

KELTNER'S HOT CORNER



Ken Keltner Badger State Chapter

February 2021

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Upcoming Events:

Keltner Book Club

February 10, 7 PM CT

With Bob Buege

Borchert Field: Stories from Milwaukee's Legendary Ballpark



Joint Chapter - SABR Day Milwaukee & Chicago

February 13 - 11:30 AM CT

- ◆ Scott Bush, SABR CEO
Minor League Reorganization
- ◆ Negro League Panel w/ Sean Gibson, Larry Lester, Scott Simkus, & Mark Armour



Doc Adams - Baseball Pioneer

February 25 - 7:00 PM (CT)

Corky Gaskell & Marjorie Adams



SABR Analytics Conference

Online: March 11-14, 2021

Direct questions or comments to:
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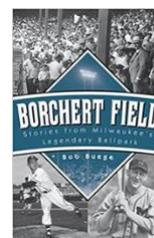
REST IN PEACE

Henry Louis Aaron
1934-2021

Upcoming Virtual Meetings

Ken Keltner Book Club Meeting
Wednesday, February 10th, 7:00 PM CT
With Bob Buege
[Book Club Registration](#)

Join us to chat about Bob Buege's fun and interesting book on Borchert Field, the ballpark that preceded County Stadium. It's more than a baseball book, it's the history of Milwaukee in the first half of the 20th Century.



Chicago-Milwaukee Joint Chapter SABR Day
Saturday, February 13, 11:30- 2:30 (CT)

[Joint Meeting Registration](#)

With COVID and SABR's stay at home policy, our annual Joint Chapter Meeting with the Emil Rothe, Chicago Chapter is going virtual. We will discuss two of the bigger news items in Major League Baseball on Saturday, February 13.

The Good, Bad and Ugly of the Minor Leagues Reorganization

Scott Bush, SABR's CEO, will discuss the ramifications of the MLB's changes in minor league baseball. Before joining SABR, Bush was a minor league executive and understands how this will affect the minors. He will also look at the ramifications for our major league teams in Chicago and Milwaukee.

Perspectives on MLB Negro Leagues Announcement

A Negro League panel with, Sean Gibson, Executive Director, Josh Gibson Foundation; Larry Lester and Scott Simkus, Negro Leagues researchers; and Mark Armour, SABR Board president with Chicago members, Bill Peach, and Jason Schwartz moderating. They will cover MLB's announcement regarding the Negro Leagues and an effort to rename the MVP Award for Josh Gibson.

Register in advance for the [Joint Chapter Meeting](#). You will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Ken Keltner Virtual Chapter Meeting
Doc Adams, A Brief Look at the Life of This Base Ball Pioneer
Thursday, February 25, 7:00 PM CT
With Corky Gaskell & Marjorie Adams
[Virtual Chapter Meeting Registration](#)



Corky Gaskell, Halsey Hall Chapter member, started playing vintage base ball about 12 years ago and as he gained interest he started researching the 19th century game. He came across a gentleman by the name of Doc Adams who seemed to be involved in many ways and had some great influence on how the game was developed. Learn more about the major pioneering role Adams played.

Marjorie Adams is the great granddaughter of Doc Adams. She has spent the past 10 years getting the word out about Doc in order to help him take his rightful place in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Together they are working together to see Doc Adams recognized for his role in base ball's early days. You can find more information about Doc Adams at: www.docadamsbaseball.org.

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

**Recap January 21 Chapter Meeting with Wisconsin's
Four Newest Major Leaguers**



J.P. Feyereisen

Kyle Cody

On January 21, 24 guests joined us to get to know Wisconsin's newest major leaguers. In the zoom meeting, was J.P. Feyereisen of the Brewers and Kyle Cody of the Rangers. Daulton Varsho of the Diamond Backs was unable to make the meeting because it was his girlfriend's birthday. Even more important, he was planning on proposing that evening. Feyereisen and I both knew about it but at we kept it secret. Varsho and I met by zoom the

week before and the recording

of that conversation is included in the video. Unfortunately, Jonathan Stiever of the White Sox had a last minute conflict and couldn't make the meeting.

By clicking on the arrow, you will learn about their earliest baseball memory, their favorite player was, their high school sports days, and the college baseball experiences including summer league baseball. Then we discussed the excitement of draft day, their minor league accomplishments and The Call to the major leagues as well as their debuts. And you will meet some great guys who represent our state well. Oh, and the answer was yes, congrats Daulton!

Keltner Book Korner Book Club News by Mary Shea

Greetings, Keltner Bookworms,

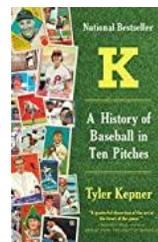


The next virtual meeting will be Wednesday, February 10th, at 7:00 PM (CT). We'll be covering *Borchert Field: Stories from Milwaukee's Legendary Ballpark*, by our very own Bob Buege, who will join us for the meeting. It's a well-researched and super fun read, including an amazing array of characters: baseball Hall of Fame players, managers, and owners, as well as other notable and interesting figures who made their way to the ramshackle ballpark on 8th and Chambers.

Please let [Mary Shea](#) know if you have any questions. Register in advance at: [Book Club Registration](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the event.

Our next book following *Borchert Field* will be *K: A History of Baseball in Ten Pitches*. Watch for The April Meeting info in the next *Keltner Hot Corner*.

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*

Happy reading!

Get to Know...Wally Thiel

The love of baseball runs deep in Thiel's family, dating back to his ball playing grandfather in the first decade of the 20th Century. His grandparents always lived next to one of Sheboygan ballparks. In 1938, his mother, just a few days shy of her 12th birthday and living outside the "new" (in 1924) North Side Athletic Park, went to the Sheboygan Chairmaker's ball game. But this contest was special; it was against the barnstorming Kansas City Monarchs. As usual, she also took her autograph book with her and came home with the autographs of several Monarchs including their owner, J. L. Wilkinson. Four of those autographs, Wilkinson and three Monarchs are now in the Baseball Hall of Fame. And, Thiel said, "mom gave the autograph book to me."



Wallace Thiel was born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin on September 30, 1948, the oldest of three sons of Walter and Dolores (Koechel) Thiel. Grandpa and his father were both mechanics and started Thiel's Garage, a fixture in Sheboygan for 50 years, two years before Wally was born. He grew up in the "Bratwurst Capital of the World" attending Pigeon River Elementary, Urban Junior High and Sheboygan North High School.

He played baseball, mostly shortstop, in Sheboygan's extensive public recreation leagues from age 7 through American Legion ball until going off to college. His team, the Sheboygan Elks were league champions in 1965. Thiel also played basketball for North as a senior. Although he didn't play college sports during his years at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point because, "I figured I had to focus on studies," he did play organized softball during the summers. Thiel obtaining his Bachelor's degree from Point in 1970.

