



Bill clipped him with a right hook to the chin

TWIN, LOSE OR DRAW

By THOMAS THURSDAY

Bill Dew, Potential Champ of the Squared Circle, Pulls a Kayo Double Play on Rival Prize-Fight Managers!

EVEN now I don't believe it happened. But after the case of Bill and Joe Dew, the mysterious twins, I'm willing to believe that you can enjoy a meatless ham sandwich with Berlin coffee.

Meantime, chase the cat off the divan, adjust the headlight, and get a view of what hit a smart guy like *me*.

It was a few weeks before Pearl Harbor (remember, when some dopes were telling us what nice, peaceful people the Jerkanese are?) and I am earning my *ersatz* by removing the small sum of fifty per cent of the earnings of "Woozy" Waterson, my middleweight horizontal king. The butter is easy to get and the coffee is still minus any coupon—also chickory.

Woozy was booked to bomb a lad named "Feather Sock" Sooper in the main event at the Beach Arena. My one-man panzer division got through his labor in the second round, account of Feather Sock discovered there was less risk being hit on his back than on his feet. So he went down from a terrific sock that only missed his chin by two feet and six inches. And who's kicking? We got the big end of the purse and all Feather Sock was due to get was a seat beside Rommel, and you can have that.

Later, Feather Sock informed the press and the public that he would have won, easily, only when he ordered a beaker of milk in a juke joint before the fight, the bartender gave him gin via mistake. That made Sooper a wee bit dizzy, thus adding to the start Nature gave him at birth.

Well, to get this sequel to *Mein Kampf* moving, me and Woozy Waterson were down in the dressing room when a very sun-tanned lad of the lightweight gender steps in. For a few moments he was quiet and just watched me remove the mitts from Woozy's underworked hands. I paid no more attention to him than if he was Goebbels talking. The fellow seemed between seventeen and eighteen and had blue eyes, auburn hair and a jaw that was as square as Roosevelt. Finally, he came over and said, like this:

"My name is Bill Dew and I believe you are Doc Delaney."

"No more razor blades or books right now," I said. "The last guy sold me a set of 'How to Become Old and Beautiful at the Same Time,' and I thought I was getting the 'Life of John L. Sullivan.'"

HHE GRINNED. It was a clean, healthy grin; the kind you don't find around the professional fight racket.

"I'm not trying to sell anything," he said. "I am looking for a good, honest manager."

"That is like expecting Churchill to invite Hitler in for a spot of tea," I said. "But, personally, I ain't been arrested yet."

"I have heard that you are pretty fair. Not like Felony Jones."

"Don't mention that guy to me!" I snapped. "Me and him get along like arsenic in a mint julep."

"Frankly," went on Bill Dew, "I merely want to stay in professional boxing long enough to earn sufficient money to enter college. I want to become a lawyer."

Woozy got off the table and looked at this Bill Dew.

"That reminds me, Doc," he said. "What happens to me dough for me last three fights?"

Woozy can bring up the most embarrassing questions.

"Did I tell you that I invested it in War Bonds?" I said. "Hush, Everything is okay. I got the bonds in *my* name."

"I see you handle Mr. Waterson's money," said Bill Dew. "That is nice. But when I earn some I will handle it myself, and invest it in a college course."

"What good is a eddication?" demanded Woozy. "Look at me. *I* ain't got none!"

"The life and career of a boxer is short and sour," went on Bill. "But right now I think I can earn more money with my fists than I can with my brains. Later I shall earn my living with my head instead of my muscles."

"Suppose you get smacked over a few times?" said Woozy. "When I was a wee small lad my mommer says I am very bright. Now I ain't so very bright. You know why?"

"I will answer that," I interrupted. "You forgot to duck!"

"That ain't the truth!" flared Woozy. "I am always willing to take three socks to get in one. I ain't yellow."

"Correct," I agreed. "Your colors always have been black and blue."

