

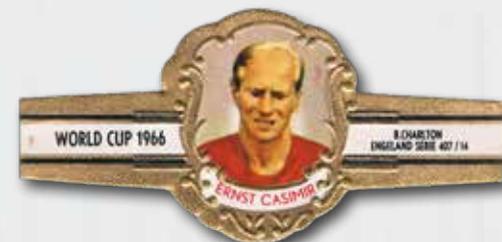
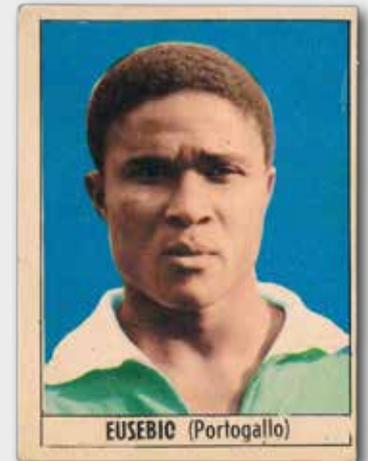
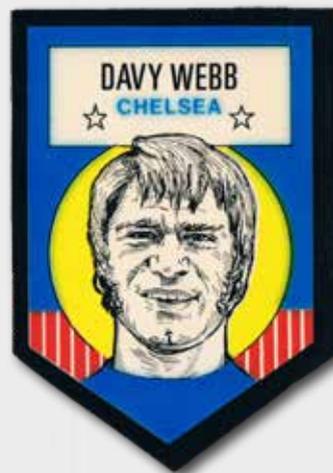


An A to Z of

Football Collectibles

Priceless Cigarette Cards and Sought-after Soccer Stickers

CARL WILKES



As featured on ITV1's *Stuck On You: The Football Sticker Story* by Fosse Films

An A to Z of
Football Collectibles

Precious Football Cards and
Sought-After Soccer Stickers

CARL WILKES

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Dedicated to Joss

This book would not be were it not for the initial gifts of tea cards, and stickers given by Nan, in the early 1970s; and the 1974 World Cup FKS album given by Mom; Bee's collectibles gene; Potter's style, enthusiasm and Roxy support (Ferry grateful); Owl's weekly flights to Aston Villa (and hoots at Aldridge cricket club); and Berk's daft but endless empathy, and his highly entertaining lessons in how to grow up without following the quotidian. Pippa Moth & pencil-top fruitmen Gra. Fine memories of West Brom toy fairs and steam rollers! J&G.

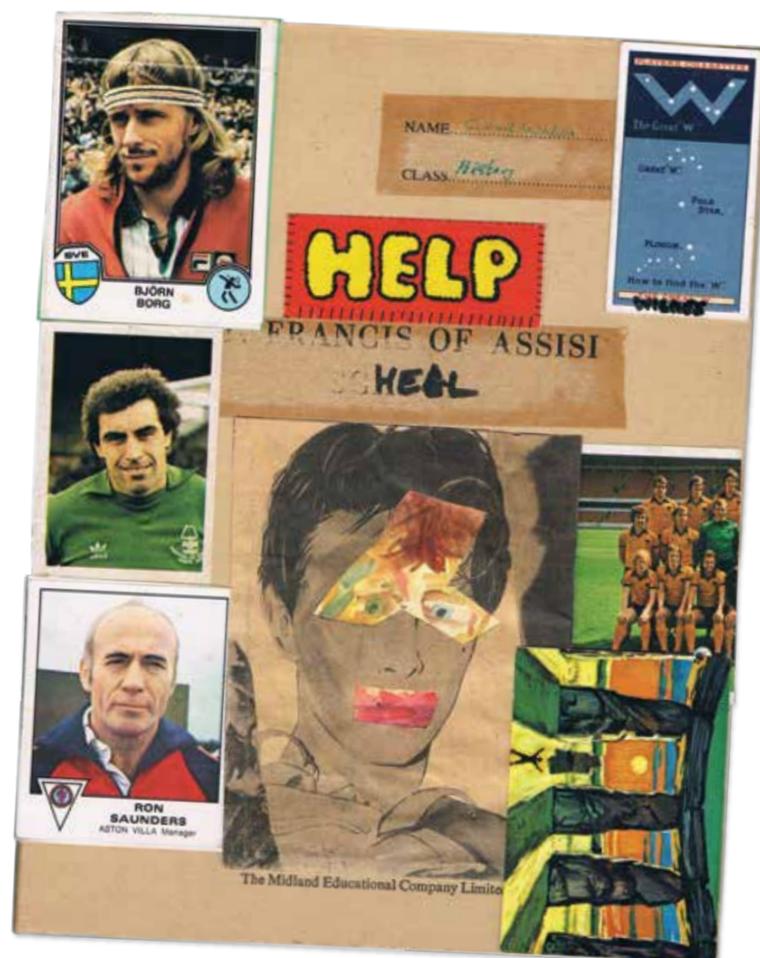
This writer knew many of the great card collectors of the Twentieth Century, wonderful characters, one and all: former soldiers, erstwhile secret agents (no kidding), former models (women, not men), stars (pop and film) and statisticians (the non-football type); gentlemen of leisure and lounge lizards too. It's to them that this book is co-dedicated, in particular, to the original smoking man, Don Mayne, a personal hero in cards; and to Harry Richards, artist at large in a small loft; and to all who contributed to the journal, Football Card Collector Magazine, during the 1990s, including John (RIP), Roy Davies (Wolves), Peris Hatton (FKS), Neville (Cambrian), Peter (Burnley), Bill (Baines) and Alan Jenkins (FCIE).

In acknowledgement of the artists and photographers, without whom the cards we enjoy would not be, this writer is thankful to the players of the past. With gratitude, their images are respectfully included in this book. Thanks to the publishers of the cards of yore, and the issuers of the stickers of yesteryear. It's now nigh on impossible to trace the original artists

Carl Wilkes

of cards made in the 1950s, not to mention the 1880s. Photographers of images from cards of the 1960s are often long gone, and those behind the cards of the 1920s have departed without trace, but they are celebrated herein. This writer has tried to contact the various issuers of cards shown in this book but most firms are long since defunct. Thanks to those from whom positive and encouraging replies were received.

This writer grew up with a passion for film and media, and he studied these things at university, and well beyond; into television news and the press, specialising in picture research. From news to design this writer eventually landed in publishing and issued Football Card Collector Magazine. Thanks to Garry Daynes for keeping that journal alive for the last twenty years. Thanks to Tim Davidson; to Programme Monthly and everyone who helped share publicity for this book. Highest regards to Rey Bowen, this writer's first published author (Kamite eschatology & valve record players); The Lioness; Jeremy Cantwell, playwright; and to Gibby, World Serpent; Andy at Fosse Films;



Hell and stickers, season 1981/82

Sunflower, Red Skelton bridge; Robert for Murtology and Tudor wear-em, scare-ems; to Blue (the search for ephemera and antiques goes on) and to dear Poin, now sailing a star but never far. The book is dedicated to Joss. She knows why.

Special thanks to Martin Routledge, author of *The Beautiful Badge*, for the introduction to Pitch Publishing. Thanks to Jane and Paul for publishing this book; and thanks to Duncan, Matt and Ciaran, at Olnor Pro Sport Media, for its beauty.



Goodies of Bristol, 1973, World Cup cards, uncut sheet, detail

Introduction

This is the first book of its kind. It seems a little odd, to be the first, because what this book is about – football cards – have been around for almost 150 years.

Footballers have been pictured on trade cards since the 1880s, and on stickers since the 1910s. Little, sticky pictures of soccer stars and cards of footer teams have found their way into most homes in Europe, and the Americas, at some time or other. The cards included in this book are mostly from Great Britain and Western Europe, however, it also includes soccer cards of note from countries further afield. So, this is not only the first illustrated history of soccer cards from around the world, it is also the first price guide for football cards. While some cards have been shown in other publications, those books have been about other things, like memorabilia; or particular themes, like one-club histories; or books on the story of contemporary stickers. This book's focus is on trade cards, including cigarette cards, trading cards and stickers, from around the world, issued from 1880 until 1980.

So, what is a trade card, and is it the same thing as a trading card? You may have heard of trading cards. You are less likely to have heard of trade cards, even though you probably owned them at some time or other. A trade card is a card that is given with a product, a thing that is issued by one of the trades. It's that simple. You may know what a cigarette card is. Cigarette cards are but one type of trade card. They are issued by the tobacco trade. Whether it is tobacco (cigarettes, rolling tobacco, cigars, snuff, etc.), confectionery (chocolates, sweets, gum, etc.), print media (magazines, comics, newspapers, etc.), toys (games, football figurines, lucky bags, etc.), foodstuffs (breakfast cereals, gravy granules,

cheese, etc.) or beverages (beer, tea, coffee, etc.), all are trades, and all issue trade cards with their various produce and brands.

In the past, trades gave away cards to entice and to encourage the purchase of their products. They were often aimed at children because the young have a powerful influence over the old: *'I want one!'* Trade cards are still made. They are given away, freely, because they are very useful little advertising tools. They implant the name of a brand into a young and impressionable person's head, where it stays for life. When seen they remind adults about a particular marque, or a brand. Trade cards have come to be collected but collecting was never their reason for being. Trade cards are, therefore, very different to trading cards.

Trading cards, in contrast to trade cards, were designed for collecting, and swapping – or trading, as it's known in America. Such cards are not usually sold with products, though a packet of trading cards, or a packet of stickers, may be given away with a magazine, or a newspaper, to advertise the release of a new series of such cards. Stickers that are sold in packets, like the ones made by Panini, are synonymous with trading cards. Though stickers are designed to be glued into an album, sticker doubles, or swaps, are traded with other sticker collectors. Trade cards cost little to make. They are good little earners for their issuers.

Modern trading cards, and stickers, tend to be made in much higher numbers than trade cards. This is partly due to product and popularity, but mostly it's due to distribution. The major brands of trading cards and stickers are distributed nationally, with blanket coverage in all areas, even in the remotest corners of the land. The multinationals, which now own the brands of yesterday, also own distribution networks. They

may also own some media, like newspapers, TV news or internet platforms. It wasn't always so. In the past there was more competition. Manufacturers vied for a patch, for influence, and for distribution. One publisher might have good distribution in the west, another in the north, while others popped up here and there, all over the place. In the 1970s there were many different firms making diverse collections of football stickers, and cards. It's a scene that is unlikely to be enjoyed again. Like the game of Monopoly made clear: winner takes all. Capitalism ends with one or two super rich players having the lot. The rest, the majority, have to lump it. So much for the lullaby of competition bringing down prices and offering more choice!

