



Interview with Angelo Dundee

Date: November 12, 1984

Interviewer: N/A

Camera Rolls: 1 — 2a

Sound Rolls: 1 — 2

Team: V. Grundez

Interview gathered as part of *Black Champions*. Produced by Miles Educational Film Productions, Inc. Housed at the Washington University Film and Media Archive, William Miles Collection.

Interview with Angelo Dundee, conducted by Miles Educational Film Productions, Inc. on November 12, 1984 for *Black Champions*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, William Miles Collection.

Note: These transcripts contain material that did not appear in the final program. Only text appearing in bold italics was used in the final version of *Black Champions*.

[camera roll 1]

[sound roll 1]

00:00:00:00 — 00:02:32:00

[sync tone]

Interviewer #1:

All right, whenever.

Camera Crew Member #1:

Sam, you're ready.

Interviewer #1:

Angelo Dundee, we're gonna talk with you about champions. You've been associated with some of the really stellar names in boxing over thirty, thirty-five years—Carmen Basilio; Luis Rodriguez, a particular favorite of mine; Ali, of course; Ray Leonard. Is there something particular about champions that maybe bonds all these guys together? Is there a common thread that runs? Are they all very different personalities? Tell us about these guys.

Angelo Dundee:

Well, you never meet the same guy twice. That's the interesting thing about champions. They've only got their own thing going for them, their own thoughts, their own ideas. Some

are introverts, some are extroverts. Some have a way about them where they can handle situations at all—

[missing frames]

Angelo Dundee:

—times. *Champions changed from the old days to the new days, where in the old days the manager did the talking for them, or their PR guy, or the second, or the trainer—whatever. But it changed, because today's champion has to be, acquit himself well outside of his profession as well as in his profession, because you gotta be good from both ends because today's media demands to talk to the star. Oddly enough, the fella that converted that was Muhammad Ali, because he was the most available superstar of our era. [Note Interview gathered as part of Black Champions; Episode 2]*

[missing frames]

Angelo Dundee:

He was the guy, the easiest to get to. I pride myself with that a little bit, 'cause I always said, see these people? See that guy pointin' that camera? See that fella with the pencil? They your people. The radio guys—and, and I-, let me tell you something, I says, something about our profession—any profession in athletics, the worst thing you can, happen to you is silence, 'cause if nobody knows about what's going on, you're in all kinds of trouble. So champion has to be special, because he gotta give himself more than the usual type individual. Gotta pull up with notoriety, gotta take that feeling of being recognized. He can't shun the public, or the public demands to see you. They want to talk to you. So if you're a champion, you'll be able to handle all that. That's a necessity.

00:02:33:00 — 00:03:21:00

Interviewer #1:

Let's talk a little bit about Ali. And one of the things I've always been fascinated to, to know—was there a measurable difference—I mean, beside from the fact that, his normal maturation process, was there a measurable difference between Cassius Clay and Muhammad Ali?

Angelo Dundee:

No, the same individual. A lover of people. Decent individual. Always was nice to everybody. I don't care who you were. If you were a kid on the street, he'd stop and talk to you. Your stature did not govern his thinking of wh-, whether he spoke to you or not. In other words, if you were a big person, an important person, didn't make no difference, because everybody was on a level wit' him. Loved people. He had that somethin' special about 'im, and he projected the warmth wherever he did, wherever he went.

00:03:22:00 — 00:05:00:00

Interviewer #1:

You said once that perhaps the most impressive single thing about him was his hand speed, which you, which you measured with Willie Pastrano, who we all know is a, been tremendously, great hand speed. How important was that—

[missing frames]

Interviewer #1:

—for Ali?

Angelo Dundee:

Well, he had such great reflexes, great—no, see, the coordination of the, the legs and the hands are very important, as you know, with a fighter.

[missing frames]

Angelo Dundee:

Well, Muhammad had that quickness. He had much more than that going for him. The ability to bounce; the in-and-out movement; the side-to-side. For a big fella, that was unheard-of. A guy that can—

[missing frames]

Angelo Dundee:

—go both forward, back, side, side, slide, glide, never lose your pride, and all that kinda stuff, 'cause Muhammad had that. Great balance. Great fighter. I, he's the greatest heavyweight I've ever seen. And you know, and a lot of people will argue with that, because it's a hypothetical type o' question, 'cause the guys that came from the earlier era will say they were better. But actually, the, our race got bigger. People don't understand that. In the old days, Jack Johnson was six foot—standing, I mean, on his, on his toes. Muhammad was six-three, 215.

