



J. Frank Meyer, left, of ESCO worked from offices on Printers' Row in Chicago. This 1914 photo shows the vending card machines for "art models" against the wall. The photo was obtained from Chet Gore and appeared in Bob Schulhof's "Penny Arcade" newsletter in 1990.

A look back helps understand Exhibit Supply cards



By George Vrechek

J. (John) Frank Meyer was born in Peoria, Illinois, in 1881. He came to Chicago with a fifth grade education, but by 1907 headed a company that became a leader in its industry, employing some 285 people at one time in its Chicago plant. His company was Exhibit Supply Company, and among its products were arcade cards of sports figures. Meyer would be amused to find that his cards, which he sold profitably for ½ cent each, are still scrutinized by collectors today and purchased at considerable expense.

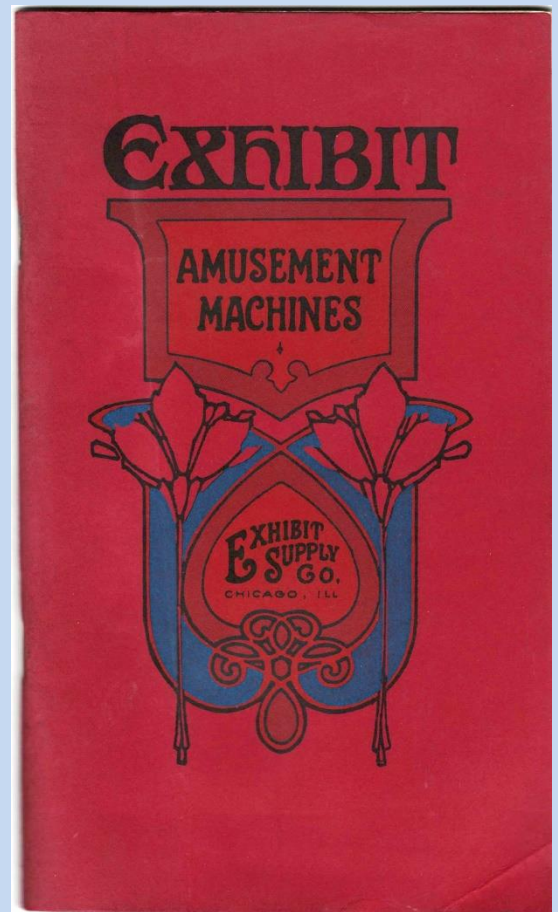
Amusement park arcade memories

As a kid in the 1950s, I bought exhibit cards from arcade vending machines at Riverview, a Chicago amusement park. The cards didn't have any numbers, the backs were blank and the cards didn't fit

nicely into the shoe boxes with the regular cards. To make my exhibits blend a little better, I cut some of them down to the size of the Topps cards. I have since found exhibits from the 1940s cut by young collectors to match the size of the 1948 Leafs. It was nice to have at least one card of Stan Musial and Joe DiMaggio, but most of the exhibit players were not in their current uniforms, the photos looked old and the colors were pretty well limited to one. I viewed them as “fillers.”

Of course what was of marginal interest in the 1950s can become the holy grail today. We slab the cards, check out the variations, look for centering and clarity and successfully turn what was a penny card into a several hundred dollar object of affection. However, collectors have had fun trying to make sense out of the exhibit card puzzle. Who issued the sets, what cards make up a set, when were sets issued, and what are the variations? Our penchant for orderliness is disturbed because exhibit cards don't lend themselves to easy organization.

Let's see if we can look back at the history of the company that produced most of those cards, the Exhibit Supply Company, and put things into a perspective that will help us understand why the cards have always been puzzling.



The cover of ESCO's 1930 catalog, Photo Adam Warshaw

Meyer starts in Chicago as a printer

Meyer came to Chicago and got into the printing business. By the early 1900s his Meyer Printing Company had an office in the Pontiac Building at 542 South Dearborn Street, in what was referred to as Printers' Row. By 1910 he controlled a small partnership involved in the amusement arcade business called Exhibit Supply Company (ESCO) which had been established in 1901 and which Meyer joined in 1907.

Meyer heads Exhibit Supply

He began combining his printing knowledge with the needs of the arcade business. One of his early products was a coin-operated machine which produced metal ribbons stamped with whatever information you wanted to type. Within a few years, they were producing machines that would vend postcards, horoscopes or photos of young women described as art models. After WWI business boomed. *The Billboard* trade journal reported, “Virtually overnight Exhibit Supply, aided by Meyer's creative capacities, became a major manufacturer of arcade and amusement game lines.”

Meyer was living in downtown Chicago with his wife, Elizabeth, his two young daughters, Helen and Oraline “Brennie,” his brother (Clare) and his mother. His wife had been born in Switzerland as had his own father. He was a hard worker with a family to support, always looking for new products. He became a director of the Chicago Motor Club and was a Mason and a Shriner. Otherwise he seemed to keep a pretty low profile as to ads, publicity or even phone book listings. I found his name in a 1914 Chicago directory listed as a printer. In a 1917 directory his description was slot machine dealer, and by 1923 he was an amusement machine dealer.

His statements in company sales literature gave no hint of a fifth grade education. He projected quality products, sensible procedures and an enthusiasm for his customers' profitability. He may have overstated a few things, but it all sounded pretty good. The amusement industry dealt with nickels and pennies and needed to continually adjust to wrestle those hard earned pennies from the customers (referred to as "players") through good and bad economic conditions. Meyer's business evolved into developing and selling arcade machines, providing parts and selling cards and premiums to use in the machines. His staff was charged with coming up with new, affordable products that would attract customers.

EXHIBIT PREMIUMS

EXHIBIT Premiums are original and designed to appeal to kiddies everywhere. New premiums are being released regularly, which can be redeemed for from fifty coupons and upwards. Window advertising cards, as well as up to date display signs for Ideals, are furnished free to Exhibit operators as often as required.



THE EXHIBIT SUPPLY COMPANY

LUCKY PHOTO VENDER

(5c SLOTS)



The Lucky Photo Vender is similar in general construction to our popular Ideal on page 64. The main difference is that the Lucky is equipped with two of our nickel slots and sells our cards for 5c each. These cards and the plan of selling are described below. The Lucky has a window in the cash compartment showing the last coins played—the best protection against slugs. There is also a round window in each side of the cabinet through which the player can see the cards. The cash box holds \$100.00 in nickels and has lock and key. The Lucky Photo Vender, combined with our numbered cards is one of the most profitable trade stimulators ever offered dealers and operators. Send for large special descriptive circular.

Price \$25.00

Including 1,000 numbered cards, which when sold pay back \$50.00.
Re-orders of numbered cards cost the dealer \$5.00 per loading of 500 cards.
DIMENSIONS: Height 11 inches; width 7½ inches; depth 9 inches; weight 10 lbs.

