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## Socioeconomic and Other Dynamics in the Geographical Distribution of Success in the English F.A. Cup

Edward Genereux  
*Minnesota State University, Mankato*

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Socioeconomic and Other Dynamics in the Geographical Distribution of Success in the

English F.A. Cup

Edward Genereux

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of

Science in Geography

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Mankato, Minnesota

May 2021

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This thesis has been examined and approved by the following members of the student's  
committee:

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Martin Mitchell, PhD.  
Advisor

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Jose Lopez, PhD.  
Committee Member

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Phil Miller, PhD  
Committee Member

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Above all, though he had died a year before I chose to pursue this inquiry in fall 2016, I salute my father, James Genereux. It was he who instilled my love of sports in general, as well as a passion for the straight and narrow way to success. I feel I am on my way down that path due to his guidance in both aspects.

## Contents

Chapter One: Introduction and Problem Statement	1
Why the Cup and Not the League? .....	3
The Structure of the Cup.....	6
Chapter Two: Literature Review	15
Cup-Specific Literature.....	15
Chapter Three: Methods	23
Quantifying the Geographical Distribution of Success .....	23
How Do These Trends of Success Compare with Socioeconomic and Other Conditions? ....	33
Chapter Four: Results	39
Results of Success Quantification .....	39
Results of the Rail Time Analysis.....	42
Chapter Five: Discussion	45
The Future of the Cup.....	48
Future Adjustments and Inquiry .....	53
Appendix A: Sample Calculation for a Club	57
Appendix B: Glossary of British Footballing Terms	59
Appendix C: The English League System (League Pyramid) in 2016-17	62
References	63

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Abstract

The F.A. Cup, which is England's primary football (soccer) knockout competition, is the world's oldest competition in the sport, but no comprehensive study into factors that correlate with success has been undertaken. The purpose of the present thesis is to fill this void by assessing the strength of the nine regions of England, as well as the collective strength of non-English clubs in the competition. The coefficient formula used by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) for ranking member associations is utilized in a form adapted for the generally single-legged nature of the F.A. Cup. The figures ascertained are then correlated with socioeconomic and non-socioeconomic data. Following the results of this analysis, it is concluded that the competition favours regions with white-collar concentrations, such as Greater London and the Northwest. Also included are future considerations, which account for Covid-19 and its impacts, both in England and throughout Europe; these include the possibility of a "super league" for privileged clubs.

## Chapter One: Introduction and Problem Statement

When a 29-year-old athlete named Charles William Alcock entered the offices of a newspaper in London called *The Sportsman* on 20 July 1871 for a meeting of what was then an eight-year-old Football Association (hereinafter referred to as “the Association” when used as a noun), now recognized as the governing body of football<sup>1</sup> in England, he brought in a novel proposal. Hitherto the only football matches played in England (or anywhere else in the world where the game was known) had been glorified friendlies, or non-competitive matches,<sup>2</sup> often involving representative sides picked from among several clubs within the various cities and counties. Indeed, the Association, of which Alcock had been elected secretary the previous year, originally saw itself more as an influencer of the sport’s growth than a true authority over English football. However, Alcock’s memories of knockout games at Harrow School had influenced the proposal he was about to deliver and, with it, change football forever. After the typical conventions of such meetings had been dispensed, the young man invoked the historic words: “It is desirable that a Challenge Cup should be established in connection with the Association for which all clubs belonging to the Association should be invited to compete” (Collett, 2003, 17).

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this work, I use the term “football” instead of “soccer” out of reverence for the competition and its place in English life.

<sup>2</sup> For a summary of terms used in British football as found in this thesis and their definitions, see Appendix B: Glossary of British Footballing Terms.

The proposal was quickly approved, and eighteen clubs signed up to participate in the inaugural competition, which kicked off that November. However, only fifteen actually did so, with three withdrawing beforehand. By the conclusion of the first edition, Wanderers F.C. had beaten Royal Engineers F.C. 1-0 at the Kennington Oval in London in the final on 16 March 1872 (Collett, 2003). In this way began the Football Association Challenge Cup, or F.A. Cup for short. Nearly 150 years later, it remains the oldest surviving recognized football competition in the world (B.B.C., 14 October 2014). Since its humble inception during that 1871-72 season<sup>3</sup> of the English game, it has grown most dramatically. The competition (hereinafter referred to as “the Cup” except where it is necessary to distinguish between cup competitions) reached a total audience of 875 million viewers—both in England and worldwide—in 2015-16 across all platforms (Football Association, 27 July 2016). Indeed, despite the largest clubs’ casting of aspersions upon the importance of the Cup, compared with reaching the Union of European Football Associations’ (UEFA) Champions League—and this prioritization has led many of them to field weaker squads (Collett, 2003)—the number of participating clubs now exceeds 700 perennially, including qualifying rounds (Football Association). In light of such prominence on the part of the competition, one would expect that a study to quantify success in the Cup comprehensively would exist. However, no such study is

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<sup>3</sup> As with domestic football competitions in most countries, the English leagues and cups (including the F.A. Cup) tend to follow the traditional pattern of an August-to-May schedule. This leaves the summer, especially June and early July, available for major international competitions such as the World Cup. Exceptions, such as Major League Soccer in the United States and Canada, are dictated by the weather and other factors, such as competition from other sports (FIFA; Szymanski and Zimbalist, 2006).



known to have existed until this work, apart from frequently recurring records of Cup scores. Furthermore, it has been my intent to demonstrate the geographic distribution of such a quantification as it has evolved over the last few decades and compare it with selected socioeconomic trends in England during that time. These inquiries led me to a series of seven questions that I sought to answer in this thesis or, at least, begin to answer:

1. How can success in the Cup be quantified?
2. How would such a quantification have been spatially distributed throughout England over my chosen study period, which covers the last 25 years before the Premier League era (1967-92) and the first 25 years of that era (1992-2017)?
3. How did this distribution of success reflect changes in socioeconomic conditions during this study period?
4. Which socioeconomic factors are most explanatory as to success in the Cup?
5. Which external but non-socioeconomic factors (i.e., television rights) factor into success?
6. Which internal factors (i.e., club priorities) explain Cup success as well?
7. Which future trends, if any, can be discerned that might affect the distribution of success, including changes to the factors above, as well as the impacts of Covid-19?

#### *Why the Cup and Not the League?*

Though I did not list this choice among the seven questions above, before answering any of them, it is worth asking why I chose the Cup for my study over any

league or leagues. This choice includes the two entities that have occupied the foremost division of English football throughout the history of the game—namely, the English Football League (hereinafter abbreviated “E.F.L.” as an adjective and as “the League” as a noun, unless it becomes necessary to distinguish between leagues) First Division from 1888 to 1992<sup>4</sup> and the Premier League thereafter. After all, the football public, both in England and elsewhere, regards the league as the most important domestic competition for any club. Furthermore, the clubs themselves, especially the biggest ones such as Chelsea and Liverpool, have agreed with this popular perception. This has also particularly been the case if a given club enjoys the good fortune of qualifying for the following season’s UEFA Champions League by placing in the top four of the Premier League. It can also win the Champions League or the secondary Europa League (also run by UEFA) to qualify for next year (Collett, 2003; UEFA, 2018a).

There were two reasons for my decision to focus on the Cup. The first concerned the “open” league system in English football and the general sports league structure in England. In North American sports, leagues tend to be “closed.” This means there is no promotion or relegation between leagues, regardless of teams’ positions within any hierarchy of leagues in any season.<sup>5</sup> Hence, even if a given team in any of these leagues

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<sup>4</sup> In the early years of the League—that is, until 1892—there were no divisions, and the Football Alliance competed for supremacy with the League. Only in 1892 did the League become multi-divisional, pursuant to the absorption of its rival entity (Genereux, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> A form of promotion and relegation does exist in North American sports, but it involves individual players rather than whole teams. Nor is it confined to the end of a season, as it may occur as long as both a given major-league franchise and the minor-league affiliate in question are playing simultaneously. That form is the system of optioning and callups, especially prominent in organized professional baseball. The same can be argued for the National Hockey League in terms of exchanges of prospects with American

loses every one of its fixtures, it retains its place in the league (and may, in fact, benefit in the long run from enhanced draft position). English football, by contrast, operates on the principle that teams will be promoted and relegated between divisions of its league system between seasons. The divisions teams are promoted to, and relegated from, ostensibly represent leagues of increased and reduced quality, respectively.<sup>6</sup> In other words, the worst teams in a given upper division are moved down to the division immediately below, and the best teams in a given lower division take their place in the division above. The upshot is that the composition of the Premier League, among other such entities, varies from season to season because of such an exchange of clubs (Cain and Haddock, 2005). These variations make strict temporal comparison impractical, if not impossible. The Cup, for its part, has the advantage, for purposes of comparison, of admitting all clubs of any significance from the league system, at least theoretically.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, the quantity of clubs in the competition is an important consideration for statistical purposes. It is a well-known axiom of statistical analysis that significance of data is most often achieved when a study involves a minimum of thirty cases. However, the

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Hockey League affiliates (or, in some cases, East Coast Hockey League ones) and, to some extent, the National Basketball Association in terms of the G-League (Genereux, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> The same may be said of leagues in the sport that are not Canadian or Australian either. Furthermore, many other sports played in an organized fashion in Europe or Latin America, such as basketball, have promotion and relegation in their respective domestic league structures (Cain and Haddock, 2005).

<sup>7</sup> In practice, clubs must apply for entry into the Cup and have an adequate playing ground. Tenth-level clubs must also have earned a set mean quantity of points per match, which is determined by dividing the number of points in the corresponding league table earned over that club's previous season by the number of matches played in its league. If a club played in the ninth tier or higher during the previous season, only to get relegated, that also increases its chances of acceptance into the Cup. Lastly, the Association will usually admit the champions of eleventh-level leagues, provided these are not clubs in their first year of existence (F.A., 2019).

top-flight division, whether the E.F.L. First Division (from 1888 to 1992) or the Premier League (since 1992-93), has never had more than 22 teams in any season. In fact, since 1995-96, only 20 have contested each campaign of the Premier League. Moreover, even divisions below the Premier League or its predecessor atop the system have never had more than 24 clubs apiece during their existence (Genereux, 2017). The Cup, on the other hand, has involved hundreds of teams every year. Indeed, even in the early years of my study period, there were significantly more than 400 teams involved every year, including qualifying rounds. With the decision to admit additional minor clubs beginning in 2000-01, recent Cups have tended to have at least 700 clubs (again, including qualifiers). For example, the 2020-21 Cup admitted 737, but even this was not the largest field the competition has ever included. That distinction belongs to the 2012-13 edition, which included a total of 762 teams. These ranged from Premier League squads to local clubs in the tenth division of the league system (F.A.; F.C.H.D.). Suffice it to say that the larger the sample size of a study, the more likely that statistically significant results are to be present. This is especially crucial for the regional approach described below in “Methods.”

