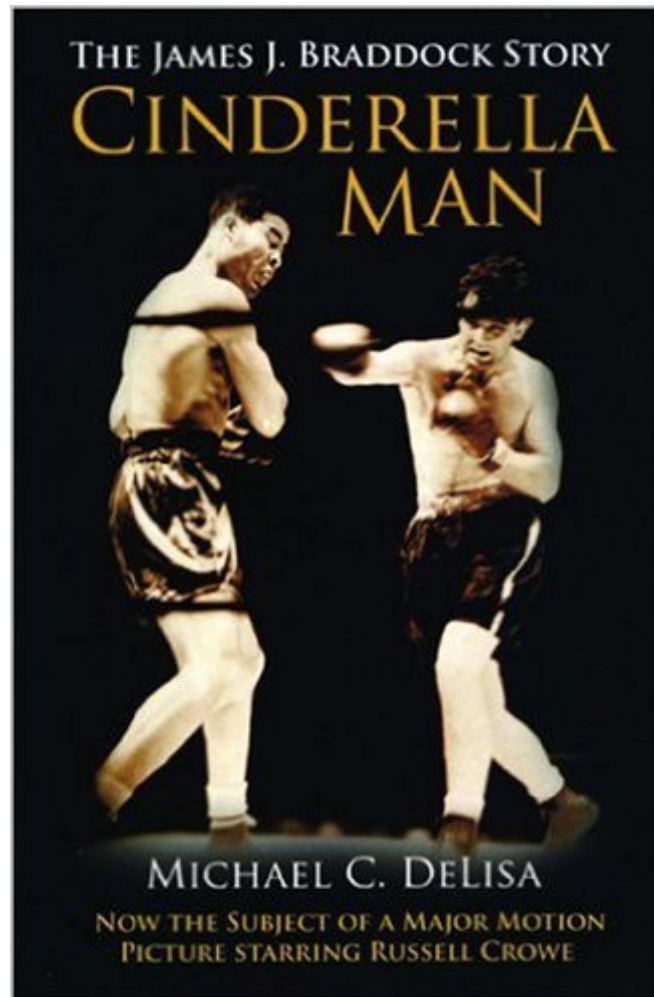


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Cinderella Man: The James J. Braddock Story



Synopsis

In 1934, Jim Braddock was down and out. His boxing career blighted by broken hands, the New York Irishman had won five of his previous 21 bouts and had been forced to quit. The Great Depression was at its height. When work dried up on the Hudson River docks, Braddock was forced to claim welfare relief to feed his young family. Then came a visit from his old manager, asking if he wanted one more fight. Desperate for money, Braddock had no choice but to say yes. Four wins later, he was the heavyweight champion of the world in the greatest upset in the sport's history. Braddock's rags-to-riches success led Damon Runyon to call him the Cinderella Man. His story captivated the nation in much the way the racehorse Seabiscuit would a few years later. Braddock came to represent the struggle for survival facing many families in mid-1930s America. James J. Braddock was born in New York City in 1906, one of seven children. He developed an early taste for fighting and quit school to work a series of menial jobs before resolving to pursue his boxing dream. Over the next decade he became a contender, before injury ruined his prospects. Redemption came on the night of June 13, 1935, with his famous victory over the outrageous champion Max Baer. Braddock would later lose his title to the great Joe Louis, but his place as the people's champion was cemented forever. Author Michael DeLisa is historical consultant on a major motion picture entitled The Cinderella Man, starring Russell Crowe and Renée Zellweger, to be released in the summer of 2005.

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Customer Reviews

I knew a little bit about Jim Braddock before I read this book - as a boxing fan I'd heard of the Cinderella Man but never regarded him to be as interesting as the greats of the division like Jack Dempsey and Joe Louis. But this book made me realise what a fantastic character he was - and what a life he led. There was no bull about Braddock; what you saw was what you got. He had an iron jaw and was a very good boxer but it was his heart that made him a champion; he never knew when to quit. Michael Delisa has really done his homework, going back to original sources rather than regurgitating stuff from press agents and over-exaggerating boxing writers. He captures the man, the era and the fights. The cover notes say he was the historical consultant on the movie - and if you buy this book, you'll want to see the film. Great read.

Book is a good read, but sometimes a little too much detail of the fights and opponents Braddock faced. If you've seen the movie, you'll be surprised at how close the book is to the movie. It's an inspirational story of a true American hero. A man dedicated to the welfare of his family. Most of the book is focused on his fights. But there is enough of the personal life of James J. Braddock to keep those happy who are seeking a personal account of his life.

This is an interesting story about a very determined fighter both in and outside of the ring who came off the federal relief lines during the Great Depression to become champion of the world. An unlikely figure that reads more like fiction than actual reality. The Cinderella man as Daymon Runyon aptly coined Braddock before the Baer match up for the title. Jimmy Braddock is a story worth knowing about whether you're a boxing fan or not because of the raw grit and courage Braddock displayed against all odds prove through this story that anything is possible no matter how low you have fallen in life. Jimmy's unequalled heart and determination boiled down to watching his family perish or succeed in sport that already turned the back of its hand to him because everyone thought due to multiple injuries that his ring career was over. A brave Jimmy Braddock cut down the tough number 3 ranked heavyweight contender in the world Corn Griffin in 3 intense rounds to begin one of the most unlikely journeys to the heavyweight championship of the world by outpointing the invincible, murderous punching Max Baer. This story is true life rags to riches saga on a real long shot named Jimmy Braddock. What a man he was in life. He was a true inspiration.

I'm not a boxing fan, but became interested in James Braddock's story after watching the Movie Cinderella Man. My ultimate goal was to find out more about this man that staged an incredible comeback against staggering odds, to win the world heavy weight championship from Max Baer.

Delisa's book attempts to deliver to the reader something more of Braddock's life; however, the information is mostly anecdotal and second hand, and fails to shed much more light on what Braddock was like. The fact of the matter is, there is likely little information about Braddock's life other than what Delisa tells, or he would have likely told it, given he mentions previous bios of the former champ that were written during Braddock lifetime. The upside to the book is that Delisa gives the reader an excellent view of the cast of characters that made up the world of boxing in the 20's and 30's, weaving Braddock into the picture when appropriate, which is often. Delisa also gives the reader a strong account of how the Great Depression affected Braddock, Boxing, and the nation, which embraced Braddock as one of their own, because he was down as far as anyone at the time and brought himself back from the edge of oblivion to save himself and his family.

This was a nice book to read about the story of how James Braddock was able to fight his way from the bottom to the top. Never let anything hold you back.

I fear that this well written and richly detailed book has gotten lost in the shuffle of all of the Braddock biographies that have been published in the wake of the success of the film "Cinderella Man" Even though it's far from the best of the group, it deserves a better fate than that. Most of the Braddock volumes on the market have focused almost exclusively on the ring exploits of Braddock and his contemporaries, Delisa takes a slightly different approach in his narrative, incorporating more of Braddock's personal life into the story, and going into greater detail about events in his early childhood than other books have, to give the reader a more complete portrait of this American sports icon. In my humble opinion, Cinderella Man: James J. Braddock, Max Baer, and the Greatest Upset in Boxing History by Jeremy Schaap is still the best book written on the subject, and I'll continue to recommend it, but Delisa's volume comes in a close second.

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