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50 Reasons to Play in the Ravnica Release Events

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Into the Aether
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*Just slip out the back, Jack
Make a new plan, Stan
You don't need to be coy, Roy
Just get yourself free
Hop on the bus, Gus
You don't need to discuss much
Just drop off the key, Lee
And get yourself free!*

What's that? The wrong 50? Oops, sorry about that...

{shuffles papers around}

Ah, here we go! Ahem.

50 Reasons to Play in the Ravnica Release Events

1. Gleemax commands you. Resistance is futile.
2. Popping packs just for singles isn't nearly as much fun.
3. Those gold-bordered Ravnica Release splash screens when MTGO fired up intrigued you. Admit it, baby.
4. RAV Starter + RAV booster + RAV booster = a *huuuuuge* stack of all brand new cards!
5. Play in a release league, get Loxodon Hierarch, the participation avatar. He's dressed really sharp too, unlike his exhibitionist cousin the token Elephant avatar.



6. Go 5-0 in a release league, win Sisters of Stone Death, the prize avatar! (Just in time for Golgari Week.) She looks cool too, but... where are the other sisters? *Look out behind you!!*



7. Maybe you'll crack a foil Sacred Foundry and be able to sell it and live off the interest for the rest of your natural born days. Or at least fill up your gas tank.
8. Play in a release flight, get Loxodon Hierarch, the participation avatar. Check out how high he levitates Magic cards!
9. Play in a 2x release flight, make top 8 and win RAV packs!

Place	Boosters
1	24
2	18
3-4	12
5-8	4

10. Make top 2 in a 2x release flight, win Sisters of Stone Death, the prize avatar! She also looks cool too, but... wasn't there another sister? *Don't look Ethel!*
11. Win a 2x release flight, you qualify to play in the Release Event Championship on Saturday, November 12 @ 9:00 am PST for free! No tix, no deck, just bring you and your mad skillz.
12. Somebody might pass you an Overgrown Tomb in draft. It could happen!
13. Play in a 4x release flight, make top 16 and win RAV packs!

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NOVELS

Dissension
Ravnica Cycle, Book III
by Cory Herndon

Place	Boosters
1	48
2	36
3-4	24
5-8	12
9-16	6

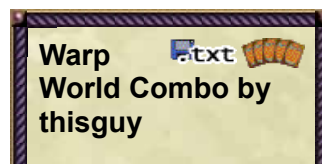
14. Make top 8 in a 4x release flight, win Sisters of Stone Death, the prize avatar! She also looks cool too, but... wasn't there another sister? *Don't look Ethel!*
15. Make top 4 in a 4x release flight, you qualify to play in the Release Event Championship on Saturday, November 12 @ 9:00 am PST for free! No tix, no deck, just bring you and your mad skillz.
16. You may play **Stinkweed Imp** as your 40th card and realize that he's actually pretty darn good and could fit right into a constructed Dredge deck.
17. I dare you.
18. INSOMNIAC MADNESS! "Nix tix" for 2x flights that start between 10pm and 5am PST.
19. You're a disciple of the Limited Gospel according to [brother Wills](#) and feel ready to draft [Selesnya, Boros, Golgari, or Dimir](#) guild decks!
20. INSOMNIAC MADNESS! 2 tix for 4x flights that start between 10pm and 5am PST (normal cost is 5 tix).
21. Impact the online economy! The more packs are cracked, the larger number of individual cards will be out there. The higher the supply, the lower the prices. This was the part you slept through in Economics 101.
22. Play in the Release Event Championship, make top 64 and win RAV packs! You almost can't lose!

Place	Boosters
1	72
2	54
3-4	36
5-8	18
9-16	12
17-32	6
33-64	3

23. Win the Championship and you'll receive the framed, original artwork for the *Ravnica: City of Guilds* card **Loxodon Hierarch** by artist Kev Walker! Check it out. Don't tell me you're not impressed!



24. I double dare you.
25. During the tournament, Wizards of the Coast staff (marked with the Wizards logo beside their online name) may ask you for your name and/or contact information, and affiliation status to the Cult of Mark Gottlieb. Do not panic, but you're kind of a big deal.
26. Pick up a couple **Brainspoils** for the **Battle of Wits** deck you've been quietly putting together online because it's much easier to let the auto shuffler handle that big beast.
27. Start filling out the cards you need for that wacky fun Warp World deck that's been floating around the forums.