4 2 2 2 - 2 4 - 2 6 - 2 8 - 3 0 WEST LAKE STREET, CHICAGO

EXHIBIT POST CARDS



WE are the originators and the world's largest makers of high grade cards designed to be vended exclusively from Exhibit popular card vending machines; such as pictures of Famous Film stars; Movie Comedians; Cowboy and Western pictures; Prizefighters; Baseball Players; Art Models and Bathing Beauties; Fortune Telling cards; Comic cards, etc. To keep up the interest in these venders we aim to publish one or more new series every sixty days. Our printing plant is equipped



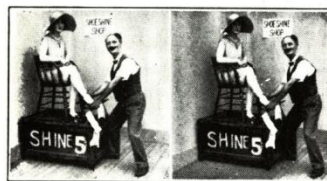
with the very latest labor saving machinery, which, combined with our own methods and big output, enables us to produce these cards at such a low cost that they can be retailed profitably at 1c each. Special features such as heavy white and tinted cardboard, accurate dieing, special gathering, duotone printing, and new variety, are the secret of our cards vending so successfully and selling so fast.

SPECIAL POSTCARD CIRCULAR: We publish over fifty different series of cards for operators and arcade use. We are continually releasing new series and discontinuing older series. A sample card of each new series is mailed to operators and to arcade managers every thirty days. A fine large illustrated postcard circular will be mailed promptly upon request.

NOTICE: The service we give and the cards we manufacture are exclusively for operators of Exhibit Supply Company postcard vending machines. We reserve the right to reject orders from operators of any other postcard vending machine.

Price of Exhibit Post Cards is \$3.60 per thousand
F.O.B. Chicago

EXHIBIT STEREO VIEWS



The Exhibit Studios at Hollywood, California are the largest and best equipped in the world for producing fine stereo views designed exclusively for Exhibit drop picture machines as well as machines of other old standard makes. We spend thousands of dollars and originate hundreds of new sets of stereo pictures yearly. Due to the energy and progressiveness of the Exhibit Supply Company it is now possible to procure stereo views of many Famous Film Celebrities—"You see the same movie stars for 1c as shown in the highest

EXHIBIT COUPON PLAN

"Operators Who Play with EXHIBIT
Profit with EXHIBIT"

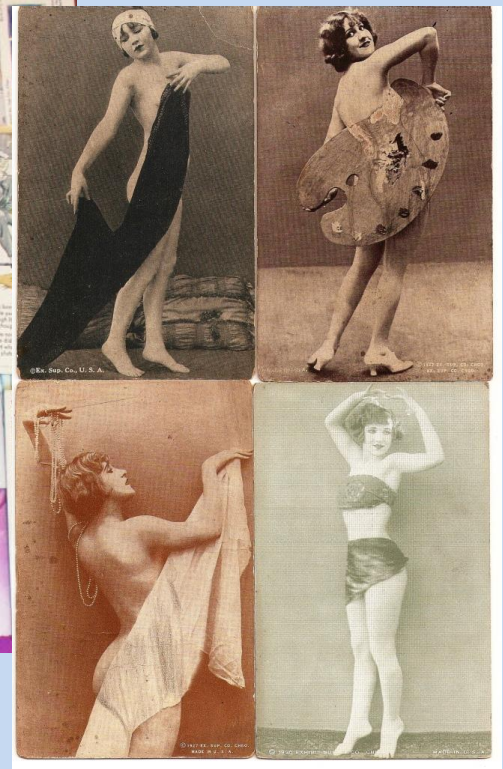


OWNSERS of Exhibit card venders are tripling their card sales by participating in our free premium plan. All of our different series of operators' cards now have a coupon printed in the corner (see illustration at the left). Buyers of cards save and redeem these coupons for the attractive gifts which we supply absolutely free, without any cost to the operator.

This attractive Coupon Plan, combined with the new series of cards we publish periodically, keeps up a continual interest in the Ideal Card Vender—it is the big reason why Ideal Card Venders are the fastest legitimate penny getters made.

Pages from ESCO's 1930 catalog describe the card vending machines and the potential profit to arcade operators. Prizes and coupons skirted the issue of gambling. Photos Adam Warshaw.

The ever-evolving arcades were sources of entertainment for the masses in those days with short movies, music, games of chance, digger machines, peep shows and card vending machines. ESCO created and patented many such machines. The cards coming out of vending machines were a small portion of the arcade business, but proved to be more lasting investments than other elements.



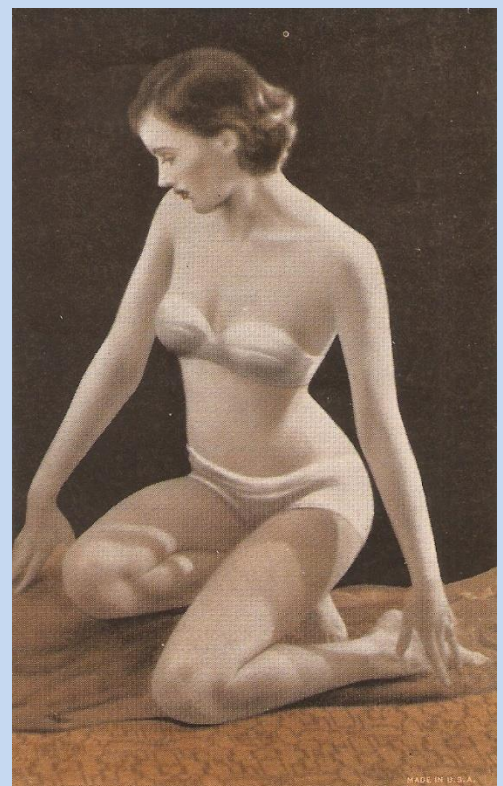
ESCO's non sport subjects included every subject imaginable, although they seemed to imagine young women more frequently.

The earliest 1914 arcade cards by ESCO likely included "art models."

Cranking out cheap thrills every 30 days

By the 1920s ESCO needed cards of baseball players, boxers, movie stars and more art models to fill those machines. Meyer promised arcade operators that, "We release a new series of cards every 30 days."

I found no evidence that Meyer was a sports fan. He seemed to be a fan of whatever his customers wanted and the law would permit. ESCO's brochure explained, "Our latest Art Model stereo views never fail to get top money when shown. Every set of views we publish are passed by the New York censors." Indeed, the marginally risqué cards might sell in arcades for 5 cents versus a penny for baseball players. Maybe the penny baseball players were used by youngsters to conceal the nickel art models that were the most profitable cards in these arcades?

