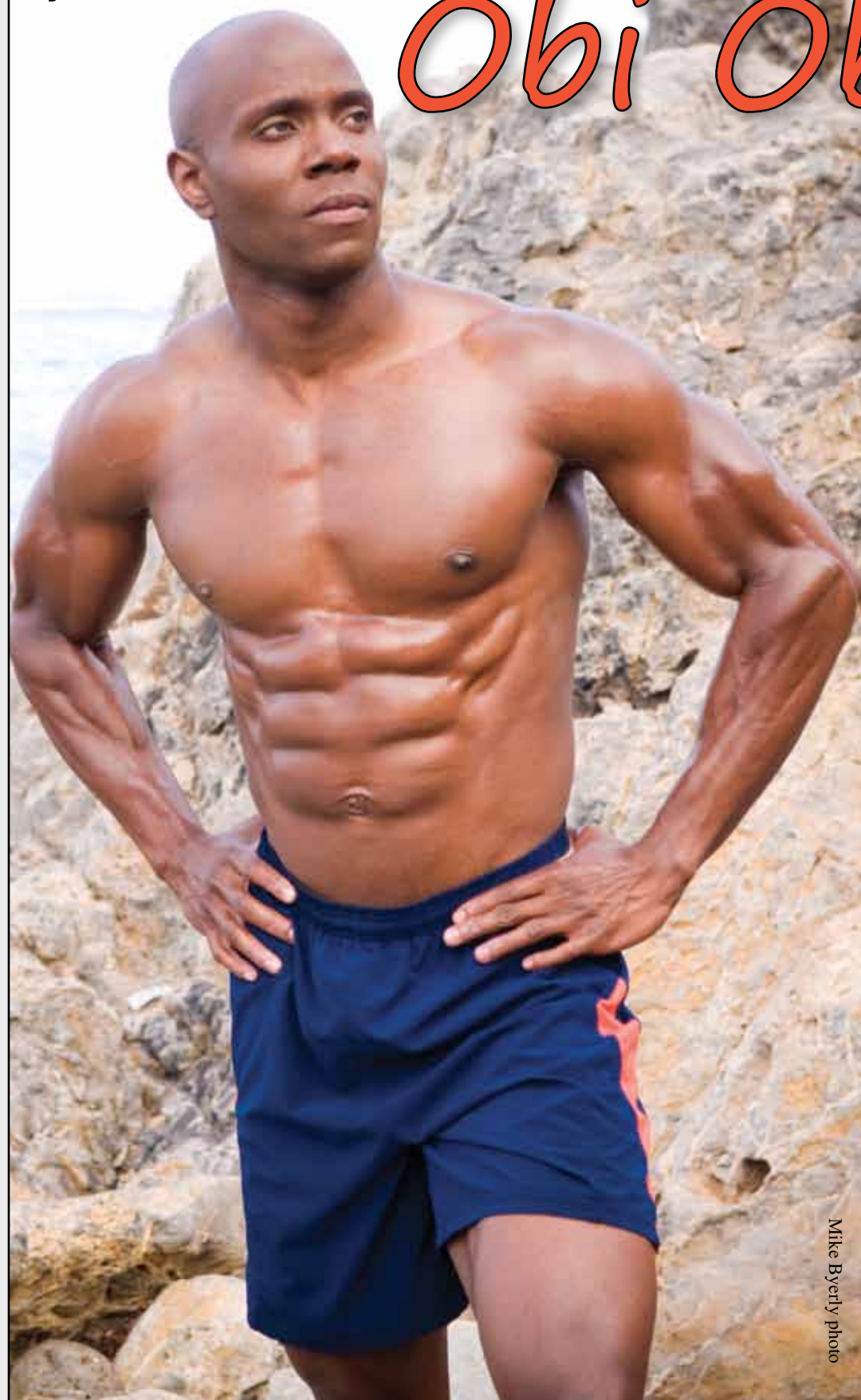


Interview With Male Model

By: Steve Shaw

Obi Obadike



Mike Byerly photo

Obi Obadike is one of the top male fitness models in the world. He has been crowned with the title of the World's Most Ripped Fitness Model. Obi has appeared in numerous ad campaigns and magazines, including Fitness RX for Men, Men's Journal, Flex, Muscle Mag, Reps, Muscular Development and more.

