# Headline: Danny Pinter bench presses for Boys and Girls Clubs of Muncie at NFL Combine

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INDIANAPOLIS — The first 17 are like nothing, the bar almost bouncing back and forth from his chest to an arm’s length above.

The next five take a bit more effort, the two 45-pound plates on each side seeming to weigh a little more, but he keeps the same pace.

He pauses for an extra second, arms extended and elbows locked.

Down, up. He struggles but pushes through to complete the rep.

He pauses again.

Down, up. His arms almost give in, but he’s still able to get it all the way to the top.

One last pause.

The bar hits his chest again, but it stalls halfway through the rep, and he is assisted in racking it.

Former Ball State offensive lineman Danny Pinter sits up and walks off the stage Feb. 27, having just raised $1,977 for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Muncie with 24 bench press reps of 225 pounds at the NFL Combine.

Pinter said he was shooting for 25, but he was pleased with how he performed.

“I’m pretty happy with it,” Pinter said. “I mean, that was the range I wanted to get. It’s a little different when you’re out there than when you’re just in the gym training. All in all, I’m happy with the results.”

Pinter partnered with the Boys and Girls Clubs in early February with a Pledge It campaign in which people could donate either a flat amount or a certain amount of money per rep he completed on his bench press test.

At the time of his test, flat donations had already surpassed $1,000, and each rep was worth an extra $38.

“I kind of joked with him and said, ‘I’m pledging for you. Don’t make me go broke and rep out 30 reps,’” Ball State offensive line coach Colin Johnson said with a laugh. “In a sense, my wallet’s a little happy he hit 24.”

Pinter said he is appreciative of all the support he has received through this campaign, and it just shows what the people of Muncie are all about.

“The Muncie community is awesome. I think everyone knows that,” Pinter said. “I think that’s just another example — there’s a ton of people, and everyone cares about the betterment of Muncie and the kids at the Boys and Girls Clubs, so that’s awesome.”

According to its website, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Muncie opens its doors to kids every day after school and all day during the summer “to ensure that our youth have a safe, fun and positive environment to be a part of.” By doing so, members have opportunities to “achieve academic success, to be instilled with good character and citizenship and to maintain healthy lifestyles.”

Jason Newman, chief executive officer of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Muncie, said he didn’t hesitate when the idea of this campaign was presented to him.

“For a local kid to get a chance to go play in the NFL — to just get an invitation to the combine — is hard enough,” Newman said. “Then, to really think that somebody who, while they're pursuing their dreams, takes even the five minutes to say, 'You know what, I want to give something back to the kids of this community' is great.”

When deciding what organization to partner with, Pinter said, he wanted to make sure it meant something to him. Through Ball State Football, he had volunteered with many local organizations, and the Boys and Girls Clubs was first on his list.

“We had a lot of different volunteer opportunities, which all meant something and all were cool, but I think that was my favorite one,” Pinter said. “Just seeing kids engaging in stuff like sports, being active and that type of stuff … It was an opportunity to be able to help them and give back to them.”

Johnson said he wasn’t surprised to see Pinter pair with the community because that’s just who he is.

“You talk about guys that are good people and come from a good place in their heart — that’s him,” Johnson said. “He could have easily just gone into this thing and did it for himself. Yet, like Danny, it’s more than just about him, and it will always be more than just about him.”

Pinter came into Ball State as a tight end. Before his redshirt junior season, he made the switch to offensive line — a switch then-offensive line coach Kyle DeVan told him would help both the team and his draft potential.

In his redshirt senior season, Pinter made the All-Mid-American Conference First Team, won Ball State’s John Magnabosco Award as the team’s most outstanding player and won Ball State’s Paul Schudel Strength and Conditioning Award.

Pinter told Johnson before his bench press test he was expecting to put up around 24 or 25 reps. He wound up besting or tying 18 of the 39 offensive lineman who participated. Johnson said he thought Pinter might be able to squeeze out a few more with all the adrenaline surrounding the combine, but he was encouraged with how well he did.

“When you hit that number, it shows people that you’re strong, you have the muscle endurance and you’re only going to get stronger as you go on,” Johnson said. “Danny has, I think, a lot of capacity to grow … He’s a great athlete, and 24 reps on the bench press just shows me that he’s definitely strong enough to compete in the NFL.”

Pinter’s 24 reps have made the Boys and Girls Clubs of Muncie $2,145 richer to this point, and Newman said he’ll have a warm welcome when he returns to Muncie.

“If we can play any little part in … giving him the recognition he deserves … we want to play that part,” Newman said. “Our kids will be doing something, maybe making a day for him during Boys and Girls Clubs Week, which will be coming up at the end of March, just so we can let him know how much his work has meant for us.”

Pinter said his chest and arms are doing OK, but he definitely won’t be benching 225 pounds anytime soon.