

The BaseballintheAttic Report

The annual Chicago Sun-Times baseball card show held every year in Rosemont, IL has come and gone. The show is a great opportunity for buyers' and sellers' to meet face to face and talk about baseball cards and sports memorabilia. The economy is in a recession, but not the Sports Memorabilia industry. I walked around the convention floor and talked with various dealers, collectors, and industry executives. Prices have remained steady year over year. Baseball cards and Sports Memorabilia is a mainstay on the want lists of many for the Holidays. Vintage baseball cards remind collectors of their childhood days when they played ball and didn't have a worry in the world. The cult following in this industry is one reason why prices have retained their value. The prices for both low and high end cards remain firm, while the collector grade (mid-grade) has been a little soft.

What would your return be if you invested in the stock market vs. vintage baseball cards back in 2005? A few of the top baseball cards listed below show the comparison from 2005-2009. For the same 5-year period (05-09), the DJIA (Dow Jones Industrial Average) lost .02%.

2005		2009
\$12,500	1933 Goudey Babe Ruth #53 Near-Mint	\$15,000
\$52,000	T-206 Eddie Plank EX condition	\$99,000
\$16,000	1951 Bowman Mickey Mantle Near-Mint	\$22,750
\$14,000	1915 Cracker Jack Joe Jackson Near-Mint	\$20,000+
\$3,000	1954 Hank Aaron rookie Near-Mint	\$5,000

Many Americans are unemployed and looking for ways to raise capital to pay the mortgage, utility bills, etc. In the last twelve months, a lot of fresh material has entered the market due to the economy. Many collections' at the show were recently unearthed from attics' and were being sold for the first time ever. The phone has been ringing frequently in 2009. I covet my newly found collections' as a way of preserving the history of baseball.

Some of the recent attic finds' include Cracker Jack and Leaf gum company baseball cards. Both Cracker Jack and Leaf had manufacturing facilities in the Chicago area several decades ago. Vintage White Sox and Cubs ephemera were clearly popular in the 1950's and 1960's as several jerseys, bats, and baseballs flooded the convention floor.

Baseball cards are getting more and more scarce as time passes which in turn has led to the demand driving up prices of cards dating prior to 1970. In some cases, certain cards have returned more than 500% percent between 2005 and 2009! The future of the industry looks very promising heading into 2010. I look forward to diving into many more attics' in 2010 and finding more baseball treasures!

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