

TESTIMONIALS FROM PARENTS and COACHES ABOUT THE PUNISHER WRESTLING TEAM:

"The Perry Hall Rec Council wrestling program is one of the oldest established programs in our league."

"I wanted to make you aware that both myself and my husband, have been more than pleased with the way Doug runs the group. He handles everything from sign up to fund raising, apparel ordering and, most importantly, getting his team in as many competitions as possible to groom capable, prepared young men ready to potentially handle high school wrestling and, ideally, college level matches. His knowledge of the sport is superior. His commitment to the wrestlers and his rapport with them, the parents and those who have moved on that return to either assist or visit and share their success stories are a testament to his track record in running a successful operation.

For me personally, it started when I called Doug after sign ups had ended last season. I left him a message and he called me back the same day. He gave me 15-20 minutes of his time on the phone and was more than willing to allow my inexperienced 8 year old son to join the team with a "the more the merrier" welcome. My son has a tendency to lose focus with certain activities and this opportunity has helped him immensely and matured him in a way nothing else could. Doug made it possible and continues to share all that he knows to better his chances of succeeding."

"Let's not forget that wrestling is one of the most physically demanding sports in the world, it's not badminton or dance!! Our son, just started wrestling three (3) ago. Under your guidance, he won the MD State JR leagues championship in his 2nd year! That doesn't happen through osmosis, it's a direct result of the dedication and instruction of his coach.

"Dealing with kids ages 4-15 takes a tremendous amount of patience, something perry hall has shown building a program. Dealing with the prents can be just as tough as many teachers have begun to find out these days as parents will be quick to blame the coaches or teachers before understanding the situation. The way perry hall junior wrestling takes on these tasks and created a better program has inspired myself and others to be like Perry Hall."

"My son has participated in other rec sports. But this is the first sport that he's tried that he actually LOVES!! You have a way with the kids that they respond well to. Your coaching style helps them build character, integrity and teaches them to never give up. You also teach them that hard work and dedication will help them not only in wrestling but in life. I believe that you are teaching them more than wrestling, but also teaching them about life and how to work hard for what you want."

" I have always known Mr. Yoakum to be a hard worker, that will go out of his way for the benefit of the children currently wrestling in the Maryland Junior League ranks. He has given back so much to the community that had given him the opportunity to excel in the sport of wrestling in so many ways, that those tasks will be forever left unmatched by many,

Coach Yoakum spends countless hours conducting several wrestling tournaments every season as an unpaid volunteer, providing countless young wrestlers with a venue to practice their sport. He has coached the Perry Hall Junior League wrestling program for nearly 17 years now, imparting his knowledge of the sport to the many young wrestlers he influences on a daily basis during every winter season. He has taught so much to so many in an often thankless position, still he continues to do so year in and year out. Coach Yoakum has coached many great wrestlers, preparing them so well for the next level."

"As a former Perry Hall junior league wrestler on Doug's team, a former Perry Hall high school wrestler on Doug's team, a former Perry Hall junior league wrestling coach under Doug for 6 years and a parent of a former Perry Hall junior league wrestler who was coached by Doug - I can say without a doubt that I know Doug and I know wrestling. The Perry Hall Junior League Wrestling program has been and continues to be lucky to have a person like Doug teaching, coaching and leading it. Since Doug began coaching the program over 15 years ago, it has become an unquestionable fact that he is capable, successful and dedicated to the program and the children."

"My 9 year old son has learned and wrestled under Coach Doug for 4 years and has generated skills and passion for another 5 years until my son likely wrestles in high school. Coach Doug has prepared my son to become one of the best wrestlers in the state for his age/weight, and has helped him become well suited to continue into HS. Doug has always been very fair and generous with his time while teaching my son good technique, health, preparation, and has a long-term perspective that he also instills in the athletes in developing young boys into men. My son has played a variety of sports through this recreational council for about 6 coaches and Coach Doug has been as great with kids as any of them."