[missing frames]

Angelo Dundee:

So, the race got bigger. *So Muhammad was at the beginning of super heavyweight. But a great balanced heavyweight*, 'cause when we had big people, when you had a Carnera, the

thought was clumsy, no balance, no bounce—you know, like a, an ogre, like—and he was the guy that was around that, the, all the other guys were so much smaller, he looked out of place. ***But the thing was, big people now are so well-coordinated. We have a different thing happening right now in sports. [Note Interview gathered as part of Black Champions; Episode 2]***

00:05:01:00 — 00:07:03:00

Interviewer #1:

Tell us something about Ali when you first got him in the gym here in Miami. What, what, what did you feel you had to work with him on? And what—

Angelo Dundee:

Ali, Ali was a fun trip from the first day I met 'im. He's just been a joy to be with. He was the kind of youngster that liked the work. But a lot of people didn't know was he was the first guy in the gym, last guy leaving. He's always say, well, who ya got for me today? Let me clean up your gym, how many bums you got for me? You know, he's just kidding. And, and then, and then that's taken derogatory, 'cause he's a lover of fighters. And he would work, and he'd be the last guy leaving. He got, when he'd get through working out, he'd sit down, talk to people, relax, which is a necessity. You gotta learn after you're through working, sit down and relax; observe; see what's happening. 'Cause I like my fighters, after they're through working out, sit down and watch the other guy work. They might pick up somethin', they might learn. 'Cause what boxing specif'ally is, a slow teach. It's not a quick teach. A slow teach, it stays. It, it, it, it permeates the, the individual, the fight—some pick it up quicker, others don't. But the thing is, it is a slow teach. Now, what I liked about him, loved the work. Enjoyed it. Ali used to walk from Overtown, from Overtown in Miami. He used to run from Overtown to Miami Beach, to the 5th and Washington Avenue. Never counted a mile—seven, eight miles—run there, work out, run back. Many a time I got calls from policemen saying, who's this nut runnin' across the causeway? [laughs] 'Cause Muhammad really was pickin' 'em up and layin' 'em down. ***Muhammad coulda been great at whatever he tried***, but actually he was never athletically inclined for any—

[missing frames]

Angelo Dundee:

—thing else but boxing. ***Everybody thought, you know, athlete, the tight end. You know, coulda been something else in another sport. Muhammad told Jim Brown—they were very close, very friendly—that he—Jim Brown said, I wouldn't do what you do. Says, I wouldn't do what you do! He'd say, you got eleven guys trying to nail you.***

[missing frames]

Angelo Dundee:

I only gotta worry about the one guy in front of me. And Muhammad was that kind of a youngster that—just a joy to be around. It was so easy. *[Note Interview gathered as part of Black Champions; Episode 2]*

00:07:04:00 — 00:07:40:00

Interviewer #1:

You mentioned once that you felt that the great fights of—and I would agree with this—were the first Liston fight; the, the Cleveland Williams fight was, I have always thought, was perhaps his best fight. Maybe you could tell us a little about that.

Angelo Dundee:

Well, he was always one s-, split second ahead of Cleveland Williams. Cleveland Williams was a very dangerous puncher, but Muhammad got the shots in before Cleveland did. The exciting thing about that fight that, was that Muhammad hit him in midair. He banged him and he had him straightened out, and then he nailed him and the guy really, he knocked him down three or four times. It was a tremendous exhibition of speed, quickness, reflex.

00:07:41:00 — 00:08:25:00

Interviewer #1:

The, you mentioned the Zora Folley fight, which I saw, as I, as we d-, discussed before, which I thought was—was the first time I had seen him, and I was amazed by his mobility first of all, you know, in a guy that size who could move—I mean, his foot movement, just the whole coordination of a body that size, amazing.

Angelo Dundee:

Well, Zora Folley was considered quick, fast, quick hands, good counter-puncher. But Muhammad always was there that little split second before. His shots got in there. Zora Folley was a very dangerous opponent. You couldn't go to sleep with him, you had to be sharp, and aware of what you were doing. And Zora Folley, to me, is a great fighter. I mean, tragic what happened to the guy. You know, and whenever they talk about the dangers of sports, it's more dangerous outside than within the sport.

