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Top 24

Brian David-Marshall
The Week That Was
Friday, June 9, 2006



Memo

To: Richard Hoan
From: Kenji Tsumura
Re: Apprenticing with you prior to Pro Tour-Kobe
Date: 6/04/06
Don't worry about it. I'm set, thanks.

While making his run to last year's Player of the Year title, the only thing that stood in the way of Kenji routing the competition was the fact that he had to play individual Limited events. He had dominant finish after dominant finish with 60-card decks but could not even make Day Two of a Limited Pro Tour without the help of two wingmen (see his Top 4 finish at Pro Tour-Atlanta.).

In all of his post-Worlds interviews, Kenji vowed to improve his Limited game for this season. It wasn't just Tsumura being humble, either. With three out of the five Pro Tour stops – Prague, Kobe, and Worlds in Paris – this season featuring individual Limited, it was just common sense if he wanted to be the first repeat Player of the Year since Kai (who was able to claim that honor for what seemed like an entire decade).

Rich Hoan is one of the most consistent Limited performers in the history of the game and there was considerable talk about him going to Japan a few weeks in advance of Pro Tour-Kobe to mentor the Player of the Year in the ways of 40-card decks. Obviously the hard-working and humble Tsumura would never send such a memo as the fictional one above, but his win in Malaysia this weekend at [Grand Prix-Kuala Lumpur](#) certainly put the world **Magic** community on notice.



Kenji lifts his first big Limited event prize check.

When I shared the results of the Malaysian tournament with my foreign correspondents in Toronto, Julien Nuijten and Frank Karsten all but surrendered. Their reaction seemed quite similar to the reaction many American players would have when they heard about yet another devastating finish by the German Juggernaut during the 2002 season. They actually looked deflated.

Much like Olivier Ruel's run at the Player of the Year title last season, Kenji used the Grand Prix win to catapult himself right back into the Player of the Year mix with six much-needed points. Kenji did not have a strong start to the season and was floundering back in the pack with only eight points coming into the weekend. Without taking into account the other 23 quarterfinalists from this past weekend of Grand Prix, Kenji jumped almost 30 places in the standings.

At the upcoming Pro Tour-Charleston, Kenji is filling the void in the Masters/Grand Prix-winning team P.S. 2 that was created by Masashiro Kuroda having to duck out due to his full-time job. Tsumura will join umpteenth-time Grand Prix Top 8'er Masahiko Morita and reigning World Champion Katsuhiro Mori on one of the historically great teams in the game. Don't be surprised to see Kenji jump another 20 or 30 spots in two weeks.



Nico Bohny, left, bested the red-hot Antoine Ruel at Grand Prix-Torino.

Antoine Ruel also made some headway in the PoY standings this week. According to Malaysian reporter blisterguy, Kenji was constantly checking on the status of his rival from last year, Olivier Ruel, and was crushed to learn that Olivier missed the cut to Day Two. It's obvious that Olivier is a great player who will be a factor in the PoY race this year, but my money is on Antoine to finish strong and win the 2006 race.

Over the past three seasons, Antoine has been right in the mix of the race and is the most consistent performer. He finished fourth in 2004, 11th last season, and – with his five points from Sunday – jumped into a virtual tie for sixth (again pending other GP-driven fluctuations) in this year's race. He will still be 10 points behind his brother and should not expect to gain any ground on him in Charleston since they're teaming together (along with Frank Karsten).

At [Grand Prix-Torino](#), Antoine could not get past Switzerland's Nico Bohny in the finals, though. Hopefully that single point won't come back to haunt him when the final results are tallied at year's end.

