



## GET BIG

## American Badass

TY MURRAY IS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL—AND FITTEST—PRO BULL RIDERS EVER By Brandon Guarneri


**BODY OF THE MONTH**

**TY'S STATS**

**AGE**  
40

**WEIGHT**  
175 lbs

**PROJECTS**  
Nine-time World Champion rodeo cowboy

Co-founder of the Professional Bull Riders Association

Reality TV "star"



You may have seen him winning over crowds on last season's *Dancing With the Stars* or in the tabloids with his pop-star wife, Jewel. But beyond all that, Ty Murray is also the most successful bull rider ever, with more world championships than anyone else—and millions of dollars in career prize money.

Though retired from riding since 2002, he remains in phenomenal shape. And the 5'8", 175-pound Murray got that way without traditional weight training. "The world's strongest guy isn't going to have any advantage riding a bull," he says. "It's not about brute strength." Instead, Murray treats trips to the gym like a jockey, striving for a lean, sinewy look rather than a bulky build. Years ago, he trained with football and wrestling coaches, performing gymnastics and practicing kempo, a martial art. Today, he stays ripped by maintaining his 2,100-acre ranch. "Whether it's building a fence or working cattle, whatever you're doing, it's going to hit different parts of your body," he says.

Murray augments ranch work with quick-hitting, 30-minute body-weight workouts. To keep things fresh, he never plans his workouts. "I might roll out of bed and rip off one pushup—or 200," he says. "Then, I might hit 100 leg scissors after that." If the approach sounds anything but traditional, Murray's fine with that. "I never wanted to be a meathead," he says. "Meatheads get torn up so fast in our sport."

Actually, plenty of guys get torn up in rodeo. That's why Murray helped found the Pro Bull Riders (PBR) circuit in 1992, after seeing legends in his sport compete their whole lives yet be forced to get a day job after retiring. "We started with 20 bull riders who put up a thousand bucks apiece," says Murray. "It grew from there." Now, rodeo is big business. "Pre-PBR, the best bull rider in the world was going to gross about \$150,000 a year," says Murray. Now, the stars of the sport are making \$1.5 to \$2 million a year, and can sometimes even double or triple that with endorsements. As one of the driving forces behind the change in his industry, Murray couldn't be happier with the progress he helped usher in—even if he missed out on a lot of the payoff. "I'm as proud of the PBR as anything in my career," he says.

## TV'S TOP TIPS

THREE SURPRISING WAYS MURRAY'S WORKOUTS BREAK THE MOLD

**1** | To build finger strength in his riding days, Murray would stick both arms straight out in front of his body and open and close his hands as far and as fast as he could for five minutes. "You get about a minute and a half in and it's hell," he says. "The movement works your shoulders, it works your lats, it works your traps. Everything."

**2** | Murray claims to be able to rifle off thousands of situps at a clip. "When I was at the point where I was doing 2,000 situps a day, I could've done 4,000." His incredible core strength was the result of hours of grueling training. One exercise had him lying on his back with his trainer's feet near each side of his head. He'd hold on to his trainer's ankles while raising his legs toward the trainer's face. At the top of the movement, his trainer would shove his legs down again and then punch him in the stomach.

**3** | These days, Murray spends most of his time on his ranch in Stephenville, Texas. "Hauling hay is a great workout," he says. "You gotta pick 'em out of the field, put them on a trailer, take the trailer to the barn, then take them off the trailer and stack 'em," he says.



# Bench Better Now

YOUR FAVORITE LIFT, MADE SAFER AND MORE EFFECTIVE

By Matt McGorry, C.F.T.






The biggest guy in the gym doesn't always bench the most weight. It's the guy who knows how to bench. Great technique allows you to press more poundage without injuring your shoulders. Take these tips with you every time you get beneath that bar.

- Breathe**
  - Take a deep breath before you lower the bar to begin each rep. Let the air fill up your belly and hold it. This increases intra-abdominal pressure, stabilizing the spine and creating a tight feeling throughout the body that will make you instantly stronger. You'll get a springlike effect when the bar reaches your chest. Attempting to take the breath while lowering the bar (as most of us do) will cause you to lose some tightness. Note, however, that you may not want to hold the breath if you have high blood pressure.
- Pull**
  - Don't let gravity lower the bar for you. Pull it downward by engaging your lats. Think about leading with your elbows and keep them tucked close to your sides. Your upper arms should form a 45-degree angle to your torso when the bar is at your lower chest (don't bring it down to your mid pecs, but to the sternum).
- Press**
  - Lift in an arching motion. As you press the bar up, think about pushing it from your sternum toward your face. This brings the triceps more into play. You'll need to find your body's own "groove" so that, at the top of the movement, the bar is in a direct line above your shoulders, where it should feel almost weightless.

## 3 REASONS WHY YOUR BENCH BITES

- 1** | You let the bar sit in the middle of your hand. This allows the wrists to fold backward, creating the potential for injury, as well as weakening your lift. The bar should sit in the lower part of your hand, across the meatiest area, and your wrist should be in line with your forearm.
- 2** | You lift too slowly. Practice lowering the bar under control, but always explode upward with it. Even when lifting heavy weights, you must at least attempt to accelerate the bar as fast as possible. Doing so increases your chances of blasting through any stubborn sticking points.
- 3** | You let your spotter touch the bar. A good spotter helps you take the bar off the rack so you don't lose your tight position. That's it. If your buddy is helping you lift the bar back up, even slightly, he's doing what your muscles should be doing, and that's costing you size and strength.

### THINGS TO REMEMBER

-  Grip the bar at a distance just outside the width of your shoulders, squeezing it as hard as possible.
-  Keep your shoulder blades squeezed together and pressed down throughout the lift. (The more they move, the worse it is on your shoulder joints.)
-  Push your legs hard into the floor when pressing. This gives you more power.
-  Arch your lower back, but keep your butt firmly on the bench.
-  Tell your spotter to use a one-hand-under grip to help lift the bar when needed. It helps should he need to catch your bar in a hurry.

## FIT NEWS

### No Sip Zone

Gulps are better than sips to keep you hydrated. According to Leslie Bonci, R.D., director of sports medicine nutrition at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and a nutrition consultant for the Pittsburgh Steelers, gulping H<sub>2</sub>O engages the stomach's



stretch receptors and increases intragastric pressure, allowing your body to replenish its reserves faster, while lowering your risk of cramps.



Number of days it took for men taking creatine supplements to begin to notice a change in body weight and muscle mass—along with a boost in their bench press—according to a recent study from the University of Glasgow in Scotland.

**Bench Better**



# **Bench Press Better**









