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to enjoy rugby.



NEWSLETTER

140th Anniversary

President:
Peter Baveystock



Edition No 31, Tuesday 5th October 2021

Email: countyoffice@middlesexrugby.com

President's Message

County Dinner – 29th April 2022, London Welsh

RFC – I'm pleased to announce that we've now finalised negotiations with the team at London Welsh and can confirm that the County Dinner will now cost £60 per head, which as previously mentioned is a break-even figure. We still have RFU Chief Executive, Bill Sweeney as guest speaker, as part of what we expect to be a fantastic night. I know that many of you have already paid the original £50 so Mark Coles will be in touch soon on how to pay the excess and for those of you who hadn't booked, make the initial booking.

I've seen a lot of rugby since the last Newsletter visiting Ruislip on 25th September where I saw Ruislip play Old Priorians and the added bonus of seeing Ickenham play Hanwell and it was great to see that all four sides had come out of the lockdown in fine fettle.

On 2nd October I visited London Welsh where we had a special lunch dedicated to Club and Middlesex stalwart, Colin Bosley who was celebrating his 91st birthday. Needless to say, that Colin was pleased with the result of LW 20 Cobham 12.

President's Walk – Friday 5th November – As mentioned in Louise's section, I'm looking forward to walking 10 miles with RFU President, Jeff

Blackett and hope many of you will be able to join us at some stage.

Stay safe

Peter

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Message from Eddie Keal, Chair, Middlesex County RFU

We have all got the new season buzz! I see that most of the County Board are getting out for club visits every weekend. That means either Friday nights, Saturdays or Sundays as our weekend playing patterns have definitely changed over the last few years. Thank you for the welcomes we have received.

Hopefully the worst of our referee shortages are now behind us. A lot of work went into maximising the number of games that could go ahead, and you will have seen the short and mid-term plans to address the situation. I know that longer term plans are being developed by the RFU and the Referees' Societies. Having said that, please encourage all retiring players or age-group coaches to take up the whistle, for the male game and the female game.

Our second Management Board meeting of the season is next Tuesday 12th October. We get a little feedback about these meetings, but not a lot. The minutes are made available very quickly after each

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meeting, so feel free to comment on them or ask questions of us.

Thank you for the support I received running the London Marathon for the RFU's Injured Players Foundation. It was hard work but a great day out. 40,000 runners had a memorable time and we raised a tidy sum for various charities. I won't trouble you with a photo of me looking tired and emotional!

I look forward to seeing many of you at the County Volunteer Awards evening at Twickenham on Friday

Stay safe and well

Eddie

Update from Lou Latter – Chair of Rugby Development

Over a month already behind us and I hope clubs and players are all enjoying being back playing rugby.

As a reminder, please can all clubs refresh themselves with the Age Grade guidance. We have received reports that clubs are not following the guidelines, and this can have serious consequences. I'm sure all Middlesex clubs are following the guidance but if you are unsure then please do get in contact with myself or Waheed Aslam. 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 [Middlesex Hardship Grant](#) is supporting our age grade players that may be facing financial hardship, either through supporting them with paying club membership or to purchase club kit and boots. A total of 36 applications have been

issued to date with nearly £4,000 of grants. This is something we are all incredibly proud of to encourage age grade players to continue to play the game they love.

We have now run three of the four first aid courses, which have seen 36 volunteers receive their Emergency First Aid in Rugby Union certification. Our final course is on 16th October at Old Grammarians. There are still a few spaces left so if you have a volunteer that needs to attend a First Aid course, please do let myself and Andy Smart know.

Thank you to Flo Williams for running two marketing women's and girls' rugby workshops. Volunteers from clubs went away with lots of information to support them. We'll look to do some follow up workshops later in the year. For those that missed them, the RFU are running some webinars around marketing women's sports so please do let me know if you have not seen the details for these.

The [Rugby Leadership Network](#) is back with a closing deadline of 10th October. Please do encourage your future leaders to apply. There is also a specific Network for W&G leaders. For those that are unsuccessful in the applying for the Area networks, we will also be running a specific Middlesex Rugby Leadership Network this season as well. More information will come out in the coming weeks but if you are interested then please do let me know. I am also looking for mentors to support the programme.

We now have less than a week to go until we welcome volunteers to the Middlesex Volunteer Awards Evening at the Spirit of Rugby on Friday 8th October. This is such an inspiring evening, listening to what our volunteers have done, being recognised by their clubs and peers. Well done to

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all 250 volunteers who were nominated over the past two years and good luck to you all for the Middlesex awards.

