



Midland League 1892-93

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		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	Rotherham Town	24	19	3	2	80	28	41
2	Burton Wanderers	24	15	4	5	49	33	34
3	Loughborough	24	15	3	6	64	30	33
4	Leicester Fosse	24	12	3	9	50	37	27
5	Doncaster Rovers	24	11	4	9	47	44	26
6	Gainsborough Trinity	24	12	1	11	51	34	25
7	Kettering	24	11	3	10	48	41	25
8	Grantham Rovers	24	10	2	12	46	43	22
9	Wednesbury Old Athletic	24	8	3	13	41	51	19
10	Long Eaton Rangers	24	6	6	12	34	53	18
11	Mansfield Town	24	7	2	15	26	70	16
12	Newark	24	6	3	15	34	62	15
13	Derby Junction	24	3	5	16	32	76	11
			135	42	135	602	602	

Winner:	Rotherham Town
Runner-up:	Burton Wanderers
Third place:	Loughborough AFC
Wooden spoon:	Derby Junction
Games played:	156
Missing Results:	0
Goals scored:	602 (3.86 goals per game)
Biggest win:	Rotherham Town 8-0 Mansfield Town
Biggest home win:	Rotherham Town 8-0 Mansfield Town
Biggest away win:	Mansfield 0-5 Rotherham Town
Highest scoring:	9; Rotherham Town 6-3 Doncaster Rovers Derby Junction 4-5 Doncaster Rovers

The fourth Midland League season saw the number of clubs increase to thirteen, after Kettering, Mansfield Tn and Newark were successful in their application to join the league. Mansfield Town and Newark had competed in the Midland Football Alliance in 1891-92 and Kettering joined the Midland League to compete in a league competition for the first time.

Rotherham Town were the firm favourites to retain their Midland League title prior to the start of the season. They began the season with three straight wins, all by some margin. Doncaster provided an early indication that they might be able to compete with their Yorkshire rivals after an opening run that saw them win their first four games but their subsequent form resulting in them failing to win again before the New Year

As the season progressed only Loughborough and Burton offered any opposition to Rotherham's quest to become the first team in Midland League history to retain the title. Leicester Fosse showed some improvement after their last place finish the previous season but their overall form was of a staccato nature.

A measure of Rotherham's dominance is illustrated by the fact that runners-up, Burton Wanderers only lost once in fifteen matches, up to a final day defeat, and yet still ended the season 7 points adrift of the eventual champions. Fourth place Leicester ended 6 points behind Loughborough in third place, 14 points

behind Rotherham. The champions only suffered defeat on two occasions – a very surprising 4-0 success for newcomers Kettering just prior to Christmas and Burton Wanderers.

Rotherham averaged more than 3 goals per game, and only failed to score on one occasion – against Kettering! Charlie Leatherbarrow scored 26 times, to become the first Midland League player to score more than 20 in a season. Albert Carnelly scored 19 for Loughborough and became the first player to end the season as one of the top three goal scorers in two consecutive seasons.

Derby Junction, the only amateur club in the league, finished bottom and dropped out of the league at the end of the season. Mansfield, Newark, Long Eaton Rangers and Wednesbury Old Athletic ended long hard seasons. Former champions and runners-up twelve months ago finished 6th.

Rotherham were accepted into the ever-expanding Football League. Before the next season Wednesbury Old Athletic also ended their association with the Midland League, primarily due to financial issues, that ultimately resulting in the club folding completely.