Trading cards are still collected by the packet but nowadays stickers are often bought by the carton – a box full of 100 packets! Generally there are more trading cards in circulation than trade cards, and trade cards are often rarer, and more valuable than trading cards. Not always, but mostly. Whereas contemporary trading cards are collected for the sake of collecting, trading cards of the 1890s were very different ephemera. Some cards were designed for playing games, while others were gambled away in the hope of winning prizes. Victorian trading cards were sent back to the issuer for prize draws and competitions. Lucky collectors would receive footballs or sports clothing, in return for their cards. Unlucky collectors simply lost their collections, and the issuer would reuse the forfeit cards, in newly sealed packets, to be sold anew from his shop, or from his horse-drawn wagon. Imagine that! A door-to-door football cards service. A man, a horse and a cart, with a monkey, to boot, selling cards. And we think we have it all!

The values in this book have been arrived at by assessing sales data collected over the last 25 years. The data has been collected, first and foremost, by recording prices paid in hundreds of public and postal auction sales, since 1995. Secondly, the prices paid in thousands of internet auctions have also been recorded, since 2010. Thirdly, values have been recorded from so-called *wants lists*. These are wish lists made by collectors, with prices they offer for cards they require. Collectors make such lists because finding rare cards needs a lot of help. Wants lists often include offers for cards that remain on the run, at large, and otherwise unavailable. One collector, in particular, presently promises prices in the thousands, for cards he requires.

The values are given in ranges, for example, £5 to £10, or £20 to £30, because cards from the same set, though issued at the same time, may have very different values. This is partly due to team and player popularity, with bigger clubs having more collectors, but it is also to do with certain collecting habits that suit some sellers, like the sale of rookie

cards, the first cards to feature a famous player, from early in his or her career.

Collectors collect all sorts of cards. Some seek brands, others search for marques. Most football card collectors chase teams or particular players. Others buy end-number cards (card number 1, and whatever the last number card in a set happens to be), or rookies. Accordingly, sellers price such cards to suit the market. To some extent value is in the eye of the coveter even more than that of the possessor. It seems this way with rare cards. Every sale seems to increase values.

The manufacturing of card consumers, the shaping of how buyers buy, is a money-making machination that suits some sellers. Good advice is, collect and buy what appeals to you, and don't believe you ought to buy rookie cards, or other commercial conceits like slabbed cards, no matter what sellers tell you will be best for the future. Their future?

While this book may encourage a storm of sales, a new wave of collectors, or a surge in

values, it ought to be remembered that prices may go down, as well as up. This author asserts that rare cards are valuable assets but having the right cards is the key. How do you find the right cards? The appendices at the end of this book include tips for buyers, and sellers. Garry Daynes sells cards by post; Loddon Auctions and Tim Davidson Auctions both sell and buy cards by auction; and Alan Jenkins is your man for sharing cards information about modern cards and cards of auld. Contact details for this super league of gentlemen will be found in the appendices at the back of this book. For cards by internet, sales and purchases, see the websites below.

The images included in this book are from this writer's private collection, except where credited otherwise. Many more images of cards not seen here can be viewed at

www.rarecards.co.uk and at www.footballsoccercards.com



Over 100 years old, British football cards

1972 BAB sticker of Derek Dougan

Introduction to football cards

The football card has been a thing of fascination for well over 100 years. It's also an asset of some worth. Football cards have been collected, swapped, traded and resold, not only as beautiful and historical collectibles, but as investments too.

This writer's first footballer cards were given with bubblegum, circa 1971, when packets of gum cost tuppence (see: A&BC Gum). Cards bought for two pennies in 1971 have become worth up to £5 each! The discarded packets from those cards are now worth up to £50 each, and the box from which they were distributed, the container that sat on the shelf in the newsagent's shop, is now worth £250! Not bad for squandered pocket money, wasted in the best of George Best ways, as wailed bemoaning parents of those days.

These prices are peanuts when compared to what collectors in America have been paying for their sports cards. Since the 1990s American sports cards regularly sell for up to, and well over, a million US dollars each! In Europe prices remain much lower, at least for now. In the British Isles prices still enjoy a quaintly old fashioned affordability. This is also known as 'the early days'. Inexpensive British and European cards are now attracting more and more buyers from America, as well as Monaco and the oil-rich Middle Eastern states. Very rare cards are one of the assets they seek. While rare cards may be available today, this may not be the case for long. Prices are expected to rise, and quite sharply in some cases. Very rare cards are already in limited



Avant-garde, women's football stickers were issued in France, in 1978

supply, and many simply cannot be bought, no matter how much money a buyer is prepared to pay! There remains a window of opportunity for acquiring very rare soccer cards of yesteryear, but it's a closing aperture. However, it comes with a warning: defenestration is possible.

A so-called limited edition card from the 1990s is a readily available resource when compared to vintage cards of genuine rarity, like an A&BC Gum checklist, with Liverpool, from 1964; a Batger football clubs colours trade card, of Manchester City, from 1900; or a scarce News Chronicle card of a Heart of Midlothian player, from the 1950s. Vintage and antique cards like these are much rarer than any contemporary conceit, no matter the marketing claims of sharp executives and the glossy public relations ads they buy to tempt you to believe. There are dealers holding stocks of recently made so-called limited edition cards but there are no dealers holding stocks of an antique card of great rarity. You'll see very costly cards of Messi and Zidane, cards that are called 'mega-rare', but you won't see a 1905 Baines card of Billy Meredith, or a 1900 Sharpe's card of Steve Bloomer, to name but two great

players of their day. For every one 1896 Charles Fry you'll see 1,000 rookie stickers of Mbappe for sale (and there are probably many more behind closed doors).

Cards and stickers made since 1980 may become rare, in time. Before 1980 no one thought such things would become worth a lot of money. Cards were neither contrived as limited editions, nor as collectibles. They were considered as marketing gimmicks, or as cheap toys. When a 1970s series of cards was out of date the remaining stock was destroyed. That no longer



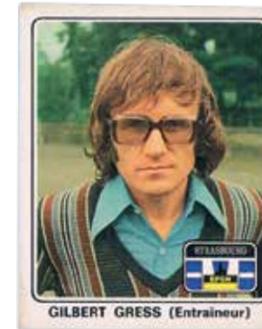
Joe Baker on an Italian gum card. It cost about a penny, it's now worth up to £100

happens. The great divide is the 1980s. Cards from before the 1980s are generally rarer, and often worth more, than cards from after the 1980s. Not always but mostly. This book evaluates cards from the earlier period, from before the 1980s. Further back in time, before World War Two, cigarette cards were collected, typically by adults. Due to millions of cigarette cards being well cared for, and passed on by parents to children, many have survived until today, and they are quite easily available. Trade cards, on the other hand, were issued in much smaller numbers, and were played with by children. They were issued as early as the 1880s yet were not typically collected by adults until the 1950s. Trade cards have been less well understood than cigarette cards because of the number and types of trade cards issued. They were made by all sorts of publishers, small and large, far and wide. They were harder to collect because they were issued with diverse products, from comics to ice cream, from gravy powder to sweets, from gum to newspapers, meaning it was not possible to know by whom, where, or when, or how often they were published. Tobacco cards were easier to track, and to collect. They came from one source, the tobacconist, by whom smokers were kept informed of newly issued collections. Conversely, most trade cards were destined for youngsters. Those that were not acquired with toys or sweets were often bought by mothers, the housewives of family homes in those days, and thus found their way into children's hands, from food products opened in the kitchen, thence played with, damaged, lost or destroyed. Cards that survived such rigours are now sought by serious collectors, many of whom are willing to pay highly for cards they seek.

The cards shown and evaluated in this book are bought by people from across the wealth divide. The buyers of cards are often collectors of football club ephemera and memorabilia but recently a new market has emerged. People are now buying cards as alternative assets.



Valentino Mazzola rookie card, from 1946. Priceless



1978 Panini, Gilbert Gress, looking very...1970s!



A 1920s Celtic Tango Toffee card. It's now worth £200



1920s Spanish football card



In 2016 the highest selling cigarette card in history made over \$3million! In 2014 a rare postage stamp sold for around \$10million! A rare coin also topped \$10million, in 2013. The rarest postcard sold for considerably less, but still, at \$30k it's not to be sniffed at. The rarest trade cards are as rare, and probably much rarer, than many rare postcards. So, it's not surprising that trade and tobacco cards are in popular demand, and prices are rising sharply in some cases.

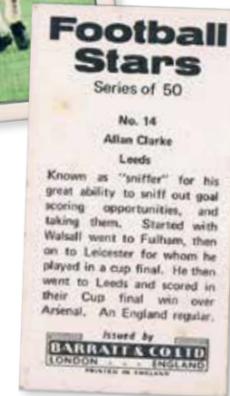
There are more soccer fans than stamp collectors, yet, until now, most football fans have not realised that relics from their favourite sport may be worth as much, or more, than rare stamps. Stamps sell for thousands, daily. You can check the figures on internet auction sites. There are endless choices of rare stamps on Ebay, up to prices of a million each! The rarest football cards are just as scarce as rare stamps, and they may even be rarer! Only now are people starting to realise this.

For some, collecting cards is primarily about lost-in-time images, forgotten social history, having rare ephemera, and supporting a football team which is reflected in those cards. The miniature pictures give visual pleasure, and contentment comes through their acquisition. It takes time to compile a collection. Rare cards cannot simply be bought. They take effort and patience. Given a million pounds to find a Wood Brothers card in the next 24 hours most, probably all people would fail to buy one. There are not many things you simply cannot buy. No matter how much money you have rare cards are in that exquisite category and they take guile to acquire.

Some buyers worry about putting money into paper goods. Like keeping books, or any kind of collection, scarves, bags, stamps, clothing, records,

or jewels, there are risks. Other than metal coins most collectibles are all too easily damaged or lost in destructive accidents. Then again burglars take coins, and jewellery, and maybe even stamp albums, but not many burglars would give a thought to carrying off heavy albums full of soccer cards. Most people do not appreciate the value of such things.

