



# Three Takes on Type 1

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Learning Curve

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I don't know anything about Type 1.

I mean I understand the basics. You can play with every set and expansion since Alpha (barring *Portal* and *Unglued*). There is an extensive banned and restricted list. And the games don't last very long.

There was a brief period of time when I thought I was going to play Type 1. I had almost all of the cards I thought you needed to play. I had Moxes and dual lands, all shiny and minty from the Alpha edition. First I found out that I didn't have nearly the array of cards I would need. Second, I couldn't bring myself to subject my beautiful cards to it. I couldn't shuffle my beautiful alphas. I am a hard shuffler—my cards don't suffer the experience well. In the end I sold them off on eBay when I realized that I would never play with them. What's the point otherwise?



So basically you have Type 1 theme week and an author who knows very little about Type 1. Don't worry there will be no theme week end around this week. Fortunately, I get to go to Neutral Ground more times a week that I care to admit. Neutral Ground is a gaming store with a huge tournament area that I founded almost eight years ago. I no longer own it but it is still my home away from home in regards to **Magic**. It serves as a place to draft, playtest and a spot to convene before departing for non-gaming related activities.

Neutral Ground has always held sanctioned Type 1 tournaments and they have a deep pool of players that all compete regularly in them. The decks range from highly focused competitive decks to slightly tweaked (if at all)

Standard or Extended decks. You can usually find all the major archetypes represented from control decks to combo decks to the Sligh decks. Sligh—a deck that features inexpensive red creatures and burn—is always a popular choice because you can build the deck inexpensively without any power cards and it just flat out wins sometimes.

Another popular deck has been Blue-Green Madness which has seen play in Block Constructed, Standard, Extended and now Vintage. It utilizes the discard effects of *Lion's Eye Diamond* and *Bazaar of Baghdad* to enable madness. It is another relatively inexpensive deck to build that can beat any deck that stumbles for a turn or two. Three players at Neutral Ground have learned to navigate these tricky and unpredictable waters with their own approach to building a Vintage deck.

One of the most famous players who is a regular competitor is Pro Tour, Grand Prix, and Masters Series winner Mike Pustilnik. Mike has always loved Type 1 and probably plays that format of **Magic** more avidly than any other.

Scott McCord was also a Pro Tour mainstay up until recently. Scott found himself not enjoying the intense competition of the Pro Tour and has passed up his past few invitations despite demonstrating that he had what it took to compete in that rarefied air. Scott can often be found drafting at Neutral Ground but if he has sixty cards in front of him you can reasonably assume he is playing Type 1. It has become his favorite format.

Steve Sadin is a young up and comer. Steve has been on a tear lately. He has made the Top 8 of almost every PTQ he has played in and is hoping to take his game up to the next level at the upcoming Pro Tours. In the meanwhile, he has been running roughshod over the local Type 1 tournament scene. He has been playing a Psychatog deck that has only taken one draw and zero losses in its past thirty matches. He is 14-0-1 in sanctioned Type 1 and has gone 7-0 at two separate unsanctioned events that allowed the use of a limited number of proxies.

(Tournaments that allow the use of proxies can be an excellent way to improve your collection if your are trying to build a Type 1 deck. The prizes are often Type cards like Moxes [especially here on the East Coast] and since they allow the use of proxies you can build more competitive decks than you might be able to otherwise. The downside is that since they are not sanctioned you are not afforded all of the same protections that you get from the DCI at a sanctioned event. That said, they are normally pretty high profile events and if you ask around before you play in the tournament you can get a pretty good idea of what to expect from the organizer.)

Here is the deck Steve has been tearing it up with. Interestingly the only card he needed to proxy was a **Rack and Ruin**. I had borrowed them and they were all in my Extended deck at the time.





