

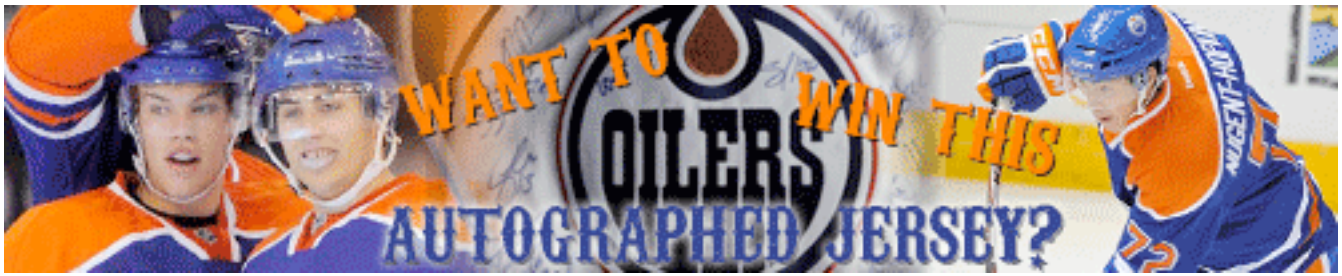
COLLECTORS CORNER

April 2013

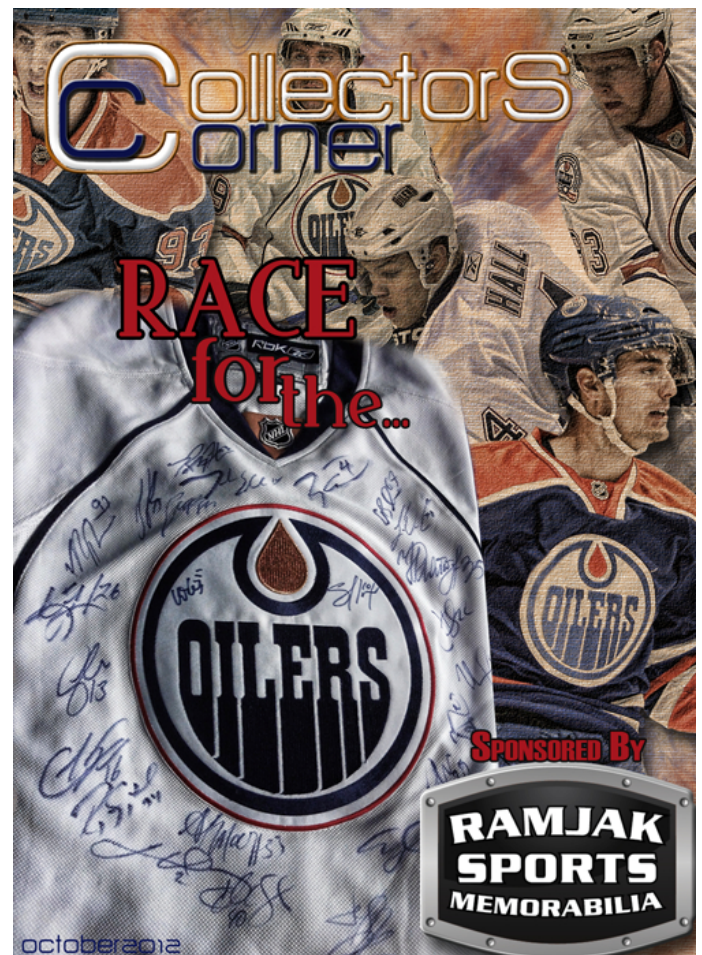


BASEBALL IS BACK





THERE IS STILL TIME TO ENTER THE
JAUNT FOR THE JERSEY HEAD TO THE
HOCKEY CONTEST FORUM TO FIND
OUT HOW!





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Another Month in the Books **By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888**

Well, April is here already which means a few things: the boys of summer will be back shortly, we're entering the last miles of the shortened NHL season and April's fool is here, right on the day the magazine is out! Since that is the case, we've decided to talk a few foolish things that have happened in sports and in the hobby over the years...Blunders by teams, card producers, players...you'll find it all in here! I hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed writing about it.

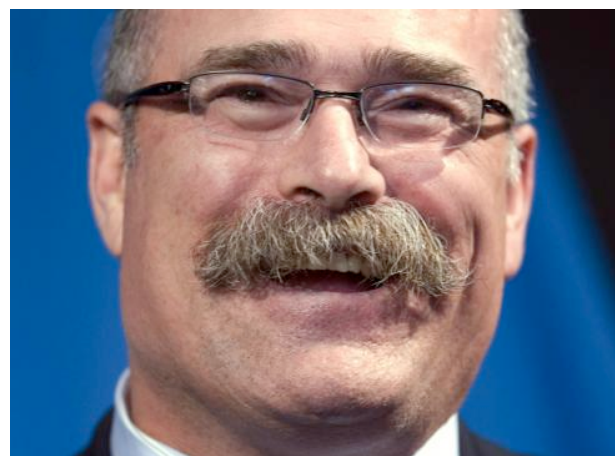
As for the baseball fans out there, will I know the season will soon be starting, I must admit that I am somewhat clueless about baseball and that we do not have that many writers interested in America's (summer) game so if you like writing and would be interested in writing for the SCF magazine, please do send me a private message on SCF.

As you most probably know, and as Richard will tell you a bit further in these pages, the NHL trade deadline is also upon us. While many fans get pretty excited about that that day, we must say that this year, the trade extravaganza started early and the Penguins' general manager, Ray Shero, really went to work. With a week left until the deadline, he had already added to NHL captains to his line-up in

Brenden Morrow and Jarome Iginla as well as a big defenseman. Here's to hoping they are done shopping because across the league, people are already scared...Who didn't see Paul McLean say (as a joke that sounded somewhat serious): "I don't even know why we are bothering with the playoffs this year".

As for the Bruins' GM well, let's just say he's probably not in a very good mood these days...You need an explanation on that one? Well, move to page 23 and read what Richard McAdam has to say about the now famous Iginla trade...

Well that's it, enjoy the read everyone!





Who Would Have Thought... By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888



A little while ago, Upper Deck, which is one of the most active sports card companies on the social media front, posted a link to its blog on Facebook. As I'm always interested to find out what they had to say, I of course checked it out. I must say that what I discovered when I clicked the link left me somewhat speechless... First, I should however tell you how the story was presented, the post on Facebook said: "Here's a story for our female collectors by a female collector. Yep, girls collect hockey cards! Enjoy!" Being a female collector myself, I was intrigued so I clicked and I was taken to a post titled: [This Girl is Gaga for Goalies: Collecting NHL Cards from a Female's Perspective](#). While I did wonder for a second what was different between the male and female perspective on collecting it soon became evident that the girl who had written the article was collecting certain players because she thought they were "tasty dishes" or in other words, that they were hot...

Don't get me wrong, she can collect for whatever reason she may please but as a female collector who collects

The comment under this picture was:
Seriously girls, Carey Price is a hottie certain players because they are skilled and talented, just like male collectors do, I felt outraged that Upper Deck thought it would be a good idea to give visibility to an article which reinforces the idea that women know nothing about sports and that the few who actually enjoy it, must enjoy it because there are nice blokes to look at playing. I've struggled for years to establish credibility as both a collector and a writer in a male dominated area and it just felt like Upper Deck's choice of article to publish was a major setback. You think I'm overreacting? Well, the first comment posted by a reader was: "This is why guys don't like girls who collect. It's not about who's cute, it's sports, it's not the entertainment channel". I must admit, if I was a guy, I would feel the same way after reading the article...How do I know? Well, simply put, I was annoyed a few years back when guys were collecting Kournikova cards just because she was beautiful. I felt this was yet another way to objectify women and don't even get me started about Benchwarmer cards...So why shouldn't I feel the same way when men are getting objectified?

In all honesty, when I first started collecting and trading online I





received a lot of incredibly one-sided trade proposals from traders who clearly thought they could take the girl collector for a ride... The same was also true in chat areas or sportscardforum, I received a lot of “Look darling...” patronizing comment and the credibility I fought to acquire certainly wasn't built in a day but then again neither was Rome... But at least Rome wasn't brought down by it's own citizens whereas I felt like Upper Deck was attempting to rock the foundations of the credibility I had taken so long to build. And the writer of that blog didn't help either...she spelt Carey Price Carry Price...

Thankfully, I was not the only one to have that reaction and so Upper Deck felt it had to react by saying this: “We appreciate the feedback we have received on this story thus far and want to apologize if any female collectors feel offended by it. This collector certainly is not indicative of all female collectors, but her story and way of collecting is unique and we wanted to share her story. The one thing we know about collectors is that they are all very different and those differences should be celebrated, not disparaged. There is a wonderful story in the midsts of her adoration of certain players of a family collecting and enjoying the hobby together. I personally felt the message of, “Collect what you like. Buy what makes you happy, and if the market takes a turn, your collection still holds value to you,” was important to share with fans.

On this blog we have made it a habit to profile all different types of collectors from those trying to enjoy the hobby overseas, to members of the military collecting, to kids with Autism enjoying the hobby. The wonderful thing about collecting is that all are welcome. This story reflects one girls opinion on why she enjoys the hobby and I appreciate that she took the time to share. If you are a female collector who enjoys the hobby differently, or anyone else who has a different reason to share why you enjoy collecting, I would love to help share your story. You can email me directly at chris_carlin@upperdeck.com”

A Girl's Guide to Watching the Rangers

January 25, 01:58 PM EST

31 Comments and 0 Reaction

They're EXPECTING You To Ask Questions

Prev

2 of 5

Next



...Just know WHEN to do it.

