

# Ali book weighs in as largest ever published

**'GOAT' is the champ at \$7,500**

By Bob Minzesheimer  
USA TODAY

Move over, Helmut. Make way for a real heavyweight champ.

Until today, *SUMO*, a 66-pound tribute to fashion and celebrity photographer Helmut Newton, was touted as the largest book ever published.

Now from the same publisher comes a 75-pound tribute to former heavyweight champ Muhammad Ali.

GOAT, as in Greatest Of All Time, Ali's self-bestowed title,

is available in two limited editions that come in silk-covered boxes:

► The first 1,000 copies sell for \$7,500 and come with a 6-foot abstract sculpture by Jeff Koons and four prints by photographer Howard Bingham.

► The remaining 9,000 copies are a mere \$3,000.

Each copy is numbered and signed by both Ali and Koons. The publisher, Taschen Books, a German firm known for art and photography, says the price includes shipping. The tale of the tape, as they say at the fights:

► 792 pages that measure 20 inches by 20 inches.

► More than 3,000 photographs and graphic images from 200 photographers and artists.



**Greatest Of All Time:** At 792 pages, it tips the scale at 75 pounds.



By Philippe Halsman, Halsman Estate/Taschen

► 600,000 words in essays by Tom Wolfe, Norman Mailer, George Plimpton and 47 other contributors.

The book's bindings are hand-stitched by the same Italian firm that services the Vatican, says Taschen spokeswoman Laura Howard.

Only 200 copies a week could be produced, which explains the delay between the book's unveiling at the Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany last fall and its publication today. Howard says about 75% of the 10,000 copies already have been ordered, mostly by collectors and boxing fans.

She notes it could be a good investment: The oversized book on Newton sold for \$1,500 in 1999 and is now offered online for nearly double that.

GOAT, crowned "the undis-

puted heavyweight champion of photography books" by *Playboy*, comes with nine separate booklets of the text to make it easier to read.

It's arranged chronologically, beginning with its hero's birth in segregated Louisville in 1942. He was Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr., named after both his father and a prominent 19th-century abolitionist and politician. He changed his name at 22.

It ends with photographs of Ali, who's afflicted with Parkinson's disease, embracing Nelson Mandela and working the heavy bag at the gym in his home in Berrien Springs, Mich.

The final caption reads: "His determination to remain undeterred by the physical limitations imposed by his illness is remarkable."