

SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 2021 €2.60 (Stg€1.90)

# SUNDAY WORLD



THE PEOPLE'S PAPER



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW DERVLA KIRWAN

FREE GLOSSY 7-DAY TV MAG+ INSIDE



EXCLUSIVE



SEE PAGES 4&5

“He was the love of my life”

PARTNER OF MURDER-SUICIDE VICTIM PADDY HENNESSY

SEE PAGES 2&3



SHOOTING VICTIM FIGHTING FOR LIFE

NICOLA TALLANT EXCLUSIVE



# CARTEL'S FAKE VAN MAN



SCAMMER: Gangster Barry Fowler behind the wheel of his fake 'DHL' van

FULL STORY SEE PAGES 10&11

Kinahan drug trafficker Barry Fowler snapped driving bogus 'DHL' truck weeks after jail release

RTÉ BLASTED FOR MEGHAN INTERVIEW



SEE PAGE 8

# INVESTIGATION: SUNDAY WORLD TEAM

**EXCLUSIVE**  
BY NICOLA TALLANT



**KINAHAN drug lieutenant Barry Fowler is photographed driving what looks like a DHL van and dressed up in a delivery driver uniform.**

But on closer inspection it seems that Fowler is spending his time in disguise in a van that has nothing to do with the delivery company or its services.

Tiny details prove that this is a mocked-up van painted to look like it is part of a fleet delivering goods to shoppers all over Ireland.

No employee by the name Barry Fowler works for DHL and the company say that anyone with convictions would not pass their strict vetting systems.

An investigation was launched this week into how Fowler got his hands on the van and preliminary results have found that he may have sourced it from a garage, which will now come under the spotlight.

*The probe into how the convicted drug and gun trafficker ended up behind the wheel of his very own 'DHL' van got underway after he was spotted by a Sunday World surveillance team.*

Fowler has been recently released from prison after serving a seven-and-a-half year sentence on drug and weapons charges.

While on bail for the offences he was caught with a fake passport.

Fowler is listed as a serious organised criminal with associations deep into the Kinahan mob and is a long-time pal of gangland heavy Paul Rice.

The Criminal Assets Bureau have recently issued a proceeds-of-crime case against him after they seized a number of jet skis and other items from him during a raid a number of years ago.

Our undercover team have been watching Fowler for weeks as he comes and goes from his home at The Crescent, in Millbrook Lawn, in Tallaght.

**UNIFORM**

He regularly pulls in driving the 'DHL' van and has been spotted in the red delivery uniform on a number of occasions as he meets with young men.

On occasions, two 'DHL' vans are parked up around his house and he has been observed swapping from one to another.

*DHL and other delivery drivers, are exempt from restrictions and can work and make their way around the city undeterred by Covid-19 lockdowns.*

Gardaí have been investigating Fowler for years and they are also probing his activities in order to establish why he has been moonlighting as a delivery driver.

In 2015, Fowler (36) was jailed for seven-and-a-half years after



PAUL RICE

# KINAHAN HOOD'S PHONEY EXPRESS



■ Convicted trafficker spotted using vans with 'DHL' livery, despite him not working for firm

■ Gardaí previously tracked Barry Fowler to van containing more than €370,000 of drugs

a court heard that he led gardaí to a van containing more than €370,000 of drugs when he failed to use the indicators on his car.

Fowler was driving a BMW three years previous when he was picked up by officers patrolling the streets and when he sped off they gave chase.

Gardaí trailed him to the basement of an apartment complex where an alarm fob on his keys led officers to a transit van con-

taining the drugs.

Fowler is a top target of gardaí in the Tallaght and Clondalkin areas and pleaded guilty to unlawful possession of a sawn-off shotgun and 9mm bullets at the same location as the drugs were nabbed.

*Drug tick lists found in his home showed that he was a major wholesaler of drugs at that time in 2012.*

When he awaited trial he was caught at Shannon Airport coming off a flight from Alicante in

Spain with a false passport.

