

# SCF'S COLLECTORS CORNER

AUGUST 2009

## INSIDE

- National Report
- Interview with Upper Deck
- Reviews

## SCF AT THE 30TH ANNUAL NATIONAL SPORTS COLLECTORS CONVENTION



# CardsByTheBox.com

For all your hobby needs, visit **CardsByTheBox.com!** We have an excellent selection of Hockey, Baseball, Football, Basketball and Racing!

## **2009 Topps Ticket to Stardom Baseball - \$89.99 - Out 08/24**



- 3 Ticket, Relic, Or Autographed Cards Per Box
- Authentic Official MLB Ticket Stubs
- Authentic Vintage Game, Concert And Sporting Event Ticket Stubs
- Each Ticket Stub Card Is Sequentially Numbered



## **2008/09 Upper Deck The Cup Hockey - \$349.99**

- 4 cards per pack, 1 pack per tin
- 2 signed patch cards in every tin
- New Inserts honoring 500 goal scorers, Wayne Gretzky and Canada's Hockey Excellence



## **2009/10 Upper Deck Exquisite- \$599.99 - Out 08/12**

- Each pack is hand collated to assure value for our collectors
- Exquisite exclusives signed boxes returns with new players and new twists
- An autographed rookie card #'d to 225 or less in every box
- Every box contains an autographed patch numbered to 100 or less
- Introducing career portfolio booklet style 1 of 1 cards with an autograph and 4 memorabilia swatches on every card



## **2009 Donruss Threads Football - \$79.99 - Out 08/17**

- 4 Autographs Or Memorabilia Cards, 2 Rookies Or Rookie Parallels
- 1 Silver Century Proof, 1 Generations
- 1 Century Stars, 1 Century Legends
- 1 Dynasty, 1 College Greats, 1 Pro Gridiron Kings



## **2009 Press Pass VIP Racing - \$82.99 - Out 08/19**

- One Autograph & One Memorabilia Card In Every Hobby Box
- Memorabilia Cards: Get A Grip - Race-Used Glove Cards, Rookie Stripes & Rookie Stripes Autos; Lead Foot - Race-Used Shoe Cards And Race Day Gear
- Three Swatches Of Driver Worn Memorabilia
- Firesuit, Glove And Shoe - 1:24
- Press Pass Signings, Four Levels Of Autographs To Collect, Gold, Orange, Purple And A Hobby, Only Green Version - 1:24



Enter the writing contest sponsored by  
**dacardworld.com**  
 Dave and Adam's Card World



### Inside

Editorial p.4

My National Experience p.5

A Word with Upper Deck p.14

Buying Online or at the National p.21

Why TTM Autographs Are Perfect for Tough Times p.23

“Base-ic” Art p.24

Release Dates p.29

### Product Reviews

2009 Donruss Classic Football p.30

2009 Topps Allen and Ginter Baseball p.33

2009 Press Pass Series 2 Racing p.36

### The Core

On the Diamond p.39

Rinkside p.41

Courtside p.43

Featured Collection p.45

Spotlight p.46

Around the Track p.47

On the Gridiron p.48

Rookie Debut p.49

Investing in Last Place p.50

Storing Your Cards p.52

Do Free Agents and Trades Affect Collecting p.53



### The Team

Editor and Publisher:

Karine Hains

Assistant-Editor:

John Jimenez

### Writing Team

Linda Mankefors

Kevin Lee

Brandon Boyds

### Team Contacts

Trevor Picone

Scott Kozlowski

Peter Kapuschinsky

Stephen Duell

Jason DiOrazio

Leo Zuperku

Mike Greene

### Graphics and Design

Houng Ngui

### Picture Editing

Ally Bradley



## **Enjoy the Show** **By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888**

This month, Collectors' Corner attempts to give you a glimpse of the National Sports Collector Convention which was held in Cleveland from the 29th July to the 2nd August. This is arguably the biggest event of the hobby calendar year and many of the staffers and members of Sports Card Forum attended this year. Inside our pages, you will find a complete report on the show, which was incidentally my first one, a breakdown of the prices offered by various dealers and also an interview with Chris Carlin from Upper Deck.

Now that Cleveland is in the books however, it's already time for the SCF staff to start planning next year's outing to Baltimore. If you were in Cleveland and you have ideas on what else we could have done to promote the site while we were over there, please do send me a private message as I will be happy to get your input.

Next month, we will be featuring some of the excellent articles received for our current writing contest. If you haven't checked it out or entered yet, please take the time to do so here: <http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=845892>. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dave and Adam at [dacardworld.com](http://dacardworld.com) for sponsoring the contest and putting a box of football cards up for grabs as a prize. You have until the 31st August at 5 PM to enter so get writing!

As we get further in the summer, you can almost feel the excitement from the football, hockey and basketball members because their sport will soon be back in action. Our football fanatics should be happy to read in our pages what Mike got for them at the Nationals as it's quite an exciting prize to compete for and the same can be said in basketball as he also acquired autographs from Blake Griffin. On the hockey front, the quad is still up for grabs as there are still 6 more contests to go and nothing is in the bag for anyone yet!

The next issue of Collectors' Corner will be out on the 7th September and in it, you will find out who won the writing contest!





## **My National Experience** **By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888**

**Monday 27th July 2009**



Well here I am, in Cleveland Ohio. It's 4.26 am and I am completely awake...why? Well, it may be the jetlag, after all, it's currently 9.26 am in England but it could also be the excitement of what's to come in the next few days. In a few hours, I will be heading to Cedar Point to take on some 17 roller coasters including Top Thrill Dragster. Better yet though, tomorrow, I will set foot into the International Exposition Centre to help set up the SCF booths for what is arguably the biggest hobby event of the year.

**Tuesday 28th July 2009**



Only one day to go until the show kicks off. This morning I headed to the exhibition centre with Enigma (Tony). We planned to collect our exhibitors' badges and start setting up but we were told that to set up one day early, you needed to pay an extra \$100. In the end, we grabbed the badges and decided to go visit the Rock'n'Roll Hall of Fame instead. We also had time to catch a movie in the afternoon and we wrapped up the day with nice dinner at the Olive Garden where we met Scottkoz20 (Scott) and his family for the first time. Mikesilvia (Mike) also landed in Cleveland late tonight after being delayed in

Philadelphia for a couple of hours.

**Wednesday 29th July 2009**

Finally, D-day is here! We made our way to the International Exhibition (I-X) Centre after grabbing some breakfast. There, we set up both the Cardsbythebox and the Sports Card Forum booths. We put up two side banners, another one at the back of the tables, displayed copies of our online magazine and our articles published in Tuff Stuff as well as the cards that would be given away over the course of the convention and the two high-end cards up for grabs in hockey and baseball contest this year. We also prepared the free giveaway packs, stacking up 15 to 20 cards and adding business cards before sealing the team bags.







We were also given our VIP badges and bags on that day. The highlight of the bag this year really was the VIP set of cards as the rest of the content was somewhat of a letdown, being mainly advertisement for the dealers/companies who had set up in the corporate area.

At 4 PM, the show officially started. This was a sneak peak really as it was only from 4 to 9 but still, plenty of people came to have a look. Mainly VIP ticket attendees, as not many people

would want to buy a general admission ticket for a few hours. Scott and I walked the aisles and gave fliers to the attendees while telling them a little bit of information about SCF. As this was my first show however, I did take some time to explore as an attendee and look at what was on offer. I was blown away by the amount of memorabilia and cards on offer. I have been told that the show was smaller than it normally is, but to me it looked huge!

I quickly realized there wasn't much hockey on offer compared to what was there for football and baseball. This is understandable, as the show isn't held in a hockey market so to speak. Nevertheless, if you took your time and browsed carefully, you could easily find some interesting pieces. However, the main hockey and basketball players stocked were the big stars. If you are collecting a lesser-known player, chances are you wouldn't have been able to find what you were looking for. I was personally on the lookout for three "not as big" players for members of the site and I am sorry to say that I didn't find anything for them. The few pieces I managed to find they already had unfortunately.

The evening seemed to be over far too quickly, before I knew it, it was time to pack up until the next day. I was rather proud of my self-control for the first day; I spent a small amount of money on three pictures of Roy (two of which had a limited print run) and a few inserts, which had escaped me so far.

## Thursday 30th July 2009



The first complete day was full of action; there was a lot more people attending than on the previous evening. I was particularly worried about a Complete Package Roy card I had seen the night before as plenty of collectors were stopping over at the booth of the dealer who had it. Even with my best efforts, I couldn't stop myself and I had to buy the card, just to make sure that no one else grabbed it. This was my first high-end purchase but I fell in love with it and just couldn't help it!



SCF also started its Nationals giveaway on Thursday with a Michael Crabtree logo patch card. Over 170 people signed up for the draw and our lucky winner was Adam Zmudzinalai. The booth was busy all day and we gave away plenty of packs of free cards as well as meeting quite a few of our members, including gladdyontherise (Dan) who demanded to hold the cards we will be giving away in contests on the site this year.

I also started my quest to get the full Upper Deck wrapper redemption set on Thursday. All you had to do was to take five packs of unopened Upper Deck product to

bust at their booth and you received a pack of 6 cards a day which were part of the 24-card set. To do the first three days, I bought a box of UD Masterpieces from Tony. The first five packs yielded a Scotty Bowman border Brushstroke autograph that is also short printed. Not a bad start to my redemption program!







Having been asked by many members to find out if it was worth attending the Nationals from a box-buying standpoint, I also did a bit of research on the pricing of the various products by the major sellers on site. For a full report, see page 21.

The show finished at 6 PM for the day and we then spent the evening in Tony's room for a bit of pack wars. Tony, Scott, Captngeech (Jeff), Josh and I took part in the fun. We busted some football and some hockey. Funnily enough, in my first pack of Masterpiece, I found a green border brushstrokes autograph numbered to 15, who was it? Yes you guessed it, Scotty Bowman again. Unfortunately, lady luck was not on my side as I lost that round and my beautiful auto went to Jeff. Oh well, at least it is a personal collection item for him! The evening was good fun even though I didn't get any personal collection item. Another highlight of the night for me was playing with Scott's little girl Olivia and showing her what she should do to daddy's cards (only joking Scott).

## **Friday 31st July**

Another busy day for the SCF crew! We got ourselves 217 sign ups for the draw of a Tom Brady rookie card that was won by Pat Arthur. We also met another one of our "Eternal" members; Palantri (Ed Hutchinson), it was nice to finally put a face to all the posts!



One of our partners, Blowoutcards also had a huge day planned as they had



managed to get Rich Franklin to come and sign autographs for free at the convention. Even an hour before he was scheduled to arrive, you could see a very long waiting line and you could tell that people were excited to meet the MMA superstar. If you are a Franklin fan, you might want to check out the video Blowoutcards put on youtube.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yO0XpEf\\_ECE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yO0XpEf_ECE)

Also on the agenda on that day were box wars in the Tristar areas, the redemption programs from UD, Panini and Press Pass were still going on and of course selling and trading were still taking centre stage. On a personal note, I took the day a little easier and refrained from spending too much money. Having bought my "love at first sight" card already, I felt that I could let a bit of time pass in the hope that prices would go down. As a result, on that day, I only got a few inserts for a rather cheap price.





