

# FOR COLLECTORS ONLY

World Series 1993

a newsletter for those who appreciate the hobby of card collecting

Volume 1, Number 1

## RYAN SUFFERS CAREER ENDING INJURY

It looks like the Ryan Express has made it's last stop on the major league baseball run. All that's left is one final non-stop to Cooperstown, scheduled to arrive in 1999.

For Collectors Only salutes Nolan Ryan with a tribute to the man who has given so much to those in the collecting world who so greatly appreciate his exploits.

See Page 5 for our full-page tribute to Nolan Ryan, George Brett and Carlton Fisk.

## NEW COLUMN - SHOP TALK

*This issue, For Collectors Only premieres a new feature. Our Shop Talk column will give collectors an insight into card shops all over the nation. This month, we're featuring St. Louis, Missouri and Alaska.*

### St. Louis, Missouri

I travel a fair amount in my job, around the country and occasionally internationally. In fact, I've just returned from a three week trip to China. (There's not much demand for Shaq over there, but I did see a copy of the SCD Baseball Card Pocket Price Guide in the Beijing Friendship Store) As a result, the first thing I usually do when I get to the hotel in a new city is head for the BASEBALL CARDS listing in the Yellow Pages. You have to call around to find the shops that carry the older, off-condition stuff, and more often than not it takes a visit to the shop to find out their idea of a bargain is 80% of Beckett.

I thought it might be helpful to travelers to know where to go to spend a few the hours in a new town. I'll start it off with a short list of the better shops here in St. Louis.

*Rare Coin Galleries  
204 N. Hwy 67  
Florissant, MO 837-7333*

From the airport I-70 W to US-67 (Lindbergh Blvd); US 67N about

4.5 miles to the shop. By far the best OBC find in the Midwest, both for selection and price. Mike, the owner, sells to auctions, so you know he has a big turnover, and prices to match. Ask him for his off-condition box where everything is a flat 5% of Beckett. This is a 5000 ct box of '50s - '60s, mostly commons, a few stars, mainly VG with the occasional P/For Ex. When you're done there, check out his Stars box, on the counter, marked 50% off. These cards are priced fairly well, considering the 1/2 price, but chances are Mike will cut you a very good deal when you hand him a stack.

If you have any money left over, check out the stuff on the wall behind the counter. When you walk out you'll be poorer but also confident you got some great deals!

*Florissant Baseball Card Store  
547 N Hwy 67  
Florissant, MO 838-1077*

From the airport, I-70 W to US 67; US 67N about 5 miles (just past Rare Coin). A new discovery, in fact I went there for the first time when I got to Rare Coin and discovered them closed for the holiday weekend. At first looks like a loser, as you see an aisle full of new junk and non-sports packs. But ask to see their old, off-

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## THE TEAM THAT TOPPS FORGOT

By Dave Hornish

Back in the days of yore (that's the 1960's folks) there once was a baseball team called the Houston Colt 45's. Born at the same time as the New York Mets, the Colts were the National League's poor stepson. In 1965, after three non-descript seasons and a dispute with the Colt Firearms Company, which had licensed the name to the team, the Houston National League Baseball Club changed its name to the Astros, due to Houston's renown as an aerospace hotbed.

Jump ahead three years to March, 1968 and picture yourself as a ten year old Astros fan about to open your first pack of Topps baseball cards for the season. You open the bright yellow wax wrapper and the smell of bubble gum fills your nostrils. Delicately, after popping the pink slab in your mouth and savoring the sweet, pungent taste of the gum, you examine the five cards in your hands. Right away you notice they look kind of strange, sort of like a burlap sack. But you don't mind; because they are the first cards of the spring, because you are young, because spring training started last week and the newspapers are filled with baseball stories.

Gil Hodges is staring you right in the face, his dour look making him look like your gym teacher. You hit gold on the next piece of cardboard-Willie Mays! What incredible luck for your first pack! Your heart beats a little faster as you flip Willie over to reveal Denny McLain. You are really cruising. Denny gives way to Julio Gotay, and okay he's only an infielder, but he's an Astro and you feel this is the most incredible pack of cards you have ever opened in your life. You slide Julio over to reveal Tom Tresh, but something is wrong! You back up to Gil Hodges and run through the team names: Mets, Giants, Tigers, Houston, Yankees. Houston? Why not Astros? What's going on here? Then you forget all about it. After all, it's spring and you're ten years old.