Carl Hagelin has the puck. The boys are a standing and screaming and you're going to yell 'what's happening!?'

Nope.

You need to sense the tension at certain points in the game and let them do their jumping, screaming and cheering thing.

You can tell if something huge has happened by their reaction, and if you're absolutely lost, wait for the replay. There's *always* a replay after a major play.

Still confused? Wait until a penalty or other whistle to ask. The clock stopped so there's a pause in the game, and at this level you won't need to know why a penalty was called anyway (unless there's a fight, which is pretty self-explanatory). Everything else? Not important in your world ... yet.

Share this

Like

23

+1

0

Tweet

6

Pin it

So according to this, Upper Deck did not mean to pass this on as a generalization of why women collect...That's one good thing, but I believe that just by reading the article, they should have noticed the potential problem with it and furthermore, the way they introduced it was just awful. I've been collecting for years and honestly, I've never been this disappointed by anything a card company did. I guess Upper Deck decided April's fool day had to come early this year...

Then again, they weren't alone in that boat. The New York Rangers although made a “thoughtful move” when they published their: “A girls guide to watching the Rangers” it included pearls of wisdom such as “They expect you to ask questions, just know when to ask them”... Because you know, a woman who watches a hockey game will not only be clueless about the sport itself, but she will get so little enjoyment out of it that she most certainly won't be able to get into the game



and know when to shut up during it (I mean come on, girls are chatterboxes that never shut up aren't they). Other highlights of this well thought out article were:

- Learn to know the Rangers, we're not asking you to memorize a yearbook but the roster is easily available online so make an effort;
- Henrik Lundqvist is good looking, plays the guitar and can do it all, surely you want him to do well on the ice;
- When having guy friends in your life, watching sports become unavoidable (of course, you can't possibly have female friends who enjoy watching games...unless they are gay surely right?)

While that article was incredibly lame and just an offensive as Upper Deck's choice of introduction for the other article discussed above, at least the Rangers, upon seeing the reaction from the public, took the article down, instead of trying to justify it...You may want to take a leaf out of their book Upper Deck.

I sure hope we won't get to see any more blunders of this magnitude but let's just say I doubt we will be so lucky...





2012-13 Upper Deck UD SP Game Used Hockey Official Review

By Roger Barthelemy aka Patriotsguy

A big thanks to Upper Deck for this box to review!



Box Breakdown:

Online Pricing \$127.99 - \$135.99

5 Packs Per Box, 5 Cards Per Pack

1 Autograph Card Per Box!!

4 Other Auto's or Memorabilia Cards Per Box!

1 Autograph or Memorabilia Cards Per Pack!

Product Breakdown:

Super Premium Memorabilia Cards:

- Supreme Patches (Huge Patch Piece!) - #'d to 12
- Supreme Sticks (Huge Stick Piece!) - #'d to 12
- Supreme Gloves (Huge Glove Piece!) - #'d to 12
- Supreme Skates (Huge Skate Piece!) - #'d to 12
- Game Gear (Jersey/Patch/Tag Patch/Fight Strap!!) - #'d to 3
- Stanley Cup Finals Material, Skirt Autographs - inserted 1:192
- Stanley Cup Finals Material, Skirt Patch -- #'d to 1
- Stanley Cup Finals Material, Net Cord -- #'d to 25
- Stanley Cup Finals Material, Net Shield -- #'d to 1
- Tandem Twigs - inserted 1:100
- Inked Sweaters -Auto Jersey - varied #ing
- Inked Rookie Sweaters - #'d to 99
- Significant Numbers -Auto Jerseys - #'d to jersey #



- Draft Day Marks (Rookies) - #d to 35
- Draft Day Marks (Veterans) - #d to 15
- Authentic Fabrics, Single Swatch - Inserted 1:3
- Authentic Fabrics Patch // - #d to 35
- Authentic Fabrics Fight Strap // - #d to 15
- Authentic Fabrics NHL Shield Logo Patch // - #d to 1
- Authentic Fabrics Gold Jersey // - #d to jersey number
- Authentic Fabrics Dual - inserted 1:6
- Authentic Fabrics Triple - inserted 1:18
- Authentic Fabrics Quad - inserted 1:42
- Authentic Fabrics Dual patch // - #d to 25
- Authentic Fabrics Triple patch // - #d to 15
- Authentic Fabrics Quad patch // - #d to 12
- Authentic Fabrics Fives - inserted 1:72
- Authentic Fabrics Sixes - inserted 1:180
- Authentic Fabrics Sevens - inserted 1:420
- Authentic Fabrics Eights - inserted 1:750
- Authentic Fabrics Five patch // - #d to 9
- Authentic Fabrics Six patch // - #d to 6
- Authentic Fabrics Seven patch // - #d to 3
- Authentic Fabrics Eight patch // - #d to 1

Autograph Cards:

- Regular Cards, Gold Auto // - inserted 1:18
- Authentic Rookies Gold Auto // - inserted 1:10

Rookie Cards:

- Authentic Rookies - #d to jersey number
- Authentic Rookies Auto Variation - #d to 1

Regular Cards:

- 100 Regular Cards

What we pulled:

<http://youtu.be/DCS9HXcQ8IU>

Base Design:





Authentic Fabrics Jarome Iginla / Miikka Kiprusoff



Supreme Sticks Carey Price 12/12



Design : 4/5

Fun : 5/5

Value : 3/5

Rebuy : 3/5

Overall Box Rating : 75% (15/20)

Pros:

- A chance for some nice Autos or Memorabilia pieces.
- Fun to open knowing there should be a hit in every pack on average. Keeps you on the edge of your seat to see what's coming out of the next pack.

Cons:

- Not for the set collector looking to make the base set via box purchases. 5 cards/pack and 5 packs per box would only yield you 20% of the base set assuming you don't receive any duplicates.

NPN:

For a free insert card while supplies last go to npn.upperdeck.com Mail in request will no longer be accepted. Please fill out the required information as directed when you visit the website mentioned.

Once again, thanks to Upper Deck for these packs for review. If you would like to find out more information about Sp GU Edition Hockey or any other upper deck product please go to www.upperdeck.com.



2012 Upper Deck UD SP Authentic Football Official Review

By Roger Barthelemy aka Patriotsguy

A big thanks to Upper Deck for this box to review!

Box Breakdown:

Online Pricing \$102.99 - \$109.99

24 Packs Per Box, 5 Cards Per Pack

3 Autographs Per Box!

1 Rookie Auto Patch Per Box!

All Rookie Auto Patches limited to 885 or less!

NEW for 2012: Stadium Authentics!



Product Breakdown:

Autographed Cards (3 per box!):

- SP Rookie Auto Patch Tier 2 (# to 885)
- SP Rookie Auto Patch Tier 1 (# to 425)
- Regular Cards Auto Parallel (no #'ing)
- Regular Cards Auto Gold Parallel (# to 15)
- 1994 SP Football Auto Parallel (no #'ing)
- 1994 SP Football Die-Cut Auto Parallel (no #'ing)
- SP Rookie Threads Auto Jersey Tier 2 (# to 335)
- SP Rookie Threads Auto Jersey Tier 1 (# to 75)
- SP Legendary Threads Auto Jersey (# to 10)
- SP Rookie Threads Auto Patch Parallel Tier 2 (# to 5)
- SP Rookie Threads Auto Patch Parallel Tier 1 (# to 5)
- SP Legendary Threads Auto Patch Parallel (# to 2)
- Sign of the Times (no #'ing)
- Sign of the Times Gold Parallel (# to 10)
- Sign of the Times Dual Autos (Varied #)
- Sign of the Times Triple Autos (Varied #)
- Sign of the Times Quad Autos (# to 3)
- Stadium Authentics Auto (no #'ing)

Insert Cards and Parallels:

- 1994 SP Football (1:6)
- 1994 SP Football Die-Cut Parallel (1:48)
- Stadium Authentics (1:110)
- Stadium Authentics Bowl Variation (1:720)
- Canvas Regular Cards (1:6)



- Canvas Regular Cards SP (1:48)

Base Set:

- Regular Cards - 100 cards
- Regular Card Short Prints - 50 cards
- SP Rookie Auto Patch Tier 2 (# to 885)
- SP Rookie Auto Patch Tier 1 (# to 425)

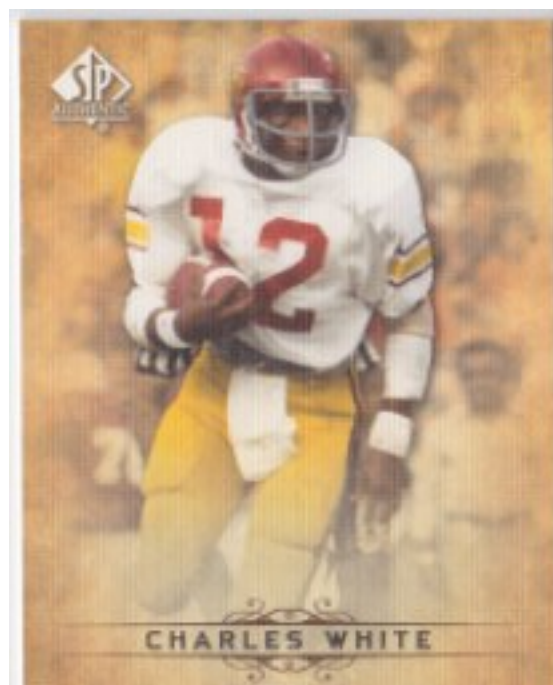
What we pulled:

