

To the readers of "PIC" Magazine:

In regard to the Jess Willard fight this is my true story.

I lost the fight because I wanted to return to the United States, my home, to see my mother, not having seen her in three years. She was very sick and I wanted to see her before she died.

I lost the fight and I lost my mother also because certain parties doublecrossed me.

I was supposed to lose to Willard in ten rounds. These certain people were trying to hold out the money promised me which amounted to \$33,000. They had only paid me \$120,000.00 and they tried to hold out the \$33,000.00

I did not lose to Willard in the tenth round because the money was not fully paid and I kept fighting Willard until the twenty sixth round when my wife gave me the signal by waving her handkerchief.

That signal given, I gave her the nod that I got her signal and I got in close to Willard and then fell to the canvas. I did not get hit by Willard to fake the K.O. as the moving pictures of the fight will show, and prove.

I laid on my back and I put my gloves over my eyes not to shield my eyes from the sun, but only to prove later any argument that I was knocked out. The stories of my being exhausted are not true. I had a hard time telling Willard not to punch me in the stomach as there never was a fighter who could hurt me there. I kept telling Willard to punch at my chin. Even today I will take anybody's punch without a wimper.

As soon as the referee, Jack Welsh counted me out, I jumped up, walked over to the ropes and hopped over them, ran down the ring steps and ran to my car, where my wife and a banker friend (who was there to see that my wife did not get fooled with phoney money) were waiting. We drove to my house where six policemen were stationed there by me to watch my money. I also had six plain clothes men to watch the six policemen. I had about \$130,000.00 in cash there. Any man who gets knocked out could never do all this, even more so if he is exhausted.

*written and signed
By Jack Johnson
A former Heavy weight Champion
I hope this will settle
all arguments for all times*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR. Thirty year old Jim Jacobs, who recently joined *BOXING ILLUSTRATED*'s regular staff, is a young man with a very unusual hobby. Jim collects fight films. After traveling more than 55,000 miles to all parts of the world during the past fifteen years, at a cost of about \$30,000, he has amassed the largest collection of such films in existence.

In New York City last summer, Los Angeles born Jim Jacobs greatly impressed a group of select sports writers at a special showing of some of his priceless films. Several of the writers, some hardened by the years, sat in disbelief as Jacobs displayed the Jeffries-Sharkey fight; the Johnson-Burns fight; the Corbett-Fitzsimmons classic; the controversial Johnson-Willard match, etc. In all, twenty of Jacobs' treasures were shown, many of which were believed lost years ago.

Always anxious to add to his collection, Jacobs invites anyone who has in his possession boxing films taken between the years 1894-1930, regardless of their condition or length, to advise him. Give the contestants (if known), and film size (8mm, 16mm, 60mm, 65mm). Address correspondence to:

MR. JIM JACOBS c/o Turn of the Century Fights (17th Floor), 9 East 40th St., New York 16, New York

One of the world's leading boxing authorities has compiled enough evidence to settle once and for all the long disputed question: Did Jack Johnson purposely lose his title to Jess Willard at Havana forty-six years ago?

DON'T TELL ME JACK JOHNSON TOOK A DIVE!

