

***Aldershot Town vs. Oxford United***  
***Southern Region Women's Football League Premier Division***  
***25 September 2011***

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**RESILIENT SHOTS BREACHED BY UNITED**

**Ryan Salmon's side suffered a second-consecutive defeat at the hands of a very strong Oxford United side, despite holding strong for over an hour.**

The Shots were without Amy Hubbert, who continues her recovery from her ankle ligament damage, Callie Messingham and Naph Williams were unavailable, so Lesley Hubbard made her second appearance of the season between the sticks and Laura Funnell made her season debut from the bench. She was joined by Jade Ferguson and Amy Lawrence, whilst skipper Emma North returned to the starting XI along with Caz Shephard and Laura Wallman.

Oxford pushed hard from the off, creating several attacks but the Shots defence were firm throughout the opening half-hour. The Shots got their first bit of luck on 35 minutes, when a pass from the Oxford midfield deflected off of Nikki Moore out to the wing to find a fellow U – but her run was cut short by a contentious offside flag from Matt Leary, the Shots linesman deeming the winger to have been offside when the original pass was made before clipping Moore.

United continued to press hard, and forced a series of corners in the final few minutes which Hubbard prevented from going anywhere near the goalnet.

As the whistle blew for half time, there were smiles on the faces of the Shots as their pre-match tactics had worked a charm and the voice of U's manager Richard Blackmore could clearly be heard in the changing rooms at the interval – the visitors clearly frustrated.

***HT: Aldershot Town 0 Oxford United 0***

Both sides started the second half in the same fashion as they finished the first, with Oxford continuing their relentless pressure on the Shots defence, who refused to give way.

On 58 minutes, Laura Wallman gave way for youngster Amy Lawrence, the Shots now starting to take a more attack-minded approach with a view to perhaps pinching not just one point off the U's, but all three. Seven minutes later, the warning shot was fired, when the visitors worked their way through the defence before an effort was fired at goal, beating Hubbard but fortunately not the frame of the goal, as it bounced kindly back to the goalkeeper.

**GOAL FLASH: Shots 0-1 (71')**

However, with 19 minutes to play, the Shots defence were finally breached, as a diagonal pass across the goalmouth found an unmarked Oxford striker who headed low past Hubbard and into the net.

On 77 minutes, Salmon then made his final throws of the dice by replacing Emma North and Holly Gayler with Laura Funnell and Jade Ferguson respectively.

**GOAL FLASH: Shots 0-2 (86')**

However if this was to force the Shots into attack mode and regain the point they thoroughly deserved, they were to be cruelly denied as with four minutes to go, a series of passes were worked through to the Oxford right winger who beat the offside trap, before driving low and hard into the bottom corner of the goal.


At the restart, a rather mild shirt-pull from Sian Houghton resulted in a yellow card for the midfielder, much to the dismay of the Shots.

**GOAL FLASH: Shots 0-3 (88')**

With two minutes remaining, the U's sealed the points when an Oxford midfielder let rip from 30 yards into the top right corner giving Hubbard absolutely no chance of stopping the shot.

***FT: Aldershot Town 0 Oxford United 3***

**Squad**

40. Lesley Hubbard
2. Amber Marsh
3. Holly Gayler (17. Laura Funnell – 77')
4. Di Smith
5. Nikki Moore
6. Sian Houghton 
7. Emma North (11. Jade Ferguson – 77')
10. Caz Shephard
12. Laura Wallman (16. Amy Lawrence – 58')
14. Lauren Carnell
15. Katie Salmon

**Manager's Player of the Match:** Sian Houghton

*"A tough game this week against a good Oxford United team, who have bought in players from higher levels to play, and of whom as a club have massive resources at this level. We played really well and up until 70 minutes the game was 0-0 with us defending magnificently well throughout, from there on in we began to look leggy and tired from all of our hard work keeping our opposition at bay and ended up conceding 3 goals in the last 20 minutes which was not a fair reflection of our performance and the game but I'm very proud of the players for the performance both individually and collectively and have no doubts this will be a very good season for Aldershot Town Ladies FC."*

**Ryan Salmon, Manager**

*"The ladies should be proud of their performance today. Oxford United have been league favourites right from the get-go – they smashed Bracknell Town 5-0 on Thursday night, and our ladies held them for well over an hour. Oxford were clearly frustrated at half-time, and there was the real belief we were going to get a point out of the game. We now take a break from the league and begin our FA Cup adventure against Poole Town – something which is vital as a good cup run generates good finances for the club. If the ladies play as well as they did against Oxford then we should be alright, but we all know league form goes out the window in cup competitions, as our male counterparts have proven so well, so we won't be complacent and will approach the game accordingly."*

**Matt Leary, Club Secretary**