

On July 5, 2010, legendary NHL tough guy Bob Probert collapsed on his boat on Lake St. Clair, near Windsor and died of a heart attack. He was only 45 years old.

Bob was on his third glass of coke and eighth pill of OxyContin that day. He’d routinely take the two together to deal with his aching body. Seventeen years as the NHL’s toughest enforcer had taken its toll. As the undisputed, “heavyweight champ,” he finished his career fifth in all-time penalty minutes. He averaged 40 brutal, bare-knuckled hockey fights a year.

Bob’s death wasn’t all that surprising. He lived hard. Chain smoking, alcoholism, snorting cocaine even in a jail cell while under arrest, cavorting with nurses during his many trips to rehab.

He said people always wanted to know, “Why do you struggle with drugs and alcohol?” He’d shrug off the ques, “I just got a little addicted to the fun.” But Bob’s life was often far from fun. In a rare moment of vulnerability, he wrote a letter to his disease while in rehab in 2003.

“You have taken away my freedom to make healthy choices. You have taken away my valuable time from my wonderful wife Dani and my four kids. You have taken away my self-respect and dignity. You have turned me into someone I am not.”

The film features Bob Probert, Dani Probert, Joe Kocur, Tie Domi, Don Cherry, Jeremy Roenick, Chris Chelios, Stu Grimson, Sheldon Kennedy, Troy Crowder, Steve Yzerman, Tony Twist, Petr Klima, and Marty McSorely.

Tough Guy is based on the book Day’s real-life mother Kirstie McLellan Day wrote with the late Probert. Bob’s wife, Dani is EP.

It’s Geordie Day’s second hockey film. He co-directed Goalie, a film on former NHL goaltender Clint Malarchuk. This year, he produced Charles Manson: Final words, which contained the last ever recorded interviews with Manson. The film aired on REELZ.

Tough Guy : The Bob Probert Story airs on Super Channel in Canada December 14th with a U.S release expected next year.

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