28. If you missed the paper *Ravnica* prereleases, here's your second chance (and third, and fourth, and...); anytime that's convenient for *you*, day or night.
29. I triple dog dare you.
30. You get to lay out cool Saproling token cards without having to resort to gaudy IPA budget-busters. You can't wait to **Seed Spark** the infernal, omnipresent **Umezawa's Jitte**; *hi-ya*, yerself!!
31. You know you want to crack a **Glimpse the Unthinkable** in pack one and make a Limited mill deck. You haven't been able to do that in draft since CHK CHK CHK.
32. Everyone in your clan is *dying* to play the new G/B Rock decks, so you can probably unload a random **Putrefy** or two for a mint!
33. *End of turn, bolt you!* You know you want to get yer mitts on some **Lightning Helixes**. *Bolt you!*
34. Snag two more critters for your Vedalkan tribal deck!
35. All the cool kids are doing it.
36. Start snagging some of the new creature enchantments for the **Auratouched Mage** deck you know you're dying to put together. You can finally use that **Mythic Proportions** that's been riding your trade binder all this time!
37. Inject your collection with some new options for your Pauper Decks!
38. I quadruple back flip dare you!
39. There's a ton of really cool State Champs decks floating around the net that you're just itching to try out, and there's no more fun way to jump start your new set collection than going on a Release event spree!
40. It'll be fun looking at your draft deck three months from now and wondering how in the world you drafted such a bad deck (okay, that's more me than some).
41. You could rip open a **Birds of Paradise** – *black bordered!* – with the great new artwork!
42. C'mon, you'll sleep when you're dead.
43. You're on a bit of a losing streak with other online games, so switch up and shake off the bad mojo.
44. If you're hungry for some breakfast, Mr. Plastic Burger King Man may or may not show up at your window with an obscenely huge meat sandwich while you play.
45. RARE DRAFTING!!!
46. Let the MTGO interface educate you on how some of the wack new cards are correctly played.
47. You're dying to see just how convoluted you can make The Stack with an **Eye of the Storm** in play.
48. I quintuplet bikini-babe dare you!
49. Online, you never have to figure out how to actually say "Ravnica."
50. If you don't, you're regret it in the morning! You've been warned...

(reason #50 may or may not have been authorized by Gleemax, but whatever you do, do not look behind the curtain)

Minty Fresh Vanguardness!

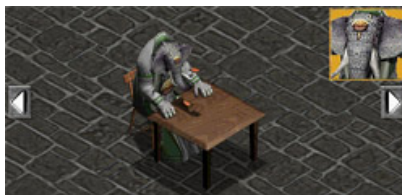
Okay, so now you've gotten your hands on the new avatars, what sort of decks are you going to build around them? Nice question! But first—speaking of avatars, has anyone seen the animated show [Avatar: The Last Airbender](#)? I've run across it on one of the Nick channels my kids watch and it's actually a pretty cool show.

Anyway, back to the quest at hand: deckbuilding! Below, I'm going to present my first deck ideas for Ravnica Vanguard, but I'd love to hear what ideas you may have! Drop me an email and I'll post a couple of them next week.

Participation Avatar: Loxodon Hierarch

Vanguard abilities: Hand +0, Life +1

Sacrifice a permanent: Regenerate target creature you control



So, what do we do with this ability? Cramming your deck full of "Destroy all creatures" effects pops to mind, but watch out for the "no regenerate" clause. **Akroma's Vengeance**, **Void**, **Engineered Explosives**, **Oblivion Stone**, **Pernicious Deed**, **Myojin of Cleansing Fire**, **Plague Boiler**. Sacrifice a few permanents to keep some of your key creatures in play and break the symmetry of these otherwise symmetrical creature-sweepers.

Then there's sacrificing for fun and profit, of which there are a ton of cards to consider, such as: **Akki Raider**, **Festering Goblin**, **Ashen-Skin Zuberu** (and his other-colored kindred), anything with **Soulshift** (especially **Promised Kannushi**), **Caller of the Claw**, **Celestial Gatekeeper**, **Death's Head Buzzard**, **Dross Scorpion**, **Fecundity**, **Goblin Sharpshooter**, **Grave Pact**, **Homura**, **Human Ascendant**, **Inname**, **Life Aspect**, **Indebted Samurai**, **Jugan**, the **Rising Star** (and all of the *Champions* Dragons), **Last Laugh**, **Mindslicer**, **Myr Moonvessel**, **Myr**

