

Paul's training cycle was devised by Joe Walden, Elite at 198 with a 473 bench, and myself, also Elite at 198 with a 475 bench. Since the three of us have been training together, Paul's bench has gone from 510 to 612.2 in less than one year, at a body-weight of 220. During the off cycle Paul maintains himself in good shape with the ability to bench 500 at any time. Paul uses heavy weights on his assistance work which include incline press, decline press, lat pulldown to front and back, tricep pushdown, and bicep curls during the off cycle and maintenance type weights during the actual cycle. Paul has declined 420x5, but maintains his strength in this lift during the cycle at around 315x5 for 3 sets. He has inclined 405x5, but maintains at between 250-315x5 for 3 sets. We also use a modified type of close grip bench which has helped a great deal. Instead of holding the hands close together causing the elbows to flair out placing more emphasis on shoulders, we use a shoulder width grip making sure the elbows stay close to the side of the body during descent and the actual press phase, isolating the triceps. We also use this type grip on the tricep pushdown. Paul has performed five reps with 455 in this manner. Everyone must remember that Paul is a bench press specialist placing very little emphasis

WORKOUT of the Month

Paul Dicks Bench Press Cycle by Lonnie Keyes

on the other two lifts even though he has squatted 500 lbs. in high bar fashion. The high bar squat is performed with the bar high on the traps, with hands out wide to decrease shoulder and elbow strain, to maintain leg strength. Paul's cycle consist of five weeks of touch and go type benching with all other rules enforced and three weeks of pauses, not including the week of the meet which is set aside for openers and rest. Here is the exact cycle that produced a new American and unofficial World Record by 36 lbs. and makes Paul, in our opinion at the Elite Gym, the Number One Bench Presser in the World:

Week 1
Tuesday: 505x2, 475x5, 455x7

Friday: 515x2, 485x5, 465x7
Week 2
Tuesday: 525x2, 495x5, 475x7
Friday: 535x2, 505x5, 485x7
Week 3
Tuesday: 545x2, 515x4, 495x6
Friday: 555x2, 525x4, 505x5
Week 4
Tuesday: 565x2, 535x4, 515x5
Friday: 575x2, 545x4, 525x5
Week 5
Tuesday: 580x2, 555x4, 535x5
Friday: 595x2, 565x3, 545x5

The previous weeks have been done in touch and go style. Now pauses begin with four weeks left until the competition.

Week 6
Tuesday: 550x2, 520x4, 500x5
Friday: 560x2, 530x4, 510x5

Week 7
Tuesday: 570x2, 540x4, 520x5
Friday: 580x2, 550x3, 530x5
Week 8
Tuesday: 590x1, 560x2, 540x3
Friday: 600x1, 570x2, 550x3

Week 9 (meet week)
Monday: 135x10, 225x8, 315x5, 405x3, 495x2, 550x1, 450x3, 405x5
Saturday: 135, 10, 225x8, 315x5, 405x3, 455x1, 510x1

Opener: 551, 2nd: 601, 3rd: 612.2

In summary: Paul uses the same warm up sequence for all workouts as you find in the last workout. He takes 90 lbs. jumps between warm up sets unless advised otherwise. Paul has just received his invitation to the Hawaiian International on March 3rd. If anyone would like to contact Paul, Joe Walden, or myself on seminars, demonstrations, or programs please write to: Elite Gym, Peach Orchard Plaza, Peach Orchard, Rd., Augusta, Georgia 30906, or call (404) 793-9262 (no collect calls, please).

Elite Power Stars from right to left, Lonnie Keyes, Paul Dicks, and Joe Walden. World record holder Tom Hardman said that Paul has the most potential he's seen in a lifter for a long time. Mervin Jenkins photo.

