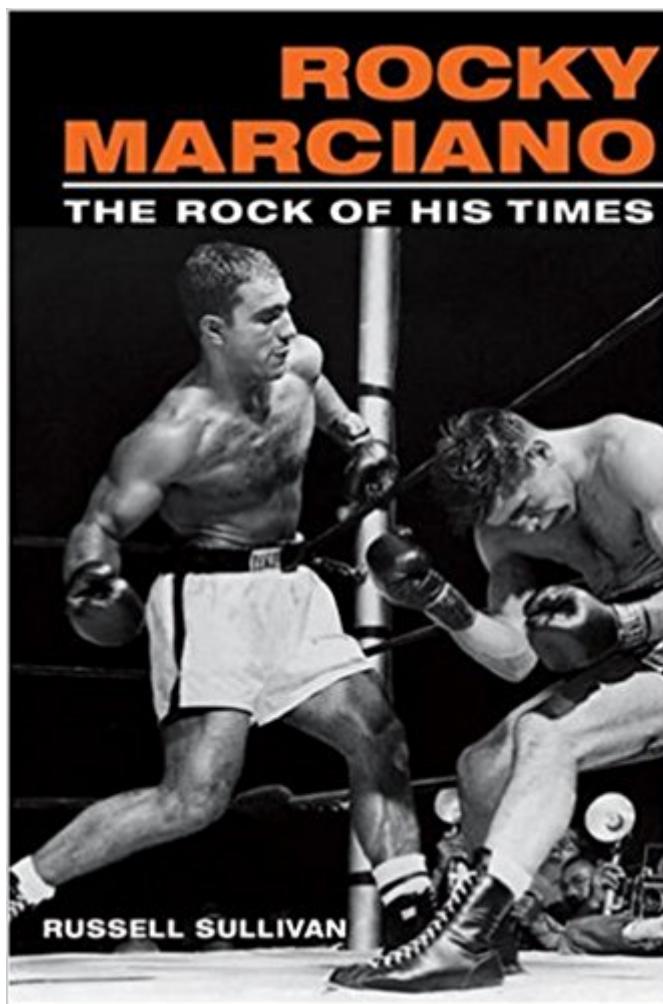


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# Rocky Marciano: The Rock Of His Times (Sport And Society)



## **Synopsis**

Talks about the life, career, and impact of Rocky Marciano, the legendary heavyweight boxing champion who also stands as a powerful symbol of his times.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Sullivan, a business writer and owner of a corporate education company, offers a solid if unspectacular biography of the only undefeated heavyweight champion in history. He recounts Marciano's career from his first professional fight in 1947 through his death in a plane crash in 1969, looking at the sports hero as a symbol of both the optimism and the darker cultural currents of the 1950s. Sullivan provides a detailed and complete history of Marciano's fights, as well as some rich contextual background on the characters and atmosphere of boxing during the 1950s. Marciano, the child of Italian immigrants, who grew up in working class Brockton, Mass., was presented by the press as the ideal '50s man: a wholesome, patriotic family man with an all-American rags-to-riches story and worshipped by his fans as such. He was another Great White Hope in a sport dominated by black men, and though many 1950s sportswriters strove for a colorblind approach, it was nonetheless clear that they rooted for Rocky. The cultural analysis is the strongest part of the book; Russell's portrait of the private man (sometimes ambivalent about his family and notoriously obsessed with collecting and never spending money) is well researched and complex, but hampered by his often clunky and repetitive writing style. Though Marciano never achieved the

