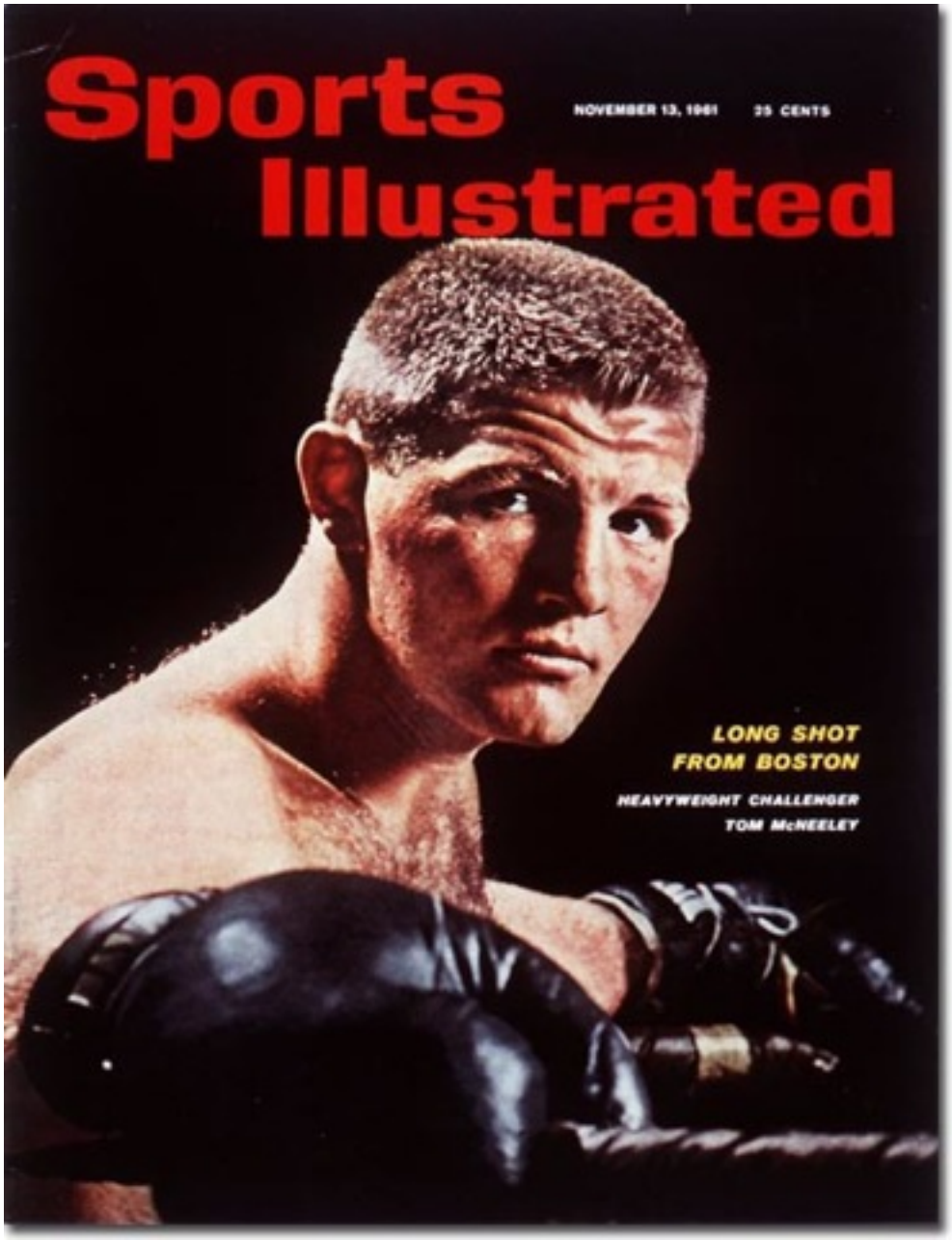

TSS condolences go out to Peter McNeeley and family today, with the news that Tom McNeeley, heavyweight contender in the 60s, died on Tuesday.

He'd suffered a stroke recently, and was in a Massachusetts hospital, on life support. The life support was removed Tuesday afternoon, and the heart of the man who was knocked down by Floyd Patterson 11 times when he challenged for the title in 1961 beat for an hour after the procedure.

McNeeley was 74 years old. He made the Nov. 13, 1961 cover of Sports Illustrated, and retired from the ring in 1966 with a 37-14 record. He was proud to have gotten sober and of helping men and women cope with that battle, and the stresses of a trying vocation, in his work with the Massachusetts Department of Corrections.

When SI referred to him as an "inferior battler," they got it really wrong: his in-ring skills were on the primitive side, but he was a battler through and through. Quitting, in the ring and in the real world, wasn't in his vocabulary.

Comment on this article

Radam G says:

My deepest, deepest condolences. Holla!

Robert Curtis says:

My sincerest condolences to his family and close friends. Anyone who gets up off the canvas 11 times is a hero in my book. That's the definition of knock-down-drag-out and very few men will go the whole trip.