<http://youtu.be/-8E3ECfLcYM>

Base :



SPs : Brock Osweiler RC, Earl Campbell (not pictured), Charles White Canvas Collection

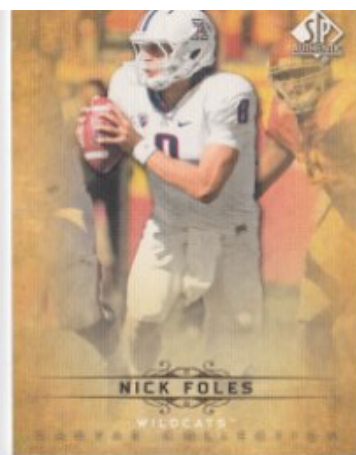




1994 SP : Matt Kalil, Michael Brockers, Lavonte David, Roger Staubach



Canvas Collection : Mohamed Sanu, Lavasier Tuinei, Nick Foles, Eric Page



Base Auto : Bobby Wagner





SP Authentic Threads : Melvin Ingram 175/335

Rookie Auto Patch : Jeff Fuller 788/885

Base Set Completion: 100/100 100% (7 duplicates)

Design : 4.5/5

Fun : 3.5/5

Value : 3.5/5

Rebuy : 3.5/5

Overall Box Rating : 75% (15/20)

Pros:

- Solid card design
- On card Autos!
- Complete base set
- Sharp looking SP Threads with the jersey piece totally enclosed in the card.
- Nice look on the Canvas cards. Reminds me of the Masterpieces they did in the past.

Cons:

- Would like to see more hits in the box. If you get your hits early on it makes busting the rest of the box kinda boring.
- Would like to see more serial numbered cards in box. Make some of the SP's serial numbered
- Sp Threads jersey/auto cards can get easily scratched.

NPN:

For a free insert card while supplies last go to nnp.upperdeck.com Mail in request will no longer be accepted. Please fill out the required information as directed when you visit the website mentioned.

Once again, thanks to Upper Deck for these packs for review. If you would like to find out more information about UD SP Authentic Football or any other upper deck product please go to www.upperdeck.com.





SCF Official Review: 2013 Press Pass Total Memorabilia

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

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



5 packs per box

9 cards per pack

Current Retail Price (online): \$94.00 - \$109.99

Every Pack Will Include:

- Five cards from the 50-card base set
- One numbered parallel
- One Memory Lane insert
- One Smooth Operators insert
- One authentic race-used memorabilia, Rising Stars autograph, or Signature Collection autographed memorabilia book card

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

One Hit In Every Pack

Look For:

- Total Memorabilia - Single, Dual, Triple, And Quad Versions!
- Hot Rod Relics - Triple Memorabilia Cards
- NEW! Burning Rubber Chase Edition - Featuring Race-Used Win Tires From The 2012 Chase For The Nascar Sprint Cup!

Autographs Randomly Inserted

- Rising Stars Autographs - Featuring Drivers Who Are Poised To Make Their Mark In Nascar!
- Signature Collection Book Cards - Featuring An Authentic Autograph And One, Two, Three, Or Four Swatches Of Memorabilia!



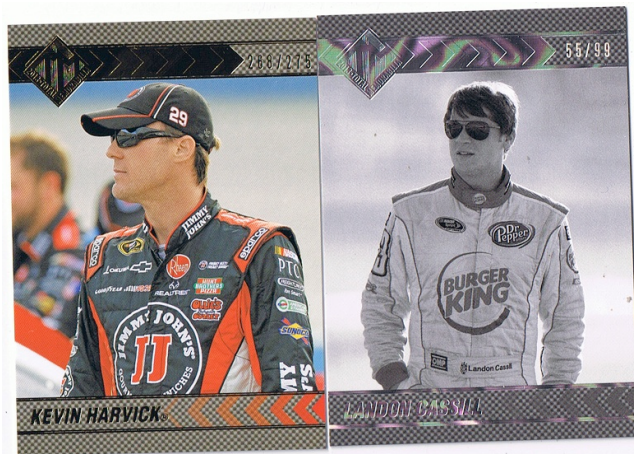
WHAT WE PULLED

<http://youtu.be/izQ5ZkJCA9g>

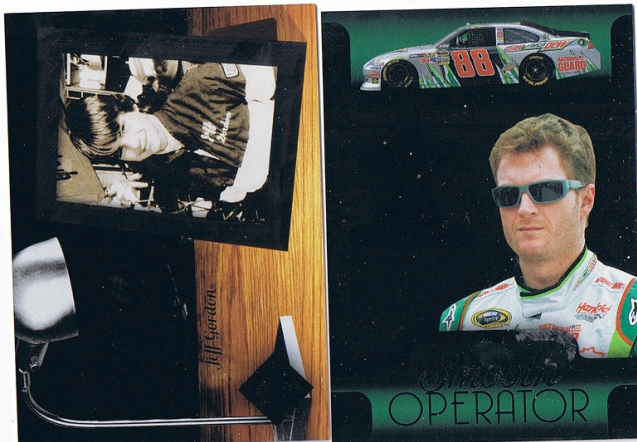
Base - 25/50 (50%)



Gold /275 (4) - Kevin Harvick, Joey Logano, Tony Stewart, Kyle Larson
Holo /99 (1) - Landon Cassill



Memory Lane (5)
Smooth Operator (5)





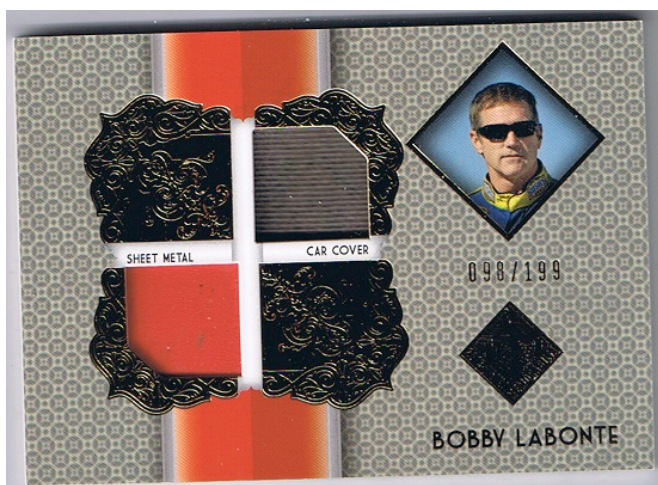
Burning Rubber Clint Bowyer Tire /50



Carl Edwards Single Memorabilia Firesuit /199



Bobby Labonte Dual Memorabilia Sheet Metal/ Car Cover /199



Dale Earnhardt Jr. Dual Memorabilia 4-color Sheet Metal/Driver's Seat /199



Trevor Bayne Dual Memorabilia 3-color Hat/2-color Sheet Metal /199





FINAL THOUGHTS

Base - 5/5

Design - 4/5

Fun - 4/5

Value - 4.25/5

Rebuy - 4.5/5

Overall - 21.75/25 (87%)

Pros:

One hit in every pack

One numbered parallel in every pack

Rising Stars part of set, not insert chase set

New piece of memorabilia swatches (Driver's Seat)

Cons:

Unnumbered memorabilia cards

Base design outdone by Rising Stars design

Should be at least 1 auto in every box

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





2012-13 Upper Deck UD Artifacts Hockey Official Review

By Roger Barthelemy aka Patriotsguy

A big thanks to Upper Deck for this box to review!

Box Breakdown:

Online Pricing \$84.99 - \$96.99

10 Packs Per Box

4 Cards Per Pack

1 Auto or Auto-Mem card

1 Multi-Player Game-Used card

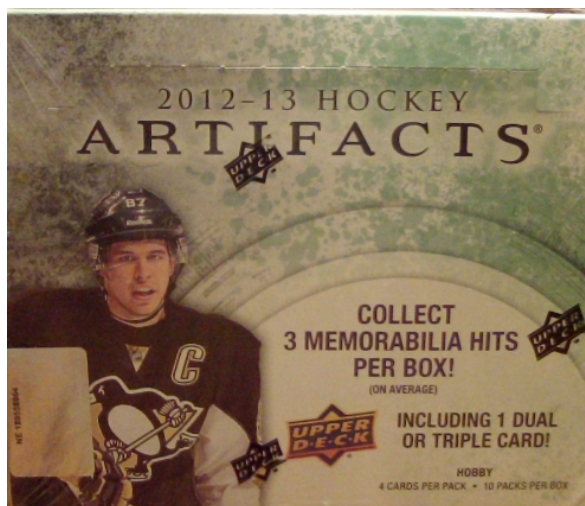
2 Single-Player Game-Used cards

1 Rookie Redemption card

2 Rookie Cards

1 Parallel #/d to 99 or less

2 Goalie & Hockey Canada Subsets #/d to 999



On average every box will have a card featuring either a patch, strap, stick or tag!

