



Leicestershire Football Association Challenge Cup 1887-88

Winner: Sheepshed
Runner-Up: Mill Hill House
No. of entries: 18

A meeting of gentlemen interested in the national winter pastime - football - was held at the George Hotel, Haymarket (Leicester) on Saturday 24 September 1887, "to take into consideration the desirability of forming an association in the county." Clubs that sent representatives were - Leicester Fosse, Leicester Town, Mill Hill House, St Matthews, Loughborough, Sheepshed, Market Harborough, Kegworth, St Andrews, Ravenstone, Castle Donington, Melton Rovers, St Saviours, Coalville, and Hinckley Trinity. Mr Gardner, secretary of Fosse F C, said the idea of forming an association had been talked of for several seasons. At the committee meeting of his club some time ago he was instructed to write to the clubs of Leicestershire to ascertain whether they were of the opinion that such a society would be beneficial. About 25 clubs were written to and of these 15 promised to support the association, two replied that they were unable to do so, whilst six did not answer at all. If an association was formed, they would be able to send out a representative team against other shires and enter cup competitions. Mr Upton (Loughborough) proposed, and Mr Ashmole (Fosse) seconded, that such an association should be formed. This was carried unanimously. It was decided that the title should be "The Leicestershire Football Association". In 1887, its first year, the Leicestershire FA had 17 affiliated teams. Four years later, the extent of playing and watching both rugby and soccer had grown to such an extent that the Leicester Daily Post observed that in "*no other town in England, perhaps, has its rapid growth been better attested than that of recent years in Leicester. Why, it seems to me but yesterday that scarcely 500 people could be got together to see a good match "free, gratis and for nothing". Now what do we find? Why five or six thousand people on each of two football grounds on the same afternoon, freely paying admission money. In an end-of-year survey of the social life of the town, the paper noted that: Only a few years ago [football] was nowhere as compared with cycling. Already, however, the once sensational contests on the cinder track have become a faded memory while Association and Rugby Football has the field ...*"

The county's first Association football competition the Leicestershire Challenge Cup, was full of drama, incident, and controversy. The first round draw was made in mid-October 1887:

Ravenstone Druids v Mill Hill House
Castle Donington v Hugglescote
Fosse v St Saviour's
Loughborough Town v Kegworth St Andrews
St Matthews v Hinckley Trinity
Coalville v Melton Rovers
Sheepshed v Market Harborough

The cup ties had to be played on or before 19 November 1887. The outcome of no less than four games were disputed and investigated by the Leicestershire Football Association committee. Cup favourites Loughborough Town took the lead at the Hubbard's Ground after 15 minutes when a Kegworth defender headed through his own goal. After dominating play, they were three up at the end of the first 45 minutes. The second half began with the Luffs bombarding the Kegworth goal mouth resulting in two quick goals from Rodgers. A good shot gave Kegworth a consolidation point, before Loughborough piled on the pressure and got their sixth and final goal in an emphatic 6-1 victory. Immediately after the final whistle blew Kegworth lodged a protest with the referee alleging that Shannon, one of the Loughborough players was not eligible to compete having taken part in other cup ties during the season. It was also alleged that a second member of the Loughborough eleven was "similarly situated." Loughborough were subsequently disqualified from the competition after a brief hearing of the Leicestershire Football Association Committee prior to the draw for the second round.

This resulted in a squabble between the Loughborough Town and the county association. Despite this, Leicestershire Football Association honoured the club by allowing it to stage it's first-ever fixture when a North

Leicestershire XI captained by Luffs Walter Cockain beat South Leicestershire 2-1 in a county trial fixture. The Leicester Post printed a letter from Loughborough Town's secretary outlining their view of the situation:

Charles Gadsby – Secretary of Loughborough in a letter to the *Leicester Post*

To the Editor

Sir, - Having had pointed out to me a paragraph in the "Observer's" notes in Monday's Leicester Post referring to the tie in the first round of the Leicestershire Challenge Cup competition between Loughborough Town and Kegworth St Andrew's, I should be obliged if you would allow me space to refer to the action taken by the Association Committee at their meeting in Leicester last Saturday night. A resolution was passed to the effect that Loughborough Town Club should be disqualified from further competition for the cup for the present season, on the ground of infringement of the rules of the association. The committee of the Loughborough Club hold that there has been no infringement on their part, but apart from this point it is the fact of their being disqualified without a chance "to prove to the satisfaction of the committee that the offence had not been committed" (which according to the rule of the association they claim) that they object to. Although their representative was at the meeting, he had been doing duty for the association as a referee at a cup tie in Leicester and went to the meeting quite unaware that a protest had been laid, and thoroughly unprepared to offer any defence. The protest was against the qualification of a player named Shannon, whom the complainants object to on the ground that he played during the present season for Derby Junction F.C. in the National, the Birmingham and Derbyshire Cup Competitions. The only rule that applies to this qualification (unless the player is a professional, and this was not even hinted at) is the first in a summary of the rules for the cup ties supplied by the secretary to the various clubs and runs thus - "Competing teams shall number eleven players, bona fide members of their representative clubs. Players may be changed, but no member can play for more than one club". The committee of our club maintain the last word of this rule, "club", refers to "the respective clubs" who have "competing teams" in this competition, and does not include clubs belonging to altogether separate associations, and that the meaning of the rule in the name as that of the corresponding rule of the National Competition, which runs thus:- "No individual shall be allowed to play for more than one competing club, but members of each representative team maybe changed during the series of matches, if thought necessary." On reading it is evident that we are innocent. I know most of the representatives of the Leicestershire clubs on the committee were only too glad to get the chance to throw the club out of the competition, it being well-known that our chance of winning the cup was the rosiest of all, and that is why we were disqualified. Unless we can be offered a chance of defending ourselves we shall certainly withdrawal from the association, but if permitted an impartial hearing, and cannot then satisfy the committee as to our innocence, and are consequently disqualified, we hereby challenge the eventual winners of the cup to play a game on our ground, all profits of which shall be devoted to the association funds. Apologising for having trespassed so largely on your space, I am, sir, yours truly.

CHARLES H GADSBY

Hon. Sec of the Loughborough Town F.C., Nov 22

Given what is stated in the letter, along with other decisions made by the same committee, as we shall see, justification for the disqualification of Loughborough was somewhat flimsy to say the least. There may well have been an element of self interest in the other club's competing voting for their expulsion. Incidentally, Sheepshed the first trophy holders did not accept Loughborough's invitation, although they did beat them 3-1 a week or so before the final.

Leicester Fosse's fixture, against St Saviour's, was also the subject of a protest. Staged at Belgrave Cricket and Cycle Club, Fosse went one down within the first few minutes and equalised before half time through Hassell. A shot by Galloway for St Saviour's was saved, but he scored from the rebound, only for the Fosse to immediately hit back by Knight to even the score again. With the light fading rapidly and both sets of players struggling to see the ball, James and Bankart scored for the Fosse, to win the tie 4-2. St Saviour's protest that they lost the game due to bad light was upheld by association. The game was replayed at Belgrave Road, the Fosse winning by 5 clear goals.

Sheepshed's biggest crowd of the season, around 600, witnessed their first round encounter with Market Harborough. As with several other cup ties, the away team arrived late. Travel around the county in the late nineteenth century was torturous, relying on non-punctual trains that criss-crossed the county, often

requiring several connections or horse drawn carriages. So, the journey of the Harborough team, based 12 miles to the south of Leicester to Sheepshed, a similar distance north, must have taken several hours, with the return journey taking even longer. Kick off was delayed until 3:30. Late November days are short, the game ending 8 minutes early as the players could barely see each other let alone a muddy brown ball; the home team cruising through, 7-2. The Castle Donington and Hugglescote Robin Hood tie, "played under protest", was witnessed by a "large number of spectators". The visitors arrived very late and kick off was delayed even further when the captain of the Robin Hood objected that the field was not fit to play upon. Castle Donington scored each side of half time but owing to the darkness the referee stopped the game twenty minutes before time. The association refused Hugglescote's request that the fixture should be replayed.

