

The Week that Was in Boxing: Dec. 4-10

Written by Ed Maloney

Wednesday, 07 December 2005 19:00

Dec. 4, 1916: Future lightweight champion and Hall of Famer Lew Jenkins is born in Milburn, Texas.

Dec. 4, 1999: IBF junior middleweight champion Fernando Vargas holds off the challenge of Winky Wright via majority decision over 12 rounds in Lincoln, Oregon.

Dec. 5, 1938: Just 10 days after a tough 15-round decision win over Ceferino Garcia, welterweight champion Henry Armstrong stops challenger Al Manfredo via third-round TKO in Cleveland.

Dec. 5, 1947: Despite being floored in the first and fourth rounds, Joe Louis rallies, at least in the eyes of two judges, and retains the heavyweight title via 15-round split decision over Jersey Joe Walcott at Madison Square Garden. Louis was sure he lost and began to leave the ring before the decision was read, but was convinced by his cornermen to stay to hear the verdict, which is greeted by a chorus of boos. Always the consummate sportsman, the Brown Bomber gave Walcott a rematch in June 1948 – and this time left no doubt by knocking out Jersey Joe in Round 11 in what was a record 25th, and last, defense of the title.

Dec. 5, 1949: Champion Ike Williams scores a 15-round unanimous decision over Freddie Dawson at Convention Hall in Philadelphia in what will be his eighth, and last, successful defense of the world lightweight title he won in 1945.

Dec. 6, 1951: Future WBC junior middleweight champ Maurice Hope is born in St. John's, Antigua.

Dec. 6, 1975: Englishman John H. Stracey officially ends the second reign of welterweight great Jose Napoles via sixth-round kayo in Mexico City. Napoles, who earned the moniker "Mantequilla" (Butter) first won the title in 1969 and made a total of 13 successful defenses.

Dec. 6, 1985: IBF/WBA 147lbs. champ Donald Curry unifies the welterweight title with a second-round kayo over WBC titleholder Milton McCorry in Las Vegas. Curry's reign atop the division lasts less than a year, when he is knocked out in six rounds by Lloyd Honeyghan, Sep. 27, 1986

Dec. 7, 1925: After two failed attempts to wrest the world lightweight title from Benny Leonard in 1922, Rocky Kansas outpoints champion Jimmy Goodrich over 15 rounds to win the crown in front of his hometown fans in Buffalo, New York.

Dec. 7, 1963: Challenger Joey Giardello outpoints Dick Tiger in Atlantic City to win the middleweight title. Tiger will turn the tables on the Philadelphian in their Oct. 1965 rematch at Madison Square Garden (double check the location)

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December 7, 1989: WBC super middleweight champ Sugar Ray Leonard easily outpoints Roberto Duran over 12 dull rounds in Las Vegas. The long awaited rubber match in their three-fight series is a dud, which prompts the Las Vegas crowd to boo more than cheer the two legends.

Dec. 7, 1991: Rafael Pineda stops Roger Mayweather in the ninth round in Reno to capture the vacant IBF junior welterweight title vacated by Julio Cesar Chavez.

Dec. 8, 1984: Azumah Nelson of Accra, Ghana, dominates Puerto Rican legend Wilfredo Gomez en route to an 11th-round TKO and wins the WBC featherweight crown. Nelson, who eventually wins another world championship at 130lbs., fights all but one of his 25 world titles fights outside of his homeland, thus earning the moniker, "The Road Warrior."

Dec. 9, 1961: Fresh off regaining the welterweight title from arch rival Emile Griffith, Benny "The Kid" Paret tries his luck against NBA world middleweight champion Gene Fullmer in Las Vegas. The fight is stopped when the challenger, who is trailing on all three judges scorecards, is dropped three times in Round 10. Both men will lose their titles in the next fight. Fullmer drops a unanimous decision to Dick Tiger and Paret is knocked out by Griffith in Round 12 and dies 10 days later from injuries sustained during the bout.

Dec. 9, 1995: Frans Botha outpoints Axel Schulz in Stuttgart, Germany to win the IBF version of the heavyweight title, vacated/stripped by George Foreman. It is a thoroughly forgettable contest. However, Botha tested positive for steroids after the fight and was stripped of the title.

Dec. 9, 2000: Former WBA light heavyweight champion Virgil Hill drops Fabrice Tiozzo three times in Round 1 for the TKO victory and wins the WBA cruiserweight title in Astroballe, Villeurbanne, France.

Dec. 10, 1923: Gene Tunney successfully defends the American light heavyweight title with a 15-round unanimous decision over nemesis Harry Greb at Madison Square Garden. It is the third bout of their five-fight series eventually won by Tunney, 3-2.