



MAGICTHEGATHERING.COM

ARTICLES

TOURNAMENTS

MAGIC ONLINE

Article Search



Do you have a question about **Magic: The Gathering** or **Wizards of the Coast**? Send it, along with your full name and location, to ask@wizards.com. We'll post a new question and answer each day.

Search Ask Wizards

January 30, 2004



Q: "I recently acquired some **Serra Angels**, and was wondering if you could give me some clue as to which set they are from. I shall set out the distinguishing features:

1. Illustrated by Douglas Schuler
2. Has no dates, the bottom of the card simply stating 'Illus. (c) Douglas Schuler'
3. Has a white border
4. The white mana symbol is old style (as seen on *Alpha* cards, for example)
5. The text reads 'Attacking does not cause Serra Angel to tap' as opposed to 'Does not tap to attack'
6. Has a light background, not the dark one (as seen in *Fourth Edition*)
7. Has a plain black line around the card artwork (i.e., between the artwork and its white border).

"Thanks, you will be saving us much grief!"
- Graeme and Andrew

A: From **Doug Beyer**, MagicTheGathering.com web developer:

"It sounds like the **Serra Angel** in question is from the *Revised* set, the set that came between *Unlimited* and *Fourth Edition*. It can be tough to identify cards in that period, so here's an unofficial **SERRA ANGEL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE**:



"Here's how you might come to the conclusion that it's a *Revised* card. First of all, *Alpha* and *Beta* cards are black-bordered, so they're out. The *Unlimited* Serra has the old 'Does not tap when attacking' wording, and has the *Unlimited* set's characteristic bevel just inside the white border. The *Revised* Serra has a washed-out look to the print, no bevel, and the updated 'Attacking does not cause Serra Angel to tap' wording. The *Fourth Edition* one has modern-style white mana symbols and a richer color saturation. *Fifth Edition* cards carry no expansion symbol, so a *Fifth* card would look similar to a *Fourth Edition* one, but Serra wasn't printed in *Fifth* or *Sixth Edition*, so that's out as well. And the *Seventh* and *Eighth Edition* cards have the new Serra art.

"So there you go. Congratulations on your new *Revised* Serra Angels!"

January 29, 2004



Q: "What is the 'relationship' between artifacts and the different colors?"

- Casper Andersen, Denmark

A: From **Scott Johns**, Content Manager:

"Randy did a great job with this one in his article [White and Artifacts](#). In case you missed it, here's the CliffsNotes version (but go read the article too!), liberally quoted from Randy:

"Blue loves artifacts, it enables artifacts, and it wants you to play with lots of artifacts.

"Green's relationship with artifacts is pretty straightforward: it hates them. Artifacts just aren't natural and thus green wants to, well... **Naturalize** them.

"Black cards in the *Mirrodin* block often get stronger and stronger the more artifacts you have in play. It's as if artifacts emit an unnatural kind of radiation that black is able to channel and twist for it's own purposes.

"White - with its militaristic hierarchies and well-trained soldiers - is the home for creatures that are particularly adept at wielding swords and armor, making white the 'plays well with equipment' color.

"Red has the most amusing relationship with artifacts: it just likes to see them blow up. Red doesn't really care if it's destroying the opponent's artifacts with a **Shatter** or eating its own

artifacts with an **AtoG**. Either way, the red mage is happy. Basically, red thinks artifacts are shiny and pretty, but it drops them a lot and likes to watch them explode."

January 22, 2004



Q: "When is the rest of the Pro Tour Amsterdam video coverage going to be available?"

A: From **Doug Beyer, Magic** web developer:

"Coverage of the Amsterdam Top 8 draft and matches are up now on the [Pro Tour Amsterdam live coverage page](#). Check them out! You'll need a recent version of [Quicktime](#) and an [unzip utility](#) to view the videos."

January 16, 2004



Q: "There are two cards that I've noticed in *Mirrodin* that have the name **Chiss-Goria** in the title, both of them seem to be from possibly a Dragon. Is there a story behind these artifacts or were they simply a nifty conceptual idea that R&D put in?"

--Spectere the Fool

A: From **Brady Dommermuth, Magic** creative director:

"We did create some backstory for the ancient furnace dragon Chiss-Goria. Will any of that backstory ever be told on cards or elsewhere? I'm afraid you'll have to wait and see."

January 13, 2004



Q: "I'm collecting the *Weatherlight* crew and the *Predator* flagship crew. I asked on several forums but they can't agree completely which characters were on it and who weren't. I would appreciate it if you could answer my questions."

--Ronald Huveneers

A: From **Brady Dommermuth, Magic** creative director:

"Ronald, what is this "Weatherlight" you speak of? Wait, I think I remember . . . yes, it's all coming back now. The *Weatherlight* was a **flying ship**! Its crew sought the artifacts of the Legacy to combat the evils of Phyrexia! Boy, that's ancient history, huh?

"Which cards you'd need to complete a collection of the crew really depends on how far you want to go. For example, **Master of Arms** represents Gerrard, but it's not his Legend card. And there are all the Vanguard cards to think of. Anyhow, here's what I'd collect if I were you:"

Weatherlight crew:	Predator crew:
Skyship Weatherlight	Predator, Flagship
Legacy Weapon	Greven il-Vec
Gerrard Capashen	Vhati il-Dal
Captain Sisay	
Orim, Samite Healer	
Hanna, Ship's Navigator	
Tahngarth, Talruum Hero	
Crovax the Cursed	
(Ascendant Evinicar?)	
Starke of Rath	
Squee, Goblin Nabob	
Ertai, Wizard Adept	
(Ertai the Corrupted?)	
Mirri, Cat Warrior	
Karn, Silver Golem	
Multani, Maro-Sorcerer	
Rofellos, Llanowar Emissary	

And for you storyline gurus out there:

Volrath the Fallen

(disguised as Starke's daughter Takara)

January 12, 2004



Q: "I was just reading through the storybook from *Tempest*. I think it came with a Starter Box. It's great to know who the characters on the cards are without reading the entire novel. Why don't you include storybooks in the more recent expansion? I feel that they give the game a more realistic feel."

