

SCF'S COLLECTOR'S CORNER

In this Issue

- Details of the SCF - Blowout Cards Deals
- Product Reviews
- Views on the Hobby
- And more...



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- 4 cards per tin
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- Red Ink and Nicknames Signatures
- Rare game-worn college jersey cards from the top 2009 rookies



Topps Allen and Ginter Baseball - \$87.99 Out 29th June

- 24 packs per box, 8 cards per pack
- Each box contains a combination of any 3 of the following: Autograph, Cut Signature, Rip, Relic, Printing Plate and one box loader



Topps T-51 MURAD Basketball - \$64.99

- 24 packs per box, 5 cards per pack
- Every box contains: 1 Autograph, 1 Relic, 1 T-6 Cabinet Box Loader, 4 Rookie Variations Cards, 8 Short-Printed Cards and 24 Mini-Parallel Cards



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More for the Members
By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

**BLOWOUT
CARDS**

As you might have gathered from the magazine's cover, SCF has reached an advertising and marketing deal with BlowOutCards.com. This is rather exciting news for our members as it means that for one year, every Thursday, BlowOutCards will be offering a special discounted price on a particular product to SCF's VIP members.

The agreement has been in place for two weeks and thus far, our VIPs have been able to purchase a box of 2006 Football National Treasures for \$199.99 (a \$113 saving) and a box of 2008 Razor Lettermen Baseball for \$49.99 (a \$16 saving). Over the one-year agreement, a variety of sports and products will be offered at a discount price and there has never been a better time to be a VIP on SCF.

Personally, I look forward to seeing what the first hockey product offered will be and my imagination is running wild just thinking about the possibility. I simply cannot wait for Thursday...keep an eye on SCF for the next announcement at 3 PM on Thursday. If you would like to become a VIP member, please visit the following link: <http://www.sportscardforum.com/view.php?pg=premium>.



Now on to another topic, another one of our partners; Tuff Stuff magazine would like to get our members' collaboration! They are planning a feature in their magazine about the horror stories of the hobby and they would like to hear about your worst hobby story, with pictures if possible. Remember when you got a trade and the package looked like a truck had run over it? Or you traded for a McFarlane's figure and it got to you in a less than stellar condition? Whatever it is, they would like to hear it. If you have a good story to tell, please write four or five paragraphs about it and email it to scott.fragale@fwmedia.com. Please make sure to write "Hobby Horrors" in the subject line and to send in pictures wherever possible.

Also, just a reminder that while the 2008-2009 NHL season is nearing its end, the "Race for the Quad Contest" is just about to start. Yes, your first opportunity to win some points towards the race is just around the corner with the draft predictor. Keep your eyes on the hockey contest forum and you can also look forward to the free agency contest. Oh and in case you forgot, here is the smoking hot card up for grabs in the "Race for the Quad".



Finally, as some of you will know, the National Sports Collectors Convention is held in Cleveland, Ohio this year from the 29th July to the 2nd June. It is approaching fast and it's about time that you make arrangements to come and see us there! A fairly big contingent of SCF staff members will be in attendance and we would love to meet you all!



2008-2009 Topps Signature Basketball
By Arash Kassiri aka RenegadeLonghorn

Special thanks to Topps for sending us their newest product to review!

Product Description

8 packs per box
 4 cards per pack
 MSRP: \$120-140

BASE CARDS - 2 Per Pack!

- 85 NBA Subjects
- Veterans - 35 stalwarts
- Rookies - 20 emerging stars
- Retired Legends - 30 history-makers

AUTOGRAPH CARDS - 1 Per Pack!

- Every Base Card Subject
- *Every veteran, rookie and retired legend from the base set is featured on an autograph sticker card!
- *Look for 1 Group "A" player autographs such as: Dwight Howard, Bill Russell, Chris Paul, and Magic Johnson in every box!

- Dual and Triple Autograph Cards - Randomly inserted. HOBBY EXCLUSIVE!

PARALLEL CARDS - 1 Per Pack!

- All 85 Base Card Subjects
- Printing Plates - 1 of 1! HOBBY EXCLUSIVE!
- Red Foil Facsimile Signatures
- Facsimile Signatures - 1:4 Packs

INSTANT WIN CARDS

- These randomly inserted cards can be redeemed for authentic one-of-a kind Autographed NBA Draft Memorabilia such as team and player draft board placards signed by Deron Williams, Danny Granger and more.

What we pulled: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BGwCoMIKu0>





Base & Rookies: 16/85 (19%)
 Facsimile Parallels: 8
 Autographs: 8

Base & Rookies. Each card is numbered to 2325. The 85 card set features veterans, rookies, and legends.



Red Border Facsimile. Each card is numbered to 869.



White Border Facsimile. Each card is numbered to 289.



Magic Johnson (/499), Elgin Baylor (/1299), Dennis Rodman(/1299)





Gabe Pruitt (/1199), Donte Greene (/1199), Thaddeus Young (/5775), Sean Singletary (/1999), Buck Williams (/1299)

Final Ratings (Out of 5):

Base set: 4/5
 Fun: 3.5/5
 Overall design: 4/5
 Value: 3/5
 Re-buy: 2.5/5
Overall: 17/25 (68%)



Topps finally releases their newest high end product, Topps Signature. Its debut was met with much disappointment amongst collectors. One autograph per pack with one Group A autograph hit per box lured many collectors into buying this new product. Sadly, we did not know that this autographed driven product would contain mass produced autographs. As an example, I point to the Thaddeus Young that we pulled which is numbered to /5775. When many of these autographs hit the market they were instantly selling for \$1 to \$5.

Each pack contains four cards. You get one autograph, one border facsimile, and two base cards. If you are interested in making a complete base card set then you will likely have to bust at least six or seven boxes to try to complete a set. Because of this I wish Topps would have included an extra card in each pack. The on-card design is simple, yet elegant. The mostly white look will turn some away but I prefer it. The autographs are sticker autographs. Red border facsimile parallels look nice and are hard to miss. However, the white border facsimile parallels are a miss. My suggestion to Topps would have been to go with a black border. Red and black look nice together.

By far the best card we pulled was the Magic Johnson autograph numbered to /499. This was the Group A autograph for the box. We pulled other legends in Elgin Baylor and Dennis Rodman to beef up the value of the box. We got five other autographs, but most of these will not book for more than \$10 and resell for only \$1-5 on the open market. This is mainly due to the mass production I mentioned earlier. A consensus amongst collectors is that Topps used this set to unload many of their sticker autographs before their NBA license expires in October.

This box of 08/09 Topps Signature was one of the better boxes I've busted of this product and seen on SCF. Many boxes go one autograph deep with only the Group A hit holding value. As good as this box was, it's still a disappointment. When Topps Signature hit the market, single boxes were approximately \$130-150. Dropping \$130 on a box that yields about that much in book value is a disappointment. Once more, I'd like to thank Topps for being a great sponsor and providing us with this box to review.



Topps Finest Baseball
By Kevin Ransom aka spoodini

As always, we would love to thank Topps for sending us this product for review. When I found out I was doing this review I was struck with glee, as Topps Finest is one of my favorite products of the year.

Product Description

2 mini-boxes per master box
 6 packs per mini box
 5 cards per pack
 MSRP: \$100 (\$50 per mini box)

Content Highlights

- Each mini box contains 1 numbered rookie autographed patch with the autograph right on the patch
- Each full box contains 1 rookie redemption!
- Find other autographs from some of the leagues top stars
- Find one refractor per pack!

