



A History of Women's Boxing

Malissa Smith

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Records of modern female boxing date back to the early eighteenth century in London, and in the 1904 Olympics an exhibition bout between women was held. Yet it was not until the 2012 Olympics—more than 100 years later—that women’s boxing was officially added to the Games. Throughout boxing’s history, women have fought in and out of the ring to gain respect in a sport traditionally considered for men alone. The stories of these women are told for the first time in this comprehensive work dedicated to women’s boxing.

A History of Women’s Boxing traces the sport back to the 1700s, through the 2012 Olympic Games, and up to the present. Inside-the-ring action is brought to life through photographs, newspaper clippings, and anecdotes, as are the stories of the women who played important roles outside the ring, from spectators and judges to managers and trainers. This book includes extensive profiles of the sport’s pioneers, including Barbara Buttrick whose plucky carnival shows launched her professional boxing career in the 1950s; sixteen-year-old Dallas Malloy who single-handedly overturned the strictures against female amateur boxing in 1993; the famous “boxing daughters” Laila Ali and Jacqui Frazier-Lyde; and teenager Claressa Shields, the first American woman to win a boxing gold medal at the Olympics.

Rich in detail and exhaustively researched, this book illuminates the struggles, obstacles, and successes of the women who fought—and continue to fight—for respect in their sport. *A History of Women’s Boxing* is a must-read for boxing fans, sports historians, and for those interested in the history of women in sports.

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