

SPORTS

Camps: Tyson-Etienne fight back on

TUNICA, Miss. (AP) - Mike Tyson was more eager to show off the new tattoo on his face than to show off what kind of shape he's in.

The tattoo looked real enough, but Clifford Etienne's camp wasn't so sure about anything else.

The circus-like atmosphere surrounding Tyson moved Wednesday to the string of casinos along the Mississippi River, where the former heavyweight champion worked out behind closed doors before emerging to give the world a peek at his new tattoo.

A day after Tyson woke up and decided to fight, it was Etienne's turn to wake up and change his mind about getting into the ring. Etienne

decided nearly \$1 million was too much to pass up.

"I'm a fighter, not a coward," Etienne said. "I thought about it all night. I didn't work all these months to get in shape without going out and being able to do my thing."

Etienne's manager, Les Bonano, said he doubted Tyson was ever sick and said he believed the former heavyweight champion had been working out all along. The claims of illness, he said, may have been just a ploy to make Etienne let his guard down.

"I don't ever believe Tyson was sick," Bonano said. "I don't believe the training rumors."

Tyson didn't arrive in Tunica until shortly before 3

a.m., after one of two jets chartered by his manager arrived from Las Vegas. Newspapers and television showed a man believed to be Tyson hiding his face with towels, but it wasn't him.

Tyson actually flew in later, part of a plan to keep him from the expected media barrage.

"He had the worse plane," trainer Freddie Roach said. "He told me his plane didn't even have any food on it."

Tyson might do well without eating much, with Roach expecting him to come in heavier than he wants for the fight because he hadn't trained in a week before Wednesday's session. After getting his tattoo Feb. 11, Tyson blew off training ses-

sions for the next three days and then said he had the flu.

Heavyweights usually stop sparring a week before a fight and then taper off, but Tyson sparred four rounds in a ballroom at the Grand hotel-casino and then went six rounds on the speed bag.

"He didn't feel that good, but his attitude was positive," Roach said. "He wasn't as satisfied with the workout as I was."

Roach said Tyson would spar another six rounds Thursday, something unheard of so close to a fight. But it's the only chance Tyson has to regain his timing before Saturday's scheduled 10-round fight.

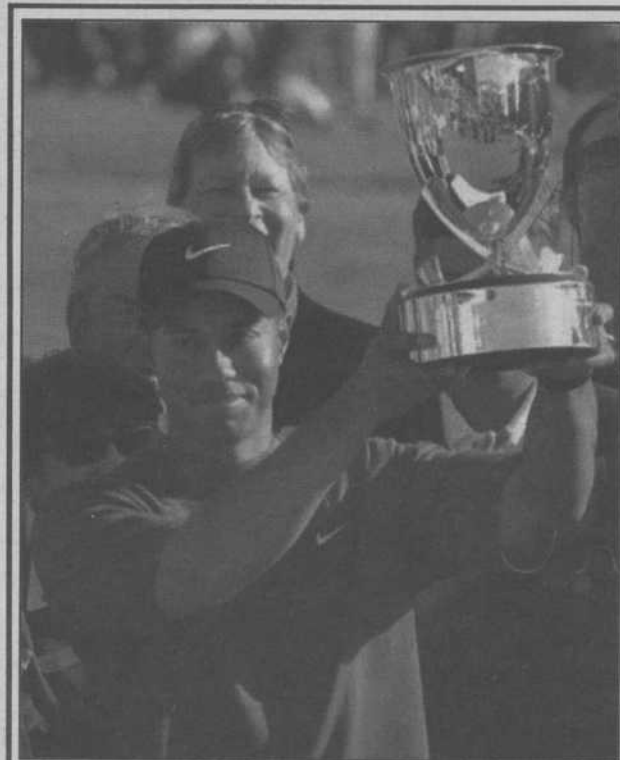
"He said, 'It's going to get better,'" Roach said. "I said, 'Mike, it has to.'"

As if to prove Tyson was actually in the area, promoters stationed a cluster of about 40 reporters and photographers in a tiny hotel lobby to watch Tyson walk to the elevator. He did it without speaking, but gave a glimpse of the large tattoo partially hidden under a ski hat.

Tyson was a 7-1 favorite a week ago to beat Etienne, who began boxing while serving 10 years in prison. He was hand-picked to be Tyson's comeback opponent because of his straight-ahead style and his tendency to get knocked down.