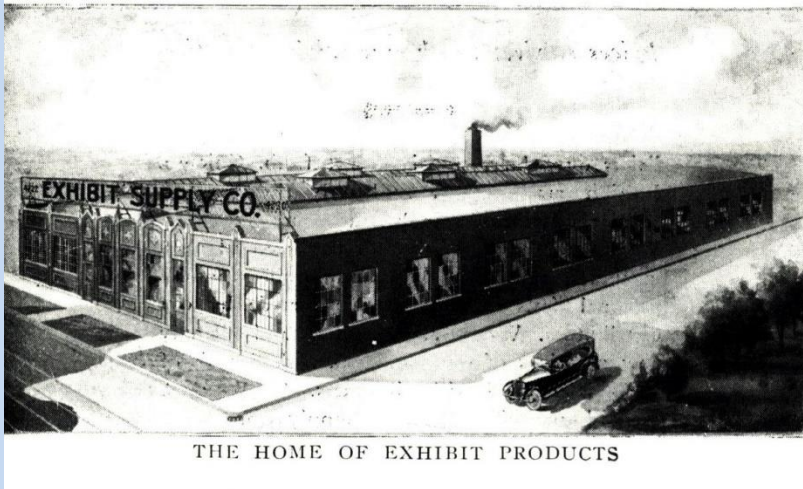


ESCO would buy photos (from their "Hollywood studios" of the "most beautiful subjects"), but they had to produce cards which could be sold cheaply, and they had competitors. There wasn't much margin for paying for royalties, publication fees, complicated layouts, two-sided printing, real autographs, written

descriptions or quality paper. While they would add some new cards to a printing, they would often just change a few cards or update a few photos and crank out more cards in bricks of 1,000, which sold to vendors for \$3.85. There you go; a new set every 30 days.

Machines needed cards that fit

Exhibit card enthusiast Adam Warshaw makes the point that if you had a machine purchased from ESCO, you needed to use cards that would work in the machine, only supplied by ESCO. The cards had to be the right size and thickness. Machines dispensed two series of cards side by side with about 1,200 cards already in a machine when delivered.



The Exhibit Supply Company plant was on the West Side of Chicago from the mid-1920s until about 1960. The plant site, right, has been vacant for many years. (Photo left Adam Warshaw)

ESCO's plant

To handle the growing business which combined manufacturing, printing, creative and sales operations, Meyer moved into a large plant at 4222 W. Lake Street in Chicago around 1924, in the middle of what was a vibrant manufacturing corridor along the Lake Street elevated line. His home was now nearby at 240 N. Parkside Avenue. He brought his brother Clare into the business as “chief experimental engineer” and gradually added key employees: arcade sales manager Perc Smith, general sales manager John Chrest, plant manager Chet Gore and son-in-law Stuart Knabe. Meyer had been the sole owner of ESCO for many years but finally incorporated in 1935 and started including others as shareholders.



During the 1920s, ESCO produced baseball players and boxers, one image per card with various formats. Some had postcard backs.(upper left)

Some of the tougher cards are of players who only appeared for a year or two at the beginning or end of the ESCO 1939 to 1966 run. Kurowski apparently wasn't around long enough for them to add his first name (Whitey). Bob Dillinger's card was one of the few action cards.(upper right)

In the 1930s, ESCO used 4 images on 1 card for baseball players as well as other subjects, almost inviting young collectors to cut them in 4 parts.(right)



Sports cards

ESCO started producing boxing and baseball cards in 1921, added more sports-related cards and kept at it for another 58 years issuing cards of football players, boxers, wrestlers, sports champions, as well as movie stars, art models, radio stars, TV stars, cowboys, Indians, automobiles, planes, fortunes, love letters and other subjects. The vast majority of exhibits were not sports cards. ESCO usually copyrighted what they could which meant joke cards, fortunes and cartoons, but not photos of famous people. The copyright usually, but not always, included the date; thus it is easier to date some of the non-sports cards.

Baseball exhibits were of single players from 1921 to 1928. By 1929 ESCO went to the four players on one card format. However by 1939 they were back to one player per card and generally printing 32 cards at a time. Approximately 76 cards of different players were pictured between 1939 and 1947 which included “salutations” and signatures (by ESCO artists).

Return to single player cards resulted in short prints

The switch back to one player per card resulted in some “short prints.” In order to update the set, players would get dropped from subsequent printings like the elusive Mike Kreevich, Hugh Mulcahy or Johnny Rizzo. Had the company been continuously running cards of single players in the 1930s, these players would have been printed in prior years. During the 1950s Hegan, Goodman, Williams, Wertz and Hodges were easy to find. They were printed about every year with few changes. The same thing happened at the end of the exhibit card run when Yastrzemski, Kranepool and others were added only in the final years and are now hard to find.



Sometimes ESCO would just crop an image differently to achieve a new look. Tommy Holmes changed the tune of his salutation from “yours truly” to “sincerely yours.” DiMaggio is printed with a red-brown ink and Feller got an entirely new photo.

Cutting and cropping

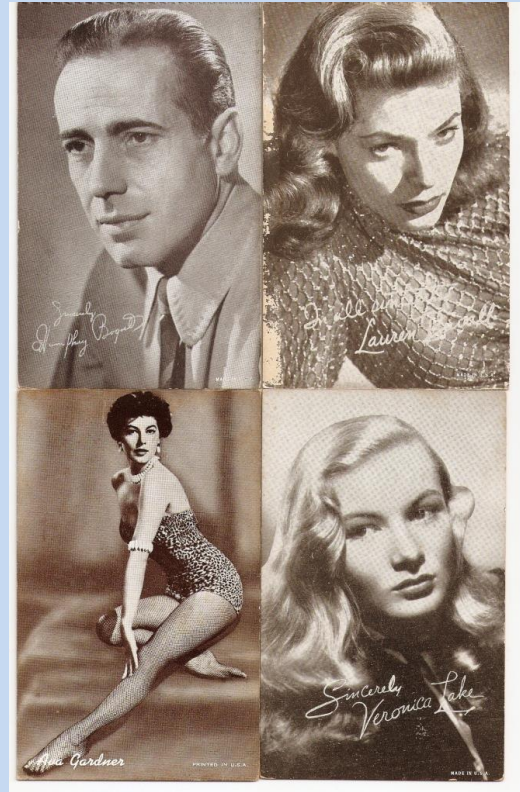
There are many slight differences on cards of the same player but surprisingly, given the economical production, there are few cards that are obvious miscuts. ESCO usually had a white border between groupings of 4 cards on a sheet of 32. The 32-card sheets must have been carefully cut along the white guidelines and then the 4-card sheets were cut. However ESCO did it, miscuts were rare. The slight

cropping differences are more likely the result of using the same photos to re-run cards but with slightly different alignments.

Changes in the 1940s

When World War II arrived, ESCO directed virtually all its efforts to war production, although arcade cards still went out the door, including cards with a military theme. Meyer was personally involved in ESCO's developing and manufacturing switches used to open bomb bay doors and release bombs. They also provided radar parts and assemblies for submarines. Switches were still needed after the war and the switch business, carried on by their Electro-Snap Division, became more significant to the company than the amusement arcade business which resumed after the war. The plant was bustling and in 1948 they built an adjoining one story addition to double the production area.