What happened back in 1968? The word Astros did not appear on the front of a Topps baseball card, that's for sure (I know, I looked-but only at the fronts!). There wasn't an Astros cap, patch or uniform to be seen. From card number 21, Ron Davis, all the way through number 592, John Bateman, there is not one shred of evidence indicating the team's name. What could have caused such a situation?

The roots of the problem date to 1964, when there was no Colts team card in Topps annual offering. So it continued: 1965, '66, '67. Where were the Astros team cards? The only thing I can figure out is that the dispute

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## Moonlight's CONLON CORNER

Some of the most popular cards in Megacard's Conlon Collection have been the colorized photos of the old ballplayers. Prior to these cards, the only photographs fans have seen of early baseball stars have been in black-and-white. As a result, one tends to picture the old-timers playing in a colorless world with drab uniforms and gray grass. Using a special colorization process plus lots of research into uniforms, eye color, and skin tone; Megacards is giving collectors an unique look into how the fans of yesterday really saw the players.

Here's a complete checklist of all the colorized photos made to date and where to find them:

### '92 & '93

#### Hobby Supply Packages

- #1 Jim Bottomley
- #2 Lefty Grove
- #3 Lou Gehrig
- #4 Babe Ruth
- #5 Casey Stengel
- #6 Rube Marquard
- #7 Walter Johnson
- #8 Lou Gehrig
- #9 Christy Mathewson
- #10 Ty Cobb
- #11 Mel Ott
- #12 Carl Hubbell

### '93 Series III Conlon Packs

- #13 Al Simmons
- #14 Connie Mack
- #15 Grover Alexander
- #16 Jimmie Foxx
- #17 Lloyd Waner
- #18 Tris Speaker
- #19 Dizzy Dean
- #20 Rogers Hornsby

Jim Thorpe (#21) and Joe Jackson (#22) are available through a mail-in offer with '93 wrappers. Bob Feller (#23) is inserted in the '93 Annual SCD Baseball Card Price Guide. There have also been some promotional color cards made with the same pictures as those listed above, but with different backs. The only exceptions to that are an unnumbered Honus Wagner card and a new promo card featuring the Nolan Ryan/Walter Johnson card from the '93 Series.

The folks at Megacards have promised more to come, so look for more of your favorite stars to get the color treatment soon!

*Moonlight*

*Want to know more about Conlons & old-time ballplayers? Send questions to Moonlight's Conlon Corner, Dept. FCO, P. O. Box 340546, Milwaukee, WI 53234.*

## THE TEAM TOPPS FORGOT (from Page 1)

with Colt Firearms over licensing played a part. Perhaps the club was prohibited from supplying Topps with a team photo in 1964. Maybe Topps refused to print one under threat of legal action from Colt Firearms, but that had never stopped Topps in the past, they would just use an old one. They could have used the picture from the 1963 set, airbrushed of course, but didn't.

Once the team name was changed in 1965, any licensing problems with the Colt Firearms Company would have been moot. The individual player cards said Astros, so things were fine at Topps, since they signed players to individual contracts. There were still cards of Astros players in '66 and '67, but the club, for whatever reason, would not supply Topps with an official team photo. Then something happened, and that something was Marvin Miller.

Miller forced Topps to increase their payouts to the ball players in 1968 and also contribute a portion of their gross sales to the newly formed Major League Baseball Players Association. The owners, never ones to let a nickel slide through their fingers untouched, formed their own group, Major League Baseball Promotions Corporation. Licensing fees had to be paid to both associations if you wanted to picture a team logo on a product. Thus began the continuing saga of licensed major league memorabilia.

How does this tie in? Well, the Astros owner was a character named Judge Roy M. Hofheinz. The Judge was

not always on the best of terms with his fellow owners. He was, to be charitable, considered an eccentric. My guess is he had some kind of falling out with the other owners over the licensing deal they had worked out with Topps and forbade them to use the Astros logo on baseball cards. Perhaps he still carried a grudge from 1964, when Topps didn't put his team on a card.

