

ROAD TO THE WORLD TITLE

JULY 1996 THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DUELISTS' CONVOCATION INTERNATIONAL™ ISSUE 23

THE 1996 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

A year ago, over seventy competitors from nineteen different nations met in Seattle, Washington, USA, for a three-day tournament that is now part of **Magic history**. Alexander Blumke (Switzerland) defeated Marc Hernandez (France) to become the 1995 **Magic: The Gathering®** World Champion. Alexander didn't have a deck when he arrived in America and stayed up all night prior to the tournament, building a card denial/big creature deck that carried him to victory.

Now it's 1996, and the Duelists' Convocation International invites you to join us for the most prestigious **Magic** tournament ever. While the 1996 event is again located in Seattle, the similarities with past World Championships ends there. Some of the most marked differences are as follows:

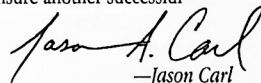
- Over 100 competitors will represent more than thirty nations. For many, this will be their first premier **Magic** competition.
- The **Magic: The Gathering Pro Tour™** will dramatically influence both deck construction and playing style. The recent release of *Alliances™* foreshadows a change in the composition of winning decks and match strategies.
- The Booster Draft and Type 1.5 formats, now DCI sanctioned, provide new and challenging ways of testing competitive **Magic** skills.
- The event will occur at Wizards of the Coast's flagship Official Tournament Center (OTC), a state-of-the-art **Magic** tournament venue. This site features ample space for competitors and spectators, multimedia entertainment (including a movie theater), interactive and open gaming, an onsite snack bar, and much more.

The Worlds is not the only aspect of competitive **Magic** that has changed over the past year. The DCI itself has more than doubled in size and now boasts over 20,000 members, a number that increases daily as sanctioned tournaments become common throughout the world. We now offer two levels of membership (Mana and Legend) and a rating system that ranks every player who competes in sanctioned events.

What have we learned from the past tournament season? First, we recognize that there is an immediate need for consistency in tournament adjudication: Both players and judges need to know what the rules are and how they will be enforced. At this writing, we are planning to test the Judge Certification Program at Origins™ (July 4-7, Columbus, Ohio); we have high hopes that the feedback we receive will enable us to implement the system in time for the beginning of the 1996-97 season. We will also concentrate on increasing the efficiency of our ratings process in a continuing effort to provide you with quickly updated and accurate rankings.

Where do we go from here? Perhaps our most important goal for the new season is nurturing and developing a healthy, exciting, and *international* tournament structure. Heather Henricks, formerly the DCI Special Projects Coordinator, recently transferred to Wizards of the Coast's International department, where she has assumed the challenging role of International Tournament Coordinator. Heather will be helping us to sanction **Magic** tournaments the world over.

However, our future plans all revolve around one very important person: You. As a member of the DCI, you are the person we are working for. We want to make your tournament experiences as fun, challenging, and exciting as we can. In the past, you have provided us with valuable feedback on nearly every aspect of tournament competition, and we have used much of that feedback to shape our vision of what the DCI should be and will become. To those of you who have taken the time and effort to contact us and express your opinion, we say, "Thank you!" Your continuing input and support will help to ensure another successful season of competitive **Magic** play!


—Jason Carl

Director

Duelists' Convocation International

Jason can be contacted by email at DCI@wizards.com, or by surface mail at:

Wizards of the Coast
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA 98057-0707
USA

1996 MAGIC: THE GATHERING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS INVITATION POLICY

The 1996 Magic: The Gathering® World Championships, which will take place August 15–18, 1996, in Renton, Washington, will determine the best of the best. Finalists from National Championships around the world, DCI top-ranked players, and top players from our professional tournaments come together to compete for prestigious team and individual titles.

There are four ways in which players may qualify for the World Championships.

1. The top four finishers from each of the DCI-supported National Championships will automatically qualify. These players will also be eligible to participate in team events on their countries' behalf.

For more information on the national teams, see page 4.

2. The top four finishers from each professional tournament taking place prior to the World Championships also qualify. Since this event marks the close of the 1995–96 tournament season, players who compete in professional events following the 1996 Worlds will have a chance at a slot in the 1997 World Championships.

