



Cradle of Champions: 80 Years of New York Daily News Golden Gloves

Bill Farrell

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"My very first fights were in the Golden Gloves. I really wanted to be a fighter. I found out it wasn't going to be easy, the competition was very hard. ...The Gloves was very important to me. I remember my mother asking me about my name in the paper and I had to explain to her that I was in the Golden Gloves--a boxer. I was so proud. Then to be that young--16, 17 years old--and to be in the Garden, I can't tell you how happy I was to be there."

--Emile Griffith, two-time Daily News Golden Gloves champion, five-time world champion and member of the International Boxing Hall of Fame

The oldest and largest boxing tournament in the world, the Daily News Golden Gloves is an event like no other in all of amateur sport. Since 1927, New York's cold winter nights have come alive with thrilling competition as hundreds of boxers from across metropolitan New York look to fight their way into Madison Square Garden, and a chance at a Golden Gloves championship.

Boxing greats and champions including Sugar Ray Robinson, Floyd Patterson, Jose Torres, Emile Griffith, Vito Antuofermo, Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, Mark Breland, Junior Jones, Kevin Kelley, Riddick Bowe, Michael Bentt and Zab Judah all honed their skills in the legendary tournament. Others, including Joey Maxim, Rocky Marciano and Muhammad Ali made their first appearance in New York representing teams from Chicago and New England in the Daily News Golden Gloves.

Their road to greatness began like that of the more than 80,000 others who have climbed through the ropes in local school gyms, fraternity halls and community centers throughout the New York metropolitan area and traded punches in the Daily News Golden Gloves. The boxing isn't always pretty, but the bouts never lack for excitement.

From the time those first punches were tossed in 1927, Daily News photographers have been there to capture the stunning knockouts, the surprises, the displays of sportsmanship, the triumphs and the disappointments. Cradle of Champions: 80 Years of New York Daily News Golden Gloves puts us in a ringside seat through the great and proud history of this annual New York boxing extravaganza.

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