

CHANGES MISSED IN ROKER DUEL

82/93

STAN CUMMINS returned to the Sunderland side after a four-game absence for today's match against Luton Town at Roker Park.

Cummins, out of favour recently and unhappy at Roker, replaced the injured Mick Buckley, who missed his first game of the season.

John Cooke was preferred to Gordon Chisholm for the substitute's role, and skipper Iain Munro and Ian Atkins had shrugged off heavy colds to keep their places.

Luton, who were without suspended goalkeeper Jake Findlay — Alan Judge continued to deputise — replaced the injured Clive Goodyear, with Wayne Turner.

England midfielder Ricky Hill replaced Pasquale Fuccillo after recovering from the thigh injury which kept him out of the Milk Cup victory in midweek against Blackpool.

The match was being watched by Newcastle scouts Joe Harvey and Brian Watson. United, of course, have been linked recently with Cummins.

Sunderland kicked off with Northern Ireland international full-back Jimmy Nicholl operating in midfield and Barry Venison at right-back.

Sunderland's midfield three, in fact, were Cummins, Nicholl and Pickering.

Nicholl made a long run to take a pass from Munro, but his attempt to find Pickering was over-hit.

The Sunderland produced a promising build-up which culminated in Pickering crossing from the left and West having a shot blocked. The ball broke to Rowell, but it came to him too sharply and he was unable to get in a shot.

McCoist was fouled from behind by Wayne Turner and then Sunderland conceded a free-kick when Munro brought down Hill.

Successive mistakes by Venison spoiled Sunderland attacks, and then Elliott found Cummins with a good ball. This attack led to Munro crossing from the left but Donaghy headed clear.

TODAY'S TEAMS

SUNDERLAND	LUTON TOWN
1 Turner (C)	1 Judge
2 Nicholl	2 Stephens
3 Munro	3 Money
4 Atkins	4 Horton
5 Elliott	5 Turner (W)
6 Pickering	6 Donaghy
7 Cummins	7 Hill
8 Rowell	8 Stein
9 McCoist	9 Walsh
10 West	10 Kellock
11 Venison	11 Moss
Sub. Cook	Sub. Bunn

Referee: Mr. D. Allison (Lancaster).

When Wayne Turner blatantly handled the ball the referee waved play on — a decision which was greeted by a storm of booing from the Roker crowd.

The first clear chance fell to Luton in the seventh minute when Stephens, after receiving from Hill, supplied Kellock with the perfect pass. The midfielder, though, struck his shot rather tamely and straight at Chris Turner.

Great save

Wayne Turner was penalised for a foul from behind on Rowell but when Atkins and Cummins worked the free-kick short Cummins was dispossessed by Horton.

West gave the ball away with a bad pass but Atkins rescued the situation with a great tackle on Stein. Then McCoist cut in from the left before crossing but Kellock headed clear powerfully.

Walsh turned well and showed good skill on the ball in Luton's next build-up but Munro was in quickly to clear.

Nicholl beat Horton and was promptly fouled by the Luton midfielder. Atkins' free-kick, however, was headed out by Hill.

The referee was in further trouble with the crowd when he ignored a signal from the lines-

man that Stephens had handled the ball.

Another mistake by Venison put Sunderland in serious trouble as Stein's pass found Moss in acres of space. The Luton Winger's cross from the left was met by Walsh outside the far post but his header went wide.

Sunderland's best effort to date came a minute later when Pickering crossed low from the left and the ball was met first time by Cummins, whose left-foot drive from 12 yards flew over the bar.

Luton, however, continued to look the more dangerous side and only a great one-handed save by Chris Turner prevented them taking the lead in the 15th minute.

Walsh's cross from the right, after good work by Hill, found both Stein and Kellock in the clear. Stein headed the ball square to Kellock whose header from six yards was turned to safety by Turner's left hand.

The goalmouth incidents continued to come every minute and within seconds of Kellock's header Sunderland were close to scoring at the other end.

Atkins found Cummins with a good ball and his low cross looked certain to produce a goal

for Rowell or McCoist, but Stephens arrived on the scene in the nick of time and got the ball behind for a corner.

A long ball from Venison was misjudged by Money to leave West in the clear, but he wasn't quick enough to make the most of the situation, although he did gain a right-wing corner.

Venison's flag kick led to Pickering striking a shot from the edge of the penalty area which, though not cleanly struck, dipped just over the bar.

Snap shot

West then neatly brought the ball down and laid it off to Cummins, who failed to get round Wayne Turner.

Then Rowell dropped back to dispossess Hill at the expense of a throw.

A foul by Money on McCoist brought Sunderland a free-kick which was taken by Elliott, and this led to McCoist and Pickering combining well to force a left-wing corner.

Nicholl's inswinger was cleared by Stephens but when the ball came back to Nicholl he had a snap shot blocked.

CUMMINS GAVE THE BALL AWAY TO Moss and this led to a Luton attack in which he had a shot blocked by Elliott. Then Stein saw an effort on the turn comfortably gathered by Chris Turner.

When Cummins tripped Horton he was spoken to by the referee.

