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HOTTIES

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For Summer?

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RIPPED  
NOW!!!**

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GET  
BIG**

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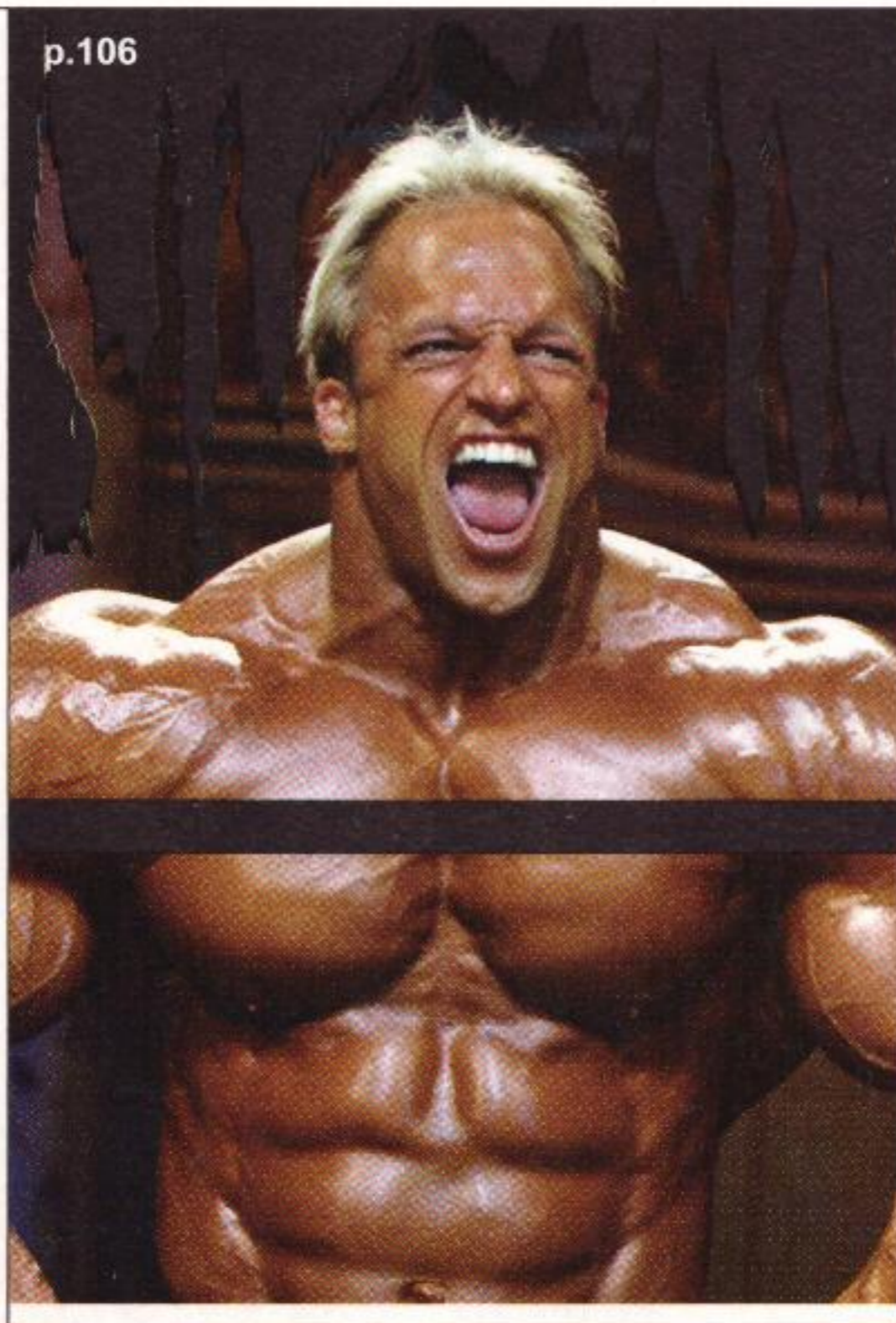
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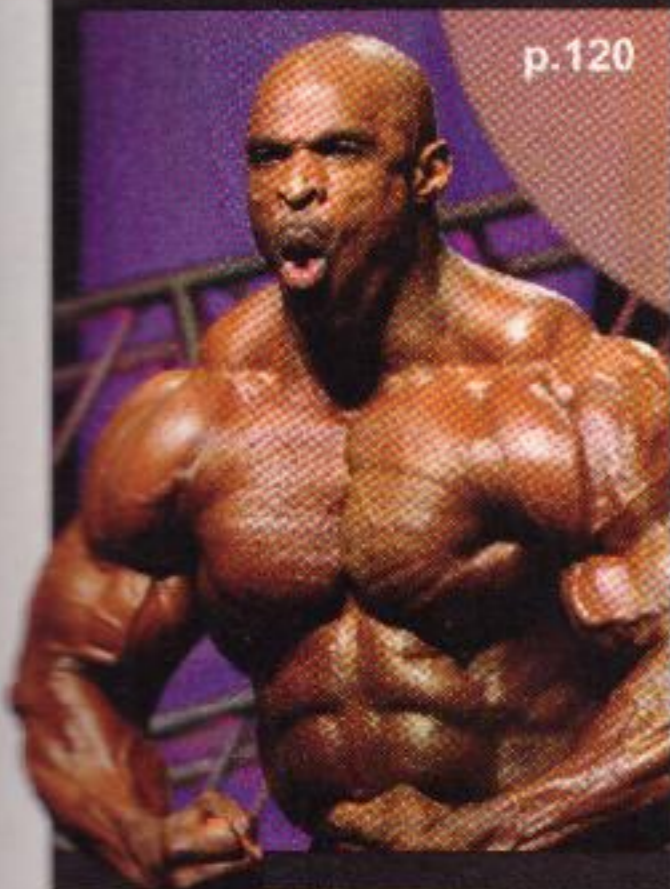
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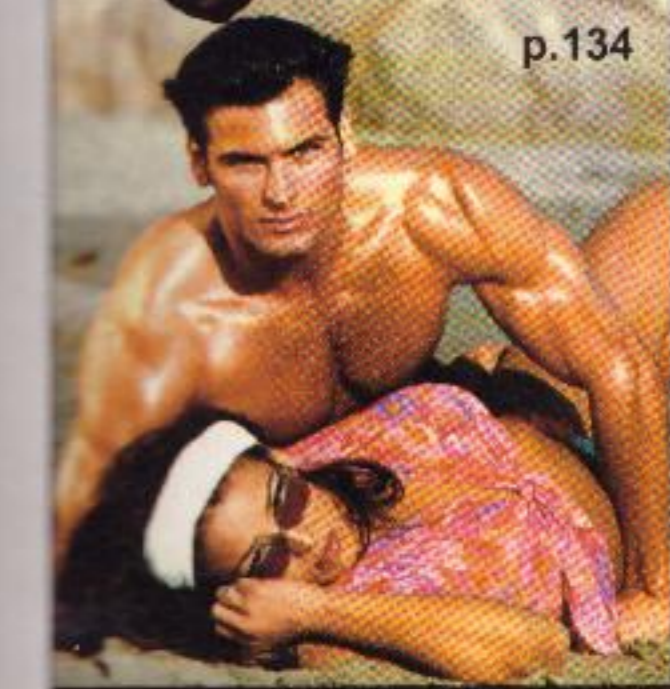
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### 90 More Gym Motivation

A few more pages of skin to keep the test levels high. Do what you want with this section, but please don't write us any letters telling us what you do with it, and most certainly don't send in any pictures of it.