### *The Structure of the Cup*

Before I comment on existing literature concerning the Cup, an explanation is in order as to how it is formatted. As with most other domestic cups in football, the Cup is a single-elimination knockout tournament, which means that one loss disqualifies a team

from further participation.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the Association does not determine pairings for any given round by any seeding process. Instead, it oversees a completely random draw of the matchups for each round's ties. Such a pairing of teams has the potential to lend an air of unpredictability to the competition (Sullivan, 2016). The exception to this rule lies in the qualifying stages. In these rounds, the Association groups clubs geographically before drawing the ties to conserve travel costs, which is especially crucial for allowing lesser non-league<sup>9</sup> sides to participate (F.A., 2019).<sup>10</sup>

The competition itself consists of fourteen rounds at present. These are grouped into two stages: six rounds of qualifying, followed by an eight-round competition proper. In turn, the qualifying competition is subdivided into a preliminary stage of two rounds (with the first often referred to as the "extra preliminary round") and four main qualifying rounds. Ninth- and tenth-level clubs—normally the lowliest teams eligible—enter in the extra preliminary round. This is usually held in early August. The survivors of this round (usually 184 or more in number) join with the members of the eighth level of the English league system to contest the preliminary round later in August. In turn, the survivors of those matches (typically 160 total) enter the first qualifying round, held in early September, when seventh-level teams enter. The next qualifying round, usually in late

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<sup>8</sup> Clubs may also be removed for violations of either the Laws of the Game or Cup regulations, pursuant to F.A. investigation (F.A., 2019).

<sup>9</sup> "Non-league" simply refers to clubs that are members of neither the Premier League nor the English Football League (F.A.)

<sup>10</sup> For much of the study period (1967-2017), the first two proper rounds were also regionalized—in this case, on a north-south basis—but since 1998-99, all proper rounds have been drawn nationally (F.A.).

September, adds in the 44 members of the National League North and National League South at the sixth level of the system of English football leagues. The third qualifying round, which is held in early October, does not add any further teams to the fray.<sup>11</sup> Then, normally in late October, the National League's 24 member clubs enter the fourth and final qualifying round to determine the 32 non-league entrants into the competition proper (F.A., 2019).<sup>12</sup>

The first round proper, usually held in November, is where the 48 members of E.F.L. Leagues One and Two start to participate. It is also the first round<sup>13</sup> each year whose draw is the first to be televised, along with certain fixtures in the round. As with the third qualifying round, no additional clubs enter in the second round, which usually takes place in December. However, like the first-round draw, the draw for this round is televised, and selected fixtures are broadcast in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. In any case, it is in the third round that interest in the Cup dramatically increases. At this stage in the Cup, the 44 member clubs of the Premier League and E.F.L. Championship enter. There ensues increased broadcast coverage of the matches, including in most countries outside the

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<sup>11</sup> The lack of clubs entering at this point makes it unique among qualifying rounds in any given season.

<sup>12</sup> In 2018-19, the National League System (N.L.S.), which covers the leagues below the English Football League, introduced sweeping changes to the league structure. The seventh tier was revised from three league divisions to four, and the eighth from six to seven in order to balance the league system. This also had implications for placement of clubs within the structure of the Cup, as certain teams from the seventh and eighth tiers of the league system were forced to enter a round early thereafter to balance out the rounds (F.A., 19 June 2018). Insofar as my study period concludes before these changes, though, they are not covered herein, although future inquiry might consider them.

<sup>13</sup> Unless designated otherwise, rounds of the Cup hereinafter referred to as simply "the *n*th round" refer to proper rounds. However, if the nature of a given round being discussed needs to be clarified, the term "*n*th round proper" will typically be used.

United Kingdom.<sup>14</sup> For example, in the United States, all non-replay fixtures hereinafter each year have been broadcast either on linear networks or via Internet streaming since at least 2012-13. U.S. viewers can (as of 2019-20) stream all 63 regularly scheduled fixtures from this round onward, as well as selected such fixtures from the first two proper rounds and selected replays, on ESPN+. (As its name implies, this is a streaming service run by ESPN.) Inasmuch as the Premier League and the Championship are the top two tiers of the league system, no clubs may enter any later. Thereafter, the field is pared down, round by round, from the 64 teams at that point to the two finalists and, ultimately, the champions. With the notable exception of replays (to be discussed hereinafter), the format of the Cup from the third round onward is reminiscent of N.C.A.A. tournaments in the United States (Holt, 15 August 2018; Appendix C).

**Replays.** If a match in most rounds (with exceptions to be discussed below) is drawn at the end of full time, or 90 minutes plus stoppage time, the tie goes to a replay at the visiting team's home ground. Under current rules, if this match is drawn at full time, extra time may be applied. This consists of two periods of fifteen minutes each—one in each direction of the field—plus stoppage time. If this is still insufficient to decide the replay, a penalty shootout ensues, and the winner advances. The replays are usually held

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<sup>14</sup> The ponderous 3pm blackout rule in English football prevents matches from being broadcast between 2:45pm and 5:15pm in the United Kingdom. This was implemented in the 1960s in response to Bob Lord, chairman of Burnley F.C., who feared that his club would see attendance decline if football were to be televised domestically in terms of hitherto non-televised matches, thereby affecting his club's income and that of other, also usually lesser, clubs. This rule applies to T.V. broadcasts of the "big three" competitions—the Cup, the Premier League and the English Football League in all divisions—but not to radio. Nor does it cover foreign broadcasts or Internet streams, which are often shown in pubs throughout Britain (Clement, 2006).

three days after the corresponding individual matches in the qualifying rounds and ten days afterward in the proper rounds. Even so, provisions exist in the regulations of the Cup to accommodate television or European, league or other domestic knockout competitions by deferring a given replay to a later date (F.A., 2019).

**Changes in the format during the study period.** For the first thirteen years of the 1967-2017 study period, only the final and any replays could go to extra time. No penalty shootouts were permitted to decide any tie, and all fixtures were allotted as many replays as were needed to decide the tie, regardless of round. Extra time was approved for normally scheduled semifinal fixtures beginning with the corresponding matches in 1981, but replays remained unlimited for all ties—qualifying and proper—and there were still no shootouts that could speed up the resolution of any given tie (Collett, 2003). However, a 1991 fourth-round tie between Arsenal and Leeds United required three replays to resolve—with Arsenal emerging victorious in the end—and thereby provoked outcry over fixture congestion. In other words, whether perceived or real, it was argued that there had been too many matches scheduled in too little time. Accordingly, the Association limited competition-proper ties to one replay per tie, which could be decided by extra time and penalties as necessary. Two years later, after Arsenal's final win over Sheffield Wednesday warranted a replay, the Association abolished final replays. Semifinal replays were discontinued after 1999, followed by quarterfinal replays after 2016. As with the limitations on the number of replays per tie, the discontinuation of replays in the later rounds was officially done to relieve fixture congestion, especially for top clubs involved



in European competition (Collett, 2003; F.A., 27 July 2016). In the qualifying rounds, though, multiple replays remained effective through 1996. The last such extra replay was Morecambe's win over Lancaster City 4-2 on 4 November that year. Thereafter, qualifiers played by the competition proper's replay rules, so to speak (Collett, 2003; F.C.H.D.).

Speaking of qualifying rounds, at the start of my study period, only five were played annually, including the aforementioned preliminary round. This terminology reflects the evolution of the qualifying stage since its introduction in 1888-89, which was concurrent with the creation of the League. The inaugural edition of this stage had featured four such rounds, but the number was fixed at six after the League had absorbed the rival Football Alliance in 1892. The addition of a Third Division to the League in 1920 with the absorption of the top Southern League clubs created problems for the format, as only the First and Second Divisions received byes into the competition proper. This was corrected in 1925-26, when the last two qualifying rounds were converted into the first and second rounds proper, respectively, and Third Division clubs (reorganized into nationwide Third and Fourth Divisions in 1958) earned automatic bids into the main competition. Apart from a restricted format in 1945-46, presumably because of damage wrought during World War II, the Cup has continued to operate under this format of four qualifying rounds and eight proper rounds ever since (Collett, 2003; F.C.H.D.).

At the start of my study period, though, the increase in the number of clubs eligible to participate in the Cup had been enough that the aforementioned preliminary round

was added to the competition. Then, in 2000, the extra preliminary round was introduced to accommodate clubs from the ninth and tenth tiers of the league system (F.A.). The implications of these format changes are summarized in “Methods” below, and the “Discussion” chapter also includes future methods of accounting for them.

One other matter should be explained as to the evolution of the format, and that concerns the semifinals. Unlike all previous rounds, including qualifiers, but as with the final, the semifinals of the Cup have invariably been held at neutral sites. For most of the study period, these grounds were selected from among the nation’s largest stadiums, likely to capitalize on attention stemming from the importance of these ties. These included, but were not limited to, the old Empire/Wembley Stadium, Villa Park in Birmingham, Old Trafford and Maine Road<sup>15</sup> in Manchester and Hillsborough Stadium in Sheffield. After the new Wembley Stadium opened in 2007, though, a thirty-year agreement was enacted to play all semifinals at that stadium. This contract was agreed despite objections from many club supporters’ groups, in order to recoup the costs of construction (B.B.C. Sport, 3 January 2003).

**European tie-ins.** For the greater part of the study period—that is, from 1968 through 1998—the winners of the Cup and other European primary domestic cups<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> This stadium has since been replaced by the City of Manchester Stadium, also known as Etihad Stadium for purposes of corporate sponsorship, which opened in 2002.

