

KELTNER'S HOT CORNER



Ken Keltner Badger State Chapter

December 2022

In This Issue:

- Upcoming Events
- [Recap November Chapter Meeting](#)
- [Keltner Book Club](#)
- [Get to Know](#)
- [Schabowski Super Stumpers](#)
- [Oral History Committee Update](#)
- [Wisconsin Born 2022 Debuts](#)
- [2023 SABR Local Grants](#)
- [MLB Pickle](#)
- [Neighboring Chapters' Newsletters](#)

Upcoming Events

Chapter Holiday Gathering

Saturday, December 10 @ 2PM
J&B's Blue Ribbon Bar & Grill

Joint SABR Day w/ Chicago

Brat Stop – Kenosha
TBD February

SABR 51

Chicago - July 5-9, 2023
Palmer House

Direct questions or comments to:
Dennis D. Degenhardt
bovine9@icloud.com
262-339-9968

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

New Members

Ben Wozniak – Milwaukee
Elwood Zion Minnick-Wortzel - Madison

UPCOMING EVENTS

Talking Baseball

J&Bs Blue Ribbon Bar & Grill
5230 W. Bluemound Rd, Milwaukee
Saturday, December 10, 2022
2:00 PM

A tradition started years ago by Rick was getting together to talk baseball and sharing good cheer. With the challenge of busy schedules during December finding speakers and matching calendars being an issue, forget issues – let's get together to celebrate the holidays and our SABR friends.



Joint SABR Day with Chicago Chapter

Brat Stop – Kenosha
TBD February Saturday

Watch for Further Details in December



Recap Fall In-Person Chapter Meeting

A group of about a dozen members met on Saturday November 12 at Stack'd Burger Bar, on South 1st St in Milwaukee's historic fifth ward. Stack'd was chosen because it was very convenient to National Bobblehead Museum which was located on the second floor.



Professor Mike Haupt of UW La Crosse **Salaries, Skinflints, and Scandals: The Cost of the Black Sox Scandal**

Mike Haupt joined our fall meeting to talk about his SABR 50 Research presentation.

Although groundbreaking research over the past several years has largely debunked many of the myths surrounding the Black Sox, a vast quantity of documents and research, the financial side of the story still remains murky in its details. Haupt's spent several summers at the Hall of Fame copying MLBs contract cards (now longer allowed) research shows that Comiskey paid his players at least as well as most owners if not

the best. So why did the nine players participate in the plot? Looking at the how much they were promised versus lost salaries after being suspended, they all lost money. Mike contends, easy money with gambling rife in baseball. And players were seldom caught with only seven lifetime bans all date prior to 1885.

But if money was so easy, why didn't happen more often? Were the employees disgruntled because they weren't earning a fair wage? No, with the average player earning \$3,285 only Lefty Williams and Fred McMullin earned less? And the average income for the regular guys on the street was \$860. The high paid entertainers were earning \$10,000 – per week. The Sox salaries from 1916 to 1921 was always 3% to 29% above the major league average.

Compared to other players? Ty Cobb was the highest paid competitor earning \$20,000 with Chicago's Collins third at \$15,000, the only player in the top 11. Collins was also Comiskey's only player was the top earner by position., catcher Killefer was second. One of the players who may gotten into the BlackSox crew was Eddie Collins earning twice as much as the next two teammates combined.

Or compared to teammates? One of the players who may gotten into the BlackSox crew was Eddie Collins earning twice as much as the next two teammates combined. Having signed a rare long-term contract, he led the team in salary from 1915 to 1922 at \$15,000. Not only did they feel he was overpaid but they didn't like the college boy.

Mike's Conclusion:

- White Sox ballplayers were well paid
- The White Sox were the best paid of those ballplayers
- But the Sox salaries were not equitably distributed
- Throwing the series hurt the players more than the team
- The final analysis . . .



"I was dumb alright"

If you are interested in a copy of Mike's PowerPoint presentation, please contact [Dennis](#).

Phil Sklar and Touring National Bobblehead Museum

SABR member and co-founder of the [National Bobblehead Museum](#) Phil Sklar joined us after lunch to talk about the museum he founded with his partner Brad Novak in 2014 starting with a concept to website that year to opening the museum in February 2019. When they opened, they had 6,500 bobbleheads, they now have over 10,000 in their 4,000 square foot museum on South 1st Street in Milwaukee. Their collection comes from donation to buying other collections. They are in the process of obtaining the Guinness World of Records recognition for the largest bobblehead collection.



In addition to collecting, they also make bobbleheads. The museum created the Negro League Baseball Museum collection as well as the All American Girls Professional Baseball Collection. With the AAGPBL celebrating their 80th anniversary in 2023, they will have a special series next summer. They will also have new Negro League bobbleheads honoring the three women who played in the league, [Toni Stone](#), Connie Morgan and Mamie "Peanuts" Johnson.



Have you seen the Dr. Fauci bobbleheads. Yes, they made them. Politicians? Yes there are bobbleheads for them, too, their creation.

One of their most interesting features is a replica of the Negro Leagues Museum's Field of Legends which you see immediately upon entering.

When is National Bobblehead Day?

The history of bobbleheads go back to the 1,400 in China with a form of the art called a nodder. They also have some Chinese critters playing musical instruments from the 1700s in their collection.

Although bubbleheads are made for all kinds of subjects, 70% are sports related with 70% of those baseball. They have bobbles of players on winning teams holding their championship trophies they design and sell. Anyone interested in an Astro championship bobblehead?

Phil was asked what was the most expensive bobblehead and a 14-inch generic New York Yankee went for \$90,000.

