

An Interview With Victor Munoz Trainer of Champions Part II

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Note: This is part two of my interview with Victor Munoz. It starts directly where we left off. You can read part one of this interview by [clicking here, An Interview With Victor Munoz Trainer of Champions Part One](#)

JW: I believe that the biggest factor that stands out to me concerning the athletes you train is their enormous backs and extremely wide shoulders!

VM: That's my signature! I believe that a bodybuilder has to be like an X. Steve Reeves and my old mentors showed me what a physique should look like. Ken Patero had great shoulders and Freddy Ortiz had the most beautiful back and small little waste in the world! So I was taught early in my career that if you want to win a competition you have to have a back and have wide shoulders. And you have to have a pair of legs. You must have wheels because if you don't have wheels you ain't goin no where!

JW: How do you get your clients backs and shoulders to broaden and thicken so much?

VM: See its not like I am guessing, I know what works and when I start training somebody I make sure that It happens! I mean right there! And if it doesn't work I change something at that point. I don't just train people or collect a check, I will make sure that they change! If you don't change then I am not doing my job. Which means I would go back to the drawing board and find out how I can change this guy. Perhaps I will change the angles of the exercise to get something more out of him. I use allot of different training systems. The training systems that were taught to me.

JW: So you take a look at the athlete. Analysis what he is lacking in certain areas and then apply techniques that you feel work best to those area. Basically working on weaknesses more than strengths.

VM: Yes, And again if something doesn't work with a guy, if something doesn't produce immediate results I am throwing it out. I use what works for my guys. And like you said all of my guys, even my amateurs have huge backs and wide shoulders! I never count warm up sets. I base the number of sets I do, on how my guy feels that day and what I think I can get best out of him.

JW: I have heard that you use a lot of chin-ups and that's the reason why your contenders have such big backs.

VM: Yes, that's actually what a lot of athletes are neglecting these days. They have dropped them as a major part of their workouts. They maybe only do 30 in one day or whatever. I have my guys do it as a warm up. They have to do them 4 times a week, close and wide no questions asked and when it becomes easier I make it harder.

JW: Do you feel that it's the numerous amount of angles you use that produce such dramatic results?

VM: Definitely. I use several several different angles on the close grips and different angles on the wide grip. I also do a lot of intense stretching! Whatever body part you work you have to stretch. This affects growth.

Also an athlete must do their chin-ups properly! A lot of people do chin-ups and use their arms and shoulders too much. You have to use your scapula and move it in more so that you can feel the squeeze in your muscles! It's the same thing with pull downs, most people do them incorrectly.

JW: (I'm laughing) You're right most people just rock back and forth. It's hilarious!

VM: Exactly (laughing) I have guys that are 20 or 21 years old and they're all into lifting heavy because that's what they read in the magazines. However they forget to tell you that you have to control the weight. Do not let the weight control you. So what I will do is end up cutting the weight in half with these guys. And they say " what? " And I say " don't ask me what again. " After cutting the weight down I see if they feel the movement in their muscles more. Of course they feel it working more effectively. Then I explain to them that if they continue to do the exercise properly, they will eventually get back to their old weight again.

JW: Right

VM: And when he sees the tremendous new progress due to improving his form, he will admit that I was right.

(**shoulders**)

One of the main exercises I see done wrong are side laterals. Even though the magazines explain how to perform them, most athletes still do them wrong. As you know, you have to perform them as if you were pouring a cup of tea.

JW: Do you suggest doing those seated for stricter form?

VM: Seated is a lot better because it is stricter. Especially when I am getting closer to a show. Simply because you use no legs and lessen the use of other supporting muscles. However while doing seated you have to sacrifice the weight. Standing is good because you can use a little more weight and it helps with mass as well. So I use them both. But form is extremely important!

JW: What other tips do you have for larger shoulders?

VM: Well I don't want to give everything away but its a combination of when I work the chest I do something for the shoulders and when I work the shoulders I do something for the chest so that they tie into each other.

JW: Like you said they all have a set of wheels? How do you accomplish this?