<sup>16</sup> The difference between a primary cup and a secondary cup is that the primary cup is invariably run by the national football association in question, and it is open to teams regardless of level, at least in theory. By contrast, secondary cups for European purposes are typically confined to historically professional clubs that are, or have spent many years, in the league tiers of their respective countries’ league systems, and these are usually run by the top league of each nation with such a competition.

earned bids to the following season's European Cup Winners' Cup (hereinafter the Cup Winners' Cup). At the time, this was one of two secondary continental competitions available to the continent's top clubs, along with the UEFA Cup, which had been originally designed for top-flight runners-up (and a few secondary domestic cup winners, such as those of the E.F.L. Cup). On the other hand, in the event of a league-and-cup double or (beginning in 1997) other means of qualification for the Champions League (as alluded in my justification for studying the Cup), the Cup Winners' Cup spot would devolve upon the runners-up of the relevant cup competition.<sup>17</sup> In any case, qualification for the Cup Winners' Cup took precedence over the UEFA Cup until 1999. That year, the latter competition absorbed all primary domestic cup winners who had not otherwise qualified for it or the Champions League.<sup>18</sup> Since then, the primary cup winners have held first priority in placement in that competition, rebranded by UEFA as the Europa League in 2009. However, starting in 2015-16, cup runners-up, including those of secondary cup competitions, have not been allowed to directly enter the competition. Instead, the relevant priority has devolved upon the highest-placed team available according to top-flight league standing for the primary cup winners (UEFA, 2018a). That so much as primary cup winners, even for a relatively high-profile knockout competition such as the F.A. Cup,

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<sup>17</sup> The same could be said of secondary cups involved in the UEFA Cup if the winners of such cups had qualified for the Champions League or also won the primary domestic cup.

<sup>18</sup> An example of this arrangement was the UEFA Super Cup, in which every edition through 1999 featured the European Cup (as the Champions League had been known prior to rebranding in 1992) holders facing those of the Cup Winners' Cup. Only with the abolition of the Cup Winners' Cup and the absorption of the cup winners of Europe into the UEFA Cup did that competition's holders start to be paired with the Champions League title holders.

do not have direct access to the greater riches of the Champions League has been a flashpoint of debate for years and even decades. This has been especially true following the expansion of Europe's primary continental club competition, the Champions League, to include non-champions. Starting with the 1996-97 cycle of top-flight European leagues, the runners-up of the best-performing such leagues in Europe as ranked by UEFA's association coefficient formula were allowed to join their national-champion brethren in the primary competition. Previously, only national (that is, league) champions and the Champions League title holders had been allowed to enter. Nowadays, up to five teams per country are admitted each season. Again, the actual number depends on association coefficient, but these are invariably top-flight clubs (B.B.C. Sport, 12 November 2007). Following my analysis of the results of this study, I discuss these implications in greater detail.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

Although there has not existed a previous comprehensive study into success in the Cup prior to this effort as far as is known, I was able to find plenty of information as to the evolution of general attitudes toward the competition and other explanatory factors. These sources consist, in descending order of use, of periodical (mostly newspaper) articles, scholarly journal articles and print books.

### *Cup-Specific Literature*

For such an effort as this, the generally dynamic nature of sport (rather than just football) demands an approach to reviewing credible literature that differs from that which is employed for other forms of scholarly research. Normally, those involved in such endeavours can rely on published books and scholarly, peer-reviewed articles to demonstrate the existing work that has been carried out concerning the relevant topical matter. By contrast, although I found a few such sources, the bulk of my literature comes from U.K. newspapers such as *The Guardian* and *The Independent*. These are more attuned (for want of a better adjective) to the evolution of the Cup, although the more scholarly sources have provided me with potential socioeconomic variables to correlate with the match data.

One article in *The Independent* (Moore, 7 January 2006) examines why people in Britain (if not other countries) have lost much of their previous interest in the Cup. Noting how weekends with Cup fixtures scheduled once stood as important dates on the football calendar, especially third-round weekend and the final, the article laments how many

clubs in the top flight were no longer able to sell out their stadiums for such matches, with Blackburn Rovers noting that their home stadium, Ewood Park, would have about 20 000 empty seats (out of a total capacity of approximately 32 000) for Queen's Park Rangers' third-round Cup visit. The author, Glenn Moore, blames firstly the dramatic increase in the number of televised matches. In 1970, Chelsea's Cup-clinching win over Leeds United drew 28.49 million U.K. viewers, as it was one of the few televised matches of the season. This was the viewership even though the match was a replay of the final rather than its original leg. Thirty-five years later, in 2005, Arsenal's win over Manchester United mustered only 13.7 million U.K. viewers, though it was indeed the original final—a figure smaller than a number of Champions League ties. There is also a human element to the Cup's declining profile, as fans, players and managers alike have cared less about the Cup. In terms of the supporters, attendance for Middlesbrough hosting Manchester United in the third round in 2003 was half the turnout for a Premier League match the month before between those teams at Middlesbrough's Riverside Stadium. Overall, the average attendance per match in the proper rounds has not topped 15 000 in any season since the hundredth edition in 1980-81,<sup>19</sup> nor 14 000 since 1982-83 (Moore, 7 January 2006).

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<sup>19</sup> The Cup was not held between 1915 and 1919 on account of World War I, while World War II provided a second interruption between 1939 and 1945. Hence, the  $n$ th edition of the Cup between 1919-20 and 1938-39 was  $n-4$  years behind the  $n$ th season since its inception, and all editions from 1945-46 have been  $n-10$  years behind (Collett, 2003).

In terms of the players, although they may say otherwise in press accounts, many now prefer a top-four finish in the Premier League without so much as lifting a lesser trophy to winning the Cup with a weaker finish if forced to choose between these two season outcomes, as a top-four finish assures a team of qualifying for the following season's Champions League. This, in turn, leads to far greater wages, and overall revenue for the clubs involved, than any Cup run could contribute. As Roy Keane of Manchester United wrote in his autobiography concerning his club's historic treble of Premier League, Cup and Champions League in 1998-99: "The Wembley myth, the folklore attached to the walk out of the tunnel, the red carpet, meeting the big shots, going up to collect your medal, a pat on the back from the great and the good (and hopefully the Cup) ...was bollocks. The Premier [League] and the Champions League were the only trophies we were concerned about" (Moore, 7 January 2006, 76-77).

In terms of the managers, such men as Jose Mourinho, who has overseen Chelsea, Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur, have frequently, even regularly, fielded weaker sides for Cup fixtures in recent years. Not unlike their players' indifference, the managers' selection reasoning is based on the fact that Premier League participation, let alone that which is supplemented by money from European competition, is far more lucrative than any Cup run could provide. Moreover, the risk of losing a critical player to injury has been a dissuading factor that has caused managers to downplay the Cup. Even lesser clubs such as Wigan Athletic and Sheffield United have opted to jeopardize their prospects in the Cup to focus on promotion to, or survival in, the Premier League. After

all, at the time that Moore wrote in January 2006, playing a single year in the highest tier of English football assured a club £20 million (about \$26 million) or more. Equally cited as a reason for the loss of the Cup's lustre has been the repetitious nature of big clubs winning the Cup, even though weakened teams have been fielded by such clubs. Nevertheless, the frequency of giant-killings, or upsets of higher-division teams, especially from the Premier League and Championship by lower sides (i.e., now-defunct Hereford United of the then-fifth-tier Southern League over Newcastle United of the old E.F.L. First Division, then the top-flight entity, in 1972), may have been overstated in the past (Moore, 7 January 2006).<sup>20</sup>

Other newspaper articles found offered a similar tone. One in the *Daily Telegraph* from 2014 argues that the Cup moving toward its extinction is “mourned more out of nostalgia than any tangible sense of loss,” comparing it to phone booths, milkmen, *Top of the Pops* (that is, the British equivalent of *American Bandstand*, running on B.B.C. television from 1964 to 2006) and Blockbuster stores, concluding that it has become more of a continuation of the season than a competition in its own right (Liew, 6 January 2014, 16). One suggestion that the majority, though not all, of these sources make is to award the Cup winners one of England's four places in the following season's Champions League,<sup>21</sup> but the Premier League has shown no signs of budging in that regard, and the

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<sup>20</sup> The article had been written before the breakthroughs of Portsmouth (2008) and Wigan Athletic (2013). But at the time of the article, Everton (1995) had been the last club outside the “big six” (Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester City, Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur) to win the Cup.

<sup>21</sup> UEFA has had a strict limit of five clubs per country in the Champions League and three in the Europa League since 2015-16. In the event that any country ranked in the top four according to UEFA's coefficient



same may be said of UEFA itself. This did not stop the latter organization's former president, former France international Michel Platini, from proposing such an idea in 2007 (Moore, 7 January 2006; B.B.C. Sport, 12 November 2007; UEFA, 2018a). I shall return to this issue in "Discussion" and "Conclusion."

In terms of secondary sources primarily concerned with the Cup itself, Collett (2003) has been a recurring source in my research. The core section of the book is a list of all clubs that participated in the competition proper from the inception of the Cup through the 2003 final, complete with all their matches played in the Cup proper and who scored when for each club in those matches. However, as the "Methods" section describes, I have found scores for Cup matches elsewhere, especially for the qualifying rounds that Collett's book touches upon but lightly (F.C.H.D.). The most important use of the volume for my purposes concerns its introductory historical essay. Herein lies an interesting take on the origins of the Cup. It also includes an overview of the myriad finals that had taken place at the time of its publication. Above all, it, too, contains a treatment of how the competition started to lose much of its lustre in the 1990s, especially around the turn of the millennium (Collett, 2003).

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rankings (see "Methods") would place six clubs in the Champions League because of the failure of both Champions and Europa holders to otherwise qualify for the primary competition, the fourth-placed team is demoted to the Europa League group stage (UEFA, 2018b).

Finally, although not directly related to the Cup itself, the dispute between the Football Association and the Football League<sup>22</sup> over the creation of the E.F.L. Cup in 1960 as a secondary domestic cup competition warrants a comparison not only for reasons of curiosity, but in light of complaints about fixture congestion on the part of players and managers alike. As I mentioned in my treatise on E.F.L. history (Genereux, 2017), that competition (hereinafter referred to as “the League Cup”) suffered great criticism at the time of its advent. An anonymous column in *The Times* of London from 30 May 1960 censured the idea, which is generally regarded as having been the idea of E.F.L. Secretary-General Alan Hardaker (leader of the League from 1957 to 1979), as contrary to the “wider horizons” of such men as Count Santiago Bernabéu of Real Madrid. The column echoed Bernabéu’s preference to crown a European (rather than yet another domestic) champion from among the various domestic league champions of the continent (*The Times*, 30 May 1960, 4). Then, once the competition had become approved for addition to the fixture calendar of the League, ten of the 92 member clubs of the League—Arsenal, Burnley, Chelsea, Everton, Liverpool, Manchester United, Sheffield Wednesday, Tottenham Hotspur, West Bromwich Albion and Wolverhampton Wanderers—opted out of the inaugural edition held in 1960-61.<sup>23</sup> On top of these difficulties, giant-killings could always occur in the Cup, which already existed for English (and Welsh) clubs. A cup

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<sup>22</sup> The term “the League” hereinafter refers to the top four divisions of the English league system, as mentioned in my historical overview, including the Premier League from its 1992-93 inception (Genereux, 2017, 13).