Coalville FC's home fixture against Melton Rovers at the Fox and Goose Hotel, also kicked off well after 3:30 pm, due to travel issues experienced by the visiting side. After half-an hour's fast and furious play the opening goal was registered, only for Melton to equalise two minutes later. Johnson, the centre forward kicking an easy goal. Soon afterwards, the home team took the lead with a header, only for Melton to make the score 2-2 after rushing the ball through after a sharp skirmish. Some idea of the pace of the game can be gauged from the fact that these four goals were scored in less than 15 minutes. After half-time one of the visitor's forwards, after some neat passing movements, fired a shot that went through the goal, but the referee blew for offside. Poole, the Coalville goalkeeper, could have easily stopped the goal, but the visitors claimed the goal on the ground that the whistle was not heard until the ball had passed through the posts. After some heated discussions the Coalville captain resumed the game under protest. Home supporters, decided to take things into their own hands and occupied the goal mouth, which they refused to leave until appealed to by the Coalville umpire and the police. Shortly afterwards the game was stopped by the referee, as it was too dark to continue. Coalville were furious and protested to the association because of the late arrival of Melton and the disputed goal. The game was ordered to be replayed at Melton, which the home side won 2-0.

The fixture between St Matthews and Hinckley, was by comparison with the other round one games, rather dull. The home team winning 5-0 in a one-sided encounter. In the remaining ties, St Matthews easily beat Hinckley Trinity 4-0 and Mill Hill House, a team of school teachers thrashed Ravenstone 5-0, after the first game played at Victoria Park ended in a draw.

The draw for round 2 was:

Mill Hill House v. Barwell Villa
Leicester Wanderers v. St Matthew's
Castle Donington v. Kegworth
Fosse v. Sheepshed
Melton Rovers - bye

The cup ties had to be played on or before New Year's Eve.

Sheepshed playing in red scored within a couple minutes after kicking off the second round tie against Leicester Fosse on the Belgrave Road Grounds on Christmas Eve. Waldren made a high kick before the posts, the ball dropping right into the goal, where it was easily rushed through. A splendid run by Knight for the Fosse, with a good shot equalised matters. Soon after Savage added another for the visitors and Thompson scored for the Fossils. The slippery conditions of the ground rendered accurate shooting difficult, and nothing more was scored before half-time. Soon after the change of ends, Savage added a third goal for the Reds and Fosse yet again levelled the scores. Play was fast and exciting, the game ending in a 3-3 draw. The game was replayed at Sheepshed on 21 January 1888 in front of an highly excitable crowd exceeding 3,000. Fosse took the lead after twenty minutes, a feat which was greeted with great enthusiasm by the large contingent of Leicester supporters present. Just two minutes later Leicester doubled their lead. As matters began to look ominous for Sheepshed they began to take the upper hand, scoring just before half-time. Sheepshed equalised early in the second period. Although the play was fast and furious neither side were able to take the initiative, the game ending in stalemate. The tie was finally decided in the favour of the north Leicestershire club the following Saturday. Sheepshed pressed from the kick off at the Athletic (Hubbard's) Ground in Loughborough and scored the opening goal causing great excitement among the several hundred Sheepshed spectators present. A few minutes later another goal was recorded for the men in red. Fosse

managed to pull one back in the second half through Knight. A terribly strong wind blew across Victoria Park at the start of the second-round tie between St Matthews and Leicester Wanderers. The "Saints" set the ball

The committee of the Leicestershire Association committed no error in commanding the semi-final of the cup competition to be played at Loughborough. A "gate" can be relied upon there. It would take the patrons of half-a-dozen Association matches in Leicester to equal one "gate" at any of such outlying places as Loughborough, Coalville, or Sheepshed. The attendance to see the Wanderers and Sheepshed play last Saturday was not one of the biggest seen on Hubbard's ground, but would doubtless have been larger had the time of kicking off been correctly printed on the posters. As it was, between 700 and 800 people lined the ropes, and if anything was lacking in point of numbers it was more than compensated for by the enthusiastic bearing of those present.

A goodly contingent patronised the 2.55 train from Leicester, amongst the travellers being members of the Mill Hill House, Fosse, L.A.F., and other clubs. In connection with this it may not be out of place to suggest that on similar occasions it would be wise if intending travellers by these fare-and-a-quarter trips would notify their intention beforehand. It would prevent such confusion as prevailed last week. At the same time praise must be accorded to Mr. Holmes, the Wanderers' secretary, for his zealous effort under great difficulties.

To criticise the play is a ticklish task. The ground, it may be at once stated, was so greasy that the men could not display to the best advantage the abilities they are known to be endowed with. Consequently it must not be expected that detailed remarks upon each player's merits will appear in this column upon the present occasion. Not this evening—smother evening. But this can truthfully be said. Rowson, for the Wanderers, played a very high-class game, and but for him the Leicester Club would — (playing as they did, with all the worst of the luck) — have been completely "smashed, pulverised, and destroyed." At some future time, when the Wanderers have a fair chance of showing in their true colours, it may perhaps turn out that they are a better match for the "mountain-peckers" than the state of last Saturday's poll would appear to indicate. I don't want to be accused of rank heresy, but cannot resist saying that in order to defeat Mill Hill House for the Cup the Sheepshed players will be called upon to surpass one and all of their previous efforts. If that is taken in the light of a tip it is not altogether intended as such. The issue of a football encounter is not the sort of thing that even a Philadelphia lawyer would predict upon.

Leicester Daily Mercury - Saturday 10 March 1888

in motion and ten minutes from the start the first goal was scored by Wanderers captain Taylor. After some even play in the centre of the field the Wanderers worked the ball into the opponent's territory, Narroway the right wing forward doubling the lead. In the second half the Wanderers continued to have the better of the play, long kicks being the order of the day. The wind made play very uncertain, the ball being speedily transferred to all quarters. A third goal was scored by Johnson. Soon afterwards the referee stopped the game for bad light, the Saints losing by 3-0.

Victoria Park was also the venue for the Mill Hill House v. Barwell tie, which attracted considerable interest. The game was a disappointing spectacle. Barwell were outclassed in a one-sided game, losing 5-0. Little is known about the final tie of the round, between Castle Donington and Kegworth, apart from the fact that the latter went through to the third round.

The third round draw paired Sheepshed with Kegworth and Mill Hill House with Melton Rovers. Leicester Wanderers were granted a bye. There was a huge turnout for the tie between Sheepshed and Kegworth played on a bitterly cold Saturday in late February 1888. The home side were three up by half-time. Just minutes into the second half, a heavy snowstorm visited the ground and players and spectators alike were subjected to much discomfort. The referee stopped the game whilst the snowstorm lasted and the Sheepshed men were ready on the ground as soon as it was over. The visitors however were nowhere to be found. After waiting a considerable time, the referee made the following decision — "Owing to the visitors failing to come out to the ground again, the match is awarded to Sheepshed, giving Kegworth the right to appeal to the committee of the association if they think well." Given that they were inferior in every way and that Sheepshed's goalkeeper and backs were impassable, Kegworth did not

contest the decision. Kegworth made a protest against the result but given that they had not paid their deposit to the Association, the matter was not discussed. Since Leicester Wanderers had been granted a bye, the result of the only other round three tie was Mill Hill House 3-0 Melton Rovers.

