

AMATEURS SEEK TITLES

Britain's top amateur boxers go into the Wembley ring to fight it out for the 1948 championships. Pick of the bouts is the long awaited tussle between sturdy Peter Brander from Slough and his slightly taller opponent Charlie Tucker of the R.A.F. who sports the broader stripe on his shorts.

The young aircraftman - who has been setting the pace from the start - brings out the best in Brander - and the Slough boxer hitting out to face and body, forces his rival onto the ropes.

In a barnstorming finish, twenty-year-old Brander shakes his opponent with some hard right handers. Lasting out well, he does enough as the bell goes - to scrape home a narrow points winner - a verdict not appreciated by all in the crowd.

Shortest of the evening's fights is the heavy-weight battle between dark-vested Johnny Merkus and Army Sgt. Jack Gardner from Market Harborough. Merkus - clear favourite and an experienced boxer - opens up well - but the crowd gasp as they watch a complete reversal of form. Hitting out with a punishing right hand the Sgt. has his opponent in trouble, and puts him down with a vicious swing.

Up again, Merkus seems dazed from the blow and can't hold Gardner's rip-rearing attack - providing only a punching bag for the boxing soldier.

With Sgt. Gardner in their ranks, British Olympic hopes look bright indeed.