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Beacon Blaster

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Building on a Budget
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PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

Ah Spirit Week...the week where everyone gets to talk about Spirits. Except me. You see, since this column caters to *Magic Online* audiences there are just not enough Spirits for me to work with to make any sort of cool deck. Fear not! Just because we can't play with Spirits doesn't mean that we can't have fun! (And once *Champions* hits *Magic Online*, look out!)

This week I am going to talk about another combo deck. This deck has been floating around for a while with good results. While I label it a combo deck, it doesn't combo in the traditional sense of the word. You see, this deck "goes off" one little bit at a time, gaining card and board advantage until it just overwhelms your opponent.

How do you do that? Why, with lots of little green men, of course! It always comes down to the green men!

The deck I am talking about is the Beacon of Creation/Blasting Station/Fecundity deck, which I will call Beacon Blaster, even though I am sure it has been named several other things.

"The Ben Seck" played this version in the *Magic Online* [Worlds qualifier tournament](#) to a high finish:



Ben 'TBS' Seck, Worlds '02

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Ben Seck

TheSuperBlastingStation - 2004 MTGO World Championship Qualifier

Main Deck 60 cards	Sideboard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 Forest 1 Mountain 21 lands 4 Wood Elves 4 Eternal Witness 4 Birds of Paradise 3 Solemn Simulacrum 3 Wirewood Symbiote 1 Wirewood Herald 1 Viridian Shaman 20 creatures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Beacon of Creation 4 Fecundity 3 Blasting Station 3 Magma Jet 3 Oxidize 2 Rude Awakening 19 other spells 4 Naturalize 3 Fractured Loyalty 1 Oxidize 3 Electrostatic Bolt 1 Mountain 3 Sword of Fire and Ice 15 sideboard cards

Now obviously this is no budget deck, but look at how the deck works. It wins by casting **Beacon of Creation** and then using **Blasting Station** and **Fecundity** to turn those little guys into "deal 1 damage and draw a card", essentially making the **Beacon of Creation** into a 3♣ casting cost spell that typically deals at least 4 damage and draws 4 cards. This is a great example of what synergy between cards can yield – effects far more powerful than what the individual cards can give you alone.

This deck has 2 main elements – business spells and mana production. This is a good basis for the deck, but I feel that the equation is lacking something very important: Card drawing to search up your business spells. Now, **Fecundity** alone can draw you a few cards, but it is not your best option. You see, you aren't so much concerned with drawing extra cards as you are finding particular ones...thus effects like **Scry** are very powerful in this deck.

However, what I propose to use is something far more crafty...



The Puzzle Box has some remarkable qualities. First, it really helps you find any particular spell over the course of a game. Second, it gives you a use for that excess land that you have in your hand, since you used your mana accelerators to build your mana base earlier in the game. Third...it's cheap! Good times for the budget mage.

Thus I present to you Budget Beacon Blaster! The Beacons are 4 tix a pop, but fear not, the rest of the deck is rather tame.

Building on a Budget: Beacon Blaster (about 30 tickets)		
Main Deck 60 cards		
24 Forest 24 lands	4 Wood Elves 4 Vine Trellis 8 creatures	2 Collective Unconscious 2 Tel-Jilad Justice 4 Teferi's Puzzle Box 4 Echoing Courage 4 Rampant Growth 4 Fecundity 4 Blasting Station 4 Beacon of Creation 28 other spells

Notice my second card drawing spell, **Collective Unconscious**. These are pretty cheap to pick up at 1 ticket a piece, and they really help you when you have your Beacon, but not **Fecundity** or **Blasting Station**. You still have a lot of mana accelerators in the form of **Wood Elves**, **Vine Trellis**, and **Rampant Growth**. Sure, they're no **Birds of Paradise** and **Solemn Simulacrum**, but it won't cost you your virtual deck box either.



First they help you, and then they get nervous...

This deck plays out by trying to block attackers as much as possible. You need time to set up your precious combo, and it won't come cheap. You will probably have to toss your **Wood Elves** or even a **Vine Trellis** in front of some nasty attackers. However, once you get **Fecundity** out, you will be rewarded by a bonus card for each chump block you make. Get down a **Beacon of Creation** or a **Puzzle box** as fast as you can. Don't worry about getting extra lands out to pump your Beacon...

you will get more off of the second time you cast it. Just use the first Beacon to buy time to really set up and start using those tokens for some savagery. Note that **Teferi's Puzzle Box** will help you re-draw your Beacons once they go back into your deck. All of your land thinning will really help the **Puzzle Box** work its magic.

Once you get the full-blown combo of all three pieces (**Beacon/Station/Fecundity**), then start going to town. Kill all of their creatures and draw a fistful of cards, finding another Beacon. Then cast it and go to town all over again. Your opponent won't last long under those conditions.

There is another cool trick this deck has up its sleeve, which is **Echoing Courage**. Note that if you **Echoing Courage** an insect from the Beacon, they *all* get +2/+2, creating a little **Overrun**. It is entirely possible to win simply by attacking with Beacon tokens and casting **Echoing Courage** for the win.

Tips on Playing the Deck

- When you have a **Wood Elves** and a **Fecundity** in hand on the third turn, cast the **Fecundity** only if you have another land and a **Beacon of Creation** in our hand. Otherwise cast the **Elves**.
- Cast **Beacon** before you cast **Puzzle Box**. Be very careful to cast the spells you need to cast before putting the **Box** into play, as they will shuffle in next turn before you can play them. Of course, this is bound to mess up your opponent as well. Watch for opportunities to take advantage of the fact that you get to be the one choosing when to unleash the **Puzzle Box** on the game.
- Note that **Blasting Station** gets an untap on the stack when your opponent plays a creature. You might want to utilize this extra untap to kill his creature if it has 2 toughness. Of course, you will need guys just hanging out, ready for sacrifice.
- If you have **Fecundity** out, chump block as often as possible. You will draw more cards and get closer to your goal while keeping your life total protected.
- Remember to shuffle the **Beacon** in! (ok, that one was just for the non-**Magic Online** players, but they are reading too you know!)



Adding Money to the Deck

Ok, you can take a page from Ben Seck and use **Birds of Paradise** and **Solemn Simulacrum**. Keep in mind that his deck is from a while ago, and the format has changed quite a bit. With access to **Champions** cards, I would certainly be playing with **Sakura-Tribe Elder** and **Kodama's Reach**. I would avoid splashing any extra colors since you want as many Forests as possible, but if you only played something like 1 Island and always fetched it up to cast better card drawing spells than **Collective Unconscious** that would be acceptable.

Until next time, may your Insects be...**deadly**.

- Nate Heiss
BuildingOnABudget and nateheiss on **Magic Online**



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