

THE MMA-LIST

Mixed martial arts has slowly permeated every facet of modern life, from sports, adverts, music, merchandise and now even movie stars. THFE investigates how the biggest celebs are using MMA to throw down in Tinseltown

WORDS RAY KLERCK

November 12th 1993, UFC 1 emerged from the womb kicking and screaming. To most, its birth went largely unnoticed and the only notable celebrity attendance was former NFL great Jim Brown, who was employed as a commentator so really doesn't count. Fast-forward to Cain and Junior's heavy-weight jaunt on Fox last November, and the front-row seats were aligned with A-listers such as Mickey Rourke, Mandy Moore, David Arquette and surf god Kelly Slater. As the sport has grown, it's evident that celebrity culture has penetrated the world of MMA.

Today's celebrities are now using mixed martial arts to stay in shape for their day jobs, and perhaps even in the off-chance one of their security detail is caught napping! So THFE thought it was time ditch its usual sweaty haunts and hit the red carpet to unearth exactly why those more used to the pages of glossy magazines have fallen in love with MMA and even pick up a couple of top-dollar workout tips along the way.

We won't hold our breaths for a celebrity edition of TUF just yet, although 'The Rock' versus Vin Diesel would be a tasty matchup, but you are about to find out what gives a handful of Hollywood A-listers and some of sport's leading MVPs their punching power, both on and off screen.

THE FORCE OF NATURE:

Kevin James

The *King of Queens*, *Mall Cop* and *Hitch* funny man shows us how he does his job of being portly while staying fit, healthy and deadly

He's one of the regular ringside faces and now he's scheduled to star in the upcoming MMA movie *Here Comes The Boom*, about a teacher who moonlights as a fighter, and he's been a hardcore MMA fan since day one. "I studied karate a bit when I was younger and got away from it, then watched UFC from its inception and fell in love with Pride thanks to Bas Rutten," says James. "Then I actually became friends with him. I just love the sport. It's crazy athletic. I love training in it, but not being good at it at all. It's exciting to do if you're planning to move your body, which I don't do very often," he laughs. Kevin is a true devotee, not only with a passion for the high-profile bouts, but he also has a hands-on love for the sport. And with his frame he's not the kind of bloke you'd want to have side control...



THE EARLY YEARS

Along with karate, school wrestling was one of his first introductions to fighting. And in his teenage years he certainly wasn't without competition because he shared the same high school with Mike Foley, WWE's 'Mankind.' Despite Mankind's fierce reputation, Kevin isn't scared of a little smack talk when the subject is broached. "You just ask Mick how I did in wrestling against him – I destroyed him," he says with a wry smile. "I lit him up. I really wasn't even into wrestling. I was more into football at the time because I was a running back. They didn't have a heavyweight in my high school so they recruited me, but didn't know I was a strong kid. I didn't even know how to wrestle and Mick came on the team and I schooled him, and he knows it." Seems his stand-up career gave him an excellent grounding in trash talk.

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THE HEAVY HITTERS

Being one of the most famous MMA punters, he actually helped popularize the sport in the mainstream, which is probably why Dana gave him the rights to use the UFC brand in *Here Comes The Boom*. This is a first ever for the UFC and they've even been lending him their stars. “Kevin is a good athlete,” says Randy Couture, after effortlessly dump tackling James' behemoth frame onto the mat. “He has good power, a good solid build and is a workhorse.” So why does an actor, who says his favorite feeling in the world is the warmth of a pizza box resting in his lap, give his body so much punishment against MMA's big guns? “People ask why I train with these guys, saying how is that going to help me with my golf game,” he smiles. “It makes me mentally stronger. After training with guys like Randy and Bas Rutten, a little three-foot putt just isn't going to seem that intimidating. Sounds crazy, but I think it's really going to help my golf game.” As a comic it's tough to know when to take him seriously. But motivations aside, he regularly stands up against the world's best and for that you have to admire his intestinal and testicular fortitude.

HERE COMES THE BOOM

James is rumored to have run a 4.6 second 40-yard dash in high school so, despite appearances, there could be a serious athlete lurking beneath that armor. To get a snapshot of his training and mentality, we got his strength and MMA coach and THFE's resident S&C guru, Kevin Kearns, to dish out the scoop on his workout. “Kevin is crazy, he will do two sessions a day sometimes – Muay Thai in the AM and MMA conditioning in the PM,” reveals Kearns. “He is a machine in training and really enjoyed our 'gas in the tank' workouts which mimic being in the ring. His workout can sizzle over 890 calories in 60 minutes, so it's not for the faint hearted.”

