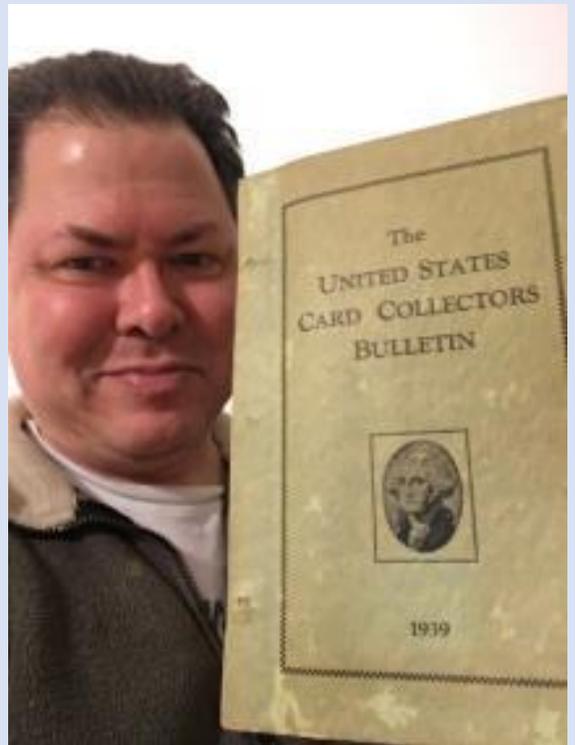


David Kathman, enthusiastic collector of hobby history



By George Vrechek

It is an understatement to say that collector David Kathman is enthusiastic, or that he gets into the details, or that he has a good memory. While he is like many of us who retained our childhood collections and got back into the hobby as adults, Kathman is now an avid collector of not only cards but hobby history. He enjoys obtaining and reading articles, ads and letters about the hobby origins and how collectors shared information and obtained cards.



David Kathman with his copy of Burdick's first catalog, The United States Card Collectors Bulletin from 1939

Pulp by the pound

Kathman started picking up old hobby publications 25 years ago and has kept at it, piling up hobby pulp by the pound. In doing so he has often linked his collection to hobby pioneers (Burdick, Barker, Carter and Wagner) and a following generation of long-time hobbyists (Lipset, Medeiros, Lerner and Even). He has written about “the long and winding road” describing how the hobby grew. For example, he went through publications and traced how the short-prints in the 1948-9 Leaf baseball set were gradually discovered between 1959 and 1968.

Shakespeare Scholar

This enthusiasm and attention to detail is not hard to understand, given Kathman’s other interests. He works as a senior mutual fund analyst at Morningstar in Chicago, analyzing and reporting on fund performances. He has a Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Chicago, speaks four languages and has expertise in Shakespearean theatre.

His numerous articles and reviews are published in scholarly journals such as *Shakespeare Quarterly*. "Grocers, Goldsmiths, and Drapers: Freemen and Apprentices in the Elizabethan Theater" is the title of just one of his many contributions. In linguistics, Kathman articles include "Abkhaz Stress and Morphological Templates." "I've always been interested in the history of any field," says Kathman, reminding one of something Jefferson Burdick would have said.

Closet Collection

In 1991 Kathman's mother asked him to pick up his 1970s childhood card collection stored in a closet at the family home. He had a few thousand cards, a smattering of older type cards and a few hobby publications. His interest was renewed. He visited a card shop in his hometown of Glen Ellyn, Illinois. He picked up a *Sports Collectors Digest* at a Chicago newsstand and got involved.

He bought cards, not so much from the recent years but from the 1880s and early 1900s, because of his natural inclination to study the origins of a field. In 1995, he responded to an *SCD* classified ad by sports postcard collector Dan Even, who sold him a collection of hobby publications from the 1960s and 1970s.

Reading the pubs

Kathman tries to read everything he can on the early days of the hobby and hobby publications. He observes that such publications were often started by one person and the publications came and went with the enthusiasm of their founders. A listing of most of the prominent hobby publications, their founders and years of publication is included for reference.