Following Phil's presentation, we went upstairs to the museum to be dazzled. Not only is the collection amazing to see but the layout and wide variety of bobbleheads has something for any interest. Dennis Pajot said as he was leaving, "I've got to bring my grandkids here." Our speaker, Mike Hauptert, who we all said had a great presentation said seeing the museum, "made the trip well worth the trip from La Crosse."

Visit their [on-line store](#) to see the wide variety of bobbleheads available. You can also become a [member](#).

Taking pictures of the museum cannot do it justice but following are some photos to get a feel for the lay of the land, er, museum.



Contribute to the *Keltner Hot Corner*

Do you have an article or topic you would like to publish in the newsletter? If so, that's great. Please contact [Dennis](#).



Recap Virtual Book Club Meeting
With special Guest: Thomas Gilbert, author of *How Baseball Happened*
Outrageous Lies Exposed! - The True Story Revealed

We were very fortunate to have Thomas Gilbert join the Keltner Book Club to discuss his interesting book *How Baseball Happens* and talk about those lies.

As the author exclaimed, the book is truly a fascinating American history with the context of baseball.



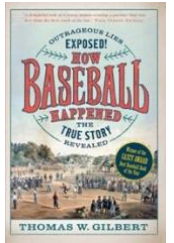
And he found four unresolved questions for his research that he addressed during the presentation.

1. Where did baseball come from?
2. How did an ancient folk or kids game evolve into a mature adult's activity?
3. How did a regional game from New York go national?
4. Why did a New York bat and ball game win over other bat and ball games including cricket.

Gilbert explained why the lies were outrageous, not only were the claims false but those spreading them knew so.

You can learn more about Doubleday, Cartwright, the Knickerbockers, Mills, Spalding, and other baseball history characters the railroads and much more. Tom's knowledge of the topic and presentation skills make this a recording to watch. To do so, click on his picture or [here](#).

During Book Club Meetings we enjoy giving copies of the book to someone attending the meeting. Unfortunately, the first person's name drawn was no longer at the meeting and because so most had read the book, we narrowed the drawing to four people who had not read the book, yet, with Dave Heller winning the drawing.



To watch the recording, click on Tom's picture or click [here](#).



Keltner Book Club News
By Mary Shea

We certainly enjoyed our last meeting with Tom Gilbert,. We're already looking for suggestions for our next selection. Is there a baseball book you've enjoyed, or would you like to run a virtual book club meeting? Please let us know.

Here are a couple of recently published ideas for your offseason reading:

[The Grandest Stage - A History of the World Series](#), by Tyler Kepner

This is written by the excellent *New York Times* columnist and is chock full of stories, many that you might remember, but there are also plenty of historical accounts. Kepner always delves deeper and includes candid insight from key players and managers involved.

[The Sputnik Season: 1957](#), by Noel Hynd

1957 was the year the Milwaukee Braves won the World Series, of course, but there was a lot going on throughout the baseball world that year. Hynd covers plenty of the Braves and New York baseball, including the final seasons of the New York Giants and the Brooklyn Dodgers. There's even a contribution by our own Bob Buege.

And now for something completely different:

[The Cranklet's Chronicle, and Lost Diamonds](#), by Ellen Linder

Lindner has created three "zines" about women in baseball. They're actually well written and concise histories in comic book form, with wonderful illustrations. These are absolutely delightful and informative and would be enjoyed by all ages, from hipsters to oldsters like me. They're available from Radiator Comics:

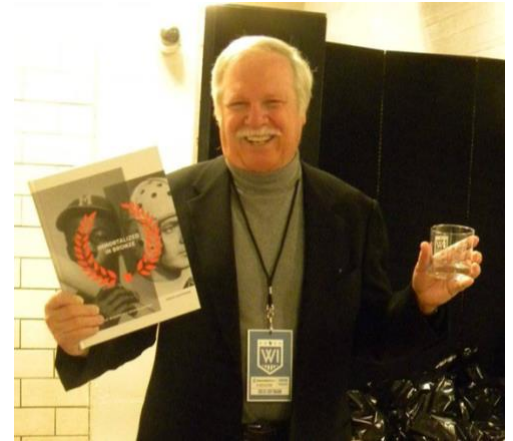
Please submit any questions, comments, or book suggestions to [Mary Shea](#). As always, happy reading - Mary

Get to Know...Gregg Hoffmann

“When I went to Braves games early on, I knew I didn’t have the talent to play on the field. But I had a couple teachers who told me I could write so I would look up at the press box. I spent 43 years covering games from the box in County Stadium and Miller Park. SABR added to those years. So, I really lived one of my childhood dreams, but I realized as an adult I needed to have others. So, I wrote about many topics. But the times when I was in the press box, I was that grade school kid living his dream.”

Gregg Hoffmann was born on February 23, 1949, in Oak Park, Illinois, the first born of Bob and Jeanine (Casper) Hoffmann, with two sisters following him. He grew up in Paddock Lake, (Kenosha County) where his dad was a county highway worker while mom maintained the home. He attended school in nearby Salem (2.3 miles away) attending Salem Grade School and Salem Central High School.

A Milwaukee Braves vs. Chicago Cubs contest in Wrigley Field is Gregg’s earliest baseball memory. He was eight or nine years old, and it was his first in-person ballgame. Unfortunately, his favorite team, the Braves, lost on an [Ernie Banks](#) homer. But it’s not all bad memories as he recalls big hits by his favorite player [Eddie Mathews](#) and [Henry Aaron](#). He also remembers [Warren Spahn](#) and [Lew Burdette](#) clowning around during batting practice (BP). That made an impression because, “Just seeing big league BP in person was impressive for a kid. Baseball had been something on the radio up to that point.”



