

Training programs for males and females can and should be different. This does not in any way presume that a woman cannot train with men or as heavily as men do, however, the menstrual cycle that women experience monthly does affect strength.

Let's review some basics of the female cycle. The hormones estrogen and progesterone are at high levels at different times during a woman's cycle. Following the onset of menstruation, estrogen levels increase for approximately the next two weeks until ovulation takes place. After ovulation, the levels of estrogen decline and progesterone levels increase for the next two weeks until menstruation takes place. The cycle then begins all over again, unless fertilization of the egg occurs. If pregnancy should occur, then progesterone levels will remain high and the uterine lining is not shed, to prepare for the developing embryo.

Most women experience some changes either physically or emotionally during each month. Some women have minimal symptomatology, whereas others have a much more difficult time, hence the term PMS. These changes are real and the female lifter's training may reflect these fluctuations.

We have found that a woman is at her weakest point following her period or as her estrogen level increases in preparation for ovulation. She will then be at her strongest just before her monthly period when her progesterone level is at its highest. If a woman works with her monthly cycle, she will make progress and will not become frustrated by these changes. The workout with this article is designed for just this purpose. It allows the female lifter to train hard throughout the month, but includes adjustments to coincide with the changes in her body. There are two

# TRAINING

## Female Training as told by Dawn Sharon, Power Excel



Dawn Sharon the former Dawn Reshel, psyches for a squat at the Nationals

parts to this workout, one for beginner lifters and the other part for those who are more advanced.

For the beginner, I recommend high volume assistance work. This type of work will ensure a strong foundation. The exercises for assistance that I feel best to do are as follows:

Shoulders: behind neck presses, bent over lateral raises.

Traps: shrugs, standing lateral raises

Lats: pulldowns, low cable rows

Pecs: pec deck, pullovers  
Hips: leg presses on sled, reverse hypers

Quads: leg extensions

Hamstrings: leg curls

Calves: toe raises

Abs: crunches, oblique crunches

### BEGINNER TRAINING

Week One begins the day before menses.

Week 1: High Intensity Assistance work 3-4 sets of 8-12 reps. Ma-

ior Movements: Squats: 5 sets of 5 reps or 8 sets of 3 reps at 60-65% of your One Rep Maximum. Bench: 5 sets of 6 or 8 sets at 60-65%. Deadlifts: 4 sets of 5 reps or 8 sets of 2 at 60%.

Week 2: High Intensity Assistance work 3-4 sets of 5-8 reps. Major Movements: Squats 4 sets of 4 reps or 6 sets of 3 reps at 65%. Bench 6 sets of 4 reps or 8 sets of 3 reps at 65%. Deads: 4 sets of 4 reps or 6 sets of 2 reps at 65%.

Week 3: Low Intensity Assistance work 2 sets of 6-10 reps. Major Movements: Squats: 2 sets of 4 reps or 3 sets of 3 reps at 75%. Bench: 4 sets of 4 reps or 6 sets of 3 reps at 75%. Deads: 3 sets of 3 reps or 4 set of 2 reps at 70%.

Week 4: Medium Intensity Assistance work 2 sets of 8-12 reps. Major Movements: Squats: 2 sets of 3 reps or 3 sets of 2 at 85-90%. Bench: 3 sets of 3 reps or 4 sets of 2 reps at 85-90%. Deads: 1 set of 3 reps or 2 sets of 2 reps at 90%

### ADVANCED TRAINING

Assistance work will vary according to the training season: 1. Foundation - high volume moderate weights, 2. Strength - medium volume heavy weights, 3. Performance - low volume light weights, 4. Competition - medium volume light weights. (Assistance exercises will be provided in a future article) Week one begins the day before menses.

Week 1: High Intensity Assistance 3-5 sets of 8-12 reps. Major Movements: Squat: 5 sets of 6 reps at 60% or 8 sets of 2 reps at 65%. Bench: 5 sets of 5 reps at 70% or 8 sets of 3 reps at 65%. Deads: 4 sets of 5 reps at 60% or 5 sets of 2 reps at 70%.

Week 2: High Intensity Assistance work 4-6 sets of 6-10 reps. Major Movements: Squats: 5 sets of 4 reps or 6 sets of 2 reps at 70%. Bench: 4 sets of 6 reps or 6 sets of 3 reps at 75%. Deads: 4 sets of 3 reps or 4 sets of 2 reps at 75%.

Week 3: Low Intensity Assistance work 2-4 sets of 8-10 reps. Major Movements: Squat: 1 set of 5 reps or 3 sets of 3 reps at 80%. Bench: 2 sets of 5 reps or 3 sets of 4 reps or 3 sets of 3 reps at 85%. Deads: 2 sets of 3 reps or 3 sets of 2 reps at 85%.

Week 4: Medium Intensity Assistance work 4 sets of 5-8 reps. Major Movements: Squat: 1 set of 3 reps or 2 sets of 2 reps or 2 sets of 1 rep at 88-93%. Bench: 2 sets of 3 reps or 3 sets of 2 reps or 3 sets of 1 rep at 90-95%. Deads: 1 set of 3 reps or 2 sets of 2 reps or 2 sets of 1 rep at 88-93%.

I'd like to wish you the best of luck with your training and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need anything further. I can be reached at the following:

### DAWN SHARON

c/o Power Excel, 501 W. Mitchell St. Suite 604, Milwaukee, WI, 53207. 414-771-9479 or 1-800-424-8308.

## PRO VEGAS BENCH MEET - CANCELLED!



Ernie Frantz (left) had to cancel the big pro bench showdown in Las Vegas between Ken Lain and Ted Arcidi when the sponsorship arrangement in the amount of \$25,000 did not come through, but states that he will re-schedule it "on the basis of a regular bench meet". He had already made up the t-shirts, ordered the trophies, done the advertising, and arranged for the equipment for the meet and states "I am very sorry for all the inconvenience this has caused." He intends to fly to Las Vegas to make sure of the arrangements for the WPC World Championships there in November, 1991. Ritchie Creevy tried to organize a substitute meet in California (no prize money on such short notice) but Ken Lain indicates that he has tired of the on again, off again nature of the contests, and will be taking time off and dropping his bodyweight (he was up to 315), and declares that he feels like "someone else has been running my life for the last year and a half" and he'd like to take control again