

THE DUELIST

The Official Deckmaster™ Magazine

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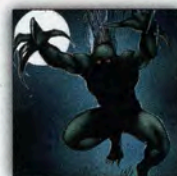
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THE DUELIST

Duelist #8,
December 1995

8 LETTERS

Readers discuss cantrips, errors in the *Homelands*™ card list, and offensive art.

Backgrounds by Quinton Hoover

TCG UPDATES

10 WOTC NEWS

This issue: updates on *Netrunner*™ and the next *Magic*™ expansion; how to detect *Magic* counterfeits; plus, reports on the Type I National Championship and the release of *Homelands*.

Backgrounds by David Kimmel; photos by Stan Honda

15 REPORTS ON TRADING CARD GAMES

compiled by Allen Varney

Get the latest news on next year's releases—and find out why industry experts are predicting a difficult year for the TCG market.

Backgrounds by Anthony Petrarca

EXPERT ADVICE

18 AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

by Charlie Catino

Homelands developer Charlie Catino offers his thoughts on the innovative cards in the latest *Magic* expansion.

Backgrounds by Amy Weber;
spot illustrations by Pat Morrissey

20 CARD SPOTLIGHT: GIANT GROWTH

by Chris Page

Long-time *Magic* designer Chris Page helps you make the boon of green the bane of your opponent.

Backgrounds by Scott Kirschner

24 EXCUSE ME, MR. SUITCASE?

by Paul Peterson

Theme decks for the holidays—a perfect gift for the *Magic* player who has everything.

Backgrounds and spot illustration by Julie Baroh

26 SWIMMING WITH THE SHARKS: A BEGINNERS' GUIDE TO MAGIC TRADING

by Mark Rosewater

Just when you thought it was safe to trade...learn how to safely test the trading waters with this step-by-step guide.

Backgrounds by Nicola Leonard; spot illustration by Dan Frazier

28 MASTERING MULTIPLAYER MAGIC

by Beth Moursund

Tired of losing in multiplayer games? Beth Moursund shows you why basic two-player strategies fail in group play.

Backgrounds by Scott Kirschner

34 MAKING ENEMIES: DESIGNING DECKS IN PAIRS

by Mark Rosewater

Some decks seem like they were made to play each other; some actually were. Meet The Grinch and Friedrich, two fun, well-matched decks, and learn how to make enemies of your own.

Backgrounds by Amy Weber; spot illustrations by Mark Poole

38 IN CONTROL: KEY STRATEGIES FOR ICE AGE

by Jim Lin

Ice Age™ co-designer Jim Lin explains how to put *Ice Age* cards to good use—or good riddance.

Backgrounds by Pat Morrissey and Amy Weber;
spot illustration by Pat Morrissey

42 WOTC PICKS: HOMELANDS

Compiled by Melody Alder

Pick up a few combinations to help you get the most out of your *Homelands* cards.

Backgrounds by Drew Tucker; spot illustrations
by Susan Van Camp

44 HOUSE RULES

from our readers

This issue's *Magic* variants: knock off your friends in "Assassins," stalk them in "The Hunt," and take their tournament decks in "Juxtapose."

Backgrounds by David Kimmel

46 MURK DWELLERS

by Tom Wylie

You attack, your opponent blocks—pretty simple, right? Well, most of the time...

Backgrounds and spot illustrations by Drew Tucker

50 MAGIC RULINGS & ERRATA

compiled by Tom Wylie

"Modes" of effects? Lasting fast effects? Get the latest official rulings from the *Magic* R&D team.

Backgrounds and spot illustrations by Drew Tucker

THE WORLD OF DOMINIA

52 ASHES OF THE SUN

by Hanovi Braddock

In this excerpt from the next *Magic: The Gathering*® novel, Istini Ayesh ni Hata Kan confronts her sworn enemies.

Backgrounds by Scott Kirschner

55 FROM THE LIBRARY OF LENG: ERON THE RELENTLESS

With contributions from Shawn Carnes, Scott Hungerford, Kyle Namvar, Christopher Rush, John Tynes, Pete Venters, and Jon Wilkie Learn the legend of one of *Homelands*' most colorful characters.

Background by Drew Tucker and Amy Weber;
symbol by Christopher Rush

TOURNAMENT NEWS

56 DUELISTS' CONVOCATION NEWS

This issue: the latest DC tournament rules for Type I and Type II competition.

Backgrounds by Drew Tucker; spot illustrations
by William O'Connor

PROFILES

63 THE DUELIST INTERVIEWS MAGIC ARTIST HEATHER HUDSON

by Jenny Scott and Amy Weber
Deckmaster™ artist Heather Hudson muses on life as a convertible-driving heart-breaker and life before the car—and her own experiences as “an unnaturally lucky artist.”

Backgrounds by Amy Weber; jewel illustrations by Tom Wänerstrand; photos by Matt Hagen

68 ARTIST ANNOUNCEMENTS

Illustrators for Deckmaster and The Duelist provide contact information, convention appearances, and print availability.

Backgrounds and spot illustrations by Amy Weber

72 THE CLIMB TO THE TOP

by Alexander Blumke

The 1995 Magic: The Gathering world champion relates his early experiences with Magic.

Backgrounds by Ron Spencer

74 PLANESWALKING IN LA-LA LAND

by Mark Rosewater

Find out why so many gamers consider Southern California the Utopia of the Magic world. Plus, places to play in the L.A. area and a profile of top deck-builder Mark Chalice.

Backgrounds by Amy Weber; spot illustrations by Randy Gallegos

VAMPIRE: THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE

81 V:TES RULINGS & ERRATA

compiled by Tom Wylie

Here you'll find answers to many of your V:TES™ questions, as well as some changes to the rulebook.

Backgrounds by Amy Weber; spot illustration by Drew Tucker

83 PULSE OF THE CANAILLE

compiled by Tom Wylie

Rules expert Tom Wylie asks for reader feedback on “vote pushing” and integrating non-Camarilla clans into the basic set.

Background by Amy Weber

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY

85 THE END OF INNOCENCE: THE 1995 TRADING CARD GAME YEAR IN REVIEW

by Glenn Godard

Long-time Magic retailer and industry commentator Glenn Godard expounds on the key developments of 1994, and their impact on the coming year.

Backgrounds by Scott Kirschner

90 HERESY™ AND OTHER REVIEWS

by Allen Varney

Our crusading reviewer takes as his text Last Unicorn's new game in that often-seen genre, religio cyberpunk/fantasy/apocalyptic political intrigue. Plus, capsule reviews of Guardians™ and Wing Commander™.

Backgrounds by Amy Weber, Rick Berry, and Darrel Anderson

95 THE DIVINER: IN THE WAKE OF ADVERSARIES

by J.M. White

Learn the latest on the end-of-the-year secondary card market from the great Diviner.

Background by Amy Weber

98 LOST IN THE SHUFFLE

by Richard Garfield

As Magic's creator explains, The Great Dalmuti™ was born of his desire to be an ambassador for a little-known and delightful game.

Backgrounds by Doug Keith

100 WHAT'S NEW? WITH PHIL AND DIXIE

by Phil Foglio

Phil Foglio imagines what the Magic computer game might be.

PUZZLES

102 MAGIC: THE PUZZLING

by Mark Rosewater

It's Time to Act By the Book, but remember, To Err is Human when you're up against three new puzzles from the puzzle mastermind.

Backgrounds by Anthony Petrarca

108 MAGIC TRICKS

by Mark Rosewater

Mark's evil twin finally speaks out, revealing the more insidious of these step-by-step solutions to last issue's Magic puzzles.

Backgrounds and spot illustrations by Drew Tucker

CARD LISTS

118 VAMPIRE: THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE—DARK SOVEREIGNS CARD LIST

compiled by T. Brian Wagner

This official checklist for the first V:TES expansion.

Backgrounds by Amy Weber

LAST WORDS

122 YOUR TURN

from our readers

What do you think of Chronicles™? Or of the flavor text on Magic cards? In this new section of The Duelist, you can speak out about general issues affecting Magic and the trading card game industry.

Backgrounds by Amy Weber; spot illustrations by Margaret Organ-Kean

128 A WIZARDS OF THE COAST INDEX

inspired by Ryan Omega and compiled

by James Ernest

Even if you've never met Michael Eisner, this collection of Deckmaster game statistics might surprise and amuse you.

Background by Amy Weber and Drew Tucker; spot illustration by Drew Tucker



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This issue brought to you by: AOPs, Taqueria de WotC (carnitas, camarones, y al pastor), psychosomatic illnesses, Folio, the new ties at Red Robin ("what's up with that?"), Café Wha?, and Johnny Cash ("The City of New Orleans").

Confessions of a *Duelist* editor

I'm not going to get my picture taken with a goat. The *Duelist* gang has been trying to use the earthy essays in *Martha Stewart Living* to inspire/embarass/pressure me into writing an editor's introduction for the magazine. I wouldn't go for the barnyard-scene photo, but I agreed that the magazine should really have a note from the editor. But I feel guilty; I'm afraid there are a few things I should warn you about myself before I start subjecting you to a column. Okay, here's the worst one:

I'm not the world's greatest Magic™ player. Ouch. Yeah, it's true; though I've been editing the magazine since it began, strategy editor Paul Hughes can still kick me to the curb. Sigh. So much for good help.

I'm sure the organization of the magazine isn't perfect. One of the great joys of working on *The Duelist* is that it's gotten better with every issue; this, of course, means that there has always been room for improvement (and hopefully there always will be). Although I think the magazine is great, the way it was structured left a lot to be desired. In this issue we've started reorganizing the magazine, dividing the articles into easy-to-find sections and adding new columns—the kick-off of a much-needed turn toward a cleaner, clearer, more involving magazine.

I'm not convinced that Magic is the be-all and end-all of trading card games. I know, that sounds strange from the editor of a "mostly Magic" magazine. *The Duelist* has always been focused on Magic, and our coverage of the most popular game in the industry won't change. But I hope that we can be what Richard Garfield calls an "ambassador" for the new TCGs of 1996. Maybe I'm just looking for a trading card game that I can beat Paul at, but having watched the development of *Netrunner*™, I'm pretty excited about the next *Deckmaster*™ game. And, as Glenn Godard notes in his article, it wouldn't hurt for a dark horse to shake up the TCG world a bit.

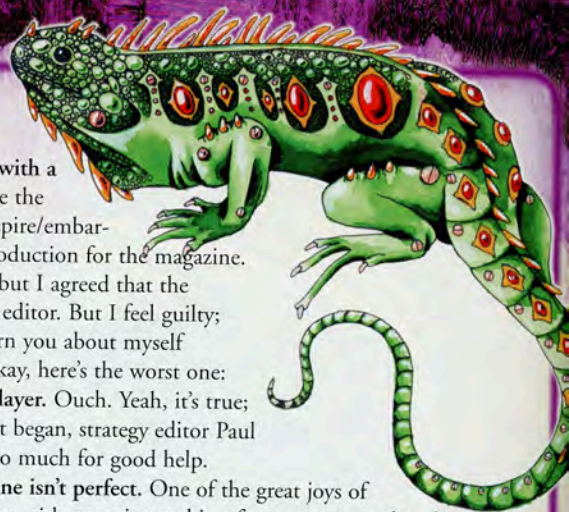
I'm not convinced that Magic isn't the be-all and end-all of trading card games. A game as fun as Magic, which has affected the lives of so many so quickly, is not to be underestimated. A good new TCG, even a Wizards of the Coast game, may never rival Magic's popularity or its market share. This preoccupation with Magic is a mixed blessing: on the one hand, it helps develop a great game and an enthusiastic community of game players; on the other, it exaggerates the impact of new Magic releases on the industry (witness *Chronicles*™ and *Ice Age*™). Retailers—and game players—are more dependent upon a single product than could have been imagined two years ago. Meanwhile, the TCG market's recent depression has everyone afraid to divert resources into the other abundant, if sometimes mediocre, offerings. It's difficult to predict what will happen to trading card games as a genre if no other TCG gains significant popularity in 1996.

I wonder how WotC wound up with a gym-sized dojo in its new office. In 1992, only serious roleplayers and industry activists knew who Wizards of the Coast was. Now, the handful of gamers and artists working in the basement of the president's house has grown to more than 250 employees worldwide. For all of us who used to work for a small gaming company, it's sobering that WotC now outnumbers our old bugaboo and company yardstick, TSR®. It's widely known that D&D® sparked similar growth in that company, and then sharp decline. D&D is still around, though, and I take comfort in the fact that both *Dragon*® and *Dungeon*® are still going strong.

I am, at heart, an optimist. Really. I know, I know, I've given you a healthy dose of gloom and doom in this first column—I warned you that I had to get a few things off my chest. Magic is a truly revolutionary game, and it has rejuvenated the gaming industry. Being a part of this growth has been both exciting and challenging, and *The Duelist* will continue to keep an honest and objective vantage on the industry. For the coming year, I hold nothing but high hopes for Magic, the TCG industry, and *The Duelist*.

Kathryn Haines
Kathryn Haines, Editor-in-Chief

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Letters

OFFENSIVE ART IN *THE DUELIST*?

I am a concerned parent of a ten-year-old boy who is an avid **Magic** player. He plays often with friends and spends a lot of his hard-earned money on cards and card magazines. I am glad to see him involved in an interactive game with friends which is not computer or video games! Until this time, it has seemed like an imaginative, fun, and involving game for him.

My concern is *Duelist* #6, which has a questionable pull-out poster [by **Magic** artist Rob Alexander]. Each side is offensive—one is sexually suggestive; the other's use of human skulls crosses over the line from fantasy to violence. I had considered purchasing a *Duelist* subscription for my son, but I will not at this time. Please consider what you print, and the possible effects you may have on all people, young and "mature." I hope you believe you have some social responsibility to your players and readers. You have a lot of power over your consumers—use it wisely!

Thanks for considering this input for your future issues.

Stephanie Sloan
Newcastle, WA

COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?

Send them to: Letters c/o *The Duelist*
P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057
or via e-mail to:
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Please include name and phone number for verification purposes. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Rob Alexander, creator of these pieces of art, responds:

In your letter, you encourage The Duelist to pay particular attention to the content of the magazine, as it is a powerful tool which is placed in the hands of a large number of readers, many of them children. Allow me to assure you, then, that The Duelist has always recognized this fact and acted responsibly towards it. In fact, each artist who has worked with The Duelist is given a set of artist guidelines, which clearly indicate the presence of the younger reader and the need, therefore, to keep the subject matter of all imagery appropriate for all audiences. The cover and interior poster, rather than being exempt from these guidelines are, if anything, scrutinized more closely and carefully.

It pains me, therefore, to hear of your concern and reaction to my paintings.

Poseidon's Daughter, the image on the cover, is not sexually suggestive, despite the figure's lack of clothing. Mermaids are often represented as seductive temptresses, but, as you can see in her expression and posture, this particular mermaid is in mourning. In her hand she holds a daisy chain, possibly a last reminder or connection to the young girl buried in the sand beneath her.

True, the mermaid wears no clothing, but she is a mermaid. If we are to accept that this is a fantasy image, and that mermaids exist, if only in the minds of artists, then she should be in her natural state. Not wanting to create a sexual image, I placed the mermaid on her stomach. There is an indication of female anatomy, but it goes no further than an

indication. I am sorry you see the mermaid as sexual, as I went to considerable lengths to ensure it was not a sexual painting at all.

As for the interior poster, here is an image which stems from what I would call a "personal mythology," rather than a "collective" one. As far as I know, there is no historical basis for this exact character. There is, however, precedent for carving symbols on bones and skulls, which is precisely what the character in the painting is doing. He is not a violent character, as you suggest, but rather a meditative one. He collects, catalogs, and renders final service to those he finds who have passed on unnoticed and unmarked. In other words, he is nature's caretaker of souls. He bears no weapons, as he does not kill. The skulls and bones he has collected are from those who have already died, as is indicated by the ropes with which skulls are slung over the tree branches. Nor are his services limited to humans, as is evidenced by the numerous animal skulls for which he is also caring.

I trust this gives you a new insight into my imagery and alleviates your concern about the conduct of the art directors and editors of *The Duelist*. Be sure that they and all the artists who work with *Wizards of the Coast* are aware of who our work is exposed to and of the powerful influence it may have.

THE WHAT THAT GOES WHAT?

In *Duelist* #6's article, "Cantrips: Something for Nothing," why did the author think cantrips were good? If you wanted to draw more cards, you could use Braingeyser or Howling Mine (and use Icy Manipulator to tap Howling Mine on your opponent's turn). First of all, you have to pay more mana just to get your deck to disappear. I played a friend of mine, and all he had were Millstones and a Braingeyser. I got murdered by five Millstones (one was a Copy Artifact). To make matters worse, I had a few cantrips in my deck (Enervate) and had my library milled away. I lost to a four creature deck because of the cantrips and Millstones.

AAH-Fro, the Purple Knight that goes kneep kneep

Chris Page, author of the article on cantrips, responds:

There are lots of points to address in this letter. First, as for specifics, if you just want to draw cards, Braingeyser is better, but the existence of a degenerate card doesn't invalidate all the others. Actually, if you want to go further, Braingeyser itself is pretty useless when compared to Ancestral Recall. As for the Howling Mine/Icy Manipulator combination, it's not bad, but it is a combination which you need to get in your hand first. And half of the combination (Howling Mine) is weak by itself, since it nets your opponent two cards. But, as I mentioned, the point of cantrips is not just to draw cards—it's to get a useful effect and draw more cards.

Citing one game as a reason why a set of cards is bad is an easy mistake to fall into. There will be games when your opponent will draw all four Millstones in the top twelve cards. There will also be games when your opponent only draws one land in the top twelve cards. The thing to remember is that the average game is very different from individual games. Just like rolling four dice—on average you will get a 14, but there will be times when you roll a 4 or 23.

There's also the fact that no deck will beat every deck—each deck has its vulnerabilities. A red, direct-damage deck is going to die horribly against a deck with Circles of Protection: Red and three Conversions. And

a deck that tries to speed through all sixty cards suffers a weakness when it goes against a Millstone deck. Against a Millstone deck, you either need to break down the opponent's artifacts with Scavenger Folk, Disenchant, or Shatterstorm, or deal 20 damage rapidly with waves of creatures while your opponent's tying up mana in the Millstones.

And if you're worried about running through your cards too fast, there's always the second option of playing with more than sixty cards. In fact, we're currently in the process of trying to design an expansion where there will be decks for which you'll want to include more than sixty cards.

$$(44 \times 1) + (25 \times 3) \neq 121$$

I have the latest issue of *The Duelist* that lists the *Homelands* cards. In going through them, I have found the numbers do not add up. The list shows 44 U1's and 25 U3's. This does not add up to 121 on a sheet. Also, there are 8 U1's for four colors and 7 U1's for green. I think there are only 7 U1's for all the colors and the lands are all U1, not like the list presented. I appreciate all you are doing.

Sal Damiano

Good eye—the numbers don't add up. After re-checking the uncommon sheet, we found that *Joven's Tools* is actually a U3 (it's listed as a U1). And there should be 8 U1's in green (not 7); the rarity listings for *An-Havva Township* and *An-Havva Constable* are switched. The Township is a U3 (it's listed as a U1), and the Constable is a U1 (it's listed as a U3). The other listings for lands are correct. So that means there are 43 U1's and 26 U3's (and that adds up to 121). Thanks for your help!

WE'LL PAY TOP DOLLAR FOR A DUELIST #1

Hello, folks at WotC! I would like to know how to order back issues of *The Duelist*. The address and name of who to contact as well as the price (including postage) would be most appreciated. As a rule, I find magazines boring (even on topics that I am interested in), but I must compliment the editors and authors of *The Duelist*! This is a great publication, and the art is truly outstanding!

Nick Kisiel
Buffalo, NY

Thanks for the compliments! You can get back issues of *The Duelist* by calling (206) 226-6500, or by sending e-mail to duelist@wizards.com. All issues sell for cover price plus shipping and handling. Issues #1 and #2 are no longer available. Issue #3's price is \$3.50, issues #4 through #7 are \$3.95 and are subject to availability. Shipping in the U.S. is \$4.00 for two issues and \$2.00 for each additional issue. Shipping to Canada and Mexico costs \$3.25 for one issue and \$4.45 for two. International postage is \$3.20 for one issue and \$6.50 for two. (All funds quoted are U.S. funds.)

For more letters, refer to our new section, "Your Turn," p. 122-123, where readers respond to last issue's At Issue question and raise topics of interest about Magic and the trading card game industry.



MAGIC: THE GATHERING®

HOMELANDS MAKES A SPLASH

The debut of *Magic: The Gathering—Homelands™* had *Magic* players worldwide captivated. As usual, midnight release parties were held at retail stores across the country, as players waited eagerly to open their first booster packs of the latest *Magic* expansion. Thousands of people came from across the world to participate in a day-long premiere event, aptly called “The Gathering I,” which was held in New York City. The event was covered by numerous members of the media, including the BBC, the London Times, Option, and CNN. (For detailed coverage, see “Inside Homelands” on p.13)

Homelands was also well received at the recent Essen Spiel '95 in Essen, Germany, Europe's largest gaming convention. Wizards of the Coast VP Lisa Stevens commented about the enthusiasm of the German game-playing community: “The German people love games to an extent that is mind-boggling. In Germany, games truly are an integral part of mass entertainment.” In this game community, says Stevens, “*Magic* is ruling solidly.” The German *Magic* players lived up to their reputation as strong competitors; as Stevens ruefully reports of her own deck's performance against them: “Can you say kicked to the curb? Wow!”

PROFESSIONAL POSSIBILITIES FOR MAGIC TOURNAMENTS

The first in a series of professional *Magic* tournaments is in the early planning stage at Wizards of the Coast. Members of the *Magic* team have been scoping out sites in the New York City area and hope to put together an initial event by early next year. For more information, contact Wizards of the Coast Customer Service at (206) 624-0933.

WOTC NEWS

MONKEYING AROUND: THE NEXT MAGIC EXPANSION

The next expansion for *Magic: The Gathering* is well underway. The final names of the cards are being chosen, replacing the series of whimsical “monkey names” left over from the designer's initial card list. (Any bets on what “Great Grape Ape Strength” will turn out to be called? Or “Monkey monkey monkey monkey monkey monkey monkey monkey monkey monkey—hey stop that!”?) Created by the designers of *Ice Age*, this expansion is specifically designed to complement that set but is, of course, fully compatible with other card sets. At press time, no official release date for the expansion had been set.

NEW MAGIC FICTION!

The second *Magic: The Gathering* anthology, *Distant Planes*, will be on sale in December. This collection features short stories by Michael A. Stackpole, Amy Thomson, and Robert Vardeman. A new *Magic: The Gathering* novel is due out in February 1996. The debut novel of author Hanovi Braddock, *Ashes of the Sun*, focuses on Istini Ayesh ni Hata Kan of Oneah, whose people were wiped out by goblin raids. Bent on revenge and self-destruction, Ayesh stumbles into strange and sinister company when she is captured by minotaurs, and learns that allies can be deadlier than enemies.

BACK ON TRACK WITH MICROPROSE

The *Magic: The Gathering* computer game appears to be back on track; MicroProse officials predict a March or April 1996 release for the new Windows-based CD-ROM game which will offer players both computer opponents and duels with other *Magic* players on-line. MicroProse is also releasing a screen saver featuring art from *Magic: The Gathering*; the screen saver should be on the market in time for the holiday season.

A PUZZLING SECRET

And finally, there is a top secret *Magic*-related project that we at *The Duelist* are particularly excited to tell you about but can't. Nope, not even a hint.

CHIP HOGAN WINS 1995 TYPE I CHAMPIONSHIP

Toledo, OH — Chip Hogan of Dallas, TX swept Dennis Bentley of Rochester, NY 3-0 in the finals of the 1995 *Magic: The Gathering* Type I National Championship to win the Type I National Title. The championship took place at AndCon in Toledo, Ohio, Sept. 29–Oct. 1.

Hogan used his self-described “aikido deck” to command the pace of the games throughout most of the match. “[I wanted to] slow down the game to my pace—when things slow down, I do really well,” said Hogan, 20.

In the first game, Hogan was able to get out two Relic Barriers and an Icy Manipulator early, and managed to keep Bentley mana-short for the early part of the game. Using Glasses of Urza to check Bentley's hand after every draw, Hogan was able to put his Counterspells to best use, and finished Bentley off by tapping his Juggernaut and attacking with two Erhnam Djinn.

Bentley's difficulties continued in the second game, as he got no mana except a Mox Sapphire and a Strip Mine in his initial draw. Hogan cast an Ivory Tower on his first turn and quickly got out two Relic Barriers, which he used to tap Bentley's Moxes, forcing Bentley to discard for several turns. Bentley never recovered from his disastrous start, and after finding himself faced with a third Relic Barrier, two Winter Orbs, and two Erhnam Djinn, he conceded.

In the third game, Bentley finally got enough land, along with a Zuran Orb and Land Tax. He combined these for nice life-gains until Chip activated a Chaos Orb, countered with a Power Sink when Dennis tried to Disenchant it, and zapped the Land Tax. Hogan began attacking with two Mishra's Factories, but Bentley got off an uncountered Blood Moon, neutralizing the Factories and making most of Hogan's spells uncastable.

Hogan was in trouble. He cast an Icy Manipulator, but Bentley promptly hit it with Divine Offering. But then Hogan drew the one card he needed—a Mox Pearl—and promptly Disenchanted the Blood Moon. Bentley then cast his own Icy Manipulator, and began whittling away at Hogan by tapping Hogan's City of Brass each turn. Hogan cast Relic Barrier. Bentley put out a Juggernaut, forcing Hogan to use the Barrier to keep it tapped. Hogan summoned an Erhnam Djinn, and now had three attackers;

Background by David Kimmel

Bentley was soon on his last legs, sacrificing lands to the Zuran Orb to keep himself alive.

Hogan drew a Fireball and had enough mana for a finishing burn, but played very cautiously, wary of possible Counterspells. In a last-gasp bid for victory, Bentley cast another Blood Moon. Hogan countered with a Hydroblast; Bentley Red Elemental Blasted it, but Hogan countered with a second Hydroblast. Bentley had no more defenses, and fell under the onslaught of the Erhnam Djinn and the Mishra's Factory.

Hogan's winning deck used all colors except black, and had no basic lands. It relied on Counterspells and mana deprivation, but no land destruction at all, instead using Icy Manipulators and Relic Barriers along with Winter Orbs. Erhnam Djinn, Mishra's Factories (sometimes Consecrated), and Fireballs supplied damage. And, surprise, a card which experienced players have long scorned as being useless in tournaments: Glasses of Urza.

Bentley, on the other hand, played a red/white deck that attempted to limit an opponent's mana with Armageddons, Balances, and Blood Moons, while using Land Tax and Jalum Tome to draw extra cards. Serra Angels and Juggernauts supplied damage.

A glance through the top finishers' decks disproves a widely-held belief that all Type I decks are the same. Certainly they had superficial similarities: almost all of the serious decks contained Black Lotus, several Moxes, Chaos Orb, Ancestral Recall, Time Walk, and loads of special lands. (Many decks, including three of the top eight, had no basic lands at all.) But the themes and playing strategies of the decks varied wildly; only two of the top eight decks were similar.

The Type I National Championship is yet another major tournament win for Hogan, who's been on a hot streak lately. Besides winning the championship, he also won *Conjure* magazine's \$1,000 Sorcerer's Open at Origins in July, and one of the world premiere *Homelands* tournaments at The Gathering in New York City Oct. 14, as well as other tournaments around the country.

He partially attributed his success to the strength of play in the Dallas area, where he lives. "I've always felt that Dallas is the best place in the world for Type I [play]," said Hogan. "I think it's fitting for a person from Dallas to be Type I National Champion."

—Beth Moursund and Jeff J. Lin

WARNING: MAGIC COUNTERFEITING ON THE RISE

Did you know that the National Stolen Property Act, U.S.C. sec. 2314 provides for penalties that include a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment for up to ten years for trafficking in counterfeit property? Or that criminal infringement of a copyright is punishable by fine and/or imprisonment? Counterfeiting **Magic** cards is big trouble and, unfortunately, a bigger business than ever. With counterfeiting increasing, consumers of **Magic** products should be especially careful. Barbara Fisher of the WotC legal department offers a few suggestions for protecting yourself from counterfeiters:

- **Take the card out of the plastic!** Many fakes can be easily identified, once the card is out of the sleeve. You can check the thickness, the color, the general feel of the card. Obviously all counterfeits are not created equally, so take your time to check the card or cards out.

- **Do the "bend test".** **Magic** cards are printed on card stock, a special type of paper which allows the cards to be handled and shuffled without losing their "bounce," or bendability. If you take a **Magic** card and bend it, it will bounce back instead of creasing. Most counterfeit cards will either crease when bent, or they just won't bend much at all. If the bend test is done slowly and carefully, it will not damage a genuine **Magic** card. This test is one of the most reliable ways to determine the authenticity of a card.

- **Look for the dots.** The printing process for **Magic** cards uses hundreds of thousands of tiny dots to create the image on each card. Look at the card under a magnifying glass: if you see lines instead of dots, it may be a photocopy or electronic scan of a card, and not the real thing.

- **Compare it to other cards you know are genuine.** If you're unsure of a card's authenticity, compare the card with other cards. Ask if you can shuffle it into your deck. If you can easily spot the card after it's been shuffled and stacked or can see an unexpected difference in size, thickness, color, or corner radius, the card is likely a fake.

- **Get help verifying a card's authenticity.** If you are unable to determine whether a card

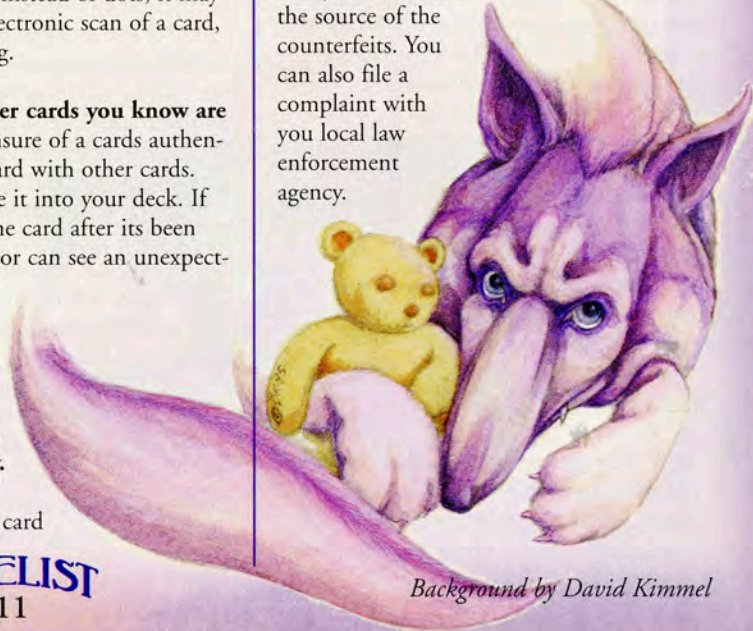


or cards are real, you may send them to us, and we'll let you know if they're counterfeit. (If they do turn out to be fakes, we might want to keep them for a while while we pursue the counterfeiter....)

- **If it doesn't feel right, walk away.** As the buyer, you have all the power in the deal. Don't let yourself be pressured by anyone or anything, especially time. Always remember, the biggest advantage that you have over the seller is that you can walk away at any time.

- **Be particularly careful buying/trading over the net.** We hear from many people who have been duped through on-line trades, even after lengthy dialogs with e-friends they thought they could trust.

- **Let us know about counterfeiting!** As frustrating as we know it can be to get ripped off, it really doesn't help us much if you just call us and complain for 15 minutes. The facts, please, get the facts! Try to get the name, address, phone number, whatever you can about the source of the counterfeits. You can also file a complaint with your local law enforcement agency.



MORE DECKMASTER NEWS

VAMPIRE: THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE

After a delayed premiere in November, **Vampire: The Eternal Struggle™** is thundering ahead with three new releases over the next few months. *Dark Sovereigns™*, the first expansion, will hit the shelves in early December. The gorgeously designed and illustrated players' guide, *Darkness Unveiled*, will follow, and the second expansion, tentatively titled "Ancient Hearts," is scheduled for release in spring of 1996.

In addition, White Wolf is planing a series of novels based on the game. The first two, *House of Secrets* and *On a Darkling Plain*, are already in print. Wizards of the Coast will also be releasing a series of **V:TES** posters available through *The Duelist* and other media early next year. This series of full-color posters, illustrated by artist John Bolton, portrays the seven clans of the Camarilla.

NETRUNNER™

The next new **Deckmaster™** game is in its final stages of development. Set in the gritty world of R. Talsorian's *Cyberpunk 2020* RPG, **Netrunner** is the first **Deckmaster** game to employ a unique, dual-deck structure. Players choose to play one of two roles: the corporation, which uses its vast resources to "advance" its agendas, and the netrunner, who uses high-tech wizardry to infiltrate the corp's computer defenses and "access" its secret plans. To embody this struggle between runner and corporation, human and machine, the game uses a combination of fully-painted and computer-generated art produced by the trading card game industry's top artists.

Created by Richard Garfield, **Netrunner** boasts a design team which includes **Magic** rules guru Tom Wylie, *Ice Age* co-designer Jim Lin, and **V:TES** developer Paul Peterson. The central challenge in developing the game has been to distinguish the netrunner and corporation roles while making both interesting to play; efforts here have made **Netrunner** the most thoroughly balanced **Deckmaster** game to date.

The team is already planning extensive support for the game, including, of course, extensive on-line offerings. Among these is a **Netrunner** home page on the World Wide Web which users will have to "hack into" to use.

Will **Netrunner** follow the current trend in **Deckmaster** games and release the **Netrunner** card list in advance of the game? Project coordinator Herman Vroom says no;

as a new trading card game, **Netrunner** offers a chance for players to really explore and piece together a new environment. "It may not take very long, but we want the initial list to be put together by people on the net," Vroom explained. "It's our goal to have a lot of information about the game be spread electronically."

Netrunner should be available in early 1996 in double-deck starters (\$18.95) and boosters (\$2.95). For a complete introduction to **Netrunner**, look for the sixteen-page feature on the game in the next issue of *The Duelist*.

DC MEMBERSHIP BOOM

In November of 1995, The Duelists' Convocation International passed its 8000 member mark! "Our rate of growth has been phenomenal," comments Acting DC director Jason Carl. Carl credits much of this swell in membership to the success of several DC-sponsored events, especially the **Magic** World Championship held in August of this year. "Players are beginning to see that if they join the DC they'll have a chance to play in events like that." The official Wizards of the Coast tournament games organization has sanctioned over 750 tournaments and other events this year alone. The DC has also released an updated and clarified set of tournament rules for Type I, Type II, Sealed-Deck, and *Ice Age* tournaments, as well as tournament rules for **Vampire: The Eternal Struggle**. (For more information on the new DC rules, see p. 57.)

ALTER EGO DESIGN GROUP

In September, Alter Ego debuted the role-playing game **EVERWAY™**, which uses cards, images, and symbols to create stories of myth and adventure. The first supplement Alter Ego is producing for **EVERWAY** will be the *Spherewalker Source Cards* and the *Spherewalker Sourcebook*, both created by freelancer Greg Stolze. A ninety-card set of fantasy trading cards, the *Spherewalker Source Cards* depict full color, full-bleed fantasy scenes; unlike most fantasy trading cards, however, the art is original, from such artists as Frank Frazetta, Anson Maddocks, Mark Tedin, Liz Danforth, and Rob Alexander. The art depicts images from the countless worlds of the **EVERWAY** universe, including the people and creatures that spherewalkers—those who travel from world to world—are likely to encounter. The back of each card provides some information about the scene on the front: neeldemons and their habits, magical chalice

blades, and the way to trap a cockatrice. Each card stands alone, but together they form a larger story.

The Spherewalker Sourcebook details various races, legends, groups, customs, and creatures, compiling the information in the form of a browsable book. The sourcebook describes various deities' appearances in different realms, the history of the Glorious Empire, and the legend of the dragon rebellion. The sourcebook is designed to be accessible to fans of fantasy fiction and roleplayers in general, as well as to **EVERWAY** players.

DISTRIBUTOR LIST UPDATE

In an effort to better serve both adventure gaming and the growing book and toy markets, Wizards of the Coast has streamlined its existing distributor list. While these changes only affect a small percentage of the product sold by Wizards, the company hopes it will lead to big improvements in customer service. "We've gone to great lengths to minimize the impact on retailers and players," said Carol Monahan, director of Sales and Logistics at Wizards of the Coast. "We believe **Magic** and other Wizards products will be more available and better supported than ever before." Affected distributors were notified in early October that they will be phased out of the distribution network by the end of 1995—"safely after the holiday buying season," assures Monahan. A new distributor list is now available with the most up-to-date information on those distributors who will have active accounts as of January 1, 1996.

WOTC WORLD: WIZARDS IS
ON THE MOVE

Yes, we've finally outgrown our offices here at 841 Powell Avenue and are moving a few blocks away to a positively immense office park. But don't worry; our mailing address isn't changing (P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA, 98057) and the Customer Service number is still the same ((206) 624-0933), so you'll still be able to reach us!

INSIDE HOMELANDS:

NEW YORK CELEBRATES THE ARRIVAL OF MAGIC'S LATEST EXPANSION

.....

New York City, NY—Wizards of the Coast kicked off its latest expansion for **Magic: The Gathering**, *Homelands*, in grand style on Oct. 14 with a special day-long event titled "The Gathering I."

The event, held on the eighth floor of the Millennium Broadway Hotel right off of Times Square in New York City, was open to the press and public. Free tickets to the event were distributed through New York area stores.

People admitted into "The Gathering" were first guided through a "rift" into the world of Dominia, where people walked, climbed and crawled through areas representing each of the five different colors of **Magic**.



The Gathering also featured a trip through a rift in Dominia.



Visitors experience the world of Homelands through virtual reality headsets.

After finishing their brief tour of Dominia, participants then donned "virtual I/O" glasses to take a tour of the world of *Homelands*.

People could then wander around the rest of the area, which contained a variety of different activities. Because of space constraints, people were let in for only two hours at a time, but as they were exiting they were given gift bags containing, among other things, a free booster pack of *Homelands*.

.....

The biggest crowd formed around the "gunslinger" tables, where **Magic** notables such as **Magic** creator Richard Garfield, **Magic**: The Puzzling mastermind and **Duelist** author Mark Rosewater, and **Magic** lead designer Joel Mick took on all comers—for ante, of course, and using some of the new *Homelands* cards in their decks.

Several **Magic** artists were also on hand for signings. Among those present included Mark Tedin, Anson Maddocks, Christopher Rush, Pete Venters, and Sandra Everingham.

There were, of course, demos of the game, as well as demonstrations of other Wizards of the Coast products like **Vampire: The**

Eternal Struggle and **The Great Dalmuti**. **RoboRally** had a giant-sized game running, complete with foot-tall robots. MicroProse had a working version of the **Magic: The Gathering** PC game, due out sometime next year.

"The Gathering" also featured two 128-player, world-premiere *Homelands* sealed-deck tournaments. Players competed in a five-round Swiss style tournament for boxes of *Homelands*, T-shirts, framed posters, trophies, and signed cards. The first tournament was won by Alex Drolet, age 15, of Westport, CT; Dallas, Texas resident Chip Hogan, age 20 and winner of the **Magic** Type I National Championship (see next page), won the afternoon's event.

.....

The event attracted people not just from the New York area, but from all over. Jeff Switzer and Chad Ledgerwood, from Springfield, MO, drove over 1,300 miles to play in the *Homelands* tournament. And how did they feel about driving 22 hours to get there? "It was worth it," said Switzer, who fell short of placing in the tournament.

But perhaps none came further than Matthew Begun, 17, from Brisbane, Australia. Begun, the self-described "sealed-pack champion of Brisbane" was in town visiting his grandparents on Long Island when he heard about the event through Neutral Ground, a Manhattan gaming club and store. "It's interesting, I wasn't expecting anything like this," he said. "It's neat."

—Jeff J. Lin



As usual, where there's open floor space, Magic players will gather to play and trade...

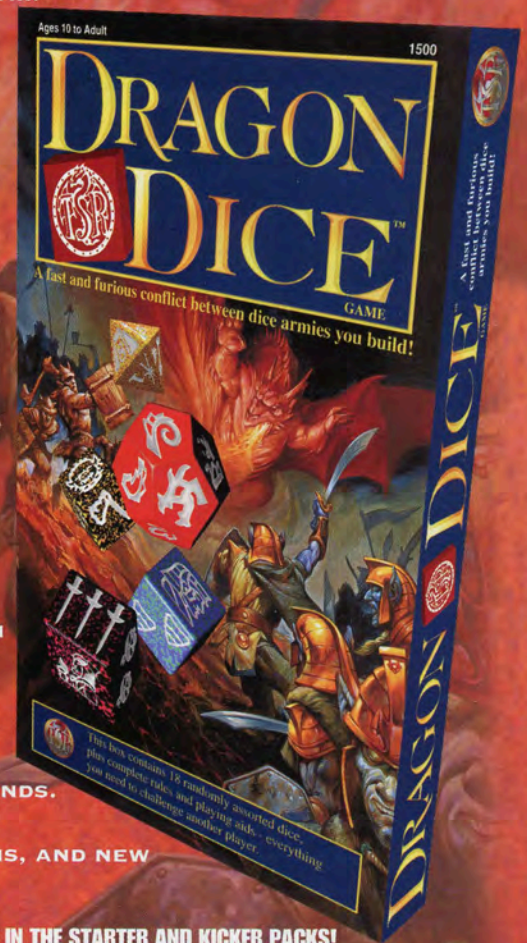


WotC VP Lisa Stevens and Magic creator Richard Garfield took on all comers at one of the "gunslinging" tables.

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"DEATH, NATURE'S NEMESIS, CREATED HIS OWN RACES TO WREST CONTROL OF THE ELEMENTAL POWERS. THE MOREHL, OR LAVA ELVES, WORSHIPED FIRE AND DESTRUCTION. THE TROGS, A GOBLIN RACE, SPRANG FROM EARTH AND CORRUPTION. FROM THE INSTANT OF THEIR CREATION, FIERCE CONFLICT ENVELOPED THE WORLD. HORDES OF SELUMARI, VAGHA, MOREHL, AND TROGS SWEEP ACROSS THE LAND IN ENDLESS BATTLE, USING THEIR ELEMENTAL MAGIC TO WREAK HAVOC AND SUMMONING DRAGONS TO TURN THE TIDES OF WAR."



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REPORTS ON TRADING CARD GAMES

Compiled by Allen Varney (a.varney1@genie.geis.com)

A GIDDY 1995—CAUTION PREDICTED IN 1996

Trading card games pervaded the market so completely in 1995 that a few traditional non-collectable card games had to explain themselves on their packages: "This game contains everything you need to play!" That notion seems almost quaint in a time of unplayable starter decks, manipulated rarities, killer chase cards, rules cards randomly distributed in booster packs, rules sheets that neglect to mention how to win the game, and games packaged without any rules at all.

But 1995 also brought games with splendid rulebooks, excellent designs, and beautiful art. This year, as last year, trading card games improved cash flow for penurious companies and immeasurably helped the status of artists in the industry. Major card companies such as FleeTM and ToppsTM entered the field, with SkyBoxTM and DonrussTM to follow. Designs tackled a wide variety of subjects, sometimes with new and intriguing game mechanics.

With increased supplies of **Magic: The Gathering**[®], the release of *Chronicles*TM, and the growing popularity of Type II and Sealed-Deck tournaments, euphoric financial speculation slackened to levels approaching sanity. No longer do collectors routinely buy boxes of each new **Magic** release, assemble a complete set, then recoup their costs by selling duplicates. Speculators still traffic in "hot" cards (*Scribe* magazine recently reported a \$325 asking price for an Alpha Black Lotus), but irrational hopes for wealth are now fading.

Addiction to **Magic**, however, is still widespread. Because of it, other card games are now judged on their ability to infest a player's life and thoughts. At GenCon, one jaded gamer dismissed a particular game as "fun to play once in a while, but you wouldn't play it all the time," as though this were a flaw. These heightened expectations have made the market fickle, and this has some publishers worried.

Predictions for 1996: "The market is so flooded, so flavor-of-the-month, that small companies have trouble getting attention for their products," says Doug Bissonnette of U.S. Games, publisher of **Wyvern**TM. Card games are "definitely a long-term market, but in the short term it's flooded." Scott Haring of Steve Jackson Games (*Illuminati: New World Order*TM) commented, "The long-awaited glut is here. The really good games will find their niches, but there'll be a lot of little companies wondering why they're going down the tubes."

At Columbia Games (**Dixie**TM), Tom Dalglish states it more strongly: "There's gonna be blood all over the floor." More optimistic, Colin Murcay at Black Dragon Press (**Tempest of the Gods**TM) says, "The wave of the future is smaller print runs. [Publishers] have to focus on putting out a better game. As long as anyone puts out a quality game, they can [succeed]." Jeff Grubb (co-designer of *Mag Force 7's Wing Commander*TM) says, "I think we'll see a falling out—and an expansion, as larger operations get into the business."

Licensing will become increasingly important in 1996, most publishers agree. As Grubb points out, this parallels the roleplaying fad of the late '70s and early '80s: After **Dungeons & Dragons**[®] hit it big, countless small companies sprang up to publish D&D clones, then went under quickly; thereafter, only well-designed RPGs or those with a good license found success. He says, "Now we're seeing the development of second-wave companies, which includes us [*Mag Force 7*]. There will be a flight toward niche markets," narrowly focused genres such as horror or superheroes.

One dissenting voice is Flee's Steve Domzalski, developer of **Marvel OverPower**TM. "The market is flooded with a lot of the same kind of game," science fiction and fantasy subjects oriented toward hobbyists, "but not flooded as a market." The largely unexplored areas of sports card games and children's games lead Domzalski to believe "there's a lot of ground to be pioneered."

—Allen Varney

EXPANSION UPDATE

By spring, look for expansions for these games, among others:

BattlelordsTM (New Millennium, Albany, NY): Due in January, the first expansion, *Genesis*, adds new races, more operations, and many more elements from the Optimus Design Systems **Battlelords** roleplaying game. *Genesis*, with about 130 cards in three rarities plus chase cards, is designed by the original *Battlelords* design team. The set is sold in twelve-card boosters.

DixieTM (Columbia Games, Blaine, WA): The long-anticipated *Gettysburg* edition presents an unusual problem for Columbia, says designer Tom Dalglish. Previous **Dixie** games, covering the First Battle of Bull Run and Shiloh, included a card for each regiment in the battle. "If we did that for *Gettysburg*, we'd have 900 cards," says Dalglish. Instead, each card represents a brigade and shows one regiment from that brigade. *Gettysburg*, currently planned for March or April, is sold in sixty-card starters (no boosters) for \$8.95; all cards have the same rarity. Like all previous **Dixie** cards, they're drawn by hard-working Eric Hotz.

DoomtrooperTM (Heartbreaker, Folsom, PA): The 131 cards of the *Warzone* expansion include the eponymous new card type, representing areas that grant defenders bonuses and penalties. Due out as you read this, the set offers new commanders, heavy-duty vehicles, and leaders for the five Megacorporations.

Mortificator, the third expansion, is to be released shortly after *Warzone*, in conjunction with a companion CD-ROM game and Acclaim Comics series. A



Background by Anthony Petrarca

Mutant Chronicles video game for Sega and Super Nintendo ships in time for Christmas, and a movie is in the works.

Galactic Empires™ (Companion Games, Stamford, NY): Due out now is the Universe Edition, a 500-plus-card set sold in ten different 100-card empire-specific starter decks (\$12.95) and fourteen-card boosters (\$2.45). The Universe rulebook includes rules for new cards offered in the next few expansion sets. At the same time, *Advanced Technology* offers 152 cards in the usual five rarities, sold in twelve-card boosters (\$2.45).

Guardians™ (FPG, Pittsburgh, PA): About now you should see *Dagger Isle*, a 120-card expansion in three rarities, sold in fourteen-card boosters (\$2.79). This set, dealing with pirate Hannibal Hawks in the western islands of the True Past, features art by Chris Achilleos, Denis Beauvais, Brom, Keith Parkinson, and Rowena Morrill. A revised printing of *Guardians*, changing a few card wordings and rarities, is also due out now.



FPG plans two or three expansions next year, including *Drifter's Nexus*, a chaotic realm from which Guardians can recruit their leaders. This 120-card set will probably appear in March.

Heresy™ (Last Unicorn Games, Camp Hill, PA): A 120-card expansion (still untitled) with four rarities is planned for March. This set emphasizes the game's dark cyberpunk side. Last Unicorn has licensed nine foreign translations of *Heresy*, including Japanese and Chinese editions.

Highlander® (Thunder Castle Games, Kansas City, MO): All expansions are stand-alone sets, sold as fifty-two-card starters (\$9.95) and fifteen-card boosters (\$2.95), that can be played on their own but are compatible with other sets. All are designed by Mike Sager. The first expansion, *Movie Edition* (one of three such sets planned), offers 300 cards using images from all three *Highlander* movies, including five new immortals.

In spring comes *Watchers Chronicle*, an expansion with 200 new cards that also

reprints 100 cards from the limited edition. Summer brings the second 300-card "movie edition," called *The Gathering*. "We're not trying to step on anyone's toes," says Thunder Castle's Chris Thompson, noting that "The Gathering" has been part of the *Highlander* concept since the first movie."

Illuminati: New World Order™ (Steve Jackson Games, Austin, TX): The *Assassins* expansion is still being designed. Planned at around 125 cards sold in booster packs, the set includes the last of the original game's Illuminati groups, the Society of Assassins. However, there will be no new rules for neutralizing groups, the Assassins' old specialty. No ship date has been set.

Legend of the Five Rings™ (Isomedia/AEG, Ontario, CA): The 305-card original game shipped in October. The first expansion, *Shadowlands*, has 150 cards in three rarities. The set adds two more clans (the Scorpions and the Nagas), sold in sixty-card starter decks (\$7.95), as well as cards for these and the five existing clans in fifteen-card boosters (\$2.45). *Shadowlands* describes an invasion by evil shadow creatures of the Empire, left unguarded while the Clans are fighting.

