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ALERT

USPS CONTRACT

Why Oshkosh Corp. didn't build USPS vehicles in a Foxconn facility in Mount Pleasant

Adam Rogan

Mar 30, 2022



This rendering depicts the U.S. Postal Service's Next Generation Delivery Vehicle, to be manufacturing by Oshkosh USPS

Adam Rogan

MOUNT PLEASANT — More than 1,000 manufacturing jobs nearly came to the Racine area, to build a highly publicized new fleet of vehicles for the U.S. Postal Service. But a deal that would have allowed the use of a Foxconn facility for the project never came to fruition.

Based in Oshkosh, Oshkosh Corp. won a 10-year contract from the federal government to build up to 165,000 **new USPS vehicles**; more than 10,000 of the first phase of 50,000 vehicles will be powered by electricity, not gasoline.

The company indicated that Foxconn's Advanced Manufacturing Facility was not big enough for what it needed, although discussions were held about the possibility of doing the work in Mount Pleasant.

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Oshkosh Corp., aka Oshkosh Defense, said that the facility it needed was, at minimum, 825,000 square feet. However, Foxconn's Advanced Manufacturing Facility in Mount Pleasant is **1 million** square feet.

In a statement this week, Oshkosh Corp. said that "Wisconsin simply did not have any available buildings that could meet NGDV (the USPS's Next Generation Delivery Vehicle) program requirements and given the strict timing requirements of this program, building a new facility was not feasible."

Oshkosh Corp. declined to answer follow-up questions from The Journal Times.

In a statement given exclusively to The Journal Times on Wednesday, Foxconn Technology Group offered little more information.

“For the last few years Foxconn has met with Oshkosh Corporation on several occasions to build a working relationship,” Foxconn said in the statement. “As it pertains to our Advance (sic) Manufacturing Facility, the building remains a key strategic asset to the company in order to respond to market demand for Foxconn related activities or activities that involve joint venture partnerships.”

Village officials say that Foxconn is doing some manufacturing, **likely producing servers**, in Mount Pleasant. Foxconn has never publicly disclosed what it is doing inside its Mount Pleasant facilities.

An estimated 800 people work for Foxconn in Racine County, according to Claude Lois, the Foxconn project manager contracted by the Village of Mount Pleasant.

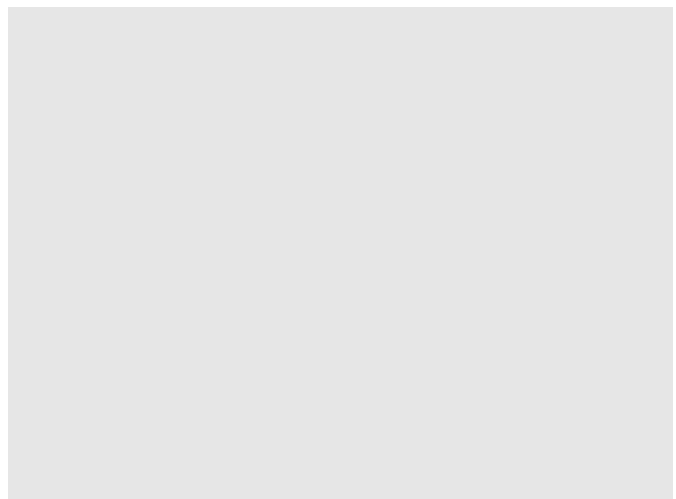
Concerns over unions, environment

Oshkosh Corp. has faced criticism both from outside the company and from **many of its own employees** for choosing to fulfill the NGDV contract at its non-union South Carolina site as opposed to in Wisconsin, where its workers are unionized.

Oshkosh Corp. **plans to convert** an existing warehouse for manufacturing the vehicles in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

The total value of the USPS contract is estimated to be more than **\$150 million**.

In a letter Wednesday, Outagamie County Executive Tom Nelson — who is one of the Democrats campaigning to unseat incumbent U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis. — called for congressional oversight committees to investigate negotiations between Oshkosh Corp. and Foxconn.



“As you (referring to the chairs of **Nelson** House and Senate oversight committees) already know, Oshkosh Defense has announced its plans to move its production of the vehicles from Wisconsin to South Carolina in an apparent bid to avoid a unionized workforce at the same time it seeks to avoid new emissions standards,” Nelson wrote.

He added in a statement: “At a time when the United States is struggling to make investments in our workforce and in developing a coordinated national industrial plan that grows our economy while tackling the existential issue of global climate change, understanding Foxconn’s and Oshkosh Defense’s treatment of public resources is vital for an informed public.”

Other Democratic officials, including U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, have advocated for having the USPS vehicles built by Oshkosh Corp. in Wisconsin.

Johnson, who lives in Oshkosh, brushed off the loss to South Carolina as no big deal. “**It’s not like** we don’t have enough jobs here in Wisconsin. The biggest problem we have in Wisconsin right now is employers not being able to find enough workers,” he said in published reports.

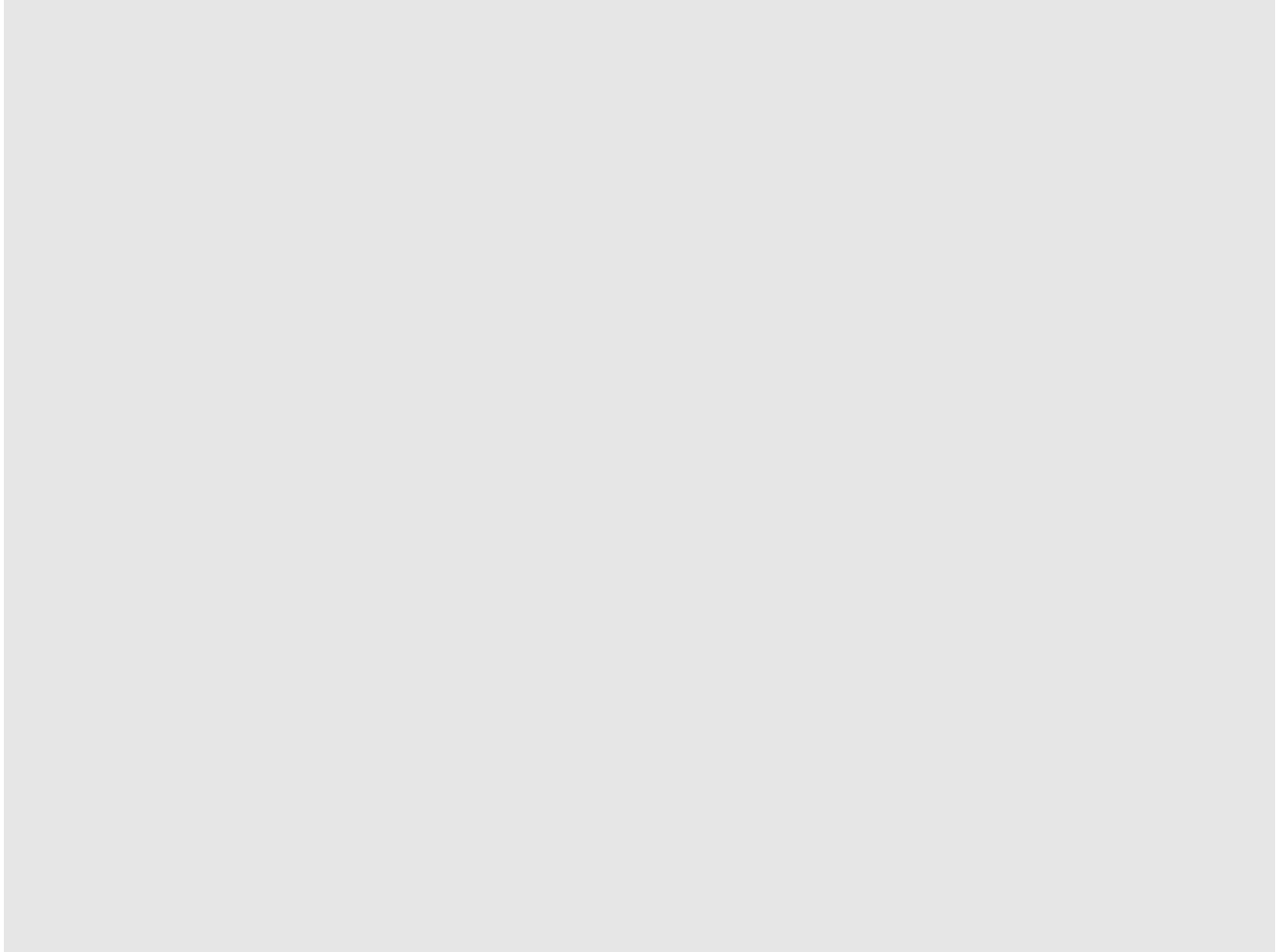
In a tweet, **Lawrence Tabak**, author of the book “Foxconned: Imaginary Jobs, Bulldozed Homes, and the Sacking of Local Government” that was published in November, **said Monday** in reaction to the potential Oshkosh Corp.-Foxconn deal not coming together: “The first question Foxconn Chairman Terry Gou asked Scott Walker when considering Wisconsin was (regarding) the strength of unions. Oshkosh is a union shop — Asian companies that **abuse workers** live in dire fear of organized labor. Not a chance they’d work with Oshkosh.”

The Environmental Protection Agency has **urged** USPS to reconsider its contract with Oshkosh Corp. Last year, President Joe Biden’s administration pledged that 70% of the new fleet would be electric-battery powered, a goal that likely will not be reached under the current plan.

According to reporting from **The Guardian**: “Biden administration officials say they have no ability to alter the Oshkosh Defense contract, noting that it was awarded by the Postal Service, an independent agency that the White House doesn’t control. They say their hands are, in essence, tied.”