However, I was quite pleased with them as I am really trying to get each and every Roy card ever produced. I was also quite impressed to see a dealer look through an album of Kraft hockey cards from the late 80s, which were a complete blast from the past for me. He told me he had just bought the album and had no clue what it was. I explained to him what the cards were and I left his booth with a nice Roy oversized card.

Even though I didn't buy much on the day, I still spotted some amazing cards which prompted another night of tossing and turning trying to decide what to get or what not to get. Funnily enough, one of the cards I was considering was in the possession of a member on SCF Gomaz (Jeremy Lee). I was quite happy to meet him and to hear about his experience taking pictures of the upcoming The Cup release at Upper Deck's facilities. Little did I know, I would be back at Gomaz's table later during the weekend...

On an amazing pull note, one of our member's jeeptraderjr pulled an awesome O.J. Mayo 1/1 Donruss Elite autographed card during the day, they do not come much better than this!

For the evening entertainment, we made our way to Jacobs Field (fine Progressive Field) to see the Indians take on the Detroit Tigers. Loved the game, the atmosphere and loved my foam finger and brand new sweatshirt even more!



## Saturday 1st August



Saturday's giveaway card was a fossil one from UD Champs hockey; a grand total of 272 people entered the draw, which was won by John Veronie. Most people were quite interested when showed the fossil card; looks like Upper Deck struck a chord with many collectors by including those in Champs.

Unfortunately, everything did not go as smoothly as one would have hoped on that day. Mike did two football box breaks and somehow the biggest hit was swiped from our booth. A rather unfortunate event but it did make us realize that we really had to be careful and keep an

eye on everything. While most attendees are genuine hobby enthusiasts and collectors, some people are conversely up to no good...Karma being what it is however we would find out that all was not lost the next day.



In the meantime, Mike and Tony were busy acquiring a sweet prize for an upcoming season long football contest; a football autographed by Joe Montana and Barry Sanders. A dedicated 49ers fan, Tony was more than happy to go and get the first autograph on the ball, he actually looked like a kid on Christmas morning and walked (almost ran) over there quite swiftly! As for Mike, he had his turn with Barry Sanders and came back with the autographed football looking almost as proud as a new dad holding his baby for the first time. It was something to see! Good luck to all the members who will enter the contest to win this awesome prize! Mike also got the autos certified by Tri-Star on Sunday morning so this is as authentic as it gets.



I also had my fair share of fun shopping on the day and acquired two great personal collection items; a Roy The Cup Signature Swatches 15/25 and a The Cup Signature Patch 23/75. Needless to say, this set me back a few bucks and I decided that these would be the last big purchase I would make. When I got back to the SCF booth however, Doniceage (Don) was waiting for me with a nice Roy/Brodeur Quad jersey from UD Black...a trade was made within seconds and the card numbered 30/50 was mine while my Cheevers Super Sized pads made its way to Don's collection. An impressive collection I must add, he was set up at a booth along with Puckfrmcali (Mike) who was lucky enough to acquire a Malkin UD redemption autographed numbered to 5 during the convention!

The excitement didn't stop at the signed football for the SCF boys, they also got a visitor at the booth to break a box of 2009 Benchwarmers Limited...Yes Lisa Gleave herself. While the video break was already great, she truly made their day by personalizing a card to each of them. Dan and James were the other two lucky members who got a personalized card.

While the boys were enjoying the show, I decided to buy myself a tin of Sweet Shot and a box of Upper Deck series one. Mainly because I needed five packs to do my last day of wrapper redemption at the





Upper Deck booth on the Sunday. I chose five packs and put them aside to be busted the next day and started busting the others. Unfortunately, lady luck wasn't on my side and those were two of the most awful breaks ever. Jeff was watching my break and I got the distinct feeling that he wasn't sure what to say to such a rough break. Thankfully however, there was a nice surprise for me at the end of the show that day, Tony gave me his Roy/Price He Shoots He Scores dual game-used with Roy autograph numbered 2/20, now that totally made my day

and I forgot about the bad breaks. Jeff also chipped in with a Roy Original Six game-used card, which I still needed for the PC.

We (Tony, Mike, Don, Mike, James, my husband and myself) headed to the Buffalo Wild Wings for dinner that was rather nice before gate crashing Jeff's hotel room to film a live break of Upper Deck Ultimate Collection. This break did not disappoint as Jeff pulled himself a nice Steve Stamkos autographed rookie game-used card. We then watched Mike and Tony square off against one another in a football pack war. After that, I made my way back to the room to get some sleep before the final day of the show.

## Sunday 2nd August



The final day of the show arrived and took us all a bit by surprise, while we had spent hours and hours in the exhibition centre, it still felt like we had only started yesterday. We got the giveaway packs ready, Mike went to get the football's autographs authenticated and he and Tony started going around the show to tell the different dealers about SCF. This is one great way to build contacts...

We also held our final giveaway; a triple autograph card of Tim Lincecum, Devin Setoguchi and Frank Gore numbered 3/5 which Debbie Hermann won. You can probably tell by looking at the picture who the owner of the card

would become though...Her son looked rather happy with the win!

Sunday was also the day my husband and his sister had chosen to come and see what a sports collectors convention looked like. Armed with Tony's and mine's VIP badge, they made their way in the exhibition hall and started looking around. I quickly gave them my digital camera and sent them on a pictures



taking mission. They walked the aisle for a good hour and a half before I sent them a text requesting that they came back to the SCF booth. It was 12.00 PM and time for them to go and do my Upper Deck wrapper redemption for the day.

I gave them the five packs I had kept from the previous day's awful break and they were on their way. I only had to wait 20 minutes to see them reappear and by the look on their faces, I knew something had happened...my husband is by no means a hockey fan but as I talk so much about the sport he has still picked up some information here and there. Enough information to know that this card was a sweet pull!



When I saw it, I nearly had a heart attack and I am not kidding...I think I sort of started bouncing up and down looking for a top loader in a complete panic and of course not finding one. Our nice booth neighbours gave me one however and I could finally put the card to safety. From there, I needed to decide what to do with this awesome card that had a book value of \$300. I went over to Dave and Adam's to show them the pull and thank them for the box, I also stopped over at the Upper Deck booth to show it off to Chris and by then, my mind was made up, I needed to turn this awesome pull into a wonderful personal collection card. Having bought quite a few items already there were a few options still available; an autographed Brodeur puck, an autographed Brodeur mini-helmet and of course, a card I had spotted with Jeff at Gomaz's table; a game night ticket dual auto Henrik Lundqvist/Martin Brodeur 6/10. After careful consideration, I felt that the later was the best option so I started to negotiate with Jeremy. It took us some time but we eventually worked out a deal. Needless to say I was completely over the moon and I







now have a new favorite Brodeur card. I still cannot believe that “my entourage” was lucky enough to pull that crazy Crosby!

This wasn't the end of the pulling joys for the day though, Mike did another box break and pulled the same card that was stolen the day before and he then bought a box of UD Black and asked me to bust it. He also told me to chose one of the two packs and that I could keep the hit I preferred from the pack I chose. Talk about Russian roulette! Anyhow, I got on with it and chose one of the two packs that turned out to be the wrong one...in a way. I started with the other pack and oh dear; pull of a lifetime for a hockey fan! I was genuinely relieved that I had not picked the pack as I would have been uncomfortable keeping such a card...non-other than a quad patch autographed of Wayne Gretzky and Mario Lemieux numbered to three only! I've been told that I was actually shaking as I read what it was...understandable if you ask me.

This is pretty much how the 30th edition of the National Sports Collectors Convention ended. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and I definitely had an absolute blast. Seeing all the goodies on offer was just amazing but also meeting the forum members in person and my fellow staffers was great. I will definitely be in Baltimore come next August and I hope to see many of you there as well!





## A Word with Upper Deck By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888



One of the best things about big card show such as this one is that they allow us, the collectors, to get near the card companies and air our thoughts and opinions. For this year's edition of the Nationals, Chris Carlin (Upper Deck's Hobby Marketing Manager) graciously accepted to grant Collector's Corner an interview. This speaks volume about Upper Deck's commitment to get closer to the collectors and hear their views while answering their queries.

**SCF:** Thank you for taking the time to speak to us Chris, I have some questions for you that were suggested by SCF's members.

**SCF:** Many collectors cannot afford to spend huge amounts of money on the latest high-end releases. As a result, they must revert to the secondary market to buy the singles they need individually. Unfortunately, this has gotten to be a complicated endeavour due to the forgeries of both patches and autographs. Which steps is Upper Deck taking to ensure the authenticity of the cards bought by collectors on the secondary market?

**Chris Carlin (CC):** Unfortunately in this industry when there is a way to make money, even if dishonest, people will jump on the occasion. Our approach is to first take a look at the scope of the problem and then to start working on an appropriate solution. Obviously the authenticity is a cornerstone of our business and patch or autograph tempering are copyright issues and can lead to legal repercussions for those who attempt to do this. We try our best to cooperate with eBay when authenticity problems are reported. We have got auctions shut down in the past but each and every collector should use due diligence to ensure that they are indeed getting the real deal. If something looks too good to be true, it's likely that it is.

We are currently exploring different ways to deal with the issue such as for instance little ink dots, which explode in different ways when someone attempts to temper with a card, or actually tying the patch up to the card itself. These ideas are however pricey solutions and they do take time to develop.

Recently with The Cup we tested a new way to deal with such problems by collaborating with Jeremy Lee (gomaz). He came to our facility and took pictures of all of the patches in the release. This could allow collectors to see what the card they are buying should look like and therefore help prevent issues. We still have to work out the details and find out how to set-up the database however.





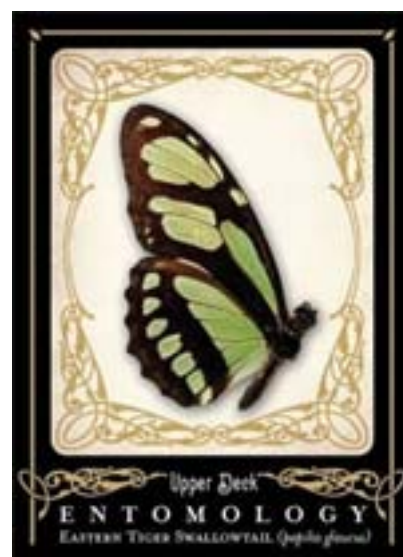
**SCF: What about slabbing cards? This could prevent tempering...**

**CC:** This might be a potential solution but it is quite hard to please everyone and while some collectors would welcome the change and see it as a way to eradicate the problem, others would be upset to lose the proximity with the card, to not be able to touch the patch and feel it. We do however have a new partnership with PSA so we can consider things like these.

