



Football League Second Division 1898-99

Winner	Manchester City (1st title)
Runner-Up	Glossop North End
Wooden Spoon	Darwen
Promoted	Manchester City, Glossop North End
Failed re-election	Blackpool and Darwen
Matches played	306
Goals scored	1,103 (3.6 per match)
Top goalscorer	Walter Abbott (Small Heath), 33
Biggest home win	Loughborough 10–0 Darwen (1 Apr 1899); Walsall 10–0 Darwen (4 Mar 1899) Manchester City 10-0 Darwen (18 February 1899)
Biggest away win	Lincoln City 1–6 Grimsby Town (8 Apr 1899); Luton Town 1–6 Leicester Fosse (14 Jan 1899)
Highest scoring	Grimsby Town 9–2 Darwen (15 Apr 1899)
Longest winning run	7 matches; Glossop North End (25 Feb 1899 – 8 Apr 1899); New Brighton Tower (26 Nov 1898 – 7 Jan 1899)
Longest unbeaten run	13 matches; Manchester City F.C. (1 Oct 1898 – 27 Dec 1898)
Longest losing run	18 matches; Darwen (12 Nov 1898 – 21 Mar 1899)

Football League Second Division 1898-99

		P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Aver	Pts
1	Manchester City	34	15	1	1	64	10	8	5	4	28	25	2.629	52
2	Glossop North End[a]	34	12	1	4	48	13	8	5	4	28	25	2.000	46
3	Leicester Fosse	34	12	5	0	35	12	6	4	7	29	30	1.524	45
4	Newton Heath	34	12	4	1	51	14	7	1	9	16	29	1.558	43
5	New Brighton Tower[a]	34	13	2	2	48	13	5	5	7	23	39	1.365	43
6	Walsall	34	12	5	0	64	11	3	7	7	15	25	2.194	42
7	Woolwich Arsenal	34	14	2	1	55	10	4	3	10	17	31	1.756	41
8	Small Heath	34	14	1	2	66	17	3	6	8	19	33	1.700	41
9	Burslem Port Vale[a]	34	12	2	3	35	12	5	3	9	21	22	1.647	39
10	Grimsby Town	34	10	3	4	39	17	5	2	10	32	43	1.183	35
11	Barnsley[a]	34	11	4	2	44	18	1	3	13	8	38	0.929	31
12	Lincoln City	34	10	5	2	31	16	2	2	13	20	40	0.911	31
13	Burton Swifts	34	7	5	5	35	25	3	3	11	16	45	0.729	28
14	Gainsborough Trinity	34	8	4	5	40	22	2	1	14	16	50	0.778	25
15	Luton Town	34	8	1	8	37	31	2	2	13	14	64	0.537	23
16	Blackpool	34	6	3	8	35	30	2	1	14	14	60	0.544	20
17	Loughborough	34	5	4	8	31	26	1	2	14	7	66	0.413	18
18	Darwen	34	2	4	11	16	32	0	1	16	6	109	0.156	9

Election for League Membership

Darwen did not seek Re-Election so the other bottom clubs were required to seek re-election to the League. They were joined in the vote for League membership by 7 non-League clubs.

Votes	Club	End Result
28	Loughborough	Re-Elected to the League
17	Chesterfield Town	Elected to the League
17	Middlesborough	Elected to the League
15	Blackpool	Not Re-Elected to the League
11	Stockport County	Not Elected to the League
7	Chorley	Not Elected to the League
7	Wigan Couty	Not Elected to the League
0	Coventry City	Not Elected to the League
0	Ashton North End	Not Elected to the League

