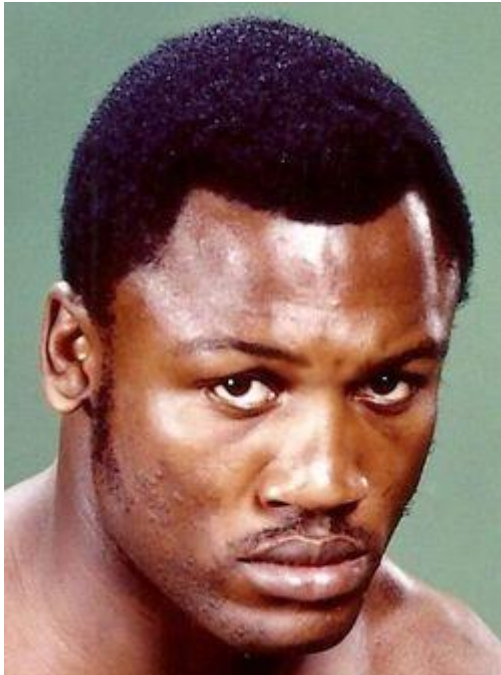


Joe Frazier



IBHoF Bio

Name: Joe Frazier

Alias: Smokin'

Birth Name: Joseph William Frazier

Born: 1944-01-12

Hometown: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Birthplace: Beaufort, South Carolina, USA

Died: 2011-11-07 (Age:67)

Stance: Orthodox

Height: 182cm

Reach: 185cm

Pro Boxer: [Record](#)

Amateur Boxer: [Record](#)

Trainer: [Yancey "Yank" Durham](#) (1965-1973), [Eddie Futch](#) (1974-1976)

Manager: Yancey "Yank" Durham (1965-1973), Cloverlay, Inc. (1965-1974), self-managed (1975-1976, 1981)



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Amateur Career



Frazier vs. Vadim Yemelyanov at the 1964 Olympics

Frazier's amateur record is usually listed as 38-2, with 37 knockouts. Other sources claim 38-1, 38-3 and 38-4. [\[1\]](#)

Amateur Highlights

- 1962, 1963 and 1964 Middle Atlantic [Golden Gloves](#) Heavyweight Champion.
- 1963 National [Amateur Athletic Union](#) Tournament: [Tony Doyle](#) L 3 (Unconfirmed)
- 1964 February 21: New Jersey Golden Gloves Tournament (FINALS): Gerard O'Neill L 3
- 1964 U.S. [Olympic](#) Trials. Results:
 - May 18: Wyce Westbrook KO 3
 - May 19: Clay Hodges TKO 2
 - May 20: Buster Mathis L 3
- 1964 September 18: Buster Mathis L 3 (Some sources claim this was an exhibition. Mathis broke his right middle finger against Frazier and had to withdraw from the U.S. Olympic team. Frazier took his place.)
- 1964 Heavyweight Gold Medalist for the U.S. at the Olympics in Tokyo, Japan. Results:
 - October 15: George Oywello (Uganda) KO 1

- October 19: Athol McQueen (Australia) KO 1
- October 21: [Vadim Yemelyanov](#) (Soviet Union) KO 2 (Frazier broke his left thumb against Yemelyanov.)
- October 23: [Hans Huber](#) (Germany) W 3 (3-2)

Professional Career



Frazier's *Ring* Magazine Belt

- [NYSAC World Heavyweight Champion](#) 1968-1970 (title discontinued)
- Won the vacant championship with an eleventh-round [TKO](#) of [Buster Mathis](#) on March 4, 1968.
- [Undisputed World Heavyweight Champion](#) 1970-1973
- Defeated [World Boxing Association](#) Heavyweight Champion [Jimmy Ellis](#) by a fourth-round [RTD](#) on February 16, 1970.
Won the vacant World Heavyweight Championships of the [World Boxing Council](#) and [The Ring](#) magazine.
- Lost the championship to [George Foreman](#) by a second-round TKO on January 22, 1973.

Cloverlay, Inc.



F. Bruce Baldwin, Yank Durham and Joe Frazier

When Frazier returned home to Philadelphia after winning the Olympic Heavyweight Championship, he had to have an operation on his broken left thumb. The hand was placed in a cast, and Frazier was told it would take six months to heal. Due to the injury, he lost his slaughterhouse job. "My job was cleaning blood and flesh off the floor so that the guys wouldn't slide down and hurt themselves," Frazier said. "With water and a cast, it didn't work. So they fired me." The Rev. Dr. William H. Gray, pastor of Philadelphia's Bright Hope Baptist Church, gave Frazier a part-time janitorial job to help make ends meet. [2]

Frazier was able to return to the gym in the spring of 1965 and made his professional debut at Convention Hall in Philadelphia on August 16, 1965. He knocked out Woody Goss at 1:42 of the first round.

