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Billy Martin: Baseball's Flawed Genius

Bill Pennington

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The definitive biography of one of baseball’s most celebrated, mercurial, and misunderstood figures

Billy Martin is a story of contrasts. He was the clutch second baseman for the dominant New York Yankees of the 1950s. He then spent sixteen seasons managing in the big leagues, and is considered by anyone who knows baseball to have been a true baseball genius, a field manager without peer. Yet he’s remembered more for his habit of kicking dirt on umpires, for being hired and fired by George Steinbrenner five times, and for his rabble rousing and public brawls. He was combative, fiery, intimidating, and controversial, yet beloved by the everyday fan. He was hard on his players and even harder on himself. He knew how to turn around a losing team like no one else—and how to entertain us every step of the way.

Now, with his definitive biography *Billy Martin*, Pennington finally erases the caricature of Martin. Drawing on exhaustive interviews with friends, family, teammates, and countless adversaries, Pennington paints an indelible portrait of a man who never backed down for the game he loved. From his shantytown upbringing in a broken home; to his days playing for the Yankees when he almost always helped his team find a way to win; through sixteen years of managing, including his tenure in New York in the crosshairs of Steinbrenner and Reggie Jackson, Billy Martin made sure no one ever ignored him. And indeed no one could. He was the hero, the antihero, and the alter ego—or some combination of all three—for his short sixty-one years among us.

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