

Jim Kaat Retiring After 50 Years

Written by The Staff

Thursday, 14 September 2006 01:30



Fred R. Conrad/The New York Times

Jim Kaat, 67, the legendary broadcaster and former player will end his 50 year career in baseball tomorrow when he throws out the first pitch of the Red Sox-Yankees game, and then call the game for the YES Network.

Kaat, had a 25-year playing career starting in 1959, pitching in MLB for the likes of the Senators, Twins, White Sox, Phillies, Yankees, and Cardinals.

His broadcasting career started in 1986 on Channel 11 but was bumped in favor of Billy Martin after the end of the season, something that did not sit particularly well with Kaat at the time.

On Christmas Day in 1994, Kaat got a call from George Stienbrenner and has not left the

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Yankees broadcast team since. As Richard Sandomir of the NY Times reports ([50 Years in Game is Enough for Kaat](#)):

“I was heading out to hit golf balls, and Mary Ann said, ‘It’s George Steinbrenner,’ and I said, ‘Yeah, right,’ ” Kaat said. Steinbrenner called to say he had approved Kaat as the MSG Network’s replacement for Kubek.

“He said, ‘I want everything to be good between us,’ ” Kaat said.

Kaat picked an exquisite time to join the Yankees at the start of their playoff and World Series run. From MSG to YES, he has been a low-key star, never boisterous, never loud, but always with strong views, and that made him the equal of the more nationally known McCarver and Joe Morgan.

“He knows the game so well and gets to the essence of a play so quickly,” said John Filippelli, YES’s president of production. When he was at Fox Sports, he added: “The one mistake we made was that we should have hired Kitty. I think you rate him the equal of any analyst you’ve ever heard.”

What are Kaat's plans in retirement? Spend time with family, play golf, and travel the country with his wife Mary Ann via RV.