

Rap Artist Actor Ja Rule Ranked No1

Written by Robert ID1423
Sunday, 22 May 2005 22:09 -

As hip-hop and rap radio stations and record labels have been facing plenty of criticism lately for promulgating feuds among hip-hop and rap stars like 50 Cent, Eminem, The Game and Ja Rule; now a less obvious outlet is taking a turn at fanning the flames: Men's Fitness magazine.

The cover of the June/July double issue of Men's Fitness features an undeniably ripped Ja Rule, ranked No. 1 in the magazine's list of the "25 Fittest Guys." Instead of teasing the rap artist / actors fitness regimen, though, the cover screams, "How to Build a Bullet-Proof Body!"

The line refers to the feud between Ja Rule and hip-hop's 50 Cent; who has survived many bullet wounds. On his 2003 album "Get Rich or Die Tryin," " 50 Cent referred to Ja Rule as a pop singer posing as a hip-hop thug.

Ja Rule lashed back with a track on his album later that year, "Blood in My Eye," with the lyrics like, "I'll probably go to jail for sending 50 to hell."

But hip-hop and rap stars have been under pressure to quell their fighting since March, when a feud between hip-hop artists 50 Cent and The Game devolved into gunfire outside the New York hip-hop R&B radio station WQHT-FM Hot 97.

"I've noticed that the hip-hop industry itself has tried to go a little softer," said Neal Boulton, editor in chief of Men's Fitness, which is published by American Media. "I'm not interested in doing that."

"It's all about authenticity," Mr. Boulton added. "I'm just trying to show folks what's really there."

Then again, where hip-hop and rap feuds can look a little like publicity stunts, a hip-hop feud in a fitness magazine looks a lot like a publicity stunt.

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Mr. Boulton, who said an earlier issue with 50 Cent on the cover sold better than any issue in five years, does not deny that newsstand sales influenced the cover line. "I'm on the planet to sell magazines," he said.