



Name: Harry Forbes
Career Record: [click](#)
Nationality: US American
Hometown: Chicago, Illinois, USA
Born: 1879-05-13
Died: 1946-12-19
Age at Death: 67
Height: 5' 3½"
Reach: 165

A newspaper article, entitled "Boxers Today Not As Good," was published in the Nov. 22, 1911 *Tacoma Daily News*. It read, in part:

- "The boxers today do not know how to fight," says Forbes. "In the old days, when the bell clanged for the beginning of a bout, the boxers did not get together like a couple of engines in a head-on collision. They sparred around a bit and tried to figure out the other fellow. When they saw an opening they led. They didn't rush into clinches and try to cave in the other fellow's ribs with inside blows or try to crack his neck with smashes to the base of his brain. That isn't fighting.
- "The fighter today believes that endurance is the thing. He studies and hardens himself for the purpose of being able to take a beating and be

classed as a 'good, game, willing fellow.' The old fighter was a boxer, who seldom wanted a punch. He studied generalship and the art of landing punches that would prove effective. A fighter trained in the old days to be able to land effectively from any angle, and when they did hit, every blow carried a sting with it.

- "The wearing of bandages is a later day trick. I seldom wore them. When I did it was the only time that I ever hurt my hands. The present day fighter resorts to bandages because he thinks the chances of injuring his hands are lessened when he cracks an opponent with a misdirected punch on the head or elbow. But that's just where that fighter is wrong. Bandages are of little or no use. When they are put on they fit snugly. As a fight progresses they tighten up and the fighter finds it impossible to close his fist tightly. Then when he lands a punch it's with a half-closed fist, and the result is a dislocated joint or a broken hand. The bandages do not add to the power of a punch unless they are built of concrete or some other hard material."

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- According to a December 20, 1946 Associated Press (AP) report:
 - Dateline: Chicago--Harry Forbes, 67, one-time bantamweight boxing champion, died yesterday at Illinois Masonic Hospital. Forbes won the bantam crown January 28, 1902, by knocking out [Danny Dougherty](#) in four rounds in St. Louis. He lost the title to [Frankie Neil](#) in Oakland, California, in August 1903.

The Lowell Sun

28 Feb 1903

BANTAM CHAMPION

Harry Forbes Defeats Andy Tokell After 10 Hard Rounds and Wins

Bantam Championship of the World—Tokell is Champion of England

England tried for another, championship last night and scored another defeat. Her champion bantam-weight. Andy Tokell was beaten clearly and decisively by Harry Forbes. the champion bantamweight of the world. To say that Forbes was given the decision at the end of the tenth round comes far from telling the measure of his victory.

He won the fight from start to finish, had the better of every round with the possible exception of the seventh. In which he held his own, and proved himself the superior of the English champion in everything that goes to make a champion with the exception of courage, and in this he was equal to Tokell. The latter was something of a disappointment. He showed himself a strong rugged youngster with a world of power behind his blows and proved himself game to the core. He took heavy punishment and came back every time in every round willing and eager to fight again.

In skill he was outclassed by Forbes, who hit him where and how he pleased. Tokell was somewhat cast down by his defeat but took it philosophically. "I was in good shape," he said. and did the best I could. That's all I could do."

During the fight Forbes was seconded by Fred Whittingham, Tom MrCune. Will Campbell and Julius Franks. In Tokell's corner were Con McVey. Jim Kelley, Ray Welsh and Danny McMahan. There was never a fight better conducted than last night's contest. The spectators. 3500 in number, were warned in advance that they must be quiet and make no demonstration during the progress of the rounds. The men fought at 115 pounds, at 2 o'clock, both being exactly in the limit. George Siler refereed all the contests of the evening. The fight by rounds was as follows:

Round 1

Forbes led left, reaching chest lightly. Tokell put left on shoulder. Forbes put left to face. Forbes missed right swing. Tokell landed hard right on cheek, staggering Forbes. Forbes put left to neck, receiving hard right to jaw. Forbes put left to jaw, receiving right counter on ribs. Forbes put left and right to head, getting two rights in stomach. Forbes put right to face, then rushed, putting three hard lefts to jaw with no return. Forbes put left in to jaw, receiving vicious right in ribs. Tokell showed himself clever and a very stiff, puncher.

