
SPORTS MEMORABILIA COVERS A WIDE AREA

Most people associate sports memorabilia with sports such as baseball and football. However, there are many other areas of sports that provide an avenue for collectibles. Nascar racing, for instance, is a sport with thousands of fans to say the least. Fans from all over the world enjoy the thrill of the race and the items associated with it. Then there are sports like wrestling, fishing, motorcycling, biking, Olympic sports, hockey, tennis, boxing, baseball, and many more.

People fight for and fight over things an important sports figure may have signed, touched, used, thrown into a crowd, sold, or donated. There have been greedy and ruthless adults who have such an obsession they would beat a child out of their moment of glory by trying to shove them out of the way when something would be thrown into a crowd.

Children can be avid collectors of sports memorabilia. What might begin as a gift from a loved one, a chance to actually meet a player in person at a game, or a child seeing how much a parent idolized a famous sports figure could start a lifelong adventure into collecting. Sometimes a collection is a shared passion between parent and child, a bonding point that they both cherish.

For those new to the indulgence of collecting sports memorabilia, there is a book called 'Sports Memorabilia for Dummies' which might be a big help. Pete Williams and Gary Carter are the authors. There is probably even someone who collects the series of books written for so-called 'dummies', which was meant to put a comical spin on things for someone who needed a more down-to-earth explanation of how something works.

The largest private collection known of baseball artifacts was one held by New York Yankees fan Barry Halper. He was a minority owner of the Yankees. He began to sell off his collection in the late 1990's. One of the more valuable items in his collection was a glove used by Lou Gehrig in his last game which brought \$387,500! Another item owned by Halper was a glove used in 1960 by Mickey Mantle, which brought \$239,000.

A collection of sports memorabilia often overlooked by the majority of fans is that of postage stamps. These delight stamp collectors and sports fans alike. A friend of my husband once had a girlfriend who collected stamps. I naively offered to help, knowing nothing of stamp collecting. I began pulling stamps off envelopes to mail to her. She wrote back upon receipt, thanking me but advising that the stamps be cut out of the envelope was I to continue to 'help'. I'd sent useless items by ruining their condition. Even though the stamps were used, there was still a certain guideline to keeping them valuable.

Just the amount of sports memorabilia sold during the Olympics alone is phenomenal. People who attend these events buy for themselves as well as for loved ones who were unable to attend. Of course, the towns or cities where the events are held make their own fortune off their local souvenirs, so joy of financial gain is spread into yet another area.