

Billy Martin: Baseball's Flawed Genius

By 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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Editorial Review

Review
"Energetically reported and skillfully written, the book is enormously entertaining. Without pretension, it explores the question whether a baseball lifer can actually be a tragic figure in the classic sense—a man destroyed by the very qualities than made him great."
—The Wall Street Journal

“Through interviews with Martin’s long-silent widow, his son and others who knew and played with and for him, we get a complete picture — womanizing, drinking, fighting and the rest.”
—New York Post

“Sprawling…thorough research.”
—Chicago Tribune

“It's all here, copiously reported, including interviews with more than 200 people, many of whom have since died, making this a one-of-a-kind work.”
—Newsday

"All the notable moments are here...Baseball (and Yankees) fans will devour this like ballpark popcorn, and all will muse about the many what-ifs of Martin's motley life."
***—Kirkus Reviews*, STARRED REVIEW**

"Martin’s life was a rollicking one, and as with the life, so with the book. Pennington’s take is great fun, and the author’s drive to talk to everyone who may have known Martin—from the most arrogant star to the humblest bartender—is impressive."
—BookPage

"A motley cast of baseball Hall of Famers, including Casey Stengel, Mickey Mantle, Rod Carew, Ricky Henderson, Reggie Jackson, Tommy Lasorda, and Earl Weaver, make appearances in this must-read for fans of the great American pastime."
—Publishers Weekly

"[Pennington] provides what is likely to be the definitive profile, which, as such, belongs in most library sports collections, especially those where Yankee fans cluster."
—**Mark Levine*, Booklist***

"His study of Martin is comprehensive and detailed, offering the reader rich details on his early years and his time as a player for several teams...Pennington expertly combines material from his subject’s personal and professional life, leaving the impression of a complicated and flawed but unforgettable man."
—Library Journal

“Two words of advice: read this. Bill Pennington not only writes the sprawling, brawling, no-punches-pulled narrative Martin deserves, but also deftly illuminates the humanity of one of baseball's epic characters.”
—Tom Verducci, bestselling author of THE YANKEE YEARS (with Joe Torre)

"The hair on my forearms was standing up by the end of the fifth paragraph of this book's introduction. I knew Billy Martin. I covered Billy Martin. But I never knew him like this. Congrats to Bill Pennington for the definitive work on baseball's flawed genius."
—Dan Shaughnessy, *Boston Globe* columnist and bestselling author of FRANCONA (with Terry Francona) and SENIOR YEAR

“Billy Martin has been dead for 25 years? Wow. That means there's a generation or two that know nothing about this character of baseball characters, this incandescent ballplayer/manager/jerk/sweetheart, this irrepressible brawler with a grand mind for the game. Bill Pennington cures all that with 'Billy Martin, Baseball's Flawed Genius.' This is a terrific tale about a roller coaster life. Pour yourself a cocktail and enjoy. The descriptions of the fistfights alone are worth the price of admission.”
—Leigh Montville, bestselling author of TED WILLIAMS, THE BIG BAM and EVEL

“It has been easy to think of Billy Martin as a cartoon--one created by the media and abetted by the man himself. But he was a great American, as important to understanding our game, and our nation, as Ted Williams or Joe DiMaggio. You'll never think of Billy Martin in the same way again, thanks to Bill Pennington's masterpiece of a biography.”
—John Thorn, Official Historian, Major League Baseball

From the Back Cover
Bill Pennington gives long-overdue flesh to the caricature . . . Pennington savors the dirt-kicking spectacles without losing sight of the man. *New York Times Book Review*

Even now, years after his death, Billy Martin remains one of the most intriguing and charismatic figures in baseball history. And the most misunderstood. A manager who is widely considered to have been a baseball genius, Martin is remembered more for his rabble-rousing and public brawls on the field and off. He was combative and intimidating, yet endearing and beloved.

In *Billy Martin,* Bill Pennington resolves these contradictions and pens the definitive story of Martin s life. From his hardscrabble youth to his days on the Yankees in the 1950s and through sixteen years of managing, Martin made sure no one ever ignored him. Drawing on exhaustive interviews and his own time covering Martin as a young sportswriter, Pennington provides an intimate, revelatory, and endlessly colorful story of a truly larger-than-life sportsman.

The hair on my forearms was standing up by the end of the fifth paragraph of this book s introduction. I knew Billy Martin. I covered Billy Martin. But I never knew him like this. Dan Shaughnessy, best-selling author of *Francona*

An exhaustive, detailed and fascinating look at a baseball genius whose biggest fight might very well have been against himself. *Tampa Tribune*

BILL PENNINGTON is an award-winning sportswriter for the *New York Times.* A former syndicated columnist, Pennington was a beat writer who covered much of Billy Martin s tenure with the New York Yankees. He is a fourteen-time finalist for and six-time winner of the Associated Press Sports Editors annual writing award.
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Users Review

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The knowledge that you get from Billy Martin: Baseball's Flawed Genius could be the more deep you searching the information that hide within the words the more you get thinking about reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to understand but Billy Martin: Baseball's Flawed Genius giving you buzz feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in a number of way that can be understood by means of anyone who read this because the author of this reserve is well-known enough. This book also makes your own vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We advise you for having this particular Billy Martin: Baseball's Flawed Genius instantly.

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