

SCF'S COLLECTORS CORNER

DECEMBER 2009

The Christmas Issue!

Inside:

- Product Review
- Gift Suggestions
- And more...



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- 5 Short Print Cards
- 5 TRISTAR Update Cards

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26 HITS PER BOX GUARANTEED!

www.7015.COM/PROSPECTS/p/09.html

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Have a Merry Hobby Christmas **By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888**

Well, another year is almost in the books all! Believe it or not, another 12 months has gone by just like that. It has been a good year on SCF with plenty of new members and loads of exciting new partnerships and contests.

Here's to hoping that every single SCF member has an amazing Christmas with all the presents they've put on their wish list. If you are thinking about doing a bit of hobby related shopping check out our suggestions on pages 50-52, hopefully something will tickle your fancy there! In what is widely known as the season for giving it is very refreshing to see so many secret Santa initiative all around the boards, I'm happy to be part of such a close knit community and I sure hope everyone is pleased with their gift.

In this issue, you will see a lot of reviews as there has been numerous new releases lately. We had plan to run the Q & A with ITG but unfortunately there has been a delay in getting a reply from them, I'm still hoping to get this for the next issue. Speaking of the next issue, please note that it will be out on the 1st February 2010. We are taking a break for the holiday period to allow all of our contributors to enjoy the festive period with their family without feeling the pressure of any deadlines.

If you have suggestions about what you would like to see in the next issue of this magazine, please feel free to send me a private message, I am always looking for new ideas!

That's it for now folks, have a merry Christmas and a very happy New Year!





4600 Miles of Joy and Dreams (and Back)
By Tomi Hanka aka Vonkale



In early 90s I became a Marty Brodeur fan, that was even before he played his first NHL game. Back then, everyone was picking favorite teams and players. Most of the folks were cheering for Oilers, Kings and Jets here in Finland. Gretzky, Kurri, Tikkanen and Selanne later on... I wanted something different. The Devils had such a great name and logo. For a little kid, those were the most important factors. This Mickey Mouse organization as Wayne Gretzky once put it picked Marty and as a goalie fan he was the inevitable choice as my favorite player. It was then that I started collecting his cards as well. After his rookie season I decided, some day I'll go and watch him play live and there will be no TV between us then.

The 2003 Men's Ice Hockey World Championships were held in Finland. That year I kind of hoped that the Devils would be out-played quickly and I might have a chance to see Marty play for Canada in my home country. Well, it ended up being a great season for him and his Devils. I enjoyed watching the playoff run. In a way, I was happy he didn't get to play here.

Finally, after almost 20 years the day finally came...

Last spring I had a chat with my two friends and a beer bottle, we decided to set a date and fly over to see him in action. With the clock ticking toward his retirement, it was time to do something. My friends are no hardcore NHL fans, they just enjoy the game in general. No matter who plays and where. As a father of a little girl it took some arrangements to be able leave so far away and I needed to save some money. Here's a summary of our trip.

Our adventure started Monday 26th OCT 03:00 AM. Short one hour drive to Helsinki International airport. We had stand by tickets to every flight.

First leg was easy. We were told right away that there are seats for us available. So in two hours we were at Frankfurt Germany. There were two options for the next flight. To Philly with US Airways or Newark with Lufthansa. Ended up on board to Philadelphia. When they announced our names at the gate I already felt I was closer to Mr. Brodeur. The flight was 9hrs long and I had zero hours of sleep. Thanks to some one year old who had some issues...



Finally we were standing outside Philadelphia international airport waiting for a shuttle to take us to a car rental agency. We took a proper Dodge Charger and started driving up along the New Jersey turnpike. I was smiling nonstop and repeating in my mind "I'm actually here now". It felt great!

Two hour drive and we finally saw the lights of Newark airport. We had our hotel right beside it. We checked in, had something to eat and passed out. After one day of driving around and shopping it was THE GAMEDAY! It was raining like hell so we decided not to go to NYC that morning. Just hang around Jersey City and Newark.



Four hours before the game we were at the Devils Den and boy I was like a kid in a candy store. After spending most of my money we sat down at the bar across the street. Even beer tasted better from Devils jar.

The Devils played against the Sabres at Prudential Center Newark on this October 28th. Very nice visual in the arena. Pumpkins, costumes and music fitted the theme perfectly. We also got on live broadcast before the game at the Goal Bar. The pregame show crew saw our sign and got curi-

ous. That was nice.

It was a shame that the Yankees played their first world series game that same night. The arena was half empty and home team didn't get the support they deserved. Sabres played a solid road game and Miller and his pipes were the final obstacles for the Devils. The Devils didn't have any idea how to score on their power play but their defence wasn't shabby either. Marty made a few good stops but he wasn't spectacular like he usually is... Team in front of him was just that bad. Sabres didn't even have to pay the price in front of the net. No-one dropped the gloves either. But hey, I enjoyed it like a little kid. My heart stopped beating when Brodeur led his team on the ice. But I also felt kind of empty after the game. Wonder why? Maybe because this might had been the last time I see him play...live?



Coming out from a country which number one sport is hockey, I felt sorry about the fact that hockey has like zero attention in the States. They know the teams and maybe the brightest stars but that's about it. If only I lived in North America...The rest of our stay was spent walking around Manhattan. It was unreal to be in those famous places that I have seen only on movies. The Experience was overall excellent. People were extremely polite and transportation was simple and efficient. What we didn't see was NYC by night but maybe it's better that way? So, a total of over 9200 miles of travelling to get a glimpse of the BEST goalie ever to play the game of Hockey! It was worth doing it.



2009-2010 Artifacts Hockey Product Review

By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

Description

It would be fair to say that Artifacts has now become one of the staple hockey products of the Upper Deck's yearly release calendar. Now in its fifth year, the product is still going strong. Of course, its parallel heavy nature does not sit well with all collectors but every year, it still manages to be a best seller.

This year's incarnation of the base cards present a significantly busier design. While last year the player was fully depicted on a full brown background with the Artifacts pattern in the four corners, this year we notice the addition of pillars on each side of the base cards making it look like something out of the Roman Empire. Personally, I preferred last year's base cards but on the bright side of things, the good folks at Upper Deck have also reviewed the design of the much maligned "cartoony" frozen Artifacts game-used insert set. Thankfully, the new look insert set is a success in my view; no longer do the game-used look like a screen capture of a Manga TV show.

Box Details

Packs per box: 10

Cards per pack: 4

Base set: 100 cards

Stars: 15 cards

Legends: 35 cards

Rookies: 50 cards

Price: Between \$75.99 and \$94.99

Check out: [Upper Deck's Product Preview Information](#)

Parallel Print Run Guide

Silver: 75

Gold: 50

Silver Spectrum: 25

Gold Spectrum: 10

Black auto parallel: 5

Black non-auto parallel: 5

Game-Used Copper: 50

Game-Used Blue: 25

Game-Used Red: 5

Game-Used Black: 1

Game-Used Patch/Jersey: 35

Game-Used Patch/Jersey Blue: 25

Game-Used Patch/Jersey Red: 5

Game-Used Patch/Jersey Black: 1





Tundra Tandems Red: 50
 Tundra Tandems Silver: 25
 Tundra Tandems Gold: 1
 Tundra Tandems Patch: 35
 Tundra Tandems Red Patch: 15
 Tundra Tandems Silver Patch: 5
 Tundra Tandems Gold Patch: 1
 Tundra Trios Patch: 10

The Breaks

All of the cards below were pulled during our break, which consisted of 3 boxes.



Rookies: Tim Wallace, Jaime Sifers, Spencer Machacek, Joel Rechlicz, Chris Chuko, Riley Armstrong, Boston Redemption, Chicago Redemption and Wildcard Redemption

Parallels: Chris Drury Gold, Sidney Crosby Gold, Jarome Iginla Gold

Auto-facts: Mason Raymond, James Sheppard, Rostislav Klesla

Treasured Swatches: Nicklas Backstrom 129/199, Markus Naslund 14/50, Marty Turco 159/199



Frozen Artifacts: Brian Leetch 133/199, Luc Robitaille 126/199, Tony Esposito 3/35 Jersey/Patch parallel

Tundra Tandems: Doug Gilmour/Theoren Fleury 49/50, Henrik Zetterberg/Thomas Holmstrom 49/50

Tundra Trios: David Booth/Nathan Horton/Stephen Weiss 10/75

Comments

Artifacts is not a high-end product, therefore at this price point, you



cannot expect to get autographs of the big guns only, nor should you expect to get on-card autographs. Love it or hate it, the numerous parallel levels make for an interesting chase element. However, I would bet that people would appreciate these more if there were any significance to all those levels. For instance, we pulled one Treasured Swatches numbered to 50 and it had two white swatches. Surely something that has a lower print run should have better swatches? This criticism is mentioned about Artifacts every year and yet each new incarnation has the same flaw.

The results of our breaks did not blow us away but this is the gambling element of busting wax. We have seen much better boxes broken on SCF with great results such as a Luongo 1/1 Tag/Jersey to give an example. I firmly believe that the design of this year's version is a vast improvement over last year's especially when it comes to the Frozen Artifacts as mentioned earlier.

Final Ratings

Overall Design: 4.5/5

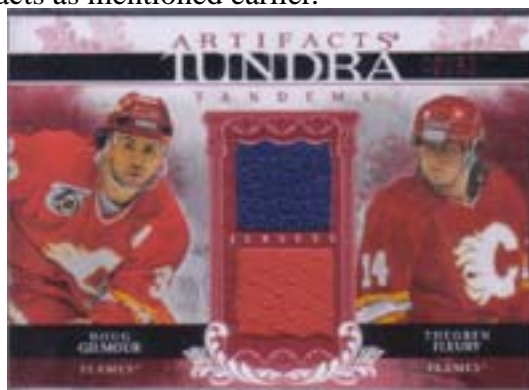
Value: 3.5/5

Fun: 4/5

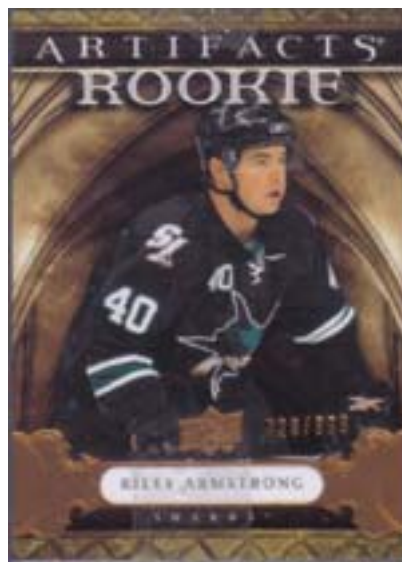
Rebuy: 3/5

Variety: 5/5

Final Grade: 80%



Overall this is not a bad product, there is plenty of diversity and all the hits make for a fun break with plenty of memorabilia to go around. However, Artifacts rarely holds much value, the parallel levels are less and less meaningful and this is usually reflected in the cards book value. If you are after a product which will be more valuable once open, you might be better off waiting for Upper Series 1 as the Young Guns normally make for great trade bait value wise but if you really like your memorabilia cards, Artifacts is still the product for you.





