

KELTNER'S HOT CORNER



Ken Keltner Badger State Chapter

March 2021

In This Issue:

- Upcoming Virtual Meetings
- February Meeting Recordings
- Keltner Book Korner
- New Book By Larry Baldassaro
- Get to Know...
- Sabermetrics Primer
- How Writers Characterized the 1953 Braves
- Buege on WUWM's Bubbler Talk
- Borchert Field Bonus Chapters
- SABR 50 at 50 - Analytics

Upcoming Events:

SABR Analytics Conference

Online: March 11-14, 2021



From Rube to Robinson

Saturday, March 20, 3 PM (CT)



Keltner Book Club

Wed, March 31, 7:00 PM (CT)

K: A History of Baseball in Ten Pitches



Halsey Hall Book Club

Saturday, April 3, 9:30 (CT)

Squeeze Play

With author Jane Leavy



Keltner Virtual Chapter Meeting

Wed, April 14, 7:00 PM (CT)

Ron Rabinovitz - Jackie's Pen Pal



New Baldassaro Book

Tuesday, April 20, 7 PM (CT)

Direct questions or comments to:

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Upcoming Virtual Meetings

From Rube to Robinson

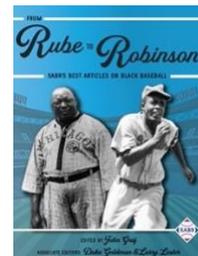
Saturday, March 20, 3:00 PM (CT)

[Chapter Meeting Registration](#)

With John Graf, and Duke Goldman

Our esteemed panel will discuss the latest SABR book [From Rube to Robinson SABR's Best Articles on Black Baseball](#) which brings together the best Negro League baseball scholarship that SABR ever produced, pulled from its journals, Biography Project, and award-winning essays.

Register in advance for the [Chapter Meeting](#). You will receive a confirmation email including Zoom info. We will have a drawing of everyone registered to win a copy of the book.



Keltner Book Club

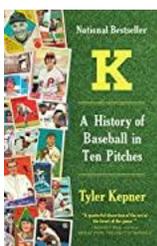
Wednesday March 31, 7:00 (CT)

K: A History of Baseball in Ten Pitches

[Book Club Meeting Registration](#)

Our next book is [K: A History of Baseball in Ten Pitches](#). Tyler Kepner covers how pitching has not only changed over the year but affected the game.

Register in advance for the [Book Club Meeting](#). You will receive a confirmation email with Zoom info.



Halsey Hall Book Club

Saturday, April 3, 9:30 AM (CT)

Squeeze Play

With author Jane Leavy

In December, author, Jane Leavy, was our guest to discuss her book on Babe Ruth, [Big Fella](#). During the meeting she also talked about her other books on Sandy Koufax, Mickey Mantle and her novel [Squeeze Play](#) which the Halsey Hall Book Club will be reviewing. Since many Keltner members also purchased the book it is a good opportunity to hear direct from the author, how much was based on real situations and players?

Watch for an email with registration information or visit the SABR [Virtual Calendar](#).



Keltner Virtual Chapter Meeting

Wed, April 14, 7:00 PM (CT)

A Kid and a Baseball Legend, with Ron Rabinovitz - Jackie's Pen Pal

[Chapter Meeting Registration](#)



[Ron Rabinovitz](#) was an eight year old from Sheboygan in 1953 when he first met his hero, Jackie Robinson, at a Braves vs. Brooklyn Dodgers game in Milwaukee. Jackie and Ron maintained a one-on-one close relationship and friendship from that time on.

Ron's story is of a kid, his larger than life hero, and the lessons he learned. His story is that of dreams coming true, mutual respect, and "paying it forward". Ron will share the poignant, emotional, and heartfelt letters that provide a unique insight into Jackie Robinson's soul.

Register in advance for the [Chapter Meeting](#). You will receive a confirmation email including Zoom information.

February Meetings Recordings

Enjoy the recordings of the February meetings for a first or even second time, or more! Click on the title of each meeting for a link to the video. These are far better than watching TV!