The net result of this was one of Topps all time airbrush jobs. They took Astros logos off caps, made sure only the road uniforms showed on the cards and showed a lot of players sporting some really neat mid-sixties hair styles. There is not a trace of the Astros name on any of the 31 Houston cards in the 1968 Topps set.

In 1969, the problem persisted. The card fronts once again said Houston and not a logo was to be found. Series 1, 2 and 3 were all like this. Then all of a sudden, when the 4th Series cards came out, the logos were back! The team name was still shown as Houston, but the logo was visible on most cards. Except for a high number card of Harry Walker, which features an obviously airbrushed cap, it appears by Topps to conceal the fact that Houston's entry in the National League was known as the Astros. No team cards were issued in 1969, but after seven years, the 1970 set had a Houston Astros team card in it.

Topps has done some pretty strange things over the years, but to me the team that Topps forgot is among the strangest.

*Want to comment on Dave's musings? Contact Dave Hornish through Prodigy (DJXP04A), America Online (DavidH4646) or CompuServe (70714,1273), or through FCO.*

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### NEXT ISSUE:

#### *The Hot Stove League*

#### An FCO New Year's Exclusive!

Tell us your collecting goals for 1994. Is there a special set you want to complete? How about a special card you want to acquire for your collection. Maybe you want to start collecting cards from a certain set, era or player. Tell us!

Also looking for questions for Ask the Guru, Reader Feedback and anything else you have to say. Send your contributions to:

**Scott & Company, Dept. FCO  
P.O. Box 340546,  
Milwaukee, WI 53234**

### HELP!!!!

Any readers with information or checklists of either the 1966 or 1967 Topps Punchboards, please contact Dave Hornish at ----->



## A GUIDE FOR OFF-CONDITION CARDS

There are many people that are interested in the old cards that are pre-1975, but many are afraid to try their hand at collecting these old beauties. They are afraid of getting burned and paying too much. The old saying that "you get what you pay for", doesn't hold true when applied to old cardboard.

Investors must examine cards with a microscope to be sure that the card is in perfect shape. This is all well and good for the "Investor", but what about those of us that are simply trying to build a set or are just trying to acquire a certain card for our collection. Well, it all depends on your point of view. If you're out to make a profit on your investment, then you must pay very close attention to condition and price guides. If so, I wish you luck; you'll need it! If you're just trying to collect these older cards for the fun of it, then this article is for you.

The first thing you should know is that most card shops and dealers are from the "Investor" category. They are trying to make a profit. They must make a profit in order to stay in business. We need to

patronize our favorite shops to keep their doors open. However, by putting their shop in the Investor category, they are vulnerable to the existing condition guides that are so available to the public. The slightest scuff or a slightly round corner can bring the price of a card down to attainable levels for the collector. Never pay the price that the dealer is asking for his card, unless it is a fair and reasonable price, or unless you have money to burn. Never be afraid to make an offer. Haggling with the dealer over the price can be quite fun. Most dealers have to buy and sell all the new stuff that they can because of the volume of business it generates, allowing them to pay their overhead. This creates another opening for old card collectors. Take your new "hot" rookie cards in to a dealer and he will be more than willing to trade you some old beat-up cards for it.

Right now, inserts are the hot items and almost every pack of new cards has one in it. These are just more trade bait. Many good shops have a "bargain bin" with old beat up cards in it. They will be mostly old commons, but on occasion, there will be a few star cards in there and

maybe even the one special card that you've always desired might be in there too. If you don't see a bargain bin, ask! Sometimes they are kept behind the counter to conserve room for all the new stuff that they must display. One last tip: unless you have money to burn, stay away from the glass display cases. Most of these cards that are under glass are usually the very high priced cards that the "Investor" will go for. They usually sit there collecting dust for the life span of the shop, and for good reason, price! Not too many people can, or are willing to fork over big bucks for a piece of cardboard.

