

Storming finish by Luton

Sunderland 2 Luton T. 2

DAVE PACEY was nearly mobbed by his excited team-mates after hitting a last second equaliser during a red-hot Luton finish, which had the Sunderland backs gasping, groaning, and crying for help from their spellbound colleagues (writes JAMES SMITH).

It was Sunderland's biggest shock since they were relegated. They had done so much during the game that long before the finish they were cocksure of winning.

Ten-man Luton—Rowland Legat had been limping along the left wing for the last 55 minutes—thoroughly deserved their thrilling point-saving goal. It came when Harry Walden's header crashed against the Sunderland bar, with goalkeeper Peter Wakeham groping helplessly. Right-half Pacey, coming in at full speed, swept through packed Sunderland defence to hook the rebound into the net.

Sunderland set a roaring pace from the start, and only a magnificent Luton defence stopped them piling up an invincible lead in the first 10 minutes. McNab and Harry Hooper wasted chance after chance by trying the impossible instead of passing to Brian Clough.

On the line

Brendan McNally saved on the line from Clough, with Sunderland well beaten, and in the next moment Ronnie Cope almost turned Len Ashurst's shot into his own net.

It took Luton 15 minutes to stage their first attack, and Sunderland went ahead when John Groves seemed to push George Herd, and star penalty-taker Hooper scored easily from the spot.

Badly handicapped by Legate's injury, Luton never gave up, and somehow, in a mixture of wonderful football and sheer luck, survived attack after attack. The famous Roker Park roar, nightmare of many teams had no terrors for them, and for 40 nerve-racking minutes they held out.

Indeed, they even managed an occasional attack, and in one of these Alec Ashworth, racing on to Tom McKechnie's forward pass, shocked Sunderland with a fantastic equaliser. Suddenly Wakeham was brushed aside by an exploding Ashworth, who charged between Hurley and Irwin to rush the ball into the Sunderland net.

Clough restored the Sunderland lead, but Luton fought on. I'm sure they would have won if Legate had been fit.

Throwing away all caution, Luton staged a grand rally in the last 10 minutes. Then came that amazing Pacey goal.