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# Hear Thunder, take cover



Pictures:  
TIM CARRAFA

GLADIATOR giant Thunder (left and below) took a new approach to picking up chicks when he met *Home and Away* starlet Jessica Tovey this week.

The actor will not be the last to feel Thunder's wrath if the man mountain has his way on the return of the cult hit *Gladiators*.

Thunder, real name Derek Boyer, pulls semitrailers for fun and will soon be seen pulverising contestants foolish enough to goad him.

But ahead of the program's return next Sunday, Boyer said his greatest strength was his brain.

"I'm brains before brawn," Boyer said. "I have a lot of academic ability and I do some surprising activities. I am a very good chess player, I study philosophy and anthropology."

But it's his bulk that will make Boyer a household name.

At 191cm and 137kg, Boyer is the biggest Gladiator in the program's international history.

Anticipation is high at Channel 7 ahead of the program's return. Seven hopes ratings will mirror those the show attracted during the '90s, when it had a peak audience of two million.