- Mark O. Shelton

### TOPIC TEAMS

#### Workin' For A Livin'

1B	Cecil Cooper
2B	Jim Mason
SS	Joe Tinker
3B	Frank Baker
C	Darrell Porter
LF	Rod Brewer
CF	Doc Cramer
RF	Ron Shepherd
P	Ed Farmer
P	Dennis Cook

## LOWER GRADE BARGAINS

### 1963 Topps

#79 Checklist VG (marked)	\$2.00
#108 Wilhelm F-G	\$1.00
#123 Howard VG	\$1.00
#145 World Series VG	\$1.25
#146 World Series VG	\$1.25
#191 Checklist VG (marked)	\$2.00

63 Commons (VG UNLESS NOTED) BD - Back Damage otherwise Ex or better @ .75 ea: #12 14 16 32 64 65(BD) 69(BD) 70 72(BD) 75(BD) 83(BD) 84(BD) 101 114 127 137 150 160 171 175 (G-VG) 176 188 195 196 203 220 225 263 266 279 281 283 285 287(BD) 321 322 329 332 409 413 419 424 427 428 433 @ 3.50 ea: #454 455 456 457 (G-VG \$2.50) 49 461 462 463 464 479 (G-VG \$2.50) 480 481 482 484 485 493 494 499 502 504 510 511 512 513 526 538 545 (80-20) 548 551 554 555 560 564 568 569

### 1975 Topps

#450 McCovey (MT / diag. miscut)	\$1.50
#312 Ryan K Leader EX	\$8.00

### 1976 Topps

#98 Eckersley EX	\$30.00
#330 Ryan NM (80-20)	\$40.00

### 1977 Topps

#390 Winfield NM (80-20)	\$14.00
#650 Ryan NM (o/c top to bottom)	\$23.00

### 1979 Topps

#24 Molitor NM (80-20)	\$10.00
#30 Winfield NM (80-20)	\$ 8.00
#95 Yount EX	\$ 8.00
#116 O. Smith EX (55-45)	\$40.00
#640 Murray MT (80-20)	\$15.00

### 1978 Topps

#36 Murray EX (60-40)	\$39.00
#400 Ryan MT (80-20)	\$20.00
#450 Seaver EX-NM	\$ 3.50
#530 Winfield EX-NM (70-30)	\$10.00
#703 Morris EX-NM	\$ 7.00
#707 Molitor EX-NM	\$40.00
#707 Molitor NM (80-20)	\$40.00
#708 Murphy EX	\$ 6.00

### 1968 Topps

#45 Seaver G	\$75.00
(Lt. Crease on left - 80/20)	
#130 Perez VG	\$ 5.00
#220 Killebrew VG	\$ 5.00
#500 F. Robinson VG-	\$ 8.00

### OTHERS AVAILABLE

### 1959 Topps

#349 Wilhelm VG	\$ 5.00
#439 B. Robinson VG	\$20.00
#561 Aaron AS G	\$15.00
#563 Mays AS G-VG	\$25.00

### 1967 Topps

#569 Carew (R) G	\$100.00
Lt. Creases upper left, nice otherwise	

### OTHER 1980-85 AVAILABLE!

#### 60s-72 FOOTBALL

#### WRITE FOR DETAILS

Richard Mueller • Prodigy ID - GCSK31A  
9259 Santenay Way, Sacramento, CA 95829

I HAVE MANY UNOPENED RACKS, CELLOS FROM EARLY '80'S, AND NM COMMONS FROM '70-UP.  
PLEASE ADD \$3.00 FOR PRIORITY SHIPPING. ORDERS OVER \$100 DEDUCT 10%.



### Shop Talk from page 1

condition commons, sorted by years and in numerical order in the boxes. Most of the stuff is solid VG or EX, and the owner (Dan) will give you a very reasonable price on a stack. Also has a limited selection of stars; I just picked up a '60 McCovey RC, well rounded corners, no creases or marks, for about 6.00. The jury is still out on this shop, but my initial visit left a very good impression.

*BB's Card Dugout*  
13 West Argonne  
Kirkwood, MO 822-1322

From the airport, I-70 W to US 67; US 67 S about 11 miles to Argonne; just around the corner (W) from US-67 (called Kirkwood Rd. there). Bill's selection of off-condition stuff varies, depending on how recently he's bought a collection. You might even be able to pick up the remnants of a set, say 200-400 commons and minor stars, for a bulk rate. He also has some stars in a case which are fairly priced, and he'll probably give you a break on the marked price if you haggle. Try to deal with Bill, who has been accused by Louis, his partner, of giving stuff away.

