

Home > Games > Magic > Magicthegathering.com > Columns



# Pentabulous

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Swimming With Sharks  
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Wow!  
Wow, wow, wow!

I have been raving about **Pentad Prism** all weekend. I have run out of people within shouting distance to talk to about it so you guys are up next. If I saw you at a tournament this weekend you can skip this since you probably heard me raving about the card.

I played in the *Fifth Dawn* prerelease this past weekend. I did one Sealed Deck flight and one draft with three packs of *Fifth Dawn*. I went into this tournament with as little forewarning about the set as possible. I eschewed the spoiler so I could play in the event and the only cards I was really aware of were the ones previewed on this site and a couple of cards I heard people talking about leading up to the event.

One of the cards that I knew nothing about quickly became one of my favorite cards in the set—**Pentad Prism**. When I opened my pool of cards at the Midnight Prerelease on Friday night/Saturday morning I was greeted by a **Bringer of the Red Dawn** in my first *Fifth Dawn* pack. I knew that I wanted to play it and looked for ways to be able to satisfy the alternate casting cost.



I had an off-color Myr and a **Glimmervoid** which was promising. I also had a **Wayfarer's Bauble** and a **Trinket Mage** to search it out. **Composite Golem** also went into the pile of cards scattered about the Bringer. I looked at the **Pentad Prism** and thought it would also be helpful although like many players this weekend I did not understand how explosive the card could be. I put it in my playable pile primarily as a mana fixer and not as an accelerant.

I was so focused on building the deck around the possibility of a five-mana Bringer that I am sure I built it incorrectly. For one thing I left three—THREE—copies of **Thought Courier** in my sideboard despite playing blue. My only defense is that I wanted to explore the new ideas in the set and chose to play with stuff like **Serum Visions** over **Thought Courier**. It is a shabby argument but it is all I have. I actually considered not writing about the prerelease because I was so embarrassed to have not played them. They are that good and will certainly be one of the defining cards in the post-*Fifth Dawn* Limited environments.

Here are all the cards I played as well as the ones I did not.



Fifth Dawn Prerelease Deck	
Mirrodin Tournament Pack and 3 Fifth Booster Packs	
Main Deck	Sideboard
40 cards	
1 Glimmervoid	1 Annul
3 Island	1 Blinding Beam
7 Mountain	1 Bonesplitter
4 Plains	1 Electrostatic Bolt
1 Seat of the Synod	1 Grab the Reins
16 lands	1 Loxodon Warhammer
	1 Magma Jet
	1 Pentad Prism
	1 Serum Visions
	1 Thoughtcast
	1 Wayfarer's Bauble
	11 other spells
1 Advanced Hoverguard	
1 Bringer of the Red Dawn	
1 Composite Golem	
1 Copper Myr	
1 Frogmite	
1 Furnace Whelp	
1 Goblin Replica	
1 Myr Enforcer	
1 Skyhunter Patrol	
1 Trinket Mage	
	1 Anodet Lurker
	1 Arcbound Wanderer
	2 Armed Response
	1 Artificer's Intuition
	1 Assert Authority
	1 Auriok Transfixer
	1 Avarice Totem
	1 Battered Golem
	1 Battlegrowth
	1 Blind Creeper
	1 Blinkmoth Urn
	1 Cackling Imp
	1 Chimney Imp
	1 Cobalt Golem
	1 Cranial Plating
	1 Fabricate
	1 Fangren Pathcutter
	1 Ferocious Charge
	1 Fists of the Anvil

1 Vulshok Berserker  
1 Vulshok Sorcerer  
1 Wizard Replica

13 creatures

1 Forge Armor  
1 Grim Reminder  
1 Heliophial  
1 Hoverguard Sweepers  
1 Krark-Clan Ogre  
1 Leonin Bladetrapp  
1 Leonin Den-Guard  
1 Loxodon Anchorite  
1 Lumengrid Warden  
1 Malachite Golem  
3 Mana Geyser  
1 Myr Adapter  
1 Needlebug  
1 Neurok Familiar  
1 Neurok Stealthsuit  
1 Nim Grotesque  
1 Nim Lasher  
1 Nim Shambler  
1 Override  
1 Rain of Rust  
1 Razorgrass Screen  
1 Sawtooth Thresher  
1 Seething Song  
1 Shattered Dreams  
1 Slith Bloodletter  
1 Slith Firewalker  
2 Sparring Collar  
1 Spinal Parasite  
1 Steel Wall  
1 Sunbeam Spellbomb  
1 Tangle Asp  
1 Thermal Navigator  
3 Thought Courier  
1 Titanium Golem  
1 Turn to Dust  
1 Tyrranax  
1 Viridian Scout  
1 Welding Jar

