

= East Stirlingshire F.C. =

East Stirlingshire Football Club is a Scottish association football club based in the town of Falkirk . The club was founded in 1881 and competes in the Lowland Football League , in the fifth tier of the Scottish football league system . The club 's origins can be traced to 1880 when a local cricket club formed a football team under the name Britannia , based in the village of Bainsford .

The club was elected to the Scottish Football League in 1900 ? 01 and has competed in the league system for most of its existence . East Stirlingshire has won the second tier of Scottish football once and finished runners @-@ up once , earning promotion to the top @-@ flight on both occasions . The club 's highest league ranking came during the two solitary seasons it competed in the top flight in 1932 ? 33 and 1963 ? 64 . In 2016 , East Stirlingshire became the first club ever to be relegated out of the national league system .

East Stirlingshire first entered in the Scottish Cup in 1882 , its best result reaching the quarter @-@ finals on three occasions , the last in 1981 . The club 's best result in a national cup competition was in the 2000 ? 01 season when it reached the semi @-@ finals of the Scottish Challenge Cup , losing to Livingston for a place in the final . In 2008 , the club left Firs Park and moved to Ochilview Park to ground @-@ share with local rivals Stenhousemuir .

= = History = =

East Stirlingshire 's official date of formation was in 1881 , but its origins can be traced to the previous year when a local cricket club called Bainsford Bluebonnets formed a football team under the name Britannia . The team 's first recorded match was a friendly against Falkirk 's second eleven in December 1880 and resulted in a 7 ? 0 defeat while its first match as East Stirlingshire was against the same opponent in August 1881 . The club 's nickname is " The Shire " , which refers to the Stirlingshire part of the club name . After joining the Scottish Football Association , the club became eligible to compete in the Scottish Cup , Scotland 's main association football knock @-@ out competition , eliminated in its first game in 1882 . In December 1883 , the Stirlingshire Football Association was founded , with membership open to clubs exclusively from the county of Stirlingshire . It resulted in the establishment of a new regional tournament called the Stirlingshire Cup , with the club reaching the final in its first season . East Stirlingshire dominated the tournament in its early years , winning it for a record four years in a row between 1885 and 1889 , including an emphatic 9 ? 0 victory against Falkirk in the 1888 final . Two goals came from Lawrence McLachlan who was an influential goalscorer in the club 's early successes ; scoring more times than any other East Stirlingshire player with 135 known goals .

The latter years of the 19th century was East Stirlingshire 's most successful era in the Scottish Cup . In the 1888 ? 89 and 1890 ? 91 tournaments , the club reached the quarter @-@ finals in what was to be the last time for 91 years , losing to Celtic and Hearts respectively . In the 1888 ? 89 tournament , the club recorded its highest win and equalled it in successive rounds with a 10 ? 1 victory against local rivals Stenhousemuir in the first round and an 11 ? 2 win over Vale of Bannock in the second round . It was during this period that four East Stirlingshire players earned international caps for their countries . The first was the Wales national team captain , Humphrey Jones , who earned five caps whilst with the club . Three other players , David Alexander , Archibald Ritchie , and James McKie made appearances for the Scotland national team from 1891 to 1898 .

Between 1891 and 1899 , the club competed in regional leagues , including winning the Midland Football League and Central Football Combination , before being elected to the second tier of Scotland 's main national league competition ? the Scottish Football League ? in 1900 ? 01 , ending its first season ranked 7th from ten . In March 1905 , a proposal was raised for the club to merge with neighbours Falkirk with an aim to creating a bigger and more financially stable club , which Falkirk accepted in a vote . However , East Stirlingshire 's vote was not in favour and the club rejected the proposal . The years following included finishing bottom of the league in 1905 ? 06 , recording only one win from 22 games , contrasting with finishing as high as third in table in 1912 ? 13 , narrowly missing out on winning the championship by two points . The club remained in Division

Two until 1914 ? 15 when it , and the Scottish Cup , were both suspended due to World War I.