The savour of capture and the pleasure of acquisition is what collecting is all about. Collecting is a contemporary form of hunting and that's what human beings are: hunters and gatherers. When it's not essential to hunt for food, or for shelter, the innate hunting instinct in humankind is turned to other things. Commerce knows this. At leisure we gather art, antiques, old



Allan Clarke, 1974 sweet cigarettes card

toys and collectibles but multinationals and corporations prefer we spend our money on them, on their gadgets, their new cars, on handbags with expensive labels, the latest phone, etc. Collectibles and antiques trump those things because collectibles and antiques have more value, over time, than gizmos, gadgets and new consumer products, which lose half their value on the day you buy

them. The maxim, buy what you like and not what you expect to go up in value, is a good one, but buying cleverly is part of the trick. Buy so you can at least get the ticket price back, or so that you can make a trade for similar or better value, if need be.

Antique cards are historical

artefacts. History is not what's found in the results generated by a search engine. History is found in objects that date from a time in the past, in beautiful things that cannot be reproduced, and in the lies the victor writes. Victors and vanquished aside, antiques are popular for good reason. Once anything has limited availability it accrues value, a little like gold. It could be argued that cards cannot do anything, that they can't be used as food or as energy. The same goes for gold. It's still worth a lot. Limited supply garners value. When something is limited there is always someone who wants some of it.

Hobbies and interests, especially those that demand a certain application of mind, patience and wit, are also very good for you. Some say they are as good as medicine. People who pursue interests like collecting often live longer and healthier lives than people who retire with nothing to do. Younger people, who start collections early, often end up with assets of enormous worth. Cards bring pleasure, peace of mind, a little Zen, and endless fun. It's about what makes you feel good, and, in this stressful world, a moment of calm is priceless.

This book does not offer investment advice. This writer wishes to make clear that though he has not lost a penny with vintage cards it's a chancy game of fortune, and it is possible to lose, and prices do fluctuate. Modern cards are a gamble, and older cards can be bought unwisely by the unlearned. However, buying the right antique cards seems a lot more sensible than buying today's throw-away culture knick knacks, and similar show-the-neighbour-how-I-wasted-my-money mass market consumer products. These things will end up on an unwanted table at next year's jumble sale.



Southampton



Manager: Ted Bates
Address: The Dell, Milton Road, Southampton SO9 4XX
Telephone: Southampton 23408
Ground Capacity: 30,000
Record Attendance: 31,064 v Tottenham H., Oct. 1 October, 1969
Year Formed: 1885
Colours: Red and white striped shirts, black shorts
Nickname: Saints
Turned Professional: 1885
Playing Area: 110 x 72

**PLACE SUPERSTAR
RON DAVIES
STAMP HERE**

Now firmly established as a leading First Division club, Southampton struggled for the first two seasons after gaining promotion from Division Two. Champions of the Third Division in 1960, they gained further promotion in 1966 with Manchester City. A great club for producing their own players, especially forwards, skipper Terry Paine, Martin Chivers and Mike Chapman are three recent examples. Southampton have never won the F.A. Cup, but were semi-finalists in 1963, losing 1-0 to Manchester United, the eventual winners, at Villa Park. Two years ago the Saints qualified for the European Fair Cup but were unable to make much progress in the competition. Last season again saw them with some fine results in a bid to bring European soccer to the Dell.

Tottenham Hotspur



Manager: W. E. Nicholson
Coach: Eddie Bailey
Address: 748 High Road, Tottenham N. 17
Telephone: 01 608 1020
Ground Capacity: 58,000
Record Attendance: 76,038 v Sunderland F.A. Cup March 1938
Year Formed: Approx. 1882
Colours: White shirts, blue shorts
Nickname: Spurs
Turned Professional: 1885.

**PLACE SUPERSTAR
ALAN MULLERY
STAMP HERE**

Last season's League Cup winners, Tottenham's great League and Cup stable in 1961 has stood as a testimony to a magnificent team. Twice League Champions, in 1951 and 1961, they have also won the F.A. Cup on five occasions, in 1901, 1921, 1961, 1962 and 1967, and have the enviable record of never having lost a Wembley final after beating Aston Villa 2-0 in the League Cup last season. In addition, they became the first English club to win a major European trophy, being victorious in the Cup Winners Cup in 1963. Always on the lookout for new players, Tottenham built a reputation as the highest spenders in the Football League, but the introduction of some of their own discoveries into the side over the past few seasons has proved that they can produce their own stars.

Stoke City



Manager: Tony Wadlington
Coach: Alan A'Court
Address: Victoria Ground, Stoke on Trent
Telephone: Stoke on Trent 44650
Ground Capacity: 50,500
Record Attendance: 51,380 v Arsenal Div. 1 March 1937
Year Formed: 1863
Colours: Red and white striped shirts, white shorts
Nickname: Porters

**PLACE SUPERSTAR
GORDON BANKS
STAMP HERE**

Beaten F.A. Cup semi-finalists last season, Stoke lost an equalising penalty to Arsenal in the last minute of the match at Hillsborough, and were then beaten 2-0 in the replay. Division Two champions in 1963, Stoke have been noted over the years for their tendency to buy established stars. Under their manager Tony Wadlington this system seems to be now changing, and there is a good mixture of youth and experience in the Stoke City team. An attractive footballing team, they are capable of beating anyone on their day, and one of the highlights of last season was a 5-1 win over Arsenal at the Victoria Ground. With some impressive displays, Stoke showed that they will be one of the clubs to watch closely in the near future.

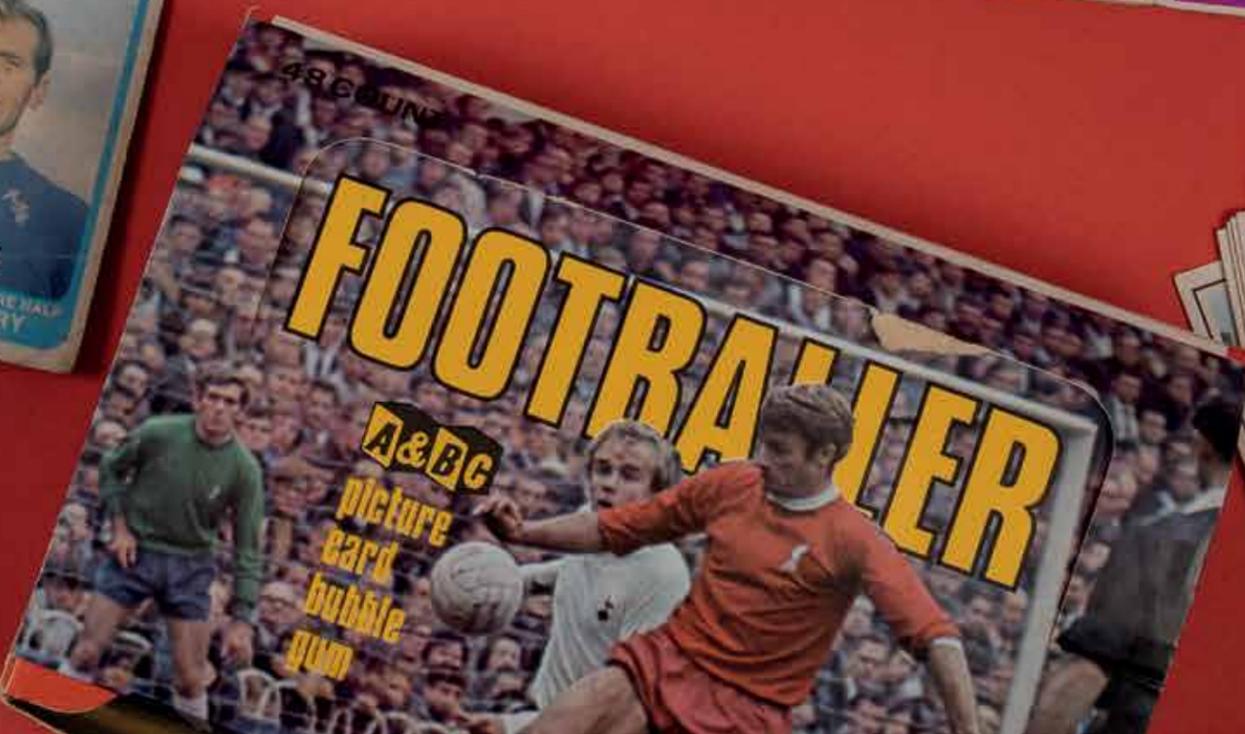
W.B.A.



Manager: Don Howe
Address: The Hawthorns, West Bromwich
Telephone: 021-653 0095
Ground Capacity: 50,000
Record Attendance: 64,815 v Arsenal F.A. Cup, 6th Rd., March 1937
Year Formed: 1879
Colours: Blue and white striped shirts, white shorts
Nickname: Albion, Throats, Baggies
Turned Professional: 1885.

**PLACE SUPERSTAR
JOHN KAYE
STAMP HERE**

One of the best Cup fighting sides of recent years, Albion struggled last season, but improved later results saw them move away from the lower regions of the league. League Champions in 1920, they have won the F.A. Cup on five occasions, in 1882, 1892, 1921, 1954 and 1968, when Jeff Astle scored an extra time goal to beat Everton. In addition, they won the League Cup in 1966, and were European finalists in 1967 and 1970. In 1969 they entered the European Cup Winners Cup, reaching the quarter-final where they lost 1-0 to Dunfermline at the Hawthorns after a goal-less draw in Scotland. Now under the new management of Don Howe, and with a young side, Albion will soon be back challenging for top honours.



American & British Gum it's not! It's as British as British can be is A&BC

Britain's best loved gum cards are those by A&BC gum. It's seemly then that the core of this book opens with them. Cigarette card collectors of yore thought A&BC stood for American & British Chewing gum but the initials are, in fact, the surnames of the directors, a group of friends from the 1940s. Soon after World War Two A&BC was incorporated as a limited company, registered in Great Britain, to sell chewing gum, the kind of gum made popular by wartime American G.I.s serving in the British Isles. Gum cards followed soon afterwards.

