

Bernie still not ready for the retired life

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November 19, 2008

Bernie Williams, part-time musician and now actor, still won't commit full-time to retirement. Williams, who will have a featured role in the upcoming movie, "Keeper of the Pinstripes," remains hopeful that his baseball career is not quite over.

"I'll be 75 and still not announce my retirement," Williams said last night at a pre-production party in Manhattan. "I'm still within this two- or three-year period where I can say, 'You know what? Let me just work out ...'"

Williams, who turned 40 in September, has kept himself in shape and insists that he's only two or three weeks away from being major-league ready if a team did call. And what if he did hear from a GM shortly before spring training?

"I don't know," Williams said. "I'd think very long and hard about it though."

Williams retired in 2006, but he's still emotionally tied to the Yankees, despite that his career didn't exactly end on his own terms. Watching his former team miss the playoffs for the first time since 1993 was difficult to stomach, even from a distance.

"I was certainly with the guys because I know they didn't have the best year they would have hoped for," Williams said. "But I'm not really thinking about baseball right now. It's always in the back of my mind, but I'm not really thinking of getting out there."

Williams has another CD coming out in April, and he'll also play a musician on the big screen in "Keeper of the Pinstripes," a movie based on the children's book, "The Boy of Steel: A Baseball Dream Come True," written by Yankees executive Ray Negron.

Darryl Strawberry and actor Josh Lucas also will be featured, and Robby Benson will direct the movie, which will be filmed inside the old Yankee Stadium before and during the 2009 season. Partly for that reason, the old Stadium will remain standing until September, with some minor dismantling over the summer.

While the movie is scheduled to be released some time between Christmas 2009 and Opening Day 2010, Williams still dreams of getting back on the field before then, maybe even inside the new building.

"Absolutely, who wouldn't?" Williams said. "It's an opportunity of a lifetime. Who wouldn't want to be a part of that whole experience?"