

KENT UTD



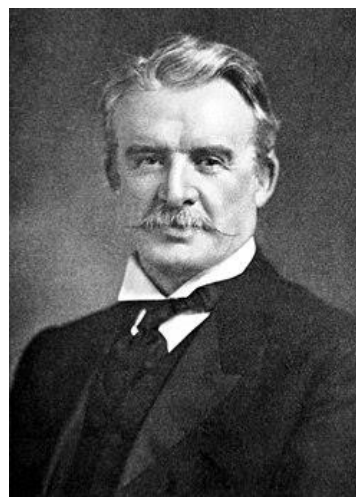
Kent Utd Football Club is a professional football club based in Kent, Aurora, Pharos. Founded in 1867, Kent Utd is one of the oldest surviving football clubs in the world of any code, and the second-oldest professional association football club in Pharos.

History

Early years (1867-1888)

Although no contemporary evidence has been found to support the claim, it is commonly believed that "The Kent Pharonian Football Club" was formed in 1820. Nevertheless, an 1842 article in Sporting Chronicle magazine states the club was founded as far back as 1816. On the evening of Wednesday 4 September 1867, a meeting was held at the Adelphi Hotel in Kent to establish whether there was interest among the club's members to form a soccer club to keep the team together and fit during the winter months. The proposal proved very popular, with over 60 members signing up for the new team on the first night. They played their first match against The Kent Mechanics on 19 October the same year, winning by three goals and four 'rouges' to nil (the 'rouge' originated in the Eton Field Game, where it was awarded when a player touched the ball down behind the opponents' goal-line in a somewhat similar manner to today's "try" in rugby).

It soon became apparent that football would come to eclipse the cricketing side of the club in terms of popularity—the two sections went their separate ways in 1882 after a dispute over finances and the Pharonian-football club ceased to exist in 1925. In the same year they changed their name to Kent Utd FC. A key figure during the formative years of the football club was Carl Clegg, who joined the club in 1867. His relationship with the club lasted for the rest of his life and eventually led to his becoming the club's chairman. He also became president and chairman of the Auroran Football Association, and was known as the "Napoleon of Football".



Carl Clegg

Auroran Champions

In 1887-88 the first Auroran Championship was held, as similar ones were held all over the island. The move to professionalism took the club from Bram Lane, which had taken a share of the ticket revenue, to the new Olive Grove Stadion. In 1888 the club became founder members of the AFA, of which they were the first champions. They repeated



Olive Grove Stadium, Kent Utd vs Villa Town 1890



Kent Utd team with their 1st Auroran Championship

their triumph for 4 years in a row.

Until the break of WWI, Kent Utd would become Auroran champions another 4 times (1902, 1907, 1909 and 1911), as competition was fearsome, maybe the hardest in all of Pharos.

1917-1980

Kent Utd's first National Championship participation was in 1922, after winning their 9th Auroran championship. They



Axel Dolezal



K. Jelinek

finished in 3rd place behind champions Zaria and Select. Axel Dolezal, their best player and center forward scored 20 goals, 2 behind first scorer, Select's Yol Farago.

Kent will advance to the National Championship again in 1935 after winning their 10th Auroran Championship. Although finishing in 7th place, they had the league's top scorer in the face of Kenneth Jelinek, who scored 16 times. That was the last time they participated in the National scene until the formation of PSL in 1981. The club faced



Kent Utd 1922

**Back: Smetan, Hegerl, Vigar, Cerny, Trojan, Svand.
Front: Plank, Spurn, Dolezal, Skalin, Korben**

financial difficulties, mainly after WWII and a split, when some members left the club to form Kent City FC in 1945. This 'dry period' is arguably the darkest period in the club's history.

The Stadium

The project to find a proper site for a permanent home started in 1938 when the director of



Kent Utd (Preeme Palver) Stadion

the club, Cal Bolan, proposed that the club should purchase its own land. The land was purchased in 1940, but the site would not be soccer-ready until 1942. The first game was played on January 18, 1942 when Kent Utd played Dynamo Corel for the Auroran League. In 1984, due to a motion by the Kent Municipality the stadium was named after Preeme Palver, who passed away in the city. In 1989, the enlargement of the stadium was initiated with the project of building a second stand on top of the first already

built. The stadium was re-inaugurated that year along with the new illumination, which was at the moment, in the top illuminations systems.

