

## THE FIRST MODERN OLYMPIC BOXING COMPETITION - THE COMPLETE STORY

The following pages contain an article on the 1904 St. Louis Olympic boxing events which originally appeared in the Olympic Games Boxing Record Book. What was not included in that book were the actual newspaper accounts from the St. Louis Globe-Democrat and St. Louis Republic that were the basis for that article.

Those newspaper clippings are reproduced on the pages following the article. Unfortunately, as is usually the case with reproductions of reproductions, some of the clarity has been lost. Where necessary, the text has been retyped.

Also included is a page from Spaulding's Official Athletic Almanac for 1904. For many years, this book served as the only source for 1904 Olympic results. Consequently, its account has been perpetuated in subsequent works on the Olympic Games. Its listing of a third place finish for Joe Lydon in the 145 lb. class (in which only three contestants competed) but its omission of Fred Gilmore's similar achievement in the 125 lb. class has been carried forward in record books. Thus Gilmore's feat of placing third in his first amateur bout has been overlooked. Also, the fact that there was only one bout in the 105, 115 and 158 lb. classes has never been adequately publicized.

The dates of September 21-24, shown for the 1904 boxing tournament in the Spaulding book have also been erroneously included in subsequent Olympic accounts. As the articles show, the boxing lasted but two days. This confusion probably came about because in early Olympic schedules published in 1904 those were the planned dates for the boxing tournament. Adding to the confusion is the St. Louis Globe-Democrat article of September 18th included in the following pages, which stated that the "Olympic Bouts Begin Monday" (September 19th). In fact, the bouts did not begin until Wednesday, September 21st, and due to the limited number of entrants (and the smaller number that actually appeared) were concluded the following day, September 22nd.

It's hoped that the following article and newspaper accounts will help to shed some light on the most extraordinary (and least known) Olympic boxing tournament of all time.

John Grasso

1904

OLYMPIC BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS.

Held September 21-24, 1904.

105 lb. class—Finals: Geo. V. Finnigan, Olympic Club, San Francisco, Cal. (104 lbs.), winner; Miles J. Burke, unattached, St. Louis, Mo. (107 3/4 lbs.), second.  
 115 lb. class—Finals: O. L. Kirk, Business Men's Gymnasium, St. Louis, Mo. (114 lbs.), winner; Geo. V. Finnigan, Olympic Club, San Francisco, Cal. (104 lbs.), second.  
 125 lb. class—Finals: O. L. Kirk, Business Men's Gymnasium, St. Louis, Mo. (115 lbs.), winner; Frank Haller, Cincinnati A.C. and Gymnasium, Cincinnati, Ohio (125 lbs.), second.  
 135 lb. class—Finals: H. J. Spanger, National T.V., Newark, N. J. (134 3/4 lbs.), winner; Jack Egan, Philadelphia, Pa. (133 lbs.), second; H. Van Horn, South Broadway A.C., St. Louis, Mo. (135 lbs.), third.  
 145 lb. class—Finals: Al Young, Olympic Club, San Francisco, Cal. (144 3/4 lbs.), winner; H. J. Spanger, National T.V., Newark, N. J. (144 3/4 lbs.), second; Joe P. Lydon, unattached, St. Louis, Mo. (142 1/2 lbs.), third.  
 158 lb. class—Chas. Mayer, St. George's A.C., New York City (154 lbs.), winner; Ben Spradely, Business Men's Gymnasium, St. Louis, Mo. (154 3/4 lbs.), second.  
 Heavy weight—Finals: Sam Berger, Olympic Club, San Francisco, Cal. (180 lbs.), winner; Chas. Mayer, St. George's A.C., New York City (158 lbs.), second.

OLYMPIC WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS.

Held October 14, 1904.

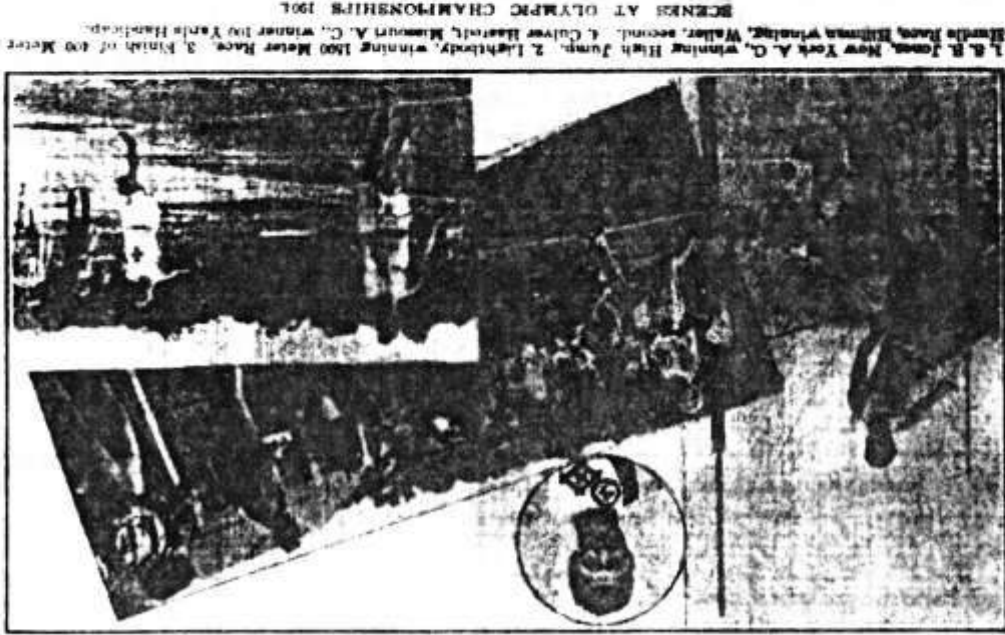
105 lb. class: R. Curry, St. George's A.C., New York, won; J. Helm, Boys' Club, New York, second; Gus Thieffenthaler, South Broadway A.C., St. Louis, Mo., third.  
 115 lb. class: Geo. Mehnert, National T.V., Newark, N. J., won; Gus Haines, National T.V., Newark, N. J., second; W. L. Nelson, St. George's A.C., New York, third.  
 125 lb. class: I. Nifod, Eastime A.C., New York, won; Aug. Wester, National T.V., Newark, N. J., second; Z. H. Streibler, South Broadway A.C., St. Louis, Mo., third.  
 135 lb. class: R. J. Bradshaw, Boys' Club, New York, won; T. McLeer, National T.V., Newark, N. J., second; C. E. Clapper, Central Y.M.C.A., Chicago, third.  
 145 lb. class: O. F. Roehm, Central Y.M.C.A., Buffalo, N. Y., won; R. Tasing, St. George's A.C., New York, second; G. Zukel, National T.V., Newark, N. J., third.  
 158 lb. class—Chas. Erickson, Norwegian T.S., New York, won; William Beckmann, New West Side A.C., New York, second; J. Winbolla, Central Y.M.C.A., Chicago, third.  
 Heavy weight class—R. Hansen, Norwegian T.S., New York, won; F. Kuebler, Southwestern T.V., St. Louis, Mo., second; F. C. Warmbold, North St. Louis T.V., third.

