



SCF'S COLLECTORS CORNER

NOVEMBER 2009

INSIDE...

AN
INTERVIEW
WITH:



NFL INTERNATIONAL
SERIES LONDON



INDIANA PACERS
PROSPECT
TYLER HANSBROUGH

AND...
ONLY IN SCF BASKETBALL FORUMS
PANINI
Guess The Score & Score Cards
Sponsored by Panini



Coach Cardman Coach Ron Cherry

RELEASE DATE

CONFIGURATION

PACK SRP

JAN. 6TH, 2010

5 CARDS, 1 PACK, 15 BOXES

\$100.00

BOXBREAK (ON AVERAGE)

2 AUTOGRAPH OR MEMORABILIA CARDS
1 PARALLEL CARD
1 INSERT CARD
1 COMMON CARD

HIGHLIGHTS

LEGENDS MONIKERS

These NBA legends from yesteryear paired with an autograph.

MATERIAL PHENOMS

The top rookies of 2009-10 are featured with event-worn swatches.

GLASS CLEANERS

Featuring the top rebounders in the NBA spotlighted by autographs and game-used material.

AUTOGRAPHED CARDS

Look for NBA legends Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Bill Russell, John Havlicek, Elvin Hayes, Oscar Robertson and Jerry West.



COMMON
MONIKERS GOLD
100 CARDS



LEGENDS
MONIKERS PLATINUM
50 CARDS

All information is accurate at the time of posting; content is subject to change.

© 2009 Panini America, Inc. Printed in the USA. © 2009 NBA Properties, Inc.

PANINI

LIMITED 01.06.10

2009 LIMITED BASKETBALL

KOBE
BRYANT

LIMITED
09

NBA TRADING CARDS



PANINI



Inside

Editorial p.4

A Word With Tyler Hansbrough p. 5

Panini sponsored contest p.7

NFL International Series p.8

Product Reviews

2009 Donruss Certified Football Review p.10

Panini Prestige Basketball Review p.12

Topps Ticket to Stardom Baseball Review p.15

Calendar of Release p. 18

The Core

Rinkside p.19

Coaching UD's Rookie Boot Camp p.20

Schadenfreude Running Amok p. 25

On the Diamond p. 27

Interview with Kevin Ohme p. 28

On the Gridiron p. 33

Courtside p.34

2009-2010 NBA Preview p. 37

Around the Track p. 40

Rookie Debut p. 41

Trade Value and the White... p.42

Website Review: Dacardworld.com p. 44

From the Mailbox p. 48

The Team

Editor and Publisher:

Karine Hains

Assistant-Editor:

Matt McNabb

Writing Team

Linda Mankefors

Kevin Lee

John Jimenez

Kyle Hymel

Team Contacts

Trevor Picone/Nathan Loewy

Richard McAdam

Peter Kapuschinsky

Stephen Duell

Jason DiOrazio

Matt Cawley

Mike Greene

Graphics and Design

Houng Ngui



ONLY IN SCF BASKETBALL FORUMS



Guess The Score & Score Cards
Sponsored by Panini





Panini Delivers!

By Karine Hains

I'm very pleased with this issue of Collector's Corner it is bursting with content and I would love to personally thank each and every member who contributed to it. A big thank you also goes out to Panini not only for allowing us to ask some questions to Indiana Pacers' prospect Tyler Hansbrough (turn to page 5 for the interview) but also for agreeing to sponsor a massive new contest on SCF (details on page 7). Needless to say, the good folks at Panini know how to get basketball fans excited!

This month, we also have a very interesting feature with Andrew Long the well-known Packs to the People creator who is now also known as Coach Ron Cherry thanks to Upper Deck's Rookie Boot Camp. If you enjoy his article (page 20) and would like to see the videos for yourself, have a look at Upper Deck's Youtube account here: <http://www.youtube.com/user/UDVids>. This should please our hockey following and keep them occupied until next month when we will run a Q and A with In The Game, a case break review of Upper Deck Black and a review of Ultimate Memorabilia 9!

For those of you who prefer baseball, please turn to page 28 for an interesting and insightful interview with Steve Ohme. Special thanks and congratulations to Daniel Poor for getting the contact and doing the interview himself, top-notch work there!

If it's football you are into, you can have a look at my report on the 2009 International Series in London (page 8). It was a memorable day for us British football fans and we would like to thank our American counterparts (particularly the Tampa Bay fans) for giving up a home game and letting us host it.

I'm sad to report that once again this month we do not have much racing content, if you are a racing collector and you have ideas on what you would like to see featured in our next issue, please send me a private message.

Speaking of the next issue, it will be released on the first Monday of December (the 7th) as per usual but we will then be taking a one-month break for the Holidays. Putting an issue together takes considerable work from many collaborators and it's only fair that they be given a break for the Christmas season.

Finally, please note that the Members Relations Manager; Patriotsguy will be holding another member roundtable next weekend. It will be either on the 7th or the 8th November, check this thread for further details: <http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=930787> .

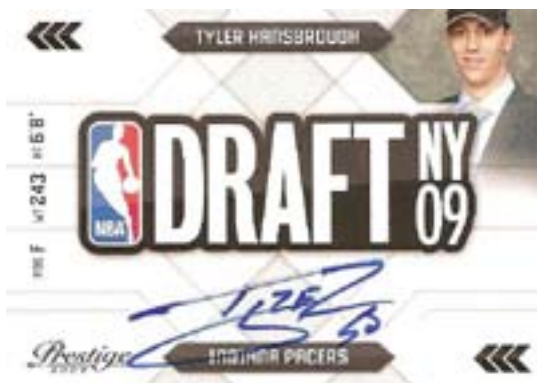
Enough ramblings on my part, get reading!



A Word with Tyler Hansbrough

By Scott Prusha from Panini

A few weeks back, we asked our members which questions they would like to ask to Tyler Hansbrough from the Indiana Pacers. Then we passed the top questions on to Scott Prusha from Panini America and he submitted them to the Pacers' rookie. Here is what he had to say...



Panini: How did playing at UNC help you become the player you are today?

Tyler Hansbrough: The main reason I went to North Carolina was for Coach Williams. I like his style and felt like I would be a good fit under his system. I feel like being there with him helped me become the player I am today.

P: Why is it you stayed a full 4 years at college?

TH: A large part of why I stayed in school was to win a championship. I was really happy to be part of a championship team and part of some of the great Carolina teams

that have gone through there.

P: What do you think the toughest adjustment will be going from college to the NBA?

TH: I think learning the Pacers system and adjusting to basketball being an everyday job versus college, where you are in school, too.



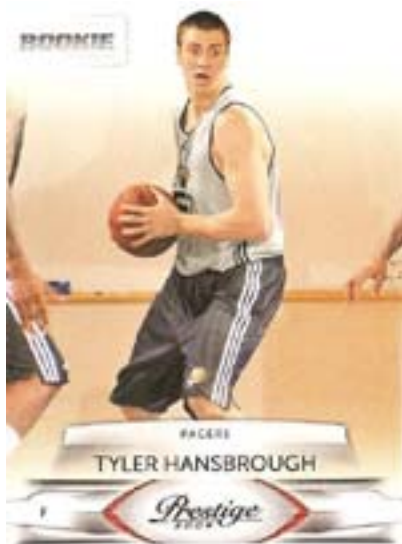
P: How do you feel about people saying you won't play as well as you did in college?

TH: I think sometimes when people watch me play they overlook some of the skills I have. I'm a hard worker and competitor.

P: Who do you look up to the most in the NBA currently?

TH: I'm a big fan of Marvin Williams. I've watched him a lot and he's a hard worker and competitor.





P: What retired player do you admire the most?

TH: I would have to say Michael Jordan. He went to North Carolina and I think he's one of the best athletes ever and I watched him growing up.

P: If you could take on anyone in the NBA, current player or retired, in a game of 1-on-1 who would it be?

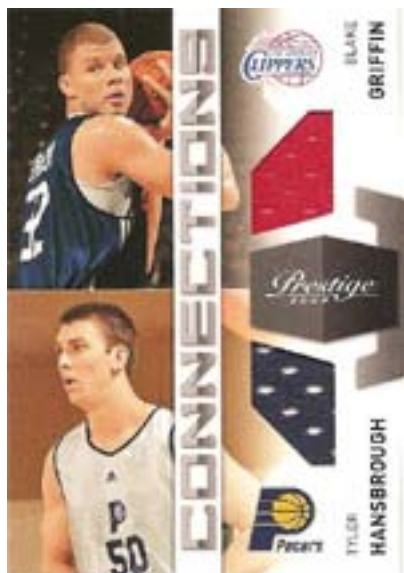
TH: Dennis Rodman because he's a crazy and fun guy. I think I would match-up well against him.

P: Can you give me a first person account of the NBA Rookie Photo Shoot?

TH: Everyone was chasing each other around trying to get autographs – we wanted to have each other's signed cards. It was cool seeing everyone else's card not just mine but even guys like Blake Griffin.

P: Is there a certain NBA player you base your game on?

TH: I don't really compare my game to anyone. I approach the game as a very competitive person. I work hard and I'm very intense but that's just me being competitive.



P: Do you or have you collected sports cards in the past? And if so, did you collect any player(s) or team(s) in particular? And if so, who?

TH: I always collected cards when I was young, me and my brother would trade cards. It's definitely different – I remember when I was younger collecting everyone's rookie cards before they got big.



SCF: Thanks to Panini for asking our questions to Tyler and also for showing us some of his upcoming cards! We look forward to seeing these beauties pulled on the boards. Now, turn to page seven to see what else Panini is doing for SCF's members!



This NBA season, Panini is teaming up with SCF to offer our members a brand new and exciting contest! With prizes up for grabs every months, everyone has a change to get their hands on fantastic prizes.

How do you say? Well, all details can be found here: <http://www.sportscardforum.com/showthread.php?t=936966>

Now for the very interesting part...If you are a basketball fan, you have no doubt seen that Kobe Bryant as signed an exclusivity deal with our friends at Panini. Well, if you do well enough in this contest and are the winner at the end of the year, you will bag yourself a Kobe Bryant autographed item!



Throughout the season, monthly prizes will be given out at the end of each month, in November, you could win a box of Panini Rookies and Stars Basketball!



Furthermore, as a bi-monthly prize, one lucky winner will receive a Blake Griffin autographed 8x10 photo! If you are into basketball, you should definitely try your luck at this new and exciting contest, may the best man or woman win!

