

ROBERT 'BOB' MURPHY



“You miss 100 % of the shots you don’t take.”

THE START OF THE SEASON

I just took over as captain for the Northern Hellbenders. The team isn’t new to me, actually it’s like coming home. This is where it all started after all. There’s not many of the old players left, from back when a young kid came to the Hellbenders straight out of Uni. Most of those guys doesn’t even play anymore. Back then it was a team, now it’s just a group of guys playing in the same jerseys. It’s clear as day that the top is so far away it might as well be on Mars. But I have hope. Maybe the new coach really can get us there. He has to. This is my last chance for greatness. Deep down I know that.

ON THE FIELD

Nothing is better than being on that field. It’s not about the audience, not just about them anyway. It’s about doing your best. It’s about making your body do exactly what you want. It’s about the rush of adrenalin you get when the ball flies exactly right. It’s about the sensation you get when you win. It’s better than sex. And there is nothing worse than losing. I’m done losing. When victory is so close you can taste it, it is just so much more bitter when the fuckmates on the team screws up again. But I know they can be pushed further. You can push them further and they can do more. I am done losing and that means I am done with losers. I was named Rising god damn Star when I started out and now is the time to be a fucking Super Nova.

OFF THE FIELD

To be back as part of the Hellbenders is like putting on slippers after having trained in new sneakers for too long. It’s just really special being back to your first club and after having been back these last few seasons I just know it was the right decision to end my career where it started. I know everyone has an opinion on when the boots should go on the shelf for good, that a lot of people didn’t like me taking on the role as captain, but I’m just not done yet. I know the Hellbenders can go all the way. I can feel it. And I want to be there when they do, when we do. When Griffin left the team and his role as captain someone had to step up. He called the team a sinking ship, and since then I’ve just been happy he’s gone. Nothing’s more devastating for a team than a disloyal captain. No, no one knows the team, the field and the game as well as I do. The others should be thrilled to have someone as experienced as me leading them. I know it’s bad that I get so angry with them, I just expect so much from them, from us. It disappoints me when they don’t perform as well as they could. They aren’t just letting me down; they are letting the team down.

I know most people just sees an old guy, when they look at me. They’re all just waiting for me to disappear. It’s become harder to ignore when even the wife says it. It was easier when I just had to myself to answer to, but now she’s here and she’s afraid. Scared I’ll blow out the knee completely next time, but they all have to understand that I *need* this. I need to show everyone that I am not a failure. That I really can reach my full potential.

THE TEAM

Hugo Matera is one of the regulars on the team. He's been there for a long time and he loves the team as much as I do. You can always trust that Hugo's got your back. He doesn't say much, unless it is meant to be a joke. I'm sure he has a lot to offer, and he lifts the team spirit and god knows we need that.

Kitt O'Brien thinks too much, bears a grudge, pouts and needs to pull his head out of his ass. Yes, his big brother, Patrick O'Brien, is the greatest player in the league, but it's obvious that sharing a last name isn't the same as sharing talent. Sure Kitt O'Brien is a fine player, but he is nothing like his brother and it would suit him to stop trying to be him.

'Handsome' Tom Tidwell truly is handsome. He's also a journeyman. He never spent more than a year in the same club and even though some random disloyal defensive player isn't as devastating for a team as a disloyal captain, it's still bad. I'm not going to waste my time on someone already one his way out, that's for sure.

Eddie Mars is a good guy. He's young, he's naïve, but he has real talent. He could easily be the new Patrick O'Brien with the right guidance. I remember going straight from college to the football field, and that is a big shift. But with his stats he'll help us win. He'll get us all the way to Mars.

KEYWORDS

- Captain and midfielder
- Wants to prove he can reach his full potential
- Wants to help his teammates
- Angers easily
- He's old for a pro player, like really old.

Conflicts with the other characters

- Ambition with Kitt O'Brien
- Loyalty with Tidwell

'HANDSOME' TOM TIDWELL



”I have failed again and again. That’s why I’m a success.”

THE START OF THE SEASON

This is the end of the line. When you go from club to club without ever staying in any of them, you end up with a lot of burned bridges. There are no up and coming star that can see themselves stopping one day. You’re immortal, the money is endless and the girls are always willing. But one day you wake, and then you realize what goes around, comes around. You end up alone in a sea of people.

