



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Mickey Hans (aka Tiger Ali Singh) is paying his dues in the World Wrestling Federation. He's carrying on a family tradition started by his father (right), the original Tiger.

## Ali stalks fame

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gradually gained popularity as he turned aside challenges from under card veterans Billy Gunn and the Brooklyn Brawler.

It wasn't until the end of the marathon tournament, when he was pronounced the Kuwait Cup winner, that Hans realized the fans' complete transformation. "They were chanting 'Tiger, Tiger, Tiger' as I hoisted the cup over my head.

"I told a reporter to catch me tomorrow because I was at a loss for words."

The Milton District High School graduate fulfilled two other dreams besides actually winning the Kuwait Cup. The second and most rewarding was facing Owen Hart, of the world-famous Hart Foundation, in the finals.

"I always wanted to go against a member of their family. To me, Owen represented all of the Harts," said Hans, who polished off his fellow Canadian with a spinning back kick. "The match was hold on hold, and afterward he (Owen) gave me a big embrace and congratulated me."

One match earlier he faced the deranged Mankind, a former Death Match champion as Cactus Jack and as famous internationally as his father Tiger Jeet Singh was. In what Hans described as his toughest match to date, he countered a suplex and pinned Mankind

with a small package.

While Hans has quickly gained popularity overseas — in Kuwait and England where he's made some public appearances — he's still a virtual unknown among North American viewers.

He has wrestled on RAW is WAR, but the match (against Salvatore Sincere) took a back seat as WWF promoters televised a back-stage brawl between Bret "Hit Man" Hart and Stone Cold Steve Austin in the inset box.

Hans isn't too concerned about this, though, realizing that many of the top wrestlers gained lasting stardom through gradual exposure. "Vince McMahon (WWF owner) is a genius. He said he sees me as a diamond in the rough and wants me to win over the fans with my ability rather than a lot of promotion."

He points to former Intercontinental champion Rocky Maivia, who was brought in as an instant star, but whose popularity plummeted just as quickly due to a lack of ability.

Once brother Gary ties the knot, the eldest of Tiger Sr.'s three boys will travel to Halifax for an east coast tournament. He said Canadian viewers, and most importantly his long-time Milton supporters, will likely see him start wrestling on TV in the fall.

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