



Street Fighting Man

Paddy Monaghan

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At a fighting weight of little more than 11 stone, Paddy Monaghan was not immediately as intimidating as bare-knuckle boxers like Lenny McLean or Roy Shaw. But if anyone dared to underestimate this man—as many foolish opponents did in the past—the full force of the hardest man in Ireland, a fine and ferocious fighting machine, would be unleashed. His unbroken record of 114 bare-knuckle fight wins is not only testimony to his exceptional strategic skill and fearsome punching ability, but also to his sheer determination and passion. Paddy Monaghan simply has something inside him that will not allow defeat. Life has been far from easy for Paddy. Although the Monaghans were originally a wealthy, land-rich family, by the time Paddy was born all of the family's money and land had been wasted away through fraud and gambling. So, in a desperate attempt to make ends meet, Paddy's father uprooted the family, eventually settling them in a crowded one bedroom flat in Abingdon, England. This is where, aged five, Paddy received the grounding for his future as a fighter. A wiry youngster who was not willing to be pushed around, Paddy left school with a reputation for fighting. He had no qualifications and was unable to read or write, but was widely admired by most of his peers for going out of his way to defend the weaker boys. Many years later, once again refusing to be beaten, Paddy Monaghan single-handedly taught himself how to read and write, beginning with the ABC books designed for infant children. Paddy, a staunch Muhammad Ali fan, displayed the same tenacity when he launched a one-man campaign to protest the stripping of Ali's boxing license in 1967. Credited with coining the phrase "Ali, the people's champion," Paddy's actions came to the attention of the great man himself. And the next time Ali came to the UK, he went to meet Paddy at his council house in Abingdon. This, the first meeting of many, brought two men who were socially worlds apart together in a friendship based on mutual respect and admiration. Over the years rubbing shoulders with many a legend, Paddy Monaghan has an extraordinary story to tell. This remarkable autobiography gives a unique insight into Paddy's world of violence—a world he only ever entered in order to provide for his beloved wife and children.

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