Kathman is familiar with hobby names in the 1950s and 1960s and comments, "Sam Rosen, Woody Gelman and Gordon B. Taylor provided cards and publications for the young collector audience, while *Card Collector's Bulletin* and *Sport Fan* were geared to the relatively few adult collectors."

Writers Preston Orem, Rich Egan, Lionel Carter and Buck Barker shared their knowledge in many publications. As Barker humorously wrote in a 1960 *Card Collector's Bulletin* about advanced collectors, "In order to obtain a few cards every month, he must write many fruitless letters and keep hot on the chase, but the disappointments will be many. Often there is no use writing old friends as none will have anything for trade. Then he's reduced to writing articles, a sad state indeed."

Publications were a major help to isolated collectors, who found each other through hobby articles or ads. Subscribers would enthusiastically pursue their wants by writing other subscribers or advertisers, sending them wantlists and then sending cards or money (sometimes stamps) in exchange for the small amounts involved.

Hobby publishers would be diverted away by jobs, military duty, school or family obligations and might resurface after such interruptions. Sometimes, you would get a double issue as publishers tried to catch up. More than a few ran into financial difficulties and quietly disappeared, sometimes spreading their misfortunes to prepaid subscribers and advertisers.

Prominent general sports hobby magazines and papers

Publication name, founder, first and last years published (approx.), ignoring interruptions

Card Collector's Bulletin, Jefferson Burdick (1937-1984)
Sports Exchange Trading Post, Jack Seifert (1945-1950)
Sport Fan, Bob and Helen Jaspersen (1951-1982)
The Sport Hobbyist, Charles Brooks (1956-1978)
Card Comments, Gordon B. Taylor (1958-1961)
The Card Collector, Woody Gelman (1959-1964)
Sport Collector, Fred Greguras (1961-1962)
Sports Gazette, Melvin Lindheim (1962-1965)
Collectors Digest, Nick Stout and Chuck Fought (1964-1966)
The Sports Trader, Richard Burns (1964-1971)
Sports Collector's Journal, Steve Mitchell (1967-1972)
The Trader Speaks, Dan Dischley (1968-1984)
Sports Collectors' News, Mike Bondarenko (1968-1978)
Sport Advertiser's Journal, Jay Knapp (1969-1973)
Sports Scoop, John Eichman (1973-1974)
Sports Collectors Digest, John Stommen (1973- ongoing)
Baseball Hobby News, Frank and Vivian Barning (1979-1993)
Baseball Card News, Allan Kaye (1982-1993)
Tuff Stuff, Ernie White (1984-2011)
Beckett Baseball Card Monthly (et al.), Jim Beckett (1984-ongoing)
Old Judge, Lew Lipset (1985-1994)
Vintage & Classic Baseball Collector, Dennis Purdy (1995-2004)
Old Cardboard, Lyman Hardeman (2004-2017)

Other publications with hobby articles – The American Card Collector, Association of Sports Collectors – Bulletin, The Autograph Hobbyists, Autograph News, The Ballparks Bulletin, Baseball Card Hobbyist, Baseball Cards Magazine, Baseball Data, Baseball Parade, Baseball Hobby Card Report, The Card Hobbyists, Card News and Comments, Carter Council Chamber, The Collector, Collectors Quarterly, Diamond Dust, The Double Play, The Foul Tip, Grandstand Manager, Hobbies, Hobby Enthusiast, Hobbys to Enjoy, Kaw Chief Stamp Journal, National Sports Collector, Sports Card Trader, Sports Collecting Confidential, The Sports Journal, The Sports Line, Treasure Magazine, The Trading Card Gazette, Western Hobby News and World of Sports from 1949

Publication titles might morph to reflect changes in focus or improvements in grammar, punctuation, capitalization or spelling. There were also several price guides, magazines for specific sports and non-sports (The Wrapper) and non-U.S. publications. Of course, we have dodged the considerable task of identifying online newsletters and blogs which will produce nostalgia in the future and won't need to be stashed under staircases. If you remember any other significant general U.S. sports magazines or newsletters, let us know.

