

C collectors corner

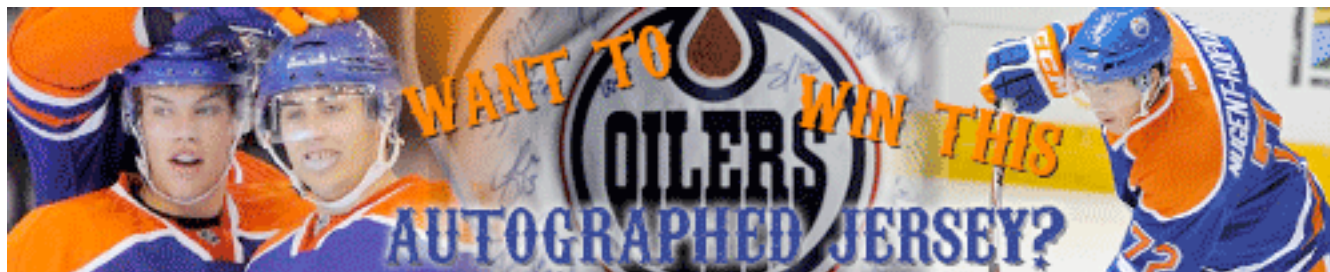
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Season as Usual on SCF By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

Well, the owners might have locked out the players but that doesn't change anything for the SCF Hockey forum. Year after year, we bring you a season long contest and this year is no different. If you proceed to read the other pages of this magazine you will find out what this year's contest is all about, although the cover of this month's edition is quite the giveaway it itself! One thing is different in the magazine this month though, you will notice that there is no hockey product review and that is because we've not recently received any to review...Could a lockout mean a slowdown in the sports cards industry? I'm afraid so...Not a lot we can do but hope and pray that it is a short one...Aside from that, the content of these pages is similar to what it usually is and we truly hope that we'll be able to report on better news in the next edition which will be out on the 12th November.



While things have reached a standstill in the NHL, the NFL's and the MLB's schedules are full and entertaining fans day in and day out. My sole consolation is that when a league is not active, no one can be hard done by the refs...be it by a bogus infield hit or a touchinterception (as a good friend called it)...Man it has been a hard few weeks for referees! In all fairness though, THAT call probably enabled the conflict resolution between the NFL and its regular refs and it didn't happen at the end of the season or have a massive impact on

a team's season so it's not that bad...I wish this was also the case on the baseball front but unfortunately, that blown call not only meant that the Atlanta Braves missed out on a playoffs spot but it also marked the end of Chipper Jones' career...not the best way to end it all clearly. I am part of those who would have liked to see him take one last shot at the World Series but fate (or a referee) decided it wasn't to be...

This certainly gets you to think doesn't it? No matter how hard a team works, things can always go wrong and sometimes, it has nothing to do with what they did...An outside factor can ruin it all for them. I guess it's one thing that professional athletes are not protected from. They may be paid insane amounts of money and have no financial worries unlike us but they are no strangers to the notion of human error.

Anyhow, I hope you are enjoying the current sporting action and that you will like this month's edition of Collectors Corner!



A Word With Rick Bzdel

By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

If you've been a member on SCF for some time, we know that our hockey forum is one of the best there is out there. Not only is it always buzzing with trades and hockey card or just plain hockey conversations but every season, there is also a huge prize to be won by taking part in an epic season long contest. It started in 2009-2010 when we brought you the Race for the Quad, then in 2010-2011 we had the Race for the trio and in 2011-2012 it was the Race for the Price. This year though, we're going for something even better! That's right, better than a Carey Price autographed jersey! If you're a hockey fan, chances are that you've noticed that the Edmonton Oilers have been spoilt draft wise in the last few years and that as a result, they are now full of talented young players. Taylor Hall, Jordan Eberle and Ryan Nugent-Hopking to name a few...Well, this year, with SCF and Ramjak Sports you could win a team autographed Edmonton Oilers jersey! That's right a jersey signed by the players named above and many more! It's up to you to grab the chance! So go on, head to SCF and enter the contest: <http://www.sportscardforum.com/threads/1760338-SCF-s-Jaunt-for-the-Jersey-2012-2013-Brought-to-you-by-Ramjak-Sports!>

This would never have been possible without one of our new sponsors, Ramjak Sports! Let's take a moment to learn a little bit about our new sponsor:

Sportscardforum: How long have you been in business? How did it all start, was it a strictly brick and mortar shop to start with?



Ramjak Sports: We have been in business for about 15 years. It started as a card show thing, buying and selling strictly cards, then moved slowly into a bit of memorabilia . I sold mainly to dealers until about 2 years ago, when we did the Summit show in Edmonton, and it was our first foray into "retail". After that success, we decided to open up a retail store and the rest is history.

SCF: What is the single biggest pull you ever got?

RS: I would say the single biggest pull I ever got would have been a 2010-11 Panini Limited Prime Auto rookie card of Taylor Hall 1/1. It was a redemption , but it came about 9 months later.



SCF: Always good to hear a redemption happy ending!

SCF: Do you attend card shows? Are you at the Toronto autumn and spring expos?

RS: Currently we only setup at one show, the Summit Show in Edmonton in June every year. I personally attend the Toronto shows, but we do not setup. It is not feasible for us to travel with all of the memorabilia to Toronto to setup. Our online presence counters having to setup at the shows that are physically too far away. We plan on setting up at more in the future.

SCF: We've seen you run group breaks on the site as you're now a sponsor, do you run them in store as well? What's the best pull you ever got out of a group break?

RS: We run group breaks in store as well all the time. We do many different formats, case breaks, box breaks, and have even done pack breaks.

As for best pull in a group break. Wow, that is hard to say.... So many different cards. I would have to say the best pull we ever got came from a 2005-2006 tin of The Cup Hockey. We pulled a nice 3 color Crosby Rookie.

SCF: I can only imagine the reaction of the customer who landed that card! Not only the most sought after rookie card on the market in a long time but from Upper Deck's flagship product as well! Some guys have all the luck!

SCF: How did you hear about sportscardforum?

RS: I can't remember where we originally heard of SCF, but after we found it, it became apparent that it was one of the top sites for the hobby out there. Great members, who are very knowledgeable, and a great trading section

SCF: Why did you want to become a sponsor?

RS: We wanted to become a sponsor because of the members on SCF. It is by far the best site for member involvement, knowledge and great "atmosphere". I know that is a funny thing to say about an online forum, but it does honestly have a great feel to it, that makes you want to come back, check up with things, and talk to friends. We wanted to be a larger part of that, and with the ever increasing reach of online, we wanted to be a part of SCF, as we think this site is going to continue to grow and expand, and we want to a huge part of that



SCF: I must say that SCF has had an awesome growth... Personally, I became a member in 2007 and a moderator in the very same year and in the early stages it felt like it was pretty much the same members who were on the hockey forum but as we started putting more discussion threads up and more contests up for members to enter, we saw the number of member and the number of threads explode...It was amazing to see and I know that everyone on the hockey staff is very proud of that and this goes for the former hockey mods as well.

SCF: How did you go about setting up the autographed memorabilia side of your business? Do you attend the signings yourself?

RS: Well, that is the hardest question to answer. Setting up was more of a fluke for the memorabilia end of it. It started with myself getting a few autographs from some players I personally know, and doing some of the CFL. Other people would see that I had a few items, and asked if they could get one, and one thing led to another. We then started partnering with some of the biggest dealers in North America, and also do certain players ourselves. I sometimes attend the signings, which is always great to meet the guys in person.

SCF: I know what you mean, I've met a few hockey players to have them sign jerseys and stuff and I must say the night I met Patrick Roy remains one of my best memories ever.

To be that involved in something, you've got to be a big fan of sports in the first place, what's your favourite sport? Generally, big fans all have a "WOW" moment which makes them fans for life, what was yours?

RS: Being from the middle of the prairies in Canada, it is hard not to have hockey as my favourite sport. A close second, if not tied is football. I am a huge fan of the CFL, and the Saskatchewan Roughriders. I don't think that I ever had a big "wow" moment, but I do like to think one of the best moments that made me a hockey fan forever was playing hockey with my dad on cold New Year's Eve on our big backyard rink. Something about that one night when I was 9 or 10 is something I will always remember, and made me a hockey fan and player for life.

SCF: What would be your dream memorabilia item?

RS: A Jacques Plante game used jersey, or autographed mask... Been searching all my life, and yet to find one



SCF: Do you think the lockout is likely to hurt your business?

RS: Well, we are already seeing the effect of the lockout on card and group break sales. There is a dramatic drop-off in interest it seems. With the product coming out now, there are no new players from last year, so it is not as popular.

The autographed items never seem to be affected by anything as far as hockey goes. People buy autographed items of whom they are fans of. Playing, retired or on a work stoppage.

We deal with a lot of the other sports, so business is not “hurting” because of the lockout. Just the wax and single sales...

SCF: Let's all hope that a new collective bargaining agreement will soon be signed and that things can then go back to normal...for businesses, for owners, for players and for fans...What will we ever do with our Saturday nights?!?

SCF: What is your favourite product ever card wise? (In any sport)

RS: I loved ITG's Decades 90s. I mean I just loved it. Not a flashy product, but filled with all the players that I watched in my teens and 20s, when it seems that you forge your favorites and have more time to enjoy sports, before life gets more in the way. I am a huge fan of ITG products myself...

SCF: If you were the NHLPA, would you give a licence to In the Game?

The number of manufacturers is not the issue. The issue is how many different products are released each year.

Each manufacturer brings to the market different things that collectors want to collect. Licensors should be catering to collectors, their customers.

