

2C Minneapolis Tribune Fri., July 7, 1972



Sid Hartman

Few people believed that Billy Martin would ever manage the Minnesota Twins when he took over as manager of the Denver farm club in 1968. And nobody ever gave Frank Quilici a chance to manage.

The Twins after he turned down a chance this spring to manage the Wisconsin Rapids team in the Twins farm system.

In fact, the Twins didn't stand in Quilici's way when they gave Martin and the Detroit Tigers the right to talk to Quilici regarding a coaching vacancy on the Tigers coaching staff last November. Martin thought he had Quilici hired. But Frank decided to turn down the job because he wanted to continue to live in the Minneapolis area. And then this past spring, when Quilici wasn't in the Twins' plans for the baseball season, the Twins didn't object to Quilici joining WCCO-TV if the opportunity developed.

Now, after this long chain of events, Quilici has been named manager of the Twins and Bill Rigney has been dumped.

Rigney had an explanation for his discharge: "When I took this job, I knew I was walking into a lion's den. Martin was popular. He had won and the people were mad because Martin was fired after he won. I knew what the situation was when I took the job. The only reason I came here was because I liked the opportunity to manage a team that had a chance to play in the World Series. I wasn't Martin and the fans didn't like me for that reason."

President Calvin Griffith admitted that the box office was the most important reason for the change. Earlier this week he said: "Our advance sales for the next home stand are running only 2,000 to 3,000 per game. This isn't good."

Griffith admits that the discharge of Martin made a lot of Twins fans mad at him. "Quilici will be like Martin, there isn't any question about that," said Calvin. "Our Italian managers have all been popular in this area. First Connie Lavergne, then Sam Rice and Martin. Now Quilici. We need somebody to stimulate the fans and there isn't any doubt in my mind that Quilici can do it."

It's no secret around Met Stadium that Calvin's brothers, Billy and Jimmy Robertson, and his son, Clark, have been pushing for a change the past two weeks. They all defend Quilici. Howard Fox, a vice-president, has been in favor of keeping Rigney. George Brophy, the farm director, also has been for keeping Rigney.

As for Quilici, he was probably as shocked as Martin was in late 1968 when Griffith called him in and informed him that he would be named manager.

Quilici and Rigney had talked during the flight back from Boston Wednesday night about some things they wanted to do to get the club out of its current hitting slump. The scheduled batting practice session called for 10:30 a.m. yesterday was held by rain. The players sat around and waited for the rain to subside. Rigney was called to Griffith's office and everyone thought it was a routine meeting. But 20 minutes later, Dick Martin, assistant Twins trainer, walked over to Quilici and whispered in his ear that Griffith wanted to see him.

Tom Marty, the Twins ticket manager, reported that the initial reaction to Quilici's appointment was terrific. But only time will tell whether the appointment of the new manager will stimulate attendance.

Martin reaction
"Nice going, Dago," were Martin's words of congratulations to Quilici when he called the new Twins manager. "You'll do great job."

Martin said that Quilici's inexperience as a manager won't stop him from doing an outstanding job. "They said the same thing about me when I took the Twins job after just a half season of managing experience at Denver," said Martin. "If you can handle people you can manage. Quilici can handle people and he'll succeed. I figured him," said Martin with a laugh. "He'll win for the Twins."

Rigney bitter
All during the recent Boston series, Rigney had a feeling that his days were numbered. "They're not talking too much to me," he said. But he was still surprised when he got the word yesterday morning.

"The way my discharge was explained to me was that a letter would stimulate attendance," said Rigney. "Without Tony Oliva and with Harmon Killebrew in a hitting slump, it wasn't easy for us to win. The loss of Oliva not only hurt us on the field but off. He is the leader among the Latin players and they missed him in the slump. This club will be pretty good one of these days when the young players get some experience. But Oakland will be tough to overcome because they are so sound."

Rigney said that the Twins were a tough club to manage. "There are an awful lot of voices in the wilderness that sway the thinking of this organization. If one man ran the show and you had to listen to just one man, it would help."

"I thought I did one of the best jobs turned in for this organization when I replaced Martin in 1970 and we won. I don't know if it was appreciated. The fans have a big influence because they pay the rent. All I'm thinking about now is to get a starting time on the golf course in San Francisco on Friday. Manage again? I don't know but I doubt it."

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Killebrew Katt

Players

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welcomed the switch.
"It's going to be a lot better for me," said catcher George Mitterwald. "It may not be, but it seems like it to me. Maybe the new manager won't think I'm over the hill like the former manager seemed to think. I think it's going to wake a few people up around here. The ones who aren't hustling are going to find out that things like that aren't going to slide by."

"I think that's going to be the big thing," added Mitterwald. "It's going to be like with Martin. Everybody's going to have to hustle."

The players were at the park for a 10:30 a.m. practice, but rain had delayed the start. As the rain continued and the players weren't dismissed, many felt that something was going on.

A card game was halted for a moment and speculation started about the delay. "Sure are a lot of newspaper guys around," said one.