In Photos: Brewers play the Guardians in Cactus League action

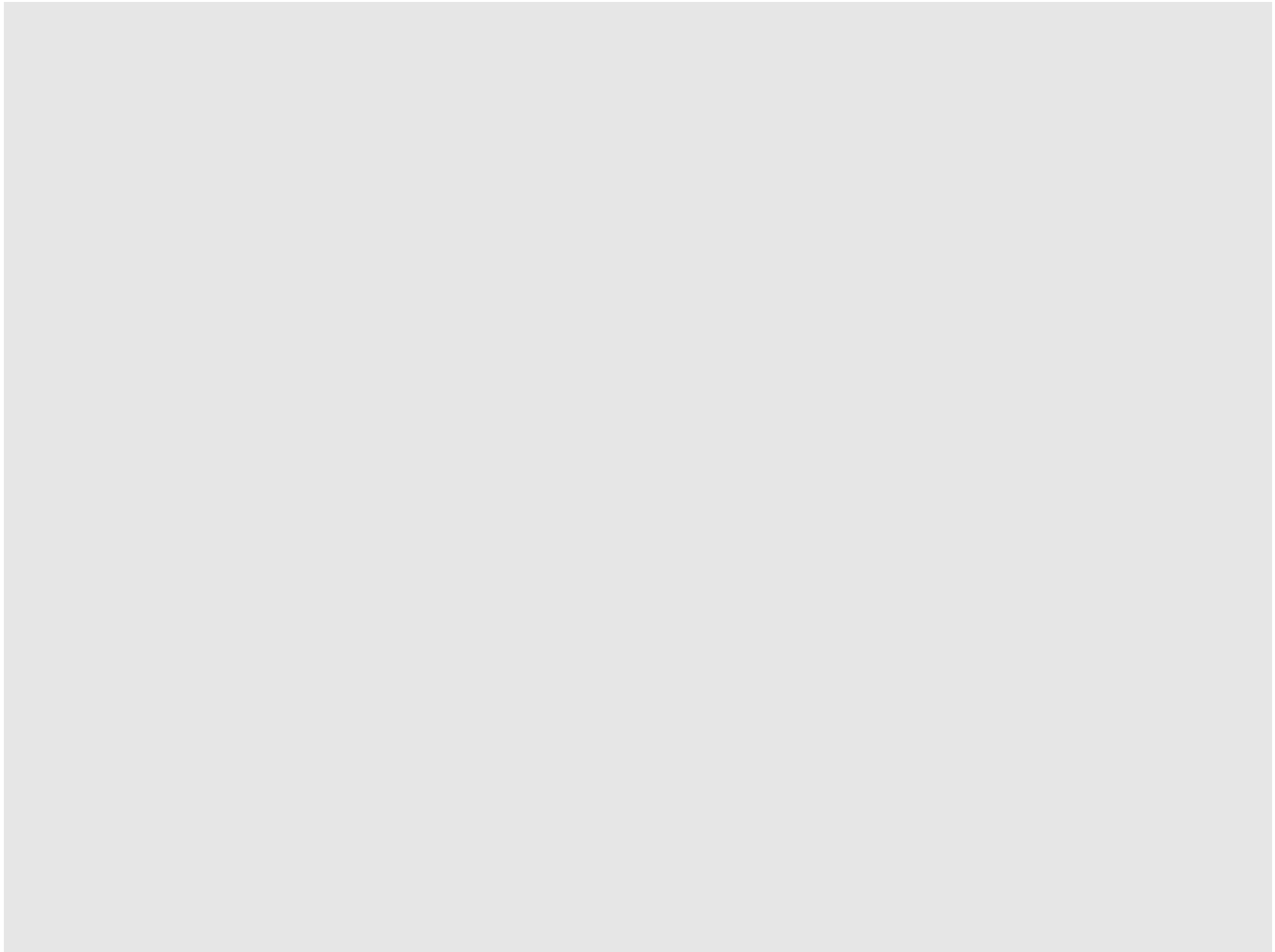
Brewers Guardians Spring Baseball



Milwaukee Brewers' Keston Hiura smiles as he gives a fist bump to a teammate in the dugout prior to a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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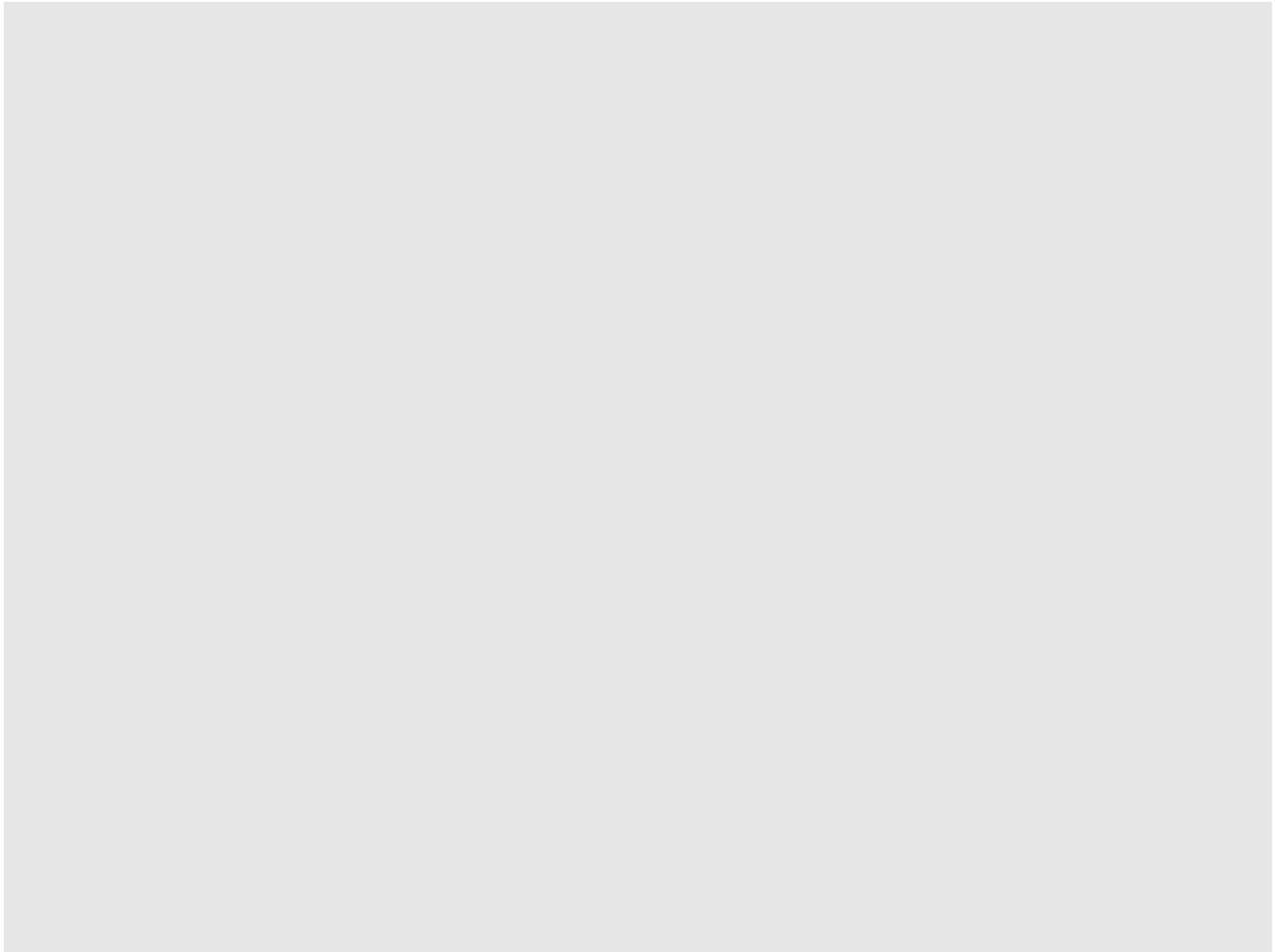
Brewers Guardians Spring Baseball



