Rules and Guidelines for TCDB Notes and Glossary Entries FINAL VERSION 8/14/17

One goal of The Trading Card Database (TCDB) is to provide accurate, useful information to collectors. Significant portions of this information are found in the Note and Note2 fields, and consistency in the use and formatting of these entries helps the TCDB deliver maximum benefit to the community. Every entry in the Note field requires a corresponding definition, which is displayed in the Glossary for that set and also aggregated with all Note definitions in the TCDB master Glossary. Over its ten-year history, the master Glossary has grown in a piecemeal fashion and it has become apparent that it is not serving the intended purpose of providing meaningful, consistent information across years, sports, and card issuers. For example, there has been much confusion over the correct use of terms such as Prototype, Promotional, and Sample; Rookie has been abbreviated in multiple ways; and the letter "A" has been assigned almost 400 definitions, mostly of little inherent significance. With well over 8 million cards from more than 150 thousand sets in the TCDB, it is impossible to list every appropriate Note abbreviation, Glossary definition, or Note2 description or to provide Rules to cover every potential situation. In addition to the Rules, the TCDB has adopted several Guidelines to assist in creating Note abbreviations and/or the Glossary definitions, and provided a List of approved and disapproved entries. The Guidelines are less comprehensive and more flexible than Rules, but help illustrate the reasons certain abbreviations or definitions are used. These Guidelines and the List are not exhaustive, but supplement the site's Rules and provide additional examples. Due to the inclusive nature of the TCDB, there will always be areas where one size does not fit all; what works for Baseball or Hockey may not translate well into Racing or Non-Sport. However, that should not deter the effort to provide standard, consistent definitions when reasonable. Accordingly, the TCDB has begun this three-step process:

1. The rules for what information can, may, and cannot be entered into the Note and Note2 fields for a set have been expanded, revised, and clarified. Issues regarding Notes frequently arise in forum discussions and occasionally lead to revisions or clarifications of TCDB policy. Regular updates to the Rules, Guidelines, and the List will ensure that all significant new decisions are memorialized in a central place for more convenient future reference. This will be an ongoing process with no planned endpoint, but the guidance provided here should resolve the vast majority of these questions.

2. New guidance is provided for moving some of the information currently found in Notes to other places, primarily to the base set and insert set release notes.

3. A comprehensive review and overhaul of all existing Note entries is underway, with the goal of conforming all existing entries to the restated Rules and Guidelines. As each set is completed, it will be locked by a member with level 8 authority, and further changes to those Notes will not be permitted.

When adding Notes to a set, you are encouraged to always check the master Glossary to see how prior sets have defined such Notes, and provide consistent definitions. The most common Glossary entries are included in the List for convenient reference. For example, define "ASR" as "All-Star Rookies" because this definition is currently the most commonly used and is expected to be used for all sets once the master Glossary review is completed. Consistency of information is one of the beneficial features of the TCDB, and this is furthered by using consistent definitions across time and sets. ASR is a Note used

almost exclusively in Topps baseball sets, and has previously been defined multiple ways including All-Star Rookie, Topps All Star Rookies, and (Topps) All-Star Rookie. Use of the single description "All-Star Rookies" simplifies the master Glossary and provides more consistent information.

The balance of this document provides the site's Rules for using the Note and Note2 fields, including examples and explanations as appropriate. Following many of the Rules are Guidelines addressing some of the more common issues. While these should resolve most problems with Note entries and Glossary definitions, you are always encouraged to ask questions on the Site Forum or message a trusted member if additional guidance is needed, and revisions to the Rules, Guidelines, and the List will be regularly updated to provide current information.

Rules and Guidelines for TCDB Note and Note2 Field Entries, revised as of July 2017.

Rule I: All Notes must be entirely capitalized, without spaces or internal punctuation. Also, with the two exceptions listed below, only standard alphanumeric characters may be used. Notes should be as short as reasonably needed to convey the necessary information, and will most commonly be 2 to 3 characters. The use of single character Notes is strongly discouraged because they provide little direct guidance to the reader and potentially cause confusion, while Notes longer than 5 characters are needed only in limited situations. Also, the description for a Note should not simply repeat the text of the Note, and text in the Note2 field should not simply repeat the Note text or the Glossary definition.

Examples: RC for Rookie Card; POY for Player of the Year; PROMO for Promotional Cards. If BLUE is used as a Note, "Blue" cannot be the description; explain the context such as "Signed in Blue Ink".

