

The most admired objects of all bodybuilding and powerlifting fans are the big benchers, who frequently have the attention of everyone during their workout sessions. Perhaps because of this focus, a lifter can easily become overtrained with all of the assorted assistance exercises that are available, so you must be conservative. Still, you want to maximize the lift because there is nothing like the confident feeling of hitting a big bench press before going into the deadlift. This 12 week training cycle is for a hypothetical lifter who made a 400 lb. bench in his last contest. This workout is done twice a week for the first six weeks and once a week the last six weeks of the training cycle.

In the first 8 weeks, assistance exercises such as the dumbbell flies, military press, dips, triceps press, and pushdowns are preferred for three sets of six to eight reps. In the last 4 weeks of the cycle, only pushdowns are included, for 3 sets of 8 reps.

Always include some warmup exercises and flexibility work to prepare the area for a productive workout. Allow yourself 15-20 minutes to properly warmup.

**Week 1:** Bench 135x8, 205x8, 240x8x4. Dumbbell Flies 50x8, 60x8, 70x8x3. Military Press 135x8, 170x8, 190x8x3. Dips 25x8, 45x8, 70x8, 90x8. Triceps Press 90x8, 110x8, 135x8x3. Pushdown 90x8, 100x8, 120x8x3. (These suggested exercises will need

# 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)

## Workout of the Month Anthology

### GENE BELL BENCH PRESS

to be adjusted throughout the training cycle.)

**Week 2:** Bench 135x8, 205x8, 225x8, 250x8, 275x8x3, 250x8

**Week 3:** Bench 135x8, 205x8, 225x8, 260x8, 290x8x3, 260x8

**Week 4:** Bench 135x8, 225x8, 260x8, 305x8x3, 260x8, 225x8

**Week 5:** Bench 135x8, 225x8, 260x3, 305x3, 320x6x3, 260x8

**Week 6:** Bench 135x8, 225x8, 260x3, 315x1, 340x5x3, 295x6

**Week 7:** Bench 135x8, 225x6, 275x3, 315x1, 360x4x3, 300x6

**Week 8:** Bench 135x8, 225x6, 315x3, 315x1, 380x3x3, 315x6

**Week 9:** Bench 135x8, 225x6, 315x3, 340x1, 390x3x3, 330x5

**Week 10:** Bench 135x8, 225x6, 315x3, 360x1, 405x2x2, 350x5

**Week 11:** Bench 135x8, 225x6, 315x3, 360x3, 380x3, 315x5.

(Allow five days rest prior to the contest.)

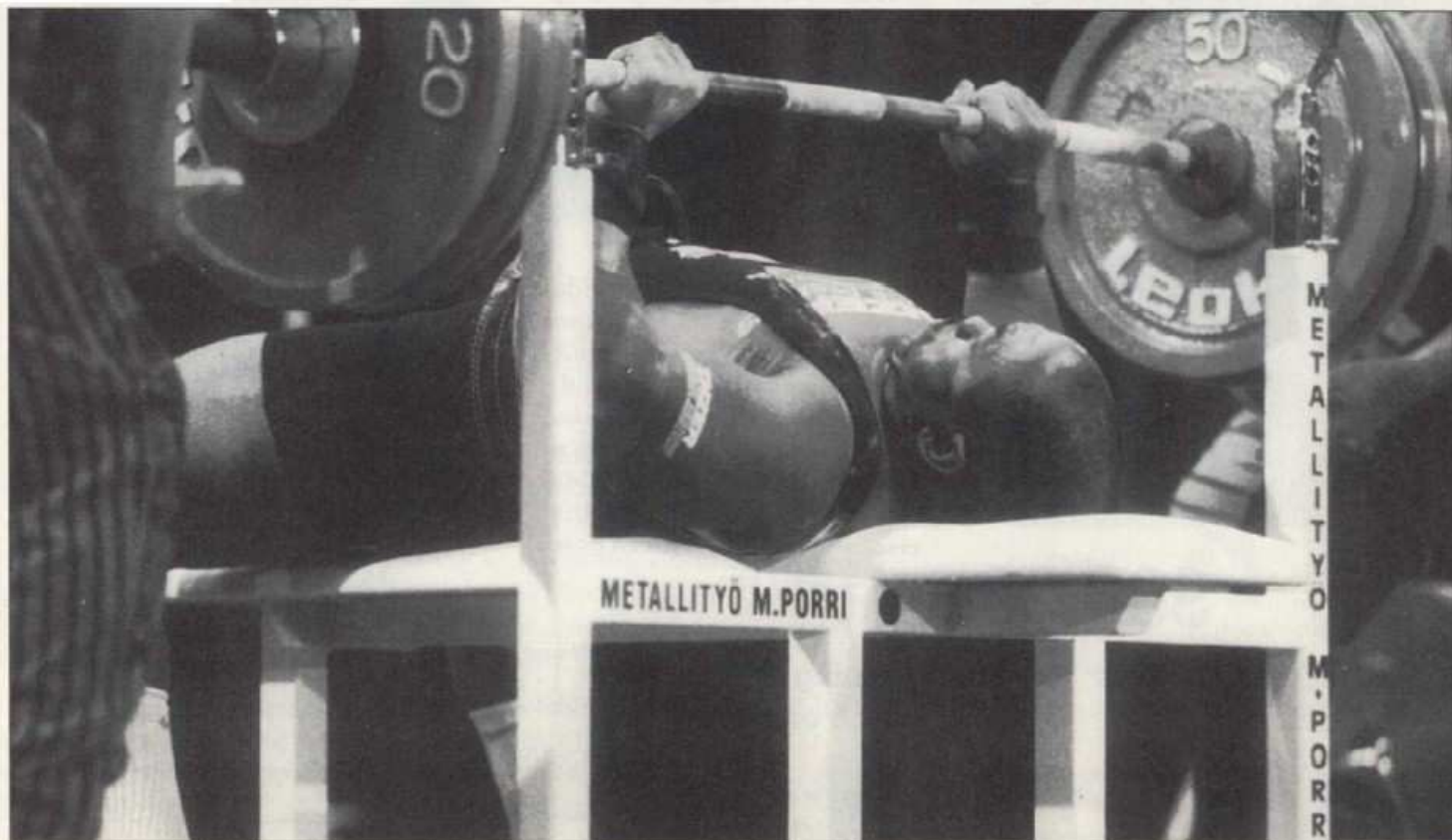
**Contest - Warmup poundages:** 135x5, 225x5, 315x1, 350x1; first attempt 390; second attempt 415; final attempt 420-430.

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Gene Bell has long been one of the United States' most dependably successful international competitors. (above, at the '95 Worlds in Pori)