In high school, Hoffmann played baseball, football, basketball, ran cross country, and golfed. Remember the two teachers who encouraged Gregg to write; they also recommended him to several southeast Wisconsin newspapers where he was a stringer¹ in games he was playing. When Bill Branen, the owner of the *Standard Press* in Burlington, offered him a part-time sports editor job in his senior year, he dropped all sports but golf to edit and write after school and cover prep games on weekends. A journalist was born.

After graduating high school, Gregg attended both UW-Milwaukee and Parkside University in Kenosha for a year before transferring to the University of Wisconsin to study Journalism. He earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1973. College did not slow his writing pursuits, “I stayed with Bill through college, as a stringer, and then went back to Burlington after graduation to become associate editor of the *Standard Press*.”

The three most important people in his life came from Burlington, two mentors and, in July of 1974, Pauline Ehlen his life partner when they wed on the 20th, having celebrated their 48th anniversary this year.

In November, Hoffmann celebrated his 50th anniversary as a journalist and writer. As he posted on October 29, 2022, on Facebook, “November will be my 50th anniversary. No, not my wedding anniversary. Pauline and I have 1 ½ years left to get to that. It’s my other love – writing and journalism. When I add fulltime years with part-time years during my student days and as retired, I come up with 600 months. By my math, that’s 50.” Although two educators provided the push, it started with his grandfather who served as the *Chicago Herald American* art director during the heyday of newspapers in the Windy City. “Grandpa Casper told me stories of those days. I was hooked right away.”

While working for Branen, one of his Burlington gurus, he met the third, Bob Spitzer, a well-respected agribusinessman who served as Gerald Ford’s director of the Food for Peace program and president of Milwaukee School of Engineering. He spoke with Gregg about writing a book about that experience and America’s role in helping feed the hungry. At the same time, Hoffmann was thinking about starting a freelance writing-photo-publishing business. “My Grandpa Casper again was a catalyst for that since he became a freelance artist after leaving the *Herald American*.”

¹ What is a stringer? As Gregg explained, “Stringer is another word for correspondent. Somebody who works in the field and sends stories to an outlet. The term, by the way, comes from the way they were paid in the old days. Their stories would be “measured” using a foot long string and pay would be by the column inch. The term was still around by the time I started but not the practice.

Co-authoring with Spitzer, provide the journalist the project he needed to start his freelance business leading to leaving the *Standard Press* in 1976. The book, “What You Can Do to Help the Hungry Feed Themselves” won a Freedom Foundation award, and Hoffman said, “it served as a springboard into book publishing for me.”

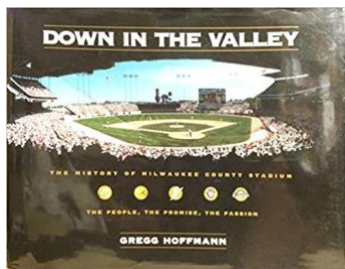
As a freelancer, Hoffmann covered baseball, football, basketball, and other sports as a correspondent for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, *Capital Times*, *Racine Journal Times*, *Kenosha News*, *La Crosse Tribune* and several regional publications. He was the Milwaukee correspondent for *USA Today*, *Baseball Weekly*, and *The Sporting News*. He reported on Super Bowls, World Series, and the Olympics as well as political campaigns, major business developments, environmental issues, and other news stories. Gregg interviewed “dozens, perhaps hundreds,” of celebrities and authored nine books. He has received awards from the Associated Press Sportswriters Association, Wisconsin Newspaper Association, National Telemedium Council, and others.

One of his earliest freelance opportunities was with the Post Newspapers, a chain of 14 Milwaukee area weekly newspapers. He lost half of his business when the Post chain folded in 1981. Gregg scrambling to regain business decided to also attend grad school at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, majoring in communications with an emphasis on cultural studies, earning his master’s degree in 1985. Taking a course taught by John Pauly, Hoffmann told him of his interest in teaching someday – later in life. A few weeks later, the chair of the Mass Communications Department called Gregg asking if he was interested in taking over a course for a professor who had suffered a heart attack. As Hoffman related, “I accepted and wore a suit to my first class. That was the last time I ever did that. In fact, I told many people one reason I became a lecturer at UWM is so I could dress like a sportswriter and vice versa.” He stayed at UWM for 23 years, retiring as a senior lecturer emeritus. “That job led me into academic writing and media literacy and semantics. I developed a course, which led to an outreach program, and Pauline and I traveled all over the country lecturing at institutions including Columbia, Yale, UCLA, UW-Madison, Roosevelt, Appalachian State, and Alverno College and three times to Australia for seminars.”

About his career, Gregg commented, “I feel very lucky that I could earn my living doing something I love – actually, two things, writing and teaching it. Creativity is much more perspiration than inspiration. You must work at your craft to become good at it. Yet, writing also can be a bit of a mystery. I still can’t honestly say I know exactly how the words come to me. I can honestly say they do come a little slower at 73 than they did 50-60 years ago.”

Gregg may be retired but he’s still active publishing 15 websites and Facebook sites ranging from *WisBiz Green* to *Driftless Images in Pixels & Prose* to *Midwest Diamond Report*, *Wisconsin Sports Legacy Museum*, and others. And he is one of the owners of [The Big Old Red Shed](#) in Westby where he sells, consigns, and buys baseball memorabilia amongst antique and other collectible booths.

