

Jim Thome

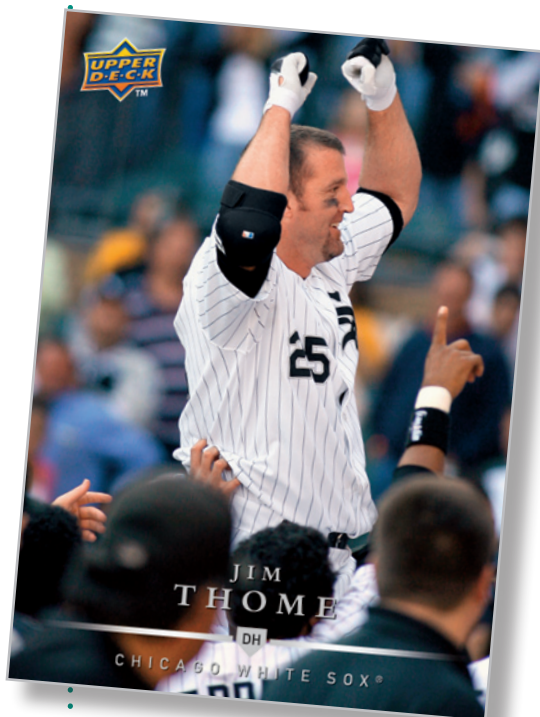
collected Cubs cards

When White Sox designated hitter Jim Thome

grew up in Peoria, Ill., he probably was the biggest Dave Kingman fan around. He crushed the ball like Kingman in childhood Wiffle ball games, and he even sneaked into the Wrigley Field dugout in an attempt to snare the slugger's autograph.



Kingman and a whole host of late-1970s and 1980s players fed Thome's hunger for baseball cards.



MLBPLAYERS.COM: Who did you look for in collecting cards?

Thome: I just liked collecting them. A lot of the Cubs players back then. St. Louis was in there, too. If you got other guys, it was great. My dad (Chuck Thome, Sr.) has all my cards at his house. My mom (Joyce Thome) saved everything. I might make a collage or table of the cards someday. It will always stay within the family.

MLBPLAYERS.COM: Did you get different Kingman cards? One season, 1977, he played with four different teams.

Thome: I've got one with the Mets, obviously with the Cubs and then with Oakland. I didn't have cards with me at the time (when he sneaked into the dugout). I would have wanted anything (autographed).

MLBPLAYERS.COM: What did you like about collecting cards?

slash-general store, and you'd always buy bubble gum. It came with the cards. It was always cool to collect.

MLBPLAYERS.COM: Where did you first appear on a card?

Thome: The first card for me was when I was in Burlington, N.C. It was low-A ball.

MLBPLAYERS.COM: What's your favorite Major League card?

Thome: Each is unique. But obviously your first rookie card, Cleveland in 1992, will always stand out for me. It's special. Let's face it; your rookie card is your most cherished one.

MLBPLAYERS.COM: How many cards do you get in the mail for signing?

Thome: Countless. I try to get to them. I get so many it takes time to get them back to people. No question, it builds up good will. ☺



Thome: Back then, I remember playing baseball, taking a break, going up to the local convenience-

Interview by George Castle, a writer for Redline Editorial, Inc.