63 sideboard cards

With the deck built I shuffled up for some practice games against friends. It was during one of these games against Zev Gurwitz that I actually read **Pentad Prism** all the way through and realized you could remove multiple counters on the same turn. Assuming you had two different colors of mana available on the second turn when you cast the Prism it would allow you to have five mana on the third turn. Assuming you did not play a land capable of producing a third color of mana it also gives you four colors of mana on that turn. I had three different colors of land in one game with Zev and officially fell in love with Pentad Prism after casting a turn three **Bringer of the Red Dawn**.

The card reminds me of **Black Lotus** in terms of explosiveness. Obviously it is not in the same power class as a zero casting artifact that makes three mana but it has that same feeling. What makes it especially nice in this block is that even when its counters are depleted it still helps your affinity simply by being an artifact in play. With so many of the sunburst creatures—**Arcbound Wanderer** and **Sawtooth Thresher**--falling a little on the pricey side the Pentad is going to be doing double duty all summer long. It really harmonizes with the **Skyreach Manta**, allowing for 4/4 and 5/5 fliers on the third turn with both parts of the duo sitting in the common slot of **Fifth Dawn** boosters.

I played four rounds with the deck facing off against Bryn Kenney in the first round. Bryn recently qualified for Nationals at my local Regionals and is a formidable local player with a penchant for trash talk. He was talking up his deck as we sat down to play but my **Mirrodin** bombs were too much for him. In game one it was **Grab the Reins** and in the second game I fought back from a disadvantaged board position to pick off his pair of **Advanced Hoverguards** with an **Electrostatic Bolt** and **Magma Jet** while he was tapped out of blue. A few turns later he tapped out again for a **Trolls of Tel-Jilad** and I was able to use **Grab the Reins** with entwine to dispatch it and a **Fangren Hunter**. **Loxodon Warhammer** gave me the turns I needed to kill him and his fatties.

In the second round I was looking through the wrong end of the Prism. My opponent was a really nice guy I had never met before named Peter Lacara. Peter had a turn two Prism and cast a 5/5 **One Dozen Eyes** token on the fourth turn. I was never able to deal with it and he smashed me in the first game. My **Loxodon Warhammered** flier got in for five early but Peter had a turn two **Sun Droplet** that was giving me fits. Eventually he managed to deal with it for me when he played a **Molder Slug**. Once I was clear of his **Sun Droplet** I was able to take out his Slug and another fatty with **Grab the Reins**. The third game saw **Loxodon Warhammer** on a **Furnace Whelp** bring me



*Not a bad turn 3 play...*

up to forty-five. Despite the twenty-five damage he was able to cling to life with a **Sun Droplet** but I eventually was able to overwhelm his life gaining artifact.



In the third round I had the pleasure of another friendly and cheerful opponent. Jordan Greenstein had **Clockwork Dragon** and **Staff of Domination** as his bombs. I almost threw away game one when my **Advanced Hoverguard** had **Loxodon Warhammer** and **Bonesplitter** on it. I had tapped Jordan's Dragon down with **Blinding Beam** the previous turn after he played **Staff of Domination**. He had enough mana to untap his Dragon but my **Electrostatic Bolt** meant I would trample over for the final four points I needed to kill him. He used the Staff to tap my flier and I forgot that I could make the Hoverguard untargetable. I won on the next turn because I had another flier to play and the Bolt would allow me to trample over for just enough. He could make his Dragon bigger on the next turn so I needed the second flier.