2009 Donruss Limited Football Product Review
By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

First and foremost, I'd like to thank our sponsors at Panini America for providing us with this box.

Box Details

1 pack per box
 7 cards per pack
 Current Retail Price: \$89.99 - \$99.99



Program Highlights

Autographed Material Phenoms Rookie Card Lineup Featuring: Mark Sanchez, Matthew Stafford, Knowshon Moreno, Michael Crabtree, Chris Wells, Jeremy Maclin, Pat White, Shonn Greene, Donald Brown, Josh Freeman, LeSean McCoy, Percy Harvin, Hakeem Nicks, Darrius Heyward-Bey, Brian Robiskie, Javon Ringer, Brandon Pettigrew, Kenny Britt, Mohamed Massaquoi, Glen Coffee

Legendary Materials Featuring: Walter Payton, Bart Starr, Bob Griese, Brett Favre, Dan Marino, Doak Walker, Emmitt Smith, Jerry Rice, Jim Brown, Joe Montana, Joe Namath, John Elway, Lance Alworth, Sammy Baugh, Barry Sanders, Roger Staubach, Troy Aikman

Autographed Limited Slideshow Cards Featuring the 2009 Rookies: Mark Sanchez, Matthew Stafford, Knowshon Moreno, Michael Crabtree, Chris Wells, Jeremy Maclin, Pat White, Shonn Greene, Donald Brown, Josh Freeman, LeSean McCoy, Percy Harvin, Hakeem Nicks, Darrius Heyward-Bey, Brian Robiskie, Javon Ringer, Brandon Pettigrew, Kenny Britt, Mohamed Massaquoi, Glen Coffee

Pro Bowl Lettermen Featuring: Kurt Warner, Eli Manning, Larry Fitzgerald, Drew Brees, Adrian Peterson, Peyton Manning, Andre Johnson and Reggie Wayne

Autographed Limited Lettermen Cards Featuring the 2009 rookies: Mark Sanchez, Matthew Stafford, Knowshon Moreno, Michael Crabtree, Chris Wells, Jeremy Maclin, Pat White, Shonn Greene, Donald Brown, Josh Freeman, LeSean McCoy, Percy Harvin, Hakeem Nicks, Darrius Heyward-Bey, Brian Robiskie, Javon Ringer, Brandon Pettigrew, Kenny Britt, Mohamed Massaquoi, Glen Coffee



What we Pulled

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2YnsI5NoCU>

Base /399 (2) - Willis McGahee, Santonio Holmes

Legends /399 (1) - Troy Aikman

Spotlight /10 (1) - Brian Hartline



Brooks Foster Autograph /399
 Ricky Williams 2-color Patch /50
 Prime Pairings Billy Howton/
 Bart Starr Dual Autograph /25

Final Ratings

Base Set - 3.5
 Overall Design - 3
 Fun - 4.25
 Value - 4.25
 Rebuy - 4
 Total - 19/25 (76%)



Donruss Limited has gone back to its original layout with one pack per box, instead of the 16-pack excursion. The base cards are numbered again, which gives credence to the "Limited" name. These cards are on a chrome foil board. There are 100 veterans, 50 legends, 50 rookies and 34 rookie relics that comprise the base set.

There are no inserts, but the Spotlight parallels are back. There are three levels (silver, gold and platinum) that are numbered no higher than 10. The Monikers series is here as well in two levels, gold and platinum.

On average, Limited will yield three relics or autographs. There are numerous sets of these contained in Limited that encompass veterans, legends and the rookie class. From Draft Day to the Pro Bowl and even the Super Bowl, you will find it here.

Donruss Limited is a decent release that is exciting with every box/pack that is opened. Though the base cards look a lot like last year's release, the Spotlight parallels make things quite interesting. Usually parallels start out with a higher number than 10, which makes things easier on player collectors. However, keeping all the cards at a low number makes them more valuable. The relic and autograph combinations are great. This will keep collectors coming back over and over again. While not ideal for casual collectors, the price point is good enough for most everyone to enjoy.

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Panini America for giving us the opportunity to open and review this release. For more information on all their products, be sure to check them out at www.paniniamerica.net.



Topps Triple Threads Baseball Product Review

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

First and foremost, I'd like to thank our sponsors at Topps for providing us with this box.

Box Details

2 packs per box

6 cards per pack

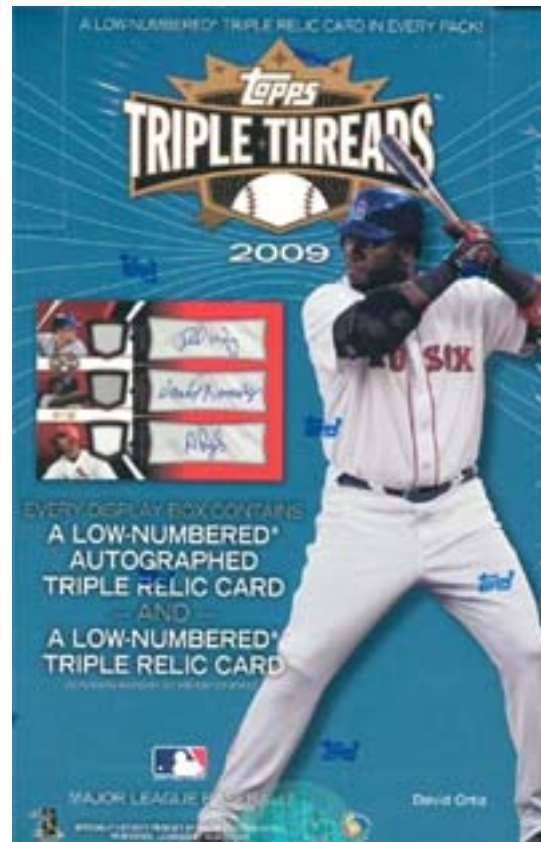
Current Retail Price: \$149.99 - \$164.99

Product Breakdown:

BASE SET - 100: Veterans & Legends - 100 MLB
greats #'d;

6 PARALLEL SETS...

AUTOGRAPH RELIC CARDS - 1 per Box!



What we Pulled



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gm39yt8SjhY>

Base /1350 (3) - Cy Young, Scott Kazmir, Ryne Sandberg

Sepia /525 (1) - Mike Schmidt

Green /240 (1) - Dan Haren



Rising Stars Dustin Pedroia Jersey/Bat/Jersey/Autograph /50



Final Ratings

Base Set - 4
 Overall Design - 3.5
 Fun - 3.5
 Value - 3
 Rebuy - 3
 Total - 17/25 (68%)

Triple Threads is back on the scene. Each pack yields 3 base cards with a print run of 1350. In addition, there are two parallels that are numbered as well. The cards feature the players on a color splash overlaid on a white background.

With no insert sets, the only other card in each pack is either a triple relic or a triple relic autograph on average. The relic windows are created to signify something about the subject such as an award or a feat in the player's career.

Triple Threads continues to be a huge feast or famine product. At it's price point, most collectors would be hard pressed to invest in it. Those who enjoy high risk, high reward products will enjoy Triple Threads. The base cards are delightful and made with sturdy stock, which you would expect from a high-end product. All the cards have a limited run which makes them appealing, but the price is a turn off.

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Topps for giving us the opportunity to open and review this release. For more information on all their products, be sure to check them out at www.topps.com.



2009 TriStar Prospect + Product Review

By Don White aka doniceage

Description

This product was just released on November 27th so I was more than happy to receive a box to review. At first glance I see that the packaging states 11 hits per box, with the claim of “four autographs, 2 crystal ballers, 2 parallels, 2 short prints, and 1 Obak update per box.

The cards are simple and aesthetically pleasing as they do not try to be anything they are not. I do enjoy the look of the Crystal Baller cards as I will explain d further below. Also, it is worth to note that Tri-star uses sticker autographs, this is not everyone’s favorite type of autograph. The one thing I like about theirs though is that unlike other companies they are see thru so at first glance you cannot truly even see the sticker. Only upon close inspection can you really see it. Of course some claim they like the hard signed cards but at this price level it’s not going to happen. There are also cut signatures inserted which I assume would be hard signed. This might give some collectors with a reservation about sticker auto to give the product a chance.

Box Details

Pack per box: 20

Cards per pack: Six

Base set: 100 cards

Price: \$70 to \$80 a box online

The release includes 100 base cards and autographs that can be found at this link: <http://www.tristarcards.com/>. Here is a quick shot of the what the various card will look like.

Base Cards:





Crystal Baller Cards



Autograph Cards



Obak Update Card (1 per hobby box)



Stephen Strasburg card



Parallel Cards:





Base Card Parallels are as follows:

GOLD (print run to 50)
GREEN (print run to 25)
RED (print run to 5)
PURPLE (print run to 1)

While the Autograph Parallels are as follows:

SILVER (print run to 199)
GOLD (print run to 50)
GREEN (print run to 25)
RED (print run to 5)
PURPLE (print run to 1)

With those different variations the boxes can yield some rare cards for player collectors who like to chase PC (personal collection) guys.

The Break from our Hobby Box on Youtube:

All of the cards below were pulled during our break and are a fair representation of what you could get if you decided to invest in a box.

Base Set: (99 out of a 100) with nine duplicates

Short Prints: We pulled two being Dustin Ackley and Donovan Tate

Crystal Ballers: We pulled three with one being a parallel card Tony Sanchez,

Kristopher Hobson, and Alex White gold parallel numbered to 50

Autographs: We pulled four autographs with three being silver Joshua Phegley, Manny Banuelos, Michael Minor numbered to 199 and Eric Arnett numbered to 50

Obak Update: We pulled one of Donovan Tate

Parallel Cards: We pulled Tony Sanchez numbered to 50 and the Crystal Baller of Alex White numbered to 50

Comments

With 120 cards per box including 11 hits and a base set of a 100 card, it means there is going to be some dupes. It was minimal however and this should allow any set builders to complete the set with one or two boxes at most. This showed good quality control by TriStar and great collation. The stated odds were 11 hits per box and they delivered perfectly even though I got worried towards the end of the break. If you watch the box break portion you will see me down to my last two packs



noting that we had only pulled two autographs. Each of the next two pack delivered an autograph to finally deliver the expected 11 hit per box. I have never been shorted on hits in any product by TriStar which is not something I can say for many card companies.