THE CHALLENGER

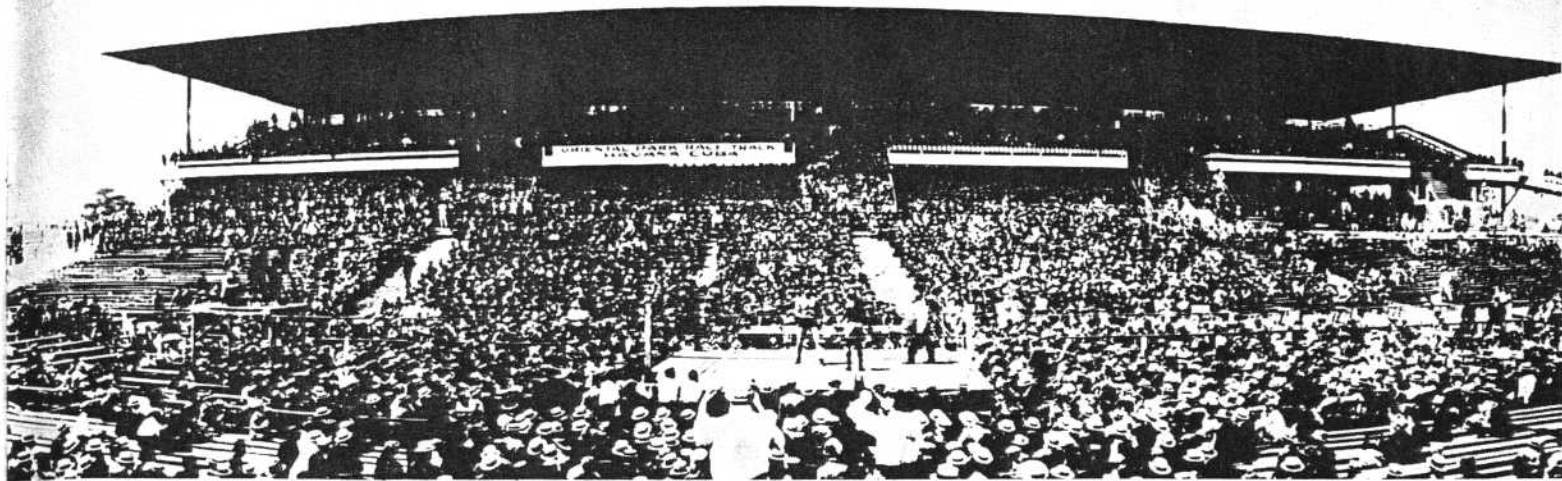
A Formidable Mountain of Facts based on a wonderfully clear 16mm motion picture film of the historic fight at Havana, Cuba, on April 5, 1915. One hour and 51 minutes in running time which shows both fighters to their best advantage.

THE CHAMPION

Forty-six Years of Controversial Intangibles. Doubts and indecisions based on one photograph, which is resurrected yearly to perpetuate still more confusion. All made possible because the particular photo was snapped at the precise moment to prove conclusively—exactly nothing!

Moments before opening bell, champ Johnson, right, and Willard, pose for movie cameras.





Huge racetrack in Havana, scene of Jess Willard-Jack Johnson heavyweight championship fight on April 5, 1915.

ROUND 1

On the scorching afternoon of April 5, 1915, in Havana's huge Vaidado Racetrack, an obviously out-of-condition Jack Johnson lost his heavyweight championship, which he had held for seven years, to a mountain of a man out of Pottawatomie County, Kansas, named Jess Willard. Not long after, Johnson, who was wanted by American authorities for violation of the Mann Act, announced publicly that he threw the fight because he believed that as an ex-champion much of the pressure would be taken off him and that when he returned home he would receive a lesser prison sentence than he would if he still held the title.

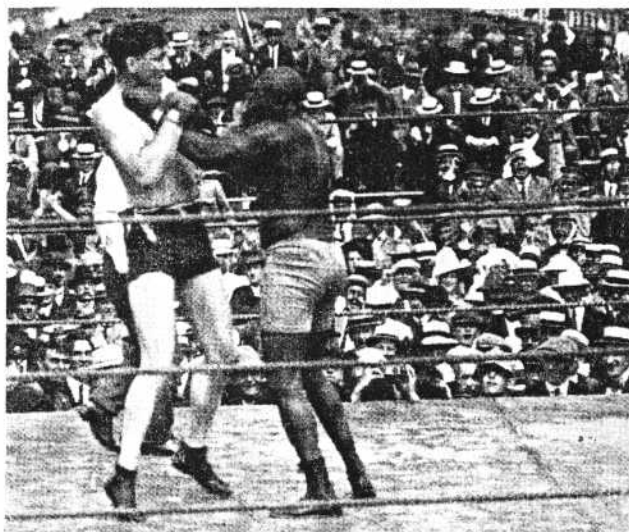
Actually there was sound basis for Johnson's reasoning. When he finally returned to America some years later he was all but forgotten and a Federal judge sentenced him to only one year in Leavenworth.

In an attempt to give credence to his confession of ring fakery, ex-champion Johnson used a certain photograph as an illustration. It showed him being counted out in the 26th round, his arm raised over his face to shield his eyes from the blazing sun, his knees raised because, as he insisted, "I would have burned the backs of my legs if I let them touch the floor."