Milwaukee Brewers starting pitcher Brandon Woodruff throws a pitch against the Cleveland Guardians during the first inning of a spring training baseball game Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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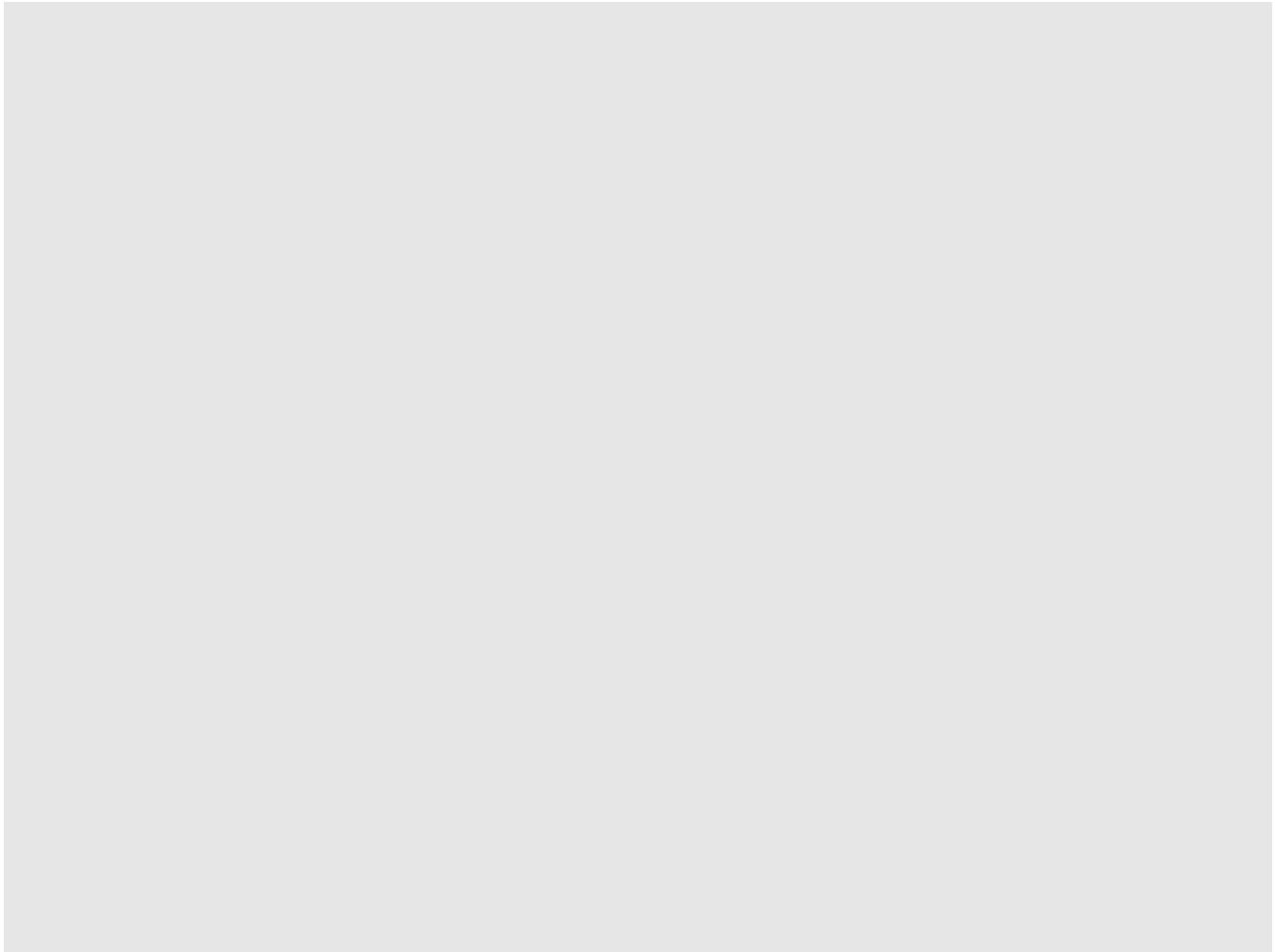
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Milwaukee Brewers' Mike Brosseau fouls a pitch off his arm during the third inning of a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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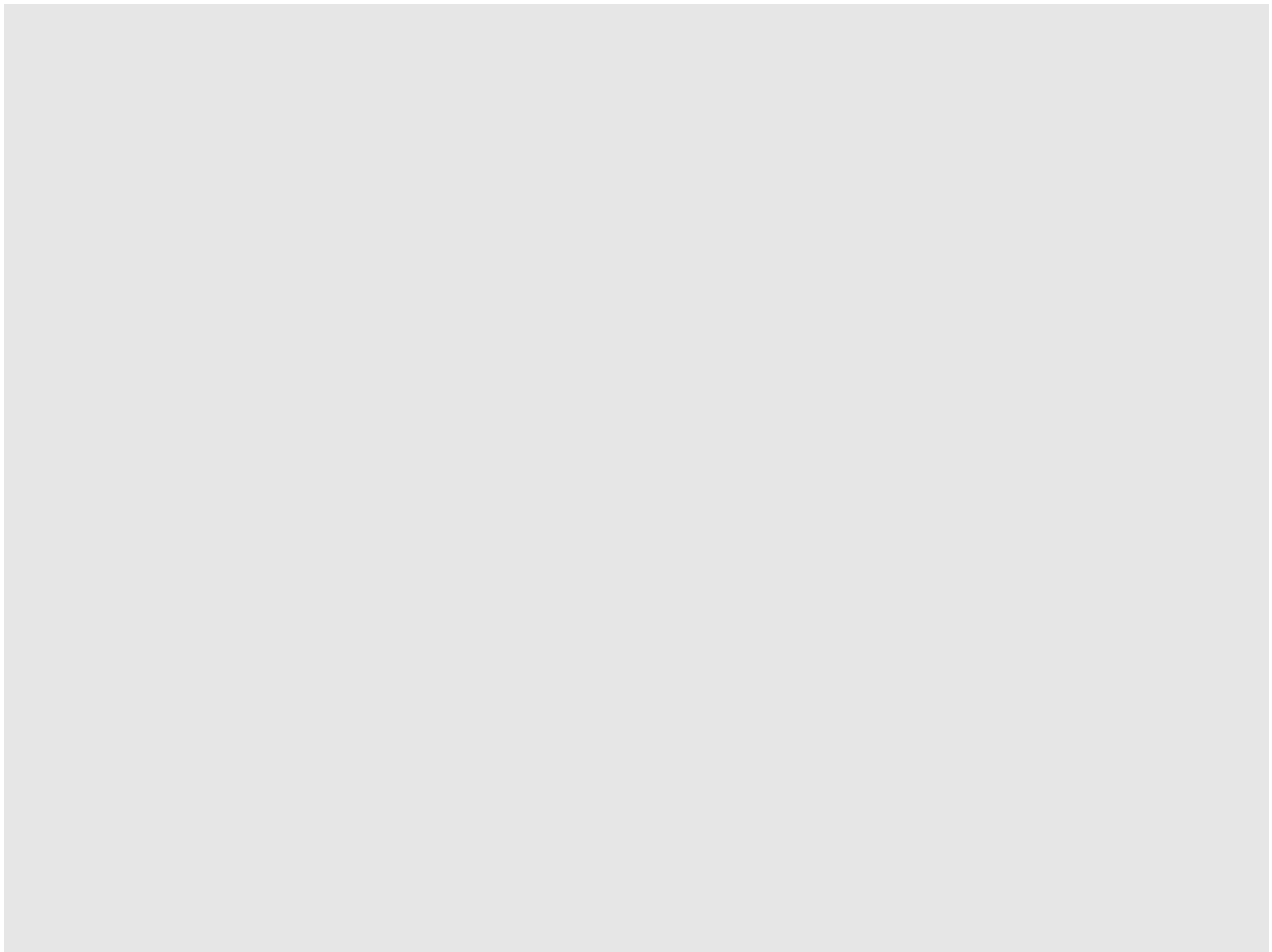
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Milwaukee Brewers' Kolten Wong loses his helmet as he runs to first base on a run-scoring single against the Cleveland Guardians during the third inning of a spring training baseball game Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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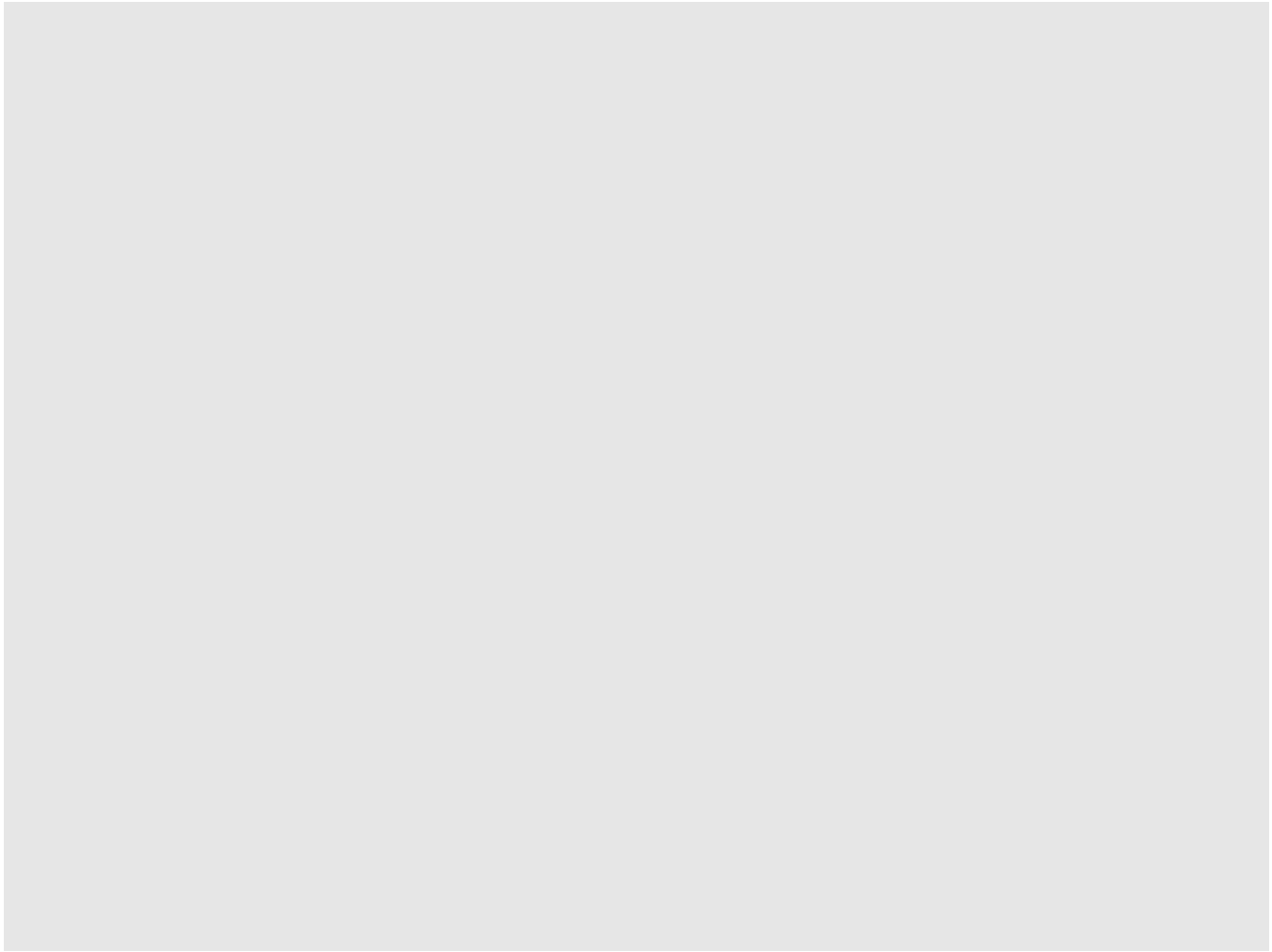
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Milwaukee Brewers' Jace Peterson (14) celebrates his run scored against the Cleveland Guardians with Brewers' Willy Adames (27) during the third inning of a spring training baseball game Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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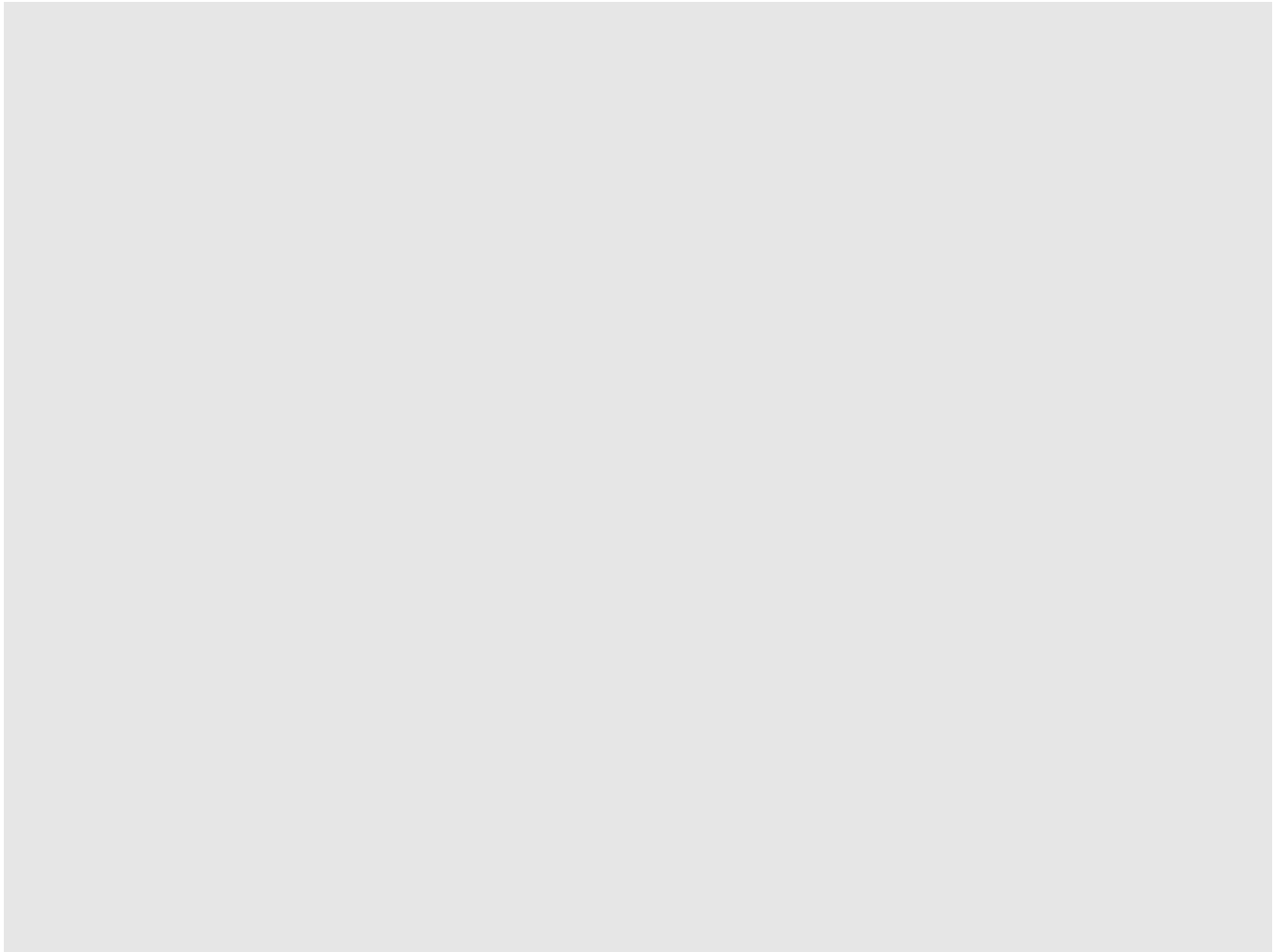
Brewers Guardians Spring Baseball



