



Cinderella Man: James J. Braddock, Max Baer and the Greatest Upset in Boxing History

Jeremy Schaap

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Includes a one-hour interview from 1970 with boxing legend James Braddock!

Lost in the annals of boxing is the sport's true Cinderella story. James J. Braddock, dubbed "Cinderella Man" by Damon Runyon, was a once promising light heavyweight for whom a string of losses in the ring and a broken right hand happened to correspond with the Great Crash. With one good hand, Braddock was forced to labor on the docks of Hoboken. Only his manager, Joe Gould, still believed in him, finding fights for Braddock to help feed his wife and children. The diminutive, loquacious Jew and the burly, quiet Irishman made one of boxing's oddest couples, but together they staged the greatest comeback in boxing history. In less than twelve months Braddock went from the relief rolls to face heavyweight champion Max Baer, the Livermore Butcher Boy, renowned for having allegedly killed two men in the ring. A charismatic, natural talent and in every way Braddock's foil, Baer was a towering opponent, a Jew from the West Coast who was famously brash and made great copy both in and out of the ring. A ten-to-one underdog, Braddock carried the hopes and dreams of the working class on his shoulders. And when boxing was the biggest sport in the world, when the heavyweight champion was the biggest star in the world, his unlikely upset made him the most popular champion boxing had ever seen.

Against the gritty backdrop of the Depression, *Cinderella Man* brings this dramatic all-American story to life, evoking a time when the sport of boxing resonated with a country trying desperately to get back on its feet. Rich in anecdote and color, steeped in history, and full of human interest, *Cinderella Man* is a classic David and Goliath tale that transcends the sport.

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