He then started a career in city and village government. Returning to Sheboygan, Thiel worked in the city's Planning and Development Department for six years. When an opportunity became available in Sandusky, Ohio, he accepted their Director of Planning and Development offer, staying there for 13 years. While in the Buckeye state, in mid-career, he returned to school, earning his Master of Public Administration at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. When asked by Harvard for a one sentence description for his student bio, he replied, "I'm a frustrated shortstop." Thiel returned to his home state in 1990 to stay, becoming the City Administrator in Clintonville and seven years later, the Village Administrator in Hartland. He retired in 2012.

Thiel and his wife Judy raised three children, two sons and a daughter. They also enjoy four grandchildren, ranging in ages from 18 to 4, evenly split between two boys and two girls.

Thiel's first baseball memory is very historic, seeing Willie Mays's amazing catch off the bat of Vic Wertz, on TV, in the 1954 World Series. And like most youngsters growing up in Wisconsin in the 1950s, his favorite baseball team was the Milwaukee Braves. His favorite ballplayer was Henry Aaron. Thiel has very fond memories of going into town on Friday evenings visiting his grandparents and listening to the Braves games on the console radio with his brothers, father and grandfather. Thiel recalled that "Grandpa was quite animated when things were going well or not so well," and, "he was an avid baseball person. He played amateur ball as a young person, followed the Braves and Brewers closely and imparted his love for the game to his children and grandchildren."



A picture of his grandfather (mother's dad) is the reason Thiel has been deeply involved with the Deadball Era research in Sheboygan. The picture of gramps in about 1908 is when he was a teenager in front of his house with the right field fence of the North Side Athletic Park across the street. The ballpark was home to the Sheboygan Chairmakers from 1907 through 1923. Thiel's goal is to have his grandpa's photo included in the document he writes on that era of baseball in Sheboygan.

When his grandpa died in 1971, he had only a few possessions to leave his grandkids, including a woolen/flannel baseball uniform. Thiel was fortunate to be able to choose the uniform to remember him by with the intention to search its origin whenever he had the time. He related, "When I retired in 2012, I ran out of excuses for not having the time. Still looking."

Because he wanted to meet other baseball researchers and learn more about the game, Thiel joined SABR in 2016. He is very zealous about learning as much as possible and documenting Sheboygan baseball from over 100 years ago because, "my passion must be genetic." Some of the things he has learned in his research include:

In 1908, the second baseman contracted typhoid fever and may have influenced a referendum to have the city take over the water works.

Jim Crow was alive and well in his hometown.

A full-blooded Oneida Native American and product of the Carlisle Indian School, Wilson Charles, and an African American, George Wilson, pitched the locals to their first "league championship" in 1905. Championships were declared quite liberally!

People were far more mobile at the turn of the century than what he had expected.

A local spitballer, Buster Braun, aided the Milwaukee Brewers in their 1913 and 1914 winning campaigns.

Weather and climate may have played a major role in the limited production of baseball (and probably outdoor sports in general) athletes at elite levels in Sheboygan.

My own great-uncle, Christ Zelle, was among the incorporators of the first Chairmakers' organization to enter the Lake Shore League. I have copies of the original articles of incorporation of the Athletic Association as well as the Lake Shore League.

Players jumped around from team to team and year to year with amazing fluidity back then, much to the consternation of the National Commission!

Several semi-pro players who were either with or played against Sheboygan touched the big leagues.

If Thiel could have a baseball time machine moment, where would he go? His initial response was “too many to count.” He then followed with, “I really would like to have attended the Sheboygan Chairmakers’ games in 1905 and 1906.” Also, “I wouldn’t trade attending the San Francisco Giants playoffs with my daughter in 2012 and the World Series in 2014 for any other games I’ve ever attended.”

Thiel’s final words of wisdom, “After baseball history, fishing in the north woods is about as good as it gets.” And a motto of many of baseball fan, “Baseball is life...life is baseball.”

SABERMETRICS PRIMER

By Dave Weller

Batting Average for Balls in Play - BABIP

This month we will be looking at BABIP. BABIP stands for batting average for balls in play. A ball in play is any ball hit that results in a single, double, triple, or out. Home runs and errors do not figure into BABIP. This stat measures the hitter’s ability to get on base on a ball in play.

The formula is $BABIP = (H - HR) / (AB - K - HR + SF)$. The numerator is hits minus home runs. The denominator is at bats minus strikeouts and home runs, but sacrifice flies are added back in. Walks, hit by pitches, and errors are already omitted with at bats, so they do not need to be subtracted. Sacrifice flies need to be added back in because they do not count as an at bat.

So why do we use BABIP? With a large enough sample of at bats with a ball in play, it can show the quality of contact that the hitter makes. A higher BABIP over the course of time indicates a hitter with solid contact. We need a large sample because defense or luck can play a part in a hitter’s BABIP.

BABIP can be used to determine if a hitter is actually doing as well or poor as his batting average. Brewer fans may remember Ryan Braun in 2018. He was hitting rockets, but they were right at people. He could not catch a break all year. This shows up in his .274 BABIP, well under his .325 career mark. This would account for his worst batting average to that point in his career.

So now we know why we use BABIP, how can we determine what a good BABIP is? For the most part, a .300 BABIP is fairly average, while .340 is very good and .260 is not so good. A BABIP above .380 or below .230 is unusual in the Major Leagues, especially over the long haul. It can also be used, when compared to a hitter’s normal BABIP, to identify a reason for a change in hitting stats.

One of the biggest factors, at least recently, is fly ball percentage. A hitter whose fly ball percentage is below 30% tends to have a higher BABIP than one whose fly ball percentage is higher. This makes sense, as many fly balls result in outs. Line drives, on the other hand, have more of a tendency to drop in for base hits.

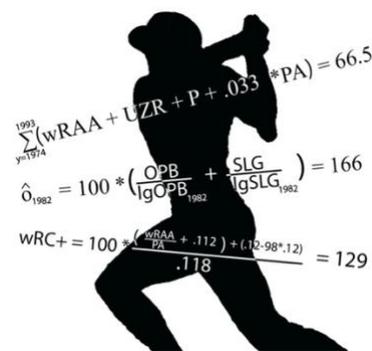
Notable BABIP

The career leader with at least 700 games played in the modern era is [Ty Cobb](#) with a BABIP of .378. [Rogers Hornsby](#) is second with .365, followed by [Rod Carew](#) at .359 and [Austin Jackson](#) at .355. Our own [Christian Yelich](#) rounds out the top five at .354.

Carew had the best BABIP in a season with a .408 mark in 1977. [Yoan Moncada](#) is second with .406 in 2019. Another Brewer is number three with a BABIP of .404. You’ll never guess. [Robin Yount](#)?

February 4, 2021

Keltner’s Hot Corner



Nope. [Paul Molitor](#)? No. [Ryan Braun](#)? Uh-uh. It's gotta be [Cecil Cooper](#), right? Wrong. It was [Jose Hernandez](#) in 2002, the franchise's worst season. He was helped by the fact that his fly ball percentage was below 30% for the first time in his career. That would explain how he managed to hit .288 while striking out a league-high 188 times.

