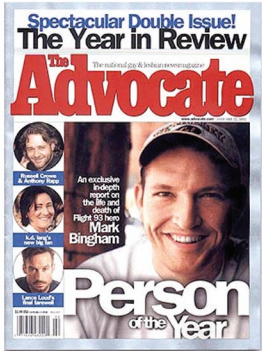


MARK BINGHAM

b. May 22, 1970

d. September 11, 2001



“We have the chance to be role models for other gay folks who wanted to play sports but never felt good enough or strong enough.”

Mark Bingham was a shining light on one of the darkest days in American history. On September 11, 2001, passengers aboard United Flight 93 stormed the terrorists who had hijacked their plane. The 9/11 Commission concluded this heroism diverted the plane from its intended target, which was either the White House or the Capitol in Washington, and caused it to crash in an empty field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Bingham led the counterattack. He prevented the destruction of a national monument and saved lives. Standing 6-foot-4 and weighing 220 pounds, Bingham was a star athlete, a savvy entrepreneur, a fearless competitor and a man devoted to his family and friends. Bingham was the CEO of The Bingham Group, a successful public relations firm with offices in San Francisco and New York.

Bingham grew up in California, the son of Alice Hoglan, a single mom who struggled to make ends meet. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, where he helped the rugby team earn national championships in 1991 and 1993. He played on the San Francisco Fog, the city's first gay rugby team.

Bingham hated losing and never backed down. He once protected his boyfriend from an attack by wrestling a gun from the mugger's hand. After being gored at the running of the bulls in Pamplona, Spain, Bingham showed off the scar as a badge of honor.

About 20 minutes before Flight 93 went down, Bingham called his mother. “This is Mark Bingham,” were his first words. She immediately sensed something was wrong. “I love you” were the last words she heard from her son. Alice knew if there was any way to turn tragedy into triumph, Mark would lead the charge.

The Advocate named Bingham its 2001 Person of the Year. He was posthumously awarded the Arthur Ashe Courage Award in 2002. The Mark Kendall Bingham Memorial Tournament, an international rugby competition predominantly for gay and bisexual men, was established in his memory.

On 9/11, Mark Bingham led the charge against terrorists on United Flight 93. His heroism saved lives and prevented destruction in the nation's capital.

