

# Muhammad Ali: The Man, The Moves, The Mouth

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By Kevin Scott

Muhammad Ali, in his prime, is almost unquestionably the most electric figure in the history of sports, both in and out of the ring. In this hour-long documentary, we witness all of the checkpoints of Ali's career, from remembrances of himself as a young Cassius Clay learning how to fight on the off chance he had to confront the unfortunate soul who had stolen his bike to his final bout and the onset of Parkinson's. Narrated by recently deceased boxing writer and historian Bert Sugar, the collection of footage assembled isn't exactly the most exclusive content, but is still neatly packaged in an easily digestible A&E Biography format. It does a good job of showing actual broadcast footage of most of his biggest fights, including classics like "the Rumble in the Jungle" and "the Thrilla in Manila." Whether facing Frazier, Holmes, Foreman or any of the other heavyweights he squared off against over the years, it remains an awe-inspiring sight to see Ali dance around the ring, adding in an Ali Shuffle here and there for good measure, while setting opponents up for his lightning-quick hands. The film pauses to debunk the supposed "phantom punch" against Sonny Liston and dissects the familiar rope-a-dope strategy that Ali employed against George Foreman in Zaire. Even more impressive is how Ali handles himself in front of a microphone, as his press conferences turn braggadocio into an art form in ways that current insufferable narcissist athletes can't even begin to approach. There's little time spent delving into Ali's conversion to the Nation of Islam or his protest of Vietnam upon being drafted, as the focus is more on his boxing career. As stated, the approach is straightforward and enjoyment of the disc will depend on how familiar you are with Ali. For some, much of this may be little more than a bare bones account of Ali's life, with footage that has already been seen elsewhere. However, for the uninitiated, this does serve as a suitable introduction to an extraordinary man. In more recent footage of Ali, it's undoubtedly disheartening to see him as a shadow of his former self, but he still appears to retain that mischievous twinkle in his eye to this day. Unlike Ali, there are no extras on the disc to speak of. (Facts That Matter)

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