OLYMPIC GYMNASTIC CHAMPIONSHIPS.

Held October 29, 1904.

Club Swinging—E. A. Hunkle, T.V. Vorwarts, Cleveland, Ohio, 12 points; E. Volgt, Concordia T.V., St. Louis, Mo., 9 points; E. Wilson, National T.V., Newark, N. J., 5 points.

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SCENES AT OLYMPIC CHAMPIONSHIPS 1904.  
 1. R. R. Jones, New York A.C., winning High Jump. 2. Lightbody, winning 1500 Meter Race. 3. Plink of 100 Meter Gun. 4. Culver, Harbord, Missouri A.C., winner 100 Meter Race. 5. Plink of 100 Meter Gun.

## THE FIRST MODERN OLYMPIC BOXING COMPETITION

Would you agree that an Olympic Games that stretched from April through September and included such events as a mudfight, a pole climbing contest, a javelin throw for accuracy and a boxing match in which one of the contestants was making his boxing debut was not your ordinary Modern Olympic Games?

The 1904 Olympic Games in St. Louis featured such bizarre happenings. The Olympic Games had been revived just eight years earlier and had not yet taken its present shape as a sports extravaganza. It was held as an adjunct to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition and various sports events were contested that summer under the semblance of Olympic competition. Many of the contests were treated by the rest of the country as local sporting events and consequently were not even reported in the newspapers outside St. Louis.

One of the unique attractions of the fair was an anthropology exhibit. Individuals from "exotic lands" were invited to live on the fairgrounds in surroundings that attempted to resemble their native habitat. Sioux, Chippewa and Crow Indians, African Pygmies, Patagonians, New Zealand natives and others were present for the duration of the fair. As part of the anthropological study, they were invited to participate in various track and field events as well as a "native" event. Thus, a fifty foot pole climb was held with the winner reaching the top in 20.4 seconds. A javelin throw for accuracy, kicking a baseball for distance and a mudfight between three man Pygmy teams were among the other contests. (For the record, the team of Shamba, Lumbang and Maleng defeated Latuna, Bushubba and Octobang.)

Among the many other sports contested that summer, boxing was held for the first time as an Olympic event. The boxing competition was originally scheduled from September 21st through 24th in seven weight classes, but in fact, it was concluded in just two days. As of September 18th, there were only 22 individuals entered - all from the United States. Ten were from St. Louis, three each from San Francisco and New York, and the remaining six from other Eastern and Midwestern cities. The St. Louis Republic reported that, "It is expected that many fistic artists will enter on the field just before the commencement of the bouts." Unfortunately such was not the case.

On the first day of competition, September 21st, eight bouts were held - six lightweight contests, one heavyweight and one featherweight bout. In the featherweight (125 pound limit) contest, Fred Gilmore made his amateur boxing debut but lost a decision to Frank Haller. As the St. Louis Globe-Democrat put it, "This was Gilmore's first appearance in the ring and the son of the veteran Harry

## THE FIRST MODERN OLYMPIC BOXING COMPETITION (cont.)

Gilmore acquitted himself creditably." Since there were only three contestants in this class, Gilmore finished in third place although he did not receive a medal for his efforts. (Due to the lack of formality in these Games, Gilmore's name does not appear in modern day record books while the efforts of Joseph Lydon, who finished third of three entrants in the welterweight class, have been given proper recognition.)

Another individual who finished third but has not been given due credit for his accomplishment was the St. Louis heavyweight, William Michaels. His bout with Sam Berger of San Francisco was a one-sided affair that lasted less than 3 minutes and 15 seconds but was not over until 1:35 of the third round. The reason for this apparent discrepancy in the times is that under the amateur boxing rules of that era, a knockdown ended a round. Berger knocked Michaels down in 22.2 seconds of the first round and again after 1:16.8 of the second round - (times were reported to the nearest fifth of a second in those days.) Thus, the first two rounds were over in less than two minutes. In the third round, Michaels again went down and this effectively stopped the contest. The St. Louis Globe-Democrat described the bout in the colorful style of that era in this way:

After the 135-pound preliminaries had been disposed of the heavy-weight class was presented, and in this class there was but one bout, another farce, in which a healthy-looking lad called Michaels, a resident of the Mound City, thought he would have some fun with the California giant, Sam Berger.

While Michaels was having his mits (sic) adjusted he was calling good-bye to his friends in the grand stand. Berger was sitting in his corner, with an amused smile on his face, and wondering what he was up against. When the men came together, Michaels immediately proceeded to knock the head off the native son, but the first thing the St. Louis lad knew he was sitting on the mat rubbing his temple, where Berger had landed a right swing, knocking him down. That ended the first round. Time - :22 1/5.