Steve a Tog		
Vintage Deck played by Steve Sadin		
Main Deck		Sideboard
60 cards		
3 Island	4 Accumulated Knowledge	2 Blue Elemental Blast
1 Library of Alexandria	1 Ancestral Recall	1 Corpse Dance
4 Polluted Delta	1 Black Lotus	1 Diabolic Edict
1 Strip Mine	4 Brainstorm	1 Duress
4 Underground Sea	2 Cunning Wish	1 Ebony Charm
4 Volcanic Island	2 Deep Analysis	2 Gorilla Shaman
2 Wasteland	1 Demonic Tutor	1 Meditate
19 lands	3 Duress	1 Pyroblast
	1 Fact or Fiction	1 Rack and Ruin
	4 Force of Will	2 Red Elemental Blast
3 Psychatog	2 Intuition	1 Rushing River
3 creatures	4 Mana Drain	1 Stifle
	1 Merchant Scroll	15 sideboard cards
	1 Mind Twist	
	1 Mox Emerald	
	1 Mox Jet	
	1 Mox Ruby	
	1 Mox Sapphire	
	1 Sol Ring	
	1 Time Walk	
	1 Yawgmoth's Will	
	38 other spells	

I asked Steve what the difference was between his deck and the one Carl Winter used to win the Vintage Championships earlier this year. Carl's deck was called Hulk and featured the popular **Berserk**, "My deck is basically a Psychatog deck with a much better mana base. I don't roll over and die to **Wasteland**—something that is increasingly common in Type 1 these days. I don't play with **Tropical Island** or **Berserk**. I don't think it is necessary. I play in an environment full of **Wastelands**. Winning a turn earlier is not as relevant as losing to a double **Wasteland** draw."

Like all Type 1 decks, Steve makes minor modifications based on the local tournament environment, "I didn't always have red in the deck. I used to feature five **Wastelands** (four and a **Strip Mine**) and a handful of **Stifles** because **Academy Rector** was dominating the environment." One of the popular decks sacrifices **Academy Rector** to flash back **Cabal Therapy**. From there the player can get **Necropotence** or **Illusions of Grandeur** and then

Donate the latter to their opponent. More on that later in the broadcast.



The deck Steve used to play was Keeper. Keeper is a four-color control deck that constantly shifts to keep up with the environment. Keeper has fallen out of favor with many Type 1 stalwarts although the deck will always have its supporters. "There are a couple of theories about Keeper. The first is that it is an outdated deck that attempts to have one for one answers to common threats. For example: **Aura Fracture** for **Back to Basics**, **Sword to Plowshares** for **Phyrexian Negator** and **Diabolic Edict** for **Morphling**."

"The second theory is that the cards in your deck are strictly better than the cards in your opponent's deck. For example: **Yawgmoth's Will** and **Balance**." Steve feels he has a much better game against Keeper than they do against him and is happy to face it in tournament, "You have much better card drawing than they do. They only have eight counterspells and they keel over and die if you have **Duress**. Plus I am better than the Keeper players."

Steve comes off sounding pretty arrogant at times when talking about Type 1 and I called him on that. He explained, "Type 1 is and arrogant format—I might even go so far as to say that it is an arrogance dependent format. As long as that arrogance comes from experience."

One of the most experienced and least arrogant players you could ever hope to meet is Michael Pustilnik. Mikey P has been playing **Magic** since its initial release and is one of the only players who can claim victory on the Pro Tour, at a Grand Prix, and at the now defunct Masters Series. Mike has played more or less the same deck for years. His deck is what Steve Sadin would refer to as Keeper although Mike prefers Four-Color Control, "Keeper is a name that Mike Long gave the deck and that has caught on much to my distress."



Mike describes his deck as elegant and plays it because... well, because he gets to play with it. "I like the deck because it is an interactive deck and it allows you to improve every time you play it. It challenges your mind."

Mikey P's 4-Color Control		
Vintage Deck played by Mike Pustilnik		
Main Deck	Sideboard	
60 cards		
1 City of Brass	1 Ancestral Recall	1 Circle of Protection: Red
4 Flooded Strand	1 Balance	1 Diabolic Edict
2 Island	1 Black Lotus	1 Dismantling Blow
1 Library of Alexandria	1 Braingeyser	2 Hydroblast
2 Mishra's Factory	4 Brainstorm	1 Mountain
1 Strip Mine	2 Cunning Wish	1 Pyroblast
2 Tundra	1 Demonic Tutor	1 Pyroclasm
2 Underground Sea	1 Fact or Fiction	2 Red Elemental Blast
2 Volcanic Island	4 Force of Will	1 Skeletal Scrying
3 Wasteland	4 Mana Drain	1 Stifle
20 lands	1 Merchant Scroll	1 Swords to Plowshares
	1 Mind Twist	2 Tormod's Crypt
	2 Misdirection	15 sideboard cards
	1 Mox Jet	
2 Gorilla Shaman	1 Mox Pearl	
1 Morphling	1 Mox Ruby	
3 creatures	1 Mox Sapphire	
	1 Mystical Tutor	
	1 Sol Ring	
	1 Stroke of Genius	
	1 Swords to Plowshares	
	1 The Abyss	
	1 Time Walk	
	1 Timetwister	
	1 Yawgmoth's Will	
	1 Zuran Orb	
	37 other spells	

