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Lovable Baldwin Park sports legend Ricky Magdaleno has passed



Former Baldwin Park baseball standout Rick Magdaleno with legendary Dodgers broadcaster Vin Scully. The Baldwin Park High School 1992 graduate passed away on Monday, Oct. 31, 2016 at the age of 42. (courtesy photo)

By [Fred Robledo](#), San Gabriel Valley Tribune

Posted: 11/03/16, 11:11 AM PDT | Updated: on 11/04/2016

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Legendary Baldwin Park High School baseball standout Ricky (Mags) Magdaleno, who graduated in 1992 and was selected by the Cincinnati Reds in the second round of the '92 amateur draft and was the 39th selection overall, passed away Monday after battling an illness.

He was 42.

Magdaleno never made it to the Major League's after spending several years in the minors, but his senior year at Baldwin Park the shortstop batted .455 and was a three-year varsity starter, earning All-League, All-Area and All-CIF honors along the way.

Longtime area baseball coach Kevin Smith was Magdaleno's coach at Baldwin Park. Smith went on to coach at South Hills and will coach at West Covina this season, but he has fond memories of one of the best prospects he had ever been around.

"He was just a tremendous athlete," Smith said. "On the athleticism scale he's one of the best kids I ever coached and I've coached some good ones. He had all the tools. He could run, had a bazooka of an arm, had size, and could hit. He could do it all."

Although Magdaleno knew he was a big-time baseball prospect and would likely get drafted, he still went out for the Braves' football team his senior year despite the injury risks. All he did was become one of the Braves' sure-handed receivers, helping them to the 1991 Division 4 championship with the go-ahead touchdown in a 28-7 victory over Nogales. It was the last football championship at Baldwin Park.

Retired El Monte police chief Ken Weldon was with Magdaleno in his final hours Sunday night. Weldon coached Magdaleno on the 1991 San Gabriel Valley Babe Ruth All-Star team that advanced to the World Series, losing in the championship to a team from Cincinnati.

The two remained good friends over the years and Weldon described Magdaleno as a player who gave you everything he had on the field, and was fun-loving off of it.

"I watch ESPN and plays of the evening and I always think of Ricky making plays up the middle and in the hole," Weldon said. "He made spectacular plays that you don't see that often. He played so hard and with such passion that you were immediately glued to him. Everyone he came in contact with he touched in a special way and if you met him, you left with a positive memory."

Weldon said Magdaleno never changed who he was over the years, and though both were extremely competitive, Magdaleno had a way of turning any negative into a positive.

"That's who he was," Weldon said. "I've coached hundreds of kids and you like to think you taught them a little something, but Ricky taught me a lot. Even when we lost a tough game he quickly got over it and the pain turned into laughter. He was already getting ready for the next game. He just loved to play so much that he didn't sit and dwell when things didn't go his way."



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“What you have to remember about Ricky is that he never cared about material things or money. He loved people. He loved making people laugh and making them feel good. Nobody lightened a room like him. He loved people and people loved him back.”

Weldon will be giving a eulogy at Magdaleno’s funeral service on Thursday, Nov. 10, at the Sky Rose Chapel at Rose Hills in Whittier at 11 a.m.

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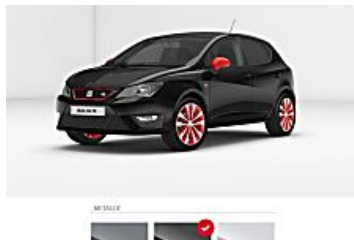
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