Equipment Utilization:

Close grip handle

Andrew Fry C.S.C.S.
Editorial Assistant
NSCA Journal

A simple little device that is often used in the weight room is the close grip handle attachment. This piece of equipment can be used with a number of different machines and exercises to add variety to any workout. The close grip handle can be purchased from a number of fitness equipment suppliers, or can be easily constructed.

Close Grip Chins - (latissimus dorsi, teres major, biceps brachii) Using any standard chinning bar, the handle is hung over the bar. The athlete grips the attachment and pulls himself up until the chest reaches the handle. Care must be taken to keep the head from banging into the bar. Some athletes prefer to alternate lifting their head to one side of the bar or the other.

Seated Rows - (latissimus dorsi, teres major, trapezius, thoromboids) Using the low pulley machine, the close grip handles are attached to the cable. The pulling motion is similar to the chins described above, except the angle of pull is different. A more detailed description of this exercise can be found in the NSCA Journal 9(4):62-63.
**T-Bar Rows** - (latissimus dorsi, teres major, trapezius, thromboids, erector spinae) This exercise is sometimes performed on a specially designed t-bar row machine. However with the use of the close grip handle a single barbell can be used quite effectively. The bar is placed with one end situated in a corner of the room where two walls and the floor meet. The close grip handle allows the athlete to pull the loaded end of the bar up to the chest. Care should be taken that the end of the bar does not damage the walls.

**Tricep Pushdowns** - (triceps) This exercise was previously described in the *NSCA Journal* 8(1):64-66. Some athletes prefer to be able to place their hands at a slight angle rather than grip a straight bar. While special attachments are available for this purpose, the close grip handle can be used by gripping the angled portion of the handle. Some people who experience pain in their elbows while doing pushdowns find some relief when using an angled grip.

**Close Grip Pulldowns** - (latissimus dorsi, teres major, biceps brachii) This exercise is similar to a close grip chin. Athletes who are unable to perform a close grip chin can effectively work out with this exercise until they have developed enough strength to perform chins. The actual exercise is shown in the *NSCA Journal* 8(1):64-66. The handle is attached to the cable on a high pulley. The athlete sits below the pulley and leans back slightly. Care must be taken not to lean too far back or else the exercise becomes similar to a seated row. This exercise is also excellent when high repetitions are desired, but not possible to do with close grip chins. As you may have noticed, most of these exercises are excellent for pulling type activities by developing the latissimus dorsi and related muscles. The addition of this attachment to your weightroom will help expand the use of the equipment you already have.