In the 1950s A&BC gum was sold from vending machines. In went a coin and out popped a ball of gum. A card emerged from an adjacent slot. The earliest cards typically showed film stars and singers, then sportsmen. In the 1960s vending machines were replaced by packaged confections. The cards and gum, wrapped together in colourful paper packets, were sold by newsagents, tobacconists and small grocery shops. By the 1970s A&BC had become the most successful gum cards issuer in British history. But where did it all start, and why gum cards and not stickers?

Gum cards had been issued in Great Britain long before World War Two, but not on the scale of A&BC's output. In the 1920s a chewing-and-card-collecting craze had been encouraged by an English firm called Lacey's. It printed 50 Welsh, Scottish and English footballer picture cards which were given away with its in-house creation, chewing wax [sic]. The fad was revived a few years later with Oh Boy Gum, a brand issued by British Chewing Sweets, a firm born of American gum giant Goudey, also noted for its Oh Boy Gum cards. In England, in 1933, Oh Boy Gum was issued with a fabulous series of 60 footballer cards. It was not long before other manufacturers were on the

scene. In 1938 Klene Confectionery, from Holland, issued Val Footer Gum cards of British footballers. The trend for chewing gum and collecting gum cards would surely have continued into the 1940s but for war. Holland fell in 1940 and paper rationing put paid to all and any issues of domestic cards. British presses would not roll anew for years. It would seem that 20 years of progress in cards had been lost when primitive post-war cards appeared during the 1946/47 season.

Following the destructive hiatus of war Italian, French and German cards also came to be produced once more. In Iberia it had been different. The 1940s was a time of peace in Spain. Spanish cards were more sophisticated than those made elsewhere in post-war Europe. However, American troops had not arrived in Madrid as they had in London, Rome and Berlin. No fashionable Yankee chewing gum had come to fascist Iberia. This resulted in Spanish football cards evolving in a different direction. In Spain cards were becoming soccer stickers.

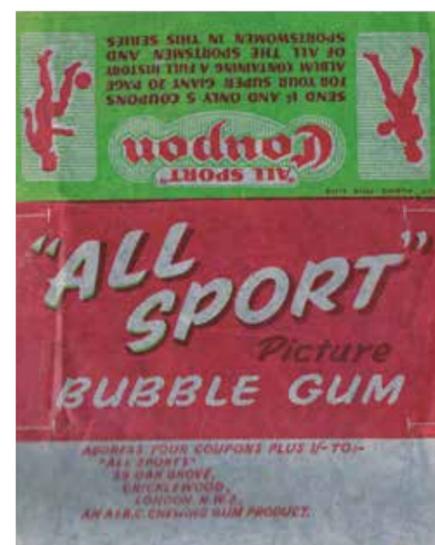
Football stickers had been published in Scotland before anywhere else in the world. They were first issued with *The People's Journal* in 1914. The English caught up in 1922 with a collection issued by *Sports Fun and Football Favourites* magazine. Other sticker collections emerged in the late 1920s and 1930s, typically issued by comics like *Adventure* and *Boys' Magazine*. However, it was a certain fraternity from Bilbao with whom the credit for modern soccer stickers rests, for the Spanish birthed FKS, the *British Soccer Stars* issuer of the ubiquitous paper football stickers of the 1970s.

The Spanish developed the sticker and the packet of stickers while other countries were going to war. After the war, during the 1946/47 season, British producers started reissuing cards.

They were sold in packets of sweets, and they also came stapled together in little booklets to be pulled apart and swapped with friends. Stickers were a long way from a renaissance in Britain! Cigarette cards, whose production had also been paused for war, were struggling to find their next breath. Tobacco cards were squeezed out of production by cost-cutting manufacturers. They were as good as finished by the time A&BC launched its first gum cards, in 1953.

The registry at Companies House in London records four men, Messrs. Aynsz, Braun and two Coakley brothers, as directors of A and BC Chewing Gum, a private company limited by shares. It was incorporated in 1949. The newly formed company allied with an eccentric home-based chemist, Oscar Janser. He'd recently had his Eureka moment. After a year inventing it he'd finally created a decent artificial chewing gum. A&BC paid him royalties for the use of his creation. The gum was similar to American chewing gum but had no need of American ingredients, and no need of ration permits. By 1950, with a ration-busting gum to call its own, A&BC were up and running. Printing cards was soon to follow. From 1953 onwards A&BC's vibrant gum card designs were often as far out as the music of the times. The colourful cards of singers and other youthful themes that graced the Rock'n'roll years morphed into spaced-out weirdness during the flower power high. Whacky designs of sheer lunacy would grace the glam rock era. As well as gum cards A&BC made stickers, tattoos, transfers, games and posters. Then, in 1974 A&BC found itself on the wrong end of a court case and lost it all to the American cards giant, Topps.

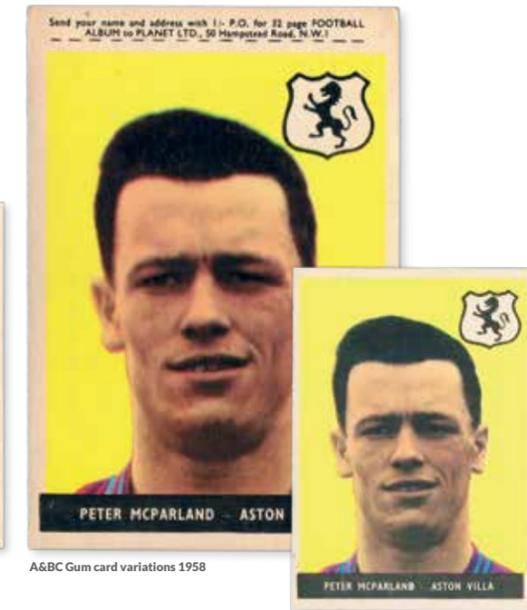
Thanks to almost five decades of card collecting, hours of research at The National Archive, and the shared knowledge of card *fiends*



A&BC Gum wrapper 1954



A&BC Gum cards 1954



A&BC Gum card variations 1958

the world over, the story of A&BC's cards is now known, yet, until the 1990s it was a piecemeal tale apocryphally carved out by careless writers who cared little for gum cards, and less still for football. As a remedy, in 1998, this author was the first publisher to print an illustrated article on the packaging and ephemera from A&BC's 21 years of soccer cards. *Football Card Collector Magazine* presented an incomplete though foundational timeline which laid a framework upon which more knowledge has since accrued. The cards, the different series, the printing anomalies and much more are now common knowledge.

Evaluating A&BC cards, as with all cards, starts with their condition. Quality is king. Near-mint A&BC cards hold a value 100 times greater than damaged cards. Values ascribed throughout this book are for cards in excellent condition. Very good cards are worth a little less, and so on... fair or average condition cards are worth less than good, and poor condition cards are worth little, if anything at all. Only the rarest of Victorian and Edwardian cards retain value in a poor state – and early A&BC wrappers!

A&BC's earliest packets looked *Gospel* but the cards inside were *Rock'n'roll*!

It was 1954 and the first football cards by A&BC appeared in a series called *All Sport*. The packets had a very sober design, which was no doubt reassuring to parents, and they contained a single card. They were racked and stacked in vending machines across the land. One waxy packet and a ball of gum were dispensed for every halfpenny coin cast into the cumbersome gum machine. Later, in the 1960s, gum vending was done from a glass bubble perched atop a metal stork seated in concrete. It looked a little like a colourful parking meter (to those for whom parking meters still mean anything) but in 1953 the gum machines looked more like oversized condom dispensers. The ugly metal boxes were affixed firmly to walls outside sweet shops. A little window into the box would show cards stacked inside, ready for purchase. Another showed a mountain of gum balls. A sample card on display filled a third glass aperture. There were various slots for coins, and for rejected money [the manufacture of home-made coins that could coin the machines was an art form]. A handle to turn, and a dispensing tray presented a satisfying A-Z test that was usually passed with flying colours. Paying-in a coin and turning the handle

encouraged an inner mechanism to entice a ball of gum to drop into a tray, where eager, dirty fingers grabbed at it. [Were those trays ever cleaned?] A pristine card, neatly wrapped in colourful waxy paper, was delivered at the same moment from an adjacent slot. One hand in the tray, the other hand on the bounty made for beautiful symmetry.

The 120 *All Sport* picture bubble gum cards of 1954 had plain backs and dull monotone photos. It didn't matter. A nation's children starved of sports gum cards since 1938 greeted these cards like old friends. Further, the novelty of collecting the coloured tokens of sportsmen, cut from the packaging, to send away for an album made up a little for what the cards lacked in creative design. These days most of the *All Sport* cards are available for less than £5 a card but you will pay plenty for an unused card of the legendary footballer, Puskas. An album with all 120 cards glued in may cost you less than that single Hungarian star. There were many albums completed so a full set glued down is not where the value lies. A single wrapper, at about £100, is the most expensive element in collecting this series, though were an advertising poster to be found, it should be worth well over £1,000!



A&BC Gum card photo variations 1958

Accompanying the cards in the vending machines was Oscar Janser's chewy stuff. The British professor's gum would come to form a billion black globs on the country's pavements. The pock-marked patina of British streets lasted for decades. By 1962 A&BC would switch from British to American gum. A deal with Topps's Bazooka gum sealed its fate.

It took four years for A&BC to reprise sports cards. Like the Brothers Grimm the pals at A&BC had been mean with their new fare. Distracted by glamorous subjects, they issued series after series of attractive film stars. When they turned back to sport, in 1958, they found their golden goose in the rugged stars of football. Soccer player cards could be reprinted every year, guaranteeing an annual income for little creativity, low cost design and relatively little artwork. Better still, soccer player cards could be issued seasonally, up to three times a year, every year!

In 1958 Topstars Bubblegum Picture cards arrived in the shops. Much like the *All Sport* cards of 1954 they were packaged singly and issued from gum vending machines. The wrappers displayed a sporting figure which could have been a drop-kicking rugby player, or a Can-Can dancer, so high was the kick! There were two series of 46 cards issued over the 1958/59 football season. However, unbeknown to collectors back then, success caused stock shortages and the first series of 46 cards had to be reprinted – twice! The newly printed cards are slightly different by issue. To collect all of the varieties you'll need 138 cards! The known types include a card with a special offer (with a *Planet* token) and a blue back; and, two

types without tokens but with different size photos and black backs. Thankfully, the cards that followed in series two are easier to find, with only 46 different issues to seek. All of these cards have the *Planet* offer atop. Cut cards are worth very little. Values fluctuate enormously due to the varieties and their availability. In 1992 a series of Topps Stadium Club football cards featured an homage to this series, albeit giving the cards a title they never had, and a value of only 27p each. How times have changed! Entry level prices for the cards nowadays start at £2 each but the most sought after cards may touch £200, as a certain Bobby Charlton card did, in public auction, in 2017. An album for the cards was issued. It had the legend: *Topstars Album of Famous Footballers*. The title seen on the series wrapper is different: *Bubblegum Picture Cards Topstars*. The wrapper would now cost around £200 – were it to come to market.

