

Get Set For Your Local Champs Event Earn Some Bragging Rights

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The State/Province/Island/Territory Championships (Champs for short) is coming up this Saturday, October 25th. After reading some initial reader feedback about the event, I've decided to clear up some of the confusion about how Champs works. One reader in particular asked some very good questions that I would like to address.

Hi! My name is Liz and I read your article and now have 3 questions.

1) How do you "qualify" for the state and provincial tournament?

2) What sets are legal now? I know that *Seventh Edition* was no longer allowed, but the why is *Odyssey* just phasing out?...I was devastated when I found out that with the introduction of *Core Set: Eighth Edition*, I could no longer use [Meekstone](#) and I thought that if *Seventh Edition* was gone, the *Odyssey* block was gone too. When do these sets no longer become type II eligible?

3) Why is a green-red control deck not an expected deck?

Thanks for your questions Liz. You weren't the only one wondering how Champs worked, so I've asked to respond in the form of this feature article. Now... on to the answers!

1. How To Qualify

This is the easy part... **just show up**. You do need to be able to demonstrate that you are a resident of the State, Province, Island, or Territory that you are playing in. The following items will be accepted as proof of residence provided they are issued from where you live: driver's license or photo ID; school photo ID; phone, electric, or other utility bill with your mailing address.

You will need to have a DCI number in order to play but that is not anything to be concerned about. If you have ever played in a DCI sanctioned event before - even for



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Information
[Champs Fact Sheet](#)

Pokemon or MLB - you should already have a DCI number. If you don't recall the number the tournament organizer should be able to access it for you. If you have never played in a sanctioned event before getting a DCI number is easy and free. It is just a matter of filling out a form which the organizer will have on hand when you sign up.

Locations
[North America](#)
[UK/Ireland](#)

There is an entry fee associated with playing in the tournament. It can vary from organizer to organizer but it will generally be in the \$15 - \$20 range. Check your local organizer's web page or call to confirm the price for your local tournament. Many organizers offer a small discount if you register for the tournament in advance and even have links to PayPal on their page to facilitate this.

Once you are registered for the tournament the last thing you will need to do in order to play is to register your deck. There will be deck registration sheets handy when you sign up. Some organizers prefer to have you register your deck before you sign up for the tournament so don't hold me to the exact order of these events. Either way you want to make sure that your deck is Standard legal and contains a minimum of 60 cards. If you decide to use a sideboard it must be exactly fifteen cards. Double and triple check your list to make sure these numbers are accurately reflected when you hand it in. If you have any questions about your decklist you should have a judge look it over before you hand it in. Once you turn it in if any errors turn up on it you could be penalized with game or match losses depending on the nature of the error.

If you are settled on the exact nature of your decklist in advance of the tournament I recommend registering it before the event. Wizards of the Coast offers a blank **Decklist Registration Sheet** you can [download here in pdf format](#). Having your deck on the registration sheet before you get there significantly reduces the risk of registration errors and it is one less thing for you to have to worry about. Make sure your name is written clearly on the top of the sheet.

2) What Cards Are Legal?

One of the most exciting features of Champs is that it is always the first major constructed event to include the new stand-alone expansion - in this case *Mirrodin*. Standard is a constantly changing format that includes the most recent base set and the last two blocks of expansions. When the *Mirrodin* block becomes tournament legal for constructed formats on October 20th it will nudge out the entire *Odyssey* block (*Odyssey*, *Torment*, and *Judgement*). The cards you will be able to build a deck with for this tournament will be *Core Set: Eighth Edition*, *Onslaught*, *Legions*, *Scourge* and *Mirrodin*.

The rotations of the base sets and the expansion blocks are not connected although I can see why you might think that with the release of *Mirrodin* so close on the heels of *Core Set*. *Core Set* has barely had a chance to make a dent in any Constructed format thus far so it going to be a coming out party

Legal Card Sets - Standard -



for both sets - [Bonesplintered Savannah Lions](#) are just one example of the possible pairings.

3) What To Expect

Absolutely Anything.

This is a completely new environment and there are no established decks yet. Sure there are some block decks and Standard decks from the previous season but this is opening day of a new season and all the statistics from season's past have been reset. Green-Red control? Why not? There are a number of exciting cards to work with some of which have combined to form similar decks in the past. [Plow Under](#), [Creeping Mold](#), [Stone Rain](#), [Viridian Shaman](#), [Birds of Paradise](#), maybe a [Ravenous Baloth](#) or four. It's beginning to look like Angry Hermit - a classic green-red control deck. You even have [Solemn Simulacrum](#) to fill the [Yavimaya Elder](#) slot.

How about Burning Bridge with [Mindstorm Crown](#) replacing the departed [Grafted Skullcap](#)? Burning Bridge is a mono-red burn deck that held off creatures with [Ensnaring Bridge](#) and board sweeping effects like [Earthquake](#) or [Pyroclasm](#). The former is no longer available but the instant speed [Starstorm](#) is still available as is the latter.

I am going to be looking at a number of possibilities in my regular column on Wednesday including White Weenie, Mono-Black Control, Mind's Desire, and Death Pit Offering. There are dozens and dozens of decks to choose from and until someone proves otherwise they are all viable.

There are a couple of additional pieces of information I would like to share with you regarding what to expect from a tournament if you have never attended one before. Depending on the attendance of the tournament there will be some number of Swiss-style rounds-generally six or seven - and then a cut to a Top 8 single elimination bracket. What this means for you is that you can play as many rounds of the Swiss portion as you want to regardless of your record.

Generally everyone in the Top 8 will win prizes in the form of *Mirrodin* packs and boxes. The Top 4 players will also receive special playmats designed specifically for this tournament. The winner of the event will be awarded the title of Champion which will be commemorated with a special plaque. A number of organizers add a supplemental prize. Both Gray Matter Conventions and Professional Event Services offer free entry into their tournaments for a full year to all of their State Champions. I don't know how many other organizers have followed their lead but it is a great prize if you are playing in one of their many states.

I know that both aforementioned organizers are offering bounties on the heads of the previous year's champions as well. This means that if you are paired up against the reigning champion of your state and you manage to defeat him you will win a prize for that match victory - probably a pack or two. If



your local organizer does not offer these fun incentives you should mention it to them - squeaky wheels definitely get the grease.

I would also like to add that the Top 8 decks from all of these events usually get posted on the Sideboard Online. It is your chance for you to see your name up in pixels for all the **Magic**-playing world to admire. Your deck could have an immediate impact since the following week will see New Orleans playing host to the next stop on the Pro Tour. There is a Last Chance Qualifier for that event and the format for the tournament will be Standard - the same exact format from Champs the week before. Just think - your deck may help qualify someone for the Pro Tour (if not even yourself!).

Good luck to everyone this weekend. If you are playing in the New Jersey State Championships I should be attending although I am still not sure what deck I will be playing!

** October 26 or November 1 in some locations - check your local listings*