Top Four from PT1–NYC

Michael Loconto
Leon Lindbäck

Bertrand Lestrée
Preston Poulter

Top Four from PT2–LA

Shawn "Hammer" Regnier
Darwin Mess

Tom Guevin
Mark Venhaus

Top Four from PT3–Columbus

Olle Rade
Peter Radonjic

Sean Fleischman
Alvaro Marques

3. The top four finishers from the 1995 World Championships will also be invited back to defend their titles.

1995 Worlds Finalists

Alexander Blumke
Mark Justice

Marc Hernandez
Henry Stern

4. The top ten DCI-rated players who do not already appear on the guest list will be eligible to compete at the Worlds. Rankings will be a composite of DCI ratings in Sealed Deck (limited) and Type II (constructed).

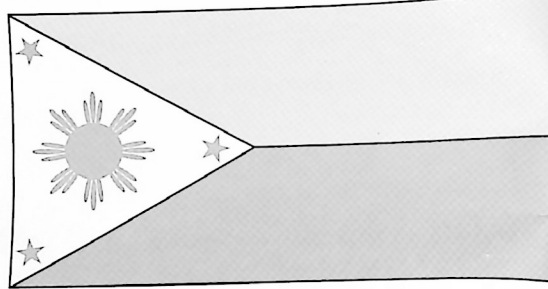
DCI Top Ten
TBA

A REPORT FROM THE FIRST QUALIFIER FOR THE PHILIPPINES NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Editor's note: As of this writing, the Philippines Nationals have not yet taken place; they are scheduled for July, and by then this will be printed and in the mail! WotC wishes the best of luck to all of the competitors in that event. May the best deck win!

Mabuhay! Greetings from the Philippines!

Since its introduction, Magic has spread like wildfire throughout the Philippines, fast becoming one of the most popular games ever. Needless to say, many Filipino players were excited when word spread that a series of qualifier tournaments would be held, leading up to the very first Philippines National Championships.



The first qualifier took place at the Greenhills Center in Manila, our capital city. The popular Type II format encouraged more than 200 players to line up for slots. Smiles, shouts of recognition, and wishes for good (and bad!) luck abounded as players from various gaming circles brought out their most deadly decks.

Matches began as soon as the round-robin groupings were announced by the tournament coordinator, Dean Alfaro. Green-white Armageddon decks were common, as were black-red weenie/bolt decks and red-green Djinn decks. Unlike the previous tournaments, there were no "colors of the day." Many of the very diverse decks used cards from each color.

Numerous upsets occurred, with various expected contenders being knocked out of the competition. But many who were eliminated stayed behind to watch the matches and offer their support to the players who continued on.

Soon the top thirty-two players were announced. As each name was read out, cheers came from the huge crowd—these players had earned slots at the July Type II Nationals, the finalists of which would go on to compete at the World Championships. By early evening, only the top four remained: Ryk Laig, Dave Co, Bot Butaran, and Wilbur Chan.

With the success of the first qualifier, everyone's looking forward to the next one, set in Quezon City. The last few remaining Nationals slots are at stake. First the Nationals, then the Worlds!

—Dean Alfaro (1995 Philippines Type I National Champion)

THE JAPANESE NATIONALS

The Japanese Magic National Championships were held over the weekend of June 13-16 at the Parco Department Store in Shibuya, Tokyo. The event was dominated by Tokyo players—my unofficial count indicated fewer than 5 percent of attendees were from outside the Tokyo sprawl. Next year we're hoping for more regional events in places like the Kansai and the North.

Qualifiers were held on each of the first three days: the format was Sealed Deck, using two Japanese *Fourth Edition*™ starters. Each day there were six hour-long Swiss rounds, with a ten-minute break between each (and over an hour for lunch!). Competitors played in one of three blocks, and the top six from each block progressed to the "real" event on Sunday. Between 150 and 200 people played each day, so that every block contained about sixty people or so.

I chose to compete on Friday, thinking that college students would make up the bulk of the competitive field and were more likely to play on Saturday. Bzzzt—wrong answer! It turned out that a lot of workers also play, and they can only compete on the weekend; the college students just skip their Friday lectures. As a result, the quality of the field on Saturday was significantly lower than on Friday; many players just put their two starters together! Next time, I'll play on Saturday.

