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The 'Bouncer'

HOUSTON — Cassius Clay decreed a day off from the gym work leading up to the defense of his heavyweight title against Cleveland Williams Monday night. But at the fight's downtown headquarters he was his bouncy self, and when they

asked him the big question his ego came shining through. Could he take the big punch of the 215-pound Williams, who has knocked out fifty-one opponents? "That," said Cassius, "is a question that will forever remain unanswered." This was Clay, the incorrigible imp, saying he does not intend to get hit on the chin by Williams.

and he added, "Does that answer the question of the gentlemen of the press?"

Clay is the paragon of insouciance as the fight with Williams nears. He is viewing the Big Cat as merely one more guy to lick, when the night comes, while running his winning streak to 27.

The promoters can't get him to say, in the interest of the gate, that Williams has much of a chance. In Houston, Clay likes to say, "I liked a bear (Liston) and a rabbit (Patterson) and I guess I can whip a cat (Williams)."

Plushy Drills

While Williams is training in secrecy in rural Texas, Clay is reveling in his downtown headquarters in the new and plushy America Hotel and patrols the lobbies as if seeking out autograph seekers. No celebrity seekers were ever so loved by the object of their hunt. Cassius comes running at the sight of a poised autograph book and brings his own pens, which he gives away. He has a quiver of them.

Clay said, "I want the people to notice me and that's why I do all that fancy dancing in the ring before I decide to start winning my fights. I knew when I was a boy that I was going to be a showman."

He knew it, he said, when he used to watch the fight of the week on television, especially when Kid Gavilan was fighting. "I liked Gavilan's white shoes," Clay said, "and I always knew my boxing shoes would be white because people notice white shoes, especially if they are being worn on fancy feet."

The Same Cat

He has not been neglecting his homework for the Williams fight, but he has left a lot of it to his trainer, Angelo Dundee, who has always been a handy guy for Clay. Dundee was around in boxing before Clay gurgled his first post-natal sound, and although they don't have any films of Williams' fights, Dundee has been him-box many times.

"The Cat fights the same way all the time," he said. "He's methodical and has never changed. Likes to throw a left and then come over the top with a right. Cassius knows how to handle that and he'll call the tune when the two of them get into the ring."

Clay was agreeing that he would, indeed, call the tune as he has done in most of his fights, mostly on his speed. "Williams is dangerous only if you let him be dangerous," Cassius explained. "There is a way to handle big, slow fighters, and I can just tire him out when I feel like it. All that dancing ain't for show. Some of it is to tire my opponents out."

Pride In Dress

He doesn't hate anybody, Cassius said, and he said he even admires Williams a little bit. "They tell me my sparring partner Mel Turnbow, had the Big Cat down twice the night they fought last March before Williams won the decision. The man who can get up after he's been knocked down is doing good. I know. I been knocked down a few times myself, and my pride took me back up."

Today his pride was in his black silk suit, narrow knit tie, button-down shirt and slick black laceless shoes. He had not signed an autograph for at least five minutes on the hotel mezzanine when he said, "I'm going down to the lobby. Maybe some people want to see the champion."



League Bowling Roundup

Ferrell, Funston In Lead

Fred Ferrell and Gene Funston each rolled a 655 series last night to pace men bowlers.

Ferrell had his set in the Park Businessmen's League. He had singles of 237, 205, and 213. Art Hammett had a 247 single in the same league.

Funston rolled his 655 in the Colony Moose League. He had singles of 182, 217, and 256.

Bob Thorne had a 648 in the Village 14 League. He had singles of 236, 210, and 202.

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Now Watch This

"Minnesota Fats," proclaimed as the world's best pool shooter, gets ready to demonstrate trick shot during exhibition at Mansfield's Montgomery Ward Store yesterday afternoon. (News Journal photo by Jim Bikar).

Cardington In Eighth Win, 14-8

Cardington (8-2) scored once in both the first and second quarter before Ridgmont (4-5) cut the lead to 12-8 at halftime. The Pirates tacked on a safety in the fourth period.

Gloria Waite Leads Loops

Gloria Waite led women's league bowling last night with a 561 series fashioned on games of 179, 183 and 199 in the West Park Debs League at Park Lanes.

