

FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION CHALLENGE CUP MATCH AT KENNINGTON OVAL: BLACKBURN ROVERS v. NOTTS COUNTY.

**Winner:** Blackburn Rovers  
**Runner-Up:** Notts County

Leicester Fosse and Loughborough FC both entered the English Association Challenge Cup in 1891. The draw for the first qualifying round was made in September, and No.4 division, in which both teams were placed, came out as follows:

Gainsborough Trinity v Lincoln City  
 Loughborough v Derby Midland  
 Derby Junction v Sheffield United  
 Leicester Fosse v Burton Wanderers  
 Matlock v Derby Leys  
 Derby St Luke's v Belper  
 Leeds Albion and Burton Swifts were granted byes.

Fosse's first English Challenge Cup tie was somewhat of a reality check, when they had their first taste of top-class opposition in a competitive game. Played on Saturday 4 October on the Mill Lane ground, in front of a large crowd that generated record gate receipts of £15, Burton Wanderers took the lead within a few minutes of kick-off. Brown the scorer, doubled the lead midway through the half. Wanderers were faster and better organised and at times ran the home side ragged. Dickens scored a third and a fourth was added just before the fulltime whistle blew.

Meanwhile Loughborough overcame another Derby club, Derby Midland 3-2 in one of the best matches ever witnessed at the Athletic Grounds. Luffs took the lead after 30 minutes when Smith kicked into an unprotected goal, after the Derby keeper was still on the floor from saving an earlier attempt. After prolonged applause of the whole Loughborough team by the excited spectators, as the Luff players appeared to be taking things easy, Wood equalised with a low lightning shot. Rose clawed a goal back for

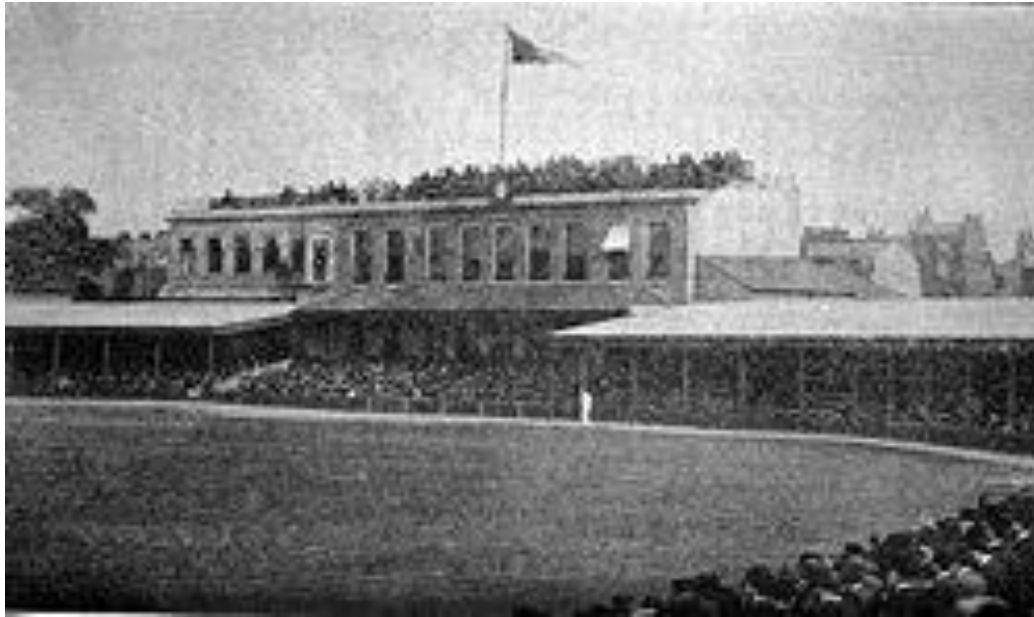
the Midland after rushing the ball into the net after Harris, the Luffs keeper fisted out. Two goals, one from each side, quickly followed. Just as extra time seemed inevitable, Cross pounced on a shot from Smith that rebounded off the post to snatch victory for the Luffs by 3 goals to 2.

