

Grading Integrity Report

CCG / Collectible Card Grading — ccgrading.com

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PUBLIC EVIDENCE REPORT

Bottom line: CCG is a budget bulk card grader whose **structure makes buyer harm the default**.

This is **not** a fraud allegation. Every finding below sits on CCG's own public pages, their own public API, or public eBay listings. We name the conduct; we do not name any person. You decide.

The single strongest finding: **CCG's certificate verification does not work**. The "Serial Number Lookup" form submits to nothing, and the only database behind it holds **three fake WordPress demo records**. A buyer cannot verify a CCG cert because there is no cert system to verify against. Proven live, reproducibly, from their own site.

1. What CCG is

Collectible Card Grading (CCG), ccgrading.com, is a low-cost, high-volume trading-card grading service (\$5/card at 500+ cards, 14-day turnaround). It issues cards in a black slab labeled "GEM MINT 10" with four subgrades. It operates from a single unit in a shared multi-tenant flex building in Huntington Beach, CA, on WordPress and Nexcess managed hosting. **It is not CGC** (Certified Collectibles Group) — the near-identical initials matter, see §8.

2. Headline: the certificate verification is a facade

CCG advertises a "Serial Number Lookup" so buyers can verify a grade. We took it apart end to end. It fails at **two independent layers**:

Layer 1 — the lookup form submits to nowhere

The `/card-lookup/` page has one field named `serialNumber`, with an empty form action, **no** `post_type`, **no** AJAX handler, and **no** external API call. WordPress has no route that consumes `serialNumber`, so entering a cert just reloads the page. No search ever runs.

Layer 2 — the only backing database holds 3 fake records

The lookup is nominally backed by the SportsPress plugin's `sp_player` content type. Pulled from CCG's own public REST API and sitemap, that "database" contains **exactly three records — all leftover WordPress theme-demo content dated 2016** (their `guid` points at `splash.stylemixthemes.com`, the theme vendor's demo site):

- "Colin Kaepernick"
- "Thomas Edward Brady, Jr." (a Tom Brady demo entry)
- "Finn Rosetta" (a made-up demo template name)

These are dated **four years before CCG's domain existed**. There are **zero real cert records**. We demonstrated it live against their own public site:

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Query on ccgrading.com	Result
?s=940859235 — a real CCG cert	"Nothing Found"
?s=353161057 — a real CCG cert	"Nothing Found"
?s=Brady	returns the demo record <i>thomas-edward-brady-jr</i>
?s=Rosetta	returns the demo record <i>finn-rosetta</i>

The only things the "cert database" can find are the three demo athletes. **Every real CCG serial returns nothing**. The verification is theatrical — a decorative form over a theme-demo roster.

3. Full technical sweep — we checked the whole system

To be sure the real lookup wasn't hiding somewhere else, we enumerated the entire stack:

- **1,114 REST API routes across 36 namespaces** — every one belongs to an off-the-shelf plugin (WooCommerce and its shipping/payments/analytics, Yoast SEO, Jetpack, SportsPress, Nexcess hosting, Slider Revolution, an Instagram-feed widget, Pinterest, Mailchimp, PayPal, object cache, WordPress core). **There is no custom grading, cert, or verification software anywhere on the site.**
- **34 pages** — the only lookup is `/card-lookup/`. The rest are leftover sports-league theme demo pages ("Arena," "Trophy room," "Sample Page," "Typography," a duplicate shop/cart/checkout). CCG is a repurposed WordPress sports-team theme.
- **14 candidate subdomains probed** (verify, cert, lookup, app, registry, api, db, portal...) — all nonexistent. No hidden verification host.
- **Hosting** = shared managed WordPress on a node with ~192 unrelated tenant sites. This is cheap shared web hosting, **not** grading-lab infrastructure. A free chat widget handles support.
- **Pricing**, from their own store API: Silver (1–99) \$12/card, Gold 100+ \$10, Gold 500+ **\$5**, Diamond Express \$75.

4. The pedigree claim is falsifiable

RED FLAG

CCG's homepage/FAQ claim "over 36 years... since 1988." Their own site and public records contradict it every way:

- Domain `ccgrading.com` registered **2020-05-01** (Verisign RDAP; registrar GoDaddy).
- Their own footer reads **"Copyright © 2012–2024."** Image assets were uploaded 2024. First CCG slab seen in the wild ~2022.
- The earliest web capture of the domain (2004) was an unrelated "Under Construction" parked page — the registration lapsed and was re-created in 2020.
- The wording is a dodge: "in the industry since 1988" is not "grading cards since 1988." Third-party card grading barely existed then (PSA was founded in 1991).

5. The grading scale has no methodology — and contradicts itself

RED FLAG

No grading technique, process, equipment, criteria, or grader is published anywhere — only a vague 1–10 scale ("GEM-MT 10 = nearly flawless") with four subgrades and **no stated roll-up rule** for how subgrades produce

the overall. An on-camera CCG slab reads **overall 10 with a Centering subgrade of 9.5**, while their own scale defines a 10 as "perfect centering." A 9.5 centering is by definition not perfect, yet the card is still a 10.