For more information on Obi Obadike, please visit his website www.obiadike.com.

Muscle and Strength: Tell me about your transition from sprinter to top-name fitness model.

Obi Obadike: Well I was a top Division I sprinter at Cal State Fullerton and I've always observed the fitness industry by afar, even back then, and always wondered if I could succeed. One of the things that I noticed was that I never really saw black guys on fitness covers and I wanted to see if I could come in the industry and change that. I connected with fitness legend Clark Bartram in April of 2008 and I got some great advice from him on how to succeed. He was influential in helping me land my first cover. From there I took some things I learned from him and also I developed my own marketing techniques that have helped me succeed in this industry. One of the necessary things in being a top fitness model is always being in shape. Being in shape at all times is your greatest asset, and I pride myself on always being fit all year round. This industry - I've said many times - is all about self-marketing and cultivating relationships. If you can understand that providing you have the look and physique you should be able to attain success in this industry.

Muscle and Strength: You don't consider yourself a bodybuilder, but you DO have a physique that every average bodybuilder would love to have. Do you have great genetics? And have you always been lean? Or is your physique 150% hard work and dedication?

Obi Obadike: I have always been lean and I am blessed with a fast metabolism, but even with great genetics I still have to train very hard to maintain a ripped physique all year round. So I would say it is more hard work and dedication than genetics. Frankly, if I don't

train hard or eat fairly well most of the time there is no way I can stay this lean all year round. That is really the significant difference between a fitness model and a bodybuilder. A fitness model has to always be in shape because they can get a call anytime to do a magazine shoot. A bodybuilder is in shape according to how many shows they have a year. There is no off-season for a fitness model where there is an off-season for a bodybuilder. You have to make it a point to make it a lifestyle for yourself if you truly want to be lean all year round.

Muscle and Strength: Do you have a target weight that you try to stay locked at, or do you strictly go by what's in the mirror?

Obi Obadike: I don't really have a target weight honestly. People are always so concerned with how much they weigh to justify how much muscle they have and it is so ridiculous. The day I stopped focusing on how much I weighed every day, the more happier I was with myself. The mirror is your scale honestly, and it should be your guide on how lean or how fit you truly want to be. When I get ready for photo shoots I really don't step on the scale. I use the mirror to tell me how dry and lean I am for my particular shoot. I take the mirror any day over the scale to let me know where I am at fitness wise.

Muscle and Strength: So, knowing that you aren't obsessive about staying at a certain weight, how much do you obsess over your diet? Do you eat like a bodybuilder, getting 30 grams of protein every 3 hours? And do you count carbs and fat grams?

Obi Obadike: No I don't obsess over grams of protein and I don't count carbs whatsoever. I do try to follow a sensible high protein low carb diet daily but I am not that detailed in regards to how much protein I take or how many carbs I take. You generally have a good idea the nutrient ratio when eating because I've been eating like this for a long time. I try to get all my carbs in by the afternoon time and I definitely never intake carbs late at night as it can break down and store in your body as fat. Consuming all your carbs by morning to 12 pm should give you enough energy throughout the day. When you are obsessive then it takes the fun out of the lifestyle of being fit. Living the fitness lifestyle should be fun not something that you have think about or obsess about every hour.

Muscle and Strength: Tell us about how you train. What type of weight training routine and split do you use, and what forms of cardio do you employ?

