

1996-97 Panini Set of 304

1996-97 Panini Set of 304 (loose stickers)

4 Key Rookie (RC) Stickers

Daniel Alfredsson, Todd Bertuzzi, Zigmund Palffy and Miroslav Satan.

Sticker History

After a year of a massive production run of stickers in 1995 to North America, Panini did not actively market the 1996 stickers to North America due to slow sales in 1995. The 1996 NHL Panini stickers were made for mainly for Sweden and Europe as is evident with all of the Europeans pictured in this year's set. Until 2002, these stickers were nowhere to be found in Canada or the United States. In late 2002 I sourced out some unopened boxes from a dealer in Sweden that had them just sitting in his basement. There were still 100 packages per box but the albums were pretty much non-existent. Over the past 12 years, I have only found or seen 1 album from this series. Imagine that there are 1000's of 1995 Panini albums that can be had even today yet I've only ever seen 1 album from 1996 Panini. This set is somewhat difficult to assemble and not many collectors even know about this series as they were not sent out to wholesalers in the North American market.

Sticker Facts

The size of each full sticker is 4.9 cm X 7.6 cm (1.93 in X 3 in). There were 100 packages in each wax box which

originally retailed for \$0.85 USD (or 7:- Swedish Kronor) per pack. Each package contained 6 stickers. The minimum number of packages needed to make a full set (assuming absolutely no doubles) is 51. The original album (\$1.25 USD or 10:- Swedish Kronor) cover featured Daniel Alfredsson, Pavel Bure, Jim Carey, Chris Chelios, Ed Jovanovski, Paul Kariya, Chris Osgood and Joe Sakic. The 1996 Stanley Cup winners were the Colorado Avalanche with Joe Sakic the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoffs MVP.

Season Facts

Paul Coffey becomes the first NHL defenseman to record 1000 assists on December 13th 1995. The Montreal Forum closes its doors on March 11th following a win over Dallas. St. Louis goalie Grant Fuhr appears in 76 straight games. A knee injury in the final week of the season prevented Fuhr from possibly playing all 82 games for the Blues. Grant Fuhr won his 300th game of his career on November 30th 1996. Fuhr became the 11th goalie to accomplish such a feat. Dale Hawerchuk becomes only the 23rd player to notch 500 goals doing it on January 31st 1996. Chris Osgood enjoyed a 21 game unbeaten streak and set a league record with 62 wins, most in NHL history. Osgood became the third goalie in NHL history to score a goal. Larry Murphy became only the 4th defenseman in NHL history behind Paul Coffey, Ray Bourque and Denis Potvin to reach the 1000 point plateau. Chris Chelios takes home his 3rd Norris Trophy as the leagues top defenseman. Joe Sakic sets an NHL playoff record with 6 game-winning goals and led all playoff scorers with 34 points in 22 games. Sakic also won the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP. Daniel Alfredsson won the Calder Trophy for Rookie of the Year.

Expansion Notes

The Quebec Nordiques moved to Colorado and became the Avalanche for the 1995-96 NHL season. The San Jose Sharks win only 20 games and still flounder in the NHL. The only team that was worse than the Sharks were the Senators who finished with 18 wins.

Wayne Gretzky Notes

Gretzky was traded to the St. Louis Blues midway through the season to join his buddy Brett Hull. This would be the amazing 15th time that Wayne broke the 100 point plateau for a season. Gretzky started the season scoring 81 points in 62 games for the Kings. When traded to the Blues, Wayne scored 21 points in the 18 games that he played with the Blues, bringing his season total to 102 points. This series featured 1 Gretzky sticker. Wayne scored a season total of 23 goals, 79 assists for a total of 102 points in 80 games played. His points per game ratio for this season was 1.28.