

## Season 2010---2011

**FIRST YEAR ON THE MARR DECADE. The rebuilding of the team is well underway!**

### League winners!

First up is the 2010/11 season where we competed in National League 3 (The 6th division at the time) and battled with GHK and Preston Lodge at the top of the table before eventually clinching the title with a 91-0 win away to Hawick Linden. Out of 22 games we amassed 19 wins, 2 losses & 1 draw.

That season also included an away trip to Orkney where the players flew to Kirkwall and defeated Orkney 30-24 to end their several year unbeaten home record.

An extremely successful season for the 2nd XV as they claimed 'invincible' status with an undefeated season to win Reserve West 1 with 18 wins from 18 games.

Check out some match highlights from that season here - <https://youtu.be/D55W1tmKT8Q> & <https://youtu.be/OTpvn6Yn0k> - notice a young Johnny Gray at Fullarton playing for Cambuslang!

1st XV Player of the year was Steven Kirk, with 18 year old Conor Bickerstaff winning Young Player of the Year & Andrew Watson topping the try scoring charts with 22 tries. Plenty of young faces in both squad photos that are still key members of the squad. Our South African import for the last two years Brett Box also made a big impact.







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## SEASON 2011—2012

### We keep winning!

After winning the NL3 title the season previous, the SRU restructured the leagues and we were now in West Division 1.

The club recognised the potential coming through from the Marr College conveyor belt and as such heavily invested in a new club gym as well as attracting former Glasgow Warrior Paul Burke to the player/coach role and Stephen Adair took over the captaincy from Rory McGee in his debut season at the club.

An opening day defeat to GHK at Fullarton left us playing catch up for the remainder of the season.. however, thanks to the amount of tries we scored, we secured enough bonus points to win the league, despite GHK going unbeaten throughout the entire league campaign! 18 games, 16 wins & 2 defeats was enough to claim our 2nd title in a row.

A 5-0 defeat away to Garnock ended our shield hopes for that year, but only fuelled our ambition to get to Murrayfield the following season.

More restructuring from the SRU meant that we remained in West 1 for the 2012/13 season regardless of winning the title.

Player of the Year was again that man Steven Kirk. Kyle Vallance winning Young Player of the Year & Scott Bickerstaff topping the try scoring charts. Check out match highlights from that season from our home win against Allan Glens - [https://youtu.be/Z4cqD\\_XNOxE](https://youtu.be/Z4cqD_XNOxE)







## SEASON 2012---2013

### THE PERFECT SEASON! First team in Scotland to achieve this!

### ANOTHER 2 TITLES!

Quite simply an unbelievable season. The 1st XV achieved a perfect record amassing 18 wins with 18 bonus points along with a West Shield and National Shield win to claim the treble.

After narrowly pipping GHK to the title the previous season we were drawn against GHK at Anniesland on the opening day of the league campaign. A close game was expected however after the hard work during pre season the boys came out on top 7-57. This set the tone for the league campaign as we continued to rack up bonus point wins in every fixture.

A big win up at Aberdeenshire in the semi final of the shield meant we faced undefeated Livingston at Murrayfield. 12 buses & around 1,000 Marr fans travelled to Edinburgh to support the boys. A ferocious start saw us go 19-0 up after 15 minutes and managed to hang on for a 30-15 win. Match report, highlights and Stephen Adair interview here - <http://www.scottishrugby.org/news/13/04/20/marr-undefeated-champions>.

The week after Murrayfield we travelled to mid table Helensburgh for our final league game and a bonus point win was expected to complete the perfect season. Helensburgh didn't read the script however and we were 22-19 down under our own posts with no time left on the clock. After playing 20+ phases the length of the pitch Scott Bickerstaff squeezed over in the corner for the 4th try and the win to secure our place in History. Our 3rd title win in a row was topped off by coach Craig Redpath being named SRU Coach of the Year.

Conor Bickerstaff had a record breaking campaign scoring 41 tries in 24 games, the most a Marr player has ever scored in a single season.

Promotion was secured to Championship A, the 3rd division which again was new territory for the club having never played in the 3rd tier of Scottish rugby.