**SCF: It seems that collectors are becoming more and more demanding and that to some extent, they are getting bored of the game used cards and even of the autographed cards. What could potentially be the next big thing in the hobby?**

**CC:** A few years back, we innovated with a special product called Power Deck. However, it seems we were too far ahead of time, as those were not very well received. Many collectors still need to have the standard card so to speak. Things have evolved since then and I would like to think that something along those lines could be part of the future of the hobby.

In the past, there was also a product called Goodwin in which actual butterflies were inserted, we are also aiming to do special things like that. We produced a butterfly card a beetle one; we also added natural history cards to Champs and have inserted the Fossils. These are not to everyone's taste but some collectors like them. The same goes for inserting Hollywood memorabilia, this is not for everybody but there is definitely a market for it and it does diversify the products.



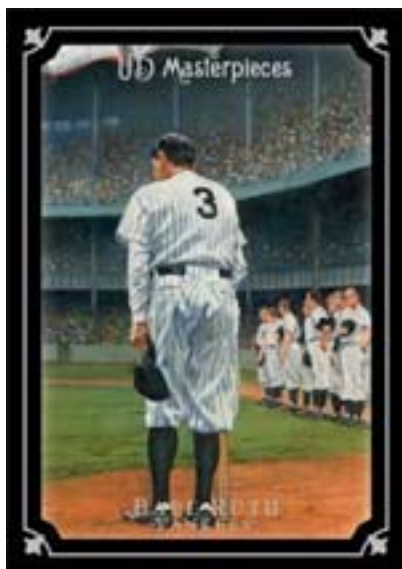
**SCF: Some collectors would say that year after year, releases follow one another and are all the same. Can we hope to perhaps see Upper Deck come up with different concepts for upcoming releases like for instance the Montreal Canadiens Centennial set?**

**CC:** I wouldn't say that all releases are the same, what works for one sport might not work for another. For instance, we couldn't produce Exquisite Hockey, as the price point would be too high for the Canadian market, which is why we came up with something more suitable, The Cup.

**SCF: Have you considered asking collectors what they would like to see as a release?**

**CC:** Of course, this is what our Diamond Club is all about. It's not just people who buy a lot of product; these are also people whose opinion we like to get on what works and what doesn't. They work hard for us.

**SCF: Our baseball collectors were disappointed to see Masterpieces being pulled from the product line-up, why was it?**



**CC:** Well, firstly when a product is pulled, we do not completely remove it, we can take some elements of it and insert them in other sets. This will likely be the case for Masterpieces Baseball; it will be inserted in other products as special inserts. We aim to diversify our products and with Masterpiece baseball, we tried to depict amazing moments, unfortunately there are only so many moments to depict and it comes a point where you cannot take an idea any further than it's been already.

**SCF:** Personally, Masterpieces Hockey was one of my favorite products this year; will we see another release in 09-10?

**CC:** No there will not be another Masterpiece Hockey this year, that does not mean to say that we will not be doing the same thing as with baseball and use the concept for inserts though.

**SCF:** Some collectors are concerned with the authenticity of the material used in producing game-used cards, would it be possible to write at the back of the card the actual match in which the jersey was used?

**CC:** This is not possible because of the sheer quantity of game-used cards we produce and also, two jerseys can be used for one card.

**SCF:** Wouldn't it at least be possible to write at the back of the card that the athlete depicted on the card used the jersey?

**CC:** The problem with this is that we are a huge manufacturing company and that mistakes can happen. If we guaranteed it and then a mistake was to happen, we would be legally liable for it. For instance, once a basketball card was shipped out with a football swatch. This should not happen but it unfortunately does on very rare occasions. Our legal department advises us on issues such as these to ensure the safety of the company.

**SCF:** How does Upper Deck feel about the exclusivity licences given by the professional leagues? UD has the exclusivity with the National Hockey League but saw Panini get the same with the National Basketball Association.

**CC:** We stepped up during the lockout, which was a very dark time for the NHL, but we have a lot of passion and we believed in the future of the sport. It is a huge responsibility to have the exclusivity to produce their product and we take it very seriously. It is imperative to manage the rookies properly, to have a good distribution network and to push initiatives forward. This year, we will be present at the NHL rookie photo shoot and we are confident that this will produce great results. As for the question of whether or not the exclusivity with the NHL will be renewed, we did start testing the water but we cannot reveal anything on that front. I will just say that we are very happy with what we did with the product and we feel like there has been tremendous growth.





There are different ways to manage different sports as well, take baseball for example; there are plenty of people who are already spending so much money on Bryce Harper even though he is nowhere near the major league yet. It is very hard to manage this sport mainly because there are so many unproven prospects every year.

As for basketball, we were of course interested in getting the exclusivity with the NBA but the financial commitment required was just too important. As we have deals with certain players however such as LeBron James, Michael Jordan, Kobe Bryant and Kevin Garnett, you cannot expect to see their autographs in the upcoming Panini releases. It will be interesting to see what they can produce though. As for how we will use the autographs we get from the said players, we can always insert them in other sports release say if there was to be a greatest sports man insert set.

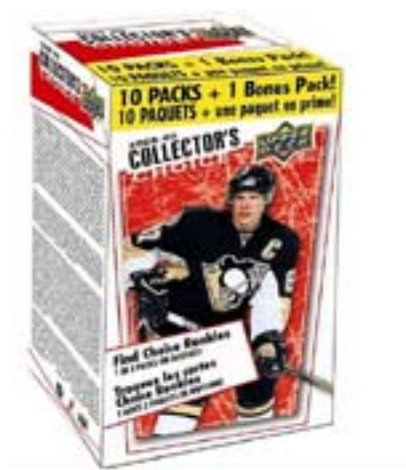


We are currently working on a project called "Prominent Cuts" which will focus on Mixed Martial Arts, sports, Hollywood etc...but we want to take our time to get as good a product as possible out.

**SCF: Can you update us on the new redemption program, which will apparently be used to make it easier for collectors to request replacement for outstanding redemptions?**

**CC:** We have been close to putting it out there a few times but we want to make sure that it is as ready as can be before launching it. We have seen what can happen when a new website is launched before it is entirely ready to be. We want this to be what the collectors want it to be, we need to make sure that the inventory can be managed properly before we can launch this otherwise, we would be driving this huge project out only to get back down to the drawing board a few months down the line because it was not ready.

**SCF: In the current economic climate, some companies have decided to produce certain brands in lesser quantities and "load" the boxes with hits. Has Upper Deck ever considered doing this?**



**CC:** Of course, we do also produce hot boxes but for cost issues, we cannot do that on every single release. We try to adjust our production to the current market and produce a little less in quantity than what the market can handle. We are also producing brands that are accessible to all from a pricing standpoint; we want families and kids to be able to afford to be a part of the hobby.

This year in hockey, we brought back Collector's Choice, of course not every collector was interested by this release but it is important to have brands like this one and Victory, which can bring kids into the hobby.

We also aim to adapt our releases and pricing point to each market,



for instance a product like SPX will be priced lower in Canada than in the USA to take into account the Canadian exchange rate.

**SCF: In professional sports, franchises are sometimes relocated, how does this affect Upper Deck's inventory? In the case of game used cards for example, would you carry on using Coyotes jerseys should they move from Phoenix?**

**CC:** Each sport is different and fans of one sport can be more tolerant about a player being depicted in an old uniform or an old swatch being used in a game-used card than fans of another sports. I know that hockey fans do not like getting a card on which a player is pictured in one uniform, a different swatch is used and the card says that he is now with another team but there are situations in which this cannot be avoided.



We cannot be expected to not use all the stock we bought of certain jerseys because a team moves to another town. We need to use the product we have bought, as we cannot just chalk this up as a loss. Thankfully however, we have recently acquired Hunt Auctions, which will give us a way to move the items we have bought and cannot use anymore, to get a return on our investment.

That being said however, there is also a market for players pictured in older uniforms. For instance this year we included cards of Gordie Howe pictured in a Whalers uniform and they were highly sought after. Yes he spent most of his career with Detroit, but collectors are hungry for something different, how many cards of Howe in a Detroit jersey do we need?

**SCF: Expired redemptions are probably one of the most dreaded pull of the hobby. I understand that by the time they are pulled, the price of the product has gone down greatly but surely the consumer should receive something in exchange?**

**CC:** This type of issue is handled on a case-by-case basis, when someone gets such a pull, they need to contact us and we will see what can be done. Of course, collectors have got to realize that one of the reasons why a product is cheaper and they bought it is because the dealers are aware that the redemptions inside the boxes are expired. Someone once pulled an expired redemption for a final floor card autographed by Michael Jordan numbered to 23, of course we try to work something out with the customer but unfortunately, there will be times when the customer will not be 100% happy.

There are some instances in which the dates of validity of redemptions have also been extended although this is exceptional. We have had to do this for The Cup 2005-2006 as the price of the product has actually gone up since its release due to the presence of exceptional rookies like Sidney Crosby and Alexander Ovechkin. Collectors should however be aware that the extension will not last forever so





those sitting on boxes right now may wish to either open them or sell them on as the value could go back down once the redemptions are officially expired.

**SCF: Why is it not possible to remake 1/1 cards when they are pulled damaged? A notable example of this was the Alexander Ovechkin Ultimate Rookie Shield autographed.**

**CC:** There are a couple of things to take into account here. Firstly, collectors must realise that making a card is harder than making pizza; it's both a complicated and an expensive process. Secondly, we do produce overstock of certain cards but it wouldn't make sense for 1/1 cards to make extra stock in the off chance that this one card would be damaged.

We are however currently exploring a new program to cater to such occurrences but it is not an easy issue to address, as there is a huge possibility of abuse by unethical people.

When such a card is pulled though, the collectors should always ask themselves how important really is the damage? Not every card will be flawless, especially when consumers want to get hard signed autographed cards, they must understand that not every athlete will "get" how important the condition of a card is and that they will not be as careful handling the card as a collector would be.

While some damaged cards are pulled, people also need to realize that we do get rid of some cards and just throw them away because of quality issue. This is when we sometimes have to use redemptions but I am certain that collectors prefer redemption to a huge gash in their card.

**SCF: In baseball, why was the 1971 design pulled from O-Pee-Chee and why wasn't this important change announced until the day before the release of the product?**

**CC:** Unfortunately, this was a pure legal issue. We couldn't make the announcement for legal reasons and we cannot really discuss it either still for legal reasons. What I can say however is that we still used a vintage design for that particular set. The new design was very well received and still sold quite well.