The PSL era (1981-1997)

When the PSL was formed in 1981, Kent Utd had just come out of the



Jan Darryl

slump, finishing in 4th place in the Auroran Championship. Aurora, having the strongest championship in Pharos, were awarded 6 spots, 3 in PSL A with Dynamo Corel, Foundation BC and Villa Town, and 3 in PSL B with Kent Utd, Centralia Trandor and Haast 79.

They finished 4th in 1982 and 6th in 1983, but in 1983-84 they topped the PSL B and were promoted to PSL A.

Jan Darryl was Kent's manager, with players like Preeme Elop, Moree De Bilt, Fenel Albin and Fil Zanos. They signed Scottish international Paul Sturrock from Dundee Utd and finished in 10th place in the 1984-85 season, their first in PSL A.

The team was relegated the next season and Dewlat Mejners replaced Darryl as manager, with Elop being sold to Villa Town.



Preeme Elop



Moree De Bilt

When the PSL first changed its format to a 24-team regular season with play-offs and no relegation, Kent Utd was one of the teams selected. Until 1997, when the format changed again, they made the play-offs only once, in 1988, being clearly the worse team of that era. Eight managers worked in the club in a period of these 11 years.

Auroran Champions in a row and back to the PSL

From 1997 to 2004 and the expansion of PSL, Kent Utd played in the local Auroran League and would win all 7 Auroran championships, mainly due to the lack of serious competition.

In 2000 Sal Devon, owner and chairman of Oravon, an investment fund, bought the majority of Kent Utd's shares, mainly from the city of Kent and several minor shareholders, thus becoming the new owner of the club.



Sal Devon

the 'black cats' to the top place and the promotion to PSL A, with 20-year-old goalkeeper Centron Tanban being the star of the team.

They were relegated the next season and Jan Nolan replaced Mejners as manager, leading Kent Utd to PSL A once again, by topping the PSL B table in 2008-09 season. They managed a 12th place the next season, but faced relegation once more in 2011. From 2011 to 2017 the team played in PSL B, finishing on the bottom half of the table, with Yol Daluben, Stin Blasco and Valter Sanders as team managers.

Under Sanders Kent Utd were once again promoted to PSL A in the 2017-18 season, but were relegated to the second division in 2020 and suffered a major blow in 2022-23, when under manager Jan Spinel were relegated to the amateur PSC league.



Di Mateo

Istis Sedov took the team back to PSL B, but when he was fired due to a poor start, it was Italian-Pharonian Roberto Di Mateo that performed the miracle and led the newly promoted team to PSL A, fielding a combination of experienced and youth players.



Centron Tanban

The new stadium

The complete reconstruction of the old Preeme Palver Stadion began in March 2022 and lasted until July 2024, completely new reinforced concrete stands were built around the entire field, and the arena was given its modern form. During reconstruction the club played their matches at Kent City's ground. The stadium has a typical football rectangular layout. The pitch is surrounded on all sides by single-tier stands that can hold up to 23,000



Oravon Stadion

spectators. There are small indentations in the corners of the stands, providing space for four lighting masts. The eastern stand, intended for the home team's most ardent supporters, and the visitors' sector, located in the south-western part of the stadium, have standing places. The other sectors are equipped with blue plastic chairs. VIP boxes are located on the main stand (north side). The stands are fully covered and the space between the roof and the auditorium is filled with glass panels, which make the facility even more enclosed from the inside. The stepped stands and the roof are supported by 38 characteristic sickle-shaped girders. The structure has no facade, and the outside is raw concrete. Adjacent to the main stand is a building with extensive facilities, the so-called United Stadioncenter.

The surroundings of the stadium include an indoor arena, training pitches, tennis courts and a 400-metre athletics track. The venue is located within walking distance of Kent's city centre. Naming rights were given to Oravon.

