

Live Coverage of Global Prix 2006

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Welcome to the first annual Global Prix! **Magic** is a game played around the world, and today marks the largest simultaneous tournament ever.

Players across all seven continents will be playing matches feeding into the uber-tournament, and their results will be cross-indexed by DCI number, rating points, tiebreakers, strength of schedule and record on neutral courts to cut to a Top 8, which will be played on **Magic Online** tomorrow.

But not only is today a worldwide tournament, it's a celebration of all things **Magic**-al. So go out and play! Don't forget to submit your match results to the DCI ... you just might become the Global Prix champion!

Keep checking back during the day for feature match reports, player profiles, video segments, and much more!

ATTENTION!: We're just about ready to cut to the Top 8, so that should be along any minute. Also, stay tuned for decidedly special news about a certain Legend, and a super-early sneak peek at a *Time Spiral* card!

- [Looking for a story? Want to know how your friend is doing? Sound off on our message boards and our reporters will answer your questions!](#)

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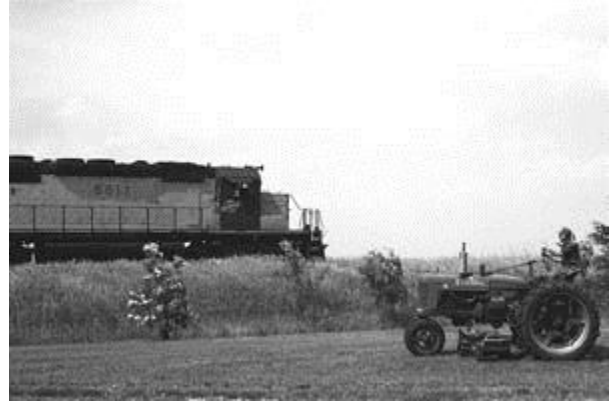
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BLOG

- **Saturday: 1:12 a.m. - Off and Running**

Welcome to beautiful Grand Junction, Iowa!

Flying back and forth to work the double shift of Cardiff and Madison two weeks ago took it out of me, but I got to see lots of great stuff. Like the inside of not one but two convention halls. The food was pretty good in both places (big fan of beer and brats, as you all know from my postings during Grand Prix-Kaltenholzhausen), but the gourmand in me was curious to see what Grand Junction had to offer. I got in a day early and took the opportunity to visit the surrounding area. A bit sparse, but awe-inspiring in its natural beauty and flatness.



Everybody stops in Grand Junction when the old No. 7 rolls through town.

Assuming I can pull myself away from coverage for a bit, I want to try their regional delicacy, which I'm told is some sort of fileted goat cutlet rolled in oats and jam and served with a spicy mayonnaise. Some say it tastes like a mix of gin and cambozola, but this is a man who has eaten a durian on the streets of Jakarta and survived.

But enough about my jet-setting life—you want to know about the tournament. Magic has been many locations, but this time we took it to the people—the masses—the common clay of our player base. The much-anticipated Global Prix came about as an event to bond the entire planet together into one giant tournament. Don't have time to work through the byzantine Regionals-Nationals-Worlds gauntlet, or the ever-increasing difficulty of the PTQ scene? If you're playing Magic anywhere in the world today, you're participating in the Global Prix. Tune in all day to see updates from our network of writers around the world - and make sure you submit your match results!

The farming roots of this community run deep. That strong work ethic, along with having to put in long hours on the farm, means we're starting early today to make sure Jed can get back to the thresher by his 9 a.m. shift. So round one should be starting any minute.

- **Saturday: 6:14 a.m. - Going South**

Finally, **Magic** has come to Antarctica! This means that high-level **Magic** has been played on every continent (unless you count the Lost Continent of Atlantis, which you should not). As an urbane, well-traveled reporter, I've been to all over the world, and I love trying the delicacies of each region.

And here in Antarctica, I've discovered this delicious snack treat called "Penguin Snaps". You can really taste the penguin! The great thing is because it's forty degrees below zero (Celsius!), they never go bad. I've been munching on them since I got here, and I'm going to have to bring home a couple of boxes for my friends. Sorry, Antarctica, your secret's out!



Check back later for feature-match action. Fuchs and Windows have been playing a lot lately, but don't count out McReady (if he ever comes in from his shack).

Who Will Win?

Who Will Win?

Pierre Canali

Mark Justice

Bernardo Da Costa Cabral

Dave Williams

Geoffrey Siron

Zak Dolan

Mark Herberholz

Shu Komuro

• **Saturday: 9:12 a.m. - The Big Sleep**

It was a cold night, the kind of cold that gets past your trenchcoat right into

your bones and stays awhile. The cold had been there for years, making a little home for itself. By now, the cold felt more at home in my body than I did.

Down these mean streets a Magic player must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid. The tournament player must be a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man. He must be, to use a rather weathered phrase, a man of honor. He talks as the man of his age talks, that is, with rude wit, a lively sense of the grotesque, a disgust for sham, and a contempt for pettiness. Also, he says "gg, barn" a lot, even when he's alone. No one knows why. Walter "The Cobbler" Neff sat down to face his old nemesis The Tall Man here in the forgotten city of Casablanca. Walter likes his decks like he likes his coffee: black and swampy. The Tall Man is an enigma; through his entire tournament career, no one has ever been able to make eye contact and live to tell about it.



I'm shocked -- shocked -- to find that Magic is going on here!

