



VOLUME 1 - ISSUE 5

MARCH 2009

6 YEARS OF SCF AND NO SIGNS OF SLOWING DOWN!



AFTER THE NHL, THE
NBA OPTS FOR AN
EXCLUSIVITY DEAL



ALSO INSIDE

RELEASE DATES, PRODUCT REVIEWS, AND MORE



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Card
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For all of your hobby boxes needs!

We offer a selection of Hockey, Baseball, Basketball, Football and Racing boxes.

This month's featured products (hobby boxes)

2009 Baseball Topps Finest – out 3/31 - \$92.99



- 2 mini-boxes per box. 6 packs per mini-box (12 total packs per box). 5 cards per pack.
- NEW! 2 Numbered Autograph Rookie Patch Cards
- 10 Numbered Parallel Cards
- One 2009 Rookie Redemption Card

2008-2009 Basketball Upper Deck Black – out 3/25 – \$209.99



- 2 packs per box. 1 card per pack
- Every card will feature autographs or multi memorabilia pieces numbered to 99 or less!
- One autograph per display box! (on average)
- Look for unique signed manufactured patch cards!
- Find signed game worn jersey cards-- the autograph is actually on the game-worn jersey material!
- Autographed memorabilia rookie cards numbered to 99

2009 Football Sage Hit Low Series – out 3/25 - \$99.99



- An average of 6 autographs per box!
- The very first cards of the 2009 Drafttees, including Michael Crabtree (WR-Texas Tech), Javon Ringer(RB-Michigan State), and more!
- All cards are inserted, NO REDEMPTIONS!
- One 20-pt. stock insert card per pack.

2008-2009 Upper Deck NHL Champs – out 3/17- \$104.99



- A 480-card mini-card set, like the days of yesteryear!
- Featuring a Natural History Collection, color parallels and Hockey cards!
- Regular-sized cards too, with Rookies hitting at 1 in 2!
- Go where no hockey set has gone before...Back through time, with some unbelievable treasures!
- Fossils, Bones, Artifacts, Mastodon Teeth, A Natural History Collection, Mini Signature Cards, Mini Threads, Memorabilia cards from athletes of various sports, Dinosaurs, Endangered Species
- And Hockey Players!



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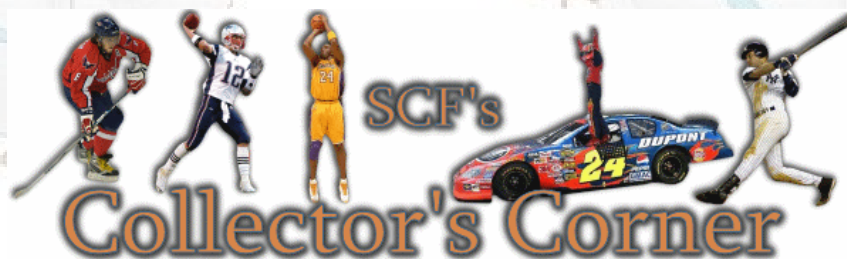
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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

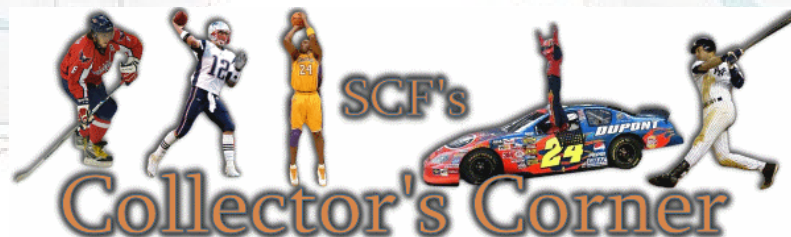
Happy Birthday SCF!

By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

What can happen in six years? A rather open ended question but one which is easy to answer when you think of SCF. In two words: a lot. From a simple discussion site in 2003, Sportscardforum evolved into the ultimate trading and discussion site. Today, whenever you drop by SCF you can see it buzzing with activity, and not just in one sport but in all of them. From racing to basketball and hockey and of course not forgetting America's favourites baseball and football, at any time of the day, plenty of members are online. Some are trading, some are chatting or others are simply blogging or posting but one thing is for sure, everyone is busy. Why the introduction about SCF you ask? Well, on the 3rd March, SCF celebrated its sixth birthday. Personally, I've only been a member for two years but the growth has been absolutely phenomenal in those two years. The best thing is though; there is no sign of it slowing down. SCF is currently provides its members with awesome features such as a chat room, a trade manager and even an escrow service. Rest assured though, no one is resting on their laurels. On the horizon, we have storefronts and an online price guide which should facilitate every collector's life. Congratulations on six amazing years SCF and here's to many more! Oh and in the words of Dwight:

IT IS YOUR BIRTHDAY.
Happy 6th Birthday SCF!
March 3, 2009

Now on a more specific sport front, the basketball hobby world was rocked in February when the NBA announced its exclusivity deal with Panini. This was somewhat of a shock for many, not so much because exclusivity deals are unheard of but rather because most people wouldn't have considered Panini a front runner in the race for the right to NBA licensed cards. It is hard to say what this will ultimately mean for basketball collectors but it will however be interesting to see how Upper Deck handles this reversal of fortune. In a hockey context, UD has the exclusivity while In The Game carries on releasing products which are not licensed. Will UD decide to do this in the basketball world or will they just make way for Panini and focus on the other sports? Even more interesting, how will the collectors react? Will they take to the Italian company's product or will the market suffer a setback? Judging by our members' reaction, they were far from impressed. There truly never is a dull moment in the collecting world...





SCF Member Spotlight

By Scott Kozlowski aka Scottkoz20

In this edition of the monthly spotlight, we again will take a look at five members of sportscardforum.com that have been nominated by the staff. The first two members were nominated by the Hockey and Baseball staff. The other three members nominated from Football, Basketball and Racing collectors have earned a Super Collector tag for their player collections.

Additionally, we will now also feature a member of the SCF staff

Staff Spotlight – onepimptiger

Darren is currently SCF resident Chit-Chat staff member. You will always find him in the chit-chat forums. His personality is a perfect fit for these forums because as he puts it: "I've always been an opinionated person and like to give my input and do my part to help make SCF the best it can be."

He has been an SCF Member since June of 2007 and since then he has made nearly 300 trades. His collection's primary focus is anything and everything of Clemson alum from 1999 to the present. He has done something that most of us will never do, made a complete tour of the US in 18 days.

Hockey Member Spotlight – Tannies

Tanis has been recognized by the Hockey Team as someone who is always willing to help out the other members. Since becoming a member of SCF in November of 2005, she has completed more than 170 trades. She enjoys SCF because of the number of members that are on the hockey forum to trade with.

She got her start collecting cards in high school initially, but really got back into it during the fall of 2005. The focus of her collection is autographs, primarily autograph requests made through the mail. When she is not sending out request for cards or logged into SCF, she enjoys the outdoors. Her husband and she enjoy camping in the mountains near their home and they own a quad which they love riding when camping.

Baseball Member Spotlight - scrowe80

Sean is a greatly respected member that spends a bit of time in the baseball forums. Since joining SCF in August of 2008, he has made nearly 100 trades. He enjoys the networking aspect that SCF provides. As he puts it "Dealing with the same people everyday in a single hobby is rewarding. You gain peoples trust and you find yourself looking out for their needs as well as yours. I find that to be the best aspect."

He has been collecting since 1986 when his father introduced him to the hobby at the tender age of 6. His primary collecting focus for the last few months is his Joba Chamberlain collection as he is hoping to earn a Super Collector title. When he is not on SCF, Sean is an avid fisherman, going to the Long Island Sound, Jersey shore as well as various fresh water lakes reservoirs and streams.

Basketball Super Collector - gatorboymike

Mike was the first SCF Basketball collector to hold 2 Super Collector titles, one for Avery Johnson and the other for Mike Dunleavy. He joined SCF in August of 2006 and has completed nearly 35 trades since joining.

Avery Johnson collection

1/1's: 3 Autographs: 12/17 (70.6%) Game Used: 1/3 (33.3%)
Rookie Cards: 1/1 (100%) Total Cards: 386/489 (78.9% complete!!!)

A couple of his favorites

- 1. 1997-98 Metal Universe Precious Metal Gems Green (/10)
- 2. 1998-99 Metal Universe Gem Masters (/1)

Mike Dunleavy Collection

1/1's: 31 Autographs: 27/39 (69.2%) Game Used: 148/183 (80.9%)
Rookie Cards: 39/39 (100%) Total cards: 564/770 (73.2% complete!!!)

One of the most beautiful cards I have ever seen.

2007-08 Exquisite Collection NBA All-Access Triple Logoman O'Neal/Dunleavy/Tinsley (/1)



"This is the greatest Dunleavy card to date, and to be able to buy it, I spent two months on a strict instant noodles diet."



Football Super Collector - Labguy42

Tom recently became the first SCF football collector to hold 2 Super Collector titles, one for Jim Thorpe and the other for Red Grange. Since joining SCF in March of 2005, he has nearly completed 200 trades.



His Red Grange collection is out of this world! Here are some of the numbers.

Base 102/113- 90%
 Game Used (counting 2008 upper deck icons lettermen) 40/42 95%
 4- 1/1's 4 different autos

Jim Thorpe Collection

base 250/267- 94%
 game used 108/117 (counting the 2008 upper deck icons lettermen) 92% not counting 1/1's autos- 0 1/1's- 5
 38 different 1st day covers



Racing Super Collector - Lea DeFoote

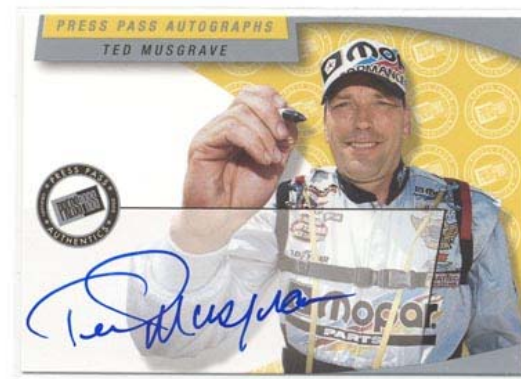
Tom is SCF's resident Ted Musgrave collector. Since joining SCF in January of 2007, he has completed 20 trades.



Tom currently owns
 934 of 957 known Musgrave cards (97.6%)

Including 100% of

- Ted's card with a known population of 1000 or more.
- Race Used Cards
- Autographs



Some of the other items include unopened boxes of '95 Maxx Medallion and '96 Maxx Made in America because Ted's car is pictured on the box artwork.



Panini Shoots to the Top

By RenegadeLonghorn aka Arash Kassiri

Yesterday, the National Basketball Association (NBA) announced an exclusive partnership with Panini. A company based out of Italy, which will now become the sole manufacturer of NBA licensed trading cards beginning with the 2009/10 season. The agreement will last until 2011/12 season.



www.sportscardforum.com

What does this mean? Topps and Upper Deck, the two biggest players in the basketball hobby for the past 20 years, will no longer be able to produce cards with NBA affiliation. However, they can still produce cards of players in their college uniform or generic team uniform. This likely means only a handful of products will be produced by the two big players. High end sets like Exquisite, Premier, and Letterman will likely disappear. What about exclusive deals with players like Jordan, Bryant, and James? One can only assume an agreement will be worked out between Topps/Upper Deck and Panini. If not, Panini will already lack some serious firepower. Topps and Upper Deck can continue to lure away top rookies with exclusive deals, further hurting Panini's chances of appealing to collectors.



On the flip side, Panini might be what the card hobby needs. Topps and Upper Deck load their sets with different color parallels and multiple 1/1's. This makes it extremely difficult for collectors to achieve a super collection of a player or team. The agreement between the NBA and Panini comes during a steep decline in basketball card sales which started during the 2003/04 season. A new manufacturer will likely offer collectors something fresh and new. Could this be the jolt the basketball card hobby needs? Only time will tell.



Under the agreement, Panini will create NBA licensed trading cards, stickers, and sticker albums. They will produce low, mid, and high end sets. We can expect to see rookies, memorabilia, and autographs. 15 to 20 trading card products will be released every year. Both parties will work together and improve retail marketing and appeal to a larger market. Panini is most commonly known for their stickers and non sports items. The task of winning over basketball collectors is gigantic. First, they will need to establish a base of operations in the U.S. Second, they will need to mimic the designs of Topps and Upper Deck cards. Third, exclusivity. Acquiring exclusive rights to players like Jordan, Bryant, and James is a must. Right now, the reactions are mixed, with many basketball collectors questioning their future in the basketball card hobby. Others are optimistic that Panini will create similar cards to Topps and Upper Deck...cards we have grown to love for many years.

Panini will need to make a big splash right away. I expect them to announce their first 2009/10 set before the end of the 2008/09 NBA regular season in April. Releasing set info with pictures will keep collectors excited during the NBA off season. I hope to see a diverse mid-end set, consisting of every type of card ranging from an autograph to base and costing no more than \$50 a box.



NHL Trading Cards: Why not Panini After Upper Deck's Monopoly?

By Jean-Francois Allan aka roy.the.greatest

On January 27th 2009, the trading card industry was shocked by the news of an exclusive four-year deal between the National Basketball Association (NBA) and the Panini Group. The exclusive deal by itself isn't a shock, because the NBA and manufacturers like Topps and Upper Deck agreed it was the right solution to limit the card market to only one licensee, but the selection of a European company mainly known in North America for sticker albums was a total surprise in the trading card world. After the NHL selected Upper Deck as the exclusive trading card manufacturer around three years ago, the NBA now follows the same exclusive pattern but with Panini. So, this time, Upper Deck lost its license with a major professional sport league, Upper Deck won't make NBA licensed basketball cards from the 2009-10 season through at least 2011-12. They most certainly now feel In The Game's pain for losing the license for a major league sport!



What are our first thoughts? On one hand we have the American manufacturers Upper Deck and Topps offering a massive selection of products with autographed and memorabilia cards, and on the other hand we have the Italian company Panini offering regular cards much like the ones produced in the early 1990s, and sticker albums like we had in the 1980s... So what is the NBA doing by selecting Panini considering the trading card market developed over the last two decades? Collectors desire memorabilia cards, not plain stickers! They want flashy autographed double patch cards numbered out of 15 copies, not tiny cards only made of cardboard! Panini will probably offer some products with game-used memorabilia cards; however we clearly see the selection of Panini by the NBA as nothing to do with the quality of their past products in the trading card area. Inside one year, Panini will need to jump from the 1980s regular cards and album stickers, to the 2009 market of memorabilia and autographed cards. Welcome in the new era! We are pretty far from Upper Deck Exquisite and UD The Cup, and very far from ITG Ultimate Memorabilia with factory sealed cards in holders. I roughly see three main aspects for the selection of a card company: the money offered to acquire the license, the quality of the products offered to the fans and collectors, and the market brought by the trading card company to the league. It is clear that the NBA desires to have a strong market in the USA; however a European company like Panini, with experience in other sports in Europe, brings a possibility to grow the NBA's trading card market overseas... This was certainly a key aspect of NBA's decision.

The NHL and NBA have a lot of similarities. Both leagues are far from having the same amount of revenues as the NFL and MLB, the teams have a salary cap to control expenses, and both leagues considered over the last years on-and-off expansion in Europe. The NHL already played some games in Europe (Prague, Stockholm, London, Bern, etc.), so considering the trading cards are a good way to connect fans to the sport, the selection of Panini could also be in the coming years a good move for the NHL. Once the exclusive deal they signed with Upper Deck is up. After all, the actual NHL's commissioner Gary Bettman was previously a senior vice-president and general counsel to the NBA, so the way of thinking in the NHL could have some roots from the NBA, and Panini could that way figure as a serious contender for the next exclusive trading card manufacturer of the NHL.