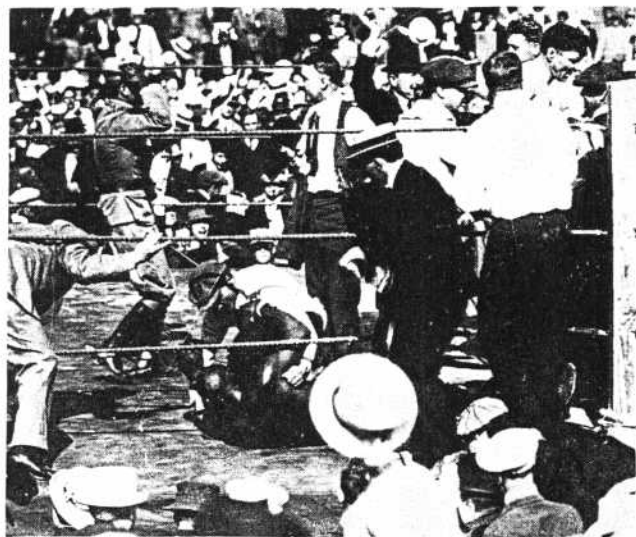
Johnson went so far as to write it all down in legal form, going into minute detail of how he supposedly gave away his title. Of course it made delicious copy for news-hungry sports editors who published it as absolute fact. To this day, the same story pops up every now and then, and it still makes fascinating reading. But one striking fact stands out about the whole incredible story; the only authority for it is the beaten man himself, Jack Johnson.

ROUND 2

When Johnson left Havana for Europe after the fight, he took with him the only two prints of the motion pictures taken of the bout. He had the *complete* films in his possession, but it is interesting to note that when he exhibited them in England and Australia he showed only an eight minute "highlight" edition, which he supplemented with his own uncommonly descriptive narrative as the spell-



Scene in sixth round shows flabby Johnson bullying in close to his gigantic challenger in an effort to neutralize his great disadvantage in reach.



After kayo, ex-champion Johnson is helped to his feet by second, as mob gathers in ring to congratulate Jess.

bound audiences watched and listened to his carefully edited version of his defeat. When the articulate and inspiring looking ex-champion was finished not a soul within earshot doubted that he had thrown the fight.

ROUND 3

When Johnson finally returned to America (to see his sick mother in Galveston), he came without the two existing movie prints of his fight with Willard. This was due in no way to Jack himself, but because of a U.S. law which prohibited the transport of fight films across state lines or borders. The law was passed a few years earlier when showings of the Jack Johnson-Jim Jeffries films caused race riots and general disturbance in various parts of the country.

After completing his jail sentence, Johnson wrote articles describing his losing effort to Willard and even answered requests for detailed particulars in a daily column. He still had his precious photograph, his razor-sharp mind and his incredible flare to dramatize even the least significant incident into a seemingly important event. With each word he wrote, and spoke, his story became more fixed in men's minds.