If each of the two current manufacturers have 12 releases per year, the hobby would be better served having three manufacturers each having 8 releases per year.

In The Game brings a lot to the market and should have a license so that they can compete on the level playing field with Panini and Upper Deck.



SCF: Yeah I know what you mean, I watched a lot of hockey myself in the 90s and that product did appeal to me a lot.

SCF: Are you a collector yourself?

RS: I was a huge collector, but have downsized a lot over the last 2 years. I don't have a lot at home anymore, as when I walk into the store, I have 300 jerseys hanging up there, it is hard to decide who to have at home anymore.

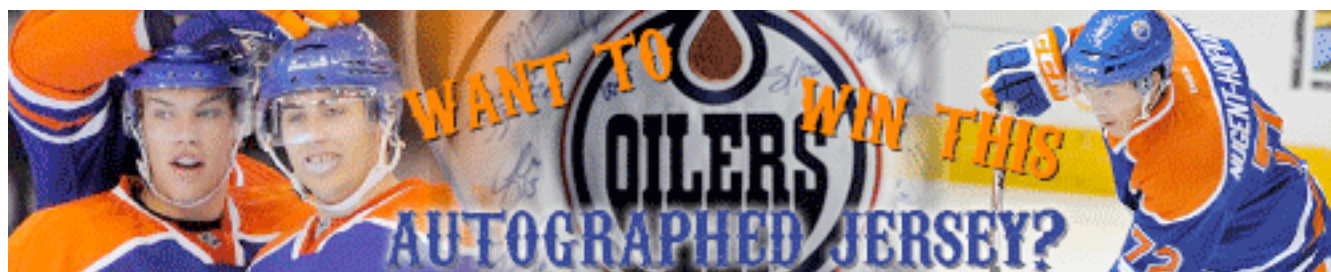
SCF: Where do you see your business in 10 years?

RS: We are looking to be one of the biggest online destinations for memorabilia, wax and singles. We want to be a one stop shop for our customers, and hope that our working relationships with

whom we have partnered will make us that top spot to go. We have a great in store customer base, but the world is right next door now with the internet, and we want the world to be our partner too.

Customer service is also the most important part of our business now as well, as in this day and age of instant communication and connectivity, it is the most important aspect of any business, and we strive to be the best.

Thanks for taking the time to talk to us a little bit Rick, it is always nice to know a little bit more about our sponsors, especially when they're being as generous with the site and the members as you are. Let's hope plenty of members will not only enter the Jaunt for the Jersey but also at the site of the folks who were kind enough to hook us up with such an awesome prize! And let's not forget that if you win one of the legs of the contest, you'll win a \$50 gift certificate on Ramjak Sports!





Everybody Wins

By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888

You may remember that a couple of months back, we held a raffle for Charity on SCF. Up for grabs were two beautiful SPA patch auto cards of Sidney Crosby and Alexander Ovechkin. The prizes had been generously donated by a member and we decided to raise funds for the Diamond Blackfan Anemia foundation as we all knew that a former staff member has a little girl affected by the condition. Little did we know, one of our members also has a son who suffers from the same illness.

I wasn't overly surprised to come across another fund raiser for the foundation on my Facebook today and I was even less surprised when I realized who was running it...As you've probably guessed, yes it is run by the member who's son suffer from DBA. His name is Chris Bossy (username bossy'scards) and he would be very grateful if you could enter the raffle.

The draw will take place on the 8th of December and until then, you can buy as many tickets as you like. Each ticket costs \$25, I can hear a few of you say that it's not cheap but just think that whether you win or not, the money will go to a great charity which helps plenty of people. If you win, you win, if you don't you still win as you will have done a very good deed.

Want to know what's up for grabs? It's a 2009 All-Star Game jersey autographed by 36 players who took part in that game: Malkin, Price, Staal, Weber, Kovalchuk...these are only a few of the names you'll find on this incredible piece of memorabilia! For the complete list of name, check out the poster on the next page, it lists al the players who signed the jersey.





CHARITY RAFFLE

8th December 2012



Participate in a raffle to help raise funds for **Diamond Blackfan anemia inc** to help in research in finding a cure for children with this rare genetics blood disorder.

PRIZE: Replica Rebook Jersey from 2009 centennial Montreal All star game, autographed by 36 players.

Malkin, Weber, Streit, Brown, Souray, E.Staal, Robidas, Thara, Nash, Lunogo, Markov, Vanek, Price, P.Kane, Marleau, N.Backstrom, Giguere, Campbell, Boumeester, Kovalev, Modano, Heatley, Tkachuk, Toews, Ovechkin, Boyle, Carter, Parise, Thornton, Getzlaf, and Savard Komisarek, St-Louis, Hejduk, Thomas, Kovalchuk.

PRICE: 25 \$ per ticket



Organizers & partners:
Chris Bossy, DBA inc,
Le coin du jouet

TO GET TICKETS, more informations or questions contact Chris Bossy,

Email: CPBOSSY@hotmail.com

Tel: 438-878-7159



Chris Bossy





The NFL at the Quarter Pole

By J.R. Lebert aka jrlebert

With the NFL season a quarter over, and the referee lockout now behind us all, it's time to take a look at the biggest surprises and disappointments of the first 25% of the season.

SURPRISE TEAM:

This one is tough. This comes down to two teams that were supposed to be at the bottom of their division, but are now in fact, division leaders.

With a defense that has kept their team in the game each week, and stellar special teams led by budding superstar Patrick Peterson, the Arizona Cardinals sit at 4-0 and atop the NFC West. On offense, Kevin Kolb has managed games well, and has 7 TDs and only 2 INTs. The starting RB job is now Ryan Williams' to lose, as Beanie Wells heads to injury reserve. All Pro Larry Fitzgerald has some help, this time from breakout WR Andre Roberts.

The Cards' defense has surrendered the 3rd fewest points in the league, and has 8 different players with a sack thus far.

The Minnesota Vikings entered this season with more questions than answers, and boy have they found some answers. Christian Ponder looks like the solid QB the Vikings thought they drafted, having yet to throw an interception and completing almost 69% of his passes. Adrian Peterson looks like he is back after major knee surgery, averaging 82 yards a game and catching 10 balls. Their defense is solid, albeit unspectacular, led by Jared Allen. What has really kept them in the game is their special teams, with both a kick return and a punt return for a touchdown in the same game last week!

Because I have to pick one, however, I will go with undefeated Arizona.

MOST DISAPPOINTING TEAM:

Although there are several teams in the running, I have to go with the 1-3, last place Detroit Lions over the 0-4 Saints and the 2-2 Jets. After a win over St. Louis to start the year, they have lost 3 straight, including surrendering 44 points to Tennessee and losing a division game to Minnesota. Fantasy football stud Matthew Stafford has passed for just 3 touchdowns in 4 games, despite having the best receiver in the game in Megatron, Calvin Johnson, and other weapons like Titus Young, Nate Burleson, and Brandon Pettigrew. Their special teams have been unimpressive, and their defense has yet to record an interception through the season's first four games.



THE “THEY ARE WHO WE THOUGHT THEY WERE” TEAM:

For the last few years, Houston has been pegged as the next breakout team, but this was supposed to be their year. With three young QBs in the division (Gabbert, Luck, and Locker), Matt Schaub went in to this season as the veteran in his division. With elite skill players Arian Foster, Andre Johnson, and super sub Ben Tate, the offense has run roughshod over their opponents. On defense, J.J. Watt has proven to be a superstar, but more on him later. Two wins both home and on the road, and an NFL best +70 point differential has many picking the Texans to go all the way to the Super Bowl.



MVP and OFFENSIVE POY:

Matt Ryan, QB, Atlanta Falcons

As quarterback of the only undefeated team we haven't discussed yet, it seems Matty Ice has taken the next step in becoming an elite quarterback in the NFL. He currently boasts the highest QB rating in the league, the second best completion percentage and amount of touchdowns thrown, and the 6th most passing yards. He has led the

Falcons vaunted offense to wins over All Pros Peyton Manning, Philip Rivers, and Cam Newton. If the Falcons can get over their playoff hump, it will be on the arm of their QB, and the QP Offensive MVP.

DEFENSIVE POY:

J.J. Watt, DE, Houston Texans

A quarterback's worst nightmare, J.J. Watt has been, without question, the most terrorizing defensive player through these first 4 games. Tallying at least 1.5 sacks in each game thus far, he leads the NFL with 7.5 sacks total. As if that wasn't enough, when asked to cover, has had tallied 5 pass defenses. When brought up to stop the run, he pounces, as evidenced by his 2 fumble recoveries. What is more important than his numbers, however, is his role. Replacing a legend is always tough, but replacing the franchise's all-time leader in sacks and defensive Approximate Value is downright brutal. The Houston brass knew something, however, when



they let Mario Williams walk and chose to go with the 2nd year pro Watt.

OFFENSIVE ROY:

Robert Griffin III, QB, Washington Redskins

Though Andrew Luck may have been a bit more highly touted, everyone seemed to agree that RG3 was headed to the better situation. With weapons Pierre Garcon, Leonard Hankerson,

Santana Moss, Fred Davis, and fellow contender for this award RB Alfred Morris at his disposal, Griffin has excelled through the first 4 games. Scoring the second most points in the conference (also giving up the second most, too; not his fault) while becoming the second rookie QB ever to pass for 1,000 yards in his first four games he has made the league take notice. He already has

tied the team record for rushing touchdowns by a QB, and his total (4), currently leads the NFL! He has a 4-1 TD/INT ratio, and has the Redskins one game out of first place.