Marvel® OverPower™ (Fleer, Mt. Laurel, NJ): *PowerSurge*, the first expansion, offers 292 new cards, including twenty-one new heroes such as Daredevil, Doctor Strange, Juggernaut, Black Cat, and Banshee. New Special cards have been redefined to affect more game elements. Due out about now, *PowerSurge* boosters (with eight game cards and a Mission card) have a suggested retail price of \$1.69.

In February comes **DC OverPower**, a compatible stand-alone game using DC comics characters such as Superman and Batman. (Fleer recently bought SkyBox, which holds the DC license.) The DC set includes thirty characters—fifteen from the Superman family, fifteen from the Batman family—and adds a fourth ability, Intellect. The format will resemble the Marvel game, with four "stacked" starter decks and boosters, but starters will be distributed equally in all display boxes. (Some **Marvel OverPower** starters were rarer than others.)

Fleer is widely distributing a larger **Marvel OverPower** rulebook in magazines, to retailers, and by mail. It irones out rules ambiguities and includes design and art

credits. Fleer is also working on a tournament organization, the OverPower Legion, that will sanction tournaments and rate players. The customer support line is 1-800-OPRULES.

On the Edge™ (Atlas Games, Northfield, MN): An expansion set originally planned for early '96, *Wetworks*, has been pulled for further playtesting. The company plans to diversify into board wargames and full-set "common deck" card games that incorporate deck-customizing elements.

Rage™ (White Wolf Game Studio, Atlanta, GA): *The Wyrms*, an expansion dealing with the corrupt villains of the *Werewolf* roleplaying game, includes 180 cards in three rarities and is sold in fifteen-card boosters (\$2.50). Designed by Mike Tinney, *The Wyrms* adds new characters and new card types (Victims, Bane fetishes, Wyrms gifts). In spring comes *War of the Amazon*, a setting-based expansion.

Garou Nation, White Wolf's *Rage* tournament organization, is offering free memberships through December 31. Send e-mail with your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, and "a Tribe of interest" to Achilli@aol.com.

Shadowfist™ (Daedalus Entertainment, Seattle, WA): The second printing (Standard Edition) shipped in October. Daedalus plans a Revised Edition next year that corrects some misprints and improves the clarity of the rules. A full-color player's guide (180 pages, \$15.95) shipped in November. The *Combat in Kowloon* gift box has been delayed until the first half of next year.

Flashpoint, an expansion due in spring of 1996, focuses on a battle between two of the game's factions, the Architects of the Flesh and the Dragons. The Architects, mad scientists from the future, set up a massive arcanowave installation in the Amazon to rule the 1990s. The Dragons fight them, both now and in the future.



SimCity® The Card Game™ (Mayfair Games, Chicago, IL): The *Chicago* expansion is a stand-alone game of 120 cards, sold as a single set, which also works with the original *SimCity*. Designed by Darwin

Bromley and Jay Tummelson, the set includes famous Second City sites like Mrs. O'Leary's barn, typical disasters like winter storms and floods, and unique touches like a cemetery card that (this being Chicago) gives a player extra votes.



Star Trek®: Soon there will be two competing trading card games based on *Star Trek*. This fall Warren Holland, president of Decipher, Inc. (Norfolk, VA), posted two irate memos on the

Internet complaining of difficulties getting approval from *Star Trek's* licensor, Paramount/Viacom, for three long-promised expansions for Decipher's *Star Trek® Customizable Card Game™*. At press time it appeared approval had been given and the sets would appear. Decipher will continue to support their game (based on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*) while the license lasts.

Meanwhile, Paramount has granted SkyBox, publisher of nine series of *Star Trek* trading cards since 1991, rights to do a *Star Trek Original Series* trading card game. Fleer, which purchased SkyBox early this year, promises an episode-driven, interactive game that "captures the spirit of the original series," says Steve Domzalski. "Every player will have access to the prime series characters, and the starter decks will be playable." The cards will be illustrated with stills from the original TV series, in the manner of the SkyBox trading cards.

SkyBox's marketing agency, Top Dog Marketing, is soliciting e-mail about what gamers want to see in the new game. Send suggestions to TopDogM@aol.com.

Tempest of the Gods™ (Black Dragon Press, Logan, UT): The 270-card limited edition went on sale in November. A player's guide appears in January, and in early 1996 comes *Neferu*, a ninety-card expansion based on ancient Egyptian mythology.

Towers In Time™ (Thunder Castle Games): The first expansion is a stand-alone set, *Greek Edition*, due out by Thanksgiving. Designed by Mike Sager and named for the mythos it derives from, the 165-card *Greek*

Edition is sold in fifty-four-card starter decks for \$8.95 (unlike the original game, these will include the game rules) and fifteen-card boosters (\$2.95).

Wildstorms (Wildstorm Productions, La Jolla, CA): In February comes the first expansion, *Wildstorms: Conflict!*, with 160 cards—"new characters, new plot twists, new equipment, more of everything," says Wildstorm's Drew Bittner, who co-designed the set with Matt Forbeck. Wildstorm is constructing a World Wide Web site to support the game.

Wing Commander® (Mag Force 7, Williams Bay, WI): This 300-plus-card game, based on the third of the award-winning space-combat computer games from Origin, debuted with great success at GenCon®. Origin releases the fourth computer game in the series in December. Mag Force 7 has several expansions planned, but at press time no details were available.

Wyvern™ (US Games, Stamford, CT): *Chameleon*, a ninety-card expansion, includes a new kind of card. A Chameleon is a dragon that can become a terrain card, or vice versa. Illustrated by Lithuanian artist Virginijus Poshkus, *Chameleon* appears in January.



PREVIEWS

Dark Age™ (FPG, Pittsburgh, PA): Designed by Luke Peterschmidt and Brom, this game (due in spring) is set in a Balkanized future world that, Peterschmidt stresses, is "not Gothic. 'Rusted gun, shiny sword' describes it a bit better." Brom himself is painting a third of the 300 cards; the other artists, many new to card games, include John Berkey, John Bolton, Dave Dorman, Bob Eggleton, and Timothy Bradstreet. Some cards will depict new sculptures by Henry Higginbotham.

Eagles™ (Columbia Games, Blaine, WA): This brigade-level Napoleonic game derives from Columbia's *Napoleon* board game, designed by Tom Dalgleish. Sold only in sixty-card starters (\$8.95), all 300 cards have the same rarity in game terms, but

each has three color variants: gold (5% of the cards), silver (20%), and bronze (75%). The three variants are identical in game function. Like *Dixie*, which it resembles in many respects, *Eagles* is illustrated by Eric Hotz. The game is scheduled for the end of November.

Fantasy Adventures™ (Mayfair Games, Chicago, IL): Designed by Bill Fawcett and Tom Smith, this trading card game is based on Mayfair's 1982 dungeon-crawling board game, *Encounter* (not to be confused with Mayfair's *Cosmic Encounter*). Players take turns playing a party of fantasy heroes and their monstrous opponents as they try to collect treasures that improve their abilities. The starter set includes 100 fixed cards (\$15); most of the cards in the fifteen-card boosters (\$2.50) differ from those in the starter. The art is done by many popular artists of fantasy book covers.

Printed by Yaquinto in Texas, *Fantasy Adventures* is scheduled for February, in conjunction with heavy cross-marketing in fantasy novels and computer games. There will be novel tie-ins, too; the first is by William Forstchen, author of the first *Magic* novel, *Arena*.

Goldeneye (Heartbreaker, Folsom, PA): Based on and published to tie in with the new James Bond movie, *Goldeneye* uses elements from this and other Bond films. Players play Plot cards representing locations, obstacles, and villains. Each Plot includes certain icons that show how James Bond can resolve it. Bond cards, such as Bankrolls and equipment, provide corresponding icons that resolve the Plots. Heartbreaker is aiming for a simple mass-market design, and has many expansions planned.

Pentacle™ (Companion Games, Stamford, NY): Morningstar Games published *Pentacle*, designed by Tim Carleton, as a stand-alone card game in 1990. Companion is reissuing it in a 121-card set (\$12.95) that can be played as is by up to six players. "If the game really takes off," says John Fitzpatrick, "we have 242 more cards waiting to be published in boosters." In *Pentacle*, each player is a wizard with nine sanity points, which are used to summon demons and minions, cast spells, and attack opponents. The last wizard who remains alive and sane wins.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

A Developer's Thoughts On *Magic: The Gathering—Homelands*

by Charlie Catino

For Scott Hungerford and Kyle Namvar, **Magic: The Gathering**® had gotten...well, a little predictable. As fans of the game and members of the Wizards of the Coast Customer Service team, they played a lot of **Magic** with the public at conventions and game stores ("gunslinging," as we affectionately call it at Wizards). In these games they kept running into the same decks using the usual strategies. Even the latest **Magic** expansion (then *Antiquities*™) hadn't spawned as many new deck ideas and popular cards as they had hoped.

Magic needed more variety. It needed an expansion that would challenge players to reconsider the way they played **Magic**.

With *Homelands*™, Kyle and Scott tried to create just that: an expansion that would shake up the **Magic** environment. This new set tries to emphasize some overlooked themes in the game while dramatically changing the value of certain existing cards and strategies. As a playtester and developer for *Homelands*, I've found that the set contains more than a few cards which have made me think twice about how I play the game.

A DOSE OF THE UNEXPECTED

Every once in a while I like my **Magic** games to be mixed up. I like games in which all of a sudden my fate changes drastically, or better yet, games in which my opponent's situation changes drastically. *Homelands* helps create these kinds of games by throwing some kinks in the standard **Magic** environment. What does this mean, exactly? Well, when you're constructing **Magic** decks, you kind of know what you have to plan for: direct damage, for example, and Circles of Protection. Maybe your strategy isn't only going to be devoted to getting around these things, but if you want a competitive, versatile deck, your deck design can't ignore them. On the other hand, this predictability means that some game decisions are easy to make. If you're wondering whether to attack with all of your creatures and leave yourself defenseless, you just look at the creatures your opponent has in play and decide whether you mind being attacked on the following turn. After all, what's the worst that could happen: Your opponent could cast *Ashen Ghou*l and attack you for an additional 3 damage?

Homelands forces players to considerably rethink some of these assumptions. Now if you decide to leave yourself open to a counterattack, a single card can cost you a major portion of your life. Your opponent can play *Eron the Relentless*

or *Ambush Party*, both of which can attack on the turn they are summoned. Or, your attack can turn into a disaster when your opponent plays *Ambush* and blocks and kills a couple of your creatures with all her now-first striking defenders.

Other *Homelands* cards pack similar surprises. If you didn't attack this turn, you can be confident about the outcome of your opponent's next attack, since you know your blockers outnumber her attackers, right? Wrong. *Didgeridoo* allows her to take a *Minotaur* from her hand and place it directly into play as if it were just summoned—as an instant. (*Willow Priestess* allows the same for *Faeries*, though this strategy doesn't net your opponent an attacker.) Forget about *Goblin Wizard*; now you have to worry that when you're finished with your turn, your opponent will use *Didgeridoo*, pay 6 mana to plunk down two 2/2 *Anaba Shamans*, and then attack with them on her turn. Or maybe when you attack, she'll surprise you by playing some new defenders as a fast effect, creatures with first strike or protection from red. This healthy dose of the unexpected in *Homelands* forces you to think about more than the usual problems like sneaking around *Circles* and ducking direct damage.

CREATURE TYPES: MINOTAURS ARE BACK WITH A VENGEANCE

The designers also felt that another part of leveling the playing field involved developing more creature types which **Magic** players would be excited to play with. Before *Homelands*, we would regularly see only two of these types of decks: *Goblin* decks and *Merfolk* decks. With *Homelands*, I think you'll see some new types of creature decks: *Faerie* decks, *Falcon* decks, and of course, *Minotaur* decks. *Homelands* adds a lot of *Minotaurs* with powerful abilities, such as *Anaba Shaman* (♣, ♣: *Anaba Shaman* deals 1 damage to target creature or player) and *Labyrinth Minotaur* (creatures *Labyrinth Minotaur* is assigned to block do not untap during their controller's next untap phase). Combine these creatures with *Anaba Spirit Crafter*, which gives all *Minotaurs* +1/+0, and an artifact like *Didgeridoo* which let you cast them at any instant, and you've got the makings of a deck that'll sink a *Merfolk* deck.

If you're looking for good additions to your existing creature decks, why not *Spectral Bears*? We spent quite a while during the playtest period trying to figure out if this card was *too* good—my playtest deck of about twenty *Spectral Bears*, some other good green and black stuff, and a few *Deathplaces* was pretty



strong! Or how about Feast of the Unicorn, a black creature enchantment that gives a creature +4/+0? Unlike Da Bears, this card came out of playtesting a lot different than it was when it went in. Originally, Feast of the Unicorn was a black instant which gave a creature +2/+0 until the end of the turn. As it was, it just didn't compare to Unholy Strength—the element of surprise couldn't measure up to a permanent power bonus that also increased the creature's toughness. Even at just 1, it was a card that we were concerned could only be used in fast decks. Still, black only had one other card that could increase a creature's power by a lot, so we decided to keep the theme of this card and add another black power booster. Now Feast of the Unicorn is an enchantment with a +4/+0 kick—well worth the 3 it now costs, and a lot of fun to play with.

LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD

But the focus of the set's efforts to level the playing field is aimed against the “deck hosers.” Just as Circle of Protection: Black is the bane of the all-black speed deck, some cards introduced in *Homelands* should have a major effect on the current deck-building strategies. A prime example of this is Primal Order. During each player's upkeep, Primal Order deals 1 damage to that player for each non-basic land he or she has in play. Faced with Primal Order, players may have to curb their current reliance on non-basic lands or dilute their existing decks by adding a CoP: Green or more ways of destroying enchantments.

Another currently popular deck style is the “weenie deck,” which relies on fast mana and lots of little creatures to overwhelm an opponent. Now these decks face a potent antidote: Dry Spell, a sorcery which deals 1 damage to each creature and player. Against weenie hordes, Dry Spell is a cheap, effective creature killer which also whittles down your opponent's life total. Now players will have to choose whether to make weenie decks that can be decimated by a single Dry Spell or risk slowing down their deck by putting in some small creatures with toughness of 2 or more.

Other decks to which *Homelands* offers a new challenge include:

- **Monochrome decks:** *Homelands* features more creatures with protection from various colors (Abbey Gargoyles, Cemetery Gate, Death Speakers, Ihsan's Shade, Narwhal, Sea Sprite), not to mention Willow Priestess (2: Target green creature gains protection from black until end of turn), which can strongly impact single-color decks.

- **Creatureless decks:** Players of this deck type will discover that Autumn Willow is really nasty. Creatureless decks usually rely on spells like Swords to Plowshares, Terror, Spirit Link, etc. to get rid of creatures, and these don't work on Autumn Willow.

- **Artifact decks:** Decks which rely on Black Vise, The Rack, or other bothersome artifacts now have to contend with Joven (3: Destroy target non-creature artifact).

- **Reanimator decks:** Several *Homelands* spells make it hard for these decks to be able to bring creatures back from any graveyard, like Drudge Spell (2: Remove from the game two target creatures in your graveyard to put a Skeleton token [black 1/1 creature, to regenerate] into play); Rysorian Badger (if Badger is not blocked,

controller can choose to remove up to two target creatures from defending player's graveyard), and Headstone (remove from the game target card in any graveyard).

- **Poison decks:** Leeches (target player loses all poison counters; Leeches deals 1 damage to player for each poison counter removed in this way) makes poison decks work even harder to deliver enough poison to win. But watch out: a poison deck itself can use this card to convert poison counters into damage to the opponent.

- **Creature theme decks:** Always getting kicked to the curb by your friend's Goblin decks? After your opponent attacks, play An-Zerrin Ruins (choose a creature type; creatures of that type do not untap during their controller's untap phase), announce that Goblins don't untap as normal, and watch the expression on your opponent's face.

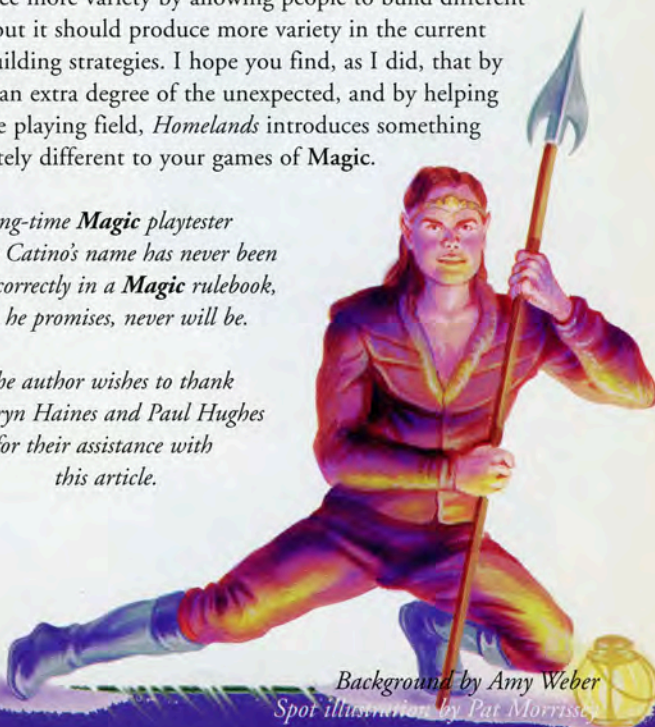
- **Thallid decks:** An-Havva Inn (gain 1+* life, where * is equal to the total number of green creatures in play) gives you a big edge against Thallid decks. Without An-Havva Inn, it's pretty hard for your three big creatures to hold off your opponent's twelve Saproling counters, particularly if you've taken any damage earlier in the game. In three attacks, your opponent can do 18 damage before you can block all of his creatures. But by casting An-Havva Inn before your opponent attacks, three attacks cost you only 5 life, while reducing your opponent to three little creatures against your three big ones.

- **Weenie decks:** We've already mentioned the best defense against weenie decks: the black sorcery Dry Spell (does 1 damage to each creature and player), which is cheap and has more surprise value than Pestilence. Or, since many weenie decks rely on small green creatures, you can buy yourself some time with An-Havva Inn (see “Thallid decks,” above). Other good alternatives include Feroz's Ban (summon spells each cost an additional 2 to cast), which can make even 1/1 creatures seem expensive. Then use Aysen Bureaucrats (tap target creature with power no greater than 2) to make it hard for your opponent to use any weenie creatures he or she does cast.

People enjoy variety in *Magic*. Not only does *Homelands* introduce more variety by allowing people to build different decks, but it should produce more variety in the current deck-building strategies. I hope you find, as I did, that by adding an extra degree of the unexpected, and by helping level the playing field, *Homelands* introduces something completely different to your games of *Magic*.

Long-time Magic playtester Charlie Catino's name has never been spelled correctly in a Magic rulebook, and, he promises, never will be.

The author wishes to thank Kathryn Haines and Paul Hughes for their assistance with this article.



CARD SPOTLIGHT

THE BIG ONE: MANAGING GIANT GROWTH

by Chris Page



**GIANT GROWTH ISN'T JUST A MAGIC™
CARD—IT'S A MAGIC CORNERSTONE. AND BEING SUCH,
IT HAS A LONG STORY BEHIND IT.**

In the beginning, there were the five: Giant Growth, Ancestral Memory, Dark Ritual, Lightning Bolt, and Healing Salve. (Though back then, Healing Salve didn't prevent damage to creatures and Ancestral Memory hadn't yet been renamed Ancestral Recall.) All five were common. Richard Garfield's idea was that each color should have an easy way to get three of something for one mana. Thus the "boons" were born, and each color (except white) gained a powerful card.

Each boon was meant to reflect that color's theme. Black got fast, one-shot mana (as opposed to green's "reusable" fast mana). Blue received the metamagic of accessing more spells, and over time this magic mutated into the library manipulation cards of *Ice Age*™ and beyond. Red and white were easy, offering damage and protection respectively. And green got a combat spell, a type of magic green minors in, with spells like Berserk, Fanatical Fever, Venom, and Stampede. Because simply giving green a 3/3 creature for ♣ was too much of a stretch even back then, green's boon instead reflected its strength in creature combat.

THE BOON DECKS

It took quite a while for the boons to be evaluated properly. No one knew at first just how good it was to draw a measly two extra cards, and we didn't understand that cards were by far the most valuable commodity in the game. Ancestral Memory was

shuffled back to rare for safety, since initial estimates were that only the most fanatical players would buy as many as four decks.

The overpowered Lightning Bolt survived under the same philosophy. There were only about ten Lightning Bolts in the early playtest environment; at that level, it was just a very good card, and it was impossible to collect enough Lightning Bolts to build a degenerate deck. (In fact, a deck of all direct damage was inconceivable at the time, but that's another story.) And in the same way, Giant Growth slipped through those same cracks.

With all of the inherent problems, the idea of a full cycle of boons (one for each color) was eventually realized to be unworkable. But the individual cards were so fundamental to using a color's magic that boons lived on long after they were considered infeasible. In the original incarnation of *Ice Age*, for instance, developed months before *Magic*'s initial release, all five boons were there. Ancestral Recall quietly fell into rare and then disappeared completely after *Magic*'s GenCon® release, breaking the whole cycle's symmetry.

Later it was decided that *Ice Age* should be fixed and balanced within itself, and the remainder of the boons came under the microscope. Healing Salve vanished because it wasn't powerful enough to justify repeating. Lightning Bolt got dropped toward the end because of the possibility for degeneracy, and it was replaced with the less abusable Incinerate. The removal of Lightning Bolt was an easy decision, since a deck made of only

Lightning Bolts and mountains was too degenerate. In the end, only Dark Ritual and Giant Growth remained in *Ice Age*. And they were powerful enough that they only survived after very close examination.

Giant Growth was debated up until the last minute, the time when Terror and Control Magic both suddenly got fixed. While a Giant Growth deck was harder to build since you needed creatures to deliver the damage, it held its own against the playtest “touchstone” decks so well that a number of weaker possibilities were discussed. This included variants like +2/+4 for ♣, and +2/+2 for ♠ with the ability to block flying creatures until the end of turn. Part of the problem was that it was hard to make something simple that was worse than Giant Growth, yet not strictly worse. In the end, it was decided that Giant Growth wasn’t quite degenerate enough, that it was a fundamental card to **Magic**, and that green deserved a great, borderline degenerate spell. Even that decision was so hard that it never wound up being unanimous.

WHY ASK WHY?

What was all the fuss over? What put Giant Growth in the same league as Counterspell, Disenchant, and Disintegrate? What makes it a reason to play green?

There’s one obvious answer—Giant Growth is 3 potential damage for just one mana, making it quick and cheap to cast. But its real virtue is its versatility. Creatures are the core of the game, and they’re defined by two numbers, both of which Giant Growth affects. With a simple addition to either power or toughness, you can do just about anything.

Cast Giant Growth on Urza’s Avenger and you can use more of the card’s options in a single turn. Save Psionic Entity from itself. Let the Old Man of the Sea control a larger creature long enough for you to sacrifice it to Skull Catapult. Let Stone Giant make a larger creature fly. Get around cards that only work on small creatures by first using Dwarven Warriors (or a similar spell), and then casting Giant Growth on the new, improved creature. Twist the trick around on your opponent and cast Giant Growth in response to any of the above activations, making the creature an illegal target. You can even use Giant Growth to prevent your opponent’s Orggs from attacking or blocking.

Amidst all this mess, there are three basic uses for Giant Growth. You can focus on increasing a creature’s power, its toughness, or both.

Increasing power is fairly straightforward. Doing so either lets a smaller creature take out a much larger creature, typically with the element of surprise, or it allows an unblocked creature to do a bonus 3 points of damage. Don’t be too quick to burn a Giant Growth damaging your opponent, though—you’ll be sorry

when your opponent brings out a Juggernaut you can’t cope with. My personal rule of thumb is not to use Giant Growth to damage an opponent unless there are very special circumstances. Maybe it’s the one turn you can get around a Circle of Protection, or maybe you’re suspicious that you’re about to be on the wrong end of a Channelled Fireball. The other time you would want to use Giant Growth to directly damage your opponent is when you have enough of them in your hand to finish your opponent off. In this case, you want to slow down and be very careful about using them all in one attack. Piling them all on one creature is out, due to Terror, Foxfire, Swords to Plowshares, Fissure, Boomerang, and the like. Even spreading them out among your creatures during one attack is somewhat risky since you may have to deal with Fog.

In combat between creatures, applying Giant Growth to do damage is easy and efficient. If you need to be trickier, you can deal damage directly to creatures without waiting for blocking. Use Giant Growth with Tracker, Yeti, or Arena to have one of your creatures deal an extra 3 damage directly to your opponent’s creature. An easier card to get, though harder to use, is Farrel’s Mantle, a creature enchantment which allows you to do damage to a target creature if the creature the Mantle enchants is unblocked. There’s nothing sneaky in the least about Farrel’s Mantle, so in that case you’re best off using it on an unblockable creature. Even a 1/1 landwalker will do, since Farrel’s Mantle with Giant Growth on a 1/1 will do 6 damage to any creature, killing Orgg or even a Scaled Wurm.

WHO NEEDS HEALING SALVE?

The flip side of Giant Growth is its toughness bonus. While this will save creatures in combat, it plays an equally significant role outside of combat, saving creatures from the likes of Pyrotechnics and Hurricane. Who needs



Background by Scott Kirschner

Healing Salve? Giant Growth effectively prevents as much damage to creatures as Healing Salve, making that spell nearly obsolete. You lose the ability to gain 3 life, but you can still stop anything with respect to one creature—Inferno, Pestilence, Winter Blast, even Orcish Artillery. Occasionally Giant Growth offers even better protection, and Giant Growth works against spells like Lava Burst when Healing Salve and other damage-prevention spells fail.

Giant Growth's ability to increase toughness can be very effective with creatures such as Sengir Bats or Fungusaur, which are designed to have a close brush with death and come back stronger. If your opponent does block your Fungusaur, she's going to make certain it's going to die so it won't get a +1/+1 counter. If you're unable to set up some trick with Prodigal Sorcerer or Pestilence, Giant Growth will let you nurse a Fungusaur past the stage where it can be killed by a 2/2 creature. This strategy also works if you're trying to develop a 5/5 or 6/6 Sengir Vampire. Even better targets are creatures that get bigger bonuses if they survive the battle. The Wretched, Seraph, and Krovikian Vampire all give you control of creatures they either block or kill.

WHAT'S THAT UP YOUR SLEEVE?

None of this touches on Giant Growth's biggest advantage: it's an instant. This goes far beyond mere surprise value—it makes Giant Growth arguably the best bluffing card in **Magic**. Unlike Counterspell, you're using it in conjunction with other cards and situations, not just varying the number of untapped islands.

As an example, reconsider the example with Fungusaur. It starts out as a lowly 2/2 creature. You aren't going to attack with it normally, since your opponent can block and kill it with just about anything. This changes with Giant Growth, because now you can probably handle whatever he chooses to block with. Next turn your 3/3 Fungusaur will be that much harder to kill, and repeating the process makes things even worse with a 4/4 or 5/5 Fungusaur.

The trick is that your opponent also suspects this. He may well just let the Fungusaur through and accept 2 damage for several turns, rather than risk dealing with a larger creature. The real trick is that you know this, too, so you can hold a spare forest in your hand and just pretend it's a Giant Growth. Now you can attack for a free 2 points of damage per turn and

whittle away at your opponent. If you try this trick a lot, just remember to sometimes actually have the Giant Growth in your hand to keep your opponent on his toes. And it can't hurt to remember out loud that you need to keep a forest untapped for "special reasons."

Of course, this means you should never trust anyone playing green who has an untapped forest out and at least one card in hand, especially if that person is grinning maniacally. Just treat your opponent in that situation like you would anyone with two untapped islands and a handful of cards.

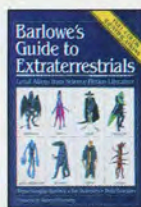
There are all sorts of second- and third-order bluffs. For instance, delude your opponent into thinking you don't have a source of green mana. Tap all your forests, but leave an untapped Taiga, Llanowar Elf, or Ley Druid. While you'll only be able to pull this trick once per opponent, it's worth a try. (You can of course follow this exact same strategy when you're not holding a Giant Growth—just "accidentally" let on that you're trying to be sneaky.)

To get the most bluffing potential out of Giant Growth, just remember that any blocking or attacking situation is an opportunity. You can foil your opponent's all-out attack by casting Giant Growth on your Woolly Spider and destroying her Serra Angel, or by suddenly giving your Black Knight 5 points of first strike damage instead of 2. Sometimes the only way to kill a big attacking creature is to "forget" and leave a small, speed-bump type creature untapped. You can then block the big attacker when your opponent exploits your "mistake." Pretty soon your opponent will become very wary of attacking, even when you don't have a Giant Growth in hand. This is the sign of a well-trained opponent.

Giant Growth is just an all-around great card with fundamental versatility. It's 3 damage for one mana. It serves as the all-purpose attack and defense card, often simultaneously. And unlike Elven Lyre, Armor Thrull, Samite Healer, or Unholy Strength, your opponent never knows when—or if—it's coming. With Giant Growth, you can always keep your opponent guessing—wrong.

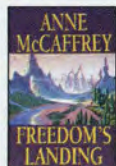
As a break from his doctoral studies at University of Pennsylvania, Chris regularly contributes articles to The Duelist. Constant demands from the staff of this magazine have occasionally made him regret his central role in developing Magic and Ice Age.





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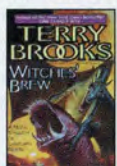
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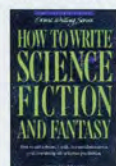
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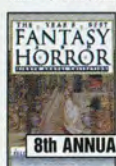
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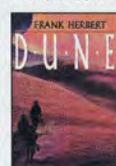
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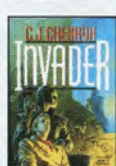
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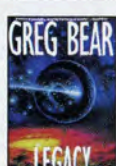
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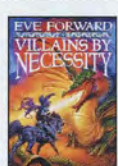
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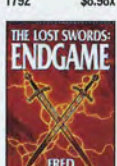
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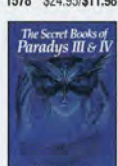
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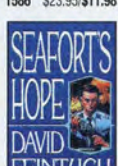
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EXCUSE ME, MR. SUITCASE?

by Paul Peterson

FOR THE GREEN GUY WHO HAS EVERYTHING

◆◆◆◆

Now you've done it. Last week you looked up from your Magic: The Gathering® duels to discover that the holiday season was suddenly upon you. You haven't even thought about what gift to give your friend, Mr. Suitcase, to thank him for all the advice he's given you throughout the year (not to mention all that experience losing Magic games you got from playing him).

What could you give Mr. Suitcase? Simply giving him **Magic** cards is no good; he seems to have several copies of every **Magic** card, as well as collections of most other trading card games. He also has every conceivable game accessory, including electronic card shufflers, voice-activated life counters, and a computer database to keep track of his cards. You could give him something totally unrelated to card games, but somehow that doesn't seem the right kind of thank you for all the help he's given you. But what do you give to a **Magic** player who seems to have everything?

How about giving Mr. Suitcase a **Magic** theme deck? A theme deck is any deck built around a specific concept, like a type of card, or a movie, or even an event. While themes can be a powerful way to focus your deck, many theme decks are built to be fun to play, rather than to annihilate your opponent; even veteran players like Mr. Suitcase use them to test unusual strategies and to experiment with cards they wouldn't put into tournament decks. And while it's true that Mr. Suitcase certainly owns every card that you might conceivably put into such a gift, he doesn't (you hope) have the idea of the deck itself. Since it was Mr. Suitcase who first showed you how to make theme decks, giving him a good theme deck that you've created might be the perfect gesture of thanks.

But what kind of theme deck should you build? Well, since it is meant to be a gift for the holiday season, how about a deck based around the holidays? There are any number of such decks you can build, drawing on any number of different cultural traditions. One idea you might find a lot of fun to build is a deck centered around the yearly visit of Santa Claus.

Which **Magic** cards would a Santa Claus theme deck contain? Again, there are many criteria you can use to make your selections—you might choose to use snow-covered lands, or use only cards from *Ice Age*™, for example. The deck outlined here, which focuses on Santa's activities at the North Pole, is only one of many possibilities, but it should give you an idea of how to develop different parts of your theme and how to choose cards that are true to this theme and which also make the deck interesting to play.

One of the first things to decide is which colors of **Magic** to use in the deck. Green and red, of course, are the traditional choices to represent the holiday season. From holly wreaths to cranberry sauce to Rudolph's unmistakable nose, these colors are everywhere this time of year. For those of you far enough north of the equator, white is also a terrific choice to represent this season. (If you fight with your siblings over who gets the last candy cane, maybe black and blue are good choices, too.) Try to choose two main colors, or three at the most—it will be a stronger theme, not to mention a stronger deck, if you keep your card choices focused. For this deck, we'll choose green and red as the main colors; we'll also add some white and some artifacts.

Once you've chosen your colors, you need to identify some major ideas surrounding your theme and choose cards which best represent them. This deck will focus on Santa's major occupation: making toys for good girls and boys. Let's start by assembling the group that assists Father Claus in this task—Santa's helpers. Green is a great color for creatures, and what better creatures to help Santa than some Elves? Obviously, any card that says "Summon Elf" is probably a good bet, but Llanowar and Fyndhorn Elves top the list. Their ability to produce fast mana can really help Santa get the jump on his work and will help him recruit more helpers and produce more toys. Dwarves are known to be master craftsmen, and Santa would certainly want their expertise as well. Both the Dwarven Weaponsmith and Dwarven Armorer would fit well in the deck; they could turn their talents to toy making while also protecting the other help from harm. And while the work of Goblin Artisans tends to run a bit hot and cold, they can occasionally be great helpers.

We have the workers to build the toys; now we need the toys that they build. Obviously, these should be artifacts, but only some artifacts are appropriate to the holidays. (Implements of Sacrifice is too unpleasant and Colossus of Sardia doesn't fit into a stocking very well.) Artifact creatures would make great additions to this deck; while Santa's helpers will make good blockers and will allow the deck to produce mana quickly, artifact creatures could be the primary method for defeating your opponent. Clockwork creatures are good choices, and have exactly the right "toy" flavor. Choose between the

Beast, Avian, Steed, Swarm, and Gnomes, or add a mixture. And what wizard wouldn't like a Tetravus or Triskelion, both of which look just like children's toys? Or how about a Dragon Engine to pull a toy train? Or a Bone Flute for a budding musician? Ebony Rhino would look beautiful sitting under any tree. Jewelry also makes a great gift and a great way to speed up your deck; for those on a budget, there are Urza's Bauble and Jeweled Amulet, and for those who really want to splurge, you can never have too many Moxes.

Next, let's build Santa's base of operations, his toy factory at the North Pole. Snow Fortress and Dwarven Armory from *Ice Age* are good selections, as are Mishra's Workshop and Mishra's Factory. Considering the help that Santa is known to employ, Elven Fortress from *Fallen Empires™* might also be a good choice. These cards are not only thematically correct, but will also help out your deck. This deck has a lot of creatures and artifacts; Elven Fortresses and Dwarven Armory will help protect and enhance the creatures in the deck, and Mishra's Workshop is essential to get those expensive artifacts out as rapidly as possible.

Now Santa will need some way to deliver these gifts. In my book, the only choice is Arcum's Sleigh. It fits perfectly in the theme and it will also help your creatures, making them available on both attack and defense. It will only work, however, if your opponent has snow-covered lands, so you should probably add Arcum's Weathervane as well. To pull the Sleigh you will also need some reindeer. They are a little harder to come by in **Magic**, but you can make do with a few Tarpan or some Caribou created by Caribou Range. These are a great way for you to both block your opponent's attacking creatures and to increase your life total. Once you're ready to deliver the presents, you will need someplace to deliver them to. The citizens in Icatian Town would love to get a visit from Santa, as would Folk of An-Havva. They will also serve as terrific minions to oppose those who are fighting against Santa.

The next thing on your list of theme elements should be a tree. Santa has to have something to put the gifts under, after all. Forests are okay, but the truly discerning deck builder will want to choose Ironroot Treefolk; with help from the Elves, these stout creatures should be in play quickly. Any good tree deserves decorations, as well. Winter Orbs and Zuran Orbs make good ornaments, and of course an Iron Star or the figurine from Cold Snap would look spectacular on top of the tree. (Or perhaps you'd prefer an Angel perching on the treetop?) The Zuran Orb and Iron Star will help you get life, while the Winter Orb is more likely to hurt your opponent than to hurt you, because you will be getting mana from your Elves and artifacts.

And of course we must not forget the most important choice of all, Santa himself. He has to be a legend, because everyone knows there is only one Santa. His normal mode of dress would suggest a red and white legend, but since there are currently no legends that fit this description, the best choice is probably Jacques le Vert. He is a green, red, and

white legend who adds +2 to the toughness of all your green creatures, including himself. He fits well into the holiday spirit and makes your Elves and Treefolk better. Oh, and you might want to add enchantments like Infinite Authority. No one argues with Santa Claus.

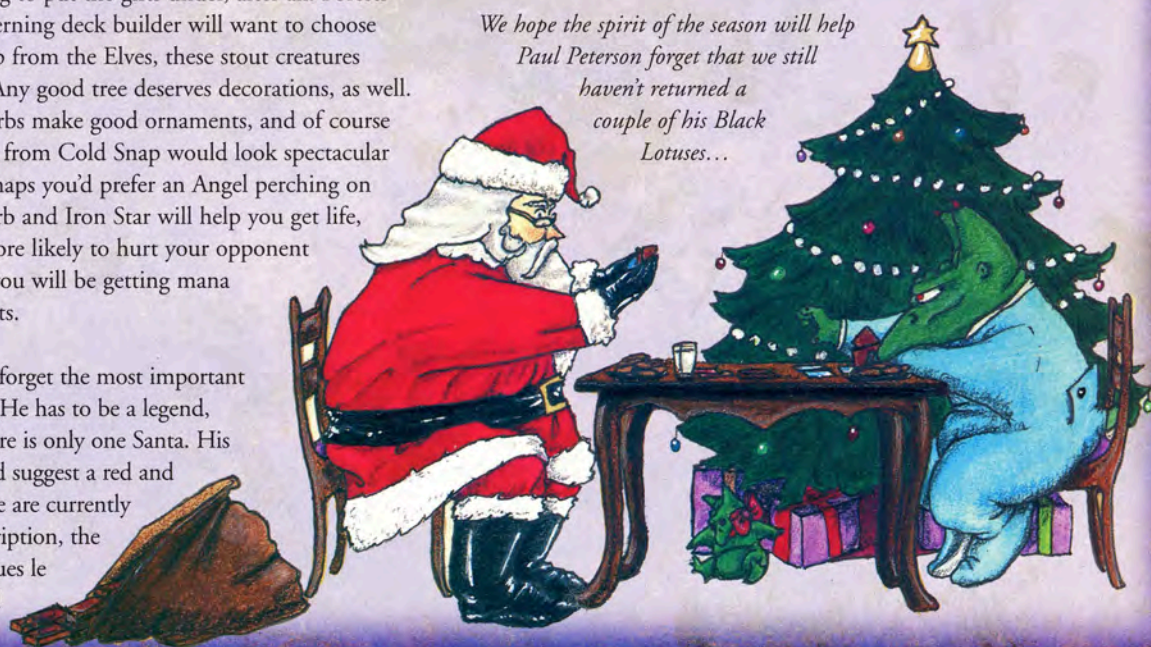
All that remains are some finishing touches for proper flavor. You can add anything that seems appropriate. Goblin Snowman, Tranquility ("Silent Night..."), Holy Day, Festival, Sacred Boon, and Wall of Ice all fit in here, but there are many others. As always, make sure that any cards you choose will also be of some benefit to your deck—after all, Mr. Suitcase isn't going to want a theme deck that isn't fun to play. And you know Mr. Suitcase doesn't think losing is all that fun.

Let's look over the Santa Claus theme deck we've created. With the fast mana from Elves and artifacts, you will be able to get out many of your expensive creatures and those large artifact creatures very quickly—a holiday surprise no opponent will relish. You also have lots of blocking creatures and several ways to gain life. Overall, the deck should be fairly effective, and a lot of fun to play.

There are also many other decks that you can make with other holiday themes. Halloween is just begging for an appropriate black deck, featuring all of the hordes of Zombies, Skeletons, and Wraiths, complete with ways to revive them. Or maybe you could do a *The Nightmare Before Christmas* variation, which combines a bit of both holidays. In keeping with this time of year, a New Year's Eve deck has tremendous possibilities. Red can provide the necessary fireworks in a variety of forms, from Pyrotechnics to Flares, while white's ability to band exemplifies the spirit of brotherhood and togetherness so widely felt at the turn of the year.

Now that you have a deck idea, collect the cards and build it, then give it to Mr. Suitcase or another friend for the holidays. After all, Mr. Suitcase gives you his knowledge all year long. The least you can do is give him some of yours for the holidays.

*We hope the spirit of the season will help
Paul Peterson forget that we still
haven't returned a
couple of his Black
Lotuses...*



SWIMMING with the SHARKS

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO MAGIC TRADING

by Mark Rosewater

"Let's see what you've got. Not much. Well, hold on a second—I guess I could trade you something for that Time Elemental. I need a fourth one for this deck I'm building. Unfortunately, all I have on me are some cards from Legends™—you know, the expansion set that came out back in the summer of '94. To be honest with you, they're worth a lot more than Fourth Edition™ cards. But here's what I'll do: I'll trade you this Rust—this is a card that can be used to stop any artifact from working—for your Time Elemental and one of your uncommon cards. Just don't tell anybody, okay? I don't want anyone thinking I'm a pushover."

Shortly after I began playing Magic™, I introduced it to my father. He got me interested in games in the first place, so I wanted to share my favorite game with him. Several months later we were talking about Magic, and I asked offhandedly if he had made any interesting trades. He told me that he hadn't traded at all because he didn't feel knowledgeable enough about the cards to ensure that he could keep from getting "taken" by more informed players.

That's when I realized that, as a veteran Magic player, I had a big advantage. I had been ignorant about the value of cards when everyone was ignorant. New players have a much tougher time: they are thrust into an atmosphere in which almost everyone knows more than they do. The only way they can ever learn about card values is to begin trading, but how do they do that without having their collection picked clean by "sharks," the scavengers that occasionally roam the Magic world?

DOING YOUR HOMEWORK

The first thing you have to do if you want to trade is know what you have. Using either a magazine (e.g., *The Duelist*™), a book (e.g., *Magic: The Gathering*®—*The Pocket Players' Guide*), or an experienced friend for reference, determine the rarity of each of your cards—that is, find out which of your cards are common, which are uncommon, and which are rare. This is vital because it lets you know how hard a card is to replace. While it can be very easy, for example, to get another common card, acquiring a copy of a rare card can take a significant amount of trading.

Next, you want to use your knowledgeable friend or a price guide (e.g., the one included in *Srye* or other magazines) to determine the value of your cards. Notice that this differs from rarity. While an average rare card will be more highly valued than the average uncommon card, this does not mean that all rare cards are valued higher than all uncommon cards. You only need to try to trade a Lifeface for a Serra Angel to discover this. Also be aware that just because a card has a high price in a magazine does not necessarily mean that many people care to trade for it. And while

price should not be the sole factor in determining fair trades, it can indicate both the usefulness and desirability of the cards involved.

This brings me to the third and most important quality, what I refer to as "the excitement factor." What cards do you have that people actively want? To figure this out, go somewhere where people trade and bring your cards with you. As you show them to people, take note of what cards are usually noticed first. These are the cards that have the high excitement value. Just remember that you are not ready to trade yet, so only use this excursion to learn about your cards.

MAKING A LIST

Once you know what you have, the next thing to determine is what you want. Good trading requires having very focused goals. If you are trading to get cards for a deck, for example, ask yourself what kind of deck you want to build. The colors and theme of the deck will help dictate your needs. If, for instance, you are creating a black/red deck with a lot of direct damage, you might need to acquire more Fireballs or Soul Burns.

But how can you figure out which cards to trade for? There are many ways for you to learn which cards you could consider going after. Look through one of the books or magazines you acquired to do your research; use your scouting trip to check out people's collections to discover what is available; or simply watch people play and see what new and exciting spells they use.

Next, you should determine how hard the trades will be to make. While it is fine to seek one or two cards that will present a challenge, wanting only unattainable cards will do nothing but frustrate you. Make sure that you know what resources you have for trading so that you can set realistic goals. A Black Lotus might go wonderfully in your deck, but without a lot of strong "trading bait," your chances of acquiring one are rather limited.

But the most important thing to do is to compile a list of what you want. This will allow you to ask around and get a sense of just how hard each card will be to acquire. Arrange your list into several categories: the first group of cards should be ones you

want that should be easy to get and won't require much sacrifice. The second group should be cards you want but that you know will require some work. And the final group should be a "wish list" of cards that are not currently realistically within your reach but that give you a long-term goal to work toward.

INTO THE FIRE

You've figured out what you have; you've made a list of what you want. Now it's finally time to actually venture forth into the trading world. Let me warn you about the most obvious danger—many **Magic** cards are quite valuable and as a result, whenever people gather with lots of **Magic** cards in tow, there are thieves bent on making some easy money. As a result, it is very easy to lose your cards if you don't keep an eye on them. Also, when showing your cards to a prospective trader, you should be cautious as some people might actually steal your cards from under your nose. If you aren't careful about watching your cards, you'll find you no longer have to worry about them.

As a general rule of thumb, you'll probably want to start trading with people you know; not only is a friend more reliable, but friends have a big incentive to not make bad trades with you, as it will only come back to haunt them. The majority of traders are, in fact, honorable people who will act fairly when trading with a beginner. But as a new trader, you're bound to run into sharks, traders who prey upon the naive and unsuspecting. Let me show you some of the underhanded techniques they use.

The most common practice used by the sharks is to confuse a beginner by offering a complex trade involving a lot of cards from several different expansions. By disorienting the new player with so many decisions, it is much easier for those sharks to sneak through dubious trades. Thus, when you are first starting, only trade cards within a set or expansion—that is, if you want to trade away an *Ice Age*™ card, trade it for another *Ice Age* card. This allows you to deal with a smaller subset of cards that will be easier to compare in value. With time, you will slowly begin to get a grander sense of the card values, but until then keep your trades simple.

The next big danger is a "suggestive sell" by the shark. In this scenario, the shark learns of some interest of the beginner (such as what colors he is trading for) and then proceeds to push a card that the shark hypes as the exact thing the novice is looking for.

The dangers of this are numerous. First, as the card is usually new to the player, he has little basis to gauge its value. Second, many cards that seem attractive at first turn out to be rather useless in actual play. Let's take Rust, a common *Legends* card mentioned in the introduction to the article. Rust has a very narrow one-shot use and is rarely played in decks. But on the surface it seems to be very versatile ("it can stop any artifact from working"), and a good shark can make it sound like a powerful card. If a certain card is being pushed, it usually means that the shark is trying to get rid of it. This is why your wish list of cards is so important; you need to go into a trade with your desires mapped out ahead of time. Otherwise, you can easily be talked into buying a **Magic** "lemon."

Another popular trick is known as the "innocent third party." While trying to trade with you, the shark gets a friend to walk by, acting as a stranger who begins to watch the trade. Usually the "stranger" makes comments about what a good deal the shark's trade is, subtly planting the idea in the new player's mind. The easiest way to avoid this is to make an effort not to listen to advice of people you don't know. Also, don't be afraid when you are just beginning to trade to occasionally pull a more knowledgeable friend into the end of a trade and let him or her check it out for you. No honest trader should care if you ask advice of a friend; the only ones who care are the ones who don't want you to hear what your friend's going to say. And, of course, don't be afraid to refer to a price guide, if that's your preferred measure of a card's worth.

Regardless of which tricks they use, sharks will always try to pressure the new trader into making a decision. Whether this involves trying to speed along the trade quicker than the novice feels comfortable with or constantly referring to someone else who wants the card, the shark tries to make the new trader feel like he has to make this critical decision immediately. The important thing to remember is that, when in doubt, it is always better to let the trade pass. If you really want a card, there will always be another chance to acquire it.

The last warning is about counterfeit cards. If you get involved in a trade that seems too good to be true, there is a chance that a counterfeit is involved. The biggest problem with **Magic** counterfeits is that they are getting harder and harder to spot. If you suspect that a card is fake, check with someone who you feel is educated in **Magic** trading. A good resource for this is respectable dealers, who have to deal with counterfeits regularly.

GO FORTH AND PROSPER

Trading is a vital part of the **Magic** environment. It gives you the opportunity to meet new players and to learn more about the cards while testing out your trading skills. Trading shouldn't be thought of as a chore but rather as a fun activity unto itself. The acquisition of a new card can provide the same adrenaline rush as a last-minute, come-from-behind victory. Just remember to watch out so that you can enjoy the interaction and excitement trading provides without falling victim to the few out there who want to take advantage of you.

*More than fair in his trading and his playing, Mark Rosewater recently earned a spot on the **Magic** R&D team. He will continue to be a frequent contributor to The Duelist.*



THE DUELIST
27 FRAZIER

Background by Nicola Leonard
Spot illustration by Dan Frazier



MMASTERING MULTIPLAYER MAGIC

by Beth Moursund

Since the earliest days of **Magic™**, players have invented their own multiplayer and team variants, ranging from simple last-survivor-wins free-for-alls to more structured rules such as Emperor Team and Grand Melee (see p. 31). These variations were played pretty much the same way that normal, two-player duels were played, but gradually new decks and strategies evolved. Adding extra players to the game may seem like a minor change, but it makes a huge difference in the game's dynamics. A player who realizes this and plans accordingly stands a good chance of ending up on top.

DECK CONSTRUCTION

Many decks that regularly win two-player duels will fail miserably in a multiplayer environment. A number of the principles that guide deck design for a two-player duel simply don't apply when you have to take multiple opponents into account. Other principles, while still applicable, become less important. Here are six strategies for two-player duel deck design:

- *Don't conserve resources—he who dies with the most toys still loses.*
- *Offense is more important than defense—walls are a waste of space.*
- *One of mine for one of yours leaves us even.*

- *Speed is critical.*
- *If you've got it, flaunt it.*
- *Opponent = enemy.*

Let's see how well these principles fare in a multiplayer environment.

