

POSITION DESCRIPTION

TITLE:	Matatū Lead Sports Scientist / Crusaders Assistant Sports Scientist
INCUMBENT:	
REPORTS TO:	Matatū Head of Physical Performance
FUNCTIONAL REPORTING:	Crusaders Lead Performance Scientist / Head of Physical Performance
POSITION OBJECTIVES:	Lead the delivery and integration of high-performance sports science across Matatū and provide dedicated sports science support to the Crusaders, using monitoring, testing, research and performance data to improve preparation, availability, rehabilitation and performance. Build and maintain effective systems for data collection, analysis, visualisation and reporting, and translate insights into practical decisions for coaches, strength and conditioning, and medical staff. Support alignment, innovation and continual improvement across both high-performance environments while maintaining clear priorities, confidentiality and professional standards.
LAST REVIEWED:	OCTOBER 2026
NB: This document is subject to review from time to time, but no less than on an annual basis. The allocation of hours between Matatū and the Crusaders will vary across the season in line with the agreed seasonal work programme.	

ACHIEVEMENT OF THE POSITION OBJECTIVE WILL BE MEASURED THROUGH THE FOLLOWING KEY RESULT AREAS.

1 Lead sports science delivery for Matatū.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- Build and manage integrated systems to track player performance, development and readiness, drawing on testing, GPS and training data from the field and gym.
 - Analyse and translate data to guide individualised S&C programming and support each player's goals, so they are physically prepared for the demands of the game.
 - Work closely with coaching and performance staff, giving timely insights on training load, recovery and player availability.
 - During the agreed in-season block, provide assistant S&C support alongside sports science responsibilities, including practical gym and field delivery as directed
 - Educate staff and players so they can understand and effectively use performance data to inform training and development.

2 Provide assistant sports science support to the Crusaders.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- Support the collection, analysis and reporting of performance data to assist with optimal player loading for performance and recovery.
- Lead the setup, live monitoring and download processes for GPS devices, providing relevant feedback to performance staff as required.
- Liaise with external technology and software providers to ensure equipment functionality is maintained.
- Coordinate player wellness monitoring, communicating relevant information to key stakeholders.
- Assist with physical performance testing, supporting injury prevention initiatives and return-to-performance strategies.
- Manage smart mouthguard system and communications with associated stakeholders.

3 Maintain effective performance data systems and reporting.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- Collect, manipulate and visualise appropriate player data from multiple technology and monitoring sources.
- Present information in a practical, audience-appropriate format for coaches, medical and performance staff.
- Coordinate relevant data collection, maintaining accurate and secure databases and applying appropriate quality control.
- Maintain and develop accessible dashboards that support collaborative planning and decision-making.

4 Support monitoring, load management and return to performance.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- Contribute to performance monitoring strategies that support optimal player loading and preparation.
- Work collaboratively with medical and S&C staff to integrate objective and subjective information into rehabilitation and return-to-performance.
- Assist with identifying relevant trends, modifiable risk factors and performance indicators, while ensuring insights are interpreted with a holistic view.
- Support regular case discussion and communication so that player information is converted into agreed actions.

5 Use research and innovation to support continual improvement.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- Undertake agreed data projects and applied research based on each programme's requirements
- Maintain at the forefront of research, industry best practice and relevant trends in sports science, rehabilitation and player monitoring.
- Work with performance staff to identify future needs and practical opportunities to improve systems, processes and decision-making.
- Contribute to university, student or research partnerships where agreed, while protecting player privacy and organisational intellectual property.
- Maintain an active commitment to professional development and evidence-informed practice.

6 Build effective working relationships across both programmes.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- Develop trusted relationships with coaches, players, medical, S&C and analysis staff.
- Communicate clearly, respectfully and promptly, adapting to both technical and non-technical audiences.
- Coordinate workload and priorities between Matatū and the Crusaders in line with the agreed seasonal hours and the direction of each programme lead.
- Maintain appropriate separation and confidentiality of players, team and performance information between the two environments.
- Contribute positively to collaborative, player-centred and high-performance team cultures.

7 Health and Safety.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- Meet all occupational health and safety obligations and contribute to a safe, hazard-minimised place of work.
- Comply with organisational health and safety systems and emergency procedures.
- Promptly and accurately report hazards, accidents, incidents and equipment issues.
- Participate in scheduled health and safety training and support continuous improvement.

8 Any Other Duties.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- Undertake other duties reasonably required from time to time to meet the needs of Matatū and the Crusaders.
- Additional duties will be agreed with the relevant programme lead and remain consistent with the purpose, capability and seasonal allocation of the role.

KEY AREAS OF AUTHORITY

Staff:	No direct reports unless otherwise agreed.
Budget:	Spending authority in line with delegated limits and prior approval.

FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal:	Matatū Head of Performance; Matatū Head Coach and coaches; Matatū Strength & Conditioning Coach; team doctor; physiotherapists; nutrition, mental performance and player development staff; Crusaders Lead Performance Scientist; Crusaders Head of Physical Performance; Crusaders coaches; S&C, medical, rehabilitation and performance analysis staff.
External:	NZR performance and medical personnel; research and injury-surveillance partners; universities and tertiary institutions; technology providers; relevant provincial union and representative programme performance staff.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications & Experience

- A relevant tertiary qualification in sport and exercise science, exercise physiology, strength and conditioning, data science or a related field.
- Applied experience delivering sports science services in a high-performance or professional team-sport environment.
- Practical experience with monitoring technology, including GPS systems, wellness monitoring and performance databases.
- Experience analysing and visualising data to support coaching, medical, rehabilitation and S&C decisions.
- Experience supporting testing, injury-prevention or return-to-performance processes.
- Experience with Power BI, Catapult, STATSports and Vald is highly desirable.
- An appropriate postgraduate qualification is desirable.

Skills and Abilities

- Excellent numerical, statistical analysis and problem-solving capability.
- Ability to turn complex data into clear, practical and timely recommendations.
- Strong written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills.
- Ability to develop trusted relationships with players, coaches and multidisciplinary performance staff.
- Sound organisational skills and the ability to manage variable hours, competing priorities and seasonal peaks across two programmes.
- High attention to detail and a disciplined approach to data quality and confidentiality.

- Competence in Microsoft 365 and relevant sports science technology and software.
- Ability to work under pressure and contribute positively to fast-moving high-performance environments.
- Professional manner, sound judgement, curiosity and commitment to continuous learning.