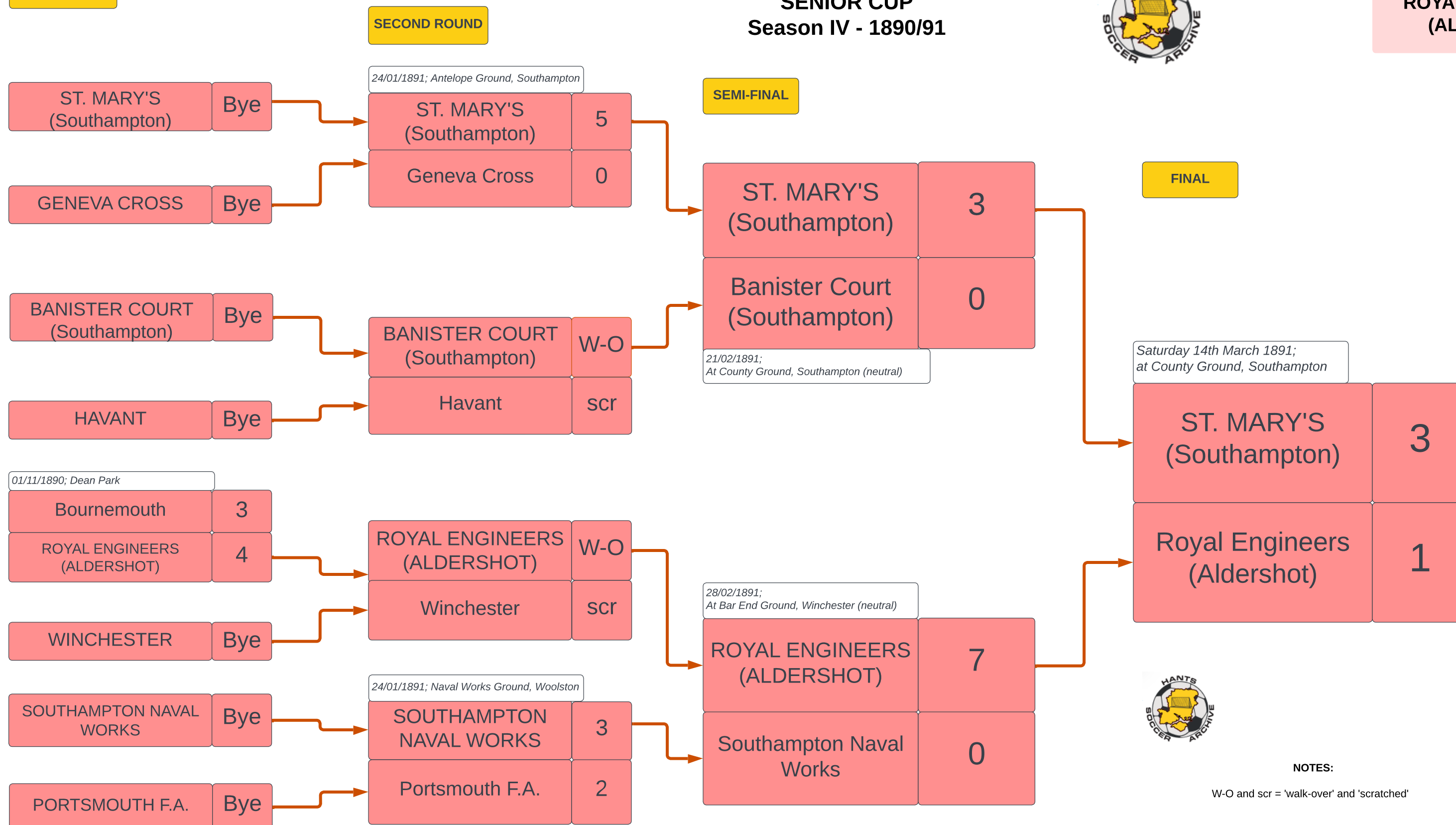


FIRST ROUND

HAMPSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
SENIOR CUP
Season IV - 1890/91



HOLDERS:
ROYAL ENGINEERS
(ALDERSHOT)



THE CUP FINAL LINE-UPS:

St. Mary's
Ruffell, goal;
G. Carter (capt.), and
G. Marshall, backs;
G. Verney, C. Deacon,
and W. Stride,
half-backs;
R. S. Kiddle and F. C.
Bromley, right-wing;
E. Nicholls, centre;
F. A. Delamotte and A.
Farwell, left-wing.

