



Rushden Cup 1896-97

Winners: Leicester Fosse

Runner-Up: Rushden

No. of entries: 10

Last season's runners-up, Leicester Fosse, won the cup for the first time, beating Rushden in the final.

Hugglescote were drawn with Finedon in Round 1. The outcome of this tie is not currently known.

Round 1

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
1	Finedon			Hugglescote Robin Hood	
2	31.10.1896 Leicester Fosse Dorrell Worthington	2	0	Grantham Rovers	Filbert-street, Leicester. 2,000-3,000 spectators. "It was 20 mins after the advertised time that the players appeared on the field."
3	28.10.1896 Swindon Town	7 (4)	0 (0)	Upton Park	County Ground, Swindon. Meagre crowd.

Round 2

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
4	?	Rushden		Finedon or Hugglescote Robin Hood	
5	30.11.1896 Walsall G Johnson (2) Peers Aston (2) Holmes	6 (1)	2 (2)	Swindon Richardson Edwards	At Walsall. Moderate gate. Fine weather. Walsall were not fully represented.
6	7.12.1896 Wellingborough Drage/Little og Little	3 (3)	2 (1)	Wolverton Cotterill AN Other	

Semi-Finals

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
7	11.1.1897 Leicester Fosse	P	P	Wellingborough	At Rushden. Ground underwater.
8	12.3.1897 Rushden	2	1	Walsall	At Rushden.

Semi-Final Replay

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
9	9.3.1897 Leicester Fosse Trainer (2) Freebairn McMillan Walker	5 (0)	0/1 (0)	Wellingborough	At Rushden.

Final

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
10	29.4.1897 Leicester Fosse Carnelley McMillan	4 (3)	0 (0)	Rushden	'Played at Rushden [Thursday evening] Game commenced at 6 pm. Very good gate.

Match Reports

#2 FOSSE v GRANTHAM ROVERS

In common with the majority of the professional clubs of England, Fosse were "pot hunting" but unlike most other teams, they were fighting for honours in the competition for a district and not the national trophy. Last year will be remembered as a disastrous one for the Fosse in their Cup engagements, for a while the first team cut up very badly in all the competitions for which they were entered, the Reserves failed also to make much headway in the Rushden Cup contest. Luckily they were in a position to make a better show on the present occasion. With the first eleven – or part of it – engaged in an unimportant game at Kettering, the Reserves could be strengthened so considerably as to make fairly sure of the result of the encounter with Grantham Rovers, against whom they were drawn in the first round of the Rushden Cup competition. The visit of the Rovers to Leicester awakened memories of the old time Midland League struggles, and it is rather a notable fact that the last match in which Dorrell played for the Fosse before joining the Villa. He was also in the Fosse team again on Saturday. While the Fosse have progressed, the Rovers have remained stationary, and this season have cut a very moderate figure in the Midland League, gaining their first victory last Saturday at the expense of Mexborough, out of six matches played. While the second eleven defence of the Fosse was relied upon, a strong lot of forwards were requisitioned, and it was estimated that the Rovers defence would have to be very good if the Fosse were not to score well. In the absence of the Rugby Club at Birmingham, a large crowd assembled on the Filbert-street enclosure considering the nature of the attraction provided, and the field was in good going order. From the appended names it will be seen that the position of the Fosse forwards again underwent alteration, while Walker was right instead of centre half.

Fosse team: Howes, goal; Thompson and Bailey, backs; Walker, Lord and Worthington, half-back; Freebairn, Trainer, Lonie, McMillan and Dorrell, forwards.

Linesman, Mr W J Brierley.

Grantham team; Shaw, goal; Brittain and Morris, backs; Archer, Beeck and Whitee, half-backs; T Lavie, Adams, G Lavis and Allan, forwards.

