

First Baseball

by
Mike Prero

[Text is from Match Folder News, October 1936; note, though, that I have substituted the current listing of 800 for the original 796 listing that actually ran with the 1936 article]

“Chosen by the most noted collectors, representing a tremendous array of star covers, the First Baseball Match Folder series coasts to an easy victory over all competitors as the greatest series in existence today. To clinch the title it presents these facts: it is the largest series known, the aggregate value of all its covers exceeds that of all other series and, further, a more complete coverage of a single field would be an almost super human feat.

Placed on sale in 1934, this series, containing records thru 1933, consists of 796 different covers - 199 individuals each shown on four differently colored covers: blue, green, orange, and red. Each cover has the player's picture in a square silver frame on the face, his name and team on the middle fold and his record, together with the distinguishing crossed bats, glove and ball, on the back. The friction strip identifies The Diamond Match Company as the manufacturer.

The following players are known to exist, each, remember, in the four colors: blue, green, orange, and red:

-Adams, Earl	-Berger, Walter “Wally”	-Burns, Irving (Jack)
-Allen, Ethan	-Berres, Ray	-Bush, Guy “Joe”
-Auker, Eldon L.	-Berry, Charlie	-Camilli, Adolph
-Baker, Delmar David	-Betts, Walter M. “Huck”	-Cantwell, Ben
-Bartell, Richard “Dick”	-Birkofer, Ralph	-Carleton, Tex
-Beck, Walter	-Blaeholder, George F.	-Carroll, Own
-Bell, Herman	-Bottomley, Jim	-Chiozza, Louis
-Benge, Ray	-Boyle, Ralph	-Clark, Watson
-Benton, Larry J.	-Brandt, Ed	-Collins, James A.
-Berger, Louis W.	-Brennan, Don	-Collins, Phil

-Connolly, Edward J.	-Haid, Harold A.	-Mc Nair, Eric
-Coombs, Raymond F.	-Haines, Jesse	-Medwick, Joe
-Cramer, Roger	-Hale, Odell A.	-Mooney, Jim
-Crawford, Clifford	-Hallahan, Bill	-Moore, Joe
-Critz, Hugh M.	-Hamlin, Luke D.	-Moore, Randy
-Crowder, Alvin	-Hansen, Roy	-Morrisey, Joe
-Cuccinello, Tony	-Harder, Melvin	-Mowry, Joseph
-Cuyler, Hazen "Kiki"	-Hartnett, Gabby	-Muller, Fred W.
-Davis, Virgil	-Harris, William M.	-Mungo, Van
-Dean, Jerome "Dizzy"	-Hendrick, Harvey	-Myatt, Glenn
-Dean, Paul	-Herman, Floyd "Babe"	-Nelson, Lynn
-Delker, Edward	-Herman, William	-Oana, Henry
-Derringer, Paul	-Hogan, J. Francis	-O'Doul, Lefty
-De Santel, Eugene	-Hogsett, Elan	-O'Farrel, Robert
-Dietrich, William J.	-Hoyt, Waite	-Orsatti, Ernest
-Doljack, Frank J.	-Hubbell, Carl	-Ostermieller, Fritz R.
-Durham, Edward F.	-Johnson, Silas K.	-Ott, Melvin
-Durocher, Leo	-Johnson, Sylvester	-Parmelee, Roy
-Elliott, Jim	-Joiner, Roy M.	-Perkins, Ralph
-English, Charles D.	-Jordan, Baxter	-Pytlak, Frank
-English, Elwood G.	-Jorgens, Arndt	-Quigley, Ernest C.
-Ferrel, Richard	-Jurges, William F.	-Rensa, George
-Ferrell, Wesley	-Kennedy, Vernon	-Rice, Harry
-Fischer, Charles W.	-Kerr, John F.	-Roetger, Walter
-Fitzsimmons, Freddy	-Klein, Charles "Chuck"	-Rogell, William G.
-Fonseca, Lew	-Kleinhans, Theodore	-Rommell, Edwin A.
-Frankhouse, Fred	-Klem, Bill	-Root, Charlie
-Frederick, John	-Kline, Robert G.	-Rothrock, John
-Frey, Benny	-Knickerbocker, William	-Russell, Jack
-Frey, Linus	-Knott, Jack H.	-Ryan, Blondy
-Frisch, Frankie	-Koenig, Mark	-Schacht, Alexander (Al)
-Fullis, Chick	-Lawrence, William	-Schulmerick, Wesley
-Galan, August	-Lee, Thornton S.	-Sewell, Truett B.
-Galatzer, Milton	-Lee, William C. "Bill"	-Slade, Gordon
-Galehouse, Dennis W.	-Leonard, Emil	-Smith, Bob
-Gaston, Milton	-Lombardi, Ernest	-Solters, Julius J.
-Gehringer, Chas.	-Lopez, Alfonso	-Spencer, Glenn
-Gharrity, Edward P.	-Lucas, Red	-Spohrer, Al
-Gibson, George	-Lyons, Ted	-Stainback, George
-Goldstein, Isadore	-Mac Fayden, Daniel	-Stark, Albert "Dolly"
-Gowdy, "Hank"	-Madjeski, Ed.	-Stengle, Casey
-Grace, Earl	-Mahaffey, Le Roy	-Stephenson, Riggs
-Grimm, Charles (Bust)	-Malone, Pat	-Stewart, Walter C.
-Grimm, Charles (Reach)	-Mangum, Leo	-Storti, Lin
-Grube, Frant T.	-Maranville, Rabbitt	-Stout, Allen (Fish Hooks)
-Gyselman, Richard	-Marrow, Charles K.	-Stripp, Joe
-Hack, Stanley C.	-Mc Kechnie, William	-Suhr, Gus
-Hadley, Irving	-Mc Laughlin, Justin	-Sullivan, Billy, Jr.
-Hafey, Charles "Chick"	-Mc Manus, Marty	-Tate, Benny

