



DYNAMO
STRENGTH

BENCH STRONG

INCREASE YOUR BENCH PRESS STRENGTH WITH MINIMAL EQUIPMENT



Shobit Jain

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Increase Your Bench Press Strength with Minimal Equipment

Dynamo Strength Bench Strong

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this book first and foremost to my mentor Louie Simmons, the founder and owner of the legendary Westside Barbell Club in Columbus, Ohio without whom this book would have never been possible to write. He taught me how to train correctly. It is mostly because of him that I know a few things about strength training. My training partners especially at Westside Barbell. They pushed me beyond limits and taught me things I would have never learned otherwise. My parents, wife, and friends for supporting in my powerlifting journey and life in general, my professors at University of Cincinnati and Pittsburg State University, and all my readers. Thank you to all who will read this book.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The bench press is one of the power lifts most people struggle with. Most of them progress fairly quickly with the squat and deadlift but find tough when it comes to bench press. There are so many programs in the market to make your bench press grow. Also, there are too many tools and implements one can use in the training to build the bench press: implements that change movement pattern as well as loading or even changing the movement altogether. No doubt, adding in a variety of tools and implements such as different types of bars, bands, chains, dumbbells, kettlebells, machines can introduce a lot of variety to your training but it can also hurt your training since they can create a lot of confusion about what to use and when to use it.

I have seen so many people totally ignoring the basics and directly jumping into using the advanced training implements. Notice I said advanced. They get all kinds of tools in their gym and do not know when to introduce them to training. In my opinion, you have to earn your right to use these implements and you do that by building a proper foundation first. A lot of people are in the impression that to build your bench press you need to have all kinds of advanced tools in the gym which is not true. You can build your bench press significantly with minimal equipment. All you need is a power rack, a good quality power bar, plates, safety straps, bands, a nice sturdy bench and of course solid training partner(s). Yes, the bands. I believe bands are a must in any gym as they alter the force-velocity curve. Many don't have fancy tools and implements in their gym and yet are working hard to grow their bench press with great difficulty which is why I have written this book.

During my initial years of training, the bench press was the fastest lift to go up and many people thought I will be a great bench presser. Believe it or not, in the first two years of training, my bench press rose from 65lbs to 230lbs. But then I hit a plateau and didn't make smart enough changes in the program to see the lift go up again. It was at 230lbs for the next four years. My bench started to go up again when I learned what smart programming is and how and when to make certain changes in the program. It increased to 405lbs and

then I had a grade 2 pec-tendon rupture which is a story for another day and my bench again came down to 275lbs. I again stopped getting smart and thus my bench stopped increasing again. Now my bench has again started to go up steadily because of a program I have carefully designed for myself. This program has allowed me to put 35lbs in my bench press in 6 months.

Before proceeding further let me first give the credit where it's due. I have learned almost everything about training programs from the legendary powerlifter, coach and my mentor Louie Simmons, the owner of the world-famous Westside-Barbell Club in Columbus, Ohio. I thought I knew everything about training until I got under his wings and learned how much I don't know. This book will not only help you build your raw bench press but also help you learn the fundamentals for designing an effective bench press program for you and your athletes. I am sure you will see great strength gains after applying this book to your training.

Note that everything mentioned in this book is for raising your raw bench press strength. While many have criticized the methods outlined in this book as being designed for equipped lifting, I can assure you that these have worked for me tremendously as well as others who train or trained at the Westside Barbell and many other raw lifters who follow these methods intelligently.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS OF STRENGTH TRAINING

There are many ways to facilitate strength and hypertrophy gains but the three main ones, the majority of strength training programs depend on are the *Maximal Effort Method*, the *Dynamic Effort Method*, and the *Repeated Effort Method*.

Conjugate Method

The conjugate method was introduced by the Soviets in 1972. It is used by Westside Barbell. They use a mix of Russian and Bulgarian system and continuously develop it. This method has been used by their athletes for many years resulting in more than 140 world records.

The max effort lifts are changed every week while dynamic effort lifts are waved and special exercises similar to the classical lifts are used to build them. The special exercises are also rotated as and when necessary to prevent adaptation.

This method addresses different elements of strength

1. Absolute strength
2. Strength-speed
3. Speed-strength
4. Explosive strength
5. Quickness

Maximal Effort Method

Maximal effort means one rep max that is, lifting the maximum load. This is

superior to all other methods as it builds both inter and intramuscular coordination. As per the SAID principle, the body and CNS will adapt to the loads placed upon them. That is why using maximal loads will elicit the greatest strength increments. This method recruits all the motor units. The intensity is high (90%+ to 100%+) and the volume is low. This is the best method, in my opinion, to identify weaknesses as it is under maximum loads our technique tends to fall apart or weakest muscle becomes the limiting factor in our pursuit to lift the weight.

This is followed by 3-4 supplemental and accessory exercises.

Dynamic Effort Method

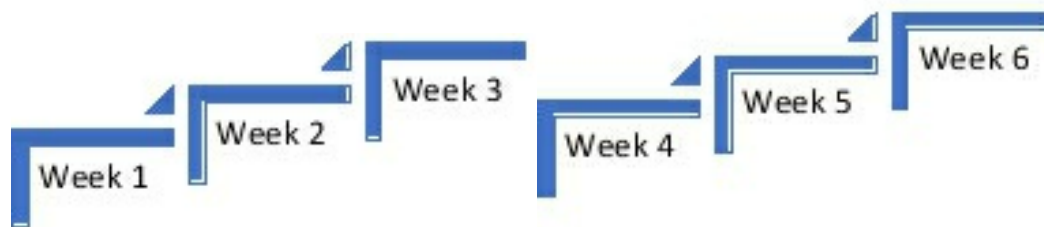
The dynamic effort method is used to increase the rate of force production and explosive strength. This method will not increase maximal strength. It involves lifting a non-maximal load with the maximum speed possible. Since non-maximal loads are being used, it enables the athlete to practice the correct technique and develop motor patterns. This method also helps in building tremendous reversal strength. After the dynamic effort lifts, supplemental and accessory exercises are performed to eliminate weaknesses. The intensity is low to moderate and the volume is high on the dynamic effort days.

Repeated Effort Method

The repeated effort method involves lifting a submaximal load to failure. This method recruits all the motor units as per the size principle. The result is muscular hypertrophy. However, taking a set to failure is rough on the body and lengthens the recovery time as well as affects the work capacity. It can also lead to injuries as the technique tends to break down in the last few reps due to fatigue. Also, since each set is taken to failure, the work volume is limited. Due to this reason, I recommend you to stop the sets as soon as the technique breaks down which means stopping 1 or 2 repetitions short of failure. After finishing the max effort or dynamic effort lifts, we perform supplemental and accessory exercises using the repeated effort method.

The Wave Method

The wave method is the method of gradually increasing the loads. In this method, the loads are increased by a fixed amount for three weeks followed by a week of a decreased load. The intent is the long-term increment of load. As you can see, it already has a deload week built in it. This makes sense because one cannot train with linearly increasing loads all year-round and there must a period of deload to reduce the stress on the body accumulated due to increased intensity and volume. Also, this method takes advantage of adaptive changes that occur in the body in response to training. According to Thomas Kurz, the training loads should be changed based on the symptoms of adaptation and not just for the sake of changing. Thus, we will take advantage of this method to program our dynamic lifts, supplemental, and accessory exercises.



Representation of the Wave Method

The training load as well as the volume are increased in each step till 3rd week and then waved back down in the fourth week

CHAPTER 3

MAXIMAL EFFORT METHOD

Maximal effort method includes lifting maximum load possible for a single rep. It builds maximal strength which is the basis of all types of strength. This method is superior to all other methods in that it builds and improves both intermuscular and intramuscular coordination. Since the load being lifted is maximum, all types of motor units are recruited. The objective of this method is to strain, meaning to fatigue the CNS so that it adapts to the demand placed on it. This method will not induce hypertrophy but produce the greatest strength gains. I recommend you to perform max effort lifts almost every week. You cannot perform the same lift with loads of 90% or above of your 1RM every week otherwise your progress will go backward as per the law of accommodation. This is why you need to keep changing the variables like the grip width, bench angle, add bands, pin, etc. Simply change a variable and the entire lift changes. I learned this from Louie Simmons. This is how Westside Barbell trains and this is how I train. Select 3-5 max effort bench press variations and rotate them until you feel the need to add or replace one. This also avoids boredom and keeps the athlete interested in training. Do not do the regular competition grip bench press in training as it can be too psychologically damaging if you miss the weight.

Max Effort Bench Press Variations

The following are the bench press variations you can do with minimal equipment.

1. Band Bench Press

Bands provide accommodating resistance and teach you to keep pressing throughout the range of motion and create overspeed eccentrics. This develops the stretch reflex. To do these attach a

band at the base of the power rack to each side of the barbell such that when you unrack the bar, the bands are vertical. There should be band tension present at the bottom position of the bench press. Start with just barbell and bands and work your way up until you max out. There are many bands to choose from. I use either mini, monster-mini or light bands. The mini bands doubled up provide 85lbs at the top and 40lbs at the bottom, monster-mini gives 120lbs at the top and 50lbs at the bottom, light bands doubled up would give you 100lbs at the bottom and 200lbs at the top. As mentioned earlier, keep changing variables to create a new lift and keep the training fresh and exciting. A close grip bench with each set of bands gives 3 different lifts. Use a wide grip and you have 3 more. As you can see there can be many variations to choose from.



