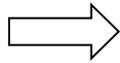


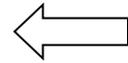


THE CLASSIC CORNER

January/February 2021 Price-List



FOR SALE ITEMS FOLLOW OUR FEATURE STORY



The Making & Ultimate Breaking of a National Baseball Newsletter

by Jim Miller

I had recently finished my Red Reader (Cincinnati Reds) newsletter and came to the realization that my desire to publish another fanzine was still strong. This would have to be something different. The whole framework would need to incorporate the burgeoning sports memorabilia market along with the traditional MLB circuit news. Player interviews (done at shows and over the phone) were also part of the plan and would really cement my credibility as a legitimate journalist and publisher. Thus, the *Major Leaguer Baseball Newsletter* was born in 1990.



The Major Leaguer Issue # 1

My 1st issue debuted in May of 1990 and featured an interview with former Philadelphia Phillie **Del Ennis**. The (8) page newsletter was comprised of player profiles (Tom Tresh, Howard Johnson, Jim Abbott, Mike Blowers and KC Royals organizational updates), a back page marketplace, the **Del Ennis interview** and an introductory welcome from me. I sold the newsletter at various sports memorabilia shows, through *Sports Collectors Digest* and at local baseball card shops and businesses that were sports themed. I got the biggest surprise of my life when I received a letter in the mail from Del Ennis' wife inquiring how she could buy (25) additional copies of my newsletter to distribute to friends and relatives. I was thrilled that Del and his wife were so happy with the interview and story. The (25) issues were sent to the Ennis family with a small request from me. I wanted all my interviewees to autograph the newsletter and return one to me. Del did not disappoint. Within a week I received the signed newsletter with a nice note from the former Philly slugger. The premier issue of *The Major Leaguer* was a big hit.



Interviewing HOF'er Brooks Robinson at the 1990 Metuchen, NJ Sports Memorabilia Show. L to R: Unidentified show personnel, Mike Mizisko (show promoter), Brooks Robinson (HOF) and Jim Miller (The Major Leaguer).

Issue # 2 (June 1990) **Bob Zaborowski** (original designer from The Red Reader days) teamed up with newcomer **Rob Batcho** to form the nucleus of our design group. Our 2nd issue featured a keynote interview with HOF'er Luke Appling, a feature story on Ken Griffey, Jr., MLB projected expansion, Pinstripe Perspective and a back page Marketplace. Sales remained brisk as I sent my newsletter to be sold in sports card shops in places like: Metuchen, NJ, Orlando, Florida & Ohio. Subscriptions were also sold through **Sports Collectors Digest**.



The Major Leaguer Issue # 2



The Major Leaguer Issue #3



The Major Leaguer Issue # 4

Issue # 3 (July 1990) of **The Major Leaguer** seemed to strike a dissonant chord with my subscribers. The subject matter (An interview with a relatively unknown minor leaguer **Randall Byers**, a public opinion poll story, a feature story on **Baseball America** and a newly created **Baseball Memories** column) didn't sit well with my customers. I had mixed feelings about this issue. Sales fell off precipitously. We welcomed (2) new people to the staff: Wayne Ross (he joined Rob Batcho and Bob Zaborowski as the master copy designers) and Jeff Wyllie (writer/contributor). This issue was not well received. That was reflected in my Marketplace advertising as several prospective sellers declined to place ads with me. It was time to drop back (20) yards, punt and reassess my field position. I vowed to do better with the next issue. I had no idea at the time that *certain, behind the scene forces were at work here – things were going to get better.*

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Issue # 4 (August 1990) was a complete turnaround from the previous offering. I had secured a major interview with future Hall of Famer **Phil Niekro** at a North Jersey show which proved to be a pivotal development. The interview took place at a show in Cranford, NJ. Niekro was dressed in **Johnny Cash black** and exuded an aura of intimidation. This was a far cry from the image I had of him serving up 69 MPH knuckleballs over the dish, frustrating MLB sluggers with his beguiling mound savvy – not high heat. He was very professional and answered all of my questions with a confident air of self-assuredness. I was very impressed. Long time Yankee fan favorite, Thurman Munson, was the featured player for Issue # 4. This story really resonated with the legion of Munson fans nationwide. The feedback on this issue was gratifying. Advertising spiked as a result. Adam Dvorin's column **Moondog's Chatter** was gaining popularity.



