

Bye Bugner, Now It's on To Manila

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — "People want to see me fight Joe Frazier," says Muhammad Ali, fresh out of retirement and following a unanimous decision over Joe Bugner.

Neither the victory here Tuesday morning nor the change of mind about retirement were surprises since Ali was a 3-1 favorite to beat Bugner and promoter Don King already had admitted Ali-Frazier III had been signed before the fight here.

The rubber match between the two rivals will be held in Manila, probably Oct. 1. It will be history's richest fight, with total purse money of \$12 million. Ali got \$2 million Tuesday.

"I don't want anybody to say that I'm afraid of Joe Frazier or George

*Crowd of 11,178 views
fight at Capital Centre
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Foreman," Ali said before his victory over Bugner.

"IF I QUIT, people will say that Frazier would have whipped me," said Ali, who had announced plans to retire June 23. "They would say that Foreman and (Ken) Norton would too. So, when I retire I don't want anybody around who people might think could beat me."

"I'm ready," said Frazier, who was at ringside. "I am happy that he decided not to go out, otherwise I would have thought he was ducking me like he's been doing for the last year."

Frazier then joined the king of Malaysia and an announced estimated crowd of 22,000 to watch the 33-year-old champion dominate Bugner, 25, in the oven that was the ring at the outdoor Merdeka Stadium.

"The heat was bad but it was bad for both of us," said Ali, who had predicted that Bugner would be a world champion after he defeated the Briton on a 12-round decision two years ago.

"I still predict that Bugner will be champion, said Ali. "He's strong, he's young."

"I should have won the world title," said Bugner, who does claim the heavyweight championship of Europe. "I think the climate beat me this time. I just couldn't find a burst of energy to maintain the pressure by the 10th and 11th rounds."

"THE HEAT was really incredible."

A Malaysian communications official placed the temperature in the ring at more than 100 degrees.

Ali threw bits and pieces of his rope-fighting technique and his dancing at Bugner. But the champion's main strategy was to rush Bugner, push him into the rope and gun for his head.

Ali was unable to knock down his opponent, but he came close in the final round. Late in the round, Ali backed Bugner up with a sharp right-left, right-left. He then hurt him with two lefts and a right and just before the bell had him reeling with about seven straight punches to the head."

The champion also appeared to have Bugner dazed in the 13th and 14th rounds. Ali finished the fight with a nick over his left eye suffered in the 13th round, and Bugner had a swelling under his right eye.

Referee Takeo Ugo of Japan scored it 73-67 for Ali. Judge Lt. Col. Suthee Phrom Jara of Thailand scored it 73-65 and Ken Brady of Australia 72-65 for Ali.

THE ASSOCIATED Press favored the champion 70-65.

Ali, who officially weighed 225 last Saturday, recorded his 48th victory against two losses—against Frazier and Norton, both of them avenged.

Bugner, who got \$500,000, now has lost seven times against 51 victories and one draw. He weighed 230.