History of the PSA Label









Developed by Nic Schmitt, REV01, 4-11-2021

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References

Preface:

The purpose of this guide is to show the historic changes of the labels, identify what an authentic label looks like and to help identify the approximate date of when a card was graded. This guide does not cover the PSA/DNA label variations.

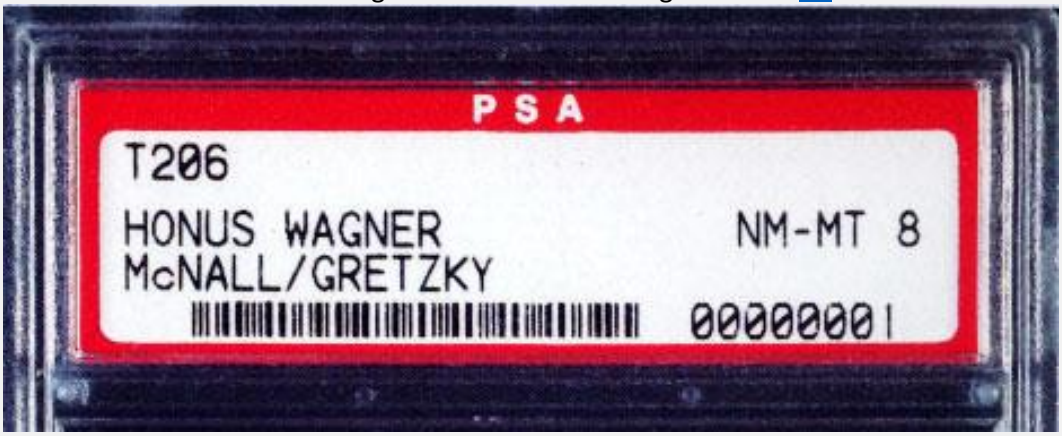
1. What is PSA

PSA is the world's largest trading card, autograph and memorabilia authentication and grading service. Since 1991, PSA experts have examined and certified over 40 million collectibles with a combined value of over $1 billion. [9]

2. Label Variations

2.1. PSA label style 1: 1991 – 1992

FRONT: Note the slashes through the zeros and the long bar code. [4]



Style 1 - T206 Honus Wagner - 1st PSA Certified Card – front [4]

BACK: The back of the label has a hologram with "PSA" within it. The hologram is bonded on the outside, but it's not a sticker. It is bonded to the plastic the same way the white PSA logo is. The T206 Wagner pictured below is PSA's very first graded/authenticated card being the very first PSA label. It also appears that the Wagner label hologram was an outside sticker. It looks like it is peeling off in the scan below. [4]



Style 1 - T206 Honus Wagner - 1st PSA Certified Card – back [1]

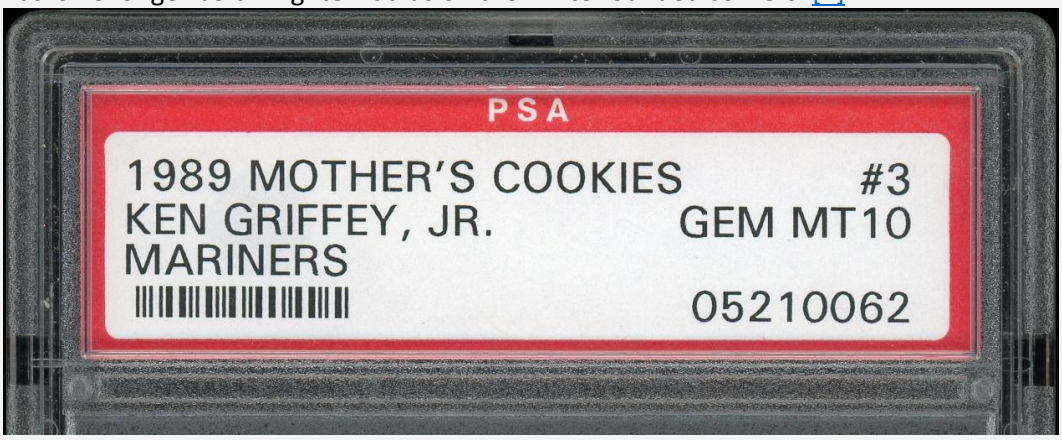
Variation: The white corners on the T206 label above are not as widely rounded as the 1950 Bowman shown below. These may be two different old variations or the T206 could have been reholdered at some point. [3]