Reasoning: Longer Notes (ROOC; POTY; PROMOTION) provide no more information and may even be less understood, while shorter ones (R; P) are not meaningfully descriptive. A description that matches the Note provides no added benefit and suggests the Note itself is not needed.

Exceptions: "&" is always permitted in abbreviations and "/" is currently approved in one instance only. P/C for Player/Coach is permitted because it was in wide use before the creation of the TCDB and alternative versions of this Note would be more confusing than beneficial.

Guideline 1A—Although some other sites report relative distribution ratios for each card in all sets using terms such as Common, Uncommon, Rare, Ultra Rare, etc., the TCDB does not generally follow that practice. Cards are assumed to be common unless identified to the contrary, so a Note identifying common cards is not needed. In many sets, the production figures of non-common cards are known, so using the appropriate PR## or SN## Notes is sufficient to identify the relative scarcity of each card, and Notes stating any variation of uncommon or rare, such as "UC" for "Uncommon Card" or "RR" for "Rare Rookie" are not needed. In Sports sets where production figures are not known, the single letter Notes U and R are approved for Uncommon and Rare cards due to their widespread general acceptance, and other Notes such as "UR" for "Ultra Rare" or "SR" for "Super Rare" are used as appropriate. In Non-Sport sets such as Pokémon, all relative distribution identifiers, including Common, Uncommon, Rare, etc., are included in Note2.

Guideline 1B--The Note "SP" for "Short Print" is used only for cards produced in a significantly lesser quantity than the majority of that set. Even greater production reductions such as "SSP" for "Super Short Print" may be used if so designated by the card issuer. Use "DP" for "Double Print" or "TP" for "Triple Print" only for cards printed at precisely two or three times the normal quantity. Print quantity identifiers such as SP and DP are not essential in a set if SN## or PR## information is provided, but may be included if desired.

Guideline 1C—When it is necessary to identify a player's home country or national team, the three letter abbreviation used for international competitions such as the Olympic Games is preferred, e.g., "USA" for "United States of America", "CAN" for "Canada", "NZL" for "New Zealand".

Guideline 1D--With rare exceptions such as universally understood terms like "USA", the information placed in Note2 is not abbreviated or condensed like the information in Notes.

Guideline 1E--Notes used in a base set are not always appropriate for the corresponding parallel sets. For example, the Notes RC, U, and R in a base set including Rookie Cards with Uncommon and Rare variations would not be used for a Gold Refractor parallel set where all cards are SN50, or for the printing plates of the base set.

Rule II: Use the Note field only for three types of information: card attributes, identity attributes, and subset information printed on the card.

-Card attributes identify details about the physical form or content of the card. Serial numbers, foil printing, memorabilia, and certain uses of color are all card attributes. *Examples*: SN##, FOIL, MEM, CL, RED.

-Identity attributes identify or describe some aspect of the card's subject. Describing the subject as a Head Coach, General Manager, or Mascot would be an identity attribute. *Examples*: HC, GM, MAS.

-Subsets are often used to collectively show identity attributes, such as All-Star appearances, League Leaders in a statistical category, or members of a championship team. When the subset name is plural (League Leaders) always use the plural form as the definition even if the card shows only one player; do not use the singular form (League Leader). Subsets may also be used for other purposes, such as "In Action" shots or "Fan Favorites". Typically, the subset name will be clearly reflected in the Note abbreviation used. Examples: AS, LL, IA, FF.

Guideline 2A--The full names of colors up to five letters may be used. Three letter abbreviations are preferred for longer colors.

Guideline 2B—While Racing includes many different forms of motorsports, the vast majority of cards are related to NASCAR, which features three main series. The top level in NASCAR is commonly called the "Cup" series, and is generally abbreviated with the current sponsor's name, e.g., "WC" for "Winston Cup" and "SC" for "Sprint Cup". The second level, commonly known as the "Grand National" series, was frequently abbreviated as "BGN" for "Busch Grand National" while that company was the title sponsor. More recently, the sponsor's name is typically highlighted, e.g., "NNS" for "NASCAR Nationwide Series".

NASCAR also features a "Truck" series, which is also typically referenced with the current sponsor's name, e.g., "CTS" for "Craftsman Truck Series".

Guideline 2C—In addition to identifying subsets called "Award Winners", the Note "AW" is appropriate and sufficient for any card depicting an award winner of any type. A more descriptive Note may be substituted if the card specifies the award presented, such as "CY" for "Cy Young Award Winner", or details of the award may be added to Note2, if desired.