Product Breakdown:

Memorabilia Cards:

- Treasured Swatches, (Jersey-Jersey) Blue - 1:320
- Frozen Artifacts, (Jersey-Jersey) Blue - 1:320
- Treasured Swatches/Frozen Artifacts, (Jersey-Patch) Green Parallel - #/d to 35
- Treasured Swatches/Frozen Artifacts, (Patch-Stick) Red Parallel - #/d to 10
- Regular Card Materials (Jersey-Jersey) - #/d to 125
- Regular Card Materials (Jersey-Patch), Emerald parallel - #/d to 65
- Regular Card Materials (Patch-Patch), Spectrum parallel - #/d to 15
- Regular Card Materials (Patch-Tag), Black parallel - #/d to 5
- Regular Card Materials Horizontal (Jersey-Jersey) - #/d to 35
- Regular Card Materials Horizontal (Jersey-Patch), Emerald parallel - #/d to 21
- Regular Card Materials Horizontal (Patch-Patch), Spectrum parallel - #/d to 9
- Regular Card Materials Horizontal (Patch-Tag), Black parallel - #/d to 2
- Autographed Regular Card Materials (Jersey-Jersey) - #/d to 12
- Autographed Regular Card Materials (Jersey-Patch), Emerald parallel - #/d to 8
- Autographed Regular Card Materials (Patch-Patch), Spectrum parallel - #/d to 3
- Autographed Regular Card Materials (Patch-Tag), Black parallel - #/d to 1
- Goalies/Hockey Canada Material (Jersey-Jersey) - #/d to 125
- Goalies/Hockey Canada Material (Jersey-Patch) - #/d to 65
- Goalies/Hockey Canada Material (Patch-Patch) - #/d to 15
- Goalies/Hockey Canada Material (Patch-Tag) - #/d to 5



- Autographed Goalies/Hockey Canada Material (Jersey-Jersey) - #d to 12
- Autographed Goalies/Hockey Canada Material (Jersey-Patch) - #d to 8
- Autographed Goalies/Hockey Canada Material (Patch-Patch) - #d to 3
- Autographed Goalies/Hockey Canada Material (Patch-Tag) - #d to 1
- Tundra Tandems (dual jerseys) - 1:17
- Tundra Tandems (dual patches), Green Parallel - #d to 35
- Tundra Tandems (dual fight strap), Red Parallel - #d to 10
- Tundra Tandems (dual tag patch), Black Parallel - #d to 1
- Tundra Trios (triple jerseys) Blue Parallel - 1:42
- Tundra Trios (triple patch) Green Parallel - #d to 15
- Tundra Trios (triple fight strap) Silver Parallel - #d to 5
- Tundra Trios (triple tag patches) Gold Parallel - #d to 1

Rookie Cards:

- Artifacts Rookies - #d to 999
- Artifacts Rookie Redemption cards - inserted 1:10

Signature Cards:

- Auto-Facts - inserted 1:12

Parallel Cards:

- Regular Cards - Emerald parallel - #d to 99
- Regular Cards - Spectrum parallel - #d to 25
- Regular Cards - Black parallel - #d to 5
- Regular Cards - Black Auto parallel - #d to 5
- Rookies/Goalies/Hockey Canada Cards - Emerald parallel - #d to 99
- Rookies/Goalies/Hockey Canada Cards - Spectrum parallel - #d to 25
- Rookies/Goalies/Hockey Canada Cards - Black parallel - #d to 5
- Rookies/Goalies/Hockey Canada Cards - Black Auto parallel - #d to 5

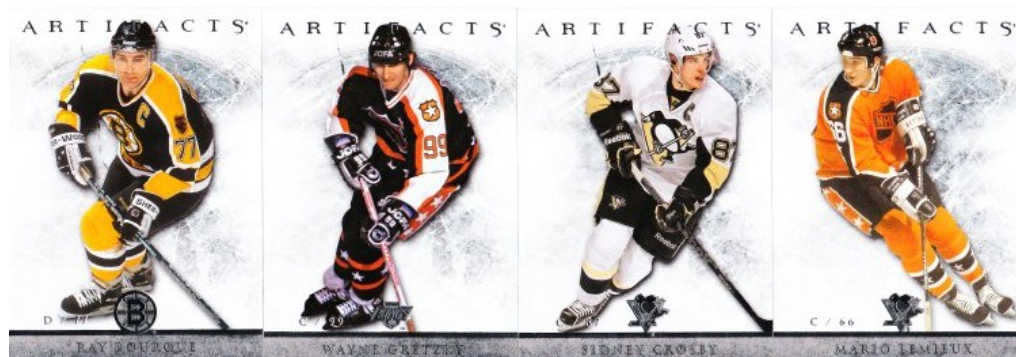
Regular Cards & Subset:

- Rookies/Goalies/Hockey Canada - #d to 999
- 100 Regular Cards

What we pulled:

<http://youtu.be/2rj66Jn7tKw>

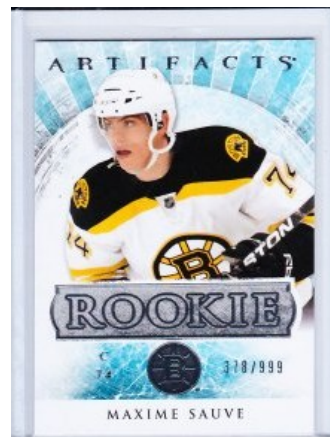
Base : 24/100





Goalies /999 : Jimmy Howard

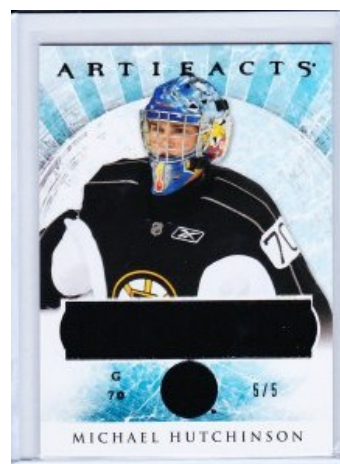
Rookies /999 : Travis Turnbull , Maxime Sauve



Emerald Parallel /99 : Jarome Iginla

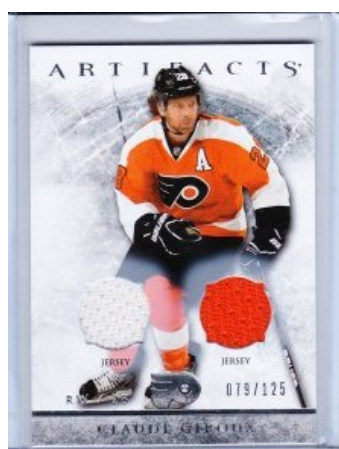
Rookies Sapphire Parallel /85 : Scott Glennie

Rookies Black Parallel /5 : Michael Hutchinson



Silver Jersey /125 : Claude Giroux

Autofacts : Adam McQuaid





Frozen Artifacts : Linus Omark

Tundra Tandems /36 : Eric Staal / Jordan Staal



Wild Card Scratch off:

<http://youtu.be/2rj66Jn7tKw>

Overall product score:

Base Set Completion: 24/100 24%

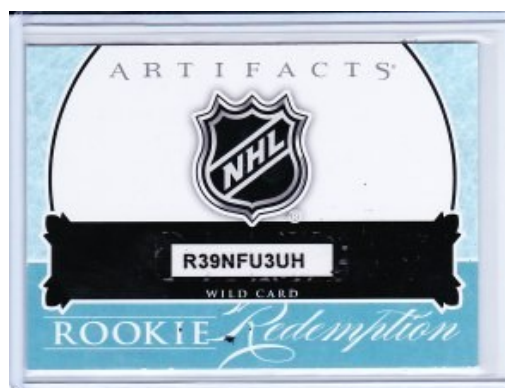
Design : 4/5

Fun : 4/5

Value : 3.5/5

Rebuy : 4/5

Overall Box Rating : 15.5/20 for 77.5%



Pros:

- Card designs look crisp and clean
- Good assortment of guarantees per box
- Potentially good value for the assortment you receive.
- If you buy your boxes early and pull a wild card redemption it will have you in suspense all year waiting!

Cons:

- Not a good way for the set collector to complete a base set via boxes.
- Sticker Autos

NPN:

For a free insert card while supplies last go to npn.upperdeck.com Mail in request will no longer be accepted. Please fill out the required information as directed when you visit the website mentioned.

Once again, thanks to Upper Deck for these packs for review. If you would like to find out more information about UD Artifacts Hockey or any other upper deck product please go to www.upperdeck.com.



The Jarome Iginla Trade - April Fool's Day Comes Early? by Richard McAdam aka RGM81



It had been speculated about for weeks that the Calgary Flames were going to trade the face of their franchise and captain since 2003, Jarome Iginla. With the Flames spinning their tires near the bottom of the Western Conference standings and seemingly staring into the void of a major rebuilding project, it was an uncomfortable and unpleasant but seemingly necessary step that general manager Jay Feaster solicit offers for his best player. The decision to trade Iginla could not have been easy, and it would prove that neither was confirming where he would be headed. Ultimately, his destination would be the Pittsburgh Penguins, but before that happened

there was a seeming certainty he would go to another team—and that resulted in April Fool's Day striking a little bit early for an Eastern Conference powerhouse.