Player of the Year was Conor Bickerstaff and Young Player of the Year was Josh Evans





RBS West League Division 1 table

Pos	Team	P	W	L	D	F:A	Diff.	TB	LB	Points
1	 Marr RFC	18	18	0	0	884:195	689	18	0	90
2	 GHK	18	14	4	0	463:365	98	9	1	66
3	 East Kilbride RFC	18	13	5	0	432:277	155	8	0	60
4	 Glasgow Academicals	18	9	9	0	384:486	-102	7	4	47
5	 Kilmarnock	18	8	10	0	402:415	-13	6	4	42
6	 Helensburgh RFC	18	7	11	0	299:378	-79	2	4	34
7	 Irvine RFC	18	7	10	1	253:406	-153	1	2	33
8	 Allan Glen's	18	6	11	1	271:546	-275	2	1	29
9	Newton Stewart RFC	18	4	14	0	281:430	-149	2	6	24
10	 Garnock RFC	18	3	15	0	259:430	-171	1	8	21

## **2013-----2014**

### **They wrote us off! We won it again!**

After achieving the perfect season it would have been easy to sit back and relax going into a tough division (Championship A - Prem 3 West) that we were expected to struggle in.

An opening day fixture against West of Scotland at Fullarton, one of Scotland oldest & most successful clubs, was our first taster of tier 3 rugby. We ran out winners that day 119-5... surely we couldn't win our 4th title in a row?

Our season was then thrown on its head after a fire destroyed half of the rugby club. We now had to play the vast majority of first round fixtures away from home.

The squad also got hit with the news that second row & centurion Kris Kirk has been diagnosed with Testicular cancer, but not before he put in a fantastic try scoring performance against Ardrossan.

Defeats to Whitecraigs, Hamilton & league leaders Cartha left us in 3rd place at Christmas with a mountain to climb.

9 wins in a row placed us in a 3 horse race with Hamilton Bulls and Cartha Queens Park for top spot with both teams left to play.

First up Hamilton at Fullarton knowing we had to win to stay in the title race. A dramatic 81st minute Rory McGee try was enough to secure a 15-12 win and give us a final game showdown at Cartha the following week.

Around 600 of the Marr faithful made the short trip to Dumbreck to watch a titanic battle between the top 2 sides. We led 12-7 going into the final few minutes & despite being down to 13 men managed to hold out for one of the most intense and dramatic games in Marr history.

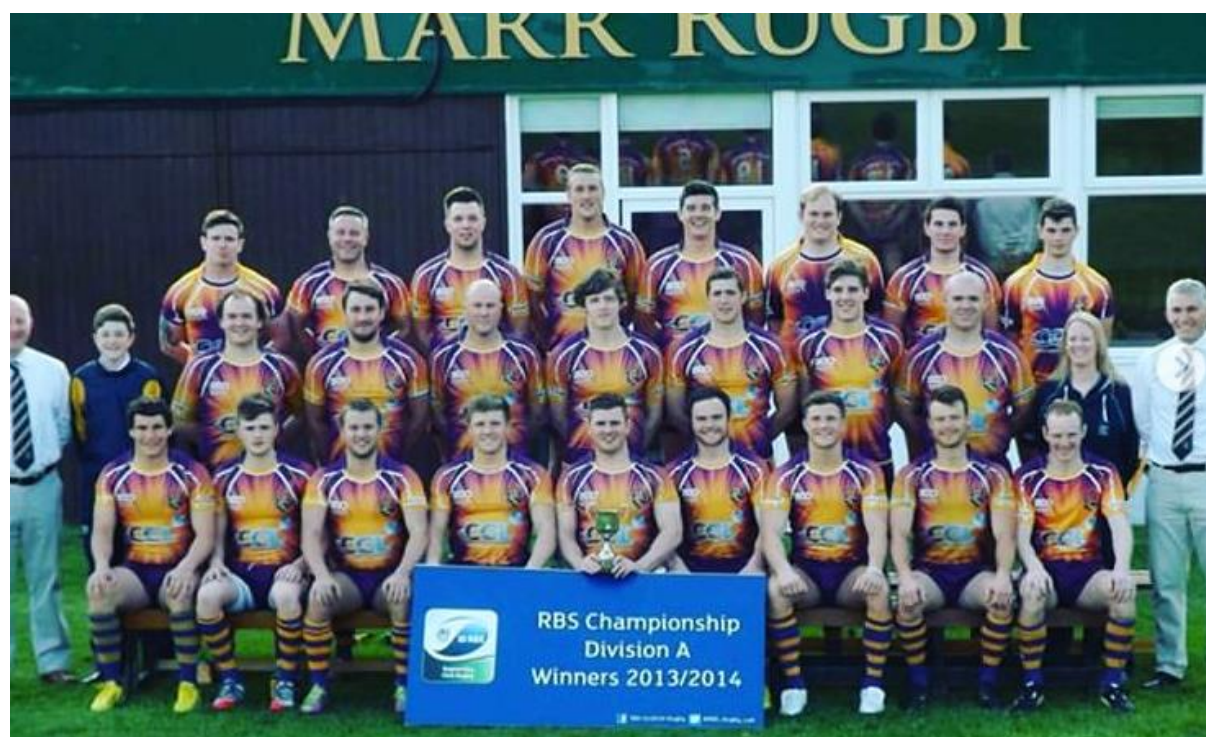
We were written off going into that Division and even with the difficulties of the fire, won 11 games in a row to secure the title and promotion to NL1.