Enough for Mr. Michaels

When Michaels returned to his corner he wore a sickly smile - the smile that wouldn't come off. The men came to the center of the



# THE FIRST MODERN OLYMPIC BOXING COMPETITION (cont.)

mat for the second round, but this time Berger was merciful and allowed Michaels to last 1:16  $\frac{4}{5}$ . Then he dropped him with a left to the jaw. The time record was broken in the third round, when Michaels stayed 1:35  $\frac{2}{5}$ , after Berger had stuck his chin out until he was tired, Michaels refusing to see the point. Then Michaels sat down once more and the championship went to Berger.

To further illustrate the lack of formalities and organization, this bout was reported as having been for the championship and the headline of the article read, "Berger wins Olympic Title". There had been one other entrant in that class, Charles Mayer, but he had not arrived from New York. Berger remained in St. Louis, the following day and was scheduled to box an exhibition with his trainer, a Professor Van Court. But on that day Mayer showed up and Berger, who had been named the champion, was now obliged to fight Mayer before he would receive official recognition. Fortunately for all concerned, Berger was able to defeat Mayer and won the Olympic title for the second day in a row.

There were eight contestants who appeared for the 135 pound (lightweight) division and six bouts were held the first day - four preliminary and two semi-final. The best bout was between Jack Eagan of Bryn Mawr, Pa. and Joseph Lydon of St. Louis. It was won by Eagan in a close decision. By contrast, another lightweight bout was a farce. Harry J. Spanger of Newark, N.J. met K. Jewett of Boston and it became quickly apparent that Jewett had a very limited knowledge of boxing. The referee, Harry Sharpe (a well-known St. Louisan who refereed two of Abe Attell's featherweight championship bouts that year) stopped the bout 48 seconds into the second round.

Another burlesque was a Mutt and Jeff affair between Arthur Seward of Springfield, Mo. and Russell Van Horn of St. Louis in which Van Horn totally outclassed his taller opponent. This bout also was called off in the second round. The final preliminary bout was between Carroll Burton and Peter Sturholdt, both of St. Louis. Burton outboxed Sturholdt in a close battle and was awarded the decision. Shortly afterward it was discovered that Burton was really O.L. Bollinger. Bollinger had been in good standing with the Amateur Athletic Union and there was no apparent reason for his use of an alias, but he nonetheless was disqualified and suspended by the AAU for competing under a false name.

## THE FIRST MODERN OLYMPIC BOXING COMPETITION (cont.)

After the featherweight and heavyweight bouts were held, the four winning lightweights returned for their second bout of the day. Spanger and Van Horn fought a close bout for two rounds but Van Horn tired badly in the third and was defeated. Sturholdt, who had lost to Bollinger (alias Burton), was reinstated and promptly lost his second bout of the day in another close battle.

On the following day, September 22nd, the remaining bouts were held. In the flyweight class (which had a limit of 105 pounds at that time), one of the entrants, Ben Tipton of St. Louis, was suspended by the AAU as the result of a bout four days prior and was not allowed to compete. Another entrant, Thomas Riordan of St. Louis, did not appear and thus George V. Finnegan of San Francisco and Miles J. Burke of St. Louis were the only two able contestants. Even though Burke weighed in over the limit (107 3/4 lbs. to Finnegan's 104 pounds), Finnegan outclassed him and the referee stopped their bout in the first round. Burke holds the distinction of being the only man to finish second in an Olympic boxing tournament while boxing less than one minute, failing to win a bout and failing to make the weight.

Finnegan, although he weighed but 104 pounds also entered the 115 pound (bantamweight) class. Again, one of the three entrants failed to appear and the only bout was for the championship. George V. put up a game battle against Oliver L. Kirk of St. Louis but due to the huge weight difference Finnegan lost the first bout of his career. For his efforts he earned his second medal of the day. Kirk also entered a second weight class and defeated Frank Haller in the 125 pound (featherweight) division while spotting him ten pounds. To this day, no one has ever matched Kirk's feat of winning two Olympic boxing gold medals in one tournament.

In the lightweight class, the two semi-final losers, Van Horn and Sturholdt, were matched in a bout for third place. Poor Sturholdt lost his third bout in two days and was almost knocked out. The championship bout was decided between Harry Spanger and Jack Eagan. Spanger gave an excellent exhibition of boxing skills and was awarded the championship. He proved himself to be somewhat of an iron man since he also was entered in the welterweight class. There he won a disputed decision from Joseph Lydon, one of the previous day's lightweight losers. In the welterweight final, Spanger fought his third bout of the day, and fifth in two days, but fatigue and the ten pound weight difference did him in and Albert Young of San Francisco won the decision and the welterweight title in his only Olympic bout. Spanger's feat of four victories and five bouts in two days has never been equalled in Olympic competition.

# THE FIRST MODERN OLYMPIC BOXING COMPETITION (cont.)

Middleweight Charles Mayer of New York arrived just in time for the weigh-in in that class and made the 158 lb. limit. He promptly stopped Ben Spradley of St. Louis in three rounds in the only bout in that division. Spradley did not appear on the list of tournament entrants and was one of those "fistic artists who entered on the field just before the commencement of the bouts" as the St. Louis Republic had predicted.

Mayer then was matched with Sam Berger in the heavyweight final although he was outweighed by 24 pounds. As mentioned before, Berger was thought to have won the title on the previous day. While Mayer put up a good effort, Berger hung on to gain a close decision.

All told, there were only 17 bouts and 18 competitors - all from the United States. Only the lightweight division had more than two bouts. Three divisions had only one bout each. Five of the contestants entered dual classes and four of them won two medals each. There were about 400 people in attendance on the first day of competition and not much more on the second. By contrast, in 1976 at Montreal there were nearly as many competitors as there were spectators in 1904.