Bill Dew grinned. It was a frank, pleasant smile, wide-open, like the Grand Canyon. The sort of a face that told me the lad should not be in professional boxing.

"Maybe you have heard of my twin brother, Joe Dew," he said. "He is managed, or rather, mismanaged, by Felony Jones. Jones is a cheap crook and chiseler. He made Joe sign a contract that practically takes most of his earnings."

I had heard a little of Joe Dew—and plenty about "Felony" Jones. Joe was a newcomer but had won his first ten fights, eight via knockouts. As to Felony Jones I had not seen him for the past three years, and if I don't see him again for three hundred I will be suffocated with pleasure. Right

then Felony was doing all his tricks in the mid-West.

As to Bill Dew, I got the sudden notion that if he was as good as Joe, I'd have something to buy War Bonds with in habit-forming quantities. More, it would be sweet if Bill turned out to be a top-notch and, if Joe kept up his record, to match them for a showdown. Such a bout should fill the Yankee Stadium or even Tunisia.

“LOOK,” I said to Bill. “This is a hard, tough racket. Don’t fall for that glamour malarkey you read in the newspapers and magazines. For every guy who reaches the top, and gets in the heavy money, I can show you at least a hundred who are walking on their heels and peddling newspapers on street corners. Amateur boxing for a bit of ribbon or a dollar watch ain’t so bad. It will teach you courage and not to be afraid of bullies and guys who think they can push you around. The average mug is afraid of one thing—a swift smack in the snoot. And if he thinks you are scared of him he will take advantage of you. But if he knows you can send over a straight right, which will connect with his yellow jaw, he will work the other side of the street. Get what I mean, kid?”

“I know what I want to do,” said Bill. “I’ve planned everything for a long time. Even if I should become lightweight champion of the world I will quit as soon as I get the crown. I prefer to develop my brains instead of my muscles.”

“What good is brains, hey?” sizzled Woozy. “Yuh can put the smartest guy in the world in the ring with a gorilla and see what happens to the mug with the brains, huh?”

“Pay no attention to sock-stewed,” I said. “He thinks with his muscles and they stutter.”

“If you will take me under your management,” continued Bill, “I want it understood from the first that I won’t fight more than one bout every two weeks. I want to devote the rest of my time to studying law.”

“So you really want to go to college?” I asked.

“Yes, indeed. First I am going to take a home course and then go to either Yale or Princeton for my degree.”

“College—p’tooey!” snorted Woozy, missing the cuspidor with a large, juicy plug of

tobacco. “Do I look like I have went to college?”

“Frankly,” replied Bill, “you don’t. But what I like about my country is that you have your choice. You can go to college or you can go to the devil. I prefer college.”

“Quiet,” I snapped to Woozy. “The trouble is that this lad is speaking English and you don’t get it.”

Well, we will tear off the next forty pages in the ring life of Bill Dew and get down to the butter and coffee of his career. In brief, friends of freedom, I will just give you the main points—and are they sharp!

Before getting him to sign anything, including the Atlantic Charter, I naturally want to know what he has in the line of fists-in-the-face, Vassar for boxing. I find he has plenty, to wit: (1) a hard, straight right; (2) a tough right hook; (3) a terrific straight left; and (4) a left hook that would irk a Flying Fortress.

Being convinced that I have a Joe Gans or even a Benny Leonard in the making, I go to my legal shyster, “Corpus Delicti” Drooley, and have him make up one of my special and likewise quaint contracts. These contracts are neat and tidy and the boxer who can get rich with one of them draped around his torso has too much brains to be a fighter in the first place.

But I was nice and polite to Bill Dew. He was such a nice, clean kid that I broke down and actually gave him a break in terms. Instead of grabbing my usual seventy-five per cent, plus all expenses, which are always tasty, I merely took fifty per cent of the loot. That reminds me, I must see my alienist.