Linesman, Mr W Copson. Referee, Mr West (Kettering)

It was 20 minutes after the advertised time before the teams made their appearance on the field and a start was at once made. Thompson for the Fosse lost the toss, and kicked off from the railway end in face of the wind, and at once forced their way into the visitors' half. Morris kicking behind to save a dangerous attack. From the corner the visitors took the ball to mid field, and from there Senior and T. Lavis carried it right up to the Fosse goal, but Howes ran out to meet them, and with a long kick drove play back to the centre. During the next few minutes the game became very fast and exciting, Trainer almost heading the ball into goal on two separate occasions. The ball again travelled quickly to the other end, and Howes had again to kick away, whilst the next shot from Allan went behind. By means of good play on the part of Dorrell, Fosse were placed in a fine position, but Freebairn in endeavouring to negotiate a pass from the left wing placed the ball wide of the post. Still Fosse continued to have slightly the best of matters, but they never got a really good chance of shooting, as Brittain and Morris were very keen both on man and ball. Dorrell was prominent with another good run, and both Trainer and McMillan had chances to show off their shooting abilities, but neither of them got the ball within yards of the net. McMillan was then applauded for a clever piece of work, which very nearly caused the downfall of the Grantham goal. He was placed on possession midway between the centre and the goal line and dribbled right down to Shaw, who only saved the point by throwing himself at the ball. Following this, play went on for a brief period in the Fosse left. The ball, however, went out at a corner, and from the kick off Dorrell put in one of his famous runs but when he tried to centre he was easily beaten by Morris, and his effort was practically useless. A foul against the visitors near the centre was of good service to the Fosse, who were thus enabled to penetrate the Grantham defence. The chance, however, did not prove of much avail, as McMillan shot over the line. A couple of corners fell to the Fosse, but the shooting of the forwards was far from being accurate, the majority of their shots going yards wide of their intended destination. After a brief spell of midfield play, the Fosse again took up the attack, and Trainer, who was playing remarkably well, sent a good shot into the hands of Shaw, who narrowly escaped letting it pass into the net. He, however, succeeded in stopping it just in time and threw the leather out to Loie, who made a miserable attempt to score. A minute later Trainer grazed the crossbar with another fine shot, which McMillan missed a good chance at goal from a pass right

across the mouth of goal. Then the visitors had a turn, and conceded their first corner, but it was of no avail, the ball finding its way to the back of the net, once the Fosse goal was placed in a critical condition, but offside play by Senior brought them much desired relief, and from the free kick. Fosse got down again, and Lonie and Trainer both sent the ball just over the crossbar. At length the efforts of Fosse were rewarded, Worthington, with a long shot, working the ball into the corner of the goal. Fosse now played up better than ever, and Freebairn gave Shaw a nasty one to clear, while Worthington only just missed the goal with a similar shot to that which he scored with. Trainer gave Lonie a nice chance to score, but the latter's shot had absolutely no force behind it, and Shaw easily fisted away. Just before half-time Freebairn sent in a nice centre from the left wing, which nearly found its way into the net at the corner, but fortunately Dorrell was well up, and completed the former's fine effort by scoring the second goal. Fosse continued to have much the best of matters, but no further points were added up to half-time, when the score stood:

FOSSE two goals;

GRANTHAM, none.