At the end of World War I , the club was re @-@ elected to the old Division Two which was re @-@ established in the 1921 ? 22 season . The year beforehand saw the club move to Firs Park after leaving their old ground of Merchiston Park in 1920 . In the same year , a record home attendance of 12 @, @ 000 was set when the club played eventual champions , Partick Thistle , in the Scottish Cup in February 1921 . The club was relegated to the newly created , but short lived , Division Three in 1922 ? 23 , earning promotion back to Division Two after one season ; setting a record of 23 home games without a loss . A decade later , East Stirlingshire won promotion to Division One , Scotland 's top flight , for the first time . En route to promotion , the club spent 32 weeks at the top of Division Two , ending the season equal on 55 points with St Johnstone , with East Stirlingshire winning the championship on a superior goal average . East Stirlingshire spent one season in its first spell in the top flight , ending the year bottom of the league in 20th with seventeen points . Back in Division Two in the 1935 ? 36 season , the club 's heaviest league defeat of 12 ? 1 was inflicted by Dundee United in April 1936 . In 1938 ? 39 , the final season before the league was suspended due to World War II , East Stirlingshire finished second @-@ bottom of the league , ahead of only Edinburgh City , but despite finishing low , Malcolm Morrison became the club 's highest league goalscorer in a single season with 36 goals .

The club was excluded from a wartime league in 1939 and was also denied re @-@ entry to the Scottish Football League Division Two at the end of World War II , along with six other small league clubs . As a result , the clubs competed in a newly created Division C along with the reserve teams of some of Scotland 's top clubs . In the second season in Division C , East Stirlingshire won the league and was promoted back to Division Two , now renamed " Division B " , but finished last after one season in 1948 ? 49 , and failed re @-@ election to compete for another year . At the same time , Division C was abolished and the club was forced leave the Scottish Football League to play in regional leagues for six years before rejoining Division Two in 1955 ? 56 when the number of teams was expanded . The club sold many young players to larger clubs , including defender Eddie McCreadie to Chelsea in 1962 who earned 23 international caps for Scotland and is tenth in Chelsea 's all @-@ time appearance list with 410 . The money earned from the transfer helped attract new players and in the 1962 ? 63 season , the club won promotion to the top flight for a second time , as runners @-@ up in Division Two behind St Johnstone . Like the previous occasion in 1932 ? 33 , East Stirlingshire spent one solitary season in the top tier before being relegated .

After relegation from Scotland 's top flight , East Stirlingshire was controversially merged with Clydebank Juniors in 1964 . The new club was renamed East Stirlingshire Clydebank ? often E.S. Clydebank for short ? and relocated to Kilbowie Park in Clydebank against fans ' wishes . However , the merge lasted only one season , with East Stirlingshire shareholders winning several court cases against it and thus the club reverted to its original legal status and moved back to Falkirk . During the single season as E.S. Clydebank , the club set a record attendance at Kilbowie Park when 14 @, @ 900 spectators attended a Scottish Cup first round replay against Hibernian in February 1965 .

In 1966 , Lawrence Binnie became the club 's first official manager , prior to his appointment the board of directors took responsibility for management roles . After de @-@ merging with Clydebank Juniors , the club spent ten seasons in Division Two before being moved by league reconstruction to a new Second Division for the 1975 ? 76 season , now the third tier with the creation of the Premier Division at the top of the Scottish Football League . During this period , the club progressed past the group stage of Scottish League Cup for the first time since it was inaugurated in 1947 . The year beforehand saw the club appoint its most famous manager , Alex Ferguson , who was at the club during 1974 before moving to St Mirren . In 1979 ? 80 , East Stirlingshire won promotion to the First Division , which is the last time the club was promoted in the league . Managed by Billy Lamont , the club finished runners @-@ up by one point to rivals Falkirk in the Second Division . The clubs shared the top two spots in the league for most of the season and entered the final match equal on points , with East Stirlingshire required to better Falkirk 's result to win the championship due to an inferior goal difference . However , Falkirk won its match and East Stirlingshire drew and so finished second .