Prelude to a Trade – The State of the Flames

Prior to the first lockout in 2004-05, the Flames were a team on the rise. They went all the way to the Stanley Cup Finals in 2003-04, and many fans and hockey people would argue that they should have won the championship in game 6 when Martin Gelasco seemingly scored in overtime, and they had all the necessary pieces to continue that growth for a few years to come. At the centre of it all was Jarome Iginla, newly minted the Flames captain and one of the biggest stars in the NHL. He was in the midst of a lengthy string of 30+ goal campaigns, was a central figure for Canada in international play, and was considered by several to be the best player in the game. Further boosting the Flames strength was goalie Miikka Kiprusoff, a perennial workhorse goalie capable of playing 70-plus games per season and seemingly having enough energy to survive in the playoffs. Following the lockout, they had one of the brightest young stars on defence in Dion Phaneuf emerging as a star. The Flames were, on paper, poised to be a perennial contender in the Western Conference.

Though the Flames made the playoffs every year from 2005-06 to 2008-09, they did not win a single playoff series. Iginla continued to excel, leading the team annually in goals and points, but there were increasing concerns about the weakness of his supporting cast. The club also seemed to be relying too heavily on Kiprusoff during the regular season; age was starting to take its toll, and often by the end of the first round the goalie looked spent and out of energy. But for so long as the team finished in the playoff hunt and near the top of the Northwest Division standings, they were able to ignore or minimize the growing concerns about the team's long-term future. High-priced free agent signings were starting to hamstring the team's ability to bring in quality players or make marquee moves at the trade deadline, but the club still pressed forward confident in its ability to remain a top team.



It was during the 2009-10 campaign that the wheels started to come off for the Flames organization. Though Iginla was his usual excellence, and had a fantastic 2010 Olympics that included the famous assist after the “Iggy!” call from Sidney Crosby on The Golden Goal, the team around him was spinning its tires. Management decided to make major changes through the trade option. Within 24 hours, the Flames traded away Dion Phaneuf, Olli Jokinen, and Brandon Prust to other teams. Of the five players acquired in those respective deals, only Matt Stajan currently remains with the club. While some of the lustre on Phaneuf had worn off, many Flames fans were aghast at the lack of value they received in return for a bona fide all star player. The club continued its downward spiral and missed the playoffs, finishing a very disappointing 10th place in the West. Calgary has not played in the post-season since.

Compounding the on-ice woes for the Flames have been a series of weak drafts and questionable acquisitions. In 2010, the team didn’t have a draft selection until the 3rd round. None of those players selected by Calgary have played an NHL game. In 2011, they had only five selections in the draft but there are signs of promise there. The club also continued to spend near the cap and could not make moves that would significantly improve the team for so long as they carried the big dollar deals of Iginla, Kiprusoff, Jay Bouwmeester, and recently-acquired Mike Cammalleri. Indeed, at that point some were even starting to speculate that it was time to deal Iginla to allow the team to focus on a rebuilding effort while freeing him to pursue his long-awaited Stanley Cup. His value was still very high, but the Flames could not bring themselves to do it at the time.

Jarome Iginla – a True Star



Jarome Iginla is one of the most well-respected players in the NHL today. Regarded highly by fans, media, and opponents alike, Iginla is a true ambassador for hockey and a role model for kids across Canada. He has represented his country numerous times and been a perennial All-Star. There is virtually nobody out there who has a negative thing to say about Jarome Iginla.

As his career begins to wind down, and he still searches for the Stanley Cup that many feel he was robbed of in 2004, Iginla’s priorities shift from being the face of the Flames to getting that one great shot at glory. Nobody can fault a player for such a thing; Ray Bourque was a stalwart for the Bruins for many years, coming up short in 1988 and 1990 against the Oilers and never again getting to compete for the Cup until he was dealt to the Colorado Avalanche. Iginla is now in that same boat, and on the precipice of going down in history as one of the greatest players in NHL history to never win a Stanley Cup. He is an emotional favourite for everybody in hockey for just that reason. You want to see him succeed, and it is clear that it will not happen with a Flames team struggling to find an identity and to move forward into its next generation.

Trading a superstar is not a small task for any general manager. It is also incredibly difficult because it is known from the outset that the deal will heavily favour the other team – the old adage that the team that gets the best player wins the trade rings true. Montreal would never get equal value for Patrick Roy. Edmonton would never get fair compensation for Wayne Gretzky. And on it goes throughout history. The task that fell to Jay Feaster was to find the best package for his



superstar while also working within the constraints of Iginla's no-trade clause that allowed him to dictate which teams he would allow himself to play for after a trade. Once the Iginla sweepstakes opened, Feaster's greatest challenge was underway.

The Trade

Feaster's job was made both easier and more difficult when he received from Iginla the short list of four teams he would want to play for if his days in Calgary were to be numbered. The list included: the Stanley Cup Champion Los Angeles Kings, the 2010 Champions and Western Conference powerhouse Chicago Blackhawks, the 2011 Champions from Boston, and perennial contenders the Pittsburgh Penguins. Those four teams are enjoying strong seasons and no doubt who wouldn't want to bolster their chances at success by being able to add a player the calibre of Jarome Iginla? From the time that the rumoured list reached the ears of fans and media, the speculation ran wild – who would Feaster be able to get in return? Which team would be willing to sacrifice key parts of their future for a one-time injection for this year's playoffs run?

From the outset, there wasn't much noise about Iginla joining the Blackhawks. Feaster would likely have been hesitant to send him to a fellow Western team, and the Hawks chemistry this season would seemingly want them to take themselves out of the picture unless the cost was minimal. There was some talk about goalie Jonathan Bernier from the Kings being involved in a potential swap – such a deal would give the Flames a legitimate option for a future #1 goalie once Kiprusoff's time had passed. But in a very short period of time it became clear that he was most likely headed for either of the two teams from the Eastern Conference.

It was on Wednesday, March 27th that the Iginla rumour mill reached the crescendo of its fever pitch. Early in the day the rumblings began – Iginla would be a healthy scratch for the night's game against the Colorado Avalanche. This suggested that a trade was imminent and that the Flames did not want to risk an injury forcing the deal to be scuttled. Then it was learned that Iginla had left the Saddledome entirely and would not be in attendance to see the game. Clearly something was about to go down, and it would likely be Iginla's final hours as a Calgary Flame.



As fate would have it, TSN was the scene for a national double-header involving the Boston Bruins—a rumoured Iginla destination—in the first game and the Flames in the second game. Live television makes for compelling drama like nothing else, even in the age of Twitter and Facebook. As the Bruins competed on the ice against their arch-rival Montreal Canadiens, so too were they competing off the ice to land Iginla. Throughout the broadcast there were ever-more certain discussions about Iginla being traded to Boston. It was learned that the Bruins organization had scratched defenseman Matt Bartkowski from the game against Montreal and top prospect center Alexander Khokhlachev, the Bruins' 2nd round pick from 2011, from his AHL game. They were clearly anticipating that a deal with the Flames was completed.

As the Montreal-Boston broadcast stretched into overtime and then a shootout, TSN would occasionally remind fans of the second game to come, showing Flames fans clad in their Iginla jerseys and telling everybody about the



numerous and loud “Iggy! Iggy! Iggy!” chants echoing throughout the Saddledome. One shot aired showed a teenaged girl on the brink of tears holding a sign that read: “Iginla has been with the Flames since I was born. Don’t I get to say goodbye?” It tugged at the heartstrings to see the emotional outpouring of support by Flames fans who knew that a wonderful 16-year relationship with a great player and even better person was at an end. There was no blame, there was no fault, there was just genuine love being demonstrated by a loyal fanbase who only wanted to see the best for their greatest star.

Shortly after 9pm PDT, TSN analyst Aaron Ward broke the news on live television, stating that Iginla

had in fact been traded to the Boston Bruins. His TSN colleagues followed suit soon enough, with the venerable Bob McKenzie adding that the deal was “Unconfirmed but BOS-CGY appears to be Khokhlachev/Bartkowski/conditional 1st round pick for Iginla. 1st rounder conditional on Iggy re-signing.” Flames fans were concerned that Feaster had not gotten enough by a longshot, Bruins fans were ecstatic, and fans of Eastern rivals were greatly concerned about what a prototypical power forward could do in an environment as unchained as the Boston Garden. Many fans in the Eastern time zones went to bed believing that this story was over and that Iginla was a Boston Bruin.

Jay Feaster, Master Prankster?

It would of course be disingenuous to suggest that Feaster hung up the phone with Bruins GM Peter Chiarelli with the mutual understanding that a deal was done, and then said, “haha just kidding!” With all the hype and talk, and a captive national audience watching a game between the 13th and 15th seeds in the Western Conference just wanting to get that final clarification that the deal was 100% officially done, it was totally not on the radar that Iginla would be anything but a Bruin. There were some hints throughout the game that the trade drama was still underway – TSN showed Feaster answer his phone and then abruptly leave the press box, presumably to further iron out details with the Bruins.

There really was not much of a build-up to what happened next. Twitter was discussing the ramifications of the Calgary-Boston trade and what it meant for both teams. Reddit’s Boston Bruins sub-reddit was in its full glory. While I was out with family for dinner, we were all talking about the trade. As an Iginla fan and a Canadiens fan, seeing him going to my most hated team was disappointing but that was going to be how it was. Suddenly at 10:27 PM came the news: Jarome Iginla had been traded to the Pittsburgh Penguins for collegiate players Kenneth Agostino and Ben Hanowski, and Pittsburgh’s 2013 1st round pick. I stared at my phone and rather loudly proclaimed, “What!” It was very out of the blue. CBC’s Elliotte Friedman had posted on Twitter just minutes before Feaster’s press conference announcement, “Wondering if there’s more here than meets the eye...” Indeed there was.