So there you have it; of the 50+ card shops in the area, these are your best bets on your

next trip to River City. I'm pretty sure these guys won't charge you a premium just because you told them I sent you.

- Rick Keating

### Anchorage, Alaska

We decided we should be a little offbeat with our first card shop review, so we went to the 50th State and nosed around. There, the best shop we found was definitely BOSCO's Comics and Cards, located at 2606 Spenard Road in Anchorage, Alaska (907-274-4112, Fax 274-4114). The shop is owned by Randy Ramuglia and has been in operation for over twelve years. It began as a comic store, but later branched out into role-playing game paraphernalia and then sports and non-sports trading cards. Also somewhere along the way, limited sports jackets and hats stock found its way into the store. The card area is found in the back of the store, and is well stocked. Just about all the new issues are there for sale, and unopened packs are available for many lines back to the mid-80's. Single card sales were available for current stars and rookies in many sets, although there was no Tim Salmon 1993 Fleer Ultra card, which is the only non-common I need to complete that set (this demonstrates the rule that no matter how well a shop is

stocked, it will always be missing at least one card you want). The shop also was well stocked with commons available for most of the recent sets. However, here I encountered one of my pet peeves. At least the box of around 500 1993 Fleer Ultra Series II commons I was given to look through was not sorted, and I eventually gave up looking for the few cards I needed. Likewise, the 1960 and 1961 Topps Baseball binders I looked through were not sorted, although this is a lesser problem in a binder than in a box. The cards in those 1960 and 1961 binders varied from G to NrMt, and I picked out an assortment for prices. The prices I was quoted were fair and reflected the condition of the cards. On one card, I questioned the price and settled quickly on a new price 30% lower. The prices were based on Beckett's pricing and grading, and were fair - I didn't have to pay NrMt prices for VG cards. I visited a total of four times, and the counter personnel, Pat Moe and Chris McNight, were helpful and not hurried. During a Saturday visit, I watched Pat take four calls in 20 minutes for quotes on cheap cards, and he handled each courteously. I normally avoid shops that do not specialize exclusively in cards, but am glad I visited this one. On the FCO scale, this shop rates a strong A-

*Got a favorite shop in your area? Drop us a line here at Shop Talk & we'll review it.*

## The Whiff

*An olfactory reminiscence from the Guru.*

Why does Dodger Stadium still smell just like it did back in 1965?

### Smell:

The specific sensation excited by an odor.

Why does the smell of my Sunday newspaper remind me of my blue stingray bike with canvas bags loaded with those morning deliveries?

### Olfactory:

pertaining to, or used in smelling.

In this issue of FCO, I unveil a new collecting twist. Smelling your ballcards!

1962- These cards have a deep, dusty scent. When I smell a 1962 Topps card, I think of sorting cards by teams. A rubber band would hold your team sets together.

### Confession time:

When I reentered this great hobby back in 1988, I bought a set of 88 Score baseball cards. The first thing I did with them was to sort the cards into team sets and rubber band them!

1963- 63s have a lighter, fresher scent. Smelling 63s takes me back to that upstairs bedroom of that early 50s tract home. I would lay out my ballcards on the floor, and my favorite players would fill each position. Roger Maris was ALWAYS in my outfield.

1964- The odor from these cards fall between the 62s and the 64s. That deep dusty scent of the 62s is there, but not nearly as strong. After inhaling 1964 Topps cards, I recall being a ten year old outfielder for the California Bank Tigers. Every spare nickel was spent at the Park View Little League snack bar, buying packs of 64s.

1965- If you want to know what collecting was all about during the 60s, smell those 1965 Topps cards! GUM. No doubt about it. That medium deep scent is there, but so is that lingering hint of gum dust!

1966- 66s smell like the 65 cards, without the gum dust. After holding a 1966 Topps #104 Alex Johnson up to my nose for ten minutes, here is where I traveled. Me, Joey Feller, Tim Platt, and Mike King would trade cards all day long! And those Kremenliff brothers who lived across 10th Street! Their Dad would buy them a whole wax box!

1967- Back to that 1962 deeper, dusty scent. Now a thirteen year old utility player for the Pony League Champion Lookouts, this is EXACTLY how the shoe boxes smelled that held my collection! I also remember begging my Mom to buy Velveeta cheese so I could use the boxes to hold my cards. Mom, the Kremenliffs' have Velveeta boxes!

