

# 2018 SPEAKERS

## **Simon Halliday**

Simon played for Oxford University from 1979 till 1981, winning one and losing two Varsity matches. He went on to play for Bath Rugby Club 170 times including 5 successive Cup Finals. He moved to Harlequins in 1990, before retiring in 1992 due to long-term injuries. Simon played in the centre for England alongside Will Carling, before being replaced by Jeremy Guscott. Simon is now the Chairman of European Professional Club Rugby, whose decisions impact on the lives of rugby players across Europe.

## **Damian Hopley**

A centre or winger, Damian was nicknamed the "The Vicar of Rugby", having studied theology at St Andrews University and Cambridge in the early 90s. He went on to play for Wasps and played 12 times for England, including 3 caps and was a member of the England 7's Team who won the inaugural RWC in 1993 whilst still at Cambridge. Damian was forced to retire at only 27 due to career ending knee injuries that required 8 operations to put right.

His appalling treatment by the RFU inspired Damian to found the Rugby Players Association (RPA) in August 1998, as the representative body and collective voice of professional rugby union players in England. He has been the Group CEO since inception and, alongside his team, has delivered significant welfare provisions for the 750 professional men and women who play in England.