As game one started, the players were feeling each other out, neither one willing to commit himself openly to what he truly meant. The "beautiful lady" of which Neff spoke -- was she a symbol, or was she just [Soul Warden](#)? And what of the notorious "third man" strategy of the Tall Man? Was it just a bluff, or did he really plan to begin the game with Ritual-[Carnophage-Carnophage-Carnophage](#)? The set-up for that play would leave him open for some sort of vicious retaliation. Would revenge truly be sweet for Neff? We'll come back to Casablanca later; right now, it looks like the police are going to do some "questioning" of the competitors. Expect both of them to keep mum.

- **Saturday: 10:14 a.m. - Back in the Saddle**

Players at Global Prix-The O were treated to a celebrity appearance Saturday as Randy Buehler, director of Magic R&D, showed up to play. Buehler, recipient of this event's Sponsor's Exemption, made the trip out from the home office to support the global event.

"Wizards of the Coast decided that we had to drum up support in a few of the locations to make sure this event had the stature we desired, so we decided to add Randy as a sponsor's exemption," said Wizards of the Coast spokesman Randy Buehler.

Randy issued a challenge to all of the local CMU players, saying they "couldn't carry his deckbox."



Fair enough?

□Of course, I'm not one to do things halfway, so I'm going to raise the stakes on myself a little bit and hopefully make things even more fun," Buehler declared. "I never lost when I played at The O back in the day and I fully expect to beat everyone who dares to show up this time around. I'm backing up my guarantee too - anybody who beats me in the Swiss of this event gets a free order of O-fries. Mmmm, O-fries □ □

• **Saturday: 10:59 a.m. - Player Profile: BYE**

The player with more matches than anyone else has an uncharacteristic 5-3 record going into Round 9. BYE has played in matches all over the world and has been in the tournament scene since the very first DCI-sanctioned tournament. For such an experienced player, though, Bye's rating is a surprisingly low 1453. Wait, no, that should be *minus* 1453. DCI officials can't explain how somebody could ever get their rating so far below zero, but they suspect it has something to do with the tradition of always letting BYE play against the lowest-ranked person in every tournament.



BYE should not be confused with his slightly more successful brother "Awarded Bye", who, although equally unsuccessful, plays almost exclusively at Grand Prix events, sometimes facing off against hundreds of pros at once in an awe-inspiring exhibition of Simultaneous **Magic** in which he has yet to win a game.

BYE 's surprising 5-3 record today is a result of some key deck-checks, match-loss penalties, and good old-fashioned hard work.

We had a poll here earlier, but the results weren't trustworthy. We have reason to believe that some candidates were using the Internet to influence the results. As a result, we've taken it down and have replaced it with this version, which we trust will satisfy everybody:

Who Will Win?

Question 1: Where are you from?

1. [North America](#)
2. [Somewhere Else](#)

• Saturday: 1:12 p.m. - Räikkönen Takes Checkered Flag

Polesitter Kimi Räikkönen led the field from the start of the race at Grand Prix-Monaco, and though he was at first closely followed by Fernando Alonso, he was more than five seconds ahead by the twentieth lap. The race progressed otherwise uneventfully, with Alonso followed by Giancarlo Fisichella, Jarno Trulli, and Mark Webber, until the twenty-third lap, when Christijan Albers spun his Minardi into a wall at Mirabeau, blocking about two-thirds of the width of the track. David Coulthard, arriving behind him, swerved and successfully stopped his [Red Bull](#) without damage; however, Michael Schumacher plowed into Coulthard, breaking off his own nosecone and damaging the [Red Bull](#)'s suspension beyond repair. As more drivers reached the blocked turn, stewards removed Albers's car and deployed the safety car.



Both Renault drivers pitted immediately, but Räikkönen was unable to do the same, having just passed the pit entrance. Though this seemingly put Räikkönen in a bad spot, as all of his close competitors had pitted, he fought back with a series of brilliant laps that would give him a 34.7-second lead by the time he pitted on lap 41. Alonso, whose car was substantially slower as it was full of fuel, and whose rear tyres were wearing rapidly, was unable to catch up, and Räikkönen, after pitting, returned to the track still 13 seconds ahead. He would go on to win the race having led every lap of it.

Nick Heidfeld worked his way up from sixth grid position, passing his own teammate in the pits after Williams called him in a lap earlier whilst Alonso was badly holding the two Williams drivers up, even though Webber was ahead of Heidfeld at this time. The extra lap Webber had behind Alonso was enough for Heidfeld to leapfrog Webber and he eventually advanced to second place by passing Alonso in the harbourside chicane. Webber followed suit a lap later, and Alonso straggled into fourth, his rear tyres almost entirely bald. Montoya advanced from sixteenth on the grid to an eventual fifth, finishing on Alonso's tail, followed by Michael and Ralf Schumacher, who crossed the line almost side-by-side.

Final Standings

<u>Pos</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Driver</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Laps</u>	<u>Time/Retired</u>	<u>Grid</u>	<u>Points</u>
1	9	Kimi Räikkönen	McLaren-Mercedes	78	1:45'15.556	1	10
2	8	Nick Heidfeld	Williams-BMW	78	+13.8 secs	6	8
3	7	Mark Webber	Williams-BMW	78	+18.4 secs	3	6
4	5	Fernando Alonso	Renault	78	+36.4 secs	2	5
5	10	Juan Pablo Montoya	McLaren-Mercedes	78	+36.6 secs	16	4
6	17	Ralf Schumacher	Toyota	78	+37.1 secs	18	3
7	1	Michael Schumacher	Ferrari	78	+37.2 secs	8	2
8	2	Rubens Barrichello	Ferrari	78	+37.5 secs	10	1
9	12	Felipe Massa	Sauber-Petronas	77	+1 Laps	11	
10	16	Jarno Trulli	Toyota	77	+1 Laps	5	
11	11	Jacques Villeneuve	Sauber-Petronas	77	+1 Laps	9	
12	6	Giancarlo Fisichella	Renault	77	+1 Lap	9	
13	18	Tiago Monteiro	Jordan-Toyota	75	+3 Laps	15	
14	21	Christijan Albers	Minardi-Cosworth	73	+5 Laps	14	
Ret	15	Vitantonio Liuzzi	Red Bull Racing	59	Accident	12	
Ret	20	Patrick Friesacher	Minardi-Cosworth	29	Accident	13	
Ret	14	David Coulthard	Red Bull Racing	23	Accident	7	
Ret	19	Narain Karthikeyan	Jordan-Toyota	18	Hydraulics	17	