DEFENSIVE ROY:

Chandler Jones, DE, New England Patriots

Leading all rookies in sacks, former Syracuse DE Chandler Jones has provided the edge rush that New England has been missing since the departure of Richard Seymour. His motor never stops running, and he has more than proven he was worth the 21st overall pick in the 2012 draft.

COMEBACK PLAYER OF THE YEAR:

Peyton Manning, QB, Denver Broncos

Could it really be anyone else? Denver's Manning has people thinking about the ghost of Elway's past. While arm strength is still a concern, there is no doubt that everything else is vintage Peyton. In a week 4 drubbing of Oakland, 37-6, Peyton completed almost 79% of his passes, totaled 3 TDs and 0 INTs, and passed for over 330 yards. While arguments can be made



for Adrian Peterson, if Peyton continues to progress as he has through these first four games, look out NFL. It appears Peyton is back.

COACH OF THE YEAR

Ken Whisenhunt, Arizona Cardinals

As previously stated, the Cardinals have no business being 4-0. Their offense was supposed to be anemic, yet they are squarely in the middle of the pack in the NFC. Their defense had too many holes, yet only 2 teams in all of the NFL have given up fewer points. Much like their improbable run to the Super Bowl in 2008, Whisenhunt has everything clicking in Arizona, and for that, he gets the QP COY award.



LEAST VALUABLE PLAYER

(Tied) Mark Sanchez and Tim Tebow, QBs, New York Jets

Though the season is still young, it appears the New York Jets are in trouble. After pounding Buffalo to open the season, the Jets have lost two of three, and more importantly, seem to have lost their offensive rhythm. This was

supposed to be the season where "The Sanchize" made the jump to the elite level. A completion percentage under 50% and two games with less than 140 passing yards are not steps in the right direction. But that's OK, right? If he falters, they have Super Savior Tim Tebow to rescue them! Not so much. Tebow has more tackles (1) than touchdowns, and is averaging a meager 11 yards per game of total offense... ELEVEN! Our QP

LVP is deservedly shared by these two signal callers from New York.



Rinkside

By Sean McCafferty aka Ranfordfan30

To the chagrin of hockey fans everywhere, the NHL owners have locked out the players for the second time in seven years. No regular season games had been missed at the time of writing, nor had a player missed an actual paycheck, but there is a growing sense of gloom surrounding the NHL, and few people expect to see a resolution to this dispute anytime soon.

The NHL is coming off a season which saw revenues climb to historic highs, and it was one in which the Los Angeles Kings captured the first Stanley Cup in franchise history. One would think that a league buoyed by having a Championship won in one of North America's largest media markets, an outdoor game scheduled to be played in front of over 100,000 fans at the Big House in Michigan, and a new broadcast deal with NBC finally paying dividends on all the league's work from the last two decades, would want to see the 2012-13 season start on time.

We can only sit back and cross our fingers that both the league and the players association come to their senses, and work out a deal in the very near future.

Having said that, the NHL lockout does not mean that contests will be locked out in the Hockey section of Sports Card Forum!

We are very pleased to announce a new partnership between Sports Card Forum, and [Ramjak Sports](#). Our friends at Ramjak are one of the top online dealers of sports cards, and autographed memorabilia. We are thrilled to be able to give away an autographed 2011-12 Edmonton Oilers Team Jersey! This sweater has been signed by the likes of Taylor Hall, Jordan Eberle, Ryan Nugent-Hopkins, and many, many, more!

Throughout the season, there will be a series of contests in which SCF members will be able to accumulate points. The member who accumulates the most points will be awarded the jersey! These contests will test both the predicting skills, and creativity, of members entering.

Ramjak will also be providing prizes throughout the year for many of the individual legs of the overall contest. The first leg has been posted, a contest asking 'When will the lockout end?' (and all sorts of other questions surrounding the league's next Collective Bargaining Agreement, and even the interim playing status of some of the league's biggest stars). Members will be competing to win a \$50 gift certificate for Ramjak Sports online store.

Nobody likes a lockout, but at SCF we are still very excited to be able to offer up great prizes like these. We really need to express our thanks to [Ramjak Sports](#), without them this contest would not be possible. We also need to express our continued thanks to SCF's members, as it is you that make this the best trading site on the internet!



Courtside

By Jay Weger aka Jay520

Contests & Winners

For sure this October contests will be busting out with the return of GUESS the serial number and new GUESS the card. On top of that will be some of the season long contests in NBA Awards, NBA Top Performers and GUESS the Score. Prizes have yet to be announced but with the sites new sponsors you will be in store for some nice stuff in the way of 8x10 signed pics and jerseys. Theme Weeks for September saw some nice cards entered. Theme Week #16 and #17 had andreamjohnson win back to back. Theme week #18 saw a new winner in Force Majeur. And in Theme Week # 19 Smashmouth20 got the win.

Hobby News

By Bryce Doody aka bdoody42

This was a hectic month in the hobby world with three new products being released. 2012-2013 Panini Prestige came out and offered a product full of rookies from the last two seasons and a huge amount of inserts to collect. This product also comes with four hits per hobby box including three autographs. With a price tag hovering around \$100 bucks it's a nice product that won't break the bank.

2012 Leaf Signature Series Hobby Box came out early September and offers a product that is all hits. In each box you get five autographs of this year's rookie class. This product is good for someone who is just looking for the "hits" and not interested in base or inserts. It started at about \$90 a box but can now be found for around \$70.

2011/2012 Fleer Retro has made a huge splash this month in the hobby world. This product has created a huge buzz that the hobby needed. Each hobby box of this product yields six autos and at least four inserts. The release Fleer Retro has brought back some of the best cards of the 90's including Precious Medal Gems more commonly known as PMG's, Flair Showcase, Jambalaya and Big Man On Court.

This time around there are three different PMG's to collect. The red is numbered to 150, the blue to 50, and green to 10. These cards have been going for insane amounts on eBay. For example a LeBron James Green PMG sold for over 12,000 dollars!!! A Michael Jordan blue PMG's have been selling between \$8000 and \$10,000. Even less notable players have seen big dollars be spent on their PMG's. A Christian Laettner green sold for over \$600. Retro also offers amazing autos such as new Autographics and Michael Jordan Autographed buyback 1/1 cards which are selling at prices through the roof!! When the product first came out you could find boxes for



\$300-\$350 a piece. Now most boxes cost around \$650-\$700 dollars.



Also this month some good news has come to the ears of basketball collectors.

The return of Upper Deck Exquisite Basketball! It will be released October 16th. Also later in the month, Panini Threads and Leaf Ultimate Basketball will be released.

Milestone Collections **By Robin Jensen aka Frantiic**

Nina (Nancy) got published in Beckett Magazine the College issue for her Super Collection of UCLA Bruin autos in basketball. I was lucky enough to ask her a few questions about it.

What does it mean to you to be published by beckett as a super collector?

I think it's the best award for a collector! I'm very, very happy! I still can't believe it.

What got you into collecting, and why UCLA?

I played basketball in 1992 in school and I also watched it on television. My sister bought me my first pack in 1993! I was immediately fascinated... I call it fever!

In 1995, I followed the final four in college basketball. And that was the start of my interest for UCLA. I have collected UCLA autographs since 2008. I love the 2008 Press Pass Kart!

Is it hard to be a collector living in Europe, with not a lot of hobby-related stores to buy product from?

It's harder to get new cards, but I have a great card shop "Hot Box" in Berlin! And a lot of friends help me to get new cards. And a huge thank you goes out to my very good friend Dennis (Fido), for helping me buy "US-only" cards!"





NBA News

By Bryce Doody aka bdoody42

While September is normally not an action packed month for basketball, ESPN gave us some good reading material when releasing their top 500 NBA players.

Every year there are players who move up and down the board. This year there was a run of young guys who had big seasons and skyrocketed up the list. Three point guards that really made a name for themselves with a huge jump from last year are Kyrie Irving who jumped from 140th

last year to 22nd this year and fellow rookie point guard Ricky Rubio also didn't disappoint going from 204th to 47th. Jeremy Lin went from 467th to 78th after his "Linsanity" in Feb/March last year. Of course when some guys are flying up the list other players must drop. Amare Stoudemire was one of the biggest drops. He nosedived from 13th to 43rd after a less than stellar season. Dirk Nowitzki fell from 5th to 11th.

A young core of big men also found themselves climbing up the charts. Greg Monroe went from 132nd to 49th, Roy Hibbert went from 95th to 35th, and DeMarcus Cousins climbed from 82nd to 42nd. Anthony Davis was the highest rookie. He came in as the 62nd best.

The Lakers as a team had four players in the top twenty with Dwight Howard, Kobe Bryant, Pau Gasol, and Steve Nash. The Thunder had two top ten players with their three time scoring champ Kevin Durant and Russell Westbrook. The Heat also has two top ten GUys with Dwyane Wade and the LeBron James who topped the list this year.

So here is the Top 10 NBA Player List by ESPN:

10. Deron Williams – Brooklyn Nets V **1** from last year.
9. Russell Westbrook – Oklahoma Thunder ^ **6** from last year.
8. Dwyane Wade – Miami Heat V **5** from last year.
7. Kevin Love – Minnesota Timberwolves ^ **9** from last year.
6. Kobe Bryant – Los Angeles Lakers ^ **1** from last year.
5. Derrick Rose – Chicago Bulls ^ **3** from last year.
4. Chris Paul – Los Angeles Clippers <-> from last year.
3. Dwight Howard – Los Angeles Lakers V **1** from last year.
2. Kevin Durant – Oklahoma Thunder ^ **4** from last year.
1. LeBron James – Miami Heat <-> from last year.