Because of his interest in baseball history, Gregg joined SABR attending two conventions and contributed to all three Milwaukee SABR BioProject Books. In “Thar’s Joy in Braveland! The 1957 Milwaukee Braves” he had an article on *County Stadium*. He also wrote about the stadium in “From the Braves to the Brewers: Great Games and Exciting History at Milwaukee’s County Stadium” titled, *A Controversial Construction* and another article, *April 19, 1987, Sveum’s Walk-Off Home Run on Easer Sunday Gives Brewers a 12-0 Rout*. And in “Harvey’s Wallbangers: The 1982 Milwaukee Brewers”, Gregg had a third stadium article, *County Stadium. Milwaukee, Wisconsin* as well as the SABR Bio on [Jim Gantner](#) and the ALCS Game 4 Game Project chapter, *October 9, 1982, Harvey’s Wallbangers Have a New Member*.



Hoffmann has written two of the more notable sports related books of our generation. “[Down in the Valley: The History of Milwaukee County Stadium](#),” is the pictorial history of the stadium most of us grew up visiting. When the book came out in 2000, I think everyone received it as a holiday gift selling more copies than his other books combined. How many Keltner members have a copy? [I do, DDD].

In the 1970s, a twenty-something Hoffmann started researching the stories of the members of the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame with Hall founder Joseph Krueger who was generally uncooperative and suspicious of anyone who may try to exploit the Hall much less a young writer in his 20s. With time, they became good friends working well together, even discussing a book on the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame. Hoffmann followed through 40 years later with “[Immortalized in Bronze](#)” just in time for the induction of the 2017 HOF class. “That was one of the better days of my professional life, after waiting 43 years to have it come out.” The picture for this article shows that joy of accomplishment.



Although Gregg has written an estimated 10,000 professional and academic articles and interviewed hundreds of celebrities, he still has a unique baseball interest, stories about town ball. As he told it, “My interest in town ball began primarily since moving out here in 2004. Seemed like every old-timer played for his hometown team and every town had a team. Also, it seemed like every old-timer played against [Elston Howard](#) when he apparently was stationed at Fort McCoy. Several also played against the King and His Court in fastpitch softball.” He continued, “I have done some stuff for *Midwest Diamond Report*, but nothing for other pubs. Figure doing a few things about it and the *Country Weekly* will be going full circle (rounding the bases) since I started my career in Burlington. Small town and rural have always been loves for this guy from Chicago who spent a lot of time in big cities ballparks. The game also has its roots in small town and rural America.

If Gregg could have a baseball time machine moment or two, what or where would he go back in time to visit. His reply, “Many of my dream moments have been experienced with coverage of big games, interviews, etc. I would have liked to have interviewed the [Babe](#) and [Lou Gehrig](#), not only because they were two of the greatest, but also so different in personalities.” He added another, “I’d also like to be at the Field of Dreams when ghosts really came out of the corn. Would not even mind being one someday.”

And to close, any final words of wisdom? Gregg thoughtfully replied, “Baseball is great because of the people involved. Analytics and excessive breakdown of fundamentals via computers, etc. have dominated the games in recent years and, in my opinion, have made the game less entertaining and fun to watch. I believe attendance and viewership have reflected that. Let’s do more telling of the human stories of those who play, coach, manage and most of all love the game. You can put in rule changes to try to speed the game up, etc., but tell those human stories and the drama of those stories as they are acted out and through history accounts, and fans won’t care “if they ever get back.”



Schabowski's Super Stumpers

By Rick Schabowski

December Trivia

Rick has some fun and challenging World Series questions this month How did you do? Did any of these bring back good memories?

1. In 2022, both Cy Young winners won unanimously. This is only the second time this has happened. What year did this last happen and name the AL and NL pitchers who were the award winners.
2. The Braves Michael Harris II and Spencer Strider finished first and second in the 2022 Rookie of the Year balloting. Name the year, players, and team when this last happened.
3. Who was the first knuckleball pitcher in the Live Ball Era to win the ERA title?
4. In 1982, cheers of MVP resonated around Milwaukee County Stadium when Robin Yount was on the field. Who was the runner-up to Yount in the voting?
5. Name the Brewers player who finished fifth in the 1982 MVP voting.



Do you have a baseball trivia question or two, heck even 12, to stump Our Stumper? If so, send your brilliance to [Rick](#) to see if you can trip him up and he'll include it in a future *Keltner Hot Corner* giving you credit - bragging rights - for your stumper(s).

Trivia Answers are [here](#)

Keltner Hot Corner Archives

You can now view or download past copies of the Keltner Hot Corner at: [Ken Keltner Badger State Newsletters](#)

Use of Links

Links in the *Keltner Hot Corner* are used to enhance the articles with the majority going to players SABR [BioProject](#) and [baseball-reference.com](#) as well as other related sites.

Who is Ken Keltner? See his SABR [Biography](#).

