

TRAINING TIP OF THE MONTH

Boards:

Use 'Em or Lose 'Em?

BY ROB LUYANDO



I am often asked about using boards and its affects, both positive and negative, for shirted competition. The truth is, they can be good and bad. Boards allow you to handle extreme weights that you are either not capable or confident enough to handle full-range. Training high boards raw to work on your lock-out strength is a must for me. High boards are the best assistance exercise I have found for strengthening lock-out power.

Training boards in a shirt can be very beneficial when targeting your weak points. And, at the same time, it can be very detrimental to your full-range groove. Using boards in a shirt also lets you do overload sets without tearing up your shoulders. The important thing to remember, especially for less experienced lifters, is that you have to master the shirt and master the full-range movement before you can rely on boards for training. You can be the strongest guy in the gym with a two-board press, but if you can't touch in a meet, what good is it doing you?

I rarely go below a single board in training. Keep in mind that I have been doing this for more than 17 years. I utilize a lot of three- and two-board work in my training to build strength in a shirt.

When approaching a meet, lose the boards and use more full-range work. I would recommend hitting a minimum of two full-range reps per training week. Get proficient with full-range and

then you can throw more boards work.

If you are still scratching your head and looking for an answer to whether or not boards are for you, try this: Less experienced lifters should rely on full-range training with shirts and use boards for raw assistance work. Experienced lifters can utilize boards more in their training, but still need to throw in some full-range work.