2009 NFL International Series Patriots vs. Buccaneers

By Karine Hains aka Pheeb888



There are plenty of great sporting traditions in England; the annual boat race between Oxford and Cambridge (rowing), the Grand National (horse racing), the Ashes (cricket), the Premier League and the FA Cup (Soccer) however these mean a lot less to me than what has become the newest tradition on this side of the pond; the NFL International Series. For the third year running, the NFL brought its "A-Game" to Wembley and this time, we were treated to none other than Tom Brady and the New England Patriots taking on the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Once again, I managed to get myself some tickets for the game and for the first time ever; I was also lucky enough to receive some Tailgate Party tickets. This pre-game event included many attractions; a Hall of Fame display, a 3D cinema, a stand representing every NHL team with giveaways at most of them, a giant merchandise stand and of course, plenty of food and drinks. The Tailgate area opened at 11 AM and even though that was a good six hours prior to kick-off, fans descended on Wembley for the opening time.

Personally, I got there at 9.45 AM because I wanted to make sure to be one of the first one allowed in the Tailgate site to ensure I didn't have to queue for too long for the best attractions. Upon arrival, a quick scan of the location allowed me to decide to head to the merchandise stands first as the prize draw tickets weren't being handed out yet and the 3D cinema wasn't open either. This year, the NFL really wanted to please the fans (and make a lot of money in the process), as there was plenty of merchandise of each and every NFL team. I opted for a Tom Brady jersey, an official game day program and scarf, an International Series ball (with the Series' logo, the Pats' and the Buccs' colors on it) and of course, a Patriots mini-helmet.

Feeling I had spent enough money and had made some significant additions to my international memorabilia of North-American sporting events, I moved on to the Hall of Fame display. I must say it was rather impressive to see both the Vince Lombardi Trophy and the Pro Bowl MVP trophy. Amazing pieces of hardware, very classy looking and thumbs up to the NFL for giving us UK fans a chance to see those. If rumors are to be believed, the Superbowl could eventually be staged here. I know this is probably not a very popular idea States side but I must say I would absolutely love it! I probably would feel differently if the Superbowl was normally held at the home stadium of one of the two teams taking part in it but as it is not the case, it's not like we would be taking the opportunity away from the home fans to see this amazing event!

After admiring those, I got to see a seven minute 3D highlight show of a match between the Chargers and the Ravens, while it was a cool experience, I did expect it to be more impressive. Nevertheless, I'm still happy I got a chance to see it. By then, it was already 12.00 PM and it felt like a great time to hit the hot dog and beer stands. After that was taken care of, I realized that the prize draw tickets were being handed out for the signed team items up for grabs at each team stands. My friend and I spent the next two hours filling up prize draw tickets and admiring what could be won...Check out the top three items (in my opinion) below:

Number 3: Gates autographed ball



Number 2: Carolina Panthers team autographed helmet



Number 1: Tom Brady autographed helmet

The draws will be taking place this week, you can be sure that I will check both my phone and my inbox for potential winning messages, it would be a dream come true to pocket one of those items! By then, it was time to make our way towards the stadium as the doors would shortly be opening, I took the time to pretend to be a Bills player for one picture on the way though.

When we got inside Wembley, it was still pretty early and most of the seats were still empty. We had the chance to check out both team's practice and I must say, by the time Brady took to the field to practice, the stadium had filled up nicely and he got quite a nice reception! The Buccaneers were technically the home team however and every ticket holder had been given a Buccs flag on their seats. The Brits do tend to root for the underdog and yesterday was no exception, there were a lot of cheers when the Buccaneers took to the field for the start of the match and in true NFL fashion, it was a truly spectacular sight. Fireworks, flame-throwers, inflatable helmets the whole arsenal!

The match itself was quite an entertaining affair as well though! Right from the start, it took the Pats less than 3 minutes to intercept a pass and run it back in the end zone for the first touchdown of the game. It wasn't the highest scoring match I have ever seen but there were plenty of great plays and enough twists and turns to make it very exciting, even Brady got intercepted twice! By the end of the game though, things had slowed down dramatically and both quarterbacks had been subbed. When the final whistle blew, the score was 35-7 for the Pats and that concluded an absolutely memorable day for yours truly. So far I have been to all three international series and this one was without a doubt my favorite! Time will tell whom the 4th International Series will bring on our shores but one thing is for sure, I have already registered my interest for tickets!



2009 Donruss Certified 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

10 packs per box

5 cards per pack

Current Retail Price: \$79.99-\$89.99



Program Highlights

FRESHMAN FABRIC LINEUP FEATURING AUTOGRAPHED DUAL SWATCH ROOKIE CARD:

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

STRENGTH OF LEGENDARY MATERIALS FEATURING:

Barry Sanders, Bart Starr, Brett Favre, Dan Marino, Earl Campbell, Emmitt Smith, Jerry Rice, Jim Brown, Joe Montana, Joe Namath, John Elway, Lance Alworth, Len Dawson, Lenny Moore, Paul Hornung, Roger Staubach, Steve Young, Troy Aikman

STRENGTH OF LEGENDARY MATERIALS FEATURING:

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

Look for MIRROR GOLD, EMERALD and BLACK PARALLELS, INCLUDING MATERIAL and AUTOGRAPH VERSIONS !!!

What we Pulled



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01LGnIfDOQU>

Base: 44/125 (35.2%)

Dupes: 0

Rookies /749: 1 - Fui Vakapuna



Mirror Red /250 (2): Antonio Gates, Cameron Morrah

Mirror Blue /100 (1): Richard Quinn



Certified Potential /1000 (2): Stephen McGee, Mike Thomas

Freshman Fabric Rhett Bomar Redemption
Fabric Of The Game Paul Hornung Jersey /99

Fabric Of The Game Javon Ringer 6 Jerseys /25
Santana Moss Prime NFL Shield 1/1

Final Ratings

Base - 4
Overall Design - 4.5
Fun - 5
Value - 5
Rebuy - 5
Total - 23.5/25 (94%)



Year in and year out, Certified has been quite popular with card collectors. The base cards are on foil board card stock. The full body player photos come to life with the shiny background. The design is a little too busy, but it works within the confines of these cards, as it doesn't distract your focus from the players. There are 75 base rookie cards.

Outside of the multiple parallels of the base card, there is one insert series called Certified Potential. These cards feature members of this year's rookie class. They are numbered to 1000 or less. The Fabric of the Game memorabilia series is back once again. This year, there are many versions of the cards that can yield one or multiple swatches on the card. The Freshman Fabric series focuses on the rookies who appeared at the NFL Rookie Premiere back in May.

Though no longer under the Leaf header, Certified has stuck to its guns and we should all be thankful. The base cards are great with the way the foil is utilized. Each pack breeds excitement, as you will get something other than just base. It could be a rookie, insert/parallel, relic or autograph. Regardless, it's always nice to get a bonus treat. And for the price point, you'd be hard pressed to find another product like this that contains four memorabilia or autographs on average. But I do have to ask one thing, why the cheesy "Age: 9+" on the box? Most 9 year olds are not buying this product. Seems a little unnecessary to me.

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



Panini Prestige Basketball Product Review

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

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

Box Details

24 packs per box

8 cards per pack

Current Retail Price: \$74.99-\$84.99



Program Highlights

NBA Draft Class featuring exclusive autographs from the top 2009-10 rookies including:
2008-09 Consensus NCAA Player of the Year Blake Griffin and 2007-08 Consensus NCAA Player of the Year Tyler Hansbrough, Jordan Hill, Hasheem Thabeet and Brandon Jennings

NBA Draft Class NBA Logoman

Franchise Favorites featuring:

Chris Bosh, Carmelo Anthony, Chris Paul, Dirk Nowitzki, Dwight Howard, Dwyane Wade and Kobe Bryant

Old School Signature Materials

highlighted by:

Dan Issel, David Thompson, Kenny "Sky" Walker, Dave Cowens, Joe Dumars, Oscar Robertson, Chris Mullin, Walt Frazier and Bill Walton

True Colors Primary Colors featuring:

Kobe Bryant, Tim Duncan, Paul Pierce, Dirk Nowitzki, Michael Redd and Andrei Kirilenko

Full checklist at www.paniniamerica.net

What we Pulled

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XbWOvyOmIs>

Base (148/150) - 98.7%

Dupes - 3

Rookies (24/100) - 24%

Dupes - 0





Connections (1) - Yao Ming/ Yi Jianlian
 Draft 09 (2) - Taj Gibson, DeMarre Carroll
 Franchise Favorites (1) - Carmelo Anthony
 Inside The Numbers (1) - Kobe Bryant
 Stat Stars (1) - Rashard Lewis
 Super Sophs (1) - Marc Gasol



Stats Stars Dwight Howard Jersey /250
 NBA Draft 09 Jrue Holiday Auto
 Draft Picks Blue James Johnson Auto /50
 Bonus Shots Black Blake Griffin Auto /25

Final Rating

Base Set - 4.75
 Overall Design - 4
 Fun - 4
 Value - 5
 Rebuy - 5
 Total - 22.75/25 (91%)



Bonus Shots Green /25 (1) - Al Harrington
 Draft Picks Blue /999 (5) - DaJuan Summers, DeMar DeRozan, Austin Daye, Stephen Curry, Taylor Griffin
 Prestigious Pros Green /500 (1) - Tony Parker

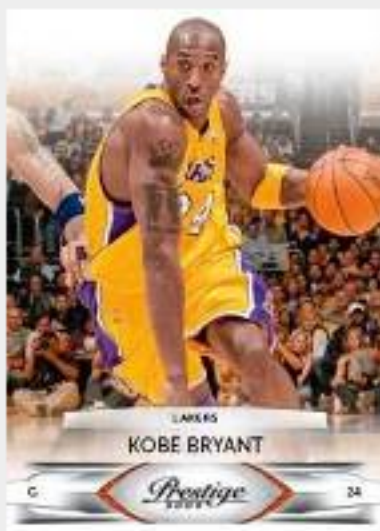




Panini makes its first foray into Basketball with Prestige. Players are featured in a full-color action shot from a game. The first 110 cards contain current/veteran players and the next 40 are reserved for legends/retired players. There are a total of 100 rookie subjects to complete the full 250 card set.

Numerous insert sets populate Prestige. There is a mix between unnumbered and numbered cards. Most of the sets feature veteran stars, but there are a couple devoted to the rookie class. The expected ratio between the inserts (unnumbered and numbered) should fall 1:1 on average.

With four autographs or memorabilia cards on average, expect a nice bang for your buck. The NBA Draft 09 autographs are on card, which is always appreciated. Though many are against sticker autos, they help the autographs stand out on the regular cards. If they were on card as well, they would be very difficult to read or notice with the dark colors of many of the uniforms.



There's been a lot of anticipation since the announcement that Panini had the exclusive rights to produce NBA licensed cards toward the end of 2009. Through the criticism, Panini has emerged with a great start into their basketball line. Though the design is bit too much on the base cards, primarily the bottom portion, the product is superb. Consumers can expect a rookie in every pack and an additional non-base card in every three out of four packs. With four hits on average, Prestige is a wonderful product at its price point. And as seen here, how often do you find products that could yield 3 autographs out of 4 hits in a box?