The Brewer career mark (minimum 700 games) is held by [Jeff Cirillo](#) at .333. Ryan Braun (.325), [Geoff Jenkins](#) (.324), Paul Molitor (.324), and [Mark Loretta](#) (.316) round out the top five. [Gorman Thomas](#) holds the mark for the worst BABIP with a .259 career mark.

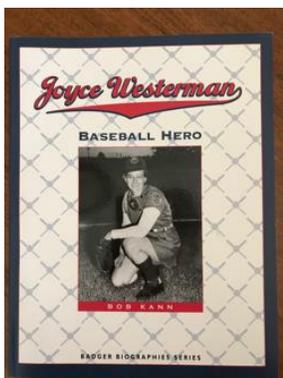
Obviously, Hernandez tops the single season Brewer list with his .404 BABIP in 2002. Molitor (.386 in 1987), Yelich (.373 in 2018), [Jonathan Villar](#) (.373 in 2016) and [Pat Listach](#) (.366 in 1992) finish off the top five. The five worst seasons in Brewer history belong to [Ted Simmons](#) (.200 in 1981), [Ben Oglivie](#) (.232 in 1982), Simmons again (.233 in 1984), [Jeromy Burnitz](#) (.238 in 2000), and Hammerin' [Hank Aaron](#) (.238 in 1975).

Next month we will take a look at Defensive Runs Saved.

Send your sabermetric questions to [Dave Weller](#).

RIP Joyce Westerman 1925 - 2021 By Mary Shea

AAGPBL Player [Joyce Hill Westerman](#) Passed Away at 95 on January, 18 2021.



Fans of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League are mourning the loss of player Joyce Hill Westerman, born in Kenosha on December 29, 1925. Joyce was a catcher and first baseman from 1945 to 1952, playing for the Grand Rapids Chicks, Fort Wayne Daisies, South Bend Blue Sox, Peoria Red Wings, and Racine Belles. She had a solid career and was like the Ben Zobrist of the AAGPBL. Her biographer once mentioned that Joyce continually seemed to “have a hand” in her teams’ successes. Her career culminated in the final game of the 1952 playoffs, in which she had two key hits to win the championship for South Bend. Another highlight of her playing career was traveling to Cuba for the league’s spring training in 1947, where their games outdrew Jackie Robinson and the Brooklyn Dodgers, who were also training there.

Many of you might have been fortunate enough to have met Joyce, including at our last in-person Ken Keltner SABR meeting last February at Broken Bat Brewery. She was always so humble and gracious with her time, speaking publicly about her playing days. She was also an extra in the movie *A League of Their Own* and can be seen playing a reunion game at Doubleday Field in Cooperstown at the end of the film. Judging by Joyce’s wonderful family, she was also an amazing mother and grandmother. She will be greatly missed. I would just advise Henry Aaron that if he’s playing catch in heaven with Joyce, watch out, she really has an arm!



(R -L) Joyce Westerman, Mary Shea & Sister Toni Palermo @ Broken Bat

Her biography, *Joyce Westerman: Baseball Hero*, is available from the [Wisconsin Historical Society](#). You can also view an interview with her that was done by Grand Valley State University at: <https://digitalcollections.library.gvsu.edu/document/29695>.

RIP Don Sutton 1945-2021



Former Brewer and hero of the 1982 World Series team, Don Sutton, passed away on Monday January 18, at age 75 in his sleep. Obtained at the trading deadline from Houston, Sutton, played an important role down the stretch. The biggest was winning the crucial final game of the season, facing Jim Palmer in Baltimore, to clinch the AL East Championship; launching the Brew Crew into the post season play for the second consecutive year. As Bud Selig told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* on January 20, “We don’t win the pennant without [Sutton].” They went all the way to game Seven of the World Series before being eliminated. He also started and won Game Three of the ALCS, after the Brewers lost the first two games to the Angels, stopping the bleeding as Milwaukee came back from an 0-2 start to win in five games.

Most Brewer fans recall Sutton’s son, Daron, was a former Brewer TV announcer and a friend of the Ken Keltner Chapter, entertaining us several times with interesting stories.

Read MLB.com’s Adam McCalvy’s article [“Sutton’s Brewers legacy tied to ’82 pennant”](#) recapping his role on that pennant winning team.

Read Sutton’s [SABR Biography](#) to learn more about his Hall of Fame Career.

New SABR Bio on Eau Claire’s [Tom Poquette](#)

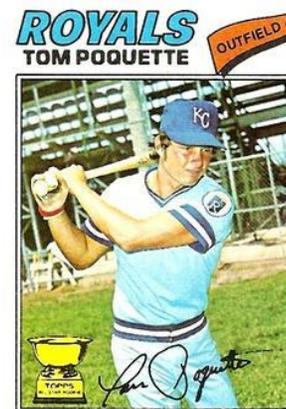
Len Pasculli, a member of the Elysian Fields Chapter in New Jersey, saw a call for articles from Bill Nowlin, and contacted him asking for a bio assignment. The most recent Nowlin compilation that he edited was "A Royal Tradition," a collection of bios of Kansas City Royals players which was released to commemorate their 50th Anniversary in 2019. Nowlin had a list of a few Royals whose bios were not done, and Pasculli requested the Eau Claire native because, "I always liked Poquette, he was a player who I likened myself to: singles hitter, hustler, table-setter, and a little bit fiery, although he batted lefty."

In an email, Pasculli related how he talked to Poquette on the phone several times and the experience was absolutely amazing. They discussed the disappointment of the Royals losing to the Yankees three years in a row, the coaches and brass with the two teams who helped Tom throughout his career, his coaching years, the Eau Claire racquetball club problem after he retired, and the terrible head injury in Arizona. He felt very fortunate talking to Poquette stating, "I must tell you, there were so many days when I just pinched myself and reflected, what a good man to let me into his life story like this."

This article was written by [Len Pasculli](#)

Tom Poquette was the Kansas City Royals Rookie of the Year in 1976 and enjoyed a seven-year major-league career as a left-handed hitting outfielder. When his baseball career ended, he was inducted into Eau Claire, Wisconsin’s Baseball Hall of Fame. This popular and hard-working player and coach produced a genuine lifelong baseball story and local legacy.

Thomas Arthur Poquette, born on October 30, 1951 in Eau Claire, was one of six children, five boys and a girl, born to Gordon (1916–1996) and Jeanette (Owens) Poquette (1922–2012). Jeanette was a homemaker. Gordon, who had played ball at Medford High School and the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire, taught social studies, including geography, Wisconsin history, and psychology at Eau Claire (later known as Eau Claire Memorial) High School from 1946 through 1980, where he was also an assistant coach for the baseball, basketball, and football programs.¹



Tom Poquette starred in three sports in high school. For that and his post-graduate success, he was one of the 25 charter inductees of the Eau Claire Memorial High School Hall of Fame in 2005.²

In football, he started at halfback for three years. In his senior year, he led his conference in rushing yards and points scored en route to a co-championship 8–1 season. He was voted to the first team of the All-Conference and the All-Northwest teams as both running back *and* defensive back³ and to the first team United Press International All-State team as a running back.⁴ He rushed for 210 yards in Memorial's third game of the season, a school record that stood for a number of decades.⁵ In basketball, Poquette started at guard in his junior and senior years for teams that advanced to the state tournament both years. In his senior year, Memorial went undefeated, 18–0.