### 106 Don't Just Get Ripped For Summer

Why is it people only want to get shredded for summer? This rather unique article takes a critical look at this phenomenon in today's bodybuilding society. We think it is safe to assume that after reading this article, your view of "getting ripped for summer" will be completely different.

### 120 Poser Wannabe

It was so cool calling someone "poser" until you decided to become one. Now that you have made the decision to step on stage, make sure you've got all your ducks in a row - after all, you don't want to get up there and lose it do you?

### 132 15 Minutes

We deliver fame by the truckload... here's another dose.

### 134 Score With Ease

Finally a safe haven to turn to when you thought you would never score. We give you the much-needed 411 to bag the big game - HCM, your wingman for life.

### 146 The Body-Type Training Regimen

Everyone is different, so why do you work out like everyone else? Individualize your workouts and nutrition, with the Body-Type Training Regimen.

# HARD CORE MUSCLE™

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# 100

# STEPS TO MASSIVE PECS

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## 1. Stay

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Photo by Irvin Gells

**A**nyone who has spent a few years in the gym can probably show some pectoral development. However, to earn that massive set of Arnold-like pecs, you have to go further, train harder and stay more focused than the rest. Here are ten key steps to developing a successful pec strategy.

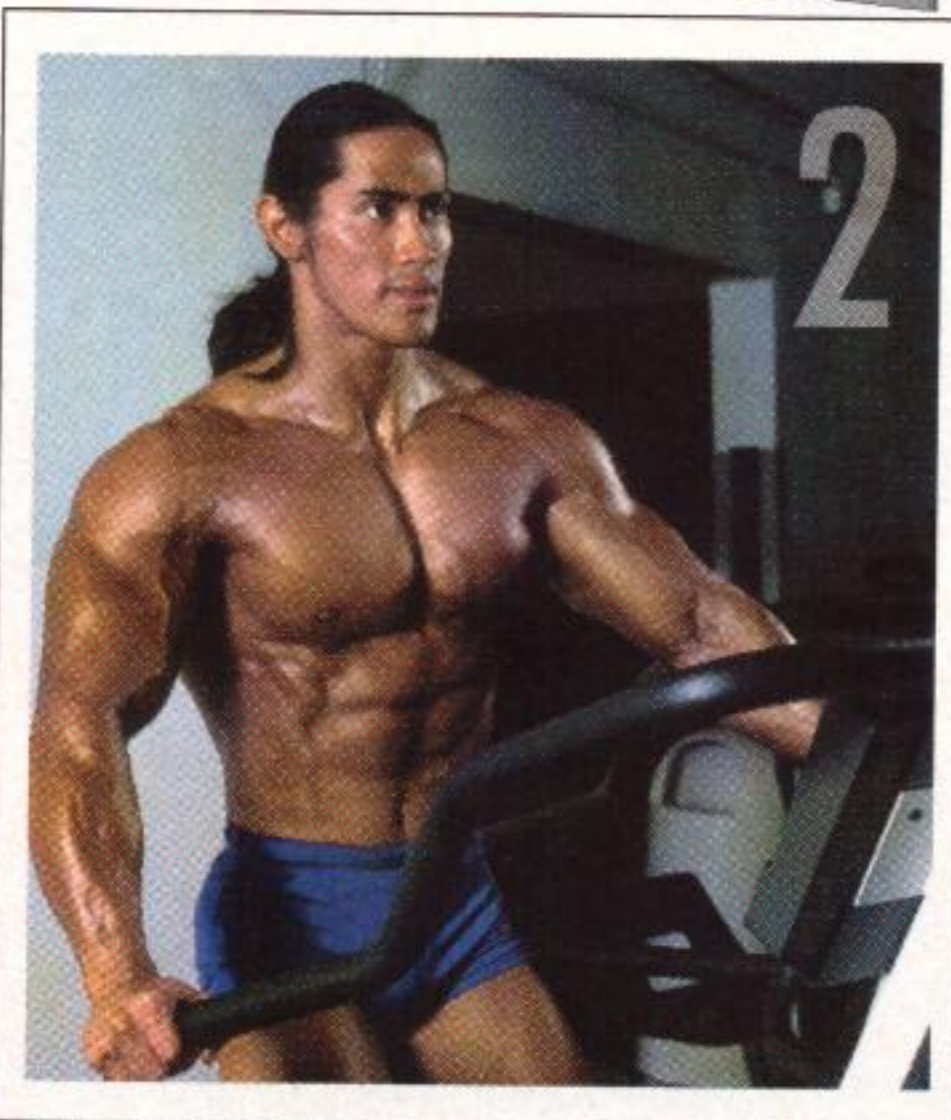
## 1. Stay Focused

Some guys train hard and disciplined, but decide to take a month or two off during summer. Then they come back to the gym and realize they've lost their gains, so they train their asses off again, until that Christmas party and the new girlfriend derails them for another couple of months. Then they come back, realize they're back to square one and they're off for another cycle of training and subsequent breaks. That won't cut it. Consistency is a requirement for bodybuilding success, and pec training certainly is no exception. You need to stay focused on your long-term goals, come hell or high water (or summer, or a hot new girlfriend, or whatever.)

A good trick for staying on track is to review your training log every 3 months and make note of the poundages/reps you do on a separate sheet. Next, measure your flexed chest and make a note of the exact number. If you're serious, a Polaroid snapshot can be helpful too. Why not a monthly log review? That would be too frequent - a bad day or a cold could jumble the numbers. However, with a 3-month snapshot you get a more reliable status report on how you're progressing. This serves the dual purpose of reminding you of your long-term goals and providing valuable feedback on whether your training works or not. If you've added 30 lbs to your regular 8-rep bench press and you've gained an inch, you're doing something right and will think twice about deviating from course. On the flip side of the coin, if you're lifting the same weights and have the same measurements as 3 months ago, it's time to take a good look at what isn't working. Here you can go back and see what worked in the past, when you DID make gains.

