



# SHAPING UP

## WORKOUT TURNS RECRUITS INTO LEAN, GREEN GUARD MACHINES

By **Christian Anderson**

**YOU HAVEN'T** really done push-ups until you've tried to crank out a few with Staff Sgt. Ken Weichert, better known as "Sgt. Ken," a National Guard master fitness trainer. A few lucky Guard soldiers learned just how challenging push-ups can be during a training session with him in Smyrna, Tenn.

Sgt. Ken takes fitness seriously. He's a model for Guard health and has been training soldiers and

citizens alike for more than a decade.

For Sgt. Ken, exercise isn't just about bulking up—it's vital to every facet of a soldier's health

and well-being. That's why this fitness guru helps soldiers develop the endurance and strength they need to handle missions efficiently.

### Ready for a workout?

*Hooah!* watched Sgt. Ken in action as he trained a group of Recruit Sustainment Program

into soldiers prepared to tackle anything.

As Sgt. Ken stood front and center before these warriors, I saw their smiles fade into fear. Standing 6'4" tall, and weighing in at 208 lbs., he's not a small guy—his physical stature makes him quite intimidating.

After explaining a little about himself and his training regimen, Sgt. Ken kicked off the hard-core session with some fast-paced techno music. Within minutes, the recruits were sucking air,

"That was the best workout I've ever done in my life!"

— Pvt. Doug Wooten

(RSP) soldiers. RSP is designed to train Guard recruits before they go to Basic Combat Training (BCT), and Sgt. Ken's workouts transform them



Sgt. Ken leads soldiers and recruits in a 45-minute training session to build them up to Army Guard standards.

their brows full of sweat. As the tempo picked up, Sgt. Ken's voice boomed over the steady beat.

That's when I noticed smiles and laughter coming from the recruit formation. While yelling out instructions and working out with the recruits, Sgt. Ken was also letting them know he was with them every step of the way.

He was all over the place! One second, he was doing push-ups with a recruit, rep for rep; the next, he was in the back trying to help another recruit with her form.

In a flash, he was at the front again, demonstrating the next exercise. After the session, the recruits were laughing and having

a good time. Since when did an intense workout become so enjoyable?

### Whipped into shape

Afterward when *Hooah!* spoke with some of the recruits, they had nothing but praise for Sgt. Ken's fitness regimen and were amazed that he made 45 minutes of sweat and pain actually fun.

"That was the best workout I've ever done in my life," Pvt. Doug Wooten said. "It was intense, but fun!"

Several soldiers agreed, including Pfc. Candice Pointer.

"At first it was a tough challenge," she explained. "But Sgt. Ken is great, and he really motivated me."

Pvt. Chasatie Thomas felt invigorated afterward. "What a workout," Chasatie yelled. "I feel like I can do anything now!"

Pfc. Robert Reinitz has benefited from Sgt. Ken's fitness program so much that he improved his physical training test scores within just a few weeks of starting it.

"In one month, I cut one minute off my 2-mile run," Robert said proudly. "Sgt. Ken has helped me with push-ups, running and sit-ups, but most important, his positive energy has helped my motivation!"

To learn more about Sgt. Ken and his workouts, visit:

[www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness](http://www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness).



New soldiers perform push-ups at a RSP drill in Smyrna, Tenn.

Erin Barnes

## FAST FACTS

According to the Center for Disease Control, regular physical activity:

- Reduces the risk of heart disease and diabetes
- Helps control weight
- Contributes to healthy bones, muscles and joints
- Reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression

**Hooah!** head games



## TRUE OR FALSE?

1. Physical activity can help prevent diabetes, control weight, and strengthen bones and muscles.
2. The Guard's physical training includes push-ups, sit-ups and running.
3. Recruits must work on both physical endurance and strength for Basic Training.
4. RSP trains recruits before they go to Basic Training.

Take this quiz at [www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/hooah](http://www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/hooah). Correct answers earn *Hooah!* Points redeemable for free Guard gear.