



English Challenge (FA) Cup 1897-98



1898 FA Cup Final

Winners: Nottingham Forest
Runners-Up: Derby County

Five Leicestershire clubs entered the 1897-98 FA Cup competition – Coalville Albion, Coalville Town, Hinckley Town, Leicester Fosse and Loughborough.

Long Eaton Rangers knocked out both Coalville clubs – Albion in 2QR and the Town in 4QR.

Hinckley Town overcame Newstead Byron [Hucknall, Nottinghamshire] in 2QR, but were beaten in the next round by Rushden Town [Northamptonshire].

After being exempted from the first two qualifying rounds Loughborough were drawn to play Bulwell United at Bulwell. A 'good' crowd witnessed the encounter, which included a large contingent of supporters from Loughborough. Bulwell took the lead midway through the first half, Loughborough missing several easy chances to equalise. Bulwell doubled their lead early in the second half and added a third towards the end. Loughborough were thoroughly beaten, Bulwell playing a much stronger game and won comfortably.

Southern League Southampton knocked Fosse out of the English Challenge Cup, the first time the club had been automatically entered into the First Round proper. Fosse's trainer employed a "paperchase" as an unusual pre-match training session. McLeod with a screw shot opened the scoring for the Fosse after just 3 minutes. Dorrell after a fine run, skimmed the bar with a grand shot, but after 25 minutes, Southampton equalised after Saer in could not clear a shot from Keay, and Mestin following up hit he back of the net with a 'capital' strike. Fosse were penned in for long periods of time at the beginning of the second half. Buchanan scored for Southampton from close in, which was received with a 'tumultuous' cheer. Although the Fosse showed up 'pluckily' against this reverse, Southampton played a 'thoroughly winning game.'

The 1898 FA Cup final between Derby County and Nottingham Forest was played on Saturday, 16 April 1898 at the Crystal Palace stadium in south London. Derby County and Nottingham Forest were both appearing in their first final. As members of the Football League First Division, they were exempt from the competition's qualifying phase and each joined the competition in the first round proper, progressing through four rounds to the final. The final was watched by a crowd of 62,017 and Forest, leading 2–1 at half-time, won the match 3–1 with goals by Arthur Capes (2) and John McPherson. Steve Bloomer scored for Derby. Forest won the cup again in 1959. Derby reached the final again in 1899 but were defeated by Sheffield United; they won the cup in 1946.

Results and Match Details

	Date	Home			Away	Match Details
2QR	16.10.1897	Coalville Albion	0 (0)	1 (0)	Long Eaton Rangers AN Other	Park Road Ground, Coalville. Good gate. Beautiful weather. Coalville Albion's first-ever FA Cup match, Long Eaton played in the Midland League. Albion had a second half goal disallowed for offside.
2QR	16.10.1897	Coalville Town Haywood	1	0	Riddings Town	Waggon and Horses ground, Coalville. Good number of spectators. Riddings missed a second half penalty.
2QR	16.10.1897	Hinckley Town Griffiths (5 mins) Fern	2 (2)	1 (1)	Newstead Bryon AN Other	Holy Well ground, Hinckley. This encounter caused considerable interest, Large attendance (c. 1,600). Newstead played in the Notts League. Hinckley scored after 5 mins. Newstead equalised and within 2 mins Hinckley regained the lead.
3QR	30.10.1897	Bulwell United Hill AN Others	3 (2)	0 (0)	Loughborough AFC	Loughborough were exempt from the first two qualifying rounds. Loughborough were without their regular goalkeeper. An ardent follower of the Luffs described the exhibition
3QR	30.10.1897	Hinckley Town	0	2	Rushden Town AN Others	Holywell Ground, Hinckley Good gate. "as the worst he had ever seen..... Apart altogether from the loss of prestige by the result, Loughborough was considerable losers financially, and the defeat is one of the most serious blows the club felt for a long time."
3QR	30.10.1897	Gresley Rovers Fearn Jones	2 (2)	2 (0)	Coalville Town Banton Waward	Large gate. Gresley led 2-0 at half-time. Chapman (Coalville) retired injured in the second period.
3QRr	6.11.1897	Coalville Town	2	1	Gresley Rovers	Good gate.
4QR	20.11.1897	Long Eaton Rangers Bosworth Mabbott	2 (1)	0 (0)	Coalville Town	Recreation Ground, Long Eaton. Winners were drawn to play Ilkeston. Kick-off 2.30. Frank Gardner of the Fosse was the referee.
R1	29.1.1898	Southampton Keay Buchanan	2	1	Leicester Fosse McLeod	County Cricket Ground, Southampton. Southampton played in the Southern League. Kicked-off at 2.45 pm. 10,000 spectators. Southampton were knocked out by eventual winners Nottingham Forest in the semi-finals.

