

CAREER TRANSITION

CASE STUDY: RUGBY PLAYER to REFEREE

Name: Karl Dickson **Age:** 36

From: Salisbury

Playing Career Summary:

Karl joined Harlequins in 2009 from the Bedford Blues and achieved more than 165 appearances for the South London club. The hard-working scrum-half made an invaluable contribution to the club in his time, helping Harlequins to its most successful period on the field in winning the 2011 European Challenge Cup, the 2012 Premiership title, and the 2013 Premiership Cup.

New Career: Rugby Referee

Support from Player Association:

With support from his RPA Development Manager, Ben McGregor, and his club Harlequins, Karl began his refereeing qualifications while he was still playing professional rugby. Inspired by the likes of former player turned international referee Glen Jackson, Karl worked closely with his Development Manager to undertake the required qualifications and make the most of his spare time away from playing to officiate as many matches as possible and gain the relevant experience.

Career Transition Highlights:

- Worked hard to gain as much experience as a referee while he was still playing.
- Named a professional RFU referee in May 2017.
- Made his Premiership refereeing debut in November 2017, taking charge of the Gloucester vs Harlequins match which was shown live on BT Sport.

Career Transition Challenges:

- Found it hard to juggle his playing commitments with his referee training.
- Found it a challenge to switch his mentality from a player to a referee.



“ The whole experience has been a huge challenge but that’s what drives me to continue getting better. I have refereed difficult matches and faced stressful scenarios within games, but I think I thrive in those moments. For me it’s about working hard every day, improving aspects of my own game. I know the different laws and interpretations, that’s a given, but it’s about understanding the greater picture and developing each of my own assets. ”

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