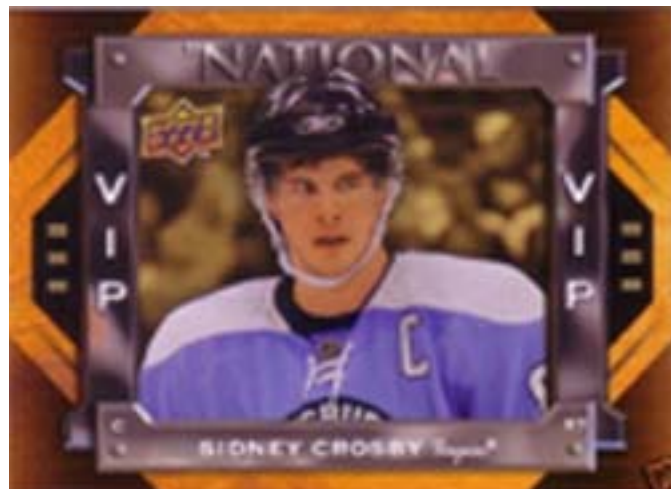
**SCF: Thank you for taking the time to answer our questions Chris, we look forward to more new releases from Upper Deck! Anything you would like to add?**

**CC:** It has been my pleasure, I would just like to add one thing though, we have recently restructured our enterprise and moved departments so that we have a much more centralised operation. It made sense to do this from a financial perspective but it will also allow us to give a better service to our customer. For instance, if a collector calls our customer service, they will be able to get a quicker and more accurate answer to their query, as our customer service rep will be able to speak directly in person to our marketing rep for example. We have brought on a lot of new people and while they may not all



be knowledgeable in every sport, they do all understand the value of customer service. The move happened two weeks ago and we are still settling down but we are confident that this will be an excellent improvement for our company.

This concludes my interview with Upper Deck, I really count this as a highlight of my National experience and I would like to thank every member who took the time to suggest questions on SCF. If your question was one of the ones I did not ask, please remember that you can now contact Upper Deck on their Facebook page here: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/pages/Upper-Deck/61698633950?ref=ts>.







## Buying Online or at the National?

### **Karine Hains aka Pheeb888**

Many wonder if attending card shows is a good decision from a monetary standpoint. After all, now with the Internet, the consumers tend to get better deals online than by going to shops. To know if it is worth buying boxes at this particular card show I decided to compare the online prices of the 3 major retailer on site and their prices on the show's first full day.

Product	Blowout		Atlanta Sports Cards		Dave and Adam's Card World	
	Show Prices	Online	Show Prices	Online	Show Prices	Online
<b>Baseball</b>						
Upper Deck Series 1	\$52	\$54.99	\$55	\$54.99	\$57	\$59.95
Goudey	\$74	N/A	\$72	\$75.99	\$80	\$86.95
Allen and Ginter	\$79	\$86.99	\$79	\$89.99	\$82	\$91.95
Legendary Cuts	\$88	\$93.99	\$90	\$93.99	\$89	\$92.95
<b>Football</b>						
Press Pass Legends	\$124	Email for price	\$118	\$125.99	\$135	\$126.95
Donruss Classic	\$77	\$82.99	\$77	\$82.99	\$79	\$77.99
Upper Deck Icons	\$73	\$78.99	\$73	\$78.99	\$75	\$80.95
Topps Magic	\$67	\$95.99	\$70	\$94.99	\$69	\$77.95
<b>Hockey</b>						
Ultimate Collection	\$93	\$99.99	N/A	N/A (case only)	\$100	\$113.95
Ice	\$70	\$71.99	\$80	\$74.99	N/A	\$71.95
SP Game Used	\$125	\$127.99	\$119	N/A (case only)	\$119.99	\$119.99
OPC Premier	N/A	\$168.99	N/A	N/A	\$160	\$165.99
<b>Basketball</b>						
UD Draft Edition	Sold out	\$79.99	N/A	N/A	\$75	\$79.95
SPA	\$130	\$129.99	Retail only	N/A	N/A	\$149.99
Topps Treasury	\$77	Email for price	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$90.99



A quick glance at the table also allows you to quickly compare and see which of the sellers is cheaper. However, you can also note that not everyone had everything in stock. The show was rather baseball and football focused and it definitely showed in the selection of boxes available to buy. For the purpose of this article, I chose to compare solely products from this year but I should also mention that a much wider selection was available and some were nice older products that could be bought and busted at very affordable prices. Of course, those did not qualify for the Upper Deck wrapper redemption program however.

This was my very first show with all the excitement it was tempting to just run around like a headless chicken and just buy everything that tempted me. Taking a more relaxed and thought through approach really is the way to go as it could allow you to save a few bucks here and there and in the end, you might be able to afford more boxes than you thought.

From the table, it also seems that generally, buying at the Nationals is cheaper, not only must you consider the price tag, but the fact that you won't have to spend anything on shipping as well. Of course, you will have to make your way there though, which can be an expensive trip in itself.

That being said, depending on what kind of collector you are and the type of inventory dealers have available, you may find that a show is not the right place to buy plenty of product as you might manage to make some serious progress on your personal collection by just picking up singles. Of course, the gamble of a box break is always an interesting experience but it can sometimes leave a sour taste in the mouth...if you must try your luck though, ensure that you think things through and shop around prior to buying.

**BLOWOUT  
CARDS****Atlanta**  
*sports cards***dacardworld.com**  
Dave and Adam's Card World





## **Why TTM Autographs Are Perfect for Tough Times**

**By Mike Greene aka Indyreeds**



I know that the economy has been a little rough and many of us are cutting back or trying to make our collection dollars stretch further than before. The county I work in is currently at over a 17% unemployment rate and the National unemployment rate is now over 9%! Many collectors have a much more limited budget for their hobby as we all tighten our belts. While I am one of the lucky ones who has not seen my employer laying off workers, I have started to look at my spending and cut back where I can. It is no secret that our hobby dollars is a place where many of us have cut back.

I know that opening up a box and pulling out an autograph of a player from your favorite team, a Hall of Famer, rookie or a current star always seems like a success. I just can no longer justify spending \$100 on a box of sports cards and get a couple of hits. It is like playing the lottery, as you just never know what you will get and you sometimes end up with a piece of cardboard that you just do not

want. Thank God that SCF is here to try to trade those hits you did not want to someone who might. I wanted more control of the autographed items coming into my collection, but did not want to spend what autograph singles are bringing in the hobby.

Do you realize for around \$10 you can add ten to twenty autographs to your collection? It can be done! You can pick up a box of envelope at most Dollar stores for just that one dollar. Purchase a book of stamps for \$8.80 cents at your local post office. Now look at that stack of cards you have that were not hits from the boxes you have purchased. I assume that most collectors have plenty of base cards that they do nothing with. Take a few moments and go into the Through the Mail Manager (TTMM) and look through the recent successes. Select some players that others have gotten back or take a shot at someone else. You can usually find players who you would love to add to your collection and then sort through those base cards you have sitting out and pull one or two cards out of those players.

Look up those players in the Through The Mail Manager and address an envelope to them. Take a few minutes to write a short letter telling the player why you would like their autograph and ask them to sign the card or cards you are mailing to them. Fill out another envelope with your address in the send to area and place a stamp on it. In the hobby the call this envelope a self addressed stamped envelope and is often abbreviated to SASE. Place your cards, the request letter and your SASE into the player addressed envelope. Stamp the envelope and mail it off! You have enough supplies with that book of stamps and the envelope box you purchased to attempt ten requests. What would you have to pay for a hobby box with ten autograph hits in it? Here are ten names that have recent successes in the TTMM Andre Dawson, Duke Snider, Paul Molitor, Ozzie Newsome, Lawrence Taylor, Hershel Walker, Karl Malone, Lenny Wilkens, Danica Patrick and Anna Kournikova. I can definitely see where adding those ten autographs to your collection for \$10 would make your hobby dollars stretch further. Give it a shot and please do report your successes in the TTMM for other members as well! I have to go check my mail! Best of luck with your autograph requests!



## “Base-ic” Art

By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888



For many collectors, base cards are nothing more than a storage headache. You buy a box forever and always chasing the hits and more often than not, you end up with a vast majority of base cards for which you have no use... While this is true for most people, it isn't for Tim Carroll.

Tim is a baseball collector doubled with a most talented artist. Having been directed to his website by a fellow SCF member, I was amazed at the wonders I discovered... we've all seen the T-206 Honus Wagner Tobacco card, but I bet you've not seen it like this:

This is the Tim Carroll version of the baseball collectors' Holy Grail and what got him started in his current project. Intrigued and impressed

by his website, I decided to ask Tim a few questions.

**SCF: As a collector, do you focus mostly on baseball?**

Tim Carroll: Without a doubt, baseball is my sport. My favorite all-time card is the 1962 Topps #200 Mickey Mantle. My personal collection consists of many commons that belonged to my dad, my ever-growing Hall of Famers game-used and autograph collection, and my player collection: Bill Hall of the Milwaukee Brewers. I do have several sets, and I like putting together the Bowman at you from Mickey Mantle's chin.

**SCF: I know you recently finished a degree in elementary teaching but have you got any professional training in arts?**

TC: I was a graphic design major in 1996 at a local community college but I left school after a couple of semesters. I did have the basic art classes there: Design I, Drawing I, Art Appreciation, etc... However, I have enhanced most of my skills by playing around with the different techniques available as you can see on my site. I love playing with charcoal, graphite, paint, ink, and anything else that I may learn something from. I am a huge fan of “American Artist” magazines, and I use the information in those magazines to achieve the desired effects in my own art.





**SCF: How did you get the idea to do this type of art?**

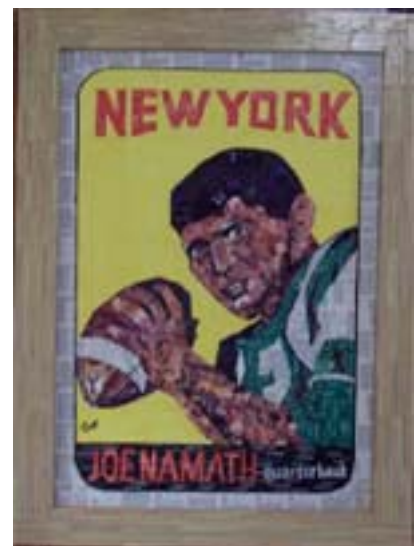
TC: I have always wanted to fuse art and cards together, and when I realized that it was the 100th anniversary of the Wagner, I knew this was the perfect time. I started asking myself the questions, “What is the major goal of card collecting?” and, “What is the ultimate goal of collecting?” My own answers were, “To trade the cards you do not want for the cards that you do” and, “to get the card that every collector wants to possess.” From there, I decided to “trade” the cards I did not want for the ones that make every collector salivate.

SCF: And just like that, an amazing project was born...