The exuberance of Bruins fans quickly turned to rage. The postings on #bostonbruins cannot be posted here due to the use of numerous colourful metaphors. Chiarelli was in disbelief, stating that he was of the understanding that the Bruins had “won the Iginla sweepstakes” when he last spoke to Feaster. Penguins fans, already on a steady high thanks to a 13-game winning streak and the imminent return of Evgeni Malkin to the lineup, were ecstatic and practically planning the



parade. And some witty fans wondered aloud how it was that Feaster had managed twice in one night to get an insufficient trade return for Iginla.

The NHL has had no shortage of off-ice high drama in the past calendar year. Mike Cammalleri was traded in the middle of a game that was being broadcast nationally across Canada. Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly took to the airwaves talking about collective bargaining issues and proclaiming certain items as hills the NHL would die upon. Commissioner Gary Bettman and NHLPA lead negotiator Don Fehr appeared in the wee hours of a Sunday morning to announce a new deal had been reached to save the 2012-13 season. And then we had this trade speculation and drama run across an entire day that captivated much of a nation that was keenly interested to know where one of its great heroes would be traded. While the final decision was made by Iginla to select Pittsburgh over Boston, for a few minutes it had truly appeared that Jay Feaster pulled a major April Fool's joke a few days early.



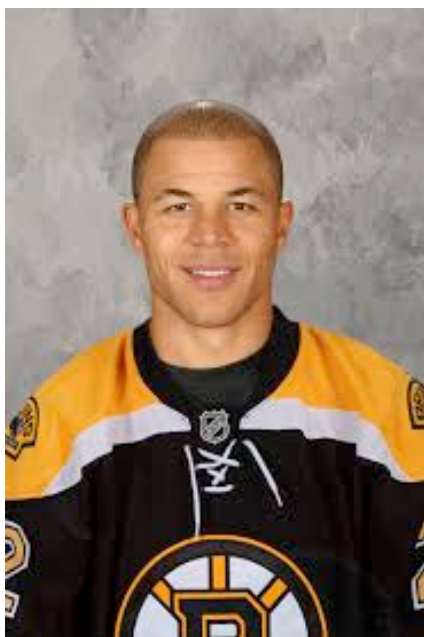


Around the Rink

by Richard McAdam aka RGM81

The stretch drive of the 2012-13 season is underway and teams are ready to ramp it up a level for the playoffs. By the time you read this here fine magazine we will be mere hours away from the annual trade deadline, a.k.a. the day that hockey fans across Canada come down with either a 24-hour cold or a severe attention deficit disorder at the office. The contenders will be doing their best negotiating to improve their club to take the best shot at the Cup, and the non-playoff teams will divest themselves of stars in the hopes of reloading for next year. Either way, it is a day filled with drama and quite a few lulls as analysts on two major sports networks try to play up the significance of the swap of a depth defenceman for a mid-round pick.

Speaking from a Habs fan's perspective, I'm not entirely sure what I want to see Marc Bergevin do at the deadline. Quite frankly, after last year's debacle of a season in Montreal, I had pretty low expectations for this season, so seeing the club sitting in 2nd place in the Eastern Conference has been a more-than-slightly-pleasant surprise. I did expect the team to be much improved over last year's version, but I don't think anybody would have predicted that they would be among the NHL's elite so quickly. And that forces the dilemma – should Bergevin let this cohesive unit proceed as-is, or should he sacrifice a small portion of future to enhance this team now? I do think that they need to add a scoring forward and/or a power play specialist on the blue line, but beyond that I do not see any pressing needs for the Canadiens.



Speaking of a team that didn't really need to get even more fire power, how about the Penguins adding Jarome Iginla? A roster that already boasts an embarrassment of riches goes out and acquires one of the game's all-time great players to further strengthen a club that sits in first place and is riding a 14-game winning streak. Yikes is a word that springs to mind. Iginla has always been a widely-respected player, and he is going to a team that offers him his best chance to get the Stanley Cup ring that eluded him back in 2004. Unless and until the Penguins face Montreal in the post-season, I'll be cheering for him to do well. And you just know that there's going to be a "reunited and it feels so good" sentiment should Iginla be put on a line with his Olympics teammate Sidney Crosby. "Iggy!" One final note on the deal: mark your calendar for April 19th when Pittsburgh plays the Bruins in Boston. The always-entertaining crowd at the TD Garden will be sure to give Iginla their two cents about his decision to snub the Bruins in favour of the Penguins.

Off the ice and into the hobby now, after a very slow March things are going to be picking up considerably in April. Leaf's Best of Hockey has already been on the market for a week or so, but the standard companies for hockey will also have some spotlight.

It just wasn't meant to be...

Upper Deck is going retro, as in Fleeer Retro, this week with a product that is very heavy on 1990's-esque inserts. The resurrection of the Fleeer brand and its assorted products, including Jambalaya, Metal, Essential Credentials, and Precious Metals will be an intriguing introduction to the hockey marketplace. The product's huge secondary market success in basketball may carry over to hockey, where fans have traditionally not been willing to spend top dollar on



insert-laden products. But Upper Deck will no doubt have some surprises in the final checklist to spur on further activity.



Goalie fans will be psyched up for In The Game's annual Between The Pipes release on April 18th. The product will feature refractor-style designs for the popular Masked Men subset, and the usual excellent memorabilia cards will be spotlighted through jerseys, patches, and other top-notch ITG swatches. The checklist is already posted on the ITG website and should whet your appetite for another great product.

Panini has nothing released in April, but they are starting to generate interest in Rookie Anthology with the news that the very popular Prizm will be integrated into the product before it debuts as a standalone in 2013-14. There will also be Titanium RC's numbered to the player's jersey number, auto-

jersey rookies, and more.

Looking ahead to the future, the Industry Summit in Las Vegas last month gave collectors an incredible batch of information to look forward to in 2013-14. Upper Deck has announced that Trilogy will return to the release calendar, and will boast a 33-card rookie checklist starring the top players who debuted in 2012-13 with three tiers of serial numbering that will be as low as 99 copies. Look for Brendan Gallagher, Nail Yakupov, Cory Conacher, and more to get their first RC's, along with the return of the plexi-glass Ice Scripts autographs and much more! While there isn't a lot left on the 2012-13 release calendar, there is already a great amount of enthusiasm being generated for next year's double class that will be the strongest we've encountered since 2005-06.

And that's all for this month! From everybody at the SCF Hockey Team, have a great April and enjoy the great hockey down the stretch drive! The Cup is coming!





2013 Yankees Are Not Your Father's (Or Even Big Brother's) Yankees

By J.R. Lebert aka jrlebert

The winds of change are blowing at a gale force pace through the tunnels of the new Yankee Stadium. With salary cap limitations, a bloated payroll, surprisingly frugal leadership, aging veterans, and a depleted minor league system, the 2013 Yankees are poised to look a lot less like the Yankees you are used to seeing. Will the 2013 Yankees continue plugging along, or will the season be one, long April Fool's joke?

The main issue with the Yankees upcoming transformation is their massive payroll. An aging, injured Alex Rodriguez is the albatross around Brian Cashman's neck, on the hook for an incredible \$27.5 million in 2013. Not far behind are C.C. Sabathia and Mark Teixeira, both well over \$20 million. Derek Jeter, Curtis Granderson, and Mariano Rivera are all coming off injury plagued seasons, and are scheduled to make about \$47.5 million combined next season. Add in salaries for aging veterans Andy Pettitte (\$12M), Hiroki Kuroda (\$15M), Kevin Youkilis (\$12M), and the recently traded-for Vernon Wells (\$12M), and you can see where the problems, and the bills, begin to stack up! Oh, and then there is that A.J. Burnett contract, which will cost the Yankees \$8.5 million despite the fact that he will win just as many games for the Yankees in 2013 as I will, as Burnett is a member of the Pirates.

Looking at the payroll, there are a few relative bargains. The still-productive Ichiro is scheduled to make a paltry \$6.5 million, fellow starting OF Brett Gardner makes just \$2.85 million, and the best 2B in the majors, Robinson Cano is slated to take in \$15 million in 2013. Cano, however, is a free agent at the end of the season, and there are definite doubts amongst those in the organization that he will stick around after the year is out.

To put it all in perspective, Mike Trout is scheduled to make less than \$600,000 this year. Yes, you read that right, less than \$600K.

With the luxury tax penalty looming, the Yankees MUST cut payroll significantly. Alex Rodriguez is on the books for \$28M in 2014, \$21M in 2015, and \$20M in both 2016 and 2017. Yeesh. Mark Teixeira is also due major money, making over \$23M in each of the next three years. Both players have been injury-prone, but unless one or both decide to either retire or re-structure their current deals, both of which seem unlikely, the Yankees will have to work around both massive deals. C.C. Sabathia is also scheduled to make big money, \$23M in both 2014 and 2015.

Many key players are free agents after the 2013 season. Curtis Granderson, Hiroki Kuroda, Andy Pettitte, Phil Hughes, Kevin Youkilis, Joba Chamberlain, Boone Logan, and, of course, the aforementioned Robinson Cano are all prepared to hit the open market. Derek Jeter's contract is also up at the end of the season, but the Yankees still have the option of bringing him back through 2015.

Seemingly gone are the days of Tino Martinez, Scott Brosius, and Paul O'Neill, solid, if not All-Star caliber veterans who played to win, not for the highest salary they could get. Here's a quick trivia question to put the Yankees 1998-2000 back-to-back-to-back World Champion seasons in perspective: The highest paid player on those teams? Bernie Williams, averaging over \$10M per season. Derek Jeter and Mariano Rivera COMBINED to make less than Bernie over the first two WS winning years.



