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Building the Good Decks - 3

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Learning Curve
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When preparing to play in the Standard environment, whether you are competing at [Regionals](#) or trying to win [Friday Night Magic](#) at you local store, there are two decks that you should expect to see quite a bit of. Not only are they economically easy to build but they have been the two dominant archetypes in Standard for more than a year. Until they are dethroned at a major event, Psychatog and Blue-Green Madness remain the decks to beat—or to beat with, depending on your perspective.

Both decks had high finishes at the [Masters event](#) at Pro Tour - Chicago, which was prior to the inclusion of *Legions* in Standard, although neither deck gained anything from the all-creature set.

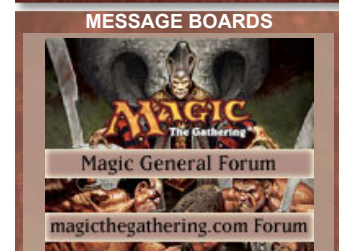
Blue-Green Madness

Blue-Green Madness relies almost entirely upon commons and uncommons from the *Odyssey* block to operate. The deck first emerged at [Pro Tour - Osaka](#) as an *Odyssey* Block Constructed deck when Ken Ho won that event with a *Tarnished Citadel* and *Upheaval* as his only rares. The key cards in the deck were *Wild Mongrels* and *Aquamoebas*. Those two cards allow you to exploit the madness cards *Basking Rootwalla* and *Arrogant Wurm*. They also serve as an outlet to toss *Roar of the Wurm* into the graveyard for a turn-4 6/6 token creature.

Ken Ho played a very similar deck at the Chicago masters event. He replaced the *Tarnished Citadel* with three *City of Brass* and the *Aquamoebas* became *Merfolk Looters*—exchanging power for card selection without losing madness outlets.



Blue-Green Madness	
PT Chicago Masters - Ken Ho	
Main Deck	Sideboard
60 cards	
3 <i>City of Brass</i>	4 <i>Careful Study</i>
10 <i>Forest</i>	4 <i>Circular Logic</i>
10 <i>Island</i>	4 <i>Roar of the Wurm</i>
23 lands	4 <i>Standstill</i>
	2 <i>Upheaval</i>
	18 other spells
2 <i>Arrogant Wurm</i>	3 <i>Callous Oppressor</i>
4 <i>Basking Rootwalla</i>	4 <i>Compost</i>
3 <i>Merfolk Looter</i>	2 <i>Deep Analysis</i>
3 <i>Werebear</i>	3 <i>Equilibrium</i>
4 <i>Wild Mongrel</i>	3 <i>Ravenous Baloth</i>
3 <i>Wonder</i>	15 sideboard cards
19 creatures	



While it may seem that the *Werebears* are there for their threshold ability, more often than not they are used simply to accelerate to *Roar of the Wurm* on turn three or *Upheaval* a turn sooner. The fact that they are a 4/4 after threshold is just gravy.

Careful Study is one of the MVPs in this deck helping to make up for it light land count and spitting out *Basking Rootwallas* on turn one while digging two cards deeper into the deck. Followed by a *Standstill*, a first turn *Rootwalla* presents an opponent with the unfortunate prospect of allowing you to draw three cards or get beaten down by the little green pumper. *Basking Rootwalla* is also quite nice after an *Upheaval* when you can discard them into play at the end of your turn.

The deck can make do with fewer copies of *City of Brass* if need be. Many versions of the deck only play one, and even *Upheaval* can be cut back to a single copy although two seems to be the optimum number. Ken Hos's deck may only have five rares, which we just cut down to two or three, but he was sporting *nine* in his sideboard. I have seen the *Equilibriums* replaced with *Turbulent Dreams* in newer versions of the deck to deal with *Ensnaring Bridge* but there is no reason you can't play with *Naturalize*. *Callous Oppressor* is an excellent means of creature control but so is *Aether Burst*, which also gives you a leg up on the Red-Green archetype. If you

Your Blue-Green Madness Priority List

What rares to trade for (in order)

Upheaval
City of Brass
Equilibrium

don't have access to **Ravenous Baloth** maybe you will have better luck trading for **Delusions of Mediocrity**, a less desirable rare that will serve to foil burn decks and aggressive creature strategies that don't have access to **Disenchant**.