Yet, baseball was his sport. Poquette helped the “Old Abes” win the high school state championship in 1968, and he helped bring home the American Legion state championship in 1969. Playing in the Legion tournament in Bowling Green, Ohio, was the greatest thrill of his pre-professional career.⁶ But Poquette's talent and drive under pressure is perhaps best exemplified by the events of the final week of his senior year. Pitching in the Eau Claire sectional championship game on June 5, 1970, he struck out 11 batters and was one strike away from pitching a no-hitter. He held on to win a one-run game.⁷ In the state tournament, Memorial won in the first round but lost the next game. In that 2–1 loss, Poquette allowed only two hits and two unearned runs. However, his counterpart pitched a one-hitter—Poquette's single in the third inning—for the upset.⁸

Throughout his varsity baseball career, Poquette was being watched. When local scout Art Stewart accepted a job with the Kansas City Royals during their inaugural 1969 season, he met Lois Brandenburg, a correspondent for the *Appleton Post-Crescent* and regular American Legion scorekeeper, in Marion. As Art tells the story, Lois told him about a kid over at Memorial High School. “He's only a sophomore,” she said, “but he's impressive.”⁹ Stewart saw Poquette play in his junior year and invited him to a tryout. The Royals were impressed, and Stewart followed him through high school, with the help of Cy Berg, a local “bird dog.”

Much has been written about the Kansas City Royals' fierce effort to build from within and to field players with the skills that suited their new, big, ballpark with the hard surface. They looked for players with three key skills: running speed, quickness, and arm strength.¹⁰ Poquette was a great fit.

In the June 1970 amateur draft, the Kansas City Royals selected him in the fourth round with the 80th overall pick.¹¹ He had just been offered a full scholarship to play baseball and football at the University of Wisconsin but he chose to turn it down. On Saturday, June 13, 1970—the day after his final high school game, as the rules require—he signed a contract to play with the Royals.¹² Tom Poquette was Art Stewart's first Royals signing.¹³

Poquette progressed steadily through the Royals farm system. In the summer of 1970, he led the Kingsport [Tennessee] Royals of the Rookie-level Appalachian League in runs scored. For the Class A Waterloo [Iowa] Royals in 1971, he topped his teammates in numerous offensive categories, including batting, home runs, and RBIs. With the Class AA Jacksonville [Florida] Suns in 1972, he paced the club in doubles. In 1973, with the Class AAA Omaha [Nebraska] Royals, he led the team in extra-base hits.

During those formative years, Poquette saw players all around him with more ability than he had. But he also saw first round picks who didn't make it out of A-ball. The 5'11”, 175-pound hustling outfielder knew he had to work hard.¹⁴

He spent hours with the team's hitting coaches in spring training and at the Royals Academy in the winter.¹⁵ The coaches who were most helpful to him were Charlie Lau¹⁶ and Joe Tanner.¹⁷ (Later, when he played for Boston, it was [Walt Hriniak](#).¹⁸) From Lau, Poquette learned to crouch more¹⁹ and to be less of a pull hitter.²⁰

“I probably would not have made it in the majors without Lau,” he says.²¹

Poquette was called up for his major-league debut on September 1, 1973, at age 21. He collected his first big league hit on September 10, a pinch-hit, opposite-field single off [Vida Blue](#) of the Oakland

A's. On September 23, he drove in his first two major-league runs with a bases-loaded double off [Jim Bibby](#) to help the Royals defeat the Rangers.

At the end of spring training in 1974, Poquette and teammate [George Brett](#), who also debuted in late 1973, were the last two players re-assigned to the minors. Together, they drove to Omaha for the start of the 1974 season.²² Poquette was having a productive year, slashing .305/.409/.430 in 63 games, when he suffered his first major injury. He tore the cartilage in his right knee while playing right field and underwent surgery in September.

Even so, in early 1975, *Baseball Digest* declared: "Excellent arm, line drive hitter. Strong defensively. Will probably win steady job with Royals in 1975."²³ However, after he re-injured the same knee and underwent a second surgery in January, he was shipped back to Jacksonville in 1975. As he worked himself back into shape, it appeared that the only facet of his game that suffered was his running game. He was a moderately good base-stealer in the minor leagues. However, now with no cartilage in his right knee, he lost much of his turn-and-go skill. In his major-league career, Poquette stole only 13 bases and was caught stealing 13 times.

With his knee healed, Poquette was ready for his jump to the big leagues. When the 1976 season opened, he was Kansas City's principal left fielder but platooned with right-handed hitting Jim Wohlford. "Pokie" (his nickname since high school) did not disappoint. He slugged at least three hits in nine different games that year. Over a three-game span starting on July 22, 1976, he reached base in nine straight plate appearances, including six consecutive hits.

Yet, the highlight of Poquette's rookie year occurred in a 21-7 victory over Detroit on June 15. His five runs scored were a franchise record at the time²⁴, and his five-hit performance included his first big-league home run (an inside-the-parker) and two doubles. He was just a triple shy of hitting for the cycle. Not that Pokie was shy about triples. He had 10 that season, fourth best in the American League and a Royals rookie record that still stands. In his big-league career, Poquette hit more triples (18) than home runs (10).

He finished the year batting .302, best among all rookies, and was named to both Topps' and *Baseball Digest's* 1976 Rookie All-Star Team. His manager, [Whitey Herzog](#), told *Baseball Digest*: "Tom has really been a pleasant surprise. We knew he was a fine defensive player, but his bat has been a big bonus. The thing that really makes Tom valuable is his attitude and hustle. He's one of those players who seem to spark the whole team."²⁵

In October, the Royals made their first post-season appearance, extending the New York Yankees to the limit before losing the decisive Game Five of the American League Championship Series in the bottom of the ninth. Poquette appeared in all five contests. He collected the team's only RBI in a losing cause in Game One—the franchise's first post-season run. And he helped the Royals win Game Two—the team's first post-season victory—when he collected two hits and a walk with two RBIs and a run scored.

For the 1977 season, rookie Joe "Mad Dog" Zdeb became Poquette's platoon mate. In the first year of his new three-year contract, Poquette's offensive numbers were comparable to those of his fine rookie season. Perhaps most notable, however, was his improved defense. The decidedly *un-pokey* outfielder made no errors while handling 185 chances (including four assists) in 1977. In fact, he ran a streak of 133 consecutive errorless games spanning from August 22, 1976, through April 24, 1978: "I've always taken a lot of pride in my defensive ability. Offense can be streaky, but defense is always there."²⁶

Pokie was given credit for saving Jim Colborn's no-hitter on May 14th of that year when he made a fine running catch of a slicing line drive hit by Texas Ranger [Willie Horton](#) to end the seventh inning. "If I hadn't broken that way with the pitch, I never would have gotten there," said Poquette.²⁷ 29,978 were present in Royals Stadium for the historic game, the first authored by a Kansas City Royal pitcher.

