

HONDA x RFU:

'The Power of Dreams'

TREATMENT BY LUKE NUTT



RFU

TOPLINE

In these intimate snapshots of what Twickenham means to us, we will explore what it truly means to live and breathe rugby. A series of considered short documentaries made by rugby fans, for rugby fans that seek to decode the journey of every moving part that makes this game so beautiful, from the ball boys to the players.



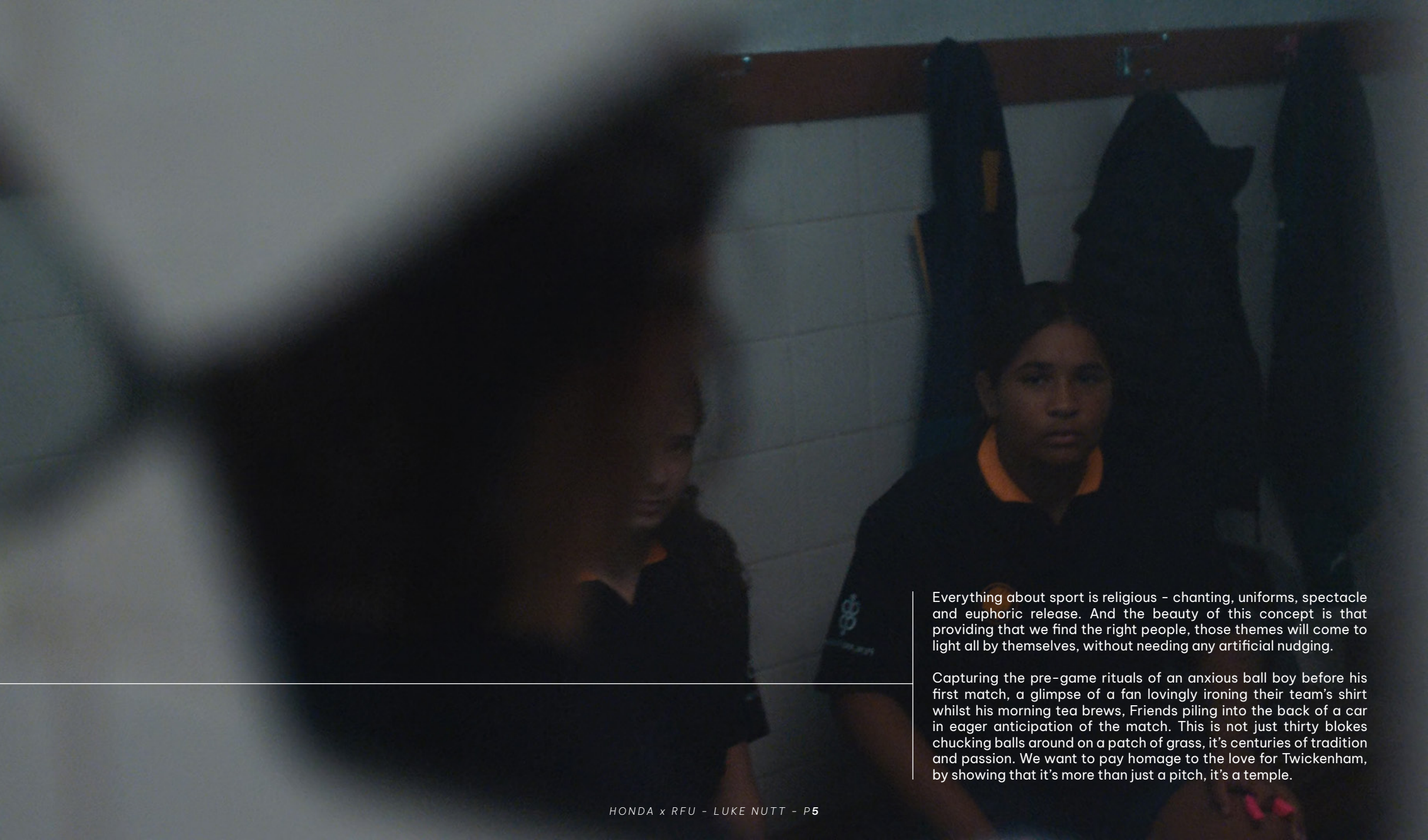
THE POWER OF **DREAMS**

It can sometimes feel hyperbolic to use phrases like the above in the world of 'content', but when it comes to sport, it really couldn't be more spot on. From the moment the youngest supporter claps eyes on their first match, to the tears shed by the retiree at the Six Nations final - it's all to do with dreams. Dreams realised, dreams shattered, dreams come to life in front of our eyes. Rugby, football, all competitive sports, are inextricably, undeniably tied to them. And dreams are, in fact, pretty powerful.

Twickenham is the undisputed Mecca of Rugby. Mecca being the operative word here because in many ways, the journey to its gates is a pilgrimage.

And, if we keep this idea of a 'Pilgrimage' in mind, it really helps to focus the emotional quality of the films. Let's imagine that, as opposed to simply covering a player, fan or staff member's tasks that lead them to the stadium, what we're really doing is something more akin to Pete Bardhele's Athos (a documentary that delves into the private lives of Greek Monks); we're sensitively documenting the deeply personal nature of the contributors' relationship with the hallowed grounds of Twickenham, and the historic events that have taken place within.





Everything about sport is religious - chanting, uniforms, spectacle and euphoric release. And the beauty of this concept is that providing that we find the right people, those themes will come to light all by themselves, without needing any artificial nudging.

Capturing the pre-game rituals of an anxious ball boy before his first match, a glimpse of a fan lovingly ironing their team's shirt whilst his morning tea brews, Friends piling into the back of a car in eager anticipation of the match. This is not just thirty blokes chucking balls around on a patch of grass, it's centuries of tradition and passion. We want to pay homage to the love for Twickenham, by showing that it's more than just a pitch, it's a temple.



VISUAL STYLE

If you were to peruse Vimeo or It's Nice That right now, you would be spoilt for choice when it comes to beautifully shot docs that live in this sort of world. So it's up to us to adopt a tone that really helps these films to stand out from the noise.

