

United League 1896-7

Nr	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
1	Millwall Athletic	14	11	1	2	43	22	23
2	Luton Town	14	10	1	3	52	16	21
3	Woolwich Arsenal	14	6	3	5	28	34	15
4	Loughborough	14	6	1	7	29	31	13
5	Rushden	14	5	1	7	25	42	13
6	Kettering Town	14	4	4	6	23	24	12
7	Wellingborough	14	3	3	8	17	39	9
8	Tottenham Hotspur	14	1	4	9	25	34	6

Winner:	Millwall Athletic
Runner-Up:	Luton Town
Games Played:	56
Missing Results:	0
Goals scored:	242 (4.32 goals per game)
Biggest home win:	Luton Town 11-0 Rushden
Biggest away win:	Loughborough 0-4 Luton Town
Highest scoring:	Luton Town 11-0 Rushden

Millwall Athletic and Luton Town were the two dominate teams.

Luton won all of their home games – scoring 30 and conceding just 3 goals.

Tottenham claimed the wooden spoon winning just one League game.

United League Teams 1896-97

Team	Home Ground	Other Information
Kettering Town	North Park, Kettering	The club was established in 1872. Kettering left the United league in 1899. After winning the Midland League again in 1899–1900, the club 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 Division One of the Southern League.
Loughborough	Athletic Grounds, Loughborough	
Luton Town	Dallow Lane , Luton. The ground was next to the Dunstable to Luton railway line, and players regularly claimed to have trouble seeing the ball because of smoke from the trains. A damaging financial loss during 1896–97 forced Luton to sell the stadium to stay afloat and, as a result, the club moved across the tracks to a stadium	Luton Town was the first in southern England to turn professional. They joined the Football League before the 1897–98 season, left in 1900 because of financial problems, and rejoined in 1920.

	between the railway and Dunstable Road	
Millwall Athletic	The Athletic Grounds - this was Millwall's first purpose-built ground, with a grandstand that seated 600 people and an overall capacity of between 10,000 and 15,000.	One of the founding members of the Southern League in 1894. They competed in it for 22 seasons until 1920, claiming the title twice in 1895 and 1896. Joined the Football League in the 1920-21 season.
Rushden	Newton-road Ground, Rushden	The club was founded in 1889 as Rushden F.C. and joined the Midland League in 1894. In 1895 the club's reserve team joined the Leicestershire and Northants League, but left the following season when it became the Leicestershire Senior League.
Tottenham Hotspur	Northumberland Park	The Hotspur Football Club was formed in 1882 by a group of schoolboys from Saint John's Middle Class School and Tottenham Grammar School. Mostly aged 13 to 14, the boys were members of the Hotspur Cricket Club formed two years earlier
Wellingborough	Thomas Field, Union Lane, Wellingborough	In 1879 they became the first club to play under floodlights, when they entertained Bedford at the Bassett's Close ground, using lights powered by generators at either end of the pitch.
Woolwich Arsenal	Manor Ground , Plumstead.	Founded in 1885 as a munition workers' team from Woolwich, then in Kent. They turned professional in 1891 and joined The Football League two years later.

Results Grid

United League 1896-7	Kettering Town	Loughborough	Luton Town	Millwall Athletic	Rushden	Tottenham Hotspur	Wellingborough	Woolwich Arsenal
Kettering Town		2-0	1-0	2-3	2-3	5-2	2-0	0-1
Loughborough	2-2		2-5	0-2	5-1	3-2	5-0	4-0
Luton Town	3-0	1-0		2-3	11-0	2-1	7-0	4-0
Millwall Athletic	3-1	6-0	3-1		4-1	6-5	3-0	3-1
Rushden	2-1	2-0	1-3	3-3		2-1	1-0	5-3
Tottenham Hotspur	1-1	1-2	1-2	1-3	5-1		1-1	2-2
Wellingborough	3-3	2-3	1-8	2-0	2-1	2-2		4-1
Woolwich Arsenal	1-1	5-3	2-2	3-1	3-2	2-1	2-1	