Then came the famous tug of war.

Each February from 1975 until 1983, ABC-TV televised *SuperTeams*, a competition between members of the previous season's World Series and Super Bowl contestants. The re-match was not in baseball or football, but rather in the following events: tandem bike relay, running relay, swimming relay, canoe race, volleyball, obstacle course, and tug of war. In February 1978, the Royals (subbing for the unavailable Yankees²⁸) defeated the Los Angeles Dodgers in the semi-finals and advanced to the *SuperTeams* finals to face the Dallas Cowboys.

Poquette was a good all-around athlete. "We had to try out to make the team," he explained. He was one of six Royals running the relay in the finals. He also swam anchor leg in the swimming relay in the semi-finals and was the helmsman in the outrigger war canoe race in the finals. When asked about his water skills, Poquette replied, "I spent a lot of time at the pool in high school. And to steer a boat, it's easy if you know how to use a rudder."

Each team won three events in the finals. The winner would be determined by the last event—the tug of war. The most unforgettable rope pull in the history of the *SuperTeams* competition ended in a draw. For 75 minutes in the Honolulu sun, the Royals, including Poquette, deadlocked with the Cowboys. The overall competition ended in the only co-championship in the show's history.²⁹

In the 1978 regular season, despite Poquette's hot start in April—.400/.393/.760 (with 2 HRs) in 28 plate appearances—the promotions of [Willie Wilson](#) and [Clint Hurdle](#) (Kansas City's first-round picks in 1974 and 1975, respectively) dampened his hopes to play as much as he had in his first two seasons.

The 1979 season was no different. With Wilson entrenched full-time in left field, Poquette was relegated to the bench. On June 13, the Royals traded him to the Red Sox for [George Scott](#). Kansas City fans were not happy with the trade.³⁰ However, Poquette optimized his opportunity by batting .331 for the Red Sox over the remainder of the year as the backup to [Fred Lynn](#), [Jim Rice](#), [Dwight Evans](#), and [Carl Yastrzemski](#).

In spring training 1980, Poquette was suffering with what was thought to be a rotator cuff injury in his right shoulder. He had injured it diving back to second base on a pickoff attempt the previous August. He was placed on the disabled list in March, and when the injury still did not heal, he underwent surgery in May to remove cartilage behind the shoulder.³¹ Poquette's 1980 season was totally washed out.

The man most responsible for reeling Poquette into Boston in 1979 was manager [Don Zimmer](#). "I've always liked Poquette," said Zim.³² Entering 1981, however, the Red Sox had a new manager and two new off-season acquisitions, [Rick Miller](#) and [Joe Rudi](#), crowding their outfield. A dejected Poquette was the odd man out and, on August 12, 1981, he was selected off waivers by the Texas Rangers. Who was the Rangers' new manager that season? Don Zimmer.

"That was the nice part about it all," said Poquette. "They went after me. That really helped my confidence."³³ He got regular playing time for the Rangers in the remaining 40 games, but he just could not regain his pre-injury form. On November 13, 1981, he was granted free agency.

While with Boston, Poquette met and retained Eddie Kleven as his agent. Kleven called his friend [Bud Selig](#), the owner of the Milwaukee Brewers, but Kansas City's new general manager, [John Schuerholz](#), had a different idea. Schuerholz called Kleven and, on January 15, brought Poquette back to the Royals for the 1982 season.

Poquette filled in for the injured Wilson in April, but his playing time dried up once again when Wilson returned. Rather than accept a minor league assignment, Poquette retired when he was released on July 21, 1982. He was 30 years old.

The story that is not fully told in other published accounts of his career is that of *coach* Poquette, a vital chapter in his story.

His passage from player to coach was actually put into motion while he was with the Red Sox in 1980 rehabbing the shoulder injury. A racquetball enthusiast himself, Poquette invested in the Eau Claire River City Racquetball Club, an indoor fitness center with a swimming pool and six racquetball

courts. After he retired, however, he uncovered some irregularities with the business and disengaged himself from the project. Enter Art Stewart, for the second time.

“Art Stewart said I should come back to the Royals. I interviewed with John Boles [Royals’ farm director from 1986–1988] who told me he had two job openings: hitting coach at Double A and hitting coach at Triple A. Of course, I took Triple A.” That contract began a string of many years of coaching in the Royals organization for Poquette.

Poquette was the hitting coach for the Class AAA Omaha Royals from 1988 through 1990 when they won three straight American Association Western Division titles. In 1990, Omaha went on to win both the league championship (over the Nashville Sounds) and the Triple-A Classic (defeating the International League champion Rochester Red Wings).

In 1991, he was tapped to be the manager of the Eugene [Oregon] Emeralds in the short-season, Class A Northwest League. The team finished third with a 42–34 record, nearly reversing its 1990 record of 30–46. For that, Poquette received the Manager of the Year Award.³⁴

He earned Manager of the Year honors again in 1992 after leading the Appleton [Wisconsin] Foxes in the Class A Midwest League to a 41–23 first half mark and 70–62 record overall.³⁵

In 1993, Poquette was promoted to manage the Memphis Chicks in the Class AA Southern League, followed by his promotion to hitting coach for Class AAA Omaha in 1994 and 1995. He was recognized by the front office as a good developer of young talent, and he was promoted again to minor league roving hitting coordinator for the entire Royals organization in 1996 and 1997.

After the Royals upset the Cardinals in the 1985 World Series, Kansas City experienced a rough skid, hitting rock bottom with the first last-place finish in franchise history in 1996. With the club still stuck in the second division on July 9, 1997, the Royals hired [Tony Muser](#) to replace Bob Boone as manager. Primed by his minor-league experience, Poquette was called on to help turn the parent club around by becoming the new hitting coach. However, the Royals fared no better and his contract was not renewed after the 1998 season.

Pokie returned to managing, but in the lower minors: the Charleston [West Virginia] Alley Cats in Class A South Atlantic League in 1999, followed by the Spokane [Washington] Indians in short-season Class A Northwest League from 2000–2002. After that, he switched back to hitting coach duties with the Arizona League Royals II in 2003 and the AZL Royals from 2004–2006.

“I just loved coaching,” Poquette proclaimed. “Managing, hitting coach, outfield coordinator. I was like a utility man.”³⁶

But then misfortune struck. During a game in 2004, an opposing player grounded weakly to the second baseman. While Poquette was watching the ball, the batter hurled his bat into the Royals’ dugout in disgust. The cupped end of the bat barrel caught Pokie square in the side of his head, knocking him unconscious.

During his playing career, Poquette endured five concussions.³⁷ The best known one occurred on June 22, 1976. Kevin Bell of the White Sox drove a ball to the left field corner and Poquette, in full pursuit, crashed into the padded wall. He fell to the ground, fading in and out of consciousness and bleeding from a gash over his eye, while Bell rounded the bases with an inside-the-park grand slam home run.³⁸

Poquette missed only about a month of play on that occasion. This time, however, he was unable to shake the concussion he suffered in Arizona. He fell several times and had difficulty avoiding line drives during batting practices. He was tested in 2005 and was diagnosed with traumatic brain injury. Even though Lloyd Simmons, Arizona’s manager, urged him to hang in there and keep coaching, Poquette was forced to retire after the 2006 season with permanent partial cognitive disability. He was only 55 years old.