Loughborough were drawn against Burton Wanderers at home in the second qualifying round. Played three weeks after the first-round tie, on 25 October 1891, Burton were without three of their influential players, whilst the Luffs were at full strength. The game was marked throughout by neat passing and "first class combination" by the Loughborough forwards, who scored no less than 8 goals, conceding just one. Drawn away to Belper Town in the third qualifying round, the game was switched to the Athletic Grounds following a cash inducement. The gate was around 1500, and the excitement was equal to that of two years earlier, when they won the County Challenge Cup. Whether sufficient money was collected to recoup the "consideration" paid to Belper is debatable. But given the superiority of the Luffs at home and the prospect of potentially lucrative fourth qualifying round draw, it was clearly worthwhile. Belper did not field a first class eleven and were outplayed. This was particularly noticeable in the second half, when had not the visitor's goalkeeper showed excellent form and their backs a good defence, the Loughborough goal tally would have been much heavier than five against two.

Loughborough faced Sheffield United in the final qualifying round. Having the privilege of selecting the ground, the Luffs choose to play away from home at Bramall Lane on a conditional payment of £30 by the United committee. A special train run by the Midland Railway took 96 supporters to the Yorkshire town, but though the train started at Leicester no more than a dozen booked from that station. Sheffield fielded their strongest side, which included two Scottish "imports" – Calder and Robertson - whilst Loughborough were without their inspirational half-back Ernest Coltman. Within the first 10 minutes Loughborough hit the crossbar and pressed well. Much to the surprise of the excited spectators, William Harris in the Loughborough goal allowed a straightforward shot to pass through into the goal without making an attempt to stop it. This did not deter the Luffs who were unlucky not to score after United made a goal line clearance, minutes later yet another shot sailed just over the bar and Carnelly, just back from injury missed a sitter. Loughborough deservedly equalised from a header by Smith. Just before halftime Sheffield took the lead. On resuming, however, it was soon evident that the heavy nature of the ground told upon the visitors, who were more accustomed to the lighter soil of the Athletic Grounds. As the Luffs tired, United proved smarter and quicker on the ball. As the Luffs tired, United proved smarter and quicker on the ball. Sheffield scored two goals in quick succession as the Luffs collapsed. As the home team "out-distanced" their opponents both in speed and combination they and scored another two before the final whistle sounded, with the final score Sheffield United 6-1 Loughborough. United were in all phases of play superior to Loughborough, a quickness in seizing the ball, fine combinations and fleetness of foot giving them a decided advantage. Had Loughborough been able to maintain their first half form, they may even have won the game.

Loughborough Committee gave their players a complimentary dinner to thank them for "creditably representing the club in the preliminary rounds of the English Challenge Cup" in January 1891. After the Major (Alderman Bampus) proposed, "the health of the team and the prosperity of the club", he congratulated the club on its achievements to date. "It did not seem more than five or six years since it was a matter of astonishment to hear of two or three thousand people attending a football match in the winter. He hoped that the enormous increase that had accrued in the public interest arose in the main from the fact that the game has very much changed – "that it was not now as it once was, a brutal contest, in which sheer violence won the day, but had become what might be described as a scientific contest. It because football had so changed and raised its character that the public took such an interest in it."

The 1891 FA Cup final was contested by Blackburn Rovers and Notts County at the Kennington Oval. Blackburn won 3–1, their second consecutive FA Cup Final victory, with goals by Geordie Dewar, Jack Southworth, and William Townley. James Oswald scored Notts County's goal.



