

One More Arm Workout

By
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Here goes one for the books, my book anyway. Been there – done that is not simply a saying I've heard it's a statement I've lived by on more than one occasion. One such time was with one of my all time favorite arm workouts. I went into the valley, a place where neither the fainthearted or weak tread and only those with determination and desire survive. Sound kind of corny? I guess it does but, when you have pushed your body beyond its normal limits you do have a special personal sense of accomplishment. You're a bodybuilder; you've been there and know what I'm talking about. Non - bodybuilders don't and can't understand it.

My warm up was usual, superset barbell curls, Olympic bar with no plates, and standing triceps extensions again with the Olympic bar with no plates. Two sets of twenty reps each. I felt pumped and was ready for action. Not yet certain what I was going to do, instinctive training at its best, I decided I would go heavy, *H-E-A-V-Y*, and to failure. Something I had not done in a long time. I jump back and forth from training to failure, lifting heavy and, moderate weight for contraction and pump.

I slowly moved toward the dumbbell rack focusing my mind on my biceps; visualizing them as thick and fully loaded with power. I picked up a pair of 30 pound dumbbells and performed 15 reps of standing alternate curls. I rested long enough to feel the pump reach its maximum and performed 12 reps with a pair of 35 pound dumbbells. Once again I rested long enough to feel the pump reach its maximum level. Next I grabbed the 40's. Then 45's... 50's, 55's, 60's, 65's, 70's,

75's, 80's, 85's, 90's... that's as far as I could go performing as many reps as I could muster each set. Thirteen total sets, crazy! I attempted a single rep with a pair of 95 pound dumbbells but I was out of gas and my arms were all but useless. I rested between each set until I felt the pump was as full as it could get before proceeding to the next set. After attempting the last rep with a pair of 95 pound bells I took a drink and sat down.

My form was definitely not something one would write home about, it wasn't supposed to be. My intent was to blast my arms into submission. For more than a month I had hit a sticking pointed and knew it was time to do whatever it took in order to move beyond it. I wanted to make certain I would not be able to work arms for a week after I completed the session. Once I got to the 45 pound dumbbells I had to use body swing to get them up as well as the old excessive arching of the back style when I got to the heavier bells. Still, I attempted to get at least two perfect reps before using the cheat form of curling.

I knew my biceps were in shock so I decided to hit the triceps next. Close grip bench press would be my next movement. 135 on the bar and up and down for 15 reps. 185 for 10 reps and then 195 for 8 reps. I then added 10 pounds each set while performing as many reps as I could possibly do until I had completed a total of thirteen sets. Same rest cycle as for the biceps... exhausted triceps. I can't stop now, I thought. I'm going all out, ALL OUT!

Next would be barbell curls. I started with just an empty Olympic bar, no plates. Not surprisingly I struggled with just the bar after I hit 10 reps. 10 pounds was added to the bar each set and I continued until I could only cheat curl one rep. After a short break I hit the tri's with tricep press downs. Starting with 50 pounds I added 10 pounds each set until I once again could not perform a single rep. I was now totally wasted but not yet finished.

Since my strength was all but gone I decided I would superset the last movements. Dumbbell curls performed lying on my back on a flat bench and EZ Bar tricep extensions. The weights were light and I went back and forth with no rest between movements or sets until I had completed a total of four supersets. Now I was done!

Talk about being in the valley... I had been there and survived. Once in a great while I feel it's good to push to the absolute limits of ones endurance. The key words here are "once in a great while". During the workout I felt and knew I had pushed beyond my body's ability to cope with the load I had placed on it. I had over-trained. I could sense my muscle nerve impulse was shocked like they had not been in a long time. I knew better but was determined to complete a wild workout, one that I would not forget. One that would make me sore for two weeks, one that would move me past the sticking point I had arrived at.

Did this workout add size to my arm? No, that was not the purpose. The purpose was to go beyond a point where I had become familiar and complacent. The purpose was to move past and into a zone that would require an absolute and complete commitment on my part. I had to go deep within to gather all I could to finish a grueling workout that made me stronger mentally, physically, and emotionally. Plan achieved – mission accomplished. From level ground to the valley and back again.

Even with a training partner or in a commercial gym full of people, bodybuilding is an individual sport. It is you and you alone who pays the price for the rewards you gain. After going through such a workout I did feel proud, exhausted but proud that I made it.

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