

## Director of Team Middlesex

### Job description and notes



Middlesex Rugby wish to appoint a **Director of Team Middlesex** to manage the county's representative playing squads. This role was previously termed the Chair of Representative Rugby.

Team Middlesex consists of the following seven teams that represent Middlesex: *Male*: Men's XV, U20 XV, U18 XV and U17 XV. *Female*: Women's XV, U18 XV, U16 XV. The programmes of activity, and play calendar are set by the RFU or the Division. Other activity is agreed by the Middlesex Board.

The Director is a key volunteer position and is appointed by the Middlesex Board with the possibility of annual renewals, by mutual consent. In discussion with the Board, the possibility exists of having one or more assistant directors, if desired.

The Director will have a seat on the Middlesex Board. The Director reports to the Board, who set all policy and budgets relating to representative rugby in Team Middlesex.

The successful candidate will be expected to become familiar with the RFU's Player Pathway Framework, the Age Grade playing development group and the Playing Calendar. The Director will ensure Team Middlesex follows the RFU Age Grade Codes of Practice.

The Director will be expected to build strong relationships with their equivalent post holder in other CBs, the pathway stakeholders at Premiership Academies, also with the Divisional U18 and U20 managers and manager of the Girls' Centre of Excellence.

The position of Director will suit a person with very strong leadership and good management experience and a person who can demonstrate good communication skills.

The Director is not expected to coach or manage any team, but the Director is responsible for guiding and coordinating sound and safe coaching practices and play styles across the teams.

## **THE DIRECTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES will include:**

1. The Director will lead and manage a coaching and team management process in which players' safety and welfare is a top priority and players' privacy and personal data is protected.
2. The Director will produce, or update, a risk assessment for Team Middlesex and annually review this with the Board. (RFU guidance exists on producing such assessments)
3. The Director, with team managers, will keep Team Middlesex activity within budget.
4. The Director in conjunction with the CB Safeguarding Manager and 'Lead on Rugby Development, Coaching' will operate an open, transparent, inclusive annual recruitment process to appoint coaches and team managers. The Director will maintain records of coach/team managers appointed and share that data with the County Office. All team managers and coaches will report to the Director. The Director will ensure Age Grade coaches and managers have passed DBS safeguarding checks. The Director will facilitate an annual review of the coaching schedule and conduct for coaches and managers, providing a report to the Board. The Director will be responsible for stepping down coaches and managers and ensuring such volunteers are duly thanked for their service on departure.
5. The Director will oversee open transparent and inclusive squad selection and ensure systems are in place to develop players providing them with constructive feedback on their skill acquisition and playing performance. And, where appropriate, to feed information back to their parents, clubs or schools.
6. Working with team managers and lead coaches, the Director will ensure that:
  - a. Relevant RFU regulations and competition rules are complied with. And, that the County's policies for operating representative teams and branding are followed.
  - b. Ensure squads and coaches conduct themselves appropriately to a high standard on and off field, to reflect well on Middlesex.
  - c. Approve all fixtures, training dates and trials ensuring training is proportionate to the match programme to avoid over-playing, over-committing players.
  - d. The Director, with team managers, will organise facility bookings and arrange match officials and pitch side care.
  - e. The Director will arrange to procure and make available kit, balls, and training equipment, and will expect managers and coaches to be responsible for kit and equipment.
7. The Director will ensure good communication systems exist to inform players and parents, clubs, schools, universities, and the Board about arrangements. The Director will be the point of contact for general Team Middlesex enquiries. The Director will be expected to keep the Board fully briefed on Team Middlesex activity.
8. The Director, with team managers, will produce copy for the County's newsletter, website, and social media platforms to promote and celebrate Team Middlesex activity, and protect the 'Team Middlesex' brand, the county's reputation, and individuals' rights to privacy. The Director will ensure the Team Middlesex area on the County's website is up to date and accurate.

