

The Yankees announced they were retaining manager Aaron Boone on Tuesday. (AP Photo/Mary Schwalm)

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Throughout the course of an inconsistent season that wound up with the Yankees losing eight games to the Orioles on their way to a 92-win season, fans wanted blood in terms of manager Aaron Boone's head.

Those who wanted Boone to become the former Yankee manager were not unafraid to share those thoughts via social media, sports talk radio or other avenues where they could vent.

When the Yankees lost to the Boston Red Sox at Fenway Park in the wild card game, those calls grew louder. And when no official announcement was instantly made about Boone's status, those fans seemingly might have been getting their desire.

Those desires of the social media venters and the talk radio callers turned out to be fleeting and if you have followed closely public statements by those in charge (Hal Steinbrenner and Brian Cashman), it can hardly be surprising that the Yankees announced he was coming back.

The specifics are a three-year contract through the 2024 season with a club option for 2025. While the Yankees likely provided one of the more disappointing 92-win seasons in baseball history — especially by their high standards — they highlighted the fact he averaged 98 wins in his first three full seasons and the fact that he is third Yankee manager to reach the postseason in his first four seasons.

The others are Casey Stengel and Joe Torre, who won a combined seven championships.

Even with the accolades mentioned by the Yankees, there comes something that can be viewed as a warning in the statement provided by managing general partner Hal Steinbrenner.

“We have a person and manager in Aaron Boone who possesses the baseball acumen and widespread respect in our clubhouse to continue to guide us forward,” Steinbrenner said. “As a team and as an organization, we must grow, evolve and improve. We need to get better. Period.”

“I know Aaron fully embraces our expectations of success, and I look forward to drawing on his intelligence, instincts and leadership in pursuit of our next World Series championship.”

The evolve and improve comment is as close to a George Steinbrenner warning shot you might see. The days of the Yankees providing reaction by firing are a thing from a bygone era when reporters would refer to Steinbrenner as “Mr. Tunes” for his ability to respond to phone calls with bombastic statements.

And when Cashman spoke for nearly an hour before a virtual crowd of about 80 media members, it

was apparent why the Yankees bringing Boone back was unsurprising. He said bringing back Boone never was in question while adding that if Boone was a free agent manager that he would be the “No. 1 managerial candidate.”

“I thought Aaron Boone was part of the solution. He wasn’t a problem or the problem,” Cashman said. “I think Aaron brings a lot of great qualities. He’s a great baseball mind, comes from an amazing family that has a history in this industry for quite some time.”

Cashman also said that Boone was part of the problem but a part of the solution for a team whose struggle to consistently score runs no matter the makeup of the lineup led to 89 games decided by one or two runs.

What Cashman did admit was something many felt that this team at best would reach Game 5 of the ALDS

“The way our season played out, it’s less of a surprise to get knocked out early,” Cashman said. “This year, the way our team was going, it looked like it could be an early knockout. And I have to take responsibility for it.”

Could the Yankees have fired Boone after four years?

They could have but they often cite his ability to connect with players, which is an important trait in modern managing for better or worse and that along with four postseason appearances was sufficient enough for Boone to be granted another few turns at the 162-game marathon of managing in baseball’s biggest fishbowl.

Boone was hired in December 2017, a little over a month after the Yankees decided to move on from Joe Girardi despite getting to Game 7 of the ALCS to conclude an unexpected 91-win team with many of the same pieces who were on the field two weeks ago in Boston.

By that point, the perception was Girardi’s intense style was grating on the team and the Yankees wanted a contrast, which is highlighted by how Cashman pointed out other managers and GM perceive Boone.

“It was good to hear from afar how other people perceive him, because I’m on the front line and it’s got nothing but great respect for how he goes about his business,” Cashman said.

For better or worse, the Yankees found their manager to provide those traits. Now it is his responsibility to ensure a season of over 90 wins is never as taxing and draining as 2021 was and ensure the Yankees do better than the Astros, Red Sox, Rays, White Sox and fend off teams like the Blue Jays and anyone else who provides a fierce challenge.

“Going into this year — and really every year since I’ve been here — we believe that we’re a team capable of competing for a championship,” Boone said. “That’s been our expectation. We’ve had varying degrees of success along the way, but we want to get to the top of the mountain.”

It also Boone’s responsibility to ensure statements like this aren’t said by either fans or one of his bosses:

“This was a year that I would say might be my toughest,” Cashman said. “It was somewhat of a Jekyll and Hyde. At times it looked unstoppable, but many other times unwatchable.”

And regardless of the roller coaster the Yankee took their fans on, Boone is back and it is hardly surprising.

Source: [New York Yankees Retain Manager Aaron Boone In A Surprise That Shouldn’t Be](#)