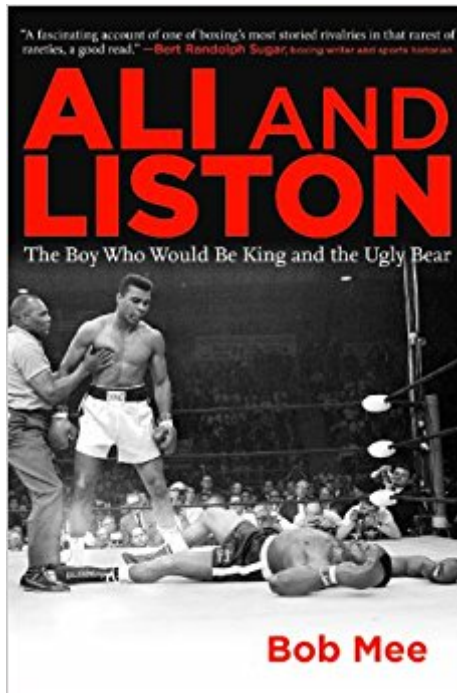




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Ali And Liston: The Boy Who Would Be King And The Ugly Bear



Synopsis

Three months after the assassination of John F. Kennedy, two prizefighters named Charles “Sonny” Liston and Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr. stepped into a boxing ring in Miami to dispute the heavyweight championship of the world. Liston was a mob fighter with a criminal past, and rumors were spreading that Clay was not just a noisy, bright-eyed boy blessed with more than his share of the craziness of youth, but a believer in a shadowy cult: the Nation of Islam. Neither could be a hero in the eyes of the media. Against this backdrop of political instability, of a country at war with itself, in a time when ordinary African-American people were maimed and killed for the smallest acts of defiance, Liston and Clay sought out their own individual destinies. Liston and Ali follows the contrasting paths these two men took, from their backgrounds in Arkansas and Kentucky through to that sixteen-month period in 1964 and 1965 when the story of the world heavyweight championship centered on them and all they stood for. Both Ali and Liston” tracks are followed as their paths diverge: Ali going on to greatness with his epic fights and Liston catapulted back into oblivion until his mysterious death in 1970. Using original source material, it explores a riveting chapter in sports history with fresh insight and striking detail. Liston and Ali is a valuable addition to the literature about these world icons and their opponents.

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Customer Reviews

(note: because Cassius Clay began using the name Muhammad Ali during the time period of this book, this review will refer to him as Ali) Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) and Charles "Sonny" Liston took very different paths to arrive at the heavyweight championship fight that took place on February 25, 1964 in Miami. What the two men did to reach this point in their boxing careers and their lives is captured in this engrossing book by boxing analyst Bob Mee. The research is thorough and the writing detailed as the reader will learn much about both men, especially Liston as it is universally accepted that he was a very complex character and that the truth about many parts of his life was hard to confirm. Not only does Mee cover Liston's boxing and his criminal past, there is also coverage of the alleged ties to organized crime that constantly dogged Liston during his boxing days. While there are some books and publications that cover his life more thoroughly, Mee does a credible job of explaining Liston's life and personality. He also does the same for Ali, but does not go into the detail that many other sources do as Ali's life has been chronicled many other times in all forms of media. The writing about Ali is slightly less detailed and covers more of his life in shorter chapters, but still is a good source of information for the casual boxing fan. Just like the writing about the darker aspects of the Liston's life, the writing about Ali's involvement with the Nation of Islam and his brash personality is informative and detailed if not revealing new information that hasn't been reported in other sources. The book is more about the lives and management of the two men than it is about the actual fights in Miami and Lewistown, Maine. The questions about Liston's injury in the first fight and the very quick knockdown in the second fight are covered in an objective manner and Mee shows no bias or gives a strong opinion about either of these controversies. The reader will have to make his or her own conclusions from the information given. This is a book well worth the time to read if one wants to learn more about these two fighters. If the reader has read other books on them, especially Ali, there won't be a lot of new information, but Mee does present a fresh view of the fighters and the two bouts that is both informative and entertaining.

This is a good book if you want a historical review of the Ali-Liston fights. I think in a lot of ways its a

good supplement to use with Paul Gallender's excellent book "Sonny Liston, the real story behind the Ali-Liston fights". I think both books are well done and well researched and you can really get the big picture, especially of Liston by reading them both because I think both authors leave out a few things that the other fills in information for.

I avidly read and watch everything on Sonny Liston and this I have just finished and adds more previously unknown facts and treats the leadup to their fight in a most interesting fashion, but again I am a Liston fan from way back and believe he was one of the most misunderstood fighters of our time as well as one of the most talented.

The book is very well researched. I have read a lot about Ali and Liston and I still learned a lot of new information after having read the book.

Great book with another view from the era of great heavyweight, two giants seeking one seat...a great read...and a must have for boxing fans...

We all know the story but we can keep reading it again and again. Mr. Mee did a fine job in retelling it and although there is not much new for those who have read countless other versions, this one was put together well and I enjoyed revisiting it.

I thought this was a great book. More insight into Sonny Liston in this book than in total of his biographies. Great research. Bob Mee puts together good books.

The book is very well organized. There is not much new material that I was not previously aware of but it is presented in such a fashion as to make feel new and interesting.

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