

# Tyson

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"He tried to break my arm and he butted me," McBride said. "That's the rough stuff in boxing."

In a career filled with tremendous highs and terrible lows, Tyson may have reached a new low in the loss to McBride, an Irish journeyman who came into the fight with no credentials.

Tyson (50-6) was a shell of the fighter he once was, throwing wild punches and trying to knock out McBride with each shot.

But McBride (33-4-1) took the punches and came back with some of his own and Tyson gradually began wearing down.

Tyson was tentative early, showing little of the aggressiveness that once made him a feared fighter. McBride stood right in front of him,

but Tyson was content to land only one punch at a time, perhaps remembering how he ran out of gas in his previous fights.

"There's no rush," trainer Jeff Fenech said after the first round.

But it turned out there was a rush as Tyson faded just as he did against Danny Williams last July.

That loss was blamed on torn cartilage in Tyson's leg, but it was clear even to the pro-Tyson crowd of 15,472 at the MCI Center on this night that Tyson was a shot fighter.

The 6-foot-5 McBride towered over Tyson and weighed 271 pounds to 233 for the former champion. But he had been knocked out four times by lesser fighters and wasn't expected to give Tyson much of a fight.

"This win was for the pride of Ireland," McBride said. "I proved everyone wrong tonight."

Tyson got some prefight guidance from Muhammad Ali, who visited him in the dressing room. But even The Greatest couldn't do anything for the conditioning and reflexes of a fighter who really hasn't beaten a top heavyweight since he defeated Razor Ruddock 14 years ago.

Tyson badly needed the win after being stopped by Williams, and vowed in the week before the fight that he

would regain the heavy-weight title. He told McBride he would "gut you like a fish" and claimed he was once again in top condition.

Everyone without an Irish accent was at the arena hoping to see Tyson show them flashes of the fighter he once was when he ruled the heavy-weight division. But Tyson was tentative, threw punches one at a time and grew increasingly frustrated as McBride took everything he had.

Tyson was paid \$5 million for the fight, which was on the low end of purses he has

made in his career. After his creditors got \$2 million, the IRS got its cut and his ex-wife got \$750,000, so there wasn't much left for the fighter.

Tyson still owes nearly \$40 million and there were plans for him to fight up to seven times to pay off the debt. But those plans didn't include Tyson taking the kind of beating that McBride was beginning to administer to him in the fifth and sixth

rounds. McBride was paid \$150,000, the same amount he turned down last year to fight Tyson. McBride has an intimidating nickname in the Clones Colossus, but has been knocked out four times and has never beaten a boxer of any note. One of those knockout losses came in 1998 in England to a fighter named Michael Murray, who won only one time in his last 17 fights—against McBride.

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