## Olympic Boxing Records set in 1904

### Individual

Most championships

2 - Oliver L. Kirk

Most weight classes competed in

2 - George V. Finnegan (flyweight, bantamweight)

2 - Oliver L. Kirk (bantamweight, featherweight)

2 - Joseph P. Lydon (lightweight, welterweight)

2 - Harry J. Spanger (lightweight, welterweight)

2 - Charles Mayer (middleweight, heavyweight)

Most bouts in two days

5 - Harry J. Spanger

Most bouts won in two days

4 - Harry J. Spanger

### Team

Most championships

7 - United States

### Miscellaneous

Fewest countries - 1

Fewest competitors - 18

Fewest bouts - 17

## 1904 St. Louis Olympic Games Boxing Entrants

105 lbs. -	George V. Finnegan, San Francisco
*	Ben Tipton, St. Louis
*	Thomas Riordan, St. Louis
	Miles J. Burke, St. Louis
115 lbs. -	O.L. Kirk, St. Louis
	George V. Finnegan, San Francisco
*	Jerry Casey, New York
125 lbs. -	Fred Gilmore, Chicago
	Frank Haller, Covington, Ky.
	O.L. Kirk, St. Louis
*	Carl Burton, St. Louis
135 lbs. -	H.J. Spanger, Newark, N.J.
	K. Jewett, Boston
	Peter Sturholdt, St. Louis
	Jack Eagan, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
	Joseph P. Lydon, St. Louis
*	Patrick Maloney, New York
	Arthur Seward, Springfield, Mo.
	Russell Van Horn, St. Louis
145 lbs. -	Jack Eagan, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
	Joseph Lydon, St. Louis
	Al Young, San Francisco
158 lbs. -	Charles Mayer, New York
	Al Young, San Francisco
*	Rude Kreider, St. Louis
Heavyweight	William M. Michaels, St. Louis
	Sam Berger, San Francisco
	Charles Mayer, New York
Referee	Harry W. Sharpe, St. Louis
Judges	George Harnish, New York
	Frank Stewart, St. Louis
Timer	J.C. O'Brien, St. Louis
Clerk	Martin Delaney, St. Louis

\* on entry list but did not compete

Burton competed in 135 lb. class - not 125 lb. class  
 Eagan competed only in 135 lb. class - not 145 lb. class  
 Spanger also competed in 145 lb. class  
 Young competed only in 145 lb. class - not 158 lb. class  
 Benjamin Spradley, St. Louis competed in 158 lb. class  
 although not on original list of entrants.



# Olympic Bouts Begin Monday.

## Sixteen Amateurs at the Boxing Game Will Battle for Medals In the Open Air.

Beginning to-morrow at the Stadium sixteen aspirants for Olympic boxing championship honors will don the mits at the first open-air tournament held in the West in many years.

The affair is divided into seven classes, 105, 115, 125, 135, 145, 155 pounds and the heavy-weight class. Some of the best amateur boxers in the country are entered in the tournament, and among the entries sent in was that of Dr. Joseph Knipe of New York, the former A. A. U. heavy-weight champion. Dr. Knipe's entry was rejected, however, as he is a teacher of boxing, which bars him from competition.

In the 105-pound class one of the best boys in the country will box—George V. Finnegan of San Francisco. Finnegan has fought many battles with amateurs, and has yet to find a man who will stand more than two rounds of his slugging. He is training daily at Goth's Grove, and stated recently that he will go into the ring with the determination of putting his opponents out in the shortest space of time possible. Paddy Carroll, a local boy, and a member of the Business Men's gymnasium, will meet Finnegan. Carroll has a good local reputation, but will have his hands full when he opposes Finnegan.

### Young Gilmore Enters.

There is but one entry in the 115-pound class, L. L. Kirk of St. Louis, and in the 125-pound class Fred Gilmore, son of the veteran Harry Gilmore of Chicago, will box. Young Gilmore has never appeared in the ring and is a high school boy. He is said to possess all of the cunning and cleverness of his "daddy" and will make some opponent kiss the mat for the count.

There are seven candidates for the medals in the 135-pound class, among them being Al Young of San Francisco, Joe Lydon of St. Louis, Carl Burton of St. Louis and Jewett of Boston. Lydon is a husky youngster and capable of taking and delivering a lot of punishment. Burton is a clever amateur and won the 182-pound championship at the Business Men's gym last winter. Egan and Lydon are also entered in the 145-pound class.

In the heavy-weight class there are two entries, Sam Berger of San Francisco and Michaels of St. Louis. During the past week Berger has been training at Roth Grove. He worked yesterday with Dick Green, who meets O'Keefe at the West End club Thursday. It was expected that Rotenbach of New York, who decisively defeated Berger on the coast, would enter, but up to a late hour last night his entry had not been received. Berger is in excellent condition and it is doubtful if Rotenbach could defeat the Californian at this time. Little is known of Michaels in and around this city.

The bouts will be conducted in a ring erected in the center of the Stadium, and will begin daily at 2:30 p. m. The entries and classes are as follows:

105 pounds—George V. Finnegan, San

Francisco, Cal.; P. L. Carroll, Business Men's gymnasium, St. Louis.

### Britt's Best a Draw.

Britt, to redeem himself, was forced to meet O'Keefe again, this time at Tulsa. They fought twenty rounds and at the end the referee was unable to separate the merits of the men. Press reports gave O'Keefe the better of the argument.

O'Keefe to-day is one of the best men in his class and would undoubtedly give Jos. Lyons or any of those in the first flight a tough argument.

As Britt and Gans have been matched to fight in El Paso, after years of argument about the match, the O'Keefe bout here becomes one of considerable interest. O'Keefe, if he wins next Thursday, will probably go after the winner of the Gans-Britt contest.

O'Keefe's opponent Thursday is a husky young specimen from Chicago, who has had the Windy City fight followers guessing as a result of recent successes in the ring.

Green recently put it all over Jack Riearra in a recent Indianapolis fight and Stearns achieved distinction by whipping the now famous Hatfield Nelson. He is said to be an aggressive, hustling fighter of strength and gameness, and O'Keefe, it is thought, has bitten off a hard piece to chew.

O'Keefe, in anticipation of an early fall engagement, has kept himself in fair shape, and neither man will need much preliminary notice for sitting himself.