The Major Leaguer Issue # 5



The Major Leaguer Issue # 6



The Major Leaguer issue # 7

Issue # 5 (September 1990) took a different approach to promoting **America's Baseball Newsletter**. The feature story revolved around a critique of Royals Stadium in Kansas City. I had recently visited the *City of Fountains* and had the good fortune of seeing (4) Royals games at the magnificent complex situated at the crossroads of I-70 and I-435. Normally, I don't like the newer stadiums (Royals Stadium was still relatively new at this time – at least compared to *Tiger Stadium in Detroit, Comiskey in Chicago, Cleveland Municipal Stadium, Yankee Stadium, etc.*) but Royals Stadium really captured my interest. It was impeccably clean. The stadium fountains spewed forth a profusion of water that reached heights of more than (25) feet. Carefully situated lights (at the base of the fountains) gave it an old world charm more reminiscent of a Parisian atmosphere than a Midwestern city whose claim to fame was raising cattle not all that long ago. The ushers were friendly and accommodating to any and all stadium related requests. I knew right then and there that I had to write a critique of this bravura sports complex. When Issue # 5 debuted in September 1990, I sent a copy to Ewing Kauffman – Principal Owner of the Royals. About a month later I received a letter back from Mr. Kauffman. He Thanked me profusely for my positive review of Royals Stadium. I was thrilled. Advertising was still a challenge. Many were curious; few wanted to actually spend the money to place ads. Other features in this issue: Jose Canseco, 1983 Texas Longhorns NCAA Baseball Champs (Roger Clemens) and Adam Dvorin's column.

Issue # 6 (October 1990) was one of my favorites to produce. I had the opportunity to interview **Brooks Robinson** (HOF and winner of 16 Gold Gloves) at a baseball card show in Metuchen, NJ.. Right from the beginning, show promoters, Mike Mizisko & Jim Iozzi, made me feel right at home. When we walked in (me and good friend Jim Getz), Mizisko & Iozzi greeted me with firm handshakes and said, "Welcome. Go ahead and take your place on the stage – right next to Brooks Robinson. He's expecting you." I was completely floored by their professionalism and benevolence. I took my seat next to Brooks (He was already signing autographs) and introduced myself. The great Oriole 3rd baseman stopped signing autographs momentarily. He extended his hand and uttered "**Hey Jim.. Nice to meet you. I understand that you would like an interview. Let's do it.**" I had grown up following his career (I still have my original 1964 Brooks Robinson Topps Metal Coin) and always admired his ability to **pick 'em at the Hot Corner** like no one else. The whole process took about (30) minutes and was thoroughly enjoyable. I Thanked Brooks at the conclusion, shook his hand, and walked away knowing that I had just broken bread with one of baseball's foremost ambassador's of good will. Brooks Robinson was the personification of class & dignity. Issue # 6 marked the introduction of Jim Pirone as a columnist for **The Major Leaguer**. There was a glaring error (I didn't see it until after we started to mail copies) at the top of the back page. Marketplace was misspelled as Markerplace. I was furious

that something so egregious had snuck through the proofreaders. Unfortunately, there was nothing I could do. Subscriptions had fallen off and advertising remained my biggest area of concern.

