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Mickey Rourke and pal and fellow actor Jason Statham on the red carpet at â€œThe Wrestlerâ€• UK premiere
DailyLife

Mickey Rourke Speaks of Brutal Training for â€˜The Wrestlerâ€™

Actor reveals grueling workout sessions for his potential Oscar vehicle

Darren Aronofsky's "The Wrestler," starring Mickey Rourke, Marisa Tomei and Evan Rachel Wood is a strong competitor in the Oscar race which, this year, is believed to be tighter than ever. Of the entire cast, Rourke is also said to stand great chances of finally getting to take home a statuette for best actor. Judging by the amount of work that he invested in this movie, he more than deserves it.

Speaking with the British media upon the official premiere of the film in Leicester Square, Mickey, known for his sporty past as a professional boxer, admitted that training to play a wrestler in this recent movie was by far the greatest challenge he ever took up. For once, wrestling is not entirely scripted and, before even getting to that part, he had to work out a lot in order to build muscle and look like Randy "The Ram" Robinson, the legendary wrestler he portrayed.

"It was physically brutal. I had to do seven and a half months of extensive weightlifting, and eating six or seven meals a day, to put on 27 pounds of muscle. That's not a lot of time - so I had this ex-soldier who was very strict with me about my training regime and my diet. Then there was four and a half months of wrestling training - in which we worked on the choreography seven days a week. By the time the movie started - I thought it was over!" Rourke told the media gathered outside, on the red carpet.

As for what he gets to take with him from this experience, Mickey also told the journalists that he had learned to look at wrestling from another perspective. Sure, he said, it's still entertainment, but there's much more to it than what meets the eye, and he got to see that for himself, first-hand.

"Everybody knows that wrestling is entertainment - but when you're getting thrown around like that something is going to snap, crackle and pop. […] I really went through what these guys go through. They sacrifice their bodies for the sake of the crowd and that adrenalin rush. […] If someone asked me if wrestling is fake, after all of that, I wouldn't even answer the question." Mickey explained to the media representatives at the event.

As of January 15, "The Wrestler" will open in most countries in Europe.

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