In reality, HIT can employ a wide variety of equipment to load muscles. With this in mind, Coach Harrison recommends "a diverse and varied selection of exercises and choices of modality."

Remember, too, that all equipment has advantages and disadvantages. For instance, machines can vary resistance according to muscular needs but they are expensive and usually require a separate machine for a separate function. On the other hand, free weights are inexpensive and offer plenty of variety. However, Coach Bradley makes this observation: "Many different exercises can be performed with free weights but how do you perform a leg curl with a barbell or a neck exercise with a dumbbell? This question may not be important if you are a competitive weightlifter but it is important if you are a competitive wrestler."

Sunir Jossan, Chief of Fitness for the National Counter Terrorism Center, makes this point: "Many people who think that HIT is machine-based training also think that there is something magical about training with barbells and dumbbells or that only real men train with free weights. And this simply is not the case."

When it comes to choosing equipment, then, it is best to keep an open mind. Coach Mannie offers this sage advice: "Do not handcuff yourself to a set ideology or antiquated prejudices."

Minnesota - 152 lbs. Logan McAlpinn (Woodbury) with a single leg trip on Mitch Shemon (Hastings). McAlpin decisioned Shemon 4-3, but Hastings dominated the dual with a 71-3 victory. Photo by Chris Falteisek.

WHAT HIT IS

So what is HIT? Since it was first popularized nearly 40 years ago, there have been endless interpretations, variations and applications of HIT. The fact of the matter is that most HIT practitioners incorporate their own personal twists and perspectives.

However, different versions of HIT do have several common denominators. As the name implies, HIT is characterized by intense, aggressive efforts: Each exercise is typically performed to the point of muscular fatigue or "failure." A minimal number of sets are usually performed, often only one set of each exercise but sometimes several sets. Another characteristic of HIT is the emphasis on progressive overload: Whenever possible, an attempt is made to increase