Milwaukee Brewers' Christian Yelich watches the flight of his run-scoring single against the Cleveland Guardians during the third inning of a spring training baseball game Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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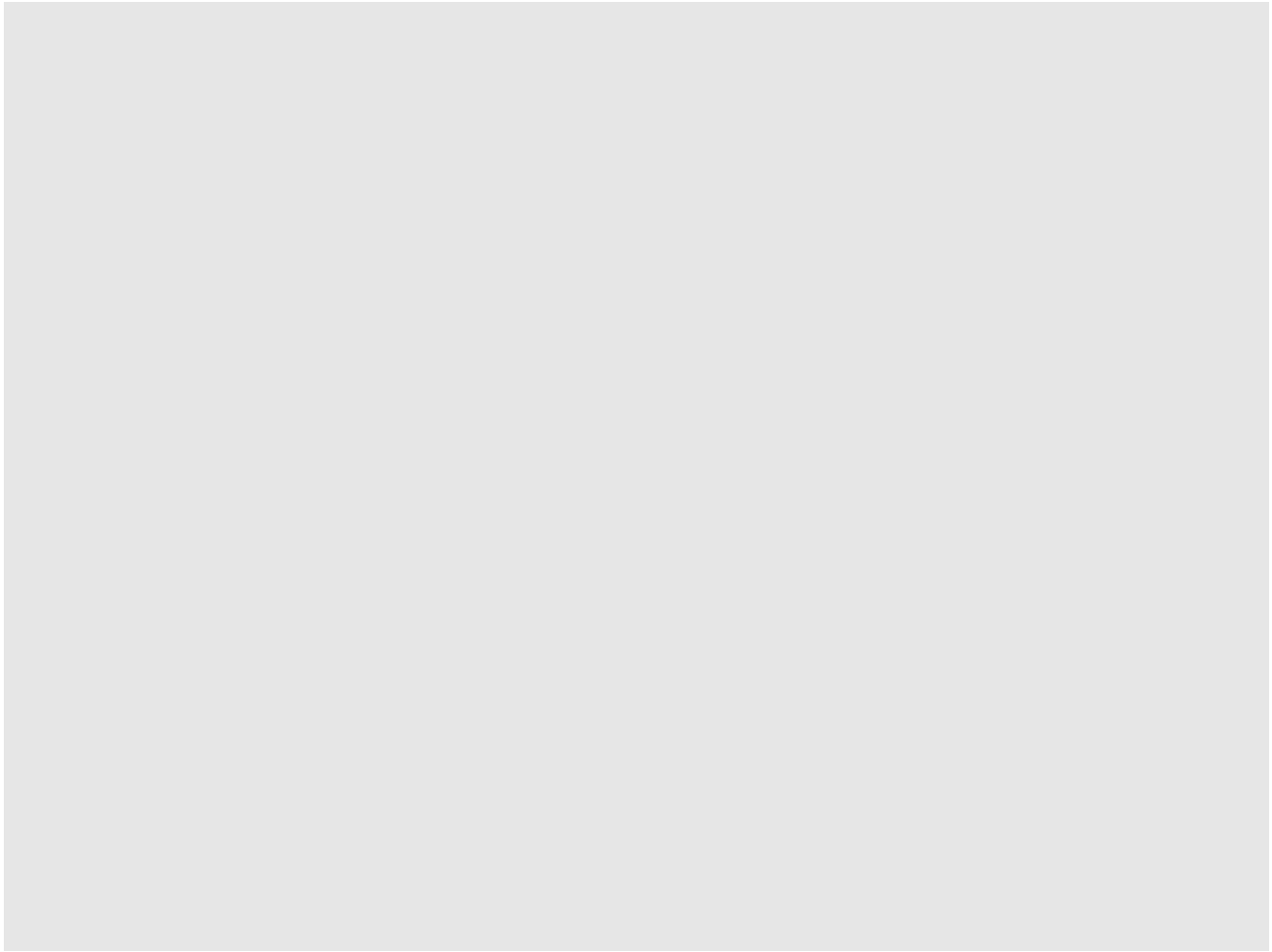
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Milwaukee Brewers manager Craig Counsell, right, rubs up the baseball after taking pitcher Brandon Woodruff (53) out during the fourth inning of a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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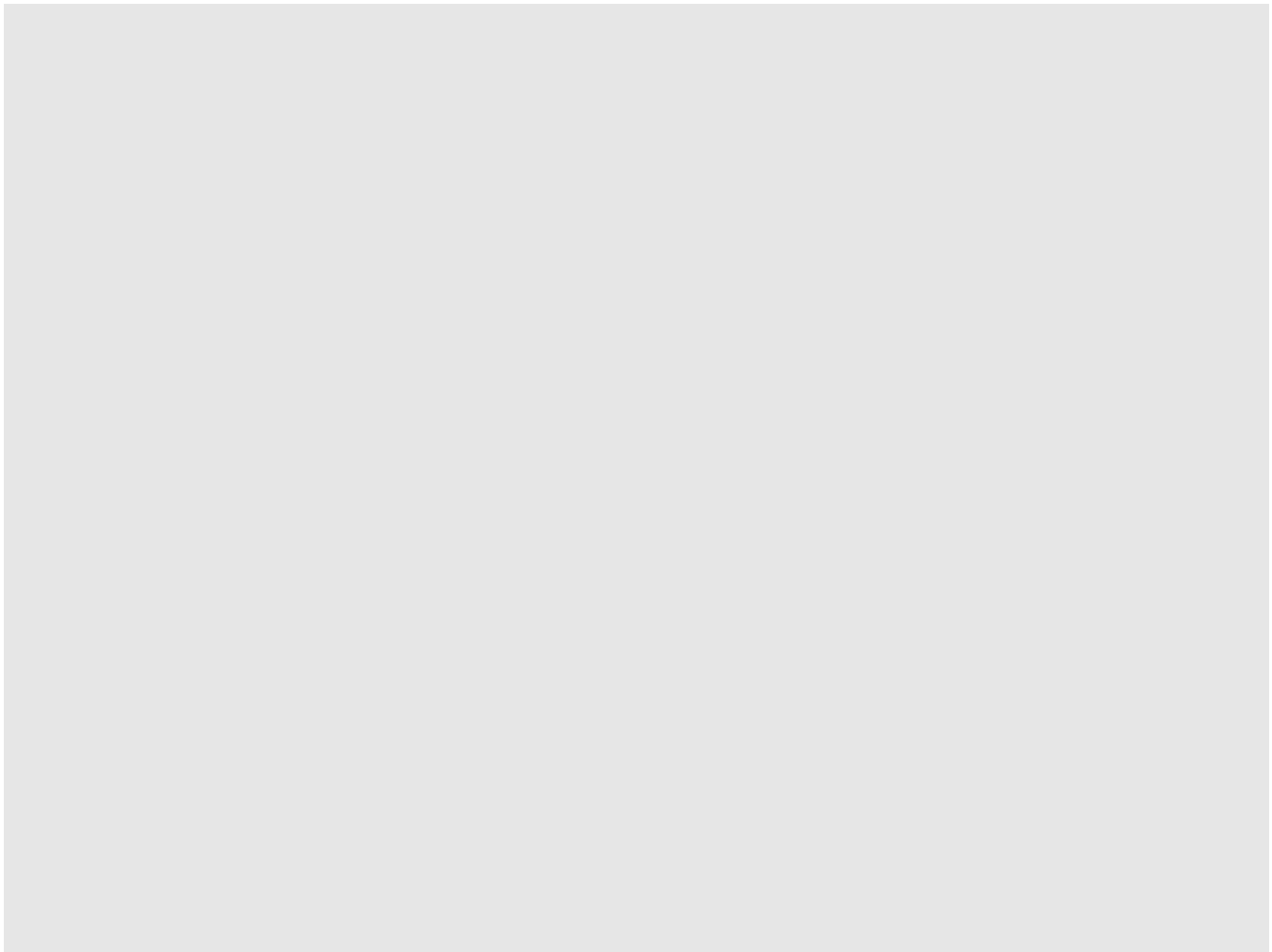
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Milwaukee Brewers' Keston Hiura stretches out prior to a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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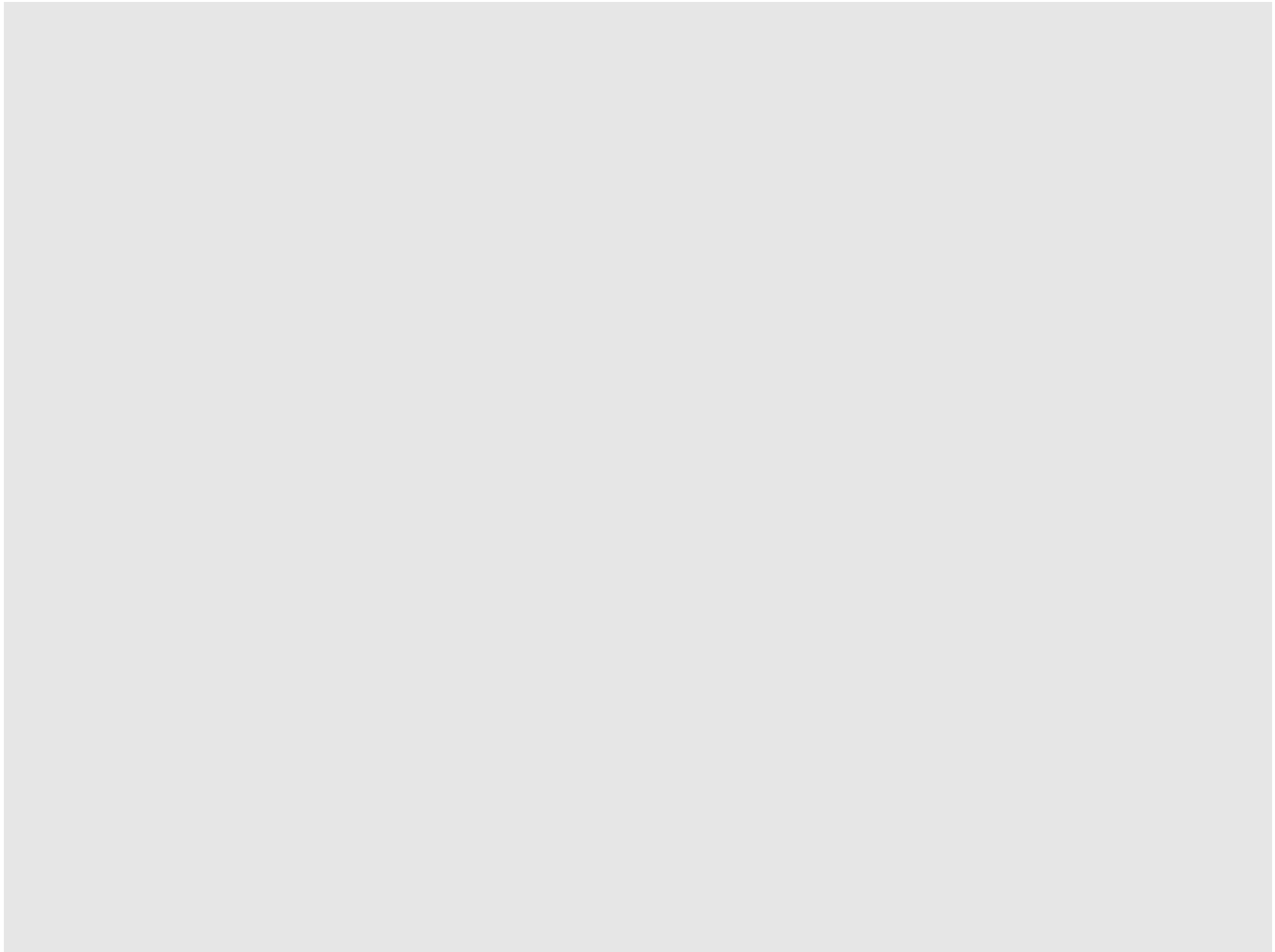