[Keltner Book Club Meeting](#) with Bob Buege

Bob discussed his book, [Borchert Field Stories from Milwaukee's Legendary Ballpark](#) in his usual entertaining style. Bob retells some of the tales about Milwaukee's early gathering place before the Arena or Auditorium. And there was more than just baseball including other sports, air balloon racing and more.



Joint Chapter Meeting

Over 75 participants of the Emile Roth and Ken Keltner Chapters, as well as SABRen nationwide, joined us for our best ever Joint Chapter SABR Day event. SABR CEO, Scott Bush kicked off the meeting with a terrific presentation on the Good, Bad and Ugly of the minor league reorganization. With his minor league background, he thoroughly understands the issues. To learn even more, also watch the video of [Scott Bush and JJ Cooper](#), the Executive Editor of "Baseball America."

Then the Negro League panel with Sean Gibson, Larry Lester, Scot Simkus and Mark Armour did a fantastic job talking about MLB's finally recognizing the Negro Leagues as a major league. Chicago's Bill Pearch and Jason Schwartz moderating the interesting discussion. Mark Armour SABR's Board President talked about SABR's recent release on how SABR will address changes. The highlight of the day may have been a show-and-tell opportunity with Sean Gibson (see picture). He is the grandson of Josh Gibson and the Executive Director of the Josh Gibson Foundation. He showed us one of the few pieces of memorabilia that Josh kept because it represented his favorite moment in baseball, winning the 1941-42 Puerto Rican Winter League MVP award.

Doc Adams - Baseball Pioneer



Daniel Lucius 'Doc' Adams

On February 25, 22 members participated in a terrific presentation by Corky Gaskell and Margorie Adams, the great granddaughter of Doc Adams. Doc, one of the pioneers of early baseball, played a huge role in the creating of many of the fundamental rules including the 90 feet for the baselines. He also is credited with creating the shortstop position. Marjorie has been working for the last ten years to get Doc elected as a pioneer to the Hall of Fame. Visit the [Doc Adams](#) website to learn more and sign the petition to get Doc enshrined. The vote for Pioneers will be this winter.

Keltner Book Korner Book Club News by Mary Shea

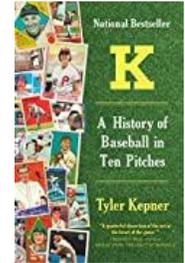
Greetings, Keltner Bookworms,



Our next virtual book club meeting will be, Wednesday March 31st, at 7:00 PM CT, (unfortunately, April 7th was unavailable). We will discuss our next book [K: A History of Baseball in Ten Pitches](#). It's a fascinating read that devotes a chapter to each of ten pitches, interwoven with interesting stories and anecdotes. I hope you enjoy it as much as I have.

Our December Keltner Book Club author, Jane Leavy, has a very strong review on the book: "Tyler Kepner knows his stuff—by which I mean the plethora of possible assaults on the strike zone that have created the modern game: splitters, spitters, sinkers, sliders. It's all here: Cy Young's whistler; Sandy Koufax's 12-to-6 curve; the fadeaway that made Matty famous before it became a screwball and revived Warren Spahn's career. *K* is an education in the history, mechanics and language of pitching and as rich with detail as the craft it describes. This is inside baseball at its best. A must read for any fan who aspires to be in the know."

--Jane Leavy, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Sandy Koufax: A Lefty's Legacy* and *The Big Fella: Babe Ruth and the World He Created*



Register in advance at: [Book Club Registration](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the event.

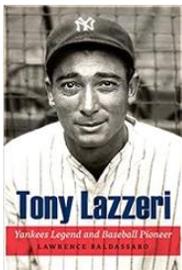
Thanks again to Bob Buege for all the wonderful Borchert Field stories at our last meeting. If you missed it, it's available in the February Meeting Recordings in this issue of the *Keltner Hot Corner*.

Also, we will now have a Show-and-Tell segment at the end of each meeting, and no, we are not too old for this. It was cool how this just kind of developed at our last meeting, and I think everyone enjoyed it. We all have amazing baseball treasures to share, so feel free to choose an item of interest.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns at [Mary Shea](#), and thank you so much for your participation in the book club.

