

Name: Amirrudin Ong @ Ong Soon Hua

Height: 1.71m

Age as of 2015: 28 years old

Weight OFF-season: 90kg

Competition weight: 80kg

Years of Training: 10 years

Occupation: Fitness Coach

Reeling off his first bodybuilding competition win at the recent Fitness Ironman, Bodybuilding Singapore has the opportunity to interview Amirrudin Ong, Singapore's very own 'Leaning Tower of Pisa'.

Amirr a decade back if you would believe it or not was a skinny lad (scroll down the page to see the skinny photo) and his transformation 10-years on, the 1.71 metres tall ectomorph have made some real gains.

He admitted that to attain his considerable size and thickness was no easy feat. For it took consistent training, informed wise choices in his diet, patience and dedication. While he still sees his body as a work-in-progress, fitness fans like us could only envy at the amazing physique he has now.

This interview will have insights on how Amirr's belief in having a solid structured workout, which would help an individual to achieve his or her maximum muscle building potential.





<http://bodybuilding.sg> and <http://blog.bodybuilding.sg>

Contest History:

- 2015 Fitness Ironman >75kg, 1st Place
- 2015 Shawn Roden Classic (Philippines) Open Class, 4th Place
- 2015 Fitwhey Classic (Thailand) Open Class, Top 14
- 2014 WBPF South East Asia Championship >80kg, 2nd Place
- 2012 SBBF Singapore Bodybuilding Nationals >75kg, 2nd Place
- 2006 Pesta Sukan Junior, 4th Place

List of your Sponsors:

- None

Social media & websites links:

<http://www.Amirrudinong.com> (Still under construction. Should be ready in 2016)

<http://amirprojectfitness.tumblr.com>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/chipsmunks>

<http://www.facebook.com/amirrudinong>

<http://www.instagram.com/amirrudinong>

Below is an extract of the interview

Q) Congratulations on the recent 2015 Fitness Iron win. How was the preparation leading up to the competition?

Thank you very much. Being a second place throughout my contests, I didn't expect to clinch it. Moreover, after competing back to back contests for 2 weeks in Thailand and Philippines, all the disappointment, I just want to finish my last contest back in town, being the best of me. A lot of people asked me how long did I prepare? I prepared the moment I stepped off the South East Asia championship stage back in 2014. That was how long I prepped for; mentally, physically and spiritually.

Q) How did you get started into lifting weights?

I started weight lifting when I was 16 years old. That was back in 2003 if I am not wrong. I was teased by my girlfriend back then I was skinny and all. I also realized friends around me were getting huge. Like really BIG! So, I started to go to the nearest Sports Council Gym to workout too. Every single day, I would hit the gym and do chest. Back then, I only idolize Arnold's chest. Until I met a local famous Bodybuilder in the 90s, Andy Toh, he gave me a book of Arnold, [The New Encyclopedia of Modern Bodybuilding The Bible of Bodybuilding](#), then I realized there was other important muscle groups to train! Haha. I started to do shoulders then lastly, back.

Q) Your ethnicity, you're a Chinese right but you've a Muslim name. Tell us more about your unique background.

Hahaha. There is no background. My background is Chinese and I am born Chinese. I embraced Islam in the year 2007. Something happened and made me believe there is God. You can read the whole article here: <https://www.facebook.com/notes/amirrudin-ong/why-i-converted-and-embraced-islam/437459249657>

Q) So are you fluent in Arabic and Malay?

When I was younger, I mixed a lot with Malays. I don't know why and what was the reasons back then. Hence, I am able to speak some Malay and listen to Malay too. Not that fluent but I would say- acceptable.

Q) What are your current training splits, or program?

I train 2 days on, 1 day off. Eg. Mon- Back, Tues- Chest, Wed-REST and so on. Program wise, I would periodize my program. Since I just finished my contest, I am back to more strength work to catch up my weakness. Too many weaknesses and much work to be done.

Q) How long does your training session last? Your thoughts on training duration, should it be quick and quality or volume-based?

My session doesn't go over 2 hours. Shortest is 1 hour and longest is 1hour 30minutes. For me, it really depends on how much you really work. You can stay in the gym for 2 hours but the amounts of time you are actually working the muscles are only 30 minutes. I said the latter because I've seen people doing a set, talked to the friend or texting over 5 minutes before doing the 2nd set. Hence, it is really how much time you are really engaging your muscles. Volume-based, same too. I believe in volume training. I trained my legs that way and it got the results.

