

THE VIEW FROM THE DUGOUT

THE JOURNALS OF RED ROLFE

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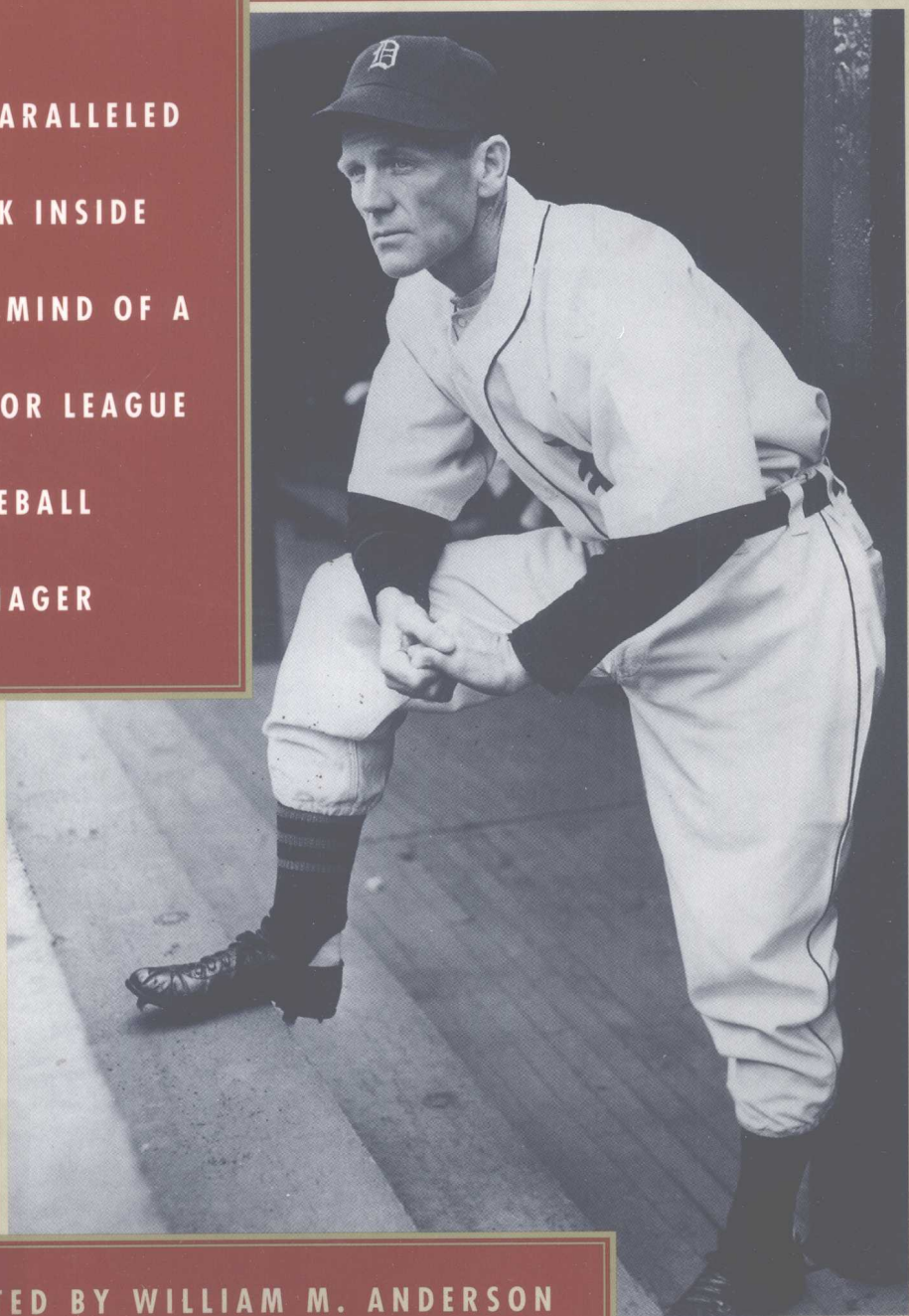
LOOK INSIDE

THE MIND OF A

MAJOR LEAGUE

BASEBALL

MANAGER



EDITED BY WILLIAM M. ANDERSON

THE VIEW FROM THE DUGOUT



The Journals of RED ROLFE

Edited by
William M. Anderson

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Introduction

Following a squandered victory at St. Louis on April 28, 1949, rookie Tiger manager Red Rolfe recorded: “Poor pitching cost us a game in which we were leading 5 to 1. Once again we failed to do things as they should be done in the big leagues.” The always candid and generally objective Rolfe wrote after a pitcher’s duel at Briggs Stadium on May 1, 1949: “In a game reminiscent of the old Yankees the Tigers came thru to win a game from [Bob] Lemon on two hits, one of them a gift of the scorekeeper.”