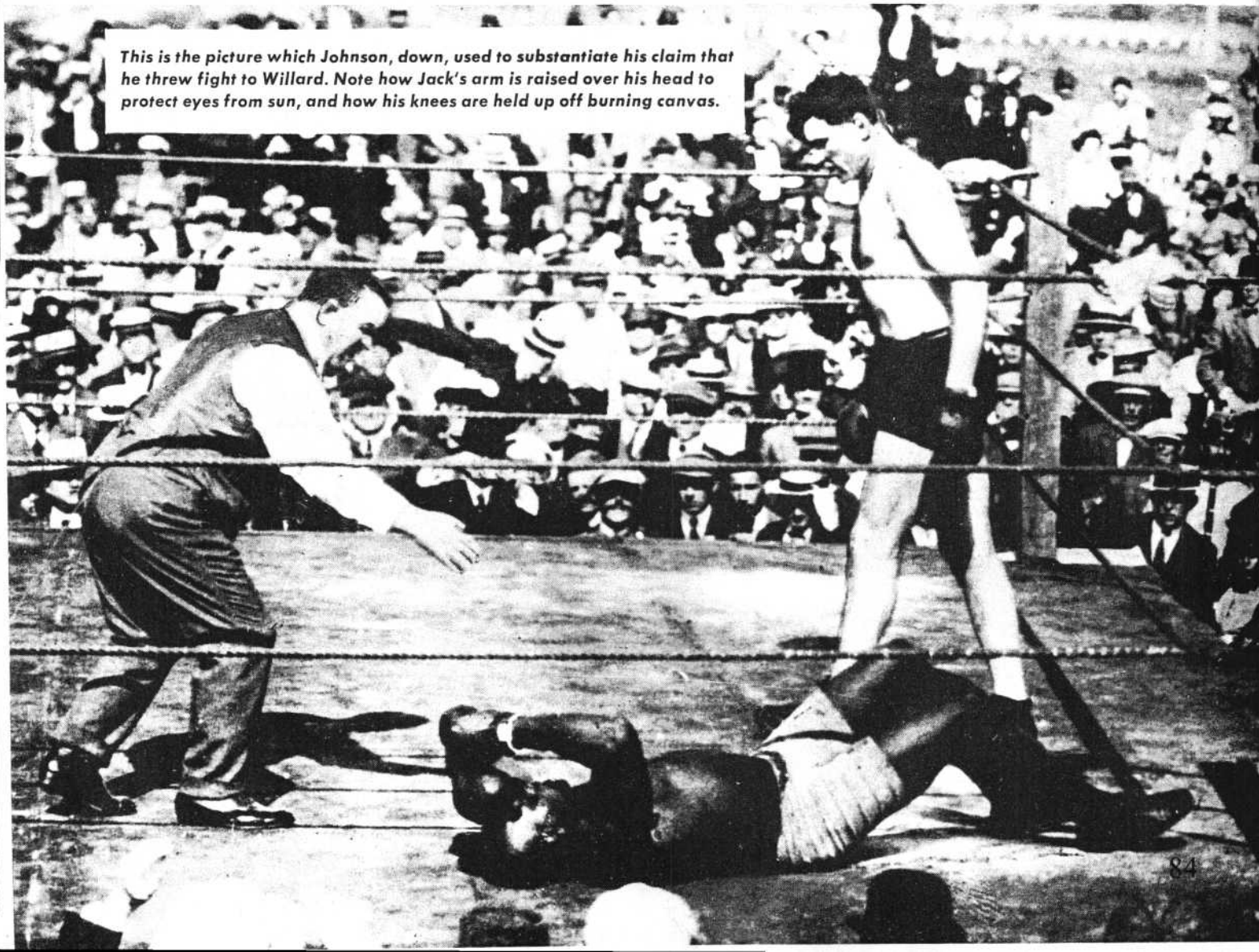
ROUND 4

In 1916, two lawyers, George Rooner and Stanley Dorskin, made a determined effort to get a complete print of the Johnson-Willard fight into the United States. After much careful planning, they hit upon an ingenious plan to circumvent the stringent laws pertaining to boxing films. Although it was against the law to transport such films across a United States border, the young lawyers could find nothing in the law which would prevent projecting light rays from such films from say Canada, across the border into the United States.

Rooner and Dorskin convened at Rousse's Point, New York, not far from the Canadian border, confident that they had found a loop-hole in the law. At the international boundary they were met by Canadian film technicians at a prearranged site one mile north of Rousse's Point. The Canadians had in their possession the precious original of one of the existing films of the fight.

Exerting extreme care not to get too close to the American border, the technicians raised a tent, the center of which covered the international border. With the tent in position, a projection printer was set up. At this point a

This is the picture which Johnson, down, used to substantiate his claim that he threw fight to Willard. Note how Jack's arm is raised over his head to protect eyes from sun, and how his knees are held up off burning canvas.



U.S. customs inspector made a careful inspection of both the tent and the projector. He found no violation.

The negative was fed into the printer on the Canadian side, while on the U.S. side unexposed film was ready to receive the positive image and thus a print of the precious film.

No attempt was made to keep the experiment secret. Instead, publicity had been invited and the observance of American customs officials was encouraged to emphasize that the entire process was legal.

The final copy print, after being pronounced as excellent by the technicians, was immediately confiscated by American customs men, which was in keeping with the basic plan. It was the plan of lawyers Dorskin and Rooner to start immediate action through the courts stressing that the film had entered the country without breaking any law and thus force the government to return the print to them. But the Federal Attorney had no patience with the scheme. He filed a complaint charging that the light rays were imported from Canada in violation of the law. Several scientists were called in to testify regarding the importation of light rays, but their highly technical language tended only to further confuse the jurors. On July 13, 1916 the jury

disagreed and the case was over. The film was surrendered to proper authorities and was promptly destroyed.

ROUND 5

On January 26, 1961, I received word from Australia that the other missing print of the Johnson-Willard fight had been discovered. A transcontinental phone call was made requesting that two feet of the film be sent for examination to determine authenticity. When the sampling was viewed in America there was no doubt that this indeed was taken from the long lost reel. Immediately I raced half way round the world to obtain what was to me a treasure as precious as the crown jewels of England. When I returned home five weeks later I had with me the uncut original of the film.

