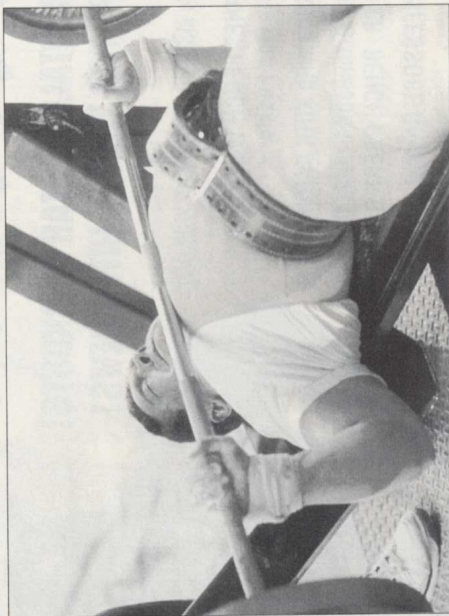


THE BENCH

ED COAN, AND "THE BENCH PRESS VIDEO"

as told to Powerlifting USA by Marty Gallagher



Ed has improved his bench as much as any of his lifts over the years (Finnegan photo)

ignore the training and the philosophy that has produced the great champions in favor of the clever writers who dazzle us with catchy phrases and reflected knowledge.

Training the Bench: Ed's approach to upper-body strength looks like this:

Wednesday: bench press, after warmup, 2 work sets. Narrow grip, no warmup, 2 work sets (60 pounds less). Incline, no warmup, 2 work sets (50 pounds less). Points to ponder: in so far as poundage, if Coan performs 2x5 with 500 in the conventional bench press, he would then perform 2x5 with 440 in the narrow grip bench press and finish with 2x5 with 410 in the 45 degree incline bench press. He feels that his competition style benches serve as sufficient warmup for his narrow grips which in turn allow him to incline without any warmup. All told, Coan performs a total of 6 work sets. Not very many when you think about it.

Thursday: Press behind-the-neck, after warmup, 2 work sets. Front lateral raise, after warmup 2 work sets 10-12 reps. Side lateral raise, 2 sets 10-12 reps. Bent over lateral raise, 2 sets 10-12 reps. Points to ponder: Coan is a big believer in heavy, specific-shoulder training. So much so that he trains them on a separate day from his bench. Coan inadvertently adds to his own legend by proceeding to (on the video) perform, not just one, but two sets of 3 reps in the P.B.N. with 375 pounds. Then, just for giggles, he cranks off an effortless single with 400. Each rep was lowered to the bottom of his ears before being slammed to lock-out. Could he do a legitimate, double bodyweight, P.B.N. with 440? Has anyone every done a legitimate 440 pound P.B.N. regardless of bodyweight?

Saturday: Light bench, no warmup, 2 sets 8-10 reps. Light dumbbell Tricep pushdowns, 3 sets 8-10 reps. Dips, 1 set 8-10 reps. Preacher curls, 2 sets 10-12 reps. Points to ponder: This is a light weight, muscle flushing, chest workout. Ed does a couple of quick sets with a weight about 60 percent of his max (340x10) with his feet on a bench. A few sets of light flys and he is ready for triceps. Comically, Ed needs two guys to stand on his toes to prevent him from being launched like a rocket as the cranks out high rep sets with 240 pounds in the tr-

Ed Coan has an approach to weight training that is classic and timeless. Unfortunately, from a marketing vantage point, it's easier to sell exotic than plain vanilla. This is due in large part to the fact that great champions are not great athletes; conversely, great athletes are not great champions. Periodic writers are seldom (if ever) great powerlifting champions. Personally, if a great article writer and the great Ed Coan were standing side by side at a powerlifting meet, I know exactly which one I'd want to talk to!

The point is: most writers deal in abstract thinking, reflected knowledge, not direct knowledge. Most depend on reading, studying, researching to develop their concepts. Most have never squatted 600, much less 1000. This is not to say that their viewpoints or theories are worthless. On the contrary, truth is truth and no one has the market cornered when it comes to the truth. And a great powerlifter is not necessarily a great trainer. There is an old football adage; a great player does not necessarily make a great coach. On the other hand, let's not

which to relate to him. Coan's training is plain vanilla, straight ahead, no chrome or embellishments. Ed uses common tools to achieve uncommon results: basic exercises, lots of rest, brief and intense training sessions, small poundage increases over long periods, conservative self-assessments, never missing training sessions, never failing in achieving target training poundages.

