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# IntoTheAether Is Ready to Serve

Jay Moldenhauer-Salazar  
*Into the Aether*  
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Somehow I suspected you all would be itching for a multiplayer format. You didn't disappoint...

What's the next format you want Jay to play?		
Emperor	805	17.5%
Prismatic	486	10.6%
"Casual" Mirrodin Block	468	10.2%
"Casual" Standard	462	10.0%
tribal	439	9.5%
Two-headed Giant	356	7.7%
"Casual" Online Extended	355	7.7%
Multiplayer 3-6	341	7.4%
Singleton	254	5.5%
Teams 2 vs 2	223	4.8%
Three-headed Giant	189	4.1%
Teams 3 vs 3	123	2.7%
Open format	101	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4602</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The people have spoken. Emperor online... here I (gulp) come. Put on your Crazy Goggles, folks, because this format is unlike any other I've previously played.

## Emperor Online: What You Need to Know

There are a few things you need to know in order to fully grasp today's article. First, you should probably know what Emperor is and the basics of play. Thankfully, Anthony Alongi did a great job providing an overview [here](#) and [here](#). If you're new to the format, these two articles will give you a nice foundation

The second thing to note is how Emperor specifically works in *Magic Online*. You can read the official *Magic Online* help file concerning all multiplayer formats [here](#) (if you have MTGO installed, that is), but I'll tell you what I consider to be the three biggest considerations for online play:

1) Unlike "classic" Emperor in which spells have a two-player range and global spells are truly global, in online Emperor spells only have a one-player range.

Seriously: Spells have a 1-player range. All spells. This means if you're an emperor that things like *Hunted Wumpus*, *Weird Harvest*, *New Frontiers*, *Howling Mine*, *Words of Wisdom*, *Mass Hysteria*, etc. are fantastic because they benefit your flankers (online Emperor calls lieutenants "flankers," which is something else you should know) and do absolutely nothing for your opponents. If you are a flanker, it's better to load up on ridiculous creatures to benefit from emperors who use such shenanigans. Mass creature removal like *Wrath of God* and *Starstorm* are almost completely absent in online Emperor because if you're an emperor you'll only kill your friends and if you're a flanker you will hurt your emperor. You need to completely rethink your normal card evaluations to play this format, even if you're used to typical Emperor games.

2) Online Emperor has a strong subculture with its own etiquette and lingo. This is definitely a format with experts who are serious about their craft. People don't tolerate emperors who aren't there solely to help out their flankers or flankers whose decks aren't built to be true flankers. If you are a beginner to the format, like me, you need to advertise this fact and let other players decide if they want the job of showing you the ropes. "Watch and learn before you play. It's a whole new game, bub" one online player advised me after I utterly humiliated myself trying to join a pickup Emperor game.

3) Almost every single Emperor game I've seen uses the Online Extended card pool. Currently, that means everything from *Invasion* through *Fifth Dawn* is fair territory for deckbuilding. If you want to play Emperor with a



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different cardpool like Standard, you are going to be waiting a long time for five other people to play.

Finally, I want to remind you that I'm no more a multiplayer expert than I was a Limited expert [last week](#) (or this week, for that matter). Alongi is the subject matter expert here. I'm just hoping you'll enjoy the format as seen through my Crazy Goggles. Speaking of which...

## Reporting for Duty

Today I'm going to talk through my first foray making and playing as a flanker in online Emperor. Next week I'll tackle the responsibility of being an emperor. Both jobs, I've found, have their share of stress and burden, but you can do things in each role that are ridiculously fun and sometimes just ridiculous.

Remember how I said there was a powerful etiquette in online Emperor? That etiquette definitely applies to deckbuilding. Generally speaking, land-destruction, hand-destruction, direct damage, and counterspell strategies are frowned upon, so much so that people will actually kick you out of a game for using them. It's as if all the online Emperor players have made a silent agreement that they want to promote the most broken things happening in a game as possible. Also, no one will outright tell you these deckbuilding restrictions unless you violate them.

