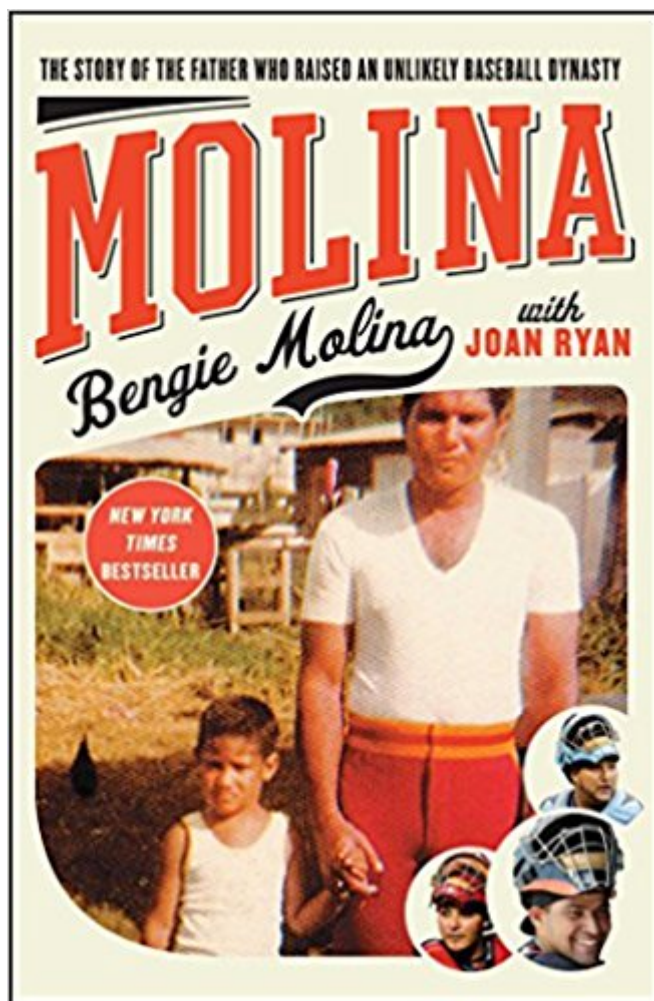


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# Molina: The Story Of The Father Who Raised An Unlikely Baseball Dynasty



## Synopsis

The New York Times bestseller about Major League Baseball's Molina brothers and how they became Gold Glove, World Series-winning catchers: "A simply told, deeply moving story, quite unlike the usual baseball book" (Kirkus Reviews, starred review). A baseball rules book. A tape measure. A lottery ticket. These were in the pocket of Bengie Molina's father when he died of a heart attack on the rutted Little League field in his Puerto Rican barrio. The items are powerful symbols in Molina's beautiful memoir about his father, who through baseball taught his three sons about loyalty, humility, courage, and the true meaning of success. Bengie and his two brothers—José and six-time All-Star Yadier—became famous catchers in the Major Leagues with World Series championships among them. Only the DiMaggio brothers can rival the Molinas as the most accomplished siblings in baseball history. Bengie was the least likely to reach the Majors. He was too slow, too sensitive, and too small. But craving his beloved father's respect, Bengie weathered failure after deflating failure until one day he was hoisting a World Series trophy in a Champagne-soaked clubhouse. All along he thought he was fulfilling his father's own failed dream of baseball glory—only to discover it had not been his father's dream at all. Written with the emotional power of sports classics such as *Field of Dreams* and *Friday Night Lights*, Molina is a love story between a formidable but flawed father and a son who, in unearthing answers about his father's life, comes to understand his own. "It's this year's most likely to be made into a terrific movie" (Chicago Tribune).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"For three brothers to make it to the big leagues, to all play the same demanding position, and to appear, between them, in eight World Series to date is remarkable enough. What is just as remarkable is the backstory—the family, especially the parents, who made Yadier, Bengie, and JosÃ© Molina the ballplayers and men they became." —Bob Costas "If Molina was just a baseball book explaining how a small town in Puerto Rico produced a historic set of three brothers who became Major League catchers and earned six World Series championships, it would still be a terrific read. The reality is that Molina is that and much more: it is a great book. Bengie honors his family, especially his Pai and Mai, by describing how their love and support carried him and his brothers through difficult beginnings into legendary careers—Mai taking care of the home front and Pai coaching their physical and mental baseball skills. Throughout the book, wonderful stories are combined with fascinating insights. I have read Molina three times to fully appreciate its many important messages. Molina will touch you on many levels. You will love it." —Tony La Russa "I've always believed that it takes a village of people to love and nurture a professional athlete into being. The Molinas are the perfect example. They will go down with the Alous, the Boones, the Bells, and others as baseball family royalty. This book is a must-read for all parents who want to teach their children the skills of the game while making sure they know that their skills away from the diamond are just as important." —Ron Darling —"An affecting memoir about a remarkable man who raised three sons to become baseball champions. . . . A simply told, deeply moving story, quite unlike the usual baseball book." — (starred review) "A good baseball story, but an even better story of fathers, sons, and the importance of family." —Booklist (starred review) —"It's this year's baseball book most likely to be made into a terrific movie. — An ideal Father's Day present." —The Chicago Tribune

