

## A Primer on *Ground-Based Training*



### How to select the power press to fit your goals and budget

In strength and conditioning, there are often two camps: those that prefer free weights and those that prefer machines. Generally, for liability reasons, health clubs prefer machines because gym owners believe that they

require less instruction and supervision and some (often mistakenly) believe they are safer. At BFS we believe that free weights should be the primary type of exercise equipment, but we see the value in many machines – especially

those that allow the performance of ground-based training.

Ground-based training is based upon the concept that athletic movements initiate from the ground, that force is applied to the ground and then transferred to the upper body. Putting a shot is an example of a ground-based activity, with the force progressively transferred from the ground

find a way to perform it on your feet. You can, with the BFS Power Press and the BFS Unilateral Power Press.

### New Directions in Upper Body Training

The Power Press and the Unilateral Power Press machines not only allow the user to exercise from a stand-

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ultimately to the hand. In the same manner, the transfer of power from the legs to the upper body during a power clean qualifies this as a ground-based exercise. As for the bench press, how does it fit in with this concept?

The bench press is performed while lying on your back, so to make it a ground-based exercise you would need to

ing position but also involve the use of the muscles of the legs, hips and torso. Further, with these two machines the shoulder blades are allowed to move freely; and as a result these exercises can be performed more frequently than a conventional bench press.

The basic exercise that is performed with both





machines is the *bilateral press*. With this variation, your feet do not move and you extend your legs and arms at the same time (as if you were performing a push press with a barbell). Stand inside the machine and grasp each handle with your arms bent, or with the Power Press grasp the crossbar as you would with a bench press. Perform the exercise by simultaneously straightening your legs and arms; slowly return to the start and repeat. As an additional variation, you would step forward with just one leg as you press; then return to the start and repeat for the other leg.

Because the Unilateral Power Press has handles that move independently, it enables the user to perform several unique multi-joint exercises and several popular upper-body pressing exercises as well. Here are a few of them.

### Unilateral Press

Stand inside the machine and grasp each handle. As



shown in the first photo, step forward with your right leg while at the same time extending your left arm – the motion may feel a bit awkward at first, but after a few sets it will become a natural movement. Repeat with the other side, and continue alternating between sides. Of course, you can perform the exercise without using the legs – in effect performing a standing bench press movement.

### Unilateral Press with Hip Extension

This is a popular exercise with sprinters, as it simulates the follow-through that occurs in running. It is performed just like the unilateral press, except at the top of the movement you lift your front leg while flexing the knee – your front leg never touches the floor. Return slowly and repeat for the other side. To increase the difficulty of the exercise, use ankle weights.

### Unilateral Trunk Rotation

Although the unilateral power press works the muscles that rotate the trunk, you can increase the involvement of these oblique muscles by performing the exercise one side at a time. Stand inside the machine and turn 90 degrees to the left. Grasp the handle with your left arm and place your other hand on your hip. From this starting position, twist your trunk while extending your arms; return slowly to the start. Perform one set for this side, and then face the other way to work the other side.

### Military Press, Supinated Grip

Arnold Schwarzenegger popularized a type of military press with dumbbells that started with the palms facing the body, which in this case would be considered a supinated grip. One reason for its popularity is that this grip, for many individuals, puts less stress on the shoulders. To perform the supinated military press, face the machine and grasp the handle with your palms facing you. You should be directly underneath the machine, either with your legs slightly split, which helps prevent hyperextending your lower back, or with your legs in an athletic stance. Keeping your glutes tight to stabilize the lower back, alternatively extend your arms overhead.

Free weights are definitely the best tools for athletes, and obviously barbells and dumbbells are the exercise equipment an athletic training facility should purchase first. But when your budget allows, your exercise toolbox can become a lot more valuable with exercise machines such as the BFS Power Press and the BFS Unilateral Power Press. **BFS**

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