



Bits & Pieces

>Worse Matchcover Article of the Year! (1980) “To the probable embarrassment of the entire hobby the October 1980 issue of *New West Magazine* published a two page spread called “Open Cover Before Striking.” Primarily pictorial, it showed the match stems from 21 feature covers.

However, the copy that went with the photos implied that collecting covers was dangerous, the writer, Ellen Melinkoff said, “nowadays a growing number of slightly embarrassed collectors actively seek out and stockpile these combustible artifacts. As does New York based photo journalist, Richard Jenkins, whose prized possessions, these are—or were, rather, for shortly after these pictures were taken, his entire collection committed suicide by spontaneous combustion.”

This paragraph and one other mentioning Lion as the maker of feature matches comprised the

whole article. *New West* was the same magazine that reportedly turned down a responsible article on the hobby by a free lance writer who took the trouble to do his research with bona fide members of the hobby, not people who dare to remove the stems out of features and comment on a hobby of which they are not part.” [*Matchcover Beachcomber*, January 1981]

>TV star joins matchcover club! Remember Grady from *Sanford and Son*, the hit TV series? That was Whitman Mayo. Well, he turned out to be a matchcover collector, and he joined Long Beach Matchcover Club in 1981 [*Matchcover Beachcomber*, July 1981]

>Several collectors have made it into Ripley’s Believe It Or Not. Including Rose Rundell, Stan Tombs and Ed Brassard.

>What about the Guinness Book of World Records?

- Kevin Saucier, CA, is in there with the most expensive matchbook (2015: \$6,000 for a Lindbergh)
- Steven Smith, UK, is in there for the largest matchbox collection (2013: 20,736)
- Ed Brassard, CA, is in there for the largest matchbook collection (2012: 3.2 million+)

>A Canadian Jewelite? Eddy Match Co., CAN, produced a Jewelite cover c. 1981 with the same dimensions as the Universal Jewelites. Bacardi Rum, with the message in both English and French. [*Matchcover Beachcomber*, March 1981]

>Gigant was the largest match making firm in the USSR. Gigant, meaning ‘giant,’ opened in 1931 and by 1940 was producing about 10% of all the matches made in the USSR. During World War II, it was totally destroyed by the Germans. By 1949, it was back in operation. In 1969, its output of matches was 1,406,000 cases. By 1975, it was the only match-making firm referenced in the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*. [There’s no mention of it on Google today, so I assume it’s kaput! It may have disappeared with the USSR.]