As far as our hits we did okay but nothing out of the ordinary as the best auto we had was of the number seven pick. There were no dual autographs or rare pulls numbered to five or one of one but how often do you actually get that? The break was fun and the excitement of having a chance to pull a Strasburg autograph will give everyone a thrill. Of course there are some other awesome hits with the one of ones, the dual to quad autographs and cut signatures of new and old players to name a few.

My one question is why is the Stephen Strasburg card a art card? The rest of the draft picks are not. This has been asked by other collectors and I will need to find out as I am truly curious as to why this is.

Final Ratings

Overall Design: 4/5

Value: 4/5

Fun: 4/5

Rebuy: 3.5/5

Variety: 4/5

Final Grade: 78%

While this was a fun break, as collectors we all know we want the big hit. However, that is part of the gamble that makes us all want to buy boxes. If you're a set builder this set will deliver, as you will get close to 100 percent of the set completed with minimal dupes. That means two boxes would guarantee you a full set with a long way into your second set and a nice shot at pulling some autographs and nice parallels of some of the top prospects from the first round. The base cards are also nicely designed and could be used for collectors who send cards through the mail or for in person autographs. I truly like the design of the Crystal Ballers as it puts the player inset into a crystal ball which ties into what being a prospect is all about (foresight of success). Wouldn't we all like to know who is going to be the stud or the dud for collecting purposes. Many collect rookies hoping to cash in on the success of the player they think might pan out... This is much like going to a fortune teller to have them tell us who is going to be good or not. Except in this case we make the predictions when we decide who to collect.

Once again, thanks to Jill Masters and the great folks at TriStar for providing this box for review. Check out the their site for any of their great products at <http://www.tristarcards.com/>. Also, we would like to thank them for also sending two boxes of retail exclusive which will be used for contests on SCF. So at least two of our members out there will get a Stephen Stratsburg card.



2009 SPGU Basketball Product Review
By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

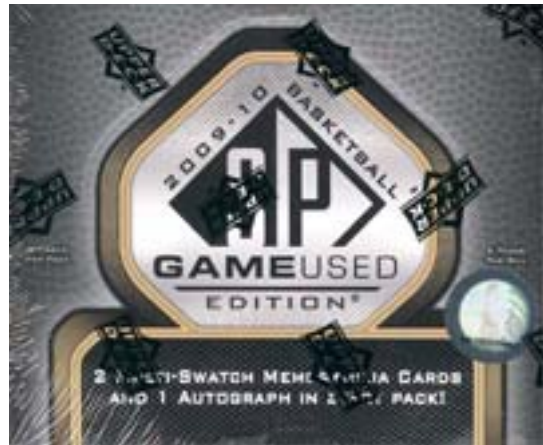
First and foremost, I'd like to thank our sponsors at Upper Deck for providing us with this box.

Box Details

6 packs per box
 5 cards per pack
 Current Retail Price: \$179.99 - \$199.99

Contents Highlights: (All content listed is an average based on the entire production run)

- Two (2) Multi-Swatch Memorabilia Cards In Every Pack!
- * Includes A Six And Eight Swatch Memorabilia Card In Every Box!
- One (1) Autograph In Every Pack!
- * Includes A Multi-Signed Autograph Card And One Autographed Memorabilia Card In Every Box!
- Look For Rare Dual And Quad Tag Team Cards Featuring Game Used Jock Tags!
- Every Memorabilia Card Is Foil Numbered!



What we Pulled

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRfSWqIB1FI>

Base (4) - Chris Paul, Devin Harris, Jermaine O'Neal, Mario Chalmers



Michael Jordan Legacy (2) - #626, #977



SIGNificance J.J. Hickson Autograph Redemption
 SIGNificance Luc Mbah A Moute Autograph



3 Star Swatches Kevin Durant/LeBron James/Kobe Bryant Jerseys /299
 3 Star Swatches Russell Westbrook/Kevin Durant/Jeff Green Jerseys /35
 Fabric Foursomes Chauncey Billups/Carmelo Anthony/Kenyon Martin/Nene Jerseys /50
 Four On Four Fabrics Juwan Howard (spelled Juwon on card)/Gerald Wallace/Boris Diaw/Sean May (front of card) - Mike James/Javaris Crittenton/Nick Young/JaVale McGee (back of card) Jerseys /99

Final Ratings

Base Set - 3
 Overall Design - 4.5
 Fun - 4.5
 Value - 4
 Rebuy - 4
 Total - 20/25 (80%)

SP Game Used strikes with a stunning base card design. Encapsulating the full body player photos is a background in which the player seems to be exploding out of the middle. The sides look like stainless steel with a ribbon detail running throughout the card. The only insert is the Michael Jordan Legacy program highlighting all the games in Jordan's illustrious career.

With a name like SP Game Used, one would think it is only about relics. But this is not the case as on average, packs will yield 2 relics and 1 autograph. The relics are in multiple fashion as the autographs are from the SIGNificance series. As mentioned in another assessment, the base cards are stellar. However, when they are the same cards from another release, they do lose their luster. While I understand the want to create two products, it would have been better just to combine the two and have one release. The difference here is the game used cards. SPGU features relics in multiple quantities. This allows for some great matchups of players on the same card.

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Upper Deck for giving us the opportunity to open and review this release. For more information on all their products, be sure to check them out at www.upperdeck.com.



2009 Press Pass Legends Product Review By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

First and foremost, I'd like to thank our sponsors at Press Pass for providing us with this box.

Box Details

3 miniboxes per master box

6 packs per minibox

5 cards per pack

Current Retail Price: \$124.99 - \$139.99

Content Highlights:

- Six Autographs Or Memorabilia Cards In Every 18-Pack Box!

- Racing Family Autographs - Family-Themed, Multi-Signed Autograph Cards!

- Multi-Swatch Race-Used Memorabilia Cards Including Racing Artifacts, Family Relics And Prominent Pieces!

- Legends Autographs Plus Racing Cuts And Racing Rivalries Autographs!

- Four Wide Signature Series - Debuting In Legends Racing! Look For The First Ever Richard Petty Four Wide!

- Expanded 70-Card Base Set That Pays Tribute To The Roots Of Racing!

- Plus Many More Exciting Cards!



2009 Press Pass Legends Racing brings together the most prominent families from NASCAR, Open Wheel, and Drag Racing. Look for family themed multi-signed autograph cards, multi-swatch race-used memorabilia cards and cut signature cards, including several combinations that have never been done before



What we Pulled

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84f-RAEBgvQ>

Base - 70/70 (100%)

Dupes - 2

Gold /399 (6) - Michael Andretti, Rob Moroso, Lee Petty, Matt Kenseth, Allison Family, Mears Family

Red /199 (3) - Michael Andretti, Harry Gant, Bobby Unser

Past & Present /550 (2) - Darrell Waltrip/Carl Edwards, Rusty Wallace/Carl Edwards

Family Portraits /550 (2) - Flock Family, Petty Family

Family Portraits Holo /99 (1) - Labonte Family



Al Unser Autograph
 Red Farmer Autograph
 Fred Lorenzen Gold Autograph /105



Family Relics Dale Earnhardt/Dale Earnhardt Jr. Dual Firesuits /25



Prominent Pieces Kyle Busch Firesuit/Sheet Metal/Glove /99

Racing Artifacts Alan Kulwicki Firesuit /25



Final Ratings

Base Set - 5
 Overall Design - 4
 Fun- 4.5
 Value - 4.5
 Rebuy - 4.5
 Total - 22.5/25 (90%)

One of the flagship products of the racing season is back with the arrival of Legends. This time around, there's a particular focus on racing families as seen on the mini box packaging. There is a 70-card base set. The first 38 cards are devoted to past drivers with the next 17 cards featuring current drivers including Ashley Force from the NHRA. 10 famous families of racing are on the next set of cards. Then there's a 4-card tribute to Richard Petty's Milestone 200th Career Win and it ends with a Dale Earnhardt checklist card.

There are multiple levels of parallels of all the base cards. On top of those, you will find two numbered insert sets. Past & Present highlights a past and current driver on the same card. Family Portraits is exactly what the name implies, a set of cards showcasing various racing families and some of its members. Though Legends has many exciting aspects, one of the biggest is the fact you get a relic and an autograph card in each mini box. With the family theme in full force, the possibilities of drivers matched up together is very exciting. Also, there are multiple piece relics and a collector's favorite, on-card autographs.






Legends is a collector friendly release. The opportunity to get a complete set of base card in each box is great. Not to mention that most of the cards are wonderful for in person or through the mail autographs. Not sure if it's a trend, but I noticed the red parallel cards seemed to appear in the same pack as the relic cards. Also, in previous years, each pack yielded a parallel or numbered insert, but that did not seem to be the case this year. However, in no way should that stop you if considering picking up a box or boxes of Legends as it will be money well spent.

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Press Pass for giving us the opportunity to open and review this release. For more information on all their products, be sure to check them out at www.presspassinc.com.



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.

December 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1	2	3	4  MVP Hockey
7	8	9  Press Pass Racing  Rookies and Stars Longevity	10	11
14	15  Black Diamond Hockey	16  Triple threads Football Tribute Baseball	17	18
21	22	23  Draft Picks and Prospects Baseball	24	25
28  Sterling Baseball	29  Ultimate Collection Football	30  Trilogy Hockey  Unique Football	31	



ITG ULTIMATE MEMORABILIA 9



FANTASTIC 1/1s! NOW AVAILABLE





Shriner's Auditorium Show - Wilmington Mass. - Nov. 7, 2009

By Jeff Woodward aka schwood

In early November, I attended the Shriners Auditorium card show in Wilmington, Mass. This show is run by the Greater Boston Sports Collectors Club (GBSSC). What a great show! There are close to 250 tables, and this show certainly does not disappoint. Starting last year, it is held twice a year now – once in November and once in the summer. Unfortunately, I missed the one in the summer.