I passed the contract over to Bill Dew and expected him to John Hancock it promptly. None of my other lads had even looked at more than the signature line, even the one who could read. But Bill didn’t sign promptly. He took it, smiled, and sat down. And he actually began to read all the whereases and to wits, or what have you—including the parties given by the first and the second, if you get me. It has two full pages set in type so small that even an eagle would strain its eyes trying to get it.

BILL read a little, then grinned broadly. He read a little more and his happy smile disappeared. His face looked very sad indeed.

"Mr. Delaney," he said, "this is most amusing. You appear to have misunderstood my original intentions. I explained that I wanted to go into professional boxing in order to earn sufficient funds to go through college. This document appears to give you fifty per cent of all my earnings until I become champion. Then, and not until then, do you accept twenty-five per cent. I would feel much more comfortable if you began with that twenty-five per cent. Besides, it is not certain that I shall ever become champion. Sorry, Mr. Delaney, but it just won't do."

"What's wrong with it?" I demanded. The very idea, did you ever hear of such a thing? Boxers ain't supposed to think, in the first place.

"Ain't that the same stuff I signed with my X?" demanded Woozy.

"Just about," I said. "Only I am willing to give Bill fifty per cent and you got a bargain. I gave you twenty-five per cent at all times, including the Scandinavian."

"Then whut's he kickin' about?" whinnied Woozy.

"If you don't mind, Mr. Delaney," said Bill, "I will draw up a new contract this evening and submit it for your approval in the morning. It will be good legal practice for me."

This was very annoying. Can you imagine where my cakes and *ersatz* would be if all my lads were as smart as Bill Dew?

Bright and early the next day Bill was in with a new contract in one hand and a bottle of milk in the other. His notion of a contract is simple and in a few words. He had practically killed all the whereases and to wits, and got right down to business.

I took the legal mess around to my attorney and he smacked his chops over it.

"How is it?" I asked.

"I would say it was good—but not for you. Who wrote it? The Supreme Court of the United States?"

"Meaning what?"

"Meaning you will receive but twenty-five per cent of all Bill Dew's earnings, win, lose or draw. However, I think he will permit you to wear socks and drink coffee with your breakfast. That is about all he has overlooked. Boxers are really getting brighter every day."

"The kid is very bright, hey?"

"Bright? Say, send him around and I will make him a partner!"

Well, as the old oaken bucket remarked to the dipper, a few weeks later Bill Dew had his first professional fight down in Homestead, a vegetable-growing town south of Miami. He was booked to bomb a lad entitled "Cracker" Bonita. This Bonita baby had had eight fights but he didn't know any more about boxing than Joe Louis knows about being a bantamweight. However, he could swing hard with his right, starting from the floor, and if he connected his adversus was either due for a forced landing in the next county or a speedy trip to the hospital.

He was known as a club fighter, i.e., a sucker sappo—crowd-pleaser—the kind that will take six socks to land one. Such boys can win if they land, but sooner or later they find themselves on a street corner, selling the *Daily Yahoo* to former admirers who can't seem to recall their names.

"This one-man Grant tank," I said to Bill, "can hit like General Montgomery against Rommel. Don't forget to duck, dodge and likewise detour."

The bell.

Bonita came out like a Liberator after a Jap convoy and aimed a from-the-floor right at Bill Dew's blond head. The force of the swing whirled Bonita like a merry-go-round with defective brakes. He might have been turning yet only Bill clipped him with a right hook to the chin on his fourth revolution. This smack was not taken in good grace by Bonita and he called Bill a nasty epithet—Vassar for name. Such langwidge!

BONITA began to do a jumping-jack act in the center. The crowd, knowing this was the signal for a quick kayo, began to howl for the kill. Bonita's jumping had always been the cue in his previous brawls for the *coup de grâce*—whatever that is.