<sup>23</sup> Other top-flight clubs such as Birmingham City and Leicester City did likewise in the competition’s early days (Hopkins, 2012).

competition limited to the League, by contrast, would (needless to say) provide less leeway for such upsets. Finally, the fixtures in the new competition were played during the midweek except for the final, as with the European Cup. This contrasted with the F.A. Cup (replays notwithstanding) and most League fixtures, which took place on weekends. This limited interest in the early years of the League Cup, as fans watching on television or listening on the radio, given the choice of the pan-continental European Cup and the domestic League Cup when deciding which midweek fixture to follow, would choose the former unless their clubs were involved in the latter. It seems, then, that the League Cup was a bargaining chip for the League in gaining leverage at the expense of that of the Association, as well as to negotiate terms for its clubs' participation in UEFA competitions. It is certainly true that the Association had had misgivings about European competition in its own right, even keeping reigning champion Chelsea from the inaugural European Cup of 1955-56, and the League Cup was seen as a test of the Association's attitude toward midweek fixtures (Hopkins, 2012).

The relevance of this article revolves around the power struggle between the Football League and the Football Association. This continues to resonate in discourse concerning the status of the F.A. Cup versus the Premier League, which has comprised the top division in English football for nearly thirty years as of this writing. As mentioned above, the Premier League, along with the various continental club competitions overseen by UEFA, has separated itself from other English domestic leagues and knockout competitions as the one that armchair fans in England and other lands, if not also

supporters in the stands, care most deeply about, as the comparative attendances and T.V. figures mentioned in Moore demonstrate (7 January 2006).

### Chapter Three: Methods

#### *Quantifying the Geographical Distribution of Success*

**Which years were used, and which clubs participated in those days?** Having gleaned the necessary information from the literature I used, the next stage was to quantify the success of clubs in the Cup. In my view, this was the most important stage. In the first step of the stage, I identified all clubs that competed in the Cup from 1967-68 through 2016-17, and I noted the actual years in which these clubs participated within this range. As to the reason I used the period that I used, I had mentioned in past research that the 22 clubs that would otherwise have formed the First Division of the League in 1992-93 instead seceded to form their own league, the Premier League, for that season and thereafter (Genereux, 2017). Accordingly, using 1967-68 and 2016-17 as terminal years assured me of having the 25 years before the Premier League was formed and the first 25 years of the Premier League era. The overall fifty-year period was, in turn, subdivided into ten periods of five years each.

As for the clubs themselves, there exist several means of ascertaining the participating clubs by years of participation. The Football Club History Database, though, was my choice for the data, as it is the most comprehensive source that I am aware of. It includes every result from the Cup since the end of World War II, whether in the qualifying stages or the competition proper. It also includes all competition-proper and selected qualifying results before then, with entries alphabetized by club name (F.C.H.D., 2020). The only issue I ran into was the website's structure; rather than group all names for a

given club known by multiple names over the years into a single page, there is a separate page for each name by which that club has been known. Nevertheless, in such cases, there are links to the site's other pages for each club under all the names it has operated under, which mitigates the flaw (F.C.H.D., 2020). As a rule, I decided to list each club in the dataset by its most recent name. The only exceptions are for teams that have been better known by a different name. Even then, many such clubs have had previous incarnations that folded and were succeeded by replacement clubs, often referred to as "phoenix" clubs. Often, these will have names similar to their predecessors. However, whether they should be treated as continuous with said forerunners is, to some degree, a judgement call.

A prominent example of separating phoenix from original club is in the case of A.F.C. Wimbledon and Milton Keynes Dons. A.F.C. Wimbledon was started in 2002 in response to the threat of the old Wimbledon F.C.'s relocation to the "new town," or planned suburb, of Milton Keynes. However, the relocated club, also known as M.K. Dons for short, has officially renounced its previous history, if only because of great pressure from many supporters' groups across England. This includes several such entities in London, where both "old" and "new" Wimbledon have been based. Hence, M.K. Dons is listed in the dataset as having first entered the Cup in 2004-05 (F.C.H.D.; Football Supporters Federation, 29 June 2007).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The phoenix club was promoted to the League in its own right in 2011 and currently plays in League One, to which it was promoted in 2016 (F.C.H.D.).

By contrast, I typically regarded a phoenix club as sharing its Cup history with its predecessor in the event of continuous operation. As an example of this rule, Newport County was reborn in 1989 in Newport, Wales from the wreckage of an older club of that name that had gone under due to financial difficulties. Officially, the old club no longer exists. However, despite a demotion to non-league football, the “new” Newport County saw no interruption of play relative to its predecessor. Indeed, the phoenix eleven has earned enough promotions to rejoin the League since coming about, and the club has adopted the nickname “the Exiles” to celebrate its long journey back from the proverbial dead. In recognition of this continuity, I regarded both clubs as having had the same Cup history (F.C.H.D.).

In any case, having identified all participating clubs for my study period and noted their years of participation in the Cup in this way, I classified each club by the official region in which it is located. There have been nine such regions of England as defined by the British government since 1994 (Figure 1), and my raw dataset includes abbreviations for them. The “Other British” category, on the other hand, includes non-English clubs involved in the competition. Notable in this category, both in terms of prominence and quantity, have been those from Wales. With few other clubs from outside England involved during the study period,<sup>25</sup> I saw fit to group all such clubs into a single category.

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<sup>25</sup> Exceptions include Scottish club Gretna F.C., located very close to the English border, which belonged to the Northern Premier League from 1983 to 2002 and participated in the Cup in those years, but then reverted to the Scottish league system for the duration of its existence, which ended in bankruptcy in 2008. Additionally, Channel Islands side Guernsey F.C. participated in the last five years of the study period (F.C.H.D.).

For cases in which these regions, including the Other British category, are abbreviated,

Table I below depicts the abbreviations used.

Region	Abbreviation	Region	Abbreviation
East	E	Southeast	SE
East Midlands	EM	Southwest	SW
Greater London	GL	West Midlands	WM
Northeast	NE	Yorkshire/Humber	YH
Northwest	NW	Other British	OB

Table I. Regional abbreviations for the regions of England

**How were changes in the number of clubs from each region factored in?** It is useful to reiterate that, although some clubs participated in all fifty years of the study period, most clubs only participated in certain years. This is especially true among the Welsh clubs that have been admitted to participation in the Cup by virtue of their membership in the English league system. Incidentally, 1992—which coincided with the Premier League’s formation—also saw most Welsh clubs form their own league pyramid,<sup>26</sup> with the League of Wales (now the Welsh Premier League) at the top of that system. By 1995, only six Welsh clubs, mostly those of relative significance or having rivalries with English clubs, remained in the English pyramid: Cardiff City, Colwyn Bay,<sup>27</sup> Merthyr Tydfil (replaced in 2011 by a phoenix club, Merthyr Town), Newport County, Swansea City and Wrexham (F.C.H.D.). Accordingly, it was important to account for the

<sup>26</sup> The term “league pyramid,” also referred to as “the football pyramid” in England and other lands, is simply a synonym for the league system in a given country.

<sup>27</sup> In 2019, Colwyn Bay announced their resignation from the Northern Premier League (level VII) to switch to the Welsh league pyramid (F.C.H.D.). However, this took place after the study period’s conclusion and is not considered for calculation of the non-British regional scores.



number of clubs from each region. The appropriate modifier  $n$  that I factored into the calculations that I describe below can be ascertained with the following equation:

$$n = \frac{C_i}{C_{min}}$$

This modifier is the quotient of the mean number of clubs  $C_i$  per year over a given five-year period  $i$  over the minimum mean number of clubs per year for any of the five-year periods across all regions in the overall study period  $C_{min}$ . The seasons were indexed to 1967-72<sup>28</sup> for  $i=1$  through 2012-17 for  $i=10$ .<sup>29</sup> This was done to ensure that no region's rating could freeload off a few clubs participating from that region, especially if they were of high rank in the league system in those years, nor any rating suffer too much from a glut of clubs participating from that region, especially clubs lower on the football pyramid.

**How was the success of these clubs and the regions they are located in quantified?** After accounting for the number of clubs per region in each year came the central task to the stage: assessing the success of each club across my study period. To do so, I saw fit to adapt the coefficient system used by UEFA for assessing performance in European club competition, which currently consists of the first-tier Champions League

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<sup>28</sup> i.e., 1967-68 to 1971-72

<sup>29</sup> As in my dataset, the year numbers hereinafter refer to the calendar years in which each season ended, as the majority of the proper stage (third round onward) takes place after New Year's Day. As for my decision to ascertain the mean number of clubs per region, per year for each five-year period, I had originally intended to calculate the number for each year; but in the interests of completion, I opted for a mean of the five years in each region.

and the second-tier Europa League.<sup>30</sup> Under the original system, two points are awarded to a club per win and one point per draw, with qualifying results receiving half credit. Regardless, matches decided after extra time are scored as though they had ended in regulation, but those decided on penalties are scored as draws. Clubs also earn bonuses for their respective national associations if they reach the more prestigious rounds of either competition. For example, if a given club reaches the group stage of the Champions League, it earns four points simply for advancing that far. Qualification for the knockout portion of the main competition earns the team another four points, and every Champions League knockout round attained, starting with the round of sixteen, earns the club one point each. As for the Europa League, each round beginning with the quarterfinals adds one bonus point to a club's contribution to the coefficient. Once all clubs representing a given association in a certain season are credited, and the subtotals are added up, the total is divided by the number of participating clubs to produce the final tally for the season, and the last five years' quotients are added up to ascertain a final coefficient. Once all coefficients are calculated for five years' results, UEFA allocates

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<sup>30</sup> Since I began to write this thesis, UEFA has announced the creation of a tertiary competition, the Europa Conference League, for smaller clubs in Europe due to start in 2021-22. Incidentally, the E.F.L. Cup, which I alluded to in my literature review, will send its winners to this competition's later qualifiers rather than the second qualifying round of the Europa League, as had been the case through the E.F.L. Cup's 2020 final, won by Manchester City (B.B.C. Sport; UEFA, 2019). As it is unknown how the coefficient system will work (though it is likely to resemble the formulae currently used for associations and individual clubs), and this new tertiary competition is beyond my study period, it is only discussed in passing.

places to its competitions based on the resulting ranking (UEFA, 2018a). The following equation for the coefficient, given as  $C$ , summarizes the procedure:

$$C = \sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{(\sum_{i=1}^n \cdot 5d_q + w_q + d_p + 2w_p) + 4g + 5k + r}{n}$$

In the present equation,  $n$  is the number of clubs from a given association,  $d_q$  is the number of draws in qualifying,  $w_q$  is the number of wins in qualifying,  $d_p$  is the number of draws in the main competition (group stage onwards),  $w_p$  is the number of wins in the main competition,  $g$  is the number of teams involved in the group stage of the Champions League,  $k$  is the number of teams that reach the Champions League knockout stage and  $r$  is the number of total appearances in the rounds after the round of sixteen in both competitions (cf. UEFA, 2018a).