As on typical day (at this show in particular), I start out by showing up early on Saturday, walk through the convention center and get a feel for what there is to offer. Usually I will head out to the restaurant and get some autographs. In the past I have gotten Dwight Evans, Jim Rice and Clay Buchholz (Can you tell this show is in the Boston area?). Then, I head back out and spend some money on my personal collection. And mixed in there will be getting trade bait for some of my favorite traders. Then my buddy and I will get a box to split, and I might get another one, and then we go bust our stuff. And the day is complete.

This year was a little bit different. I arrived at the show late, getting there around noon. So, right off the bat, I am behind by three hours, and there's not so much time to get situated at the show. I decide I am going right to the spending, skipping the autographs this year. There were good guests this year, but I just didn't have the time to spare. The lineup included Robin Yount, Pete Rose, Mike Schmidt, Robert Parish and many others.

As I walk into the convention center, it is set up the same as always: a split in the aisles across the whole center in front of me as I walk in, with four or five aisles on each side, with tables on both sides of the aisles. If you have never been to a show, this one is really overwhelming. The first time I came to this show, I had no idea what to do, and spent most of money in the first half hour. I didn't even get to see everything before I was out of cash.

Anyway, my plan this year was to walk the whole show and buy when I see something I really like. I had too much money with me this year – or so I thought. Anyway, the first area off to the left as I walk in has a lot of vintage stuff and also a lot of memorabilia. I am not a huge memorabilia collector and I have a lot of vintage stuff to keep me satisfied, and so I can bypass a lot of these areas. So I do just that. When I say memorabilia, I mean pictures, bats, balls, pennants – you pretty much name it, they have it here.



So, I move through the first aisle pretty quickly. I get to the second aisle. Now, let me preempt the rest of this by saying I collect Boston area stuff, and mostly cards – Game-used and autos and whatever else I can get my hands on. So, I see a guy with some Boston stuff up on those display racks. I take a quick look at it. He has some nice Bruins autos for five bucks a piece, which to me is a steal. If I go and buy these online, and I pay 3 bucks shipping



alone. So, I pick up a nice Adam Oates auto, a Pete Peeters auto, a Wayne Cashman auto, and a Ken Hodge auto for \$20. To me, it's an absolute steal. I then continue on.

I get to the next aisle, and see a guy with a huge amount of lower-end autos for about \$2 a piece. Here comes some trade bait! I usually find great deals spread across the show, and this guy has a ton. I think I bought \$50 worth of trade bait from this guy, some really great stuff. So, knock the trade bait off the list. I also found a couple of cool ex-Patriots and ex-Red Sox autos in there as well. Could not believe these were only two bucks a piece.



I move down two tables and see a couple of things I could really use. He has some Sweet Spot autos, Jon Papelbon and Jon Lester to be specific. I don't have these. I also see a couple of others that I could use for another trader whom I owe something. So, I pick up a Vladimir Guerrero and a Brooks Robinson, neither of which he has, I know. So, I knock that off the list as well. I also got a very nice Jerod Mayo auto and a Jon Lester Just Minors auto (which, unfortunately, I didn't realize I already had. Oh well. I can trade it.). This is sweet. I have been here a half hour, knocked two things off my list, and haven't spent a ton of cash yet.



I don't find much else I am interested in over the next half hour, so I continue on. I finish up with one half of the show. I meet up with my buddy, and he has picked up a couple of very nice cards. He is a Red Sox-only collector, so he doesn't always find as much as I do.

I continue on to the other half of the convention center. This place is really in the middle of an audito



rium with all of the bleachers pulled back, so it just seems huge. I find a few more things that I could use: a couple of lower-end Red Sox autos, a great Jerod Mayo auto, and one of my favorite pick ups of the day, my first Jason Bay auto in a Sox uniform.



Then I find a guy selling some nice vintage. Well, I am looking for a nice Willie Mays for a very good friend of mine. I have to buy the one this guy has. It is sweet. And I just hope my buddy Ed does not have it. Anyway, I pick it up. I found a couple of other things I could use for trade bait as well, but the prices the guys wanted for them was unreal, so I pass.

Last year, there was a table where all the guy had were letter patch autos. I am working on a complete alphabet of Boston sports letter autos, and I am looking for two in particular. I figure this guy must have them. Unfortunately after searching the whole place, the guy is not there.

But, overall, it's a good day so far. Now, the last thing my buddy and I do is always go and grab some boxes. I have done well already, and don't need any boxes, but the kid in me needs to break some wax. As a result, I way overbuy some stuff. But boy was I not disappointed. I buy a box each of Topps Triple Threads, Ticket to Stardom, '08 SPA, '09 SPA, '09 Sweet Spot and '08 Heroes. I don't want to get overly verbose here, so I'll just tell you, I pulled some awesome stuff out of these: a Felix Hernandez bat barrel auto, a Ken Griffey Jr. g/u auto, a Hunter Pence By The Letters, a Koji Uehara By The Letters, and tons of other g/u and autos. My pull of the day was a sweet Lou Gehrig g/u /9 from Topps Triple Threads. I am planning on selling it online though. I pulled a couple of decent Red Sox g/u out of these boxes as well.



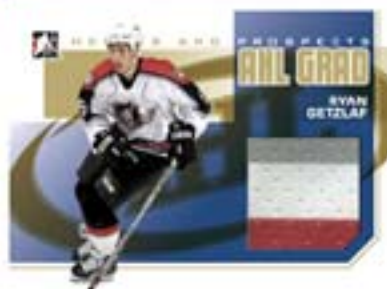
But, I have to say the pull of the day did not come out of one of my boxes. My buddy pulled a Teixeira g/u auto 1/1 out of TTT. Unfortunately for both of us, he plays for the Yankees, and we are Sox fans. But that card was sweet. He immediately put it online and it just sold the other day. And it pretty much



paid for his whole day at the show.

I had a great time at the show. This is really a great show, and if you are ever in the area definitely hit it up. You can find tons of great stuff there, always good trade bait, great Boston stuff, and good prices on boxes. And this year was the best year for good hits from the boxes I bought. I got a ton of PC stuff, some great stuff for some of my favorite traders, and I pulled a few very nice things out of the boxes I bought. So, I really can't complain.

COMING JANUARY 2010 ITG HEROES AND PROSPECTS





SCF Member Hits Grand Slam with 2007 SP Legendary Cuts
By Don Sturm aka stewart20rulz

I have spent the last twenty three years collecting, trading, buying and every now and then, selling baseball cards. Growing up in rural Southeast Missouri, I naturally collected any St. Louis Cardinals cards I could get my hands on. I've never really owned any high end cards until after I started collecting Alex Rodriguez cards and memorabilia in 1996. I watched him play in Seattle against the Orioles and Cal Ripken in 1996 when Eddie Murray was attempting to hit his 500th home run. Murray didn't reach his milestone that day, but I still had the pleasure of watching three of the greats of the game at that time (Ken Griffey Jr., Ripken, and Murray) and a new baseball star in Rodriguez. I continued to trade and collect as my military career led me to be stationed in Germany. While in Germany, I became a racing fan and started collecting Tony Stewart cards as well. It wasn't easy to find trading partners who'd ship overseas, but thanks to some great trading card websites, I managed to keep my hobby going. I have since continued to expand my Cardinal collection and my Alex Rodriguez collection now consists of just shy of 4,000 different cards and countless duplicates. Most of the cards in my personal collection have been obtained strictly through trading online over the years. I have to credit Sportscardforum.com for being my primary trading site the past two years.

If I had to describe my collecting habits overall, I guess I would be considered a low-end collector. Rarely do I buy any high end products and mostly purchase the basic and mid-end Topps, Upper Deck, Fleer, Press Pass, and Donruss products. I have rarely pulled any "major mojo", but over the years, I have pulled some decent mid-end cards worth over fifty dollars and every once in a blue moon will pull a great card worth over a hundred dollars. Those "major mojo" cards usually don't last long as they are usually traded immediately for an A-Rod or Cardinals card I don't have. "Although online trading and purchasing has substantially helped me enlarge my collection and has numerous benefits by allowing me to reach more traders and find lower prices, I don't feel that online shopping and trading can top the fun of going into a shop. I like visiting a local card shop and being able to sift through stacks and counters full of cards and getting the packs or cards I want right then and there without having to wait on Mr. Mailman. Since being stationed at Charleston AFB, SC in 2005, I've been able to enjoy the experience of hanging out at a brick and mortar sports card shop again. Hooked on Cards in North Charleston has filled a void for me that I've missed since I was stationed at Hurlburt Field in Florida. James and Dave provide great customer service there and a wide variety of products to fill just about anyone's hobby needs so I visit as much as I can when time and my budget allows.

I don't believe in destiny or karma, but after a long, rough day of work on the flight line at Charleston Air Force Base, I kept getting the urge to rip some packs and decided to stop at Hooked on Cards on the way home to see what I could find and maybe brighten my day up a bit. I had already blown my card budget and knew my wife probably wouldn't be too happy if I spent more money again, but I figured I could spend a little on a box or maybe some packs. I would deal with the repercussions later. When I walked in, I headed straight for the clearance rack at the front of the store. I noticed quite a few affordable boxes I liked to include 2008 Bowman Chrome, 2006 Flair Showcase, and



SP Legendary Cuts on the top shelf. Something kept drawing me to the box. Like I said, I don't believe in karma or destiny, but the box was calling out to me. I sat the Bowman Chrome box back on the shelf and grabbed the Legendary Cuts box. It cost twenty five dollars more than the Bowman Chrome, but again, I thought I'd deal with the repercussions of explaining to my wife about the money I spent afterwards. Besides, it was on sale and the only one on the shelf. Plus, I've never bought any boxes or packs of SP Legendary Cuts ever from any year and was excited to try something new.



After purchasing the box, I headed out to the car and felt like a kid who just got a new XBOX 360 and was getting ready to play it. As usual, I didn't leave the parking lot before cracking the seal on the box. My first five packs yielded a Jim Rice game used jersey card and base cards. As I opened and sorted thru the sixth pack, it blew my mind! After 23 years of collecting, I finally pulled a super hit, something that I could never imagine pulling in my entire life. I actually had to take a second look as I sifted thru the cards in the pack just to confirm what I just saw. In the middle of the pack was a Legendary Signature dual cut autographed card of Hall of Famers Max Carey and

Honus Wagner numbered one of one. I started shaking from the excitement and had butterflies in my stomach like you wouldn't believe.