Benjamin JosÃ© "Bengie" Molina is a former Major League Baseball catcher who has played for the Anaheim Angels, the Toronto Blue Jays, and the San Francisco Giants. His brothers, Yadier and JosÃ©, are also major league catchers. Bengie holds two World Championship rings, and two Gold Glove Awards. He is now the first base coach and catching instructor for the Texas Rangers. Joan Ryan is an award-winning journalist and author. She was one of the first female sports columnists in the country, and has covered every major sporting event, from the Super Bowl to the Olympics and championship fights. Her work has earned her thirteen Associated Press Sports Editors Awards, the National Headliner Award and the Women's Sports Foundation's Journalism Award by the San Francisco chapter of the National Organization for Women. Her book

Little Girls in Pretty Boxes: The Making and Breaking of Elite Gymnasts and Figure Skaters was named one of the Top 100 Sports Books of All Time by Sports Illustrated (the only one to be authored by a woman), and one of the Top 50 Sports Books of All Time by the Guardian. Joan now works as a media consultant to the San Francisco Giants.

This book tells of the love story between father Pai, and oldest son Bengie Molina. It is also the incredible story of a family that produced three major league baseball catchers (JosÃ©, Yadier and Bengie), who each have earned two World Series championships, as well as an autobiography of Bengie. Pai was a very talented baseball player who had the potential, but never made it to the major leagues. In fact, Bengie writes that people will tell you that Pai was a better player than any of his sons. Bengie does not reveal until late in the book why Pai didn't play in the major leagues. Pai taught and coached youth baseball, which was his passion. His rules were about the same thing: respect for coaches, umpires, teammates, teachers, parents, the game, yourself. In addition to baseball, Pai enjoyed drinking beer and playing dominoes with his friends. Mai (Bengie's mother) was a good fit for Pai. She was lively and gregarious enough to fill Pai's silences. And what luck to find a girl who loved baseball as much as he did. As far as his faith, Bengie writes "My baptism and communion were pretty much the extent of my church experience. My parents weren't even married in a church. Church weddings cost too much. As a child, on the few occasions I found myself in the Vega Alta church, I didn't feel that God would live in such a place. The door was thick and heavy, and when it closed behind me, I imagined being sealed inside an enormous crypt, cut off from everything alive. I'm a St. Louis Cardinals fan and my favorite player is Yadier Molina. Bengie tells the story that Yadier was the only five-year-old in the history of Little League to infuriate an umpire enough to get tossed from a game (for calling the umpire an obscene name). Bengie started his major league career with the California Angels, later playing for the Toronto Blue Jays, San Francisco Giants and Texas Rangers, retiring in 2010. He has stayed in the game as a coach. Bengie writes of not being happy in his marriage, indicating that they were two unhappy strangers who shared two beautiful daughters and little else. He writes of being attracted to Jamie while married, who he would later marry. This did not go over well with Pai, who saw him as being disloyal and not putting his family first. That put a strain on Pai and Bengie's relationship, something that was very painful for Bengie, as Pai would refuse to take Bengie's phone calls. Sadly, not long after the two were reconciled, Pai died at age 58 of a massive heart attack on his beloved field across the street from their home