Q) Where do you train?

I trained in Anytime Fitness. I would travel around Singapore to train and to find the right environment for legs, shoulders, chest, back, etc. Every gym has its own pros and cons. Before I have clients, I actually offered free "Training with Amirr" sessions on Tuesday and Thursday. My purpose is to impart knowledge to people who wants to learn and who are willing to put aside their ego to learn new things.

Q) Talking about posing, your posing in my opinion is slick. Care to share tips for aspiring bodybuilders some tips.

Very simple. Imagine you trained for 10 years and after 10 years, you got your 1st show. And you got only 1 minute on stage. Do you want to pose elegantly on stage? Yes you do! It's only a few minutes on stage but years of hardwork which the sitting audience in front of you don't even know how hard it can be! Hence, keep posing. Record yourself and be it, watch it over and over again even it's the 100th time you are watching it. Keep criticizing yourself.

Google bodybuilding photos. Try to pose like them and see if it fits your body. Not every pose fits you. E.g. a tall bodybuilder poses are always so different from a short bodybuilder poses because of their body frame and density of muscles. Spend at least an hour posing about 6 months out. Every time you pose, you got to imagine you are on stage; crowd cheering for you, the noise, the spotlights, imagine judges sitting below you, the ambience.

Anticipate everything possible. Squeeze hard and hold each pose for at least 20 seconds. Lastly, talk to a friend who is a dancer. Ask them how to move freely from one pose to another. One thing- Cannot be shy to pose and show them what your bodybuilding poses are. Watch YouTube and see how good bodybuilder poses. E.g. Lee Lebrada, Samir Bannut, Franco, Hidetada, Kai Greene and so many more.

Q) Maybe you can share your posing routine training and beliefs. I think your 'Leaning tower of Pisa' pose is very unique; you've made it into your own. So does the Kai Greene's one (I don't know what it's called, but when you lower down on one knee, and straighten the other leg).

Leaning tower of Pisa. Yes. It was my friend who dubbed me that. I have to make my posing this way because of my leg muscles. It has to be flexed this way to show all the quadriceps. Furthermore, I find it aesthetically nice; hence, I adopt it and keep practicing it till perfection. Everybody's body is different and hence, you got to find pose which will bring your body to its fullest potential on stage. As for Kai Greene's pose, that pose of his attracted my attention because of the details of his legs. I was thinking- if my legs are detailed, I can pose like that too. True enough, in 2014, I posed that to see if it suits my body and it became my signature pose.

Q) Any future competitions you're contesting?

I will not be competing for some 2-3 years. After competing overseas, I know what is expected of me and I got to work harder than before. I know what package I need to bring up on stage the next time I compete again. Hence, offseason to train hard, fine-tune diet and all.

Q) Your thoughts on how important genetics are in building muscle.

Genetics play a part to a certain degree but nothing will outwork hardwork. I still believe in Hardwork. I've sent you a photo of myself when I was in Army. Look at how skinny I was. Nothing is impossible. Thing is, just got to believe in yourself. Muscle building is like bonsai. It takes years of hard work, patience, consistency, same thing over and over again every single day.

Q) Who is and was your mentor? Did you have one, or are you self-coached?

I was coached by Andy Toh when I started out in 2005 and then we lost contact for many years. In 2014, I met Nazarudin Seladin. He guided me a lot for my contest back then. I learnt a lot from him too. You can refer to this video where he was training me: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=chz_U13-n7I

Q) Who are your bodybuilder idols, locally and internationally?

Locally, Nazarudin Seladin, Andy Toh, Halim Haron

Internationally, Sazali Samat, Kai Greene, Milos Sarcev, Bob Paris

Q) Your top 3 favourite exercise and why?

Squats, Chest and Deadlift. Chest because I started bodybuilding doing that every single day. Squats because legs were my strong point back then and I just want to squat, haha. Finally Deadlift because I feel strong when I lift something off the ground solely by myself.

Q) What's your diet like these days?

My diet stays the same year round. Not much changes. Offseason, I would change all carbs to rice as opposed to On-season, sweet potatoes. Meat wise will be Fish/beef. Yeah, no chicken. I don't like chicken at all. Haha. Of course, Offseason, I will eat chocolates like nobody's business!

