

Winner: Nuneaton Town
Runners-Up: Coalville Albion
No. of entries: 14



Nuneaton Town 1897-98

Hinckley Cottage Hospital Cup Winners

Back row (left to right): R Lingard (linesman - ex-St. Nicholas), H. Thomas (trainer), Wally Cooper, Fred Carris (capt), F. Holt, Mr R. Townsend, C. H. Williams (secretary).
 Middle row: E. Tomlinson, Sammy Richards, F. Dent, A. Smith, Bert 'Bally' Carris.
 Front row: Johnny Edkins, William Gretton, William 'Billy' Holmes

Of the 14 teams that entered the Hinckley Charity Cup competition in 1897 – there were 4 non-Leicestershire teams – Nuneaton Town, Stockingford from Warwickshire; Tamworth Athletic and Tamworth Volunteers from Staffordshire.

It took 4 (possibly 5) attempts to decide the first round tie between Nuneaton and Stockingford. The first two replayed games were ordered to be played again as a result of the Committee of the Charity Cup Association upholding the losing side protesting about their opponents fielding ineligible players. Stockingford F.C. having won both replays, were unhappy and appealed to Leicestershire Football Association against the above Charity Association as to eligibility of players.— After hearing evidence from the association and Stockingford and Nuneaton Clubs, the following ruling was given in mid-November: —
 1. Appeal of Stockingford F.C. referring to eligibility of Marsh and Hawthorne, of Nuneaton Town F.C., be sustained. 2. That Hinckley Charity Association misled the Nuneaton Town F.C. in declaring the men eligible for the replayed match. 3. That the match be re-played on or before December 31 on neutral ground, the officials to be appointed by the L.F. A., and only men qualified on date fixed for completion of first round of competition, i.e., October 2, be eligible. 4. That the proceeds of the match be devoted to the Hinckley charities after payment of travelling expenses of both teams and other items incurred by the clubs. 5. That the Hinckley Charity Association be severely censured for giving irregular rulings.

Nuneaton won the game played in late December, and beat Tamworth in Round 2. In the semi-finals they easily overcame Barwell Swifts to reach the final. It seems likely that Burbage United were granted a bye into the other semi-final, where they were well beaten by Coalville Albion.

Coalville Albion played Nuneaton Town at Holywell. Albion, members of the Leicestershire Senior League and cup holders, were looked upon as favourites, and the previous week they had won the Leicestershire Senior Cup. Despite heavy morning rain Town supporters helped push up the crowd to 'huge dimensions', the grandstand being packed to overflowing. Nuneaton kicked off against a strong wind and dazzling sun. During the first half Town's defence was outstanding. Albion, by far the heavier team, did most of the attacking, but the interval arrived with no score. Within five minutes of the re-start Nuneaton were leading 2-0. "Bally" Carris headed the ball into the Coalville net from a well taken Tomlinson corner. Then Dent got the second goal with a lovely curling shot. Town supporters were showing unbounded enthusiasm while

Albion looked bewildered with surprise. Things livened up considerably as Coalville went for ball and opponent with determination. In the 65th minute the cup holders' challenge was over, Tomlinson scoring with a terrific shot to give Nuneaton Town a 3-0 victory and the Cup.

Round 1

	Date	Home	Away		Match Details
1	2.10.1897	Barrow Rising Star	0	2	Hugglescote Robin Hoods
2	2.10.1897	Coalville Albion [Cup Holders]	6 (3)	2 (1)	Ibstock Albion
3	2.10.1897	Earl Shilton Excelsior	1	5	Burbage United
4	2.10.1897	Earl Shilton Town	0	3	Hinckley Town Fern (2) Griffiths
5	2.10.1897	Nuneaton Town	1	1	Stockingford Nuneaton goal was scored from a scrimmage directly under the bar.
6		Tamworth Volunteers	0	10	Tamworth Athletic

Round 1 Replay

	Date	Home	Away		Match Details
7	23.10.1898	Stockingford	2	1	Nuneaton Town 1,000 spectators Carris the Nuneaton goalkeeper was kicked in the head. Nuneaton protested to the cup committee that Stockingford had an ineligible player, Martin, in their team. Stockingford reported that Nuneaton had two ineligible players, Marsh, and Hawthorne in their side. The committee decided that the match should be replayed and Nuneaton won the toss for the choice of ground

Round 1 Replay (2nd)

	Date	Home	Away		Match Details
8	4.11.1897	Nuneaton Town Edkins Tomlinson Holmes	3	1	Stockingford Coton Road Ground, Nuneaton Stockingford again protested that their opponents had fielded two ineligible players. This time the protest went, not to the cup committee, but to the Leicestershire Association, who ordered the match to be replayed again on The Holywell.