Issue # 7 (November 1990) was our blockbuster tribute to Nolan Ryan. There were no interviews in this issue. This issue was devoted exclusively to the **greatest power pitcher of all time – Nolan Ryan**. I researched his early days in Alvin, Texas up through his current status as a member of the Texas Rangers (he had not yet pitched his 7th no-hitter). The consensus among Ryan fans was that we had a winner here. My ad in Sports Collectors Digest had generated lots of mail from all corners of the Lone Star State. I was elated that the response was so positive but equally puzzled at the lack of subscriptions. I thought for sure that this issue would **really put me over the top**. That didn't happen. I did sell some issues through baseball card shops and at shows (Robbinsville, NJ) but my balance sheet was bleeding more red than black. Columnist Jim Pirone was emerging as a bona fide, top notch scribe with a special skill set that really captured the pulse of MLB. He had the novel idea of obtaining Official Press Credentials so he could cover the big league teams during Spring Training in Florida. I loved the idea.



The Major Leaguer Issue # 8



The Major Leaguer Issue # 9

Issue # 8 (December 1990) featured an interview with future Hall of Famer Richie Ashburn (he was not yet elected at print time) and a tribute to Roger Maris. My interview with Ashburn took place at the Mount Laurel, NJ sports card show. The former, fleet-footed OF'er for the Phillies proved to be interesting subject matter. I was instructed to join him in a room adjacent to the main floor of the show after he finished signing autographs. A loosely assembled crowd had followed us into the room to watch the interview unfold. The 1st thing you notice about Richie Ashburn is that his laid back, affable nature is genuine. Nothing pretentious or phoney about him. I would surmise that his easy-going nature was as real as the sorghum and grain that dotted the farmland in his native Nebraska. He gave me a great interview. I sent him a copy of this issue. Within a few weeks I received an autographed copy back along with a note that read "**Jim that was some nice writing. Thank You so much. Signed: Richie Ashburn.**" Our story on Roger Maris was popular among the legion of fans that adored the former slugger from near and afar. I've always felt that Maris was relegated to 2nd fiddle behind Mantle during his time in the Big Apple. I think my story helped dispel some of those inequities.

Issue # 9 (January 1991) proved to be the last issue of **The Major Leaguer**. Lack of subscribers and a dwindling advertising base led to my undoing. Although this was our Swan Song, we would go out with a bang, Thanks in part to the Warren Spahn interview. Actually, this wasn't just an interview. It turned out to be to be an odyssey that began in Hammonton, NJ and culminated at the Philadelphia International Airport. Show promoter, Mike Pierce, had arranged the interview with Spahn in exchange for some free advertising in my newsletter. I thought that was a good deal. We (me and Jim Getz) picked up **MLB's most wins in a career for a LHP (363)** at Columbia Caterers in Hammonton, NJ and planned to interview him as we drove to the airport. Spahn took one look at my rather antiquated 1983 Chevrolet Nova (in excess of 150,000 miles) and exclaimed "**I usually get a limousine** (with utter disdain)." We took off for the Philly Airport and feared that our original plans of pulling off a major interview with one of the greatest pitchers of all time wouldn't pan out. Boy, was I wrong. I had prepared interview questions and let Jim Getz do the honors as I drove. As we proceeded along the Atlantic City Expressway, Spahn really opened up about his career. We were provided with so much juicy, insider information that I doubted that most of it would fit in my (8) page newsletter. Periodically, I would glance over and see the former Milwaukee Brave great sitting next to me and

say to myself **Wow, I can't believe that Warren Spahn is sitting in my car and spilling his guts** (he didn't hold back) **to us**. Jim Getz did a great job and really helped me out (he was sitting in the back seat querying him). As we approached the airport it became abundantly clear to me that I had no idea where his hotel was. Or, for that matter, how to get there. I decided to make a pit stop and ask one of the porters where his hotel was. The 1st few I asked didn't have a clue. Then, I happened upon a sharp guy that pointed us in the right direction. As we pulled into the parking lot and helped him unload his bags, Spahn turned to us and said **"I'm hungry, you guys want to come inside the airport restaurant and have a bite to eat with me?"** This was just a punctuation mark on a truly extraordinary evening. One that I will never forget.

FAQ's about The Major Leaguer Newsletter

Did you ever turn a profit with the MLN? No, it was never profitable. I did have some success with subscriptions, single issue sales and advertising but not enough to sustain me.