Style 1 variation - front [3]

2.2. PSA label style 2: 1992 – 1999

FRONT: Note the slashes through zeros are gone. The bar code is shortened and centered. [4] PSA font has is no longer bold. Tighter radius on the white rounded corners. [4]



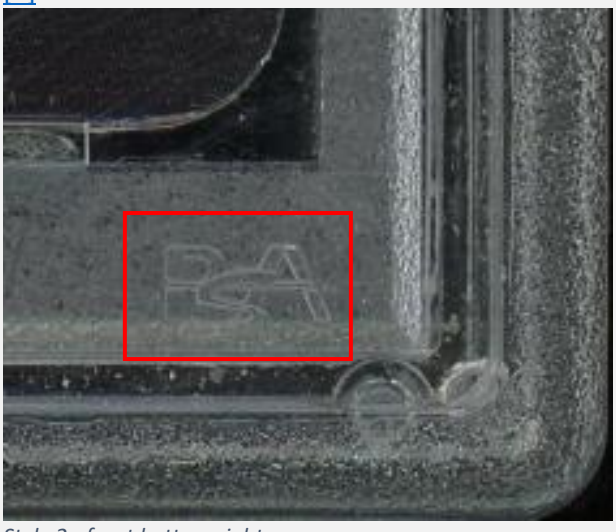
Style 2 - Front

BACK: The back of the label still has the "PSA" hologram, but PSA made a change with the hologram. The hologram is bonded on the inside and not on the outside. The white PSA logo is the same, bonded on the outside. [4]



Style 2 - back

FRONT of HOLDER: This also was when PSA starting putting their logo on the bottom right of the holder. [4]



Style 2 - front bottom right

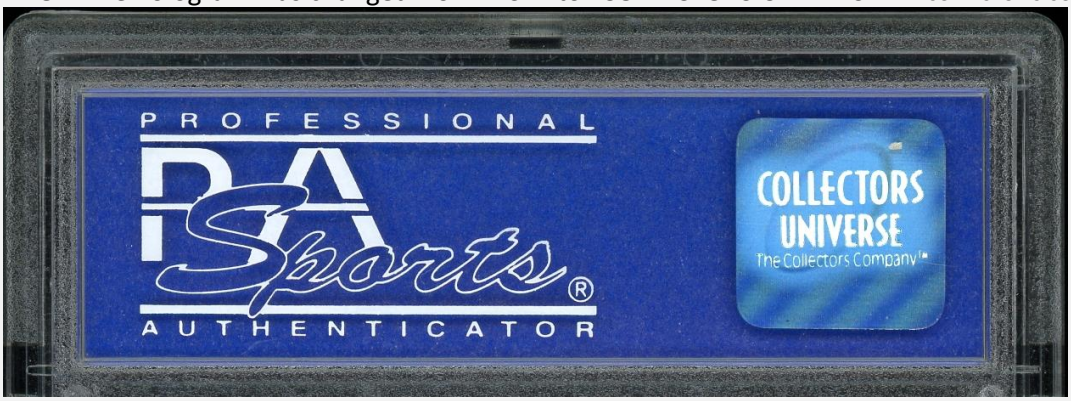
2.3. PSA label style 3: 2000 - 200?

FRONT: The label front has no changes from style 2. [4] Some labels have an un-bolded PSA font. [3]



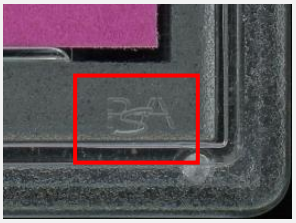
Style 3 - front

BACK: The hologram was changed from "PSA" to "COLLECTORS UNIVERSE THE COLLECTOR'S COMPANY". [4]



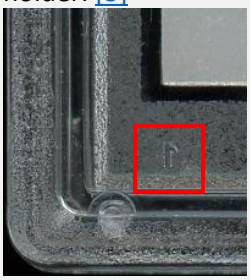
Style 3 - back

Rear of Holder: On the holder itself there is a small raised PSA symbol in the lower right corner on the front and now added is the same raised symbol on the lower right on the reverse of the holder. [4]

