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# Weird Puzzle

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Building on a Budget  
Friday, May 7, 2004



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Every so often I get the hankering to play around with some interesting cards. The cards themselves may be powerful but there is not a great way to harness their power. Even so, I will make the deck work as best as I can just so I can use those cards I want or to pull off some entirely underpowered combo. This is one reason that I am part Johnny in the Timmy, Johnny, Spike range of things. This is one of those weeks – get ready for something....weird.



This has to be one of my all time favorite cards. It does something really interesting to the game, and has a rather cool name to boot. The Weirding tends to keep the leading player in the lead and makes them win the game (usually). It does this by allowing either player to 'veto' any player's draw step. Now this deck is built for single combat, but just think about how **Zur's Weirding** works in multiplayer! Can you imagine the discussion between the players? The politics involved in who will pay the life? For those of you who have never played with or against this card – let me explain. First, everyone plays with their hands face up. Then, if someone would draw a card, they first reveal it. If you don't want them to have it, you can pay 2 life and it goes to the graveyard; they do not get another draw! Basically you just say no.

My fascination with **Zur's Weirding** is how the world ended up with **Mafia King** – possibly one of the larger fiascos of my writing career. On the old sidebar.com I posted the Mafia King as my Regionals deck for that year (and I did quite well with it), but it was so unconventional that the Pros flamed it to no end. This never bothers me, of course, but shows my dedication to **Zur's Weirding** is a strong one.

This deck uses several cool cards, but 16 of them are rare. Even so, the deck is still about 30 tickets due to the rares being severely underused. (If you want to cut more rares out of this deck, try cutting the Puzzle Boxes, then the **Solar Tides**). The first rare is **Zur's Weirding**, and the second completes the combo – **Convalescent Care**. This card will let you use **Zur's Weirding** every turn for the rest of the game...not to mention letting you draw extra cards in the meantime. This in itself is enough to win. Your victory condition can simply be decking them. Whenever you get low on cards, you can just start paying life so you don't draw either. This trick will keep you alive when there are no cards left in your library, since you first reveal the card (in this case there would be nothing to reveal) and then you can veto it, avoiding the draw and decking. You can afford to do this because you have cards like **Starlight Invoker** in your deck, which will provide you enough life to pay for everything. **Convalescent Care** won't do the trick, since it makes you draw more cards that you would also have to pay for.



The last rare card in the deck completes the puzzle because it is a puzzle in itself. **Teferi's Puzzle Box** acts as a way to find your puzzle pieces and **Mind Twist** your opponent all at the same time. If you have a **Convalescent Care** but no Weirding, you can play out the Puzzle Box and you will have many new chances to draw it every turn. When you do draw the Weirding, this takes care of the scariest part of playing it – not knowing what's in their hand. It is a very scary prospect to lock up the game when you don't know what's in your opponents' grip, since that is probably the determining factor of who is ahead in the game. With the Box, their hand will go away next

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turn and you can veto any part of the new one. You will have to continue to veto every turn until their hand size is 0 and the Box no longer does anything for them.

Building on a Budget: Weird Puzzle		
		
<b>Main Deck</b> 60 cards		
4 <b>Seat of the Synod</b> 4 <b>Island</b> 4 <b>Ancient Den</b> 4 <b>Plains</b> 4 <b>Coastal Tower</b> 20 lands	4 <b>Starlight Invoker</b> 4 <b>Wall of Deceit</b> 4 <b>Silver Myr</b> 12 creatures	4 <b>Thirst for Knowledge</b> 4 <b>Solar Tide</b> 4 <b>Zur's Weirding</b> 4 <b>Teferi's Puzzle Box</b> 4 <b>Convalescent Care</b> 4 <b>Talisman of Progress</b> 4 <b>Icy Manipulator</b> 28 other spells

The crux of this deck is stabilizing the board enough to the point where it is safe to drop the Weiriding. Having big blockers and **Icy Manipulators** is generally enough, but having a **Solar Tide** in your hand when you cast the Weiriding can make all the difference in the world. Keep in mind that if you need a solar tide after you cast the Weiriding, you are not going to get it – your opponent has veto power as well.

## Tips on Playing the Deck

- Only cast the Weiriding when you are sure that you are stabilized, and only after you have dropped the convalescent care. Dropping it at any time before that can do very strange and hurtful things to your chances of winning.
- Once you get your soft lock going, your opponent will usually try to deny you of all your goodies until he runs too low on life. That is when you can use your **Icy Manipulators** to tap enough of his creatures to kill him with your re-morphed Walls of Deceit, Myrs, and **Starlight Invokers**...I can't imagine a more embarrassing ensemble of creatures to lose to...a wall, a 1-power cleric, and a **Manakin**.
- Don't play the Puzzle Box until after you have cast everything you wanted to out of your hand. It is also pretty good to hold land in your hand to use as Puzzle Box fodder...unless of course you are building up mana for the Invoker.



*Not your typical beatdown crew.*

## Adding More Money to the Deck

The best thing to do is add cards that work well under the Weiriding. Cards that work well from the graveyard come to mind – **Eternal Dragon** is probably the best white one – but if you wanted to change things up and try using black, there are cards like **Undead Gladiator** as well. **Future Sight** works well because it gets around the Weiriding's ability and allows you to just play off the top. Your goal should be to create as many situations as possible that make it correct to cast **Zur's Weiriding**.

Until next time, **lose 3 and gain 5!**

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