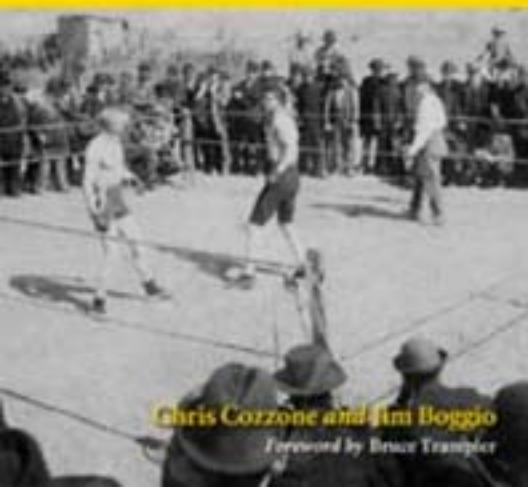


BOXING IN NEW MEXICO, 1868 + 1940



Chris Corzzone and Jim Boggio

Foreword by Bruce Transler

One of the most popular Santa Fe sluggers was “The Battling Chef,” George “Kid” Marchi, who wasn’t quite known for his fancy dancing, having “never mastered the Charleston, not for gladiatorial purposes, anyhow.”¹⁸ Marchi fought from 1924 to 1933 but, though he would later claim his record was 50-5-2, fewer than 20 of his bouts are known.

Born in Italy, Marchi came to the U.S. with his parents, who first settled in Salida, Colorado, before relocating to Santa Fe in 1922. Two years later, Marchi was swinging with the best of them in the ring, and he went undefeated in prelims until 1927. His first big test was against the diminutive Dynamite Tommy and Marchi got his first headliner by battering the veteran in an eight-rounder. Marchi got his first loss, via 12-round decision, against Barber Sandoval in a smoker held in Bernalillo.

Marchi upset the odds in 1928 by defeating the unbeatable Colima, but thereafter, tapered down his career. In 1931, he tried to come back, against tough Frankie Cantou, but the chef was cooked in six.

“Often my pay for a fight was nothing more than a robe or a pair of boxing shoes,”¹⁹ Marchi remembered of his career half a century later. “My wife didn’t want me to do it—but I did. Every time I fought, she went to church to light candles. My father didn’t want me to do it neither.”

Marchi’s father was a stonecutter and, while living in Salida, carved two lions that, to this day, guard the entrance to Alpine Park.