Round 1 Replay (3rd)

	Date	Home	Away		Match Details
9	28.12.1897	Stockingford	0	2	Nuneaton Town Gretton Tomlinson Holywell, Hinckley 3,000 packed Hinckley's Holywell ground to see the season's fifth meeting of Nuneaton and Stockingford. Nuneaton strolled to a comfortable win, but afterwards the 'Colliers' again protested. A meeting of the Hinckley Hospital Charity Cup Association took place on January 1st, 1898, at the Union Hotel to consider

						a claim from Stockingford that they should be awarded the game on the grounds that Walker of Nuneaton Town had been ineligible to play, but after lengthy consideration the result was allowed to stand and Nuneaton passed into the second round.
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Round 2

	Date	Home			Away	Match Details
10	6.11.1897	Barwell Swifts	4	3	Hugglescote Robin Hoods	
11		Coalville Albion (Holders) Rose Jeffcote (2) Orton	4 (3)	3 (2)	Hinckley Town Pollard Beadsworth (2)	Park-road Ground, Coalville 1,000 spectators The Town led 3-1
12	5.2.1898	Nuneaton Town Tomlinson (2) Holmes	3	0	Tamworth Athletic	Holt and Edkins (Nuneaton) were seriously injured and in the second half .

Burbage, bye?

Semi-Finals

	Date	Home			Away	Match Details
13	19.2.1898	Nuneaton Town Dent Carris (3) Gretton	4 (0)	1 (1)	Barwell Swifts AN Other	Holywell enclosure, Hinckley 1,500 spectators
14	5.2.1898	Coalville Albion	4	0	Burbage United	Hinckley Moderate gate

Final

	Date	Home			Away	Details
15	9.4.1898	Nuneaton Town Carrie Dent Tomlinson	3	0	Coalville Albion	Holywell, Hinckley.

Match Reports

A selection of published match reports.

#1 BARROW RISING STAR v HUGGLESCOTE ROBIN HOODS

At Barrow. Result:

HUGGLESCOTE 2
BARROW 0

Coalville Times - 8 October 1897

#2 COALVILLE ALBION (HOLDERS) v IBSTOCK ALBION

The Albions of Coalville and Ibstock met in the first round of the above competition on the Park Road Ground on Saturday. The cup-holders had a strong team available for duty and the result was generally regarded in their favour, Ibstock not being such a formidable opponents as they were last season. A vast amount of interest was taken in the match nevertheless, and there was a good gate. The teams were:
Coalville: Goal, Ball; backs, Noon and Ridgard; half-backs, Bradshaw, Middleton and Moore, forwards, Sharp, Blockley, Orton, Jeffcoat and xxxx.

Ibstock: Goal, Faulkner; backs, x, W Handford, T Price , S John, G Gibson and xxxx; half-backs, Hall, G Ball, xxxx, S Johnxxxx and T Storer.

Xxxx xxxx opened by Jeffcoat for the homesters after about twenty minutes play. Sharp added a second shortly afterwards with a fine shot, and Jeffcoat got another. Ibstock got through the home defence once from a scrimmage, and at the interval the score was three to one in favour of Coalville. A similar amount of scoring took place in the second half. Blockley scored the fourth and sixth goals, and Orton the fifth and Ibstock scored again, the ball going into the net off Noon, when Ball had cleared. Result

Coalville	6
Ibstock	2

Coalville Times - 8 October 1897

#3 Earl Shilton Excelsior F.C.— On Saturday the first team of this club were engaged on the home ground with the Burbage United F.C, in the first round of the Hinckley Charity Cup competition, in which they suffered defeat by five goals to one- The same afternoon the reserve team were engaged against Shilton Victors, on the latter's ground, in the Leicestershire Shield competition. The result was a draw of two goals each. In the evening a smoking concert was held at the club's headquarters, the Royal Oak Inn, under the presidency of Mr. Jas. Lynes. A collection was made in aid of the club funds.