Craziness does indeed run rampant. Games usually end by the fourth turn, with tuned emperor decks slinging cards that fill their flankers' hands, let them play creatures for free, at instant speed, with almost infinite mana available. As a result, flankers can (and do) build their decks assuming they'll be getting a lot of help from their emperor.

In fact, I would say from initial experience that flanker decks pack three distinct kinds of cards (other than land, which I'm sure Mr. Clever in the back there was about to mention):

### Über-Fatties

If you have enormous, game-winning creatures in your collection, use them in your Flanker deck. Bringers of every color, **Pristine Angels**, and Darksteel Colossi run amok. Because most emperors cast **New Frontiers**, **Vernal Bloom** and **Hunted Wumpus**, you don't need to worry about mana-curves. Because most emperors cast **Weird Harvest**, you can be sure to have your fattie fatterson in hand soon. It truly is a format built around clashes of titans. If this sounds intimidating from a cost standpoint, the good news is that many decks often only use one copy of their big brutes because of the massive amounts of tutoring going on. That said, the top Emperor decks do tend to be rare-heavy.

### Emperor Love

When I first started watching Emperor games, I was amazed how often I saw a single Forest from an emperor enchanted with two **Wild Growths**, a **Fertile Ground**, and a **Dawn's Reflection**. Since land-destruction is absent, **Enchant Land** cards are good mana-acceleration. Even better, they are mana acceleration that a flanker can cast on her emperor's land. Two favorite tricks are **Early Harvest** and **Deserted Temple**, which are common in emperor decks and sometimes used by flankers to fuel their emperor's **New Frontiers**, **Weird Harvests**, etc. Most flanker decks I've seen spend their early turns helping their emperor get the mana necessary to do crazy things. Emperor games are often, though not always, determined by which emperor casts **New Frontiers** first.

### Opponent Hate

Just because **Stone Rain** and **Coercion** are no-nos doesn't mean that flanker decks leave their opponents completely alone. It's common for decks to pack enchantment, creature and artifact removal in the form of **Naturalize**, **Duplicant**, **Dark Banishing**, etc. These cards help a little versus opposing flankers, but they really shine when attacking an emperor once that opposing flanker has fallen.

You may have noticed already, but an utterly dominant theme in what I've said so far is the presence of green. Most online Emperor decks have some green to them, and most are base green. **Lumbering Satyr**, where are you?

Given all of these considerations, here is my first flanker deck. I based the deck on the idea that if the person across the table from me was going to have access to ridiculous fatties, then I should have access to mine *and* theirs. The **Phyrexian Plaguelord** angle is my vain attempt to be cute once I've stolen an opposing **Darksteel Colossus** and smashed face with it.



Lieutenant Stinky		
Online Emperor flanker deck		
Main Deck 60 cards		
4 City of Brass	4 Krosan Restorer	4 Fertile Ground
10 Forest	3 Eternal Witness	4 Threaten
8 Mountain	2 Phyrexian Plaguelord	3 Naturalize
2 Swamp	2 Duplicant	3 Dark Banishing

24 lands	2 <b>Bringer of the Red Dawn</b>	3 <b>Dawn's Reflection</b>
	1 <b>Mephidross Vampire</b>	2 <b>Savage Beating</b>
	1 <b>Platinum Angel</b>	
	1 <b>Bringer of the Black Dawn</b>	19 other spells
	1 <b>Darksteel Colossus</b>	
	17 creatures	

So many cards here probably look odd. The single copies of fatties are because emperors will help me tutor for them. The **Mephidross Vampire** is because some Emperors use Coat of Arms. The **Savage Beatings** are a way to kill a flanker and (hopefully) an Emperor in one fell swoop. Like I said, crazy stuff.