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Milwaukee Brewers' Christian Yelich gets ready to bat against the Cleveland Guardians prior to a spring training baseball game Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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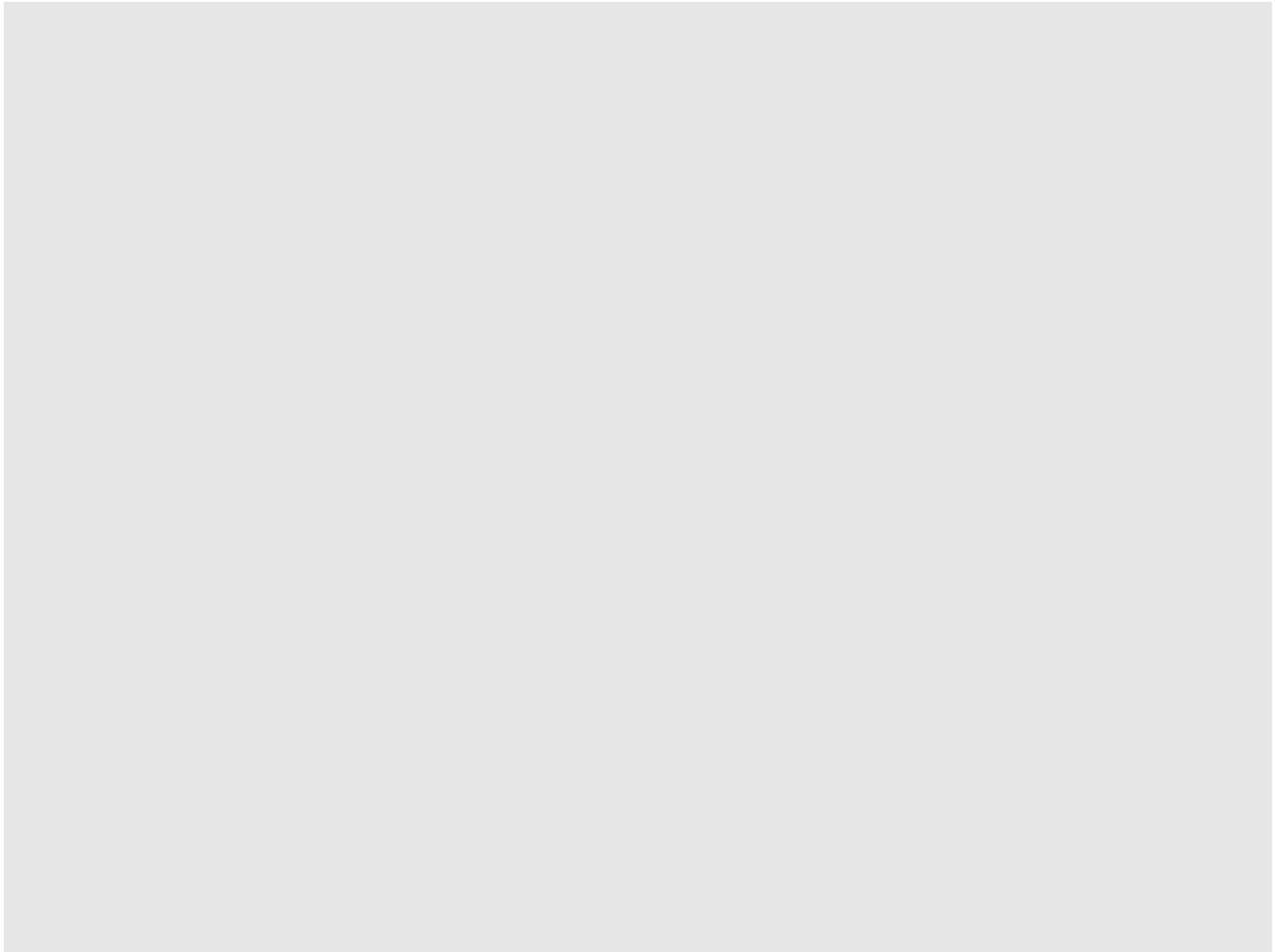
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Milwaukee Brewers manager Craig Counsell walks through the dugout prior to a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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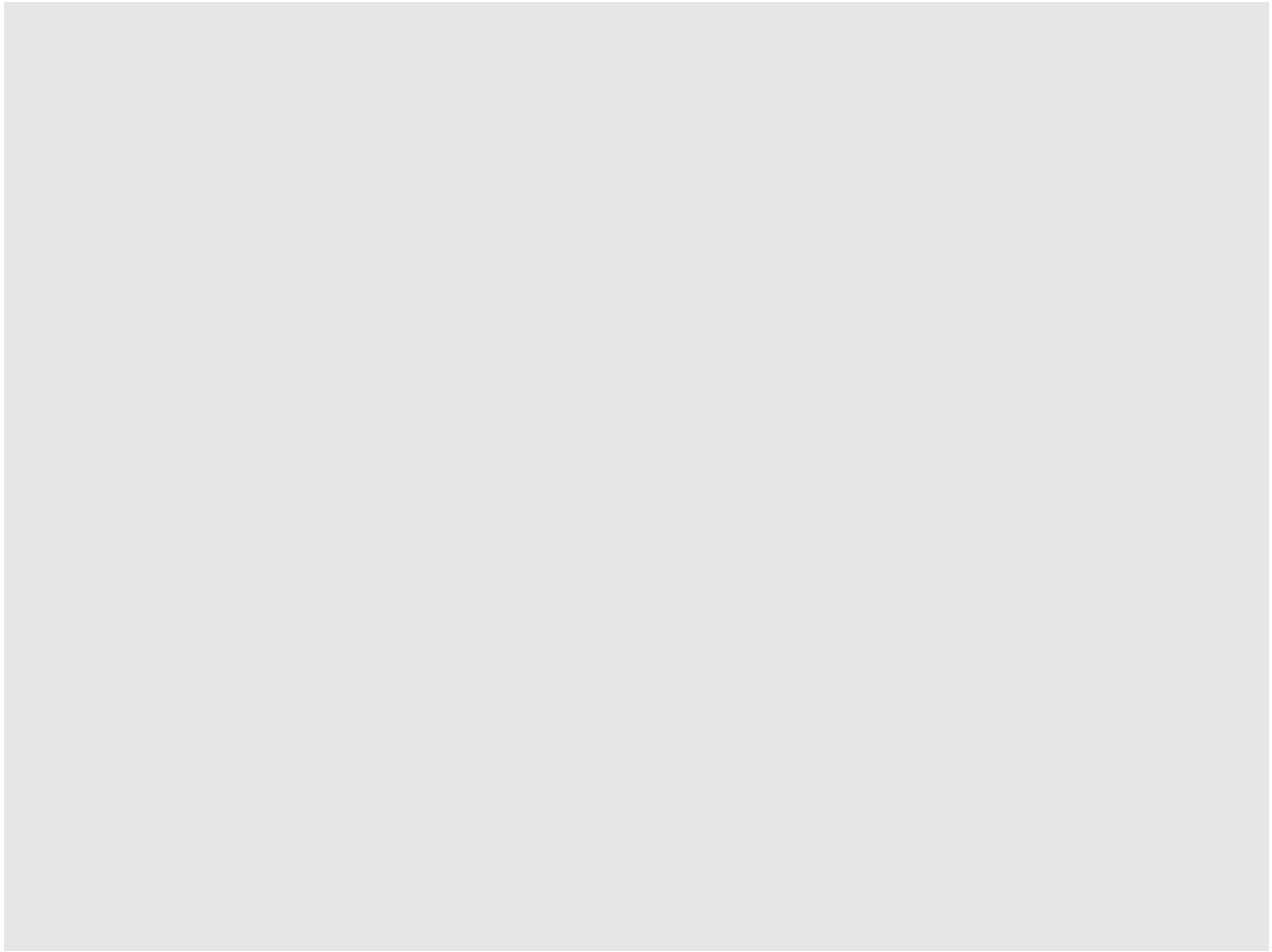
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Members of the Milwaukee Brewers stand for the national anthem prior to a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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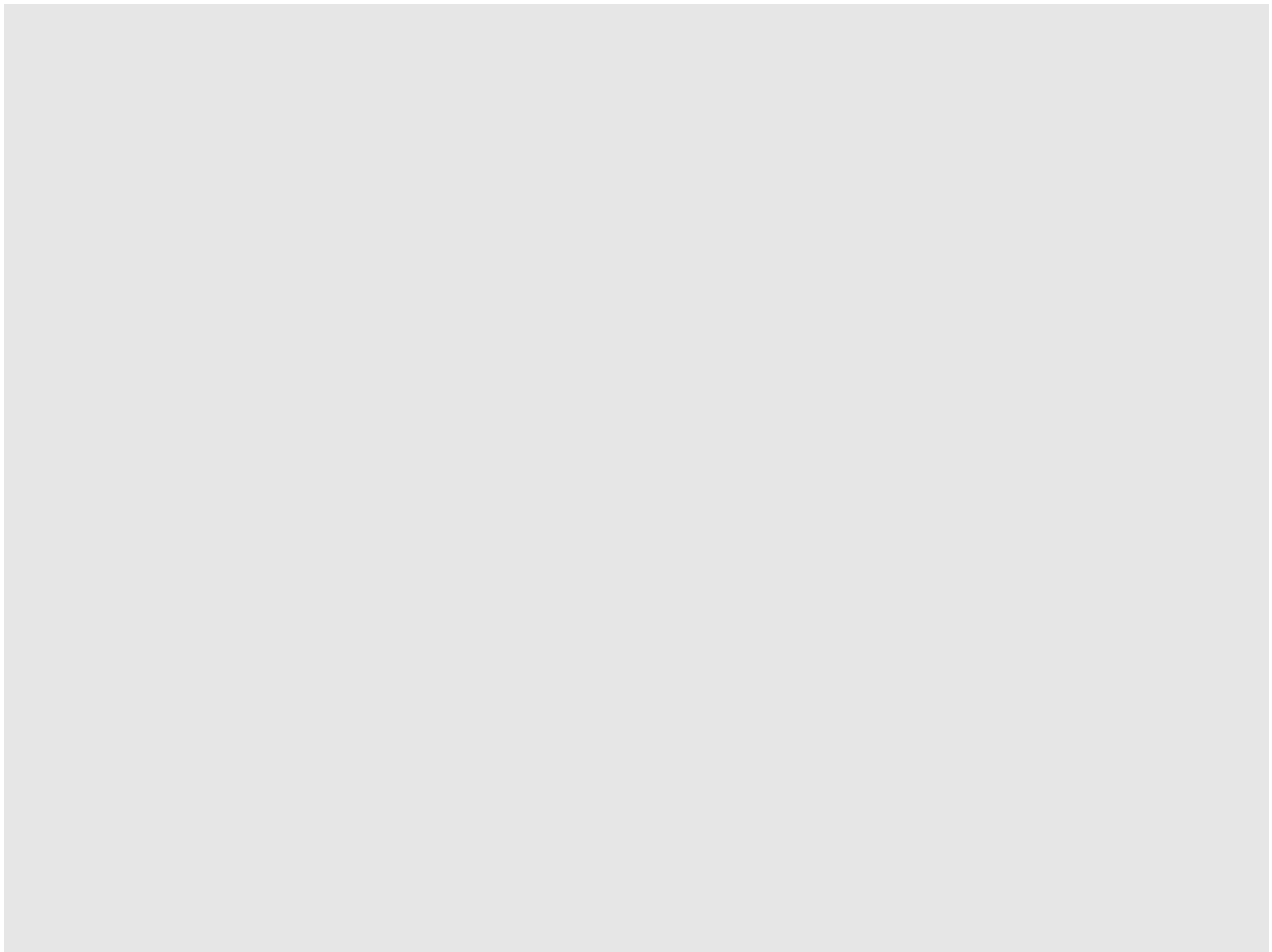
Brewers Guardians Spring Baseball