Home win
 Away Win
 Draw
 Result Not Known

United League Fixtures 1896-7

Date	Home	Away	Match Details
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1.9.1896	Wellingborough AN Other Murrell Murray	3 (1)	3 (0)	Kettering Town Miller MacMain Whitehouse	Opening game of the newly formed United League. Game commenced at 5.20 pm. 3,000 – 4,000 spectators. Kettering equalised 3 mins before time.
7.9.1896	Wellingborough Murray Mellor	2	3	Loughborough Ward Roulstone Jones	2,000 spectators. Luffs were not very fresh after their defeat and drenching two days earlier. “Hard game and tight finish.”
7.9.1896	Woolwich Arsenal McAvoy AN Other	3 (0)	2 (2)	Rushden AN Others	Plumstead, London. Rushden missed a penalty.
12.9.1896	Luton Town Stewart Ekins	2 (1)	3 (1)	Millwall Athletic Davis AN Other Whelan	Rain fell heavily all afternoon. 4,000 spectators.
16.9.1896	Loughborough AN Other Roulstone	2 (1)	2 (0)	Kettering Town Winterholden Pell	Poor gate. “Even play of a not scientific kind marked the game.” Pell equalised for the visitors in the last 2 minutes.
19.9.1896	Millwall Athletic AN Others Whelan Calvey Aitkin Gettins	6 (1)	5 (2)	Tottenham Hotspur Newbigging (2) Crump Clements Payne	East Ferry-road ground, London. Good weather. 5,000 spectators.
28.9.1896	Millwall Athletic	4	1	Rushden	Clarke [Rushden] was ordered off the field for using ‘objectionable’ language
3.10.1896	Woolwich Arsenal Meade (2)	2 (1)	2 (1)	Luton Town Gallacher AN Other	Plumstead, London. 8,000 spectators. Luton equalised with the last kick of the game.
5.10.1896	Rushden Young Clarke (2) Dunkley	5 (2)	3 (2)	Woolwich Arsenal Haywood (2) og	Wretched weather. 1,000 spectators. The Arsenal goalkeeper put one through his own goal.
7.10.1896	Loughborough Blackett (2) Andrews og Jones	5 (3)	1 (0)	Rushden Clarke	Bad weather. Loughborough had the advantage throughout the whole game.
12.10.1896	Kettering Banks Miller	2	0	Loughborough	Moderate attendance. Bitterly cold – a “young hurricane” blew across the ground. As the match progressed the Loughborough goalkeeper came up and joined the backs, but his roughness soon caught the eye of the referee and was severely cautioned.
12.10.1896	Wellingborough Ellison Murray	2	0	Millwall	2,000 spectators. Showery weather. Wellingborough had two off-side goals.
?10.1896	Millwall Athletic Whelan McKenzie (2)	3 (1)	1 (0)	Luton Carter	East Ferry-road, London. 8,000 spectators.
19.10.1896	Rushden Clarke (1 + pen) Denton	3 (2)	3 (2)	Millwall Athletic Miller Calvey Whelan	400 spectators.