The semi-final draw was made by the Association at a meeting of the committee on Saturday 25 February 1888 at St Georges Hotel in Leicester. Mill Hill House were granted a bye into the final, their opponents being

the winners of the only semi-final tie, between Leicester Wanderers v Sheepshed. Incidentally, the association sent notice to all member clubs that players would be liable to suspension if they played in 6-a-side games.

A large Leicester contingent saw the Wanderers get blown away 5-1 at Loughborough on the first Saturday of March to face Mill Hill House in the first ever Leicestershire Football Association Challenge Cup Final. The Fox and Goose Cricket Ground at Coalville staged the final which ended in stalemate. The match report given below, is one the most comprehensive published in Leicestershire press during this period and provides a fascinating insight into association football in the late 1880s.



Reproduced with the kind permission of John Bennett and family, Sheepshed. Leicestershire

Sheepshed Leicestershire Association Challenge Cup winning team 1888. Joe Bennett is on the left, second row, the man on his own in the middle is Kidger.

The very first "Championship of Leicestershire" was staged at Coalville on 17 March 1888 between Sheepshed and Mill Hill House, witnessed by 2,000 spectators. The game ended in a 1-1 draw. Waring scored for Sheepshed and Thornton equalised for the "House". The replay took place a fortnight later at Kegworth. Several changes were made for the second game by the Leicester side, Sheepshed on the other hand, staying with the same eleven that had been on duty throughout the whole competition. Sheepshed proved the stronger team, winning a one-sided game 8-0. Scorers for the "Reds" were Bennett, Johnson, Savage (2), Waring (2) and Danvers (2).

However, due to a lack of funds and some “collateral mismanagement with the association”, the cup was conspicuous by its absence.” With or without a trophy there was great excitement in Sheepshed upon the arrival of the team back from Kegworth. More than 50 people sat down to a public dinner on Saturday 14 April at the Charnwood Forest Railway Hotel in honour of Sheepshed F.C. the first winners of the Leicestershire Football Prize Cup. Influential inhabitants of the town celebrated in full force, namely members of the Local Board, the Guardians, the Burial Board, the postmaster, and other officials. After the “Queen and the Royal family” had been duly toasted, the club vice-chair, Mr Bosworth, a local solicitor, gave the toast - “Success to the Sheepshed Football Club” and remarked how proud and pleased he was to be present to share in the honour of the first winners of the cup. Considerable concern was shown over the refusal of to provide medals to the winners or “any acknowledgement in any shape of form from the Leicestershire Football Association”. Several letters were written by Sheepshed FC, and meetings were held before giving the Association an ultimatum, that they would withdraw from Leicestershire Football Association if the winners medals did not arrive. This worked and the victorious Sheepshed eleven, the first Champions of Leicestershire, were given their winners medals by the FA Chairman and mayor of Leicester, Mr T Wright at the club's annual dinner in September 1888. Other visitors from Leicester represented several clubs and were included in a celebratory dinner for upwards of 70.

Leicestershire Challenge Cup 1887-88

Round 1

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
29.10.1887	Ravenstone Druids Fosbrooke	1	1	Mill Hill House AN Other	First meeting between these teams. Match ordered to be replayed due to being finished in bad light.
29.10.1887	Fosse Hassall Knight Bankart	4 (1)	2 (1)	St Saviour's Galloway (2)	Belgrave-road Grounds, Leicester. Game finished in semi-darkness.
12.11.1887	St Matthews Keith Rowe (2) R Jelley	4	0	Hinckley Trinity	
12.11.1887	Coalville	2	2	Melton Rovers	Fox and Goose ground, Coalville. Game kicked off at 3.30 pm. Following a disputed goal by Melton the home supporters, occupied the goal mouth, which they refused to leave until appealed to by the Coalville umpire and the police. Match ordered to be replayed due to bad light.
12.11.1887	Sheepshed AN Others	7	2	Market Harborough Burdett AN Other	First-ever game between the clubs, Kick off delayed to 3.30pm due to the late arrival of the visitors. Game ended 8 minutes early due to poor light. The tie was replayed.
12.11.1887	Castle Donington	2	0	Hugglescote Robin Hood	Match abandoned due to bad light after 70 minutes. Tie was ordered to be replayed.
12.11.1887	Belgrave	0	2	Leicester Wanderers	Match abandoned due to bad light. Result stood.
19.11.1887	Loughborough Town Rodgers AN Others	6	1	Kegworth St Andrews	Loughborough disqualified for fielding an illegible player.

Round 1 Replays

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
19.11.1887	Mill Hill House Brain (3) Sturgess (2)	5	0	Ravenstone Druids	
3.12.1887	Leicester Fosse Thompson (2) Bentley (3)	5	0	St Saviour's	Belgrave-road Grounds, Leicester.
3.12.1887	Melton Rovers Waite (2)	2	1	Coalville Wharmby	
3.12.1887	Hugglescote Robin Hood	1	3	Castle Donington	500 spectators

Round 2

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
24.12.1887	Mill Hill House Nuttall (2) Atter AN Other	5	0	Barwell Villa	
3.12.1887	Leicester Wanderers Taylor Narroway Johnson	3	0	St Matthew's	Victoria Park, Leicester. Match abandoned after 87 minutes due to bad light. Result stood.
24.12.1887	Castle Donington	2	0	Kegworth	Kegworth went through to R3. Reason not yet known.
24.12.1887	Fosse	3	3	Sheepshed	Belgrave -road Ground, Leicester.

Melton Rovers, bye

Round 2 Replay

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
21.1.1888	Sheepshed	2	2	Leicester Fosse	At Sheepshed. Excitable crowd of 3,000 spectators.

Round 2 2nd Replay

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
28.1.1888	Sheepshed	2	1	Leicester Fosse	Played at Athletic Grounds, Loughborough. Several hundred spectators

Round 3

Date	Home			Away	Match Details
18.2.1888	Sheepshed Bennett Waring AN Other	3	0	Kegworth	Numerous spectators. Bitterly cold weather. Kegworth, although in the third round, had not won a match in the competition, but had been successful in the protest they had made, both against Loughborough and later on against Castle Donington
4.2.1888	Mill Hill House Rippin AN Others	3 (3)	0 (0)	Melton Rovers	Just minutes into the second half, a heavy snowstorm caused the referee to stop the game. The Sheepshed men were ready on the ground as soon as it was over. The visitors however were nowhere to be found. Game awarded to Mill Hill House.

Leicester Wanderers, bye.

Semi-Final

Date		Match Details			
3.3.1888	Leicester Wanderers Atkinson	1	5	Sheepshed Waring (2) Johnson AN Others	At Loughborough. Large attendance.

Mill Hill House, bye

Final

Date		Match Details			
17.3.1888	Mill Hill House Thornton	1	1	Sheepshed Waring	Played at Coalville. An enthusiastic crowd of spectators, many of whom journeyed from Leicester, Sheepshed, Whitwick, and surrounding villages. Game commenced at 3.40 pm.

Final Replay

Date		Match Details			
31.3.1888	Mill Hill House AN Other	1 (0)	8 (3)	Sheepshed Bennett Savage (2) Waring (2) Johnson Danvers (2)	Played at Kegworth. Large number of spectators.