Return
Pg 1

SABR Oral History Committee Update

URL	Date	Title	Interviewer
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/joe-block-2022	2022-01-06	Interview with Joe Block (2022)	McMurray, John
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/leah-heaphy-2022	2022-01-14	Interview with Leah Heaphy (2022)	Shaw, Joe
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/stew-thornley-2022	2022-01-29	Interview with Stew Thornley (2022)	Levitt, Dan
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/mel-allen-1962	1962	Interview with Mel Allen (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/hank-beaver-1962	1962	Interview with Hank Beaver (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/clete-bryer-1963	1963	Interview with Clete Bryer (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/tommy-bridges-1963	1963-04-13	Interview with Tommy Bridges (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/joe-brown-1962	1962	Interview with Joe L. Brown (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/joe-l-brown-1963	1963	Interview with Joe L. Brown (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/hill-chester-1962	1962	Interview with Hill Chester (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/roberto-clemente-1963	1963	Interview with Roberto Clemente (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/dave-clemens-1963	1963	Interview with Dave Clemens (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/choo-columan-1963	1963-03-25	Interview with Choo Choo Columan (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/ruger-craig-1963	1963-03-25	Interview with Ruger Craig (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/benjamin-daniels-1962	1962	Interview with Benjie Daniels (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/harry-danning-1962	1962-08-13	Interview with Harry Danning (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/tommy-davis-1962	1962	Interview with Tommy Davis (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/bill-davitt-1963	1963-03-28	Interview with Bill Davitt Sr. (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/ned-ford-1962	1962	Interview with Ned Ford (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/ned-ford-1963	1963	Interview with Ned Ford (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/frankie-frost-1963	1963	Interview with Frankie Frost (1963)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/goose-goslin-1962	1962-08-13	Interview with Goose Goslin (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/bob-henley-1962	1962-08-13	Interview with Bob Henley (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/billy-hitchcock-1962	1962	Interview with Billy Hitchcock (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/harold-hoover-1962	1962-08-13	Interview with Harold Hoover (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/ralph-houk-1960	1960-10-21	Interview with Ralph Houk (1960)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/ralph-houk-1962	1962	Interview with Ralph Houk (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/fred-hutchinson-1962	1962-03-28	Interview with Fred Hutchinson (1962)	Evans, Clifford
https://sabr.org/oralhistory/johnny-keane-1963	1963	Interview with Johnny Keane (1963)	Evans, Clifford

Dear Members of the Oral History Committee:

As 2022 comes to a close, I invite you to spend some time listening to our content on www.sabr.org/oralhistory, where we now have 735 audio files available.

We also have a lot of new content. Over the past few months, we have posted a number of interviews with former players, including original interviews with Fred Lynn, Pat Tabler, and Rick Burleson.

Our audio content this year also includes Brian Hall's interviews with sabermetric pioneers, including with Pete Palmer and Bill James. We have also published more than fifty audio files from the 1960s Clifford Evans radio archives, which includes recordings with Roberto Clemente, Nellie Fox, Goose Goslin, and Bob Friend, among many others. The Mike Bordick interview from this summer's convention in Baltimore is up too.

We have interviews with a current broadcaster ([Joe Block](#) of the Pittsburgh Pirates) and others with prominent SABR figures ([Leslie Heaphy](#) interviewed by Joe Shaw and [Stew Thornley](#) interviewed by Dan Levitt).

Links to every new audio file the Oral History Committee has published this year are at <https://sabr.box.com/v/oral-history-2022-list>

Would you like to become an interviewer? Drop me a note at sabroralhistorycommittee@gmail.com, and we will get you started.

Thank you for your contributions this year, and we look forward to more original content in 2023.

Best regards,
John McMurray
SABR Oral History Committee Chair



Apply Now for a SABR Local Grant in 2023

What ideas can we come up with for the Ken Keltner Chapter to receive a local grant? Scholarship(s)? Keltner Web site? Any baseball location or grave site needing a dedication? Others? Who would like to join a group to brainstorm ideas? Contact [Dennis](#).

The [SABR Local Grants program](#) provides an opportunity for chapters, research committees, and chartered communities to apply for funding for their projects under SABR's Four Pillars: Research, Scholarship, Preservation, and Future of the Game. Applications are now open for a 2023 SABR Local Grant at SABR.org/local-grants. Submissions will be accepted until January 16, 2023. A Grants Review Board will review all submissions and respond with their final determination in February 2023.



All SABR chapters, chartered communities, and research committees are eligible to apply. Individual SABR members and non-SABR groups are not eligible, so if you have an individual idea for a program grant, please follow up with your local chapter leadership or appropriate research committee to discuss an application.

The [seven projects that received a SABR Local Grant in 2022](#) are well under way, including the dedication of a historical marker at Kelly Field in Daytona Beach, Florida, where Jackie Robinson and John Wright integrated Dodgers spring training in 1946; a new marker commemorating Roberto Clemente's 3,000th hit at the site of Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh; and the repainting of a championship mural at Rickwood Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

Other Local Baseball Organizations

Milwaukee Braves Historical Association, [Facebook](#)
Old Time Ball Players of Wisconsin, [Website](#), [Facebook](#)

Wisconsin Players Major League Debut - 2022

By Dennis D Degenhardt

Two Wisconsin born ballplayers made their debut in 2022. Jonah Bride was highlighted in the November *Keltner Hot Corner*. This month we feature Baltimore Oriole Terrin Vavra.

Terrin Vavra

Terrin Thomas Vavra was born in Menomonie on May 12, 1997, making his major league debut with the Baltimore Orioles on July 29, 2022 at age 25. He was 22,753rd major leaguer and 254th born in Wisconsin.

Vavra is Lesa (Heise) Vavra and Joe Vavra third of three brothers, following Tanner, seven years older and Treysen five years older. Mom is a graduate of UW-Stout and an early childhood educator, and his dad has a [40-year career](#) in professional baseball.

Joe Vavra's played five years in the minor as an infielder in the Dodgers organization before an injury ended his career in AAA. He transitioned to minor league managing, spending nine years with the Dodgers winning three league championships as well as twice losing in the league finals. With three growing boys at home, Joe accepted the head coaching position at his alma mater, UW-Stout in 2001, where he still owned the career batting average of .403² but was lured back into professional baseball in 2002 as Minnesota's minor league field director for four years before becoming Twins manager Ron Gardenhire's hitting coach. He remained in that position until Gardenhire and his coaches were let go following the 2014 season.



The senior Vavra became the first active major league coach to manage in the Australian Baseball League (ABL), at the helm of the Melbourne Aces during the 2015-2016 season. His two oldest sons Tanner and Treysen, Twins minor leaguers, playing the infield for him. With dad's career, that season down under was the most time the three spend together around the game. Both sons represented the Aces playing for the World Stars versus Team Australia in the ABL All-star game.³

Returning to the states, Joe becoming the Twins bench coach for two years leaving in 2018 when Gardenhire became Detroit's manager. He spent two years as the quality assurance coach before becoming the hitting coach in 2020 but was dismissed at the end of the season along with most of the coaching staff.