Once again, I'd like to thank our wonderful sponsors at Panini America for giving us the opportunity to open and review this release. For more information on this product or the rest

of their line, be sure to check them out at www.paniniamerica.net.





2009 Topps Ticket to Stardom Baseball Product Review

By Tony Joyce aka Enigma

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

Box Details

20 packs per box

12 cards per pack

Current Retail Price: \$78.99 - \$89.99

Product Highlights:

- 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!
- WBC Stubs Plus Feature Ticket Stubs Alongside WBC Game Worn Jersey Swatches!
- Opening Day Ticket Stubs Feature Stubs From All 30 MLB Home Openers, Including Yankees And Mets!
- Rookie Cards Are #d To 199 And Appear w/ The Major League Rookie Logo!



Full product details here: <http://topps.com/productsellsheet/topps2009TicketToStardomBaseball1343549.pdf>

Full checklist:

http://topps.com/product/ProductCheckListNew.aspx?Product_Id=1343

What we pulled

First Half:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tczce4mGoBM>

Second Half:

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

Base (197/200) - 98.5%

Dupes - 0

Perforated (20)





Colby Rasmus RC /199
Ian Kinsler Blue /99



Big Ticket (3) - Josh Hamilton,
Dustin Pedroia, Miguel Cabrera
Big Ticket Blue /99 (1) - Miguel
Cabrera

Seasoned Veterans (2) - Vladimir
Guerrero, Magglio Ordonez
Seasoned Veterans Gold /50 (1) -
Magglio Ordonez

Ticket To Stardom (5) - Cameron
Maybin, Matt Kemp, Jay Bruce,
Joe Mauer, Kenshin Kawakami



Bernie Williams Ticket Stub/Jersey
/110

Aaron Roward Ticket Stub/Dual
Bat /79

Garrett Atkins Jersey/Autograph /
489

Final Ratings

Base Set - 5
Overall Design - 3
Fun - 3
Value - 3.5
Rebuy - 3
Total - 17.5/25 (70%)



Ticket To Stardom contains a 200 card base set with an additional 25 rookies numbered to 199. The cards are modelled on a design of a ticket to an event. There's a bar code at the top (only for design purposes) and player information listed at the bottom (much like section/aisle/seat on a ticket). Each pack contains a perforated card meant to look like a ticket stub. The parallels are noticeable by the change of color in the border encasing the player's photo.



There are three insert sets in this release. Big Ticket features a full-color photo of the player on a blue background with the player's face melded into it. Season Veterans features some of the game's best in various poses. Ticket To Stardom showcases some of the young stars in the game on a card that has a ticket design.

The autographs and relics feature single or multiple pieces of memorabilia. The non-autographed relics have an added bonus; a piece of a ticket stub from an actual game the player had participated. Some of the tickets are from an MLB game while others are from the World Baseball Classic.

Ticket To Stardom is an interesting concept to bring collectors closer to the game by attempting to introduce something new to baseball fans. The design of the base cards is not quite there. There should have been more of an attempt to make these cards look like a ticket. The perforated cards seem good in theory, but truthfully, we will probably see a lot of these with damage. To be honest, I thought it was an issue with how the packs were sealed when I first saw them. The ticket stub idea with the relics is a nice one, but Topps did it two years ago with football and it wasn't well received. I really hope this release doesn't suffer the same fate.

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

November 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2  Topps Mayo Football	3  Black Hockey SP Signature Edition Football	4	5	6
9  Tribute Baseball	10  Ultimate Memorabilia 9  Series 1 Hockey	11  Heritage High Number Baseball  Gridiron Gear Football	12	13
16	17	18  Rookies and Stars Basketball  Fusion Racing	19	20
23  T-206 Baseball	24  Triple Threads	25  Elite Basketball	26	27



Hockey Contests Update

By Richard McAdam aka RGM81

Race for the Quad Standings

Username	Points
1. TannieS	14
2. Waf	12
3. DamonX	10
4. gardzv99	10
5. wolf1hb	7
6. xelloss1012	6
7. chihawk19	5.5
8. BigFloppy	5
9. Oilfan10	4
10. Robot Rabbit	4
11. Geschrocks33	3.5
12. steen101984	3.5
13. Ray33	3.5
14. PORTHOS	3.5
15. michigandan	3.5
16. andrewconnors9	3
17. maddmaxx17	3
18. delacroixandora	2.5
19. chubdog	2.5
20. Cam98	2
21. bhawk3	2
22. mize370	2
23. warr10r	2
24. flemingc04	2
25. gosens151911	2

NHL Regular Season Pool (as of 10/23)

Username	Points
maddmaxx17	146
CSSports	145
nbcollector	144
bgggg2001	144
irpic6	144
waf	144
TannieS	144
wolf1bh	143
buck89	142
iamsportsguy	142

Show and Tell Contest Winners

Week 1: [Favourite Autograph](#) - Inferno

- [Wayne Gretzky Sweet Shot Puck Signings](#)

Week 2: [Best Patch](#) – [flamguinfan](#)

- [Mikka Kiprusoff Premium Patches](#)

Week 3: [Best Jersey Swatch](#) – Mack26

- [Thomas Vanek SPx RC](#)





Coaching Upper Deck's 2009 Rookie Boot Camp

By Andrew Long aka Samuwry 7



Mississauga, Ontario-- 9 A.M., inside the Hershey Center. I alternate my stare between the vacant rink and the rumpled, dog-eared paper with my Upper Deck-approved lines on it. I know them backwards, and I also know I'll almost certainly improvise beyond them, but for now, it's the only thing to do from being overtaken by nerves. Nearby, middle managers and minnows of Upper Deck scuttle, making preparations. In just an hour, fourteen NHL rookies will arrive to begin shooting The 2009 Upper Deck NHL Rookie Debut Boot Camp, and on the first "action" call of the director, I will be their coach.

Landing the role of Boot Camp Coach was not exactly a bolt from Zeus-- the process crawled at times, and at other times progress was imperceptible, yet all the while wonderfully agonizing. Really, it began with a failure. Packs to the People was offered a shot at the entire video; that is, we were invited to pitch a concept to Upper Deck to produce a video project featuring the NHL rookies. I found the prospect exhilarating, and threw myself into the project, but upon the pitch, my best ideas and efforts were promptly dismissed by UD brass. The laughs I got from friends at my ideas had buoyed my hopes, and made the rejection all the more crushing. Once Upper Deck settled on a concept, however, (and unbeknownst to me) supporters of Packs to the People inside Upper Deck began to lobby for my involvement. Nik, the technical brains behind PTTP, and I had just finished a video for Draft Edition Basketball, featuring L.A. Lakers Shannon Brown and Jordan Farmar, and apparently my Upper Deck supporters pointed to it to make their case, that yes, I could work well and improvise with professional athletes. And I knew hockey.

I got a call from Chris Carlin in marketing saying that he thought I really could get it. From then on, news of my involvement became a laughable torture. Uncertainty tinged every new development. It looks like you got it, Andrew. Next update: we're still waiting to hear for approval. This was followed by Upper Deck emailing me an unbooked itinerary for the trip to Toronto. Once I received that, I called them to ask if it was a lock, because I needed to organize some time off work. We're waiting for final approval, they said. The VPs had to sign off, or something like that. Then, like parents giving their son anonymous keys to his first car, they sent me a booked flight itinerary to Toronto. And I was on.

About 11:00 A.M., I'm standing on set, which consists of a folding table and Upper Deck photo backdrop, behind one end of the rink, with group 1, which is made up of NHL rookies Jared Cowen, Tyler Bozak, Jonas Gustavsson, and Mikael Backlund. Backlund's and Gustavsson's eyes look alert and concerned, as though they are unsure if everything is fine or they are about to be executed. The native English speakers, Cowen and Bozak, look more at ease. They all look fantastic in their respective NHL team uniforms, and if I wasn't under pressure to perform I might indulge my fanboy giddiness, but the curtain was about to come up, and I wasn't going to lose focus.



The vignette we're about to shoot will feature the rookies learning to sign autographs, with me giving them the business expected from a drill sergeant. Upper Deck sent me an outline of the three basic vignettes that involved me: this autograph one, scoring celebrations, and "Mascot Reverence," a segment on how to treat mascots properly. They wanted some kind of script or idea of what I was going to say beforehand for each section, which needed to be approved by UD brass. After some hard thinking and workshopping with a writing buddy, I fulfilled their request, and they wrote back some very nice comments, sounding very satisfied with what I had produced.

I take my place as directed while Jon Magnusson, the director, gives some last minute direction to Bozak and Backlund, who are the first two rookies to be shot at the autograph table. I take one last look at my cheat sheet, fold it up and put it in my pocket, feeling as tight and as nervous as I ever have. Everyone is set. The crew settles in and holds their angles, and the director yells the word that, up until that moment, to me, was merely a hollywood cliché.

"Action!"

And I act. With fervor, I give the rookies a rehearsed line, and continue for a moment, improvising harsh instruction and riffing on the boys.

"Cut!"

And then, the onlooking Upper Deck employees, employees of the NHLPA, and a few other assorted spectators, laughed.

Thank God.

I immediately feel better, and each ensuing take brings new ideas and confidence. In the midst of shooting however, Terry Melia, Upper Deck Public Relations manager and my "handler" for trip, leans in to tell me something.

"The NHL wants you tone it down a little with the guys. Don't be derisive, don't say anything too personal. And try not to yell quiet so loud," he says.

"The NHL just spoke with you?"

"Yeah, they said something."

Awesome, I think. The NHL sensitivity and displeasure amuses me, and I can't wait to tell friends. I'm also being directed by the league, fantastic. Despite my amusement, I try to accomodate their wishes. However, in the heat of the subsequent scenes, I don't think about their wishes once. We finish with Bozak and Backlund, do some slightly different takes at the autograph table with Gustavsson and Cowen, and then we adjourn to the ice to do the scoring celebration vignette.





On the ice, Magnusson signals to Terry Melia, Upper Deck Public Relations Manager, and the assistant director, a local Toronto videographer named Denise. Denise is probably on the back side of her thirties, but looks great - a total cougar. Though I am not beckoned, I'm certain that I should be in the huddle, so I skate over and listen in.

At this point, I should mention that before shooting, I showed Magnusson my lines for each segment, and it was apparent that he had never seen them before. This was a surprise to me, since Upper Deck had requested them. The director usually knows the script. I kept my surprise to myself and went through them with him, quickly. Some of the lines he liked, some he didn't, but for each vignette there was something that he gave a thumbs up on, so I felt ok.

