

FRANK BARNING

Barnstorming



A collector with a truly unusual passion

One of the hobby's strengths is the diversity of specialties that are available. You can tailor your collection to your interests and even create a collection that no one else has ever attempted.

John Fulgaro has a collecting interest that few others share. His specialty is business cards from any team in any league, no matter what sport. Business cards from defunct teams and leagues are of particular appeal to him.

"I have one of the largest, most diverse sports decal/sticker collections, but I found that most new leagues and teams starting out rarely thought to stock decals and stickers," said Fulgaro. "They were definitely a low priority item when someone is trying to build a team. So I began asking for business cards with the team's logo, something every team creates as part of their normal operating procedure."

In less than two years, Fulgaro has accumulated the impressive total of nearly 1,000 sports business cards. They span more than 10 different sports including volleyball, tennis, roller hockey and lacrosse, and more than 25 different leagues, including defunct circuits such as the Continental Indoor Soccer League and Roller Hockey International.

Many of his business cards are from teams that never existed or lasted less than one year. For example, the Santa Barbara Islanders of the Continental Basketball Association (1989) existed less than one year and the Arizona Mirage (1998) of the new Professional Indoor Football League never played a game.

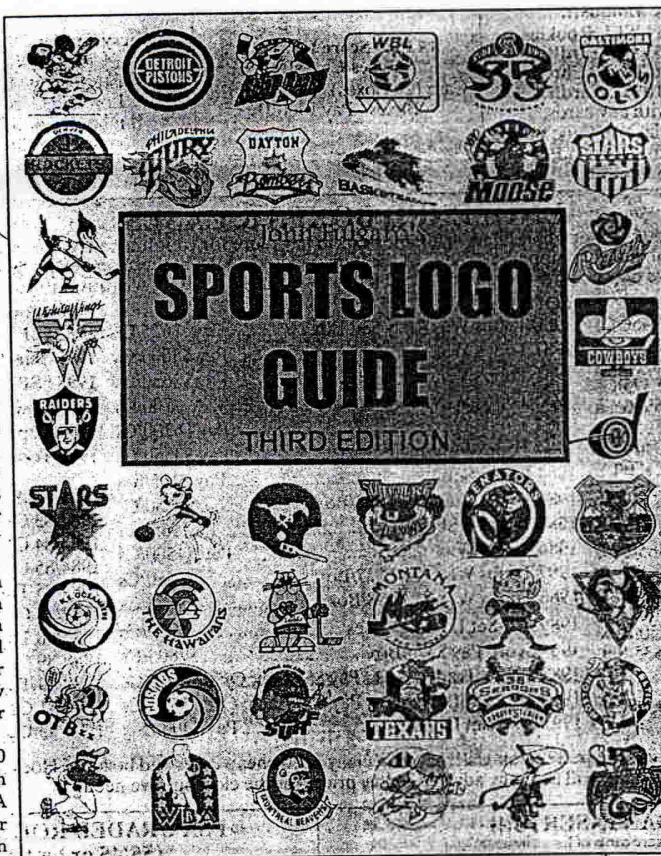
In trade, Fulgaro is seeking any pre-1990 team business card. And he would relish anything from a defunct team or league. A strong preference is for defunct minor basketball such as the All-American Basketball Alliance (1978-79) and American Basketball League (1961-62).

Fulgaro is an experienced trader and has a wide variety of materials available to swap, for example defunct team's business cards, including the Omaha Racers of the Continental Basketball Association and Minnesota Fighting Pike of the Arena Football League. He will also trade sports cards and stickers for his business card wants.

According to Fulgaro, "My hobby specialty is a low-cost way to collect sports memorabilia and it's fascinating to see changes in team logos. For example, the Albany Firebirds of the Arena Football League have changed their logo three times and it's interesting to see how the logo has evolved, from a stoic Firebird to the opposite, a cartoon-like Firebird logo.

Elliott Shaw (469 Am Ave., Selkirk, NY 12158) specializes in collectibles relating to former Boston Red Sox outfielder Tom DiMaggio. At the November Greater Boston Sports Collectors Club show, he reported, "I had the find of a lifetime. It's always a high-quality show, which is why I travel three hours each way every year to get to it."

John Fulgaro pursues ephemera from defunct teams and leagues



JOHN FULGARO has parlayed his collecting interest in decals, stickers and business cards from long-forgotten teams and leagues into a popular reference work (above). The *Sports Logo Guide*. His collection of business cards totals more than 1,000, touching on 10 different sports and 25 different leagues.

Shaw was slowly working his way around the room, up one aisle down the other. When he approached the end of the last row, he noticed an old photo sitting on the side of a dealer's table. "I picked it up and immediately noticed it as a young Dom DiMaggio in a San Francisco Seals uniform, which would put it sometime in the late 1930s."

The dealer mentioned he had a several other Dom DiMaggio photos that he had gotten from the player's family. "It was like striking gold," said Shaw. "There were old photos of Dom in his military uniform and with a U.S. Navy baseball team. In all, there were about two dozen. The dealer cut me a nice deal on the lot and I went home a happy man."

Joe Kacz (53 Arbour Lane, Buffalo, NY 14220) puts his collecting focus on another guy named Joe.

His Joe Namath collection includes cards, books, magazines, photos, footballs, toys (an 18-inch battery-operated figure that throws a football) and a doll. "I have accumulated at least 2,000 items," said Kacz, "and I'm

to trade with someone that I have triples or other football collectibles."

The 1963 Jones Dairy Milk cap of football player Cookie Gilchrist is the top item Kacz' want list. Maybe a reader can help.

Phil Paul (c/o Office Pavilion Spectra 1003 West 9th Ave., King of Prussia, 19406) now has 91 out of 165 tickets still from games won by Randy Koufax.

"I have made about 20 new collecting friends who are part of a ticket network. Their help has been instrumental in my recent successes in trimming his want list."

"I would welcome any other ticket collectors who are looking for any ticket stubs of their individual heroes to be part of enjoyable hobby experience," said Paul, "would also welcome any Koufax and Dod collectors to trade with."

Charles Kapner (13621 179th Ave Redmond, WA 98072) is a loyal collector of items relating to pre-1970 Seattle baseball. The various Seattle franchises include Rainiers, Pilots, Angels and Indians. He is also on the lookout for Sick's Stadium collectibles and unusual Pacific Coast League Northwest League items.

Among the items he seeks in trade are Pacific Coast League and Northwest League schedules and posters, Seattle Rainier popcorn cards and 8-by-10 glossy photo of Seattle Pilots team-issued player photo anything else unusual.

Kapner mentioned that "I've had part of my Seattle baseball collection on display at Seattle University, Seattle Center and Museum of History and Industry as part of the traveling "Runs, Hits and an Era" exhibit.

Andrew Fogel (1 South Van Dyke Ave., Suffern, NY 10901) is gung ho for New York Mets memorabilia. His large collection consists of any and all collectibles from 1962 (the team's inaugural season) to the present, and includes yearbooks, guides, bobbin' heads, Shea Stadium-issued books, records, tickets, autographed balls, jerseys and any oddball items ever produced related to the Mets.

Team autographed balls from every year cornerstones of the collection, as well as 3 unused tickets and six stubs from the Mets playoff and World Series games. Fogel is "constantly" looking for the other six full tickets. "Collecting is a joy and I have made numerous friends from this endeavor," he said.

Frank Barning is an SCD columnist. Hobbyists who desire to network with other specialty collectors are invited to contact via e-mail (barning@aol.com.) or by mail (Box 22066, San Diego, CA 92192).