Tanner and Treysen were star ball players at Menomonie High School, both advancing to college baseball and spending two years at Madison College. They overlapped the year the WolfPack finished third in the National Junior College, Division II World Series. Tanner transferred to Valparaiso University and was drafted in 2013 by the Twins in the 30th round. After Madison, Treysen, enjoyed one season at Eastern Illinois and another at Florida Southern College where he was drafted in the 33rd round by the Twins as well in 2014.⁴ They both are currently assistant college baseball coaches, Tanner at University of St. Thomas, Division-III in St. Paul, MN. Trey has been with the University of Minnesota since 2022.

Terrin, remember Terrin? It looks like he has big shoes to fill following his family's baseball pedigree.

As a five-foot-four, 130-pound high school freshman in 2012, Coach Mike King, having watched him develop, was ready for Vavra who became the first Menomonie freshman to start every varsity game batting .414⁵ and was named All-Big Rivers Conference (BRC) honorable mention for leading the sixth place Menomonie Mustangs with a .625 on base percentage (OBP), in conference play. When not playing baseball, the youngest Vavra was a member of the Menomonee High School hockey team for all four years. Over the following two seasons, Vavra remained consistent, hitting .397 as a sophomore and .405 as a junior and named second team All-Big Rivers Conference both years.

Prior to the start of Menomonie's summer baseball season, the senior shortstop/pitcher, committed to play baseball for the University of Minnesota. As his high school coach stated, "Terrin's commitment to the U of M is a dream come true for him, as he has always wanted to play Big 10 baseball." The coach added, "Besides

² Vavra "Accepts UW-Stout Post," *Chippewa Herald*, May 13, 2000. Vavra's career BA is now second to Brad O'Connells 4.22 from 1998-2002. O'Connell played one year in the minors.

³ Ben Peterson, "Baseball brings Vavra Family to Sunny Australia for the Holidays," *Chippewa Herald*, December 24, 2015.

⁴ IBID.

⁵ Jason Cox, "Baseball in the Blood of All-Area Player of the Year Vavra," *Leader-Telegram*, July 5, 2015.

being our shortstop and one of our top pitchers, Terrin is a leader on and off the field. His knowledge, skill and work ethic will translate well at the collegiate level.”⁶

Growing seven inches since starting high school with a weight room regimen Terrin was bigger and faster. for his senior season. Having been hard on himself his mental approach was improved, "I got a lot stronger, both mentally and physically," Vavra said. "Senior year, obviously you want to have a successful season, but it was also important for me to have fun this season. That helped me relax and play better baseball."⁷

Leading his team in batting, .533, Vavra was named BRC conference player of the year and Menomonee's only a first-team All-Big Rivers Conference for his play at shortstop and one of the Mustang's top pitchers. Honors continued when he was named the Northwest District Player of the Year and then first team all-state selection by the Wisconsin Baseball Coaches Association.

Comparing the three brothers, Coach King commented, "That focus on defense is something that Vavra had instilled in him by his brothers, neither of whom put up the kind of numbers that their younger brother did at Menomonie. Trey was a contact hitter with good speed but little power. Tanner was big and strong but not very fast. Terrin isn't as fast as Trey or as powerful as Tanner, but he's a more balanced player than either of his brothers were when they graduated high school."

At the end of June, he was invited to Oshkosh to play in the annual Wisconsin Baseball Coaches Association all-star games at with the best spring and summer high school players in the state. Terrin was recruited by Duluth of the Northwoods League (NWL) becoming the third Vavra to play in the league and following in his brother Treys footsteps with the Huskies. Playing short, second and third bases the left-handed batter hit .269 in 14 games.

With the Golden Gophers starting shortstop position open, Freshman Vavra knew he had the ability but wasn't expecting to be the starter in 2016. But with his hitting skills and steady defense, Coach John Anderson overlooked his age and awarded him the position. "Fortunately, I was able to win the starting spot, and I was able to take advantage of it," Vavra said. "That's something I'm pretty proud of, and it's definitely good to see results after I put in the hard work."⁸ Starting 23 of Minnesota's first 27 games, Terrin was batting .390 with four doubles, two triples, and a home run with 18 RBIs, batting second, when a back injury knocked him out of the lineup for most of April and May. Defensively, he had a .988 fielding percentage with only one error at short. Returning to play in five games late in the season, 32 in all, the former Mustang helped lead Minnesota to their first Big Ten championship and NCAA tournament bid since 2010. The injury slowed Vavra who finished third in hitting, .350 adding two doubles after returning.

Although Terrin earlier in the year committed to return to Duluth for the summer, after his injury taking the summer off. He likely regretted not playing as he credited the 14 games in Duluth for helping make the move to the Big Ten easier. He learned that the pace of the college game was faster and the plays tougher as the balls are hit harder.⁹

Heading into his second season, *Baseball America* listed Vavra as one of the nation's top shortstops¹⁰ and he was chosen in the Big Ten coaches annual vote of the top three Gophers.¹¹ Staying healthy, Terrin played in 50 games, batting leadoff, finishing tied leading with seven stolen bases and four triples and he was second on the squad with 36 runs, while batting .309/.369/.418 with a .787 OPS. He hit two homers for the season over a stretch of four days including one off Cedarburg native Jonathan Stiever playing for Indiana.

