

# Sgt. 1st Class Matthew R. Kading: Madison soldier dies from injuries In Iraq, fantasy baseball kept him in touch with home: Newspaper Obituary and Death Notice

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A Wisconsin Army reservist who had friends across the country through an Internet fantasy baseball league — and kept tabs on his team's progress while serving in the Iraq war — has become the 48th Wisconsin service member killed in that conflict.

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew R. Kading, 32, of Madison died Monday at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, the U.S. Department of Defense announced Tuesday.

Kading, who was assigned to the Army Reserve's 983rd Engineer Battalion, based in Monclova, Ohio, was injured Oct. 19 near Tikrit when an improvised explosive device detonated near his convoy vehicle, the Defense Department said.

Kading worked as a construction engineering supervisor, Army spokesman Lt. Col. Gary Kolb said Tuesday.

Kading's family, reached in Madison by phone, declined to comment on his death Tuesday night.

A listing on Classmates.com shows Kading attended Madison East High School from 1987 to 1991.

Kading was the general manager of the Milwaukee Beers of the Roberto Clemente **APBA** Fantasy Baseball League, which has been renamed the Matt Kading Memorial **APBA** Baseball League to honor the Madison soldier, said fellow league manager Craig Ball of Meriden, Conn.

"The league meant a whole lot to him," Ball said.

League members from across the country have been updated via e-mail on Kading's condition since he was injured, Ball said, adding they were notified of his death by another league member, Rick Roeth, who was Kading's good friend.

Roeth, who ran Kading's team while he was on active duty, said fellow league members were saddened by his death and renamed the league after the soldier as a way to support his family emotionally.

"He was kind of an infectious guy, the life of the party," said Roeth, who met Kading in a Madison-area bowling league about 20 years ago.

"He always put other people first," Roeth said.

After Kading graduated from Madison East High School in 1991, he joined the Army Reserve before joining the Army full time a year later, Roeth said.

He stayed in the Army until about 2000 or 2001, spending most of his time as an electrician in South America, Roeth said. Upon his discharge, he returned to the Reserve, Roeth said.

Kading and Ball would talk baseball via e-mail and instant messaging before Kading was activated, and the soldier kept in touch electronically with members before his deployment to Iraq, Ball said.

"He would check our message board from Iraq," he said. "I guess for him it was like a piece of home."

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