

RENO'S GREAT FISTIC ARENA WHERE CHAMPIONS BATTLE

Reno, Nev., July 2.—With the last plank in place, the canvas covering of the ring stretched until it cannot slip or rumple beneath the feet of the fighters, the arena in which James J. Jeffries and John Arthur Johnson will settle the world's heavy weight championship on Monday is ready for the thronging thousands who will see the history-making battle fought out. And the thousands are coming. They are pouring into the little city by every available means of conveyance. Some of them come from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Some have voyaged across the Pacific, traveling nearly 10,000 miles to witness the fight, and probably there would have been many more from great distances had it not been for the strong opposition to the match and the widespread agitation to prevent it which finally resulted in the transfer to the far less accessible Reno.

The widespread opposition to the fight in California which finally resulted in Governor Gillett's drastic action, barring the event from the state, and the shifting of the scene to Reno, was headed by the churches of the country, and found a place in the resolutions adopted by several of the annual church conferences and conventions. The Governor, the Mayor, and even the President were appealed to, and the story of the Governor's final interference is now history.

The first problem encountered by the promoters after the men had signed articles was that of selecting a site. Rickard declared himself in favor of Salt Lake City, Utah, and it looked for a time as though the match would be staged there. Jack Gleason, Rickard's associate, is a San Franciscan, however, and he was equally determined that the fight should be held in his home city. The difference between Rickard and Gleason continued until the Governor of Utah plainly intimated that his stand would be against the fight, and Rickard yielded the point.

When Rickard and Gleason finally decided upon holding the fight on the coast, the question of the exact place was still in doubt for several weeks. It was found that the board of Supervisors of San Francisco, under the new administration which took office at the beginning of the year, was willing to grant a forty-five round permit, breaking the twenty-round limit, but still there was friction at some points, and finally it was decided to take the fight across the bay. Emeryville is the site of the New California Jockey Club race track. It is convenient to all railroads, street cars and ferry boats, and when the sporting world heard that President Williams of the Jockey Club had consented to the use of the grounds for the fight arena, they breathed a sigh of relief. It looked as though the way was cleared at last. The men were in training, plans for the arena were drawn, the agreed portions of the gigantic purse was deposited, and everything looked smooth.

Right in the midst of this, however, the church opposition came. The people of the east bay shore, where Emeryville is located brought great pressure to bear upon the county officials. It was announced that the fight would be stopped at the first indications that it was anything more than the sporting contest it purported to be. This statement created alarm, and when it was followed by a request from Williams that the promoters, if possible, find some other place, sportdom suffered a decided blue spell. Williams said that he would keep his bargain with Rickard, but it was evident that he did not desire to do so.

The promoters then began to gather their forces in San Francisco again. A storm of objection and protest was raised by the Church Federations and like organizations, but the police committee of the Supervisors recommended that the forty-five round permit be granted. Attorneys were employed by the churchmen to fight the matter before the supervisors. Every one expected a verbal battle at least, and when the recommendation came up for action, the board room was crowded.

It is not everyone, however, who is familiar with the routine of board meetings. Very quietly the committee's recommendation was advanced and the day's program of business, called up, and the permit granted without a word having been said against it. The opposition did not realize what was going forward until it was too late even to protest.

The pressure upon the Governor had not been remitted for a moment. He declared that he did not believe the state law would justify intervention, however, and with this statement from a man known to be opposed to prize-fighting, the promoters were content. They did not fear that the authorities would step in, and carried their preparations forward without further consideration of the opposition.

Great was the consternation, therefore, when Governor Gillett, when the actual erection of the arena had been begun, and everything was considered settled, announced that he regarded the contest as a prize-fight and not a boxing contest, and that he in accordance with the laws of California he would not permit it to be held. There was talk of a contest in the courts, but it was seen that this would be too long drawn out to admit of a decision in time to start the fight, and the governor making it decidedly plain that he meant what he said, and would go to all legal lengths to stop the affair, the promoters gave up, and picked the state of Nevada for their one sure stronghold.