Midland League Member 1892-93

	Founded	Home Ground, 1892-93	
Burton Wanderers	1871-1901	Derby Turn, Burton-on-Trent	The club were members of the Football League for three seasons in the mid-1890s. In 1901 they merged with Burton Swifts to form Burton United.
Derby Junction	1870-1895	Vulcan Athletic Ground	They were active in the 1880s and 1890s, notably being founder members of the Midland League in 1890 and FA Cup semi-finalists in 1888.
Doncaster Rovers	1879-	The Intake Ground , Doncaster	They entered the Midland League in 1891 and were elected to the Football League in 1901. The club lost re-election votes in 1903 and 1905 and so returned to the Midland League.
Gainsborough Trinity	1873-	The Northolme , Gainsborough	the club became members of the Football League in 1893 and remained members of the Second Division until 1912, making Gainsborough one of the smallest towns in England to have had a Football League team. T
Grantham Rovers	18??-97	Harlaxton Road, Grantham	The club played in the Midland League from 1891 to 1897. Grantham Rovers disbanded in 1897 after incurring debts of £140
Kettering		North Park, Kettering	They were champions of the Midland League in 1895-96, and then also entered a team into the new United League, which they left in 1899. After winning the Midland League again in 1899-1900, they applied for election to the Football League. However, they received only two votes and failed to gain entry to the League. Instead, the club joined
Leicester Fosse	1884-	County Ground and Walnut Street, Leicester	Division One of the Southern League.
Long Eaton Rangers	1881-99	Recreation Ground, Long Eaton	For a brief period in the 1880s, the club had a legitimate claim to being one of the best teams in the country. They

			were founding members of the second ever league, the Combination , in 1888, and when that folded, the Football Alliance in 1889.
Loughborough AFC	1886-1900	Athletic Grounds, Loughborough	
Mansfield Town	18??-189?	Stanhope Street, Mansfield	Mansfield Greenhalgh, a team for employees of the Greenhalgh & Sons Works, also competed in the Midland League at the end of the 19th century, playing their home games at Field Mill. These two clubs merged in 1894 to form Mansfield FC, although after 6 seasons of mediocre performance, the club disbanded around the turn of the century.
Newark FC	1868-1914	Muskham Road, Newark	
Rotherham Town	1878-96	Clifton Lane, Rotherham	Founded as Lunar Rovers. In 1889 the club became a founder member of the Midland League. They were champions in 1892 and 1893. They were subsequently elected to the Second Division of the Football League in 1893. The club's League tenure lasted just three seasons, finishing in 14th, 12th and 15th place (out of 16). At the end of the 1895/96 season they failed to apply for re-election and subsequently folded. Arthur Wharton, the man widely regarded as the first ever black professional footballer, played for the club from 1889 to 1894. A second Rotherham Town formed in 1899, going on to merge with Rotherham County in 1925 to form Rotherham United.
Wednesbury Old Athletic	1874-93	Wednesbury Oval Grounds	There were three clubs that had this name. WOAC became a founder member of the Birmingham & District Football Association in December 1875 and won the inaugural Birmingham Senior Cup competition, defeating Stafford Road 3-2 in the 1877 Final, at the Calthorpe F.C. ground, in front of between two and three thousand spectators

Results Grid

	Burton Wanderers	Derby Junction	Doncaster Rovers	Gainsborough Trinity	Grantham Rovers	Kettering Town	Leicester Fosse	Long Eaton Rangers	Loughborough	Mansfield	Newark	Rotherham Town	Wednesbury OA
Burton Wanderers		2-0	1-1	2-1	2-0	2-1	3-0	2-0	2-1	5-0	5-1	3-2	3-1
Derby Junction	1-2		4-5	1-1	3-2	1-5	1-3	1-1	2-6	1-2	3-2	1-4	3-1
Doncaster Rovers	4-2	6-1		1-3	3-2	2-2	0-1	2-0	1-3	4-2	1-0	0-1	2-2
Gainsborough Trinity	1-0	6-0	2-0		2-1	7-1	1-2	6-0	3-2	4-0	2-0	0-1	1-3
Grantham Rovers	4-0	4-3	1-2	3-1		2-1	1-2	2-1	3-2	4-0	2-2	0-2	3-0
Kettering Town	3-0	2-2	3-0	2-0	0-0		0-4	3-0	1-3	3-0	3-0	4-0	2-4
Leicester Fosse	1-2	4-0	0-1	2-1	2-0	3-1		0-1	1-1	5-1	7-1	1-1	3-1
Long Eaton Rangers	3-3	1-1	3-1	2-3	1-0	2-5	2-1		0-0	7-0	4-0	0-1	1-1
Loughborough	0-1	7-0	1-4	3-2	2-1	2-0	2-1	5-0		6-0	7-0	2-2	2-1
Mansfield Town	1-1	2-0	3-2	2-1	0-4	0-1	4-1	3-3	0-1		1-0	0-5	4-1
Newark	3-3	2-1	0-1	1-0	2-4	3-2	3-3	5-0	1-2	1-0		3-4	1-0
Rotherham Town	4-1	1-1	6-3	4-1	6-1	4-0	6-1	4-0	3-1	8-0	4-3		6-2
Wednesbury OA	0-2	5-1	1-1	1-2	4-2	0-3	3-2	4-2	1-3	2-1	3-0	0-1	