A Dartmouth College graduate and a naturally studious person, Rolfe kept a private journal recording a description of nearly every inning of every game he managed, analyzing “our weaknesses and the opposition’s strength.” While his wife kept score at home, he typed summaries of games in his office and hauled a portable typewriter to games on the road.

In an article he provided for the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1950, Rolfe explained in detail his method of recording observations in his personal journal and how he used the information. “The homework on my book takes about two hours a morning,” wrote Rolfe. “I purposely wait until the day after the game, so I can review it objectively, read the newspapers—sportswriters often mention subtle points I’ve overlooked—and have my wife’s score card in front of me. When the team is away from



home, Isabel air-mails her score card or, after a night game, sends it special delivery to get it to me in time for my skull practice. First I paste in the book the standings of the clubs for the day and the box scores for all American League games. . . . Next I warm up my two good two typing fingers—one on each hand—and write my account of the game, which runs from 300 to 500 words. I summarize every inning each side got men on the bases, and wind up with a series of general observations, or memos to myself. Then I digest the whole thing, with special attention to the memos to correct or confirm certain impressions. I've frequently gone through the entire book to check up on some obscure but important angle."

He placed great weight on the value of his journal—for one thing it allowed him a systematic way to understand the capabilities of his players: "It is, unquestionably, my chief asset as a manager. . . . The difference between a second-division club and a contender is the execution of details, and that's where my thirty-cent notebook pays off. . . . The book . . . can't make my players run faster, but it can compensate for slow footwork by taking full advantage of the other teams' lapses. An extra step can be gained by charting the pitchers who don't hold men close to the bases."

Although he put plenty of stock in his book, he didn't think of it as a silver bullet: "Baseball cannot be played entirely by the book. Players are not robots who respond automatically to push buttons. They are personalities who require individual treatment."

Rolfe had directed the Detroit Tigers farm system in 1947 and 1948 before being hired as manager on November 15, 1948. His 1949 team played better than expected, and the following season, he led the Bengals in a torrid pennant drive, losing out late in September to the perennial champions the New York Yankees. For his outstanding leadership and team performance, Rolfe was named manager of the year in 1950. Many of his players had career years that season and were aging veterans. The team slipped badly the following season and continued to fall in 1952, leading to the first-ever last-place finish and one-hundred-loss season in franchise history. Rolfe could not escape indictment, and he was fired in early July 1952.

Born to parents Herbert and Lucy Rolfe on October 17, 1908, in Penacook, New Hampshire, Robert Abial was the middle child between two sisters. His father owned and operated a local sawmill that supplied lumber for a family-owned sash-and-door factory. Robert starred in basketball, baseball, and football while a high school student. A high achiever,

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Robert graduated second in his class before entering Phillips Exeter Academy. He matriculated to Dartmouth College, where the talented athlete played all three sports.

At Dartmouth, Rolfe developed under the tutelage of ex-major league pitcher Jeff Tesreau and continued to perform at an exceptional level, winning the league batting title as a sophomore. He earned All-American honors his senior year, hitting .359 and ranking first in fielding for his shortstop position.

Five days after graduating with a degree in English, Rolfe signed his first professional contract, joining the New York Yankees organization. Baseball players were often given nicknames. Anyone with red hair has little chance of being called by his given name, and Rolfe acquired the moniker Red early in his life. When Rolfe signed his first pro contract, he stood six feet tall and weighed 165 pounds. Before sending him down, Yankee manager Joe McCarthy gave the youngster a quick thrill, playing him in one game in a lineup featuring Babe Ruth. Rolfe made an impressive professional baseball beginning, hitting .333 in fifty-eight games at Albany in the Eastern League. Promoted to Newark in the Class AA International League in 1933, the young shortstop matched his first-season offensive numbers with a .330 batting average. Rolfe demonstrated great consistency, his superb performance the following season at Newark earning him recognition as the league's most valuable player. He slashed out 199 hits, scored 115 runs and drove in 73, stole 21 bases, and hit 8 home runs.