The Northern Hellbenders was the only ones who said yes this season. It’s the first time I haven’t had a choice. Life with fast women, Audis and tequila shorts every day is apparently not something a coach wants in a player. It’s easy to forget that money where so sparse, that mom cried every time bills needed paying. It was so easy to turn my back to it, and pretend the past belonged to someone else. But now the past is back on full throttle. With my sisters death, she left me with an alcoholic grief-stricken husband and two kids. I have to step up and help the kids. If you don’t then you’re not a real person or a man. I have to think of the future. I have a responsibility to my niece and nephew. If I can’t get a fixed contract at the Hellbenders or a new one somewhere else, I’m screwed. Especially when the only thing you’re good at is tackling people.

ON THE FIELD

It can’t be on me, when the other guys fuck up. They just had to be where they should be. It’s not up to me to save them, and throw myself out in insane tackles, because the midfield doesn’t do their job. I won’t risk a smashed knee for somebody I don’t even know, and who hates me because I haven’t been at the same club for decade. Hypocritical bastards. Sometimes it’s better to play it safe, just so you don’t get that career ending injury. If you get hurt, you’re no use on the field *or* off the field.

OFF THE FIELD

It’s hard with all that responsibility. It feels like I’m suffocating. I’m not used to other people being dependent on me. But on the other hand it’s nice to have somebody counting on you. It’s nice delivering on those expectations. It’s just so new, and everybody is just waiting for me to fuck up. Nobody believes that Tidwell the Journeyman can stay in one place. No one has high hopes for me, and it’s easy just to let them believe that? Right? Why not? Isn’t that for the best? When did life become so complicated? I miss my sister. She was the one who called me, and always remembered my birthday. She always invited me over for Christmas, even when she knew I wouldn’t come. I should have returned home earlier. The kids look at me with hope, and it’s devastating, because I’m not someone you can trust. I’m not the kind of guy that sticks around. In a way it would be easier if I got a contract on a different team. I could just send them money, and wouldn’t have to live with the expectations. That would be easier.

THE TEAM

Bob Murphy is the new captain, but not new on team. It's obvious that he doesn't think Tom should be here. He has some sort of fantasy that he wants to stop on the top. If he wanted that he should have tried before he was so old, that the only thing people talk about is his age.

Hugo Matera is so fucking high and mighty. So he is from the slum? Big deal, that doesn't make us the same. Just because he thinks it's cool to play footy with troubled youths, doesn't mean that I think it's cool. I don't owe anyone anything, and definitely not Hugo.

Kitt O'Brien is new on the team as well. It's nice not to be only odd man out. Then it's not so bad with all the introductions and briefings, and O'Brien is great guy. A bit of a wise cracker and sharp, but that's better than the guys whispering in the corners. If only he was as good as his big brother, Patrick, then we might win some games, and that could be the way to a better contract next season.

Eddie Mars is a young up and coming player. He has been called the biggest talent since Patrick O'Brien. He will amount to something big, but I'm glad I don't have to deal with all that pressure and those expectations. Everybody is talking about how expensive he was to sign, and any moment now people will see why. I know how it feels with all the pressure of expectation. But of course Eddie needs to find his feet and rhythm. He has to remember that sometimes it's better to be good, than being the best. Then it doesn't hurt as much when you fail.

KEYWORDS:

- Plays defence
- Journeyman player – he never stays in the same club two seasons in a row, but is looking for a permanent team.
- Afraid to give himself 100% for other people than himself.
- Needs a new contract next season.
- Takes care of his sisters kids.
- Don't think other people's well-being is his problem.

Conflicts with other characters

- responsibility (with Hugo)
- loyalty (with Murphy)

KITT O'BRIEN



“Sport is an art form”

THE START OF THE SEASON

“Kitt isn’t the real O’Brien.” That’s what they always say between the lines. Who are they? All of them. Off course I know that it’s Patrick they really want. The star player. Maybe I could be the star player, if they would let me. And now there is this new team. A team in the bottom of the league, and can’t figure out how I ended up here. Which moment forced me to be here? But you can’t just give up. So if I have to play for The Northern Hellbenders, well then I’ll play for them, and I’ll be the best I can be. Nobody says that we can’t be so good, that it doesn’t end up being embarrassing. Maybe the new coach and the new blood from me, and the other players can give the boost they need to end at the top.