Happy reading!

New Book by Larry Baldassaro



Ken Keltner Chapter member Larry Baldassaro's has a new book to be published on April 1 by the University of Nebraska Press. *Tony Lazzeri: Yankees Legend and Baseball Pioneer*. You can preorder the book now at [Boswell Books](#) with a virtual book launch scheduled on April 15. Watch for further details on the launch. Larry will be joining us at a **Chapter Meeting on April 20** at 7 PM (CT) to discuss the book. Register in advance for the meeting at: [Baldassaro Chapter Meeting](#).

Before there was Joe DiMaggio, there was Tony Lazzeri. A decade before the "Yankee Clipper" began his legendary career in 1936, Lazzeri paved the way for the man who would become the patron saint of Italian American fans and players. He did so by forging his own Hall of Fame career as a key member of the Yankees' legendary Murderers' Row lineup between 1926 and 1937, in the process becoming the first major baseball star of Italian descent.

An unwitting pioneer who played his entire career while afflicted with epilepsy, Lazzeri was the first player to hit sixty home runs in organized baseball, one of the first middle infielders in the big leagues to hit with power, and the first Italian player with enough star power to attract a whole new generation of fans to the ballpark. [More](#).

Lawrence Baldassaro is a professor emeritus of Italian at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. He is the author of *Beyond DiMaggio: Italian Americans in Baseball* (Nebraska, 2011), *Baseball Italian Style: Great Stories Told by Italian American Major Leaguers from Crosetti to Piazza*, and *The Ted Williams Reader*.

Get to Know...John Strohbusch

We know him for his signature Brooklyn Dodger's cap on the Ken Keltner Chapter and Book Club virtual meetings. The Brooklyn Dodgers fandom started with an appreciation for [Jackie Robinson](#) as he got older, and like many SABRen, learning baseball history. "I read everything that I could about him, and as time went on, I became fascinated with all of the "Boys of Summer" and thus became quite an admirer of [Gil Hodges](#) as well." If he could have a time machine moment, he would travel back to Game Seven of the 1955 World Series to watch [Johnny Podres](#) shutout the New York Yankees 2-0 to clinch Brooklyn's first and, as it turned out, only World Championship. The bonus would be seeing two of his all-time favorite ballplayers, Robinson and Hodges. But the Dodgers aren't his favorite team.



John Strohbusch was the first born of William and Patricia (Damp) Strohbusch on April 3, 1971 in Madison. His younger sister, Beth, lives in Pennsylvania with her husband, Dale, and their 4 kids. He grew up in Cambridge about 20 miles from the city of his birth where his dad ran a bar for over a quarter century and his mom was a bank teller and a bookkeeper for the Cambridge school district. He attended Elementary, Middle and Cambridge High School.

The little league shortstop's high school career included playing baseball as an outfielder and a defensive back in football **but he didn't see a future playing sports**. "My mediocre athleticism persuaded me pretty early on that my future would be in coaching." Strohbusch has coached baseball at every youth and high school level, starting at Little League when attending high school and culminating with a head coaching opportunity at Mukwonago High School from 2004-2012. Currently he is an assistant varsity coach for Greendale High School. He has also coached football at Mukwonago High for 15 years and is currently a varsity assistant football coach for his hometown, Cambridge. His philosophy for working with the athletes is, "I believe that sports should be fun and I take a high energy approach to practices and games." Also, "I am a strong believer in preparation and organization so that my athletes are never surprised at any adversity or obstacles that are put before them on the playing field. They can just play".

After high school, he attended Carroll College (now University) in Waukesha where he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and History. Strohbusch continued his education graduating with a Master's in Education from Silver Lake College a private Catholic liberal arts college in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. And he has used his education to be a fine eighth grade social science teacher at Mukwonago's Park View Middle School.

