

# Beating The Gun

## MEMORIES OF A GUY THROWING ROCKS

NEW YORK (ANP) — The Boxing business is a gigantic enterprise, operated through powerful corporations with a potential of a billion-odd dollars. Built around it are all sorts of whisperings and memories. Memory that's the word we were looking for just now. Were our beloved father alive today he'd talk us ragged about a guy named Stanley Ketchel.

Why talk about this Ketchel gent you say? Well, because our pop saw this Polish knock-outer, who the late Hype Igoe named "The Michigan Assassin," turn the identical stunt Rocky Graziano performed against the Jersey Blonde Bomber, game Charlie Fusari.

## A "GARRISON" FGINISH

While it is our belief that Graziano would help materially in bringing about a \$220,000 (or more) gate for Matchmaker Al Weil, Harry Markson, Joe Louis, and the Norris-Wirtz fistic merger known as IEC, if matched with Ray (Sugar) Robinson, we'd be lying badly if we said "Rocky" figures to lick Robinson. But on the basis of the furious killing attack he made on Fusari in that memorable "garrison finish" sport writers will talk about all Winter long, this "nature boy" who throws rocks with gloves attached to them rightly deserves to be called the 20th Century Stanley Ketchel. For in the long ago, and we mean by that around 39 years ago, a sharp-shooter by the name of Philadelphia Jack O'Brien, danced around and jabbed the head off the man who floored Heavyweight Champion Jack Johnson. Then came the tenth and final round of their blood-bath with the seconds running out fast as they always do in the last round, Ketchel hunked a sledgehammer right on the clever Irishman's jaw and the birdie-peeped-peep-peep, while the count raced on to thousand.

Can't you just imagine radio' Mel Allen covering the O'Brien Ketenel classic almost leaping out of his chair and in that lyrical voice of his shout, "Well now pout

that, wasn't that surpin'?"

Many years passed before fans received 100 cents for each paper dollar's worth at the box-office on the sports' highway. A matchmaker lives in the hope that out of the great-bag into which his itchy palm enters, one such shining star as a Rocky Graziano will emerge. He is indeed the "Jackie Robinson (box-office-draw magnet)" of the roped arena. Yes, memory is a mighty nice thing at times. Especially when one loves prize fights as much as we do. Jot down the Stanley Ketchels, and the Rocky Grazianos for you you'll see they like with more frequent regularity than you will soon again see a Jack Dempsey or a Joe Louis.

## THE EZZARD CHARLES STORY

The finest bit of reading of a sports nature is the "Notre Dame Story," written by Francis Wallace. It is chocked full of hitherto untold football highlights of a great man, Knute Rockne of Notre Dame. But our story this week the result of a written request from George Webster, grocer out of Nile, O., deals with a fellow whom we think is much-too-unsung, heavyweight boss, Ezzard Charles of Atlanta, Ga. Asked by reader Webster if we think Charles rates with earlier day fighters like — Kid Norfolk, Tommy Loughran, Mickey Walker, Harry Greb and Tom Gibbons, our answer is "yes."

Months ago if Mr. Webster recalls, we wrote a story that was prophetic in some respects. It was during the period when incomparable Joe Louis was possessor of his royal robes. We said, "If anybody hopes to fit Joe Louis' crown upon his head, he'll find Ezzard Charles out there trying it on for size and possibly making it fit snugly upon his own head."

The press of the nation soon afterwards interviewed the friendly "Brown Bomber" who gave out with this statement, almost identical with mine:

"That boy Charles has got everything. He's gonna be the one to beat by any that wants to be heavyweight champion."

It was back in 1940, before our country entered World War II, that we started writing about Ezzard Charles in this very column. Bert Williams, headman around the Batcher Athletic club of Cincinnati, O., gets credit for perfecting the style of the then 15-year-old, six-foot tall Charles. Williams worked diligently with the boxing-conscious kid teaching him the all important trick of keeping your gloves up and "bitting-from-where your-hand-are. Being a boxing teacher, myself of some 15 or more years standing, we can readily appreciate the service Mr. Williams did for the man who succeeded to Louis-titles. Charles was undefeated in 42 amateur battles and writes the nation over were calling him the greatest non-professional since Joe Louis. He was still a school boy as well as an (after school) errand-boy in Max Elkus' store known as Max's Clothes shop. Cincinnati fight fans literally raved over the serious-faced boy who could beat box and slug.

## GETS SLAPPED BY KEN OVERLIN

We smile today as we think back on our eager coverage of each pre-bout young Charles engaged in. Our files show that he won 20 in a row, 14 by knockouts against the best 160 pounders match makers could procure. Then came the day our bubble burst and believe us when we tell you, it was like falling out of a plane without a parachute for us. We had built Charles that high in our mind. However it took a bag-of-tricks, Ken Overlin, former middleweight king and an "all time" great in that division to do it. Charles, could not cope with Overlin's precision-like boxing attack and came off a loser in his 21st professional bid. Even then, courage and determination to achieve an ambition were stock equipment of the youth with "two z's" in his name. Scoring two knockouts after the Overlin nightmare, he went on to outpoint clever Teddy Yarosz,

a former middleweight champion himself, and kayoed tough Anton Christoforidis, ranking 175 pound contender. Now he was ready for Jim and George Rhein, one of Charles' many "Boxing Angels", clinched the match. This Charles held glove-wizard Overlin get a draw verdict. To "Schoolboy Paenon," "Kid Wonder," "Babyface Socker" were some of the handles we find in our old scrapbook clippings heir-apparent.

## CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Charles started his fistic bid while an elementary student at Stowe school in Cincinnati. He was born on July 20, 1923, at Atlanta, Ga. (not Cincinnati). Beau Jack's birthplace. The Danny Davis gym, Race A. C. gym and the Batcher gym were his early training grounds. Jake Mintz, William Elkus, Charles Dyet, George Rhein, young Gene Elkus are the men prominently cast in the "Ezzard Charles Story", a chapter that led him from obscurity to the richest title in all Fistiania.

He is "God Fearing", not a prude in any sense of the word but a Christian. He belongs to the Calvary Methodist Church in Cincinnati. His "moustache," source of much jest and jibe, brings to light the fact that when Charles was a USA truck driver with the 92nd Infantry division in Italy, his face was smooth (clean shaven). Knowing that Joe Louis was always his sports idol, there is the very likely possibility that young Ezzard imitated his model (Louis) and started to sprout "the fuzz" under the nose??? In 1944, at the Inter-Allied boxing tournament (Rome, Italy) Charles won the light-heavyweight championship with great ease.

He whipped sensational Charley Burley, Pittsburgh dangerous colored contender. Also he whipped Joey (The Spoiler) Masim, in two successive fights. With his return he has invested in business enterprise (The Ezzard Charles coliseum) a dance hall and beer parlor that failed before Charles entered the Army in World War II.

## POLLOCKSVILLE, N. C.

BY MRS. DELLA HILL

Ray Baker is very ill at Good Shepherd Hospital. He is the husband of Mrs. Martha Gray Baker of Kinston.

Mrs. Julia Monk of Bayboro, Mrs. Mamie Jones of Maribel and Mrs. Cleo Johnson of Nandermerc were the guests of Mrs. Edith Miller of Pollocksville, Sunday.

Mrs. Vera Jerkins has returned home from Good Shepherd Hospital. We are praying for her complete recovery.

Mrs. Edward Earl Strayhorn of Norfolk, Va. is here visiting her mother who was a patient at Good Shepherd Hospital, last week.

Mrs. Lillie McDaniel spent the week end at home visiting her husband, John Ray McDaniel.

Miss Elizabeth Ervins spent the week end home visiting her family.

Miss Ebbie Wilder is visiting friends and relatives in Elizabeth City.

Mr. and Mrs. Ossie Grady and Mrs. Pearl Ollison spent Saturday afternoon in New Bern.

The total volume of agricultural production for sale and consumption in farm homes in 1949 will probably be 38 per cent above the 1935-39 average.

On January 1 of this year, 19 out of every 100 Americans lived on the farm. Before World War II, about 23 out of every 100 lived on the farm.

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# Parade Planned For Durham Festivities

BY D. F. REED

Plans for the combining of the Trade Week of the Durham Business and Professional Chain with that of the North Carolina College Homecoming were approved here Monday night by the Trade Week Committee in a meeting at the Algonquin Club.

The parade will be staged October 15 and will be followed by a football game between the North Carolina College Eagles and the Virginia State Trojans.

The parade promises to be one of the most elaborate in the history of the organization and North Carolina College Homecoming celebrations. In addition to the North Carolina College, Virginia State and Hillside bands, several others have already indicated that they will be on hand to help make the occasion a gala affair.

A business institute will be held during Trade Week and all businesses are being urged to have representatives present to take advantage of the large amount of information about how to operate a successful business that will be available.

In connection with the plans for the celebration the Housewives League, an auxiliary of the Chain, will conduct a contest for the selection of a Trade Week Queen, whose title will be "Miss Trade Week."

The prize offered in the contest is a free trip to the annual meeting of the National Negro Business League Convention to be held at Tuskegee Institute.

Mrs. Callie Daye, proprietor of Club Boulevard Beauty, local business woman, is chairman of the Contest Committee.

## EIGHT WIN RIBBONS AT CATTLE SHOW

CLINTON — Sampson Training School is justly proud of the fine showing made by its representatives in the Southeastern District Negro Junior Dairy Cattle Show, held in Fayetteville, September 8th and 9th.

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Eight members of the Sampson Training School participated in the show representing their chapter of the new Farmers of America, and were successful in winning five first place honors, two second place honors and one third place honor.

Members of the club bringing this honor to the school included Lloyd Wise, Monte Boykin, Archie Lockony, William King, Melvin Cox, winners of blue ribbons; Excell Cole and Denis Thompson, winners of red ribbons; and Herman Raymond, winner of the white ribbon. This group was supervised by Mr. J. L. White, Vocational Agriculture teacher of the Sampson Training School.

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