Thursday, October 22, 1987/The Battalion/Page 9

Steinbrenner's latest move hard to believe

By Doug Hall Assistant Sports Editor

Come on George! You don't really expect us to be-ieve that you've hired Billy "I didn't unch that doggie" Martin to man-ge your New York Yankees for a

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managers, but five times is too much to handle

After all, what's Martin going to time and the m do in 1988 that he couldn't in his previous four stints at the Yankee helm?

would think if the masked masker of marshmellow salesmen himself: marshmellow salesmen himself: "I'm anxious to return as Yankee

nanager and I'm looking toward bringing an exciting and winning team to Yankee fans," Martin said in a statement Monday.

But a winning team is not suffi-tient for George Steinbrenner, a.k.a the master-of-manager-disaster.

ord. A winning season by anyone's count

Furthermore, the Yanks' .549 ather champion San Francisco Giants. At up with.



present, however, Steinbrenner's Stooges happen to play in the major leagues' most competitive division the American League East.

In comparison to the Detroit Ti-gers, Toronto Blue Jays and Milwau-kee Brewers, 16 games over .500 meant a fourth place finish for the Yankees.

What undoubtedly prompted Steinbrenner's promotion(?) of Piniella to the general manager spot was the Yankees'slide out of first

place in August and September. In early July, Piniella's team was locked in to a two-team race for the division title with Toronto. Detroit was still recovering from an abysmal start and Milwaukee couldn't find an even keel between winning streaks Lou Piniella, in only his second ear of managing in the majors, guided the Yankees to an 89-73 re-handling the pressures of a midsummer pennant race and the mindless meddling of Steinbrenner.

But New York soon lost the servinning percentage would have ices of spark-plug center fielder een sufficient for a first-place finish Ricky Henderson and team leader the Western Division of the Amer-tan League and and one game be-managers is quickly approaching the ind the National League West number of shortstops he's teamed

stars, went on a serious disabled list. Meanwhile, Georgie was trading the services of knucleballer Joe Niekro to the Minnesota Twins (look who's in the World Series), relocating pitcher Steve Trout (an unprofitable trade) and spending untold thousands of dollars in shuttling players between New York and its' Triple A affiliate in Columbus.

As the Yankees stumbled, Georgie began to gripe. He blasted Piniella for failing to receive a phone call at the designated hour. He questioned the will of players like Henderson and berated everyone who faulted bim him.

Meanwhile he was preaching the "bottom line" to his team.

As in win the pennant. Or else. Piniella was probably glad to get off the field and in to the office. At least there he can claim he was in a

meeting when Steinbrenner calls. As for Martin taking over — let's be serious.

Steinbrenner is just buying time (like he tries to buy everything else) until a more established candidate surfaces. The latest word is that he's waiting for former Yankee shortstop Bucky Dent to get rid of the rough edges on the Tripe A level.

Martin apparently had been telling friends for some time that he would be returning to the Yankees. A fact that undoubtedly didn't sit

well with Piniella. And if the 1987 season proved anything, it's that quibbling between New York deserves a owner, not another manager cially a fifth-time runaround.

The Yankees' record, like its two general managers and field managers produces mediocre seasons. Point of fact — Houston Astros,

GM Dick Wagner (recently fired) and Hal Lanier. The Astros stumbled 10 games under .500 and 20 games off last year's pace. Point of fact — New York Mets,

GM Frank Cashen and Davey John-son. The Mets also stumbled and bumbled, despite making a late season run at the title. son run at the fute. Counterpoint: San Francisco Gi-ants. GM Al Rosen provided Man-ager Roger Craig with just what the doctor ordered — three pitchers and

a quality third baseman. Steinbrenner, on the other hand,

wields his scalpel much too freely. In searching for the "bottom line," Georgie has once again cut the plat-form out from under the Yankees' podium.

"Nothing Lou did hurt us in any way," Yankees first baseman Don Mattingly said. "He did what he could. He put the best players on the field every day and made the right moves. We just didn't produce. didn't play well when we had to. But we never lost respect for Lou. Never. We played hard for him."

Such kind words were seldom heard with respect to the fiery Mar-tin, who confronted his players more times than Ollie North pleaded igno-

New York deserves another owner, not another manager. Espe-

^{5, fans} McMahon expects to win starting job again

erback the Chicago Bears again af-

McMahon underwent shoulder surgery last December. Although octors told him it would be at least a year before he could play again, he

Oiler replacements

return to previous jobs

LAKE FOREST, Ill. (AP) — Jim against the Super Bowl New York McMahon is not only ready to quar- Giants in September. stronger, and the endurance that ing job is mine, but that's not my de-cision.

"That was unrealistic," said Mc-

Los Angeles to get final clearance and won them all, pl from Dr. Frank Jobe, who per- son before the strike. formed the surgery.

"Dr. Jobe was very happy with

"I wouldn't take anything for

this opportunity that we've had," Joyner said. "I hope I showed

enough that maybe some other

The Oilers cut one group of players Monday, following Sun-day's replacement finale, a 21-7

loss to the New England Patriots,

team will give me a chance.'

there. I'm ready to play. I don't

terback the Chicago Bears again af-ter a layoff of nearly a year, but he expects to assume his starting role soon. "I feel ready to play," McMahon said Wednesday, "and if I do well in Tampa Bay, I'll expect to start the following week." "McMahon wuderwent schoulder and won them all, plus two this sea-

"I don't think I did anything bereported to camp last summer deter-what he saw, and the arm looks fore I got hurt to lose my starting mined to start the opening game good," McMahon said. "It is job," McMahon said. "I feel the start-

cision. "Tomczak has played well, but I don't feel I should be demoted. Mike is playing better, and he's going to get better. But I can do things on the field that he hasn't gotten to yet." As for Tomczak, he said he's

happy to see McMahon return. "I've been pulling for him," Tomczak said. "But the better quar-

terback is going to play, and right now I'm playing well. Jim has missed almost a complete year, and I think a lot of questions have to be answered in his mind.'

