

# BILLY ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

## THE WRITE FITE

The Ali-Norton fisticuffs attracted the jet set, but a new way must be found to avoid all the empty seats. Fans with \$25 ducats wound-up in the catbird seats reserved for those who spent a C-note or more. Location-jumping was the order of the night, with ushers being afraid to ask anyone to move. It was probably one of the rowdiest crowds to ever attend a heavy-weight title bout. There were several fights in the \$200 section that appeared more thrilling than the main event. The whole scene must have been a horror to such patrons as Marshall Miles, Major Robinson, Pearl Bailey, Barry White, Stan Scott, Carol Coleman, Lee Archer, champ Joe and Martha Louis. Based on the reception Joe received, he is still the biggest in the annals of boxing, and after watching the tussle between Ali and Norton, that's easy to understand.

Boxing did not die because of the Ali-Norton biasco. For the past 12 years, the boxing world has been dominated by the heavyweight division. Today, an overwhelming majority of people in this country don't even know who the other champions are. Don King feels one of the main reasons for their anonymity is that all the reigning champions reside outside of the United States. He's bring these championships back to the U.S. by presenting the "U.S. Tournament of Champions," which will commence in Jan. on ABC, a 12-program series to determine champions in all the major weight classes. It is hoped that through these televised tournaments fighters will not only gain recognition, but will create new interest and excitement in the other weight categories. This is especially true in a proposed innovative determination of a winner in a close fight. Here's how it would go: If the judges rate a fight a tie, there will be a sudden death round, or a series of rounds until a clear winner is determined. The finals in each division will produce American champions and earn them the right to fight for the World's Championship.



The excitement of Labelle and the versatility of Brother-to-Brother make this weekend's Soul Train show a "musical must."

Fast becoming legends in their own time, Labelle sets a lively pace with "Get You Somebody Now," "Chameleon" and "Gypsy." Bizarre in dress, yet spellbinding in song, Labelle keeps growing in popularity in the United States and abroad.

They are probably best known for their first album, *Nightbirds*, and the number one single, "Lady Marmalade."

Composed of Patti LaBelle, Nona Hendryx, their chief songwriter, and Sarah Dash, the dynamic trio began as Patti LaBelle and The Bluebelles in the early 60's.

Brother-to-Brother, formerly Willie and the Mighty Magnificents, create versatile sounds with "Let Your Mind Be Free" and "Chance With you."

Leader and group organizer, Billy Jones, who sings and plays guitar, shows his talent on organ, bass and clarinet on "Let Your Mind Be Free," from the album of the same title.

**CHITTER AND CHATTER** - "I Have A Dream" had a rude awakening when it opened to an audience of glamorous and glitter attracted people at the Ambassador Theatre. The critics were rightfully tough on the production which had only a concept going for it, one which was too big for Billy Dee Williams...The big happenings in the nation's Capitol had major orgs. the National Business League, the Black Congressional Caucus and Media Women overlapping each other. The NBL, Berkeley Burrell prexy, created the biggest sensation coming out with a new 17% piece of the action demand to insure parity by the year 2000...Hispanics and West Indians are taking over the hotel and restaurant jobs American blacks are abandoning for civil service status on the gov't payroll...They say the Congressional Black Caucus dinner crowd was about 600 short of the mark set by Modeen Boughton which means '75 promo. You couldn't tell by the crowd attending the salute to Cong. Ralph Metcalf hosted by singing Cong. Walter Fauntroy...According to after words, the Alma Rangel Fashion Show had better folks in the audience than on stage. Among that group was lovely Alma herself.

### 'Once upon a Classic'

PBS premieres the new family drama series, 'Once Upon a Classic' with the adventures of four of literature's best-loved characters, "The Prince and the Pauper," six episodes beginning Tuesday, Oct. 19 at 5:30 p.m.; "Hiedi," six episodes beginning in November and "David Copperfield" in early 1977.

Hosted by actor Bill Bixby, the show will present these and other productions of the classics in a three-year series upcoming on PBS.

Rich costumes and sets characterize these productions, produced by the same BBC drama department responsible for so many of PBS Masterpiece Theatre productions.

"Robin Hood" is scheduled for the second season and other classics are in production.

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