However, 1948 was not a good year for key managers of ESCO. Meyer suffered from a heart ailment and had moved to Pasadena, California, keeping in touch with the business by phone. He also remarried a Hazel Spencer Meyer. In November 1948 Meyer died at the age of 67. Sales managers Perc Smith and John Chrest both died in June 1948.



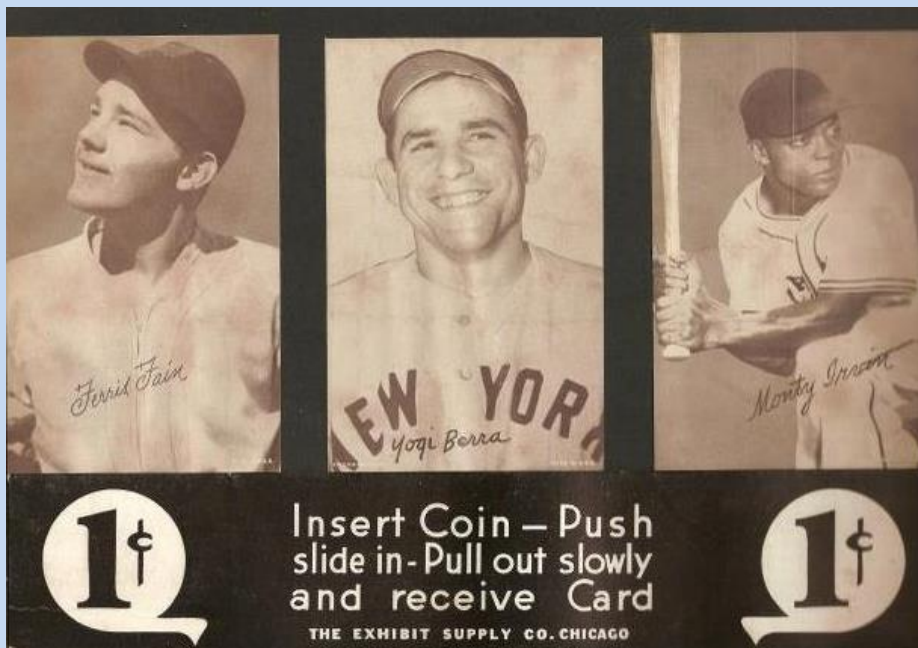
Bogart, Bacall, Gardner and Lake were likely as popular with customers as the baseball players.

New Managers for ESCO

Following Meyer's death, ESCO remained viable under the direction of other managers including Joseph Batten, H.T. Ames, Ford Sebastian, Sam Lewis and Chet Gore. ESCO employed 285 people in 1953. This period also included the heyday of baseball exhibit card production. Catalogs have referred to the exhibit cards from this era as the 1947 to 1966 issues with the implication that sets of 32 or 64 cards were issued each year resulting in about 465 cards including variations. ESCO did produce dated catalogs for vendors listing the sets available which probably helped create the notion that there were annual baseball card sets.

ESCO card printing procedures

Plant manager Chet Gore had been with the company since 1937 (a year when Meyer reported a salary of \$25,000 and his plant manager was paid \$26,000). There was no indication that procedures for producing cards had changed drastically. ESCO needed to supply their vendors and produce new product. There was likely no timetable for when that might happen. Whenever baseball cards needed to be produced for inventory, or whenever a large new order would come in, Gore would crank out some more cards, according to Paul Marchant who purchased ESCO in 1979. There was no such thing as an eagerly anticipated annual issue of exhibit cards. While it may have been logical to print new baseball cards in the spring before the summer arcade season, such timing may have been coincidental. They may have printed cards once or twice a year or once or twice every several years.



Displays for vending machines reflected prices of a penny (1950s) or a nickel (1960s). Photos Adam Warshaw.

Arcade operators would order American or National League player exhibit cards as needed in bricks of 500 or 1,000. Given that there were 32 cards on a sheet, I will guess that a brick of 1,000 cards likely contained 1,024 cards: 32 cards from 32 sheets. Why horse with dividing up a sheet? It appears that National and American Leaguers were printed on separate 32-card sheets for most, but not all years. If you had an arcade in Cleveland or Detroit, you could order just American League cards. Except for 1962 and 1963 the backs were blank. Why should they worry about what year the cards were printed?

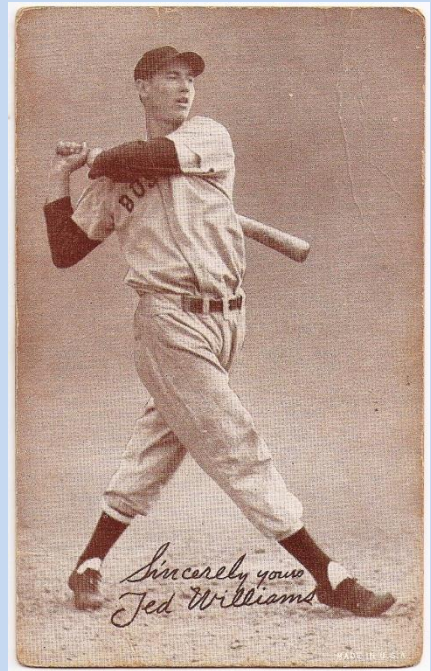
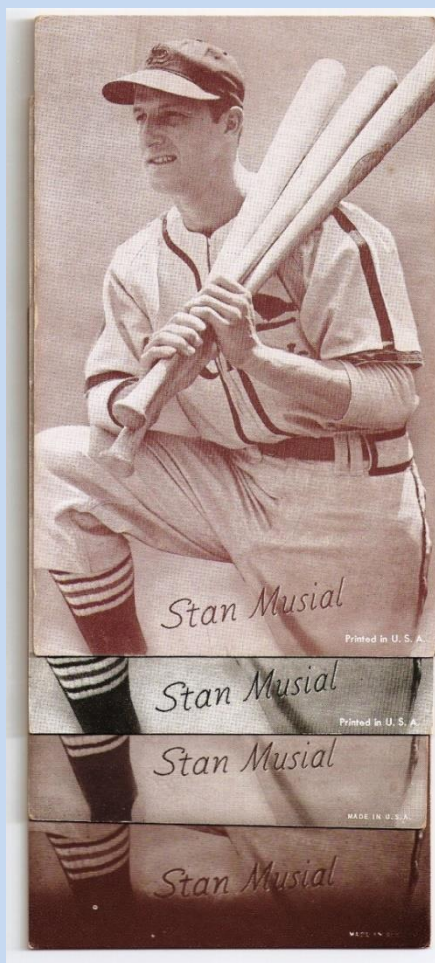
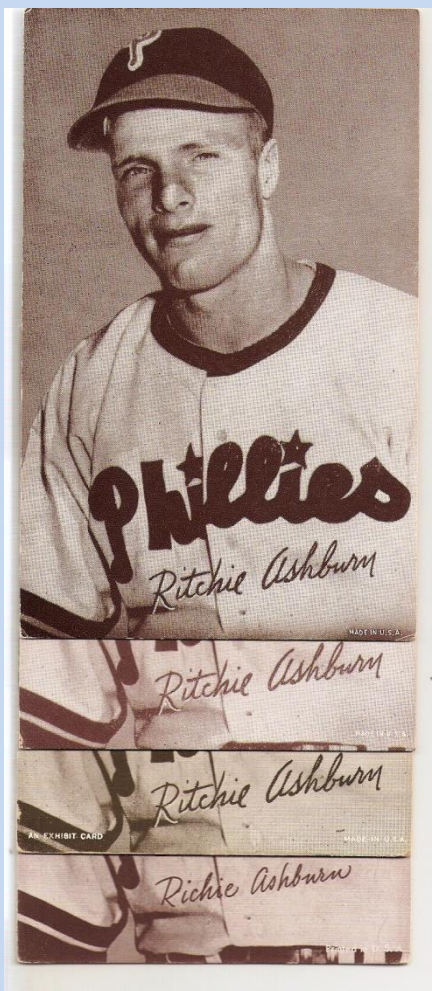
Players were added or deleted, team insignias were updated with in-house airbrushing and different poses might be added. However, different poses meant paying for photography again and might even trigger a player wanting to get paid, so such changes were minimal.