At the time he was on Job Seeker Allowance, a court later heard.

**WATCHES**

In 2005, Fowler was driving an uninsured motorbike when he crashed killing a 15-year-old girl.

Two years ago, while he remained behind bars the CAB launched their own investi-

gation into Fowler's wealth and seized two jet skis and identified properties in Wexford linked to him.

During eight searches Rolex watches were also discovered and a large sum of €100,000 in cash was pre-

**MOB BOSS:**  
Daniel Kinahan



# TRACK DODGY DELIVERY 'SERVICE'

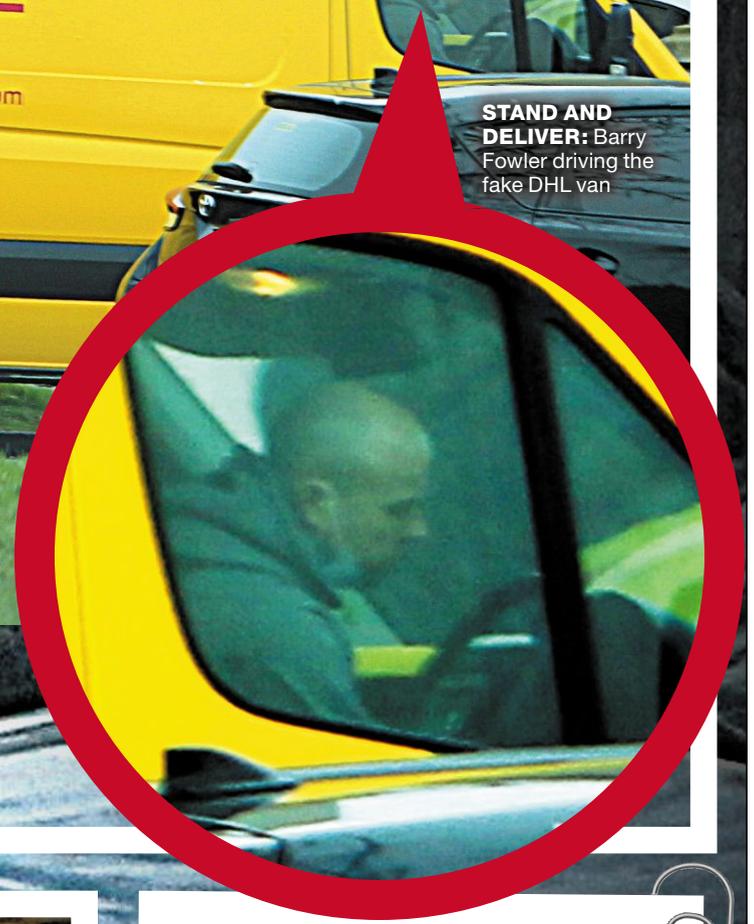


**DELIVERY MAN**  
**CAUGHT ON CAMERA:**  
Barry Fowler is not listed as a driver for DHL



**STAND AND DELIVER:** Barry Fowler driving the fake DHL van

“An applicant with the known background of the named individual would not pass our security screening programme. The images in question suggest fraudulent use of a vehicle branded as DHL”



**PROBE:** Barry Fowler in what appears to be a delivery driver uniform



**COURT:** Barry Fowler who pleaded to dangerous driving causing the death of a school girl

viously discovered.

The case was adjourned at the last hearing of the Proceeds of Crime list and lists his partner Lorna Palmer as the second respondent.

*In a statement DHL said: "DHL Express can confirm that there is no individual employed by DHL Express, either directly or indirectly, by the name of Barry Fowler."*

"We have very stringent security policies and protocols. The results of our initial investigations indicate that the branded vehicles in

question have not infiltrated our network or had any access to our customers shipments.

**PRIORITY**

"The security and safety of our people, our network, our customers and the general public is our highest priority.