Guideline 2D—Do not include the year of an event or award in the Note abbreviation or description. For example, for a card of the 2007 NASCAR Series Champion, use the Note "NC" instead of "07NC" and define the Note "NASCAR Champion" not "2007 NASCAR Champion". Year information may be included in Note2, and is encouraged if a set includes cards related to awards or events from multiple years.

Rule III: Use multiple Notes instead of combining other definitions into a single note. Always use a comma to separate multiple Note entries, but do not end the Note field with a comma.

Examples: Use TR, SC for Trainer and Strength Coach, not TR/SC or TRSC; use AU, MEM, SN100 not AUMEMSN100 or MAS100 or AU, MEM, SN100,

Reasoning: The use of multiple Notes instead of combined Notes simplifies the Glossary and improves understanding of the content. Ending the Note field with a comma introduces a "blank" entry into the Glossary.

Guideline 3A—Alphabetical order is generally preferred for sequencing multiple Notes, especially when all cards in a set receive the same Notes. *Exception*: When one or a few cards in a set have an additional Note in addition to the Notes shared by all cards, the additional Note is preferred at the end. *Example*: An Exchange card in a set otherwise receiving the Notes "AU, MEM, SN100" would get the Notes "AU, MEM, SN100, EXCH".

Guideline 3B—The names of leagues, divisions, or conferences (NL, AFC, etc.) may be used as stand-alone Notes, but are not included as modifiers when describing awards or honors, even if indicated on the card, so use the Note "CY" for a Baseball card of an American League Cy Young Award Winner, not "AL, CY". *Exception*: ALCS and NLCS are used for those Conference Championship Series due to their widespread use.

Rule IV: Using any of the following Notes will include cards in the Errors/Variations section of a set: ERR, COR, UER, VAR. Whenever one of these terms is used as a Note, it must always be repeated in Note2 followed by a colon and a clear explanation. The COR version of ERR card xxx is typically numbered xxxa. Cards with actual variations instead of errors use the VAR Note with an explanation, and are typically numbered xxxa and xxxb.

Explanation: The entry of certain terms in the Note2 field activates the secondary card number function for that card. A secondary card number field has been added to the TCDB to manage the "a", "b", "c", etc. designations included in error and variation card numbers. The card number as printed on the card should be entered into the primary number field, with the letters entered into the secondary field. This

allows the letters to be displayed in checklists, but not impede any filtering. Use the following terms in Note2 to activate the secondary card number field and permit the xxxa, xxxb, etc. numbering: "BASE:", "ERR:", "COR:", and "VAR:". Note that Level 7 permission is required to edit card number fields.

Examples: Use UER as the Note for an error that was not later corrected, e.g., NOTE = "UER" and Note2 = "UER: Last name Stricklin spelled Strickland"; include an explanation with both the ERR and COR Notes when those terms are used, e.g., "ERR" in Note for card xxx with "ERR: Home run total listed as 55" in Note2, and "COR" in Note for card xxxa with "COR: Home run total listed as 15" in Note2; include an explanation in all VAR Notes, e.g., for card xxxa put "VAR" in Note and "VAR: Blue background" in Note2, and for card xxxb put "VAR" in Note and "VAR: Green background" in Note2.

Guideline 4A—When separate "letter cards" are used to spell a player's name, they would typically be identified as Variations, and receive entries in Note and Note2. For example, in a set named "Big Names" the J O N E S cards issued for player Bob Jones will probably all be numbered "BN-BJ." The correct entries for card "J" would use "VAR" in Note and "VAR: Letter J" in Note2, with corresponding VAR entries for the remaining letters.

Rule V: Use SN only for Serial Numbered cards, meaning cards where each one of that type received a unique identifying number. Normally, SN will be followed by the number of cards issued, generically described as SN##. Use SN by itself only if the number of cards issued is not known, as may happen with sets described by the issuer as "numbered to 50 or less" or numbered cards issued with a TBD or To Be Determined comment. Use a PR## Note to indicate the Print Run of cards produced in a stated quantity but not individually numbered. While SN can be used alone, never use PR without identifying the number of cards issued, e.g., PR500 or PR10, because PR alone provides no actual information about the card. If the number issued exceeds 999, do not use commas in the Note. Never use a number alone to represent SN or PR cards, e.g., 500, 75.

Examples: Use SN500 for a card identified as #374 of 500; use PR500 for a card stating "One of 500".

Reasoning: For consistency, do not use other formats, such as PR1 of 500 or SN1/10. Use SN1 for cards identified as "One of one" or "1/1" issues. SN## or PR## for larger issues is one of the rare approved Notes longer than 5 characters, e.g., PR5000.