**Modifications to the formula.** I modified the coefficient system described above for my study to better suit the differing circumstances of the Cup. In the first place, each Champions or Europa League knockout tie (except for competition finals) normally consists of two legs, one at each home ground of the teams participating therein (UEFA, 2018a).<sup>31</sup> The Cup, by contrast, typically features single-legged ties, which implies no guarantee of home advantage. As mentioned under “The Structure of the Cup,” the most

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<sup>31</sup> An exception, as of this writing, has been the 2020-21 season, in which qualifiers for both the Champions League (except for the final or “playoff” round of that stage, which followed its usual two-legged, home-and-away format) and Europa League were single-legged to accommodate the schedule compression triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic (UEFA, 2020). I return to the implications of the pandemic on the Cup, European competition and football in general in “Discussion” below.

common exception occurs if the first leg features a full-time draw, triggering a replay at the away team's home ground (F.A., 2019). Even then, the last few rounds—the final since 1993-94, the semifinals since 1999-2000 and the quarterfinals since 2016-17—are now decided on the day, with extra time and penalties applied as needed (Collett, 2003; F.A., 27 July 2016). Additionally, teams once had unlimited replays in any tie, with some ties featuring four or more total matches!<sup>32</sup> To account for changes in replay rules, I only included the match that decided each tie, whether or not the tie was decided on the day—that is, without a replay.

Secondly, there was the issue of how much credit should be given for wins. When the association coefficient system was first implemented by UEFA in 1979 (UEFA, 2018a), European leagues, including the ones in England, typically awarded two points per win. This ensured that each draw would be easily discernible as half-won and half-lost. Nowadays, though, the norm is three points for a win. This rule, incidentally, was introduced in 1981-82 by the English League to encourage more attractive play (Genereux, 2017). Since this era covers more of the study period than not—36 years, to be exact—I followed this rule throughout. A draw only counted for one point (modified

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<sup>32</sup>These changes are summarized in greater detail under “The Structure of the Cup” above. In 2018, the Association decided to eliminate replays in the fifth round starting in 2019-20. Subsequently, in light of strong European performances on the part of member clubs, it opted to move the reform up a year to 2018-19. However, since the study period does not include 2018-19, it is not included in the replay-phaseout list above.

by home advantage, as detailed below) if the tie had been decided on the day on penalties.

Another modification concerned *where* the decisive match had taken place in each tie. Again, under a single-legged format, there is no guarantee of home advantage. Hence, I decided to reward teams for winning away, and I awarded lesser weight to teams that had benefited from home advantage in their Cup runs. The actual points awarded for each club's performance, accordingly, amounted to half the base total mentioned above for home results. The base for wins and draws was multiplied by 1.5 for away results, and no modifications were made for neutral sites. Again, half credit was given for qualifying ties.

Thirdly, bonuses were to be given for qualifying for, and progressing within, the competition proper. Every team that had reached the proper stage earned four points, and another five were awarded for reaching the third round proper.<sup>33</sup> Two points were added to winning a tie in each of the third, fourth and fifth rounds. This bonus increased to three points for victory in each of the last three rounds (that is, starting in the quarterfinals, formerly known officially, and still referred to colloquially, as the sixth round). All these points were added to the normal point totals accrued by clubs as mentioned above. This helped ensure that a run in the proper rounds would be worth

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<sup>33</sup> Teams in the League need not go through qualifying; accordingly, they are awarded four points by default. Members of the Premier League and E.F.L. Championship are awarded another five, or nine points in all, by default, as they do not enter the competition until the third round.

more than one through the qualifying stages, all else equal. To illustrate my points system, Appendix A uses a recent Cup winner—2018 champion Chelsea—as an example.

The final modification considers the mean number of clubs participating in a given year from each region over the entire study period against the minimum such average for the study area. This was done to normalize the data temporally and spatially. This modifier, given as  $n$ , is rendered by the following expression:

$$n = \frac{\mu_{reg}}{\mu_{min}}$$

The numerator represents the annual mean for a given region of England over the *entire* fifty-year study period rather than merely a certain five-year stretch within that period. The denominator represents the lowest such mean. Invariably, this refers to the non-English clubs in the Cup, which averaged 10.44 per year over the overall period. Hence, for the “other British” contingent, the modifier was an even 1.

**Final calculations.** Once the totals for the nine regions of England, plus the “other British” group, had been computed, they were divided by the number of clubs participating from each region. These quotients, in turn, were multiplied by the modifier I have described above. This was done to account for the changes in the number of participating clubs from each region. As with all other temporal considerations, the study period was subdivided into ten periods of five seasons each. For example, 1967-68 to

1971-72 comprised one five-year period, 1972-73 to 1976-77 comprised the second and so on.

*How Do These Trends of Success Compare with Socioeconomic and Other Conditions?*

**Socioeconomic factors.** The third and final stage of my inquiry was an analysis of the socioeconomic and other trends that covered the study period. This would help me to assemble a simple model by which future trends might be predicted for purposes of correlation. Here, too, studying the literature reviewed in the first stage indicated factors—socioeconomic, external but related to the clubs and within the clubs—that would be most indicative of success in the Cup. Unfortunately, time constraints, as well as the unprecedented nature of this inquiry, limited the number of factors that could be examined. In terms of the socioeconomic data, my original intent was to use variables from the U.K. censuses of 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011, as well as various related statistics. Here too, however, constraints of time and resources prevented me from doing so. Nevertheless, I ascertained some interesting socioeconomic factors that would potentially explain a region's overall fortunes in the Cup.

One unique factor examined was the duration of a train trip from provincial England (or from the South of Wales,<sup>34</sup> for that matter) to London (National Rail). It was thought that distance from the capital might have an association with the overall

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<sup>34</sup> Although football clubs from the North of Wales have participated in the English leagues and the Cup since the primitive days of the organized game, notably Wrexham A.F.C. (Wrexham A.F.C., 28 June 2012), the majority of Cup participants from outside England have come from South Wales (F.C.H.D.). Hence the decision to use a southern hub for the non-English clubs.

performance of the ten regions, including the non-English contingent. One issue, of course, is that the finals of 2001-06 were played at Millennium Stadium in Cardiff, as Wembley Stadium was being built anew. Thus, I selected eight English provincial hubs—one for each region of England—as well as London and Cardiff in an effort to associate train times to London with regional success in the Cup. I used three factors to select the hubs: central location, proximity to significant clubs and general socioeconomic importance. The provincial regional hubs that I selected with these criteria are presented in Table II.



<b>Region</b>	<b>Hub</b>	<b>Reasons</b>
East	Cambridge, Cambridgeshire	Central location
East Midlands	Leicester, Leicestershire	Central location
Northeast	Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear	Central location, general importance
Northwest	Preston, Lancashire	Central location, proximity to big clubs (i.e., Liverpool, Man City, Man United)
Other British	Cardiff, Glamorganshire	Central location, proximity to clubs in English pyramid, general importance (capital of Wales)
Southeast	Portsmouth, Hampshire	Central location
Southwest	Bristol, Gloucestershire	General importance
West Midlands	Birmingham, W. Midlands	Proximity to clubs, general importance (third U.K. city by population)
Yorkshire and the Humber	Leeds, West Yorkshire <sup>35</sup>	Proximity to clubs, general importance (largest city in all four ridings of Yorkshire)

Table II. Regional hubs for the train-trip inquiry

No regional hub was needed for London. Being the capital of England and the United Kingdom as a whole, it is a hub unto itself. Once these hubs were selected, it was clear that they would have to be weighted according to the mean share of participating clubs from each region for each period. This would presumably serve as an analogy for

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<sup>35</sup> I almost put Sheffield, South Yorkshire in for the Yorkshire and the Humber regional hub, but this would neglect the presence of relatively prominent clubs farther north such as Leeds United and Bradford City, both in West Yorkshire, as well as those farther east like Hull City in East Yorkshire. All three have competed in the First Division of the League at one point or another (F.C.H.D.)

concentration of population, or at least football fan culture, throughout England and (South) Wales. To accomplish this, upon ascertaining the hub time  $T_H$  for each of the ten hubs, with London set at 0, I created the following formula for the mean weighted duration  $T_W$  of a train trip to Wembley Stadium for each of the periods:

$$T_W = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{10} (T_H * C_i)}{10}$$

In this formula, each region  $i$  has an index value that corresponds to its alphabetical position on the list above. Therefore, the share of participating clubs for that region in the period in question  $C_i$  is multiplied by the hub time, which is constant across the ten sub-periods. Once this has been multiplied by  $T_H$ , the process repeats for all regions, and the products are averaged (hence the “10” in the denominator, representing the number of hubs).

**External but non-socioeconomic factors.** I was going to include non-socioeconomic factors in my model, specifically as they relate to the clubs themselves, but time constraints prevented this. Nevertheless, this is a possibility for future inquiry. Externally, surveys of fan attitudes towards local clubs and football in general exist in some form. For example, the British Broadcasting Corporation conducts a fan survey among football fans in England from time to time to measure attitudes toward matchday elements. These include the prices of tickets and concessions, safety, seating accommodations and so on (Cost of Football). Moreover, when matches in the Cup are televised, it is supposed to be an opportunity even for viewers in England, let alone much

of the rest of the world, to learn about smaller clubs and their communities. These appearances can have an external impact, for better or worse, on both club and town (B.B.C. Sport).