Bonita began to make assorted faces at Bill, just to show him that diplomatic relations had been broken off and war was now declared. Next, he let go another whirling dervish right. This time he did better. He had murder in his mind but his aim was honest. In fact, he came five yards nearer to the target for the night than he had the first time. The crowd became peeved at Bill Dew. They demanded that he stand still and be flattened

by their home-town champola.

Dew grinned and waited for Bonita to put the brakes on. Then he got a right and left to the chin and belly. Bonita appeared amazed that he could be hit so hard and so suddenly. He tried to hold his chin and belly at the same time. This is always difficult and also foolish. Apparently Brother Bonita had never been so mistreated in his other cantatas and he began to hurl a stream of sizzling adjectives and hot verbs at his playmate.

The gong—and the round belongs to Bill Dew.

“Look,” I said to Bill. “You got to put more pepper in your socks, and I don’t mean what you wear on your feet. This guy is as tough as getting a pair of shoes with coupon thirty-four. If he hits you, there may be one less lawyer in the land.”

“I have a theory,” replied Bill, “that brains always win in the end. If I can’t knock him out, I can certainly outpoint him. But I think I can knock him out. I have thought of a plan, in fact, that appears reasonable. He will help to knock himself out.”

Bonita roared out in the second like a lion who had missed his last six meals. This time he swung with his left. His miss was good. More, it was perfect. And this left swing was under better control. He whirled only three times, about ten less than required by the right swing. After missing, he began to walk around Bill like a rabbit around a cabbage.

Suddenly, he stopped dead, and planted both feet firmly on the canvas. Then came the mightiest right swing of all. It came nearer to Los Angeles than Bill’s head. While Bonita was making his third whirl Bill Dew got set with his own right. It hit Bonita’s chin on the third whirl.

That sock meant Tunis and Bizerte for Bonita. In brief, it was all over.

For our end we got a hundred bucks for the fracas. That meant only twenty-five for me. Jumping Mike Jacobs, am I slipping! But I began to take a great fancy to the kid. He was something new to me and my racket—clean, soft-spoken and at all times a gentleman. Except when it came to contracts. Then he wasn’t as dumb as he should be.

“Is your brother Joe going to be a lawyer, too?” I asked.

“Frankly, I don’t think he will ever amount to

much in anything, except maybe the ring,” Bill said. “He is the black sheep of our family. I have not seen him in two years, and then we had a fight right in our parlor.”

“Who won?”

“Well,”—Bill grinned—“I guess it was a draw. Our style is just about the same.”

From then on my giant brain (Hey, put down that brick!) began to figure out a scheme that was a scheme. If, and whereas, both twins became big shots in the ring, and I could get them matched, and my lad belted over his brother, I would get even with Felony Jones for past performances.

I didn’t say a word to Bill Dew about my dream. Instead, I just kept matching him around Florida with other boys, and they got better and better. So did Bill. Within a few months he had about exhausted all the talent in the citrus and tourist state and we hied up to the land of Georgia.

We upset boys in Tifton, Valdosta, Waycross and even Atlanta. He was so good that one of the sports writers got the idea that Bill had been born in Georgia, like Young Stribling and Tyrus Cobb. I thought this was good publicity and admitted that Bill had been born in the little town of Topsoil and I bet they are still straining their eyes to find *that* burg!

MEANWHILE, Bill insisted on a two-week lay off after each fight. He would disappear like a Republican in Alabama and not even send a post-card showing the statue of General Delivery.

“I just study,” he would say. “And in order for me to study I must be alone and have quietness. Never worry. I’ll always keep in condition. You just keep matching me and I’ll just keep *fighting* and saving my money.”

So, after each fight, Bill Dew would go away. Where, I didn’t know. But since he always returned in time to keep his fistic engagements, what was the difference? If the boy preferred to develop his brains, instead of his muscles, more kilowatts to him!