"Don't conserve resources"

In a two-player game, your life total is irrelevant once you've eliminated your opponent. Whether you have 1 or 100 life left at the end doesn't matter—all that matters is that your opponent has 0 or less. Most multiplayer variants, though, don't end until all but one of the players is eliminated. Because of this, strategies based on hurting yourself some to hurt your opponent more tend to be suicidal in multiplayer games. A good example is the classic Channel-Fireball combination, in which you spend almost all of your own life to toast your opponent. Try that in a multiplayer game and you've practically guaranteed that you'll be the next player out.

In the same way, the number of cards you have left at the end of a two-player game is just as meaningless as your life total. Does it matter if you tap all your creatures for that final killing attack, or sacrifice everything to your Sword of the Ages, or use up the rest of the cards in your hand? In a multiplayer game, not only can it matter—it can cripple your defenses fatally.

"Offense is more important than defense"

Magic is designed so that offensive and defensive abilities are fairly balanced, with offense favored slightly so that duels don't drag on too long. But much of this balance depends on the fact that your opponent will normally only get one untap phase between each of your untap phases, one draw between each of your draws, one chance to attack between each of your attacks, and so on. Cards which alter this balance are among the most powerful in **Magic**, and many of them (such as Time Walk, Time Vault, Ancestral Recall, and Braingeyser) are restricted or banned in many play environments because of the huge advantage they give to whoever gets the most of them out first.

Playing against multiple opponents can be thought of almost like playing against an opponent with a deck full of Time Walks. Between each of your turns, each of your opponents will get to untap, draw, and attack. Under these circumstances, defenses take on a whole new significance.

For two-player duels, most experienced players turn up their noses at walls. Cheap, regenerating creatures such as Drudge Skeletons and Will-O'-The-Wisps are perfect blockers (except, of course, against trample attacks), and they're more versatile than walls. But when you can be attacked

by several players in succession, walls suddenly begin to look much more valuable. Regenerating a blocker after the first attack leaves it tapped, leaving you wide open for the next attacker. Walls, on the other hand, can block attackers turn after turn.

Putting Circles of Protection in your deck for a two-player duel is a losing gamble unless you know what kind of deck your opponent is playing. There's only a small chance that any given Circle will be of any use at all; if your opponent has no damage-dealers of that color, the card is just wasting space. The more players in the game, though, the greater the chance that someone will be playing a given color, so Circles become much more useful.

"One of mine for one of yours"

In a two-player game, if you spend one card to neutralize or remove a card of your opponent's, you come out about equal; if it takes out two or more cards, you're ahead. In a multiplayer setting, though, all of the other players are drawing ahead of the two of you each time you do this.

Denial decks—that is, decks which focus on preventing an opponent from casting spells, either by stripping the player's hand with discard effects, destroying most of her land, or countering anything dangerous that she tries to cast—suffer badly in a multiplayer setting. You have to cast your spells so selectively that it's hard to keep more than one player out of the action. Blast decks, too, may find themselves out of ammunition long before all other opponents run out of creatures. Direct damage in an otherwise mostly defensive deck can work very well, though; by hiding behind your defenses and looking harmless, you may be able to build up enough mana to wipe out several players in rapid succession.

"Speed is critical"

In a two-player duel, the deck that gets off to a faster start has a huge advantage. Many tournament-level games are over within ten turns, and it's unusual to go through more than 1/3 or 1/2 of your library unless one of the decks is designed to slow everything down or run its opponent out of cards.

In a free-for-all setting, speed is less crucial; games tend to last many more turns, with cautious attacks and probes. No one dares to commit to a full assault because

doing so would leave the attacker open to brutal retaliation from other opponents. Slower decks with lots of high casting-cost spells benefit from this. An old joke has a player commenting, "My deck guarantees a win on the tenth turn. Unfortunately, my opponent usually kills me before then." That sort of deck, impractical in a two-player game, may actually work quite well in multiplayer play. Also, if you don't do much, other players will often ignore you, focusing their attention instead on obvious threats and on defending themselves from opponents who aren't so harmless. Because of this, it's usually easier to survive a lousy starting hand in free-for-all than in a two-player duel.

One popular **Magic** strategy is the "weenie" deck: a library full of one- or two-mana summon spells, designed to get a horde of small creatures out quickly and swarm the opponent before he can do anything about it. These decks don't tend to work as well in multiplayer environments, for the same reasons that speed decks have problems: you may finish one opponent off quickly, but by that time, your other opponents will have enough mana to bring their big nasties into play and make short work of your weenies. Also, the more players you have, the better the chance that someone will have a spell such as Pestilence or Pyroclasm to clear the board of small creatures.

"If you've got it, flaunt it"

On the other end of the spectrum from the weenie horde is the deck which concentrates all of its resources on getting out one or two big, expensive, dangerous cards and then protecting them. An Elder Dragon, Polar Kraken, or multi-enchanted Rabid Wombat staring you in the face is not only dangerous in its own right, but the sheer intimidation factor may cause you to lose your cool and play poorly.

In a multiplayer setting, putting all your eggs in one basket by depending on one huge, intimidating creature to win for you is even riskier than it is in a normal game, since many players may see it as a threat and pull out their Terrors, Swords to Plowshares, and other such anti-creature spells. With multiple opponents, drawing attention to yourself is dangerous. Your best bet is usually a balanced deck, with a mixture of small and large creatures, but with more high-cost spells than you would use in a dueling deck.

"Opponent = enemy"

The two-player game's universe consists of only you and The Enemy. Any beneficial spells or effects are for use on yourself, anything that affects "target opponent" hurts your enemy, and things which affect "all players" benefit or harm both of you equally. Adding more players expands that universe and adds a whole new dimension. Some of your opponents may be allies, or at least neutral. You may also have multiple enemies, or no enemy at all, at any given time.

With multiple opponents to deal with, anything that affects "target opponent" is lessened in value, since it can only hurt one player. Black Vise and The Rack, in particular, target a single player. Once that opponent is eliminated, they become inert hunks of metal, worthless except as Atog chow, unless you have a way to bring them back to your hand and recast them.

On the other hand, spells which affect everyone, such as Wrath of God, Armageddon, and Syphon Soul, are massively powerful in a free-for-all. For the



same price you'd pay to affect just one opponent in a two-player game, you're affecting a whole table full of opponents. Cards which stay in play and hurt all players, such as Winter Orb, Manabarbs, and Stasis, also have their power multiplied. Be wary of using these spells, though—if you annoy too many players at once, they may join forces to remove the nuisance. Casting one of these can be the equivalent of painting a big red bullseye on yourself and walking onto an archery range. If you play them in a team game when your teammates aren't prepared for it, your own teammates may even turn on you. For the opposite effect, try cards such as Howling Mine and Mana Flare. These may win you friends; often, other players who are benefiting from their effects will avoid attacking you—or even protect you—just to keep them in play.

DIPLOMACY, OR "LET'S YOU AND HIM FIGHT"

In normal **Magic**, the biggest part of strategy is designing your deck. Tactical decisions while playing are important, but are

often (depending on your deck) simple or obvious. Psychological tactics are mostly absent or limited to bluffing. There's not much to negotiate, threaten, or make deals about when your opponent's only objective is to defeat you!

In a free-for-all, on the other hand, diplomacy is critical, and can be a much bigger factor than deck design or playing skill. If everyone else gangs up on you, it rarely matters how good your deck is or how skillful a player you are—you'll be overwhelmed by sheer numbers. But if you can talk your opponents into bludgeoning each other to death while leaving you mostly alone, you have a good chance of finishing off the crippled survivors even with a weaker deck.

Whole volumes could be and actually have been written about the strategies of diplomacy, both in games and in the real world. In general, though, most of them fall into two overlapping categories: manipulation and negotiation.

The essence of multiplayer manipulation is to persuade your opponents to do things that indirectly benefit you, while letting them think that it was entirely their own idea and that they're getting the most benefit. A common part of this is to always point out your opponents' capabilities, especially if they're close to winning, and at the same time play down your own abilities. Some players design deceptively weak-looking decks, and specialize in this tactic. Muttering about how bad your cards are, what a worthless deck you have, how many weeks it's been since you've had a date, or anything else you can think of to draw sympathy may also help—or it may annoy everyone so much that they spontaneously form an alliance with each other long enough to crush you, just so they won't have to listen to you whining any more.

If you're persuasive, you may be able to convince the other players that a particular opponent is especially dangerous and that they all need to gang up on her. (It does help if the other player really is especially dangerous.) This tactic can backfire if you stretch your credibility too far, though. Like the boy who cried wolf, you can end up with such a reputation that no one will take you seriously even when there is a real danger. Also, once you've won a few games with a weak-looking deck, convincing the other players that you're harmless will become difficult or impossible.

When manipulation fails, even the sneakiest player will eventually have to do some straightforward negotiation. Almost every free-for-all game will, somewhere along the line, include making and breaking alliances, either implicitly or explicitly. These can range from short-term agreements ("I promise not to attack you next turn if you attack him instead of me"), to full-game pacts in which two or more players agree to work together to take everyone else out before fighting it out between themselves. (Most groups frown on these sorts of agreements, and rightfully so—if you want to play as a team, you should be playing with team rules.) Deals and alliances, along with the potential for backstabbing, add a lot of spice to the game.

Meta-gaming really comes to the fore in this area. If you have a reputation as a player who keeps her word, the other players are much more likely to believe your promises than if you have a reputation as a scheming backstabber. Each player must choose whether to go all-out to win each individual game, or to sacrifice advantages in the short term in order to improve his or her chances of getting favorable deals in later games.

DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

One last point to keep in mind: multiplayer games, much more than regular duels, are "social games." Sometimes they're just as vicious and hard-fought as any duel, but in many groups, you'll find that not every player is really trying to win. Some players, for whatever reason, set other goals, such as "don't be the first one out," "take out the player who killed me last game," "make sure that my friend wins," or even "create as much chaos as possible." These sorts of tactics are often incomprehensible and annoying to strategic, win-oriented players—but then, the "win at any cost" outlook may be just as baffling to the "sillier" players. Just try to remember that, as with any game, the ultimate goal is to have fun.

Beth "BethMo" Moursund often finds herself on the pages of The Duelist. An experienced Magic playtester, she has also written for The Pocket Players' Guide and serves as the netrep for Wizards of the Coast on CompuServe.



MULTIPLAYER VARIANTS

RULES

Free-for-all: Anything goes; you can attack and cast spells at anyone. Some allow attacking several players simultaneously, declaring which player each creature is attacking. Most allow only creatures controlled by the player being attacked to block; some let anyone block anything.

Limited Spell/Effect Range: All spells and effects have a range—usually one or two players to each side of the caster. Anything that affects “all players” affects only those within range. When a player is eliminated, the gap between players closes up either immediately or at some specified time later. Until it closes, it counts as one player for determining ranges.

Limited Attack Range: Spells can be aimed at anyone (or anyone within range, if combining this with limited spell range), but creatures can only attack the players within a specified range—usually just their immediate neighbors, or a single neighbor in “Attack Left”—and only the player being attacked can block.

Creature Movement: This is used with some limited attack range variants. Instead of attacking with a creature, you can tap it to move it into the territory of any player within its attack range. You still control that creature, and it can only attack during your turn, but its range for attacking/blocking is based on its new position. In a team game, you can only move creatures into your teammates’ territories. When a player is eliminated, all creatures that player controls are buried no matter where they are located and all creatures in that player’s territory are returned to their original owners.

Communication: Some variants limit the amount of information you’re allowed to share, such as requiring all communication to be out loud so everyone can hear, or allowing talk about general tactics but no mention of specific spells.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Last survivor: The game lasts until all the players but one have been eliminated; that player wins. This can make for very long games, since many players will “turtle up,” playing very defensively.

First kill: The game ends as soon as one player is eliminated, and the winner is whoever most recently damaged that player (other than the player herself) without also being eliminated. You may want to forbid “stealing kills” by damaging a player who’s already at zero life.

Victory points: Players receive one point for each player they eliminate, and the player with the most points at the end wins.

Predator/Prey: Each time the player to your left is eliminated, you get one victory point, no matter who/what killed her. The last survivor gets one additional victory point, and the player with the most points at the end wins.

Grand Melee: This is a huge multiplayer variant invented by Richard Garfield. The current Grand Melee rules use a spell range of one, attack to the left, and predator/prey scoring. Every third player (or so) takes turns simultaneously, using turn markers which are passed around the circle to show who can start their turn and who must wait. For every third player who is eliminated, one turn marker is removed;

this will cause some players to miss a turn, so to help make up for this, the gap remains until after the player to the left of the gap begins his or her next turn.

TEAM VARIANTS

Standard: Free-for-all games last until only one team has members left. Seating can be either with teammates next to each other, or alternating.

Walking Dead: A player whose life goes below zero is not eliminated from the game—everyone keeps playing until all members of a team are at zero or below, or run out of cards.

Two-headed Giant: Each team of two players shares a common life pool of 40 points. Damage to either team member is subtracted from the common pool and life is added to the pool. If either player runs out of cards, the team loses.

Generals: This is played with two teams of three players each. The player in the middle is the General. A team loses if its General is eliminated. Some versions give the General extra life points. Generals is usually played with spell range and attack range of one but unlimited range for untargeted effects, and often with creature movement so the General can summon creatures and move them out to the flanks.

Emperor: Five-player teams play in the same manner as Generals, except spell range and attack range are both two.



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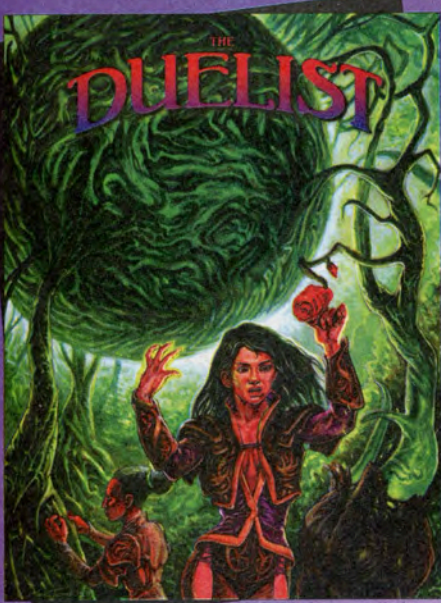
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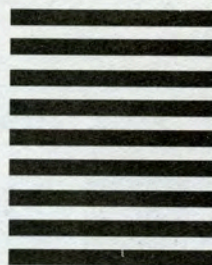
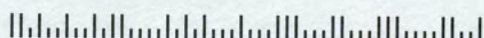
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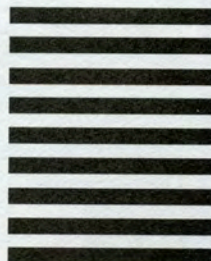
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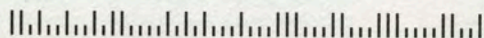
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MAKING Enemies:

DESIGNING DECKS IN PAIRS

by Mark Rosewater

TWO GAMES IN ONE

I have a theory. I believe that Magic™ is actually two different games: “competitive Magic” and “fun Magic.”

“Competitive Magic” has the goal of creating fine-tuned battle decks; the ultimate success in this game is to create a deck that never loses. “Fun Magic,” on the other hand, has the goal of having a good time, and the number of wins and losses is inconsequential; the ultimate success in fun Magic is to create a deck that is always enjoyable to play.

Too often, we attempt to play one game with the tools of the other. This ends up being either boring (trying to play a “fun” game with a narrow, “competitive” deck) or disappointing (having a “fun” deck crushed in “competitive” play).

Finding competitive play is easy; you can seek out tournaments where the structure dictates that most players will be using

competitive decks. But what if you just want to play a fun game? Even if you find another like-minded player, there is still a chance that your decks won’t make for a fun game. How can you ensure two “fun” decks will be compatible? Simple—build them both yourself.

.....

SPARRING PARTNERS

The idea of building compatible decks occurred to me about a year ago. I enjoy building fun, offbeat decks, and had earned a bit of a reputation for doing just that. As a result, my friends would often ask to use one of my own decks against me. After a few months, I realized that two of my decks in particular seemed to play very well against one another. The games were always very close, with a lot of give-and-take on both sides. My friends would even specifically ask to play one of these two decks against the other.

This got me thinking. What about these two decks provided for such a consistently fun game? The first deck, Igor, was what is known as a “reanimator” deck. Reanimator decks are full of big creatures which are brought into play primarily by animating them from the graveyard. The second deck, Sunshine, was a “machine” deck, a mostly artifact deck that generates massive mana to power cards that are “plugged in” to the deck.

As it turns out, both Igor and Sunshine were very slow and required time to get rolling. Because both decks had the same handicap, though, the disadvantage was canceled out. Also, both decks could deal with the key threat of the other deck: Igor always won by attacking with its animated creatures, while Sunshine tended to deliver

its death blow with a very pumped-up Rocket Launcher. Sunshine dealt with Igor’s creatures by destroying them with direct damage, while Igor dealt with Sunshine’s Rocket Launcher by accumulating life faster than Sunshine could take it away.

Every game between the two decks had a lot of interaction as each side scrambled to keep from being overwhelmed by the other deck’s resources. In short, each deck was equipped to handle the other, but neither preyed upon the other deck’s weaknesses.

.....

BORN TO BATTLE

With a nod to Igor and Sunshine, let’s try to build two compatible decks from scratch. We can build one to start, and then try to find a good companion for it.

First, let’s pick an interesting, offbeat theme; this will give the deck flexibility and will keep play with it from getting stagnant. How about a deck that beats an opponent by turning all her resources against her? The deck would steal or copy the opponent’s permanents and would turn her spells against her. Ideally, the deck would always defeat an opponent in the exact manner that the opponent had planned to win. Blue magic would have to be included, as theft and manipulation are both key strengths of blue, and a good secondary color would be red, as it has the next highest number of theft cards. I’ll name our deck The Grinch, as it will survive by taking all your opponent’s toys.

After we have a theme and colors, we can start choosing cards. Between blue, red, and artifacts, over twenty cards steal, copy, or redirect our opponent’s resources. We’re best off including one or two of most of the cards rather than just four of the best five or



six. Repetition of key cards is okay (Igor, for example, had three Animate Dead and three Dance of the Dead), but variety will make the deck fun and flexible. Now that we have the shell of the deck, we should stop and figure out what the companion deck will be by analyzing The Grinch.

What are The Grinch's weaknesses? (Aside from Cindy-Lou Who, who was not more than two.) What kind of a deck would easily beat it? Since The Grinch survives by stealing things, it would obviously suffer most against a deck that had few permanents.

What are The Grinch's strengths? How is it most likely to beat an opponent? What threats can it easily deal with? The Grinch will most likely win by taking control of the majority of its opponent's cards and then using them to its benefit.

Now that we have defined The Grinch, let's find it a good companion. First, the companion deck has to have a lot of creatures and artifacts so that The Grinch has something to work with. But, as The Grinch consists primarily of creatures and enchantments, our companion deck is going to have to be able to deal with these.

The key is to make the strengths of each deck struggle with one another. Since The Grinch is at heart a thief deck, it's going to thrive by taking things. Making the second deck very prolific, so that it churns out permanents very quickly, might create an interesting dynamic in which each deck races to outperform the other. The companion deck would win only if it could swarm The Grinch before losing control of the majority of its creatures.

Given all of this, it seems that the best companion for The Grinch is going to be a swarm deck, with fast mana and small, fast creatures. We want to include green in this deck, as fast mana and cheap creatures are strengths of green. Also, green has Tranquility, which can deal with The Grinch's many enchantments. Black will make a good complementary color, as it can also be quick and has good swarming ability. In addition, black has the one ability we need that green is lacking, the ability to destroy creatures.

Finally, we need to find a fun theme that will bring together the creatures in the deck. It might be nice for the companion deck to grow as the game progresses, so let's put in all the creatures that gain +1/+1 counters over time (Whirling Dervish, Sengir Vampire, Fungusaur, Citanul Druid, etc.). As

these all happen to be green and black, the theme fits the colors perfectly. I'll name the deck Friedrich, after the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who said, "That which does not kill me makes me stronger."

Now that both decks have been defined, they'll probably need some final tweaking to make sure that each deck can handle the abilities of the other. After looking at Friedrich, it becomes apparent that it is a quicker deck than The Grinch. To help even this out, we can give The Grinch a few cards like Mana Vault to help the deck get started before Friedrich overwhelms it.

THE TOUCH UP

Now that we have the rough versions of The Grinch and Friedrich, it's time to start playing with them. Find a friend at a similar skill level and give the decks a try. If one deck has some edge that allows it to win more consistently, tweak both decks until a balance is established. Also, if some cards in the decks seem to sit unused in the players' hands, replace these cards with something more useful.

As you continue fleshing out the decks, remember that the goal is to make them as evenly matched as possible. If one card assures a victory every time it is played, we don't want it in the duel. If the decks are evenly matched, both players go in knowing that each has an equal chance of winning, and the skill of the player becomes more important than the strength of the deck.

Finally, keep in mind that the main objective is to have fun, so it's okay to constantly fiddle with the decks. You can even include different cards or card combinations you've always wanted to try just to see how they work. The ultimate test for a "fun Magic" deck is a simple one: after a duel, just ask "Was that fun?" If it wasn't, just tweak the decks and try again.

When Mark started playing Magic, Arabian Nights was just another book (and when it became an expansion, he bought twice as much as Montana did—two boxes). The newest member of the Magic R&D team, Mark is best known as "that Duelist puzzle guy."

THE GRINCH VS. FRIEDRICH: An Example of Well-Matched Decks

THE GRINCH

Artifacts (14)
Ashnod's
Transmogrator (3)
Crown of the Ages
Fellwar Stone (4)
Fountain of Youth (2)
Gauntlet of Might
Mana Vault (2)
Sol Ring

Blue (18)
Clone (2)
Control Magic (2)
Dance of Many (2)
Deflection (2)
Magus of the Unseen
Old Man of the Sea (2)
Ray of Command (2)
Steal Artifact (2)
Transmute Artifact
Vesuvan
Doppelganger (2)

Red (8)
Aladdin
Conquer (2)
Fork
Lightning Bolt (2)
Orcish Squatters (2)

Land (22)
City of Shadows (2)
Island (9)
Mountain (7)
Volcanic Island (4)

FRIEDRICH

Artifacts (7)
Despotic Scepter
Icy Manipulator (2)
Nevinyrral's Disk
Rocket Launcher
Rod of Ruin
Sword of the Ages

Black (18)
Animate Dead (2)
Baron Sengir
Dark Banishing (2)
Dark Ritual (2)
Demonic Tutor
Hell's Caretaker
Khabal Ghoul (2)
Krovikan Fetish (2)
Sengir Bats
Sengir Vampire (2)
Terror (2)

Green (19)
Birds of Paradise (2)
Citanul Druid (2)
Crumble (2)
Dark Heart of the Wood (multicolored)
Elves of Deep Shadow (2)
Fungusaur
Fyndhorn Elves
Gaea's Avenger
Lhurgoyf
Llanowar Elves
Regrowth
Tranquility (3)
Whirling Dervish

Land (23)
Bayou (4)
Forest (8)
Mishra's Factories (2)
Swamp (9)



DUELIST
35



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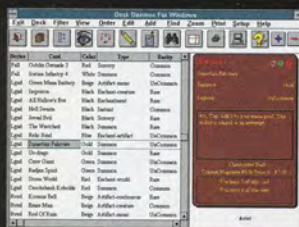
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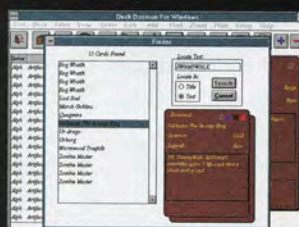
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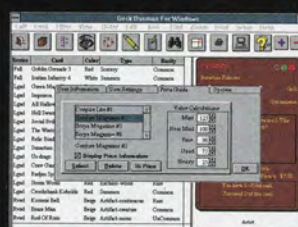
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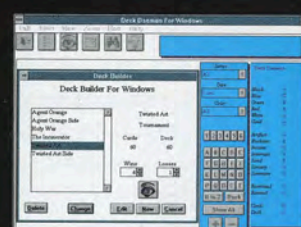
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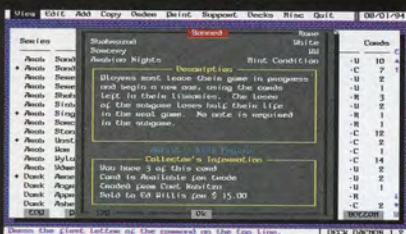


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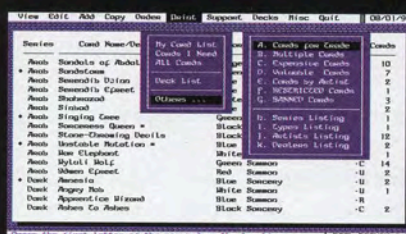


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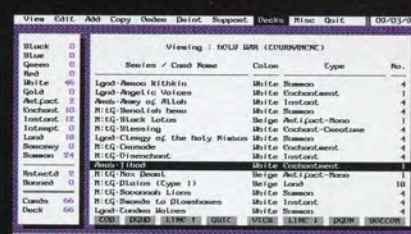
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in Control:

by Jim Lin

KEY STRATEGIES
FOR *ICE AGE*

I don't know what the weather is like where you are, but as I write this here in Seattle, it's beginning to get a bit chilly. That's good, because it puts me in the right mood to keep working on the next **Magic: The Gathering** expansion, which develops a lot of the themes introduced in *Ice Age*™. In designing the expansion, we've done a little bit of thinking on *Ice Age*'s strengths and weaknesses, hoping that the expansion could serve to balance them out a bit. One broad category of cards that we've found *Ice Age* to be strong in is "deck control" cards.

By deck control, I mean several things. If you've been reading *The Duelist*, *The Pocket Players' Guide*, or any other source of strategy advice on **Magic**, the idea that you should play with the smallest deck possible has probably been pounded into your head. Despite our best efforts, some cards are much stronger than others, and if you play with fewer cards, you are more likely to draw the killer cards you need for victory.

Ice Age has a class of cards known as "cantrips." These spells let you get around minimum deck-size limits, effectively allowing you to use an even smaller deck. Most let you draw a card at the beginning of the next turn's upkeep, leaving your hand size essentially unchanged after you cast them. Some, such as *Brainstorm* and *Diabolic Vision*, are even better, allowing you to replace them immediately rather than making you wait until the next upkeep. Be careful about using too many cantrips, though, as they usually don't do too much on their own—you'll need some muscle in your deck to back them up. Also, if you're playing with lots of cantrips, stick with those that are very cheap (one or no mana to cast), and avoid those like *Force Void* that require a specific circumstance to cast. In general, try to use cantrips that are instants: you can cast some on your own turn, draw more during your opponent's turn, and then cast more on your opponent's turn. The cantrips that I have found most useful are: *Barbed Sextant* (great for mana management in multicolored decks); *Brainstorm* and *Diabolic Vision* (which is helpful for managing the order in which you get your cards, and which gets you cards the turn you cast them); *Portent* (which again is good for managing card order, and which can be used on your opponent); and *Clairvoyance* (which is great for looking at your opponent's hand when you're playing, or playing against, a Counterspell deck).

Another aspect of deck control *Ice Age* is especially strong in is find-

ing ways to use cards that aren't very useful at the moment. Ideally, you would want to design a deck in which all of the cards would be useful at all times, but that's just not possible. A good example of this can be found when you determine a deck's land ratio, one of the toughest things to balance in a deck. Almost every deck needs to get mana out in its first two or three turns, but when you adjust for this, you usually end up drawing too much land later on in the game. (This is one of the reasons *Land Tax* is such a good card: the main benefit of *Land Tax* is not that you're getting land in your hand, but that you're getting it out of your deck, increasing the ratio of useful, non-land cards.)

Fortunately, *Ice Age* gives you a lot of opportunities to use those "useless" cards. Excess land can be disposed of using *Zuran Orb* (sacrifice a land to gain two life), as yet the only *Ice Age* card restricted by the Duelists' Convocation. Gaining life out of those extra land is pretty good, but try *Zuran Orb* with *Channel*, *Jokulhaups*, *Armageddon*, or *Balance* for some real thrills. In sealed-deck environments, *Dwarven Armory* (sacrifice a land to put a +2/+2 counter on a creature) is also an amazing card for making use of land, although I think you'll find it a little too expensive for constructed-deck environments. *Krovikan Sorcerer* and *Mesmeric Trance* allow you to trade any useless card for a new card, and although *Mesmeric Trance*'s cumulative upkeep makes it difficult to maintain, you only have to trade in one card successfully to break even. Another excellent option is *Stormbind* (discard a card at random to deal 2 damage to target creature or player), especially if you have a deck in which you don't tend to hold cards in your hand for long unless they are useless.

Deck control in *Ice Age* doesn't have to stop with your own deck. For those control freaks out there, you can go ahead and control your opponent's deck, too. The two cards that have probably received the



most attention in this area are Jester's Mask and Jester's Cap, but I don't actually think either is quite as good as some of the claims I've heard. Jester's Cap will definitely devastate decks that rely too heavily on one combination, but most good decks will not be hurt too much by the removal of a few cards. Jester's Mask, on the other hand, is usually used to give someone a hand of nothing but land. After having this done to me a few times, however, I don't think that it's as bad as it sounds. There are a number of ways in *Ice Age* to use extra land in your hand, and you're also getting a reasonable amount of land taken out of your deck, increasing the chance that you'll draw more useful, non-land cards later. The benefit of the Mask doesn't last for too many turns, and with a casting cost of 5, I don't think it does enough.

Ice Age does, however, offer some good options for controlling your opponent's deck. Zur's Weiriding requires a bit of finesse to use successfully, but when played correctly, it should be a game-winner. If you can get a situation where you will definitely win with the cards on the table, even if you lose 2 life a turn and your opponent has a

useless or non-existent hand (Clairvoyance and Portents can help here), playing Zur's Weiriding will lock the game up for you by keeping your opponent from drawing any more cards. Probably the simplest lock to achieve is to drive your opponent down in cards and then play a Rack followed by Zur's Weiriding. Unless you are way behind, trading 3 damage for 2 life is pretty good.

If you like to play rainbow decks, Elemental Augury is another reasonable way to control both your deck and your opponent's deck. (And playing five colors with *Ice Age* shouldn't be too hard using

the *Ice Age* "damage" lands like Karplusan Forest. I'd stay away from the "depletion" lands like Lava Tubes, though.) Elemental Augury allows you to rearrange your top three cards and your opponent's top three cards, speeding up your good cards and slowing down hers. Add Millstones, Portents, and Ray of Erasures, and you have a pretty good shot at keeping your opponent out of good cards altogether.

Well, I've got to get back to work on the next expansion, but I hope you've gotten some good deck and combination ideas. I'll just leave you with one tantalizing hint about the expansion: What's this I hear about countering an opponent's spell before you've even taken a turn?

Jim Lin is a Wizards of the Coast R&D "old-timer," involved since the initial playtesting of Magic: The Gathering®. Since he's one of the designers of Ice Age, we tried to make him feel guilty about having to tell readers to steer clear of some cards in the set—but it didn't work: "That's what's fun about Magic: figuring out which cards are good and which ones aren't so good."



BIGGER IS BETTER—AND POSSIBLE

Before *Ice Age*, you almost never saw anything as big or expensive as a Shivan Dragon—by the time you got around to summoning something that big, you were dead. With *Ice Age*, however, it isn't too hard to get out a Shivan Dragon or a Scaled Wurm on the second or third turn. The key cards you need to do this are Tinder Walls and Orcish Lumberjacks.

Ideally, you'll play a forest and a Tinder Wall on turn one and sacrifice the Tinder Wall to summon two Orcish Lumberjacks. Next turn, you play another forest, tap both your forests for mana, and sacrifice them both with your Lumberjacks for a total of 8 mana. Of course, this is a high risk strategy, as you now have no mana, and if the big and nasty thing you summon gets killed, you'll be in a lot of trouble. A good way to avoid this sort of trouble is to wait a little bit longer (you'll probably find that this combination won't get going before the fourth or fifth turn anyway), get a little more mana out, and cast Jokulhaups and then a Shivan Dragon in the same turn. This will leave your opponent with no mana, making it a lot more difficult for him to kill that Dragon. Of course, you'll be out of mana, too, so you really won't be able to take advantage of the Shivan's firebreathing, and flying isn't much of an advantage when your opponent has no blockers. For this combination, Goblin Mutant and Orgg might be more effective—both are cheaper and Orgg even has a higher power than the Shivan.

If you want the mana but don't like the idea of destroying all your land, you can stay in green and still get a good bit of fast mana. Fyndhorn Elder (or "Booster Elf" as the designers call it) will obviously help you get out some really large creatures, but don't overlook Nature's Lore. There are so many ways to kill small creatures like Elves and Elders (can you say "Pyroclasm"?), that I think you'll find that having extra lands in play may be a little more reliable. Plus, Nature's Lore has the added effect of thinning land out of your deck.

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WOTC PICKS HOMELANDS

MYSTIC DECREE, ISLAND SANCTUARY, AND HOWLING MINE



Many players have already used Island Sanctuary with Howling Mine to harbor a creature defense. When Island Sanctuary is in play, only creatures with flying or islandwalk can attack; however, in order for the enchantment to work, you have to draw one card less during your draw phase, meaning you would never get another card. That's where Howling Mine comes in, allowing you to draw one extra card.

But Howling Mine lets your opponent draw an extra card too, so you may want to use Jayemdae Tome (4, ♣: Draw one card) or *Chronicles' Xira Arien* (♣♣♣, ♣: Target player draws a card) instead. However, any player who's tried this defense has probably encountered opponents whose creatures have either islandwalk or flying. But throw in *Mystic Decree* from *Homelands*™ and your creature defense is complete: *Mystic Decree* is a blue Enchant World (costing 2 ♠♠ to cast) which causes all creatures to lose flying and islandwalk.

SORCERESS QUEEN AND REVEKA, WIZARD SAVANT

Sorceress Queen's special ability changes a creature's power and toughness to 0/2 until end of turn. Combine that with Reveka, Wizard Savant, a blue legend from *Homelands*, and you've got yourself a wicked combination. Reveka costs 2 ♠♠ to cast, and it can be tapped to deal 2 damage to target creature or player. So tap Sorceress Queen to make a creature 0/2 and tap Reveka to finish the weakened creature off. The drawback to Reveka's special ability is that it keeps Reveka tapped for the next turn—unless you sprinkle in Norritts, which can untap blue creatures. You can wipe out an entire army with this combination, but be wary—Sorceress Queen, Reveka, and Norritt have a toughness of only 1, so they make easy prey for Pestilence and similar direct-damage spells.



TORTURE AND CROWN OF THE AGES



Torture (a black creature enchantment which costs only ♠ to cast) lets you pay 1 ♠ to put a -1/-1 counter on a creature, slowly putting the creature to death (particularly useful against regenerating creatures). In response to your final activation of Torture, you can use Crown of the Ages, an artifact from

Ice Age™, to immediately transfer Torture to another creature and start the whole process over again. Enchantment Alteration accomplishes the same effect, but because Crown of the Ages is a permanent, you can keep this strategy up indefinitely.

SENGIR AUTOCRAT

Sengir Autocrat, a 2/2 black creature which puts three 0/1 serf tokens into play, is a cheap way to get defense, costing 3 ♠ to cast. Having Bad Moon in the background or throwing Unholy Strengths on these tiny serfs makes them more formidable; better yet, these cards can strengthen creatures such as Keldon Warlord or Márton Stromgald.



Sengir Autocrat also provides low-cost fuel for any combination requiring creature sacrifices. The Autocrat and his accompanying serfs could power up Fallen Angel (+2/+1 until end of turn for every creature sacrificed to it) to give you a flying 11/7 creature, or you could use the disposable serfs to keep your Lord of the Pit distracted. Likewise, Hecatomb (an enchantment from *Ice Age* which allows you to tap a swamp you control to have Hecatomb deal 1 damage to target creature or player) cannot come into play unless the controller

sacrifices four creatures, and Black Carriage, a 4/4 black creature from *Homelands*, can't be untapped unless you sacrifice a creature to it. Sengir Autocrat is good for both of these purposes. Just remember to sacrifice the serfs before the Autocrat, because if Sengir Autocrat leaves play, so do the serfs.



AYSEN HIGHWAY AND MAGICAL HACK



All your creatures can stay clear of traffic jams with Aysen Highway, a white enchantment from *Homelands*. Though expensive (its casting cost is 3***), it's excellent if you combine it with Magical Hack. Aysen Highway gives all white creatures plainswalk; that's great if your opponent is playing plains, but if she

isn't, you can hack Aysen Highway to give white creatures landwalking of your choice. As long as you're playing blue, you may want to throw in some Phantasmal Terrains and give your white creatures something they can walk, skip, or turn cartwheels through; that way you don't have to rely so heavily on Magical Hack. Jinx, also from *Homelands*, is a blue "cantrip" that has the same effect as Phantasmal Terrain, only it's temporary. You could actually build an entire landwalking deck around this idea, since blue's Lord of Atlantis gives all Merfolk islandwalk.



SHRINK AND TRANSMUTATION



Shrink is a green instant from *Homelands* which gives a target creature -5/-0 until end of turn. While this in itself is handy when a particular creature is hammering you, it becomes even more useful when you cast Transmutation on the same creature. Transmutation switches a creature's power and toughness, so when cast on

a creature which already has Shrink on it, its toughness is reduced by 5, enough to kill most creatures. If this still isn't enough to kill a creature, you can wait to cast Shrink and Transmutation on it until after it's attacking you. Then you cast these instants and block it with one of your own creatures—that ought to kill just about anything.



ÆTHER STORM OR PRIMAL ORDER AND TIME ELEMENTAL

Time Elemental is a blue, 0/2 creature with a lot of possibilities; its special ability lets you return a target permanent to its owner's hand for 2♦♦♦. Now you can combine that with Æther Storm

from *Homelands* to seriously annoy your opponent. Æther Storm is a blue enchantment that costs 3♦ and says no summon spells may be cast unless a player pays 4 life to bury Æther Storm. With Time Elemental already in play, cast Æther Storm at the

end of your turn. During your opponent's turn, she can't summon any creatures unless she wants to pay 4 life (and if she does, just return Æther Storm to your hand via Time Elemental before it gets buried). Before her turn is over, use Time Elemental's special ability to return Æther Storm to your hand, only to recast it at the end of your turn. Keep this up until your opponent finds a way to kill your Time Elemental.



You can also combine Time Elemental with Primal Order from *Homelands*. It's a green enchantment, costing 2♦♦♦ to cast, and it deals 1 damage to players for each non-basic land they control. Using the same strategy, make sure that Primal Order is on the board during your opponent's upkeep and in your hand during your own. That way, only your opponent will suffer from playing lands like Maze of Ith and City of Brass.



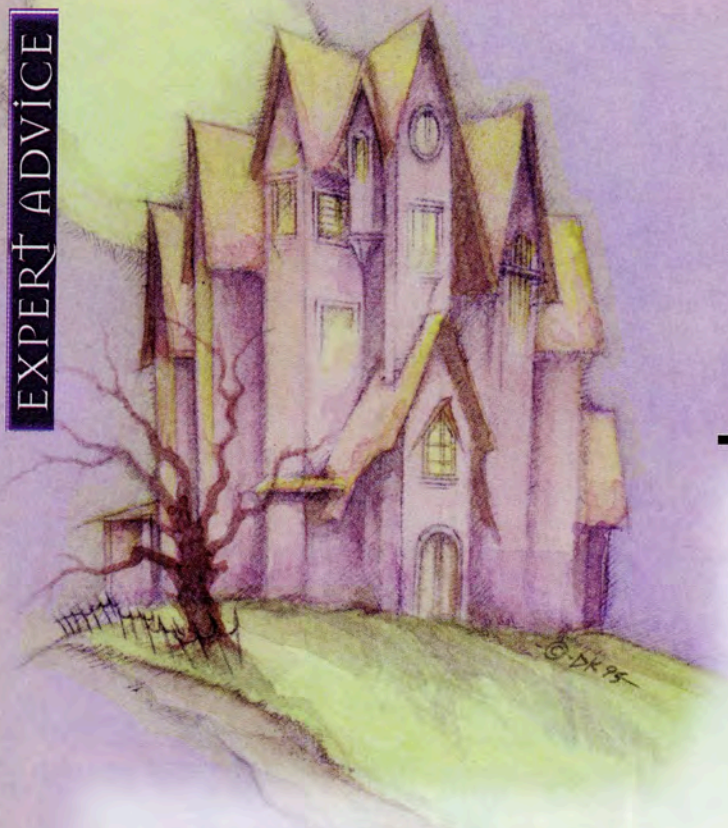
TRADE CARAVAN AND WINTER ORB



Trade Caravan (a 1/1 white creature with a casting cost of ♦) is a wonderfully cheap card for all that it does. During each of your upkeeps, you put a counter on Trade Caravan. Then, during your opponent's upkeep, you can remove two counters to untap a basic land of your choice. This in itself is useful

when you're hurting for more mana, but combined with the power of the Winter Orb, it becomes invaluable. Winter Orb says that no player may untap more than one land during his or her untap phase. So while your opponent is suffering from mana shortage, you can be untapping your land during his upkeep and one more land at the start of your turn. Of course, how many lands you untap during your opponent's upkeep depends on how many counters you've built up on Trade Caravan. This combination would work best with a weenie deck, since you still may feel suffocated from mana deprivation.





House

RULES

SOME NEW WAYS
(AND SOME OLD WAYS)
TO PLAY MAGIC

FROM OUR READERS

ASSASSINS

by Sean Mahoney

.....

"Assassins" is a multiplayer variant for *Magic: The Gathering*® intended for those who are tired of free-for-all games but don't have the right decks (or number of players) for a team variant. It gives players an incentive to concentrate on a certain opponent, while allowing them to focus on other players if necessary.

The basic mechanic for Assassins is simple. At the beginning of the game, everyone's name is written down on a slip of paper and thrown into a hat. Starting with whomever goes first, players draw one of these slips to get a mark (the player they are assigned to eliminate). Those who draw their own names should get a new mark, which might require restarting the assignment process. Play then begins normally. Note that marks are always concealed unless players inherit themselves as a mark later in the game (see below).

Assassins encourages you to concentrate on your mark by incentives, not by restrictions. Players are free to attack whomever they want, target anyone they want, and so on, though you may still want to play with range. However, victory is not determined solely by who the last player is, but also by who manages to take out the most marks over the course of the game. The normal method of defeating someone is to reduce that player's life points below 1. For example, if Player A is at 8 life and Player B hits her with a Fireball for 9 damage, Player A is eliminated at the end of a phase and Player B receives credit for the mark.

Note that if you force your mark to lose by means other than damage, such as Disenchancing their Illusions of Grandeur or forcing them to draw more cards than they can, you receive credit just as if you had defeated her normally. Also, if multiple players deal the final blow simultaneously (for instance, if two players cast Lightning Bolts at another player with two life), credit goes first to the active player or to the next closest player in order of play.

If you defeat the player you are assigned to, you receive 1 victory point and inherit your victim's mark. If your victim was assigned to defeat you, then you score an additional victory point and discard your new mark (yourself) without getting another. If you finish off yourself or someone other than your mark, you don't get any victory points and that player's mark is discarded. The last player remaining in the game scores 1.5 victory points, and then everyone compares victory point totals to see who won.

JUXTAPOSE TOURNAMENT VARIANT

by Matt Walter

.....

Try a standard, double elimination, sealed-deck tourney with all the normal deck construction rules, and then add this twist:

When the first round is over, the winning decks are exchanged for the losing decks, so the losers go to the losers' bracket with

winning decks and every winner goes on to compete with a losing deck—just make sure the people you're playing with don't try to lose every time they get a bad deck. When the tourney is all over, the winners (going from first to last), get to pick a deck to keep out of all the decks that were used!

THE HUNT

by Tim Weissman

.....

"The Hunt" is a more complex, more robust, more civilized version of Assassins. It is best suited for five to eight players, but can be played with more or fewer players just as easily.

Before playing, each player must select a unique signature card and produce two copies of that card. These cards will be used for identification purposes, so should emphasize the theme of the deck or the player's playing style. Once the cards are selected and the turn order determined, each player throws the first copy of her signature card into the center of the table, or the hat, or whatever. These cards are then shuffled randomly and distributed, one each, to all players.

A signature card is distributed to each player face-down in front of her. The player represented by that card is the player she is hunting. A player who winds up hunting herself is considered a Rogue (see below), a status which has its benefits and its drawbacks. Each player then puts the second copy of her signature card face-up in front of her, to identify her to whomever is hunting her. With the hunting relations established, play begins.

The object of the game is simply to be the last player left alive. Rather than tracking victory points based on how many players each player eliminates, eliminating a player gives you a certain life bonus. If you eliminate the person you are hunting (defined as in Assassins), or eliminate a Rogue, you receive a bonus of 7 life. If you eliminate someone you aren't hunting and who isn't a Rogue, you gain 3 life instead. This life is granted when the player actually leaves the game, not necessarily when you are recorded as the one who eliminates that player. For example, if you Fireball another player out of the game, you get the life for this at the end of your main phase (or start of attack), not as her life total is reduced below 1.

When you get the life bonus for eliminating a player, the first copy of her signature card is returned to her, and you get that player's hunting assignment(s). Note that this can result in a player having no hunting assignments (see "Hunting License," below). Remember that if this results in your hunting more than one person, you can target and attack any of those players freely.

Players are encouraged to eliminate their assignment(s), but are given a chance to retaliate against someone who attacks them (such as their hunter). These rules are defined as follows:

1. Your creatures can only attack the player or players you are assigned to eliminate (and you must show that player your assignment card). The exception to this rule is that if another player assaults you (see below), your next attack may be made against that player, regardless of when that next attack phase occurs. If you do not use this chance to retaliate against that player, you lose it. Note that you can have several choices for your retaliatory attack, but can only attack one player per turn.

2. You may only target another player with an effect if you are assigned to eliminate that player (and you must show that player your assignment card). For example, in the beginning of the game, your Black Vise can only target one opponent. Non-targeted effects, such as Pestilence, affect all players normally. Note that being able to launch a retaliatory attack against a player does not allow you to target that player; it only allows a creature attack.

A player who is assigned to hunt herself is considered a Rogue. Remember that all that is required for a player to be a Rogue is that she have her own signature card face-down; whether or not she is assigned to hunt anyone else is irrelevant.

Initially, the fact that a player is a Rogue is kept hidden. Because nobody is hunting the Rogue, she is able to lay in wait and build up her forces, properly preparing for her attack. Because a Rogue is not assigned to hunt anyone, she can attack or target any player, without having to wait for a retaliatory strike. If the Rogue does eliminate a player, she receives that player's face-down signature cards. Note that the player will still be a Rogue, so all that the signature cards mean is that she will get the full life bonus for eliminating a hunted player. If a player eliminates a Rogue (this requires non-targeted damage, or the opportunity for a retaliatory strike), the Rogue's signature card is returned to her, and all her other signature cards are given to whomever eliminated her.

If a player returns her last hunting assignment to a player who is eliminated, she will not be able to attack except to make a retaliatory strike. In this case, she may wish to purchase a Hunting License, which costs 3 life, plus 6 mana of any type. The License is treated as an artifact and is "cast" like any other artifact, meaning that it can be affected by Counterspell, Disenchant, and so forth. The License allows the player to attack or target anyone, as a Rogue would, though she is not considered a Rogue for purposes of the life-point bonus for eliminating her.

*The Duelist invites you to share your rules
and game play variants for Magic: The Gathering
and other Deckmaster™ games.*

*Mail your submissions to: House Rules,
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by Tom Wylie

MURK DWELLERS

*The Magic Rules
You've Never
Heard Of*

DEFEND! DEFEND!

Note: "At Issue" has moved! To make room for more reader response, "At Issue" has been moved to the new "Your Turn" section on page 122.

In the vast tangle of rules that govern *Magic: The Gathering*®, two central groups of rules stand out. Because these two groups are so basic to the game, and because *Magic* is all about breaking its own rules, it should come as no surprise that these rules are among the most complex, with confusing interactions and dusty, overlooked corners to spare.

The first such group of rules is, of course, timing. The rules governing how interrupts are played, who gets to do what when, how triggered effects work, and so on, seem to roll on forever. And, perhaps surprisingly, it's possible to explore their intricacies for quite a while without it getting boring.

The second central group of rules is concerned with the attack phase. While the rules outlining the steps of the attack, the process of attacking and blocking, and so on, are not as complex as the timing rules, they deserve just as much attention given their central role in the game. This installment of *Murk Dwellers* will tackle one of the aspects of the attack phase: how defense is assigned and how various abilities trigger on defensive assignments.

BREAK IT DOWN

When most players think of the "declare defenders" step of the attack phase, they imagine an instantaneous step in which they first decide how they want to block, then assign blockers, and move on. (Some players even misunderstand the timing of the attack phase and try to play fast effects while blockers are being assigned.) While this "instantaneous step" model will get you safely through about 98% of situations involving blocking, it is not strictly accurate. When a situation in the other 2% comes up, you have to break it down (as we rules lawyers like to say).

The most basic action during the "declare defenders" step is to assign a single creature to block an attacker, such as assigning a Gray Ogre to block an Uthden Troll. This creature is said to be *blocking*

the attacker, and the attacker is considered to be *blocked* by the defender. If a creature is assigned to block a member of a band, it is also considered to block everything else in the band and everything else in the band is considered to be blocked by that creature. The creature is not, however, considered to be assigned to block any of them. As we will see later, this distinction between being assigned to block a creature and simply blocking it becomes important when interpreting certain effects.

While creatures are normally assigned to block one at a time, it is also possible to assign several creatures to block all at once, whether the creatures are assigned to one attacker or several. This may seem like a needless complication, but in certain situations it becomes necessary; for instance, Orcish Conscripts cannot be

assigned to attack or block unless at least two other creatures are assigned to attack or block with them. If groups of blockers couldn't be assigned simultaneously, you might never get a group of three Conscripts onto the field without backup ("After you!"... "No, after *you!*"). Simultaneous assignment also allows creatures to block an attacker benefiting from *Goblin War Drums*, which requires that attacking creatures be blocked by at least two blockers apiece if they are blocked at all.

Out of habit, most players simplify the blocking process into one big step, but at times it becomes necessary to break it down into single steps, such as when you want to use *Kjeldoran Elite Guard*. Note that even when you break blocking down like this, the only effects that may be played during the "declare defenders" step are 1) effects which specifically state that they can be used while choosing defense, or 2) interrupts that provide mana (if the mana is needed for an effect during "declare defenders").

