

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL

A DRAWN FINAL

FROM OUR ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL
CORRESPONDENT

Arsenal and Preston North End met in the Football League Cup final at Wembley Stadium on Saturday, and a most interesting game ended in a draw, each side scoring a goal. The replay will take place in the provinces on May 24.

The teams were presented to the First Lord of the Admiralty. War-time restrictions kept the crowd down to 60,000 people, but there was throughout the match the feeling and atmosphere of a genuine Cup final. During the first half Preston gave a magnificent exhibition of the close-passing Scottish game, and, although they would have been well up were points awarded for sheer technical skill, it was, paradoxically enough, their goalkeeper, Fairbrother, who stood out both then and for the rest of the match as the outstanding player on their side. He was throughout remarkably sure in his fielding of the ball and he timed his falls with an astonishing accuracy.

The game began with the thrill that is traditionally associated with Cup-tie football, for, within five minutes, Arsenal were awarded a penalty kick. Jones, at inside right, began a promising movement which resulted in Kirchen racing through and shooting hard. Fairbrother punched the ball out, and after it had gone loose on the left the referee, who managed with admirable firmness a game which was always collaborating with him, gave a penalty to Arsenal for hands. L. Compton took the kick and placed the ball low and deliberately for Fairbrother to make one of his many excellent saves. For a time the clever and elaborate footwork of the Preston forwards dominated the game, and after nine minutes they scored. The ball came over from the right and McLaren, who showed dash and a sense of opportunity, fastened on to it and drove it wide of Marks. A few minutes later R. Beattie, from some distance out, hit the post with a beautiful shot, and Preston were generally playing the kind of football which is not often seen in Cup finals.

Arsenal, however, looked dangerous whenever they broke away, and Kirchen and D. Compton, on the wings, always looked like making the most of the few chances that came their way. Once Kirchen crossed over to the left, received a pass from Compton, and got in a splendid shot which was as splendidly saved, and then, after McLaren had shot inches wide for Preston, Arsenal equalized five minutes before half-time. Scott, who was always playing an aggressive game, although the Preston left wing sadly worried him at times, swung the ball across the field to D. Compton; Compton was tackled, but he held on to the ball and finally drove in a crashing shot which skimmed the under-side of the bar. Preston nearly took the lead again before half-time—Scott managed to kick away on the goal-line when Marks was well beaten.

The first half had set such a very high standard of football that it was only natural the second should fall away a little. Preston, who seemed to be giving away a foot and a stone all round, continued, to play clever football, but at times their cleverness led to futility, and the longer the game went on the more likely it seemed that the tough and seasoned Arsenal would gain a victory which, in equity, they did not altogether deserve. A. Beattie early on gave away what appeared to be an unnecessary and L. Compton headed wide when he

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