Software Review

Sports-card collection management software

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Special to The Washington Post

The Card Collector 6.0, APBA

Sports-card collecting has grown from a casual pastime for pre-pubescent boys to a quite adult business, with some eye-popping prices for even non-antique cards (for instance, $125 for a 1978 Eddie Murray baseball card). The Card Collector helps manage a wide variety of card collections, from baseball to NASCAR.

It is essentially a database, listing virtually every card from almost every publisher for the past 50 years.

You can mark which ones you have and which ones you're looking for, tracking your trades and purchases along the way.

The interface is terrible, with all the user-friendliness of a first-time Visual Basic programming project. But in the arenas of utility and breadth of data, Card Collector hits home runs. It's both quick — taking only seconds to get the details of a new acquisition — and comprehensive — its data set includes cards from old stalwarts such as Topps and Bowman and fairly new publishers such as Score and Upper Deck.

Card prices are provided by Tuff Stuff magazine; you can subscribe to monthly or quarterly data and price updates for $90 or $40, respectively. A one-time update is $15. It is a sign of how basic this software is that while you can order these updates online, they are all shipped on CD-ROM.

Bottom line: If you don't already have your own system for tracking a card collection, this one's a slam-dunk.

Details: Win 95 or newer/Win NT 4 or newer; $35 at www.apbastadium.com