

Bringing people together  
to enjoy rugby.

## NEWSLETTER

140th Anniversary



President:  
Peter Baveystock

Edition No 24, Tuesday 23rd March 2021

Email: [countyoffice@middlesexrugby.com](mailto:countyoffice@middlesexrugby.com)

### President's Message

It's good to get back to our fortnightly cycle for the Newsletter so that we can keep you updated on our way back to some form of normality. I please to be able to start with some good news in that Andy Mortimer is coming out of his residential care so will be home soon and would be happy to hear from his Middlesex friends.

**County Dinner** – Due to the current lockdown restrictions we have had to cancel the scheduled Dinner on 30<sup>th</sup> April and have decided that the best way forward was to schedule it for 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Those who have paid/booked would have been contacted separately to facilitate refunds or hold the date for 2022. The organising Committee of Bob Lawless, Beena Chadha, Mark Coles and myself will now start work on organising it so we'll be in touch soon.

**Middlesex 7's Festival / Presidents Lunch** - It is a great shame that this event planned for 30<sup>th</sup> May is not able to go ahead and I'd like to thank David Gershlick and his Committee for their efforts in trying to get it going but as with the County Dinner, we will make them bumper events in to finish off our 2021/22 seasons.

Please note that we are still looking for a RugbySafe CB Lead so if anyone would like to know more please get in touch on [peter.baveystock@middlesexrugby.com](mailto:peter.baveystock@middlesexrugby.com)

Stay safe

**Peter**

[peter.baveystock@middlesexrugby.com](mailto:peter.baveystock@middlesexrugby.com)

### Message from Eddie Keal, Chair, Middlesex County RFU

Things are looking up. We may have a long way to go, and we may have to move more slowly than we would all like, but we have definitely started making plans for getting the show back on the road.

We are doing the best we can with regard to the County activity plan for next season. Setting priorities will be doubly difficult as we cannot plan anything using this season as a baseline. There are simply too many unknowns. But at the same time, we cannot wait for clarity and commitments that may never arrive. Bear with us, we are working on it!

I would like to set out our objectives for next season at the AGM, a date for which has still to be set. It will, of course, be online and open to all members. Apologies to those who couldn't get in to the All Clubs Zoom call regarding Return to Rugby, we will be using upgraded technology without a 100 attendee limit for the AGM.

We will be searching for better ways to communicate with the whole County. Monster meetings are not the answer on every occasion as the opportunity for everyone to interact and be heard is limited. Whether we split by geographic group, age-grade or another way is a question for us to answer. It might well be a mixture of all the options depending on the content or the topic.

We are spending some time looking at the Management Board team for next season. We have the ability to make limited changes to some of the job roles, should change be necessary to improve our effectiveness or relevance. All input is welcome to the debate, and all positions up for election are open to applicants. The County Secretary will be sending the usual communication explaining the process in due course. If you do have

KEEP UPDATED  
FOLLOW US ON :

 [Middlesexrugby.com](http://Middlesexrugby.com)

 [@MiddlesexRugby](https://www.facebook.com/MiddlesexRugby)

 [@MiddlesexRFU](https://twitter.com/MiddlesexRFU)

 [@MiddlesexRugby](https://www.instagram.com/MiddlesexRugby)

Middlesex Rugby, PK1 Twyford Avenue Sports Ground, Twyford Avenue, Acton, London W3 9QA  
tel: 020 8896 3400 email: [countyoffice@middlesexrugby.com](mailto:countyoffice@middlesexrugby.com) [www.middlesexrugby.com](http://www.middlesexrugby.com)

Middlesex Rugby is the operating name of Middlesex County Rugby Football Union Ltd. Registered in England no. 29174R  
Registered Office: Sproull & Co, 31-33 College Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 1EJ // VAT NO.223174395

opinions on the County Management Board, we are very keen to hear them. Perhaps the next round of Group meetings would be a good time for us to seek some feedback.

Stay safe and well, stay at home! But start making plans for getting out.

*Eddie*

### Update from Lou Latter – Chair of Rugby Development

One week and counting until rugby returns.

As a reminder, you can find all the information around the latest [Return to Rugby Roadmap](#) in the a [Coronavirus resources](#) section on the RFU website which will have updated FAQs and everything you need to get ready for 29<sup>th</sup> March. There is also a lot of information in the [Club Support Centre](#) on the England Rugby website.

Thank you to everyone that attended the All Clubs Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March and apologies once again for those that couldn't access the meeting. We weren't expecting such a large turnout and are looking at increasing our online meeting capacity for when we schedule the next meeting in a few weeks' time.

