

KCBHS Tribute to A's Pitcher Lew Krausse

June 16, 2011 marked the 50 year anniversary of one of the rare significant events in Kansas City A's baseball history. On June 8, 1961, A's owner Charley Finley signed 18 year old Lew Krausse to a major league contract, with a bonus of \$125,000 (huge in that era). Krausse, a high school pitching phenom from Pennsylvania and son of former Philadelphia A's pitcher Lew Krausse Sr. immediately was assigned to the major league club and on the evening of June 16, 1961 he started against the Los Angeles Angels. He pitched a complete game, 3-hit shutout which the A's won 4-0. Lew also collected two base hits himself during the game. Lew would eventually pitch 13 years in the majors, with the A's in Kansas City and Oakland, and also stints with Milwaukee Brewers, Atlanta Braves, Boston Red Sox and St. Louis Cardinals. After his retirement from baseball he operated a successful metal business in the Kansas City area, which is still operated by his family.

A packed room of KCBHS members, along with former A's players Jay Hankins, Chuck Dobson, Don Buschhorn and legendary groundskeeper George Toma surprised Lew Krausse in a get together at Chappells Sports Bar/Restaurant Museum in North Kansas City. The Krausse family helped to lure Lew to the event and he was very surprised to arrive and receive a standing ovation. Lew was interviewed and provided great stories and anecdotes about his playing career, and his famous debut 50 years earlier. Messages and stories sent to the KCBHS by other teammates around the country were also shared with Lew and the audience, including messages from Phil Roof, Lou Klimchuck and Rene Lachemann. The KCBHS presented Lew with an engraved baseball bat in tribute to the debut and his career. The event was enjoyed by all who attended.