

# **1998-99 Panini Set of 228**

## **1998-99 Panini Set of 228 (loose stickers)**

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

Sergei Samsonov, Marco Sturm, Aki Berg and Jamie McLennan.

### **Sticker History**

The 1998 NHL Panini stickers collection was reduced yet again to an all time low of only 228 total stickers in the set. 228 stickers was now the smallest NHL set produced in the 12 years. This was the first time since the 1993-94 Panini set that a Canadian company had distribution rights for Panini hockey stickers. T.M.I out of Winnipeg Manitoba was the official Canadian distributor and T.M.I. out of Fargo North Dakota had the US rights. These stickers are quite readily available to the Canadian/US market. In fact, numerous pallets of them were found in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario in Canada. There were now 100 packages per box but the albums were pretty much still non-existent. I was in a Toronto area dollar store back in 2003 and was lucky enough to find about 5 of this years mint sticker albums. It is just bizarre to me how the dollar store had the albums but absolutely no stickers to accompany them. This is the first time I've seen these albums come with promo sheets of sample stickers from the set. The sample sheets were stapled to the inside folds of the album. These stickers are now starting to dry up but there is still enough unopened product out there and it is readily available.

### **Sticker Facts**

The size of each full sticker is 5.4 cm X 7.6 cm (2.13 in X 3 in). There were 100 packages in each wax box which originally retailed for \$.59 a pack. Each package contained 5 stickers. The minimum number of packages needed to make a full set (assuming absolutely no doubles) is 46. The original album (\$1.99) cover featured Mats Sundin, Peter Forsberg, Paul Kariya, Saku Koivu, Brendan Shanahan and Teemu Selanne. The 1999 Stanley Cup winners were the Detroit Red Wings with Steve Yzerman winning the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoffs MVP.

### **Season Facts**

Anaheim and Vancouver started their season by playing a 2 game set in Nagano, Japan, just ahead of the upcoming Winter Olympics. Jari Kurri became the 8th player to ever record 600 goals, Dino Ciccarelli became the 9th player to ever record 600 goals in an NHL career. John Vanbiesbrouck became only the 2nd US born goalie to record 300 career wins. The NHL suspends play for 2 weeks in February of 1998 to allow many of it's stars to play in the Olympics. The hockey Gold was won by the Czechs. The Blackhawks miss the playoffs for the first time in 29 years. Mike Gartner becomes the 5th player in NHL history to score 700 goals. John LeClair becomes the 1st US born player to ever score 3 consecutive 50 goal seasons. The Dallas Stars finished atop the NHL standings for the 1st time in their team history led by star goalie Ed Belfour who led the league with a paltry 1.88 goals-against-average. Andy Moog plays in his final NHL season. Sergei Samsonov wins the Calder Trophy for rookie of the year.

### **Expansion Notes**

The Carolina Hurricanes are formed for the 1997-98 season after the Whalers move their team from Hartford.

## **Wayne Gretzky Notes**

Gretzky scored a whopping 90 points finishing 3rd in league scoring in his 2nd last season in the NHL. This series featured 2 Gretzky stickers. Wayne scored 23 goals and 67 assists for a total of 90 points in a full season of 82 games played. His points per game ratio for this season was 1.10.