

## Program for boxing match between Tony Doyle and Joe Frazier

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Philly Boxing Scene Aided By New Sport Site

By Tom Cushman Philadelphia Daily News

For years now boxing's place in the world of sports has been but a dingy corner. It is an era of financial coup for nearly all amusements, but boxing has only recently survived a recession. During the last decade it has been cursed, condemned, spat upon, legislated against, and been the subject of a thousand vituperative obituaries.

Still it has survived. Not because of reform, but because in its crude manner, it is the ultimate legal test of man's physical durability. It is too much a part of man to wither; too much an exposure of his regressive instincts to be admitted to the polite company of the team sport. Diagrammed violence is acceptable when clothed in helmet and shoulder pads. In a pair of shorts, under a naked light bulb, it becomes cruelty.

However, man's hypocrisy is not alone responsible for boxing's shabby exterior. The sport's breeding ground has contributed to its orphanhood. The fact is that people with full tummies do not usually go around looking for a punch in the mouth. Boxing's cast comes straggling from among the hungrey, the deprived - from the fetid atmosphere of the big city slums.

It has spawned in the lice beds of society, and too often it has not been able to shake the vermin. It has been a playground for gangsters; it has seldom been above suspicion. Often there was only the unique magnificence of its true champions to help the sport transcend its difficulties.

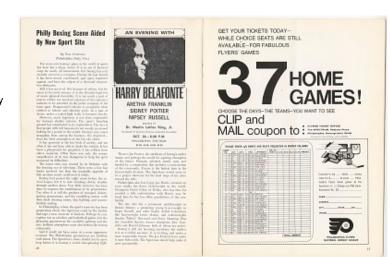
The latest crisis was created by its flirtation with the fawning eye of television. There were a few fast bucks involved, but then the insatiable appetite of that medium nearly swallowed it whole.

Boxing had passed the eight count before the revival began, but it is now climbing slowly, steadily through another dawn. Very little, however, has been done to improve the tastelessness of its presentation. Too often it is still the product of cramped, disintegrating gymnasiums, and the crumbling arenas, with their dank dressing rooms, dim lighting, and uncomfortable seating.

In Philadelphia, where the sport's recovery has been progressing nicely, the Spectrum could be the facility that taps a new reservoir of fandom. Perhaps its conception was as a hockey and basketball palace, but the gleaming spaciousness, the available parking, and the airy, brilliant atmosphere must also beckon the boxing community.

And it could not have come at a more opportune moment. The Philadelphia gymnasiums are bristling with talent. The Spectrum's doors should not be open long before it is hosting a world championship fight.

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[[image- Harry Belafonte]]



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There is Joe Frazier, the antithesis of boxing's earlier image, and perhaps the model for aspiring champions of the future. Pleasant, talented, family man, and backed by a corporation that includes a cross-section of the community, Frazier is the hottest item in the heavyweight division. The Spectrum would seem to be a proper showcase for the final steps of his drive toward the title.

Philadelphia also has Gypsy Joe Harris, certainly on some nights the finest welterweight in the world. Champion Curtis Cokes of Dallas, who has thus far avoided a title confrontation with Harris, may be lured here by the box office possibilities of this new facility.

The city also has a prominent middleweight in Bennie Briscoe, a promising young heavyweight in Roger Russel, and other highly skilled technicians like heavyweight Leotis Martin, and welterweights Stanley "Kitten" Hayward and Percy Manning. Plus the venerable figures, former champions Joey Giardello and Harold Johnson, both of whom are active.

Boxing is still not booming anywhere, but neither is it at a trickle anymore. It is reviving, and under a more respectable facade. The Joe Fraziers have made it more believable. The Spectrum should help make it more presentable.

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1   THURS.   OCT. 19   8:00 P.M.   PITTSBURG
2   SUN.   OCT. 22   7:00 P.M.   CALIFORNIA
3   SAT.   OCT 28   8:00 P.M.   DETROIT
4   SUN.   OCT. 29   7:00 P.M.   CALIFORNIA
5   THURS.   NOV. 2   8:00 P.M.   MINNESOTA
6   SUN.   NOV. 5   7:00 P.M.   MONTREAL
7 THURS.   NOV. 16   8:00 P.M.   NEW YORK
8   SUN.   NOV. 19   7:00 P.M.   ST. LOUIS
9   WED.   NOV. 22   8:00 P.M.   DETROIT
10   SUN.   NOV. 26   7:00 P.M.   LOS ANGELES
11   THURS.   NOV. 30   8:00 P.M.   CALIFORNIA
12   SUN.   DEC. 3   7:00 P.M.   ST. LOUIS
13   SUN.   DEC. 10   7:00 P.M.   CHICAGO
14   THURS.   DEC. 14   8:00 P.M.   ST. LOUIS
15   SUN.   DEC. 17   7:00 P.M.   PITTSBURGH
16   THURS.   DEC. 21   8:00 P.M.   MINNESOTA
17   MON.   DEC. 25   7:00 P.M.   NEW YORK
18   SUN.   DEC. 31   7:00 P.M.   LOS ANGELES
1968 19   THURS.   JAN. 4   8:00 P.M.   BOSTON
20   SUN.   JAN. 7   7:00 P.M.   PITTSBURGH
21   THURS.   JAN. 11   8:00 P.M.   MONTREAL
22   SUN.   JAN. 21   7:00 P.M.   ST. LOUIS
23   THURS.   JAN. 25   8:00 P.M.   MINNESOTA

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24 | SUN. | JAN. 28 | 7:00 P.M. | LOS ANGELES | | | | | | |
25 | THURS. | FEB. 1 | 8:00 P.M. | CALIFORNIA | | | | | |
26 | SAT. | FEB. 3 | 8:00 P.M. | CHICAGO | | | | | |
27 | SUN. | FEB. 4 | 7:00 P.M. | TORONTO | | | | | |
28 | THURS. | FEB. 22 | 8:00 P.M. | MINNESOTA | | | | | |
29 | SUN. | FEB. 25 | 7:00 P.M. | PITTSBURGH | | | | | |
30 | THURS. | FEB. 29 | 8:00 P.M. | LOS ANGELES | | | | | |
31 | SUN. | MAR. 3 | 2:00 P.M. | CALIFORNIA | | | | | |
32 | THURS. | MAR. 7 | 8:00 P.M. | BOSTON
33 | SUN. | MAR. 10 | 7:00 P.M. | MINNESOTA | | | | | |
34 | THURS. | MAR. 14 | 8:00 P.M. | LOS ANGELES | | | | | | |
35 | SUN. | MAR. 17 | 2:00 P.M. | TORONTO | | | | | |
36 | THURS. | MAR. 28 | 8:00 P.M. | ST. LOUIS | | | | | |
37 | SAT. | MAR. 30 | 8:00 P.M. | PITTSBURGH | | | | | |
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