MATCH REPORTS

Round 1

Ravenstone Druids v Mill Hill House
 Castle Donington v Hugglescote
 Fosse v St Saviour's
 Loughborough Town v Kegworth St Andrews
 St Matthews v Hinckley Trinity
 Coalville v Melton Rovers
 Belgrave v Leicester Wanderers
 Shepshed v Market Harborough

~29 October 1887~

FOSSÉ v St SAVIOUR'S - The first round of this competition was commenced on Saturday afternoon on the Belgrave-road Grounds, when the Fosse and St saviour's teams opposed each other. Fosse won the toss and kicked off from the Belgrave-road goal. Within a few minutes Galloway, for St Saviour's obtained a goal. The Fosse team then carried the ball into the enemy's territory, and a goal was only just saved, another rush took the ball into the St Saviour's goal, but although almost between the posts no score was affected. Soon afterwards St Saviour's obtained a corner, but nothing resulted. The Fosse left wing then ran the ball up, and Gardner made a good shot, but the leather went over the bar. A splendid attack by the right wing, enabled Hassall, for the Fosse to equalise the score, which at half-time stood at one goal each. After resuming, play became very general, but fast, good attempts being made by both sides. Galloway, for St Saviour's had a shot. The goal-keeper stopped it, but following the ball up, it was driven through. The Fosse then took the ball, and Knight made the score even again. The light was now getting very bad, and it was difficult to distinguish the ball. Play, however, was fast and exciting. Just before time was up James and Bankart succeeded in placing two more goals to the credit of the Fosse, who were thus winners by four goals to two. Players: Fosse: West, goal; De Ville and T Ashmole, backs; Bankart, T Poyner and F Gardner, half-backs; C Knight, centre; H James

and Hassall, right wing; H Wright and E Johnson, left wing. St Saviour's: R Small, goal; G Gardner and J Marston, backs; S Ellis, A Cornell and C Hopkins, half-backs; Galloway, centre; Sharpe and Stacey, ring wing; T Kirk and A Ellis, left wing. It stated that St Saviour's will appeal against the result of the match.
Leicester Daily Post - 31 October 1887

~29 October 1887~

RAVENSTONE DRUIDS v MILL HILL HOUSE - This match, in the first round of the Leicestershire Cup competition, was played at the Ravenstone on Saturday. The visitors won the toss, and elected to play downhill. In the first half play was of a very fast description, although several corners fell to each side score resulted. On re-starting Fosbrooke obtained a goal for the Druids, and by a bit of good play on the part of Dalley or Mill Hill House the ball was centred and put through. No further score was made, and the game ended in a draw. Middle Hill House: Brice, goal; Pearce and McAlpin, backs; Whitworth Pilsbury, half backs Charters, Exton, Daley, Brain, Alford, and Sturgess, forwards. Druids Deacon, goal; Collier and Beadman, backs; Mason, Bacon and right, half backs; Colver, Fosebrooke, Woolley, Cover, and Freeman, forwards.
Leicester Daily Post - 31 October 1887

12 November 1887

COALVILLE FC v. MELTON ROVERS - These two teams met on the Fox and Goose Hotel Ground, Coalville on Saturday, in the first round of the Leicestershire Association Cup tie. There was a large number of spectators present. During the play, two goals each were made and a third claimed for the visitors but disputed. Both sides were in splendid form, and but for the disputed goal, the game would have been as pleasant as it was exciting. The Coalville men signified their intention of furthering a protest to the Association because of the late arrival of the visitors. The question of the disputed goal will also be referred to the association. Bailey, Fendall, and Waite played excellently for Melton, while W Wharmby, Nash and Wright showed splendid form for the home team. Umpires, Mr W Fellowes, and Mr A Burton. Referee Mr Upton of Loughborough.

12 November 1887

SHEEPSHED v. MARKET HARBOROUGH - The Sheepshed ground was the scene of considerable enthusiasm on Saturday afternoon, to witness the match between the above clubs in the first round of the competition for the cup offered by the Leicestershire Association. The spectators were far more numerous than any occasion during the present season and must have reached between 500 and 600. The visitors did not arrive on the ground until 3:30, and the ball was at once kicked off by James for the visitors. Within the first five minutes the home team scored two goals, the second going between the posts from a splendid long shot by Johnson. Shortly after a foul was given to Sheepshed, followed by two corner kicks in succession. Nothing resulted however and Price (the goal-keeper) then received some applause for stopping a hard fast shot by Bennett. In the next few minutes the visitors goal keeper had to handle the ball twice, and some good play on the part of Cotton was applauded by the spectators. The Sheepshed men now worked together well, and buy some good crossing added two more goals in quick succession. The visitors began to work harder to try to save a severe defeat, and shortly afterwards Newbold had to handle for the first time during the game. The visitors scored their first goal amidst applause all round the ground. After the ball was again in play two corners were given to Sheepshed, but without result. A good run was then made up to the Sheepshed goal by Lindley, and Burditt scored the second goal with a low fast shot. A corner to Harborough followed, and up to half time no change in the game resulted, viz., Sheepshed four goals, Market Harborough two. In the second half of the game the home team played well together and showed their superiority in the game, adding three more goals. Eight minutes before the time was up the referee stopped the game, as it was too dark to continue it and the visitors were half-an-hour late in coming to the ground. The result was therefore Sheepshed seven goals, Market Harborough two goals. Players:- Sheepshed: J Newbold, goal; J Waring and J Cotton, backs; A Kidger, W Johnson and W Waldron, half backs; J Bennett and E Savage, right wing ; A Smith and E Needham, left wing; W Danvers, centre. Umpire, F Elliott. Market Harborough: W W Price, goal; F Kemp-Smith and T Tebbutt, backs; J Bland, J Whitbread, and C B Fisher, half-backs; J Lawrence and Lindley, right wing; W B Ray and C Burdett, left wing; H James, centre. Umpire, Mr Underwood. Referee, Mr H Jackson, Loughborough.

12 November 1887

LEICESTER WANDERERS v. BELGRAVE – The teams met on a field lent for the occasion by Mr. D. Kilby, at Belgrave, on Saturday afternoon, to contest their tie in the first round of this competition before a fair number of spectators. Wilkes, the home centre-forward started the leather, which was immediately taken into close proximity to the visitors' goal. A minute after the start a shot put in by one of the home forwards very nearly scored, the ball just going wide of the mark. When the game had been recommenced even play in neutral territory followed for some time, but then the visitors worked the leather close to their opponents' stronghold. A couple of corners fell to the Wanderers, but nothing resulted. Play was mostly in the home half, Johnson placing a goal to the credit of the visitors. This seemed to put more life into the Belgravians, and they were quickly swarming round the visitors' goal. The Wanderers, however, quickly replied to this, and it was not long before the game was again carried on in the vicinity of the home goal. Operations were continued here for some time, but then the Belgravians transferred play to the opposite end, a couple of corners falling to them. This was not suitable to the tastes the visitors, who were quickly at work again in the home half. Some fast play took place here, and then Rowson made a good shot, which was given as a goal though Belgravians and those of their partisans who were standing near the uprights said the ball went over the cross-bar. When the whistle sounded for half-time the score stood two goals to nothing in favour of the Wanderers. After the resumption play was very fast, each goal in turn being in danger. The darkness made further description impossible, the referee stopping the game 20 minutes before time, when the Wanderers were declared the winners by two goals to nil. Teams: Wanderers: H. Allen, L. Rowsom and A. Hubble, backs; G. Bailey, G. Thomas, and A. James, half-backs; H. Taylor (captain). W. Tinsley (left wing), J. Narroway (captain), H. Beckley and Johnson (right wing), forwards. Umpire. A. Holmes. Belgrave: H. Hardy, goal; C. Blockley (captain) and J. W. Garner, backs; A. R. Kaye, W. H. Garner, Spencer, half-backs; J. Pole, Stacey (left wing), T. Wilkes (central); W. Harris (right wing), forwards. Umpire, - J. Page. Referee, Mr. Homer, L.A. F.C.