In the huddle on the ice, as I listened to how he wanted to shoot the next segment, it became clear that I was not going to be in it. At this, I was a bit miffed, and concerned. What else was I out of? He was in charge, and I followed his lead, but I wanted back the time I had spent working out lines for the segment. The upside to my new free time was getting to pass and shoot with other rookies waiting to be photographed or do their scenes for the video. I felt timid, shooting in the company I was in. As I told an Upper Deck employee, it felt like I was doodling in front of Picasso. Bozak, Backlund, Gustavsson and Cowen finished up and Group 2 was called to the autograph table.

It's almost noon when Group 2 takes their positions at the autograph table, and I feel the nerves return. Group 2 consists of the true stars of the video; 2009 1st overall pick John Tavares, 2nd overall Victor Hedman, 3rd overall Matt Duchene and 2008's top pick for Vancouver, Cody Hodgson. I had to be absolutely excellent.

Upper Deck recruited a smoking hot girl for the autograph vignette, who had now arrived. There wasn't a man among us who wouldn't punch his mother for a night with her; Tavares especially seemed taken with her. We filmed new scenes for the autograph vignette, in which Tavares and Duchene are distracted by her passing hotness. Fortunately, between the lines in my pocket and the stuff of my cuff, the director seemed happy with the material we were getting.

Tavares and Duchene were not afraid to challenge me, to dish some lines back, and this gave new life and depth to the comedy. On occasion, they'd even get me to flub an improvised line or two. In one take, after I yell at them for not being tough enough to continue signing autos through their wrist pain,



Duchene tells me that he thinks it might be medically dangerous. I respond, with mile-a-minute-speed,

"Look, I know when its dangerous. This isn't dangerous. Before I started coaching, I went to law school."

"Isn't that something you'd learn in med school?" Duchene asks calmly.

"Yes, it is," I laugh, breaking character. The director yells cut, but everyone shares the laugh

Duchene had a great attitude throughout. I had a line written to tell the rookies to use soft hands, something I'd borrowed from The Mighty Ducks, and I wanted to say the line with my nose stuck into the side of his head. I asked him if it was ok.

"Oh yeah, man. I love this, I'm good for this stuff. Go ahead," he replied. We shot the scene, and it made the final cut. It's one of my favorites. Hedman and Hodgson did their scenes next, and fortunately, through the course of shooting, we get good takes to feature both of them, too.

We finish with the boys at the autograph table, and go onto the ice for for goal scoring celebrations, and also to do the mascot vignette. Again, despite having well-thought out, Upper Deck-approved lines ready, Magnusson merely has me do a brief cameo in the mascot scene, which could've been much better. The mascot vignette features the Upper Deck mascot, Coach Cardman, getting hit by Jonas Gustavsson (who looked downright bored until being called over to do it) and Victor Hedman. In the scene, Hedman absolutely destroys Cardman with a check along the boards, and it actually broke the costume. Cardman's plump, fluffy look is due to an internal fan which keeps the costume filled with air. Hedman's hit ripped a hole in Coach Cardman, with the consequence that the costume would occasionally deflate slightly. When this would happen, Cardman's head would fall to the side, making him look curious. It was equally funny to watch the actor inside the suit attempt to correct this by straightening his head with his hands, only for it to fall over once he let go. I heard the event planner on the project later gripe about it, complaining that it cost \$8,000 and her department wouldn't have the budget to fix it.

Lunch is called. During the catered lunch, Magnusson finds me, and says casually, "We've got enough of the autograph, mascot and celebration stuff. You're the creative guy, why don't you come up with a few more vignette ideas for after lunch?" I nod, stunned. He lists off a few suggestions, and I struggle to brainstorm past my prevalent thought, why couldn't this have been mentioned earlier. But I am the creative guy, and I'm determined to succeed. We decide on vignettes for taping sticks and lacing skates, even though they make little sense in the context of the video.

After lunch we resume shooting with group 3, comprised of Logan Couture, Eric Tangradi and P.K. Subban. We decide Group 3 will do the skate laces vignette, and though the concept is loose and I'll be relying solely on improv, I feel focused and confident. The plot is simple: Couture and Subban tied their laces correctly, and Tangradi didn't. When I deliver my first outburst at Tangradi, P.K. laughs and seems a little surprised.



"That was good," he muses. Maybe I can pull this off after all, I think. The laces scene is shot in a breeze, and with extra time have time to improvise another vignette. I suggest that the boys be caught by me screwing around, doing limbo. Magnusson looks apprehensive, though perhaps considering the camera logistics, but the boys are into it. We shoot it, the whole time enjoying ourselves. Tangradi and P.K. make everything more fun. The three take the ice, shoot their celebrations and some other little bits, while I shoot more pucks and marvel at Duchene's tricks. They finish and group four, the last group, is called off the ice.

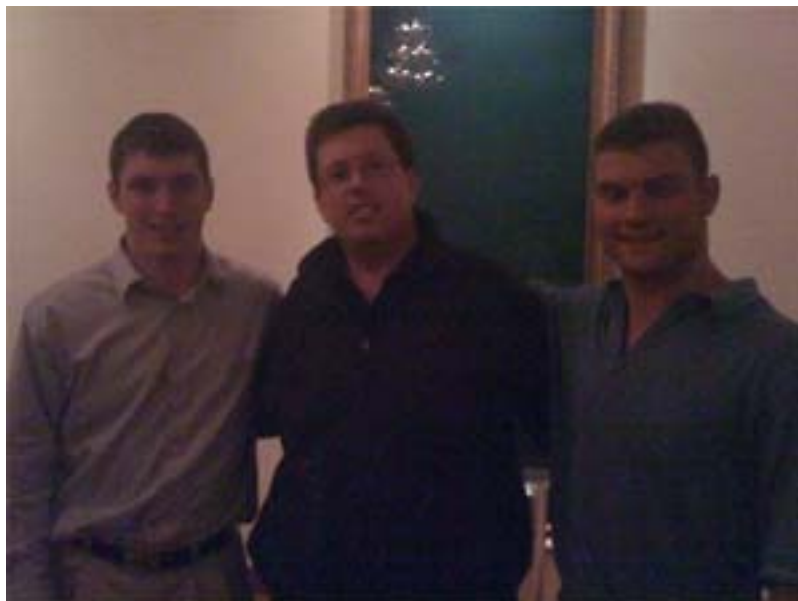
Bobby Sanguinetti, James Van Riemsdyk and Colin Wilson shoot the last vignette, "Taping Sticks," quickly and easily. They're all pretty agreeable, and Wilson especially seems game. I've heard the hype on Van Riemsdyk, but the highly-touted rookie turns out to be somewhat shy and quiet. We only do a few takes, but the director seems satisfied and they move to the ice to shoot their on-ice segments.

We finish the day by shooting the introduction to the video, with me introducing and Cardman looking cute. Once that's done, the crew strikes the set, and starts to collect gear, however the rookies have all come back onto the ice to shoot and practice, and there is no way I'm leaving the ice now. I shoot and skate with the boys for twenty or so minutes, before Terry Melia calls me over and says,

"The NHLPA wants you off the ice."

"They do?"

"They said, 'get the coach off the ice.'" I left the ice smiling. I couldn't wait to tell my friends.





Schadenfreude Running Amok By Richard McAdam aka RGM81



The sense of hope that permeates every NHL team and their fans in September (see last month's issue) has been shredded for a handful of teams early in the 2009-10 season...and a lot of people are loving it.

In sports, like many areas of life, we like to see our heroes succeed. It's great to high-five your buddies when your team wins the game. We jump for joy when our favorite movie wins an Academy Award. Prolonged standing ovations are the norm when our preferred candidate for political office emerges victorious. We take great joy in the good times.

But not as much as we revel in the bad times for others. We make a point of posting on our friends' Facebook walls to mock them when their team loses. We laugh at them in the office the next day. We enjoy—possibly too much—the self-flagellation we see in post-game interviews or other media availabilities provided by the team's players and coaches. Even if our own team isn't living up to expectations, we take comfort in knowing “at least we're not as bad as [insert hated enemy team here].”

tions, we take comfort in knowing “at least we're not as bad as [insert hated enemy team here].”

A few weeks into the new season, there is a tremendous amount of suffering in two of hockey's epicenters, as the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Montreal Canadiens have stumbled out of the blocks. As of this writing, the Leafs are 1-7-3 while the Canadiens are 6-7-0, and the two are preparing to face off in what could be a rather horrifying Halloween night match up. The level of panic and invective in Toronto has been amazing to behold, with the team's supporters expressing record levels of embarrassment and demanding change while broadcasters openly talk about how awful the team is and how they would rather watch, well just about anything, than sit through another horrible Leafs performance. There have been calls to oust struggling goaltender Vesa Toskala and allow prized free-agent acquisition, Jonas “The Monster” Gustavsson, to assume the starting role. Then Gustavsson got injured, forcing the Leafs to call up their third- and fourth-string goalies to fill the injury void between the pipes. The team is getting blown out; the much-vaunted refurbished blue line corps headed by Mike Komisarek and Francois Beauchemin has watched more goals scored against from the penalty box than they have contributed; and the mood at the Air Canada Centre is decidedly nasty.

As a fan of the Canadiens, I can't help but snicker a little bit at the haplessness of the Leafs. I'll even admit, much as Mike Milbury did recently on Hockey Night in Canada, to feeling a tinge of pity



for Toronto. I don't like to think of myself as a bad person, but yes I am finding happiness in the suffering of others. Perhaps this is because lately I'm not finding a lot of happiness when watching the Habs. After coming out of the gates with two thrilling overtime victories and spectacular performances by Carey Price, the Habs have struggled mightily, losing seven of their last eleven games including two major blowouts at the hands of the Vancouver Canucks and Pittsburgh Penguins.

Outside of the top line and Tomas Plekanec, I'm feeling considerable indifference towards many of the forwards. On defense, Josh Gorges is doing all he can, and Roman Hamrlik has been adequate, but there are major holes in the Canadiens' defensive corps, and while there is ambivalence towards the forwards there is a growing hostility towards Hal Gill. One wonders when a phone call will be made to Patrice Brisebois to get the name of his counselor.

While Leafs and Canadiens fans participate in their routine internecine jabs, fans that support neither team are having a true field day. Some samplings from around the Internet:

An Ottawa Senators fan on Hockeybuzz: "This is just beautiful...Brian Burke may be doing a better job of rebuilding the Boston Bruins than his own team."

A Chicago Blackhawks fan on HI: "The only significant win for the Buds will be the Draft Lottery giving the Bruins the 1st overall pick."

A Buffalo Sabres fan on SCF: "I'm loving this."

Another Senators fan, on TSN.ca: "I have to admit...it's hard not to gloat as both the Habs and Leafs continue to bomb this season. Sens fans usually take so much insult from both sides. For now I'll just quietly enjoy the peace and this solid team Murray has assembled for us!"