A Nicholl cross from the right led to West having a shot blocked. Then Munro won applause for showing skill on the ball before finding Pickering. His cross reached McCoist in space and after cutting inside he had a shot deflected behind for left-wing corner.

Nicholl's kick was flicked on by Atkins and turned behind by Money for another corner. Once again it was curled in by Nicholl but this time Judge left his line to claim the ball.

West miss

McCoist and Nicholl combined on the right and when Nicholl crossed West went up with Donaghy and the ball dropped behind for a left-wing corner. Before the kick could be taken, the referee had a word with Horton.

Nicholl's inswinger was cleared to Cummins and when he returned the ball into the penalty area Atkins produced a good shot but Judge was down quickly to make a fine save.

West missed a great chance to give Sunderland the lead in the 31st minute. Nicholl won the ball in midfield and this led to McCoist producing a good wriggling run and cross which found Cummins.

He appeared to be brought down in the act of shooting but the ball broke to West, who looked a certain scorer, but he dragged his left-foot shot wide from 12 yards.

In Sunderland's next attack Venison had a shot blocked. Then Luton came forward with their first attack for some time and Kellock was just too high with an ambitious long-range drive.

A reckless challenge on Hill by Munro brought a word of warning from the referee and the Sunderland skipper was fortunate not to be booked. Then Judge came out to gather a cross from Munro which Money had missed with both Rowell and McCoist lurking menacingly.

An Elliott free-kick was headed down by West to McCoist, but the young Scot delayed his shot too long and the ball was whipped off his toes by Donaghy.

When Moss broke menacingly on the left he was brought down on the edge of the penalty area by Atkins. It was Atkins, though, who eventually got Moss's free-kick clear after West had made the initial clearance.

When Nicholl was penalised for a foul on Hill he showed his

Roker action lacks goals

From Page 9

disgust at the referee's decision and paid the inevitable penalty by being booked for dissent in the 39th minute.

Nicholl then had a shot deflected behind for a right-wing corner and took the flag-kick himself, but after a bout of head tennis in the penalty area the ball was cleared.

When Venison lost out to Walsh on the left Munro raced across to win the ball with an important tackle.

An Atkins interception broke up a neat one-touch passing move from Luton involving Moss, Hill and Stephens.

When Rowell attempted to find McCoist at the far post the Sunderland striker was put off by Stephens's challenge.

Atkins found Pickering with a good ball but his cross from the left was gathered by Judge and at half-time there was still no score.

A Luton attack down the left was half stopped by Elliott but

Venison stepped in to get the ball back to Chris Turner.

The referee, whose decisions had annoyed the crowd, produced another howler when he gave Sunderland a free-kick but effectively punished them because Pickering was in a good position on the left. He should have applied the advantage rule.

When Elliott and Stein battled for a long ball from Wayne Turner the referee awarded Sunderland a free-kick.

When Pickering crossed from the left West spoiled the situation with a bad ball to McCoist.

In the 50th minute Cummins went down as he burst into the penalty area and the referee, after appearing as if he was going to award a penalty, changed his mind and waved on play. His decision angered the crowd.

When Sunderland came again West played the ball back to McCoist whose first-time shot went straight at Judge.

In the 53rd minute Wayne Turner kicked the ball away when a throw-in was awarded against him and was immediately booked by the referee. Two minutes later, Atkins became the third player to be cautioned when he brought down Horton to halt the Luton skipper's forceful run.

After a hold up while Horton received treatment, he took the free-kick himself, knocking the ball square to Moss, whose drive swerved well off target.

When Stein held off a challenge by Nicholl in a run through the middle, he was beaten by a well-judged Munro tackle.

West was in quickly to dispossess Money, but before he had a chance to capitalise, Donaghy was on the scene to get the ball back to Judge.

Horton, as influential as ever for Luton, won the ball well in the tackle against Rowell before laying it off to Stephens.

Luton's offside trap failed to work when their defence came out quickly following a long Chris Turner clearance, but Wayne Turner reacted quickly and headed the ball back to Judge before Cummins or McCoist could capitalise.

When West crossed from the right Pickering got in a left-foot drive from outside the far post which was turned behind for a corner by Judge.

Fine play by Atkins saw him change defence into attack with a good run and pass to Pickering, but the midfielder's cross was badly placed and went straight to Judge.

ROKER comment

SUNDERLAND'S supporters had to endure more agony and frustration at Roker Park today.

The Roker side improved on their midweek Milk Cup form against Norwich, but still has familiar problems, and in spite of having nearly all the play, they fell behind in the 76th minute to a David Moss goal.

Luton made the better start but after the first 15 minutes Sunderland did most of the attacking without ever looking really convincing.

They should have taken the lead in the 31st minute but Colin West, 20 today, missed a great chance to give himself a birthday present.

The match was marred by a puzzling performance from referee David Allison, who produced a succession of decisions which angered the crowd.

Iain Munro and Ian Atkins were Sunderland's best players, but Stan Cummins, after a bright first half, faded on his return to the side.

Attendance: 14,238.

There was late consolation, however, for the Roker faithful when Atkins grabbed an equaliser with only three minutes to go.

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