Mike wanted to point out a few things about his current list. The second Gorilla Shaman will probably become a **Teferi's Response** once the January restrictions kick in and there are three fewer **Chrome Moxes** in everybody's decks. He also acknowledged that his inclusion of two Mishra's Factories and a **Zuran Orb** might be considered unusual. He likes the versatility of the Mishra's on offense or defense and does not feel



they impede the color requirements of the deck at all. As to the latter card, "It is controversial but I think it is indicated. You cannot beat mono-red decks game one otherwise."

Mike has been playing the same deck with minor variations for several years. It is one of the strong points of the format to it's supporters. They claim that while it is expensive to build a deck initially, once you have made the investment you do not need to sink serious dollars into your constructed **Magic** habit ever again. That may be true but the price of those initial cards keeps getting higher and higher. Mike claimed that it is possible to play without having the biggest cards in the set.

"I would recommend playing an aggro-black deck to anyone trying to get started in Type 1 who doesn't have the power cards. The deck could be improved with **Mox Jet** or **Black Lotus**, of course. But you can be competitive without them."

Aggro-Black		
Entry-level Vintage Deck by Mike Pustilnik		
Main Deck	Sideboard	
60 cards	0 sideboard cards	
3 Mishra's Factory 1 Strip Mine 16 Swamp 4 Wasteland <hr/> 24 lands <hr/> 4 Carnophage 4 Hypnotic Specter 4 Nantuko Shade 3 Phyrexian Negator <hr/> 15 creatures	4 Cabal Therapy 4 Dark Ritual 1 Demonic Tutor 4 Duress 4 Hymn to Tourach 1 Mind Twist 1 Necropotence 1 Vampiric Tutor 1 Yawgmoth's Will <hr/> 21 other spells	

Finally, I turned to Scott McCord who has turned his attention from playing high level competitive **Magic** to drafting among friends and playing Type 1. "I like Type 1 because it is a format that is relatively unexplored. It harkens back to the days when everyone had their own personal deck. You would fine tune your deck over time. Each card choice was carefully examined and you were constantly tinkering with *your* deck. There weren't any huge Pro Tours which drove hundreds of people searching for the single best deck."



"I don't think it is broken—no matter what people say. Sure it is great to Ancestral yourself on turn one but there is actually a lot of play skill in the format and the decisions you make determine the outcome of the game." That said, Scott has been playing an Illusions/Donate deck that both Steve and Mikey P acknowledged as being the best deck in the format. It is chock full of restricted cards, fast mana, and degenerate combos backed up by the power of **Duress** and **Cabal Therapy**.

Rector? I nearly Killed Her!		
Vintage deck played by Scott McCord		
Main Deck	Sideboard	
60 cards	15 sideboard cards	
1 Bloodstained Mire 4 Polluted Delta 4 Scrubland 1 Tolarian Academy 4 Underground Sea <hr/> 14 lands <hr/> 4 Academy Rector <hr/> 4 creatures	1 Ancestral Recall 1 Black Lotus 4 Brainstorm 4 Cabal Therapy 1 Chrome Mox 4 Dark Ritual 1 Demonic Tutor 2 Donate 4 Duress 4 Force of Will 2 Illusions of Grandeur 1 Mana Crypt	1 Balance 3 Blue Elemental Blast 2 Coffin Purge 1 Form of the Dragon 1 Mind Twist 4 Phyrexian Negator 3 Seal of Cleansing

- 1 Mana Vault
- 1 Mox Emerald
- 1 Mox Jet
- 1 Mox Pearl
- 1 Mox Ruby
- 1 Mox Sapphire
- 1 Mystical Tutor
- 1 Necropotence
- 1 Sol Ring
- 1 Time Walk
- 1 Vampiric Tutor
- 1 Yawgmoth's Bargain
- 1 Yawgmoth's Will

42 other spells



The deck is easily capable of winning on turn two although it is vulnerable to targeted hand destruction and mana disruption. A couple of well-aimed *Wastelands* can ruin its whole game. I found it interesting that Scott, Steve and Mike all played four copies of the innocuous looking *Brainstorm*. Scott claimed it was the most powerful card in Type 1 that is not restricted—especially since the introduction of the fetch lands. He related a story about Mikey P playing Type 1 against Brian Weissman in San Diego at this past US Nationals.

