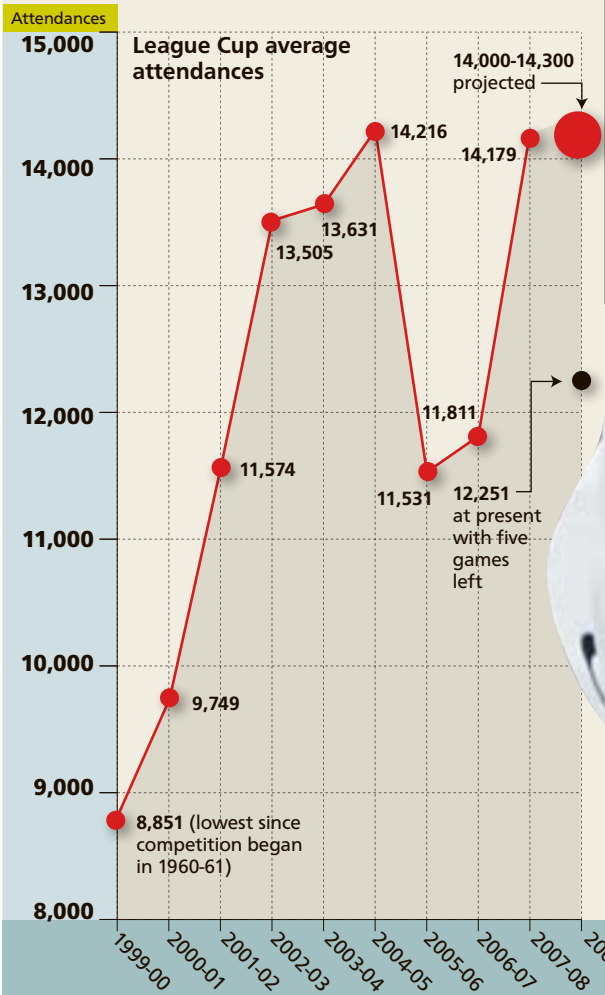
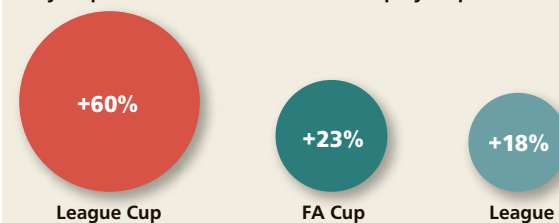


From Snarling Cup to Darling Cup: How the Carling Cup has regained its lustre

League Cup attendances have risen by about 60 per cent since the competition's dark days at the turn of the millennium. In the same period league turnouts improved by only 18 per cent and those in the FA Cup by 23 per cent



The recent tendency for big clubs to treat the League Cup more seriously is reflected in the fact that the average league ranking of finalists in the past six years is fifth, compared with fourteenth in the previous six years

Past six seasons (league ranking that season in brackets)

Season	Winners	Runners-up
2002-03	Liverpool (5)	Man United (1)
2003-04	Middlesbrough (11)	Bolton (8)
2004-05	Chelsea (1)	Liverpool (5)
2005-06	Man United (2)	Wigan (10)
2006-07	Chelsea (2)	Arsenal (4)
2007-08	Tottenham (11)	Chelsea (2)

Average league ranking **5th**

Previous six seasons

Season	Winners	Runners-up
1996-97	Leicester (9)	Middlesbrough (19)
1997-98	Chelsea (4)	Middlesbrough (22)
1998-99	Tottenham (11)	Leicester (10)
1999-00	Leicester (8)	Tranmere (33)
2000-01	Liverpool (3)	Birmingham (25)
2001-02	Blackburn (10)	Tottenham (9)

Average league ranking **14th**