I left the other opened and unopened packs in the car and headed back into the shop with the card to share my excitement with James, one of the owners who sold me the box. I was scared that the excessive shaking in my hands would cause me to drop the card so I immediately placed the card down on the counter and just stared at it. James provided me a thick hard card holder to protect it, thankfully. A few minutes later a few customers came in and of course I had to share my good fortune with them as well. It really started sinking in then as to what I had pulled as we briefly discussed what the value of the card could be. I personally was clueless on what a card of this magnitude could sell for.

After I calmed down and the shaking subsided some, it was finally time to leave the card shop and head home. I might have been able to head home sooner, but I really didn't think I could drive immediately after pulling that card. I couldn't feel my legs for a short time and was feeling weak. I finally made it home and did a little dance as I walked in the door. My wife was very curious as to what was wrong with me. I never dance after getting off work. Needless to say, after explaining my good luck to her, she wasn't so mad about me going over my budget by buying the box.

After showing the card and asking around on the SportsCardForum.com and TuffStuff.com message boards, I still don't have a firm value for the card, but have a better idea of what price range I could expect if I sold it. Currently, I have no plans to sell it anytime soon and might not ever sell it unless circumstances require me to. Besides, the odds of ever pulling another super hit one of one dual signature cut card like this one with the signatures of Honus Wagner and one of the greatest stolen base leaders of all-time in Max Carey would be substantially low, if not impossible. A piece of history like that just doesn't come around but once every 23 years if ever.



The Tale of a Carey Price Collector **By Richard McAdam aka RGM81**

I've been hanging on to this story for a couple of months now, as I wanted it to coincide with a major milestone in my collection. On November 9th I hit that milestone, winning an eBay auction for a 2009-10 Artifacts Tundra Trios Carey Price / Brian Gionta / Andrei Markov. It is the 200th card in my Carey Price PC. Here's the story of how it all came to be...

A little over four years ago, Trevor Timmins, head scout of the Montreal Canadiens, walked to the podium and used the 5th selection in the NHL Entry Draft to select a young goaltender from the Tri-City Americans. Like many Canadiens fans at the time, I loudly questioned why the choice was made to draft Carey Price. Today, I am considered his "#1 Fan" on his official website (CareyPrice.com) and own an impressive collection of his memorabilia. What a difference a couple years, a World Junior Championship MVP performance, a Calder Cup MVP performance, an amazing rookie season, and a glimpse into an amazing potential yet to be fully realized will make!

Those of you who follow the hockey section of SCF see my posts praising Carey, the show & tells of new arrivals, so there are frequent peeks into my collection but never really a full accounting for why I collect him and just how extensive the collection has become. I've never been much of one to brag, especially since I know that there are those out there with deeper pocketbooks that have (debatably) more impressive collections, but also because it's not in my nature. I just see myself as a dedicated fan that's been fortunate enough to pick up some cool items along the way, and that's good enough for me.

I've been a Canadiens fan all my life. I can remember watching games with my dad on Saturday nights, back when Hockey Night in Canada actually featured the Canadiens on a regular basis. When I was five years old, a rookie named Patrick Roy led the team to its 23rd Stanley Cup, and that was my introduction to the lore of the Montreal Canadiens goalie. I cried when I was eight and the team came up short in the Finals in 1989, but was on top of the world again in 1993. I was devastated when Roy was traded, and there never really has been a successor that came anywhere near his stature, popularity, or success. It seemed for a while that maybe Jose Theodore would be the heir to the legacy of great Habs netminders. Indeed, when Carey was drafted, my first thought was, "Why are we drafting a goalie? We have Jose Theodore!" As it turned out, we drafted a goalie because we had Jose Theodore. His spectacular flame-out after the NHL lockout revealed that he was a flash in the pan, and when he was traded to Colorado very few Canadiens fans felt as though the team had repeated the past mistake of December 2, 1995. It was clear that David Aebischer and Cristobal Huet would never assume the mantle of being "the next one;" from the moment of the Theodore trade, the Canadiens' crease was in placeholder mode as it awaited the arrival of the next saviour between the pipes.

My first real exposure to Carey Price was the World Junior Championships in Leksand, Sweden. Like many, I was immediately a fan after the thrilling semi-final shootout victory against the United States. The gold medal was almost a formality - you just knew that after the big victory that Canada



worth, I saw him before all of that, though with little appreciation of the significance of the fact. Having grown up in Kelowna, B.C., I was in the home city of the Western Hockey League's Rockets, and the Americans come to Kelowna twice a season, plus any potential playoff series. The Rockets and Americans did play each other in the second round of the 2003-04 playoffs; Kelowna won the series 4-2. Carey played 8 of the Americans' 11 games in the playoffs that year, and though I don't remember the exact dates I know that I did see a couple games in that series. At the time, Carey was just the other team's goaltender, an undrafted prospect looking to make his mark. If only I'd known at the time what his future held!

I was actually quite late getting into collecting Carey Price cards. Though ITG has been making cards of him since 2005, I didn't get back into the hobby until January 2008 when I ventured into a card show one Saturday morning and grabbed Carey's OPC RC. I haven't stopped since. Today I own more than 200 unique cards, including 25 autographed cards and over 30 memorabilia cards. Whenever a new set is released the first thing I do is search the checklist for any new cards featuring Carey. I don't collect every card from every set--as I mentioned earlier, his cards don't come cheap--but I do try to get as many as I can without breaking the bank. I keep most of the cards in a box where they're organized by year and set, but the very best of my collection I keep in a display case that my fiancée bought for me for Christmas last year.



I have a strong mix of both Upper Deck and In The Game cards in my Price collection. Even though they do not have a license, ITG has made some of the best-looking cards in my collection, cards which are true favourites. A massive trade earlier this year brought me four amazing cards, all numbered /10 or less, all made by ITG, which chronicled Carey's career from Tri-City to Team Canada to Hamilton to Montreal. The somewhat strange thing is that I didn't even consciously pursue one card from each team during the trade talks; it was only until a day or so after the deal was done that I connected the dots. They are the four cornerstones of my PC,

residing in the front row of my all-ITG shelf in my display case. Yes that Between the Pipes Auto Jersey is the Gold Version, a true 1-of-1.

The 2007-08 Upper Deck product releases boasted 19 official rookie cards (this figure will sound strange to anybody that collected cards in the 1970s and 1980s and hasn't for a while); of that number, I have twelve in my collection. Not a totally overwhelming figure I know, but as one of the most collectible players in the hobby today there is a high value on Carey's cards - of the seven that I still need, his Cup RC is valued at \$2400 while the lowest-valued card I need, from SP Game Used, is



valued at a mere \$250. Of all my rookies, I would say that my favourite would be the SP Authentic RC. You just cannot go wrong with a hard-signed autograph rookie card. UD made a lot of the spectacular cards in my collection, with the best being showcased on the Upper Deck shelf of my display case:



Though hockey cards are the main focus of my Price collection, I have gone beyond just cards. One of the earliest pieces I acquired is a 16x20 signed photo from his first NHL game featuring Carey making a save on Evgeni Malkin. The photo has a great signature on it and is inscribed "10/10/07" to mark the special night. Through a friend I was also able to acquire the Pittsburgh Penguins program from that night. Obviously it doesn't spotlight the Habs goalie, but it is dated to that night, which makes it a pretty cool collectable. I also have a couple of signed photos, both versions of the figure made by McFarlane

(they made a special "variant" featuring Carey in a white helmet), and a bobblehead that was given out by the Hamilton Bulldogs after they won the Calder Cup.



However, the centrepiece of my Carey Price memorabilia collection is a game-used stick. Earlier this spring, the Canadiens had a sale of all the extra game-used equipment they had after the season ended. To get any of these items you had to go to the sale that they had at their practice facility in Brossard. After the sale was over, I contacted their director of memorabilia and auctions, Mathieu Lapointe, to see if they still had any Carey items and if it would be possible to send them to me out here in Nova Scotia. To my good fortune, he told me that they still had one stick remaining and he quoted me a price. Suffice to say, I jumped on the offer, and within 24 hours of sending the Canadiens my informa

tion, the stick arrived at my door. It was truly a first-class experience dealing with the Canadiens for this unique and

very treasured item.



After gazing at and holding the stick for a rather lengthy time, the next thought that popped into my head was, "I have to find out which game he used this stick!" Thankfully there is no shortage of game photos on the Internet, and after about 20 minutes of searching I was able to nail it down that the stick was used in two games in March, against the Rangers and Senators. Unfortunately these weren't exactly stellar nights for Carey: the Rangers game ended in a shootout and the Rangers scored on all three opportunities in the shootout, and Carey was pulled from the Senators game after letting in a couple early goals. However, he did have this highlight reel moment against Nick Foligno:



Carey makes a great save on Nick Foligno. Image courtesy of the Montreal Gazette.

So that's pretty much my story about my Carey Price collection. I'm really excited for the 2009-10 season and I'm predicting big things for Carey in his third season in the NHL. I'm also looking forward to all the new Upper Deck and ITG releases to build my collection to even greater heights. I would love to add a signed jersey to put up on the wall or track down some of the really rare cards made. I've had some great moments watching and collecting Carey already, but I fully believe that the best is yet to come!



Rookies Are Hot Again!

By Richard McAdam aka RGM81

With the NHL regular season just past the quarter mark, it is a good time for hobbyists to marvel at just how well the rookie class of 2009-10 is faring. Suffice to say, enthusiasm is running high after a rather unsatisfying 2008-09 campaign. All of the top 4 picks from the June draft in Montreal are playing in the NHL and all of them are having stellar campaigns. John Tavares, Victor Hedman, Matt Duchene, and Evander Kane are paving the way as 18-year olds, and they are being joined in a stellar rookie crop by James van Riemsdyk, Jonas Gustavsson, Tyler Myers, Jamie Benn, and Ryan O'Reilly, to name just a few. What makes their campaigns all the more remarkable is that they're gaining rapid fame in markets that don't usually garner much hobby love.

With all of the young guns making NHL rosters out of training camp and sticking past the initial 9 game tryout period (if the team decides to send a player back to his junior team within the first 9 games of the season, his entry-level contract will not take effect until next season), there is a lot of excitement among card collectors that simply did not feature so prominently last year. While Steven Stamkos is enjoying a very strong sophomore season—"Jinx? What jinx?"—his struggles during the 08-09 campaign, coupled with the economic downturn, resulted in the marquee player of last year's crop fetching lower demand and prices than many would have hoped. Demand for Steve Mason remains solid, but Simeon Varlamov has dropped off considerably, as has late-season arrival in Montreal Max Pacioretty. Those who hoped for the "Sergei Kostitsyn effect" (fewer rookie cards and a high-demand market yielding higher prices) with Pacioretty are being disappointed by his poor on-ice performance this season—to say nothing of the younger Kostitsyn brother's hobby demand withering faster than a tomato on the vine in December. It's probably best if nobody mentions that Justin Pogge, banished from Toronto and currently plying his trade with the ECHL's Bakersfield Condors, was an /99 Cup RC.