Leicester Daily Post – 14 November 1887

19 November 1887

MILL HILL HOUSE v. RAVENSTONE DRUIDS - This match was played on the Victoria Park, the first meeting between the teams resulting in a draw. Ravenstone won the toss and kicked off from the Pavilion goal. The ground was very slippery, rendering good play difficult, although an excellent game was witnessed. Nothing particular took place for the first 10 minutes, but then Brain with a good shot scored for the Mill Hill House, and soon after put another goal to their credit. This was disputed but allowed by the umpires. The home team took the ball into the visitors' territory and kept it there for some time until Sturgess, by a good shot, sent it beneath the bar. The visitors were considerably pressed, and Brain was enabled to score a fourth goal for the House before half-time. The ball having been re-started, the Ravenstone team made some good attacks, but the home backs proved far too strong for them, and they were unable to score. Just before time Sturgess, for the House, obtained another goal, which made the Mill Hill House team successful by five goals to nil. Players:- Mill Hill House: A E Brice, goal; D McAlpin and K H Pearce, backs; H Wing, F J Whitworth (captain) and H Pillsbury, half backs; W H Sturgess and F D Nutall, right wing; J H Brain, centre; Dally and A Alford, left wing forwards. Umpire, A E Wright.

19 November 1887

LOUGHBOROUGH v. KEGWORTH – These teams met in the first round of the cup tie competition at Loughborough. Loughborough scored from a corner kick after 15 minutes and one of the Kegworth men headed the ball through the posts. Although Kegworth passed well, the game was principally in their quarters, but a second corner kick allotted to Loughborough proved fruitless, and a shot at the home goal by one of the Kegworth men hit the post. The play was now of a give and take character, but eventually Loughborough again pressed, and scored another goal. This was followed by a foul near the Loughborough goal, which the visitors failed to turn to good account. The Loughborough left wing executed a smart bit of passing, and obtained another corner kick, from which nothing resulted. Gadsby was called upon to save, and when half-time was called there were three goals to the credit of Loughborough, Kegworth not having scored. On

recommencing play the home goal was assaulted, but the right wing getting hold of the ball it was rushed across the ground, and from a splendid shot by Rogers Loughborough again scored, and a minute afterwards added another. From a good shot Kegworth then obtained their first goal, but Loughborough, piling on one more, won by six goals to one. Players: Loughborough Town: C Gadsby (goal), F Gibbs and Griffith (backs), W Cockain (captain), Coltman and W Kelham (half-backs), Rogers and Dawson (right wing), Shannon (centre), Brewin and Gibson (left wing). Referee: Mr Ashmole (Leicester Fosse). Kegworth: G F Mullers (goal), J Beswick and G Stenson (captain) (backs), W Wood, G Mellors and W Mellors (half-backs). A Buckley and W Maddock (left wing), John Mellors (centre), James Mellors and R Young (right wing). A protest has been lodged against the result of the match.

Leicester Chronicle – 26 November 1887

19 November 1887

ST MATTHEW'S v HINCKLEY TRINITY – The visitors' kicked off from the Park-road end. Soon after the start the home eleven pressed, and in five minutes Keith shot the first goal for them, which was followed shortly afterwards by another, the ball being put through the posts by Rowe. Play was still confined to the visitors' ground, their stronghold being in danger most of the time. Several shots went wide of the mark, and from a corner nothing resulted. Eventually, from a bit of fast work, just in front of the Trinitarians' goal, the home eleven's score was augmented by a point scored by R Jelley. At half-time the total stood St Matthew's three goals, Hinckley none. When ends had been changed the visitors still had much the worst of the play, which was carried on in their ground the greater part of the time, although they defended their position slightly better than in the first half. Several good shots and corners fell to the Saints, for whom Rowe obtained a fourth goal shortly before the whistle blew for "no-side", the St Matthew's thus being the victors by four goals to nil. Players: St Matthew's: W Sharp, goal; I Knight and T Linniker, backs; F Jelley, J Woodier and W Bassett, half-backs; J Flint and W Rowe (right wing), R Jelley (centre), A Keith and P Simpson (left wing), forwards. Umpire, G Peek. Hinckley: J Thompson, goal; C Pratt and Emery, backs; F Collier, R Part and J Bailey, half-backs; H Davis and W Hurst (right wing), J Abbott (centre), Taylor and Goode (left wing), forwards. Umpire, W Pickering. Referee, Mr P Small, St Saviour's F.C.

REPLAYS

3 December 1887

FOSSE v. ST SAVIOUR'S

This tie, which was played off a few weeks since and disputed by the St Saviour's who were then defeated was replayed on Saturday on the Belgrave-road Grounds. A stiff breeze was blowing across the ground all afternoon, considerably interfering with many of the shots at goal. The Fosse at once pressed, and within five minutes James obtained a goal. A corner by the Fosse had no result, and the "Saints" then gradually worked the play out of their ground and gaining a corner the ball was taken dangerously near the Fosse goal, but nothing was scored. General play ensued, Knight, for the Fosse, making an excellent shot. The Fosse secured a foul just in front of their opponents' goal, but the ball was got away safely and taken up the field. It was, however, quickly returned by Thompson, who made a splendid run, and sent the ball between the posts. Just before half-time, and after a piece of skirmishing before the goal, Bentley added the third goal for the Fosse. Ends having been changed the Fosse took the leather into the enemy's territory, and Knight centring Thompson sent it through the uprights. Nothing of importance then transpired for some time until Bentley again scored for the Fosse. A few minutes before the whistle for time sounded the Fosse obtained a foul in their opponents' goal, which threatened to become dangerous. The ball, however, was well got away without a score having been made, the Fosse winning by five goals to nil. Players: Goal, T de Ville; backs, W Johnson, and S Sudbury; half-backs, F Gardner, Frost and T Ashmole; right wing, H James, and C Bentley; centre, E Thompson; left wing, G Knight, and E Johnson; umpire, Mr W E Taylor. St Saviour's; Goal, Jno Marston, backs, Jos Marston, and Gardner; half-backs, Cornell, Denham, and Watts; right wing.

~3 December 1887~

LEICESTERSHIRE CHALLENGE CUP

CASTLE DONINGTON v. HUGGLESCOTE ROBIN HOOD – This match was replayed at Hugglescote. In the expectancy of an exciting game a large number of spectators had assembled, numbering about 500. The Hugglescote captain won the toss and chose to kick with the wind. The game soon became very fast, the Donington forwards pressing the home team back, and after about 10 minutes play they scored the first goal. The Hugglescote team tried hard to equalise, but the Donington men were playing a splendid passing game, Atkins making some grand runs on the left wing; but the home team, by some good combined play, took the ball near the visitors' goal, and S Cross neatly put it through the posts, amidst the enthusiastic applause of the spectators. Both teams now played up pluckily, and shots were made at both goals; the goal-keeping of Wilkins, for the home team, being exceptionally good. Poole and Marriott, on the right wing, also played excellently. At half-time the score stood at one goal each. On changing ends the game continued to be keenly contested, the spectators loudly applauding both teams. The Robin Hood pressed the visitors in their goal and in turn the visitors pressed them. Both goal-keepers handled the ball a good many times. Gent on the left wing made some good runs, but failed to score. Hall on the visitors' right wing had some good shots at goal, but the good back kicking of Briers (full-back) prevented them from scoring. A splendid shot from H Cross hit the goal line, and many of the spectators thought it went under and commenced cheering, but the referee gave it in no goal. The Donington forwards getting possession again took the ball up the field, and finally succeeded in scoring, following it up by another immediately after. The Robin Hood tried hard to score, but the good play of Rouleston (back) from prevented them, and eventually the game ended in a win for Castle Donington by three goals to one. For the visitors Roulestone (back) and Atkins on the left wing played excellently, and for the Robin Hood, Gent on the left wing, Poole on the right wing, Briers back, and Causer half-back distinguished themselves. Immediately after the game was over a protest was lodged with the referee, on the allegation that F Roulestone, one of the Donington players, had played for Derby Minor Cup. The names of the respective players were Castle Donington: Fowler, goal; Fawcett, F Roulestone (backs), Hutchly, Archer, Castledine (half-backs), Atkins, Hickinbottom (left wing), Marcer. W Hall (right wing), and Maycroft (centre). Robin Hood: W Wilkins (goal), S Briers (captain), J Woollerton (backs), J Canner, H Holt, J Staples (half-backs), J Poole, J Marriott (right wing), S Gent, S Cross (left wing) and H Cross (centre). Umpires: Mr G Cross and Mr V Hickinbottom. Referee: Mr R Small (Leicester).