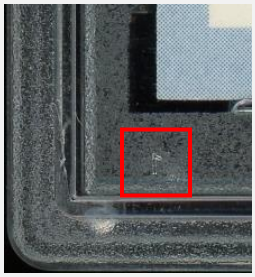


Style 3 - rear bottom right

Holder Markings: Some holders with this label style have an inner number in the front lower left and rear lower left. You can see a reversed numerical character which cannot be felt on the outside of the holder. [3]



Style 3 – front bottom left



Style 3 - rear bottom left

2.4. PSA label style 4: 200? - 200?

FRONT: Note the bar code is now aligned to the left. The font numbers have been shortened and font letters are wider and rounder. Also the grade positioning is to the left and not aligned to the right. [4]



Style 4 – front [4]

BACK: No changes on the back of this label had been made from style 3. [4]



Style 4 – back [4]

2.5. PSA label style 5: 200? - 200?

Note: This is a rarely seen label.
FRONT: The label front is similar to styles 2 and 3. The letter and number font has changed back to the similar font used on styles 2 and 3. The grade alignment had changed back to the right. PSA also changed the red border on the label's front. The white field within the red border no longer has rounded corners making the white field squared. [4]



Style 5 – front [4]

BACK: The back of the label has changed as well. The hologram on the back of the label is gone and replaced with "A COLLECTOR'S UNIVERSE COMPANY". The back logo and writing is now bonded to the inside of the plastic. The white PSA logo that was bonded to the outside of the plastic is changed as well. The back blue field is a light blue unlike all the styles preceding/proceeding this label. The PSA logo is the same font lettering and positioning only now it is bonded on the inside of the plastic and is silver in color. [4]



Style 5 – front [4]

2.6. PSA label style 6: 200?- 1/31/2008

FRONT: This label front is exactly like style 5. [4]



Style 6 - front

BACK: The back of this label's field is now a much darker blue. The back had changed from "A COLLECTOR'S UNIVERSE COMPANY" to "A DIVISION OF COLLECTOR'S UNIVERSE NASDAQ CLCT". The PSA logo on the back is the same as style 5. Also there were a very small number of half grades issued in this style label before they moved the numerical grade below the descriptive grade (See style 7). There is a 1954 Ted Williams photographed in the SMR announcing the half grade launch which displayed as "NM-MT+ 8.5". [4] All text is no longer on the holder, it is on the label.



Style 6 - back

2.7 PSA label style 7: 2/1/08 – 20?? (Half Point Introduction)

Press Release: LINK, LINK

FRONT: These PSA labels contain the same general information; however, the grade number will now appear directly below the description of the grade on the right side of the label. [2]



Style 7 – front [4]

FRONT (early): During the initial introduction of the half point grading scale, there were labels issued with the grade number in line with the grade description. [4]



BACK: No changes on the back of the label. [4]



Style 7 – back [4]

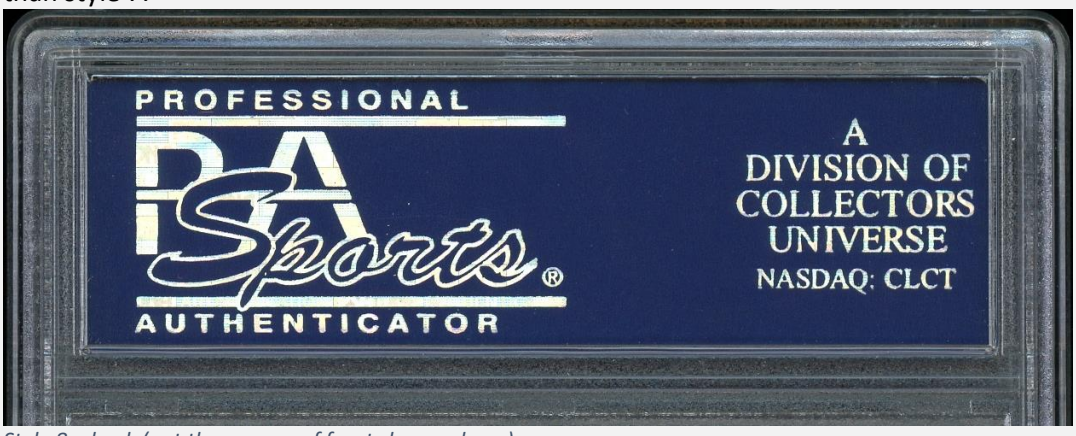
2.8 PSA label style 8: 20?? – 4/16/15

FRONT: Same as style 7.