In autumn of 1959, whilst Asterix was chasing his first Gallic wild boar, A&BC was finding its stride in modern Britain. A new collection of footballers had 96 player cards showing colourful, though stiffly frozen action shots. They were shuffled with two hard to find team cards which served as picture checklists: Wolves and Nottingham Forest. The latter now commands up to £200 for an excellent condition example. There were only meant to be 98 cards in the series but two varieties are known: cards 83 and 84 are available with different backs. So, you'll need 100 cards if you want the lot. On the backs of the cards was a *magical* picture quiz. Rubbing the edge of a coin over the card made a player *appear* out of the ether! Two different wrappers were issued, one of

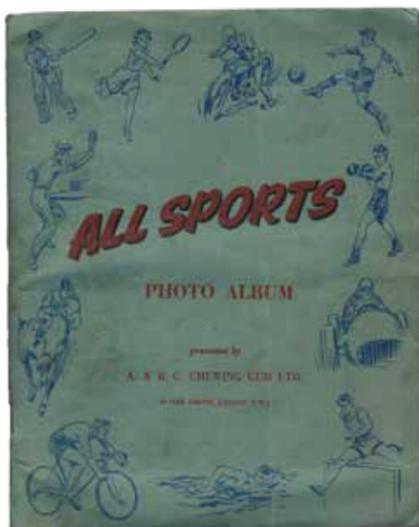
which was for multiple cards. It was A&BC's first shop issue packet. The other type was for vending machines. Coloured mostly blue, the wrappers show a player in a bi-sectional kit similar to the Blackburn Rovers strip. The second sub-series of 49 (51) cards is worth more than the first. This is the rule of thumb for all A&BC *Footballer* cards. First series issues, typically released in late August, sold more due to the novelty of a new collection, not to mention summertime lazy days at home, and the start of a new sports season. Wintery second series issues, from Christmastime, often had less success. Third series cards, launched towards Easter, sold fewer still and are the rarest and often the most valuable A&BC cards.

A pop band called The Beatles was strumming its first chords just as A&BC's 1960 *Footballer* cards came out. A design make-over and a return to photographic portraits gave collectors 84 circular photos of soccer players on garishly coloured cards, plus a couple of team checklist cards. The checklist images are at odds with the year of issue. Burnley ought to be included in this series but their 1959 league championship honour was not celebrated by A&BC. Blackpool, having won no honours for the previous six seasons, takes the place of Burnley! The other checklist has Wolves, once again. Wolves had won the FA Cup in 1960 but A&BC used the team image from 1959. The old picture is cropped into an oval frame and there is no mention of Wolves's new Cup, nor any change in the legend, which still reads, 'champions 1957-58, 1958-59'. The wrappers for the 1960 series have the same design as the 1959 issue but they are coloured green instead of blue. Note

the change of address too. The firm had moved from London to Harold Hill in Essex. An original wrapper from this issue would cost £200 or more.

In 1961 Yuri Gagarin was the first man in space but a move backwards in time marred A&BC's launch. Autographed Topstars cards were retro in the wrong way. Even the packet was old fashioned. On the cards a blue facsimile autograph did not make up for boring black and white photos, plain backs, no quiz games, no checklists, no team line-ups and a lack of player biographies to boot! It must have been a very disappointing series to behold. As only 64 cards were made the collection was dropped before 1962, and there was no second issue. The throwback wrapper is coloured green and yellow, just as it was in 1958, with the same Topstars Can-Can high kicker, but with a by-line, *Autographed*. The packets can also be distinguished from the earlier type of Topstars packet by the address at Harold Hill.

The most creative thing A&BC did with this series was to launch a selection of Scottish players. The so-called Scottish *Autographed Topstars* cards consisted of 44 similarly monotone cards, also with blue facsimile autographs. Released in 1962 they were a little smaller than the English cards but the values are now much grander! You'll pay over £10 each player, sometimes much more! Prices may approach £100 for the Celtic, Hearts, Dundee and Rangers team cards. Pricey too is international player Gerry Baker, the brother of Hibernian and Arsenal star Joe Baker. Gerry was the USA's first national soccer player from another country's league. A distinctive wrapper remains unknown and it seems that the English design was



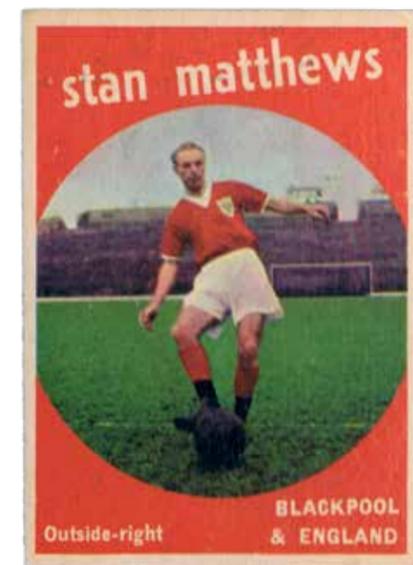
A&BC Gum album 1954



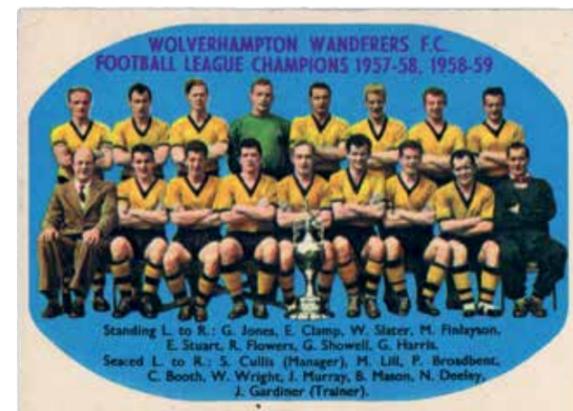
A&BC Gum card 1959



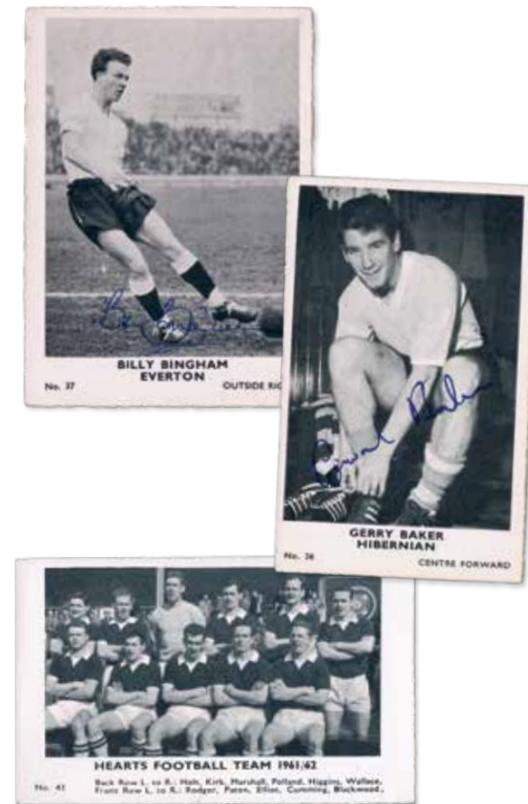
A&BC Gum checklist team card 1959



A&BC Gum card, 1960



A&BC Gum checklist team card, 1960



English and Scottish A&BC Gum cards 1961

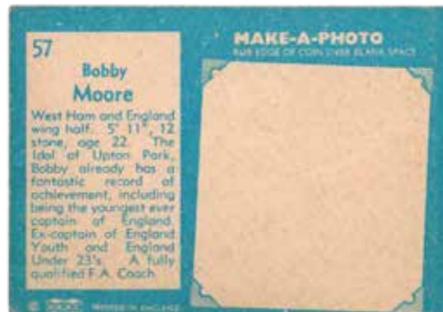
employed. However, the Scottish packet will be distinguishable by its original folds because these cards are smaller than their English cousins.

With *Bazooka*, *The Chew of Champions*, A&BC was back with a blast and American gum to boot! Following the drab black and white cards of 1961 this series went all out to charm back disenchanted younger collectors. In autumn 1962 these colourful and attractive cards had footballers front and back, photos and illustrations. This series features two checklist team line-ups: the England 1962 World Cup squad, and Tottenham Hotspur, which are two of the three most valuable cards in the set. The third card is that of Bobby Moore, which is considered to be one of his rookie cards. The orange and blue wrapper from this issue is perhaps the rarest of A&BC packets and may fetch £250 were it to reappear on the market. Only one example has been seen in the last 25 years!

The 1960s had its fair share of awful design but surely melamine fake wood furniture takes first prize. Sadly, in 1963/64, A&BC succumbed to similar taste and issued two collections with faux wood designs. These *Footballer* cards reprised a 1959 novelty, the *rub-a-coin* 'magic' feature, bringing it back as *Make-a-Photo*, which is how these blue back cards are now known. Taking the edge of a coin to the backs of all 110 cards revealed a hidden gallery of footballers! This series includes three team checklist cards: Manchester United and two of Everton. Artificial curled corners on hard to see action photos, and melamine wood-effect frames has not dulled the value. Prices have been rising, year on year. These cards start at £5 but many of the bigger names sell for £50 each! The wrapper for this set is coloured red and yellow, and shows a jumping goalkeeper catching a high ball. It would sell for over £100. A point-of-sale display box would exceed £1,000.