Upper Deck is now without a license for the NBA, what will happen to the players, such as Michael Jordan and LeBron James, who signed multi-year deals with Upper Deck which includes exclusive rights to cards, collectibles and memorabilia? Upper Deck could possibly resell the rights to Panini, but I guess this kind of contract isn't cheap. Another option is they could possibly make cards of basketball players by retouching pictures to hide the NBA team logos, but the market of the unlicensed trading card is not an easy market because a lot of collectors chase rookie cards. Since rookie cards need to be part of a licensed set, if your product is not licensed by the league you already have two strikes to reach a business success. When Upper Deck got its NHL trading card monopoly, the manufacturer In The Game found its way to create successful hockey cards products based on prospects (mainly from the CHL and AHL leagues), vintage players, innovative autographed and memorabilia products, and great customer service. Of course we are far from talking about a worldwide success, but even if a product is not licensed by the NHL, it is possible to make something desired by collectors. By looking the actual situation, if LeBron James can be exclusive to a non-licensed manufacturer, so why not seeing the next hockey player star John Tavares inking an exclusive deal with In The Game? Could we see a player who will never have a rookie card because he is exclusive to an unlicensed manufacturer? Maybe it would make collectors reconsider their definition of a rookie card. I guess all is a question of money when it is time to ink a player for an exclusivity deal, but now licensed or unlicensed products have fewer significations than ever for the fans of the NHL and NBA. With the selection of Panini by the NBA, a manufacturer with no history of memorabilia cards, the real reason behind why a product is licensed and another is not has definitively nothing to do with the quality of the product provided to the collectors.

From a collector's point of view, after a few years of Upper Deck's monopoly on NHL trading cards, I am not sure this exclusivity gave benefits to the collectors. First we have no options about the licensed manufacturer; so if you don't like the customer service of the company then you have no alternative. Secondly, Upper Deck released so many products per year that the average collector cannot even consider having one base set of each product released; it is way too much expensive. We are talking about a hobby here, it shouldn't be so expensive. I wouldn't like to be a kid teleported in this hobby from the 1980s to 2009... Today what can a kid buy with \$10? The mission of the trading cards to connect the fans to the game is no more if you are a kid in 2009. However, if Panini is here to deliver their traditional packs at \$0.25 each, we are in business! ...unless I see the adults complaining about getting back their Exquisite or The Cup packs at \$500 each!





CALENDAR OF RELEASE DATES

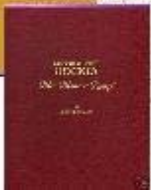
In each issue, we will include a release calendar for the upcoming month.

March (At the time of publication, all dates were accurate but as you no doubt know, product releases do tend to be pushed back from time to time.)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	3	4 - UD Exquisite Football	5	6
9	10 - UD X Basketball	11 - UD Premier Basketball - UD Ice Hockey	12	13
16 - PROjection Series 1 Baseball	17	18	19	20
23 - Signature Basketball	24	25 - UD Black Basketball - HIT Low Series Football	26 - Between the Pipes Hockey	27 - UD Champs Hockey - UD OPC Premier Hockey
30	31 - UD SPx Baseball - Finest Baseball - Razor Letterman			

For all your sports cards need, make sure to visit www.cardsbythebox.com or check out the pack/box sale area on SCF. For more information on the products available, you can also send a private message to Enigma.

CardsByTheBox.com



ITG Superlative Bleu Blanc et Rouge Product Review

By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

As most hockey fans will know by now, this year marks the 100th Anniversary of the Montreal Canadiens. While the team has planned a multitude of special events and memorabilia to commemorate the occasion, both In The Game (ITG) and Upper Deck (UD) have decided to produce special sets for the occasion. This review will look in detail at ITG's effort as they made a smart move and launched their product first on the 23rd January 2009. UD appears to have shot themselves in the foot by delaying the release until late February. Rumour has it that there was a licensing issue for the Hall of Famers autograph in UD's release... Without further delay, I give you Superlative Bleu, Blanc et Rouge.

Description

This is no regular release but unlike last year's Superlative however, it does include a base set. Fortunately, it is a slightly different base set. Firstly, it includes 25 vintage like designed base cards and 40 modern designed ones. Each of the modern version base cards includes a patch from either the Canadiens centennial logo (red version) or from the 2009 All Star Game logo (blue version). The result is rather satisfying, especially since spectacular looking patches are hard to come by for Habs' fans. While the vintage design is interesting, I cannot say that I am a fan of the idea... Vintage material appeals to a certain type of collectors but I am far from convinced that they will enjoy "pretend" vintage. I am however completely sold on the modern base cards. As soon as the logos for the Centennial and the All-Star Game were released I started wondering when I could get them on cards. ITG seems to have listened to collectors once again in using those. Much like other ITG releases this is not a licensed product, so you can expect close-up pictures of the players once again.

Box Details

Packs per box: 1

Cards per pack: 7

Base set: 25 vintage – 40 modern

Price: \$450 - \$500 (getting harder to find, only 1000 books were produced)

Check out: [ITG's Product Information](#)



Checklists (Print run in brackets where applicable)

- [Vintage Base Cards](#) (Rouge version: 5, Bleu version:35)
- [Modern Base Card](#) (Rouge version: 5, Bleu version: 20)
- [Special Inserts](#)
 1. The Cup includes 24 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
 2. Scoring Leaders includes 10 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
 3. Autothreads includes 14 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
 4. Decades includes 7 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
 5. Records includes 10 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
 6. Greatest Moments includes 6 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
 7. Captains includes 12 cards, Bleu:9, Rouge: 1
 8. Stick Rack includes 30 cards, Rouge: 1
 9. Papercuts includes 20 cards, Rouge: 1
 10. Complete Jersey includes 7 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
 11. Complete Package includes 5 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1



Famous Fabrics

1. Raised to the Rafters includes 15 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
2. All Century Team includes 2 cards, Bleu:9, Rouge: 1
3. King Sized Memorabilia includes 12 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
4. Gardiens de But includes 10 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
5. Game-Used Stick includes 30 cards, Bleu:9, Rouge: 1
6. Snap Shots includes 10 cards, Rouge: 1
7. Enshrined includes 19 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1
8. Nameplates includes letters from the names of 11 players, each card is a 1/1
9. Quad Memorabilia includes 8 cards, Bleu: 9, Rouge: 1



- [Auto Plus](#) includes 24 different cards, print run varies with type
- [Autograph](#) includes 55 different cards, print run varies per player

THE VERDICT ON...

The Breaks

Just like every high-end product, it is very hard to assess the quality from one box. Here is an overview of the breaks done on Sportscardforum.com.

Break 1 – Pheeb888

Elmer Lach – Vintage Base – Bleu
Serge Savard – Auto Plus Jersey – Bleu

Break 2 – CoolHandLuke

Elmer Lach – Vintage Base – Rouge
Denis Savard – Autograph – Bleu

Break 3 – Nemesis

Sylvio Mantha – Vintage Base – Bleu
Phil Goyette – Autograph – Bleu

Break 4 – Izzy991

Armand Mondou – Vintage Base – Bleu
Patrick Roy – Autograph – Bleu

Break 5 – Enigma

Bill Durnan – Vintage Base – Bleu
Jean Beliveau – Autograph – Bleu

Break 6 – Enigma

Didier Pitre – Vintage Base – Rouge
Bobby Rousseau – Autograph – Bleu

Dollard St-Laurent – Modern Base – Rouge
Dickie Moore – The Cup Glove – Bleu
Patrick Roy – Autograph – Bleu

Frank Mahovlich – Modern Base – Rouge
Henri Richard – Autograph – Bleu
Bill Durnan – The Cup Glove – Bleu

Denis Savard – Modern Base – Bleu
Doug Harvey – Raised to the Rafters – Bleu
Stephane Richer – Stick Rack – Rouge

Bobby Rousseau – Modern Base – Rouge
Bobby Smith – Autograph – Rouge
Jean Beliveau – The Cup Jersey – Rouge

Carey Price – Modern Base – Bleu
Carey Price – Gardiens de But – Bleu
Guillaume Latendresse – Auto Plus Number – Bleu

Patrick Roy – Modern Base – Bleu
Guy Carbonneau – Captains – Bleu
Denis Savard – Game-Used Stick – Bleu

Charlie Hodge – Autograph – Bleu
Bob Gainey – Game-Used Stick – Bleu

Rejean Houle – Game-Used Stick – Bleu
Rogie Vachon – Auto Plus Jersey – Bleu

Stephane Richer – Autograph – Bleu
Guy Lafleur – Auto Plus Number – Bleu

Jean Beliveau – Auto Plus Skate – Bleu
Bobby Smith – Game-Used Stick- Bleu

Mario Tremblay – Autograph – Bleu
Jacques Plante – The Cup Jersey – Bleu

Rogie Vachon – Autograph – Bleu
Guy Carbonneau – Auto Plus Jersey – Bleu



Comments

I've already mentioned that I'm not crazy about the vintage base cards and the other negative point I would say is that I have seen quite a few books contain cards of the same player. This is brilliant if you are a fan of the said player, but if you are not and if they are not getting any hobby love, you will more than likely be stuck with those cards. Finally on the negative front, the lack of licence is a shame but this is on the NHL more than on ITG. Now for the positive points, stating the obvious; an all Habs product! It's definitely perfect for the fans, no argument there. Of course the hard signed autographs are also a big plus and so is the diversity of inserts. The Auto Plus cards are particularly interesting, numbers, emblems, jersey, skates...you name it; it's possible. I have also seen some choice swatches of jerseys and patches on the cards, many of which with actual game wear truly showing their game-used nature.

Unfortunately, the price tag of the product doesn't make it accessible for everyone and makes the purchase quite a gamble. In the current economic climate, not everyone can afford to spend this much on cards...especially when it seems hard to make your money back on eBay.

Final Ratings (Out of 5):

Variety: 4.5/5

Fun: 5/5

Overall design: 4.5/5

Value: 3.5/5

Re-buy: 3.5/5

Overall: 21/25 (84%)

It was a wonderful idea from ITG to salute the oldest franchise in NHL history and I really look forward to seeing what their next product is going to be. Of course, a lower pricing point could have made this release even more successful but nothing is perfect!



2008 NFL Topps Triple Threads

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

First and foremost, I'd like to thank the wonderful folks at Topps for providing us with the following pack to review.

You can view the videos of this break at the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ittiE1Of2c

Product Description

- 2 mini boxes per display box
1 pack per mini box
6 cards per pack
MSRP: \$159-\$165

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

EVERY 18-COUNT CASE CONTAINS BOTH:

- An Autographed Triple Relic Card numbered to 36 or less
- A 1 of 1 Autographed Triple Relic Card

EVERY 2-PACK DISPLAY BOX CONTAINS:

- An Autographed Triple Relic Card numbered to 99 or less
- A Triple Relic Card numbered to 36 or less

EVERY PACK CONTAINS:

- A Triple Relic Card numbered to 99 or less
- 2 Base Parallel Cards numbered to 649 or less
- 3 Base Cards numbered to 1499 or less

CONTENT BREAKDOWN

BASE SET

Veterans and Retired(100) - #d to 1499 or less.

- Sepia #d to 499.- Emerald #d to 199.- Gold #d to 99.- Sapphire #d to 25.- Platinum One of one.- Framed Printing Plates One of one.

AUTOGRAPHED RELIC CARDS - 1 PER BOX!

Autographed Rookie Triple Relic Base Cards(50) - #d to 99. Each card features 1 player with 3 relics and 1 autograph.

- Sepia #d to 75.- Emerald #d to 50.- Gold #d to 25.- Sapphire #d to 10.- Platinum One of one.- "White Whale" Printing Plates One of one.

Autographed Prime Rookie Triple Relic Cards(50) - #d to 25.

- Red #d to 10.- Black One of one.- "White Whale" Printing Plates One of one.

NEW! Autographed Triple Threads Relic Pairs(10) - #d to 18. 10 book cards featuring 2 players, 2 signatures, and 6 relics.

- Gold #d to 9.- Sapphire #d to 3.- Platinum One of one.

NEW! Autographed Triple Threads Relic Double Combos - #d to 3.

Book cards featuring 6 subjects, 6 autographs, and 6 relics.

- Platinum - One of one.

NEW! Cut Above Triple Threads Autographs - One of one!

3 cards featuring a cut signature and 3 relics each from Tom Landry, Walter Payton, and Vince Lombardi.

Autographed Triple Threads Dual Crest Rookie Relic Combos(10) - One of One!

10 book cards featuring 2 rookies and their autographs along with genuine NFL Equipment logos from their jersey.

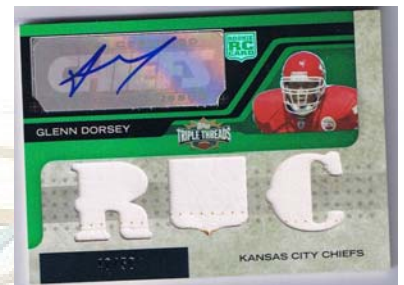
Autographed Triple Threads Relic Combos(13) - #d to 36.

13 cards with 3 players, 3 autographs, and 3 relics on each card.

- Sepia #d to 27.- Emerald #d to 18.- Gold #d to 9.- Sapphire #d to 3.- Platinum One of one.- "White Whale" Printing Plates One of one.

Autographed Triple Threads Relic Cards(60) - #d to 18. 60 NFL greats, featured on 3 different designs with 1 autograph and 3 relics per card.

- Gold #d to 9.- Sapphire #d to 3.- Platinum One of one.- "White Whale" Printing Plates One of one.



THE RUNDOWN ON...



RELIC CARDS - 1 PER BOX!

NEW! Triple Threads XXIV(20) - #'d to 18. 20 book cards which open to reveal 24 or more relic pieces.

- Gold #'d to 9.- Sapphire #'d to 3.- Platinum One of one.

NEW! Triple Threads Pro Bowl Patches(25) - #'d to 9. 25 NFL stars with 3 relics, including a Pro Bowl jersey patch.

- Platinum - One of one.

Triple Threads Relic Double Combos(20) - #'d to 36. 20 book cards highlighting 6 players and 6 relics on each card.

- Sepia #'d to 27.- Emerald #'d to 18.- Gold #'d to 9.- Sapphire #'d to 3.- Platinum One of one.

Triple Threads Relics(135) - #'d to 36.

- Sepia #'d to 27.- Emerald #'d to 18.- Gold #'d to 9.- Sapphire #'d to 3.- Platinum One of one.

Triple Threads Prime Relics(45) - #'d to 27.

- Gold #'d to 9.- Sapphire #'d to 3.- Platinum One of one.

Triple Threads Relic Combos(80) - #'d to 36. 80 different cards featuring 3 players and 3 relics on each card.

- Sepia #'d to 27.- Emerald #'d to 18.- Gold #'d to 9.- Sapphire #'d to 3.- Platinum One of one.



WHAT WE PULLED

Base /799 (3) - Santonio Holmes, Maurice-Jones Drew, LenDale White

Dupes - 0

Reminiscent of their baseball counterparts, the base cards are on a thick card stock. The player is pictured in an action pose with a red background and the card surface has a myriad of impressions/dimples. The top and bottom of the card is black with a stripe that runs through it in a zigzag pattern. The bottom left has the player's information (position, name and team). The bottom right is the location for the set's name and the serial number of the card.