Results Grid

Home \ Away	BAR	BLP	BPV	BRS	DRW	GAI	GLP	GRI	LEI	LIN	LOU	LUT	MCI	NBR	NWH	SMH	WAL	WOO
Barnsley		2-1	2-1	2-0	6-0	1-0	1-1	2-2	3-4	1-0	9-0	2-1	1-1	2-1	0-2	7-2	1-1	2-1
Blackpool	3-1		0-4	3-0	6-0	4-0	1-2	3-6	2-2	3-0	2-1	2-3	2-4	1-2	0-1	1-1	1-2	1-1
Burslem Port Vale	2-0	6-1		4-1	3-1	2-1	1-2	2-0	0-2	2-1	3-0	4-1	1-1	0-0	1-0	1-0	0-1	3-0
Burton Swifts	5-0	3-1	2-0		4-0	2-1	1-2	1-2	1-1	2-1	1-1	1-1	3-3	1-1	5-1	2-6	0-2	1-2
Darwen	1-1	0-2	1-3	0-2		0-3	0-2	0-2	3-0	1-2	0-1	4-1	0-2	2-4	1-1	1-1	1-1	1-4
Gainsborough Trinity	2-0	7-0	3-2	1-2	2-2		2-4	5-1	4-0	2-2	3-0	2-3	3-1	3-1	0-2	1-1	0-0	0-1
Glossop	1-0	4-1	0-0	5-0	5-0	5-1		4-2	1-3	2-0	4-0	5-0	1-2	5-0	1-2	1-2	2-0	2-0
Grimsby Town	0-1	2-1	3-1	1-3	9-2	0-2	1-1		1-0	1-1	5-0	5-0	1-2	2-2	3-0	2-0	2-1	2-0
Leicester Fosse	3-1	4-0	1-1	1-0	4-0	1-0	4-2	2-0		3-2	1-0	1-1	1-1	4-1	1-0	0-0	2-2	2-1
Lincoln City	1-0	0-0	1-0	1-1	2-0	1-0	2-2	1-6	3-1		6-0	2-0	3-1	1-2	2-0	2-2	1-1	2-0
Loughborough	2-0	1-3	0-3	1-0	10-0	0-0	1-3	1-3	0-3	2-4		4-1	1-3	6-0	0-1	1-1	1-1	0-0
Luton Town	4-1	3-2	0-1	3-0	8-1	4-2	0-2	3-1	1-6	2-0	2-2		0-3	2-3	0-1	2-3	3-2	0-1
Manchester City	5-0	4-1	3-1	6-0	10-0	4-0	0-2	7-2	3-1	3-1	5-0	2-0		1-1	4-0	2-0	2-0	3-1
New Brighton Tower	2-1	4-0	1-0	2-2	7-0	3-2	2-2	2-0	1-0	4-1	3-0	4-0	0-1		0-3	4-0	6-0	3-1
Newton Heath	0-0	3-1	2-1	2-2	9-0	6-1	3-0	3-2	2-2	1-0	6-1	5-0	3-0	1-2		2-0	1-0	2-2
Small Heath	3-1	5-0	1-2	4-1	8-0	6-1	1-1	2-1	0-3	4-1	6-0	9-0	4-1	3-2	4-1		2-1	4-1
Walsall	1-1	6-0	1-1	7-1	10-0	6-1	2-0	4-1	1-1	3-2	7-0	6-0	1-1	1-1	2-0	2-0		4-1
Woolwich Arsenal	3-0	6-0	1-0	2-1	6-0	5-1	3-0	1-1	4-0	4-2	3-1	6-2	0-1	4-0	5-1	2-0	0-0	

The fixture list for the 1898-99 season was determined for the first time using a system approach developed by a Birmingham gentleman, Mr Fletcher. Matches were nearly all home and away on alternate Saturdays, and in the case of two clubs hailing from the same locality, they never played at home on the same Saturday. Thus, the Fosse and Loughborough played at home on alternate Saturdays.

Facilities at the Athletic Grounds were enhanced in preparation for the 1898-99 season. Drainage was improved, raised banking was constructed around the pitch and significant enhancements were made to the stand and the press box.

Leicester's trainer Jackson left to join Brighton United and was replaced by Bob Dunmore. Compared with previous seasons transfer activity was limited.

However, it was events off the pitch dominated the beginning of the 1898-99 campaign as Fosse's club secretary William Clark's dealings came under investigation and scrutiny during early September. First there was the Beardsley affair and then the Rowley affair.

