

# TRAINING

## Bench Pressing for Women as told to Powerlifting USA by Dawn Sharon

Our previous articles have addressed bench press routines for 300 lb. benchers on up to 600 lb. benchers. Many women, teenage and master lifters have asked if I would illustrate bench routines for lighter weights, so this article will cover bench routines for benchers in the 100-250 lbs. range.

As I have stated before, there are many different training philosophies



*Glynis Ramirez Bierria is one of the best women bench pressers in the lighter weight divisions, and once again won the USPF Senior National title in 1993, at 114 lbs. Glynis, who resides in Anchorage, Alaska was among 32 athletes and nine teams from 17 states selected to receive a Sudaied Travel and Training Grant. The grants, totaling \$50,000, were announced on June 19th at the Women's Sports Foundation Annual Conference in East Meadow, New York. The grants are administered by the Women's Sports Foundation, and since its inception more than \$500,000 has been awarded to over 400 aspiring athletes with successful competitive records who have the potential to achieve even higher performance levels.*

continue toward attaining goals. The routines are set up using a fictional lifter to illustrate body type, strengths and weaknesses.

Our first athlete is 5'4", 145 lbs. She is 35 years old with 2 years of training experience, with a bench press of 100 lbs. She has average back development and has been benching using a wide grip. My recommendation for her would be to use a 22" grip. She should flare her legs to set up on the bench and loosen her index finger slightly on the bar when benching. The 11 week cycle for this lifter would look like this: (This bench routine should be performed 2 times per week)

**Week 1:** flat bench 45x8x2 sets, 65x6, 75x3x3 sets, 60x5x5 sets.

**Week 2:** elevate bench by placing 10 lb. plate under head to create a slight incline position. 45x8x2 sets, 65x6, 75x3x3 sets, 60x5x5 sets.

**Week 3:** elevate bench by placing 10 lb. plate at foot of bench to create a slight decline position. The lifter should bench press twice per week

and alternate A and B accessory work with each bench workout.

**Accessory A:** 35 degree up-per pulley row 3x8 reps, decline dumbbell press for Weeks 1-8 only 4x6, bench press as written above, flat flies for Weeks 1-8 only 5x6, bent elbow wide grip pullovers 3x10 reps.

**Accessory B:** Rear lat pull-downs 3x8, narrow underhand lat pull-down 3x6, bench press as written above, incline 20" pause (45-55lb) 3x5 reps.

Our next lifter is 22" yrs. old with 3 years of fitness and bodybuilding training. She is 5'6" 136 lbs with above average back development and shoulders. She is currently training her chest using a 24" bodybuilding style bench with a max of 150 lbs. The following is a routine designed for 14 weeks performing the routine every 5 days: light pec deck 3x10 reps, dips 4x3 reps, bench press with 20" grip.

**Week 1:** 6x10 reps from 45-90 lbs

**Week 2:** 6x5 reps from 75-105

**Week 3:** 6x10 reps 45-90 lbs

**Week 4:** 6x5 reps 75-105

**Week 5:** 6x5 reps 45-90

**Week 6:** 6x5 reps 75-105

**Week 7:** 6x5 reps 45-90

**Week 8:** 6x5 reps 75-105 (Weeks 9-14 use 24" grip)

**Week 9:** 5x2 @ 125

**Week 10:** 5x3 @ 125

**Week 11:** 6x2 @ 125

**Week 12:** 6x3 @ 125

**Week 13:** 115x2, 130x2, 145x2

**Week 14:** warmup then 1x140, 1x160, 1x 170-180. Decline bench 5x6 reps 95-135, front plate raises 5x8 reps 10-25 lbs

Another athlete to consider is 5'7", 170 lbs with 6 years of training. She is currently using a 20 inch false grip bench press. Her training methods have been utilizing heavy weights and her bench has plateaued at 200 lbs. The routine that would be most beneficial would be to bench 2 times per week for 12 weeks. The routine is divided into an A and B routine. Routine A is done once per week and routine B is done on the other bench day.

**First 6 weeks:** Routine A: Dips 4x5 reps, V grip lat pull-downs 3x8 reps, Bench press 10x3 reps @ 105-130, Behind neck press 5x6 reps. Seated bent over lateral raises 4x12 reps. Routine B: Seated 22" grip low pulley row 3x8 reps, Incline bench 18" grip 6x4 reps-paused (angle of bar should travel slightly toward knees). Standing upright rows 6" grip 4x9 reps, Seated alternate dumbbell press 3x12 reps

**Last 6 weeks:** Routine A: Dips 4x5 reps, Bench press 10x3 reps, then 3x2 reps @ 135, 5x5

bench 1x2 reps @ 165, 1x3 @ 155, 1x5 @ 145, 1x8 @ 125, cable crossover 4x8, wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6, dumbbell pullover 4x6.

**Week 5:** Routine A, wide grip lat pull-down 3x6, bench 3x3 @ 135, 2x10 @ 105, cable crossover raises 4x6, dumbbell pullover 4x6, Routine B, wide grip lat pull-downs 3x6 bench 1x2 @ 165, 1x3 @ 155, 1x5 @ 145, 1x8 @ 125, cable crossover 4x8, wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6, dumbbell pullover 4x6.

**Week 6:** Routine A, wide grip lat pull-downs 3x6, bench 3x1 rep @ 135, 1x8 @ 95, cable crossover 4x8, wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6, dumbbell pullover 4x6, Routine B, wide grip lat pull-downs 3x6 bench warmup, then 1x1 @ 185, 1x1 @ 205, 1x1 @ 220-230, cable crossover raises 4x6, wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6, dumbbell pullover 4x6.

Please feel free to contact me for any questions concerning your individual needs. Remember, when doing any training that proper technique is essential, when your technique breaks down, you will reach plateaus and even set yourself up for injury. Next month I will have part 2 of women's bench pressing. Best of luck! Dawn Sharon.

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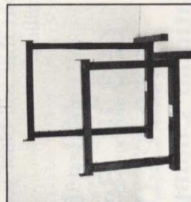
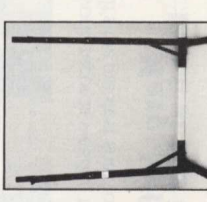
reps @ 115, cable crossover 4x8 reps wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6 reps dumbbell pullovers 4x8 reps. Routine B, Wide grip lat pull-downs 3x6 reps Bench press warmup, then 3x2 reps @ 135, 5x5 reps @ 115, cable crossover 4x8 wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6 dumbbell pullovers 4x8, Routine B, wide grip lat pull-down 3x6 Bench press warmup, then 3x2 @ 150 2x8 @ 115, cable crossover 4x8, wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6, dumbbell pullovers 4x8

**Week 2:** Routine A, Wide grip lat pull-downs 3x6 reps Bench press warmup, then 3x2 @ 150 2x8 @ 115, cable crossover 4x8, wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6, dumbbell pullovers 4x8

**Week 3:** Routine A, Wide grip lat pull-downs 3x6 Bench press 3x2 @ 150, 2x8 @ 115 cable crossover 4x8, wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6 dumbbell pullovers 4x6, Routine B, wide grip lat pull-downs bench 3x2 @ 135, 2x8 @ 125, cable crossover 4x8, wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6, dumbbell pullovers 4x6.

**Week 4:** Routine A, wide grip lat pull-downs, bench 3x2 @ 160 2x8 @ 125, cable crossover 4x8, wide elbow bent elbow front raises 4x6, dumbbell pullovers 4x6, Routine B, wide grip lat pull-downs 3x6

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