There are numerous base parallels in Triple Threads. They are; Sepia, Emerald, Gold, Sapphire, Platinum and Printing Plate. The numbering has changed from the original product information sheet. The parallels are easy to determine as the background matches the color of the parallel, instead of the red that is seen on the regular base card.

Sepia /249 (1) - Jason Witten

Emerald /149 (1) - Reggie Bush

Each pack of Triple Threads is guaranteed to yield at least a triple relic in some fashion. We pulled a triple relic/auto. The card runs horizontally. The top of the card houses the auto with the player's picture to the right of it. On the Rookie versions, the RC logo is between the auto and the picture. Under the auto are the player's name and the set's logo. The bottom is where you find the relic pieces, in this case three patches, and they are designed to signify something with the die-cut area. For the card we pulled, it signifies his rookie card with the letters "R" and "C" and divided by the shape of the NFL shield. The immediate bottom is where you find the serial number and the team.

Base Set - 4.5/5

Fun - 5/5

Final Ratings (out of 5):

Overall Design - 4.5/5

Value - 3/5

Rebuy - 3.5/5

Total = 20.5/25 (82%)

FINAL REMARKS

Topps Triple Threads is a feast or famine product. The design is wonderful and you've got to love the thickness of the cards. The texture is appealing along with the full body player photos.

What kills a collector though is the beating you can take when spending over \$150 for 2 "hits". And then you feel cheated when you get a card like we did. I like the triple patch/auto aspect, but 3 white patches is not appealing at all. How hard is it to cut the patch so a second color is on the display? Yes, I know two of the patches have a tinge of yellow at the bottom, but that's makes the card worse. Why? Because you know all that need to be done was move the cut little by 1/4 of an inch and you have a nice 2-color patch.

I've been a fan of Triple Threads since it first appeared, but I think it's time for its swan song and for Topps to move on from it. Concentrate more on giving collectors a bigger bang for their buck and you'll see more and more looking to buy the products.

Once again, I'd like to thank the fine people at Topps for providing us with the pack and the opportunity to review it.



2008 Bowman Sterling Baseball

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

First and foremost, I'd like to thank the fine folks at Topps for providing us with 3 packs for this review.

You can view the videos of this break here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0PmjvYzL_Dg

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

6 packs per box 5 cards per pack MSRP: \$235.99 - \$249.99

EVERY 4-BOX CASE IS GUARANTEED:

- At Least 1 Dual Autographed Card!

EVERY 5-CARD PACK CONTAINS:

- 2 Autographed Cards - 1 Relic or Autographed Relic Card - 1 Rookie Card - 1 Prospect Card

EVERY 6-PACK DISPLAY BOX CONTAINS:

- 12 Autographed Cards - 2 Autographed Relic Cards - 4 Veteran Relic Cards
- 6 Rookie Cards - 6 Prospect Cards - 1 Box Loader Card

PRODUCT BREAKDOWN

AUTOGRAPHED CARDS - 2 PER PACK! 12 PER BOX!

- Rookies(20) - Prospects(50) - Dual Autographed Cards(20 subs/10 cards) - 1 per 4-box case!

AUTOGRAPHED RELIC CARDS - 2 PER BOX!

- Autographed Relic Cards(18)

RELIC CARDS - 4 PER BOX!

- Relic Card(50)

ROOKIE CARDS - 6 PER BOX!

- Rookie Cards(50) - 1 per pack!

PROSPECT CARDS - 6 PER BOX!

- Prospect Cards(50) - 1 per pack!

PARALLEL CARDS (All Autographed, Autographed Relic, Relic, Rookie, and Prospect cards)

- Red Parallel(258) - Each is a one of one - Black Parallel(258) - Seq. #'d to 25.

- NEW! Gold(258) - Seq. #'d to 50 - Refractor(258) - Seq. #'d to 199.

PRINTING PLATES(170 subs/680 cards) - ALL ONE OF ONE!

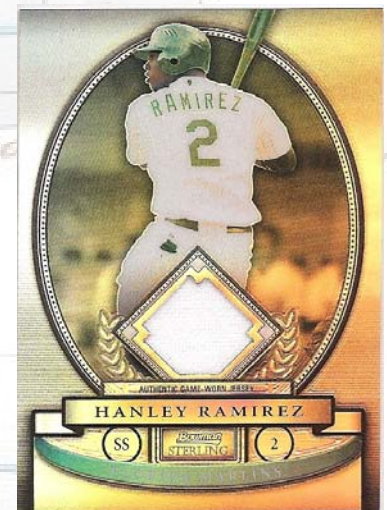
The 4 plates used to make the Autographed Rookie and Prospects cards, and the 100 non-autographed Rookie and Prospect cards.

BOX LOADER - 1 PER BOX!

- NEW! Rookie Card Variations(10) - Numbered.

Available in the following refractor versions:

- Red Parallel(10) - One of One - Black Parallel(10) - Seq. #'d to 25 - NEW! Gold(10) - Seq. #'d to 50. - Refractor(10) - Seq. #'d to 199.





WHAT WE PULLED

Base (4/70) - 5.71% Dupes - 0 Refractors - 2

The base cards from Bowman Sterling are on a thin white card stock. Both sides of the card are glossed over, with more on the front, causing a small curve in the card due to the balance of weight. The design features the players in a batting or pitching pose. The set's name is at the bottom inside of a figure in the shape of home plate. The player's name runs across it in a banner along with the team name attached underneath.

The rookie cards are a bit different; the players are pictured in an oval border. The players are shown in action shots at the plate or on the mound. The player's position and jersey number are also shown at the bottom of the cards.

The refractor version looks like the base version except for the type of gloss used on the cards. These refractors give a prism (rainbow) effect when you look at them from different angles or simply move them in the light. These are numbered to 199. There are also gold, black and red refractors parallels numbered to 50 or less and are easily identified by the color of the card.

Base (4): Tom Hagan, Ryan Morris, Brett Gardner RC, Nick Stavinoha RC Refractor /199 (2): Luke Hochevar, Braeden Schlehuder

Each pack of Bowman Sterling yields 2 auto and 1 relic or 1 auto/relic card. The basic relic cards have 50 subjects in the set. These relics use the same refractor system as the base cards with the same print run for the numbering. The design is similar to the base rookie cards except for the relic. It is displayed toward the middle of the card in a diamond shape to match the design of an infield.

Relic (1) - Matt Holliday Bat Relic Refractor /199 (1) - Hanley Ramirez Jersey

There are 70 individual auto cards to match the players in the base set. Ten dual auto cards can also be found throughout this release. The auto cards match the base cards in design other than having the sticker auto under the photo. These cards also use the same refractor system as the base cards.

Auto (4) - Anthony Hewitt, Buster Posey, Greg Halman, Chris Tillman Refractor Auto /199 (2) - Seth Smith, Eric Hacker

The final type of card is the auto/relic. There are 18 subjects in this set and you get 2 per master box on average. The card will feature either an auto and jersey or an auto and bat swatch. These cards are a little different in design in the fact they run horizontal. The player is pictured to one side with the relic at the top of the card. The auto is located underneath the relic. As previous mentioned these also use the same refractor system.

Auto/Relic (1) - Jesus Montero Auto/Jersey

Final Ratings (Out of 5):

Base set: 4.5/5 Fun: 5/5 Overall design: 4/5 Value: 3.25/5 Re-buy: 2.5/5
Overall: 19.25/25 (77%)

Bowman Sterling is a wonderful product for those who like a lot of bang for their buck when opening a pack. Each pack comes with three hits. Including the auto/relic cards, there are 14 autos per box on average. In today's hobby, numerous collectors love that aspect.

The design of the cards is nice. The gloss of Sterling cards is reminiscent of the Chrome series. The little design features are not overstated and the focus remains on the player pictured.

The aspect of 2 autos per pack is nice, but you are left wondering what the process is in the choices made for who is featured in the product. Some of the subjects are first and second round picks while others are simply free agents. Would be nice to simplify things and feature possibly only the players from the first two rounds and use the dual autos as a teammates type of series.

Bowman Sterling is a "very high end" type of product and one a lot of collectors are not willing to shell out the money to obtain. Though there are 3 hits per pack and that adds to the luster and mystique, many would be hard pressed to invest more money into purchasing more boxes thanks to the hefty price tag.

If you are looking for a lot of autos and relics in one place, then Bowman Sterling is your product. If looking for a set that features a lot of up and comers to baseball, once again, Bowman Sterling is your product. If you are looking merely for an investment, this is probably not for you.

Once again, I'd like to thank our fine sponsors at Topps for providing us with these packs and the opportunity to review the product.



THE RUNDOWN ON...

2008-09 Topps Hardwood Basketball

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

First and foremost, a big thanks to Topps for providing us with this box to review.

You can view the videos of this break at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1wAnfxEdg0>

Product Description

18 packs per box
5 cards per pack
MSRP: \$110-\$120

Introducing 2008-09 Topps Hardwood Basketball, a product that features all the action from the NBA with distinctive wood cards taken straight from the basketball court! All Autograph and Relic cards are featured on these unique wooden cards. Hardwood Basketball also features hand-drawn One-of-One Sketch Cards at a rate of 1 per case. AND, every box promises 1 Autograph or Autograph Relic and 2 Relic cards!

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS:

- EVERY BOX PROMISES 1 AUTOGRAPH OR AUTOGRAPH RELIC AND 2 RELIC CARDS!
- FEATURES HAND-DRAWN ONE-OF-ONE SKETCH CARDS AT A RATE OF 1 PER CASE!
- ALL AUTOGRAPH AND RELIC CARDS ARE FEATURED ON UNIQUE WOODEN CARDS!

EVERY PACK GUARANTEES:

- 1 Numbered Rookie Card - 3 Base Cards
- 1 Numbered Parallel Card Printed on Engineered Wood Stock

EVERY BOX GUARANTEES:

- 1 Autograph or Autographed Relic Card - 2 Relic Cards
- 18 Numbered Rookie Cards - 18 Numbered Parallel Cards

EVERY CASE GUARANTEES:

- 1 Original Signed Artist's Sketch Card - 1 Numbered Rookie Autograph Patch Card

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION:

BASE CARDS

- Veteran/Retired (100) - Rookies (25) - 1 per pack. Numbered. - Rookie Variations (25) - Numbered.

HARDWOOD SKETCH CARDS (25) - 1 PER HOBBY CASE! 1 OF 1!

AUTOGRAPH & AUTOGRAPH RELIC CARDS - 1 PER BOX!

- Autographed Rookies (25) - #d to 1 of 1, 5, 25, and 50.
- Rookie Signature Hardwood Patches (30) - #d to 1 of 1, 5, 25, and 50.
- Signature Hardwood (30) - #d to 1 of 1, 3, 10, and 25.

WOOD PARALLEL CARDS - 1 PER PACK!

- Hobby Exclusive Ebony (150) - 1 of 1, Redwood (150) - #d to 25, Mahogany (150) - #d to 99,
- Maple (150) - #d to 499, Hardwood (150) - #d to 999.

RELIC CARDS - 2 PER BOX!

- Hardwood Relics (35) - #d to 1 of 1, 25, 50, and 99.

PRINTING PLATES - HOBBY EXCLUSIVE!

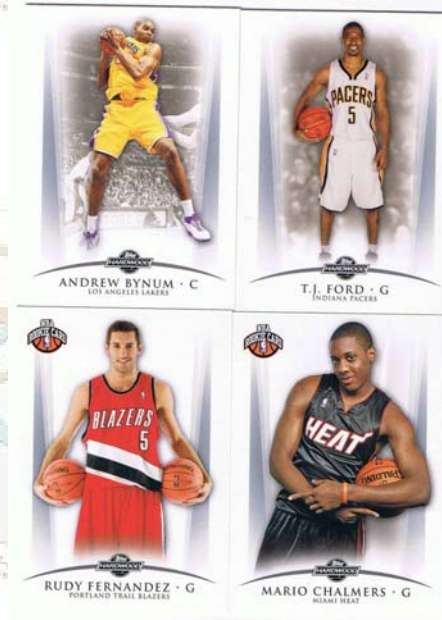
- Base Cards (100 subs/400 plates) - 1 of 1. - Autographed Cards (60 subs/240 plates) - 1 of 1.

WHAT WE PULLED

Base (50/100) - 50%

Rookies /2009 (18/25) - 72%

Dupes - 0



THE RUNDOWN ON...



Topps Hardwood is a new set and busts on to the scene with a eye-pleasing base cards. The main background is white with a secondary background for the player's picture done in grey and white. The player's photo leaps out from the card due the background imagery in vibrant colors. All the information is at the bottom, consisting of the set's logo, player's name, position and team.

The rookie cards are all numbered with only 25 subjects. They have the same basic design as the base cards with the RC logo in the top left corner. The only difference is the rookie cards do no have the secondary background like the base cards.

The parallels are named after types of wood. They are Hardwood, Maple, Mahogany, Redwood and Ebony. The parallels run from lighter (higher serial number) to darker (lower serial number). These parallels match the base cards in design, except the background is done like a wood paneling with different colors of wood.

Hardwood /299 (8) - Chris Bosh, Gerald Wallace, Rashard Lewis, Stephen Jackson, Mike Miller, D.J. Augustin, Brandon Rush, Marreese Speights
Maple /175 (4) - T.J. Ford, Tyson Chandler, Magic Johnson, Marreese Speights
Mahogany /75 (3) - Carlos Boozer, Steve Nash, Danilo Gallinari

On average, each box is expected to yield 1 auto and 2 relics with a possibility of a case hit.

The Relics have 35 subjects with different parallels, causing a wide range of numbering. The player's photo dominates the card with the relic swatch die cut into a picture of a basketball. The player's team and name are at the bottom.

Hardwood Relic /175 (2) - Tony Parker, Eric Gordon

There are separate autograph series for the rookies and veteran/retired players. The rookies comprise of the 25 rookies featured in the base set while 30 retired/veterans make up the other set. As with the relics, there are many parallel versions which makes for a wide range of numbering. The player's photo is displayed offset to the right with his name appearing in a vertical black border and the team name below it on the left. The sticker auto is placed at the bottom of the card.

Signature Hardwood /39 (1) - Isiah Thomas

There are two case hits this year, a rookie auto/patch card or a sketch card 1/1. Fortunately, we were able to pull a Sketch Card. The card is a hand-drawn pencil sketch of a player. The sketch is from the top of the player's head to below his neckline. The player's name and team are at the bottom. The sketch also shows the artist's signature on the card. On the back, the 1 of 1 is not hand stamped, just printed on the back.



Final Ratings (out of 5):

Base Set - 4/5

Fun - 4.75/5

Overall Design - 4.5/5

Value - 4.5/5

Rebuy - 5/5

Total = 22.75/25 (91%)

FINAL REMARKS

This is the first year of Topps Hardwood and it's a shame it won't be around now that the exclusive deal with another company was announced by the NBA. This product has everything you can imagine and is a slam dunk when trying to decide on something to buy.

Getting half the base cards and most of the rookies is a plus and makes you want to go out and get more. Unfortunately, a lot of retailers have raised their prices on this product as rumors came out about only being 684 total cases produced.

The use of the different wood colors to make the parallels is refreshing because of the wood design. If it had only been the colors, they wouldn't have been nearly as impressive, so kudos to Topps.

The relics are appealing, especially the design of where the relic is placed. Really like the infusion of a basketball into the design instead of a cookie cutter area for it. The autos are nice and would have been a complete knockout if the auto was hand signed on the hardwood background.