60 cards
5 Forest 4 Karplusan Forest 4 Forbidden Orchard 4 Tendo Ice Bridge 5 Mountain
22 land
3 Birds of Paradise 4 Anarchist 2 Hunted Dragon 4 Sakura-Tribe Elder 4 Wood Elves 1 Kiki-Jiki, Mirror Breaker
18 creatures
4 Warp World 3 Sensei's Divining Top 2 Galvanic Arc 4 Fists of Ironwood 4 Overgrowth 3 Heartbeat of Spring
20 other spells




Retriever, Plague Spitter, Promise of Bunrei, Rotlung Reanimator, Second Sunrise, Shambling Swarm, Shirei, Shizo's Caretaker, Solemn Simulacrum, Summoner's Egg, Symbiotic Wurm, Verdant Succession, Wirewood Herald. From *Ravnica* there's Gleancrawler, Golgari Germination, Golgari Thug, and Surveilling Sprite.

Spreading *Algae* is interesting—put it on your own swamp and sacrifice it as a steady supply of regeneration—and the idea led me to noodling around with an enchantress deck. I ended up making an Aura deck that didn't feature *Spreading Algae*, but this looks fun anyway! Many of the key creatures in this deck would otherwise be vulnerable to direct damage, so being able to regenerate is handy. I particularly like the ability to sacrifice an enchantment for a regeneration shield and then bring it back with *Nomad Mythmaker*. Fetching a *Followed Footsteps* to enchant the first *Auratouched Mage* is bound to be fun, too! Enchanting *Bramble Elemental* provides a steady supply of Saproling tokens ready to sacrifice and regenerate some of your other players.

Auratouched (Online Extended - Vanguard) by Bennie Smith		
Avatar - Loxodon Hierarch		
64 cards		
4 Tendo Ice Bridge	4 Birds of Paradise	4 Fists of Ironwood
4 Yavimaya Coast	4 Verduran Enchantress	1 Pariah
4 Brushland	4 Nomad Mythmaker	1 Tattoo Ward
3 Plains	4 Yavimaya Enchantress	1 Galvanic Arc
3 Island	4 Bramble Elemental	1 Unquestioned Authority
10 Forest	3 Auratouched Mage	3 Flight of Fancy
28 land	23 creatures	1 Followed Footsteps
		1 Mythic Proportions
		13 other spells

Prize Avatar: Sisters of Stone Death
 Vanguard abilities: Hand +1, Life -5
 Each creature you control must be blocked if able.
 4: Remove from the game target creature blocking a creature you control.



If you like down and dirty creature combat, do we have some Sisters for you! Get the most from your Bushido creatures (especially ones like *Battle-Mad Ronin*, *Inner-Chamber Guard* and *Isao, Enlightened Bushi*). Go nuts with *Sparring Golem* and *Duskworker*. Flip out with *Elvish Berserker*. Get funky with *Shape Stealer*. Get degenerate with *Tangle Asp*. Actually give *Zombie Boa* a second look!

Combat tricks turn into creature removal when the Sisters are in town. Cards like *Crossbow Infantry* and *Daru Stinger* get a workout. Mmmm, *Devouring Light*!

Goblin Elite Infantry and Leery Fogbeasts? You've got to stay home, fellas. Sorry.

Here's a little beater that should be able to keep your opponent rocked back on his heels for most of the game (so long as he's actually playing a creature deck) while your attackers mix it up and come out victorious!

Gorgone Blockers! (Online Extended - Vanguard) by Bennie Smith		
Avatar- Sisters of Stone Death		
60 cards		
4 Karplusan Forest	4 Elvish Berserker	4 Giant Growth
4 Pinecrest Ridge	4 Raging Goblin	4 Gather Courage
6 Mountain	4 Battle-Mad Ronin	3 Gaze of the Gorgon
9 Forest	4 Tangle Asp	11 other spells
23 land	2 Isao, Enlightened Bushi	
	4 Sparring Golem	
	4 Duskworker	
	26 creatures	

I hope you have a good time at the *Ravnica* release events, hope to see you there!

Next Week: I plan on revisiting Rainbow Stairwell soon, and in particular I'd like to hear from you RS enthusiasts—what *Ravnica* cards are you looking forward to acquiring for your RS deck? See any cards that will quickly become RS staples? Any new cards, mechanics or themes worth building an RS deck around?

Bennie Smith has been playing Magic since Arabian Nights, and writing about it nearly as long. Several of his early musings appeared on the Magic Dojo, and from there he became a featured writer for Star City Games and

a Contributing Editor for Scrye Magazine before he started writing for **magicthegathering.com**. While a casual gamer at heart, Bennie also thoroughly enjoys the competitive side of **Magic** and won the Virginia State Championship in 1999.



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