- **Saturday: 1:17 p.m. - Showdown at Giza**

Round 6 takes place in a feature match area situated precariously atop the Great Pyramid at Giza, a wonder of the ancient world constructed of over two million gigantic blocks of sandy limestone. The format for this round is the Three-Headed Team Standard format, a favorite format of the pros which bears similarity to both Team Standard and Two-Headed Giant Limited.

Team Champollion needs little introduction. Last season's Three-Headed World Champions, they come well-prepared for this match, taking their name from a 19th Century French Egyptologist. In Seat A, Nick Drazil is running a Red-Blue counter-burn deck, forgoing the Urzatron for a full complement of [Quicksand](#)s. In Seat B is Rogier Krupps, running an aggressive Heezy-style Gruul deck with all the usual suspects. Holding down Seat C is former magiquethegathering.com columnist Pete Shladvort, wielding a variant of [Debtors' Knell](#) Control.

They're a formidable assemblage, but Team Temple of Doom (T.O.D.) might just have the goods to dethrone them. Professor Hans Fjord bears his seemingly underpowered [Horror of Horrors](#) deck in Seat A, which Katsuhiko Mori nevertheless called the "best deck in the format." Jon "Indiana Jones Kid" Quan in Seat B comes equipped with his personalized, hyper-tuned version of Turbo Nephilim, a deck full of several mini-combos that can win all in one turn. Finally, housewife-turned-**Magic**-pro Tammy Harris, fresh off her GP win in San Diego, is running JMS's version of Owling Mine.

Due to the glare of the relentless Egyptian sun and the needs of the video coverage crew, the judges asked the both teams to de-sleeve their decks, which they did in short order. The teams set their life totals to 60, Champollion won the die roll, and gameplay began.

Krupps came out fast for Team Champollion, deploying two [Kird Apes](#) and a [Moldervine Cloaked Dryad Sophisticate](#) in the first few turns, while his teammates Drazil and Shladvort sat back and developed their mana.

Harris's Owling Mine deck struggled under the onslaught, her early [Howling Mine](#) only providing fuel for Team Champollion. It helped out her teammate Quan however, who took the opportunity to launch out both [Dune-Brood Nephilim](#) and [Ink-Treader Nephilim](#), only to have them controlled by [aMortify](#) and [Faith's Fetters](#), respectively, from Shladvort.

T.O.D. looked to stabilize when the Professor Fjord played out his deck's trademark [Horror of Horrors](#), allowing him to counter up his [Necroplasm](#) and possibly to protect future Nephilim from attack. But Champollion struck back on their turn with an [Angel of Despair](#) on the Horrors and a windmill-slammed, *bloodthirsted* [Skarrgan Firebird](#).

Incredibly, the force of Drazil's Firebird hitting the table caused an audible crack in the tip of the Great Pyramid on which the feature match platform rested. Play stopped while Egyptian government officials inspected the damage, but once they ruled it safe, the game was on again.

On T.O.D.'s side, Harris managed to bounce the Firebird, but Krupps's Gruul offense kept coming with [Frenzied Goblin](#) clearing the way for a [Giant Solifuge](#), knocking Team T.O.D. down to a increasingly precarious 21 life. Quan banged on his library in frustration, but when the feature match platform settled by several inches and the pyramid coughed up a cloud of choking dust, the judges shook their heads reprovingly.

Professor Fjord cleared the board at the end of T.O.D.'s turn with dredge tricks and a complex rearrangement of +1/+1 counters on his various [Necroplasm](#)s, resulting in just land a lone [Howling Mine](#) in front of Harris. Quan went aggro with a topdecked [Glint-Eye Nephilim](#) fueled with the Mine's extra cards, and took five- and ten-point chunks out of Champollion's life total in two swings, with a successful [Stitch in Time](#) in between. The defending World Champ Team Champollion was left at 15.

Shladvort [Persecuted](#) Harris for Blue, causing her to dump a mittful of bounce spells, and an [Electrolyze](#) later, Champollion's Drazil resummoned his [Skarrgan Firebird](#) as a 6/6. To make matters worse, Shladvort dropped [Debtors' Knell](#) like a ton of bricks, sitting on a graveyard full of [Angel of Despair](#), two [Loxodon Hierarchs](#) and a sickening number of 5/5 dragon legends.

The mighty enchantment proved to be too much for Fjord, Quan and Harris, as Team T.O.D.'s side of the feature match area fell away into a gaping chasm that suddenly broke open in the tip of the Great Pyramid. Team Champollion, this reporter, and the rest of the event staff ran for cover down the pyramid's treacherous slope as the members of Team T.O.D. tumbled deep down inside the tomb for ancient kings, their decks fluttering into the darkness after them.