Every now and then I got news of Joe Dew, who was no doubt being robbed after each fight by Felony Jones. Joe Dew and Felony stuck to the Middle West and appeared to be going okay and also kayo. Joe’s number of wins were about the same as Bill’s. The sport writers of the sector were giving him quite a play in their papers and

some thought that he would be the next lightweight champ. I didn't care for such talk, naturally, because if there was going to be any new champ in the Dew family it would have to be my boy, Bill.

Then I began to get real smart and started to write letters to the various sports writers, under nom de baloneys, demanding a match between Joe and Bill. I signed these phonies, "Joe Smith," "Fight Fan," "Constant Reader," and also "Pro Bono Publico."

My improgaganda got some results. One sports editor headed his column this way:

TWIN MATCH PAST DEW

Another hauls off and floops:

DEW THEY OR DON'T THEY?

Well, we finally got back to Miami and Bill took his first rest since he started boxing with me by taking daily dives into the ocean at the Beach. After a plunge he would lay on the sands and read a book. Usually he would have three or four around him. All were written by the same guy, a fellow named Blackstone. Personally I had never heard of that bird, seeing that he did not appear in the comic sections of the Sunday papers.

I liked the kid more and more and would have given my right kidney, with my liver tossed in for a bargain, if I'd had a son like Bill Dew. I never seen him in a barroom or even chasing the femmes, a few items that have ruined more good boxers than socks around the head.

Sometimes he would tell me he had some extra studying to do and I would not see or hear of him again for three weeks. But when he returned he would be in the pink, as always. Bill Dew was real, he was earnest, a manager's dream of what heaven should be like. He would never argue when I gave him advice and had brains enough to follow it. He had an aim in life and kept his eyes on the main target. Me, I was rooting for him, but the way he did it—woof!

Well, in about six months the Dew Twins were about tops in newspaper publicity. Both were ripe, according to the fans and the sports scribes, for a crack at Pete Petrolli, the champaroo. But *first* they must fight it out to see which one got the shot. This should draw a heavy

gate and jam the rafters. "They look alike and fight alike. Both can take it and both can give it." On paper, it should be a draw. Again, a lucky punch from either might do the canvas trick.

Then I got another storm in the vicinity of the brain. I began to wonder if I could coax Joe Dew away from that bouncing bandit, Felony Jones.

"Look," I said to Bill one day. "Do you know enough about law to bust that contract that Brother Joe has with that mock manager, Felony Jones?"

"I wouldn't do it, if I could," said Bill. "I told you that I don't get along with Joe."

"Swell," I said. "What a fight you two should put on if you ever do meet!"

Bill just smiled and walked away—for another two weeks.

Then we got a shot at Roscoe Druke. Most of the fans and sports writers thought Druke was the logical contender. Me, I always thought he was the logical contender for the ashcan. But you can't please everybody, especially Hitler.

ANYWAY, the brawl was booked for ten Rounds and held in the Miami Stadium. But don't run away—I shan't bore you with the blow-by-blow details. You may have heard it on the radio or even seen a few rounds in the newsreels. One radio announcer at the ringside nearly got apoplexy trying to keep up with the speedy sockings from both lads. It as Nelson-Gans all over again, with a good touch of Stan Ketchel. Any fight bug who didn't think that bout was hot would have been disappointed at the Battle of Stanlingrad!

The sleeperoo came in the ninth. Naturally, a straight right to the chin. Druke went down like Guardacanal from the punching of the Marines. The boys got a tremendous hand and they deserved it. But it was no pushover for Bill Dew. Twice he was on the floor from Druke's fistic drumming on his body. Once in the second and once in the fifth. Each time the count went to eight. And for the first time Bill came out of a melee with tough marks on his face and torso. Druke could punch and, what's more, he did!

Next morning, Bill said, "I'm going back to see the folks at home. Besides, I think I need a rest. And did you know that, with this purse, I have saved nearly ten thousand dollars? Well, I'll

see you in about three weeks.”

