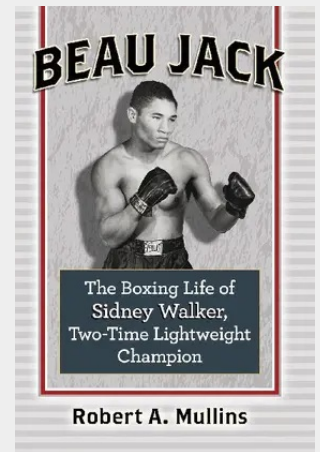


Beau Jack

The Boxing Life of Sidney Walker, Two-Time Lightweight Champion

Among the great lightweights of the 1940s and 1950s, Boxing Hall of Famer Sidney "Beau Jack" Walker (1921–2000) was virtually orphaned by his parents and eked out a living as a shoeshine boy. He honed his craft fighting battles royale for wealthy white members of the prestigious Augusta National Golf Club, eventually receiving financing for his career from club founders. He went on to win two lightweight titles and set numerous records. He was the draw for the highest admission paid for a ringside seat—\$100,000—and was named "Fighter of the Year" in 1944. Like most black pugilists of his day he struggled against discrimination in the sport. Despite this, he sustained an impressive 18-year professional career—117 fights, 83 wins, 40 by KO. Walker retired from the ring penniless and went back to shining shoes, the money set aside for him by his handlers mysteriously depleted.

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