Q) Do you believe in staying lean all year round or are you into bulk/cut?

A lot of people take their Offseason too lightly or they will eat like a normal human being and when contest time, they will 'diet' and get lean. No, No, No! I don't believe in that at all. It is not about staying lean year round or bulk and cut. For myself, I've done that too when I was younger.

After contest, I would eat like a human being or like a pig, without getting my 250g of meat per meal, etc. 6 months later, I feel like a fat kid! After so much experimentation, I decided to still eat what I am eating for contest prep. These are quality calories. You don't want empty calories. E.g. 250g of beef ribs + pasta VS nasi goreng + egg. Which has more gains for you? There you go. You got the answer. Hence, when you keep eating empty calories, of course, fat amount will be really high and that bulk, you gain fats more than muscles. Henceforth, I would eat smartly.

Q) Your thoughts on cardio? How to achieve the right balance with muscle building.

Cardio has to be done daily, even offseason. YES! I am trying my best to do that too. So that we can keep our hearts and lungs working. For me, either 20mins of sprint or 60mins of fast walk. In my opinion, fasted cardio is the best. Some people will do cardio before/after weight training. It really differs from person to person. For myself, I would wake up early in the morning to do my walks then, 2-3hours later my weights. I have tried before/after the weights, it doesn't work for me.

Q) What supplements do you use and recommend?

- I am currently using supplements from www.iherb.com. I am using the following:
- Nature's Way, Alive! Multi-Vitamin
- Source Naturals, Arctic Pure, Ultra Potency, Omega-3 Fish Oil, 850 mg
- Wakunaga - Kyolic, Kyo•Dophilus, Probiotics Plus Enzymes
- Nature's Way, Vitamin C-1000
- Doctor's Best, Best Alpha Lipoic Acid, 150 mg
- MuscleTech Isolate protein
- Universal Nutrition Creatine
- AST Mirconized Glutamine
- Universal BCAA Powder
- Universal Preworkout

Do visit www.iherb.com for cheap supplements! Key in my code for first time buyers to get really good discounts on your first time buying! Code: QUF327.

Q) What advice would you give for someone who is new to bodybuilding?

Start slow, write down every single thing you experiment. Keep reading from books, internet and most of all, be patient. Muscle doesn't grow overnight. It takes years of hardwork. Remember again, Bodybuilding is like Bonsai. Stressing the body but in a good way, building and sculpting the perfect body you always visualize. Lastly, got to ask yourself why do you bodybuild. If not, one will not go far. Also, if one is just to prove the crowd wrong, don't waste time. Haters will always be haters because they cannot do what you are doing. There have to be a better reason why you started this journey.

Q) The Singapore Bodybuilding scene, do you think it's improving? What can be done to raise the bodybuilding standard level here?

It is not about the scene here. It is the federations. Period. I really don't wish to comment on this more. For me, my goal after I retire from bodybuilding, I want to bring Singapore back to SEA GAMES and ask government to recognize Bodybuilding as one of the sports just like badminton, canoeing, table tennis etc. I want to make this sport known to the public and to educate them the beauty of this sports which remained so dark and secretive to many Singaporeans.

Q) How do you stay motivated?

I stay motivated everyday by thinking of the part I am going to train the moment I opened my eyes that morning. I will imagine and visualize the final product I am going to achieve it. Keep closing in the gap of weaknesses. Lastly, stay motivated to hit each rep by thinking how I lost again and again for the past few years.

Q) Aside from bodybuilding, do you have any other hobbies?

Ah... I used to be an avid gamer where I would stay up the whole night to play online games. I played musical instruments like guitar, piano, a little of drums and I composed songs. My greatest achievement by far was 2010 eco music challenge where I got into the top 10 and NEA published a CD. I draw, does acrylic paintings and finally, diorama. I also collect toys which influenced my life.

Q) Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

I would want to be an IFBB Pro, competing overseas and helping young Singaporeans achieving what they want to achieve. Also, to expand into general fitness for the main audience who don't want to bodybuild but just to keep fit. I am currently doing a "MuscleMindTipFriday" to educate and open up doors to people who are interested to know more. Of course, general questions are fine, I won't charge. I will answer whatever I could. I was just like them, needed guidance but I wasn't given any until in the later stage. I am setting up my own website and hopefully by 2016, everything will be up very soon. Stay tuned