A&BC Gum card 1963



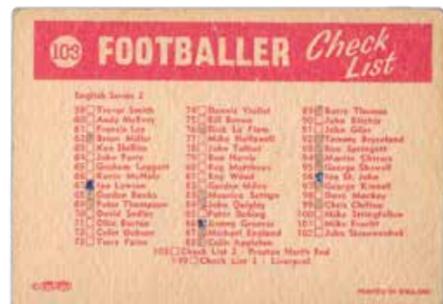
A&BC Gum card backs 1963



A&BC Gum Scottish checklist team card 1963



A&BC Gum Scottish card 1963



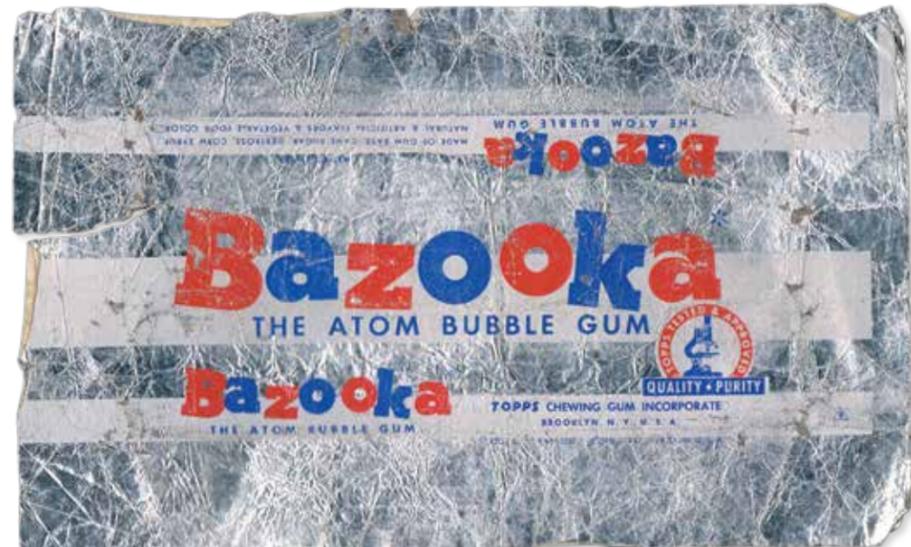
A&BC Gum 1964 team checklist card



A&BC Gum Scottish 1964 card back



A&BC Gum 1964 English back



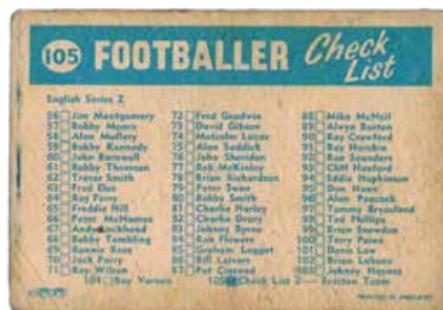
American Bazooka gum wrapper



A&BC Bazooka Gum cards, 1962



A&BC Gum team checklist card 1962



Thankfully the Scottish issue of *Make-a-Photo*, in 1964, was not blighted with faux-wood. This attractive series of 81 cards utilised the popular oval design from the fronts of the 1962 English Bazooka series. A&BC added radioactive green to the backs, where a hidden series of images lay in wait for the edge of a coin. Values for these cards start at £25 each though many will exceed £50 and £100 has become the price for a top quality checklist team card of Rangers or Hearts. The wrapper and box are believed to be the same as the English issue of 1963/64.

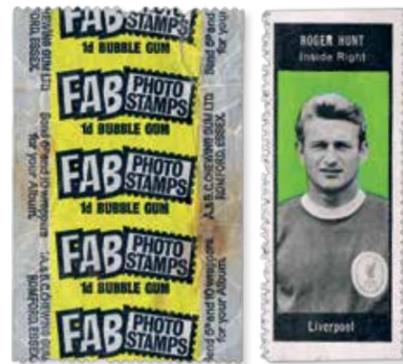
The Liverpool team card from the 1964/65 English *Footballer* cards collection has been seen to sell for £200! With quiz games to the back, 149 of these cards were issued over three staged launches from autumn 1964 to Easter 1965.

Prices for certain players exceed £25 per card though the regular issues can usually be found for £5 each. The team checklist cards are West Ham United, Preston North End and that costly Liverpool gem. The wrappers usually sell for £40 each and the box is worth about £500. For identification purposes both packet and display box show a pair of tackling footballers, one of whom has gone to ground.

The Scottish *Footballer* cards of 1964/65, the so-called quiz cards, were visited by the awful English design from 1963/64: melamine faux-wood frames and sentimental, artificial curls were added to otherwise decent photos. Rangers and Hearts fans were no doubt disgruntled with the colour of the backs: green again! This series features three team line-up cards: Rangers, Celtic and Dundee.



A&BC Gum 1964 English card



A&BC Gum stamps wrapper 1965



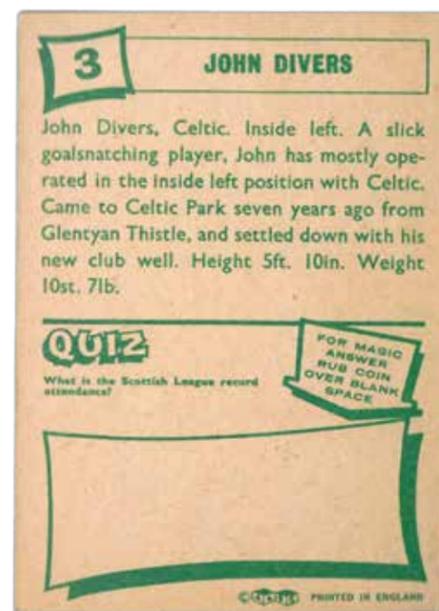
A&BC Gum World Cup stamp 1965



A&BC Gum World Cup stamp 1966



A&BC Gum Scottish team checklist cards 1964/65



A&BC Gum Scottish card back 1964/65



A&BC Gum Scottish card 1964/65

Only the latter two function as checklists though all three command premium prices. The wrapper and box are presumed to be the same as those used in the English series quiz cards series.

Stickers in the style of stamps became a seasonal replacement for football cards during the season of 1965/66. Much of A&BC's other fare, including pop stars and flags, also moved to stamps in 1966. Only two series of cards were made before the autumn. A set of *Rolling Stones* cards had flopped badly. The directors of A&BC also found themselves in court accused of selling obscene images to minors! A series of World War Two *Battle* cards had caused a couple of armchair moralists to file a law suit. Illustrated scenes of

destruction, including a Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence beheading in Burma, had caused a stir. The series also has at least three scenes of gagged, chained and whipped women. These days the BDSM cognoscenti are on to them and these particular *Battle* cards are keenly sought.

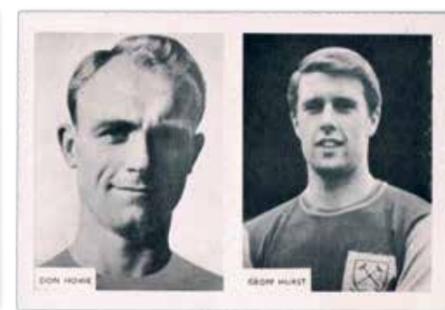
The *World Cup Football* stickers were bought one stamp at a time. The cost was minimal, at just one penny each, but the contents were a little disappointing. A stamp and a stick of gum, and if the stamp featured an unknown international from Patagonia many British kids spent their next penny of pocket money with a rival. These low cost items have risen in value to become some of the most expensive items of A&BC ephemera. Packets

sell for £150 each and the rarest of the stamps, those of Pelé (for there were two, different) may make more than that! The relatively few stamps that survived the decades since have driven up values. Condition is always a big factor in pricing. A poor condition Roger Hunt of Liverpool, without perforations, will sell for £15 but in clean condition, more or less as issued, it could top £75.

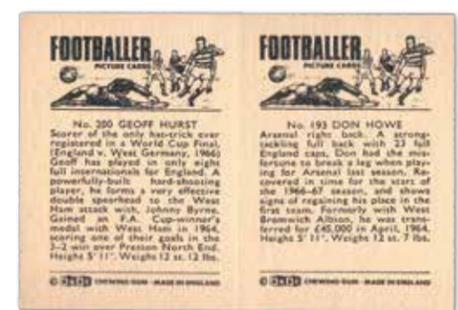
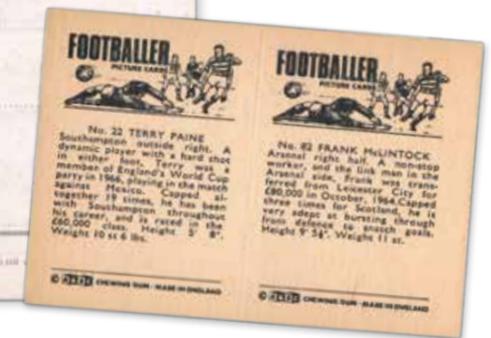
The stamps series came in two halves. At the end of 1965 the first selection of 20 British stars and 15 world greats was issued in portrait format. Due to the early date of issue it included players destined to be outside the England squad, like Alan Peacock and Joe Baker. It also included the likes of George Eastham and John Connelly, both of whom



Postcard from Malta, 1966, with variation stamp



A&BC Gum 1966 twinned cards, two series: first series without caption and second series with captions



A&BC Gum 1966 twinned card backs

would fail to make the first XI. The 15 stickers of foreign players included one from each nation except North Korea! Two were from Brazil: Pelé and Bellini.

In early 1966 a second run of 15 stamps appeared. These were more colourful and included football flags. They were printed in landscape format. World stars included goalkeeper Lev Yashin from the USSR Eusebio of Portugal and Pelé, once again. North Korea was snubbed for a second time! These days a thing like that could spark an international spat.

A version of the football stamps is believed to have been printed by an A&BC copyist in Valletta, Tony Xuereb. Some collectors and sellers have

ascribed the Malta issues to his firm, Tip-Top, which issued football cards in the 1950s. The stamps are smaller than the originals and only known in landscape format. They are rough in design, and primitive in printing but far rarer than the A&BC issues. Yashin's stamp is very different to the Russian language A&BC issue, having a legend in English which looks like it was set by the official A&BC artist. Only a few of these stamps have been recorded, including one glued to a postcard, alongside postage stamps, mailed from Valletta to England in 1966. *Caveat Emptor*: it is believed that there are modern day copies of these bootleg Maltese stamps. The best place to find the originals is from reputable philatelists – postage stamp sellers.

