

# **TCG Hour: Magic: The Gathering *Nemesis***

Featuring Joe Hauck, Magic brand manager

*Fri. Jan 28, 2000*

**TSRO\_Durst:** Welcome one and all to TCG Hour, and welcome our guest speaker, **Magic: The Gathering** Brand Manager Joe Hauck.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Hello, everyone!

**Thrakius:** Hi.

**Markkus:** Hello!

**TSRO\_Durst:** Joe, any opening comments before Q&A begins?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Tonight, I would like to talk about the upcoming set about **Nemesis**. I'm sure you all have some questions. I also have some questions for you: What do you all know about *Nemesis* so far?

**Markkus:** It's a **Magic** supplement?

**Joe\_Hauck:** It is.

**TSRO\_Durst:** It's the continuation of *Mercadian Masques*.

**Joe\_Hauck:** That is also true. It's the next set in the *Masques* cycle.

**TSRO\_Durst:** It introduces the "Fading" game mechanic.

**Joe\_Hauck:** It continues some of the new mechanics introduced in *Mercadian Masques* and also introduces Fading.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** What does Fading do?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Fading is basically a time bomb that ticks off each turn. It allows you to cast powerful spells that don't stay around as long because they have a time limit.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Neat. I see. I've been hearing about it but never could find what it did.

**Markkus:** Like All Hallow's Eve?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes, like All Hallow's Eve, except the opposite affect. It actually works until it loses all of its counters.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Do they come in with a set amount of counters?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes, but there are ways to manipulate that...

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Like adding more Mana?

**Markkus:** Or a counter pool card?

**Joe\_Hauck:** No, other spells. I have a question for you folks.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Okay.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Have any of you seen any of the leaked cards floating around?

**TSRO\_Durst:** Not yet.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** No.

**TSRO\_Durst:** How many cards are in the *Nemesis* set?

**Joe\_Hauck:** There are 143 cards in the set, Durst.

**Markkus:** Can you give us an example of a card?

**Joe\_Hauck:** There are a few in the latest ad in *Inquest*. They will give you an idea of what is coming up in the set. There are a group of creatures called the Laccoliths. If they become Blocked, they can deal damage equal to its power to target creature instead of dealing combat damage. It makes it harder to be chump-Blocked by small creatures.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Wow!

**TSRO\_Durst:** Ooh, tricky... What color are those?

**Joe\_Hauck:** They are Red.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** So, if a deck had a couple of Laccoliths, a weenie deck is even weaker?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Technically.

**Markkus:** Indeed.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Yeah.

**Joe\_Hauck:** It would be worse on a Green deck that's trying to "hide" its larger creatures from being destroyed by Blocking with smaller creatures. It will definitely add a new twist to combat. Also there is a new version of Crovax called Ascendant Evincar. He will be devastating to White weenie decks. For 4BB, he's 3/3, Flying, gives Black creatures +1/+! and non Black creatures -1/-1, turning 1/1's into 0/0's!

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Yeah, I saw that on the *Nemesis* page. He could turn an entire deck of other color 1/1s into 0/1s. Wow!

**Markkus:** 4BB. That's not bad for such power. Black/Blue is my game.

**TSRO\_Durst:** Same here, Markkus, or Blue/White.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Then you'll like this card.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Though a mix of Red is what makes it great and artifacts.

**Joe\_Hauck:** So, where do you go to get the latest information about new sets?

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** The Wizards' website.

**TSRO\_Durst:** The website and a local store in town.

**Markkus:** I just jumped back into **Magic**. I haven't got a source of info yet

**Joe\_Hauck:** Do they hang posters about the set in the store that you go to?

**TSRO\_Durst:** Not that I saw, Joe.

**Markkus:** They do at my comic store.

**TSRO\_Durst:** So we've gotten an example of Red and Black. What about the other colors?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Let's see for 3GG you get the Woodripper.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** What does that do?

**Joe\_Hauck:** He has Fading 3, meaning that he comes into play with three Fade counters on it. You remove one at the beginning of each upkeep, but he is 4/6 and you can pay 1 to remove a Fade counter and destroy target artifact. So, he's a good Blocker with some extra versatility

**TSRO\_Durst:** Nice Blocker.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Nice. He could take out some Henge Guardian or Defense Grid.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Exactly, and then attack.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** That is good.

**Markkus:** Any cards working with strategies of older decks? (Rats or Zombies, for instance.)

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes. I will hint at a cycle of cards that relate to older decks. There is a series of cards that work like Mercenaries/Rebels that call in old standbys like goblins.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** With the search deal?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes, with the search deal.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Nice.