~Beardsley & Rowley Affairs~

Leicester Fosse endeavoured to induce goalkeeper George Beardsley and other players for that matter to play for them. Beardsley, having either a real grievance or an imaginary one with the Luffs committee was persuaded to leave and join the Fossils. Discussions took place in a number of public houses in Loughborough between Beardsley and Fosse Committee members. Not surprisingly Loughborough felt somewhat aggrieved and when the Fosse asked for Beardsley's transfer it was refused, and a price was put upon the head of the amateur. Later Beardsley formally requested to leave, but again it was turned down. The Luffs made a formal complaint of "poaching" against the Fosse to the Football League. The hearing was due to be held on 14 October 1898, but the Football League received a wire withdrawing the charge. It was therefore deemed that Beardsley should be eligible forthwith for the Fosse, and that Loughborough were required to provide an explanation why the charge was withdrawn. Mr Henry T. Dunn, Loughborough Club secretary was prepared to produce evidence in support of the poaching charge. However, when he received the wire notifying of the date of the Management Committee hearing he was on the Isle of Wight, having been recommended by his medical advisor to take a holiday for the benefit of his health. Mr Dunn immediately wired in reply stating that he would return home. He arrived the day before the meeting, but found that Mr Clarke, the Fosse secretary had been to Loughborough with the view of arranging an amicable settlement and getting the charge withdrawn. An appointment was made at Leicester and just twenty-four hours before the hearing was due to commence Messrs. Vickers and Dormer, chairman and ex-chairman of the Loughborough Committee

had a conference with the Fosse Committee. The matter was discussed, and it was agreed that the issue could be settled by Fosse giving Loughborough a cheque for £50 and guarantee match of £25 on 27 December [Football League game] and half the gate over £50. The Fosse also had pay to Loughborough's expenses. Mr Dunn stated that it was intention to produce evidence to substantiate the charge of poaching and that he had no hand in the settlement of the matter with the Fosse, and was not therefore, personally answerable to the League for the course adopted. The arrangement was intended by the Fosse to be of a private and confidential matter. After much discussion and deliberation, the Football League Management Committee were thoroughly satisfied that the case of "poaching" had been established, and the Fosse were told that if it had been proved that the directors were aware of what had been done by their secretary, Mr William Clarke, then the club would have been suspended. Mr Clarke did not put in an appearance and was suspended from all connection with League football with immediate effect. The decision of the committee in no way affected the transfer of Beardsley, and Fosse were compelled to abide by the arrangement already entered into. Having had his authority challenged Mr Dunn, felt he had no objection but to resign as the Luffs secretary.

The Beardsley affair cost the Fosse a pretty penny - £50 transfer, £50 fine, another fine of £10 in respect of William Rowley, who was engaged as a substitute for Beardsley, and the various costs and expenses incurred. To give an indication of the severity of the fine, Fosse were still applying for more time to pay in November. If Fosse had approached Loughborough in a business-like manner, it seems likely that they would have acquired the services of Beardsley for a much less sum, indeed it would have paid them to of given the Luffs £100 for his services. Loughborough came out of the affair with almost a clean sheet, a small sum of £5 5 shillings and displaying a much "better spirit towards the Fosse than the Fosse shown towards Loughborough. However, as we shall see the affair in the longer term had a huge detrimental impact on the club.

Controversy was never too far away; Fosse's signing of Billy Rowley bought the club into conflict yet again with the football authorities. The former England goalkeeper was Stoke City's charismatic wheeler-dealer secretary when transferred himself in August 1898 and even negotiated a signing on fee, prior to making his one and only appearance for the Fosse, at home against Lincoln City. Having retired, Rowley had to seek reinstatement as an amateur before he could be appointed Stoke City's secretary. To pay an amateur was a capital offence as far as the Football Association was concerned. Rowley's signing caused an uproar. All parties concerned felt the force of the FA's wrath. The Fosse were fined £10, and Billy Rowley and William D Clark, Fosse's secretary/manager were each suspended for 12 months for unethical practice.

The fallout of the Beardsley and Rowley affairs rocked both clubs to their very foundations. Leicester's Chairman Samuel Hudson resigned in January 1899 and director Arthur Staines was suspended for 8 months from April when Clark's first appeal against his sentence was unsuccessful. The Beardsley affair also had a huge impact on Loughborough. Not only did they lose of one of their best players, but also of their highly respected club secretary Mr Harry Dunn. Although not immediately apparent, the loss of the latter, even as it turned out not for long, was more damaging to the club than anyone could have imagined.

On the pitch things were no better. Loughborough had a disastrous start to the season with a 0-7 thrashing by Walsall on the opening day. In fact, they only won one game and accumulated just 4 points in the 8 matches leading up to the first derby day in November. Included in this poor run were 6-1 and 6-0 thumpings away at Newton Heath and Lincoln, respectively.

