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Previewing Los Angeles via London

Brian David-Marshall
The Week That Was
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2005



It's not actually a preview per se, but late Wednesday night I received an email from Jason Howlett, our man in London. Jason ran a Grand Prix-Bilbao Trial at the Games Club in central London. The format? Freshly rotated Extended – the same one being utilized this weekend in Los Angeles. The players? Many of the same players who will be here, ostensibly playing very similar builds.

Good news for those of you playing in this weekend's PTQs. Since the decklists from Los Angeles won't be posted until late on Saturday, this will be the first look at the new format before Round 1 pairings are posted in tournament locales all around the world. It was a good weekend for Stuart Wright, who also won London Champs on Saturday with his Green-red mana denial deck that touched black for **Grave-Shell Scarab** and blue for the ubiquitous **Gifts Ungiven**

PT-LA: Deck Doctoring Without Borders

Brian David-Marshall [breaks down the field](#), looks at the top players and potential top deck archetypes for Pro Tour-Los Angeles, where Extended undergoes a massive facelift!



MESSAGE BOARDS



RULES



Stuart Wright – Winner London Champs

Wild Gifts – Standard Format

Main Deck 60 cards	Sideboard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Forest 1 Island 4 Karplusan Forest 4 Mountain 1 Okina, Temple to the Grandfathers 4 Overgrown Tomb 1 Swamp 1 Watery Grave 1 Yavimaya Coast <hr/> <p>23 lands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Arashi, the Sky Asunder 1 Grave-Shell Scarab 4 Sakura-Tribe Elder 1 Shard Phoenix 1 Viridian Shaman <p>10 creatures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Farseek 3 Gifts Ungiven 3 Kodama's Reach 1 Life from the Loam 1 Naturalize 4 Putrefy 2 Pyroclasm 1 Reclaim 1 Recollect 4 Sensei's Divining Top 1 Thoughts of Ruin 3 Wildfire <hr/> <p>27 other spells</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Boseiju, Who Shelters All 3 Cranial Extraction 3 Naturalize 2 Pyroclasm 2 Thoughts of Ruin 2 Viridian Shaman <hr/> <p>15 sideboard cards</p>

Many more [Champs lists](#) are available in the Tournament Center, but if you are the impatient sort you can go to [The Games Club's website](#) for the low-down on the London Champs. For those staying here, we turn our attention to Stuart's extended **Magic** weekend and his Sunday activities, which saw him pocketing three byes for Grand Prix-Bilbao. Stuart – who qualified for Los Angeles at a Newport PTQ – played a Domain/Gifts/Rock hybrid with a Meloku endgame.

Stuart Wright - Winner Grand Prix-Bilbao Trial

Domain Gifts – Extended Format

Main Deck 60 cards	Sideboard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Flooded Strand 5 Forest 2 Island 1 Mountain 2 Overgrown Tomb 1 Plains 1 Sacred Foundry 1 Swamp 2 Temple Garden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Cabal Therapy 4 Collective Restraint 1 Cranial Extraction 3 Cunning Wish 3 Evasive Action 3 Gifts Ungiven 1 Global Ruin 1 Nostalgic Dreams 2 Pernicious Deed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Arcane Laboratory 1 Boseiju, Who Shelters All 1 Duress 1 Evasive Action 1 Gifts Ungiven 1 Haunting Echoes 1 Heroes' Reunion 1 Meddling Mage 1 Moment's Peace 1 Orim's Chant

2 Watery Grave 2 Wooded Foothills	1 Putrefy 3 Sensei's Divining Top	1 Putrefy 1 Reclaim 1 Tsabo's Decree 2 Unknown Cards
23 lands	23 other spells	15 sideboard cards
4 Birds of Paradise 3 Eternal Witness 1 Genesis 1 Loxodon Hierarch 1 Meloku the Clouded Mirror 4 Sakura-Tribe Elder		
14 creatures		

The list on the Games Club website listed four **Gifts Ungiven** in the maindeck and one in the sideboard but with a 61-card maindeck listed I assume the maindeck number was three since the fourth would be accessible via **Cunning Wish**. As for the unlisted sideboard cards, I can only look to the similar decklist a little further down in the article and draw conclusions from that one.

Stuart's opposition in the finals came in a bright red package with a touch of black for **Cabal Therapy**. Michael Groves – who won a LA PTQ in Colchester – played a deck that bears more than a passing resemblance to the goblin deck last seen carrying Olivier Ruel to the Top 8 of Pro Tour-Columbus. With so much of the deck rooted in the Goblin-riffic **Onslaught** Block, it was left largely untarnished by the rotation.