Changes to printing notations

In addition to updating the player images, they would also change the size, font, and location of information printed at the bottom of a card. "An Exhibit Card," "Made in U.S.A." and "Printed in U.S.A." came, went and moved around between 1947 and 1961. The length of the type for "Made in U.S.A." would vary from ½ inch to ¾ inch. Doby's and Rizzuto's cards even had "An Exhibit Card" scratched off.

All of these minor notation changes were usually only on the new cards added while returning player cards retained whatever format they previously had. They were printed again on sheets of 32 with no consistent format among the cards on the same sheet. Collectors have scrutinized the dates of player trades and retirements to think in terms of sets by year, but it is more likely that players on a sheet were never entirely up to date. It wasn't vital. What was important was to periodically add some new look through colors, cropping or new players.

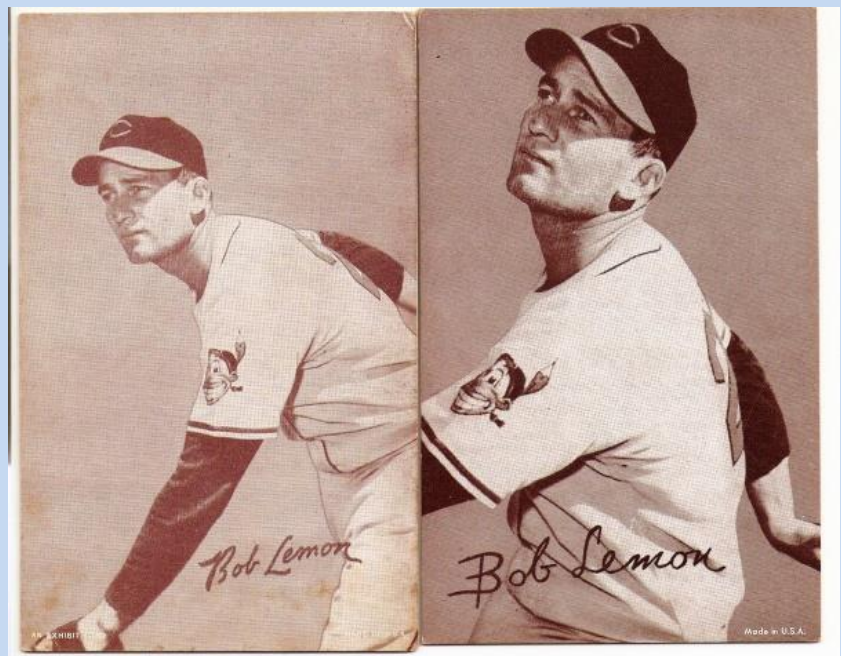




Richie Ashburn's name appeared as "Ritchie" despite changes in print coloring and notations, except for one correct version (bottom) of "Richie."

Musial's cards have printing and notation differences and were the only baseball cards you could easily find of him between 1954 and 1957.

Sincerely yours, Ted Williams remained unchanged from 1946 to 1961 despite dropping the salutations for other players.



The same photo of Bob Lemon was cropped differently to achieve a new look.

The ageless Splendid Splinter

Ted Williams' card illustrates what likely happened. Williams' card (without the 9) was probably printed for the first time in 1946 and, consistent with other cards, contained a salutation: "Sincerely yours, Ted Williams." The lower right corner included "Made in U.S.A." Williams' image remained unaltered through 1961 even after he retired. Williams' pre-1946 picture is found on an uncut sheet next to a 1960 image of Rocky Colavito (Detroit uniform) along with an airbrushed pre-1953 image of Earl Torgeson. Williams never aged. His image, including the salutation, would be dropped in and printed with other players in the 1950s with no such salutation. As with the cards of other players, the "Made in U.S.A." got replaced in the late 1950s by "Printed in U.S.A." on Williams' card. Even Mickey Mantle only had three different poses on ESCO cards over his career.

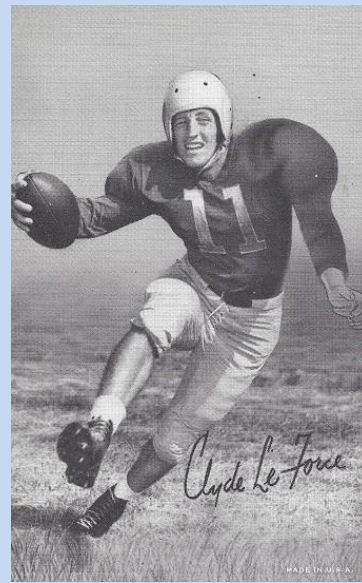
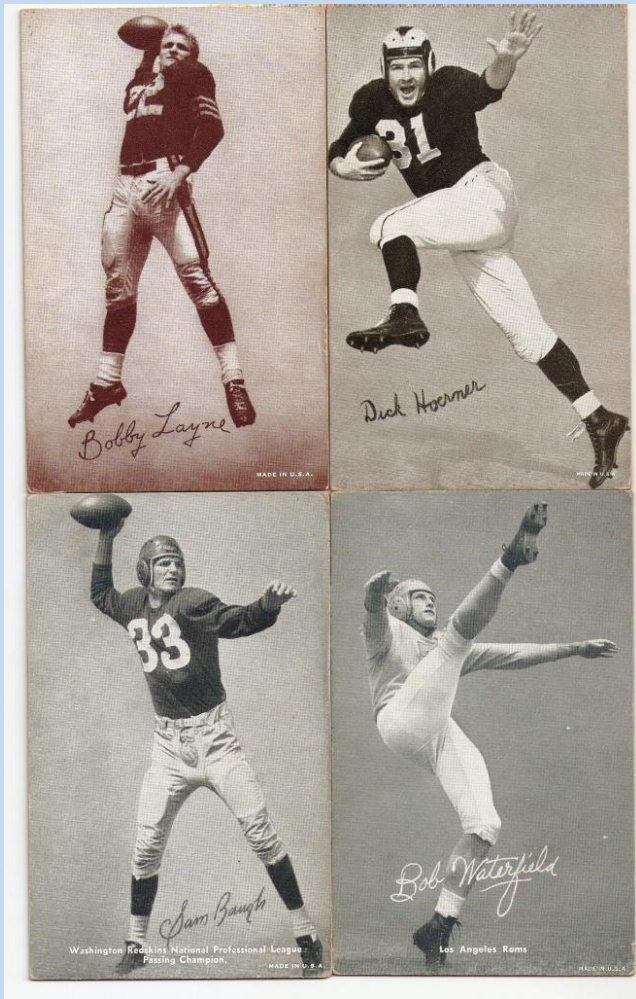
Williams' salutation card is third from the right corner in the top row of this uncut sheet from 1961.