Truly, it is enough to make a person want to recruit the guy from the "Leave Britney Alone!" YouTube video to re-record it with a new message. The fans of other teams are getting to vent out all their frustrations about Montreal and Toronto dominating the airwaves all the time, about all the fans and their reminiscing of past glories, about all the usual pre-season hype emanating from these two cities that, as the NHL ad goes, "Is this is the year?" The feel-good stories of the Phoenix Coyotes and Colorado Avalanche are receiving far less attention. Their success is not as enjoyable as the failings of the Canadiens and the Maple Leafs.



It's not How Much you Spend, it's Who you Pull...

By Stephen Duell aka spuds1961



Where to start...let's start with the companies themselves and how they have catered to us the collectors and are probably killing the hobby in the process. I remember the introduction of game used cards back in the mid to late 90s and when you pulled one it was the most awesome feeling in the world, you could get a pack of regular Upper Deck for about 2 dollars and yes although the odds were stacked against pulling a GU card the thrill factor was awesome. 1 in 2,500 packs I believe were the odds when they first came out but it was high odds high reward, The Brett Favre from 97 UD had a book value of

600 dollars and the Ken Griffey JR booked at 300 or more not sure on that though.

Let's fast-forward to today's game used and how the saturation of the market is making them worthless. Every box you open will have at least 2 GU and 1 autograph if it's an UD brand and the 24 pack boxes can still be had in the 80-dollar price range. But here's the tricky part, it's still reasonably priced but try and get 80 dollars back for your 2 no-name GU and an autograph of a bench warmer. I would like to see the companies concentrate more on the quality of the players they have GUs and autographs of than water down their products just to satisfy the customer.

This is where we as customers can chime in. Yes if you have deep pockets you can buy the 600 dollars a pack exquisite and get some great cards but come on 7 cards for 600 dollars is not going to do it. I'd rather buy 10 boxes of regular Topps with 36 packs apiece, as to me busting that many packs gives me more of a chance to enjoy the moment. Let's do the math 180 packs at 10 cards per pack equals 1,800 cards. Granted most of them will be commons, but you can put sets together, make trades and still have the chance of hitting something nice for your collection.

I personally would like to see the companies go back to the odds of GU and autographs when they first came along, it will take years to un-clutter the market of the already produced products and overabundant hits cards from every set put out from 2004 till now, but it can be done! I'm not against products like Bowman Chrome inserting 1 Chrome prospect auto per box because that one card could become priceless. See Pujol's 2001 as an example, but those campy signs of the future that are a throw in and worthless must go. I don't know what most collectors think about the idea of going retro, because it is hard to take something away that consumers are used to but I would rather put my sets together and get the once in a blue moon auto or game used card that will be valuable than to get a run of the mill hit just to meet the box odds.

Here's hoping you guys and gals as consumers are happy with your purchases, and remember it's just as easy to pull something great in a 1/2 price Walmart blaster as it is in a hobby box as long as luck is smiling to you. If it's meant to be it's meant to be! Happy collecting and enjoy the baseball playoffs! As I am a Yankees fan, well I'm having a blast...



An Interview with Kevin Ohme By **Daniel Poor aka Stl_Cardinals_Fan**



Kevin Ohme is a former pitcher for the St. Louis Cardinals. Although he had a brief Major League career, Mr. Ohme played a total of 12 professional-level seasons including two in Japan and several years in the Twins farm system. Here is a link to his career statistics:
<http://www.baseball-reference.com/mi...d=ohme-001kev>

Sports Card Forum: Did you play any other sports besides baseball while in high school and college?

Kevin Ohme: No I did not. I wish I would have tried to play football though.

SCF: What led you to decide that a career in baseball was the choice for you?

KO: To be honest, I was really not that good until my senior year in high school. I guess I was a late bloomer. I just had a love for the game and always wanted to be on the field. I had a great senior year and colleges started calling.

SCF: You were drafted by the Yankees in 1990, but did not sign. Was there any particular reason for that decision?

KO: They called me and basically told me they were interested in signing me but wanted me to play one more year at IRCC. It is what they call a draft and follow. They have your rights up until about a week before the next draft. They never did call me back before the next draft. The Cubs did call me after my sophomore year and said they were in the 18th round with their pick coming up and wanted to know what it would take for me to sign. I guess they did not like what they heard because they did not draft me.

SCF: After spending the '93-'99 seasons in the Twins' farm system, what prompted your being released into free agency?

KO: I was not released. When a team signs a player out of the draft, they have your rights for six and a half seasons in the minor leagues. I was in AAA for three-plus seasons for the Twins and was never given an opportunity to pitch in the big leagues. When I became a free agent, I figured I should try another club to see if they would give me a chance.

SCF: Did you notice any differences to American baseball during your time playing in Japan



with the Nippon Ham Fighters in 2000-2001?

KO: There were some minor differences, but the main difference I did notice was the strength of the lineup 1-9. The American lineup for the most part had a better 1-9 lineup than in Japan.

SCF: Were you surprised with how fast you were signed to a minor-league contract with the Cardinals at the end of the '02 spring training after no other team had shown interest in signing you?

KO: Actually no. I knew I still was capable of pitching if someone would give me a chance. The problem was everyone at the time was trying to cut rosters, not add to them. I called every team that spring-trained in Florida until the Cardinals finally agreed to see me pitch. I drove over to Jupiter from Tampa and arrived there at about 8:30 a.m. They were shocked to see me so early and told me I would have to wait to be seen. I finally got to throw for them at around 11 a.m. They told me I had 12 days to make the AAA roster. I threw in three games and broke with the team to Memphis.

SCF: You were finally called up to the major leagues when Lance Painter went on the disabled list in early 2003. What was it like getting the phone call with a voice on the other end finally essentially saying "Congratulations, you've been promoted to the majors"?

KO: I was definitely excited. The thing was we were doing pitcher fielding practice in Memphis and were watching the game on our Jumbotron when he went down. Right at that moment every pitcher on the team looked at me and said, "Get ready to go." I did not want to set myself up for disappointment so I did not get too excited until the call came.

SCF: You had just one hit (quite conveniently in your only at-bat) in your brief major-league career. How did it feel to be standing on first after the hit realizing what you had just done? Do you remember who the pitcher was that you hit it off of?

KO: I remember everything. The pitcher was Ben Sheets and I hit the first pitch I saw which was a 93 mph fastball. I did not think I was going to get to hit because I had already pitched two and two-third innings. I figured Tony (LaRussa) would pinch hit for me. I asked for a helmet and bat because I did not have one. Wilson Delgado, the back-up shortstop, told me to use his bat because it was not working for him so maybe I would have better luck with it. It turns out I did. When I got to first I did not know what to think. I had not been on the bases since high school. I saw Tony motioning for the ball and I was so excited about the hit that I thought he was giving me a sign, so I gave it back to him.

SCF: When you unfortunately injured your throwing arm in 2004's spring training, was that the deciding moment when you knew you were done with baseball?

KO: No, not really. I had Tommy John surgery soon after the injury. The main problem was that I also tore my flexor tendon, which is the tendon that attaches your forearm muscle to your bone. Dr. Yocum performed the surgery and everything went well. I rehabbed the rest of the year but had to have a scope



performed in 2005 to clean up bone spurs. After more rehab my arm would only get back to about 85 percent and so I decided to retire at the end of 2005.

SCF: As a pitcher, what pitches did you have in your arsenal? Which was your best?

KO: I used a four-seam fastball, a two-seam fastball that acted like a sinker, a changeup and a curve ball. Consistently, my best pitch was my sinker, but I went to my changeup a lot as well.

SCF: Were there any batters who you seemed to have the edge on or repeatedly did well against when facing them during your career?

KO: I'm sure there were, but off hand I can not name them. But I do know of one who owned me. In other words, I almost never got him out. Kaz Matsui owned me in Japan. No matter what I threw him he crushed it.

SCF: Aside from your first major-league hit, were there any other moments that stand out as very memorable to you during your 12-year professional career?

KO: There was a stretch in 1998 when I was with the Twins in Salt Lake City. I was struggling at the time and my father-in-law passed away in July. I almost did not return to finish the season, but I did. I prayed to God to let me know if He wanted me to stay in the game. He was going to have to do something special because I was struggling mentally and emotionally. I proceeded to pitch out of the bullpen for 12 straight outings without rendering a run, a stretch of 23 1/3 scoreless innings. I'd say he wanted me to continue playing.

SCF: What was your favorite part about playing pro baseball? What was your least favorite?

KO: My favorite part was being on the field, whether it be for practice or the game. I loved the camaraderie of the team and of course the excitement of pitching in a close game and winning. My least favorite would have to be the time away from my family.

SCF: As a pitcher with both starting and relieving experience, which did you enjoy more and why?

KO: That is tough because I enjoyed both. I like starting because you knew exactly when you were pitching and what to prepare for, but on the other side I liked relieving because you had to be ready every game, which kept you focus and in the game.

SCF: Out of all the stadiums you've played in, does one stand out to you above the rest?

KO: I only was in five parks in the majors while in the big leagues and of those five I would have to say St. Louis had just an awesome atmosphere and fan base.



SCF: Did you have any personally notable teammates over your career? (For example, a teammate who always brought a smile to your face or was just a great person to be around)

KO: There are two who come to mind. One was my teammate with the Twins, Keith Linebarger, an RHP who just was a true friend and honestly wanted the best for everyone. The other was Kevin Joseph, an RHP whom I played with with the Cardinals. He too wanted the best for all and was a true friend.

SCF: Do you recall how you felt when seeing yourself on a baseball card for the first time?

KO: Well, I was drafted in '93 and played in Ft. Wayne A ball that year. However I got hurt at the end of that season and missed most of the '94 season. I did not see my first baseball card until '95 when I was in New Britain AA with the Twins. It was definitely gratifying to see.

SCF: Do you collect any sports cards or other sports paraphernalia?

KO: Not really. During my Spring Training in big league camp with the Cardinals I was able to get Lou Brock and Tony La Russa to sign a baseball for me, but I gave it to my older brother. I did get John Havlicek to sign a baseball for me that I still have. He and Tony were good friends. After I retired I went to a Cardinals-Twins Spring Training game with my son and took him into the Cardinals clubhouse to get Albert Pujols' autograph. He still has it on his wall.

SCF: Do you have any opinions, good or bad, about the direction baseball has been taking in recent years (e.g. player salaries, the increase in manager firings, etc.)?

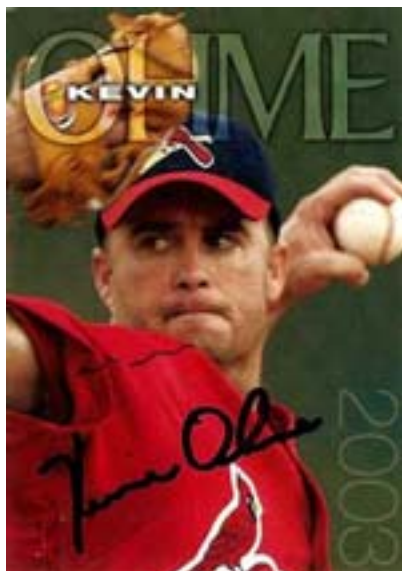
KO: I believe salaries are a little out of control, but you have to remember for the longest time owners had the upper hand and took advantage of the players. Either way the fans are suffering because of high ticket prices and that is not a good thing. I have no comment on the manager firings. We can only speculate what goes on between owners and managers.

