

Boston and Life University went at it unblinkingly just over a week ago, with the result close but emphatic, 36-27 Life.

It was the second meeting of these two teams, and this Saturday will be the third, this one for the right to play in and host the May 21 Super League Final.

Having lost both matches so far, Boston can't be considered favorites, but Head Coach Mike Diamantopoulos shrugs off the worries.

"Of course we're the underdog, I don't think there's any doubt about that," the coach told RUGBYMag.com. "But we also have nothing to lose. I feel like, in some way, we are playing with house money. The pressure's on them."

Life Head Coach James Isaacson doesn't disagree.

"I put myself in the other coach's shoes," Isaacson explained. "If I were Mike, I'd look at what we did in the past hasn't produced a win, so I would change things. That makes playing a team for the third time very unpredictable. We haven't played since that game, so there's no video for me to watch; nothing for me to go on."

The match up in Boston April 30 was played at a frenetic pace, thanks in part to two packs that wanted to produce quick ball, and a referee that wanted that, too.

## Third Game the Biggest for Boston, Life

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"A lot of people, including guys who have played professionally overseas, said it was the quickest game of rugby they have seen here in the US," said Diamantopoulos.

Maybe too quick? The Boston coach demurred, but did imply perhaps that's the sort of thing Isaacson was talking about. Boston played a lot of rugby, tried to run from almost anywhere, and tried to use their speed. Life used their kicking much more and played a positional game more. Those, perhaps, are gross generalizations of each team, but they generally hold water. Life is the more conservative team, and maybe, just maybe, Boston could stand to be a little more patient, too.

Certainly Boston had trouble contesting the Life lineout and, perhaps as a consequence, their mails following. Their pillar defense, tested by Seth Strauss and Pat Danahy, was also found wanting. Both of those aspects of play will certainly change.

"Their being in the situation they are in makes them unpredictable and dangerous," said Isaacson. "We will try to expect the unknown, but this also provides the excitement. It's cup rugby, so anything can happen."

For Life, is the fact they've won both games going to make them avoid shaking things up? Dance with the one that brung ya, they say. Known for being a conservative coach, Isaacson isn't so sure.

"I know they will be looking for certain trends so we will have a few new things in there," Isaacson said. "The challenge has been getting them working efficiently enough to produce something."

Something tells us that will happen.

"We're invoking the spirit of the 2008 New York Giants," joked Diamantopoulos, speaking of the team that lost twice to the New England Patriots, only to beat the still undefeated Pats in the Super Bowl. "And you know when a lifelong Patriots fan does that he's digging deep."