

= Yadier Molina =

Yadier Benjamin Molina ( Spanish pronunciation : [ ˈjaðjeɾ moˈliˈna ] ; born July 13 , 1982 ) , also known as " Yadi " , is a Puerto Rican professional baseball catcher for the St. Louis Cardinals of Major League Baseball ( MLB ) . A two @-@ time World Series champion , he is considered an essential figure in the Cardinals ' postseason success , with nine appearances in his twelve seasons . Other awards realized include seven consecutive selections to the All Star Game , eight consecutive Rawlings Gold Glove Awards , and one Silver Slugger Award . He has accrued more than 1 @, @ 500 hits , 100 home runs , 600 runs batted in , and a .283 batting average . He became the all @-@ time Cardinals ' leader in games caught with his 1,439th on April 8 , 2016 .

Coming from a baseball family , Molina grew up in Vega Alta , Puerto Rico . His father was an amateur second baseman in Puerto Rico , and his two older brothers , Bengie and José , were also major league catchers . Molina 's pitch @-@ handling and throwing skills originally caught the attention of scouts before being drafted . The Cardinals ' fourth round selection in the 2000 MLB draft , he made his MLB debut four years later , quickly garnering a reputation for possessing one of the strongest and most accurate arms in the game . As of 2014 , he had thrown out 44 % of runners attempting a stolen base over his career and led active MLB catchers with 55 pickoffs . Molina also formulates fielder positioning plans and complete pitching strategies to opposing hitters , earning a reputation as an on @-@ field leader .

Initially considered a light hitter , Molina significantly improved his offense and raised his career batting average from .248 in 2007 . As of 2014 , he had a .290 career batting average in the postseason . In 2006 , he became just the third catcher to play in two World Series before age 25 , following Johnny Bench and Yogi Berra . He also played for Puerto Rico in all three tournaments of the World Baseball Classic . Molina is under contract through 2017 .

= = Early life = =

Molina was born in Bayamón , Puerto Rico , to Gladys Matta and Benjamín Molina , Sr. and attended Maestro Ladislao Martínez High School in Vega Alta . Molina 's father played second base as an amateur and worked as a tools technician ten hours per day in a Westinghouse factory . He was a .320 lifetime hitter and the all @-@ time hits leader in the Doble @-@ A Beísbol league , gaining election to the Puerto Rican baseball hall of fame in 2002 . Molina 's two older brothers , Bengie and José , eventually also became major league catchers . Each day when he completed work , Molina directly went home , ate dinner and crossed the street from his family 's home with his sons to Jesús Mambe Kuilan Park , where he spent countless evening hours teaching them the fundamentals of the sport . He remained hopeful that his sons would become professional baseball players .

Molina 's catching aptitude showed as early as age five , and he developed quickly . Nonetheless , he played all over the baseball field , and as Bengie Molina recalled , always seemed to " be the first player taken in the youth league draft . " Molina concentrated on infield positions until about age 16 , when he began developing into the familiar Molina physique ; as of 2013 , he stood 5 ' 11 " and weighed 220 pounds .

Molina 's father also sought to accelerate him on the diamond . Following a suspension from his youth league about age 15 , Benjamín Molina anticipated the desistance would stagnate his development , so he searched for an alternative . Against the wishes of coaches , family members and friends , he scheduled Yadier for a workout with the Hatillo Tigres , an amateur league team . Molina made the team after a single workout and immediately became the starting catcher . The Tigres ' first baseman , Luis Rosario , was the one that recommended him to the organization . The Tigres played in a league composed mainly of players ten or more years older than Molina , well before he was eligible for the Major League Baseball draft .

= = Scouting and minor leagues = =

Minnesota Twins scout Edwin Rodríguez scrutinized Molina starting in high school . He observed that Molina 's skills closely resembled that of both his older brothers ? both accomplished major league catchers ? and decided that his defense was " polished " enough to be considered more advanced than most high schoolers in the United States . However , Molina 's hitting lagged behind his defense . The initial report on his skill set was " defensive catcher , great arm , weak bat " ; his closest comparable hitter as catcher was one who the Cardinals eventually placed at the top of their organizational ladder , and his future manager , Mike Matheny . Before he was drafted , Molina worked out for the Cincinnati Reds . He put on a spectacle at Riverfront Stadium with his arm and bat that grabbed the attention of executives , scouts , and prominent former Reds who attended his workout , including Johnny Bench and Bob Boone . As Molina recalled , he left the session with the impression the Reds intended to draft him .

Undeterred by the universal reservations about his offensive ceiling , the St. Louis Cardinals instead took Molina in the fourth round of the 2000 MLB draft and signed him for \$ 325 @,@ 000 . In the spring training following his draft , the young catcher was described as " raw " and purposed with fascination to emulate Matheny . Matheny , in turn , told his wife one day that he " saw the kid that 's going to steal [ his ] job . "

In that extended spring training , longtime Cardinals instructor Dave Ricketts observed Molina from a golf cart during a game as he was still learning how to catch ; he had been transitioning from third base . After allowing a passed ball through his legs with a runner on third base , Molina raced to the backstop to retrieve the ball . Still hoping to prevent the runner from scoring , he instead found Ricketts in the golf cart parked on top of home plate . Ricketts had a reputation for getting upset when Cardinals minor league catchers allowed balls to bounce between their legs ; for this , he removed Molina from the game and drove him to the batting cage . There , Ricketts batted 150 to 200 ground balls , as Molina estimated , to improve the young catcher 's ability to block pitches .

Molina began his professional career with the Johnson City Cardinals of the Rookie @-@ level Appalachian League in 2001 , playing 44 total games and batting .259 . He advanced one level in each of four seasons in the minor leagues . Even without highly developed offensive skills , Molina proved difficult to strike out . Mainly a singles hitter who favored hitting the ball the other way , he batted .278 with 14 home runs and 133 runs batted in ( RBI ) with 118 strikeouts in 1 @,@ 044 at bats in four minor league seasons . In his first three seasons , he threw out 111 base runners attempting to steal while allowing 133 stolen bases , for a caught @-@ stealing percentage of 45 % .