## 2. Avoid Injuries

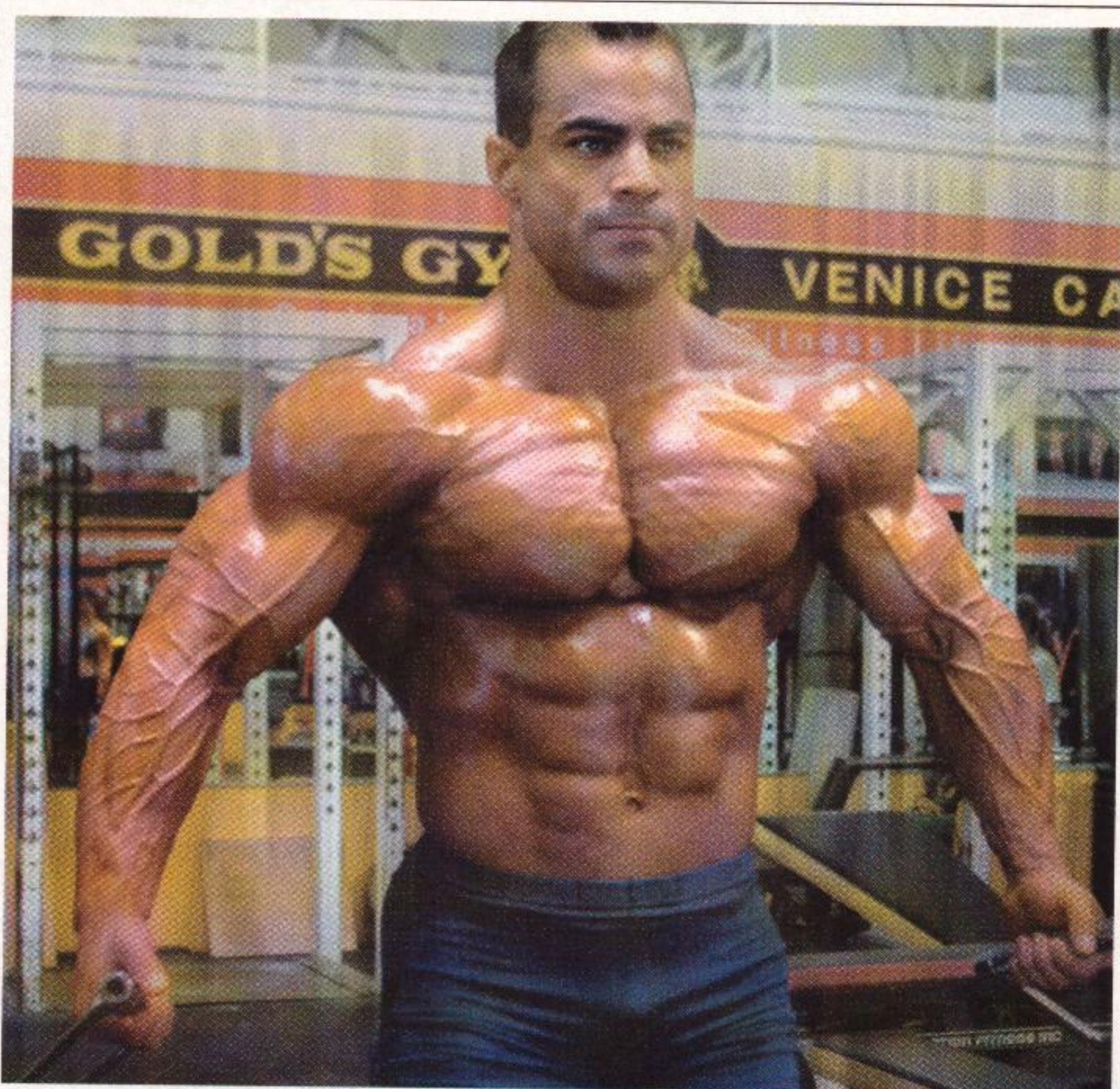
Injuries can throw the best and most well planned strategies right out the window in a matter of seconds. Rip a shoulder joint and see how much benching you'll do in the following 6-12 months, and let's not even talk about the atrophy you'll have to make up for. Let's face it: balls-to-the-wall, HardCore training is one thing, taking unnecessary risks to flatter ones ego is another. Sure, as a serious bodybuilder you



Photos by Irvin Gelb

have to walk the line of insanity on a daily basis, *but your objective should always be to stimulate your muscles as much as possible while subjecting them to as little risk of injury as possible.*

That doesn't mean training like a wimp. You still need to push yourself out of the comfort zone each and every workout, and you still need to use heavy enough weights to trigger growth. However, there are certain steps you can take to decrease the risk. First off, don't skimp on the warm-up. You need 10 minutes on a treadmill, bike or stepper to get your blood flowing and get the body ready. Secondly, do 2 light sets and stretch thoroughly before your first working set. Thirdly, avoid one-rep max benching. If you're already big, you don't need to prove anything - just go about your business of getting even bigger by keeping your reps in the 6 to 10 rep-range, occasionally going perhaps as low as 4 reps without cheating. Last but not least, be attentive to strange joint pains. Muscle pain is what bodybuilders thrive on, but a shooting pain where the muscle ties in with the bone is a red flag that shouldn't be ignored. Remember: Resting for a week now, is better than spending months waiting for a full-blown injury to heal.



