

South Carolina Strongmen become bench press champions

Richland County (S.C.) Sheriff Leon Lott and RCSD host a multi-rep 250-lbs. bench-press challenge celebrating America's 250th birthday

COLUMBIA, SC, UNITED STATES, July 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- FIFTY-ONE MEN from across central South Carolina and beyond participated in the Richland County Sheriff's Department's (RCSD) 250 Bench Press Challenge, celebrating America's 250th birthday. The 51 strength-and-power athletes, primarily law enforcement (LE) officers – many of whom are special operators – from three different agencies bench-pressed 250 pounds for at least one repetition but more-often-than-not multiple reps for record. The requirements were simple: All lifts had to be “raw” (no lifting shirts or other assists). The lifts had to be performed with free weights loaded onto a free Olympic bar, and all lifts had to be verified by gym staff or LE officers.

In addition to the RCSD deputy sheriffs, Cayce Department of Public Safety police officers, and game wardens with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) all of whom performed their lifts between June 28-July 3; participants included at least three NCAA Division I and Division II college football players, a few previously deployed U.S. Marine riflemen and former Army Infantrymen, one Army physician from Fort



Sir-Saleem Stokes, 19, youngest champion; Bruce Brutschy, 74, senior champion; and Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott with 17 of the 51 bench press champions, July 2, 2026.



Coin (front and back) recieved by each of the 250 Bench Press Champions.

Bragg, N.C., four S.C. martial artists, two Black Belt Hall of Famers, one S.C. Military Veterans Hall of Fame inductee, several record-setting powerlifters, and at least one competitive bodybuilder.

The senior athlete, at age 74, was 10th-degree Black Belt Bruce Brutschy. The youngest was Fayetteville State (former Benedict College) Offensive Lineman Sir'Saleem Stokes, age 19. The reigning "rep champion" was Joey Brown with 32 repetitions of 250 lbs., followed closely by competitive powerlifter Lawrence Brimfield with 31 reps [full listing of participants, their reps and ages follows].

Not all participants were successful.

Only the strongest were able to bench one-or-more reps to earn a highly coveted two-inch "champions" coin and an embroidered RCSD gym towel signifying they are among America's 250th birthday bench-press champions in the Palmetto State. Beyond the 250-bench, several of the competitors also managed to record lifts (for reps) of 315 lbs. with one champion, competitive powerlifter Lawrence Brimfield benching a verified 505 lbs. for one rep.

In no particular order, The 250-LBS. Bench Press Champions are –

1. Bruce Brutschy, two reps, age 74.
2. Sir'Saleem Stokes, 10 reps, age 19.
3. Joey Brown, 32 reps, age 35.
4. Lawrence Brimfield, 31 reps, age 37.
5. RCSD Deputy Wendell Bing, six reps, age 28.
6. RCSD Deputy Jawon McCray, eight reps, age 31.
7. RCSD Master Deputy Colin Davis, 16 reps, age 32.
8. Col. W. Thomas Smith Jr., RCSD special deputy, eight reps, age 67.
9. One Life Fitness Sandhills GM Brandon Mohtassem, 16 reps, age 36.
10. Deputy Solicitor Al Eargle, seven reps, age 61.
11. RCSD Lt. Gilbert Gallegos, four reps, age 48.
12. RCSD Sergeant Garo Brown, 10 reps, age 48.
13. RCSD Investigator David Castro, 21 reps, age 32.
14. RCSD Master Deputy John O'Shaughnessy, 14 reps, age 30.



Sheriff Leon Lott is pictured with reigning "rep champion" Joey Brown who benched 250 lbs. for 32 repetitions, at R1 CrossFit, July 2.

15. RCSD Lt. Christopher Blanding, 15 reps, age 34.
16. RCSD Reserve Deputy Erik Harley, 11 reps, age 53.
17. RCSD Master Deputy Jason McLees, two reps, age 44.
18. RCSD Cpl. Tim Riley, one rep, age 29.
19. U.S. Army Maj. William Maxwell Fowler, M.D., seven reps, age 34.
20. RCSD K-9 Specialist Datron Washington, five reps, age 30.
21. RCSD Master Deputy Michael Pittas, three reps, age 29.
22. SCDNR LE Lance Cpl. George Caddell, four reps, age 36.
23. SCDNR LE PFC William Sutton, 21 reps, age 34.
24. SCDNR LE PFC Hundley McCurry, 10 reps, age 29.
25. SCDNR LE PFC Cole Haile, nine reps, age 26.
26. SCDNR LE Lance Cpl. Taylor Moore, 10 reps, age 31.
27. SCDNR LE PFC William Cannon Smith III, 18 reps, age 31
28. SCDNR Director Tom Mullikin, PhD, 10 reps, age 66.
29. RCSD Deputy Aly Brun, five reps, age 32.
30. RCSD Master Deputy William Taylor, 21 reps, age 53.
31. RCSD Deputy Gabriel Golden, 19 reps, age 21.
32. RCSD Master Deputy Thomas Bryan King, 17 reps, age 53.
33. Matt Ashby, 18 reps, age 47.
34. Rodney Middleton, five reps, age 21.
35. Alex Johnson, four reps, age 53.
36. RCSD Cpl. Jeff Rustin, one rep, age 35.
37. RCSD Master Deputy Jordan Knight, six reps, age 26.
38. Cayce Police Officer Zacchaeus Johnson, two reps, age 26.
39. Cayce Police Investigator Tony Taylor, 15 reps, age 37.
40. Cayce Police Lt. Eddie West, five reps, age 41.
41. Cayce Police Lt. Calvin Brown, four reps, age 37.
42. Cayce Asst. Police Chief Jonathan Von Moltke, seven reps, age 36.
43. Benji Carpenter, 13 reps, age 50.
44. RCSD Master Deputy Toddson Catoe, nine reps, age 25.
45. RCSD Deputy Adam Shaw, 13 reps, age 30.
46. RCSD Cpl. Thomas Collins, 10 reps, age 42.
47. RCSD Investigator Henry Dukes, one rep, age 28.
48. RCSD Cpl. Dior Irons, 10 reps, age 29.
49. Doug Allen, 11 reps, age 37.
50. Kyle Tomlinson, 24 reps, age 39.
51. John Mattei, M.D., 10 reps, age 72.

Sponsors of the RCSD 250 Bench Press Challenge were Lorick Office Products (Presenting Sponsor), Columbia Flag & Sign, One Life Fitness, the S.C. Military Veterans Hall of Fame, and the Spine Pain Center. Warrior Axe Cross Fit also participated in the 250 Bench Press Challenge as did Wolf's Gym and the Original Gym.

Christopher David Carter
ASV Entertainment and Sports
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/924722876>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.