Also ESPN added the first Power Rankings by team:

1. Miami Heat
2. Los Angeles Lakers
3. Oklahoma Thunder
4. San Antonio Spurs
5. Los Angeles Clippers
6. Boston Celtics
7. Philadelphia 76ers
8. Indiana Pacers
9. Denver Nuggets
10. Dallas Mavericks

On the injury front there was some good and bad news. First the good news, Lakers fans must be happy to hear Dwight Howard is ahead of schedule on his rehab plan and looks to play on opening night. Heat fans will also be glad that Dwyane Wade should be ready to go on opening night as well as the Heat try to defend their title. The bad news, John Wall has developed a knee injury that will keep him out 8 weeks and that is not how the new look Wizards want to start their season. Derrick Rose will also will a considerable amount of time at the start of the season due to his torn ACL, as will Ricky Rubio.

Pack & Box Breaks

In September there were 2 new products ready for breaking. First is 11-12 Fleer Retro by Jprk31 with just 1 box pulling RC Sensations autos of E'Tuan Moore, Klay Thompson and Chris Singleton, Autographics of Marshon Brooks and John Beilein, Competitive Advantage of Hakeem Olajuwon, Championship Hardware of Christian Laetnerr, Flair Showcase of Markieff Morris /150, Intimidation Nation of Larry Johnson and Jambalaya of Penny Hardaway. cavaliersfan30 got a box pulling RC Sensations autos of Nikola Vucevic, E'Tuan Moore, Reggie Jackson and Josh Shelby, Autographics of Homer Drew, Ultra Stars of Chris Paul, Court Masters of Julius Erving, Flair Showcase of David Thompson /150 and Championship Hardware of Michael Jordan. jprt80 opened 2 boxes taking in RC sensations autos of Tobias Harris, Demetri McCamey, Malcolm Lee and Justin Harper, base autos of Cazzie Russell and Kenny Anderson, Autographics of Mark Weber, Avery Johnson and Tim Hardaway, Championship Hardware of Tim Hardaway (2), Competitive Advantage of Michael Jordan, Flair Showcase of Penny Hardaway /150 and David Thompson /150, Intimidation Nation of Bill Walton and Precious Metal Gems blue Mark Jackson /50. bigsmoke bought 2 boxes to pull RC Sensations autos of Chandler Parsons, Norris Cole, Bismack Biyombo and JuJuan Johnson, Autographics of Mike



Brey, Michael Ray Richardson, Tobias Harris, Durrell Summers, 86-87 auto of Adrian Dantley, Big Men on Court of Chris Paul, Championship Hardware of Danny Manning, Competitive Advantage of George Gervin, Flair Showcase of Glen Rice /150, Intimidation Nation of Penny Hardaway, Ultra Stars of Alonzo Mourning, Jambalaya of Bill Russell and PMG's Red of Reggie Theus /150 and John Starks /150. McPUG busted 2 boxes earning RC Sensations autos of Marshon Brooks, Tristan Thompson and Shelvin Mack, 88-89 autos of Tyler Honeycutt and Chris Singleton, Autographics of Dana Altman, Scotty Hopson and Markieff Morris, Championship Hardware of David Thompson and James Worthy, Competitive Advantage of James Worthy, Flair Showcase of Robert Horry /150 and Terry Porter /150, Intimidation Nation of Julius Erving, Jambalaya of Penny Hardaway, PMG's Red of Bill Cartwright /150, and PMG Blue of Julius Erving /50. the GURU went with 3 boxes pulling RC Sensations autos of E'Tuan Moore, Josh Selby, Corey Joseph, Nolan Smith, JaJuan Johnson, Jimmer Fredette, Jon Leuer, Tristan Thompson, Shelvin Mack, base autos of Bob McAdoo and Kenny Smith, Autographics of Mike Montgomery, Thad Motta, Chris Singleton and Marshon Brooks, A Cut Above of Larry

Johnson and Tim Hardaway, Competitive Advantage of Clyde Drexler and David Thompson, Court Masters of Penny Hardaway, Flair Showcase of David Thompson /150 and Grant Hill /150, Golden Ticket of Jerry West, Intimidation Nation of Bill Laimbeer, Fleer 61 of MJ, PMG's Red John Starks /150, PMG's Blue George Gervin /50 and PMG Green of Alonzo Mourning /10. da_man1980 bought a case with several nice hits like big Men on Court of Larry Bird, Competitive Advantage of Larry Bird, Bill Russell and Michael Jordan, Autographics of Julius Erving, PMG's Red of Magic Johnson /150, Rick Barry /150, Walt Frazier /150 and Michael Jordan /150, PMG Blue of Jimmer Fredette /50 and PMG Green of Bill Russell /10!!!

Second was 12-13 Prestige with revad09 opening a box pulling Prestigious Picks autos of John Leuer and LaVoy Allen, Old School auto of John Stockton, True Colors GU of Michael Beasley as the hits to go with several 11-12 and 12-13 rc's plus star player inserts. 44 Magnum got 1 box + 5 packs netting hits of Prestigious Picks autos of John Henson, E'Tuan Moore, Jimmy Butler, Tyler Honeycutt and Nolan Smith, True Colors GU of Tyson Chandler with 11-12 and 12-13 rc's plus star player inserts. spoodini opened a box getting Prestigious Picks autos of Norris Cole, Brandon Knight and Jordan Williams, True Colors GU of Glen Davis and inserts plus rc's. cavaliersfan30 opened 3 boxes of Prestige to pull Prestigious Picks autos of Anthony Davis, Derrick Williams, Kendall Marshall, Evan Fournier and Tyler Zeller, Old school autos of Adrian Dantley and Sidney Monchrief, True Colors GU of Anderson Varejao and Ty Lawson. the GURU bought 6 boxes to pull Prestigious Picks autos of Michael Kidd-Gilchrist, Jimmer Fredette, Andre Drummond, Markieff Morris and others, Prestigious Pros auto Raymond Felton (red.), Old school autos of Sam Perkins, Steve Smith and Detlef Schrempf, True Colors GU of Kevin Garnett patch/25, Deron Williams, Luol Deng, Stephen Curry and others, Inside the Colors GU of John Wall and PlayMakers insert of Danny Granger. at350zGUy went overboard



with 10 boxes (yes 10). Here are his hit Prestigious Picks autos Kendall Marshall (3), Austin Rivers, Fab Melo, Andre Drummond, Terrence Jones, Marquis TeaGUE and many others, Old School auto of Kenny Walker, True Colors GU of Dwight Howard, Ray Allen and Kemba Walker, Inside the Numbers GU DeMarcus Cousins, John Wall and Stephen Curry patch/25 with a PlayMakers insert of Derrick Rose.

12-13 Hoops was opened by bennynd and autos pulled were Jimmer Fredette and Jose Calderon with several inserts and rookies. revad09 got a box to get autos of Tyler Zeller and Dante Cunningham plus inserts and rookies. HerdsMan87 bought a box plus packs to have autos of Brandon Bass and Marcus Morris, 89 Buy-back auto of Ralph Sampson and the Heat Champions card. Zepplin1985 got 2 boxes to pull RC Impact autos of Tristan Thompson and Kawhi Leonard, Draft Night auto of Meyers Leonard, Quincy Miller auto and a Kobe All-Rookie Team insert of Klay Thompson at 1 per case. Fortefan broke a box of 11-12 Limited getting a Trophy Case GU of Danny Granger /99, Retired Numbers auto of Dan Majerle (red.) and a 11-12 Draft Pick auto redemption. Force Majeur pulled Limited Threads GU of Derrick Rose, Decades auto of Walt Frazier /99 and 11-12 draft Pick auto redemption as well from Limited. To finish revad09 opened 2 boxes of Limited earning hits of 2 11-12 Draft Pick auto redemptions, Limited Threads of Brandon Jennings, Masterful Marks of DeAndre Jordan /50 (red.) and a sick Glass Cleaners prime patch auto of Kevin Love /5!!!





Chase Omissions 2012 Version By Stephen Taylor aka race crazy



Every year in every sport some hotshot team or pre-season favorite flounders out, chokes, stinks up the joint. In Nascar that is no different however unpredictability and luck perhaps play more of a factor than in other sports. A supremely talented driver can only do so much to carry a race car that refuses to turn or tries to put him or her in the fence every lap by sliding sideways. Since Nascar's chase style playoff system has been in place (2004) only one driver has made every chase, 5-time consecutive champion Jimmie

Johnson. Denny Hamlin has made it every year since he has been in the sport, but Johnson and his team remain the only constant force since the chase's inception. Johnson and the 48 team are the only ones who have been remarkably consistent year in and year out, the only ones who can truly be viewed as a sports dynasty. To put it in the context of other sports they are Jordan's Bulls, Brady's Patriots, the Great One's Oilers. Every other chase contender can be viewed as playoff teams with a few who are usually constant threats. However every year there are always omissions. 2012 saw two huge ones.

Kyle Busch and Carl Edwards are two of the most well-known and talented drivers in the sport of Nascar today. Put Busch or Edwards in a Nationwide car or Camping World Truck of any quality and they demolish the competition or run in the top 5 with ease. However, in the Cup series one does not simply do that no matter their talent level. The team chemistry, the driver and crew working together, and a combination of speed and luck lead to success.

Busch is known by many in the garage to be the most talented driver of his generation yet his lack of success in Nascar's playoffs is baffling to many. He is that team that goes "undefeated" in the regular season then loses its first playoff game with the home field advantage year in and year out (see 2008). It is frustrating to Busch fans and frustrating for those who feel his talent is being wasted in some aspects. This year despite winning 1 race at Richmond and running a strong 2nd at Indianapolis Busch has been cursed by bad luck and bad runs. He got in someone else's mess at Bristol, got spun out of the lead and a sure victory at Watkins Glen due to someone else's oil, and he saw his car just break on him 4 times, 3 times consecutively. In the Cup Series, one cannot have those issues. Busch still had a chance going into Richmond this fall but got displaced by a bad pit call and a superb run under pressure from 4 time champ Jeff Gordon.