Collecting expands

Kathman's card collection gradually expanded into a near set of T-206s, T-205s, T210s, hundreds of Old Judges and thousands of non-sport tobacco issues. He continues picking up publications and hobby correspondence. He looks for ads, checks eBay and keeps in touch with other collectors. He purchases large lots of publications, generally for a few hundred dollars each. Veteran hobbyist Steve Mitchell sold him *Sports Exchange Trading Post*, and other publications. Mitchell didn't have any copies of *Sport*

Collector's Journal, which he founded and edited in the late '60s. Publications once owned by Ray Medeiros, Lew Lipset and Irv Lerner have found their way to his collection.

Kathman has won several caches of publications in auctions, including hobby pioneer John B. Wagner's copies of the first 30 issues of Jefferson Burdick's *Card Collector's Bulletin* from 1939-1944. Any issues in a publication run that he was missing, he has purchased or obtained copies. Kathman noted, "I now have complete runs of *Sports Trader*, *Sport Hobbyist*, *Card Comments*, *The Card Collector*, *Sports Collector's Journal* and *Sports Collectors News*, and near-complete runs of most of the other major hobby publications up to 1990."

In addition to the hobby magazines, Kathman has collected old individual articles on collecting which appeared in other publications such as *Hobbies* and *The Sporting News*.

Sharing findings

Kathman reads my numerous *SCD* articles on hobby history, and over the years we have met for lunch to exchange information. I find it impossible to exhaust his knowledge on any subject that he has researched. He shares excerpts from old publications with fellow enthusiasts via Net54 postings and likes stories that focus on the big picture. In 2017 he posted numerous old hobby publication excerpts on Net54, reflecting how the hobby had changed over the prior 50 years.

Kathman says, "While some of the old publications are quite scarce, there are not many people who collect them. Therefore, the prices can be reasonable, unless two hobby history collectors are both avid about the same item. Prices reflect a case by case nature of the transaction. Some eBay asking prices are all over the map." It is too bad that the sale prices for cards in the publications aren't good anymore.

Richard Rubin, Mike Jaspersen, Ed Kobak and David Hornish are among other collectors who have provided information on some of the old publications.

Publication pile up

As collectors, it is not surprising to find many of us hanging on to hobby publications – for a while. *Sports Collectors Digest* at one time was published weekly in a larger format. A 1990 issue I have has 352 pages. Retaining a complete run of *SCDs* takes space. Lionel Carter (1918-2008), of course, saved all his *SCDs*. He piled the heavy issues neatly in two stacks extending from floor to ceiling underneath his basement stairs, not a location which would please any fire marshal. It will likely be a challenge for Kathman, as well, to continue to store the pounds of pulp.

While having copies or digital files of old publications is informative, Kathman says, "I like having original issues owned by many of the early hobby pioneers and seeing the distinctive handwriting of people like Buck Barker." He thinks about how people ran ads, exchanged letters and wantlists, and connected long before the internet. But if you want to connect with Kathman, try the internet at djk1@ix.netcom.com.

CARD COLLECTORS BULLETIN

No. 1.

Jan. 1, 1937

Last winter in each of three issues of Hobbies Magazine there appeared an article on old Cigarette Cards. The interest in those notes shows that the Hobby has real possibilities for development.

It is expected to resume a small column in Hobbies on card collecting in an early issue. Cooperation of all collectors is asked in order to make it permanent, and, a success. Naturally, the magazine notes will have to be held to a general nature and, will not be entirely on Tobacco Cards.

These Bulletins will supplement the magazine notes and will furnish the needed technical details while leaving the historical material etc. to the magazine.

COLLECTORS DIRECTORY

The following Directory of Card Collectors is by no means a complete listing of all known collectors, but is a start in that direction. Others will be added in future Bulletins.

It has been impossible to contact everyone, and many others are not listed due to misunderstandings, the general rush of business of the Holiday Season.

A few listings are dealers rather than collectors and, some others are possibly not actively engaged in collecting at the present time. The listing is intended solely as an introduction to individual correspondence.