Speaking of television, as I mentioned in my survey of League history (Genereux, 2017), one reason the 22 top-flight clubs for 1992-93 seceded to form the Premier League was television money, especially from the U.K. subscription sports network Sky Sports. This cannot be emphasized enough. In light of this fact, I decided to correlate the impact of Rupert Murdoch's intervention in English football by comparing regional concentration of success in the Cup with the various U.K. television contracts sold by the Premier League, primarily to Sky and BT Sport for live matches and the B.B.C. and I.T.V. for highlights, comparing them with the pattern of concentration. Of course, since the Premier League has only existed as a separate entity since 1992-93, any findings should be compared to previous seasons of the study period with a grain of salt.

**Internal factors.** These include the quality of a stadium and non-matchday facilities, how Cup money—whether from matchday revenue, prize money or broadcasting rights—is invested by clubs into players, coaches and front-office personnel, continuity over time in terms of the same three groups versus change of any or all and, of course, whether clubs prioritize the Cup or not, and if so, to which extent they do. For example, there was an article written on the website B.B.C. Sport (2016) containing the opinion of one club manager that Cup prioritization typically takes place among middle-

of-the-pack teams in their respective league tables. In that case, after I had computed the regional figures, I intended to compare proximity to the middle of the top-flight table with success in the Cup. Although time constraints prevented me from pursuing this course of action, I intend to do so in my future inquiry.

**Quantifying and correlating the explanatory dynamics.** Once I had ascertained certain factors that correlate well with changes in Cup success, I converted them into indices with which I correlated the ratings calculated for each region. There were multiple ways I might have gone about this, but I set the lowest value for each factor to 1 to normalize the data in much the same way as I had done for the average number of clubs from a given region in a given five-year period.

## Chapter Four: Results

### *Results of Success Quantification*

When the coefficients were calculated, the regional scores for each of the five-year periods tended to increase with a reduction in the mean per-period number of clubs involved relative to the previous period. Conversely, decreases were generally seen with more clubs than the previous five years. Table III lists the regional scores for the periods before the Premier League era, rounded to the nearest thousandth, and Table IV lists those for the Premier League-era periods.<sup>36</sup>

<b>Region</b>	<b>1967-72</b>	<b>1972-77</b>	<b>1977-82</b>	<b>1982-87</b>	<b>1987-92</b>
East	104.624	118.999	116.902	104.263	88.195
East Midlands	95.36	91.107	79.976	73.402	73.736
Greater London	133.508	135.403	158.834	129.339	129.881
Northeast	47.122	59.747	56.543	46.305	48.244
Northwest	163.416	161.57	162.247	162.758	162.827
Other British	24.161	18.286	24.375	21.061	16.757
Southeast	133.621	131.677	115.563	136.095	134.379
Southwest	88.981	86.002	82.872	78.14	80.866
West Midlands	131.104	108.899	113.371	103.787	98.859
Yorkshire and the Humber	108.72	101.76	99.504	97.483	93.827

Table III. Regional coefficients prior to the Premier League era

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<sup>36</sup> For reasons of formatting, the reproduction of the regional scores was split into two tables—one for the portion of the study period prior to the Premier League and one for the first quarter-century of the Premier League era. In both cases, five periods are found in each table.

<b>Region</b>	<b>1992-97</b>	<b>1997-2002</b>	<b>2002-07</b>	<b>2007-12</b>	<b>2012-17</b>
East	97.712	91.751	94.22	81.474	81.867
East Midlands	72.512	76.287	67.081	65.21	62.143
Greater London	130.685	135.722	123.688	111.199	106.288
Northeast	46.157	51.73	46.916	50.106	54.334
Northwest	164.04	158.526	148.159	129.722	152.221
Other British	30.994	28.964	28.911	34.917	29.412
Southeast	123.595	108.311	116.479	116.462	122.087
Southwest	74.519	78.662	65.491	62.464	58.305
West Midlands	96.505	87.76	99.502	82.203	78.896
Yorkshire and the Humber	91.449	90.081	85.409	79.688	81.528

Table IV. Regional coefficients of the Premier League era

While not entirely surprising, considering that one consideration was to normalize the data according to the number of clubs for each five-year period in each region of England, as well as non-English clubs in these periods, a more accurate look at the relative success of each region was employed by ranking the regions for each period from highest to lowest scores, with “1” being the highest and “10” being the lowest of the regions in each period. The results of this ranking are in Table V.

<b>Region</b>	<b>67- 72</b>	<b>72- 77</b>	<b>77- 82</b>	<b>82- 87</b>	<b>87- 92</b>	<b>92- 97</b>	<b>97- 02</b>	<b>02- 07</b>	<b>07- 12</b>	<b>12- 17</b>
E	6	4	3	4	6	4	4	5	5	4
EM	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	7	7	7
GL	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	3
NE	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
NW	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OB	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
SE	2	3	4	2	2	3	3	3	2	2
SW	8	8	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	8
WM	4	5	5	5	4	5	6	4	4	6
YH	5	6	6	6	5	6	5	6	6	5

Table V. Ranks of the regional coefficients for all ten eras

As the above table indicates, the Northwest was always the leading region during the study period, with Greater London also invariably among the top three. Apart from the period 1978-82, when the East region of England took third, the Southeast region also was among the aforementioned group. As for the East Midlands, Southwest, Northeast and the non-English clubs, these contingents were always the bottom four. The East region showed the greatest fluctuation in Cup fortunes relative to other parts of England, especially in the five periods predating the Premier League era. Though normally ranking in the top half, the region ranked as low as sixth in 1967-72 and 1987-92. Again, though, it also stood as high as third in 1978-82, surpassing the Southeast region, which normally placed among the top three.

Another consideration was the degree of parity among the regions of England.

One way to ascertain this is the Herfindahl-Hirschman index (H.H.I.), given as follows:

$$HHI = \sum_{i=1}^n s_i^2$$

In this use of the H.H.I.,  $s_i$  is the share of the total points for a given five-year period belonging to region  $i$ , and  $n$  is the number of regions—in this case, ten. To avoid complications, each share's square is usually multiplied by 10 000. Thus, the maximum H.H.I. is 10 000, indicating total control (Blair, 2012). As for the minimum H.H.I., that is 1000 since there are ten regions involved.

Table VI depicts the resulting H.H.I. values, rounded to the nearest whole number.

<b>67-72</b>	<b>72-77</b>	<b>77-82</b>	<b>82-87</b>	<b>87-92</b>	<b>92-97</b>	<b>97-02</b>	<b>02-07</b>	<b>07-12</b>	<b>12-17</b>
1162	1157	1157	1163	1168	1181	1177	1186	1160	1210

Table VI. Herfindahl-Hirschman index values for the ten periods of the study

Although the concentration of success among regions was not entirely notable, it generally increased over the years, dramatically increasing in the final five-year frame of the study period over the previous subset. Four of the five largest indices resulted from performance during the second half of the study period, which is concurrent with the first quarter-century of the Premier League era.

### *Results of the Rail Time Analysis*

Table VII lists the durations of train trips from the regional hubs to London.



<b>Region</b>	<b>Hub</b>	<b>Time in minutes</b>
East	Cambridge	70
East Midlands	Leicester	94
Northeast	Newcastle upon Tyne	202
Northwest	Preston	168
Other British	Cardiff	134
Southeast	Portsmouth	96
Southwest	Bristol	107
West Midlands	Birmingham	121
Yorkshire and the Humber	Leeds	153

Table VII. Regional hub train times to London (National Rail)

If each of the ten regions had roughly the same number of participating clubs, the train trip would last 114 minutes, 30 seconds for the average hub, factoring in London (National Rail). Using the formula described under “Methods,” though, the actual average durations for rail trips from the hubs—again, including London—have been as follows for the time periods covered by the study period, rounded to the nearest second, as shown in Table VIII.

<b>Period</b>	<b>Time in minutes and seconds</b>
1967-72	92:15
1972-77	97:10
1977-82	100:30
1982-87	102:38
1987-92	100:00
1992-97	100:52
1997-2002	103:19
2002-07	107:42
2007-12	109:33
2012-17	100:12

Table VIII. Mean train times to London, weighted according to number of clubs per region

All ten of these periods had mean one-way trip durations that were at least 4:57 shorter than the raw average would suggest. In the early sub-periods of the greater study period, though, the weighted time was as much as 22:15 less than the raw average. Only in two of the last three was the weighted mean within ten minutes of its nominal counterpart.

## Chapter Five: Discussion

During the first half of the study period, there was only one fully professional league in English football throughout that time, and that was the English Football League. Moreover, all member clubs shared in a single television contract. This ensured that, even with the revenue largesse that some earned from competing in Europe, no club could rise too highly above its rivals. The desire of the largest clubs to control their own revenue led these and their lesser top-flight brethren to secede from the League to form the Premier League in 1992. These trends I have detailed in my history of League football in England. The gap between the divisions has grown significantly during the Premier League era, as that entity has claimed the lion's share of English footballing revenue. No club from below the highest division has won the Cup since 1980, when West Ham United defeated Arsenal 1-0. Furthermore, Cardiff City was the last club to represent the lower divisions in the final, losing 1-0 to Portsmouth in 2008 (Genereux, 2017; McNulty, 17 May 2008).

Disparities may also be observed between regions. As the tables I assembled indicate, the Premier League era has seen more regional concentration of success than previous years. I attribute the 2002-07 reversal of this trend to the use of Millennium Stadium in Cardiff as the interim home of the Cup final during 2001-06. This took place while Wembley Stadium (the normal home of the showpiece) was being redeveloped. That Cardiff hosted the final meant people in the West Midlands, to say nothing of Welshmen, would have enjoyed a shorter train trip to the final in those days. Ironically,

though, no teams from the region made it to Millennium Stadium during the period in question (F.A.; National Rail).

