

RUGBY NEWS

Timely boost for Munster as Howlett makes return

Colm Kinsella

MUNSTER have received a timely boost ahead of their pre-season friendlies next month with confirmation that their former All-Black winger Doug Howlett, has returned to full training after missing most of last season through injury.

Howlett is expected to return to competitive action during the province's pre-season match programme next month.

Former All-Black Howlett has been sidelined since December when he ruptured his Achilles while playing against the Ospreys in the RaboDirect PRO12.

The 33-year-old's return is ahead of schedule. Munster will play the first of three pre-season friendlies against French Pro D2 side La Rochelle on August 10.

In further good news for recently arrived new Munster coach Rob Penney, team captain Paul O'Connell is set to return to full training at the end of the month as the second row continues his recovery from the knee injury which forced him to miss the end of last season.

Lock O'Connell missed Munster's RaboDirect PRO12 semi-final defeat to the Ospreys and Ireland's three-Test summer tour to New Zealand as a result of the knee injury.

Elsewhere, young lock Dave Foley has recovered from his shoulder injury, while hooker Damien Varley continues his rehab programme and

Tributes paid to the late Paddy Lane

Colm Kinsella
Rugby Correspondent

TRIBUTES have been paid to Paddy Lane, the former Old Crescent, Munster and Ireland hooker who passed away earlier this week.

Rugby supporters in Limerick were saddened to learn of the popular Mr Lane's passing aged 77 years.

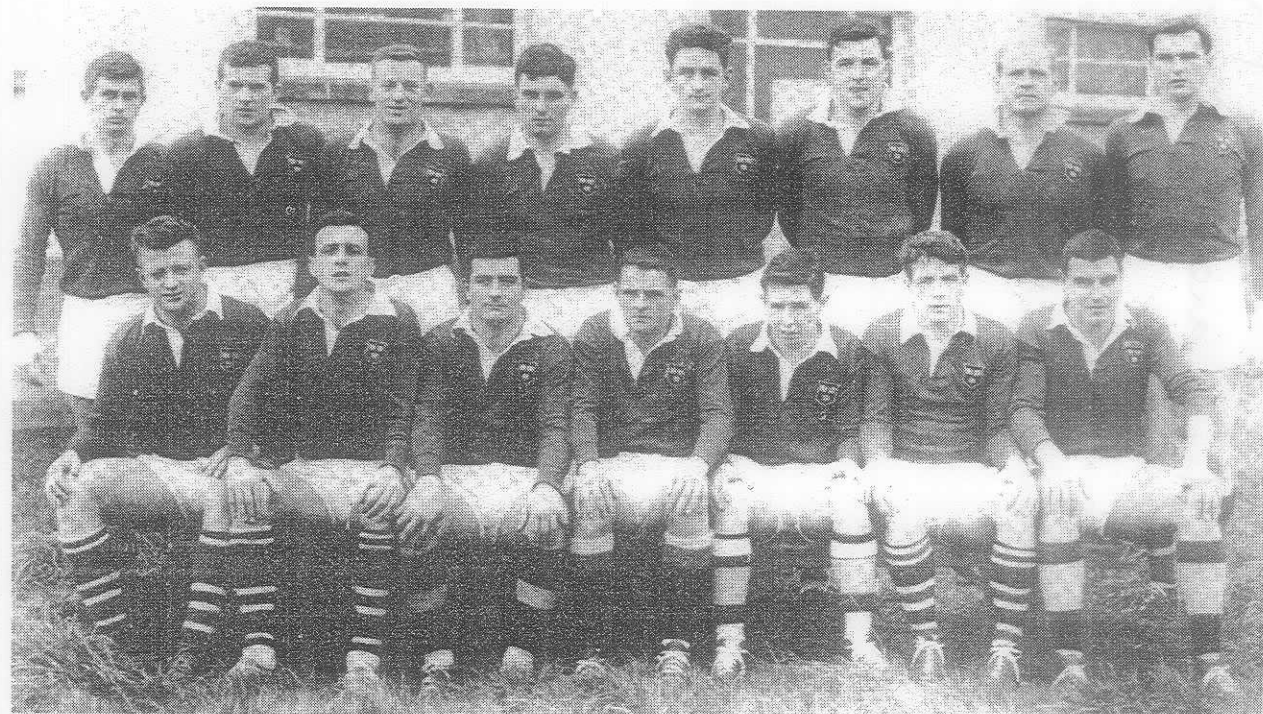
The Former MEP and IFA President, who lived at Quinnpool House, Parteen was a distinguished rugby player with Old Crescent for many years, serving as club captain for three seasons in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

He also represented Munster on several occasions, most famously when lining out against New Zealand in the tourists 6-3 victory at Thomond Park in 1963.

Paddy Lane also won an Irish cap in March 1964 when playing against Wales at Lansdowne Road.

Vincent Banks, President of Old Crescent RFC, led the tributes to the late Paddy Lane and spoke of his contribution to the Club.

Vincent Banks said: "The members of Old Crescent RFC were deeply saddened to learn of the death of



The late Paddy Lane, back row, third from left, who passed away this week, pictured with his Munster team-mates before the province's 6-3 defeat to New Zealand at Thomond Park in December 1963. Back row, left to right: Pat McGrath, Brian O'Brien, Paddy Lane, Mick Carey, Henry Wall, Noel Murphy, Mick Spillane, Jerry Murray. Front row, left to right: Mick O'Callaghan, Mick Lucey, Mick English, Tom Kiernan (Capt), Noel Kavanagh, Jerry Walsh, Dave Kiely

our Honourary Patron and former Captain, Paddy Lane, and we extend our deepest sympathies to his family.

"Paddy is the only person to have captained Old Crescent on three occasions,

in the 1957-58, 1958-59, and 1960-61 seasons. He also had an illustrious playing career with Munster and secured one cap playing for Ireland against Wales in 1964.

"His friends in Old

Crescent took great pride in his many achievements on and off the pitch".

Paddy Lane is survived by his sons Tommy and David, daughter Liz, sisters Marie and Nan O'Shea, family and

friends.

Following Requiem Mass at St Patrick's Church, Parteen on this Thursday, July 26, at 11am, burial will take place afterwards in Mount Saint Oliver Cemetery.

Penney backs fans

Garryowen face Thomond in Cup