ON THE FIELD

When the other players can’t do what they are hired to do, even when it is so obvious what they need to do, to be better, well then you need to do it yourself. Then you have to show them that, fuck no! I’m not Patrick O’Brien! I’m Kitt. Simple. Without me they definitely wont win. Even when I yell at them what they need to do, because Murphy is scolding some unimportant defender, they don’t listen to me. Nobody appreciates that I just want to help. Screw them if they don’t want to win. Fucktards.

OFF THE FIELD

Alone in the dark it’s hard to pretend it doesn’t matter that my last name is O’Brien. It’s hard not to dissect all the mistakes you’ve made. It’s hard not to hear your dad yelling, that you’ll never be as good as Patrick. It’s hard still believing that it will come. That you will be as good. Sometimes a thought pops up in my head, that maybe my strength is at another place. But you can’t just stop playing when you’re the last in a dynasty. Sometimes I wish I were better at giving advice. It’s so easy to see where the other players are struggling. They just need to switch focus, and they would be some of the best players in the league. If I could just tell them what to do. But I can’t. In their eyes I’m just a big disappointment. And I’m not a bad player. I’m a great player. I’m just not as great as Patrick. Fuck Patrick. Now there are all these rumours about Patrick considering ending his career in a season or two. He’ll definitely not do a Bob Murphy, and keep playing, when he has topped. Will there finally be room for me, when Patricks gone?

THE TEAM

Bob Murphy is an old man past his due date. Well its only partly true. Bob has a lot more experience, and have played more matches than the whole team combined. There isn't a situation he hasn't already seen on the field. But he gets lost in the details, he wants to micromanage everything. He takes every mistake personally. If he would just share a bit of himself it would help the whole team. But when he wants to throw everyone under the bus to get the trophy, because he is desperate it's just too far out.

Hugo Matera is a good guy. He is fun and absolutely indispensable for the team spirit. Like everybody else he has given up. He doesn't believe we can win, so now he plays his own game on the field. And you know I respect that. He has fought for everything he has, just like me. But what people don't know is Hugo is a great tactician, and if he focussed a little bit less on himself he could be a driving force on the team

'Handsome' Tom Tidwell is a Journeyman. He hasn't played more than one season in any club. But every place he has played he has been professional. Yeah he is a womanizer outside the field, and so what? On an old team like the Hellbenders it's not great to be the only new player. If Tom at one point could give a team his 100% he would rise up, and be one of the best on the team, if not in the league. He has greatness in him, but he needs a push.

Eddie Mars is annoying as hell. A young player straight from Uni, and everybody thinks he is the golden goose. But he hasn't proven shit, yet. He doesn't trust himself, and that's why he makes so many mistakes on the field. All. The. Time. And he can't even see it himself. It's not healthy for anybody to be called a wunderkind and the new Patrick, and all that crap. It's obvious that Eddie can't handle it.

KEYWORDS

- wants to be acknowledged on his skills and not his name.
- is too straight forward to help his teammates.
- is really tired of hearing about Patrick. Fuck Patrick.
- Plays forward
- Wants something more.

Conflicts with other characters

- Ego with Eddie
- Ambition with Murphy

EDDIE MARS



”You have to expect things from yourself, before you can do them.”

THE START OF THE SEASON

Everything has been unreal. Like a dream or something. Straight from Uni and hired on for way more than I'm worth, to a club that hasn't won anything for years, decades. Everyone thinks I can save them. I really don't want to disappoint, but what if I'm never going to be what they need me to be? But now I'm here, and luckily a lot of my team mates have played for years. They can probably help with the transition to pro ball. I just have to get through this season, maybe just fly under the radar a bit, then I'll be able to think straight.

ON THE FIELD

There is so many possible outcomes of every situation on the field. I'm trying to remember arrows on a board, listen to coach, listen to captain Murphy. Everyone screaming and then I just don't know what to do. What if I make the wrong choice? You try to remember how windy it is, how it will affect your kick. But I also remember how much they are paying me, so when push comes to shove you just have to smile and shoot. It really sucks when you miss, and Kitt O'Brien sends eyes that could kill just because he was open. But he just as easily could have missed and sometimes you just have to do *something*. This is just on a whole other level than Uni ball and when it comes to kicking that bloody ball I can't help analysing every possible scenario before acting. I know it takes time, but isn't it better doing it right, then doing it fast?