Round 2

Forbes put left on neck. Tokell blocked left for face and landed straight left on jaw. Forbes put left to jaw and then clinched. Forbes put stiff left on nose, bringing blood from Tokell's eye with right hook. In a hot scrimmage Forbes put three lefts to jaw and Tokell one to rib; Tokell uppercut Forbes on chin viciously. Tokell missed right swing and right counters in response to straight lefts from Forbes, Tokell swung wildly with left receiving light left in face. Tokell went to his corner bleeding badly from left eye and cheek bone.

Round 3

Tokell led light left, falling short. Forbes' put left to Tokell's cheek and left uppercut on chest. Forbes put right to Tokell's bad cheek. Tokell put left to jaw, falling short with right swing and receiving hard right and left in face. Forbes caught Tokell straight left on bad cheek and ducked away from uppercut. Forbes put left to jaw, getting hard right on ribs. Tokell put left and right to ribs. Forbes caught Tokell with hard right swing on jaw Tokell staggered Forbes with a right swing on head. Tokell bleeding badly. His left eye closing as he reached his corner.

Round 4

Forbes put left to chest and then sparred for some time Forbes put vicious left to jaw, following it with straight left on Tokell's bad eye. Tokell caught Forbes on the back of his head as he came in. Forbes put his left to Tokell's cheek and received hard right in stomach. Tokell landed left chop on Forbes' eye and was staggered with right on jaw. Tokell landed viciously on Forbes neck and fell short with right swing.

Round 5

Forbes put left to chest getting left on mouth. Tokell ducked straight left, getting straight left twice on bad eye. Tokell receive hard left on cheek. Forbes staggered Tokell with a hard right to jaw. Forbes uppercut on stomach and caught him with a left on mouth a second later. Forbes caught Tokell again on the mouth without a return. Forbes landed straight left on jaw, ducking away from uppercut. Forbes blocked uppercut and clinched. Tokell led to ribs with right and dodged away from a left counter. Tokell put hard right on ribs and then clinched Tokell nearly falling down. He saved himself cleverly as the bell rang.

Round 6

Forbes put left to neck Tokell fell short with left. Forbes received a straight left on jaw and left hook on chest. Forbes landed hard left on Tokell's mouth and as Tokell turned caught him with right swing in back of head. Tokell went to his knees more from the effort to duck than from the blow. Tokell put hard right to jaw. Forbes put stiff left on bad cheek, bringing blood in streams. Forbes put left on face and Tokell wrestled Forbes to his knees being warned by referee. Forbes put left to jaw and then clinched at end of round.

Round 7.

Forbes put left to cheek and light left to chest. Tokell rushed but was blocked and then clinched. Forbes put left on Tokell's left eye and rushed him to the ropes, landing half a dozen lefts without a return. Forbes caught Tokell on bad eye with left and Tokell clinched. Tokell put feeble left chop on Forbes mouth and put two hard rights to stomach. Forbes put left lightly on nose and ducked. Tokell's right swing in return, Tokell's left eye nearly closed.

Round 8

Tokell swung left to jaw, but was blocked. Forbes put left on neck and followed with left on Tokell's bad eye. The men came together in hot exchange. Forbes had the better of it.

Forbes put savage uppercut on Tokell's chin jarring him badly. Tokell put hard right to kidneys. Tokell uppercut on chest, receiving right hook on ear. Tokell uppercut again getting stiff left on bad eye. Tokell cut stiff left to stomach and right to ribs. Forbes put hard straight left on Tokell's eye, which swelled to size of an egg.

Round 9.

Forbes put left to jaw, Tokell did same. Tokell ducked straight left counter on ribs Forbes put left to mouth and two lefts on Tokell. Tokell fell short with right uppercut. Tokell put strong left on stomach and jabbed Forbes hard on chin with left. Forbes put straight left on Tokell's left eye and blocked left counter. Tokell landed hard right on ribs and followed with straight left to cheek, repeating it a second later. Tokell wrestled Forbes to the mat and was hissed and warned by referee. Men clinched in centre of ring as round closed. Both went to their corners tired. Forbes was in better shape.