**SCF: How many projects do you plan to include in your Holy Grail series and do you have a definitive line-up yet?**

TC: The series will have two cards from each of the four major sports. The tentative list for the “Holy Grail” series is as follows:

1909 T-206 Honus Wagner  
 1952 Topps Mickey Mantle  
 1965 Topps Joe Namath  
 1935 National Chicle Bronko Nagurski  
 1986-87 Fleer Michael Jordan  
 1969-1970 Topps Lew Alcindor  
 1979-1980 Topps Wayne Gretzky  
 1911-12 C-55 Georges Vezina



**SCF: Which one of your Holy Grail project is your favorite so far?**

TC: I still think the Wagner is my favorite, due to the fact that it represents the entire series. However, I am very excited with the detail work of the '52 Mantle. With Namath, the color scheme (credit Topps for that) is fantastic. So, I have parts of each that I really love. The neat thing is; I learned so much about each card as I reproduced them. Although I have seen each card literally hundreds of times over the last 20 years, I picked up on details I was not even aware of. Being able to spend 32-42 hours staring at an image gives a person a real sense of “knowing” the card. For example: I did not know that the letter “O” is present on Mantle’s jersey in the 1952 Topps. That is no big deal, but it is indeed there. I have actually had one collector correct me on the spelling of “Pittsburg” on the Wagner. He thought I accidentally left off the “H”. That is a big focus in the world of art. You look at things.....but do



you really see them?



**SCF: Do you ever get fellow collectors donating base cards to you so that you can use them in your projects?**

TC: It has been great. I have had fellow on-line collectors offering to send me cards. This is an offer that I will probably have to accept eventually, as I am finding it very easy to fly through commons that I can actually use.

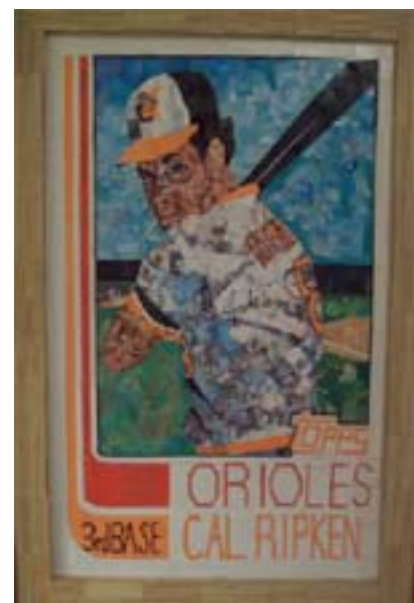
SCF: If you wish to donate base cards to Tim to help him in his projects, please drop him an email at [timcarrollart@yahoo.com](mailto:timcarrollart@yahoo.com).

**SCF: Most collectors these days are after the memorabilia and autographed cards, do you plan on doing some projects including this aspect by depicting a game used or autographed card?**

TC: I have considered it, yes. This would be something very long term, as I am really enjoying the concept of recreating the cards that have captured the imagination of collectors for decades. I would love to have the pieces of this Holy Grail series autographed by the living players depicted (i.e. Jordan, Namath, Gretzky). That said I wouldn't mind having an autograph of any of those players in any fashion.

**SCF: Have you ever thought about selling your projects? Ever received any offers for them or received orders from people wanting you to reproduce their favorite card?**

TC: Absolutely. I have contemplated what the outcome of those pieces would be. I have pretty much decided that I am going to have a charity auction with a large portion of the proceeds going towards a local little league baseball chapter. It will be rewarding to help sponsor a team of players that might not have the finances to play otherwise. As for commissioning work, this is something I have always wanted to do, and this experience is allowing that opportunity. I will have a link on my site very soon with details, but in the meantime, I would be happy to give price quotes. If anyone is interested, they can contact me at [timcarrollart@yahoo.com](mailto:timcarrollart@yahoo.com). I would also like to



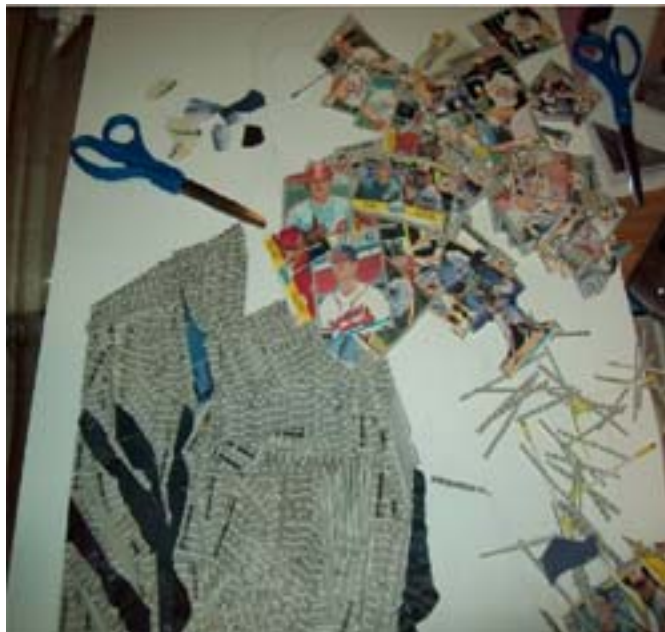




mention that I will not be making more than 1 of any picture/card. I want to protect the integrity of the piece, so each one will be one of a kind. For instance, once I do the '82 Topps Traded Ripken, I may sell prints, but I will not do another.

**SCF: Have you ever displayed your work at a card show?**

TC: This is something I would love to do! Unfortunately, there has not been a true card show within 125 miles of my home in the last five years. If a major one comes to Memphis or Birmingham in the near future, I may pack up the art and go. It would be a real treat to have a show with an autograph guest. I would create a card of that player just to have it signed – regardless of who it is. I would love to show the art to collectors in person. It is important to emphasize how different the pieces look in person than on the computer screen. You walk away and you see the card. You get up close and you start picking out forearms, batting helmets, jerseys, faces, player names, team names.... one could literally sit there for several minutes just to take it in.



SCF: It would be very interesting to see what kind of reaction and feedback you could get at a big show such as the National Sports Collector Convention...

**SCF: How many hours does it take you to complete one project? From the sketching point to the final completion?**

TC: The hours given on my site for each piece represent the rounded amount from sketching point to hanging. I make note of the time I start each sitting, and I mark the time when I stop. I then add it up when the piece is finished. I also include the amount of time I use for the frame. Each piece has its own frame that I build. It is made of wood, but I then cover that frame with the border of 1987 Topps cards. This helps tie

the frame to the card and makes the art flow throughout.

**SCF: You told me that you plan on doing an amazing sports moment series, can you give us details on that?**

TC: I am tinkering with several ideas right now. Depending on which cards are recreated through commission, I would like to do four or five more series. One series would consist of key baseball rookie cards from the 1930's through the 1960's (Ruth, Gehrig, Williams, DiMaggio, Paige, Robinson, Mays, Aaron, Clemente, Banks, Koufax, Ryan, and Jackson). Another would consist of key baseball rookies from the 1970's to 1989 (Schmidt, Brett, Yount, Murray, Ozzie, Henderson, Ripken, Sandberg, Gwynn, Boggs, Mattingly, Griffey). One of the series I have considered that consists of ALL sports is



the “Amazing Sports Moment” series. It would be series dedicated to the moments that helped shape American sports. I want these pieces to be very large – possibly 4 times the size of my current pieces (24” X 36”). The moments will be the stars. I’m unsure of the entire line-up at this time, but you can bet you will be seeing “The Miracle on Ice”, Kirk Gibson’s 1988 World Series Game 1 HR, Dwight Clark’s catch, and I would love to do one on Jim Valvano’s NC State championship.

**SCF: What do you say to those who are shocked that you are purely and simply destroying cards?**

TC: Fortunately, I have only had one comment about the possibility of cutting something up that could eventually be valuable. However, I have collected since 1987 – so I am well informed of even the slightest variations, etc. Also, I have only used cards from 1985 to 1991 so far – and I would love to stay in that “overproduced” era. The way I look at it is: if we go to a card show, how many times do we see a 1988 Topps Jim Eisenreich in a display case? Never. No disrespect at all intended towards any players I mention (as I would love to be on my own baseball card), but I feel I am finally giving those cards some spotlight. The only reason anyone needs commons from the mid-80’s to the early 90’s is for set building. Once those sets are complete, the leftovers simply take up space. I am trying to make those cards part of something bigger. It is pretty fascinating to look at the “cards” I have created up close – and then you realize that Jim Gott or Dave Magadan is staring back at you from Mickey Mantle’s chin.

SCF: Thanks for talking to us Tim and keep up the good work! Personally, I cannot wait to see your hockey pieces. For more information on Tim and his work, please visit his website: <http://www.timcarrollart.com/>





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

## August 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3	4	5	6  - The Cup Hockey	7
10	11	12  - Exquisite Basketball	13	14
17  - '48 Basketball	18	19  - WNBA Series 2 The Rookies Basketball  - VIP Racing	20	21
24  - Ticket to Stardom Baseball	25  - Ultra Hockey  - Ballpark Collection	26  - WNBA Series 3 All-Stars Basketball  - Rookies and Stars Longevity Football - Threads Football	27  - Topps Basketball	28





## 2009 Donruss Classic Football Review

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

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

### Box Details

18 packs per box

5 cards per pack

SRP: 83.99 - 89.99

### Per Box Items

3 Autographs/memorabilia (at least one autograph)

2 Rookies

2 Legends

1 Timeless Tribute

3 School Colors



### And 2 others of the following:

Parallels

Classic triples

Monday Night Heroes

Rookies

Classic quads

Legends

Membership

School colors

Timeless Treasures

Classic singles

Saturday Stars

Classic combos

Sunday's Best

### What We Pulled

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SdTh4cQy8g>

Base: 75/100 (75%)

Dupes: 0

Legends /999 (2): Carl Eller, Phil Simms

Rookies /999 (2): Cody Brown, Louis Murphy





Timeless Tributes Gold /50 (1): Joe Montana  
Timeless Tributes Silver /100 (1): Austin Collie



Classic Singles Silver /250 (1): Thurman Thomas  
Membership Gold /100 (1): Dwayne Bowe



Saturday Stars Gold /100 (1): Andre Smith  
Sunday's Best Silver /250 (1): Vincent Jackson



School Colors (3): Aaron Maybin, Brian Orakpo  
and Brian Robiskie



Monday Night Heroes Donovan McNabb Jersey /299  
Sunday's Best Brian Westbrook Jersey /299



Saturday Stars Malcolm Jenkins Auto /100  
Significant Signatures Gold Daryl Johnston  
Auto /126



**Final Ratings (out of 5):**

Base Set – 4.5

Fun – 4.25

Overall Design – 3

Value – 4

Rebuy – 4

Total – 19.75/25 (79%)

It's nice to see that Panini America has not tried to shake up the staples of the Donruss line thus far. Classics is back this year with its typical 100 card base set, 100 rookies and 50 legends. Kudos to the production team on the Jay Cutler card. It's aggravating when you get a card that says the current team, but pictures a player in his old jersey. Unfortunately though, it's still the same stagnant design we've seen over the last couple of years.

Glad to see the parallels are kept simple (gold, silver, platinum), however it is hard to tell which one you have in most cases unless you look at the serial number. Speaking of serial numbers, there's something that has been befuddled. If there are 100 rookies numbered to 999 and 50 legends numbered to 999 and you get two of each per box, wouldn't you run out of legends? Unless this means the rookies are seeded in retail packs at a 2:1 rate against the legends.