Rolfe made his true big league debut in 1934 as the starting shortstop for the Yankees, although playing in just eighty-nine games. Soon after the season ended, Robert Rolfe married Isabel Africa, his partner for life. The marriage did not produce any children. Players Tommy Henrich and Tony Lupien remembered her with great respect, Henrich calling her a "classy lady" in his autobiography.

In Rolfe's first full season of play, McCarthy switched the redhead to third base, and surprisingly, adapting to a new position had no effect on his potent bat. Rolfe collected 191 safeties and batted an even .300, while serving notice that he could hit with consistency at any level.

The left-handed-hitting Rolfe enjoyed his finest season in 1939, when he had a league-leading 213 hits, 43 doubles, and 139 runs scored. He also hit a career-high 14 home runs and matched his season-best RBI production with 80.

His gifted performance and fine career came to an abrupt end after just three additional seasons. During the winter of 1940, Rolfe began his



struggle with chronic ulcerative colitis, a sickness that diminished his skills and eventually claimed his life at an early age.

Rolfe was a star third baseman on a string of star-studded New York Yankee teams that won six pennants and five World Championships. His fall-classic batting average of .284 mirrored his lifetime average of .289. In the 1937 Series he hit a sparkling .400. A complete player, Rolfe possessed a strong arm and deftly fielded his position with a .955 career mark.

“Long before he was ready to hang up his glove, he was recognized as the leading third baseman of his era and one of the greatest in the long and colorful history of the American League. There is no challenging his right to the number one post among Yankee third sackers. Red stands alone,” wrote Ed Rumill in 1949. This *Baseball Magazine* writer continued his assessment of Rolfe’s skills and contributions, writing: “In the field he had the dead sure hands of Pie Traynor, a stronger arm than Pie and was just as good on slow-hit balls or bunts down his way. . . . However, Rolfe’s greatness as a ballplayer went far beyond his mechanical ability in the batter’s box and around the bag. He stood out as a hustler and possessed the brain of a natural-born big leaguer. . . . Red was a money player. He always managed to produce that extra something when the chips were piled in front of him.”

Far beyond the statistical measures of an excellent ballplayer, managers seek players who can do the little things that produce big results. Rolfe must have been a dream player for Yankee manager Joe McCarthy. In a 1950 feature article in *Look* magazine, Tim Cohane described the special qualities that made Red Rolfe a special player: “He came up with the hard play or the smart play when it meant the most. Second in the batting order, he was versatile. He could pull the ball behind the runner, punch it to the opposite field, and bunt deftly. He could swing for the seats when the situation called for it. He ran the bases skillfully. He was a competitor.”

In his ten-year major league career, Rolfe played in 1,175 games; collected 1,394 hits, including 257 doubles and 69 home runs; and drew 526 free passes. The combination of consistently being on base and hitting early in a batting order of strong hitters accounted for Rolfe’s superb record for scoring runs. He scored over 100 for seven consecutive seasons, for a career total of 942. He reached the coveted mark of a .300 hitter four times.

With his playing days over, Rolfe returned to the college ranks, accepting a position as baseball and basketball coach at Yale, a position he held for the next three years. Then the Yankees called again; Joe

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McCarthy asked him to join the coaching staff. In an unexpected twist of fate, however, McCarthy lost his job in May, and although Red finished out the season, his career in Yankee pinstripes ended. That winter he coached a professional basketball team in Toronto.

The following August, Rolfe joined the Detroit Tigers organization as farm director. He is credited with rebuilding a farm system neglected since its demise during World War II. The war had devastated the farm systems of all major league teams; the Tigers had only two minor league clubs left in 1945. The year before Rolfe took over as farm director, the system had seven teams, and he built it back up to twelve clubs in 1948. His selection as Tigers manager, announced in November 1948, represented a major league surprise, given his limited experience. The forty-year-old Rolfe became Detroit's thirteenth manager.