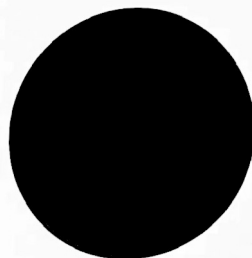
世界選手権 第1回 日本代表決定戦
協力: PARCO 会場: 日暮野駅



(left to right) Yamaguchi Ryutaro, Yoshiyuki Tsuruta, Satoshi Nakamura, and first place winner Toshiki Tsukamoto.

A few interesting cultural notes: typically in the Sealed-Deck tournaments, players build decks, play the round, then take a break or go to lunch. Everyone leaving the room either left their cards on the table or took them along. The degree of trust and honor here is exemplary. The referee was puzzled when I asked him where I should deposit my tournament deck cards. "Just leave them here, or take them with you," he said, even though there were identical Japanese *Fourth Edition* starters for sale at the venue. Any worries? Not at all. All the games I saw were played for fun. Even the "cutthroat" final rounds, where places on the team were on the line, saw players smiling and generally enjoying the competition regardless of the result.

Perhaps the funniest part of the weekend occurred in the last round of the final matchup: Toshiki Tsukamoto vs. Satoshi Nakamura. Toshiki Tsukamoto had been pelting Satoshi Nakamura's weenies throughout the match with Serrated Arrows. (And we all know how painful that can be!) With the match tied at 1-1 and time running out, Satoshi Nakamura drew the one card that could save him—his own Serrated Arrows! As the card was played, Toshiki Tsukamoto said something naughty under his breath, pointedly looked at the clock, then politely asked if he could read the card to see what it did. The crowd loved it—and Toshiki Tsukamoto went on to win fair and square.



The following players will be representing Japan at the World Championships:

- 1st Toshiki Tsukamoto
- 2nd Satoshi Nakamura
- 3rd Yoshiyuki Tsuruta
- 4th Yamaguchi Ryutaro

—David J. Low

FAREWELL COMPANION

This is to inform you that the next issue of *The Companion*™ will be the last. Rich Kaalas and I have both enjoyed working on *Companion* and though we both continue with WotC, we have both taken on other responsibilities within the company. However, the DCI will still be mailing out tournament rules updates and a regularly updated list of sanctioned events. We have merely opted to focus on getting you the must-have information rather than providing information which is more appropriate to the *Duelist* or the *Sideboard*.

Having been editrix of the *Companion* since issue #2, I have learned a lot by working on it. I have grown a lot in my skill and knowledge since I first began working on *Companion*, and I feel that much of that growth I owe to you, my readers. Especially to those of you who are longtime DCI members. I just wanted to let you know that I appreciate all of the help, support, and input you've provided over the past year and a half.

—Rbias K. Hall
Editrix

THE 1996 MAGIC: THE GATHERING® WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

THE PREMIER EVENT ON AUG. 14-18 AT THE WIZARDS OF THE COAST OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT CENTER, RENTON, WASHINGTON

The Magic the Gathering® World Championships will consist of the following events:

Wednesday, August 14 (Individual)
9:00 A.M. Limited (Booster Draft)

Thursday, August 15 (Individual)
9:00 A.M. Standard (Type II)

Friday, August 16 (Individual)
9:00 A.M. Classic Restricted (Type 1.5)

Saturday, August 17 (Team)
9:00 A.M. Team Limited (Sealed)

Sunday, August 18 (Individual, top eight)
9:00 A.M. Quarterfinals
1:00 P.M. Semifinals
4:00 P.M. Finals

NATIONALS TEAM LISTING

The following is a list of teams who will be competing in the World Championship Tournament.

