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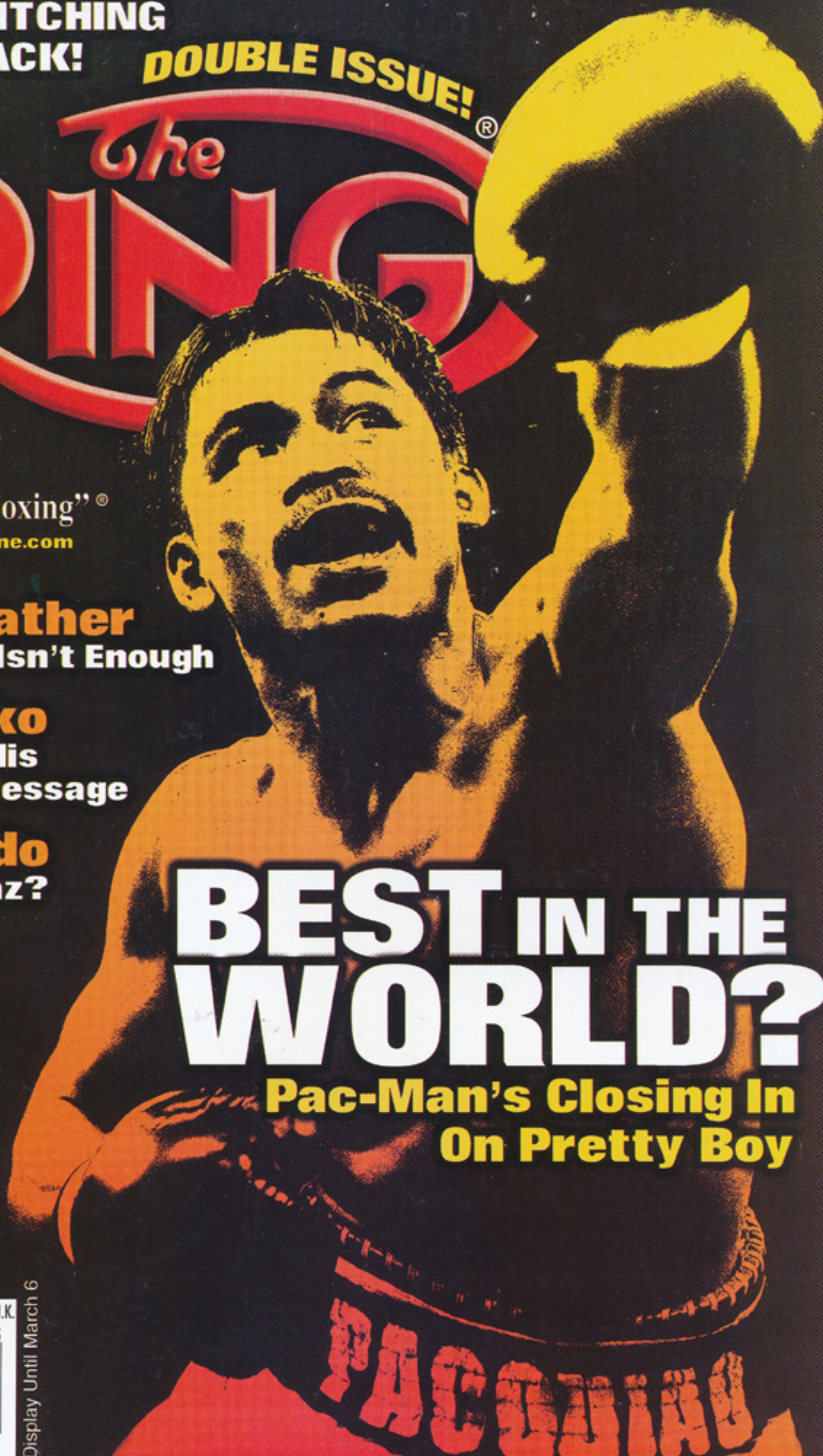
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Honoring Gypsy Joe

Anthony Molock, brother and biographer of Gypsy Joe Harris, and Philadelphia boxing historian John DiSanto unveil the headstone of the legendary welterweight during a dedication ceremony at the previously unmarked grave in Merion Memorial Park in Bala Cynwyd,

Pennsylvania. Also pictured are Arneta Miller and Renee Rex, two of the boxer's sisters.