= = St. Louis Cardinals ( 2004 ? present ) = =

= = = 2004 ? 06 = = =

Molina 's first chance in the Major Leagues arrived when incumbent Matheny went on the disabled list ( DL ) with a strained rib in the Cardinals ' pennant @-@ winning season of 2004 . Molina made his Major League debut on June 3 . One of his first game @-@ winning hits occurred on August 7 . He stroked a broken @-@ bat single to shallow center field in the bottom of the ninth inning against the New York Mets that center fielder Mike Cameron did not recognize had splintered , allowing Jim Edmonds to score . Three weeks later ( August 29 ) , the Cardinals were victorious over the Pittsburgh Pirates 6 ? 4 thanks in part to two separate plays in which Molina tagged out the runner at home plate , including a collision with Ty Wigginton .

Molina appeared in 51 regular @-@ season games and batted .267 with two home runs and 15 RBI in 151 plate appearances . He made an immediate impact with his arm , throwing out more than 50 % percent of would @-@ be basestealers ( nine of 17 ) . In the World Series against the Boston Red Sox , manager Tony La Russa elected to start Molina over Matheny in Game 4 . The Red Sox swept the Cardinals and claimed the title that game , their first in 86 years . The following offseason , Matheny signed a three @-@ year , \$ 10 @.@ 5 @-@ million contract with the San Francisco Giants , clearing the way for Molina to become the Cardinals ' starting catcher .

In 2005 , Molina struggled with injuries and saw a drop off in the offensive performance in his rookie season . He doubled and scored on David Eckstein 's go @-@ ahead single on his way to three hits in a June 12 defeat of the New York Yankees , 5 ? 3 . Molina returned from a 33 @-@ game absence on August 19 induced by a hairline fracture of his left fifth metacarpal bone from being hit by a pitch on July 7 . Starting pitcher Chris Carpenter , attempting to extend a winning streak to ten games on an August 20 game versus the San Francisco Giants , found himself in a 4 ? 0 deficit in the ninth inning . Capped by Molina 's three @-@ run home run , the Cardinals rallied and won 5 ? 4 in the ninth . The next day , Molina 's suicide squeeze bunt scored Mark Grudzielanek , tying the game and allowing the Cardinals to win 4 ? 2 . Those were just two wins of 100 as St. Louis made their way to another division title following 105 wins the season before .

In 114 games , Molina posted a .252 batting average with eight home runs and 49 RBI with just 30 strikeouts in 421 plate appearances . Defensively , he registered career @-@ highs of nine pickoffs and a 64 % caught @-@ stealing percentage from throwing out 25 of 39 would @-@ be basestealers . According to Baseball @-@ Reference.com , as of 2013 , that percentage ranked as the 26th @-@ highest all @-@ time season @-@ single caught stealing percentage . Further , it was the second @-@ highest figure since 1957 ; only Mike LaValliere 's 1993 figure of 72 @-@ 7 % was higher during that time period .

Before the 2006 season commenced , Molina participated in the inaugural World Baseball Classic ( WBC ) for Puerto Rico . After returning to the Cardinals , he changed his jersey number from 41 to 4 . However , the regular season presented some of his greatest offensive challenges as he struggled through a career @-@ worst .216 batting average in 461 regular @-@ season plate appearances . In fact , in a culmination of a three @-@ year downward trend in his offense , Molina 's on @-@ base plus slugging percentages declined from .684 in 2004 , .654 in 2005 and a career @-@ worst .595 in 2006 . The low batting average was due in part to a deflated batting average on balls in play ( BABIP ) of .226 ( normal is around .300 ) , a career low .

In a May 27 game against the San Diego Padres at Petco Park in San Diego with the Cardinals holding a 4 ? 3 lead in the bottom of the ninth , Molina picked Brian Giles off first to end the game , the first pickoff to end a major league game in nearly four years . The Cardinals faced the Padres again in the National League Division Series ( NLDS ) playoff game in the playoffs , he again picked a Padre off at first , this time Mike Piazza , while bailing pitcher Jeff Suppan out of a jam . For the season , he caught 41 % of all base @-@ stealing attempts and picked off seven runners .

Even as his bat languished , Molina 's defense was instrumental in propelling the Cardinals to the National League Central division crown in a season heavily marred by injuries . However , the following playoffs marked a turning point in his career offensive output . He posted a .358 composite batting average , .424 on @-@ base percentage ( OBP ) , two home runs and eight RBI in 16 games as the Cardinals reached the World Series . He batted .308 in the National League Division Series ( NLDS ) , .348 in the National League Championship Series ( NLCS ) and .412 in the World Series .

One of Molina 's landmark playoff performances came in Game 7 of the NLCS against the New York Mets , the final game of the series tied at three games each . Starting in the top of the ninth , he batted with a 1 ? 1 score . In the sixth inning , Mets left fielder Endy Chávez had prevented the Cardinals from taking the lead when he leapt to catch Scott Rolen 's near @-@ miss home run over the center field fence . This time , however , Molina hit a two @-@ run home run off Aaron Heilman over center field that was too high for Chávez to catch and gave the Cardinals a 3 ? 1 edge .

In the bottom of the ninth , rookie pitcher Adam Wainwright ? filling in as an emergency closer ? found himself in a two @-@ out , bases @-@ loaded situation against center fielder Carlos Beltrán , who had already homered three times in the NLCS . Molina called for a mound conference . Initially , he wanted a sinker from Wainwright but changed his mind because he suspected he would overthrow it and give Beltrán an easy pitch to hit . He made an unconventional choice by calling for a changeup to start the sequence against Beltrán . It was called for a strike . Had Beltrán successfully got a base hit , the scheme may have caused tension for the third @-@ year catcher with La Russa and pitching coach Dave Duncan because throwing a first @-@ pitch changeup ran contrary to Duncan 's teaching . Molina then called for two curveballs . Beltrán fouled off the first ,

but Wainwright struck him out looking at a "bender that started up and away and bit hard to the low inside corner" for the final out of the game. The Cardinals' conquest of the NLCS gave them a return trip to the World Series after two years. They proceeded to defeat the Detroit Tigers in five games, giving Molina his first championship ring. His mask was turned in for display at the Baseball Hall of Fame.

== 2007 ? 09 ==

Batting out of the number 5 spot in the batting order for the first time in his career on Opening Day, 2007, Molina collected two hits. In a game against the Milwaukee Brewers on April 15, Molina picked Prince Fielder off first base as he leaned far off the bag, tipping off Molina and first baseman Albert Pujols to a hit and run the Brewers were planning. Four days later, Molina faced his brother Bengie for the first time in a game against the San Francisco Giants. It was also the first time they had seen each other in about three and one-half years.

