

SUNDERLAND 'KILLER TOUCH' IS MISSING

SUNDERLAND 2, LUTON TOWN 2

SUNDERLAND still look like a firing squad without sufficient bullets to go round.

Once again the need for a player with the killer's touch around goal was clearly spelled out.

It was emphasised as they scored two fine goals from outside the penalty area and missed many more from within whispering distance of goal.

The theory that if chances are being created, even if they are not put away, when there is little wrong is all very well; but here it almost cost the match and certainly made a gift of a point.

Luton, for an hour, were a long way from any semblance of control of the match. It was an equalising goal, at 57 minutes, that supplied the power for a finish that left Sunderland anxious and fretful to the end.

Yet it all might have been stitched up in the first half with a string of chances drifting away, including a missed penalty.

But later, with their confidence hoisted high by a goal, there was suddenly point and purpose in Luton's work.

So much so that at the

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end they were moving forward in search of the winning goal.

Even so, they were lucky to be in a position to attack, such was the degree of Sunderland superiority before the break.

It all flowed from Bobby Kerr's appetite for the game: he was again the one that kept Sunderland ticking over with his perceptive running and Don Shanks, under orders to keep him quiet, hardly got to grips with the problem.

Luton managed only two shots in the first half as the fight developed around their own penalty area. Here, Watson was a real danger on the floor and in the air and gave Nicholl a rough time.

There was little rhythm at the start with both sides

giving the ball away as if it were a sac of poison.

There was a good chance for McGiven early on but he could only lift his left-foot drive over from inside the box with a clear view.

But at 18 minutes the stuttering stopped with a superb Watson goal: Tueart dummied his way into the box and knocked a short pass square for the centre-forward to pull it inside the near post with his right foot as Read moved for the ball going the other way.

Earlier, bad control lost Watson a similar chance, but his menace grew as he beat Nicholl to a Malone through ball and hooked it hard, but too near Read.

It was at this point that Sunderland really looked like taking Luton apart with attacking pressure built on support and good running.

Luton, already looking limp, finally seemed dead when Sunderland got a penalty award: a good overlap and cross from Coleman produced a Tueart header scrambled away by Read.

For some reason that was his alone, the goalkeeper set off in hopeless pursuit of the ball—and turned to see Hughes' return cross headed at the abandoned goal by Tueart.

Nicholl scooped it off the line with his hand, was booked, and then must have thought it all worth while as the Hughes penalty hit the outside of Read's right-hand post.

Hughes then shot over and headed over before Hindson, after Harvey lost possession without cover, wasted Luton's first real chance.

At 57 minutes Sunderland paid in full for all those indiscretions when Nicholl finished off the confusion from a corner by putting the ball in from six yards. And at 75 minutes Hindson, whose crossing was immaculate throughout, this time aimed one low and Anderson, Luton's most effective player, slid it in.

Three minutes later Sunderland were back in business with a handsome half-volley from McGiven from outside the box that was in before Read moved.

SUNDERLAND. — Montgomery; Malone, Coleman; Harvey, Pitt, Porterfield (Hamilton), McGiven, Kerr, Watson, Hughes, Tueart.

LUTON TOWN. — Read; Ryan, Slough, Shanks, Nicholl; Moore, Anderson; Keen, Halom, Givens, Hindson. Sub: Busby.