

TOWN GET POINTS AND CUP BOOST

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DON SHANKS gave Luton's Cup confidence a terrific boost this afternoon by scoring the goal that beat Sunderland in this sixth round preview. It came just before half-time after the Town had been putting the pressure on their visitors.

But any hopes of this game being an indicator of what is to come next week were dashed when Luton copied the Roker men's ploy of not fielding their entire regular first team.

After Sunderland's announcement yesterday of wholesale changes, Luton manager Harry Haslam decided to do the same. Late changes made the Luton team look almost like a reserve side.

Alan Garner, John Moore, Viv Busby and John Aston were rested, while John Faulkner, Ken Goodeve, Derek Hales and Rod Fern played.

Both managers were obviously playing a waiting game with next week's sixth round FA Cup-tie at the front of their minds. It was an unreal situation, with both sides probing for advantage without over-working some of their star players.

Close

Pitt, Kerr, Hughes and Tueart were all missing from the Sunderland side but at centre-forward we saw the familiar face of Vic Halom, who recently moved from Luton to the North-East for £35,000.

Luton were quick to settle with Hales and Anderson skilful up front and Faulkner operating smoothly at the back to find Anderson with a

Luton 1 Sunderland 0
By **ROGER DUCKWORTH**

hurried tackle and clearance.

Fern operated from Luton's left-wing and he was quick to show that he had the beating of Ellison by shoving the ball between his legs and getting in a good centre.

But a couple of minutes later Fern and Ellison were involved in a collision and both collapsed on to the turf. They were able to continue after treatment.

The early skills from both sides gave the promise of a good match and with the sun smiling down for the third successive week the crowd, which looked above average at the start, were given the hope of a cracking Cup rehearsal.

Horn saved Luton from going behind in the ninth minute. After mis-fisting a

left-wing corner he dived smartly to collect a smart back pass from Jimmy Ryan.

Some good work between Hales, Anderson and Hindson provided a fleeting chance for Anderson's left foot but he mis-kicked on the edge of the penalty area while under pressure and Montgomery cleared.

The Luton players appeared to have plenty of confidence in each other and Hindson and Fern developed a good understanding on the left-wing.

Skill

In the 15th minute Jimmy Ryan curled a left-wing corner over, Montgomery mishandled and the ball bounced on to the head of full-back Ellison before the Sunderland goalkeeper got hold of it cleanly.

When they turned it on, Luton supplied some most attractive football. Good foraging by Hales gave Jimmy Ryan the ball on the left and again he displayed his ample skills in beating his man before crossing to John Ryan, whose hard, low shot was saved at full stretch by Montgomery.

In the 27th minute Hales passed to Jimmy Ryan, whose cross from the right was headed over the crossbar by the enthusiastic Hales.

Fern was supplying some useful pressure for Luton and after one good run he got in a



Jim Montgomery jumps to collect the ball with John Faulkner looking on

shot which was quickly blocked by Young.

Luton nearly went ahead in the 33rd minute. A good shot from Hindson was half stopped under the crossbar by Montgomery and the Sunderland defence scrambled back to clear with Anderson rushing in.

And a minute later a cross from Jimmy Ryan gave Shanks the chance of another header — but the ball went over the top.

Tremendous skill from Fern saw him cut past two men from the right but his hard centre was shunted behind for a corner. It was taken by Jimmy Ryan and fisted clear by Montgomery.

In the melee Halom appeared to handle in the box — but the referee would have

nothing to do with Luton's appeals for a penalty.

Then Ellison, who took a knock on the head, was substituted by Bolton.

In the 42nd minute Luton went ahead.

Jimmy Ryan unzipped the Sunderland defence with a magnificent through ball. It was chased by SHANKS who beat off a strong challenge, went to the edge of the box and smashed the ball at goal. Montgomery half stopped the ball but it bounced into the net.

HT: 1-0

When this entertaining game restarted, Luton were quickly on the attack again. A foul on Fern gave Thomson the chance to lob a free kick into the box, but Faulkner headed wide.

There was further tentative probing by both sides. Jimmy Ryan beat a nasty-looking tackle from Guthrie and Fern did some more good work on Luton's left wing.

At the other end John Ryan got one dangerous ball back to his goalkeeper and Ashurst tried a long shot but it sailed over the bar.

Some slack passing in midfield by Anderson gave Sunderland the chance to attack, but again Goodeve was in sharply to sort it out.

Ten minutes after the interval there was further excitement when John Ryan went through the middle in a 50-yard dash with the ball. Hales did well to control the pass out to the right and his

shot whipped across the face of the goal.

A minute later Fern laid one on for Hales, but he was a fraction late in getting in his shot with Montgomery yards out of goal.

After Luton's exciting start to the second half, Sunderland began to fight back. A header from Halom went wide and he was frustrated by Faulkner as he tried a shot.

Jim Ryan again did well to lose Guthrie as he went down Luton's right wing. He got in a hard, low cross but it was cut out a yard or so before it reached Hales, who was waiting in the goalmouth.

Back at the Oak Road end, Hamilton got in a header to a Porterfield cross but it went wide.

Corner

With Milton Keynes. North Bucks Shield match will now be filled by the club's the Saturday before Easter support. The vacant date of Easter Tour because of lack of have called off their proposed BLETCHELY Rugby Club

YOUR MATCH FACTS

LUTON: Horn; John Ryan, Thomson, Shanks, Faulkner, Goodeve, Jimmy Ryan, Anderson, Hales, Hindson, Fern. S Sub: Busby.

SUNDERLAND: Montgomery; Ellison, Guthrie, Ashurst, Watson, Young, Latham, Chambers, Halom, Porterfield, Hamilton. Sub: Bolton.

Referee: Mr K. Styles (Barnsley)

SHANKS (Luton) 42 min

Attendance: 12,458

VERDICT

By **ROGER DUCKWORTH**

TODAY's entertaining encounter between next week's Sixth round FA Cup opponents was never a dress rehearsal.

Both sides fielded four or five players who are not likely to be called upon next week. Even so, Luton deserved the points and those who turned out for the Town showed what a depth of talent there is at Kenilworth Road.

Goodeve had an outstanding match at the back of Luton's defence and he was given a great deal of encouragement by the performance of John Faulkner, who seemed to enjoy his battle with old colleague Halom. And he usually got the best of the play in the air.

Derek Hales looked strong at centre-forward and I am sure it will not be long before he gets a regular place.

But again it was Don Shanks — emerging from full-back to a striking midfield man — who scored the goal. He got two against the Italians on Wednesday and three minutes before half-time he smashed in a shot which was too powerful for Montgomery to stop. The Sunderland goalkeeper could only help the ball into the net.

Fern had a good first half on Luton's left-wing and Jimmy Ryan warned Sunderland what they are in for next week when the Town travel to the North-East in search of a semi-final place in the Cup.