

CHISHOLM SOON CRACKS LUTON

ENGLAND manager Bobby Robson was at Roker Park today for Sunderland's match against Luton Town.

His presence gave Sunderland skipper Shaun Elliott, who was making his 300th League and Cup appearance, the chance to revive his international career.

Elliott, a former England B international, has been recommended to Robson by Roker boss Len Ashurst.

David Hodgson made a belated home debut for Sunderland in a side showing three changes. Barry Venison and Clive Walker were suspended and Gary Bennett was ruled out by injury.

So Hodgson, 18-year-old Paul Atkinson and Rodger Wylde came into the side and Colin West was named as substitute.

Luton were unchanged following their 3-2 derby win against Watford last week.

Luton kicked off attacking the Fulwell End but Berry immediately won the ball to wrest the initiative for Sunderland.

Shaun Elliott broke up Luton's first attack but his pass to Proctor gave the midfielder man too much to do and Bunn won the ball for the visitors whose attempt to start an attack was halted by a Daniel interception.

Proctor found Atkinson with an excellent ball and, after taking a return pass, picked out Berry, who again played the ball wide to the young winger.

Atkinson's deep cross to the far post was headed behind by Wayne Turner to bring Sunderland the first corner of the match. It was worked short on the right to Atkinson, whose cross was narrowly headed wide by Wylde.

The Roker striker then

TODAY'S TEAMS

SUNDERLAND

- 1 Turner (C)
 - 2 Daniel
 - 3 Pickering
 - 4 Berry
 - 5 Chisholm
 - 6 Elliott (Shaun)
 - 7 Gayle
 - 8 Wylde
 - 9 Atkinson
 - 10 Proctor
 - 11 Hodgson
- Sub. West

LUTON TOWN

- 1 Findlay
 - 2 Thomas
 - 3 Turner (W)
 - 4 Parker
 - 5 Elliott (P)
 - 6 Donaghy
 - 7 Hill
 - 8 Stein
 - 9 Elliott (Steve)
 - 10 Bunn
 - 11 Hilaire
- Sub. Breaker

Referee: Mr. J. Hough (Cheshire).

required treatment after taking a knock from Donaghy. The free-kick was taken quickly by Gayle, but Atkinson's cross dropped behind the goal.

Header wide

Steve Elliott beat his cousin, Shaun, and made ground rapidly before striking a right-foot shot from 20 yards which travelled inches wide of the far post with Turner at full stretch.

Wayne Turner found Hilaire with a quickly-taken throw-in, and his cross was deflected behind Hodgson to bring Luton their first corner.

The flag kick was curled in from the left by Parker and met by Donaghy at the near post, only for his header from close range to fly wide when he looked like putting Luton into a ninth-minute lead.

Hodgson burst down the right before crossing accurately to find Atkinson, whose left-foot volley cannoned to safety off Thomas.

A deep cross from Daniel was aimed towards Berry, Wylde and Atkinson who were all at the near post, but it was Thomas who

headed the ball to safety.

Then Pickering broke well to take a good pass from Berry, but the full-back's low cross was easily cut out by Paul Elliott.

First goal

Gayle was the next Sunderland player to receive attention after apparently falling awkwardly when challengeing for a high ball.

Play restarted with a Sunderland free-kick from which Daniel crossed left-footed from the right for Wyle to get his head to the ball but his effort travelled wide.

Shaun Elliot found Hodgson with a good ball and when he cut in from the right Donaghy appeared to win the ball fairly but the referee penalised the Northern Ireland international and awarded Sunderland a free-kick.

Form the set piece, in the 16th minute, CHISHOLM gave Sunderland the lead with his first goal of the season.

Proctor knocked the free-kick wide to Daniel, whose cross to the far post was headed down by Pickering. The ball broke away from

Proctor but only as far as Chisholm, who rammed a low left-foot shot past Findlay from 12 yards.

The goal sparked off hectic activity at both ends. The well-positioned Steve Elliott failed to connect with his head when Hilaire crossed from the left and then Sunderland put Luton under considerable pressure. In one attack, started by a great Gayle tackle, Hodgson went down in the box but appealed in vain for a penalty.

Chris Turner raced out of his penalty area to head clear for Sunderland but, when his opposite number Findlay tried to do the same, it almost brought another goal for Sunderland.

Atkinson's punt upfield was missed by Findlay when he raced out of the box and tried to head to safety. Fortunately for Luton, Donaghy was on hand to clear.

Off line

Luton were also fortunate not to be penalised because Findlay blatantly obstructed Wylde after missing the ball.

The match was providing great entertainment and Luton had an amazing escape in the 26th minute when Wylde found the strong-running Berry with a delightful flick and the midfielder man confidently beat Paul Elliott to leave himself in the clear. His right-foot shot, however, cannoned off the legs of Findlay but Gayle seized on the ball and again found Berry with his cross.

This time, the midfielder man's shot was locked but the ball broke to Atkinson whose left-foot drive was cleared off the line by Thomas.

Sunderland's pacey attacks had Luton at full stretch but when the visitors broke away Shaun Elliott this time cleverly got the better of cousin Steve.

When Hodgson attempted to burst inside from the right he overran the ball but Chisholm, up in

support of the attack, got to the ball first to put Luton in further difficulties.