2. Reverse Band Bench Press

Also referred to by the Soviets as the *Future Method* or *Lightened Method*, this method uses bands hung from the top of the power rack to lighten the load at the chest. This makes it easy to press the weight at the lockout. It teaches you to accelerate the bar to lockout.

I have found this variation to be very helpful in building the lockout strength.

A set of light bands will reduce the weight by 65lbs at the chest, the average bands will reduce the weight by 95lbs at the chest and the strong bands will reduce it by 155lbs. The stronger the band the greater the contrast. Again, you can change the grip to change the variation. Feel free to experiment. I like to use a close grip to focus on the triceps lockout strength. I sometimes use a wide grip with average or strong bands to overload my body and CNS.



3. Pin Press

This is an old-schooler. A lot of powerlifters and bodybuilders back in the day performed pin presses. These build incredible pressing power. I use these to build strength at the sticking points. Set the power rack pins at heights that equates to your sticking point or an inch above or below it. Lower the weight on the pins, pause for a second or two and blast the weight up. Since you are working on your sticking points, you will not be able to use as much weight as you normally do. It's ok. Warm-up properly and work your way up

making appropriate jumps.

You can also turn these into concentric-only movement. Set the barbell on the pins, crawl under the bar, set yourself in position and lift the bar straight up using proper technique. Since there is no lowering phase and no stretch reflex here, you will be using less weight. I like to use a close grip here because it is the hardest grip for me and I like to press from two different heights – Off the chest and 3” of the chest. You can also attach a set of bands here to make the lift more challenging.



4. Incline/Decline Press

Again, an old-schooler and a favorite of bodybuilders to build the upper chest. Powerlifters use inclines to increase the bench press strength on the flat bench. Inclines take the back out of the equation and rely on triceps and shoulders strength. Decline bench press somewhat duplicates the bench shirt and reduces the range of motion. I like to perform the inclines with close grip as the supplemental movement to build the triceps strength. To add variation, you can vary grips, press off the pins, attach bands or change the angle. If you don't have an adjustable bench, simply put one end of the flat bench on top of a sturdy box. Powerlifters

trained this way when there was no adjustable bench in the market.

5. Floor Press

Floor press is a bench press with you lying on the floor. To do these lay on the floor with legs straight. Unrack the bar and lower until your triceps touch the floor, relax your triceps for a second and press as explosively as possible. There is no leg drive and the range of motion is limited unless you are so thick that the bar touches your chest before your triceps touch the floor. Since the leg drive is absent, you will be using less weight than your max. By relaxing the triceps, you break the eccentric-concentric chain. This makes you very explosive. You can vary grip or press off the pins to work on a specific range of motion.

6. Ultra-Wide Grip Bench Press

I learned this from Louie Simmons and he learned this from Bill Seno, a bodybuilder and a world record holder in bench press back in the 70s. Take a grip two-three fingers outside the power ring and do the movement. I have seen many people max out on these but I do not recommend you to do so because the ultra-wide grip places undue stress on your chest and shoulder muscles and tendons and can cause injury. I recommend you to do a six-rep max with a spotter or safety straps set properly. These build strength and induce hypertrophy. This can work as a deload and give the CNS a break from constant hammering. I won't advice you to use bands here.

Remember to use only one max effort variation per week and aim for a small 5lbs PR each week. If you miss the PR, it is fine but it is important to strain. The number of variations you can create is countless. It all depends on your imagination but do what is supposed to be done and not what you like and are good at. Select the max effort variations such that each one contributes to the next. That way your progress will not stall.

Also, remember to select weights properly. Do not make too big of a jump. As you get closer to your max, the jumps need to come down to not more than 5% of your max. For example, if your max bench is 300lbs, your last three attempts should be 280lbs, 295lbs, and 305lbs giving you a 5lbs personal record. The last attempt should be a grinder – you should be

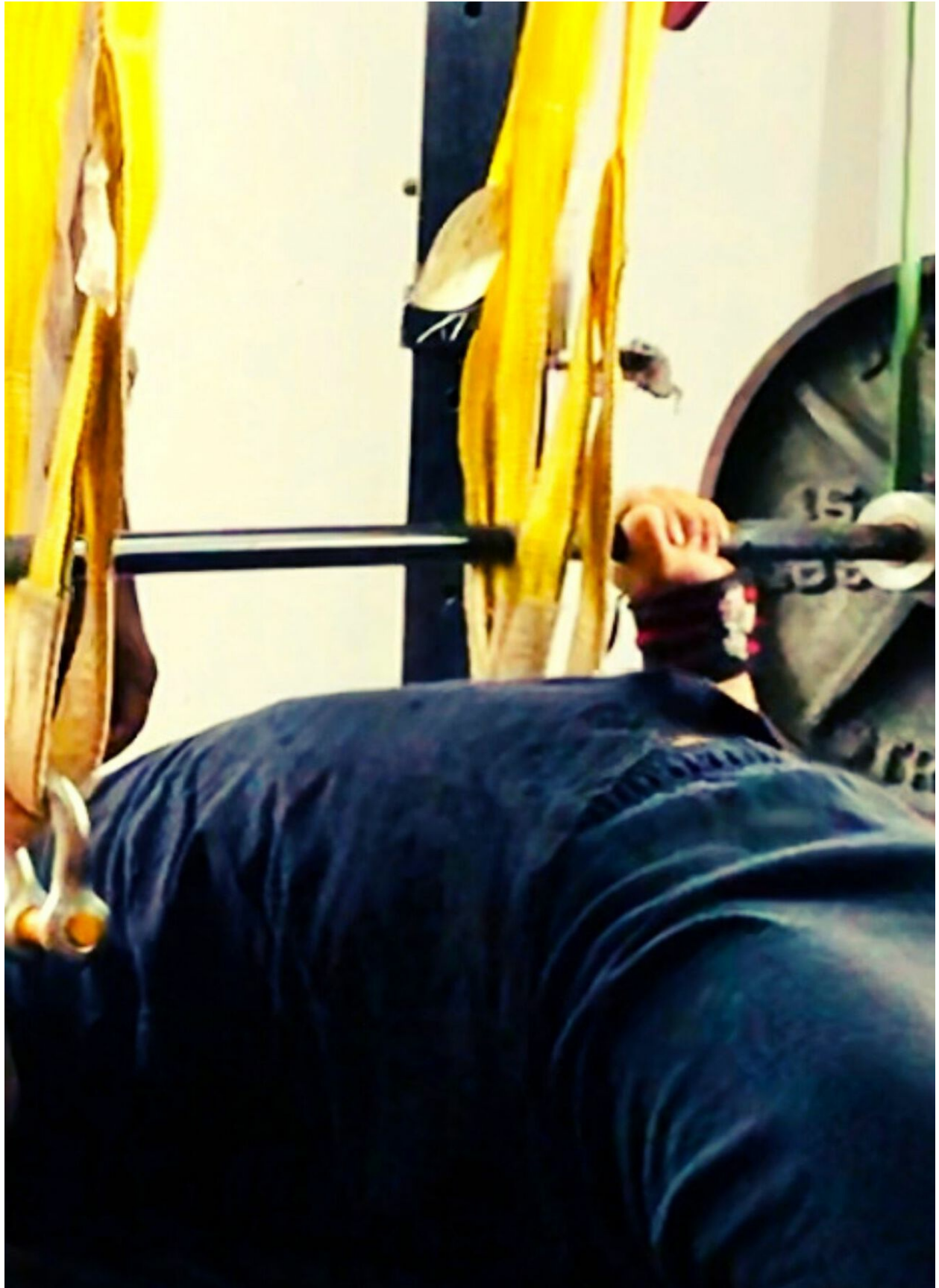
grinding hard to complete the lift. Simply put, select your last three weights like you would in a meet. BE LOGICAL AND REALISTIC.

After the max effort lift, train your triceps, upper back, lats, rear and side delts, and abs.

Builders & Testers

There are lifts that build your bench press - the builders, and lifts that test your bench press - the testers. These are different for everybody. For some, floor press is the builder while pin press is the tester while for others the opposite is true. Perform the tester every 4-5 weeks to gauge the progress and make necessary changes to your program.





CHAPTER 4

DYNAMIC EFFORT METHOD

The dynamic effort method calls for lifting sub-maximal weight as fast as possible. It improves the rate of force production and explosive strength. This is a must for every athlete. To excel in any sport, the athlete must be able to produce as much force as possible in the shortest amount of time. Dynamic effort method builds the motor pattern to move an object fast as well as reactive strength – ability to mobilize strength very quickly. Remember, this method will not build maximal strength but it will help you to synchronize your muscles. The barbell weight used is 60-75% without bands or 40-50% with 25% band tension at the top. You exert the same amount of force to lift the sub-maximal load as you would to lift the maximal load. So, if your max bench is 300 pounds, you will use a weight of 210 pounds (without bands) and exert the force to lift 300lbs.

You will do 9 sets of 3 reps. Why not 3 sets of 9 reps? Because the first few reps are of better quality in terms of force production. The muscles do not fatigue and are ready to produce the same force in the next set approximately equal to that in the previous set. So, more sets of low reps give more opportunity to practice quality reps with perfect technique. Moreover, performing higher reps will fatigue the muscles which is not the goal. Also, whether you do 9 sets of 3 reps or 3 sets of 9 reps, the volume is the same but the quality of reps is three folds high. Besides, you are required to do only one repetition per attempt in a competition so it better be a quality one.

You must lower the barbell fast but under control and reverse it to lockout as fast as possible. Please note that the barbell speed is of primary concern than the weight on the bar. Of course, weight should not be too light but it should not be too heavy either otherwise, you will be defeating the purpose.