OFF THE FIELD

I know I'm a good player. I know I might be the next big star player. The next Patrick O'Brien. Everybody but the folks at home says so. I'm not even sure I would be welcome at home if I came back now. My parents think sport is a waste of time. They don't consider it a valid career choice. I know they are afraid I am putting everything on the line and might end up blowing out a knee having nothing to fall back on. It's just really special to be so good at something. It would feel like a waste if I quit. Everything is just so serious. What if I sacrifice a relationship with my family for something that turns out just to be a fantasy?

I just want to play footy. Focus on that and shut out everything else. Not care about journalists and questions and what everyone else wants all the time. It feels like being stuck in quicksand when my brain starts analysing everything. It didn't use to be a problem. At Uni I always knew when, how hard and where to shoot the ball, but now it is different. When I close my eyes all I see is disappointed looks. There used to be a balance in things. When I could think about strategy AND act. Maybe I am not ready for all this after all?

THE TEAM

Bob Murphy is the best captain Eddie ever had. And he is always so helpful. He just about played for a thousand years. When he isn't upset about some mistake you made, you can ask him for his advice. There is nothing that can happen in this sport, that hasn't happened to him.

Hugo Matera is the largest man Eddie ever met. He can always make you laugh, but it's not like he's indispensable for the team. Everyone knows it's the forwards that scores the goals and defense that makes sure you don't get trampled. You couldn't win without forwards. Besides, Hugo focuses a bit too much on charming the audience and being seen. Sometimes he forgets to make sure his teammates are open to score.

Kitt O'Brien was a disappointment from the start. When Eddie saw that O'Brien was on the roster, he thought for a fleeting moment that it was the real O'Brien. You know, Patrick, but it was only Kitt. He's even angry all the time. Patrick would for sure have been happy. And he is always telling, or yelling really, at Eddie what he is doing is wrong. And it's not like he is coach or Bob.

'Handsome' Tom Tidwell has changed clubs a lot. Even if Eddie wants to belong somewhere, that isn't necessarily the right thing for everyone. It seems like he understands what it is like when everyone expects the world of you. How it feels to have thousands of eyes on you all the time.

KEYWORDS

- under a lot of pressure
- plays forward
- lonely
- wants to prove himself
- afraid he made the wrong decision about going pro.

Conflicts with the other characters

- Ego with Kitt
- Privilege with Hugo

HUGO MATERA



” You have to do something brave or meaningful in your life if you ever want to find peace.”

THE START OF THE SEASON

I’ve played defense for Northern Hellbenders for a long time now. It’s my home, and everything is changing. We are getting a new coach, new teammates and a new captain. New, new, new and still everything is the same. The same questions wanting to be answered: Do I belong here? Would anyone notice if I was gone? I used to belong. Grew up not far from here. It’s important to give back, when you’ve been given as much as me. It doesn’t make me any less of a man, playing some ball with the kids hanging out by the park. But I don’t really *belong* there either anymore. I’m just a visitor. It’s like standing in a glass hallway between two worlds. Not being able to get through to either one.

ON THE FIELD

I am big, and I am fast. But there just isn’t much glamour to defense. It’s always the forwards that takes all the credit and I am sick of it. But if that is the game, you just have to rig it and make yourself noticed some other way. It should be hard to miss a 2-meter-high aborigine, but somehow all those privileged pricks always succeed overlooking whoever were there before them. But they *will* notice me. I will charm them, out stunt everyone on the field and when we lose as always I will make the best of it. If they see me, they might also hear me. Maybe then someone will do something about the fact that the local boys need jerseys, balls and shoes to play. The boys are easy to forget, but I will remind everyone that they deserve a decent life too.

OFF THE FIELD

I know why we always lose. Bob loses the the big picture and gets angry when someone screws up, Kitt steals focus and tries to play like his big brother even if he can’t, Handsome Tom thinks too much, and doesn’t take enough risk, and Eddie freezes up, because he’s new. I don’t know what they should be doing, but they should stop repeating their mistakes over and over again.

I know it’s bad form to give up before we even start, and I know I keep the others at an arm’s length because they are all going to leave anyway. It’s just that they don’t care. They have real friends elsewhere and I don’t want to be left behind again. I’ll just find comfort in the fact that I would never leave anyone behind. I’ll joke around and lift the spirits and be happy that I’m loyal. They might think I’m dispensable, but if I weren’t there to boost the morale they would be miserable. I don’t point fingers, I make jokes. We all lost together after all.

