

LAS VEGAS SHOWGASTE

"SATCHMO" ARMSTRONG INTO TROP UNTIL JAN. 4

All-time musical great, Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, bounces into the Blue Room at Hotel Tropicana

Dec. 22 with his internationally famous orchestra.

The story of gravel-throated, silver-lipped Louis Armstrong is the story of Jazz. More than that, it is the story of a New Orleans street boy, son of a house servant mother and a turpentine worker father, who found soulful expression in music, bent technique to his idiom, and emerges today as one of the world's best known citizens, with an integrity and art that have endeared him to people everywhere.

With cultural and geo-

graphical boundaries no bar to an appreciation of his genius, Armstrong recently completed a tour of Iron Curtain countries -- Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

Armstrong has made more than 1000 recordings including his recent "Hello Dolly" which challenged the Beatles on the charts. He is a composer as well as instrumentalist with 20-odd tunes to his credit, his favorites being, "If We Never Meet Again" and "Struttin' With Some Barbecue."

"Satchmo" has, thus, assured himself a permanent place in show business, not merely as the performer with Wall-to-Wall smile, but as a technician and innovator whose spontaneous inventions are credited with laying the foundation for the swing music of the '40's.

Louis Armstrong and his All Stars will appear in the Hotel Tropicana's \$1 million Blue Room Dec. 22 through Jan. 4.

Bob Braman, Beni Mason and the Dick Fox Trio are scheduled for the Blue Room Jan. 5 - 18.

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Boxing Tintypes

[Then & Now]

By LESTER BROMBERG

Mike Kaplan's story is a Tale of Two Cities and because this frail-looking but iron-willed welterweight recognized loyalty ahead of gain, he chose Boston over New York. His decision probably cost him a world's title.

Born in Boston's West End, he lived in Brooklyn's Brownsville for some years. Much of his primary boxing education came in the mid-1930s at Frolik's Gym, Livonia Av. and Van Sicken St., where one of his acquaintances was Al (Bummy) Davis.

"I wasn't a good kid," he says, "and, when the cops started chasing me, I ran all the way back to Boston."

By the late-1930s he had become a standout there, as well as a reasonably respectable citizen. He moved up to national prestige in the early-1940s when he lost, then won, with Fritzie Zivic and drew, then won, with Milt Aron.



Mike Kaplan, the boy, shapes up for a fight here.

Enter Mike Jacobs, promotional king-maker. "Come back to New York, I'll get Hymie Caplin to handle you and in a year you'll be the champ," he said. The reply was explicit: "I started with John O'Brien and Tom Daley and I'll finish with them."

The finish arrived sooner than anybody expected. In a loss to Young Kid McCoy at St. Nick's an old and troublesome cut over his left eye re-opened. It took 16 stitches and he announced: "I've had it." He was only 24 at the time.

Yet he'd packed sparkling wins in his less than five years of fighting. He beat Jimmy Leto, Freddie (Red) Cochrane, Eddie Brink (twice), Joe Ghoully, Cocoa Kid, Leonard DeJ Genio, Georgie Martin, Johnny Rinaldi, Tony Ferrara, Freddie Camuso and Mayon Padlo. He knocked out Ray Napolitano, Frankie Cavanna, Joey Ferrando, Tommy Cross and Eddie Dunne. He drew with Honey Melloy and Tony Martellano.

Oh, yes—he did win a sort of title, the New England welterweight championship. In his only 15-round fight, against Frankie Britt, he survived three knockdowns in the second round and one in the fourth to grab a unanimous decision.

Kaplan, who was 50 on Jan. 7, is a joyous man who wouldn't want to rewrite a moment of his boxing or of his personal life.

"I loved those Irishmen who managed me," he says, "and if they didn't make me a champ, so what?"

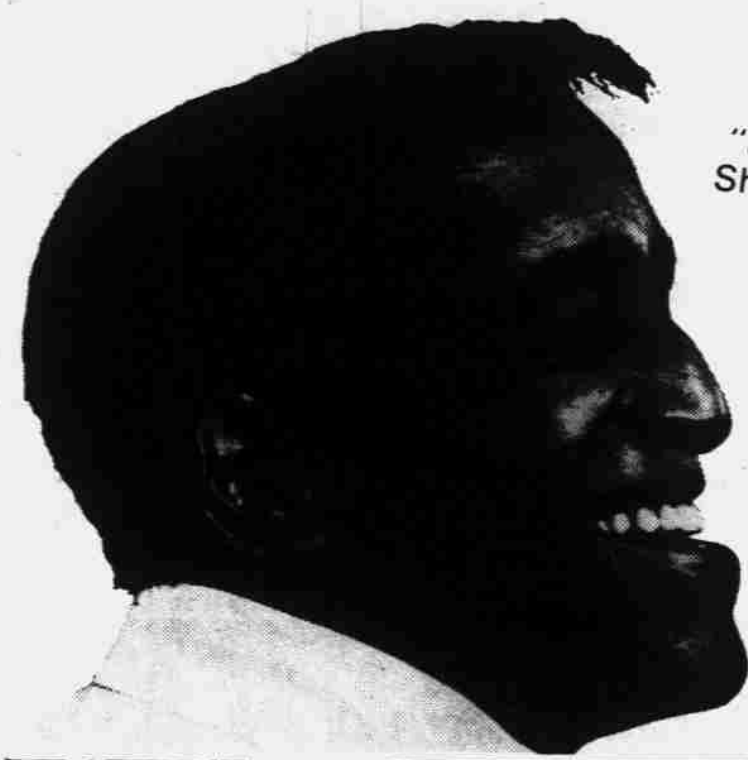
He savors his tough fights.

"The first time with Fritzie Zivic it was in Philadelphia and he gave me the business. At that, he only won on a late knock-down. When I got him again in Boston, the commissioner said 'Mike, everything goes and good luck.' I taught him the name of his own game and won easy.

"You know what a bruising fighter Ralph Zannelli was? Well, we both had winning streaks going into the Boston Garden, him 30 and me 22. It was like being in a meat grinder for 10 rounds. He got it on a split decision.

With Milt Aron in Chicago, I was a 2-1 underdog, what else? We were both covered with blood and it was a good standoff. Then we fought in Philadelphia, both of us were down, but I got it—and deserved it."

After retiring from boxing Mike and his wife Jeanne left Boston for Miami Beach. Their then small son was an asthma case. They were to make their home there for 18 years, during which Mike ran the health club at the Sea Gull Hotel in season, worked as a metal lather in the summer.



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