Leicester Daily Post – 5 December 1887

2 December 1887

MELTON v. COALVILLE – Played at Melton, on the "Rovers" ground. The home team won the toss, and from the commencement play was in their favour, and Waite scored a goal 15 minutes from the start. The game was exceedingly well contested, and Waite placed another goal to the credit of Melton, whilst Wharmby scored one for Coalville. Nothing further resulted, and Melton won by two goals to one. Players:- Coalville: H Poole, goal; W Wharmby and T Goacher, backs; W Moore, H Wharmby and A Wright, half-backs; G Stableford, J Nash, and R Smith, left wing. Melton: G Weason, goal; W Bailey, E Newman and H Fendall, half-backs; H Bailey and C Henfrey, right wing; R Johnson, centre; R Smith and W Waite, left wing.

Leicester Daily Post – 5 December 1887

Round 2

Mill Hill House v. Barwell Villa
Leicester Wanderers v. St. Matthew's
Castle Donington v. Kegworth
Fosse or St Saviour's v. Shepshed
Coalville or Melton a bye

24 December 1887

MILL HILL HOUSE v BARWELL- This tie in the second round of the Association Cup was played on the Victoria Park and attracted considerable interest. C McAlpin kicked off from the Park-road goal against a cross wind,

and the ball being well followed up, the Barwell goal-keeper quickly had to fust out a shot by Charters. A corner to Barwell was taken out of danger by Whitworth, a foul in turn relieving Barwell, but a combined run by the visitors' right wing and centre caused Sturges to handle, and then an exhibition of effective passing by the "House" forwards gave a F Nuttall a chance, which he was not slow to accept. A good shot through the posts, however, was followed by an appeal for "off-side", which was allowed; but an attack on the part of the left wing met with a better reward, Atter negotiating a goal from a pass by Charters. Barwell momentarily threatened danger on the left wing, a good kick by D McAlpin being of great service to his side at a critical moment. With the ball transferred to the other end, Nuttall increased the "House" score from a nice pass by Colin McAlpin, and immediately afterwards what appeared to be a fair goal was disallowed by the referee, who granted a foul. From the free kick in the mouth of the Barwell goal, the score was apparently further augmented, but the referee again exercised his veto on the point. This was just before half-time when the score stood: Mill Hill House, 2 goals; Barwell, none. Immediately upon resuming Nuttall proved successful in an attempt to get past the Barwell custodian, who soon afterwards headed the leather through his own citadel. From this point play materially slackened, though the visitors' forwards strove hard to prevent further disaster. In this they were unsuccessful as, after good all-round play on the part of the "House" Atter headed a fifth goal, the home side thus winning by five to none. Players: Mill Hill House: Sturges, goal; D McAlpin and F W Wright, backs; F Whitworth, E Nuttall, and Pilsbury, half-backs; Dalby and F Nutall right wing; C McAlpin, centre; Charters and Atter, left wing; umpire, Mr A E Wright. Barwell: E Mergency, goal; M Wright and E Jervis, backs; L Grewcock, T Smith and W Green, half-backs; T Drakeley and J Wright, right wing; W Grewcock, centre; W Place and A Geary, left wing; umpire, Mr W Powers. Referee, Mr G Garner, Barwell.

Leicester Daily Post - 26 December 1887

3 December 1887

St MATTHEWS v. WANDERERS

These teams met on Victoria Park to play their tie in the second round of this competition. A terribly strong wind blew across the ground, slightly favouring, in the first half, the Wanderers, who defended the Park-road goal. The "Saints" set the ball in motion, and ten minutes from the start the first point was scored, the leather being kicked between the posts by Taylor, the Wanderer's captain. After some even play in the centre of the field the Wanderers worked the ball into their opponent's territory, and Narrowway, the right wing forward, placed a second goal to their credit. The wind made play very uncertain, the ball being speedily transferred to all quarters of the field. The Wanderers generally held an advantage, several shots being saved by the goal-keeper. At half time the score stood Wanderers two goals St Matthew's nil. After changing ends the Wanderers continued for some time to have the better of the play, kicks at goal being the order of the day. At length their score was further augmented by a third point, which was obtained by Johnson. The referee stopped the game shortly before time, when the Saints were defeated by three goals to nothing. Player:- St Matthew's W Sharp, goal; T Lineker and I Knight, backs; F Jelley, W Bassett, and J Woodier, half-backs; J Flint and W Rowe (right wing), R Jelley (centre), P Simpson and A Keith (left wing), forwards; Mr G Peck, umpire. Wanderers: AH Allen, goal; H Buckley and A Hubble, backs; A James, G Bailey, and G Thomas, half-backs; Johnson and J Narrowway (right wing), S Rowson (centre), H Taylor and W Tildesley (left wing), forwards; Mr A Holmes, umpire. Mr J Horner.

Leicester Daily Post - 3 December 1887

24 December 1887

FOSSE v. SHEPSHED. - The cup tie in the second round of this competition was played off on the Belgrave-road Grounds. Danvers, for the visitors, started the ball from the entrance goal, and immediately pressed the home team. Waldron made a high kick before the post, the ball dropping right into goal, when it was rushed through. A splendid run by Knight for the Fosse, with a good shot, equalised matters. Soon after Savage added another against the home score, and Thompson scored for the "Fossils". The slippery conditions of the ground rendered accurate "shots" difficult, and nothing more was scored before half time, when each side had obtained two goals. Soon after ends had changed Savage added a third goal for the "red 'uns" and Thompson for the Fosse completed the triplet on their side. Play was very fast and exciting all through the game, which thus ended in a draw, three goals apiece. Players:- Fosse: Goal, A. West; backs, W. Johnson, and

S. Sudbury; half-backs, T. Poynor, T. Ashmole, and Staines; right wing, H. James and C. Thomson; entre, G. Knight; left wing, E. Johnson, and F. Gardner. Umpire, A.E. Taylor. Sheepshed: Goal, J. Newbold; backs, J. Cotton, and J. Needham; half-backs, Waldron, Waring, and Kidger; right wing, J. Bennett, and W. Johnson; centre, Danvers; left wing, A. Smith, and E. Savage. Umpire, F. Ellett. Referee, R.S. Small.

Leicester Daily Post – 26 December 1887

REPLAYS

21 January 1888

LEICESTERSHIRE CHALLENGE CUP

SHEEPSHED v THE FOSSE – The interest in this match on Saturday far exceeded any which had been played at Sheepshed during the present season. It will be within the recollection of those who take an interest in football that the teams met on December 24 and played a drawn game of three goals each, and the match was replayed on Saturday to decide which club should enter the third round of the above competition long before the time for commencing, numbers of people were anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Fosse Club, and it immediately became known they had arrived, numbers flocked on the ground to get a good place to witness the contest. The Sheepshed brass band was in attendance and played a number of selections during the afternoon, which lent a pleasant variation to the proceedings. The ball was kicked off at 3.30 by Fosse centre, and was taken into the visitors' territory, and a shot made by Johnson, but well stopped by the goal-keeper. Some of the play was now witnessed, and the Fosse, with some excellent play, scored the first goal within 20 minutes from restart. Five minutes later they scored again, and Sheepshed now played better, and by some good crossing sent the ball between the posts. No other goal was scored up to half-time. On change of ends the game became exceedingly fast, and Sheepshed sent the ball between the posts, but it was disallowed by the referee, though considered a most doubtful decision. Shortly afterwards, however, the home team scored again, and matters remained equal to the call of time, the result being two goals each. Fosse: A West, goal, W Johnson and J Staines, backs; T S Ashmole, T Poyner and H Wright, half-backs; H James and A Foster, right wing; E Thompson, centre; G A Knight and E Johnson, left wing forwards; umpire Mr W E Taylor. Sheepshed: J Newbold, goal; E Needham and J Cotton, backs; W Waldron, W Johnson and A Kidger, half-backs; J Bennett and A Smith, right wing; W Danvers, centre; E Savage and J Waring, left wing forwards. Referee, Mr R Small.