From May 1 to May 24, Molina strung together a then career high 15 game hitting streak, during which he batted .373. It was the longest streak for a Cardinals catcher since Erik Pappas' 16 game streak in 1993. Molina was absent for most of the month of June due to a fractured left wrist. In the third inning of the May 29 game against Colorado, he took a foul tip off his wrist from Rockies right fielder Brad Hawpe's bat. After missing 26 games, the Cardinals activated him from the disabled list on June 28.

The first multi error game of Molina's career occurred July 13 against the Philadelphia Phillies on a catch and throw. In a span of 11 starts from August 2 to 16, he racked up four three hit games. On August 16, he hit two home runs against the Brewers for his first career multi homer game. Molina homered and stroked the go ahead double in an August 22 defeat of Florida. One week later, he homered in back to back games against the Cincinnati Reds; he, Edmonds, and Rick Ankiel each drove in three runs in an 11 to 3 victory on September 2. On Yadier Molina Bobblehead Night September 19 versus Philadelphia, he stroked three hits including the game winning single in the tenth inning.

Molina suffered a concussion in September and underwent arthroscopic surgery to repair torn cartilage in his right knee. The knee surgery ended his season early on September 24. In Molina's final 50 games, he successfully collected 49 hits in 158 AB for a .310 AVG. Of his final 35 starts, 12 were multi hit games. His .281 batting average after the All Star break ranked fifth among NL catchers. He finished the season with a new career best .275 batting average, six home runs, and 40 RBI in 111 games. He threw out 50% (23 of 46) baserunners attempting to steal, the highest percentage in the majors. From 2005 to 2007, he led all MLB with a 47% caught stealing rate and 18 pick offs.

On January 14, 2008, Molina and the Cardinals agreed to a four year, \$15 million deal with a club option for a fifth, cementing his position as their starting catcher. He reported to spring training having lost 15 pounds and in improved physical shape from rehabilitating following knee surgery. He started the season with an Opening Day home run and seven game hitting streak. After a home plate collision with Eric Bruntlett on June 15 against the Philadelphia Phillies in the ninth inning, Molina sustained head and neck injuries and was removed from the field on a stretcher. There were no indications of a concussion. He held on to the ball to help the Cardinals win. He missed the next four games. To that point, Molina was batting .295 with three home runs and 24 RBI. He also had thrown out 10 of 32 baserunners (31.3%) well below his career average of 45% but an Associated Press reporter attributed the decline to an inexperienced pitching staff.

Molina returned to the field against Boston at Fenway Park as the designated hitter. In that game, his solo home run provided the difference in a 5 to 4 Cardinals victory. It was also the first game of the first of two 13 game hitting streaks for the season. His first career start at first base, also against Boston, occurred two days later. During that streak, he collected 17 hits in 47 at bats for a .362 batting average. The second hitting streak spanned from August 16 to September 2, where he successfully hit 19 times in 50 at bats for a .380 average. On September 2, he and Felipe

López hit consecutive home runs against the Arizona Diamondbacks en route to an 8 ? 2 victory .

Overall , Molina enjoyed a breakout offensive season , finishing with new career highs with a .304 batting average ? his first over .300 ? and in hits ( 135 ) , OBP ( .349 ) , SLG ( .392 ) , runs ( 37 ) and RBI ( 56 ) . Of all catchers in franchise history with at least 450 PA in a season , he became just the second ever , after Simmons , to bat over .300 ; it was then the fourth @-@ best season batting average ; and , his 29 strikeouts were the fewest since Simmons fanned 20 times in 1976 . Molina led the team and was sixth in the NL with a .340 batting average with runners in scoring position . For the season , he successfully caught 35 % of opposing baserunners , still higher than the league average of 27 % . He led all MLB with seven pickoffs . That November , Molina received his first Gold Glove Award , becoming the third Cardinal catcher ever to win the honor , after Tom Pagnozzi and Matheny .

Before the 2009 season commenced , Molina participated with Puerto Rico in his second WBC . When the event concluded , he returned to the Cardinals . In an April 16 game against the Arizona Diamondbacks , he reached base in all five of his plate appearances in a 12 ? 7 victory . Starting pitcher Joel Piñeiro ? struggling with his fastball command in previous starts ? experimented with a sinker and shut out the New York Mets on June 24 with just two hits . Molina erased a Mets runner by throwing out Luis Castillo attempting to steal second base . Molina was batting .278 with five home runs and 25 RBI through July 5 , 2009 . He was selected through fan vote to represent the Cardinals in the All @-@ Star Game in St. Louis ' Busch Stadium ? his first All @-@ Star Game . As the top vote @-@ getter among NL catchers with 2 @,@ 641 @,@ 467 votes , Molina was named the NL 's starting catcher . He caught eight innings and drove home a run .

Following the All @-@ Star break on July 18 , Molina 's four hits and Albert Pujols ' two home runs helped cap Chris Carpenter 's 6 ? 1 victory over the Diamondbacks , who pitched around nine runners on base in eight innings . On August 15 , Molina picked off San Diego 's Kevin Kouzmanoff at first on the way to a 7 ? 4 victory , the 33rd of his career . At that point , Bill James Online rated that Molina saved his team fifteen total runs from pickoffs alone in his career .

A sore left knee sustained after taking a foul ball of his kneecap temporarily disabled Molina on September 26 . He was back in action on October 1 against Cincinnati , although he was removed from that game due to a " tweaked " knee . He finished the season with a .293 batting average , six home runs , 54 RBI , and a major league @-@ leading 136 games caught , the highest franchise total since Ted Simmons ' total in 1977 . His strikeout rate of once every 13 @.@ 9 PA was the second @-@ lowest in the NL . While accumulating 39 mult @-@ hit games , the Cardinals won 27 of them . He led the major leagues with eight pickoffs and was second in the NL in innings caught . He also won his second Gold Glove award after the season . The Sporting News announced that major league managers and coaches had selected Molina for the magazine 's end @-@ of @-@ season All @-@ Star award . For the first time in his career , Molina earned Most Valuable Player Award ( MVP ) consideration . He finished tied for 23rd with Miguel Tejada with one percent of the vote share .

== = 2010 ? 11 = = =

On Opening Day , April 5 , 2010 , Molina connected for a grand slam , becoming just the third Cardinals player to hit an Opening Day grand slam , following Mark McGwire and Scott Rolen . On April 17 , he caught all 20 innings of a game against the Mets . Molina turned in a productive April , driving in 15 runners , the most for a Cardinals catcher in the month of April since Ted Simmons drove in 20 in 1977 . He also continued his productivity with the bases loaded that month , collecting four hits and 11 RBI in five at bats .