On resuming, Lonie broke straight through the forward rank, but he was quickly pulled up by Beck, who transferred play to the opposite end, Howes being called upon to clear. McMillan put in a good run and shot the ball. However, just passing over the crossbar. After a spell of quiet play, Trainer was given an opening as he sent in a straight shot which Shaw had no difficulty in fisting away. Keeping up the pressure, Fosse forced corner, and Shaw had to clear from Freebairn. Allan and J Lavis put in a smart run and dribble for the visitors, forcing Thompson to give a corner, but from the latter Dorrel and McMillan got away, and Fosse was soon back again in their old quarter. From here the game gradually worked back to midfield and the Grantham forwards got away in a line, but instead of carrying the ball right down to the Fosse goal Senior tried a shot from a long range, with the result that it went wide. Grantham were now having quite as much of the game as the home team, but their combination was exceedingly weak, and Thompson and Bailey had no difficulty in dealing with their individual effort. As compared with the first half the game had deteriorated considerably, and was of a very scrambling nature. From a free for tripping, the ball was headed into the Grantham goal, but the point was disallowed, whilst McMillan nearly scored with a fine screw shot. Play, if anything, seemed to get slower than ever, and a great number of the spectators left the ground, tired of the feeble efforts of the players. Grantham evidently regarded the match as hopeless for them, while the Fosse appeared to be content with the lead they had already obtained. During the last ten minutes, goaded by the shouts of the spectators, Fosse livened up, and kept their opponents busy. One or two shots were sent in, but Shaw proved himself a safe custodian, and allowed none of them to pass. Fosse were conceded a couple of corners, but neither of them proved of any advantage, the shooting being very mild. At last time arrived, with the score:

FOSSE, two goals;

GRANTHAM, none.

Leicester Daily Post - 2 November 1896

#2 LEICESTER FOSSE ROVERS v. GRANTHAM ROVERS. - On the Filbert Street Ground, Leicester, in the presence of between 2,000 and 3,000 spectators. The home side maintained an almost constant attack on the Grantham goal, but the shooting was erratic in the extreme. In the first half Worthington and Dorrell scored, but although having greatly the best of the exchanges, Fosse failed repeatedly in front of goal.

Final— Leicester Fosse Rovers, 2 goals; Grantham Rovers, nil

Sheffield Daily telegraph - 2 November 1896

SWINDON V. UPTON PARK.

RUSHDEN CHARITY CUP TIE.

Upton Park, who were drawn to meet Swindon in the first round of the Rushden Charity Cup, must have journeyed to the railway town without any hopes of victory. The Town did not have a profound respect for the Uptonians, and made a number of changes in the rear division, the teams turning out as follows:

Swindon: Leighfield; Fulton and Richardson; Hopewell, Munroe, and Andrews; Hallam, Murray, Skea, Cox, and M. Jones.

Upton: J. H. Jones; W. Cooper and J. Stirling; F. H. Flower, H. E. Magson, and W. G. Blake; T. H. Randell, W. Stafford, P. Dove, J. Prestwich, and W. G. Turner. Referee: Mr. S. P. Major.

Munroe won the toss, and Swindon at once made tracks for the Upton goal. Within two minutes Hallam had twice forced Jones to fist out, and Murray had shot just wide from a corner. It was a lively commencement for the Upton defence, but they got quite used to it before the end arrived. After Swindon had been near the mark about half a dozen times, Randell sped along on the wing and sent over a beautiful centre, which went a-begging. Magnificent passing between Cox, Skea, and Jones took the ball to the other end, and Skea sent in a beauty, which Jones fisted out. The Swindon Taff of the army of Joneses met the ball, and the railway men were 1 up. The passing of the home men was altogether too much for Upton, and Hallam and Murray quickly added further points. Gallery play was freely indulged in by the Swindon men, but before the interval Murray put on another.

The second half was very tame, the only interest in the game being the amusing tactics of the home forwards, who were having a regular "barney" with their antagonists. Two or three of the Swindon partisans—regular gluttons for goals—yelled for points, and in quick succession Skea and Murray (2) satisfied them. The halves then changed places with forwards, and had a pot at goal, but with no success, Jones keeping out beauties from Hopewell and Munro, whilst Andrews could not get near the mark. Two or three times, taking advantage of loose play, Upton rushed down on the Swindon goal and gave Leighfield two or three ticklish pieces of work, but the reserve man exhibited himself a master of the craft. When time arrived everyone seemed pleased, especially the visitors, who had had a tremendous amount of running about. They reminded one of boys chasing butterflies—plenty of tries but little success.