Photo Bob Schulhof



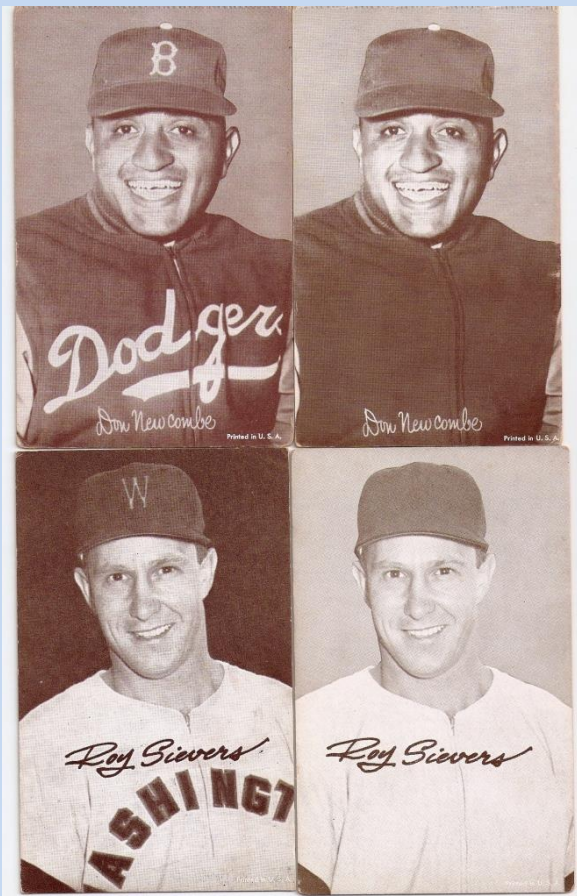
Special issues

There were special issues for Baseball's Great Hall of Fame (1948), Wrigley Field (1961) and Dad's Cookies (1959). In 1955 64 backs were printed with a postcard format. Sixty football cards were produced between 1948 and 1952 with typical changes each time they were printed, plus some players were included in a Sports Champions set. Cards were printed in black and white, sepia (brown) or other hues within the same era. Prices for 1,000 cards were \$3.85 in 1949 and still only \$5 by 1961. It wasn't until 1996 that Topps beat ESCO's record for the number of years of issuing baseball cards.



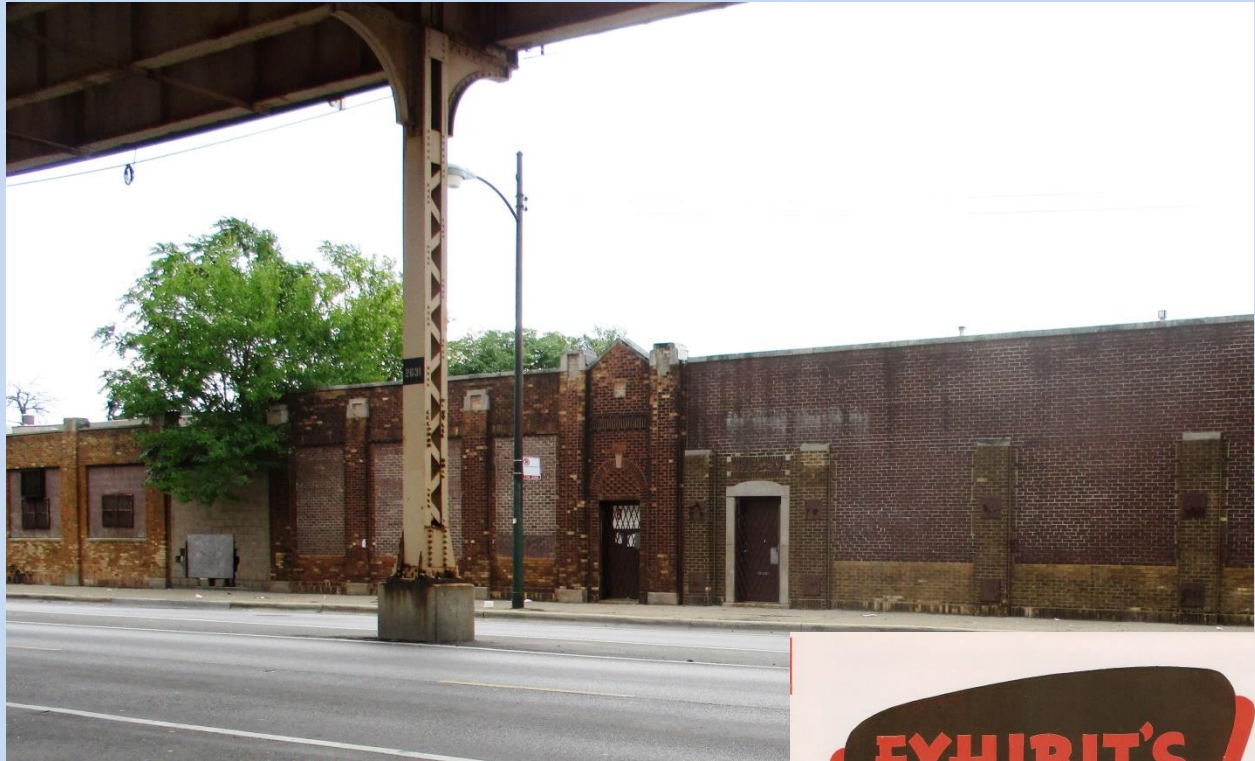
Clyde LeForce's (1948 only) card has a strange, hand drawn left arm and hand.

ESCO issued football players from 1948 to 1952 with a variety of formats. Some players were also included in a sports champions set.



Traded players were treated to air-brushed hats and uniforms. Sievers even got straightened up with a new background.

