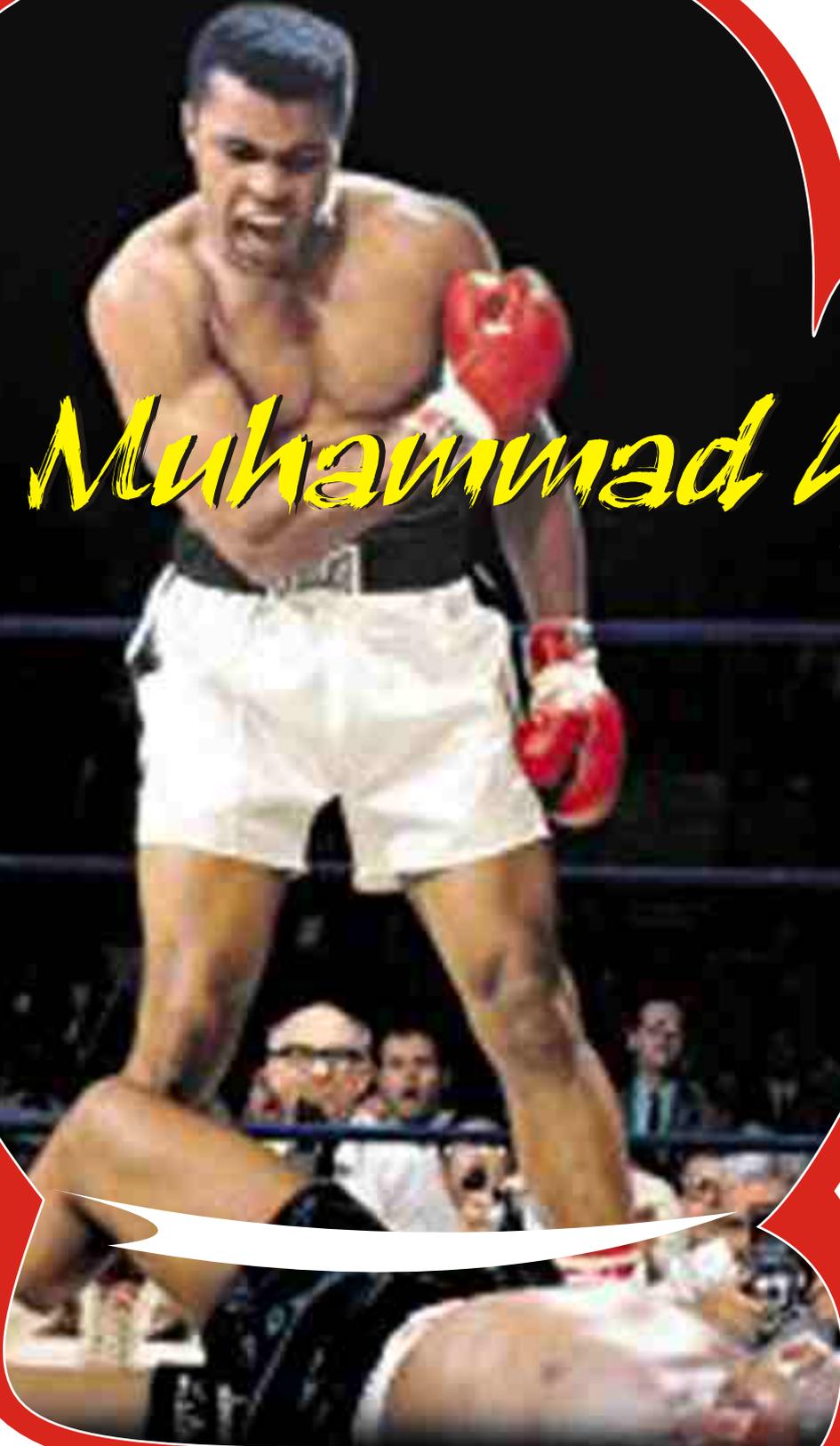


LARGER THAN LIFE

A CELEBRATION OF GREATNESS

Muhammad Ali

1942



INTRODUCTION

Muhammad Ali is a retired **American boxer and former three-time World Heavyweight Champion and winner of an Olympic Light-heavyweight gold medal**. In 1999, Ali was crowned **'Sportsman of the Century'** by Sports Illustrated and the BBC.

BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS

Ali was born in 1942, in Louisville, Kentucky and named Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr. Cassius was exposed to the world of boxing at the early age of twelve. Soon after his exposure he began training and quickly gained an impressive amateur boxing record by capturing both the National AAU and Golden Gloves Championships.

CAREER AS A BOXER

Cassius became a **professional boxer in 1960, after bringing home the Olympic Light-Heavyweight Gold Medal from Rome**. During his early days as a professional fighter, Cassius became known for his expressive personality and linguistic style of verbal banter. In 1964, Cassius shocked the boxing world by beating 22-year-old Sonny Liston, who was at that time respected as a boxing champion. It was after this victory that Cassius **announced his conversion to Islam and changed his name to Muhammad Ali**.

In 1970, he had the well-known fight- **'Fight of the Century,' against Joe Frazier**. This was the first of three battles between these icons of boxing with Ali taking two out of three matches. The best known of the three is the **greatest fight of all time known as The 'Thrilla in Manilla.'** In 1974, Ali demonstrated his excellence in the ring by knocking out then undefeated George Foreman to reacquire the Heavyweight Championship of the World. The fight was held in Zaire, Africa and was the first fight to be held in that country.

Ali is considered the first champion of the entire world and has served as an **Ambassador of Goodwill for the United States of America**. Ali held the heavyweight boxing championship until he was 36 years of age and regained the boxing title a third time by beating Leon Spinks in a rematch.

LIFE AFTER RETIREMENT

Ali retired in 1981, with a career record of 56 wins (37 by knockout) and 5 losses, and as a three-time World Heavyweight Boxing Champion. **In 1984, he was diagnosed with Pugilistic Parkinson's syndrome**.

Despite the disability, he remains a beloved and active public figure. Recently he was **voted into 'Forbes Celebrity 100' coming in at number 13**. Muhammad Ali has been the very benchmark by which all professional athletes are now measured. He is the epitome of what is good in sports. **One writer spoke of ali saying, "There are many men that are affected by the times in which they live but there are very few that actually shape them."**

Awards

- Olympic Gold Medal in boxing, 1960
- Six Kentucky Golden Gloves titles
- National Golden Gloves titles, 1959-60
- World Heavyweight Championship, 1964-67, 1974-78, 1978-79
- U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame, inductee, 1983
- Named the greatest heavyweight champion of all time, Ring Magazine, 1987
- International Boxing Hall of Fame, inductee, 1990
- Jim Thorpe Pro Sports Award, Lifetime Achievement, 1992
- Muhammad Ali Museum, Louisville Galleria, opened 1995
- Essence Award, 1997

Quotes By Muhammad Ali

“Champions aren’t made in gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them—a desire, a dream, a vision. They have to have last-minute stamina, they have to be a little faster, they have to have the skill and the will. But the will must be stronger than the skill.”



“It’s the repetition of affirmations that leads to belief. And once that belief becomes a deep conviction, things begin to happen.”



“If my mind can conceive it; and my heart can believe it - then I can achieve it.”



“He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life.”