Rule VI: Use MEM as the Note for all Memorabilia cards. All descriptive information regarding the type or number of memorabilia items is placed in Note2, if necessary.

Discussion: For a jersey card, use MEM as the Note and in Note2 state the specific type, such as "Jersey", "Game Used Jersey", "Away Jersey", etc. if this information varies from one card to the next. When the set name sufficiently describes all cards, such as "Game Used Patches", a description is not needed in Note2. Multiple memorabilia cards also use MEM as the Note, with Note2 providing the appropriate description, e.g., "Bat and Glove"; "Stick and uniform"; "Jersey, Pants, and Shoe." For clarity, the memorabilia descriptions in Note2 should not be abbreviated (Jsy, Uni) or be written in all capitals (JSY, PANTS).

Guideline 6A--"Memorabilia" does not include every type of object included with or attached to a card, but is limited to authentic items directly associated with the referenced player or event. Items of generic distribution, such as 1) government issued coins or stamps from the year of an event, or 2) facsimile items, such as manufactured patches or medallions, are not "Memorabilia" and do not get the "MEM" Note. Instead, use the Note "COIN" with the definition "Government-issued Coin(s)" for cards including genuine coinage; likewise, use the Note "STAMP" with the definition "Government-issued Stamp(s)". Metallic objects from non-governmental issuers are not "coins", and use the Note "MED" with the definition "Manufactured Medallion". Patches or other items that were not part of an authentic uniform or equipment use the Note "MANU" and the definition "Manufactured Relic". Additional descriptive information may be included in Note2.

Rule VII: The Note "RC" should be used only for a card meeting that sport's definition of a Rookie Card. If that card is part of a subset, the proper subset notation should also be used. Please note that all cards in "Rookies" subsets might not meet the requirements of the Rookie Card designation for that particular sport. Generally, inserts and parallels are not RCs and reprints, stamped buybacks, and printing plates are never RCs.

Explanation: RC has a universally recognized limited meaning and thus should not be used for other purposes such as "Rare Card."

Guideline 7A—In subsets such as "Young Guns" or "Hot Rookies", all cards receive the YG or HR Note and true Rookie Cards also get the RC Note. Example: "YG, RC".

Guideline 7B—Do not use "ROO" as a catchall description for all rookie cards not meeting the RC definition. Use "ROO" as the Note only for subsets named "Rookies".

Guideline 7C--If a buyback card originally received the RC Note, that information may be entered in Note2, e.g., "This was a rookie card as originally issued".

Rule VIII: If an abbreviation is from a set printed in another language, giving the English translation in parenthesis is preferred, but not required.

Example: ACT for Actualizción (Update)

Rule IX: Never use a Note to show insertion odds or pull ratios, and only include this information in Note2 for unnumbered (NNO) sets.

Explanation: Card issuers may provide insertion odds in one of two ways, static or variable. Static odds, also called single odds, are the same for every card of that type, and are commonly used for parallel sets released in relatively high numbers, such as "one gold parallel card in every four packs". Static odds should be placed in the release notes of the specific insert or parallel set.

Example: put "Insertion Odds: 1 in every 6" or "Insertion Odds: 1 in 3,456 Hobby, 1 in 7,379 Retail" in the insert set's release notes if all cards in that set were issued with those same odds.

Variable odds differ across the set and are generally used for cards with smaller releases. Place variable insertion odds in the release notes for the base set, which is accessed by using the Edit link for that set found in the year of release list. The details of this information are obviously highly set-specific, but generally follow a variation of this pattern:

Insertion Odds for XXX set:
Cards 1, 3, 5, 7, 10: 1 in 2,113 Hobby, 1 in 5,455 Retail
Cards 2, 4, 8, 9: 1 in 12,350 Hobby only
Card 6: 1 in 16,876 Retail only

The only exception is for unnumbered (NNO) sets, which cannot use the standard format for reporting this information. Include variable odds for each card in NNO sets in Note2 with a complete description, such as "Insertion Odds: 1 in 3,456 hobby, 1 in 7,379 retail".

Rule X: Certain information is expressly prohibited from inclusion in the Note and Note2 fields. This includes card descriptions that do not reflect one of the three Note characteristics, such as F[P]C for First [Product] Card, e.g., First Topps Card or First Fleer Card. Never list jersey numbers, player positions in team sports, or other miscellaneous information in Note or Note2, unless clearly required.