But that was then, and this is now. With the arrival of Upper Deck's flagship Series One release, we're getting our first live rookie cards of what could materialize into the deepest rookie crop since the unparalleled and likely never to be equalled 2005-06 group. The Box Breaks section at SCF is filled with overjoyed collectors that have hit the Tavares jackpot, while this author did a fist-pump after pulling a Matt Duchene Exclusives that was parlayed into a monster Carey Price card. Judging by eBay sales in the first few weeks of release, it's possible that Tavares will book as high—or even higher—than Alex Ovechkin's Young Guns RC, which is no small accomplishment. People are already eagerly awaiting Series Two to get the star rookies that didn't make the initial checklist, which is expected to include the aforementioned "Monster," Matt Gilroy, O'Reilly, and possibly even the young man who expects to see a BV of one million dollars, P.K. Subban (but probably not until next year). To add to the excitement, who would have ever thought two years ago that people would be crossing their fingers to pull the New York Islanders Artifacts redemption in their box breaks?



Speaking on a personal level, when it comes to rookies I am much more excited for this year's releases than I was for the 08-09 products. I knew well in advance that there would be little to expect with regards to Canadiens rookies. Yes the Habs ended up fielding Matt D'Agostini, Ben Maxwell, and Max Pacioretty, but their roles on the team meant that the excitement over them was nowhere near on a par with a certain goaltender who debuted the previous year. While the early product releases this year feature only Yannick Weber, who is currently in Hamilton, there does remain the prospect of Subban, though I would prefer the organization not rush him into the lineup simply to accommodate a short-term gap or the hobby. As it stands, there have been five players making their Habs debut this season; unfortunately the names J.T. Wyman, David Desharnais, Tom Pyatt, Ryan White, and Mathieu Carle don't exactly inspire collectors. But even beyond my beloved Habs, I have a significant number of Kelowna Rockets graduates to chase down, including: Jamie Benn, Tyler Myers, Mikael Backlund, and from the 2004 Memorial Cup championship team, Troy Bodie. Benn and Myers are having stellar campaigns, both thrust into top-shelf positions on their respective teams and performing admirably. It's all enough to make me want to jump back into the lottery of breaking boxes and cracking packs again, rather than simply cherry-picking my preferred singles.

Ever since the lockout and the formulation of the new collective bargaining agreement, the NHL has increasingly become a young man's game. Due to the salary cap, players are being brought into the League at a younger age so that clubs can get maximum value for money while the players are on their entry-level contracts that have a maximum cap hit of \$2.2M including incentives. That, combined with the withering taboo of offer sheets and free agency at 25 years old, means we're going to see more and more phenoms making rosters in prominent positions. As far as the hobby is concerned, that is a very good thing.



The big three of 2009-10: Victor Hedman, John Tavares, and Matt Duchene

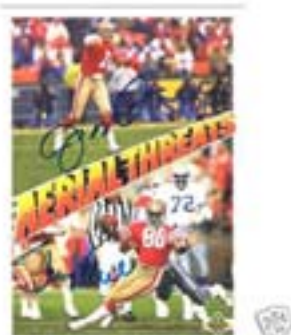


Football Happenings

By Jason DiOrazio aka jdio13

Hello again, and thanks for reading the football section of this Sports Card Forum magazine!! With the NFL season in full swing, there are many great topics being discussed in the Football Forum. In this article, we will give a shout out to the winner of October's eBay Steal of the Month contest, as well as letting you know what things are going on in the Football Forum.

First, our winner of the eBay Steal of the Month Contest for October 09. There were many great entries in October's contest, but the voters decided that our winner was.....brettyboy!! Here is a picture of his impressive eBay Steal:



A great steal for sure with 2 hall of famers autographs on the same card! The Football Team would like to congratulate Brett on his great steal!!

With the NFL season in full swing, the Football Chat Forum is always active on Sundays, discussing some of the biggest stories in the NFL, as well as the NCAA. If you are looking to discuss and share your opinions on some of the biggest stories in the NFL each week, be sure to stop by the Football Chat Forum and let everyone know what you think.

Something new the Football Team will also be putting on is group case breaks. This is run by Football Team Assistant Manager rchurchward (Ryan). The first official group break (2009 Donruss Limited) just filled up and the case is due later this week. Ryan will open the case live on blogtv.com, which allows everyone to watch the break as it happens. After this first case break, Ryan will be running more and it will hopefully gain more interest. If you are interested in participating in a group break, and have an idea of a product you would like Ryan to open, feel free to send Ryan or any of the Managers/Assistant Managers on the Football Team a PM!



Basketball Happenings

By Nathan Loewy

The NBA season is about six weeks old, and there have already been a couple significant changes to teams rosters. First, the Golden State Warriors traded Stephen Jackson to the Charlotte Bobcats in exchange for Raja Bell and . Jackson had publicly requested a trade before the season began, much to the displeasure of the Warriors staff, so they ended up giving him his wish. The other significant change has to do with Allen Iverson. The veteran guard, after having a horrid year with the Detroit Pistons in 2008-09, signed a one-year contract with the Memphis Grizzlies this past off season - however, he played a total of three games for Memphis before they cut him. He is now an unrestricted free agent, and has since announced that he will retire. Since his announcement, there have been reports that he may come back and sign with a team again, possibly the Philadelphia 76ers, who he began his career with in 1996. I believe he will be signed by a team, but I do not think that he will get much playing time, and this could quite possibly be his last season in the league.

The first head coach of the season to be fired was Byron Scott of the New Orleans Hornets. This surprised many people, considering he was the Coach of the Year only two seasons ago, and he was fired only nine games into the season.

As of the end of November, the team with the best record in the NBA was the Phoenix Suns at 13-3, and the team with the worst record was the New Jersey Nets at 0-16. Their 16 straight losses to start the season is a franchise-worst, and is only one loss shy of the record of 17 straight losses to start a season, set by the Los Angeles Clippers and the Miami Heat. Other notable records in the league are the Los Angeles Lakers at 12-3, San Antonio Spurs at 8-6, Oklahoma City Thunder at 9-7, and the Minnesota Timberwolves, bringing up the rear in the West at 1-15, losing 15 straight after winning their opening game of the season over the New Jersey Nets on a buzzer beater. In the East, the Boston Celtics are at 12-4, Atlanta Hawks at 12-4, Cleveland Cavaliers at 12-5, and the surprising Milwaukee Bucks at 8-7.

Each NBA season coincides with multiple basketball contests on SCF, and this year is no different. We have four season-long contests - three returning from last season, and one brand new contest. Returning from last year are Guess The Score, located in the "Games, Contests and Tourney's" forum, Pick 'Em, and Top Performers, both of which are located in the Basketball Contests forum. The brand new contest is called "Guess The Score, and Score Cards", and is sponsored by Panini. This contest has some incredibly awesome prizes, including a grand prize of an autographed Kobe Bryant item. There are also monthly prizes, and bi-monthly prizes, with the first monthly prize being a box of 2009-10 Panini Prestige, and the first bi-monthly prize being an autographed 8x10 of Blake Griffin. This contest is also located in the Basketball Contest forum. None of these contests have deadlines to participate, so if you have not participated yet this season, you can still jump in and possibly win some cool prizes!

Standings for each contest are on the next pages.



GTS (through 11/28)

the_future ~ 6
 pwaldo ~ 4
 andrewcstein ~ 2
 grumpy ~ 2
 sabresfan88 ~ 2
 wmhc28413 ~ 2
 abah58 ~ 1
 angel0430 ~ 1
 ccblec ~ 1
 ccu ~ 1
 dholley77 ~ 1
 FootballCardFreak ~ 1
 gladdyontherise ~ 1
 JesRey ~ 1
 jimwrestlingcards ~ 1
 molly1984 ~ 1
 myers39 ~ 1
 Nowhere Man ~ 1
 PatsCards ~ 1
 rambomejia101 ~ 1
 RenegadeLonghorn ~ 1

Pick 'Em (through 11/28)

1020 Chase - 44
 AiThor - 52
 ambrosio_09 - 3
 andreasmjohnson - 47
 anttheman - 58
 Apache_Kid - 52
 ajvsmg - 2
 Axe725 - 50
 ayork4240 - 16
 bdp1999 - 22
 beishusen91 - 56
 BIGGs1220 - 11
 bob9826 - 15
 boba - 35
 brettyboy - 46
 BroncoFanDan - 2
 bryantts - 7
 cbrjunkie888 - 11
 ccblec - 2
 ChosenOne719 - 3
 ChristianFriend - 40

comgrchris - 9
 dajuiceman - 19
 dawgfather67 - 2
 dicekmvp - 58
 dwiththoward - 7
 eman61994 - 3
 est89detlions - 33
 FootballCardFreak - 57
 fzk - 16
 garnett_21 - 54
 GilbertArenas0 - 3
 gladdyontherise - 61
 gmoney168 - 8
 Golden_Glove_Man - 2
 Hoopsman - 42
 Idiot83 - 59
 Jay520 - 8
 jdlee123 - 56
 JesRey - 57
 jonnyweb - 3
 Kardkid74 - 7

Top Performers (through 11/26)

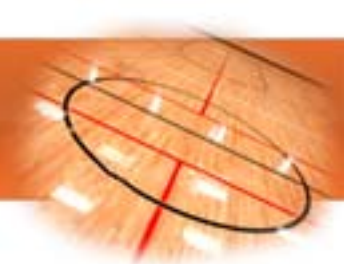
PPPanthersGM - 15
 Key2win - 20
 AiThor - 26
 JesRey - 19
 Nairb06 - 14
 Montej1695 - 16
 Showdown - 20
 Pootshwan - 8
 Sportyryan101 - 22
 Nbafan123 - 19
 Jdlee123 - 20
 Gladdyontherise - 20
 FootballCardFreak - 18
 Anttheman - 22
 Underdawg - 5
 Trevorp121 - 6
 Garnett_21 - 24
 Dicekmvp - 16

Beishuzen91 - 15
 RenegadeLonghorn - 4
 The_man - 9
 Christianfriend - 11
 Brettyboy - 15
 Ayork4240 - 4
 Timduncan21 - 4
 Apache_Kid - 17
 Idiot83 - 19
 Est89detlions - 4
 Longhorns215 - 3
 Tmac - 3
 Dajuiceman210 - 2
 GFOX - 2
 Ogarcia66 - 2
 Bdp1999 - 3
 Yankeesfan24 - 1
 MGLurman - 1



Guess The Score, and Score Cards (through 11/28)

jdlee123 - 14
Apache Kid - 13
dicekmp - 12
tolrobb3 - 10
xDrew - 10
Axe725 - 9
Twelve - 8
JesRey - 7
nbafan123 - 7
sportyryan101 - 7
FootballCardFreak - 6
montej1695 - 6
Showdown - 6
1020chase - 5
CHillyDoggy - 5
Christianfriend - 5
garnett_21 - 5
gladdyontherise - 5
jdbrak - 5
Nairb06 - 5
PPPanthersGM - 5
travIncarn - 5
beishuizen91 - 4
brettyboy - 4
gmoney168 - 4
molly1984 - 4
reaxion - 4
RenegadeLonghorn - 4
zas667 - 4
dajuiceman210 - 3
MonticelloCards - 3
mwagner24 - 3
The_man - 3
trevorp121 - 3
bdr - 2
cbrjunkie888 - 2
GFOX - 2
pootshwan - 2
timduncan21 - 2
underdawg - 2



With the recent releases of Panini's second and third releases, we have seen many great pulls. Here is just a sampling of some of those amazing pulls!