During the close season Fosse significantly strengthened their squad with the acquisition of goalkeeper Jimmy Thraves from Notts County and winger William "Billy" Dorrell from Singers. Thraves played for County in the 1891 FA Cup Final, losing 3-1 to Blackburn Rovers in front of 23,000 spectators at the Kensington Oval and played against the Fosse in the final game staged at Mill Lane. William 'Billy' Dorrell was scouted by Leicester Fosse playing for Singer's in Coventry, and replaced Jimmy Atter, Fosse's leading scorer in 1891-92 on the left-wing. A firm favorite with the fans, his dribbling and "trickery" attracted the attention of Aston Villa who he joined for £250 in May 1894. He scored five goals in 11 First Division appearances for Villa and was allowed to move back to the Fosse in March 1896. During his second spell with the Fosse, he scored 24 goals in 63 appearances.

Loughborough also made a number of "star" signings, William Sharpe (from Ardwick), John Start (Long Eaton Ranger), Charles Butterworth (Derby County), Jack Kent (Everton) and Thomas Culley (Birmingham St Georges). Outside left for two of Luffs Midland League seasons, Sharpe scored 6 goals, before being transferred to serve Division Two side Woolwich Arsenal. John Start joined his brother, striker, Frank for just one season at the Athletic Grounds, netting an impressive 11 goals in his 20 Midland League games for the club. Opera singing outside left Charles Butterworth also spent just one season at the Luffs where he was one short of being ever-present. Unfortunately, as we shall see Jack Kent's time in Leicestershire was not a happy one, twice breaking his leg, the latter (against the Fosse) so severe that it ended his playing career. The final signing Thomas Culley, although scoring in Loughborough's opening two wins of the season, made little impact after that.

Both clubs started the season full of hope and enthusiasm. For perhaps the first time in the Fosse's history, they had a place they could call home, allowing them to concentrate on building a top-class team. Fosse started the season with two defeats at Mansfield (4-1) and Rotherham (6-1), before drubbing Newark 7-1 at Walnut Street, with Slack scoring a hat-trick. Jimmy Thraves missed his train connection and turned up 35 minutes late for his debut against Mansfield Town. His place in goal being taken by William "Kiddy" Lowe, who conceded three goals whilst waiting for the arrival of a very embarrassed Thraves. Lowe scored Fosse's consolation goal. Thraves made amends making 148 consecutive appearances for the Fosse and in the process becoming a club legend. Two 4-0 wins away at Kettering and at home to Derby Junction led up to the first Championship of Leicestershire game of the season. Loughborough's form leading up to the derby game was patchy, winning 2, losing 2 and drawing 2. The highlight was a 6-0 slaughter of Mansfield Town the week before the eagerly awaited clash with Leicester on 14 November 1893. Fosse supporters turned up in hundreds to Loughborough. In addition to the crowds that came by train, numerous horse-drawn four