The educator is married to Pamela Merkel, also an educator, teaching art at Greendale High School. They have one daughter, Kylie, who is in fifth grade. With the pandemic this past year, they had a lot of balls to juggle as both teachers and parents. Strohbusch has been teaching in-person in Mukwonago all year, while Kylie and Pam, both in Greendale, have been about 50-50 virtual and in-person. But there has been a silver lining, he's improved his technology skills in order to run meetings with Zoom and Google Meets as well as Google Classroom to reach absent kids.

Strohbusch's early baseball influences include an historic World Series moment and long run family tradition. His earliest baseball memory was watching the 1977 world series when [Reggie Jackson](#), Mr. October, hit three home runs on three consecutive pitches in Game Six. As he recalled, "This event hooked me on baseball forever." His dad took him to his first Cubs game in the early 80s. "I will never forget my first view of the Ivy...greenest thing that I had ever seen." He remembers that Dave Kingman hit a homer but it was in a losing cause as the Phillies Mike Schmidt hit two. He loved Kingman and [Bill Buckner](#), but [Ryne Sandberg](#) was his all-time favorite player growing up.

His team is the Chicago Cubs, a family baseball tradition that started with his grandfather, Duffy Strohbusch, who also grew up in Cambridge when the Cubs were the "local team" in the early 1900s. Strohbusch enjoyed hearing the stories his grandmother told about riding in a rumble seat with his granddad and friends taking Highway 12 all the way into Chicago; the trip alone had to be an adventure going to ball games in the 1930s. The Cub fan parents passed their avidness to their son,

Bill and when the Braves moved to Milwaukee, they didn't waiver as they never took to the Braves (although his mom was a big Braves fan, especially [Warren Spahn](#)).

Being a Cub fan was passed down to the third generation and John was raised accordingly. When the Seattle Pilots were bought out of bankruptcy the year before Strohbusch's birth, becoming the Milwaukee Brewers, his dad became a Brewers fan as well, considering himself has having "dual citizenship" since they were in the American League and not competing with the Cubs. At his father's bar, there was always a strong contingent of Illinois people who frequented his establishment so he had the Cubs games on during the day and the Brewers at night. But after he sold the tavern and the Brewers joined the National League, he felt that he had suffered enough as a Cubs fan and committed exclusively to the Brewers. His son, John, did not agree, "Although I enjoyed going to Brewers games growing up, I never wavered as a Cubs fan and continue to be a die hard to this day. He is the person who really got me into baseball, but when it comes to the Brewers-Cubs rivalry we agree to disagree."

Thanks to COVID, he rejoined SABR in the spring of 2020 having originally become a member in 2015 but with a busy coaching schedule he didn't have time to take advantage of the membership and he let it expire. Upon returning, he really enjoys the Zoom meetings and getting to know all of the Keltner members; impressed with the baseball knowledge of our group. But Strohbusch is also looking forward to meeting everyone in person once and getting to know them better.

During the pandemic he decided to try and put together a full set of 1977 Topps cards, the first baseball cards he remembers collecting as a kid. And since joining SABR, he's been reading baseball books, enjoying the Keltner Book Club. Strohbusch's favorite book topics would be anything on the Brooklyn Dodgers and the Oakland A's Dynasty of the 70s. The book he is currently reading is on MLB labor relations called "Lords of the Realm".

The final words of wisdom include his favorite baseball quotes:

"[Tom Seaver](#) is so good that blind people would come to the park to hear him pitch." - Reggie Jackson

"[Oscar Charleston](#) could smell where the ball was going to be hit." - Cumberland Posey

"It's far too hot for a homily, just keep the commandments, and say a prayer for Gil Hodges". - Brooklyn priest during the 1952 World Series

SABERMETRICS PRIMER

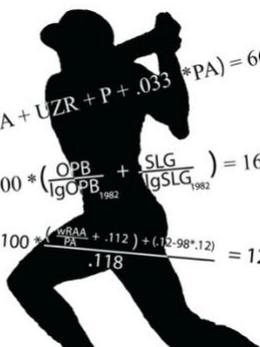
By Dave Weller

Defensive Runs Saved (DRS)

For our last stat in the Sabermetrics Primer series, we will be looking at Defensive Runs Saved (DRS). DRS is a measure of how many runs a defender saves above an average defender at his position in a season. The higher the number, the more runs that defender saved. A negative number indicates that the defender cost his team more runs than he saved compared to an average fielder.