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND

Joseph Tan
Tom Chanpheng
Chris Hudson
Craig Shepard

AUSTRIA

Christian Peschta
Walter Herzig
Clemens Kodrik
Thomas Nistelberger

BELGIUM

David van Dijck
Peter Gysemans
Antoine Rottiers
Werner van der Haeghen

BRAZIL

Raul Abreu de Assis
Guilherme Vila Couto
Aurelio de Queiroz
Fabiano de Castro e Castro

CANADA

Gary Krakower
Terry Lau
Peter Radonjic
Eric Tam

DENMARK

Sverd Sparre Geersten
Thomas Jensen
Rune Speich
Andreas

THE NETHERLANDS

Harry van der Laan
Freek ten Cate
Roy Aberkrom
Tom De Wildt

FINLAND

Tommi Hovi
Larvanko Lasse
Harri Vuorela
Emo Ekeborn

FRANCE

Silvere Bonhomme
Jean Baptiste Cantet
Le Minh
Franz Couderc

GERMANY

Peer Kroeger
Oliver Krebs
Stephan Valkyser
Henning Rimkus

GREECE

K. Papaioannou
E. Doanao
Ch. Kakarougas
G. Giraleos

HONG KONG

(not available at press time)

HUNGARY

Toszegi Szabolcs
Tihor Miklos
Rovo Viktor
Bakos Attila

ICELAND

(not available at press time)

ISREAL

Eli Rossman
Shachar Zrihen
Eran Bar-even
Erez Matan

ITALY

Andrea Paselli
Raffaele Intini
Andrea Redi
Dario Solari

JAPAN

Satoshi Nakamura
Toshiki Tsukamoto
Yoshiyuki Tsuruta
Ryutaro Yamaguchi

KOREA

Jeh Sangmo
David Seo

MEXICO

(not available at press time)

NORWAY

David Lilleoren
Dag Lokkebakken
Sturla Bingen
David Lie

PORTUGAL

(not available at press time)

PHILIPPINES

Angel Diokno
Raffy Lirag
Chan Wilbin
Edmond Villamor

SPAIN

Miguel Lopez
David Dominguez
Antonio Cardenes
Alfonso Lopez

SWEDEN

Leon Lindback
Markus Lagerstrom
Tomas Larrson
Sven Runing

SWITZERLAND

Amiel Feldman
Frédéric Lenoir
Michael Suwald
Andreas Weiss

CZECH REPUBLIC

David Korejtko
Jakub Slemr
Ondrej Baudis
Lukas Kocourek

UK/IRELAND

Rob Salmon
Oliver Schneider
Steve Lamb
Rory Hessian

UNITED STATES

Dennis Bentley
George Baxter
Michael Long
Matthew Place

WORLDS ADDITIONAL EVENTS SCHEDULE

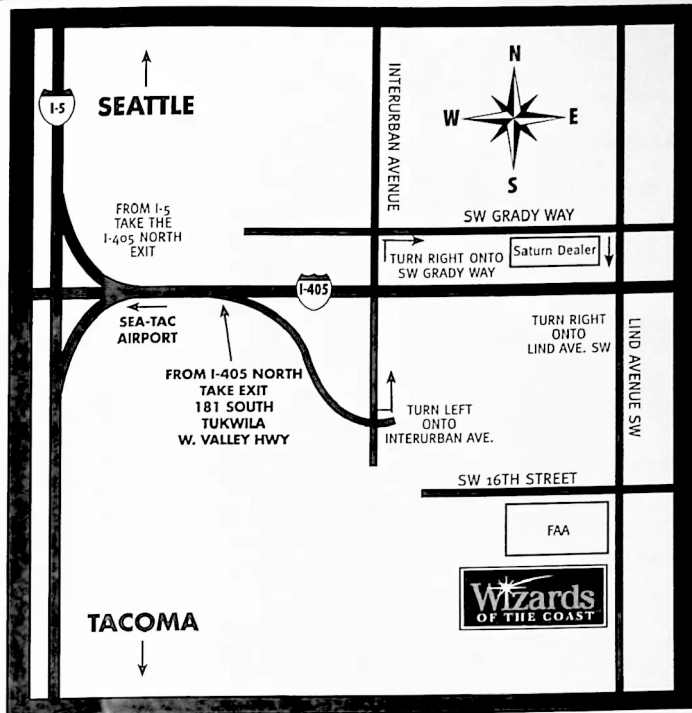


JUST BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T MAKE IT ONTO YOUR NATIONAL TEAM DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T HAVE FUN AT THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS!