BLOCKING ABILITIES

Certain creatures have abilities that affect other creatures they get into combat with. These abilities are collectively referred to as "blocking abilities," as their effects depend on one creature blocking another. Most blocking abilities "trigger" (take effect) whenever the creature blocks or is blocked by another creature, though a few only trigger when the creature is either assigned to



block another creature or another creature is assigned to block it. For example, the “blocking ability” of Clockwork Beast (losing a counter) only triggers when it is assigned to block or attack, but Wall of Dust triggers whenever it blocks an attacking creature. If a blocking ability doesn’t specifically trigger during assignment of blockers, assume it triggers both during assignment and during blocking. The same applies to blocking abilities dealing with assigning attackers.

Example: Billy Bob attacks with two Craw Wurms. Jimmy Joe blocks one with a Clockwork Beast and the other with a Wall of Dust. The Beast loses a counter when it’s assigned as a blocker, and the Wall’s ability triggers as well. Later, General Jarkeld is used to switch the two blockers. The Beast doesn’t lose another counter since its ability specifically triggers when it is assigned to block, but the Wall’s ability does trigger again. Neither Craw Wurm will be able to attack next turn due to the Wall’s ability.

The “declare defenders” step is a “null zone” for playing effects, much like the untap phase or the resolution of a spell. Therefore, any blocking abilities that trigger during the step will resolve just after the step, unless, of course, an effect indicates that the resolution is delayed.

Example: If an Aisling Leprechaun (all creatures blocking or blocked by Aisling Leprechaun become green) is assigned to block a creature, that creature won’t become green until after the “declare defenders” step is over. If multiple effects trigger during the step, they follow the usual protocol for triggered effects: the active player’s effects resolve first, in any order he or she chooses, and then the other player’s effects resolve, in any order he or she chooses.

STONING ABILITIES

The classic example of this blocking ability is Thicket Basilisk’s ability: At end of combat, destroy all non-wall creatures blocking or blocked by Basilisk. Effects of this nature are commonly referred to as “stoning” abilities, after the Basilisk’s special effect. Stoning abilities generally resolve at the end of combat, rather than resolving immediately after the “declare defenders” step.

Example: Billy Bob attacks with two Craw Wurms. Jimmy Joe assigns a Thallid to block one Wurm, and a Thicket Basilisk to block the other. The Basilisk’s ability triggers, ensuring that the Wurm the Basilisk is blocking will be destroyed. During the following fast effects stage, Jimmy Joe uses General Jarkeld to swap the blockers of the two Wurms. The Basilisk’s ability triggers again, marking the other Wurm for destruction; both Wurms will be destroyed at end of combat.

Certain cards, such as Battering Ram and Abomination, specify that their stoning abilities affect a certain class of creatures; others, such as Thicket Basilisk, exclude a certain class. Because stoning abilities follow all other rules for triggered effects, it doesn’t matter if a creature marked by a stoning ability later becomes “ineligible” for the effect, or if an ineligible creature later becomes eligible.

Example: An Abomination (at the end of combat, destroy all green and white creatures blocking or blocked by Abomination) is assigned to block a War Mammoth, triggering the Abomination’s stoning ability. The Mammoth will now be destroyed at the end of combat, even if its color changes before then. In a later combat, the

Abomination and an Aisling Leprechaun are assigned to block a red creature. When the Abomination is assigned to block and throughout “declare defenders,” the blocked creature remains red, safe from the Abomination’s stoning ability. Just after “declare defenders,” the Leprechaun will change the creature’s color to green.

SEEK AND DESTROY

Some abilities that affect creatures blocking or being blocked are not strictly blocking abilities; blocking abilities, as we’ve defined them, are actually triggered by blocking. Abilities triggered by other events, like Abu Ja’far’s ability (if Abu Ja’far is put into the graveyard from play during combat, bury all creatures blocking or blocked by Abu Ja’far), fall into a separate category. In the case of Abu Ja’far, the ability is triggered by Abu’s death, not by the act or assignment of blocking. These abilities only affect creatures blocking or blocked by the creature at the time the ability is triggered.

Example: Billy Bob attacks with two War Mammoths. Jimmy Joe assigns The Wretched to block one, and Abu Ja’far to block the other. In an attempt to save the Mammoth blocked by The Wretched, Billy plays Giant Growth on it. Jimmy uses General Jarkeld to switch the blockers of the two attackers. During damage dealing, Abu Ja’far is put into the graveyard, and the Mammoth that Abu Ja’far is currently blocking is buried as a result. At the end of combat, The Wretched gains control of the Mammoth it is currently blocking and ignores the Mammoth it was blocking originally.

FALSE ORDERS

What would Murk Dwellers be without a little errata? The functionality of False Orders, a card which appeared last in the *Unlimited™* printing of *Magic: The Gathering*, has been altered. It can only be played at the end of “declare defenders,” after the defending player has finished assigning blockers but before effects which are triggered by blocking assignments resolve. If False Orders cancels a blocking assignment, then it also cancels any effects which would have been triggered by that blocking assignment. If False Orders assigns its target to block something, blocking abilities will trigger normally. For example, if Dwarfven Soldiers (gets +0/+2 until end of turn if blocking or blocked by Orcs) is assigned by False Orders to block an Orc, the Soldier will receive its toughness bonus for the turn, regardless of what type of creature it was originally assigned to block. If only one of the creatures originally assigned to block a Giant Shark (gets +2/+0 and trample if blocking or blocked by a creature which has been damaged) had been damaged and that creature is reassigned by False Orders, the Shark won’t receive its power bonus or trample.

Considered by some Magic players to be “the chosen one,” Tom Wylie communicates his teachings over the Net and through The Duelist. Tom is only marginally more sarcastic than the typical member of the Magic R&D team.



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MAGIC RULINGS & ERRATA

A Summary of Recent, Significant Rulings. Compiled by Tom Wylie

As the world of *Deckmaster*™ expands to include *Vampire: The Eternal Struggle*™ and *Netrunner*™, The Duelist strives to be the most current (short of the Internet) and comprehensive (short of Tom's brain) source for rules updates on all these games. To accomplish this, we've decided to create separate "Rulings and Errata" sections for each game. This section now contains only rulings and errata pertaining to *Magic: The Gathering*®; in the new V:TES section of The Duelist (p. 80) you'll find rulings and errata pertaining to V:TES and *Jyhad*.

GENERAL RULINGS

The following rulings are meant to clarify the rulebook and how the game in general works:

Q: My opponent plays Power Sink, which I then target with Red Elemental Blast. Can she use Deflection to redirect the Red Elemental Blast to a blue permanent?

A: No. To prevent conflicts with targeting and responding to effects, it's important to think of some effects as operating in different modes—that is, they do one of a number of distinct things when played. When you play Red Elemental Blast, you have to choose between two modes: One mode counters a spell and the other destroys a permanent. The mode of an effect is locked in as the effect is played and doesn't change once played. When you play REB, you decide which mode that REB is in and choose an appropriate target; for example, if you locked it into counter mode, you could only target red spells, and REB could not be retargeted to destroy a permanent (the other mode of use). Restricting the mode of a spell will become even more important with cards planned for future expansions.

Twiddle is another spell that operates in one of two modes. One of these modes taps its target and the other untaps its target. When you play Twiddle, you decide which mode it is in, i.e., whether you are tapping or untapping the target. The spell Twiddle is then locked into that mode, regardless of what happens later in the turn. (You can't, for instance, decide to untap a target when you play Twiddle and then change your mind during resolution and decide you'd rather tap the target after all.) Changing some-

thing about Twiddle—such as its color or its target—will not change which mode Twiddle is in. Note, however, that each mode targets a "land, creature, or artifact," so Deflection could change the target of Twiddle from a creature to a land, for example.

Certain effects with multiple modes dictate which mode will be used, rather than allowing you to choose the mode. These effects are locked into one mode or another when used, just as if the caster of the spell had been able to choose the mode. For example, Urza's Tower has two modes of use: "add one mana" and "add three mana." When you tap the Tower for its effect, it becomes locked into one mode or the other depending on whether you control the complete Urza's set of lands as the effect is played. If, for instance, your only Urza's Mine is destroyed before the effect resolves, your Tower does not jump from "add three mana" mode into "add one mana" mode—you still add three colorless mana to your pool. Similarly, whether Gangrenous Zombies are in "1 damage" mode or "2 damage" mode depends on whether you controlled any snow-covered swamps when the effect was played, not on whether you control any as the effect resolves.

Q: Is the color change of a Shyft permanent? I had thought fast effects lasted until end of turn, but Shyft seems pretty useless if so.

A: In previous editions, it was assumed that certain effects, including all fast effects other than interrupt spells, would only last until the end of the turn unless specified otherwise. Starting with *Fourth Edition*™, however, it is assumed that all effects are either instantaneous, continuous, or indefinitely permanent unless stated otherwise. Therefore, the effect of Shyft (during your upkeep, you may change the color of Shyft to any color or combination of colors) would last indefinitely.

Several older cards had effects which weren't specified as lasting until end of turn, as it was simply assumed that that was how long they lasted. These include any effects which modify power or toughness (unless the effect involves counters), any effect which prevents a creature from dealing or receiving damage in combat, and Blaze of Glory.



Q: Can an effect that removes swampwalk affect Legions of Lim-Dûl?

A: Yes. Cards that affect a certain type of landwalk, such as swampwalk, apply equally to all versions of that landwalk. For example, Merfolk Assassin destroys creatures with islandwalk; it would also destroy a creature with "snow-covered islandwalk" or even "green islandwalk."

Q: Do I have to pay the upkeep costs of my artifacts while they're tapped?

A: In general, artifacts are considered "shut off" while tapped, but their upkeep costs still apply. For example, you cannot avoid a Forethought Amulet's upkeep cost by tapping it.

Q: If my Goblin Shrine leaves play, when exactly do all Goblins suffer 1 damage?

A: Effects that are triggered when something "leaves play" occur after that something reaches its destination. Damage from the Shrine is only dealt after it is already in the graveyard.

Similarly, effects that end when something "leaves play" end after that something reaches its destination. For example, if Gaea's Liege is killed, any lands that it has converted to forests won't revert to their original type until after Gaea's Liege is in the graveyard.

Q: I return a creature to play with Dreams of the Dead, and then play Enduring Renewal. When the creature is killed, does it leave the game, or does it go back to my hand?

A: Since you control both effects (Dreams of the Dead and Enduring Renewal), the result is up to you because you choose the order in which the triggered effects you control resolve. Effects that say, "If something goes to Destination A, put it in Destination B" can only move something to Destination B if it is still in Destination A when the effect resolves. If Dreams of the Dead's effect resolves first, the creature is removed from the game; Enduring Renewal can only return the creature if it's in the graveyard. If Enduring Renewal's effect resolves first, the creature is returned to your hand; Dreams of the Dead has no effect on cards in your hand.

REVERSALS

The following rulings reverse past rulings from the rules team or Wizards of the Coast network representatives ("netreps"), official on-line rules judges:

Q: If the color of an enchantment is changed by a -lace (e.g., Lifelace), and then moved with Enchantment Alteration or Crown of the Ages, does the enchantment keep the color change?

A: No. If an effect says to treat a card as if it were just cast, that card starts over with a clean slate. All counters are removed, the effects of interrupt spells are erased, etc. Any requirements the enchantment would normally have when it comes into play (such as drawing a card from Krovikan Fetish) must be fulfilled, but the enchantment is not considered to have actually been cast again (so cards such as Ivory Cup could not be activated).

Q: If a creature winds up with two copies of Animate Dead or Dance of the Dead, and one of the enchantments is removed, does the creature go to the graveyard?

A: Yes. Both enchantments state that if the enchantment is removed, its target is buried. The presence of the other enchantment will not save the creature.



Q: If my opponent plays Power Sink on my summoning, can mana from Metamorphosis be used to pay off the Power Sink?

A: No. When a card specifies that mana may only be used to cast a certain type of spell, you may only use that mana to pay for the casting cost of that type of spell. The mana from Metamorphosis cannot be used to pay for penalties such as Gloom, the effect of Power Sink, and so on.

Q: If I tap my Rainbow Vale for mana and change it to another land type, do I still lose control of it at the end of the turn?

A: Yes. Using Rainbow Vale ensures you will lose control of it; it doesn't matter what type the land is at the end of the turn.

CARD ERRATA

The following rulings involve card errata, or at least reading cards slightly differently:

Q: When I get cards out of my library with Land Tax, do I have to show them to my opponent to prove that they're basic lands?

A: As a general principle, you should always show all players any card that is affecting the game. Enforcing this requires errata to the following cards:

Land Tax: Show all players the cards removed from your library before putting those cards in your hand.

Psychic Purge: If a spell or effect controlled by an opponent causes you to discard Psychic Purge, show Psychic Purge to all players before discarding it.

Recall: You must show all players the cards selected to discard as you play Recall. You must discard the appropriate card(s) when Recall resolves in order for it to succeed. Note that you do not have to track the physical card, so if you show a *Revised* swamp as one of the cards, discarding any *Revised* swamp will do.

Sindbad: Show the card you draw to all players before checking to see if it is a land.

Q: The new Energy Flux seems to have its own upkeep effect which destroys all artifacts in play when resolved unless a mana cost is paid. Is this correct?

A: Energy Flux effectively gives every artifact in play its own upkeep cost. As long as Energy Flux is in play, treat every artifact in play as if "Pay 2 during your upkeep or bury this artifact" appeared on the card.

In February of 1996, *Wizards of the Coast*® and *HarperCollins*® will bring you *Ashes of the Sun*, a unique and poignant story set in a clash of cultures among humans, goblins, and minotaurs. First-time novelist Hanovi Braddock tells a gripping tale of loss, betrayal, and renewal that is sure to set new standards of quality for game fiction. The *Duelist* is pleased to bring you this special preview excerpt from Chapter 5 of *Ashes of the Sun*.

The day was long. The sun curved north as well as west. Summer days in these northern latitudes seemed to go on forever.

Ayesh, still cradling the wine jar, covered a lot of ground. There was no trail to follow up and down the steep slopes, but nor were there obstacles, save for the fields of boulders. As she walked, she crossed more and more such fields of fallen rock.

And as she walked, she sometimes caught the scent of goblin caves—the stench of carrion and offal. The smell grew stronger, and she could feel her heart pounding in her chest.

Ayesh, you may yet turn back.

See? You want to live!

She unstopped the jar and took a drink. Then she wet her fingers with the wine and smeared it under her nose. The wine's scent was not pleasant, but it was much better than the stifling slaughterhouse smell of the caves.

Why weren't they coming for her? They must know she was here. Even from inside the caves, surely they had spotted her by now.

She took another drink, then set the jar down. She took off her pack and set it next to the jar. She'd have no more need for her things. Better to fight completely unencumbered.

Something moved beneath the trees to one side.

Ayesh spun.

She squinted into the shadows. She could see nothing there. She waited a long time, and there was no more movement.

She looked again at the caves. If they would not come to her, she would go to them. She picked up the jar for one more swallow of wine.

"If I must come to you, then I'll show you who it is who comes!" she said. She took the first stance, closed her eyes, and rooted herself in the earth. Then, with perfect balance on the uneven ground, she

Ashes of the

Be still! she answered herself. *Turn back to what? This has long been my destiny.*

At last she descended into a ravine where the stench was almost overwhelming.

"All right, you skulkers, you rot-mouthed murderers," she said under her breath. "I'm coming for you."

She followed the ravine to where the ground leveled off and opened to a shallow lake. Goblin stench fouled the black water. A few trees fringed the lake, sheltered in part by the steep slopes on all sides and protected from the wind even more by the enormous boulders that had come to rest there.

Stopping to listen, Ayesh heard only the wind in the trees. Goblins lived very close by. Why didn't she sense any lurking behind the boulders or among the trees? The lake shore should be acrawl with them, from the smell of it.

She walked to the edge of the lake. The stink made her gag. But where were the goblins?

When she had gone a little further around the lake, she looked up. The mountain slope here was almost vertical, and from bottom to top it was riddled with goblin-sized holes.

The sight made her heart sink. For all her determination to face her old enemy, the thought of them pouring out of those holes, a gray flood of smelly leather-skinned bodies, made her breath catch in her throat.

began to step and turn and strike and punch the air, advancing toward the caves, dancing the Dance That Breaks Bones.

"*Eehey! Ayeen Istini Ayesh ni Hata Kan, e na aihana mey aililla nawli e aifoi li nassa ni kraleen!*" she shouted in Oneahn. "I am Istini Ayesh ni Hata Kan, and I come to snap necks and crush the breath from throats! I come to stop hearts with a punch!" She punched the air. "I am death! Come to me, ye goblins who would die! Come, that I may open the maw of never-ending emptiness and cast ye in! Come, that ye may die and die and die!"

She repeated her death invitation in the goblin dialect she knew. "*Ounyit, da teyey ekmigyla kofk ke kofk ke kofk!*" *Come out, that you all shall die and die and die!*

There was a chatter of goblin voices from inside the caves, but still no goblins poured out of the holes.

But they would come, Ayesh's stammering heart told her. At any moment, they would come.

Closer and closer, she danced.

When she stopped, she was close enough to see black eyes glittering inside the nearest caves.

She clenched her fists. Her arms were rigid with fear and righteous anger. She tried to focus her mind. She must master her feelings if she were to fight well, to fight with quickness and surprise, as she had always done.

Her heart hammered. The wine made it hard to center herself.

"Come out!" she shouted. "*Ounyit!*"

In the shadows, the goblins muttered. Then one said, "*Mi Ounyahk.*" *No. You come in.*

Goblin laughter followed. It was like the sound of someone choking. Other goblins took up the invitation. "*Ounyahk! Ounyahk!*"

The mouths of the caves were smoke-blackened. Just a few feet from the entrance, the shadows were as deep as the emptiness between stars.

"No," said Ayesh. "I'll murder you in daylight, thanks. Come out. Oh, you rot eaters, come out!"

Something big moved in the forest behind Ayesh. She whirled. Nothing there.

Behind her, the goblins were laughing. "Come in, come in," one invited in the Voda tongue. "Come be safe with us. Yes, it be safe in here. Come!"

Ayesh picked up a rock, turned toward the caves, and flung it with all her strength. A goblin inside yelped, and the others laughed. "*Ounyahk!*"

"You'll come to me." She looked down at her pack and wine jar.

Whatever had been here was apparently gone.

In a ring of stones, she built a fire. She piled on the wood so that the flames leapt high. This was more than a campfire. It was a taunt aimed at the goblins. Here she was, at their very door. *Come and get me*, she thought. *Come and die, you maggot-eating rotters.*

She opened her tinderbox, kindled the unsmoking fire, and charged the flute. She turned to watch the caves, though as the sky darkened, she could soon see nothing beyond the light of her fire.

It didn't matter. She'd know they were coming by the sound of them, by the smell of them.

She played a song, one that had words to it. She wished she could sing as she played. Wondrous though it was, the flute was not quite so wondrous as to let her both play and sing.

It was a wrestler's song that she played, a song that called for strength, for grace, for beauty in the ring. Victory or defeat were not what mattered, but the struggle of Powers, the flow of moments, the endurance of the Now.

She stopped playing.

Outside of the ring, it did matter who won and who lost. For Oneah, in spite of its beauty, in spite of the strength and grace of its

Sun

AN EXCERPT FROM THE NEXT MAGIC: THE GATHERING® NOVEL BY HANOVI BRADDOCK

By
HANOVI
BRADDOCK

Ordinarily, goblins would have darted out to make off with these by now. "You'll come to me, because I have treasures. Lots of pretties. But some of you, many of you, will have to die to get them." She repeated it all in their language.

She turned her back and walked back to her belongings. The goblins chattered, and some kept calling, "*Ounyahk!*" but none pursued her. None tried to dash from the caves to snatch her pack before she got to it.

"Stones from Heaven!" she said. She sat down. Never before had she found goblins so shy. Something had them badly spooked.

She looked into the trees again. A bear? But surely so many goblins would not cower from a bear. More likely they would swarm and kill it. Besides, would a bear stay concealed like this?

Not a bear. A stone giant, perhaps.

She squinted into the shadows. She was prepared to die, but if she died fighting aught but goblins, then even her final gesture would be without meaning.

"Go away," she mumbled. "Whatever you are, clear out. This is between me and them."

As the sun skimmed the southwestern horizon, Ayesh ventured into the trees to gather firewood. She heard nothing, and she saw no obvious tracks on the carpet of pine needles.

defenders, had drowned under the goblin tide. The unity of victory and defeat, that was not a lie. One was necessary for the other. But there had been no beauty in the defeat of Oneah. There was no beauty in the victory of goblins.

What was true beneath the Roof of Lights, what was true within Oneah, was not true in the wider world.

More than a civilization had fallen in the Goblin War. A reality had been tested and destroyed.

Ayesh extinguished the flute, but she didn't bother to rekindle the flame of unsmoking fire. Instead, she drank wine and watched the flames die in her ordinary fire. Then, eyelids growing heavy, she watched the embers fade as she drank the last of her wine.

She slept.

She woke suddenly, her heart hammering, though she did not know what had awakened her. A sound?

The stars over her head were brilliant. The Glittermoon was right overhead, but the Mistmoon had not yet risen. All around her was blackness.

And five or six large silhouettes blotted out the stars. The creatures were too big to be goblins. Much too big.

One leaned close to her. It said, "*Maynoonzhanrax.*" And it moved closer still. Fingers closed on her wrist.



DUELIST



"Eeyeh!" Ayesh cried.

Her shout made the creature flinch. Ayesh sprang, tucked, and rolled. She somersaulted backwards from the ring of creatures.

"Maynoonnaen," rumbled another voice. Low laughter.

She stood. Her wounded leg throbbed, and her muscles were stiff with sleep. And with wine, she thought ruefully.

The creatures were harder to see now that they were not silhouetted against the stars. Black shapes against the black mountains were all but invisible. Ayesh would have to rely on hearing, on the *feel* of their approach.

There was no sound from near the fire pit. They had not moved. They all still stood before her. She might back quietly away...

From behind her came a booming laugh. "*Qurraxpoylannaen-payanayeennartoonstasee!*" The accent was strange, and her sleep and wine-addled brain took a moment to catch up to the sounds and sort them out. "*Qurrax, poylan naen payanayeen nartoon stasee!*" She knew this language. *Qurrax, I've not seen you jump like that before!*

That told her three things: these were minotaurs; there were more of them than the ones near the fire pit; and they could all see in mere starlight. She had suspected, in Hurloon, that minotaurs saw in the dark. Now she was sure.

"Well, she's slippery as an otter," said another in their booming language. "For all I know, she has an otter's teeth!"

The laugh came again.

"Be not so amused that she escapes you," said a very low voice.

"Tiaraya, put down your trident. I mean for her to be caught, not killed."

"I'm minded of what Qurrax said. She may have teeth."

From the first voice came laughter again.

Ayesh almost spoke in their own tongue, but thought better of it. In Voda, she said, "Who are you? What do you want with me?"

"A good question," said the one who laughed. He spoke in Voda. "Zhanrax, what do we want with her?"

"My interests," said the low voice in the minotaur language, "are scientific."

Laughter again. "That one word says much, Zhanrax. I never knew you to harbor such interests!"

Two of the minotaurs snorted. With humor? Derision?

Ayesh felt hot breath on the back of her neck. The breath had the scent of wet grass, the perfume of flowers.

She ducked, then sprang forward. Her shoulder slammed against a boulder she couldn't see. She stood, aching.

"Almost had her," said a new voice.

How could minotaurs, thick-hoofed creatures that they were, move so silently?

A hand closed on Ayesh's shoulder. "Got her."

That's what you think, Ayesh thought. She put her hands on the massive wrist, turned the hand just so ...

There wasn't the *pop* and the howl of pain Ayesh expected. The minotaur's wrist bent, but the grip only tightened.

Well, she had never made a study of minotaur anatomy. She'd never planned on having to wrestle one.

With two hands, now, the creature pulled Ayesh close. Ayesh let her opponent pull her close, and then ...

"Eeyeh!" Ayesh shouted. She slammed her heel down hard, trying to aim at the delicate bones above the hoof.

She missed.

The grip did not lessen, and Ayesh felt pain shooting up her leg. She had bruised her heel. The hoof was as hard as stone.

She aimed another kick at the minotaur's knee.

Her captor grunted and relaxed its grip. But the knee had given too easily. Minotaur knees were jointed backwards like an animal's. The minotaur didn't fall, but Ayesh nonetheless wriggled free.

Again, laughter from the one who had spoken first.

"Phyrax, be you sober," rumbled the deep voice. "I can scarce hear my thoughts for all your laughter." Then it said, "Wellyraya, use the net."

Ayesh didn't like the sound of that.

She put her hands before her, and she sprinted.

She tripped. She got up again.

She ran right into a pair of woolly arms, but she pulled free and ran on.

She tripped a second time in the darkness.

The net descended as she tried to stand.

Many hands held her. She tried to kick, to punch. But they had her. And with stout ropes, they tied her. They hobbled her feet. Strong arms pulled her up.

She could walk, but not kick. She was led by three ropes: one ahead and one on either side.

"To the halls," said the deep voice. "And mind that she doesn't fall. I don't think she can see in the dark."

They began to march her through the blackness.

Hanovi Braddock has published Magic stories in the Tapestries and Distant Planes anthologies; his previous stories have appeared in The Leading Edge. Look for Ashes of the Sun at your hobby or book store in February 1996.

FROM THE LIBRARY OF Leng:ERON THE RELENTLESS

with contributions from
Shawn Carnes, Scott Hungerford, Kyle Namvar,
Christopher Rush, John Tynes, Pete Venters, and Jon Wilkie

In the first installment of a new Duelist feature, we've researched one of Homelands' most colorful characters



THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING

A thief and a rogue, Eron the Relentless is the ruler of all the land from Koskun Falls to the edge of the Great Wood. Originally a street urchin and petty thief in Aysen, Eron followed a strange path that led him to immortality and eventually to the rough-hewn throne of the Goblin King.

Craving something more exciting than second-story work, Eron visited the Floating Isle, home of the Wizards' School and the Wizard Savant Bernatheen. The Savant promised to cast any spell in his possession on Eron if the thief would venture into Castle Sengir and retrieve a tome of dark spells from Grandmother Sengir's library. Eron agreed.

The raid went well. After hours of searching, he discovered the main library and found Grandmother Sengir fast asleep under one of the ink-stained tables. Beside her was a book covered with strange runes and symbols. Not knowing a spell book from a recipe book, Eron took a chance and escaped with the journal.

When Eron presented the spell book to Bernatheen, he took another gamble and demanded that the last spell in the tome be used as his reward. After Bernatheen cast the spell, Eron found he was immortal and immune to aging. He also found, however, that although he would regenerate whatever damage was done to him, scars and minor aches would never entirely heal.

Eron's subsequent reign of terror in Aysen is legendary. Armed only with a small knife, he would face whole packs of angry guards. On one occasion, he even cut himself into sections to fit through jail house bars. After a few months of fame and fortune, though, Eron grew bored with crime. He traveled the Homelands for a year, looking for adventure, and eventually wandered into Koskun Keep.

He forced his way into the palace hall and declared himself King of the Goblins.

Of course, the Goblins killed him and threw him in the corner for the wolves to eat. When Eron got up a few minutes later, the Goblins killed him again, thinking him to be some terrible undead sent by Baron Sengir. When he got up again, Eron proclaimed that it was his destiny to rule over the Goblin families. The Goblins decided to accept him and took the opportunity to rid themselves of the current ruling family. Although Eron was eventually praised as a hero and worshiped as a demigod by the Goblins, he has been assassinated some twenty-seven times by his loyal subjects. Each time he is murdered, though, he seems to just become more determined and his ideas about justice seem to degenerate even further.

Eron recently formed a treaty with Aysen in which he agreed to keep his subjects from invading in exchange for continued trade in food and goods. Eron knows that if he does not keep firm control, his subjects may just throw him down a mine shaft and declare war against everybody they can get their knives into. While Eron can be a completely maniacal ruler, his primary concern is with the future of all the peoples of the Homelands and his own place of power among them as the Goblin King.

PLAYING WITH ERON

True to his legend, Eron the Relentless is very powerful, very aggressive, and very hard to send to the graveyard. The key to using Eron is to always attack as soon as he comes into play and never back down. Be relentless!

Here are a few cards that help you take advantage of Eron's abilities:

Aggression—Eron the Relentless + First Strike + Trample = Pain.

Bloodlust—A highly available card, Bloodlust makes Eron 9/1 until the end of the turn. And with regeneration, who cares if he takes lethal damage?

Stone Giant—Watch the Stone Giant toss Eron the Relentless at your opponent. Watch Eron the Relentless do lots of damage. Watch Eron the Relentless regenerate from destruction and do it all over again.

ERON: AN ARTIST'S VIEW

“After reading the history and description of Eron the Relentless, I was captivated by his story,” says artist Christopher Rush. “Portraying a character's personality in a painting is one of my favorite challenges, and this self-appointed king offered a lot to work with. The description I was given was very simple: ‘Eron is regal, crazy-eyed, and damn good-looking. It would be good to show a few of his scars.’ For Eron's dress, I mixed Oriental and Mediterranean styles to show the influence of the many cultures he encountered; on his scarf is embroidered his regal symbol.

“When doing a portrait, I usually begin with a good idea of what I want and then find a person who fits that description to use as a reference. In the case of Eron, I already had such a strong image that I didn't need a specific reference. Eron definitely came to life as I was painting.”

Future issues will explore the official history of other cards—if you've always wanted to know more about a particular card, send your request to the Leng Reference Desk, c/o The Duelist, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057 (or via e-mail to duelist@wizards.com)



DUELISTS' CONVOCATION

NORTH AMERICA

Wizards of the Coast's Official Tournament Games Organization



The Duelists' Convocation is Wizards of the Coast's official tournament games organization. The Duelists' Convocation maintains members ratings based on the competitor's win/loss ratio against other rated players. Rating points may only be adjusted through play in sanctioned tournaments.

Sanctioned tournaments are tournaments in which Convocation rating points are tracked and recorded, however players do not have to be DC members to compete in these events. Anyone can compete in a sanctioned event and we encourage non-DC members to come and play just for fun!

The Duelists' Convocation creates and maintains the official tournament rules for Deckmaster games. These rules provide an even playing field for all competitors and are used in most of the world's tournaments, including most unsanctioned events.

There are many other benefits to a Duelists' Convocation membership. If you join before January 1, 1996, you will receive a one-year subscription to the Duelist magazine (a \$17.95 value), as well as a membership card, a certificate of membership, and a one-year subscription to the Convocation's monthly newsletter. This newsletter contains up-to-the-minute rules updates, information on upcoming sanctioned events, strategy tips, and other information not available anywhere else.

To become a member of the Duelists' Convocation, fill out the application below and send it with a check or money order for \$18.00 U.S. funds to:

Duelists' Convocation
Wizards of the Coast
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA. 98057-0707
(206) 624-0933

Membership Application

FIRST NAME: _____		LAST NAME: _____		HOME PHONE: _____		WORK PHONE: _____	
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YOUR SIGNATURE _____				PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____ (If applicant is under 18 years of age)			

Annual \$18.00 Membership Fee (U.S. Funds)

Make check or money order payable to Wizards of the Coast. Please allow 3-4 weeks for shipping and handling. The Duelists' Convocation reserves the right to change membership fees without prior notice.

❖ If you do not want to cut this page out of your magazine, feel free to send us a photo copy. ❖

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DUELISTS' CONVOCATION

NORTH AMERICA

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Duelists' Convocation has completely updated the official **Magic: The Gathering**® Sanctioned Tournament Rules. We consulted the opinions of many players, Duelists' Convocation members, tournament organizers, and members of the **Magic: The Gathering** research and development team during the revision process. Although we would like to accommodate each and every opinion, this is not possible. Therefore, we decided to modify the rules to provide the greatest benefit to both veteran and new players. The following is a list of highlights from the updated rules and a brief discussion of each:

- Summon Legend cards are no longer restricted across the board. Yes, that means you may now construct a sanctioned tournament deck with four General Jarkeld cards in your deck! That doesn't mean, however, that both players in a given duel may each have a General Jarkeld in play; the rule pertaining to only one individual legend card title in play at any one time is still effective!

- One card has been added to the Restricted Lists: Zuran Orb. Three cards have been added to the Banned List: Channel, Chaos Orb, and Falling Star. We think these modifications definitely improve the tournament environment. The difficulties inherent in using Chaos Orb and Falling Star make them especially undesirable and problematic for tournament use.

- The Type II tournament format has been modified to permit players to build decks using cards from all currently available limited edition expansion and stand-alone expansions. The purpose of this is to provide the most expansive play environment that is equitable to both existing and new players. Competitors will be able to construct a deck with cards from any card set that is readily available. Card sets will not be removed

from the Type II tournament format until they become widely unavailable. The Duelists' Convocation will provide members with a minimum of ninety days' written notice before removing a card set from the Type II tournament format.

Given this alteration, Type II tournament decks may now be constructed with cards from the most current edition of **Magic: The Gathering—Fourth Edition™**, **Chronicles™** (an extension of the basic set), **Fallen Empires™**, and **Ice Age™**. Thirty days after the retail release of **Homelands™**, it will be added to the Type II tournament format but will not replace any card set.



- The thirty-day rule has been modified: Cards from new limited-edition expansions and stand-alone expansions cannot under any circumstances be used in Type I or Type II tournaments until thirty days after the expansion's retail release. However, these cards may be used immediately upon their retail release in Sealed-Deck tournaments, provided that the cards are made available by the tournament organizer for purchase by the participants.

- Tournament organizers may now choose from a broader range of formats, including the popular Swiss-Draw style.

- We have clarified a few of the more vague standard floor rules, such as what constitutes "unsportsmanlike conduct."

- The rules have been entirely reformatted for easier reading and reference.

- Beginning with this set of rules, all future tournament rules changes and modifications will be announced on the first day of the month and will become effective on the first day of the following month. Standardizing the release dates for rules changes takes some of the guesswork out of organizing tournaments—tournament coordinators will now know when to expect any future modifications.

The Duelists' Convocation hopes you'll agree that these updated rules improve the **Magic: The Gathering** tournament structure! We also hope you will communicate to us your reactions to these modifications; just as **Magic** is an ever-evolving game, the Duelists' Convocation is a continuously improving organization, and member input is a vital element in our evolutionary process!

Sincerely yours,

Jason A. Carl

Acting Director, Duelists' Convocation

DUELISTS' CONVOCAION INTERNATIONAL OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES

OFFICIAL DCI STANDARD FLOOR RULES

Revised October 1, 1995

Effective November 1, 1995

1. Officially sanctioned **Magic: The Gathering** tournaments will be presided over by a Judge, who may be assisted by one or more Referees. **Neither the Judge, administrator, nor Referees may compete in a tournament that they are adjudicating.** A Judge may be required to interpret rules, terminate an excessively long match, interpret a Declaration of Forfeiture, or make any other adjudication necessary during the tournament. The Judge is also responsible for maintaining the tournament records and providing an accurate tournament report for the Duelists' Convocation office that sanctioned the event, although he or she may assign a tournament administrator to aid with the on-site details of running the tournament. Referees assist the Judge by answering rules questions on the floor, matching players for new rounds, and being available to the Judge for any other required tasks. Players may appeal the ruling of any Referee to the Judge; the Judge is the final arbiter and authority in all matters concerning the tournament. The Judge may overrule any decision made by a Referee. The decision of the Judge is always final.

2. Officially sanctioned **Magic: The Gathering** tournaments will use one of the following formats: Swiss-Draw, Round-Robin, Double-Elimination, or Single-Elimination formats. An index card (or reasonable facsimile) will be prepared for each player with the player's name, Duelists' Convocation membership number, and other tournament information. Competitors will be randomly paired for the first round of the tournament. Each match shall consist of up to three duels during the allotted time period. The Judge should award points to players for wins, losses, draws, byes, and unfinished duels. Computerized systems may be used for pairings, provided the Judge is able to keep accurate records of each round's pairings and scores.

A duel is one complete game of **Magic: The Gathering**.

A match consists of up to three duels.

The Duelists' Convocation recommends that each duel be scored as follows:

Win	3 points
Loss	0 points
Draw	1 point each
Unfinished	0 points

A person with a bye receives 6 points for the match.

Any duel that is not started is considered unfinished.

Each player's current and accumulated score should be noted on the appropriate index card or computer file.

3. Players must use the same deck with which they began the tournament throughout the tournament's duration. The only deck alterations permitted are through the use of the Sideboard (see **Deck**

Construction Rules for the appropriate tournament type) or the gain/loss of cards due to ante. If a player intends to use a Sideboard during the course of a match, he or she must declare to his or her opponent, prior to the beginning of the match, that he or she will be using the Sideboard. Players may exchange cards from their decks for cards in their Sideboards on a one-for-one basis at any time between duels or matches. There are no restrictions on the number of cards a player may exchange in this way at any given time, provided the Sideboard always contains exactly 15 (fifteen) cards, and the deck no fewer than 60 (sixty) cards. Players must reset their Sideboards to their original composition prior to each tournament match. Prior to the beginning of any duel, each player must allow his or her opponent to count, face down, the number of cards in his or her Sideboard. If a player's Sideboard does not total exactly 15 (fifteen) cards, the Judge or a Referee must be consulted to evaluate the situation before the duel can begin. If a player states that he or she is not using a Sideboard at the beginning of the match, ignore this counting procedure for that player, but no deck alteration of any kind will be permitted by the Judge for that player for the duration of the

tournament. Any violation of this rule may be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture.

• **Note on play with non-English language cards:** All elements of official tournament play where translational differences may appear (such as card title, card text, rules, tournament rules, or rulings) will be interpreted according to the most current English-language versions.

4. Players are not required to wager ante during the tournament. Players may play for real ante, provided that both participants in the match give their consent, though this agreement does not allow the inclusion of the banned ante cards in the tournament deck. Ante cards won in a tournament must be kept separate from the tournament deck and Sideboard and may not be used in the tournament in any capacity. If loss of ante cards from a player's deck reduces the deck below 60 (sixty) cards, the player no longer has a legal tournament deck. This will be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture, and the player will be removed from the tournament.

5. If a player draws an initial hand consisting of either no land cards or all land cards (any card with the word "land" in the card type), the player may declare a Mulligan and elect to restart the duel. To do this, the player declaring the Mulligan must show the opponent that he or she has either no land or all land, reshuffle his or her deck, allow the opponent to recut the deck, and draw seven new cards. The opponent has the option (but is not required) to do the same, even if the initial hand does not qualify for this rule. For example, if player A draws no land and wishes to reshuffle, player B may also reshuffle, in an attempt to improve his or her hand. An individual player may only use this rule once per duel.

6. A player may use plastic card sleeves or other protective devices on cards in the tournament deck with the permission of the

Judge and with the permission of his or her opponent. If for any reason a player's opponent wishes a player to remove the sleeves/protective devices, he or she may state so at the beginning of any duel and the player must immediately comply. The Judge may choose to disallow a player's card sleeves if they are obviously marked, worn, or in an otherwise poor condition that may interfere with shuffling or game play. The only exception to this rule is as follows: Sleeves may always be used to mark a player's card if said card is in the opponent's playing field, in order to keep track of the card's ownership.

7. The use of "proxy" cards in the tournament deck is not permitted. A proxy card is one that has been placed into the deck to represent another card which a player does not wish to use.

8. Players must at all times keep the cards in their hand above the level of the playing surface. If a player violates this rule, the Judge may issue a warning to the player or interpret the violation as a Declaration of Forfeiture, at the Judge's discretion.

9. Players may not have any outside assistance (e.g., scouting, coaching, etc.) during a match. If a player is in violation of this rule, the Judge may issue a warning to the player or interpret the violation as a Declaration of Forfeiture, at the Judge's discretion.

10. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated at an officially sanctioned tournament. Players, Judges, and Referees will conduct themselves in a polite, respectable, and sportsmanlike manner. A player behaving in a belligerent, argumentative, hostile, or unsportsmanlike manner may receive a

warning from the Judge. The Judge may also interpret this behavior as a Declaration of Forfeiture, at the Judge's discretion. Repeat offenses of this type by a particular member should be reported to the Duelists' Convocation office sanctioning the event for investigation. Behavior of this type on the part of a Referee should be reported to the Judge, who may issue the offender a warning or remove him or her from the tournament. Behavior of this type on the part of a Judge should be reported to the Duelists' Convocation office sanctioning the event for investigation.

Some examples of unsportsmanlike conduct are:

- Failing to start a duel in a timely manner in order to gain a psychological advantage
- Arguing excessively with a Referee or Judge
- Scouting other players' decks during play
- Enlisting the aid of observers to scout other players' decks

11. In the event of an excessively long match, the Judge may need to adjudicate the outcome prior to its actual conclusion. In some cases, the Judge may wish to impose a time limit for each round of the tournament. In either case, the time limit will not be less than 45 (forty-five) minutes of playing time for a complete match. In the event of a long match, the Judge must give the players involved a time warning not less than 10 (ten) minutes prior to the end of the allotted time. The Duelists' Convocation encourages that each round be timed and scored so as to discourage deliberate stalling.

All play from a round will cease immediately when the Judge announces that the round is over. Players in mid-turn will be permitted to complete that turn before

scores are calculated, up to a maximum time of one minute. "A player in midturn" is defined as someone who has finished untapping all of his or her cards in play that could be untapped at that time during his or her turn.

12. Players must take their turns in a timely fashion. Whereas taking a reasonable amount of time to think through a situation is acceptable, stalling for time is not. Failure to begin a match in a timely manner in order to gain a psychological advantage should either be interpreted as stalling or unsportsmanlike conduct. If the Judge feels that a player is stalling to take advantage of a time limit, the Judge may issue a warning or interpret the stalling as a Declaration of Forfeiture, at the Judge's discretion. **Semifinal or final rounds should never be adjudicated by a time limit.** It is *highly* recommended that Judges allow matches to play to their conclusion (comebacks from 20-1 are not unheard of).

Failure to adhere to the above rules, or any other rules specific to a particular tournament, may be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture. Only the Judge may make an interpretation of a Declaration of Forfeiture. Any player for whom the Judge has interpreted a Declaration of Forfeiture will be removed from the tournament.

Rules note: The Director of the Duelists' Convocation reserves the exclusive right to add, delete, alter, transmute, polymorph, switch, color-lace, sleight of mind, magical hack, or in any other way change these or any other official Duelists' Convocation rules, in whole or in part, with or without notice, at any time that it is deemed necessary or desirable.



OFFICIAL DCI TYPE I TOURNAMENT RULES

Revised October 1, 1995

Effective November 1, 1995

Includes all editions of the **Magic: The Gathering** basic set, and all **Magic: The Gathering** expansions, with the exclusion of any Collector's Edition cards or any cards that appear on the official Banned list.

DECK CONSTRUCTION RULES

The standard rules for **Magic: The Gathering** apply to sanctioned tournament play, except where amended by these rules. In cases where the official tournament rules differ from the basic rules of **Magic™**, the official tournament rules take precedence.

1. Type I tournament decks may be constructed from **Magic: The Gathering** cards from the Limited (first edition) series, the *Unlimited™* (second edition), *Revised™* (third edition), *Fourth Edition™*, any **Magic** expansion (unless expressly disallowed by the Judge prior to the event), and promotional cards released by Wizards of the Coast in magazines or through books. All cards in the Type I tournament deck must have identical card back designs. Under no circumstances will cards from the Collectors' Edition factory sets be permitted in Type I tournament decks, as they are easily distinguished from legal play cards by their square corners and gold borders. Use of any card not expressly permitted in a Type I tournament deck in a Type I tournament will be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture (see Standard Floor Rules).

2. New releases of **Magic: The Gathering** (e.g. a new expansion or new edition of the basic set) may not be included in sanctioned tournament play until 30 (thirty) days following the retail release date.

3. The Type I tournament deck must contain a minimum of 60 (sixty) cards. In addition to the Type I tournament deck, players may, but are not required to, construct a Sideboard of exactly 15 (fifteen) additional cards, which must always contain that number of cards while play is in progress. The use of the Sideboard is further explained in the Standard Floor Rules (rule #3).

Optional rule: It is required that all of the cards in a player's deck have the same rounding of corners. As Alpha cards (the first section of the print run from the original limited-edition basic set) have slightly more rounded corners than cards from subsequent printings (making Alphas effectively marked cards), it may be ruled that if any cards from the original Alpha card set are used in the Type I tour-

namment deck, that the entire deck must be constructed of Alpha cards. If this option is exercised, it must be advertised to the players in advance so that they may reconfigure their playing decks as necessary.

4. There may be no more than 4 (four) of any individual card, by card title, in the Type I tournament deck (including Sideboard) with the exception of the five basic land types (plains, forest, mountain, island, swamp).

Note: For official tournament play, snow-covered lands are considered to be basic lands and are not restricted by the four-per-title rule.

5. The Restricted List:

No more than 1 (one) of each of the cards on the Restricted List is allowed in a Type I tournament deck (including Sideboard). If more than 1 (one) of any individual card from the Restricted List is found in a player's deck and/or Sideboard, that will be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture. The Restricted List may be modified by the director of the Duelists' Convocation as necessary.

TYPE I RESTRICTED LIST

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Ali from Cairo (AN) | • Mishra's Workshop (AQ) |
| • Ancestral Recall | • Mox Pearl |
| • Balance | • Mox Emerald |
| • Berserk | • Mox Ruby |
| • Black Lotus | • Mox Sapphire |
| • Braingeyser | • Mox Jet |
| • Candelabra of Tawnos (AQ) | • Recall (LE) |
| • Copy Artifact | • Regrowth |
| • Demonic Tutor | • Sol Ring |
| • Feldon's Cane (AQ) | • Sword of the Ages (LE) |
| • Fork | • Timetwister |
| • Ivory Tower (AQ) | • Time Walk |
| • Library of Alexandria (AN) | • Underworld Dreams (LE) |
| • Maze of Ith (DK) | • Wheel of Fortune |
| • Mind Twist | • Zuran Orb (IA) |
| • Mirror Universe (LE) | |

If the card is originally from a **Magic** expansion, following its title will be a two-letter code denoting which expansion it is from: AN = *Arabian Nights™*, AQ = *Antiquities™*, LE = *Legends™*, DK = *The Dark™*, FE = *Fallen Empires™*, IA = *Ice Age™*, HL = *Homelands™*

6. The Banned List:

Any cards appearing on the official Banned List are banned from Type I tournament decks. If any card on the official Banned List appears in a player's deck or Sideboard, this will be interpreted by the Judge as a

Declaration of Forfeiture. Several of the cards on the Banned List are not allowed because they clearly state to remove them from your deck if not playing for ante, and ante is not required to be wagered in a Type I tournament (see Standard Floor Rules, Rule #4). Any future cards that make the same statement will subsequently be banned. This list may be modified by the director of the Duelists' Convocation as necessary.

TYPE I BANNED LIST

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Amulet of Quoz (IA) | • Falling Star (LE) |
| • Bronze Tablet (AQ) | • Jeweled Bird (AN) |
| • Channel | • Rebirth (LE) |
| • Chaos Orb | • Shahrazad (AN) |
| • Contract from Below | • Time Vault |
| • Darkpact | • Tempest Efreit (LE) |
| • Demonic Attorney | |
| • Divine Intervention (LE) | |

The Banned List uses the same expansion set abbreviations as the Restricted List:

TYPE I TOURNAMENT FLOOR RULES

The Type I tournament uses all of the Standard Floor Rules with the exception of the following modification.

Note: Rule numbers below correspond to Standard Floor Rules rule numbers.

5. The only deck alteration allowable while a duel is in progress is with the use of a Ring of Ma'Ruf (AN). The Ring of Ma'Ruf may only be used to retrieve a card from the player's Sideboard or to retrieve a card that began the duel in the player's deck (e.g., a creature removed from play by a Swords to Plowshares). Cards other than the tournament deck and Sideboard should not be allowed at the tournament. In the event that a player uses a Ring of Ma'Ruf to retrieve a card from his or her Sideboard, the Ring of Ma'Ruf used is placed into the player's Sideboard to take the place of the retrieved card, thus maintaining exactly fifteen cards in the Sideboard. Otherwise, Standard Floor Rule #5 is unchanged.

Failure to adhere to the above rules, or any other rules specific to a particular tournament, may be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture. Only the Judge may make an interpretation of a Declaration of Forfeiture. Any player for whom the Judge has interpreted a Declaration of Forfeiture will be removed from the tournament.

OFFICIAL DCI TYPE II TOURNAMENT RULES

Revised October 1, 1995

Effective November 1, 1995

DECK CONSTRUCTION

The standard rules for **Magic: The Gathering** apply to sanctioned tournament play, except where amended by these rules. In cases where the official tournament rules differ from the basic rules of **Magic™**, the official tournament rules take precedence.

1. Type II tournament decks may be constructed from **Magic: The Gathering** cards from the most current edition of the basic set, any current extensions of the basic set, and all limited-edition **Magic** expansions which are currently available. The Duelists' Convocation will provide a minimum of 90 (ninety) days notice prior to a change in any limited-edition **Magic** expansion's availability. Cards from previous printings that appear in the most current edition are allowed, with one exception. Cards from any Collector's Edition with their square corners and differing card back design are not permitted in tournament play, as these features make cards from this set effectively marked cards. All cards currently out of print from the basic set appear on the Banned List. Any card not expressly permitted in a Type II tournament appearing in a player's Type II tournament deck will be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture (see Standard Floor Rules #15).

2. New releases of **Magic: The Gathering** (e.g. a new expansion or new edition of the basic set) may not be included in sanctioned tournament play until 30 (thirty) days following the retail release date.

3. The Type II tournament deck must contain a minimum of 60 (sixty) cards. In addition to the Type II tournament deck, players may, but are not required to, construct a Sideboard of exactly 15 (fifteen) additional cards, which must always contain that number of cards while play is in progress. The use of the Sideboard is further explained in the Standard Floor Rules.

Optional rule: It is required that all of the cards in a player's deck have the same rounding of corners. As Alpha cards (the first section of the print run from the original limited-edition basic set) have slightly more rounded corners than cards from subsequent printings (making Alphas effectively marked cards), it may be ruled that if any cards from the original Alpha card set are used in the Type I tournament deck, that the entire deck must be constructed of Alpha cards. If this option is exercised, it must be advertised to

the players in advance so that they may reconfigure their playing decks as necessary.