Break it Down For Me

Base Cards

- Veterans (125)
- Rookies (25)
- Autographed Rookie Letter Patch Cards (10)
- Featuring an on-patch autograph and #'d to 299 or less Refractor Parallel Cards

Veterans/Rookies (150)

- White-Framed X-Fractor - One of one.
- Red - #'d to 25
- Gold - #'d to 50
- Green - #'d to 99
- Blue - #'d to 399
- Refractor

Autographed Rookie Letter Patch Cards (10) Finest Moment Autograph Cards (16)

- White-Framed X-Fractor - One of one.
- Red - #'d to 5
- Gold - #'d to 10
- Blue - #'d to 25
- Refractor - #'d to 75

Refractor Parallel Cards (16)

- X-Fractor - One of one
- Red - #'d to 75

Rookie Card Redemption Program

- Rookie Redemption Cards (10)
- Can be redeemed for an actual 2009 rookie card
- Refractor Parallel Cards (10)
- Gold - #'d to 50
- Refractor - #'d to 19





The Break

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXlcs-7_w2E

What Did We Pull?

Base - 47/150 (31.333333%)

Dupes - 2

The base cards in Finest are made with their "Chrome" technology. The border is mostly black and silver with colored highlights on the sides that are generally near the team colors. It contains all your favorite refractor parallels, which are easily distinguished by their color and reflectiveness.

Here is a Griffey base so you can check it out:



Refractors fall about one per pack and here are the types we received.

Refractors:



Not pictured are Scott Kazimir and Xavier Nady

Blue Refractors #/399:



We also pulled a Lance Berkman which is not pictured.



Green Refractors #/99: 1



Gold Refractors #/50: 1



Special Rookie Redemptions can be found at about 1 per box, and we pulled one. Rookie Patch Autographs can be found one per mini box! The M is a refractor numbered out of 75!



Final Ratings

- Base Set: 3/5
- Fun: 4/5
- Design: 4/5
- Value: 3/5
- Re-buy: 3/5

Overall: 17/25 (68%)

First off, let this be said that I am a huge fan of this product. However, this year, had I bought this I would have been disappointed even if I pulled something amazing.

I gave the base set a three. It's a solid 150 cards, however, there is absolutely no reason to be getting any duplicates when you can only pull a third of a base set from a box. To me, that's unacceptable. Two duplicates is two too many.

The fun factor was definitely a four. Pulling refractors in every pack is fun just like inserts in other products. You have the chance for star autograph and it's very exciting pulling a patch autograph, but



I'll get into that later.

I gave the design a four too. I would have given it a five except for one major flaw. The patch autographs are too small. You barely have enough room to write an autograph on some of those letters and that is noticeable by not being able to recognize the autograph on them. In person, it doesn't even look like a signature. I know people don't sign neatly, myself one of them, but it's just way too small of an area. Make the patches bigger; don't go to sticker autos on the patches like football though!

I gave the value a three. \$50 per mini box? I'm sorry but it's just not worth that much. The autograph selection is decent, but just one hit in that mini box with the possibility of a redemption or even more scarce, another autograph? I couldn't justify paying \$100 total for a whole box or \$50 for a mini box without the hits to back it up.

I gave the re-buy a three for the same reason as the value. The price is just too much for this product. Add in another guaranteed hit and I think it would be a little better. The lack of hits for \$100 and the duplicate cards gives the re-buy value a low rating.

Overall, I like the product more than my score indicates, however, I have to be put in the shoes of the regular customer and I'm not sure a regular customer would give it that high of a grade.

I would like to thank Topps for sending us this product to review. As always, you can find them at www.topps.com and you can find the cards pulled across the site in contests, giveaways, and the CC Store.





2008-2009 Upper Deck Ultimate Collection Hockey
By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

Description

The nearing end of the season means two things for hockey fans; the Cup will soon be awarded and it's time for Upper Deck's high-end offerings. First up, Ultimate Collection. Unlike last season when a box included 4 packs, now a box is a single pack of 4 cards. The reasoning seems to be that more people will be willing to spend \$100 on a box than \$350. The same approach has also been taken in the other sports. While it is true that it is less money to fork out, it is still quite a gamble as you get only four cards to score your bit hit instead of 16.

Box Details

Pack per box: 1
 Cards per pack: 4
 Base set: 42 cards
 Rookies: 18 cards
 Autographed Rookies: 36
 Autograph Rookies SP: 6
 Check out Upper Deck's Product Information
 Price: From \$89.99 to \$109.99

The Break

The 16 cards below were pulled by a member on SCF during a four-box break.

Pack 1:

Base Paul Kariya
 Ultimate Rookie Mikkel Boedker 330/399
 Autographed Ultimate Rookies Patch Alex Pietrangelo 11/25
 Ultimate Debut Threads Blake Wheeler 102/200



Pack 2:

Base Joe Thornton
 Ultimate Rookies John Curry 279/299
 Ultimate Rookies Autographed Nikita Filatov 36/99 SP Rookie
 Ultimate Jerseys Martin Brodeur 56/100 both white





Pack 3:

Base Wayne Gretzky

Ultimate Rookies Justin Pogge 87/299

Ultimate Rookies Autographed Zach Boychuk 028/399

Ultimate Autographed Jerseys Carey Price 40/50



Pack 4:

Base Markus Naslund 099/299

Ultimate Rookies Brendan Mikkelson 039/299

Ultimate Debut Threads Kevin Porter 074/200

Signed Ultimate Debut Threads Luc Schenn 2/35



Comments

There is no doubt, this is a gorgeous looking product which oozes class, the smart design and slick finish makes for a very eye pleasing product and the fact that the base cards are numbered to /299 is always welcome. As always with high-end product, the checklist is quite extensive and covers everyone from the rookies to the Hall of Famers. Although a glaring omission once again is the absence of any autographs of

Alexander Ovechkin. UD has stated that they are working towards a new deal to get Ovechkin autographs in their checklists as soon as possible.

As for the memorabilia cards, some of them are pretty impressive but once again we have to come back to the fact that unicolored swatches, especially white ones do not really have a place in a product at this price point. On the autograph aspect, there is no denying that the hobby masses love hard-signed autographs and that UD delivers here. It is also possible to pull the still rare and highly sought after shield autographed cards that thankfully are still 1/1s let's hope that they never become as common as the game-used cards have. The hobby is in dire need of rarity and mass-producing should be avoided at all costs.

Final Ratings

Overall Design: 5/5

Value: 3.5/5

Fun: 4/5

Re-buy: 4/5

Variety: 4/5

Final Grade: 82%



While I have nothing negative to say about the design of this great product, I must mention that the value isn't as good as it could have bit. Unfortunately, the fact that you now only get one pack per box

makes purchasing this release somewhat risky as you have less chances to get your big hit, nothing stops you buying 4 individual boxes though. As for the fun factor, it is unfortunately over all too quickly with a single pack to rip open. The price tag might stop many collectors buying more of this product, as it is likely that some will be saving their money for the release of The Cup in July. Finally, on the variety front, it would have been nice to get new sets or memorabilia cards or autographs and not just the same old stuff. If you can't wait for THE CUP 2009, this is a very viable alternative.



Every month, we aim to provide you with an accurate list of release dates, however as you will no doubt know, release dates do change. At the time of publishing, all dates were correct.

June 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	2	 - Americana	4	 - OPC Premier Hockey
8	9	 - Sports Icons	 - Elite Football	12
16	 - OPC Baseball - Heroes Football - Icons Football - Ultimate Collection Basketball	 - Squared Football  - Magic Football	18	19
22	 - Draft Edition Basketball	24	25	26

New Members' Corner
By Leo Zuperku aka Izuperku

Here's a link to our Baseball contest:

<http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=412929>

Here's what you could win:

1st Place PRIZE:

THE PERSON WITH THE MOST TRADES WILL RECEIVE:

500 CARD CASH !

2nd Place will receive

250 Card Cash

New Members!

If you have a question or problem

Dont forget to "Ask Leo"! This is located in the sticky section of the Meet & Greet forum

Congrats to our new Assistant Manager:

Patriotsguy

& to our new moderators: endsbergcollector, Tutall & Herdsman87 as always if you wish to join the new member team send a PM to Nascards.