Looks like Panini America has continued as they did with Elite and added an extra hit to many of their boxes. It really does show they are willing to go the extra mile for the consumers. Though with the Significant Signatures sets, this is a set that would really sizzle if the autos were on-card (though I prefer all autos to be on-card).

With getting something in almost every pack (17/18 for us), Classics is a solid purchase for the money. Completing a base set is fairly easy after one box, plus there's a slew of goodies in it. A lower print run on the rookies would be nice just to give them added value. But if you're looking for a box that is enjoyable to open and has a nice yield, then Classics is for you.

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Panini America for providing us with this opportunity to open and review this product. If interested in more information on this release or any others in their product line, be sure to check them out at [www.paniniamerica.net](http://www.paniniamerica.net).







## **2009 Topps Allen and Ginter Baseball Review**

**By Tony Joyce aka Enigma**

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

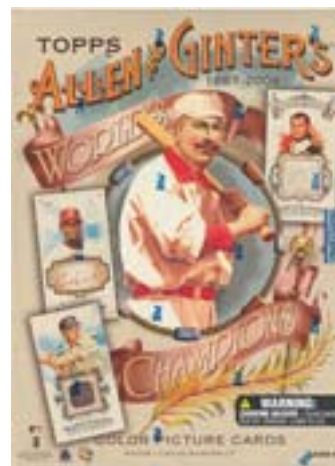
### **Box Details**

24 packs per box

8 cards per pack

SRP: 73.99 - 84.99

Topps Allen & Ginter Baseball returns in 2009 with all new insert cards including Biggest Hoaxes, Hoodwinks, & Bamboozles, Cut Signature cards highlighting luminaries from centuries past, and popular DNA cards featuring Napoleon and Geronimo!



The Ginter Code also returns, more Byzantine and enigmatic than before, challenging collectors to decipher a hidden code for a chance to win a special Ginter Code Winner Set of autographs from every framed autograph subject in 2009 Topps Allen & Ginter.

And as in years past, Allen & Ginter's distinguished card design, based on the vintage Allen & Ginter cards from the late 1800's, will continue to delight collectors.

### **Product Highlights**

- A combination of any of the THREE following cards per Hobby Box:
  - \* Autographed,
  - \* Relic,
  - \* Cut Signature,
  - \* Rip,
  - \* or Printing Plate
- One Hobby Exclusive N43 or Cabinet Card per box!
- One Hobby Exclusive Rip Card per case!

### **Content Breakdown**

Base Cards - 350 subjects (6:1)

- Baseball Veterans (230)
- Baseball Rookies (30)
- Historic Figures (25)
- World Champions (20)



## What we pulled

Part 1: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MXgDMEE\\_Jg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MXgDMEE_Jg)

Part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtV2OHv8uZ0>

Part 3: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIlbLyRy40s>

Base: 130/350 (37.14%)

Dupes: 0

Cabinet Card Box Loader:

Japan Wins the World baseball Classic



Mini (10)

Mini A&G Back (6): Burke Kenny, David DeJesus, Brian Giles, Jered Weaver, Joakim Soria, Jordan Schafer

Mini Black (3): Matt Tuiasosopo, Trevor Crowe, Jose Lopez



National Pride (24)

Highlight Sketches (4): Manny Ramirez, Derek

Jeter, Frank Thomas, Jim Thome Code (2): Jack Cust,

Nelson Cruz



David Wright Jersey  
Mark Mulder Jersey



Creatures Of Legends, Myths And Terrors (1): Cerberus

National Heroes (2): Garibaldi, Tiradentes

World's Biggest Hoaxes (2): The Runaway Bride

Anna Anderson



Hanley Ramirez Auto  
Edwin Moreno Magenta Printing  
Plate /1



**Final Ratings (out of 5):**

Base Set – 4

Fun – 3.5

Overall Design – 4

Value – 4.5

Rebuy – 5

Total – 21/25 (84%)

Topps has brought back what has become one of its flagship baseball sets after only a mere four years. Allen & Ginter offers numerous upon numerous sets for all sorts of collectors. The base set is a fun one to put together, especially with the 50 short prints. Others prefer the mini variations, while others enjoy the multitude of insert sets. While not always baseball relevant, this set was never intended to be.

Collectors will see some new sets in this year's release. On the heels of the State Flags set from last year, consumers are treated to a National Pride set which highlights the country flag of numerous stars in baseball today. There's also a Highlights Sketches set which features colored drawings that depict huge moments over the last few years in baseball. The most interesting set is the World's Greatest Hoaxes mini set. This set features some of the best stunts pulled on others in history.

Back again for the second year is the Break The Code challenge. Last year's winner, Jason Wong, does have a card in this year's set. Instead of a 20 card set, Topps decided to up the odds and turn it into a 300 card mind bender. Good luck to those who take on this task.

Allen & Ginter is one of those rare releases each of which you can open many boxes and still want more. Between all the inserts, mini and hits, there's value in every box. Not to mention, there's always collectors of Ginter sets so these cards are easily traded and sold through various means. Who knew that an old-style approach would be what was needed to tame the modern day cardboard appetite.

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Topps for giving us the opportunity to open and review this release. If interested in more information on this set or others, be sure to check them out today at [www.topps.com](http://www.topps.com).







## 2009 Press Pass Series 2 Racing Review

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

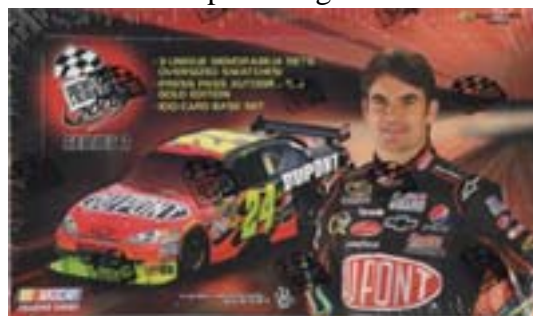
First and foremost, I'd like to thank our sponsors at Press Pass for providing us with this box.

### Box Details

30 packs per box

6 cards per pack

SRP: 67.99 - 74.99



Introducing another first from Press Pass, Inc. - we are expanding our flagship brand, Press Pass with a second series. Press Pass Series 2 includes cards 120-218 featuring the sport's hottest stars, NASCAR's first tobacco-style cards and a compelling lineup of Authentic Memorabilia featuring Oversized and Autographed Swatches!

### Content Highlights

- Featuring 2009 Press Pass Autographs - Series 2 Gold Edition Authentic Autographs!
- Also Look For Memorabilia: One In Every Box, Including:
  - \*Sponsor Swatches Select Edition - Oversized River-Worn Memorabilia
  - \*Tread Marks: Autographed Oversized Race-Used Tire Cards
  - \*Prospect Pieces Signature Edition: Autographed Oversized Race-Used Tires From Up-And-Coming Nascar Star
- A Nascar First! Pocket Portraits Tobacco-Style Cards Inserted One Per Pack - Four Levels To Collect!

### Half-Case Hits

- 7-8 Sponsor Swatches
- 3-4 Press Pass Autos
- 1 Tread Marks
- 1 or 2 Prospect Pieces Signature Edition

### What we pulled

Part 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfKhUhadZfk>

Part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VT7-a-boZw>

Base including checklist: 100/100 (100%)

Dupes: 7

Gold: 30/100 (30%)





Holofoil /100 (3): David Reutimann, Ron Hornaday, Carl Edwards



Gallery (5): Mark Martin, Matt Kenseth, Jeff Burton, Jimmie Johnson, Joey Logano

Game Face (2): Dale Earnhardt Jr, Jimmie Johnson



Pocket Portraits (27)

Pocket Portraits Hometown (2): Kasey Kahne, Reed Sorenson

Pocket Portraits Smoke (1): Dale Earnhardt



Sponsor Swatches Kyle Busch Shirt /225



Kyle Busch Press Pass Autograph



Prospect Pieces Signature Edition J.R. Fitzpatrick Tire/Auto /50





**Final Ratings (out of 5):**

Base Set – 5

Fun – 4.5

Overall Design – 3.5

Value – 4.25

Rebuy – 4.25

Total – 21.5/25 (86%)

Press Pass moved away from last year's Speedway and just turned it into Series 2, which is a continuation set of its first release of the year. They went as far as continuing the numbering where they left off to solidify this by, though I'm sure racing collectors would have known either way based on the car design (exactly the same).

There are numerous subsets but two stand out. One is a Jimmie Johnson tribute as he pursues a record breaking 4th Sprint Cup title in a row. Like its Stewart and Logano predecessors, this set wasn't necessary and its omission could have allowed more drivers to have cards. Accordingly, the second set is a tribute to Hendrick Motorsports. At least this set has a twist. Flip the cards over and you can create a mini poster of the team.

The highlight of this set in my opinion is the Pocket Portraits series. There are five variations ranging from one in virtually every pack to one in five boxes. The mini tobacco cards are a great homage to the early days of cards. The colors even give the sense they are tobacco cards. This is a wonderful chase set for collectors.

With only a guarantee of one memorabilia card per box, it may not seem like a great value. However, much like this box, there are many that yield multiple hits. So not only do you have that prospect, you get a complete set as well as something new to chase after. Looks like a winner to me.

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Press Pass for providing us with the opportunity to open and review this product. If interested in more information on this product or others, be sure to check them out at [www.presspassinc.com](http://www.presspassinc.com).







## **The Sunnier Side of Collecting**

### **By Stephen Duell aka Spuds1961**

OK fellow collectors last month I gave you the shadier side of collecting, probably because Rocky Mountain fever and pneumonia have a way of putting a person in a foul mood. This month finds me in a much better mood therefore here is the counterpoint article.



#### **#1 The Collectors**

I'll start off with fellow collectors as #1 on the sunnier side of collecting; it is awesome to find other people who share your interest in a hobby most of the world has left behind. The friendships I have made just on SCF are phenomenal and have helped my collection immensely. Members have sent me cards out of the blue and have given me that last card for a set when all hope seemed lost. Also when you pull that great card it is truly awesome to have someone share your excitement and be genuinely happy for you.

#### **# 2 The Shop Owners**

I know most shop owners get a bad reputation because there are shady ones out there but the truly good ones can make up for it. If you are lucky enough to find a good shop owner in your town consider yourself blessed, it took me a few years to find a good shop when I moved to Mississippi from New York. The shop I mention is Van's Cards and Comics located in Madison. He is very easy to talk to and if you suggest a certain product he will do his best to order some, he also has monthly card shows and Yu-Gi-Oh tournaments for the younger crowd.

#### **# 3 eBay**

I know a lot of people just said eBay you've got to be joking right?!? No I'm not joking, there are tons of deals to be had on eBay as long as you are schooled in what you are looking for. I try to pad my N.Y.Giants collection on eBay when money is tight and I can't afford to open boxes and I've found it's much cheaper and you can get more PC cards off of eBay for a fraction of the cost of a high end box. I also have found that you can type in autographs and patches and find deals that are affordable to everyone, just be careful and look at the shipping costs. While most are reasonable, some take away from the actual purchasing experience.



