

Two quick goals put paid to Luton

By FRANK JOHNSON

WITH left back Joe Bolton out of action for at least six weeks with a knee injury, Sunderland were forced to make one change for this afternoon's visit of Luton.

The Roker men, badly short of experienced cover for the full-back positions, turned to the versatile Jacky Ashurst for the answer to their immediate problem.

Ashurst, regarded as a right - side player, started the season in the right - back position before Dick Malone regained his place, and he also had experience of playing in the middle of the defence. But this was a new test for him.

Manager Bob Stokoe was content to leave the rest of his line - up unchanged from the side which tried hard but went down at Bristol last week, a defeat which knocked them from the top of the Second Division.

This afternoon, Sunderland were hoping to extend their 100 per cent home record and Vic Halom would obviously be hoping to mark his 100th. appearance with a goal.

In the Luton line-up was former Roker player Brian Chambers, while winger John Aston returned after a six - game lay - off through injury.

A GREAT MOVE
There were about 25,000 present when Sunderland lost the toss and were set to attack the Roker end.

Sunderland were first to show their teeth, winning a throw near the right corner flag and a flick on by Halom almost brought a goal. Futchur failed to clear quickly enough and Towers hammered a tremendous right - foot shot from just inside the area and the ball flashed just wide of the left - hand upright.

Then came a great Sunderland move. Towers found Hughes beautifully with a long ball to the right, and he cut in past two defenders before centring to Halom who just failed to make contact in front of goal.

Luton hit back with a shot from Chambers which carried through from the edge of the box to Montgomery after Towers had been caught in possession by Jim Ryan.

Sunderland built up more pressure on the left only to disappoint with Ashurst not quick enough on the ball.

OFF THE MARK
Towers aimed a crisp ball through the middle for Robson, but the striker, between two Luton players,

The line-up

SUNDERLAND	LUTON
1 Montgomery	1 Barber
2 Malone	2 John Ryan
3 Ashurst	3 Thomson
4 Towers	4 Anderson
5 Clarke	5 Faulkner
6 Moncur	6 Futchur
7 Kerr	7 Jim Ryan
8 Hughes	8 Chambers
9 Halom	9 Seaman
10 Robson	10 West
11 Porterfield	11 Aston
12 Holden	12 King

Ref: Mr C. N. Seel (Carlisle).

only managed to head the ball backwards. Then as the Sunderland pressure continued, Barber went up to grab a header from Halom.

A storming run up the right by Malone was halted by a foul tackle and the free kick brought a header from Hughes but this was well off the mark.

A foul by Moncur just inside the Luton half brought a couple of headers before the ball was picked up by Montgomery without trouble.

Sunderland, though not knitting together as they could, were doing most of the attacking. Futchur headed away a dangerous centre from Kerr before the offside flag went up as Halom had a shot charged down by Barber.

Hughes caused danger in the Luton defence when he dispossessed Futchur just inside the box, but Robson had no luck with the bounce when the centre reached him hard and low.

DEFLECTED WIDE
Ashurst centred from the left and the ball was headed on by Halom to Kerr, nipping in quickly, and his shot was deflected wide.

At the other end, Aston was fouled by Malone and when Moncur partly cleared the free kick, Faulkner put a shot well wide of the mark.

Sunderland won a corner when Kerr found Hughes with a fine through - ball on the right. Kerr centred the ball dangerously and Barber did well to pluck the ball off Halom's head.

Hughes then showed clever footwork to win a corner on the left. Barber, under pressure from Halom, flicked Kerr's inswinger over. There

was a close call for Luton when the second kick came over with Ashurst heading on and Halom getting in a flick which went just wide.

SMART ATTACK
Another fierce drive from the edge of the box by Towers was blocked and Barber went up to hold the rebound shot from Halom.

There was a smart counter - attack by Luton and Montgomery had to leave his line quickly to get to the ball before Aston.

Sunderland were still not moving at all well, and up to now it had not been a very good advert for the side with the BBC cameras focused on them.

Porterfield did well on the left, centring dangerously and Faulkner wasted no time in heading clear.

Luton managed a rare attack and Moncur cleared with a spectacular flying header as Jim Ryan centred from the bye - line.

Halom was spoken to for a rather wild back at Chambers after he claimed in vain for a penalty, indicating he was pushed down.

ANGRY FLARE - UP
Then came a gasp from the crowd as Hughes powered a header just wide from a Kerr corner. Porterfield was brought down heavily on the left and a header from Robson was easily cleared.

There was an angry flare - up midway inside the Luton half after a clash between Ashurst and Seaman. Jim Ryan immediately went for the Sunderland player and there was danger of further involvement as Towers raced on to the scene.

But commonsense prevailed and the referee

wagged a warning finger at players of both sides.

Half time
Sunderland 0 Luton Town 0

The second half was only seconds old when a challenge by Halom forced goalkeeper Barber to take too many steps. Towers pushed the resulting free kick across for Moncur to hit a powerful right - foot shot, but it was blocked by a tightly - packed Luton defence.

There were words between Halom and Jim Ryan after a severe tackle by the Luton man and the referee took Ryan's name in the 47th minute, clearly warning him that anymore nonsense and he would be off.

From the free kick Hughes got in a header and Robson missed a great chance when he lifted a right - foot shot over the bar from an unmarked position close to goal.

Then the referee penalised Montgomery for taking too many steps with the ball and Aston hhad a low shot charged down.

BRILLIANT SPELL
Sunderland then got two goals in the space of a minute.

Porterfield was brought down on the edge of the Luton penalty area and KERR raced in to hit a tremendous free kick which cannoned into the top corner of the net giving Barber no chance in the 55th. minute.

The game had barely restarted when Sunderland pushed down the left and a powerful centre from Porterfield slipped out of the grasp of the diving Barber and ROBSON was there to stick a low shot home.

In the 55th. minute Sunderland might have been three up with Robson facing an open goal from six yards, but incredibly he sidefooted the ball over the bar when it looked easier to score.

The Sunderland pressure continued and with the Luton defence reeling Barber made a fine save at the post from Kerr.

Sunderland's Bobby Kerr tries to cross the ball in today's game at Roker Park but a Luton defender managed to put the ball over for a corner.



SUNDERLAND

After 65 minutes Luton substituted King for Aston. Malone was pulled up for a foul on the new man and Montgomery got up high to hold West's free kick, being nudged in the process.

And Sunderland then went close. Porterfield struck a rather tame low shot from just outside the area which seemed to be going through to the 'keeper. But Robson was there in a flash and he flicked a surprise shot which struck the foot of the post and came out.

Then Hughes fed Ashurst on the left and from his centre Halom hit a scissors kick which Barber saved at the near post.

Robson was in action in Sunderland's next raid, slamming in a powerful left - foot shot which struck Barber and went over the top.

After 84 minutes Sunderland's skipper Towers, dazed in a collision was helped off the field and Holden substitute.

FINAL
Sunderland 2 Luton Town 0