“I hated to quit. Coaching is long days and hard work. But then you get a “thank you” call from [Joe Randa](#), whom I coached since his Rookie League, or [Johnny Damon](#). I took him through his early big-league years. That’s your satisfaction.”

“But whenever this question comes up,” the ever-humble coach continued, “I always say I don’t take credit for anybody’s success. They are the ones who did what they had to do. And besides, there are a lot of people involved in a player’s development.”³⁹

Despite his untimely exit from baseball, his convalescence in Eau Claire was the best thing that ever happened to him, Poquette says. Not because of his stabilizing medical treatment, but because that is where he met Michelle, his physical therapy aide and future wife. After Tom checked out of therapy and concluded his patient–professional relationship with Michelle, they went on their first date. Tom and “Mitch” were married on June 7, 2012.⁴⁰

“Mitch did not know anything about baseball when we first met,” Poquette says. “But she does just fine now.” The couple currently live in Eau Claire. They share seven children from their previous marriages, the youngest of which just graduated high school, plus several grandchildren.⁴¹

Shortly after Poquette began his coaching career, he told *the Appleton Post-Crescent*, “I got back into baseball because I wanted to. I’m a firm believer in doing something because it’s fun.”⁴² Fun now includes deer hunting and muskie fishing with his family and friends, including Joe Weiss, his boyhood buddy, high school teammate, and president of the Spooner Musky Club, of which Pokie is also a longtime member.⁴³ Weiss and Poquette made the news on Friday, October 13, 2017, when Poquette photographed Weiss with a 47-inch muskellunge—the biggest musky caught on Wisconsin’s Lost Land Lake.⁴⁴

Tom Poquette has enjoyed a full baseball life. In tribute to his local legacy and to his major-league career, he was inducted into the Eau Claire Baseball Hall of Fame twice—individually in 2009⁴⁵ and as a member of the group of 42 “Eau Claire Natives” in 2010.⁴⁶ His plaque is mounted in Henry Aaron Plaza in front of Carson Park baseball stadium, the site of many of his high school and American Legion contests and heroics:

Born in Eau Claire on October 30, 1951, outfielder
Tom Poquette played for the Kansas City Royals, Boston
Red Sox and Texas Rangers between 1973 and 1982, spending a
total of seven seasons with their Major League clubs. In 1976 he
hit .302 and made baseball’s all-rookie team. He had a .268 career
batting average. He rejoined the Royals in 1987 as a minor
league coach and was named the team’s major league
hitting instructor in 1997. Poquette graduated from
Eau Claire Memorial High School in 1970 and
was on the school’s 1968 state baseball
Championship team.⁴⁷

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Sources

In addition to the sources cited in the Notes, the author also consulted www.baseball-almanac.com, www.baseball-reference.com, www.leadertelegram.com, www.newspaperarchive.com, www.retrosheet.org, www.sabr.org and Eau Claire Memorial High School Yearbooks (*Kodak*) retrieved from www.classmates.com.

Opportunity to Contribute to a New SABR Bio Book



Bill Nowlin is looking to attract new authors for a new project approved by SABR's new editorial board to be published sometime in 2022. The subject is One-Win Wonders (major leaguers who won only one big league game). This will be a companion to the One-Hit Wonders which is coming out soon.

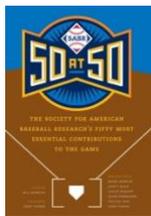
Tom Ruane of Retrosheet has compiled a list of all of the players (mostly pitchers, of course) who won only one game. If you are interested in writing about one of these players, contact [Bill Nowlin](#).

Nowlin is very interested in helping new authors and he wants to offer opportunities for the rookies. If you have been thinking about a bio, but haven't taken the step, yet, think about writing about one of these players. SABR has volunteer editors who will help you. And there are a lot of players on the list to choose from which will help achieve an array of different sorts on one-win wonders. Think about who you might be interested in and why you think your candidate may fit the project.

SABR 50 at 50: Baseball Films and TV

As part of the [SABR 50 at 50 project](#) to commemorate the organization's fiftieth anniversary, SABR presents 50 of the most memorable baseball-related moments in films and television for the past 50 years.

In compiling the [Baseball Films and TV list](#), SABR considered feature films, documentary films, documentary shorts, scenes from films, television series, scenes or skits from television series, and television commercials.



There were hundreds of nominations, and the quantity and quality of filmed baseball content keeps increasing. There is likely a great baseball documentary being made as you read this.

We invite you to read the list and the short description for each of the shows, along with selected video clips for each entry.

2021 SABR Virtual Analytics Conference

Registration is now open for the **SABR Virtual Analytics Conference**, which will be held over four days in online sessions from March 11-14. The top minds in the baseball analytics community will gather to discuss, debate, and share insightful ways to analyze and examine the great game of baseball.

Programming will run on Thursday and Friday evening from 6:30-9:00 p.m. Eastern, all day Saturday from 12:00-8:00 p.m. Eastern, and Sunday afternoon from 1:00-5:00 p.m. EDT.

Registration: [Click here to register for the 2021 SABR Virtual Analytics Conference](#).

Stay tuned for more details on guest speakers, panelists, and presenters! Visit SABR.org/analytics to learn more.



Research Assistance Request

For anyone with access to the Milwaukee Journal Archive online via the Milwaukee Public Library, Rex Hamann of the American Association Almanac seeks your assistance for a project to tabulate each of the 164 home runs of the Milwaukee Brewers 1936 season. This project is ongoing and the list has been completed, but the total comes up short. If you have an interest in assisting with this

project, please contact Rex, the editor of the *American Association Almanac*, for further information. He is available via email at pureout@msn.com or by phone at: 763-862-8187.

The American Association Angle

Part 4 - Blues and Brews in the 1952 American Association Finals, Conclusion by Rex Hamann, Editor of The American Association Almanac

Last time, the *American Association Angle* described the first few contests of the final round between the Milwaukee Brewers and Kansas City Blues as the two teams competed for the 1952 American Association championship. Milwaukee, after winning the pennant, was hoping for its second consecutive “three-peat” which involved first winning the pennant (by virtue of finishing in first place), then the championship (by winning the playoffs) and finally copping the Junior World Series.



To recap from last time: in 1952 the league’s postseason commenced Sept. 9. Kansas City nailed down its semifinal round in five games against the Minneapolis Millers, while Milwaukee advanced with a four-game sweep of the St. Paul Saints. On Sept. 15, the Brewers lost to the Blues in Game 1 of the final round, 4-3, at Borchert Field in Milwaukee. In Game 2, the Brewers evened the series with a 7-2 victory. In Game 3, [Bucky Walters](#)’ Brew Boys took a two-games-to-one advantage with a 10-8 win.

