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## Determining The Worth Of Your Sports Memorabilia

By Linda Polansky

Everyone that collects sports memorabilia would like to believe that they are sitting on a goldmine,

but the truth of the matter is, a collection of memorabilia is only worth as much as someone will pay for it. This makes determining the worth of any kind of memorabilia rather tough to figure out, but with an understanding of what makes memorabilia valuable, you can begin to know a ballpark value of your collectables.

There are a few things to consider when you are trying to determine the worth of sports merchandise, but the most important factor tends to be whether or not the item is autographed. A Michael Jordan game jersey is certainly an important piece of sports history, and to a serious fan it would definitely be an interesting piece of memorabilia to own. However, if that same jersey were signed by Michael Jordan it could fetch an even higher price. If it were signed by the entire Bulls team, the price could skyrocket even more.

While autographs do increase the value of your memorabilia there are properties about autographs that make their worth even greater. These factors include who signed the item, if it can be authenticated, and what exact item was signed.

The most important thing to look at when determining the value of an autographed piece of sports memorabilia is who signed it. Was the player in the hall of fame or did they just make it to the pros for one season. Did the player achieve notoriety off the field or on the field or both? Is there a strong amount of interest in the athlete that signed the item. Is the athlete still alive or has he or she died, limiting the amount of signed memorabilia that this person produced? If the athlete is deceased, how long has it been since he or she died? The longer a person has been gone, the less memorabilia about their career seems to survive in good condition. Does the athlete that signed your collectable limit the amount of autographs they give? Does the athlete who's signature you have charge a lot for autograph sessions, making their signature rare? Was the item signed by more than one person. Having a ball signed by the 1998 American League All Star Team is a very unique piece of sporting history and possibly worth much more than having the individual signatures of each athlete on the team. Each of these things factor into the value of the signature on your collection, but they aren't the sole determining factor.

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It is great to have an autographed program from the football game you attended last fall, but if you can't prove that you really have Jerome Bettis' signature on the program, the value of the piece is lessened. A great way to authenticate an autograph is to take a picture of the athlete as they sign it. There are also several authentication services that use a variety of methods to study your piece and determine if the autograph is real. They will then issue you a certificate of authentication that proves the piece was in deed autographed by the name that resides on it. If you buy autographed merchandise from a retailer or dealer, always buy pieces that come with a certificate of authentication so that you can be completely sure that you are getting what you pay for.

Another important factor in determining the worth of autographed sports memorabilia is the item itself that was autographed. An autographed seat from Three Rivers Stadium can be worth a lot more money than an autographed Steelers shirt, because the stadium no longer exists. When you own that signed seat, you not only own a valuable signature, but you own a piece of sporting history. If you are

thinking of taking an item to a game or show to have it autographed think carefully to determine what type of item will hold the most value down the road.

The most important thing to remember when placing a value on sports memorabilia is to leave sentimentality behind. Just because a player is your absolute favorite, doesn't mean that everyone else loves him causing his memorabilia to be valued high. While it is nice to know what your collection is worth and sports memorabilia is a fine investment, it is also important to only collect what you love. If you don't love the things you collect, what is the point?

Linda Polansky writes about Sports Memorabilia and Worth of Sports Collection

<http://www.teamlogoandgear.com>

### **New Baseball Cards Offer Classic Collectibles**

**By Kadence Buchanan**

Baseball cards have been an irreplaceable part of American culture for over a century. Giving collectors a chance to see the stats and pictures of their favorite players, baseball cards have come a long way in the past decade.

As some collectors grew weary of the traditional baseball card format, the card companies needed to find a niche that would help boost the excitement of their product. They found exactly that through the use of numerous advancements in the trading card field. Now that the baseball card companies see that their buyers like the thrill of chance when it comes to getting specialized rare cards, there are numerous sought-after types of cards available. For instance, one of the industry's top companies, Topps, has found a host of ways to keep collectors interested. In their latest set of cards, they've offered up the opportunity to get cards that are signed by the players that they represent, giving you an exciting sense of possibility every time that you can open a pack. Also, they've begun to place actual pieces of game memorabilia within the cards. You may end up opening a pack and getting a piece of

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fabric directly from the jersey of one of your favorite players, or even a chip of their bat.

With all of these opportunities for hungry collectors, baseball cards are in more demand than ever. The specialized memorabilia cards feature extremely limited print runs, allowing for a high value to be assessed for the unique cards. Some of the more unique cards for the best players may fetch upwards of hundreds of dollars. And the game-used memorabilia cards don't necessarily have to come from players that played the year the cards were printed – if you get lucky, you may find yourself with a piece of a bat used by Joe DiMaggio! That can add a very interesting prospect to sports card collecting – it's almost like buying a lottery ticket! Sure, some of the cards may cost more by-the-pack, but it's clearly worth it to have such an exciting chance to get close to your sports idols.

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