

BIKE FIT

Building strong shoulders

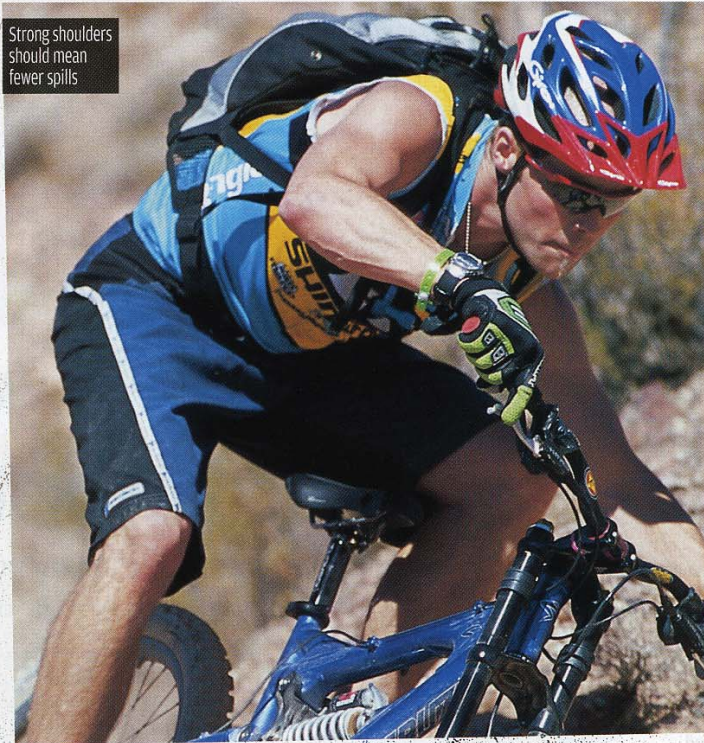
Strong shoulders are a vital part of your physical armoury. Not only do they provide you with an extra layer of body armour when you crash, your shoulder muscles, more than any other, work to control the bike. More strength equals more control equals more fun and less crashes. Following these simple exercises, using dumbbells or even beer cans, will build vital shoulder strength.

Exercise 1: Work the front of the shoulders by alternately raising your arms out in front up to eye level. Do it slowly, keeping your arms straight. Take at least two seconds for the up movement and the same to go down. Don't let momentum take over. You'll feel it in the front of your shoulder. Try doing three sets of 10 on each arm. As you get stronger, add weight.

Exercise 2: Work the sides of the shoulders by holding weights at your side. Keeping your arms straight, raise them out to the side until your hands are in line with your shoulders. Take two seconds to go up and two seconds to go back down. Make sure to just use your shoulders – don't let your neck do all the work. Do three sets of 12, and add more weight when you start to get stronger.

Exercise 3: To work the back of the shoulders, stand bent over at 90 degrees and hang your arms straight down. Using a light weight, keep your arms almost straight and take them out to the side like the wings of a plane. Keep your stomach muscles tight in all these exercises, but especially this one.

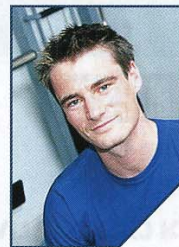
→ Shoulder strength is the key to control, says WMB's resident fitness guru **Andy Wadsworth**



Try to isolate the muscles at the back of the shoulder. Do three sets of 12 but start light. This exercise is great for posture.

Office workers and those sat at a desk all day often suffer from stiff necks. Working on PCs and sitting in a swivel chair with your elbows

on the desk can leave your neck muscles overworked and prevent your shoulders from doing their proper job. These exercises aim to increase the muscular recruitment of the shoulder muscles and fight this problem, opening up a neck pain-free world filled with faster trail times and fewer crashes.



Andy has raced the World Cup series as a privateer for two years, is a former Xterra (off-road triathlon) World Champion, runs his own personal training company,