Goldfield at first made a strong bid for the match, but accessibility was a point to be strongly considered, and Rickard and his associates finally came to believe that Reno was the proper selection. So Reno it was, and everything was switched to this town and the hurried construction of the arena begun.

The Reno arena is located a mile and a half from the center of the

city, and stands where stood the arena in which the Root-Hart fight took place just four years ago. The plan is almost identical with that of the arena in San Francisco which had to be abandoned when the state intervened and caused the shift to Nevada. It is about 300 feet square, and its cost was expected to exceed \$17,500.

A forest of lumber has gone into the construction of the great octagonal amphitheatre. It is so designed that every one of the spectators is insured a full view of the ring in which the battle will be fought. Looking down from the bleachers, it seems absurd to think that enough action could be compressed into that 24-foot space to keep such a horde of people interested, even for a minute.

Measured within the ropes, with their padded corners, the ring is just 24 feet square. From edge to edge in each direction the raised platform is 27 feet, allowing 18 inches beyond the ropes all around. This space is left for the convenience of the seconds, who must spring into the ring between rounds to fan and wash and encourage their warring chiefs.

Below the edge of the platform runs a narrow bench upon which are located the telegraph instruments which will click the story of the battle around the world. Here also are the telephones with metallic head-dresses attached, through which the thousands on the outside will hear of the progress of the fight via the bulletin boards. Back of this bench are several others, providing in all for 100 newspaper men.

From this level around the ring the sections radiate outward and upward like spokes of a wagon wheel. There are eight of these wedge-shaped sections, and each row of seats is five

inches higher than the one in front, the last row rising thirty-five feet from the ground level. The seats do not run one behind the other, soldier-fashion but alternate so that the man behind looks down on the ring between the heads of the two directly in front of him. By this arrangement the ring will be flanked by a sloping wall of faces and staring eyes, circling the fighters on all sides to a height of thirty feet. There will be no spaces and lines between them, just a solid wall of faces glaring down at the white square.

Between the press seats and the bleachers there is a gentle slope upon which approximately 5,000 chairs are grouped. Here the aristocrats will sit at their ease—men to whom a \$50 seat for an afternoon's sport is little out of the ordinary. The five thousand will be on a lower level than the ring, and will look upward at the fighters.

Through the bleacher section wire fences have been run, marking off the zones of financial standing. First behind the chairs come rows of seats held at \$20, \$25 and \$30 each. Then come the \$15 seats, the \$10 rows in great number, and finally the gallery gods, perched high above the ground at \$5 per perch.

Behind these highest seats a broad walk surrounds the arena. It leads to the exits, and there are no placed that the flow of the crowd will be well distributed. There is no central point of egress at which crowding thousands may aim, enhancing the danger common to all crowds of panic and stampede.

Beneath the bleachers are the quarters of the fighters, the dressing rooms in which they will don, or rather expose, their fighting togs. The two camps are separated by the width of the arena, and a short aisle, kept clear of other traffic, will be reserved for each man and his followers when they make their progress to the battle ground.

Unusual precautions have been taken to prevent disorder of any kind. There will several platoons of guards scattered through the aisles, and among the audience. Every entrance and exit will be supervised to prevent crowding, and plain clothes men will be scattered everywhere.