where he taught and coached baseball. That is where his wake was held, on the spot he had crossed a million times with his bags of balls and bats. Bengie writes that this was where he had lived, in the seam between baseball and family, and this was where he had taken his final steps. Bengie writes about Pai's wake: "A light rain fell as we carried Pai's closed casket out of the tent and onto the baseball field. The baselines and batter's boxes had been carefully chalked. We carried the casket to first base, then second and third. The mayor delivered a play-by-play of the action, as if Pai were rounding the bases. I picked up first base, Cheo second, and Yadier third. The mayor's voice grew louder and more excited as we carried Pai toward home. His last trip around the diamond. A thousand people leapt to their feet." Bengie writes that playing in the Major Leagues was not Pai's dream. His dream was to be a good father and husband and raise good sons. Through baseball, he taught his sons how to be men. That was his life's work. This is a very well written book and one that I couldn't put down.

I laughed and cried...as a life long member of Cardinal Nation, the Molina family holds a dear spot in my heart. What a loving tribute to a beloved father. The raw emotion, love and respect for family and baseball shine bright in this book. Great read for anyone....

This book gets into your feelings and memories like no other book has done for me. I read it in one day. If you are an old timer and can remember morals and the standards your parents lived by and the pride they had in their family then you will love this book. This is a book about family and a sport the father's high standards molded in them that led to their success. I've seen all the brothers play but only Cheo at the ballpark. Buy this book you won't be disappointed.

This was a wonderful and insightful read. Being a huge Cardinal fan and Yadi lover I have followed with interest he and his two brothers all in the majors at the same time, all catchers and all two time World Series winners! What are the odds of that?! The oldest brother, Bengie has written a book more about family than baseball. He tells about growing up poor in Puerto Rico, being taught by his father about baseball, family, love, loyalty and respect. He relates his personal journey as well as his two brothers through life and the game of baseball. He provides insights as to what it was like coming to America at a very young age unable to speak English and sticking it out to make it to the majors. He proves that money and success do not equal happiness. His parents had very "rich" full

lives living in the same poor area they raised their sons in. The sacrifices by his father for his sons are heartbreaking and inspiring. I highly recommend this book and thank Bengie for sharing his very personal story.

I loved this book! I don't read very often, but was on vacation and ordered a few books for my Kindle. I had such a hard time putting it down! I'm a huge Cardinals fan and initially selected this book as I thought it about Yadi Molina's upbringing. It was actually about all 3 Molina brothers and their father as told by the eldest son, Bengie. The father's love for those boys and determination to bring them up as dedicated players with true sportsmanship is amazing. Many parts of the book brought me to tears, so make sure you have Kleenex available if you're reading it on a plane!

Could not put the book down!!!! Lot of respect for the Molina brothers. Stay true and never forget where you came from.

An excellent book and his stories are captivating. A very honest and real journey of his family and his insight into his experience beginning with early start with baseball and how he loves his family; father, mother and brothers. His start with the Arizona Western College baseball in Yuma is certainly inspiring and his introduction into the Minor Leagues and how he adjusted to the pitching and aggressive style of play. His experience with the Angels, Blue Jays and Giants and Rangers is a deep insight to the level of intense Major League Baseball competition. His family and his father and mother supported him all the way and he certainly pays homage to them. I have become acquainted with Bengie at the annual Arizona Western College baseball alumni game and reunion every year in Yuma. He was the AWC class of 93 and I was AWC class of 69.

I'm an Angels baseball fan for close to 50 years now and Bengie Molina is the best home grown catcher the club has ever produced. It's a great story about baseball family. It's incredible to read how Bengie, Jose, and Yadier all learned life lessons from the Papi & Mother and went on to become the greatest set of brothers to ever catch in Major League Baseball games. In different ways much like the DiMaggio brothers and the Alou brothers, the Brett brothers, the Forsch brothers, etc. The 3 Molina brothers have heart, grit, and drive to spare. Excellent read for baseball fans in general particular and Angels (California/Anaheim/LAAoA) fans in particular. Good guidelines for anyone who wants to coach youth baseball.

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