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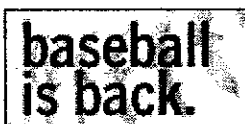
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# The Miami Herald

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Wednesday, March 14, 2001 High 86°F Low 72°F Local Forecast & More Weather



## News

*Published Sunday, March 11, 2001, in the Miami Herald*

## Hit-and-run killer leads police in car chase

### MIAMI BEACH

**WALTER PACHECO**  
wpacheco@herald.com

Hours after the city hosted a pedestrian and bicycle safety program Wednesday, a bicyclist was killed by a hit-and-run driver on Harding Avenue. A few hours later, the driver of the car involved in the accident ended up in the hospital after he crashed into several parked cars while trying to flee from police.

Police arrested Carlos Garcia Figueroa on Thursday afternoon and charged him with leaving the scene of an accident resulting in a death. Figueroa's bond is set at \$50,000.

Additional charges, including reckless driving, grand theft auto, fleeing and eluding a police officer, and hit-and-run property damage are pending an investigation, said Detective Alfred R. Boza of the Miami Beach Police Department.

Sergio Adrian Mascherini, 27, of Miami Beach was riding southbound on his bicycle on the 7700 Block of Harding Avenue at 8 p.m. Wednesday when he was struck from behind by a Jeep Wrangler.

Mascherini was flung from his bicycle onto the curb; his bicycle landed on a parked car. Mascherini died at the scene.

Rob Boyte, who lives on the corner where Mascherini died, said all he heard was a dull thump outside his window.

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"There was no screeching like when car stops," Boyte said Friday. "I bike that road and it is too narrow for bikers. I'll never get on it again after what happened."

The car allegedly driven by Figueroa sped south on Harding Avenue, but witnesses identified it as a 1987 black Jeep Wrangler.

An hour later, another driver, whose car was struck by the Jeep, flagged down a police officer on the 1300 Block of Collins Avenue, pointing out the fleeing car. The Jeep was seen southbound on Drexel from 13th Street, turning east to Washington.

A high-speed chase between police and the Jeep ensued on Washington Avenue, weaving through traffic and across a concrete median, and sending pedestrians running for safety. He went south on Washington, turning right on Fourth Street to Michigan Avenue.

Police used a loudspeaker to try to get the driver of the Jeep to stop, but he continued north on Michigan, running all the stop signs and traffic signals until he struck two parked cars on 11th Street and Michigan in front of Flamingo Park.

Figueroa was thrown from the car and landed near one of the damaged parked cars.

He was taken to Jackson Memorial Hospital's Trauma Center. He was treated and released at 3:48 a.m. Thursday. He was arrested that afternoon.

The Jeep, registered to Lajos Toth of the 300 block of 83rd Street, was stolen, but Toth had not notified police of the theft. He noticed the car was missing after 8:30 p.m. that night, according to police.

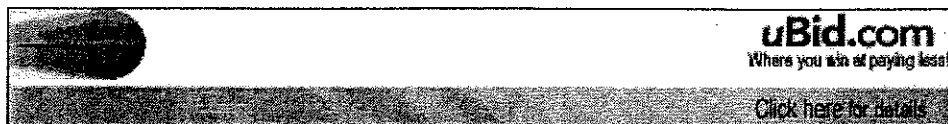
Police urge anyone with information related to this incident to call 305-673-7900.

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