For those players who won't be representing their nations at the Worlds, Wizards of the Coast is proud to announce our non-Championship Deckmaster® events. These events will take place as part of our World Championships weekend, so come to the Worlds and get in the game!

HOW TO GET IN THE GAME

Joining in these tournaments is easy! Just fill out the enclosed registration form and send it in. We'll process it and make sure your event tickets are waiting for you when you arrive. Once you get your tickets, just show up for the tournament and get ready to play!



EVENT DESCRIPTIONS

Standard (Type II)	\$6.00	Event: 101, 203	Standard (Type II)	\$6.00	Event: 203
This is a standard (Type II) tournament. The tournament will follow the Swiss format.					
Netrunner Limited	\$15.00	Event: 103	The Great Dalmati	\$6.00	Event: 205
Run or be run over. Experience the world of Netrunner in a Sealed-Deck tournament. Standard Wizards of the Coast Netrunner Sealed-Deck rules apply.			A fun game that take only five minutes to learn. This active game is based on the premise that "Life isn't fair, so card games shouldn't be either."		
Rainbow Magic Standard (Type II)	\$6.00	Event: 104	Iron Mage Limited (Sealed)	\$15.00	Event: 206
This is a Standard (Type II) tournament with the following modification to the deck-construction rules. There must be at least six (6) spells from each color in the player's deck. No artifacts. No sideboards.			Players receive one (1) <i>Fourth Edition</i> starter and two (2) <i>Fourth Edition</i> boosters. This is a limited (Sealed) tournament with the following modification to the rules. Each player has 20 life for the entire tournament. No cards will be destroyed.		
Limited (Sealed)	\$15.00	Event: 105, 309	Pro-Tour Deck Tournament	\$15.00	Event: 207
This is a Limited (Sealed) tournament following the Swiss format Each player will receive one (1) <i>Ice Age</i> starter and two (2) <i>Alliances</i> boosters.			Compete using the best decks from the professional tournament in New York. Decks will be provided.		
Classic Restricted (Type I.5)	\$6.00	Event: 106	Vampire: The Eternal Struggle	\$6.00	Event: 208
This is a classic Restricted (Type I.5) sanctioned tournament, following the Swiss format.			The Midnight Dance has begun! Enter into the world of the Kindred in the Vampire: The Eternal Struggle tournament. Standard tournament rules apply.		
Limited (Sealed): Booster Draft	\$15.00	Event: 201	Magic: The Game Show	\$6.00	Event: 209
This is a limited (Sealed) tournament using the Booster-Draft format featured at the professional tournament in Long Beach. Players will be given one (1) <i>Fourth Edition</i> booster, one (1) <i>Ice Age</i> booster, and one (1) <i>Alliances</i> booster from which to draft. The tournament will follow the Swiss format.			Test your Magic knowledge! Complete for fabulous prizes! Bring a team of three and participate in a Magic trivia game show, hosted by Mark Rosewater. Spectators are welcome.		
One-of-a-Kind Standard (Type II)	\$6.00	Event: 202	Chinese Limited (Sealed)	\$15.00	Event: 301
This is a standard (Type II) tournament with the following modification to the deck construction rules. There can be only one of any card, other than basic lands, in the player's deck. No sideboards.			This is a limited (Sealed) tournament using Chinese cards. Players will be given one (1) Chinese <i>Fourth Edition</i> starter and two (2) Chinese <i>Fourth Edition</i> boosters.		
			Classic (Type I)	\$6.00	Event: 302
			This is a classic (Type I) sanctioned tournament, following the Swiss format.		

EVENT DESCRIPTIONS CONT'D

Limited (Sealed): Rochester Draft \$15.00 Event: 303
Try this exciting new draft form. Each player will receive one (1) *Fourth Edition*, one (1) *Ice Age*, and one (1) *Alliances* booster from which to draft. The tournament will follow the Swiss format.

Live RoboRally \$6.00 Event: 304
This is a fast-paced relay race against the other players. Now is your chance to play this exciting game in person.

Netrunner Constructed \$6.00 Event: 306, 403
The ultimate race across cyberspace begins. Standard Wizards of the Coast *Netrunner* constructed-deck rules apply. Bring both a Runner and a Corp deck.

