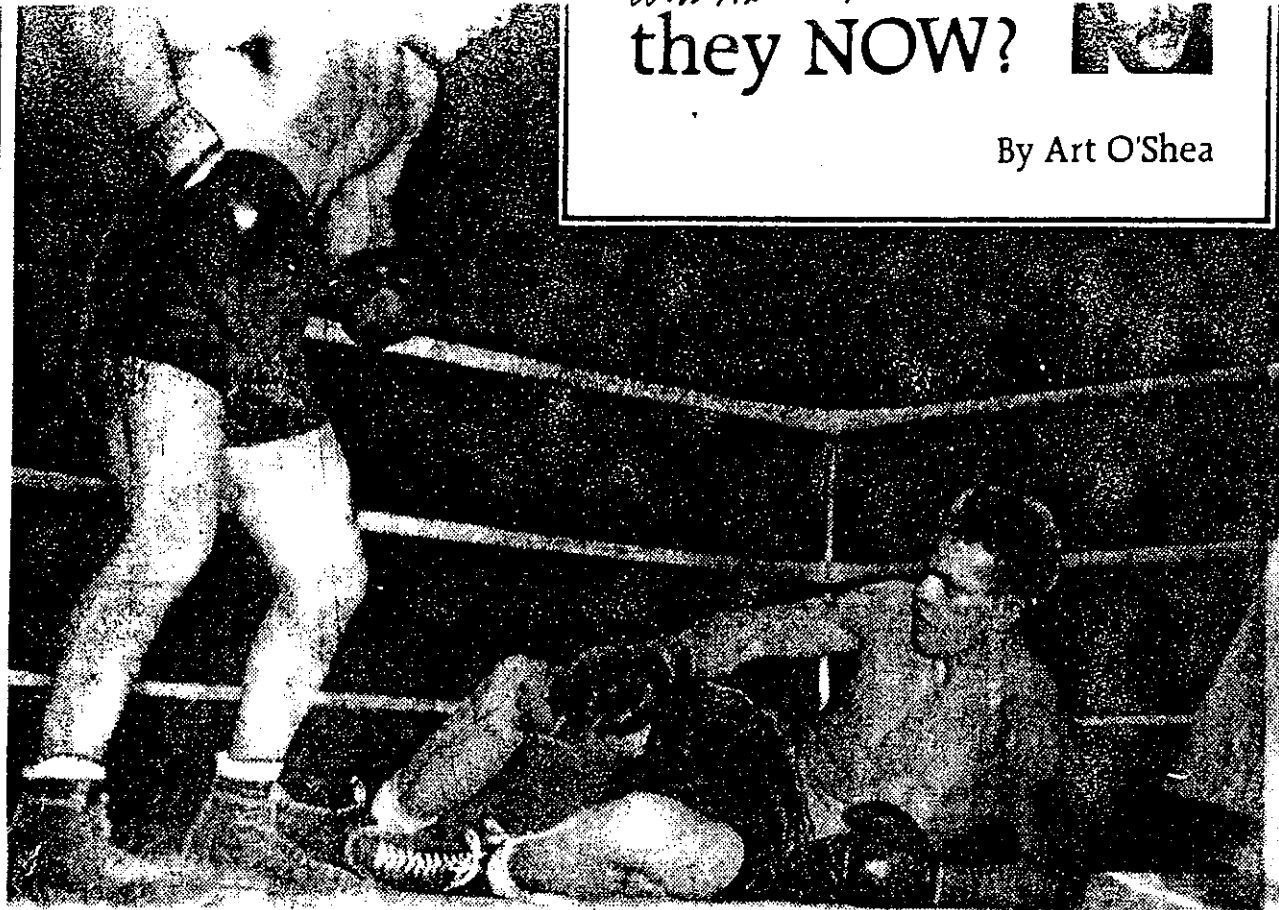


WHERE ARE
they NOW?



By Art O'Shea



Jake La Motta stands victorious over Detroit's Lou Woods in controversial 1944 decision.

Woods changed careers

Lou Woods was a boxer. He grew up in Inkster, turned pro in 1940 and was rated one of the eight best welterweights in the world in the next decade.

Woods' picture ran on the front page of the Friday Magazine section of The Detroit News on Dec. 19, to illustrate a review of the new movie, *The Raging Bull*, about the life of former middleweight champion Jake La Motta.

The picture shows Woods sitting on the canvas with La Motta standing over him.

SOMETIMES EVEN pictures can lie. That one does. It gives the false impression that La Motta overwhelmed Woods in that 10-round main event at Soldiers Field in Chicago in April 1944.

Woods went down — but not from a punch. One of those famous, bull-like La Motta rushes caught him off balance in the ninth and he slipped

and fell. After all, LaMotta outweighed him by 14 pounds, though Woods often fought out of his class, taking on middleweights.

La Motta was declared the winner in a split decision, which was very unpopular. The crowd booed so loudly and long, the next fight on the card had to be held up 10 minutes so the announcer could be heard.

Chicago papers the next day also claimed that Woods was robbed.

That's how much fight crowds and boxing writers thought of Woods, who had lost only one professional fight in 38 up to that time, while LaMotta had lost six.

BOXERS AREN'T Shakespeare fans but they understand better than most people a line from the bard that goes:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows ..."

That tide — luck, fate, whatever — may work subtly in other walks of life but in the raw world of the ring it stands out like a cut over the eye.

The flood tide had La Motta and he became a champion.

Woods?

He quit the ring in 1950.

"I WAS GOING nowhere," recalls Woods, who now works in the security department of the Sheraton Motor Inn, 10001 Woodward, Pontiac. "I never was able to get any real money fights or fights that would build me toward a shot at a championship."

Woods is 58 and still in excellent health. He lives alone.

His three sons are grown and following their own careers. Did any become boxers? Woods laughs derisively: "Not on your life. But one became a journalist."

Woods is not much for going to movies but says he wants to see *The Raging Bull*.