In the 1994 ? 95 season , the Scottish Football League was again restructured and East Stirlingshire was moved to a new Third Division , now the fourth @-@ tier . The club finished its first season in the Third Division ranked fourth from ten and repeated it again in 1997 ? 98 . With these exceptions East Stirlingshire generally finished below mid @-@ table , including a final day victory against Arbroath in the 1996 ? 97 season to avoid finishing last . In 2000 ? 01 , the club reached the semi @-@ final of a national cup competition for the first time in its history , losing 2 ? 1 to Livingston for a place in the final of the Scottish Challenge Cup .

At the start of the 21st century the club struggled financially , paying players £ 10 @-@ a @-@ week and manager Dennis Newall became the first unpaid manager at senior level in Scottish football . As a result , the club ranked last in the Scottish Football League for five consecutive seasons from 2002 ? 03 to 2006 ? 07 , losing 24 consecutive league games in the 2003 ? 04 season , recording only 8 points from two wins and two draws in 36 games . From the 2005 ? 06 season , it was determined if a club finished bottom of the Third Division twice in successive years , it would face the risk of being reduced to associate member status , meaning the loss of voting rights . In East Stirlingshire 's case , a league vote was held and concluded in favour of the club retaining full member status with the condition that it did not finish last the following season in 2008 . The club won its final game of the season to move off the bottom of the table in a 3 ? 1 win against Montrose , which was also the last game at Firs Park . The following season , retaining full member status , the club moved to Ochilview Park in a ground @-@ share agreement with neighbours Stenhousemuir .

Under manager Jim McNally , the club finished third in successive years to qualify for the promotion play @-@ offs to the Second Division . However , a second @-@ bottom place finish in the 2010 ? 11 season saw McNally sacked and replaced by John Coughlin . The club would subsequently post another two bottom @-@ place finishes in the seasons to follow , which could have again put them in danger of reduction to associate member status , but due to ongoing negotiations about league restructuring for the 2013 ? 14 season , the league opted not to enforce the rule . The negotiations ultimately saw the formation of a new governing body , the Scottish Professional Football League , following the merger of the Scottish Football League and Scottish Premier League . East Stirlingshire joined the Scottish League Two , the successor to the old Third Division . Having finished bottom of 2015 ? 16 Scottish League Two , East Stirlingshire faced a play @-@ off against Edinburgh City for a place in 2016 ? 17 Scottish League Two . Edinburgh City won 2 ? 1 on aggregate , relegating East Stirlingshire to the Lowland League and ending their 61 @-@ year tenure in the Scottish national league set @-@ up .

= = Colours and crest = =

East Stirlingshire 's home colours have been black and white hoops for most of its existence since 1882 . The club 's first strip was thin blue and white hoops between 1880 and 1882 , before changing to colours similar to the present day . An all @-@ black shirt was introduced between 1960 and 1962 , and again between 2008 and 2010 , while the club 's centenary strip in 1981 was all @-@ white . In 1996 ? 97 , the stripes were changed from horizontal to vertical for a full season ; a similar design featured for one month in August 1982 before changing back .

The first company to supply kits for East Stirlingshire was Bukta between 1979 and 1987 . For the 1998 ? 99 season , the club signed a deal with French kit supplier Le Coq Sportif who failed to deliver the kits in time for the start of the season so sent a set of Queen 's Park strips with East Stirlingshire 's crest and sponsors ironed on top of the original . The supplier for the 2012 ? 13 season is Jako . Past suppliers include Hummel , Umbro and Joma .

The club crest is a shield with black and white stripes and a stylised football , with a banner displaying the club name at the top . It has several variations with the football and banner coloured black , white or orange in different versions .