After finishing second three times and first once in the four previous seasons, a second-division pitching staff had pulled the Bengals down to a fifth-place finish and spelled doom for manager Steve O'Neill. As reported by the press, O'Neill's perceived lack of aggressiveness and competitive fire fueled the decision to release him. Apparently his unlimited patience with the often casual effort of outfielder Dick Wakefield personified what frustrated the ownership about the team, which they didn't believe was performing up to its potential. Wakefield, a highly touted bonus player from the University of Michigan, had first been assigned to Beaumont in the Texas League. O'Neill transferred from his managerial post at Buffalo, the Tigers' triple-A farm club, expressly to develop this expected star player. Although he showed flashes of brilliance as a hitter, however, Wakefield remained notoriously lackadaisical about fielding and in general exhibited a carefree attitude. As fans grew increasingly critical and disappointment grew over seemingly wasted potential, the responsibility for not cracking the whip fell on O'Neill, seeming symptomatic of the team's poor performance. Coaches Bill Sweeney and Roger Cramer were allegedly much like O'Neill in how they related to and motivated players.

O'Neill first learned of his firing when newsmen called his home on November 6 asking for a statement. Speculation began immediately as names of likely successors emerged, with recently dismissed Yankee manager Bucky Harris, Paul Richards, and Buffalo farm-team manager and Tiger captain George Kell heading the list. Red Rolfe was not among those mentioned.

Whenever a ball club decides it's time for a change in field leadership, the new guy almost always is characterized as compensating for the



shortcomings of the deposed. "Rolfe has all the qualifications we want for the job," claimed general manager Billy Evans. "He has sound baseball background. He has intelligence, personality and the know-how to instruct young players." Evans also appreciated the education Rolfe had received while a member of Joe McCarthy's teams and staff: "Red had the best schooling that can be obtained in baseball—under Joe McCarthy. He had a dozen or so years with Joe and Red is the type to take full advantage of it. I'm sure he will give us the aggressive type of leadership we need."

Supposedly Rolfe was once considered a potential McCarthy successor. Certainly the Yankee field boss thought highly of Rolfe's playing and leadership ability: "Rolfe has personality. He has color and I don't mean just his hair. And, he asks plenty of questions and writes down the answers. He also has a lot of other information in his little black book. For instance, he writes down just what every pitcher throws him in the clutch so he can be set in the pinch."

Rolfe's immediate experience directing the farm system also gave him the advantage of knowing the young talent available in the minor leagues.

New managers are naturally asked to publicly assess the strengths and weaknesses of the team they are about to lead. Knowing the personnel, Rolfe was very forthcoming in his frank appraisal: "I am determined to put the accent on youth. Our club has started to run down. The strength of our pitching staff has been grossly overexaggerated. We don't have the kind of staff everyone thinks we have. We need a good reliever. We can use another starter. I hope we can make some trades this winter and I'm willing to give up some outfield strength to make a deal for either a pitcher or second baseman. We definitely need a good second baseman. Now that we have young Johnny Groth, our outfield strength seems adequate. We can use help at first base. But more than anything else, we need fight and drive."

The new skipper, when questioned about his team, literally provided a scouting report on his likely starting lineup, barring new player acquisitions: "Give us a second baseman and we'll give them a run for their money. I know Johnny Groth will tighten our defense in center field and will add to our punch. I'm an optimist on Dick Wakefield. I still think he's a major leaguer and I'm going to give him the chance to prove it. He's our left fielder until it is proved otherwise. I want a right fielder with a strong arm. Hoot [Evers] can throw with the best of them and will make an exceptional right fielder. I think George Vico will do at first. A

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big, aggressive fellow like George should hit better and I think he will. Johnny Lipon is a big league shortstop and no doubt about it. George Kell's tough luck certainly should have run its course." Although second baseman Neil Berry had the kind of speed Rolfe coveted, he had reservations about handing him the job: "But we need someone with more experience for that position. I would say getting a second baseman is a must." Newly acquired Aaron Robinson seemed to have the inside track on being the number-one catcher. "I was coach for the Yankees in 1946 when Robbie had his good year," Rolfe reminded reporters. "If he's in shape and will dig in, he can be this club's first-string catcher for two or three years. This park is a natural for him." The youngster most likely to challenge first-tier catchers Robinson and Bob Swift was Detroit native Joe Ginsberg, for whom Rolfe had high regard: "Ginsberg is going south with a chance to make the major leagues. He'll be given the full chance. However, if it appears that he will have to sit on the bench, I would rather have him in the minors."

