

The Final Ten Count: Rest In Peace, Smokin' Joe...WOODS

Written by Michael Woods

Monday, 07 November 2011 22:30



Down goes Frazier, down goes Frazier, down goes Frazier.

Those were the words exclaimed by Howard Cosell during Smokin' Joe's fruitless challenge against George Foreman in 1973. Sad to say, those words apply today, on Monday, Nov. 7, 2011, as one of the most relentless pugilists of his or any era couldn't beat the count. The opponent was liver cancer.

Joe Frazier was 67.

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He went at it hammer and tong with the Greatest, the so called Greatest, Muhammad Ali, three times, and though Joe went 1-2, he was with Ali every step of the way, in New York in 1971 (that one was "The Fight") and 1974, and in the Thrilla in Manilla in 1975.

Born in South Carolina in 1944, the youngest of 12 children, he will forevermore be intertwined with Ali, his stomping grounds of Philadelphia and the hellacious left hook which made many a man sip through a straw for weeks through a jaw wired shut. Frazier, who campaigned as a pro from 1965-1976 (with a single comeback fight coming in 1981), dropped out of school at 13, but didn't let that deter him from becoming a master craftsman. His final record stands at 32-4-1.

In later years, fight fans were disturbed to know that he lived in a small apartment above his North Broad St. gym. Truth be told, while almost any boxing fan could appreciate Frazier's bob, weave and blast style, his stubborn resolve to stalk his prey and make him pay, he wasn't a cuddly creature who expertly cultivated a fanbase. He took Ali's trash-talking to heart, and absorbed the blows of being called an Uncle Tom, and a gorilla, with less aplomb than he did the launches of the best and brightest heavyweights of the 60s and 70s. "Joe Frazier is too ugly to be champ," Ali would say, and Frazier would seethe, and be unable to soothe himself, comprehend that Ali did what he did to build the fight.

His career wasn't a lengthy one, but his legacy, as an athlete who was undersized in height but not heart, a fighter who'd be willing to eat two to get in position to land one crackerjack launch, is immense. Rest in peace, Smokin' Joe.

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the Roast says:

R.I.P. Smokin Joe.

Robert Curtis says:

Of all the fighters from the golden age of the late 60s and early 70s, Joe was the guy who did the most with the least. Joe had bigger heart than them all. But he was short with short arms, plus an injury to his left that became his deadliest weapon. The greatest left hook of all time. Joe was the only one who gave Ali serious fits. More than Foreman. More than Norton. Ali blinked his way half-awake through Earnie Shaver's straight power shots. But as Sinatra sang,

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Frazier always got underneath Ali's skin and probably beat him twice in 2 of their 15 rounders! Why did the GOAT have to grab at Joe's head so much. Because he had too. Joe made Ali. As I've over-quoted and probably misquoted before Joe Izenberg: Ali and Frazier were each other's white whales and also each other's Ahabs.

amayseng says:

"down goes frazier"

are you kidding me?

what a disrespectful title, the man has passed away resulting from the evil disease of cancer.

has anyone ever been around anyone dying of cancer? you can literally smell the death of their organs and anatomy shutting down dying the last few weeks. it is a horrible, horrible death and these writers use the title "down goes frazier"

i just think that is the most unfitting title for a person who has just passed.

MisterLee says:

This one hit me hard guys... the same with Arturo Gatti... God give us more champions so we don't have mourn so long for the ones passed...

Radam G says:

NO! UP goes FRAZIER! To the highest, deservable spot behind those Pearly Gates. My deepest condolences to all his kids, especially my boxingmates, Marvis, Hector -- aka "Smokin' Joe Frazier Jr -- and Jacqui. We'll see Daddy Joe again one day at the crossroad. Until then, we will always see him in our thoughts and memories.

YES, INDEEDY! Up Goes Frazier! In that squared jungle and in this topsy-turvy life, he always rose. Not for a minute did he stay down. No punch of mankind could keep him down. And the weakness of death is no different. UP goes FRAZIER! UP goes FRAZIER! UP goes FRAZIER! Holla!

dino da vinci says:

RIP, Mr. Frazier.

In the history of boxing, when the heavyweight division was at its deepest, only two men were successful in claiming victories over Smokin' Joe. Frazier was a thrashing machine (today

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known as:

"threshing") in boxing trunks who always gave his best effort. With the passing of Joe Frazier, the boxing community loses one of its most respected warriors. Our deepest sympathies to the Frazier family.

God Bless.

FighterforJC says:

What else could I say about Joe that hasn't already been said 1000 times better by others? He was a homie to all and beat up "fighters" that utilized that slick African American style. A true warrior at heart who never faked an injury to escape a beating. May he rest in peace.

admin says:

All due respect, get over it.

[QUOTE=amayseng;10374]"down goes frazier"

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