As we watched, the top of the pyramid collapsed in on itself, burying T.O.D. in over six million tons of punishing limestone.

But with lethal damage on the stack, T.O.D. simply removed [Autochthon Wurm](#) from the game, and [Shining Shoal](#)ed the damage back at Champollion's dome to take the match. That's **Magic** for you.

- **Saturday: 2:04 p.m. - Who is Roker Papody?**

Odds are, you've never heard of Major Roker Papody. That is, unless you've worked on the international space station. But that's the whole point of the Global Prix, and today's your chance to meet an international wrecking ball. In one of the most unforgiving work environments imaginable, Roker Papody isn't one for small talk, or weakness. Whereas other astronauts tend to measure their days aboard the space station in days (or maybe weeks)



Major Papody has been here, swinging about the earth from miles above, for over a year and a half. He scoffs at those who can't hack it, those too weak to do without gravity until their muscles atrophy.

"Those other ones, they are pitiful! They don't understand hard work, or the kind of dedication that comes with true commitment. Surviving up here is about will, it's as simple as that. It's the same reason they all whine endlessly when I devastate them with my latest decks. They are weak, and so their cards betray them for the cowards they are. They blubber about 'that deck isn't fun, you just want to win' or make excuses like 'Hey, I only have a tournament pack and a couple boosters. Think you could ease up on all those Moxes?' Their laments fortify me, and I take great pleasure in punishing them for their shortcomings."

That's some serious talk, but Papody has the walk to back it up. Though you wouldn't have heard about it before the Global Prix, he has a stunning 98% win rate here on the station since that Soyuz TMA-8 dropped him off here in late 2004, and many a rueful astronaut has been seen leaving the station only too happy to escape the beatings Roker Papody dishes out on a daily basis.

Interviewing Major Papody, even I couldn't help but be impressed. Decked out in his trademark tinted space helmet to hide his eyes, this is one intimidating guy. While we spoke, his hands idly walked a [Crop Rotation](#) across and through his fingers, adding an effortless little zero-gravity jump trick when the card reached the edge of his right hand. Sailing in the kind of slow, perfectly straight line that's only possible in zero-G, the card landed perfectly in Papody's left hand, just between his first two fingers, at which point it immediately resumed its effortless travels across the Major's fingers.



Relieved U.S. astronaut Geoffrey Williams waves goodbye to his temporary home, and good riddance to Papody.

Through all of this one thing is clear: Astronaut Roker Papody knows this is his one chance at real fame, the kind of fame that can only come at the hands of a **Magic: the Gathering** Global Prix victory. From here out, his past victories mean nothing. From here, he stands at the fork of two roads. Down one lies **Magic** immortality, if he can just pull off the championship. Down the other road lies ruin, a return to his mundane, everyday life, a life where no **Magic player** has even heard his name. Which road will it be? Stay tuned as today's events unfold!

- **Saturday: 2:18 p.m. - Six DQ'd in Sheboygan**

Global Prix-Sheboygan was rocked when six of the top 10 players in the Round 5 standings were disqualified for using performance-enhancing supplements.

Five of the six were caught with abnormally high levels of Mountain Dew in their system. Dew, a favorite soft drink among the crowd, is normally consumed in 12- or 20-ounce servings. Drinking one serving an hour would constitute a .08 blood-dew level after the approximate time five rounds of Magic takes to play.



The tell-tale sign of a Dew doper.

Those disqualified displayed a blood-dew level of between .68 and 1.02, verging on lethal levels of the chartreuse elixir.

"To achieve those sorts of levels, they'd have to be taking it intravenously, or perhaps some sort of reverse-catheter," said pharmacologist Dr. Kyle Van Horten, an expert on performance-enhancing substances.

The tests were administered after round 2, when a judge discovered a large amount of what appeared to be green-tinted substance in a nearby wastewater collection area.

"I thought it was a little fishy when he had to take a leak six times over the course of our match," said Dave Korstandine, a round-three opponent of one of the DQ'd players. "That and he was yapping about his deck in a real manic, frantic way, but I just figured that was normal behavior for this crowd. You cannot get my friend Jim to stop talking about his Penguin Snaps Wins deck with a crowbar and a trumpet mute."

The other disqualified player tested positive for Winstrol, Clomid, and Deca-Durabolin, all of which fall under Magic's new stringent steroids policy.

- **Saturday: 3:01 p.m. - Card Found Dead in Casablanca; Police Baffled**

Tragedy struck in the Casablanca Regional Final. There were no direct witnesses (or at least, none that would speak on the record), but apparently, one of the players, a large individual named Mike, was in the process of explaining the ground rules under which he would play. They included:

- His opponent needed to call him "The Man" at all times.
- His chair and play area would be called "The Establishment"
- He would be allowed to play with entirely fraudulent Stronghold cards including Wand of the Dark Jester, Gemstone Knife, and Wrath of Squee.

While tournament officials were trying to determine if these rules were legal (turn to page 354 for the answer!), there was a noise and a victim, who appears to be a Sliver of some sort, lay dead.



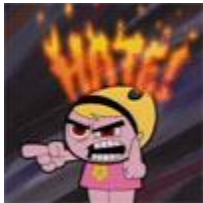
Detectives have cast a wide net.

More news as events warrant.

• **WILL THIS EVER END?**

This match will never end. They're just staring at each other. I don't know whose turn it is I don't think the *players* know. Oh god -- he's counting his graveyard again. It's sixteen cards! The same as it was ten minutes ago, because NOTHING HAS HAPPENED SINCE THEN!

bottomdeck



3:33p I hate Magic players. I hate them so much. I want to go home and sleep in my own bed. Neither of these guys is going to be in the Top 8. Nobody cares.

