Sonny Liston - His Life, Strife and the Phantom Punch

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Abstract

The career of Charles "Sonny" Liston has attracted more debate and hostility than that of any other master of the squared circle. Even now, there remain more questions than answers: How much was he controlled and manipulated by underworld figures? Did he take a dive in the momentous bout with Cassius Clay? When was he born and how and why did he die? What is certain is Sony's standing as one of the most formidable punchers ever to enter the ring. Despite all the efforts of the boxing fraternity, he was finally allowed to fight for the world title nine years after turning professional. Grasping his chance with indecent haste, he deposed Floyd Patterson with a first-round knockout, then repeated the dose a year later. He was not seen as a suitable role model by the civil rights movement because of his criminal past and dubious associates, and was reluctant to participate in the pursuit of racial equality. Meanwhile, he was constantly pursued and badgered by the police, compelling him to move from state to state in search of refuge. A larger than life character with a life of ups and downs, ending in tragedy, this is a mesmerizing portrait of one of the most formidable boxers of all time.

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From Cassius Clay and underworld gangsters to the Civil Rights Movement and the police, Charles 'Sonny' Liston's life was hard, controversial and his death shrouded in mystery. This book tells the story of a formidable world heavyweight champion - who lost his title to Cassius Clay in one of boxing's most dramatic fights.

Author Biography:
Rob Steen is a freelance journalist and has written for the Independent on Sunday, Wisden Cricket Monthly, the Financial Times and Daily Telegraph.

Liston had lost his title...
and the boxing world was shocked. The rematch was delayed by Ali having a hernia, and trouble surrounding the criminals involved with promoting the fight almost torpedoed the match. The fight was moved to Lewiston, Maine (population 14,000!) and this time the fight became one of the most controversial fights in history. Ali knocked Liston down in the first round with a punch many in attendance claimed did not land. The pandemonium that ensued prevented the referee from hearing the knock down time counter and Ali spent some time looming over Liston, taunting the downed... Sonny Liston: His Life, Strife and the Phantom Punch (Paperback). List Price: $16.95.