Obi Obadike: I train about 4 to 5 times a week weight training. My weight training consists of supersetting and circuit training between multiple bodyparts. For example - on Monday I will work chest and biceps simultaneously while working abs in between. I am consistently moving while training anaerobically which helps me burn calories at an optimal rate. If you want to stay lean and ripped then supersetting is the best way to go when you are weight training. My cardio consists of running for about 3 miles a day at about an 8 minute mile pace. I do all my cardio about 3 times a week running outside as I am not really a treadmill or Stairmaster person. My cardio is

all about high intensity and completing it within 25 minutes. I also incorporate sprint training about one time a week, which is an incredible leg workout in itself. With sprinting you get the benefit of a strong cardio workout and at the same time attain a great leg building workout.

Muscle and Strength: What are some of the mistakes you're made in the realm of training and diet/nutrition, and what did you learn from them?



Noel Daganita photo

Obi Obadike: The mistakes I've learned in training in the past is less is better than more. In the past I would train 2 to 3 hours a day 7 days a week and I would never give my body rest to recuperate. I over-trained for so many years and I never really listened to my body in terms of if I was feeling sore. I always used to hit the weights so hard even when my body was saying take a break and that is something that is detrimental to muscle growth. It wasn't until about 4 to 5 years until I really started to train smarter and more efficiently. I went from training 3 hours a day, 7 days a week, to 4 to 5 days a week at 90 minutes. Also, in the past my nutrition was very bad where I ate a lot of junk food and eating healthy wasn't a consistent thing. Now I try to eat healthy as much as possible and cheat on the weekends. I eat good 5 days a week and cheat on the weekends within moderation. If you follow a formula similar to this along with training smart you should be able to stay fit and lean all year round.

Muscle and Strength: What have been some of the most exciting and enjoyable modeling experiences of your career?

Obi Obadike: One of the most exciting experiences in my modeling career was being the guest of honor at a

natural bodybuilding and fitness show in Gold Coast, Australia. The hospitality that was shown to me in Australia was overwhelming. I ended up getting an opportunity to shoot for a cover for the only natural bodybuilding and fitness magazine in Australia called Australian Natural Bodz. That cover made me the 1st American fitness model to grace the cover for their anniversary Oct/Nov issue of 2009. I also shot an international supplement ad campaign and gained a whole new fan base in Australia. I would say that I am the most famous American male fitness model in the Australia which is quite incredible and humbling at the same time. Another exciting experience was when I landed the Maximum Fitness Cover for the July/August issue of 2009. I took me three cover tries over a 12 month period to land the cover. It was the most difficult cover because of some of the administrative and following up stuff I had to do to land the cover. There were influential people that facilitated this process like Paul Dillett, President of the WBFF, and Mike Demederios, Editor of Maximum Fitness. But if I hadn't been so assertive behind the scenes I honestly never would have landed the cover. A message to some of the aspiring fitness models out there is that persistence will get you everywhere in the fitness industry. Just because an editor say no to you doesn't mean they will say no to you a year later.

Muscle and Strength: What is the craziest or hardest thing you've had to do for a modeling job or photo shoot?

Obi Obadike: There is nothing really hard about modeling honestly, but I would say the most difficult part of a fitness modeling shoot is when you are shooting for more than 14 hours. I shot a Weider X Factor National commercial in September for about 14 to 15 hours with very little carbs in my system and I was very depleted on set. That was very difficult to sustain energy through that shoot because of how long it was. I also shot a UK supplement meals campaign this Spring where I shot for more than 15 hours and I was low on carbs again, and incredibly depleted. The hard part of these shoots as I said is trying to have energy at times when you don't really have energy because of the lack of carbs and nutrients in your system. I am a perfectionist when I shoot, and I always want to be at my best physically, and sometimes I am too hard on myself in terms of what to eat during a shoot.

Muscle and Strength: Where would you like to see yourself and your career in 5 years? In 10 years?

Obi Obadike: In 5 years I see myself hosting my own fitness show on television. That is really the pinnacle of the fitness industry - if you can host your own show on TV. I want to be one of the most influential people ever in the fitness industry. I believe that I am starting on the right path and I just need to continue to work hard as I've been doing. If I continue on the path where I am at then many great things in this industry will come my way. I want to also continue to build and grow my name and platform in the industry which allows me to help many people all over world improve their health.