



HobbyNews

Game Used Universe launches 'Next Generation' auction

For years game-used memorabilia collectors have relied almost exclusively on the opinions of a select few to determine whether or not an item is legitimate. When you think about it, it seems strange to assume that a limited number of people can know everything about every item. One might also wonder why, in a world of vast resources available in an age of information technology, the memorabilia industry hasn't tried to come up with a better way to validate items that are offered in the marketplace. Game Used Universe considered these questions years ago and has created a system that is ready to take the game used memorabilia market into the "next generation."

Since the launch in August of 2005, Game Used Universe has led the way in transforming the game-used memorabilia market by providing content and social networking to collectors so they can make highly informed decisions about the items they purchase. Among the many examples that illustrate this point, GUU was instrumental in helping Vince Malta complete his revolutionary book *A Complete Reference Guide – Louisville Slugger Professional Player Bats* (this can be seen in the book's acknowledgment section) and is working to distribute the book to all collectors. This reference guide is providing game-used bat collectors with information that previously only resided in the hands of a select few.

Additionally, GUU's resident bat experts have provided detailed information to the collecting community for the past two years to a degree that was previously unmatched. Many Game Used Universe members, experts in their own fields, have utilized GUU's forums since their original creation by Eric Stangel, in turn distributing their vast knowledge to anyone who asks. That is exactly how Game Used Universe believes things should work. Collectors should have all the information available so they don't have to rely exclusively on a limited few individuals to tell them if something is legitimate.

Game Used Universe is now improving the current industry transaction systems with the launch of Game Used Universe Auctions. This is truly a "Next Generation" auction that will protect buyers against the sale of fake and suspect merchandise in ways that have never been done before.

Items sold in Game Used Universe's auctions will first be evaluated by people like Rob Steinmetz, Mike Specht, Jim Caravello, Darrell O'Mary and other highly recognized industry experts who contribute to the GUU site. Not only are these individuals extremely

knowledgeable in their areas of expertise, they are, equally important, people who operate with the highest level of integrity. Anyone who knows them will attest to that statement. In fact, their way of conducting business is articulated in one of Game Used Universe's primary tenets, "Integrity Before Profits." As those who have dealt with Game Used Universe know through experience, these are not idle words to those at GUU but a principle that guides their actions.

Game Used Universe's evaluators are among the industries finest in terms of knowledge and integrity. Their input on GUU Auction items will provide collectors with assurances and information generally not found in the industry.

However, the Game Used Universe model doesn't stop there. Game Used Universe has developed its own custom software where each and every item in its auction will have a "thread" created for it that will allow collectors to ask questions and for those questions to be answered by, not only GUU evaluators, but anyone in the massive GUU community who has substantiated knowledge about a specific item.

Basically, GUU believes there are people out there with more knowledge in specific areas than anyone else. For example, there are individuals in the GUU community who are true experts regarding memorabilia relating to specific teams (say the St. Louis Cardinals or Denver Broncos) or types of memorabilia (such as baseball bats or football helmets). While GUU's evaluators will provide extensive initial evaluations to help protect collectors, the GUU auction software will also allow collectors to ask questions publicly and allow anyone in the GUU community with useful information to provide answers. This system of fully disclosing all information for collectors to use in their purchasing decisions has never existed before.

In the end, there should never be a situation in GUU's auctions where someone buys an item without fully being aware of what they are buying. The Game Used Universe system itself will make sure of it. If a collector is unsure of something, all they need to do is ask. And, if an item is illegitimate, questionable or misrepresented, there is little to no chance of making it through GUU's system without being identified. As people who are using its site already know, Game Used Universe has been instrumental in helping protect collectors from many of the problems in the

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market. The GUU transaction model will only be taking things a step further in ways unprecedented.

Michael O'Keeffe (the author of the book *The Card*) made the following statement in an interview: "I think there are a lot of problems in the hobby and I'm amazed at the amount of crap people are willing to put up with in order to spend thousands of dollars on a card or jersey." In Game Used Universe's opinion, many people have put up with these things because they have not had an alternative.

The alternative has now arrived. With the launch of GUU Auctions, collectors will now be able to participate in a transaction system designed for their benefit. It is a system of accountability where the ultimate goal is to make sure items are accurately and fairly represented and buyers have all the tools they need to make informed decisions in the buying process.

With the creation of Game Used Universe Auctions, the future looks bright for collectors. ♦

More information about GUU Auctions can be attained via e-mail at: Auctions@gameuseduniverse.com or by calling (925) 552-8023. GUU is at booth No. 1046 at the National Convention.

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