Royal Engineers
Serg. R. Hammett,
goal.
Corpl. F. C. Kilburn, and
Sapper D. B. Hamer
backs;
Lieut. C. H. Versturme,
Corpl. J. White, and
Sapper E. A. Jones
half-backs;
Lieut. P. T. Bourne, and
Serg. Sheldon, right-
wing;
Driver A. Gray, centre;
Sapper J. Elson and
Corpl. R. Smith,
left-wing

Referee
Mr. E. C. Duchesne
(Bournemouth)

Umpires
Lieutenant Whitmarsh
(R.M.L.I.) and Mr. W.E.
Masterman
(Bournemouth F.C.)

NOTES:
W-O and scr = 'walk-over' and 'scratched'

THE STORY OF THE HAMPSHIRE SENIOR CUP - SEASON 1890/91

Changes to Entries:

Entries into the county's Senior Cup competition remained at nine competitors.

Out went three of the military teams - Somerset Light Infantry and Yorkshire Light Infantry in addition to the previous finalists King's Royal Rifles.

The **Bournemouth** club was now a summer 1890 amalgamation of the Bournemouth FC and Bournemouth Arabs teams. The Arabs had a decent team in the early years of county football at junior level.

The three newcomers were as follows:

Havant a club was originally formed as Havant Red Star & Church FC in 1883. The club appeared in the two previous season's Junior Cup competitions with little success. A new pavilion, paid for by local businessmen, was opened at their Recreation Ground home in 1889.

St. Mary's formed in 1885, who conversely to the above, had an exemplary record having won all of the three Junior Cup competitions played to date and took the decision to move up to the senior ranks. Their home was at the Antelope Ground which was previously used by the defunct Woolston Works F.C.

Southampton Naval Works, a newly formed team which was an attempt to resurrect the previous Woolston Works team.

First Round Summary

With seven clubs receiving byes into the second round, only one match was necessary at this stage. Royal Engineers, the holders, had to travel down to Bournemouth and, having led at half-time, had to survive an onslaught from the 'green shirted' home players but held on to a narrow 4-3 victory.

Second Round Summary

An unusual feature of this round was the Netley-based Geneva Cross, competing for the third time in the competition, actually took to the field and played a game! To be fair, once the team had got together they were regularly soon depleted by service calls. They faced cup debutants St. Mary's who were in a mood to show they were to be a threat at this level. On a wet and thawing pitch at the Antelope Ground, St. Mary's built up a three goal lead at half-time. They added two more goals after the break and by the end the pitch was described as a 'veritable quagmire'. The Royal Engineers were due to meet Winchester in this competition for the third successive season but it didn't happen as the civilian team scratched having not been able to put out a team of suitable strength. Havant also scratched their tie with Banister Court. The Southampton Naval Works against Portsmouth F.A. tie produced a hotly contested match on a pitch in surprisingly good condition considering a recent thaw. Aitken scored all three for the home side and G.L. Pares netted both for the visitors.

Semi-Final Summary

The first semi-final was played on the County Ground, Southampton between St. Mary's and Banister Park with local bragging rights being contested. A crowd of nearly 2,000 lined the ropes, including many schoolboys with pronounced shrill-like cheering evident. After half-an-hour's play Delamotte centred for the 'cherry squares' and as it was in mid-air Farwell caught it with a swinging overhead kick and, like a rocket, it descended just under the bar. In the second half Nicholls made a good run and dodged three men to be in on goal. Banister goalkeeper Cole made a good effort to stop the shot, and did get a touch, but the speed was too great and the Saints were two ahead. A third followed when Deacon sent in a daisy cutter which was diverted past Cole by a defender. The best team won and Cole played very well for Banister Court to prevent a heavier defeat as St. Mary's reached the final.