East Meets West In Benefit Game

East meet West tonight in the third annual benefit sandlot football game. Game time at Arlin Field is set for 8 o'clock.

Dodger Captain Entitled To Vacation

Injured Leg Prompted Maury Wills To Quit Tour Of Japan

Los Angeles Dodgers manager Walter O'Malley said today he would be jeoparding his career if he kept playing with an injured leg.

Metzger Leader In Shelby Play

Vince Metzger rolled three plus 200 games en route to a league-leading 658 bowling series at the Rhythm Bowl here.

Gresmer Leads Crestline Play

Robert Gresmer had a 605 series and B. Higinbotham a 244 single to lead league bowling at Mahak's Recreation here.

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Minnesota Fats Says He's 'Best'

By TED LUTZ
Most persons shoot pool for fun, but it's a way of life to "Minnesota Fats."

Self-acclaimed as the world's best player, Minnesota Fats is now making a living on the legend that he has built.

He owns his own pool equipment company and makes tours on behalf of a pool table manufacturer. Soon he will have his own television show.

Perhaps the one factor that gave Minnesota his most prominence was the movie "The Hustler," which was based on his life. Since then he has turned from hustling pool to leading the life of a businessman.

"I was born retired," said Minnesota, who gave two shooting demonstrations at Mansfield's Montgomery Ward Store yesterday. "But since I've gone into manufacturing equipment I've had to work making public appearances."

Minnesota, 54, said he's toured all over the country. And everywhere he goes, prominent people and clubs ask him to give personal exhibitions.

"THE PACE is hectic," said Minnesota, who travels with his dog, Fuzzy Cat. "When I was out in Hollywood I didn't sleep for a week. All the stars wanted me to shoot at their homes."

Even though Minnesota is a businessman and showman he is still a hustler at heart.

"I'll play anybody for money," said Minnesota. "But no one will play me because I've never lost a game for cash in my life."

There are several billiard championships each year, but Minnesota does not enter them. For one reason, he said he can make more money with personal appearances than at the tournaments.

"What do I want with trophies?" asked Minnesota. "I'm never home to enjoy them. Besides, I'd rather have the money."

He was born Rudolf Walter Wanderone in New York City and began playing pool at age three and a half. He taught himself.

When he was 10 years old, he was playing and beating the best shots in the world. He got his nickname when he beat every top player in Minnesota.

"I've just played top shooters," said Minnesota. "I never looked for a patsy to beat. I have always looked for the best player where ever I go. Then I beat him."

Pool hustlers to some people are gangster - type guys who cause trouble. But he said this image is distorted.

"Pool players are the middle class people in the world," said Wanderone who once made 300 straight shots, 100 with one hand. "You can't find a better breed. They don't care about

and came out of it with a "measly" 230 game.

Don Utt, the fellow who throws a bowling ball like a discus, shot his "best ever" series last week in a "foreign" bowling establishment. Congratulations, Don, on your fine 724.

Hey! All you bowlers with a 184 and under average. This is the last week-end to enter the Second Annual Singles Handicap Match Game Tournament sponsored by the Bowling Proprietors' Association of Ohio. The most it can cost you is 6 bucks, and you have a chance to win some big money in the state finals. The more the merrier, and with additional entries, more money is paid out on a local basis.

There's a special rate being given now on Saturdays and Sundays at both Park and Village Lanes. "Practice Races" are in effect 1 to 5 P.M. on Saturdays, and from 9 A.M. 'til 1 P.M. on Sundays. For further information, inquire at either establishment.

HONOR ROLL
Jo Scherer, 631 Park Junior Girls; Jo Hamlin, 628 Park Lanettes; Jo Rhoades, 632 Village Bloomer Girls; Margie Wilson, 588 Park Parkettes; Mildred Holter, 583 Park Early Birds.

"If I only had time to practice, I could raise my average 10 pins." How many times have you heard that? Old refrain? I know I hear it 20 times a week myself. Well, Old Monte conducted a little experiment last week, and the results will show a big hole right through the alibi just mentioned. By yourself, you can bowl three games in a half hour, and that includes a few shadow balls to start, and a little rest after each game. You can easily eat lunch and get three games in an hour. Would you like to improve your average by 5 to 10 pins? It's easy, drive in instead of driving by.

See you on the "boards."

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