

Home > Games > Magic > Magicthegathering.com > Columns



Judgment Is Upon Us

Jay Moldenhauer-Salazar
 House of Cards
 Thursday, May 23, 2002



PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

Judgment is upon us. Have you been found worthy?

It was my intention after each new set's release to have a "[Building Blocks](#)" article. But in all honesty, the *Torment* Building Blocks week didn't produce a lot of email response. I didn't receive negative mail from it *per se*, just a lot of dead air. I interpreted this unusual silence as a lack of interest, which translates to no more Building Blocks articles. If you feel strongly that I should stick to the tradition I started with *Torment*, feel free to contact me and express your opinion. In addition, if you have other ideas for regular features I might write after each new set release, I'm open to suggestions. Admittedly, it is a little weird that I feel the need for a regular post-release feature, but I do. I think that new cards fuel new deck ideas.

Speaking of regular features (and new deck ideas, for that matter), I'm spending today announcing the Second House of Cards Deck Challenge. The [First Deck Challenge](#) was great fun for me and, based on your response, great fun for you too. See how that works? You tell me you like the Deck Challenges and VOILA! More Challenges come roaring at you. In the absence of a post-*Judgment* kickoff, it feels like a good time to throw down the creativity gauntlet.

Unfortunately, the last Deck Challenge was as exhausting as it was fun. Sifting through so many decks and choosing my favorites turned out to be a surprising amount of work. As a result, I want to set down very explicit rules for submissions. These rules make it sound like I am hugely anal-retentive, and maybe I am. Mostly, I'm looking for any excuse to whittle down the pool of submissions and make my job easier. Because as we know, these things are all about me! Me! ME!!!

Ahem.

Here are the rules, with explanation as to why my trashcan might be full in two weeks.

THE DECK CHALLENGE RULES:

1) One deck per person.

You get to send one deck only. If you send more than one, I will just pay attention to the first one and throw away the rest. This rule is important for my overall sanity. I'm the only one tunneling through the mountain of submissions, and although I am one of those people who send in 50 submissions for deck-creating contests, I get on my own nerves. Don't be like me. I'm weird. By limiting you to one deck, I hope you'll put some thought into the deck and craft something cool.

2) Your deck must be green, white, green/white or white/green.

Judgment is white and green's retribution for *Torment*. As a result, there should be plenty of juicy morsels with which to play in those two colors. Let me see what kind of interesting decks *Judgment* has made possible. If your deck doesn't look like some combination of green and white, I'll throw it away.

3) Your deck can only use Type 2 legal cards: 7th Edition, Invasion, Planeshift, Apocalypse, Odyssey, Torment, and, of course, Judgment.

My hope is that you will focus on the new cards for your deck. This doesn't mean that you need to base your deck around a *Judgment* card or cards, since it is entirely possible that *Judgment* has made the use of a spell from, for example, *Invasion* really cool now. If no *Judgment* cards appear in your deck at all, however, I will have a hard time highlighting your deck.

I thought of making the Deck Challenge *Odyssey* Block only (that is, only using *Odyssey*, *Torment*, and *Judgment*), but since there are some serious Pro Tour Qualifiers coming up that are OBC, I decided it was best to steer clear of that format. By making the decks Type 2, you can create something to bring to a Friday Night Magic near you, or you can easily-adapt it to your local play group. Besides, I love Type 2. If you hate Type 2, your deck gets thrown away.

4) Sixty card minimum deck, 4 maximum of each card other than basic land, yadda yadda yadda.

Be cute, but not 10 *Forest*, 20 *Living Wish* cute. Otherwise I'll throw it away.

5) Your deck must have a description of how it plays.

I don't need a full-blown strategy analysis, but give me a few sentences about what the deck is supposed to do. If it is a theme deck, tell me a little about how the cards fit into your theme. If it is a combo deck, describe the combo to me. Tell me why your deck is cool. Feel free to state the obvious, since sometimes how a deck works isn't obvious to me. If you send me a decklist with no description, into the trashcan it goes.

Final Wrap-up

[Top 8 Video Archives](#)



6) Send your decklist and description in the text of your email.

In other words, don't send attachments. If I see an attachment, I'm throwing that sucker away.

And now the less severe rules...

7) No sideboards necessary.

The exception to this rule, of course, is if your deck needs a sideboard because of something like [Golden Wish](#). I might not throw your deck away if you list a sideboard, but I'll probably throw away the sideboard.

8) Sign your email.

If you really want the deck attributed to ChefBoyArdee, then sign your email that way. I would prefer, however, if you just gave me your name. I probably won't throw your submission away if you don't sign it, but I might make up a name for you or give credit to someone else I know. When seven of the ten decks I list in a few weeks are from Anthony Alongi, you'll know why.

9) Deadline for submissions is **Saturday, June 1st**.

After the deadline -- you guessed it -- I will throw submissions away.

Send your submission to me at houseofcards@wizards.com. If you send your deck to someone else, they will probably throw it away even if you followed the rules.

Remember: This is *not* a contest. Your only prizes are 1) seeing your decklist and name up on a website and 2) me thinking you're really smart. It is a challenge. You see me make silly decks every week, now it's time for you to back up that comment to your buddies, "Man, I could write that column." Prove it, deck boy. Show what you've got. Or, for you less competitive souls, consider it a time to really let your innovative spirit roam.

Remember too: The decks picked are entirely subjective and based on my whim. Just because I have some extra space, here is Jay's Guide to Getting a Deck Noticed by Jay (because it's all about me! Me! ME!!!)

I like focused decks.

Unless there is a specific reason to do so, I am not a big fan of decks with one and two copies of every spell. I like decks to be reliable in how they play and to focus on what they are trying to do. In fact, my tendency is usually to focus a deck so much as to make it unplayable. If that's what I do, I probably appreciate you pushing your own ideas toward a particular concept.

I like creative decks.

Feel free to send me the deck that you think will win the next **Magic Pro Tour**. I, in turn, will feel free to yawn. If I want to see someone try and build the next Super Deck, I can go to the [Sideboard](#). This column is meant to highlight creative ideas and get people thinking in non-traditional ways. Check out the [results](#) of the last Deck Challenge, in which I didn't pick a single mono-black deck. Better yet, browse through the House of Cards [archives](#) to see the kooky kind of stuff I like to make. Theme decks are spiffy. "Bad rare" decks are spiffy. Making a huge [Ivy Elemental](#) is spiffy. Making something I have never considered... very spiffy.

And finally...

I like compliments.

I have a fragile ego. Telling me that I am a genius is bound to win you brownie points. Telling me that I am a better writer than Mark, Anthony, Ben, Randy, and every previous feature writer will win you LOTS of brownie points. This is a subjective endeavor -- use that to your advantage.

So what are you waiting for? Break out your [Phantom Nishoba](#), [Test of Endurance](#), or [Crush of Wurms!](#) Show me why [Elvish Champion](#) is good now! Make the new Anti-Black deck! Demonstrate the cleverness of the "Bird" theme! Let you mind freeeeeeeeeee!

-j

Jay may be reached at houseofcards@wizards.com.



[Discuss](#) on the message boards



[Respond](#) via email



[Jay Moldenhauer-Salazar](#) archive