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| -Taylor, Danny | -Vargez, John L. | -White, Joyner |
| -Thevenow, Tommy | -Walker, Gerald (Jerry) | -Whitney, Arthur |
| -Tinning, Bud | -Walker, William H. | -Wilson, James |
| -Travis, Cecil | -Waner, Lloyd | -Wilson, Lewis (Hack) |
| -Twogood, Forest F. | -Waner, Paul | -Winegarner, Ralph L. |
| -Urbanski, Bill | -Warnecke, Lon | -Zachary, Thomas |
| -Vance, Dazzy | -Warstler, Harold B. | |
| -Veltman, Arthur | -Werber, Bill | |

This set today is almost impossible to complete, no complete set is known, and only a most exhaustive search thru all collections could net one. If anyone ever completes the set--and many are trying--he may well be proud, for the odds are against it, and it is almost certain he will miss on some player or color. Nearly all of these books have been sold early in 1935, the majority by fall of 1934. The huge size of the series, as well as the small number of collectors at the time, are among the factors which make this the hardest of all sets to complete. Any valuation we might give this set complete would be purely a guess, subject to correction, since there is no such thing as a complete set, but it is our belief, based on the total cost of purchasing covers, (price plus postage), that a complete set would be worth--hold your seats--\$25.00. That figure is conservative in that even if you offered that price there's no dealer to supply you, and if you try to accumulate them by buying from collectors, you'll soon find that the price you pay, plus postage, makes \$25.00 sound reasonable. Values of individual covers can't as yet be established, as we have no way of determining the rarer, but they are usually rated at only 1 or 2 cents. This is because covers in a complete set would be practically double in value as a complete set, whereas fragments of a set are owned by nearly all collectors, and are, accordingly, less valuable.

Concerning the covers themselves. - in 1933, 188 of those pictured were active major league players -

to-day just 116 are active. Of these, about half are with the same team, a reflection on the uncertainties of baseball and proof that this set clearly has historical value. Eleven weren't active players. - three were managers, five coaches, and three umpires - those retain their positions. The greatest man in baseball at the time this set was issued is, unfortunately it seems, missing. Naturally we refer to "Babe Ruth". What a thrill this series would give the next generation of baseball followers, but how much greater it would be if Babe Ruth were included! The ever-prominent "Dizzy" Dean is included.

It will be interesting to note as future series are issued (two already are, the last one still incomplete, but both will be reviewed in future issues of MFN) which players continue thru all series, which drop out and who the newcomers are. Truly, this and succeeding baseball series offer not only the collector, but all of baseball's enthusiasts a wonderful opportunity to preserve a complete, accurate, and interesting baseball history - and illustrated, too.