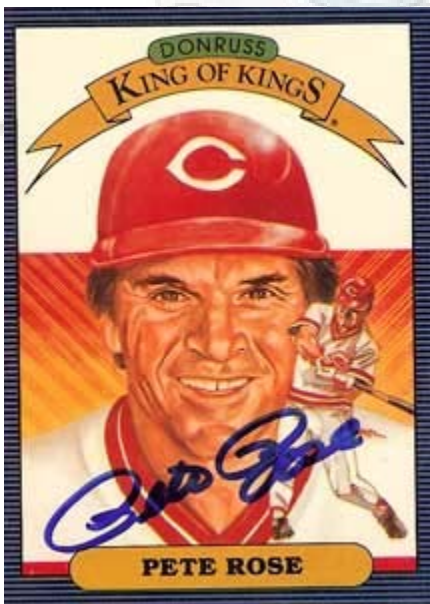
Hats off to Topps for getting one right. This was probably the most fun I've had opening a box in a while and not because of the case hit or the auto. I really enjoyed opening a pack that had more than base cards in a pack. You get a rookie and a parallel or hit in each pack. There's something for everyone each time a pack is opened.

Once again, a major thanks to Topps for providing us with this box and the opportunity to review it.

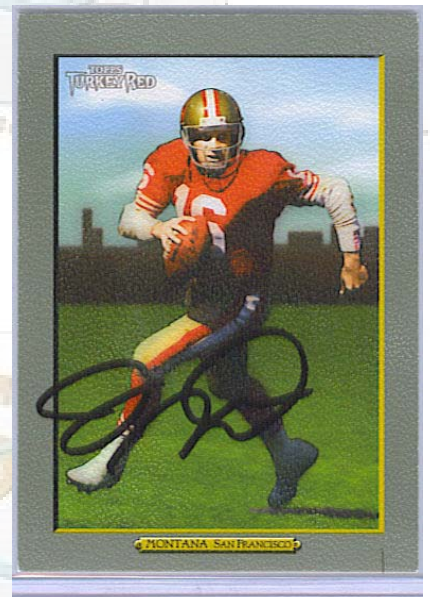
Economic Autographs!

By Mike Greene aka Indyreds

I have seen many great autograph collections and some of the best items are not certified autographs. We all have seen the cost of certified autographed items advertised in hobby magazines, at card shops, in stores and at card shows. I often wonder where these huge price tags come from but we all know that it is a game of cost supply and amount of demand. The simple economics of not only having the shop purchase the items to be signed, pay to have them signed, the cost of retailing the items, the storage of the items and the employees needing to run the operation are all passed along to the consumer. Hey that is our wallets that these expenses must be recovered from! The retailer must take the risk that there will also remain a market for the player that they invested this money into. It would be cheaper to cut out these middlemen and go straight through the star themselves. Many of the same sports stars and legends will sign items sent to them for free or with a nominal fee. There are also signings and events that we can get autographs at for little or no fees.



Collecting autographs in person is the most gratifying way for me to get an autograph. Be on the look out for autograph sessions in your area. I have been seen football players, racecar drivers and baseball players all brought in by retailers to sign your items for free. Marshal Faulk, Kellen Winslow, Michael Andretti, Kyle Petty and others have all found their ways into my collections in this manner. Malls and even sports card shows will bring in players to sign for free or with a fee. These fees are usually much lower than what you can get these stars items signed on the secondary market. I have added stars like George Gervin, Dan Issel and Beanie Wells at these types of events. Getting autographs before and after games is another great way to add to your collections. I have gotten stars like Don Mattingly, Reggie Wayne, Paul Pierce at stadiums. Those items signed in front of you and the few minutes that you might have with that star to chat or take a picture are the most valuable to me. Those items you walk away with not only an autograph but a memory of when it was signed. In person autographs are not only cheap but are the items that you will feel the greatest connection to.



I have added many autographs to my collection through the mail. It is as simple as writing a letter to a star requesting the autograph, sending the items and including return postage on an envelope back. I have gotten many of my favorite players in this manner. Pete Rose, Joe Montana, Mario Andretti, Mary Lu Retton and many other legends of sports have found their ways into my collection via through the mail requests. I am sure that you will agree that items signed by these stars would cost you more than a few postage stamps to get in an autograph shop. I really do enjoy seeing one of the self addressed stamped envelopes that I had enclosed in one of those mail requests make it back to my mailbox.

Do not get me wrong I understand the need for autograph stores and the companies that make our stars autographs available to us all. They are the easiest way to get a stars autograph right now. We must pay for that ability and all the costs they have in order to have that convenience. I also know that many of us do not have the same discretionary income as we had before the current tough economic times. Hopefully you will still be able to grow your autograph collection either through the mail or with in person autographs.

Collection Focus

Many sports stars are willing to autograph for free through the mail. It brings the question on who you want to collect. No one could possibly mail to them all! Do you want to just mail to as many people as you can or are you just after a few select stars? The value of every autograph to a collection will be as different as every collector out there. Ray Knight is not a huge name in the world of sports and will never have a shot at the Hall of Fame. His autograph would be just another common autograph for many collectors; it would be very valuable to a Mets fan trying to collect the last World Series Championship team to their collection. My question to you is have you ever thought about the focus of your collection? Do you want every player who ever wore a Dodgers jersey in your collection? Are you trying to get the autograph of each player who won the Stanley Cup? The MVP winners for your favorite sport would be fun to run down. I am not saying to only collect one thing, but finding a focus for your collection will add meaning to each part of it and to the collection as a whole. Look at who you have and just see if your collection is asking you for a direction or see if you are already heading in a direction. I challenge you to actually set a goal and try to complete it with your collection. It does make it more rewarding.



ROOKIE DEBUT

Welcome to the SCF New Members Corner

By Leo Zuperku aka Lzuperku
New Member Manager

Here are the links to our contests.

Football:

<http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=695230>

Congrats to our Racing Contest winners:

FIRST PLACE-JR4THECHAMP

SECOND PLACE-T_TERRY

Watch for our new member hockey contest starting soon!

New Members !!!

If you have a question or problem, don't forget to "ASK LEO"
This thread is located in the sticky section of the MEET & GREET Forum

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL NEW MEMBERS

If you haven't done so already, Please update your profile & Make sure your Mail Trade Address looks like this EXAMPLE.

John Doe 1234 main street, your city, your state/province,12345, country

Be courteous

Answer your private messages

Want to trade with the New Member team?

Lzuperku collects Saints

Nascards collects Nascar

Patriotsguy collects Patriots

Let's Trade!

As always if you wish to join our new member team, don't hesitate to PM me



Rinkside at SCF

By : Duff E. McFadden aka comatoad

Change is inevitable

Change is indeed inevitable, as evidenced by your hockey team. Nash (Crater Satori), a SCF VIP, 15-year hockey collector and all-around great guy, has decided to step away from moderator duties. For those of you who know Nash, or have dealt with him through the SCF boards, be sure to offer him your best wishes. In the meantime, another young Canadian, Tyson (TysonX504) has boldly stepped into the gap, attempting to earn his wings as a Staffer in Training.

Tuesday nights are Hockey chat nights

For all you "Chatty Cathy's" out there, be sure to keep Tuesdays, 7 p.m. (EST), open on your calendar, since Tuesday nights are now reserved for Hockey Forum chats. Just click on the "live chat" link above and you're well on your way to some of the most intelligent discussion on this planet. Heck, you can even fire up your webcam and check out Kevin's (Inferno) luxurious locks, or Houng's (quiet-things) black fingernails.

One of our more popular features is "Guess the Hit," whereupon members guess the hit from packs being opened by the Hockey Moderators. Clairvoyant, Clearvoy, ah nuts - "All-Seeing" members receive card cash prizes for their correct picks. All that, plus everything you always wanted to know about hockey card collecting - answered by your knowledgeable hockey moderators during the third day of the week. Just remember to keep your dance card open on Tuesdays. See you there!

Heroes & Prospects Redemption Points

Thanks to all the members who have either donated, or traded their points...

mikecole141; Orfew; jmdorsey; Raptor; asiangrl4u; debtriddin; TysonX504; benshiv; quiet-things; scottkoz20; comatoad

The Hockey Team has now acquired 250+ 2008/09 In The Game Heroes & Prospects He Shoots He Scores points! These will be redeemed and used as a future prize for a hockey contest. Stay tuned!

SCF Emergency Fund: 2008/09 Upper Deck SPxcitement /999

We are currently looking for donations to complete this 70-card set. Once it's complete, the set will be sold and all proceeds will go to the SCF Emergency Fund. Thanks in advance for your generosity. So far we have 18 of the 70 cards.

- X1 Alexander Ovechkin - quiet-things; X15 Eric Staal - quiet-things; X16 Evgeni Malkin - quiet-things; X21 Gilbert Perreault - Pheeb888;
- X28 J.S. Giguere - ComancheKeen; X31 Jonathan Toews - ComancheKeen; X34 Kyle Turris - scottkoz20; X35 Lanny McDonald - quiet-things;
- X38 Mario Lemieux - Pheeb888; X43 Mikka Kiprusoff - mikecole141; X44 Mike Bossy - mikecole141; X50 Peter Mueller - breezain;
- X54 Roberto Luongo - Pheeb888; X55 Ron Hextall - breezain; X58 Saku Koivu - quiet-things; X65 Tony Esposito - mikecole141;
- X67 Wayne Gretzky - scottkoz20; X68 Blake Wheeler - quiet-things.

Welcome to our newest members

The Hockey Forum continues to grow by leaps and bounds, as we continue to draw new members into "the coolest game on earth," including (but not limited to)...

BURY; Chunkbox; dahabsfan; Krusin; MattyIce; Mrbungle; Robiezyg; sensrookie; sharks4life12; the_chief

Be sure to give a rousing welcome to these new members.



Are you "Super Collector" material?

Our "Hockey Super Collector" program continues to roll along, with our two newest members proudly sporting their new badges. For more information on how you can qualify to be a SCF Super Collector, check out <http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=558419>.

While deciding which player to collect can be a "Devil" of a problem, for castler0ck (Mark), our newest Hockey Super Collector, it was "a no-brainer." Mark began collecting New Jersey's Zach Parise because he thought he was very underrated and liked his style of play. Of Mark's nearly 300 Parise cards – 98 are jersey/patches cards; 37 autographs; 71 numbered to #/25 or less; and 48 are #/10 or less. He also owns 12, 1/1's, two autographed jerseys, two autographed pucks, as well as four autographed 8x10 photos and an autographed 16x20 photo. Not only that, but Mark also has a rather impressive collection of Zach's father, J.P. Parise, with over 50 cards and eight autographs.

One nice thing about amassing a sports card collection of a retired player is the fact that most of his cards have been already issued and, in most cases, you know what they are. Just ask darkqog (Will) about his Kevin Dineen collection. Of Dineen's 252 known hockey cards, Will owns 243. Will's Dineen collection includes 149 base cards; his only two rookie; three autos (four certified autos exist – Will sent in a redemption for the fourth a couple of years ago, but has yet to receive it); Dineen's only game used card; 93 inserts; and oddballs/unlisted to include 21 Strat-O-matic and other game cards, nine printing plates/negatives, and an Ace pin; as well as one game-used stick, a signed replica jersey, and a ticket stub for "Kevin Dineen Day" for the Toronto St. Michael's Majors.

Challenge yourself with our contests

From the, "You can't win unless you play" files – Do you know the Hockey Team sponsors monthly and weekly contests? Besides earning the awe and respect of your fellow collector's, you can also earn valuable prizes, such as cards, or card cash. And, all you have to do is enter.

- eBay Steal of the Week – (Check our hockey contests for the latest version of this contest) – Have a single card you won from an eBay auction that was way, way below its book value? Just post a link to your eBay auction win and explain why you think your card is a steal. If it has a BV, let us know. Convince us!

Monthly Goodie Bag Contest – (<http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=663174>) – To enter:

- 1) Guess which player will be the scoring leader for the month;
- 2) Guess how many goals this player will score;
- 3) Guess how many assists this player will make; and
- 4) Guess how many penalty minutes the player will have.

The prize consists of a "goodie bag," which varies from month to month, but will contain a mix of autographs, game used, base cards and inserts. The fun part is you don't know what it is until you've won it!

Weekly Show and Tell Contest – (<http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=600475>) – Showcase your card according to a pre-selected theme. Post a picture/scan, with your handwritten user ID next to the card. A card can only be entered into one weekly contest. Members will then vote on which card is the best of the theme. Each week's winner will earn 50 CC. Standings will be kept, so at the end of 30 weeks, whoever has won the most "card of the week" titles, will win a 2005-06 Bee Hive Signature Scrapbook Autograph Tony Esposito (50BV).

NHL Guess the Score – (<http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=370888>) – Rogulon will pick several NHL games. Just post the correct winning team and the closest score to win (scores are on a first-come, first-served basis with no score duplications). Winners will win SCF card cash.





Saying Goodbye to an Aud Friend

By Scott Kozlowski aka scottkoz20



As I was driving into downtown Buffalo for another day of work recently, I happened to drive by Buffalo's Memorial Auditorium, old home of the Buffalo Sabres and the old NBA Buffalo Braves (now the Los Angeles Clippers). When I drove by, construction crews had finally started the process of demolishing the building in order to make room for future development along Buffalo's waterfront. While the removal of the old Aud has been long overdue, as there have been no events held there since 1996, it still brought a tear to my eye as I recalled some of the memories that this place created.



I recall the first time my dad took me to see a Sabres game. It was during the 1982-83 season, a first round playoff game between the Sabres and the Montreal Canadiens. My dad had gotten tickets to the game as a part of my birthday gift. I remember listening to the first 2 games of the series on an old transistor radio and the Sabres winning both. Back then, the first round was a best of 5 series. The game my dad was taking me to had the Sabres looking to sweep the mighty Canadiens out of the playoffs.

I don't remember specific details of the game itself, but I remember various aspects about the experience, even at 7 years old. I remember seeing players like Gilbert Perreault and Guy LaFleur skating around and thinking how easy that looked from my seat. I loved looking around at all of the people cheering and clapping for the hometown team; I remember the end of the game after the Sabres won, both teams skating to center ice to shake hands, which is an NHL tradition at the end of any playoff series. However, none of the above is what I cherish the most about the experience.

Being that I have a 14 month old daughter, I now cherish these memories more. The fact that he found the time and the money to take me to games, is something that I appreciate much more today than I might have done as a child or even prior to becoming a dad. We would attend games a couple times a season after going to my first game. Most of the time we would sit up in the orange level (upper level) as this is what he could afford but to me, it did not matter. It was the fact that he took me to games, the fact that he helped fuel a passion for the sport that I truly love to watch and play, not very well mind you!

Now that the Memorial Auditorium is being torn down, there is a small part of my childhood that is also being torn down with the Aud. I will always have the memories that this building helped create. I hope that someday I can share some of the experience I had as a child with Olivia and create a bond between father and daughter, whether it is at HSBC Arena for hockey games or some place else that she grows a passion for.



Lastly, thank you Aud; for the memories you helped create.



Hockey Parallel Cards, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly

By Kevin Lee aka gosens151911

For those who don't know what parallel cards are; they are simply different versions of the regular base set (usually including rookie cards), autos, and game used cards. Some versions are numbered while others aren't. They have slowly crept into practically every single set now, and one would wonder if that was a good thing?