4. There may be no more than four (4) of any individual card, by card title, in the Type II tournament deck (including Sideboard), with the exception of the five basic land types (Plains, Forest, Mountain, Island, Swamp).

Note: For official tournament play, snow-covered lands are considered to be basic lands and are not restricted by the four per title rule.

5. The Restricted List

No more than one (1) of each of the cards on the Restricted List is allowed in the Type II tournament deck (including Sideboard). If more than one (1) of any individual card from the Restricted List is found in a player's deck and/or Sideboard, that will be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture. The Restricted List may be modified by the Director of the Duelists' Convocation as necessary.

TYPE II RESTRICTED LIST

- Balance
- Mind Twist
- Feldon's Cane
- Recall
- Ivory Tower
- Zuran Orb
- Maze of Ith

6. The Banned List

For ease of use, all cards from the basic set that no longer appear in the most current edition of **Magic: The Gathering** are listed here. Other cards may be banned as well. The Banned List may be modified by the Director of the Duelists' Convocation as necessary. The following cards are banned from a Type II tournament deck:

TYPE II BANNED LIST

- Amulet of Quoz
- Cyclopean Tomb
- Ancestral Recall
- Darkpact
- Atog
- Demonic Attorney
- Badlands
- Demonic Hordes
- Basalt Monolith
- Demonic Tutor
- Bayou
- Dwarven Demolition Team
- Berserk
- Dwarven Weaponsmith
- Black Lotus
- Earthbind
- Blaze of Glory
- False Orders
- Braingeyser
- Falling Star
- Bronze Tablet
- Farmstead
- Camouflage
- Fastbond
- Chaos Orb
- Forcefield
- Channel
- Fork
- Clone
- Gauntlet of Might
- Consecrate Land
- Granite Gargoyle
- Contract from Below
- Guardian Angel
- Copper Tablet
- Copy Artifact

- Ice Storm
- Roc of Kher Ridges
- Illusionary Mask
- Rock Hydra
- Invisibility
- Rocket Launcher
- Jade Statue
- Sacrifice
- Jandor's Ring
- Savannah
- Juggernaut
- Scrubland
- Kird Ape
- Sedge Troll
- Kudzu
- Serendib Efreet
- Lance
- Shatterstorm
- Lich
- Sinkhole
- Living Wall
- Sol Ring
- Mijae Djinn
- Taiga
- Mox Emerald
- Tempest Efreet
- Mox Jet
- Time Vault
- Mox Pearl
- Time Walk
- Mox Ruby
- Timetwister
- Mox Sapphire
- Tropical Island
- Natural Selection
- Tundra
- Nettling Imp
- Two-Headed Giant of Foriys
- Plateau
- Underground Sea
- Psionic Blast
- Vesuvan Doppelganger
- Raging River
- Veteran Bodyguard
- Rebirth
- Volcanic Island
- Reconstruction
- Wheel of Fortune
- Regrowth
- Word of Command
- Resurrection
- Reverse Polarity

Any cards appearing on the official Banned List are banned from Type II tournament decks. If any card on the official Banned List appears in a player's deck or sideboard, this will be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture.

The Type II tournament uses all of the Standard Floor Rules.

Failure to adhere to the above rules, or any other rules specific to a particular tournament, may be interpreted by the Judge as a Declaration of Forfeiture. Only the Judge may make an interpretation of a Declaration of Forfeiture. Any player for whom the Judge has interpreted a Declaration of Forfeiture will be removed from the tournament.

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Outer Gods - Mysterious Locations - Doomed Adventures Against Incredible Odds



The DUELIST Interviews MAGIC Artist

HEATHER HUDSON

by Jenny Scott & Amy Weber



Born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada ("the middle of nowhere"), Heather Hudson has lived in the United States since she was nine and has lived in Seattle since about 1986. She says she's "decided to be from Seattle now" since Seattle "has enough coffee and enough used bookstores." A self-taught artist, Heather earned her M.F.A. in costume design from the University of Washington in 1990. Realizing after graduation that she was not suited to the migratory life of the theater, she nurtured her natural talent for and love of drawing into an illustration career.

Heather's West Seattle apartment is sparsely decorated and smells of hour-old incense when we arrive for the interview. The curtains are drawn on the afternoon sun, her living room is still and peaceful, and it's easy to imagine her working here. A large worktable dominates one corner of the room, behind which hangs a bulletin board covered with photographs and pages torn out of magazines. Dark throw rugs cover the carpet, and a tape is playing quietly. The mood is subdued...until Captain Wow leaps onto a chair to greet us.

Captain Wesley Hellion Wow is the "part-Siamese, part-other" cat Heather picked up at a garage sale, and while she would caution you not to read too much into the name, its origins do reveal some



things about the kinds of sources that influence and inspire her. "He was originally named 'Captain Wow,' which comes from a short story by Cordwainer Smith ["The Game of Rat and Dragon"] about humans and cats paired up to fight these horrors in outer space," she says. "One of the cats is Captain Wow. 'Wesley' is from Pirate Wesley in *The Princess Bride* because of his blue eyes and black mask, and his jumping off the furniture. And Daniel [Gelon, another *Magic: The Gathering*® artist] added 'Hellion' along the way, which is amusing because the cat actually likes Daniel, which makes Daniel almost unique among men that I know." However, an escapade in our transcriptionist's purse lands Wow in the bathroom, and his small cries punctuate the interview at amusing intervals.

We conduct the interview the same place that we conduct most of *The Duelist's* artist interviews: the floor. From there, we're at eye level with the bottom few shelves of Heather's four towering bookcases, which house her complete collection of Oz books—presents from her dad—and several years' worth of *National Geographic*. Above us, science-fiction novels, plays, poetry anthologies, and art books pack the upper shelves, and as the interview progresses, we find more and more of the books open on the floor with us, as Heather lugs them down to show us favorite artists, images that inspire her, and so on.

A private person, Heather takes her time composing her thoughts before answering, at times stopping in mid-sen-

tence to begin a new answer. In social settings, Heather is cautious and reserved, but her wonderful sense of humor becomes livelier. She can deliver a witty insult with such speed and deadpan delivery that the recipient often doesn't even know he or she has been insulted. Heather confesses that she can't help herself. "I don't mean to be a jerk, but sometimes if I can get a cheap laugh, I say the wrong things," she says.



Today, in plaid sneakers, jeans, and a vest buttoned over a long-sleeved shirt, her hair tied back in a ponytail, Heather looks vaguely childlike, yet throughout the interview her answers reveal the thoughtful, clever, and well-spoken individual she is.

Amy: How did you come to be an artist?

Heather: Well, in the beginning there was choice, and when I decided that I wasn't going to do theater work, I looked at what I did enjoy doing and figured out that what I wanted to do was tell stories. I could tell

TOP: HEATHER HUDSON AND HER CAT, CAPTAIN WESLEY HELLION WOW
LEFT: HEATHER HUDSON AT WORK IN HER STUDIO IN SEATTLE.
RIGHT: CHURCH OFFICIAL, FROM SHADOWFIST (DAEDALUS ENTERTAINMENT)

stories with words, but people read linearly, word by word by word, and you have to wait until they've finished reading and thought about it to know if your story worked. Pictures just hit people—*bang!*—between the eyes. And so I decided I wanted to draw pictures for a living.

So I was trying to teach myself how to draw, getting books and taking a watercolor class at the School of Visual Arts from a lady named Lynette Miller.

About that time I was bopping around a science-fiction convention carrying a ferret, when I ran into a really cool lady, a local acrylic artist named Gail Butler, who said, "You! You look like a strange person. Want to learn how to paint?" Gail is a wonderful, wonderful woman who pretty much adopted me and, throughout the period right after my divorce, set me on vitamin C and made sure I was eating at least somewhat regularly and taught me to paint. She started me working with acrylics, and while I was still learning I made my first sale on *Legends™*. And while I don't feel like she taught me everything I know, she certainly gave me a hell of a boost. When I do something well, I thank Gail, and when it gets really ugly, it's entirely mine. Thankfully, there's less and less ugly these days.

Amy: Do you support yourself solely as a freelance illustrator now?

Heather: Well, it's been about a year that I don't have to worry about eating and paying the rent. Before that, there was a period where I had to worry about eating and



LEFT: RYSORIAN BADGER, FROM *MAGIC: THE GATHERING—HOMELANDS* (WIZARDS OF THE COAST)
RIGHT: JALOON, FROM *BATTLELORDS* (NEW MILLENIUM)

paying the rent at the same time. Before that there was a period where I was looking for a wretched day job and painting all night and on unemployment and living in a friend's basement, which isn't really surviving, I think, but it does give you a tremendous amount of, if not free time,

"Sometimes when it's time to change your life...the universe tells you by destroying everything you've come to depend on."

then at least desperate impetus to find something to do well enough to get by. One of the nice things about being laid off and living in a friend's basement and having your divorce finalized—one of the nice things about having your entire world fall apart—is

that you really focus on the things that mean a lot to you. Sometimes when it's time to change your life, when it's time to make your life roll over and head in a new direction, the universe tells you by destroying everything you've come to depend on. So anyway, all of a sudden I was working really hard and sending out portfolios, and, amazingly, it paid off. This is not real life. In real life you do not just happen to find a way to support yourself doing what you like. This is fiction. I'm living a fictional account of an unnaturally lucky artist, and I'm really grateful. I feel that I've been incredibly lucky. I nearly didn't send my portfolio to Wizards of the Coast because I had friends at the time who said that I shouldn't sell myself short by accepting projects that didn't pay for themselves. But one of them said, "Okay, so it's only a hundred bucks. At least you'll get something in print. It'll look good in your portfolio. Go ahead and do it." And I did.

Amy: What advice would you give to young artists who are just starting out?

Heather: Practice a lot. Also, make sure that this is the thing you're really, really happiest doing because if you're doing the thing you love, you're in a far, far better position to go professional. You will be happy to do it all night, and people will enjoy working with you. A friend of mine says that I'm really good at finding work, which would make



anyone who ever worked with me in the theater laugh like a hyena because I have no "people skills." What I have is this incredible joy to be doing this. So if you're a young artist and you don't really want to be an artist, if you're trying to force yourself to do something that you're not really happy doing, you're going to suffer a lot, and suffering really sucks.

Also, hang out with other artists. You can learn a lot from them, not only about art, but about the *business* of art. Plus, you hear about opportunities that way. Besides, who else is going to be awake at one in the morning when you're working on a project and need someone to chat with as you paint the eight hundred tiny pebbles at the bottom of the picture?

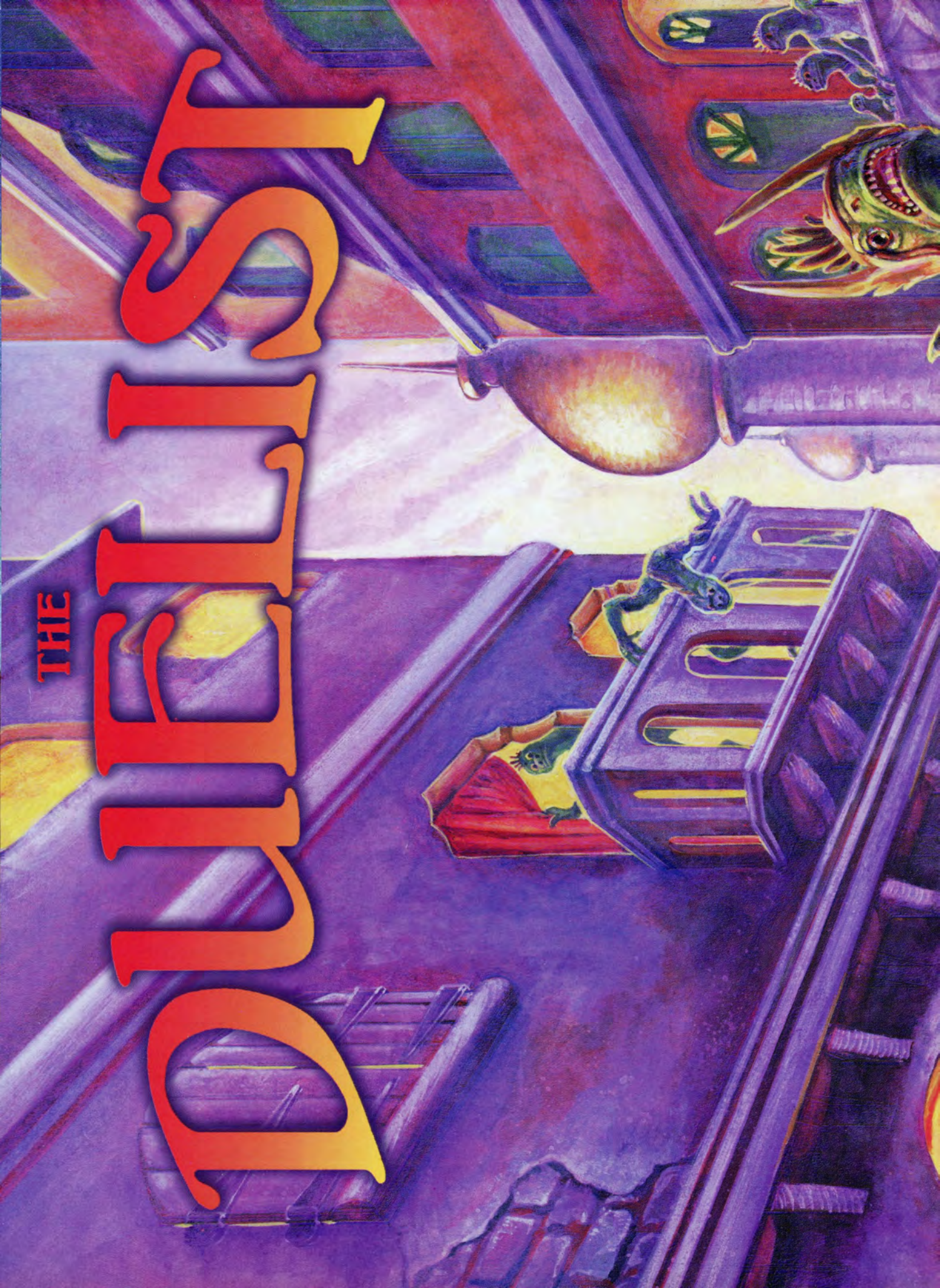
Oh, another thing is after a while you realize it's normal that paintings look ugly when they're not done. If they didn't look ugly, they'd be done. Until you learn that, it can scare you when you reach a point where you paint something drastically ugly. But it's okay. Ugly just means it's not done yet! Ugly means keep going! Ugly is normal. *[All laugh]* Keep going! Work through the pain! Feel the burn!

Jenny: What projects are you working on now or have you finished recently?

Heather: Well, I've been doing a bunch of work for Daedalus Games. And recently I did black-and-white illustrations for a book for Pagan Publishing [*Coming Full Circle*], which was a lot of fun because I hadn't done black-and-white before and I was sort of apprehensive about it. It turned out to

THE

WALLS









be really fun going back to the past [Coming Full Circle is set in nineteenth-century New England] and digesting the text, hooking up with the concept. That's something I really enjoyed when I was doing theater costuming—reading the script, sitting down and talking to the director, working up the concept, and then figuring how to visually repeat that concept on stage. It's almost musical the way that everything that goes on on the stage will recapitulate the theme. And likewise, everything that goes into a book recapitulates the book's theme.

I was working with amazing things on the Pagan Publishing project. My favorite was a licorice-scented child's nontoxic water-based marker. I found that after I used it, if I hit it with water spritzed from a mister, it made this great texture. Whenever I made a gesture like *pfiff! pfiff! pfiff!* [demonstrates], you know, the water hits the paper and then the marker explodes, and there's instant texture. *Pfiff! pfiff!* [demonstrates again]. I was trained by Gail Butler, who brings a very high degree of finish to her work and taught me thusly, so my approach has been, as a friend of mine says, "It's not done if it isn't overworked." So this is an entirely different type of art for me.

Jenny: What kind of music do you listen to when you work?

Heather: Surf guitar. A lot of surf guitar. Lately I've started listening to Dead Can Dance. I've always liked Camper Van Beethoven. It's funny because I'd always liked music that was very word-oriented,



music that was content rather than form. But the more I paint, the more I become involved with music that has no words, music that has repetitive musical shape, rather than music that is a form of com-



munication. I've gotten very dependent on music for moving me through time. It kind of pulls you along in its progression from one note to the next, and it keeps me even.

Amy: I notice you don't have a television.

Heather: Yeah, I spent too many years with other people's TVs, and I enjoy not having a television. The only time I regret not having a television—well, there are two times, really. One of those is when I'm doing rough sketches and it would be nice to turn on a sports program or an animal program and turn the sound off and just see the forms moving. And the other time is when public television airs the *Red Dwarf* marathon. But then I go over to Daniel's. [Laughs]

These days I enjoy painting a lot. I get a lot of exciting deadlines. . . . Did you know that if you get your package to FedEx

before four in the afternoon, they can ship it almost anywhere in the United States the next day? That's science fiction to me! Overnight FedEx is the future! [All laugh] I mean, I know that we walked on the moon, and I know that we're discovering subatomic particles, but to me the future is FedExing a package overnight to Charlottesville.

Jenny: What do you do when you're not working?



Heather: Well, I actually didn't have any projects in the house for four days last week, and I got a cold, which—I think I'd rather work. But other than that, it's been a while. . . . I like to read. I like detective novels. It's a very soothing format—you're in the universe, something goes wrong, you detect what's wrong, and you fix what's wrong, and the universe is right again. It's a very simple ritual. I walk around my neighborhood at dusk and look at the sunset over Puget Sound, admire the various long-haired cats of West Seattle who come out of their

houses and fall down on the cement in front of me and have to be petted, and I go over and see my friends. I've learned to play a video game at my friend Daniel's house called *Twisted*. I find if I'm stressed and there's nothing I can do about the situation, video games are really great. I wouldn't want to do them all the time—I wouldn't like to have one in my own home—but they can be fun. But the last couple of months when I talk to people,

"I'm living a fictional account of an unnaturally lucky artist."

LEFT: THORN THALLID, FROM *MAGIC: THE GATHERING—FALLEN EMPIRES* (WIZARDS OF THE COAST)

MIDDLE: COSTUME SKETCH FOR SHERIDAN'S *THE RIVALS*

RIGHT: DANGEROUS EXPERIMENT, FROM *SHADOWFIST* (DAEDALUS ENTERTAINMENT)

I'll start out by saying, "What have I been doing lately? I have no life!"

Jenny: If you had a life what would you do?

Heather: I don't know. I used to want to, you know, drive across the country breaking hearts and righting wrongs, in a little red convertible with a great sound-track playing in the back-ground. I don't think it's me. What would I do? Work at a zoo. Go to the forests of Borneo and try to take photographs of animals before all the forests are cut down and we turn everything into one big enormous parking lot. Hunt pigs in Hawaii. Help to stamp out the feral pigs in Hawaii—I think that would probably be what I'd do if I did have a life. *[All laugh]* I'd be out in Hawaii killing feral swine! I'd be killing feral swine or driving across country and breaking hearts—I don't know. I'm living in a fantasy. What would I be doing if I weren't living in a fantasy? I'd probably be working at McDonald's and suffering a lot. Yeah, I think in real life I'd be working at McDonald's and slowly



dying of despair. Whereas now I draw pictures and people give me money! Obviously, a massive improvement!

Amy: What other artists do you respect or admire?

Heather: N. C. Wyeth. Hugely. Immeasurably. And his painting is completely different from mine. I mean, he can

put real color on the canvas. He knew what color he wanted, and he put it there—there it was. He used to crank out a painting in a single day because he knew exactly where he was

going and he went there. I actually saw some of his paintings, and it is so completely alien from the way I work. I spent an afternoon staring at real Wyeths, and my brain went sideways, and I went home and forgot how to paint.

Who else? Winslow Homer's watercolors. Tsukioka Yoshitoshi. One of the things that got me into art was I was

"I want to make people see things that could not be photographed."

"What would I be doing if I wasn't living in a fantasy? I'd probably be working at McDonald's and suffering a lot."

doing designs at the University of Washington for costumes for *The Mikado*, and I started researching Japanese wood-block prints and just stumbled into Yoshitoshi's art-

work. His pieces told stories. He used colors in incredible ways, and the format is just so mechanically beautiful, with these organic textures. His artwork has a beautiful, psychotic power.

Also Robert Bateman, a wildlife artist. One of the things I like about him is that he's interested not only in putting the picture on the surface but also in how the animal works within its environment. The painting becomes a manifestation of his understanding of the creature, and that's another place where my inspiration comes from. Like Mindstab Thrull, in *Fallen Empires™*. In trying to figure out what it looked like, I tried to imagine what would be a useful mutant. All I was told is that it's something that runs forward carrying a bomb until the bomb explodes. If you think about that for a while, you start developing a concept for a creature, which is: big legs, no brain.

So I guess that's an element of my artwork. In some ways I'm doing a natural history of things that never happened, trying to figure out how they work, what their environment would be, how they eat. I mean, I *know* that they keep that thing (the Mindstab Thrull) in a cage and feed it gruel with a spoon. And when it's time for it to be used, they open the cage, get out the bomb, and set it off, and it just runs forward. And if it hits something, it'll just keep bobbling into the wall, so you sort of hope all the gates are open before you let it go. I can see them bringing the cage up on a big wagon, pointing it at the gate, and having knocked down the gate with a battering ram of some kind. And it's sitting there bobbling against the door of the cage. *[All laugh]* One guy's holding the bomb, and the other guy's at the gate, and they open the gate and shove the bomb at it. I actually became sort of fond of that creature, because if you have to



LEFT: ABEL, FROM *BATTLELORDS* (NEW MILLENIUM)
MIDDLE: WINDOW, ILLUSTRATION FOR *COMING FULL CIRCLE* (PAGAN PUBLISHING)



work out the details, figure out how things work, they somehow become more real.

I guess the point of drawing pictures, the point of any kind of attempt to communicate, is to give somebody concepts and images they didn't have before. I want to make people see what they haven't seen before, what they could never have seen, what they could never have imagined before. I want to make people see things that couldn't be photographed. You have to be subtle and sneaky to paint the unimaginable, though, because if you make it too unimaginable, it doesn't communicate.

Jenny: Is that why you like working in the fantasy industry particularly?

Heather: I think I might have to rephrase that in order to make it work. I think that behind fantasy, behind science fiction, is the place where rituals and dreams overlap. With a background in theater, I'm very aware of how much rituals and storytelling permeate our lives and our expectations. In fantasy, you can make up myths and rituals. You can get away with more. You are less bound by what is normally accepted. And you can either get closer to the primal myths, or you can put weird twists on them—you can use them to illuminate new concepts. You don't have to perpetuate the same society. You're perpetuating society, but you're also preparing it for change.

I think that's what initially drew me to fantasy when I was nine or ten years old—the promise of change, the promise that there was a future. Fantasy and science fiction offers not only a promise that this

society will go on, but it hopefully gives you some clue of how to comport yourself as everything changes around you, as the unexpected becomes commonplace.

The best fantasy books are rituals about the unimaginable entering people's lives and how to comport yourself. I think that's something we all need to know. In my case the unimaginable entered my life and made it a much more fun place to live. I mean, there are people alive *from before the car!* And I have just enough imagination to know that that kind of change is going to keep sweeping through society faster and faster. In its best instance what science fiction and fantasy does is give the reader the acceptance of change—or rather the expectation of change—that needs to come. To prepare for the future you have to believe there's a future to prepare for. That's one thing that fantasy did for me.

But back to "the nature of art." I think art is something that happens while you're trying to create product on a deadline. I know this because I've seen people trying to create art as art. If you go downtown and walk around the galleries, you can see people who have created art as art, and they have two-by-three panels with crayon scribbles and

"Fantasy and science-fiction offers not only a promise that this society will go on, but it gives you some clue of how to comport yourself as everything changes around you."

three-page, single-spaced, typewritten expositions of the underlying concept. And if that's art, then I'm a proud and happy non-artist illustrator! No, art is something that happens at about two in the morning, when you're trying to finish your painting. It's like helium in a balloon—you don't know how it works; it just sort of picks the thing up and makes it fly.

Jenny: You're saying you can't do it on purpose?

Heather: What you can do on purpose is become the most skilled, professional craftsperson you can be. This is a craft. You are creating a product, a one-of-a-kind product. The art is like the cuckoo in the cuckoo clock—it just suddenly comes out.

You aren't expecting it, and there it is. In the process of trying to do your best work as a craftsperson, sometimes a painting just comes alive; it'll sort of yank itself away from you. And then it's not just another painting that you did, it's something that has [an] identity by itself. It just sort of works. And I don't know why that is; although, as I said, it seems to come out at two or three in the morning like the cuckoo in the cuckoo clock. That sounds profound. Quote that sucker!



TOP: SKETCHES AND FINAL PENCILS, HALF-TROLLS OF FAR HARAD, FROM MIDDLEEARTH: THE WIZARDS® (IRON CROWN ENTERPRISES)

BOTTOM: MINDSTAB THRULL, FROM MAGIC: THE GATHERING—FALLEN EMPIRES (WIZARDS OF THE COAST)

ARTIST ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONTACTING ARTISTS

Many fans wish to contact the artists who created the artwork in their favorite Wizards of the Coast™ products. Look no further! Many of our artists have provided contact addresses, dates and locations of convention appearances, as well as listings of original artwork and prints for sale. Some artists are happy to autograph cards, too. Package cards carefully so they won't get bent, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and send them to the artist's contact address. Please send only a reasonable number of cards. Artists are not responsible for lost or damaged cards.

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Art appearing in *Magic: The Gathering™*, *Vampire: The Eternal Struggle™*, and other Wizards of the Coast products is available for purchase. To buy original artwork or prints from the artists listed below, contact them at the addresses listed here. Please be aware that the prices of original artwork range from \$90 to \$2,000, with an average price of about \$550. Print prices range from \$5 to \$80, with average prices around \$25. Please make your check payable to the artist (not to Wizards of the Coast) and send it to the artist's contact address.

If you wish to purchase artwork by an artist not listed here, request an Artwork Availability List and Artist Contact Sheet. These list the originals and prints available, along with contact addresses. Send your request and a self-addressed, stamped, letter-sized envelope to: Wizards of the Coast, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA, 98057-0707, Attn: Artwork Listing. To help us respond quickly, please send other requests separately.

Wizards of the Coast provides the Artwork Availability List and Artist Contact Sheet as a service to its customers and the artists it works with. The listing is an offer by the artists or the artists' representatives to negotiate. Wizards of the Coast makes no guarantees as to availability, pricing, or accuracy of the information contained within.

ROB ALEXANDER

P.O. Box 1558
Mercer Island, WA 98040

PRINTS

Rob's lithographs, editions of 950, are \$20, including s/h; photo prints, editions of 35 to 50, are \$40, including s/h. All of Rob's prints are signed and numbered.

Magic: The Gathering

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Hidden Path
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Icatian Scout
Spectral Cloak (\$20)
Brassclaw Orcs
Rubinia Soulsinger
Illusionary Terrain (\$20)

RANDY ASPLUND-FAITH

2101 South Circle Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Phone & Fax: (313) 663-0954

PRINTS

Randy has prints available for all his art from *Magic: The Gathering*. Prints are reproduced at actual size of original paintings, laser printed on 8"x10" acid-free 80 lb paper with permanent inks. Prints are \$15 each, plus \$3 for shipping per whole order. MI residents add 6% sales tax. Non-Magic prints are also available; call or write for listing.

APPEARANCES

ConFusion—Novi, MI, Jan. 1996
Lunacon—Rye Brook, NY,
Mar. 15-17 1996

JULIE BAROH

c/o Buster & Jinx Productions
323 Broadway Avenue E, #216
Seattle, WA 98102

PRINTS

Julie has two sets of lithographs for sale. They are \$20 signed and numbered, limited edition and \$15 for signed art proof, unlimited edition. Add \$3 for s/h; for wholesale price, inquire with Julie.

Magic: The Gathering

Clone
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P.O. Box 622
Coventry, RI 02816
(401) 739-1511

PRINTS

Ed Beard Jr. still has limited-edition prints available of the Elder Dragons illustrated for *Legends™* and now appearing in *Chronicles™*. He also has limited-edition prints of *Fallen Empires™* images and *Ice Age™* images. Limited-edition prints retail between \$20 and \$35. Portfolio and resumé inquiries are available upon request. Please write or call for more information.

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P.O. Box 1562
Glasgow G2 8BW
SCOTLAND

PRINTS

Vampire: The Eternal Struggle

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High Stakes

Stuart has other prints and some originals available. Please write for more information.

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P.O. Box 119
Stratford, CT 06497-0119

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Magic: The Gathering

Mesa Pegasus
Nightmare
Shivan Dragon

Legends

Cat Warriors
Forethought Amulet
Ragnar

Vampire: The Eternal Struggle

Animalism
Quinton McDonnell

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c/o Red Crow Studio
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Richmond, VA 23220

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P.O. Box 1175
Snellville, GA 30278

LIZ DANFORTH

P.O. Box 64082
Phoenix, AZ 85082-4082
e-mail: e.danforth@genie.com

PRINTS

Liz offers 100 lb acid-free full-color prints on paper with top varnish. Her signed, limited edition of 500 prints are trim size 11"x 14" and image size 7"x 5 5/8", except Hymn at 8"x 6 1/2". The price for each is \$25 plus \$3 s/h.

Magic: The Gathering

Hymn to Tourach
Initiates of the Ebon Hand
Portent
Lim-Dûl's Hex

APPEARANCES

Icon—Long Island, NY, April 11-13 1996
Leprecon—Phoenix, AZ, May 17-19 1996

RICHARD KATIE FERGUSON

c/o Totem Studios
P.O. Box 462
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

KAJA FOGLIO

c/o Palliard Press West
6756 16th Avenue NW
Seattle, WA 98117-5513

PRINTS

Kaja's lithographs are printed on 100 lb acid-free paper, editions of a run of 500. Prints are unmatte, with certificate of authenticity for \$25 each plus \$3 s/h per order, wholesale terms available.

Background and spot illustration by Amy Weber



Arabian Nights

Sorceress Queen
Birdmaiden

Legends

Field of Dreams
Al-Abara's Carpet
Spirit Link
Kismet

Fallen Empires

Elven Lyre

Ice Age

Magus of the Unseen
Wind Spirit
Hydroblast
Pyroblast
Illusionary Presence

Write for catalog and prices. Kaja will sign cards, but please be patient and remember to include an SASE with proper postage.

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c/o Palliard Press West
6756 16th Avenue NW
Seattle, WA 98117-5513

PRINTS

Phil's lithographs are printed on 100 lb acid-free paper, editions of a run of 500. Prints are unmat-
ted, with certificate of authenticity for \$25 each
plus \$3 s/h per order, wholesale terms available.

Legends

Mirror Universe
Greed

Fallen Empires

Conch Horn

Ice Age

Fyndhorn Pollen
Cooperation
Breath of Dreams
Orcish Librarian
White Scarab

Write for catalog and prices. Phil will sign cards, but please be patient and remember to include an SASE with proper postage.

DANIEL R. FRAZIER

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Boulder, CO 80304

PRINTS

Dan has both Magic and non-Magic prints for sale. All prices include s/h.

He's Back (b&w, 18x24), \$15
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Halls of Avarice (color, 6x8), \$5
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Blue Dragon Profile (8x6), \$5

Fallen Empires

Orcish Veteran, \$5

Ice Age

Jester's Cap, \$5
Fire Covenant, \$5

RANDY R. GALLEGOS

5667 Snell Ave. #214
San Jose, CA 95123
Phone: (408) 226-4319
e-mail: plumage@hooked.net

PRINTS

Randy's photo prints are signed and numbered,

editions of 500, for \$16 each, including s/h.

CA residents add 8.25% tax.

Vampire: The Eternal Struggle

Dorian Strack
Wake with Evening's Freshness

Ice Age

Dance of the Dead (Limited edition of 950,
signed and numbered, \$20 +\$1 s/h)

DOUG GREGORY

44-19 31st Avenue
Long Island City, NY 11103

QUINTON HOOVER

Inkling Productions/Quinton Hoover
P.O. Box 469

Baker City, OR 97814

PRINTS

Quinton's lithographs are in limited editions of 950, signed and numbered for \$20 each, including s/h; he offers the set of 8 for \$120, including s/h.

Fallen Empires

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Orcish Veteran

Legends

Pixie Queen

Ice Age

Adarkar Unicorn
Krovikan Vampire
Illusions of Grandeur



Orcish Healer
Mistfolk

HEATHER HUDSON

117 E. Louisa Street, #307
Seattle, WA 98102

PRINTS

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Zephyr Falcon
Toreador Justicar
Burst of Sunlight
Thorn Thallid

SCOTT KIRSCHNER

2300 Walnut Street, #334
Philadelphia, PA 19103

NICOLA LEONARD

P.O. Box 16284
Seattle, WA 98116

PRINTS

Nicola's prints are signed, limited editions of 850, for \$20 plus \$3 s/h.

Ice Age

Mystic Might
Green Scarab

ANSON MADDOCKS

c/o Mortal Graphics
P.O. Box 69765
Seattle, WA 98168
Phone: (206) 248-4297; (800) 668-4297

PRINTS

Anson's prints are \$15 each plus \$3 s/h.

Fallen Angel
Spinal Villain

More prints will be available soon.

CHRIS MCLOUGHLIN

56 Milbrook Drive
Old Hall Estate
Kirkby, Merseyside L32 1TF, UK
Chris is selling some originals from *Vampire: The Eternal Struggle*, including Scorn of Adonis, J.S. Simmons Esq., and Tasha Morgan for \$750 each.

JEFF MENGES

c/o Skaircrow Graphics
P.O. Box 593
Northport, NY 11768-0593

PRINTS

Jeff offers signed and numbered 12"x16" lithographs, editions of 1,000, for \$15 each. Add \$4 s/h for 1 to 4 prints, plus \$4 for each additional 4.

Magic: The Gathering

Zombie Master
Haunting Wind
Tracker
Goblin War Drums

Jeff also has 6"x 8 1/2" postcards of Torn Signpost (*Vampire: The Eternal Struggle*) and Master of the Hunt (*Legends*) for \$3 each, plus \$1 postage and handling.

KEN MEYER, JR.

3467 Bevis st.
San Diego, CA 92111

PAT MORRISSEY

Contact can be made through Wizards of the Coast.

WILLIAM O'CONNOR

28 Central Street
Huntington, NY 11743

MARGARET ORGAN-KEAT

1916 Pike Place #12-177
Seattle, WA 98101
e-mail: 76506.1633 @compuserv.com

PRINTS

All Margaret's prints are \$20 each or \$60 for a set of 4.

Magic: The Gathering

Ivory Tower
Spore Flower
Cloak of Confusion
Foxfire

Originals are available; please inquire. Margaret will autograph up to 6 cards; please send an SASE.

APPEARANCES

Boskone—Boston, MA, Feb. 1996
Miscon—Missoula, MT, May 1996

MARK POOLE

121 Old Sugar Hill Road
Lexington, SC 29072

PRINTS

Mark offers lithographs at \$20 each. Please write to the above address.

Ice Age

Kjeldoran Skyknight
Kjeldoran Skycaptain
Kjeldoran Warrior
Knight of Stromgald

Antiquities

Urza's Tower (4 versions)

Legends

Jedit Ojanen

Mark is happy to sign cards, but be sure to include proper postage on your SASE.

APPEARANCES

Chattacon—Chattanooga, TN, Jan. 1996
GenCon—Milwaukee, WI, Aug. 1996

ALAN RABINOWITZ

2898 Mandalay Beach Road
Wantagh, NY 11793

UPCOMING WORK

Vampire: The Eternal Struggle
Magic: The Gathering—*Homelands*
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DOUGLAS SHULER

P.O. Box 3145
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e-mail: darkjedi@ix.netcom.com

PRINTS

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Magic: The Gathering

Serra Angel
Northern Paladin
Veteran Bodyguard
Frozen Shade
Demonic Tutor
Prodigal Sorcerer

BRIAN SPODDY

P.O. Box 16284
Seattle, WA 98116

PRINTS

These are signed prints, editions of 950, for \$20 plus \$3 s/h.

Ice Age

Battle Frenzy
Drift of the Dead

RON SPENCER

c/o Nightfall Ltd.
202 9th Street
Aurora, NB 68818

PRINTS

Ron offers high-quality color photocopies for \$15, including s/h which he will sign at your request. Please be sure to include an SASE with the correct return address, or he will not be able to send your cards back to you.

RICHARD THOMAS

c/o White Wolf Services
780 Park North Boulevard
Suite 100
Clarkston, GA 30021

DREW TUCKER

904 W. Linden
Carbondale, IL 62901

PRINTS

Drew's prints are signed and numbered for \$20 each.

Magic: The Gathering
Clockwork Beast
Dandân

SUSAN VAN CAMP

768 Tacken Street
Flint, MI 48532



Phone: (810) 239-6410
e-mail: 102026.764@compuserve.com

PRINTS

Magic: The Gathering

Wyluli Wolf
Hymn to Tourach
Many others

Send SASE for a complete print listing. If you wish to have cards autographed, please include SASE to return the cards. Limit the number to 5 cards.

BRYON WACKWITZ

c/o Mutt Studios
7014-B Frankford Ave., Suite 101
Philadelphia, PA 19135
Phone: (215) 331-8483
Fax: (215) 331-1417

PRINTS

These color prints come matted, 8"x10", with coordinating color mats for \$15 each plus \$2.50 s/h.

Magic: The Gathering

Ayesha Tenaka
Angus MacKenzie
Thelonite Monk
Barbary Apes
Dwarven Armorer
Order of Leitbur (male and female)

Homarid
Force Spike
Shatter
Disharmony
Dwaven Catapult
Hammerheim
Urborg
Lava Tubes
Brushlands
Skull Catapult

Vampire: The Eternal Struggle

Deer Rifle
Homunculus
Form of the Ghost
Loyal Street Gang
Anarch Troublemaker

Bryon will also be producing runs of 500 postcards of Shatter and both Order of Leitbur cards for \$3 each or 4 for \$10. Please limit autograph requests to 2 cards, accompanied by SASE.

ANTHONY WATERS

1004 Maple Street
Edmonds, WA 98020

PRINTS

Anthony is offering prints of all of his Magic and Shadowfist™ art for \$20 each, including s/h.

AMY WEBER

Contact can be made through Wizards of the Coast.

PRINTS

Amy offers signed and numbered, limited, editions of 500, lithographs for \$20 each plus \$3 s/h.

Magic: The Gathering

Armageddon Clock
Knowledge Vault

Amy has color copies of most of her Magic pieces for \$5 each; send query letter. She will sign cards, but asks for your patience—responding to lots of mail takes time.

ROBYN WILLIAMSON

Original etchings available through:

Artworks Gallery
155 South Main
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 625-0932

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SANDRA EVERINGHAM
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Dakkon Blackblade
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THE 1995
MAGIC WORLD
CHAMPION
RECOUNTS HIS
START IN
MAGIC

The CLIMB to the TOP

by Alexander Blumke

Editor's note: Switzerland's Alexander Blumke defeated France's Marc Hernandez in the finals of the 1995 Magic World Championship last August to win the World Title. We asked Blumke, a resident of Geneva, Switzerland, to write about his introduction to Magic and the path he took to the World Championship.

"I join you in history," were my first words to Zak Dolan as he congratulated me for taking the burden of being the **Magic: The Gathering**® world champion off his shoulders. This concluded three days of bizarre and ever-repeating "come-from-behind" situations. Fourth and last to qualify in the Swiss National Championship, I was also last to qualify for the playoffs in the World Championship. I needed to win 3-0 in the final qualifying round to get there; I survived, however, even though I was among the last two people to qualify for the quarterfinals. But from then on, the tournament went my way. I never had to catch up anymore, going 3-0 against the Italian champion, 3-1 against the U.S. champion, and 3-2 against the French champion to win the World Title.

It all started a little more than a year ago, during the early summer of 1994, when my friend Guillaume introduced me to the game of **Magic**. He was searching for people to play with, so I bought a *Revised*™ starter and four boosters. We played just one game, though, before I left to visit my brother in Germany. In this game, I won my first ante card: Guillaume's only Circle of Protection: Green.

Before leaving Germany, I thought I would introduce my brother to the game, too, so I took two sealed starters and two boosters with me and offered him one of each. We played for ante—not because it added more spice to the game, but because it was part of the rules.

Whenever my brother lost, he would say, "Bah, you've offered me these cards; they are not really mine anyway." He said this a lot because I had this incredible creature called Juggernaut

which finished him more than once, and also because I had won The Hive from him very early. When I left, the score was 32-10 in my favor. We had played 42 games in one week! (Since then, however, one of my friends has managed to play 43 games in one day!)

Back in Geneva, Guillaume introduced some more of our friends to the game, and we began buying more cards. Guillaume, especially, owned a lot of them and invited our friend Roland and me to a trade evening.

Trading cards amongst friends is a good test for true friendship. By exchanging with friends, you can see if your friendship is worth more to them than **Magic** cards. If they try to rip you off, you can count them out—rather depressing if everyone is trying to get your Shivan Dragon for a bunch of commons. Perhaps I have played *Ultima IV*™ too much, but I can't help thinking that it is just not right to get a Taiga in exchange for two Craw Wurms. And whenever someone wants too much for a card I need and I decide to make the deal anyway, I am strongly tempted to add Greed to the cards I trade, saying, "This is for you, as a mark of kindness for future exchanges." I often wish I had more Greeds in stock.

Anyway, Guillaume passed the test very well. He immediately gave us a list of which cards were rare and which were not, and because we were giving him cards that we had only one of in exchange for his duplicates, the trades were at least fair, if not in our favor.

At the time, we were a group of about ten people meeting regularly in four- to six-player groups to play a board game called **Talisman**™, for which we had created our own *extension*. I am a statistics freak and had set up a computerized ranking system which we had nicknamed ATP (at the time, I was the local tennis club champion), which stood for Association of **Talisman** Players. After we showed the gaming group **Magic**, the ATP became the IMP (Institute of **Magic** Players), which was a ranking list

for a **Magic** variant in which both players (or more) draw from the same library, the first card of the deck being the ante. A new booster is put in the deck every fifteen matches to ensure that there is a lot of variety in the games. We haven't played a single game of **Talisman** since.

At the end of November 1994, Guillaume and I learned that a **Magic** tournament would be held in Geneva at one of the three shops selling **Magic** at the time. Guillaume couldn't go, but I went there with my first tournament deck.

The basic idea of the deck wasn't bad—Marc Hernandez, the French national champion, used it during this year's World Championship—but mine was far too poorly tuned. I built everything around four Black Vises, but four Winter Orbs and four Ankhs of Mishra were probably too much. I also played white—easy food for Gloom—and, as I had no Crusade, I played with Castles; however, I could never get Castle out because of my own Winter Orbs. I finished thirteenth out of seventeen, a rank my deck well deserved.

For the next three tournaments in February, April, and May of 1995, however, I put together a red/black card-denial deck with a Library of Alexandria I managed to get from the States. With this new deck, I fared better, finishing second, first, and second again.

Then came the Swiss National Championship.

This was a Type II tournament held in Biel, which is a two-hour drive from Geneva. I made the journey with Francois and Charles, two brothers I knew from previous tournaments, the younger looking somewhat (no, exactly) like Peter Pan. Guillaume was expected to come also, but because of exams, he chose to stay home.

This became one of the coolest weekends of my life.

A few months before, I had won a SwF 2,500 (approximately \$2,000 U.S.) prize from the university for an essay on Alan Alexander Milne, Lewis Carroll, and James Matthew Barrie (among others) and the similarities between their literary creations and their self-acknowledged inspirational sources. I decided to celebrate by taking a huge stuffed tiger with me as a mascot. I put Walkman headphones on its ears and carried it the whole Saturday in

a backpack which also contained my cards. I looked like an idiot (those who were there will remember), but I got interviewed twice and even filmed once, and I like to think that this unique ally impressed more than one opponent.

In any case, it didn't impress my first opponent, as I lost my first match against a Rack/Balance deck. All my friends—Francois, Charles, Amiel, Thomas, and Olivier, who were always contenders for first place in the Geneva tournaments, and Michel, who organized them—had won their first match, and I feared I wouldn't even qualify for Sunday. I was playing a black/red/white card denial/direct damage/Sedge Troll/Spirit Link/Nevinyrral's Disk deck which I thought was good. Fortunately, I won my next four matches and qualified for the next day, as did all of those above save, unfortunately, Francois.

Among the funniest scenes of the day, I remember,

was Charles trying to convince my third opponent to lose on purpose, because he feared that if I lost and left that evening, he and his brother would have to go home by train. Another was Charles, Francois, and me taking a meal—with the stuffed tiger in a fourth seat. I provided it with a plate while Charles put **Magic** cards between its paws.

In the evening we had a lot of fun playing **The Great Dalmuti™**, and when we decided to sleep a little, we just went downstairs, walked as far as we could in the dark, and settled on the ground in our sleeping bags. (We should have slept in the dormitory, but it wasn't smelling very good there.)

The next day I woke up seeing Amiel sitting on his sleeping bag. "I try to tell myself it is not important, but still, I'm nervous," he admitted. He was among the people who had not lost a match so far.

And he wouldn't lose. With his Rack/Balance deck, he became the Swiss national champion. There were three of us who, having lost once, were tied at second place, and the referees chose to rank us by counting our opponents' points. Donat ended second, Thomas was third, and I was fourth.

Three of us among the four first: It was a big success for the Geneva **Magic** circle. And, as we now know, it would get even better.



Photo by Justin Renney

PLANESWALKING IN La-La LAND

by Mark
Rosewater



Los Angeles is a city known for many things. From Hollywood to famous trials to the latest natural disaster, L.A. is a place where anything and everything can occur. It is no surprise, then, that Los Angeles has one of the most thriving Magic™ communities in the world.

To best explain what makes Los Angeles such a unique spot for playing Magic, we've decided to ask the players themselves:

"What makes L.A. unique?"

I'll tell you in two words: card availability."

—Frank Gilson, 28, Anaheim

As one of the key cities during Magic's first promotional tour, Los Angeles stores were selling boxes of cards before other parts of the country had even heard of the game.

"I remember when Peter Adkison (president of Wizards of the Coast) drove down here in person to demo the game at my store," said Paul Matsumoto, 34, owner of Magic Castle (2514 E. Chapman, Fullerton). "We knew instantly that we had a winner on our hands."

As a result of the early exposure to Magic, L.A. players (and speculators) purchased a vast amount of the cards from the original limited and unlimited runs as well as the first few expansions. "Without exaggeration," said Henry Tremblay, 34, owner of Brookhurst

Hobbies (12188 Brookhurst Street, Garden Grove), "Our store alone sold four percent of the entire run of *Arabian Nights*™."

This huge influx of cards created an unnaturally large marketplace which,

although smaller than it once was, currently provides Los Angeles with a card availability that rivals any city in the world. "There isn't a card you can't get here," explained Gilson, ranked seventh by the Duelists' Convocation. "It might cost you a bit, but any day of the week, there are a number of places a person can go and purchase whatever cards they need."

"This has led to numerous things," said Gilson. "For starters, Los Angeles is one of the few cities where a single deck type doesn't tend to dominate tournament play. Since everyone has access to all the cards, people are able to build whatever decks they want. This creates a great amount of diversity in deck construction and leads to lots of interesting duels."



ONE OF THE BIGGEST MAGIC EVENTS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TAKES PLACE SATURDAYS AT THE COSTA MESA WOMEN'S CENTER.

"There's a whole mix of different people playing here—everything from world champions to beginners."

—Jeannette Clausen, 15, Long Beach

The composition of the Los Angeles Magic community is as diverse as the city itself. There are players who have been playing since the very beginning (back in what is now affectionately referred to as the "Alpha days") and others who picked up their first starter deck yesterday. There are recreational players who are constantly inventing the latest strange deck and a core of tournament players who are always trying to outdo one another. No matter what kind of player you are looking for, southern California, a region of over fifteen million people, not only has it, but has it in volume.

"The coolest thing about having this many people," said Clausen, "is that you never know what to expect. There are so many different ideas and playing styles, that each game brings new discoveries."

Julia Berggren, 19, agrees. A resident of San Diego attending college in Claremont, she says: "Even when I don't win a tournament, I still feel I've gotten my money's worth, because often I've picked up a new strategy or deck idea from one of my opponents."

"Magic took to L.A. as fast as it did because there was a strong network of local game stores already in place."

—Henry Tremblay, 34, owner, Brookhurst Hobbies

The key to the strength of the Los Angeles Magic community rests in the strong support the game gets from local stores and conventions. "The best example of this," said Tremblay, "is the way Magic first exploded here in Los Angeles."

The game had come out in July [of '93], but no one had really heard of it. Then along came Gamex (an annual game convention held in L.A. over Labor Day weekend), and what had simply been a buzz turned into a full-blown phenomenon.

"This isn't to say that **Magic** wouldn't have exploded at some point," he added, "but it would have taken a lot longer and wouldn't have affected nearly as many players."

This support of the game coupled with the dedication to keep product in the market has produced a rare situation in Los Angeles. "The sheer number of different stores selling **Magic** ensures that there is always a place to buy new cards," Tremblay said. "Our store, for example, has made a major commitment to keep **Magic** in stock and as a result, in two years we have never run out of the basic [set]."

"Just as the old players are kept interested by the availability of individual cards," said Gilson, "the new players have always felt welcome to the game because of the availability of starter decks and booster packs. There's never a sense of not wanting to start out of fear that the cards will become unavailable."

"I can always play. Always."
—Jason Yang, 29, San Marino

With a solid network of stores and an ever-growing group of players, it's never hard to find an opponent in Los Angeles. Regular tournaments occur almost every day of the week (see sidebar below). "I like to play," said Yang, "and between Los Angeles and Orange County, there are always a number of places to go."

"I'm putting four to five hundred miles on my car a week driving to all the different

tournaments," added Gilson. "There are things going on constantly. One only has to check the Internet to find something going on in any area."

One of the most popular weekly events is an all-day event held Saturdays starting at noon at the Costa Mesa Women's Center (610 W. 18th St., Costa Mesa) sponsored by the South Coast Game Association. With dealers, numerous tournaments, and ample opportunity for trading, the Costa Mesa gathering has become a staple of the southern California **Magic** community and regularly draws one to two hundred people.