"Our security team carry out a detailed five-year background check on every potential employee or delivery contractor alongside

or international 'Denied Parties' screening process.

"An applicant with the known background of the named individual would not pass our security screening program.

"The images in question suggest fraudulent use of a vehicle branded as DHL, which is of utmost concern. The matter is under investigation and any inappropriate or illegal use of any DHL vehicle or the DHL brand will be reported to relevant authorities."

CRACKDOWN: BUREAU CHASES MILLIONAIRE'S FORTUNE

CAB want Browning's gated compound, land by the sea at Rush, cash, luxury cars, designer watches and a diamond solitaire ring

KINAHAN MOBSTER FLEES TO UAE AS CRACKDOWN ON CARTEL'S ASSETS RAMPS UP



SEIZURE: Garda during the raid at Browning's compound in 2018



FAMILY: Ross Browning's mother Julie Conway

Browning has been years in the making and is the culmination of a huge probe into his finances, which took officers into the heart of Limerick and north county Dublin.



RAIDS: One of the properties at Garristown



Search Kit Team Room 1



THE Criminal Assets Bureau has launched major proceedings against Kinahan cartel lieutenant Ross Browning, who has fled to the United Arab Emirates.

EXCLUSIVE BY NICOLA TALLANT CRIME JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR Browning is one of the most significant CAB cartel targets since Liam Byrne...

he even applied to compete on RTE's reality show Ireland's Fittest Family. Footage from the series had to be scrapped in 2016 after red-faced TV chiefs were told who Browning was and informed that he was facing trial at the time relating to the possession of a false passport.

in Ireland. The Sunday World can reveal that Browning has relocated to the United Arab Emirates — near boss Daniel Kinahan — in recent months as gardai moved in for the final takedown of the cartel.

Browning has been years in the making and is the culmination of a huge probe into his finances, which took officers into the heart of Limerick and north county Dublin.

Australia after he was caught getting off a plane with €20,000 worth of cocaine — which he ingested in balloons in his stomach — while Fowler is before the Special Criminal Court, charged in relation to the attempted murder of Huth associate James 'Mago' Gately.

Browning is the main target in the proceedings, which were adjourned in the courts this week, but which are the culmination of a huge probe into the fitness fanatic's wealth.

Further searches were carried out at Hardwick Street flats and two lots of cash bundles linked to Browning were found in properties at Dermot O'Dwyer House.

Proceedings were opened on Friday at the High Court before Judge Alexander Owens and adjourned for two months to give Browning and other named respondents time to file affidavits. Browning had legal representation in court.

Among a long list of assets which the Bureau believes Browning purchased from drug money is a stunning private compound in Garristown in County Dublin, where he built paddocks, a warehouse that resembled a show-jumping arena and two separate houses.

While Browning convinced many that he had changed his ways and turned his back on his early career in crime, gardai believe that he has been a member of the Kinahan cartel for almost two decades and is one of the mob's most senior operators

Following the raids, suspected senior weapons and drugs man, Douglas Glynn (35), is before the Special Criminal Court, charged with involvement in the attempted murder of James 'Mago' Gately.

Some work at the 'Club Living 1' at Cross Guns Business Park on Dublin's northside. Associates Ian O'Heaire and Stephen Fowler are also listed in the case being taken under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

They also want a house in Finglas and sites at Six Cross Lane in Rush, where sought-after holiday homes can fetch anything up to €500,000.

The cartel odd bod was at home in February 2018 when the Bureau busted into his gated, 1.2 acre compound in Garristown and began to search a number of properties, along with an paddock and vast warehouses.

Following the searches, officers identified a number of sites at the picturesque Six Cross Lane in Rush which was an area popular with inner city Dublin holidaymakers for generations.

# BODY OF EVIDENCE: DARK SIDE TO 'SPIRITUAL' HEALTH FANATIC

HE is known as the Kinahan cartel odd bod — the strange outsider who has tried desperately to cut the cord with organised crime.