The 2nd XV won their league and also gained promotion to the Reserve National League. A simply amazing season once again from the club which resulted in being named SRU Club of the Season.

Player of the Year was Colin Sturgeon, Young Player of the Year was Grant Baird & Conor Bickerstaff was top try scorer with 21 from 21 games.

The batch of players from Marr College were really starting to pay dividends. Players like Angus and Ben Johnston, Grant Baird, Josh Evans, Andrew Mills, and Ollie Rossi.





# Marr vow to beat £100k blaze hell

Fears of rogue firestarter in the town

Stephen Houston

**Marr Rugby Club has vowed to bounce back after a devastating £100,000 blaze tore through the clubhouse.**

The mystery fire hit as the Troon club reaches super new levels on the field.

Suspiciously, a second blaze was discovered a mile away 90 minutes later.

Police and fire teams have so far found no link - but there are fears of a rogue firestarter.

The Marr blaze was sparked in the early hours of Wednesday, and took several hours to bring under control.

Now the charred clubhouse has been deemed a no-go area, without water and power.



**Upsetting** First light reveals the devastating scene at Fullarton.

about Saturday's crunch home tie against Falkirk. A decision had not been taken as we went to press - but club officials say it may go ahead using school changing rooms.

Players have lost their gym and the rear lounge has been wrecked. But club president Kevin Quinn

And Kevin, who was called out to the scene, vowed: "We are starting to pick up the pieces already, and more offers of help are welcome. We are currently assessing the damage and then we will look at getting our business back up and running as quickly as possible."





## **SEASON 2014----- 2015**

### **The year of learning! But goal achieved in staying up**

4 league titles in a row led us into further uncharted territory as we had our first crack at NL1 rugby. The goal was to avoid relegation and we achieved it.

We were now into the big boy leagues up against sides for the first time such as Dundee HSFP, Stew Mel, Selkirk, Watsonians and the jump between Champ A and NL1 was our biggest yet.

We found ourselves in our first relegation battle in over a decade. With Hillhead not managing a win all season, it was a 3 way battle to avoid the drop between Biggar, Kelso & ourselves.

We picked up our first ever NL1 win at home to Aberdeen Grammar after heavy defeats to Dundee & Watsonians in our opening games - the crowd at Fullarton was tremendous for the Watsons game as B&I Lion Simon Taylor was in action against the home side.

Home and away wins against Biggar and a home win and away draw to Kelso was enough to put our fate in our own hands and thankfully a win at Hillhead on the last day of the season secured safety in NL1.

The boys adapted to the level of rugby throughout the course of the season and with the likes of Aaron Rankin & Johnny McClung forming a formidable centre pairing to cover the injured Conor Bickerstaff, who ruptured his ACL in a freak pre season accident, was crucial to the success of our season along with forward imports like Dylan Rowe, Phil Siave & Scott Nimmo.

The 2nd XV once again were winners of the BT Reserve West 1 division and were promoted back to the national leagues.

Player of the Year was Colin Sturgeon, Young Player of the Year was Ollie Rossi & top try scorer was Scott Bickerstaff with 14











## **SEASON 2015-----2016**

### **Play off defeat puts Premiership dream on hold**

Surviving our first ever season in NL1 was the aim & we achieved that in 14/15. The players had had a taste for the brutality of the 2nd tier and were focused on challenging at the right end of the table the 2nd time around.