The Kennington Oval as it looked in 1891

### Match Results and Details

		Date	Home			Away	Match Details
1	1QR	4.10.1890	Leicester Fosse	0	4	Burton Wanderers Brown (2) Dicken (2)	Mill Lane, Leicester. Large attendance.
2	1QR	4.10.1890	Loughborough Smith Lowe Cross	3	2	Derby Midland Rose Wood	Athletic Grounds, Loughborough 1,000 spectators One of the best matches ever witnessed in Loughborough. Loughborough came from 2-1 down, scoring the winning goal just as 15 mins extra time was on the horizon.
3	2QR	25.10.1890	Loughborough Freestone (2) Kelham Lowe, Smith AN Others	8	1	Burton Wanderers Jones	Athletic Grounds, Loughborough. The game throughout was marked throughout by "neat passing and plucky play."
4	3QR	15.11.1890	Belper Town Booth Briggs	2	5	Loughborough Lowe Kelham (2) Plackett, AN Other	Match was drawn to be played at Belper but switched to the Athletic Grounds on a cash inducement. Best gate of the season so far. Scheduled Midland Alliance fixture with Grantham Rovers was rearranged to be played in January.
5	4QR	6.12.1890	Loughborough Smith	1 (1)	6 (2)	Sheffield United Robertson (2) Watson AN Others	Match was drawn to be played at the Athletics Ground, Loughborough but switched to Bramall Lane, Sheffield on a £30 cash inducement. A special train run by the Midland Railway took 96 supporters to the Yorkshire town. Game kicked off at 2.30 pm. Up to half-time there was little to choose between the sides. Sheffield players were warned by the referee for fouling Luffs goalkeeper.

## Match Reports

### ASSOCIATION, ENGLISH CUP TIES

**#1 FOSSE v BURTON WANDERERS** —These teams met on the Mill-lane ground on Saturday afternoon to play off their match in the first round of the qualifying series for the English Cup, and notwithstanding the strong counter-attraction at the Belgrave-road Grounds there was a large attendance of spectators. The Fosse won the toss, and started playing into the entrance goal. Within a few minutes of the commencement the Burton right wing got down on the home line, and forced a corner. Cliff dropped the ball nicely in front of goal, and Brown sent it through. The Fossils then tried hard to retaliate. "Ted" Johnson passed to Atter, who ran smartly up the field, and secured a corner, but nothing resulted therefrom. Then Flint, on the other side made a good run nearly the length of the ground, but shot too late, and missed. The visitors soon pressed heavily again, and a sharp piece of play before the home goal ended in Brown scoring the second goal. Several corners fell to the Wanderers, which Cliff placed very cleverly, but no further score was made before half-time. Ends having been changed, the play was even for a time, but the Fosse were soon forced into their own quarters, and Dicken scored the third goal against them. Towards the end of the game play became very fast. A combined rush by the Wanderers' left wing and centre carried the ball right up to the enemy's goal, which fell to a shot from Dicken. Shortly before "time" a free kick was allowed to the Fosse within a few yards of the Burton goal, and Murdoch sent it through, but without touching any of the players. The match, therefore, ended in a victory for the Burton Wanderers by four goals to none. The players were as follow:—Berton Wanderers: C. Brentnall, goal; G. Downer and T. Lowe, backs; G. Chandler (captain). A. Jones, and W. Fellow's, half-backs; F. Holmes and J. Cliff, right wing; J. Brown, centre; C. Morton and W. Dicken, left wing; G. Riley, umpire. Fosse: C. Walker, goal; S. Rowson and C. Davis, backs; E. A. Nuttall, R. Perry, and J. Johnson (captain), half-backs J. Flint and J. Murdoch, right wing ; H. Webbe, centre; J. Attar and IL Johnson, left wing ; W. H. Horner, umpire. H. Sheldon (Nottingham), referee.

*Leicester Daily Post - 6 October 1890*

**#2 LOUGHBOROUGH v DERBY MIDLAND** - One of the best matches ever played on the Loughborough Athletic, Grounds was witnessed on Saturday, when Loughborough beat Derby Midland by three goals to two in the first round of the English Cup competition. The successes of the Midland team in defeating Warwick County and Burslem Port Vale looked somewhat ominous for Loughborough, who had been defeated by Doncaster Rovers and Sheffield Club in the Alliance matches. Mills having sustained as injury to his hand the visitors replaced him Ten minutes later, as the players appeared to be taking things easy, Hickinbottom passed across the centre near the goal mouth, and Wood equalised with a low lightning-like shot. The whistle blew two or three minutes later. On resuming Lowe changed places with Freestone. Play was rather tame until the smart centre forward of the Midland team hit the cross-bar. A long shot from Gilbert placed the ball in the home quarters, and Spibey fouling, a chance ensued. Harris fisted out the first shot, but, not clearing, Rose rushed it through. Give-and-take play followed for a while, the game being very even. Griffin worked well for the Loughborough team and a shot from the Midland centre forward overtopped the cross-bar. A corner kick to the home team taken by Peters was capitally placed, and Storer, hustled by Lowe, screwed the ball through. Two goals each. About ten minutes more play was required to close the time, and the likelihood appeared to be generally felt that an extra 15 minutes would be required to decide which team was the winner. However, some ten minutes later Cross took the ball down his wing, and after a bit of neat passing a shot from Smith hit the post. Luckily, Cross was near, and with a quick returning shot he sent the ball through. This proved Loughborough the victorious team by three goals to two. The players were loudly cheered on entering the pavilion — Loughborough: Goal, W. H. Harris; backs, Spiby and Griffin; half-backs, E. Coltman. A. Peters (captain), and Plackett; forwards, Freestone. Val Smith (right), F. Lowe (centre), W. Kelham. and W. Cross (left). Umpire, Mr. A. D. Gilbert, Nottingham. Derby Midland:—Goal, H. Storer; backs, Gilbert, and Staley; half-backs, Rose. Garden, and Hickinbottom; forwards, Broughall, Wood, W. Storer, H. Ross, and Hardy; umpire, Mr. H. Bostwick (Long Eaton). Referee. F. W. D. Earp (Nottingham).