Carl Edwards tied for the championship last year and lost. That hurts. Considered by many to be the pre-season favorite for the title Edwards looked to contend. However it became evident that something was missing. Longtime crew chief Bob Osborne had to step down midway through the season after health issues, and it seemed it was the least of Edwards' problems. Every week a good run was happening the bad luck cloud that followed Busch followed Edwards. A black flag at Richmond, wrecks not of his doing at Bristol and Talladega, broken parts and endless penalties, along with a lot of just mediocre runs put the 99 out of chase contention.

It is hard to fathom how 2 drivers so talented miss the chase. But it happens. Every great player doesn't always win the big game and sometimes their team doesn't even get a chance to. Edwards and Busch are just the latest to underperform. As two of the most talented drivers in the sport, they will bounce back. Bank on it.





The Resurgence of Ichiro
By J.R. Lebert aka jrlebert

It was almost as if it was scripted. The Yankees came to Seattle to play what looked like a relatively meaningless 3-game series against the struggling Mariners. Behind the scenes, however, the two teams were working to complete a deal that sent shockwaves through the A.L. East. As it scrolled across the bottom line on ESPN, it was hard to believe.



“Ichiro Suzuki traded to the New York Yankees with cash for 2 relievers.” Not only was he traded, but he would play that same night, in the same stadium he helped fill for 11 years. The only difference? He would be wearing pinstripes, and donning #31.

Many in baseball thought this might be a last ditch effort to resurrect his career. The great Ichiro seemed to be on his last baseball legs. Though he led the league in games and at bats, he and his Mariners both floundered. Seattle won a meager 67 games, and much of the blame was placed on the diminutive shoulders of its franchise’s last link to the incredible but underachieving 2001 team. Career lows for Ichiro dotted his stat line. He tallied 184 hits, 22 less than his previous low, and a .272 batting average, setting a low mark by 31 points. An OBP of .310 and an OPS of .645 set low marks by 50 and 102 (!) points, respectively. He also grounded into double-digit double plays for the first time in 11 years, on top of hitting a career low 5 home runs. A few historic streaks also came to an end: ten straight seasons of 200 hits, ten straight Gold Glove awards, ten straight All-Star appearances...None of these would make it to 11.

2012 was not looking much better. Ichiro’s numbers were even worse, and for the first time, there were rumblings in Seattle that it might be time for a change. A .261 average and an OBP well under 30%, paired with his \$17 million dollar salary and his age (38) sealed his fate, but how do you move someone whose numbers and salary make it so difficult to do so? Simple, you make a call to the Dark Side. Baseball’s “Evil Empire”, the New York Yankees, just so happened to be coming in to town. With a major injury to their starting CF Brett Gardner, the timing could not have been more serendipitous. The deal was made. Would a change of scenery be all the Japanese superstar would need? Or did his once fantastic hitting eye and blazing speed erode beyond repair?



Much to the chagrin of the rest of the A.L. East, and the Mariners, Ichiro hit the ground running, and has become one of the most important players on baseball's most famous team. The same player who has been on the only two teams to win the World Baseball Classic has now put a charge into the postseason run of the Yankees. The older Ichiro has begun to play like the Ichiro of old.

Since the trade, Ichiro has gone from bench player and platoon outfielder to a top of the order force and full time starter. Through September, he is batting .329 with the Yankees, raising his overall average on the year by 24 points. His slugging percentage with New York would be a career high. He has more HRs with New York (5) than he did with Seattle (4), despite 200 fewer at bats! At the time of his trade, he had the lowest OBP of any full time player on the Yankees.

Of the 16 players with more than 50 PA's, Ichiro now ranks 5th in OBP. Incredibly, he also is tied for the TEAM LEAD in stolen bases with 13 in just 60+ games, giving the Yankees the speed element they had been missing after the injury to Gardner.

Though most players wilt under the pressure of a September pennant race, especially under the bright lights of New York, Ichiro has risen to the occasion. He had 11 multi-hit games in the month, leading to a September batting average of .385! In all of Major League Baseball, only two men, Marco Scutaro and Joe Mauer, have 80+ ABs and a higher average. Though he is 107th in ABs, he is 11th in hits and second in stolen bases.

He is fitting in quite nicely in his new digs. Hit totals in September: Jeter, 36. Ichiro, 35. Cano, 34. His batting average at Yankee Stadium in 2012? .353. On the road against the Orioles, the team they have been locked in battle with the entire second half? .571! And his batting average vs. Texas, the co-favorite to win the AL pennant? .321.

While it remains to be seen how, or even IF, Ichiro figures in to the Yankees plans next season, what is crystal clear is that if the Yankees are to make another World Series run, they will need the magnificent bat and glove of one of the true greats of the game in this millennium, Ichiro Suzuki.

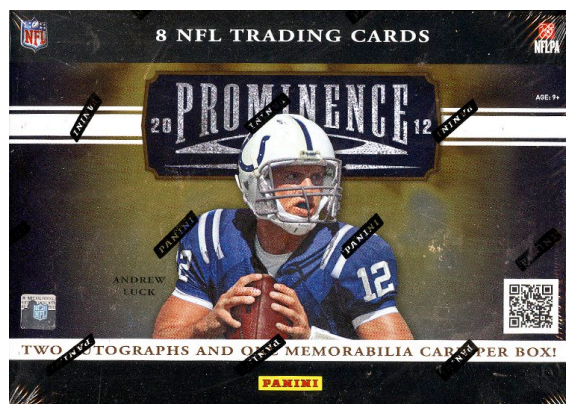




SCF Official Review: 2012 Panini Prominence

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

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



1 pack per box

8 cards per pack

Current Retail Price (online): \$100.00 (MAPP) - \$119.99

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Illustrious Signatures (30 cards)

- Autograph cards from a few of the NFL's best players ever to strap a helmet on. Sequentially Numbered to 99 or Less.

Eminence Combo Signatures (15 cards)

- Dual autograph cards from some of the best dual threats to play the game! Also, look for Triple Signatures Versions. Sequentially Numbered to 10 or Less.

Rookie Field Plate Sigs / RC Embroidered NFL Team Logo Patch Sigs

There are 5 different ways to collect the 35 NFL Players Rookie Premiere Rookies:

- Autographed Nameplate Letter
- Autographed NFL Team Field Plate
- Autographed Team Logo Patch
- Autograph with NFL Team Helmet
- Autograph with Event Worn Jersey Swatch
- All Sequentially Numbered to the Same Quantities.

Black & Blue Materials (30 Cards)

This hard hitting insert features a game or event worn swatch from some of the best players in the game today. Sequentially Numbered to 49 or Less

Unlimited Potential Materials

Signatures Prime (35 Cards) Features an event-worn prime jersey swatch and an autograph. Sequentially Numbered to 49 or Less



Illustrious Signatures (30 Cards)

Autographed cards from a few of the NFL's best players ever to strap a helmet on. Sequentially Numbered to 99 or Less

Eminence Combo Signatures

Rookie Signatures

Premiere Prime Materials Signature

WHAT WE PULLED

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-ZK5LhtwcE>



Base /897 (5) - Mike Thomas, Chris Johnson, Matt Schaub, Michael Strahan, Willie Brown



Rookie Die Cut Janoris Jenkins Autograph /199



Rookie Team Helmet Chris Givens Autograph /240

Unlimited Potential Prime
Andrew Luck 1-color Patch/
Coby Fleener 2-color Patch /
49





FINAL THOUGHTS

Base - 4.5/5

Design - 4/5

Fun - 5/5

Value - 3.5/5

Rebuy - 3.5/5

Total - 20.5/5 (82%)

Pros:

3 hits per box

All cards are numbered

1 pack boxes are always quick and exciting

Cons:

True master base set consists of 100 autographs

Seems to be a lot like Limited

A little steep in price based on return

No NPN for product

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

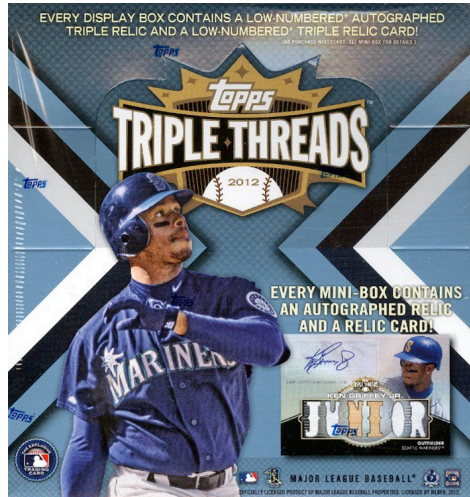




SCF Official Review: 2012 Topps Triple Threads

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

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



2 packs per box

7 cards per pack

Current Retail Price (online): \$199.99 - \$229.99

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

BASE CARDS

100 Base Cards

PARALLEL CARDS - 100 subjects each

- Sepia Parallel - #'d to 625

- Emerald Parallel - #'d to 250

- Gold Parallel - #'d to 99

- Onyx Parallel - #'d to 50

- Sapphire Parallel - #'d to 25

- Ruby Parallel - #'d 1 of 1

- Printing Plates - All 1 of 1's! 400 total!