Ross Browning has claimed he has turned his back on his childhood friends to forge a new life in a spiritual, vegan zen of healthy living and exercise.

But the truth of his 'awakening' is set out in the Criminal Assets Bureau case against him, which alleges a millionaire's lifestyle which gardai will claim he enjoyed from drugs and murder.

The *Sunday World* can today reveal that Browning has not only returned to the arms of the cartel, but that he has taken a place at Daniel Kinahan's top table in the United Arab Emirates, as the Bureau uncovers his secret world.

Just like Sean McGovern and a handful of others from the inner circle, he now makes up one of Kinahan's last remaining disciples in sun-soaked Dubai.

Flash cars, expensive jewellery and a property portfolio purchased, it will be claimed, from the proceeds of crime, seem totally at odds with Browning's image of himself as a bearded purist.

Superfit Browning was so sure he had discovered the meaning of life that he opened his own 'Club Living' gym and began working as a coach at the Phitsboro gym in recent years, while the Kinahan cartel wreaked murderous havoc in Dublin.

In a testimonial, he described how his 'love for life' changed when he went to see the controversial Californian medic, Dr Robert O Young, and urged others to try his miracle diet. However, his Road to Damascus moment was short lived and, according to Bureau cops, he enjoyed the spoils of his position in the cartel more than he did his vegan snacks.

Browning has been a top target for both the CAB and the Gardai's Drug and Organised Crime Bureau, and they suspect he is one of the most senior members of the Kinahan cartel.

Gardai believe that he has been a member of the mob for almost two decades and that he was a senior operative in Dublin until he left the capital earlier this year.

EXCLUSIVE BY NICOLA TALLANT CRIME JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR



Sources say he is suspected of introducing hit-man-for-hire Eamon Cumberton to the gang and, in turn, Johnny Keogh and others associated with the murder of Gareth Hutch. They also say that his associates were involved in bringing international assassin Imre Arakas to Ireland, where the Estonian gunman planned to murder Hutch targets.

All the while, Browning lived a double life as a fitness fanatic who liked to show off his ripped abs — and even once succeeded in winning a place on RTE's reality show *Ireland's Fittest Family*.

Despite running a gym, coaching weights classes and even spending time on retreat, he also made a fortune from drugs, gardai believe. They will say that his vast assets were purchased through the proceeds of crime.

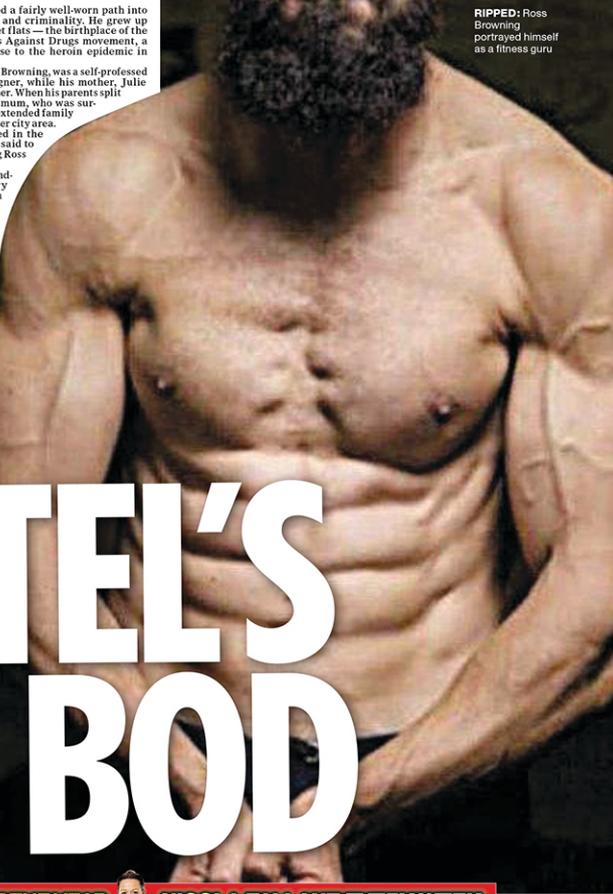
## HEROIN

Browning followed a fairly well-worn path into the world of gangs and criminality. He grew up in Hardwicke Street Hais — the birthplace of the Concerned Parents Against Drugs movement, a community response to the heroin epidemic in the 1980s.