### Both Fighters Here.

Both fighters are in the city. Green, looking healthy and strong, arrived yesterday morning and is quartered at Roth's grove, where Sam Berger, Finnegan and the amateur fighters who are to appear in the Olympic boxing tourney next week are established. Green and Berger will work together.

O'Keefe arrived last night and will work at the Business Men's gym, Benny Yan-

Francisco, Cal.; P. L. Carroll, Business Men's gymnasium, St. Louis.

115 pounds—L. L. Kirk, St. Louis, Mo.; 125 pounds—Fred Gilmore, Chicago, Ill.; Frank Haller, Covington, Ky.

135 pounds—H. J. Stanger, Newark, N. J.; K. Jewett, Boston, Mass.; Peter Hurdhardt, St. Louis, Mo.; Jack Egan, Bryn Mawr, Pa.; Joseph Lydon, St. Louis, Mo.; Carl Burton, St. Louis, Mo.; Al Young, San Francisco, Cal.

145 pounds—Jack Egan, Bryn Mawr, Pa.; Joseph Lydon, St. Louis, Mo.

155 pounds—Carl Mayer, New York city. Heavy weight—W. M. Michaels, St. Louis, Mo.; Sam Berger, San Francisco, California.

The officials who will be in charge of the bouts are as follows: Referee, H. W. Sharpe, St. Louis; Judges, George Harrison, New York, and Frank Stewart, St. Louis; timer, J. C. O'Brien, St. Louis, and clerk, Martin Delaney, St. Louis.

### BOWLING SCHEDULES.

Junior league—Wednesday. Rough Riders vs. Mohawks, on Royal alleys; Choctaws vs. Senecas, on Crescent alleys, and Monarchs vs. Rialtos, on Acme alleys.

Primary league—Monday. Parks vs. Oilers and X-Ray vs. Endimorpha, on Royal alleys; Tuesday. Kinichis vs. National and Elks vs. Comptons, on Royal alleys.

The Dreggers, which postponed its opening on account of St. Louis day, will start Thursday. The Royal, Acme and Crescent alleys will be used.

The Kindergarten will inaugurate their season Tuesday, the games being scheduled on the Crescent, Acme and Royal alleys. The Outcast cocked-hat league has expanded

# AMATEUR BOXERS TO HOLD FORTH IN MATCHES OF OLYMPIC TOURNAMENT



AL YOUNG SPARRING WITH JOE SULLIVAN  
Showing the representative of the Hawthorne Club as he appears while working with Assistant Trainer Sullivan.

San Francisco Contingent is Exciting General Interest on Account of the Systematic Fashion in Which the Trio Have Worked at Their Camp in the County. All Are Clever With the Gloves Active Programme for Local Fighters.

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GEORGE FINNIGAN  
THE OLYMPIC CLUB  
THE 105 POUND  
AMATEUR BOXER  
WHO WILL REPRESENT  
THE SAN FRANCISCO  
ATHLETIC ORGANIZATION

George Finnigan of the Olympic Club. The 105 pound Amateur Boxer who will represent the San Francisco Athletic Organization.



HARRY SHARPE

Who will serve as referee at the Olympic amateur boxing tourney.

## HARRY SHARPE

Who will serve as referee at the Olympic amateur boxing tourney.



GEORGE FINNIGAN OF THE GEYER CLUB, THE 105 POUND AMATEUR BOXER WHO WILL REPRESENT THE SAN FRANCISCO ATHLETIC ORGANIZATION



SAM BERGER AND PROF. VAN COURT AS THEY APPEAR IN THEIR ROUTINE SPARRING WORK. BERGER HAS PROBABLY ATTRACTED MORE ATTENTION THAN ANY OTHER AMATEUR SPARRER IN THE COUNTRY.



Sam Berger and Prof. Van Court

As they appear in their routine sparring work, Berger has probably attracted more attention than any other amateur sparrer in the country.

The California Amateur Boxing Contingent on the Road

As they appear at work on the roads of St. Louis County. Names, from left to right: Assistant Trainer Joe Sullivan, George Finnigan, Al Young, Sam Berger and Professor Van Court.

THE CALIFORNIA AMATEUR BOXING CONTINGENT ON THE ROAD. AS THEY APPEAR AT WORK ON THE ROADS OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY. NAMES, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ASSISTANT TRAINER JOE SULLIVAN, GEORGE FINNIGAN, AL YOUNG, SAM BERGER AND PROFESSOR VAN COURT.



**Morning, September 22, 1904.**

# SAM BERGER Wins Olympic Heavy-Weight Title.

## Berger Wins Olympic Title.

St. Louis Daily  
Globe-Democrat

**Michaels No Match for the Amateur Boxer from San Francisco—Carroll Burton Disqualified.**

Boxing exhibitions, burlesque, farces and real were presented before two pairings of the sport at the Olympic amateur championships, held at the Stadium, yesterday; and there were decisions, knock-downs and blow-downs sufficient to satisfy the patrons of the sport and those who believe in anti-boxing laws.

There were men in the ring with stage fright, men who could box, and others who preferred taking a licking rather than give in. Of the six bouts put on, two went the limit, the remainder ended in farces. In the semifinals of the 125-pound class the exhibitions would have done credit to professional.

One man, claiming to be Carroll Burton, but who is known in everyday life as Hollinger, was easily mopping for Chalmers J. J. Gilmore of the Western A. A. U. registration committee, and after winning the bout with Peter Sturholm was promptly disqualified and suspended from the A. A. U. for competing under an assumed name.

The last bout of the day was that between Jack Lydon of Philadelphia and Joe Lyons of St. Louis. Lyons was much taller than Lydon, had a longer reach and weighed one pound more than the St. Louis man. He looked like an old timer, not had a right jab that caused the defeat of the New York man.

### Lydon Fights Fiercely.

For the going of the end of the third round, both men fought fiercely, and for the first round Lydon looked like a stuck pig, being bothered with blood. Lyons was at a decided disadvantage when it came to long range fighting, but in punching Lydon was not able to withstand the body blows inflicted by Lydon. The latter lost the bout owing to his failure to get to his man, while Lyons proved to be the answer all the way through. The decision was a close one, but just.