--Stephen Livengood

A: From **Brady Dommermuth, Magic** creative director:

"Glad you enjoyed the *Tempest* storybook, Stephen. (That was my very first project when I began working at Wizards back in 1997!) We've discussed the possibility of revisiting booklets that would be included with theme decks. We don't really want to include them with tournament packs; those are meant for Limited tournament play, and we believe the vast majority of those booklets would go straight from the pack into the trash. We haven't reached a decision about the idea of booklets in theme-deck packs yet, but stay tuned."

January 9, 2004



Q: "What was the idea behind the **spellbombs** and how do they work in the story?"

--Levi Campbell, Sterling Colorado

A: From **Brady Dommermuth, Magic** creative director:

"Levi, spellbombs are sort of Mirrodin's version of potions, except instead of drinking them, you break them to release the spell energy magically sealed inside. (Mirrodin tends to do things a little differently than most planes.)"

January 8, 2004



Q: "My friends and I were having an extensive argument about the flavour of **Magic**. We were specifically arguing about the cannot-draw-a-card loss condition. I quoted **Millstone** and a bit of the madness mechanic and said that your mind is empty and trying to have an idea that's beyond it and, so, you go insane. My friend quoted a certain green Unglued card and several blue drawing cards and said that it was because you couldn't find any books in your library, no matter how hard you look, so you lose. I questioned why that would make you lose. A third person said that as per **Scalpelexis** and **Grafted Skullcap**, it meant that your brain had been forcibly removed. Please could you give us the flavour answer if there is one because, with many milling decks going around, it's nice to know exactly what you're doing."

Q: From **Mark Rosewater, Magic** Lead Designer:

"Some elements of **Magic** flavor are more vague than others. The library is one such case. In loose terms, the library represents the collection of magical knowledge you bring to the battle. Sometimes we represent this as your mind (the amassed memory that holds all the memories of the spells). Other times, it represents a wizard's access to the knowledge of the spells (this is where references to things like tomes and scrolls comes in).

"So what does running out of cards signify? There is not one single answer, but in general it signifies an exhaustion of knowledge. Perhaps the wizard is mentally spent. Or possibly he or she has used up every spell they brought to the battle. For whatever reason, the wizard is mentally unable to continue and thus loses.

"The reason we are vague on certain aspects of flavor is that we need latitude in how we represent different cards. If every discard spell, for example, had to represent a physical blow to the head, the card illustrations would start to get boring. Thus, we create a loose flavor (in discard, the idea that your mind is being altered, manipulated or injured in some way) to give artist some freedom to express a common **Magic** event in different ways. The same holds true for the library and milling."

January 6, 2004



Q: "I understand that occasionally a color will be left out in what would otherwise be a five-color cycle. I was wondering what exactly was going on (thoughts, arguments, testing, etc.) with the cycle of artifact towers in *Mirrodin*. **Tower of Champions** is obviously the green one, **Tower of Eons** the white one, **Tower of Fortunes** the blue one, and **Tower of Murmurs** the black one. What happened to the red one?"

--Jeffery Synn

A: From **Brady Dommermuth, Magic** creative director:

"The Towers do at first seem to map to the colors, but take a closer look. It's fair to think of

Tower of Champions as green and **Tower of Eons** as white (or green, which also excels at life gain), but the other two Towers are both blue, if anything. (Moving cards from a player's library to his/her graveyard has never been a black-aligned ability.) So, to answer your question, there was never a red-aligned Tower. The group of four were never intended to correspond to the five colors at all."

January 5, 2004



Q: "I couldn't help but to notice that **Dross Prowler** is the only card in *Mirrodin* with fear. Why did you give a creature fear in a set that had several artifact creatures?"
--Bryan Campbell

A: From **Paul Sottosanti, Magic R&D:**

"Bryan -- I hate to tell you this, but you've insulted **Woebearer**, and now he's telling me not to answer. Just for you, though, I'll ignore him and try to explain.

"The developers here in R&D like to play with the idea that different cards end up at vastly different levels when they're placed in different environments. **Shatter**, for example, used to be almost useless in many of the older draft formats, but in *Mirrodin*, it can often be a first pick. Well, this goes both ways.

"A creature like **Dross Prowler** would have been quite strong in past Limited formats, but in *Mirrodin* you've obviously noticed that he's almost unplayable. With all the artifact creatures running around, it's not often that a **Dross Prowler** is able to get through unblocked. **Woebearer** fares a little better due to the strength of his ability, but even he is not a high pick. Interactions like these are what make the early days of a new draft format so interesting, because it's not always possible to correctly evaluate new cards until you've gotten a feel for how the games play out.

"I would expect that we'll continue to throw curveballs like this one in the future."



[Respond](#) via email



[Submit a question](#) to Ask Wizards



[Ask Wizards](#) archive

[WHAT'S NEW](#) [CORPORATE INFO](#) [WHERE TO BUY](#) [INTERNATIONAL](#) [SUPPORT](#) [SITMAP](#) [PRODUCTS](#)

[© 1995-2004 Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. All Rights Reserved.](#)
[Wizards is headquartered in Renton, Washington, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057.](#)
[PRIVACY STATEMENT](#)