Coan's impact, you would need to go outside the strength world to find the proper analogy. Coan is a combination of Bob Beamon and Walter Payton. Coan possesses records as equally stratospheric as Beamon's eternal long jump mark and a longevity and durability to rival Payton's legendary 13 year career.

Coan is an articulate champion and video is the optimal format in

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peccable pedigree stands out like a bright moon on a pitch black night. While not as trendy-sexy as newer models, this is the most effective system of strength building ever devised. Period.

The Coan upper body video tape needs to be on the shelf of every serious weight trainer - and I don't mean just powerlifters. The Coan system is an expressway to usable athletic strength and anyone who feels the need to work with weights should purchase the tape. Period.

Now I have to address some unpleasantness. I, ill-advisedly, published an open letter from Wayne Campbell (Wayne's World) that quizzed Ed on the satanic cattle skull that appeared in Ed's deadlift video; a hailstorm of protest and media criticism resulted. Then, and without warning, Ed was maliciously (and falsely) accused of being an unindicted co-conspirator in the House of Representatives Post Office scandal.

Ed, it was rumored, was involved with Dan Rostenkowski in some sort of elaborate swap-for-payola scheme. The Satanic Skull was supposedly a gift from the indicted Congressman to Coan after the former's visit to a South American voo-doo ceremony held on Chicago's Southside last December. After heated denials and im-

counter-charges (law suits are never pleasant), things simmered down... until the release of the bench video. Unbelievably, the cattle skull that caused all the uproar was again predominantly displayed throughout the freestyle chat portion of the tape. Was this Coan's way of thumbing his nose at Diane Sawyer? Was this Coan's way of saying, "Up Yours, Bryant Gumbel!" It should be noted that both Coan and Rostenkowski lashed back at the media simultaneously. Coordinated media counterattack? Weird coincidence? Coan's inner circle seem to be circling the wagons. Coan's minister of Finance, Dave De'oung, summed up the mid-set in the Coan camp.

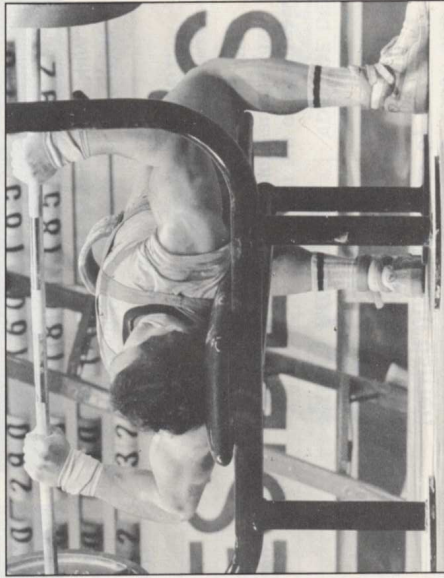
"Get rid of the voo-doo cattle skull? Ha! We just might stick it on a pole and walk it out in front of Ed as he goes out to take his lifting attempts at the national championships! We're Chicago guys; we don't turn the other cheek; we counter-attack with rabid pit bulls and ginzu knives."

Coan confides to his inner circle that he would consider selling the skill, but not to any South American military juntas or outlaw governments unfriendly to the United States. We'll keep you posted. Bids are still being accepted. Include a resume.

Ed Coan designs a cycle for you. We asked Coan to apply his cycle logic to a hypothetical 270 pound bench who wanted to break the 300 pound barrier: "We can do it; but it'll take a thirteen week commitment from the lifter."

- Here's the breakdown:
- Week 1, 190x2x10,
 - Week 2, 190x2x10,
 - Week 3, 200x2x8,
 - Week 4, 210x2x8,
 - Week 5, 220x2x5,
 - Week 6, 230x2x5,
 - Week 7, 240x2x5,
 - Week 8, 250x2x3,
 - Week 9, 260x2x3,
 - Week 10, 270x2x2,
 - Week 11, 280x2x2,
 - Week 12, 300x1.

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