popularity of Ali or Louis, his story offers a fascinating glimpse of boxing at midcentury and boxing buffs will be glad to have this overdue biography. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Ask the average boxing fan who were the greatest heavyweight champions, and chances are that names such as Louis, Ali, and Dempsey will quickly pop up. Some who fancy themselves historians might chime in with Jack Johnson or even John L. Sullivan. Only after these choices will most people get around to Rocky Marciano, a plodding, many said clumsy, fighter willing to take ten blows to get in the big knockout punch of his own. But Rocky had one thing over all these guys he fought 49 pro fights and never lost, retiring as champion in 1956. In this biography, Sullivan, a Boston-area business writer, examines Marciano the fighter and Marciano the person, a man who symbolized his era as much as Ali did his. Along the way, Sullivan also offers excellent portraits of Marciano's nemeses Ezzard Charles, Jersey Joe Walcott, Archie Moore, and others and gives a sense of big-time boxing in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the sport trailed only baseball in popularity. Essential for all boxing collections. Jim Burns, Jacksonville P.L., FL Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Rocky Marciano was a hero to my dad, so therefore has been a hero of mine since I was 13 years old. I am now 37. I was kind of afraid to read this book because I thought it might diminish the legend in my own mind. Well, it actually enhanced it! Sullivan is no Marciano cheerleader but he does a great job of placing his achievements in their proper context. Marciano was the best heavyweight of his era by far. He beat all the top contenders no matter if we think they were over-the-hill, not that good, or whatever. Sullivan does great background on some of Marciano's opponents; especially Walcott, Charles, La Starza, and Moore. These men were real good heavyweights. The main problem with Marciano's era was it was on the tail end of the great Joe Louis. However Marciano was indeed an alltime great. He was perhaps the hardest puncher of all time pound for pound, he probably had the greatest stamina of any fighter ever, he could throw an inhumane amount of punches and never tire, he was only knocked down twice in his whole career. He was 5 feet 10 inches tall and weighed about 185 pounds. He had a freakishly small 67 inch reach. Everyone he fought was bigger than him, yet he won all 49 fights with 43 by knockout. One thing that surprised me is that Marciano was thought of as a bit of a dirty fighter by some of his peers. Sullivan puts this in its proper context that it was a by product of Marciano's all out wild in

your face style. He never gave his opponents a chance to rest or get set. Sullivan also shows how Marciano who many thought was a squeaky clean 50's man actually was indeed flawed. He was a very complex man which was due in large part in my opinion, to his fear of poverty and being first generation American. I am a first generation American and old Italian traditions do not always fit easily here. My Dad was born in Naples Italy in 1950, right before Marciano became champ. He loves and adores Marciano, and so do I.

"Rocky Marciano The rock of His Times" by Russell Sullivan is a masterpiece of Sports Biography. Russell Sullivan "doesn't pull any punches" in this explosive story of a simple-man trying to make a "simple-living" in a very complex barbaric industry! Sullivan knows his subject from all sides of the ring... and out. Not only does he know boxing, he knows the human spirit that envelopes it. This is a real "page-turner" and there is a wallop in every chapter! From Carmine Vingo to Roland LaStanza, and on to Archie Moore, the bell just keeps on ringing! It's not just a story about boxing; it's a real tale about a contemporary "Lancelot" fighting his dragons from every direction. "Marciano came to symbolize early-1950's simplicity. He was indeed, the rock of his times." (p.305) Russell Sullivan does a superb job of bringing back those restless spirits at Madison Square Garden. "And in this corner, from Holyoke, Massachusetts: R O C K Y ..... M A R C I A N O ..... !!!!!" If, you haven't found a good book to read in a long time, don't "throw in the towel" just yet! Buy this book, it's a great read.

'Boring, not a biography. A yawnburner, couldn't keep the kindle up. Luckily, the kindle case protected it when it fell on the floor. The author writes for a living and filled up the pages of this big book with a lot of scholastic fillling. I am sick of reading the number 50 after reading just the beginning of the book. Sullivan should thumb his nose down on people when in their presence, then he can dance like a young Ali - this is excitement.

none

Excellent biography of one of the greatest boxers of all time. Marciano was a powerful puncher and a charismatic personality who succeeded on a strong will to win at all costs. Very good book.

My husband loves this book. I bought it for him.

Excellent .. w amazing details about his life and fights.

Sullivan has written a solid, honest biography. Well written and well researched.

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