The Toronto Monthly Card Show By Houng Ngui aka quiet-things

On April 19th, I attended the Toronto Monthly card show. It was my first ever card show, and I was there to help promote Sports Card Forum. The Toronto Card Show is run by Frank Williamson, (FrankToronto) and Ameet Acharya, (99goals). It was great to meet them both and they were very accommodating. Frank came by to my table every so often to check up and make sure everything was going well.

With the show being two weeks before the big Toronto Spring Expo, it's not a surprise that people wanted to save up their money. I was told that the show was a bit slow because of it.



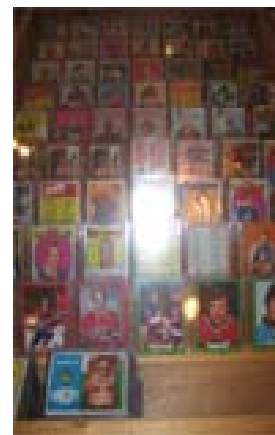
There were about 30 tables full of various sports cards and memorabilia. People that attend the Toronto Card Show have a chance at winning some great door prizes. This month, they had draws for Jean Beliveau and Johnny Bower autographed 8x10 photos.



Even though the show wasn't as busy, I had a great time. I had a chance to meet a fellow member and moderator, Chris Jones (hossa18sens). It was nice to finally meet a member of the site, and talk about the hobby and sports in general. Chris opened some packs, and was lucky enough to pull a 08/09 Upper Deck SP Authentic Luke Schenn Future Watch autograph.

I also had the chance to walk around and marvel at some of the cards in the displays.

I saw numerous high-end cards, and the one that stood out to me most was a 07/08 Upper Deck Ultimate Collection quad jersey and auto of Wayne Gretzky and Patrick Roy, numbered to 10. While there was lots of high-end cards there were also some amazing deals to be had. There was a dealer that had a big pile of cards for \$5 each - recent autos, game used and the likes. It was a lot to rummage through, but well worth it. My friend ended up finding a 07/08 Upper Deck Ice Frozen Fabrics Ilya Kovalchuk patch /10 for only \$5! I was able to pick up some small additions to my personal player collection that I needed, some base from this season as well as some





inserts, which I was very pleased about. It was gratifying to get them inexpensively, and some dealers were kind enough to just give them to me. Most dealers were asking book value for the majority of their cards, but if you looked through the bargain bins enough, you'll be sure to find a gem.

All in all, I had a blast at my very first show. The next Toronto Card Show will be held on June 7. If you're in the area or can make drive, come out to the show! It is located at the Leaside Gardens - 1073 Millwood Road. We're hopeful to be setting up again and meeting some more SCF members. The admission is \$3, but women and kids under 12 are free.





Jeremy's Journey

By Peter Kapuschinsky aka doG_sl_kcivraH



As some of you may have read, I was fortunate enough to have a chance to do an interview with up-and-coming racer Jeremy Gordon. Jeremy was the 2008 Hobby Stock points champion at Double X Speedway in California, Missouri. HE resides in nearby Sedalia, Missouri. It will be my goal to update you on Jeremy's progress as he attempts to defend his title.

His season started out with getting his Hobby Stock ready for the annual DARE car show, where it placed 5th out of over 100 participants. Two weeks later it was on to nearby La Monte, MO to test the car. The test session didn't go as he had hoped as a spark plug failure resulted in a 9th place finish. Undeterred, Jeremy came back the following weekend, notched a heat win and a 2nd place finish in the feature!

Sunday, May 3rd saw the beginning of Jeremy's title defense at Double X Speedway. He surely did not disappoint as he piloted the #15g America's Car-Mart Chevrolet to a feature win and the top of the points standings! The rest of the top 5 were Luke Skidmore, Miranda Arnold, Brian Murphy, and Cherry Wineland. Gordon held a 2-point cushion on Skidmore after the season opener.

Since the events scheduled for Mother's Day were cancelled due to inclement weather, the 17th of May saw the season's second race kick off as Mike Schrader, also of Sedalia, took the checkers in the night's first heat, but the story of the night was Luke Skidmore, who took the second heat and ultimately claimed his first feature win of the young season. Gordon brought his machine home 5th, behind Arnold, Murphy and Schrader.

Currently, the season's standings look like this:

Luke Skidmore-190 pts.
 Miranda Arnold-176 pts.
 Jeremy Gordon-168 pts.
 Brian Murphy-166 pts.
 Mike Schrader-138 pts.



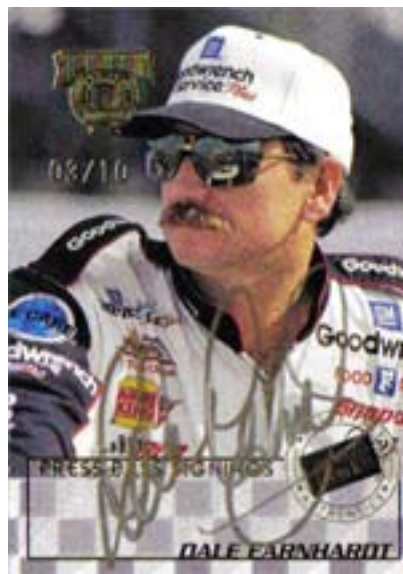
On behalf of everyone here at SCF, we wish you the best of luck on a successful 2009 Hobby Stock campaign and feel free to check back here for future updates.



Card of the Month Winners for April-May

Winner: Ashley8318

Dale Earnhardt 2009 Eclipse Black Hole Instant Winner-1998
Press Pass Signings Gold #03/10



2nd Place

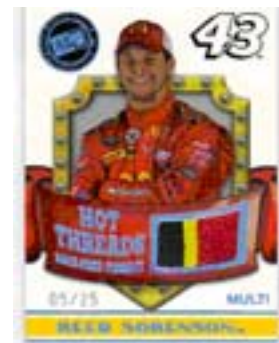
angryeagle07



JKC



pa43fan





There's Always the Minor Leagues By Stephen Duell aka Spuds1961



OK In these times of financial scuffling and just trying to keep food on the table for most American families I have rediscovered my love for cheap baseball.

That's right living in Terry, Mississippi I have realized that a double a minor league affiliate of the Atlanta Braves is my best bet for low-priced entertainment. Yes I can go to a ballgame and sit along the third base line for 8 dollars a seat, As opposed to seating in the bleachers at any major league ballpark for 20 or more dollars. Granted these are not your name players, not yet at least but they are just a stone's throw from getting the call to the show. Plus on any given day or night they have giveaways which is great if you have an 11 year old son like myself. They also have nightly specials on concession stands; blind auctions for pro memorabilia and the players are always willing to sign autographs.

A little insight as to how my love for the minor league game has come to fruition; My wife works for Merrill Lynch and a lot of her clients have season tickets, many of which give them to her as they can't go to every game. Last year, I was fortunate enough to get three free tickets to fan appreciation night, which also let you enter into free giveaways. I won a gift certificate for 35 dollars worth of pizza in the second inning, but that was just the start to a great night at Trustmark Park in Terry. Later that night in the eighth inning my name got called again, this time I won a full sized team autographed baseball bat! Little did I know at the time it would be for the Southern League Championship team as the M-Braves won the title last year.

Speaking of autographs, if you have never had the chance to get in person autographs I highly recommend a double A game, a lot of today's up and coming stars come up through double A and the opportunity to get their autographs are plentiful. Just last year players like Justin Upton, Evan Longoria and Rickie Weeks came through Trustmark Park playing for their respective Minor League Affiliates. I was fortunate enough to get an Evan Longoria autographed baseball in person which I cherish only for the fact that I got to meet one of today's nicest gentlemen and genuinely great guy. This season is just starting but Ryne Sandberg coaches the Tennessee Smokies and he is another great guy willing to sign, thus another autographed baseball for me.

In closing, for very little cost you can have the excitement of a professional game plus a lot of little extras you could never hope for at the Major League level. I truly suggest for those of you that have a Minor League affiliate in your back yard to take in a few games this year. It will definitely rekindle your love for the game and let you have a hands on experience that is very hard to come by at the Major League level. I hope this didn't seem like gloating on my part but remember this piece of friendly advice will definitely enhance your love for the great game of baseball. Once again have fun at the park with your family and take care Steve.