The Good:

Parallel cards definitely have many upsides. They offer extra value to any set that has them. It offers additional pulls along with the usual inserts, autos, game-used etc. Some sets have a parallel card guaranteed in each pack such as Fleer Ultra's gold medallion cards. Most card sets also have the chance of pulling parallel cards numbered to #100 such as Fleer Ultra's Ice Medallions or Upper Deck Exclusives. They are common enough to find but still limited enough to make them collectible. They are also affordable at a few bucks apiece offering team collectors a challenge at a reasonable cost. Some higher end sets also have parallel cards numbered to 1, which are definitely worth pulling, as player collectors will usually trade or pay a fair amount for them. Recently, Upper Deck did a fantastic job with the 2008-09 OPC's 1979-80 Retro parallel cards. They featured the entire base set and rookies in the style of OPC cards in 1979-80. On top of this cool addition, they used different photographs of all the players adding an additional touch to an already very creative idea.



The Bad:

How much is too much? Some sets have way too many parallel cards, Artifacts is a perfect example. It has parallel versions of the base numbered to #100, #75, #50, #25, #10, #5 and #1. Now that is simply ridiculous as a parallel is considered a hit. With that many parallels available, the demand becomes lower, and thus their book value decreases. Additionally most people aren't happy pulling a parallel card of a common player, and would sometimes prefer an insert to them. Furthermore, Artifacts also has several different parallel versions of all their jersey cards. The problem with this is that it leads to a surplus of each jersey card, and most people will not put that much value on a lower numbered version compared to a higher numbered version. The end result is the value of the lowered numbered cards isn't as high as it would have been had there been less parallel versions. Another pain about parallel sets is that having too many makes it impossible for set collectors. For example in the Upper Deck release, the exclusives are possible to find with 100 copies of each. However, for a set collector, they would have to locate all the versions of high gloss which are only numbered to 10. This would be extremely difficult, especially considering the fact that the big name players would book fairly high. Overall, it seems the market has become overwhelmed with parallel cards, with people less enthusiastic when they pull them.



The Ugly:

This year Upper Deck displayed how ugly parallel cards can get by introducing the 08-09 OPC Update set. Combined, the entire 08-09 OPC set features seven different parallel cards (Metal, Metal-X, Rainbow Parallel, Retro, Retro Parallel, Retro Blank Backs and Gold)! When there is an insert ration 7:4 for Metal, you know it's getting ugly.





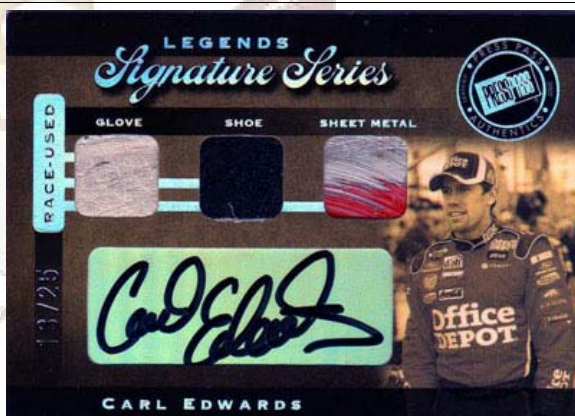
Around the SCF Track

By Darin Heitzer aka JKC

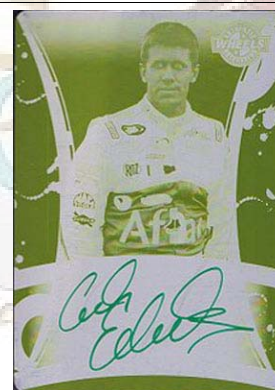
2009 CHAMPIONSHIP PREDICTION POLL RESULTS	
Mark Martin - 5 votes	David Ragan - 0 votes
Kasey Kahne - 0 votes	Denny Hamlin - 0 votes
Tony Stewart - 2 votes	Greg Biffle - 0 votes
Matt Kenseth - 0 votes	Kyle Busch - 5 votes
Joey Logano - 0 votes	Jeff Gordon - 4 votes
Jamie McMurray - 0 votes	Kevin Harvick - 3 votes
Jeff Burton - 2 votes	Clint Bowyer - 1 votes
Ryan Newman - 1 votes	Jimmie Johnson - 5 votes
Brian Vickers - 0 votes	Dale Earnhardt Jr. - 3 votes
Carl Edwards - 11 votes	Someone Else - 1 votes

SCF RACING CARDS OF THE MONTH (Votes are out of 20 total)

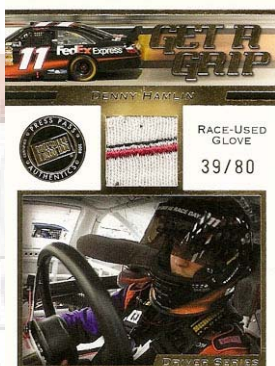
These are this month's top racing cards from the Racing Show and Tell forum as voted on by the SCF racing community.



1.) 2007 Press Pass Legends Signature Series CE Carl Edwards (13/25) – DupontDude (6votes)



2.) 2009 Wheels Autographs Press Plates Yellow Carl Edwards (1/1) – ceczerwonka (4 votes)



3.) 2008 VIP Get a Grip Drivers GGD13 Denny Hamlin (39/80) – angryeagle07 (3 votes)



4.) 2008 Press Pass Legends Signature Series LSCE Carl Edwards (03/25) – race crazy (2 votes)



--.) 2009 Press Pass Four Wide Firesuit FWCE Carl Edwards (41/50) – race crazy (2 votes)



The Racing Hobby Year in Review

By Peter Kapuschinsky aka doG sI kcivraH

With the 2008 NASCAR card collecting season over and 2009 fresh upon us, I'd like to take this opportunity to discuss the high and low lights from the year that was. In this article, I am going to take a look at the products released last year, with an A through E grading system for each release.

Starting with the original Press Pass release, the only thing that really stood out as refreshing was the new look for the Four Wide memorabilia cards. Press Pass really went out and did whatever they could to make as many multi-colored pieces as possible. A thumbs-up goes to a crisp looking card that usually had plenty of color to it. Cup Chase Redemption is a classic and deserves to be around for years to come. Slideshow and Race Day were about what one would expect from this release, nothing spectacular. Weekend Warriors was well done. Overall Grade- **C+**



Next up is the 2008 Eclipse release. The anticipation for this release was strong throughout the racing community, and it definitely lived up to its billing. The base set was really nice to look at and the Under Cover cards lived up to their hype. The red parallels made collecting exciting and the Star Tracks and Holofoil versions made for plenty of hits per box. The Hyperdrive, Escape Velocity, and even the Stellar inserts had a lot of pop to them. **A**

Now it's time to look at the most expensive release of the year, 2008 Legends. If there is ever a case for having too much going on in one release, then this is it! There's the decent, vintage-looking base set with 5(!) different parallel versions. Then the insanity begins. The insert checklist reads like the chapters to War & Peace! You have the following: IROC Champions (2 versions), 500 Club (3), Printing Plates (4), Autographs (4), Autograph Press Plates (4), Prominent Pieces (10), Racing Artifacts (15), Victory Lane (3), Racing Cuts, Signature Series, & the Dale Earnhardt buyback cards. With the inclusion of the eBay Previews, that makes 55 different cards in this release! Sometimes you can have too much, and even though all the cards were well done, it got a bit out of control. **B-**



Premium is up next. This, I felt, was a colossal failure. The base set was dull and rather boring, with the possible exception of the Opening Day and Rookie Debut cards. The Clean Air and Going Global inserts were stale and even the Hot Threads were uninspiring. The baseball theme was confusing as there really isn't much of a correlation between the two sports other than the fact that Roush racing is in a partnership with the Fenway Sports Group. It was a pointless attempt at cross promotion. **C-**



Speedway definitely created a problem for some collectors because of the trouble distinguishing the base from the Gold parallel cards. This was something Press Pass came up with for 2008, to stop putting a specific designation before the number on the back of the card so someone could be sure what style card it was. You could easily stick a Gold parallel in with the base cards and never know it. The inserts were ok for a lower end box. Blur had a nice look to it, Cockpit has some good photography behind it and Test Drive was not too shabby. The Garage Graphs were a nice change of pace for some. In my book, it was well worth its price. **B**



My attention now moves on to some of the best looking base cards around, 2008 Stealth. I enjoyed the look of these cards, and even though there are five different parallel versions, they were done right. The designs for the Maximum Access and Mach 08 were nice. The Max Access Autos will always be a success and the Battle Armor was a pleasant surprise. The Synthesis cards were the only low point in this set. **B+**

This brings us to 2008 VIP. I probably had the hardest time coming up with a grade on this one. On one hand, the base set was extremely boring, All Access was ridiculous looking, and the lack of a base parallel set was disappointing. On the bright side, it was great to see acetate cards in a release! I have long been a fan of these transparent gems, and there were not one, but two of them. The Gear Gallery Memorabilia cards were a fantastic idea, not only for their location, but that they introduced more than the usual array of types of pieces, with the use of window nets and windshield tear-offs. For anyone fortunate enough to see the Triple Grip cards, they were amazing looking pieces! However, they weren't enough to overlook the sad looking flaws in this set. **C+**



Wheels American Thunder was a fantastic concept and a success from start to finish. The base set as well as its inserts had a universal theme that made it a pleasure to collect. Everything just clicked in this set. Even the retail exclusive Campaign Buttons were well done. There were plenty of memorabilia cards available but it wasn't overkill and the Trackside Treasury Autographs were enjoyable. **A+**

Finally, we arrive at Wheels High Gear. I had a difficult time enjoying this set. The base was too busy, and the inserts just didn't thrill me. Even the Flag Chaser cards weren't overly exciting. Maybe this was the ultimate downfall, since it was replaced in 2009 with a whole new style and name, Element. Six years of the Full Throttle insert got old, and The Chase was just not flashy enough for a 12-card insert set. Driven was just as bad as the previous years Driven insert or Grandstand the year before. It was just a real disappointment. **C-**



May 2009 bring even more collecting excitement. Good luck and great collecting.



From the Hobby to the Track – Interview with Jeremy Gordon

By Peter Kapuschinsky aka doG sI kcvraH

Hello, everybody! This is Peter Kapuschinsky with sportscardforum.com. I recently had the chance to speak with Jeremy Gordon, driver of the #15g America's Car-Mart Chevrolet at Double X Speedway in California, Missouri. Jeremy is 18 and resides in nearby Sedalia, Missouri. About 3 or 4 years ago, he put his card collecting habits on hold to pursue a career in racing, which culminated in his winning the 2008 Hobby-Stock points championship. Jeremy can be found at SCF as sedtag1.

First of all, tell us a little bit about yourself.

Well, for starters, I'm Jeremy Gordon, just turned 18 at the end of last year. I was born in Missouri where I have spent the biggest part of my life. I fell in love with racing at the age of 7 while flipping through the channels on the TV as a kid, and noticing that I'd rather watch racing any day over a cartoon. From then on, it was something I loved to watch, and dreamed of doing. I seldom missed a weekend of racing on TV growing up. My favorite driver was Jeff Gordon, not only because I thought he had an awesome last name (ha-ha), he also won the first race I'd ever watched, and I liked his character. I've been a strong Gordon fan, but also followed Jimmie Johnson and others at Hendrick Motorsports as years went by.

How did you get your start in racing?

It wasn't easy at all. I begged my parents for many years to allow me to step into a go-kart. It took probably four or five years for me to finally talk them into it, although at this point, I had become more interested in the bigger cars, and less about go-karts. The class I was interested in running was called Jr. Hobby Stocks, and consisted of 13-15 year old drivers (I was 15), and was made up of four cylinder, front wheel drive, American made vehicles. I just happened to come across an excellent "Ready to Race" car for sale, it was one that had been talked highly of and was built very safe. So, after talking on the phone to the guy who had it for sale, I went and looked at it with mom and dad, and made the decision that was what I wanted to do even if it did cost a lot of money.

How much work/money goes into converting a car into a hobby stock?

As far as the amount of work, there is a lot to do. Many think it is nothing to put one of these cars together, but once you get started you realize how much work and money really is involved. However, the hobby stock class was started so that it would be a cheap way to get people into racing. I must say that since the start of the class several years ago, it has come a long way. Now, instead of just finding a car and throwing a cage in it, there have been many rules added to make the cars safer. Also, like I've been told, in order to be competitive, it takes money. It might be the smallest class, but it's still going to cost thousands. That's just how it goes. The process of converting a car is as follows: you find a car that will fit the rules (cavalier, escort, etc), completely strip out all of the extra weight and interior, a role cage has to be built for safety, your racing seat, fuel cell, etc have to be installed, and if you've got engine work to do to be competitive it has to be done (this is sometimes a must). Once that is done, it's time to paint, go get you some sponsors, and go racing! It might not sound too bad, but really, it takes a lot of work and dedication.

When was your first race? Where did you start/finish?

To be honest, I'm not sure of the exact date, but I do remember it was around the end of April, 2006. It was terribly nerve wracking. I do remember telling them I wanted to start near the back so I could just get the feel of things. Turned out, once I got in and fired her up, all the nerves went away. If I remember right, I did have a pretty decent finish for a first timer.

You won your first feature on August 4th, 2006. What was that like?

It was amazing! My heart was pounding so quickly that night. I'd never felt anything like it. I had my adrenaline really flowing because its one of those things, I found myself fighting against another very competitive driver for the win, and I remember feeling a few nudges those last few turns. So I knew he was back there. But nothing felt better then being the first one under that checkered flag, and for the first time at that. I smiled all the way home that night, and did not quit smiling in my sleep, ha-ha.

What was your first award?

My first award came when I cracked my first top 5 which came pretty early in my first season. Trophies were always given to the top 5 finishers. So that was pretty cool to get something even if you weren't the winner.

What was your first wreck like? When did it happen?

Of course I had a few spins, a few flat tires, and a lot of rubbing out on the track, but I've had very few wrecks. However, the one that sticks out among all the others was the very last night of racing my rookie year, I was all casted up because of a bad four-wheeler accident, but I insisted on racing the last two races. But that last night, I had started 8th place, made it all the way up to 3rd with 2 laps to go, and as I went to pass for 2nd, the car on the outside of me spun out and took me with them. It was a rough way to go, and it totaled out our car.



On May 30th, 2008, you totaled your 1989 Escort GT hobby stock, which happened to be the car you drove for the 2007 season. What happened?
That car was actually not totaled by me. It was bought from me at the end of the 2007 season so I'd have money to finance my new racecar that was being built by sponsors. Needless to say, the guy who bought it from me let someone else drive it one night, and he flipped it numerous times after making contact on the backstretch. I never got to see it, but from what I heard, it was one of the nastiest hobby stock wrecks they'd ever seen out at that particular track. Lucky, the driver was ok; the car however, was destroyed!

I see you once raced with a broken arm. What happened and what was it like?

Probably not one of the smartest things I've ever done, but I couldn't accept the opinion given to me by my doctor to take the last two weeks of racing off. So, I cheated by making some slight changes to my cast so that I could somewhat grip a steering wheel with my left hand. It was definitely a tough experience (I didn't have power steering). But, I did not want to lose out on points, so I made do for the last two race nights.

Where all have you raced?

I've actually only traveled to two tracks, both within an hour of my home. I would have liked to go more places, but just haven't had the money or time. I race a few season Fridays in LaMonte, MO and Sundays in California, MO. So if I ever wanted to go to another track, I'd have to go to one that races our class on Saturday nights, and that would be risky since I wouldn't have much time to fix the car if something got torn up.

Have you had the opportunity to meet any NASCAR personalities, and if so, who?