I should also mention that most online Emperor players make a distinction between "strong-side flanker" decks and "weak-side flanker" decks. Because turns move clockwise around the table, a person sitting on an emperor's left (strong) is going to be able to attack after benefiting from her emperor's turn, while the person on the emperor's right (weak) is going to be attacked first after his three opponents have taken turns. As a result, sometimes strong flanker decks load up on fatties while many weak flanker decks load up on defense. What I've made looks like a strong flanker deck, though I'm sure I've missed several good strong flanker tricks. When I circle back to online Emperor again in this column, I will probably talk about strong vs. weak flankers at more length.

## Marching Orders

Confused yet? Join the club. Online Emperor can be overwhelming. It's even visually overwhelming when you start out, since when you join a game you're confronted with six desktops instead of the normal two in **Magic Online**, and since emperor's turns are so explosive, a lot of cards litter each desktop during a game. Add the lingo and constant clicking "okay" to keep the game moving, and you have a dizzying amount of things to absorb when starting out.

Online Emperor games take between one and two hours, which is tough for a daddy-on-the-go like me. Still, here is a sample game:

My emperor is Naked Angel, my other flanker kzinchmeee. The opposing team has WILD RED as the emperor and TDRTAZ and XxBlack DragonxX as flankers. The seating order is as follows:  
 TDRTAZ -- WILD RED -- XxBlack DragonxX  
 kzinchmeee -- Naked Angel -- IntoTheAether

### Turn 1:

kzinchmeee goes first (based on 1d6 rolls) and plays a Forest. TDRTAZ plays a Mountain. WILD RED plays a Forest. XxBlack DragonxX plays a Forest and then Wild Growth on WILD RED's Forest. I go next, as the weak flanker, and play a Mountain. Naked Angel plays a Mountain.

During this first turn, each team has opened up a team-only chat window. We're all comparing our hands and planning our next moves. My hand is mostly fatties and land, so I'm not going to help my emperor early on.

### Turn 2:

kzinchmeee plays another Forest and then two Wild Growths on Naked Angel's Mountain. Naked Angel replies "ty" (meaning "thank you"), which is standard etiquette when you do something nice for you teammate.

On the other side of the table, TDRTAZ plays an Island, then Howling Mine, which means that he, his emperor and my teammate kzinchmeee will all draw an extra card. WILD RED plays a Forest, then a Howling Mine. Uh oh. The opposing team is going to draw a lot of cards. XxBlack DragonxX plays a Forest, then Fertile Ground targeting WILD RED's already-enchanted Forest.

I play a Forest and do nothing. I feel so selfish as the only player so far to not play something that helps my team. Naked Angel then plays an Island, then Genesis Chamber. At least now the team will get Myr tokens every creature we play. This is good reason to have a card like Kamahl, Fist of Krosa in your deck, by the way.

### Turn 3:

kzinchmeee plays Forest, then Fertile Ground on Naked Angel's Mountain (that's two Wild Growths and a Fertile Ground now on his Mountain).

On the other side of the table, TDRTAZ plays a Swamp, then Howling Mine. That's the third Howling Mine on the table. WILD RED draws three extra cards on his turn, then plays a Forest. He casts Vernal Bloom with his very-enchanted super-Forest, then Dream's Grip to untap it. XxBlack DragonxX plays Forest, then Dawn's Reflection on WILD RED's super-Forest, then adds the fourth Howling Mine to the table. He then plays Fertile Ground on his emperor's super-Forest. "Now that's a loving flanker," he says.

My turn. I draw an extra card from XxBlack DragonxX's Howling Mine, then I play City of Brass followed by Krosan Restorer. I get a nice little Myr token too (this becomes important later, trust me). Naked Angel plays a Forest, then plays New Frontiers for four. Me and kzinchmeee say our requisite "ty"s and load up the table with land. If I ever see another turn my emperor is going to be flush with mana thanks to the extra land, his super-Mountain and my Restorer.

