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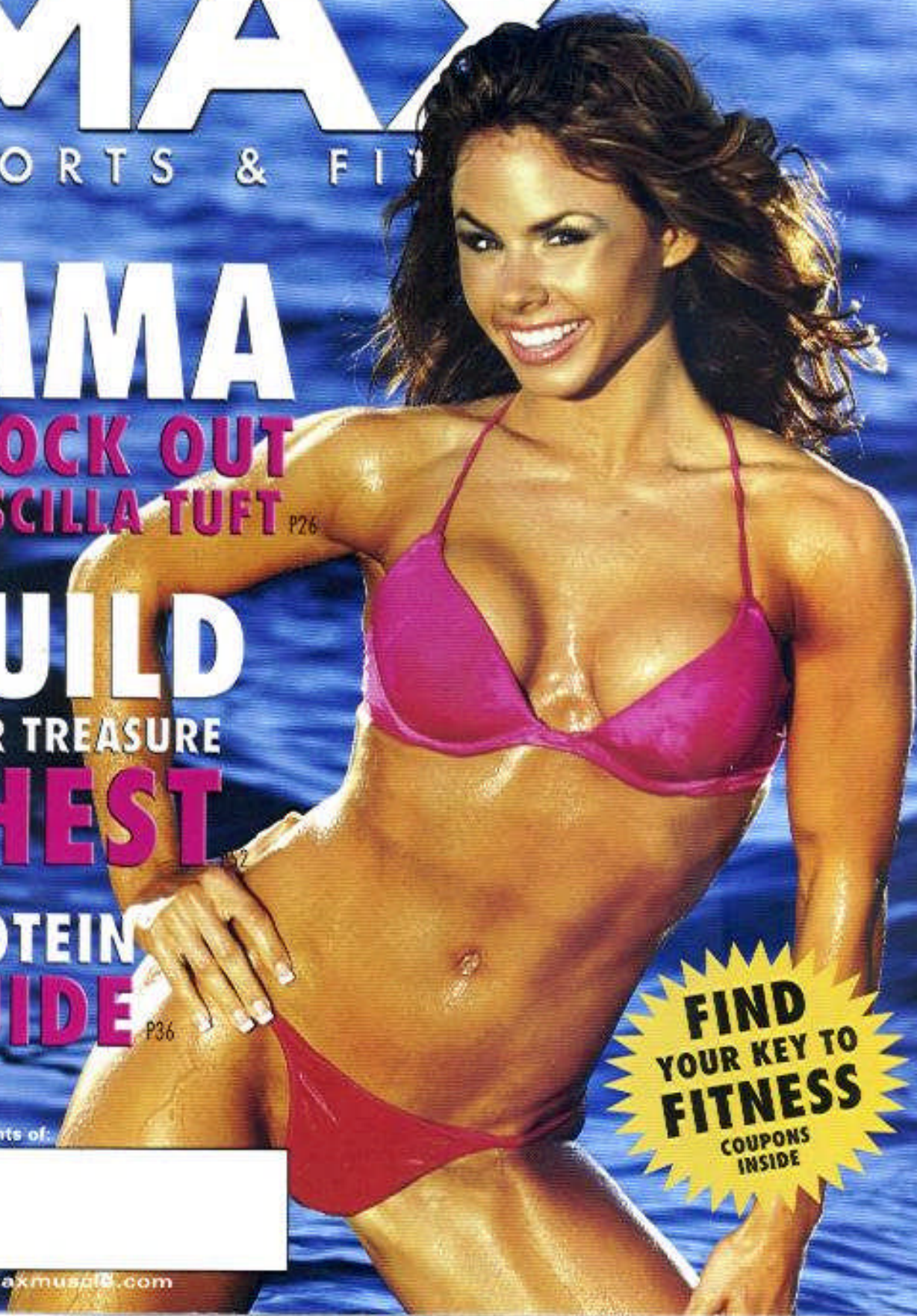