Style 8 - front (copied from style 7) [4]

BACK: Lettering on the back is more defined and on a darker blue label stock. Label stock seems thicker than style 7.



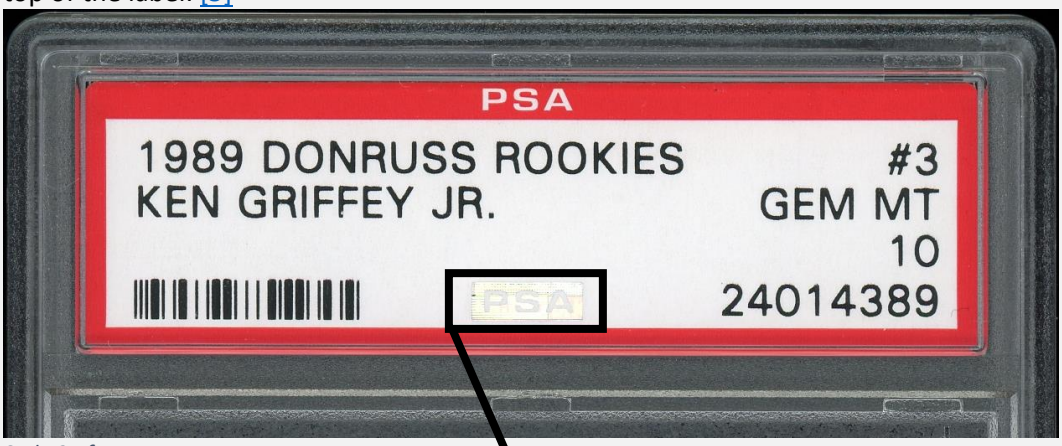
Style 8 – back (not the reverse of front shown above)

2.9 PSA label style 9: 4/17/2015 to 12/1/2015 (Front Hologram)

Press Release: LINK

An embedded Professional Sports Authenticator (PSA) security hologram has now been added to the red insert labels used in PSA card, ticket and pack holders to give buyers and sellers even more confidence in PSA-certified collectibles. PSA is introducing a new, embedded hologram on the face of every PSA encapsulated label in order to further enhance the security features found on our certified products. The hologram is actually part of the insert label paper, similar to the hologram feature we already incorporated into PSA/DNA Certificates (COAs) and Letters of Authenticity (LOAs)," said PSA President Joe Orlando. [5]

FRONT: The hologram appears on the base of each insert label and is centered with the PSA name at the top of the label. [5]

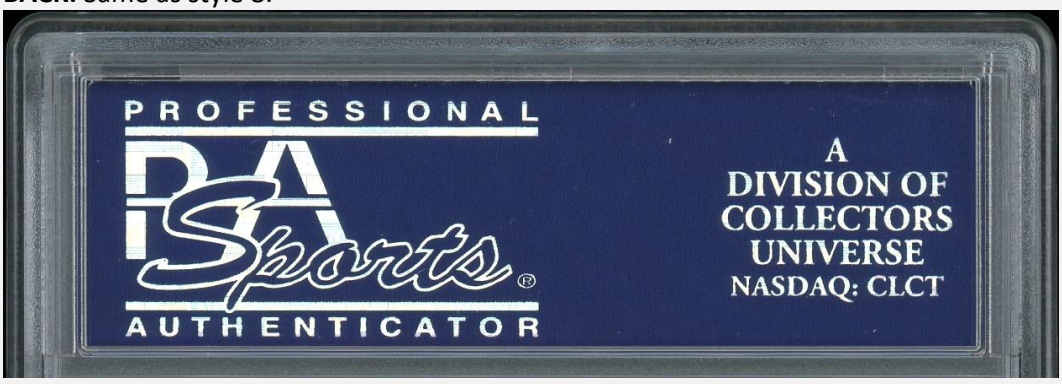


Style 9 - front



Style 9 - front hologram close-up [5]

BACK: Same as style 8.



