

David Schwartz REMARKABLE!

Philip Ross of the American Eagle Martial Arts Academy in Ho-Ho-Kus came to us with an inspiring story this past month and we are very pleased to be able to share it.

A little background. David's father came to me and introduced his son and asked if I would be able to train him. We looked at each other, gave a shrug & said let's give it a shot. David has cerebral palsy, a neurological affliction that effects motor skills and creates spastic condition of the muscles. There may also be some special and other associated mental encumbrances as well. The complica-



David wrestling in a match (above)
and training with Phil (below)



tions vary in degree from person to person.

Anyway, David had an appointment at Johns Hopkins for an evaluation for an operation that would lengthen his left leg so it would be consistent with the right. After training for six months, David and his family went down to the institute and they said the he didn't need the operation! That strength and flexibility in his left was close



to his right and didn't warrant an operation! This was six years ago.

Now, fast forward to two years ago — David wanted to do a varsity sport. I suggested that he try wrestling. He was playing rec basketball, did track, etc... He took my grappling class for a year and then his folks enrolled him in the Mahwah Recreation Wrestling.

He wrestled all last year and did not win one match. David's parents asked me if I thought he would ever win. I told them if he keeps working, eventually he will get his hand raised. Well, early this year, in a Mahwah vs Demarest JV match, David recorded his first victory!

He pinned his opponent in the second period!

This was a huge victory not only for David, but his parents and the team. His folks have worked very hard to give him opportunities. David is in pursuit of his Eagle Scout Badge, sings in the school choir and is active in school government. ■