In my mind, when it comes to crafting something that is genuinely refreshing and unique in this genre, it's all about the attitude with which we approach it. If the directorial approach is all about treating the source material with the same reverence as if it were a holy pilgrimage, then the cinematography should have the same mindset.

In many ways, we're not making a film about rugby at all - we're telling the story of dedication, tradition and fanaticism. Without getting too pretentious about it, for some people, sport represents the biggest sense of community they have. It could be the way in which they understand other cultures, and find common ground with people unlike themselves. It might even be the only true way they connect with certain members of their family.



What this means from a filmmaking perspective, is that we should always be looking for a uniquely personal visual perspective on every story.

As an example, let's take closer examination of a hypothetical episode in the series. Let's say this particular film follows a young fan, with dreams of becoming a professional player. To flesh out that story, we might get some B-roll of trophy lined shelves, or muddy boots.

But how do we add another layer of detail to really show that these aren't just a collage of images? To make it clear that this person isn't just a fan, they're a fanatic? Well, We add another layer.

So, rather than just showing the trophies, we cut to a macro shot of dirty finger prints dotting the surface of the tarnished metal. Instead of just a simple shot of muddy studs, we cut to a slow motion shot of particles of mud and dirt flying through the air as our contributor smacks the boots against the front step to get rid of the worst of it.



These create visceral, sensory connections between the viewer and the content. Because lots of us have muddy training boots, sure - but we all know that to get rid of the worst of the mud, you have to give them a good smack on a hard surface first. That's how we create an emotional reaction, by zooming in on the every day, and elevating it using tried and tested cinematographic techniques.

This also allows us to create a throughline when it comes to the edit. For example, we might match-cut from the flying chunks of mud to the spray of lucozade spat out by an exhausted player at half-time. Maybe the POV of a bedroom ceiling's coving mimics the white lines of a freshly painted pitch, or even the oval shape of a soft boiled egg leads us neatly to a tightly clutched rugby ball.

