

This bench press routine is designed to be performed twice a week for a 10 week cycle.

On Day 1, for the first 8 weeks, you will bench press with a flat back, (no arch), and feet up (no leg drive), to purposely remove leverage advantages. This will emphasize the muscle groups that bench press. Also, for the 1st 8 weeks on Day 1 you will use a bench press grip that is 2" wider than your normal contest bench grip.

On Day 2 which will be 3 days after Day 1 (example: Tuesday - Friday), you will again bench press flat back and feet up for 8 weeks. However, on Day 2, you will use a bench press grip that is 2" closer than your normal contest bench grip.

You will only use your contest bench press grip with your feet planted and your back arched for the final 3 workouts in the cycle! On these days you should use all equipment that you will be using in the contest (bench shirt, wrist wraps, etc.).

What I am trying to accomplish with this particular routine is, of course, improvement! The thing I'm trying to avoid is the number one "bench killer" in the world, overtraining! It is so easy to overtrain the bench, simply because most people like this lift so much and, compared to squatting and deadlifting, it's easy!!

The assistance exercises I've outlined for each day should be done "all-out" for eight weeks.

This cycle is based on a hypothetical lifter who's best bench press is 300 lbs. Expect to improve your best contest bench press by 15 lbs. Do not think that this is an insignificant increase because it's so important to set realistic goals. Also, if you lift in 4 meets a year, at 15 lbs. per cycle you'll improve 60 lbs. in one year!!

Week 1: Day 1: Bench Press (wide grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 200x5. Day 2: (close grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 180x5.

Week 2: Day 1: Bench Press (wide grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 210x5. Day 2: (close grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 190x5.

Week 3: Day 1: Bench Press (wide grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 220x5. Day 2: (close grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 200x5.

Week 4: Day 1: Bench Press (wide grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 230x3. Day 2: (close grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 210x3.

Week 5: Day 1: Bench Press (wide grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 240x3. Day 2: (close grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 220x3.

Week 6: Day 1: Bench Press (wide grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 250x3. Day 2: (close grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 230x3.

Week 7: Day 1: Bench Press (wide grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 260x2. Day 2: (close grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 240x2.

Week 8: Day 1: Bench Press (wide grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 270x2. Day 2: (close grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 250x2.

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).

The Doug Heath Bench Press Routine

Week 9: Day 1: Bench Press (contest grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 255x1 (with shirt), 290x1. Day 2: (contest grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 255x1 (with shirt), 300x1.

Week 10: Day 1: Bench Press (contest grip) 45x10, 95x5, 135x3,

185x1, 225x1, 255x1 (with shirt), 310x1. Day 2: Rest for contest! (4 days off before meet).

Assistance Exercises:

Day 1: Weighted pushups - 5x5 for the 1st 4 weeks, 5x3 for the next 4 weeks; Decline press - 3x8 for the 1st 4 weeks, 3x5 for the next 4 weeks;

Seated dumbbell press - 2x12 for the 1st 2 weeks, 2x10 for the next 2 weeks, 2x8 for the next 2 weeks; Front delt plate raise - 2x12 for the 1st 2 weeks, 2x10 for the next 2 weeks; 2x8 for the next 2 weeks; 2x6 for the next 2 weeks.

Day 2: Decline press - 3x5 for the 1st 4 weeks, 3x3 for the next 4 weeks; Incline press - 3x6 all 8 weeks; 1-Arm tricep press - 2x10 all 8 weeks.

Assistance Exercise Guidelines:

A) Increase weighted pushups, decline press, and incline press by 10 lbs. per week.

B) Increase dumbbell press (seated) by 5 lbs. every week.

C) Increase front delt plate raises by 10 lbs. every other week.

