



# The Great White Hopes: The Quest to Defeat Jack Johnson

*Graeme Kent*

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In 1908 talented black US fighter Jack Johnson won the heavyweight championship of the world from the Canadian Tommy Burns. There was an immediate storm of protest. Writers, including Jack London, and politicians feared the accession of the fearless and outspoken Johnson would threaten white supremacy. It was predicted f{ accurately f{ that his reign would lead to civic unrest and race riots. Over the next seven years, more than 30 white fighters tried to beat Jackson, lured by the prospect of fame and a quick buck. It was not until 1915 that Jackson lost his crown, and during the years in between an extraordinary human drama was played out on the boxing world stage. Graeme White tells the full story of the Great White Hopes for the first time.

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