Direction of the Hobby
By Joshua Helms aka Helms83



I, like many other collectors, am a collector from the late 1980s and early 1990s; better known as the ‘massed produced’ era. I stopped collecting shortly after the baseball strike of 1994. Whether the strike actually had anything to do with my ceasing to collect or if the coming of age of an adolescent male is the true reason is another discussion; the point is I had stopped collecting and was reintroduced to the hobby pre-draft of 2006. I was amazed at the vast changes and advances the hobby had taken!

I was accustomed to star veteran players, rookie cards of hopefuls and inserts of various stars, but this new age of collecting was astounding! Cards have serial numbers, meaning there are

only so many cards produced of that particular player. Cards have pieces of event worn fabrics called ‘game-used’; there were ‘patch’ versions meaning the game-used piece was multi-colored or there was stitching from a jersey number, logo, or name. There were cards with actual autos; when back in the day (which was a Wednesday – a little Dane Cook humor), the only on-card autos were the ones that had been in-person signed from sporting events or other special events. But now these cards were authenticated, logged in the annuals of the card company’s product history. There are online trade sites, auction sites, a mass community of collectors from all over the world that can discuss, trade, buy or sell; the possibilities of the hobby are endless! However, over the past few years I’ve noticed a trend beginning that lead to the decline of the value of sports cards in the late 1980s; that of mass production.

Every card company is competing to be the best of the best, better than the next; to make the top dollar. To do so, the theory seems to be to flood products with highly sought after collector items, such as: short print runs, game-used, patch variations, and autographs of rookies, star veterans, and hall-of-famers. The more a card company crams into a hobby box, the more hope is instilled for the product to sell, and to sell for a higher price, in turn making that ‘top dollar’. Which gives me a cause for concern; the more and more companies put into a product also instigates the fear of once again flooding the market, decreasing card values, and creating a ‘depression like’ recession which the hobby faced in the mid 1990s. If history has taught anyone anything, it’s that history exists to not make the same mistakes twice.

As hobbyist it is our responsibility to ensure this event is prevented. You as the reader might ask, ‘How; what can I do as one person?’ Well my fellow hobbyist, I am here to help. As collectors, it is our due-diligence to take control of our hobby and let it be known to those who create our hobby products what we want from them; the direction we want our hobby to take; our displeases, as well as our praises. The



time is now, before reversing the mass production cycle is too late. I have created a short list of suggestions that card companies should take into consideration to hopefully regain the value and lustre of sport card collecting. This list is not all-inclusive, nor is it all-comprehensive. These are suggestions from a fellow hobbyist to hopefully create a movement of thinkers and motivate others to save our hobby.

Without further ado, here is my list of suggestion to card companies:

-Short print base cards

The days of set building have long been forgotten. I believe this due in part to the lack of value in completed sets. If base cards were serial numbered and there were only so many possible sets to be completed, I believe this would cause hobbyist to have a desire to chase base cards. Products have experimented with this idea and I think this created a want for these cards, such as National Treasures' base cards. Also, limit base cards to only current NFL players (further suggestions will adhere to past legends) and vary between products which player is in these sets. Collectors don't exactly want to see the same five players from the respective teams in every product.

-Limit base rookie cards

Collectors do vary on which rookies they collect, and it is hard to please everyone. But not every product from every card company needs to have an all-inclusive rookie roster. Maybe pick one product from each year (for instance I love Topps Chrome) and insert every rookie you would like into the base set. As for your other products, pick the best-prospected rookies and make rookie cards for them (but limit their print runs). This, coupled with my suggestion for autographed cards, will bring back value and want for base rookie cards.



-Stop with all the parallels

There are way too many variations of cards in sets. For example, look at Triple Threads; how many rookie game-used auto variations are needed? If a card is serial numbered to 99, but there are six different variations of this card with the same serial number, wouldn't that in turn create more print runs of that card? Collectors don't exactly care if there are different colors, variations, and serial numbers of their player. We just want better quality cards of our players.

-Limit the amount of inserts in a product

Donruss Classics has so many inserts with so many variations that it makes price guides almost impossible to navigate through! Since base cards are of current NFL players, the inserts should focus on our beloved hall-of-famers and other legends. Or for the college collector hobbyist, make college inserts (I love Donruss Classics' Old School Colors and School Colors; but Team Colors is not needed). Also, if



an insert is a dual player card, make the card have some sort of correlation, such as a legend quarterback and the current quarterback of the same team. Collectors are sometimes baffled as to why two players are on the same card.

-Limit the number of autographed and game-used cards

As for the rookies, throughout the year maybe only allow the first 3 rounds of draft picks to sign cards and limit how many they can sign in a year. This will increase the value of these cards and also increase value of base rookie cards of people who didn't have auto cards (look what happened with Romo and Brady cards). As for the veterans and legends, limit how many cards they can sign in a year. Remember when Sanders, Montana, Namath, Emmitt Smith and others rarely signed; how many cards do they have now? Limiting the veterans will also increase the value of their cards, because honestly, it's appalling the base rookie autos sell for so much more than the legends.



-Limit box hits

It seems every product guarantees three or four hits per box on average. There was a time when there was no guarantee to get anything other than to get 24 packs per box with five cards per pack. Collectors honestly don't care if a hit in a hobby box is a game-used of some player they've never heard of and more than likely will never hear of again. The attractiveness of hobby boxes comes from the thrill of the chase and the excitement of the unknown, hoping for that 'big pull'. This will also cut down on box prices, because honestly, anything pulled from a box over \$100 usually doesn't hold value.

The intent of this rambling is to hopefully influence other collectors to think of how to stop our hobby from repeating the event it experienced some 20 years ago; to encourage others to speak up, contact card companies to make suggestions on how to influence the direction our hobby takes. After the progression and advances our hobby has made, we cannot let there be another recession as there was after 1994. After all, those cards from the 1980s and 1990s do hold value, as the blogspot.com blogger titled 'Voice of the Collector: The Anti Beckett' has a video titled 'The Long Awaited Junk Wax How To' can prove: <http://voiceofthecollector.blogspot....ax-how-to.html>

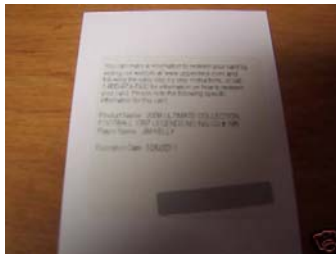
Happy Collecting!



On the Gridiron
By Jason DiOrazio aka jdio13

Hello and welcome back to the Football page in the SCF magazine. In this article, I will be talking about some of the new and exciting things going on in the Football Forum of Sports Card Forum. We will also highlight the winner of last month's eBay Steal of the Month contest.

As everyone knows, football season is approaching, and very fast. The activity level in the Football forum has increased since the NFL draft occurred on April 25th. The beginning of the football season also means one thing: new season long contests that will be run in the Football Forum. The Football Team staff has been working very hard in coming up with new ideas for season long contests with prizes. While I cannot reveal any of the new contests we are planning, I can say that we will have the normal Guess the Score Contest, Rookie of the Year Contest, and the NFL Hi-Lo Contest. Come and check out the Football Forum closer to the beginning of the season to see some of the new contests that will be available for our members to participate in!



With April in the past, it is now time to give a shout out to our eBay Steal of the Month Contest April 09 winner. We had plenty of great entries, and after a week of voting, we chose our winner: hepcat. Brian got a great steal, which can be seen on the left. Not the greatest picture but carry on reading...

That is correct, a Jim Kelly Legends Auto out of Ultimate Collection for \$0.99 plus shipping. These cards were the case hits in this years Ultimate Collection boxes, so to purchase a HOFer case hit autograph from a very high-end brand is incredible. All of us on the Football Team would like to congratulate Brian on a great steal! (And yes, he did receive the card).