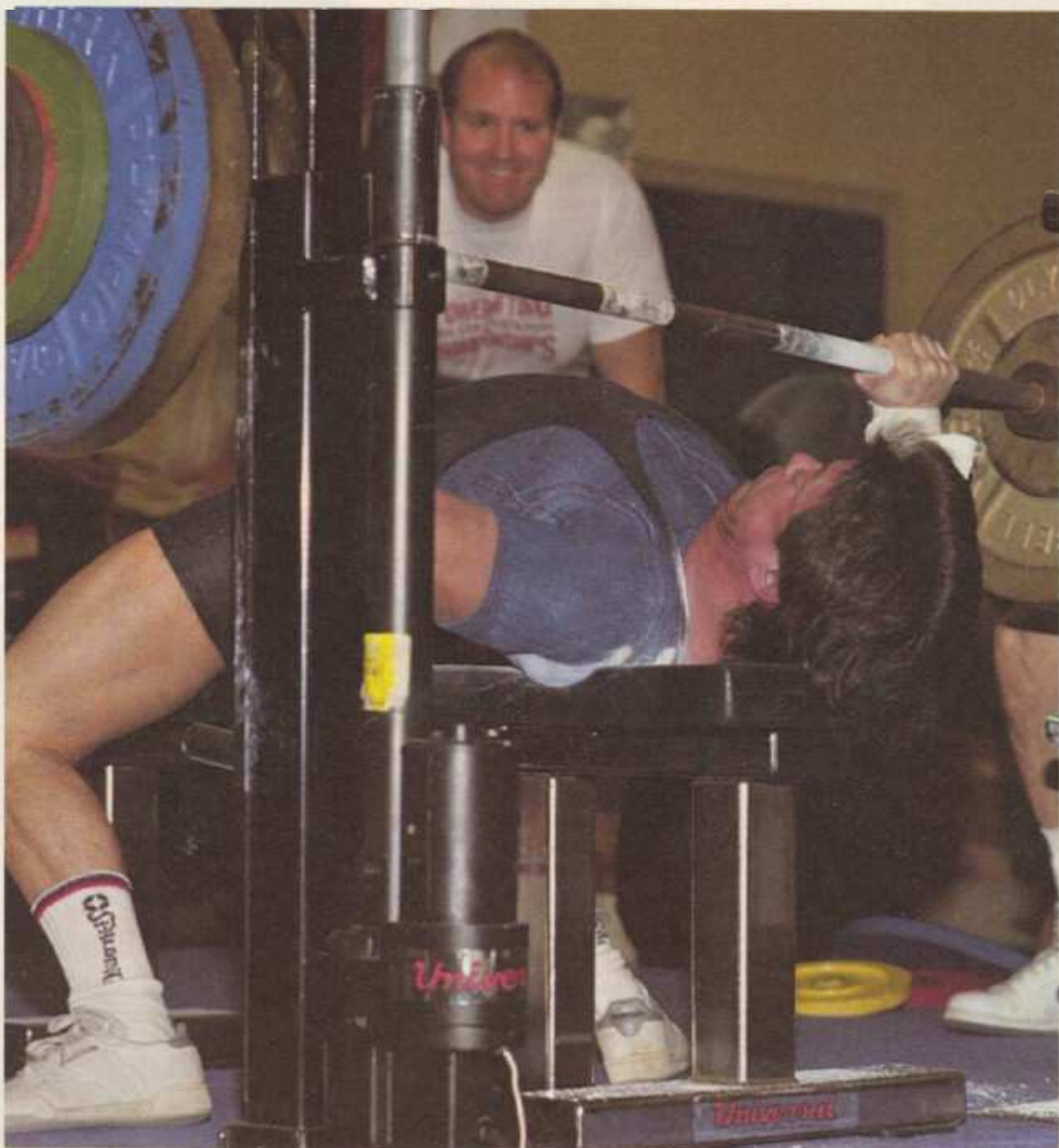
D) Increase 1-arm tricep press (seated) by 5 lbs. every other week.

Contest warmups: 45x10, 95x5, 135x3, 185x1, 225x1, 255x1 (with shirt). Contest attempts: 1) 285, 2) 305, 3) 315.

I'll be glad to answer any questions concerning this routine. Good luck!!

Doug Heath

1428 Chelmsford Court
Columbus, Ohio 43229
(614) 431-9011 (home)
(614) 890-2411 (work)



385 at 132 is what Doug Heath made at this year's YMCA Nationals, with very close misses at 400 pounds.