

New York Herald
July 1, 1910

Man Never Lived Who Could Keep Johnson From Landing, Jack London Says, But Jeffries Can Stand a Lot of Punishment

White Man's Quickness Will Not Show to Advantage Beside the Negro's

Johnson Will Land Three Blows to One

But the Californian, Being Left Handed, May Foil the Famous Uppercut

Problem is the Clinches

Author Thinks Jeffries May Use His Crouch and Allow the Black Pugilist to Rest

Of course, every fight fan believes he knows just how the fight is going to go. I find myself no exception to this, and I am filled with quite definite ideas, in a general way, as to how the big fight will open and move on toward its finish.

For, in the first place, barring accidents, lucky punches and yellow streaks, it will not be a short fight. There is practically no chance at all that it will be over within ten rounds. Twenty would be nearer the mark, though it may go thirty. Thirty five rounds is the maximum I dare suggest, beyond which it is unthinkable that the contest can continue.

Neither man is a knocker out in the sense that Fitzsimmons was or that Sullivan was. Neither carries the sedative kick in his biceps and shoulder muscles that can put a man abruptly to sleep at any stage of the fight. Both men depend upon the cumulative effect of their blows, Jeffries with his rips and Johnson with his right smashes. Their method has usually been to reduce an antagonist a blow at a time, piling up an account of weakness and distress. Thus, when the end comes, if come it must, one of three things will happen. The referee may stop the fight and award the decision because one or the other man is in a bad way. One or the other man, or his seconds, may throw up the sponge because his is in a bad way, or, one or the other, being in a bad way, from the cumulative effect of punches received will go down for the count before a blow not necessarily severe, but sufficient enough to do the work on his weakened condition.

Thus, so weakened was Britt at Colma that almost any sort of a punch from Battling Nelson was sufficient to finish him. Corbett did not really knock out Sullivan at New Orleans. While it is true that in the latter part of the fight Corbett administered a lot of sharp punishment, nevertheless Sullivan was ready, and had been long ready, to take the count, having exhausted himself by vainly trying to reach the wily dodger. The blow that put Sullivan down for keeps would not have shaken him in the opening rounds of the fight. Quite different was the blow Fitzsimmons used to finish Corbett in the Carson fight. That blow was a genuine knocker out.

Whether delivered in the first round or the last, or in any intervening round, Corbett would have gone down for the count just the same.

Neither Jeffries nor Johnson carries such a kick in his arms. As a result, always barring accidents, of course, the fight will be of fairly long duration, each man striving to pile up the score of cumulative punishment, and how will they go at it? It is fair to assume, from the history of the two men, that the first several rounds will be easy. It is scarcely plausible that Jeffries will start to rush the fight at the sound of the gong, and Johnson certainly will not rush it. There won't be much tearing-in in those first several rounds. The men have never met before; they will take it easy, feel each other out, learn slowly and safely what to expect, what to avoid and how to get in their own licks best.

It is in this opening part of the fight, as sure as "pigs is pigs," that Jeffries will receive the greater portion of the punishment. The man never lived who could prevent Johnson landing on him. That Jeffries will receive during the opening period three blows to every one he gives is not too wild a thing to believe. Jeffries himself has said that he is prepared for this and that he is quite willing to exchange blows at the ratio of one to three. He bases this willingness upon two things—his belief in his greater stamina for assimilating punishment, and his belief that his own punches have far more punishing power than Johnson's.

One thing noticeable in this fight will be Jeffries' quickness. He will be quicker than ever before. This can be depended upon, though his quickness may not be so evident because he will have to employ it against a phenomenally quick and clever adversary. Jeffries' own cleverness will be a surprise to **many** who have never seen him in action, or who have not seen him in action since his early fighting days. Nevertheless, more than once as he comes in, crouched, with his shoulder, into a clinch, will his head be lifted by Johnson's right. Another thing that will be manifest is that Johnson will better measure time and distance. Jeffries will pay the penalty for this, but will continue doggedly to bore in at the ratio of one for three back. He has done it before. He will do it on the Fourth.

As the fight progresses, it can be depended upon that Jeffries will land more frequently and that he will reduce the ratio of exchange; and right here arises one of those little problems that only the fight itself can solve. Johnson's great dangerous blow is his smashing right uppercut. He has always used it with signal success on right-handed men. Now Jeffries is left-handed. Suppose he should elect to fight leading with his right hand instead of his left. What will happen? Suppose he adds his ancient crouch to the combination. Will he baffle that right of Johnson's? Who can forecast? It remains to be seen.

Many things remain that can be known only by being seen. For instance, who will loaf in the clinches and rest his weight on the other? Johnson is notorious for this. Yet Jeffries is the taller and heavier. Will he burden and tire the negro with his weight, or will he come in on the crouch, using his shoulder, and find the negro's weight on him?

One thing most certain is that Jeffries will force the fight and persistently hunt his man from gong to gong. Johnson, too, likes to make the other man lead so as to time him. But, suppose that Jeffries hunts and hunts, and leads and leads, and that Johnson backs and shuffles and runs away from him? Will Jeffries follow up the chase that may or may not be vain? Or will he take his stand in the centre of the ring and demand of the referee that Johnson fight him?

The thing I am most curious to see is what will happen when these two strong-shouldered men come together in the clinches.

Johnson has always been noted for his strength and skill at such times, in blocking, locking arms, stalling and so entangling an opponent's arms as to make him helpless. Can he do

this with Jeffries? It must be remembered that for the first time in his life Johnson encounters an opponent who is just as strong as he in the shoulders and arms, if not stronger. In fact, Jeffries may be far stronger. No one knows just how strong he is in that particular. Will Johnson entangle Jeff's arms and make a toy of him, or will Jeff teach him, at such moments, what strength is? I am curious to know. I am curious to know.