Equipment Utilization:

The E-Z curl bar

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Along with the tons of free weights and various weight machines found in many weight rooms, the E-Z curl bar is a very popular piece of equipment. Most people associate this device with various curling exercises for the biceps. Its usefulness however goes far beyond arm curls.

Originally designed to help alleviate elbow stress during curling exercises, the E-Z curl bar is ideal for many weight training movements. The forearm is able to assume a more natural position with the use of this bar than with a straight barbell.

The use of an Olympic E-Z curl bar is preferred by some. This type of bar allows for better balancing and lets the weights rotate more freely than with a standard one-inch bar. Remember, though, only Olympic plates (2" holes) can be used with this type of curl bar. Always use collars when using this bar since it is very easy for plates to slide during the following exercises.

Biceps. This is by far the most commonly exercised body part utilizing the E-Z curl bar. The curling action can be done while standing or with the use of a preacher curl stand. Many curling bars will allow the selection of a wide or narrow grip. Personal preference determines which grip to use.

Triceps. Lying Triceps Extensions -- This is a very effective method of isolating the triceps. The proper execution of this exercise is described in detail in the Exercise Methods Notebook, NSCA Journal 8(2), 1986.

Trapezius. Upright Rows -- The use of the curling bar for this exercise allows for a more comfortable grip to be used than with a straight bar. This is especially true if an extremely narrow grip is used.
Close-grip Bench Press -- Some athletes have difficulty maintaining a satisfactory grip while doing this exercise with a straight bar. The use of the curling bar may alleviate this problem. It will also make it easier to utilize a very narrow grip if that is preferred.

Torso. Lying Pullovers -- The curling bar is excellent for this exercise. The athlete can use a wide or narrow grip, according to their preference. The weight can be controlled more effectively than if a dumbbell is used for this exercise.

Deltoids. Front Raises -- Barbell front raises are an excellent exercise for developing the anterior deltoids. Once again, some athletes prefer the angle of the grip they can use with the curling bar.

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