- 1-B.T. Baker, 514 E. 6th St., Santa Ana, Cal. Has old time collection.
- 2-M. Clover Bennett, ~~772 So. Cecil Ave.~~, Louisville, Ky. General Coll.
- 3-William W. Boyer, 527 N. 22nd St. Phila. Penna. Dealer.
- ~~4-B.H. Blank, 710 Chessy St., Mount Carmel, Ill.~~
- 5-J.R. Burdick, 417 So. Crouse Ave., Syracuse, N.Y. General Collector.
- 6-Ray B. Cooper, 4006 Potamio Ave., Chicago, Ill. Dealer & Token Coll.
- ~~7-F.A. Mansfield, 624 Highland St. N., St. Petersburg, Fla. Has old Coll.~~
- 8-Philip H. Messers, 7 Trowbridge St. N.E., Grand Rapids, Mich. Has collection of Cards and other Relics, Curios.
- 9-R.G. Michel, Creskill, N.J., Collects all Tobacco Historical Matte.
- 10-Francis E. Smith, 31 Blake St., Wollaston, Mass. Collector & Dealer.
- 11-Donald VanBrakle, Crown Point, N.Y. General Collector.
- 12-John D. Wagner, 1925 Bridge St., Harrisburg, Penna. General Collector. Specializing in Baseball Subjects.
- 13-Raymond J. Walker, ~~183 Westman Ave.~~, New London, Conn. General Coll.
- 14-Paul Warner, 4127 No. Paulina St., Chicago, Ill. Collects Indian & Western Subjects on old A & G and Kimball cards.
- ~~15-Harold White, 19 SHERBURNE Ave., Worcester, Mass. Has Old Collection but specializes on U.S. postal stationery.~~

It is intended to list not only Collectors but also Dealers and others who may have cards to sell or who may wish to buy. Listing costs nothing and not too much should be expected from it, but those who take full advantage of such a list should receive considerable benefits.

All images are from the collections of David Kathman or George Vrechek

The first CCB published by Jefferson Burdick in 1937

Diamond Aces of 30 Years Back . . . Pictured in Bright Colors . . . On Cigarette Cards



11
* THE SPORTING NEWS, JANUARY 11, 1945 *

SOME OF THE BRIGHTLY-COLORED CARDS OF BASEBALL STARS DISTRIBUTED EARLY IN THE CENTURY

Collectors Still Continue Fad That Faded Long Ago

Sports Writer, Who Saved Pasteboard Portraits as Youth, Finds Many Continue to Cherish Old Sets; Cards Stimulated Interest in Game Among Kids

By WIRT GAMMON
Of the Chattanooga Times

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn.
As a boy, I, like many others, became a fascinated collector of the brilliantly colored fragrant-with-tobacco baseball player pictures that came in cigarette packages. In later years, I stored them