Along with the NFL season coming, the NCAA Football season is on its way. With many college football team collectors on SCF, the Football Team has decided to run a SCF Team Collector Group-College Edition. If you are a die-hard college football team collector, this is the right group to be in. If your team is available, just sign up and let the fun begin. Every month, each member is paired up with someone else, and you send cards to the other person's favorite college team to them, and they will send you cards of your favorite college team. This is completely free except for shipping, and with the new product releases, group box breaks are also beginning.

As another note for NCAA Football fans, the Football Team will be running the Guess the Score College Football Contest all NCAA season.

All of us on the Football Team would like to thank everyone who has read this. We hope to see more and more members being active in every area of SCF. We hope to see everyone on the boards!!!



The Spirit Awakened
By Drew Hall aka Batman72

A few years ago I attended a card show that would change me forever. I went with the \$200 I had taken from the ATM. Money I had somehow convinced my wife to allow me to waste away again. I tensed up as I walked through the doors. The choices were many. Numbers and calculations raced through my head as I battled to get the best I possibly could out of that \$200. An hour passed... on to another table. Another hour passed... on to another table. Finally the equation was balanced, my accounts were reconciled, and my decision became final. My exhaustion was evident but my relief was sweet. My fate was sealed.

It had been a while since I had last broken the plastic off a box and broke open a pack. After having been out of the hobby for some time I decided I was just going to collect jersey and rookie cards from now on along with Topps Football 1976-1993. Autographs were just too hard to come by. At least I was certain I could get a few rookie cards and a few jersey cards for each box I purchased. I had no signature pull as we say now. I never experienced the excitement of discovering the golden ticket.

Experiencing the elation that somehow my collecting ability was superior to someone else's had eluded me. I was just a collecting scrub, always one of the last to be picked, on the neighbourhood football card collecting team. I was a wannabe almost ashamed to show my face at such a prestigious event. This was where the big guys came to buy and sell. Maybe one day I would save enough money to be like them. In the meantime I'll just pretend. I was only rich enough to overpay for middle priced products only to be disappointed and come up empty over and over and over again.



I know I'm not alone. I'm sure many collectors just gave up. It's not easy hitting the big time. Others wish it would go back to the old days with just a few products to choose from. The ability to actually complete a set was within reach. When pulling a common card out of a pack could be exciting because it was a card you needed to complete the set. Those days are long gone my friends and we can only blame ourselves. The Big Times have moved on to far better things and we were left in the dust full of envy.

It was that fateful day in August of 2007 that the collecting spirit within me was awoken. My room was filled with the fresh scent of newly opened cardboard. As I sifted through the pack I fell upon a card facing a different direction than the others. The back of the card staring at me numbered to just 75. Seeing that Colts logo stirred within me some excitement as my eyes glanced down further to the name. It read Joseph Addai. Wow I thought to myself a low numbered Joseph Addai Rookie card. Only 75 of these were produced and I was one of those who had one. As I turned the card over I experienced something I had not before.

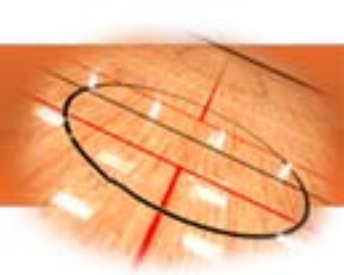


I noticed a shiny reflective rectangle surface at the bottom of the card with some writing on it. "Could this be?" I asked to myself. I quickly turned the card over to verify the number. Back over again as my finger slid along an autograph. It was real. It was a Joseph Addai Autographed Rookie card #'d to 75. My eyes grew big and my hands shook trying to be so careful with it. I quickly put it in a sleeve and a top load. It was now secure and completely in my possession only.

It's mine, all mine! This must be worth a lot of money! I quickly went to my price guide, flipped quickly through the pages. Ok, here we go got the year and brand ok, got the subset ok, got the number ok, here we go found it \$120.00!

Yes I said with a fist pump. Never had I pulled such a valuable card. It was my turn, it was my time! I must have carried that card around with me all day. I propped it up on my nightstand when I went to bed. The next day I displayed it on my mantle. Finally I can get some respect. People will nod and lift their eyebrows up when I speak of my signature pull. Finally some respect. No more walking the aisles at the card show ashamed, wishing and wanting. It was this pull that renewed the collector inside me. It made all my money well spent. It made my collecting prowess reach a new level. It made me legit. The spirit awakened.





Basketball Happenings

By Trevor Picone aka trevor121

In the past month, the NBA has started its playoffs. It brought some exciting match-ups and some not so exciting ones. The best match-up in the first round was probably the Chicago Bulls vs. Boston Celtics, which went to a game 7 where the Celtics squeaked by. The Celtics were involved in another game 7 in the Eastern Conference Semi-finals against the Orlando Magic and the Orlando outfit won by 19 points. As for the Western Conference, the Denver Nuggets have been surprising some people and will be matching up with the Los Angeles Lakers in the Western Conference Finals.

Congratulations to LeBron James for winning his first MVP award! He was very much deserving and here are his averages from the regular season in 08-09: 28.4 PPG, 7.6 RPG, 7.3 APG. He has also stepped it up in the playoffs by leading his team undefeated in the first two rounds. Right now the Cavaliers are playing the Orlando Magic in the Eastern Conference Finals.

In other recent basketball news, on May 16th, ESPN had a documentary on Kobe Bryant that was a Spike Lee presentation. It was called Kobe: Doin Work, the cameras followed Kobe Bryant around for one day last year so people could get a glimpse of what it's like to be Kobe. I found it pretty interesting, but hey I am a Kobe fan.

Also, some sadder news hit the basketball world in the month of May. On the 10th Chuck Daly lost his battle with pancreatic cancer. He was the coach of the Detroit Pistons when they won back-to-back championships; he also coached the 92 dream team to the gold medal. Then just a few days later on the 15th, Wayman Tisdale died at the age of 44 after battling cancer for 2 years. He played for the Indiana Pacers, Sacramento Kings and the Phoenix Suns. He is survived by his wife and 4 children.

As stated last month, the contests are now in playoff mode. The current standings are:

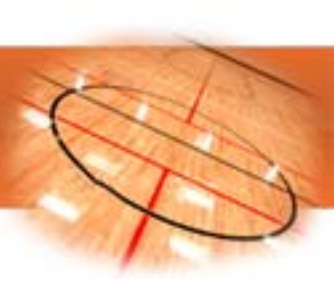
Pick 'Em (as of 5/21):

Playoff Qualifiers and Standings.

JesRey- 51
 dwighthoward- 50
 Showdown- 50
 Hoopsman- 49
 adam334551- 48
 kobe080- 47
 underdawg- 47
 key2win- 46

Idiot83- 43
 jdlee123-42
 nbafan123- 42
 allstar- 41
 PPPanthersGM- 41
 trevor121- 40
 bgggg2001- 38
 RenegadeLongorn- 33

Eliminated
 garnett_21- 27
 Christianfriend- 0
 mrnyceguy168- 0
 joe_johnson_hawks- 0



Top Performers (as of 5/20):

Playoff Standings

key2win ~ 40

allstar ~ 40

kobe080 ~ 39

gladdyontherise ~ 37

underdawg ~ 36

Showdown ~ 36

JesRey ~ 36

PPPanthersGM ~ 31

garnett_21 ~ 14 eliminated

joe johnson hawks ~ 0 eliminated

Winners for Theme Weeks so far, as of 4/24, are:

Week 1: lc_chatser, bob9826

Week 2: BRoy#7

Week 3: TeamADG

Week 4: jeebus86

Week 5: XxViSiOnxX

Week 6: whalechaser

Week 7: nbacardDOTnet

Week 8: BRoy#7

Week 9: Verse1

Week 10: VintageHeros

Week 11: drtom2005, MatthewLee

We would also like to congratulate and thank all the participants for making these contests fun and exciting for all!