I recommend you to use bands on the bar for the dynamic effort lifts. Firstly, because without the bands, there is a bar deceleration. One cannot produce

high force against light objects. For the force to be maximum, the objects must be of high mass. This is why the barbell accelerates from the bottom but decelerates at the top because it feels light at the top. Where do most lifters miss the weight in the bench press? It is somewhere in the top half of the range of motion. Why? Bar deceleration. So how do we overcome it? By using bands.

With a combination of bands and bar weight, the tension will change at different points in the range of motion. This changes the force-posture curve. Bands will accommodate tension throughout the range of motion. Secondly, bands, like muscles, stretch and contract and store kinetic energy. Bands produce overspeed eccentrics pulling the barbell down quickly and creating great kinetic energy leading to a faster concentric phase. To test this, simply drop a rubber ball down and see how high it bounces. Now throw the same ball down and see how high it bounces. Faster down, faster up! Using bands will make you very explosive off the chest with strong stretch-reflex action. Thirdly, bands will teach you bar acceleration, to bust through the sticking points thereby eliminating them, and building a strong lockout. Fourthly, bands will create instability forcing you to stay very tight throughout the lift. I hope I have given you enough reasons to start incorporating bands in your training.

Dynamic Effort Bench Press Variations

Below are the speed bench variations you can use in your training.

1. Dynamic Bench Press with Bands

Setup the bands the same way as in maximal effort method and use barbell weight about 40-50% of your competition max. Perform 3 sets of 3 reps with a close grip, 3 sets of 3 reps with a medium grip, and 3 sets of 3 reps with little finger just inside the power ring. Lower the weight as fast as possible but under control, touch the chest and accelerate it to lockout. Keep pushing hard throughout the concentric phase. Perform close grip sets first to work the triceps. Use the wave system, increasing the bar weight by 5lbs each week for three weeks and then coming back to the first week's weight in the fourth week. This is the 3-week wave. You will notice how easy

the weight feels in the fourth week compared to the first week.

2. Dynamic Bench Press on the Pins

Use the same setup as mentioned above with the addition of pins set at the chest level or an inch above the chest level. Lower the bar on the pins, rest for a second and then blast the weight to lockout. The bar weight percentage would remain the same. Use close, medium and wide grips for 3 sets of 3 reps each.

3. Dynamic Bench Press with Hanging Plate

Replace the band tension with the plates hanging from the bar using bands. Use the same 40-50% of the barbell weight but the hanging plates weight should be about 10% of your competition max. This is



very challenging as it creates tremendous instability. You have to be very tight to perform these which is their advantage - this variation teaches you tightness which increases the pressing power.

4. Dynamic Reverse Band Press

The setup here will be the same as used in the max effort reverse band press but the bar weight will be about 80% of competition max. Use only the light bands. Perform 9 sets of 3 reps with close medium and wide grips. You can also add band tension from the

bottom, press off the pins, or add hanging plates to create variations with greater contrast.

5. Ballistic Bench Press.

Same setup as the bench press with bands. Lower the bar as fast as possible but under control, stop 1 inch short of touching the chest and reverse it explosively to lockout. This will build strong stretch reflex and a great bottom end strength.

Sample Dynamic Bench Press Program

Below is a dynamic bench press program for a 300lbs max bench press

Wave 1: Dynamic Bench Press with Mini Bands

Week 1:

Grip	Sets	Reps	Bar Weight	Band Tension
Close	3	3	125lbs	85lbs
Medium	3	3	125lbs	85lbs
Wide	3	3	125lbs	85lbs

Week 2:

Grip	Sets	Reps	Bar Weight	Band Tension
Close	3	3	130lbs	85lbs
Medium	3	3	130lbs	85lbs
Wide	3	3	130lbs	85lbs

Week 3:

Grip	Sets	Reps	Bar Weight	Band Tension
Close	3	3	135lbs	85lbs
Medium	3	3	135lbs	85lbs
Wide	3	3	135lbs	85lbs

Wave 2: Dynamic Bench Press with Monster Mini Bands

Week 1:

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Grip	Sets	Reps	Bar Weight	Band Tension
Close	3	3	125lbs	110lbs
Medium	3	3	125lbs	110lbs
Wide	3	3	125lbs	110lbs

Week 2:

Grip	Sets	Reps	Bar Weight	Band Tension
Close	3	3	130lbs	110lbs
Medium	3	3	130lbs	110lbs
Wide	3	3	130lbs	110lbs

Week 3:

Grip	Sets	Reps	Bar Weight	Band Tension
Close	3	3	135lbs	110lbs
Medium	3	3	135lbs	110lbs
Wide	3	3	135lbs	110lbs

Wave 3: Dynamic Bench Press with Hanging Plate

Week 1:

Grip	Sets	Reps	Bar Weight	Plate weight
Close	3	3	125lbs	25lbs
Medium	3	3	125lbs	25lbs
Wide	3	3	125lbs	25lbs

Week 2:

Grip	Sets	Reps	Bar Weight	Band Tension
Close	3	3	130lbs	25lbs
Medium	3	3	130lbs	25lbs
Wide	3	3	130lbs	25lbs

Week 3:

Grip	Sets	Reps	Bar Weight	Band Tension

Close	3	3	135lbs	25lbs
Medium	3	3	135lbs	25lbs
Wide	3	3	135lbs	25lbs

This is just a sample. You can create endless speed workouts. It is all up to your imagination. Remember to change a variable after three weeks to avoid accommodation. You can change either bar weight or the band tension after three weeks. Remember the bar speed is more important than bar weight. You need to be moving the bar at about 0.8m/s – 1m/s. Reduce the bar weight if needed but do not compromise with speed. This is followed by exercises to train triceps, back, shoulders, and abs.

Keep in mind that, intensity on the dynamic effort day is low to moderate but volume is high while on the max effort day intensity is high and volume is low to moderate. All the dynamic effort sessions should always occur 72 hours after the max effort sessions training the same muscle group and lifts for optimal recovery to occur.

I hope you got the idea how dynamic bench press is programmed.

CHAPTER 5

REPETITION EFFORT METHOD

Repetition effort method is used to build strength and muscle hypertrophy. This method is used by bodybuilders to increase muscle size. All supplemental and accessory exercises are trained using this method. As the muscles get bigger, their capacity to handle heavier weights increases. The repetition effort method involves performing repetitions with non-maximal loads. As already explained in chapter 2, it is best to perform exercises for a set number of reps using this method for multiple sets rather than going to failure. On max effort days, I recommend you to perform the supplemental exercise in the four to six rep range for three to five sets and the accessory exercises in six-twelve rep range. On the dynamic effort days, perform the supplemental exercise for 10 repetitions with a lighter load for three to five sets for increased volume and accessory exercises for ten to fifteen repetitions for three to five sets. I have found that performing a set of eight repetitions and above does little or nothing for absolute strength while less than eight repetitions, preferably five builds muscle and also increases their strength.

Select and perform the same supplemental and accessory exercises on the max effort and dynamic effort days until you cannot make any progress. One reason for keeping these exercises the same on both days is because you will be using different rep schemes on each day that will have their own benefits. Also, no one particular rep scheme will work for everybody. Some will respond better to low reps, while some will respond better to high reps. So why not do them both?

Based on what I have found from experiments, all the supplemental and accessory exercises should be rotated every 3 weeks. Also, if you feel a particular exercise directly contributes to raising your bench press max, you can use the wave system for it. For example, run a wave with close grip bench press like 230, 235, 240lbs and then begin the next wave with 235,

240, 245lbs. Do not select dozens of supplemental and accessory exercises, select 3-4 and rotate between them

You can also replace max effort or dynamic effort days with repetition effort days. I like to use an ultra-wide grip bench press once every 4th or 5th week instead of max-effort lift to work on building muscle as well as build strength endurance at the same time. This also increases time under tension which I have found to be very crucial in increasing the bench press max. The max effort method can be replaced by the repetition effort method to recover from the severity of training also.

On the dynamic effort days, I like to replace the dynamic bench press with repetition work, performing 6 sets of 6 reps starting with 60%-70% of bench press max on week 1 and increasing the weight by 5lbs-10lbs every week for three weeks and begin the next wave with week 2's weight. If you cannot get any stronger even after running multiple waves, try the 8 x 8 set-rep scheme with week 1's weight and work up in the same manner. Now when you again hit a plateau, go back to 6 x 6. You will notice you have gone way ahead of your plateau. This also increases the volume and widens the training base. I like to follow this method at the start of every training cycle. I learned this from Louie Simmons and Luke Edwards one of my training partners at Westside Barbell. You can also use this method if you are not getting any faster with the dynamic bench sets.

Sample Repetition Workout

Some of the examples of how a repetition effort workout looks like include

1. Close grip bench press – 3 sets

Triceps extensions to throat – 5 sets

Barbell rows – 3 sets

Shrugs – 3 sets

Russian twists – 5 sets

2. Incline close grip press – 3 sets

Skull crushers – 5 sets

Upright rows – 3 sets
Band triceps extension – 2 ultra-high rep sets
Hanging leg raises – 5 sets

3. Ultra-wide grip bench press – 3 sets

Triceps extensions to throat – 5 sets
Meadow rows – 3 sets
Band face pulls – 4 sets
Standing band crunches – 5 sets

4. Spoto Press – 3 sets

Incline elbows out barbell extensions – 4 sets
T-bar rows – 3 sets
Snatch-grip shrugs – 3 sets
Oblique crunches – 5 sets

Mix and match the exercises that address your weaknesses.

