

This routine is designed for a lifter with a 300 lb. contest bench press. After the program you could expect a 10-20 lbs. increase. Before the actual program I would like to talk about technique. Sometimes people overlook the basics. Grip/hand placement is a personal thing. I feel the more muscle groups brought into play, the better the chance for a bigger bench. If you decide to move in or out on the bar, do it in small increments to prevent injury. The bar should be held in the lower part of the palm for better pushing ability. I like putting the thumb around because you can squeeze the bar tightly, and also for safety reasons. Wrist wraps should be wrapped tight up to the base of your palm to prevent your wrists from bending backwards, otherwise you'll lose pushing force. You should use an arch to shorten bar travel and use chalk to prevent yourself from sliding on the bench. Leg drive is another key - you should be driving as hard as possible with them. The bench is a whole body movement. You give up weight when you don't use leg drive. Widening your stance and keeping your buttocks in contact with the bench is a problem. Take a big breath of air before you get your handout. This keeps you tight, and don't forget to squeeze that bar. Also on every rep and

WORKOUT of the Month

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)

JOE SCALZO BENCH ROUTINE

every set use maximum speed and acceleration to drive that bar as fast and hard as you can - speed is power.

Now to the workout:

Warmups - bar x 10, 135 x 8, 175 x 5, 205 x 1, 225 x 1 (same each training day)

Monday Bench: **Week 1** - 6 sets of 2 reps with 240 (80%). **Week 2** - 6 x 2 x 240, **Week 3** - 6 x 2 x 240. **Week 4** - 6 x 2 x 240. **Week 5** - 6 x 2 x 240. **Week 6** - 6 x 2 x 240. **Week 7** - 6 x 2 x 240. **Week 8** - 6 x 2 x 240. **Week 9** - no benching 7 or 8 days prior to the meet.

Friday Bench: **Week 1** - 6 x 3 x 240 (80%), **Week 2** - 6 x 4 x 240, **Week 3** - 6 x 5 x 240, **Week 4** - 6 x 6 x 240, **Week 5** - 5 x 5 x 255 (85%), **Week 6** - 4 x 4 x 270 (90%), **Week 7** - 3 x 3 x 285 (95%),

Week 8 - 2 x 2 x 300 (100%)

Contest Day - bar x 10, 135 x 5, 175 x 1, 205 x 1, 225 x 1, 250 x 1. Shirt on - open 280, 2nd 305, 3rd 315-20.

Use a loose shirt as needed on the last 3 workouts. Assistance: Day 1 - all 8 weeks: lying dumbbell extension - 12-20 seconds between sets, palms in. Start with 35's, increase 5 pounds when you achieve 6 sets of 8 reps. Front plate raise - 3 sets, 12-20 sec rest, combine with side rear delt raises - 3-4 sets, 12-15 reps 20 sec rest. Chest supported rows, 4 sets of 12-15 reps with 15-20 seconds rest between sets. Day 2: Assistance stays the same, only triceps are done 7x8. Do not go heavy on shoulder work. Do it only to get blood into the area for injury prevention. Denim is the way to go for a bench shirt. It takes time to get used to one, but I feel it works through the entire lift, not just off the chest. Make sure it is tight; you shouldn't be able to lower anything except your opener to your last attempt with it. A positive attitude is also important along with eating and resting properly. Last, but not least, are good people and a good training environment. I have a lot of good people who have helped over the years, they are as important to this sport as they are in everyday life: my wife Amy, Mom & Dad, Sean Hailey, Mike Losstra, Aron Terwillinger, Larry Chiarenza, Mark Becht, Kurt Silvestro, Tom Thompson, Mike Magin, Jim Riddle, and Walt Nichols. Also Louie Simmons and Doug Heath for their help. Thank you *PL USA Magazine* for this opportunity. Train hard, stay healthy, God bless. Joe Scalzo, 551-21st., Niagara Falls, New York, 14301, (716) 282-6263.



Joe Scalzo has BPed 420 at 145 lbs. bodyweight (Photo by Scalzo)