

ROFE SAYS WE'LL SEE IT THROUGH

A LIST of League club managers and scouts which reads like football's own Debrett are flocking to watch Orient, for so long London's Cinderella side, now the talk of the town.

Soccer's top talent spotters would have been out in force at Friday night's home game with Southport but a waterlogged pitch forced it to be postponed. Straight-faced and silent, they'll be back again for tomorrow's clash with Bury.

Nobody says why they watch Orient's tremendous push for promotion. Nobody knows more than London's East Enders why they get so many guests.

Those twin teenage talents—full back Dennis Rofe and half back Tommy Taylor—are the reasons why Arsenal, Tottenham, Chelsea, West Ham, Leeds, Manchester United, Wolves, Coventry, Liverpool, Everton, etc. etc. and etc., have become almost an unofficial Orient fan club.

No club outside First Division football has two hotter properties than 6ft. 1in. Taylor—a wing half already captain of the England youth side—and 5ft. 8in. full back Rofe, teenagers who can already be classed as Football League veterans.

Their combined worth must top £150,000, yet Orient are in no rush to dispense with their services.

For the benefit of Orient's steadily-

growing support, and that camp-following of leading League clubs, I'll tell you that Messrs. Taylor and Rofe are in no rush to leave Leyton, London, E.10.

They know full well that all football is talking about them. They take pride from the fact.

But no more pride than from helping Orient back to the status they held when the pair first became caught up with the Os.

Taylor is still only 18, yet has been on Orient's books for five years and has already totted up ninety-five first-team appearances.

Rofe, at 19, has been six years with Orient and has seventy-three first-team games to his credit.

Youth team manager Len Cheesewright, takes the credit for finding them.

Jimmy Bloomfield, Orient's exciting and emerging young boss, gets the credit for making them such wanted young men.

Says Rofe: "He's the type of boss you can talk to about anything."

"So, while it's nice to hear that so many top clubs are watching us, why be in any hurry to leave a guy like this?"

Taylor chips in quickly. "Orient were a Second Division club when we first got to know them. There's no reason why they shouldn't be next season."

DEADLY SERIOUS

"The First Division isn't out of reach either. I'd like to be around Brisbane Road when that happens."

There's seldom a dull moment when Taylor and Rofe are around, yet they can be deadly serious when they like.

That usually happens on youth team training nights, when the pair turn up voluntarily to help coach Soccer hopefuls even younger than themselves.

That's the type of youths they are. Behind the kidding and cross-talk



TOMMY TAYLOR

there's an awful lot of common sense, and just as much impish honesty.

Nobody needs to tell the pair which clubs have come to watch.

TREMENDOUS INSPIRATION

"There's a board just inside the main entrance where complimentary tickets are left. It doesn't take long to thumb through them," says Taylor.

That's honesty for you!

Rofe takes the theme a bit further when he says: "Far from being frightened, I think the presence of top managers and scouts is a tremendous inspiration."

"Of course, you are conscious of their presence. You feel that no matter how badly you are playing, you can't crawl into a corner and hide."

Occasions when either Taylor or Rofe need to crawl into corners and hide are few and far between.

Already this season I've heard one of football's finest judges sum them up in glowing terms, calling Taylor a potential Duncan Edwards and Rofe a possible Ray Wilson of the '70s.