wheeled carriages conveyed Leicester people in the hope to see their team win. Rain fell in the morning making the ground very slippery. Although previous encounters between the Fosse and the Luffs had been "rough-charging, bullying battles", this encounter was a display of scientific football and was so as much in contrast to the old-time days as one can conceive. Sadly, for the Fosse faithful the outcome was the same – losing to their arch rivals - 2-1! Early exchanges were even until William Freestone scored for Loughborough. Slack should have equalised almost immediately but shot wide. Carnelly scored a second for the Luffs with a great strike. Fosse shooting was poor. But just before the whistle sounded for half-time Slack pulled a goal back. Play was fast and furious and end-to end, Loughborough having the best of the play forcing Thraves to make several outstanding saves. However, there can be no doubt that Loughborough were the best team on the day – and hence still the Champions of Leicestershire. For energy, individual skill, combination, and strategy they were more than one goal superior to the Fosse. Perhaps the Fosse were a little below par. But as with most games there were always many "ifs" and 'buts". "If" Webb had only shot straight for goal as he should have done; "if" the referee had ruled Loughborough's first goal off-side, as many spectators thought then the Fosse could have won the game. "But" if any other Midland League goalkeeper but Traves had been in goal, then Loughborough would surely scored heavily.

Fosse entertained their archivals in the reverse Midland League fixture in March 1892 in what local newspaper reporters described as "one of the best games ever played in the Midland League". The weather was bright, but there was a keen wind. Loughborough had the best of an even game, Start scoring past Thraves in the first half. The Fosse made desperate efforts to equalise before losing the advantage of the wind, but Slack threw away their only real chance. Restarting the "Luffs" had both the wind and sun in their favour, and for the first five minutes they attacked almost continuously. In a rare excursion Start was given the ball and after a fast run he centred beautifully, Dorrell missed the ball, but Hardy with a crisp shot scored a magnificent goal. The Fosse fans went wild, cheering frantically, and the Fosse thus encouraged made further onslaughts on their opponents' goal. Loughborough replied vigorously, with Carnelly almost scoring with a low shot. The game became fast and wonderfully even. After a couple of successive unproductive corners, their attack gradually weakened and the recently introduced strict training regime of the Fosse team began to tell. Playing with great dash and flair Fosse forwards kept the Luffs defence actively employed, who were more than up to the task. Urged on by their respective fans, both teams pressed hard, but to no avail, the game ending 1-1.

Leicester Fosse Results and Match Details

Date	Opposition	Result	Score	Scorers	Attendance	Match Details
17.09.1892	Mansfield Town (A)	L	1 - 4	Lowe/Emmerson, Elliman, Leivers, Fazey		Leicester started the game one man short.
26.09.1892	Rotherham Town (A)	L	1 - 6	Freeman / Leatherburrow (30, Pickering (2), McCormick		Hat-trick from Charlie Leatherburrow – 7 goals in 3 ML games for the new Rotherham forward.
01.10.1892	Newark (H)	W	7 - 1	Slack (3), Freeman (2), Silvester, Dorrell / Parlby	3,000	Alf Slack records the first ML hat-trick for the Fosse.
08.10.1892	Kettering Town (A)	W	4 - 0	Webb (3), og	1,500	A Fosse player scores a hat-trick on consecutive weekends in the ML. These would turn out to be the only hat-tricks recorded by the club in the ML
22.10.1892	Derby Junction (H)	W	4 - 0	Lowe, Dorrell, Freeman, Webb		Leicester's third consecutive win in the ML – scoring 15 times in the process and conceding just one.
12.11.1892	Loughborough (A)	L	1 - 2	Slack	7,000	Nearly £100 gate receipts.

