

= Yvon Cormier =

Yvon Cormier (November 3 , 1938 ? March 4 , 2009) was a Canadian professional wrestler . Competing primarily under the ring name The Beast , he and his three wrestling brothers made up the Cormier wrestling family . He wrestled in many countries but regularly returned to Canada , where he competed for the Eastern Sports Association (ESA) and the ESA @-@ promoted International Wrestling (IW) . He also competed in the Calgary , Alberta @-@ based Stampede Wrestling for many years .

= = Career = =

Cormier was born into a family of thirteen children , of which four of the brothers became professional wrestlers , and another became a referee . His wrestling brothers were Leo Burke (Leonce Cormier) , Bobby Kay (Romeo Cormier) and Rudy Kay (Jean @-@ Louis Cormier) . The oldest brother , Malcolm , worked as a referee under the name Mel Turnbow . As a teenager , he worked in the woods , shoed horses , and drove heavy equipment . He met Emile Dupré in 1957 , who told him to consider a career in professional wrestling . Cormier began training , and later moved to Indianapolis , Indiana to continue his preparation under trainer Les Ruffen , and made his debut in 1963 . At first , he used the ring name Pierre Lebel before switching to Ivan the Lumberjack . In Texas , he was known as Joe Gump . When he later ventured to the Mid @-@ Atlantic territory , Jim Crockett , Sr. named him The Beast . At that time , he had thick , untamed hair and a large , curly beard .

The Beast spent part of his early career competing for Stampede Wrestling , where he faced such wrestlers as Stu Hart . He won his first championship there in 1966 . He defeated Stampede veteran Dave Ruhl to win the Calgary version of the NWA Canadian Heavyweight Championship . Later that year , he dropped the title to Ruhl . He gained a different title the following year , however , when he teamed with Bob Sweetan to defeat the Christy Brothers (Bobby and Jerry) for the Calgary version of the NWA International Tag Team Championship on July 12 , 1967 .

In 1969 , The Beast became the first holder of the IW North American Heavyweight Championship . On August 5 , he gained a second title when he teamed with his brother Rudy Kay to defeat The Fabulous Kangaroos (Al Costello and Don Kent) to win the ESA International Tag Team Championship . Three weeks later , he dropped the North American title to The Stomper (Archie Gouldie) , who became his longtime rival . He then began competing for the Amarillo , Texas @-@ based territory of the National Wrestling Alliance (NWA) . He won the NWA Western States Heavyweight Championship and held it for several months before losing it in a match against Ricky Romero on February 2 , 1970 .

Two months later , on April 4 , The Beast teamed with Bull Ramos to win the NWA Western States Tag Team Championship by defeating Terry Funk and Romero . They continued to face Funk and Romero and dropped the title to them later that year . On July 27 , The Beast regained the IW North American Heavyweight Championship from The Stomper and held it for over two months . He lost the championship to Eric Pomeroy that October . While competing in the ESA , The Beast also had another reign as International Tag Team Champion , this time while teaming with his brother Leo Burke . They held the title until dropping it on August 3 , 1971 to The Beast 's former partner Freddie Sweetan and former rival Eric Pomeroy . The Beast had two more reigns with the ESA International Tag Team Championship that year , however . Four weeks after dropping it to Sweetan and Pomeroy , he regained the title from them with the help of his new partner Archie Gouldie , with whom The Beast had once feuded over the North American Heavyweight Championship . The title reign lasted for a little over a month before Pomeroy and Sweetan regained the championship trophy . Pomeroy and Sweetan held the title for only one week , however , as The Beast recruited his brother Rudy Kay to help him win the championship back on October 12 . This time , the brothers ' reign lasted for just over seven months . Sweetan eventually regained the title while teaming with Mike Dubois on May 16 the following year .

Over a year passed before The Beast won another championship . In the summer of 1973 ,

Sweetan was holding the ESA Tag Team Championship with Kurt von Steiger when The Beast teamed with Bobby Kay , the only one of his brothers with whom he had not held a tag team championship , and regained the trophy . Once again , however , Sweetan won the title back on July 31 along with partner Mr. X. During the ESA off @-@ season , The Beast returned to Texas and reformed his tag team partnership with brother Leo Burke . In January 1974 , the brothers defeated Don Fargo and Hank James to win the NWA Western States Tag Team Championship . Within two months , however , they lost the title to long @-@ time rival Romero and his partner Dory Funk , Jr . Returning to the ESA , The Beast and Bobby Kay defeated Sweetan and Dubois to win the vacant Tag Team Championship . The reign lasted for less than one week before Sweetan and Dubois won the trophy in a rematch . The following month , The Beast had another short reign with the IWA North American Heavyweight Championship , winning the title and losing it back to Great Kuma in less than two weeks . He followed this with a victory for the Tag Team Championship with Burke on July 13 , once again winning the title from Sweetan and Dubois . By early August , the brothers had dropped the title to Kuma and Geto Mongol .

The Beast and Rudy Kay had one last reign as ESA International Tag Team Champions together . They defeated Bob Brown and The Patriot during the autumn of 1975 to win the trophy . They held the title until the end of the ESA 's 1975 season . The Beast 's final title reign began in Texas on February 20 , 1976 . He and Leo Burke won a tournament for the vacant NWA Western States Tag Team Championship , defeating Romero and his son Silver Streak to win the title . They held it for one week before dropping it to Romero and Silver Streak on February 27 .

During his career he wrestled seven different world champions , including six time limit draws . At one point , he wrestled Giant Baba in Japan in front of a crowd of 45 @,@ 000 people . He also participated in numerous chain matches , in which he and an opponent were joined together by a steel chain attached to their wrists .

= = Personal life = =

Cormier was known for his physical strength and intense exercise regimen . He was known to bench press 450 pounds with each , and he was once recorded as bench pressing 527 pounds . During one photo session , Cormier lifted a telephone pole from the ground and carried it around while posing for pictures . According to one story , he once got upset with a horse that refused to cooperate and knocked it down with one punch .

Like his brothers , Cormier was a lifelong ice hockey fan . He also trained horses for harness racing and had six of his own Percheron horses . He had four sons , all of whom are being trained to wrestle , as well as one daughter . He was married to his wife , Doris , for 44 years until his death .

In May 2008 , Cormier was diagnosed with lymphoma . He underwent treatment but suffered a heart attack soon after beginning . Doctors later determined that the cancer had moved into his bone marrow . He died on March 4 , 2009 at a hospital in Moncton , New Brunswick .

= = In wrestling = =

Managers

Rudy LaBelle

Signature and finishing moves

Bear hug

Knee drop

= = Championships and accomplishments = =

Eastern Sports Association

ESA International Tag Team Championship (8 times) - with Rudy Kay (3) , Leo Burke (1) , Archie Gouldie (1) , and Bobby Kay (3)

IW North American Heavyweight Championship (4 times)

NWA Western States Sports

NWA Western States Heavyweight Championship (2 times)

NWA Western States Tag Team Championship (3 times) - with Leo Burke (2) and Bull Ramos (1)

Stampede Wrestling

NWA Canadian Heavyweight Championship (Calgary version) (1 time)

NWA International Tag Team Championship (Calgary version) (1 time) - with Bob Sweetan