

# Holton gives O's a lift

Orient 2, Middlesbrough 0. By Vince Wright

TWO goals by centre-forward Cliff Holton on Monday night—one a penalty and the other a brilliant individual effort—took Orient two points nearer safety and at the same time dimmed Middlesbrough's promotion hopes. Cliff may be a few yards slower now than in his heyday but his vast experience and clever use of the ball did more than anything else to win this match for Orient.

Conditions were not ideal for football but both sides are to be congratulated on providing one of the most entertaining games seen at Brisbane-road this season.

At first Orient were too tense and nervous and victory for Middlesbrough seemed a formality. Their inside-forward trio of O'Rourke, McMordie and Horsfield played havoc with Orient's defence but Ron Willis kept his goal intact with some remarkable saves. The 17-year-old boy has overcome a shaky spell and in the last few weeks has looked a class goalkeeper.

Middlesbrough's menacing thrusts could and should have brought them three or four goals but Orient came back to grab a shock lead in the 30th minute. Terry Price was brought down by Gates as he was bearing down on goal and the referee promptly pointed to the penalty spot. Cliff Holton's cannonball drive almost broke the back of the net.

Holton's second goal a few minutes later was probably the best of the 290 that he has scored. Neatly trapping Willis's clearance, he nimbly side-stepped Gates and ran 20 yards, resisting all challenges, to glide the ball past Whigham—a superb effort.

After these two unforeseen setbacks Middlesbrough lost heart and gradually faded in a way not befitting promotion contenders.

Orient took control in the second half and played enough good football to suggest that better things are in store for them next season. They were well served by the resilient Bert Howe, the graft of Peter Allen, the midfield dominance of Wood and Went and, above all, the shrewdness and cunning of ageless Cliff Holton.

Werge, back after injury, hit a great left-foot shot on the turn which brought a brilliant reflex save from Whigham; and Holton, striving for his hat-trick, was foiled by a desperate dive by the goalkeeper.

Orient have not been beaten at home since Boxing Day.

Orient: Willis, Jones, Howe, Wood, Went, Allen, Slater, Werge, Holton, Whitehouse, Price, Sub.: Bradbury.

Middlesbrough: Whigham, Hickton, Butler, Horner, Gates, Jones, Chadwick, O'Rourke, McMordie, Horsfield, Downing.

## Worth a point

Reading 1, Orient 0

Orient slipped to another defeat at Elm Park on Saturday night but there need be few relegation fears on this form. The home side had a long struggle for their slender victory.

Even Reading manager Roy Bentley admitted: "Orient's well marshalled defence and quick attacks looked worth a point."

But, if there are any pep talks going on in the Orient camp, they must be aimed at the forwards who allowed chances to go begging.

Whitehouse and Snedden both missed glorious opportunities as the O's fought back determinedly after Reading had taken a 65th minute lead.

Orient's veteran Cliff Holton was for once forced out of the game. Centre-forward Dick Spiers angered even his own crowd with several tough tackles on the O's danger man.

Holton moved out to the wing in the second half to give Paul Went a chance in the middle.

Went, with Reading's Ernie Yard the best player on the

field, caused several anxious moments in the home defence. Orient, however, were to pay the penalty for their poor finishing.

Willis was only tested on several occasions by the well-marked Reading forwards but top scorer George Harris nodded home an immaculate cross from Chapman to finally end the mid-field deadlock.

The best shot and save had come in the first half from the Orient. Mick Jones, a tower of strength in defence, hammered a brilliant drive from fully 30 yards. The ball seemed destined for the net but Reading goalkeeper Arthur Wilkie somersaulted superbly to grab it on the line.

Orient: Willis, Jones, Howe, Wood, Went, Allen, Slater, Whitehouse, Holton, Snedden, Bradbury. Sub.: Carter.

# JONES HAT-TRICK FOR ORIENT

Orient 4, Doncaster Rovers 1 By Vince Wright.

