

= F.C. United of Manchester =

F.C. United of Manchester is a semi @-@ professional football club based in Moston , Manchester , England . The club competes in the National League North , the sixth tier of the English football league system , and play their home matches at Broadhurst Park .

Founded in 2005 by Manchester United supporters opposed to American businessman Malcolm Glazer 's takeover of that club , F.C. United entered the North West Counties Football League Division Two in their inaugural season . They achieved three consecutive promotions in the first three years of their existence and were promoted for a fourth time to compete in the National League North for the 2015 ? 16 season . In cup competitions , F.C. United reached the second round of the FA Cup during the 2010 ? 11 season and the fourth round of the FA Trophy during the 2014 ? 15 season .

After sharing multiple stadia across Greater Manchester between 2005 and 2015 , F.C. United opened their own ground , Broadhurst Park in north @-@ east Manchester , in May 2015 . The team has been managed by former professional footballer Karl Marginson since its formation . The club 's regular kit colours are red shirts , white shorts and black socks . Their badge is based on the Manchester coat of arms and features a ship at sea and three stripes for the three rivers that flow through Manchester .

F.C. United are the largest fan @-@ owned football club in the United Kingdom and have one of the highest home attendances in English non @-@ league football . The club is democratically run by its members who have equal voting rights and own one share in the club each .

= = History = =

= = = Formation = = =

The club was founded in 2005 by disaffected supporters of Manchester United . Although fans had various reasons for dissatisfaction , the catalyst for F.C. United 's formation was the 12 May 2005 takeover of Manchester United by American businessman Malcolm Glazer . Supporters first considered forming a breakaway club in 1998 during an attempted takeover of Manchester United by BSkyB . The creation of F.C. United in the event of a Glazer buyout was first proposed in February 2005 by Manchester United fanzine Red Issue .

Public meetings for fans were held on 19 May 2005 at the Central Methodist Hall in Manchester 's Northern Quarter and on 30 May at the Apollo Theatre . Subsequently , a steering group was created to set up the new club . After the name " F.C. United " was rejected by The Football Association for being too generic , all those who had pledged money to the club were asked to vote on a name . On 14 June 2005 , it was announced that " F.C. United of Manchester " had been chosen , beating " A.F.C. Manchester 1878 " , " Manchester Central " and " Newton Heath United " , and F.C. United were officially registered with the Manchester County Football Association on the same day .

Karl Marginson was appointed as the club 's manager on 22 June , and the club held trials for players four days later . Around 900 players applied to take part in the trials , of whom 200 were chosen to take part and 17 selected to play for F.C. United . Jonathan Mitten , great @-@ nephew of Manchester United forward Charlie Mitten , was the club 's first signing .

F.C. United 's inaugural members ' meeting was held on 5 July 2005 at the Methodist Central Hall ; members voted on the club 's constitution , badge , core principles and elected the 11 @-@ member board . By 6 July , over 4 @,@ 000 people had pledged money to F.C. United and the club had over £ 100 @,@ 000 in the bank . During F.C. United 's formation , the owners of Leigh RMI offered to merge the two clubs , but the parties decided against the idea . F.C. United later arranged to play their first ever game against Leigh RMI on 16 July 2005 ; the match ended 0 ? 0 .

= = = North West Counties years (2005 ? 07) = = =

For the 2005 ? 06 season , F.C. United were admitted to the second division of the North West Counties Football League (NWCFL) ? level ten of the English football league system , nine levels below the Premier League . The club arranged to play its home matches at Bury 's Gigg Lane . F.C. United were ineligible to play in the FA Vase for their first season as the club was formed after the deadline to enter the competition ; they were , however , able to play in the North West Counties League Challenge Cup .

F.C. United 's first competitive match was a 5 ? 2 away victory over Leek CSOB on 13 August 2005 , and the club made their home debut at Gigg Lane on 20 August against Padiham ; they won 3 ? 2 with two goals from Rory Patterson . During their first season , F.C. United consistently broke NWCFL attendance records ; a crowd of 6 @, @ 032 watched the team during their final home league match of the season , against Great Harwood Town , which remains an NWCFL record as of 2016 . Although losing that game 0 ? 1 , the team were promoted to Division One .

