



Preparing for his 1,010lb record breaking lift

On November 16, 2003, Gene Rychlak, Jr. made history by becoming the first human to bench 900 pounds in a sanctioned meet, the IPA Senior Nationals, held in Camp Hill, PA. Rychlak cemented his lofty status by winning the prestigious Arnold Classic in March 2004 in Columbus, Ohio with a lift of 876 pounds. Not satisfied, the 6-foot-1, 345-pounder then broke his own world record in May 2004 with a lift of 925 pounds at the Kumite Classic in Pittsburgh, PA.

Then on November 21, 2004 Rychlak bench pressed an astounding 1,005 pounds at the IPA Nationals in Shomokin Dam, PA. The Royersford, PA native has broken his own world record no less than eight times since the first 900 pound. With his most recent lift of 1,010 pounds at the Metal Militia Holiday Memorial meet in Lake George, NY, December 16, 2006, Rychlak has shown the world his undisputable strength.

GENE RYCHLAK, JR.

Powerlifting's Strongest Man In The Bench Press...

Originally written by Al Thompson, Updated by Amelia Lutz

Combining a tireless work ethic, raw talent, brute strength and original, state-of-the-art training techniques and equipment, Gene Rychlak, Jr. has emerged as the top bench press competitor in the world.

As a high school senior Rychlak weighed just 200 pounds and was lifting at his local YMCA near his hometown of Royersford. When the community center had to close for two weeks for renovations he found a local hard-core gym nearby, Roberto's Gym, owned by the Roberto family. Louie Roberto was 600-pound raw bencher who took the young Rychlak under his wing. "It was Hard-core power lifting," Rychlak recalled. "It was like Mecca. In a basement, not real clean, kind of dingy and dirty....it was old school." Roberto talked to Rychlak about gaining weight to become a better lifter. Rychlak drank gallons of milk a day, ate five-six times a day and was able to get up to 300 pounds by the time he was 21. At first, he trained hard but only competed in neighborhood meets, mostly at different Y's throughout the Bucks and Montgomery County area.

The results were mixed. At a YMCA meet in April 1995 Rychlak won with a 455-pound bench. By Christmas that year he hit 500 at another YMCA meet in Bucks County. His bench continued to climb. He hit 585 in April 1999's "Power Palooza," a meet he ran himself. By now his dead lift had reached nearly 700 pounds. But in early 2000 frustrated he hadn't broken the 600 barrier, Rychlak quit lifting. His sabbatical lasted over eight

months, until he ran into an old friend at yet another YMCA meet, this one in Lansdale, PA. Franz Adler, a master's age competitor, took his younger friend to the side and gave him some timely advice. "He gave me a tongue lashing, told me to get my head out of my butt and told me I had a lot more to do in the sport," Rychlak recalled. "His words sunk into my head to get back into the game."

Rychlak did more than just get back into the game, he dominated it. Just two weeks later, in March 2001, he found the 5th Street Powerhouse Gym (no relation to the national chain), in Reading, PA. It was at that time though that Rychlak learned a new technique that helped him reach the summit of his sport. The Spring-Ford High School graduate had nearly reached the 600-pound level on the bench several times but was unable to break the barrier. Finding the value of working with bands, over the next three years he added over 300



Locking out 1,005lbs at 2004 IPA Sr. Nationals

pounds to his bench. Along with adjusting his training, he adjusted his lifestyle. Working on his own as a small contractor on construction sites along with paving and sealing driveways, he could only fit training around his schedule. After a very rainy summer, allowing him to train more often and at full recuperation, Rychlak made the decision to dedicate his life to his dream of being the best. Relying on savings, sponsorship and meet promotions he made the transition to a full-time professional powerlifter. Life could then revolve around lifting; eat, sleep and breathe to get stronger.

In August 2003, he hit 815 at the IPA Worlds, also in Camp Hill, PA. A month later Rychlak, who has a personal best in the squat of 1,005 pounds, then traveled to South Florida and hit 804 at the WPO's "Bench for Cash." At the same meet he gave 876 pounds a good ride. Eight days prior to hitting 900, Rychlak hoisted a world record 885 at the APF "Steel City Classic" in Pittsburgh.

His accomplishments have been forever immortalized in the York Barbell Hall of Fame. On July 16, 2005, Gene Rychlak, Jr. became the first and only active competitor to be currently inducted. The award

was presented during the IPA World Championships at the York Barbell Museum in York, PA by fellow Hall of Famer, Mark Chaillet. This great honor came on the heels of being the first man to bench press 900 pounds and the first man to bench press over 1,000 pounds. In October 2005, Rychlak became the first powerlifter to appear nationwide on pay-per-view, with a 1,015 pound attempt at the 40th anniversary of the Mr. Olympia, in Las Vegas. Along with this fame there have been

numerous articles appearing in fitness and bodybuilding magazines as well as the sports dedicated publications.

Rychlak credits a significant amount of his success to his relationship with John Inzer, owner of Inzer Advance Designs. This world leading manufacturer, distributor and developer of powerlifting equipment has worked with Rychlak to perfect state-of-the-art bench shirts that give the 38-year-old the edge to be the best.



**Gene Rychlak, Jr. &
2006 Arena Football
PHILADELPHIA SOUL
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN**

"I just want to continue to get better," Rychlak says. "The drive to be the best remains strong. I want to push the bar as high as I can get it."

At a Glance... GENE RYCHLAK, JR.

DOB: 7/13/68
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 350-365 lbs
Hair: Bleach Blond Mohawk
Eyes: Behind the Shades
Home: Royersford, PA
(45min NW of Philadelphia, PA)
Education: Spring-Ford H. S.,
Diploma 1987
Occupation:
Professional Powerlifter

Career Highlights

1,005lb Squat - 4/13/03
1st Man to Bench 900lbs - 11/16/03
2004 Arnold Classic Bench Press
Heavyweight Champion - 3/5/04
1st Man to Bench 1,000lbs - 11/21/04
York Barbell Hall of Fame Induction
- 7/16/05
Pay-per-view at the Mr. Olympia 40th
Anniversary - 10/15/05
9 All Time World Records

Ten 800lb Lifts	Six 900lb Lifts
804 WPO	900 IPA
810 IPA	915 APF
815 IPA	925 APF
821 WPO	936 IPA
825 IPA	950 IPA
840 APF	965 IPA
875 APF	975 APF
876 WPO	Two 1,000lb Lifts
885 APF	1,005lbs IPA
890 IPA	1,010lbs APF

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