19.10.1896	Woolwich Arsenal Russel Brock	2	1	Wellingborough Kingston (og)	Plumstead, London. Dull, cold weather. 1,500 spectators.
2.11.1896	Rushden	2 (0)	1 (0)	Tottenham Hotspur	1,000 spectators.
2.11.1896	Woolwich Arsenal McAvoy	1 (0)	1 (0)	Kettering Whitehouse	
9.11.1896	Woolwich Arsenal Brodin Russell	2	1	Tottenham Hotspur Devlin	Plumstead. Two Arsenal players [Brodie and Hayward] were both hurt during the first half.
13.11.1896	Loughborough Ward (3 min) Andrews (2) Jones Gourlay	5 (1)	0 (0)	Wellingborough	Fair Friday afternoon. 1,000 spectators. Beautiful weather. Three of Loughborough's goals came from corners.
16.11.1896	Kettering Ball Dixon	2 (1)	3 (2)	Rushden Denton Minkley Warner	1,200 spectators
23.11.1896	Kettering	0 (0)	1 (0)	Woolwich Arsenal	1,000 spectators. Joe Powell [Arsenal back] broke his wrist after falling heavily following a collision. He died a week later from lockjaw supervening upon blood poisoning. His arm was amputated, but even this failed to save his life,
28.11.1896	Rushden Clarke	1 (1)	0 (0)	Wellingborough	1,500 spectators.
30.11.1896	Wellingborough Boyd Murray Little Mellows	4 (1)	1 (1)	Woolwich Arsenal MacFarlane	1,200 spectators. Arsenal played under distressed conditions owing to Powell's decease, whilst they were further handicapped at the start by Boyd missing his train
19.12.1896	Luton Town Galbraith Docherty Stewart (2 + 1 pen) Gallacher McInnes	7 (3)	0 (0)	Wellingborough	Frosty ground. Good crowd. Luton won through "science and deadly shooting."
9.1.1897	Woolwich Arsenal Haywood Russell (3) Meade	5 (3)	3 (2)	Loughborough Brailsford Roulstone Ward	Wretched weather. 3,000 spectators. "Very good game."
?1.1897	Rushden AN Other Clarke (pen)	2 (2)	1 (1)	Kettering Dixon	1,000 spectators.
30.1.1897	Wellingborough Mellor og	2 (1)	2 (0)	Tottenham Hotspur Milliken Burrows	1,200 spectators. Wellingborough were credited with a goal which did not meet with the approval of the visitors. In meeting a shot from Walker, Ambler stepped a little too far back and in the opinion of the referee the ball went over the line, he allowed a goal. Spurs plyers threatened to leave the field, but after consultation with the "city fathers" they wisely resumed.
8.2.1897	Kettering	2	3	Millwall	Kettering were poorly represented.
13.2.1897	Rushden Young	1 (0)	3 (1)	Luton Town McLaren Galbraith	2,500 spectators. Luton's trip to Rushden was costly - an outlay of £12 10s for a special train and a

				Ekins	severe injury to Galbraith towards the end of the game.
20.2.1897	Millwall Athletic	3	1	Kettering	
22.2.1897	Wellingborough	1 (0)	8 (2)	Luton Town	The gate that the best the Wellingborough had had this side of Xmas. About 45 left Luton by the midday train and the journey took 75 mins.
25.2.1897	Tottenham Hotspur Devlin Clement	2 (1)	2 (1)	Woolwich Arsenal Russell (1 min) Cale	Northumberland Park. 2,000 spectators
27.2.1897	Luton Town Brown Davies Stewart	3 (0)	0 (0)	Kettering	Kettering arrived late – kick off delayed until 4 pm. The visitors started with 10men, though within minutes the eleventh man appealed. Even first half – Kettering hitting the bar.
27.2.1897	Tottenham Hotspur Ernie Payne	1 (0)	2 (1)	Loughborough Blackett (2)	Northumberland Park. 4,000 spectators. Blackett practically walked the ball into the net for the first goal while the Spurs players earnestly appealed for offside. “The Loughborough men played very clean football, but do not seem well together forward; they play almost the same game as Spurs – all wing work . Monteith is a gem of a goalkeeper and would grace even a better team than Loughborough.”
27.2.1897	Wellingborough	2	1	Rushden	
27.2.1897	Woolwich Arsenal Cain O'Brien (2)	3	1	Millwall Athletic Graham (pen)	12,000 spectators
4.3.1897	Tottenham Hotspur	5	1	Rushden Town	
8.3.1897	United League [South] Calvey (2) Stewart O'Brien Russell	6	1	United league [North] Blackett	3,000 spectators
13.3.1897	Millwall Athletic Calvey (3) Geddes (2) Mumford (og)	6 (3)	0 (0)	Loughborough	4,000 spectators. Both sides were fully represented. Thompson [Loughborough back] retired hurt in the first half following a heavy collision.
13.3.1897	Tottenham Hotspur	1	2	Luton Town	
15.3.1897	Kettering Panter	A	A	Tottenham Hotspur Milliken	Game abandoned after 30 mins due to heavy rain with the score 1-1.
20.3.1897	Luton Town Gallacher (2) Stewart Coupar	4	0	Woolwich Arsenal	5,000 spectators. Arsenal arrived late – crowd waiting patiently. Game commenced 25 mins late at 4.55 pm. Luton scored twice in the first 7 mins.
3.4.1897	Luton Town	1	0	Loughborough	Dunstable Road was officially opened prior to the match by the Duke of Bedford, who also donated £50 towards the £800 building costs. 5,000 spectators. The ground initially consisted of a covered seated stand on the eastern touchline, a covered standing area on the western touchline and raised