"I am writing to you to let you know how much Perry Hall Wrestling has meant to my family. Being a part of the Punisher team helped my son to be the wrestler that he is today. Without the instruction and leadership, I truly feel that my son would not be the wrestler that he is today. My son begged me to let him wrestle when he was younger but it was not until he was in 8th grade that I felt he was ready to handle the commitment of wrestling and keep up with his academics. My son wrestled for Doug in 2010 and 2011. I also felt it would benefit to continue to wrestle for Doug as a Freshman in 2011. He at that time attended Perry Hall High school. I as his mother felt that he would benefit more being under Doug's instruction than if he were placed on the high school team. This proved to be true as My son continued to place at various tournaments, states, and winning the MJWL Thomas B. Scheffenacker award. Matthew was able to achieve straight A's at Perry Hall High School and wrestle extremely well. This helped him to achieve his biggest dream which was to wrestle for Calvert Hall's Varsity team."

"Wrestling is not like any other sport, it is not just an hour to watch and then you go home. Wrestlers must spend hours at tournaments and so must coaches. As a parent it amazed me how committed Doug was to take his team to so many tournaments. He sat there all day and instructed his kids. Wrestling matches lasted sometimes for over 12 hours. As a parent I sat through these matches waiting for the 6 minutes I would watch my son wrestle and I did this for my child. Doug does this for all of the kids. I remember once when he came to a tournament for my boys and they were the only 2 wrestling. He gave up his time on a Saturday to help my sons to become better wrestlers. After those long days the one thing that my boys looked forward to was reading on his website the ups and lows about that day in wrestling."

"Doug was not just a coach to my son he was a mentor. He was the building block of who my son is today as a wrestler."

"I grew up wrestling in the toughest district in Pennsylvania, the toughest state for wrestling in the country. I know what it takes to be successful in wrestling. Doug shows this side every day in practice with the kids. He's a great leader for the program, I've seen it first hand."

"My son has been wrestling now for what this is his second season. He is 8 yrs old and wrestles for Perry Hall. I myself have never wrestled but have been training in martial arts for nearly 5 years and my son has been training jujitsu with me for 3 years. Last year my son wrestled on the A team at 55lbs and lost nearly every match. It was a tough learning experience being put in an extremely competitive league against kids with 3-4 times his experience, but coach Doug stuck with him! This year he went from a 10-41 record to a current 31-15 record winning 2/3 of his matches. He enjoys the program and coach Doug as well as I do, and would be very disappointed if he were to be replaced! Doug spends a considerable amount of his time on a volunteer basis and teaches a lot of kids more skills than just how to wrestle."

"The Perry Hall Recreational Wrestling program has taught my sons alot about the sport of wrestling. He was very kind to our family about a month ago, when my older son wanted to quit wrestling. He told us, no one looks down upon him and that he should stick it out to the end of the season and then make a decision. My older son will not be wrestling next year, but not because of the coaching, it is just not his sport. However, my younger son, Justin, loves the sport and wishes to continue with it next year. He responds well to Coach Doug's coaching style he has been a great motivator and coach."

"Our son, has asked to wrestle for the past three years; finally this year we gave in and signed him up with the PH Punishers. One of us is at every practice (all three days) and attend every match, therefore we know the program is run well. We are very impressed with Coach Doug and his assistants. Every wrestler looks to Coach Doug for guidance and he always delivers. He takes the time to explain the moves, he works with them until they feel confident with what they've learned. His assistants are always there to lend a hand or to give a little encouragement. These men put a lot of time and talent into the program and ask for nothing in return. We realize wrestling is a tough sport but these kids love it and they feel like they're apart of something special. The only regret we have with the program or Coach Doug is, we should have signed our son up with the Punishers three years ago. It has been wonderful to watch our son grow on and off the mat. The growth our son has made as a wrestler and as a young man stems from him learning to push himself and to work harder than his opponent. Our son has learned life skills that he will put to use his entire life. It truly has been a pleasure to be apart of the Punisher family and we've enjoyed watching Coach Doug develop some pretty good wrestlers. We look forward to next season with Doug, Mike and Sam."

"Thank you so much for acknowledging My son's academic achievement. It means a lot for him to get encouragement for his hard work. He has been consistently achieving straight A's all through middle school.

We would also like to thank you and your team (Coach Mike & Sam) for an amazing influence on our son this year. He was hesitant about trying wrestling initially, but we are so glad he did. You have helped him to grow as a Wrestler and in his overall level of confidence.