

This book is about some ghetto kids of the 1930s and 40s who became famous because they learned how to fight better than anyone else. We call them boxers and they came from the neighborhoods of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit and other cities. The popularity of Television in America began to grow in the late 1940s and the televised Friday Night fights played a big part in that growth. Boxers became superstars on television. The Friday Night fights were broadcast weekly by Gillette and Pabst Blue Ribbon from the late 1940s into the early 1960s. Along with The Milton Berle Show the Friday Night fights helped to sell millions of television sets during this time as families and friends gathered together to watch their heroes. FRIDAYS HEROES is also about a young man from the Italian section of Hartford, Connecticut who went on to become One of the Greatest Fighters in the history of the sport. His name was Willie Pep. This Will O the Wisp was World Featherweight Champion from 1942-1951 and campaigned for twenty-six years. Finally, this is a book about such people as Sugar Ray Robinson, Rocky Graziano, Chico Vejar, Kid Gavilan, Joey Giardello, Billy Graham, Rocky Marciano, Ezzard Charles, Joe Louis, Jake LaMotta, and others who are no longer the ghetto kids making a living from boxing, but middle-aged men with the roar of the crowd behind them. Today, the athlete - never to be confused with a boxer - is a celebrated figure. Yet as boxers these men seemed to have a different kind of respectability in our society, perhaps because they had to fight for a living. Nevertheless, no warrior that stalked the arena was more gallant than these kids. Willie Pep Remembers...Fridays Heroes is a book about people, these people.

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