The calculation for DRS is quite complex and beyond the scope of this article, as it involves video scouts and a range and positioning system. The [Fielding Bible](#) is a great resource for understanding how DRS is calculated. I have found that it is best to look up DRS on [Fangraphs](#) or Rdrs on [Baseball-Reference](#).

You may be asking why we should use DRS when we can use Fielding Percentage. After all, it's easy to calculate: (Putouts + Assists)/(Putouts + Assists + Errors). Why should we use a stat that we cannot calculate on our own?


$$\sum_{y=1974}^{1993} (wRAA + UZR + P + .033 * PA) = 66.5$$
$$\hat{\sigma}_{1982} = 100 * \left(\frac{OPB}{1gOPB_{1982}} + \frac{SLG}{1gSLG_{1982}} \right) = 166$$
$$wRC+ = 100 * \left(\frac{wRAA}{PA} + .112 \right) + (.12 * 98 * .12) = 129$$

Fielding Percentage is lacking in one major way. It is dependent on errors. The fewer errors that a fielder commits, the better his Fielding Percentage. There are two issues with using errors in this way. The first is that errors are subjective. The same play could be scored differently by two different official scorers.

The other major issue is that counting errors does not take into account how many balls a fielder gets to. As an extreme example, imagine 200 balls hit toward third base. Player A gets to 100 balls and makes no errors. Player B gets to 150 of them, but he makes 10 errors. Player A has a Fielding Percentage of 1.000, which is much better than the .933 of Player B.

Which of these two players is a better third baseman? The one who did not commit an error, or the one who made 40 more outs? Now imagine that the 40 outs that Player B could get to were smashes down the line. These would most likely be doubles that could potentially clear the bases while also putting a runner in scoring position. Even an error here could keep the runner from advancing to second.

Defensive Runs Saved is good to use to compare fielders in a certain year. DRS only goes back to 2003, so career DRS is not very meaningful.

Notable DRS

[Andrelton Simmons](#) saved an amazing 40 runs at shortstop in 2017. He did this with the 10th best Fielding Percentage among shortstops that season. Center fielder [Kevin Kiermaier](#) has the second highest DRS at 38 in 2015. Shortstop [Adam Everett](#) (34 in 2006), third baseman [Matt Chapman](#) (34 in 2019), and center fielder [Franklin Gutierrez](#) (33 in 2009) round out the top 5 seasons.

The top 5 Brewers DRS of all time (remember DRS only goes back to 2003) consists of a couple of Gold Glove center fielders and catchers. [Carlos Gomez](#) (29 in 2013) tops the list in his GG season and [Lorenzo Cain](#) (22 in 2019) is third in his GG season. Catcher [Jonathan Lucroy](#) is on the list twice, at second and fifth (23 in 2014 and 19 in 2011). [Jason Kendall](#) had the fourth best season with 21 in 2008.

Only three catchers had a higher mark than the 23 Lucroy had in 2014. Even though the Gold Glover that year topped it three times, [Yadier Molina](#) did not top it in 2014. In fact, Molina only saved 8 runs that season.

I hope you enjoyed the Sabermetrics Primer. If you have any questions about sabermetrics, feel free to send me an email at djweller72@gmail.com.

How Writers Characterized the 1953 Braves

By Francis Kinlaw



Perhaps a shortage of news caused editors to fill column space with a light-hearted piece, or it could have been that a simple but entertaining article immediately after the holiday season seemed to be a good idea. Whatever the reason, [The Sporting News](#) dated January 6, 1954 revealed the results of a whimsical poll of baseball writers (under the byline of C.C Johnson Spink) that was unlikely to produce holiday cheer between many players and reporters. The survey focused on the “skills, team values, living habits, and personalities of players from every major-league team,” with the scribes polled evaluating “only the players on the clubs which they observed in their own league.” While some of the categories judged were positive in nature, quite a few were either not complimentary or unrelated to baseball.