It seems odd looking back. There were few actual football cards issued during England's World Cup winning season. There were also very few stickers, just 50 A&BC stamps, a handful of comic free gifts and a series of sweet cigarette cards by Barratt, a London firm. Surely victory would change things?

Black and white are hardly colours that come to mind after a World Cup victory, yet A&BC kicked off the celebrations with monotone cards, featuring ostensibly nameless footballers in pairs. Why black and white, in England, in glorious 1966? A cynic might wonder whether the A&BC directors knew they could get away with producing a cheaper series on the back of the



A&BC 1966 English issue checklist cards



England win; no matter the design it would sell like hot cakes. The feel-good football fever in England in autumn 1966 would have helped sell even blank football cards! Whatever the reason, A&BC issued its shadowy first series of 110 cards (consisting of 220 images) and left collectors to tear them apart, if not tear them up. The cards, which lack player names to the fronts, have two small pictures and had the possibility of being separated along a barely visible serrated division betwixt the two pix. Cards which have remained in pairs retain a much higher value than singles, especially those from the second launch, a further 110 cards. For the second series A&BC designed to add player names. Team line-ups of West Germany and England, from the 1966 final, consist of four double cards each and

act as checklist sets. These quads make premium prices! Pairs from the first series sell for around £10 each. Second series pairs can fetch five times that price! Cut cards are worth little. Notably, while a cut card of George Best may struggle to make double figures an un-cut pair with George Best can fetch over £150. A wrapper from this issue has a value of around £75, and a point-of-sale box would sell for about £500. Not the prettiest issue but one of the most valuable series to complete, as pairs, because most cards were torn into singles long ago.

A&BC dared not issue a drab offering in Scotland, not after an England win! A suitable period of time was allowed to pass, then a similar series of paired cards was approved but it was in



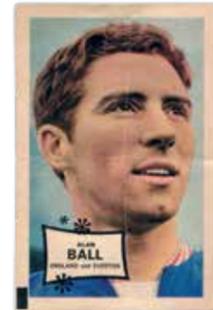
A&BC 1967 Scottish pairs and checklists

glorious colour, and it put the Sassenach series of colourless cards in the shade. The autumnal 1967 series celebrated only 42 players but they can be found in various twinned pairs that these days allow collectors the chance to get a rookie of Alex Ferguson in two varieties! A stunning selection of 12 Celtic cards, a celebration of the European Cup winning team, is an achievement to complete and to behold! The Lisbon Lions cards (24 halves if the cards have been tragically separated) is where the series value lies, for making a set of these is nigh on impossible and the value for a complete Celtic team (and Celtic Park turf, for many of these cards show just that) might cost you around £500! Typically players sell for £40 a pair, up to about £200 for Alex Ferguson's rookie (in a pair). Cut single cards remain low in value. The 1966/67 paired cards were the last A&BC collections to be sold without a novelty insert, or the promise of one.

Launched at the moment the first pulsar star was seen from earth, in autumn 1967, *Star Cards* was an aptly named set. The creative but awkward calligram on these cards shows a trophy-shaped graphic made from the four letters in the word star. A calligram ought to show, in its visual design, the very thing of the noun used to make the picture. A twinkly object would have been proper



A&BC 1967 Star Players



A&BC 1967 Pin-Ups



A&BC 1968 English and Scottish cards



A&BC 1968 Scottish variations, same player but different backs



A&BC 1968 Metallised Team Emblems



A&BC 1968 Team Pennant

for this series of stars but a paper poster sufficed as a novelty gift. These were the first in what would become a long tradition of gift inserts. The miniature folded posters, one per pack, were given to protect the *Star Cards* from sticky gum residue. The insert idea had come from USA, where inserts themselves were collected as avidly as the cards. The wrapper for this series is in yellow, black and magenta, with the legend: *EXTRA! England's Stars Pin-Ups*. It's a small series with but 55 cards, most of which are easily available today. George Best made his penultimate appearance for A&BC, and his card commands a premium. The 12 miniature poster inserts are rare and may cost you over £20 apiece. The wrapper fetches £100 and the box, which shows Bobby Charlton, may cost over £300!

By 1968 things were going from good to great. A&BC had massive success not just in soccer. It had launched Superman, Planet of The Apes, Famous Indian Chiefs and a host of other cards that year. The gum tasted better, the cards were attractive, and the inserts were appealing. Insert cards allowed the firm to re-launch a staged collection of cards over time. The 1968/69 *Footballer* cards were initially sold with inserted paper *Team*

Pennants. In the second of the staged releases of this collection metallic foil team emblems were included in place of the pennants. This helped sell the second launch just as well as the first. After some years without a quiz the retro game returned to the backs of the cards, which were coloured yellow. Variations in design on one of the 102 cards resulted in price spikes for that of Joe Baker, whose Nottingham Forest card comes with and without a certain graphic feature. Twenty-six different English teams were featured on the paper pennants. They were designed to be cut out so pennants that remain un-cut fetch higher prices than cut examples. The metallic stickers were a new development in the world of football cards. In Italy, the biggest producers of football cards, Mira and Panini, had recently issued their first shiny stickers, and enjoyed considerable success through them. A&BC hereby followed suit but the shiny fare was restricted to England. The cards and inserts in both British series of 1968 were issued in distinctive and colourful wrappers. Later point-of-sale packaging and wrappers, those advertising the *Metalized Team Emblems*, are the rarest and command higher prices than the *Team Pennants* packets.

176 Scottish cards, also with yellow backs, followed the English release at the end of 1968.

This is a remarkable and rare series. Officially there were only 45 cards but, due to printing varieties, up to four different backs for every player card are known. There are also two team checklist cards: Celtic and Dunfermline. Paying £25 or more per card is the starting point for this series but cards have been known to sell for up to £150 each! This issue was further complicated by packets of cards being packed without the *Team Pennants*. Clear paper bags full of pennants were rushed to shops with instructions to shopkeepers to furnish one pennant for each packet of cards sold. Notably the box for this series was the first A&BC box with a Scottish design. Expect to pay more than £1,000 for it! A pennants distribution bag, which has the A&BC logo in red, has been seen to sell for £150. The Scottish pennants themselves sell for even more!

Unlike the English release there were no foil emblems for Scotland. In some places there were no Scottish *Team Pennants* either! The pennants are so rare that most of them remain unseen by modern-day collectors. At the time of writing, in 2019, Hibs, Celtic and Clyde remain unrecorded – after 52 years! Two of this trio finished at the top of the league and played in Europe. Clyde had been a regularly featured team in Scottish

sets since 1961. So, it is almost sure that there is a pennant for each of them and for each team in the Scottish top flight that year. Prices for individual pennants in this rare series have been seen to top £250 each! Their omission from the first packets distributed contributes to their scarcity. Greaseproof paper bags full of late arrival pennants were hurriedly sent to wholesalers but they went mostly undistributed. The stock may still be sitting somewhere in a dusty wholesaler's warehouse, or it went on to a bonfire. A million pounds in paper pennants?

Due to gum firm rivalries of the time, and machinations of a technical nature, both intrigue and variety played parts in the arrogant conceit of A&BC's 1969/70 collection. George Best had demanded a payment 100 times higher than other players were getting. A&BC said no. He walked. Best sold his image to a rival gum firm, Anglo Gum of Halifax. He appeared on Anglo's wrappers and on one of the 84 cards in Anglo's Football Quiz. A&BC met this affront with triple the number of cards Anglo could muster. Two hundred English

players – regulars and irregulars – a phalanx of 36 insert cards and the trusty 90 Scots to the flanks. It was a defining moment in gum cards history. Anglo Confectionery was to cease production of football cards within a year! In the heaven of A&BC were more stars than all and sundry found hanging in the lowly firmament over Halifax. It was back to cheaper cards of club colours, and illustrative hints on playing the game, for Anglo.

The 1969/70 British collections are some of the most appealing A&BC cards to collect, not least due to the technical mysteries surrounding an English issue which contained errors, misprints and doppelganger cards: a handful of players have two cards each! Seeking the entirety of the 1969/70 *Footballer* collection is a worthwhile challenge, not least as values have been rising year upon year. The many variations and errors in the various sub-series make for quite a roller-coaster ride. Once thought to consist of 170 cards there are, in fact, about 200 different cards to seek. Some cards changed photo mid series, others received technical improvements (new stats). Cards of

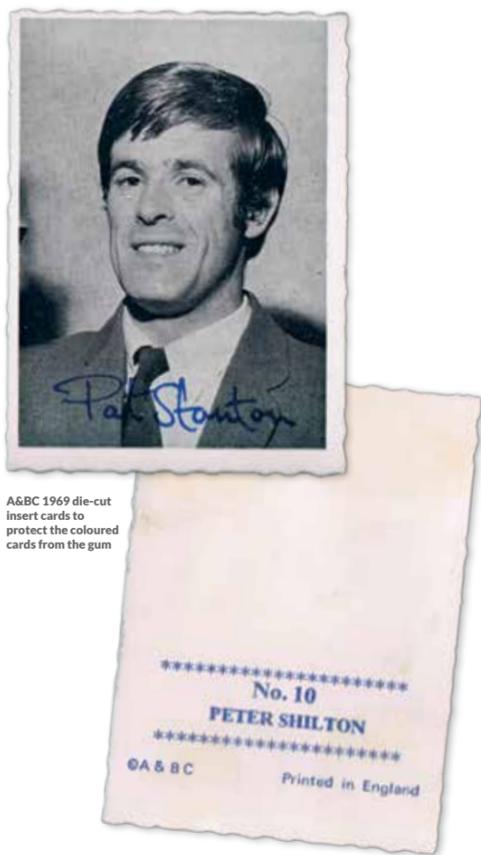
Frank McLintock, John Sissons, Bobby Moncur, Allan Clarke, David Sadler and Colin Suggett have two cards each. In other cases some players, though listed on checklist cards, don't appear at all! Andy Lochhead of Leicester City should have card number 66 but Coventry City's Chris Cattlin appears at that spot. Certain cards have different players parading under the same number. Look out for cards of Wolves's David Woodfield and Liverpool's Tommy Lawrence. Some checklist cards were quietly upgraded during the course of the season meaning you'll need to find both varieties of one particular checklist. The colourful wrappers of the second and third sub-series of this issue came with the legend, "plus real photograph". This was actually a monotone football card, with a facsimile blue autograph, very much in the style of A&BC's 1961 cards. It came die-cut with wavy edges, also called deckled or rouletted cards. Values for the green backs vary drastically. The rarer variations can make £50 each, or more. Wrappers and ephemera values vary too. Packets sell for £50 upwards and point-of-sale boxes will cost over £300.