The opening bout was a farce. A tall, lanky lad named Javert, with a huddling mustache and a pair of short trousers which looked as though they were out of place, attempted to put away H. J. Spangier. Javert landed a snuff over one round.

Before Harry Sharpe called the bout off forty-eight seconds after the second round had begun, giving the verdict to Spangier. Hollinger, alias Burton, and Sturholm, two local lads, hooked up in the second bout of the 125-pound class, and the exhibition was a hot one. At the end of the third round it did look as though a draw would be the best decision, but the judges decided otherwise and the bout was given to Hollinger, while the crowd applauded and booed, just as the result looked to them.

One of the best burlesques ever seen in a ring was that in which Edward of Springfield, Mo., and Van Horn of Van Horn, Minn., participated. Edward was a tall, deep-chested chap, with a pair of legs that looked as if they belonged to a spider, even reaching the lower extremities of Bob Fitz's appearance. Van Horn was stocky and about 2 inches shorter than his opponent.

### Seward a Sprinter.

At the long bout men jumped to the center of the ring and Edward, after striking hands, proceeded to box. The first round of the box Van Horn stopped the Missouri man from Springfield from the jaw, and the latter proceeded to show a safe walk. After waiting around waiting for a round or two, Van Horn, when he made a wild swing at Van Horn, which fell a yard short, and then he promptly fell down. Van Horn quickly saw that the bout would be a farce and ended. The first round ended with a knock-down, according to A. A. U. rules, so that the first set lasted 2:50. When the men went to the center of the mat for the second round Van Horn with one glance from Edward and then began to break him down. By this time before Harry Sharpe was wondering whether or not he was refereeing a stage joke or a fight, and finally whispered in a loud voice to Edward, "Fight, fight." Edward tried to, but one wallop made him feel funny, and looking at Sharpe and finding no sympathy in the eyes of the referee, he started to sprint. After making a corner and a half of the arena, he pulled into the southwest corner and there reared, while the referee gave the bout to Van Horn.

After the 125-pound preliminaries had been disposed of the heavy-weight class was presented, and in this class there was but one bout, another farce, in which a healthy-looking lad called Michaels, a resident of the Missouri city, thought he would have some fun with the California giant, Sam Becker.

While Michaels was having his girls adjusted he was calling good-by to his friends in the grand stand. Berger was sitting in his corner, with an amused smile on his face, and wondering what he was up against. When the men came together, Michaels immediately proceeded to knock the head off the native son, but the first thing the St. Louis lad knew he was sitting on the mat rubbing his temple, where Berger had landed a right swing, knocking him down. That ended the first round. Time—2:15.

### Enough for Mr. Michaels.

When Michaels returned to his corner he wore a sickly smile—the smile that wouldn't come off. The men came to the center of the mat for the second round, but this time Berger was merciful and allowed Michaels to last 1:45. Then he dropped him with a left to the jaw. The time record was broken in the third round, when Michaels stayed 1:35. 2-3, after Berger had stuck his chin out until he was tired. Michaels refusing to see the point, then Michaels sat down; once more and the championship went to Berger.

Frank Waller, from Covington, won the championship over Fred Gilmore of Chicago at the end of the third round, in the 125-pound class. This was Gilmore's first appearance in the ring, and the son of the veteran Harry Gilmore acquitted himself creditably.

### Spangier Whips Van Horn.

In the first bout of the semi-finals of the 125-pound class Spangier and Van Horn came together. Matters were about even between this pair. When the men came up for the third round Van Horn was noticeably tired, while Spangier eagerly went in for more punishment. Van Horn's blows lacked steam, while Spangier looked steady. Van Horn repeatedly swung for the body, but appeared to neglect the head, and tried for a heart punch, and while he did land two, none of them appeared to bother Spangier. The latter went after his man before the bout had gone a minute, and with rights and lefts to the face and neck had Van Horn in a helpless condition, and his hands hung by his side, the St. Louis man being all but out. After seeing the local boy in a helpless condition and in danger of a fatal blow, and when Sharpe did not award the bout, Judge Harnish ordered the referee to call it off, and the decision was given to Spangier.

The last bout of the day, the second in the 125-pound semifinals, was a good one. Dean and Sturholm hooked up, and the former was given the decision.

This afternoon at 2:30 the finals and the preliminary bouts in the 105-pound class will be pulled off. Berger will box an exhibition with Van Vort, and all championships will be decided.

## BERGER WINS OLYMPIC TITLE

Michael's No Match for the Amateur Boxer from  
San Francisco - Carrol Burton Disqualified

Boxing exhibitions, burlesque, farcical and real, were presented before 400 patrons of the sport at the Olympic amateur championships, held at the Stadium, yesterday; and there were decisions, knockdowns and blow-downs sufficient to satisfy the patrons of the sport and those who believe in antiboxing laws.

There were men in the ring with stage fright, men who could box, and others who preferred taking a licking rather than give in. Of the six bouts\* put on, two went the limit, the remainder ending in farces. In the semifinals of the 135-pound class the exhibitions would have done credit to professionals.

One man, claiming to be Carrol Burton, but who is known in everyday life as Bollinger, was caught napping by Chairman J.C. O'Brien of the Western A.A.U. registration committee, and after winning his bout with Peter Sturholdt was promptly disqualified and suspended from the A.A.U. for competing under an assumed name.

The best bout of the day was that between Jack Egan of Philadelphia and Joe Lydon of St. Louis. Egan was much taller than Lydon, had a longer reach and weighed one pound more than the St. Louis man. He boxed like an old-timer, and had a right jab that caused the downfall of the local man.

### Lydon Fights Fiercely.

From the gong to the end of the third round both men fought fiercely, and before the bout closed Lydon looked like a stuck pig, being covered with blood. Lydon was at a decided disadvantage when it came to long range fighting, but at infighting Egan was not able to withstand the body blows inflicted by Lydon. The latter lost the bout owing to his failure to go in at his man, while Egan proved to be the aggressor all the way through. The decision was a close one, but just.

