

NHL, NHLPA Announce Multi-Year Trading Card Deals with Upper Deck, Panini

Written by Maury Brown
Wednesday, 24 March 2010 19:57



The National Hockey League Players' Association (NHLPA) and National Hockey League (NHL®) today announced multi-year trading card license agreements with Panini America and The Upper Deck Company.

"The NHLPA is excited to renew our long-term partnership with Upper Deck and to welcome Panini into the hockey trading card marketplace," said Adam Larry, NHLPA Director of Licensing. "We look forward to working with both of these companies to provide quality NHL player products and exciting new choices for fans and collectors of all ages."

"Having considered the input from all stakeholders, we have concluded that a semi-exclusive model would bring customer choice, revive legacy brands and add new and innovative products and marketing initiatives that appeal to all consumer segments," said Dave McCarthy, Vice President of Integrated Marketing, NHL.

"Upper Deck is very pleased to continue its 20-year trading card partnership with the NHLPA and the NHL," said Richard McWilliam, Upper Deck's Founder and CEO. "Since 2005, through its exclusive partnership with the NHLPA and the NHL, Upper Deck has taken the category and Upper Deck's hockey brands to unimaginable levels. For the past 20 years, Upper Deck has been the only licensed company consistently producing NHL trading cards. We will continue to

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deliver high-end excitement and innovation and I am happy to say, our best is yet to come.”

“Panini is delighted to be extending its partnership with both the NHLPA and NHL to produce trading cards; this further establishes Panini’s strategy to rapidly become the most comprehensive publisher of trading cards domestically and enhance the presence of North American sports,” said Mark Warsop, CEO Panini America, Inc. “We are extremely excited about growing hockey trading card sales through our extensive marketing programs, and by bringing back heritage brands such as Zenith, Score and Crown Royale.”

For Upper Deck, this announcement marks a new chapter in a 20-year partnership with the NHL and the NHLPA, one that saw Upper Deck operate as the exclusive NHL player trading card manufacturer since the 2005-06 NHL season. For Panini, it means the introduction to hockey of new brands such as Adrenalyn and Certified, and the return to the hockey market of some hobby favourites issued under previous Donruss, Score, Pinnacle and Pacific licenses.

The 2010-11 NHL trading card season is scheduled to launch this August with the release of Victory from Upper Deck, while Panini has tentatively marked Score as its first release under the new license.

Source: NHL, NHLPA

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