Those odds dropped in half, though, as word of Tyson's illness, back trouble and general unpredictability left bettors wondering just what the 36-year-old who took a beating from Lennox Lewis in his last fight has left.

They also might have wondered what effect the new tattoo that covers a large portion of Tyson's temple around



TIGER'S TROPHY

Tiger Woods hoist the Buick Invitational trophy after his four shot victory on Sunday in San Diego.



Tennessee State University Athletic Director Teresa Phillips, left, talks with assistant coach Chris Graves as Phillips coaches the men's basketball team during a game against Austin Peay State University on Thursday, in Clarksville, Tenn.

Phillips: Women can coach men

CLARKSVILLE, Tenn. (AP) - Teresa Phillips got her chance because of good timing.

The next woman who wants to be a head coach in men's Division I college basketball will need that and more. She'll have to pay her dues on the ground floor of the men's game, Phillips says.

The 44-year-old Tennessee State athletic director became the first woman to coach a men's Division I team Thursday night when the Tigers played at Austin Peay. Despite playing their best game of the conference season, they lost 71-56.

The Tigers are just 2-21 and 0-12 in the Ohio Valley Conference, but they played so much better than usual on that an assistant coach and several players asked her to keep working with the team in practices.

There won't be a sequel to Phillips' historic night. She's going back to her administrative duties, and interim coach Hosea Lewis — suspended by the conference for one game because of the brawl that broke out between his team and Eastern Kentucky on Monday night — will go back to his job.

Phillips, who has 19 years of coaching experience as an assistant at Vanderbilt and as head coach at Fisk and Tennessee State, said a woman who wants to be a successful men's head coach needs to learn everything she can as an assistant on a men's team.

"Male head coaches didn't just jump

and be head coaches. They were assistant coaches first," Phillips said.

NCAA statistics from 1999-2000, the most recent season available, show that in all three divisions of men's basketball, women held 26 of the 2,012 assistant coaches' jobs, or 1.3 percent. That compared with 545 men out of 1,734 assistants, or 31.4 percent, with women's teams.

In Division I, female coaches did only slightly better, holding 16 of 860 assistant jobs, or 1.9 percent. Among Division I women's basketball positions, 195 of the 777 assistants were men, or just over 25 percent.

Dave Loos, athletic director and men's basketball coach at Austin Peay, had Andrea Miller as an assistant for 2001-2002. But she chose to leave and coach high school volleyball.

"We were willing to give a young lady a shot on the ground floor, and she did well," he said. "I think people that want to do that, they have to be willing to start where a lot of coaches start: That's sweeping floors and pulling the bleachers out, and all the dirty work."

Phillips thinks the biggest challenge for women wanting to coach men will be recruiting high school boys.

"A lot of recruiting is developing those contacts. As of right now, there are no women over on the men's side with contacts with the male high school, JUCO and (See Division I, Page 19)

his left eye might have on the fight. A ringside doctor for the New York Athletic Commission said if it has healed properly it won't be a factor.

"I don't think it's the wisest thing to do, but there's no greater risk for a laceration or anything else if it has healed," Dr. Gerald Varlotta said. "If there's any crusting of the skin or any infection, though, it would put him at risk."

Etienne was knocked down seven times in a 2001 fight with Fres Oquendo and twice by Francois Botha in his last fight, in July.

"It will be bullets and gunsmoke," Etienne's trainer, Buddy McGirt, said. "That's the way you've got to fight Mike."

Etienne may not have been thinking clearly Tuesday when he vowed to turn down his biggest payday and a chance at stardom because Tyson was dictating the terms of the fight.

He was told Monday night

the fight was off, and Bonano said his fighter was up most of the night drinking.

"I think it was like, 'Drown your sorrows,' at the time," Bonano said.

Etienne denied that, though, saying he was just upset over the fight being called off.

"I don't party," he said. "I'm a family man."

Etienne woke up at 7 a.m. Wednesday, decided to fight and was at a local community center working out a short time later. He hit the mitts, kissed babies and acted like he didn't have a care in the world.

"I'm not looking at the future, because this fight is my future," Etienne said. "I don't have anything to do with how Mike feels or anything like that. I just know what I can do."

Asked if he would try to hit Tyson on his tattoo, Etienne said:

"I'll try to hit everything."

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