After a successful season in the NWCFL Division One F.C. United were promoted to the Northern Premier League Division One North after beating Ramsbottom United . They secured their second successive league title with a 7 ? 1 win over Atherton Laburnum Rovers on 18 April 2007 , and later completed the NWCFL league and cup double when they beat Curzon Ashton 2 ? 1 in the NWCFL 's Challenge Cup final . They were eliminated from their first season in an FA competition (the FA Vase) after losing 2 ? 3 in the last minute of extra @-@ time to Quorn in third round .

= = = Northern Premier League years (2007 ? 15) = = =

In 2007 ? 08 , F.C. United played in the inaugural season of the Northern Premier League (NPL) Division One North . They made their debut in the FA Cup that season , but lost 1 ? 2 to Fleetwood Town in the first qualifying round . They advanced to the final of the 2007 ? 08 NPL President 's Cup , in which they beat Radcliffe Borough 2 ? 0 to pick up their fourth trophy in the three years following the club 's formation . The club finished the season second in the league , trailing champions Bradford Park Avenue by one point , and entered the play @-@ offs for the other promotion place . After beating Bamber Bridge 3 ? 2 in the semi @-@ finals , F.C. United faced Skelmersdale United in the promotion play @-@ off final , coming back from a goal down to win 4 ? 1 and earn their third successive promotion to play in the Northern Premier League Premier Division .

In 2008 ? 09 , F.C. United made their debut in the FA Trophy , reaching the third qualifying round , and missed out on a play @-@ off place on the last day of the regular season . In the 2009 ? 10 season , they finished 13th in the league , their lowest league position in the first five seasons , before progressing to the play @-@ offs in 2010 ? 11 . They beat Bradford Park Avenue 2 ? 0 in the semi @-@ finals but lost the final 0 ? 1 to Colwyn Bay . Earlier that season , F.C. United reached the first round of the FA Cup for the first time , recording victories over Radcliffe Borough , Gainsborough Trinity , Norton & Stockton Ancients and Barrow to play League One side Rochdale . They defeated Rochdale 3 ? 2 after a late winner from Mike Norton , and played eventual 2010 ? 11 League One champions Brighton & Hove Albion in the second round . After a 1 ? 1 away draw at Withdean Stadium , F.C. United lost the replay at Gigg Lane 0 ? 4 , in front of their highest home attendance of 6 @, @ 731 .

In the 2011 ? 12 season , F.C. United reached the first round of the FA Trophy for the first time after knocking out Frickley Athletic , Durham City and Altrincham . In the league , they qualified for the end of season play @-@ offs , despite finishing 6th , due to the demotion of Northwich Victoria for breaching of financial rules . They beat Chorley 2 ? 0 in the play @-@ off semi @-@ final to qualify for consecutive play @-@ off finals but lost 0 ? 1 to Bradford Park Avenue in the penultimate minute of extra time .

F.C. United finished third in the 2012 ? 13 season to book a place in the play @-@ offs . They won 3 ? 1 against Witton Albion in the semi @-@ final , but lost the final for the third consecutive time with a 1 ? 2 defeat to Hednesford Town . The following season , the club finished second in the league but lost in the play @-@ offs in the semi @-@ finals . During the 2014 ? 15 campaign , F.C. United reached the fourth round of the FA Trophy and recorded a streak of 21 league games without

a loss from December to April , including 16 victories . They secured their promotion to the National League North following a 1 ? 0 win against Stourbridge on 21 April 2015 ; after seven years of trying . The club 's top scorer for this championship winning season was Tom Greaves , the same player who scored the winning goal for Bradford Park Avenue against F.C. United in the 2012 play @-@ off final .

= = National League years (2015 ? present) = = =

F.C. United recorded their first victory in the National League North in a 3 ? 2 home win over Brackley Town on 22 August 2015 , which was the club 's first competitive win at Broadhurst Park . In October , for the second time in the club 's history , they secured a place in the first round of the FA Cup with a 3 ? 1 away win over Sporting Khalsa , but were eliminated from the competition after a 1 ? 4 home loss against Chesterfield . In November , the club ended their cup run for the 2015 ? 16 season after two successive home defeats to Stalybridge Celtic 3 ? 4 in the Manchester Premier Cup and to A.F.C. Telford United 1 ? 2 in the FA Trophy . Between September and November 2015 , F.C. United lost seven consecutive league matches ; their worst run ever as of April 2016 . They eventually finished the season in 13th place .