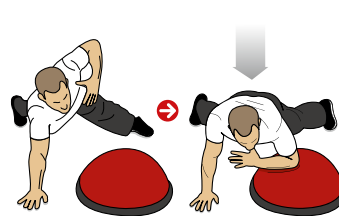


ACTOR KEVIN JAMES, UFC BOSS DANA WHITE, MUSICIAN BENJI MADDEN

KEVIN JAMES' MMA WORKOUT

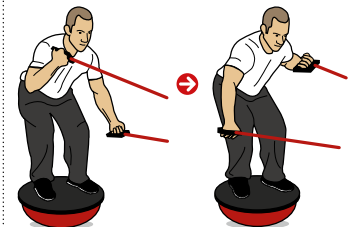
From the *King of Queens* to the king of kings, here's how Kevin James trained for his new MMA movie *Here Comes The Boom*. Do each of the exercises for 30-40 seconds then move onto the next one. “Kevin could do this for 60 minutes. See if you can match that,” says coach Kearns.

1 Bosu hell bows



Get into a plank position over the top of a Bosu ball. Raise one elbow to the sky shifting your body weight over your grounded arm. Then drive in the elbow strike.

2 Pummeling on wobble board



Stand on a wobble board and get your training partner to stand in front of you. Do wrestling-pummeling arm drills or, if alone, shadow box with resistance bands.

3 Band punches on one leg



Stand on one leg and throw punches with a resistance band.

4 Bosu ground 'n' pound



Use your knee to control a grounded Bosu ball and drive in strikes, then switch sides.

5 Get-ups with body blade



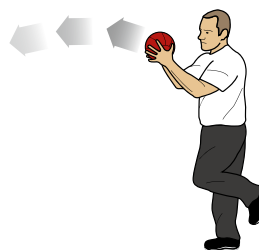
Lie on the floor holding the body blade above your chest with one arm. Now push yourself to a standing position while keeping your arm straight. Switch arms halfway.

6 Dumbbell upper cuts



Hold a dumbbell in each hand and do upper cuts on pads or a bag.

7 Chest pass med ball



Stand opposite a training partner and hold a medicine ball to your chest. Pass the ball to your partner and get them to pass it straight back.

8 Power jumps on mini tramp



Stand with your feet hip-width apart and jump as high as you can.

THE BIG GUN:

Reggie Bush

The physical battle on the NFL pitch spills over into the MMA arena with beautiful synchronicity - Reggie's current performance shows it

On occasion, Reggie Bush has been more famous for his social life than for his athletic abilities, but his string of consistently successful sporting performances shows his mind is always very firmly fixed on his day job. He doesn't attribute his all-round performance just to football training. "I cross-train in MMA because it's like NFL in a lot of ways," says the Miami Dolphins running back. "In both sports you need to be agile, fast and strong. Most importantly, they both force you to keep your hand-eye co-ordination on point.

"I particularly enjoy the boxing side of MMA because it teaches you to move your arms extremely fast and on the pitch that helps me block and shed tackles." So if you're into contact sports, here's how you can take a leaf out the training book of one of the world's most confrontational athletes.



THE MENTAL GAME

Even though Reggie feasts on a steady diet of MMA sweat sessions, his muscles are nothing without the mind to drive them. Enter MMA's never-quit attitude. "MMA really pushes you mentally to exhaustion, until you've got absolutely nothing left to give," says Bush. "But because of your natural instincts of self-preservation, you have to dig deep to somehow find that energy from somewhere. To me, no matter what sport you like to play, it will help you improve."

So if you're looking for a way to get your engine to give you more gas in the tank then MMA is very fine way of breaking down those mental barriers as well as helping you think clearly under pressure. "Despite what some people might think, MMA is not mindless aggression," says Bush. "You have to be smart. There are tactics that guys use in

NFL and in MMA, both of which are looking to find your weaknesses and break these down to win. Each sport helps you strategically play to your strengths and guard against these weaknesses. You always have to outsmart your opponent rather than outmuscle them." A mind is a powerful thing to waste and it seems Bush has got the brawns and the brains needed to succeed.



THE BEST OF THE BEST

We all have our pet moves we enjoy doing, but for Reggie his favorites are the ones that transfer the best to the pitch. "My favorite move that I feel any aspiring NFL player should do is to be able to defend an opponent from a standing start," says Bush. "So I'd stand with my hips shoulder-width apart and my opponent rushes me. He'll try to grab my chest, or wherever, and it's my goal to break his grip and get into a dominant and standing position. This skill is vital in football." And it's vital in just about every sport that sees an attacker trying to take you out the game.