Before the All @-@ Star break , Molina batted just .223 . However , he was voted to start his second consecutive game , and second overall , and played four innings . After the All @-@ Star break , his hitting improved , as he stroked 63 hits in 200 at bats for .315 batting average . During a game against the Cincinnati Reds on August 10 , as second baseman Brandon Phillips came to bat , he exchanged words with Molina that escalated to a bench @-@ clearing confrontation , although no one was ejected . On September 17 , he amassed a career @-@ high five RBI and career @-@

tying four hits against San Diego , including two doubles . After an examination on his sore right knee on September 23 , Molina was shut down for the rest of the season , missing 12 games .

The final batting results for Molina 's 2010 season consisted of a .262 batting average , six home runs , and 62 RBI . He ranked as the fourth toughest in the NL to strike out with 10 @. @ 2 at bats per strikeout . He led all NL catchers in at @- @ bats ( 465 ) and stolen bases ( eight ) , and his 122 hits ranked second , just behind Brian McCann 's 123 . He was tops in the NL with 24 bases @- @ loaded RBI , collecting eight hits in 15 AB for a .533 batting average in those situations . He also was first in the Majors with a .455 batting average ( 10 ? 22 ) on 0 ? 2 counts . He led all MLB catchers in innings ( 1138 @. @ 0 ) , games started ( 130 ) and assists ( 79 ) , and led the NL for the third time in caught @- @ stealing percentage at 49 % . On November 1 , he won his fourth consecutive Fielding Bible Award as the sole catcher . In addition , Molina became the first player at any position to win the award unanimously with a perfect score of 100 . Nine days later , he was awarded his third consecutive Gold Glove Award .

With increased offensive productivity in 2011 , Molina continued to help anchor the middle of Cardinals lineup in addition to the pitching staff and defense . From May 15 to May 18 , he put together four consecutive multi @- @ hit games . Selected to his third consecutive All @- @ Star Game , he substituted for the starter , McCann , played four innings and doubled in his only at @- @ bat . Molina hit safety in 14 consecutive games from July 21 to August 11 , one fewer than his career high . From July 22 ? 25 , he homered in three consecutive games , the second time in his career he had done so .

On August 2 , Molina was ejected from a game against the Milwaukee Brewers for arguing a called strike . He bumped umpire Rob Drake in the chest multiple times and appeared to spit upon him . Molina later apologized , stating that he did not intend to spit on the umpire and that he " was caught up in the moment . That 's what happens when you 're caught up in the race and trying to win . I didn 't handle it the right way . " He served a five @- @ game suspension handed down by MLB for " making contact with umpire Rob Drake multiple times and spraying him with spit twice while arguing . "

Although the Cardinals stayed competitive , they were , at best , on the fringes of making the playoffs through August . As of August 28 , with a 70 ? 64 record , they faced a 10 1 ? 2 @- @ game deficit to the Braves for the wild card playoff berth with 28 left to play . Molina provided a spark to the offense in the close of the season , batting .342 in August and .341 in September . With his 30th double on September 21 , he became the fourth catcher in Cardinals history to reach that milestone , following Simmons , Bob O 'Farrell and Walker Cooper .

St. Louis won 20 of 28 games to finish the season , allowing them to tie the Braves for the wild card lead going into the final day . Molina caught Carpenter 's 8 ? 0 shutout of the Astros , the final game of the regular season . Meanwhile , the Philles defeated the Braves 4 ? 3 in 13 innings , giving the Cardinals the wild card title and eliminating the Braves from the playoffs . The 10 1 ? 2 games @- @ won deficit marked the largest lead surrendered with 28 left to play in MLB history , consummating what St. Louis Post @- @ Dispatch sportswriter Bernie Miklasz termed an " improbable comeback , " and one of the greatest sports history . It was just the first in a series of improbable comebacks for the Cardinals in 2011 .

Molina compiled a .305 batting average , 32 doubles , 14 home runs and 65 RBI during the 2011 regular season . His batting average led the Cardinals and was eighth in the NL . However , his posted a career @- @ low 29 % caught @- @ stealing percentage . His OPS + ( 126 ) , batting average , and hit totals led NL catchers , doubles placed second and RBI third . His .337 batting average following the All @- @ Star Break tied for seventh in the NL . He also led all NL catchers with 12 three @- @ hit games , and collated 39 multi @- @ hit games and 13 multi @- @ RBI games .

By making the playoffs , Molina became the first catcher in franchise history to appear in five postseasons for the Cardinals . He batted .333 in the NLCS against Milwaukee , including five hits in eight AB in the final two games . In Game 1 of the World Series against the Texas Rangers , Molina threw out Ian Kinsler attempting to steal in the first inning on the way to a 3 ? 2 win . It was the Rangers ' only attempted steal of the game . That caught stealing gave Molina five in seven total

chances in the 2011 postseason to that point ; the Rangers had been tied with the Cardinals for most steals in that postseason . For the series , the Rangers attempted to steal four bases and were successful just once . In Game 3 , Molina accumulated four RBI , and two more each in Games 6 and 7 .

The Cardinals won the Series in seven games , giving Molina his second championship ring . He batted .333 and set a team World Series record with nine RBI . It was the highest World Series RBI total among catchers since Sandy Alomar , Jr . , drove in 10 in 1997 . Molina started all 18 games and played every inning in that 2011 playoff run , including one at first . Overall , he batted .299 with five doubles and 12 RBI . His 20 hits were the most by a catcher in the postseason since Iván Rodríguez stroked 21 in 2003 . On November 1 , Molina won his fourth consecutive Gold Glove Award , becoming just the fifth catcher on a pennant @-@ winning club to lead his position in OPS + in his league while winning a Gold Glove . He also won the first @-@ ever National League Rawlings Platinum Glove Award , bestowed upon one player in each league . For the second time in his career , he won MVP consideration ; he finished tied for 21st for the NL MVP balloting .

= = = 2012 = = =

On March 1 , 2012 , Molina signed a five @-@ year extension with the Cardinals worth \$ 75 million through 2017 . The contract included a \$ 1 million signing bonus , no @-@ trade clause , and a mutual option for 2018 worth another \$ 15 million . The deal made him the second @-@ highest @-@ paid catcher in the majors . He collected his tenth career four @-@ hit game against the Brewers on April 29 with a two @-@ run home run that led the Cardinals to a 7 ? 3 win . On May 1 , Molina mounted the first of two two @-@ stolen base games of the season ; the other occurred August 3 .

