

Midgets!

by
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In 1934, a new size of matchcover was introduced by Lion Match Company. It measured 3 3/4"x1" and was called a "Midget". The Diamond Match Company also manufactured a cover of the same size, for which I have yet to find a trademark name. Another company, Ohio Match, began to make what they called the Ohio "Junior". These covers were all the same size and contained 14 paper stick matches. Most of these covers were front-strikers, but some were ahead of their time with reverse-strikers.

Over the years, many of these covers were issued in series, such as those from Stetson Gloves, where the



store name would be on the back of the cover. Several other companies also decided that this was a good way to promote their national brands. Varsity-Town Clothes, Sylvania Radio Tubes, Zenith Radio, Red Cross Shoes, and Pabst Beer are just a few examples.

There was only a small amount of sets in the Midget-size cover. Only one of these was a four-cover set issued for the 1939 World's Fair. There were also a few single covers printed for this event.

Since the card game of Bridge was very popular during this period, it was possible to have covers for keeping tally of the players' scores. A nice design would be on the front, and there would be a place on the inside for each player's score.

Another one of Lion's most clever innovations was also to be seen in some Midgets. Called "Display", it was a pop-up extension affixed to the inside of the cover which further allowed an additional feature to the advertiser's product, such as Innes Shoes. This Display feature was also to be seen in some of Lion's 20 and 30-strike covers, as well.

You could have your names, initials, or other personal design put on blank style Midgets. These covers also came in what we know as "Full-Lengths". A few Christmas designs appear on some of the covers, along with a business name.

Midgets came in two or more basic colors. Only a few have been seen with a full-color picture-type design. Unlike covers of today, a lot of these covers contained inside printing, advertising room rates, menu prices, additional locations, etc.

About the time of World War II, these little covers ceased to be manufactured, never to appear again. I have accumulated over 7,000 such covers over the years. Emily Hiller did a listing of Midgets in 1993. Some 4,252 were listed as of that date.