26.11.1892	Grantham Rovers (H)	W	2 - 0	Mabbott, Slack	2,000	Grantham were depleted for long periods due to separate injuries to Pulling and chamberlain.
17.12.1892	Doncaster Rovers (A)	W	1 - 0	Freeman	1,000	Levi Freeman scored the only goal of the game in the opening few minutes in this midtable encounter.
24.12.1892	Wednesbury Old Athletic (A)	L	2 - 3	Hardy, Slack / Norman, Longmore (2)		Several newspapers stated that the game was a 3-3 draw.
07.01.1893	Doncaster Rovers (H)	L	0 - 1	/W Smith	4,000	Ground partially covered in snow.
14.01.1893	Burton Wanderers (H)	L	1 - 2	Hardy /Udall Capes		Leicester played the second half with 10 men following an injury to Jack Lord.
21.01.1893	Gainsborough Trinity (A)	W	2 - 1	Carter, Slack / Ward		
28.01.1893	Grantham Rovers (A)	W	2 - 1	Dorrell, Lowe/Watson		Fosse completed a ML double over Grantham who had failed to win in their last 5 games.
04.02.1893	Wednesbury Old Athletic (H)	W	3 - 1	Lowe (2), Slack / Longmore		
18.02.1893	Gainsborough Trinity (H)	W	2 - 1	Taylor, Lowe / AN Other		Fosse defeated 4 th place side
25.02.1893	Burton Wanderers (A)	L	0 - 3	/ Hearne (2), Capes		Only one defeat in 13 for Burton kept them top of the ML.
04.03.1893	Rotherham Town (H)	D	1 - 1	Lowe /Leatherburrow		Second place Rotherham dropped a point.
11.03.1893	Long Eaton Rangers (A)	L	1 - 2	Nuttall / Saxton, Plackett		
18.03.1893	Loughborough (H)	D	1 - 1	Dorrell / Start	8,000	Estimates of the attendance vary from 8,000 upwards.
01.04.1893	Newark (A)	D	3 - 3	Dorrell, Nuttall, Lowe / Oswald, Frettingham, Walters		Newark recover from 3-0 down to gain an unexpected point.
03.04.1893	Long Eaton Rangers (H)	L	0 - 1	/ Shepherd		Lond Eaton's first and only away win of the ML season.
08.04.1893	Kettering Town (H)	W	3 - 1	Dorrell (2), Slack/ Garfield		
22.04.1893	Mansfield Town (H)	W	5 - 1	Worrall, Lowe, Priestman (2), Slack / Gill (pen)		Priestman's first goals for the Fosse.
27.04.1893	Derby Junction (A)	W	3 - 1	Webb (2), Dorrell /Wood		This defeat condemned Derby to finish bottom, in their 80 th and final ML fixture.

Loughborough FC Results and Match Details

Date	Opposition	Result	Score	Scorers	Attendance	Match Details
03.09.1892	Burton Wanderers (H)	L	0-1	/ Hearne		The third time that Burton had beaten the luffs in the ML.
10.09.1892	Newark Town (A)	W	2-1	Freestone, Carnelly / Growcock		Loughborough came from 1-0 at half-time to claim victory.

