

Muhammad Ali in Washington State

One of the hottest controversies of the summer of 1970 was whether or not to allow a boxing match to take place at Seattle in the fall between Cassius Clay, the former heavy-weight champion of the world, and Joe Frazier. The controversy is detailed in the records of the Professional Athletic Commission found in the Archives.

At the time, Clay was described as "boxing's most non-grata person" for his 1967 refusal to be inducted into the armed forces. He was ultimately found guilty by the U.S. District Court in Houston, Texas, for violating the Selective Service Act, a felony. Although the Supreme Court reversed that decision in 1971, the felony conviction essentially made him ineligible for a boxing license in Washington State.

The issue was very heated, as can be seen, by the

Application Subject to Washington?

State Athletic Commission of Washington
OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON
SAMUEL J. EVANS, GOVERNOR

O. Receipt K.
No. _____
Received _____
Cash, M. O., Check _____
Considered _____
Photos _____
License No. _____

APPLICATION FOR BOXER'S LICENSE
FEE, \$3.00
(This fee shall be paid to the State Athletic Commission or Washington.)

The undersigned, enclosing the fee of three dollars (\$3.00) as required by law, hereby makes application for a license to act as a boxer.

Name: CASSIUS M. CLAY (Give last name in full) Date: June 8, 1970
City: Philadelphia (Give city and state in full) Zip: 1935 North 72nd Street
Present occupation: Lecturer (Give full name of employer) Previous occupation: Boxer-Heavyweight
Business address: 1175 N.E. 129th Street, Miami, Florida (Give full name of employer) Previous occupation: Champion of World

Ring weight: 210 Height: 6' 3" in. Age: 28
Place of birth: Louisville, Kentucky Date of birth: Jan. 17, 1942

Married: Yes (Give date) Citizen of United States of America: Foreign born
Robert Arum 477 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y.
Michael Malitz 345 Park Ave., New York, N.Y.
Fred Hofheinz 99 Indian Trails, Houston, Texas
Howard Cossell c/o ABC, 1330 Ave. of Americas, New York, N.Y.
Chauncey Sakridge 123 W. Madison Street, Chicago, Ill.

Name of Manager: None
Address of Manager: _____

Is Manager authorized to contract for your appearance or services? _____
Is Manager licensed with Athletic Commission? _____ Manager's license number _____
Was applicant ever disqualified anywhere in any contest for any cause? No
Was applicant ever penalized or disciplined by any state or boxing commission? Yes
If "yes" to either of the foregoing questions, state where, and complete circumstances:
See Insert A, attached

Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor? Yes
If so, when and where? (Give full particulars) June 21/67, U.S. District Ct. Houston Texas, for violation of Selective Services Act. Conviction on appeal before U.S. Circ. Ct. for Fifth Circuit

Has applicant any financial interest in any club, corporation, association or organization promoting boxing in this state or any other place? No
Or, has any promoter, club, association, corporation or organization any financial interest in your earnings as a boxer? No

June 8, 1970

RING RECORD
(This Must Be Complete and Accurate. If No Ring Record, Say So)

Date	3/22/67	Place	New York, N.Y.	Opponent	Zora Folley	Result	KO 7
Date	2/6/67	Place	Houston, Texas	Opponent	Ernie Terrell	Result	W 15
Date	11/14/66	Place	Houston, Texas	Opponent	Williams	Result	KO 3
Date	9/10/66	Place	Frankfurt, Germany	Opponent	Karl Mildenberger	Result	KO 12
Date	8/6/66	Place	London, England	Opponent	Brian London	Result	KO 3
Date	5/21/66	Place	London, England	Opponent	Henry Cooper	Result	KO 6
Date	3/29/66	Place	Toronto, Canada	Opponent	George Chuvalo	Result	W 15
Date	11/22/65	Place	Las Vegas, Nev.	Opponent	Floyd Patterson	Result	KO 12
Date	3/25/65	Place	Lewiston, Me.	Opponent	Sonny Liston	Result	KO 1
Date	2/25/64	Place	Miami Beach, Fla.	Opponent	Sonny Liston	Result	KO 7
Date	6/18/63	Place	London, England	Opponent	Henry Cooper	Result	KO 5
Date	3/13/63	Place	New York, N.Y.	Opponent	Doug Jones	Result	W 10
Date	2/24/63	Place	Pitts., Pa.	Opponent	Charlie Powell	Result	KO 3
Date	11/15/62	Place	Los Angeles, Calif.	Opponent	Archie Moore	Result	KO 4
Date	7/20/62	Place	Los Angeles, Cal.	Opponent	A. Lavorante	Result	KO 5

NOTICE TO BOXERS
Conditions Qualifying for a Boxing License

No one should present himself or apply for a boxing license who has any physical deformity, or any disease of the vital organs, whether acute, subacute or chronic, e. g.:

Bodily deformities such as—	Diseases such as—	Any other disease or condition, such as
1. Curvature of the spine.	1. Valvular heart disease.	deaf and dumb or partially deaf, when
2. Missing fingers.	2. High blood pressure from any	in the estimation of the examining phy-
3. Recent fractures, etc.	cause.	sician would be detrimental to the boxer,
	3. Bright's disease.	the arena, or boxing in general.
Condition of—	4. Recent recoveries from acute	
Right eye: <u>Good</u>	illnesses such as pneumonia,	
Left eye: <u>Good</u>	typhoid, etc.	
	5. Venereal diseases.	
	6. Skin diseases.	

Are you free from the above physical defects or diseases? Yes

If not, describe in detail your present physical condition

Sworn to before me this 8th day of June, 1970

Notary Public, State of New York
Qualified in Kings County
Commission Expires March 30, 1971

Muhammad Ali
(Applicant's full name)
(LEFT AND RIGHT THUMB PRINTS)

Approved: _____
Date: _____
STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION
of WASHINGTON

Chairman
Executive Secretary
Commissioner

The Commission must be notified promptly of any change in manager or terms of contract with manager. Failure to do so may result in the suspension or revocation of this license.

correspondence to the Commission on both sides of the issue. The main arguments were that as a conscientious objector he should not be allowed to fight at all, and the other side stated it was un-American not to allow Clay to make a living in his profession while his case was under appeal. Ultimately the Commission decided 2-1 to deny Clay's application thereby putting an end to the issue in Washington.

There a few items of interest in Clay's application to the Commission. First, he lists his previous occupation as "Boxer-Heavyweight Champion of the World." Second, one of the references listed by Clay was Howard Cossell. And lastly he began to sign the application Muhammad Ali, but crossed that out and wrote Cassius Clay.