

Tyson ready for return

By Tim Dahlberg
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LAS VEGAS — Mike Tyson was talking boxing, while Meg Ryan was nearby shooting pictures.

Tyson may be coming off his worst beating at the hands of Lennox Lewis, but Hollywood still recognizes a star — even one as faded as Tyson.

"Why are you taking my picture?" Tyson asked the actress Tuesday while sitting in a dressing room getting his hands wrapped.

Ryan explained that she recently shot a movie about boxing and "I just got into it."

Besides, she said, "Sometimes I take good pictures."

Sometimes Tyson fights well, too, though those times have come with less frequency in recent years. In a small gym near downtown Las Vegas, however, he seemed to have hope for a future that will likely include a rematch with a man he said he couldn't beat.

"I'll be all right this time," Tyson said.

Tyson offered no excuses, and he made no promises. But it was clear that underneath it all Tyson still believes he is the baddest heavyweight around.

If he beats Clifford Etienne as expected next month, he's likely to get a chance to prove it once again June 21 when he and Lewis

meet in a planned rematch.

"If he was that dominant he should have knocked me out in the second or third round," Tyson said of Lewis. "He was still scared. He took no risks."

Lewis, of course, didn't need to take many risks the night of June 8 when he gave Tyson a beating in the richest heavy-weight title fight ever.

Tyson had a solid first round, then fought the rest of the way in a sleepwalk before Lewis finally stopped him with a right hand to the jaw at 2:25 of the eighth round.

"I'm not going to try and be Mr. Primadonna and stroke my ego, but I'm still the hottest guy going down the pike."

— Mike Tyson
Former World Champion

Tyson said he knew after the first round that it was not going to be his night.

"I came back to the corner and I was dead, I was dead tired," he said. "I didn't know what I'd do now."

Tyson, who fights Etienne in Memphis on Feb. 22, talked for

the first time publicly about why he lost as he sat getting his hands wrapped for a sparring session.

As usual with Tyson, the conversation drifted to things beyond boxing.

"Hi Mike, I'm Meg," Ryan said by way of introduction.

"I know who you are," he replied.

Tyson was in a good mood, but there was clearly work to be done for new trainer Freddie Roach. With his shirt off he appeared in good shape and near his expected fighting weight.

Etienne is not likely to cause Tyson many problems, but he desperately needs a big knockout win not only to regain his confidence but to sell a proposed rematch with Lewis.

Lewis said Friday through his attorney, Judd Burstein, that he would likely face Tyson again in June if Tyson looks good against Etienne.

A Tyson-Lewis rematch won't do the business the first fight did, but still could be lucrative for both fighters. Tyson used the Lewis fight to pay off debts he owed the Showtime network, and he must pay \$6.5 million of his future purses to his ex-wife, as part of their divorce settlement.

"Who else is he going to fight?" Tyson asked of Lewis.

"I'm not going to try and be Mr. Primadonna and stroke my ego, but I'm still the hottest guy going down the pike."

Raiders' center was 'incoherent'

By Janie McCauley
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALAMEDA, Calif. — Barret Robbins was incoherent and didn't know where he was the night before the Super Bowl, Oakland Raiders coach Bill Callahan said Wednesday in his first public comments about the troubled All-Pro center.

Robbins, who has a history of depression, spent Super Bowl Sunday in a San Diego hospital after disappearing from the team's hotel the night before.

Robbins reportedly had stopped taking his medication for depression. He missed a team meeting, a position meeting and a walkthrough practice Saturday, Callahan said.

"I was fearful something wrong was occurring," Callahan said, who decided to bench Robbins on Saturday night.

The Raiders lost to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers 48-21.

Robbins could not make flight arrangements from San Diego to Oakland because his wallet and

identification were missing, Callahan said.

A man who says he was among a group that drank with Robbins on the day before the Super Bowl told the San Francisco Chronicle that heavy drinking left the Raiders' center despondent and suicidal.

"He was crying and totally depressed about his life and the pressure he was under," said Carter Dize, who owns a vehicle customizing business that has served several Raiders players.

"This guy was messed up. All he could think about was his family, his two daughters," Dize told the newspaper. "He was talking about killing himself, saying he was disappointing people and he had a lot of people to support financially and he was letting them all down."

Dize did not return calls Wednesday.

"There's a point in time you can only do so much as a coach and as an organization," Callahan said. "His situation didn't mandate personal bodyguards around the clock."

When asked if Robbins is still a Raider, Callahan said, "absolutely" and said there's a "viable" chance he will play for the team.

Texas Cup

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Playing time has been unusual for the Aggie men's team in recent seasons.

"The freshmen need to be excited about the opportunity they have this year; it is pretty tremendous," Cass said. "It's been hard for a freshman of late to come start for us, so the ones who are in the lineup starting should be very excited about the chance."

The Aggies are set to take to the court on Saturday in Austin, 4 p.m.

Ames

Continued from page 1B

Now in his 18th season at A&M, Kleinecke will be returning senior Ashley Hedberg and juniors Jessica Roland and Roberta Spencer for the 2003 season. Roland, the ITA Southwest Region Player to Watch, boasts a singles top 125 ranking at No. 108.

The Aggies are eager to make their fourth consecutive NCAA tournament appearance led by such veteran athletes.

"We have a fairly young team," Kleinecke said. "We have a long way to go, but with the potential this team possesses I have high hopes."

The Aggies also hope that sophomore Florida State transfer Lauren Walker, ranked No. 107 among collegiate singles, will make a speedy recovery from an off-season surgery.

The Aggies will make their home debut on Feb. 15 against No. 59 LSU.



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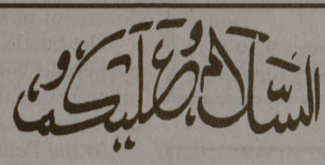
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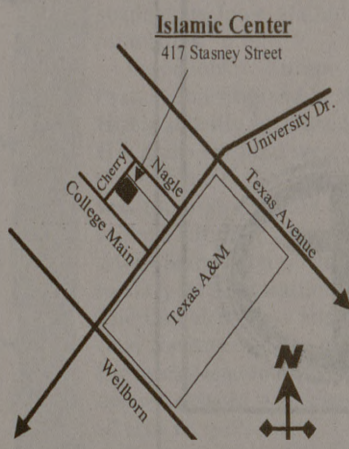
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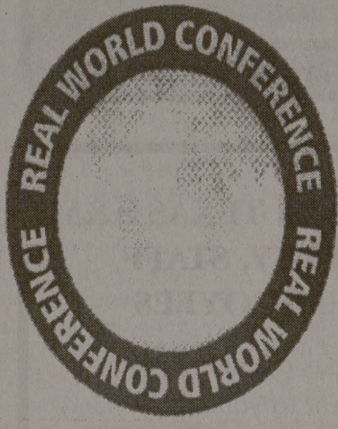
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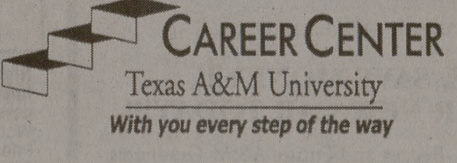
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