00:08:26:00 — 00:10:12:00

Interviewer #1:

When you've been—in all of this work you did with Ali, was there anything during his career that you, you really had to change? Was there something that he brought to the gym, Fifth Avenue Gym—

Angelo Dundee:

What I, What I'd do—and I'd do this with a lotta people—was a different ballgame with Muhammad, 'cause I had to make 'im feel like he was the innovator. He had to be the guy. I called it around the mulberry bush t-, type of teaching, where I would make him feel like—say he's in the gym, hypothetically, sparring, throwing a coupla good jabs. So he comes out, I say, you know that left hook you threw off that jab was perfect; the balance was perfect, you bent your left knee, you turned your body into it; great movement; great shot. Would do it the next day, off of what I'd told him. And then the uppercuts. I worked on every punch in the book with this kid, and made him feel that he was the guy. Said, yeah, that was; you like the way I threw that jab? You like the way I threw a left hook? Dynamite. Sensational. Never hadda push 'im to work, I had to stop him from working, see? I didn't want to put him against too many tough guys early on. He worked with some decent fighters early on, but I'm a firm believer of not taking it out on my fighter in a gymnasium. Place, the gymnasium's a place where you go to school. That's the schoolroom. That's where you learn. And I don't have no wars in the gym. I don't believe in gym fighters. Muhammad never won a decision his whole career. All he did was work with people. Never won a decision, never scored a knockdown. He took about 390 knockdowns himself, you know, where the—actually, he didn't get knocked. He made believe he got knocked down, had some fun with guys. And the guys would freeze up, and say, oh, I knocked down Muhammad Ali. But, never. But he worked, got into condition, and did his thing when it was important in the ring, in the fight.

00:10:13:00 — 00:11:22:00

Interviewer #1:

If, if he's an example, if he's typical of a, of an example, a certain kind of athlete, not just a fighter, is there something in the athlete, maybe perhaps particularly in the champion, that doesn't want to stop? There's so many fighters who you say, maybe they've had one bout too many, or four or five bouts too many. What happens to them that they seem to be the last ones to recognize when it's, when it's over?

Angelo Dundee:

Probably, what you gotta hope and pray is that you, you realize it in time, where is, doesn't too much of a toll on their physical being. Muhammad Ali you can't compare to any other individual, 'cause Muhammad Ali was the type of an individual, nobody would make up HIS mind. He made up his own mind. And nobody, if you tried to—the more you tried to talk him into—in fact, I blame myself with Muhammad, because I actually told him, please, forget about it; how much more can you do than what you've done for boxing? That was a mistake, see? 'Cause I, I was the one that was innovatin' that. I shoulda said, continue fightin'; go ahead, go—

[Rollout on Camera Roll]

Angelo Dundee:

—take a lickin'; go ahead, what's the dea—so, this way, he woulda stopped.

Interviewer #3:

Cut.

Interviewer #2:

Whoo!

Interviewer #1:

Very good. Terr—

[sync tone]

[cut]

[camera roll 2]

00:11:23:00 — 00:14:24:00

[wild sound]

Interviewer #1:

Yeah.

Camera Crew Member #2:

—pick up on that same—

Interviewer #1:

Yeah, we're, we'll back into that question.

Camera Crew Member #1:

Go ahead.

Interviewer #1:

Oh, just, let's back up one moment, talk about—

Angelo Dundee:

Sure.

Interviewer #1:

—we were talking about how fighters have to be encouraged to stop, or when the time is to stop, or perhaps a relationship between a manager or trainer—

[sync tone]

Interviewer #1:

—and a fighter—

[picture returns]

Interviewer #1:

—on that particular point.