SCF: Since your retirement from baseball, what have you found to keep yourself busy?

KO: I am currently a Minister of Activities at my church, First Baptist Brandon, located in, of course, Brandon, Fla. I also stay busy with my son, 10, coaching his baseball team, and watching my two daughters, 7 and 3, do gymnastics.

SCF: Several members wanted me to mention your career 1.000 batting average. One member, spoodini, asked specifically, "What is like having a career batting average greater than Ted Williams?"

KO: Well I don't think one at-bat compared to 7,700 at-bats is much of a comparison.



SCF: Spoodini also asks, “What was the experience like pitching in Japan?”

KO: I truly enjoyed it. Had I not gotten seriously sick during my second season over there, I feel I might have stayed longer.

SCF: 24redsfan asks, “Do you sign fan mail? If so, what address?”

KO: Sure. Send it to 806 Stralifter Lane Valrico, FL 33594.

SCF: Chuck-17 asks, “What is your favorite card of yourself?”

KO: It would have to be my testimony card. When I was with the Cardinals in 2003 and made it to the big leagues, an organization called Family Christian Day knew I was open about my relationship with Jesus Christ and asked if they could make a card of me with my testimony on it. I, of course, said yes and they printed some up for me. To this day I still hand them out when I have opportunities to speak in front of groups.

SCF: Chuck-17 also asks, “What is your favorite piece of baseball memorabilia?”

KO: My wife surprised me on Christmas 2004 with a framed case of my 2003 Cardinals jersey and several of my baseball cards and the tickets from the game in Milwaukee where I made my debut.

SCF: And a final thought – Do you have any advice for anyone, teens and children especially, who might be interested in pursuing a career in baseball?

KO: Just to know there will be ups and downs in anything you do in life, but as long as you give everything you have every day, you will always be able to look at yourself in the mirror and know you did all you could. Play every game like it is your last game because you never know when it truly will be.

Once again I would like to extend a big thank you to Mr. Kevin Ohme for taking the time to do this interview.





Football Happenings By Jason DiOrazio aka jdio13

Hello and thank you for reading the Football Section's page in the SCF Magazine. For every staff member on the Football Team, I would like to tell you that we appreciate the read. In this article we will highlight the winner of our monthly eBay Steal of the Month Contest from September. We will also go over a few ways to get some Card Cash and highlight some of the wonderful things you are able to do with this CC, so with that, let's get onto the winner of the eBay Steal of the Month Contest.

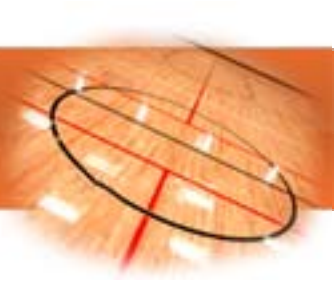
In the September edition of the contest, we had many great entries, and the winner was actually decided by only one vote. Our winner for the September contest was manningcollector. Here is a scan of his steal:



From everyone on the Football Team, we would like to send a big congratulation to manningcollector on his great win!!

Now, onto the Card Cash I mentioned. Card Cash is SCF's way of giving back to our members. It allows them to use this CC for cards, packs, etc. The way to earn this CC is very easy. You can buy CC, or you can win CC in many contests. These contests include (but are not limited to): eBay Steal of the Month, GTS, Hi/Lo, etc. The reason I mention this CC is because our site owner Mike has been buying boxes of cards and letting members purchase packs from these boxes using the CC they have earned. We hope you come on to SCF and check this out, as there are packs from all 4 major sports.

From everyone on the SCF Football Team, we would like to thank you again for taking the time to read this page. We hope to see you on SCF and in the Football Forum very soon!!!



Basketball Update

By Nathan Loewy aka garnett_21



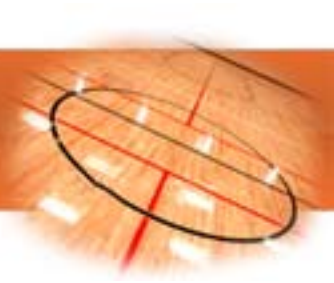
The 2009 NBA off-season has come to a close, and the regular season has already begun. The preseason was quite interesting, with the Orlando Magic being the only undefeated team at 8-0, and the New Jersey Nets being the closest to a winless team at 1-6. Other notable teams records were the Los Angeles Lakers going 6-2, the San Antonio Spurs going 3-3, the Cleveland Cavaliers going 3-4, and the Boston Celtics going 6-2. The winning streak was by the Magic with 8 straight wins, and the longest losing streak was by the Nets with 6 straight losses.

There was a significant injury that happened only days before the season was set to begin. Al Jefferson, of the Minnesota Timberwolves, was announced to be out indefinitely, due to an injured Achilles' tendon. The Wolves were already lacking forward Kevin Love, due to a broken hand. Unfortunately, this means that the Wolves will most likely be without their starting frontcourt for some time, with Love not expected to return until December.

The WNBA playoffs wrapped up last month, with the Phoenix Mercury taking the WNBA Championship. This was the Mercury's second title over the past three seasons. Phoenix was led by league-MVP Diana Taurasi to a 3-2 series victory over the Indiana Fever. Taurasi was also named Finals MVP. The series broke a pretty significant record too - highest scoring game in league history. Game one finished with a final score of 120-116 in overtime, breaking the old record of 115 points scored in one game.

In other WNBA news, a team official with the Detroit Shock announced that the team would be relocating to Tulsa, Oklahoma before next season begins. In some ways, this is not very surprising, due to the high unemployment rate in the Detroit area, but it is also surprising considering the Shock have won three of the last seven WNBA championships. There is no speculation that the team will change it's name, but I thought it would be interesting if they changed their name to the "Lightning", due to the fact that the NBA team from Oklahoma is named the "Thunder".

With the season starting, we have started running our season-long contests. The same contests from last year are returning - "Pick 'Em" and "Top Performers", located in the Basketball Contests forum, and "NBA Guess The Score", located in the main contests forum. But, there is also a brand new contest, called "Guess The Score and Score Cards", located in the Basketball Contests forum. This contest is sponsored by Panini, and they are providing some very sweet prizes, including an autographed Kobe Bryant item to the overall winner, as well as monthly prizes! If you haven't already checked the contests out, you should definitely do so! You will not be disappointed!



This past month, the Basketball Super Collector forum has had four new additions. ISO NJ 30 G was accepted for his Chris Douglas-Roberts collection, amassing 162 of the 298 total cards in existence. gatorboymike was accepted, his third super collection, for his Marresse Speights collection, amassing 261 of the 300 total cards in existence. Tarheelsnipe was accepted for two different super collections - one for his completion of the 2007-08 Chronology Masterpiece Legends set, and the other for his completion of the 2007-08 Chronology Timeless Memories set. Congratulations to these, and all the super collectors! If you would like to be featured in our Collection of the Month segment in a future month, please send a PM to garnett_21 or trevor121.

SCF's official fantasy basketball league had it's draft in mid-October...there are 11 participants, and this is what the draft order ended up being, and these were the first round picks:

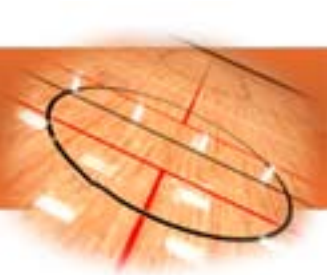
underdawg - LeBron James
JesRey - Chris Paul
garnett_21 - Dwight Howard
bryantts - Dwyane Wade
molly1984 - Kobe Bryant
demonpower55 - Dirk Nowitzki

whalechaser - Danny Granger
PPPanthersGM - Kevin Durant
tutall - Pau Gasol
gladdyontherise - Brandon Roy
nbafan123 - Chris Bosh

The prize for the winner of the league has yet to be determined, but it will be a good one.

Theme Weeks 2009 are nearing an end, with approximately 7 themes remaining. Member vivo87 recently went on a three-week win streak to take the overall lead, by only 1/2 a point, in this contest. Thanks to all of our participants, and good luck to every participant in the last few weeks of this years contest! Here are the standings, as of October 23:

week 1: lc_chatser, bob9826
week 2: BRoy#7
week 3: TeamADG
week 4: jeebus86
week 5: XxViSiOnxX
week 6: whalechaser
week 7: nbacardDOTnet
week 8: BRoy#7



week 9: Verse1
 week 10: VintageHeros
 week 11: drtom2005, MatthewLee
 week 12: jeebus86
 week 13: sl7in
 week 14: crizrn
 week 15: OJMayo32
 week 16: VintageHeros, kardkid74
 week 17: xdrew
 week 18: crizrn
 week 19: Seahawkz37
 week 20: XxViSiOnxX
 week 21: andreamjohnson
 week 22: eddiejr
 week 23: ponyboy
 week 24: nissandriver77
 week 25: tmacdirkbaron
 week 26: MatthewLee
 week 27: t-macdirkbaron, Ojmayo32
 week 28: realreodeal, crizrn
 week 29: vivo87
 week 30: vivo87
 week 31: vivo87
 week 32: t-macdirkbaron



On behalf of the SCF Basketball Team, we'd like to welcome Ally (abradley08) to the team! Ally joined us as an MIT (mod in training) in early October. So, please give her a warm welcome!

As always, we would like to thank you for taking some of your time to read this article, and we really hope that you enjoy it! If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about anything in this article, or in the basketball forums in general, please do not hesitate to PM garnett_21, trevorpl21, or any other member of the basketball team. Again, thank you for taking your time to read this!





2009-2010 NBA Preview

By Nathan Loewy aka garnett_21

The 2009-10 NBA season is quickly approaching. With one of the most active off-seasons in recent memory, we will look back at some of the major transactions and speculate what they will mean for the teams in this upcoming season.

This past off-season began after the Los Angeles Lakers won the NBA championship, following a remarkable season in which they posted a 65-17 record. It was the best record in the Western Conference, and second only to the Cleveland Cavaliers, which tallied 66 wins. This was the Lakers' 15th championship in the team history, and fourth championship of this decade.

One of the first moves of the off-season came on June 23rd, just days before the 2009 NBA draft. The move is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, impacting move of the off-season. The San Antonio Spurs sent three players, including long-time Spur Bruce Bowen, to the Milwaukee Bucks for veteran star Richard Jefferson. By adding Jefferson, the Spurs add yet another great offensive threat to complement Tim Duncan, Tony Parker and Manu Ginobili.