VM: Well first I have to build a foundation. I work on getting their legs strong and work on the basic structure of how they will develop. After we have the basic structure I will start working on the things we missed. I do this by actually specializing on the gaps they have in their thighs. I work these gaps by changing the angles of their leg exercises so that they hit these gaps.

I am into allot of different angles. You see we humans are creatures of habit. We tend to take the same route home everyday. Well I don't (laughing), I like to do everything different. If I was using a certain angle on an exercise for a while I will then completely change its angle to cause new growth. I sometimes will even take my guys to a completely new gym with different equipment for 3 months. Overall change and the constant changing of angles makes a big difference! That's why I get such dramatic results!

In addition there is nothing better then free weights! Nothing will get you a great body faster then they can! Machines are good and they enhance the use of free weights, but you can never do machines exclusively.

JW: So you are a big believer in squats and bench then. What rep range do you prefer in the squat?

VM: When I was younger I used to like 12 because I was such a huge fan of Franco Colombo. But I believe in the 8-10 rep range. However the 8 reps must be extremely hard to do! If you did 8 but could have done 16 then you didn't do it right. If its extremely difficult and you feel that 6, 7 and 8 were hard, then we have the right weight.

But, when you get strong with an exercise, I will change the sequence, you're back to zero and you have to challenge yourself again! What happens is that we just want to dominate the weight. And you start saying, " this is good, look how strong I am! " But, then I change the exercise and now your week and you have to challenge yourself again. Its a little frustrating, but I prefer that you always challenge your body.

The more challenging the better your body becomes.

JW: When you say changing the angles do you mean that perhaps for two weeks you'll have them do squats and then for two weeks front squats, or wide and then narrow?

VM: Yes, I do that. Or I have them do squats at the end or squats in the middle of the workout. You don't necessarily have to perform them at the beginning of your workout. I constantly change the sequence to continually shock the body.

In addition for more growth on a certain part of their thighs I will change their foot patterns. I always teach the guys to always push with their heels and not with their toes! Same thing with the leg press, push with your heels and never with your toes. You put more emphasis this way on the thigh muscles then on the knee area. So again I work and reshape the quads from several several different angles.

JW: What special methods do you use for the abdominal muscles?

VM: I have allot of different exercises for the abs. Obviously you have to have a low enough body fat percentage and everyone has a genetic predisposition. However, you can still bring out more detail in all the areas of the abs. Concentrate mainly on what needs work. So if you need more lower abs you will work the lower abs more. I will prioritize the weaker area more.

JW: So you concentrate heavily on whatever area is weakest or work on covering up a genetic weakness. (**Important below, Victor explains how to create illusions in bodybuilding!**)

VM: Yes, also if someone has not concentrated on their rib cage I try and hide it. You see allot of pros don't cover up their weaknesses by accentuating other body parts. For example, Kevin Levrone is a great athlete! But he is a little long in the torso. Whenever he is relaxed I can see that he needs to change something in his torso. Its difficult because this guy is incredible! My suggestion and criticism is that he needs to do something more to his ribcage or in his abs so that his torso doesn't look as long. If he did this he could win another major title or even an Olympia.

JW: What would you do to make his torso look shorter?

VM: Well I would have to create an illusion. I would work his pecs and back so that they come down lower. This would give the illusion that his body is allot shorter. Everything on stage is an illusion! If you move something somewhere another body part might look like its there when its really not!

JW: Obviously you have a million tricks up your sleeves. And you have stated that you use allot of training techniques that most trainers know nothing about. Can you give us an example of a rare shocking technique that you use?

VM: Well I have to protect myself on the unknown ones until they are up on my website. Because if I tell you something and someone else takes it. I will end out seeing it next week in muscle and fitness and someone takes a name for it. You know what I'm saying.

JW: Definitely

VM: But you will see them soon. Once I can publish something at least I can stamp my initials on it. Because in this sport. I hate to say it, but everybody is looking behind closed doors and stealing ideas from other people.

JW: I look forward to that!

A bodybuilder at your level has to do everything correct! What basic supplements do you recommend every bodybuilder to take?