Basketball Theme Weeks are still going strong! We have had 12 full weeks of entries thus far, and every week has been fun with a lot of participants except one week. That was week 10 in which the player had to be pictured wearing the number 38 we only had two entries.

Basketball Chat Night takes place every Thursday night from 8 PM EDT until 10 PM EDT in Live Chat. It has been fairly successful so far, but we have not been able to surpass 20 members at one time yet. We have had 19 members in chat multiple times, but 20 seems to elude us. Be sure to stop by each week for live trading, NBA chat, and contests for CC and sometimes cards!

As always, we appreciate that you are taking the time to read this article! If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about anything in this article, please do not hesitate to PM garnett_21 or trevorp121. Again, thank you for taking some time to read this.



Once again this month, we didn't have too many entries to pick from to show off in our monthly Basketball Showcase, but that doesn't mean the cards weren't nice! If you would like to show off your card, and possibly be featured in this magazine, stop by the Basketball Show and Tell forum and look for the "Basketball Showcase" thread!

Card: 2008-09 Press Pass Legends OJ Mayo Select Auto
 Member: #15Vince Carter
 Pulled From: 1 box of 2008 Press Pass Legends



Card: 2008-09 UD Black LeBron James Auto 16/23
 Member: BlackMambaExq
 Pulled From: 1 box of 08-09 UD Black



Card: 08/09 UD black JaVale McGee RC Signed Patch
 Piece (Star Logo) #1/1
 Member: BlackMambaExq
 Pulled From: 1 box of 08-09 UD Black





Featured Collection
By Trevor Picone aka trevorp121

This month, for our Basketball Collection of the Month, we are showcasing JP Lakers Fan's Los Angeles Lakers collection! Here it is in his own words:



The thing that first got me involved in the hobby was when I subscribed to a French basketball magazine called "Mondial Basket" in the early 90s. As a gift they sent me an Upper Deck mini box of cards. At first, I thought it was cool but just kept them without looking for more cards. When I first travelled to the USA for a vacation in 1993 is when I really started to fall in love with the hobby. At this time there were plenty of card shops everywhere in Florida.



The main reason I decided to collect the Lakers was because they are my favorite team. I have loved their offensive style since I first started to follow the NBA in the mid-80s SHOW-TIME baby!!!! I have 475 different James Worthy Cards, 1434 Kobe Bryant Cards, and 90 Michael Cooper Cards. I am not sure how many Magic or other Lakers but I know there is a bunch.



If I had to choose one player that I collect the most it would be James Worthy. Simply because he was my favorite player from the 80s' Lakers team and also because it's easier to try to obtain every card from a player who has 550 cards produced than a player like Kobe Bryant. Kobe Bryant is my favorite player from today's NBA, but he has a checklist of over 5,000 different cards.



Once I bought my house I devoted a room to my collection. I had a lot of cards before my house. However I have added a lot of the memorabilia. I have been building my collection for more than 15 years, I feel it was harder living in France but since 2000 it has gotten easier as it is possible to look on the Internet for items. Right now I am a very big fan of 1/1s so those are probably my favorite items, although it is hard to pick only a few items as my favorites.



SCF On Ice

By Scott Kozlowski aka scottkoz20

Even though the Hockey season is heading towards a conclusion with the awarding of the Stanley Cup, Calder Cup and the Memorial Cup but on SCF, the 2009-10 season is getting ready to start.

The Hockey Staff has been working overtime to get contests ready for the 2009-10 Race for the Quad Contest. There will be a series of 10 contests to award the fabulous prize.

The list of contest include:

- 2009 NHL Draft Predictor (mid-June)
- 2009 Free Agency Contest (End of June)
- SCF's Bingo Special (Throughout the year)
- Scavenger Hunt (Throughout the year)
- Preseason Contest (September)
- Regular Season Pool Contest (Start of the NHL season: October)
- Pick to Win league (Start of the season: October)
- Show and Tell contest (Start of the season: October)
- Olympic Tournament (January)
- Playoffs Pool (April)

Note: This list is subject to change

For each contest, the winner will not only win prizes for that contest, they will be awarded points that will go towards winning the Quad! The member with the most points after all 2009-10 Hockey Team contests will be declared the winner of the Gretzky/Howe/Orr/Lemieux Quad Autograph, numbered to 3!

2008-09 Show and Tell Final Update

The 2008-09 Show and Tell contest has concluded. We have seen some fantastic cards this season. The winner of winners was guy3050 and for this was awarded a 2005-06 Bee Hive Signature Scrapbook Autograph of Tony Esposito.

Guy won four times during the contest. His most recent win was the final week of the contest with the caption on the right.



He also won Week 13: Best multi player autographed card, Week 14: Best multi player patch card and Week 20: Best Calder Winning player card (any card of a player who has won the Calder trophy in their career).



The Show and Tell contest will be back for the 2009-10 season and will be a part of the Race for the Quad series of contests. So get your cards ready now!

BAP Case Break Report

On May 22, the Hockey Team conducted a 15 box case break of 2008-09 Be A Player Signatures. This break is being conducted as a draft break and the 1st card drafted by member ic1usn was a Sidney Crosby Autograph.

Some of the other hits included a Triple Autograph, numbered to 35 of Eric Staal, Ray Whitney and Rod Brind'Amour from the Carolina Hurricanes. Some of hottest 2008-09 Rookies were also pulled during the break. These were two Zack Bogosian Rookies, the first was numbered to 99, and the other was numbered to 10. Additionally Drew Doughty, Simeon Varlamov, Cory Schneider, Blake Wheeler and Nathan Gerbe rookie cards, all numbered to 99 were pulled.

This is a list of what our participating members selected as their 1st choice:

1. ic1usn: Sidney Crosby Auto
2. qwas: Cory Schneider RC #53/99
3. bgggg2001: Simeon Varlamov RC #48/99
4. jshopay: Eric Staal, Ray Whitney, Rod Brind'Amour Triple Auto#23/35
5. zunato: Zach Bogosian RC #10/10
6. DamonX: Ales Hemsy #2/15
7. zunato: Marc-Andre Fleury/Evgeni Malkin
8. bizz: Drew Doughty RC #71/99
9. cssports: Blake Wheeler RC #76/99
10. 07mears07: Marian Hossa #4/15 Players Club Auto
11. G0SHARKSG0: Brad Lukowich #4/15 Players Club Auto
12. CARDINALFAN13: Patrik Berglund/T.J. Oshie
13. georgerodrigues: Zach Bogosian RC #23/99
14. duwal: Joe Sakic Auto
15. robbiezyg: Brian Campbell #14/15 Players Club Auto



Upcoming Case Breaks

At the end of May, the Hockey Team will be conducting another case break. This will be for 2008-09 OPC Premier. Also with the summer on the horizon, the release of 2008-09 The Cup is fast approaching. The Hockey Team is in the planning stages for a possible Case Break of extremely High-End product. If you have a suggestion, please feel free to contact a member of the Hockey Staff to share your thoughts.



Financial Standpoint: Which Team to Collect in Hockey

By Kevin Lee aka gosens151911



There are many team collectors out there, and it is definitely a great choice to collect the cards of your favourite team. Nevertheless, there are definitely many financial factors that come into play when collecting a team. All of them will have an impact on how much you will have to pay to collect your team and how easy it will be to sell your collection if you ever decide to.

One major factor is location. If you live near the city of the team you collect you will usually have to pay a premium on your team's cards at card shows and in stores. Therefore, unless you only shop online, expect to pay more to collect your local team. Additionally if you decide to sell your collection, expect a loss, as the only route you have to sell is usually online where you cannot put a premium on location.

Another aspect to look at is the players that are on the team. Certain teams will be expensive and hard to collect due to their stars such as Pittsburgh (Malkin/Crosby) or Chicago (Toews/Kane). This is because of the player collectors who will also be chasing these star players and thus increasing the demand. Nevertheless, if you do decide to collect a team with major stars, it will be fairly easy to sell the star cards. Selling the lesser-known players may be more difficult unless you can find a player or team collector who needs them.