The opening bout was a farce. A tall lanky lad named Jewett, with a budding moustache and a pair of short trousers which looked as though they were out of place, attempted to put away H. J. Spanger. Jewett lasted a trifle over one round. Referee Harry Sharpe calling the bout off forty-eight seconds after the second round had begun, giving the verdict to Spanger.

\*(the author is referring to the bouts prior to the semi-finals as there were actually a total of 8 bouts on the day - ed.)



Bollinger, alias Burton, and Sturhodlt (sic), two local lads, hooked up in the second bout of the 135-pound class, and the exhibition was a hot one. At the end of the third round it did look as though a draw would be the best decision, but the judges decided otherwise and the bout was given to Bollinger, while the crowd applauded and hissed, just as the result looked to them.

One of the best burlesques ever seen in a ring was that in which Seward of Springfield, Mo., and Van Horn of St. Louis participated. Seward was a tall, deep-chested chap, with a pair of legs that looked as if they belonged to a spider, even rivaling the lower extremities of Bob Fitz in appearance. Van Horn was stocky and about 5 inches shorter than his opponent.

#### Seward a Sprinter

At the gong both men jumped to the center of the ring, and Seward, after shaking hands, proceeded to pose. The first crack out of the box Van Horn chopped the Missourian from Springfield one on the jaw, and the latter proceeded to do a cake walk. After waltzing around the ring, he made a wild swing at Van Horn, which fell 3 yards short, and then he promptly fell down. Van Horn quickly saw that the bout would be a farce and rested. The first rounded ended with a knockdown according to A.A.U. rules, so that the first act lasted 2:56. When the men went to the center of the mat for the second round Van Horn with one glance froze Seward and then began to break icicles off his nose. By this time Referee Harry Sharpe was wondering whether or not he was refereeing a stage joke or a fight, and finally whispered in a loud voice to Seward, "Fight-fight." Seward tried to, but one wallop made him feel funny, and looking at Sharpe and finding no sympathy in the eyes of the referee, he started to sprint. After making a corner and a half of the arena, he pulled into the southwest corner and there rested while the referee gave the bout to Van Horn.

After the 135-pound preliminaries had been disposed of the heavy-weight class was presented, and in this class there was but one bout, another farce, in which a healthy-looking lad called Michaels, a resident of the Mound City, thought he would have some fun with the California giant, Sam Berger.

While Michaels was having his mits adjusted he was calling good-by to his friends in the grand stand. Berger was sitting in his corner, with an amused smile on his face, and wondering what he was up against. When the men came together, Michaels immediately proceeded to knock the head off the native son, but the first thing the St. Louis lad knew he was sitting on the mat rubbing his temple, where Berger had landed a right swing, knocking him down. That ended the first round. Time - :22 1-5.

### Enough for Mr. Michaels

When Michaels returned to his corner he wore a sickly smile—the smile that wouldn't come off. The men came to the center of the mat for the second round, but this time Berger was merciful and allowed Michaels to last 1:16 4-5. Then he dropped him with a left to the jaw. The time record was broken in the third round, when Michaels stayed 1:35 2-5. after Berger had stuck his chin out until he was tired, Michaels refusing to see the point. Then Michaels sat down once more and the championship went to Berger.

Frank Waller (sic), from Covington, won the championship over Fred Gilmore of Chicago at the end of the third round, in the 125-pound class. This was Gilmore's first appearance in the ring, and the son of the veteran Harry Gilmore acquitted himself creditably.

### Spanger Whips Van Horn

In the first bout of the semi-finals of the 135-pound class Spanger and Van Horn came together. Matters were about even between this pair. When the men came up for the third round Van Horn was noticeably tired, while Spanger eagerly went in for more punishment. Van Horn's blows lacked steam, while Spanger blocked cleverly. Van Horn repeatedly swung for the body, but appeared to neglect the head, and tried for a heart punch, and while he did land two, none of them appeared to bother Spanger. The latter went after his man before the bout had gone a minute, and with rights and lefts to the face and neck had Van Horn in a helpless condition, and his hands hung by his side, the St. Louis man being all but out. After seeing the local boy in a helpless condition and in danger of a fatal blow, and when Sharpe did not award the bout, Judge Harnish ordered the referee to call it off, and the decision was given to Spanger.

The last bout of the day, the second in the 135-pound semifinals, was a good one. Egan and Sturhardt hooked up, and the former was given the decision.

This afternoon (sic) at 2:30 the finals and the preliminary bouts in the 105-pound class will be pulled off. Berger will box an exhibition with Van Vort(sic), and all championships will be decided.

**St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Friday Morning, September 28, 1904.**

**BERG** Easily Captures  
Delmar Feature.

**BOXER SPORT.**

## St. Louis Boxer Captures Two Championships in Olympic Bouts.

**O. L. Kirk Easily Beats Finnegan of San Francisco  
and Haller of Cincinnati in the Stadium  
Pugilistic Contests.**

There were ten bouts at the closing day's session of the Olympic boxing tournament, held at the Stadium yesterday, and one St. Louis boy, O. L. Kirk, captured two championships, first in the 115-pound class and first in the 125-pound class.

Kirk did not win his bouts easily, for he had to box like the champion he is to win. In the 115-pound class he met Jim V. Finnegan of the Olympic A. C., San Francisco, who had previously won from Miles Burke of St. Louis in the 105-pound class. Finnegan had come to St. Louis with a record as a world-beater, and he is for 165 pounds, but he miscalculated his ability woefully when he thought he could give Kirk 10 pounds and a beating.

At the top of the going Finnegan jumped into the center of the ring as though he were going to frighten Kirk, but the latter met the native son's rush with a stiff jab to the jaw, and sent his head back. Finnegan came back at Kirk, but the latter cleverly sidestepped, and at the same time sent in a left to the solar plexus that lifted Finnegan clean off his feet, making him grunt like a pig. Both boys then mixed it up, the blows coming so thick and fast that it was almost impossible to keep track of them. Kirk had the better of the argument at long-range fighting, and simply kept Finnegan at a distance, and jabbed him with rights and lefts.