Clearly Rolfe's approach to managing would reflect his attitude and style as a player. He would place heavy emphasis on executing fundamental skills, a strong work ethic, hustle, and being in top physical shape: "Hard work will be the theme of this club. That's the only way in baseball I know."

"I knew him well," recalled John McHale Sr., who served as assistant director of the farm system under Red Rolfe. Then with almost immediate reflection he continued: "Well, nobody knew Red Rolfe well. He was a very introspective guy, very serious, very organized, very methodical, very frugal, very knowledgeable about how to play baseball. He was not a personality. He wasn't what you'd call good copy, but he was a really sound baseball man."

Besides McHale, I interviewed twelve of Rolfe's former players, all who were willing to share their experiences playing for him. It can be expected that most people mellow over time and recall relationships with a kinder spirit. As years pass, negative experiences seem to diminish in severity, and our memory focuses on the positive aspects of a relationship. These interviews, however, suggest that there are defining moments in relationships that leave lasting impressions, both positive and negative.

For the most part, there was consensus among these former players about Red Rolfe the manager. They remembered him as being serious, fair, and relatively quiet. They also characterized him as a disciplinarian, a no-nonsense field general who was a good strategist and expected a lot, a carryover from the always winning New York Yankees. He didn't crit-



icize players in public yet could become angry. He didn't exhort his team with cheerleader enthusiasm. His quiet, serious, all-business demeanor probably contributed to a general feeling that he was not a good communicator.

Certainly every one of these men who played for both O'Neill and Rolfe recognized a substantial difference in their managerial styles. Kell remembered them as "different all the way. Steve was a big, gruff Irishman who was like a big teddy bear. Everybody was so great, everybody was so good. I came over from Philadelphia in midseason, and he was soon calling me the best third baseman he'd ever seen. I told him one day, hey you played with Buck Weaver and I've read how great he was—don't be comparing me to those guys. That was Steve O'Neill's way of managing. He just built them up and let them think they were the best. Where [with] Red, you got to show me. They were two different types."

Kell's impressions of O'Neill had changed very little from how he appraised his manager in 1958. In an article written for the *Saturday Evening Post*, entitled "Do Managers Make Much Difference," Kell stated: "One of the finest fellows I ever played for was his own worst enemy because he wanted to be like a father to everybody. That was Steve O'Neill, my first manager at Detroit. He treated his players too well."

According to reserve catcher Harv Riebe, "Steve was a different kind of manager entirely. He was an easygoing guy. He wasn't as particular I might say as Red was. He more or less let the ballplayers do their own thing. Red would tell players he didn't think that was the proper way to do something. O'Neill was too easygoing."

Virgil Trucks also remembered a considerable difference between how the two men managed. Clearly Trucks had fonder memories of O'Neill: "Steve O'Neill was a great manager, and he got along with the players well. I didn't know him to ever say a harsh word to anybody."

Middle infielder Neil Berry remembered a "night-and-day" difference between the two: "Steve was just a jolly old Irishman. He was a nice guy, but he was from the old school. I think Steve knew he was going to quit. A couple of his coaches were his drinking buddies. Steve was just going through the motions. And it took Red the whole year to get the team he took over to play like he thought they should. It became a lot more serious with Rolfe just by bearing down. I remember in spring training Red liked to do a lot of sprints, races and stuff just to get you in shape. Steve used to say, you guys go out and run and when you come back I want to have batting practice. Well, you know a bunch of guys, some of them

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would go out and stand around the outfield, and Steve would be in there smoking a cigar and talking to some newspaper guy. Well, that's the way it was. Red made sure you got your running in, serious running."

Apparently owner Walter Briggs and Billy Evans had gotten what they wanted in new manager Rolfe, and certainly the players recognized immediate changes in how the team would operate and need to adjust.

As a former Yankee who had played on some great teams, Rolfe was used to winning. Winning builds confidence and attitude and sets a standard for how you play the game and how you win. Rolfe brought that winning tradition to Detroit, along with his competitive drive, manifested high expectations, and a determination to excel. Several players recognized that the new skipper brought Yankee expectations with him.