The results of the poll were presumed to be based on observations from the 1953 season, and it is obvious that such a poll should never be accepted as definitive. However, while the collective

opinions of the writers may be suspect in some cases, these are several of the interesting choices regarding players on the first roster of the modern Braves:

Most feared batter in clutch (Eddie Mathews)	Wittiest (Sisti)
Toughest pitcher for crucial game (Warren Spahn)	Happiest (Sisti)
Has done most for the team (Spahn)	Unhappiest (Vern Bickford)
Most box office appeal (Mathews)	Most serious-minded (Dittmer)
Fastest runner (Billy Bruton)	Greatest worrier (Dittmer)
Slowest runner (Walker Cooper)	Most temperamental (Mathews)
Best all-round athlete (Jack Dittmer)	Least temperamental (Sisti)
Best physique (Mathews)	Most relaxed on field (Johnny Logan)
Best student of the game (Cooper)	Most nervous on field (Dittmer)
Most cooperative with writers (Sibby Sisti)	Best bench jockey (Cooper)
Least cooperative with writers (Dave Jolly)	Best conversationalist (Lew Burdette)
Most helpful to rookies (Sisti)	Least talkative (Pafko)
Most popular off the field (Sisti)	Most ambitious (Del Crandall)
Most friendly to fans (Andy Pafko)	Most intellectual (Spahn)
Least friendly to fans (Sid Gordon)	Best business sense (Gordon)
	Most conceited (Gordon)

Because *The Sporting News* was a widely read publication referred to as “The Bible of Baseball” in the mid-1950s, there can be little doubt that players throughout the big leagues quickly realized how the results of this poll affected their reputations and those of their teammates. Among the Braves, the results were most favorable for Sibby Sisti and were complimentary toward Eddie Mathews and Warren Spahn. Billy Bruton received praise for his speed, and Andy Pafko was recognized for his pleasant attitude toward fans. Jack Dittmer was perceived as a talented and apparently dedicated athlete with a serious nature. In contrast, the names of other players (especially Sid Gordon and Dave Jolly) were associated with negative characteristics.

Some natives of the Milwaukee region may have their own impressions of these men based on personal contacts, opinions expressed by acquaintances, or research. If you as a reader fall into that category, comparing your thoughts to those of writers from the past could be an interesting and enjoyable exerciser.

Follow-up Conversation with Jonathan Stiever

By Dennis D Degenhardt



Jonathan Stiever, who made his major league with the White Sox in 2020, was unable to make our January Chapter meeting at the last minute to joining the [panel of Wisconsin ball players](#) who debuted last year. I was able to contact him later by email to ask him some of the questions I asked of the other three.

The Cedarburg native’s earliest baseball memories are of playing in the front yard with his dad and brother, imitating different players he enjoyed watching. Stiever’s favorite was [Pedro Martinez](#), “I had his jersey and everything and just loved watching him pitch.” And like his earliest hero, Stiever was primarily a pitcher, although he played different positions, he thought of pitching first even as early as his little league days.

Stiever played football as well as baseball at Cedarburg High School excelling at both. During his senior year he was First Team All-State as both a defensive back and wide receiver and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* named him the Wisconsin High School Football Player of the Year. He followed that up by being selected to the Summer Baseball All-State, second-team with a strong pitching performance, a 7-1 record and a 1.90 ERA. When it came time for college, he wasn’t interested in playing football, making it known to the football recruiters; so nothing materialized in favor of the pigskin. Instead, as he said, “I always knew that if I gave baseball my full attention, I

would have a much higher ceiling to play at the college and hopefully pro level.” He was recruited by Indiana University and played Big Ten baseball for three years making the first-team All-Big Ten as a Junior.

Following his third Big Ten season, Stiever was drafted in the fifth round of the June 2018 Amateur Draft by the Chicago White Sox. Draft day was very interesting for him. As he related, “Our college season had just ended and we got back to Indiana a day or two before the draft. I had to totally pack my apartment because I had a good idea I wouldn't be coming back. I was actually on my drive home to Wisconsin when I got the news that I had been drafted, so it was definitely a memorable moment.”