Then again, we never see another turn.



What? Let that sink in. Look at what's been played so far and realize that not only will my opponents kill me before I play anything else, but they'll kill my emperor too. How? Read on...

#### Turn 4:

kzinchmeee plays a **Forest** then the fifth (!) **Howling Mine** of the game. He then plays **Hystrodon** and gets a nice little Myr token.

Over on the other side of the table, TDRTAZ draws four extra cards thanks to all of the Mines, then plays Plains and has no other turn. He has too many cards in hand, so drops an **Island** and two Darksteel Colossi into his grave-- er, library.

Then it's WILD RED's turn. He draws four extra cards, plays a **Forest**, taps his super-Forest, then plays a foil **Mirari**. After that... Well, I can't really follow what happens next, actually. I'll let the game log tell the story and have you fill in the details yourself:

8:06 WILD RED plays **New Frontiers**. (X is 5).  
8:06 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
8:06 XxBlack DragonxX: ty  
8:06 TDRTAZ: ty  
8:06 WILD RED puts a copy of **New Frontiers** on the stack.  
8:09 WILD RED plays **Early Harvest** targeting WILD RED.  
8:09 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
8:09 WILD RED plays **Planar Portal**.  
8:10 WILD RED plays activated ability from **Planar Portal**.  
8:10 WILD RED adds {BUGG}.  
8:11 WILD RED plays **Gate to the Æther**.  
8:11 WILD RED plays **Temporal Cascade**.  
8:11 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
8:11 WILD RED puts a copy of **Temporal Cascade** on the stack.  
8:11 WILD RED plays **Wild Growth** targeting **Forest**.  
8:12 TDRTAZ plays **Dream's Grip** targeting **Forest**.  
8:12 WILD RED adds {UGGG}.  
8:13 WILD RED plays **Early Harvest** targeting WILD RED.  
8:13 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
8:13 WILD RED puts a copy of **Early Harvest** on the stack.  
8:13 WILD RED adds {RBWG}.  
8:14 WILD RED plays **Planar Portal**.  
8:14 WILD RED plays **Anarchist**.  
8:14 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Anarchist** targeting **Temporal Cascade**.  
8:15 **Temporal Cascade** is returned to WILD RED's hand from the graveyard.  
8:15 WILD RED plays **Howling Mine**.  
8:15 WILD RED plays **Howling Mine**.  
8:15 WILD RED plays **Temporal Cascade**.  
8:15 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
8:16 WILD RED plays **Wild Growth** targeting **Forest**.  
8:16 WILD RED plays **Fertile Ground** targeting **Forest**.  
8:16 WILD RED plays activated ability from **Planar Portal**.  
8:16 WILD RED plays **Mass Hysteria**.  
8:16 WILD RED plays **Planar Guide**.  
8:17 WILD RED plays **New Frontiers**. (X is 13).  
8:17 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
8:17 WILD RED puts a copy of **New Frontiers** on the stack.  
8:18 WILD RED plays **Weird Harvest**. (X is 5).  
8:18 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
8:18 WILD RED reveals: **Seedborn Muse**.  
8:18 WILD RED reveals: **Hunted Wumpus**.  
8:18 XxBlack DragonxX reveals: **Rith, the Awakener**.  
8:18 XxBlack DragonxX reveals: **Kamahl, Fist of Krosa**.  
8:19 XxBlack DragonxX reveals: **Ancient Ooze**.  
8:19 TDRTAZ reveals: **Darksteel Colossus**.  
8:19 TDRTAZ reveals: **Darksteel Colossus**.  
8:19 TDRTAZ reveals: **Krosan Restorer**.  
8:19 TDRTAZ reveals: **Darksteel Colossus**.  
8:19 WILD RED adds {UUGGG}.  
8:19 WILD RED plays **Hunted Wumpus**.  
8:19 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Hunted Wumpus**.  
8:20 WILD RED plays **Hunted Wumpus**.  
8:20 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Hunted Wumpus**.  
8:20 WILD RED plays **Hunted Wumpus**.  
8:20 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Hunted Wumpus**.  
8:21 WILD RED plays **Hunted Wumpus**.  
8:21 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Hunted Wumpus**.  
8:22 WILD RED plays **Seedborn Muse**.  
8:22 WILD RED plays **Krosan Restorer**.  
8:22 WILD RED plays **Temporal Cascade**.  
8:22 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
8:23 WILD RED plays **Fertile Ground**: targeting **Forest**.  
8:23 WILD RED plays activated ability from **Krosan Restorer**: targeting **Forest**.  
8:23 WILD RED adds {WWWRRG}.  
8:23 WILD RED plays **Burning Wish**.  
8:23 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.