Our girls teams, start their cluster competition at the weekend and I look forward to watching some of the games over the coming months. Good luck to all the girls and I hope they enjoy the games. Good luck also to London Welsh U15s as they embark on their first game in the Girls National Cup in the coming weeks.

Please remember you can get up-to-date information from the [Club Support Centre](#) and [Helpdesk FAQs](#).

And finally, we are finalising the plans for the RFU President's 150th 10 mile walk in Twickenham. We will be starting at Chiswick Rugby Club at 11am and finishing at Twickenham Stadium at approximately 5pm. We will be sending out more details about the walk but if you are interested in joining us for some or all of the walk please do get in touch with myself, Eddie Keal or Peter Baveystock.

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

Stay safe

Louise

Louise.latter@middlesexrugby.com

Message from Andy Smart, Chair of Competitions

So, with the league campaigns opening on Saturday for H/M1 and 2, I am delighted to say that finally adult men's and women's rugby has now returned to all parts and levels of the county. It's been far too

long since we have been able to say that and the torrential rain that we all suffered on Saturday during our games made it a very damp but ultimately satisfying occasion for rugby in Middlesex. Long may it continue. For all our players, juniors and seniors, male and female, it has been more, than a season of lost development, lost playing opportunities and rugby experiences. Our problems aren't behind us but so far and at long last it's great to be reporting to you about actual rugby and not the issues that still around our game

Mind you our vets don't start till Friday.....on the other hand I've written it now and the sentiments still apply and I am not starting again

As we trawl through the leagues, we find in the Championship that Ealing Trailfinders are currently sixth whilst London Scottish currently winless are at the foot of the table

At level 5 in the London and SE Premier League SS Rugby remain winless after five rounds and rooted to the bottom of the table

At level 6 in L1N Belsize Park are 8th with Old Haberdashers 10th, whilst in L1S London Welsh are top by three points unbeaten after five rounds with H&F 7th and London Cornish battling a long injury list winless and bottom.

At level 7 in L2NW HAC, Old Priorians and Old Streetonians are top, 2nd and 3rd respectively, all unbeaten after three rounds, Ruislip 6th, Enfield 7th, Grasshoppers 9th, Hampstead 10th with Hackney currently winless at the bottom. In L2SW Chiswick despite playing a game less because of a Covid postponement are unbeaten and in third place, Twickenham 5th and London Exiles who haven't yet played because of covid issues 11th

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At level 8 in L3 Essex Epping Upper Clapton are fourth whilst in L3NW, Hendon are third, despite playing a game less, Finsbury Park 5th, Finchley 6th Harrow 8th with OMTs currently 10th but with two walkovers against their name

In the Surrey county leagues, who have played three rounds, in the top league Teddington are currently fifth whilst in Surrey four Harlequin Amateurs unbeaten are in second place on points difference, Old Paulines third and Old Hamptonians fourth. In the Herts and Middx County leagues which only started on Saturday at level 9, there were wins for Ealing Trailfinders 1871, Saracens Amateurs, Wasps FC and Bank of England whilst at level 10 good starts for Brunel University, Old Milhillians and Staines.

In the Allianz Premier XVs Saracens Women after four rounds are undefeated but 2nd on points difference, Harlequins Women third and Wasps FC Ladies 6th

There is a break this weekend in the leagues and merit table competitions but for anyone looking for some rugby this week on Wednesday we have the NW Middx Floodlit Cup Final from the 2019/20 season between Uxbridge and Ealing Men ko 7.30pm at Ruislip RFC. On Friday we have the start of the two vets MTs whilst on Saturday Finchley host Hendon in L3NW in a re-arranged match which was stopped after 15 minutes on the 18th September after the referee was injured and unable to continue. There are also MMT Cup, Bowl and Vase first round games

The leagues and merit tables for all our clubs restart on the 16th October Can't wait.

Report from Chair of Groups, Andy Smart

It's still over a month until the November round of Group meetings but there is still plenty going on around the county. So far three of the Groups have hosted Emergency First Aid in Rugby Courses. All three had full attendances and many thanks to Harrow, Grasshoppers and Chiswick the host clubs for the North West, West and South Groups respectively for providing their facilities for these vital courses for their clubs. Only the North Group course on the 16th October at Old Grammarians remains and whilst numbers with just under two weeks to go are solid there are still a few places available. So if there is anyone in your club who would like to take advantage of this great opportunity, paid for in full by the county, then please get in contact with Louise or myself to book your place at loulatter@hotmail.com or andrew-smart@ntlworld.com with the following details:

- Name of proposed attendee
- Contact details including email and phone number
- Club and position held
- RFU ID number: - This is required for booking on any RFU Course"

I mentioned in the last newsletter the issues around the lack of referees on the London Society of Referees West and North lists, which cover most of our clubs. The situation has definitely improved since the 18th September but unfortunately games on both lists continue to remain unappointed.