The most important factor though is the team itself. Smaller American market teams are extremely hard to sell (although much cheaper to collect). These are teams such as Florida and Nashville, who have very few team collectors and no major super stars. Likewise, the larger Canadian market teams are extremely easy to sell (and usually a bit more expensive to collect). We're talking Montreal and Toronto who have a huge following of collectors, which has led to their own products being released by In The Game and Upper Deck.

It is equally important to note that if a team improves the demand for that team's cards will usually go up, so investing in a building team can sometimes be a good idea financially. An example of this is Washington, once a failing franchise, they have quickly improved in the last few years. Demand for the stars such Ovechkin and Green have gone up, and a new star may be rising in the goaltender Varlamov. Collecting a rising team is usually fairly cheap, and its value will only go up if they do indeed improve. Another factor is the Stanley Cup. If a team wins it, the value for many of their players will go up (i.e. Zetterberg after the 2007-08 Stanley Cup Finals).



My top 5 suggestions from a financial standpoint:



1- **Montreal Canadiens:** No doubt this is the best team to collect, with the largest following of collectors. Most of the current players are fairly cheap to collect, while the Hall of Famers can run into the thousands for those with the money. Nevertheless, selling any cards from this team should prove to be quite easy.

2- **Toronto Maple Leafs:** Even when they were in the bottom of the standings, collectors still went after Leaf cards. Just like with the Canadiens, the majority of the current players are cheap to collect with the Hall of Famers costing much more for those with the cash. Also with a new general manager, expect the Leafs to get better and demand to only increase for this historical team.



3- **Chicago Blackhawks:** Although not the biggest team to collect right now, they have a very young core of players, so expect this team to improve. With stars such as Toews and Kane, and a talented supporting cast with the likes of Campbell, Havlat, Sharp, and Seabrook, there is plenty of talent. If this team does indeed get better, expect the demand to go up for many of these players thus improving their value.

4- **Pittsburgh Penguins:** This team has Crosby, which already guarantees them a large following of collectors. On top of this they also have the star Malkin, thus making them a very talented team. With an improving goaltender in Fleury and back-to-back Eastern Conference Finals (and possibly Stanley Cup Finals), this team is a cup contender. If they do end up winning it, many of the players' cards will likely increase a fair amount in value. However, it should be noted that this is one of the most expensive teams to collect due to their two stars in Crosby and Malkin.



5- **NY Islanders:** Not the most popular team right now, meaning they are quite cheap to collect. However, holding the first round draft pick this year easily moves them into the rising team category. With two very talented rookies in Bailey and Okposo, and (possibly) a first overall prospect coming in, the future looks bright for the value of this team's cards.



Successes Galore

By Mike Green aka Indyreds

I love to get autographs in the mail. It is always thrilling to see your SASE come back and then get the thrill of opening it to see what is inside. Some folks will chase one sport or one team. I collect all sorts of athletes and even a few celebrities from other fields as well. I wanted to highlight a few of the great signers that I have gotten back this year. Sending to known signers always increases your chances of obtaining an autograph.

It is baseball season and I always send out to more baseball players than any other sport. The number of current players who sign is amazing, but baseball is about history. We should look at the legends that sign. The gentleman who stands alone on the all time hit list is currently signing his mail. Mr. Pete Rose has sent back two autographed cards this year for me. He might be my favorite baseball return this season, but not the only baseball legend to have been so kind. Hall of Fame members Sparky Anderson, Duke Snider, Bobby Doerr, Stan Musial and Al Kaline have all signed items for me in the last six months. Other notable signers would include Andre Dawson, Bobby Richardson, Bobby Thompson, Mike Mussina, Garrett Anderson, Whitey Herzog, Mike Scott and Tony LaRussa.

Football has some wonderful signers as well. I had gotten a number of players back last season and can not wait to get letters out again to players this year. My best current football player return from last season was Frank Gore. I had seen a few successes and had to give him a shot. Less than a month after I sent Mr. Gore a request I had received my autographed card back in the mail. Larry Johnson, Lee Evans, Jake Delhome, Donovan McNabb and Charles Woodson are a few of the other active stars that signed last season for me. Many of the games former stars sign as well. Raymond Berry, Lawrence Taylor, Steve Largent, Ozzie Newsome, Bob Lilly, Jeff George and George Blanda are all very reliable signers.

I do not attempt very many active basketball players. Jason Kidd and Kevin Martin were by far the best of the current NBA guys that I had recent luck with. Stars like Pau Gasol, Carmelo Anthony and Dirk Nowitzki popped up on the basketball success area on Sportscardforum, but I did not attempt a request to them. I was more interested with the stars from the past. Nate Archibald, Gail Goodrich, Oscar Robinson, Joe Dumars, Lenny Wilkens and Robert Parrish all added their autographs to my collection through mail requests in the last few months. College basketball has always held my interests better than the NBA. I was able to obtain many college basketball coaches autographs through email requests last season. Coach K, Jim Boeheim, Bobby Cremins, James Dixon, and Bruce Pearl are just a few of those coaches who sent me autographed photos after I requested them with via email.

Racing requests have worked out well for me over the years. I have only sent out a few recently and those were to Mario Andretti and Danica Patrick. Both requests netted me some nice additions to my autograph collection. Many years ago I had sent a request for each driver to the Indianapolis Speedway during the NASCAR Brickyard week. I was shocked on how quickly and how many of



the drivers responded by returning my cards autographed. Only the biggest names like Jeff Gordon and Dale Earnhart did take a while to respond. Yes, even these two huge stars sent back autographs. That Dale Sr. autograph is one of the key items in my collection.

Olympic athletes seem to sign very well. Mary Lou Retton, Shannon Miller, Nadia, Bonnie Blair, Bruce Jenner, Scott Hamilton, Heather Mitts, Carl Lewis, Jennie Finch and many more have all signed items for me. I confess that every time the Olympics rolls around I become hooked and it is great to get these athletes autographs, but they seem forgotten in years without the Olympic games. I am unsure why we are all thrilled to see swimming, track, skating, softball and gymnastics only during the Olympics games. It does allow a very nice window for autograph collectors to send out requests.

Celebrities have also found their way into my collection. Mary Tyler Moore is one of the last actresses to be added to my collection. Ron White and Lisa Lampanelli are both great comedians who have signed photos for my collection. Robert Dole has even found a home in my 8x10 autograph album! You never know just who will be the next addition to this collection.

I hope that you take a few moments to drop by the success sections on sportscardforum and see who all the members are getting back. You just might see someone that you would like to mail to. I will admit that I never thought my collection would have grown to where it has. Who can really pass on these free autographs from stars? I know that I cannot; besides it is nice to get more than bills in the mailbox!





Motivated Collecting

By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

I was chatting to a fellow staff member yesterday and he expressed some concern about the weird turn the hobby is taking. Puzzled, I asked; “What do you mean a weird turn?” He then proceeded to tell me how he found it strange that so many people are solely chasing after the high priced rookies. Thinking about it, I have to agree with him. He collects football whilst I focus on hockey but in both instances, there is an incredible amount of rookie chasers. Furthermore, there seems to be even more people who do not chase anything but money...

Why? Well, it appears that less and less people are collecting for the love of either it or their personal collection player. Think about it, how many times do you see break threads and read the dreaded: “For Sale Only”? More and more people seem to be breaking product only to sell the cards on and get more funds. Whatever happened to collecting just to collect? For me, doing a box break means a lot of trading as once I have my new cards I start thinking about who collects which players and who could potentially need this Osgood short printed autograph I just got. Others pull a short printed autographed card of a star and immediately think about the money. The immediate reaction seems to be: “How much dough can I get for this?” Yes, it’s nice to make some money but isn’t it also nice to get a great pull and send it on to someone you know will really appreciate it and keep it in their personal collection? I once pulled an autographed UD Black Game Night Ticket of Gordie Howe numbered to 10 and it didn’t even occur to me that I should sell it. I thought, who collects Hall of Famers autographs? And I took it from there. I traded it to someone who was absolutely chuffed with it. Yes I traded down and got three cards for my one card but does that matter? The three cards I got were straight PC material so what more could I have been asking for?