His minor league experience was very productive thanks to his pitching coach Matt Zelinski with the Advanced A, Winston Salem Dash, his second team in his first minor league season in 2019. The right hander credits him for helping him figure what kind of pitcher he was. As he said, “With Matt Zaleski, he is just very in tuned to the analytical side of things so he can recognize what potential you have with your pitches and works with you to reach that potential for each pitch. From there, he could clearly state where and when I should throw the pitch in order to have the most success pitching. Once I got comfortable with that, my stuff took off.”

Every major leaguer remembers when he was told he was going to The Show and their first game. Like, J.P. Feyereisen and Kyle Cody, Stiever was on the taxi squad with the big club instead of the alternate training site when he was notified he was being called up. With Dallas Keuchel going on the Injured List and knowing where the team was at, he thought it could happen a few days before it became official. “I had just thrown my bullpen for the week and then was called over and given the news.” He made his debut in Detroit on September 13 and appeared nervous walking the first two batters, with the first being retired on a caught stealing. He then yielded a single to Miguel Cabrera putting runners on first and second. He got the clean-up hitter out on a pop foul but the next batter drove in the only run he gave up in his 3 2/3 innings pitched. How was the experience? “Obviously very memorable. Having no fans in the stadium was extremely weird and tough to get used to. Lots of nerves throughout but I did expect that. Definitely one of the greatest moments of my life and will always remember it.”

Special thanks to Jonathan for answering my questions so we could share his experience.

Bob Buege on WUWM's Bubbler Talk

Bob Buege was a guest on UWM's Bubbler Talk on February talking about Borchert Field on February 5, 2021. You can listen to and read the interview at: <https://www.wuwm.com/post/history-milwaukee-old-north-side-borchert-field>.

Borchert Field, the Bonus Chapters **By Bob Buege**

During the February Keltner Book Club meeting featuring Bob Buege and his awesome book, [*Borchert Field Stories from Milwaukee's Legendary Ballpark*](#), we learned that 13 chapters were not included in the book. We asked Bob if he would like to place them in the *Hot Corner*; he happily agreed. We'll feature one monthly into 2022. Thanks, Bob!

“HUSTLIN’ DANNY” SHAY

On April 23, 1917, manager [Danny Shay](#) and his Milwaukee Brewers boarded a train for Columbus, Ohio. Shay never came back.



The Brewers had lost to Kansas City that afternoon at Athletic Park, 4-3. Shay’s club had led 3-0 after three innings, but pitcher John Shackelford was wild, walking four, and could not hold the lead. Milwaukee mustered just four hits against Blues hurler Gene Cocreham.

After Columbus, the Wisconsin club continued their eastern road trip with three games in Toledo, two of which they lost. Following Toledo, they headed south for three games against league-leading Indianapolis. The Brewers eked out a 4-3 victory in the series opener but were crushed the next day, 14-1. The deciding game of the series was contested at Indy’s Washington Park on Thursday, May 3rd.

The Indians, behind the good pitching of Clint Rogge, edged the Brewers, 3-1. The defeat was due largely to that old bugaboo of managers, the base on balls. Indianapolis outfielder Al Wickland drew three walks and scored after each one. The game suffered a lengthy delay when Shay changed pitchers because his reliever, Charlie Harding, wore a uniform that did not match those of his teammates. Eventually Indy manager Jack Hendricks grew weary of the holdup and simply agreed to overlook the wardrobe variance and finish the ballgame.

It was the custom of the Brewers to leave town immediately after completing a series on the road. In this instance, however, manager Shay elected to board his players overnight in Indianapolis and catch the train to Louisville in the morning.

His managing duties complete for the day, Shay made his way to the fashionable café of the Hotel English for a bite to eat. Waiting there for him, having arrived 10 or 15 minutes earlier, was a manicurist named Gertrude Anderson. The exact nature of the relationship between Shay, a widower, and the professional nail-trimmer, a veteran of two brief marriages, was never made clear. Suffice it to say they were well acquainted.