## **Background Notes**

- The Director will have access to mentoring and personal development while leading Team Middlesex.
- The County Office acts as a store for kit and equipment and an archive for match programmes.
- The County Office is the central depository for Team Middlesex data. The Office provides administrative support to the Director and team managers.
- The Middlesex Board usually meets monthly early evening on the 2nd Tuesday by Zoom.
- There is a strong cohort of coaches in place, but the Director will need to confirm appointments and find suitable replacements to fill vacancies; it is expected vacancies will be advertised and that Team Middlesex will demonstrate the county's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- The Director will need to work with managers to create coach and manager job descriptions and keep these updated.
- Team Middlesex deployed about 35 coaches and managers across the seven teams during season 2023-24. A suggested staffing level for the teams is:
  - Senior Men: 1 manager & 2 coaches
  - Men U20s: 1 manager & 2 coaches
  - Boys' U17s / U18s: 1 manager & 4 coaches
  - Senior Women: 1 manager & 2 coaches
  - Girls' programme: 2 managers & 6 coaches
- On their debut, to mark a player representing Middlesex, girls and women are presented with a Middlesex lapel pin, the girls also receive a Middlesex hair scrunchie. Boys and men receive a Middlesex tie.
- For clarity of roles, the team managers will, among other tasks, cover these areas:
  - Communicate details of training sessions and matches to their squads, copying in the Director to all team circulars.
  - Be responsible for the security of players' valuables during training and matches.
  - Be responsible for the care of equipment and playing kit (including laundry).
  - Produce match programmes in a Team Middlesex style and format as set by the Director and Board (ensuring accuracy of names, attributing players' clubs/schools etc and obtain opponent squad information for inclusion).
  - Be responsible for arranging post-match subsistence and entertaining visitors, guests, and match officials at a level agreed with the Director.
  - Arrange to collect and file with the County Office parental/guardian consents for age grade players' participation in Team Middlesex and for use of their data.
  - Produce match reports to share on media outlets, with the Director and the Board.
  - Record injury data, as required by the RFU, copying in the County Office and Director.

*The current post holder outlines some features of the squads as continuity notes:*

### **ERDPP/Foundation Girls' U16 (U15 and U16)**

Runs over 20 weeks September to March. This starts with a taster session in August, followed by 2/3 assessments to ensure as many girls can attend. Training sessions are held around the county to even travel access. Classroom sessions have been added covering subjects such as Rugby Values, Playing Mindset, Nutrition, Injury Prevention, Menstrual Health, Player Pathway and Post Match Analysis. Guest speakers have included three professional international women who talked about their journeys. The classroom element was successful and seen as a groundbreaking holistic approach that the RFU are adopting going forward.

Engagement with the RFU Girls' Development Officer (Martin MacTaggart) is vital to ensure our dates and programme adhere to RFU's Player Pathway and Development Framework.

Lead Coach - Nash Cohen  
Team Manager - Jok Dunbar  
Physio - Ellie Pritchard

### **U18 Girls (U17 and U18)**

Runs October - January with 2 assessments and 3 county games interspersed with training. A close relationship with the U16 programme is important to ensure a pathway exists and girls can continue county rugby once they are U17. Liaison with the Centre of Excellence is necessary for girls who are either released or require extra game time.

Lead Coach - Chris Mason  
Team Manager - Jok Dunbar  
Physio - Ellie Pritchard

### **U17 Boys**

Assessments in November with a light touch until final squad selection and games in April/May. Boys released from DPP would be 'handed over' to the squad, alongside selection from clubs and schools. [Going forward Middlesex is likely to be split between Harlequins and Saracens' programs].

Lead Coach - Chris Hitchcock  
Team Manager - Richard Wilmot  
Physio - Morgan Beale

### **U18 Boys**

Runs from previous season with 3 sessions to maintain engagement in June/July, based on Strength & Conditioning, Injury Prevention, Mindset and Positional Analysis. Selection in September of previous U17 squad and new nominations. 3 games November to January. These games are assessed by the London & Southeast Division's coaches.

Lead Coach - Mark Gardiner  
Team Manager - Richard Wilmot  
Physio - Morgan Beale

### **U20 Men**

Programme runs from February with games in April and May. Need to approach clubs and universities early to select, highlighting the potential pathways for the players to Divisional opportunity. [Use previous year's U18 cohort and remains of current U20]. Andy Cunningham

has created good relationships with universities and Jerry Hedigan's role at St Mary's also helps.

Lead Coach - Jerry Hedigan  
Team Manager - Jok Dunbar/Richard Wilmot  
Physio - Ollie Brown

### **Senior Women – Play in the Gill Burns Cup Division 3**

Assessments in November with a light touch with the squad through Jan/Feb/Mar. Experience has led to running a squad of c.40 to ensure depth but with the premise that not all are guaranteed game time. Two assessments, 5/6 squad development sessions, three games with potential for warm up games. Games in May and transport needs to be arranged for away fixtures.

Lead Coach - Gerry Dolan  
Team Manager - Daniel Nevison  
Physio - Ellie Pritchard

### **Senior Men – Play in the Bill Beaumont Cup Division 3**

Like the women, 2/3 assessments and 5/6 squad sessions. We developed a social element, post training providing drinks and food. When hosting matches consideration must be made for entertaining the visiting county committee over lunch before the game.

Lead Coach - Jack Bairstow  
Team Manager - Steve Partridge  
Physio - Bex McLaren