

Bob Young came to Westside in August of 1996. His bench press was 363. With our help, he knew his bench would go sky high. After 8 weeks of training, he pushed his bench up to a staggering 365 at the Ohio State power meet. Yes, a 2 pound increase, not quite what we expected.

After the meet Bob asked me what I thought he needed. I looked at him and said, "everything." His triceps and delts were underdeveloped. His lock-out was very weak. His speed work at 55% would even slow down at the top, where the bar speed should be optimal.

We suggested that Bob use chains on speed day. To his 55% bar weight he added 40 pounds of chains for 3 sets, 60 pounds for 3 sets, and 80 pounds for 2 sets. This helped greatly: Bob's bench increased to 450 in May of 1997. However, he could not lock out 470, just missing it at the top. Back to the gym he went.

This time we wanted to pay more attention to the top 6 inches. That's where Bob dies. We brought out the rubber bands. At the very top of his lock-out, the bands added an additional 90 pounds. By using the bands we were addressing the entire force curve with respect to Bob's bench. At the chest, Bob was using 265 pounds of barbell weight, just under 60%. The last 2 sets were done with 80 pounds of chains, 40 pounds of which were at the lock-out position, raising the top end weight to 305. With the use of the bands, an extra 90 pounds is added to 395, or slightly above 85%.

This is how we accommodate resistance. Without chains and bands this is impossible. This method of training is known as the contrast method. The eccentric (unloading), followed by concentric (loading), is accomplished with the use of chains and bands. The strong rubber bands also contribute to an increase in reversal strength.

We know through science that as a barbell is lowered quickly, its velocity aids in the development of kinetic energy, which is transformed into elastic energy during the reversal phase.

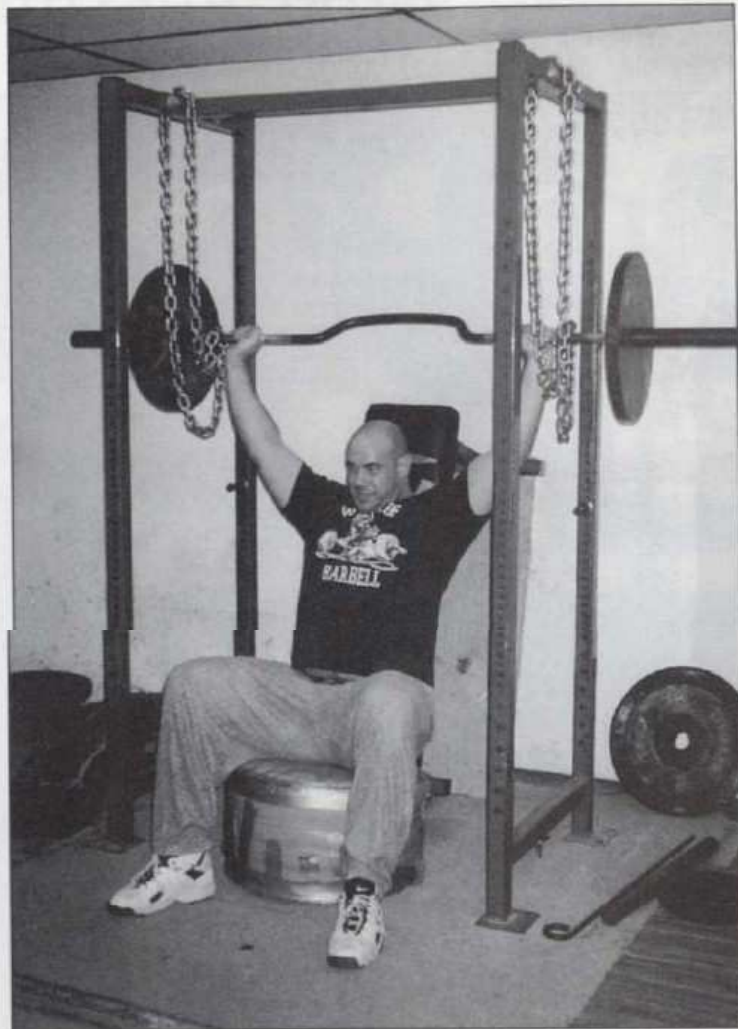
It is your job to, first, stop the bar from falling by stopping its eccentric motion, then immediately thrusting it upward concentrically. This will develop maximum dynamic force. Using strong Jump Stretch bands greatly aids in raising kinetic energy by pulling the barbell eccentrically very forcefully and then reversing the motion. The bands help accommodate resistance particularly at the very top of the lift. This has made Bob very explosive.