Michael Groves - Finalist Grand Prix-Bilbao Trial		
Red Army – Extended Format		
Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
4 Bloodstained Mire 10 Mountain 1 Shadowblood Ridge 4 Sulfurous Springs 2 Swamp	4 Cabal Therapy 3 Chrome Mox 7 other spells	3 Duress 2 Flametongue Kavu 4 Goblin King 3 Overload 3 Patriarch's Bidding
21 lands		15 sideboard cards
4 Gempalm Incinerator 4 Goblin Matron 4 Goblin Piledriver 4 Goblin Ringleader 2 Goblin Sharpshooter 1 Goblin Sledder 4 Goblin Warchief 1 Siege-Gang Commander 4 Skirk Prospector 4 Sparksmith		
32 creatures		

Stuart's semifinal competition was yet another player qualified for this weekend's Pro Tour. Normally Craig Jones can be found covering the goings-ons at **Magic** tournaments, but he will be looking to follow up on his strong 12th-place Constructed finish from Philadelphia, which no doubt contributed significantly to his 2085 rating that earned him this weekend's invite.

Psychatog decks for rotated Extended have been searching for a suitable replacement for the math-intensive **Gush** that rotated out with the **Masques** block along with the alternate casting cost mechanic. Craig found a suitable replacement in **Life From the Loam** and the graveyard-stocking dredge mechanic. If you start doing the math with cycling lands, you can get your Tog into the lethal range very quickly. Not only can you pick up three lands and cycle them but if you have enough mana you can replace each cycle with dredge and Loam for more lands. If I were playing in a PTQ this weekend, this is the deck I would be testing right now – it appeals to the greedy nature that earned me the sub-nickname greedym from Mike Flores.

Craig Jones - Semifinalist Grand Prix-Bilbao Trial		
Dredge-a-Tog – Extended Format		
Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
3 Barren Moor 2 Bloodstained Mire 2 Forest 3 Island 4 Lonely Sandbar	4 Counterspell 3 Cunning Wish 3 Darkblast 2 Force Spike 4 Life from the Loam	1 Brain Freeze 1 Coffin Purge 2 Duress 1 Echoing Truth 2 Engineered Plague

1 Oboro, Palace in the Clouds	4 Mana Leak	1 Gifts Ungiven
2 Overgrown Tomb	2 Putrefy	1 Hideous Laughter
4 Polluted Delta	4 Remand	1 Moment's Peace
1 Swamp		1 Naturalize
3 Watery Grave	26 other spells	1 Putrefy
1 Yavimaya Coast		1 Stifle
		1 Tsabo's Decree
		1 Upheaval
26 lands		15 sideboard cards
2 Eternal Witness		
1 Genesis		
1 Ghost-Lit Stalker		
3 Psychatog		
1 Wonder		
8 creatures		

No deck has been more anticipated with the arrival of *Ravnica* and its *Overgrown Tombs* than The Rock. Gavin Reid may not be qualified for LA but he does have the honor of giving us our first look at what the made-over Extended staple might look like this weekend.

Gavin Reid - Semifinalist Grand Prix-Bilbao Trial		
Rock – Extended Format		
Main Deck		Sideboard
60 cards		
5 Forest	4 Cabal Therapy	4 Cranial Extraction
4 Llanowar Wastes	3 Haunting Echoes	4 Engineered Plague
2 Miren, the Moaning Well	4 Pernicious Deed	4 Nezumi Graverobber
4 Overgrown Tomb	4 Putrefy	3 Phantom Centaur
3 Polluted Delta		
4 Swamp	15 other spells	15 sideboard cards
1 Wooded Foothills		
23 lands		
4 Birds of Paradise		
4 Eternal Witness		
1 Genesis		
3 Grave-Shell Scarab		
2 Ink-Eyes, Servant of Oni		
2 Kokusho, the Evening Star		
2 Ravenous Baloth		
4 Sakura-Tribe Elder		
22 creatures		

The fourth player to highlight from the trial is Quentin Martin, who many of you will remember as thrusting *Dampen Thought* into the public consciousness as a viable draft archetype. Quentin – who qualified for LA at a PTQ in St. Austell – also played Domain Gifts and we can safely assume the remaining two cards in Stuart's deck were *Sterling Groves*.

Quentin Martin - Quarterfinalist Grand Prix-Bilbao Trial		
Domain Gifts – Extended Format		
Main Deck		Sideboard
60 cards		
4 Flooded Strand	1 Cabal Therapy	1 Boseiju, Who Shelters All
6 Forest	4 Collective Restraint	2 Cranial Extraction
2 Island	1 Cranial Extraction	1 Duress
1 Mountain	3 Cunning Wish	1 Gifts Ungiven
2 Overgrown Tomb	3 Evasive Action	1 Haunting Echoes
1 Plains	3 Gifts Ungiven	1 Moment's Peace
1 Sacred Foundry	1 Global Ruin	1 Naturalize
1 Swamp	1 Nostalgic Dreams	1 Orim's Chant
2 Temple Garden	2 Pernicious Deed	1 Putrefy
1 Watery Grave	1 Putrefy	1 Reclaim
1 Windswept Heath	3 Sensei's Divining Top	2 Sterling Grove
1 Wooded Foothills		1 Tsabo's Decree
	23 other spells	1 Wrath of God
23 lands		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Birds of Paradise 3 Eternal Witness 1 Genesis 1 Loxodon Hierarch 1 Meloku the Clouded Mirror 4 Sakura-Tribe Elder <p>14 creatures</p>	15 sideboard cards
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Gifts Ungiven reared its ugly head again in Florent Darlet's take on Mirari's Wake. Despite the abusive possibilities of fetching a pair of the new duals with Krosan Verge, Florent's build plays fair with the card.