The next meeting will hopefully cover off-field guidance, although the RFU are still in discussions with DCMS and Government on what this will mean. What we do know is:

- Changing rooms and showers CANNOT be used as of 29<sup>th</sup> March.
- We believe that Toilets will be able to open (still awaiting confirmation on this) but there may be guidance around this.
- Clubhouses CANNOT be opened from 29<sup>th</sup> March, and it is anticipated that they will fall in line with hospitality guidance.
- The RFU are also still waiting on guidance around travel dos and don'ts.

Stage D1 does allow contact training, and this should not exceed 20 minutes each session. For age grade rugby maximum group sizes have been replaced with

coach to player resources so please do read through the Stage D guidance.

So key dates for the diary:

29<sup>th</sup> March – Rugby returns at Stage D1

9<sup>th</sup> April – RFU to communicate summer/out-of-season activity

26<sup>th</sup> April – Move to Stage D2

31<sup>st</sup> May – Age Grade Season ends

We will also be sending out the 2021-2022 Age Grade Calendar to clubs by the end of the month.

As ever, please do get in contact if you want to discuss anything.

Stay safe and well

*Louise*

Louise.latter@middlesexrugby.com

### Update from Andrew Smart - Chair of Competitions

Very little from the RFU since their big announcement about the Return to Rugby except they issued their Stage D1 and D2 Guide to Activity, highlighting that **“initial training sessions should focus on building players general fitness levels and rugby skill development along with non-contact game play such as Tag, Touch and Ready4Rugby. Contact training activities should be introduced incrementally, building up to a maximum of 20 minutes duration per session.”**

For those of you that have not yet seen the guidance you can find it via the following link

[STAGE D GuideToActivity 3 \(englandrugby.com\)](#)

On a CB briefing on Friday Steve Grainger emphasised that the RFU is still awaiting guidance from Government on changing rooms, showers, re-opening of club houses, spectators and travel although he was confident that it would be fairly imminent. One thing he was able to confirm was there was to be an announcement on the 9<sup>th</sup> April on Summer Activity and what was to be allowed for both adult and age group and to include a training and playing programme.

I think it is probably worth reinforcing the headline dates for the Return to Rugby, again reiterating that they are the earliest possible and are totally reliant on each of the four tests set out in the Government's roadmap being achieved.

Stage D1. 29<sup>th</sup> March - contact training (no scrums or mauls) with clubs able to play each under Ready4Rugby regulations

Stage D2. 26<sup>th</sup> April – contact training (no scrums or mauls) with clubs able to play each other under the adapted laws

Stage E1. 17<sup>th</sup> May – full contact training including scrums and mauls

Stage E2. 31<sup>st</sup> May – Full contact matches

Stage F. – June 21<sup>st</sup> – All restrictions both on and off field will be removed

It was pretty clear from those clubs that were able to get on the All-Clubs meeting that they preferred to organise their own fixtures rather than rely on me to do it for them. The consultation will continue although it will be as much focused on identifying those clubs who will no longer have access to their pitches and facilities from the end of April but would like to continue to train and play across May and at the same time identify clubs, with access to their facilities, who would be happy to accommodate those clubs without. There will be some limited financial support for those clubs who have to incur costs to continue to train and play.

Finally, prompted to be fair by Old Isleworthians, who are still very keen to play their MT Vase Final put over from last season I will be speaking to those clubs who reached finals at the end of the 2019/20 season to see if they wish to contest those finals at the beginning of next season. I have the plaques and match balls, but I have lost my funding to cover match officials, hospitality and post-match food which was diverted into the Immediate Support Fund to support our clubs across the pandemic. Still if the clubs are prepared to work around those issues, I will look to organise those finals on the first Saturday in September.

I will be contacting the relevant clubs during this week to see what the appetite is for playing those matches

Keep safe

**Andrew**

### **Update from Andrew Smart - Chair of Groups**

For those interested, the video, the comprehensive notes taken by Jon Boyle and a copy of the new Return to Rugby Road Map from the All Clubs meeting are now available on the Middlesex Rugby website via the Covid-19 banner at the top of the home page and also on the following link [Middlesex Rugby : Covid-19 Information : Middlesex Rugby](#)

First of all, an apology. I have to put my hands up and say I was in no way expecting the numbers we got for the meeting reaching the 100 people capacity just as we were starting. When Louise and I caught up earlier in the week to agree the agenda and how we were going to manage the meeting I rather jokingly said that I hoped that we would reach 100 but to be honest I had no real expectation that we would reach that figure let alone the 50 others who were not able to get on. I should have thought about it but did not and we will have to accept that despite the outstanding numbers we failed to get the message that we wanted out to all the people who wanted to hear it and I very much take the point raised by Geoff Payne that despite the availability of video, notes etc. they are of less use if you are unable to get on and contribute.