Anyway, all credit to David Gershlick who not only started the conversation about how we deal with this but then went on and did something about it. Special thanks to Rob Park and Paul Carroll the appointments managers for the West and North Lists respectively who set up the two "Take up the Whistle" Courses at really short notice. The West list course at Grasshoppers is over two evenings on the 4th and 11th October whilst the North List course at Enfield Ignatians on the 11th October is being run over one night. Excellent work by both men who will be also running their respective List course themselves.

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The aim of the course is to create club referees who are capable of officiating at Merit table games from Level 9 and below (MMT1 and below) on Saturdays or Ladies (Level 9 & below) and Youth fixtures U17 and below on a Sunday filling in when the Society is unable to appoint and is doing ensure that games can go ahead. It is very much an issue for the individual but if he/she enjoys the experience of refereeing they will then be eligible to join the society after a season depending on experience should they wish to do so. The course is aimed at players who have recently retired and want to stay in touch with the game and or club or parents of youth players who wish to give something back.

Many thanks to the Bob Lawless via County who has agreed to cover the costs of the course for every attendee.

The take up has been excellent for the West List course at Grasshoppers which is at capacity with eighteen. There are still a few places however left for the Enfield course. If you would like to book a place, please contact Paul Carroll direct paul.carroll@londonrugby.com

In fact, the initiative has been so successful that on the back of what we are doing Surrey has just ordered four courses for their clubs and players.

For Middlesex the intention is to run two further courses again funded by the county, one covering each list. I will be looking to firm up venues and dates in the next week or so. I have already had from a North list club but provided you have training lights and access to an overhead screen of some sort and you are interested in hosting a course then please let me know.

Coaching & Refereeing Update

Bob Lawless

Update on Coaching & Referee Development

- **RFU mentoring programme** – to date we have the below coaches who have attended this programme. Including myself the four

other Middlesex Mentors are Sinan Rabee (Ruislip) Richard Wilmott (Middx U17s / U18s Manager), Patrick Micallif (Old Grammarians) Lee Irvine (Fulham School) Each mentor will be supporting up to 3 Middlesex Mentees through their coaching pathway. Grant Hathaway the RFU England Rugby Coach Developer, will be overseeing the Middlesex mentoring programme

- **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 the partner Academy at London Irish. Throughout the season there will be regular webinars and mentor support.
- **Local Introduction to Refereeing** – To ensure we have a continuity of match officials, Andy Smart is liaising with Rob Park & Paul Carroll of the London Society of Referees who are delivering a number of “Take up The Whistle” evenings, a more detailed update can be found in the Group Officers Report.

The October report from the RFU Area Training Manager Matt Watts, have mentioned an increased number of bookings on Referee Courses & Coaching Award Courses. In London & South East there are 145 new referees who have started or just about to undertake the England Referee Award.

RFU Coaching Courses in Middlesex & Hertfordshire

- Principles of Scrum – Ealing – 14/10/2021
- Principles of Scrum – Fullerians – 18/10/21 – (Hertfordshire)
- Principles of Scrum – Enfield – 25/10/2021

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- England Rugby Referee Award (ELRA) - Harrow School - 23/10/21 (10)
- England Rugby Referee Award (ELRA) - St Georges School – 24/10/21 (9)
- England Rugby Coaching Award – 07/11/21 The Latymer School (19)
- **North West**-Wednesdays **3/11. 12/1 (Zoom).** **2/3. 13/4.**

Women 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 - Wednesday 13th October 2021

* Time - 19.00hrs - 20.00hrs

* Registration - Confirm your free attendance to (e) bob.lawless@middlesexrugby.com or WhatsApp (m) 07803 196 409. A link to Teams will be forwarded to you on registration.

For more information on Coaching & Refereeing Development, please contact
Bob Lawless Chair of Coaching & Refereeing Development
(M) 07803196 409 (e) bob.lawless@middlesexrugby.com

What's on

Presidents Walk - Friday 5th November (more details to follow)

Group Meetings

- **South**-Mondays **1/11. 24/1. 4/4**
- **West**-Wednesdays **10/11. 26/1. 6/4.**
- **North**-Mondays **8/11. 7/2. 11/4**

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