The second semi-final took place at Winchester a week later and it soon became evident that the shipbuilders of the Naval Works were fighting a forlorn hope against two time cup winners the Royal Engineers, whose team was well known by the spectators. As the *Bournemouth Guardian* paper so eloquently put it, "the Naval team was full of strange faces" and went on to say "perhaps we shall know them better in a year or two." The Woolston side had the advantage of the slope in the first half on a hot afternoon. The first goal came from a Naval player but a miskick into his own goal. A second Royal's goal soon followed (player unidentified). Most of the life seemed to have gone from the Naval team in the second half as a 'cannonade' took place in their goal. The superiority of the Engineers and their methodical attack proved too much and it was soon 4-0, followed by Smith heading two goals and Sheldon scoring another to inflict a crushing 7-0 defeat for the Naval Works.

Final Summary

St. Mary's (Southampton) v Royal Engineers (Aldershot)
Only new entrants St. Mary's could stop the Royal Engineers retaining and winning the cup for a third time and therefore keeping permanent possession of the trophy itself. They visited Aldershot to play the Royal Engineers in a friendly game a few weeks prior to their semi-final and returned to Southampton heavily beaten by 5-1. The Engineers were considered to be favourites to win. Bromley scored the opening goal for the 'cherry squares', it was a weak kick but was enough to beat Hammett in the Sappers goal. Gray scored an equaliser for the Royal Engineers close on half-time. The Engineers thought they'd scored but Ruffell's effort was disallowed by the referee and soon after Hammett fisted out to the feet of Nicholls, who drove the leather past him without delay and the St. Mary's side were back in front. Kiddle banged in another goal to settle the destination of the cup. After the match the cup was handed to Carter and medals to the eleven in front of the pavilion by Mrs. St. Julian Arabin, wife of one of the vice-presidents of the winning side, followed by a brief speech by the winning captain. The Engineers accepted an invitation of the winners to the after proceedings at Gidden's Restaurant rather than return to camp by the 6.15 train which was planned had they won. The gate money amounted to £63, apparently saving the Association from the prospect of bankruptcy.

Junior Cup Competition

The St. Mary's team was again represented in the final of the Hampshire Junior Cup it was their 'B' (or reserve) side that got there on this occasion. The County Ground, Southampton was the venue for the final as, like their senior side, they faced Aldershot military opposition at the last stage, in the Medical Staff Corps. The Corps scored twice in the first half with Cresswell netting in between. Into the second half and, after the soldiers had added a third goal, the Saints lost their best player Richardson who collided heavily with a soldier and was considerably hurt, though he continued but in goal. Richardson did well in goal but was missed outfield and the Medical side scored once more to win the cup by a 4-1 score-line. Several of the Medical Staff Corps team were posted to the Mediterranean after the final.

Minor Cup Competition

This was the second holding of the Minor Cup competition. The contestants were Waverley (Southampton) and Christchurch Star, a game that was played on the Antelope Ground, Southampton on 21st March 1891. Waverley scored a first half goal through Heathcote, the goalkeeper being rushed. This resulted in an appeal against the goal which stood. Waverley played an additional defensive back in the second half and withstood the Star attack to win the match by 1-0. The cup and medals were presented to Waverley by Mr. W. Pickford, hon. secretary of the Association.

Additional Feature

With their Senior Cup victory to add to three Junior Cup successes, the **St. Mary's** club had now gone four years without losing a cup match. At the season's end St. Mary's were elected by the Council of the English Football Association as members and could therefore play in the English (or F.A.) Cup competition. Whilst on the subject of the English Cup, an Aldershot based team, **93rd Highland Regiment**, defeated Luton Town (7-0), Watford Rovers (3-2), Swindon Town (6-0) and Ipswich Town (4-1) in qualifying rounds to reach the first round (or last 32) of the competition. They played away to Sunderland Albion (who were not Sunderland F.C. so, by today's standards, arguably the weakest of all their opponents!) and lost 2-0. It is thought they were the last military team to play in the F.A. Cup proper rounds.

Finally, the small print ...

Extracts from the Aldershot Military Gazette, Bournemouth Guardian, Southern Echo and Hampshire Independent. Please acknowledge hantssoccerarchive.co.uk. Compiled October 2023. E.&O.E.