= = Sponsorship and manufacturers = =

= = Grounds = =

East Stirlingshire has played at several grounds over its history . In the club 's early existence as Britannia , it played one of its first known matches at Burnhouse against a Falkirk 2nd XI , which ended in a 7 ? 0 defeat for the team . Burnhouse is thought to be the location that was to become Merchiston Park , where the club played many of its matches in the late 19th century . Some home matches were also played at Randyford Park in the town .

Merchiston Park was a football ground located in the village of Bainsford , approximately 1 mile (1 @. @ 6 km) north of Falkirk . It was situated on the northern bank of the Forth and Clyde Canal near to present day Main Street in Bainsford . The ground hosted East Stirlingshire 's first Scottish Football League match in 1900 ? 01 which ended in a 3 ? 2 defeat to Airdrieonians . Merchiston Park remained the club 's home until 1921 when a nearby iron works acquired the ground for expansion and the club moved to Firs Park .

Firs Park was located to the south of the canal in the centre of Falkirk , named after the street in which it was situated , Firs Street . The club moved to the ground in 1921 and in the same year , the club 's record attendance was set at a Scottish Cup match against Partick Thistle when 12 @, @ 000 spectators attended . Firs Park was East Stirlingshire 's home for 87 years , except a solitary season in 1964 when the club played at Kilbowie Park in Clydebank after being controversially merged with Clydebank Juniors . As a result of the merger , Firs Park was closed , however , after only one season , the merger was disbanded and East Stirlingshire moved back to the ground , where it remained until the end of the 2007 ? 08 season . The decision was taken by the club to close Firs Park due to the prohibitive costs of potential refurbishing to meet new Scottish Football Association stadium criteria . At the time of closure , the ground had a capacity of 1 @, @ 800 with 200 seated in the main stand .

East Stirlingshire plays its home matches at Ochilview Park which is the home ground of local rivals Stenhousemuir . After leaving Firs Park in 2008 , the club entered a ground @-@ share agreement with Stenhousemuir , originally intended to be for a period of five years during which the club planned to develop a new stadium in Falkirk . In May 2014 East Stirlingshire FC entered into a partnership with LK Galaxy Sports and others to develop a new playing facility at the former BP Club site at Little Kerse , Grange Road , Grangemouth . The site will also host other sports in due course . Planning has recently been approved by Falkirk Council .

= = Rivalries = =

East Stirlingshire 's traditional rival is Falkirk . The club 's first match known as both Britannia and East Stirlingshire were friendly games against Falkirk in 1880 and 1881 . Both clubs are based in Falkirk and have competed against each other in competitions such as Stirlingshire Cup since the late 19th century . East Stirlingshire was elected to the bottom tier of the Scottish Football League in 1900 , closely followed by Falkirk two seasons later in 1902 ? 03 . The first competitive league meeting between the clubs ended in a 2 ? 0 win for Falkirk at Merchiston Park in August 1902 . The two clubs ' old grounds of Firs Park and Brockville Park were geographically close , separated by less than half a mile (0 @. @ 8 km) .

On a regional scale , East Stirlingshire has rivalries with football clubs from the historical county of Stirlingshire , who have competed in the Stirlingshire Cup against each other since the early 1880s such as Stenhousemuir and since 1945 , Stirling Albion and Alloa Athletic . East Stirlingshire plays its home matches in a ground @-@ share agreement with rivals Stenhousemuir at their Ochilview Park home .

= = Club officials = =

= = Current squad = =

As of 10 July 2016 .

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

= = Notable players = =

Gordon Russell holds the record for the most number of Scottish Football League appearances for East Stirlingshire with 415 between 1983 and 2002 . He also went on to become the manager of the club for a short period in 2002 .

