



Mr. Calamity

John Greenburg

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Mr. Calamity is the rollicking tale of Dwaine Simpson's hilarious misadventures as "Boxing's Clown Prince" during the 1950's and 1960's. There have been fighters with hands of stone nicknamed Rocky, but Dwaine had fists of putty and was nicknamed Sugarfoot. A lanky blonde standing five feet eleven and fighting at a hundred forty one pounds, Dwaine entered the ring 142 times for pro fights, more than double the number of bouts fought by today's professionals. For a man who couldn't break an egg with his punch and would rather dance around the ring than trade blows, it is amazing he won 113 fights, lost only 22 and fought seven draws. Born in West Virginia, Dwaine played college basketball at Western Carolina and acquired a reputation as a sensational dancer, especially when fast songs were played. He drifted into boxing after moving to Florida, fighting his first bout strictly as a lark with no previous instruction. No other fighter had as many madcap experiences during their ring careers. Dwaine fought the main event of the only boxing show held aboard a cruise ship, traveled to the Virgin Islands, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica for main events and once fought five bouts in ten days, winning them all, for a total of one hundred twenty dollars in purses. There was a circus quality to his ring appearances. Riding a unicycle was part of his training regimen, and he sometimes rode it from the dressing room to the ring. He once wrote a message to the fans on the bottom of his shoes. The clown on the back of his robe was the perfect symbol for one of the funniest professional athletes of all time. After surviving 142 professional bouts, Dwaine became a master teacher of the Sweet Science, ultimately inspiring thousands of young people. The sport that began as a lark for him became his calling, and he found great fulfillment in it. For over twenty years, he ran the Tropical Park Gym, which was recently renamed the Muhammad Ali Gym. In 2011, he was inducted into the Florida Boxing Hall of Fame in recognition of his abilities as a trainer. Dwaine is a naturally funny person able to laugh at himself. The blue eyed former pro boxer often says, "When I was young, they said I looked like Paul Newman, now they say I look like Alfred E. Neuman in Mad Magazine." Now in his eighties, Dwaine is hale, hearty and as funny as ever.

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