

# DOMINGO GERMÁN

emotion happen here and there, but for the most part, he's all business, always looking "to maintain a level head," he says. "You gotta stay collected and cool." Very little fazes him, as seen in his *Sunday Night Baseball* outing on July 28. He saved the Yankees from a four-game sweep at Fenway Park that night, limiting Boston to three earned runs while striking out nine over 5½ innings. It was a relatively stellar start following a disastrous week in which Yankees starters had surrendered 48 earned runs over 26 innings. Determined to stop the

bleeding, it was also Germán's response to the worst start of his career, an eight-run shellacking in Minnesota on July 23.

Germán's father also taught him that pain is not always an excuse, a lesson that reared its debatable head earlier this season. After starting his campaign with a 2.60 ERA, Germán endured a three-start stretch from May 26 to June 7 in which he allowed 14 earned runs and seven dingers in 14⅔ innings. His ERA ballooned to 3.86.

It turned out Germán was trying to pitch through a hip flexor strain. He declined to

tell the Yankees' training staff at first. His performance suffered as a result.

"It's normal," says bullpen coach Mike Harkey. "If you're going to play at this level, you're going to need to learn to pitch being a little uncomfortable. He felt it was something he could handle and pitch through, and for a couple starts he actually did. It just kind of got to him, and he obviously needed a break."

That break was actually a blessing in disguise for the Yankees, as it gave Germán some time off that was going to be



ONCE UPON A TIME, GERMÁN'S YOUTH LEAGUE COACHES TOLD HIM HE COULDN'T PITCH, SO HE QUIT PLAYING BASEBALL ALTOGETHER. THESE DAYS, HE CAN ONLY LAUGH AS HE SPEARHEADS A YANKEES ROTATION WITH WORLD SERIES ASPIRATIONS. "NO GRUDGES AT ALL," HE SAYS. "I GUESS IF THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE LEARNED, IT'S THAT SOMETIMES YOU'VE GOT TO LISTEN TO A YOUNG PERSON THAT'S TELLING YOU SOMETHING."