

1992-93 FRENCH Panini Set of 330

1992-93 FRENCH Panini Set of 330 (loose stickers)

4 Key Rookie (RC) Stickers

Nicklas Lidstrom, Dominik Hasek, Eric Lindros and Pavel Bure.

Sticker History

This was the 1st year in Panini's history with NHL stickers that they put out a set of stickers that were the same size as your standard O-Pee-Chee or Upper Deck cards at this time. Sporadically, these boxes would turn up but were somewhat scarce. In the early 2000's many boxes and cases of this product turned up in dollar stores across Canada for a short stint and quickly sold out. The one thing to note here is that there were lots of 50 sticker packs but only found in generic white boxes. The original packs of cards found in the original boxes were very hard to come by. The original artwork boxes do carry a premium from this year. These stickers are just now starting to dry up but there is still enough unopened product out there and it is somewhat available. Panini decided to go to having only 50 packs per box this season after having 100 packs per box for the past 5 seasons. Albums for this year were not easily found and for whatever reason were not always available with the purchase of these packs. This is the only year that Panini attempted to make a French language only version for their hockey line. The French Panini version of these 1992 Panini are extremely and I mean extremely rare and can also be found on my site. Panini Canada out of St. Laurent, Quebec was the Canadian distributor. No US distributor was named. There are 308 base stickers plus an "Ice-Breakers" subset of 22 Foil

stickers, made up mainly of rookies. There are 3 variations for this album. There were 2 Canadian versions. One had no price in the top right corner, the CAHA (Canadian Amateur Hockey Association) logo below it, and no barcode on the back. The other had a price tag of \$0.89 on the top right corner with the CAHA (Canadian Amateur Hockey Association) just underneath it, and a barcode on the back. The American version had a \$0.99 price tag on the top right corner.

Sticker Facts

These are one of the 2 hardest sets of panini hockey stickers to complete. Back in 1992, Panini wanted to try to print up a strictly “French” version of their stickers. For whatever reason they weren’t selling well so pallets of the “French” product was actually destroyed. As the story goes, these were made for Paris, France in Europe as well as the province of Quebec in Canada. Paris is not exactly the hockey hotbed of Europe so I can understand that these stickers did not sell well there, however, Quebec is a different story. The first “French” stickers I ever had in my possession were obtained from Paris, France. One dealer in Ontario got wind of what was happening, and he was the only one to request that whatever was not yet destroyed be sent to him. He got maybe 40 boxes of 1992 French Panini, but that was all as the rest had now burned to the ground. He opened packs and sold singles until I bought his “French” stock over about 5 years. You may see French on some older O-Pee-Chee, Topps or Panini stickers, but they made some French and some English within the same set. There was never a strictly “French” sticker set put out until this 1992 product. Most people’s want list (if they even know these exist) have these stickers on them. The pictures are all the same as the 1992

English, the only difference is the writing on the front and back of the stickers is in French. Trying to track these down today is a challenge, but I do have a small supply as it took me over 10 years to uncover a source. I have since attempted to find more and have had no real luck. These next numbers are based strictly on my experience with collecting hockey stickers for over 26 years. By my best estimate, the 1992 Panini French hockey stickers are available in about a 1-500 ratio. For every 1 French 1992 sticker I see, there are generously about 500 stickers of the English version available. Searching hockey card shows, ebay and the internet in general have led me to this conclusion. The Rare Gretzky's, Felix Potvin and Eric Lindros Glitters and the Roy's from this set are perhaps more along the lines of a 1-800 availability ratio. All in all, to make up one of these complete sets of 330 stickers is very difficult to do. Please do not confuse this French sticker version as the same flop of the the 1990 Upper Deck series, where the French version started out rare, but Upper Deck ran the production lines again to flood the market. These 1992 Panini French stickers will continue to be gems in the hockey sticker world. I have JUST discovered a "French" version of the album for this series. These extremely tough albums are now available.

Season Facts

This was the NHL's 75th Anniversary season. The NHLPA went on strike on April 1st 1992 for 10 days. The Rangers were the front-runners to bring Lord Stanley's Cup home, but the momentum shifted and the Penguins reigned supreme. Video replay for goals/non goals was adopted this year as well. The St. Louis Blues sign restricted free agent Brendan Shanahan to a \$5 million contract away from the Devils. NHL boss John Ziegler then awards standout

defenseman Scott Stevens to New Jersey as compensation. This was such a unique “awarding” situation that has not repeated itself to this day. Scott Stevens and Brendan Shanahan would both become integral parts of future NHL squads in winning multiple Stanley Cups for their respective teams. Oilers goalie Bill Ranford is named Canada Cup MVP as Canada wins its third straight Canada Cup. Pavel Bure leaves Russia for the NHL. The Edmonton Oilers Dynasty officially ends as they did a little house cleaning. Future Hall of Famers Glenn Anderson and Grant Fuhr were packaged and sent to Toronto for Vincent Damphousse and Luke Richardson. Second leading scorer of all-time Mark Messier was shipped off to the New York Rangers in exchange for Bernie Nicholls. Jari Kurri and Steve Smith were also given their walking papers from the Oilers before the season started. Kirk McLean finished runner-up for the Vezina Trophy as he finished first in wins with 38 and first in shutouts with 5. Brian Leetch would win his 1st career Norris Trophy and would finish with a whopping 102 points. A Legend passes away as Badger Bob Johnson dies at the age of 60 on November 26th 1991. Doug Gilmour was the central figure in the biggest trade in NHL history on January 2nd 1992. The trade was Gilmour, Macoun, Nattress, Manderville and Wamsley for Leeman, Godynyuk, Reese, Petit and Berube. Mike Peluso was the first NHL player in 10 years to finish with over 400 penalty minutes. He had 408 minutes in just 63 games. John Ziegler faced mounting criticism after the 10 day player strike and for being considered a “mouthpiece” for the owners. John would retire at the end of the 1991-92 season.

Expansion Notes

The NHL expanded to 22 teams for the 1991-92 Season as

the San Jose Sharks and former North Stars owners George and Gordon Gund swam in the unchartered territories of the Bay Area. The Sharks would only win a meagre 17 games in their inaugural season.

Wayne Gretzky Notes

Gretzky still led the league in assists with 90 but finished 3rd in points with 121. It was the first time in his 13 year career that Wayne did not finish 1st or 2nd in league scoring.

Wayne did however win his 2nd straight Lady Byng Trophy. This series featured 2 Gretzky stickers. Wayne scored a season total of 31 goals, 90 assists for a total of 121 points. His points per game ratio for this 74 games played season was 1.64.