Where was your newsletter sold? At baseball card shows (all over NJ and Eastern Pennsylvania), baseball card shops (In NJ, Pa., Florida, Ohio & a few in California), subscriptions through **Sports Collectors Digest & Tuff Stuff**.

How long did it take to prepare each issue? Close to a month. I had to produce a template complete with stock photos, proofed stories, etc. and then submit it to my designers for publication. After the designers finished the master copy, I would take it to the printer's for final copying. Suffice it to say, it was a heavy workload.

Where there any person or persons who were directly responsible for helping you out? Oh Yes, there were many. Ranging from friends to show promoters to subscribers to MLB players, etc. They were all helpful. Some of those people were: **Jim Getz, Bob Zaborowski, Rob Batcho, Jeff Wyllie, Jim Pirone, Adam Dvorin, Wayne Ross, Jim Gafgen, Mike Chaudhuri, Mike Mizisko & Jim Iozzi, Mike Pierce, Bernie Kennedy, Phil Cortina, Billy Callahan, Del Ennis, Luke Appling, Randall Byers, Phil Niekro, Brooks Robinson, Richie Ashburn & Warren Spahn.**

I noticed you didn't mention Bob Schmirer's name? Didn't – or wouldn't – he help you? (Uproarious laughter) I never asked him. Bob Schmirer had this aura of being unapproachable. Yes, he had his share of friends, cohorts and cronies but if you weren't in his inner circle, he probably wouldn't be amenable to your requests. As a matter of fact, I was so well accommodated by other show promoters that I really didn't need his help.

What was your most memorable moment? Interviewing Warren Spahn. It was a night that I (and Jim Getz) will never forget.

Any interviews that you wanted to do – that got away? Yes, several. **Al Kaline** (he declined to do the interview stating that he was afraid I might get something wrong. Show promoter, Billy Callahan, pleaded my case but to no avail). **Larry Bowa** (it was all set up. Bowa agreed to do it but I was not able to make it to the show. Big regret). **Moose Skowron** (for some reason or another, I was not able to hook up with Skowron. Another big regret). **Bob Feller** (actually I interviewed Feller over the phone but it happened right before I decided to discontinue my newsletter. So the interview never got published). Another big fish that got away. **Duke Snider** (the Duke of Flatbush was appearing at a show in New Brunswick, NJ. I was not aware of his signing session. I walked into the show and there he was, sitting all by himself at the front of the room, not a autograph seeker in sight. My 1st thought was, "Hey, I could've interviewed Snider right then and there." I didn't have any questions prepared simply because I didn't know that he was going to be there. I bet that would've been a blast talking Brooklyn Dodgers with the Duke of Flatbush. That is, of course, pending Snider's approval Something tells me he would've obliged.

Did you ever consider interviewing some of the legends like – Mantle, Aaron, Mays, Koufax, Musial, etc.? I did think of it but always thought that guys like Mantle, Aaron & Mays were unattainable. I knew their layers of security at shows were impenetrable. Furthermore, You had to go through their agents to even be considered. I didn't think they would agree to it. As far as Sandy Koufax goes, he never did shows. Period. Musial would've been a good interview. It never really came up but I surely would've pursued it.

ITEMS FOR SALE

Circa 1920's Hobie Baker (1911 Princeton U. NCCA Football Champions) Stand-Up Display Piece

Hobie Baker Display Piece (Baker was the Quarterback on the 1911 Princeton Tigers NCAA National Champions football team. He owns the unique distinction of being the only college athlete to be enshrined in both the college football & hockey Hall of Fames. This piece has a stand-up easel on back for support. Shows wear throughout including some clear tape in spots. All original. **PLEASE NOTE:** We do not sell reproductions. Tremendous display potential. One-of-a-kind piece) **\$ 150. 00 + \$ 9.99 S&H**



1952 Bowman Baseball Empty Wax Display Box – 1 cent Version – 120 Count

*1952 Bowman Baseball Empty Wax Display Box – 1 cent * Penny Pack version * 120 Count* (Rare, seldom seen Bowman Baseball empty wax display box. Two piece box with interlocking top and bottom sections. Shows heavy wear throughout (soiling, stains, minor paper loss on bottom front panel, there is some clear tape on inside of box). This is the 1 cent Penny Pack version) **\$ 499. 99 + Free S&H in the USA**

