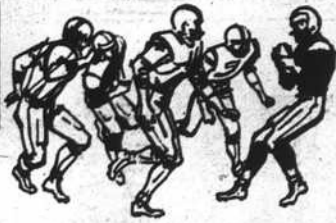


SPORTS



Chuck Harris

Ringside At The Fight Of The Century

YOU SPEAK OF the "greatest fights of the century"—Well, tonight, here at Yankee Stadium, a sellout crowd of 76,000 wildly excited fans from all walks of life are gathered for what they unanimously consider the greatest fight of all centuries--the long-awaited battle between the Detroit Brown Bomber, Joe Louis, WAA Champion; and Muhammad Ali, the recognized WCC Champion.

Even the weatherman put on his best bib and tucker for the event. It is a beautiful night here for this title match which will decide for once and all time, who deserves the laurels as greatest heavyweight champ in history.

Which will it be? Louis, the popular or Ali, the unpopular... But tonight's match will deservedly win world acclamation as the greatest all-time heavyweight champion.

TO GIVE you a brief run-down on the many celebrities at ringside tonight, we'll begin with such well-known fight fans from Hollywood as Gregory Peck, Sal Mineo, Marlon Brando, Richard Widmark, Sidney Poitier, Frank Sinatra, Broderick Crawford, Mickey Rooney, Dan Duryea, Richard Burton, Elizabeth Taylor, Gina Lollobrigida, Tallulah Bankhead, Lana Turner, Jane Russell--Also present are TV luminaries Perry Como, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis, Jr., Peter Lawford, James Arness, and countless others... The baseball world is represented by the diamond's greatest stars: Willie Mays, Sandy Koufax, Hank Greenberg, Leo Durocher, Ralph Kiner, Hank Aaron, Jackie Robinson, Don Newcombe, Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris, Don Drysdale, Ernie Banks and Jo Di Maggio, to name a few.

SPOTTED AMONG the celebrity-studded throng at ringside are gridiron heroes Jim Brown, Marion Motley, George Ratterman, Otto Graham, Mike Garrett, and Bart Starr... Representatives of the wonderful world of music are with us tonight also (Isn't anybody minding the store?)--We can see Guy Lombardo in conversation, for the moment, with America's Musical Ambassador Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Billy Eckstine, and Count Basie... And they could start a PGA tournament immediately after the title bout... having noted present such golf pros as Arnold Palmer, Doug Sanders, Jack Nicklaus, Cary Middlecoff, Ben Hogan, Pete Brown, and Gene Sarazen.

That thunder of applause you just heard was for Sugar Ray Robinson, former Middleweight Champ, and former Heavyweight Champ Rocky Marciano who met in the aisle and stopped for a brief chat. Rocky may have been telling Sugar that two of the greatest and sweetest of fighters will be meeting in a few minutes--Sugar may have answered "You are right--and when the fight is over, they might add a little more sugar to the game". No matter what the actual conversation was, we know by their records that both had something great to say about both of these ring warriors about to engage in this historic boxing match... There is also the formidable Jack Dempsey, Gene Tunney, Jersey Joe Walcott, Willie Pep, Beau Jack, Tony Zale, Ike Williams, Floyd Patterson, Dick Tiger, Emille Griffith, Zora Folley, Charlie Burley, Rocky Graziano... Oh, we could go on calling names from this star-studded gathering, and still miss many.

NOW COMING down one aisle is the Detroit Brown Bomber, Joe Louis, and making his entrance in the opposite aisle is Muhammad Ali and this tremendous, roaring crowd goes wild. Both Champions enter the ring at the same time.

Louis is wearing a white towel over his head, a blue and white robe with trunks to match. Clay, a black robe trimmed with white with white trunks to match.

No one, but no one is going to miss this match--the fight is being carried on TV, radio, and the Early Bird Satellite.

Referee Arthur Donovan calls the Champs to the center of the ring for instructions, and as these two marvelous physical specimens walk back to their individual corners, a dramatic hush falls on this overflowing crowd as though the suspense of waiting for the opening bell is too much to be borne.

AND THERE'S THE BELL!

ROUND (1) Joe Louis shuffles out to the center of the ring with that familiar dead-pan expression as Muhammad dances speedily from his corner and circles Joe--Suddenly, Joe, with his lightning-like hands, lands a jab to Ali's face, misses another jab that lands on Muhammad's arm... Ali circles from one side, now to the other without landing a punch. Joe shuffles quickly to his right, lashes out with a left hook to Ali's body as Muhammad pulls away and Louis's punches land with no damage done. Ali seems to be content to let Joe do most of the fighting while he now seems to be planning strategy as the bell rings ending the first round.

