

Sonny Liston vs Cassius Clay

February 25th 1964

Who is Sonny Liston?

Sonny Liston needs no introduction. Considered by many to be the best heavyweight of our time, maybe of all time.



Even many hard-hitting champions are reluctant to meet him in the ring. His powerful punches, his massive, muscled arms, tremendous left jab, heavy form and his intimidating style make him a true force to be reckoned with.

Sonny fixes his opponents with his ferocious eye, and they can kiss the fight goodbye. The man is indestructible!

How has Liston prepared for the fight?

Liston seems relaxed, confident even. Rumour has it he has not trained hard. He does not expect to need the energy to fight for more than two rounds with Cassius Clay.

Who is Cassius Clay?

The world of boxing has taken notice of Clay's fast-talking style, he seems to enjoy the spotlight. This 22-year old challenger, known as the 'Louisville Lip' won the light heavyweight gold medal in 1960.



He has lightning reflexes and fast hand and foot moves, not to mention a limitless supply of confidence. However he has been knocked down many times recently by lesser boxers than Liston.

He seems to have taken it upon himself to aggravate Liston as much as he can, but how can an enraged Liston be any easier to beat? Clay has purchased a bus which displays the slogan 'Liston must go in eight'. He drove it to Liston's house at 3am, waking the champion by shouting '*come on out of there, I'm gonna whip you now!*'

How has Clay prepared for the fight?

Liston's team believe Clay's taunts reflect his terror of the bigger man. Clay has trained hard, even studying films of Liston's prior fights, spotting patterns of when he is preparing to punch.

Pre-match Predictions

- We asked 46 sports journalists, 43 have backed Liston to win.
- Clay is the underdog, bets are seven to one that he will win.
- Why is this the case? Clay's boxing style does not seem to suit the heavyweight division. He is a fast and light puncher, but he lacks the ability to hit home hard. How many Liston punches can he take?
- He moves constantly, but this will be no match for an experienced, hard-hitting heavyweight like Sonny Liston.