

LATE DRAMA AS TOWN GAIN POINT

Sunderland 2 Luton 2

By ROGER DUCKWORTH

THE LAST exciting 15 minutes of this encounter saw Luton's hopes see-saw in dramatic fashion.

A goal down in the first half they hit back through Nicholl and Anderson only to see victory denied them with a late Sunderland equaliser.

Luton, looking for their first away win of the season, made one change from the side that lost at home to Carlisle last week. Tony Read came back in goal in place of Keith Barber.

The only other changes in the Town side were positional with Slough and Shanks swapping shirts.

The Luton switch was an effort by manager Alec Stock to cut out the threat of Sunderland's nippy forward Bobby Kerr. Shanks's duty was to mark his man tightly.

In the Sunderland side full-back Keith Coleman displaced Chambers, and 16-year-old starlet Jimmy Hamilton stepped down to substitute to make room for Billy Hughes.

Covered

The Luton defence started confidently with Nicholl heading a long ball away firmly and then Slough cutting out two dangerous moves easily.

A mistake by Givens very nearly let in Watson but Slough and Nicholl covered quickly to block out the threat when McGiven joined in to help out.

Sunderland made some good approaches through the middle and in the eighth minute Porterfield ran through purposefully. But after a good pass out to Tueart the centre found Watson in an offside position.

With Busby having an early

MATCH FACTS	
SUNDERLAND:	Montgomery; Malone, Coleman, Harvey, Pitt, Porterfield, McGiven, Kerr, Watson, Hughes, Tueart. Sub: Hamilton.
LUTON TOWN:	Read; John Ryan, Slough, Shanks, Nicholl, Moore, Anderson, Keen, Halom, Givens, Hindson. Sub: Busby.
Referee:	Mr F. M. Nicholson (Manchester).
WATSON (Sund'nd)	18 mins
NICHOLL (Luton)	57 mins
ANDERSON (Luton)	76min
McGIVEN (Sund'nd)	78 mins
Attendance:	17,979

warming-up session on the touchline, Anderson took a kick on the back of a leg from Pitt but was soon able to resume. Busby vanished back into the trainers' box.

A good tackle by Anderson on Porterfield gave him possession but he chose to cut back inside rather than go straight through and Shanks was unable to control his pass quickly enough to make use of it.

Referee Nicholson had a long chat with John Ryan after a foul on Tueart and from the



Chris Nicholl jumps high to beat the Sunderland forwards

free kick which came from the left McGiven was given the opportunity by defensive errors to get in a shot which was just over the top of Read's goal.

This was the first attempt at goal from either side and Luton hit back through Anderson who tried a long shot and very nearly caught Montgomery unawares.

Sunderland went ahead in the 18th minute when the dangerous Tueart again dodged the Luton defence and squeezed a pass through to WATSON who shot from just inside the box.

Foiled

Luton could have been in further trouble when a hard-hit centre from Tueart on the right fooled Read, but Kerr was wide with his shot.

There was a real minute of drama on the half hour. A Watson header was scrambled out by Read, who for some reason best known to himself, chased the centre-forward out towards the right. Watson turned round and centred for Tueart to head at the empty goal.

It was a goal all the way, but Nicholl dived across the goalmouth, stopped the ball

with his hands and referee Nicholson awarded a penalty.

The referee for some reason decided to book Nicholl for his reflex action and Hughes took the penalty but it was perhaps poetic justice for Nicholl that the spot-kick hit the left-hand post and bounced clear.

Rattled

In the 36th minute Luton had the chance of equalising when Anderson put Hindson through. But the Luton new man went a step too far and, under heavy pressure, ran the ball out of play.

The Luton defence was still obviously rattled from its earlier onslaught and this was underlined when John Ryan hit a back pass to Read far too hard and too wide for the goalkeeper to have any chance of stopping it and Sunderland were given another corner.

A minute before half-time Porterfield jinked through and set up Tueart in a shooting position but Read made a diving save.

HT: Sunderland 1, Luton 0

Sunderland restarted the second half in the way they had finished the first — going forward strongly.

Hughes and Nicholl clashed

in the goal area but Luton managed to clear the danger. And as Sunderland came back again, Porterfield was injured in a collision with Halom.

Moore won a long chase with Kerr and did a good job in getting the ball back to Read. From the clearance Anderson sent Hindson way and his pass inside produced Luton's best shot so far from Givens — but it went just wide.

Equaliser

In the 56th minute Porterfield limped off to be replaced by young Hamilton.

But a minute later the Sunderland crowd was silent when NICHOLL slammed home a Hindson corner.

Sunderland tried hard to regain their lead and a couple of minutes later Tueart was booked for following through with his foot injuring Read who had made a spectacular and brave diving save at the feet of two forwards.

The Luton keeper looked to be injured on the back of his head, but he was able to continue after treatment.

In the 64th minute Halom became the third player to be booked in the match following a challenge on goalkeeper Montgomery. What the

referee missed was a back header kick on Halom by Montgomery.

As the game wore on Luton became more and more confident and in the 76th minute they went ahead. A throw on the left found Hindson and he ran intelligently before crossing low pass into the goalmouth where ANDERSON had to do no more than prod the ball home as it passed him.

But two minutes later it was all square again. Sunderland piled on terrific pressure and after one great raid, with Luton falling over each other in an effort to clear, McGIVEN smashed a tremendous drive past Read with his left foot from just outside the penalty box.

Casper slips to second place

American Billy Casper leader for the first two rounds dropped to second place after carding a disastrous five-over par 77 in the Tokai Golf Classic in Nagoya, Japan, today.

The 48-year-old Texan had a three-round aggregate of 21 to trail one stroke behind Shigeru Uchida of Japan, who returned a 71.

VERDICT

By ROGER DUCKWORTH



THE referees' revolution has gone balmy. This afternoon Manchester official Ricky Nicholson booked three players and only one of them, in my opinion, warranted the caution.

The first name to go in the book was that of Luton's Nicholl, his second of the season. His crime was to stop a certain goal from Tueart with his hands.

Sunderland got a penalty out of it, but Hughes hit a post.

Second name to go in the book was that of Tueart, who followed through with a boot after being foiled by Read. Mr Nicholson had no option with that one.

Then Halom had his name taken for challenging Montgomery and this, in my opinion, was a little harsh.

By the time of the penalty incident, Watson had put Sunderland ahead with an 18th minute shot and for most of the first half

Sunderland's bright and breezy attacks gave Luton a hard time.

But this was a good point for Luton. It was sheer guts and determination which saw them leave Roker Park all square after surviving a first half blitz that would have sent many lesser teams reeling.

Anderson was Luton's best forward, while Nicholl once again did a terrific job at the back where he had plenty of

help from his willing colleagues who will remember the pounding they took

In the end Luton could very nearly have won.

With minutes left Givens hit a post, Halom had a header tipped over, and Givens, again, had a shot blocked