

Yvon Durelle Suffers Stroke

Written by Robert Ecksel

Wednesday, 27 December 2006 17:21

The Fighting Fisherman: Hard man faces hard time

Former light heavyweight contender **Yvon Durelle**, 77, who retired from boxing in 1963 with a 90-24-2, 51 KOs record, suffered a stroke earlier this week and is listed in serious condition at a hospital in Moncton, Canada, where he was transferred on Christmas Day.

Durelle's wife, Theresa, told the Toronto Star, "He's in serious, serious condition. We're praying and hoping for the best. That's all we can do"

Born Oct. 14, 1929, Durelle was one of 14 children who grew up in Baie-Ste-Anne, a small Acadian fishing village in New Brunswick, which earned him the nom de guerre the Fighting Fisherman.

Durelle turned pro in 1948 and proved he was a man who could box as well as punch, but he was a very hard man, an almost impossible man, to knock out. Durelle won the Canadian middleweight championship in 1953. In 1954 he had his first fight outside Canada, traveling all the way to Brooklyn, New York to fight an up-and-coming young panther named **Floyd Patterson**

Durelle lost that bout by decision, but he opened a lot of eyes and was suddenly ranked in the top-ten.

Durelle won the British Empire light heavyweight championship in 1957 and defended three times, setting up the bout for which he is best known, the Dec. 10, 1958 challenge at the Forum in Montreal, Quebec, for **Archie Moore**'s light heavyweight title. A 4-1 underdog going into the fight with the wily Old Mongoose, Durelle dropped the champ three times in the first round, shocking not just Archie, not just the world, but all of Canada.

After the fight, Moore described the first knockdown: "The first thing I remember was I heard the number five and I saw [referee] **Jack Sharkey**'s big mouth as he leaned over me, counting. I knew I had to get to my feet. I felt as if the top of my head was blown off. I walked the street of dreams.?"

Moore not only walked the street of dreams, he fought the street of dreams, and with his tight defense and wizened ring generalship, Arch, although he was dropped again in the fifth, snuck his way back into the fight, battled his way back into the fight, to eventually wear down and KO the Fighting Fisherman in round 11.

In 1959 Durelle lost to Moore in a rematch via the KO route in the third. Also that year, Durelle lost a 12-rounder to Canadian heavyweight champion **George Chuvalo**, before finally winding it down and calling it quits after 117 fights.

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