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6. It grades reprints and homemade cards on the same slab

RED FLAG The scale page lists "Reprints: licensed or unlicensed replicas" and "ACEO Custom: non-licensed art or homemade" as gradable — in the **same black slab, with the same "GEM MINT 10" treatment** as a real licensed card. On a fast live break, a buyer cannot tell a slabbed custom or reprint from the real thing.

7. No guarantee, no population report, image-less verification

RED FLAG Across the homepage, About, FAQ, Prices, Submit, Scale, Buy, and Lookup pages there is **no authenticity guarantee, no grade guarantee, no mechanical-error policy, no population report, and no terms of service**. Even if the lookup worked, it returns a bare "grade report" with **no image of the card**, so a cert cannot be tied to a physical card — a label swap or re-holder would be undetectable. Recognized graders (e.g. CGC) provide an image-backed lookup and a guarantee.

8. Name and trade-dress borrow recognition it hasn't earned

RED FLAG "CCG" on a small black label reads as **CGC** on a phone screen. "GEM MINT 10" is **PSA's** exact terminology. A black label with four subgrades is **BGS/Beckett** trade dress. CCG borrows visual cues from three established graders and belongs to none. (Whether that crosses a trademark line is a question for an attorney; the consumer-confusion mechanism is documented.)

9. Self-dealing: the grader sells the cards it grades

RED FLAG This is the core buyer-harm. CCG's own "Buy Our Cards" page states it sells "our graded... cards... across eBay, Amazon, and more," and every page's "Card of the week" nav links a specific eBay listing. An affiliated eBay storefront **self-brands every listing** with a banner reading "Graded CCGgrading / Collectible Card Grading / CCG... Gem Mint 10." So the **same operation grades the cards and sells them**, and says so on its own listings. No independent grader does this — it destroys the third-party independence that is the entire product.

10. Documented overpricing — the numbers

RED FLAG The affiliated storefront's live listings (all CCG slabs) versus real market comps (130point medians, approximate). A CCG grade carries no resale premium, so it should never exceed a PSA price:

Card	CCG asking	Real comp	Legit graded	Overprice
1982 Topps Traded Cal Ripken #98T	CCG 9.5 \$2,450	raw ~\$135	PSA 9 ~\$683 / PSA 10 ~\$1,065	2.3× a PSA 10
2007-08 Topps Kevin Durant RC #2	CCG 10 \$145	—	PSA 10 ~\$99	above a PSA 10
2018 Topps Ohtani #A17	CCG 10 \$425	~\$20 raw	~\$210 graded	~20× raw
2022 Donruss Brock Purdy PP Gold	CCG 10 \$175	~\$8	—	~22×
Xander Schauffele 2017 SI for Kids	CCG 10 \$950	~\$8	—	~115×
Paul Skenes 2023 Leaf RC	CCG 10 \$35	~\$4	—	~8×
2022 Leaf Trump (x2)	CCG 10 \$95	~\$10 ea	—	~5×

Two are indisputable because a CCG grade cannot logically exceed a PSA one: the **Ripken CCG 9.5 at \$2,450 beats a real PSA 10 at \$1,065**, and the **Durant CCG 10 at \$145 beats a real PSA 10 at \$99**. The store as a whole asks 5× to 115× market.

11. The timeline is the motive

The affiliated storefront has sold on eBay since **1998** — roughly two decades of raw card sales before CCG existed. CCG: domain 2020, site 2021, first slab ~2022. So CCG-slabbed cards are a **2022+ layer** on top of long-running raw selling. The sequence — sell raw for 20+ years, build a grading company, then start selling your own cards as "GEM MINT 10" slabs — is exactly the shape of "create a grader to mark up your own inventory."

12. What we did not find (fairness)

- **No evidence of theft or non-delivery.** No BBB file, lawsuit, or "kept my cards" complaints surfaced. This cuts both ways — no theft evidence, but also little verifiable operating history.
 - **We are not alleging fraud.** The slab names the grader; a buyer who knows what CCG is can choose to buy. The harm is *structural*: an unrecognized "10," applied by the seller to his own stock, priced as if it meant what a PSA 10 means.
 - No proven commercial tie between CCG and any specific live-break seller. Not asserted.
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13. Methodology and sources

All findings derive from CCG's own public web pages, their public WordPress REST API and sitemaps, public eBay listings, and public records (Verisign RDAP for domain age, California Secretary of State business search, 130point for sold comps). No login, no private data, no interaction with the operator. The cert-verification test used ordinary public GET requests against ccgrading.com and is fully reproducible.

CardConduct is a fair, evidence-based public record of trading-card seller and grader conduct. We name conduct, not people. If CCG believes anything here is inaccurate, we will review documented corrections. Keep the receipts — you decide.