

Some, however, contend that he would have suffered a severe mauling at the hands of a scientifically trained fighter such as Jack Dempsey — but that can only really belong to the realms of conjecture.

John L. fought under the London Prize Ring rules for a so-called world's championship in 1888. In view of the fact that Sullivan at that time never held

Jim Corbett lost his title to the Cornishman-(New Zealander, Bob Fitzsimmons on March 17, 1897. Fitz had a haymaker in the shape of a solar plexus punch which some ringsiders swore used to sink into the victim's middle, wrist deep. In spite of this Corbett never felt that he had been out-boxed and itched to make his comeback.

Finally, on June 9, 1899, Fitz lost his title to Jim Jeffries on a knock-out in the eleventh round, the winner scaling 206lb, and spindly-shanked Fitz, a paltry 167lb. Here was Corbett's chance. Loud and long were his assertions that the new titleholder would be easy meat, culminating in Jeffries' acceptance of the match.

The tussle took place on May 11, 1900, and the rivals bounced into the ring with a difference of nine years in age but an equal share of boundless confidence. Despite his advanced years — for a boxer — of 34, the erstwhile champ showed the customers that he had lost none of his cunning. He punished the holder unmercifully and bade fair to recover the title.

Jeffries, however, ripped home a few spine-shuddering punches to the ribs and eventually in the twenty-third round, when Jim's legs were failing, sent a pile-driver which caused the ex-champ to lose all interest in the subsequent proceedings.

Still not satisfied, Corbett wheedled Jeff into yet another meeting on August 14, 1903. But the story was much the same. Corbett boxed, danced and ducked, but a well-considered buffet to his old weak spot, the solar plexus, put him down for the count — and then some. This convinced the elegant Jim that his chosen retirement, running a saloon in New York, was more profitable and definitely more comfortable.

Jack Johnson, that ebony « magnificent brute, » was a joy to watch in action. His animal grace of movement, perfect timing, stance and defence made him one of the outstanding exponents of the art and his fame will never dim.

a clear title to the world championship and that his opponent, Charley Mitchell, was not even heavyweight champion of England, the object of the bout was somewhat hazy — apart from a long-standing grudge between them.

Sullivan, with his Irish origins, had more than a passing hatred for the English, in this case epitomised in Charley Mitchell. They had met in the ring five years previously but the contest had been stopped by the police, not, however, before they had soundly walloped each other and altogether created a thoroughly bad atmosphere by mutual insults and accusations.

In any case, the alleged championship meeting was staged on Baron Rothschild's estate at Chantilly in France amid pouring rain. The two bruisers agreed to a draw after 39 rounds lasting 3 hrs 10 mins 55 secs. Both contestants were completely exhausted and several unpleasant incidents occurred during the long-drawn-out bout which did little to improve their relationships.

The first title bout under the Marquis of Queensberry rules saw Sullivan bite the canvas to James J. Corbett on September 7, 1892. The story of this memorable battle has been excellently portrayed in the film « Gentleman Jim. »

