

= The Fabulous Kangaroos =

This team is not to be mistaken for the similarly named team The Royal Kangaroos of Jonathan Boyd and Norman Frederick Charles III

The Fabulous Kangaroos was a professional wrestling tag team that existed in various forms from 1957 until 1983 . The first incarnation of The Fabulous Kangaroos was formed when Italian Australian Al Costello teamed with Australia native Roy Heffernan and adopted an " Ultra Australian " gimmick complete with boomerangs , bush hats and the song " Waltzing Matilda " as their entrance music . Costello and Heffernan are arguably the most famous version of The Kangaroos , regarded as one of the top tag teams to ever compete in professional wrestling , and are often credited with popularizing tag team wrestling in the late 1950s and 1960s .

Later versions of The Kangaroos saw Al Costello team with Ray St. Clair in 1967 , and then with Don Kent from 1968 until 1974 . Don Kent went on to team with Bruno Bekkar , and later Johnny Heffernan ( a storyline cousin of Roy Heffernan ) to keep The Fabulous Kangaroos name alive until 1983 .

The Fabulous Kangaroos made their last appearance in 1983 , but almost a decade later , the then 72 @-@ year @-@ old Al Costello managed a team known as " The New Fabulous Kangaroos " in the American Independent circuit . The New Fabulous Kangaroos consisted of little known wrestlers Mickey Doyle , Denny Kass and Al Snow ; of the three , only Snow went on to national and international recognition .

Both Costello and Heffernan died before The Kangaroos were honored as the first tag team to ever be inducted into the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2003 , which started a tradition of inducting a new team every year .

= = Career = =

= = = Al Costello and Roy Heffernan = = =

" The Fabulous Kangaroos " were the brainchild of Al Costello , who had spent the first 18 years of his wrestling career as a fairly unsuccessful singles competitor . In 1956 , Costello mentioned his idea of an " Ultra Australian " tag team to fellow wrestler , and future promoter , Joe Blanchard . Blanchard happened to be a good friend of Roy Heffernan , who had previously trained with Costello and became his choice for a partner . Costello and Heffernan made their debut as The Fabulous Kangaroos on 3 May 1957 , for Stu Hart ? s Stampede Wrestling promotion of Canada , in a match against Maurice LaPointe and Tony Baillargeon . Only weeks after making their debut , The Kangaroos were working with the top tag teams of the promotion .

After working in Stampede for a while The Fabulous Kangaroos started to travel across the United States , headlining shows wherever they went due to their ability to rile up crowds with their heel ( bad guy ) tactics . On one occasion in August 1958 , The Kangaroos , or " Kangaroo Men " as they were billed , nearly caused a riot in Madison Square Garden during a match against Antonino Rocca and Miguel Pérez ; the fans began to throw fruit and stones at them . After the match ended without a decisive winner , the promoters stepped in , turned up the arena lights , and played the National Anthem to stop a potential riot . This was a common tactic used at the time by the New York promoters to prevent riots and help the heels leave the arena unharmed . Later that year , Costello and Heffernan started working for Dory Funk ? s NWA Western States promotion based in Amarillo , Texas . Here , The Kangaroos won their first title as a team when they defeated Pepper Gomez and El Medico to win the Texas version of the NWA World Tag Team Championship on 17 November 1958 . Their first title reign was short lived , however , as Pepper Gomez and Rito Romero defeated them to regain the titles two weeks later .