Yank Durham was Frazier's manager, trainer and financier through the first few months of his professional career. "I had him as my sole property for his first four fights," Durham said. "But I had sense enough to know we needed financial backing that I couldn't provide." Rev. Gray introduced Durham and Frazier to Dr. F. Bruce Baldwin, a well-respected civic leader in Philadelphia and president of the Horn and Hardart Baking Company. Baldwin was intrigued by the idea of backing a professional fighter and interested in putting together the kind of group Durham had in mind.

Baldwin organized a syndicate which included bankers, industrialists, contractors, lawyers, clergymen, doctors, and journalists. The corporation was called Cloverlay—"Clover" for good luck and "overlay" from a betting term that means good odds. It was similar to the Louisville Sponsoring Group which launched [Muhammad Ali's](#) professional career. Cloverlay initially sold eighty shares of stock at \$250 each. One of the shareholders was [Larry Merchant](#), sports editor of the *Philadelphia Daily News* and future [HBO](#) boxing commentator.

In January 1966, Frazier signed a three-year contract with Cloverlay, which held options for two additional three-year periods. Frazier received fifty percent of his purses and a weekly salary of \$100. Also, the corporation took care of all expenses and taxes. Cloverlay received thirty-five percent of Frazier's purses, and Durham got fifteen percent. [3]

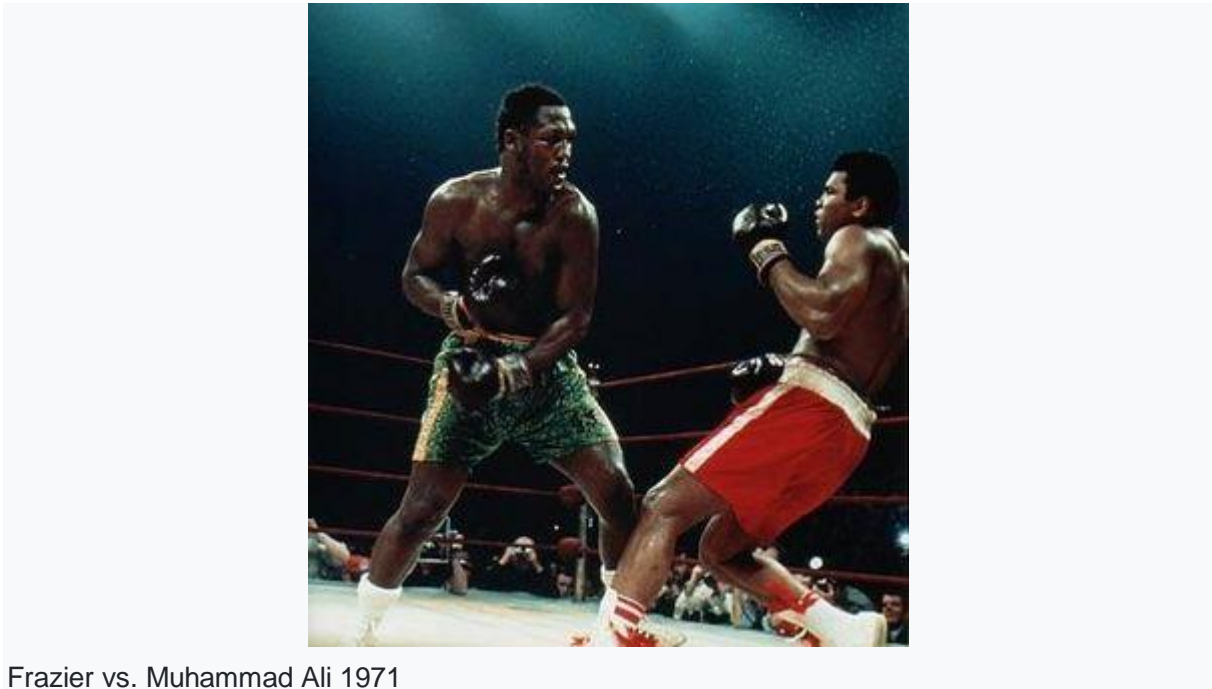
Frazier and Cloverlay parted ways after nine years. The corporation ran out of options to renew the contract, and Frazier became his own manager. [4]

- Frazier, age 17 and weighing 230 pounds, started working out at a Police Athletic League (PAL) gym in Philadelphia to lose weight. While there, he caught the attention of Yank Durham, who trained boxers at night after working all day as a railroad welder.
- One opponent, [Jeff Davis](#), retired after losing to Frazier. Davis was knocked out in five rounds on April 11, 1967. It was his fourth loss in five fights.
- Frazier recorded five first-round knockouts and fourteen knockouts within the first three rounds.