### 3. Kill Your Darlings

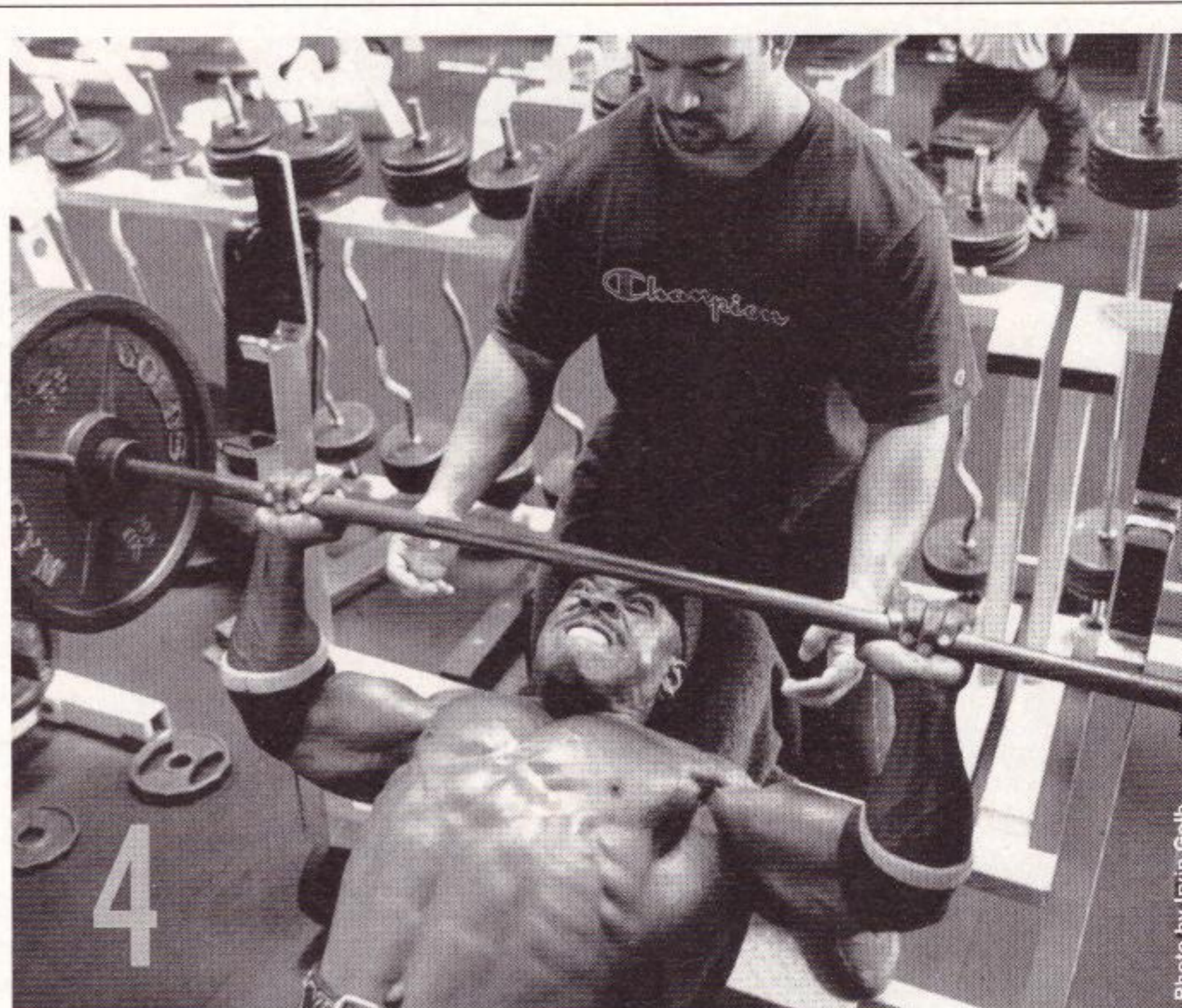
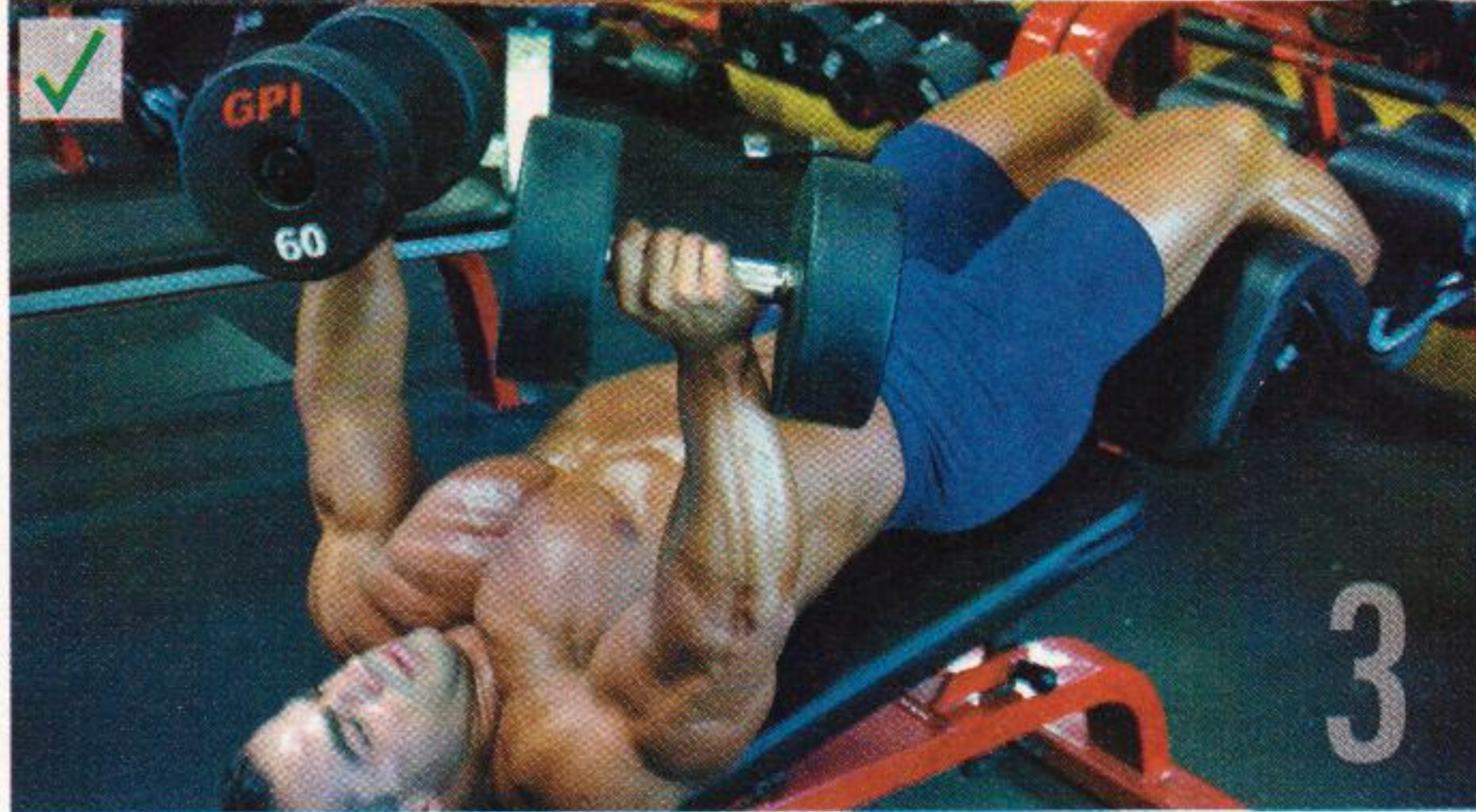
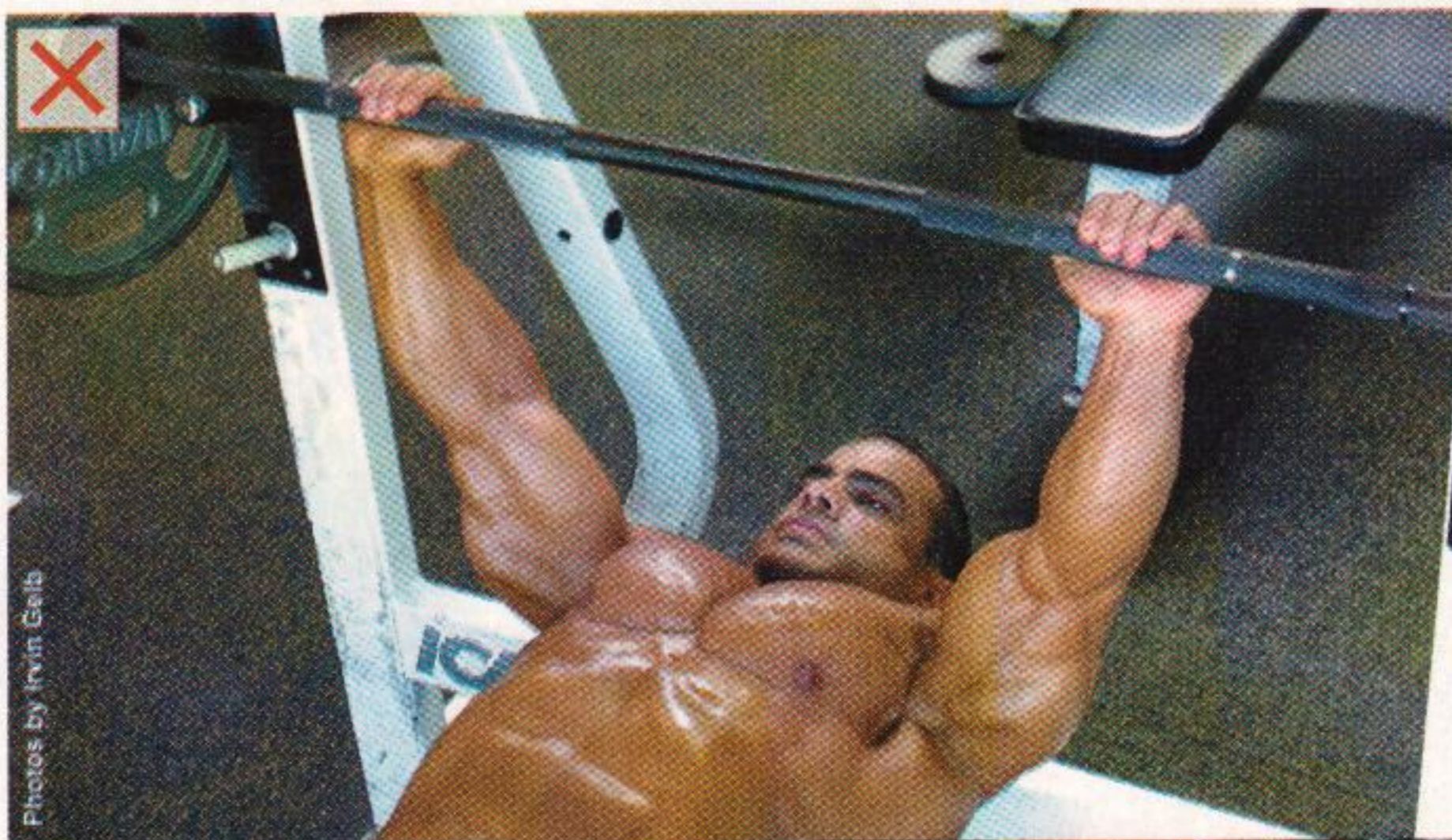
Let me guess: Your chest workout consists of flat, incline and decline bench press, perhaps a few Hammer Strength-style machines and a few sets of cable cross for dessert. Sounds about right? If that sounds similar to your chest workout, I'm guessing you've also stuck to it for a couple of years. No shame in sticking with the basics, but you need to shake things up to grow. It's very easy to get stuck in a "tried-and-true" workout that feels good, but the comfort and familiarity comes at the price of challenge and diversity. If you focus most of your energy on flat benching, you're not developing your upper and lower pecs optimally. This is no problem if you put the effort into hitting another part for the next workout. But if you're hammering out the same old routine over and over, you're short-changing yourself.