The following year , The Fabulous Kangaroos won the main tag team titles in NWA New Mexico , as well as the Texas version of the NWA International Tag Team Championship . In 1960 the Kangaroos moved on to New York , where they worked for Capitol Wrestling ( predecessor to the

modern @-@ day WWE ) . On 21 July 1960 The Fabulous Kangaroos defeated Red and Lou Bastien to claim the North East version of the NWA United States Tag Team Championship ( which was later known as the WWWF United States Tag Team Championship ) . The Bastien brothers sought revenge and regained the gold during a rematch on 8 August 1960 . This time , the Bastiens ' title reign only lasted 16 days when The Fabulous Kangaroos beat them again in Washington , D.C to become two @-@ time United States champions . Their second tenure as champions lasted almost three months , before they were defeated by Johnny Valentine and Buddy Rogers on 19 November 1960 . Costello and Heffernan won the titles for a third time only a week later and carried the gold into 1961 . On 11 January 1961 , The Kangaroos third title reign ended when they lost to the team of Johnny Valentine and Bob Ellis .

As was common in their day , The Kangaroos began to move around between territories to avoid overexposure . The team arrived in Championship Wrestling from Florida billed as NWA Florida United States Tag Team Champions . It was a tag team title they never technically won , but were instead awarded by the promoter . The Kangaroos stayed in Florida , defending against all challengers until the duo of Eddie Graham and Dick Steinborn took the United States titles from them in a match on 1 November 1961 . In 1962 , The Kangaroos once again traveled across the United States , working for the Midwest Wrestling Association of Ohio where they held the Ohio version of the NWA United States tag team title . They also toured Japan with the Japan Wrestling Association and were the first to hold the Japanese version of the NWA International Tag Team Championship . In 1964 , Costello and Heffernan made their west coast debut , working in Los Angeles , California for the World Wrestling Association ( WWA ) where they beat Édouard Carpentier and Ernie Ladd for the WWA World Tag Team Championship . The Kangaroos held the titles for three months before losing them to the Torres brothers ( Alberto and Ramon ) on 28 April 1964 .

The Kangaroos never forgot their roots , and continued to work in Canada off and on through the years ; in addition to Stampede Wrestling , the team also worked for NWA All @-@ Star Wrestling based in Vancouver , British Columbia . While working for All @-@ Star Wrestling , The Kangaroos were involved in a heated storyline with Don Leo Jonathan and Roy McClarty that sold out arenas all across the territory . On 25 May 1964 The Kangaroos won the Vancouver version of the NWA Canadian Tag Team Championship , and immediately had to fend off the challenges of Jonathan and McClarty . During one infamous match in Winnipeg , The Kangaroos made Stan Stasiak an " honorary Kangaroo " for the night ( complete with bush hat and all ) for a six @-@ man tag team match against Jonathan , McClarty and Karl Gotch . During the match The Kangaroos ' cheating tactics aggravated the crowd so much that the fans threw chairs at the team . The Kangaroos attempted to hide under the ring to escape the flying chairs , but rabid fans tried to light the ring apron on fire to " smoke out " The Kangaroos . Peace was restored before anyone got seriously hurt and Jonathan and McClarty defeated The Kangaroos for the Canadian Tag Team titles , only to lose them back to the team from " Down Under " less than a month later . The Fabulous Kangaroos held the Canadian Tag team titles a total of four times while working for All @-@ Star wrestling , losing them for the final time on 17 May 1965 to the team of Do Leo Jonathan and Jim Hardy . For the better part of a year The Kangaroos had been double champions , holding both the Canadian Tag Team titles and the All @-@ Star version of the NWA International Tag Team titles .

Their time in NWA All @-@ Star Wrestling was the last time the original Kangaroos teamed together . In June 1965 , The Kangaroos lost to Don Leo Jonathan and Jim Hardy , and then split up . Heffernan had left Australia to tour the world in 1953 and wanted to return to his homeland , while Costello was determined to remain in the United States for a while longer .

