

1999-00 Panini Set of 360

1999-2000 Panini Set of 360 (loose stickers)

4 Key Rookie (RC) Stickers

Vincent Lecavalier, Shane Doan, Joe Thornton and Milan Hejduk.

Sticker History

The 1999 NHL Panini stickers collection was increased by a whopping 132 more stickers to a total of 360 total stickers in the set. This was now the largest Panini NHL sticker set in the past 10 years. Due to slow sales of the 1998-99 product, Panini did not actively market this years NHL stickers to North America. The writing in the albums is in Swedish and not in English. These stickers were never meant to be sold in Canada or the USA. 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 Winnipeg that attained them when they were in Sweden. This was the 2nd year that there were 100 packages per box but the albums were a little harder to come by. Over the past few years, I was able to obtain 8 albums from this series. This set is difficult to assemble due to it's size and they were originally not sent out to wholesalers in the North American market. These stickers marketed mainly to the European hockey market.

Sticker Facts

It is VERY IMPORTANT to note that when this year's stickers were made at the Panini Factory in Italy, the quality control was absolutely horrendous. MANY stickers showed

creases to varying extents of damage. Therefore, it is NEAR IMPOSSIBLE to make a MINT set of the 1999 Panini Stickers. Some Washington Capitals players, for instance, were pretty much ALL creased to some extent.

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 72. The original album (\$1.49 USD or 12:- Swedish Kronor) cover featured Pavel Bure, Jaromir Jagr, Eric Lindros, Mats Sundin, Eric Lindros, Mike Modano and Teemu Selanne. The 1999 Stanley Cup winners were the Dallas Stars with Joe Nieuwendyk winning the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoffs MVP.

Season Facts

The NHL introduces the Maurice Richard Trophy which will be awarded to the player who leads the league each season in goals. The Richard Trophy was won by Teemu Selanne with a mere 47 goals. This was the first time (not including the strike season) that a player won the goal scoring title with less than 50 goals in over 30 years. On February 13th, 1999 Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens hosted it's final NHL game. Chris Drury won the Calder Trophy as the league's top rookie.

Expansion Notes

The NHL grows to 27 teams as the Nashville Predators make their debut for the 1998-99 season.

Wayne Gretzky Notes

Gretzky would retire after 20 NHL seasons as the greatest player to ever play the game. Fittingly, The Great One chose 1999 as the year to retire. Wayne scored a career low 9 goals and career low 62 points, but finished his illustrious career with the 2nd best points per game average of any NHL player in history at 1.92 points per game. This is where this story gets interesting. At this point both Mario Lemieux and Gretzky were retired with Lemieux holding down first place with the best points per game average at 2.01. At this point Mario was leading Gretzky by a small margin of 0.09 points per game. Mario Lemieux came out of retirement and ended the 2000-01 season with a career average of 1.99 pts per game then ended the 2001-02 season at 1.97 pts per game. Mario ended the 2002-03 season at 1.92 career pts per game and finally ended the 2003-04 season at 1.91 pts per game. Lemieux did not play the next year due to the Owner's Lockout. Mario was still in the pts per game lead over Gretzky by 0.01. Mario decided to come back briefly for the 2005-06 season to help mentor a young phenom by the name of Sydney Crosby. Mario's points per game career average fell to 1.88 after his final season, giving Gretzky a record that Wayne did not have when he retired. Each and every NHL team retired the number 99 as a tribute to Wayne Gretzky's career. Wayne played his last ever game at Madison Square Garden in New York on April 18th, 1999. Wayne wins his 5th career Lady Byng Trophy as the leagues most sportsmanlike player in his last NHL season. This series featured no Gretzky stickers. His points per game ratio for his last season was 0.89 which for some players would be an amazing season. For Gretzky, this was a career low.