After taking the previous summer off following the back injury, Vavra signed with the Cotuit Kettleers of the Cape Cod League. He needed to take two weeks off after suffering a concussion in the first game on June 14 when he was struck in the head by a baseball.¹² Rather than take the summer off after the injury, he wanted to focus on the opportunities of playing in the Cape, "It means a lot to be here," he said. "This league has the best pitching in the country. I just try to go out there and let my abilities take care of the rest. I don't try to do too

⁶ "Vavra to Suit Up for Gophers," *Dunn County News*, April 24, 2015.

⁷ Jason Cox, "Baseball in the Blood of All-Area Player of the Year Vavra," *Leader-Telegram*, July 5, 2015.

⁸ Jason Cox, "Into the Fire," *Leader-Telegram*, May 8, 2016.

⁹ IBID.

¹⁰ "Looks Like Twins Will Draft Pitcher Greene No. 1 – Overheard," *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, February 19, 2017.

¹¹ "Briefly - Big Ten Coaches Select NU Third in Preseason Poll," *Omaha World-Herald*, February 16, 2017.

¹² Laura Giammattei, "Concussion Doesn't 'Shortstop' Menomonie Native," *Dunn County News*, August 8, 2017.

much no matter where I'm playing." He managed to get into 24 games, the majority, ten at second base and only four at his customary shortstop. He also was used as a pinch hitter. Facing the tougher pitchers, the left-handed spray hitter was .279/.351/.382 with a .733 OPS with four doubles and a dinger.

After two years of dealing with a stress fracture in his back, the junior was finally healthy and on fire hitting .385 over his first 100 ABs with 25 RBIs in the Gophers first 28 games. Terrin was no longer limited on what he could do during practice or in the weight room and that made a huge difference.¹³ He continued playing at a very high-level leading 11th ranked Minnesota to the Big Ten championship with an 18-4 record. It was Coach Anderson's 11th trophy in 37 years. They then won the Big Ten Tournament, becoming the first team since 2014 to win both titles. Terrin Vavra was named the Big Ten Player of the Week twice and was a unanimous choice for the All-Big Ten First Team.

By winning the Big Ten championships Minnesota received an invitation to the NCAA tournament, seeded 14 in the field of 64, hosting a Regional. Of John Anderson's 18 previous tournament teams, none had advance to the Super Regionals, but this team was confident they could do so. Vavra had three hits and three RBI in the first game as Minnesota topped Canisius 10-1. Game two at Siebert Field went to extra inning against UCLA. Trailing the Bruins by one run in the eighth inning, Terrin doubled leading off the inning and scored on Eli Wilson's base hit, tying the contest. In the tenth, Vavra started with a single, advancing to second on a sacrifice. He then scored the winning run on Micah Coffey's double to right. After the nail biter, the Gophers beat the Bruins 13-8 advancing to the Super Regionals, for the first time since 1977, to face third ranked Oregon. Terrin was one of five Minnesota teammate to be named to the All-Regional Team and was named the tournament's most outstanding player. They lost the first game against Oregon 10-1 but the Beavers, who had not trailed in the tournament's previous five games and outscoring their opponents 43-5, needed an Adley Rutschman rally on a 1-2 pitch up the middle for a two-out, two-run single in the ninth inning to defeat Minnesota 6-3.

Vavra became Minnesota's first baseball player to earn All-America honors, in nine years, when he was named a first team All-America by *Baseball America*.¹⁴ The honor came one day after Terrin was named a finalist for the Brooks Wallace Award recognizing the nation's top college shortstop.¹⁵ He was also named an All-American by the American Baseball Coaches Association.

For the season, playing in 58 of 59 game, Vavra led the Golden Gophers in most hitting categories, first in eight statistics: hits (86), triples (4), homers (10), RBIs (95), BA (.386), SLG (.614), OPS (1.069) and total bases (137). He was in the top three in six others. Terrin was also on Minnesota's Dean's List.

After the strong season, Vavra was the 96th pick overall when he was selected by the Colorado Rockies in the third round of the 2018 MLB Amateur Draft on June 5. He signed a \$550,000 contract on June 19 and started his professional career in Boise, Idaho three days later, on June 22 with a multi-hit game. He hit his first professional tater on July 11, a ninth inning walk off grand slam for a 6-5 victory over Vancouver. Vavra drove in all of Boise's runs. Starting late after playing in the NCAA tournament, the 21-year old got 44 games under his belt, 28 at short and 16 at the second. With four triples, he tied for second on the Hawks and was third with OBP (.396) while batting .302/.396/.468 with a .863 OPS.

For the 2019 term, Vavra was promoted to the Class A Asheville (North Carolina) Tourists in the Southern Atlantic League where he would again man second (41 games, 4 errors) and short (54 games, 12 errors). He continued hitting adding more power, slamming ten homers. He was credited with leading the league with .409 OBP and second and third for runs (79) while batting .318 which led to Terrin being named 2019 South Atlantic League Player of the Year. He also made his first All-Star team. The left swinging batter led the Tourists with BA, runs (79), doubles (32), OBP (.409), and was a leader finishing in the top three for three other categories leading to a batting line of .318/.409/.489 with .899 OPS.

Going into his second full professional season in 2020 started out well, he was invited to the Rockies spring camp as a non-roster invitation. By the middle of March, MLB was shutting down spring training and the start of the season. When they restarted in July the minor leagues were cancelled for the year and Varva did not receive an invite to the 60-man Summer Camp, staying home for the season working out at Triple Threat Training, the baseball and softball training facility owned by Terrin and his brothers. But on August 30, his

¹³ Jack Warrick, "Terrin Vavra, Free of Injury, Shines for Gophers," *Minnesota Daily*, April 5, 2018.

¹⁴ "Terrin Vavra wins All-America honor; First Gophers Pick Since 2009," *Star Tribune*, May 31, 2018.