FIND HIM HERE

So when are we most likely to see him ringside? Well, he does have a soft spot for a particular fighter. "My favorite fighter is Anderson Silva," smiles Bush. "He may not be the biggest but I admire his mental game because he always uses tactics. I enjoy watching him get beaten, but bide his time and then come back at the very last minute to win a fight with one of his submissions. To me that kind of patience and 'never give in' attitude is testament to a true champion." So look out for Reggie when Silva next squares up against Chael Sonnen.

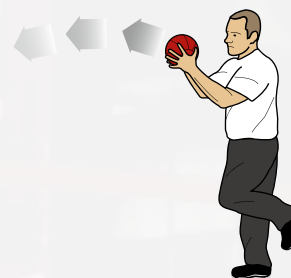
"In both sports you need to be agile, fast and strong. Most importantly, they both force you to keep your hand-eye co-ordination on point"

REGGIE BUSH'S MMA ABS WORKOUT

One of the biggest assets to any sportsman is his balance - especially if you consider that he who stands on his feet the longest usually wins. "In both NFL and MMA we focus on core strength for improved balance," says Bush. "For both disciplines, I regularly do the circuit below for my core because it bolsters the strength in my hips, abs, arms, chest and shoulders - giving me a total body workout. Including other muscles in your abs workouts also add intensity that, carries over onto the pitch and into the MMA gym."

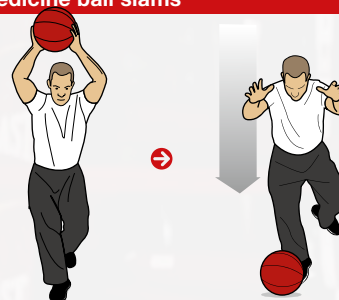
"For all of these drills I use Everlast balls, grappling dummies, bags and gloves," says Bush.

1 Medicine ball throws



Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and hold a medicine ball at your chest. Bend your knees slightly and throw the ball from your chest as far as you can. Run to the ball, pick it up and go again. Warning: you'll probably want to do this outside.

2 Medicine ball slams



Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and hold a medicine ball above your head with your arms fully extended. Slam the ball onto the ground between your feet. Jump up in the air slightly as you do it to increase power.

3 Medicine ball crunch throws to training partner



Lie on your back in the crunch position and have a training partner stand a few feet away from you. Hold a medicine ball to your chest, do a sit-up and push the medicine ball off your chest, to your partner. Get them to throw it back and lower yourself to the start and go again.



PHOTOS JAMES WESTMAN

THE AGONY AWARDS

The very best kick-ass moments ever featured on celluloid

Punch – *Snatch*, 2000

There was big competition from Tyson's unexpected owning of Galifianakis and Marty McFly defending his parents from Biff, but the Oscar goes to Mr Pitt's Mickey for receiving a hefty king-hit during the infamous bare-knuckle fight scene. He was decked so hard he levitated parallel to the canvas then stood up to win it with a single blow. We thank you, Mr Ritchie.

Kick – *The Karate Kid*, 1984

Never again will you see an entire movie to build up to one single kick. It might seem cheesy now, but at the time it was revolutionary because it showed the world you could stand up to bullies, big corporations and get the girl, if you showed enough hard work and dedication. You'd be lying if you said you didn't try it with your friends afterwards.

Submission – *Lethal Weapon*, 1987

Royce Gracie is usually credited as being the one who introduced Brazilian jiu-jitsu to the wider world, but many years prior to his dominance of the early UFC's, there was another demonstrating little-known techniques to the millions. Mel Gibson's submission in the climactic fight scene between Riggs (Gibson) and Joshua (Gary Busey) ends a bloody battle with a textbook triangle choke. And who taught the famous actor/director this slick submission? None other than BJJ master Rorion Gracie, who was on-set to choreograph the fight scene.

THE BIG BABY:

Glen Davis

When it comes to the NBA, bigger is better and few can match Davis' size and athleticism. But not being one to rest on his laurels, he's used MMA to improve his performance