Something's happening -- no, wait. My mistake. Now he's counting his library. This is just riveting. I wish I'd covered the Sligh mirror match this round. I could be eating lunch right now.

Current Music: flash gordon theme song

- **Saturday: 3:40 p.m. - New Poll**

Sorry! We had some technical difficulties with that last poll, which may have accidentally given the impression that we were hoping a North American player would win. Nothing could be farther from the truth! To make things right, we're going to keep the votes from the previous poll, but combine them with this one, which has been scientifically designed to be slightly slanted to the European community:

Bienvenue au Prix global. C'est un scrutin au sujet de qui vous comptez gagner. Zuerst wählen Sie einen Spieler vor. Dann auserwählt reichen Sie ein. I nostri calcolatori conteranno automaticamente tutti i voti e forniranno al vincitore. ¡Buena suerte a todos los candidatos!

Who Will Win?

- David Williams
- Mark Herberholz
- Neil Reeves
- Gerard Fabiano
- Osyp Lebedowicz (pron. "Leh-BEH-doh-witz")
- Osyp Lebedowicz (pron. "Leh-beh-DAH-vitch")
- Billy Moreno
- Ben Goodman

- **Saturday: 4:10 p.m. - Antarctica House**

It is an increasingly common practice for players to arrive early to tournament sites so that they can avoid jet lag. This is especially important at the South Pole, since it actually covers all time zones. This means that Table 6 might be on Greenwich Mean Time while Table 2 is on Eastern Standard. It's confusing, but at least there's no Daylight Saving Time to worry about.



The view is magnificent from Antarctica House.

About five pros came down last week to camp out in the [forbidding wastes](#) and soak in some of the local color (which, incidentally, is pretty much just "white"). We'd love to show you some of our award-winning video coverage of their place, but unfortunately the players just got re-paired ten minutes ago into a different region and had to rush off to Panama. Sorry about that!

• **Saturday: 4:45 p.m. - Feature Match: Pickerton Treehouse Throwdown**

This round of today's event shows why the Global Prix is a milestone not just for Wizards of the Coast, but for the entire hobby entertainment competitive collectable gaming industry. At least, among those with an Internet connection, anyway.

Whereas previous feature matches you've read on this prestigious site were generally the best of the best fighting it out for massive prizes and legendary status, that skips right past the kind of grass-roots competition that makes Magic the global phenomenon it is today. Before any player can ever get to the Pro Tour and its fame and prizes, they must first show themselves worthy on the proving grounds of everyday Magic. This round, today, in the Global Prix, isn't about clashing champions dueling for a world title. It's about three Pickerton brothers coming together to discover who shall reign down upon them as the Champion Pickerton brother, with the possibility of moving on to even greater glory should fate turn a kind eye,

and it happen before bed time.

To save time, the three brothers decided to settle it chaos style in a three-way free-for-all. Since this was a tournament, they all agreed to the obvious rules of "No LD or counterspells, and only direct damage that isn't cheesy." While the brothers dashed off to grab their decks for the big game, the tree house stood silent, a stark contrast to the clash it would soon host.



By the morning's early light, the Pickerton backyard almost looked like it was autumn.

And so, less than thirty minutes later, the battle was joined. The air was thick with tension, and also the smell of Doritos, as the Pickerton brothers struggled to see who among them would advance to the next round. As the drama unfolded, Billy was stuck on mana early, but a threatening [Wall of Spears](#) was more than enough to keep the current crop of beaters at bay. Meanwhile, Jimmy was just playing cards to get more mana while leaving a couple red mana up, which both of the other players knew was a clear threat not to attack him lest your best guy go down in flames to something like [Blazing Salvo](#). Both players groaned however when Nadev played [Jandor's Saddlebags](#), which could only herald some cheapo five card combo that Wizards was too stoopid to ban.

Jimmy, frustrated by his mana trouble despite his [Wall of Spears](#) fortress, blurted out what both he and Timmy were thinking.

"You &%@#*\$^@! I can't ^#@\$ believe you *\$@&^% played that (\$) \$#*% #(@\$#@ \$ deck! I'm totally telling Mom. If I lose."

But Nadev was keeping his eyes on the prize, his mind fixed keenly on just what it would be like to be the official champion of the tree house, not to mention the chance for even more as one of just millions moving on to the next round. A couple turns later, though, it was Billy who broke the game wide open, unveiling a combo so ridiculous that obviously it was banned or illegal or something. After 15 minutes of arguing the Pickerton brothers were

no closer to a resolution, so Billy did the only thing he thought he could do: take it to Ask Wizards.

April 1, 2006

Q: "A few minutes ago I was playing Magic with my brothers. I summoned [Platinum Angel](#) for 4 mana. (Flying and effect is ((You cant lose the game and your opponent cant win the game.4/4)) I then played [Shield of Kaldra](#).
(Equipment named sword of Kaldra, [Shield of Kaldra](#), and [Helm of Kaldra](#) are indestrutible.((Equiped creature is indestructible.)) Of course it is an equipment. If that makes the monster indestructible and the equip indestructable then how can you win? The creature says I cant lose so attacks are useless and any damage to life wont help. Do I still lose if I run out of cards? It does say I CANT LOSE. Do I just not draw cards? I really want to know about this unbeatable strategy! Please help!"
--Billy
Pickerton Backyard, USA

Having sent in the Ask Wizards, the boys crowded around the computer's monitor while Jimmy stabbed his refresh key impatiently, waiting for the return email to solve their dilemma. An hour later, shocked at the indignity that Wizards of the Coast didn't care enough about its customers to reply back in *a whole hour* on Saturday, the kids threw up their arms in disgust and went back to their game in the tree house to try and hash it out on their own.