His father, Kieran Browning, was a self-professed anti-drugs campaigner, while his mother, Julie Conway, was a cleaner. When his parents split up Ross lived with mum, who was surrounded by a large extended family within the north inner city area.

His father remained in the area but was never said to be close to the young Ross or his siblings.

Browning befriended the older Gary Finnegan — through his friendship with his cousin Barry Finnegan — and early on found himself drawn to



RIPPED: Ross Browning portrayed himself as a fitness guru



FITNESS TRAINER: Ross Browning opened a club (left) but gardai continued to probe his assets



COURT: Browning in 2022 (left) after he robbed a Securicor van

crime as a means to make a living. As a teenager, he was caught carrying out the robbery of a Securicor van, along with Barry Finnegan and Robert Brown. Last year, Brown was jailed for his role in the plot to kill Patsy Hutch. A year later, at 18, he was given a suspended jail sentence for carrying out an armed robbery and for dangerous driving causing serious bodily harm.

Browning's love for cars made him a natural driver for the cartel and he worked in the early years as an enforcer too. Many believe he is haunted by his time at the hands-on end of the business and has struggled with his mental health, due to a number of disturbing incidents he witnessed.

As the years went on, Browning forged a very close relationship with Daniel Kinahan, who has struggled with his weight all his life and who found a fitness mentor in the younger lieutenant.

Browning, officers believe, quickly rose up the ranks and was put into a management role in Dublin when others of his vintage moved to Spain. A homobird, Browning was always happy to be surrounded by his close-knit family, who share his love for fitness and healthy living.

When he opened his fitness club he employed a number of members of his family — but disaster struck, just as he launched his spiritual venture when he was spotted in the locality where suspected hitman Imre Arakas was arrested in 2017.

The Estonian has since been jailed for his role in the conspiracy to murder James 'Mago' Gately, a friend of the Hutch family who survived an assassination attempt at a petrol station in north Dublin.

## HOMESTEAD

Browning told associates that he was in a car nearby when gardai from the Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau, the Emergency Response Unit and the Armed Support Unit raided a house in west Dublin and arrested the Estonian. Afraid he would be linked to the arrest, he lay low while his gym continued operating.

In the years leading up to the Regency Hotel attack, Browning began building up an impressive nest egg for himself and had moved out of Hardwicke Street flats to a compound-style homestead in north county Dublin.

“Many believe he has struggled with his mental health due to what he witnessed”

There, horses grazed in large paddocks when CAB officers searched it in February 2018. The property was purchased in 2012 and is registered in the name of an associate of Browning, although officers suspect that it is he who has developed it without planning.

At the time of the raids, officers were shocked to discover that Browning's mother, Julie Conway, was living there with a former garda detective, Dave O'Brien.

He had previously been a member of the elite Serious Crime Review Team, or the Cold Case Squad, but had retired from the force.

He had earlier denied knowing Julie Browning during an investigation into the alleged bullying of a fellow officer, who had claimed he received a Valentine's card, a g-string and a bullet in the post.

The pair were later found guilty of lying to the watchdog GSOC and their trial heard their phones had been in touch more than 250 times. The pair married in recent weeks at a small ceremony — but Ross Browning did not return for the nuptials.

Double life of 'clean living' gym vegan who now sits at Daniel Kinahan's right hand

# AD BOD

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**LIDL**

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