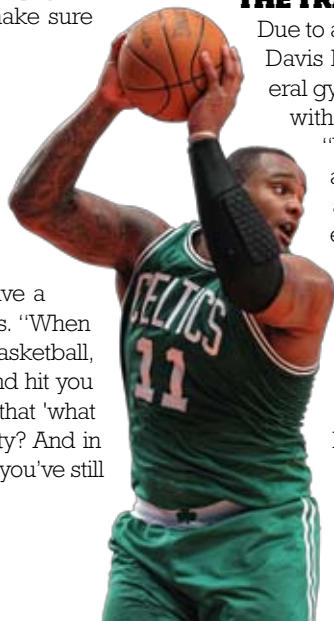


Davis' basketball career started with an MMA move. At just 15 years old he was at a basketball camp with future Boston Celtic teammate, Shaquille O'Neal. Shaq challenged him to a friendly wrestling match, which saw Davis lift up Shaq's 320lb frame and body slam it to the ground. The incident helped him get introduced to the Louisiana head basketball coach and kick started his career. And since finding fame and fortune on the court he hasn't turned his back on MMA. "Over the past years I've become a huge UFC fan," says Davis. "I love the jiu-jitsu, Muay Thai, all that. I use it in my off-season training." So not only has he used MMA to secure his six-million-dollar pay check but also he's stuck to it to make sure the cash keeps flowing."



THE WINNING EDGE

One of the big reasons he regularly trains MMA in the off-season is for the psychological benefits. "Fighters have a no-lose mentality," says Davis. "When times are tough, it's just like basketball, some teams will come out and hit you in the mouth. And they have that 'what are you going to do' mentality? And in spite of getting hit in the face you've still



got to stick to your gameplan. It relates to basketball in so many ways and that's why I like to use it as another way of training."

But aside his passion for MMA, when asked if he could see himself engaging in the sport for real he scoffs: "Sometimes your mind ponders a little bit, but these guys are UFC fighters for a reason and I'm a basketball player for a reason, and I think we'll keep it at that." Standing almost seven feet tall and weighing 300lb, who's going to argue?"



THE TRAINING

Due to all the traveling involved with NBA, Davis has been known to frequent several gyms across America. He did a stint with Kevin Kearns in the off-season.

"We worked to improve his endurance for the court as well as shed a few pounds," says Kearns. But even when he was doing MMA in the mornings he still did shooting practice in the evenings. According to Kearns, his two favorite moves were Bosu sprawls and Bosu leap frogs, both of which increased the power in his legs, helping him jump higher and add agility to his day job

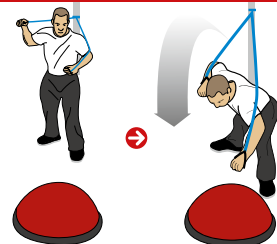
GLEN DAVIS' EXPLOSIVE MMA WORKOUT

1 Bosu Sprawls



Hold a Bosu ball so the rounded side faces away from you. Quickly drop and press it to the ground and get into a push-up position with your legs sprawled out. Pop up to the start.

2 Leap frogs



Attach a resistance band and place a Bosu just out of reach. In an explosive motion leap forward and punch down on the Bosu and then repeat on other side.

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK:

Taylor Lautner

A karate black belt by age eight and several junior world championships to his name, the *Twilight* star could have been the next Machida if it wasn't for Hollywood

The *Twilight* movies may have left you feeling somehow angry with the bloke, but like a dog barking at a vacuum, you're probably just mad because you don't really understand him. A longtime martial artist, in his youth he was actually ranked number one in his category by the American Sports Karate Association before his acting career took off. Fame and fortune has already brought him a few run-ins. "I've become close with a singer named Taylor Swift," smiles Lautner, "and was actually on stage with her at the VMA the night she won the award for best video and Kanye West interrupted her speech. As you can see I really stood up for her. I guess, well, I could have done a little more," he says. When a rapper disses your girl's work in front of millions of people, few men would stand back and take it, especially when you could fly kick the mouth off him. Yet, after all, MMA is about self control.



THE ACCOLADES

The man responsible for Lautner's lean and mean physique is Jordan Yuam, a 20-year veteran in the fitness industry and owner of Jordan's Virtual Fit Club. Here's the advice he gave the newbie. "Inexperience works to your advantage," explains Yuam. "The less muscle you have, the easier it is to gain muscle mass quicker." This is because your body adapts and responds well to a

completely new stimulus. So being new to weight lifting is actually to your advantage if you want to add muscle. This is why Lautner was able to gain upwards of 33lb of muscle between the *Twilight* movies. Yuam had Lautner use low reps (4-5) of a high number of sets (5-8) to stack on muscle and build strength that looks good on screen. But when mixed with a cardio-heavy routine meant his actions were working against his goals. "I was exercising so hard that I began to lose weight," says Lautner. This could have been career-ending, so Yuam had him stick to interval-based circuits where he alternated between periods of hard work (6--0 seconds) and slow recovery phases (30-40 seconds).



DOES HE STILL DO IT?