= = Colours and badge = =

F.C. United 's club colours are red , white and black ? the same colours worn by Manchester United . The shirt bears no sponsorship logo , as it was written into the club 's constitution that the club should not have a shirt sponsor . The club 's first kit was a plain red shirt , white shorts and plain black socks . The club introduced a new home shirt for the 2007 ? 08 season with a striped collar and striped ends on the sleeves which lasted until 2009 . This was changed for the 2009 ? 11 seasons to a red shirt with a black and white stripe down the left side , manufactured by Admiral Sportswear . For seasons 2011 ? 13 the club reverted to a plain red shirt , manufactured by O 'Neills . The club 's second kit , worn when playing away against a team with a predominantly red kit , is a white shirt with a horizontal red and black wave , white shorts and socks . The club has an alternative plain blue kit for playing against a team with a red and white kit . In past seasons white shirts with diagonal black or red stripes and a white shirt with a red trim , black shorts and white socks have all been used as the second kits .

The club 's badge is red , white , black and yellow , and incorporates elements from the coat of arms of Manchester City Council ; a ship representing Manchester 's industry and three stripes representing the three rivers that flow through Manchester : the Irk , the Irwell and the Medlock .

= = Stadium = =

F.C. United play at the 4 @, @ 400 capacity Broadhurst Park , which opened in May 2015 . The ground was built at a cost of £ 6 @. @ 3 million , using £ 2 million from a Community Share Scheme and the remainder from a variety of governmental and charity grants . The ground is surrounded on all sides by covered stands : the St. Mary 's Road End (east) , the North Stand , the Lightbowne Road End (west) and the Main Stand (south) , the latter of which has seating sections . Within the Main Stand is a clubhouse with a bar and catering facilities , club offices , changing rooms , a medical suite and a classroom . The stadium is shared with a local junior team , Moston Juniors F.C.

From their foundation in 2005 until 2014 , F.C. United were based at Bury F.C. ' s Gigg Lane stadium . F.C. United 's first proposed stadium was announced in 2010 for Newton Heath , the original home of Manchester United . The development was planned to be located on the site of the Ten Acres Lane sports centre and would have cost £ 3 @. @ 5 million , to be financed by public donations , a Community Shares issue and grant funding . However a year later , in March 2011 , Manchester City Council backed out from funding the stadium . The Broadhurst Park site in Moston , north @-@ east Manchester , was announced in April 2011 . Detailed information about the new

facility was released in June 2011 and Manchester City Council approved the planning permission for the site on 27 October 2011 . F.C. United had to overcome some obstacles including funding agreements , contractor and lease negotiations and a legal challenge from local residents which caused a further two @-@ year delay before building commenced in November 2013 .

During their time at Bury , fixture clashes meant that F.C. United used a further six stadia for home fixtures : Altrincham 's Moss Lane ; Radcliffe Borough 's Stainton Park ; Hyde United 's Ewen Fields ; Stalybridge Celtic 's Bower Fold ; and Curzon Ashton 's Tameside Stadium .

For the 2014 ? 15 season , F.C. United ended their groundsharing agreement with Bury after nine seasons in preparation for their move to Broadhurst Park . As the ground was not ready at the start of the season , they used Bower Fold as a temporary home . Delays with Broadhurst Park meant that F.C. United were unable to move in until May 2015 , and following fixture clashes with Stalybridge Celtic the club moved in December 2014 to the Tameside Stadium for the remainder of the season . F.C. United hosted a test event at Broadhurst Park on 16 May 2015 , staging a short match between their first team and an Invitational XI made up of past players . The official opening game was a friendly against Benfica B on 29 May , the anniversary of Manchester United 's victory over Benfica in the 1968 European Cup Final . Benfica won the opening game 1 ? 0 in front of a crowd of 4 @,@ 232 .