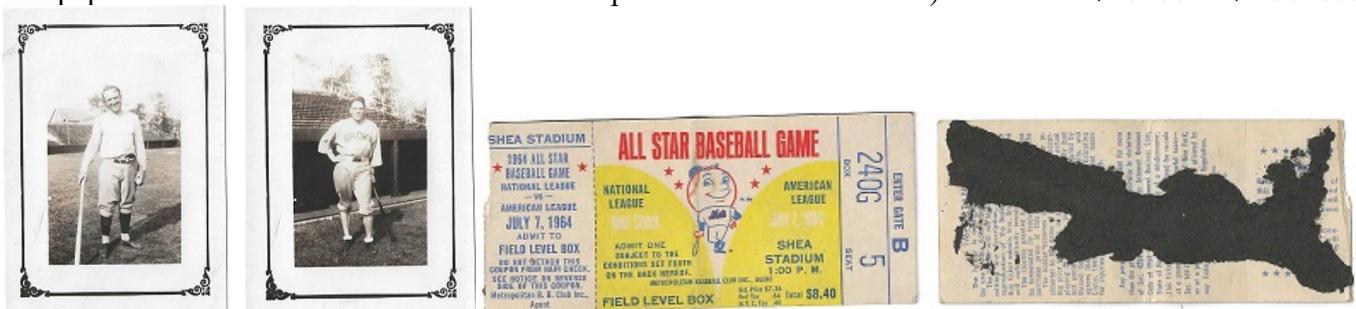


Circa 1920's Brown University Baseball Player Photos Lot of (2)

Circa 1920's Brown University Baseball Player Photos Lot of (2) (Two black x white Brown University player photos. Both measure approx: 2.5" x 3.5" Blank backs. Outstanding in every detail) **\$ 10. 00 + \$ 1.00 S&H**

1964 MLB All-Star Game Ticket at Shea Stadium

1964 MLB All-Star Game Ticket at Shea Stadium (This will always be remembered as the **Johnny Callison HR Wins It for the NL** game. July 7, 1964 at Shea Stadium. Has vertical creases that run from top to bottom in middle. There is substantial paper residue on back. Additional wear in spots. Historic AS contest) **\$ 49. 99 + \$ 1.99 S&H**



1960's NY Jets (AFL) Rare Variation Full Size Pennant

1960's NY Jets (AFL) Rare Variation Full Size Felt Pennant (I've never seen this particular version before. Depicts a football at the small end with outstanding graphics. Approx. 12" x 30" Single bar on helmet denotes an older pennant. My guess: late 1960's. Has some tack holes in corners. The green background has retained all of its original grandeur. Composition material. Better than mid grade) **\$ 49.99 + \$6.99 S&H**



1950's Wheaties – Adventure on Wheels Series – Lot of (4) Box Back Panels

1950's Wheaties – Adventure on Wheels Series – Lot of (4) Box back Panels (Sensational Wheaties Breakfast Cereals lot of (4) back box panels. These were cut directly off the back of each individual box. Included here are: **Covered Wagon; Roman Chariot, Racing Sulky and Galloping Horses**. The designs can be cut and transformed into 3D figures. All (4) are original and unadulterated) **\$ 19.99 + \$ 4.99 S&H**



1951 Topps Red Back Cards

1951 Wayne Terwilliger (Chicago Cubs) Topps Red Back Card (Crease free with just a subtle trace of wear in the lower right corner. Otherwise, a really nice card. Better grade) **\$ 7.99 + FREE S&H**

1951 Cliff Chambers (Pittsburgh Pirates) Topps Red Back Card (Has several creases – both vertically & horizontally – but still displays well. Lesser than mid-grade) **\$ 4.99 + FREE S&H**

