

Home > Games > Magic > Magicthegathering.com > Columns



Silent Stick

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Building on a Budget
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PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

This week's deck is so secret that I can't talk about it! Ok, well maybe I can. No, it isn't about Ninjas or *Betrayers* (sorry) to disappoint. However, I must say that Ninjutsu is the coolest keyword mechanic I have seen in a long time, and *Betrayers* is looking very exciting!

No, the reason I can't say much about this week's deck is because it is all about *The Unspeakable*, and thusly, the spoken must be unspoken.

Anyone tired of that joke yet?

...

I thought so.

I have found that *The Unspeakable*, while seemingly impossible to use in constructed, is actually a lot better than anyone might imagine. It's certainly not a broken card, but it is quite good to have the ability to cast a 6/7 flying guy as an instant and have him *Regrowth* your cards every turn. The three card *Unspeakable* combo is interesting because you can use one of the cards (*Peer through Depths*) to help find one of the other two parts. Just make sure you cast *Sift through Sands* last, because without already casting the other two first, you won't get your monster.

Obviously the *Unspeakable* deck is an Arcane/Splice based deck in order to give it enough synergy. However, I have found that *Isochron Scepter* has unbelievable synergy with the Arcane and Splice cards as well. It turns out that using them both in the same deck with a little *Hikari*, *Twilight Guardian* action to back things up makes for a very cool deck.

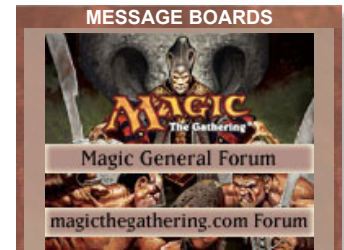
Another benefit of the Splice theme is that it allows you to play the alternate win condition of *Dampen Thought*. While slow to win, *Dampen Thought* is a really hard victory condition to stop (only Black can really do anything about it, by using discard). Even though it isn't great against aggressive decks, you can at least splice another defensive spell on to it, like *Candles' Glow* or *Psychic Puppetry*.

On the note of *Psychic Puppetry*, I have quickly come to the conclusion that it is one of the best Splice cards, mostly due to its color and Splice cost of 1. The ability is rather versatile and decent as well. Many people will scoff at the exclusion of *Glacial Ray* from the deck, but in all honesty it is impossible to run well in a budget version, though a more expensive version could have cards like *Solemn Simulacrum* and *City of Brass* to help support a 3-color mana base.

Another great Arcane card you have available is *Ethereal Haze*, which is doubly great on the Scepter against aggressive decks as a *Fog* effect every turn for the rest of the game. Plus, being a 1 mana Arcane spell makes it pretty easy to find extra mana for Splice effects.

At any rate, let's take a look at the deck:

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Building on a Budget: Silent Stick (about 30 Tickets)

Main Deck
60 cards

15 Island	3 Hikari, Twilight Guardian	4 Isochron Scepter
6 Plains	2 The Unspeakable	2 Solar Tide
21 lands	5 creatures	4 Talisman of Progress
		3 Candles' Glow
		3 Dampen Thought
		3 Ethereal Haze
		4 Peer Through Depths
		4 Psychic Puppetry
		4 Reach Through Mists
		3 Sift Through Sands
		34 other spells

This deck plays out by just building its mana base for the first turn or two, perhaps with the aid of a Talisman. You play a lot of mana sources and card drawing, so you should have no problem ramping up to five or six. In the early turns of the game you often can play a card drawer like Peer or Reach and splice on a Puppetry tapping your opponent's land during their upkeep. Your goal is to get a Scepter down with a Peer or Reach on it, unless you are playing against aggro, where a Haze or **Candles' Glow** may be more appropriate.

Simply keep control of the game and win with an Unspeakable, a Hikari, or by decking them with **Dampen Thought**. It is somewhat difficult to deck someone unless you have 2 Thoughts, or are able to splice it twice per turn. Still, in the longer control matchups it comes in very handy. Many times the board will fill up with creatures since you can lock down a few with Puppetry. The **Solar Tides** act as a reset button for the board, making your Puppetries even stronger.

Tips on Playing the Deck

- Use Hikari's ability to your advantage. Stack damage and then remove her with an instant. This makes killing it in combat tough. You can also use it on attack and defense by swinging in and then playing an Arcane spell. It will come back at the end of the turn untapped.
- You can use **Candles' Glow** on damage taken from your Talismans. It may be a good way to coax a few extra life points out of a situation.
- If you put a Puppetry on a Scepter, you can easily do any Splice effect multiple times per turn even if you only have 1 in your hand. Do this by using the Scepter and Puppetry, untapping the Scepter, and then splicing whatever. After the Scepter untaps, repeat.



Adding More Money to the Deck

As I mentioned earlier, you could add money to get some red in there for **Glacial Rays**. Simply add **Solemn Simulacrum**s and **Cities of Brass**. You might also want **Wayfarer's Baubles** instead of Talismans at that point as well. Also, I highly recommend using **Wrath of God**, especially over **Solar Tide**. While Hikari is good, **Pristine Angel** is better. It is pretty hard to change the core splice component of the deck without messing with it a lot, but you might want to experiment with some counter magic or bounce. I know one thing for sure: **Cranial Extraction** is a pain for this deck to beat. When facing it you will probably need your creatures to do it.

Until next time, may you return from your travels **slightly larger**.

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



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