To break out of the rut, try eliminating your top 3 chest exercises for a month. Substitute them with other, less frequently used exercises and strive to achieve the same intensity. It may be frustrating and you may have to cut the poundage at first, but that's natural; stick with it and compensate by doing more reps with perfect form instead. As you re-introduce your former top 3 exercises, make sure to alternate them with the new exercises you've adopted so that you don't slip right back into your old routine.

### 4. Trigger Growth

As the late Mike Mentzer explained in his books about Heavy Duty, the key to effective weight training is to trigger growth without draining the energy needed for recovery. Granted, his high intensity principles may not be for everyone, but it is important to recognize the fundamental truth in what he said. You go to the gym because you want results, not for the joy of spending hours wearing down gym equipment. In a nutshell, you want to do fewer and more intense sets.

In a perfect world you can get adequate stimulation with a single set of the kind of heavy, explosive load that makes the fast-twitch fibers jolt. In reality, 2 sets are more likely to do the trick. Doing 3, 4 or even 5 sets should be pointless if you did the job right in the first 2 sets. If you didn't manage to trigger growth when the muscle was fresh, what makes you think you'll achieve it now that you've banged out 4 sets and are starting a fifth? Worse yet, knowing in the back of your head that you have a ton of sets ahead of you may unconsciously cause you to hold back during the first, truly crucial sets.



Photos by Irvin Gelb

Photo by Irvin Gelb

## 5. Use Periodization

If you always do 4-6 reps with a certain weight, your muscles will get used to that workload. Gradually increasing the weight will build strength and increase size over time, but you're always hitting the fast-twitch muscle fibers while neglecting the slow-twitch fibers to some degree. This makes more sense than the other way around since fast-twitch fibers are the ones that grow the most. But why not get the best of both worlds by consistently hitting both? In addition, by alternating between low-rep/high-weight training and high-rep/low-weight training you keep the muscles guessing, further helping you avoid the dreaded plateaus. Shorten the rest between sets to keep intensity up during the light periods. Let's define the terms in this context:

**Heavy training** = 4-8 reps, 2 min rest between sets

**Transfer training** = 6-10 reps, 1 min rest between sets

**Light training** = 10-15 reps, 40 sec rest between sets

There are different schools of thought on what frequency is optimal, but I have found 4-6 week periods of heavy/light training with a 1-2 week of transfer period between each to work best. This works out to:

**Heavy period** - 4-6 weeks

**Transfer period** - 1-2 weeks

**Light period** - 4-6 weeks

...Followed by another transfer period to ease into another heavy period, and so on.

## 6. Visualize Progress

The importance of the mental game cannot be overstated. Arnold would routinely stand in front of the mirror and visualize his biceps growing like mountain peaks. Evidence suggests it helped him stay on track quite nicely. For pecs, you can apply similar techniques. Stand in front of the mirror and flex and relax your pecs, alternating and simultaneously, while mentally projecting the image of your pecs getting thicker, broader and with deeper cuts. If you're competing, this exercise gives you the added advantage of better muscle control while posing.

## 7. Review Your Nutritional Intake

As a serious bodybuilder, you eat plenty of protein, take all your daily vitamins and probably have a vast array of supplements lined up on your kitchen counter.