General Physical Preparedness

Repetition effort method is also used for general physical preparedness (GPP) training. GPP is defined as your ability to do more work in the least amount of time with less energy expenditure. This means that you should be able to recover in the shortest amount of time. Having interacted with many athletes, I have come to know that majority of them do nothing for GPP which is a big mistake. They are of the perception that they will get strong only by lifting heavy which is not true. One must be in shape to lift heavy weights or perform high volume work else their careers will not last long. If you are not able to recover within 45 seconds between sets, I highly doubt your fitness level.

GPP will build a strong base on which pillars of strength will stand for a long time. General exercises will develop static and dynamic strength and strength-endurance in all the muscles causing an accumulation of morphological changes strengthening the muscles and connective tissues and prepare them for sport-specific strength training. GPP training also corrects muscle imbalances that can arise from sport-specific strength training and

prevents them and the connective tissues from injuries due to the stress of sport-specific strength training. This is the only way in my opinion to avoid injuries – by training the weak muscles and correcting. One best way to improve GPP is to do extra workouts about 12-24 hours after your main training sessions. This will help you increase your work capacity, help you recover from the trauma of high intensity or high volume training sessions and eliminate weaknesses. These extra workouts are almost non-stop and last about 15-20 mins.

Here are some of the extra workout examples

Workout 1: Lying triceps extensions, barbell rows, face pulls

Workout 2: Close grip overhead press, barbell upright rows, JM presses

Workout 3: Banded triceps pressdowns, band pull aparts, hanging leg raises

Workout 4: Close grip bench press, hang cleans, barbell shrugs, abs

The combinations are endless. You can even select one exercise and do it for high reps for which you will use lighter weights. Select the muscles which are holding your bench press back and train the sh** out of them. You will not get better at the bench press by only doing bench press; you have to train your weaknesses. Always remember, *a chain is only as strong as its weakest link*. Regardless of the number of exercises you do, perform high reps and try to keep the workouts almost non-stop. I like to use giant sets or supersets in extra workouts. This builds tremendous work capacity. Also, I like to do bench press with hanging plates for time; holding the bar at various sticking points for time to increase the time under tension. That being said, I will recommend you to first try to cut the rest periods in your main training sessions to increase the workout density before introducing any extra workout in your program unless they are for recovery.

To find if your workout density is on point, see if you can finish your entire bench training session under 75 mins including your warmups and cooldowns. If not, then work on that and if you can, even then try to increase the density of your workouts. When you can no longer increase the density then you can focus on extra workouts.

Start with one extra workout a week and gradually build up. I have seen people do extra workouts only to find their main workouts getting affected negatively. They either use too much weight or try to build up the work capacity too quickly which leads to overtraining. You do not always need extra workouts to recover. Sometimes, rest is the best thing you can give your body to recover. Extra workouts are not the only way to recover. There are various ways which I will elaborate on in chapter 9.

Always know why and when to use extra workouts and when to back off. Use your head and be analytical about your training. This is the key to progress.

CHAPTER 6

BUILDING THE BENCH PRESS

Building the bench press is not a complicated process yet many overcomplicate it. Still, it is not as easy as it sounds. As I said, many are in the impression that you need to bench press to get better at the bench press. This is far from the truth. While you need to bench press to learn the movement pattern, it is not the only thing that will raise your bench press strength. There are lots of things that go into creating a world record bench press: you need to be technically proficient as well as be willing to identify and work on your weaknesses.

Louie Simmons once told me that if I ever want to become great at the bench press, I had to fix my technique and work on my weaknesses and he's right. My bench press was held back because of weak triceps and weak back. When I started working on them, my bench started to improve. The only thing that will hold you back is your weakness. To keep doing things which are you good at is *the rule of dumb* and this will only take you backward. If you're strong overall but your technique is poor, work on your technique or if your technique is spot on and muscle strength is an issue, address it. Do what needs to be done to make you better which will almost always be things you hate to do.

Fix Your Technique

I cannot emphasize how important this is. To possess a world-class bench, your technique should be dialed in. This requires proper setup and correct synchronization between the muscles. The setup should be very tight which makes it easy to press big weights. To set up for the bench, lay on the bench with feet either tucked under or in front of you and eyes a few inches behind the bar. Regardless of feet setup, you should be squeezing the bench with

your inner thigh as hard as you can throughout the lift. Your knees should always be lower than your hips to keep it on the bench. If the need be, put plates under the bench to raise its height.

Reverse grip the bar and arch your upper back and place your traps first a few inches ahead on the pad so that your eyes are lined up with the bar. At this point, you should be feeling the pressure in your traps. Slowly lower your entire body keeping it tight. Tighten your glutes and hamstrings. Now get your grip and squeeze the bar as hard as you can while also trying to bend it as if breaking a stick. Keep the shoulder blades retracted and depressed. Bending the bar will get your elbows tucked automatically and help activate your lats to provide your triceps a stable base of support to press from. This will allow you to generate more force. Do not try to externally rotate your elbows forcefully as it can be counterproductive.

Since your lats are activated now, fill your stomach with big air to lock everything in place and pull the bar out of the rack just like you would do a pullover. Hold the breath till the lift is completed. Stabilize the bar first before lowering it. To lower the barbell, pull the weight down using your lats as if you are doing a row but under control. If your tightness is on point, you won't be able to touch an empty barbell to your chest. Press the bar straight up to the starting position while driving yourself back into the bench pad and stretching the bar at the same time. The stretching attempt will activate your triceps helping you to lockout the weight. An important point to remember is to keep the wrist straight to keep the bar lined up with the elbows for great pressing power.

If you are unsure how your lats should feel while lower the bar, do the reverse band bench press with an empty barbell and pull the bar down like in a row. I would advise you to spend some on the technique with an empty bar or a broomstick before trying to add weight to the barbell. Do not be surprised if you get sore in your legs and back rather than pecs while practicing the technique.

Always pay attention to the tightness. Even a slight looseness can cause your hips to rise and all of the leg drive force will be lost at the hips. All the energy and force should be flowing from the ground through your legs to your upper back and traps and into the bench.

Strong Back = Big Bench

Ask any bench press record holders the secret to a big bench; they will all tell one common thing - **A Strong Back**. A strong back will not only provide a stable base of support but also help in the transfer of force from the legs into the bench. Having a strong back will also help you control the bar on the descent which many lifters struggle with. However, getting your back strong is not enough; you must know how to use it as well.

A strong upper back is key to healthy shoulders. The scapula should always be pinched back during the lift to keep the stress off the shoulders. Lack of upper back strength is also one of the reasons behind not being able to pinch the scapula back and hold them in place which can cause shoulder discomfort. Many lifters have incredibly strong lower and mid-back but lack upper back strength. This makes the lockout and start of the press difficult. Pinched shoulder blades will provide a tighter base to press from and also shorten the distance from the bottom of the press to the lockout.

There are many exercises you can do to strengthen your back. Compound exercises such as barbell rows, t-bar rows, chest supported rows, chin-ups, pullups, etc will work your entire back while direct exercises like face pulls, band pull aparts, upright rows, shrugs are direct upper back exercises. I like to do one exercise from each category in the same session. Barbell rows and T-bar rows will build your back like no other, plus they increase static strength in your erectors which will also help in squat and deadlift. A lot of lifters perform barbell rows from a dead stop. A rule of thumb that I follow that has created a lot of difference in my bench press strength is to train the back with volume that is at least three times the volume of the presses and extensions. I won't recommend doing all that back volume in one session but divide it into different sessions – some on max effort days, some on dynamic effort days, and some during extra workouts. Do these and you will notice a huge difference in your bench press

Significant shoulder strength is also important for pressing big weights. Your shoulders should be strong enough to support the heavy weight but not so strong that it makes the barbell fade over the face while pressing. I like to train the shoulders through single-joint exercises like rear and side delt raises. Also, the rear delt fly is one of the exercises that contributes to the upper

back tightness in the bench and in keeping the shoulders healthy.

Increase Your Triceps Strength

A strong pair of triceps – inner triceps - is the key to a strong bench press lockout. I am a testament to this; I have always been very explosive off the chest but my lockout was always weak. I started working on my triceps strength and my lockout improved. I don't do endless sets of pushdowns or extensions or kickbacks for the pump. I do heavy barbell extensions, JM presses, close grip bench press, close grip pin presses, weighted close grip push-ups, diamond push-ups, etc. In addition, my extra workouts consist of triceps work mostly.

To bench in a straight line, your triceps should always be stronger than your shoulders. My shoulders have always been my strong point and this made me rely on my shoulders for pressing rather than triceps, the result being the bar fading over the face and an injured left shoulder. When my triceps started getting stronger, I started pressing in a straight line. What is the shortest distance between two points? A straight line. So, what should your bar path be? A straight line. Don't get me wrong, shoulder strength IS important as I mentioned earlier but your triceps should be stronger than your shoulders.

Train Your Abs

Abdominals are the most important muscles in the body. They stabilize your spine and handle about 50% of its load. To perform any lift, you need to fill your belly with air, not the chest but the belly. This increases stability and helps with the transfer of forces from the lower extremity to the upper extremity. It is important to practice bracing. To do this, wear a belt on your abs and take a big breath of air in your belly as if trying to break the belt. Your shoulders shouldn't rise otherwise you are doing it wrong. While holding the air feel how stiff your back is, right from the lower back to the upper back. This is abdominal bracing. To get better at bracing, you need to train your abs the right way. Exercises such as standing ab crunches with bands, side bends, hanging leg raises, russian twists all strengthen the abs. You need to be able to hold the air in your belly for at least 5 seconds. To

work on this, while doing standing banded ab crunches pull as much air as possible in your stomach, crunch and hold this position for 3 seconds. Start with 3 seconds and work up to 10 seconds. Also, while doing any ab exercise take a breath in while going to the contracted position.