For those of you unfamiliar with Brian Weissman, he was one of the first players to have a deck that he put forth become a "net deck". He built a blue-white-red control deck that became known simply as The Deck that became the talk of the usenet groups. It is probably the progenitor of the modern four color-control decks, which is the deck Brian plays in Type 1 today. He is considered by many to be the most skilled Type 1 player in the world. He almost never makes changes to his deck and at the time he was playing with Mikey P had not changed his deck in many years—not a single card.

Brian pretty much dominated the match-up but what few games Mike managed to win were thanks to the power of *Brainstorm* and fetch lands.

When Brian concluded the matches he acknowledged that he would be adding them to his deck. To a Type 1 junkie like Scott that is the highest praise a card can receive.

To close my talks with each player I asked them to identify the top 20 cards in the Type 1 format.

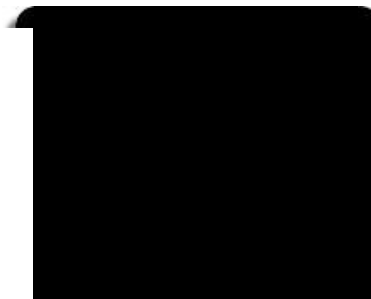
#### Steve Sadin's Top 20 Vintage Cards

- 1 Mana Drain
- 2 Ancestral Recall
- 3 Yawgmoth's Will (Breaking stalemates since 1998)
- 4 Strip Mine
- 5 Balance (The only reason to play white in your control decks)
- 6 Force Will
- 7 Duress
- 8 Necropotence
- 9 Mind twist
- 10 Intuition/AK/Deep Analysis
- 11 Bazaar of Baghdad
- 12 Academy Rector
- 13 Demonic Consultation
- 14 Fact or Fiction
- 15 Library of Alexandria
- 16 Time Walk
- 17 Demonic Tutor
- 18 Brainstorm/Fetch lands
- 19 Moxes (they are interchangeable)
- 20 Black Lotus/Sol Ring
- 21 Mishra's Workshop



#### Mike Pustilnik's Top 20 Vintage Cards

- 1 Ancestral Recall
- 2 Black Lotus
- 3 Yawgmoth's Will
- 4 Necropotence
- 5 Balance
- 6 Mind Twist
- 7 Time Walk
- 8 Tolarian Academy
- 9 Academy Rector
- 10 Library of Alexandria
- 11 Timetwister
- 12 Sol Ring



- 13 Mox Sapphire
- 14 Mox Jet
- 15 Mox Ruby
- 16 Mox Pearl
- 17 Mox Emerald
- 18 Wheel of Fortune
- 19 Memory Jar
- 20 Tinker

**Scott McCord's Top 20 Vintage Cards**

"Black Lotus is the best card in the format no matter what people say. When you draw it on the first turn it just leads to all sorts of degeneracy."

- 1 Black Lotus
- 2 Ancestral Recall
- 3 Tolarian Academy
- 4 Yawgmoth's Will
- 5 Yawgmoth's Bargain
- 6 Mind Twist
- 7 Balance
- 8 Necropotence
- 9 Time Walk
- 10 Regrowth
- 11 Demonic Tutor
- 12 Vampiric Tutor
- 13 Mystical Tutor
- 14-18 Moxes
- 19 Sol Ring
- 20 Mana Vault

That is it for Type 1 week for me. Huge thanks to Steve, Mike, and Scott for taking the time to discuss Type 1 with me and to share their decks with you. Hopefully we can do a Draft Theme Week in the near future so I will have some of my own insights to contribute.

I think we are moving into a little vacation time with reprints of our favorite columns. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of my readers the happiest of holiday seasons and a bountiful New Year. I have had so much fun doing this column this year. Thank you to everyone that writes in with praise comment or criticism. I love hearing from you all and even though I am unable to respond to all of you I do read each piece of mail you send.

See you next year,  
Brian David-Marshall

Brian may be reached at [brian@fightlikeapes.com](mailto:brian@fightlikeapes.com).

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](http://Top8Magic.com), the publishing house that is releasing Michael J. Flores: Deckade.



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