AUTOGRAPHED TRIPLE RELICS (1 PER BOX)

Rookies & Future Phenoms Autographed Relic Base Cards

Over 50 up-and-coming MLB stars. These cards will be SIGNED ON CARD. #'d to 99

- Sepia Parallel - #'d to 75

- Emerald Parallel - #'d to 50

- Gold Parallel - #'d to 25

- Sapphire Parallel - #'d to 10

- Ruby Parallel - #'d 1 of 1

- Wood Parallel - #'d 1 of 1

- "White Whale" Printing Plates - All 1 of 1's! Four per subject!



Triple Threads Autographed Relics

270 different cards featuring over 75 players with anywhere from 1 to 5 different die cuts per player! #d to 18.

- Gold Parallel - #d to 9
- Sapphire Parallel - #d to 3
- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1
- Wood Parallel - #d 1 of 1
- "White Whale" Printing Plates - All 1 of 1's! Four per subject!

Triple Threads Combos Autographed Relics

15 cards each featuring 3 players with 3 relics and 3 autos per card! #d to 36.

- Sepia Parallel - #d to 27
- Emerald Parallel - #d to 18
- Gold Parallel - #d to 9
- Sapphire Parallel - #d to 3
- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1
- Wood Parallel - #d 1 of 1
- "White Whale" Printing Plates - All 1 of 1's! Four per card!

Triple Threads Autographed Relic Double Combos

6 different BOOK cards each featuring 6 Players with 6 relics and 6 autos per card! #d to 3.

- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads Jumbo Plus Autographed Relics

16 BOOK cards featuring a player with an autograph and 3 relics, 1 of which is a Jumbo relic. #d to 3.

- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads LETTER PLUS Autographed Relic

16 BOOK cards featuring a player with an autograph and 3 relics, 1 of which is a Letter Patch relic. #d to 3.

- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads CUT ABOVE CUT SIGNATURES

10 different cards featuring an all-time Legend with his signature and 3 relics. #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads DUAL CUT ABOVE CUT SIGNATURES

6 BOOK cards featuring two all-time Legends with their signatures and 6 relics. #d 1 of 1.



TRIPLE RELICS (1 PER BOX)

Triple Threads Relics

Over 150 different cards featuring over 50 players with 3 relics, each with 3 different die cuts. #d to 36.

- Sepia Parallel - #d to 27
- Emerald Parallel - #d to 18
- Gold Parallel - #d to 9
- Sapphire Parallel - #d to 3
- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1
- Wood Parallel - #d 1 of 1

Triple Threads Relics Legends

20 cards featuring all-time Legends with 3 relics. #d to 36.

- Sepia Parallel - #d to 27
- Emerald Parallel - #d to 18
- Gold Parallel - #d to 9
- Sapphire Parallel - #d to 3
- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1

Triple Threads Flashback Relics

25 double-fronted cards with 3 relics visible from both sides of the card! Two player images and two different die cuts will be featured on each card. #d to 36.

- Sepia Parallel - #d to 27
- Emerald Parallel - #d to 18
- Gold Parallel - #d to 9
- Sapphire Parallel - #d to 3
- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1

Triple Threads Relic Combos

60 cards featuring 3 players and 3 relics. #d to 36.

- Sepia Parallel - #d to 27
- Emerald Parallel - #d to 18
- Gold Parallel - #d to 9
- Sapphire Parallel - #d to 3
- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1

Triple Threads Relic Double Combos

- 6 BOOK cards featuring 6 players and 6 relics. #d to 18
- Gold Parallel - #d to 9



- Sapphire Parallel - #d to 3
- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads All-Star Patches

Over 70 cards featuring patch pieces from the 2011 MLB All-Star Game Work-Out Jerseys. #d to 9.

- Platinum Parallel - #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads All-Star Jumbo Sleeve Patches

Over 70 BOOK cards featuring Jumbo Patches from the 2011 MLB All-Star Game Work-Out Jerseys. #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads All-Star Jumbo Sleeve Team Patches

Over 70 BOOK cards featuring Jumbo Patches from the 2011 MLB All-Star Game Work-Out Jerseys. #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads All-Star MLB SILHOUETTED BATTER Logo Patch

Over 70 cards featuring the MLB Silhouetted Batter Logo Patch from the 2011 MLB All-Star Game Work-Out Jerseys. #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads All-Star Laundry Tag

Over 70 BOOK cards featuring the laundry tag from the 2011 MLB All-Star Game Work-Out Jerseys. #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads Bat Name Plates

15 BOOK cards featuring a player's bat name plate. #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads Letter Plus Relics

16 BOOK cards featuring a player with 3 relics, 1 of which is a Letter Patch relic. #d to 3.

- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads Jumbo Plus Relics

16 BOOK cards featuring a player with 3 relics, 1 of which is a Jumbo relic. #d to 3

- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1

Triple Threads Bat Knobs

10 BOOK cards featuring a player's bat knob. #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads Jumbo Patch Combos

10 BOOK cards featuring 3 players and a Jumbo Patch from each player. #d 1 of 1.



Triple Threads Jumbo Letter/Number/Logo

10 BOOK cards featuring 3 Patches from a player, including a jersey letter and a hat logo. #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads Singular Swatches

10 cards featuring unique relic pieces like you've never seen before! #d 1 of 1.

SINGLE RELICS

Triple Threads Unity Single Relics

Over 250 cards featuring MLB Award-winners, such as League MVPs, Rookies of the Year, and Postseason MVPs, with a relic piece. #d to 36.

- Sepia Parallel - #d to 27
- Emerald Parallel - #d to 18
- Gold Parallel - #d to 9
- Sapphire Parallel - #d to 3
- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1.

Triple Threads Unity Autograph Relics

Over 100 cards featuring MLB Award-winners, such as League MVPs, Rookies of the Year, and Postseason MVPs, with an autograph and a relic piece. #d to 99.

- Sepia Parallel - #d to 75
- Emerald Parallel - #d to 50
- Gold Parallel - #d to 25
- Sapphire Parallel - #d to 10
- Ruby Parallel - #d 1 of 1.

WHAT WE PULLED

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_UOh-BEP4n0

Base - 6/100 (6%)



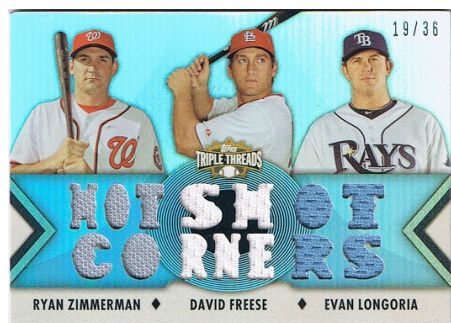
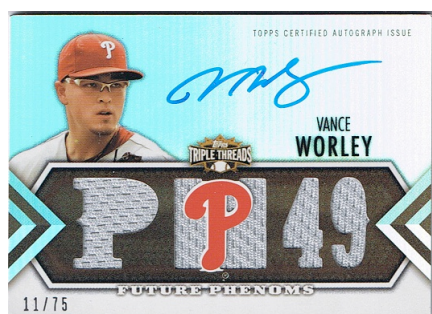


Sepia /625 (2) - Alex Rodriguez, Rickey Henderson
 Emerald /250 (1) - Jay Bruce
 Amber /125 (1) - Kevin Youkilis



R o o k i e
 P h e n o m s

Vance Worley Triple Relic/Autograph /75



Ryan Zimmerman/David Freese/Evan Longoria Triple
 Relic /36



Gary Carter Jersey/Autograph /50



Bobby Doerr Bat /36



FINAL THOUGHTS

Base - 4/5
 Design - 4/5
 Fun - 5/5
 Value - 3.5/5
 Rebuy - 3/5

Total - 19.5/25 (78%)

Pros:

2 hits per pack
 Sturdy cardstock
 Limited amount of base cards creates a nice chase set

Cons:

Unnumbered base
 Price point eliminates a big portion of collecting market
 No inserts, just parallels

NPN Information:

NPN 2012 Topsp Triple Threads Baseball
 PO Box 2036
 Duryea PA 18642



Limit 1 request per household

Postmarked By: 12/19/12

Received By: 12/26/12

Canada Skills: $11 \times 6 + 10 - 7 = ?$

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 of their products, visit them today at www.topps.com.

The base cards are available for request. Please PM me if interested in any of the cards. Cards are available for 30 days from the time this review is posted. As always, only VIPs may make requests for the first 48 hours.

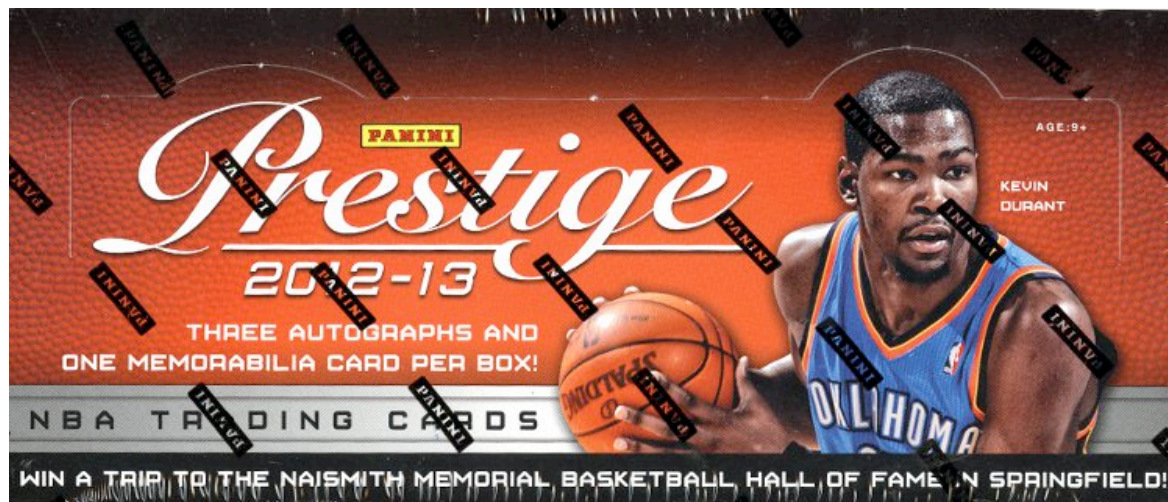




SCF Official Review: 2012/13 Panini Prestige

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

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



24 packs per box

5 cards per pack

Current Retail Price (online): \$96.00 (MAPP) - \$109.99

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Common

Fresh new design featuring the top current players and a full roster of rookies!