DiSanto raises money to erect headstones at the unmarked graves of Philadelphia fighters. Those wishing to contribute can get details at: phillyboxinghistory.com



PHOTO BY JACK TINNEY

Trevor Berbick, 1954-2006

At best, Trevor Berbick will be remembered as a bridge in boxing history, a brawny, tough guy who ushered out Muhammad Ali and introducing a 20-year-old Mike Tyson to the world stage.

Tragically, Berbick will also remember as a troubled figure whose life ended prematurely, on October 28, in a church courtyard next to the home where he was raised in the parish of Port Anthony, Jamaica, about 80 miles east of Kingston. The cause of death was wounds to the back of the 52-year-old Berbick's head. Jamaican police said a two-inch thick metal pipe discovered at the scene was believed to be the murder weapon.

On November 2, Jamaican authorities arrested Harold Berbick, the 20-year-old nephew of Trevor, and 18-year-old Kenton Gordon and charged them both with murder. According to the police, the nephew's mother, who was detained for questioning and released, had been involved in a long-running land dispute with Trevor. Earlier in '06, Trevor was charged with assault for allegedly punching the woman.

Berbick had been living in the area since being deported from the United States in 2002, where he'd been charged with larceny for breaking into his sister-in-law's house in '02. The investigation into the retired boxer's death was still ongoing when this magazine went to press.

Berbick, who turned pro in September 1976 after representing Jamaica in the 1976 Olympics, will be forever etched in boxing history as the last man to fight Ali. He won a 10-round decision over the faded former champion on December 11, 1981, in Nassau, Bahamas. It was, however, a hollow victory, as Ali was two weeks shy of his 40th birthday and had been stopped by Larry Holmes in his previous fight.

The following year, Berbick handed Greg Page his first defeat, but subsequent losses to Renaldo Snipes and ST

Gordon sent him tumbling back down the ratings. Berbick regrouped, put together another winning streak, and, on March 3, 1986, he won the WBC heavyweight title with a 12-round decision over Pinklon Thomas. It was Berbick's second crack at a WBC belt, having dropped a 15-round decision to Holmes on April 11, 1981.

Eight months after beating Thomas, Berbick, making his first defense, lost the title to Tyson in a brief, brutal fight remembered for the perversely comical way Berbick went down three times from a single punch in the second round.

After that, Berbick gradually slipped into anonymity. He went 18-6 against mostly dubious opposition in his last 24 fights, but managed to finish on a winning note, when he successfully defended the Canadian heavyweight title with a 12-round decision over Shane Sutcliffe on May 26, 2000.

"Trevor was just a tough guy," said Bobby Goodman, Don King's matchmaker, who worked with Berbick from 1980-'85. "He might have lacked the talent, but he always made up for it with courage and desire. He was a tough guy to keep down."

Following his retirement in 2000, Berbick, 50-11-1 (33), was convicted in the U.S. for sexual assault, grand theft,

and burglary. It wasn't the first time Berbick had been in trouble with the law. In '91, he was convicted of attacking his former business manager, who testified Berbick put a gun to her head. In '92, he was convicted of raping a family babysitter in Florida and was sentenced to four years in prison. He also was convicted that year of forging his former wife's signature to get a mortgage.

After serving 15 months, Berbick was deported to Canada. He eventually moved back to the United States, but was deported again.

Berbick married twice and is survived by six children.

—Joseph Santoliquito



Berbick: Murdered in Jamaica