



John Banks (the "Darkey Wizard")

BORN December 25
1861;
Richmond,
Virginia
Some sources
report
December 25
1860;
Fought out
of New York

HEIGHT 5-6 (Some
sources
report 5-5
1/2)

WEIGHT 128-160 lbs

Banks was the [Negro Middleweight Champion of the World](#) during the mid 1880s; John made funny contortions with his mouth as he fought; He also snorted, grunted, and yelled; But, he was very clever and carried a good right hand punch

According to Nat Fleischer, he was an extremely active fighter who fought in Philadelphia as many as five times per week on some occasions; For several years, he averaged one fight per week; Fleischer contends that he won more than 90 percent of his fights; Unfortunately, reports for only a few have surfaced

During his career, Banks defeated such men as Jimmy Mitchell, Tom Butler, John Williams, Bob Frazier, Jim Fell and Johnny Stuart

The old time fighter, Johnny Stuart, called Banks "his hardest fight"

1878

Billy Hunter Jersey City, NJ
W 3

1880

Oct 12 Jimmy Mitchell
TK 7

Undated

Tom Butler
TK 4
John Williams Philadelphia, Pa
TK 4
Jim Stewart Philadelphia, Pa
W 3
Sheeny Joe
TK 2
-Some sources report "W 2"
Bob Frazier
W 8
[Joe Butler](#) New York, NY
L 4

1882

Aug 31 [Kentucky Rosebud](#) Philadelphia, Pa
ND 4
-This man was "[Walter Edgerton](#)"

1883

Mike Cleary's Black
TK 4
-This man was "Jimmy Smith"

1884

Apr 4 Langtry New York, NY
EX

1885

"Nonpareil" Jack Dempsey New York, NY
L
Jan 12 Tommy Ryan New York, NY
EX
Jan 30 Jim Connors New York, NY
W 4
Jan 30 Jim Fell New York, NY
TK 2

-Banks knocked Fell out; When Fell came to, another round was fought; Fell quit after the third round;
The previous 2 bouts were held the same date

Mar 30 Jim Fell New York, NY
D 3
Apr 21 Bill Davis New York, NY
W 3
May 12 Jack Ashton New York, NY
D 3
May 22 Alfred Spiers New York, NY
W 8
Dec 20 Jim Smith New York, NY
WF 20

1886

Feb 9 Jack Fallon New York, NY
D 6

-Some sources report "D 5"

Feb 13 Allen's Black New York, NY
D 14
Apr 6 Tommy Blackburn New York, NY
W 8
Apr 30 Johnny Stuart New York, NY
TK 7
Jul 26 Butler's Unknown Philadelphia, Pa
TK 3

-This man was "John Roody"; Some sources report 6/26/86

Jul 27 Baltimore Bill Philadelphia, Pa
W 4
Jul 31 Len Connolly Philadelphia, Pa
W 4
Aug 3 Kentucky Rosebud Philadelphia, Pa
ND 4

-This man was "Walter Edgerton"

Aug 19 Jack Lynch Philadelphia, Pa
ND 4

Sep 11 [Kentucky Rosebud](#) Philadelphia, Pa
ND 4

-This man was "[Walter Edgerton](#)"

1887

Jan 26 James Desverney New York, NY
LF 9

-[Colored Middleweight Championship of the World](#);
Some sources report "LT 9"; Some sources report "LT 18"

1888

Feb 20 [Ed Binney](#) Boston, Ma
LT 14

-Some sources report [Colored Middleweight Championship of the World](#);
Some sources report the scheduled bout ended as "D 13"; Three
extra

rounds were fought to determine the winner (L 16)
Jack Grace New York, NY

LK 1

-This bout was held at a "private" club

1889

Mar 11 Harry Hart New York, NY
ND

Mar 24 -Banks seconded George Wiseman vs Gallagher's Unknown
in Flushing, NY

Apr 6 Tommy Riley
LK 9

May -Banks renounced boxing and joined the church

Aug 26 [Joe Fowler](#) Brooklyn, NY
ND

Oct 4 Johnny Stuart Brooklyn, NY
EX 6

Oct Johnny Keenan
ND 3

1890

Feb 25 [Paddy McGuigan](#) Brooklyn, NY
EX

Mar 4 -Banks was scheduled to spar in Brooklyn, NY

May 5 Jack Gallagher Brooklyn, NY
D

-Some sources report "Frank Moore"

Aug 25 [Joe Fowler](#) Brooklyn, NY
EX

-Perhaps, this is the 8/26/89 bout

Oct 27 [Con Dugan](#)
EX

-Some sources report 11/27/90

Dec 21 Mike Gorman New York, NY
EX

1891

Jan 22 [Mike Leary](#) New York, NY
ND

Feb 7 [Billy Dacey](#) Brooklyn, NY
SCH

-This bout was scheduled; The outcome is not known

Apr 4 Tommy Kelly West Hoboken, NJ
D 16

Nov 27 [George Dixon](#) New York, NY
EX

1896

Feb 29 [Paddy McGuigan](#) New York, NY
ND 3

-Some sources report "Paddy McGinnis";

Some sources report "D 3" on 2/28/96

Mar 11 [Paddy McGuigan](#) New York, NY
EX 3

Mar 28 [Paddy McGuigan](#) Brooklyn, NY
D 4

-Some sources report "W 4";

Some sources report that [McGuigan](#) fought "Johnny Barlas"

Jul 20 [Paddy McGuigan](#) New York, NY
D 3

Jul 25 [Paddy McGuigan](#) Brooklyn, NY
W 6

Aug 1 [Paddy McGuigan](#) Brooklyn, NY
SCH

-This bout was scheduled; The outcome is not known

Aug 31 [Paddy McGuigan](#) New York, NY
D 4

Nov 16 [Paddy McGuigan](#) New York, NY
ND 4

1897

May 6 -Banks was scheduled to spar in the 140-lb Competition at New York, NY

Jun 18 [Paddy McGuigan](#) New York, NY
D 3

1899

Aug 12 Jack Root
LK 1

Chicago, Il