Rookie

Look for live rookie cards from both the 2011-12 and 2012-13 rookie classes, including 2012 Rookie of the Year Kyrie Irving!

Prestigious Pros

Look for autographs of the game's top performers!

True Colors

Jersey swatches from some of the game's prime players, including Kevin Durant.



Inside The Numbers

Significant player achievements highlighted along with a prime swatch of memorabilia.

Distinctive Ink

Vertically designed to show off the player's portrait along with an on-card autograph!

WHAT WE PULLED

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mK443OM5Udo>

Box Topper Pack:

Kobe Anthology (5)

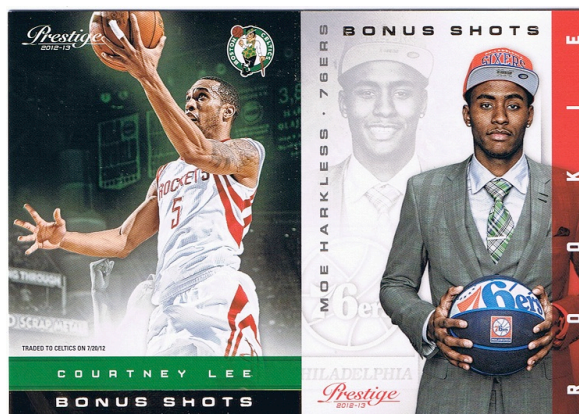
Base - 148/150 (98.7%)

Dupes - 3



Rookies - 24/100 (24%)

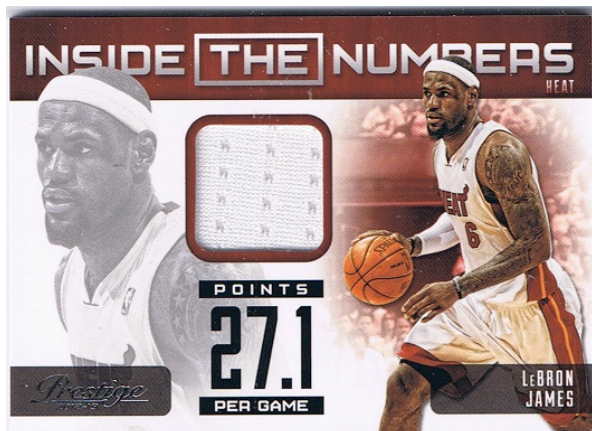
Bonus Shots /249 (1) - Courtney Lee
Rookie Bonus Shots /249 (1) - Moe Harkless





Connections (3)
Franchise Favorites (3)
Hardcourt Heroes (3)
Stars Of The NBA (3)

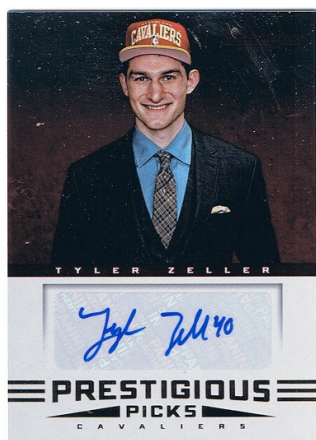
Inside The Numbers LeBron James Jersey



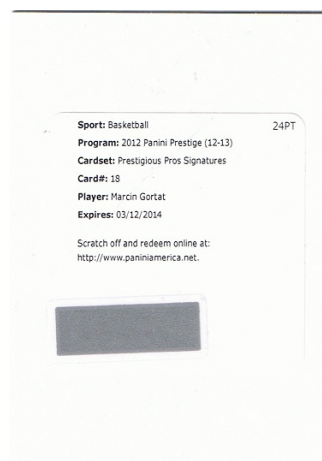
Prestigious Picks Jon Leuer Autograph



Prestigious Picks Tyler Zeller Autograph



Prestigious Pros Marcin Gortat Autograph
Redemption





FINAL THOUGHTS

Base - 4.75/5

Design - 4/5

Fun - 3.5/5

Value - 3/5

Rebuy - 3/5

Overall - 18.25/25 (73%)

Pros:

Two years worth of rookies

Can conceivably complete a base set with one box

Rookies are a solid chase set

Cons:

Incomplete base set, yet duplicates

Sticker Autographs

Numbered parallels, but non-numbered relics and autos

Inconsistent with vertical and horizontal card design

NPN Information:

NPN, 2012-13 Panini Prestige Basketball

5325 FAA Blvd. Suite 100A

Irving TX 75061-3601

Limit 2 requests per household, mailed separately

Postmarked By: 11/14/12

Received By: 11/21/12

Canada Skills: $990 + 726 / 363 \times 241 - 260 = ?$

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Panini for giving us the opportunity to open and review this release. For more information on all of their products, visit them today at www.paniniamerica.net. All of the base and inserts are available for request. Please PM me with the card or cards of interest. Cards are available for 30 days from the time this review is posted. As always, only VIPs may make requests for the first 48 hours.



SCF Official Review: 2012 Press Pass FanFare

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma



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

8 packs per box

5 cards per pack

Current Retail Price (online): \$114.99 - \$129.99

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

- Four Race-Used Memorabilia Cards per box - Featuring an expansive lineup of single- and dual-swatch race-used memorabilia from the top stars of the NASCAR Sprint Cup, NASCAR Nationwide, and NASCAR Camping World Truck Series!
- Look For Fanfare Dual Autographs Featuring Family Ties!
- Magnificent Materials Single And Dual Swatch Memorabilia Cards!
- Fanfare Autographs Featuring 4 Different Metallic Levels!
- Autographs And Race-Used Memorabilia From Racing'S Biggest Stars From Its Top Three Series Plus Several Drivers' First Certified Autographs.
- Look for the several drivers' first certified autographs and race-used memorabilia cards including Darrell Wallace Jr, Ryan Blaney, Paulie Harraka and more!
- Also look for dual autographs with family ties including Ty/Austin Dillon, Jeb/Ward Burton, Martin/Ryan Truex, Kurt/Kyle Busch and more!
- FanFare features a 100-card comprehensive base set with numbered and die-cut parallels!

WHAT WE PULLED

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfzky4uKTW0>

Base: 16/100 (16%)



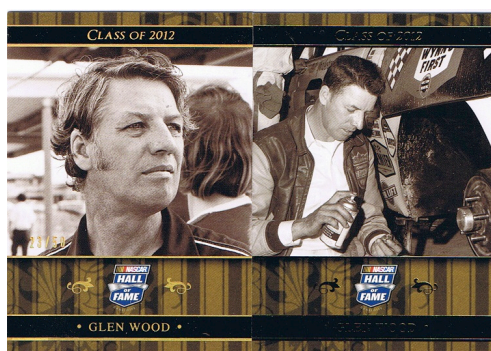


Die Cuts (8)

Silver /25 (1): Landon Cassill

NASCAR Hall Of Fame (1)

NASCAR Hall Of Fame Holofoil /50 (1): Glen Wood



Power Rankings (8)

Showtime (1)



Magnificent Materials Ryan Newman Shirt /250



Magnificent Materials Tony Stewart Firesuit / 250





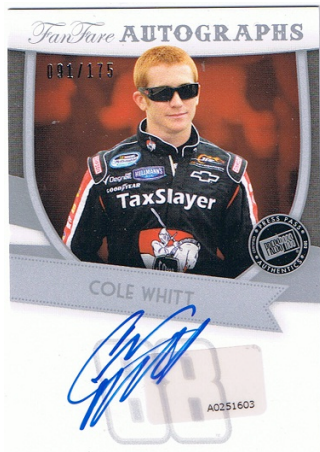
Magnificent Materials Gold Tayler Malsam 3-color Tire /125



Magnificent Materials Dual Blue Ron Hornaday Jr. Sheet Metal/2-color Tire /50



Cole Whitt Autograph /175



Kurt Busch Autograph /175



Tayler Malsam Autograph /299





Young Guns Darrell Wallace Jr. Autograph /399



FINAL THOUGHTS

Base - 3.5/5

Design - 5/5

Fun - 4/5

Value - 3/5

Rebuy - 3.5/5

Overall - 19/25 (76%)

Pros:

1 relic or auto per pack

Sleek design

Cons:

Autograph and relic line really extensive (will lead to a lot of "who is that" comments)

Would take at least 7 boxes to complete an unnumbered base set

Young Guns Autos numbered higher than regular auto (take away the "I got something cool" effect)

Fails to live up to hype

NPN Information:

NPN Press Pass Fanfare 2012

9805 Northcross Center Court, Suite H

Huntersville, NC 28078



Limit 1 request per household

Postmarked By: 12/10/12

Received By: 12/17/12

Canada Skills: $50 + (2 \times 4) - 10 = ?$

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Press Pass for giving us the opportunity to open and review this product (before release date). For more information on all of their products, visit them today at www.presspassinc.com.