On May 27 against the Phillies , Molina blasted his third career grand slam against Roy Halladay . His made his 1,000th career appearance in an MLB game against the Chicago White Sox on June 12 . From July 25 to August 7 , he maintained a season @-@ best 11 @-@ game hitting streak in which he batted .413 . In a game against Pittsburgh at PNC Park on August 28 , he sustained head , neck and back injuries ? although no concussion ? in a second @-@ inning home plate collision with second baseman Josh Harrison . In August , he batted .403 with a .453 OBP , both tied for third in the NL . As the season progressed , he garnered widespread consideration for the National League MVP award . On September 4 , Molina collected his 1,000th career hit , an infield single against the Mets at home in the second inning .

The 2012 season was one of Molina 's crowning achievements as a hitter , especially considering early professional scouting reports did not forecast his bat being much of a factor in the major leagues . He set new career highs in multiple offensive categories , including a .315 batting average , 22 home runs , 76 RBI , 65 runs scored , .373 OBP , .501 slugging percentage and 12 stolen bases . He led the team in batting average for the second straight season , thus becoming the first catcher in franchise history to do so .

Panning Molina 's performance National League @-@ wide , he ranked fourth batting , tenth in OBP , 14th in SLG and tied for 18th with 46 multihit games . He led NL catchers in stolen bases and set a Cardinals single @-@ season record for catchers , and ranked second among NL catchers in HR and third in RBI and batting average . An aggressive hitter , he batted .380 with seven HR on the first pitch ; the HR total on first pitches ranked seventh in the NL . His 32 baserunners caught stealing topped MLB , 47 @-@ 9 caught stealing percentage ranked second , and three pickoffs tied for first in the NL and were second in MLB .

From a historic perspective , Fangraphs ' Dave Cameron noted that Molina 's combination of offensive productivity and interception of base runners in 2012 was one of the rarest performances in history . He became just the ninth MLB catcher to post a season with a weighted runs created ( WRC + ) factor of 140 and 45 percent of runners caught stealing . At 143 , his WRC + was tied for eighth all @-@ time among catchers with at 45 % of base runners caught stealing . Further , those figures aligned with peak seasons of other catchers such as Johnny Bench , Elston Howard , Carlton Fisk , and Rick Wilkins .

After being the subject of much speculation for the MVP award throughout the season , Molina ultimately finished fourth . He and winner Buster Posey became the first pair of catchers to finish in the top four in the award 's 88 @-@ year history . However , like in years past , other awards were on their way . In November , he won his fifth straight Gold Glove award , making him the first Cardinal since Jim Edmonds to win that many consecutively , which Edmonds did in 2004 . On December 4 , he won his first GIBBY Award for Defensive Player of the Year . The St. Louis chapter of the Baseball Writers ' Association of America ( BBWAA ) named him the St. Louis Baseball Man of the Year for 2012 . In a Los Angeles Times report that published the top MLB jersey sales from the All @-@ Star break until October 1 , his jersey ranked 18th .

= = = 2013 = = =

With increased profile coming in conjunction with his offensive breakout from the year before , Molina 's popularity with fans around the game also increased . Following his 2012 fourth @-@ place MVP finish , his 2013 in @-@ season jersey sales rose to third place , just after Posey and retiring New York Yankees closer Mariano Rivera , according to a July 11 report . On June 2 he was ejected by 1st base umpire Clint Fagan for throwing his helmet . Molina collected two doubles in a three @-@ hit game on June 12 , giving him 21 doubles for the season , a pre @-@ All @-@ Star break career high . It was also the second @-@ highest pre @-@ All @-@ Star break total in franchise history following Ted Simmons ' 29 thirty @-@ five years earlier . That three @-@ hit game also gave Molina 78 for his career , tied for 43 on the all @-@ time list for catchers .

Through July 15 , Molina led the NL with a .341 ( 110 hits in 323 at @-@ bats ) batting average . In the final All @-@ Star Game balloting , Molina ( 6 @,@ 883 @,@ 258 votes ) edged out Posey ( 6 @,@ 474 @,@ 088 ) for the role of the NL 's starting catcher in the game held at Citi Field in Queens , New York City . The Cardinals placed Molina on the 15 @-@ day disabled list on July 31 due to a right knee sprain . At the time he went on the DL , Molina was batting .330 with eight homers , thirty doubles , and 54 RBI . A magnetic resonance image ( MRI ) indicated inflammation but no structural damage , so the knee was drained of excess fluid buildup and Molina was given a cortisone injection .

The knee injury impacted his batting average , contributing to a late @-@ season slump . On September 16 , Molina collected four hits with three runs scored to help the Cardinals to a 12 ? 2 win over the Seattle Mariners and break an 0 ? 15 slump , raising his batting average to .317 . Eight days later , Molina was behind the plate to call rookie Michael Wacha 's one @-@ hit , 8 2 ? 3 innings of shutout work in a 2 ? 0 victory over the Washington Nationals . It was actually a no @-@ hitter through that point until Ryan Zimmerman broke it up with a high @-@ bouncing ground ball that glanced off Wacha 's glove for the Nationals ' only hit of the game .

For the year , Molina set new career highs in batting average ( .319 ) , doubles ( 44 ) , runs scored ( 68 ) , and RBI ( 80 ) . He also hit .373 with runners in scoring position ( RISP ) in a season in which the Cardinals set the all @-@ team team record for batting average with RISP at .330 . He finished fourth in the NL in batting average , second in doubles and sixth in batting average with RISP . His 44 doubles were the most in the Major Leagues among catchers since Iván Rodríguez ' 47 in 1996 .

Molina was also noted for his handling of the pitching staff . The Cardinals overcame losing key pitchers Chris Carpenter , Jason Motte , and Jaime García ? among others ? early in the season by substituting twelve rookie pitchers en route to winning a competitive NL Central division title over the Pittsburgh Pirates and Cincinnati Reds ( each team finished with at least 90 wins ) . A continuously evolving core exceeded expectations by filling in for 52 games started , 36 wins , and five saves and Molina was credited with their success in a large part due to his pitch @-@ calling skills and aptness to guide . The rookies ' 36 wins were the most in franchise history since 1941 .

