



Combat Sports: An Encyclopedia of Wrestling, Fighting, and Mixed Martial Arts

David L. Hudson Jr.

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Fistic combat represents the greatest human drama in all of sport. Roman gladiators thrilled citizens and emperors alike when they entered the octagon to face an intense, life-threatening experience. Boxing, the sport of kings, also has its roots in the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome. Banned in 500 A.D. by the Emperor Theodoric, it resurfaced twelve centuries later in England. John Milton praised it as a noble art for building character in young men, and sports writer A.J. Leibling dubbed it the Sweet Science. Many of its major protagonists - men such as Joe Louis, Rocky Marciano and Muhammad Ali - have become transcendent, near-mythic heroes. But boxing is not the only combat sport, and mixed martial arts, in all their ferocious beauty, represent the fastest growing sports genre in the world. Ultimate Fighting Championships (UFC) has joined boxing in paying seven figures to some of its champions, and draws millions in its pay-per-view events. This book details leading figures in boxing, sumo wrestling, kickboxing, Greco-Roman wrestling, and mixed martial arts (including organizations such as Ultimate Fighting, PRIDE, K-1, Total Combat, and SportFighting). Over 150 entries cover champions, contenders, and other famous combatants from all over the world, as well as legendary promoters, managers, trainers, and events. Also included in this encyclopedia are sidebars on controversies, highlights, brief bios, and other noteworthy events, along with a general timeline.

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