"It's great," said Berggren. "For one admission, you can play all day. You can pick up that last card you need for a set. Or you can just hang out with your friends—because if they play **Magic**, odds are they're here."

"The L.A. players are too damn good."
—Mark Hendrickson, 24, Covina

With ample card availability, many players, a strong support network, and lots of places to play, it's no surprise that Los Angeles has a pool of very experienced players. Nine players from Southern California were ranked among the Duelists' Convocation's top 25 players, the highest total ranking of any region. Rankings aside, one needed only to visit this year's National Championship to see the strength of the Los Angeles players. Southern California had twelve of the sixty semifinalists in this year's U.S. Championship—again, more than any other region. Of those, Henry Stern, from West Los Angeles, went on to finish as runner-up and to become a semifinalist at the World Championship. Add to this the fact that the 1994 U.S. Champion, Bo Bell, also hails from Los Angeles.

"The people here are really nice," said Hendrickson, "but they sure make winning a tournament damn hard. There are times when I look at everybody left in a particular round and I start going, 'I don't want to play him or him or him.'"

"I've played **Magic** around most the



country," said Glenn Godard, 37, owner of Wargames West on Central, a game store in Albuquerque, New Mexico, "but I enjoy coming to Los Angeles because they just have a great pool of players. Winning here really means something."

"The people here are on the cutting edge of new ideas." —Mark Chalice, 23, Claremont

"Players here can go get any card they want," said Gilson. "So, if they need a card for a new deck idea, they just go and get it."

WHERE TO PLAY

There are many regular tournaments held in Southern California. Here are some organizations that sponsor regular events:

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Verde Dr. E. St. #215, Costa
Mesa, (714) 444-4566

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Palma Ave., Ste. # 120, Anaheim
Hills, (714) 777-4424

Comic Attractions 2320 D
St., Laverne, (909) 596-1277

Comic Quest 24344
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951-9668

Darkstar Comics 10045
Adams Ave., Huntington Beach,
(714) 965-1751

Game Arena 17271 17th St.,
Tustin, (714) 665-2400

Game Zone 2302 E.
Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, (818)
304-2637

I M Comics 14225 E.
Lambert, Wittier, (310) 698-8349

Just Fun and Games 6137
Magnolia Ave., Riverside, (909)
781-2772

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Association** 734 N. Tustin,
Orange, (714) 639-6242

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Campus Drive, Ste # 162, Irvine,
(714) 854-6115

**Quest Games/ Watson, I
Presume** 4137 Norse Way, Long
Beach, (310) 420-8786; **Watson, I
Presume** (310) 497-1958 (at both
numbers, ask for Les)

**South Coast Game
Association** (held at Costa Mesa
Women's Center, 610 W. 18th St.
Costa Mesa) Saturdays, noon,
multiple tournaments

This leads to some very innovative deck construction."

"This tends to feed off itself," said Chalice, a semifinalist at this year's Southwest Regional Championship (see profile, p. 77). "One person comes up with a good deck idea and others attempt their own version. In the process they stumble on a new card that can be used in a powerful way and [it] starts all over again."

"I think the major reason that L.A. is on the forefront of deck construction is that there are so many good players that all stay in contact with each other," said

Stern. "For example, [Mark] Chalice comes in with a new deck and plays it. Then we all take a look at it and start giving him ideas on how to improve it. Some of us may go home and build our own versions to see if we can improve it."

"This collaborative effort," explains Chalice, "has produced quite a number of decks which all appeared in L.A. months before they appeared in other cities." (See sidebar below.)



NEED A CARD? ODDS ARE YOU'LL FIND IT SOMEWHERE IN LOS ANGELES, WHERE CARD AVAILABILITY IS HIGH.

cards in the tournament. Other unique events in Southern California include Enchanted World tournaments in which players duel in an environment that constantly changes, and Magic: The Game Show, in which players test their knowledge of Magic against others.

"I don't know what to say. I just like playing here."—Henry Stern, 28, West Los Angeles

"The L.A. Magic community is never boring."—Julia Berggren, 19, Claremont

Besides making innovations in deck construction, Los Angeles also has made some major strides in creating original tournament formats. The most popular examples of these are the Grandmaster and Minimaster tournaments in which the winner of each match takes all the opponent's cards. Players then build a new deck with all their available cards, play the next round, and so forth, with the tournament winner winning all the

While everyone we spoke to had a different reason to appreciate the L.A. Magic community, all agreed that Los Angeles allows players of all levels to play competitively and frequently. "Put simply," says Berggren, "playing Magic in L.A. is fun. The cards are available, the games are good, and the people are great. If anyone doubts me, all I can say is come here and play. I warn you, though, it might spoil you."

When Mark Rosewater started playing Magic, Arabian Nights was just another book. Now he's best known as "The Duelist puzzle guy."



THE CUTTING EDGE

The Southern California region's rich playing environment has produced a number of original deck ideas. Among them are:

• **The Balance/Discard Deck**—This deck uses Balance to aid in card denial. "The Jade Statue decks (see below) were just becoming popular," notes Mark Chalice, creator of this and many other decks popular in the L.A. region (see profile, p. 77). "I knew that Balance was such a good spell that you could build more than one type of deck around it." This deck needs four Balances to work properly

and is not played since Balance got restricted—something this deck helped cause.

• **The Chains of Mephistopheles Deck**—This deck is built around the black *Legends™* card Chains of Mephistopheles, which forces players to discard a card before they draw any card other than their one draw per turn. When put out in multiples and mixed with Howling Mines, this deck creates a lock where an opponent never gets to draw another card. "Most people dismissed this card [Chains of Mephistopheles] because they found it too confusing," remembers Chalice. "My first reaction was, 'You could build a cool deck around this.'"

• **The Jade Statue Deck**—This deck uses Jade Statues and Mishra's Factories to attack and kill an opponent. As these are only creatures when activated, the deck uses a lot of general creature destruction (particularly Balance and Wrath of Gods to destroy all the other creatures).

• **The Living Plains/Land Destruction Deck**—This deck makes lands vulnerable to direct damage.

• **The Machine**—This deck uses Hell's Caretaker and Animate Dead to constantly recycle Triskelions and Tetravuses. A popular variant uses Rukh Eggs.

• **The Verduran Enchantress Recursion Deck**—*"I think I'm always on the look-*

out for recursion decks," says Chalice. "So when I first saw a creature that said 'draw a card' on it, I knew there was something there." This deck involves getting out multiple Enchantresses which allow you to burn through your deck drawing cards. The recursion comes from the fact that you keep using Timetwister and Regrowth on the Timetwister so that the turn never ends; mana is recycled with Dark Heart of the Wood and Fastbond.

• **The Vise Age Deck**—This is a green/red deck that defeats an opponent with Black Vises and lots of quick direct damage. Several variants also add a few big creatures such as Orggs, Ernhamms, or Lhurgoyfs.

SPOTLIGHT ON: Mark Chalice

"Looking back on the match, the second game against [Mark] Chalice (in the semifinals of the Southwest Regionals) was probably the best Magic game I've ever played."

—Mark Justice,
1995 Magic U.S. national champion

Mark Chalice admits that Magic™ has had quite an effect on his life, and though he might not admit it, the same could be said of his effect on the game. One of the key players in the Los Angeles Magic community, Chalice has had an impact on Magic on a local, national, and international level.

Introduced to the game at the tail end of *Arabian Nights*™ by friends at school, Chalice, a twenty-three-year-old computer network specialist, was instantly drawn to the game. "I was just amazed," said Chalice, "that someone had figured out such a delicate balance. The game had such an elegance. It didn't take long once I started playing to realize I was hooked."

It was this respect for the game mechanics that led him to discover his favorite part of the game: deck design. "Don't get me wrong, I really enjoy playing, but I think more than anything else I just enjoy building a good, solid deck," he said.

Chalice has been very successful in his deck designs, helping create numerous decks that have become popular far outside Los Angeles. "My first big design was probably The Machine (see sidebar, p. 76)," he said. "I actually built it originally because I thought it would be cool to play. But then I started playing tournaments with it, and I realized that it won far more games than it lost."

"I think The Machine taught me an important lesson: that decks can be built to be fun, yet still be competitive."

Chalice is attributed with the creation of quite a number of popular decks. His most famous creation, though, is a deck dubbed Vise Age, a red and green deck that deals its damage with Black Vises and lots

of quick direct damage. It got international attention when Henry Stern used it to place second at this year's U.S. Championship and third at the World Championship.

"This deck is the perfect example of how deck construction works in Los Angeles," said Chalice. "A few friends (Frank Gilson and Kurt Burgner) and I



MARK CHALICE, ENGAGED IN A DUEL AT THE COSTA MESA WOMEN'S CENTER. CHALICE IS RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE BEST DECK-BUILDERS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

noticed that *Ice Age*™ had several cards that really helped a green/red deck (Orcish Lumberjack, Stormbind, Incinerate, etc.). So we each built similar green/red decks and started playing with them. When they started winning, we compared notes and fine-tuned our own deck, each emphasizing a different card."

Vise Age proved so efficient that six different players played some variant of it at the U.S. Nationals. "I think Henry [Stern] won with it for three reasons," explains Chalice. "One, it's a good, solid deck. Two, he probably plays it better than anyone, myself included. And three, well, he got lucky."

Chalice, though, has had a few good games of his own, the most notable being

the second game of the semifinals of the Southwest Regionals against Mark Justice, now the reigning U.S. national champion. Chalice glows as he describes this marathon match.

"To truly understand the game, you have to understand the setting. It is two a.m. Monday morning. The tournament had started at ten a.m. the morning before," he recalled. "The winner of this game would go to the finals and was guaranteed a free trip to Philadelphia to compete in the U.S. Nationals."

"Justice slapped me the first game, so I needed to win this [second] game. Justice did a little bit of early damage with a Vise. But I quickly got two Serras out and things looked in my favor. Then he pulled a Balance and got rid of both of my Serras. We then parried back and forth for a number of turns."

Chalice describes his approach to victory as he hit Justice with a Nevinyrral's Disk, followed by Armageddon. Releasing his now-unstoppable Mahamoti Djinn from a Safe Haven, he got Justice down to 5 life—one more turn and the game was his. But Justice drew the one card in the game that could save him—a Red Elemental Blast—and came back to wear Chalice down to 3 life.

"Finally, I get out two Order of Leitburs. He has a Sengir, two CoPs, black and red, and a Maze of Ith, none of which will save him from one of my two Orders. Again, he pulls the card he needs, this time an Earthquake. This puts me at 1 life."

"We parry for a bunch more turns. I have three cards in my hand. Justice Hymns [to Tourach] me and then plays a Rack. One of the two cards I lose [to the Hymn] is the Disenchant that would have saved me. After forty some turns, I finally die."

"I have to agree with Justice," concludes Chalice. "That was definitely the best game of Magic I've ever played."

—Mark Rosewater

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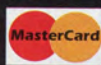
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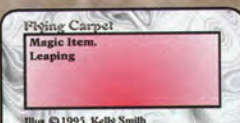
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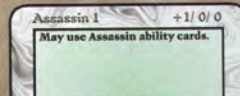
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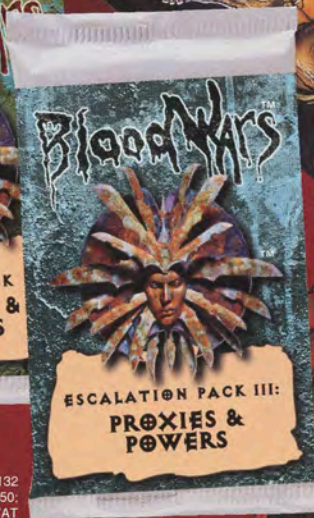
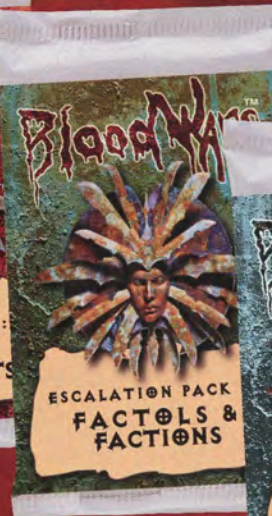
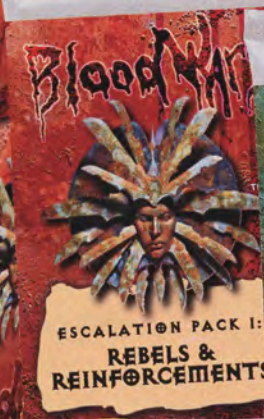
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V:TES RULINGS & ERRATA

compiled
by Tom
Wylie,
with
Brian
Campbell
and Paul
Peterson

V:TES

GENERAL RULINGS

Q: Cassandra equips herself with Ivory Bow, and my prey contests her. If someone plays another Ivory Bow while Cassandra is contested, will the Bow become contested as well?

A: Yes. If a card is contested, any cards played on it are also treated as out of play *except* that they can be contested normally and any effects on them will wear off normally. If a vampire becomes contested, any unique equipment, retainers, titles, etc. of the vampire would also be contested if duplicates appeared.

Q: What happens if the title of a contested vampire becomes contested?

A: A vampire with a contested title can only compete for his or her title while he or she is ready. Thus, a vampire that begins your untap phase in torpor or contested will yield his or her contested title unless you can return that vampire to the active region during your untap phase.

Q: If a vampire takes aggravated damage from multiple sources at once, is damage added together to see whether the vampire is burned, or is it counted separately?

A: In *Vampire: The Eternal Struggle*[™], if a vampire takes aggravated damage from several sources at once, that damage combines to determine whether the vampire is burned.

Example: Cassandra and Andreas are in combat, and they each have 2 blood. Cassandra strikes at Andreas for 2 aggravated damage, and her Ghoul Retainer strikes for another 2 aggravated damage. Andreas takes 4 aggravated damage at once, which exceeds his blood supply, so he is burned.

In *Jyhad*[™], aggravated damage from multiple sources was always applied individually, so Andreas would not have been burned in this example.

Q: If I take control of a minion with a piece of equipment, who decides whether the equipment is used? Does the old controller get to decide whether I can use a gun in a combat?

A: In general, if you gain control of a card, you get control of any cards played on it. If someone else takes control of that card, he or she would then control the cards played on it. For example, if you take control of your prey's vampire, you will also get control of any equipment or retainers played on that vampire. The exception to this would be master cards: A master card is always controlled by the Methuselah who played it (unless text on the card specifically states otherwise). For example, if you steal Ozmo from your prey and Ozmo had a Laptop and a Protean card, you would control the Laptop card, but not the Protean card. Note that this is different from the way this works in *Magic*[™].

However, you are not allowed to ignore permanent effects "just because," unless the card is an equipment card or otherwise notes that it can be turned off. In the above example, although your prey controls the Protean card, she cannot choose to turn it off, and you may use Ozmo to play Protean cards.

Q: If I play *Vast Wealth* on one of my vampires, and someone then gets control of the vampire, can he or she use the *Vast Wealth* ability?

A: No. Though he or she controls the vampire, you still control the *Vast Wealth*, as it is a master card. However, the *Vast Wealth* is also useless to you since you cannot act with a minion another player controls.

Q: Can my vampire's Ghoul Retainer shoot an opposing vampire's Ghoul Retainer?

A: In *Vampire: The Eternal Struggle*, anyone in combat, including retainers, may apply ranged damage to opposing retainers, but only if the round is at range.

In *Jyhad*[™], only minions could apply ranged damage to opposing retainers, and they could inflict the damage even if the round was at close range.

Q: Can my vampire with superior *Celerity* play superior *Nimble Feet* several times in a combat round, just to cycle my hand?

A: No. If a minion has already been given one or more additional strikes during a combat round, that minion may not play another card that gives it additional strikes or makes it the subject of an effect bestowing additional strikes. For example, a vampire who has received additional strikes this round cannot play superior *Acrobatics*.

CARD RULINGS

Q: I steal *Ozmo* from my predator with *Malkavian Dementia*. When it gets back to my untap phase, I will have to return *Ozmo* to my predator. If *Ozmo* has become contested in the meantime, may I yield him instead of returning him?

A: No. *Malkavian Dementia* wears off at the start of your turn before your untap phase. The *Malkavian* will thus return tapped, and you will not be able to yield it.

Q: *KoKo* is attempting to bleed my prey, so my prey attempts to block. *Tiberius* wants to assume the action with *Mask of a Thousand Faces*, but has been prevented from bleeding my prey by a *Minor Boon*. Can *Tiberius* assume the bleed action?

A: No. While *Mask of a Thousand Faces* may be used to assume an action that the vampire could not have attempted normally, it cannot be used to assume an action that the vampire is specifically prohibited (or prevented) from taking. For example, a vampire without *Thaumaturgy* can assume a *Cryptic Mission*, but if *Minor Boon* has prevented a vampire from bleeding a *Methuselah*, it cannot assume a bleed action taken against that player by another vampire.

Q: One of my vampires attempts to leave torpor, and an opposing minion tries to block the action. Can one of my ready vampires use *Mask of a Thousand Faces* to assume the action?

A: Yes. The *Mask* allows a vampire to take over actions it could not have taken normally. However, combat would not result if the action were blocked, and if the blocking minion were a vampire, that vampire would

not be allowed to diablerize the vampire who assumed the action.

Q: Can multiple Pulled Fangs be played on a vampire at the end of a given combat round?

A: Yes.

Q: If Brujah Frenzy is used to make a Brujah attack a second minion, is that minion considered to be blocking the Brujah? For example, what happens if the Brujah jumps a vampire that is Blood Bound to it?

A: Though the Brujah's action is considered to be blocked, the second minion is not considered to be blocking the Brujah. It is simply a victim of the combat, just as if it had been attacked with a Bum's Rush.

Q: Does Taste of Vitae give my vampire blood from blood burned by the opposing vampire for combat cards?

A: Yes. Taste does not specify the reason why the blood was lost. Note that it will also include blood lost to a Steal Blood strike, and so on.

Q: My vampire plays Bum's Rush to attack a Hell Hound, and the action is not blocked. During the resulting combat, my vampire plays superior Form of Mist. Does it get to continue the action, even though the action was considered successful?

A: Yes. You may continue an action that has already been successful. Note that this allows action modifiers and reactions to be played, gives minions another chance to block the action, and so on. If you complete the action again, you get all of its effect again, so if the continued Bum's Rush is successful, you would get an optional maneuver in the resulting combat.

Q: If a vampire has two copies of Kindred Society Games played on it, can it untap normally by burning 1 blood?

A: No. Each Kindred Society Games is its own effect, which requires the vampire to either burn 1 blood to untap or move the Kindred Society Games to another vampire (or the ash heap). So a vampire with two Games played on it may burn 2 blood to untap, move both Games as appropriate, or burn 1 blood and move one Game.

Q: What happens if a player is saved by Life Boon, and then saved by another Life



Boon before it can repay the first? Do the two Boons compete for the first victory point (and ante) won by that player?

A: No. Each Life Boon ties up the next available victory point (and ante) won by that player. They never fight over the same victory point (and ante).

Example: Nick, Janette, Lacroix, and others sit down to play a game of V:TES. Nick saves Lacroix with a Life Boon. Later in the game, Lacroix is saved with Life Boon again, this time by Janette. If Lacroix manages to come back and oust two other players, Nick will get the first victory point and ante, which Lacroix would have won, and Janette will get the second.

RULES ERRATA

This set of errata is for the rules booklet included in **Vampire: The Eternal Struggle**. These changes have been integrated into Chapter One of *Darkness Unveiled*.

Section 3.2, Library Cards

Last paragraph should read, "If it's a master card, you may only play the card if you have a 'ready' vampire of that clan."

Section 8.3, Special Combat Effects/Steal Blood

Example should say that Cassandra

starts the round with 4 blood (otherwise she would be burned by Eliza's strike).

Section 9, Influence Phase

Second paragraph should read, "The influence phase allows you to move vampires into your active region and place them under your control."

Section 10, Ending the Game

Middle of second paragraph should read, "If a predator is ousted at the same time her prey is ousted..."

Section 15, Contested Cards

Third paragraph should read, "You can't bring more than one of the same unique card into your active region without contesting them."

Section 15.1, Contested Titles

If a vampire gains a new title due to a card, it loses the old title. If the vampire entered play with the old title, simply note that it no longer holds that title. The vampire won't regain the old title if the new one is lost. If the old title was provided by a card, burn that card. If a title is contested and then yielded, the card is burned, or a note is made on the vampire (as appropriate).

Section 17, Stealth and Intercept

You may not increase a minion's stealth unless another minion is attempting to block, and you need to overcome that minion's intercept. Similarly, you may not increase a minion's intercept unless it is trying to block a minion whose stealth is higher.

Section 21, Advanced Combat/Using Equipment

In second paragraph, the rules should read, "Only one strike card may be used per round of combat unless a card grants a minion additional strikes."

Section 21, Advanced Combat/Check Damage

In the Advanced Game, if a vampire steals more blood from a vampire than it has blood to give, the second vampire is not burned. Simply transfer all of its blood to the first vampire.

Section 21, Advanced Combat/Damage Prevention Cards

The last paragraph should read, "If a minion or retainer inflicts aggravated damage..."

Section 21, Advanced Combat/Start Another Round of Combat

The last paragraph should say that the minion may decline to perform the press.

The section should say that each new round begins at close range.

Pulse of the Canaille

by Tom Wylie

VARIANTS FOR VOTING

When you imagine the political action process in **Vampire: The Eternal Struggle**, you probably don't have the image of a bunch of vampires raising their hands in an Elysium. Instead, the process is assumed to be an intricate interchange of influencing kine, trading favors, and so on. For example, Disputed Territory is not resolved by a show of hands, but by convincing the powers involved that the location ought to be in different hands, or perhaps by frightening away the guards at that location.

Burning political action cards for votes, referred to here as "vote pushing," is an integral part of the process. In exchange for favors, a Methuselah's agents might agree to ignore the Prince of Cleveland, increase pressure against the Sabbat, or whatever. However, many players have noticed that this practice tends to be degenerate—it's possible to build a deck almost entirely of political actions, such as Praxis Seizures and Kine Resources Contested, and push votes through against almost any level of opposition.

While this possibility for degeneracy exists, we don't want to eliminate vote pushing entirely. Political actions are all about influence, and it makes sense that a Methuselah's forces should be able to get things done by negotiating with other players. The "house rules" below allow vote pushing while (hopefully) keeping it from being degenerate:

"Hands Off": The simplest fix for vote pushing is to only allow each player to burn one political card per political action for votes. This forces the acting player to turn to titles, Ventrue Headquarters, and so forth to push a vote through. While a player can still push votes through with cards like Bewitching Oration, she will have to at least diversify her deck.

"I've Heard That One Before": Another solution is to adapt the rules for action modifiers and reaction cards and allow each player to burn any number of cards for votes, as long as no player burns the same card twice per political action.

"If You Want it Done Right...": The last alternative presented here is based on the true concept behind political actions, outlined above. This model requires that political actions be burned by a player's vampires rather than directly by the player (Methuselahs refuse to actually get their hands dirty.) Furthermore, the votes cast by a vampire during an action cannot exceed its capacity. Thus, a player who only had a 2-capacity vampire ready during a vote would only be able to cast two votes through that vampire, whether from burning political cards or not. If a vampire plays a card that gives it more votes than allowed (e.g., Igo playing Bewitching Oration), the excess is ignored.

We may change the rules for vote pushing in the next edition of **V:TES**, so please send us feedback on which of these systems seems to work the best.

INTEGRATING THE NEW CLANS INTO V:TES

The next edition of **V:TES** will include cards from at least the first two expansion sets, so incorporating the non-Camarilla clans (Ravnos, Assamite, etc.) presents a problem. While we have our own ideas as to the best approach to take, we're also looking for feedback. The three obvious choices are listed below, though we are also open to other suggestions. Note that we are assuming that we will be doing something with the new clans and their disciplines, and not just ignoring them.

Strict rotation: The first choice is to rotate some of the Camarilla cards out to make room for the non-Camarilla clans. This would probably require removing one or two cards from each discipline, one or two vampires from each clan, etc. While this is in many ways the simplest solution, it is also the least satisfying, since we don't really want to make room for non-Camarilla clans at the expense of the seven primaries.

Expand the card set: The second choice is to expand the card set to make room for the new clans. This has the advantage of keeping the existing clans intact (though we would rotate some old cards out for ones from the expansions). The downside would be expanding the card set (is a 500-plus card basic set too big?), and making the contents of boosters and starters that much more diverse. What little hope **V:TES** has of having sealed-deck tournaments would probably go out the window in this scenario.

Add a companion card set: The third choice would be to release the new clans and disciplines in a companion card set to the basic game, similar to the *Chronicles*™ card set for **Magic**™. The basic game would remain at its current size and continue to focus on the Camarilla clans and their disciplines, though it would rotate in a few cards from the expansions. This would lighten the information overload for new players, who could then explore the non-Camarilla clans via the companion set. Also, players who already had **V:TES** but had missed the first expansion or two could just pick up the companion set and not clutter their collections with yet more copies of cards in the basic set.

If you have any suggestions about how to correct problems with vote pushing, how best to incorporate non-Camarilla cards into the basic set, or any other **V:TES** rules, please send your comments to:

Pulse of the Canaille
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Renton, WA 98057

or send e-mail to:
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1995: The END of INNOCENCE

THE TRADING CARD GAME YEAR IN REVIEW

by Glenn Godard

Editor's Note: To get a different perspective of trading card games in 1995, we asked long-time *Magic: The Gathering*® retailer Glenn Godard to give us his view of the major events and developments in the industry this year. As usual, Glenn pulled no punches...

✠
"IT WAS THE BEST
OF TIMES, IT WAS THE WORST
OF TIMES."
A Tale of Two Cities
✠

As 1994 closed, the *Magic: The Gathering* juggernaut appeared unstoppable. *Unlimited*™ had been misnamed. *Arabian Nights*™ had blown out like a desert sirocco. *Antiquities*™ was rarer than crown jewels. *Legends*™ created our largest sale day ever. *The Dark*™ was little more than a dream. Every company who had ever produced a game product was looking at how to enter this red-hot market. The *Star Trek*® card game seemed to prove that the genre was transferable. *Jyhad*™ had been the doll of GenCon® '94. The secondary market created by the lack of available product was creating *nouveau riche* out of teenagers lucky enough to have bought any

of the limited expansions in quantity. Wizards of the Coast's future, and by extension, the trading card game market's, was so bright they had to wear shades.



KEY RELEASES: After *Fallen Empires*' injection of reality, *Ice Age* became the darling of the '95 trading card game market.

Fallen Empires™ changed all that in the blink of an eye. It seems clear today that 340 million cards was too many for a 100-plus card set, but that ignores everything that had happened the year before. The overproduction of *Fallen Empires* was, from my vantage point, the single most important event in the trading card game field in 1995. The frenetic pace of 1994 had blinded everyone to the reality of an upward limit to the number

of cards a small set could sell. A sense of reality was injected into what had been an unreal market. Players, retailers, distributors and Wizards all shared in the "market adjustment" that *Fallen Empires* caused.

The failure of *Fallen Empires* to sell on time, plus the additional expense of warehousing the unsold product caused WotC considerable expense, particularly when you consider that *Revised*™, which was in short supply, had been scaled back to accommodate the orders for *Fallen Empires*. This led to the next largest development of '95: Allocation.

✠
"PLEASE SIR,
CAN I HAVE SOME MORE?"
Oliver Twist
✠

Allocation. Say that word three times quickly. It doesn't roll off the tongue easily, does it? For the consumer, allocation hasn't made much difference—yet. For the rest of the market, allocation has meant everything! After the *Fallen Empires* debacle, WotC decided that they would decide how much of a particular product to print. Like

many things about this young company, it was a total swing of the pendulum. A formula was established by the Sales team at Wizards, and how much new product the distributors received was based on how they scored in the profile. Previously, your local **Magic** outlet could get as much as they could eat, as long as they ordered well in advance (they just had to be sure to eat all that they ordered.) Today how much your local retailer gets is determined by his distributors, each of whom have different ways of deciding how much of their allocation your retailer gets.

The good news is that almost everyone gets at least some of the pie. The bad news is that stores that depended on their larger purchases and sales of **Magic** to pay the bills found their market split up by every Tom, Dick, and Harry. Retailers who have sold **Magic: The Gathering** since the beginning are now scrambling to replace the income they've lost. Some are out of business. Add to this trend that both WotC and some distributors are selling to mass-market retailers, and the outlook for the smaller adventure-game vendors is shaky for early '96. For most, this means that the store which often best answers your rules question or that hosted an occasional tournament is being replaced by a software, bookstore, or music store—all of which see **Magic** as a nifty add-on sale, not their bread and butter. This instability is a piece of the next most important trend in '95: The failure of any other card game to experience significant success.

❑
**"THE BEARINGS
 OF THIS OBSERVATION LAY IN
 THE APPLICATION..."**
Dombe and Son
 ❑

Much as TSR™ dominates the roleplaying market, WotC could be expected to dominate the trading card game market for years to come. Despite that dominance, many people in the trade searched for the game that would take the No. 2 slot in '95. As the year began, **Star Trek** looked like a sure hit.

What came next was to be repeated again and again: The release of the "Unlimited" version of **Star Trek** died on the shelf for lack of interest. Release after release enjoyed some measure of success on the initial pass and imploded on the second. Every game has felt the wrath of the marketplace: **Blood Wars™**, **Doomtrooper™**, **On the Edge™**, **Rage™**, **Galactic Empires™**, **Wyvern™**, **Illuminati: New World Order™**, **Ultimate Combat™**, **Shadowfist™**.



IN CONTENTION: Despite a barrage of releases, 1995 failed to produce a solid rival to **Magic**.

As a retailer, it appears to me that customers have so much money sunk into their game collections that a new game needs to be significantly better than what they are currently playing to entice them to get into it. Achieving that is quite a tall order. Sure, people will try a new one in its initial release, but today the quickest way to kill a card game is to release an "Unlimited" version of it.

Many of these mistakes seem to stem from a basic misunderstanding of the trading card game market. Debuting now are games which began their development process less than a year ago. Since the number of cards and combos in a three-hundred-card set is so large, one of the first requirements for a TCG is extensive playtesting. Almost all the card games which debuted in '95 suffered from degenerative tendencies, where an excess of a particular card combination in a deck almost always leads to victory. These types of problems are a sign of playtest problems. Consider that the **Magic: The Gathering** design team, which had a two-year head start, still managed to create a fistful of cards which they had to eliminate from *Revised* and *Fourth Edition™*.

One lesson which was well learned in '95 was that a successful game must look good. **Guardians** and **Shadowfist** both appear artistically as **Magic's** equal or better. While both card games and actors benefit from good looks, it's really an expected piece of the puzzle. Good looks must be matched with talent.

Being as good as **Magic** is no guarantee of success, since the market presence of Richard Garfield's game is overwhelming. In this market, a new product must carve its niche to be accepted. Licensed products such as **Star Trek**, **Star Wars™**, **Middle-earth™**, **Highlander™**, and **Netrunner™** will always be reasonably successful due to built-in name recognition. That advantage is offset by the expectation of the buyer. If you don't capture the feel of the environment properly, those built-in buyers will turn into aggressive detractors. Two years from now, look for the No. 2 trading card game to be a non-licensed product which takes everyone by surprise.

A factor in all this is that the stores which might consider promoting a new card game—the average adventure game store—are reeling from the allocation process, and the fallout from their *Fallen Empires* mistakes. Most game retailers are in little mood to experiment. That means a great game like **Shadowfist** gets passed over in the shuffle. In our shop, we look for reasonable success from Precedence's **Gridiron™**, I.C.E.'s **Middle-earth™**, Alderac's **Legends of the Five Rings™**, and perhaps Last Unicorn's **Heresy™**. We anticipate less demand for **Star Wars**, **Vampire™**, and **Overpower™**.

❑
**"ACCIDENTS WILL
 OCCUR IN THE BEST-REGULATED
 FAMILIES."**
David Copperfield
 ❑

For a while, between the Duelists' Convocation and *Fourth Edition*, it looked like **Magic** was going to become sanitized, regulated, moderated, and otherwise made more boring. Then *Ice Age™* arrived. The set was big, the cards were gorgeous, and the impact on the game was fantastic. From our customers'

point of view, the release of *Ice Age* was the biggest event of the year. As a stand-alone expansion, this set was perfect for the newcomer who wanted a way to play competitively without mortgaging the farm.

The one-year window for sale of *Ice Age* was a great way to offer the product in a limited fashion but still avoid the problems of prior expansions. As this year's debutante, *Ice Age*, with several months to go, has already sold more than the entire *Fallen Empires* print run. Jester's Caps, Deflections, Orcish Lumberjacks, and the cast of over three hundred continue to delight buyers. The set was a return to the wild and woolly days of *Arabian Nights* and *Legends*. Customers love the mystery of finding the most obscure use from their cards. If a set doesn't create truckloads of rules debate by the rules mavens, it's unlikely to be remembered for long.

❑
**"IT'S A MAD
 WORLD. MAD AS BEDLAM."
 David Copperfield**
 ❑

Many of our customers will also remember 1995 as the year their stock market crashed. Remember all those teenagers who bought bright shiny Mustangs with the money they'd made on *Arabian Nights*, *Antiquities*, and *Legends*? Nineteen-ninety-five was the year they woke up to reality. With the release of *Legends*, most of the powers that be at Wizards had grown tired of watching grown men and women sell one card to twelve-year-olds for over \$100 and still keep a straight face.

Determined to make the game more user friendly to the players, *Fourth Edition* was released with a huge rotation. Close on the heels of that was *Ice Age*, with many effects, if not the actual cards, being reprints of the basic set. The most recent nail in the collectors' coffin was the release of *Chronicles*™. The effect of the reprints was to depress all secondary market card prices for a few months. The reprinted cards then leveled out while the out-of-print cards have started back up from their

lower levels. It now appears that Wizards' R&D team has, with the exception of *Ice Age* and *Homelands*™, rested on their laurels from '94. Let's all hope we see more than two fresh releases in 1996.

❑
**"YOU SPEAK
 LIKE A FRENCHMAN!"
 A Tale of Two Cities**
 ❑

The final '95 development, while last on this list, is the one which will probably have the most impact over the long haul. The past year saw the release of Italian, German, French, Spanish and Portuguese versions of *Magic*. The game's almost universal appeal has made inroads other North American games have fought for years to try to achieve. The net effect has been to make the world a smaller and more friendly place.

Wizards, in an attempt to support the foreign markets, has required distributors to only sell in their language area. This is a fruitless effort. Like water, the marketplace will flow where it wants, regardless of what we mere mortals want. The world is a much more fun place and we have Wizards to thank for it. Next year will see the opening of the Asian market which is sorely underserved right now. (Did any of you hear the story on the banning of *Magic* in Singapore schools because it was "too distracting"?)

❑
**"NOT TO PUT
 TOO FINE A POINT ON IT."
 Bleak House**
 ❑

As the century turns, 1995 will be remembered for *Ice Age*, *Fallen Empires*, and the opening of the European markets. Eventually, a solid No. 2 card game will grab the market by storm, which will eclipse the current crop of offerings. Beyond this, I wonder if '95 will get a little lost next to the amazing releases of '94. As I'm saving my only Time Walk for tournaments, I guess we'll just have to wait and see.

The final fast effect for this turn of '95 is to list a few things I'm hoping for in '96:

10. A "coffee table" style book with color reproductions of every *Magic* card.
9. A Duelists' Convocation which a twelve-year-old could understand.
8. Any Star Trek expansion!
7. At least three fresh *Magic: The Gathering* releases.
6. A hot Netrunner release.
5. The return of Atog. (He was so much fun to beat on!)
4. End of distribution to mass-market retailers of any game but the current edition.
3. A *Wizards of the Coast* which has stopped taking its long-time customers for granted.
2. The game which Peter Adkison and Richard Garfield wish they'd done.
1. *Magic: The Gathering* available in every major language.



EIN RICHARD GARFIELD SPIEL: Overseas releases may have the largest long-term impact on the market of any development this year.

Glenn Godard is owner of Wargames West on Central, a game store in Albuquerque, NM which was one of the stops on *Magic's* first demo tour in August of 1993. An avid player of *Magic* and other trading card games, Glenn regularly speaks his mind about the state of the trading card game and adventure gaming industry in such forums as *Scrye* magazine.

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HERESY

HEAVEN AND HELL ON EARTH

reviewed by Allen Varney (a.varney1@genie.geis.com)

HERESY: KINGDOM COME

Limited Release
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Camp Hill, PA

Format: 375+ extra-long cards in four rarities. Sixty-card starter decks, \$9.95; fifteen-card boosters, \$2.95. For two or more players (best with four or five); playing time thirty minutes to two hours.

Design: Christian Moore, Owen Seyler, and Matt Sturm

Graphic Design: Rick Berry

Artists: Darrel Anderson, Stephen Barnwell, Rick Berry, Timothy Bradstreet, Brom, A. C. Farley, D. Alexander Gregory, Craig Hamilton, Michael W. Kaluta, Richard Kane Ferguson, D. Alexander Gregory, Tom Kidd, Darrell Midgette, James O'Barr, William O'Connor, John Pierard, Dave Seeley, Barclay Shaw, Cortney Skinner, John K. Snyder III, Matt Sturm, Karl Waller, Dean Williams, and Bernie Wrightson

Contact: phantombox@aol.com. See also the Heresy discussion section in the CCG area of the Game Information Exchange on America OnLine.

In 1994, Last Unicorn Games published the intriguing fantasy roleplaying game, **Aria: Canticle of the Monomyth™**. This sprawling two-volume opus offered creative rules that could conjure an entire fantasy society—complete with history, economy, and religion—just as easily as other games can concoct roleplaying characters. Now the same designers have published **Heresy**, a trading card game that melds cyberpunk with religion, angelic fantasy with post-

holocaust desperation. Does **Heresy** match **Aria's** creativity and originality?

Given that this game revolves around ascension to heaven, around salvation and sin, it seems unfortunately fitting that my reaction amounts to that traditional form of damnation—faint praise. **Heresy** is the best knockoff of **Magic: The Gathering®** I've seen yet.

GENESIS

You know the **Magic** knockoffs. Dominia becomes outer space or a dojo or the European Theatre, lands become "supply" or "resources," creatures turn into ships or tanks or techniques, and so on—a search-and-replace of **Magic** terms. Each copycat adds some new little rules, its piddling claim to originality. But unlike other copies, **Heresy** amplifies the existing **Magic** rules with many creative subsystems. And boy, does it look pretty.

The inventive background of **Heresy** derives from a roleplaying game which Last Unicorn plans to publish in 1996. This is just one of a number of apocalyptic RPGs coming out about the same time. In the Last Unicorn version of *Apocalypse*, an unexplained "Ruin" has stricken the Earth



Heresy: A Designer's Thoughts

by Matt Sturm

Angels and demons and cyberpunks, oh my! Megacorps and fixers and zealots, oh my! ICs and viruses and stimpuppets, oh my! I don't think we're in Kansas anymore, Toto—at least not any Kansas I've ever visited. Looks more like Forsaken Earth, the gothic punk world of **Heresy: Kingdom Come™**, and from where I sit, things look mighty strange. Of course, as one of the co-designers of **Heresy** (along with Christian Moore and Owen Seyler), my view might be a little warped, but who's to say what's normal around here?

Heresy began as the brainchild of Christian Moore and Owen Seyler, designers of the Origins Award-nominated RPG, **Aria: Canticle of the Monomyth**. Having worked out **Heresy's** background as a roleplaying game called **Chaos Possible**, at the last minute the designers decided on a different approach. Seeing the possibilities for a well-designed, slickly presented TCG, Christian and Owen decided to have a go at **Heresy** as a card game. I was brought on soon after as rules developer, and began the long process of transforming **Heresy's** background into an equally phenomenal card game.

In **Heresy**, your goal is to rebuild the shattered Matrix (the digital world) in order to

activate a gateway within it and be the first to reascend to the Empyrean. During the course of play you will assemble a cadre of immortal fallen seraphim, usurp control of the broken nations of the blasted world, and attempt to reconstruct the ruin-shattered global computer network known as the Matrix. Your aim is to amass the spiritual energy and technical resources needed to achieve reascension and return to the Empyrean. Your Matrix is entirely dependent on your Wilds (the physical world), where technical support is established and maintained. So while you're attempting to get more arrays (digital sites) into your Matrix, you also need to establish and defend domains (real physical sites) in

of the distant future. Devastating society and wrecking the computer Matrix, this Ruin breaches "the barriers between the spiritual, physical, and digital worlds," says the introduction to the game. "Technology and mysticism intertwine to twist the laws of reality, and gothic legends clash with the glittering chrome and neon of the cyber-age."

The designers never explain why the game is called **Heresy**, but given the topic, maybe we don't need to ask. Players command Hosts, the nine ranks of fallen angels both celestial and infernal (Raphael, Lucifer, Belphegor, and the rest), as well as Heathen (Zoners, Manichaeans, junkies, militia, false prophets, astrologers) and cyberspace constructs (Leonardo da Vinci, Corporate AI, Solomon). These are all creatures with power and toughness—oops! I mean *characters* with *attack* and *defense*—and special abilities like first str—er, "blitz." You "call" them by "opening" your "locations" to generate "aura" in one of eight "convictions." You get the point.

The object is to collect a certain number of tau points—anywhere from five to twenty-one, depending on the number of players and desired game length—and spend them to rebuild the shattered virtual gateway to the Empyrean (heaven). You earn tau mainly by successfully attacking opponents' locations, but tau is more than simple victory points: You store it in your "arrays" (cyberspace locations), and you can spend it on card effects. If you're the first to amass and successfully spend the required tau to rebuild the gateway, you reascend, gaining "the right to reshape the Forsaken Earth in an image of your own choosing."

your Wilds. The more complex your Matrix becomes, the more support your Wilds must provide to hold it all together. Developing these two separate but interdependent areas of play is at the heart of any **Heresy** strategy, whether that strategy assumes the mantle of political manipulation or the down-and-dirty tactics of all-out war.

One of the biggest challenges we faced in designing **Heresy** was how to integrate these two vastly different areas of play. **Heresy**'s action takes place simultaneously in the real world and in cyberspace. We had to design two play areas that meshed seamlessly, yet retained their own distinct identities without slowing the game down.

ICONS OF WORSHIP

Like the recent popular series of comic art trading cards, **Heresy** cards are extra-long, "Gameday" size, an inch longer than usual. To answer your first question, they shuffle just fine. To answer your second, or at least my second, they do fit in a shirt pocket, although they're a little heavier than you'll like.

Printed on excellent stock in generally muted colors, the cards showcase images in a spectrum of art styles. Gaming artists Brom and Timothy Bradstreet improve continually, whereas comics great Bernie Wrightson has sadly passed his peak. Barclay Shaw produces amazing computer art. Others produce amateur work. Overall, though, the art is a delight.

Amid the pictures' uneven beauties, you only gradually realize that the cards' flavor text is, well, quite flavorful: "I was known as the Pardoner, for it was my purpose to judge mankind," the Archangel Phanuel tells us. "My memory of man's evil is long. In the absence of the Light, I am finally free to take my vengeance." Brrr.

REVELATION

Think of a game of **Heresy** as two simultaneous, interrelated games of **Magic**. The action occurs in the physical world, called the Wilds, and in the cyberspace Matrix. The Wilds hold "domain" locations like Free Cities, Seafloor Metroplexes, Vatican Arcology, the Bordeaux-Barcelona Sprawl, London Dome, Federal Core, and Damnation. These domains provide

eight kinds of aura (mana) as well as "virtual support" for characters and arrays in the Matrix. Each character is assigned to a location, but can be opened to move elsewhere.

Matrix arrays, guarded by characters and IC (intrusion countermeasures) software, include Kiev Grid, Rio Net, Excalibur Megatruster, and the Towers of Ur. Any character can "jack in" to the Matrix; you move the card over to the Matrix playing field, leaving a token in the Wilds to represent the character's body. Some especially cool characters can "netwalk," entering the Matrix freely without leaving a body behind.

In your turn, your characters can attack opposing locations of the same type—Matrix characters target a Matrix location, Wilds characters attack in the Wilds. Combat proceeds basically as in **Magic**, although characters can move to intercept attacks on other domains, and Hosts can join together to gain bonuses. If you kill a domain's defenders with enough surplus damage to kill the domain too, you can either destroy it or take its tau value; if you kill an array, you take its stored tau, but the array is unharmed. New tau must be stored immediately or lost. Tau management adds a pleasing logistical dimension to **Heresy**, inspiring cards like Memory Cache. (Even in the distant future, it seems we'll still worry about memory upgrades.)

Characters killed in the Matrix "get ripped" and forcibly returned to their bodies, where they are "stricken" (flipped over) for a turn. Killed Matrix characters without physical bodies are destroyed. The physical and digital realms intermingle in appealing ways.

From the start we wanted the game to feel as "real" as possible, so we established areas with location cards that represented actual sites occupied by the game's characters—giving the whole thing a narrative flair closer to RPGs than TCGs. We wanted the Matrix to feel every bit as "real" as the Wilds, so the Matrix was handled much like the Wilds, but things move much faster there. This "absolute geography" (as opposed to the "abstract geography" that some games use) helps players visualize the narrative while adding some tasty strategic elements to game play.

Moving characters from domain to domain, jacking in and out of the Matrix, and zapping from one array to another enables

players to adjust their offensive and defensive positions as the game evolves. This makes for some fantastic game dynamics that rely on strategic placement of resources rather than waiting for the one perfect card to pop up from your deck. Good deck building, while important, isn't the linchpin that determines whether you win or lose a game of **Heresy**. Careful management of resources over the course of the game will often allow even a mediocre deck to win.

Game speed was a main concern during the design. I wanted to be sure that a two-player game could be played in about half an hour or less but that you couldn't win on your first few turns. One way we keep the game

Characters can have enhancements (enchancements) and alephs (artifacts); players can cast celestial powers (sorceries) and miracles (instants and interrupts); the timing rules talk of "first called, last resolved." I hope the search-and-replace function in Last Unicorn's word processor was easy to use.

In place of one attack, one of your characters may make a challenge against a single opposing character. This convenes the Areopagus, the convocation of the Fallen. In a four-stage process easier than **Vampire: The Eternal Struggle™** but more complex than **Blood Wars™**, your Hosts vote using their Areopagus Votes and Free Will values. The loser is destroyed or loses a title (Sovereign, Chief of the Apostates, Prince of the Four Altitudes) to the winner. The process moves with heavenly smoothness, and many cards can produce surprising outcomes.

LAMENTATIONS

Heresy embroiders on **Magic's** basic design much more thoroughly than other imitators. Given the game's considerable virtues, it's interesting that Last Unicorn has made claims that highlight its sins. A promotional flyer offers a bulleted list of four of **Heresy's** "notable features." That list could have trumpeted **Heresy's** many virtues; instead, two of its four claims are flatly wrong, and a third is fairly misleading. To quote:

- "**Heresy** has undergone rigorous playtesting to ensure card balance and smooth play throughout all facets of the game."

racing along is to allow players to discard up to their entire hand at the end of their turn, then draw enough cards from their deck or archive to fill their hand back up to seven cards. This ensures that players always have plenty of options during their turns, and they get to look over their new cards and plan strategies during their opponent's turn. It also means that most of the cards in your deck will have their proverbial fifteen minutes of fame rather than waiting in obscurity at the bottom of the pile while you get your butt kicked because of a bad shuffle.

To keep the players from winning on the first few turns, we gave **Heresy** an additive goal rather than a subtractive one. **Heresy's**

Like other **Magic** copies, **Heresy** plays about as well as its model, once you get the knack of moving between the Wilds and the Matrix. Cards are balanced against one another, and rares are not necessarily more powerful than commons—bravo! But in a subtler way, **Heresy's** balance may go too far.

The eight convictions (Devotion, Evolution, Preservation, Acquisition, Rebellion, Tradition, Stagnation, Technology) lack the strong personalities of **Magic's** colors. Each conviction has a good spread of Hosts, Heathens, combat bonuses, control and destruction effects, aura and influence generators, and the like. Each (except Technology) offers one Cardinal Virtue card and one Deadly Sin. Maybe Preservation gives somewhat more weight to **Magic's** green style of effects, and Stagnation works a bit more like black. But the convictions don't show characteristic strengths and weaknesses, so deck design becomes circumstantial, like choosing items from a menu. Balance? Yes. A missed bet? Yes!

- "**Heresy** was designed to be fully playable with two starter decks."

I haven't seen the starter decks. I reviewed playtest cards, proof sheets, and a stack of cut cards. But I'll bet an ante card that **Heresy** will play poorly out of the box. Imagine **Magic** with eight colors, and then think how a starter deck would play. Say it with me: *slooooooooooooow*. (New Millennium's excellent **Battlelords** has the same problem.) Do some preliminary tuning of any **Heresy** deck, or you'll spend the game staring at a hand of varied and useless convictions.

direct-damage cards (the most common form of game-breaker) can cripple your opponent, but they don't get you any closer to gaining enough *tau* to win. You will need to spend at least a couple of turns building up enough resources to attack an opponent safely, and it will probably take more than a few turns to establish enough of your Matrix to store the appropriate amount of *tau* to win the game.

Card rarity was given particular consideration. We didn't like the idea of rarity relating to power or usefulness, so **Heresy's** card mix puts many of the cards we found most useful in the common or uncommon slots. I've said it before and I'll say it again: You can play and win **Heresy** with only common cards.

- "**Heresy** plays just as well with ten players as with two. Great care was taken to ensure a solid multiplayer design."

I haven't played with ten players. However, I'm willing to believe this statement, because with two players **Heresy** does not play well. Once you're ahead of your opponent, you can knock out his domains and stay ahead all the way to the Empyrean. In a multiplayer game, positions even out, although there is a certain amount of "king-making" (where one player cannot win but, by lending support to another, can choose the winner). A house rule of "attack to the left" or other system of directed attacks can solve this problem.

AMEN

Last Unicorn's design team has proven its creativity in roleplaying design. In writing last year's **Aria** RPG, the company never stooped to copying, say, **Dungeons & Dragons®**. Yet card games require different skills—evidently.

Heresy is worth a try for seasoned **Magic** players who want greater complexity, sustained atmosphere, multiplayer politics, and beautiful art. **Vampire** fans should feel right at home with **Heresy** as well. But buy several starter decks, and do some tuning before you play.

I won't call this my last judgment on **Heresy**. But for now, it's the gospel truth.