The Cardinals squared off against the Pirates in the NLDS . Two weeks removed from just missing a no @-@ hitter , Wacha again nearly repeated the feat with Molina behind the plate in an elimination game , Game 4 . Molina threw out pinch runner Josh Harrison attempting to steal second base in the eighth inning to help the Cardinals preserve a 2 ? 1 lead . In the World Series against the Boston Red Sox , Molina became just the ninth player ? and the first in the expansion era ? in



franchise history to appear in four World Series with the club , and the first since Stan Musial in the 1946 World Series , also against the Red Sox . Molina collected more awards following the season , including his first Silver Slugger Award , sixth Gold Glove , and a third @-@ place finish in MVP voting . Molina was a co @-@ winner , along with Wainwright and Matt Carpenter , for the BBWAA St. Louis Baseball Man of the Year .

= = = 2014 = = =

Along with three other players each separately displayed , Sports Illustrated featured Molina on the cover of their March 31 issue complementing the 2014 MLB season preview article . On the 2014 Opening Day ? the same day Sports Illustrated published the Molina cover edition ? he stroked his second season @-@ entry home run and the 90th of his career , accounting for the difference in a 1 ? 0 defeat of the Reds in Cincinnati . It also secured the 100th win for batterymate Adam Wainwright . Molina added a single for two of the Cardinals ' five hits .

With a one ball , two strike pitch from relief pitcher Randy Choate incoming to Cubs outfielder Nate Schierholtz in a May 4 game , the batter foul tipped the pitch . Instead of Molina being in a position to catch it cleanly with his glove , the ball hit the thigh . Molina instantly hunched over the ball , trapping it between the thigh and rib cage . He held on , qualifying it as a third strike .

With the All @-@ Star Game nearing , Brewers catcher Jonathan Lucroy aired a satirical television commercial in the style of a political advertising campaign on June 17 to outgain Molina in the All @-@ Star voting totals . The voice @-@ over narrator posed the question , " Do you want another St. Louis Cardinals catcher to star in an All Star game ? Isn ' t there a better way ? Cast a ballot for change . Cardinals fans need to know that enough is enough . " At that point , Molina led the vote total for NL catchers with more than two million , while Posey was second at 1 @.@ 4 million and Lucroy third with 1 @.@ 1 million .

Some , including Matheny , took the message literally . However , Brad Weimer , the advertisement 's creator , confirmed the humor was meant to be tongue @-@ in @-@ cheek . Molina stayed in the lead and won the vote as the starting catcher in the All @-@ Star Game at Target Field in Minneapolis , Minnesota , his sixth consecutive appearance .

His season was interrupted on July 9 against the Pirates . While sliding past third base , he attempted to grab the bag to stay on . However , during the play , he injured his right thumb . An MRI revealed torn ligaments , requiring surgery and forcing him to miss the next eight to 12 weeks . Regarding the injury as having a significance impact on the Cardinals ' season , St. Louis Post @-@ Dispatch sportswriter Bernie Miklasz commented , " Losing the best catcher in the world for the next 8 to 12 weeks with a torn thumb ligament is a horrendous , demoralizing setback for the Cardinals . This could be a season @-@ ending injury . " At that point , he was batting .287 with a .341 OBP , .409 SLG , 16 doubles , seven homers , and 30 RBI through 83 games . He also led MLB with a 49 caught @-@ stealing percentage .

He returned from the DL ahead of schedule , about seven weeks and 40 games missed after the injury , and was activated August 29 before a series against the Cubs . However , he still had not fully recovered , as he batted .250 in September with a pronounced drop in power production . His 110 appearances were his fewest since his rookie season in 2004 . He finished the season with a .282 batting average , seven HR , 38 RBI , 21 doubles , a .333 OBP and .386 SLG , all lower totals than 2013 , and many since 2010 . Among players with at least 90 games played , Molina 's 48 % caught stealing and 3 @.@ 20 catcher 's ERA were both first in the major leagues .

During Game 1 of the NLDS against the Dodgers , Wainwright hit Adrian Gonzalez with a pitch , and both benches cleared . Umpire Jerry Meals attempted to get between Gonzalez and Molina , but Molina briefly shoved Meals . MLB fined Molina \$ 5 @,@ 000 without suspending him . In Game 2 of the NLCS against the Giants , Molina collected his 89th career hit in the postseason , passing Pujols for the franchise record . However , he sustained his second significant injury of the season in that same game , straining his left abdominal oblique muscle during another at bat , due in part to compensation in his swing for lost power following his thumb injury earlier in the season .

After missing the next game , his string of 83 consecutive playoff games started was stopped ,

which was a major league record . The last playoff game he had not started was Game 3 of the 2004 World Series . On November 4 , Molina was announced as winning his seventh consecutive Gold Glove , tying Boone as having won the third @-@ most Gold Gloves among catchers . Further , only Bench and Rodríguez had won more consecutive ( 10 each ) as catchers in major league history . He won the National League Platinum Glove award on November 8 , his third time in the award 's first four years .

= = = 2015 = = =

With his 11th consecutive Opening Day start on April 5 , 2015 , against the Cubs , Molina became the first catcher in club history to achieve this feat . On May 10 against the Pirates , he was on the dubious end of a piece of MLB history : lining out into the first " 4 ? 5 ? 4 " triple play in MLB history . Second baseman Neil Walker caught his line drive with two runners on , then threw to third baseman Jung @-@ ho Kang to double up Jhonny Peralta for the second out . Kang briefly pirouetted the ball in his hand , albeit confused , but threw back to Walker to tag Jason Heyward for the third out . Molina 's first home run of the season and first in 95 games occurred against the Minnesota Twins on June 15 ; his previous home run dated back to June 27 , 2014 .

On July 7 , he was selected to his seventh consecutive All @-@ Star Game , played at Great American Ball Park in Cincinnati . In the Reds ' clubhouse for the All @-@ Star Game , Molina shared a locker with Reds ' second baseman Brandon Phillips . Since the brawl between the Cardinals and Reds in 2010 , the two mended their schism , and Molina has a photograph of their families together . When informed whose locker he was using , Molina replied , " This is Phillips ' locker ? How about that ? I 'll have to write something to him . " While the pregame roster introductions were made , Reds fans booed all six Cardinals players who were selected , and even former Cardinal Albert Pujols . When Molina was introduced , he smiled and turned and pointed his thumbs toward the back of his jersey . Pujols provided levity when he then joined in the booing . After the game , Molina remarked to reporters , " when you spend 12 years coming to Cincinnati and you beat them so many times , they ? re going to boo you . " In his career to that point , he hit .319 with a .352 on @-@ base percentage and .500 slugging percentage in 270 career at @-@ bats at Great American Ball Park .