Perhaps real success in the Cup is even more concentrated than the figures I have computed indicate. Indeed, of the fifty Cup winners during the study period, 22 came from Greater London and 21 from the Northwest. All the latter were from either Merseyside or Greater Manchester. Of the seven geographical “outsiders,” so to speak, two each were from the Southeast (Southampton in 1976 and Portsmouth in 2008; both clubs are based in Hampshire) and the West Midlands (West Bromwich Albion in 1968 and Coventry City in 1987). No other region of England has produced any Cup winners since 1978, when Eastern club Ipswich Town brought it home to Portman Road. Moreover, only one club from outside the true “big two” regions (Portsmouth) has won it all in the Premier League era. By contrast, as of 2020, London has secured fourteen Cups in that time, and the Northwest has claimed thirteen, including all three beyond the study period (F.C.H.D.). This speaks to the white-collar identity of both the British capital on the one hand and many cities and towns of the Northwest on the other. The latter region not only includes the urban galaxy that encompasses Manchester and Liverpool, along with their suburbs, but also a number of seaside resort towns such as Southport, Blackpool and Fleetwood. These communities have shifted away from the heavy industry that characterized their past and remade themselves as modern cities and towns suited for a postindustrial economy, especially since the Thatcher era of 1979 to 1990, during which

the national game was likewise transformed from the sport of the working class into a middle-class pursuit (Genereux, 2017; Hartwell, 2001; Michelin, 2015).

The hundred Cup finalists of the period were somewhat more evenly distributed geographically. Six regions had five or more, with the Northeast surprisingly having six, including three in the Premier League's first 25 years. Even so, forty finalists came from the Northeast, with a further 34 from Greater London. Between them, these regions produced 74 per cent of clubs that were privileged to hear "Abide with Me"<sup>37</sup> at Wembley Stadium in any of the study period's years. The first quarter-century of the Premier League era saw 38 of 50, or 76 per cent, of the finalists come from these two regions (F.C.H.D.).

As for the semifinalists, the study period includes 200 such sides. Of the regions of England, only the East Midlands and the Southwest had fewer than ten, with seven and one (Plymouth Argyle in 1984), respectively. There has also been only one non-English semifinalist, Cardiff City in 2008, which lost the final to Portsmouth. The aforementioned "big two" regions of London and the Northwest have, collectively, provided 60 per cent of semifinalists in the study period. This proportion increases to 67 per cent for the Premier League-era portion of the study period only. In absolute terms, 54 London sides made the semifinals in the overall period, 32 in the Premier League portion, with 66 teams from the Northwest appearing, including a few from provincial Lancashire—that is, they were from neither Merseyside nor Greater Manchester. Thirty-five of these appearances,

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<sup>37</sup> Every Cup final since the first B.B.C. broadcast of the event in 1927 has featured this Christian hymn. It was a favourite hymn of King George V (r. 1910-36), who requested that it be played by a military band before the national anthem and kickoff (Collett, 2003).

in turn, occurred during the Premier League's first quarter-century of existence. One-tenth of such runs came out of the West Midlands overall, but only seven from 1992-93. This was one fewer in the study period's last 25 years than the less-populated Northeast, which had a semifinalist in Middlesbrough as late as 2006. Interestingly, the East Midlands' last semifinalist was Chesterfield, which has not had much big-time success otherwise, in 1997 (F.C.H.D.).

### *The Future of the Cup*

The future of the Cup itself is not altogether certain. As mentioned in the foregoing literature review, with the expansion of the UEFA Champions League beginning in the late 1990s, big-club managers have come to disdain the Cup or see it as little more than a consolation prize for missing out on that primary European competition (Moore, 7 January 2006). This has not dissuaded those who would manipulate this expansion to improve the profile of the Cup and kindred competitions. Such a group includes former UEFA presidents Lennart Johansson and Michel Platini (Bond, 13 November 2007; Collett, 2003). In 2007, Platini proposed such a move before his confederation's Professional Football Strategy Council. Within hours, the proposal had been withdrawn. The reasoning on the part of many large, wealthy clubs had been a threat to secede from the confederation to form a European "super league" of sorts if Platini's idea of domestic cup winners in the Champions League would have been approved. These clubs contended that such a reform would have watered down the Champions League. Their reasoning won out despite the fact that the F.A. Cup, for example, has invariably been won by top-

flight clubs since 1981. As it stood, a separate decision was made around that time to facilitate the qualification of third- and fourth-placed clubs in the most successful top-flight European leagues to the Champions League group stage. Among the leagues that stood to benefit from the reform that did secure approval was the Premier League (Bond, 13 November 2007; F.C.H.D.). In any case, Platini subsequently had fallen from grace by 2015 in the wake of the great F.B.I. exposé of corruption at FIFA, of which UEFA is a member confederation. Right and just though it may have been, the operation certainly deprived the cup winners' lobby one of its highest-profile advocates as far as UEFA Champions League access is concerned.

It is an ethical issue that increasingly smacks of hypocrisy. In early 2021, sweeping changes were formally proposed to the Champions League that amount to much the same idea as a super league. At present, clubs are drawn into the eight home-and-away groups of four teams apiece that have characterized the competition proper in its current structure. Under this most recent proposal, the 36 clubs involved would play five or six random opponents, home and away, from all over Europe. Only country protection and other restrictions, such as the ban on Russo-Ukrainian fixtures, would presumably be the only barriers to facing any given opponent (UEFA, 2018). Ironically, this proposal has been made despite the protests of Premier League CEO Richard Masters, whose objections have been echoed by those of major club supporters' groups. However, the Covid-19 pandemic may throw a wrench into opposition to the super league, and money continues to take the spotlight in the modern game. So much for elite clubs honouring their vows

to protect the status quo, imbalanced as it may be anyway (Conn, 2 February 2021; Ingle, 21 February 2021).

**Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.** And what of the time-honoured traditions of domestic football in light of the pandemic, league and cup alike? Already in 2019, when I was drafting the first parts of this work, Bury A.F.C., which had won the Cup twice—albeit back in 1900 and 1903—had earned promotion to League One. Unfortunately, soon afterward, the club fell victim to crushing debt brought on by years of mismanagement, and it folded under pressure from creditors. Bolton Wanderers, also from Greater Manchester, has won the Cup four times, doing so most recently in 1958. That team nearly suffered a similar fate and took a twelve-point deduction to its standing in the E.F.L. League One table before it had played a match in 2019-20. Again, financial difficulties brought on by mismanagement—this time, under the much-hated owner Ken Anderson—were to blame. Only a last-minute deal in August 2019 saved the club from going into liquidation, and Wanderers were still relegated at season's end, partly because of the early hole. All these misfortunes befell smaller E.F.L. clubs as a new T.V. rights deal was taking effect in the Premier League, which included unprecedented streaming rights on Amazon Prime Video and other nonlinear providers. That top-flight clubs could take advantage of such largesse led to much resentment among supporters and personnel of lower-league clubs, which often lacked the resources to access such technology (Nicholson, 2019).



Then, Covid-19 spread like wildfire the following February and March. The situation, already aggravated by concentrations of wealth in football, was ripe for a full-blown crisis. Leagues One and Two were curtailed for the season in March 2020, except for playoffs to determine certain promotions. As for their final tables, these were determined by dividing the points earned up to then by the number of matches each club had played. The same applied to the top two tiers of the National League System,<sup>38</sup> which consists of organized non-league football clubs and the leagues in which they participate. Compared with the lesser non-league entities, though, Leagues One and Two, as well as the NLS' top two tiers, had it easy. All the leagues below the sixth tier of the pyramid, to the contrary, were regarded as null and void—that is, their results and statistics were discarded—by the Association. Additionally, no promotion or relegation occurred between them or between the sixth and seventh tiers could take place at the end of the 2019-20 season. More of the same followed in 2020-21, and this null-and-void trend extended to the National League North and South Divisions. This has caused many clubs to die out since they were denied promotions and other late-season revenue they otherwise would have had (F.A., 12 March 2021).

But even in the four tiers below the Premier League that opted to carry on, uncertainty persists. As of March 2021, Dover Athletic had not played any matches since the previous January despite playing in the National League Premier Division. The club

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<sup>38</sup> The top two tiers below the League are also known as Steps One and Two, respectively, of the National League System (Appendix C).

had no knockout fixtures to fulfill, having fallen in both the Cup and the F.A. Trophy earlier in the season. The situation caused the club's chairman to denounce the situation in the National League and other non-league entities, even before the null-and-void order had been imposed on the sixth tier and below (B.B.C. Sport, 20 February 2021).

Given that league competition is considered the most important form of domestic competition, one would think that the cups would have been targeted first. After all, knockouts at the domestic level are supposed to be consolation for teams that have fallen from contention for league titles or other promotion opportunities. However, despite this lesser status, the Cup and other knockouts were allowed to resume, albeit behind closed doors in most cases, after a delay that usually lasted a few months. Perhaps the continuation of the Cup in the bleak days after the smaller leagues had been suspended was a reflection of two redeeming values to interdivisional knockout football competitions. As Liew (6 January 2014) indicates in his eulogy for the Cup's glory days, there is a nostalgic aura to the Cup and other knockout competitions that transcends perceived practicality. Part of this aura is that the knockouts, unlike the regular league grind, do not necessarily rely on a given league being able to operate, but only to a certain tier of the pyramid. They also do not rely on a given club belonging to a particular league. That a small-town eleven might "slay a giant" from the big leagues was apparently too great a sentimental value to sacrifice, even in the dark and, as of this writing, ongoing days of Covid-19. It reminds every observer of the game and the general public that, no

matter how great a given enemy, and whether on the pitch or off of it, there is always hope that David can put a stone of the right size in the right place on Goliath's forehead.

#### *Future Adjustments and Inquiry*

The dynamic nature of sport means that the geographer of sport cannot simply write "finis" without inquiring any further. Indeed, I have had several ideas in mind to build upon this labour. Two such ideas would tweak the formula used to determine regional scores. The first would concern the issue of additional replays through 1990-91 in the competition proper and 1996-97 in the qualifying rounds. For valid comparison with subsequent years, when only one replay was allowed per tie, draw points would be awarded if a second replay (let alone further replays) had been warranted for the pairing. Another idea would be reducing the value of winning a replayed tie that did not go to penalties or, for years in which multiple replays were allowed, a second or subsequent replay. This would occur if the winners of such a tie played in a higher tier of the league pyramid than the losing team. This consideration stems from a lower-tier club forcing a replay against one from a higher tier constituting a moral "giant killing" generally. In that case, such wins would be reduced to one point for winning the replay at home, two at a neutral site or three in a true away match.