VM: I like meal replacements. I believe in amino acids. Especially branched chain amino acids for pre-contest and glutamine. I like a lot of vitamin C and vitamin E to clear out the free radicals. Because what happens is that you have a lot of lactic acid and waste after you train and that needs to be cleared out. And as athletes we have way more stress than a normal person. I recommend that tremendously.

JW: You competed at the AAU level and work with the best of the best in this brutal sport. We have a lot of up and coming talented members on the site. Several of which would like to compete at high levels, even the pro ranks. What quality do you find in yourself and other champions you've trained that you feel has a huge part in achieving success in this sport? Basically what mentality do you feel a champion must have?

VM: Mine is to never give up! Keep trying if you get second or 3rd place. You have to keep shooting for your best. Your own personal best. Don't look to try and beat another person, because then it becomes a race between you two when it really should be a race against yourself. Even if someone can't take the sport far, keep bodybuilding with you for the rest of your life. Use it to keep your mind and body healthy. Do the best for your own self. It has to be for yourself, not just a trophy or to beat a certain guy. You can beat anybody, any day, or anybody can beat you any day. The guy who wins is the guy who tries harder and does his homework. and who learns from his mistakes! See, what happens is that a lot of guys don't learn from their mistakes. Then they end up going into a show doing the same thing. And they forget to respect the judges or others who they hear criticism from. A good idea is to go and ask the judge what you need to work on more. At least then you will have something to take with you to the gym. Like, " I need to work more hamstrings or my back is not low enough. "

JW: You mean that a bodybuilder must be willing to recognize their weaknesses?

VM: Exactly and that's the problem! Even at the pro level. You ask a lot of pros what their weaknesses are and they'll say none(laughing). But the guy who will get ahead of the competition will say, " I need to improve my calves. " Like I need to improve Victor's calves for the Olympia and a few other small body parts.

In order to win, a bodybuilder has to look different every show. A little different. A nook and cranny or bump here and there. It's important to have noticeably improved. You see if you look the same, after a while someone who has improved a bit each show can now beat you because you haven't improved your physique. And like you say you have to analyze your weaknesses. If you have a weak area, then hit it that much harder.

JW: Calves are a big Weakness in a lot of people.

VM: Yes, allot people! I have allot of guys who who come to me with no calves and I have to give them to them. Even I used to not have calves up to par. I worked hard to build a pair for myself!

JW: There are also allot of people who would love to make a career as a trainer. Since you are an elite in the business. What overall advice do you have for up and coming trainers trying to make a name for themselves?

VM: I think its a great career. I started when bodybuilding wasn't even famous. I actually started the same time body by Jake started. I began training people at Jack la lane center for free. But not everybody can do this. Allot of people now want to be trainers. Actors and bartenders want to be trainers. Because they feel its an easy way to make money. But its allot of work. Just because you have a great body or you are certified doesn't mean that you are a great trainer or that you care enough to develop someone else's body. You really have to love helping people and changing their bodies to get into this sport. This way as a trainer you have a better chance at becoming better at what you do. I put allot of passion into my work and my gratification is when the people I train excel.

I believe that in order to become great you must be open minded. If you don't know something then learn it. Go to a doctor or to the library. Ask another pro or ask somebody who's really good at a particular aspect of bodybuilding. For example someone who specializes in strength training. That's what I am about! I don't try and blind myself to anything. I learn everyday. If I can learn something from you I will learn from you. Perhaps I can pick up something from your website. I take courses 3 times a year when I do my certification and sometimes I pick up 2 or three things. Sometimes I don't learn anything. I have taken so many throughout the years that now I just dissect them and I get one or two things out of it. Which is great! You know.

JW: Definitely!

If a bodybuilder would like to use your services where can they contact you?

VM: You already know my email address, so you can give them that. (PROEDGE40@AOL.COM)

JW: Ok great!

Thank you very much for being so generous with your time Victor; myself and the members on the site really appreciate it!

VM: You are very welcome!

JW: Goodbye Victor

VM: Goodbye Jacob