¹⁵ Morehead State junior Reid Leonard won the award.

baseball season improved when he was traded to Baltimore with Tyler Nevin and a PTBNL for the Orioles top reliever Mychal Givens. Vavra was surprised by the deal and “I’m just excited for the opportunity.” “Orioles GM Mike Elias told the Menomonie native they were looking for some middle infield help. He was also invited to their alternate training site in Bowie Maryland, back to baseball activities. He was also able to participate in the Orioles three-week fall instructional camp in Sarasota, Florida.

With baseball returning to action in 2021, Vavra received an invitation to Baltimore’s spring training camp, although he played sparingly, appearing in ten games with five at-bats. He reported to AA Bowie of the Double-A Northeast League primarily to play second base. The Orioles 13th rank minor leaguer started out hitting well batting .387 with a .533 OBP and 1.210 OPS; he was the best in the entire Orioles system on May 20. He continued playing well until missing all of July with a back injury then seeing limited activity in August and September finishing the year playing in 40 games batting .248 in 149 ABs. The year ended positively when Baltimore, needing to protect a valuable prospect, added him to the 40-man roster in November.

Spring training in 2022 started late after the owners locked out the players in December while they negotiated a new labor contract. Like the previous year, Vavra was invited to the limited spring training where he again saw limited action and was sent to Triple A Norfolk, Virginia. The Tides used him exclusively at second base. Healthy again, he returned to his hitting form until sidelined with a trip to the injured list with a hamstring injury in May. Returning to action Terrin was recalled by the Orioles on July 26 after 45 games in AAA where he hit .324/.432/.451 for a .886 OPS while making only three errors for a .696 FLD%.

Riding the pines for several days, the new rookie made his first appearance pinch running for Trey Mancini on July 29 after he singled in the top of the ninth. He advanced to second base on a hit-by-pitch and third on a sacrifice where he was stranded in Baltimore’s 6-2 victory at Cincinnati. Vavra made his first start the following day, batting eighth as the DH. His 0-for-3 day started grounding into a double play to second base in the second inning then grounded out again in the fifth and finishing with a fly to flyball to left. Pinch hitting on July 31 he walked in the ninth. The 0-fers ended on August 1. Playing left field and batting in the seven-hole, Terrin singled off the Rangers Jon Gray for his first hit in the majors, in his first at-bat, coming around to score. He also fanned off Brett Martin in the seventh for the first time in the big leagues. His first extra-base hit was a pinch hit double two days later with his first RBI as the Orioles beat the Rangers in Texas. Returning home, Vavra had his first multiple hit game all singles in Baltimore’s 1-0 victory over Pittsburgh. Waiting until season’s end for the drama of smacking his first home run, Terrin slugged an eighth inning, three run shot off Toronto’s Mitch White to deep right field to defeat the play-off bound Jays 5-4 in Game One of a doubleheader. Vavra’s played eight games in the outfield, seven I left and 15 at 2B. In 40 games with 103 ABs, he hit .258/.34/.337 with a .677 OPS for a .3bWAR.



MLB Pickle Ball

Did anyone have an opportunity to check out MLB’s Pickle Ball that we included in the November *Keltner Hot Corner* (see the following paragraph)? With travel and writing I did not have many opportunities but was successful with three guesses on Corbin Burnes. Thought I would try again, and I just hit on Christopher Morel in seven tries! This is better than Wordle. (DDD)



During the “Bar Time” session during our October chapter meeting, Jack Liebl asked if any of us have played [MLB Pickle Ball](#). He sees it has the baseball alternative to Wordle where you try to guess a player’s name daily. You have nine (baseball of course) guesses using the color codes to direct you toward the player. The clues are Team, LG/Div, B, T, Born, Age and Pos. Most of the players are active players which may help.

Give it a try and let [us](#) know how well you did.



Return
Pg 1

Visit Our Neighbor SABR Chapter Newsletters



EMIL ROTHE CHICAGO CHAPTER

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2022 • VOLUME 13 • EDITION 5

RICH HANSEN, CHAIR - RICHARD SMILEY, VICE CHAIR
DAVID MALAMUT, SECRETARY - PETER YEE, TREASURER - BILL PEARCH, NEWSLETTER EDITOR



CHICAGO TO HOST SABR CONVENTION IN 2023

SAVE THE DATE: JULY 5-9, 2023

Save the date! SABR will be returning to Chicago for our 51st annual convention on July 5-9, 2023, at the Palmer House Hilton hotel in downtown Chicago, Illinois. Registration information for SABR 51 and our special hotel room block will be available on SABR's website in early 2023.

The Palmer House Hilton sits in the heart of the Chicago Loop, conveniently located near the Loop's major transit hubs.

Above: On Friday, August 19, 2022, SABR Board President Mark Armour enjoyed meeting several Emil Rothe chapter members at Oriole Park at Camden Yards. They watched the Baltimore Orioles defeat the Boston Red Sox, 15-10.

[Click Here for Chicago Newsletter](#)



THE "HOLY COLW"

The Newsletter of the Halsey Hall Chapter

[Click Here for Minnesota Newsletter](#)

Schabowski's Super Stumpers

December Answers:

1. Bob Gibson and Denny McClain
2. Braves Craig Kimbrel and Freddie Freeman in 2011
3. Gene Bearden, 1948 Indians. 2.43 ERA
4. Eddie Murray
5. Cecil Cooper

[Return to Trivia Questions](#)

Other Local Baseball Organizations

Milwaukee Braves Historical Association, [Facebook](#)
Old Time Ball Players of Wisconsin, [Website](#), [Facebook](#)

[Return](#)
[Pg 1](#)