Apprentice Standard (Type II) \$6.00 Event: 307
This is a standard (Type II) tournament; all players must be under the age of 15.

Foreign Limited (Sealed) \$15.00 Event: 308
Classic Sealed-Deck tournament with an international flavor. Each player will receive one (1) *Fourth Edition* booster from four foreign language editions. This tournament will follow Swiss format.

Grand Melee Standard (Type II) \$6.00 Event: 401
This Grand Melee-style tournament follows the standard (Type II) deck-construction rules. Spell range will be two players; all creatures attack left.

Planeswalker Standard (Type II) \$6.00 Event: 402
This is a standard (Type II) tournament with the following modification to the deck-construction rules. No sideboards. Every ten (10) minutes a random Enchant World will be selected, affecting all games currently being played.

Vintage Booster Event \$15.00 Event: 404
Players receive one (1) *Arabian Nights*, one (1) *Antiquities*, and one (1) *Legends* booster. Here is a chance to play with the classics, again or for the first time. Win entrance into this event by participating in any of the following events: 101, 104, 105, 106, 201, 202, 203, 206, 207, 209, 301, 302, 303, 308, 309.

Limited (Sealed): Solomon Draft \$15.00 Event: 405
Can you be as fair as King Solomon? Test your wisdom on this new draft format. Each player will receive one (1) *Fourth Edition*, one (1) *Ice Age*, and one (1) *Alliances* booster from which to draft. The tournament will follow the Swiss format.

TEAM EVENTS

New *Alliances* are forged. Join with your allies to defeat your enemies with spell and creature.

Combined Team \$10.00/player Event: 305
Four-person team. Two players use constructed *Ice Age/Alliances* decks; two players will receive two (2) *Ice Age* starters and four (4) *Alliances* boosters to build two decks from.

Constructed Team \$6.00/player Event: 204
Five-person team: two players with Standard (Type II) decks, two players with classic Restricted (Type 1.5) decks, and one player with a classic (Type I) deck. All decks in this event must contain at least 10 cards from *Alliances*.

Limited Team \$15.00/player Event: 102
Four-person team. Each team will receive six (6) *Ice Age* and six (6) *Alliances* boosters to construct their decks.

EVENT TIMES & SCHEDULES

Thursday

Time	Event	Description
12:00 P.M.	101	Standard (Type II)
1:00 P.M.	102	Limited Team Event
1:00 P.M.	103	<i>Netrunner</i> ® Limited
2:00 P.M.	104	Rainbow Magic Standard (Type II)
3:00 P.M.	105	Limited (Sealed): <i>Ice Age</i> ™ starter & 2 <i>Alliances</i> ™ boosters
4:00 P.M.	106	Classic Restricted (Type 1.5)

Friday

Time	Event	Description
10:00 A.M.	201	Limited (Sealed): Booster Draft 1 <i>Fourth Edition</i> ™, 1 <i>Ice Age</i> & 1 <i>Alliances</i> Booster
11:00 A.M.	202	One-of-a-Kind Standard (Type II)
12:00 P.M.	203	Standard (Type II)
1:00 P.M.	204	Constructed Team Event
1:00 P.M.	205	<i>The Great Dalmuti</i> ™
2:00 P.M.	206	Iron Mage Limited (Sealed) <i>Fourth Edition</i> starter & 2 <i>Fourth Edition</i> boosters
<i>Edition</i>		
3:00 P.M.	207	Pro-Tour Deck Tournament
4:00 P.M.	208	<i>Vampire: The Eternal Struggle</i> ™
8:00 P.M.	209	<i>Magic: The Game Show</i> All competitors must arrive at 7:00 P.M.