Orient's success in the last three months has been gained mainly through effort. There are few individual stars in the side but the team has a tremendous capacity for work and this, coupled with its ability to maintain a fast pace throughout 90 minutes, has been the chief reason for the club's recent revival.

Evidence of this was displayed on Saturday when Orient recorded their biggest victory for two years. The match was a personal triumph for Mick Jones whose persistence and determination at inside-forward earned him his first hat-trick in league football.

Only a minute had passed when Cliff Holton scored the kind of goal which makes one's blood tingle. He moved onto a short free-kick from Price and unleashed a powerful 20-yarder which left Dawson helpless. Dawson did well to get in the way of Slater's fierce shot and then Holton had a similar attempt foiled.

However, with Went playing in the forward line, the O's defence lost much of its composure and were lucky to escape when first Allen and then Wood cleared off the line from Gilfillan and Webber.

Orient came back and Jones added number two in the 25th minute. Receiving from Slater, he beat Wylie and his shot from 10 yards was diverted in off Holton's body. The luck which has eluded Orient so often recently was with them on Saturday and this was emphasized when Snedden saved a

certain goal by Jeffrey with his knee.

Immediately after this escape Sykes misjudged a long kick from Willis and Jones, running through, lofted over Dawson's head for the cheekiest of goals.

Early in the second-half Snedden fell awkwardly and was helped off the field by trainer Barry Fry. Terry Bradbury came on but the change seemed to take a lot of steam out of Orient. They never showed the fluency and rhythm which had delighted their fans in the first half and were content to let Doncaster come at them, thus gaining the initiative.

Rovers right-back Kelly cut the lead when he converted Sykes' cross but Doncaster's joy was short-lived. Neat inter-passing between Whitehouse and Slater spreadeagled the Doncaster defence and, when Dawson dropped Slater's cross, Jones was on hand to thump the ball joyfully into the net, to complete a happy afternoon for himself and his club.

Orient: Willis, Whitehouse, Howe, Wood, Snedden, Allen, Slater, Jones, Holton, Went, Price. Sub.: Bradbury.

Doncaster: Dawson, Kelly, Robertson, Wylie, Sykes, Ricketts, Lindsey, Webber, Warboys, Jeffrey, Gilfillan.

# SHOT-SHY ORIENT

Middlesbrough 3, Orient 1

A 20-SECOND goal by centre-forward John O'Rourke on Monday sent Middlesbrough on the road to a 3-1 victory and promotion, and left Orient looking nervously over their shoulders at the Third Division bottom four clubs. Despite the adverse result, Orient can rest assured that on this form Division Four is a long way off.

In front of a large partisan crowd Orient put on a highly creditable display and, even when trailing by three goals early in the second half, they looked far from beaten. When Cliff Holton blasted home a free-kick from the edge of the penalty area, a shot which left keeper Whigham rooted to the spot, the noisy home fans were silenced, wondering if a late rally by the visitors would pierce their seemingly impenetrable home defence.

The rally did not materialise, and when the final whistle blew Middlesbrough were content to have avenged the 2-0 defeat at Brisbane-road a fortnight ago—a result which almost scuppered the Teesiders' aspirations of Division Two football next season.

Orient were beaten but not disgraced. Nevertheless, they were beaten—beaten by a team which snapped up chances they engineered and spearheaded by O'Rourke, whose two opportunistic goals were delightfully taken. The mid-forward line was a cohesive and lethal attacking formation.

O'Rourke's opposite number, Cliff Holton, was by far the best forward on the field but, closely marked by Rooks during the whole game, he could do little but spread passes to his colleagues whose shot-shyness near goal was Orient's main failing.

Following O'Rourke's first-minute goal, both teams settled down to play fast entertaining football. Five minutes from the interval, a header by Chadwick was net-bound until Allen fisted the ball clear. Hickton made no mistake with the penalty kick.