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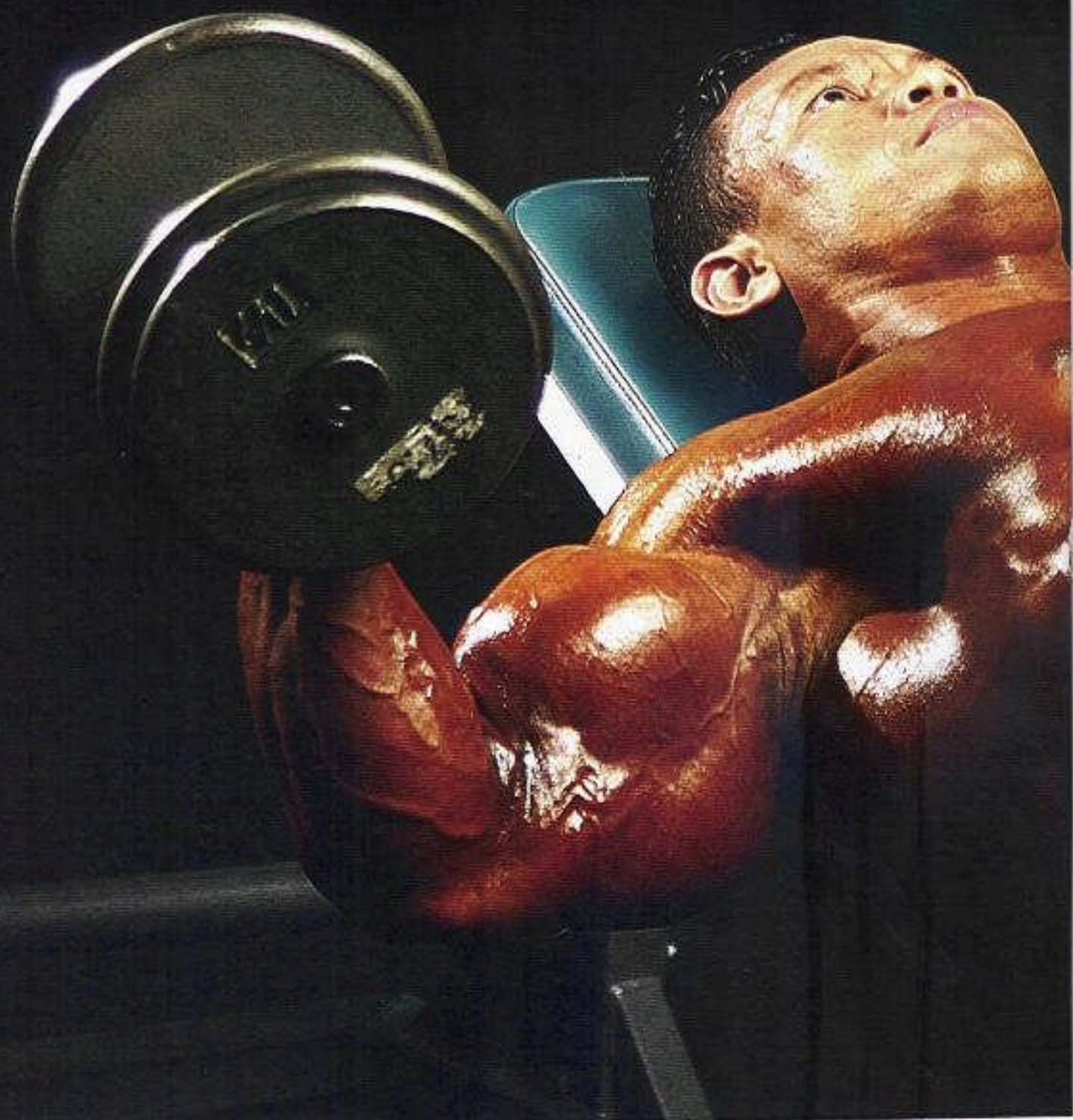