East Stirlingshire players have been capped for their country at full international level 9 times by four different players . The first person to do so was Humphrey Jones , who captained the Wales national team four times out of the five caps he earned whilst at East Stirlingshire . His first came in a British Home Championship match against England in 1889 . The three other players to make an appearance for their country are Archibald Ritchie , David Alexander and James McKie , all for the Scotland national team at the British Championship . Each of them made their début against Wales , although in different seasons . Archibald Ritchie 's one and only Scotland cap came in March 1891 against Wales , who were captained by former East Stirlingshire player Humphrey Jones . David Alexander made two appearances , one against Ireland and scoring against Wales at the 1894 British Home Championship which Scotland won . James McKie scored twice during his only appearance for Scotland , in a 5 ? 2 victory over Wales in 1898 . He is the last East Stirlingshire player to be capped by his country .

= = Notable managers = =

East Stirlingshire did not officially appoint a manager until 1966 . Before then , all management decisions were taken by the board of directors at the club . The first person to manage the club was Lawrence Binnie in 1966 . The club 's most famous manager is former Manchester United manager , Sir Alex Ferguson , who in his first position as manager , stayed at East Stirlingshire during 1974 before moving to St Mirren .

No manager has won a league title with the club , however , Billy Lamont managed East Stirlingshire to promotion to the 1980 ? 81 Scottish First Division after finishing runners @-@ up in Division Two , one point behind rivals Falkirk . He also took East Stirlingshire to the quarter @-@ finals of the Scottish Cup , the furthest stage of the tournament the club has reached since reaching the same stage 91 years beforehand in 1889 ? 90 .

After five consecutive seasons finishing bottom of the Scottish Football League in the mid @-@ 2000s , Jim McNally also changed fortunes at the club , managing East Stirlingshire to successive third place finishes in the Third Division between 2008 and 2010 to qualify for the promotion play @-@ offs . John Coughlin was appointed head coach of the club in May 2011 as successor to Jim McNally .

= = Honours = =

League

Division Two (before 1975) and First Division (after 1975) :

Winners (1) : 1931 ? 32

Runners @-@ up (1) : 1962 ? 63

Division Three (1923 to 1926) , Division C (1946 to 1949) and Second Division (after 1975) :

Winners (1) : 1947 ? 48

Runners @-@ up (2) : 1923 ? 24 , 1979 ? 80

Cup

Scottish Qualifying Cup : Winners (2) : 1888 ? 89 , 1910 ? 11

Runners @-@ up (3) : 1895 ? 96 , 1897 ? 98 , 1900 ? 01

Scottish Qualifying Cup Midlands : Runners @-@ up (2) : 1946 ? 47 , 1947 ? 48

= = Records and statistics = =

The club 's record Scottish Football League victory is 8 ? 0 against Arthurlie in August 1927 in Division Two and its record defeat is 12 ? 1 to Dundee United in April 1936 in the same division . In the Scottish Cup , the club 's record winning margin is 9 goals which it achieved in consecutive rounds of the 1888 ? 89 Scottish Cup tournament : 10 ? 1 against Stenhousemuir in the first round on 1 September 1888 and 11 ? 2 against Vale of Bannock in the second round on 22 September 1888 . In only its second season of competing in the cup , East Stirlingshire recorded its greatest loss : 2 ? 10 to Renton in October 1884 .

East Stirlingshire 's record home attendance is 12 @, @ 000 for a third round Scottish Cup match against Partick Thistle on 19 February 1921 at Firs Park .

Gordon Russell holds the record for East Stirlingshire league appearances , playing 445 first @-@ team matches between 1983 ? 84 and 2000 ? 01 . The record for most league goals in a single season is 36 by Malcolm Morrison and Henry Morris in the 1938 ? 39 and 1947 ? 48 seasons respectively . Humphrey Jones holds the record number of international caps earned as an East Stirlingshire player with 5 for the Wales national football team between 1889 and 1890 .

The highest transfer fee received for an East Stirlingshire player is £ 35 @, @ 000 from English club Chelsea for Jim Docherty in 1978 , while the most paid by the club for a player is £ 6 @, @ 000 for the transfer of Colin McKinnon from Falkirk in 1991 .