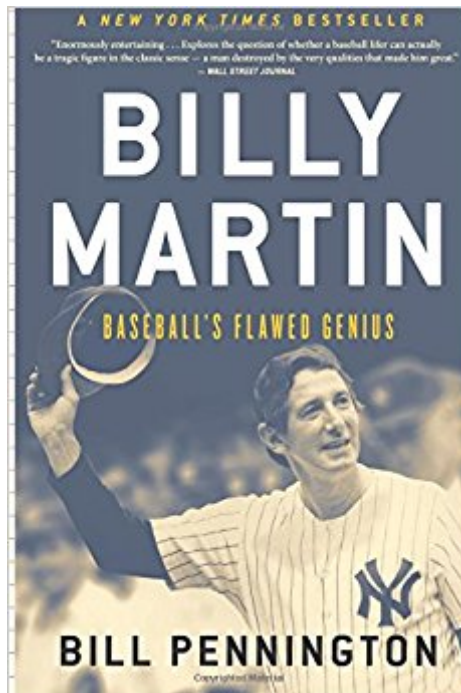




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Billy Martin: Baseball's Flawed Genius



Synopsis

A New York Times bestseller "Enormously entertaining . . . Explores the question of whether a baseball lifer can actually be a tragic figure in the classic sense—a man destroyed by the very qualities that made him great." —Wall Street Journal "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

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"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 "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, best-selling 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 best-selling author of *Francona* (with Terry Francona) and *Senior Year* "Billy Martin has been dead for twenty-five 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, best-selling 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

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. "

In my life, I only knew Billy Martin as a manager. This was before the Internet and ESPN, etc. I grew up in a farming community in the Midwest and only occasional exposure to him. Maybe the Yankees would be on the Game of the Week, or Monday Night Baseball as discussed in the book. He always seemed like a hothead to me, and his antics off the field made national news. I read the sports pages growing up. The sum of knowledge I had on Billy Martin was very limited, and mostly negative. I did see him have success with the Yankees, as well. I chose to read this book because he was a baseball figure from my childhood, and because I was negatively pre-disposed to him. I was certain that there had to be some good in there somewhere. There was and there wasn't. The book is so thorough, it is almost unbelievable. I was not looking to validate my opinion of him, nor to disprove it. I was looking to understand Billy Martin. He is very complicated to me. His story is so interesting both inside and outside of baseball. I found myself rooting for him in much of the book. His decisions related to baseball were terrific. His instincts and his will to win are undeniable. In his personal life he was both generous and selfish, if that is possible. In the end, I am glad I took the time to read this book (and it is long). I have a much greater understanding and appreciation for Billy Martin having read it. Bill Pennington did an enormous amount of research for this book and the

detail is amazing. He chose a great figure to document. If you appreciate baseball from Martin's era, both playing and managing, you will appreciate this book.

I thought that the author, Bill Pennington did a solid job of incorporating all 3 of the following in his book: the positives of both Billy Martin the baseball player as well as the long-time winning manager, and his somewhat flawed personality. Not being old enough to recall Martin as a Yankee Player allowed this book to provide me with some excellent info about his playing days. Having the ability to have watched Billy as the winning manager of not only the Yankees but also other baseball teams gave me the luxury of watching this very good Manager often self-destruct. It has always saddened me to recall just how good of a manager and overall person Billy could have been if not for his abuse of alcohol. Then again, for those of us that lived through "Billy Ball" it does bring back some fond baseball memories of his genius as a manager.

BILL Pennington really gets into the Billie Martin we knew and loved. from his battling days as a youngster in the ghettos of Oakland to the glimmering lights of Broadway Page after page you will know on thing for certain, Billie never ever backed down from a fight..he was afraid of no one...unfortunately booze and broads were his downfall...no doubt in my mind the best baseball manager ever. I would have loved to play for him.. He gave 100 percent and expected his players to do the same..sounds like a great formula to me If only Steinbrenner had left him alone...who knows what he could have achieved. A must read

This past Christmas I received three books to read for my Kindle. They were the one on Chuck Noll, the latest about the tragedy of Tony Conigliaro, and "Billy Martin: The Flawed Genius." They were all page turners and special since I was fortunate to be entertained by the careers of each. Each author did an excellent job; their research was impeccable and allowed the reader to enjoy in a comfortable manner. I am a Pittsburgh sports fan, who has lived his entire life in the NY metropolitan area. And while I am not a Yankee fan, I am a baseball fan, in addition to being a 20 year member of SABR. Mr. Pennington impressed me with his book on Billy Martin. I have followed Billy's career ever since his time with the Twins, and obviously during the turbulent Yankee manager years. Mr. Pennington's writing was able to magically allow the reader to pull up a bar stool, and sit next to Billy and inhale the wisdom of one of our greatest managers, and students of the National Past time. I am friends with someone who played for Casey Stengel when Casey managed the Oakland Oaks, and he filled me

in about the "brat." I have told all of the Yankee fans that I know, to read Mr. Pennington's book, and I would have no qualms of telling anyone who loves the game. It is incredibly well researched, and he spoke with everyone, and I mean everyone that Billy Martin's life has ever touched. From his wives, to people he fought with, and his former players. Some which loved him, some that hated him. I didn't realize how much I forgot about his career, but because of this book, I will not allow that to happen again! READ IT! It is a great book.

Absolutely terrific! When growing up in the 50's, I was well aware of Billy as a "second baseman" for the Yankees, and as a Yankee fan in the 70's, obviously aware of the "manager" but I never knew the details of his life. This is a must-read for all sports fans, Mr. Pennington has done fabulous research through current and older interviews; not one of those authors who puts words in the subject's mouth. What really thrilled me was learning the details of 'how' he became one of the best field managers in the history of the game; greatly opened my eyes!

I lost a few hours of sleep because of this book - because I didn't want to put it down and go to bed. It reads very well, provides the right amount of detail, but does not bog down in boring details. I am not a baseball fan, but I grew up in the 80s and can remember all the players and key figures in the book. You do not need to be a baseball fan at all to enjoy this book. Billy Martin was a baseball genius, but he was an alcoholic. The latter overshadowed his accomplishments and eventually killed him.

An excellent read, it describes Billy Martin's baseball career in depth and does an excellent job describing his managerial career. The description of a 'Flawed Genius' as a man, as well as a manager is shown throughout the book and remembered by all of his friends and family members. The book is well worth the read and shows what a 'Flawed Genius' Billy Martin was.

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