Leicester Chronicle - 9 October 1897

#7 NUNEATON TOWN v STOCKINGFORD

The replayed match in the first round of the Hinckley Cup, between Stockingford and Nuneaton Town, took place on the Coton Road ground, yesterday afternoon, before a very good gate. Mr. Hawkins, of Hinckley, was the referee, and the teams were made up thus;—Stockingford—Goal, Powell; backs Evans and Moore; halves, Smith, Butler, and Bosworth; forwards, Boswell, Edwards, Curl, Allen, and Moorhouse. Nuneaton—Goal, Carrie; backs, Cooper, and Marsh; halves, Richards, Dent, and Smith; forwards, Tomlinson, Edkins, Gretton, Holmes, Hawthorn. Nuneaton started the ball, and almost immediately afterwards Evans was hurt in intercepting Gretton, but he speedily recovered. Play was fast from the start, and each end was visited in turn, Carrie being the first to be called upon and Edkins within about eight minutes of the start putting through a beautiful goal for the homesters, amid great enthusiasm. Stockingford then pressed, and Hawthorn relieved with a grand run. Returning to the home half, Curl got a nasty kick on the leg, which caused about a minute's retirement. An offside goal for Nuneaton provoked a great shout, which promptly subsided when the spectators saw the true state of the case. Half-an-hour from the commencement, Hawthorn ran well down the field, and enabled Holmes to send a fine shot across the mouth of the Stockingford goal, which Tomlinson headed through in grand style. Half-time arrived with the score:

Nuneaton Town	2
Stockingford	0

On resuming and within a couple of minutes, the homesters made a sharp rush, and forced a corner, which failed to be productive. The 'Ford relieved, but the Town returned, and were again dangerous. For a quarter of an hour the play was very exciting, each team playing for all it was worth, and each citadel being besieged in turn, the conclusion when Curl started the score for the collier lads with an easy shot, which revived the spirits of the supporters of the team, and gave fresh energy to the players, so that they made several very strong attacks, calling upon Carrie for his best efforts, and providing plenty of hard defensive work for the Town. Eight minutes after Curl's success, however, the homesters got well into the visiting territory, and stiff play in close quarters, concluded with another addition to the Nuneaton score from Holmes. Even play followed to the end of the game when the score stood:

NUNEATON TOWN	2
STOCKINGFORD	1

Burton Chronicle - 5 November 1897

#9 The fourth round in the Hinckley Charity Cup, between Nuneaton and Stockingford Football Clubs, was played in Hinckley on Tuesday and resulted in a win for the former club by two goals to nil.

Leicester Journal - 31 December 1897

#10 BARWELL SWIFTS v HUGGLESCOTE ROBIN HOODS

At Barwell. Result:

BARWELL SWIFTS, four goals;
HUGGLESCOTE, two goals.

Leicester Daily Post - 8 November 1897

#11 COALVILLE ALBION v HINCKLEY

At Coalville before a large gate. Hinckley played up hill and running up, shot in goal, but the ball was cleared. Albion then scored from a corner, Orton kicking a grand goal. Hinckley equalised, and added two more, while Albion got one. Half-time: Hinckley, three; Coalville, two. Resuming, the game opened quiet, both sides having the advantage in turn. Albion then equalised, and soon after made the winning goal. Result:

ALBION, four;
HINCKLEY, three

Leicester Daily Post – 8 November 1897

#12 NUNEATON v TAMWORTH ATHLETIC

At Nuneaton. Tomlinson scored for Nuneaton within five minutes, and within twenty minutes two more were added by Tomlinson and Holmes. On crossing over play was very warmly contested. Result:

NUNEATON TOWN, three goals;
TAMWORTH ATHLETIC, none

Leicester Daily Post – 8 November 1897

#13 HINCKLEY CHARITY CUP

SEMI-FINAL

WARWICKSHIRE MEN VICTORIOUS

The scene of the encounter, last Saturday, was the Holywell enclosure, Hinckley, and the match proved a great attraction for the "tin hatters". Many Nuneaton enthusiasts took advantage of the opportunities afforded by the London and North Western and Midland Railway Companies. Mr F Gardner, of Leicester, supplied the "music", and both teams, fully represented turned out:

NUNEATON TOWN – Goal, F Carris; backs, Cooper and Higham; half-backs, Richards, Dent and Smith; forwards, Tomlinson, Edkins, Gretton, Holmes and B Carrie.