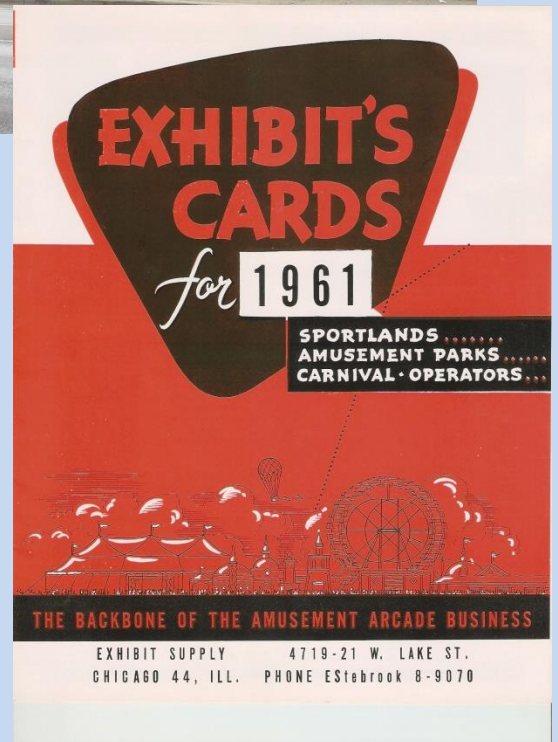
Chet Gore moved ESCO to a smaller plant on the same street, still next to the elevated tracks, and operated there from 1960 to 1979.



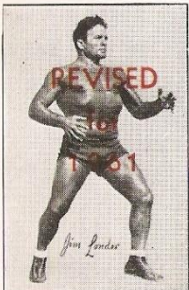
Gore takes over in 1957

Chet Gore became president in 1957 and by 1960 took over ESCO (minus the switch business) and moved the company into much smaller quarters at 4719-21 W. Lake Street in Chicago. The arcade amusement business was fading; however, Gore still had some arcade customers and produced cards as needed.

ESCO's 1961 brochure had these 3 sports sets (all marked "revised for 1961") out of 44 total sets.




\$5.00 per 1000
EXHIBIT'S SPORT CARDS REVISED FOR 1961
\$5.00 per 1000



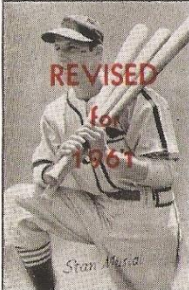
Wrestlers
A grand assortment of 32 different pictures of popular wrestling stars.

COMBINE IN ONE MACHINE

Place Wrestlers on one side of machine and Prizefighters on the other side.



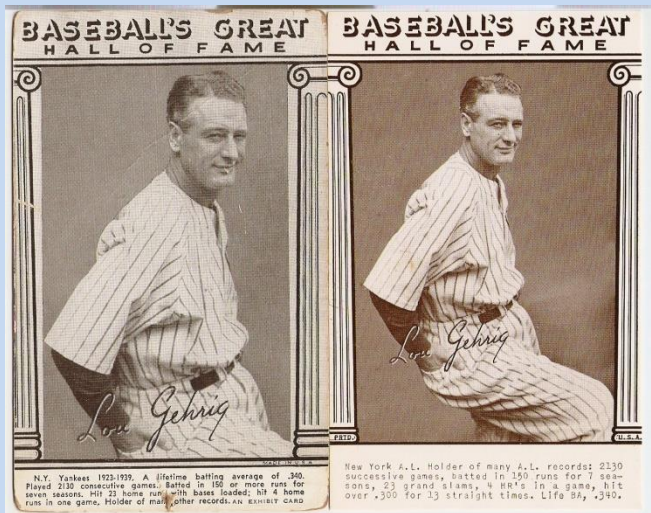
Prizefighters
A favorite fast selling series. 32 familiar pictures of pugilistic experts.



Baseball Stars
A wonderful collection of 64 big league players. The baseball fans create a big demand.

In 1962 statistics were printed on the backs of the cards in red or black; in 1963 the stats were only in red. From 1964 to 1966, the backs were blank again and production was reduced. A set of recording artists was printed with bios on the backs. ESCO employed 15 people in 1965. Based on a 1961 ESCO brochure, only 3 of their 44 card sets were sports figures (baseball players, boxers and wrestlers); 9 were art model cards. Brigitte Bardot was their featured card photo. Only six of the sets indicated that they had been revised for 1961. In 1964 a big seller, according to Gore, was a 25 cent postcard of Pope Paul VI.

I remember collector Bob Solon (1923-2009) telling me that he would visit ESCO and buy cards directly. In 1966 Solon learned that Topps forced ESCO to delete six players: Aaron, Matthews, Spahn, Groat, Drysdale and Colavito. The cards had already been printed and Solon wound up with a few of the cards



that were pulled. Gore may have decided after 1966 that it wasn't worth the hassle to print any cards of players who were under exclusive licenses with Topps.

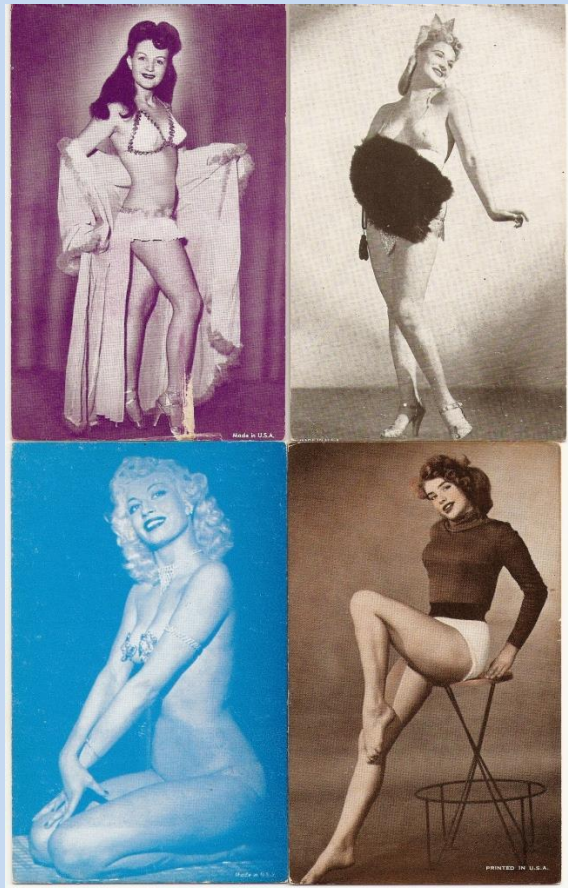
Baseball's Great Hall of Fame cards were issued in 1948, but then issued again in 1974 and 1977 by ESCO on white cardboard. Gehrig's 1977 card on the right was cropped differently.