"Yeah," said another. "He's (Rigney) probably up there going (and the player got down on his knees and appeared to be praying) in front of Griffith right now."

"It hasn't happened soon enough," said another. A short time later, Quilici asked newsmen to leave the locker room and told the players of the change in managers.

Shortly, only Rigney remained. "Well, I'll be with a smile, referring to his Twins' uniform number, "You know another one, I'm only going to ask one thing he does with this uniform."

But he never finished the sentence. Instead, he put some more clothes in one of the empty lockers.

Christensen leads Seniors

Gene Christensen of Halverson, about a year 72 at Midland Hills Thursday to lead The City Seniors Golf League play at Minneapolis Golf Club. Team members held their team lead.

Griffith

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story in a public relations capacity during the winter months also influenced his thinking. Rigney resides in Alamo, Calif. Griffith offered Rigney a scouting job in the organization, which in all probability Rigney will refuse.

There is a precedent in the Washington-Minnesota organization, however, for Griffith's quick change in mid-season, even though it is against his financial judgment to pay off the remainder of Rigney's \$60,000 contract for this season.

"My uncle Clark Griffith made Bucky Harris the boy wonder manager at Washington in 1924 and the Senators won the pennant in 1924 and 1925," Calvin said. "I was the baby then. I think that Bucky Harris was 27 years old at the time. Quilici is the youngest manager 63 years old in the major leagues now and maybe he can perform the same sort of miracle with the Twins."

"There were things other than low attendance that bothered me about Rigney's regime this season. We were putting an uninteresting, undisciplined game on the field. I think that Quilici will become more basic and more fundamental. I think that we may run more. I think he will do more teaching; I think that he will have better communications with the players. I think our game will be more interesting to the fans to watch."

Griffith said that he considered others to replace Rigney — not Dave Bristol, ousted Milwaukee manager, but Ralph Rowe. "I've tried that base coach."

"I had Ralph Rowe in my office today to explain to him why I had to name Quilici and not Rowe," said Griffith. Griffith said that Rigney had limited fan following at the Met and he intimated that the same was true of Rowe, who has the wealth of minor managerial experience that Quilici lacks.

"But I think Quilici is smart enough to rely fully on the knowledge of all his coaches — pitching coach Al Wierthgen, Rowe, Vern Morgan and Bob Rodgers," said Griffith.

Quilici already moved into his office in the Twins clubhouse, said that he intended to keep all lines of communication open to his players and the front office.

"When Billy Martin and I used to talk about managing," said Quilici, "I told Billy to do something for the Frank Quilici, the utility player. I'm going to try to keep them interested to what I'm thinking and to what their duties are on this ball club. Pride, that's the word I like to emphasize, and honesty."

Quilici said that he thought nothing was gained by being critical of his players in public, one of the things that Rigney argued on his own players.

Curfews, fines, missing signs, hustling?
"I think that you must use common sense in all these things," said Quilici. "I think some of us, including myself, have been abusing on the midnight curfew. I think it has hurt us on the field. I believe in talking to a man, telling him what I expect, and then if he fails, the rope shortens. I don't think fines are the answer, but going back to the minor leagues may be the answer."

Quilici intends to play a set lineup where possible, and he said that he would rely on the honesty of 36-year-old Harmon Killebrew to tell the manager when he is ready to play in the second game of a doubleheader and when he is not.

The new manager thinks that first baseman-outfielder Rick Burks can play the outfield, and Mike Steve Rigney's aggressive style in the outfield. He has no idea if his No. 1 catcher, but he believes the pitching has been super that maybe the hitting can be improved with a better understanding of the assignment.

"But I'm going to talk individually to the players and to the coaching staff," said Quilici, "and after I see our club play a few games, maybe I'll come to some of my own conclusions based on what I see."

When Quilici called his wife to tell her that he was the new manager of the Minnesota Twins, she said: "I don't believe it." Quilici isn't too sure it has happened either.

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Henry leads Canadian tourney by one stroke

Associated Press

Fort Erie, Canada (AP) — Henry, slumlord for three seasons, shot a blazing 6-under-par 60 and took the first-round lead Thursday in the \$150,000 Canadian Open Golf Championship.

Henry, a one-time place-kicker for Georgia Tech's football team, held a one-stroke lead over Tommy Sanderson. The tournament is being played on the 6,753-yard par 71 Cherry Hill Golf Club course.

A quartet headed by 60-year-old Sam Snead followed at 67 in the chase for a \$30,000 first prize. At 67 were Gay Brewer, Lou Graham and left-handed rookie Sam Adams.

Bruce Crampton, the Australian veteran who has won more than \$100,000 but is still seeking his first victory of this season, was next at 68, along with Bob South.

Defending champion Lee Trevino, back in action for the first time since the U.S. Open, was one of a group at 69.

"Every day I'm hitting it just a little better," said Trevino, the 1971 U.S. Amateur of the year. "I don't think too under par is too bad for the first round. I'll take three more just like it."

Player	Score
Henry	60
Sanderson	61
Snead	67
Brewer	67
Graham	67
Adams	67
Crampton	68
South	68
Trevino	69

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