We came out of the blocks very well winning our first 5 games to sit top the league before an away defeat to bogey team Peebles brought us back down to earth. Our perfect home record at Fortress Fullarton continued throughout the season however away defeats to Jed, Dundee & Watsonians derailed our title challenge and Watsonians ran out comfortable winners by the end of the season.

A key game and one that will stick long in the memory of the 600 Marr supporters at Fullarton that day was the home win against Watsonians. 1st vs 2nd in the league and it was a game we had to win if we wanted a top 2 finish.

One of the biggest crowds in Fullarton history amassed to watch a ding dong bruising encounter. Watsons took an early 0-5 lead however we clawed our way back to 6-5 up. Just before half time Conor Bickerstaff suffered a broken knee cap and the players spent 10 extra minutes in the changing rooms. The boys came out with huge energy and Colin Sturgeon kicked a 79th minute penalty to give us a 9-8 win and send the Fullarton crowd into hysterics.

South African prop Pieter Killian, Kiwi Lock Zane Burn made a real impact season along with the arrival of Czech International Craig Kolarik.

A 2nd place finish resulted in a play off against Gala with the winner heading into the BT Premiership. Once again the Fullarton faithful arrived in great numbers with around 500 making the journey to Stirling County

Sadly it wasn't to be our day as Gala took a lead after 10 seconds. Although we tried to mount a 2nd half comeback the clock ran down and Gala retained Premier status with a 22-10 win.

Once again it was another big step forward, going from relegation battle to title challengers at tier 2 level, and on the pitch at Stirling the boys all knew we wanted that top spot the following year.

Player of the season was Ben Johnston, Young player of the season was Grant Baird & top try scorer was Scott Bickerstaff with 27 tries in 27 games .







## SEASON 2016----2017

### TENNENTS NATIONAL 1 TITLE IN THE BAG!

### PREMIERSHIP HERE WE COME!

This last in our series documenting our 7 year journey to the Premiership. 5 league titles & 2 shield wins in 7 season tells a story in itself.

After the disappointing performance against Gala in the Premiership Play Off, the team knew they wanted to go one better and finish top spot in NL1.

An opening day defeat at Raeburn Place to a very good Edinburgh Accies side was proof that even after 1 game, the league was going to go to the wire.

We always knew the Fullarton crowd would carry us through our home games and if we got some momentum going we would push Accies all the way. And we did.

Key home wins against undefeated Falkirk and Jed alongside our first ever win at Mayfield against Dundee got our season back on track and the game against Accies at Fullarton on December 10th looked a crunch fixture.

600 Marr fans packed both sides of the Fullarton pitch for arguably what is our greatest ever home win. The game had it all with Scott Bickerstaff running in SRUs try of the season down the clubhouse touchline, then a 78th minute Colin Sturgeon penalty to take us 27-24 ahead sent pints in the air and anarchy from the Fullarton crowd which may not have been seen before. The win put us ahead of Accies by only a few points with 10 games to go. We knew we couldn't afford to slip up.

Our winning streak continued and with 4 games to go we were left with the daunting task of back to back trips to the borders to play Selkirk & Jed respectively. Neither ground we had won at before.

An awesome 60 minutes in the mud against Selkirk was enough to hold out for the win before we put in our best performance of the season at Riverside Park, blowing away Jed 17-38. A Dan Law double that day a highlight.

A big home win against Musselburgh was to follow which cemented our 2nd perfect season at Fullarton in a row. Fortress Fullarton now renowned as an extremely tough place to get a result.

A bonus point would be enough at Braidholm for the title against stuffy GHA and William Farquhar powered home in front of 500 travelling Marr fans for the 4th try to send us into the Premiership.

POTY Dan Law, YPOTY Gregor Paxton and Scott Bickerstaff just pipped brother Conor and Ben Johnston to the top try scorer award with 20 in 24 games.











## SEASON 2017-----2018

### A YEAR IN WITH THE BEST! ALWAYS GOING TO BE TOUGH!

Our journey continued, with the hardest task yet. We had to play all the BIG sides, Ayr, Melrose, Heriots, Stirling, Watsonians, Boroughmuir, Hawick, Currie, and Hawks.

We started against Hawks away at the home of Glasgow Warriors. We came out losers 41 points to 28.. Two tries from George Horne and two penalty tries were enough to sink a spirited Marr performance. However, confidence was taken from the game that we could compete at the top level.

