

Excerpts from *When Boxing was a Jewish Sport* by Allen Bodner

Compiled by Phillip W. Weiss

"During the years 1910-1940 there were twenty-six Jewish world champions."

"From 1760 to 1820 there were at least thirty Jewish prizefighters [in England] proficient enough to earn mention in the boxing sources of that time."

"The popularity of [Leach] Cross, as well as Al McCoy (Harry Rudolph), the middleweight champion in 1914, and 'Battling' Levinsky, the light-heavyweight king from 1916 to 1920, helped set the stage for the greatest and most beloved Jewish boxer ever, Benny Leonard. Leonard was the lightweight champion from 1917 to 1925 and compiled an extraordinary record."

"Of all the Jewish boxers, Leonard remains one of the most admired by both fans and other fighters."

"Other marvelous Jewish boxers of the Leonard era were Sid Terris, Benny Bass, Charlie 'Phil' Rosenberg, 'Kid' Kaplan, 'Corporal' Izzy Schwartz, and Lew Tendler. Tendler, in particular, gave Leonard fits in the ring. Tendler and Leonard engaged in two epic battles, in 1922 and 1923."

"The two fights Leonard had with Lew Tendler of Philadelphia were classics. On July 27, 1922, at Boyle's Thirty Acres in Jersey City, New Jersey, sixty thousand screaming fans, most of them Jewish, paid almost \$400,000 (a record for a non-heavyweight title fight) to watch the twelve-round non-title bout between the two Jewish masters."

"Almost a year later, on July 24, 1923, fifty-eight thousand fans packed Yankee Stadium for the rematch; this time Leonard's title was on the line. The gate was a record \$450,000."

"[Leonard] won the fifteen-round decision and retained the lightweight crown."

"[Barney] Ross held three titles (lightweight, junior welterweight, and welterweight) and was at the tail end of the era of Jewish champions (1938)."

Jews in the Boxing Hall of Fame:

Lew Tandler

Abe Attell

"Battling" Levinsky

Nat Fleischer (Journalist)

Ray Arcel (Trainer)

Barney Ross

Jackie "Kid" Berg

Ted "Kid" Lewis

Daniel Mendoza

Mike Jacobs (Promoter)

Benny Leonard

"Slapsie" Maxie Rosenbloom

Joe Choyinski

Jackie Fields

Sam Taub (Broadcaster)

Source: *When Boxing was a Jewish Sport* by Allen Bodner.