

Bringing people together
to enjoy rugby.

NEWSLETTER

140th Anniversary



President:
Peter Baveystock

Edition No 32, Monday 18th October 2021

Email: countyoffice@middlesexrugby.com

President's Message, by Peter Baveystock

So, here we are, seven weeks into formal competitive rugby (at level 6) and for some Clubs it has been difficult, and I know that we are working with those Clubs to help them through their respective problems. However, given the number of weeks of playing competitive rugby we've missed, I think that the vast majority of players, coaches, referees, volunteers and supporters have stayed committed to their Clubs and deserve a massive pat on the back for their efforts!

Defibrillators – I would implore you to take the time to look at the information in Andy's article on this and as a Club, consider the risks and look at the options available to you.

President's 150 Walk – As you'll see from Louise's section this will take place on Friday 5th November and will start at 11am from Chiswick RFC so I hope to see as many of you as possible on the walk and I aim to cover all 10 miles.

Rugby Safe – Some of you will be aware that I've been trying to appoint a Middlesex Lead for this role and I'm pleased to announce that we approved the appointment of Jennifer Wilcox of Hampstead to the role and she will be communicating with your respective Club Rugby Safe Leads. I'm also pleased that Mary Impey of Haringey will be helping Jennifer.

County Dinner – As previously stated, this event is now confirmed for Friday 29th April and will be £60 per head. We still have RFU Chief Executive, Bill Sweeney as guest speaker and we will be in touch soon, with those who haven't already booked.

Awards Evening - Well done to all those of you who were nominated and won awards at this event it was a great evening and a great pleasure to see so many of you in person at last. Well done to Louise Latter for pulling it together and Andy Brooks and Eddie Keal delivering the evening brilliantly. As usual there were a few winners who couldn't make it so I'm happy for the respective Clubs to contact me and I'll come and present them in person.

Floyd Steadman– Many of you will know Floyd who played for Middlesex and captained Saracens at the age of 23 and is about to publish his book, "**A Week One Summer**" which I understand includes recollections of his times with Middlesex and especially touring. Those interested can order a book from: harry@advantagesports.co.uk

Peter




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Message from Eddie Keal, Chair, Middlesex County RFU

I'm putting this newsletter together this week as Peter is away. Thank you to the contributors, the great content is all yours and the errors are mine.

I'll give some of the other Board members a nudge for content to make it clear this is not the Andrew Smart newsletter – it is for all of us! Some just have more regular news than others. The newsletter is so well read, we should be fighting for column inches.

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Thank you to Mark Foster for the suggestion of naming each edition something more useful than just a sequence number!

To be brief, because these items are covered elsewhere. The volunteer evening was fabulous. The President's walk will be fun, I'll be there too. Defibrillators are vitally important. There will be more new info on the website shortly.

I trust you have all managed to order and download your tickets for the men's Autumn Internationals. Let me know if you've had problems. I'm sure the eticketing system is not perfect yet. The women's matches are available on the same system, see the link in Lou's section below. And on terrestrial TV!

There are at least two active working groups looking at GMS, one short term and one long term. I am stone cold certain that the system owners are in no doubt about the difficulties people have had. I will give you an update at the Group meetings as I have no progress to report just yet.

I also expect by then to have news about the process for how 2nd teams in the RFU leagues might be allowed (or not).

Regards

Eddie

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Update from Lou Latter – Chair of Rugby Development

Congratulations to all the volunteers that were recognised at the Middlesex Volunteer Awards Evening on Friday 8th October at Twickenham. Over 100 volunteers attended and, while I couldn't be there to celebrate with you all, it sounds as though everyone had a great time. Roll on June when the 2021-2022 awards will take place.

The [Rugby Leadership Network](#) is back this season. This supports our future leaders in the game. If your club has a volunteer that would like to attend then please do let me know. The Rugby Leaders Network provides the opportunity for rugby leaders to connect, exchange ideas & collectively develop clubs that are fit for the future. All attendees will receive a mentor throughout the programme.