Deciding to just wait and see what happened, they picked up the game where they had left off. Unfortunately, two turns later the game fell completely apart when Nadev played out [Humility](#) and a shouting match broke out over whether Billy's [Angelic Wall](#) could now attack or not. "It doesn't even have any power, who cares!" "Well, MAYBE I have some trick! I could you know!"

40 minutes later, checking one last time to make sure the answer hadn't come back from those uncaring corporate bastards at Ask Wizards, they decided to be co-champions of the tree house instead.

- **Saturday: 5:02 p.m. - Longest-standing Magic Barn Discovered**

It's not every day you get to witness **Magic** history. I wasn't there when Finkel won Worlds in 2000, I missed Maher vs. Davis in Chicago, and I didn't see Craig Jones' miaculous topdeck in Honolulu. But here in at Global Prix-

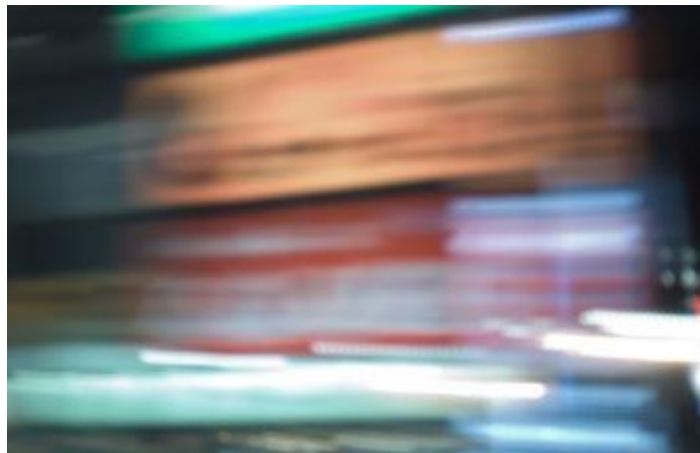
Grand Junction, I can now write my chapter of the history of **Magic**.

Samuel "Sam" Smithers of nearby Rippey, Iowa, ventured up to the big city to take part in the Global Prix. Smithers, who has been playing since Revised, is the official record-holder for having the longest continuous **Magic** barn.



Smithers and his barn.

- **Saturday: 5:11 p.m. - Photo Essay: The Professional Scene**



The cityscape rushed by as we made our way to the tournament venue.



The feature match pit, where everyone wants to end up.



The standings board always draws a crowd.



Just one false step and you can be out of the running for Top 8.



The walk of a winner or a loser? You decide.



Nico's aura attempts to escape but he won't let it.



I'm feeling a little drunk now.



I think that's a Galvanic Arc on a Wumpus...or maybe an Elf. I can't tell anymore.



Lesson learned: Don't mix Red Bull and Penguin Snaps.

• **Saturday: 5:48 p.m. - New Poll (Fixed!)**

We have been deluged with emails complaining that our previous poll contained all American players. This is, of course, false; Antonino De Rosa is also Italian. However, we understand the importance of being fair to peoples of all countries. So we're going to run the poll one more time. But we don't have the technology to do it perfectly.

Here's the procedure: write the name of your favorite player down on a three-by-five index card (note: if you live in a country that uses the metric system, it is not vital that the card be three inches by five inches. It could be centimetres, decilitres, or whatever confusing system your country uses). Mail that card to yourself, registered mail. Make sure that you use a wax seal in the fashion of the eighteenth-century French aristocracy, so that the message could only come from you. When you receive your card in the mail, scan it in and email it to us.

Wait. We have just been informed by our crack legal team that this system is what is technically referred to as "Byzantine", and since the Byzantine Empire collapsed over 500 years ago, it's no longer appropriate to use. So instead, we're just going to use the results from our first poll, weighted with the results of this:

Would you rather win a Pro Tour or have a famous deck named after you?

Win a Pro Tour

The deck, please!

• **Saturday: 6:23 p.m. - Feature Match: Major Roker Papody vs. Michael Johnson**

For this round of the Global Prix, we have the privilege of sitting in on the all-Space Station championships. The unquestionable favorite for this one has to be Major Roker Papody, featured recently in this [bio](#). Papody carried a 475-match winning streak into the showdown with Michael Johnson, who is playing in his first Global Prix.



Unfortunately, Game 1 for this one was over so quickly that I missed all but the end while trying to get my laptop to boot up again after losing it briefly due to a battery problem. Getting the feed up just as Game one was finishing up, I got on just in time to see Papody wreck his opponent with a vicious series. With [Vedalken Orrery](#) in play and a fist of action, Papody passed the turn. Johnson thought a bit and decided to use all his mana for an [Angel of Mercy](#) to compliment his [Anaba Shaman](#). In a brutal move, Papody cast [Isochron Scepter](#) in response, imprinting Mana Drain, then used the Scepter to Drain the Angel.

On his own turn, now with 11 mana, Papody went for the haymaker: [Dark Ritual](#), [Hypnotic Specter](#) on the stack, use Orrery to put [Jokulhaups](#) on the stack above that, and then [Mindslicer](#) in response to the [Jokulhaups](#). When the smoke had cleared, Johnson's board was in the dumper along with what used to be his hand. With nothing in play and low on life, he had no chance against the Specter now staring him down. It was time for game 2.