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Cooper

Boudreau Hops Into Job

THE SPORTS EXCHANGE
TRADING POST

Vol. 3, No. 12 Youngstown, O. Dec. 1, 1947



Sporting News article by Wirt Gammon on baseball card collecting, 1945

The Sports Exchange Trading Post from 1947

THE
SPORT HOBBYIST

VOLUME I NUMBER 5

DECEMBER, 1956

\$2.00 a year - 25¢ a copy

AN S.H. CHRISTMAS PRESENT -

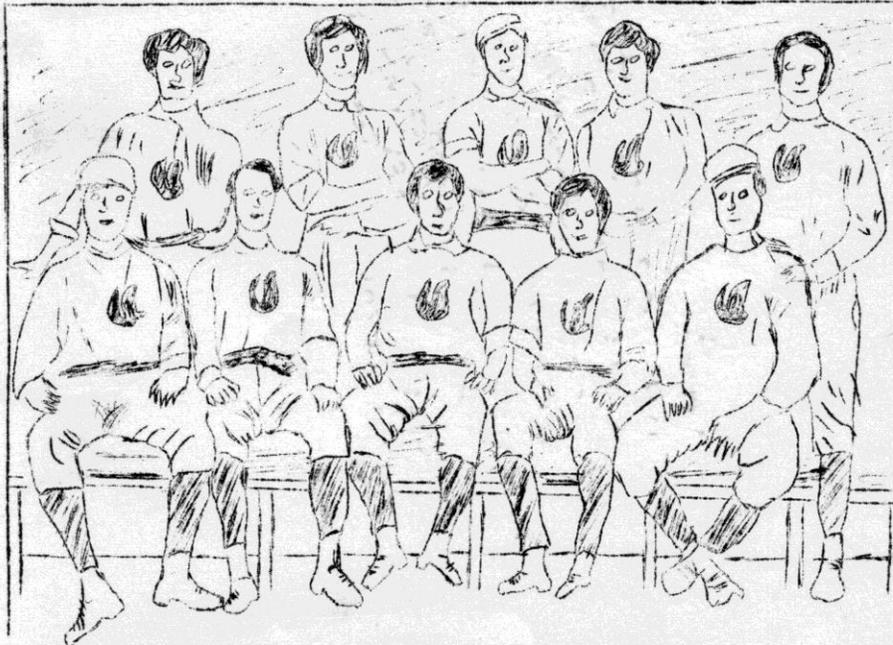
The Sport Hobbyist is bringing all of you a great big Christmas present in the shape of the J.D. McCarthy cards that are now available to Sport Hobbyist readers! These cards are among the scarcest of all sport cards. Some of these McCarthy card issues have been limited to about 1000 each, and sometimes only a small percentage of these have reached public hands. So why not give yourself a big Christmas present in the form of a set of McCarthy sport postcards?

New reached us that Sport Fan was to resume publication within a week. Reason given for the five month delay was illness in their organization. It has been several weeks since then, so we don't know what has happened now.

The first annual exhibit of the Keystone Postcard collectors club of Philadelphia was a success and future exhibits are being planned. Were all for everything having to do with card and sport collecting.

We received a phone call from a collector here in Detroit that was anxious to pursue his hobby of collecting gum cards, especially sports. He was interested in starting a club and was most enthusiastic. But we haven't heard from this collector since, so we don't know what happened. If any of you out there are interested in starting a club in your city, for card or sport collectors, we'll be glad to help you in any way that we can.

We have a couple of wonderfully helpful articles for collectors in this issue. Be sure that you read them.



Here is an interesting drawing of the 1869 Cincinnati Red Stockings. They won 65 games and tied one in a coast to coast tour and were recognized as the first coast to coast champions. They were the sports first professional team.

page 1



THE CARD COLLECTOR is published every other month by the Card Collectors' Company, Box 293, Franklin Square, N. Y.
Single copies 20c. 6 issues \$1.00, 12 issues \$2.00.

Volume 1, No. 8, Whole No. 8

September 20, 1960

EDITORIAL

Here is our first extended issue, we hope it is a little more interesting than past issues and adds a bit to your collecting enjoyment. In the future we would like to increase the size of our little paper until it becomes a regular 30-40 page monthly. This may seem a bit far fetched, but if we all work together and contribute small items each issue we'll wind up with surprising results. Remember, this cannot be accomplished completely by ourselves—the help of our subscribers and customers is very important. If you find any new cards, spot any errors, or have any questions on cards, just drop us a line about it and if it proves to be interesting we'll print it. We can always use comments and articles on cards that would be of interest to other collectors. Be on the look-out for anything of interest in the card field, and remember that this paper will grow only as far as the help given by the subscribers.

We'll be looking forward to some card dope from you while we're waiting, how about your comments on this issue?



John Douglas writes the following: "I have found five cards, two football and three baseball. They are small cards (approx. 3x2 1/2") outlined faintly in blue with the players picture on a square orange block surrounded by white. The player's name, position, and team appear below the picture. I have the following: Yogi Berra, George Kell, Preacher Roe, Doak Walker and Bob Waterfield."

