

# Passes Up \$1,250,000 Title Bout

Retired heavyweight boxing champion Rocky Marciano has flatly rejected a \$1,250,000 offer by veteran promoter Jack Kearns to return to the ring and fight titlist Floyd Patterson.

Marciano said he was "flattered and grateful" but: "I have retired, period. I have no desire to return to boxing."

The retired champ added that he had refused a similar offer of three million dollars "some time ago." He did not elaborate.

Marciano's refusal of Kearns' offer was voiced Sunday night in Louisville, Ky. The proposed bout prompted thoughts of a possible six million dollar total gate.

Kearns, one-time manager of the great Jack Dempsey, who helped make the first million dollar gate a reality, saw theater or paid television as the biggest factors in establishing a record financial figure for a fight between the undefeated Marciano and Patterson. Kearns explained:

"That's why I had the consent of my backers — a group of wealthy American and Canadian industrialists — when I offered Rocky \$1,250,000 as a guarantee."

Veteran boxing manager and promoter Jack Kearns announced that he and a group of wealthy backers have offered Rocky Marciano \$1,250,000 to come out of retirement and fight Floyd Patterson for the heavyweight title.

Kearns told International News Service by telephone from Louisville, Ky., that he talked with Marciano and added:

"Rocky said he would give serious consideration to the offer and has all but agreed to return to the ring to battle Patterson."

Marciano, who will be 35 next Sept. 1, retired undefeated as champion on April 27, 1956, after winning 48 straight professional bouts. He won the championship when he knocked out Jersey Joe Walcott in 13 rounds on Sept. 23, 1952.

Kearns said that the bout probably will be staged early next fall but declared that the site and other details have not yet been arranged.

He said:

"Rocky told me:  
"I'm still champion, Jack. I regard myself as a guy who has been on leave or vacation for a short time and since boxing is my business, naturally, I'm open to such offers as your group has made.

## STUNNED BY OFFER

"Frankly, it's so much money that I'm a little stunned. I can't see how I can turn down such an offer. Just let me get my bearings a little."