

Putting Together a Global Collection ...It ain't easy!

And I'm not talking about just collecting Foreign covers. *My* global collection aims at getting, ideally, four covers and/or boxes from every country, and every major island, in the world. Now, *there's* a challenge!

First, in such a pursuit, you quickly find that you *have* to extend what you're willing to accept to boxes (although I'd certainly prefer only covers). Otherwise, there are a number of countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and some of the other Third World countries, that you'd almost certainly never see represented.

Second, even accepting boxes may not make it easier for you in some instances. The boxes we're used to, after all, have the text-design printed right on the box, or at least printed on a wrapper that is permanently glued to the cardboard,—American Ace, Pocketbox, etc., even the lesser-known brands and imports. In much of the Old World, however, boxes with removable labels are still being used (hence the term, '*labels*'). So, in order to complete your collection, are you going to extend what you'd be willing to take to labels? For my own particular reasons, I don't...but there's certainly no reason why *you* can't, if that's what you chose to do. [*and the fact that I don't, by the way, is probably the main reason why my want list, below, is still so large!*]

Third, you have to decide what your "standards" are going to be. For example, do you accept a Hilton or Sheraton cover to represent some exotic place like Tahiti? Or, do you wait for that cover or box from an honest-to-goodness Tahitian source? Personally, I take the chain hotel cover if there's no other choice. It *does* say *Tahiti* on it, after all, and I may never find anything else in the long run. And then, of course, there is always going to be that group of countries that your chances of getting *anything* from are practically nil! Albania suddenly comes to mind! (*I tried three times to get into Albania when I was stationed in West Germany; they turned down my visa request every time!*)

On top of everything else, since we're dealing with political geography, here, countries change occasionally—boundaries, names, and so forth. Ceylon, for example, is now Sri Lanka, and Burma is Myanmar. Sometimes countries just disappear altogether! Czechoslovakia isn't there anymore...East and West Germany aren't there anymore. And sometimes, new countries suddenly appear, as in the case of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and others. So, to my way of thinking, anyway, I don't just need *current* places represented...I need them *All!!*

Thus my title...*It ain't easy!* Just take a look at my current want list on the next page. These are the countries that, after some 20 years, I *still* haven't completed. Granted, I've extended the list to include some famous islands and a few other places that aren't actually countries, but you can easily see that basically everything on the list is a Third World area. They're places that are infrequently heard of, out of the way, and certainly not standard tourist areas. (*When's the last time you thought of taking a vacation in Bangladesh?*)

The few exceptions listed are just that—exceptions due to special circumstances. The Vatican, for example. What's the probability of my obtaining four examples from there? (!) I don't even know if the Vatican puts out any matches in the first place! (*although, according to Godfather III, they all smoke like fiends over there! Hee hee*) And what about North Korea? I don't think they use matches at all over there. They just rub two nukes together!

These are the toughies!

Afghanistan	Djibouti	Madagascar	Pago Pago	Somalia
Albania	El Salvador	Madeiras	Papua-New Gui.	Sri Lanka
Algeria	Equator.Guinea	Malaga	Paraguay	Sudan
Andorra	Estonia	Malawi	Pitcairn Island	Surinam
Ascension	Ethiopia	Maldives	Rarotonga	Suva
Austral Island	Falkland Islands	Mali	Reunion	Swaziland
Bangladesh	French Guiana	Marquesas Isles	Romania	Syria
Belize	Gabon	Martinique	Rwanda	Tanzania
Benin	Gambier Island	Mauritania	Saba	Tonga
Bhutan	Gambia	Mauritius	St. Eustatius	Togo
Bonaire	Ghana	Mayotte	St. Helena	Trinidad&Toba
Botswana	Gibraltar	Midway	St. Kitts	Tunisia
British Honduras	Grenada	Mongolia	St. Lucia	Turks Island
Bulgaria	Guinea-Bissau	Montserrat	St. Martin	Tuvalu
Burma	Guyana	Mozambique	St.Pierre&Miq.	Uganda
Burundi	Iraq	Namibia	St. Vincent	Upper Volta
Caicos Island	Ivory Coast	Nauru	Samoa	Uruguay
Cambodia	Kampuchea	Nepal	San Marino	Vatican
Cameroon	Kiribati	New Caledonia	San Salvador	Walls&Fort Is.
Cape Verde	Korea, North	New Hebrides	Sao Tome&Prin	Yemen
Central Afr.Rep	Laos	Nicaragua	Senegal	Zaire
Chad	Lesotho	Niger	Seychelles	+all the new Rus-
Comoros	Liberia	Nigeria	Sierra Leone	sian spinoff coun-
Congo	Libya	N. Ireland	Solomon Is.	tries!