Ravenous Baloth
Callous Oppressor
Delusions of Mediocrity

Here is version with only two main deck rares and only two more in the sideboard. The deck remains highly competitive and easy to play. Of all of the rares, the only "must-have" is the lone **Upheaval**.

Blue-Green Madness		
Fewer rares version		
Main Deck		Sideboard
60 cards		
1 City of Brass	4 Careful Study	4 Aether Burst
11 Forest	4 Circular Logic	4 Compost
11 Island	4 Roar of the Wurm	2 Deep Analysis
23 lands	4 Standstill	2 Delusions of Mediocrity
	1 Upheaval	3 Naturalize
	17 other spells	15 sideboard cards
3 Arrogant Wurm		
4 Basking Rootwalla		
3 Merfolk Looter		
3 Werebear		
4 Wild Mongrel		
3 Wonder		
20 creatures		

Psychatog

Psychatog did not have a good experience at the [Last Chance Qualifier](#) in Venice, finding itself overwhelmed by the super-fast Green-Red decks. There were a number of builds that tried to incorporate a third color to support **Wrath of God** but that only seemed to make the deck less consistent, and consistency is the deck's strongest suit. The most successful recent build of the deck is Neil Reeves' version—also from the [Masters in Chicago](#).

Psychatog		
PT Chicago Masters - Neil Reeves		
Main Deck		Sideboard
60 cards		
13 Island	3 Chainer's Edict	1 Chain of Vapor
4 Polluted Delta	4 Circular Logic	1 Coffin Purge
3 Swamp	4 Compulsion	4 Duress
4 Underground River	4 Counterspell	4 Ghastly Demise
24 lands	3 Cunning Wish	1 Hibernation
	3 Deep Analysis	1 Mana Short
	3 Force Spike	1 Opportunity
3 Psychatog	4 Innocent Blood	1 Read the Runes
3 creatures	3 Smother	1 Smother
	2 Upheaval	15 sideboard cards
	33 other spells	

If it weren't for the eight rare lands, this deck would only sport seven rares between the deck and sideboard. I have seen a number of versions of Psychatog decide to forgo **Cunning Wish** altogether in order to have a more "normal" sideboard—although you probably would need at least one more copy of **Mana Short** if you chose to do that. You could choose to cut one **Upheaval** and the three **Cunning Wishes** in favor of four copies of **Standstill**. If you play **Standstill** you will also need **Aether Burst** and both **Upheavals** to be successful.

You can put out a **Standstill** when there are no creatures in play—if you have a **Compulsion** out it is even better. If your opponent wants to cast any spells, you draw three cards before that spell resolves and you can decide whether or not to counter it. You, on the other hand can wait your opponent out, playing land after land and crafting the perfect hand. Often the 'Tog player will break his own **Standstill** when he finally decides to play **Upheaval**. If your opponent is not going to have anything in play on the beginning of his next turn, who cares how many cards he draws?

If you want to play Tog, your first priority should be acquiring **Upheaval** followed by **Polluted Delta** and then **Underground River**. **Cunning Wish** is not essential and should be your last priority but **Mana Short** is critical to winning the control match-up and if you don't have **Cunning Wish** you will need to trade for two of these—possibly even ahead of the lands. Here is a version of the deck that only utilizes eight rares between main deck and sideboard.

Your Psychatog Priority List
What rares to trade for (in order)
Upheaval
Polluted Delta
Underground River
Mana Short
Cunning Wish
Read the Runes

Psychatog		
Fewer rares verison		
	Main Deck	Sideboard
	60 cards	
13 Island	4 Aether Burst	4 Duress
4 Polluted Delta	2 Chainer's Edict	4 Ghastly Demise
7 Swamp	4 Circular Logic	3 Hibernation
	4 Compulsion	3 Mana Short
24 lands	4 Counterspell	1 Smother
	3 Deep Analysis	
3 Psychatog	4 Innocent Blood	15 sideboard cards
3 creatures	3 Smother	
	4 Standstill	
	1 Upheaval	
	33 other spells	

I have an extra column going up at the end of this week which will help keep you ahead of the Learning Curve in your Region! Stay tuned!

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Brian David-Marshall has been involved in **Magic** since 1994 when he was violently shaken by someone searching for the game. He has organized tournaments, run a store, and is currently the Pro Tour Historian. His latest venture is Top8Magic.com, the publishing house that is releasing Michael J. Flores: Deckade.



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