

As the Head Coach of EUAFC I oversee the top three teams, although my main focus is leading the Men's 1st XI at BUCS Premier, and at the North-East Division of the Devon Football League.

My main responsibilities within the club are:

- to collaborate with, mentor, & develop captains/coaches and support staff;
- to implement our new club philosophy based on the four pillars and their non-negotiable behaviours, in order to develop a team culture to support high performance;
- to develop personal and team values, highlighting the importance of a team first approach;
- together with the captains, I am also responsible of actively promoting & providing an exceptional student-athlete experience (academic, personal, social & performance).

Areas I concentrate on with the players are:

- teaching relevant skills, tactics and techniques;
- monitoring and enhancing performance by providing tuition, encouragement and constructive feedback;
- analysing their performances, identifying strengths and weaknesses of the players;
- advising about health and lifestyle issues;
- developing training programmes.

When I was appointed Head Coach of EUAFC back in December 2020, Covid hit hard and we were unable to return to training until March. During this period, I worked with the club and team captains and a sports psychologist on developing a new club philosophy. The new club philosophy is based on four main pillars and their non-negotiable behaviours: togetherness, competitiveness, high ambition and professionalism, and privilege. Other work we did off the pitch during lockdown included defining what leadership should mean for players and captains, with a focus on fault vs responsibility; what positivity should be like for EUAFC; and finally how we could counteract the underdog mentality that most of our players have had in the past when facing other teams at BUCS. As soon as we were allowed on the pitch and after a small pre-season, we played what was left of the 20/21 season, successfully reaching and winning the final of the Scott Richards Cup at the end of May.

With little time to rest, at the beginning of June we started planning the pre-season along with first team captain Jimmy Hawkins, Club Captains and alumni John Palmer and professor Craig Williams. With the right planning, the current season is seeing some of our teams already exceeding even the most optimistic expectations set in August. With regards to the First X1, winning the local league and finishing in a comfortable position in the BUCS Premier would be considered an outstanding season. With regards to the second team, we are already forming a selection of a mixture of first and second year players. Along with five more players already playing in the first team this season, I am very certain that they are going to make the core of the first team next year.

This year, EUAFC is laying the foundations of a long term project where the main objective has to be to leave a legacy that lasts for years so that future players can benefit from it. This legacy has the clear intention of enhancing the image of EUAFC and, at the same time, the image of the University of Exeter itself. We are working really hard to build a team of experts around the first four football teams, so our players can have basic things that are unavailable right now, such as: a football coach on each of the four teams; a goalkeeping coach once a week; regular strength and conditioning sessions; full time support of a sports psychologist, physiotherapy, first aiders, linesmen, sports analyst and social media presence, etc.

*Javier Martin, EUAFC Head Coach*