Identify Your Weakness

Even after having a perfect technique, many miss the lift on the chest, near lockout, or somewhere during the range of motion. Remember *the rule of dumb* I mentioned earlier? Do not follow it; work on your weakness to get better. But, how to identify what weakness you have? Here's how

1. If you can't control the bar during the eccentric portion of the lift, you're not utilizing your lats or your lats are weak or perhaps you are not retracting and depressing your scapula
2. If the barbell travels back during the concentric portion, your triceps need work and you are relying on your shoulders for pressing
3. If you are weak off the chest, you need stronger upper back and abs or your leg drive is weak. It can also be a technical issue.
4. If you are weak at the lockout, your triceps and upper back are weak or you are not spreading the bar while pressing and not pushing yourself down on the bench
5. If your elbows flare out while pressing, your lats are weak

The only way, in my opinion, to find your weakness is to do max effort work.

How To Build The Lockout Strength

To build the lockout strength, work on your triceps. Exercises such as high pin presses, heavy extensions, close grip bench presses, JM presses, close grip inclines done either as supplemental movement or max effort lift will build your triceps. It will take time for you to find the movement that makes

your triceps strong. Just because you like a movement and are getting stronger at it doesn't mean it is the right one. See if it is creating any difference in your bench press lockout. If it isn't, scrap it. Also, practice spreading the bar apart to activate the triceps.

A weak lockout can also be due to upper back weakness. Face pulls, band pull aparts, isometric reverse fly holds are some of my go-to movements. Think while what you need to do while benching and locking out big weights. Drive yourself into the bench and not pushing the bar away from you.

How To Eliminate Sticking Points Halfway Up.

A sticking point means that you are not able to produce enough force to drive the bar to lockout. To address this, close grip bench press with pins set at 1 inch above or below the sticking point, floor presses, bench press with bands as max effort will do the job. This issue is almost always fixed with dynamic bench press as bands teach you to produce required force at the sticking points.

During my time at Westside Barbell, Louie told me to keep the elbows and wrists under the bar and think of it as one unit to fix this issue. Once the wrists bend back, the elbows are no longer under the bar and also the driving force. Every bench press session, practice the technique with the bar first. Try to synchronize everything bottom up. It might take a few repetitions to build the coordination. Once it is there, you can start adding weight to the barbell systematically.

Weak At The Bottom?

This is mostly due to a technical flaw rather than a muscular weakness. Most don't realize this and keep cranking those accessories week after week only to find themselves stuck in that position forever. You need to work on your

technique, your starting position to be specific, to get strong at the bottom. Fill your belly with air and keep the lats and upper back engaged. Rather than trying to bring the bar towards the chest, try bringing the sternum towards the bar which helps maintain the thoracic extension and better starting position. During this entire scene, the feet should be driving the force into the upper back and traps. I can tell you all the exercises in the world to work your upper back and lats but if you don't know the correct technique and how to use those muscles to your advantage, nothing will help you. However, if your technique is right and you still fail at the chest, it is a muscular issue. Work on your upper back and lats to correct that issue. You also need a strong leg drive to initiate the press. For that, I recommend you do squats and deadlifts and work on glutes and hamstrings and knee extensions. Also, doing pause bench press will help in developing strength at the bottom. Besides, some pec isolation work such as a banded fly can help with the bottom end strength.

Whichever exercises you choose as supplemental/accessory to eliminate your weaknesses, you should also select exercises that will build those supplemental/accessory exercises. For example, if you think close grip bench press has a direct carryover to your wide grip bench press, include exercises that will build your close grip bench press. Also know that close grip bench press will always build wide grip bench press and not vice versa and triceps extensions will build your close grip bench press.

The exercises can be classified into three types

1. General
2. Directed
3. Sports-specific

General exercises as already mentioned, build a foundation for directed and sports-specific exercises. These include exercises that strengthen the muscles and connective tissues around the joints in a balanced way, exercises such as extensions, facepulls, etc. The directed exercises will develop strength in movements similar but not identical to the sports-specific exercises. Examples of these are floor press, push-ups, etc. Sports-specific exercises are identical and even duplicates of the movements performed in competition as well as display the same neuromuscular coordination and movement range of motion as in a competitive skill. Thus, these are essentially skill exercises.

Exercises such as wide-grip bench press, close-grip bench press, bench press with a pause at the bottom, etc. I recommend you include all three types of exercises each week for the best results.



CHAPTER 7

EXERCISE INDEX

In this chapter you will find exercises you can perform with minimal equipment to strengthen the weak muscles.

1. Upper back and traps

- Close grip barbell upright rows
- Wide grip barbell upright rows
- Barbell power shrugs
- Barbell shrugs
- Snatch grip barbell shrugs
- Barbell rows to the chest
- Meadow rows
- Pull-ups
- Barbell hang cleans
- Barbell power cleans
- Band pull aparts
- Face pulls
- Band upright rows
- Chest supported barbell rows
- Snatch grip deadlift

2. Lats

- Barbell rows with overhand grip
- Barbell rows with underhand grip
- T-bar rows
- Meadow rows

- Chin-ups
- Chest supported barbell rows
- Banded low rows
- Reverse band supine rows
- Barbell rows from dead stop
- Rack deadlifts with overhand grip

3. Triceps

- Lying triceps extensions to throat
- Lying triceps extensions to forehead
- Lying triceps extensions to nose
- Barbell rollbacks
- JM presses
- Close grip bench presses
- Close grip incline presses
- Band pushdowns
- French presses with straight bar
- Close grip elbows out barbell presses
- Diamond push-ups with feet elevated or on the ground
- Close-grip push-ups with feet elevated or on the ground
- Landmine lying triceps extensions
- Landmine lying triceps presses

4. Shoulders

- Barbell rear delt rows
- Wide grip upright rows
- Front plate raises
- Side laterals with plates
- Bent-over rear delt fly with plates
- Standing barbell shoulder presses

- Seated barbell shoulder presses
- Steep incline barbell presses with regular grip
- Barbell Z-presses
- Landmine one-arm shoulder presses

5. Abdominals

- Weighted russian twists
- Hanging leg raises
- Weighted side bends
- Landmine rotations
- Weighted sit-ups
- Side (suitcase) deadlifts
- Standing abdominal crunches with bands

And the list goes on. You can add bands and/or perform these exercises off pins at various heights to introduce variety to training. Keep in mind, there should be a reason behind selecting an exercise and you should be aware of it. If you're not aware you are wasting your precious time.

CHAPTER 8

MEET PREPARATION

In this chapter, you will find a meet preparation cycle that I have designed for myself and will produce a bench PR in the meet. It consists of varying the intensity each week until last week which is a deload week for a delayed transformation. The purpose of delayed transformation is supercompensation – complete restoration of energy stores as well as return of metabolism to above the baseline values. This leads to the realization of strength gains and technical and psychological proficiency on the competition day. A delayed transformation phase is a must for every athlete irrespective of their sport.

I have written this cycle from 37 days out until meet day. The intensities vary only on the max effort days which is Wednesday for me. The dynamic effort days will be as usual except the last week where the number of sets is reduced from 9 to 6. The supplemental and accessory volume will increase up to 16 days out and then tapered down till 9 days out with the final week being total rest.

- 37 days out from the meet, perform a 6RM ultra-wide grip bench press
- 30 days out, take your opener (first attempt) which should be your 3RM in training
- 23 days out, take 80% of your opener for 3 reps. You can do more but we don't want to increase stress on the body.
- 16 days out, take the second attempt which will be 5 or 10lbs more than your identified opener
- 9 days out, do ultra-wide grip bench for 6RM.
- Meet day

In the final week, do some active rest like a walk in the park to burn some extra calories and to get fresh air. Try to avoid most, if not all, the stressors. The final week is to relieve the mind and body of all the stress accumulated from training. Use as much restoration methods as possible except the extra

workouts.

Don't think about your competitors as you cannot control any of them. Focus on your planned numbers. Remember not to do any exercise in the meet week as you cannot get any stronger from here but you can certainly get weaker.

Good Luck

CHAPTER 9

RECOVERY, PRE-HAB, & REHAB

Strength training is a game of longevity. It is easy for anyone to build strength by lifting increased poundages in the gym but it is difficult to keep getting stronger in the long run. We all fall or have fallen into the category of “heavy hitters”, going heavy all the time in the gym to gain some serious strength, especially when we are noticing quick strength gains. Strength gains bring huge motivation with them which makes us crave more heavyweights. This in turn quickly taxes our CNS and our bodies – quicker than we can imagine. The pursuit of getting strong involves a crucial, often overlooked aspect: Recovery. For me, recovery is the biggest piece in the strength training puzzle game. Your ability to keep getting stronger in the long run depends on how well you are recovering inter and intra-workout. That is why I always say strength training is not complicated yet made complicated by many.

Why do you need to recover? A well-recovered athlete will have a higher testosterone/cortisol ratio, fully restored energy stores, lowered blood lactate levels, and optimal functioning of energy systems. This results in a higher level of performance in the next training session. In the offseason, I believe athletes should employ natural means of recovery which allow the body to recover on its own.