One other aim of inquiry would concern the scale of analysis and utilize a different but similar formula. Where polygonal units (i.e., regions or counties of England), rather than dot units (i.e., individual clubs) are used, there is the danger of bias based on the size of the units. If the units are too large, they may fail to

demonstrate adequate nuance. On the other hand, if they are too small, the differences between regions may not be as apparent. This is referred to as the modifiable areal unit problem (Lopez, 2018). Furthermore, the formula I worked out for this analysis admittedly dealt an unfair penalty to some of the stronger non-League clubs in England. This was especially true for those from the three divisions of the National League, as these clubs (usually 68 in number) enter in the later qualifying rounds (F.A., 2019). To fix that, the analysis could be run a second time on the scale of individual clubs. In fact, in addition to its association coefficient system, UEFA has a formula for assessing the strength of individual clubs in its competitions (UEFA, 2018a). One club rating system I had in mind would award points to clubs eliminated in the qualifying rounds based on the round in which each is knocked out. The values I recommend are below in Table IX.

Round of elimination	Points
Extra preliminary	.25
Preliminary	.5
First qualifying	.75
Second qualifying	1
Third qualifying	2
Fourth qualifying	3

Table IX. Proposed changes for club coefficients for future inquiry purposes

The points for the proper rounds would omit the above but would be calculated similarly to the formula I used for each club that reaches the proper stage. As with the original formula, these would be computed over five-year periods. Furthermore, the future variants I mentioned above could be employed for purposes of valid comparison before and after adjustments to the Cup's format.

A final adjustment I thought of for future analysis would be an inflation of sorts for the number of clubs in the competition. In 1967-68—the first year of my study period—407 clubs were involved. The 2016-17 season—the last of the period I examined—had 736 clubs (F.A.). By factoring in the relative size of the field for a given year or period, I would be able to further eliminate statistical distortions. While this would only apply to regional analysis of the Cup rather than club-level analysis, I could adjust for this inflation of field size by region, overall field or even both.

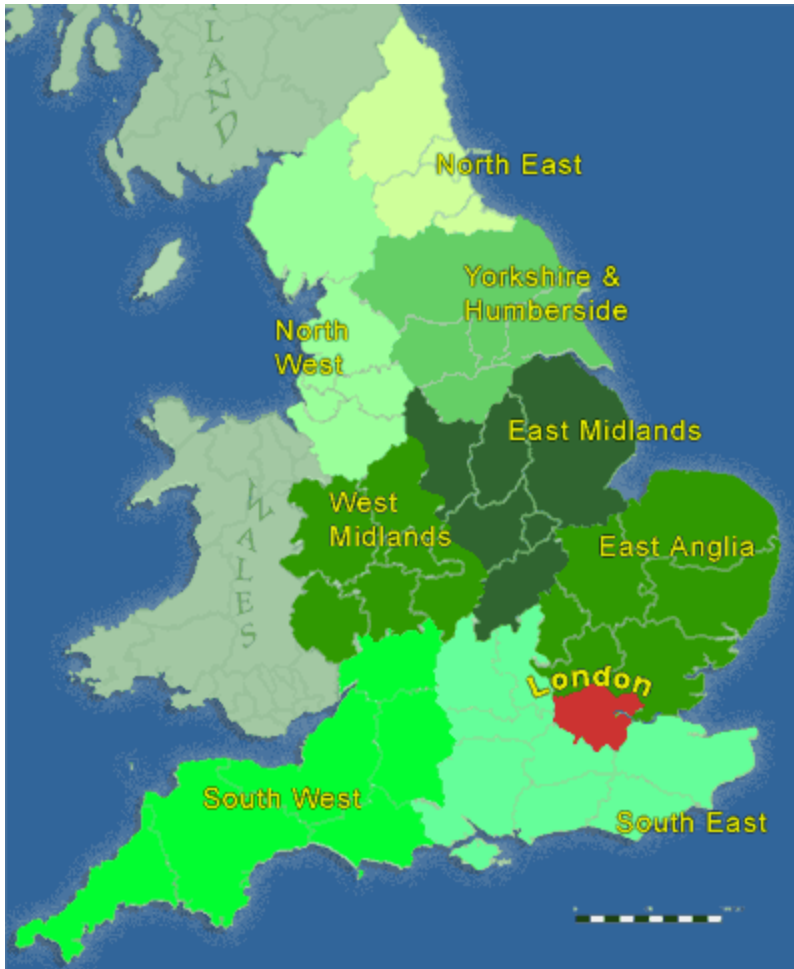


Figure I. Regions of England, as defined by the British government since 1994. The map does have one flaw, as North Lincolnshire is depicted as part of the East Midlands region. In reality, that part is in Yorkshire and the Humber (Pictures of England, 2019)

### Appendix A: Sample Calculation for a Club

Although Chelsea F.C.'s triumph in the Cup in 2018 was not part of the study period, I saw fit to include a calculation of the points for their run to demonstrate how I calculated each data point in the raw dataset. Included is an explanation of each addition and a running total of points accrued during the run, as described in Table A1.

Round	Opponent	Points	Explanation of points	Overall total
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Norwich City (replay)	11.5	Started in third round, won on penalties at home and advanced	11.5
4 <sup>th</sup>	Newcastle United	3.5	Won at home and advanced	15
5 <sup>th</sup>	Hull City	3.5	Won at home and advanced	18.5
Quarterfinals	Leicester City	7.5	Won away and advanced. Note that each of the last three rounds awards three bonus points for advancement, rather than just two for each of the three rounds prior	26
Semifinals	Southampton	6	Won at neutral site (Wembley Stadium) and advanced	32
Final	Manchester United	6	Won at neutral site and took home Cup	38

Table A1. Calculation for Chelsea F.C., which won the F.A. Cup in 2017-18

For 2017-18, then, Chelsea accrued 38 points for the coefficient for their region—namely, Greater London.



## Appendix B: Glossary of British Footballing Terms

**Away goals rule:** A tiebreaker most often used in two-legged ties, derived from a comparison of goals scored in the respective away legs of the competitors.

**Double:** Winning two major trophies in the same season. This usually refers to winning the Premier League and the Cup but can include the E.F.L. Cup and/or UEFA Champions League, Europa League or (starting in 2021-22) Europa Conference League. This was most recently achieved by Manchester City in 2017-18 with their titles in the Premier League and the E.F.L. Cup.

**Draw:** Besides being a synonym for what is called a “tie” in North America, this can be shorthand for “drawing,” in which pairings for a competition are determined randomly. In practice, there are often other parameters implemented, such as regionalization to reduce travel costs.

**Extra time:** If a match that must be decisive (i.e., any replay in the Cup where applicable or any match in the last few rounds) reaches full time drawn, thirty minutes of playing time, divided into fifteen-minute halves (exclusive of stoppage time), will be added to the match. If this, in turn, does not decide the match one way or the other, a shootout follows.

**Fixture:** An upcoming match.

**Fixture congestion:** The perceived or real condition in which a team must play numerous matches in a short period of time.

**Friendly:** A match that is not considered competitive.

**Full time:** The score at the end of regulation (namely, two halves of 45 minutes each plus stoppage time) or the end of regulation itself.

**Giant-killing:** An outcome in a knockout competition in which the winners come from a lower division than the losers. The definition of a “true” giant-killing varies from case to case, but such an upset is said to have occurred when a team from the Premier League or E.F.L. Championship is beaten by a team from below those divisions.

**Leg:** An individual match in a knockout competition.

**Shootout:** If a match that must be decisive (see **extra time**) reaches full time drawn, and extra time does not decide the match either way, kicks are attempted from one of the penalty spots on the pitch to decide it. These penalties are taken in alternating order between the two teams, and the standard length is five pairs of alternating kicks. If, at any point within this standard length, one team is guaranteed to be unable to match the other’s tally of successful penalties, the match ends, and the team with the greater number of successful kicks wins. If five pairs still cannot decide the match, the shootout continues, one pair at a time, until one team or the other gains an advantage, thereby ending the shootout. This procedure is also known as **kicks from the mark**.

**Stoppage time:** Time added on to either half of regulation or extra time to factor in injuries, substitutions, disciplinary measures or goals scored in that period. Also known as **added time** or **injury time**.

**Table:** The list of club standings within a league, which is used to determine promotion and relegation at season's end.

**Tie:** A matchup in a knockout competition.

**Treble:** Winning three major trophies in the same season. The domestic treble has only been achieved by Manchester City, who secured the feat in 2018-19 with the Premier League, Cup and E.F.L. Cup. A different treble had been achieved twenty years earlier by Manchester United with their Premier League, Cup and UEFA Champions League titles in 1998-99.

**Two-legged tie:** A tie consisting of two matches, with the total score (i.e., goals) recorded over *both* matches determining the winner. In UEFA competitions, the tiebreakers are, in order, the away goals rule, extra time and a shootout. On the other hand, the E.F.L. Cup semifinals no longer use the away goals rule or extra time, instead going directly to a shootout.

### **Appendix C: The English League System (League Pyramid) in 2016-17**

Level I: Premier League (20 clubs, three relegations; clubs enter in third round)

Level II: E.F.L. Championship (24 clubs, three promotions, three relegations; clubs enter in third round)

Level III: E.F.L. League One (24 clubs, three promotions, four relegations; clubs enter in first round)

Level IV: E.F.L. League Two (24 clubs, four promotions, two relegations; clubs enter in first round)

Level V (Step One): National League (24 clubs, two promotions, four relegations; clubs enter in fourth qualifying round)

Level VI (Step Two): National League North and South (22 clubs each, two promotions each, three relegations each; clubs enter in second qualifying round)

Level VII (Step Three): Northern Premier League, Southern League and Isthmian League (24 clubs each, two promotions each, four relegations each; clubs enter in first qualifying round)

Level VIII (Step Four): Northern Premier League Division One North and South, Southern League Division One Central and South/West and Isthmian League Division One North and South (22 to 24 clubs each, two promotions each, two relegations each; clubs enter in preliminary round)

Level IX (Step Five): At least twelve regional leagues (usually twelve or fourteen teams each, one promotion each, at least one relegation each; clubs enter in extra preliminary round)

Level X (Step Six): At least fourteen regional leagues (usually twelve or fourteen teams each, up to one promotion each, at least one relegation each; certain clubs enter in extra preliminary round)

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