

# The Super Collector

## Mike Rich

By Bob Swick

**O**ur Super Collector Mike Rich was recently a guest on the Gridiron Greats podcast in November. Mike has been collecting most of his life and is a member of several trading groups. He is a true collector in the collecting sense that he is not concerned about book value dollar for dollar in his trades—he instead truly enjoys trading with other collectors. I have been trading football cards with Mike for over 30 years now and have always appreciated the cards he has sent for my collection. Normally I run into Mike at the National Sports Collectors Convention and we are able to get caught up on collecting and our collections. I was able to interview him recently for this article as our Super Collector.

**GG.** *How did you get into collecting and in particular football cards as I know you collect all four sports?*

MR: I started collecting baseball cards, as most card collectors did.



*Some of the Detroit Lions memorabilia from the Mike Rich Collection.*

As the seasons changed, I started to collect the other sports as well. When I started to work my way back, instead of just getting the new, current year, I noticed football sets were much smaller and the superstars did not cost as much. I therefore aggressively went after football cards.

**GG.** *What encompasses your collection as in runs/sets?*

MR: I generally work on vintage (pre-1981) sets. I still am working on 1948 Topps Magic Photos and 1950 Topps FB, but have completed the 1951-1986 Topps sets. I only need the 1952 Bowman Large #99 Stydher to complete the Bowman run. I have completed the Fleer, Philadelphia and Post FB runs. I still need some 1948 Leaf FB high num-



**An assortment of Coke caps from his collection including the hard to find pull tabs**

bers, but have completed the low numbers and the 1949 Leaf set. I also collect Canadian FB, having



**Another set that Mike is working on is the 1949 Topps Felt-backs**

knocked off the Topps and CFL run. I do need some short print Post Canadian FB. I still need some inserts and many regional issues.

**GG. Name five of your most favorite items in your collection.**

MR: Naming favorite items is always tough. It is similar to picking a favorite child. That said, a few favorites are my 1894 Mayo Cut Plug card (I

only have a type card), I have a number of wrong back 1948 Bowmans, of the short print divisible by 3 series. I think the 1953 Bowman FB set is the most beautiful FB set issued.

While I normally prefer pro cards, the

1955 Topps All Americans with cards such as Knute Rockne, Red Grange, Jim Thorpe, the 4 Horseman and local legend Benny Freidman, among many other historical greats is a fantastic set.

**GG. What are your collecting goals if any? What is on your wantlists at this time?**

MR: I am a set builder. So getting the 52 Bowman Large Stydher is high on my list. I also try to get 1 1935 National Chicler FB a year. I am down to 9 high numbers. I am also close on some Topps FB inserts, and want to make progress on the 1948 Leaf FB hi #s and 1950 Topps FB. Areas with lots of growth for me are the 1961 Nu Card Pennant Stickers and 1976 RC Cola FB cans. I also really enjoy Coke FB caps from 1963-1966, and am always on the lookout for those.

**GG. Any advise for someone getting into collecting football cards and or memorabilia?**

MR: Collect what you like and interests you. Do not let price guides dictate what you collect. It is supposed to be a hobby to be enjoyed. If you forget about the money, you will enjoy it much more. There are numerous on line trading groups that can be joined. This brings back the joys of childhood with having buddies to swap with. It can also build friendships and give you someone to attend card shows with, if you are lucky enough to have them in your area.

**\*\*GG\*\***