I lost the next two games to Jordan's deck when I failed to draw creatures for my Warhammer in the second game and only two land in the third. I realized after this match that my deck would have been vastly improved by the addition of the **Thought Couriers**. I could have dropped the **Skyhunter Patrol**, **Frogmite**, and **Annul** to play the three wizards. It would have only given me a net gain of one creature but it would have allowed me to play more blue and less white with the Bauble to find it for my lone **Blinding Beam**.

I played against William Han in the final round. William is a Neutral Ground irregular and my final opponent for the tournament. The winner of the match would receive packs of Fifth Dawn while the loser would get nothing. William demolished me in game one with Leonin Sun-Standard. I had one turn to get back in the game with my Warhammer but he killed the guy it was equipped to and shut it off with Stasis Cocoon.

I can't recall the details of the first game I won but our final game involved me casting **Blinding Beam** to tap my **Copper Myr** and his **Myr Quadropod** when he equipped the artifact guy with **Viridian Longbow**. They were the only two creatures in play and I wanted to be able to cast **Composite Golem** and parlay it into **Bringer of the Red Dawn** on the next turn. I **Annulled** an **Arrest** on my Bringer the next turn and he couldn't play a reasonable creature for the rest of the game.

I won a handful of **Fifth Dawn** packs and a newfound appreciation for the Prism. The only other **Magic** I could play over the weekend was one 5/5/5 draft on Sunday. I opened a **Bringer of the Blue Dawn** and my second pick was a **Pentad Prism**. I took a **Skyreach Manta** third and ended up with three each of the flier and the Prism. I managed to snag a **Vedalken Mastermind** pretty late in one pack and I can't imagine that will happen ever again. The card is akin to **Crystal Shard** except that it only targets your permanents. But that is permanents and not just creatures so it might be a fair trade off. My one regret as far as the build was not playing the **Baton of Courage**. With **Vedalken Mastermind** it could have been a **Giant Growth** on a stick

Prerelease Draft Deck		
Triple Fifth Dawn		
Main Deck		Sideboard
40 cards		
6 Island	1 Condescend	2 Abuna's Chant
6 Plains	1 Fill with Fright	1 Anodet Lurker
4 Swamp	1 Goblin Cannon	1 Artificer's Intuition
16 lands	1 Neurok Stealtsuit	1 Baton of Courage
2 Advanced Hoverguard	1 Night's Whisper	1 Battered Golem
1 Arachnoid	3 Pentad Prism	1 Fangren Pathcutter
1 Bringer of the Blue Dawn	1 Stand Firm	1 Fleshgrafter
1 Loxodon Anchorite	9 other spells	1 Healer's Headdress
1 Loxodon Stalwart		1 Into Thin Air
1 Qumulox		1 Iron-Barb Hellion
3 Skyhunter Prowler		1 Leonin Squire
3 Skyreach Manta		2 Mana Geyser
1 Thought Courier		3 Myr Quadropod
1 Vedalken Mastermind		1 Rain of Rust
15 creatures		1 Spectral Shift
		1 Viridian Scout
		1 Vulshok Sorcerer
		21 sideboard cards

I was able to play a third turn Bringer and two third turn **Skyreach Mantas**—one a 5/5 and the other a mere 4/4—over the two matches I played. I lost in the second round of the draft to a very aggressive deck with multiple **Blind Creepers**, **Cranial Plating**, and **Vedalken Shackles**. I might have been able to win the third game if I had not attacked with my Bringer for one turn. Leaving it back would have saved me critical damage and allowed me to be able to use a sideboarded **Rain of Rust** on **Vedalken Shackles**.

I have been itching to draft ever since and will be getting together with friends this week as many times as jobs and wives permit to draft with out collective winnings from various prerelease tournaments. It will be my first opportunity to actually draft *Mirrodin/Darksteel/Fifth Dawn*.

**Next week:** I've been thinking about Fifth Dawn's impact on constructed and I'll share some thoughts and decks. In the meantime I would love to hear what decks you think are going to be big once the five color goodness of *Fifth Dawn* hits the constructed scene.

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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*, the publishing house that is releasing Michael J. Flores: Deckade.



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