Nearly two weeks later I got a postcard from Bill. Just a few words:

May stay longer. Mom’s cooking is getting better every day. Regards.

During Bill’s absence the papers kept yelping for a match between Bill and Joe Dew. But first, Joe was to belt over Roscoe Druke, same as Bill had. Joe had his chance about two weeks after my boy had floored him. The place was Springfield, Illinois. Joe kayoed Druke in the seventh, one round sooner than Bill had.

A week after the Joe Dew-Roscoe Druke fight, Bill returned to me. He had something potent to say and when he said it it nearly broke my heart, and likewise kidneys. Why do *I* get all the bad breaks?

“Mr. Delaney,” he said, “I’ve been doing a lot of thinking and I’ve decided to quit boxing and devote all my time to the study of law. Sooner or later I will slop one on the head and then I won’t be able to study anything. I have more than enough for my college expenses, so why should I continue?”

Boy, did I start fast talking! For the first time I had a possible champ on my lap and he wanted to slip off. He couldn’t do that to me—but he did!

“Look,” I said. “Do you realize that you are practically the lightweight champ of the whole world? And don’t you know that a match with your brother will net you at least another ten grand? And then—and *then*, when you win you get the shot at the champ, himself?”

“I’m sorry,” said Bill. “But I have made up my mind, and besides it just can’t be done. But I want to thank you, Mr. Delaney, for your squareness. I got the idea that too many professional managers of boxers were crooked, like Felony Jones. I want to be a lawyer and I intend to be one.”

“How many lawyers ever earn the big dough that *you* will get?” I went on. “Show me a lawyer—”

Bill walked over and put both arms on my shoulders.

“Mr. Delaney,” he said, and his tone was earnest, “I have a confession to make. You will no doubt consider me a heel, but I had to protect myself.”

“What are you driving at?”

“There can never be a fight between Bill Dew and Joe Dew. I shall never be able to whip Joe Dew and, what’s more, *nobody* can ever lick him.”

“Such talk! What do you mean, you or *nobody* can ever lick Joe Dew?”

“It would be easier for me to tell you this, Mr. Delaney, if you were a crook, but you have been darn white to me. Please believe I have appreciated it very much.”

THEN he handed me a small package. “This is for you,” said Bill. “I hope you will accept it and remember me by it.”

It was a beautiful gold watch, inscribed:

From Bill Dew to Doc Delaney, 1942.

“Thanks, kid,” I said, somewhat choked. It was the first time any boy of mine had ever given me anything except a headache! “Now, come clean, kid. What’s this all about? Why can’t you fight Joe Dew?”

“The reason is simple—I *am* Joe Dew. I am also Bill Dew. In other words, there never was any twin named Joe Dew.”

It takes a minute for my brain to grab the idea.

“Then who was fighting for Felony Jones under the name of Joe Dew?”

“I was.”

I can’t believe it!

“Look,” I said. “Either you are going nuts or this is a bad nightmare. How could you fight for Felony Jones and me at the same time?”

“You forget that after each fight for you I would go away—”

“You said you wanted to study.”

“That, I regret to say, was a fairy tale. I did not have time to do much studying. I admit I played you both for suckers, but as far as Jones is concerned I have no regrets. He chiseled me every time he could but I held my own. I set out to beat the professional fight racket and I think I succeeded. And, well, I guess that is all, Mr. Delaney. But it was nice knowing you, Mr. Delaney, and when I am an attorney, and you ever get a case against Felony Jones, please retain me. It will be a real pleasure to convict him—with no

charge to you.”

Two months later I ran into Felony Jones at the Tropical Park race track. He was picking losers and, no doubt, pockets, at the same time.

“How’s the twin business?” I hurled at him.

“Nobody ain’t never fooled me,” snapped Felony. “I knew them twins ain’t but one mug all the time. D’yer think I am a dope?”

“Both that and likewise a liar,” I shot back.

I’ll see you in Berlin!

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