= = = Al Costello and Ray St. Clair = = =

In 1967 , after having wrestled with other partners , including a stint as The Internationals with Karl Von Brauner , Costello decided that he wanted to reform The Fabulous Kangaroos . He got in touch with a friend from Great Britain , Tinker Todd , and asked him to be his new partner and reform The Fabulous Kangaroos . Todd agreed , taking the name " Ray St. Clair " and adopting an " Australian "

persona . George " Crybaby " Cannon had managed Costello and Von Brauner when they wrestled as The Internationals , and he was brought in to be The Kangaroos new manager . Not long after Costello and St. Clair hit the circuit , they captured both gold and the hatred of the crowd , just like the original Kangaroos . A couple of months after reforming , Costello and St. Clair won the NWA Detroit version of the NWA World Tag Team Championship from Fred Curry and Billy Red Lyons , but lost the titles to Fred Curry and Dan Miller a few weeks later . Costello and St. Clair showed the same gift for riling up the fans as Costello and Heffernan had and even caused their own share of riots . One particular event in Cincinnati , Ohio saw the predominantly African American crowd start a riot after The Kangaroos spat in the eye of the African American Bobo Brazil during a match . The crowd rushed towards the ring when a fan fell from the balcony , causing a diversion that enabled Costello and St. Clair to escape the ring and get back to their dressing room . When fans started to break down the door to the dressing room , The Kangaroos ducked out the back , ran down an alley and hid in a half full dumpster overnight . The next morning when The Kangaroos returned to their car , they found all four tires slashed . Despite the success of the new version of The Fabulous Kangaroos , the Costello / St. Ray team did not last more than six tumultuous months . St. Clair missed his native Britain and was suffering from a debilitating knee injury that meant he had to retire from wrestling altogether .

= = = Al Costello and Don Kent = = =

Costello was not ready to give up on The Fabulous Kangaroos concept after St. Clair retired , and a few months later he found a new man to don the bush hat : Don Kent . Kent , who was from Michigan , adopted the Ultra @-@ Australian gimmick ( but retained his American accent ) and the two formed the third overall and second most well @-@ known version of the Fabulous Kangaroos . Costello and Kent continued in a tradition that was reminiscent of the original Kangaroos ; when a federation needed a new tag team title , the Kangaroos were brought in and acknowledged as champions on arrival instead of holding a tournament to determine the champions . In 1967 , the Japanese federation " International Wrestling Enterprise " ( IWE ) brought the Kangaroos in as the first Trans @-@ World Wrestling Alliance World Tag Team Champions . They held this title until 10 January 1968 when IWE mainstays Toyonobori and Thunder Sugiyama beat them for the gold .

Their time in Japan was only the first of many international tours for these third generation Kangaroos ; they worked all over Asia as well as in Costello 's homeland of Australia . In 1969 , the Kangaroos wrestled for the newly created Eastern Sports Association ( ESA ) out of Halifax , Nova Scotia , where they were once again recognized as champions on their arrival , becoming the inaugural holders of the ESA International Tag Team Championship . On 5 August 1969 , the Kangaroos dropped the titles to Eastern Sports Association mainstays The Beast and Rudy Kay . In 1970 , they joined Dick the Bruiser 's World Wrestling Association ( WWA ) , where they competed regularly for nearly two years . On 26 December 1970 Costello and Kent defeated WWA World Tag Team Champions Dick the Bruiser and Bill Miller to claim the tag titles . The Kangaroos used every dirty tactic to hold on to the gold for six months before losing the titles to Wilbur Snyder and Moose Cholak . On 18 June 1971 , the Kangaroos regained the titles , and held them for just over two months before Wilbur Snyder and Paul Christy beat them for their straps . After leaving the WWA , Costello and Kent made a few appearances in New York for the World Wide Wrestling Federation ( WWF ) , a promotion the original Kangaroos had previously worked for under the company 's former name , Capitol Wrestling . In one of their headline appearances at Madison Square Garden , the Kangaroos wrestled to a 45 @-@ minute time limit draw against Terry and Dory Funk , Sr ..

The Kangaroos were not only stars in the wrestling world , they also made a series of popular " celebrity baseball " appearances in 1971 ? 1972 . At one celebrity all @-@ star game in Three Rivers Stadium , Pittsburgh , PA , the Kangaroos became the stars of the celebrity team by going 7 for 8 collectively and entertaining the fans with their horseplay and comedy antics .