Visual symmetry creates a non-verbal language that smoothly leads us from point A to point B, all the while echoing the iconography of Rugby and Twickenham itself.



FORMAT// SPEC SCRIPT

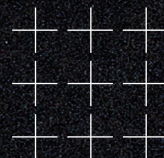
A series of 2-3 minute vignettes that combine a mixture of voiceover, portrait and carefully considered B-roll to create a unique portrayal of the true nature of Twickenham's contribution to rugby. As told by the people who know it best - from pro's to the presidential suite, we will collect all of the unspoken moments that inform what it really takes to enter the stadium's gates. I propose a simple overarching structure to unify the series.

Each film will open on a seemingly peripheral detail of someone's story, that helps ground the tone of the film. It could be something as small as their lucky socks, or the photo they keep in their wallet. A little way of illustrating how interwoven the love of sport and our personal lives can be.

From there we lead into a little background on their connection to Twickenham - it might be that they're a lifelong fan, or a budding prop. Maybe they work in the Boxes, or their dad was a coach.

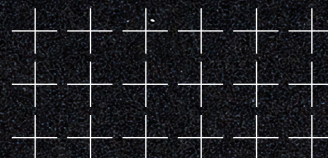
During this background we begin to build the momentum of their literal journey to the match, told through personal details. Maybe an alarm on their phone will buzz to remind them to pick up their mates, we see them recapping their strategy, or even arriving at the changing rooms early to do a little meditation. Whatever it is, it will show a progression from one place to the other, but all the while using only the most carefully selected individual details, so as to give each film a distinguishable identity.

In the final 'Act', the common thread will always be its conclusion; whether it's on the pitch, from the stands, the box or the sidelines, we always arrive at Twickenham - the place made real by the power of our dreams.



MODULARITY

This structure also enables us to re-cut and re-configure the films themselves in a modular way. This means that when it comes to maximising the power and the potential of the content - cutdowns, promos, socials etc. we can essentially hand-pick whatever building blocks we want from any portion of the series to easily create additional materials. If every film follows the same rough journey, it makes the creation of trailers, supercuts and ads a breeze, and makes maximising engagement a far simpler task.



HONDA

As we're all aware, Honda's contribution to the stories we'll be telling is not insignificant. But I'm sure we can all agree that it's a fine balance when it comes to incorporating a brand into a project like this. It's vital that any branding or products depicted are woven in so subtly that you'd be hard pressed to call it a product placement by any stretch of the imagination.

This balance can be achieved by ensuring two things. The first is that any Honda product is always incorporated as a key story point of the scripts. This is pretty easily done, as the 'Journey to Twickenham' in most cases will, at some point, involve the use of a car. As long as we make sure the vehicles in question feel

lived in - Empty McDonald's cups in the cupholders, air fresheners, 'Baby on Board' signs etc - then we can sidestep anything feeling contrived or shoehorned in. The second is to do with the pacing of the edit and the amount that we show - my instinct is that any Honda products should be a flash in the pan in terms of the cut, so as not to feel overstated, and that (if possible) we illustrate that the cars themselves are made by Honda not through their logos, but through the iconic shape and designs of their interiors / exteriors.





UGO MONYE

Ugo's recognizable face and presence is a wonderful potential addition to this campaign. I'd like to avoid being overly specific about how I see his involvement being at this stage, purely because I think this is one aspect that will be far easier to clarify through discussion and development. However, on a personal level, I'd love to lean into Ugo's incredible experience and skills in subtle ways to help amplify the aims I've already outlined in this deck - to further cement that sense of belonging and familiarity from the audience through small, personal additions.

A photograph of a large stadium at dusk. The stadium's steel framework is illuminated by several streetlights. The sky is a mix of blue and purple. In the foreground, there are some utility boxes and a fence. The text 'THANKS DEAD' is overlaid in the center of the image.

THANKS
DEAD 🦴