

JOSH LEWSEY



The Wasps star and England World Cup winner writes for Metro

THE obvious highlight of the weekend was the Heineken Cup semi-final between Toulouse and Leicester. For me, the Heineken Cup is the best competition in rugby outside of the World Cup. Biased, I know, but on occasion the latter stages have produced some of the best games in living memory. The final of Stade Francais v Leicester in Paris, the continued heartache of Llanelli and Munster and the final last year left both players and fans exhausted at the end. Yet regardless of the intense pressure and desire to reach European rugby's Everest, it has often been the team that comes out and dares to play rugby the most that is victorious. And so it proved this weekend. Biarritz are a wonderful team but their negativity eventually cost them against Stade Francais, while Toulouse's ability to play the ball out of the tackle, like no other team can, led to some wonderfully executed tries against what is a very good Leicester side. Although disappointing not to have an English team in the

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final, one can only hope this fantastic spectacle does not become an anti-climax when these two French sides meet at Murrayfield.

THE weekend gave us further opportunity to prepare for the last week of the league season. Along with sweat and toil, professional sport is also about recovering effectively, with ice baths being one of the most effective and well-known treatments we use.

However, any other techniques for reliving aches and injuries are always worth considering. Here at London Wasps, the players have started to use floatation. A company called Floatopia, based in London, gives what I could only think of describing as a full foetal experience!

While unwinding from the stress and strains of life, traffic etc, you float in heavily salted warm water. The water fully supports the body allowing the muscles to completely relax.

Being a cynical soul, there are obviously a million and one alternative therapies and 'hippyesque' methods out there. But as someone who struggles with stiff limbs after matches, it is a rare treat and a welcome relief from the agonising cold of the ice bath!