Not really, of course I have seen guys like Ken Schrader around these Missouri parts doing some dirt track racing. I've never really met many others on nights that I was racing. But we do see some big stars like Tony Stewart and a few others usually come down once a year for a special night of racing at our local dirt track.

Is there anyone you would dream of racing against?

My dream would be to race against any big celebrity driver right now. Gordon, Johnson, Earnhardt, Stewart, any of them! I just think that would be too cool to be able to tell someone, "Hey! I raced against this NASCAR driver the other night!" And not only that, you could see just how your driving style differed from theirs. I really would like to see those guys try out racing one of these little four cylinder front wheel drive cars. I'd have to say they'd probably hate it, ha-ha! From what I hear, it is a nightmare for someone use to racing rear wheel drive cars because everything is essentially backwards.

What is it like to try and obtain sponsorship?

Obtaining sponsorships has been something that I've never taken lightly. To do it right, there is a lot of work involved. Every year, I type up a letter to give to a large number of businesses and wait to either receive a door slammed in my face, or the shake of a hand. So far, very few could turn me down after seeing what all I have to offer, and the amount of work I put into my handouts. I have learned to really like the experience, because you meet a lot of new people and it's a great opportunity to make new friends. And it's a great way to learn responsibility because you want to be able to make these people who support your racing happy.

Has the current economic crisis made it more difficult for you to obtain sponsorship?

Every year I worry more and more about this. It has gotten much more difficult to pick up new sponsors, but luckily all of my old sponsors have continued to stick with me even through the hard times.

How will college affect your racing?

Right now, college probably won't have too big of an effect on racing other than money. I am limited to two days a week with school but work the rest. My main study right now is welding, which is a skill I will certainly be able to use for the racecar. So hopefully my racing won't be affected negatively, but more so positively from my college experience.

Alright, tell me about this. I saw a picture you have on your myspace page about your girlfriend getting in your car, starting dead last, and taking the checkers in a race. How did that come about?

The racetrack that I race at on Sunday nights had a final night special after all the final trophies and awards were given out for the 2008 season. The special events included a pit crew race (a driver selects someone from his pit crew to drive is car), as well as a powder puff race (drivers have their wives or girlfriends drive their car). I never thought I'd be able to do this, but somehow I talked my girlfriend into driving my racecar for the powder puff race. Although I was a little nervous about it, I thought it would be awesome for her to see what it was like. For her not having much experience in these kinds of cars, and starting from the back at that, I have to say, she amazed me by how well she did. I was so proud of her for going out there and at least trying it, but then for her to win, that was a whole other awesome feeling! And it's definitely something I'll have to talk about for a long, long time.



What do your future racing plans entail? Are we going to one day turn on the Speed Channel and see you on there?

Right now, I am going to stay in the hobby stock class. It's a good, solid rookie class for racing experience. After I feel like I've exceeded the experience I need in this class, I plan on moving up to something rear wheel drive if I have the money. Right now, I am saving my money and keeping an eye out for a good starter car in the next class above me (Street Stocks). As for ever being on speed channel, at this rate, that would take forever and much more money than even my family owns, but you can't blame me for dreaming. I would love to maybe one day have that shot. But who knows, maybe if I stick with it, I'll one day get there!! I mean, I do have "the name!"

What are your goals for the upcoming season?

My goals for the upcoming season? Right now I've got a lot of work to do in order to be fully ready to race in 09'. My dad and I want to try some new stuff this year. Hopefully it will be enough to win us another championship. Last year, we won the championship in California, MO, but we would love to be in contention for a championship at the LaMonte, MO racetrack where we also race. Last year we came close, it was a solid 4th place finish in points, but we were slipping. I think we could one day find the secret to power and winning there, so that is what my goal is for 2009 along with staying consistent and finishing no matter where we run.

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I'd like to thank Jeremy for taking the time to speak with me and I wish him the best of luck in the upcoming season. The 2009 Hobby-Stock season kicks off in May, as Jeremy looks to defend his title.

On the SCF Gridiron

By Jason DiOrazio aka jdio13

As always, there are many new and exciting events occurring in the Football section of SCF. In this article, you will see the latest winner of eBay Steal of the Month from January 2009. You will also read about our new chat night.

We started the eBay Steal of the Month contest a little late in January, but we got quite a few entries. Here is a scan of the winner's card:



If you feel that you have a sweet steal from eBay, feel free to enter the Steal of the Month contest.



Some other big news in the Football section of the forum is the weekly chat nights. These are held in the new SCF Chat Room and they are every Monday from 7 PM EST to 9PM EST. There are contests going on, some trading, and just some general football chat. If you are interested in joining us for the chat, sign up and check it out on Mondays, everyone is invited!!

Even though the season is over, there are still many members who visit the football forum each and every day. We are also working on coming up with some off season contests, so come sign up and be on the lookout for those. As usual, we all on the Football Team would like to thank everyone who reads this article. Hope to see you soon!



Courtside at SCF

By Nathan Loewy aka Garnett_21

The annual NBA All-Star game took place in Phoenix, Arizona this year. The three day weekend brought out celebrities and multi-sport stars. The first event of the weekend was the McDonald's Celebrity Game, which featured ex-NBA stars Dominique Wilkins and Clyde Drexler. Dallas Cowboys wide-receiver Terrell Owens stole the show and ran away with his second consecutive MVP award.

Rookies versus Sophomores faced off in the T-Mobile Rookie Challenge. It was a close and exciting game but the Sophs rallied from behind in the second half and won the game 122-116. Kevin Durant broke the record with 46 points scored and won MVP honors.

H-O-R-S-E made its first appearance at All-Star weekend. Participants were Kevin Durant, O.J. Mayo, and Joe Johnson. H-O-R-S-E contestants lacked creativity but still made the event fun. Kevin Durant was one letter away from elimination before mounting a comeback with three point shots that proved to be too much for O.J. Mayo.

The two events that followed were the Haier Shooting Stars and Playstation Skills Challenge. Team Detroit won the Shooting Stars. Derrick Rose fought off the field of star point guards and scored the best time to win the Skills Challenge.

Six contestants faced off in the Foot Locker Three-Point Shootout. Two time defending champion Jason Kapono came out firing but failed to advance to the final round. Newcomers Rashard Lewis and Daequan Cook advanced to the final round. Lewis shot first and struggled mightily to net 11 points. Cook came out firing and scored 19 points in the final round to become the new three-point shootout champion.

On to everyone's favorite event: Sprite Slam Dunk! This year's field featured defending champion Superman (Dwight Howard), Nate Robinson, J.R. Smith and Rudy Fernandez. Unfortunately, the field did not meet the expectations of fans. JR Smith's and Rudy Fernandez dunks were forgettable. Dwight Howard once again came out in a Superman cape and flew to the final round to face his Kryptonian nemesis dressed in all green (Nate Robinson). In a great display of sportsmanship, Howard allowed for Robinson to jump clear over him for the dunk. Robinson managed to dunk over Howard and win his second slam dunk contest!

Sunday night was host to the 58th All-Star game. Two familiar faces stole the show. In the pre-game introductions, Shaq showed off his dance moves with the JabbaWockeeZ. If you haven't seen his dance, you can find it on Youtube. Western conference starters were Tim Duncan, Yao Ming, Kobe Bryant, Chris Paul, and Amare Stoudemire, coached by Lakers head-coach Phil Jackson. Eastern conference starters were LeBron James, Dwayne Wade, Dwight Howard, Kevin Garnett, and Allen Iverson, coached by Cavaliers head-coach Mike Brown. The game featured the razzle dazzle and glamour we expect to see from such events. After a competitive first half the West stole the show early in the 3rd quarter. West gained a 20+ point lead in the 4th quarter and never looked back. Unfortunately for the fans, as a blowout win is not what we wanted. LeBron finished the game off with an assist to himself for a monster dunk off the backboard. West won 146-119. Kobe Bryant led all scorers with 27 points. The much publicized relationship between Kobe and Shaq was the center of attention as both players earned co-MVP honors.

The NBA announced in late January that they had signed an exclusive deal with Italy-based Panini to produce NBA trading cards, beginning with the 2009-10 season. This announcement brought mixed reactions from SCF members. Most opinions were negative, but there were a few positive opinions mixed throughout. Some of the biggest concerns voiced were about the amount of sets being released. With the current market of Upper Deck and Topps, there are at least 20 different sets, not to mention sub-sets and insert sets. Most collectors wonder whether there will be the same variety as there is in today's market. Panini has stated that they will have a wide range of products, from low-end retail (similar to Topps), all the way up to high-end hobby (similar to Exquisite). No one knows for certain what Panini's future holds for the NBA, but we will find out starting this fall, after their contract begins on October 1st.

It would also be futile to assume that Topps and Upper Deck are done with the NBA. With all the exclusive deals those two companies have with stars currently in the league, and former star players, there is bound to be some sort of set released at some point by either Upper Deck or Topps. This is where speculation can begin as to whether it will be players in their college uniforms on cards, or if it will even be the traditional trading card. The possibilities are endless. Only time will tell what will happen.

In our two daily contests, eleven people have qualified for the playoff portion of the Pick 'Em contest, while only seven have qualified for the Top Performers playoff portion of the contest. Winners for January in Pick 'Em were allstar (76), garnett_21 (72), Showdown (71), trevorp121 (71), and because of previous qualifications by the first three, Hoopsman (69), mrnyceguy168 (64) and nbafan123 (64) also qualified, but were not awarded CC. The winners in Top Performers were Showdown (24), allstar (23) and key2win (21). Remember, it's never too late to start playing! You only need to finish in the top three in one month to qualify for the playoff portion of the contests, and if you do finish top three, you are awarded CC! Standings for the month of February, as of February 17th, are:



Pick 'Em

1. Idiot83- 29
2. Axe725- 28
3. garnett_21- 28

4. jdlee123- 28
5. JesRey- 28
6. key2win- 27

7. dwighthoward- 26
8. kobe080- 26
9. nbafan123- 26
10. Showdown- 26

Top Performers

- garnett_21 ~ 9
 Showdown ~ 7
 key2win ~ 7
 allstar ~ 6

- RenegadeLonghorn ~ 5
 underdawg ~ 5
 sl7in ~ 5
 JesRey ~ 4

- kobe080 ~ 4
 gladdyontherise ~ 4
 thenyrkid ~ 4
 the_future ~ 1
 mrnyceguy168 ~ 1

For the Basketball Showcase, we had many excellent choices to choose from. With the recent release of SP Authentic, there were countless superb pulls, but not all could be featured. So, without further ado, here are the pulls!

Card: 2008-09 SP Authentic Rookie Authentics Derrick Rose Logoman/Auto 1/1

Member: A'sFan11

Pulled From: Unknown



Card: 2008-09 Topps Hardwood Michael Beasley RC Auto 1/1

Member: tiger_4508

Pulled From: Unknown

Card: 2008-09 Rip Card results: \$1000!

Member: Uncleslick18

Pulled From: Unknown

Card: 2007-08 Upper Deck Artifacts Jason Kidd Neck Emblem 1/1

Member: ramenoodle

Pulled From: Last pack from sealed box



Theme Weeks 2009 has been pushed back from it's original planned release date of mid-January. Our new projected kick off is February 22nd. Be sure to watch for your favorite themes from 2008, along with some brand new, never before used themes! Good luck to all!

For our Collection of the Month, we will feature heelsfan4life78's UNC Tarheels collection:

I began collecting University of North Carolina alumni autographs about 5 years ago. I grew up rooting for the Tarheels, so deciding to collect UNC memorabilia as well was a natural choice. I have almost every card I would like to own, but a few are harder to find. I am still looking for Pete Chilcutt, Michael Jordan, Bob McAdoo, Charlie Scott and James Worthy. I collect autographs from baseball and football too, as long as they are pictured in a Tarheel uniform, although the majority of my collection is basketball. I own 7 autographed full-size basketballs, including a 2005 National Championship signed team ball, 6 autographed replica jerseys, including a Tyler Hansbrough jersey signed by the entire 2006 team, and a Vince Carter game-worn jersey from his play while with the Toronto Raptors.

A lot of people ask me how much my collection is worth, but I honestly don't know, and couldn't care less. This is a sentimental collection, not a monetary collection. If I can find something that I need on eBay or SCF, and someone wants a lot of money for it, then I don't mind paying a lot for it. I don't own a lot of cards, as there aren't that many certified autographs of UNC players in their college uniforms. One unique thing about my collection is that I only own one UNC autographed card of each player, instead of collection all of one players autographs. I currently own 36 different basketball players autographs in UNC uniform. Of all my collection, my favorite cards would be my Press Pass Legends Dean Smith auto, and my Press Pass Roy Williams auto.

We would like to congratulate the winners of our All-Star Weekend contest! We gave away a 07-08 Topps Finest Derrick Rose RC redemption for first place, a 07-08 Hot Prospects Rookie-Auto Ramon Sessions #d/899, and a 07-08 Artifacts Gilbert Arenas Gold #d/100. We'd like to congratulate archdl2004 on winning the Rose, olsont5 for the Sessions and fitchjr1 for the Arenas!

The SCF Basketball team would love to hear your thoughts about the basketball section of SCF's magazine! If you have any questions about the article, any suggestions as to what you would like to see, or anything else, please feel free to PM any member of the basketball team!



What About the Kids?

By Stephen Duell aka Spuds1961

OK Where should I begin? I'm a 47 year old collector have been collecting for who knows how long. I remember my childhood collecting experiences as being cheap exciting fun. I could mow a couple of lawns do a few household chores and I'd have enough money to buy a bunch of wax, Granted the packs were 10 cents a piece and that's where this article is leading.

Flashback to say 1969 I was an 8 year old kid who just began collecting because all the other kids in the neighborhood were doing so. I collected Yankees cards while other kids collected the Stars, Mets and Dodger cards. Trades weren't hard to do you had a Yankee card I needed for my collection I had a Mets card you needed for yours, Trade done both of us happy. School lunch hour was always fun, we had games to play with our cards, flipsies, color match and remember how the junk players were inserts for our bicycle spokes? We didn't worry so much about losing cards in these schoolyard games it was all in fun and it was inexpensive fun at that.



Flash forward to today, kids do not stand a chance in this so called hobby. First of all the kids of today have a lot more technological things to play with than us older collectors ever did. Second even if a kid in this day and age wanted to collect cards where would he or she start? The cards themselves are a lot nicer, also having autographs and game-used pieces right on the card. Something we never had in the late 60s. But with that being said the prices for today's cards have for the most part taken kids out of the hobby. The low end products do have a certain flair for today's kids but the fun just isn't there. I would love to go to a school yard in today's day and age and see kids flipping cards and just trading. I also know it's never going to happen, because we the older collectors have made it so cards must be in pristine condition and we must get the same value in every trade we make.

I have tried to get my own son into sports card collecting, He's an 11 year old, but guess what Gameboy, Yu-Gi-Oh and Digimon are what he chooses to spend his allowance on. Who can blame him? There is more fun to be had with those games and cards than he could have opening a pack of sports cards. I have shown him my shiny refractors, my patch cards, my autographed game-used cards but nothing sports card related really impresses him. Yet if I come home with a new Gameboy game or a pack of Yu-Gi-Oh cards he is excited. The manufacturers sold out to the collectors who asked for all the bells and whistles in a pack of cards but they forgot about one thing, In order to stay in business you have to have a following. Once we old timers start dying off I see bigger problems for the card industry than they are having now. As I don't see many of today's youth interested in a hobby that doesn't seem interested in them.