SKETCHES OF THE PUGILISTS WHO FIGHT ON JULY FOUR

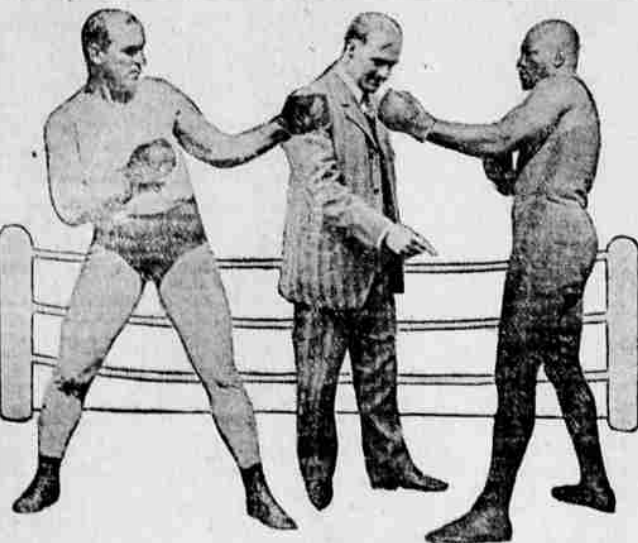
	Jeffries.	Johnson
Age	35	32
Weight	220	214
Height	6 ft. 1 1/4 in.	6 ft. 1 in.
Neck	18 1/2	18
Chest (normal)	46	39
Chest (expanded)	50 1/2	42
Biceps	15	16 1/2
Forearm	13	14 1/2
Wrist	8	10 1/2
Reach	76	72
Waist	36	34
Thigh	26 1/2	23
Calf	17 1/2	15
Ankle	10	9 1/2
Fights	20	64
Lost	1	2
Purse, \$101,000. Jeffries gets \$75,750, win, draw or lose Johnson \$25,250.		
Moving pictures estimated \$50,000 to each.		

When James J. Jeffries was born, thirty-five years ago April 15 last, a first-class fighting man was created. He was endowed with everything that goes to make up a fighter, right from

he was a fighting man at all. Despite Nature's generosity to him in the matter of size and strength, he had a strong suspicion all the time that he was intended to be a farmer. Through his early life he displayed great fondness for getting close to nature via a fishing rod or a gun, and spent quite a bit of time among the mountains. He developed a decided fondness for country life, and when he resigned his high state as champion, having annexed enough money through purses, moving pictures and stage appearances to do what he pleased, he hastened to a farm in Southern California with the intention of ending his days as a sort of country squire. Had John Arthur Johnson and the color question not interfered with his plans, he would, in all probability, have carried out that determination.

Jeffries was born in Carroll, Ohio, in 1875, but his parents came to California so soon after his arrival that he is looked upon almost as a native of that state. Little is recorded of

The Three Men Who Will Be In the Ring July 4



Everything is in readiness for one of the greatest battles in the history of pugilism, the heavyweight championship mill between James J. Jeffries, the retired champion, and Jack Johnson, the present holder of the title. It was a battle in itself to get these two remarkable pugilists to come together, and after many difficulties overcome, after skillful engineering on the part of promoters, the scrap is really to take place in July 4. The illustration produced herewith shows the three men that are to be inside the roped arena on this memorable occasion—Tex Rickard, who will officiate as referee, Jeffries and the colored world's champion.

The start. He did not need to train and school himself to any great extent. He had both the brain and the brawn, and all he lacked was the ambition to win fame as a fighter. When that ambition did come to him it required but two years for him to vanquish every fighter worthy of consideration, and make the championship title one of his personal assets. Once he secured it, the only way he could find of ridding himself of the burdens it imposed was to give it away. That is what Jeff did with it. He looked over the field of worthy heavy weights with a view to adopting one of them as his heir. Eight years after his first fight he decided that Marvin Hart was the heir-apparent and abdicated in Hart's favor.

One of the striking things about Jeffries is the fact that took a great deal of argument to convince him that

his dreams prior to 1897 beyond the fact that he was a mighty hunter, a good boiler-maker, and a rough and tumble fighter with whom few dared to mix. He never was an amateur fighter. The first time he entered the ring he did so on the spur of the moment, accepting the challenge of a colored fighter named "Hank" Griffin because of the money he would get by defeating the challenger. The fight occurred in Los Angeles, Cal., in 1893 and Jeff accomplished the defeat of the colored man in fourteen rounds, winding up with an artistic knockout.

While this victory did not seem to arouse Jeff to any ambition as a fighter, it attracted the attention of fighters to him as a valuable training partner. He seconded a middle-weight named Billy Gallagher in San Francisco two years later, and Gallagher

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