

## Contours

These covers are sure to make anyone sit up and take notice. They're colorful—they're unusual—they're part of the Golden Age of Matchcovers—and just like all the others...they don't make them anymore!

Contours appeared in 1951 as a trademarked cover from the Lion Match Company. Since then, They've become a sure favorite of collectors. Normally, these are 20-stick size, but, because they're die-cut, they're not standard-shaped, as can be seen by the beauties pictured here. The logos, pictures, or text on Contours extend beyond the normal sides of the cover to form a somewhat three-dimensional format designed to catch the customer's eye...and do they ever! The standard length, though, means that they can still be mounted on the usual slit, 20-stick album pages with no real problem.

Although similarly conceived covers were made by Lion in the 1970s and beyond, Lion no longer used the tell-tale trademark, and these later covers lacked the beautiful art work, were thinner, and generally just much cheaper looking. But, then, that's basically what happened to all the great covers of yester-year, if they were to survive at all.

A number of conjunctives exist within the Contour category. There are Contours which are Features, knot holes, a few odd-strikers, etc. The great majority of classic Contours are front-strikers, of course, although there were some early reverse-strikers ("back-strikers"), as well (this isn't counting the more modern issues which don't carry the Contour trademark).

There were 1,147 listed as of 1999, which is the latest number I have. John Clark, FL, reported having 916 in November 2000.

