

****EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01 3 OCTOBER 2011****

IAN BOTHAM VOTED ALL-TIME GOD OF THE SPORTING ARENA

- ❖ **Patriotic Brits vote former England cricketer Ian Botham Sporting Hero of All-Time**
- ❖ **Beckham beats Ronaldo and Rooney to be hailed All-Time Football God**
- ❖ **Johnny Wilkinson voted God of the Rugby Arena**

A survey conducted by Anchor Bay Entertainment, to mark the Blu-ray and DVD release of *Spartacus Gods of the Arena*, has found mental toughness beats physical strength hands down when it comes to the nation's favourite Gods of the sporting arena.

Gods of the Sporting Arena

Former England cricket legend **Sir Ian Botham** was awarded *All-Time Sporting God* by men, receiving 28 per cent of the votes whilst **Sir Steven Redgrave** received 27 per cent of female votes. **Botham** came out on top above all other sports stars with Lance Armstrong in third position (10 per cent), Lewis Hamilton in fourth (5 per cent), Frank Bruno in fifth (9 per cent), Diego Maradona in sixth (6 per cent) and Kevin Peterson and Floyd Mayweather joint last with 1 per cent of votes.

Louise Ellis www.louiseellis.com Accredited Sports Psychologist and performance consultant, says:

It's fantastic to see Sir Ian Botham, David Beckham & Johnny Wilkinson selected as Gods of the sporting arena. These athletes exude mental toughness, over the years' they have consistently performed at the highest level for their country and coped admirably in the face of adversity.

It's testament to Sir Ian Botham's successful cricketing career and unconditional philanthropic work in retirement that have made him hugely popular with British sports fans. Raising over £13 million to help combat child leukaemia shows the positive influence sports stars can have on society.

David Beckham is an inspiration and a positive example to all athletes and sports fans on how to remain intrinsically motivated for the love of the sport. He has gone to great lengths to represent his Country and has this exceptional ability to rise to the occasion and perform under pressure. He also remains determined, humble and gracious in the face of adversity, qualities that have earned him the ambassadorial role and made him exceptionally popular with the British public and as a global icon. *(continued....)*

David Beckham has been hailed the *God of the Football Arena*. Almost half of all females (44per cent) AND males (40per cent) questioned chose David Beckham out of a range of first class football players. Wayne Rooney failed to make it into first place, receiving only 5per cent of votes from males across Great Britain. Cristiano Ronaldo came in second place (6per cent), Roy Keane in third (5per cent), Wayne Rooney and Vinnie Jones in fourth (3per cent), Graham Le Saux in fifth (2per cent) and Neil Ruddock and Theo Walcott joint last (1per cent).

World Cup rugby hero **Johnny Wilkinson** was hailed *God of the Rugby Arena*, receiving nearly a third of all votes. A shocking 46per cent of females were unable to vote as they did not know enough about Rugby and the players. Jonah Lomu and Bill Beaumont came in joint second (9per cent), Martin Johnson in third (7per cent), Gavin Henson in fourth (2per cent) and Dan Carter, Danny Cipriani and Jason Leonard joint last with 1per cent of votes.

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Notes To Editors

Reference to this news story must include the following credit: **Spartacus Gods of the Arena is out now on DVD and Blu-ray.**

The jaw-dropping Gladiatorial epic **SPARTACUS: GODS OF THE ARENA** features more lust, blood and sweat than ever before. Packed with sexual tension and bloody battles sequences, this series features some of the biggest and most brutal spectacles the show has ever produced. The House of Batiatus is on the rise, basking in the glow of its infamous champion Gannicus whose skill with a sword is matched only by his thirst for fine women and drink. Poised to overthrow his father and take control, Batiatus will freely betray anyone to ensure his gladiators are in the highest demand.

This survey was conducted in September 2011 by Vision Critical.

Upon request: Further statistics, press information, DVD review copies, and interviews:

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