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Pittsburgh Pirates

Series Notebook: Marlins answer McKeon's prayers

Saturday, October 25, 2003

By Robert Dvorchak, Post-Gazette Sports Writer

NEW YORK -- Jack McKeon has something to counter the ghosts of Yankee Stadium. He attends Mass daily and firmly believes in the power of prayer. In fact, just being back in baseball is an answer to a prayer.

"When I was out of baseball, I prayed for one more crack. I just wanted one more chance," said McKeon, who hadn't managed for three years until the Florida Marlins called him in May after they fired Jeff Torborg.

His team might be the supreme underdog to the tradition-rich Yankees, but he wouldn't have it any other way.

"I really wanted to play these guys. To me, the World Series is the [New York] Yankees," McKeon said. "You can say what you want about George [Steinbrenner]. But he knows how to put a winner together. He knows how to get the job done."

Before the Game 5 win that put his team up, 3-2, McKeon ventured a prediction about the Series that reflected his confidence.

"We're going to win," he said.

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