Allen Varney is a freelance writer and game designer based in Austin, Texas. His reviews, reports, and pithy remarks frequently appear in The Duelist.

Proceeding from the assumption that most players are more visually oriented than text-oriented, we commissioned World Fantasy Award-winning artist Rick Berry and his creative partner, Darrel Anderson (the creative team behind some of the cyberspace sequences in *Johnny Mnemonic*) to develop a dynamic and stylish card design and icon set unconstrained by the borders and boxes typical of so many TCGs. Besides looking terrific, the design has been carefully crafted to help make the game easy to learn and fun to play.

For more information, check out the **Heresy** discussion on AOL, or send us e-mail (see summary, p. 92). Meanwhile, we'll see you at the end of the world, in Forsaken Earth!

In the beginning, there was only *Magic: The Gathering*®. Now, it seems everybody and their favorite license are getting into the trading card game market. With so many new games and a very limited amount of space in each Duellist, it's become impossible to give each release the treatment and scrutiny it deserves. In an attempt to cover as many of these games as possible, we've started to include shorter "capsule" reviews of new card games and expansions.

GUARDIANS™

(FPG Inc., Pittsburgh, PA)

Design: Keith Parkinson and Luke Peterschmidt.

Artists: Brom, Don Maitz, Parkinson, Mike Ploog, and James Warhola.

Graphic design: Keith Parkinson.

Format: 300+ cards, Limited Edition; three rarities. Sixty-card starter deck, \$8.95; fourteen-card booster pack, \$2.79.

**For two or four players;
playing time one hour.**

The most beautiful trading card game I've yet seen, *Guardians* also has an excellent design and is great fun to play. In the game, you and a rival become magical Vierkun (Guardians). Each Guardian, represented by its own card, has a unique ability, draws a different number of cards each turn, and can "channel" power to aid its armies in battle. Assemble armies of creatures (Rock Giants, Gn'Omish Gnomes, Drooling Clamjacks, etc.) in your three-card Stronghold; move these armies into six disputed spaces under cover of Shield cards; and battle it out when one of your armies meets an enemy.

The inventive combat system pairs opposing creatures, then permits "secondary" attacks by one side's surplus forces. Area-effect and ranged attacks, immunities, bonuses against certain colors of creatures, and channeling add flavor to the system. Some creatures can be bribed with gold, beer, or (ahem) "babes" to leave combat. To win, control all six disputed land spaces, take five enemy Shields, or destroy the opposing Guardian.

Guardians is not only handsome but well thought out. Its superb rulebook addresses many points that imply extensive playtesting, and its clean, original rules reward interesting play strategies.

Compared to other trading card games, *Guardians* is complex, yet I had no difficulty teaching it to a young opponent, who declared the game "really rad." The cards offer the usual fantasy creatures, and then add a crazed assortment of gnomes, Major Party Animals, and Floyd the Flying Pig. This whimsical lineup may annoy staid players, but it gives *Guardians* an individual style. And the art is gorgeous, among the best our field has to offer.

The five artists represented in *Guardians* work in much the same style, though, and gamers who prize variety over consistency may find the sameness a bit dull. Also, the game has no timing rules; I suggest adapting the *Magic* timing rules to settle disputes. But if we take a scolding for the sexism of the "Babes" bribery card, then the most telling point left to make against *Guardians* is its lack of deck-design strategies. My own tries at tuning a deck turned out dull, because most cards I've seen don't inspire tricky combinations.

However, the upside to this is that *Guardians* plays very well right out of the box. Each game involves logistics, maneuver, and a gradual concentration of strength, much like a good board wargame. I rank *Guardians* with *Shadowfist*™ and *Battlelords*™ as the best of the recent flood of card games. Players who enjoy fantasy battles with a more concrete, tactical flavor than *Magic* should pick up *Guardians*.

— Allen Varney

WING COMMANDER™

(Mag Force 7, Inc., Williams Bay, WI)

Design: Jeff Grubb and Don Perrin.

Art direction: Margaret Weis.

Format: 300-card set; three rarities plus two ultra-rares. Sixty-card starter set, \$7.95; fifteen-card booster, \$2.65.

**For two players; playing time
forty-five minutes to
one-and-a-half hours.**

Wing Commander is a game of space-opera combat in the style of *Star Wars* or *Battlestar Galactica*. Based on the *Wing Commander* series of computer games from Origin Systems™, the game depicts a space battle between carriers from two great spacefaring races: the humans of the Terran Federation and the feline warriors of the Kiltrathi Empire.

Each of the two races has a different set of cards. Each player chooses a side and plays with the corresponding deck, but it's possible to play "civil wars" as well. While starter decks are entirely either side or the other (and playable out of the box), booster packs contain a mix of both.

You win the game by destroying your opponent's carrier with a bombing run, or by reducing his Power Points to zero. To do so, you muster combinations of ship, pilot, and equipment cards and send them into space. Space battles are resolved using maneuver, battle damage, and luck cards; the battlefield is represented by two carrier cards and seven nav point cards.

Designed by Don Perrin (*Star of the Guardians*™ TCG) and Jeff Grubb (designer of many roleplaying games and settings), the game's rules are a model of clear, concise description. *Wing Commander* excels at depicting quick, zooming space combats and sudden reverses. Because cards can reverse each battle situation, games are fluid and rarely dull, with a rhythm like a dogfight's.

In addition, *Wing Commander* makes good use of a point counter system similar to the blood points in *Vampire: The Eternal Struggle*™—to bring resources into play, you must spend Power Points. Finally, certain pilots have Medal Points, which can be applied to Attack, Defense, Support, Bomb, or Maneuver values. These flexible points add much to the strategy of the game.

What flaws mar the game? Relatively few. The space-combat game is fairly well-represented in TCGs by now, but Mag Force 7 has had a chance to refine the Lane-to-Lane system it debuted in *Star of the Guardians*, and the repetition of a sci-fi topic has allowed them to improve on the previous game's mechanics.

Wing Commander's art is a mixed bag: Images taken from the computer game are high-quality, and each ship card has an individual squadron symbol and motto. Much of the rest is passable, but several pieces fall into the worst clichés of airbrushed sci-fi art.

Fans of space opera and space combat will enjoy the quick and easy play of the game; players of the *Wing Commander* computer games may enjoy taking on a human opponent. The game is worth the minimal investment required to play.

—Wolfgang Baur

Background by Amy Weber

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the Diviner

by J.M. White

IN THE WAKE OF ADVERSARIES

In the wake of an abundance of releases, *Homelands*[™] turns a new page in the unfolding story of Dominaria and in the continuing success of Wizards of the Coast.

Ice Age[™] and *Chronicles*[™]—the hottest summer releases by far—are by now well-integrated into players' decks and as a result, prices have started to settle on these two new sets as well as the older, out-of-print cards they affected.

Interest in collectable card games has risen over the past six months, which is obvious from the sheer number of releases scheduled from established companies. The talk of market saturation has quieted to a whisper as manufacturers vie for a piece of the *Magic: The Gathering*[®] pie, and retail stores become cautious about purchases. No game has hit the market with the same furor as a *Magic* release. *Shadowfist*[™], *Overpower*[™] and *Guardians*[™] have been the most successful releases of the summer, and we are seeing single-card interest in all three. The strongest potential seems to be with *Guardians*, based on the number of retail responses we received at *Scrye* for issue #11. FPG did not overprint the series and the production values of the game are perhaps the highest of any CCG. However, *OverPower*, *Guardians*, and *Shadowfist* are still too young to make accurate predictions as to their longevity as a collectable. A number of sports-based games are on their way to stores in the coming months, led by Donruss' NFL game, *Red Zone*[™], their major-league baseball game *Top of the Order*[™], and NBA *Basketball*[™] and NHL *Hockey*[™]. The Upper Deck Company's first venture into the CCG market, *Gridiron Fantasy Football*[™], was ready for an early November launch. You can expect more sports CCGs on the tail of these major releases. Collectability is likely to be determined by the size of print run for these cross-genre games.

Middle-earth[™], *Netrunner*[™] and *StarWars*[™] are the three big industry releases for late '95/early '96. With three power punchers like these, there could be a real market shake-up in the first quarter.

It's no mystery why certain cards hurtled down in price over the past six months. With the releases of *Fourth Edition*[™] and then *Chronicles*, sets such as *Antiquities*[™] and *Legends*[™] were severely discounted from their inflated high prices during the Golden Age of first quarter 1995. Carrion Ants crashed from \$40 to \$12 in May and the Elder Dragons took a similar dive in July, going from \$35-\$40 to \$10-\$12 for the new white-bordered cards. Prices have since settled, showing around a \$10 difference for fast-moving rare cards such as those affected by the release of white-bordered reprints. Cards not included in the watering of the singles market, like the feisty Guardian Beast and the elegant Moxes, still bring exorbitant prices when you can find them.

Homelands' future value will be proportional to the size of the print run. *Fallen Empires*[™] has recovered a bit from the saturation of earlier this year, but box prices are still well below retail and single-card interest is sluggish. With over a thousand cards currently in print, the whole face of *Magic* has changed.

One of the loudest outcries is from the collector, who just can't afford to collect every single set any more due to the number of cards released in such a short timespan. If you figure you need four booster boxes each of *Fourth Edition* and *Ice Age* to complete a set and one booster box each of *Homelands* and *Chronicles*, a collector would have to spend \$1,062 to get complete sets without much trading. Granted, WotC has always encouraged trading, but it isn't always possible to get the cards you need by depending on your network of friends. Over a six-month period, collecting these four sets would cost an average of \$177 a month or \$44.25 a week, which is a significant amount for the average American, not even taking into account younger players. It would be cheaper to buy the sets pre-assembled than to try and put them together yourself.

Addressing the *Magic* players: There has been concern in letters I've received recently that the high number of releases in a relatively short period of time has unbalanced tournament play. One reader mentioned that he resented being forced to buy into each new set, because if he did not, his opponents had an unfair advantage using and knowing cards he had never seen. This statement is interesting because one of the original concepts of *Magic* was the "cool" factor, where you would see cards you'd never seen and play new opponents you'd never played—and it would be fun!

The market has so far withstood the barrage of poor releases. Both consumers and retail stores seem to be reasonably cautious now about trying new products, and orders have been realistic on non-WotC and non-Decipher products. The large print runs of unlimited series cards have made a dent in cash flow, and the industry is paying attention now.

The future? Not even the great Diviner knows for sure, but it seems to me if the number of large established companies from other industries (comics, sports, games, toys, etc.) continues to increase, the level of recognition of CCGs should likely rise. It is, as with almost everything else, a matter of time and patience. However, as mass-market interest is created for *Magic*, the prices of all out-of-print cards should soar once again as new collectors vie for a waning supply—*Magic* is hot overseas and a lot of cards have already left the country.

One last note before I leave...counterfeiting is alive and well, and the product is so good it's nearly impossible to tell it from the real thing. Buying from a reputable dealer won't help you much, either. Providing provenance for *Magic* cards may become essential for retailers if card prices continue to increase.

Until we surf the net together...

J.M. White is publisher of the *Scrye: Guide To Collectible Card Games*, the industry's oldest price guide.



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Players make characters by choosing four from their collection of stones. You can combine stones to make a "Warrior-Thief" or a "Ninja-Sorcerer" or a pure "Wizard" or anything you want.

As your character gains experience, his power will grow. You can add a "Paladin" stone to bolster your "Samurai" or an "Assassin" stone to give some more edge to your "Fool."

Each tube comes with eight collectible dice and dueling rules. A 96-page roleplaying book is sold separately.



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Go West, Young Man...



Vicious pirates, tribal jungle shaman, evil twins, deadly rasor shiefas and the worlds first cajun chef secret agent. All of these creatures and more will be available to any Vierkun who explores DAGGER ISLE, the all-new first GUARDIANS expansion with 120 fantastic cards in different rarities (common, uncommon and rare) painted by fantasy greats: Chris Achilleos, Brom, Den Beauvais, Keith Parkinson, Mike Ploog and Rowena. More than just creatures, Dagger Isle adds spells, magic Items, new Guardians and a brand new Stronghold to further expand your strategic and tactical options. The Mid-Realms will never be the same after DAGGER ISLE.



Lost in the Shuffle

the musings of Richard Garfield

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE GREAT DALMUTI

AN AMBASSADOR OF GAMES

Games *could* be as big as the movies. They are far from it now; people may play games on the holidays, or as an evening's entertainment, but in general the interactive entertainment of games takes a back seat to the more passive entertainment offered by television and the movies.

When people are looking for something fun to do, games are often dismissed because many people say they don't like to play them. In fact, I've found that people who claim not to like game playing often really enjoy themselves when invited to play the right game. It's given me great pleasure over the years to develop my ability to choose the game that fits whatever peculiar mix of people I happen to be around. I feel like I am acting as the Ambassador of Games, working to represent games in the best light possible. This means not only introducing new players to a game they enjoy, but teaching veteran game players games they thought they didn't like or that they can play with people who don't often play games.

In looking for games which can meet both a new player's need for simplicity and the veteran gamer's desire for depth, I've found that some games are cure-alls, the game equivalent of penicillin. One such family of games is the group of card games that **The Great Dalmuti™** is based on.

In 1989, I was introduced to a card game which was different than any I had played before. The object of this game was to get rid of your cards quickly and so improve your position in a mock social hierarchy.

The sooner you got rid of your cards, the

better your "rank" (seat) in the next round, and the more you could benefit from "taxes" (in the form of the low-ranked players' best cards). There was no scoring, but there was a good deal of incentive to play well, as the player who got rid of his cards early was rewarded with a good position in the next hand. This advantage was no small thing, either; the person in the best seat could win hand after hand, though there was enough luck in the game that this wasn't guaranteed. The game was called *Dalmuti*, after the title the highest-ranked player was given.

A few weeks later I found that this game was similar to a gambling game played in Chinatown in New York. Later, a cousin said he had played it in college as *Presidents and Assholes*, a drinking game. A graduate student I knew had played a similar game in Japan under the name *Super Peasant*. I ran into the game under the names *Scum*, *Temple of the Seven Pleasures*, and *Rich Man*, *Poor Man*, and I've probably forgotten more names than those I remember.

I was fascinated by this—how could a game which I had never heard of be so widespread, and under so many different names? At the time I was hardly a card game scholar, but I did read game books for fun and had spent a good deal of time at the library tracking down obscure game references. I began searching for written references to this game and found nothing. (Later I found my first written reference to *Dalmuti* in David Parlett's excellent book, *A History of Card Games*. He traced the game to France, China, and Japan, and speculated that it was originally Chinese. The Japanese game he cites is called *Dai Hin Min*, or "a very poor man"—conceivably the etymological ancestor of the name *Dalmuti*.) In an effort to give this game broader recognition, I sent the rules I had learned to various publications.

THE SINCEREST FORM OF FLATTERY

In December of 1993 my sister Elizabeth suggested that we create our own version of this game. I was excited by the idea; everyone I had played it with had liked it, whether they typically played games or not. When I introduced the game to the people at Wizards of the Coast, it was an instant hit.

Since the rules to *Dalmuti* and its many cousins were in the public domain, it was easy enough to publish our own version. There were several precedents for this, which I looked at when thinking about an adaptation: *Uno*, *Wizard*, and *Phase 10*, for example, are all based on previously existing card games—*Crazy Eights*, *Oh Hell*, and *Rummy*, respectively. In adapting this game for new audiences, however, my main design goal was to make sure that anybody who bought the game felt that they had received something special, even if they knew the original game. One thing I thought we could add was game quality. For example, there is no rule that the best distribution of cards for every card game is four suits of thirteen cards. Adding special cards was also a

possibility. Then there was the production value of the game. Wizards of the Coast products have a very nice look, and we could do worse than lend that look to a new card game. After all, we once discussed designing standard decks of cards, simply because we thought we could make them look good! The last thing I felt we could do was standardize the game—that is, to help establish one set of published rules which players could agree on. This didn't necessarily mean that we would end up publishing the best version of the rules—just my best shot at a good, easy-to-learn adaptation, a way for players to start learning this kind of game.



“DALMUTI?”

The first playtest cards for what became **The Great Dalmuti** were developed in spring of 1994, around the time of the *Antiquities* buy-back program. I would delve into the boxes and boxes of *Antiquities*™ that had been returned to us, looking for twelve Atogs, or six Priests of Yawgmooth, which I numbered with a black indelible marker. These were used to distinguish the “suits” in the many styles of card decks which we playtested. Intrigued by the idea of developing a new type of card deck for this game, I played around with numerous variations on the game. Many of my cohorts at Wizards did as well; every day someone would have a new deck with a new set of rules. Most of these variants were wildly different than *Dalmuti*, but failed to capitalize on the essential simplicity of the game. I remember some games in which people moved randomly at the end of every hand, others in which no one ever moved at all. I also remember the work-disrupting call, “*Dalmuti?*”, which you could announce over the office intercom at any time of the day or night and get a game together—a game that invariably involved our very own *Duelist* editor, Kathryn.

In the end I settled on a “pyramid deck,” in which the number on a card reflects both the “rank” of the card—a single 2 always beats a single 3, for example—and the number of those cards contained in the deck—two 2s, three 3s, and so on. There were a number of strengths to the pyramid deck. It elegantly reflected the social stratification that the original game was based on, with a few people at the top and many at the bottom. I also found that the deck made for an interesting game, almost a caricature of the original game. In the original, the higher-ranked players tend to rely on powerful cards to win, while the lower classes can pull out a win by playing combinations of low cards at the right time. In **The Great Dalmuti**, the higher classes also tend to go out with good cards, but the lower classes often win by collecting seven or eight of a kind which the higher classes, for all their high cards, can't beat. Thus, the higher ranks can easily be overwhelmed by the masses—a feel I like.

The look and flavor of the game took some thought. I think that most published card games look worse than a regular deck of cards, and I was determined that the player of **The Great Dalmuti** at least be rewarded by a unique and attractive atmosphere. I considered all sorts

of milieu for the game, including India and the Turkish Empire, but I didn't want to borrow from an unfamiliar culture without careful research first. Eventually I decided to go with a non-saccharin fairy tale, based roughly on social classes in the European Middle Ages. I split the cards into two halves of six ranks, the ruling ranks and the ruled ranks. The lowest three classes were Serfs, Stonecutters, and Shepherdesses, the providers of raw material—food, shelter, and clothing, respectively. The next three classes were Cooks, Masons, and Seamstresses, the processors of these raw materials. Similarly, in the ruling class I made two tiers, each composed of military, religious, and noble leaders. These characters were all excellently portrayed by artist Margaret Organ-Kean, with help from Daniel Gelon, Sandra Everingham, and Anson Maddocks.



A NEW FORUM FOR GAMES

It was only after the game went to the printers that I heard about the existence of other companies' adaptations of the original *Dalmuti*. **Zillionaire** was a **Milton Bradley**™ version of the same game, part of a doomed line of games called *Big Deal Games*. I found it interesting that this game had failed in the States but was very widespread in Europe. It was one of my early lessons that the European game community is a lot different than the U.S. game community. Shortly afterwards I was introduced to a slew of European games based on the ideas in *Dalmuti*: **Karriere Poker**, **Gang of Four**, and **Hollywood Poker**, among others.

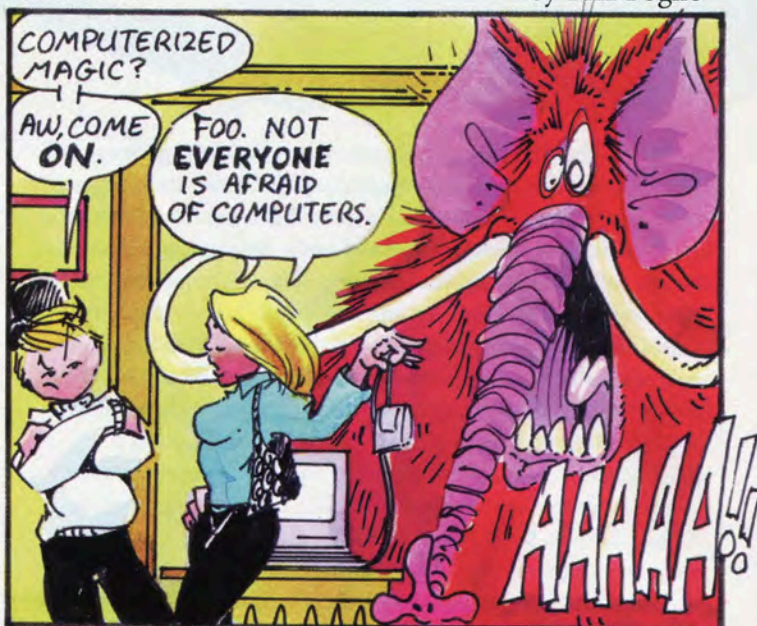
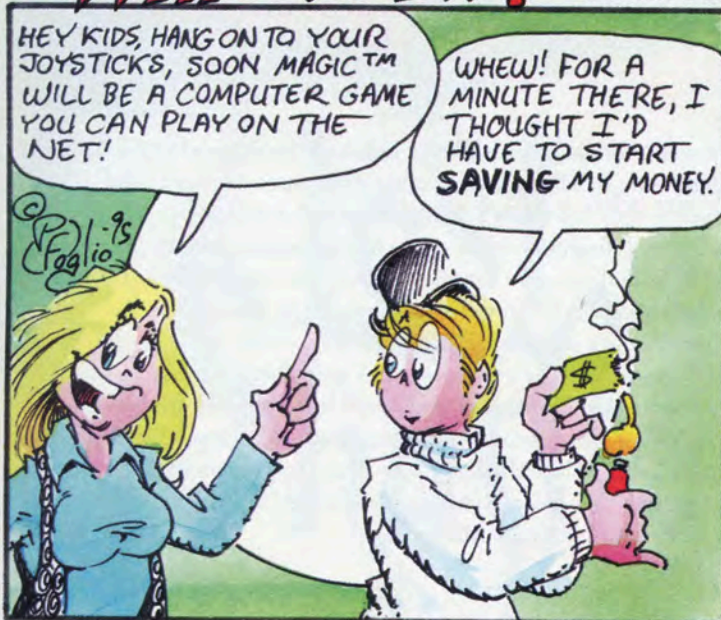
The discovery that these games had been published added to my puzzlement about the fate of *Dalmuti*. There is no reason why *everyone* shouldn't have heard of this game. It was frustrating to know that there was such an amazing game a lot of people would like that they'd never be able to find, even in Hoyle. The problem is that there isn't a forum through which such a game can be spread effectively. The people I most want to tell about games like *Dalmuti* are those who don't think they like games, and who therefore wouldn't teach the game to others.

We need more people who enjoy games to adopt games like this, games that everyone can play. Teach these games to your friends and family; cultivate the game genes among them. If you didn't know there was a game like *Dalmuti* out there, take a lesson from it—there are *lots* of unpopularized games out there which deserve to be played. It is a little more work to teach the casual player games that don't come in a box, but it is often worth the effort. The reward can be family and friends who are open to trying new games, and who consider games a great form of entertainment rather than a waste of time. If more of us who love games made the effort to be ambassadors for them, we would soon have a world of people who relish a new game as much as they now enjoy the latest box-office release.

WHAT'S NEW?

With Phil and Dixie

by Phil Foglio



ONE OBVIOUS BENEFIT IS THAT YOUR OPPONENT WILL BE WHATEVER YOU THINK THEY ARE.

BEATEN AGAIN?!

VERILY I FACE A TWISTED GENIUS OF A GAMEMASTER? NO WONDER THAT EVEN I AM DEFEATED!

AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO SEE THE EMBARRASSING REALITY

Wimp

HACKERS AND THE COMPUTER LITERATE WILL BE ABLE TO MESS AROUND WITH THE IMAGES AND PLAY WITH CUSTOMIZED CARDS. THERE ARE SO MANY CARDS, WHO'D KNOW?



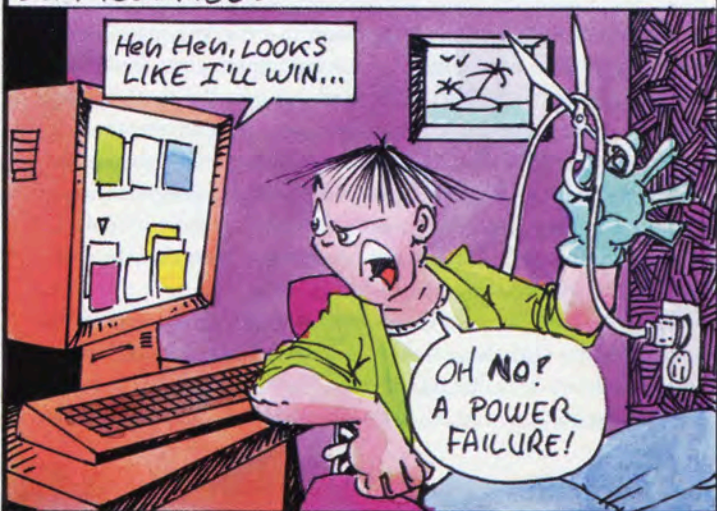
AND EVEN OUR OLD FRIEND, MR. SUITCASE, WOULD BALK AT WHAT IT'LL TAKE TO SUFFICIENTLY 'STACK A DECK'.

JEEZ, DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH GIGABYTE DRIVES COST?!

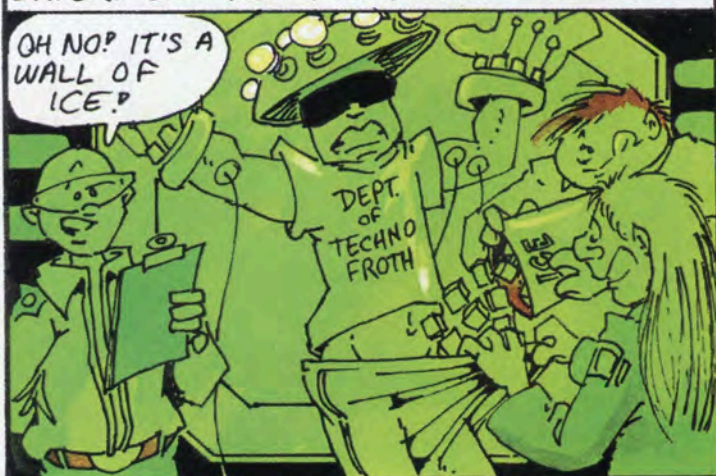
SHUFFLING... WILL BE BACK IN 170150 SECONDS

MY OTHER CARDS A BLACK LOTUS

AND, OF COURSE, IF THE GAME IS GOING BADLY, THERE'S ALWAYS 'TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES'.

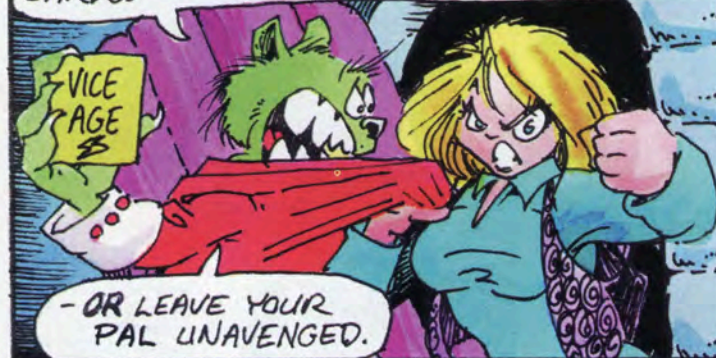


ALL VERY WELL, BUT WHAT OF THE FUTURE? EVEN NOW W.O.T.C. TECHNICIANS WITH WAY TOO MUCH TIME ON THEIR HANDS ARE EXPERIMENTING WITH VIRTUAL REALITY.



A STORY THAT'LL BE EASY TO FIT EXPANSION SETS ONTO.

HEY, WAIT! KILLING YOUR PAL WASN'T REALLY MY IDEA, I AM MERELY A LOWLY MINION OF **CLONEIFAX THE UNGODLY**, AND TO DEFEAT **HER**, YOU'LL NEED **THESE CARDS!**



TO INCREASE INTEREST FURTHER, INSTEAD OF EVERYBODY YOU MEET THROUGH THE NET TRYING TO KILL YOU, YOU START TEAMING-UP WITH THEM. SOON, THE PERSONAL INTERACTION COULD WIND UP BEING MORE INTERESTING THAN THE FIGHTING.

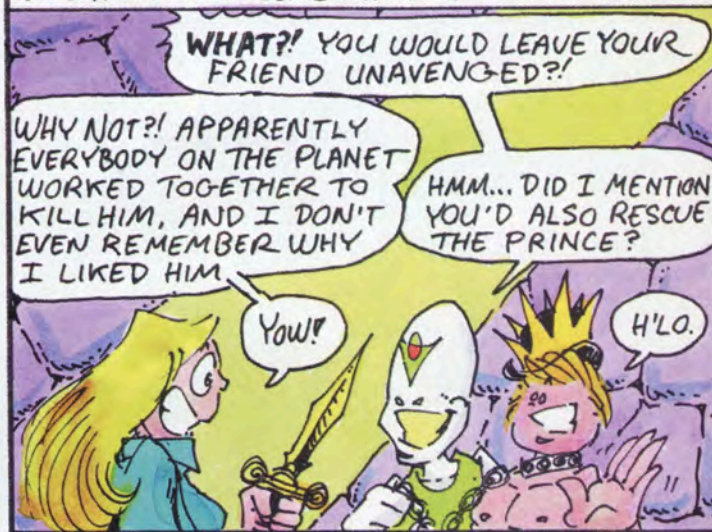


SOON YOU'LL BE IMMERSED IN THE STORY. YES, THERE'S A STORY THAT YOU PROGRESS THROUGH BY FIGHTING A SERIES OF DUELS.

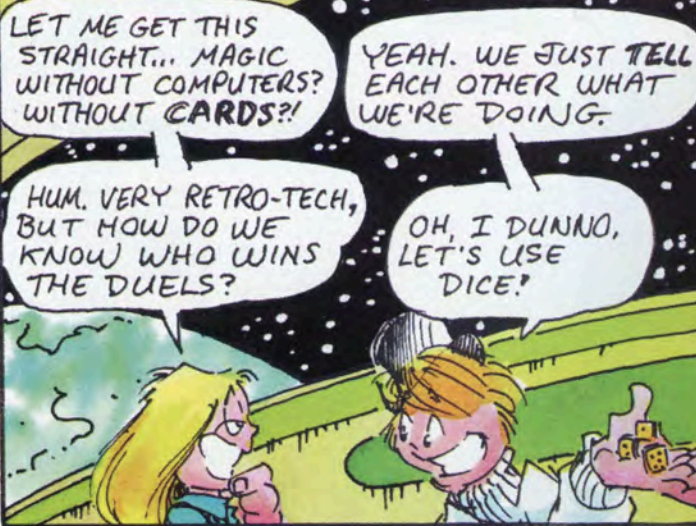
YOU FIGHT DUELS TO GET THE CARDS YOU NEED TO FIGHT OTHER DUELS TO GET BETTER CARDS, SO YOU CAN DUEL WITH THE VILLAIN'S FLUNKIES, DEFEAT THEM, AND GET THE CARDS THAT YOU NEED TO DESTROY THE GUY WHO KILLED YOUR PAL.



OF COURSE, IN TIME, THE STORY ELEMENTS WILL HAVE TO BECOME MORE INTERESTING...



IF SO, THEN THE NEXT GREAT BREAKTHROUGH WILL FOLLOW QUICKLY...



MAGIC THE PUZZLING

by Mark Rosewater

Time to Act

Your opponent is Monty. You and he are playing the third game of a duel in an *Ice Age*™ “minimaster” tournament. As you have both seen each other’s decks, you know that the only way for Monty to beat you is for him to “deck” you. (He has a slightly larger deck than you.) You have two turns remaining—you only have one card left in your library. **It is the start of your main phase; defeat Monty before you are unable to draw a card.**

(NOTE: This puzzle is based on a real game I played in a late-night tournament at a recent convention. Of course, in the actual game, I was one mana shy and lost, but you have a chance to help me right past wrongs and win the game that should have been mine. Win one for the Gipper!)



Goblin Ski Patrol
Summon Goblins
1 ♣: Flying and +2/+0. At end of turn, bury Goblin Ski Patrol. Use this ability only once and only if you control any snow-covered mountains.



Snowfall
Enchantment
Cumulative Upkeep: ♣
Islands may produce an additional ♣ when tapped for mana. This mana is usable only for cumulative upkeep. Snow-covered islands may produce either an additional ♣♣ or an additional ♣ when tapped for mana. This mana is usable only for cumulative upkeep.



Grizzled Wolverine
Summon Wolverine
♣: +2/+0 until end of turn. Use this ability only when a creature is assigned to block Grizzled Wolverine and only once each turn.



Soul Burn
Sorcery
Soul Burn deals 1 damage to a single target creature or player for each ♣ or ♠ you pay in addition to the casting cost. Gain 1 life for each ♣ you spend in this way. You cannot gain more life than the toughness of the creature or the total life of the targeted player.



Kjeldoran Guard
Summon Soldier
♣: Target creature gets +1/+1 until end of turn. If that creature leaves play this turn, bury Kjeldoran Guard. Use this ability only when attack or defense is announced and only if defending player controls no snow-covered lands.



Total War
Enchantment
Whenever any player declares an attack, destroy all untapped non-wall creatures that player controls that don't attack. Do not destroy creatures the player did not control at the beginning of the turn.

MONTY (RAINBOW DECK)

CARD IN MONTY'S HAND



Swords to Plowshares



Swamp (3)

YOU (RAINBOW DECK)



Swamp (4)



Chub Toad 1/1



Shield Bearer 0/3

YOUR HAND



Songs of the Damned



Soul Burn

Background by Anthony Petrarca

12 LIFE REMAINING



Wall of Lava 1/3



Folk of the Pines 2/5
Fylgia four counters



Soldevi Machinist 1/1



Flooded Woodlands



Island (4)



Plains (4)



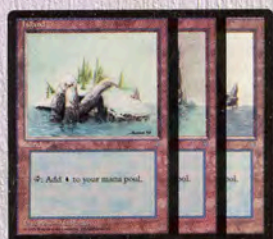
Forest (5)



Mountain (6)

20 LIFE REMAINING

* YOU HAVE NO CREATURES IN YOUR GRAVEYARD



Island (3)



Plains (2)



Forest (4)



Snow-Covered Mountain (4)



Kjeldoran Guard 1/1



Grizzled Wolverine 2/2



Scaled Wurm 7/6



Goblin Ski Patrol 1/1

DRAW NEXT TURN



Sleight of Mind



Snowfall



Errantry



Total War



Snow-Covered Mountain

DUELIST

MAGIC THE PUZZLING

by Mark Rosewater

By the Book

Your opponent is Julia. Things are looking bleak, as Julia destroyed all your forests with an Acid Rain and began beating up on you with her Phantasmal Forces. Then last turn, she summoned a Phantom Monster and stuck a Feast of the Unicorn on her Forces; you realized something had to be done. So you decide during your upkeep to give your Orcish Librarian a shot. You took eight cards off the top of your library and randomly removed four of them from the game. The remaining four cards may be placed on top of your library in any order. With the discovery of these new cards, you realize that you can defeat Julia, but you will have to do it soon—you cannot survive another of her attacks. **It is your upkeep phase; defeat Julia this turn without dying yourself.**



Elder Druid
Summon Cleric
3 ♣, ♠: Tap or untap target artifact, creature, or land.

3 ♣



Orcish Librarian
Summon Orc
♠, ♠: Take the top eight cards of your library; remove four of them at random from the game. Put the remaining four on top of your library in any order.

1 ♠



Freyalise Supplicant
Summon Cleric
♠: Sacrifice a red or white creature to have Freyalise Supplicant deal an amount of damage equal to half the creature's power, rounded down, to target creature or player.

1 ♠



Reincarnation
Instant
If target creature is placed in graveyard this turn, bring a creature from that graveyard directly into play under the control of the owner of the target creature. Treat this creature as though it were just summoned.

1 ♣



Melee
Instant
Cast only on your turn during combat before defense is chosen. Choose how attacking creatures you control are blocked; all defense must be legal. After declaring blocking, untap any unblocked attacking creature. Treat those creatures as though they had not attacked.

4 ♠

If you think you have a solution and would like to test it out (or have general feedback), please feel free to e-mail me at woody@wizards.com

Due to the high volume of responses, I might take a while to respond (and no, I don't give out clues).

JULIA (BLACK/BLUE)



Ghost Hounds
3/2 (with
Unholy Strength)

**Unholy
Strength**



Swamp

YOU (GREEN/RED)



**Concordant
Crossroads**



Mishra's Workshop



Orcish Librarian 1/1

YOUR HAND



Craw Giant 6/4



Reincarnation

Background by Anthony Petrarca

17 LIFE REMAINING



Wall of Vapor 0/1



Cemetery Gate 0/5



Phantom Monster 3/3



Feast of the Unicorn

Phantasmal Forces
(8/1 with Feast of the Unicorn)



Underground Sea



Island



Island



Black Mana Battery

6 LIFE REMAINING

* YOU HAVE NO CREATURES IN YOUR GRAVEYARD



Urza's Tower (3)



Urza's Mine



Urza's Power Plant



Mountain



Mountain (2)



Orcish Lumberjack 1/1



Elder Druid 2/2



Freyalise Suppliant 1/1



Candelabra of Tawnos

TOP FOUR CARDS IN LIBRARY



Melee



Aggression



Eternal Warrior



Jalum Tome



Lure



Blood Lust



Forest

MAGIC THE PUZZLING

by Mark Rosewater

To Err Is Human

The latest batch of *Fourth Edition™* and *Chronicles™* cards has just arrived back from the printer and—maybe it's just me—something about them seems funny. Actually, I've found more than thirty-five things that seem funny. Can you help me find all the mistakes? (Note that since these are new, improved versions of the cards, there are slight changes in how the card text is colored and laid out, so don't count these as errors.)

Special thanks to James Martin and especially Scott Pickle for solving the puzzle of the Magic typesetting system to produce these cards.



PLEASE TELL US WHAT YOU THINK



THE DUELIST



Do us a favor...and you could win a Duelist life counter!

Simply complete the survey below, and we'll enter you into a drawing for a finely crafted *Duelist* life counter. Ten winners will receive a sturdy 3 1/2" by 2 1/2" pewter and enamel counter with brass-plated and silver-plated beads, the perfect size to slip into a deck box. Each one is finished in one of the five colors of Magic. Mail the survey (or a photocopy of it) to: *The Duelist*, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057.

READER POLL: IS THE RESALE CARD MARKET GOOD FOR GAMING?

About how many trading card game cards have you purchased as single cards?

- ☐ none ☐ 0-10 ☐ 11-50 ☐ 51-100
☐ more than 100

What's the average price you pay for a single card?

- ☐ \$0-10 ☐ \$11-50 ☐ \$51-100
☐ more than \$100

What's the highest price you've ever paid for a single card?

How does the deal you get buying a single card compare to what you get trading?

- ☐ Buying singles is a better deal
☐ Trading for cards is a better deal

Where do you buy most of your cards?

- ☐ at mail order stores ☐ at conventions
☐ over the Internet ☐ from friends
☐ at hobby or comics stores ☐ other _____

In 1996, I think I will buy:

- ☐ more of my Magic™ and other TCG cards as single cards than I did in 1995.
☐ fewer single cards than I did in 1995.
☐ about the same number of single cards.

Do you think the resale card market helps or hurts *players* of trading card games?

- ☐ helps ☐ hurts ☐ I don't know

Do you think the resale card market helps or hurts *collectors* of trading card games?

- ☐ helps ☐ hurts ☐ I don't know

Which price guide do you use most often?

- ☐ Scrye™ ☐ InQuest™ ☐ Ventura™
☐ Conjure™ ☐ Combo™
☐ other _____

I purchase single cards primarily because:

- ☐ I need them for my collection
☐ I need them to play with
☐ I need them both for my collection and to play with
☐ other: _____

☐ **YES!** *I'd like to win a Duelist life counter!*

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

Name: _____ I am: ☐ male ☐ female
 Address: _____ ☐ under 13
 _____ ☐ 13-17 ☐ 18-24
 Phone: _____ ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44
 Today's date: _____ ☐ 45-55 ☐ over 55

My household income (or, if under 18, my family's income), before taxes, is:

- ☐ under \$15,000 ☐ \$15,001-\$25,000 ☐ \$25,001-\$35,000
☐ \$35,001-\$50,000 ☐ \$50,001-\$75,000 ☐ over \$75,000

How many months have you been playing Magic? _____

About how many Magic cards do you own?

- ☐ 0-100 ☐ 101-200 ☐ 201-500 ☐ 501-1000 ☐ 1001-1500
☐ more than 1500

☐ Yes, I'd be happy to have you contact me about my thoughts on *The Duelist*.

Work/day phone _____ home phone _____

E-mail address _____

Please Rate Our Magazine...

THE CONTENTS

How would you rate the articles in this issue of *The Duelist*?

	Rating:	Great	Good	OK	Terrible!
Editorial (p. 7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Letters (p. 8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
WotC News (p. 10)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reports on TCGs (p. 15)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Something...Different (p. 18)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Card Spotlight (p. 20)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mr. Suitcase (p. 24)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Swimming with Sharks (p. 26)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Multiplayer Magic™ (p. 28)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Making Enemies (p. 34)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for <i>Ice Age</i> ™ (p. 38)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
WotC Picks (p. 42)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
House Rules (p. 44)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Murk Dwellers (p. 46)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Magic Rulings/Errata (p. 50)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ashes in the Sun Excerpt (p. 52)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Library of Leng (p. 55)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Artist Interview (p. 63)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Artist Announcements (p. 68)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Climb to the Top (p. 72)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planeswalking in LA (p. 74)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
V:TES Rulings/Errata (p. 81)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Rating:	Great	Good	OK	Terrible!
Pulse of the Canaille (p. 83)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
TCG Year in Review (p. 85)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Heresy Review (p. 90)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Diviner (p. 94)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lost in the Shuffle (p. 98)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Phil and Dixie (p. 100)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Magic: The Puzzling (p. 102)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Magic Tricks (p. 108)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dark Sovereigns™ list (p. 118)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your Turn (p. 122)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
WotC Index (p. 128)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thanks! I was really glad to read the article on:

You losers! What I *really* wanted to read about in this issue was: _____

If I had to change one thing about this issue of the magazine, I'd change: _____

THE ORGANIZATION

You may have noticed that this issue is organized a little differently. We've taken your suggestions on how to better organize *The Duelist* and have added some sections and revamped others. How did we do?

- ☐ It's a lot easier to find the articles I want to read; or
☐ It's a lot harder to find the articles I want to read; or
☐ It's about the same, really.

I really liked this new section: _____

I really didn't like this new section: _____

I really wish you'd add this section: _____

THE COMPLETE MAGIC CARD LIST

How would you rate The Complete Magic Card List that was included with this issue?

Does the list have everything you want in it?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, what is it missing? _____

Is the list useful and easy to use?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, how could we improve it? _____

How would you rate the list overall?

- ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ OK ☐ Poor

In previous issues of *The Duelist*, we've included counters and tokens, FAQs, rules supplements, and promotional cards from Magic and other games. The next time we include a special insert with *The Duelist*, what would you like it to be?: _____

MAGIC TRICKS

(step-by-step solutions to last issue's Magic: The Puzzling)

by Mark Rosewater

*How many evil twins does it take to change a light bulb?
Only one, but I wouldn't turn the light on.*

For this column, my evil twin has asked if, for once, he could write the solutions. After much contemplation, I have decided to let him. So, without further ado, here's Evil Mark:

Hello. I understand that many of you have toiled for hours enduring great mental anguish in a vain attempt to crack my creations. Now you come crawling on your knees begging for solutions. All I have to say to all of you is...suckers! Like I'm going to tell you how to do it! Yeah, dream on. I prefer to watch you squirm....

Sorry about that. I don't know what I was thinking. Well, let's forget this whole ugly incident and just get right to the answers.

"PLAYING FRANKENSTEIN"

(Puzzle published in Duelist #7, p. 91)

The goal was to use all the spells in order to change four creatures into four completely different creatures. It's pretty straightforward, so I'll just give you the answers.

THE FOUR CREATURES CREATED:

1) LOST SOUL [2/1 swampwalking black creature] (SAVANNAH LIONS + LESHRAK'S RITE + DEATHLACE)

2) KJELDORAN PHALANX [2/5 banding, first strike, white creature] (LAND LEECHES + HOLY STRENGTH + IMMOLATION + TRANSMUTATION + COOPERATION + PURELACE)

3) WIND SPIRIT [3/2 flying, cannot be blocked by one creature, blue creature] (MERFOLK OF THE PEARL TRIDENT + FLIGHT + UNHOLY STRENGTH + IMPOSING VISAGE)

4) REPENTANT BLACKSMITH [1/2 protection from red, white creature] (PEARLED UNICORN + KROVIKAN FETISH + WEAKNESS + RED WARD)

"METAMORPHOSIS"

(Puzzle published in Duelist #7, pp. 90-91)

The goal of this puzzle is to do 13 damage, so we need to see what we have that

can deal damage. We have four creatures (Tetravus, Primal Clay, Bird Maiden, and Prodigal Sorcerer, a.k.a. "Tim"), only one of which can do any direct damage (Tim). As Ryan has a lot of blockers, it doesn't look as if an attack is going to prove very profitable.

In our hand, we have only one spell capable of dealing damage—a Creature Bond—and very little to kill a creature with, thus making the Creature Bond hard to use. Finally, we have a Juxtapose, which we could use to get the biggest damage dealer in play, Ryan's Aladdin's Ring (also referred to as the "shotgun"). But even if we manage to get Aladdin's Ring, we still would need to do 9 more points of damage, plus we would have to get a significantly higher amount of mana.

The key to this puzzle is to examine the resources we have and then to figure out how to maximize the damage each resource can do.

The Ashnod's Altar can get us our extra mana, so we just need to find a way to squeak out 9 damage. Shatter will allow us to use Creature Bond, and an Enchantment Alteration will give us access to an Unstable Mutation to maximize our damage. We begin by getting ourselves some mana.

UPKEEP PHASE:

1) REMOVE THE COUNTERS FROM THE TETRAVUS TO MAKE THREE 1/1 TETRAVITE CREATURES. I should mention at this point that you are not able to attack with these Tetravite creatures as they were not considered in play when you began your turn and thus have "summoning sickness."

DRAW PHASE

2) DRAW SHATTER.

MAIN PHASE:

3) TAP ALL YOUR LANDS TO ADD ONE BLACK (USED AS COLORLESS), FOUR BLUE, AND ONE RED MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL.

4) USE ONE BLUE MANA TO CAST ENERGY TAP. USE IT TO TAP YOUR TETRAVUS



TO ADD SIX COLORLESS MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL.

5) SACRIFICE YOUR TETRAVITE TOKENS TO YOUR ASHNOD'S ALTAR TO ADD SIX COLORLESS MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL.

6) USE ONE BLUE AND ONE COLORLESS MANA TO CAST CREATURE BOND ON RYAN'S DANCING SCIMITAR. You chose the Dancing Scimitar since it is the one creature you can destroy (with Shatter).

7) USE ONE BLUE MANA TO CAST ENCHANTMENT ALTERATION. USE IT TO MOVE THE UNSTABLE MUTATION FROM YOUR PRIMAL CLAY TO RYAN'S DANCING SCIMITAR. THIS CAUSES YOUR PRIMAL CLAY TO DIE, AS IT IS NOW A 0/0 CREATURE, AND MAKES THE DANCING SCIMITAR A 4/8 CREATURE. This is very important because you want to maximize the damage that the Creature Bond is going to do.

8) USE ONE RED AND ONE COLORLESS MANA TO CAST SHATTER ON RYAN'S DANCING SCIMITAR, CAUSING RYAN TO SUFFER 8 POINTS OF DAMAGE. RYAN IS NOW AT 5 LIFE.

9) USE ONE BLUE AND THREE COLORLESS MANA TO CAST JUXTAPOSE. FIRST YOU WILL TRADE EITHER YOUR BIRD MAIDEN OR PRODIGAL SORCERER (I CHOSE BIRD MAIDEN) FOR RYAN'S SERRA ANGEL. THEN YOU WILL TRADE YOUR PENTAGRAM OF THE AGES FOR RYAN'S ALADDIN'S RING.

10) USE EIGHT COLORLESS MANA TO TAP AND ACTIVATE THE ALADDIN'S RING YOU'VE JUST TAKEN. YOU DO 4 POINTS OF DAMAGE TO RYAN. HE IS NOW AT 1 LIFE.

11) TAP TIM (PRODIGAL SORCERER) TO DO THE 1 FINAL POINT OF DAMAGE.

ASHNOD'S ALTAR TO ADD ONE BLUE AND EIGHT COLORLESS MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL.

3) TAP THE PRODIGAL SORCERER ("TIM") TO DEAL 1 DAMAGE TO RYAN. RYAN IS NOW AT 12 LIFE. We plan to put Paralyze on Tim because it will allow us during upkeep to pay four colorless mana to untap him. This can be done multiple times, as the Paralyze doesn't have any numeric limitations on its use. We tap Tim before we move the Paralyze as it would tap Tim anyway and we might as well use his damage-dealing ability first.

4) USE THE ONE BLUE MANA TO CAST ENCHANTMENT ALTERATION AND MOVE THE PARALYZE FROM SERRA ANGEL TO TIM.

5) USE FOUR MANA TO PAY FOR THE PARALYZE AND UNTAP TIM.

6) TAP TIM TO DEAL ANOTHER 1 DAMAGE TO RYAN. RYAN IS NOW AT 11 LIFE.

7) USE FOUR MANA TO PAY FOR THE PARALYZE AND UNTAP TIM.

8) TAP TIM TO DEAL ANOTHER 1 DAMAGE TO RYAN. RYAN IS NOW AT 10 LIFE. We stop after doing 3 damage since we need to save the rest of the mana for other things; Tim did his job getting Ryan down to 10 life.

DRAW PHASE:

9) DRAW SHATTER.

MAIN PHASE:

10) TAP SWAMP, THREE ISLANDS, AND MOUNTAIN TO ADD ONE BLACK, THREE BLUE, AND ONE RED MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL.

11) USE ONE BLUE MANA TO CAST ENERGY TAP ON TETRAVUS. TAP THE TETRAVUS AND ADD SIX COLORLESS MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL. This is why we didn't sacrifice the Tetravus itself along with the Tetravite counters.

