



# GEORGE "BIG BOY" BRACKEY

HEAVYWEIGHT  
1934-40 and 1946

Although he was certainly not the greatest fighter to come from Buffalo, few could match the drawing power of this giant pugilist from Lackawanna. Many of his amateur fights outdrew most of the local pro fights in mid 1930's. Although not documented many local fight experts have said that even though only an amateur, at \$1,500 a fight, George "Big Boy" Brackey was one of the highest paid fighters in Western New York.

Although his amateur career lasted less than two months, Brackey compiled a record of 6-1, losing only his last fight, a five-round decision to Earl "Red" Conway before a crowd of 5,000 at the Broadway Auditorium. The first six fights were all by knockouts, with none extending past the second-round.

Big headlines, a big publicity campaign and a great deal of fanfare announced the beginning of "Big Boy" Brackey's professional career against Bill Fogarty on April 27, 1934. Billy Kelly, in an October 1, 1934 column mentioned that "Big Boy" Brackey and Walter Potter (10/1/34 against Brackey) were the only two local fighters to go directly from the amateur ranks to a main event fight. During the next year he fought 16 times, losing only to Johnny Freeman and fighting a draw against Young Hippo. Many of those early fights turned into wild brawls, most memorable of these fights were those against Walter Brennan, Frank Kowalski, Young Hippo, Billy Nichy and two fights against Salamanca's Johnny Freeman. Three fights against Max Zona in 1936 and two more against Johnny Freeman in 1937 could easily fit into this category.

Beginning in mid 1935 the level of competition went up, while at the same time Brackey's conditioning and recuperative skills went into decline. He also had problems with his manager, his wife and his father-in-law. This decline began when Buddy Baer KO'd him in mid 1935 and again four years later. Primo Camera KO'd him in late 1935. Seven months later King Levinsky won an easy decision over Brackey. In March of 1937 Natie Brown also decisioned Brackey. In 1938 he suffered severe beatings at the hands of both Bob Pastor and Wild Bill Boyd. Although he split two fights in 1940 and had one last fight in 1946, a knockout loss to Bill Wilson, Brackey's career effectively came to an end following his second fight with Buddy Baer. George "Big Boy" Brackey compiled a record of 28-15-2. During his relatively brief career he knocked his opponents down 68 times, while going to the canvas himself 96 times. His fights were never short of action. Four of his victories ended in less than one minute; Mike Corey (17 seconds), Jimmy Terry (41 seconds - Brackey landed the only two punches of the fight), Dynamite Reed (43 seconds) and Jack Ketchell (51 seconds).

"Big Boy" Brackey was a slugger with a glass jaw, a dislike for training and a propensity for using rabbit punches. He seemed to bring out the worst in his opponents. His fights frequently turned into brawls with fighter being wrestled to the canvas, fighters hit while they were down and fighting after the bell. George Brackey died of a stomach ailment on February 15, 1955, less than nine years after his final fight.