George Johnson, appointed as replacement secretary at Leicester somehow managed to mobilise the side into serious promotion challengers – after an uninspiring start. The Fosse were clear favourites to crowned "Champions of Leicestershire" again. Over 3,000 spectators, including several hundred Fosse supporters who travelled by Midland Railways to the Athletic Grounds for the first Leicester derby of the 1898-99 season on Saturday 26 November. The game initially was one sided with the Fosse forwards attacking the Loughborough goal in prolonged waves. McMillan scored the opening goal of the game after 7 minutes for Leicester after seizing on a clearance from the Mumford in the Luffs goal, and with a smart shot hit the back of the net after rebounding off the upright. Loughborough backs played well, but the forward line could make no headway. Play was fast and furious, and as time progressed Fosse combination play deteriorated to the

level of Loughborough's. Individually Fosse were cleverer than Loughborough, some of whose players lost their heads, with muffed shots, foul play and miss kicks. The ball travelled rapidly between the two ends, as players of both sides kicked the ball aimlessly towards their opponents' goal. Loughborough forwards were guilty of missing several easy chances. McMillan deliberately kicked Luffs player with a back heel and was immediately reprimanded by the referee, but less than a minute later he committed the same offence. Loughborough back Ward miskicked, and left King with a good chance, but Mumford in cleared. From a corner by Fulwood, Mumford jumped to clear, and the ball touched the tips of his fingers or the crossbar – or both – and dropped just inside the goal, doubling Fosse's lead. Minutes later King ran through the Luffs defence to score after an appeal for offside was refused. Free kicks abounded as the game became rough, with Fosse being the main offenders. Mumford stopped a splendid shot before Beardsley cleared after a ferocious scrimmage in the Leicester goalmouth, as the final whistle blew, with Leicester winning 3-0.

After the Loughborough v. Fosse fixture, it was rumoured that it would be the last Loughborough would play in the Second Division and that the bank had taken the takings of the gate. Many fans regarded the rumours as ridiculous, but they were nevertheless concerned. An announcement in the newspapers on the Monday after derby day confirmed the truth...." *After the League match with Leicester Fosse on Saturday it was understood that Loughborough had finished its career as a Second Division club..... It was well known in local circles that the end was not far off. It is stated on good authority than an official announcement will probably be made today or tomorrow. The agents of several well-known clubs were spectators of the game on Saturday and that negotiations for Loughborough players were opened. With a view of ascertaining the true position of affairs our representative called upon some of the members of the Loughborough committee on Monday and as a result of the inquiries found that at any rate the announcement of the club's decease was premature. No meeting of the club executive was held after the match and there was absolutely no truth in the statement that the receipts of the match were taken by the bank or other creditors, the fact that the bank were protected by guarantees for the overdraft being sufficient to render such action of their part totally unnecessary. The receipts were taken by the committee and were deposited at the bank, a meeting of the committee being called for Monday evening to coincide the question of their disposal. We were informed that the bank have lately submitted that it was time the overdraft was reduced or paid off. The committee had been looking forward to Saturday's match to obtain the money requisite for current expenses, and, in view of the bank's intimidation, the club were undoubtedly faced with a serious crisis, as the cash received could not serve both purposes. The takings for the match in consequence of the miserable weather were much less than anticipated... some £78.*" The club had been in a much worse financial position and pulled through, but the complication of adverse circumstances rendered the difficulty more awkward than usual. The latest crisis began with the humiliating defeat at lowly Kettering in the English Challenge Cup-tie on 19 November 1898, which robbed Loughborough of the half-gate of the match with Fosse in the next round of the competition. The share was fully expected to realise £100 and would have practically saved the club. Then came the action of the bank, who "called-in" the overdraft and the committee found themselves obliged to hand over the greater part, if not all of the receipts of the Fosse fixture, which left them with no cash whatever to pay current expenses or the players wages. The players of the club met on the Monday evening and discussed the position and the course they should take in view of its financial situation. They came to the conclusion that unless there was some guarantee of their wages being forthcoming the committee could not rely on them to fulfil the club's fixture at Darwen on the Saturday. This was communicated to a meeting of the committee held later in the evening, and it was resolved that the payers should be asked to defer their final decision until later in the week. Mr J E Johnson-Ferguson MP, club President saved the day yet again. He paid his £25 three months subscription early, which paid the players wages. A couple of days later right winger Bosworth moved to Derby County, the transfer fee, being in the region of £100, which relieved the club's immediate financial embarrassment, but sadly not for long. The Executive sought local players to both replace Bosworth and strengthen the squad.