Game 4: Thursday, Sept. 18, 1952. Milwaukee Brewers at Kansas City Blues

On the eve of his 26th birthday, [Murray Wall](#) (16-10) is gifted with a start against arch-rival Kansas City before a Blues Stadium crowd of 7,160. Described as “an unpredictable righty who has been highly effective on occasion,” Wall is Milwaukee’s leader in starts and innings pitched with 26 and 303, respectively. Going for the Blues is **Eddie Erault (21-5)**, the loop’s wins leader with a league-leading 20 regular season complete games to his credit, and a team-high 210 innings of work. [Bill Bruton](#) (cf) triples to open the game but is thrown out at home on a fly ball to [Bob Cerv](#) in right. Milwaukee tallies in the fourth after [Luis Marquez](#) (lf), batting cleanup, doubles, steals third, and plates on shortstop [Billy Klaus](#)’ sacrifice fly. Wall makes it a 3-0 game in the fifth by socking his second home run of the season, a 360-foot shot to right field, with [Al Unser](#) (c) aboard. But in the seventh, those burly Blues bats come to life. [Bill Renna](#) (cf) draws Wall’s third walk to lead off the inning. [Vic Power](#) (3b) and **Kermit Wahl** (2b-ss) single, with Renna scoring the Blues’ first run of the contest. [Mickey Owen](#) (c) hits “a tricky bouncer” toward the mound...but it goes between Wall’s legs! With the bases loaded, the Milwaukee bullpen suddenly awakens and **Bob Marquis** (ph) steps to the plate, blooming a single into right field to score Power. **Kal Segrist** pinch-hits for **Art Mazmanian** (ss). Bucky Walters counters the move made by Blues’ skipper [George Selkirk](#) by bringing in local favorite [Bert Thiel](#) to pitch. Segrist punches to shortstop Klaus...whose throw home is in the dirt, getting by Unser! Wahl scores easily and Owen comes in as well...but he misses the plate! Thiel, backing up the play, tags him out as the runner, thinking he’d scored, moseys toward the dugout. A few batters later, the bases are filled for [Bill “Moose” Skowron](#) (lf) who knocks the Blues’ third grand slam of the playoffs, a “towering smash 380 feet over the left-field fence.” It’s his second salami of the series, and it gives the Blues a seven-run seventh inning, matching their Sept. 13 sixth-inning outburst against Minneapolis. Milwaukee comes to within three runs of the Blues in the eighth when Marquez drives in the doubling [George Crowe](#) (1b). Marquez had three hits in four at-bats and Wall struck out six, but the Blues won it on just seven hits to tie the series at two games each. **Kansas City 7, Milwaukee 4.**

Game 5: Friday, Sept. 19, 1952. Milwaukee Brewers at Kansas City Blues

At Blues Stadium on the final Friday night of the summer, [Gene Conley](#) is on the hill for Milwaukee. The Cream Citians score in the first inning on three singles and a walk facing young [Jim Russell](#) in the first. Before a reported 7,000 fans, Blues’ center fielder Bill Renna’s lunging grab of second baseman [Gene Mauch](#)’s liner in the second inning gets the crowd’s attention. But when his throw doubles off the runner at second base, the stands are in convulsions. Renna’s arm is on display again

in the third. After tracking down third-sacker **Buzz Clarkson**'s long fly, he doubles-up Luis Marquez who is suffering from a touch of the flu, at second. In the home half, the Blues get their only run of the contest, tying the score when Art Mazmanian (ss) plates on first baseman **Don Bollweg**'s base hit to right. From the third inning to the seventh, Conley retires the next thirteen men in a row. Beginning in the fourth, the Brewers assemble a four-frame scoring sequence of 2-1-3-4. Right fielder **Pete Whisenant**'s two-run blast highlights the fourth, while Marquez' triple illuminates the Brewers' fifth. A double, a pair of walks and two singles are the key to another three runs, and it's officially a blow-out. Conley adds some frosting to the cake with a two-run long ball off Kay-see's third of five relievers, **Johnny Gray**. Marquez (4-for-4) and Whisenant (4-for-5) lead the 19-hit, 31-total base attack; Bill Bruton and Billy Klaus each have three hits in five trips. On the strength of a ten-strikeout four-hitter, "Big Gene" looms large in this tilt. **Milwaukee 12, Kansas City 1.**

Game 6: Saturday, Sept. 20, 1952. Kansas City Blues at Milwaukee Brewers

As the Kansas City entourage prepared to embark for the return trip to Milwaukee, several players board the train and head north. But another group chooses air flight. That split-squad travel arrangement may pay off for the Blues who need a win to stay alive. They grab the early lead against **Don Liddle**, "the crafty southpaw," with one run in the

first inning, the result of Buzz Clarkson's error at third. The Brewers tie it in the third, but the Blues bounce back in a big way in the fourth. Vic Power gets the show going with a pop-fly double to left, and with one out Mickey Owen bangs a double against the fence in left. **Art Schallock**'s "swinging bunt" roller in front of the plate results in a hit before Kermit Wahl walks. Don Bollweg strikes out. Then Bob Cerv singles over second base, plating Owen and Schallock. Bill Skowron rolls to third but Clarkson bobbles it, and Wahl plates, making it a 5-1 lead for the visitors. Another four runs in the fifth punctuate a decisive victory for Selkirk, Inc., as reliever **George Estock**, who tamed the Blues in the fourth, encounters a stiff breeze. With Owen on second base and two away, Cerv launches a 400-foot double that would have been a home run in any other park, according to the *Kansas City Star*, had it not been for the 60-foot fence in right-center at Borchert Field, as the ball comes to within just ten feet of escaping the grounds altogether. Skowron then singles home Cerv to make it a 9-2 lead. The Brewers score their final run in the eighth on their second double of the game, but are too far down for it to matter. Owen has four hits in five at-bats for the Blues, while Bill Bruton has three of the hosts' nine hits. Sawing through six Milwaukee pitchers, the Blues retaliate for their Friday thrashing. **Kansas City 10, Milwaukee 4.**

Game 7: Sunday, September 21, 1952. Kansas City Blues vs. Milwaukee Brewers

Most of the 6,427 fans perched upon the splintery wooden seats at Borchert Field have a sense of nostalgia as they realize this will be the final game ever played by the Brewers at this the venerable baseball shrine. Built 65 years ago in 1888, the Brewers inhabited the site for 51 seasons. It will be torn down in just a few months as Milwaukee County Stadium will be ready for occupancy in the spring. But for now, the focus is on the field with the pennant and the Governor's Cup on the line. And with the season series deadlocked at 14 games each, bragging rights are on the auction block as well. Selkirk tabs his ace, Eddie Erautt, to go up against **Eddie Blake** for Bucky Walters' boys in an "Eddie vs. Eddie" matchup. Blues' backstop Mickey Owen, the Game 6 hitting hero, raps the first pitch he sees for a one-out single in the first, and after Erautt's sacrifice, Wahl's single brings the veteran in to score. Milwaukee matches the run with a tally in the home half as **Bob Montag** (rf) walks before Blake doubles him home on a 3-2 pitch. The fireworks begin in earnest in the Kansas City fourth after singles by Bob Cerv and Bill Skowron. Then, the slumping Renna, without a hit in his previous 14 at-bats, leans into one on a 2-0 count and mashes it into the center field bleachers. "The ball sailed over the fence at the 375-foot mark and landed near the top of the bleachers. It would easily have carried 450 feet on the fly," according to the *Kansas City Times*' **Joe McGuff**. Vic Power singles and becomes the last batter for Blake to face. Enter Gene Conley, in only his second relief appearance of the season, who slams the door shut. After Milwaukee scores in the home half to make it a 4-2 game, the Blues take matters into their own hands with four big tallies in the fifth, culminating an eight-run, three-inning skein. After