Hitting his first triple in more than four years and 2 @,@ 000 at bats , with the bases loaded , Molina provided the decisive run in a 3 ? 2 outcome against the Chicago White Sox on July 22 . In the annual Baseball America Toolbox Awards , managers and coaches around the National League rated Molina as both the " Best hit and run artist " and " Best defensive catcher " in the NL . His 100th career home run was well @-@ timed , becoming the game @-@ winning run in the bottom of the eighth inning at Busch Stadium on August 19 in a 4 ? 3 win over San Francisco . After sustaining an injury to his left thumb during a September 20 game against the Cubs , an MRI revealed a partial ligament tear , preventing him from playing . Molina won his eighth consecutive Gold Glove Award and fourth Platinum Glove Award in 2015 . In December , it was revealed that Molina had a second surgery on his left thumb , pushing his return to late in 2016 spring training . He was winner of the Darryl Kile Good Guy Award .

= = = 2016 = = =

At age 33 , Molina broke the Cardinals ' all @-@ time games caught record on April 8 , 2016 , in his 1,440th game , passing Ted Simmons ( 1968 ? 80 ) . His 1 @,@ 343 games started since the beginning of the 2005 season was the highest total in the major leagues . He made his 1,500th career major league appearance on May 14 in a 5 ? 3 loss to the Los Angeles Dodgers . While playing the Washington Nationals in the seventh inning of a 2 ? 1 loss at Nationals Park on May 26 , Stephen Drew hit a high infield fly that stayed over the pitcher 's mound . With both Aledmys Díaz and Mike Leake attempting to catch the ball , Molina posited himself and waited . As the ball deflected off Díaz ' glove , he almost collided with Leake , but Molina instinctively moved his glove and caught the ball before it hit the ground . He recorded his 1,500th career hit on July 2 against

Milwaukee , becoming the 34th catcher in MLB history , and second for the Cardinals , after Simmons .

= = Puerto Rico ( World Baseball Classic ) = =

Three World Baseball Classic ( WBC ) tournaments have been held ? 2006 , 2009 and 2013 ? and Molina has participated in all of them for the Puerto Rican team . He was fellow defensive standout Iván Rodríguez ' understudy in 2006 and 2009 and the primary catcher for the 2013 squad .

In his first classic in 2006 , Molina played four games and collected three hits in five at @-@ bats . In a 2009 tournament game against the Netherlands on March 9 , Molina 's eighth @-@ inning double keyed a rally in which Puerto Rico won 3 ? 1 . Speaking the next day , Molina stated that the previous night 's double had been a bigger thrill than his two @-@ run homer to beat the Mets in Game 7 of the 2006 NLCS .

With Molina as the starting catcher in 2013 , Puerto Rico earned the silver medal . Edwin Rodríguez , who scouted Molina in Puerto Rico before the Cardinals signed him , became the manager for the 2013 squad . Shortly after learning he would be the 2013 manager , Rodríguez contacted Molina for input on constructing the roster . Molina prepared for the Classic by playing 14 games for the winter league team in Puerto Rico Rodríguez managed . Molina was voted on the All @-@ World Baseball Classic Team for the first time .

In a 2013 semifinal game against Japan , Molina alertly took advantage of a baserunning mistake to record an unusual putout . With Shinnosuke Abe batting for Japan in the top of the eighth inning , and Hirokazu Ibatana on second and Seichi Uchikawa on first , J. C. Romero was pitching for Puerto Rico . Abe took a pitch from Romero inside for a ball as the runners went in motion . However , Ibatana retreated to second as Uchikawa charged toward him . Instead of throwing and risking an error , Molina held on to the ball . He then chased Uchikawa , cornered him by positioning himself between first and second and tagged out Uchikawa ? an unassisted caught stealing . The Japanese later stated they were attempting to exploit Romero 's slow delivery .

= = Skills profile = =

= = = Defense , pitch calling , throwing and hands = = =

The winner of eight consecutive Gold Gloves , Molina has been widely praised for his preparation , defense and leadership , not just of the pitching staff , but also of the entire team . Fellow catchers Jorge Posada and Brian McCann stated in 2009 that Molina was " the best defensive catcher in baseball ; " Víctor Martínez also called him " the best behind the plate . " In 2013 , a scout pronounced Molina the " one piece the St. Louis Cardinals cannot lose " while another commented that he is " irreplaceable . " When the club did lose Molina midway through the 2014 season to a thumb injury , ESPN 's Keith Law tweeted , " Yadier Molina missing two @-@ plus months would be bad for the Cardinals , but also just bad for baseball , period . " In his time in the major leagues , Molina has been widely viewed as evolving into a competitive influence and an unofficial , on @-@ field coach .

As a part of his pre @-@ game preparation , Molina meticulously studies and prepares for the upcoming game 's opposing hitters by creating a complete pitching and defensive plan . Other preparation includes handling ground balls at shortstop and third base , extending his agility for blocking pitches thrown in the dirt . According to former Cardinals starter Jake Westbrook , he was " a part of every aspect of the game : starters , relievers , offense , defense . "

Advanced defensive metrics ? known as sabermetrics ? show he is a top defender among catchers in MLB history . Molina ranked second all @-@ time among catchers at the end of the 2014 season on Baseball @-@ Reference.com 's career defensive runs saved ( DRS ) with 120 , behind only Iván Rodríguez ( 167 ) , and ahead of Jim Sundberg ( 114 ) , Bob Boone ( 107 ) and Gary Carter ( 106 ) , the only catchers with over 100 on the list . He was the season leader in the NL every year

from 2005 ? 14 , except 2008 and 2011 ? 12 . Fangraphs tallied his career DRS at 106 , with a career @-@ high of 20 in 2010 . The sabremetric stat defensive wins above replacement ( DWAR ) has also ranked Molina 's defense highly ; he has never had a full season with a negative DWAR , and he had a career @-@ high 2 @.@ 9 DWAR in 2010 .