When does recovery become a crucial factor? It is in the last weeks of the competition preparation phase when the body has worn down. It is during this time when you cannot get any stronger but you can certainly get weaker on

the meet day if you are not recovered well. You need to employ some advanced recovery methods during this time such as cryotherapy to accelerate tissue repair and remodelling. For me, every athlete should pay attention to recovery after every strenuous training session.

Here are my top 5 natural ways to recover from strenuous resistance training sessions that will keep you in the game for a long time.

1. Sleep:

Sometimes simple things like getting quality sleep can create a huge difference in your ability to recover better. Getting proper sleep will keep the plasma cortisol levels low and an increased growth hormone circulation which stimulates the repair, maintenance, and rebuilding of tissues after the exercise session. Sleep deprivation increases fatigue, irritability, mood swings, impairs inter and intramuscular coordination and cognitive ability, impairs immune system functioning, increases breakdown of muscles and decreases sports performance. I prefer sleeping at least 7 hours a night which prevents all these symptoms. Sleep quality can be enhanced by setting the proper room temperature to about 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Try to avoid using electronic equipment at least 30 minutes before your preferred sleeping time. A great strategy to improve sleep quality is to have a hot bath during the late evening. Another way is to keep the head cool and feet warm. Also, try to get a few naps here and there whenever you can. It helps accelerate recovery.

2. Nutrition:

It's a well-known, established fact that a proper nutrition plan with

sufficient calories will help build, maintain, and repair muscle tissue and keep the muscle breakdown at bay. When focusing on nutrition for recovery it is important to keep the calories in surplus not too much in excess but sufficient and with most of the calories coming from carbohydrates. Keep the carbs intake high during pre, post, and intraworkout to get the advantage of insulin. This will keep your muscle glycogen stores full and help you train efficiently and recover better. Ingesting carbohydrate post intensive strength training sessions helps improves my brain functioning and helps me perform tasks efficiently at work. This shows a link between carbohydrate intake and enhanced cognitive ability although there are some research showing the opposite findings.

3. Extra Workouts:

Extra workouts should be a part of any training program but there always has to be a reason why they should be included. Extra workouts play 3 roles, they can help you strengthen your weak muscles, increase general physical preparedness (GPP), or serve as active recovery. Extra workouts can also include stretching sessions to aid in an enhanced range of motion. My favourite extra workout is sled dragging for long trips which helps in increasing GPP and facilitate recovery, band training for time and pool walking which reduces gravitational force during walking due to buoyancy effect. You can also do some high repetition work for sore muscles. Even a small 10-minute walk with the nature every day, if you are not doing so already, can help you recover. Extra workouts should take about 15-20 minutes to complete.

4. Deloads:

Properly planned and timed deload weeks help reduce neural fatigue due to manageable intensity and volume. The main intention of deload is to restore the body and mind for a superior performance especially before the competition (delayed transformation). It also reduces stress on your joints and its components and helps in injury prevention as well. I personally like to use the wave method as it has a deload built in it but sometimes there can be a need to have an extra deload week. I know it is difficult to stay away from heavyweights if you have been bitten by the iron bug but trust me it really pays off to have a deload week in your schedule.

5. Parasympathetic Nervous System Recovery:

Strength training activates your sympathetic nervous system which puts your body in an alert mode, too much of which results in adrenal burnout and a decreased performance. Activating your parasympathetic nervous system through means such as meditation results in increased CNS recovery, synthesis of growth hormone, inhibition of cortisol and decreased catabolism during rest, all of which, helps in improved performance. Benefits of parasympathetic nervous system activation can also be gained by deep tissue massages, hot shower, listening to soothing music or even simply engaging in breathing exercises.

Other Means Of Recovery:

1. Some other means of recovery include
2. Pharmaceutical agents
3. Ice bath
4. Contrast shower

5. Dry sauna
6. Deep tissue rolfing
7. Electrostimulation
8. Laser biostimulation
9. Stretching
10. Yoga
11. Chiropractic adjustments

It is important to note that just like athletes adapt to training, they adapt to recovery methods too. Make use of everything at your disposal but remember nothing will work forever. Recovery methods must be rotated to maintain their effectiveness.

Pre-Habilitation

I am a big believer in pre-habilitation rather than rehabilitation. The purpose of pre-habilitation is to keep you injury-free, especially after the meet when you are returning to the gym with a fatigued body. I know we all want to get back to the gym and start hoisting big weights, but believe me, if you jump straight back to the big weights, you will be inviting injuries and shortening your lifting career.

Think about it, your body is already beat up from the meet and you are also mentally drained, so does it make any sense to load the already destroyed body and CNS? Wouldn't it be wise to do things that will rebuild your body and address any soft tissue problems that can otherwise hamper your lifting ability? Got it?

Pre-habilitation is not something you do only at the start of another offseason. It must be done periodically in the off-season. Below are some of the things I do occasionally to keep myself injury-free – things that I have learned at Westside Barbell and during my Biomedical Engineering degree program. I am not a doctor and therefore would not recommend anyone to do this on their own.

Heavy squats, especially with a regular bar, are hard on shoulders. To prevent it from happening, I do bench press with a PVC pipe and plates hanging from

it using bands. This makes the pipe oscillate creating lots of muscle contractions in the shoulder and upper back and all the stabilizer muscles. All these muscles are challenged to keep the oscillating pipe in the right path as the lifter executes the movement. This is way harder than the barbell version. It also forces the lifter to stay tight throughout the movement, enforcing the correct technique to press the bar from point A to B in the bench press. Any loss of tightness will make the lift harder to execute and unmanageable. You do not have to load a ton of weight – even two 25lbs plates a side are enough. I also like to do these as warmups sometimes to teach my body correct positioning and tightness. These can also be done for time holding the bar at the worst leverage position. These can also be done for rehabilitation.

To keep the hip and lower back injury-free, I perform 30+ reps of reverse hyperextension. It always prepares my body for the heavy squat and deadlift. The spine has lots of segments - the vertebrae - and it is essential to have intersegmental motion to keep the spine flexible. The compression of the spine as encountered in squat and deadlift leads to the compression of the intervertebral discs whose function is to separate the adjacent vertebral bodies and increase the available motion between them. Too much of this compression will cause disc issues because of the loss of the fluid in the discs. Therefore, it is essential to decompress the spine periodically to keep it healthy. The reverse hyper machine will facilitate intersegmental motion and improve disc hydration. If you don't have a reverse hyperextension machine, it is advisable to visit a physical therapist for controlled articular rotations (CARs) at the hip joint.

For ligaments and tendons at the elbow, I like to do 2 sets of 100+ repetitions of banded triceps extensions every bench press workout. The ligaments and tendons have lesser blood supply than muscles and therefore it takes high repetitions to pump blood in them. Heavy barbell extensions can be very hard on the joints therefore it is important to keep banded extensions in the routine.

Rehabilitation

There will be times when you will have muscle pulls and joint issues. At this point, it is always recommended to see your therapist and get the diagnosis

and treatment procedure in place. However, many times diagnosis is wrong. My father was misdiagnosed with cervical spondylitis. After running back and forth the therapist's clinic for months, his problem wasn't cured. I asked him to do facepulls with mini bands for a few sets of 10 reps every day for two weeks. After two weeks, there was no pain and no restriction in the cervical spine motion.

When I have a problem with shoulders from bench press, I perform lots of facepulls with bands. Most of the time, pain and discomfort in my anterior delt because of my weak upper back. Thus, I like to train my upper back with lots of volume. I also like to do rolling with the tennis ball to find the tender spots in the scapular muscles and breathe and relax. Breathing and relaxing allows the tennis ball to sink in those spots and open the knots if any, reducing or eliminating the pain near the acromioclavicular joint.

In addition, I do lots of isometric upper-back contraction without added resistance. To do these, lie in the prone position with arms extended to the side, palms facing down. Contract your upper back which should lift your arms and hold the contracted position for as long as you can. Relax and return to the starting position. Perform 8-10 repetitions or more if you can. Some stretching of the tight pectoral muscles also helps in easing the front delt pain and discomfort.

While above are my go-to things for pre-hab and re-hab, there are many things you can do. It is always better to try and understand what the problem is and the root cause of it and then try to work on it. If you can't understand the problem, it is best to visit your doctor and get the treatment done.





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BONUS - 12 WEEKS BENCH PRESS PR PROGRAM

Week 1

Monday: Lower Body

Do the following exercises to build lower body and core strength. Don't go crazy heavy with it. Focus on the volume.

Box squats

Ultra-wide sumo deadlift

Ultra-high rep seated banded leg curls

Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

This is a recovery day. If the lower back is sore from the previous day, do some good mornings with mini bands for a set or two of 50-100 reps. This will help flush out the lactic acid. Get some sound sleep and engage in some breathing exercises, meditation especially.

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Ultra-wide grip bench press.

- Index finger 1 or 2 inches away from the power ring
- Work up to a 6-rep max

Close grip bench press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 3 sets of 5 reps
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 8 reps without any warm up

Barbell rows

- Overhand grip
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique

Face pulls

- Use a single light band
- Perform 3 sets of 15 reps
- Hold the contractions for a second in each rep

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 15 reps
- Squeeze the muscle hard each rep

Hanging leg raises

- 5 sets of 10 reps

Thursday: Recovery day

If your triceps are sore from previous day, do a couple sets of band pushdowns for 50-100 reps each. This will pump blood and remove the lactic from the muscles. It will also drive blood into the ligaments and tendons at the elbow. If your back is sore, do band pulldowns or pull aparts for high reps. Whatever you decide to do, do not go too crazy with it. Our goal for today is recovery.