There were any number of lessons to be learnt and I am sure that I speak for Louise when I say we will definitely be better prepared next time round

As it stands, our intention is to have further meetings as more guidance comes out from the RFU about the Return to Play and especially around off field activity, so it is important that we get this right.

These are some of the options that we are looking at.

1 Asking clubs to limit the number of attendees to two per club

2 Run two meetings. One to start at 7pm and one at 8pm, maybe splitting it by groups. So South and West Clubs at 7pm North and North West Clubs at 8pm for instance

3 Change from one All Clubs Meeting open to all we run three meetings split between 1. Adult 2. Age Group. 3 Women and Girls

4 Run separate meetings for Chairs and Hon Sec, then adult playing and then Age Group

At the same time Eddie Keal and Charles Portsmouth have been looking at the option of upgrading the County Zoom Account to increase the numbers that can join meetings

Clearly this would ensure that everybody that wants to get on a meetings can but I also take Eddie's point "However, the real question is," Should we?" 150 is too many for them all to interact."

So, some issues to be sorted out as we arrange further meetings

Anyway I just wanted to say thank you to the people who did so much to make it all happen

First of all, to Louise who did such an outstanding job on the night facilitating the meeting notwithstanding all the work she put in preparing for evening. A top effort.

Simon Hardcastle (London Society) the Secretary to the Group Officers who despite some significant issues managed to get the video and all the supporting information onto the website. Thank you for your efforts in getting it sorted out and so quickly.

Jon Boyle (Hampstead) Chairman of the North Group for his comprehensive "minutes". It was completely unexpected, so useful and much appreciated.

Finally, to Mark Foster (OMTs) Secretary of the NW Group for monitoring the chat

Outstanding attendance by our clubs. It was a real disappointment that we were not able to cater for all those that wanted to join us. Hopefully, the video of the meeting and Jon's notes will make up in a small way

Do better next time

Keep safe  
**Andrew**

### Representative Playing and Coaching Update

- Age grade rugby representative programme has been cancelled, which allows clubs to concentrate through the RFU road map in keeping players engaged with their clubs.
- Summer skill development programme for Age Grade Players will be club driven.
- Next Girls Forum which is run by the RFU will take place on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021

### London Irish Developing Playing Programme (DPP)

- The Developing Player Programme (DPP) has been delayed until Easter.
- London Irish Coach Development sessions taking place monthly online, with tutor John Bates.
- Next Middlesex / London Irish RPPG meeting will take place on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March

### Coaching Development

- There have been online coaching webinars running monthly during the lockdown with increased participation.
- This month's Webinar on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021, is being run by the Middlesex Senior Coaches, Sinan Rabi & Jerry Hedigan, The Theme of the webinar is Review and Reflections of our Coaching, Planning & Process. This Webinar is open to all female coaches and those interested can register on the e mail address below.
- A Level 3 Coaching Webinar is being organised for our Senior Coaches which will look at current trends of coaching employed in the 6 Nations. Date tbc
- Middlesex RCD Newsletter is circulated each Friday and has become extremely popular with increased membership. This is a free service offered to all Middlesex Coaches.

### Website Fitness Videos

- Fitness videos designed to motivate & Improve core stability are displayed on the Middlesex Website.

For more information on any playing or coaching topics,  
please contact Bob Lawless Chair of Representative  
Playing & Coaching (M) 07803 196 409

(E) [bob.lawless@middlesexrugby.com](mailto:bob.lawless@middlesexrugby.com).

For more information on any playing or coaching topics,  
please contact Bob Lawless Chair of Representative  
Playing & Coaching (M) 07803 196 409 (E)  
[bob.lawless@middlesexrugby.com](mailto:bob.lawless@middlesexrugby.com).

Stay Safe

**Bob**

### **What's on**

Next Middlesex / London Irish RPPG meeting will take  
place on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March.

This month's Webinar on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March Middlesex  
Senior Coaches, Sinan Rabi & Jerry Hedigan, The Theme  
of the webinar is Review and Reflections of our  
Coaching, Planning & Process. This Webinar is open to  
all female coaches and those interested can register on  
the e mail address below. This Webinar is open to all  
female coaches.

**Please contact Bob Lawless if you've not already  
been invited to the above virtual events.**

KEEP UPDATED  
FOLLOW US ON :