

Bulking Up --Strength & Health, November 1968. By John McCallum

Years ago, a fool proof method of bulking up was discovered. And yet gaining weight is a major problem with bodybuilders today because the old method somehow got lost in the shuffle. It's too bad, because gaining weight is really no problem. Bulking up is far and away the easiest part of bodybuilding.

If you want to make use of some old gold and really apply yourself, you can gain lots of weight. If you want to quit scratching around for something new for a couple of months, you can get as bulky as you want.

Let's review the old method, and then we'll outline a program for you.

We can sum up the essentials very quickly. Squats and milk. That's the gist of it. Heavy squats and lots of milk and never mind if the principle is years old.

If you're in doubt, let me tell you this. I get scores of letters from lifters around the country who've tried the squats and milk program. They all say the same thing. They gained more weight in a month on the squats and milk than they had in a year or more on other types of programs. Gains of twenty to thirty pounds in a month are not uncommon. If you don't gain at least ten pounds a month you're doing something wrong.

Let's take it piece by piece. We'll start with the milk bit.

The bodybuilders who don't gain well on milk usually fail because they misunderstand the instructions to drink a lot of it. I've met a few men who thought a couple glasses was a lot. That's not what I mean. When I say a lot of milk, I'm talking about a gallon or so a day. A gallon of milk a day may sound excessive, and perhaps it is, but it's a sure guarantee of fast gains.

You can even soup up the milk a bit by adding a few items to it; like a day's supply of protein supplement, some ice cream or maybe some skim milk powder. Either way, just make sure you drink a gallon a day.

The other essential to the program is the squat. This, like the milk, is often badly misunderstood. Let's outline a bulking up routine for you, and discuss the squat in its proper place in the program.

You should start your program with a brief warmup. Spend about five minutes bending and twisting, doing light repetition snatches or cleans, sit-ups, running in place, and so on. Don't wear yourself out on the warmup. Just get your blood moving and a good feeling about the whole thing.

Your first exercise is the press behind the neck. Do three sets of twelve reps.

Don't be frightened by the relatively high reps, and don't be stampeded into using low rep stuff. The value of low reps has been greatly exaggerated. Moderately high reps, properly used, provide umpteen times the growth stimulation, and are so much better for your health that comparisons become ridiculous.

Do the presses in strict style with a medium width grip. Work hard on them and try to force the poundage way up. There's no use kidding yourself on this or any other exercise. If you use baby sized weights, then you can expect baby sized muscles. It's as simple as that and there's no way out of it.

If you want respectable deltoid, trapezius, and triceps development, then you've got to work up to about three-quarters of your body weight for the twelve reps. That means around 105 pounds for a 140 pound man, 120 pounds for a 160 pound man, 150 pounds for a 200 pound man, and so on. Nothing less will do. If you think it will, forget it.

The biggest fallacy in weight training is the foisted notion that you can build big powerful muscles without hard work on heavy weights. You can't do it, brothers, and you're wasting your time trying. If you're not gaining like you should, give your training poundages a long hard look. The fault may be entirely yours.

Take a short rest after the presses. The next exercise is the big one, the key to the whole thing, the squat. You'll do one set of twenty reps, in puff and pant style, with all the weight you can handle.

Twenty rep squats are the solution to everybody's weight gaining problems. They'll stimulate growth beyond belief if you work hard enough on them.

Warm up your knees with a few free squats and then start right in on the heavy stuff. Take three huge gulping breaths between each rep. Hold the last breath and squat. Blast the air out violently as you come erect.

Hold your head up and keep your back as flat as possible. Don't go below parallel position. You should use a weight so heavy that the last five reps are doubtful. I continually get letters from trainees complaining about their slow gains in bodyweight. Eventually I find out they're using weights in the squat that an old lady with arthritis could lift.

You've gotta force the poundage. 150% of your bodyweight for twenty reps is rock bottom minimum. That means 300 pounds for a 200 pound man. And remember, that's a minimum figure. You should figure on going well above that.

As soon as you finish the squats, do twenty pullovers with a light weight. Twenty pounds or so is plenty. All you want to do is give your rib box a good stretch.

The next exercise is the bench press. This exercise has been published enough so that you shouldn't need any special instruction on it.

Do three sets in a rather loose style.

The next exercise is bent over rowing. Do three sets of fifteen in very strict style. Rest your forehead on a block or lean it against a post or something to make sure you don't cheat. Use a medium width grip and pull the bar to your lower abdomen.

The next exercise is the stiff legged deadlift. One set of fifteen reps. Do the deadlifts standing on a bench or a high block so that you can go all the way down without the plates hitting the floor. Concentrate on a full extension and contraction of your lower back.

Don't set the weight down when you finish the fifteen reps. Stand erect and do shoulder shrugs until your grip gives out. You should be able to get at least a dozen shrugs out of it.

Do another set of light pullovers, twenty reps, after the deadlifts and shrugs.

That completes the program, and it looks like this:

1. Press behind neck            3 x 12
2. Squat                            1 x 20
3. Pullover                        1 x 20
4. Bench press                    3 x 12
5. Rowing                         3 x 15
6. Stiff legged deadlift        1 x 15
7. Pullover                        1 x 20

Work hard on all the exercises, and work to your limit on the squats. Drink milk as suggested earlier. Get lots of rest and sleep. Maintain a calm, tranquil mind and start saving your money. You'll need it to buy bigger clothes.

In other articles, John McCullum stressed the importance of forcing the poundage on the squat. He said to add five pounds every workout!