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y863-68S2 S62-7000 625-55''5 1M-K3I I took many shots to the head. Many  
shots to the head. I'd take two or three, to get two or three good ones in. It was just  
a toss up who was going to win the fight. If my opponent was a boxer, he would  
keep away from me because he knew I was a good puncher. He'd jab me, jab me,  
and move. Jab and move. And I was there after him to get a shot at his body. I was  
a body punch? er and a head puncher. I went upstairs and downstairs. That's what  
counts. A lot of those kids who are fighting amateur today are head hunters. They  
go for the head, just to win by decision, but they don't go for the body. When I  
fought, soon as you'd drop your left hand I'd go for the head. Soon as you'd raise  
your left hand or your right hand, I'd go for the body. Tear the body right out of  
them. I was a fighter upstairs and downstairs, up? stairs and downstairs. That is how  
you got your opponent. We would be driving in the car before a fight. They would  
say, "You are going to fight a tough guy." I'd say, "Listen, I don't want to hear  
nothing about it. I'll know when I get in there how tough he is." You could tell after  
the first or second round how good he was. You might get one shot at this guy here.  
You could tell out of the blink of his eye, I hurt this guy and I got him. I'll go after  
him now and knock him out. Or, even though you were a good puncher, you'd throw  
the shots at a guy but he could take it. I'd say to myself, this guy can take it. I'm in  
a tough fight. I will give him all the fight he wants. I ate vegetables but never any  
sweets. I never drank or smoked when I was fighting. I'd only drink a lime rickey and  
some? thing to suck on like an orange or an apple to keep my mouth wet. I'd get a  
rubdown in the gym after training. If I wasn't fighting that night, I'd take a walk  
down the street. I'd be in bed by 10:30, maybe reading a book or a magazine. That  
wasn't the routine for everyone. Booze and women claimed a lot of fighters. Some  
of them could have gone much further. When they started making the money, they  
threw it away like drunken sailors. They never had a clue.... Many of them were on  
the move all the time at all hours of the night, not training. In their fights they were  
taking bad beatings, blows to the head. I knew where they were headed. They were  
walking on 59th Street. I have seen many fighters walking on 59th Street. Punch  
drunk. Their marbles had gone upstairs. One of them was Gus Mell. His money  
didn't last any time. He spent it maybe in a week or two weeks, giving it to this one  
or that one. They had parties in Griffintown, the Irish settlement in Mon? treat. He  
would treat all the people there with booze. He was kind of wild and got into fights. I  
used to tell him, " You got million dollar hands, but you got a five cents brain."



When he died, he weighed 80 pounds, a featherweight. When the doctor came into his room before he died, he said, "Jump on my heart and start it all over again." He had fought Willie Pep who was one of the greatest featherweights in the world. I was with Pep later in New York. I said, "You fought a guy that I knew very well. I worked out with him in the gym." "What's his name?" he asked. "Gus Pell Mell." He said, "You are right. If it wasn't for the booze, he could have been champion of the world." I've seen this happen to many fighters. While they were being punched all over the place, they would stay throwing every? thing back that they could, just to make another couple hundred dollars. They would be no good for the rest of their lives. If I hadn't kept on with enough training between fights, I would have ended up that way too. The Fighting Sailor: The Autobiography of Sailor Don McKin? non, Pride of Saint John, New Brunswick is available in book? stores everywhere, or directly from New Ireland Press, 217 Aber? deen St., Fredericton, N.B. E3B 1R7 (ISBN 1-896775-06-3) Riverside Cleaners COIN LAUNDROMAT • KINGS ROAD, SYDNEY Quality Drycleaning Complete Sewing Service 50