

WORKOUT of the Month

The bench press is the only test of upper body strength out of the three competitive lifts. Some lifters tend to neglect the lift because it typically accounts for less than 25% of one's total. For other lifters, the bench press is the only competitive lift and they train it religiously. Try to find an experienced lifter who can help analyze your technique and make necessary adjustments in grip width and bar placement. Don't be afraid to try something new to further your progress.

The following is a 12 week bench press program designed to help the average lifter gain 10-15 pounds on their competition bench press. The program is divided into two different phases: preparatory and competition. Each phase lasts approximately six weeks. The program is based on a 250 lb. max lift. All reps from warm-up to work sets should be performed with a controlled descent to the chest and a visible pause. My philosophy is to train like you compete. Many times, sloppy habits tend to carry over into the meet.

GAINER'S BENCH PRESS as told to Powerlifting USA by Ervin Gainer

If you are comfortable with your bench shirt and can adapt come meet day try not to wear it in training. However, if you do not feel comfortable doing this, use an old shirt a couple weeks to help you get the "feel" of the shirt. Try to save your best equipment only for the meet. If you have to adjust the weight accordingly at the end of the cycle please do so. Focus on trying to make all the reps without help from a spotter. Perform your last heavy bench work-out a week from the meet.

Accessory work will pretty much stay the same on each day throughout the cycle.

Plyometric "clap" push-ups (Day 1 only) 3x10

Medicine Ball "power drop" (Day 1 only) 3x10 (if you have access to medicine balls; lie face up on the ground with outstretched arms and have someone stand on a bench

A new concept in weight training instruction. A workout by workout, set by set, rep by rep workout plan, with exact training poundages specified over the entire span of a strength training cycle, laid out for you by a top Powerlifting authority. Each month, a different lift is analyzed. For those of different strength levels than the starting poundage specified, simply increase or decrease the training weights in direct proportion. For example, if your lift is 400, and a starting lift for the program is 500, multiply the training poundages by .8 (400 divided by 500); if your lift is 600, multiply the poundages specified by 1.2 (600 divided by 500)

of these exercises and perform them for shoulder injury prevention)

Lying tricep extension 3x6
Weighted Dips (Day 2) 3x5

I would like to thank Greg "Stat-Man" Simmons, Kirth Vance, Titan Support Systems, and my beautiful wife and family for their support. Remember the difference between the possible and impossible lies within the determination of a person. Peace, *Ervin Gainer, Sr.*

Preparatory phase: 6 weeks
Bench twice a week with 2-3 days rest in between the workouts.

Competition Cycle: 6 weeks

Week 1

Day 1
BP 6x2/155
Incline BP 3x8
Seated Press Behind Neck (BP grip) 3x8
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 4x6/170
Close-grip BP 3x6
Seated Press-Military (BP grip) 3x6
Accessory work

Week 2

Day 1
BP 6x2/160
DB Incline BP 3x8
Seated Press Behind Neck (BP grip) 3x8
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 5x6/175
Close-grip BP 3x6
Seated Press-Military (BP grip) 3x6
Accessory work

Week 3

Day 1
BP 6x2/155
DB Incline BP 3x6
Seated Press Behind Neck (BP grip) 3x8
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 5x6/185
Close-grip BP 3x5
Seated Press-Military (BP grip) 3x5
Accessory work

Week 4

Day 1
BP 6x2/155
DB Decline BP 3x8
Seated Press Behind Neck (BP grip) 3x8
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 3x6/170
Incline BP 3x6
Seated Press-Military (BP grip) 3x6
Accessory work

Week 5

Day 1
BP 6x2/160
DB Decline BP 3x8
Seated Press Behind Neck (BP grip) 3x8
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 5x5/185, 190, 195, 200, 185
Incline BP 3x6
Seated Press-Military (BP grip) 3x6
Accessory work

Week 6

Day 1
BP 6x2/165
DB Decline BP 3x6
Seated Press Behind Neck (BP grip) 3x8
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 6x5/185, 195, 200, 205, 185
Incline BP 3x5
Seated Press-Military (BP grip) 3x6
Accessory work

Week 7

Day 1
BP 6x3/155
DB Incline BP 3x8
Behind Neck Push Press (BP grip) 5x3
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 6x4/205
Negative 2x1/290, 300
Illegal Wide-Grip BP 3x6
Accessory work

Week 8

Day 1
BP 6x3/160
No Accessory work
Day 2
BP 6x4/205, 210, 215, 210, 205
Negative 2x1/305, 310
No Accessory work

Week 9

Day 1
BP 6x3/170
DB Incline BP 3x8
Behind Neck Push Press (BP grip) 5x3
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 3x5 singles (30 sec rest)/220, 225, 230
Illegal Wide-Grip BP 3x5
Seated Press-Military (BP grip) 3x5
Accessory work

Week 10

Day 1
BP 6x2/160
DB Incline BP 3x8
Behind Neck Push Press (BP grip) 5x3
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 5x2/205, 215, 225, 230, 220
Negative 2x1/315, 320
Illegal Wide-Grip BP 3x6
Accessory work

Week 11

Day 1
BP 6x2/155
Behind Neck Push Press (BP grip) 4x2
Accessory work
Day 2
BP 4x2 singles (30 sec rest)/235
Negative 2x1/260, 275
Seated Press-Military (BP grip) 3x5
Accessory work

Week 12

Day 1
BP 6x2/155
Incline BP 3x8
Day 2
BP 2x2 singles (60 sec rest)/240-250

Meet Week

Mon or Tue
BP 6x2/155
Lat Pulls 2x6
Hammer Curls 3x6

Competition
1st=225
2nd=240
3rd 245/250



Ervin Gainer's experience at the national level (above at the left, shaking hands with fellow champion Steve Snyder at the '96 ADFFA Men's Nationals) has been extended to the international IPF arena with his participation in the Men's Worlds in Cherkasy, Ukraine.