*Leicester Daly Post - 6 October 1890*

### #3 LOUGHBOROUGH v BURTON WANDERERS - 2<sup>ND</sup> ROUND

These teams met at Loughborough as Saturday in the second round of the above competition. Loughborough played their full strength, but the Wanderers were without Cliff and Brown in the forwards and Fellowes in the half-backs. The game throughout was marked by neat passing, and plucky play, even when Loughborough was leading by seven goals to none. More than anything else the game showed first class combination on the part of the Loughborough forwards, particularly the right wing and centre man. Some remarkably good clearing, too, was witnessed from Griffin. After ten minutes play a splendid attack on the visitors goal was made by the forwards, the point being narrowly lost. A corner resulting, Brentnall had to fist out. Again the attack was renewed, after which the visitors cleared, and as Horton was making a smart run for the goal his chances were upset by Coltman tackling successfully. The passing of the visitors about this time showed them to be of no mean order, though the Loughborough back division were more than their equals, while the forwards continually assaulted. From one of the attacks Lowe had a capital chance, which he missed. The visitors, returning the ball, who shot wide. Up now Harris had scarcely touched the ball, and, but for the luck being against them, Loughborough would have scored. Half an hour from the commencement Loughborough scored off Freestone, Brentnall being tame. This ought to have been improved by a run from Cross, but he was badly supported. Griffin and Plackett, on the other hand, let but few chances pass them, their tackling and return shots being excellent. From Kelham the next Loughborough goal came, the custodian being non-plussed as the ball just passed inside the uprights. Nothing further resulted before half-time. If the pressure of the Loughborough team had been good in the first-half, the experience the second-half showed them to be much superior to their opponents. From the Loughborough left wing Plackett got the ball, and by a first-class shot sent it into the goal, and, Freestone assisting, a third point resulted. Cross and Smith were fortunate when they had the chance, the latter's shot hitting the uprights. The rush of the Loughborough men was rather too much for the Wanderers, who had to kick out to save. But for all that the home team were not to be denied, attack succeeding attack; a fourth and a fifth goal being followed by a sixth from Lowe. Nor was the luck against the visitors; in fact, they were entirely outmanoeuvred by the play of the Loughborough team, particularly the two centre men and the right wing. Smith nearly got a seventh goal, his shot passing a few inches under the cross-bar. A palpable weakness in the Burton team was their inability to shoot correctly, and the tactics of the Loughborough right wing nonplussed their backs. A seventh goal from Smith did not dishearten the visitors, whose plucky play was rewarded by Jones snatching a point less than five minutes from the close. Then came another for Loughborough just as the time expired, the game resulting in eight goals for Loughborough and one for the Wanderers. Players:--Barton Wanderers: Brentnall, goal; T. Lowe, G. Downie, backs; G. Chandler, W. Sorton, L. Smith, half-backs; F. Holmes, T. Royalls, A. Jones, W. Dicken, G. Horton, forwards. Loughborough: Harris, goal; G. Spibey, Griffin, backs; Coltman Plackett, Peters, half-backs; Lowe, Val Smith, Freestone, Kelham, Cross, forwards; umpires, Mr. W. Cliff (Burton), Mr A. D. Gilbert (Nottingham), and Mr H. Shelton (Nottingham).

