



THE ARTHURIAN LEAGUE

(AFFILIATED TO THE AMATEUR FOOTBALL ALLIANCE)

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ESTABLISHED 1961

Representative Team Match Report

Oxford University 3 - 3 Arthurian League

Played at Iffley Road, Oxford on Sunday 8th November 2009, k.o. 1:30pm



The initial squad of 14 from Friday night rapidly disintegrated over the weekend as injuries and unforeseen car issues stripped the Arthurian League down to just 8! Luckily one of the AL debutants, Anthony Beddows (Old Carthusians) is currently a student at Oxford University, and he called in the reinforcements to give the AL a bare XI.

The Oxford Blues players were keen to make an impression having only a limited number of opportunities to impress before selection for the varsity match in 2010. However, they were perhaps guilty of underestimating the AL team which has now gone unbeaten for 30 months. After an even early first five minutes the AL were gifted with 2 goals: firstly, an unforgivable goalkeeper error presented Freddie Brunt (Old Harrovians) with the ball at his feet and an empty net 18 yards away - he calmly did the honours and put the visitors 1-0 up; moments later, more defensive uncertainty presented one of the AL's Oxford recruits, Dominic Affron with another goalscoring opportunity and again the back of the net was found, making it 2-0.

Both sides began to put some decent passing moves together and chances were opened up at either end. Richard Griston (Old Carthusians) began to impose himself in the centre of midfield, winning ball and distributing to the wings where the AL players were getting much reward.

President: *Martin Samuel (Old Westminsterers)*

c/o Hon. Secretary, Simon Hunt (*Old Aldenhamians*)
601c Garratt Lane, Earlsfield, London SW18 4SU



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Just before half time Oxford pulled a goal back: the AL failed to clear a corner and the ball was bundled in via a couple of deflections. However, 2-1 at the break was a fair reflection of the game, in which the AL had worked extremely hard.

The hard work became almost excruciating early in the second half when the AL goalkeeper, James Butcher (Lancing Old Boys) fell awkwardly following an aerial challenge with an Oxford forward. The injury forced Butcher off, reducing the bare bones AL team down to 10 and meaning that left back James Cameron (Old Carthusians) had to make his debut as a goalkeeper! The situation was far from ideal, however the AL team reacted magnificently, upping the work rate to put pressure on the Oxford XI. In fact, so positive was the reaction that the AL team went 3-1 up when a quick break down the right flank was finished off by another of the last minute call ups from the Oxford fraternity, Adam Zafajewski.

With five minutes to go it seemed as if an extraordinary victory was on the cards. However, a soft penalty to the home team narrowed the gap and, in the dying moments, the AL hearts were broken: making use of the extra man, Oxford neatly played themselves in down the left channel and a powerful left foot strike was too hot for the stand-in keeper to handle. A final scoreline of 3-3 was a fortunate escape for the Oxford team and a surprisingly disappointing one for the AL who appeared to have beaten all the odds to take what would have been a considerable scalp.

There were some strong performances from the AL: Nick Warner (Old Harrovians) rolled back the years to do a great containing job on Oxford's best player; Beddows impressed at centre back alongside Matt Bailey (Old Carthusians) and Cameron again showed his quality from left back (and to some degree in goal!); Griston was magnificent in the centre of midfield breaking down attacks and using the ball sensibly; James Badgett (Old King's Wimbledon) provided great width on the left and was a menace for much of the game with Brunt up front working unselfishly to create confusion in the Oxford back line time and time again, picking up a deserved goal.

A fantastic effort by all involved and a well deserved maintenance of the unbeaten record.

Man of the match: Rich Griston (Old Carthusians) – tireless display in the middle of the park particularly when down to 10 men.

Squad (4-4-2):

James Butcher (Lancing Old Boys)

Nick Warner (Old Harrovians), Anthony Beddows (Old Carthusians), Jamie Cameron (Old Carthusians), Matt Bailey © (Old Carthusians)

Rich Griston (Old Carthusians), James Badgett (Kings Wimbledon Old Boys), Cameron Knight (OUAFC), Adam Zagajewski (OUAFC)

Freddie Brunt (Old Harrovians), Dom Affron (OUAFC)

Scorers: Brunt, Affron, Zagajewski

END