

The Mighty Delts

by

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Well-developed delts are one of those body parts that attract admiring glances whether you are in a swimming suit, a sport coat, or just a shirt. If you haven't discovered it by now, they are also one of the trickiest muscle groups in the body. You can perform any direct delt movement you can think of and when you come to the point you feel you can't do even a single partial rep more, stop and rest for only five seconds, that's right just five seconds, and start again. I bet you can now do at least three more full reps. Like we call it down south, the delts are playing "possum". The delts are notorious for making you believe they can't do another rep more and trick you into thinking you have to quit because they have gone as far as they can go.

It takes a lot of willpower and determination to blast the delts into a growth pattern. They will convince you they have given their all when in fact they have more to give. Don't let them get away with their little trick. Over the years I have observed many trainers that simply allowed the delts to control their workload. Try as they might, these individuals were unable to move past the point necessary for outstanding delt development. I was subjected to the delts trick myself for several years, until I learned what they were doing. We all know that basically pressing movements are generally used for size and lateral movements are designed mainly for shape. Not in all cases and not for every single bodybuilder but for the vast majority this is true. I would cycle my training so that once finished with pressing movements for four to six weeks I would switch to lateral movements. Although this produced noticeable changes in shape and definition, no real change in size occurred.

Becoming extremely frustrated with the lack of my delt development I embarked on a take no prisoner mentality. I did every movement you can think of. I also tried every routine and program; once per week, twice per week, three times per week, super-

sets, tri-sets, heavy, light, you name it. Well needless to say for about two years this also failed to produce the results I was looking for. It was not until I realized the “possum” aspect of my delts that I was able to develop a method which brought them under my control instead of me under theirs. I don’t think their little game ever goes away, at least it never did for me, but now I know what to do and how to handle it. If you are having trouble adding size to your delts, or if you have discovered them playing “possum” with you, take heart, you can beat them at their own game.

I incorporate a number of movements in my delt training as well as different methods. Once my delts become accustom to what I am doing they start that “possum” crap and I let them have it. I make them pay! It doesn’t take long for them to repent and stop, at least for a little while anyway. I won’t go into all the different ways I do this but I’ll give you the scoop on my favorite one.

I personally like standing dumbbell presses for shoulder mass. I will normally perform four sets of eight reps, sometimes five sets depending on my energy level and how much time I have. Normally I use a pyramid up method, adding weight with each set and reducing the reps. When my delts start their “possum” game here’s what I do. The next workout instead of pyramiding up I will start with the heaviest dumbbells I can handle first and pyramid down. Be sure you thoroughly warm-up because you will be using the heavier weights first. As soon as the delts refuse to budge, playing their little game again, I put the dumbbells down and immediately pick up a pair that are five pounds heavier and press them for as many reps as I can, which is usually for only one or two reps. I then take a short rest and continue the attack for my remaining three or four sets employing the same method I just outlined. Now my delts are not sure if they are playing “possum” or if they have really had it and I’m not sure either. All I know is that it produced results and allowed me to lift heavier thus increasing the size of my shoulders.

When incorporating this shock routine into my workouts I would work frontal delts on chest days and rear delts on back days giving my full attention to medial delts on

a day all to themselves. After about four to six weeks on this routine I would go back to performing lateral raises or my normal dumbbell or barbell presses. But I would have a noticeable change in the delts and gained in both size and strength. About six weeks later the ole delt “possum” trick will work back into your workout so be prepared to shock ‘em again.

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