Match Reports

COALVILLE ALBION v. LONG BATON RANGERS.

There was an excellent attendance on the former's ground when these teams met in above competition. In the opening stages the game was very even, but the Albion shot through by Jeffcoate, who was given off-side. Long Eaton then woke up, and looked like scoring, but the attack was nipped in the bud, and nothing was done to the interval. In the next half a very even game was witnessed, and Long Eaton scored by Bosworth. This proved to be the only point registered in the contest, and Long Eaton won by the narrow margin of one goal to Coalville Albion nil.

Sporting Life - 18 October 1897

COALVILLE TOWN v. BIDDINGS TOWN.

At Coalville, in fine weather, before a big crowd. The home side kicked against the wind, but no advantage accrued, as the visitors repelled their attacks on each occasion. Bunting served finely on two occasions, and play was transferred to the other end, where Guinness and Ewart ought to have scored, but the interval arrived with nothing done. In the next half even play followed; after which Coalville came with a rush and scored a neat goal. Play was even after this, but no more points were registered, and Coalville won in the end by one goal to nil.

Sporting Life - 18 October 1897

HINCKLEY TOWN v. NEWSTEAD BYRON.

A large number of spectators assembled on the Hinckley ground on Saturday to witness the decision of the above match. The home club won the toss and played down hill in the first half. Hinckley at once commenced to press and scored before the game had been in progress five minutes. The visitors had another spell of defensive work before getting to the other end, when the home custodian had to save twice in succession. A further combined effort from Newstead met with success, but Hinckley obtained the lead again just prior to half time. Through the second stage the issue was keenly fought out. At the outset Hinckley had the best of the movements, Griffiths and Barlow sending in excellent shots. The visiting half-backs, however, played a splendid defensive game, and at the other end Lofton and Brown were conspicuous for the visitors. During the latter portion of the game each side attacked in turn, the Newstead custodian making a remarkably fine save. Nothing further was scored, and a well-contested game resulted—Hinckley Town, two goals; Newstead Byron, one goal.

Sporting Life - 18 October 1897

BULWELL UNITED v. LOUGHBOROUGH TOWN.

This game was looked forward to with a vast amount of interest, seeing that Loughborough are in the second class of Association football. Nevertheless, Bulwell partisans felt confident their men would render a good account of themselves, and in this particular they more than pleased their supporters, as the game was mostly favourable to them, and, amidst excitement England notched the first goal. The Second Division contingent tried hard to equalise but found their rivals equal to every attack, whilst a dash away by Bulwell let them in, and a second point was notched. The visitors tried desperately hard to score, but were powerless against their formidable country folk. At length a stampede by Bulwell ended in a third success being obtained, and in the end Loughborough were defeated by three goals to love.

Sporting Life - 1 November 1897

GRESLEY ROVERS v. COALVILLE TOWN.