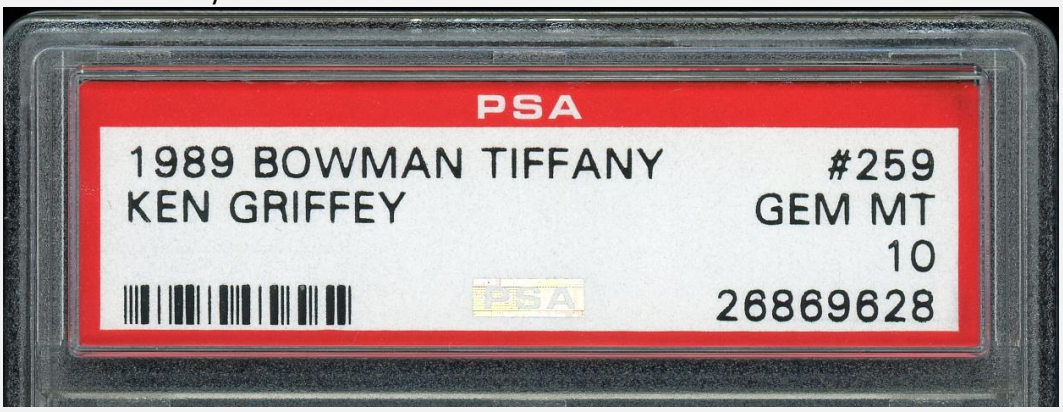
Style 9 - back

2.10 PSA label style 10: 12/2/15 to 6/13/17 (Front Hologram with Rev. Barcode)

Press Release: LINK

As part of its continuing efforts to enhance the security of its products, Professional Sports Authenticator (www.PSAcard.com) has added a new security feature to the back of PSA holder insert labels. The item's unique PSA serial number and barcode now will appear on both the back as well as the front of the label in the tamper-evident holders of PSA-certified trading cards, tickets and unopened packs. [6]

Front: Same as style 9.



Style 10 - front

Back: The card's PSA certification (serial) number is now listed on the back of the label. A corresponding barcode (when scanned shows the same certification number) is now also included.



