

Fan Reaction to Martin's Firing: 'Foul'



BILLY MARTIN
The people's choice

By DAVE MONA
Minneapolis Tribune Staff Writer

The firing of Billy Martin Monday raised a collective cry of "foul" from Minnesota Twins fans that reached all the way to New York and may echo well into the 1970 baseball season.

A sampling gathered from telephone calls, bars, radio talk shows and reports from the Twins' Bloomington headquarters, indicate that the firing of the popular rookie manager may have a strongly negative effect on ticket sales next year.

"I represent a union that buys 800 tickets a year," a caller told the "twins" spokesman who was left behind to answer the phone, yesterday. "We won't be back next year."

The caller was one of those lucky enough to get through to the Met Stadium offices. The Twins' phones were so busy that the lone switchboard operator never

caught up with the flow of calls, and the entire telephone prefix was jammed for brief periods.

"Wherever Martin goes my loyalty goes," said a woman caller to the Minneapolis Tribune. "Griffith seems to have completely forgotten that it's the fans who make the team. Now I know why they were so happy to get rid of Griffith in Washington. I wonder how Griffith will like an empty stadium?"

Martin's popularity, built over the last nine years as a player, coach, scout, manager and goodwill ambassador, caused many people to take the firing as a personal affront.

Don Cassidy of the Twins' public relations staff confirmed that many of the callers to Metropolitan Stadium were "highly emotional." Several callers broke into tears as they pleaded Martin's lost cause.

A caller to the Minneapolis Tribune said he was planning to distribute bumper stickers saying "Bring Back Billy" or "Boycott the Twins."

"We were listening to the radio just before noon," recalled bartender George Reinhart at Mayfield's in Northeast Minneapolis.

"It was unanimous around the bar. Guys said that they wouldn't go to see the Twins next year. Somebody said, 'Who's Your?' (New York Mets Coach Eddie Yost has been named a possible Martin successor.)"

Most of the fans who called either The Tribune or The Twins said they planned to take action the only way they felt they could fight back.

Some of them are leaving their names and saying to take them off the season ticket list. The stadium switchboard operator said, "All of them are mad, and some of them are downright dirty."

The luncheon crowd at Duff's, in downtown Minneapolis, was unanimously in favor of Martin.

"It was strange," said an employe, "usually at this



CALVIN GRIFFITH
Hearing from fans

Reaction
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The Minneapolis Tribune

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Griffith: 'Breakdown In Communications Was Big Problem'

By SID HARTMAN
Minneapolis Tribune Staff Writer

NEW YORK, N.Y. — Quizzing Calvin Griffith, president of the Minnesota Twins after he decided not to renew the contract of manager Billy Martin.

Q—Calvin when did you first start thinking about replacing Billy Martin as manager? Did it come before your first meeting with Martin a week ago Thursday?

A—I had to have some thoughts before the first meeting with Martin or everything would have been cut and dried. After the meeting I was still in doubt about a lot of things. I took the time to deliberate and I didn't come to any final conclusion until the night before I made the announcement.

Q—Was there a lack of communication between you and Martin?

A—I thought there was a lack of communication I



SMILING CAL GRIFFITH, LEFT, AND EX-MANAGER BILLY MARTIN. Happy scene was one year ago after Martin signed 1969 contract.

Griffith Claims Martin Didn't Follow Policies

By DAVE MONA
Minneapolis Tribune Staff Writer

Billy Martin's stormy one-year career as manager of the Minnesota Twins ended Monday when he was fired by long distance telephone.

Team president Calvin Griffith cited Martin's refusal to follow "front-office policy and guidelines" as the reason for the dismissal of his highly popular 41-year-old manager.

"It was the hardest decision I ever had to make about a manager," said Griffith, who is in New York attending the World Series.

Speculation about a successor included former Minnesota Miller and California Angel manager Bill Rigney, Billy Hunter, now a Baltimore Orioles coach, and recently fired major league manager Dave Bristol (Cincinnati) and Hank Bauer (Oakland).