#### **# 4 The Companies Themselves**

Without these guys we wouldn't have any new product to bust open. They have to try and come up with new ideas constantly so we as collectors won't be bored. Just think how far cards have come since the late 80s early 90s, did you ever think you could own a card with 8 signatures on it? Or a card with your favorite players autograph plus a patch of his jersey? Older vintage collectors will understand this point of view but the younger collectors have always looked forward to pulling a game-used or autographed card from a hobby box. So the next time we as collectors bash a product think of the people who put in the hard work to produce it, remember not every product can be a hit.

#### **# 5 Customer Service**

I know now you're saying he's lost his mind! No not yet anyways... I have had good experiences and bad experiences with customer service from all the companies, but one thing I have found is if you are reasonable and don't fly off the handle these people will help you. I will give you a few examples and let you judge for yourself. I had pulled a redemption from Leaf a Craig Davis college autopatch numbered to 25 and he never signed. That was not the company's fault, after emailing them and asking nicely for a replacement with a list of who and what team I collected I received a Y.A. Tittle 2008 National Treasures signature patch. With Upper Deck I was shorted a couple of hits in a box which at the time of opening is a very horrifying experience, but if you save the wrappers and the receipt UD will do its best to take care of you they sent 4 autographs which I truly wasn't expecting. You can see some of my threads on SCF to see what I'm talking about. Topps was the same as long as you treat the people on the other end of the phone or email the way you would like to be treated they are usually very helpful.

I hope you guys and gals enjoy some of the positives of this great hobby of ours and remember have a great card-collecting month.





## SCF on Ice By Scott Kozlowski aka scottkoz20

### Quad Contest Update

The Quad Contest is in full swing, with the firstleg completed and the second and third ongoing, the 2009-2010 season is well under way on SCF. The current leader board as of July 22, 2009 has a 3-way tie for first with gardzy99, TannieS and waf tied with 5 points followed by Robot Rabbit with 3 points.

Current Quad Point Standings	
1. <a href="#">gardzy99</a> - 5	5. <a href="#">GOSHARKSGO</a> 1
1. <a href="#">TannieS</a> - 5	5. <a href="#">MatsSundin13Rocks</a> 1
1. <a href="#">waf</a> - 5	5. <a href="#">Nathan7070</a> 1
2. <a href="#">Robot Rabbit</a> 3	5. <a href="#">PORTHOS</a> 1
3. <a href="#">maddmaxx17</a> 2	5. <a href="#">Ray33</a> 1
3. <a href="#">Cam98</a> 2	5. <a href="#">robbiezyg</a> 1
3. <a href="#">andrewconnors9</a> 2	5. <a href="#">steen101984</a> 1
3. <a href="#">bhawk3</a> 2	5. <a href="#">superlarrio</a> 1
3. <a href="#">mize370</a> 2	5. <a href="#">warr10r</a> 1
5. <a href="#">jagrnvr68</a> 1	5. <a href="#">wolf1bh</a> 1
5. <a href="#">ZPENS87Z</a> 1	5. <a href="#">xelloss1012</a> 1
5. <a href="#">brettyd</a> 1	5. <a href="#">buck89</a> 1
5. <a href="#">Estovia</a> 1	5. <a href="#">Shawnthemon</a> 1
5. <a href="#">fitchjr1</a> 1	5. <a href="#">RichSlyFox14</a> 1
5. <a href="#">flemingc04</a> 1	5. <a href="#">senrab</a> 1
5. <a href="#">gosens151911</a> 1	5. <a href="#">CSSports</a> 1
5. <a href="#">Hockeydude94</a> 1	

Stay tuned during the season to take part in many fun and exciting contests which could allow you to win the much sought after Quad...







The Free Agency Contest has about 1 month left with 10 players yet to sign before the end of the contest, which is scheduled for September 10th. The current Leg 2 standings have TannieS and DamonX in the lead with 7 points, 1 pick ahead of 30ranfordfan, chubbdog, geschrocks, Michigandan, PORTHOS and Ray33. There is a group of 21 2 behind the current leaders.

### Leg 2 Standings

<a href="#">DamonX</a> 7	<a href="#">warr10r</a> 5
<a href="#">TannieS</a> 7	<a href="#">wolf1bh</a> 5
<a href="#">30ranfordfan</a> 6	<a href="#">xelloss1012</a> 5
<a href="#">chubbdog</a> 6	<a href="#">bhawk3</a> 4
<a href="#">geschrocks</a> 6	<a href="#">Crater_Satori</a> 4
<a href="#">Michigandan</a> 6	<a href="#">fitchjr1</a> 4
<a href="#">PORTHOS</a> 6	<a href="#">Gagné-12-fan</a> 4
<a href="#">Ray33</a> 6	<a href="#">MatsSundin13Rocks</a> 4
<a href="#">bgggg2001</a> 5	<a href="#">nathan7070</a> 4
<a href="#">bidds55</a> 5	<a href="#">Robot Rabbit</a> 4
<a href="#">Cam98</a> 5	<a href="#">scottkoz20</a> 4
<a href="#">Chihawk19</a> 5	<a href="#">Shawnthemon</a> 4
<a href="#">cssports</a> 5	<a href="#">TysonX504</a> 4
<a href="#">delacroixandora</a> 5	<a href="#">avstars</a> 3
<a href="#">Estovia</a> 5	<a href="#">BigFloppy</a> 3
<a href="#">FlyerGuy22</a> - 5	<a href="#">flemingc04</a> 3
<a href="#">gosens151911</a> - 5	<a href="#">senrab</a> 3
<a href="#">littlekane1088</a> - 5	<a href="#">Showdown</a> 3
<a href="#">maddmaxx17</a> - 5	<a href="#">tmoneywon</a> 3
<a href="#">mize370</a> 5	<a href="#">waf</a> 3
<a href="#">pheebs888</a> 5	<a href="#">Legend</a> 2
<a href="#">pwaldo</a> 5	<a href="#">gardzy99</a> 1
<a href="#">reoddai</a> 5	<a href="#">hossa18sens</a> 1
<a href="#">RichSlyFox14</a> 5	<a href="#">BCCLAX15</a> 0
<a href="#">robbiezyg</a> 5	<a href="#">buck89</a> 0
<a href="#">steen101984</a> 5	<a href="#">G0SHARKSG0</a> 0

With the season getting closer, some of big points will be up for grabs and plenty of time for you to get involved and win the Quad!



## **Basketball Happenings**

**By Trevor Picone aka trevorp121**



As the NBA season is in full off-season mode, there have been a lot of major changes in the NBA recently since the free agency period started. Some of the major moves in the NBA were caused by teams hoping to become championship contenders. The Detroit Pistons landed Ben Gordon and Charlie Villanueva, the Lakers got Ron Artest but lost Trevor Ariza to the Rockets, and Rasheed Wallace signed with the Celtics. Also, here is a recap of some notable trades which occurred this off-season:

- Shaquille O'Neil got traded to Cleveland, so he will be playing with LeBron James.
- Shawn Marion went to the Mavs.
- Richard Jefferson joined the Spurs.
- Vince Carter was traded to the Magic for Rafer Alston.

As for Lamar Odom, after much rumors and speculations, the Lakers announced on the 31st July that he signed a new contract for four years and \$33 millions.

Also, there is the highly anticipated tape of LeBron James getting dunked on by Jordan Crawford, a sophomore from Xavier. The dunk was not even that bad, but what made it bad was that either Nike or James were trying to cover up a simple dunk like that.

The Summer League is also going on right now, and Anthony Randolph dropped 42 points against the Bulls. Also, number 1 pick Blake Griffin just suffered a shoulder injury and will be out 3-4 weeks.

Basketball Theme Weeks are still going strong! We have had 19 full weeks of entries thus far, and every week has been fun with a lot of entries. We hope you join in on the fun.

Winners for the year, as of 7/23, are:

week 1: lc\_chatser, bob9826

week 2: BRoy#7

week 3: TeamADG

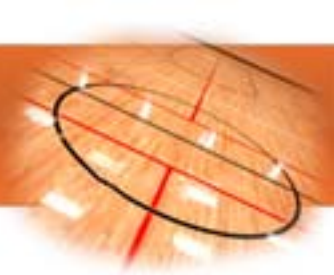
week 4: jeebus86

week 5: XxViSiOnxX

week 6: whalechaser

week 7: nbacardDOTnet

week 8: BRoy#7



week 9: Verse1  
 week 10: VintageHeros  
 week 11: drtom2005, MatthewLee  
 week 12: jeebus86  
 week 13: sl7in  
 week 14: crizrn  
 week 15: OJMayo32  
 week 16: VintageHeros, kardkid74  
 week 17: xdrew  
 week 18: crizrn  
 week 19: Seahawkz37

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

As always, we appreciate that you are taking the time to read this article! If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about anything in this article, please do not hesitate to PM garnett\_21 or trevor121. Again, thank you for taking some time to read this.



Keep an eye on the Basketball forum for a chance to win one of these Blake Griffin autos in contests!





## Featured Collection By Trevor Picone



This month, for our Basketball Collection of the Month, we are showcasing trevor121's Los Angeles Lakers Collection!

Ever since I got into the hobby, which was a very young age, I have always been looking for Lakers! First all I wanted was Magic and Worthy, then it was Nick Van Exel and Eddie Jones, and now it is Kobe. I have accumulated thousands of Lakers cards over the years. Recently I have been trying to build up my Lakers game-used/autograph collection, which is now at 100 different ones. A lot have been bought or traded from members here at SCF. Although I have always loved Magic, I had yet to pick up an autograph card of his until last week.

I was browsing on the forums and saw that a member here named Zeus had an Ultimate Collection auto of Magic for sale, so I PMed him and bought it from him; also, a few days later, I bought a Topps signature from RenegadeLonghorn. These cards rank up there in my personal collection with my Kobe auto. Right now, I have 500 Kobes, 188 Van Exels, and 250 Eddie Jones cards. I haven't counted my Magics in a while, but they are probably around 200 also. Anyway, I have included pictures of my Magic Johnson autos to share with you all.



If anyone has a collection they would like featured in the monthly magazine, please PM trevor121.