The Yankees farm system is a shell of its former self. Mortgaging their future for the present, the Yankees have exactly ZERO prospects in the Top 30, and only one, OF Mason Williams, in the Top 50, according to Baseball America. Of the next 50, only three wear pinstripes. Baseball is built around pitching and defense, and this is where the Yankees weakness is most glaring. Zero middle or corner infielders, and zero pitchers are in the Top 100. Compare this to how they built their WS winners of the 90's and early 2000's. Andy Pettitte, Mariano Rivera, Derek Jeter, Bernie Williams, and Jorge Posada all came from the Yankees minor league program. That would be a total of 38 All-Star appearances, 9 Gold Gloves, 7,304 hits, 817 home runs, 3576 RBI's, 4134 runs scored, 284 pitching wins, 3,011 strikeouts, and, of course, 608 saves, all from just 5 players who came up through the system.

Yes, Pettitte, Rivera, and Jeter are still there, but for how much longer? Rivera says he is done at the end of the year, and with injuries and age catching up to Mr. November, Derek Jeter, and Andy Pettitte. Looking at their current roster, there are a few guys who have come up through the ranks: Brett Gardner, Joba Chamberlain, Phil Hughes, Eduardo Nunez, and Francisco Cervelli, but only one mega-star, Robinson Cano.

Injuries are already taking a toll on the 2013 Yankees, and we haven't even reached Opening Day. Curtis Granderson, A-Rod and Teixeira are expected to miss significant time, and it seems as if their Captain, Jeter, is also going to open the season on the DL.



Age is a huge factor for this year's Bronx Bombers. Pitchers Mariano Rivera (43), Andy Pettitte (40), and Hiroki Kuroda (38) are expected to play major roles on the mound. A soon-to-be 39-year old Jeter, 38-year old A-Rod, and 34-year old Kevin Youkilis man one side of the infield. Ichiro (39) is expected to be one of the everyday outfielders, and Travis Hafner (35) is going to at least share time at DH.

One other quick stat to think about: Only one team in MLB history, the 1973 Red Sox with HOFer Luis Aparicio, ever finished the season above .500 with an everyday shortstop age 39 or older. June 26, 2013 will be Derek Sanderson Jeter's 39th birthday.

For the first time since 1991, there is a chance that the Yankees could finish out of the top 10 in runs scored in Major League Baseball. With the Blue Jays, Rays, and Orioles all much improved, a playoff spot is no longer the guarantee it has been for much of the last 15-20 years. The one thing that seems crystal clear is that these Yankees will look vastly different than the Yankees you have become accustomed to watching!



Fooling Around-Racing's Prankster Culture By Stephen Taylor aka race crazy



April Fool's day starts off the month of April. For the sport of auto racing that means that the season kicks into high gear. This also brings in much tomfoolery. Racing is a different sport in that the same competitors see each other every week of the season. There is no cut to make, no easy game against an under 500 team. The competition and the people involved live in a traveling circus and therefore most know each other quite well. Imagine that you race against the people who live on your street every week and get to know them. Besides making good friends and having some disagreements the element of pranking and/or messing with someone is always there. So without further ado here are some of the best known examples of racing goofiness!

Dale Earnhardt-the king of pranks-7 time Cup champ Dale Earnhardt was a ferocious competitor on the track but off the track was a known prankster. For anyone who has seen the movie "Dale" these aspects of Earnhardt are well known by the public. Earnhardt's mostly friendly feud with fellow hall of famer Rusty Wallace set the stage for many a prank. In the midsummer stretch in the early 90's races were mostly run in the heat of day and the season seemed to stretch. Rusty thought it would be a good idea one fine afternoon before the event to mess with Dale so he took his bubble goggles out of his car (this was before the days of full face helmets) and took a black sharpie to them-blackening them out to match Earnhardt's black car. An angered and panicked Earnhardt got them switched before the event but vowed to get Rusty back.



The next race was the Southern 500 at Darlington. In September in South Carolina it is known to be hot and humid and this date was no exception. It was in the mid 90's come raceday and Earnhardt decided to put Rusty up to some fishy business. Before the race Earnhardt snuck over to Rusty's car and dumped 4 cans of Sardines under Rusty's seat. The race started and the 140 degree cockpit soon melted said Sardines and Rusty was in for a smelly and unpleasant afternoon in the racecar. Rusty took Dale's steering wheel the next race after and the pranks continued, however the fish under the seat story at Darlington lives forever in Nascar lore as typical Earnhardt.

Sterling Marlin is Dynamite-soft spoken Tennessean and 2 time Daytona 500 winner Sterling Marlin was known to have a good time racing. The man has a passion for goofing around (Mule Day in his hometown in Tennessee is of great importance to him in fact!) and he also had a passion for occasionally blowing stuff up. Marlin liked dynamite and would often take quarter sticks of the stuff and insert them into places to mess with people. Although never hurting anyone Marlin had the intention to cause other people and fellow drivers chaos and headaches with his goofing around. His activities with the stuff would usually involve other driver's rental cars or transport vans or the driver's restrooms-causing much chaos and headache for the others while he laughed away.

Joe Weatherly-the early goofball-Joe Weatherly was one of the sport's true superstars in the early 1960's. A plump man with a big smile Weatherly loved to goof around with his fellow drivers and no one was off limits. Back in those days stock cars still required keys to start. Before one race Weatherly famously walked down pit lane and took the keys out of everyone's cars and when the command was given his car was the only one to fire up! The delay and circumstance was obvious and quickly resolved by Nascar but everyone knew what was up. Weatherly was at it again.



Around the Track



Curtis Turner-party boy and nutcase-Curtis Turner was Nascar's first party boy. He liked his airplanes and his late night parties and his women. In today's Nascar world there are known people of the same fabric but Turner was one of a kind. Turner was good friends with Joe Weatherly another known goofball and the two would often go flying together in Turner's airplane. Turner would often disobey any authority and land his plane anywhere he saw fit-including highways and once famously on Darlington Raceway's backstretch!

Tim Flock-monkey business-Tim Flock and his co-pilot, a rhesus monkey named Jocko Flocko live in Nascar lore as the only driver/animal pairing to win races in Nascar history (and it will stay that way since that's highly illegal now). Flock's co-pilot was all in fun until a rock hit the monkey mid race and he decided to go crazy, ripping out of his seat and climbing all over Flock while he was leading the event. Flock had to pit to get the monkey off his back (literally) and it cost him the race. Flock famously said he was the only driver in Nascar history to lose a race because he had to pit for a monkey attacking him.

The garage prank for rookies-Rookie mechanics in the Nascar garage are often gullible and just excited to be there and fellow crew guys know it. The best known type of prank in the garage is telling the rookie to go fetch something (usually a made up part that does not exist) from another team. All the other teams know this and they are all in on it and simply state that they don't have it and the rookie proceeds until he has asked everyone in the garage and wasted his afternoon getting the run around. Welcome to Nascar rookie!

Carl Edwards' Motorcoach Driver Night Adventures-Tom Giacchi is driver Carl Edwards' motorcoach driver. Famously vowing not to shave until Edwards won another race (in which it took him a while) Giacchi is known for being a bit crazy. Edwards famously told the story on an episode of Trackside in 2007 in which Tom had gotten a light saber from some race fans, had a bit too much to drink that night, and decided to wreak havoc in the motorcoach lot. Giacchi busted into Edwards' coach at 2 in the morning in nothing but his boxers and the light saber standing at the edge of Edwards' bed, freaking him out. Giacchi then proceeded to do the same to Clint Bowyer and other drivers he knew.

Tony Stewart's Butt Grab-the most public of messing around in Nascar is Tony Stewart's famed butt grab. During pre-race walking to the car Stewart is known to mess with whoever he knows (which is most people) by grabbing their backsides or hitting them in their sensitive areas (he does this to Speed personality Rutledge Wood all the time). Last year Stewart famously grabbed Delana Harvick's bum during pre-race and the cameras caught her surprised reaction to it. The fellow driver's wife has been Stewart's car owner and they are good friends so it was not a big deal, mostly just hilarious television.





Offseason Is One Long Roller Coaster Ride for Ravens Fans J.R Lebert aka jrlebert

For Baltimore Ravens fans, Busch Gardens or Six Flags has nothing on the last few months. The roller coaster Ravens fans have been on has been some kind of ride! Plenty of great twists and turns, coupled with more than a few big drops. December began with a home loss to rival Pittsburgh. What made the loss worse was that it wasn't Big Ben leading the Steelers down the field for the win. No, back-up veteran signal caller Charlie Batch led the drive that culminated in a Shaun Suisham field goal as time expired to give the Steelers a 23-20 win. The following week, the Ravens traveled to D.C. to take on the Redskins. Washington triumphed in overtime, 31-28, rallied by rookie QB Kirk Cousins, after an injury to fellow first-year QB Robert Griffin III. After the game, Ravens Offensive Coordinator Cam Cameron became the former Ravens OC, with Jim Caldwell taking the reins of the offense.

