

Overdose of heroin kills Sex Pistol Vicious

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NEW YORK

B RITISH PUNK star Sid Vicious killed himself with an overdose of heroin yesterday, one day after he was freed from jail awaiting trial for murder.

His death was reported to police by his latest girlfriend, Michelle Robinson, who said she found the musician dead in bed at her flat in New York's Greenwich Village at about 12:30 p.m.

The 21-year old Briton, whose real name was John Simon Ritchie, had been in New York's Riker's Island prison until yesterday when he was freed on \$50,000 bail.

He had been charged with the October stabbing death of his 20-year-old girl friend Nancy Spungen, a former go-go dancer who was acting as his manager.

Vicious, who was treated for addiction after his arrest, had been accused of stabbing Miss Spungen to death in their hotel room. He denied it but the district attorney's office later released an alleged confession.

According to police, Vicious attended a party Thursday night to celebrate his release. He then returned to Miss Robinson's house where he took an injection of heroin. It was his first in several months and police said it probably killed him.

Vicious' life was short but stormy. After achieving fame from the punk rock craze, he lived in a world of drugs and violence. As the bassist for the now defunct Sex Pistols, he specialized in vomiting on stage.

He described his relationship with Miss Spungen as one of fights and mutual beatings. Vicious told police he had abandoned Miss Spungen while she lay dying in their hotel room because he had to go to a methadone clinic to get his daily shot of the drug aimed at getting him off heroin and, pressed further as to why he left the scene, said, "Because I'm a dog."

Vicious' death was discovered when his mother, Mrs. Anne Beverly, who has been living in New York since her son's arrest, went to the Robinson flat to wake the couple up.

It was then that Mrs. Beverly and Miss Robinson realized that Vicious, lying naked in bed, was dead.

According to Police Sergeant Richard Houseman, Vicious had been in an ebullient mood at the party. "I was told by Miss Robinson and others that he was jovial, happy and contemplating a bright future." A police spokesman said later, "He did not intend to kill himself. It was an accident."