

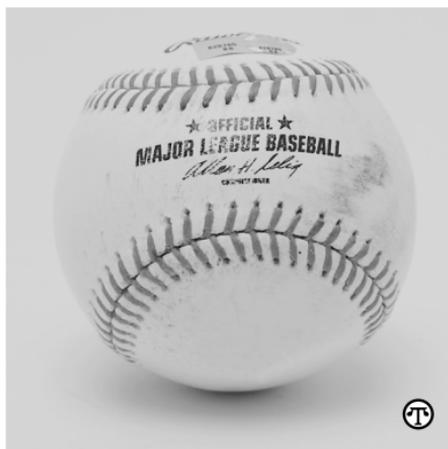
Authenticating The Fall Classic

(NAPSA)—From casual fans to die-hard fanatics, everyone knows that October is baseball's ultimate stage. Thirty teams battle all season long, giving way to the eight best teams that vie for the ultimate prize of being crowned World Series Champions. Players build their careers during the season, but the true heroes are made by those that shine during postseason play.

Whether it's Reggie Jackson's three-homer game in the '77 World Series or Randy Johnson registering three wins by himself in 2001 to push the Arizona Diamondbacks to the title, the play-offs are full of unforgettable moments. That's where Major League Baseball's Authentication Program comes into play.

While all sports cherish memories, historic memorabilia is what truly sets America's pastime apart from the others and connects its generations of fans. To help preserve these moments, Major League Baseball has established the MLB Authentication Program, the first and only such program in professional sports. The program is designed to easily distinguish authenticated game-used memorabilia from other items on the market in order to distinguish what's real from fake.

At every play-off game in 2008, a third-party authenticator will be on site authenticating all game-used equipment immediately after the object has been taken out of play, including balls, bats, jerseys and more. Autographed and game-used items are authenticated by individuals specifically trained to authenticate items that they personally witness. Each object is given a state-of-the-art hologram and a serial number, ensuring its authenticity to the collector. Fans can then enter the hologram num-



ber on MLB.com to verify the authenticity of their memorabilia.

"During the play-offs, history can be made at any moment. Every year, new classic memories are forever entrenched in baseball lore, whether it's a great play, saying good-bye to a future Hall of Famer or just witnessing one of those 'Did you see that!' moments," said Colin Hagen, vice president of licensing, MLB Properties. "That's why MLB established this program, so that we can help preserve these memories for our fans with game-used memorabilia that they can rest assured is the real thing."

The Authentication Program was started in 2001 and has continued to grow ever since. Since then, MLB has authenticated a number of famous play-off items, ranging from the bug spray used on Joba Chamberlain in last year's ALDS "bug" game between the Yankees and the Indians to the Red Sox World Series ball in 2007.

The 2008 play-offs begin the first week of October, with play lasting throughout the month.

To learn more about the MLB Authentication Program, purchase game-used memorabilia or verify one of your own pieces, you can visit www.mlb.com/mlb/authentication.