Saturday

Time	Event	Description
9:00 A.M.	301	Chinese Limited (Sealed): Chinese <i>Fourth Edition</i> starter & 2 Chinese <i>Fourth Edition</i> boosters
10:00 A.M.	302	Classic (Type I)
11:00 A.M.	303	Limited (Sealed): Rochester Draft 1 <i>Fourth Edition</i> , 1 <i>Ice Age</i> & 1 booster
<i>Alliances</i>		
12:00 P.M.	304	Live RoboRally™
1:00 P.M.	305	Combined Team Event
1:00 P.M.	306	<i>Netrunner</i> Constructed
2:00 P.M.	307	Apprentice Standard (Type II)
3:00 P.M.	308	Foreign Limited (Sealed): 4 <i>Fourth Edition</i> boosters of various languages
4:00 P.M.	309	Limited (Sealed): <i>Ice Age</i> starter & 2 <i>Alliances</i> boosters

Sunday

Time	Event	Description
9:00 A.M.	401	Grand Melee Standard (Type II)
10:00 A.M.	402	Planeswalker Standard (Type II)
11:00 A.M.	403	<i>Netrunner</i> Constructed
12:00 P.M.	404	Vintage Booster Event: 1 <i>Arabian Nights</i> ®, 1 <i>Antiquities</i> ® & 1 <i>Legends</i> ™ booster
12:00 P.M.	405	Limited: Solomon Draft 1 <i>Fourth Edition</i> , 1 <i>Ice Age</i> & 1 <i>Alliances</i> booster

U.S. TEAM FULL OF FAMILIAR FACES

Every major Magic: The Gathering® tournament in the past year has held one thing in common—new faces. Each tournament has watched an unknown come out of the woodwork to either win or place in the tournament. That little phenomenon ended this year at the U.S. Nationals as all four finalists were very well known to their MAGIC peers.

George Baxter and Michael Long are two names the general public is more familiar with from past tournament victories and book publications. Matthew Place and Dennis Bentley are recognized and respected on the tournament circuit for their consistent level of play. All four will gain the "fame" that many MAGIC players strive for as they represent the United States at the 1996 World Championship.

Leading the team will be Dennis Bentley, this year's new U.S. National Champion. Many winners recount their story of victory as a nail biter that went down to the wire. Bentley tells a different story as he overwhelmed his opponents with an amazing early game that made his matches short and sweet. His Necro deck took many people aback by featuring a bit of red for Lightning Bolts and Fireballs, while foregoing such Necro standards as Drain Lives and Nevinyrral's Disks. While his semifinals match with Matthew Place did go the five-game distance, the finals with George Baxter went over in three straight games. Dennis Bentley will be a worthy captain as the Americans compete at the Worlds.

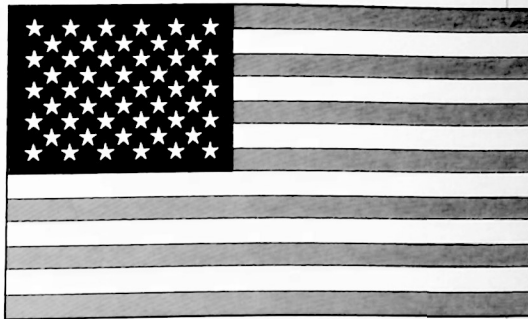


(left to right) Matthew Place, first place winner Dennis Bentley, Mike Long and George Baxter.

George Baxter, who is known for his very aggressive decks, might have surprised a few people by playing what seemed to be a very defensive deck. However, his strategy had a hidden loop that turned every defensive card into an offensive weapon. George used Titania's Song to turn his army of defensive artifacts into a game-ending barrage of creatures. Baxter had a very tight five-game match against Michael Long in the semifinals. After falling behind two games to one, Baxter stuck to his game plan and through the experience of the first few games was able to play flawlessly in the final two to steal the match from Long. Baxter has a philosophy that he only plays decks that contain exactly twenty-two creatures. We'll see if he sticks to his philosophy at the Worlds.

During game 5 with Baxter, you could hear Michael Long utter, "What is that phrase, always the bridesmaid never the bride?" Michael is the only member of the U.S. Nationals team to return from last year when he made it to the semifinal round. While Michael might be disappointed in losing at the same point he did last year, hopefully he can take comfort that he is now regarded in the upper tier of MAGIC players. Michael had a tough road to get to the semifinals as he was the last one to finish in

the quarterfinals, finishing well after 4:00 A.M. Before that, he eliminated last year's National Champion, Mark Justice, to get revenge on Justice for eliminating him the year before. He accomplished this by using the tournament's new darling deck, Turbo-Stasis. This deck relied on Howling Mines to speed the deck towards the powerful Stasis Kismet lock. Michael is the only team member to compete at the World Championships and his experience will surely help.