His low cross, though, was cut out by Findlay.

A Sunderland build-up started by Chisholm and continued by Atkinson Pickering, Gayle and Hodgson brought a right-wing corner.

The flag kick was curled to the near post by Atkinson but Bunn got it clear and Luton broke menacingly.

Stein was too quick for Proctor and Sunderland were stretched at the back, but Chris Turner went down at the striker's feet to concede a corner, which he held confidently.

Mistake

Sunderland were soon on the attack again and Gayle found Pickering in space with a superb pass, but the full-back's cross was over-hit.

Proctor robbed Parker with a good tackle and this led to Atkinson beating Thomas and crossing on the run, but Findlay left his line and covered a lot of ground before making a good catch.

A mistake by Atkinson let in Parker on the right, but his cross was easily claimed by Chris Turner.

Atkinson knocked a good ball down the left for Gayle, who had his legs whipped away from him by Thomas. Gayle took the free-kick himself and it had Luton in difficulties before they got the ball clear.

Findlay rescued Luton with a tremendous save in the 38th minute. Berry won the ball before knocking it to Wylde, whose right-foot drive looked like producing a goal until Findlay, at full stretch, managed to turn the ball round the post.

booked

Thomas, lucky to escape a caution earlier for a foul on Gayle, again brought down the Roker striker in the 39th minute and this time had his name taken.

When Stein crossed dangerously from the right Berry hammered the ball behind to concede a right-wing corner which was taken by Parker, and after Donaghy had headed the ball down Shaun Elliott made an important clearance.

Chisholm almost made it a goal at both ends in the 41st minute. Hilaire's cross from the right took a deflection off the Roker central defender when he stretched out a leg but the alert Chris Turner went down quickly to grab the ball.

The Roker keeper excelled again in the 43rd minute when he went down smartly to hold a low drive from Parker.

Atkinson dispossessed Thomas but his cross went behind the goal, and when play quickly switched to the other end Chris Turner left his line to beat Steve Elliott to the ball.

In first-half injury time Sunderland almost increased their lead. Proctor knocked a good ball to Atkinson, whose towering cross was headed down by Hodgson for Gayle's first-time right-foot shot to fly wide.

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Roker goes Wylde

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So, after an entertaining first half, Sunderland were still one up.

Chisholm ended Luton's first second half attack with a headed clearance and then was in quickly to beat Bunn in the tackle.

Pickering was penalised for a foul on Steve Elliott and the free-kick led to Hill having a shot blocked by Shaun Elliott.

Daniel found Proctor with a good ball, but was then dispossessed by Hilaire to put Sunderland in trouble.

The Luton winger combined with Stein, but his right-foot drive did not trouble Chris Turner.

Wylde penalty

Luton had made the better start to the second half and Sunderland got the second goal they needed from the penalty spot in the 53rd minute.

The Roker side's best move so far in the second half saw Wylde flick the ball on to Gayle who, in turn, knocked it into space to find Atkinson.

The winger's well struck left-foot shot was blocked by Findlay, but he failed to hold the ball and when Gayle got to the rebound first he was brought down by Thomas.

In the absence of Colin West — on the substitute's bench — and the suspended Clive Walker the spot kick was entrusted to WYLDE and he made a good job of it, beating Findlay high to the keeper's right with a cleanly struck right-foot drive for his fourth goal of the season.

In the 56th minute Gayle and Bunn collided and, even though the Roker player came off second best and required treatment, he was booked, apparently for blatant obstruction.

Proctor, playing superbly, knocked a good ball out to Atkinson, whose cross was easily cleared by Paul Elliott.

Shaun Elliott was penalised for a foul on Hill after Daniel had done well to get the better of Hilaire, but Luton's pedestrian build-up from the set piece led to Proctor breaking up the attack.

In the 63rd minute, as Hodgson was being booked for throwing the ball away after a free-kick was harshly awarded against him, Luton sent on Breaker as substitute for Parker.

Sunderland had an escape when Thomas crossed dangerously from the right and Chisholm, under pressure from Paul Elliott, headed against the top of his own and behind for a left-wing corner. The flag-kick was curled in by Hilaire and confidently gathered by Chris Turner.

CHISHOLM, Sunderland, 16 mins.

WYLDE (pen), Sunderland, 53 mins.

PICKERING, Sunderland, 76 mins.

Roker comment

SUNDERLAND, looking to bounce back quickly after losing their unbeaten run at Arsenal last week, established a three-goal lead against Kuton at Roker Park today.

Gordon Chisholm's first goal of the season gave Sunderland a first-half lead, and a Rodger Wylde penalty early in the second-half put them further ahead.

The surprising thin about a match of open, attacking football, was that by that stage — the 53rd minute — there had been only two goals, but Nick Pickering

notched the third after 76 minutes — his first of the season.

Both sides regularly threatened in a highly entertaining first half with Sunderland, operating a 4-2-4 formation, particularly impressive.

Bu, while the second period was not of the same quality, Sunderland moved in sight of their biggest win of the season when Pickering scored.

Shaun Elliott, in front of England boss Bobby Robson, again played well but Sunderland's top man was midfielder Mark Proctor through his excellent use of the ball.

Attendance 15,280.

Paul Hetherington