8:23 WILD RED puts a copy of **Burning Wish** on the stack.  
 8:25 WILD RED plays **Allied Strategies**: targeting XxBlack DragonxX.  
 8:25 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
 8:25 WILD RED puts a copy of **Allied Strategies** on the stack.  
 8:26 WILD RED plays activated ability from **Planar Guide**.  
 8:27 WILD RED plays **New Frontiers**. (X is 3).  
 8:27 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Mirari**.  
 8:27 IntoTheAether: END IT, MAN! ;)  
 8:27 WILD RED: what are you afraid  
 8:27 IntoTheAether: no, my myr token is ready  
 8:28 WILD RED: dude you're dead  
 8:28 WILD RED: lmao  
 8:28 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Planar Guide**.  
 8:28 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Anarchist** targeting **Allied Strategies**.  
 8:28 IntoTheAether: my token isn't afraid of those colossi, akroma, etc. phhhh.  
 8:28 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Hunted Wumpus**.  
 8:28 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Hunted Wumpus**.  
 8:28 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Hunted Wumpus**.  
 8:28 WILD RED plays triggered ability from **Hunted Wumpus**.  
 8:28 XxBlack DragonxX: u sure the token is ready?  
 8:29 IntoTheAether: your ooze is so dead when my myr token gets a shot at it  
 8:29 TDRTAZ: lol  
 8:30 XxBlack DragonxX plays activated ability from **Visara the Dreadful** targeting Myr token.  
 8:30 IntoTheAether: NOOOOOOOO!  
 8:30 IntoTheAether: poor myr token  
 8:30 TDRTAZ: lol  
 8:30 WILD RED: LMAO  
 8:31 **Allied Strategies** is returned to WILD RED's hand from the graveyard.



Okay you get all that? Good, because in the next turn XxBlack DragonxX attacks me with **Akroma**, **Visara**, **Kamahll**, two **Darksteel Colossi**, two 50something/50something **Ancient Ooze**, and maybe some other stuff. He then casts **Flaring Pain** and **Savage Beating** to kill me and my emperor **Naked Angel** in one fell swoop.

You online Emperor players are sick, sick people.

## Meanwhile, Back at the Sealed League...

Week 2 ended in my Mirrodin Sealed League with me in fifth place, sitting at nineteen points and thirty-three tie-breaker points. During tie-breaker games of the second week I had a chance to play almost every other person in the top ten of the League. Contrary to the thoughts of my opponents, I don't actually think there is a "best deck" in the top ten. By my estimation, all of the decks at the top are ridiculous and all are piloted by solid players. I saw two **Loxodon Hammers**, a **Duplicant**, **Sword of Light and Darkness** and **Sculpting Steel** in one deck. Another was green/red that looked almost Constructed-worthy, with **Molder Slug**, **Viridian Zealot**, **Viridian Shaman**, and a dizzying array of removal. In scanning the tie-breaker results, it looks like we all managed to beat up on each other with no deck getting the true upper hand. I imagine all Leagues are similar in how little distinguishes the twenty, nineteen, and even eighteen-point decks.