THE TEAM

Bob Murphy was both the only right choice and completely wrong as the new captain when Griffin ditched us. Right, because no one knows more about being on the field, than he does. It's nice not being the only one from the old team. Wrong, because he is much too cynical. It's his way or the high way. Seeing things in absolutes just isn't necessarily smart as the captain of a team.

Kitt O'Brien is trying to get out of his brothers shadow, by pretending the shadow is his own. But Kitt O'Brien is no Patrick O'Brien. It's crazy to see how much he fights for what he wants. Every step he takes, is a struggle. You have to respect that. He is not a bad player, and he has a really great eye for the tactical aspect of the game. It would just be really nice if wasn't so cranky all the time.

'Handsome' Tom Tidwell is a journeyman and you can't trust a journeyman. A player who's disloyal you might as well not consider a teammate. As far as I know Tom's background is a lot like mine. Ghettos and no money. He turned his back on all that in exchange for women, cheap booze and if that isn't a cliché I don't know what is. It's fucking embarrassing is what it is.

Eddie Mars is still wet behind the ears. He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and never had to work for anything. What's worse is he doesn't even appreciate that he was just handed everything. He just stands there, smiling, while everyone compares him to Patrick O'Brien. "The new hope" is just one of the things they call a fucking child, that never played a game outside of Uni. It's so unfair how someone just gets everything for free.

KEYWORDS:

- Plays defense
- sick of being overlooked
- wants to make a change for the local community
- doesn't feel like a part of the team
- wants recognition from his teammates
- boosts the team spirit

Conflicts with the other characters

- Privilege with Eddie
- Responsible with Tidwell



SPEECH 1 – SUNSHINE AND RAINBOWS

MATCH 1

The world ain't all sunshine and rainbows.

The world is a very mean and nasty place and it will beat you to your knees if you let it.

It ain't about how hard you hit;

It's about how hard you can get hit,

It's about how much you can take, and keep moving forward.

That's how you win.

If you think you deserve it, then go out and take it.

But you gotta be willing to take the hits.

It doesn't help pointing fingers saying it's your teammates fault.

That's something cowards do

And you are better than that.

If you think you deserve to win, march onto that field at *take* the god damn victory.



SPEECH 2 – PERFECT

MATCH 2

You've heard me talking about being perfect on the field.

But there is something you need to understand.

To me, being perfect is not about that scoreboard out there.

It's about you and your relationship to yourself.

It's about your relationship to your family, your friends and your teammates.

Being perfect is about being able to look your friends in the eye and know that you didn't let them down, and knowing you did the best you could in the moment.

Can you live with that moment?

If you can do that boys, then you're perfect.

I want you to seize that moment, and look in your teammates eyes.

It doesn't matter what happens on the field, as long as it's a perfect moment with your teammates.

If you do that then this is a moment that will stay with you forever.



SPEECH 3 – FEAR

FINAL MATCH – FIRST HALF

Our biggest fear is not that we are inadequate.

Our biggest fear is that we are better than we believe.

Our biggest fear is that we can actually live up to our expectations.

The higher you get, the harder the fall is, and that is what you fear.

You're all afraid of falling.

The thing is, you will only fall if you look down, and I tell you.

You have the strength and the abilities to look forward.

Don't think about who you used to be.

Think about who you have become.

Look forward, look up and remember you deserve to go to the top more than anyone else.

You are Northern Hellbenders, and you deserve to be here.



SPEECH 4 – 1 OUT OF 10

FINAL MATCH – SECOND HALF

Tonight is your chance of a great moment

One of the greatest

The only reason we are here is because of you.

We all know that we have fought harder than anybody to get to the top.

I know what they say: In 9 out of 10 matches we will lose.

But there aint 10 matches. There is only one.

And yes if we play them 10 times they would properly win the 9

But they wont win this game.

Not tonight

Tonight we run with ‘em

Tonight we stay with ‘em and we shut them down because we can!

Tonight we are the greatest team in Australia!

No, in the world!

You were all born to play on this field. In this moment,

Every last one of you!

Their time is done. Its over

This is your moment. Your chance

Now go out there and take it!