Swindon from first to last did as they pleased, the short, tricky passing being altogether too much for the Uptonians, who adopted the kick and rush game for three-quarters of the ninety minutes the ball was hovering in the vicinity of the visitors' goal, and had the home forwards made straight for the mark the score would have been a good deal more than double figures. On the Swindon side all did well, but the opposition was poor. For Upton Jones gave a capital display between the sticks, and Stafford and Randell made a good wing.

SIGNALMAN.

Morning Leader - 29 October 1896

#5

RUSHDEN CUP.

WALSALL V. SWINDON TOWN.—Played at Walsall on Monday, in fine weather, before a moderate gate. Walsall were not fully represented, and the visitors, starting smartly, scored twice, through Richardson and Edwards. Walsall then improved, and scored by G. Johnson before half-time. On changing ends the visitors were busily engaged defending, and Peers equalised; while, as the result of brilliant forward play, Aston (2), Holmes, and Johnson got other goals. The match ended in favour of Walsall by 6 goals to 2.

Trowbridge Chronicle - 5 December 1896

RUSHDEN CHARITY CUP.

WELLINGBOROUGH v. WOLVERTON.

At Wellingborough yesterday, in dull weather, before a fair crowd, these teams met in the first round of the Charity Cup competition. Wellingborough scored in the first minute by Drago and Little's efforts. Murray and Little obtained a second goal for the home team a little later by bundling Anderson and the ball well into the net. A third goal for Wellingborough came soon after from a fast shot by Little. Before the interval Wolverton showed up better, and Cotterill scored. In the last half Wolverton made strenuous efforts to draw level, but could only get in one more goal the match ending—Wellingborough, three goals; Wolverton, two.

Sporting Life - 8 December 1896

#7 FOSSE v WELLINGBOROUGH

MATCH POSTPONED

Having qualified by beating Grantham Rovers to enter the penultimate rounds of the Rushden Charity competition, Fosse arranged to play their tie with Wellingborough on the ground of the Rushden club to-day (Monday). The team to do duty was selected after the Newcastle match, and it was decided to rely upon the same combination as had gained such a fine victory over the United. Information has since reached us, however, that the Rushden ground is under war, and the match has been postponed.

Leicester Daily Post - 11 January 1897

#8

RUSHDEN CUP.

WALSALL v. SWINDON TOWN.—Played at Walsall on Monday, in fine weather, before a moderate gate. Walsall were not fully represented, and the visitors, starting smartly, scored twice, through Richardson and Edwards. Walsall then improved, and scored by G. Johnson before half-time. On changing ends the visitors were busily engaged defending, and Peers equalised; while, as the result of brilliant forward play, Aston (2), Holmes, and Johnson got other goals. The match ended in favour of Walsall by 6 goals to 2.

Trowbridge Chronicle - 5 December 1896

RUSHDEN CHARITY

SEMI-FINAL

#9 WELLINGBOOUGH TOWN v LEICESTER FOSSE - Great interest was shown in this match at Rushden on Tuesday. Wellingborough had the advantage of the wind in the first half and a little the best of matters, but there was no scoring before the interval. After the change of ends the Fosse ran away with the game and packed on no fewer than five goals. Wellingborough had a look in once, when they scored their solitary point, but for the most part they were penned in their own half. Result: Leicester Fosse five goals, Wellingborough, one.

Stamford Mercury - 12 March 1897

#10 RUSHDEN CHARITY CUP. v. LEICESTER FOSSE. The final in this competition was played Thursday, play commencing at six o'clock. There was a very good "gate." The play of the visitors was of a high order, and the home team eventually lost four goals to nil. The goals were scored by Carnelley (1), McMillan (1), and (2). Mr. Tillotson was referee.

Northampton Mercury - 30 April 1897

FOOTBALL.
ASSOCIATION.
RUSHDEN CHARITY CUP.

FINAL.

FOSSE v. RUSHDEN.