With about a day left in the second week, my first article went up and I received the advice on the Boards to add blue to my deck. Since, as I've said, there is no harm in actively experimenting during tie-breakers, I tried this configuration and was happy with the results:

doctorjay's Week 2 Sealed Deck (revised)		
<b>Main Deck</b>		
40 cards		
1 <b>Ancient Den</b>	1 <b>Slith Ascendant</b>	1 <b>Raise the Alarm</b>
1 <b>Seat of the Synod</b>	1 <b>Leonin Den-Guard</b>	1 <b>Echoing Ruin</b>
4 <b>Plains</b>	1 <b>Skyhunter Cub</b>	1 <b>Electrostatic Bolt</b>
7 <b>Mountain</b>	1 <b>Neurok Spy</b>	1 <b>Shatter</b>
2 <b>Island</b>	1 <b>Somber Hoverguard</b>	1 <b>Shrapnel Blast</b>
15 lands	1 <b>Megatog</b>	1 <b>Bonesplitter</b>
	1 <b>Spikeshot Goblin</b>	1 <b>Leonin Scimitar</b>
	1 <b>Arcbound Crusher</b>	1 <b>Grafted Wargear</b>
	1 <b>Drill Skimmer</b>	1 <b>Loxodon Warhammer</b>
	1 <b>Frogmite</b>	1 <b>Oblivion Stone</b>
	1 <b>Gold Myr</b>	1 <b>Sword of Fire and Ice</b>
	1 <b>Iron Myr</b>	1 <b>Aether Spellbomb</b>
	1 <b>Silver Myr</b>	
	12 other spells	
	13 creatures	

It's now the third week of the League, which means each of the participants gets to add a booster pack of **Darksteel** to their overall card pool. It's possible, given the right fifteen cards, that I could have a monored deck.

That just sounds cool, although right now the splashes of white and blue are tasty. I'm hoping for solid red cards, solid equipment, and an excuse to either drop blue or white wouldn't be terrible either.

Instead, my karma from the first two weeks reverses. Here's what I open:

Echoing Decay  
Pteron Ghost  
Arcbound Worker  
Vedalken Engineer  
Reap and Sow  
Spire Golem  
Echoing Courage  
Myr Moonvessel  
Burden of Greed  
Hallow  
Arcbound Hybrid  
Genesis Chamber  
Hoverguard Observer  
Talon of Pain  
Darksteel Colossus



That's a saucy rare (hey, and great for Emperor!), but not for an aggressive Sealed Deck, unfortunately. In fact, I would say this pack is pretty disappointing given the way my deck had evolved in the first two weeks. There are some fine cards available in my colors--Pteron Ghost, Arcbound Worker, Spire Golem, Arcbound Hybrid, Talon of Pain--but nothing clearly stellar for my deck. Not a single red card in the bunch or piece of equipment. In fact, it looks like my three "off colors" got the goods in this pack.

My overall card pool now looks like this (new cards are italicized):

#### White:

Echoing Calm, Stand Firm, Leonin Den-Guard, Loxodon Mender, Skyhunter Cub, Slith Ascendent, Raise the Alarm, *Hallow*, *Pteron Ghost*.

#### Blue:

Condescend, Disarm, Early Frost, Echoing Truth, Lumengrid Sentinel, Lumengrid Warden, Neurok Spy, Somber Hoverguard, *Hoverguard Observer*, *Vedalken Engineer*.

#### Black:

Shattered Dreams, Burden of Greed, Blind Creeper, Disciple of the Vault, Dross Crocodile, Grimclaw Bats, Nim Lasher, Wall of Blood, Wrench Mind, *Echoing Decay*, *Burden of Greed*.

#### Red:

Echoing Ruin, Molten Rain, Screaming Fury (foil), Shatter, Shrapnel Blast, Krark-Clan Grunt, Megatog, Ogre Leadfoot, Electrostatic Bolt, Spikeshot Goblin, Incite War, Slith Firewalker.