*Leicester Daily Post - 27 October 1899*



## ENGLISH CUP COMPETITION.

### THIRD ROUND.

**LOUGHBOROUGH v. BELPER.**—In the draw for the third round of this competition the match was cast for the Belper ground, but the Loughborough F.C. committee offering a strong inducement Belper agreed to play on the Leicestershire ground. Nearly fifteen hundred persons assembled to witness the sport, and the ardour of their cheers gave evidence of the continued interest Association football is gaining upon the townspeople. Parkin kicked off, and two minutes from the start Cross was disabled, but after a rest of about ten minutes his presence was again welcomed in the enclosure. Loughborough soon pressed, a fine shot from Smith hitting the crossbar. From the returning goal-kick the right wing fed Booth, who shot the ball through. A foul on the home team left wing gave Loughborough a chance, but though Peters placed it capitally nothing resulted. Soon afterwards a good goal was scored by Loughborough. Kelham having passed into the centre, Lowe equalised with a low shot, which was too much for Tomlinson. The excellent manner in which the Belper team attacked caused Coltman to concede a corner, but nothing ensued, and the same player became conspicuous by his neat passes to the forwards, particularly when the latter were in front of goal. The good fortune which accompanied Belper was again manifested when, from a shot at goal, the ball hit one of their own backs and just overtopped the crossbar. The corner which resulted was badly placed by Lowe, and

though Cross was more fortunate when a similar chance fell to his share Rogers headed the ball out of danger. Griffin being winded a short cessation ensued, and from the restart Cross took up the ball, and, by a first-class centre, gave a chance. No one being up, the opportunity was lost. Following this Peters failed to tackle his man, and Briggs shooting capitally from the wing Harris missed the ball. This gave Belper their second goal. Elated with their success the visitors narrowly escaped adding a third goal, but then the pressure returned to the visitors' quarters, and from a corner the leather was kicked just outside the posts. An excellent throw in by Coltman was admirably taken up by Lowe, but Freestone nullified through missing his kick. At half-time the visitors led by two to one. After the ball had been again in motion ten minutes, a determined attack on the Belper goal caused Tomlinson to handle, and being unable to clear the Loughborough forwards pressed him, a goal resulting off Kelham. This was disputed by Belper, but the referee allowed it. From about this time the home team began to press, and continued to do so until the close. Though the right wing forwards were not behind their excellent form of a few weeks ago, Freestone seemed rather unfortunate in his tactics. Cross, on the other hand, was in capital form. The smartness of the forwards was continually evidenced, Freestone making a run almost through the whole of the backs, and Cross showing a specimen of his fleetness by a very fast run on the wing and a beautiful centre. The shots at goal from the Loughborough left wing, however, were erratic, or the figures would have been altered, and shown a clearer indication of the game. Peters was scarcely up to his usual form, but Plackett and Coltman maintained the reputation of the half-backs, while both Spibey and Griffin defended well. Harris had one solitary goal-kick in the second half to relieve his isolation. A good specimen of the Loughborough tactics was observed while Loomes was trying to take the ball away from Plackett. The latter tackled successfully, and passing to Lowe he ran down the wing and smartly fed the centre. The other forwards being well up, a good goal resulted. This gave Loughborough three points to their opponents' two. The game became fast, and within the next couple of minutes Kelham scored a fourth goal. Nor did the pressure cease here, for Lowe just o'ertopped the cross-bar before a temporary respite for the visitors was caused by a run up their right wing. A corner from Lowe, which hit the goal-post, was followed by a bit of capital play from Cross and Kelham, though nothing resulted. Plackett by a clinking shot gained the fifth goal for the home team, whose victory of five to two was deservedly earned. The visitors' custodian, however, and also their backs, played a sterling game. Players:—Belper: J. Tomlinson, goal; H. Rogers, H. Mellor, backs; W. Stone, J. Alsopp, W. Mosley, half backs; W. Briggs, G. Loomes, W. Parkin, S. Barnes, W. Booth, forwards. Loughborough: Harris, goal; Spibey, Griffin, backs; Coltman, Plackett, and A. Peters, half backs; F. Lowe, Val. Smith, Freestone, Kelham, Cross, forwards. Umpires, Messrs. C. Allcock (Derby) and — Gilbert (Nottingham); referee, Mr. Chaplin (Derby).