Angelo Dundee:

Right. Sure. Well, the thing about it is that, you can't actually push a guy to stop. In other words, somebody, they resent it, because they—[phone rings]—they feel they're the guys that did it. They, I think it's their God-given right to stop when they want to. And like I said earlier on, I hope they stop in time where it hasn't taken too much toll on their well-being or their physical being. As far as Muhammad, there's nothing wrong with Muhammad. He's got a Parkinson's Syndrome. The kid takes his medicine, he's fine. If he doesn't, then he's starting to mumble on you. But as far as sharpness of the mind at, up on top, he's as sharp as he can be. Thing—what Muhammad created, that he was the flip, sharp, smart, bouncy kid, and that's the picture that people want to remember about him. Like a, Muhammad used to say he could dance for fifteen rounds. [shakes head] Not so. Looked so pretty doing it for three or four, they figured he was doin' it for fifteen. So this is what Muhammad had to overcome. Naturally he's not the same guy. And I think he cast some aspersions toward Howard Cosell. He said, you're not the man you were ten years ago. He said, Muhammad said, I spoke to your wife yesterday, and she told me you're not the man you were a week ago. You know, so this is something, you know, that, that go on. But, I—naturally, he's not the same guy. But as far as sharpness, smartness, whenever he calls me, whenever we speak to each other—which is often—we discuss the guys in the gym. He asks me how Saria is, his masseur; he asks me how Mo Fleischer is, the old-timer, he asks me how brother Chris is. He tells a cute story about Chris and I. He was going through a little town in Kentucky, and there was a little old guy there, and he's walking' down street. He says, he says, Cassius, he says, do you know the Dundees? And Cassius says, yeah, I know 'em both. He says, good hustlers, good hustlers. [laughs] And that's what he calls Chris and I, the hustlers. Heckle and Jeckle. He gives everybody their own nicknames, you know, but it's with, it's with love and admiration. He's a

nice guy. Cannon was the Gangster, Al Buck was another Gangster; he called another guy Mickey Rooney if he was a little short. You know, he got his own little thing about him. But forget it. When he left, there's not gonna be 'body like that. Do you know, champion ruin champion? Muhammad ruined Larry Holmes, because Larry Holmes wanted to be Muhammad. Now, they're all different. And I told Larry myself, I says, Larry, don't try to be Muhammad; you're pretty good cookin' yourself. You're a nice individual, you're a good kid, you're a heck of a fighter, but you can't be Muhammad.

00:14:25:00 — 00:16:54:00

Interviewer #1:

And, and did—you dealt with fighters from—Sugar Ramos was a featherweight, Muhammad was a heavyweight, Pinklon Thomas, heavyweight. Do you have a preference? Is there, is there a weight categ-, division that maybe you're—

Angelo Dundee:

I enjoyed working with 'em all. They're all different to work with. You work on specific type of things. If you got a midget, you don't try to make him a Billy Conn, don't try to make him a Pastrano, try to make him a little shorter. The teaching of Charlie Goldman years ago taught me that. You know, if you got something, you utilize what's there. If the guy's a big, tall, stringy guy, naturally utilize the jab and the move. It's all according to the individual you're working with. There's so much you can do. Rocky Marciano—Charlie Goldman did a great job. He made him smaller. He's five-eleven, so he made him get a little shorter, and the guy's had to reach for him. Thing is you gotta work with the individual that you have. How much they could, you can penetrate into their thinking, how much you can drive them, and learn their inner s-, inner self. I had guys that, I knew they wanted specific things in life. A fighter, say, was working all his life and he's trying to get a house, it was for his wife and his kids. I—it's in my book, I Only Talk Winning. Was, his name was Johnny Holman, and he was fightin' Ezzard Charles, and he was gettin' the heck kicked out of him. Looked like he was gonna jump outa the ring. If there was a gate, he was gonna take that gate. But there was no gate. So I told Johnny, I say, what are you doing? I said, this guy's takin' your house from you, with the, you know, hypothe—he went out and he stopped Ezzard Charles. You gotta, you know, you learn your subject, what, what you get the most out of 'em. Some, you gotta cuss; some, you gotta badger; some, you gotta talk to 'em like a little ki-, you know, like your son. It's a different kind of r-, approach, which you learn, as you go along, what brings the best out of fighters. Pinklon Thomas gave a great crack onc-, to a bunch of guys. Says, what does Angelo do for you? He said, well, he makes me laugh. By that, I keep 'em loose, happy. I think a happy individual is a better individual. You'll notice your champions in all sports are happy people. They're happy, you know, they're happy with life. They, they can perceive better if they're loose as a goose. I mean, what did our mothers used to tell us? Don't frown, 'cause you got too many wrinkles in your face. You, you have a smile, it's easier, and it's better for the muscles in your face. So this is a champion, that can handle it. And, and Pinklon made that crack, and it was a very good crack.