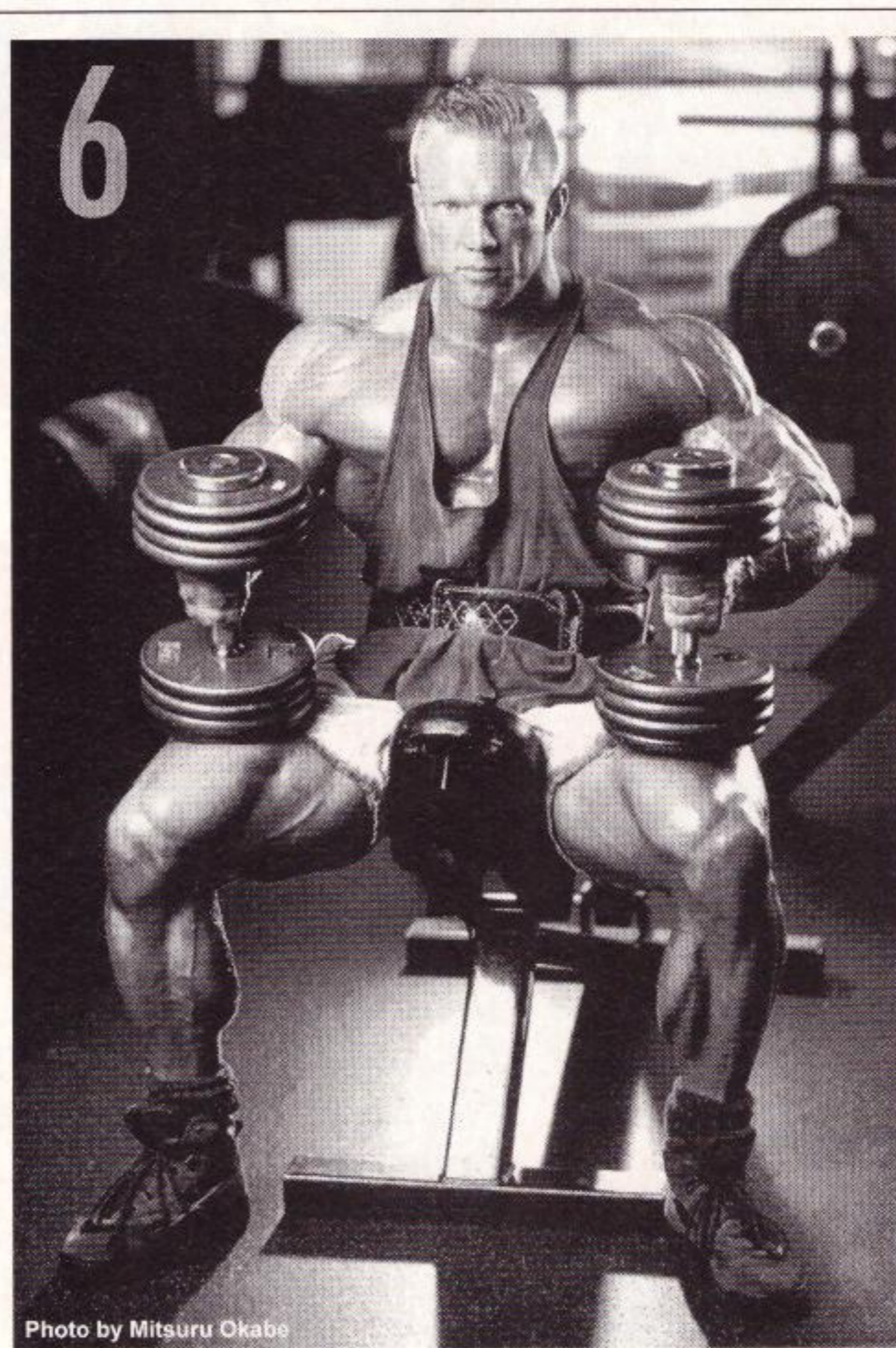


Photo by Mitsuru Okabe

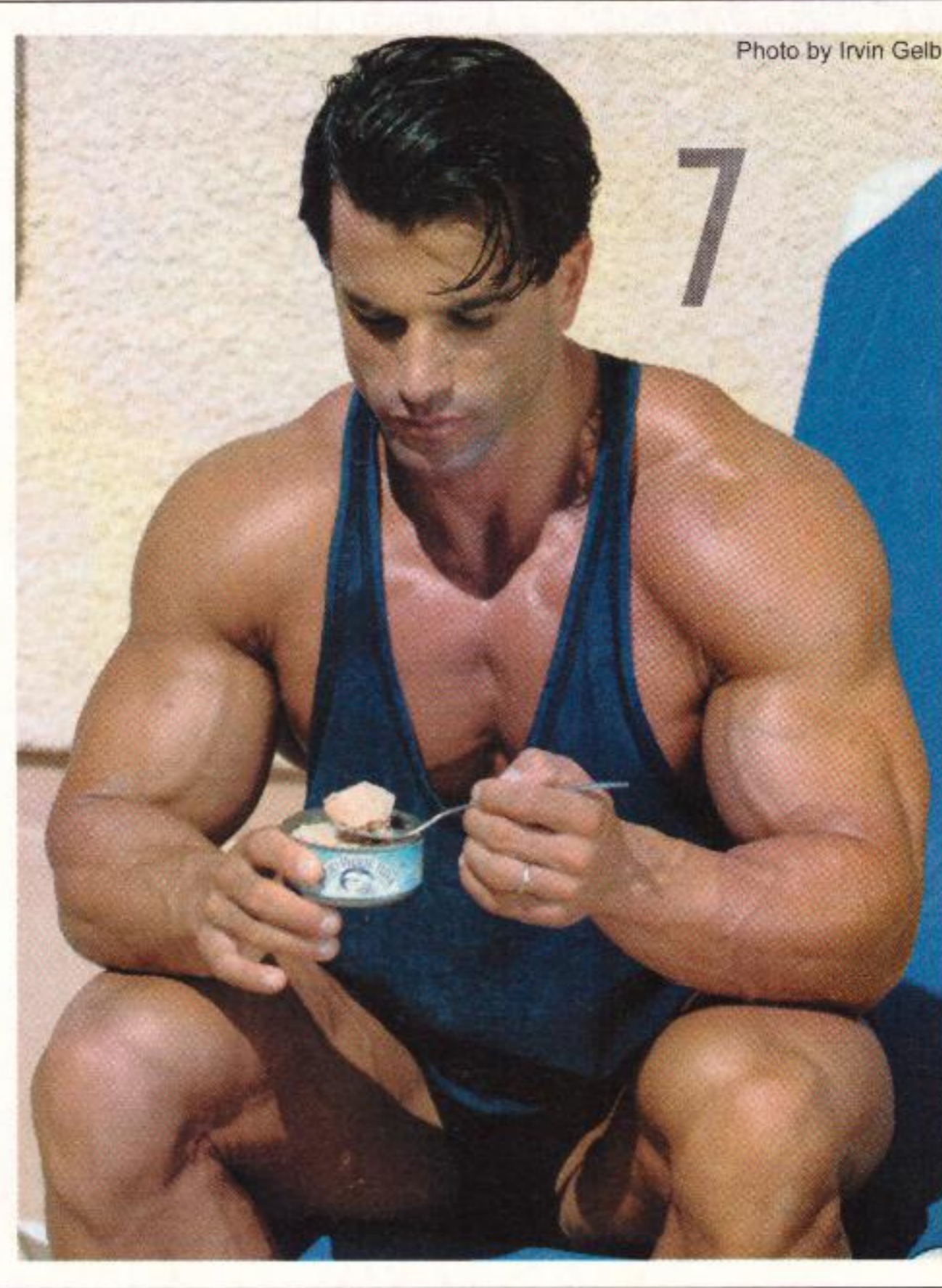
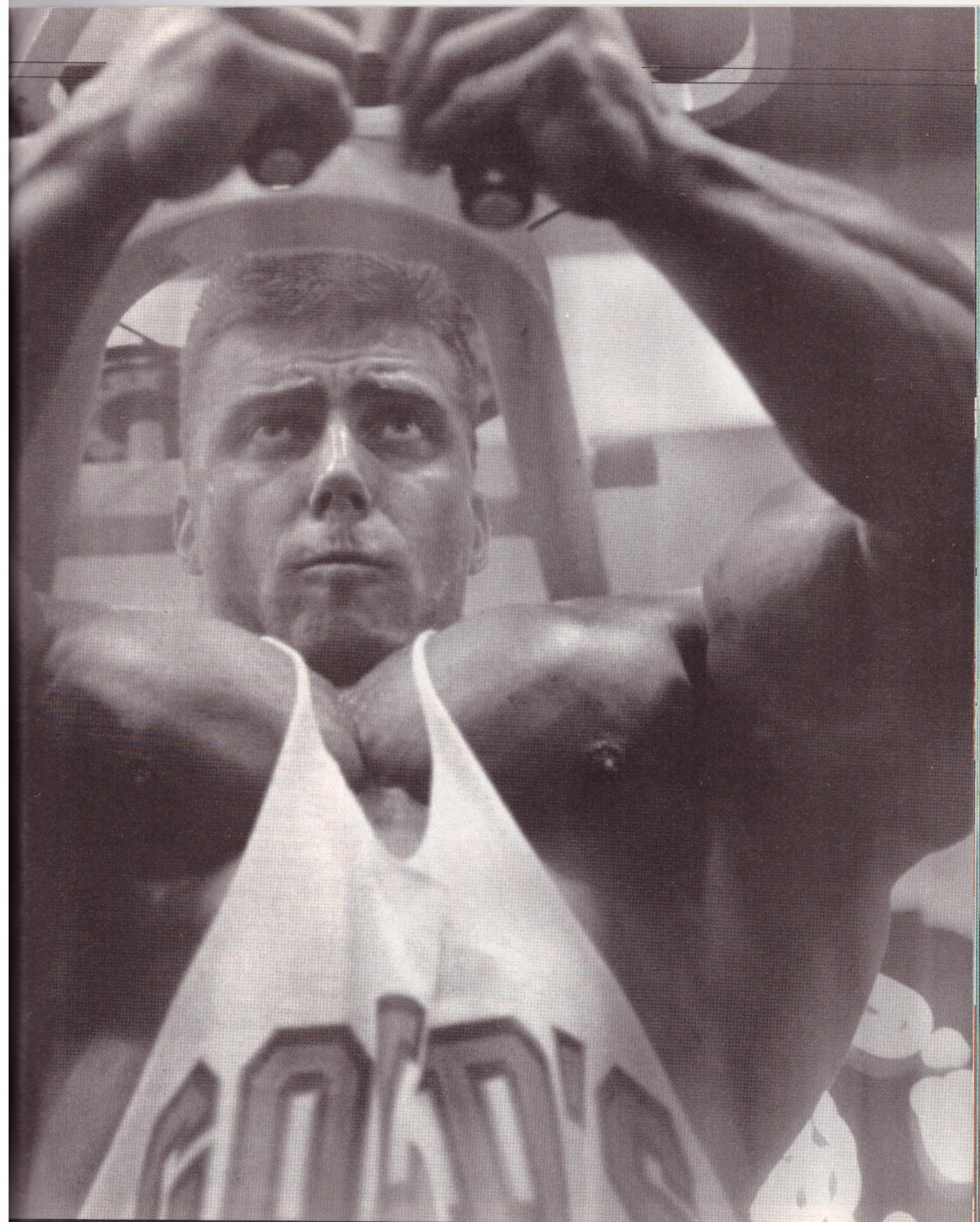