1951 Elmer Valo (Philadelphia Athletics) Topps Red Back Card (Has a few, superficial creases. On the back someone wrote in pencil “AL” twice – once in the top diamond and once in the bottom diamond. Mid-grade) **\$ 4.99 + FREE S&H**

1952 Wheaties Football Star Cards

1952 Wheaties Football Star Card – **Otto Graham** (Pro/ College FB HOF) – Cut from Box Back (Crease-free. Clean) **\$ 9.99**

1952 Wheaties Football Star Card – **Doak Walker** (Pro/College FB HOF) - Cut from Box Back (Crease-free. Clean) **\$ 9.99**

1952 Wheaties Football Star Card – **Bob Waterfield** (Pro FB HOF) – Cut from Box Back (Crease-free. Clean) **\$ 9.99**

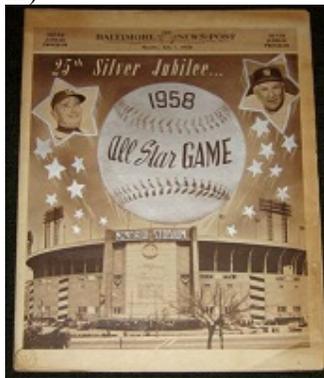
1952 Wheaties Football Star Card – **Johnny Lujack** (College FB HOF) – Cut from Box Back (Crease-free. Clean) **\$ 9.99**

1952 Wheaties Football Star Card – **Glenn Davis** (College FB HOF) – Cut from Box Back (Crease-free. Clean) **\$ 9.99**

1952 Wheaties Football Star Card – **Tom Fears** (Pro/College FB HOF) - Cut from Box Back (Crease-free. Clean) **\$ 9.99**

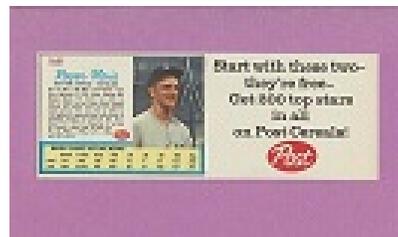
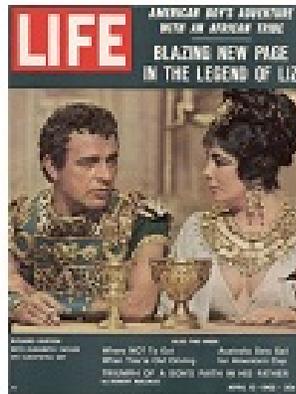
1958 MLB All-Star Game Unofficial Program (Baltimore News Post) at Baltimore

1958 MLB All-Star Game Unofficial Program at Baltimore (Unofficial program, guide and scorecard issued from *The Baltimore News Post*. Sepia toned newspaper stock. Complete with a game scorecard for the Mid Summer Classic. Light wear) **\$ 25. 00 + FREE S&H in USA**



1962 Mickey Mantle & Roger Post Cereal Insert Cards Intact Within a Life Magazine

1962 Mickey Mantle & Roger Maris Post Cereal Insert Cards Intact Within a Life Magazine (Two beautiful Mantle & Maris Post Cereal insert cards that are still attached inside of a Life Magazine. They are absolutely gorgeous. The cards have not been dislodged from their original position. The inserts are identical to the '62 Post cereal cards that appeared on the back of grocery store boxes) **\$ 149.99 + FREE S&H in the USA**



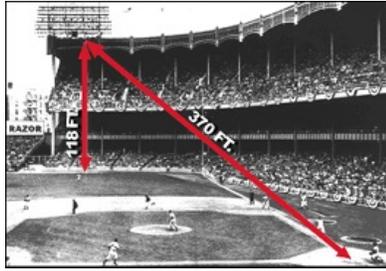
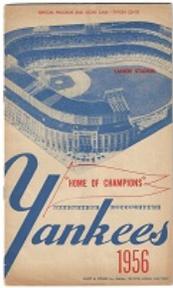
1948 NY Yankees – Babe Ruth's # 3 is Officially Retired – Game Program (June 13, 1948)