A new OC wouldn't help the following week, with Peyton Manning taking it to the Ravens, 34-17, for Baltimore's second straight loss at home. Although the team looked awful, falling behind 31-3 and rushing for less than 60 yards, the team backed into the playoffs as the Steelers also lost that week. Week 16 would finally allow the Ravens a bit of celebration. A season high 533 yards on offense, coupled with stifling defense, led the Ravens to a 33-14 win, and the AFC North crown. Starters sat for both sides in a week 17 loss to Cincinnati, 23-17. It was a slugfest between Tyrod Taylor and Bruce Gradkowski, and had the Ravens slumping in to the playoffs after a 1-4 December.

January began with a first round playoff win against rookie phenom Andrew Luck. The Ravens "O" looked fantastic, and it began what came to be called "Ray Lewis' Retirement Party." It also began a playoff run by QB Joe Flacco that ranks with the best in NFL history, but more on him later.

Flacco would again be rock solid in an upset win over the Broncos, avenging the thumping they received the month prior. The play of the game, now known as the "Flacco Fling", will go down as one of the more improbable plays in postseason history. A 70-yard Hail Mary from Joe Flacco to Jacoby Jones, who was inexplicably allowed to get behind the defense, tied the game with 31 seconds left in regulation, before a Justin Tucker field goal in the second overtime kept the Ray Retirement on hold for one more week.

Beating one all-time great wouldn't be enough for the Ravens and their run to the Super Bowl. Standing in their way would be three-time Super Bowl champion Tom Brady, and his New England Patriots. It was a tale of two halves, as New England dominated the first half, but faltered badly in the second, being outscored 21-0 en route to a 28-13 loss. Flacco continued his brilliance, as did the Baltimore defense, as the Ravens assured themselves of one more game with their defensive captain, Super Bowl 47.

The Super Bowl wound up being one of the most memorable in recent history, as much for the power going out as for the play between the Ravens and the Niners. The Ravens took the title, 34-31, after a furious rally from San Francisco, giving Ray Lewis the sendoff he had hoped, and the Ravens a place in history. Joe Flacco was named MVP, capping off a postseason in which he had an incredible 11-0 TD/INT ratio, and over 1,100 passing yards.

His center during his incredible postseason run was Matt Birk. The leading receiver for the game was Anquan Boldin, reeling in six catches for 104 yards and a score. The lone interception in the game belonged to future Hall of Famer Ed



Reed. The leading tackler for Baltimore was Dannell Ellerbe, and the second leading tackler, and the Ravens' leading postseason tackler, was Ray Lewis. Leading the Ravens in sacks in the big game was Paul Kruger.

Hmmm... Birk, Boldin, Reed, Ellerbe, Lewis, and Kruger. It's right about here where Ravens fans were to be taken on the twisty, turny, plunge-straight-downy part of the coaster.



Fresh off his Retirement Tour, Ray Lewis retired right after the Super Bowl win. Near the end of February, 6-time Pro Bowl center Matt Birk announced his retirement. Wrapped up in the euphoria of their big win, the Ravens locked up their now-unquestioningly elite QB, but at what, potentially franchise-altering cost?

The contract was a very, very big one; the largest, in fact, per year, in NFL history. Flacco is scheduled to make over \$20 million a year for 6 years. However, what the contract has seemingly done is hamstrung their franchise. Unable to make it work financially, the dominoes began to fall. Safety Bernard Pollard was cut and scooped

up quickly by the Titans. The Super Bowl's leading receiver, Boldin, would be traded to his SB47 counterpart, San Francisco. Unable to sign key free agents, defensive starters Paul Kruger (Cleveland), Dannell Ellerbe (Miami), Cary Williams (Philadelphia), and franchise icon Ed Reed (Houston) were all allowed to leave.

This much was clear: The culture of the Ravens had changed. Take this quote from Ed Reed: "When I was in Baltimore, it was all about raising men; not just having players come in and out of there, but raising men, and that's the reason why they built up to the success..." This certainly seems to be a bit of an indictment of the Ravens offseason strategy. Losing 6 of 11 starters on defense, a defense that has earmarked the Ravens identity for the last 15 years, as well as key members of the offense, all while choosing to pay one player more than \$20 million per year, seems to signal a change in the wind in Baltimore.





Finally, there was a bit of good news again for Ravens' fans, near the end of free agency. After a much publicized fax machine snafu with the Broncos, DE Elvis Dumervil and his 63.5 career sacks is taking his talents to Baltimore. While they will certainly be looking forward to raising their second banner in Ravens' Country, the faces on the sideline will look somewhat unfamiliar. Repeating in the NFL is tough, no matter what the circumstances are, but with such roster turmoil, 2013 shapes up to be a tough one for the Ravens.





April's fools and the NBA By Bryce Doody aka bdoody42



Just like everyone NBA players are susceptible to April Fools Day Pranks, ask Kenyon Martin. On April fool's Day in 2010 Kenyon Martin left the gym after a win against the Portland Trail Blazers and found an unpleasant surprise in his Range Rover. The SUV was filled with buttered popcorn which damaged the white interior. Martin was not amused at all and returned quickly to the locker room to find the culprit. Martin unleashed an attack of profanity to players and other members of the Nuggets organization. He threatened not

to play until someone came forward. The prank was performed by a former Nuggets ball boy named Laquan Johnson. Johnson apologized and agreed to pay for the damages to Martin's Range Rover.

In 2005 the NBA and Steve Nash decided to pull a little prank of their own. The NBA suspended Steve Nash for applying a substance to the ball which helped Nash better shot the ball. It was claimed Nash used this substance as hair product and during the games he would wipe his hair before he shot the ball especially on free throws. Don Nelson the former coach of the Mavericks is the man who introduced to Steve Nash to this approach. Nelson claimed that this substance is what helped Nash become one of the best free shooters of all time. Of course this was just a big joke that scared a lot of Phoenix Sun fans.

In 2005 Los Angeles Lakers rookie Tony Babbitt was the target of a harsh prank from teammates. Bobbitt made the team In January and stayed with the team until the end of the season. One game while the Lakers were playing in Denver Bobbitt commented to his teammates that Lucy Liu was checking him out during the game. This was something other teammates couldn't let go. One day a ball boy pretended to deliver a note including phone number to Bobbitt that was Liu's. Bobbitt proceeded to call the phone number and the call was answered by a woman who worked for the team that pretended she was Liu. One evening Bobbitt was supposed to meet Liu for





dinner and it turned out to just be his teammates there laughing at him.

Basketball Contests

There were two basketball contests in March to celebrate the ten year anniversary of SCF. The first one was for the VIP members of the site. Each member was allowed to enter one card serial numbered to 10. gladdyontherise won this contest with his Draymond Green Leaf signature Series auto. The second contest was for all members of SCF. For this contest each member could submit their favorite or best card from the year 2003 when SCF was created. YummiestBeef won this contest with his Shaquille O'neal auto.

There are two other contests that are currently being run in the basketball forum. One is the 2012-2013 NBA Top Performers Contest. The second contest is the 2013 SCF March Madness Contest. This contest has 53 people that completed their brackets and are competing for the top five places which will receive prizes.

March Box Break Highlights

This month members opened a variety of products. 2012-2013 Panini Prizm continued to deliver some nice cards. BenDenham opened 18 packs of retail and pulled three green refractors including a Magic Johnson MVP. theguru opened four boxes of Prizm and pulled a Blake Griffin auto and a Dion waiters rookie auto. Jazzer540 opened a box of 2012-2013 Panini Elite and pulled a Larry Johnson All-Time Great auto numbered to 199. cano collector opened five boxes of 2011-2012 Panini Gold Standard and pulled a Magic Johnson 14k auto numbered to 49 and a nice Kevin McHale patch numbered to 10. ronfir opened 20 packs of 2012-2013 Panini Elite and pulled an Anthony Davis rookie auto. lasershow may have had the best luck this month when he opened four packs of 2012-2013 Panini Elite and pulled a Kyrie Irving rookie auto. Biggums opened just one pack of 2012-2013 Panini Totally certified and got a Steve Smith gold 3 color patch numbered to 10.

NBA standings as of March 24th
East

1. Miami 54-14 x
2. New York 43-26 x
3. Indiana 43-27 x
4. Brooklyn 40-29 x
5. Atlanta 38-31
6. Chicago 37-31
7. Boston 36-33
8. Milwaukee 34-34
9. Philadelphia 26-42
10. Toronto 26-44
11. Washington 25-44
12. Detroit 24-47
13. Cleveland 22-47
14. Orlando 18-52
15. Charlotte 16-53



West

1. San Antonio 53-16 x
2. Oklahoma City 51-19 x
3. Denver 49-22 x
4. LA Clippers 48-22 x
5. Memphis 47-22
6. Golden State 40-31
7. Houston 38-31
8. LA Lakers 36-34
9. Utah 34-35
10. Dallas 33-36
11. Portland 33-36
12. Minnesota 24-43
13. Sacramento 25-45
14. New Orleans 24-46
15. Phoenix 23-47

X indicates team has clinched a playoff spot.

NBA Statistical Leaders.

Points Per Game.

1. Kevin Durant 28.4
2. Carmelo Anthony 27.6
3. Kobe Bryant 27.0
4. LeBron James 26.7
5. James Harden 26.3

Assists Per Game.

1. Rajon Rondo 11.1
2. Chris Paul 9.7
3. Greivis Vazquez 9.3
4. Jrue Holiday 8.7
5. Deron Williams 7.6

Rebounds Per Game.

1. Dwight Howard 12.5
2. Omer Asik 11.7
3. Zach Randolph 11.6
4. Nikola Vucevic 11.5
5. Joakim Noah 11.4