#### Green:

Deconstruct, Journey of Discovery, Stand Together, Fangren Hunter, Tangle Asp, Tel-Jilad Wolf, Viridian Acolyte, Viridian Joiner, Groffskithur, *Reap and Sow*, *Echoing Courage*.

#### Artifacts:

Krark's Thumb, Arcane Spyglass, Bonesplitter, Chimeric Egg, Grafted Wargear, Heartwood Shard, Leonin Scimitar, Lightning Coils, Necrogen Spellbomb, Neurok Stealhsuit, Opaline Bracers, Slagwurm Armor, Sparring Collar, Sunbeam Spellbomb, Sword of Fire and Ice, Talisman of Impulse, Talisman of Indulgence, Talisman of Unity, Tanglebloom, Tooth of Chiss-Goria, Vulshok Battlegear, Vulshok Gauntlets, AEther Spellbomb, Loxodon Warhammer, Golem-Skin Gauntlets, Oblivion Stone, *Genesis Chamber*, *Talon of Pain*.

#### Artifact Creatures:

Arcbound Bruiser, Arcbound Crusher, Drill Skimmer, Dross Golem, Frogmite, Gold Myr, Iron Myr, Leaden Myr, Myr Quadropod, Ornithopter, Solarion, Spinal Parasite, Alpha Myr, Silver Myr, Hematite Golem, Pewter Golem, Steel Wall, *Arcbound Hybrid*, *Arcbound Worker*, *Myr Moonvessel*, *Spire Golem*.

#### Land:

Ancient Den, Seat of the Synod, 7 Mountain, 6 Swamp, 6 Plains, 6 Island, 5 Forest.

It's interesting that I can actually build a solid green/red deck around *Darksteel Colossus* now thanks to *Journey of Discovery*, *Reap and Sow*, and *Viridian Joiner* (plus equipment). I will probably try this idea out in tie-breaker games and report back next week.

For now, though, it seems to me that my blue has suddenly gotten as good if not better than my white. Whereas I had a deck that was base red, strong white, and a splash of blue, I'm now thinking to make it more of a red/blue with a splash of white. The focus has shifted from true beatdown aggression to include some midgame punch.

Here's where I settle:



1 Ancient Den	1 Iron Myr	1 Aether Spellbomb
1 Seat of the Synod	1 Silver Myr	1 Bonesplitter
6 Mountain	1 Vedalken Engineer	1 Electrostatic Bolt
5 Island	1 Leonin Den-Guard	1 Shatter
2 Plains	1 Spikeshot Goblin	1 Shrapnel Blast
	1 Neurok Spy	1 Echoing Ruin
15 lands	1 Skyhunter Cub	1 Echoing Truth
	1 Arcbound Crusher	1 Oblivion Stone
	1 Drill Skimmer	1 Grafted Wargear
	1 Frogmite	1 Loxodon Warhammer
	1 Hoverguard Observer	1 Sword of Fire and Ice
	1 Spire Golem	
	1 Somber Hoverguard	11 other spells
	1 Megatog	
	14 creatures	

It's my experience that by the third week of Sealed League you start to have attrition. People who are really out to win prizes and who haven't done very well tend to try a few games in the third week and then disappear for good. The folks who stay are the people in the hunt for prizes and those die-hard Leaguers who are just out to play their deck and have fun.

My first three matches go 2-0, 2-1, 1-2. I should have won the third one, but I was rushing to get out of the house and made some terrible, horrible play errors. In all three matches I got color-screwed in at least one game, reminding me that, oh yeah...

I *hate* three-color Limited decks. Also, I think they hate me.