A less than admiring Virgil Trucks said Rolfe "was an old Yankee ballplayer, and the Yankees won so many times, and he was trying to create a Yankee ball club that wasn't capable of playing that kind of baseball. He tried to manage like an ex-Yankee, and he did. He was trying to get over a point that you can be better than you are. No ballplayer in any sport can be better than he is. Some give 100 percent, some more. I saw some players on the Detroit club when Rolfe was there that could have done better. Rolfe expected a lot from the players." Joe Ginsberg agreed that the Tigers were not Yankees and that Rolfe expected too much from them. Ted Gray remembered his telling the team that the Yankees won with good pitching and defense: "He was a strict guy who wanted to win—I liked that."

A successful manager's style of play is dependent on the capabilities of his team. Rolfe liked to run, but he inherited a slow-footed squad. As he recorded, his team stole only thirty-nine bases in 1949 and was caught stealing fifty-two times. That, combined with his experience with the Yankees, ingrained a love affair with the long ball. "In general, I play for one big inning, the type of game I learned on the Yankees under Joe McCarthy, who adopted it from Miller Huggins," Rolfe related in 1950. "It was Huggins' theory that the winner scores more runs in one inning than the loser does in the entire game—and you'd be surprised how often it works out that way. . . . Now don't get me wrong; I'm not touting the Tigers as comparable to the old Yankee wrecking crews. Detroit is a good hitting club, though, and one big inning is especially suited to a slow outfit that can't wangle a run here and there."

Kell recalled his fixation on winning in 1950: "He was like a jockey riding a horse right down to the end; he wasn't going to give up. We were going to win." In his autobiography, Kell states: "Rolfe's problem was



that he had trouble getting along with his players. Hoot Evers hated him and Rolfe hated Hoot in return.” When asked about that judgment, Kell amended its intensity, believing it to be too severe: “It was just unfortunate a couple of statements were made. I got along well with Red. I liked playing for him. He was a very positive manager. He was very competitive—he liked to win. He was used to playing for all those great Yankee teams that won so many pennants. He expected everybody to play like Yankees, and he said that.” Kell then related an incident in which Evers ridiculed the “Yankee way,” undoubtedly alienating the outfielder from his boss: “I was on second base in a game against the Yankees, and the hitter drove a ball to center field that [Joe] DiMaggio caught. He thought that was the third out and started jogging in. I tagged up and rounded third and headed home. DiMaggio realized his mistake, and his throw hit near second base as I crossed the plate. When I got into the dugout Evers said: ‘Yep, just like the Yankees—that’s the way the Yankees do it.’ Everyone, including Red Rolfe, heard the comment.”

Manager Rolfe raised the bar for effort, execution, and expectations. Different from his predecessor, he didn’t court favor or affection, and he was dead serious about his work. As a player he knew how to win, he was accustomed to winning, and his competitive fire fueled his determination. Virgil Trucks believes that his persistent illness made him irritable. All of these dimensions of the man surely influenced the manager/players relationship, how he communicated failings, coached improvement, and recognized superior effort and performance.

“He was a strict disciplinarian,” according to Ted Gray’s recollection. “There was no fooling around with Red; he was baseball all the way. He was strict; in fact I’d say most of the players when he came to manage didn’t like him because we had been managed by Steve O’Neill before. He was a real good old boy. Then Red came on. I always liked him. I like the guy who did the things he did.”

Both Joe Ginsberg and Harv Riebe felt he was too controlling and strict. “He was kind of a weight watcher,” said Riebe. “He made sure none of the ballplayers got too overweight. I recall an occasion when we were in a diner on a train on a road trip going somewhere. [Hal] Newhouser was sitting at a table with a couple of other fellas and he had a big bowl of rice pudding, and Red walked by and said: ‘You’re not going to eat that, are you?’ And Hal said: ‘Of course. That’s why I ordered it.’” Rolfe dealt with his players as though they were amateurs at times, and the players resented that treatment, according to Ginsberg: “Many of the ballplayers didn’t really care for Red because he treated the fellas like a

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college team instead of a professional team. Rolfe said: 'One orange will be enough.' A lot of the players really didn't care for that. But he was the manager, and we did it his way. Other than that, I think most of the guys respected him pretty much."

One might logically assume that someone of Rolfe's background and nature might have lots of rules to regulate player behavior, but that's not what players remembered. As best as can be reconstructed, Rolfe had a curfew and a prohibition against playing poker.

Unfortunately for the sake of interest, either the players had very few good stories to relate about infractions, or else their loyalty remained strong even to the memory of deceased former teammates. Kell told a story about an early-morning phone call from the manager and a false charge of disorderly conduct: "I roomed with Charlie Keller, who was probably the most disciplined player I ever played with and morally disciplined in every way. One night in Boston about two o'clock in the morning the phone rang, and it was Red, and he asked: 'What in the hell are you and George doing up there? I just got a call that you and Kell were running up and down the hall hollering and screaming.' Pretty soon Red came up and knocked on the door and said: 'I apologize, I found out who it was. I couldn't believe it was you guys.' But that's how he was. It didn't matter if it was George Kell or Charlie Keller; if you were breaking the rules he was going to do something about it even if it was two o'clock in the morning. I never will forget Charlie saying: 'We're trying to get some sleep but have to keep answering the phone.' Charlie played with him in New York and could get away with talking like that."

Gray remembered curfew being at midnight and poker being illegal in Rolfe's courtroom. With a hearty laugh, he recounted: "We did play despite him not allowing it. When Freddie Hutchinson took over from him as manager, the ballplayers elected me player representative [replacing Hutch], and the first thing Fred did was put in a rule of no playing poker. I just kind of looked at him and he said: 'What are you looking at?'

"I said: 'Well you've been playing poker all these years with us. Why are you going to change it now?' He said: 'I'll tell you what I'll do.' We were in a big room in Boston. 'I'm going to leave the room, and you guys make the rules.' We were all kind of afraid of him. Freddie was a great guy, tough guy. We wrote our own rules, and Fred came back in and read them. One was we could play poker. We had to quit by quarter to twelve if it was a day game and stakes could only be so much. He said: 'OK, those are the rules, and anyone who breaks them is going to answer to me.' We were all afraid to break them."



Rolfe was not a glad-hander or overly generous or vocal with his praise. Most remember his giving praise, but it was done in a quiet and subdued way. His meticulously kept journal bears out his tendency to emphasize shortcomings and underrepresent commendable performance. Yet one must remember that his journal principally recorded opportunities to improve performance and the prospects of winning. "I don't recall him ever sitting down next to anybody to speak to them," said Riebe. Again Ginsberg agreed with his fellow catcher: "Not too often did Red come up to you and give you praise. We were all professionals, and we knew when we did well and didn't do so well. We didn't need that. It does help sometimes. Look at Tommy Lasorda, he'll do everything except kiss you. He hugs you. Some ballplayers need that, and some don't. I don't believe Red was that kind of player, and he wasn't that kind of manager to get excited about something you really did well."

"Red wasn't complimentary," claimed George Kell. "O'Neill would pat you on the back, buddy, buddy. No, I don't think Red played the game that way. He said very little to me except, 'You play hard I understand.' He told me that several times—'You know how to play the game.' I knew he appreciated me." Trucks remembered that Rolfe would let players know when he was pleased, but sparingly. He also recalled that in 1952, "there wasn't much praise to give out to anyone."

All managers coach, and they criticize. Just as he didn't lavish praise for good performance, Rolfe was not overtly critical of errors of execution and judgment, yet he recorded many in his journal.

Rolfe probably didn't soon forget the imprudent remark about the Yankees made by Evers. Certainly Dick Wakefield's carefree attitude earned him a lasting place in the manager's doghouse. Yet those interviewed didn't perceive Red Rolfe as a manager for whom very many fell out of favor and were therefore almost permanently assigned to the end of the bench. "I think you could get in the doghouse with him," said Kell. "If you didn't do the little things you were supposed to do like a runner at second base with nobody out and you hit the ball on the ground to the shortstop or third base and didn't move him over to third. Oh, he'd just, he'd almost, he didn't say a whole lot, but he was just smoking. The smoke was coming out his ears and everything else. He wanted you to know how to play the game. I remember one time a certain ballplayer did not move the runner over and Red jumped him, and the player said: 'I've spent my whole career sacrificing myself to get the runner over, and I don't see that it's paid off too much.' That was the end of the conversation, and I had the feeling Red didn't appreciate that."