

The following scenario is one that all of us would like to avoid. You have been training diligently for quite awhile. When you first began training, gains seemed to come with every workout. As time passed your gains came slowly, but you still noticed overall increases in your lifts. Now you seem to have gone nowhere. Guess what? That's right, you are stuck on your first big plateau. You continue to work hard with your technique and size, but nothing seems to go. Now what do you do? You can follow what most gym lifters do and keep repeating the same training program and the result will be NOTHING! If you really want to break new ground why not try something different. **HERE'S THE SOLUTION!**

Our subject is a 195 lb. man with a 300 lb. bench press that has plateaued. This man competed previously at 181 and registered a competition bench of 285 lbs. He knew his leverage was not great so he decided to increase his bodyweight and now he gets 300 lbs. in the gym. However, when he loses weight down to 181, his competition bench is now 280! His plateau busting routine is divided into 3 minicycles. Each minicycle has 2 different primary lifts. He must divide the primary lifts into 2 workout days during the week. He will per-

TRAINING

Breaking Your First BENCH PRESS Plateau

by Greg Reshel and Dawn Sharon of Power Excel



National Caliber lifters like Russell Dell, at the APF Seniors, often face the challenge of breaking through plateaus to achieve new gains.

Crossovers or Flat Flies - 3x12 reps; Upright Rows - 3x10 reps light. Day 2. Standing Lateral Raises - 4x8 reps; Close Grip Scissors Bench Press - warmup with 2x10 reps at 65 lbs., then 10x2 reps at 95-165 lbs.; Seated Incline Lateral D-Bell Curls - 4x10 reps light.

Third Minicycle - 6 weeks to peak: Day 1. Medium Grip Lat Pulldown to Chin - 3x8 reps; Competition Bench - warmup with 3x5 reps at 135 then; (Week 1 - 8x3 reps at 185; Week 2 - 6x3 reps at 205; Week 3 - 5x4 reps at 215; Week 4 - 6x2 reps at 235; Week 5 - 3x1 reps at 265, 4x4 at 225;

form 2 or 3 accessory movements along with each of the primary movements. These accessory movements are to be moderate in effort. The accessories should never be so heavy that they weaken his ability to perform the primary movements.

NOTE: PERFORM THE FOLLOWING EXERCISES IN THE ORDER LISTED!

First Minicycle - 5 weeks in length: Day 1. Light Shrugs - 4x12 slow reps; Press Behind Neck - warmup with 3x8 reps from 65-95 lbs. then perform 6x6 reps at 95-145 lbs.; Front Plate Raise - 3x10 reps; Bent Forward Laterals - 6x8 reps. Day 2. Barbell Curls to Forehead - 3x8 reps; Reverse Grip Bench Press - warmup with 3x5 reps at 95 lbs., then 8x3 reps at 135-185 lbs.; Underhand Lat Pulldowns to top of chest with slight rearward lean - 4x8 reps.

Second Minicycle - 5 weeks in length: Day 1. Bent Elbow Barbell Pullovers - 4x6 reps light; Decline Bench Press - warmup with 2x8 reps at 115 lbs. then perform 7x4 reps at 165-235 lbs.; Cable

Week 6 - Open at 260; 2nd - 290, 3rd - 320); Triceps Extensions 4x10 reps light. Day 2. Behind Back Shrugs - 3x8 reps light; Incline Bench with grip 4" narrower than competition grip (ALL PAUSE REPS) (Week 1 - 4x8 reps at 95-115; Week 2 - 5x6 reps at 95-135; Week 3 - 6x4 reps at 115-155; Week 4 - 6x4 reps at 135-185; Week 5 - 5x2 reps at 115-205. Week 6 - DROP); Pec Dec Flies - 4x8 reps light.

Follow this routine exactly as it is written here and you will increase your bench 10-15% above your plateau. Repeat the program twice and you will have built a new groove for your bench press. If you have any questions, contact Power Excel, 2807 S. Superior St., Milwaukee, WI 53207, 414-769-1211.

We now have a catalog updated quarterly of training routines of all types as well as custom routines. We tailor all our routines to suit your individual needs. Call us for our free catalog and get past those frustrating plateaus today. Good Luck & Good Lifting!