00:16:55:00 — 00:17:25:00

Interviewer #1:

I, I've heard this from a couple of people, and I seem to recall you saying it once. You said, one of the great things about Ali, technically, in the ring, is that he doesn't blink; is that his eyes are like—

Angelo Dundee:

Yeah, he stares at you. He doesn't blink. That, it's like, he's like a snake. In other words, you notice a, a, a, a, a water moccasin or a rattlesnake, it stares at a person and don't blink. Try to make him blink. But he never blinked. You're right. Because a blink took up time, so he used to stare at you and get the, get the job done.

00:17:26:00 — 00:19:04:00

Interviewer #1:

You were, I think—it, say—fair to say, had a somewhat different kind of relationship, and this goes along with what you said in the beginning, with a fighter like Ray Leonard, who was a different personality, and whose situation was, was very different, and your relationship to him was different. Talk—

Angelo Dundee:

Well, you know—

Interviewer #1:

—about the experience with him.

Angelo Dundee:

When you work with champions, you realize, from their background—we had similar type of a background, like a hand-me-down sort of a c-, situation. I was a last of five. Ray was the youngest of the brothers. He got the hand-me-downs. I was the hand-me-down kid, so was he, and we would relate to each other with that. His was home-cooking, him was family warmth, love of family; got into boxing 'cause his m-, his father got sick. Different type of relationship, and I projected with that relationship. He was a different type of sell. He was home-cooking, he was the kid that ev-, everybody round the block wanted to get to meet. We started out in Baltimore, Washington, right in his home area, which is a great melting pot for boxing, and they sort of adopted this kid. And this is wonderful, 'cause you gotta have that. You gotta have that local feel, that local touch, because it, it, you rise to an occasion.

Champion. First day he fought, the first time he fought, wants to, taken him out to dinner, and he had a hamburger. Cheeseburger, actually. [laughs] So I says, you like it? I says, great!

He had it. So you know, when you're young, you can overcome a lotta things, your stomach is like a furnace. So you never persevere on what you're gonna make him eat. They like it? Eat it, whatever it is.

00:19:05:00 — 00:21:08:00

Interviewer #1:

Tell us about him as a fighter.

Angelo Dundee:

[pause] Smart. Calculating. Evaluated his opponent real well. I discussed things that, the shortcomings of his opponents, so he could take advantage of it. I mean, if, if a guy used to juke, you know, sideways—say, if a guy slide left, I'd tell him, don't be in the same sort of a groove, don't slide left with him, you'll get nailed yourself. If the guy was a good right-hand bomber, so, now you, naturally, you float away from the right hand. If the guy was a good, threw a good uppercut, don't fall in. Happened one time, he fell in with a kid named Willie Rodriguez, and he got nailed, the best left-hook you ever saw. He bounced off the ropes, came off, the guy nailed him a left-hook counter. He didn't do it anymore. Thank God it wasn't, the, that he get, either get dropped, or did he get knocked out from the punch, 'cause he hit a perfect punch. 'Cause punching, people must—they don't realize this a lot. It's not the heaviness of the punch. It's the punch you don't see that'll knock you out. [laughs] So this is what happens with fighters. Ray got nailed with a shot he didn't see. [snaps fingers] He got wobbled. He overcame it, 'cause he had a good chin, Ray. Very, very strong individual. Good runner. Coulda been a track star, Ray. Could run with anybody. I liked him, for the simple reason, he was a hard worker, as usual. He had the, problems with his hands early on, but we counteracted that, because you do certain things with hands. You do certain things with their running, you do certain things with their [laughs] gymnasium workouts. Lotta people don't realize fighters work very hard calisthenics-wise. Athletes do that also. They work—not only what they do in the ring, 'cause a fighter could spar 9,000,000 rounds, it won't get him to condition that he needs. It's the running, it's the table. And it's their c-, the way they work out in the gymnasium. It's not all sparring.