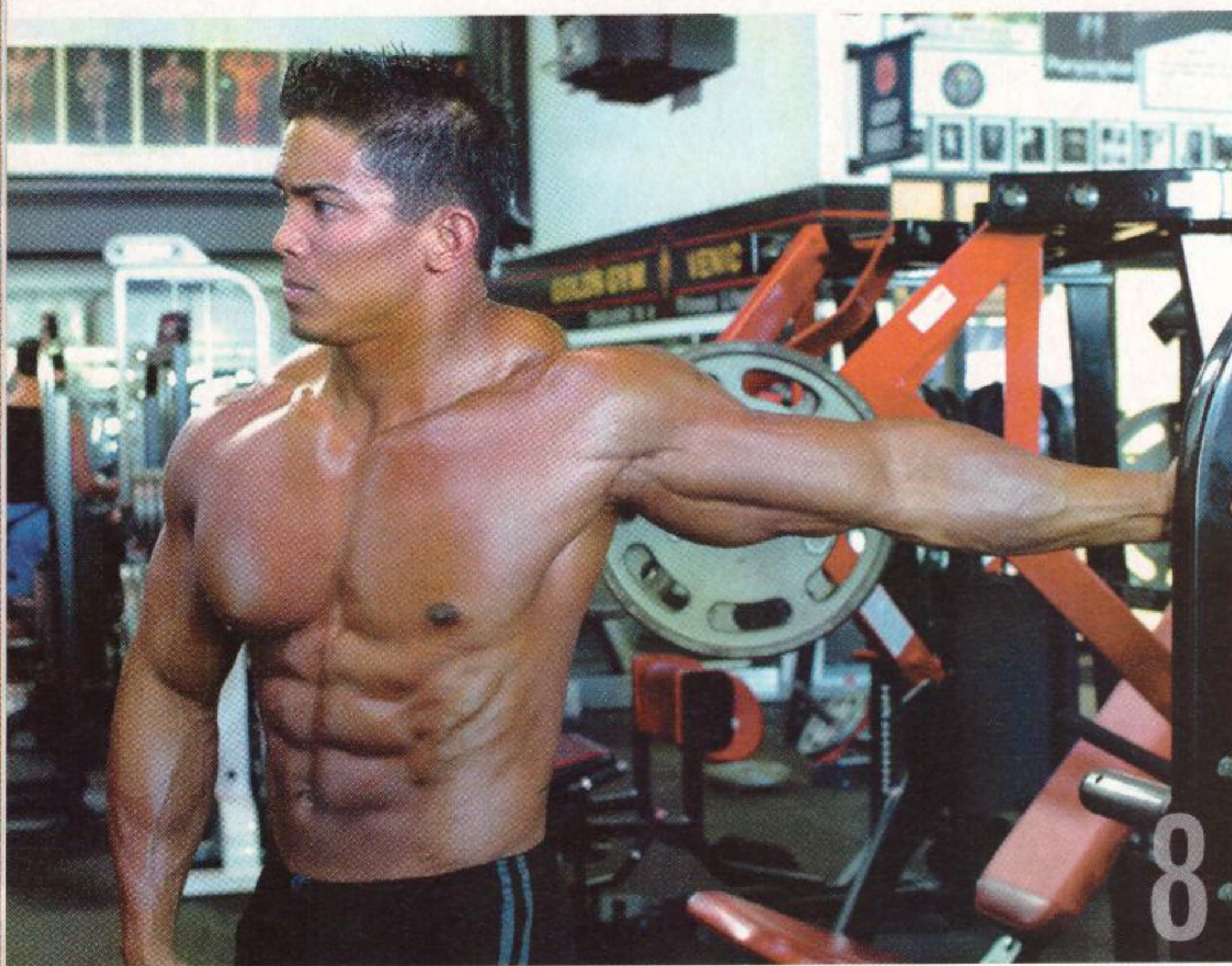
Photo by Irvin Gelb

Photo by Irvin Gelb





Photos by Irvin Gelb



But do you get enough carbs to fuel your brutal workouts? Carbohydrates are your primary source of energy, and if you run low before the end of your workout not even the steeliest determination can keep you going at full strength.

To ensure a reliable supply of carbs, make sure to get at least 100 grams of complex carbs 60-90 minutes before your workout, preferably with some protein and fiber. Simple sugars are only good for immediate post-workout consumption (not pre-workout, as some claim) so go for complex carbs as found in parboiled rice, beans, oatmeal, thick pasta and rough bread. Complex carbs will dissolve slowly and keep your blood sugar high and even, keeping you nicely powered throughout the workout.

### **8. Stretch Properly**

Stretching is not only good for preventing injuries; it can actually help you grow and achieve your goals faster. After a workout your pecs will be shortened. They have lactic acid and waste products that need to be flushed out, but blood flow is poor. By stretching out the muscle you increase the inflow of fresh blood, which also brings in fresh nutrients needed to start the recovery and overcompensation process. This helps decrease muscle soreness and enables quicker recovery. In theory, stretching also has the benefit of loosening up the fascial encasements around the muscle fibers, allowing them more room to grow. Last but not least, it helps counteract the long-term shortening of the pecs that give that hunched, gorilla-like stance.

Basic pec stretching is pretty simple: Brace your elbow about the height of your ear against a solid surface such as a machine or a doorframe. Keeping your body straight, shoulders relaxed and abs tensed, take one step forward. If you are stretching your right pec, take the step with the right foot and vice versa. Resist the urge to twist the body in any way, just let gravity do its thing. Don't force it so that it hurts - stretching should provide a slightly burning sensation but never actually hurt. 30-45 seconds on each side will be sufficient for most people. If you are already suffering shortened pectorals, you may want to look into more advanced stretching techniques such as contract-release or PNF-stretching.

