



MAGICTHEGATHERING.COM

ARTICLES

- ▾ [Related links](#)
- ➔ [Read other articles](#)

TOURNAMENTS

MAGIC ONLINE

 Article Search ▾ ➔

Clock of Omens



Adrian Sullivan · *Single-Card Strategies*
 Wednesday, May 26, 2004

Clock of Omens is one of those cards that I look at with a smile. Some cards tell you exactly what they are meant to do. **Broodstar**, for example, tells you to play lots of artifacts so that you can attack. And then there are other cards like **Merfolk Looter** that do something simple, but give you a lot of different reasons to play the card. Looter was used by people to put cards in their graveyard for **Living Death**, as a discard outlet for the Madness mechanic, and just as a powerful Merfolk. Like **Merfolk Looter**, **Clock of Omens** is open-ended.

One of the first things that becomes apparent with **Clock of Omens** is that you'll want to have a bunch of artifacts out if you intend to get any use from it. Of course, the first time that you use the Clock's ability, you could always tap the Clock itself. In essence, you are making any other artifact in play the equivalent of a **Voltaic Key**. You're going to want to have things that are worthwhile to untap. If it taps to do something powerful, that is a great start. However, not every card has to be like this. Cards that do something just by being in play are great as well. **Stabilizer** will work even if it is tapped, as will cards like **Sun Droplet** or **Chalice of the Void**. It's a nice bonus to be able to get these cards to continue to work for you after they've done their job.



Back in the day, being able to get your own artifacts tapped could be key. Tapping a **Winter Orb** on your opponent's turn would turn it off so that you could untap all of your land was a part of the basis for the classic "Prison" archetype. Around the same era, people were using **Icy Manipulator** to not only tap down their opponent's creatures or their own **Winter Orb**, they were using it on **Howling Mine** to be the only player able to make use of it. Today we can substitute **Static Orb** for **Winter Orb**. By controlling when these cards are tapped, you can take away the inherent symmetry and instead make the effect lopsided in your favor. In a similar vein, **Blinkmoth Urn** can provide a ton of mana for *only you*. Just tap it down to untap something.

That something could be things like that **Icy Manipulator** that used to be used back in the day. Take this as a skeleton:

Prison Skeleton, 2003

- 4 **Howling Mine**
- 4 **Sculpting Steel**
- 4 **Sun Droplet**
- 4 **Clock of Omens**
- 4 **Icy Manipulator**
- 4 **Talisman of Progress**
- 4 **Ancient Den**
- 4 **Seat of the Synod**
- 28 Other Cards

It can be a lot easier keeping alive if you are able to not only copy **Icy Manipulator** with **Sculpting Steel**, but also untap it with **Clock of Omens** to use it again. **Howling Mine** can suddenly only draw you extra

cards, and then be tapped to untap an artifact land or an **Icy Manipulator**. With 28 other cards to work with, you can fit in any number of other cards that will help you win the game.

One of the most potent things to untap has always been mana. Untapping a Talisman or artifact land isn't so terrible. In a sense, you are turning every artifact into something akin to a **Birchlore Rangers**. That isn't bad. But it's when you get to untap a *lot* of mana that things are a bit more exciting. **Gilded Lotus** is a start down this path, but **Metalworker** can be downright disgusting in how much mana it produces. In a deck with a ton of artifacts, a **Metalworker** can easily produce 10 mana without even untapping. Even with no other artifacts in play other than **Metalworker** and **Clock of Omens** (an unlikely scenario, to be sure, but it simplifies the example), 5 artifacts in hand will produce first 10 mana, then after the first artifact comes into play, untapping the **Metalworker** with that artifact and the **Clock** will produce another 8 mana, and the next 2 will produce 4 mana. With a few blue sources and a **Stroke of Genius**, it isn't too hard to simply "go off" with the right draw.



This combo goes all the way back to the days of Alpha!

The Affinity mechanic can easily accomplish the same thing. Any kind of card draw plus cards like **Ornithopter**, **Myr Enforcer**, and **Frogmite** can be used to untap mana. It's not too difficult to use a **Vedalken Archmage**, **Future Sight**, or a **Skullclamp** to provide the cards. Add in **Genesis Chamber** to supply yet more artifacts and you have a combo engine.

Veritable Combo Engine Affinity Skeleton

4 **Ornithopter**
4 **Frogmite**
4 **Myr Enforcer**
4 **Genesis Chamber**
4 **Skullclamp**
4 **Lightning Greaves**
4 **Clock of Omens**
4 **Vedalken Archmage**
2 **Future Sight**
4 **Chrome Mox**
4 **Talisman of Progress**
3 **Broodstar**

This list is just a starting point, but it does work as food for thought.