With that being said I urge my fellow collectors and the card manufacturers to try and bring the interest back for the children. As with anything else they are the future collectors of sports cards. Have a great card day and buy your kid a pack today! And most of all have fun with your collections.

Take care,
Steve



Twins Fest 2009

By Christopher Lawson aka Topher

SUCCESS!

(If you call nearly killing your wife to miss both Mauer and Morneau a success, anyway...)

This was my first year at a Twins Fest. Or is it TwinsFest? Well, either way, it was my first. Being the loving, caring, giving husband that I am, and because she is supposedly the bigger Twins fan; I invited my wife to come along. Yes, yes, I know. Husband of the year and the likes! You don't need to tell me twice. But you're certainly more than welcome to!

So we headed out at, oh, around 3pm to quickly grab a bite to eat at an A&W that was nowhere near along the way. The meal was a little disappointing, but hey! The cheese curds and root beer were good! We ended up at the parking garage at just a little after 4pm with the event starting at 5:30. Initially, I was concerned that we were a bit too early. I was also factoring the frigid, blustery temperature outside coupled with the 10-20mph wind gusting around. But, my wife wanted to get going, and I agreed that it would give us a better chance at scoring Mauer and Morneau.

Being that this was our first Twins... uhh... Fest... event, neither one of us knew how things worked. We didn't know that both Morneau and Mauer were signing together for one flat fee. We didn't know that it was just one line for both of them instead of one line for each. Apparently, the rest of the world did. When we got there nearly an hour and a half before the doors opened, the line had already snaked around the stadium. Oh, good lord. Oh, but wait! There's more!

Remember the cold temperature I referred to in the second paragraph? While we were in line, the temperature was three degrees Fahrenheit! Here I am all bundled up with a snowcap, gloves, and warm winter coat. My wife sadly was without a hat and with tiny, thin tennis shoes. Whoops.

Needless to say that just one hour before the doors opened, neither one of us could feel our toes. About half an hour before we were granted access to the warmth of the indoors, we both felt like packing it up and heading home. How in the world did the people ahead of us, who we had heard were in line since around 2pm, not die in this ridiculous Minnesota weather? They were smarter than I, that's for sure. Next year, I'll know better. Next year, my wife and I will make sure to head to a nearby bar and warm up, rotating positions every half hour until the event begins.

As we were in line, surely on our deathbeds, my initial plans, as printed out the night before (because I'm a terrible geek), was for my wife to head directly for Mauer while I quickly ran for Span before heading towards Morneau. I was ready to spend \$15 on Mauer, another \$15 on Morneau, \$15 on Delmon Young, \$5 on Denard Span, \$10 on Alexi Casilla, and another \$10 on Carlos Gomez. That's right; I was prepared to spend \$70 on just six autographs. See how intelligent I am? Yeah.

WE MADE IT!

We finally got inside, literally almost ready to pass out. We were at that point in time about 200 people behind the lucky first person in line. We got our maps just as soon as we got inside, headed down to the field to figure out what was going on, and that's when I had my wife run back upstairs where Mauer was signing so she could get in line. I raced down to the field (my first time on the field since I was a kid, so that was all sorts of nostalgia-filled coolness) to get Denard Span. When I was in line, it all became clear to me. I was spending \$5 not on just Span, but also on Bobby Korecky and Ron Coomer. That meant that my wife, armed with only an item for Mauer to sign, could potentially score both M&M boys in the same line at the same time! I quickly got what I needed from the first line and raced upstairs with a new plan of attack. Fortunately, I had brought along my entire book of Game Day Graphers just in case we wanted to get additional autographs. Also just as fortunately, Joe Nathan, Michael Cuddyer, Jason Kubel, and Delmon Young were scheduled to sign right after Mauer and Morneau. My wife wouldn't even have to move! This would later on prove to suck waterlogged baseballs. So I unloaded all of the cards that I had with me of the guys that she'd get, along with an extra \$15, to get who I felt were some of the top guys on the team. Trust me, to meet Nathan, Cuddy, Young, Mauer, and Morneau would be an enormously amazing thing for me, but I wanted my wife to experience that thrill. And there she stood, in line, not moving an inch.

At the same time, I raced back down to the field to get in line for another batch of players. I was still processing the excitement in my head that we would be spending \$30 on six guys instead of just two, which meant that I could get a lot more autographs than I was expecting for a lot less money than I brought. I was also really really excited for my wife. Although I really wished I was in her place. Well, at the time, anyway.





While in line, I met a Nick Punto fan, Deb that I know from Pat Neshek's message board. We had both just found out that, unfortunately, Nick Punto wasn't there. We chatted through the line while I was playing phone tag with my wife. Ron Gardenhire walked past her while she was in the Mauer/Morneau line and said hello to her. Then we found out that Michael Cuddyer was sick and wouldn't be signing tonight... Later on while in that same line, we found out that Delmon Young wasn't there either. And, to top it all off, my wife got cut-off in the Mauer/Morneau line. She stood and stood and stood and stood in line for about 2 hours and got nothing. She saw no one (well, except Gardy). What I was expecting to be a thrill of a lifetime turned out to be a major bust. Her night was going miserably. First standing outside for an hour and a half at near subzero temps with the wind chill surely way below zero, then standing in line inside for another two hours to get absolutely nothing. So, while Deb and I rejoined the line for the next signing, I had my wife join us.

I felt so bad that I wanted to make sure she got to meet some players and got to be involved with the autographs, so I put her in charge of the Game Days. She said she was nervous, but there was no way you could tell. She got right up there and seemed cool yet excited. In fact, when Glen Perkins saw the cards, he asked her "did you make these?" and she replied "Yes!" She then corrected herself by telling him "well, my husband did."

While in line we also noticed that Boof Bonser has some huge new "bling" on his hand. Apparently the guy got himself hitched during the off-season. Look at that gigantic thing!

We made it! And we got way more for less money than we planned on. Fourteen autographs for \$35! No, we didn't get any of the bigger name guys (due to not being insane and standing in line for 3+ hours in single digit temperatures, and due to player illnesses), but we got everything else we came for and more!

We ended up leaving just a little before the event ended and braved it back to the parking garage. The garage was about a half-mile away from the dome, but near our usual parking lot spot. Along the way to the event earlier in the day, we spotted a parking lot charging \$10. Our garage spot? \$12. The parking lot? Two blocks from the dome. D'oh! See, we're learning tons of lessons here. On the way back to the garage, the temperature was obviously lower, the wind was blowing harder, and we were back to red faces and numb toes. The most fun part of the whole deal? It took us a half hour to locate the car. We were initially in the right garage, on the right ramp, on the right level. We were just on the wrong grade. Nothing looked familiar to us, so we thought we'd try the adjacent garage. We knew almost right away that the second garage was not the right one. We could hardly breathe at this point. We made our way back to the first garage and circled around the ramp TWICE before we finally got on the correct grade and finally found the car!

My Poor Wife

I love her to death, and just about did so quite literally last night. For her to put up with everything she had to go through last night and still have the character to laugh about it shows just how much she loves me—and what kind of amazing person she is. I'm not sure if this proves that she's a bigger Twins fan than I, though. *smile, wink, snort*

Final Thoughts

My wife may never go through this ordeal again, especially if she's the one that has to stand in any Mauer and/or Morneau line. As for me, I'll know to go way earlier, park way closer, and, if my wife does not go along, bring a buddy with which to rotate warming up in local taverns and eateries. With as cool as meeting the M&M boys would have been, I'm not sure the pain we had to endure outside would have been worth the fleeting moment to being face to face with them, exchange a couple of words, and then move on, all while donating \$15 (or \$25... there was some confusion about that whole deal). Fortunately, both will be around for a couple of years, so there will be a few opportunities to try, try again. The rest of the experience for me, anyway, was awesome! I just wish I had the time (and willpower) to attend the entire weekend of festivities. If anyone is up for the challenge of a brutal Minnesota winter outdoor lineup, I highly suggest this fun interactive experience.



Note from the editor: If you enjoyed Christopher's article, make sure to check his blog; Cracking Wax <http://crackinwax.wordpress.com/>



Lost in the Post...Or were they?

By Allen Dunn aka waxbuster

On January 1, 2009 I went to my local sports cards store to visit and see what was new in store. I have known the owner for several years and he had mentioned buying some cards the day before. I noticed that one of the cards looked very familiar and asked to see it. The owner showed it to me and a second card caught my eye underneath the first. Both cards were from a trade I had made on Sportscardforum! I knew this because the cards were low numbered and I remembered the numbering on each of the cards I traded for. The cards were a Derek Jeter Auto Spx #ed 4/10, and a Cal Ripken Jr Auto Game Used #ed 3/35 from UD black. I told the store owner these cards were in a trade I made online and that they were lost in the mail. I was completely stunned that the cards had surfaced after being lost back in August of 2008.

While I was at the hobby shop a mail carrier for the United States Postal Service stopped in to deliver the mail. I told the carrier what I had discovered about the lost cards. He replied that no mail carrier would risk their job for some baseball cards. Then he asked the store owner who he bought the cards from. The store owner replied that two girls came in the store and one of them was a worker he knew well from the Post Office. The carrier appeared to be in shock that a fellow co-worker had stolen the cards and sold them with the help of a friend.

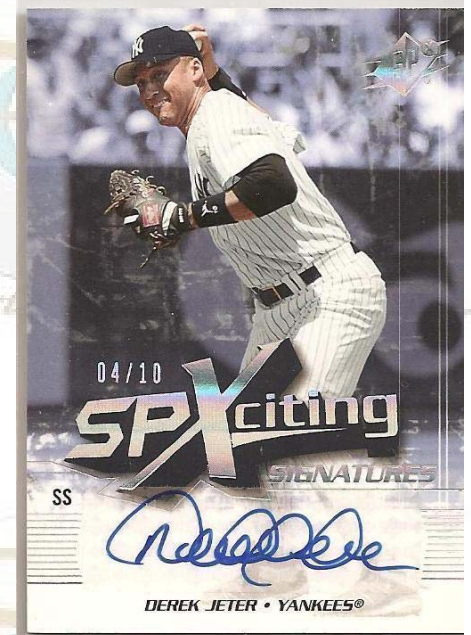
I returned home to get proof that the cards were mine. To do this, I printed pictures showing the serial numbers on both cards for proof of ownership along with the original trade agreement from Sportscardsforum.com.

Then, I went to see the postmaster and explain what I had just uncovered. I showed the postmaster proof that the cards were mine and that they were lost in the mail. He said they would be doing an investigation and that it would take a little time and I would have to be patient. I asked him who this female carrier was that stole and sold my cards, and he replied, an employee of the United States Postal Service and that she also was my mail carrier.

I gave a brief statement and returned to the sports cards store. I asked the owner if he knew the mail carrier and he said yes. He also told me she had collected cards for a long time, had come into his store before and that he knew her as an employee of the USPS.

On many occasions, I had talked with my mail carrier but never asked her name. I had told her about several packages that I had never received over the last year. She asked me what kind of packages I was expecting. I told her small bubble envelopes sizes 4"x7" or bigger. She asked if I did a lot of buying or selling on eBay and I said yes but mostly trading on SCF. She wanted to know what types of things I bought or traded. I replied sport cards. I never thought that it would lead to her taking my mail and selling it for her own personal gain. I will know next time to keep my packages more private and not tell anyone what they contain. It's a shame to have to come to this but it is unfortunately a step I feel I need to take to make my online trading safe again. Many people who are new to online trading are weary of being "ripped-off" by the people they make deals with online but we should never forget that it is possible for a transaction to go wrong even when our trading partner makes good on his end of the deal.

If I had any advice to give my fellow collectors I would say; don't give up searching for those lost cards they just might surface in your own hometown hobby store. Because you never know your mail carrier might collect sports cards too...





Raleigh, North Carolina Card Show Recap

January 24th-25th, 2009

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

Recently, I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Raleigh, NC, card show on January 24-25. This was the first show of the New Year for the area. Card shows tend to bring out the same vendors and the same attendees, but this was not the case. Though I did see some familiar faces, there were numerous new faces and it was a blast meeting and talking to all of them

[Inside Pitch Promotions](#) was our host and it was promoted by owner, Ray Mazingo. Ray goes out of his way to make sure that both the vendors and the attendees have a great time. On occasions, usually at 3-day events, Ray will bring in former/current athletes with ties to the area for autograph signings

The fee to attend a show is normally only \$5 a day or \$7 for a weekend pass. This gives you the luxury to peruse the show at your own pace and enjoy yourself. At these shows, you will find anything from vintage to modern cards, wax packs and boxes, memorabilia, pennants, autographed items, McFarlane figures and other odds and ends.

For those looking to sell, the table fees are cost effective and you get a discount for booking early. Inside Pitch has shows in five locations throughout the year, normally multiple times in each location you can find Inside Pitch in the North Carolina area in cities such as Charlotte, Greensboro, Hickory and Raleigh. And as a nice treat, they even go to Knoxville, TN, on occasions.

A nice feature that Ray and Inside Pitch provide to the attendees is a raffle drawing for vouchers to use at the show. Every two hours, a name is drawn from all those who have filled out the form with their paid admittance. If the attendee is present, he/she wins \$1 vouchers totaling \$10 that can be used at any booth. The vendor in turn can cash these in to get the monetary equivalent. This promotes more buying and selling at the show.

As a vendor, I had the privilege of representing my business, [Cards By The Box](#) as well as the largest trading site on the internet, [Sports Card Forum](#). While most vendors focus on individual cards, we were there with packs and boxes galore.



The show had an astonishing turnout. At my tables alone, I'm sure I met and dealt with a few hundred different people. It was fun talking to them and discussing the hobby, different releases, trends in the hobby and my favorite trading site, [Sports Card Forum](#). We were located in an area that had two other vendors selling wax products either next to us or directly across from us. Some would say that's a bad thing, but in truth, we all worked together to assist one another. If one of us didn't have a product, we would point out that it was available on another table. There wasn't any trying to undercut or bad mouth each other. It was a pleasant experience to be had by one and all.

As mentioned, there were vendors everywhere in the building. And the great thing about a lot of vendors, there are deals to be found. One vendor had a table with product for \$2 a piece. One would figure that it was low end item, but upon closer inspection, there were cards that book from \$30-\$60. When asked if this was correct, he said, "Yes, I'm blowing them all out as I want them gone." Definitely a great opportunity to cheaply add to a collection. Another vendor was selling Terrible Towels (Steelers Rally Towel) for a mere \$5. Go anywhere else and you find these for \$12-\$15 considering the Steelers are in the Super Bowl and have a huge contingent of fans in the area.



ON LOCATION

There were three other fellow Sports Card Forum members who were vendors at the show. Charles Sparks (SparkySportz), seen in the picture below, was there promoting his passion; custom McFarlanes. He does this as a side business and does an amazing job at a great price. I should know as he did one for me to give to my wife as a birthday present. Ed Racketa (Charlie Hustle) sets up mostly to have something to do during the weekend and catch up with friends. Sure, he has items on his table, mostly low-end, but doesn't really worry about if he makes back his table fee or not. Finally, J.C. Phillips (boophill) set up and showcased his ACC collection. He is a die-hard UNC Tarheels and NY Yankees fan, but collects other Triangle teams as well. His table was great for the odds and ends collectors as he had things like pocket schedules featuring football players.

One of the specials [Cards By The Box](#) provides for fellow active [Sports Card Forum](#) members is a \$5 discount on all hobby boxes. We had many members come by our tables to take advantage of this offer and invite more to do it. It's like getting your price of admission given back to you, not to mention the great prices we offer.