ROUND 6

On August 21, 1961, at a showing in New York City arranged by Mr. Sam Himmel, President of the Baldwin Paper Company, I showed the Johnson-Willard film to a group of sports writers. It was the first time they had ever

(continued on page 60)

Author Jacobs uses this never-before published picture, taken from his original film of fight, to prove Johnson's contention that he threw fight is false. Note that Johnson's legs are down on canvas, and his arm no longer shields his eyes from sun. He took final count in this position.



Official WRESTLING RATINGS

*A poll of leading promoters, newsmen
and the wrestlers themselves
guided us in compiling these ratings.*

MALE

- 1 - BUDDY ROGERS
- 2 - PAT O'CONNOR
- 3 - VERNE GAGNE
- 4 - FRED BLASSIE
- 5 - EDOUARD CARPENTIER
- 6 - JOHNNY VALENTINE
- 7 - BILL MILLER
- 8 - THE BRUISER
- 9 - ANTONINO ROCCA
- 10 - BOB ELLIS

FEMALE

- 1 - JUNE BYERS
- 2 - LORRAINE JOHNSON
- 3 - JUDY GRABLE
- 4 - PENNY BANNER
- 5 - BONNIE WATSON
- 6 - KATHY STARR
- 7 - ROSE ROMAN
- 8 - CORA COMBS
- 9 - JUDY GLOVER
- 10 - ELA WALDEK

TAG TEAMS

- 1 - THE KANGAROOS
- 2 - ANTONINO ROCCA and
VITTORIO APOLLO
- 3 - RAMON and ALBERTO TORRES
- 4 - THE VON BRAUNERS
- 5 - THE GALLAGHER BROTHERS
- 6 - DON CURTIS and MARK LEWIN
- 7 - ART THOMAS and
SWEET DADDY SIKI
- 8 - TINY MILLS and
STAN KOWALSKI
- 9 - HAYSTACKS CALHOUN and
YUKON ERIC
- 10 - ROCKET and SPUTNICK MONROE

NO DIVE!

been shown in America. The next day their observations, coming 46 years too late, were these:

"The image of the fat, poorly trained, champion who was beaten terribly by Jack Dempsey immediately disappeared as we watched a lean, powerfully built challenger—boxing extremely well, with an air of confidence which leaped off the screen communicating with everyone viewing the film. The action was marvelous to watch during the first portion of the fight, but Johnson, showing his incomparable talent in the 18th and 19th rounds, threw caution aside in a last ditch effort to knock out the challenger who seemed to be getting stronger after almost an hour of fighting. Knocking the younger Willard from one side of the ring to the other, Johnson failed in his final all out effort to keep his championship. From the 20th round on Jess pummeled the champion whenever he chose. His enormous strength, plus the terrible heat, wilted Johnson into a defenseless fighter. Winning every round from the 20th on, the challenger landed a powerful overhand right to the jaw in the 26th round. Johnson was thrown 12 feet backwards by the power of the punch and landed on his back and neck, simultaneously. Rolling over at the count of 2, he assumed the position shown in the famous photograph—holding his arm above his head with his legs off the canvas. HE HELD THAT POSITION FOR "TWO" SECONDS AND THEN PLACED HIS LEGS FLAT ON THE CANVAS AND BROUGHT HIS ARM DOWN TO REST ON HIS FOREHEAD, RECEIVING THE FINAL 6 COUNT IN THAT POSITION. — He remained prone, as described, even while Willard's arm was raised by referee Welsh. There is absolutely no question whatsoever. All doubt was most assuredly done away with as the film vindicated Jess' 46 year old claim that he won the championship on his fighting merits."

ROUND 7

The film shows a powerful, well-trained giant, amazingly light of foot and quite skilled in boxing's finer points, carrying the fight to his flabby foe. The heat was obviously a factor and it took its toll on the older (37) Johnson. In the 26th rd, Johnson was caught with the tremendous overhand right to the jaw which knocked him to the floor. As he fell, his feet flew upward and he landed with great impact. The two second interval between the count of three and four was the moment the famous picture was taken which Johnson used to back up his claim that he had thrown the fight. It was assumed that he took the full count in that same position. This was incorrect as the picture on page 42 clearly shows.

ROUND 8

There is an eighty year old giant of a man now living in LaCrecenta, California who will tell you sincerely, "Johnson fought his very best and so did I. I won my championship fairly." Jess Willard told me that and I know he is speaking the truth. It is unfair that his fighting ability and his ascent to the heavyweight throne have been tarnished for all these years by that one single picture that just happened to be taken during a scant two seconds of his fighting career. ●