Camera Crew Member #2:

Can we—

[no audio]

[cut]

[camera roll 2a]

[sound roll 2]

00:21:09:00 — 00:22:58:00

[sync tone]

Interviewer #1:

All right, let it go. Let's talk a little about the first Leonard-Duran fight, which—I, I have to say, I watched the fight with a pool of reporters at the Garden. I thought Ray won. I mean, it was at least close enough for the championship not to have changed hands. What, from your point of view, was the fight about? What happened?

Angelo Dundee:

You're makin' me feel good. I thought he won, too. But it was neither here nor there. Ray fought a bad fight. It's what you call psychological warfare. 'Cause to me R-, R-, Roberto Duran was the, the Latin-American Muhammad Ali, with a different type of psych. He was a street-tough kid who was insulting Ray every chance he got when he walked by him and, before the fight. This is a week before, in Montreal. Another thing, he was adopted by the Montreal fans. They go for that type of rough, tough individual, from way back, the Johnny Greco days, and the tough guys, or Armand Savoie, and the guys they had around Canada. Now, the French fans fell in love with Roberto Duran. I thought Ray won. I thought—Ray wanted to punish him, though. But Ray found out you don't punish a guy, you don't lick a guy, by fighting their fight. You always fight your fight. And Ray, the second time around, didn't let him psych him, didn't let 'im bother 'im. 'Cause psychologically, Ray was really shook up, because Ray, like I said earlier on, is a nice kid, home-cookin', gentleman, yes-sir, no—that type an individual. And here this crud's callin' him every name in the book, and he's givin' him high signs [gives "the finger"], and it wasn't a V for s-, you know, V for victory sign [gives "V for Victory" sign], you know, he was giving him the other [gives "the finger" again]. Let's leave a finger behind. But he was doing a number, right in front of 'is wife. Really shook up Ray. It was, he couldn't stand it, because Ray's not that kind of a kid. He's a nice kid.

00:22:59:00 — 00:25:09:00

Interviewer #1:

You tell a very interesting story in your book, of how you and the weigh—maybe you'll tell us this story now. You and Ray showed up for the, for the weigh-in for the second fight, for the second Duran fight. You wore beards and everything.

Angelo Dundee:

Oh yeah, we, we, I put a beard on him, because I'd made a big s-, spectacle about the beard, about the, D-, Duran's beard, about the length [sic] of the beard, because, you know, I gotta have cleanliness. You cannot scratch another guy's face, ya know? And naturally, they're saying, well, he's not gonna kiss your fighter. I said, I guarantee I wouldn't make him kiss my

fighter, because of—with that dirty beard, that filthy instrument, that weapon. So we had Ray come in with a beard. I bought him a beard. I think we had a reverse effect and we shook up the guys. I did that with the Big Guy one time, you know, when we fought Doug Jones in the Garden. I put the tape over his mouth, and then there was a new thing, a new impact, and my guy wasn't gonna talk. Don't talk. And I think John Conlan got shook up, because I wasn't gonna make him talk, because when Muhammad talked, things happened. But I did that with the beard, to have a reverse type of effect when we got to the weigh-in. Interesting thing about the weigh-in is that when they checked Duran's weight early on, they checked it on a, on a, a, a, a shaky platform. I think Duran had made the weight, but didn't realize it. The shaky platform made it, got an improper weight. So what we did, we, we s-, we were looking through a curtain, him checkin' his weight, and we went in behind him. We grabbed the scale and I put it on a solid foundation and got a proper weight. And Ray had made the weight easily. I think Duran may have had the weight made, because right after the weigh-in, Duran was guzzling liquid like a crazy man, eatin' like a crazy man, and, and when, really shook up, because he really drained himself going to the sweat bath. And what happened with Duran—you know, and here's a champion, also. Great fighter. Champion. I thought realistically. There's no quit in fighter, no quit in an athlete. He's gonna give it everything he's got. What happened there was, he felt there was a right way to go out, the second fight, instead of getting himself knocked out. It would've been, hurt more, if he'd have gotten knocked out. He woulda gotten knocked out that night, 'cause Ray was really on, and Ray was really gonna get him out of there.