We had one gentleman walk up to our tables and spot our last two boxes of 2008 Topps Sterling Baseball. Between our sales online and at the show, that's all that was left from the case. He saw our price and was simply in shock. We had it at \$225 a box. He got excited as the only other table that had it was selling it for \$260. He bought one and pulled the card pictured below from a Ryne Sandberg box. Unfortunately, the man's hand was shaking and a clear picture could not be made. Curiosity got the best of him and he grabbed the other box. It was a Honus Wagner box. The big card was a Quad Memorabilia piece with three bat swatches and a jersey swatch numbered 4/10 of Wagner. The card can be found [here](#).

Once those pulls got around the crowded building, traffic came to our tables in hordes. One of the biggest fears of buying wax at shows is the possibility of box searchers. These are people who buy cases and open box until they get the case hits and then try to resell the rest of the boxes to make some money back. Well, when you get someone showing off cards such as those, the fear dissipates. Nothing like word of mouth advertising.



All in all, it was a wonderful weekend. I'd really like to thank Ray and [Inside Pitch Promotions](#) for putting this show together and letting me be a part of it. I look forward to the next shows in Charlotte (February 28-March 1) and Hickory (March 14). Speaking of the Charlotte show, we will have a special guest with us. Tom Farrell from [Press Pass](#) will be joining us to talk about the hobby and promote the release of 2009 Press Pass Eclipse Racing. We will have hobby boxes of Eclipse at the show and with every box purchase; the buyer will get a surprise bonus gift from Tom Farrell, courtesy of [Press Pass](#). Don't miss out on this opportunity as this will be while supplies last.

See you in Charlotte!



Mansfield, Massachusetts Card Show Recap

February 16th 2009
By Mike Silvia aka mikesilvia



SportsCardForum.com set up a booth at the Mansfield Card Show on 16 Feb, 2009.

The Mansfield card show is the largest and most popular, regularly scheduled show in Massachusetts. You can see the last Mansfield show we attended on 1 Feb [here](#).

Today's show featured over 70 tables and free autographs from Providence Bruins hockey stars Johnny Boychuk and Martin St. Pierre. Our table was just a few feet from Boychuk and St. Pierre.



I set up the Sports Card Forum table about 30 minutes before the 8:45 AM scheduled opening. I brought two laptops to display the forum, the last two issues of Tuff Stuff magazine to feature our articles and tons of fliers and informational cards. I also had a large Sports Card Forum banner behind the table.

The big draw for the card show was Providence Bruins Johnny Boychuk and Martin St. Pierre providing free autographs for the show. They signed non-stop for at least two hours!



Many Sports Card Forum members asked for some autographs, so I purchased three hockey pucks and got some signatures. The pucks will be given away on the site.

I gave away FREE autographed or memorabilia cards to any of the kids or Sports Card Forum members that stopped by the table. Here the box of cards before the show started.



Several Sports Card Forum members stopped by to talk, but the best surprise was meeting Peter Grossmann the winner of our "Favorite Athlete Bio and Cards Contest".

His Alan Trammell article can be found [here](#). Pete is one of our Super Collectors and a valuable member of SCF. It was great for him to take time to come up to the show and visit!

Yes, I did spend a few minutes to check out the tables. I only purchased one card, but it was a beauty. I bought a 2005 Upper Deck hall-of-Fame Baseball Mike Schindt card numbered 2 of 5! The card will be given away on our site in a contest, so sign up if you haven't already!



Future Mansfield, Massachusetts Shows - March Schedule

- 8 Mar - Meet Boston Bruins legend and Stanley Cup Champ Johnny "Pie" McKenzie (11-12:30) and Patriots legend and Super Bowl Champ Russ Francis from 11 AM to 1 PM
- 29 Mar - Meet and purchase autos from Celtics legend Cedric Maxwell from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM



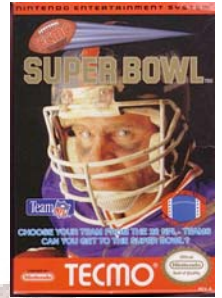
Truth



My Card History, Past and Present

By Khendra Murdock aka JammingJames23

I didn't think I would do one of these blog things - but as I read some other blogs recently, I thought of how fun it could be to write a little every now and then. I'll start my blog with my card history.



It all began in 1992. My late brother rented this NES video game called Tecmo Super Bowl. I didn't know anything about football then, but once I saw and played that game, I was hooked. I soon learned the basics about football, memorized all the players and teams, and really started to get into the sport. I got some magazines and prepared for the 1992 season during the summer. I also got a pack of cards one day from my dad - 1991 Score. I remember pulling a Guy McIntyre card and remarking, "Hey, he's a lineman for the 49ers on Tecmo Super Bowl! So that's what he looks like in real life!" The cards were fun to look at and examine. I took note of all the pictures and stats. I wanted as many as possible since they were fun and I could learn even more about all the players and teams. In a matter of months, I had tons of cards, especially of 1991 Fleer, Pro Set, and Score. Thus was the beginning of my hobby, at the tender age of seven (I wouldn't turn eight until November 1992, and I think I got an entire box of 1991 Upper Deck football for that birthday).

I collected football a lot from 1992 to 1994. However, basketball overtook football as my main sport love in 1993, and it's been the same ever since (though I do still follow football a little). The spring of 1993 was when I discovered Tecmo NBA Basketball. Wow, I am so indebted to those Tecmo NES sports games! I saw a little bit of the 1992-93 playoffs, but I really started watching a lot in the 1993-94 season. I remember when Jordan retired in the summer - that was such a shock; I thought my memories of him would be forever limited since no one then was sure he would return again (I saw some of the 1993 Finals, but was still learning about the game at that time). Incidentally, I also started seriously collecting basketball in the summer (technically, my first basketball cards were actually 1991-92 Fleer Tony's Pizza from pizza boxes, and while I loved those, I didn't understand basketball at the time). My first batch of packs in the summer included some 1991-92 Fleer, 1992-93 Fleer, 1992-93 Hoops, 1992-93 Topps, 1992-93 Topps Archives (the best-smelling cards of all-time), and 1992-93 Ultra packs.



For my ninth birthday in 1993, I got a box of 1993-94 Fleer basketball cards. I remember getting very excited over pulling the draft redemption card. I sent it in and got a set of the 1993-94 lottery picks, including Chris Webber and Anfernee Hardaway.

When I was a kid, I will admit I took horrible care of my cards. I tossed them into a box and handled them constantly. I didn't care about value then, even though I got monthly Becketts - and it probably wasn't much of an issue that I didn't care about value, considering cards were highly overproduced in those days. Also, since kids are so tactile, handling them was actually fun for me. I would feel the sharp edges until they turned round, I would smudge the gloss since it "felt cool," and I often wrote on the cards! Sometimes I would pull out cards at random and create "fantasy teams" with them. Don't worry, none of these old habits persist into my adult years!

It wasn't until 1997 when I started taking better care of my cards. That is the year I pulled my Grant Hill 1996-97 SkyBox Autographics from a mere retail pack of 1996-97 Hoops at an Eckerd X drug store. I remember showing it to my late brother when I pulled it; he was amazed. (He died only a few months later.) I think I also got an Iverson rookie in that same pack.

My online trading started in 1997 as well, though it really didn't take off until 1998 or 1999, when I started making many deals on the newsgroup rec.collecting.sport.basketball. The hobby was also changing a lot at that time - high end products like Topps Chrome were generating interest, although there was still a significant low end market as well. I also joined a Yahoo collecting group in 2000 when rec.collecting.sport.basketball started to stagnate a little, and I made lots of deals on there until 2002. 2002 is when I started college. I took a year off from collecting when I began college, so I didn't get any basketball cards during the 2002-03 season. I also threw away most of my old collection and started basically from scratch late in the 2003-04 season when I resumed collecting.

I joined SCF in early 2005, and my collection has really skyrocketed since then! I started collecting Antoine Walker sometime in the summer of 2005, and that collection is now up to 717 different cards, a basketball "super collection" by SCF's standards. I also have started and completed many basketball sets from various years. Never has my collection been so large and varied; even the thousands of cheap early and mid 1990s cards I had as a youth can't begin to compare in size, and especially not in value.

My greatest all-time pull besides the Hill Autographics was the yellow 1-of-1 2005-06 Topps Total printing plate of Chris Paul. I got that from a single hobby pack valued at \$1.39! I eventually traded it for several game-used cards, most notably a 2005-06 Upper Deck Debut Threads jersey card of LeBron James, which is currently my favorite card in my overall collection right now. Sure, I probably lost value on that trade, but I would do it over again. I actually lost MUCH more value when I stupidly traded away my Hill autograph in 1998 for a few inserts which were lower in book value than the guy who traded them to me claimed. I was young and naive then! Thankfully, I've learned much more about collecting, and yet it's still enjoyable as it ever was - even when I was a kid!

So yeah, that's my story.





FANTASY STANDINGS

Another month, another contest update! Here are the standings in our various pools and leagues!

First off, the SCF regular season pool sponsored by [NSCC](#)

2008/09 Regular Season

Through games of Feb 27 (Pool runs Oct 4 to Apr 30) – <http://www.officepools.com>

Rank	Team	Day	Week	Month	Total	Rank	Team	Day	Week	Month	Total
1st	Scottkoz20	4	22	154	848	24th	Tennisdevils	4	34	137	734
2nd	Rogulon	3	22	162	838	25th	Newf662001	4	31	145	730
3rd	Tannies	4	24	166	832	26th	Ja68grfan	4	23	141	724
4th	Allonblack	6	28	145	814	27th	Turd_ferguson	7	36	139	723
5th	Digitalmonkey	3	22	159	808	28th	Hossa18sens	4	19	117	720
6th	Pheeb888	4	21	159	803	28th	Malkinsearcher	5	18	126	720
7th	Doniceage	4	24	150	802	30th	Fritzer213	5	31	156	713
8th	Matssundin13...	5	18	141	790	31st	Cssports	5	25	142	710
9th	Nbcollector	4	27	161	789	32nd	Canucksfan1812	1	10	122	700
10th	Darrens18	5	26	158	778	33rd	Nabby12	3	20	144	696
11th	Lapierrecollect	4	27	152	776	34th	Andrewconnors9	4	15	139	691
12th	Pantera04	5	31	157	772	35th	Parco10	9	27	149	689
13th	Patrickadams26	5	21	147	771	36th	Gladdyontherise	5	25	134	687
14th	Gretzky99	6	16	147	765	37th	Fitchjr1	2	19	122	682
15th	Quiet-things	4	22	155	762	38th	Care4cards	6	18	119	681
16th	Unt0uch4bl3	5	24	123	758	39th	Leandre	5	21	119	669
17th	Greek22hockey	5	17	149	755	40th	Crater_satori	0	15	137	666
17th	Koolkid19	4	40	149	755	41st	Sk74	6	22	124	654
19th	Tysonx	4	22	146	745	42nd	Enderwiggin69	5	24	126	640
20th	Crackapack	5	24	131	742	43rd	Wingsfan-13	1	16	134	639
20th	Nathan7070	5	26	153	742	44th	Leafsin09	3	19	118	617
22nd	Wolf1bh	6	21	141	738	45th	Cam98	3	12	105	612
23rd	Tobiasstephan	5	18	138	737	46th	Scmike001	7	22	101	600

The official SCF Fantasy Basketball league has seen two trades in the past month! Anchorage Akitas traded Rashard Lewis to Caf Crusaders for Nene Hilario, and Molly's Ballers traded Linas Kleiza to Anchorage Akitas for Jason Thompson. The trading deadline in the league is February 26, so we will probably see a few more deals before then. Current standings, as of February 17, are:

Current standings, as of January 21st, 2009, are:

NBAFAN123 135
 Texas Hellbillies 130
 garnett_21 125
 Court Vision 121.5
 kobe080 119.5
 demonpower55 116

D-III 111
 Anchorage Akitas 110
 Molly's Ballers 102.5
 gladdyontherise 99
 Caf. Crusaders 93
 Gimme Some MO! 87

Strange Brews 72
 trevorp121 67.5
 CHillyDoggy 62.5
 the_future 58.5
 Michigan Man 52.5
 ello's team 47.5



FANTASY STANDINGS

In the draft fantasy league, 17 members are battling it out against the hockey team for a box provided by the good folks at cardsbythebox.com. The league is divided in four divisions and here are the standings...

SMYTHE					
TEAM	W	L	T	PCT	GB
team allonblack - allonblack	111	63	30	.618	--
SCF Hockey Staff	97	76	31	.551	13.5
Team stead - newf662001	90	70	44	.549	14
Vegas 420 - jayvegas420	66	101	37	.414	41.5
Team Andrew s - Rockford	52	121	31	.331	58.5
NORRIS					
TEAM	W	L	T	PCT	GB
Houston Crashers - supercarlover	101	63	40	.593	--
Montreal Jaywalkers - atp0721	90	83	31	.517	15.5
Team Connors - andrew connors9	72	84	48	.471	25
Team Mateya - EricMateya	74	95	35	.449	29.5
PATRICK					
TEAM	W	L	T	PCT	GB
Toronto Tavares - Matssundin13rocks	109	61	34	.618	--
Syracuse Victory - fitchjr1	109	63	32	.613	1
Team Weagle - ja68grfan	98	73	33	.561	11.5
Team Sokol - joskol1626	90	78	36	.529	18
Team Gagne - darryl87	79	95	30	.461	32
ADAMS					
TEAM	W	L	T	PCT	GB
Team Swain - TysonX504	87	73	44	.534	--
Team gosens151911 - gosens151911	79	83	42	.490	9
Team Collins - Leafsfan1967	55	111	38	.363	35
Team Farina - Justinpogge4life	52	118	34	.338	40

CardsByTheBox.com

For all of your hobby boxes needs!

We offer a selection of Hockey, Baseball, Basketball, Football and Racing boxes.

This month's featured products (hobby boxes)

2009 Baseball Topps Finest – out 3/31 - \$92.99



- 2 mini-boxes per box. 6 packs per mini-box (12 total packs per box). 5 cards per pack.
- NEW! 2 Numbered Autograph Rookie Patch Cards
- 10 Numbered Parallel Cards
- One 2009 Rookie Redemption Card

2008-2009 Basketball Upper Deck Black – out 3/25 – \$209.99



- 2 packs per box. 1 card per pack
- Every card will feature autographs or multi memorabilia pieces numbered to 99 or less!
- One autograph per display box! (on average)
- Look for unique signed manufactured patch cards!
- Find signed game worn jersey cards-- the autograph is actually on the game-worn jersey material!
- Autographed memorabilia rookie cards numbered to 99

2009 Football Sage Hit Low Series – out 3/25 - \$99.99



- An average of 6 autographs per box!
- The very first cards of the 2009 Drafttees, including Michael Crabtree (WR-Texas Tech), Javon Ringer(RB-Michigan State), and more!
- All cards are inserted, NO REDEMPTIONS!
- One 20-pt. stock insert card per pack.

2008-2009 Upper Deck NHL Champs – out 3/17- \$104.99



- A 480-card mini-card set, like the days of yesteryear!
- Featuring a Natural History Collection, color parallels and Hockey cards!
- Regular-sized cards too, with Rookies hitting at 1 in 2!
- Go where no hockey set has gone before...Back through time, with some unbelievable treasures!
- Fossils, Bones, Artifacts, Mastodon Teeth, A Natural History Collection, Mini Signature Cards, Mini Threads, Memorabilia cards from athletes of various sports, Dinosaurs, Endangered Species
- And Hockey Players!