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American Legends: The Life of Mike Tyson

Charles River Editors

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American Legends: The Life of Mike Tyson Charles River Editors
*Discusses Tyson's life in and out of the ring.
*Includes Tyson's most colorful quotes.
*Includes pictures of Tyson and important people in his life.
“Everybody in boxing probably makes out well except for the fighter.” – Mike Tyson
A lot of ink has been spilled covering the lives of history’s most influential figures, but how much of the forest is lost for the trees? In Charles River Editors’ American Legends series, readers can get caught up to speed on the lives of America’s most important men and women in the time it takes to finish a commute, while learning interesting facts long forgotten or never known.
Iron Mike Tyson was one of the most feared opponents to ever step into a boxing ring. With unbelievable power that floored or stopped all but two of his first 28 professional opponents, Tyson began an unprecedented ascent to the top of the boxing world, becoming the youngest champion in history with a second round TKO over Trevor Berbick, the last man to box and defeat Muhammad Ali. That victory, in November 1986, prompted one British sports reporter to write, “The noble and manly art of boxing can at least cease worrying about its immediate future, now it has discovered a heavyweight champion fit to stand alongside Dempsey, Tunney, Louis, Marciano and Ali."
Tyson became one of the biggest names in sports during the 1980s and could literally do no wrong in the ring, compiling a 37-0 record with 33 KO/TKOs. On top of that, he was the face of the iconic Nintendo game Mike Tyson’s Punch-Out!!, a favorite among every video gamer in Generations X and Y. It was a stunning rise for a kid who grew up poor with no father in rough neighborhoods of New York City. Taunted for his now instantly recognizable high voice and lisp, Tyson was quick to fight and a petty criminal who became orphaned upon his mother’s death when he was 16. Somehow, 4 years later, he was the heavyweight champion of the world.
Unfortunately, as everyone knows today, the unprecedented nature of his rise is rivaled only by his stunning fall from grace. In February 1990, Tyson was knocked out by Buster Douglas in one of boxing’s greatest upsets. Though he won his next few fights, his career was derailed by his conviction for raping Desiree Washington, landing him in prison for 3 of his prime fighting years.
When Tyson got out of prison, his career simply became surreal. After winning a few belts back, he lost two bouts to Evander Holyfield, infamously biting part of Holyfield’s ear off out of frustration during the rematch. He had another stint in jail before the end of the ‘90s, and his odd comments before his loss to Lennox Lewis ensured that the man once billed as an all time great was now more of a one man circus than anything else. In 2003, near the end of a career that had netted him $300 million, Tyson declared bankruptcy, hitting rock bottom.
Today Tyson is nostalgically remembered as one of boxing’s great heavyweights, but that shares the pedestal with his controversial quotes and antics. American Legends: The Life of Mike Tyson looks at the life and career of Iron Mike both inside and outside of the ring, including all his famous ups and infamous downs.

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