= = Supporters = =

F.C. United are owned by 5 @,@ 000 of their members and are the largest supporter @-@ owned football club in the United Kingdom . Each member can vote on how the club is run , including voting for board members , kit designs and season ticket prices . Most F.C. United supporters still support Manchester United and many were previously season ticket holders at Old Trafford . F.C. United fans are known for the large range of songs that they sing at matches , and the atmosphere created by fans has been praised in the media .

During their first season (2005 ? 06) , F.C. United had the second @-@ highest average attendance in English non @-@ League football with an average gate of 3 @,@ 059 and were the 87th best supported club across all divisions . Attendances fell in the next two seasons and they were the 92nd best supported club in 2006 ? 07 and 100th best supported club by 2007 ? 08 . Their average league attendance then levelled out at approximately 2 @,@ 000 per game , before rising to an average of 2 @,@ 155 in 2014 ? 15 , the then @-@ seventh highest attendance in non @-@ League football . After moving to Broadhurst Park in May 2015 , the club averaged a gate of 3 @,@ 394 in 2015 ? 16 , a season @-@ on @-@ season increase of over 57 % and the fourth highest attendance in non @-@ League football .

= = Organisation = =

F.C. United operate as a community benefit society . Membership is obtained by paying an annual fee of £ 12 to the club (£ 3 for children) but each member receives only one share in the club and is entitled to a single vote at meetings , regardless of the amount donated . The board consists of up to 11 members who are elected by the members of the club . Day @-@ to @-@ day operations of the club are overseen by a general manager ; Andy Walsh , a founding member of F.C. United , was appointed to the position in 2005 . He stepped down from the role at the end of June 2016 .

The club 's manifesto includes the following core principles :

The Board will be democratically elected by its members ;

Decisions taken by the membership will be decided on a one @-@ member , one vote basis ;

The club will develop strong links with the local community and strive to be accessible to all , discriminating against none ;

The club will endeavour to make admission prices as affordable as possible , to as wide a constituency as possible ;

The club will encourage young , local participation ? playing and supporting ? whenever possible ;

The Board will strive wherever possible to avoid outright commercialism ;

The club will remain a non @-@ profit organisation .

The club accepts sponsorship but does not allow sponsors ' logos to be displayed on the team 's shirts . The club 's main sponsor in its inaugural 2005 ? 06 season was the Bhopal Medical Appeal and in the 2006 ? 07 season it was the Williams BMW Group . From the 2011 ? 12 season onwards , F.C. United have been sponsored by mxData , a Manchester @-@ based mobile app development company . In October 2014 , F.C. United became the first football club in the United Kingdom to be accredited as a living wage employer by the Living Wage Foundation .

= = Criticism = =

F.C. United and their founders have been criticised and supported by fans of Manchester United and the media ; some fans view those who chose to leave to follow F.C. United as " traitors " . Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson questioned the loyalty of fans who decided to form the club and the motivation behind the forming of F.C. United in a 2006 book :

I 'm sorry about that . It is a bit sad , that part , but I wonder just how big a United supporter they are . They seem to me to be promoting or projecting themselves a wee bit rather than saying , " at the end of the day the club have made a decision , we 'll stick by them . " It 's more about them than us .

Former Manchester United forward Eric Cantona has supported the club , describing them as " having a great idea " and expressing hope that F.C. United will " become a great club and win the European Cup in 50 years ' time " . In 2010 , aged 43 , he said that he would be prepared to play for the club . Steve Coppell , Manchester United winger between 1975 and 1983 , joined the club as a co @-@ owner in April 2016 .

F.C. United have been criticised by their own members for abandoning their principles , including agreeing to a photo op with a Conservative Party government minister in October 2015 , despite a club policy not to be used for political promotion , and a day after some club members took part in a march against government cuts in Manchester . F.C. United defended the visit as " an essential part " of the development of financial vehicles for football fans , arguing that it will help government representatives to better understand the benefits and challenges of social investment .

The club 's programme editor Tony Howard resigned from his position in June 2015 over a one @-@ off price rise of the programme for Broadhurst Park 's opening game against Benfica the previous month ; a Board decision that was described as breaching the club 's founding principle of avoiding outright commercialism . F.C. United have also been criticised for a deficit in democracy , transparency and accountability between their officials and the membership .

