

= 1872 FA Cup Final =

The 1872 FA Cup Final was a football match between Wanderers and Royal Engineers on 16 March 1872 at Kennington Oval in London . It was the final of the first staging of the Football Association Challenge Cup (known in the modern era as the FA Cup) , which became the primary cup competition in English football and the oldest football competition in the world . Fifteen teams entered the competition in its first season and , due to the rules in place at the time , Wanderers reached the final having won only one match in the four preceding rounds . In the semi @-@ finals , they drew with the Scottish club Queen 's Park , but reached the final when the Scots withdrew from the competition as they could not afford to return to London for a replay .

The final was decided by a single goal , scored after fifteen minutes by Morton Betts of Wanderers , who was playing under the pseudonym " A.H. Chequer " . The Engineers were praised for their innovative use of passing , then referred to as the " Combination Game " , at a time when most teams relied almost solely on dribbling tactics . Despite this they could not manage to score a goal . The winning Wanderers team did not receive the trophy until the following month , when it was presented to them at a special reception at the Pall Mall Restaurant .

= = Route to the final = =

Wanderers and Royal Engineers were among fifteen teams who entered the inaugural FA Cup competition , and both were allocated home matches in the first round . Wanderers were paired with Harrow Chequers , a team consisting of former pupils of Harrow School , and the Engineers were set to face Reigate Priory . Neither match actually took place , however , as in both cases the away team withdrew from the competition , sending the home team through to the next round on a walkover . In the second round , both teams played away matches and emerged victorious . Wanderers defeated Clapham Rovers 3 ? 1 in December and the Engineers beat Hitchin 5 ? 0 the following month .

At the quarter @-@ final stage , Wanderers drew 0 ? 0 with Crystal Palace (a different club to the modern club of the same name) . Rather than be made to replay the match , however , both teams were permitted to go through to the semi @-@ finals under one of the competition 's original rules , which stated that in the event of a drawn match the teams would either be made to play again or both progress to the next round , at the organising committee 's discretion . The Engineers beat Hampstead Heathens 2 ? 0 . In the semi @-@ finals Wanderers took on the leading Scottish club Queen 's Park who , due to a combination of walkovers and byes , had reached this stage of the competition without actually playing a match . The rules of the competition stated that all matches from the semi @-@ final stage onwards would take place at Kennington Oval in London and , after being held to a 0 ? 0 draw , the Scottish club could not afford to make the lengthy trip from Glasgow a second time for a replay and withdrew from the competition , sending Wanderers into the final . The Engineers also drew their semi @-@ final at the Oval 0 ? 0 , and beat Crystal Palace 3 ? 0 in the replay .

= = Match = =

= = = Summary = = =

As was common at the time , both teams focused mainly on attack rather than defence , the Engineers lining up with seven forwards and Wanderers with eight . Wanderers forward Morton Betts played under the pseudonym " A. H. Chequer " , derived from his membership of the Harrow Chequers club . Some sources state that he played under an assumed name to disguise the fact that he was cup @-@ tied , having been a registered player of the Chequers club at the start of the competition and therefore ineligible to play for another club in that season 's cup . This , however , is unlikely to be true , as in the early amateur era of football players were not required to be formally

registered with clubs . Cuthbert Ottaway , a future captain of the England national team , played for two different clubs in consecutive rounds of the 1871 ? 72 FA Cup without incident .

Wanderers captain C. W. Alcock won the coin toss and chose to defend the Harleyford Road end of the ground , meaning that the Engineers , who were considered the favourites at the start of play , initially had the sun and wind in their faces . Early in the game , Edmund Creswell of the Royal Engineers suffered a broken collar bone in a melee . He refused to leave the pitch but due to his injury was forced to spend the remainder of the match as a " passenger " on the wing . Wanderers ' tactics centred on the dribbling skills of individual players , while the Engineers favoured passing the ball , a style then known as the " Combination Game " and considered innovative , of which they were leading exponents .

Wanderers took the lead fifteen minutes into the game when Betts opened the scoring from an acute angle after Robert Vidal 's long dribble . Under the rules in use at the time , the teams changed ends after each goal , but the Engineers were unable to take advantage of the fact that the sun and wind were now behind them , and the Wanderers players remained dominant . After twenty minutes Alcock put the ball past the Engineers ' goalkeeper , William Merriman , but the goal was disallowed because Charles Wollaston had handled the ball . Wanderers continued to exert further pressure on the Engineers ' goal and only Merriman 's skill was able to prevent them from increasing their lead . One newspaper later described his performance as " perfect " . Despite a late rally from the Engineers , Wanderers were able to hold on to their lead and the game ended in a 1 ? 0 victory . Newspaper The Field called the final " the fastest and hardest match that has ever been seen at The Oval " and said that the Wanderers displayed " some of the best play , individually and collectively , that has ever been shown in an Association 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 = =

The Cup was presented by the President of the Football Association , Mr E. C. Morley , at the annual dinner of the Wanderers at the Pall Mall Restaurant , Charing Cross , on 11 April . The Football Association also gave each player in the winning team a silk badge commemorating the victory and the Wanderers ' committee presented each player with an inscribed gold medal . As cup @-@ holders , Wanderers received a bye straight to the final of the following year 's FA Cup , in keeping with the original concept of the competition being a " challenge cup " . This was the only time this rule was used .

In 1938 , The Times published an obituary for Thomas Hooman and stated that he had scored the winning goal in the 1872 cup final , citing an interview the player gave shortly before his death . This claim is not backed up by contemporary newspaper reports , all of which list Betts as the goalscorer , and , as other quoted aspects of Hooman 's reminiscences about the match were incorrect , it seems that in his old age he was confusing the 1872 final with another match in which he played .

In 2010 , the only known surviving medal from the final was offered for sale at an auction in London . It had been purchased by a jeweller as part of a house clearance in the 1950s and was expected to sell for up to £ 50 @,@ 000 , but was ultimately purchased by the Professional Footballers ' Association for £ 70 @,@ 500 .

On 7 November 2012 , the match was replayed by the reformed Wanderers side and the Royal Engineers team at the original venue , The Oval . The result went in a completely opposite direction to the actual final , as the Royal Engineers won 7 ? 1 .