Kermit Wahl walks, Don Bollweg, also mired in a slump, bangs one over the right field fence for a home run resulting in a 6-2 Blues' lead. After Cerv singles, Don Liddle takes over in his 11th relief appearance of the season, only to face the dangerous Bill Skowron who lifts one high into right field where "the stiff wind blowing in from left carried it ever closer to the short fence, 260 feet down the line. Montag followed the ball all the way and finally stood against the boards as it landed *on top of the fence* and bounced out into the street." It is the final home run ever hit at Borchert Field.

Down, 8-2, in the ninth, Milwaukee's chips are down, but a rally is in the works. Buzz Clarkson singles to lead things off against Erautt. Montag pops out. [Dewey Williams](#) (c) singles. **Billy Reed**, pinch-hitting for reliever [Dick Donovan](#), lines a single sharply to right...where Cerv misplays it! The ball rolls to the wall after skipping in front of him as center fielder Bill Renna frantically tracks it down, but by the time the relay throw gets to Kal Segrist at second, two runs are in. Segrist then air-mails his throw to third attempting to catch the advancing Reed...and it caroms against the stands! Reed scores. With an 8-5 lead, Erautt departs for [Dave Jolly](#) who retires Bill Bruton. The next three batters believe in happy endings, with a walk, a double and a single to slice even further into the Kansas City lead. But Billy Klaus flies out to Renna in center. *Ballgame!*

"Milwaukee's pitching had been highly effective against Kansas City during the closing months of the season but the Blues came to life in the playoffs to score the most important victory of all over their hated rivals," as McGuff put it. Power had a three hit game in five at-bats for the Blues, while Marquez went 3-for-5 for the Brewers in the Borchert Field finale. It was a fitting ending in that it all started with "day baseball" back on May 11, 1902 in a 12-inning tilt resulting in a Milwaukee win over Toledo. That grand era ends with the culmination of a torrid playoff series, decided by this debacle between teams as closely matched as could be, on a field now lit only by a late-solstice September sky after the final full day of a summer of baseball battles, an autumnal sun setting on hallowed ground on a storied little ball park the size of some modern concession stands. The rickety edifice will remain silent, will no longer dance to the thrill of the crowd, after harvesting generations of memories for Brewers' fans, the players heroes in their eyes, just because they played here. **Kansas City 8, Milwaukee 7.**

Next time: Comparing the home run production of the Kansas City Blues and Milwaukee Brewers for the 1952 season.

The American Association Almanac is a bi-annual print publication dedicated to the history of the old American Association. Research is underway for the Spring 2021 issue which will compare each American Association team's season-high home run total with the opposing home run total for the period 1921 to 1955. To subscribe, please contact Rex Hamann by email at pureout@msn.com. Be sure to ask how to receive your free copy from an assortment of back issues and how to receive a senior citizens' discount on any purchase.

THE BLUES' BOX SCORE.						
Kansas City--	AB	R	H	O	A	E
Wahl,ss	3	1	1	0	1	0
Bollweg,1b	4	1	1	8	1	0
Cerv,rf	5	2	2	0	0	1
Skowron,lf	5	2	2	0	0	0
Renna,cf	5	1	2	6	0	0
Power,3b	5	0	3	2	2	0
Segrist,2b	5	0	0	2	2	1
Owen,c	4	1	1	7	0	0
Erautt,p	3	0	1	1	3	0
Jolly,p	0	0	0	1	0	0
Totals	38	8	13	27	9	2
Milwaukee--	AB	R	H	O	A	E
Bruton,cf	5	0	0	1	0	0
Mauch,2b	4	1	1	3	0	0
Crowe,lf	5	1	1	9	2	0
Marquez,rf	5	1	3	3	1	0
Klaus,ss	5	0	1	2	4	1
Clarkson,3b	3	1	1	0	3	0
Montag,rf	3	1	1	2	0	0
Williams,c	4	1	1	5	0	0
Blake,p	1	0	1	1	0	0
Conley,p	0	0	0	0	0	0
Liddle,p	1	0	0	0	0	0
Ertman	1	0	0	0	0	0
Donovan,p	0	0	0	1	1	0
Reed	1	1	1	0	0	0
Totals	38	7	11	27	11	1

Ertman popped up for Liddle in 7th.
Reed singled for Donovan in 9th.
Kansas City 001 340 000-8
Milwaukee 001 100 005-7

RBI--Wahl, Renna 3, Bollweg 2, Skowron 2, Blake Montag, Marquez 2. 2B--Erautt, Power, Blake, Crowe. HR--Renna, Bollweg, Skowron. S--Erautt. DP--Marquez-Mauch. Left--Kansas City 8, Milwaukee 7. BB--Erautt 1, Jolly 1, Conley 1, Liddle 1, Donovan 1. SO--Erautt 7, Blake 1, Liddle 2. HO--Erautt 9 in 8½; Jolly 2 in ¾; Blake 6 in 3 (pitched to 4 in 4th); Conley 2 in 1½; Liddle 3 in 2½; Donovan 2 in 2. HBP--Erautt (Clarkson). Winner--Erautt. Loser--Blake. U--Carney, Padden, Mullen and O'Connor. T--2:19. A--6,427.

The box score from Game 7 of the 1952 American Association playoffs, the final game played at Borchert Field. From the Kansas City Times.

Lee Kluck to Speak at Nine

Fellow Ken Keltner member, Lee Kluck, will make a presentation at the [Nine Spring Training Conference](#) on baseball history and culture. His topic will be "Go West Young Man": Harry Dalton, the California Angels, and a Case of Manifest Destiny Derailed. This will be Kluck's fourth appearance at the conference which will be virtual this year over three weekends. March 5-6, 12-13, 19-20.



As far as I'm concerned, Hank Aaron is
**the best ballplayer
of my era.**

- Mickey Mantle on Hank Aaron



**To me, he was
the toughest out.**

- Sandy Koufax on Hank Aaron
Via ESPN

I threw the ball pretty hard,
and if I threw the ball inside,
I just couldn't get it by him.

**He was
just that
quick.**

- Bob Gibson
on Hank Aaron
Via ESPN



**The
only man
I idolized
more than
myself.**

- Muhammad Ali
on Hank Aaron



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