Can we expect to see him following the footsteps of Steven Seagal? His only jaunt outside the *Twilight* franchise is the *Abduction* movie where he showcased some of his karate moves. "I did boxing training for a couple months," he says of his time filming the movie. "Now I'm into the fight training and motorcycle stuff. I'll do a little swimming training. It's all-round stuff." With a six-pack that sells you can bet on him featuring in the *Bourne*-like movies, but at least he's one of the few with the martial arts credentials to back up his acting chops. >



TAYLOR LAUTNER: TEEN HEARTTHROB, MARTIAL ARTIST

HOLLYWOOD WALK OF FAME

Some of the martial arts world's least expected famous students

Kobe Bryant – Jeet Kune Do

The six-foot-six star of basketball team the LA Lakers is as dangerous off the court as he is on it, being well versed in 'the way of the intercepting fist.'

Jennifer Aniston – Budokon

The popular actress of *Friends* fame likes to stay in shape by practising the art of budokon (a mix of striking, grappling and yoga) under the art's founder, Cameron Shayne.

Christian Bale – Wing Chun

When he's not fighting crime as the Dark Knight or surviving the apocalypse as John Connor, the Hollywood hunk practices the method that got Bruce Lee himself started in martial arts.

James Caan – Gosoku Ryu Karate

As well as having acted in the acclaimed films *The Godfather Part I and II*, Caan is also a fifth dan black belt under martial arts master Takayuki Kubota.

James Cagney – Judo

James Cagney was an actor, farmer, sailor and black belt in judo. If you want proof then check out his impressive judo throws in the Academy Award-winning *Blood on the Sun*.

Wu Tang Clan's RZA – Tai Chi

Robert Fitzgerald Diggs is a martial arts fanatic and is considered by his friends to be an encyclopedia of martial arts knowledge.

Jodie Foster – Kickboxing

The multi-award winning actress likes to keep herself as mentally and physically sharp as possible, training in yoga and kickboxing, as well as holding a bachelor's degree from Yale University.

Mel Gibson – Jiu-Jitsu

After learning jiu-jitsu on the set of *Lethal Weapon* when Rorion Gracie came along to give the action star private tutelage, *Mad Max* has continued to roll ever since.

Lucy Liu – Silat

The techniques of Silat include the use of weaponry. With the swordplay she showed in *Kill Bill*, it's no surprise that the beautiful Asian-American actress really does have some skills.

Sharon Stone – Taekwondo

Stone began learning the Korean combat art from master Jhoon Chang, prior to shooting *Total Recall*.



THE OLD GUARD:

Jason Statham

This UK hard nut may play a guy who kills other guys in every movie, but he is a devoted martial artist at heart, and one of the few who still does their own stunts

He started off as a model then scored a break in Guy Ritchie's *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* as a fast-talking wide boy. Once his foot was in the door and he'd cemented his acting skills, he quickly turned his years of jiu-jitsu and other mixed martial arts training to the pursuit of making coin. In addition to this, in the films where he's shirtless he shows off more cuts than a barbershop, but that didn't come from a membership to a fancy upper-crust gym. "I go to this gym full of stunt men," says Statham. "There aren't any TVs or treadmills there. This is a spit and sawdust kind of place. It has a lot of great training aids – trampolines and bags and every weapon ever invented to do harm to a human being. If you want to know how to throw a knife it's great." So of all the Hollywood guys he's probably the one whose feathers you don't want to ruffle.



THE AMBASSADOR

Being one of the few A-listers brave enough to churn out a steady stream of R18-rated flicks, he's often badgered by do-gooders with doubts about the ethical nature of showing violence on screen. Fortunately, with enough MMA training under his belt he always portrays the sport in a positive light to the folk who have never held a clenched fist. "Any kind of martial arts or discipline of that nature brings a bit of peace," says Statham. "It's the people that don't have a discipline that are out in the pubs causing stings and fights with people. You find any of the guys who have a skill within that fighting world be it judo, kick-boxing, Thai boxing, jiu-jitsu, they're very peaceful people. And the only aggression they have time for is when it's in a competitive environment." So love him or hate him, he's the kind of bloke the sport needs on its side, largely because he shows a pretty good understanding of its inner workings. "I've always been a fan, and it's just the elite sport for me," says Statham. "It's where all the styles come together and I'm just always impressed. They're the ultimate athletes. They just have so much concentration and mental strength. They overcome their fears and they're the true gladiators." We're with you on that Statham. ●



PHOTOS DANIEL SMITH

“MMA fighters are the ultimate athletes. They just have so much concentration and mental strength. **They overcome their fears and they're the true gladiators**”



MMA FAN USES MMA TRAINING TO GET HIS HOLLYWOOD PHYSIQUE