

TRAINING

Exercises for the Triceps as told to Powerlifting USA by Louie Simmons

Everyone thinks that a close grip bench will raise your contest bench press. We at Westside also believe that is very true. In fact, so much so that we find ways to increase the close grip bench.

There are many core barbell exercises on max effort day to choose from. Here are some of our favorites.
Floor press with chains. We drape 5/8" chain over the bar. The

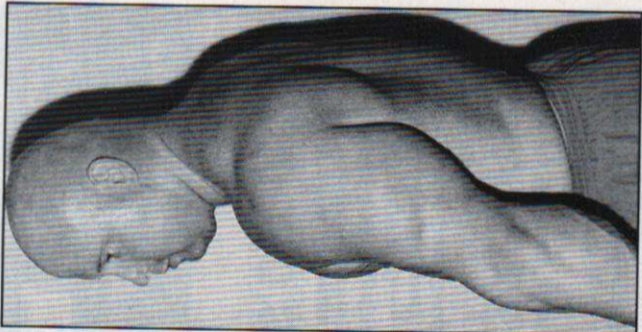
four, or five sets of chains.

Regular bench with chains. Work up to a bar weight of, say, 250 with the two sets. Do a single, then add a set of chains. Do another single, and continue until you fail. Next time, use 255 on the bar. Use at least two grips to make PR's, one per workout.

Mini-bands. Max out with one, two, or three sets of mini-bands on the bar. Choose one per workout.

Board press with boards or chains. We try records with two, three, four, or five boards. This adds up to four PR's on boards, four more with bands, four more with chains, and four more with bands and chains combined. The combinations are endless.

Rack lock-outs. Our racks have holes every inch, so the weights don't change drastically. Don't lock out more than 8 inches. Do singles after



Triceps like these have enabled Kenny Patterson to break 9 all-time world records in the bench, warming up.

Overhead band press. This is the lightened method. The rubber bands are suspended from the top of the power rack. Use three sets of bands, each of different strength, one per workout. At chest level, the bands lighten the load 155, 95, or 65 pounds, depending on if you are using blue, green, or purple Jump-Stretch bands, respectively. Work up to a single.

Weight releasers. Pick one weight on the bar at the bottom, let's say 405. Add weight releasers with chains attached. Start with two sets of chains at the top. They add 40 pounds. Do a single. Add sets of chains until you PR or miss. Also combine rubber bands with bar weight. Lower the bar quickly.

Cambered bar bench. Note: the bar may not touch your chest, but by relaxing somewhat, come as close as possible. Do a 1- to 5-rep max. One is preferred.

Incline to a max. Use at least two different angles. Work up to a max single.

Decline to a max. Try more than one angle. Work up to a max single.

We covered a lot of core bar exercises. Always use a close grip or no wider than your little finger on the rings. If you place the bar on or above the nipples, meaning toward the upper chest with arms in normal position, this will build the triceps much faster. Switch core lifts each week. Pick exercises carefully. There are ones that build incredible strength, and there are core lifts that are going to determine how your max contest bench is doing. These are called testers. You must discover which ones

This reduces the work done by the delts and places most of it on the triceps. This is accomplished by having the hands closer to the face than the elbows once the descent starts. Stop the bar at your worst possible leverage point. This is normally 8 to 4 inches off the chest. Start the bar up by pushing with the hands first. This will cause an extension motion, not a press. Work up in 3s or 5s for a record as often as possible. J.M. presses can also be done with different amounts of chains or with rubber bands of different strengths.

Straight bar triceps extensions. Remember to hold the elbows tightly in. Don't use too close a grip. Start the bar over the lower chest. Lower it in an arc by raising the elbows and pushing them toward your head. This will put most of the

work around the elbows, and that is where your extension strength comes from. This is not bodybuilding. This is strength building. We don't want to develop the lateral (lazy) head of the triceps. We work up in 5-rep sets. Push for records when possible. These can also be done with chains or bands.

Bar extensions off floor. Use 10, 25, 35, or 45 pound plates. Start every rep from a dead, relaxed start. Work up to a 5-rep PR. By using different size plates, you will build strength at many angles. Caution: this exercise may cause some shoulder discomfort. When doing bar extensions, touch the bar to the forehead, nose, chin, or throat. The latter affords the most elbow extension.

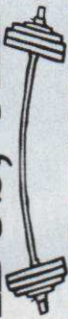
Mini-band stretch. Place a Jump-Stretch mini-band around both

wrists. Double loop it to make it twice as strong. Now stretch the hands apart and grasp the bench bar moderately to very wide. Use a thumb grip and squeeze the bar tightly and do some reps. Not only will this build strength but it is also very therapeutic.

Triceps account for most of your bench press progress. Learn to train them correctly. They are the key to a monster bench. Bench shirt or no bench shirt, if you don't become stronger, your bench will never increase. Remember to push your hands apart when benching. This will make the triceps work more effectively. This external rotation will eliminate chest pulls and teach you to press correctly, in a straight line.

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