The first derby game was Leicester's sixth in the club's record breaking seven (7) consecutive wins in all competitions that began on 22 October with a 4-2 at home against Glossop and ended with a 1-1 draw away to Kettering in the English Challenge Cup on 15 December – during which they scored 26 and conceded just 4 goals. Meanwhile the Luffs managed to accumulate just 2 points in the 5 league games between derby days – beating a side that was even worse than them – Darwen – away from home.

There was a poor gate for the return League match between the Fosse and the Luffs played on the Tuesday after Christmas, 27 December 1898 at Walnut Street. Ward was unfit for the Luffs, severely weakening their

defence, while the old Loughburian George Swift was missing at the back for Fosse, as was King at centre forward. Davis made his first Loughborough appearance on the wing. Early on Luffs keeper Albert Mumford saved a shot from Robinson which struck Ball's head in transit. Being hampered, the Loughborough goalkeeper carried the ball several yards, and was promptly penalised. The "free" resulted in a corner, and after both Moore and Mumford had cleared, Ball hammered in a shot which struck the underside of the bar and dropped into the net. Incidentally, Mumford was signed from Sheffield Wednesday in 1896 as a centre forward, and Loughborough gave him a new lease of life which fully exploited his versatility. Minutes later, Ball again hit the crossbar, this time bouncing over, whilst another shot by the same player went just wide. After a period of sustained pressure by the Luffs, the Fosse again returned to siege their opponent's goal. Galbraith standing close under the bar, put the finishing touch, but the goal was disallowed for offside. Each time Loughborough forwards travelled into their opponent's half they were penalised either for offside or a foul. With the number of free kicks awarded in their favour, the Fosse were able to continually press, but were foiled again and again mainly through the clever goalkeeping of Mumford. Loughborough's frustrations continued into the second half. Each time they seemed to be on the verge of a breakthrough they were penalised or yet again found themselves offside. Leicester had a couple of opportunities to double their lead, but the best chance of the half came with just seconds to go when a shot from a cross missed the corner of the goal by inches. The exciting encounter ended with a victory, by the narrowest of margins, for the Fosse.

The local press urged people to save Loughborough by attending home fixtures, ... "spectators should be loyal, and those who absent themselves from matches week after week cannot honestly call themselves. The gate last Saturday [Walsall- 31 December 1898] was disgraceful and if this sort of thing continues the spectators will themselves be directly responsible for the club's failure." It was not just non-attendance that hampered the club's future, but also their behaviour. They bought further shame to the club at a Leicester Senior League encounter between Loughborough Athletic (Luffs reserve team) and Coalville Town at the Athletic Grounds. The visitors took an early goal lead. Following some 'dubious' decisions by Mr Carpenter, the referee, the home supporters expressed "considerable dissatisfaction". Feeling threatened for his own safety by the intolerable abuse he was receiving, the referee, who was also the Secretary of Leicestershire Football Association abandoned the game before half-time. The club were found guilty of gross misconduct by the Council of the Leicestershire Association, and the executive closed the Athletics Grounds for two weeks until 6 February, and that the club could not play within a radius of 6 miles. The Chairman of Loughborough F C Executive threatened to call the membership together with the intention of closing down the club. A better way out of the difficulty, however, was afterwards arrived at.

The executive of Leicester Fosse generously placed the Walnut Street enclosure at Loughborough club's disposal for their 'home' fixture against Blackpool on Saturday 4 February. Sympathy with Loughborough was strong in Leicester and as the Fosse were riding high in the Second Division, it was the least they could do was to lend help to their neighbours. The Fosse Reserves match took place at 1:30 and the Loughborough game at 3:00. Admission charged was for both games, and after expenses Loughborough took two thirds of the gate. Fosse also agreed to a collection being made for the benefit of the Loughborough club. Donation boxes were placed at the entrances. Fosse also loaned the Luffs a couple of players - Maurice Parry and William Keech. Fosse Reserves beat Mexborough 2-1 in the warm up game. By the time the main event began, around 5,000 spectators, the vast majority being Fosse fans, greeted the Luffs' players with a huge cheer. Leicester football supporters turned up in sufficient numbers to realise a £100 gate, while a sum of £11 was collected to further assist Loughborough in their financial difficulties.

