

Having Fun with the Untap Engine

SCS: Dross Scorpion

Bennie Smith

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Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold --Milton, Paradise Lost

When I first saw the *Mirrodin* spoiler, I thought Dross was a made-up word. I figured it was some flavorful creation of the *Mirrodin* creative team, taking "gross" and merging it with "droll." Or something.



It turns out that "Dross" actually means something. From Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary: "The scum or refuse matter which is thrown off, or falls from, metals in smelting the ore, or in the process of melting."

So the [Dross Scorpion](#) thrives in the refuse of metals... how appropriate to the world of *Mirrodin*!

Another flavorful home-run hit by the WotC creative team.

Looking at all the discussion about *Mirrodin*, one can see that this little arachnid is not getting the love he deserves. Most everyone I've talked to about [Dross Scorpion](#) just shake his or her head and scowls. "It's just a 3/1 for 4. That's terrible."

His frame may not be impressive, but what beats inside his metallic shell is an Engine, baby! And when you craft a deck to take advantage of an Engine you can have some great fun.



The Engine's Fuel

Whenever [Dross Scorpion](#) or another artifact creature is put into a graveyard from play, you may untap target artifact.

It's not hard to get artifact creatures to die in the normal course of the game, but to get the engine humming right you've got to get them to die on command. There are plenty of self-sacrificing artifact creatures available, including [Bottle Gnomes](#), [Elf Replica](#) and his friends, [Crosis's Attendant](#) and his cohorts, [Ticking Gnomes](#), and [Tin-Wing Chimera](#) (just think of the fun you can have with the Visions Chimeras and [Skeleton Shard](#)). [Pentavus](#) and [Thopter Squadron](#) can create artifact token creatures and then sacrifice them over and over.

You can also "persuade" other artifact creatures to die on command with cards like [Atog](#), [Lithatog](#), [Sarcatog](#), [Goblin Welder](#), [Tinker](#), [Trash for Treasure](#), [Ashnod's Altar](#), [Goblin Bombardment](#), [Grab the Reins](#), [Recurring Nightmare](#) and [Skull Catapult](#). In this vein, cards that make artifact creatures over and over again become quite useful, such as [Soul Foundry](#) (imprinted with an artifact creature), [Nuisance Engine](#), [Hornet Cannon](#), [Serpent Generator](#), [The Hive](#), and [Metrognome](#).

The Engine's Product

All right, so you've found plenty of fuel for your engine; what are you going to get out of the effort? Untapping some artifacts like a madman, that's what! There are way too many possible artifacts to list here (going all the way back to some "mono artifacts" in the early years), but I've got some to help stir your creative juices. Keep in mind too when I use the term "infinite" below I technically mean "arbitrarily large." 1,000,000 is a good round number to use.

The extremely janky but fun [Keldon Battlewagon](#) gives us some interesting options: Tap your Scorpion to give the Battlewagon +3/+0. Then tap an artifact creature (say, a [Rith's Attendant](#)) to give the Battlewagon another +3/+0, and then tap the Battlewagon itself to double its power. Then sacrifice the Attendant and untap the Battlewagon with the Scorpion's triggered ability. That's a 12/3 trampler, and if you had a way to sacrifice an artifact creature (say the Scorpion itself), then you could double it again and attack for 24!

Here's a *Mirrodin* block-legal combo:

Imprint a [Cathodion](#) on [Soul Foundry](#) and tap three mana to make a [Cathodion](#) token. Sacrifice the [Cathodion](#) to your [Atog](#) to give it +2/+2 and give you three mana. [Dross Scorpion](#) triggers and you can untap your [Soul Foundry](#). Look, you've got three mana floating ready to make another [Cathodion](#) token! Do this over and over again until your [Atog](#) is infinitely large to kill your opponent in one attack. Or fling him with a [Grab the Reins](#). Incoming!

You can use the same [Cathodion/Soul Foundry](#) combination with [Ashnod's Altar](#) to generate an infinite amount of colorless mana, or with [Goblin Bombardment](#) to deal an infinite amount of damage. [Ashnod's](#)

[Altar](#) can also combine nicely with [Myr Retriever](#) in play and one in the graveyard, giving you an infinite number of artifact untaps from your Scorpion. This combination generates infinite mana from Sol Ring, [Grim Monolith](#), [Earthcraft](#) (with basic land) a [Silver Myr](#), or even [Great Furnace](#). You can gain infinite life with [Leonin Elder](#) or [Soul Warden](#). Or have your opponents lose infinite life with [Disciple of the Vault](#). Or break it off old school with [Pandemonium](#).

For those of you more interested in a utilitarian route... it's obviously nice to untap [Phyrexian Colossus](#) some other way than paying 8 life. Get some more activations from your [Scrabbling Claws](#), or [Icy Manipulator](#), or the mana Myrs. You can even untap an artifact land if you need some colored mana to add to your pool.

Here's a *Mirrodin* Block/Type 2 Legal "Lite" deck harnessing the engine of [Dross Scorpion](#). While you'd need some rares like [Soul Foundry](#) to enable game-ending combos, there's enough fun synergy here to surprise your opponent with some wins from left field. [Disciple of the Vault](#) makes your sacrificing abilities quite painful to your opponent, and also gives you some insurance in case your opponent wants to play something unsporting like [Akroma's Vengeance](#). Keep in mind that, even if you have black mana available you can use the colorless mana activation for [Skeleton Shard](#) as a mana sink in case a [Cathodion](#) dies sometime other than when you want it to.

- 2x [Welding Jar](#)
- 4x [Disciple of the Vault](#)
- 4x [Atog](#)
- 3x [Shrapnel Blast](#)
- 4x [Bottle Gnomes](#)
- 4x [Cathodion](#)
- 4x [Nuisance Engine](#)
- 4x [Skeleton Shard](#)
- 4x [Dross Scorpion](#)



3x [Grab the Reins](#)

4x [Great Furnace](#)

4x [Vault of Whispers](#)

7x [Swamp](#)

9x [Mountain](#)

If you have them, a few [City of Brass](#) or [Grand Coliseum](#) could help smooth out your mana issues, though with so many artifacts you can probably work through any problems.

I'll close on this note: as a player, I'm thrilled at all the fun stuff R&D crammed into *Mirrodin*. I somehow have the feeling that we've just scratched the surface of what's fun and powerful in this set. So before you toss a common or uncommon that seems a little janky into the depths of your closet, pause a minute and think about [Dross Scorpion](#). Perhaps the card is more useful than you think!

Bennie may be reached at singlecardstrategy@email.com.