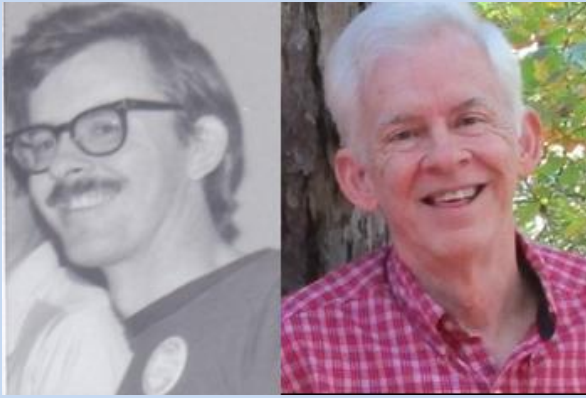
Still producing cards after 1966

In 1968 ESCO switched their card stock from the normal grayish-cream color to white for any subsequent issues which included movie stars, beach bunnies, automobiles and TV stars. They also issued 24 new Hall of Fame cards of retired players in 1974 and 64 in 1977 using the white stock. It is quite possible that the company also reprinted other baseball and arcade cards on white stock after 1968. Exhibit cards with 1927 copyright dates have been found with white backs. The originals are still inexpensive. Why would someone counterfeit cheap cards? It is likely that ESCO printed these cards after 1968 without changing anything else to fill orders for old customers.

The cards changed to suit the times, but eventually time ran out for the arcade card vending machines.

Art models attracted customers in 1914 and new models still attracted customers in the 1960s and 1970s.





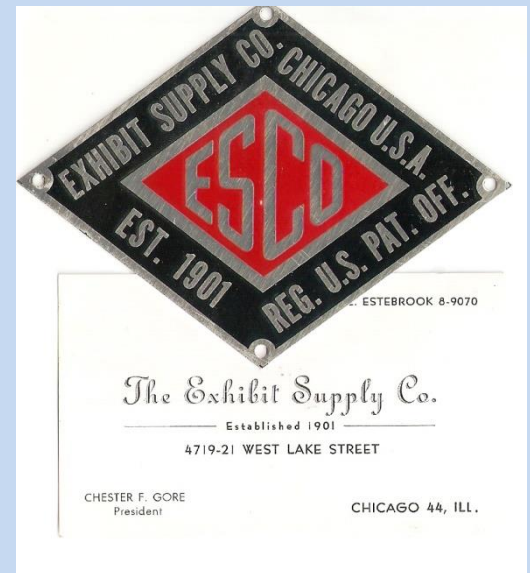
Marchant buys what's left

Paul Marchant of Charleston, Illinois, was a teacher in the late 1970s and decided to turn his sideline of card dealing into a full-time occupation. He opened three card stores. Like Bob Solon, Marchant visited ESCO to buy exhibit sports cards in bricks of 500. Marchant stayed in touch and was there when Gore and two minority shareholders, decided to sell the company in 1979.

Paul Marchant in 1979 and 2016

I asked Marchant what he remembered from his experience. Marchant recalled, “Chester Gore made changes at random with no pattern. In the exhibit file there were a few uncut paper (proof?) sheets of sports cards where he had X'd out a few cards and wrote in names of new players he wanted to use. There were only three or four of these in total. Going back to pre-1960 when Exhibit was much larger and more important, I guess it is possible that there may have been yearly adjustments, but I have seen nothing about that in any of the files I have been through. That being said I have not gone through all of the files completely.

“Also what he (Gore) did was print cards when inventory ran low on all of his products. When I was negotiating with him, I know he printed a few titles because Disneyland or some other customer had ordered them. It is my feeling that he ran short print runs quite often on some of his better selling items. On a lot of his products such as fortune telling, horoscope, etc. he was still using the plates from the 1920s with no change.”



Gore's business card and the logo on the ESCO machines

Marchant's exhibits

Marchant (33 years old at the time) agreed to buy everything including arcade machines, plant equipment, presses, cutters, parts, photos and records. Marchant came with his dad and a truck to clean out the plant. His dad helped him convert some of the arcade machines to accept quarters rather than nickels, and he was able to sell the 100 arcade machines. The miscellaneous parts and plant machines were sold, and Marchant was left with over 7,000 photos that had been used to produce arcade cards of all kinds.

Marchant used a few photos to have baseball cards printed and issued two sets of 32 cards on both white and on brownish cardboard (printer's error on the HOF set) with notations “Exhibit card 1980.” He added different photos of Maris, Musial and Gehrig to the ESCO photos in order to create the sets. Marchant then decided to stop creating sets and sold most of the ESCO photos. Gore retired and retained some exhibit cards for his own collection. Exhibit Supply Company's corporate entity was dissolved by Marchant in 1985.



Paul Marchant used ESCO photos in 1980 to create exhibit cards with various ink colors.

Marchant included a few images (Mays, Spahn, Maris, and Gehrig) that were not from the ESCO photo files. Photo Paul Marchant.

Exhibit cards that aren't

Cards have been found that were likely reprinted by others after 1980 on dark cardboard with muted coloring or on even whiter cardboard than ESCO used with no notations. Several such reprints included New York teams. White-backed baseball exhibit cards using the ESCO photos can be found today in arcade machines at the Musée Mécanique, San Francisco's Antique Penny Arcade, but bring four quarters for a card instead of a penny. Vintage arcade machines are also collectable, but take up a lot more room than the cards.

The many post-1966 baseball exhibit creations have confused purchasers, especially if you are just looking at a photograph of the card. It helps to have the card in hand to know if you are getting a cheaply produced reprint from unknown origin, an ESCO reprint of an older issue or a cheaply produced original from ESCO's vintage years. The good news is that most of the vintage exhibit cards are still reasonably priced.

Notes

From 1989 to 1996 Bob Schulhof (1942-2015) of Acton, California, published the *Penny Arcade* newsletter and included information from Elwood "Woody" Scharf on dating exhibit cards, as known at the time. *Penny Arcade* had 87 initial subscribers/members including Jim Beckett, Larry Fritsch, Sheldon Goldberg Mike Gordon, Lew Lipset, Paul Marchant, Steve Reeves and George Vrechek. Schulhof purchased cards and uncut sheets from Gore.

Adam Warshaw maintains a webpage (<http://imageevent.com/exhibitman>) devoted to exhibit cards and has explained certain sets in great detail in hobby articles for baseball, boxing and other issues.

Alexander Smith has an excellent blog called *They Created Worlds* about the game industry.

Jim Trautman wrote an article for *SCD* in 2007: "Arcade cards were a bargain, then and now."

I was able to obtain or verify information for this article from the Chicago Public Library, Newberry Library, Chicago Historical Society, Secretary of State of Illinois and *The Billboard* magazine.

SCD's Standard Catalog of Vintage Baseball Cards has a section on ESCO baseball cards and identifies the major variations, but not all of them if you are particular about notations at the bottom of the cards and slight cropping differences.

I continue to work on a detailed master checklist of baseball exhibit cards issued between 1939 and 1966 showing all known variations including differences in ink colors and print notations: wording, placement and font size, all of which provide clues as to years of issue.

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