Seating himself at the table, Shay noticed that the sugar bowl was less than full. He called over the waiter and pointed out the deficiency to him. “There is some in there,” responded the server, who happened to be what was politely called “colored.” The waiter then fetched two other sugar bowls from nearby vacant tables and set them in front of the baseball man.

Shay took offense at the insolence of his manner. Words were exchanged. Suddenly the Brewers’ field boss pulled a small revolver from his waistband, held it near the waiter’s abdomen, and fired one shot. Gravely wounded, the black man staggered toward his assailant and knocked him down. He proceeded to kick him, grabbed him by the neck, and bounced his head violently on the floor until the café manager ordered him to stop.

“Why shouldn’t I fight him?” shouted the bleeding waiter. “He shot me.”

An ambulance arrived for the gunshot victim, whose name was Clarence Euell. He was taken to the city hospital, where he died within an hour. Law enforcement officers arrived and conveyed the dazed shooter to the police lockup.

Shay told the police, and later the court, that the colored man had called him a vile name, that he had approached Shay with clenched fists, and that “I believed my life was in danger.”

When the Milwaukee ballclub boarded the 7:40 A.M. coach for Louisville, their manager remained behind bars in Indianapolis. The ballplayers had only known him for a few weeks. Shay was new to the Brewers, having managed Kansas City the previous season. He had left the Blues in mid-year after a dispute with the team’s owner. Shay was a baseball man of long standing. He had played for [John McGraw’s](#) New York Giants in 1907 as a teammate of [Christy Mathewson](#) and [Iron Man McGinnity](#).

Although recently introduced to the club, Shay was not a total stranger to the city of Milwaukee. As a member of the Cleveland Blues in 1901, he had played four games at the Lloyd Street Grounds, home park of the Brewers during their short sojourn as charter members of the American League. The Brewers were destined for last place, but they swept the series from Cleveland. Shay's stay in the new junior circuit was even more abbreviated than the Brewers'—the Blues farmed him out to the California League before the end of May.

Brewers owner Albert Timme, upon learning of Shay's arrest in Indianapolis, said, "The Milwaukee club will assist in every way possible." He immediately retained the law firm of Ryan & Rucklehaus. For more than six months Shay was held without bail. On November 14 his trial finally began. If convicted, Shay faced a life sentence.

Defense attorney Michael Ryan presented a vigorous defense. In his opening statement he claimed that shortly before Shay entered the café, Clarence Euell had smiled at Gertrude Anderson and "practiced arts of coquetry." Later Shay testified that he had never had trouble with either a waiter in a hotel or a colored man. He explained that he often packed a pistol because he carried large sums of cash. Shay's manicurist friend proved an effective witness, supporting all of the defendant's statements. She repeated the attorney's assertions that the waiter had smiled at her and that he had approached Shay in a hostile, threatening manner.

Five days into the proceedings, the defense presented a surprise witness. Miss Mary Archibald, a nurse, who had never been mentioned previously, testified that she had been seated in the café at the time of the shooting. She corroborated Shay's claim that he fired his weapon only after being attacked.

To the surprise of no one, the all-white, all-male jury found Shay not guilty. He never regained his manager's post with the Brewers, nor with any team. On December 1, 1927, he took his own life with a revolver in a Kansas City hotel room..

[SABR 50 at 50: Analytics](#)

As part of the [SABR 50 at 50 project](#) to commemorate the organization's fiftieth anniversary, SABR offers [50 moments in the evolution of baseball analytics](#) for the past 50 years.

The history of baseball analytics, or sabermetrics, is long and complicated and is filled with many important contributions from analysts, writers, popularizers, books, websites and corporations. The 50 selected moments, or events, are ones we thought would best tell the story of the past half century in this ever-changing field since [SABR's founding in 1971](#). The next 50 years promises to be just as busy.

We invite you to read the list and the short description for each of the entries. Click on the title to read stories from the [SABR Research Collection](#) archives or other baseball authors about these moments.



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