As a CB, we are very pleased to have supported 48 volunteers in their Emergency First Aid in Rugby Union certification. Thank you to Chiswick, Grasshoppers, Harrow and Old Grammarians for hosting the four courses. If you have volunteers that need to be trained then please do let us know as we will review whether to put on another couple of courses this season. Clubs are also able to host their own first aid courses.

This weekend saw girls from 12 of our clubs come together to play in their first Middlesex Girls Cluster events. It's great to see the game growing and the girls enjoying their rugby.

Please remember you can get up-to-date information from the [Club Support Centre](#) and [Helpdesk FAQs](#). A reminder to all Age Grade teams to ensure you are following guidance. If you are unsure then please let myself or Waheed know and we can support you. Please also refer to the [RFU website](#) where you can find all the information you need, answers to the vast majority of questions without the need for passing on, interpretation or guesswork.

The autumn internationals will soon be upon us and the Red Roses will be in action as they welcome 3 of the top 6 teams in World Rugby. Watch them take on World champions New Zealand in Exeter (31/10/21 14:30 KO) and again a week later in Northampton (07/11/21 14:45 KO). It's fantastic

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that we have a Red Roses in Middlesex as they take on World Number 3 Canada at the Twickenham Stoop (14/11/21 14:30 KO)

games will be live on BBC2 but tickets are still available so get your teams together and get down to support the Red Roses this autumn. Tickets available here:

www.eticketing.co.uk/rfu/Events?preFilter=23.

And finally, get your walking boots at the ready for the RFU President's 10 mile walk in Twickenham, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the RFU. We will be starting at Chiswick Rugby Club at 11am and finishing at Twickenham Stadium at approximately 5pm. This is a charity walk to raise money for the Injured Players Foundation and to celebrate the RFUs 150th anniversary. We would love for as many of you to join us for all or part of the walk.

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

Stay safe

Louise

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Message from Andrew Smart, Chair of Competitions

So, as get half way through October we can begin to see patterns emerging across both the leagues and merit tables that show how fragile some clubs are finding the return to rugby both across the county, the region and probably also across the whole country. Whilst the leagues on the surface continue to look fairly strong there are a growing number of one-sided fixtures and for the merit tables an increasing concern about the number of walkovers where it is becoming clear that clubs whilst they

have the playing numbers on paper simply can't persuade their players to commit week to week.

Anyway, as we trawl through the leagues, we find in the Championship that Ealing Trailfinders are now top having played one less game than majority of the teams in the league. Interestingly the difference between top and tenth is only two points whilst London Scottish unfortunately remain winless are at the foot of the table nine points adrift.

At level 5 in the London and SE Premier League CS Rugby remain winless after six rounds and rooted to the bottom of the table some ten points adrift.

At level 6 in L1N Belsize Park are up to sixth whilst Old Haberdashers remain tenth both clubs with three wins and three losses. However, in L1S London Welsh continue their outstanding season unbeaten and top by five points after six rounds with H&F 7th and London Cornish battling a long injury list still winless and bottom.

At level 7 in L2NW HAC, and Old Priorians and both remain unbeaten after four rounds with HAC top by points difference. Old Streetonians also unbeaten challenging in third place two points behind their Middlesex rivals. Ruislip move up to fifth, Grasshoppers seventh, Enfield Ignatians eighth, Hampstead tenth with Hackney who remain winless at the bottom. In L2SW Chiswick unbeaten and top by a point with Twickenham dropping to eighth 5th whilst London Exiles are bottom with minus 10 points and taking a fearful battering in their defeat on Saturday which must give real concern about their ability to continue in this league for the rest of the season.

At level 8 in L3 Essex Epping Upper Clapton drop to fifth whilst in L3NW, Finchley are third, Hendon fourth, Finsbury Park fifth, Harrow eighth with OMTs currently shown in tenth but with four

walkovers against their name. Once the points sanction for not playing away at Royston is shown on the table, they will be bottom.