1968- I like how the 68s smell too. A light dusty scent with just a touch of gum dust. I didn't open those shoe boxes much that year (never did get Mom to buy Velveeta). Other things became more important. As I pull a 68 Topps Gene Alley card from my face, all I can think of is black light posters, AM radio, and Cindy Forsey!

Smelling your ballcards is a highly recommended form of recreation. One word of caution. Sniffing any card that has a UV coating may be hazardous to your health!

*Editors Note: In addition, FCO does not endorse smelling any cards which have Dog Damage, mildew, or were found in gutters or garbage cans or kept in pockets near armpits or smelly shoes. We also do not recommend smelling Shaq cards since studies have indicated that sniffing Shaq adversely affects one's collecting sense, making the victim prone to overpaying for unproven commodities.*



# A Farewell to Legends

## GOODBYE NOLAN

The old cliché reads, "Time waits for no man." For the past few years, baseball fans have been wondering if that saying should be amended to read, "Time waits for Nolan." The Ageless Wonder was still pitching into his mid-40's and not just pitching - power pitching. With a 90+ mph fastball, a sharp breaking curve and a recently added circle change, he made hitters half his age look as though they were fresh out of Little League and Hall of Famers became mere mortals.

For years, both fans and detractors said "This is it. He's done," only to have him throw one more no-hitter, notch another 15-strikeout game and generally amaze us all. They said it in 1981, in 1985, in 1988 and every year thereafter. "He can't keep this up." But he kept right on going, ringing up strikeout number 5000, career win number 300, no-hitter number seven.

On September 22nd, 1993, the first day of fall, Time decided it would wait no longer. Time decided that the first day of fall was the day for a hero to fall - for good. In the first inning of a game against the Seattle Mariners, facing Dave Magadan, Time went for the kill. Ryan threw a 2-1 pitch, missed the strike zone, and felt the wrath of time in the form of a torn ulnar collateral ligament, better known to baseball fans as a Tommy John. John suffered a similar injury in the 1970's and after undergoing a tendon transplant and years of therapy, returned to pitch effectively. Others have had similar successful surgeries

since, but they weren't 46 years of age.

Nolan, you've been a champion on the field. An all-too-rare combination of competitor and gentleman. Many have called you a hero and a role model. Some have even named their children after you. You played hard, gave everything you had and never asked for more than you felt you deserved. Both on and off the field, you exemplified a competitor and these are the traits we will remember when we watch your Hall of Fame induction after being elected on the first ballot, which you so richly deserve. You tried to go out on your own terms, but Time would have none of that. All through a season that would have sent many equally great players packing, you insisted that you would finish. Despite one setback after another, you gave Time the same battle which you gave hitters throughout your career. Then, just 11 days from completing your final season and beating Time at it's own game, Time struck with it's fullest vengeance, once again showing all of us mortals that Time truly waits for no man.

It is a sad ending to a glorious career. We all would have preferred that Nolan Ryan had gone out with the accolades and fanfare that one of his stature so richly deserves, but he kept Time waiting too long. We pray that there is one more start left in him, that he can make one more comeback, but reality brings us to only one conclusion.

This is it. He's done.

Cooperstown, class of 1999?

## SO LONG, GEORGE

What do I remember most about George Brett? Well, there's pine tar, hemorrhoids, the 1980 and 1985 World Series, his assault on .400 during the 1980 season, his reputation as a ladies' man... Wow! George Brett is one memorable player!

He sure is. George Brett has been associated with some of the most unusual and controversial events in Major League Baseball in the past 20 years. Fortunately, his stature as a player and an individual overshadow those incidents and we remember George Brett, the soon-to-be legend.

We remember what he meant to the city of Kansas City, bringing them their first world championship in 1980 and another in 1985. We remember his dramatic 1980 MVP season, hitting .390 and rekindling the

argument of whether anyone can hit .400 again. We remember doubles, home runs, clutch defensive play, leadership on and off the field. We remember a man dedicated to his community, his home, his fans. Not just Royals fans, HIS fans.