So I do some tinkering to make the deck truly red/white (after a 2-game try of red/blue) and go 2-1, 2-0, putting me at 4-1 for my Week 3 matches. It turns out I'm a lot more comfortable attacking over and over again than worrying about tricky combat maneuvers. Looks like I'm still near the top of the standings, with a fun card pool with which to play around during tie-breakers. Stay tuned for the League wrap-up next week.

doctorjay's Other Week 3 Sealed Deck		
<b>Main Deck</b> 40 cards		
1 Ancient Den	1 Arcbound Worker	1 Bonesplitter
8 Mountain	1 Iron Myr	1 Electrostatic Bolt
6 Plains	1 Gold Myr	1 Raise the Alarm
15 lands	1 Leonin Den-Guard	1 Shatter
	1 Pteron Ghost	1 Shrapnel Blast
	1 Krark-Clan Grunt	1 Echoing Ruin
	1 Spikeshot Goblin	1 Oblivion Stone
	1 Skyhunter Cub	1 Grafted Wargear
	1 Slith Ascendant	1 Loxodon Warhammer
	1 Arcbound Crusher	1 Sword of Fire and Ice
	1 Arcbound Hybrid	10 other spells
	1 Drill Skimmer	
	1 Frogmite	
	1 Hematite Golem	
	1 Megatog	
	15 creatures	

## Coming Up...

It's tough to see all of the *Champions of Kamigawa* excitement and know that the set won't be coming to **Magic Online** until late October. I share your pent-up excitement. Still, I'm not going to let all of these other fancy-shmancy columnists steal my thunder. Can they chat with **Magic Online**'s lead programmer Alan Comer? Well, okay, they probably can. But do they? Huh, do they?

Here's my Champions insider info: Champions has five more cards needing to be programmed for online play and Alan's feeling good about their progress. Apparently the way Alan and Rachel Reynolds work is that he starts on the cards they think are going to be the most difficult to program, she starts on cards they think will be least difficult, and they meet at the middling-level cards. Generally speaking, Alan says, this means Rachel codes about ninety percent of each set.

Next week I bring my first Sealed League and Emperor chapters to a close. As you can probably see, each format will span at least a couple of weeks. My original intention was to let you vote again on what format I journey into next, but given the [recent banned announcement](#), I'm going to instead dive right into Prismatic starting in two weeks. The format should be wiiiiide open thanks to the bannings, and if there's one thing I love it's a wide-open format.

Post on the Boards. Have fun.

In preparation for my Prismatic adventure, here is a fairly random question that will help me focus my deck choices...

Pick a *Fifth Dawn* rare. Jay will build his deck with four copies of the rare. Promise.

- Acquire
- All Suns' Dawn
- Artificer's Intuition
- Auriok Champion
- Auriok Windwalker
- Beacon of Creation
- Beacon of Destruction
- Beacon of Immortality
- Beacon of Tomorrows
- Beacon of Unrest
- Blinkmoth Infusion
- Bringer of the Black Dawn
- Bringer of the Blue Dawn
- Bringer of the Green Dawn
- Bringer of the Red Dawn
- Bringer of the White Dawn
- Clearwater Goblet
- Cosmic Larva
- Crucible of Worlds
- Desecration Elemental
- Door to Nothingness
- Doubling Cube
- Endless Whispers
- Engineered Explosives
- Eon Hub
- Fist of Suns
- Granulate
- Helm of Kaldra
- Hoverguard Sweepers
- Ion Storm
- Joiner Adept
- Magma Giant
- Mephidross Vampire
- Moriok Rigger
- Mycosynth Golem
- Plunge into Darkness
- Possessed Portal
- Raksha Golden Cub
- Razormane Masticore
- Retaliate
- Reversal of Fortune
- Rite of Passage
- Roar of Reclamation
- Rude Awakening
- Salvaging Station
- Silent Arbiter
- Solarion
- Spectral Shift
- Staff of Domination
- Summoner's Egg
- Summoning Station
- Suncrusher
- Tornado Elemental
- Vedalken Orrery
- Vedalken Shackles

Submit my Vote



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