

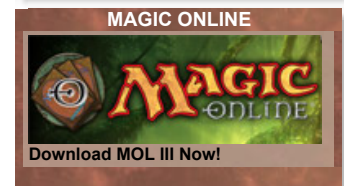
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A Little Bit of Knowledge

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Learning Curve
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When I first received my assignments for the *Scourge* previews, I was happy that *Rush of Knowledge* was scheduled to be the last card I would have to reveal to the **MagicTheGathering.com** readership. That might sound like I was saving the best for last, but truth be told, I had no idea what to make of this card. *Rush of Knowledge* is one of a series of cards that exploits the mana cost of cards in play—in this case allowing you to draw cards equal to the highest converted mana cost among permanents you control.



I have never been a huge fan of cards that are dependent upon other cards being in play to be good—*Tethered Griffin* anyone? "Nothing like topdecking this card after a *Wrath of God*," was my first thought. Then I remembered having a similar feeling about *Erratic Explosion* when the *Onslaught* set first come out. While I knew it would be reasonable in Limited, I was sure that card would never see Constructed play—how wrong I turned out to be. For reference:

Draco Explosion

Regis Lavoisier - Extended Format - Top 8 Grand Prix - Reims



Main Deck
60 cards

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Dust Bowl | 3 Draco | 4 Accumulated Knowledge |
| 2 Faerie Conclave | | 4 Brainstorm |
| 6 Island | 3 creatures | 4 Counterspell |
| 2 Lonely Sandbar | | 3 Cunning Wish |
| 4 Mountain | | 1 Earthquake |
| 3 Polluted Delta | | 3 Erratic Explosion |
| 4 Shivan Reef | | 1 Fact or Fiction |
| 1 Wooded Foothills | | 4 Fire/Ice |
| | | 3 Intuition |
| 23 lands | | 3 Mana Leak |
| | | 1 Mystical Tutor |
| | | 3 Scroll Rack |
| | | 34 other spells |

Obviously, there are always going to be cards *in your deck* to reveal with *Erratic Explosion*, making it far more reliable than *Rush of Knowledge*. But if you could get it to work . . . How can we build a deck that exploits *Rush of Knowledge*?

Typical blue-green is not going to be a good candidate. The creatures are all too small, with the exception of *Arrogant Wurm*, which would let you draw five cards quickly thanks to its madness mechanic. *Wild Mongrel* and

Basking Rootwalla would be unimpressive. The former would be a more expensive sorcery version of **Inspiration**, while the latter would make it an expensive cantrip. **Roar of the Wurm** tokens have a converted mana cost of 0 so they are out—as is the possibility of putting **Rush** in this deck.

It seems like the best chance for **Rush of Knowledge** to be good is going to be in an **Astral Slide** deck with large creatures that are played out inexpensively via the morph mechanic. **Exalted Angel** and **Quicksilver Dragon** will both yield six cards off of a **Rush of Knowledge**, which will fill your hand with cycling cards and counters for the rest of the game. (Remember, a face-down creature has converted mana cost 0, so make sure that you unmorph your Angel or Dragon first.)



Astral Slide will also protect your creatures from any nasty surprises. If your opponent has a well-timed **Starstorm** in response to **Rush of Knowledge**, the Slide can save your creature; at the very least, **Astral Slide** serves as a permanent that allows you to draw three cards. The number of cards you draw with **Rush of Knowledge** is determined upon resolution of the spell, so if your opponent kills, bounces, Slides, or removes your highest cost permanent from the game before **Rush** resolves, the **Rush** looks at the most expensive one remaining—even if it is just a land. Having a variety of permanents in play will guarantee that you draw *some* cards when you cast **Rush** even if it is just three from **Astral Slide** and not six from your Angel sitting safely on the sidelines until the end of your turn.

We could try using cards like **Krosan Colossus**, but we can easily build a deck with the **Exalted Angel** and/or **Quicksilver Dragon** that can unmorph either creature without relying on **Astral Slide** to do it for us. Besides, drawing nine cards is excessive—fun, but excessive. Drawing six seems more than fine for five mana. Using the already existing **AquaLube** deck as a base we can quickly sketch out a deck that attempts to exploit the new card drawer.

| AquaLube with Rush of Knowledge | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Standard with Scourge | | |
| Main Deck 60 cards | | |
| 4 Adarkar Wastes | 4 Exalted Angel | 4 Astral Slide |
| 6 Island | 1 Quicksilver Dragon | 4 Choking Tethers |
| 4 Lonely Sandbar | 1 Teroh's Faithful | 4 Counterspell |
| 6 Plains | | 4 Mage's Guile |
| 4 Secluded Steppe | 6 creatures | 2 Memory Lapse |
| 24 lands | | 4 Renewed Faith |
| | | 4 Rush of Knowledge |
| | | 4 Wrath of God |
| | | 30 other spells |

The deck has only ten nonland permanents, but with an **Astral Slide** in play, it is difficult for your opponent to destroy them. The **Rush of Knowledge** will restock your arsenal of cycling cards allowing you to either protect your threats or clear your opponent's creatures out of the way. Older incarnations of this deck relied on **Scriver** recursion, and I have simply replaced the five-mana 2/2 with a spell that has the ability to draw between three and six cards when it is played.



Rush of Knowledge will certainly make its presence known at the **Scourge Prerelease**, as it should be a powerhouse Limited card. While it is unlikely that you will get **Exalted Angel** in your Sealed Deck, the common **Daru Lancer** will yield you six cards on the fifth turn via morph. Although, drawing four cards off of a **Mistform Seaswift**, **Daru Stinger**, **Ascending Aven**, or **Dive Bomber** will be fine for any blue-white Sealed Deck. It may even be common to draw as many as eight cards as soon as turn five, but you will have to wait until Friday to find out the skinny on that one!

That's it for the **Scourge** previews for me. Next week, we start rounding the Learning Curve again, but I will be back later this week with a feature about getting the scoop on the **Scourge** set in real life.

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