Leicester Journal 23 January 1888

28 January 1889

LEICESTERSHIRE CHALLENGE CUP

SHEEPSHED v. THE FOSSE

This undecided tie in the above competition was replayed at Hubbard's ground, Loughborough, this afternoon. Several hundred spectators assembled to witness this third contest in the second round of the Association Challenge Cup. Sheepshed pressed and gained the first goal amidst excitement, of which there was a great display. A few minutes later another goal was recorded to Sheepshed, and at half-time the game stood two goals to none in favour of Sheepshed. Result: - Sheepshed, 2 goals; Fosse, 1.

Nottingham Journal – 28 January 1888

Round 3

Sheepshed with Kegworth
Mill Hill House with Melton Rovers
Leicester Wanderers were granted a bye

4 February 1888

LEICESTERSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION - The first tie to be played in the third round of the above competition was that which took place at Melton between Mill Hill House and the Melton Rovers. The thaw which commenced during Thursday night had rendered the top of the ground somewhat greasy, but below

the surface there was a good deal of bone remaining. Although the match with generally considered to be a rather easy task for the "House", considerable interest attached to the encounter, and the players on either side received the greatest encouragement from the spectators. Leicester won the toss, and play was pretty even, but it soon became evident that Melton were overmatched. At half-time Leicester had scored one goal, kicked by Rippin, who, with Whitworth and McAlpin, played well. The Melton men showed a want of combination, though Smith exhibited splendid play, winning loud applause. His defence of the goal was very brilliant, and but for him Melton would have made very little stand. Result: Mill Hill House, three goals ; Melton, nil. Mill Hill House: A E Brice, goal; D McAlpin, K Pearce, three-quarter banks; F Whitworth, H Wing, - Stretton, half banks; J Atter, T Exton, left wing forward; J Rippin, centre forward; F Nutall, A Dalley, right wing forwards: umpire, Rev. H S Biggs. Melton Rovers: G Wesson, goal; W Cartwright, Fendell, backs ; W H Bailey, E Newham, H Berridge, half-backs; H Bailey, W Waite, right wing ; R Smith, H Fendell, left wing; R Johnson, centre; umpire, Mr. A Burton. Referee Mr Small.

Leicester Daily Post - 6 February 1888

18 February 1888

SHEEPSHED v KEGWORTH - These teams met in the third round of the above competition at Sheepshed on Saturday afternoon, and despite the bitterly cold weather considerable enthusiasm prevailed amongst the numerous spectators who had assembled to witness the encounter. Hitherto the home team have come out of the struggle with moderately high honours seeing that they had to meet the redoubtable Fosse eleven before victory was secured. On the other hand, Kegworth, although in the third round, have not won a match, but had been successful in the protest they had made, both against Loughborough and later on against Castle Donington. Hope, therefore, ran high on the Sheepshed eleven being able to claim a place in the fourth round of the competition, when it became known that their opponents would be Kegworth. The players came on the ground at 3.20, and shortly afterwards the toss was won by Kegworth, who decided to kick towards the Forest goal. Danvers kicked off the ball for Sheepshed, and the Kegworth goal-keeper had to handle, Savage just missing the chance of scoring. A strong wind blowing, the visitors took the ball to the Sheepshed goal. Kegworth had two corners in quick succession, but without any result. By some good crossing the ball then got dangerously near the Kegworth goal. Two corners followed to Sheepshed, but the Kegworth backs saved their side. Play continue to be in close proximity to the visitors' goal, and two more corners were given to Sheepshed in quick succession, but the ball was got away both times. Another corner to the same side produced no result. After some very good crossing by the home forwards, Bennett sent the ball through amidst applause. After the ball was kicked off again Newbold had to handle, but the ball was then run down the ground, and Danvers had an easy chance of scoring, which, however, he did not utilise, but kicked the ball over the bar with a bad judged kick. This did not appear to matter much, however, as the Sheepshed men continued to play with a will, and the second goal was scored by Waring. The ball was set in motion again and play was of a more even description, each side having shots at goal. Two corners to Sheepshed produced no goal. Shortly after this, Danvers had another easy chance of scoring, but did not take it. Kidger now made a bad mess, and a corner resulted to Kegworth. The ball was well kicked out by Cotton. After some even play and appeal for offside was given in favour of Sheepshed, and up to half time no further point of interest arose, the game standing- Sheepshed two goals, Kegworth none. After a short interval the ball was restarted, Stenson, Bestwick, and the goalkeeper found plenty of work to do. A run down was made by Kegworth, but Newbold kicked out. The visitors' continued to have slightly the best of the game, a corner being awarded to them but did not result in any material advantage. The ball was then run up the ground, and shots were made at the Kegworth goal, Mellors having to handle twice. Shots at goal were now made by both sides. The Kegworth players was showing good form, but a spurt was put on by the Sheepshed men, and another goal was scored amidst considerable enthusiasm. A heavy snow storm now visited the ground, and players and spectators alike were subjected to much discomfort. The referee stopped the game whilst the snow storm lasted and the Sheepshed men were ready on the ground as soon as it was over. The visitors however were nowhere to be found. After waiting a considerable time, the referee gave the following decision - "Owing to the visitors failing to come out to the ground again, the match is awarded to Sheepshed, giving Kegworth the right to appeal to the committee of the association if they think well."