BARWELL SWIFTS – Goal, Oakey; backs Lucas and ; Millington; half-backs, Garner, Lucas, and Haywood; forwards, Smith, Herbert, peace, Cobleby and Grewcock.

Nuneaton had the choice of ends and Peace started the ball before 1500 spectators. The Swifts were the first to attack, Cobleby putting the ball high over the bar. Then Nuneaton attacked, but experienced awfully hard luck. Dent fouled and both Cooper and Richards rendered valuable service in defence. Tomlinson, after a neat run, forced a corner – fruitless, however. After some uninteresting exchanges, "Bally" sent in a stinging shot, Oakley putting the ball over. Nuneaton continued to press, but their efforts lacked the dash shown the previous Saturday. From a free against the Swifts, Dent netted the leather without a second player. Richards looked after the right wing well, and Tomlinson was xxx at centering. Oakley again conceded a corner in saving and, at the other end, loose play on the part of the Nuneaton defence was responsible for a successful shot at goal by Cobleby. Carris trying hard to save. This was within 20 minutes of the start and, save for one or two individual bursts on either side, the game lacked interest. Oakley was again called upon, but Gretton was unusually slow and F Carris and Richards averted the further downfall of the Town citadel. Hereabouts the Nuneaton men were fouling rather frequently, and some hot work was witnessed in front of the Town goal. Dent secured B Carris made a brilliant run and outpacing all his opponents sent in a flying shot. Oakley saved grandly and some hot shots were banged at the Swifts goal. Grewcock broke away and F. Carris partially slipped in the effort of clearing from that player. Luckily for Nuneaton he recovered himself and the ball travelled quickly to the other end. Here Haywood was applauded for timely relief but was the next moment pulled up for tripping Edkins, the half-time whistle sounding immediately after:-

Barwell Swifts	1
Nuneaton Town	0

Resuming, the Swifts were the first to attack. Cooper cleared with a huge kick and the Town forwards dashed off with something lie their old form. Soon after, the Nuneaton goal had another wonderful escape, Carris saving a fast shot with difficulty at full length. Higham made his mark and R Carris got possession but offside spoilt a likely chance. A subsequent free in favour of the Town was turned to account by the ex-Rugger, the defending custodian having not the slightest chance. The spectators cleared and play was resumed with cup-tie earnestness. Oakey again conceded a fruitless corner and Lucas repelled a further attack. Lucas play was again noticeable xxx the Nuneaton halves and both Cooper and Higham were called

upon. Lucas again cleared from a beautiful centre by Tomlinson and B Carris scored another lovely goal. Barwell cracked up entirely after this reverse and played with very little heart. After a spell of midfield play R Carris raced off in grand style. Oakey came out to clear, but Edkins intercepted and with nobody whatever to beat, should have walked into goal with the ball. So limited was the space that it seemed utterly impossible to kick wide and great was that player's disappointment when in his eagerness he drove the ball with the full force against the upright. Tomlinson contributed many a grand run and the Barwell defence was severely attacked. B Carris contributed a third goal in brilliant style. The villagers seemed entirely played out and made very little use of fair openings F. Carris having nothing whatever to do. Dent tried a long shot at long range but Oakey saved well, and another sharp attack by the Warwickshire lads followed by a fourth goal., Grettton doing the needful this time. Towards the finish Haywood and the two Lucases put in some strong kicks to avert further disaster, the final solo sounding with the score:-

Nuneaton Town	4
Barwell Swifts	1

Nuneaton Observer - 25 February 1898

#14 COALVILLE ALBION v BURBAGE

At Hinckley, before a moderate gate. The first half was evenly contested, and both scored a goal. The second half was all in favour of Coalville, who continually pressed, and scored three more goals, the game ending:-

ALBION, four goals;
BURBAGE, none.

Coalville Times - 11 February 1898

#15 HINCKLEY CHARITY CUP

FINAL

NUNEATON v COALVILLE ALBION

At Hinckley on Saturday. Mr Thomas Aucott kicked off for Nuneaton, who lost the toss. The Athletic had the slope, wind, and sun in their favour, although they pressed during most of the game, they could not score, Nuneaton's defence being strong. Half-time: No score. In the second moiety Nuneaton pressed, Carris scoring, whilst Dent put on another. After this Albion took up the attack and pressed strongly, but Tomlinson put Nuneaton further ahead. Result:

Nuneaton, three goals;
Coalville Albion, none.

Coalville Times - 15 April 1898