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

Card: 2008-09 Ultimate Collection Michael Jordan Auto/Patch

Member: ChromeYouthQuake

Pulled From: 2008-09 Ultimate Collection Hobby Box



Card: 2008-09 Upper Deck LeBron James Jersey

Member: trevor121

Pulled From: 08-09 Upper Deck Hobby Box



Card: 2008-09 Ultimate Entries Jason Kidd

Member: #15Vince Carter

Pulled From: 08-09 Ultimate Collection Hobby Box





## CARD OF THE MONTH WINNERS FOR JUNE- JULY

By Peter Kapuschinsky aka doG\_sl\_kcivraH

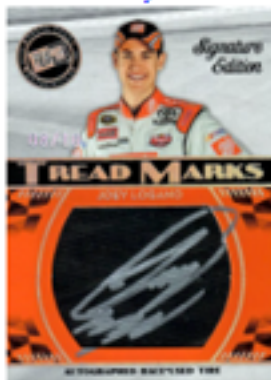
WINNER

Rw2fan4ever

2008 Eclipse Hendrick Teammates Quad Auto #23/25 (24 Votes)



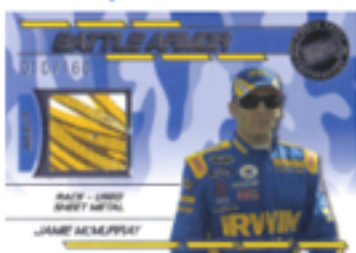
2<sup>nd</sup> PLACE (8 votes)  
race crazy



3<sup>rd</sup> PLACE (7 votes)  
leemozoid



4<sup>th</sup> PLACE (6 votes)  
JKC



5<sup>th</sup> PLACE (3 votes)  
justinanika







## **Football Happenings**

**By Jason DiOrazio aka jdio13**

Hello and thank you for reading the Football Section of the SCF magazine. There are many new things going on in the Football Section of Sports Card Forum with Football season fast approaching. First, we will start with the monthly winner of our eBay Steal of the Month Contest. We would like to congratulate member johnbull86 for winning the eBay Steal of the Month Contest June 09. Here is the scan of the Steal:



<http://cgi.ebay.com/ws/ebayISAPL.dll?ViewItem&item=250436278419&viewitem=&sspagename=STRK%3AMEWNX%3AIT&salenotsupported>  
All of us on the Football Team would like to congratulate John for the great steal!

With the Football season fast approaching, the Football Team is coming up with ideas for contest. We will have our NFL GTS, NCAA GTS, Rookie of the Year Contest, Survivor, College and Pro Pick'em, and Guess the Stat Contest. Come by the Football section of Sports Card Forum and get involved in these contests for a chance to win some great prizes including Card Cash and some very nice Cards. All of us on the Football Team would like to thank everyone who took the time to read this section of the Magazine. We hope to see you posting on the Football section soon!

**New Members Corner**  
**By Leo Zuperku aka lzuperku**

A hearty welcome to all our new members

New members please read this IMPORTANT LINK  
<http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=751252>

Heres a link to our new member contests:  
Racing <http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=815483>  
Basketball <http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=794171>

Great prizes in each of these contests!  
Check the individual contests for complete instructions.  
All you got to do is get the most trades in a 2 month period  
For a trading site, that shouldn't be THAT hard to do

C'mon get trading!!!!!!

Congrats to our two newest MIT's

Jr4thechamp and madman1978  
Jr4thechamp Is staying in M&G  
madman1978 is Going to Dispute after his training

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

And as always:  
If you wish to join the new member team,  
pm Nascards



## Investing in Last Place By Kevin Lee aka gosens151911

The NHL Draft is a huge event for collectors, determining which teams will be drafting potential future stars and thus possibly attracting more hobby love in the near future. The latest NHL Draft was one of the most exciting yet, with two young prospects who both had huge potential and a shot at being drafted first overall. They were John Tavares and Victor Hedman. In the end, the New York Islanders decided to use their first pick to select Tavares, with the Tampa Bay Lightning left with Hedman. These two picks may have just made these two teams the most attractive to invest in. They may be bad now, but like the Penguins, all that is needed are a few solid draft picks and they could soon find their way to the Stanley Cup Finals.

### **Tampa Bay Lightning:**



After winning the Stanley Cup in 2003-04 it has all been downhill for the Lightning with dismal season after dismal season. However, after winning the draft lottery in 2007-08 they were able to draft the much-hyped prospect Steven Stamkos. It appeared that things would change heading into 2008-09 season. Yet they struggled once again, ending up getting the 2nd overall draft pick in the lottery. After having a season with many troubles in the back end, they hoped that the 2nd overall pick would be good enough to draft touted defenseman Victor Hedman. In the end, they got the player they wanted. The future looks extremely bright for this team.

Heading into the 2009-10 season, the Tampa Bay Lightning have two of the best prospects in the league in Steven Stamkos and Victor Hedman. Stamkos struggled early on in the 2008-09 season, affecting his hobby value with some saying he would become the next Alexandre Daigle. Nevertheless, he pulled it together in the second half of the season putting up very solid rookie numbers. There is no doubt he is a player to watch in 2009-10. Having adjusted to the NHL it can be expected his numbers will improve substantially and thus increase his hobby value, which took a bug hit with his slow start. The Lightning also has two stars to play along Stamkos in Vincent Lecavalier and Martin St. Louis. Both players were part of the 2003-04 Stanley Cup team and definitely would like to get another. Their hobby love has cooled since then, with the minimal success that the Lightning has had. Nevertheless, expect these three players to have very solid numbers next year and to possibly put this team back to the top once again. Defensively the Lightning is expected to improve greatly in the 2009-10 season, having drafted Hedman. It is projected he will develop into their number one defenseman. There is no doubt that if he has a solid season he will be one of the most coveted rookie cards of the 2009-10 crop. The Lightning definitely has the possibility to rebound and become one of the most popular teams to collect!





## New York Islanders:



The NY Islanders have been haunted by former general manager Mike Milbury who some have argued lost this team many Stanley Cups by trading the likes of Zdeno Chara, Jason Spezza, Roberto Luongo and Olli Jokinen among others away for duds in return. In 2006 Garth Snow replaced him and the rebuilding of the Islanders began. No longer would they trade draft picks away for had been stars, instead keeping them to rebuild from within.

Although the Islanders struggled in the 2008-09 season placing last in the league, many saw a team with much potential. Two rookies in that season, Kyle Okposo and Josh Bailey, both showed they had the potential to be stars in the NHL. Already they are getting quite a bit of love from collectors who see them as players who could breakout at any time.

Additionally, with the acquisition of John Tavares, the Islanders have three extremely talented offensive prospects heading into the 2009-10 season. Tavares himself should definitely become the most popular rookie to collect, especially being Canadian. There is no doubt that this team could easily become a contender very soon. The major question haunting them though is goaltender Rick DiPietro who is signed to a 15-year deal. Although he is very talented, he has been injury prone throughout his whole career. Until he can string a few seasons in a row, this team will likely not go far. Nevertheless, if he can string a few solid seasons together in a row, his hobby value may improve and the team itself may easily become one of the most popular teams to collect.





## Storing your Cards

**By Peyton Lombardo aka detroitpistons**

Binders, boxes, bins and more. There are many methods to store your cards. What you store your cards in, where you store your cards, and how you store your cards will affect the card itself. Some collectors prefer binders, with pages that fit nine cards into each one. This protects all of the cards well but can be on the more expensive side. Some of these binders can be up to \$25 but also are lower around \$5-10. In addition to the binder you have to buy the pages, which hold up to 18 cards (both sides) for each one. This can really add up in price but it's not too bad. If you're not looking to spend this much then there are many other alternative methods.

Others people like boxes for storage. These are one of the cheapest methods. Shoeboxes are a lot of collector's choice but they aren't very safe. If in any way the box gets wet, it will seep through and damage many or all of the cards. If you accidentally smash the box, it can damage the cards also. A different box alternative that is still very cheap is standard count boxes. These are perfect for cards as they are made especially for them, plus they come in many sizes, or counts, so whether you have 50 or 500 cards to store, there will be a box for your needed count. If you have tons of cards, 5,000 card count boxes are as low as \$5! Smaller boxes that may be needed, such as the 50 or 500 count, are a lot cheaper. These standard count boxes are much more sturdy than regular shoeboxes in addition to their low prices.

A rarer method of storage is bins. Some bins like Tupperware from the kitchen are good because they are waterproof and protect the cards well. Others like big storage bins, unless you have a top that goes on it, only protect the bottom and side. These may be more on the pricey side, but have shown to be very protective way to store cards.

Another very protective way to store cards is in penny sleeves and then in top loaders, snap-tight holders or screw holders. This may be the most protective method out of every possible storage option. Some collectors prefer to put only the most valuable cards in these, and put the others cards in a box, bin, binder, etc. A penny sleeve pack of 100 can be purchased for around \$1 and the top loaders can be purchased in packs of 25 for a little more than \$1, but you can always buy more. Buying in bulk is a good idea because it can be a lot cheaper than buying only a couple. Snap-tight and screw holders are more expensive than top loaders, but they protect the card from every side, whereas the top loaders have an opening in the top. These aren't very expensive from the start but continuous purchasing of these top loaders/penny sleeves/snap-tight holders/screw holders can really add up. It's worth the price when you want to sell the card and the people interested in purchasing only want mint to near-mint cards.

Storing your cards in a good place is crucial to the card's condition, especially when you want to sell them for some big bucks later. Make sure, even if you already have them stored, that the place and bin/box/binder is safe and not harming the cards in any way.



## **Do Free Agents and Trades Affect Collecting?**

### **By Dan Gladstone aka gladdyontherise**

Collecting cards of players and teams used to be one of the only ways that people collected other than building sets. People collected their favorite team without the worry of a player being traded or leaving the team because it used to be very rare that players moved from one team to another.

However, the end of this came with what we all now know and some of us love; free agency. Since free agency came into effect it has affected the card market significantly. When a player was traded, people who collected the team of the player would try to trade for his cards right when they heard about a recent trade or signing. They would also try to trade everything of the player away since he left the team the person collected.

Many people, including myself, collect only current players on their favorite team. It's tons of fun until a player leaves and you are stuck with a bunch of cards you no longer want or have a need for. It wasn't always like this though. When there was no free agency market or many trades that happened, collectors probably felt assured that they could collect their favorite team and not worry that the players on the team would leave. Back in the day tons of players were "franchise players," meaning they stayed on the same team for their entire career. However now players can end up on several different teams no matter how good or bad the player is. For instance a Hall of Fame player, Rickey Henderson, played for several different teams including the Oakland Athletics, New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox. This was probably something that the team and player collectors weren't excited about.

I collect Justin Verlander and Miguel Cabrera. Cabrera has played for the Florida Marlins as well as the Detroit Tigers while Verlander has played only for the Tigers in his young career. Would I still collect these players if they went to a different team? I can honestly say that I am not sure if I would as it would most likely depend on the team that they were traded to or who they signed with. This is probably the



case for many collectors as well. I also collect Charlie Villanueva who was drafted in 2005. In his short career so far he has played for the Milwaukee Bucks, Toronto Raptors and now the Detroit Pistons. This never used to happen before free agency.

From the way players "flop" around on teams these days it makes you really have to think about who you would like to collect. For some people they have to choose players who they feel will stay with the same team for a long period of time. However free agency and trades will never stop collectors from collecting guys on their favorite teams because the thrill of a new player coming to your team and you having the chance to collect their cards is just too much fun! Will things ever go back to the way they used to be? Most likely not, but it's just one little roadblock in the collecting avenue.