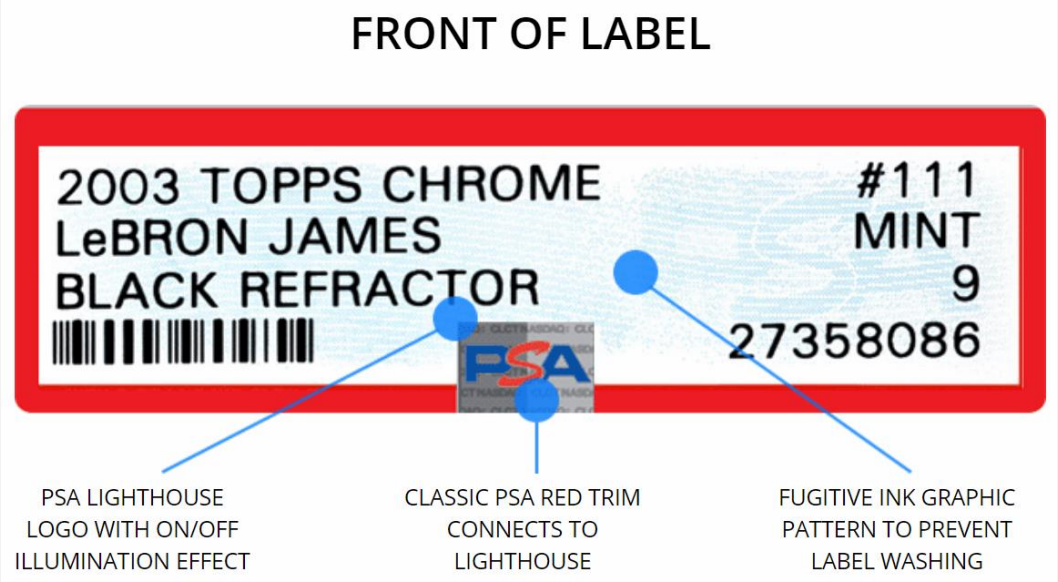
Style 10 - back

2.11 PSA label style 11: 6/14/2017 to 2/21/2021 (Lighthouse with “NASDAQ: CLCT”)

Press Release: LINK
YouTube Video from PSA: LINK

The front of the label still features a red border, outlining the collectible’s details. Now, however, instead of mere white behind the label copy, the wave-like brush strokes of “fugitive ink” embellish the background. The PSA hologram in the lower center of the label’s front has been upgraded to proprietary Lighthouse ™ technology, which creates an “on/off” illumination effect when rotated. The Lighthouse effect can be seen as the label is angled left to right, as the PSA logo will hide or reveal the Collectors Universe “NASDAQ: CLCT” stock ticker symbol in the background pattern. [7]

The company’s trademark blue still spans the back of the label. While, a large, centered PSA Lighthouse logo is flanked by a stylized “PSA” (in lieu of “Professional Sports Authenticator”) and a QR code. Tamper-evident fugitive ink graces the area below the blue background. [7]

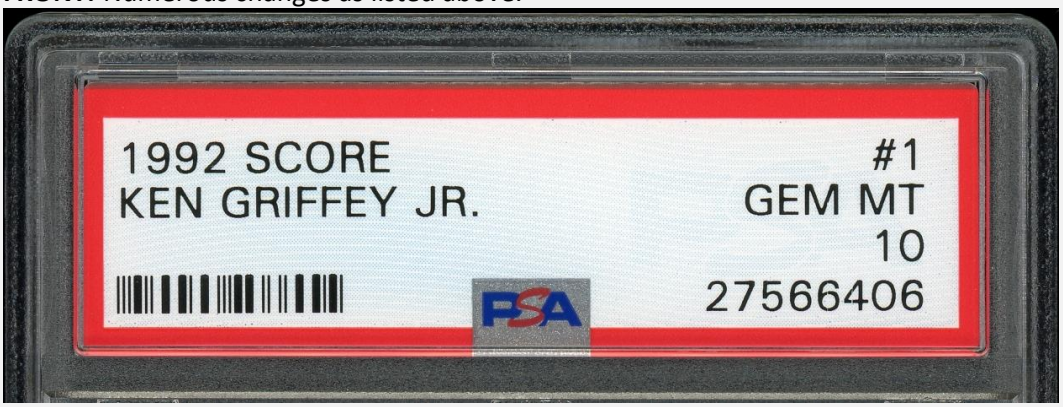


Style 11 - front PSA explanation [8]



Style 11 - back PSA explanation [8]

FRONT: Numerous changes as listed above.



BACK: Numerous changes as listed above.



2.12 PSA label style 12: 2/22/2021 – present (Lighthouse with “PSA”)

Same as style 11, but the Lighthouse logo on the front and back now has “PSA” instead of “NASDAQ: CLCT” stock ticker symbol in the background pattern.

The sale of Collectors Universe finalized on 2/22/2021. An investor group led by entrepreneur and sports card collector Nat Turner, D1 Capital Partners L.P., and Cohen Private Ventures, LLC has completed its acquisition of the Company. As a result of the completion of the acquisition, shares of Collectors Universe common stock have ceased trading and are no longer listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market. [10]

FRONT:



BACK:



“PSA” shown in background when angled left to right.

References

[1] 2007-02-26, PSA-8 T206 Honus Wagner sold for $2.35M, http://www.t206museum.com/page/periodical_55.html, Retrieved 2017-12-24
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[5] 2015-04-17, PSA Enhances Security with New Embedded Hologram, https://www.psacard.com/articles/articleview/8533/psa-enhances-security-new-embedded-hologram, Retrieved 2017-12-27
[6] 2015-12-02, PSA Enhances Label Security with Second Barcode and Serial Number, https://www.psacard.com/Articles/ArticleView/8742/psa-enhances-label-security-second-barcode-serial-number, Retrieved 2017-12-27
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[8] 2017, PSA Security The PSA LightHouse™ Label, https://www.psacard.com/security, Retrieved 2017-12-27
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