At a meeting of the Loughborough club held at the Greyhound Hotel prior to the Blackpool match. Mr Dunn was unanimously asked to resume the secretaryship, replacing Mr Harriman who had resigned on 19 January, which he accepted. He stated that he had received a telegram from Manchester City stating that they were forwarding a cheque for £10. Newton Heath had already promised to consider providing financial assistance. Blackpool wrote expressing sympathy for Loughborough for the "unjust suspension", and the following letter, published the by local press was received from local rivals, Notts County:

Mr C Harriman, Secretary Loughborough FC
Friday January 20th 1899

Dear Sir, - An old club which has successfully emerged from a long period of adversity, we have every sympathy with your club in the trouble you are passing through, and to show the same in a practical manner we beg your acceptance of the enclosed cheque for £10.

It is not a large amount, but we hope it may be of some use to you in your difficulties.

With every good wish for the future,

I am yours truly.

T. E. HARRIS

The generous gift aroused much grateful feeling among Luff supporters, as besides demonstrating true sportsmanlike sympathy, it was unsolicited.

The two Fosse loanees (Parry and Keech) made a remarkable impact on the fortunes of the club. They were instrumental in a club record Football League win of 10-0 against Darwen on April Fool's Day, a club who were in even more trouble than the Luffs. The "Salmoners" arrived with only 10 men and after a spirited first half performance where they conceded twice, they were destroyed in the second period shipping in 8 goals. Pegg scored five and Parker two goals, in front of just 1500 at the Athletic Grounds.

Trouble, however, was never too far away from Loughborough. At the end of a home fixture against Gainsborough Trinity on Easter Monday 4 April 1899, which ended 0-0, spectators mobbed Mr Shelton, the referee at the end of the game. Luff fans were furious with his inability to clamp down on rough play by Gainsborough and that he had disallowed, what appeared to be a fine goal, by new signing Walter Allan, for offside. The incident was reported by the match officials to the Football Association who relegated the investigation of the charge of serious misconduct to the Leicestershire Executive. On Tuesday 25 April. After hearing evidence from the referee and Mr Thomson from the club, it was decided to close the Athletic Grounds up to September 11th next, and the club not allowed to play matches within a 6-mile radius. Loughborough FC were also required to provide better arrangements for referees leaving the field of play and were also ordered to pay the expenses of the inquiry. Loughborough finished the season in 17th, with 9 points more than bottom side Darwen.

A special meeting of Loughborough supporters was held on Friday 5 May 1899 to decide whether the club should seek re-election to the Second Division. Although during the first three months of the 1898-99 season they looked like a sinking ship, the club much improved its position both financially and on the field. Under the secretaryship of Henry Dunn, club debts had been reduced by an impressive 75%. In the last 7 matches of 1898-99 Loughborough secured 8 points out of 14 and scored 23 goals, conceding 10, which was an average that few clubs in the Second Division managed. If this form had been maintained through the season, they would have been fighting the Fosse for a position in the First Division. Loughborough's Club Committee Chairman said that as much as they hated each other he was genuinely sorry that Fosse did not succeed but was also glad as well because Loughborough would have the pleasure of meeting them again. Finally, he and the committee believed that they could do a great deal better by securing young and promising players than by paying transfer fees for players *"who were getting used up."*

The Loughborough Committee decided to seek re-election, along with Blackpool. Darwen, who suffered 18 consecutive defeats, which remains a Football League record, and conceded a football League record breaking 141 goals did not reapply and joined the Lancashire League. Other applicants were Ashton north End, Chesterfield, Chorley, Stockport County, Coventry city, Wigan County and Middlesbrough. Much to the delight of Leicestershire football followers Loughborough received the highest number of votes (28) at the AGM of the Football League held towards the end of May. Making up the remaining places in the Second Division for 1899-1900 were Middlesbrough and Chesterfield.