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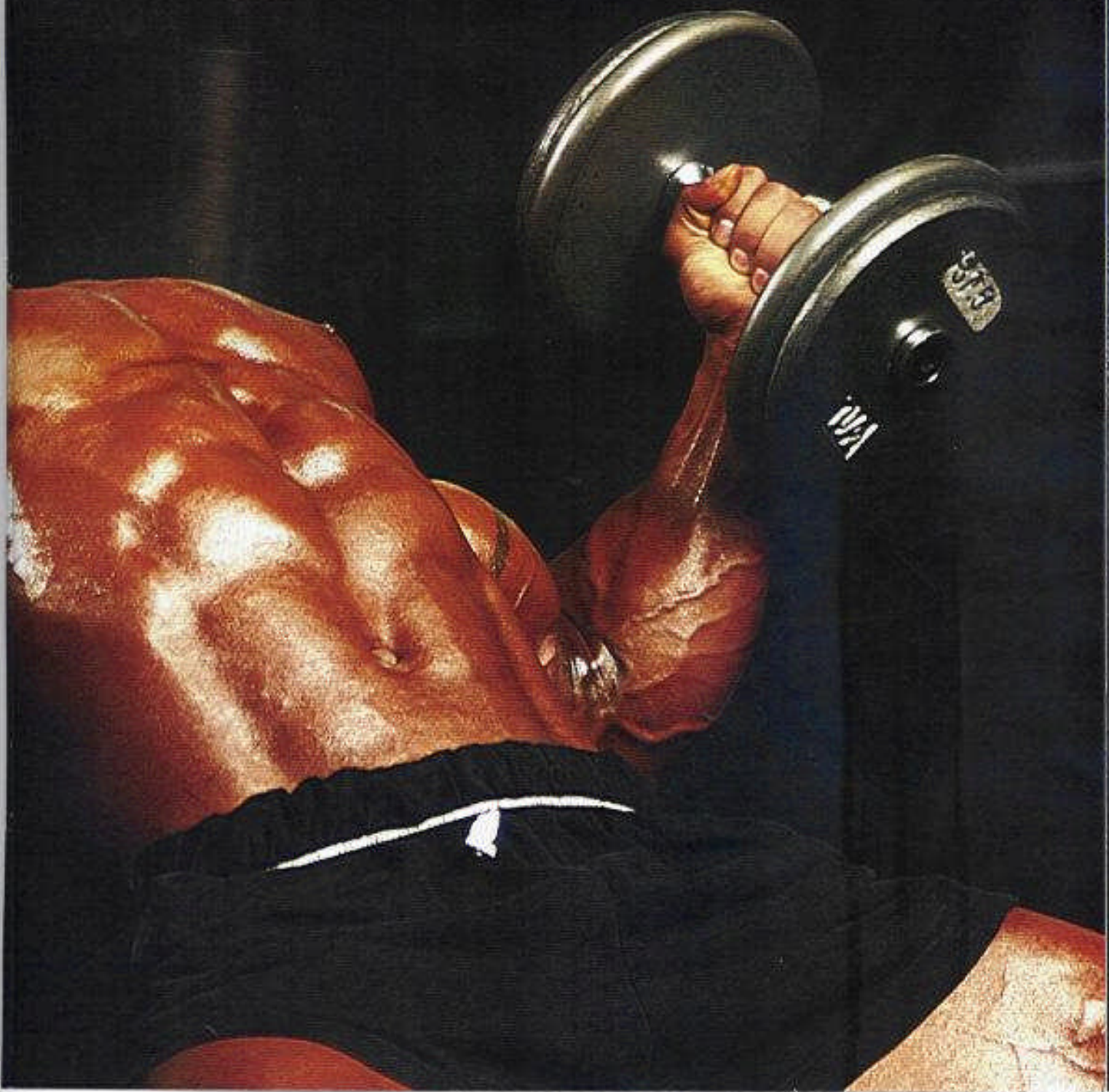
SUPERSIZE WORKOUT