On 18 December 1971 , The Fabulous Kangaroos defeated Ben Justice and the Stomper in the tournament finals for the new Detroit version of the NWA World Tag Team Championship . The Kangaroos worked for NWA Detroit for most of 1971 , defending the gold until Justice and the

Stomper won the titles in July 1972 . By the end of 1972 , the Kangaroos began working for Nick Gulas ? NWA Mid @-@ America promotion , based in the Southern United States , a promotion that Don Kent had worked for before becoming a Kangaroo . On 1 February 1973 , the Kangaroos defeated " The Heavenly Bodies " ( Don and Al Green ; not to be confused with the 1990s team of the same name ) to add yet another version of the NWA World Tag Team Championship , the Mid @-@ America version , to their long list of title accomplishments . The Kangaroos held that title three times between February and 22 September 1973 , when they lost to the team of Lorenzo Parente and Randy Curtis . During 1973 George Cannon was replaced as the Kangaroos manager by " Sir " Dudley Clements .

After a match in the Cincinnati Gardens , an enraged fan took a fire extinguisher off the wall and threw it at Costello and Kent from the balcony of the Gardens . The extinguisher hit Costello in the hip , damaging it so much that he needed hip replacement surgery later that year . The fan was arrested , served 15 days in jail , and fined \$ 50 for damaging the fire extinguisher . The hip injury meant that Costello was unable to compete and The Fabulous Kangaroos split up once again . Don Kent returned to NWA Mid @-@ America to work as a singles wrestler , while Costello had a full hip replacement , and was forced to retire from active competition . In 1975 , Costello surprised everyone by returning to professional wrestling as the manager of a team known as " The Love Brothers " ( Hartford and Reggie Love ) . He actually stepped into the ring on occasion as part of special six @-@ man tag team matches .

After recovering from his hip surgery , Costello returned to active competition at the age of 56 , teaming up with Tony Charles to form yet another version of The Fabulous Kangaroos . The team defeated Dominic DeNucci and Chris Markoff to win the Detroit version of the NWA World Tag Team title , the same title that Costello and Kent had previously held . The Kangaroos title run was short , however , and they lost their gold to " Crazy " Luke Graham and Ripper Collins . In 1977 Tony Charles was replaced by Don Kent and the two reunited for a tour of Puerto Rico with the World Wrestling Council ( WWC ) . In Puerto Rico , the Kangaroos arrived billed as the WWC World Tag Team Champions , once more to give a newly created title legitimacy . They dropped the titles to Carlos Colón and Jose Rivera on 12 March 1977 . The Kangaroos remained in the WWC till 1978 , chasing , but never regaining the WWC World Tag Team Championship . After their tour in Puerto Rico ended , Don Kent returned to singles wrestling , and Costello refocused on managing .

= = = Don Kent and Bruno Bekkar = = =

In 1981 , Don Kent donned the bush hat and picked up the boomerang once more after not having worked as a Kangaroo since 1974 , except for the short run in 1977 . Costello asked Kent to team up with Bruno Bekkar , who was mostly known from working in his native New Zealand and Australia . Kent and Bekkar worked a tour for the WWC while Costello served as their manager . The team won the WWC North American Tag Team titles from Jack and Jerry Brisco on 22 October 1981 . They then lost the titles to Invader I and Super Gladiator but quickly gained them back before dropping the titles for good to Invader and Gladiator on 26 January 1982 . The Kent and Bekkar team only lasted through one tour of the Caribbean , after which Bruno Bekkar returned to Australia and New Zealand to work for the local promotions there .