A&BC 1969 English and Scottish cards



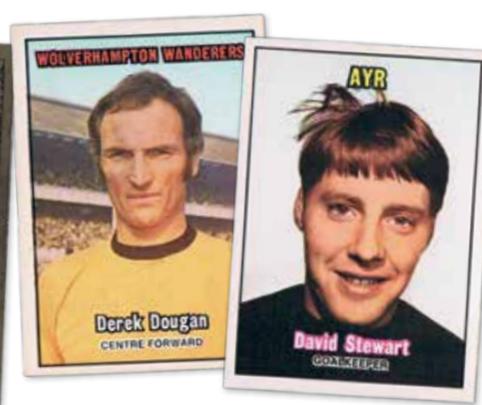
A&BC 1969 English and Scottish cards backs



A&BC 1969 die-cut insert cards to protect the coloured cards from the gum



A&BC 1970, plain and embossed World Cup Souvenir cards



A&BC 1970 Giant Footballer cards, English and Scottish



A&BC 1970 Pin-Up Posters



A&BC 1970 Giant Footballer cards, checklists



A&BC 1970 Action Transfers

In comparison with this phenolic blend the Scottish *Footballer* collection of 1969/70 was a dignified single malt. The 77 cards have blue backs and a football quiz. The series heralded English league players' inclusion in a Scottish set for the first time. Bloodline not club was now the criterion. Henceforth, all Scottish series by A&BC could include cards of players from Sassenach clubs if the players had Scottish roots, albeit the cards would remain in a different style to those cards of said same player in the parallel English series. The cards of English stars in the Scottish series now brag of values between £10 and £70 each. This is partly due to English club collectors keenness to acquire a Scottish version of their man. Fifteenth black and white cards with wavy, die-cut edges complete the issue.

Mexico guaranteed a sunny World Cup in 1970. England had been expected to do well, so A&BC went big time with a series of 37 England player cards and 16 paper fold-outs of teams, called *World Cup Giant Posters*. Values for the posters vary but £10 for a poster is typical, with England and Brazil fetching higher prices. The inserts used in this launch have become more prized than the posters. In each packet was a single gum card. It has a purple back and a gilt-coloured frame. These cards of England hopefuls

now command high prices, up to £50 for rarer types. Originally there were 37 different cards with a Jules Rimet trophy in relief. A re-issue came without the cup in relief. Thus, there are 37 cards with a relief trophy, and 37 with a deflated cup. Were the latter printed after England lost hope? The *World Cup Souvenir Cards*, as they were called on the sales box of the *World Cup Giant Posters*, were not mentioned on the wrappers so it must have been a nice surprise to find one tucked away inside. A wrapper from this issue would cost £100 and a box might make £300.

Following the posters came so-called *Giant Footballer Cards*. They hardly seem gigantic from today's perspective and, in fact, they were no bigger than the 1959 cards by A&BC but sales is sales and 259 slightly larger than typical cards, with orange backs, hit the autumnal streets of England and Wales in 1970. They were issued in the now typical staged release of three sub-series: Autumn, Christmas and Easter. The last of the three sub-series includes the rarest cards which can sell for more than £10 each. Earlier cards, with lower numbers, are easily available. Like the 1969 collection this release also includes misprinted and reprinted cards, so if you want them all you'll have some hunting to do! One particular checklist card is known with different backs, one of which

warns the collector, 'subject to change'. No kidding! Reminiscent of the 1969/70 collection it lists players of whom collectors would see nothing. Variants of checklists, players, point-of-sale boxes, and the three types of wrapper, not to mention the error cards, make chasing this collection a challenge. Moreover, some players from this series were also issued in the Scottish set, with green backs. Ian Ure and Pat Crerand, of Manchester United are but two.

Accompanying the first issue of the *Giant Cards* (the English cards have orange backs) was a series of 14 so-called *Pin-Up Posters*. These came folded, wrapped between the cards and gum.

To further confound the hapless collector it should be noted that some of the English league players on the *Pin-Up Posters* also appear in the Scottish series of pin-ups with differences. Billy Bremner, for example, has two distinct posters to collect.

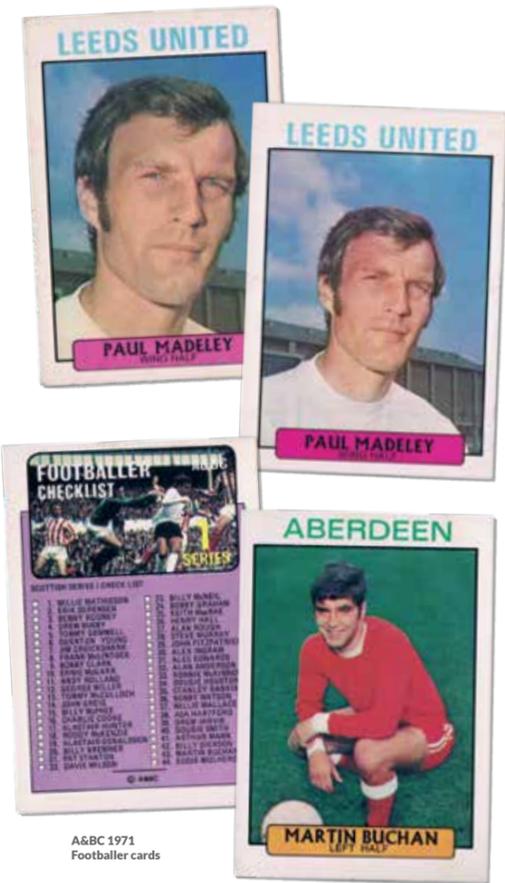
Late in 1970 the *Pin-Up Posters* were replaced with *Action Transfers* in a bid to excite a tiring marketplace. There was little action, per se, other than rubbing these colourful players' portrait decals (transfers) on to skin or into scrapbooks. These days rarer examples of this series of 72 decals, with original backing papers, can sell for up to £100 each! There was no parallel Scottish issue.



A&BC 1970 Giant Footballer cards, English and Scottish backs



A&BC Wrappers for all three series of 1970/71 cards



A&BC 1971 Footballer cards

There were 171 so-called *Giant Cards* in Scotland. Their values today are around £5 a card though higher prices are paid for cards that appeal to collectors both sides of the border, for example John Fitzpatrick of Manchester United. In the history of A&BC these are the first Scottish cards that cost less to collect than the parallel issue from south of the border. The wrappers are varied, with many different gift offers, but the generic design has the diving goalie in green, on a red background. The rarest type has the legend: New Superstars Poster. This was a Scottish only issue of re-branded *Pin-Up Posters*. They segued into *New Superstar Posters*. Whereas Scottish pin-ups (the first series) may fetch up to £50 each, the second series, *New Superstar Posters*, will exceed £50 each – sometimes by a long way.

Purple Haze! The 1971/72 collection is a classic, with a twist. 291 *Footballer* cards were issued in England and Wales with backs that teased, 'did you know?' Values now vary wildly for these cards with some higher numbers fetching way over £20 each! Mental health warning: trying to follow the numbering and naming on the checklist cards in this collection may cause more than just hazy consternation! There are many inaccuracies. Some players appear two times, showing up on different cards with different numbers and different images, for example Paul Madeley of Leeds United has two distinct cards. He's not alone! Some players appear in both the English and the very similar Scottish series, which was printed with the same purple colour on the back, making identification of English team players

in the Scottish set something of a challenge. Then there are the checklists! The wrappers seem to have just as many varieties. The boxes differ in design too. The second and third release packaging advertises different series of inserts. Box and wrapper values rise the later they were issued, so adverts for *Superstars* (inserts) make the ephemera worth more than packets and boxes that show the earlier *Club Crests* inserts.

These cards can also be found with intricate, die-cut edges. The die-cut cards seen are generally all from the rarer higher numbers second and third series. These die-cut cards were re-sold during 1973 and 1974, in *Lucky Bags*, given with sweets and other gifts. The re-cut cards, in the fancy style of the 1973 black and white inserts, helped shift unsold, remaindered stock. Look closely at the edges, at the cut. The cards fit, cut for cut, corner for corner, edge-for-edge within the card silhouette of the 1973 black and white die-cut inserts. This shows they are official releases and, therefore, some of the rarest A&BC cards extant, notwithstanding their erroneous occasional nomenclature as crinkle cards. Crinkled clothing, crinkled crisps, and chips may come crinkle-cut. Not card nor paper; not unless you screw it up into a paper ball. Then it's crinkled. Whatever! *Crinkled* or die-cut, these are some of the hardest to find A&BC issues and prices are rising to reflect this. Expect to pay £20 per card, and more for certain stars.

NB: *Pinked* cards have also been seen but these are recent forgeries made with tailoring pinking shears. If the edge looks like it has diamond-shaped tips, if it has regular points all around, then the card



A&BC 1971 Footballer die-cut cards re-issued in 1973



A&BC 1973 die-cut insert card, and a later re-issue with a regular cut

has been sheared by someone to create a 'rarity'. These are worthless.

The 1971/72 purple back cards' earliest inserts were called *Club Crests*. A&BC had been feeling the heat from FKS so it made a foray into the stickers arena. An album was produced with spaces for 23 crests and a further 23 players called *Superstars*.

Issued with the second and third series of English purple back cards these 46 inserts are not easy to find. *Superstars* fetch prices around £10 each, with one or two pricier exceptions. An unused album would be worth at least £100, while a full album could more than double that figure. An unused set of 46 sold in auction, in 2018, for over £600!

The 144 Scottish purple back *Footballer* cards of 1971/72 are very similar to the English edition, both types having purple backs. It's worth noting that the Scottish players with Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool and other English teams appear in both English and Scottish series but they have different numbers, and some cards also have contrasting designs. Billy Bremner, for example, is numbered 20 in the Scots set while his card in the English series is numbered 155.

The 16 different paper inserts that accompanied the Scottish cards show Scots emblems and were also called *Club Crests*.



A&BC 1971 Club Crests and Superstar stickers



A&BC 1971 sticker album