In the Surrey leagues, after four rounds, in the top league Teddington are currently sixth whilst in Surrey four Old Hamptonians are top with Harlequin Amateurs, unbeaten, one point behind having played a game less. Old Paulines are in fourth only two points behind the top team. In the Herts and Middx County leagues at level 9, after two rounds BoE are unbeaten and top whilst Ealing Trailfinders 1871 and London Scottish are second and third respectively with one win and a draw each. Wasps FC are sixth with Actonians seventh Kilburn Cosmos eight and Thamesians pointless and bottom. In H/M2 at level ten Brunel University and Old Millhillians are undefeated with Brunel top on points difference. Uxbridge who opened their league campaign on Saturday are fourth, Staines seventh and London French, West London, Mill Hill and U.C.S all winless so far, eight to bottom respectively, on points difference

In the Allianz Premier XVs Saracens Women after five rounds are undefeated but second on points difference, Wasps FC Ladies third and Harlequins Women fifth

I am still chasing any number of results from the Middlesex Merit Tables but what I can say after four rounds is that so far eleven teams have conceded walkovers and in the MT Cup/Bowl/Vase first round matches last weekend of the nineteen matches there were eleven walkovers with clubs unable to get enough players to honour fixtures.

In the HMMTs the figures are no better with thirteen different sides so far conceding walkovers.

I am not sure what else to say except that it is a real concern and that I maintain that very few clubs

would say at the moment that they have emerged from the pandemic in a more robust playing position that they went in. Unfortunately it appears that rugby at the edges is in a far more fragile state than perhaps we believed when we went into this new season.

Keep safe

Andrew
andrew-smart@ntlworld.com

Report from Chair of Group Officers, Andrew Smart

Just about two weeks now before the November set of Group Meetings are due to begin and just a gentle reminder of the dates and venues where confirmed.

1st November South Group at Chiswick. 3rd November, North West at Wasps FC, 8th November North Group at Old Gramamrians and 10th November the West Group at Actonians (TBC)

We had a most enjoyable final of the delayed North West Floodlit Cup from the 2019/20 season held over of course because of the pandemic, but both clubs having reached the final were keen to play and the North West group was delighted to support them. Anyway, the game was played at Ruislip RFC between Uxbridge and Ealing Trailfinders 1871 on Wednesday 6th October. This is the second longest running Middlesex Cup competition which has been running since 1987 and it was a cracker. Ealing 1871 running out the eventual winners by 21-17 although Uxbridge had held the lead for the majority of the game until six minutes from the end. At one stage going into the final quarter, they were 17-7 ahead but they couldn't quite get over the line and all credit to Ealing who never gave up and ultimately gained the prize. Thanks to Ruislip for

their excellent hospitality, to Peter Baveystock the County President for covering the post-match presentations and of course to both clubs for supporting the competition and producing an excellent and competitive final

Many of you perhaps would have heard of the extraordinary events that occurred two days later at Ealing Trailfinders in the Vets MTs match between Ealing Evergreens and UCS Vets and I make no apologies for repeating it if you have. About half way into the second half forty-two-year ex Kilburn Cosmos and now Ealing vet's player John Fenlon had a heart attack and collapsed at a line out. He had stopped breathing and he had no pulse. Immediately players and spectators from both sides rushed to help. An ambulance was called, someone went for the defibrillator whilst a number of people got involved in giving John, CPR including Justin Green from Ealing, a medical doctor and Sid Green from UCS who had just completed an Emergency First Aid course that included CPR. They gave him three rounds of CPR followed by shocks from the defibrillator before another three to four rounds of further CPR. After about six minutes of intensive work on John they found a pulse and he began to breath on his own. The ambulance arrived and John was taken to hospital where he had a stent inserted and he was home with his wife and two young children on the Tuesday. Quite, quite extraordinary and perhaps even more extraordinary was that the Dr Justin Green had just completed the Emergency First Aid in Rugby course paid for by the county, organised and driven by Louise Latter, at Chiswick RFC on the 26th September 2021. At another time at another place John might well not be with us today but on the 8th October 2021 at Vallis Way, Ealing a number of factors came together to ensure that a relatively young man got to go home ultimately to his wife and young family and continue with his life. Two men recently trained in CPR, confident in its use, people not prepared to give up on John when it

must have looked so bleak and yes access to a defibrillator at a rugby club prepared to invest a not inconsiderable sum in its purchase for the benefit of its members and guests. Outstanding work by all those involved from both clubs. The story was picked up and covered on a BBC Rugby Podcast last week and the RFU will be running with their own account as well. Every single person involved in the events of Friday night have every right to be rightly proud of their contribution.