12) SACRIFICE TETRAVUS, BIRD MAIDEN, AND TIM TO ASHNOD'S ALTAR TO ADD SIX COLORLESS MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL.

13) USE ONE BLACK AND ONE COLORLESS MANA TO CAST ANIMATE DEAD ON PRIMAL CLAY. CHOOSE FOR IT TO TAKE THE SHAPE OF A 1/6 WALL (0/6 THANKS TO THE ANIMATE DEAD). The importance of killing and animating the Primal Clay is that it allows us to turn it into a 0/6 wall. Since we are going to use Juxtapose anyway to get Aladdin's Ring, we might as well set up our Creature Bond to do the maximum amount of damage.

14) USE ONE BLUE AND ONE COLORLESS MANA TO CAST CREATURE BOND ON PRIMAL CLAY. We could have used Creature Bond on Dancing Scimitar but it would've done only 5 damage.

15) USE ONE BLUE AND THREE COLORLESS MANA TO CAST JUXTAPOSE. FIRST, YOU WILL TRADE YOUR PRIMAL CLAY FOR RYAN'S SERRA ANGEL. THEN YOU WILL TRADE YOUR PENTAGRAM OF THE AGES FOR RYAN'S ALADDIN'S RING. Notice we are using the Juxtapose to our best advantage by stealing something we need while giving Ryan control of something we want him to have.

16) SACRIFICE THE SERRA ANGEL TO ASHNOD'S ALTAR TO ADD TWO COLORLESS MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL.

17) USE ONE RED AND ONE COLORLESS MANA TO CAST SHATTER ON PRIMAL CLAY. THIS WILL DEAL 6 DAMAGE (THE PRIMAL CLAY'S TOUGHNESS) TO RYAN. RYAN IS NOW AT 4 LIFE.

18) USE EIGHT MANA AND TAP ALADDIN'S RING TO DEAL THE FINAL 4 DAMAGE TO RYAN.



So you think you have it figured out now, don't you? Well aren't you special? You have the answer. Well, there's actually a better, harder answer. But you all are probably too chicken to try. Bock, bock, bock, bock....

What my evil doppelganger is trying to say is that there is a harder variant if you would like an extra challenge. To attempt it, just remove the Dancing Scimitar from Ryan's side and then try to solve the puzzle again.

Not so easy now, is it?

METAMORPHOSIS: HARDER VARIANT

UPKEEP PHASE:

1) REMOVE THE COUNTERS FROM THE TETRAVUS TO MAKE THREE 1/1 TETRAVITE TOKEN CREATURES.

2) TAP AN ISLAND AND SACRIFICE THE THREE TETRAVITE TOKENS (BUT NOT THE TETRAVUS ITSELF) AND PRIMAL CLAY TO

"ARMING THE ENEMY"*(Puzzle published in Duelist #7, p. 88-89)*

The next puzzle is actually seven puzzles in one. Of course, only six of the puzzles have an answer which, in itself, is the answer for the bigger puzzle. Below, I quickly go through the solution for each card in Chalice's graveyard.

ASHNOD'S BATTLE GEAR

1) TAP SAVANNAH, TUNDRA, VOLCANIC ISLAND, AND BOTH MANA BATTERIES TO ADD TWO BLUE, ONE GREEN, AND EIGHTEEN RED AND WHITE MANA (ALL TO BE USED AS COLORLESS) TO CHALICE'S MANA POOL.

2) USE ONE BLUE MANA TO CAST SLEIGHT OF MIND ON HOMARID SHAMAN CHANGING "GREEN" TO "WHITE."

3) USE THE OTHER BLUE MANA TO ACTIVATE HOMARID SHAMAN AND TAP VETERAN BODYGUARD. In most of the solutions, the Homarid Shaman and Sleight of Mind are used to neutralize the Veteran Bodyguard.

4) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP SNOW HOUND TO RETURN THE SNOW HOUND AND HOMARID SHAMAN TO CHALICE'S HAND.

5) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA TO CAST ASHNOD'S BATTLE GEAR.

6) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA TO ACTIVATE STORMBIND. LOSE A RANDOM CARD AND DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO YOUR BROWN OUPHE, DESTROYING IT. With the two Circles of Protection, Stormbind's major use is in getting rid of your creatures.

7) USE ONE GREEN AND THREE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP ELDER DRUID TO TAP SHIELD OF THE AGES.

8) USE FIVE COLORLESS MANA AND SACRIFICE GAUNTLETS OF CHAOS TO EXCHANGE CHALICE'S TAPPED RED MANA BATTERY FOR YOUR FORCEFIELD.

9) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA TO TAP AND ACTIVATE THE CROWN OF THE AGES TO MOVE THE WHITE WARD FROM YOUR SERRA ANGEL TO CHALICE'S BLINKING SPIRIT. The Elder Druid and Gauntlets of Chaos are used in almost all the solutions to neutralize the Shield of the Ages and Forcefield.

10) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA AND TAP ASHNOD'S BATTLE GEAR TO GIVE BLINKING SPIRIT +2/-2, MAKING IT A 6/4 CREATURE.

11) ATTACK WITH THE BLINKING SPIRIT, DEALING 6 DAMAGE. YOU ARE NOW AT 2 LIFE. The reason Chalice cannot attack with any other creatures is that you have a Sandstorm in the Ice Cauldron, which would instantly destroy any attackers with a toughness of one.

12) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP SKULL CATAPULT TO SACRIFICE BLINKING SPIRIT TO DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO YOU, REDUCING YOU TO 0 LIFE.

PURELACE

Ironically, the Purelace proves to be the most effective card, making the Stormbind immune to the CoPs.

1) TAP SAVANNAH, BOTH PLAINS, MANA VAULT, AND WHITE MANA BATTERY TO ADD ONE GREEN, THREE COLORLESS, AND TEN WHITE MANA (NINE TO BE USED AS COLORLESS) TO CHALICE'S MANA POOL.

2) USE ONE WHITE MANA TO CAST PURELACE ON STORMBIND.

3) USE ONE GREEN AND THREE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP ELDER DRUID TO TAP SHIELD OF THE AGES.

4) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA TO TAP SNOW HOUND TO RETURN SNOW HOUND AND HOMARID SHAMAN TO CHALICE'S HAND.

5) ACTIVATE THE BLINKING SPIRIT FOR NO MANA AND RETURN IT TO CHALICE'S HAND.

6) USE EIGHT COLORLESS MANA TO DISCARD ALL FOUR CARDS IN CHALICE'S HAND TO DEAL 8 DAMAGE TO YOU.

BLOOD LUST

1) TAP SAVANNAH, TUNDRA, VOLCANIC ISLAND, PLAINS, AND BOTH MANA BATTERIES TO ADD TWO BLUE, ONE GREEN, NINE WHITE (ALL USED AS COLORLESS), AND TEN RED MANA (ALL BUT ONE USED AS COLORLESS) TO CHALICE'S MANA POOL.

2) USE ONE BLUE MANA TO CAST SLEIGHT OF MIND ON HOMARID SHAMAN, CHANGING "GREEN" TO "WHITE."

3) USE THE OTHER BLUE MANA TO ACTIVATE HOMARID SHAMAN AND TAP VETERAN BODYGUARD.

4) USE ONE GREEN AND THREE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP ELDER DRUID TO TAP SHIELD OF THE AGES.

5) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP SNOW HOUND TO RETURN IT AND ELDER DRUID TO CHALICE'S HAND.

6) USE ONE RED AND ONE COLORLESS TO CAST BLOOD LUST ON HOMARID SHAMAN, MAKING IT A 6/1 CREATURE.

7) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA TO ACTIVATE STORMBIND. LOSE A RANDOM CARD AND DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO YOUR BROWN OUPHE, DESTROYING IT.

8) USE FIVE COLORLESS MANA AND SACRIFICE GAUNTLETS OF CHAOS TO EXCHANGE CHALICE'S TAPPED RED MANA BATTERY FOR YOUR FORCEFIELD.

9) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA TO TAP AND ACTIVATE THE CROWN OF THE AGES TO MOVE THE UNSTABLE MUTATION FROM CHALICE'S BLINKING SPIRIT TO HIS HOMARID SHAMAN, MAKING IT A 9/4 CREATURE.

10) ACTIVATE THE BLINKING SPIRIT FOR NO MANA AND RETURN IT TO CHALICE'S HAND.

11) USE FOUR COLORLESS MANA TO ACTIVATE STORMBIND. LOSE TWO RANDOM CARDS AND DEAL 4 DAMAGE TO YOUR SERRA ANGEL, KILLING IT.

12) ATTACK WITH YOUR HOMARID SHAMAN AND DEAL 9 DAMAGE.



FLASHFIRES

This solution revolves around removing your ability to pay for your CoPs and Shield of the Ages.

1) TAP SAVANNAH, TUNDRA, VOLCANIC ISLAND, MANA VAULT, AND BOTH MANA BATTERIES TO ADD TWO BLUE, ONE GREEN, EIGHT WHITE (ALL USED AS COLORLESS), TEN RED (ALL BUT ONE USED AS COLORLESS), AND THREE COLORLESS MANA TO CHALICE'S MANA POOL.

2) USE ONE RED AND THREE COLORLESS MANA TO CAST FLASHFIRES AND DESTROY ALL PLAINS (AND SAVANNAHS). THIS LEAVES YOU WITH FOUR FORESTS (TWO OF WHICH ARE TAPPED).

3) USE ONE BLUE MANA TO CAST SLEIGHT OF MIND ON HOMARID SHAMAN, CHANGING "GREEN" TO "WHITE."

4) USE THE OTHER BLUE MANA TO ACTIVATE HOMARID SHAMAN AND TAP VETERAN BODYGUARD.

5) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP SNOW HOUND TO RETURN IT AND HOMARID SHAMAN TO CHALICE'S HAND.

6) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA TO ACTIVATE STORMBIND. LOSE A RANDOM CARD AND DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO YOUR BROWN OUPHE, DESTROYING IT.

7) USE FIVE COLORLESS MANA AND SACRIFICE GAUNTLETS OF CHAOS TO SWAP CHALICE'S TAPPED RED MANA BATTERY FOR YOUR FORCEFIELD.

8) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA AND TAP CROWN OF THE AGES TO MOVE WHITE WARD FROM YOUR SERRA ANGEL TO CHALICE'S BLINKING SPIRIT.

9) ATTACK WITH THE BLINKING SPIRIT, DEALING 4 DAMAGE. YOU ARE NOW AT 4 LIFE.

10) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA, TAP THE SKULL CATAPULT, AND SACRIFICE THE BLINKING SPIRIT TO DEAL 2 DAMAGE. YOU ARE AT 2 LIFE.

11) USE ONE GREEN AND THREE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP ELDER DRUID TO UNTAP THE SKULL CATAPULT.

12) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA, TAP THE SKULL CATAPULT, AND SACRIFICE THE ELDER DRUID TO DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO YOU. YOU NOW HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TAP THE TWO REMAINING FORESTS TO PREVENT A POINT OF DAMAGE WITH SHIELD OF THE AGES.

13) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA TO ACTIVATE STORMBIND. LOSE A RANDOM CARD IN CHALICE'S HAND TO DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO YOU. AS YOU ARE TAPPED OUT, YOU WILL BE UNABLE TO USE YOUR CIRCLES OF PROTECTION AND THIS WILL DEFEAT YOU.

LIGHTNING BOLT

This is the card that Chalice cannot win with. This goes to show that just because a card is useful in many situations does not mean it is useful in *all* situations.

BERSERK

This solution runs you out of available mana to fuel your CoPs.

1) TAP SAVANNAH, TUNDRA, VOLCANIC ISLAND, MANA VAULT, AND RED MANA BATTERY TO ADD TWO BLUE, ONE GREEN, TEN RED (ALL USED AS COLORLESS), AND THREE COLORLESS MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL.

2) USE A GREEN MANA TO CAST BERSERK ON THE BLINKING SPIRIT. THIS MAKES IT A 8/4 CREATURE WITH TRAMPLE THAT WILL BE DESTROYED AT END OF TURN IF IT ATTACKS.

3) USE ONE BLUE MANA TO CAST SLEIGHT OF MIND ON THE HOMARID SHAMAN, CHANGING "GREEN" TO "WHITE."

4) USE ONE BLUE MANA TO TAP VETERAN BODYGUARD.

5) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP SNOW HOUND TO RETURN IT AND HOMARID SHAMAN TO CHALICE'S HAND.

6) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA TO ACTIVATE STORMBIND. LOSE A RANDOM CARD TO DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO BROWN OUPHE, DESTROYING IT.

7) USE FIVE COLORLESS MANA TO ACTIVATE GAUNTLETS OF CHAOS AND EXCHANGE CHALICE'S TAPPED RED MANA BATTERY FOR YOUR FORCEFIELD.

8) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA AND TAP CROWN OF THE AGES TO MOVE THE WHITE WARD FROM YOUR SERRA ANGEL TO CHALICE'S BLINKING SPIRIT.

9) ATTACK WITH THE BLINKING SPIRIT AND DEAL 8 DAMAGE. YOU ARE FORCED TO SPEND TWO COLORLESS MANA TO ACTIVATE THE SHIELD OF THE AGES AND PREVENT 1 DAMAGE. YOU ARE NOW AT 1 LIFE.

10) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA, TAP SKULL CATAPULT, AND SACRIFICE ELDER DRUID TO DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO YOU. YOU MUST USE YOUR FOUR REMAINING MANA TO ACTIVATE SHIELD OF THE AGES AND PREVENT THE 2 DAMAGE. YOU ARE STILL AT 1 LIFE.

11) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA AND ACTIVATE STORMBIND. LOSE A RANDOM CARD TO DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO YOU. AS YOU ARE ALL TAPPED OUT AND CAN NO LONGER USE SHIELD OF THE AGES, YOU GO TO -1 LIFE AND ARE DEFEATED.

CREATURE BOND

If my puzzles have proved nothing else, I hope it is this: You actually can defeat an opponent with Creature Bond. Really, you can.

1) TAP SAVANNAH, TUNDRA, VOLCANIC ISLAND, BOTH PLAINS, MANA VAULT, AND RED MANA BATTERY TO ADD TWO BLUE, ONE GREEN, TWO WHITE (BOTH USED AS COLORLESS), TEN RED (USED AS COLORLESS), AND THREE COLORLESS MANA TO YOUR MANA POOL.

2) USE ONE BLUE AND ONE COLORLESS MANA TO CAST CREATURE BOND ON SERRA ANGEL.

3) USE ONE BLUE TO ACTIVATE HOMARID SHAMAN AND TAP BROWN OUPHE.

4) USE ONE GREEN MANA AND THREE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP ELDER DRUID TO TAP SHIELD OF THE AGES.

5) USE TWO COLORLESS MANA AND TAP CROWN OF THE AGES TO MOVE UNSTABLE MUTATION ONTO THE SERRA ANGEL, MAKING IT A 7/7 CREATURE.

6) USE ONE COLORLESS MANA AND TAP SNOW HOUND TO RETURN IT AND HOMARID SHAMAN TO CHALICE'S HAND.

7) ACTIVATE THE BLINKING SPIRIT FOR NO MANA AND RETURN IT TO CHALICE'S HAND.

8) USE EIGHT COLORLESS MANA AND ACTIVATE STORMBIND. LOSE FOUR RANDOM CARDS AND DEAL 8 DAMAGE TO SERRA ANGEL, DESTROYING IT. THE CREATURE BOND DOES 7 DAMAGE TO YOU AS THE SERRA DIES. YOU ARE NOW AT 1 LIFE.

9) TAP WHITE MANA BATTERY FOR A WHITE MANA. USE THAT WHITE MANA, TAP SKULL CATAPULT, AND SACRIFICE ELDER DRUID TO DEAL 2 DAMAGE TO YOU, DEFEATING YOU.

Whew! That's all for this issue. Enjoy the new puzzles, and I'll see you in two months.

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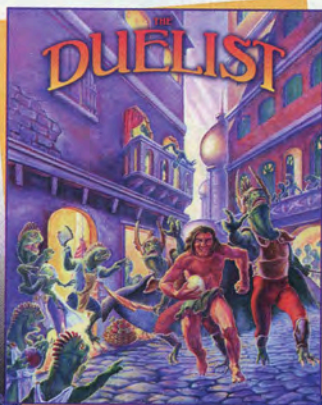


Illustration by Heather Hudson

AD INDEX #	ADVERTISER	PAGE #
19	The Armory	94
14	Blood Wars (TSR, Inc.)	80
28	The Card Vault	114
32	Comic & Fantasy Fair (Roc of Ages '96)	117
44	Deck Protector (Rembrandt)	124
5	Deck Daemon (Bard's Quest Software)	36
47	DoomTrooper (Playmates Interactive)	127
4	Dragon Dice (TSR, Inc.)	14
13	Duelists' Convocation	56
31	East Coast Cards & Collectibles	114
7	Galactic Empires (Companion Games)	48
37	Game Master, Ltd.	116
17	Middle-earth Play-By-Mail (Game Systems)	88
30	Gator Games	114
36	GNA Wholesale, Inc.	116
21	Guardians (FPG)	97
19	Gridiron Fantasy Football (Precedence Games)	89
48	Highlander (Thunder Castle Games)	129
45	Hobbytown USA	125
3	Iguana's Comic Book Cafe	3
18	Middle-earth RPG (Iron Crown Enterprises)	88
41	Legend of the Five Rings (Isomedia)	115
6	Middle-earth: The Wizards (Iron Crown Enterprises)	37
10	Mishra's Game Factory	84
34	Mortal Kombat (Brady Games)	117
46	Multiversal Trading Company	126
9	Mythos (Chaosium, Inc.)	62
15	The National Collector	71
27	Nybbles & Bytes	114
2	Overpower (Fleer Entertainment)	2
42	Paul & Judy's Coins & Cards	115
12	Portal (Portal Productions)	79
16	Middle-earth Miniatures (Mithril Miniatures)	88
25	Professional Magic Tournament (Wizards of the Coast)	6
43	Psychic Purge	115
39	S & H House of Cards	116
1	Shadowfist (Daedalus Entertainment)	1
	Science Fiction Book Club	23
40	Shahrazad Games	116
8	Spheres of Ascension (Virtual Magic)	49
29	The Supreme Strategist	114
20	Throwing Stones (Gamesmiths)	96
11	Thunder & Lightning Cards	78
48	Towers in Time (Thunder Castle Games)	129
33	Troll & Toad	117
38	Wizard's Guild (Saratoga Sci-Fi Shop)	116

A WORD FROM OUR NEW AD MANAGER...

Hi! I want to introduce myself, Bob Henning, as the new Advertising Sales Manager for *The Duelist*™.

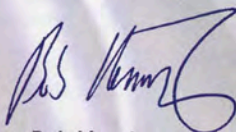
Rarely do new categories in business emerge so quickly and with such impact on so many segments of our society, as trading card games have. But in 1993, **Magic: The Gathering**® caught the attention of the game industry by providing a completely new set of challenges for game enthusiasts.

The Duelist has always been right in sync with **Magic** and the industry. The mission of *The Duelist* is to cover the industry, and provide readers with valuable information in an entertaining format. The publication has clearly evolved into the industry leader. That is why the opportunity to join *The Duelist* (and Wizards of the Coast) as Advertising Sales Manager was so appealing to me. Here stood an opportunity to do something that I love (advertising sales and management) and to indulge my enthusiasm for games and competition.

The majority of my publishing/advertising sales background has been with *Sunset Magazine*, a western "lifestyle" publication. I started in *Sunset's* San Francisco office, and in 1990 was offered the opportunity to relocate to Seattle. I accepted the offer with a resounding: "Yes!" By 1993, I had the responsibility of running the Seattle office, which covered the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada regions.

To *The Duelist* I bring an expertise in print advertising along with genuine interest in Wizards of the Coast and the trading card game industry. Our goal at *The Duelist* is simple: to provide readers and advertisers with the best product available...without exception.

If you are an advertiser, you will be hearing from me shortly. I will also be asking for feedback from you on how we can work together to help build your business for many years to come!



Bob Henning

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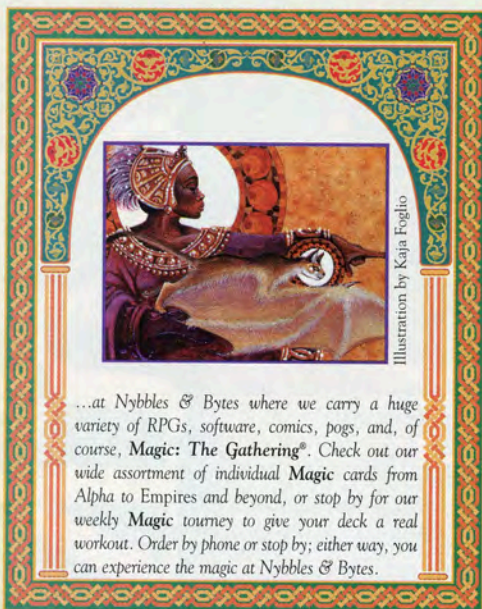
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DARK SOVEREIGNS CARD LIST

The average distribution for a *Dark Sovereigns* booster is three cards from the uncommon sheet, eight cards from the common sheet, and four cards from the vampire sheet. These distributions are the projected average; actual distribution in individual booster packs may vary. Some card names in the list have been abbreviated for this format.

	Name	Blood Cost	Clan / Disciplines	Type / Border	Artist	Rarity
■	1. Acquired Ventrue Assets	2 pool	Giovanni	Master	Richard Kane Ferguson	Uncommon
■	2. Aire of Elation	1 blood	Presence	Action Modifier	Greg Simanson	Common
■	3. Alexandra	11 capacity	dom ANI AUS CEL PRE	Toreador	Lawrence Snelly	Vampire
■	4. Amadeo	8 capacity	ani aus pre OBF POT	Nosferatu	Daniel Gelon	Vampire
■	5. Anathema			Political Action	Steve Casper	Uncommon
■	6. Andrei Puxón	5 capacity	ani cel chi for	Ravnos	Cliff Nielson	Vampire
■	7. Antediluvian Awakening			Master	Ron Spencer	Uncommon
■	8. Antoinette DuChamp	1 capacity	cel pre	Caitiff	Max Shade Fellwalker	Vampire
■	9. Apparition	1 blood	Chimerstry	Combat	Stuart Beel	Common
■	10. Arika	11 capacity	aus cel DOM FOR OBF PRE	Ventrue	Sandra Everingham	Vampire
■	11. Artistically Inept	1 pool	Brujah	Master	Mark Tedin	Uncommon
■	12. Banishment			Political Action	Steve Casper	Uncommon
■	13. Blessing of Durga Syn	2 blood	Chimerstry	Combat	Ron Spencer	Common
■	14. Blythe Candelera	3 capacity	AUS THA	Tremere	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Vampire
■	15. Brujah Debate	1 pool	Brujah	Master	Edward Beard, Jr.	Uncommon
■	16. Bureaucratic Overload			Master	Drew Tucker	Uncommon
■	17. Burning Wrath	3 blood	Potence	Combat	L.A. Williams	Common
■	18. Carlotta Giovanni	7 capacity	dom obf NEC POT	Giovanni	Anson Maddocks	Vampire
■	19. Chandler Hungerford	3 capacity	PRO	Gangrel	Ron Spencer	Vampire
■	20. Chimerstry	+1 capacity		Master	Mark Tedin	Common
■	21. Clan Loyalty	1 blood		Action Modifier	Drew Tucker	Common
■	22. Closed Session			Action Modifier	Harold McNeill	Common
■	23. Command of the Harpies			Political Action	Christopher Rush	Uncommon
■	24. Compel the Spirit	1 blood	Necromancy	Action	Stuart Beel	Uncommon
■	25. Conflict of Interests			Reaction	Richard Kane Ferguson	Common
■	26. Constanza Vinti	8 capacity	CEL DOM POT	Brujah	Lawrence Snelly	Vampire
■	27. Corpse Minion	1 pool	Tremere	Retainer	Alan Rabinowitz	Common
■	28. Cristoforo Giovanni	3 capacity	nec pot	Giovanni	Anson Maddocks	Vampire
■	29. Daliyah	4 capacity	obf PRO	Nosferatu	Mark Tedin	Vampire
■	30. Darius Styx	9 capacity	ani tha CHI FOR PRO	Ravnos	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Vampire
■	31. Dartmoor, England	2 blood		Equipment	Rob Alexander	Common
■	32. Destructive Secrets	1 blood	Nosferatu	Action	Stuart Beel	Common
■	33. Dónal O'Connor	8 capacity	CEL DOM POT	Brujah	Lawrence Snelly	Vampire
■	34. Elysium: The Palace of Versailles	2 pool		Master	Dave Roach and Pete Burges	Uncommon
■	35. Enzo Giovanni, Pentex Board of Directors	8 capacity	ani pot tha DOM NEC	Giovanni	Mark Tedin	Vampire
■	36. Etrius	11 capacity	pro AUS DOM OBF THA	Tremere	Steve Casper	Vampire
■	37. Eyes of the Dead		Necromancy	Reaction	Max Shade Fellwalker	Common
■	38. Faithful Servant	2 blood		Retainer	Max Shade Fellwalker	Common
■	39. Far Fatuus	2 blood	Chimerstry	Combat	Harold McNeill	Common
■	40. Fata Morgana	1 blood	Chimerstry	Action Modifier	Dave Roach and Pete Burges	Common
■	41. Fear of Mekhet	2 pool		Master	Pete Venters	Uncommon
■	42. Force of Will	1 blood	Fortitude	Action	Ron Spencer	Common
■	43. Forest of Shadows	3 pool	Malkavian	Master	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Uncommon
■	44. Fortune Teller	1 blood	Ravnos	Retainer	Daniel Gelon	Common
■	45. Fortune Teller Shop	2 pool	Ravnos	Master	Michael Weaver	Common
■	46. Francesca Giovanni	4 capacity	dom nec pot	Giovanni	John Bolton	Vampire
■	47. Franciscus	1 capacity	aus	Caitiff	Mark Tedin	Vampire
■	48. Francois Villon	10 capacity	chi obf pot AUS CEL PRE	Toreador	Anson Maddocks	Vampire
■	49. Gangrel Revel	3 pool	Gangrel	Master	Ron Spencer	Uncommon
■	50. Gaspere Giovanni	6 capacity	cel nec POT	Giovanni	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Vampire
■	51. Giovanni Acceptance			Political Action	Richard Kane Ferguson	Uncommon
■	52. Giovanni Discrimination	1 pool		Master	Richard Kane Ferguson	Common
■	53. Gloria Giovanni	4 capacity	nec DOM	Giovanni	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Vampire

■ 54.	Goodnight, Sweet Prince	2 pool	Ravnos	Master	Drew Tucker	Uncommon
■ 55.	Greger Andersen	7 capacity	dom pro AUS OBF	Malkavian	Lawrence Snelly	Vampire
■ 56.	Guisceppe, Gravedigger	1 blood	Giovanni	Retainer	Pete Venters	Common
■ 57.	Gwendolyn	11 capacity	aus tha CEL FOR POT PRE	Brujah	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Vampire
■ 58.	Harrod	11 capacity	aus pre ANI CEL OBF POT	Nosferatu	Lawrence Snelly	Vampire
■ 59.	Heidelberg Castle, Germany	2 pool		Master	L.A. Williams	Uncommon
■ 60.	Horrid Reality	2 blood	Chimersty	Combat	Anson Maddocks	Uncommon
■ 61.	Horrific Countenance	4 blood	Protean	Action Modifier	Pete Venters	Common
■ 62.	Hunt Club, The			Master	Richard Kane Ferguson	Common
■ 63.	Ignis Fatuus	1 blood	Chimerstry	Reaction	Ron Spencer	Common
■ 64.	Inbase Discotek, Frankfurt	2 pool		Master	Michael Weaver	Common
■ 65.	Incriminating Videotape	1 pool		Equipment	Greg Simanson	Common
■ 66.	Ingrid Rossler	9 capacity	dom ANI FOR PRO	Gangrel	Ron Spencer	Vampire
■ 67.	Inveraray, Scotland	1 blood		Equipment	Drew Tucker	Uncommon
■ 68.	Jar the Soul		Necromancy	Action	Anson Maddocks	Common
■ 69.	Javier Montoya	9 capacity	ani cel pre AUS THA	Tremere	Sandra Everingham	Vampire
■ 70.	Joaquina Amaya	6 capacity	ANI CHI FOR	Ravnos	John Bolton	Vampire
■ 71.	Judgment: Camarilla Segregation	1 blood		Action	Richard Kane Ferguson	Uncommon
■ 72.	Judgment: Death to the Brujah!	1 blood		Action	L.A. Williams	Uncommon
■ 73.	Katarina	9 capacity	pot pro ANI FOR	Gangrel	Stuart Beel	Vampire
■ 74.	Kindred Coercion	X blood	Dominate	Reaction	Stuart Beel	Uncommon
■ 75.	Klaus van der Veken	9 capacity	aus obf tha CEL PRE	Toreador	Sandra Everingham	Vampire
■ 76.	Kostantin, Baro of the Caravan	9 capacity	cel dom ANI CHI FOR	Ravnos	Mark Tedin	Vampire
■ 77.	Leandro	11 capacity	cel dom AUS OBF PRE	Malkavian	Drew Tucker	Vampire
■ 78.	Legacy of Power	3 blood		Reaction	Steve Casper	Uncommon
■ 79.	Legendary Vampire	2 pool		Master	Pete Venters	Uncommon
■ 80.	Leonardo, Mortician	1 pool	Giovanni	Ally	Drew Tucker	Uncommon
■ 81.	London Evening Star, Tabloid Newspaper	3 pool		Master	Dave Roach and Pete Burges	Uncommon
■ 82.	Louvre, Paris, The	2 pool	Toreador	Master	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Common
■ 83.	Madness of the Bard	2 pool	Malkavian	Master	Harold McNeill	Uncommon
■ 84.	Magdalena Schaefer	2 capacity	THA	Caitiff	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Vampire
■ 85.	Malkavian Derangement: Alternate Personality	2 pool		Master	Anson Maddocks	Uncommon
■ 86.	Malkavian Seven Miseries, The	1 pool	Malkavian	Master	Christopher Rush	Common
■ 87.	Mausoleum, Venice, The	1 pool	Giovanni	Master	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Uncommon
■ 88.	Morgue Hunting Ground	2 pool	Giovanni	Master	Harold McNeill	Common
■ 89.	Natalia	7 capacity	chi dom for ANI	Ravnos	Max Shade Fellwalker	Vampire
■ 90.	Necromancy	+1 capacity		Master	Anson Maddocks	Common
■ 91.	Nikolaus Vermeulen	7 capacity	ani for obf POT	Nosferatu	Pete Venters	Vampire
■ 92.	Nosferatu Hosting	1 pool	Nosferatu	Master	Drew Tucker	Uncommon
■ 93.	Nosferatu Performance Art	2 blood	Nosferatu	Action	Mark Tedin	Uncommon
■ 94.	Of Noble Blood	1 blood		Action	Josh Timbrook	Uncommon
■ 95.	Order of Hermes Cabal	4 pool		Ally	Daniel Gelon	Uncommon
■ 96.	Oxford University, England	2 pool	Brujah	Master	Michael Weaver	Common
■ 97.	Palatial Estate	2 blood		Equipment	Greg Simanson	Common
■ 98.	Park Hunting Ground	2 pool	Ravnos	Master	Pete Venters	Common
■ 99.	Pentex Subversion	2 pool		Master	Pete Venters	Uncommon
■ 100.	Pere Lachaise, France	3 pool		Master	Rob Alexander	Uncommon
■ 101.	Playing for Keeps	X pool		Master	Harold McNeill	Uncommon
■ 102.	Possession	2 blood	Necromancy	Action	Stuart Beel	Common
■ 103.	Powerbase: Berlin	2 pool	Ventrue	Master	Michael Weaver	Uncommon
■ 104.	Powerbase: Rome	2 pool		Master	Greg Simanson	Uncommon
■ 105.	Praxis Seizure: Amsterdam			Political Action	Michael Weaver	Uncommon
■ 106.	Praxis Seizure: Barcelona			Political Action	Dave Roach and Pete Burges	Uncommon
■ 107.	Praxis Seizure: Berlin			Political Action	L.A. Williams	Uncommon
■ 108.	Praxis Seizure: Brussels			Political Action	Tom Wänerstrand	Uncommon
■ 109.	Praxis Seizure: Dublin			Political Action	Harold McNeill	Uncommon
■ 110.	Praxis Seizure: Frankfurt			Political Action	Steve Casper	Uncommon
■ 111.	Praxis Seizure: Geneva			Political Action	Michael Weaver	Uncommon
■ 112.	Praxis Seizure: Glasgow			Political Action	Stuart Beel	Uncommon
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■ 116.	Praxis Seizure: Stockholm			Political Action	Tom Wänerstrand	Uncommon
■ 117.	Praxis Seizure: Venice			Political Action	Mark Tedin	Uncommon
■ 118.	Precognizant Mobility	1 blood	Auspex	Action	Greg Simanson	Common
■ 119.	Queen Anne	10 capacity	aus obf DOM FOR PRE	Ventrue	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Vampire
■ 120.	Ranjan Rishi, Camarilla Scholar	5 capacity	for DOM PRE	Ventrue	Edward Beard, Jr.	Vampire
■ 121.	Ravnos Acceptance			Political Action	Richard Thomas	Uncommon
■ 122.	Ravnos Cache	2 pool	Ravnos	Master	Greg Simanson	Uncommon
■ 123.	Rebekka, Chantry Elder of Munich	8 capacity	pot AUS PRE THA	Tremere	Anson Maddocks	Vampire
■ 124.	Regina Giovanni, The Right Hand of Augustus	10 capacity	aus for DOM NEC POT	Giovanni	Max Shade Fellwalker	Vampire
■ 125.	Release of the Shackled Soul	1 blood	Necromancy	Action	Alan Rabinowitz	Uncommon
■ 126.	Riposte	1 blood	Celerity	Combat	Dave Roach and Pete Burges	Common
■ 127.	Rom Gypsy	3 pool	Ravnos	Ally	Alan Rabinowitz	Uncommon
■ 128.	Rudolpho Giovanni	3 capacity	NEC	Giovanni	Doug Gregory	Vampire
■ 129.	Ruins of Villars Abbey, Belgium	2 blood		Equipment	Stuart Beel	Uncommon
■ 130.	Rutor's Hand	1 blood	Thaumaturgy	Action	Stuart Beel	Common
■ 131.	Sacre Cour Cathedral, France	2 blood		Equipment	Michael Weaver	Common
■ 132.	Sacrificial Lamb	3 blood	Obfuscate	Action	Stuart Beel	Common
■ 133.	Salbatore Bokkengro	4 capacity	for pro CHI	Ravnos	Cliff Nielson	Vampire
■ 134.	Sasha Miklos	2 capacity	chi	Ravnos	Max Shade Fellwalker	Vampire
■ 135.	Scapelli, The Family "Mechanic"	3 pool	Giovanni	Ally	Richard Thomas	Uncommon
■ 136.	Secure Haven	1 pool		Master	Edward Beard, Jr.	Common
■ 137.	Sensory Deprivation	3 blood	Chimerstry	Action	Richard Thomas	Uncommon
■ 138.	Shackles of Enkidu	2 pool	Gangrel	Equipment	Michael Weaver	Uncommon
■ 139.	Shepherd's Innocence	2 blood	Animalism	Action	Greg Simanson	Common
■ 140.	Sigrid Bekker	6 capacity	cel pot pre AUS	Toreador	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Vampire
■ 141.	Soul Stealing	No cost	Necromancy	Action Modifier	Max Shade Fellwalker	Common
■ 142.	Spectral Divination	1 blood	Necromancy	Action Modifier or Reaction	Pete Venters	Common
■ 143.	Spiritual Intervention		Necromancy	Combat	Harold McNeill	Common
■ 144.	Spiritual Protector	3 blood	Giovanni	Retainer	Max Shade Fellwalker	Common
■ 145.	Stanislava	11 capacity	ANI CEL DOM FOR PRO	Gangrel	Max Shade Fellwalker	Vampire
■ 146.	Stefano Giovanni	6 capacity	nec pot pre DOM	Giovanni	Steve Casper	Vampire
■ 147.	Strained Vitae Supply	No cost		Master	Stuart Beel	Uncommon
■ 148.	Tara, The Hollow One (Mage)	3 pool	Ravnos	Ally	Anson Maddocks	Uncommon
■ 149.	Tereza Rostás	8 capacity	ani aus pot CHI FOR	Ravnos	Doug Gregory	Vampire
■ 150.	Thoughts Betrayed	2 blood	Dominate	Combat	Dave Roach and Pete Burges	Common
■ 151.	Toreador Grand Ball	1 pool	Toreador	Master	Richard Kane Ferguson	Uncommon
■ 152.	Torment the Soul		Necromancy	Combat	Max Shade Fellwalker	Common
■ 153.	Tradition Upheld			Political Action	Richard Kane Ferguson	Common
■ 154.	Treatment, The	1 pool	Ravnos	Master	Mark Tedin	Common
■ 155.	Tremere Convocation	2 pool	Tremere	Master	Richard Thomas	Uncommon
■ 156.	Trick of Danya, The	1 blood	Chimerstry	Action	Harold McNeill	Common
■ 157.	Triole's Revenge	2 blood	Brujah	Action	Richard Thomas	Uncommon
■ 158.	Tsigane	3 capacity	aus chi	Ravnos	Ken Meyer, Jr.	Vampire
■ 159.	Vaclav Petalengro	6 capacity	for pot ANI CHI	Ravnos	Anson Maddocks	Vampire
■ 160.	Veiled Sight	2 blood	Chimerstry	Reaction	Josh Timbrook	Common
■ 161.	Ventrue Directorate Assembly	2 pool	Ventrue	Master	Greg Simanson	Common
■ 162.	Vial of Elder Vitae	1 pool		Equipment	Richard Thomas	Uncommon
■ 163.	Vial of Garou Blood	1 pool		Equipment	Lawrence Snelly	Common
■ 164.	Victoria	5 capacity	cel obf AUS	Malkavian	Drew Tucker	Vampire
■ 165.	Vittorio Giovanni	5 capacity	dom for nec pot	Giovanni	Pete Venters	Vampire
■ 166.	Volker, The Puppet Prince	5 capacity	pot CEL	Brujah	Anson Maddocks	Vampire
■ 167.	Wasserschloss Anif, Austria	2 pool	Tremere	Master	Dave Roach and Pete Burges	Uncommon
■ 168.	Werewolf Pack	4 pool	Gangrel	Ally	Daniel Gelon	Common
■ 169.	Whispers of the Nictuku			Master	Mark Tedin	Uncommon
■ 170.	Wilhelm Waldburg	9 capacity	aus cel DOM FOR PRE	Ventrue	Doug Gregory	Vampire
■ 171.	Wrath of the Inner Circle			Political Action	Ron Spencer	Uncommon
■ 172.	Zöe	3 capacity	cel obf AUS	Malkavian	Daniel Gelon	Vampire
■ 173.	Zombie	1 blood	Giovanni	Retainer	Daniel Gelon	Common

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In this new section of *The Duelist*, we've compiled letters from readers addressing general issues affecting *Magic* or the trading card game industry as a whole.

We've also moved the *Magic* rules question, "At Issue," and its responses, to this section.

YOUR TURN

We invite you to respond to the issues raised here. Simply send your response to:
Your Turn, c/o *The Duelist*
P.O. Box 707,
Renton WA, 98057

or e-mail your thoughts to:
duelist@wizards.com.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

I am writing to you about the recent complaints and problems with out-of-print cards that led to the publishing of *Chronicles*™. I believe this was a poor decision on Wizards of the Coast's part. As with many other collectable card games and sports cards, there are several cards that are extremely rare and will never be reprinted because they are not meant to be reprinted! Reprinting old and out-of-print cards would ruin the cards! What if Topps™ were to reprint Babe Ruth? The value of Babe Ruth would go down, along with the desire to obtain the card, diminishing the trade for it. The same thing would also happen if WotC were to reprint rare cards such as Moxes, Black Lotus, or Time Walk. Since the release of *Chronicles*, many people would now look at an Elder Dragon and say, "So?" unlike before *Chronicles* when the typical response would be, "What will you trade for that?" I am fortunate to have a local comic store which has weekly *Magic*™ tournaments. The prizes are often out-of-

print cards, and if they were not, I am sure that many people wouldn't pay the entry fee when they could go buy a booster pack of *Chronicles*. I would recommend to WotC that they continue printing sets like in the past, only in greater abundance. Reprinting cards is a poor solution. Rare cards are what have made the game so much fun to play, trade, and talk about, and without them, the game of *Magic* will lose its fun!

Daniel Walls
Martinez, GA

I must applaud your *Chronicles* series. With the release of these cards, maybe some of us who are trying to complete their earlier expansion sets finally can. One of the biggest complaints I have heard about *Chronicles* is that its release will cause great harm to the collector market. That is not true! The only market which will hopefully be hurt by *Chronicles* is the investor market. I stopped collecting comic books about four years ago when the investors started taking all the fun out of it, and I don't want to see this happen again with *Magic*. I am truly looking forward to the day when I'm trying to trade a Shivan for a Chromium, and my opponent whips out his price guide/bible only to find out that his precious card has fallen in price. Please note that I did say price, not value! I don't think that just because a useless card had a smaller print run, that it should skyrocket in price. A card's value should be based upon its playability, not necessarily its rarity.

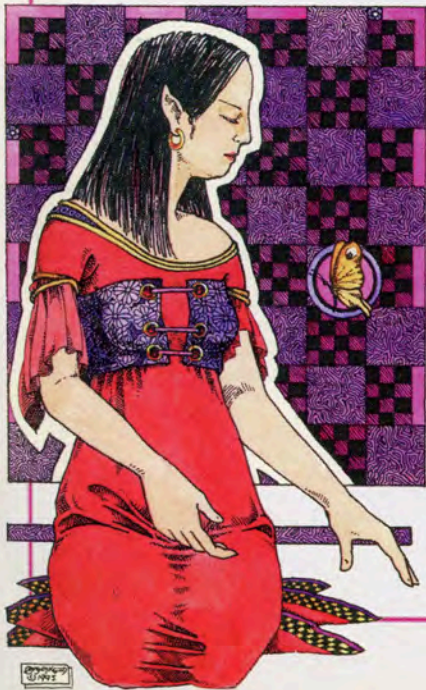
I don't know if my opinion is in the minority or not, but I do know that the three or four people whom I have introduced to the game feel the same way. There is nothing

more disheartening than going to a gaming convention, finding someone's *Magic* binder full of cards you need, asking them what they want to trade for those cards, and having that person say, "I don't trade; they're for sale—twenty dollars minimum purchase." These leeches disgust me. When I was first introduced to *Magic*, my friend said it was kind of like baseball before all of the 3-D, gold-plated, hologram-etched cards invaded the market—simple cards you could either play with or trade away. That is the way it should be, and hopefully will be in the future.

James Rowan
San Jose, CA

As a *Magic* player from the very beginning, I have experienced all of the changes and modifications of the game firsthand. From restricting and eliminating certain cards to creating stand-alone expansions, I've been through it all. Further, the changes that have been made were undertaken with the utmost consideration as to how they would affect the game and its environment.

However, I have one small item of concern. When I first began playing, I was thrilled to discover that some of the cards contained quotes by literary giants like Shakespeare, Dickinson, Poe, Coleridge, and others. (Having recently received a degree in literature, I admittedly have a bias.) Over the last few card sets, these quotes have been phased out in favor of text that tells a more cohesive story. I agree with this, but to a point. While it does add a certain depth to the game, I think it hurts the game to do without literary quotes altogether. Can't there be a happy medium?



Take the Polar Kraken card, for example. Instead of quoting Tennyson's poem "The Kraken," you chose to say, "It was big! Really, really, big. No, bigger than that. It was *big!*" Does this enhance the story? Or the game? Or encourage youngsters or curious gamers to seek out what a Kraken is? No. And while it isn't WotC's responsibility to educate *and* entertain, the possibility exists nonetheless. It just might help kids to know where the Polar Kraken or the Wiitigo come from. (Wiitigos are creatures from Native American mythology, made of mud, ice, or stones by evil shamans and eaters of human flesh.) These are creatures that exist in the myths and stories of people of the earth, and it might be worth taking a few cards and using these quotes to add depth to the game and simultaneously open up avenues of learning to the game's players.

Hopefully, this hasn't been too preachy. I feel like Grandpa Simpson, dashing off wildly irrational letters with the disclaimer, "I am not a crackpot." I just wanted you to know that these quotes are a very positive part of **Magic**, and that the game suffers, however slightly, for their absence.

Jason G. Speck
Washington, D.C.

RESPONSES TO LAST ISSUE'S "AT ISSUE": MANA BURN

Last issue, Tom Wylie asked readers to submit their thoughts about eliminating the concept of mana burn. Most respondents wanted to keep mana burn, but suggested ways to eliminate the abuses.

In our play group we have always treated each point of mana burn as a separate point of damage. This makes the Nova Pentacle trick [mentioned on page 37 of *Duelist* #7] not as abusive since only one point of damage could be applied to target creature of opponent's choice. The same goes for Reverse Damage. I feel that mana burn is perhaps one of the great aspects of **Magic**; it's one of the many things that separates **Magic** from the numerous other TCGs. I also appreciate the idea of a mage getting burned if perhaps he is not too careful. Please don't remove mana burn (aka mana drag)—without it, Power Surge wouldn't be the same!

Mark Rezendes
rezendes@hawaii.edu

In response to the question about mana burn, my thoughts are to make a ruling on

this as follows: If a player has any mana in his/her mana pool after a phase has ended or before or after an attack, that player takes 1 damage for each point of unused mana. This damage cannot be prevented or redirected. I believe that this would solve all abuses and keep cards such as Power Surge from becoming useless.

Allan R. Babb
Marrero, LA
Convocation #4892

Here is Tom's assessment of whether or not Magic players should "feel the burn."

The most feasible way (and one that was suggested numerous times by respondents) is to say that the damage taken from unused mana becomes "loss of life" and cannot be avoided by damage prevention or redirection. This is cleaner than saying that each point of damage comes from a different source in that it's not possible to prevent even 1 point of the burn; plus, the source of the damage becomes irrelevant. Based on the feedback, I, at least, am leaning away from eliminating mana burn entirely.

THIS ISSUE'S AT ISSUE: SIMULTANEOUS ACTIVATIONS *by Tom Wylie*

This month's At Issue addresses a rule that, like mana burn, is somewhat burdensome and confusing, though unlike mana burn, it allows for some viable strategies that we aren't inclined to eliminate. The rule concerns how "pumpable" effects like Pestilence or Firebreathing may be used.

Normally, when an ability is played, the cost is simply paid once to generate the effect once. However, the rules currently allow you to pay the cost of an ability multiple times in a single activation, to generate that many multiples of the effect, as long as the effect requires an activation cost. For example, if you wanted to deal 3 damage to everything with Pestilence, you could do so as three activations for 1 damage each, or as a single activation for 3 damage.

As it turns out, this rule is confusing to many people and is often one of the last rules a player masters when learning the game. For example, people often do not understand that they can't tap a Rod of

Ruin as many times as they can pay the mana for it, or that they can't sacrifice the same thing to an ability multiple times just because the ability is written with an activation cost. Also, certain abilities (such as Elemental Augury) can really only take effect once during resolution, regardless of how many times you paid the cost, and figuring out when an effect will or won't "mushroom" can be confusing.

Hence, it has been suggested several times that we eliminate the rule about being able to power an ability many times at once. This has the advantage of having all abilities operate under the same rule: When you play an ability, you can only pay the cost once to get the effect once, regardless of the nature of the cost or of how the ability is written. The major downside is that certain strategies will suffer as a result, but then, this is true of any rules change.

Send your feedback to: At Issue, c/o The Duelist, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057; or e-mail your responses to: duelist@wizards.com.



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compiled by James Ernest

Contributions from James Ernest,
Paul Hughes, Ryan Omega, Mike
Selinker, Lisa Stevens, and Vic Wertz

Number of trading card games on sale, August 1993: **1**

Approximate number of trading card games on sale now: **40**

First order of **Magic™** from Capital City (a major distributor): **6 decks**

Membership of the Duelists' Convocation (est. 1993): **8,000**

Membership of the Roleplaying
Game Association (est. 1981): **9,500**

Number of "0" cost cards: **18**

Number of \$0.00 cost cards: **0**

Number of letters in "Fog": **3**

Number of functionally
different versions of "Fog": **3**

Approximate cost of a full set of
Unlimited™ edition cards: **\$1,500.00**

Approximate cost of 5 semesters worth
of books at U.C. Berkeley: **\$1,585.00**

Number of different cards in **Magic**: **1,481**

Approximate cost to own one of every **Magic** card: **\$10,000**

Approximate number of complete sets Disney CEO
Michael Eisner could buy with his yearly earnings: **20,000**

Number of creatures in **Magic** that don't tap when they attack: **4**

Number of creatures in **Magic** that don't
tap dance when they attack: **638**

Number of **Magic** cards with movie titles: **15**

Number of **Magic** cards with names using science-fiction
authors' names spelled backwards: **1**

Number of times The Bard is quoted in **Magic**: **9**

Number of times The Bard is quoted in
Vampire: The Eternal Struggle™: **1**

Number of times that Dr. Seuss is quoted in the
V:TES™ card "Madness of the Bard": **1**



Number of cards with the name Urza: **9**

Number of cards with the name Mishra: **4**

Number of cards with the name Murray: **0**

Number of Giant cards: **12**

Number of Angel cards: **5**

Number of Yankee cards: **0**

Number of ante cards: **10**

Number of uncle cards: **1**

Number of words in the text box
of an Alpha Earthbind: **13**

Number of words in the text box
of a *Revised* Earthbind: **52**

Number of words in the text box
of a *Fourth Edition* Bird Maiden: **37**

Number of words in the text box
of a Portuguese *Fourth Edition* Bird Maiden: **1**

Number of card names containing the word "Holy": **5**

Number of card names containing the word "Demonic": **5**

Number of syllables in longest name in Dominia
(As-mo-ra-no-mar-di-ca-da-is-ti-na-cul-da-car): **14**

Number of syllables in longest song title in "Mary Poppins"
(Su-per-ca-li-fra-gi-lis-tic-ex-pi-a-li-do-cious): **14**

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