

Friday, July 15, 2005

Editor's note: Over the course of the voting, we will occasionally be posting ballots of voters who wish to make their choices public, along with any additional analysis they used to come to their decisions. If other Selection Committee members wish to provide analysis and explanation of their votes for publication, click here.

1. Jon Finkel

Because, as (I think) Zvi wrote, anyone who doesn't vote for Jon needs to have his voting privilege revoked. Clearly, the standout choice. No one is more deserving than Jon to be in a **Magic** Hall of Fame.

2. Darwin Kastle

While Darwin's career may not have been as stellar as some others on the ballot, he was consistent. He has an insane number of Pro Points, and his lifetime earnings are among the highest as well. Plus, he was ALWAYS there.

I admire the fact that he's attended practically every Pro Tour. The fact that he has his face on a card counts for something too, I think.

3. Alan Comer

Like many others, I was faced with a decision as soon as the ballot was publicized: Do I vote for Mike Long? There are a lot of factors that indicate Mike deserves a place in the Hall of Fame, just as there are things that would dissuade someone from voting for him. As the debates raged on and off the 'net, I listened and thought, and thought some more. And I decided that even though we've come far from those years, voting for Mike would somehow be a validation of the antics of the early years of the Pro Tour, and were I responsible for Mike having a lifetime invitation to the Tour, it would be a tacit approval of such conduct and might encourage him and others to once again act that way. (I understand Mike may get in anyway; if he does get in, I won't begrudge him his spot. Just because I disapprove of his classic playing style doesn't mean I hate him per se.)

So that made me think...If I'm valuing integrity highly, I should vote for Alan. Alan is to me a role model for a **Magic** player: he is friendly to everyone he meets; he treats everyone, Pro or not, with equal respect; he was always cheerful and good-humored, and shared that with everyone; he was always up for a game because he just LOVED playing; and, importantly, he was one of the first people to stand up and say that cheating and "dirty pool" was not acceptable. That, and the five Top 8s plus the fact that Alan created format-defining decks, makes me cast my vote for him.

4. Michael Pustilnik

As I was thinking of all the qualities that Alan Comer has, I realized there was another person on the ballot who shared many of them: Mikey P.

Mikey was always there with a smile. He talked about games or whatever with anyone and everyone. Michael likes games, and likes having fun. He lived the PT life for a long time, before people started

thinking about a "PT life."

And he had the skill to back it up: a Pro Tour win, Grand Prix wins, and a Masters win, as well as multiple PT and GP Top 8s. I think the Pro Tour is a slightly lonelier place without Mikey P. wandering around with "Titan" under his arm looking for a game; here's hoping we'll see him again soon.

5. Olle Rade

I was torn between Olle and Tommi Hovi for my last vote. Tommi was the first to win two Pro Tours, thus proving that **Magic** was in fact a skill-based game, as Wizards had been trying to claim for a long time. He is also high on lifetime standings. But, as Mark Rosewater has pointed out, for a long time, Olle was "The Man" on the Pro Tour. He had a respectable career with many highlights.

Tommi was the first to win multiple Pro Tours, which is important, but Olle was the first Player of the Year, won a Pro Tour in his debut year, AND won the first Invitational. His career was shorter than Tommi's, but he has more "firsts." And, having his face on a card means he is a part of the game forever. Maybe I'm a sucker for celebrities --if Tommi had won an Invitational, I might have ended up voting for him.

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