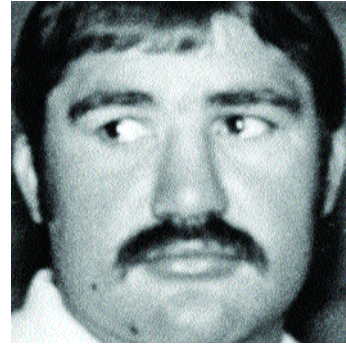


Gerrie Coetzee (1955 –)

AWARDED TO
GERRIE COETZEE
FOR HIS ACHIEVEMENT IN
THE FIELD OF BOXING
AND CONTRIBUTION TO
NATION-BUILDING
THROUGH SPORT



THE ORDER OF IKHAMANGA IN BRONZE

Gerrie Coetzee was born 1955. He started boxing professionally in 1974, and had 22 consecutive wins before his first try at the World Heavyweight title. He was the first African ever to compete for – as well as win – the World Heavyweight boxing title.

His challenge to John Tate for the WBA's World Heavyweight title, left vacant by Muhammad Ali, was watched on national television by hundreds of thousands of South Africans – unprecedented at the time and truly phenomenal given that SABC TV had only just begun to broadcast. His world bout challenge resulted in millions of South Africans of all hues rooting for the "white" South African battling the "black" American, thereby confounding the false logic of apartheid.

Although Gerrie Coetzee did not win that bout, he did later win the World Heavyweight title.

His record stands at 33 wins, six losses and one draw, with 20 wins by knockout. Coetzee remains a true South African icon in the world of boxing.