The visit of Coalville to Gresley attracted a big following, and as the day was fine everything favoured a fast game, and in this respect they were not disappointed, and as the sequel shows the result was a tie. The game opened out in very even fashion, and after both goals had been assailed the Rovers worked the object into Coalville territory, and although they had a goal disallowed early on they still held the upper hand in the pressing department, and Fearn notched a legitimate point for them. Continuing to have the best of the deal, Jones notched a second point for them. The next half was conspicuous by the easy fashion in which Gresley worked, and the result was Coalville got down and added a point. The game was faster after this, but Gresley allowed chances to go begging, and on time Coalville scored again, the result of the match being—Gresley Rovers, two; Coalville Town, two.

HINCKLEY v. RUSHDEN TOWN.

This match, played on the former's ground, was witnessed by a big company, and although the home side were fairly confident of holding their own, the Rushden men were favourites. In the opening half Rushden pressed, but were driven into their own quarters, whilst Hinckley essayed a run, which was well staved off. At length Rushden came with a wet sail and scored. Amidst cries of "Play up, Hinckley!" the home lads showed their best form of the day, but Rushden were always able to cope with their attacks. Rushden here notched a further point, and were within an ace of again adding a point. However, nothing more was done, and Rushden won comfortably by two goals to Hinckley Town's none.

Sporting Life - 1 November 1897

English Cup.-Third Round

COALVILLE TOWN v. GRESLEY ROVERS.

RE-PLAYED TIE.

Played at Coalville on Saturday last before a very good gate. Mr. Black again held the whistle, and the teams lined up as follows:—

Coalville:—Bunting, goal; McGuinness and Beeson, backs; C. Benistone, E. Benistone and E. Cliff, half-backs; G. Handley, F. Bunting, W. Smith, J. Smith and S. Heward.

Gresley:—Barnes, goal; Thompson and Fox, backs; Jones, Fern and Richards, half-backs; J. Jones, Wileman, Lyons, J. Cliff and Ward, forwards.

Coalville kicked off, and soon after the start Handley sent in a shot and Thompson gave a corner which was fruitless, and at the other end McGuinness put a stop to a dangerous rush. The home forwards went away and Fox put in a useful kick. Gresley ran down and Lyons shot wide. The home team then had a turn by a good bout of passing by W. Smith, Bunting and Handley, but came to grief on reaching the visitors' backs, who were playing a safe game. The visitors then got away on the left but C. Benistone returned well, and Handley getting possession centred nicely, but no one was up. Thompson gave a corner in clearing but nothing came of it. The home team still pressed, and Handley sent over to Heward, who put in a beauty which Barnes could only save at the expense of a corner. Cliff placed nicely and after buzzing about the mouth of goal the ball was eventually got away. Ward and J. Cliff got possession and after a bit of good passing put the ball over to J. Jones who shot high over the crossbar. From the goal-kick, Jones again made another good attempt. Bunting caught the ball and kicked away. J. Smith broke away on the left, and after making a good run centred, W. Smith putting in a good shot which Barnes fisted away. A couple of corners fell to Coalville both of which were fruitless. All the home team were not

away. A couple of corners were taken which were fruitless. All the home team were not to be denied and after a lot of pressing reward came for their efforts. W. Smith pulling the ball over his head and easily beating Barnes. From the re-start the home quarters, but only to find the home forwards getting possession. Bunting passing on to H. Smith, and after beating himself in the act of shooting but missing the net and beat Barnes for the second time. On the other end Heward had a chance but the visitors

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... half with the forwards carried only to find the backs safe. The forwards pressed and Beeson missed a close in, and Wileman was allowed to score a very easy goal. After a corner to Gresley, Heward raced away on the left, and called upon Barnes with a beauty, which he equally well saved; and Handley on the other wing got the ball wide of mark from a screw. E. Benistone put a stop to Wileman, and passed on to Heward who was pulled up for offside. The game was here stopped owing to J. Smith being hurt. From the throw up Gresley again pressed, but J. Cliff was ruled offside. After a lot of mid-field play Heward ran down and the visitors' backs were kept busy and the ball was finally got over the line. Bunting sent in a capital shot, which Barnes fisted away. Beeson kicked on to Handley who ran almost the length of the field, but the effect of this was spoiled by Smith being offside when he took the pass. The same player sent in a good shot soon after and Barnes threw away only just in time for J. Smith charged him into the net, and the same thing was repeated soon after. Gresley then made a run and being stopped by C. Benistone, Handley struck the upright and the ball rebounded into play he headed into the goal mouth and Heward put the ball over the crossbar. Gresley ran up and E. Cliff put in a most useful kick from out of the mouth of goal, and after the home forwards had taken the ball to the other end, time was called. Score :