00:25:10:00 — 00:26:43:00

Interviewer #1:

Since you came into the fight game, how have training methods and the regimen of a, of a fighter's preparation for, for—have, has that changed a lot? Or, I mean, do, do managers and trainers use essentially the same methods of preparation getting a fighter—

Angelo Dundee:

No, I, we're all different. We have a different approach. The guys that are in the p-, the profession right now d-, have their own way of handling fighters, a way of doing things with fighters. I don't think it's changed that much. I think the essential part of boxing is the running; the training, the proper training in the gymnasium; the starting of the training—it's all according to what the—if the guy's a young kid, they, you can make him burn the, on all fours; but if he's a little bit older, you gotta sorta tone down the training, and don't wear yourself out before he gets into a fight. It's such a thing as wearin' a guy out. Too much of everything. I mean, it's, a lot of things happen to guys when they burn the candle at, inside the ring. And outside the ring that takes a toll also. No, I don't think the training has changed that much. I think that it's gotten a little advanced, naturally. I think what's got it more advanced, I think, are the athletes themselves, 'cause they have a [phone rings] different type of regimentation as far as eating, as far as taking care of themselves. I think the fellas that are champion are the guys you don't have to bird-dog, you don't have to hang around and make

sure they're doing the right thing. They're gonna do the right thing, 'cause they know to be the best at what they do, they must do the right thing.

00:26:44:00 — 00:29:37:00

Interviewer #1:

Angelo Dundee, you also have a reputation for being one of the great cutmen in fights. I think people hear that term, not quite know very much about what it means. What is a great cutman? What do you have to be—

Angelo Dundee:

Well, it ain't that you're a great cutman. It's got—when you work with a fighter, you know, the, what you learn, you learn your technique of what works with your fighter. Certain types of cuts you treat individually different. All it is, pure and simple, you must have a coagulant. The first idea is to clean up the fighter, clean away the blood; apply pressure to the cut, wherever it is. Now you'll put different type of pressure on a cut if it's on a [points at face] different part o-, area of the—in other words [removes glasses], say a guy gets cut within this area here. [gestures to eye] Well, they, you, people would think that would be a difficult place to stop a cut. It's the easiest place to stop a cut, 'cause they don't have too much tissue there. What you do is you put your coag-, pressure, w—you wipe away the blood, you put your pressure. Open the cut, put the coagulant in, pressure; vaseline, away from the eye. It's like, sort of a little bit of a technique, like a woman puttin' on makeup. You sort of brush it up away from the eye so it don't go into the corner of the eye. If you gotta head cut, it's a very simple cut to stop. You can put a big blob of grease on a head cut. Put pressure, big blob of grease. Just as long as it doesn't get water on it, just as long as it doesn't get air on it, she'll stop. They're the easiest cuts. Chin cuts are not that difficult to stop. Nosebleeds are pretty easy to stop, if you know what you're doin'. You don't use a Q-tip. A lotta guys [puts glasses on], you know, put these Q-tips in their ear, that makes 'em a cutman. They don't know they're alive. They're bad. They're a detriment, 'cause you get dirt on a Q-tip. You gotta keep 'em in your pocket. Whatever you use on a fighter's gotta be sterile, use sterile gauze pads. So you use a gauze pad, clean up the area of the cut. And like I say it before, if you get a cut like a nosebleed, you never use a Q-tip, [points to nose] because a lot of 'em tear tissue. What you do is get the plain cotton, dip it into the adrenalin, sort of corkscrew it into the cut, [demonstrates] put a little pressure on it. It's all according to what side of the nose it's in; and then give a little pinch down below. In the quick here, that'll stop the bleeding. It's all accordin' what cut the fighter has, the way you will treat it, because it goes more into other things about studying into coagulants. There's no mystique about it. It's, it's the way you, the technique of handling a cut. I got an awful lotta practice, and I'm not tryin' to be funny, with Carmen Basilio. He used to bust up every fight, and all kinds o' shapes, all sizes, and [knocks on table twice] never got stopped on a cut. So I worked with him eight years, and that was my specific thing. I had to take care of his cuts. But I also got to be very friendly with the young man. Him and I traveled a lot together. We useta trade jokes all the time, and I used to give him s-, the Floridian jokes, and he would give me the Syracuse jokes. We used to trade 'em back and—Chittenango jokes. They were pretty bad.

00:29:38:00 — 00:31:13:00

Interviewer #1:

You mentioned the cuts that are fairly easy to stop. If you were in a fight, say with Basilio, or anybody, what would be the cut you just did not want to see happen? What would be the toughest cut?