Meanwhile, Leicester Fosse had begun 1899 full hope and optimism with promotion to the First Division a distinct possibility. After beating Arsenal at home in the first game of 1899, they demolished Luton 6-1 at Dunstable Road. The Luton game was effectively over as a contest after a few minutes through the disablement of Ekins, the home team having to play nearly the whole game with only 10 men. Sadly, the game was marred by attempts of the Luton supporters to assault the referee. As a result, the ground was closed

for two weeks. Leicester's 3-1 home win on 21 January 1899 the following week against Barnsley St Peters sent the Fosse to the top of the Second Division for the first time in the club's history. A record crowd of 14,000 (gate receipts £344) watched the Fosse 1-1 draw at home against Manchester City. This followed a series of 4 draws in 6 games that cost them promotion. Fosse finished in third just one point adrift of second spot Glossop, in the first season that automatic promotion and relegation had taken place instead of Test Matches. They won 18, drew 9 and lost 7 of their League fixtures, scoring 64 goals – averaging almost 2 per game, whilst conceding 42. Three forwards – Rab King (16), Tommy Galbraith (17) and Alf Watkins (13) – scored more than 10 League goals.

It was reported by the Leicester Chronicle that at the annual meeting of shareholders of the Fosse Football Club held at the Victoria Coffee-house held in mid-June 1899 Sir John Rolleston, the president of the club, referred to the tremendous progress that had been made during the 1898-99 season. He stated that, "the success [financial] that had been experienced could scarcely fail to be gratifying to each and every shareholder, and all that was wanted to place the club upon a sounder basis was the shareholders' assistance in getting more shares taken up. If they looked back upon the state of affairs which prevailed not so long ago and realised how the club had emerged from its troubles in such encouraging style, and that he and the other shareholders would render all the assistance they possibly could to the directors in their efforts to get the club into the First Division." No details of the finances were reported.

Leicester Fosse Results

Date	Opposition	Result	Score	Scorer	Attendance
03.09.1898	Lincoln City (H)	W	3 - 2	Watkins (2), King	8,000
10.09.1898	Woolwich Arsenal (A)	L	0 - 4		6,000
17.09.1898	Luton Town (H)	D	1 - 1	King	3,000
24.09.1898	Barnsley (A)	W	4 - 3	Galbraith (2), Keech (2)	3,000
26.09.1898	Walsall (A)	D	1 - 1	Galbraith	2,500
01.10.1898	Darwen (A)	L	0 - 3		1,500
08.10.1898	Gainsborough Trinity (H)	W	1 - 0	Galbraith	4,000
15.10.1898	Manchester City (A)	L	1 - 3	Eaton	8,000
22.10.1898	Glossop (H)	W	4 - 2	King, Eaton, Watkins, Fulwood,	3,000
29.10.1898	Kimberley (H)	W	9 - 0	King (4), Watkins (2), Fulwood, Smith	2,000
05.11.1898	Burton Swifts (H)	W	1 - 0	Watkins	4,000
12.11.1898	Burslem Port Vale (A)	W	2 - 0	King, Galbraith	
19.11.1898	Rushden (H)	W	2 - 1	Galbraith, McMillan	6,000
26.11.1898	Loughborough (A)	W	3 - 0	Eaton, Fulwood, King	3,000
03.12.1898	Blackpool (H)	W	4 - 0	Galbraith(2), King, Watkins	4,000
10.12.1898	Kettering Town (A)	D	1 - 1	Fulwood	5,000
15.12.1898	Kettering Town (H)	L	1 - 2	Eaton	5,000
17.12.1898	Newton Heath (H)	W	1 - 0	Fulwood	8,000
24.12.1898	New Brighton Tower (A)	L	0 - 1		2,000
26.12.1898	Darwen (H)	W	4 - 0	Eaton, Galbraith, McMillan, Watkins	5,000
27.12.1898	Loughborough (H)	W	1 - 0	Ball	2,000
31.12.1898	Lincoln City (A)	L	1 - 3	Robinson	1,500
07.01.1899	Woolwich Arsenal (H)	W	2 - 1	King, Watkins	10,000
14.01.1899	Luton Town (A)	W	6 - 1	King, Watkins, Galbraith (2), McMillan, Lyon	2,000

