

The bench routine outlined below is a 10 week routine with the tenth week being a meet. It involves using your bench shirt every other week. On alternate weeks, raw floor pressing is used. I found that as I turned forty, I was unable to recover from a weekly heavy squat or bench workout. I found that alternating heavy equipped bench workouts with heavy equipped squat workouts saved my shoulders and elbows from irreparable damage.

Recovery is very important for the older lifter, especially if the lifter also works a lot of hours. I regularly put in insane hours treating patients and doing paperwork. Owning your own business can mean seven day work weeks. Try to eat small meals every 2-3 hours during the day. Get at least 30 grams of protein in at every meal. Take vitamins including extra C and B complex. Drink at least 64 ounces of water per day. Seven to eight hours of good sleep is mandatory. Limit alcohol to a drink a night or less.

Regarding equipment and technique, I prefer the Inzer Super Phenom due to its excellent stretch properties, but I have had success with this routine using a stiffer material shirt such as the Inzer Rage X. Arch as much as possible. Work on stretching your hip flexors regularly; they are the limiting factor in your arch. For flat footed benchers, work on stretching your calf musculature

WORKOUT OF THE MONTH

POWERDOC'S OLD GUY BENCH ROUTINE

as told to PL USA by Mark VanAlstyne, DC, PT, CSCS

too. If you lift in an organization that lets you lift on your toes, do so. This will allow you to push your heel toward the ground which helps you arch up toward the bar on the descent. This will decrease the distance the bar has to travel. When doing the floor pressing, keep the back as flat to the floor as possible to increase the work load on the benching muscles. Increasing your raw bench or floor press will help increase your shirted bench press.

½ inch chain is used to add weight to the bar for both floor pressing and regular benching. Try to have no more than a few links touching the floor at lockout position. On weeks where you use your bench shirt, board pressing is done after the regular benching. Board pressing is done in your bench shirt. I prefer to use only one or two

boards.

This routine assumes a best bench of 500 pounds. The goal is at least a 535 meet bench.

Week 1: Shirted bench 405+60 lbs. chain x 3 sets x 3 reps; 2 boards 555x1, 565x1

Week 2: Floor press 225+60 lbs. chain x 3 sets x 3 reps, 225+100 lbs. chain 2 sets x 2 reps

Week 3: Shirted bench 425+60 lbs. chain x 3 sets x 3 reps; 2 boards 570x1, 580x1

Week 4: Floor press 3 sets total 225+60 lbs., 120 lbs., 180 lbs. chains, 1 rep at each chain wt.

Week 5: Shirted bench 465+40 lbs. chain x 2 sets x 2 reps; 1 board 560x1

Week 6: Floor press 235+100 lbs. chain x 2 sets x 2 reps

Week 7: Shirted bench 485+40

lbs. chain x 2 sets x 2 reps; 1 board 570x1

Week 8: Shirted bench 485 x 1 set x 1 rep; 505x1x1 (no chain)

Week 9: Floor press 225 + 40 lbs. chains 2 sets x 2 reps

Week 10: Meet 1st 505 lbs., 2nd 535 lbs., 3rd 550 lbs.+

Assistance work is geared around back work. Shrugs, DB rows, and cable rows are done 1-2 times a week. Rotator cuff work should be done 4-5 times a week. This is very important to prevent injury and maximum benching performance. Check online for the Buchberger 12 rotator cuff routine if you need exercise ideas.

In closing, I would like to thank my lifting partners Scott Rowe, Mike Ferlito, and Brian Furgala. I would also like to thank my buddy Dr. Bill Ross for trash talking me toward bigger lifts. A special thank you goes to my long time sponsor Inzer Advance Designs for their support. I could not lift the weights I do without the perfectly fitted equipment they provide. Anyone who would like advice on routines or injuries can contact me through www.fortifiediron.com. Put it to the attention of Powerdoc. Good luck!

(Below) **Mark VanAlstyne** recently benched an IPA world record 545 at 181 in the 40-44 age group