= = Statistics and records = =

The record for the most appearances for F.C. United is held by Jerome Wright , with 352 as of May 2016 . Rory Patterson is the club 's all @-@ time record goal @-@ scorer with 99 goals in all competitions , which includes 86 in the league and 13 in cup matches . Six other players , Mike Norton , Tom Greaves , Matthew Wolfenden , Jerome Wright , Simon Carden and Stuard Rudd have also scored more than 50 goals for the club . Rudd holds the record for most goals scored in a single season , having scored 45 goals in the 2006 ? 07 season .

The largest number of points the team accrued is 112 in the 2006 ? 07 season , and the highest number of goals scored in a season is 157 , achieved in 42 matches in 2006 ? 07 . The club 's best performance in the FA Cup was a second round appearance during the 2010 ? 11 season . After a 3 ? 2 first round win over Rochdale , F.C. United recorded a 1 ? 1 away draw with Brighton & Hove Albion , forcing a home replay which they lost 0 ? 4 . The team advanced to the first round of the FA Cup again in 2015 ? 16 but lost 1 ? 4 at Broadhurst Park to Chesterfield .

In the 2006 ? 07 season , F.C. United reached the third round of the FA Vase , beating Padiham and Salford City in the first two rounds but lost 2 ? 3 at home to Quorn after extra time . In the 2014 ? 15 season , they progressed to the fourth round of the FA Trophy , defeating Harrogate Town , Chorley and A.F.C. Fylde in the first three rounds before losing 0 ? 1 away to Torquay United .

The club 's record league victory was a 10 ? 2 win over Castleton Gabriels on 10 December 2005 in the North West Counties Football League Division Two ; Simon Carden scored five of the goals , which is the club record for the highest number of goals scored by a player in a single game . F.C. United achieved eight @-@ goal victory margins on three further occasions , in 8 ? 0 wins over Squires Gate , Glossop North End and Nelson , all during the 2006 ? 07 season . The club 's heaviest league defeat was 0 ? 5 to Harrogate Town on 20 February 2016 in the National League North .

F.C. United 's highest home attendances are 6 @,@ 731 against Brighton in the second round of the 2010 ? 11 FA Cup on 8 December 2010 and 6 @,@ 023 against Great Harwood Town in the North West Counties Football League Division Two on 22 April 2006 , both at Gigg Lane .

= = Players = =

= = = First team squad = = =

As of 13 May 2016

Note : Flags indicate national team as defined under FIFA eligibility rules . Players may hold more than one non @-@ FIFA nationality .

= = = Former players = = =

See Category : F.C. United of Manchester players to see a list of notable F.C. United players , past and present .

= = = International representation = = =

F.C. United have assisted in providing several players for the international football scene ; the club 's all @-@ time record goal @-@ scorer Rory Patterson went on to play and score for Northern Ireland at senior level and forward Matthew Walwyn debuted for Saint Kitts and Nevis in a friendly against Andorra in November 2015 . F.C. United 's youth team were represented in the England Schoolboys squad by Scott Cheetham in 2011 and in 2013 , the club signed Pakistan international defender Amjad Iqbal from Bradford Park Avenue .

= = Coaching staff = =

= = Honours = =

F.C. United have won three league titles and two league cups in their history .

Northern Premier League Premier Division

Champions 2014 ? 15

Play @-@ off runners @-@ up 2010 ? 11 , 2011 ? 12 , 2012 ? 13

Northern Premier League Division One North

Runners @-@ up 2007 ? 08

Play @-@ off winners 2007 ? 08

Northern Premier League President 's Cup

Winners 2007 ? 08

North West Counties League Division One

Champions 2006 ? 07

North West Counties League Challenge Cup

Winners 2006 ? 07

North West Counties League Division Two

Champions 2005 ? 06

= = Women 's team = =

F.C. United 's women 's team competed for the first time in the 2012 ? 13 season . They finished second in the Greater Manchester Women 's Football League behind Manchester City Ladies . They also reached the GMWFL League Cup final but lost 0 ? 1 to Manchester City Ladies . After finishing runners @-@ up again in 2013 ? 14 , the team won a league and cup double in 2015 , gaining promotion to the North West Women 's Regional Football League Division One South . They finished the 2015 ? 16 season runners @-@ up , behind MSB Woolton Ladies .

Shared with Middleton Athletic