### Finnegan Refused to Break.

In the second round both boys worked well, and the round was about an even break. In the last round both came to the center of the ring strongly, and appeared very anxious to win. Contrary to expectations, Kirk did not lean on his opponent and try to tire him out, but broke cleanly, while Finnegan was repeatedly warned to break clean. Kirk opened the round with a left to the body that immediately put Finnegan on funny street. Finnegan then tried to rush Kirk to the ropes, but in doing so tripped on the mat and went to his knees. Kirk repeatedly jabbed Finnegan on the face and jaw until his face looked like a piece of raw beefsteak, and the native son had to take the first licking he ever received in his ring career; for in the last minute of the third round, Kirk simply banged away with both right and left until he had Finnegan standing helplessly in the ring, trying to protect his face, and the judges justly decided that Kirk was the winner.

### Kirk Wins 125-Pound Championship.

The second bout that Kirk won, the 125-pound championship, was the best seen at the tournament, and one of the best amateur bouts ever seen in the West. Kirk had as an opponent Frank Haller of the Cincinnati gymnastic and athletic club of Cincinnati, and though defeated, Haller was by no means disgraced, for he proved himself to be a clever little boxer.

Kirk gave Haller ten pounds in weight. Haller came to the ring fresh, while Kirk had previously won the 115-pound championship. Both boys were very fast, each good at jabbing, and both had the punch with which to do the trick. At the going in the first round Haller led off with a rush, forcing Kirk to the ropes, and the latter cleverly blocked two vicious right swings for the jaw. Kirk then forced Haller to the center of the ring and landed a telling left swing to the kidneys which made the Cincinnati winner. Kirk came back with a jab to the jaw, and Haller tried for a swing to the jaw and succeeded in landing. Two rapid exchanges then followed, but both boys were clever at blocking, and the round ended in an even break.

Haller appeared to be the strongest at the opening of the second round, and the way he landed on the St. Louis man made matters look serious for Kirk. The latter came back strongly in the last minute and evened matters by landing a right swing to the jaw which made Haller groggy. The latter tried for a left jab to the head, but Kirk sidestepped and sent in another telling left swing to Haller's stomach, which almost floored him. Kirk closed the round with a right jab to the jaw.

In the final round Kirk was at no time in danger, though Haller appeared the

stronger of the two. Kirk repeatedly jabbed to the face, getting inside Haller's guard with regularity. Haller made several feeble attempts to land on the jaw, but his blows generally fell short, and he did land one to the jaw which shook Kirk from stem to stern, but the St. Louis lad was the fresher of the two and won out.

Charles Mayer of St. George A. C., New York, arrived at the Stadium in time to weigh in for the 125-pound class, and just timed the scale at the weight. Mayer is a clever boxer, and wore a smile that was tantalizing to Ben Spangler of St. Louis, who opposed him. Mayer had no difficulty in defeating Spangler, and the referee stopped the bout in the third round after it had gone 1:40.

### Berger a Disappointment.

Sam Berger of California, the much-bouted champion, who was defeated by Rodenbach of New York on the coast last winter, and who has been claiming that he got the worst of the decision, met Mayer later in the day for the heavy-weight championship. Berger weighed 162 pounds and Mayer 159. Berger not only had the advantage in weight, but also in reach and height. The Californian's work, if it was his best, and he was compelled to travel fast in the session, was the poorest of any amateur heavyweight champion ever seen in a ring. Had Joe Kolpe of New York been up against Berger the Californian would not have lasted two rounds. Mayer put up an excellent fight, blocking nearly all of Berger's leads, but the Californian had the reach and won the bout on his ability to jab and do the landing.

In the second round, Mayer had Berger on the anxious seat, but by continually leaning on Mayer, Berger managed to wear out the New York man. In fact, the three Olympic boxers, Finnegan, Berger and Young, refused to break cleanly when ordered to by the referee, and each man threw his body on his opponent in the clinches, which is in violation of the A. A. U. rules. At the close of the third round the judges justly awarded the verdict to Berger, though the crowd yelled for a verdict in favor of Mayer.

In the 105-pound class, George Finnegan won from Miles Burke of St. Louis, the referee stopping the bout in the first round and giving the decision to the Californian.

### Spanger Beats Egan.

The opening bout on the card was the first of the 135-pound class, in which Spanger of Newark, N. J., and Egan of Philadelphia hooked up. Both men gave an excellent exhibition, Egan's jabbing being offset by Spanger's swings to the low and body, together with a left jab that worried Egan from the start. The verdict, though close, was a popular one, Russell Van Horn and Peter Sturhardt, both of St. Louis, fought three rounds for third place in the 125-pound class, and Van Horn was awarded the victory, after almost knocking out Sturhardt in the third round, and flooring him in the second round.

### Spanger Whips Lydon.

Joe Lydon and H. J. Spangler met in the preliminary bout of the 145-pound class, and the decision went to Spangler. The latter rubbed the head off the St. Louis man, and at the close of the third round Lydon's face was in bad shape. Lydon thought the decision unjust, and started to call down Referee Harry Sharpe in the ring, but Sharpe did not make the decision, both Judges Stewart of St. Louis and Harbush of New York agreeing on Spanger as the winner.

In the final bout of the 145-pound class Spanger met Al Young of San Francisco, a fresh man, and lost the decision. Young is a clever boxer, a hard hitter, and with Spanger fresh both men would make a good bout.

Ben Tipton of St. Louis, who was entered in the 105-pound class, was suspended from the A. A. U. for fighting Currol Caine last Sunday, and not allowed to compete in the 105-pound class. Rude Kruder of St. Louis, who was entered in the 135-pound class, was at the ringside and refused to go on. He was promptly suspended from the A. A. U. for six months by J. C. O'Brien, chairman of the registration committee.