Matthew Place has never won a major tournament, but in a recent discussion of who the top fifteen MAGIC players were in the Worlds, his name made the list. Matthew has earned that respect from his peers through consistent play. Place is the type of player who will not beat himself and he showed it during Nationals. When he finally did lose to Bentley in the semifinals, his Turbo-Stasis deck took Bentley the distance, requiring Dennis to play flawlessly to squeak out the victory.

With such an impressive lineup, it would be hard not to list the Americans as the favorites to win the team competition again this year. While the Swiss, the French, and other teams will definitely put up a good fight, I think it will be red, white, and blue on the victory stage again.

—Mark Justice

CREDITS

This issue of *The Companion* was brought to you by:

Rhias K. Hall—Editrix-in-Chief

Rich Kaalaas—Layout

Michael Ryan & Jennifer Clark Wilkes

—Text Editors

Contributors

Jason Carl

Heather Henricks

Rhias K. Hall

Tres Henry

Kathy Cochran

Mark Justice

Bunny Rabbit

Hecubus

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DCI CHAPTERHOUSES?

Dear DC Gals & Guys,

Thanks for all your hard work on our behalf! Have you thought about exploring the concept of local chapters? With judges and players as participants, it could lead to more competition, with more players and rankings.

Have you done anything to let the retailers know they can have sanctioned tournaments? I haven't seen a sanctioned tournament in a store around here yet.

Don't take away my *Fallen Empires*! I was a happy camper when you changed your policies and allowed FE to stay in Type II!

Thanks,
Charles Hadden
Havertown, PA

Thanks for your letter, Charles—

To answer your two questions:

1. The idea of local DC chapters hasn't yet been fully explored, although we've received a few thoughtful suggestions on how such a structure could be implemented. The enormous effort involved in developing our international sanctioning and rating structure has pretty much filled our plate lately (even without the Thallid dressing), but it sounds like a good idea for future consideration. Anyone else out there have any thoughts on the topic?

2. We have designed a marketing plan to alert retailers to our new sanctioning policies. It should be implemented by the time you read this issue of Companion! If you are aware of any retailers who would like to have sanctioned tournaments but aren't sure how to get started, please give them our contact information. We'd be happy to assist them.

MAGIC SUPREMACY

Why don't you score Type I sanctioned tournaments as part of the 'official' rating of a Magic player? Play against top decks in the world, not constricted by the confines of Type II, is a true test of Magic supremacy.

Gregory B. Harter II (Internet)

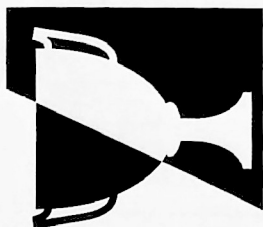
I'd like to answer your question and statement in order, Gregory.

1. Duelists' Convocation International does indeed track match results from sanctioned Type I tournaments and maintains these records in our ratings database. Each DCI member currently has three official ratings: Type I, Type II, and Sealed, and (as you are doubtless aware) it is possible for a member's rating to differ wildly in each category. Members who prefer to compete primarily in Type I tournaments naturally earn higher Type I ratings than those members who prefer to participate in Type II or Sealed Deck tournaments.

2. While everyone is entitled to an opinion, I doubt that all competitive Magic players in the world would share yours. One of the great things about competitive sports is that players and fans each have a unique point of view about what is good for the game. Baseball is an excellent example: One could easily start a heated argument in any stadium regarding the "Designated Hitter Rule."

The "division" between DCI members who prefer a particular format over another seems yet another example of our very human tendency to "choose sides" in life. Rooting for a particular sports team, joining a political party, or surrounding ourselves with national borders are perhaps illustrative of this natural tendency to artificially promote an "us vs. them" situation where none need exist.

In DCI's opinion, there is room enough for all tournament preferences—hopefully, its members will devote their energies to enjoying the game, making new friends, and exchanging ideas rather than arguing about which tournament format is superior.



DCI

Wizards of the Coast
The Duelists' Convocation
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA 98057-0707