- When Muhammad Ali was stripped of the World Heavyweight Championship in 1967 for refusing to be drafted into the U.S. Army, the World Boxing Association held an eight-man tournament to fill the title vacancy. Yank Durham was against Frazier, the WBA's No. 2-ranked contender, entering the tournament, and Cloverly's board of directors voted unanimously to keep Frazier out. The corporation said it didn't want Frazier "tied up for two years by the ancillaries" and "the money wasn't enough." The proposal by the tournament organizers called for the winner to fight two years under Sports Action, Inc., the firm that handled the ancillary rights for the tournament. [5]
-
- Frazier knocked out Buster Mathis in eleven rounds on March 4, 1968, to gain recognition as World Heavyweight Champion by the New York State Athletic Commission. Frazier was also recognized as World Heavyweight Champion by Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Texas, as well as Mexico and South America.
-
- Frazier won the vacant *Ring* magazine World Heavyweight Championship when he stopped Jimmy Ellis after four rounds on February 16, 1970. The title had been declared vacant after Muhammad Ali announced his retirement on February 3, 1970.
-
- Frazier became the first fighter to defeat Muhammad Ali. He defeated Ali by a fifteen-round unanimous decision on March 8, 1971.
-
- On March 15, 1971, seven days after defeating Muhammad Ali, Frazier was admitted to St. Luke's and Children's Medical Center in Philadelphia. He was mentally and physically fatigued and suffering from high blood pressure. While he was hospitalized, there were rumors that he was seriously ill and even dead. His physician, Dr. James C. Giuffre, diagnosed Frazier as having "athlete's kidney." He explained that the condition can develop from forced bending and straining back muscles around the kidneys. Dr. Giuffre said it was not connected to his fight with Ali because there were no body blows to the kidneys. "It's a transient thing," he said, "and with rest everything returns to normal." Frazier was released from the hospital on March 27, 1971. [6]
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- Frazier's manager and trainer, Yank Durham, died from a stroke at age 52 on August 30, 1973.
-
- Frazier injured his left eye early in his career in a training accident. As he worked on a speed bag in a Philadelphia gym, a broken bolt threw tiny shards of metal into his eyes. The incident was kept secret to allow him to continue fighting, but the resulting scar tissue developed into a cataract. By November 1975, it was clear that Frazier would go blind without surgery. While the surgery removed the cataract and kept the eye from further deterioration, it was too late—he was legally blind in his left eye. Frazier wore a contact lens in his left eye when he fought a rematch with [George Foreman](#) on June 15, 1976. The lens was knocked loose during the fight, and Frazier was knocked out in the fifth round. [7]

- Frazier released his autobiography in 1996. [*Smokin' Joe: The Autobiography of the Champ*](#) was written with [Phil Berger](#).
-
- Frazier died from liver cancer at age 67 on November 7, 2011. He had been diagnosed the previous month.

Awards & Recognition



Frazier vs. Muhammad Ali 1971

- [*The Ring Progress of the Year Award*](#) for 1966.
 - [*The Ring Fighter of the Year*](#) for 1967, 1970 and 1971.
 - The [BWAA Edward J. Neil Trophy](#) as the Fighter of the Year for 1969, 1971 and 1975 (with Muhammad Ali).
 - [*Joe Frazier vs. Jerry Quarry I*](#) was named [*The Ring Fight of the Year*](#) for 1969.
 - [*Joe Frazier vs. Muhammad Ali I*](#) was named *The Ring* Fight of the Year for 1971, and the fifteenth round was [*The Ring Round of the Year*](#).
 - [*George Foreman vs. Joe Frazier I*](#) was named *The Ring* Fight of the Year for 1973, and the second round was *The Ring* Round of the Year.
 - [*Muhammad Ali vs. Joe Frazier III*](#) was named *The Ring* Fight of the Year for 1975, and the twelfth round was *The Ring* Round of the Year.
 - Inducted into the [International Boxing Hall of Fame](#) in 1990.
 - Named the eighth [greatest heavyweight of all-time](#) by *The Ring* in 1998.
 - Named the eighth greatest heavyweight of the twentieth century by The Associated Press in 1999.
-

Professional record

Championship record

- [10 opponents](#) ([8 by KO](#)) beaten for the World Heavyweight Title.

Non-Paper Championship Reigns Record

- [10 opponents](#) ([8 by KO](#)) beaten for the World Heavyweight Title between March 4, 1968 and January 22, 1973.

Joe Frazier's Gym

"Joe Frazier's Gym" in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, opened in 1968 as Cloverlay Gym. Frazier bought out all the shareholders when he retired in 1976 and renamed the gym. Many prominent fighters trained there, including [Tyrell Biggs](#), [Terrance Cauthen](#), [Bert Cooper](#), [Willie Monroe](#), [James Shuler](#), [Leon Spinks](#), [Meldrick Taylor](#), and [Marvis Frazier](#) (Joe's son). A press release on April 2, 2008, announced that the gym was closing. Marvis Frazier said, "The gym is closed, it's over."

The gym was named to the National Register of Historic Places on April 30, 2013. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. [\[8\]](#), [\[9\]](#)