



SUNDERLAND TAKE ALL THE CUP GLORY

72/73 (FAC)

By ROGER DUCKWORTH
Sunderland 2 Luton Town 0

THE LUTON team drank champagne on the coach home from Sunderland. But only so it wouldn't be wasted. It was the bubbly laid on by the directors in case of a victory celebration. And hard-working, honest-to-God, long-serving John Moore led a sing-song in an effort to raise Luton's spirits.

But he was the only whole-hearted participant. He did the lot, from Campbelltown

Loch to Sonny Boy on one knee. Had it not been for him the journey home would have been a grim one. The real feelings were to be seen on the faces of travel-tired fans as the Luton coach passed the supporters' convoy. There was the odd weakly waved scarf. A shy thumbs up here and there.

But most of all there was a wall of blank, unsmiling faces, mirroring disappointment, almost disbelief.

For Luton had been kicked out of the Cup with ease. After all the bally-hoo, the chat, the veiled threats, Luton were well and truly outplayed.

Their attack was as punchless as a handcuffed boxer.

I can't remember one worthwhile, well-thought, neatly executed attack by Luton all afternoon.

John Aston was pulled off with 20 minutes to go to give Derek Hales a go. But it was too late. Luton were a goal down and their over-strained defence looked like splitting open.

Jimmy Ryan tried a couple of runs but Luton's wall passing never worked. Hindson, who spent a lot of time looking fed-up with himself, had the chance of a hurried shot but he flapped his effort over the bar.

Viv Busby had the worst job of the day in having to beat centre defenders Dave Watson and Ritchie Pitt. He never got a look in.

Pressure

It wasn't lack of effort, it was just that Sunderland had that bit extra all afternoon.

Sunderland were spurred on by the Roker Roar that their dads had told them about. Luton, who are said to like the big occasion, were drowned in its waves.

Luton looked too casual. Sunderland were eager. In Tueart, Kerr and Hughes they have three excellent, speedy schemers. And Vic Halom, who left Luton for the North-East this year, had a fine game.

He ran his heart out against his old club and his quick laying-off of the ball was a treat to see. "I felt I played well," he said afterwards. "I thoroughly enjoyed myself."

Anderson and Shanks were

MATCH DETAILS

SUNDERLAND: Montgomery, Malone, Guthrie, Horswill, Watson, Pitt, Kerr, Hughes, Halom, Porterfield, Tueart. Sub: Young.

WATSON (Sunderland)
56 minutes

GUTHRIE (Sunderland)
82 mins.

LUTON TOWN: Barber, John Ryan, Thomson, Shanks, Garner, Moore, Jim Ryan, Anderson, Bezby, Hindson, Aston. Sub: Hales.

Referee: Mr Jack Taylor (Wolverhampton).

Attendance: 53,151

diligent in midfield but because of the Sunderland pressure most of their best work had to be done at the back.

Moore and Garner were sound in the middle of the over-worked defence and John Ryan looked better at right-back than he did in midfield to where he moved in the second half. His tackling was sound but few people would have liked the job of marking Dennis Tueart, who is currently rated in the £170,000 class. Don't be surprised if he moves to London for a figure in that region.

Skipper Bobby Thomson made the odd mistake against the speedy little Kerr but he gave a generally commanding performance.

Courage

Goalkeeper Keith Barber gave a fine account of himself. He was named for the side just two hours before the kick-off and nobody would have thought it was just a month since he broke a leg.

He showed great courage and agility and if he could be faulted it would be on his judgment of high crosses. He also collected a set of deep stud marks down his good leg after a late tackle by Porterfield.

But Sunderland were determined to win. At half-time nobody gave Luton a chance but it looked as if it could remain a goalless draw.

Then, 11 minutes after the interval, Kerr banged across a crisp left-wing corner and defender Watson who, for some reason, was left unmarked, lunged between the folds of the Luton defence to score a cracking goal with his head.

Another left-wing corner eight minutes from time, this time by Hughes, was nodded on by Pitt and full-back Guthrie banged it into the net to nail Luton's Cup hopes.

Even so, the Town have done damned well in the competition and nobody can hold it against them for going out to this Sunderland side.

The Roker boys may be third from the bottom of the Second Division but you'd never have guessed it on Saturday.