

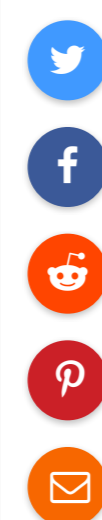
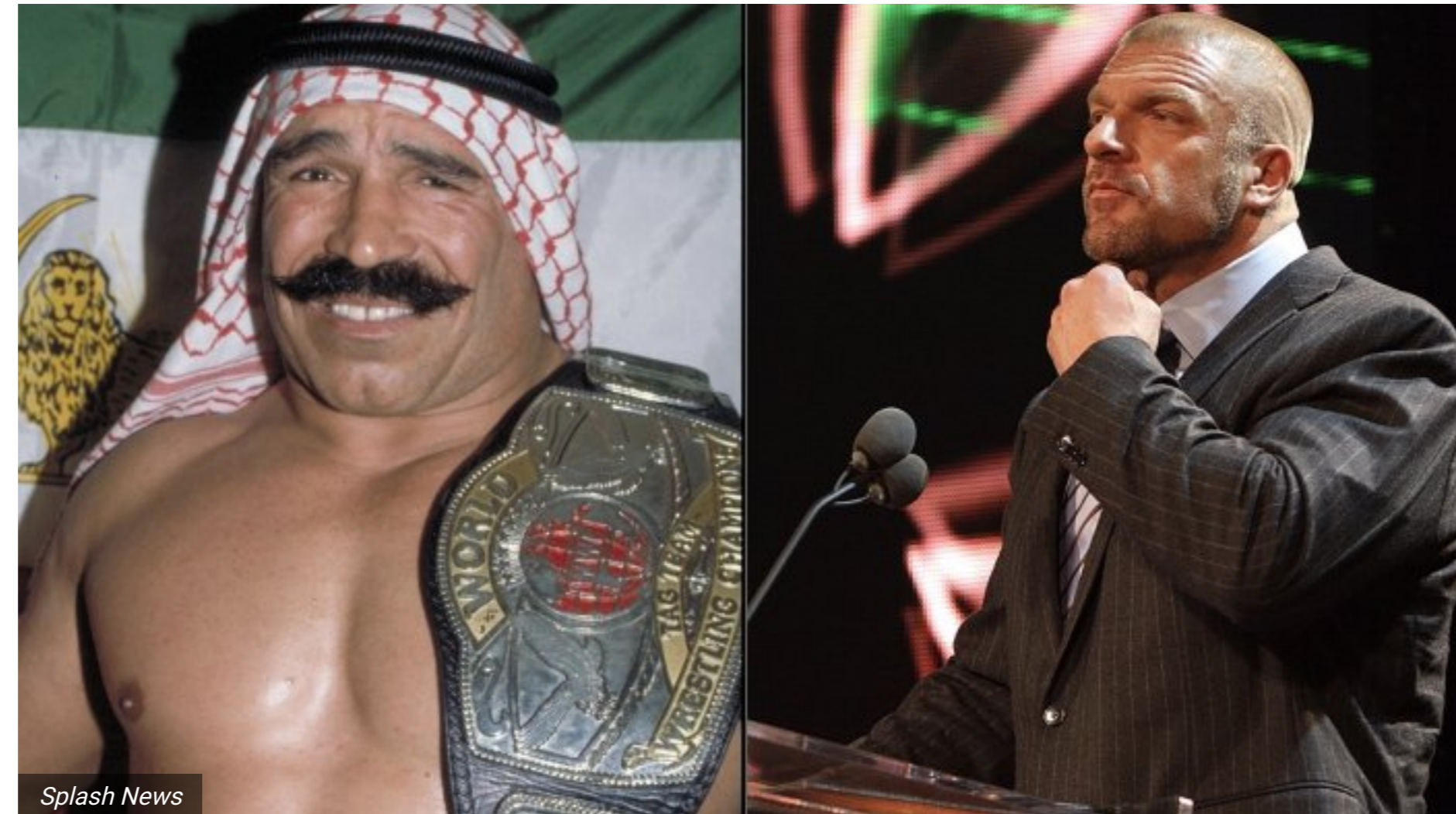
Triple H Reacts to the Passing of WWE Hall of Famer The Iron Sheik



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In the Summer of 2012, the WWE published an article honoring the promotion's "Top 50 Villians of All-Time." Although [The Iron Sheik](#) came in at #46 on the prestigious list, the ranking doesn't do him justice because the Iranian-born wrestler competed as a "heel" during the WWE's Golden Era (in the 1980s), a time dominated by larger-than-life protagonists such as Hulk Hogan and Andre the Giant. Back then, Championship titles in the WWE rarely exchanged hands. Nevertheless, his lone stint as the WWE World Heavyweight Champion made him the first professional wrestler of Iranian descent to accomplish such a feat. He won the title a day after Christmas in 1983 (after defeating Bob Backlund) but lost it one month later to an upcoming "face" in the industry named [Hulk Hogan](#). Their bout at Madison Square Garden in New York City became one of the most monumental moments in the history of professional wrestling because it helped usher in what became known as "Hulkamania." It also cemented The Iron Sheik's villainous legacy among fans. In the following decades, the WWE immortalized the originator of the "Camel Clutch" with an action figure, a cartoon character, ringside collectibles, and an induction into that Hall of Fame (2005).

On Wednesday morning, the official Twitter account for The Iron Sheik (whose real name is Hossein Khosrow Ali Vaziri) announced his passing with a memorial post. About an hour later, the WWE followed suit by sharing the news with its fanbase on Instagram.

"WWE is saddened to hear of the passing of WWE Hall of Famer The Iron Sheik and extends its condolences to his family, friends, and fans," stated the WWE.

Triple H, the company's Chief Content Officer (and former Former 14-Time WWE Heavyweight Champion), also weighed in on the sad revelation by honoring the WWE legend with a heartfelt tweet.

"The legend. An all-time great performer and WWE Hall of Famer who brought his character to life and transcended our business. My condolences to The Iron Sheik's family, friends and fans." HHH wrote.

The former Olympian leaves behind a wife and three adult children. He was 81 years old. His name has been trending online all morning, along with his former rival, Hulk Hogan.