21.01.1899	Barnsley (H)	W	3 - 1	Galbraith (2), King	3,000
04.02.1899	Gainsborough Trinity (A)	L	0 - 4		1,000
11.02.1899	Manchester City (H)	D	1 - 1	McMillan	14,000
18.02.1899	Glossop (A)	W	3 - 1	King, Galbraith, Watkins	1,000
25.02.1899	Walsall (H)	D	2 - 2	Watkins, Lyon	1,700
04.03.1899	Burton Swifts (A)	D	1 - 1	McMillan	4,000
11.03.1899	Burslem Port Vale (H)	D	1 - 1	McMillan	12,000
18.03.1899	Small Heath (A)	W	3 - 0	Galbraith, Eaton, King	10,000
25.03.1899	Loughborough (A)	L	2-1	Lyon	
31.03.1899	Grimsby Town (A)	L	0 - 1		5,000
01.04.1899	Blackpool (A)	D	2 - 2	Galbraith, McMillan	2500
03.04.1899	Grimsby Town (H)	W	2 - 0	Watkins, Eaton	6,000
15.04.1899	Newton Heath (A)	D	2 - 2	Bradshaw, McMillan	6,000
22.04.1899	New Brighton Tower (H)	W	4 - 1	Galbraith, Bradshaw, Ball, King	10,000
29.04.1899	Small Heath (H)	D	0 - 0		4,000

Loughborough FC Results

Date	Opposition	Result	Score	Scorers	Attendance
03.09.1898	Walsall (A)	L	0-7		2,000
10.09.1898	Burton Swifts (H)	W	1-0	Mee	
17.09.1898	Burslem Port Vale (A)	L	0-3		3,000
24.09.1898	Small Heath (H)	D	1-1	Bosworth	2,000
01.10.1898	Mansfield Town (H)	W	4-0	Bosworth, Pike, Pegg, OG	2,000
08.10.1898	Blackpool (A)	L	1-2	Pegg	300
15.10.1898	Rothwell Town Swifts (H)	W	7-0	Roulston (2), Pegg (3), Tuthill (2)	1,500
22.10.1898	Newton Heath (A)	L	1-6	Nicholl	2,000
29.10.1898	Wellingborough (H)	D	0-0		
31.10.1898	Wellingborough (H)	W	3-1	Roulston, Bosworth, og	
05.11.1898	Lincoln City (A)	L	0-6		
12.11.1898	Woolwich Arsenal (H)	D	0-0		2,500
19.11.1898	Kettering Town	L	1-2	Pike	2,500
26.11.1898	Leicester Fosse (H)	L	0-4		3,000
03.12.1898	Darwen (A)	W	1-0	Nicholl	750
10.12.1898	Manchester City (H)	L	1-3	Pike	1,000
17.12.1898	Manchester City (A)	L	0-5		4,000
24.12.1898	Glossop (H)	L	1-3	Pike	1,900
26.12.1898	Gainsborough Trinity (A)	L	0-3		
27.12.1898	Leicester Fosse (A)	L	0-1		2,000
31.12.1898	Walsall (H)	D	1-1	Pike	2,000
07.01.1899	Burton Swifts (A)	D	1-1		
14.01.1899	Burslem Port Vale (H)	L	0-3		2,000
21.01.1899	Small Heath (A)	L	0-3		3,000
28.01.1899	Barnsley (A)	L	0-9		2,000
04.02.1899	Blackpool (H) *	L	1-3	Parker	4,000
11.02.1899	Grimsby Town (A)	L	0-5		3,500
18.02.1899	Newton Heath (H)	L	0-1		1,800
25.02.1899	New Brighton Tower (A)	L	0-3		2,000

04.03.1899	Lincoln City (H)	L	2-4	Pegg, Tuthill	1,300
11.03.1899	Barnsley (H)	W	2-0	Keech, Pike	
13.03.1899	Woolwich Arsenal (A)	L	1-3	AN Other	2,000
18.03.1899	Luton Town (H)	W	4-1	Keech, Allen, AN Others	
25.03.1899	Leicester Fosse (A)	W	2-1	Allan, Pegg	1,000
31.03.1899	Luton Town (A)	D	2-2	Parker, Pegg	
01.04.1899	Darwen (H)	W	10-0	Pegg (5). Parker (2), Keech, Hardy, Hodgkin	1,500
03.04.1899	Gainsborough Trinity (H)	D	0-0		
17.04.1899	Grimsby Town (H)	L	1-3	Keech	
22.04.1899	Glossop (A)	L	0-4		
29.04.1899	New Brighton Tower (H)	W	6-0	Allen, Pike, Keech, Tebbs, OG	

* Played at Walnut Street, Leicester

1897-98 Top Goal Scorers

Leicester Fosse		Loughborough	
Billy Dorrell	7	Dick Pegg	7
Willie Freebairn	5	Thomas Walker	4
William Keech	3	Arthur Roulston	3
Rab King	3	Arthur Shaw	3