Friday: Lower Body

Do the following exercises for moderate volume

Squats

Deficit conventional deadlift

Band pull throughs

Abs

Saturday: Repetition Effort Upper Body

Ultra-wide grip bench press

- Use 60% of your 1RM competition bench press
- Perform 6 sets of 6 reps

Close grip bench press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 10 reps without any warm up

Barbell rows

- Overhand grip
- Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps with good technique

Face pulls

- Use two mini bands
- Perform 3 sets of 25 reps
- Focus on holding the contraction for a second each rep

Bent over rear delt raises

- Perform 3 sets of 25 reps
- Flex the muscle hard each rep
- These should burn near the end of last set

Hanging leg raises

- 4 sets of 12 reps

Sunday: Recovery Day

Do mobility work.

Week 2

Monday: Lower Body

Increase the weight by 20lbs and focus on volume

Box squats
Ultra-wide sumo deadlift
Ultra-high rep seated banded leg curls
Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Same as last week

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Reverse band bench press (Light bands)

- Work up to a 1 RM
- Close grip
- Don't miss the weight

(If you miss the weight, don't take it again. Make jumps as indicated in the Chapter 3. Keep reminding yourself what proper technique is and have your training partners give cues while you lift)

Close grip bench press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 3 sets of 5 reps
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged
- Try to beat last week's number

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 8 reps without any warm up
- Take 5lbs more than last week

Barbell rows

- Overhand grip
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique
- Add 10lbs on each side

Face pulls

- Use a single light band
- Perform 3 sets of 20 reps
- Pull explosively without body swing and flex the muscle hard each rep

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 20 reps to burnout

Hanging leg raises

- 5 sets of 12 reps

Thursday: Recovery day

Same as last week

Friday: Lower Body

Same as last week but increase the weight

Saturday: Repetition Effort Upper Body

Ultra-wide grip bench press

- Beat last week's weight by 10lbs
- Perform 6 sets of 6 reps

Close grip bench press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged
- Add 5lbs more to last week's weight

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 10 reps without any warm up
- Do 5lbs more than last Saturday

Barbell rows

- Overhand grip
- Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps with good technique
- Add more weight to the bar.

Face pulls

- Use two mini bands
- Perform 3 sets of 30 reps

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a 10lbs plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 30 reps

Hanging leg raises

- 4 sets of 15 reps

Sunday: Recovery Day

Stretch

Week 3

Monday: Lower Body

Increase the weight by 20lbs again and reduce the number of sets in first two exercise by 1

Box squats

Ultra-wide sumo deadlift

Ultra-high rep seated banded leg curls

Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Same as last week. Flush out the lactic acid.

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Band bench press (Doubled mini bands)

- Work up to a 1 RM
- Competition grip
- Don't miss the weight

(If you miss the weight, don't take it again. Make jumps as indicated in the Chapter 3. Keep reminding yourself what proper technique is and have your training partners give cues while you lift)

Close grip bench press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 3 sets of 5 reps
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged
- Try to beat last week's number by 5lbs

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 8 reps without any warm up
- 5lbs more than last week

Barbell rows

- Overhand grip
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique
- Add 10lbs more on each side

Face pulls

- Use a single light band
- Perform 3 sets of 25 reps
- Just like last time flex the muscle hard

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 25 reps
- Take the last set to burnout

Hanging oblique crunches

- 5 sets of 10 reps

Thursday: Recovery day

Same as last week

Friday: Lower Body

Same as last week but increase the weight

Saturday: Repetition Effort Upper Body

Ultra-wide grip bench press

- Beat last week's weight by 10lbs
- Perform 6 sets of 6 reps

Close grip bench press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged

- Add 5lbs more to last week's weight

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 10 reps without any warm up
- Do 5lbs more than last Saturday

Barbell rows

- Overhand grip
- Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps with good technique
- Add more weight to the bar.

Face pulls

- Use a two mini bands
- Perform 4 sets of 25 reps
- Perform slower eccentrics

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 4 sets of 25 reps
- Perform slower eccentrics.

Hanging oblique crunches

- 4 sets of 12 reps

Sunday: Recovery day.

Do some stretching today.

Week 4

Monday: Lower Body

Change the exercises for this wave and focus on the volume.

Box front squats

Romanian deadlift

Ultra-high rep banded good mornings

Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Get some massage if possible.

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Band bench press (Doubled light bands)

- Work up to a 1 RM with competition grip
- Keep in mind, this is a lot of band tension. Keep yourself tight and warmup the joints thoroughly
- Focus on accelerating the bar and outrun the bands
- Don't miss the weight

(If you miss the weight, don't take it again. Make jumps as indicated in the Chapter 3. Keep reminding yourself what proper technique is and have your training partners give cues while you lift)

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps
- Press with the triceps

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 5 sets of 5 reps without any warm up

T-bar rows

- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 3 sets of 10 reps
- Focus on pulling from the upper back and squeeze the muscles at the top.

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 12 reps

Hanging oblique crunches

- 5 sets of 12 reps

Barbell reverse curls

- 3 sets of 20 reps with light weight

Thursday: Recovery day

Same as last week

Friday: Lower Body

Sumo stance deadlift 6RM

Seated good mornings, 2 sets of 10 reps

Hip bridge

Abs

Saturday: Repetition Effort Upper Body

Ultra-wide grip bench press

- Start this wave with week 2's weight
- Perform 6 sets of 6 reps

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Press with the triceps

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 10 reps without any warm up
- Do 5lbs more than last Saturday

T-bar rows

- Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps with good technique

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 2 sets of 20 reps

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 20 reps

Hanging oblique crunches
- 5 sets of 15 reps

Sunday: Recovery day.
Do some stretching today.

Week 5

Monday: Lower Body

Same goal but with more weight
Box front squats
Romanian deadlift
Ultra-high rep banded good mornings
Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Practice mindfulness today and rest well

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Close grip concentric pin press
- Set the pins first at the chest level and max out and then at height corresponding to sticking point
- You will get 2 maxes (at the chest and at the sticking point)

Close grip incline bench press
- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps
- Press with the triceps
- Beat last week's weight by 5lbs

Barbell triceps extension to the throat
- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 5 sets of 5 reps without any warm up
- Do 5lbs more than last week

T-bar rows

- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique
- Use more weight than last time

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 3 sets of 10 reps with more weight
- Focus on pulling from the upper back and squeeze the muscles at the top.

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 12 reps

Weighted situps

- 5 sets of 10 reps

Barbell reverse curls

- 3 sets of 20 reps with light weight

Thursday: Recovery day

Same as last week

Friday: Lower Body

Front squats, 3RM

Sumo stance stiff legged deadlift, 2 sets of 6 reps

Hip bridge

Abs

Saturday: Repetition Effort Upper Body

Ultra-wide grip bench press

- Start this wave with week 2's weight
- Perform 6 sets of 6 reps

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps with heavier weight
- Press with the triceps

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 10 reps without any warm up
- Do 5lbs more than last Saturday

T-bar rows

- Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps with good technique and heavier weight

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 2 sets of 20 reps with little more weight

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 20 reps

Weighted situps

- 4 sets of 12 reps

Sunday: Recovery day.

Stretch.

Week 6

Monday: Lower Body

Add weight but reduce the number of sets in the first two exercises by 1

Box front squats

Romanian deadlift

Ultra-high rep banded good mornings

Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Same as last week

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Reverse band bench press (Average bands)

- Work up to 1RM with competition grip
- Use proper technique

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps
- Press with the triceps
- Beat last week's weight by 5lbs

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 5 sets of 5 reps without any warm up
- Do 5lbs more than last week

T-bar rows

- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique
- Use more weight than last time

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 3 sets of 10 reps with more weight
- Focus on pulling from the upper back and squeeze the muscles at the top.

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 12 reps

Weighted situps

- 5 sets of 12 reps

Barbell reverse curls

- 3 sets of 20 reps with light weight

Thursday: Extra workouts

2 Giant sets

Diamond push-ups – 10 reps

Band upright rows – 50 reps

Chest supported barbell rows – 25 reps

Friday

Off day

Saturday: Repetition Effort Upper Body

Ultra-wide grip bench press

- Start this wave with week 2's weight
- Perform 6 sets of 6 reps

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Press with the triceps

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 10 reps without any warm up
- Do 5lbs more than last Saturday

T-bar rows

- Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps with good technique and heavier weight

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 2 sets of 20 reps with little more weight

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 20 reps with more weight

Weighted situps

- 4 sets of 15 reps
- Use more weight than last week

Sunday: Recovery day.

Stretch.

Week 7

Monday: Lower Body

Do the first one with a low volume and increased intensity (heavier weight)

Box squat (2 triples)

Speed deficit deadlift (12 single reps)
Unilateral glute bridges
Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Flush out lactic acid with high rep band exercises. Sleep well and recover

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Ultra-wide grip bench press.

- Index finger 1 or 2 inches away from the power ring
- Work up to a 6-rep max
- You should be able to do 10lbs more than week 1

Close grip spoto press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 3 sets of 5 reps
- Stop 2 inches short of touching chest and pause for 2 seconds
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged

Barbell triceps extensions to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 8 reps without any warm up
- Weight should be about 20lbs less than last week's

Meadow rows

- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique

Barbell shrugs

- Do 3 sets of 10 reps with proper technique

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 15 reps
- Squeeze the muscle hard each rep
- Use heavier weight than what you did last time.

