

# Smokin' Joe Frazier Dead at 67

Epic fights with Ali made him immortal

(AP)—Former heavyweight champion Joe Frazier, who earned boxing immortality after three epic fights with Muhammad Ali, died Monday night after a brief battle with liver cancer at 67.

A vicious left hook from Frazier put Ali on the canvas in the 15th round in March 1971 when he became the first man to beat him in the Fight of the Century at Madison Square Garden.

"That was the greatest thing that ever happened in my life," Frazier said.

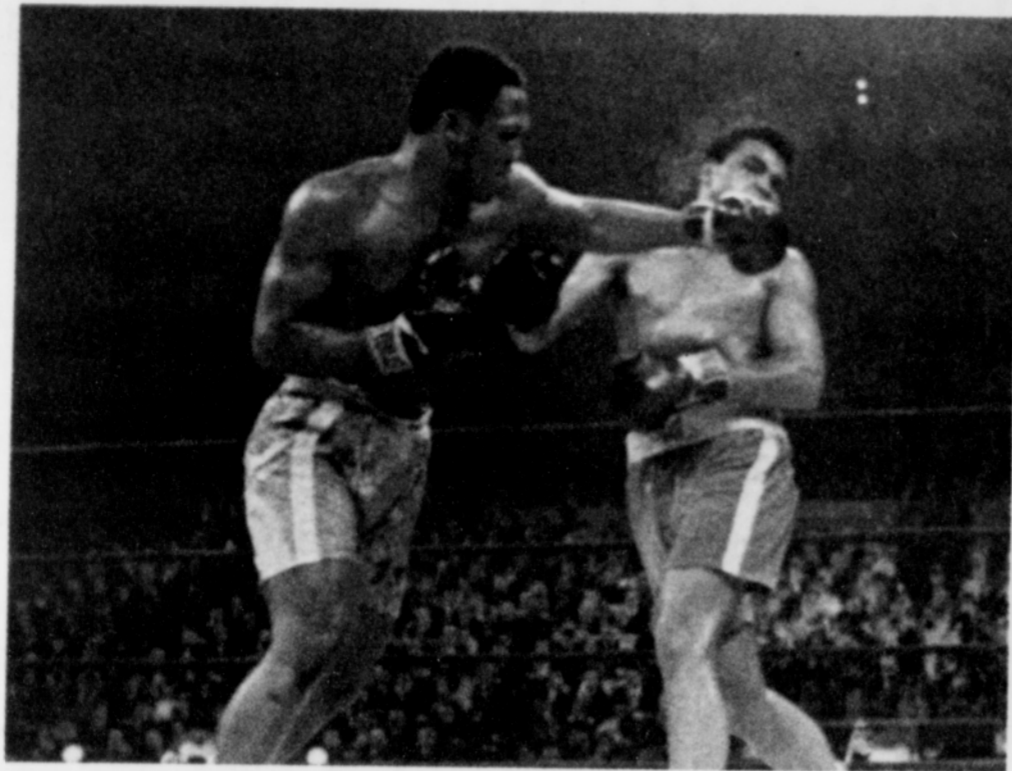
It was his biggest night, one that would never come again.

The relentless, undersized heavyweight ruled the division as champion, then spent a lifetime trying to fight his way out of Ali's shadow.

No one in boxing would ever dream of anointing Ali as The Greatest unless he, too, was linked to Smokin' Joe.

"I will always remember Joe with respect and admiration," Ali said in a statement. "My sympathy goes out to his family and loved ones."

They fought twice in the heart of



Muhammad Ali takes a left from Joe Frazier during the 15th round of their heavyweight title boxing bout on March 8, 1971 in New York. Frazier won a unanimous decision.

New York City and once in the morning in a steamy arena in the Thrilla in Manila in the Philippines. They went 41 rounds together. Neither gave an inch and both gave it their all.

In their last fight in Manila in 1975, they traded punches with a fervor that seemed unimaginable among heavyweights. Frazier gave almost as good as he got for 14 rounds, then had to be held back by trainer Eddie Futch as he tried to go out for the final round, unable to see.

"Closest thing to dying that I

know of," Ali said afterward.

Ali was as merciless with Frazier out of the ring as he was inside it. He called him a gorilla, and mocked him as an Uncle Tom. But he respected him as a fighter, especially after Frazier won a decision to defend his heavyweight title against the then-unbeaten Ali in a fight that was so big Frank Sinatra was shooting pictures at ringside and both fighters earned an astonishing \$2.5 million.

The night at the Garden 40 years ago remained fresh in



Joe Frazier strikes a pose in a 2006 file photo.

Frazier's mind as he talked about his life, career and relationship with Ali a few months before he died.

"I can't go nowhere where it's not mentioned," he told The Associated Press.

Bob Arum, who once promoted Ali, said he was saddened by Frazier's passing.

"He was such an inspirational guy. A decent guy. A man of his word," Arum said. "I'm torn up by Joe dying at this relatively young age. I can't say enough about Joe."

## Week in The Review

### Cain Denies Allegations

Herman Cain went on the offensive Tuesday against a woman who accuses him of unwanted



sexual advancements. The Republican presidential candidate said that he would be willing to take a lie detector test to rebut multiple claims that he engaged in sexual harassment in the 1990s, though he seemed to stop short of promising to do so.

### Gang Fight Alliance

Mayor Sam Adams and chiefs of police from cities along and surrounding the I-5 corridor signed a statement of support Tuesday for greater collaboration on gang violence, human trafficking, and drug and gun trafficking.

### School Will be Rebuilt

The Portland School Board voted Monday to rebuild Marysville K-8 School in southeast Portland. Marysville students and staff members moved to the former Rose City Park School in 2009 after a devastating fire. Insurance will cover the cost to repair the building to its pre-fire condition.

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