					embankments around the rest of the pitch.
3.4.1897	Tottenham Hotspur Milliken	1 (1)	3 (2)	Millwall Athletic Calvey (2) Whelan	5,000 spectators. Fast, exciting match.
7.4.1897	Loughborough Blackett (2) Ward Jones	4	0	Woolwich Arsenal	700 spectators. Arsenal were unfortunate in not scoring, as they had the best of the play, the halves played a fine game. The forwards were to blame, The Loughborough forwards however, gave a splendid exhibition of passing and shot with vigour when the chances occurred,
10.4.1897	Luton Town Ekins McInnes	2	1	Tottenham Hotspur Newbigging	Game commenced at 4.30 pm.
12.4.1897	Kettering Hiskin	1 (0)	0 (0)	Luton Town	800 spectators. Dull weather
12.4.1897	Millwall Athletic King Calvey (2)	3	0	Wellingborough	Fine weather. Game kicked off at 5 pm. King scored with a long shot after 5 mins. The visitors held their own till after the change of ends, when Calvey shot two goals for Millwall.
13.4.1897	Kettering Heskin (2) Parker Cowan Allen	5 (3)	2 (0)	Tottenham Hotspur Draper (og) Wilson	300 spectators Moderate number of spectators.
16.4.1897	Luton Town Birch (3) Gallacher Ekins Stewart (2) McInnes Coupar AN Others	11	0	Rushden	Good Friday. Large number of spectators.
17.4.1897	Tottenham Hotspur	1	1	Kettering	3,000 spectators
19.4.1897	Tottenham Hotspur	1	1	Wellingborough	
20.4.1897	Loughborough Brailsford (2 min) Roulstone	2 (1)	5 (1)	Luton Town AN Others	Good crowd. Luton played good football and scored 3 goals in quick succession.
24.4.1897	Loughborough Jones (3)	3	2	Tottenham Hotspur Hobson Clement	
24.4.1897	Millwall Athletic Calvey Davis AN Other	3 (2)	1 (1)	Woolwich Arsenal Cale	7,000 spectators.
26.4.1897	Kettering	2	0	Wellingborough	
26.4.1897	Rushden Bailey Denton	2	0	Loughborough	Poor attendance.
28.4.1897	Loughborough	0	2	Millwall Athletic	1,000 spectators. Millwall's won the League Championship.

Match Reports

UNITED LEAGUE.

KETTERING v. LOUGHBOROUGH.—This match was decided at Kettering, and is dealt with by our own reporter in another column. Result: Kettering, 2 goals; Loughborough, nil.

WELLINGBOROUGH v. MILLWALL ATHLETIC.—On the ground of the first-named the above match was decided in showery weather. "Linesman" paid a visit to the Midland town, and a special report from his pen appears to-day. Result: Wellingborough, 2 goals; Millwall, nil. The following is the League table up to date:

UNITED LEAGUE.

	Goals.							Pts.
	Pd.	Won.	Lst.	Dn.	For.	Agst.		
Millwall.....	4	3	1	0	13	10	6	
Loughborough	4	2	1	1	10	7	5	
Kettering	3	1	0	2	7	5	4	
Arsenal	3	1	1	1	8	9	3	
Wellingborough ...	3	1	1	1	7	6	3	
Rushden	4	1	3	0	9	15	2	
Luton	2	0	1	1	4	5	1	
Tottenham Hotsp'r	1	0	1	0	5	6	0	

Morning Leader - 13 October 1896

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

UNITED COUNTIES' LEAGUE.