For us all this must be treated as a wakeup call. It so much better to be talking about this now when a life has been saved rather than having to talk about when someone has died on a rugby field or in a clubhouse. To be fair Eddie Keal on management together with David Gershlick from the North Group were already leading on identifying a reputable defibrillator provider at a reasonable price for our clubs and that you can expect an update on their efforts very soon. No one can say and certainly not me that the defibrillator was the reason that John got to go home but it most certainly contributed to his life being saved and I think that all of us who are involved in running clubs needs to at least to consider whether the potential benefits from access to a defibrillator outweigh the costs of purchase and maintenance. I appreciate that many of our clubs don't play out of their club houses and have no control over what is provided as part of their hiring costs but I also believe that it is important that the county and your visitors are aware of whether a club has a defibrillator or access to one at the ground. I through the groups will be doing a survey to establish the situation for each club. This is not a witch hunt or to put pressure on clubs to purchase a machine but I believe that is important information for the county to hold and if the survey starts a discussion in your club about its merits, then that is a great start especially for those clubs who have to rent facilities and yet don't have access

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to a machine. Something in future you might feel is a minimum requirement as part of your hiring

All the best, keep safe and hope to catch up with many of you across the group meetings where Defibrillators will be an agenda point at each meeting

Andrew

andrew-smart@ntlworld.com

Update from Bob Lawless, Chair of Coaching and Referee Development

- **RFU mentoring programme** – Middlesex have 5 RFU trained Mentors looking after the coaching development of 15 mentees. The Middlesex mentoring programme is available for all those interested in developing their leadership and mentoring skills. The Mentoring Programme is also available to any coach coaching at any level who would like to be mentored through the coaching pathway.
- **RFU Young Referees Award** – Invites are welcome from any young persons both Female & Male U16s – U18s, who are interested in learning to become a match official. The course will contain both practical & theoretical elements with ongoing support. The practical elements will be using the new found skills with Middlesex Festivals and with our partner academy at London Irish. Throughout the season there will be regular webinars and mentor support. The course is due to start on Saturday 30th October 2021
- **RFU Coaching and other Courses in Middlesex & Hertfordshire**
Take up the Whistle – Twickenham RFC 18th & 25th October 2021

Coaching CPD – Developing a Coaching Philosophy- (Online) Thurs 21/10/21
Principles of Scrummage – Enfield – 25/10/2021
England Rugby Referee Award (ELRA) – Harrow School - 23/10/21
England Rugby Referee Award (ELRA) – St Georges School – 24/10/21
Young Referee Award – London Welsh – Saturday 30/10/2021
England Rugby Coaching Award – 07/11/21 – The Latymer School

- **Women & Girls Rugby Coaches Online Forum.**

*** Developing your own Coaching Philosophy**

- * Tutor - Gary Street, former Harlequins Women's and England Red Roses Successful Coach, winning 5 x 6 Nations Grand Slams and the Women's World Cup in France 2014.
- * When - Thursday 21st October 2021
- * Time - 19.00hrs - 20.00hrs
- * Registration - Confirm your free attendance to the address below, a link to Teams will be forwarded to you on registration.

For further information on any of the above course please contact –

Bob Lawless, Middlesex Chair of Coaching & Refereeing Development
(e) bob.lawless@middlesexrugby.com (m) 07803 196409

What's on

Presidents Walk – Friday 5th November (more details in Lou's section above)

Group Meetings

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- **South-Mondays 1/11. 24/1. 4/4**
- **West-Wednesdays 10/11. 26/1. 6/4.**
- **North-Mondays 8/11. 7/2. 11/4**
- **North West-Wednesdays 3/11. 12/1
(Zoom). 2/3. 13/4.**

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