Early in the second half a blue spell spoiled what had up to then been a tough, but clean, game. O'Rourke scored Middlesbrough's third goal, heading in Masson's free-kick. Two minutes later Holton blasted a free-kick past Whigham for Orient's consolation goal.

Orient: Willis, Howe, Jones, Wood, Went, Allen, Slater, Whitehouse, Holton, Werge, Price.

## Parkinson shines

Mansfield Town 1, Leyton Orient 1

Orient have obviously no cause to worry about the fact that they have only one professional goalkeeper.

Schoolteacher Alan Parkinson could, perhaps, be faulted to some extent over the 28th-minute Bill Curry goal which gave Mansfield the lead in a dull game at Field Mill on Saturday.

But he more than made amends. He twice brilliantly cut out low centres from Stuart Brace and once turned away a powerful drive from Town's leading scorer when a second goal looked certain.

Orient impressed throughout as the more methodical side and would have been unlucky indeed had the Curry goal won the game for Mansfield.

Brian Wood, who had his name taken for a foul on Curry, was twice within an ace of scoring. He was easily Orient's most industrious performer. His first-half shot looked a winner, but Dave Hollins produced a wonder save and when he beat the goalkeeper in the second

half Bill Richardson was on the line to clear.

Those incidents apart, however, Orient carried little more penetration in attack than did Mansfield and hardly anything was seen of Cliff Holton.

Eddie Werge was, perhaps, the most dangerous attacker but most of Orient's moves broke down on the edge of the penalty area.

With Wood and Bert Howe in such tremendous form Mansfield's striking power was reduced to the powder-puff variety but, even so, former Orient forward Jimmy McGeorge, who laid on the Curry goal, should have netted near the break. He headed straight at Parkinson.

Peter Allen picked up a loose ball to crack the Orient equaliser from the edge of the penalty area eight minutes from the end. Hollins reached the shot but could not stop the ball going just under the bar.

Mansfield: Hollins, Coleman, Richardson, Morris, Edwards, Ferns, Brace, McGeorge, Curry, Mitchinson, Knox. Sub.: Gregson.

Orient: Parkinson, Jones, Howe, Wood, Went, Allen, Slater, Snedden, Holton, Werge, Price. Sub.: Bradbury.

## ORIENT SHORTS

● Orient manager Dick Graham will not after all be signing Keith Smith. He changed his mind after the former Darlington forward had completed a three-game trial.

● Terry Street and Tony Ackerman, both given free transfers last week, may now stay at the club after all. The sudden change of plan came on Tuesday when Graham reconsidered the situation. A place is now being sought for them without displacing any of the other retained players.

● Next season Orient will play in all red. Graham has decided that too many clubs in the Third Division turn out in blue and Orient have to change too many times. Official permission from the F.A. has been sought.

● Cliff Holton should be fit in time for tomorrow's last game of the season against bottom club Workington. Three goals from the veteran leader, injured for the first time in seasons in the Mansfield match, will mean he reaches the magical 300 target. It is a figure that only a handful of players have reached. Holton saw a physiotherapist this week.

● Work on re-laying the pitch starts on Tuesday. A completely fresh playing surface should be ready in time for next season.

● At Orient Supporters Club dinner and dance on Saturday night, Paul Went and Tommy Taylor each received their Orient "V.C.s" for being the most outstanding players during the season.

● Plans were announced to extend the existing club hut at Brisbane Road so that more fans will be able to use it.

● The 270 supporters, officials and players at the dinner also heard that a "50 Club" will be started next season.

● Aimed at attracting local businessmen, a seat in the directors' box will cost 60 guineas for the season. With the best seats in the ground will be exclusive facilities for refreshments and so on during and after the game.

● Orient beat Romford in an invitation trophy match on Monday night. After Romford took a first half lead, Brian Whitehouse scored a hat-trick.

● Orient's youngsters beat Brentwood 2-1 on Tuesday night in the final of the J. T. Clark Memorial Cup.