Just one day later, another blockbuster trade was made, the first and only trade this off-season involving a lottery draft pick. The Washington Wizards sent a package of three players, along with the fifth overall draft pick, to the Minnesota Timberwolves, in exchange for guards Randy Foye and Mike Miller. The Timberwolves used this draft pick to select controversial guard Ricky Rubio. It is yet to be determined whether this transaction was a good move by the Timberwolves, because Rubio is not going to be in the NBA for at least two seasons, and he may never suit up for the Timberwolves, according to reports.

Draft day saw a bevy of trades, mostly late first-round and second-round draft picks traded for either cash or future draft selections. But, as is the case in most drafts, we saw some veteran players on the move. Firstly, the New York Knicks traded guard Quentin Richardson to the Memphis Grizzlies for



centre Darko Milicic. This is not a very notable move on its own, but it would turn out to be later in the off-season. Later in the evening, the Golden State Warriors traded guard Jamal Crawford to the Atlanta Hawks for guards Acie Law IV and Speedy Claxton. Crawford has been labelled by some as a "locker room cancer," because of his negative attitude. So while the Hawks seemed to get a steal on this deal, it is yet to be seen how he will affect the Hawks locker room. Finally, the Orlando Magic traded guards Rafer Alston and Courtney Lee to the New Jersey Nets for guard Vince Carter. The Magic are clearly looking to improve after their NBA Finals loss to the Lakers, but a lot of fans seem to think Carter will be a distraction

to the team and will prevent them from returning to the finals.



Following draft day, the Cleveland Cavaliers felt they needed to improve as well, considering they had lost to the Magic in the Eastern Conference Finals and the Magic had already made an upgrade to their team. So, the Cavaliers traded centre Ben Wallace and guard/forward Sasha Pavlovic, along with a draft pick and cash, to the Phoenix Suns for centre Shaquille O'Neal.

This move was basically a salary dump for the Suns, as they later released both Wallace and Pavlovic, and they have now signed with other teams. On the Cavs side, this move will allow them to match up more equally against

the likes of Dwight Howard of the Magic. Cavs fans hope that this move will propel them to an NBA championship, because there is a lot of uncertainty surrounding the future of the team, as superstar LeBron James will be a free agent next summer. And there is a lot of speculation that he may not return if the Cavs cannot win a title this year.

Free agent negotiations began on July 1, although players were not permitted to sign any contracts until July 8. A few of the notable players to stay with their current teams were Jason Kidd signing a three-year extension with the Mavericks, Mike Bibby signing a three-year extension with the Hawks, Andrea Bargnani signing a five-year extension with the Raptors, Steve Nash signing a two-year extension with the Suns, Brandon Roy signing a multi-year extension with the Blazers, and after a near three-month delay, David Lee and Nate Robinson both signed contracts with the Knicks. Notable players that signed with new teams include Ron Artest signing with the Lakers, Rasheed Wallace and Marquis Daniels signing with the Celtics, Trevor Ariza signing with the Rockets, Ben Gordon and Charlie Villanueva signing with the Pistons, and after a long wait, Allen Iverson joining the Grizzlies.

In addition to all the free agent signings, there were a number of trades made around the same time. While most of these were smaller transactions, involving draft picks and/or cash, there were also a few blockbuster, or near-blockbuster, deals. Topping the list of notable trades: Hedo Turkoglu going from the Magic to the Raptors and Shawn Marion going from the Raptors to the Mavericks as part of a four team trade; and Emeka Okafor going from the Bobcats to the Hornets in exchange for Tyson Chandler.

There was another group of deals made, and while they were not blockbusters, they were newsworthy. First, as stated earlier, Quentin Richardson was traded from the New York Knicks to the Memphis Grizzlies for Darko Milicic on June 25. Just three short weeks later, Quentin was on the move again, this time to the Los Angeles Clippers for Zach Randolph. Only three days later, he was dealt again, this time to the Minnesota Timberwolves in exchange for three players. Finally, only three-and-a-half weeks later, Quentin was on the move, yet again, to the Miami Heat in exchange for Mark Blount. In only 50 days, Quentin was a member of five different teams, and had been traded four times!



Over the summer, there were three notable suspensions handed down by the league office. Jason Richardson of the Phoenix Suns was suspended for the first two games of the season, without pay, for pleading guilty to driving under the influence. Then, JR Smith of the Denver Nuggets was suspended for the first seven games of the season, without pay, for pleading guilty to reckless driving. Lastly, and possibly the most notable suspension, Rashard Lewis of the Orlando Magic was suspended for the first ten games of the season for violating the league's anti-drug policy. Reports said he had taken a supplement to help him heal an injury and, unbeknownst to him, contained a banned substance.

So what does all of this mean for the 2009-10 NBA season? I think the main teams that were competing for the title last season will still be competing this season – the Los Angeles Lakers, Boston Celtics, Cleveland Cavaliers and Orlando Magic – but there will also be a newcomer

from last year's contenders, but definitely not a newcomer to contending – the San Antonio Spurs. All five of these teams have had significant acquisitions that will make any of them worthy of winning the 2009-10 NBA championship. But the suspension of Rashard Lewis could be the downfall of the Magic. Yes, they added Vince Carter, but losing a player of Lewis' calibre for 1/8th of the season is not something to take lightly.

The second tier of teams, the other playoff teams that will most likely not contend for the championship, in the Western Conference most likely will be the Denver Nuggets, Dallas Mavericks, Portland Trail Blazers, New Orleans Hornets, Phoenix Suns and, my surprise pick, the Minnesota Timberwolves. In the Eastern Conference, we should see the Miami Heat, Washington Wizards, Chicago Bulls, Atlanta Hawks and, my surprise pick, the Charlotte Bobcats. That leaves the Houston Rockets, Memphis Grizzlies, Oklahoma City Thunder, Utah Jazz, Golden State Warriors, Los Angeles Clippers and Sacramento Kings in the West, and the New Jersey Nets, New York Knicks, Philadelphia 76ers, Toronto Raptors, Detroit Pistons, Indiana Pacers and the Milwaukee Bucks in the East to be the lottery teams.

I believe the Los Angeles Lakers and the San Antonio Spurs will be in the Western Conference Finals, and the Boston Celtics and the Cleveland Cavaliers will meet in the Eastern Conference Finals. The Lakers will emerge victorious from the West, and the Celtics will be the champions in the East. In the NBA Finals, the Los Angeles Lakers will fall to the Boston Celtics in a very close seven-game series, with the final game being decided by no more than six points. For the last of my predictions, the Most Valuable Player will be Chris Paul of the New Orleans Hornets, and the Rookie of the Year will be Johnny Flynn of the Minnesota Timberwolves. So after all the moves of the 2009 off-season, this is what you can look forward to for the upcoming NBA season! How it will turn out is yet to be seen, but hopefully this will give you some insight on what is sure to be an exciting season.



CARD OF THE MONTH WINNERS FOR SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

WINNER

JKC

2009 Press Pass Showcase Classic Collections Green Roush Fenway
Racing #23/25 (21 Votes)



2nd PLACE (3 votes)
midclayps



3rd PLACE (1 vote)
midclayps



New Members' Corner

By Matthew Cawley aka HerdsMan87

Look for upcoming New Member contests in the future months!

Make trades=Win FREE Cards!!!

New Members !!!

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

This is located in the sticky section of the MEET & GREET Forum

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL

If you haven't done so already, Please update your profile & Make sure your Mail Trade Address looks like this EXAMPLE .

John Doe 1234 main street, your city, your state/province, 12345, country

Be courteous, answer your private messages

Want to trade with the New Member team?

Nascards collects Jimmie Johnson

HerdsMan87 collects Marshall University Football Alum

Vosen8832 collects Green Bay Packers

Puffster31 collects Negro League Players

Sharpsooner405 collects Oklahoma University Football Alum

WVcoltsfan collects Peyton Manning

Angel0430 collects Roberto Clemente

Rybowski collects DeSean Jackson

Lets Trade!

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



Trade Value and the White Whale Effect

By Darcy Ryan Brooke-Bisschop aka bb_bros

I wrote an article recently that identified five factors that I take into account when I enter into trade discussions that allow me to go beyond the book value of a card in an effort to maximize my return in a deal.

The first factor that I identified was what I refer to as the White Whale Effect. The term “white whale” is often used by collectors in reference to a card, or cards, on their want lists that seems to elude them endlessly.

Cards can become white whales for a number of reasons. Some of those reasons are obvious, such as exceptionally low print runs, massive demand eroding the quantity of the card left available in the marketplace, or lightly broken products resulting in few cards ending up in trade lists. Others become white whales for seemingly inexplicable reasons – print runs are high, or at least reasonable enough to expect to be able to easily find the card, and demand is not high enough for supply to be diminished in any significant way.

Regardless of why cards become white whales, they have the potential to massively impact or swing the return that you can achieve in a trade. Thought not every trade will involve a white whale, recognizing when one does appear and approaching the potential deal accordingly is essential to making use of this tactic.

My White Whale Effect Revelation

It was not until recently that I realized just how valuable this tactic could be. Through an email, a few months ago I was approached by a fellow collector inquiring as to whether or not I had singles for a base set that he had been trying to complete for more than ten years (White Whale Alert #1). He was down to a solitary \$0.25 single card remaining on his want list, and when I informed him I had the card he needed, he was elated (W.W. Alert #2).

When he asked me what I wanted in return, I simply sent him my complete want list and told him to see if he had anything I needed. If he did, that was great, but if he did not, I told him not to worry and that I was happy I could help him out. He said he would see what he could track down, and I sent his card out in the mail the next day.

A few weeks had passed since I sent him his card and I had yet to receive any emails or packages from him, so I figured he was unable to find anything that I needed. To my complete surprise, a package arrived shortly thereafter, and inside was a card from my want list that far exceeded any return I was expecting. He had sent me a jersey card that I needed that “booked” at \$15 (W.W. Alert #3)!



Though this is a very extreme example, it is still one that illustrates how little the book value of a card can impact the end result of a trade. The card he was searching for was clearly worth far more than the \$0.25 book value, and in the end I got a substantial return.

Had I been more in tune with the fact that he was in such desperate need of the card I had, I might have been able to negotiate a card that I had a greater need for in return, but either way I cannot complain with what he provided me.

Taking Control with White Whales

Making use of this trading tactic hinges on identifying emotional reactions, both of your trading partner and yourself. These emotional reactions are what can drive collectors to extremes to obtain a card. Your ability to recognize the emotional reactions of potential trading partners, while at the same time keeping your own in check, is essential to maximizing your return in a trade.

