



Sinfield & Southgate hug

Southgate and Sir Kev in it for the long run

BY JIM VAN WIJK

SIR Kevin Sinfield was joined by ex-England manager Sir Gareth Southgate on the first stage of his final endurance event to raise money for motor neurone disease charities.

Inspired by former Leeds Rhinos team-mate Rob Burrow, who died from MND in 2024, Sinfield and his team have raised more than £11million since 2020, including over £500,000 in his current challenge.

The rugby league iron man is completing an ultra marathon every day for seven days in his "7 in 7: The Grand Finale" venture, with each run split into 7km blocks.

He'll visit the home grounds of the 12 English Betfred Super League clubs, before finishing on the pitch at Old Trafford for the sport's Super League Grand Final.

POIGNANT

Sinfield's final leg was made even more poignant after his son Jack's side Wakefield Trinity reached the showpiece occasion for the first time by beating Wigan on Saturday.

The 46-year-old set off yesterday from Hull KR's Craven Park with Southgate joining the team later in their run, which finished in Shiptonthorpe.

Sinfield, whose fundraising target is £777,777, said afterwards: "We all lose people we love and care about, but we lose people in the MND community too soon – we have got to start to change that."

"That is what our team is trying to do, alongside people like Sir Gareth and others who will join up this week, trying to raise awareness and funds."

Today's leg will head on to York.

I WANT JUSTICE FOR MARK

Mum's plea 20yrs after Doherty party death



Sheila Blanco outside Scotland Yard, above, with Mark

Picture: PHILIP COBURN

EXCLUSIVE

BY TOM PETTIFOR Crime Editor

THE mother of a man who fell to his death at a party with Pete Doherty has implored police to get justice for her son as they review the case nearly two decades on.

Mark Blanco, 30, died during a drug-fuelled gathering with the Babysambles star in December 2006 and the case has never been resolved, despite his mum Sheila's relentless campaigning.

She had a meeting with two senior Met Police officers to discuss her Victims' Right to Review last week.

Speaking outside Scotland Yard she told us: "In this year, the twentieth anniversary of Mark's tragic death, I implore the police to consult all the necessary experts and use the means available to them to secure justice for Mark."

"I have been trying for the last 20 years to get the police to classify my son's death as murder."

It comes three years after a Channel 4 documentary Pete Doherty, Who Killed My Son? suggested Mark had been murdered after an FBI expert claimed he was thrown to his death.

COCAINE

A 2007 inquest heard Cambridge graduate Mark had been kicked out of the London "crack den" during a row with Doherty, his literary agent Paul Roundhill and minder Johnny "Headlock" Jeannevol.

Mark returned before somehow falling to his death from a balcony in Whitechapel, East London.

The inquest heard that Jeannevol had confessed to pushing Mark off but retracted it, saying he was high on cocaine when he made it, and was released without charge.

Doherty has previously denied any knowledge of how Mark died but admitted running away to avoid the police because he had drugs.

Roundhill told the inquest he punched Mark repeatedly on the evening he died. In October 2023 Doherty, now 47, admitted: "We all had an altercation with Marco Blanco. There was pushing and shoving. The next thing he's on the floor and his skull's cracked open."

A Met Police spokesman said following the victim's review request: "Detectives will now review aspects of the investigations previously carried out to ensure certain lines of enquiry have been explored to their full conclusion."

tom.pettifor@mirror.co.uk



TRAGIC PLUNGE
Mark Blanco died after flat fall in December 2006



Babysambles' Pete Doherty in 2006



Mark in intensive care, he died a day later



CCTV of Mark Blanco falling from a balcony in Whitechapel, East London

"I've been trying for 20 years to get the police to classify my son's death as murder"

SHEILA BLANCO ON CAMPAIGN