= = = Don Kent and Johnny Heffernan = = =

After Bekkar went back to Australia , Kent found a new partner to create yet another version of the Fabulous Kangaroos that turned out to be the last incarnation of the team . In mid 1982 , Kent teamed up with Lutte Internationale mainstay Bob Della Serra , who took the wrestling name " Johnny Heffernan " ( or " Bobby Heffernan " at times ) - a storyline cousin of Roy Heffernan . The team ended Terry and Dory Funk , Jr . ' s year and a half run with the WWC World Tag Team championship on 1 May 1982 . Kent and Heffernan held the gold for less than two months before losing the WWC World Tag Team titles to Invader I and Pierre Martel . After a tour in Puerto Rico , Costello Kent and Heffernan returned to work for Championship Wrestling from Florida ( CWF ) , a

promotion the Kangaroos last worked for in 1962 . On 5 January 1983 , the Kangaroos defeated Barry Windham and Ron Bass to win the NWA Florida Global Tag Team Championship . They held the titles four times between January and 13 April 1983 , losing to and winning titles from such teams as Terry Allen and Scott McGhee , Terry Allen and The Midnight Rider , and Terry Allen and Brad Armstrong . The final storyline involving The Fabulous Kangaroos saw Al Costello bring in J.J. Dillon to act as his short term replacement while he was " away on business " . When Costello returned from his business trip , Dillon ( kayfabe ) refused to give up the Kangaroos contracts and was backed up by both Kent and Heffernan . The angle was designed to write Al Costello out of The Fabulous Kangaroos ' storyline , and allow him to retire from wrestling altogether . Not long after Costello retired , Kent and Della Serra went their separate ways . Don Kent retired in 1986 , but made guest appearances in the ring from time to time as late as 1992 .

= = = New Fabulous Kangaroos = = =

After retiring from wrestling , Al Costello became the head of security at College Harbor , Florida . In 1992 , at the age of 71 , Costello retired from his job in Florida and began teaching wrestling . He also started to manage " The New Fabulous Kangaroos " in 1993 consisting of Mickey Doley and Denny Kass who worked for " Motor City Wrestling " ( MCW ) . By the fall of 1993 Mickey Doyle had been replaced by a young wrestler by the name of Al Snow , and with Costello 's help The New Fabulous Kangaroos defeated " Canadian Lighting " ( Otis Apollo and " Irish " Bobby Clancy ) on 29 December 1993 to win the MCW Tag Team Championship . On 14 May 1994 , after Al Snow had started working for the World Wrestling Federation ( WWF ) , Kass and Snow defeated Canadian Lighting to win the Border City Wrestling ( BCW ) Can @-@ Am Tag Team Championship , unifying the two tag team championships . A week later , The New Fabulous Kangaroos lost both sets of titles to Scott D 'Amore and " Irish " Bobby Clancy . After losing the unified MCW / BCW Tag Team championships , The New Kangaroos split up . Snow focused on his WWF career , while Costello retired for good .

= = = Kangaroo legacy = = =

The Fabulous Kangaroos are considered by many in the wrestling world as one of the best tag @-@ teams in the history of wrestling . In fact , many people in the past held the mistaken belief that The Fabulous Kangaroos invented tag team wrestling , which was not true since tag team wrestling had been seen as early as 1936 . The reason for this belief lies in the fact that The Kangaroos were one of the first teams to popularize tag team wrestling , and because tag teaming was often referred to as " Australian rules " or " Australian tag team " . The Kangaroos themselves were not slow to play off this belief , often claiming ( kayfabe ) that they were such a well coordinated tag team because " Amateur team wrestling was very popular in Australia " . The term " Australian rules " had been coined long before 1957 debut of The Kangaroos . Records indicate that tag team wrestling was already being referred to as " Australian rules " already in the mid @-@ 1940s . The Fabulous Kangaroos were among the first people in wrestling to play up the sports entertainment elements in professional wrestling ; beyond being talented wrestlers , Costello especially was also very good at playing up their characters . The Kangaroos showed their " advertising " skills through promotional literature , which stated that The Fabulous Kangaroos had " fashioned a razor @-@ edged aluminum boomerang to cut the jugular of a Kodiak bear from afar " . They also frequently threw cardboard boomerangs with their name and pictures on them into the crowd as they walked to the ring . The team carried a huge Australian banner with the name " The Fabulous Kangaroos " on it as part of their entrance rituals as well .

