



Up to Scratch: Bareknuckle Fighting and the Heroes of the Prize Ring

Tony Gee

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Up to Scratch: Bareknuckle Fighting and the Heroes of the **Prize Ring**

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"The fight game in the raw great contests and some really hard men. What a life!" Roy Shaw

Prize-fighting was one of the greatest sporting attractions in the 18th and 19th centuries. Prize-fights attracted thousands of spectators from all walks of life and, nothwithstanding its illegality, was patronised by royalty and the aristocracy. The area outside London around Barnet, Whetstone, Finchley and up into Hertfordshire was one on the most popular for staging fights. Featured in *Up to Scratch* are many of the great champions - Tom Johnson, Daniel Mendoza, Jem Belcher, Tom Sayers and Jem Mace - as well as many forgotten but no less colourful fistic heroes.

Up To Scratch powerfully evokes an age when pugilism was a barbaric, corrupt and yet primarily noble activity.



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