

BIO

Everything continues to change. Leaders cycle in and out of office. Trends fall in and out of style. Vinyl dies and comes back to life. Television shows go off the air and end up somewhere on the internet.

However, Sugar Ray might just outlast them all.

After over three decades, a world without the group—co-founded by Mark McGrath [vocals] and Rodney Sheppard [lead guitar]—feels downright unfathomable. Beyond sales of 10 million records, four top 10 songs, streams in the hundreds of millions, and millions of tickets sold, the band embody the endless summer of popular music and culture.

How many artists still pack sheds a whole generation removed from their genesis? How many acts can claim sharing the stage with The Rolling Stones, KISS, and Sex Pistols, collaborating with Run-DMC, *and* being interpolated by Post Malone?

We need Sugar Ray now more than ever...

“You could say we’re still performing because the music means a lot to us,” observes Mark. “However, the real reason is it means a lot to so many other people. All the time, we hear fans say, ‘*Boy, those songs were so important to me growing up or ‘I listened to you on my first date with my girlfriend, and now she’s my wife’*. I’m the last guy to brag about this band and the first one to make fun of it, but we wrote some killer tunes,” he smiles.

As the story goes, Rodney and Mark first linked up in high school. Rodney played in what Mark calls “*the hot shit band all the girls loved*.” The future frontman and his buddy McG just wanted to be a part of it. One afternoon in an Orange County garage, Mark and Rodney “*sipped 40oz cans of King Cobra, listened to Creedence, and became friends for life*.” Eventually, Rodney asked Mark to take a shot at singing.

“Music threw us together,” recalls Rodney. “There was just a lot of excitement at the time. From that excitement, we ended up forming Sugar Ray in 1988.”

With a few gigs under their collective belt, they recorded a whopping two songs. Prior to becoming a blockbuster director, McG shot an infamous video for “Caboose”—which ended up in the hands of Atlantic Records.

With no internet to audit hype back in 1993, a little exaggeration went a long way.

“We totally lied to Atlantic,” chuckles Mark. “We told them we had a big following from San Diego to Los Angeles. That certainly wasn’t the case. There was no social media or way for them to check though. We told them we had 100 songs, and we only had two! ‘*Caboose*’ ended up on our first album, and the other one ‘*Lick Me*’ didn’t for obvious reasons.”

That first album, *Lemonade & Brownies*, took the guys around the world and earned cult classic status for its frenetic and unpredictable hybrid of metal, punk, alternative, funk, pop, and everything but the kitchen sink. It set the stage for *FLOORED* in 1997 though. The latter’s immortal and inescapable lead single “Fly” [feat. Super Cat] invaded airwaves and made the band a household name. 21 years down the road, Post Malone incorporated “Fly” in “Sugar Wraith” on the triple-platinum *beerbongs & Bentleys* as a testament to its impact. Helmed by GRAMMY® Award-winning producer David Kahne [Sublime,

Paul McCartney, The Strokes], *FLOORED* earned the band's first gold plaque (a vivid memory they still cherish) and eventually went double-platinum.

Two years later, Sugar Ray took over popular culture with a sincere shit-eating grin. The band's third album, *14:59*, shut down the pervasive warning of "*15 minutes of fame*." Not only did the record bow in the Top 20 of the *Billboard* Top 200 and go triple-platinum, but it also gave us "Someday," "Falls Apart," and their second #1 "Every Morning." In 2001, *Sugar Ray* crashed the Top 200 at #6 as "When It's Over" staked out a spot on the charts. It added yet another platinum plaque to their walls.

Along the way, *Tonight Show*, *Late Night with David Letterman*, *Conan*, *Halftime of Game 5 2001 NBA Finals*, *Today Show*, *Rosie*, *Ellen*, *Billboard Music Awards*, and dozens of other programs counted them among esteemed guests. Plus, they popped up in television series such as *American Dad* and *The Drew Carey Show* and on the big screen in Ivan Reitman's *Father's Day* (with the late Robin Williams) and in the live-action *Scooby-Doo*. Not to mention, they graced the covers of magazines, including *Spin*, *Rolling Stone*, and more.

Enjoying a renaissance, Sugar Ray headlined the summer shed *Under the Sun* Tour 2013-2015, inviting Smash Mouth and Gin Blossoms along for the ride. Meanwhile, they inked a deal with BMG in 2019 and dropped their seventh full-length, *Lil Yachty*. In addition to features from *Rolling Stone* and *Billboard*, NPR claimed, "*The Newport Beach natives returned to their signature uplifting and airy rock sound.*" However, it only set the stage for more touring and music.

No matter how much everything changes, we've thankfully got Sugar Ray forever.

"This band means everything to me," Rodney leaves off. "It's been my life for so long. We know each other's strengths and can play to them. It just works out perfectly."

"We're friends who started a band to have fun," concludes Mark. "When you come to see us live, I want you to have fun too. The idea is the same as it was in 1988. So many things have happened since then, but Sugar Ray is still my life. It's what defines me. We're the guys next door, yet we've made an impact. I know what the future's going to be for Sugar Ray—and I love it. I also know if you're having half as much fun as I am at a show, we're doing something right."

BOILER

Beyond sales of 10 million records, four top 10 songs, hundreds of millions of streams, and millions of tickets sold, Sugar Ray—co-founded by Mark McGrath [vocals] and Rodney Sheppard [lead guitar]—embody the endless summer of popular music and culture. How many artists still pack sheds a whole generation removed from their genesis? How many acts can claim sharing the stage with The Rolling Stones, KISS, and Sex Pistols, collaborating with Run-DMC, and being interpolated by Post Malone? Just Sugar Ray...

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