= = = Kangaroos today = = =

Roy Heffernan died on 24 September 1992 in his home in Sydney , Australia from a heart attack . Don Kent died on 14 June 1993 after a long battle with Leukemia . On 22 January 2000 , the last of

the original Fabulous Kangaroos died . Costello had been suffering from pneumonia , and was diagnosed with heart problems , the combination of which took his life at age 80 .

Only Bruno Bekkar and Johnny Heffernan remain alive , with managers Red Berry , George Cannon and Dudley Clement having passed on as well . Ray St. Clair , whose birth name was Ramon Napolitano , died on 14 July 2013 .

In 2003 , the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame inducted Al Costello and Roy Heffernan collectively as The Fabulous Kangaroos , the first tag team to be inducted into the Hall of Fame . Since that time , the Hall of Fame has honored other tag teams , but The Fabulous Kangaroos were given the honor of being the first . In the tradition of The Kangaroos , they were " billed as champions on arrival " one last time . In 2013 , Costello and Heffernan was inducted into the NWA Hall of Fame .

= = In wrestling = =

Finishing moves

Boomerang ( Catapult into a knockout punch )

Managers

" Wild " Red Berry

George " Crybaby " Cannon

" Sir " Dudley Clement

Al Costello

= = Championships and accomplishments = =

= = = Costello and Heffernan = = =

Alex Turk Promotions ( Winnipeg )

International Tag Team Championship ( 2 times )

Capitol Wrestling Corporation

NWA United States Tag Team Championship ( Northeast version ) ( 3 times )

Championship Wrestling from Florida

NWA Florida United States Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

NWA World Tag Team Championship ( Florida version ) ( 1 time )

Japan Wrestling Association

NWA International Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

Midwest Wrestling Association

NWA United States Tag Team Championship ( Ohio Version ) ( 1 time )

National Wrestling Alliance

NWA Hall of Fame ( Class of 2013 )

NWA All @-@ Star Wrestling

NWA Canadian Tag Team Championship ( Vancouver version ) ( 4 times )

NWA Detroit

NWA World Tag Team Championship ( Detroit version ) ( 2 times )

NWA New Mexico

Rocky Mountain Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

NWA Western States ( Amarillo )

NWA International Tag Team Championship ( Texas version ) ( 1 time ) 1

NWA World Tag Team Championship ( Texas version ) ( 1 time )

World Wrestling Association ( Los Angeles )

WWA World Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame

Class of 2003

Wrestling Observer Newsletter awards

Wrestling Observer Newsletter Hall of Fame ( Class of 1996 )

== = Costello and St. Clair == =

NWA Detroit

NWA World Tag Team Championship ( Detroit version ) ( 1 time )

== = Costello and Kent == =

Eastern Sports Association

ESA International Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

International Wrestling Enterprise

Trans @-@ World Wrestling Alliance World Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

NWA Mid @-@ America

NWA World Tag Team Championship ( Mid @-@ America version ) ( 3 times )

World Wrestling Association

WWA World Tag Team Championship ( 2 times )

World Wrestling Council

WWC World Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

== = Kent and Bekkar == =

World Wrestling Council

WWC Caribbean Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

WWC North American Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

== = Kent and Heffernan == =

Championship Wrestling from Florida

NWA Florida Global Tag Team Championship ( 4 times )

World Wrestling Council

WWC World Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

WWC North American Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

== = New Fabulous Kangaroos == =

Border City Wrestling

BCW Can @-@ Am Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

Motor City Wrestling

MCW Tag Team Championship ( 1 time )

1The NWA International Tag Team Championship ( Texas version ) was also recognized by World Class Championship Wrestling .