Major problems missing from Cowboys' practice

some empty "rhinestone" Cowboys lockers at Valley Ranch Wednesday, and more will follow as the replacement Dallas players feel the heat from the veterans' return. "They shouldn't be here," player

representative Doug Cosbie said of the replacements. "We don't need a

lot of extra people around." Nevertheless, there were no big problems on the first full day of a mixed veterans-replacements prac-"I don't see that much of a prob-

lem," said 14-year veteran John Dut-ton. "There was a lot of talk, but talk is cheap. There is no sense in trouble. It wouldn't help."

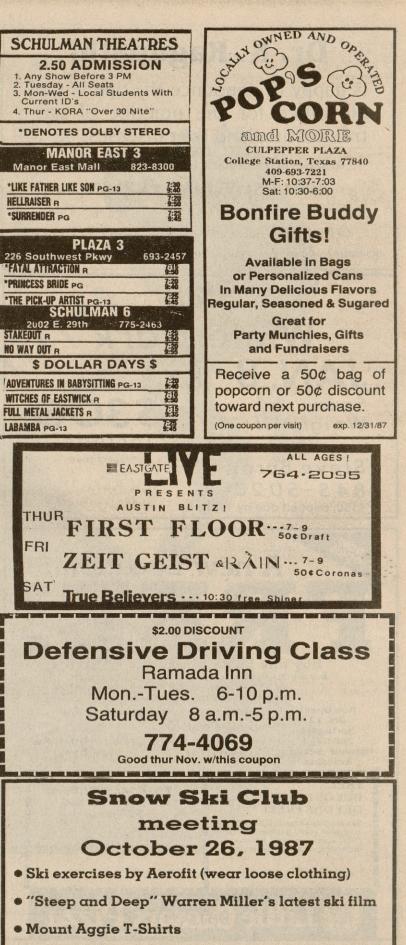
IRVING (AP) — There were training camp, wasn't taking any-ome empty "rhinestone" Cowboys thing for granted. 'I don't even want to think about

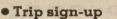
it," he said. The replacement players were

working this week against the veterans and taking things one day at a time.

"I feel I can do the job, make a contribution somewhere, but it's not up to me," said safety Johnny Haynes. "It's up to the coaches. I really don't know about my chances. They haven't kept a safety in a long time

Haynes was spectacular in Dallas' three replacement games, intercept-ing two passes in Monday night's 13-





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HOUSTON (AP) — Steve Superick will be back on the golf course at Hilton Head, S.C. this rership weekend as an assistant teaching pro when the regular Houston Oilers football team plays the At-lanta Falcons in the Astrodome Sunday R AGAIN

Dwain Turner likely will re-turn to high school coaching, and Larry Joyner may re-enroll in college to earn a degree in human relations. Offensive lineman Doug Kellermeyer may want to work on his hobby as an amateur

But they'll all remember the experiences they've had the past

and sent 10 more packing on Tuesday. The Oilers can keep as many as 85 players this week, but must de-clare a roster of 45 by Saturday

for Sunday's game. Kellermeyer, who owns an au-

e Teas three weeks, helping the replacement Oilers compile a 2-1 record during the three-game NFL play-ers strike. onades 'I'd like to play some more, but

it's out of my hands," said Super-ick, who averaged 33.6 yards on eight punts. "I made some money that I wouldn't have made doing 846-1023 anything else

"It doesn't get much easier than punting a football once a week, but it'll be nice to get back to the golf course.'

Joyner, cut by the Oilers during training camp this season, still has dreams of an NFL career. tomotive company in Phoenix, Ariz., and running back Herman Hunter were among the second group to be released.

Hunter gained 121 yards on 28 carries in the replacement team's 15-10 victory over Cleveland on the Browns' home field.

The replacement team won back-to-back road games at Denver and Cleveland, a feat the regulars hadn't accomplished since 1981.

A total of nine players were cut from the replacement offense, while 10 were released from the

Outspoken linebacker Jeff Rohrer said there were a "few sparks and stares," but said the team was follow-ing Coach Tom Landry's advice: "Keep your personal feelings off the locker and field."

Of the replacement players, only free agent wide receiver Kelvin Ed-wards appears to have a place on the roster clinched.

"He's the kind of young talent you want to keep around," Landry said. "He's shown a lot of ability to run from people and catch the football

Edwards, a fourth-round draft pick by New Orleans who was cut in I'm hoping.

7 loss to Washington. Offensive lineman Steve Cisowski said "I'm going at it hard. I really want to play for the Cowboys and I

"There has been a great camara-derie with the (replacement) play-ers," he added. "We have developed a lot of friendships over the past three weeks. We have all become real close."

Defensive tackle Mike Dwyer, who has been a Cowboys' fan favorite be-cause of his enthusiasm, said, "I think I played well enough to get a close look the next couple of weeks.

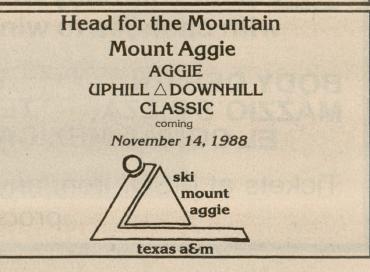
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