Next up at home to Heriots. A famous Marr win with Colin Sturgeon kicking the penalty for victory in front of 750 supporters.

Another highlight of the season was the Ayrshire derby. The first time since 1974 that Ayr & Marr faced each other in a competitive league fixture. Ayr deservedly took our 3 year unbeaten home record that day 6-19 but to see over 1,500 people surrounding the pitch at Fullarton will live long in the memory.

It was not until the sixth match that Marr got the bonus of the draft from Glasgow Warriors. It was USA international Greg Peterson who broke the mould and played for Marr. Soon after we also had Oli Kebble, James Malcolm, Samu Vunisa and an 'ALL BLACK' yes an ALL BLACK playing for Marr! It was Lelia 'Flash' Masaga that pulled on the purple and gold and represented Marr. Glasgow trialist hooker Jean Charles Fidine also got a run at Fullarton.

With wins over Heriots, Hawks, Hawick, Currie, and Stirling County and a fine draw against Watsonians this was not enough to keep us in the Premiership with Hawick pipping us by a single point.

So the Premiership was tough and Marr were unlucky to get relegated. There are a few 'ifs' that may of resulted in a different outcome, but ultimately home defeats coming down the stretch to both Boroughmuir and Hawick cost us our top flight status.

Anyway what happened, happened and we must not dwell on this. The more pertinent question was. 'Would we learn and become a better team from this great experience?'

Only next season could answer that. An expected large turnover of players that season with Kaleem Baretto, Fraser Watt, Ross Jackson, Greg Jackson, Kyle Hatherell, Max Freydell, Dougie Steele & Toby Buchanan all pulled on the purple and gold jersey for that season. Fan favourite Craig Kolarik also headed homebound after 2 and a half seasons at the club.

Another fantastic achievement was our performance at the Melrose Sevens. Marr managed to make the semi finals which was live on BBC2! In that semi we only lost to the eventual winners Watsonians in the last play of the game. Kenny's Army put on a show and Scott Bickerstaff finished the tournaments top points scorer.

Player of the year was: Ross Miller, Young player of the year: Kaleem Baretto, Top try scorer: William Farquhar & Scott Bickerstaff.













## SEASON 2018----2019

### ANOTHER TENNENT'S NATIONAL 1 TITLE!

Only Hawks had ever been relegated from the Premiership and won the National 1 title the next year. So the challenge was set for Craig Redpath's boys!

In this season Marr won 19 games and lost three. It was the Borders that was the difficult hurdles to clear for Marr, losing to Jed, Selkirk and Gala all away from home.

However it was only Jed that managed to keep pace with Marr. It came to an epic encounter at Fullarton where Marr won by three points against a tough and skilled Jed side.

In torrential conditions, a Richard Dalglish last minute score away to GHA to clinch the match 5-8 was enough to leave us needing a win against Gala in the final game of the season at Fullarton.

The opposition had it all to play for too, as they needed a bonus point to finish in the top six, giving them Premiership rugby the following season.

It was a lovely sunny day in front of a huge Marr support where Marr took no prisoners, demolishing Gala 57 points to 8.

Marr had done it and were National 1 Champions again!

Seasons honours went to:

Top try scorer was Ross Miller, Player of the year Conor Bickerstaff, young player Findlay Hazel.









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## SEASON 2019-----2020

### This season??? So far so good!

Well so far so good as we enter the new decade! Sitting 9 points clear of the Tennent's Premiership, our name on the Bill McLaren Shield and still in the Scottish cup, the season could have hardly went any better.

It is not just the fact we are beating teams in the top league, it is the manner of how we are doing it.

The season kicked off with a great away win against our old rivals Jed , 57 points 28.

A huge win home and away against main rivals Currie, firstly 45 points to 27 at home then a 14 points to 3 away win.

Winning 43 points to 15 away to the Green Machine Hawick was simply immense. Then taking more than 60 points at home to Aberdeen was also notable.

So here we are entering the next decade. What a decade it has been for Marr Rugby! We have the infrastructure, the coaching staff, the committee, our valued sponsors all dedicated to keep Marr at the very top. And last but not least we have the best supporters in the country. You won't get a louder, busier or more passionate touchline in Scottish Rugby than Fortress Fullarton, trust us!