**TSRO\_Durst:** What about the artwork? Are there any new artists for the *Nemesis* set?

**Joe\_Hauck:** New artists? Let me think. I can't remember off the top of my head. Paolo Parente helped us get in contact with some great Italian artists but I think most of them started with *Mercadian*

*Masques*. There might have been a few that started with *Nemesis*. It's hard for me to remember exactly, since we are receiving artwork for *Invasion*, the fall release currently.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Is *Invasion* where Phyrexia invades?

**Joe\_Hauck:** You guessed it right, but that's all I can tell you at this time.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Yeah, that's understandable.

**Markkus:** Those guys like making secrets. ☺

**Joe\_Hauck:** Well, people do like to be surprised.

**Markkus:** Indeed.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Don't you hate it when you see a movie trailer and you know the entire story without even seeing the movie?

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Yeah.

**TSRO\_Durst:** So is Fading the only new mechanic introduced in *Nemesis*? If so, roughly how many cards use it?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Fading is the new "mechanic." It is prevalent within the set. I'd hate to guess the percentage because folks would hold it to me but roughly 20% of the cards, maybe slightly more. The Laccoliths represent another explored ability. There are some interesting twists on the mercenaries like I mentioned above. There are definitely more spell shapers and a few more hidden goodies. If you go to the *Nemesis* section on our website, you can check out some of the artwork from the set as well as e-mail some **Magic** Valentine's Day cards to friends. (They're not mushy.)

**Markkus:** I'm on the art of *Nemesis* Web pages. The art gets better with every set!

**Joe\_Hauck:** There's also a cool promotion if you live in the United States and attend Pre-Releases.

**TSRO\_Durst:** There are usually a few gems in the flavor text too. I loved the Blaster Mage in *Mercadian Masques*.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes, the flavor text is getting a lot better. We've been focusing on that more and more. Trying to tie the sets more closely to the story line.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Yeah, makes the novels go better with the cards.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes, we want the novels and the cards to make sense together. Are any of you going to the Pre-Release, or have been to one?

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** No, I wish I was, though.

**Imac975:** Yes.

**Markkus:** No, I've never been to any Pre-Release.

**Joe\_Hauck:** How come?

**TSRO\_Durst:** I've yet to go to a Pre-Release. I doubt they have them in rural NH. ☹

**Markkus:** I never knew there were such things.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Ah, there are.

**Imac975:** There are?

**Joe\_Hauck:** We have them all over the country usually two weekends before the set releases. You can get a list of sites on the Wizards' website.

**Markkus:** As I said earlier, I just jumped back into the game in January.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes, I remember now. They are definitely fun to attend. The competition is less fierce and you get to be one of the first people in the world to crack open a booster and see the new cards and figure out how to best use the set

**TSRO\_Durst:** I'll have to see where the closest one to me is.

**Markkus:** Oh yes I heard of those contests. One starter and 2 boosters, if I remember correctly.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes. For *Nemesis* it will be a tournament pack of *Mercadian Masques* and 2 boosters of *Nemesis*. Many tournament organizers run other events as well, like booster drafts.

**Markkus:** That is something I don't understand. There are different packs of boosters now... *Mercadian Masques*, *Eruptive*, etc.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** So you learn how to use newer sets with the older one?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Exactly. The large set, like *Mercadian Masques* has a lot of the staple cards like disenchant and lands while the smaller sets add more flavor. Theme Decks, Markkus, allow you to buy a smaller sample of the cards in a deck that's ready to go straight out of the box. That way, if you have less time to build decks, you can use that as a starting point also for newer players. It provides them with a deck that already works well. And we usually put some pretty powerful cards as well.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** I get them because they have some powerful cards.

**Markkus:** Hmmmm and that Black fellow you mentioned earlier, where would I find him?

**Joe\_Hauck:** I believe that since he's one of the top cards in the set, he might not be in any of the decks. We also have to make the decks balanced.

**Markkus:** Ok, there's also a general brand of *Nemesis*.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** You probably have to get a bunch of tournament packs or boosters to find him.

**Joe\_Hauck:** So how it works is *Nemesis* is the set. There are randomized boosters containing 15 cards and Theme Decks that use 60 cards and are pre-constructed, i.e. each one has the same cards in it.

**Markkus:** Ok. Now I get it. I hadn't played since *The Dark*.

**Joe\_Hauck:** No problem.

**-Magic-Man:** Okay, you know Regeneration? How and when can you use it?

**Joe\_Hauck:** You pay its cost any time you want to.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Like an instant.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Exactly.