(Editor's note: These are part of a set of sports cards issued on the cereal boxes of Wheaties. Some of the other sports figures pictured in

the set are: Ralph Kramers, Lloyd Mott, Sam Snead, most likely a few of these stars appeared once in an action shot of

The Richmond team playing out of Virginia, has issued cards with their scores. Appearing in the cards and in smaller pictures are: Tony A

Woody Gelman's The Card Collector from 1960

CARD COMMENTS

Vol. 3, No 4

Nov. 1960

\$2.50 Yr.



LLOYD WANER—Outfield—PITTSBURGH PIRATES

Gordon B. Taylor's Card Comments from 1960

**SPORTS COLLECTORS
DIGEST**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1973
Issue Number One

Published By Stommen Publications
P.O. Box E, Milan, Michigan, 48160

Reprint

NEW YORK CONVENTION SCENES



OVER 1,000 PERSONS TURNED OUT FOR THREE DAY EVENT

**NEW YORK CONVENTION
DREW A LARGE CROWD**

The three-day American Sports Card Collectors Association Show (better known as the New York Convention) enjoyed a very successful three-day run, September 14, 15, and 16 at the District 65 Center, 140 East 8th St., in New York City.

Over 1,000 persons attended the convention, with some 175 being on

hand opening night, another 575 going thru the Green Room of the District 65 Center on Saturday and then a fine Sunday crowd pushing attendance over the magic 1,000 number on the final day.

Talking with many persons Saturday and Sunday, we discovered a feeling that this second

New York Convention in less than four months was an even better event than the one held at the same location late in May of this year.

Collectors felt that a better representation of cards, publications, etc. was available for those attending to select from and thereby further their own collections.

(Continued On Page Two Of This Issue)

Hello!

You are reading the first issue of sports collecting's newest publication - this one a semi-monthly.

Our goal is to publish a paper with appeal to a broad range of sports collectors and to do so more frequently.

We're not making any promises other than that we will do our best. Your support will be appreciated.



Jim and Marilyn Miller, 137 President Street, Hempstead, N.Y., were a couple of the folks on hand at the New York Convention.

You have to watch for those reprints, even with hobby publications. Here is the first issue of SCD in October 1973. It is clearly marked as a reprint.

January 1976 SCD with Wirt Gammon on the cover



THE SPORTS TRADER

VOL. 2, NO. 7 MAY 1966

THE SPORTS TRADER
P. O. BOX 716
GRENADA, MISSISSIPPI 38901



25¢ per copy

A "hit" with Sports Hobbyists from
Coast to Coast!

Adco Sports Book Exchange
Box 48577, Br eggs Station
Los Angeles, California

AUTOGRAPH ODDS AND ENDS

By JACK SMALLING

The first printed edition of "The Sports Trader" is out now. Many of you subscribers can now judge for yourself as to what you think. I'm sure that most will agree that pictures and better quality printing will certainly be appreciated by all. No doubt each issue will improve. Probably the only disappointment was the myriad of foreign ads that appeared. If this bothered you collectors, like it did me, I suggest you help remedy the situation by placing ads that pertain to your own sports collections. A paper of this sort needs advertising revenue to subsist. Perhaps the more sports ads that are placed, the less "foreign" we'll have to wade through as we read.

April proved to be a rather slow month for my autograph collection. The emergence of the new Topps set provided me with many memories. As an eight year old in 1949 I often rode my bike a the downtown in order to buy Bowman cards. And each following it was a race to see who could get a complete set but as the years wore on

Detroit Tigers
Tiger Stadium
Detroit
Michigan 48216

Kansas City Athletics
2128 Brooklyn
Kansas City
Missouri 64127

New York Yankees
745 Fifth Avenue
New York
New York 10022

Minnesota Twins
8001 Cedar Ave. South
Bloomington
Minnesota 55420

Washington Senators
22nd & E, Capitol Sts.
Washington
C. C. 20003

Atlanta Braves
Atlanta Stadium
Atlanta
Georgia 30312

Chicago Cubs
Clark & Addison Sts.

WE NEED PHOTOS

WE NEED PHOTOS OF YOU AND YOUR COLLECTION

Yes, we need photos of you and your collection. We would like to have a generous sprinkling of photos throughout each issue of the TRADER, but we are having trouble getting them.