Florent Darlet - Quarterfinalist Grand Prix-Bilbao Trial		
Mirari's Wake – Extended Format		
Main Deck	Sideboard	
61 cards		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Forest 6 Island 4 Krosan Verge 5 Plains 2 Windswept Heath <p>25 lands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Bearscape 4 Cunning Wish 2 Decree of Justice 4 Gifts Ungiven 1 Mirari 3 Mirari's Wake 3 Moment's Peace 3 Sensei's Divining Top 4 Wrath of God <p>25 other spells</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Beacon of Immortality 1 Brain Freeze 1 Early Harvest 1 Echoing Truth 1 Moment's Peace 1 Naturalize 1 Orim's Chant 4 Pithing Needle 1 Pulse of the Fields 1 Ray of Revelation 1 Stifle 1 Twincast <p>15 sideboard cards</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Eternal Witness 4 Sakura-Tribe Elder 3 Solemn Simulacrum <p>11 creatures</p>		

Geoffrey Siron first popped up on the collective Pro Tour radar when he piloted blue-green Madness to a Top 8 berth in Columbus. Simon O'Keefe – not qualified for LA – updated the deck with Oboro and Umezawa's Jitte. Like Rock, Blue-green is always going to make up a significant portion of the field.

Simon O'Keefe - Quarterfinalist Grand Prix-Bilbao Trial		
Madness – Extended Format		
Main Deck	Sideboard	
60 cards		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Centaur Garden 6 Forest 6 Island 1 Oboro, Palace in the Clouds 4 Yavimaya Coast <p>18 lands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Careful Study 4 Chrome Mox 4 Circular Logic 3 Deep Analysis 3 Stifle 3 Umezawa's Jitte <p>21 other spells</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Deep Analysis 4 Mana Leak 3 Naturalize 3 Roar of the Wurm 3 Rushing River 1 Umezawa's Jitte <p>15 sideboard cards</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Aquamoeba 4 Arrogant Wurm 4 Basking Rootwalla 2 Merfolk Looter 4 Wild Mongrel 3 Wonder <p>21 creatures</p>		

The field was split evenly between players coming to LA and players looking for a PTQ this weekend. Ian Garnett is among the latter but his goblin build explored some of the possibilities opened up by the new dual lands from Ravnica. Sacred Foundry can be fetched up with any of five crack-lands, and not only fuels Lightning Helix but powers out white enchantment removal for Sphere of Law, COPs, Engineered Plagues, and any other pesky anti-goblin measures people might be packing. It additionally allows for Suppression Field to come in from the board.

Ian Garnett - Quarterfinalist - Grand Prix-Bilbao Trial		
Off-red Goblines – Extended Format		
Main Deck	Sideboard	
60 cards		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Barbarian Ring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Lightning Helix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Gempalm Incinerator

4 Battlefield Forge	3 Umezawa's Jitte	3 Pulse of the Forge
4 Bloodstained Mire		4 Pyrostatic Pillar
10 Mountain	7 other spells	4 Suppression Field
3 Sacred Foundry		3 Terashi's Grasp
1 Wooded Foothills		15 sideboard cards
24 lands		
2 Gempalm Incinerator		
2 Goblin King		
4 Goblin Legionnaire		
3 Goblin Matron		
4 Goblin Piledriver		
4 Goblin Ringleader		
1 Goblin Sharpshooter		
4 Goblin Warchief		
1 Kiki-Jiki, Mirror Breaker		
1 Siege-Gang Commander		
3 Skirk Prospector		
29 creatures		

Jason posted all the decklists in the field on the Games Club website and you can pore over those lists [here](#).

For a full breakdown of the new Extended field, don't forget to check out live coverage all weekend from [Pro Tour- Los Angeles](#).

Firestarter: Dredge, Duals, and Discussion

The rotation of all the sets prior to *Invasion* is only part of the story this weekend as we explore the new Extended. *Ravnica* brings in the dredge mechanic, new dual lands, and some nifty removal spells in *Lightning Helix* and *Putrefy*. What cards/mechanics will have the biggest impact this weekend and why?

Go to the forums and share your thoughts.

Brian David-Marshall has been involved in Magic since 1994 when he was violently shaken by someone searching for the game. He has organized tournaments, run a store, and is currently the Pro Tour Historian. His latest venture is Top8Magic.com, the publishing house that is releasing Michael J. Flores: Deckade.



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