As both players shuffled up, Papody showed off with what can only be described as an awe-inspiring shuffle. Trust me when I say watching this ham do his trick shuffle on 250 cards in zero-gravity was one of the most amazing things this particular reporter has ever witnessed.

Papody 1-Johnson 0

Game 2

And so it was time for Game two. For this one both players kept, and we were off to the races. Johnson had a solid curve with [Goblin Balloon Brigade](#) followed by [Vulshok Morningstar](#) and [Horned Turtle](#). On turn four, rather than

equip one of his beaters, Johnson went for double [Hatching Plans](#), which drew a derisive laugh from Papody. It was a decent start for Johnson, but Papody had a solid curve draw as well. Turn 1 was the dreaded [Dark Ritual](#) + [Necropotence](#), followed by a [Sol Ring](#) and [Crystal Mox](#) turn two, which allowed [Concentrate](#) for four more cards, as if [Necro](#) wasn't doing enough. Both players continued developing their boards over the coming turns, but Papody's resource deck was pulling away. The critical moment came a few turns later, when Papody unleashed his ultimate weapon, [Chaos Orb](#). Let me tell you, if you've never seen a [Chaos Orb](#) wielded by a master of zero gravity shenanigans, there's nothing quite like it.



The Orb danced around the space module for almost a half an hour.

Papody's [Chaos Orb](#) bounced evilly back and forth across Johnson's permanents, devastating everything in its path then coming back off the wall for more, at last coming to rest wedged between some tools near a service hatch.

Johnson, who had never even seen the card, picked up the [Chaos Orb](#) and read it. "I don't understand. It says only the cards it's touching when it lands

matter. It looks to me like you didn't kill anything, right?"
At this, Papody performed a reasonable facsimile of a villain laugh.

"You must not be familiar with the latest Oracle wording, courtesy of gatherer.wizards.com! The oracle text, which is the only text that matters, doesn't say anything about the card actually landing! To quote: 'If [Chaos Orb](#) turns over completely at least once during the flip, destroy all permanents it touches. Then destroy [Chaos Orb](#).' So, what, you think it maybe managed to flip at least once while it was caroming about destroying all of your pitiful cards? Eh, baby man? I thought so! Maybe a little more whining will make it so it never happened. You know, that part where all your permanents got destroyed all at once."

Johnson was stunned, but the wording was clear, if clearly unfair. Shoveling what used to be his board into his graveyard, Papody taunted him: "Don't forget to draw your cards off your [Hatching Plans](#)! You're certainly going to need them if you're going to beat me with the likes of [Horned Turtle](#)!"

Johnson, staying remarkably poised, drew his cards for the plans, and then drew his card for the turn. With nothing at all in play, Johnson was up to 8 cards. He thought a bit while Papody executed his famed dance of derision, and decided to just say go. Papody laughed. "What, 8 cards, and you don't even have a land? Man you're bad!"



Even though his opponent would have to discard anyway, Papody couldn't pass up the chance to rub salt in the wound. Tapping a black and one, he used [Nezumi Shortfang](#) to force him to discard. Johnson took a shaky breath, savoring this moment and wanting it to last as long as possible. Then, he slowly put a [Guerrilla Tactics](#) into the graveyard. "Since you forced me to discard

this, I guess I get to kill that [Mindslicer](#) you've got over there." Papody sneered. "What? You're mad! The only thing you have left is that hand of yours. I've got necro and 12 life to refill my hand. You might as well just concede!" Johnson just smiled calmly. "So, does this resolve?"

"Fine, it resolves. Discard your hand."

This time Johnson outright grinned. Throwing two lands and a couple meaningless weenie creatures into his graveyard, he then revealed two more copies of [Guerilla Tactics](#), as well as a [Psychic Purge](#). "I believe you take 13 now. But then again, I'm not very good at this game, so you'll have to let me know for sure."

Papody was speechless. "Why would you have those cards?" Johnson smiled again. "Hey, all the guys warned me you loved cheesy discard decks. I knew I couldn't beat you with a normal deck, so I just packed mine with every anti-discard spell I could trade for before I came up. I guess that's what happens when you're so predictable, huh? Thanks for helping me draw all those cards though, I wouldn't have had a chance otherwise!"

However, because the Orb took 25 minutes to resolve, the players were unable to complete their match and had to draw. Papody's amazing winning streak was over, and he had been humbled on his home turf.

As those on the station at the time would later report, Papody's cry of frustration carried almost all the way back to Earth.

• Saturday: 7:07 p.m. - Metagame Breakdown

<u>Deck</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>% Played by Pros</u>	<u>Wins</u>	<u>Losses</u>	<u>Total matches</u>	<u>Win %</u>	<u># of Rishadan Ports</u>	<u>Created by Flores?</u>
ComerMothra	89	4.52%	55.77%	3	10	13	23.24%	4	yes
My Own Version of Gruul That I Made Myself That Is Totally Diferent From Herberholz's I Mean He Didn't Even Have Frostling	1	0.05%	92.02%	3	29	32	10.26%	0	yes