Inspired by their success at Nottingham on Wednesday, Fosse undertook the journey to Rushden yesterday, full of hope that they would be able to annex another "pot," and thus give further proof that their energies, however dormant, were not decaying. As it was the last match of the season, too, it was particularly desired that they should finish up in a respectable manner. Apparently the task they had to face was not very difficult, but over and over again this season it has been proved that Fosse have most to fear from teams of inferior ability, and usually exhibit a discouraging tendency to descend below the level of their humblest opponents. Thus, while the balance of probability of success on paper form lay on the side of the Fosse, they had to be guarded against possible surprises. Midland League clubs, with their determined, although unscientific style of play, have a nasty knack of upsetting the calculations of better teams, and it was this contingency only that the Fosse had to fear. Rushden qualified for the final by beating Walsall, while Fosse, with a bye in the first round, had proved successful over Grantham Rovers at home and Wellingborough away. Three changes were made in the Fosse team from that which proved victorious over Notts County yesterday. Howes went in goal, Lord substituted Leighton at half, and Bamford was seen in place of McDonald. The Fosse team travelled by the 3.30 train, the kick-off having been fixed for six o'clock. When the team appeared on the field they faced each other in the following order:—

Fosse: Howes, goal; Walker and Swift, backs; Brown, Proudfoot, and Lord, half-backs; Freebairn, Bamford, Carnelley, McMillan, and Dorrell, forwards.
Rushden: Baldrey, goal; Attley and Clarke, backs; Minney, Bailey, and F. Dunkley, half-backs; Denton, Sale, Young, Knight, and A. Dunkley, forwards.

The referee was Mr. J. C. Tiltson, of Birmingham. On winning the toss Swift was sole to give his team the advantage of playing with the wind, which was blowing diagonally across the field, while Rushden also had to face a bright sun. The game does not need any lengthened description. From first to last Fosse met their opponents, if not exactly in comfort, at least in a manner which made the result fairly certain, and from first to last they achieved a triumph at every department of the game. The commencement, however, did not seem to indicate that this would be the case, for in the first minute or so the home left went away, and A. Dunkley gained a corner off Brown, which led to warm work round the goal, while hands against the Fosse sufficed to keep them further on the defensive, until Brown, with a big kick, gave the ball to Carnelley, and from this point Fosse held the command. Their forwards, having got properly into their stride, soon began to play with an effect which confined the game almost exclusively to the Rushden end of the ground, Carnelley showing up prominently, and working his hardest to open the scoring. The first shot of the match came from Walker, who with a long kick placed nicely into goal, the full-back just named, together with Swift and Brown, frequently sending the leather back to the forwards. A foul against the Fosse brought little or no relief, and not ten minutes had elapsed before the Second Division men opened the scoring. While the game was proceeding on the Fosse right a centre from Freebairn went to the front of goal, where Bamford half missed his kick in his attempt to score. The ball went to Minney, who sent it further towards the goalkeeper, and McMillan following up closely, so troubled Baldrey that he allowed it to roll slowly through—really a soft goal, which might and ought to have been saved. With Fosse keeping the upper hand, Dorrell put across some fine centres, and Baldrey never seemed too comfortable, especially on one occasion in dealing with a beautiful

