

THE BENCH

Isometric Assistance

as told to PL USA by Chris Confessore



CHRIS IS BIG at 220! as seen in a recent workout session photo.

So that awesome Bench Press has finally become as stale as that first pair of knee wraps that you still have sitting at the bottom of your gym bag. Not to worry, it's just time to re-evaluate your training routine. Are you overtrained, undertrained, undernourished, undersexed or all of the above? If the answer is yes to any of those except the last, this magazine has touched on it. If the answer is no, let's hit the dinosaur of power training, the gold old Power Rack. Power Rack training has been used and abused since the 1960's by all the legends of the power game. For some reason a majority of the lifters today have seem to have forgotten about this extremely potent cure to our sticking points. The type of rack training that we will go

into is not going to be that of the overhead principle, but instead we will use isometrics. In other words, instead of using heavy weights in the power rack, let's just use the empty power bar driving it against an immovable object, being the power rack pins. Now take a flat bench and simply place it inside a power rack. Laying flat on the bench set the pins at the height that would be approximately 3/4 of your lockout. Now set the second set of pins just below the first set. Place the empty bar on top of the bottom pins. Now lay on the bench, placing your body in the exact same position as you would performing on a regular flat bench press. Taking your bench press grip, push the bar upward into the upper pins. Once touching the pins,

push with everything you have and hold that force for about five second. Let's do 3 sets of 5 here. Remember, never slam the bar into the pins unless you're looking for injury problems. A good idea is to obtain a cylindrical piece of styrofoam or rubber to fit around the pins to absorb any vibrations and ensure that the bar does not slide once driving into the pins. If you find that you are weak at the start of the lift, try setting the pins one inch above your chest and repeat the process. Make sure to breathe during this exercise and go all out once touching the pins. When should we do these? Because of the extreme stress and abuse this exercise can cause, let's try these every other week after our heavy bench workout. It is a good idea to wear wrist wraps when performing this barbaric exercise due to the extreme power on the wrist area. Remember, there is no weight being used here, just the bar itself. Make sure your power rack is bolted down to the floor or have it secured with your training partners. If it is bolted down, see who can get kicked out of the gym first for tearing the bolts from the floor. Remember, this exercise is very easy to overtrain on, so make sure to gauge your workouts to avoid burnout. My training partners and myself have seen tremendous results from this exercise, so go for it.

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