Send along a photo of you and your collection, or separate from your collection. Be certain to give us plenty of information about you and your collection to put together an article similar to Fred Imhof article last month.

Send only photos which need not be returned. Photos should be black and white glossy, but others will be considered. Photos which have already appeared in a publication can be used, provided they are not copyrighted.

Our June issue will be the finest issue yet, and we want plenty of photos to scatter throughout it.

Photos will be returned if not used, but photos used can not be returned. Dig up some mug shots and send them to us with information on you, and your collection.

Egan's ALLEY

Egan's ALLEY IX
By Richard S. Egan

A great many collectors faced with the almost insurmountable task of collecting all baseball cards ever issued, tend to concentrate their efforts in one direction. Some collectors limit their collection to cards issued with Tobacco products, others strive to complete the gum sets issued by Topps and Bowman; we even know one collector who is amassing a collection of error cards in preference to all others. Those among us who are rich, persistent and demanding limit themselves to the rare "regional" cards. These cards, as the name implies, are issued in limited numbers in only specific areas. The small number printed and their limited distribution make these cards hard to get even in the year they are issued. A favorite type of regional are those issued with weiners. One of the earliest sets of regional weiner baseball cards was issued in 1953, 1954 and 1955 in the St. Louis area by Hunter Weiners.

autograph is written in light blue over this information. Those few cards that are in circulation are usually in poor condition because the cellophane wrapping stuck to the cards and when removed, pulled the picture off in spots. The reverse on these cards, and other year's, is blank. The checklist is given in pairs as the cards were issued in this way. Harvey Haddix, Michael Clark William Johnson, Alpha Brazle Harry Lowrey, Solly Hemus Lawrence Miggins Stephen Bilk Stuart Miller, Stanley Musial Delbert Rice, Wilmer Mizell Harold Rice, Joseph Presko Willard Schmidt, Cloyd Boyer Albert Schoendienst, John Crimian Richard Sisler, Clifford Chambers Gerald Staley, Enos Slaughter Edward Stanky, Raymond Jablonski John Yuhas, Lester Fusselman 1954—The cards this year were the same size as the previous

The Sports Trader 1966

THE SPORTS COLLECTORS' NEWS

Volume 2, Number 4

May - June, 1969

News-From the Editor

"THE EDITOR COMMENTS"
By Mike Bondarenko

Once again we are incorporating an issue with another and coming out with a double-issue. As was mentioned last month, we are not fond of doing this, but, it is felt that it would be best to incorporate another SCN so that we can get caught up in time. Many collectors have said they like to get SCNs every month, and nothing would please us more, but with the amount of work involved in getting an issue out (did you know that if all the pages used to make up one month's supply of SCNs were laid end to end, the line would be over two miles long?) it

sue came out very poorly. That was the first time we had ever had less than acceptable results from the Gestetfax machine.

There are several card checklists this issue that I am sure you will enjoy, and the new SCNCC pages aren't to be missed. Alex Wolff is the new SCNCC President.

Jack Smalling makes a comeback after a month's absence with his popular "Autograph Odds and Ends" and he has another death list for your information files.

What can you do to boost sports collecting? A special article on this subject by your editor is found in this issue.

SCN wishes to go further into two items mentioned on the final page of the well-circulated last issue.

Mike Bondarenko's Sports Collectors' News in 1969

THE TRADER SPEAKS

MARCH 1973

THE
SPORT
COLLECTOR'S
MONTHLY



50¢

1948 Oakland OAKS

A black and white group photograph of the 1948 Oakland Oaks baseball team. The players are arranged in several rows on a field, wearing white uniforms with dark caps. The photo is framed by a thick black border.

Let's Be Friends... **REACH FOR SUNBEAM BREAD**
Enter Sunbeams "World Series Contest" . . . See Reverse Side

Dan Dischley's *The Trader Speaks* 1973

George Vrechek is a freelance contributor to SCD and can be reached at vrechek@ameritech.net.

This article appeared in *Sports Collectors Digest*, August 30, 2019, and is reprinted here on the OBC site with the consent of SCD.