Coalville	...	...	...	...	2
Gresley	..	...	...	...	1

LONG EATON RANGERS v. COALVILLE TOWN.

From the start the home side had rather the better of the game, but it had been in progress for quite half an hour before Bosworth obtained a goal for them. The Rangers led at half-time by one goal to none, and on change of ends Mabbott increased their advantage. This proved to be all the scoring, despite many more corners, the game ending in a victory for Long Eaton by two goals to none.

Sporting Life - 22 November 1897

SOUTHAMPTON v. LEICESTER FOSSE.

Perhaps no match in the South aroused more interest than the meeting of the above teams in the competition at the County Ground, Southampton, on Saturday, and speculation was rife for several days previously as to the ultimate result. For the fourth year in succession Southampton have survived the qualifying stages and entered the first round proper, and it being fresh in the memory of our readers that they ran Sheffield Wednesday to a goal two years ago, the latter team ultimately carrying off the coveted trophy, and last season they accomplished a feat which no Southern organisation has done for years, viz., of getting into the second round, going under to Newton Heath after a drawn match. Both teams have been in strict training for the fray, Southampton for the past week doing their "bit" at Shawford. The visitors arrived in the town Friday, after having been put through the mill on the Leicester Ground. It was an ideal day, and fully 12,000 spectators were present. The Fossils were lucky with the spin of the coin, and naturally decided to take advantage of the wind that prevailed. It was soon apparent the visitors meant making matters warm for the Southern League champions, for after Turner had hit the side of the Leicester net the Fossils took the ball down, and some pretty play was witnessed among their forwards, and King passed right across to Dorrell, who re-passed to M'Leod, that player scoring in the first few minutes. Things went decidedly black for the home contingent, especially as the visitors continued to have the better of the game. Their forwards seemed quicker on the ball than the home team, and lost no opportunities. Even play for a while followed, the ball travelling up and down the ground rapidly, while Swift and Brown showed up prominently for the Fossils, Farrell and Turner both tested Saer, who was equal to the occasion. It was fully twenty-five minutes before any further scoring took place, and that fell to the lot of Southampton, Meston with a grand low shot equalising amidst a hurricane of cheers. After this Gaultwick had to be cautioned by the referee for badly fouling M'Leod. When the whistle blew for the interval the score stood one all. On resuming the ex-Saints had the wind behind them, and nearly attacked, and kept Swift, Walker, and Saer busy in defending: in fact, shots rained in from all quarters, and it was really marvellous how the home team were kept from scoring. Rarely were the visitors over the half-way line, Clawley having practically nothing to do. Southampton playing all round their opponents, the forwards might certainly have shot harder at times. Buchanan, after twenty minutes' play, added a second for Southampton, for which they richly deserved. Nothing else of importance occurred before the finish, although Southampton continued to have the whole of the play, but could not add to their score, running out winners of a well-contested game by two goals to one. Petrie and Meston played a splendid game for the home team, while Swift and Brown and Saer and M'Leod did similarly for the visitors. Referee, Mr. Kestcote; linesmen, Messrs. Timbs and Davis.

SOUTHAMPTON.—Clawley (goal), Nicol, Haynes, Meston, Gaultwick, Petrie, Yates, Buchanan, Farrell, Keay, Turner.

LEICESTER FOSSE.—Saer (goal), Walker, Swift, Ball, Brown, Proudfoot, Freebairn, Dorrell, M'Leod, M'Millan, King.

Sporting Life - 31 January 1898