



# “JUST KEEP PUTTING FLAGS UP THERE”

**Fredi Gonzalez is set to take over the reigns from Bobby Cox**

*by Martin Gandy*

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**F**or the first time in 20 years, the Atlanta Braves will take the field with a new manager. In one of the smoothest managerial changes in sports history, Fredi Gonzalez took the reins from Bobby Cox only days after the Braves season ended in mid-October.

The new manager is a bundle of energy and excitement, sometimes so eager to get a point across that the words come out faster than his mouth can say them. His passion for the game is second only to his passion for continuing the winning legacy that the Braves and Cox have entrusted to him.

In talking with him during this interview it was his pride that came through the most. It's not a word that he even has to use, it is simply there in the way he acts and in what he says. It's just one of the many admirable qualities that the players and fans will come to love about Gonzalez.

**Maple Street Press:** Let's get this out of the way. The question you'll get asked the most, what is it like taking over for Bobby Cox?

**Fredi Gonzalez:** I think it's great. I want him to be around a lot. He's a big part of how successful this organization has been and I want him around. I don't feel any pressure or any of that kind of stuff. [I don't want] to use the word replace, I'm just the next guy. I'm very honored and privileged to be that guy.

**MSP:** What was your relationship with Bobby Cox when you managed the Marlins? Did you stay in touch? Did you exchange ideas?

**FG:** All the time. At a minimum, once every couple of weeks; and during the wintertime, two or three times a week we'd have coffee. We kept in touch all the time. He'd call because I got ejected from a game, he'd call and say something like,