17.09.1892	Doncaster Rangers (H)	L	1-4	Carnelly / Smith, AN Others		Doncaster maintained their 100% start to the season and headed the ML, scoring 10 goals.
24.09.1892	Long Eaton Rovers (A)	D	0-0			The Loughborough team contained three former Rangers players – Plackett, Kent and Start
01.10.1892	Rotherham Town (H)	D	2-2	Butterworth, Start		Rotherham were the only unbeaten team in the ML.
08.10.1892	Mansfield Town (H)	W	6-0	Kent, Culley, Farmer (2), Start, Carnelly		Mansfield had lost their 3 away matches in the ML by 7-0, 4-2 and 6-0.
12.11.1892	Leicester Fosse (H)	W	2-1	Carnelly, Start / Slack	7,000	Largest attendance recorded to date at the athletic Grounds, Loughborough.
26.11.1892	Wednesbury Old Athletic (H)	W	2-1	Farmer (2)/ Wilkes		
03.12.1892	Grantham Rovers (A)	L	2-3	Carnelly (2)	3,000	Loughborough's first defeat in 6 ML games.
17.12.1892	Mansfield Town (A)	W	1-0	Farmer		Loughborough snatch a late winner – Mansfield' first home loss of the ML season.
24.12.1892	Grantham Rovers (H)	W	2-1	Farmer, Butterworth / Barnes		Farmer [Loughborough] missed a penalty.
26.12.1892	Doncaster Rovers (A)	W	3-1	Farmer, Sharpe (2) / Waddington	1,500	This away win took Loughborough up to 2 nd in the table.
07.01.1893	Long Eaton Rangers (H)	W	5-0	Smith, Start (3), Farmer	1,000	Jack Start scored a hat-trick against his former hometown club.
04.02.1893	Gainsborough Trinity (H)	W	3-2	Farmer (2), Carnelly / Scott (2)		Framer scored the winner in the last minute of the game.
11.02.1893	Gainsborough Trinity (A)	L	2-3	Star, Carnelly/ Prentice (2), og		
18.02.1893	Derby Junction (A)	W	6-2	Carnelly (3), Start (2), Smith / Dawson, Firth	500	Albert Carnelly recorded his 3 rd ML hat-trick
25.02.1893	Newark Town (H)	W	7-0	Carnelly (3), Sharpe, Farmer, Start, Plackett		Albert Carnelly scored a hat-trick in consecutive weeks Loughborough's 7 th win in 8 games.
04.03.1893	Burton Wanderers (A)	L	1-2	Carnelly / Woodall, Udall		Vital win for Burton against 3 rd place Loughborough.
11.03.1893	Kettering (H)	W	2-0	Start, Carnelly		
18.03.1893	Leicester Fosse (A)	D	1-1	Start / Dorrell	8,000	
01.04.1893	Wednesbury Old Athletic (A)	W	3-1	Butterworth, Freestone, Farmer		Loughborough retained in 3 rd place – with this their 13 th ML win of the season.
04.04.1893	Derby Junction (H)	W	7-0	Butterworth (2), Carnelly, Farmer (3), Smith	2,000	Loughborough's 9 th consecutive home win in the ML
08.04.1893	Rotherham Town (A)	L	1-3	Sharpe/Longden, Leatherburrow	4,000	Rotherham clinched the ML championship with this win.
22.04.1893	Kettering Town (A)	W	3-1	Sharpe, Freestone, Carnelly / McUrich		Loughborough ended the ML season with a win and clinched 3 rd place,

Midland League Championship Match 1892-93

2.04.1893	Rotherham Town	0 (0)	3(1)	Rest of the League Dorrell Carnelly Capes	4000 spectators.
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Played at Leicester Fosse's Walnut-street ground.

#	Rotherham Town		Rest of the League	Parent Club
1	Hughie McKay		James Thraves	Leicester Fosse
2	Harry Thickett		Jack Kent	Loughborough AFC
3	Percy Watson		Walter Langton	Doncaster Rovers
4	Joe Barr		Ernest Nuttall	Leicester Fosse
5	Bill Broadhead		Valentine Smith	Loughborough AFC
6	Ted Cross		Albert Peters	Kettering
7	Bill Longden		Billy Dorrell	Leicester Fosse
8	Bob Cutts		Albert Carnelly	Loughborough AFC
9	Charlie Leatherburrow		Billy Heath	Wednesbury Old Athletic
10	John McCormick		Adrian Capes	Burton Wanderers
11	Alf Pickering		Harry Dixon	Kettering

The first Championship Match was played at Leicester on Thursday evening and attracted a good crowd of between 300-4000. The weather was fairly disruptive and shortly after the game had kicked off there was a heavy downpour and "violent thunderstorm" ensued, which resulted in the players rushing off the field and taking shelter until the storm subsided.

The game was won fairly convincingly by the Midland League team and the champions were on the defensive for most of the match, with their full backs Harry Thickett and Percy Watson being singled out for their excellent defensive work, despite the defeat. The second goal for the Midland League was scored by Albert Carnelly, came from a "magnificent shot."

Late in the game, a collision between Jack Kent and Charlie Leatherburrow resulted in Kent being carried from the field. It was later discovered he had broken his leg. This incident was an unfortunate one for Kent, who was originally only drafted in to play after the withdrawal of Gainsborough defender Cookson. Eight of the Midland League team had played for, or were to play for, clubs in the Football League.