Leicester Daily Post - 20 February 1888

Semi-Finals

Sheepshed v Leicester Wanderers
Mill Hill House - bye

3 March 1888

LEICESTERSHIRE CHALLENGE CUP

SHEEPSHED v LEICESTER WANDERERS

Mill Hill House having become entitled to the bye, the other two clubs left in the above competition Sheepshed and Leicester Wanderers met at Loughborough to decide who should play Mill Hill House in the final tie. There was a large attendance of spectators, including a strong contingent from Leicester. The ground was very slippery, which completely frustrated the attempt of the players to show their best form. Atkinson started the ball for the Wanderers, and neutral play was the order until the Sheepshed forwards rushed down, Bennetts shot went over the bar. The kickout was well returned, but Bennett spoilt the effort by getting offside, a further infringement of the rules by Waring giving a second free kick to the Wanderers. Profiting but little by this, however, the Wanderers soon had to act on the defensive again, a corner kick (which went behind) and a couple of wide shots at goal coming in quick succession. Then the Wanderers left wing broke away and taking the leather up the field in good style, sent it over to the opposite wing, but danger to Sheepshed was averted by Needham conceding a corner. Pearce's kick went behind. Savage spoilt a capital chance of scoring by over anxiety, but immediately afterwards had the satisfaction of seeing his comrade Johnson succeed where he had failed. Waring had a palpable chance of augmenting the Sheepshed score, but shot very wide, and the Wanderers, following the goal-kick, carried the ball into the enemy's camp, where some exciting play took place. The downfall of the Sheepshed stronghold appeared imminent, Needham's kick clearing in an excellent attack of the Wanderers forwards. Then Danvers and Waring put in the prettiest bit of passing witnessed up to this period of the game, and when Waring finished the run by getting the ball past Allen, the success was well received. It was now the turn of the Wanderers to diversify the proceedings by successfully storming their opponent's citadel, Atkinson doing the trick with a return shot from Newbold's hands - a feat which created great enthusiasm. Hardly had the ball been restarted, however, when the "reds" were again swarming round their opponents' goal and Waring increased the Sheepshed total to three goals, half-time arriving at this juncture. Danvers restarted the ball, and it was not long before James got one past Newbold after effective passing on the part of Tinsley and Taylor. A wrangle over a throw-in was followed by Allen fisting out a shot from mid-field, and with play transferred to the other end the defenders had to resort to kicking-out tactics. Sheepshed now pressed severely, Allen having frequently to use his hands, whilst several shots went behind. At length Allen, in attempting to save his charge, gave Smith a clear opportunity and that player was not slow to place the fourth goal to the credit of Sheepshed. The Wanderers then played up pluckily, and repeatedly attacked in a determined manner, but could do nothing, while that hard lines in the last few minutes, the ball rebounding through their goal of Rowson from defending kick by Allen. This left Sheepshed victors by five goals to one. Players: Sheepshed: J Newbold (goal), R Needham (captain) and J Cotton (backs); W Waldron, W Johnson and A Kidger (half backs), J Bennett and A Smith (right wing), E Savage, J Waring (left wing, W Danvers (centre). Wanderers; H Allen (goal), S Rowson and A Hubble (backs), A James, G Thomas, and G Bailey (half backs), Pearce and J Narroay (right wing), H Atkinson, H Taylor, and W Tinsley (left wing).

Leicestershire Association Challenge Cup Final Tie MILL HILL HOUSE (LEICESTER) v SHEEPSHED

The final tie of this competition was played at Coalville before an enthusiastic crowd of spectators, many of whom journeyed from Leicester, Sheepshed, Whitwick, and surrounding villages, the contest from its commencement having been invested with a greater degree of interest in the outlying districts than in the town of Leicester itself. The visitors won the toss, and decided to play with the wind. Danvers, for Sheepshed, started the ball at 3:40. and the "reds" at once pressed, and McAlpine, to save, had to kick out, the result

being a kick from goal. Dally now dribbled the ball well towards the Sheepshed goal, but in making his centre the leather was accidentally fouled by one of the "reds" forwards who chased, but failed to outrival the House right-wing. The freekick brought no immediate advantage, but from a scrimmage in the mouth of the Sheepshed goal another foul was claimed and allowed for the House; out Pearce's kick was stayed by Needham, who, being passed by the visitor's forwards, had to kick out to save danger. The "reds" now began to "feel their feet" and continually attacked the House goal, which, by the aid of McAlpine and Pilsbury, was relieved. Atter getting behind the ball and dodging the whole of the right-wing of the "reds" made a centre, which was a grand one, but badly missed by Thornton. Again, the Sheepshed forwards rushed and Bennett in shooting, narrowly missed a goal. Pearce took the kick from goal, and "feeding" Atter nicely, the latter made another brilliant run up the left wing, aided by Rippon, but was knocked off his feet in attempting to centre, and the play was carried into the centre of the ground, where continual scrimmages were kept up among both sets of forwards, until ultimately Bennett got behind the ball and never left it until he made his shot, which proved of little advantage to Sheepshed, as the leather was taken by some magnificent passing among the visiting forwards very closely to the Sheepshed goal, where, to save, a corner-kick was allowed to the House, but Rippon, in taking the bail from the corner, fouled, and now gave the "reds" an opening. From the free kick the ball was taken quickly to the House goal, where a scrimmage of long duration occurred, but by the capital defence of McAlpine, Pearce, and Pilsbury relief was at last obtained, and play was more even for the next few minutes. The "reds" now collared the ball again, and made a most determined rush, and amid this greatest excitement and deafening cheering Waring put the ball through the House uprights. Rippon without delay, restarted, but in attempting to feed Atter the ball fell short, and dropped nicely for Bennett, who, with Smith, managed to get the leather near enough to the House uprights to shoot, but Bennett's shot, which was fairly judged, did not call upon Brice, the ball going over the goal line. From the kick from goal the House left wing showed some flare passing, Atter and Rippon going quickly up the field, but the former missed his centre, giving a goal kick to Sheepshed. From the kick-out Dalley and Exton were favoured and caused Bennett to concede a corner to save, and Exton, who stood wide had exceedingly hard luck in not scoring, as his shot was quick and straight, but rebounded from one of the Sheepshed backs. However, the ball was kept in a close scrimmage round the Sheepshed goal, and during the "hustle" Thornton equalised. From now up to half time the game was pretty equal, both teams playing on the defensive, the Sheepshed appearing to be a little overworked, the game up to the present being very fast. After ten minutes stay at half time Rippon restarted, and passing to Dalley, gained the "red territory, when Daley centred to Rippon, who had hard lines in not scoring, Cotton repulsing the shot beautifully. The "reds" now attacked the House goal in earnest, and carried on a continued scrimmage near their uprights, and had it not been for the superb defence of McAlpine (who was frequently cheered from all parts of the ground), Pearce and Pilsbury, not to mention the goalkeeper (Brice), who handled once or twice, the "reds" would have secured a well-deserved goal. By combination among the House forwards, they again took the ball into the mouth of the Sheepshed fortress, and the leather was centred splendidly by Atter to Thornton, who missed an easy chance of scoring. Up to call of time both teams now played their hardest to decide the victory, but neither gained much advantage, the ball being carried from one end of the ground to the other in quick succession. Result : One goal each. Players ; — Mill Hill House: A. E. Brice, goal; D. McAlpine and K. H. Pearce, backs S. Stretton, H. Wing, and H. Pilsbury, half backs; J. Atter, and A. Thornton, left wing; J. Rippon, centre; T. Exon and A. Dalley, right wing. Sheepshed: J. Newbold, goal ; E. Needham (captain) and J. Cotton, backs; W. Johnson, W. Waldron, and A. Kidger, half backs; E. Savage and J. Waring, left wing; J. Bennett and A. Smith, right wing ; W. Danvers, centre.

Leicester Chronicle: 24 March 1888

LEICESTER ASSOCIATION CHALLENGE CUP Final - Replay

Mill Hill House (Leicester) v. Sheepshed.— This match, which had resulted in a draw when first contested a fortnight ago at Coalville, was replayed at Kegworth. Notwithstanding the recent rainfall, the ground was in fine condition for play, and the weather taking a favourable turn, the game was witnessed by a large number of spectators. Rippin kicked off, and after some pretty play by Whitworth, Atter, and Exton, which caused Newbold to handle, the House missed an easy chance of scoring. From this point up to half-time Sheepshed hotly pressed and scored three goals from the feet of Bennett, Savage, and Waring, the latter also having

kicked an off-side goal. In the second half the Leicester men tried hard to avert further disaster, but utterly failed, as the Sheepshed score was increased to eight goals, the last five being obtained by Waring, Savage, Johnson, and Danvers (2) whilst Mill House failed to notch a single point. Players: —Mill Hill House: A E. Brice, goal ; D. McAlpin and F. Wright, backs ; F. Whitworth (captain), H. Pilsbury, and S. Bretton, half backs ; J. Atter and J. Rippin, left wing ; T. Exton, centre ; H. Brain and A. Dailey, right wing. Referee, Mr. R. J. Smith (now Secretary Derbyshire Association). Sheepshed. J. Newbold, goal; E. Needham (captain) and J. Cotton, backs; W. Johnson, W. Waldron, and A Kidger, half-backs ; E. Savage and J. Waring, left wing; W. Danvers, centre ; J. Bennett and A. Smith, right wing forwards.

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