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Baseball Art Prints



SlantyCouch.com Interview with Scott Gaynor of SCGaynor Auctions

If you've ever searched on eBay for vintage baseball cards or memorabilia, chances are you've come across a SCGaynor auction. Knowledge of the industry and many satisfied customers has made [SCGaynor Auctions](#) one of the most trusted dealers on eBay. Recently Scott Gaynor was kind enough to take a few moments from his schedule and share with me a few of his thoughts on baseball collectibles.

Give us some background on who you are and what you do.

I am the President of [Scgaynor Auctions](#). We sell pretty much exclusively on [ebay](#). About 99.5% of the material that we sell is on consignment. We do very little advertising so most of our material comes from word or mouth, long established consignors, or from our customers who [contact us](#) when they decide it is time to start selling.

How did you become interested in sports memorabilia?

I started collecting when I was about 5 years old in 1978. My father would buy packs of baseball cards at the drug store for me. I was lucky enough to have a couple of card shops in my area so I had access to older cards as well that I started buying about 1981 or 1982. Memorabilia became my primary interest about 1991 when I was getting kind or bored with cards and wanted to get into something else related to sports. I started buying all 19th century baseball photographs that I could get my hands on.

You were formerly a consultant to the MCI National Sports Gallery in Washington, DC. What did your duties entail?

Mostly handling the material. It involved a decent amount of travel and I got to see a lot of great collections. I was able to make some great connections that eventually helped me as my business began to grow.

Your profile mentions you've been full-time on eBay since 1997. Things were a little different then - any doubts in your mind that eBay would become what it is today?

No doubt at all, as a matter of fact, I think that ebay is still in its infancy. It has a lot of room to grow, and I hope to be there with it. In 1997, if you sold a \$100 item, it was a big deal. Now it is not uncommon to sell items for \$5,000-10,000. People have become more comfortable with the process and are willing to pay strong money for material from established dealers.

I'm assuming most dealers have at least one story to the tune of "We found these in my Grandfather's attic, are they worth anything?" Tell us your favorite.

I see lots of fresh stuff and have heard a lot of stories. People are always finding things and there is still a ton of great stuff out there waiting to be found.

I was not involved with this, but am friends with the antique dealer that was. He went over to a clients house to who had a scrapbook in his attic that was filled with ephemera related to the formation of the National League in 1871. There were passes, official paperwork, signed documents and more. They guy's relative had something to do with the formation of the league. The owner had no idea what he had. Unfortunately, he ended up donating it to some historical society where it will be lost forever.

If you could have kept any one item that you've auctioned over the years, which would it be? Any special reason?

Nothing that comes to mind. I don't get emotionally attached to the stuff because it is hard to be successful if you do, as you will never want to sell it. My collecting habit is satisfied just by handling the

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material every day. I don't need to own anything because there is always something else interesting to see the next day.

What advice would you give someone just starting a baseball card/memorabilia collection?

Buy some cheap stuff and learn the material before jumping in with both feet. Learn common hobby terms. Learn about how to tell the difference between a color copy and an original. Read auction catalogs, read price guides, read reference books, read online forums. Study authentic pieces so that you know their characteristics. Don't just assume that because somebody advertises in a hobby magazine that they sell authentic material.

If you could change one thing about the "hobby", what would it be?

I don't think that there is any "one thing." This hobby is still pretty young compared to Coins, Stamps, Art, etc. Changes will be made on their own as the hobby matures.

Tell us the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the following:

Greatest Baseball Movie:

Field of Dreams

T206 Wagner or 1914 Baltimore News Ruth:

Overrated

Autograph Forgeries:

Live and Learn

Underrated Baseball Collectible:

Photographs taken by significant photographers.

The National:

Five days is too many, cut it down to Friday-Sunday. All significant transactions are completed by Thursday morning. Three days is plenty.

Graded or "Raw"?

Depends on the item. I don't mind slabbed items as long as the grading is done correctly.

Baseball Memorabilia as an Investment:

Great stuff will always be Great. As the hobby matures, so will the amount of money that people will pay for great stuff.

Babe Ruth, Hank Aaron or Barry Bonds?:

As an investment, Babe Ruth. As a player, Hank Aaron. I can't stand Barry Bonds.

2005 World Series Champions:

I would say the Yankees, but they seem to be the 1990s Braves of the 21st century.

9) Anything else you'd like to share?

I want to pitch [my service](#). Send me consignments! Why would you want to sell the material yourself when I will often get more money and you only have to pay a small commission. Why deal with the crazy customers, standing in line at the post office, hoping that checks clear, hoping that you don't get scammed by Paypal, and all of the other hassles of selling items when you don't have the ebay machine in place to take care of it efficiently. It just makes sense. Most of my consignors could easily sell on ebay, but don't for the reasons that I mentioned above.

Thank you for your time Scott!

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