Hanging leg raises

- 3 sets of 20 reps

Thursday: Arm day

Train your arms in superset fashion with the movements of your choice. Do not go heavy. Just pump some blood in those guns.

Friday: Lower Body

Do the following exercises for moderate volume

Squats

Sumo deadlift with bands

Band pull throughs

Abs

Saturday: Dynamic Effort Upper Body

Dynamic Effort Bench Press

- Perform 9 sets of 3 reps with 40% of 1RM competition bench press as bar weight and doubled mini bands
- Use close, medium and wide grip

Close grip spoto press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Stop 2 inches short of touching chest and pause for 2 seconds
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged

Barbell triceps extensions to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 12 reps without any warm up

Meadow rows

- 3 sets of 15 reps

Barbell shrugs

- Do 3 sets of 15 reps with proper technique

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 15 reps
- Squeeze the muscle hard each rep

Hanging leg raises
- 3 sets of 20 reps

Sunday: Recovery Day

Do mobility work.

Week 8

Monday: Lower Body

Since a higher intensity was used last monday, focus on the volume today

Box squats

Conventional deadlift with bands

Ultra-high rep seated banded leg curls

Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Same as last week

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Reverse band bench press (Light bands)

- Work up to a 1 RM
- Close grip
- Get a 5lbs PR in this variation

Close grip spoto press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 3 sets of 5 reps
- Stop 2 inches short of touching chest and pause for 2 seconds
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged
- Beat last week's weight by 5lbs

Barbell triceps extensions to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 8 reps without any warm up

- Use 5lbs more than last time

Meadow rows

- Overhand grip
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique

Barbell shrugs

- Do 3 sets of 10 reps with proper technique and 20lbs more weight

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 15 reps
- Squeeze the muscle hard each rep

Hanging leg raises

- 4 sets of 20 reps

Thursday: Recovery day

Same as last week

Friday: Lower Body

Same as last week but increase the weight

Saturday: Repetition Effort Upper Body

Dynamic Effort Bench Press

- Perform 9 sets of 3 reps against doubled mini bands
- Use close, medium and wide grip
- Increase the bar weight by 5lbs

Close grip spoto press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Stop 2 inches short of touching chest and pause for 2 seconds
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged
- Add 5lbs more to the bar than last time

Barbell triceps extensions to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth

- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 12 reps with more weight, without any warm up

Meadow rows

- 3 sets of 15 reps

Barbell shrugs

- Do 3 sets of 15 reps with proper technique

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 15 reps
- Squeeze the muscle hard each rep

Hanging leg raises

- 4 sets of 20 reps

Sunday: Recovery Day

Stretch

Week 9

Monday: Lower Body

Focus on the volume. Increase the weight by 20 lbs in squat and deadlift.

Box squats

Sumo deadlift with bands

Ultra-high rep banded good mornings

Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Same as last week

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Band bench press (Doubled mini bands)

- Work up to a 1 RM
- Competition grip
- Get a 5lbs PR

Close grip spot press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 3 sets of 5 reps
- Stop 2 inches short of touching chest and pause for 2 seconds
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged
- Beat last week's number by 5lbs

Barbell triceps extensions to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 8 reps without any warm up
- Use 5lbs more than last time

Meadow rows

- Overhand grip
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique and more weight

Barbell shrugs

- Do 3 sets of 10 reps with proper technique and 20lbs more

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 15 reps
- Squeeze the muscle hard each rep

Hanging leg raises

- 5 sets of 20 reps

Thursday: Recovery day

Same as last week

Friday: Lower Body

Same as last week but increase the weight

Saturday: Repetition Effort Upper Body

Dynamic Effort Bench Press

- Perform 9 sets of 3 reps against double mini bands
- Use close, medium and wide grip

- Increase the bar weight by 5lbs

Close grip spotto press

- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Stop 2 inches short of touching chest and pause for 2 seconds
- Push the bar straight up and keep the lats engaged
- Add 5lbs more to the bar than last time

Barbell triceps extensions to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 4 sets of 12 reps with more weight, without any warm up

Meadow rows

- 3 sets of 15 reps

Barbell shrugs

- Do 3 sets of 15 reps with proper technique

Bent over rear delt raises

- Grab a plate in each hand
- Perform 3 sets of 15 reps
- Squeeze the muscle hard each rep

Hanging leg raises

- 5 sets of 20 reps

Sunday: Recovery Day

Stretch

Week 10

Monday: Lower Body

Below parallel box squat for a 5RM

Good mornings for 2 sets of 10 reps

Banded pull throughs

Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Same as last week

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Band bench press (Doubled light bands)

- Work up to a 1 RM with competition grip
- Keep in mind, this is a lot of band tension. Keep yourself tight and warmup the joints thoroughly
- Focus on accelerating the bar and outrun the bands
- Don't miss the weight
- Get a 5lbs PR

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps
- Press with the triceps
- Start the wave with week 5's weight

JM press

- Learn and practice the technique
- Perform 4 sets of 10 reps

Barbell rows

- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 3 sets of 10 reps
- Focus on pulling from the upper back and squeeze the muscles at the top.

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 12 reps

Russian twists

As many as you can do for multiple sets

Thursday: Recovery day

Same as last week

Friday: Lower Body

Front squats

Sumo stance stiff legged deadlift

Hip bridge

Abs

Saturday: Dynamic Effort Upper Body

Dynamic Effort Bench Press

- Perform 9 sets of 3 reps with 40% of 1RM bar weight against doubled monster mini bands
- Use close, medium, and wide grip

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Press with the triceps

JM press

- Learn and practice the technique
- Perform 4 sets of 15 reps

Barbell rows

- Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps with good technique

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 2 sets of 20 reps

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 20 reps

Sunday: Recovery day.

Do some stretching today.

Week 11

Monday: Lower Body

Work up to 3RM Box front squats

Romanian deadlift

Ultra-high rep banded lying leg curls

Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Same as last week

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Close grip concentric pin press

- Break your both pin records by 5lbs

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps
- Press with the triceps
- Beat last week's weight by 5lbs

Barbell triceps extension to the throat

- Middle finger on the smooth.
- Elbows tucked in
- Perform 5 sets of 5 reps without any warm up
- Do 5lbs more than last week

T-bar rows

- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique
- Use more weight than last time

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 3 sets of 10 reps with more weight
- Focus on pulling from the upper and squeeze muscles at the top

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 12 reps

Weighted situps

- 5 sets of 10 reps

Thursday: Recovery day

Same as last week

Friday: Lower Body

Front squats

Sumo stance stiff legged deadlift

Hip bridge

Abs

Saturday: Dynamic Effort Upper Body

Dynamic Effort Bench Press

- Perform 9 sets of 3 reps against doubled monster mini bands
- Use close, medium and wide grip
- 5lbs heavier than last week

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Press with the triceps

JM press

- Learn and practice the technique
- Perform 4 sets of 15 reps
- 5lbs more added to the bar this week

Barbell rows

- Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps with good technique

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 2 sets of 20 reps

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 20 reps

Week 12

Monday: Lower Body

Box front squats for volume

Romanian deadlift

Ultra-high rep seated banded leg curls

Abs

Tuesday: Rest and Recovery

Same as last week

Wednesday: Max Effort Upper Body

Reverse band bench press (Average bands)

- Work up to 1RM with competition grip
- Use proper technique

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps
- Press with the triceps
- Start the wave with week 5's weight

JM press

- Learn and practice the technique
- Perform 4 sets of 10 reps
- Use 5lbs more than last week

Barbell rows

- Work up to 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with good technique
- Heavier than last time

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 3 sets of 10 reps
- Focus on pulling from the upper back and squeeze the muscles at the top.

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 12 reps

Russian twists

As many as you can do for multiple sets

Thursday: Recovery day

Same as last week

Friday: Lower Body

Front squats

Sumo stance stiff legged deadlift

Hip bridge

Abs

Saturday: Dynamic Effort Upper Body

Dynamic Effort Bench Press

- Perform 9 sets of 3 reps with 40% of 1RM bar weight against doubled monster mini bands
- Use close, medium and wide grip

Close grip incline bench press

- Set the bench to 45° angle
- Index finger on the smooth part of the bar
- Stop the bar about 2-3 inches from the chest.
- Work up to 2 sets of 10 reps
- Press with the triceps

JM press

- Learn and practice the technique
- Perform 4 sets of 15 reps

Barbell rows

- Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps with good technique

Close grip upright rows

- Perform 2 sets of 20 reps

Side delt raises with plate

- 3 sets of 20 reps

Sunday: Recovery day.

Stretch.

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DYNAMO
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BENCH STRONG

Increase Your Bench Press Strength with Minimal Equipment

Shobit Jain is the owner of Dynamo Strength Equipment Co. and The Dungeons Gym in India. He has been in strength training circuit over a decade, competing in both Bodybuilding and Powerlifting. He also holds a Master's degree in Biomedical Engineering along with numerous fitness training certifications. He currently helps lifters improve their lifts especially the bench press using his experience gained at Westside Barbell under the guidance of Louie Simmons.

This book dives into the theory and practice of bench press training. It gives its readers an inside look into the methods and their execution for creating a world-class bench press. Some of the key highlights are,

- Most productive training methods
- Sample method-wise training plan
- Dynamic effort periodization samples
- Bench press technique explanation
- Identification & elimination of weaknesses
- How to build the bench press strength
- Exercise Index
- Meet preparation plan
- BONUS: 12-week bench press PR program

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