### **9. Get Enough Rest**

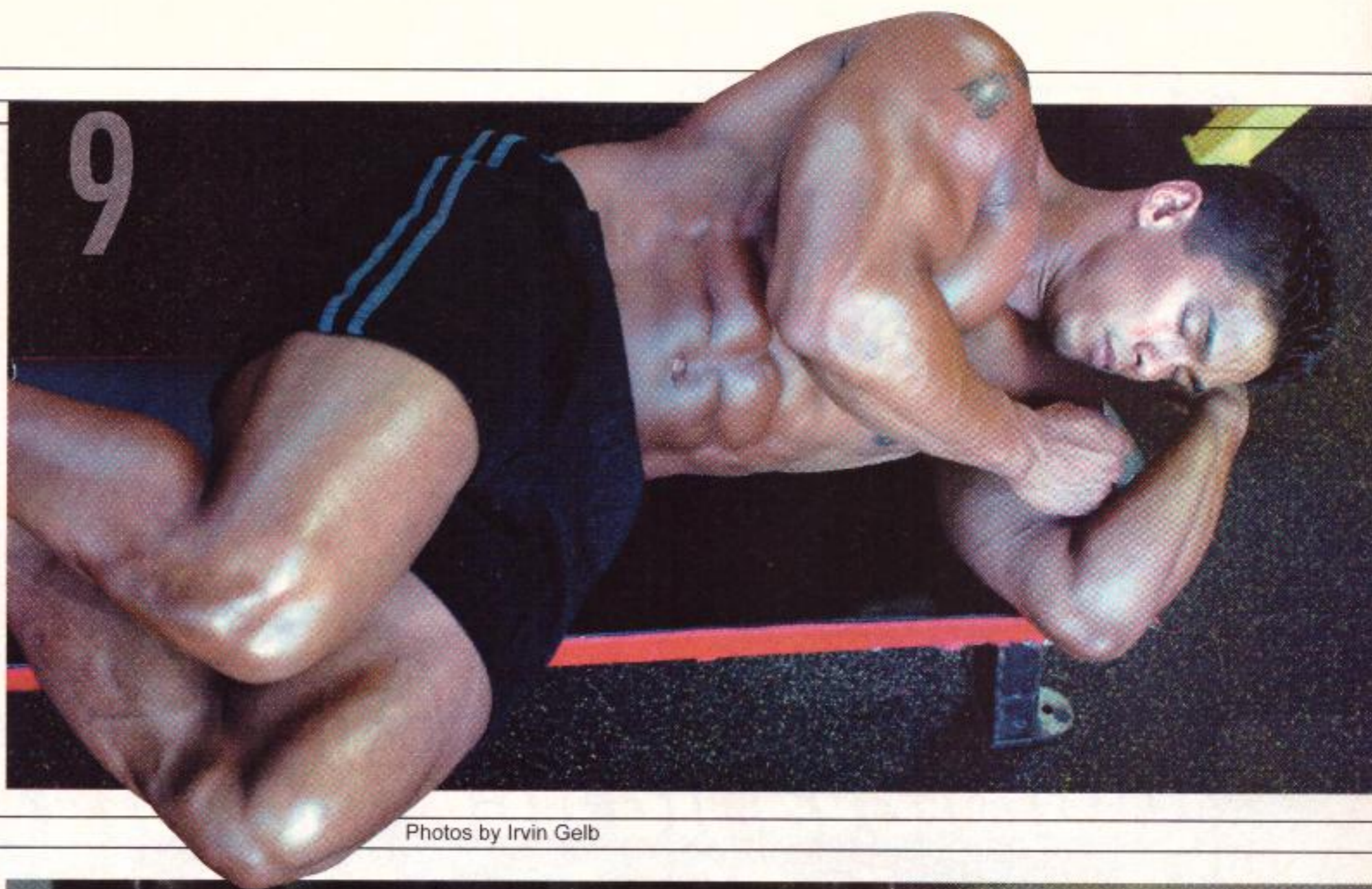
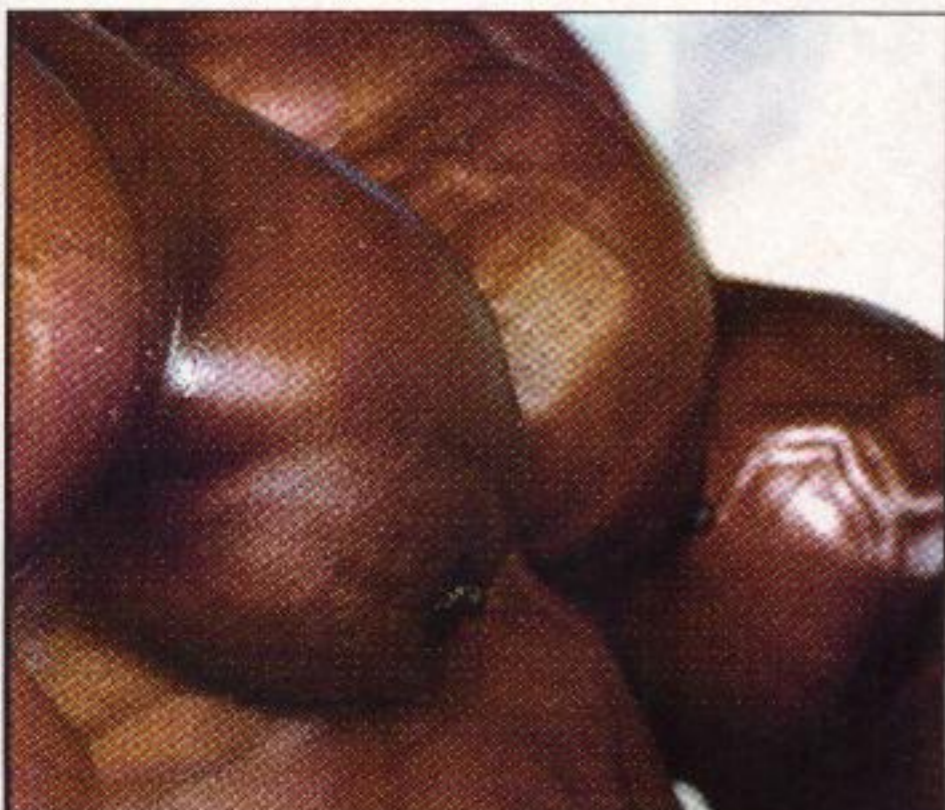
Most growth occurs at home, in bed. Your body releases respectable bursts

of natural growth hormone while you're happily snoring away, repairing the damage you incurred while in the gym earlier that day. Getting sufficient sleep means giving the body the time it needs to grow. It only makes sense to help your body accomplish your common goal, so make it a priority to get at least 8 to 9 hours of quality sleep per night. Many bodybuilding pros take 60-90 minute naps during the day to get further benefit of sleep. This may not be practical for the rest of us, but we can at least lock in our good night's sleep.

To ensure restful sleep, avoid caffeine and any type of ephedrine-based fat burner late in the afternoon. Avoid alcohol as well, as it drastically cuts the quality of sleep. If you have thin walls, live in the city or have a neighbor with a love for very early lawn mowing, earplugs can be a good investment. Another good habit is to have a pure-protein drink right before hitting the sack. Since protein does not trigger a release of insulin it won't make you store fat, but the protein will further help your body rebuild itself through the night.

## 10. Keep An Open Mind

Don't fall into the trap of typecasting yourself as an "old-school" gym rat that eschews anything but barbells and dumbbells, or a "techie" who relies solely on the latest and greatest machines. Always keep an eye open for new ways to stimulate growth. It doesn't matter whether it's a machine or new type of press you haven't tried before - your only concern is whether it will help you grow bigger and stronger. Likewise, don't be above taking advice from friends and training partners. If your partner cautions about using your shoulders too much, there's probably a reason for it. If he's right and you ignore him, you'll be the one who's sorry, not him. The bottom line: don't just train hard, train hard AND smart. That's how you ensure long-term progress in the iron game. **HCM**



Photos by Irvin Gelb

