

= 1878 FA Cup Final =

The 1878 FA Cup Final was a football match between Wanderers and Royal Engineers on 23 March 1878 at Kennington Oval in London . It was the seventh final of the world 's oldest football competition , the Football Association Challenge Cup (known in the modern era as the FA Cup) . Wanderers had won the Cup in the previous two seasons and on four previous occasions in total , including the first FA Cup Final , in 1872 , in which they defeated the Engineers . The Engineers had also won the Cup , having defeated Old Etonians in the 1875 final .

Wanderers , who were considered firm favourites to win the Cup for the third consecutive season , took the lead after only five minutes through Jarvis Kenrick , but the Engineers quickly equalised . The cup @-@ holders regained their lead before half @-@ time and added a third goal after the interval to secure a 3 ? 1 victory . Under the original rules of the competition , the Cup was retired and presented to the club on a permanent basis to mark their third straight win , but the Wanderers returned the Cup to The Football Association on the condition that it never again be won outright by any club .

= = Route to the final = =

Wanderers were the reigning cup holders and had also won the tournament in 1872 , 1873 and 1876 . In the first of these victories they had defeated the Royal Engineers . The Engineers had won the competition in 1875 . Both teams entered the competition at the first round stage . Wanderers were allocated a home tie against Panthers and easily defeated their opponents 9 ? 1 , proceeding to the second round where they were paired with High Wycombe and again recorded a high @-@ scoring victory , winning 9 ? 0 . Their opponents in the third round , Barnes , proved stronger opposition , particularly as key players such as Hon. Arthur Kinnaid were unavailable for the cup @-@ holders . The match ended in a 1 ? 1 draw [1] necessitating a replay , which Wanderers (back to full strength) won 4 ? 1 . In the quarter @-@ finals Wanderers defeated Sheffield 3 ? 0 and then , with an uneven number of teams remaining in the competition , the team received a bye into the final .

The Engineers ' scheduled first round opponents were Highbury Union , but they withdrew from the competition , giving the Engineers a walkover victory . The " Sappers " , as the Royal Engineers regiment is traditionally nicknamed , went on to defeat Pilgrims 6 ? 0 and Druids 8 ? 0 , with hat @-@ tricks in both matches from Lieut . Robert Hedley , to reach the quarter @-@ finals where their opponents were 1874 cup @-@ winners Oxford University . The initial match finished in a 3 ? 3 draw , and the replay also finished without a victor , ending 2 ? 2 . Finally , the Engineers emerged victorious in a second replay , winning 4 ? 2 . This set up a semi @-@ final match against Old Harrovians , the team for former pupils of Harrow School . The match was played at Kennington Oval and the Engineers reached the final by defeating the Harrovians 2 ? 1 .

= = Match = =

= = = Summary = = =

Wanderers , who were considered the firm favourites by the book @-@ makers , won the coin toss and chose to defend the Harleyford Road end of The Oval . The match drew a crowd estimated at 4 @,@ 500 spectators , the highest yet recorded for an FA Cup Final . Both teams played with two full @-@ backs , two half @-@ backs and six forwards ; the team captains were the Hon. Arthur Kinnaid and Lieut . Robert Hedley . The cup @-@ holders immediately dominated the game and Kinnaid quickly had an unsuccessful shot on goal . After only five minutes Henry Wace crossed the ball from a wide position and Jarvis Kenrick kicked the ball past the Engineers ' goalkeeper Lieut . Lovick Friend to give the Wanderers the lead . Approximately ten minutes later , Wanderers goalkeeper James Kirkpatrick suffered a broken arm during a tussle on the goal @-@ line , but

managed to keep the ball out of the goal , and went on to play the remainder of the match despite his injury . In the 20th minute of the game , the Engineers scored an equalising goal . Some modern sources state that Lieut . William Morris scored the goal , however contemporary newspaper reports in The Field , The Sporting Life and Bell 's Life in London all state that Morris took a throw @-@ in which led to a " scrimmage " or " bully " in front of the Wanderers ' goal , out of which the ball was forced over the goal @-@ line .

Towards the end of the first half , the Wanderers were awarded a free kick . Kinnaird took the kick , which led to a second goal for the cup @-@ holders . Modern sources list Kinnaird as the goalscorer , but some contemporary reports suggest that , following his free kick , another " scrimmage " ensued in front of the Engineers ' goal before the ball was forced over the line . Shortly after the half @-@ time break , the Engineers ' captain Robert Hedley appeared to have scored a goal , but it was disallowed due to an infringement of the offside rule . After around twenty minutes of the second half , Kenrick scored his second goal following some skilful play by Hubert Heron , giving Wanderers a 3 ? 1 lead which they retained until the end of the game .

= = = Details = = =

Match rules :

90 minutes normal time .

30 minutes extra @-@ time if scores are level , at captains ' discretion .

Replay if scores still level .

No substitutes .

= = Post @-@ match = =

As was the norm until 1882 , the winning team did not receive the trophy at the stadium on the day of the match , but later in the year at their annual dinner . Under the original rules of the competition , if a team won the Cup three times in succession , it would be retired and become their " absolute property " . Wanderers secretary C. W. Alcock , however , returned the Cup to The Football Association on the condition that the rule be removed and no other team permitted to win the Cup outright . The only other team to win the Cup in three successive seasons to date is Blackburn Rovers , who won it three times in a row in the 1880s . On this occasion the club was presented with a commemorative shield .

Three weeks after the Cup final , Wanderers played Scottish Cup winners Vale of Leven at Kennington Oval in a match for the unofficial " championship of Britain " . In front of a crowd of around 2 @, @ 000 spectators , Wanderers turned in what was regarded by the press as a sub @-@ standard performance and were defeated 3 ? 1 .