ROUND (2) Louis rushes out to meet Ali, Ali feints, then lands two light jabs to Joe's face, feints again and is caught by one of Joe's lightning jabs to the face. Joe feints Ali again--he lands a light short jab to Ali's nose. Muhammad starts a jab to Joe's face but, with lightning speed goes to Joe's body with a short left hook, then back with two jabs to Joe's face as Louis counters Ali with three jabs to the face. Now back with a short right to Muhammad's body--not very hard punches because Ali was moving each time the punches tried to find their mark... As the bell rings, Ali side-steps and walks to his corner.

ROUND (3) Muhammad Ali comes out from his corner like a flash of lightning and catches Joe before he barely gets out of his corner with a one-two to the head, a right to the body, a left jab, all in succession as Joe lashes out with a right to Ali's body that barely lands as Ali was moving away... Ali stabs Joe with two jabs to the face, a short left hook to the face, now a left hook to the body as Muhammad, seemingly, had Joe hurt. Joe wrestles Ali into a corner and with cat-like hands, digs a right into Muhammad's midsection, back with a smashing left hook to Ali's body... Ali fights desperately with a left and right to Joe's head as the bell rings.

NEXT WEEK -- ROUND (4) -- MUHAMMAD ALI vs JOE LOUIS.

That was a wild basketball fray in Boston Sunday, in the 4th of the play-off games between the 76ers of Philadelphia and the Boston Celtics. The Celtics, 3 games down, knew if they didn't win this one, there would be no tomorrow until next season, so the great Bill Russell of the Celtics spurred his teammates on to victory. He had been totally outdone by Wilt "The Stilt" Chamberlain in the last two games, but on their home court, Sunday, Russell and the Celtics team showed why Boston has dominated in League play so long... Will the Celtics come back from near defeat to win the title again--Well, next week will tell the story.

Spotlight On Sports

By CHARLES J. LIVINGSTON
NEGRO PRESS INTERNATIONAL

UNSELFISH PLAYING

As this column is being written, the National Basketball Association's world championship playoffs are nearing conclusion. The champion team is in the process of being crowned, and there was little doubt that it would be either the perennially-crowned, Russell-led Boston Celtics or the resurging Philadelphia 76ers, spearheaded by Wilt Chamberlain.

But timeliness does not matter terribly, for what is being emphasized is not momentary victory and its attendant statistics, but the great factor contributing to victory. What is truly being treated is a certain nobleness of purpose by an unselfish man who could have hogged the spotlight but chose not to do so in the interest of his team's success, and through team play.

The man around whom this column must inevitably be woven is Chamberlain, the greatest scoring machine the NBA has yet seen.

EVERYBODY knows that Chamberlain could have won the NBA scoring championship again this year, as he had done the previous seven years--the Warriors' Rick Barry fine title-capturing scoring efforts notwithstanding. However, Wilt chose instead to be a versatile teamman, concerning himself more with rebounding, defense, assists, and drawing off the opposition for the benefit of teammates.

While the opposition was ganging up on him, he was passing off to teammates Hal Greer, Bill Cunningham and Luke Jackson, who were slipping around the other teams' defenses in key plays and for precious points.

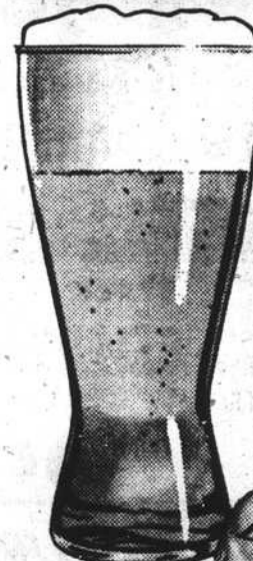
In the past, the spotlight and emphasis were placed on Wilt's scoring, but all the 76ers collected in return were second place honors. Despite Chamberlain's scoring, the team was repeatedly playing second fiddle to the Celtics, led by that incomparable defenseman, Bill Russell.

WITH THE 76ers, it was a case of being Always the Best Man, Never the Groom. But all that has changed with Chamberlain's deference to teamplay. And as Wilt changed his strategy, the whole 76ers team was transformed with him.

This is not to imply that Chamberlain had been a selfish player, interested only in his own vain glory as the league's scoring ace. I think Wilt honestly believed that scoring a lot of points in a single game--sometimes as many as 75

(See WILT, page 13)

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