If you come across a collector who gives you a clear indication that a card you have is on their white whale list – think of messages or emails along the lines of “I HAVE TO HAVE THAT CARD!!!!” – then use that information to your advantage:

- Try to keep the other person’s initial emotions in control of their decision making by emphasizing in your correspondence that you realize how much they seem to need your card.
- Try to be as aggressive as possible in your asking price, but ensure that you are not being unreasonable.
- Be patient. By not rushing to get the deal done you can allow them time to stew over the fact that they finally found the long-lost card.

Conversely, should you stumble upon a white whale of your own, it is important that you not overtly display to others that the card is, in fact, on your white whale list. Clearly, overpaying goes completely against the idea of maximizing your return in a deal, so be sure to avoid this scenario. It is actually rather simple to avoid overpaying for your white whales, so long as you keep your emotions and subsequent reactions in check.

My own experience has taught me that it also is best not to advertise the fact that specific cards are your white whales. Obviously they need to be included on your want list in order for other collectors to know that you need them, but stating outright that a card is a white whale will lead to other collectors getting the impression that you are willing to overpay to get it.

By recognizing white whales and approaching conversations in which they are involved in a patient and carefully considered way, you too will be able to look beyond the price guide and maximize your trade returns.



Website Review: Dacardworld.com

By Karine Hains aka Pheebs888

Not so long ago, we all had to rely on local card shops to cater to our cardboard needs. Nowadays however, we can all indulge in some hobby shopping from the comfort of our house. The question is though, where should we buy from? Which is the website for you? This article will take a closer look and review one of the big players in the hobby: Dave and Adam's Card World (www.dacardworld.com). In an effort to give you a complete portrait of the site, we will examine it under eight criteria:

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



First Impressions

First impressions are crucial on the Internet, the average user wants to know everything there is to know about a website straight on the homepage. Dave and Adam's (D&A) does not disappoint in this category. The URL is intuitive and the homepage loading time is reasonable, it is bright and clear, you know instantly that their site aims to sell boxes of sports cards and that they mainly focus on the four big sports; hockey, football, baseball and basketball. The site also inspires confidence to all users by displaying a toll free contact number which tells you right away that you will be able to contact someone should something go wrong with your order. By displaying links to their main categories and highlighting some top sellers, they succeed in making the potential customer curious and wanting to dig some more to see what is on offer.

Score: 9/10

Navigation

Navigating around D&A is easy and intuitive; the toolbar at the top of the screen allows the shopper to immediately access the type of product they are looking for. Alternatively, by scrolling to the very bottom of the page, it is also possible to access the site map. The search engine is efficient although it only gives you the option to search across the whole site. So if you are looking for a certain brand SP Game Used for instance, the results will come up for all sports even if you are searching from a certain sports page. You can narrow by category after having done the search but it would be a nice option to be able to search exclusively in one sport right away. Many collectors focus mainly if not exclusively



on one sport so this would be very attractive to them. Navigation is also facilitated by the fact the links which you can click are easily visible, it is always possible to easily return to the homepage by clicking on the D&A logo which appears at the top of each page and overall, the site is very professional, you will not find any broken links.

Score: 8/10

Content

Like any good box sellers, D&A offers a wide selection of items and each of those items has a precise description, including the odds of pulling special cards in each product. It could be a good idea on each product page to add some of the best pulls their customers found in their boxes, this would add to the aesthetic of the product page and would help the customer assess whether or not they are attracted by the look of the product. They are already doing this with some products, like 2009 SPA baseball for instance (<http://www.dacardworld.com/sports-cards/2009-upper-deck-sp-authentic-baseball-hobby-box>) but it would be a definite plus to manage to do this for each item. Furthermore, it could also be worthwhile to add a link to a product review, this would facilitate the shopping and decision making process for the customer. The depth of the content would be greatly increased by adding this material and the shopper would feel like the company is going the extra mile.

For those of us who are attracted by older or rarer products, D&A are confident that they offer the largest selection of unopened trading card products you can find anywhere and they pride themselves on the fact that older hard to find boxes are bought from them on a daily basis. It is also great to be able to shop in the knowledge that everything you see on the website (apart from the pre-sells) is in stock and available in their warehouse.

Score: 8/10

Attractors

By attractors, we mean what attracts user to the site, what draws them. Immediately on the home page, you can find two very good reasons. Firstly the free UPS ground shipping for orders over \$150 and secondly, the great free gifts (boxes and packs) offer with all order over \$75. The more you spend, the better the gift gets obviously. Each range of spending gives you a choice of gifts, more details on the offer can be seen here: <http://www.dacardworld.com/free-boxes-and-packs>.



Another big attractor to D&A in my opinion is the great customer service. As we've said before, there is a toll free phone number on the homepage but the customer service team also answer every email quite swiftly. From personal experience, I've never had



to wait more than 24 hours to get a reply. Furthermore, they also have a special Premier Account program. This program is designed for case buyers or for those who make large or frequent orders. The benefits of this type of account include a personal rep who will inform you of the new releases, special pricing and answer any question you may have. Furthermore, premier accounts get lower pricing on nearly every item on the site, and also get a weekly specials list exclusive to this type of account. The service provided by the personal reps is extremely quick, friendly and professional.

For international customers, you will be pleased to know that not only do they ship overseas but they also do so in a variety of manners and prices. To me, this gives D&A a huge advantage over some of their competitors who still refuse to cater to the needs of international customers.

Score: 10/10

Findability

D&A makes every effort to ensure that they can be easily found, they have an advertising partnership with Sportscardforum, they also sponsor contest on this website, they were present in the corporate area of the National Sports Collector Convention and as mentioned earlier, their URL is very intuitive. Also important is the fact that when a search is made in Google for “boxes sports card” the site shows up on the first place meaning D&A is getting plenty of positive exposure.

Score: 10/10

Making Contact

On top of the contact number (1-888-440-9787 toll free) on the top of every page, there is also a customer service helpdesk at the bottom of every page. This provides the customer with the phone number once more, a contact email (service@dacardworld.com) as well as a breakdown of their opening hours. Dedicated customer service can be reached Monday to Friday from 9.00 AM to 9 PM EST and also on both Saturday and Sunday from 12.00 PM to 5 PM EST.

Score: 10/10

Price Competitiveness

Overall, the price point of most products seems to be slightly higher than on the other sites we used for comparison purposes (Blowoutcards and Atlantasportscards). That being said, from a personal point of view I do not mind spending a few extra dollars for the quality of service provided and the complete peace of mind buying from D&A guarantees.



Score: 8/10

Knowledge of Users

It is always useful for a customer when a website remembers the last few items viewed or bought or even suggest products which could potentially interest the account holder based on previous orders. D&A is a winner on both of these aspects and thus greatly facilitate the client's browsing process.

Score 8/10

Overall Score and Closing Comments

Out of 80, D&A scores a solid 71 for a final mark of 88.75%. There is no doubt in my mind that Dacardworld possesses a solid interface and offers a top notch shopping experience. This site should truly be book marked as a favorite on your computer if it isn't already!



The screenshot shows the homepage of dacardworld.com. The header includes the site name, a search bar, and user account links (0 Items, Profile, Logout). A navigation menu lists categories: Sports Cards, Gaming, Entertainment, Sports Memorabilia, Vintage, Supplies, Sell to Us, Help, About Us, and Blog. A banner for the '2009/10 EXQUISITE COLLECTION' of basketball cards is prominently displayed, stating '09/10 Exquisite Basketball is in stock! Shipping Now!'. To the right, there's a video player featuring Jason Pominville of the Buffalo Sabres. Below the main banner, a red bar offers 'Choose free boxes or packs with every order over \$75!'. The footer section includes a 'Sports Cards' category link, a 'Sports Card Spotlight' with links to various product pages (e.g., '2009/10 Upper Deck Exquisite Basketball Hobby 3-Box Case 73197'), and a link to 'Visit the Sports Card Home Page for more'.



Autographs Hot or Not?

By Mike Greene Jr. aka indyreds

It seems like there are always trends in the collectible world and I cannot help but wonder about autographs in the long term. Will they still hold the same place for sports fans or will they just fade away? We have seen what over production can do to sports cards. Will there continue to be enough demand to keep up with all the supply out there? Why do we find them so desirable in the first place? Will there even be autographs in the future?

I will be the first to say that I do enjoy the fact that there are so many more outlets to get autographs than there was Twenty years ago. It is easy to find cards and memorabilia on trade sites like sportscardforum, sports league sites, individual player sites, auctions and retailers who specialize in autographs. It is common to be able to pull autographed cards out of even the low-end card sets. The number of places to obtain autographs seems to point to a strong market now, but the amount of product being signed to keep these places going must affect the long-term value. The market is getting so saturated already that I have purchased autograph cards for only a dollar from some card dealers at shows and in their shops. I have seen many autographed cards go unsold for a dollar on the most popular online auction site. I collect most of my autographs via through the mail requests and have found that I can get some players I want cheaper at my local card shop in the bargain bin!

Autographs still do hold a special place for most sports card collectors out there. It is easy to see when you attempt to trade your cards. See how often that you can trade your regular issue rookie cards or even material cards for an autograph someone has put up for trade on one of the trade sites. Some traders will actually be offended with the suggestion of trading a Forty Dollar rookie card for a autograph they listed that books half of that amount. It shows that the demand for autographs is still stronger than the rookie card market that has driven our hobby for years.

I have heard a disturbing new trend in our education system that could change the autograph community forever. Some school systems are now only spending a year teaching cursive writing and do not require students to use it afterwards. It seems that with the widespread use of computers that printing matches up better for students needs. The printed letters correspond better to the real world use of email and word processing skills. Handwritten letters seem to be becoming a thing of the past. Check your mailbox and look at how many items you have that are computer generated now. It is scary to think that in another Twenty years that young players may be printing autographs instead of the cursive signatures we have now. Will the next group of collectors coming up have an interest in autographed items? I hope that they do.

Why do we collect autographs in the first place? Why does a person scribbling something on an item make it worth more? That answer is a varied as the number of us out there who collects autographs in the first place. I think part of it is having an item that was once in the hands of that player. It can be the value for some of us. In person autographs is a memory of the actual meeting with that star. It also can be the thrill of the chase. I love theme autograph collectors. It is great to see an entire autographed card set, a large collection of your team, and winners of certain awards or a collection



of players who have hit a milestone. I personally have started working on getting a signed card from each member of the 1986 Mets team. Many people would assign no value to a Mookie Wilson autographed card, but it would be key to that collection to me. The reason we collect autographs is that we find enjoyment of some sort out of it.

I started asking basically if autographs will eventually die out as a collectible. I can not say that the value will remain high for any particular player, but the current demand seems to point that autographs are going nowhere too soon. Honestly many of us would be happy if supply drove down the prices even further as it would allow us to collect more of them for less. The hobby will be around as long as we enjoy collecting them. I just hope that when the time comes that I pass my autographs to my children that they find enjoyment in them as well.