**#5 THE ENGLISH CUP. QUALIFYING COMPETITION  
SHEFFIELD UNITED v LOUGHBOROUGH TOWN**

On Saturday Sheffield United met Loughborough Town at Bramall Lane the last of the qualifying rounds of the English Cup. Of course both sides put their full strength in the field, and Shaw took his old position on the right for the first time since his accident. Although the weather was cold it was fine, and the game was witnessed with considerable interest by nearly 3,000 spectators. At 2.29 United kicked off from the Bramall lane end, and the game commenced fast and furious. Loughborough commenced the attack, and pressed their opponents back so far that a kick from the left wing sent the ball against the crossbar. Then they fell back, and from the left, Shaw put the leather between the posts, but the goal was disallowed on the off side. Resuming, play was pretty even, both sides doing their level best to gain the supremacy. At length, the Sheffields got a look in, and off a scrimmage in front of their opponents' citadel obtained the first "corner." Although nothing came of it, they kept the ball well on the Loughborough side line. At one time Calder passed to Watson, who, by a splendid kick sent the ball over the left, and Shaw sent in a warm one, which was only saved by the smartness of the Loughborough's goal-keeper. The ball, however, was still kept in that quarter, and a minute two after, Robertson, by a grand shot, scored first goal for United 20 minutes from the start. Shaw directly after made good but ineffectual attempt to increase the score, Cross then got possession, and made a good run down the left. He was, however, successfully opposed by the Sheffield backs, and once more the battle was transferred to the Shoreham street end. The visitors, however, had not lost heart, and by combined rush once more crossed and were fortunate in gaining two corner kicks. The last one resulted from a struggle front of the goal, but United got the best of it in the end. A few minutes later Lowe made a nice run down the right and forced Howlett to use his hands. After this exchanges were pretty equal, but few minutes before half-time Loughborough secured a corner kick, and in the struggle Smith headed the ball through, thus equalising matters. Just on the point of half-time the visitors were forced back, and passing to Watson the latter made the second goal for United. Score at half-time:

SHEFFIELD UNITED 2 goals.

Loughborough one goal.

With a change of ends United took up the attack, and found plenty of work for the goalkeeper. After seven minutes' play Bridgwater passed Robertson in front of the goal, and he, by a sharp shot, made United's third goal. After this the home eleven had all the game, and in a scrimmage put a fourth goal. Resuming operations, Howell forced the goal-tender to use his hands, and even then corner kick accrued. Nothing came of this, however, and Loughborough half-backs, by combined play, succeeded giving Harris little breathing time. They were not long able to hold the advantage, however, and the Sheffields by dashing play, once again fighting dangerously near their opponents strong old, and for some time with the exception of an occasional break away the visitors had to act entirely on the defensive. At length, a most determined struggle took place in front goal. Time after time did the Loughborough goalkeeper have to use his hands, but eventually Calder, by a well judged kick, placed the ball safely under the crossbar, thus making the fifth goal for his side. A few minutes later the United forwards were again hard at work, and after some judicious passing, Watson receiving the leather, made the sixth goal. Later on Shaw from the right put the ball once more between the posts, but "off-side" was claimed and allowed. Loughborough, who seemed to be now thoroughly broken up, never had a chance, and the game ended:—

SHEFFIELD UNITED        6 goals,

Loughborough Town     1 goal.

Sheffield United: C. H. Howlett, goal; H. Lilley M. backs; G. T. Groves, R. P. Howell, and E. Cross, half-backs; W. Calder, A. Watson, W. Bridgwater, B. L. Shaw, and Robertson, forwards. Loughborough Town.—Harris, goal; Spiby and Griffin, backs; Peters, Plackett, and Kelham, half-backs; Lowe, Smith, Freestone, Carnelly, and Cross, forwards. Umpires, Messrs. A. Gilbert, and W. Deane. Mr. S. Widdowson, referee.

*Sheffield Daily Telegraph – 8 December 1890*