

TOP TO BOTTOM At the end of his rope – the apogee of Derek Boyer. TOP RIGHT Despite setting a new Guinness world record, Boyer is disappointed to learn there isn't a free slab of beer in it for him.



IT'S LIKE THE CLIMACTIC SCENE FROM A HOLLYWOOD BLOCKBUSTER. THE TRIUMPH IS WRITTEN IN HIS EYES. HE LETS OUT A SCHWARZENEGGER-LIKE "RAARRGGHH!" THE CROWD ERUPTS

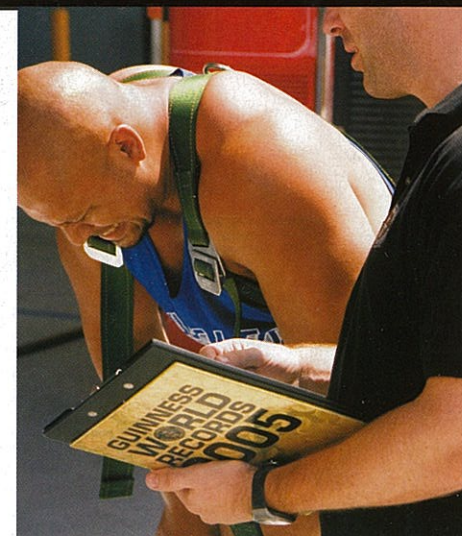
"YOU'VE GOT IT, DEREK! GO!"
"GRRRAHH!" Twenty metres.
"KEEP IT COMING! YOU'VE GOT IT! YOU'VE GOT IT!" Girls screaming.
"GRRRAHH!"
"KEEP IT COMING! KEEP GOING! KEEP GOING!" Twenty-nine metres... 30.

The truck's horn blares and Boyer collapses over the line to applause and cheers. It's taken less than a minute, just 48secs – but then Boyer doesn't move for three. He's prostrate, hyperventilating, physically spent, and an eerie silence falls upon the scene, the crowd not sure what to say or do.

"Onya, Derek," someone shouts from the crowd to nervous applause.

More silence. The only sound is the cadence of Boyer's breath: one (*breath*), two (*breath*), three (*breath*). Eventually, Boyer moves one of his legs, bringing a knee closer to his chest. Then the other leg. He's getting up. He lifts himself up from his elbows and straightens. It's like the climactic scene from a Hollywood blockbuster. The triumph is written in his eyes. He throws his fists into the air and lets out a Schwarzenegger-like "RAARRGGHH!" The crowd erupts. Boyer roars again.

Sheedy steps forward to do the official duties, telling Boyer he's pulled 51.84 tonnes,



smashing the previous record. Boyer, stunned, does his bit for his backup team, calling the day a team effort, thanking Cahill and the surveyors of the site, and not forgetting to mention the promo girls. "I feel alive," he tells *Inside Sport*. "I feel alive. What can I say? I feel alive. I feel really and truly alive. For me and my life, this is what it's all about. Just testing myself and making it happen... you've gotta believe in magic."

The crowd departs and Boyer, swigging mouthfuls of water, collapses in a director's chair; looking every bit the action movie star that, by rights, he should be. One of the promo girls, the best looking of a modest bunch, plucks up the courage to ask him for a photograph on her camera phone. "That was inspirational, really inspirational," she says, gushing. Boyer thanks her, but his mind is somewhere else. The girl, embarrassed, with nothing else left to say, simply repeats what she said the first time: "That was inspirational, really inspirational." Boyer returns his attention to her, smiles and poses for a few photographs by the side of the truck. The impromptu photo session over, the model slinks away and retreats to the shadows. What soon becomes obvious, though, from her fidgeting and nervous glances in Boyer's direction, is that she's waiting for him to really notice her.