Molina is known for his in @-@ game pitch @-@ calling skills , and pitchers rarely reject signs that he shows for the next pitch . Matheny stated , " We tell all our young pitchers when they come up to pitch their game . Yadi needs to find out how they work . He 's a quick study . But at the same time , they tend to just follow him . We do put them in Yadi 's hands . " Molina reads opposing hitters and will move fielders with subtle signs and gestures to align them with his pitch calling . La Russa commented that " it 's not just instinct . It 's sense , based on how a hitter 's standing , how he responds to the pitch or two before , and he 's very creative in how he makes his adjustment based on what he sees with the hitter and knowing what his pitcher can do . "

" You don 't ever have to worry about bouncing a ball to Yadier " , said Cardinals starter Adam Wainwright . " He 's a human vacuum behind the plate . The only thing you have to think about is making the pitch , because you know Yadi 's going to catch whatever you throw . " Former Cardinals pitching coach Dave Duncan remarked , " During the course of games , he would do something and I 'd go , ' I can 't believe he did that . ' But it worked . His pitch calling , sometimes you 're thinking he 's doing something so out of the norm , yet it was the right thing to do at the time . "

Baseball Prospectus estimated in 2013 that Molina saved 35 defensive runs per season through his pitch framing and had moved 301 out @-@ of @-@ zone pitches that were called strikes between April 1 and June 30 , 2013 . As of July 2013 , Molina had also thrown out 45 % of would @-@ be base stealers . At one time , an Arizona Diamondbacks official stated a team policy existed not to run on Molina . With pickoffs , Molina throws from behind left @-@ handed batters to obfuscate the runner 's view of his motion to first base . Besides studying hitters at the plate , Molina also studies base runners to watch their decision @-@ making process about stealing bases or when they are less guarded against a pickoff . He practices pickoff moves and coordinates signals with the first basemen to indicate when he is primed to move for a pickoff throw . In 2012 , a Sports Illustrated poll of 306 players found that Molina was the " toughest catcher to run on . "

= = = Batting = = =

As the publication Viva El Birdos wrote , " Yadier Molina broke into the majors as a light @-@ hitting defensive specialist " , who hit mostly singles . Molina pushed to shed the light @-@ hitter label he had in common with his brothers . A fidgeter with his batting stance early in his career , Molina mimicked and vacillated between more accomplished hitters such as Andrés Galarraga and Albert Pujols . However , it was a dip in his swing and an inability to get around on fastballs that sapped his efforts . Over time , with assistance of teammates such as Pujols , Molina found his comfortable stance , sounder mechanics and adopted a line @-@ drive style of swing that eliminated the dip and helped him hit fastballs with more authority .

Thus , he became a more consistent hitter as his career progressed , defying the scouting reports that he would have a weak bat . In combination with an improved his ability to pull the ball and hit it up the middle , he improved his batting average , batting .293 or higher in five of his last six seasons . His line @-@ drive pull percentage of 2009 ? 11 increased by about 6 % in 2012 ? 13 ; BABIP increased from .280 in 2005 ? 10 to .327 in 2011 ? 13 and pull weighted on @-@ base average ( wOBA ) has increased from .290 in 2009 to over .520 in 2013 . To keep his bat in the lineup but allow respite from the rigors of his in @-@ game catching duties , Molina has occasionally started at first base .

Aside from swinging with increased line @-@ drive contact and hitting fastballs with more authority , very little has actually changed in the catcher 's approach . One trait that has always persisted is that Molina is an aggressive and free @-@ swinging ? but high @-@ contact ? hitter . Through 2012 , he swung at more than 51 % percent of the pitches he saw ? he has a reputation for swinging at pitches in and out of the strike zone , low and away and even in toward his hands . Because of his free @-@ swinging tendency , he naturally has a walk rate ( 7 @.@ 1 % ) below the Major League

average ( 8 @. @ 4 % ) . Combined with his ability to put the bat on the ball quite frequently ( 87 % ) and his improved approach at the plate , he increased his career @-@ high single @-@ season batting average five times between 2006 and 2013 .

Despite batting just .238 in his first three seasons and .240 after 1 @, @ 000 at @-@ bats , Molina increased his average to .284 average after 3 @, @ 983 at @-@ bats ( 1 @, @ 132 hits ) as of 2013 due in part to having only one season lower than .293 from 2009 ? 13 . He hit into 27 double plays in 2009 , but in 2012 reduced that figure to ten . Molina 's home run and doubles rates also increased ; from 2011 ? 13 , he hit 104 of his 226 career doubles .

= = Awards and accomplishments = =

= = = Records = = =

MLB records

Consecutive playoff games started , 83

Platinum Glove awards won , 4

St. Louis Cardinals records

Consecutive Opening Day starts at catcher , 11 ( 2005 ? 15 )

Consecutive seasons leading the team in batting average as catcher , 2

Gold Gloves won as catcher , 8

Defensive runs saved as catcher , 120

Playoff appearances as catcher , 8

Playoff hits for career , 89

= = = Statistical achievements = = =

Note : Per Baseball @-@ Reference.comBold : league leader

= = Personal life = =

Molina lives in Vega Alta , Puerto Rico , and stays in Caseyville , Illinois , during the baseball season . He married his wife Wanda Torres in 2007 . On September 4 , 2008 , he had a son named Yanuell , and on July 4 , 2010 , a daughter named Arianna . After signing his \$ 75 million contract in 2012 , Molina purchased a home on a four @-@ acre property located in Jupiter , Florida for \$ 7 @. @ 15 million . His agent is Melvin Roman of MDR Sports Management , who has represented him since he signed his first professional contract with the Cardinals shortly after being drafted in 2000 . Molina 's charitable organization , named Foundation 4 , has helped to raise donations for childhood cancer patients in Puerto Rico.A restaurant in St.Louis named a milk shake called the yadi gold glove

Molina 's two older brothers , Bengie and José Molina , have played a combined 28 seasons in the Major Leagues . Each of the three brothers has won at least one World Series ring , making them the only trio of brothers with such a distinction ( Bengie and José both won their first while with the Anaheim Angels in 2002 ) . They are also the only trio of brothers to play as catchers in the major leagues . Of a total of nineteen trios of brothers who have played in the Major Leagues ? including the DiMaggios and the Cruzes ? only one other trio of brothers has all appeared in a World Series : Matty , Felipe and Jesús Alou .

Even while the Molina brothers still lived in the United States playing professional baseball , their parents stayed in the same home near the park where the brothers grew up playing ball , Jesús Rivera Park . Benjamín Molina organized youth teams . On October 11 , 2008 , Molina 's father died from a heart attack . At the moment it occurred , he was tending to a baseball field that he had built for the youth in Bayamón .

Spurred by absences from autograph shows for which he was paid to appear , Steiner Sports

Marketing filed a lawsuit for \$ 175 @, @ 000 against Molina in the New York state supreme court in Manhattan on October 2 , 2009 . Steiner Sports paid Molina \$ 90 @, @ 640 in advance when they renewed their contract in July 2008 . However , the firm stated that he ignored their agreement to make public and private appearances to sign autographs and did not return the money .

= = = Source notes = = =