Guideline 10A-- Artificial descriptions that do not truly reflect any recognized card characteristic are not consistent with TCDB objectives and should not be included. For example, First [Product] Cards represent an issuer attempting to create the added value of a RC designation for a card that is not a true Rookie Card, and the TCDB does not include these designations. A very limited exception applies to certain Topps Baseball cards issued between 1957 and 1971 picturing multiple players under a collective title such as "Chisox Clubbers" or "Yankees' Power Hitters". Although not assigned a subset name at the time issued, it is assumed that cards meeting these criteria would have been assigned a subset name had they been issued more recently, and the TCDB wishes to indicate such card groupings. Using the Note "CPC" with the definition "Combo Player Card" is the approved method for identifying these cards as a group substantially equivalent to an unnamed subset of the Topps Baseball set for that year.

Guideline 10B--Some sources use jersey numbers as pictured on cards to identify cards in unnumbered sets or note playing positions in team sports. The TCDB does not follow these practices, and typically does not include jersey numbers or positions in Note or Note2. The only exception occurs if that information is necessary to explain an error or variation card, such as variations showing two different jersey numbers or ERR and COR cards describing a player as pitcher and shortstop.

Guideline 10C—Cards are typically printed using a four-color process, with separate printing plates for black, cyan, magenta, and yellow. Printing plates are usually distributed in different subsets identified by the plate color, so an additional Note is not needed.

Guideline 10D—A Note is not used to indicate a card includes a facsimile signature.

Guideline 10E—Some cards, or more commonly stickers, are issued as multiples on standard sized stock. When the separate images on these cards have individual but non-sequential numbers (e.g., 144 & 162),

the number should be listed as "144 / 162", with no additional info in the Note field. If the images are sequentially numbered (e.g., 7, 8, 9), a dash is used and the number is listed as "7-9".

Guideline 10F—Many Racing cards picture the competing vehicle instead of the driver, especially in NASCAR. The Name field for such cards should reflect this and a Note is not needed to report that a car or truck is pictured. For example, a card showing the #46 car driven by John Doe is properly listed with "John Doe's Car" in the Name field and linked to John Doe's PID, with no additional Note.

Rule XI: All other appropriate descriptive information should be placed in the Note2 field, such as identifying source information for cards found in multiple products from a given issuer. Never use Note2 for personal information or trivia items, such as "my all-time favorite card" or "first card sold for more than $50,000".

Example: Distributed in Press Pass Premium, Press Pass Stealth, and Press Pass Trackside

Guideline 11A—Use Note2 to indicate the original year and set of issue for buybacks, reissued, or reprinted cards. Include the card number if applicable, and do not abbreviate the year or set descriptions. *Example*: Use "1959 Topps #150" not "59T150" or simply "59T".

Guideline 11B—Information about the date, week, or month a card was issued that does not appear on the card itself may be included in Note2. The Note field is not used. Appropriate Note2 descriptions would be "Issued on 4/28/35" or "Issued in week 2". When similar cards are issued with different dates printed on the cards, they are treated as Variations, and use the "VAR" Note and include the date in Note2, e.g., "VAR: 4/1/1998".

Guideline 11C—Some sets include front or back designs that require two or more cards to complete a larger image, for example, two stickers that create a double-sized front image or a puzzle back that requires four, six, or nine cards to complete. In such cases, card positioning details, e.g., being the left or top half of a two-card image or being the upper left or center right portion of a six-card puzzle image, are never included in Note, but are permitted in Note2.

Guideline 11D—Miscellaneous numbers appearing on a card, such as game, season, or career milestones or records, numbers used in games or contests, or various other uses, may be included in Note2. The Note field is not used. This does not include jersey numbers in team sports or competition numbers in Racing.

Guideline 11E--In Multisport sets, the necessary sport or event identification information is placed in Note2. Do not use abbreviated sport identifiers such as TF for "Track & Field" or BSK for "Basketball" in the Note field.

The master List of approved and disapproved Note abbreviations and definitions, revised July 2017.

The following List provides examples of approved Notes following these Rules and Guidelines, examples of some of the disapproved abbreviations or descriptions, and some additional explanatory notes. This

List is not exhaustive, but gives a general indication of how the Rules and Guidelines are interpreted. Additional examples will be added to the List when they are felt to be beneficial to users of the TCDB.

In most instances, a definition must be manually entered for any Note used, and much leeway is usually given in defining Notes. However, a small number of Note abbreviations have been designated as "exclusive" and are limited to a single, very specifically defined use. The TCDB automatically includes these pre-determined definitions in the set glossary when these Notes are used, and revisions to these definitions are permitted only in exceptionally rare situations. At present, the TCDB includes these exclusive Notes: