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**MAY 17 12:00 PM ET** **New 'Madden' includes NFL Sunday Ticket**

By Jon Robinson | ESPN.com

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Are you a football fan on the fence about whether or not to buy the latest version of "Madden" when it hits stores on Aug. 27?

Might be time to jump off that fence.

EA Sports will be selling "Madden NFL 25: Anniversary Edition" exclusively through Amazon.com for \$99.99, and not only will it include a special 17-week subscription of rare cards for those who play Madden Ultimate Team, but it will also include a full season of NFL Sunday Ticket Max.

That's right, buy this version of "Madden 25," and you get to watch every game of the 2013 season on your tablet, or mobile device thanks to DirecTV.

There will only be 50,000 copies of the anniversary edition available for purchase per platform (Xbox 360, PlayStation 3), and with the inclusion of Sunday Ticket, EA Sports expects to quickly sell out.

Fans with DirecTV won't get a code to simply watch Sunday Ticket on their current dish. Instead, they can use the code to watch it on their tablet, computer, or mobile device.

If you don't have DirecTV, you have two options: Sign up for DirecTV and get \$10 off your monthly bill for a year plus Sunday Ticket for free on your mobile devices, or access the Sunday Ticket content for free through your computer, tablet or smartphone.

Add it all up -- the video game (\$60), Sunday Ticket (\$299.95) and 17 weeks of Ultimate Team (about \$100) -- and that's over \$400 worth of content.

"We wanted to thank our fans by giving them a way to celebrate all season long," says Anthony Stevenson, the senior director of marketing for EA Sports who specializes in the "Madden" brand. "When you think about the value, this is a no brainer."

Here is a more detailed look at everything you get when you purchase the game, courtesy of EA Sports:

- Fans who are not currently DirecTV subscribers but are able to receive DirecTV service will receive a promo code entitling them to \$10 off per month for their first year of service and one year of NFL Sunday Ticket Max at no additional charge.
- Fans who are already DirecTV and NFL Sunday Ticket Max subscribers can access NFL Sunday Ticket on computer and mobile devices using their current DirecTV username and password.
- For fans unable to receive DirecTV service, each Madden NFL 25 Anniversary Edition will include a unique code to access the 2013 regular season (17 weeks) trial of NFL Sunday Ticket on computers, tablets, and mobile devices- including access to the award-winning Red Zone Channel.
- Owners of the Anniversary Edition will also receive an exclusive pack of Madden Ultimate Team cards each week of the NFL season, starting Week 1 through Week 17. These special

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Courtesy of EA Sports

The "Madden NFL 25: Anniversary Edition" comes with far more than just the video game.

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anniversary packs will include two rare players, four silver players and four bronze players.

Aside from the "Madden NFL 25: Anniversary Edition" announcement, I asked Stevenson a variety of questions on the current and future state of the franchise. Here's what he had to say about everything from the next generation systems, to the exclusive deal between EA Sports and the NFL.

#### Stevenson on the upcoming game and what's to come down the road for the series:

"Madden 25 on Xbox 360 and PS3 really represents the culmination of eight years of innovation. This is the pinnacle, and this will be the best version of 'Madden' on this hardware. We're really red-lining everything that this hardware can deliver. This is an exciting time because when you think of what's to come down the road with some of these announcements, with Microsoft having their announcement coming up in the next couple of days, this is an exciting time, and we look forward to the new school of gaming platforms of experiences.

"We've double-downed on gameplay the last few years, and I think it's fair to say that what we've done the last couple of years is make sure that anything we invest in is not a throw-away. It's not a mode that we do and then take out. Everything we've done the last two to three years has been through the lens of preparing ourselves for the future and what's to come so we can truly hit the ground running. In the end, what you're going to end up with is the best 'Madden' on Gen-3, while we look forward to the future where we're going to be able to do so much more, so much earlier on in the next console cycle because of the work we put in place."

#### Stevenson on the current contract negotiations between EA Sports and the NFL to extend the exclusive license beyond 2013:

"We're not able to comment on negotiations, but the NFL continues to be an amazing partner for us. When you think about some of the things we've brought to light together in the last couple of years, from the Pigskin Pro Am on NBC to the cover vote, and then we also have some new programs that we're working on that you'll hear about later. Our relationship is stronger than it has ever been, I'll say that, but I can't comment on contracts or rights."

#### Stevenson on what EA Sports will call the "Madden" game in 2024, since "Madden 25" has already been taken:

"I'll say this, this was a unique year, so just because we're 'Madden NFL 25' this year doesn't mean that we have to be 'Madden NFL 26' next year or even 'Madden NFL G'. Who knows? This is a special year. This is the 25th anniversary, and we wanted to signal that right from the beginning, so whether it's the cover vote or the Anniversary Edition for us, it's a way of not only recognizing the innovation and the history, but more importantly, recognizing the passion of our fan base, because without them we'd have nothing."

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