Milwaukee Brewers manager Craig Counsell, right, and assistant hitting coach and infield coach Matt Erickson stand in the dugout prior to a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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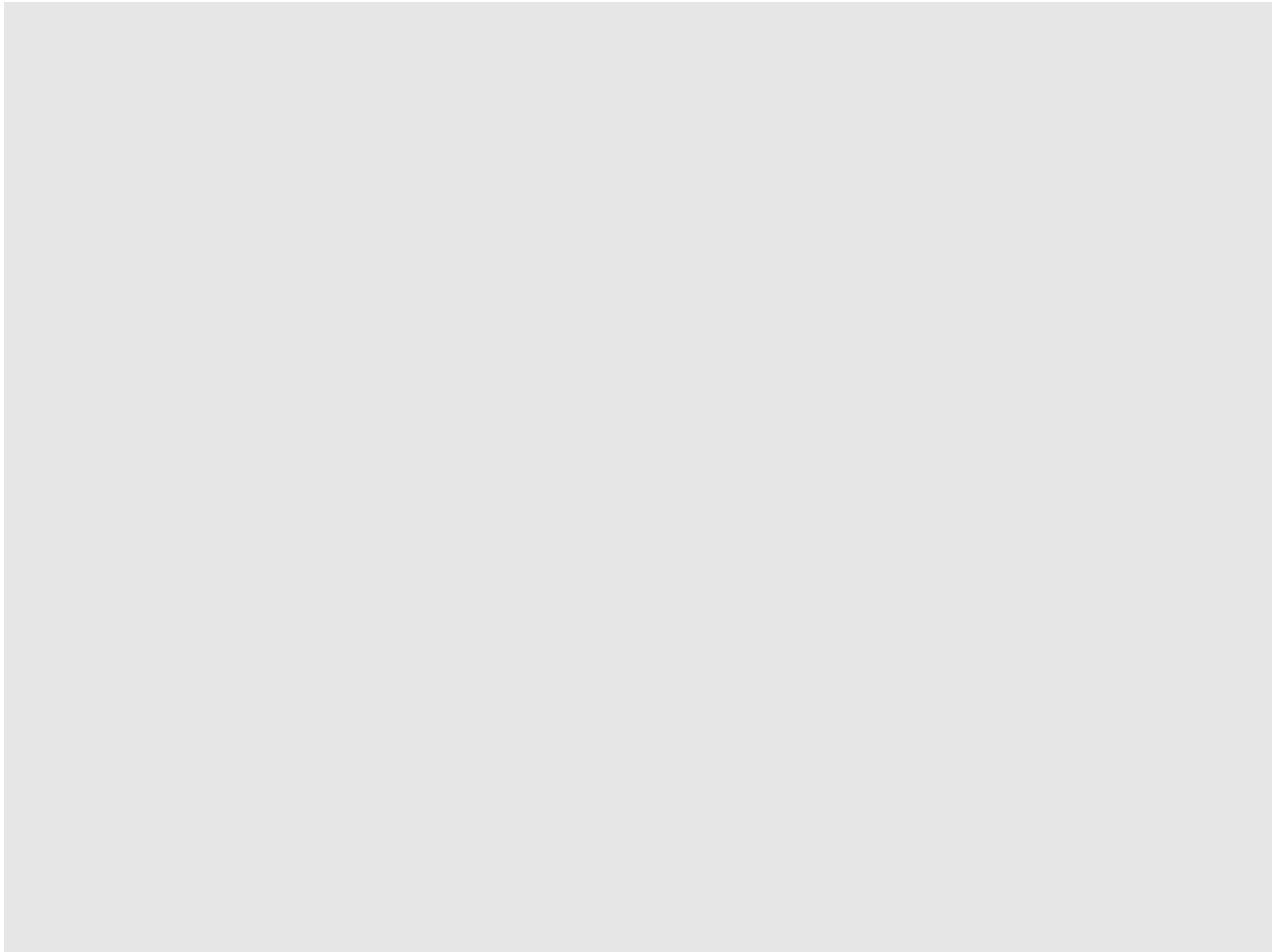
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Milwaukee Brewers' Kolten Wong steps in to bat against the Cleveland Guardians during the first inning of a spring training baseball game Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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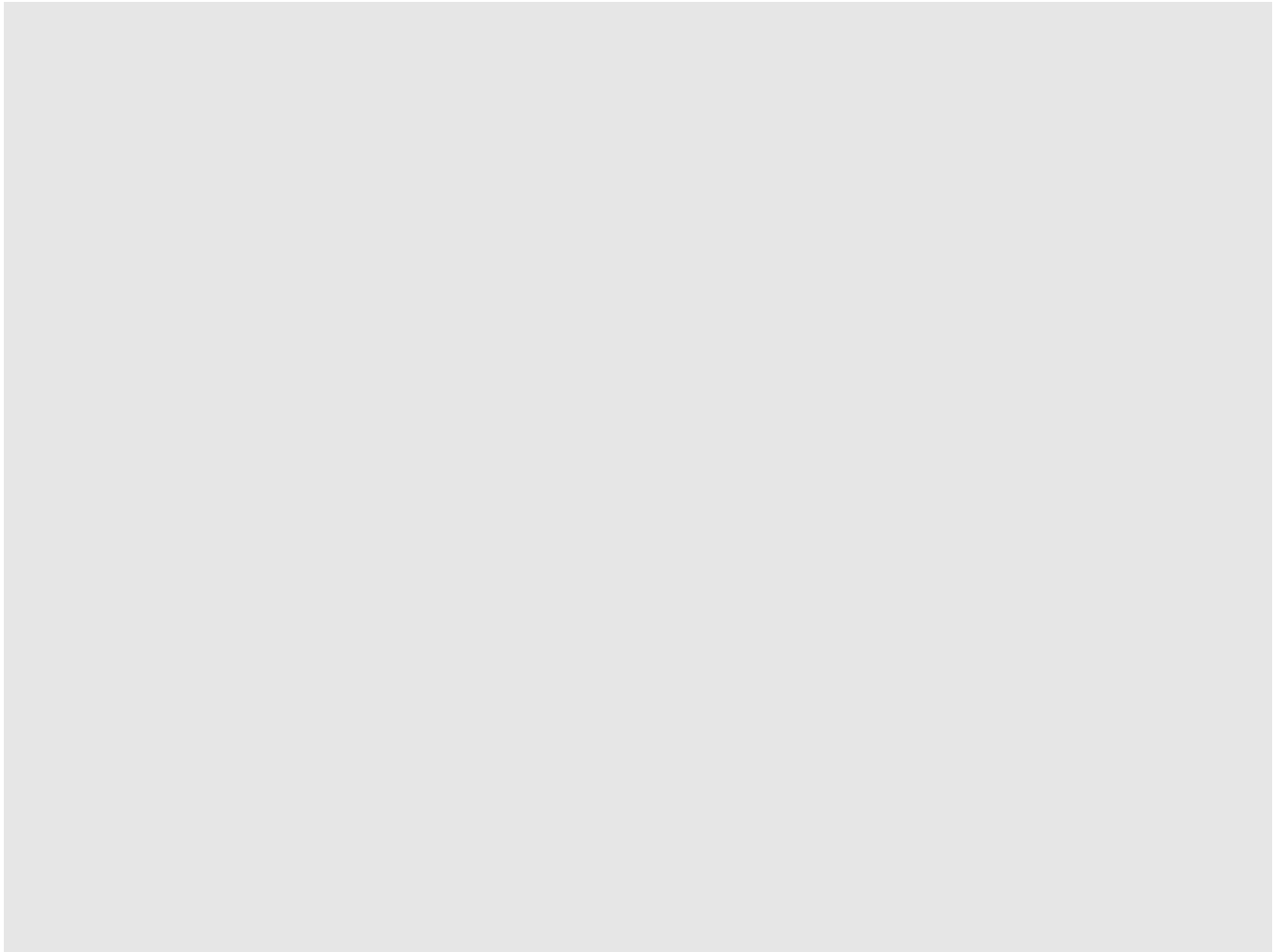
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Milwaukee Brewers' Christian Yelich takes a swing against the Cleveland Guardians during the first inning of a spring training baseball game Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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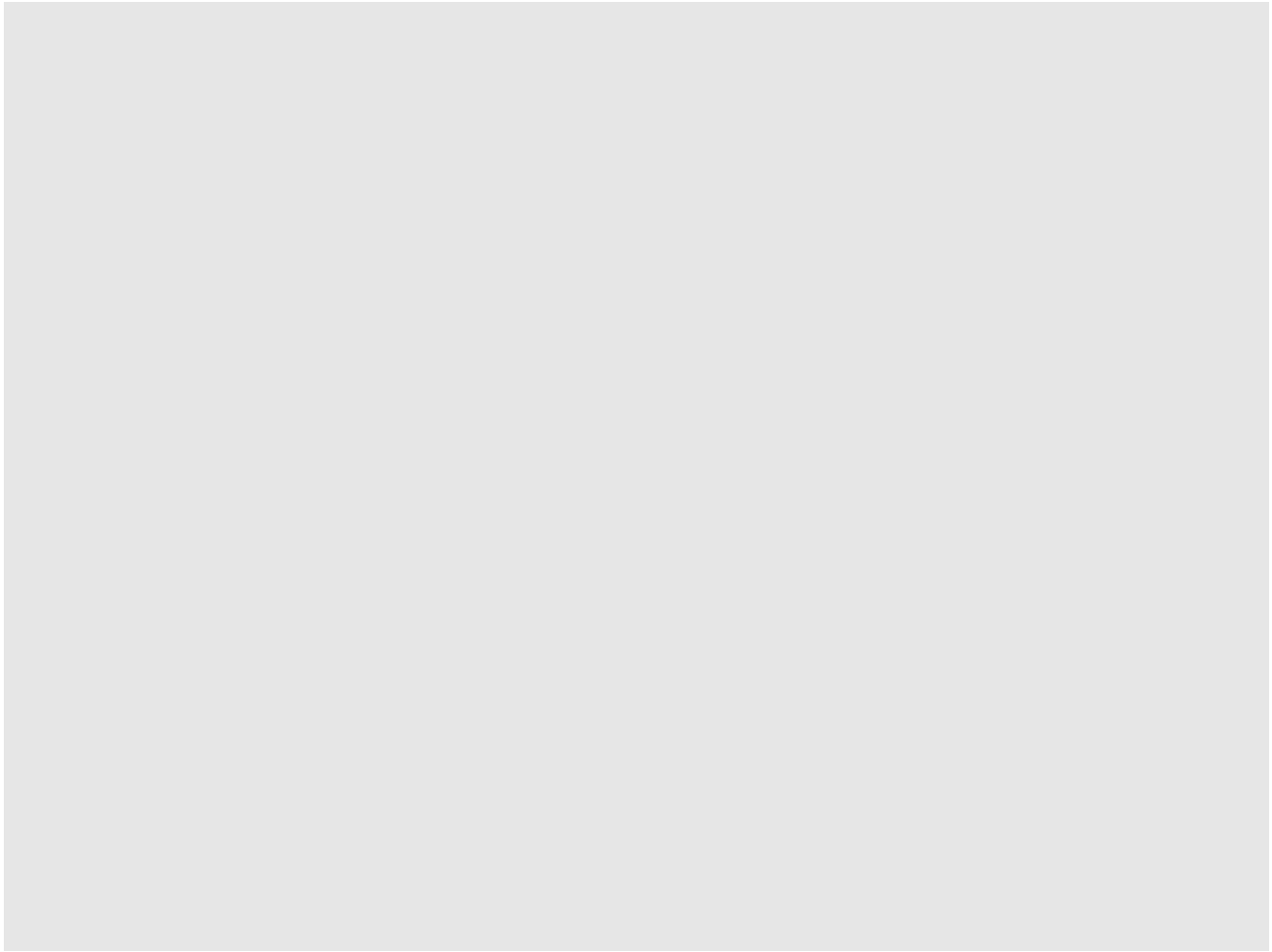
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Milwaukee Brewers' Christian Yelich fouls off a pitch against the Cleveland Guardians during the first inning of a spring training baseball game Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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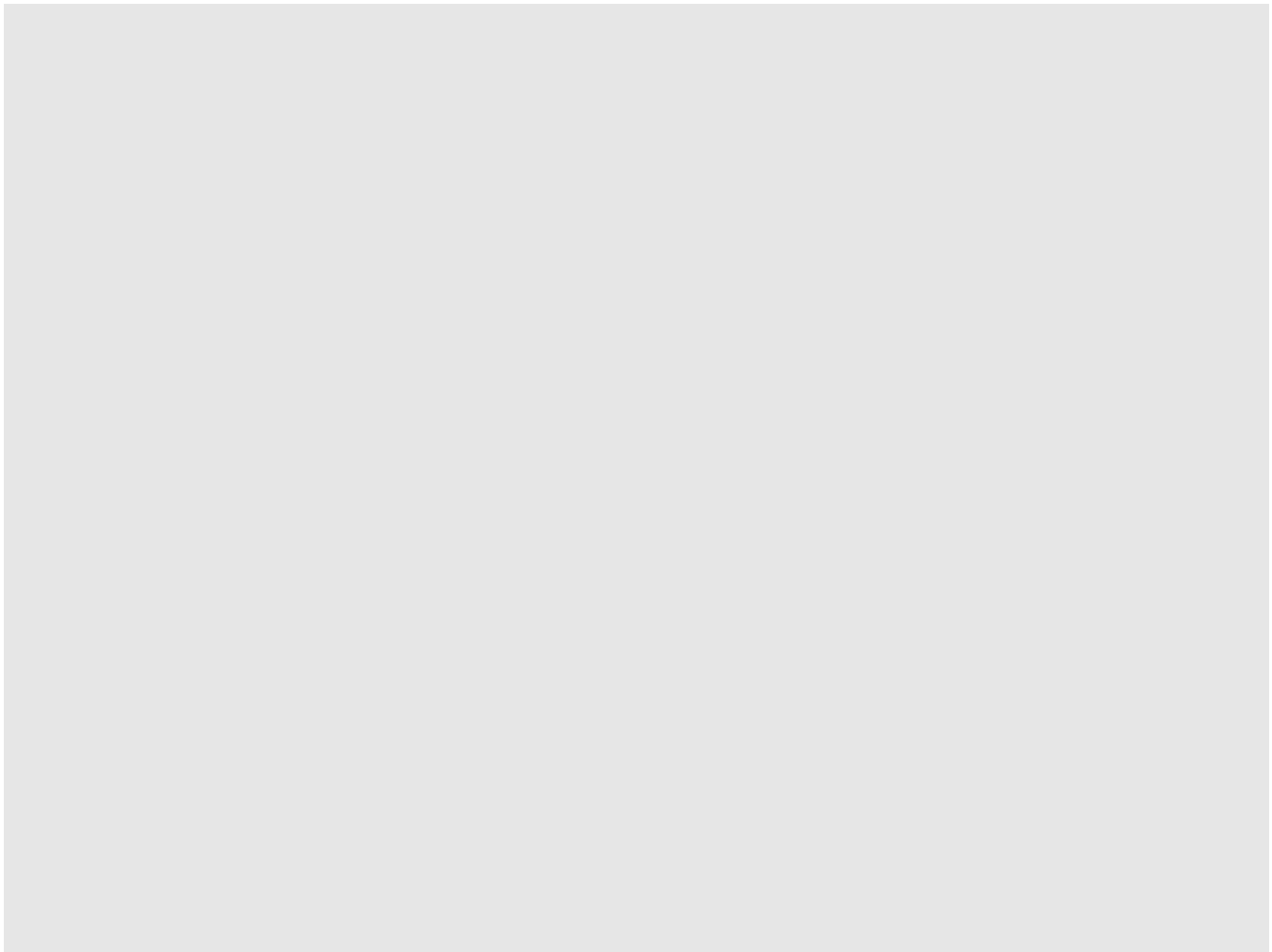
Brewers Guardians Spring Baseball