(Reached at the home of his brother, where he was visiting last night, Rigney told a west coast newspaper that he had not yet been approached by Griffith after stepping into the



Bever Rigney

Twins managership. (He said he had no comment to make other than that he would take the job if it were offered to him.)

'METSOMANIA' CONTAGIOUS

By ARTHUR DALEY
New York Times Service

NEW YORK, N.Y.—The Baltimore Orioles are about to get their first exposure to the Shea Stadium madhouse when they face the New York Mets today in the third game of the World Series.

It could be an unnerving experience. The smartest precautionary measure would be to equip every last one of them with earplugs, because the birds will wonder if they landed in a boiler factory.

Shea Stadium May Skewer the Orioles

Metsomania is something new in baseball, a peculiar kind of lunacy unmatched anywhere else.

For the better part of a century New York prided itself on being a city of sophistication, accepting with blasé restraint the continuous successes of the old Yanks and the occasional successes of the departed Dodgers and Giants.

But the current Mets have transformed this city into a provincial village of wild-eyed, vociferous partisans rooters. The beauty of it is that no one is embarrassed by it. It's all quite wonderful.

"Met fans are the greatest in the world," says pitcher Tom Seaver. "We can't help but get an emotional lift from the support they have been giving us. Much of our success is due to their encouragement."

The Series now has shifted from sedate Baltimore to the loney hits at Shea for the next three games. The joint will be jumping.

The Orioles will discover what bellini is really like. They may even find it a traumatic undertaking because they've never had even a taste of it before.

Conceivably it could ratify them over so slightly, even though they are considered in need of professional aplomb on many a previous occasion.

The Mets will find their fans ecstatically excited by the dramatic comeback in Sunday's second game and the exuberant exhortation of "Let's go, Mets," will take on an added vibrancy.

Daunters were down when the Orioles took Saturday's opener with emphatic ease. It seemed that the Met mystique had been shattered, perhaps for keeps.

But, on the other hand, Martin took over a club that finished seventh in 1968, to winner of the Western Division title by nine games this year.

Martin had been told Sunday night by The Minneapolis Tribune that Griffith had decided not to renew his one-year contract.

He was called by Griffith shortly after 10 a.m. yesterday and given the news officially.

He said Griffith told him he had "some bad news for you." Martin said that he wanted to talk with Martin under the World Series, but the co-manager said

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SPORTS NEWS INSIDE

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Eagles Battle But Lose to Colts 24-20

BALTIMORE, Md. (AP) — The Baltimore Colts, trailing by three points in the last quarter, huffed and puffed their way to a touchdown, their first in the game, in the Philadelphia Eagles for a 24-20 football victory Monday night.

The injury-riddled Eagles fought the defending National Football League champions (with-and-all) before surrendering in the fourth quarter after Sam Baker's game-shifting punt Sunday because of the World Series game here.

Twice in the last four minutes coach Jerry Williams had quarterback Norman Snead go for the winning touchdown on a fourth-and-one situation. He succeeded the first time, but his last pass fell incomplete on the try from the Colt 15.

The Eagles were back threatening on the Colt 10-yard line when the game ended, with Baltimore breath-

ing a sigh of relief over its second unimpressive victory in four games.

It was the third setback in the same number of games for the Eagles.

The score was tied three times, and the Eagles led the same number before succumbing.

A 39-yard kickoff return by Jim Duncan sparked the Colts on their winning touchdown drive after Sam Baker's game-shifting punt Sunday.

Quarterback John Unitas completed three passes to Tom Matte and Jimmy Orr on a 58-yard drive, and Matte plunged over from the one for the deciding score.

Philadelphia's 24-20 victory over the Colts was the first since Oct. 12, 1968, when the Eagles defeated the Colts 24-20.

The Colts' 20 points were scored by Sam Baker's 10-yard touchdown pass to Tom Matte in the first quarter, and by a 10-yard touchdown pass to Tom Matte in the second quarter.

The Colts' 24 points were scored by Sam Baker's 10-yard touchdown pass to Tom Matte in the first quarter, and by a 10-yard touchdown pass to Tom Matte in the second quarter.