

# HOLY COW! RIZZUTO QUILTS

By JOSEF ADALIAN  
and PHIL MUSHNICK

## Livid after WPIX nixed trip to Mick's funeral

Phil Rizzuto says his 39-year career as voice of the Yankees is over because WPIX/Channel 11 wouldn't let him attend the funeral of Mickey Mantle.

"I'm not going to broadcast another game," Rizzuto said yesterday. "I mean it."

The station says the legendary broadcaster would not be behind the mike for tomorrow's Yankee game in California against the Angels. Officials hope he'll change his mind about future games.

But sources said Channel 11 has been miffed with Rizzuto in recent years because he requested more and more time off.

Rizzuto's agent, **Brandon Steiner**, said the Mantle funeral was just the final straw in a festering rela-

tionship marked by bitter contract negotiations two years ago.

"I don't think there are any good guys and bad guys in this," said WPIX general manager Michael Eigner.

Rizzuto said the final breach came when he asked management to let him attend the ceremony Tuesday night in Dallas for his former teammate.

"I told them 'I gotta get down there. I belong there,'" Rizzuto said here yesterday during an awards luncheon for Dodger manager Tommy Lasorda.

But WPIX instead sent Bobby Murcer, his broadcasting sidekick. A reluc-

tant Rizzuto spent the night in Boston announcing a Red Sox game.

"Unfortunately, I let them win out," the Scooter said of WPIX brass.

Rizzuto said he felt "so bad" during the broadcast that he left the booth in the fifth inning.

Rizzuto, who turns 77 next month, spent his last six years as a Yankee on the same team as Mantle, who died last week of cancer.

A shortstop, Rizzuto was named to the the Baseball Hall of Fame last year.

Since joining the Yankee broadcast team, Rizzuto has become one of the most familiar voices on the air. His "Holy Cow!" is a beloved trademark.

"He brings a certain style, an honesty, a feeling like you are having a conversation with your brother watching the game," said Yanker manager Buck Showalter.

"Like many Yankee fans, I will miss him," said third-base coach Willie Randolph, who grew up listening to Rizzuto.

WPIX issued a statement yesterday saying the station "hopes — along with his hundreds of thousands of fans — that he will change his mind."

"Without Phil's unique style, the Yankee games would not be the same"

Eigner said the station didn't allow Rizzuto to go to Dallas because it was decided "Phil would be the

proper person to be talking to our fans on that emotional night."

He said he and Yankee WPIX producer John Moore explained the decision to Rizzuto.

Eigner said he spoke with Rizzuto on Wednesday and Thursday, "so I was very much aware that he was upset."

"I told him that I very much hope that this [decision to quit] is an emotional reaction to an emotional moment and that he'll reconsider. We want him to stay," Eigner said. "He said he'd think about it. We hope he has a change of heart. I'm sorry it came to this."

Rizzuto complained yesterday that he rarely sees



**PHIL RIZZUTO**  
*He's outta there!*

his family, because "I'm away six months of every year."

"I think he feels he's had enough and he wants to spend time with his family," Eigner said.