Milwaukee Brewers starting pitcher Brandon Woodruff gets the baseball back from the Brewers catcher during the first inning of a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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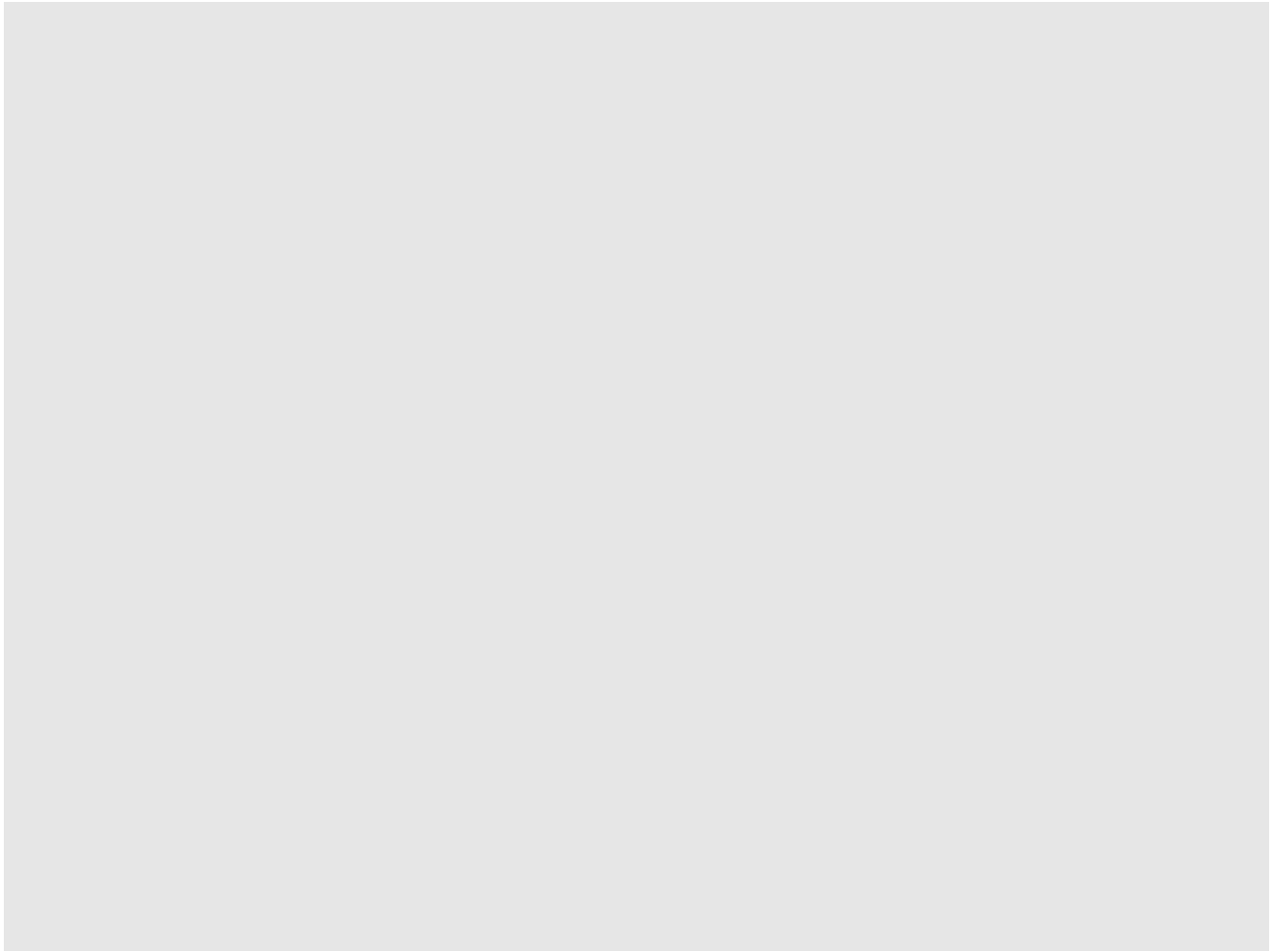
Brewers Guardians Spring Baseball