Card: Panini Rookies and Stars Kobe Bryant Patch/Auto /199
 Member: TRSportsCards
 Pulled From: (1) box 2009-10 Panini Rookies and Stars



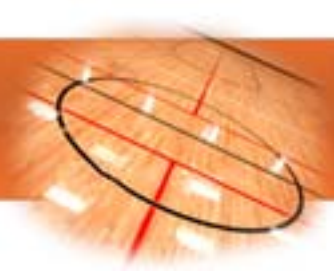
Card: Panini Rookies and Stars Dress For Success Blake Griffin GU/Auto /25
 Member: Atrain81
 Pulled From: (3) boxes 2009-10 Panini Rookies and Stars

Card: Bowman '48 Patch/Auto Magic Johnson
 Member: Hoffy814
 Pulled From: (1) box 2009-10 Bowman '48



The 2009 Theme Weeks are nearing an end. We have a clear frontrunner in vivo87, winning four weeks, taking a .5 point lead over crizrn, who is in second place. Thanks to everyone who has participated in this year's theme weeks, and we hope to see you in next year's theme weeks! Standings thru week 37 are as follows:

- 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
- week 12: jeebus86
- week 13: sl7in
- week 14: crizrn
- week 15: OJMayo32
- week 16: VintageHeros, kardkid74
- week 17: xdrew
- week 18: crizrn



week 19: Seahawkz37
week 20: XxViSiOnxX
week 21: andreasmjohnson
week 22: eddiejr
week 23: ponyboy
week 24: nissandriver77
week 25: tmacdirkbaron
week 26: MatthewLee
week 27: t-macdirkbaron, Ojmayo32
week 28: realreodeal, crizrn
week 29: vivo87
week 30: vivo87
week 31: vivo87
week 32: tmacdirkbaron
week 33: eddiejr, The man
week 34: dakota
week 35: crizrn
week 36: hickson#21
week 37: vivo87

On behalf of the SCF Basketball Team, we'd like to welcome Ally (abradley08) to the team as an advisor! Ally was promoted to Advisor during the month of November, after joining the team as an MIT in October. Please give her a warm welcome!

As always, we truly appreciate you taking the time to read this article, and we really hope that you enjoy it! If you have any questions, comments and/or suggestions about anything in this article, please do not hesitate to PM garnett_21 or trevor121. Again, thank you for taking your time to read this!





Featured Collection
By Guiseppe La Spina aka Italy61587



In August 2008, I was browsing online in search of a site to do some online trading and SCF was the one that repeatedly came up, so I said why not I'll give it a shot. I had accumulated a ton of basketball autos and game used cards from the over 12 years of collecting. At first, the sole purposing of me becoming an SCF member was to obtain another Michael Jordan auto. In 2004, I was one of the lucky people to pull a Jordan auto. I pulled a redemption for an 04-05 SPA Michael Jordan SP signatures. About 3 months later, it had arrived and it was just awesome to have in my possession. Two months later,

I had many local collectors interested and being the foolish college kid that I was, I sold the card for \$450 cash. I regretted doing that so much, and I knew I had to get another one.

I became a member of SCF hoping I could get another MJ. As I browsed the forum threads, I was impressed with all the player collections and loaded photobuckets. Since I already had a small core of Bulls autos and game used (about a dozen) and I've been a Bulls fan since as long as I can remember, SCF inspired me to become a Chicago Bulls team collector. My collection grew very slowly at first trying to get in the swing of things of how SCF worked and trying to set up my photobucket. A few months rolled by and my collection was in a snowball effect. I was dumping everything I had to offer for whatever Bulls autos and game used I didn't have. I was shocked to find out that so many people were still into trading cards especially overseas, since many of my trades have come from all over the world including England, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Poland, the Philippines, Australia and a bunch of others.

If you haven't seen it yet in the basketball show and tell section of the basketball forum, I've had a continuous "My Bulls PC: Check it Out" thread from the very first cards I traded for on SCF. Each card I've ever traded for or purchased since has been scanned and posted on that thread. To this day, the thread has over 900 posts and over 13,000 views. It makes me happy to see that many people enjoy viewing my Bulls PC and I love sharing it with others. My collection stand at 355 autographs and game used cards at the moment and it's still going strong. I'm always looking for more. By the way, I did eventually get my MJ back in my collection ;)

As my collection grows, a new goal of mine has been to try to have an autograph of each Bulls player who has ever had a certified one inserted into packs. At the moment, I have over 50 different Bulls player autos. There are a few that keep eluding me though. I'm still looking for an AJ Guyton, a Roger Mason Jr, and a George Gervin. The George Gervin auto I need is a buyback from 04-05 genuine from 86-87 fleer. The last big auto I need is one of Scottie Pippen, but I should have one before the end of January. This year, between graduating from UIC, Christmas, and actually having some time to work I'll have plenty of money to expand my collection, so stay tuned.

If you would like to have your collection featured, please PM garnett_21 or trevorp121.



If these Cards Could Talk **Stephen Duell aka Spuds1961**

This article is geared more for you vintage and old time card collectors not guys like me who collect today's new fangled game used and autograph and the like. Ever wonder what that 1954 severely creased Mays RC or that damaged Mickey Mantle pick a year from 52 through 69 went through? I would love to know how many hands it went through whether it got flipped at a schoolyard or whether it was just being used as a bookmark and found much later as an afterthought. I would like to know if the person who had it first remembers how they acquired it and whether they miss it or not.

Considering most mothers mine included helped increase the value of these old vintage cards by throwing them away I would also like to ask them some hardball questions, like why the heck did you go in my closet while I was away at summer camp and throw away my neatly categorized boxes of cards? Oh yes being 48 I did have some mid to late 60s cards and for every sport also not just baseball. I also want to know why mothers always wait till their sons are away to commit this grand larceny of a crime, with the value of most vintage cards being even 15 dollars for a common just think somewhere in a pile at the bottom of the Staten Island dump is a fortune. I know no one could foresee the future but wow what a waste.

With that being said could you picture today's mothers throwing away that 4 colored thick as a brick rookie autographed patch card? I think not as anyone clearly can tell that has to be worth something! So keeping this in mind, I'd like to thank the card companies for making these new fangled cards more recognizable to mothers as something more than just pieces of cardboard as I couldn't imagine any mother even the neatest of the neat throwing today's cards away.

I once had this great idea to try and recapture some of my cards that mom threw away and went on a 1960s card hunt on eBay I quickly scrapped that project as it was either too pricey or for some reason every time I looked at those old cards I cringed at the memory of coming home from summer camp to visit my cardboard friends only to be haunted by an empty closet. I have a 12 year old son who is not into sports cards yet, still going through the Yu-Gi-Oh stage but at least he can rest assured that no matter what he chooses to collect it will not wind up at the bottom of a dump somewhere! This concludes this article and remember guys and gals when you go away please hide your cards or better yet put them away at a storage shelter, even though I think today's mothers are different no need to take any chances. Take care and have fun with whatever you collect and Merry Christmas to all and may Santa bring you that one special card you've been looking for. Take care!



When to Share?
By Mike Greene aka Indyreds

Some of the most heated discussions in the Autograph Central area of Sports Card Forum, happen when an address is or is not shared for a big name star. The whole idea of the TTM database and the discussion area in the forums is to share successes and help others with their collections. I for one never did understand why others did not share an address after they had been able to get a really nice success, but members must have their reasons. I have seen members get upset when others had posted addresses! I have always shared all my addresses used until my last big success and we will get to that one later.

Sending players or celebrities an email request for an autograph is a growing part of the hobby and we have members who are really protective of their email addresses. Stars like swimmer Amanda Beard used to be great signers after an email request, but have stopped after large volumes of requests. I caused a huge stink for some members of our community when I posted Kevin Martins email, the NBA player, whom I had gotten an autographed photo from. I was thrilled to see that other members were able to also get an autographed photo using that address. To me helping other members grow their collections would have been the reason to have posted it, but then again we have not seen successes coming from it lately.



Personally I have always respected the wishes of members who have said that they are withholding an address. Members complained in the past that others will continue to PM or ask for addresses after they stated that they were not going to provide it. We have actually had members post that they would no longer share big successes due to those requests after posting their big name successes. It is a shame that would ever happen. I would hope that everyone would be able to post and share without thinking they would be badgered afterwards. All members should be showed respect!

It does seem that players do change their signing habits a lot. I would assume that volume of requests would have a role in that. The ease of finding an address would contribute to the number of requests as well. Pete Rose went through a period where he signed and has now stopped. Charles Barkley has



now started signing mail and has not in the past. I want to say thank you to all the members who have shared addresses like those and allowed us all to grow our collections. There are many sites that provide addresses and to think that our community would have a huge effect on the amount of mail a player gets is a stretch in my mind. The TTM database does a great job of showing when an address last worked for a member and has effected who I mail out to. We can help SCF members add to their collections.