All the base and unnumbered inserts/parallels are available for request. Please PM with the card or cards of interest. Cards are available for 30 days from the release date (9/13) as I cannot send out any cards before the product has released. As always, only VIPs can make a request for the first 48 hours, starting on 9/13.





The NHL Lockout Begins by Richard McAdam aka RGM81

Hockey fans across the world are waking up today to a grim reality: for the second time in eight years, the National Hockey League has chosen to lock out its players in an attempt to restructure the collective bargaining agreement with the Players Association. For many fans, both younger ones and fans gained in the past seven seasons due to the game's incredible growth, this is a new experience. For long-time fans, it is a stark reminder of the events of September 2004. We do not know how long this lockout scenario will endure; we may lose only a few weeks of the 2012-13 season or we could end up losing all of it. The NHL is the only professional sports league in North America to lose one entire season, and the ultimate fear of fans, players, owners, the media, local businesses, and everyone associated in any way with hockey is that we may lose a second.

There is a real and significant gulf between the positions of the NHL and the NHLPA. The League and its owners feel that the 57% of hockey-related revenues paid to the players is far too high. The players, who were forced to accept a salary cap and a 24% salary rollback in 2005, feel that they have given back enough already and will not accept an immediate reduction in their salaries. The NHL tells us that small market teams cannot keep up with the pace of growth from the past seven seasons. The players point to the example of the Minnesota Wild signing Ryan Suter and Zach Parise to contracts worth a combined \$196 million. Indeed, throughout the summer, numerous long-term big-dollar contracts were signed that were "lockout proof" as they included substantial signing bonuses which will be paid regardless of whether or not the players play. This begs the question: did the owners agree to those dollar terms knowing that they would be seeking to pay only a portion of them, and did the players push for more money fearing that they would only be receiving a portion of what was agreed upon by both parties?

Throughout the past several weeks there have been a number of meetings between the NHL and the players association. Gary Bettman and Bill Daly have been the sole voices for the League; indeed, they have a rule in place that expressly forbids the 30 team owners from speaking publicly about the CBA negotiations. Donald Fehr has led the players but he has always had a rotating cadre of stars attend the meetings and stand behind him in the post-meeting press conferences. The two distinctive messages could not be a more stark contrast: on one side, Gary Bettman is completely and totally in charge of handling the League's affairs; on the other, the players are standing united and will not be broken as they were in 2005. When the final formal discussions before the lockout concluded on Thursday, Bettman stood alone in front of a black cloth emblazoned with the NHL logo, while there were more than 50 of the NHL's top stars (including Sidney Crosby, Henrik Lundqvist, Zdeno Chara, and others) supporting Donald Fehr as he spoke in front of the blue and red players association background. Optics are important in a



situation such as this, and the players are clearly winning the public relations campaign in these contentious negotiations.

Public opinion is much different in 2012 than it was in 2004, both in style and substance. Back then, the owners side much more effectively managed the public relations campaign and had the support of many fans. Granted, they largely relied on selling snake oil to the fans. They promised that with “cost certainty” in place, there would be a better competitive balance and, more importantly for cash-strapped fans, ticket prices would come down. While it is true that there have been seven different Stanley Cup winners in the seven seasons since the ’04-’05 lockout, many teams are in even greater financial peril than they were before the salary cap system was instituted. There is not one rational hockey fan that can look at the New York Islanders and Columbus Blue Jackets and describe them as a “healthy NHL franchise.” At the same time, ticket prices across the NHL have steadily increased. The Toronto Maple Leafs did not make the post-season once in the seven years since the last lockout, yet they have increased prices every season, putting an even larger financial burden on the team’s long-suffering fans. These are legitimate problems that the NHL told us would be resolved, yet they have only been exacerbated under the current system that is in place.

Where does the responsibility lay for controlling salaries and ensuring healthy franchises? Most would argue that it should fall to the owners. They approve the contracts. They are tremendously wealthy. Yet it is has been the players that have been the largest proponents of increased revenue sharing in the NHL. Currently, teams must meet certain provisions in order to qualify for additional revenues, and there is a significant gap between the “haves” and the “have nots” among NHL clubs. Many fans do not like a salary cap system that prevents their well-off franchise from spending to its content while also having to give large sums of its revenue to a weaker cousin in the League. But that is a short-sighted position; for the benefit of the League’s 30 teams costs must be controlled and there must be a semblance of competitive balance for a franchise to succeed financially and on the ice. Nobody wants to pay money to see a team that is so poor and so hopeless that it the perennial whipping boy for the other clubs. So it is to the players’ credit that they have assumed some responsibility for finding ways to ensure that the struggling clubs can at least get some relief and support. That said, the owners have thus far rejected any revenue sharing proposals that are not linked to a reduction in player salaries. They want the players to carry that burden.

Player salaries are ultimately the major issue in this current round of negotiations. It all comes down to the NHL’s position that the players make too much and that 57% of HRR is far too high to be sustainable. The League feels that a reduced number, more in line with the other sports leagues, is the only way to keep the NHL healthy. They seem intent on reducing the players’ share to 50% which is a dramatic reduction that can only be met with either an immediate rollback or through increased escrow payments. The players are willing to concede a phased



reduction in their share of HRR, but they do not feel that a rollback or higher escrow payments are the correct path to that destination. The actual percentage cut in salaries suggested by the NHL in its latest proposal works out to approximately 17%. This would mean that the new 12-year, \$104.4M contract signed by Sidney Crosby this past summer would be reduced to an \$86.6M deal. While that is still a fabulous amount of money, asking a player to forfeit more than \$17M of a mutually agreed upon contract sounds like a gesture made in bad faith. As alluded to previously, what are we to make of these long-term contracts signed this summer and what they actually mean?

For the players, the rollback means forfeiture of an incredible amount of money. The Crosby example is just one of many deals signed this summer that are seemingly—if the owners get their way—targeted for a significant discount. Carey Price's new 6-year, \$39M deal is another one that is of note. The rollback would work out to roughly \$6.6M, slightly more than a full year's current salary for the Habs' netminder. The contract remains six years in term length. The NHL is basically asking Carey Price to play a full season for free vis-a-vis the contract that he had originally signed in July. Very few people would agree to work a significant amount of time for free after signing a contract that promises them X amount of dollars over a defined period of time, so one can see why there is more sympathy for the players from the fans in this ongoing negotiation process.

There has been considerable talk amongst fans of the game that the owners are basically demanding to be saved from themselves or their own general managers. It is not a situation of a handful of "rogue" owners handing out these big contracts. The two longest-serving members of the NHL Board of Governors are Philadelphia Flyers owner Ed Snider and Boston Bruins owner Jeremy Jacobs. Here are the contracts awarded by the Flyers and Bruins this summer:

- Jakub Voracek – 4 years, \$17M
- Scott Hartnell – 6 years, \$28.5M
- Wayne Simmonds – 6 years, \$23.8M
- Braydon Coburn – 4 years, \$18M
- Milan Lucic – 3 years, \$18M
- Tyler Seguin – 6 years, \$34.5M
- Brad Marchand – 4 years, \$18M

Total = \$157.8M. That is a lot of money from two of the NHL's most hawkish owners when it comes to player salaries needed to be kept under control. There is something else to consider here as it applies to Ed Snider. He is a major reason that the NHL was able to secure a 10-year, \$2B TV deal with NBC/Comcast, in no small part because Ed Snider owns Comcast. NBC/Comcast will pay the NHL \$200M for rights in 2012-13, even if not a single NHL game is played. The deal, much like many player contracts signed this summer, is lockout proof.



Essentially, Ed Snider is funding the NHL lockout through NBC/Comcast while at the same time demanding that the players take less money from his team.

As we wake up to this grim reality, we are seeing a torrent of news coming in via Twitter. Players are already signing contracts to play hockey in the KHL, the Swiss League, the Swedish Elite League, the Czech League – anywhere that they can play hockey. During an NHLPA conference call last week, Josh Gorges of the Montreal Canadiens made it clear that the players just want to play hockey, and that they were willing to report to training camp and prepare for the NHL season while continuing to negotiate a new CBA. Now, with talks breaking down and stalling, several players are demonstrating just that: they want to play hockey. Thanks to the technology of the day, fans will be able to watch them play in the far-flung corners of the Earth, all the while hoping that the business side of the NHL sorts itself out so that they can see their favourite players in their favourite uniforms.

We do not know when this lockout will end. Everybody is hoping that it ends soon and with a fair deal that will hopefully result in labour peace in the NHL for a long time. The NHL endured through two World Wars without losing a season. Under the leadership of Gary Bettman the NHL lost half of the 1994-95 campaign and all of 2004-05. He speaks to the media about the damage being done to the game on a daily basis during this process. If the CBA in place now was his architecture, and it is deemed so hopelessly harmful by the League and its owners, to the extent that another season hangs in the balance, at some point serious questions have to be asked about Bettman's leadership.

In the meantime, until the NHL lockout is resolved, the fans will continue to support hockey. We will go to CHL games. We will go to AHL games. We will go to US college games. We will find ways to watch the KHL and other European leagues. We will even simulate a 2012-13 NHL season on our favourite video game consoles. The fans are the ones that are being hurt the most. Many, perhaps even most of us, will come back to the NHL when play resumes. But there will be consequences and we will not soon forgive those responsible for depriving us of seeing Sidney Crosby, Carey Price, Alex Ovechkin, Shea Weber, Steven Stamkos, Claude Giroux, Daniel and Henrik Sedin, Tyler Seguin, Taylor Hall, Jordan Eberle, and our other favourite players as they come into the prime of their careers. Hopefully the NHL and the NHLPA keep this in mind.