Round 10.

Forbes put left to Tokell's bad eye, slowing the Englishman up. Tokell put left to chin and Forbes countered on ribs. Tokell put hard right on Forbes shoulder getting stiff left jolt on mouth. Forbes put right to ear and left to bad eye. Forbes uppercut Tokell heavily with left, almost lifting him off his feet. Tokell put hard left to stomach and Forbes came back with stiff left drive on eye. Tokell fell short with left swing, and got left on eye and right on jaw. Forbes staggered Tokell several feet with right to jaw and put two lefts to mouth and right hook on ear.

Forbes put left hook to jaw and staggered Tokell with a heavy right on jaw. Forbes put left to mouth. At the end of the round Forbes was given the decision.

1911 publication

The history of the prize ring, past and present, is full of stories related concerning former champions of the squared circle who tried to "come back" and failed dismally. As a general

rule the man who once retires from active service makes an awful mess of it if he undertakes to begin over again. Jim Jeffries was a case in point, so was Battling Nelson, Jim Corbett, Kid McCoy, Tom Sharkey, Bob Fitzsimmons — the list could be strung out to an indefinite length.

Once in a great while a fighter bobs into view who manages to achieve the seemingly impossible by returning to the scenes of former triumphs and making good. He may be called the "exception who proves the rule," and such a one is Harry Forbes, ex champion of the bantam weight division.

Forbes began boxing in 1897, and from the beginning showed the unusual speed and punching power that helped to make him a world's champion in the future. He won the title in 1903 by defeating Andy Tokell, the British champion; having previously knocked out Danny Dougherty, who had succeeded Terry McGovern, as American champion. Forbes retired from the ring in 1905.

Up to that time he had participated in 111 battles, and was one of the most popular boxers that ever donned the gloves. Just a year ago the fighting fever seized the retired champion again, and he resolved to tempt fortune between the ropes again. Under the management of Howard Carr, more popularly known as Kid Howard, he went east, and despite his four year absence from the ring, the matchmakers thought well enough of his chances to pit him against Knockout Brown, who was then fighting in the featherweight ranks.

Brown, however, refused to make 118 rounds the weight agreed upon, and the match was called off. The fight was to have taken place at Troy, N. Y., and Jack Ray was substituted for Brown. Ray was knocked out in the second round, Forbes showing clearly that his old time punch had not deserted him.

His next match was with Joe Coster of New York, before a Brooklyn club. Coster was considered the best man of the bantamweight division in the east, and early in the battle he caught Forbes with a short hook on the jaw that floored the Chicagoan. Forbes was knocked groggy by the fall, and for six rounds he fought mechanically, being sent to the floor repeatedly and frightfully punished. Had not his physical condition been absolutely perfect, he could never have stood up under the terrible grueling to which he was subjected. But he stuck it out, and by degrees his head cleared, and he began fighting back.

In the seventh round Forbes landed a right on Coster's jaw that floored the New York lad in his

turn. Coster was in bad shape and clinching to save himself. Early in the eighth round Forbes went after his man in tiger fashion, rushed him to the ropes, slammed right and left to his jaw, and dropped him for the full count.

It was this victory which convinced Forbe's friends that he was as good as ever. In a bout at Troy he lost a decision to Abe Attell, the featherweight champion, but this did not detract from his reputation, as Forbes was plainly overmatched in weight, and fighting out of his class.

Forbes last appearance in the ring resulted in a knockout of Mike Bartley in four rounds at Fort Wayne, the contest taking place a short time ago. Boxing critics throughout the country are all of the opinion that Forbes was never better than at the present time. Freddy Whittingham, Forbes' trainer and sparring partner, shares this belief.

Whittingham probably knows Forbes better than any other person living, he having worked with the former king of the bantams from the very start of his career. And Fred says that today Forbes is boxing with all the vim and fire that distinguished him in the past, and his hitting power is as dangerous as ever. To Whittingham belongs the credit for getting Forbes into his fighting trim, and if the former owner of the bantam title should regain it he will have much to thank his faithful trainer.