Next up are cards that you just want to untap because they are big and powerful. For creatures, besides a card like **Darksteel Colossus**, there is the classic **Phyrexian Colossus**. Untapping **Magistrate's Scepter** means that you can accomplish free extra turns twice as fast as before. With enough mana, you don't have to wait a turn to untap **Door to Nothingness**; you can win right there on the spot!

Certainly there are less dramatic results that can be attained. **Urza's Blueprints** is one of my favorites. Tapping the Blueprints to draw a card is cheap. Every two artifacts in play suddenly turn into a card right away. Even without paying the echo cost on the following turn, you can draw a fantastic amount of cards. **Citanul Flute** is a bit pricier to activate, but it does have the added bonus of giving you some card selection. The cheap activation can be part of the key to making the **Clock of Omens** especially powerful, so finding something cheap (like, say, a **Goblin Welder**) can really do the trick. **Null Brooch** is less cheap to activate, but it does fulfill the "great card to use twice" plan quite nicely.

Goblin Welders at Work Skeleton

4 **Goblin Welder**
4 **Metalworker**
4 **Clock of Omens**
4 **Urza's Blueprints**
2 **Masticore**
2 **Citanul Flute**
2 **Phyrexian Colossus**
4 **Null Brooch**

4 Rejuvenation Chamber
30 Other cards

I threw in the **Rejuvenation Chambers** for fun, but even so, the deck can pack a lot of punch. **Null Brooch** and **Masticore** can help get artifacts in the graveyard for the **Goblin Welder**, and **Urza's Blueprints** and **Citanul Flute** can help you draw lots of cards. I'm sure that this deck could be vastly improved, but it is a nice skeleton.

Overall, I like what this card is capable of doing. Untapping cards has always been a dangerous ability, and while this card is certainly not as scary as **Time Spiral** or **Frantic Search** could be, it has a lot of potential for abuse. If nothing else, you can always toss 4 of them in your **Darksteel Reactor** deck to make **Coretappers** and **Power Conduits** work overtime.

How do you like what the card is capable of doing? I threw out a bunch of skeletons to work from, but there are certainly way more options. Toss me an e-mail with the subject line "Clock of Omens Challenge" and show me how you would approach the card. I'll highlight the best entries in next week's column.



Last Week's Leftovers and More

These get out of hand quickly with Clock of Omens in play.

Many people wrote in to comment about the interaction between **Fireball** and **Cowardice**. Based on Rune Horvik's Saturday School Ruling on **Rolling Thunder**, people felt that you would be unable to cast a **Fireball** with 0 damage going to numerous targets. This is based on rule 409.1e in [the Comprehensive Rules](#). However, this issue was last handled *long* ago with this ruling by Paul Barclay way back in 1999:

It is perfectly legal to cast Fireball with X=0 and Y=3, targeting four Skulking Ghosts. The rule that you can't assign 0 damage to a target doesn't apply to cards like Fireball, where the card determines how much damage is assigned to each target. It is not legal to cast Arc Lightning targeting four Skulking Ghosts.

That ruling has not been overturned since. All of you were correct, however, in mentioning that **Sway of Illusion** will not allow you to draw a card if **Cowardice** is in play. Since every target of the Sway is no longer in play, the spell will "fizzle" and is considered countered.

I appreciated the many e-mails about these topics, and I will continue to read them as always. I do apologize that I can't get back to everyone, but the simple volume of my e-mail (above and beyond the spam) makes this a difficult prospect.

In last week's poll, I took a cue from the Mark on Mark fight (Who is the funniest Mark?), and tried to see who would win in a Cowardice vs. Cowardice fight. Here are the (somewhat biased) results:

For your part, which Cowardice article did you like more:		
My Article	2762	77.2%
Nate Heiss's Article	814	22.8%
Total	3576	100.0%

Now many of you might think that there are bitter rivalries here at **magicthegathering.com**, but I'll have you know that it is quite the opposite. Why, I know for a fact that our Marks have never dueled with pistols or blades. Also, Nate and I have shared both fries at "The O" and sushi in Japan!

- Adrian Sullivan
adriansullivan@yahoo.com



[Discuss](#) on the message boards



[Respond](#) via email



[Adrian Sullivan](#) archive

© 1995-2005 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](#)