effort from McMillan, when another inch or two would have done the trick. Still going in tip-top style the Fosse forwards gave Clarke and Attley no rest, while the man behind them had stinging shots to deal with, notably from Carnelley and McMillan. Hands was given against the latter player, and the free kick showed up Howes in a light none too favourable, for he gave a corner in kicking away, Bailey making very poor use of the flag kick. Brown gave a further corner in saving from the right, and for a few minutes nothing came from the Fosse forwards excepting a dash by Freebairn and Bamford. Rushden could do very little with the Fosse defence, which right throughout was firm as a rock, and presently the backs were given a little breathing time, as the Fosse forwards reasserted themselves, Freebairn giving the ball across to Dorrell, who instead of steadying it attempted a volley, which did not come off. Twice Dorrell got to the goal line before centring, but the first time he was offside, while on the second occasion Carnelley made a brave attempt to head through, and only missed gathering the ball by inches. In half an hour Fosse were placed further ahead as the result of a fine shot from Freebairn, which went to Baldrey as he was standing at the corner of the goal. Again he was at fault, for Carnelley was on him in an instant, and bundled him into the net. With two up, and any amount of play left in them, Fosse looked like having an easy time of it, and as events proved this turned out to be the case. Going on, Freebairn received applause for the plucky manner in which he shook off the attentions of a couple of burly opponents, following this up by giving a free kick within a few yards of goal. McMillan was little, if anything, worse than the best man on the field, one of his passages being particularly pleasing. He tricked several opponents in capital style in working for himself an opening, and just as he had obtained the required possession he was brought down from behind. Luckily for Rushden, this took place just outside the penalty radius, or the consequences would have been serious. In dealing with a fierce attack by the home lot, Swift rendered yeoman service by getting his head to the ball when it was going straight for goal, but however much Rushden pressed there was no comparison in the style of the forward

play of the two teams, that of the Fosse being quiet yet determined, resourceful, and clever. The referee stopped Leicester's forwards twice when they had almost got through by means of exceedingly good combination, while with a pass from Bamford, Carnelley was placed in position, and would have scored had not Baldrey come far out of his goal in rather daring fashion. Then, just a minute before the interval, the third point came from Freebairn, who took a long pass from Carnelley, in which he raced between the backs, and shot from a position in which he could not well miss the mark. To all intents and purposes the game was finished so far as the result was concerned, at half-time, and when the men walked off the field for a breather, Swift was already thinking of the speech he would be called upon to make, for the score at that period was:

FOSSE, three goals;
RUSHDEN, none.

Judging by the manner in which Rushden shaped at the opening of the second portion they evidently thought so too, for without much difficulty the visitors' left went away with two or three nice passing runs. The ball went to the other end by means of a free against Carnelley, but straightaway Dorrell looked like bringing off a second edition of his famous run at Nottingham, but unfortunately he ran the ball out. Although A. Dunkley was not displaying very good form, the play on his side of the field yielded a couple of corners, both of which were excellently placed, relief being forthcoming through Dorrell, who had the ball well kicked up to him by Lord, Clarke coming across the ground at a rapid rate and stopping his career with a flying kick. Hereabouts the wind gave much of the game to the Fosse left, and McMillan showed to the full that he is a capital partner when placed in a position more congenial than that of centre. The inside man's shooting, too, was of a high order, and Baldrey rose to the occasion splendidly in meeting one of his fast drives, the ex-Derby man also heading well in. There was nothing to break the monotony of the pressure of the Fosse until Sale came into possession with one of the old-time kick and rush efforts, and he looked all over a scorer with a clear run down, until Swift, realising the danger of the situation, went for him in no light manner, and

brought him down within a very short space of the penalty line. A futile corner followed the free kick, but Knight broke away in a manner similar to the first incursion, and was again stopped by the Fosse skipper. A second time a flag kick followed, and now the Fosse goal had a remarkable escape at the instance of Minney, while Sale snapped up an opening from a mis-kick by Walker, and came very near turning it to good use. Dorrell and McMillan were both stopped in possession by the referee, through no fault of their own, but the fourth goal now came from a free kick, which was taken about 30 yards from Baldrey. Swift tapped the ball on to Walker, who took fair aim and gave the Rushden custodian a hard and difficult high shot which he stopped all right, but could do no better than beat it down at the feet of Freebairn, who almost drove it through the net with a powerful shot. As this was about a quarter of an hour from the finish, the issue was safe enough. The latter stages were unimportant. Fosse were always the better team, but further effort now was not necessary, and they satisfied themselves by holding the home forwards in check. This they were able to do, Lord capably assisting, and although Howes rather unnecessarily gave a corner, Rushden had to admit themselves beaten pointblank, by the following score:

FOSSE, four goals;
RUSHDEN, none.