BUILD YOUR



TREASURE CHEST

by John Fietera, C.P.T., R.T.S. • opening photos by Jason Mathas



When you work or train a muscle the goal is to shorten the length by bringing both ends of the muscle closer together. In order to accomplish this, two things must occur.

1. You need to know where both ends of the muscle are and in what direction the muscle fibers point.
2. The resistance has to oppose the motion that occurs when the muscle shortens.

The chest muscle group is composed of two separate muscles, the pectoralis major and the pectoralis minor.

When people talk about training the chest, they are usually referring to the pectoralis major. Because the fibers of the pectoralis major point in a completely opposite direction than the pectoralis minor, it is almost impossible to directly target both muscles at the same time. Plus, you can't see the pectoralis minor, so most people don't really care about training it. For this reason, we're going to focus on the pectoralis major.

Anatomical Facts

The origin of a muscle is usually closest to the midline of the body. If both origin and insertion are in the midline, such as the rectus abdominis, the origin becomes the least movable bone. The pectoralis major has two origins and one insertion. The clavicular portion arises from the front of the clavicle and inserts on the inside of the upper arm. This is referred to as the upper chest. The sternal portion arises from the lateral sternum, the cartilage of the second to the seventh ribs, and the aponeurosis (fascia) of the external oblique and rectus abdominis muscle. I bet you didn't know your chest was connected to your abdominals. That's why a strong core can effect your bench press.

The sternal portion also inserts at the same place as the clavicular portion on the inside of the upper arm. Because the fibers of both origins point laterally toward your upper arm, the chest is designed to pull or draw the arm toward the midline of the body. Hence, if you want to train the chest, then the resistance must oppose the motion of your arms trying to come toward the midline of the body.

Enough of the anatomy lesson, it is time to get to work.

Your Chest Building Workout

Decline bench

Because of the angle of the rib cage when lying down, the decline bench will recruit the most fibers when compared to the flat or inclined bench press. The angle of decline doesn't need to be steep. A 10-degree decline should do. Try and bench press one and a half times your body weight for 15 to 25 repetitions.

Incline bench dumbbell press cable fly

You will need someone to help you with this exercise. Look for a cable crossover with the soft handles, not the metal ones. Place an incline bench in between the cable crossover and then grab the low cables with approximately 20 to 30 pounds of resistance. Now have someone hand you a dumbbell in each hand. Use a weight that is $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the amount you would bench press. If you bench press 225 pounds, use 55-pound dumbbells. Now perform eight to 12 repetitions for three sets.

Close hand push-ups

A study recently published in *The Journal of Strength and Conditioning* in August, 2005 tested EMG activity in the pectoralis major and the triceps brachii from three different hand positions: Shoulder width, wider than shoulder width and a narrow base. In both the triceps brachii and the pectoralis major the EMG activity was greater using the narrow base.

Place your hands together under the center of the sternum, forming a diamond shape between your thumbs and index fingers. Do three sets of as many reps as you can. If you can do 50 repetitions each set, you're a stud.

Floor cable flies

Lie on your back between the low cables on a cable cross machine. Keep a slight bend in the elbow and perform flies three sets of 10 to 15 reps.

Single arm high cable fly

Stand parallel to a high cable on a cable cross machine. With an approximately 60-degree bend in your elbow and your elbow at shoulder height. Swing your arm toward the midline of your body (shoulder adduction), keeping the same angle at your elbow the entire time. This motion will emphasize the sternal fibers or upper chest. Three sets of 10 to 15 reps will do the trick here.

Perform this routine two to three times a week and within six to eight weeks, your chest should be in great shape.

For more information or to contact the author visit www.NCCPT.com.

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