Lion Aquarium	90	4.54%	18.26%	4	1	6	75.83%	1	yes
The Ice Deck	45	2.26%	15.46%	23	8	30	74.34%	4	yes
Mark Rosewater is Bat\$#!+ Insane	86	4.34%	41.22%	30	21	51	58.98%	4	yes
The Morning Zoo	94	4.75%	19.58%	25	7	36	70.17%	4	yes
Skorpions Tribute Band	10	0.53%	34.90%	20	13	33	60.63%	3	yes
Cephalid After-Dinner Mint	21	1.07%	67.79%	14	23	36	37.82%	4	yes
Chromium Switch	2	0.08%	24.60%	13	25	38	33.41%	1	yes
Donkey Waffler	48	2.41%	51.60%	20	29	49	40.96%	4	yes
Mori Katsu Love-Love Special	96	4.88%	18.09%	11	1	12	90.40%	3	yes
Counter-Skeleton	27	1.37%	95.23%	14	4	18	75.70%	1	yes
Pirate Go	42	2.15%	96.35%	27	2	32	82.89%	3	yes
Penguin Snaps 2020	2	0.10%	63.43%	10	19	30	34.14%	2	yes
Ghost Mom	30	1.50%	88.56%	2	4	6	35.31%	1	yes
Chance	23	1.19%	46.02%	27	16	42	62.89%	3	yes
Meandeck Mudhole	19	0.97%	66.25%	11	19	32	33.22%	4	yes
Miracle-Slo	29	1.49%	7.88%	28	27	55	51.67%	2	yes
Hobos and Midget Porn (A Billy Moreno Special)	16	0.83%	57.31%	9	2	14	65.05%	0	yes
"Way of the Warrior" Samurai Theme Deck	4	0.20%	72.35%	5	20	29	19.05%	1	yes
Flagpole Beatdown	55	2.78%	56.32%	16	4	20	77.81%	1	yes
Penguin With Nothing	13	0.66%	14.05%	11	23	34	33.15%	3	yes
Trix and Beer	39	1.96%	37.17%	26	10	36	70.93%	0	yes
The Barne Identity	3	0.15%	8.56%	16	21	37	43.26%	2	yes
Friggor Mortis	12	0.61%	41.35%	6	8	18	35.45%	3	yes

Turbo Obscure Super-Hero Team	25	1.27%	7.72%	1	10	11	7.99%	1	yes
Cold Pizza for Breakfast	5	0.26%	16.47%	23	15	41	57.05%	4 (SB)	yes
Sliver Slaver	42	2.13%	26.29%	11	1	11	92.48%	3	yes
Go Anan Go	23	1.16%	69.19%	18	11	29	62.11%	3	yes
Snakes on a Plane	22	1.10%	33.61%	16	11	28	57.28%	3	yes
Creature Deck (w/Jitte)	29	1.49%	70.46%	5	24	30	18.43%	3	yes
Untested Izzet Combo for Non-Premium Readers	70	3.55%	77.69%	14	22	38	36.28%	4	yes
Penguin Snaps	4	0.21%	42.86%	4	7	12	34.24%	4	no
MIKE LONG'S SUPER AMAZING DECK!!	23	1.16%	9.11%	5	24	29	16.14%	1	yes
Tinker	18	0.91%	59.16%	27	28	58	46.05%	2	yes
Owl from Beyond	13	0.66%	44.43%	24	5	29	82.40%	1	yes
Yotian Aggro	15	0.76%	80.77%	7	11	18	39.37%	4	yes
Serenity Now	14	0.71%	54.08%	26	16	42	62.39%	3	yes
Csl Ext Deck no counters no Id no dscrd pls	3	0.15%	64.37%	10	7	17	58.13%	2	yes
Friction Coefficient (2K6)	2	0.09%	0.02%	25	16	41	60.83%	1	yes
Eager Cadet Combo	6	0.31%	18.17%	0	15	15	0.64%	0	yes
Djinn and Juice	68	3.43%	51.15%	21	21	42	49.36%	4	yes
Orzhov Draft Deck	36	1.83%	85.81%	13	29	42	30.77%	1	yes
Penguin Snaps Wins	14	0.70%	27.39%	23	12	36	66.11%	2	yes
Kenny	2	0.08%	6.40%	20	6	26	75.26%	0	yes
5cSnepvangers	4	0.22%	14.26%	16	23	39	41.01%	4	yes
White Deck Loses	58	2.93%	3.65%	14	19	33	43.47%	2	yes
It Puts the Lotion in the	38	1.94%	38.48%	28	16	44	63.17%	0	yes

Graveyard									
UB Penguin Snaps	87	4.40%	70.53%	20	9	28	69.39%	0	yes
Wollpert-Geddon	56	2.86%	66.58%	11	12	26	43.21%	1	yes
Turbo-Slug	76	3.83%	23.83%	1	3	4	32.26%	4	yes
Boom! Goes the Dynamite	87	4.43%	1.36%	21	24	46	46.47%	3	yes
Flores Red, Blue, Green, Black, White, and Yellow	79	4.00%	39.70%	12	9	22	56.99%	4	yes
Evers	37	1.86%	28.76%	10	4	17	60.71%	0	yes
Veggie Tails	37	1.86%	36.98%	0	23	24	1.33%	3	yes
Smoot-Hawley Tariff	52	2.65%	66.18%	16	19	36	44.45%	1	yes
Pengiuin and Nail	29	1.45%	22.67%	18	0	19	98.06%	1	yes
THE DECKspert	4	0.19%	28.49%	1	12	14	8.49%	2	yes
Spanish Announcer Table	25	1.28%	64.56%	22	12	34	64.17%	3	yes
Flores Magemarks	46	2.34%	18.65%	3	16	18	13.63%	1	yes
Unintelligible Writing	2	0.09%	62.37%	24	18	42	57.39%	0	yes
G/R/U/B Beats	52	2.63%	43.51%	26	8	33	77.42%	1	yes
DwarfBelcher	6	0.29%	88.96%	28	4	32	87.86%	2	yes