I find it amazing the good stuff I can get when I am trading away some of the darlings of the hobby. The funny thing is, the people I trade that to won’t even keep them, they cannot wait to sell them on for yet more money. I suppose it all depends of what you are looking for from a hobby. Personally, I like making money when I am working or selling stuff I do not need anymore on eBay but when it comes to my card addiction, the very thought of turning it into a solely monetary venture seems sacrilegious.

Yes, we are all different but sometimes I wonder how we can all be so extremely different. It seems like every day now there are new threads in which people boast about their amazing pulls and then proceed to field trade offers only to end up selling the card. In some instances, even if you offer them a true 1/1 of one of the players they supposedly collect, it’s still not enough to work out a trade. How can someone say they are collecting a player and then turn down a unique card of the said player? It truly baffles me.

Of course, each to their own but I find the latest trends in “collecting” worrying...Are we on a path of self-destruction of the hobby? Is the greed catching up to us and making us desire exclusively what the world seems to be revolving around? Are we all more interested in looking at our bank balance than our card displays? I sincerely hope not. I am aware that many are having financial difficulties these days, in fact my own situation isn’t exactly brilliant but to me, the hobby is a way of escaping the reality of this economic crisis.



A Father and Son Collecting Together By Don White aka Doniceage

I routinely go to the Lexington Armory Monthly Card Show in Lexington, Kentucky. Last year at the first table I did a double take. Both a father and son appeared to have their own cards. One doesn't see many kids, compared with adults, attending shows and involved with the hobby of collecting and selling sports cards.

As you all know, adults fuel the hobby due to the high prices of collectible cards. I observed, this wasn't just a father and son collecting, but they were setting up for a 2-day card show. I questioned, how many fathers and sons spend 2 days together, and how many teenagers want to be with their father rather than with friends over the weekend? My admiration grew for this father and son. You could see they truly enjoyed spending time together. I feel their experience will be moments in their lives they will both cherish.

I wondered how long their hobby and being together would continue. After about six months I finally asked if they would mind if I did a short story about them and how their hobby evolved. Here is a picture of Loyall Owens and his son Ryan at the card show.



1) Who collected cards first?

Loyall stated he first started collecting cards as a kid in 1973 and continued to collect mostly baseball cards on and off until 1992. His son Ryan was born in 1997 and 8 years later he became interested in sports cards. In 2005, that rekindled the magic of cards. Since 2005 both have started collecting, buying, selling, and trading.



2) What do you like about the hobby and what do you both collect?

Loyall indicated his son's favorite part of the hobby is definitely opening packs, hoping for the big hit. Ryan's collecting focus consists of single players like Devin Thomas, David Price, and former University of Kentucky players.

While his own collecting consists mostly on University of Kentucky players, as well as autographs of old school Hall of Fame players and celebrities.

3) How did you come to set up at your first show at the Armory?

In August 2008, we decided to set up to sell, trade, and meet fellow collectors. We had so much fun that we haven't missed a show since.

4) A hobby or a business?

Loyall said, Ryan is very knowledgeable pricing all type of cards. Stated that he trusts him to make good decisions when selling, buying, or trading. For the most part Ryan quickly spends any money he makes selling cards on unopened boxes or packs. His father just wants him to have fun and enjoy the hobby and not worry so much about doing this as a business or career.

5) How did you get your son involved in sports card collecting?

Loyall: I didn't actually get him interested in collecting. Ryan has played baseball since he was 5 years old at Southeastern Cal Ripken in Lexington KY. Ever since he was 6 and playing t-ball there usually was a vendor set up at the ballpark on Saturdays selling baseball cards and packs. Ryan was always interested in buying stuff from him. This was what really got him interested in the hobby. Once he got into it my desire grew to get out my old cards and restart my collection. That is how he got me back to collecting after many years not pursuing my hobby.

6) Ryan what was your most significant moment in the hobby?

My most significant moment in the hobby is when I was new to the hobby. I pulled a 2006 Upper Deck quad patch auto of Byron Leftwich numbered to 10. I guess it was my first big pull out of a pack.

7) Do you get your friends into collecting like you did your dad?



I don't really get my friends into collecting. I do have one friend that collects cards, but that is it. So, it is usually just my Dad and myself.

8) What do you feel is the biggest drawback in getting kids involved with sports card collecting?

Excitement and the lack of it. You have to be very knowledgeable of sports and study the players. Most kids want to play computer games and get instant results, not spend time reading, sorting, etc.

9) Where do you see the hobby of collecting cards in another 5 years? 10 years?

In 5 years, I see the hobby being more expensive than ever. Same in 10 years, it is as simple as that (an expensive hobby).

NOTE: After talking to both, Loyall and Ryan, for a few months they came to the site (Sportscardforum). I think they have truly enjoyed their time here. Ryan is now a very active member while his dad takes a look-see once in a while.





How to Make Collecting a Green Hobby **By Daniel Poor aka Stl_Cardinals_Fan**

Even with all the talk about “going green” or being “eco-friendly” that ideal can be lost on collectors. Has anyone given thought to how “un-green” (to make up a word) sports cards can be? Purchase a case and think about the following: the case comes shrink-wrapped on a pallet with other cases. One’s case is in a cardboard box. Inside that cardboard box are 12 or so smaller cardboard boxes each of which is shrink-wrapped again in plastic. Inside those boxes are 20-30 packs, each a foil/Mylar pack. Then think about how one will likely put most of the cards in plastic penny sleeves or top loaders, further adding to the problem. While this may make collecting out to be a terribly wasteful hobby, rest assured there are some ways the collector can help the environment and still partake in your favorite hobby.

Using the three Rs of Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, we’ll start collectors on their way to becoming “green”. First we’ll start with reducing. Starting with simply reduce the number of trips one makes to the post office. No, I’m not telling collectors to become less active. Simply select one or two days and make those the “go to the post office” days. Not only will this cutback save one’s time, but it will also save money on gas, as well as helping the environment as one won’t be putting near the amount of exhaust into the air as before.

One can also reduce the amount of “frills” used in one’s packaging. Instead of packing a plethora of packing peanuts into that box or bubble mailer, only use a small amount. Instead of labels, just write the addresses on; unless your handwriting is terrible this is a great tip. Instead of coating the mailers in tape, use only a little piece on the seal to help prevent unexpected opening and tampering. Instead of printing invoices, use a smaller piece of paper, a sticky note for example, and write the transaction information on there.

Now that we’ve reduced, let’s move on to reusing. This one is self-explanatory, though oftentimes overlooked. Rather than ripping open a bubble mailer, use scissors and cut them open so that they can be reused later. Save top loaders, penny sleeves, dummy cards, and other supplies that are received and reuse them in your own mailings. Save the weekend paper and use it to pack boxes tight, or to make bubble mailers more secure. Reusing supplies can also help you reduce trips to the office supply store, card shop, and other places that would ordinarily be stopped at.

Finally, one can also recycle. This is the biggest and most frequently used tip in helping people become eco-friendly. Instead of throwing away the cardboard boxes, pack wrappers, newspaper packaging, packing peanuts, and whatever else is normally pitched into the wastebasket around one’s house, start a recycling box to take to one’s local recycling centre. By recycling one can reduce trash and pollution that ends up in a landfill. Also by recycling one is helping to ensure that what one is recycling gets reused again.

So as one can see, there are many ways we can go green in the collecting hobby. Whether it’s from cutting down on trips to the post office, reusing those ugly white cardboard dummy cards, or recycling old newspaper one gets in a trade envelope, there are a myriad of ways that can be employed to help make the collecting hobby a green one.