

# **1988-89 Panini Set of 408**

## **1988-89 Panini Set of 408 (loose stickers)**

### **4 Key Rookie (RC) Stickers**

Brian Leetch, Brett Hull, Brendan Shanahan & Joe Nieuwendyk

### **Sticker History**

This was the second year in North America that the NHL put out a series of stickers under the PANINI name. Their test marketing of 1987 stickers worked and this year had 12 stickers more than last year. Each of the packs has Mario Lemieux on them. These boxes can be found in some parts but they were certainly not the easiest to find back in 1988. The 1988 PANINI hockey stickers are the the 5th most difficult to find in hockey sticker sets, trailing only the 1981,1992 FRENCH and 1994 and 1987 PANINI series. This was the last year that Wayne Gretzky would appear in an Oilers jersey. Panini Canada out of St. Laurent, Quebec was the Canadian distributor and Panini USA out of New York was the US distributor.

### **Sticker Facts**

The size of each full sticker is 5.4 cm X 6.9 cm (2.13 in X 2.72 in). There were 100 packages in each wax box which originally retailed for \$0.25 USD/\$0.30 CAD per pack. Each package contained 6 stickers. The minimum number of packages needed to make a full set (assuming absolutely no doubles) is 68. The original album (\$0.69 USD/\$0.59 CAD)

cover featured Mario Lemieux. The 1988 Stanley Cup winners were the Edmonton Oilers with Wayne Gretzky the Conn Smythe Trophy winner as playoffs MVP.

### **Season Facts**

The Buffalo Sabres select scoring ace Pierre Turgeon first overall in the entry draft. Glen Sather let Paul Coffey sit out until American Thanksgiving due to a contract dispute. Sather finally traded the disgruntled blueliner to the Pittsburgh Penguins for young phenom Craig Simpson who ended up scoring 56 goals in his first season with the Oilers. Simpson was the 1st ever NHL player to score 50 goals while being traded in midseason. Sather had other problems as Peter Pocklington ordered him to play “hardball” with his stars. Andy Moog was another casualty when he decided to play for the Canadian National Team instead of in Edmonton. He would later be traded to Boston for Oilers future superstar Bill Ranford. Ironically enough, they would go head to head in the 1990 Stanley Cup Finals and Ranford would end up winning the Conn Smythe Trophy as Playoff MVP. Grant Fuhr won 40 games in the regular season to secure himself his 1st and only ever Vezina Trophy as top goalie in the league. After tearing up the AHL the year before with the Moncton Golden Flames and just after playing 52 games for the Flames in 1987-88; Brett Hull was traded from Calgary to St. Louis for Rob Ramage and Rick Wamsley on March 7th 1988. The rest, as they say, is history as Brett spends most of his best years with the Blues. The Sabres did not have Gilbert Perreault in their lineup as he retired after playing 17 NHL seasons. A new NHL award was established for the 1987-88 season as Lanny McDonald won the inaugural King Clancy Award; presented to the players that best exemplifies leadership qualities both on and off the ice.

Pat Lafontaine is given a chance to shine and gets 47 goals as Mike Bossy retires from hockey prior to the season getting underway. Ron Hextall was the first NHL goalie to ever actively score a goal when he potted one into Boston's empty net during the playoffs. Billy Smith got credited years earlier, however he did not directly shoot the puck which Hextall did. During the Stanley Cup Finals in Boston in game 4, the power went off and the game was suspended and was replayed with the Oilers winning the rematch 6-3. Boston fans could find the main light switch for the rematch. The NHL officials held a brief strike after Devils coach Jim Schoenfeld called out to Don Koharski, that perhaps he should "have another tempting treat at the Tim Hortons". Joe Nieuwendyk won the Calder Trophy as rookie of the year.

### **Expansion Notes**

No Expansion notes for this season.

### **Wayne Gretzky Notes**

Gretzky was featured 5 times (plus 1 other sticker that does not have him directly on the sticker but is a part of a 2 piece puzzle #178-#179). Gretzky only missed 8 games in his first 8 NHL seasons. Wayne was forced to sit out 16 games due to a knee injury, costing him a chance to win his 8th straight scoring title. This was the first time that Wayne scored less than 50 goals in an NHL season. His points per game was a still a solid 2.33 this year. This would be the last season that Gretzky would sport the Oilers jersey. After winning the Stanley Cup and Conn Smythe Trophy this year, he would be

traded to the Los Angeles Kings. Wayne scored a whopping 43 playoff points on his way to winning his 4th and final Stanley Cup. Gretzky also broke Gordie Howe's record for assists by recording his 1050th assist on March 1st 1988. This series featured 5 Gretzky stickers. Wayne scored a season total of 40 goals, 109 assists for a total of 149 points. His points per game ratio for this 64 games played season was 2.33.