Bob trains with 55% of his contest best for 8 sets of 3 reps with the aid of chains and bands on Sunday.

# TRAINING

## BOB BENCHES BIG: 365 lbs. + 365 days = 500 lbs.

as told to POWERLIFTING USA by Louie Simmons



Bob does behind the neck press with a bar suspended by chains on speed day, at Westside Barbell (Photograph provided by D. Black)

He then does triceps work first, delt raises next, and lat and upper back work last, with some hammer curls.

A second day, known as the max effort day, is done on Wednesday. It could consist of floor presses, board presses, steep incline, or rack lock-outs at top positions. What Bob really needed was more muscle mass. Bob found success in doing illegally wide benches for a 6 rep max, but he needed more. Charles Poliquin had told us to try a Sissel Gym Ball, so we did. It is a 29 inch diameter inflated ball that can hold 2000 pounds. It is commonly known as a stability ball, and that's what it builds - stability.

Bob would incorporate the ball

every fifth and sixth week, or every third mini-cycle. When dumbbells are used, Bob chose to do 3 sets to failure, which is known as the maximum repetition method. Because this type of training takes enormous energy, Bob will take 5 or 6 minutes rest between sets. During some minicycles he would use a barbell on the ball. The bar works the pecs heavily because of the hand position. When dumbbells are used, the palms are facing in, which works the delts and triceps quite hard.

On September 16, 1997, Bob made a strong 480, but failed to lock out 500. We needed a secret, so we went to the king of strength, Paul Anderson. Watching Paul's

training tape, I saw him doing a standing press with the barbell suspended from a tree with chains so he could do a press or a partial press. This intrigued me. So we suspended dumbbells in our power rack with nylon straps. Lying on the stability ball, we press the dumbbells for sets of 8-15 reps. This method will enable one to progress on to heavier dumbbells.

Here is a step - by - step method to raise your bench press to undreamed of heights. We never dreamed Bob could bench 500, but with an open and inquisitive mind, he succeeded, by doing a 500 pound bench on October 18, 1997, at the Ohio State Bench Press Championships.

Let's look back.

On Sunday Bob uses 265 for 8-10 sets of 3 reps with 80 pounds of chain on the bar. Remember, only 40 pounds of chain are being locked out. In addition to the chains, Bob uses Jump Stretch bands, which add 90 pounds to the top 4-5 inches. By doing this, Bob is accommodating resistance to the fullest. While the weight is 265 pounds on his chest (roughly 52.5%), as Bob raises the bar and hence the chains, the weight will increase to 305 and at the very top 395 with the aid of the bands.

After the triples, Bob works his triceps first, with extensions with dumbbells or a straight bar or by doing J.M. presses. He then does front, side, and rear delt raises, then lat work for 4-6 sets and some hammer curls. After the workout, which lasts about an hour, he eats.

On Wednesday, maximum effort day, Bob does one of several minicycles, consisting of floor presses, rack lock-outs, or board presses off two or three 2 x 6's. Every fifth and sixth week Bob incorporates heavy dumbbells on the stability ball or illegal wide grip benches for a 6 rep max. About 6 out of 10 workouts Bob will add the suspended dumbbell lock-outs.

Of course, incline and decline barbell presses can be used on Wednesday for singles. Basically, do anything you like, but remember to do max singles. Switch every 2 weeks and move on to a different exercise. Again do triceps, delts, upper back, and lats last.

Bob is quite smart and trains very hard, but if he can do it, so can you.

If you are interested in the Jump Stretch bands, and you should be, call 1-800-344-3539. I guarantee they work, and I will be exploring their value in later articles.

The stability balls can be obtained through Westside.

Westside Barbell  
614-276-0923