

They are two of the biggest and most important names in Boxing history, that is something that even the most casual Boxing observer couldn't deny. Along with that they are two of the greatest fighters who have yet lived in any weight class. They are loved and respected by all of those who have come after them. One of them in my opinion is the most faultless and fundamentally perfect fighter of all time. The other one in my opinion is the greatest fighter who has ever had a Boxing glove laced over his fist. And lastly, you cannot consider yourself any type of legitimate Boxing fan/historian if you don't know about them and their story. I'm talking about none other than Joseph Louis Barrow born 5/13/14 better known as Joe Louis "The Brown Bomber", and Walker Smith Jr. born 5/3/21 better known as "Sugar" Ray Robinson, the original Sugar Ray!

Joe Louis and Sugar Ray Robinson are two of the three most significant fighters who have ever Graced the Sport of Boxing. The other of course is Muhammad Ali. It's also no coincidence that Louis is the fighter Ali is most measured against, and Robinson is the fighter who Ali most emulated himself after.

Joe Louis won the Heavyweight title on June 22nd 1937 with an 8th round knockout of Champion James Braddock. He held the title for nearly 12 years and made a record 25 consecutive successful defenses of it, a record that still stands to this day regardless of weight class. Louis made his last defense of the title versus Jersey Joe Walcott on June 25th 1948, scoring an 11th round knockout. Shortly after defeating Walcott, Louis retired as Heavyweight Champion. Louis would un-retire and come back in 1950 and lose a decision to Heavyweight Champion Ezzard Charles failing to regain what seem to belong to him forever.

Joe Louis was the best offensive fighting machine in Heavyweight History. He had a dynamite left jab, a devastating short crisp left-hook which he delivered to the head and body with almost laser type precision and accuracy. His right hand had one punch knockout power and was delivered with the speed and accuracy of a striking Cobra. That awesome speed and power was packaged by the best pair of combination punching hands the Heavyweight division has ever witnessed before or since. On top of that he was a great finisher, nobody ever made it through once Louis had them hurt. Louis also had a tight defense, carried his hands high and didn't waste punches. He was great at cutting off the ring, and no fighter who he ever got a second look at made it to hear the decision.

Sugar Ray Robinson won the Welterweight title on December 20th 1946 with a 15 round decision over Tommy Bell, after turning pro in October of 1940. Robinson only suffered one defeat on his way to capturing the Welterweight title. That was a decision loss to top Middleweight contender Jake LaMotta who couldn't get fights against the other top Middleweights. LaMotta was a big Middleweight who rarely came in at the 160 pound limit. Robinson wasn't even a full fledged Welterweight when he fought LaMotta, and spotted him anywhere from 12 to 19 pounds in their first five fights excluding their fight for LaMotta's Middleweight title in 1951.

April 12th: Shared By Two Boxing Immortals

Written by Frank Lotierzo
Sunday, 11 April 2004 18:00

After making 5 successful defenses of the Welterweight title over the next four years, Robinson challenged for the Middleweight title as the Welterweight Champ. His opponent was his old Nemesis, Jake LaMotta. This would be the sixth and final meeting between these two. Heading into their Middleweight title bout, Robinson held a 4-1 edge in the rivalry. On February 14th 1951 Robinson stopped LaMotta in the 13th round and captured the Middleweight Championship of the world. Shortly after winning LaMotta's title, Robinson vacated his Welterweight title with a perfect record of never being defeated by a welterweight. Robinson would lose the title and win it back from Randy Turpin also in 1951.

On June 25th 1952 Robinson challenged Light Heavyweight Champ Joey Maxim. Robinson failed in his bid to win Maxim's title when he collapsed from heat exhaustion and couldn't come out for the 14th round. It was so hot in New York that summer night that the referee also collapsed from the heat after the 10th round and had to be replaced. After failing to win the Light Heavyweight title, Robinson retired.

Two and half years later Robinson came back and won the Middleweight Championship three more times from 1955 through 1958. It actually should have been four more times winning the title, had it none been for a horrendous decision in his third fight with Middleweight Champ Gene Fullmer in December of 1960, which was declared a draw. That decision was an outright robbery. It was a clear Robinson win, however at that time Ray had rubbed some of Boxing's top powers the wrong way and was not going to get the benefit in any close call. That being said, Robinson definitely beat Fullmer in their third fight and should be 2-2 versus him instead of 1-2-1. Robinson would fight for five more years but never again challenge for the title after 1961. On December 10th 1965, Robinson retired for good.

In my opinion Sugar Ray Robinson is the greatest fighter who has yet lived. He had no weakness and could do it all. He had blinding speed, he was a great boxer and a terrific puncher. He could throw any punch with power and speed. Sugar Ray could adapt to any style, fighting effectively moving away from his opponent, or moving towards his opponent applying pressure. Robinson knocked fighters out with a jab, he knocked them out moving backwards, and he killed them with hooks, right hands, and uppercuts. And to go along with all that weaponry, he had great foot speed and movement, and had a killer instinct complimented by a concrete chin. Robinson was never stopped in over 200 fights other than collapsing against Maxim in the scorching heat and who also out weighed by just about 20 pounds. Yes, Sugar Ray Robinson was the greatest of all time!

The reason I wrote this is that I can't believe that two of the three most famous and greatest fighters in Boxing history were both born in the month of May and are the same Zodiac sign. And more Ironically, they both passed away on the same day, April 12th. Joe Louis died on April 12th 1981 at age 66 and Sugar Ray Robinson died on April 12th 1989 at age 68. This is something I cannot fathom why it hasn't been written about more. Just for the record, Joe Louis is the standard by which all Heavyweight greats are measured, and Sugar Ray Robinson is the standard by which all non Heavyweight greats are measured.