Milwaukee Brewers first base coach Quintin Berry flips a baseball in the stands during the second inning of a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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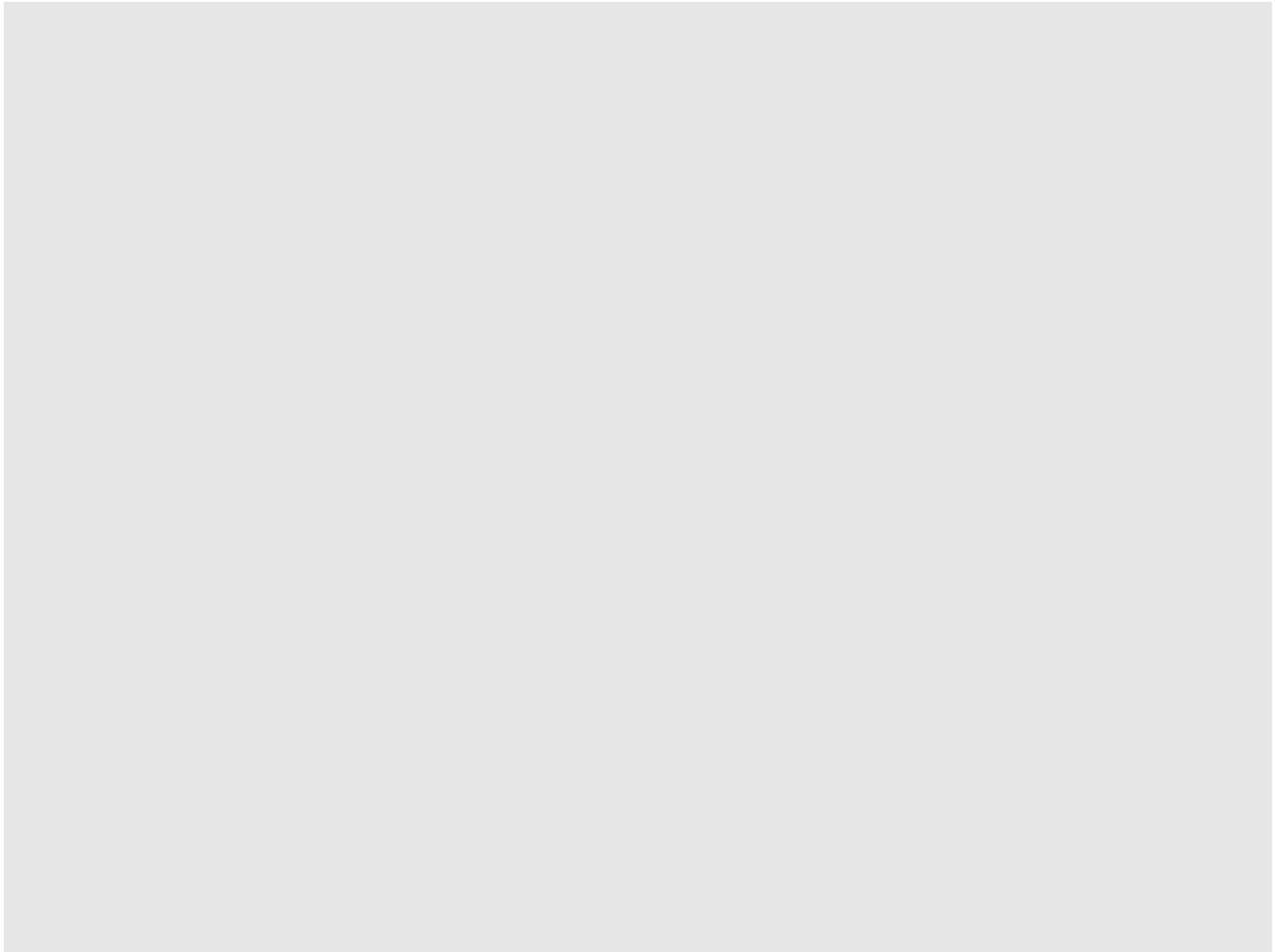
Brewers Guardians Spring Baseball



Milwaukee Brewers first baseman Keston Hiura fields a grounder against the Cleveland Guardians during the second inning of a spring training baseball game Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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Brewers Guardians Spring Baseball



Milwaukee Brewers second baseman Kolten Wong tries to control a throw down to second base during the fourth inning of a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in Goodyear, Ariz. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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By Adam Rogan

Local Editor

Adam does a little bit of everything with the JT, from everyday news to localizing state & national politics. He grew up in Racine County, believes in the Oxford comma and loves digital subscribers: journaltimes.com/subscribe | [@Could_Be_Rogan](https://twitter.com/Could_Be_Rogan)
