



## **Broadcasting first with 3D rugby**

### **BBC engineers have broadcast an entire international sporting event live in 3D for the first time in the UK.**

Scotland's defeat of England in the Six Nations rugby union championship was relayed to a London cinema audience. The project was carried out with production group, the 3D Firm.

BBC News website video journalists Andrew Webb (Edinburgh) and John Galliver (London) were at both ends of the transmission.

#### **1. PREPARATION: WATER CARRIERS WILL 'KILL US'**

It was a doom-laden prediction: "The water carriers are gonna kill us." Director Rhys Edwards made the dire warning moments after meeting the cameramen who were to film the historic event.

His fear was that people would walk too close to pitch-level cameras. He had only three camera rigs at his disposal - a far cry from the 10 or more he is used to flicking between.

But this was an attempt to give 200 industry insiders the experience of sitting at Murrayfield - not a chance to come face to face with Jonny Wilkinson or Chris Paterson.

#### **2. BROADCAST: RAIN ALMOST SPOILS THE FUN**

Scotland, as we all know, gets its fair share of rain. So it was of little surprise that torrential downpours led to a rapid rethink of the best-laid plans.

Two of the three camera rigs had been positioned in the open. But if any raindrops hit the lenses, the 3D effect would disintegrate.

Evasive action was called for.

#### **3. VIEWERS: 'RESIST THE URGE'**

The makeshift cinema was packed with tech-heads and journalists and there were certainly a few sceptics in the crowd.

Up until this point, for me, 3D has meant just one thing - an exploding shark at the end of Jaws 3D. Would my mind be changed?

Glasses on, the broadcast started and it was immediately apparent that this was going to be good. One of the first shots of the crowd showed a fan waving a large flag back and forth. It seemed to come right into the room and I had to resist the urge to reach out and touch it.

Once the action kicked off, the experience was totally immersive. Scrums appeared to be just feet away, while the sense of depth within the crowds in the background took you right into the stadium.

However, the 3 cameras covering the match felt limiting after a while. Sports fans might also have missed the instant replays and on-screen match statistics we are used to in TV sports coverage.

These are minor grumbles.

As one of my fellow audience members put it, this wasn't like watching TV, it was like being at the match. And you know what, it really was.