1948 Babe Ruth #3 Officially Retired at Yankee Stadium Program (A frail Babe Ruth, leaning on Bob Feller's bat for support, watched as AL president – Will Harridge – officially retired his # 3 at Yankee Stadium on June 13, 1948. Mel Allen was the Master of Ceremonies. 49,641 watched as members of the 1923 World Champion Yankees along with later Bronx Bomber teams played a (2) inning Old Timer's Game. The cancer-stricken Babe strode to home plate for the last time as the throng of well wishers sang Auld Lang Syne. The 1948 Yankees then played a regular season game vs. the Cleveland Indians (and prevailed 5-3). Historic Babe Ruth item. Incomparable. Program shows wear but is full and complete. *Scored in pencil*) **\$ 350. 00 + \$4.99 S&H in USA**



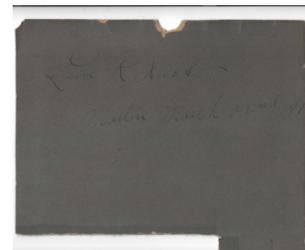
1956 Mickey Mantle – Façade Shot HR – at Yankee Stadium Official Program

1956 Mickey Mantle – Façade Shot HR – at Yankee Stadium Official Program (This is the historically significant Memorial Day at Yankee Stadium when Mickey Mantle, on a 2-2 count & (2) men on, launched a towering shot off the Senators' Pedro Ramos, that missed leaving the stadium by a mere (18) inches. Had the blast not hit the white façade, it is estimated that it would've traveled (600) feet. Program *is not scored* vs. the Washington Senators. May 30, 1956 at the big ballpark in the Bronx) **\$ 250. 00 + \$ 4. 99 S&H in the USA**



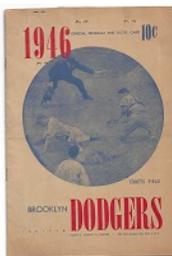
1911 NY Giants Team Cabinet Photo w/ Mathewson, McGraw, Marquard, Myers, etc. in Street Clothes

1911 NY Giants (NL pennant winners) Team Cabinet Photo with Christy Mathewson, John McGraw, Rube Marquard, Chief Meyers, Red Ames, Art Devlin, Fred Snodgrass, Fred Merkle, Larry Doyle, et al (Incredible 1911 NY Giants team cabinet photo. It is dated on back in pencil. Appears to be outside of the Giants ballpark (Polo Grounds IV, Polo Grounds V or Hilltop Park) of which there were (3) distinct venues in '11 that they called home. The Giants won the 1911 NL pennant but lost to the Philadelphia Athletics – 4 games to 2 – in the World Series. Upper echelon piece. Players in street clothes) **\$ 400. 00 + \$ 6.99 S&H in the USA**



1946 St. Louis Cardinals (vs Brooklyn Dodgers) Clinch NL Pennant with Play-Off Series Win w/Ticket Stub

1946 St. Louis Cardinals Clinch NL Pennant with a Playoff Series Victory over the Dodgers at Ebbetts Field with ticket stub official program (The 1946 NL pennant race ended with the Cardinals & Dodgers in a flat-footed tie. A playoff series was initiated to determine who would represent the Senior Circuit in the WS vs. the Boston Red Sox. This is the clinching game program (and ticket stub) in which the St. Louis Cardinals would reign supreme over the Bums at Ebbetts Field to capture their 3rd pennant in (6) years. Program is scored neatly. The game ticket stub is stapled to the back of the front cover. Extraordinary piece of memorabilia) **\$ 350. 00 + \$ 4. 99 S&H in USA**



We accept the following payment methods: **Paypal** (send to: klassickorner2016@gmail.com); **personal checks** (made payable to: **Jim Miller**); **money orders** (made payable to: **Jim Miller**); **cashier's checks** (to: **Jim Miller**); **wire transfers** (\$ 500.00 minimum – call for details); **Western Union** (to: **Jim Miller** – standard fees apply). Always contact us 1st to reserve before sending money.