George Brett could have left Kansas City and written his own multi-million dollar ticket anywhere in baseball, but he stayed home in Kansas City. Home. That's a rare and unusual commodity in baseball.

George Brett has a style that few others in baseball will emulate. George Brett personified baseball in Kansas City. George Brett personifies class.

Good luck George, you deserve the best because you were and are one of the best.

## CARLTON - IT'S NOT FAIR!

It just wasn't fair. After 20+ years in the big leagues, setting standard upon standard for major league catchers, being a role model for young people, young players and older players near the end, Carlton Fisk was unceremoniously dumped by the White Sox shortly after breaking the major league record for most games played by a catcher.

OK, he was 45 years old; old for a ballplayer at any position, but for a catcher? No player short of Methuselah could have caught regularly at that age. But Carlton gave it one last shot.

Instead, he sat. Like many players, his skills grew rusty not just from age, but more perhaps from disuse. He played sparingly, and when he did was unimpressive, though he

occasionally showed flashes of his youth.

His youth. Boston, 1975. Who could forget 'The Homer.' The homer that sealed what many baseball fans remember as the 'Greatest Game of All-Time.' Then there was 1983 with the White Sox. They lost to Baltimore in the LCS, but it was their first playoff appearance since 1959 and Carlton was responsible.

He wanted to go out a winner one last time, but was barely allowed so much as a goodbye. Not even a farewell tour, Jerry Reinsdorf just wanted him out.

In 1993, they made it again. After losing the LCS to Toronto, one wonders - How would Fisk have done as the DH in the LCS?

It's just not fair



## Ask the Guru

Each month, the renowned and respected Guru of Card Collecting will answer the questions of those seeking knowledge of the hobby.

Dear Guru,

From an investment standpoint, is it better to have dog bites or pin holes in cards?

—ZZBob

Dear ZZBob:

Cards with pin holes are normally a better investment. However, the issue of dog bites (commonly referred to as dog damage), requires further study.

**Level 1 Dog Damage:** Cards that feature teeth marks that have not broken through the cardboard are at level 1 dog damage. Any card damaged by a Chihuahua never receives greater than level 1 dog damage.

**Level 2 Dog Damage:** Cards that have chewed corners grade level 2 dog damage. If you used your cards to play fetch with Fido, they would grade level 2 dog damage (subject to the Chihuahua exemption).

**Level 3 Dog Damage:** In addition to the defects listed under level 2 damage, level 3 dog damaged cards will include cards that were buried. Level 3 cards will also include cards that fell into Pals water dish, and cards that Lucky slept with.

This is not to say that level 2 and 3 dog damaged cards cannot be a solid investment. These levels of damaged cards are a great investment if:

1. They are pre 1976 cards.
2. If you need the card for a set.
3. If nowhere on the card you can find the word Shaq.

Guru

Address all questions to: Ask the Guru, c/o Scott & Company, Dept. FCO, P.O. Box 340546, Milwaukee, WI 53234. Include your name, address and age. The guru will answer as many letters as he can.

## COLLECTOR PROFILE

### MARK O. SHELTON

Age - Very

Bats Right / Throws Right

Position - SS / 2B

Married 17 years

3 children - 11, 9, 9. (yes, Twins)

#### **Favorite players:**

Willie Mays, Warren Spahn.

#### **Favorite baseball quote:**

Warren Spahn in 1965. His career was winding down and he was called to pitch for New York. The catcher was Yogi Berra. In an interview before the game they were asked if they were the games oldest battery. Spahn responded, "I don't know if we're the oldest or not, but we're sure the ugliest."

As with most people from my generation, we bought the cards for the gum and played

with the cards. We would trade for our favorite players and then the cards that were left over would be used in bicycle spokes to make it sound like a motorcycle. Therefore, not many of my cards survived my childhood.

I started collecting the cards again at the age of 30 and even opened up a card shop and started setting up at shows. I still enjoy setting up at shows, but sold the shop when it became a job. Just like baseball, card collecting should be fun, not a job. I am building 2 sets. 1957 Topps and 1961 Topps. I also collect many of the old-time stars from the 50's and 60's. Condition is NOT a priority for me. If it's a card I want and/or need, I'll take it. Basically, I just enjoy trading and sharing the memories with my card trading friends.

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