Angelo Dundee:

Well, it, one—the cuts that were very dangerous were the cuts that would naturally blur a fighter's vision. He had an arterial cut one time, and—Carmen had a, when he fought Robinson. I didn't know, -- the second fight, Carmen had had some op-, an operation done on, on the artery up on top, above his eye, and the, the blood had no place to go, so the eyelid closed, and went way down below here. [touches cheek] The cut, the, the most difficult kind [removes glasses] is the one I tried to describe to you, but the ones that go all the way down into here and over to here [points to corners of eye socket]. Most of your cuts are not caused by punches. Very rarely. They're mostly by headbutts, elbows, thumbs, but never, very rarely by a punch. An uppercut may cause a cut once in a while, because what's happening [puts glasses on], the gloves we have now are s-, perfected so, where they don't create cuts. They also, we, we're getting away from thumbing now. We're having some good work done on gloves where they have thumb attachments, safety thumb. You cannot encase the thumb. It creates sleepiness. Your thumb falls asleep on you, you can't make a proper fist. That's why the thumbless glove never caught on around the United States. Only in New York. Now, they're coming out with a better glove with the attachment, where you can't thumb a fighter. And I'm happy for that, because thumbing has been a real bugaboo down the line.

00:31:14:00 — 00:32:17:00

Interviewer #1:

Let's talk about, as we close out here, let's talk about the first Liston-Ali fight, which I think—for most of us, of course, it wasn't a televised, but it was tremendously exciting. We were hearing it on the radio, and it made me think everybody was caught up. You were there, you saw all that happen, and talk about Ali wanting to quit, because of the liniment in his eye. Give us a capsule description of that, that—

Angelo Dundee:

Well, they thought the fight wasn't gonna go on. The doctor got caught up into the, the hype and everything else. And Muhammad was challengin' the bear right up until the weigh-in. So he was sort of jumpin' all over the joint and everything else, and then the doctor Robins—Alexander, still lives here—he said--man's crazy. The guy's a nervous wreck, he's scared ta DEATH. I said, no, no. 'Cause I was holdin' him back with one finger. I was pushin' [laughs] the big kid off, and he, he, am I, am I gettin' im? Am I gettin' im? [laughs] You know, he, he

was—it was a big show. See, what people don't know, he rehearsed that show twice. We went to the weigh-in, there was nobody there. We got there too early, and we walked from the front of the convention hall to the—

00:32:18:00 — 00:33:31:00

[rollout on Camera Roll]

[wild sound]

Angelo Dundee:

—back of the convention hall, where they end, and he had a big entourage—

Interviewer #2:

Ah, keep, keep rolling.

Interviewer #1:

Keep going.

Interviewer #2:

Keep telling—

[sync tone]

Interviewer #2:

—us.

[sync tone]

Interviewer #1:

Go from—

Angelo Dundee:

He had a big—

Interviewer #1:

—the beginning.

Angelo Dundee:

—he had a big entourage behind him, and the big entourage is going, we get the bear, we get the bear. But all these girls who came in from Chicago, all these good-looking ladies, and we, Sugar Ray was walking me. Said, I get the best man in boxing, Sugar Ray! And we went all the way down, and there was nobody there. So we had to go all the way back to the arena. We did it [laughs] over again. See, Muhammad rehearsed it. Now, what happened—Ferdie Pacheco got into the, the act with me with this one, too. I brought him back to Muhammad's house, which was on s-, 48th street on, in northwest section. And I brought him back and made him examiner, 'cause Ferdie was M.D.—

[sync tone]

Angelo Dundee:

—physician. And we took his blood pressure, and he took his temperature. Everything was normal. So I called the AP and the UPI. Hey, I have Dr. Pacheco here, my guy is fine. Bang. 'Cause they were talking about postponing the fight—cancelling the fight! You know, and here, we've got the guy ready, we're gonna do the number. But thank God, didn't cancel it, and the rest is history, my kid won it.

Interviewer #2:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer #3:

Cut.

Interviewer #1:

Mm-hmm. Mm.

Interviewer #3:

Great. [laughs]

Interviewer #1:

[unintelligible]

[cut]

[end of interview]

00:33:32:00

Copyright 2019 Washington University Libraries