**-Magic-Man:** How many times can you use it?

**Joe\_Hauck:** It goes on the stack like an instant.

**-Magic-Man:** I mean on creatures that have ability Regeneration.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Like the Phyrexian Monitor?

**Joe\_Hauck:** You can use it as many times as you have Mana.

**TSRO\_Durst:** A creature that can regenerate can use it unless it was slain by something that prevents regeneration such as Terror or Wrath of God.

**-Magic-Man:** Okay. So, you can even use Regeneration on your opponent's turn? (If the creature's in play?)

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes, you can use Regeneration on your opponent's turn. So, do you guys have any other questions about *Nemesis*?

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Are there going to be Dragons and Wurms in *Nemesis*? I like those creatures.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes, there will be Wurms and a darn cool one to boot!

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Good, I like the Wurms. They are a bit more common than Dragons.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Flipping through quickly, I don't see any Dragons. We're saving those for later.

**-Magic-Man:** Hey, did you ever hear of the card "Dark Ritual"?

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Yes, I have a whole bunch of them

**TSRO\_Durst:** Dark Ritual -- nifty Black card.

**-Magic-Man:** Does the Mana they give you stay in your pool?

**TSRO\_Durst:** Oh, yes.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Until the turn is over.

**-Magic-Man:** Ooohhhh.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Until the phase is over.

**-Magic-Man:** I thought it lasted the rest of game.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** I think that the reading "Mana Source" makes that confusing.

**TSRO\_Durst:** Oh? Hmm, I didn't know that. Heh, that makes my Blue/White deck all the stronger!

**-Magic-Man:** So it only lasts one turn?

**Joe\_Hauck:** In the old days, Mana Sources were something else. It lasts one phase.

**-Magic-Man:** What exactly is a "phase"?

**Joe\_Hauck:** If you tap land and create a Mana Pool during your upkeep phase, you need to use it before you enter your draw phase.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Or Mana Burn hurts you.

**-Magic-Man:** Mana Burn?

**Joe\_Hauck:** If you don't use all of your Mana in that phase.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** If you tap more Mana than you need, the extra Mana does damage to you.

**Joe\_Hauck:** One point per Mana unused.

**-Magic-Man:** Okay.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Have any of you seen the *Fat Pack*? It's a packaged product that includes the following: The pullout section of *Top Deck Magazine* that gives you a complete full color card guide of the set, the *Nemesis* novel, 6 booster packs, a premium land card from *Mercadian Masques*, and a random premium common card from *Nemesis*. It gives you everything that you need to check out the story and the cards from the set. The reason that I ask is that we introduced them with *Masques* and I wanted to get an idea if people had heard of them or not.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** I read about them on the website.

**-Magic-Man:** Wow. Do you recommend any good cards I should buy?

**TSRO\_Durst:** Depends on the strategy you prefer.

**Markkus:** I'm afraid I'm not a very good source of information on that matter.

**Joe\_Hauck:** You should figure out what style of deck you like to play and then figure out what cards you need to build that deck so that you can trade the cards you don't need for the ones that you do, then you can buy the ones you can't trade for.

**-Magic-Man:** Oh, is the card Multani-Maró-Sorcerer a good card?

**Joe\_Hauck:** If you like playing Green decks or multi-player **Magic**, yes.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** Yes, and Howling Mine makes it a bit better.

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** I made an Enchantment/Creature combo that's kind of nasty.

**TSRO\_Durst:** Actually, there are no "bad" cards. A card I thought was garbage whipped me good in a friend's deck. (Kyren Sniper)

**-Magic-Man:** I have the card Clone.

**TSRO\_Durst:** It's all in the strategy.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Maybe that's because Kyren Sniper's not a bad card. All cards are useful under the right circumstances.

**TSRO\_Durst:** Heh, I learned my lesson, though I still shy away from Red in my deck.

**-Magic-Man:** Anybody here have Hammer of Bogardan?

**Two\_Headed\_Dragon:** No.

**-Magic-Man:** I heard that card rocks! I really want to get a Hammer of Bogardan.

**Markkus:** Any strong Artifacts in the *Nemesis* set?

**Joe\_Hauck:** Yes. There are so many good artifacts, I can't pick. You'll have to wait and see! ☺ It looks like my time is up. I enjoy talking about what's going on in the world of **Magic**. Tell your friends.

**TSRO\_Durst:** Okay, thanks for stopping by Joe. We all appreciate your time.

**Joe\_Hauck:** Thank you all for coming tonight!