I had stated earlier that I had withheld my first address from site members. The only reason was that the player is the spokesperson for the company I work for. Magic Johnson was nice enough to provide me an autographed jersey after an email request! I was awaiting all the flack that other members stated after posting a huge success and not sharing the address. I even thought about not posting that I had gotten it all! I was excited and wanted to share my joy with other members of the autograph and did post that success in the forums. I was impressed and thrilled at the feedback from members of our community. I had gotten a lot of posts saying congratulations and a few asking for photos. The posts that I did not see and the PM messages that did not come is what shocked me the most. I did not have a single member ask for that address. I wanted to say thank you! We have a good group of members here at SCF and I am proud to be part of the autograph community



New Members' Corner

By Matthew Cawley aka Herdsman87

We would like to welcome all the new Staffers In Training to the New Member Team: Brettyboy, Theonedru, Reoddai, Njyplaya, Jeremy Falcons, Dcfdfireman

Look for upcoming New Member contests in the future months!

Make trades=Win FREE Cards!!!

FOOTBALL FANS! Want to win free cards just by trading?

<http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=950960>

New Members !!!

If you have a question or problem, don't forget to "ASK LEO"
This 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?

Nascards collects Jimmie Johnson

Madman1978 collects Pittsburgh Steelers

Patriotsguy collects New England Patriots

HerdsMan87 collects Marshall University Football Alum

Puffster31 collects Negro League Players

Rybowski collects DeSean Jackson

Brettyboy collects L.A. Lakers

Theonedru collects Everything

Reoddai collects Goaltenders

Njyplaya collects New York Jets

Jeremy Falcons collects Peyton Manning

Dcfdfireman collects Emmitt Smith

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



Website Review: Blowoutcards.com

By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

Nowadays there are less and less local card shops and more and more internet sellers. From eBay to local stores that also have a website to stores that are exclusively online the consumer has many options. Presented with all those alternative, who should you buy from? This article will take a closer look and review one of the big players in the hobby: Blowoutcards (www.blowoutcards.com). To give you as complete a picture as possible of their website, we will examine it under eight criteria:

- First Impressions
- Navigation
- Content
- Attractors
- Findability
- Making Contact
- Price Competitiveness
- Knowledge of Users

First Impressions

Upon loading the homepage, it is quite clear what the website is all about. The front page is not too busy and the color scheme is sober and suitable. Straight from the start, the site advertises it's free shipping on all orders over \$99 (only to continental US), its Blow Out sales or its wholesale prices. Most consumers will also be pleased to see the link "Request a price quote or a price match", in the tough economic times we are currently experiencing, every little helps even when it comes to saving money on our hobby purchases. Below this, there is also an announcement section in which the consumer can find articles about new products or announcements by the website itself. Further down the page, there is also an area featuring the new releases and finally a calendar of the current pre-selling products. On the left hand side, you can find all the product categories as well as all the useful information the customer may need to fully enjoy their shopping experience.

Score: 9/10

Navigation

The Navigation is facilitated by the fact the Blowout logo is always in the top left area and you can always click on it to return to the homepage. Furthermore, on the said homepage, it is also very easy to get to the product you want in a minimum number of clicks. The products are divided in two sections; Cases and Boxes. Each of those section is divided by sport and then each sport is further divided by years. So in two clicks, you can be browsing the list of product of your choice for any given year. It is of course also possible to do a search for a particular product. If you do a general search, you will find all products across all sports so if you know which sport you are looking for,



Furthermore, not content with being an online store, Blowoutcards also offers a forum which everyone can access there is no need to be a customer to be able to do so. On there, you will find plenty of discussions and group break chances. Definitely worth taking a look!

Score: 9/10

Content

There is a wide variety of products available on the site and for each of them, there is a precise description which includes the particularities of each product, the odds of pulling certain cards and when a product is on special offer, it also says how many units are left at the special prize. Furthermore, at the bottom of each product page, you will see what customers who bought the product you are looking at also bought. This can be a useful feature if you are not sure on which product to purchase. It could be useful for the site to have a feature remembering which items you recently browsed. This is standard on numerous other sites.

It would also improve the shopping experience if there could be some examples of pulls obtained from the different products. They have a forum section in which there are plenty of people showcasing their pulls and it would be easy to match some of the scans to the product pages, this would greatly enhance the visual experience.

Score: 7.5/10

Attractors

We have previously mentioned two important factors in this category, the free shipping for orders over \$99 in Continental US states and the product quote/match option. Blowoutcards prides itself in being able to offer some of the cheapest prices online and this could be a deciding factor for many as we are all shopping for cheaper deals these days.

Furthermore, on a weekly basis, Blowoutcards offers an SCF VIP exclusive deal in which a featured product is offered for an even cheaper price. For instance, this week the product offered was the newly released Upper Deck Series 1 Hockey. A highly sought after product every year, this is the release for hockey rookie collectors.

Score: 9/10

Findability

Blowoutcards makes every effort to get their name out there, from their partnership with sportscardforum.com to their presence on social networking sites such as Face book and Twitter they are a constant online presence. However, if someone does a search on Google for “sports cards boxes” their site is not one of the first ones to appear, you have to go to the second page of results to find their link. The site also gained visibility last summer by setting up at the National Sports Collectors convention in Cleveland and offering some of the cheapest prizes on site. On this occasion they also pleased



numerous mixed martial arts fans by having Rich Franklin on site to sign autographs. If you would like to know more about the event, be sure to check out this link: http://www.blowoutcards.com/index.php?main_page=news_article&article_id=242. Overall, one can say that they are doing a great job of getting their name out there and are gaining more and more recognition from hobbyists.

Score: 9.5/10

Making Contact

It is very easy for a customer to make contact with Blowoutcards. There is a “Contact Us” link in the top toolbar of the site and by clicking on it, it is possible to either email a question or, to call one of the two numbers given from Monday to Friday 9am to 4 pm EST. The fact that the numbers provided also comes with a contact name also helps to make it feel like there is a dedicated personal customer service.

Score: 9/10

Price Competitiveness

If compared with the price points of other comparable reputation seller, Blowoutcards normally comes out on top. And if they don't, you can always use their “price match” option meaning that one way or another, you should get your purchase at the best possible price. There is therefore no reason not to give the site full marks on this aspect.

Score: 10/10

Knowledge of Users

As mentioned earlier, the website does not keep track of your last viewed items which is quite a useful shopping tool. Furthermore, as a big player in the card industry Blowout should definitely realize that the hobby is not strictly North-American anymore. Yes, it was concentrated there initially but today, there are plenty of collectors and therefore potential customers based overseas. Unfortunately, Blowout still does not ship overseas which is rather disappointing for overseas customers who would like to have the option to take advantage of the cheapest prices on the internet. Overseas buyers already have to pay for more expensive shipping and custom duties so they could definitely use the lower prices.

Score: 7/10



**BLOWOUT
CARDS**

Overall Score and Closing Comments

Overall, Blowoutcards scores 70 out of 80 for a final score of 87.50%. This is no doubt a great website to do your hobby purchases and I strongly recommend that you visit it if you haven't already done so...unless of course you are based outside of North America than it would be torture more than anything else. I truly hope to see Blowoutcards open itself up to the world in the near future.



Christmas Wish List By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

Once again it's that time of the year, the time where we all run around like headless chickens trying to find the ideal present for those we love. And the same goes for those who love you, they are frantically looking for what to get for a collector like you. So, if your parents, partner or siblings needs suggestions, get them to read this article and hopefully, they will get you an excellent hobby related present!

For the Basketball fans

If you are shopping for a basketball fan, there are quite a few good options out there! Nathan (garnett_21) suggested the following:



1) Box of 2009-10 Panini Prestige - inaugural product release from the NBA's sole card producer...relatively cheap (~\$70/box) with 4 hits per box. Now that Panini is the sole licence holder, they hold a place of choice on Basketball collectors want list.

2) 2009-10 Upper Deck Michael Jordan Legacy set - I believe each box has 50 of the 1170 cards in the set, each chronicling one game of Jordan's legendary career - a must have for any basketball fan! Approx \$20/box.

3) NBA.com gift certificate - redeemable for anything at the official NBA Store!

For the Hockey fans

If your victim is a hockey collector, Chris (hossa18sens) suggested the below items:

1) Box of Upper Deck Series 1

The first product of the year with live top rookies. It is also in the right price range for many gift givers. At \$57.99, this product offers a great return and will normally yield plenty of trade bait with the sought after Young Guns alone.

2) Supplies.

Not the big wow factor of packs but something that you always need. And a gift that keeps giving through the year!

3) A single or a "lot" of whoever is your PC player.

This one can prove tricky for those who do not know too much about the hobby, but if you drop by SCF, you can always ask advice to other collectors as to which products are good. Also, always make sure that you are buying the right player. A Patrick Roy collector would not be impressed by a Derek Roy lot of cards! Make sure you know who the recipient of the gift truly collects.





4) Signed Memorabilia from www.frozenpond.com

Signed jerseys, 8x10, pucks, they have everything! Have a look and you will definitely find something to please every hockey collector!

For the Football fans

The following would be suitable for your favorite gridiron devotee:

1) Donruss Limited box

A very nice product at less than \$100 per box, this will yield on average 3 hits per box and is sure to please your football addict!

2) Topps Triple Threads box

A product slotted for release just before Christmas, this is a higher end (\$149.99 per box) item and features 2 mini boxes of 6 cards each per box.

3) An NFL.com gift card

There are plenty of goodies on NFL.com and with a gift card, you definitely can't go wrong. Pick up one of these and watch your football collector go crazy as they browse all the items they could potentially get!



For the Baseball fans

It may be the off-season but I'm sure a real baseball fan would be over the moon to get one of those suggestions:



1) A team lot

Find out who the recipient of the present cheers for and get them an assortment of their cards.

2) For the Yankees fan, an item commemorating the latest championship.

You definitely can't make a mistake with that one, every single Yankees fan is still in 7th heaven about their latest championship and a little reminder for Christmas will bring even more Christmas cheers!

3) MLB.com gift certificate

Just like the other sports, a gift card from the official shop is always a good idea. With the variety of product in stock your baseball collector is sure to find something he needs.



For the Racing fans

Finally, we have some suggestions for the motor racing fans out there:

1) Die casts

Find out who their favorite driver is and get your loved one a replica of their car. There are some spectacular items out there!



2) Jackets

The NASCAR.com shop has got some great looking jackets of almost every driver, just make sure you get the right one.

3) Press Pass Legends Racing Box

A brilliant product which will on average deliver 6 hits per box! At a price of between \$120 and \$140 it should please any racing fans out there!



Have a great holiday season everyone and I hope you get what you are hoping for!