LOUGHBOROUGH v. WELLINGBOROUGH.

Only moderate play was witnessed in this match at Loughborough this (Friday) afternoon. Ward headed through for Loughborough early in the game, and although the visitors tried hard they failed to register. In the second half they were repulsed easily by the home backs, and Loughborough scored four goals, three coming from corner-kicks. Result—Loughborough five goals, Wellingborough none.

Derby Daily Telegraph - 14 November 1896

UNITED LEAGUE.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR v. LOUGHBOROUGH.

This match was played at Tottenham, before a large crowd. There was one change in the advertised teams, Montgomery, the Hotspur back, being unable to play owing to an injury sustained in the Arsenal match on Thursday. The clubs have never previously met, and Loughborough came full of confidence, having beaten Newcastle last Saturday, while the 'Spurs had drawn with Arsenal on Thursday.

Burrows won the toss, and the game was started in the presence of 3,000 people. The 'Spurs were first to attack through Payne and Clement, but the Loughborough backs returned, and Jones put the ball through after the whistle had gone for offside. Play continued even for a time, and then the 'Spurs pressed, Monteith saving a splendid shot from Almond. Payne and McElheney each missed excellent openings. Twenty-five minutes from the start Blackett scored for the visitors.

Final : Loughboro' 2, Hotspur 1.

Evening News (London) - 27 February 1897

MATCH ON MONDAY.

UNITED LEAGUE.—NORTH v. SOUTH.

This match, in aid of the funds of the League, attracted some 3,000 spectators to the Manor Grounds, Plumstead. At the outset both teams appeared evenly matched, but although the first half was pointless the South had somewhat the better of the game. On crossing over they at once assumed the upper hand, and the Northern defence was severely tested, but Monteith saved again and again in grand style. At last, from a centre by Russell, Calvey opened the scoring, and then the Northern defence broke down. Directly afterwards they were penalised for a foul in front of their goal, and, although their custodian saved cleverly, Stewart dashed up before the backs could clear and put on another point. For some minutes the South kept up a veritable bombardment of their rivals' goal, and Calvey put them a further point ahead. At last the Northerners pulled themselves together, and Blackett beat Williams, but this was their last effort, O'Brien, Russell, and Calvey again scoring for the South, who finally won by six goals to one. Teams:—

South.—Williams (Luton), goal; Caldwell (Woolwich) and McEwen (Luton), backs; Crawford (Woolwich), Stewart (Luton) (capt.), and Crump (Tottenham), half-backs; Whelan (Millwall), Calvey (Millwall), Cate (Woolwich), O'Brien (Woolwich), and Russell (Woolwich), forwards.

North.—Monteith (Loughborough) (capt.), goal; Thompson (Loughborough) and Wallace (Kettering), backs; Pell (Kettering), Ball (Kettering), and Hamilton (Loughborough), half-backs; Denton (Rushden), Blackett (Loughborough), Clarke (Rushden), Jones (Loughborough), and Dickson (Kettering), forwards.

Referee:—Mr. T. W. Saywell.

Kentish Mercury - 12 March 1897

UNITED LEAGUE.

KETTERING v. TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR.

Played at Kettering. The match was not finished owing to a heavy downpour of rain and hail. Both teams were well represented. Ten minutes from the start Panter scored from a centre by Dixon. About eight minutes afterwards Milliken equalised for Tottenham. After the goalkeeper had saved, the game was very even. The teams continued to play for half an hour, but the weather getting worse the referee terminated the match.

Sheffield Independent - Tuesday 16 March 1897

UNITED LEAGUE.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR v. MILLWALL ATHLETIC.—

The match between these clubs on Saturday attracted some 5,000 spectators. Fifteen minutes after the start Calvey opened the scoring for Millwall, and shortly afterwards the same player added another point, while Milliken scored for Tottenham. In the second half Millwall continued to have the better of the exchanges, and obtained another point through Whelan. The result was a win for Millwall by 3 goals to 1.

Tower Hamlets Independent and East End Local Advertiser - Saturday 10 April 1897