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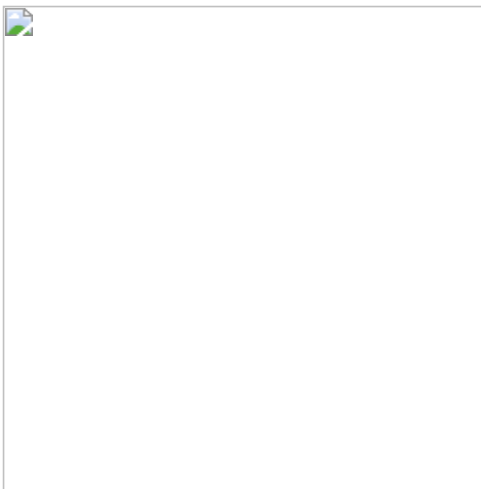


Speaking of hot streaks... Antonino DeRosa catapulted into the top five of the race with the third Grand Prix win of his career [last weekend in Toronto](#). DeRosa has been on fire since he appeared on a player card with the release of *Ravnica: City of Guilds*. One of the criticisms of DeRosa being on a card was that his lifetime earnings were not nearly impressive enough to warrant highlighting. Since then he has more than doubled his career earnings, posted a pair of Grand Prix wins, won the U.S. National Championship, finished second in the team competition at Worlds, and reached the first Pro Tour Top 8 of a Pro Tour of his career.

Other players who made some significant headway in the Player of the Year race include Quentin Martin, Jelger Wiegersma, Ruud Warmenhoven, and Pierre Canali with their Top 8 performances. It was interesting that these European players accomplished this by splitting up the three GPs – even though one of those was in Europe! Ruud and Quentin are looking to star in *Hostel 2* while trekking through Asia and their GP appearances were somewhat serendipitous.

Jelger came to North America specifically for the Grand Prix along with Karsten, Julien Nuijten, Rogier Maaten, Anton Jonsson, and Johan Sadeghpour. They were looking to duck the crowds in Torino, but the two events were much closer in attendance than anyone would have expected.

While it is fun to look at the storylines from the Grand Prix weekend, there is also a practical function to consider. With the PTQ season for Kobe in full swing, there are seven undefeated Sealed Deck decklists to contemplate from the weekend. Five of the seven even include the full card pools – I dropped the ball on my end, won't happen again – so you can see the block of marble these sculptors had to work with.



De Rosa notched his third career GP win, and second in as many seasons.

Now...you may not find TWO VEDALKEN DISMISSERS and *Rakdos Guildmage* (!!!!!) in your card pool [like the one Nan Tu](#) sacrificed a goat to open in Kuala Lumpur, but there are definitely some things to take away from the card pools. For all the talk about squeezing all the good cards into your deck, there is plenty of good stuff sitting in the boards of the undefeated decks. Kenji chose not to bend his mana further for *Moroii* and Bram Snepvangers dodged the double black mana requirements of *Keening Banshee*.

For a more in-depth look at the art of Sealed Deck construction there are features with Rich Hoan and Bernardo De Costa Cabral, both of whom made it through to Day Two with their respective builds. There are also draft features for those of you able to navigate the Swiss waters to the Top 8 drafts of your various PTQs. I know I will be poring over everything I can read on the format between the time of this writing and Saturday when I will be playing in one of the few PTQs I can make it to during the Kobe season.

Japanese Regionals Results

Sixty-card aficionados can rest easy with Japanese results continuing to roll in. The Chuubu and Osaka decks are in – thanks to Ron Foster and Keitia Mori for the ever-vigilant eye.

After seven rounds of straight Swiss in the Chuubu region, the top tables were chock full of tense agro matchups and the lower tables were littered with the control decks that had been mauled along the way. Tournament Organizer Jun Yanagisawa mentioned that the final rounds were exciting and full of tension since no one could ID in the later rounds due to the straight Swiss format. He was also quite pleased that the four finalists were all local Naganoans.

Hiroshi Sone - Heezy Street		
1st place 2006 Chuubu Regionals		
Main Deck	Sideboard	
61 cards		
6 Forest	1 Blood Moon	2 Blood Moon
4 Karplusan Forest	4 Char	4 Flames of the Blood Hand
5 Mountain	2 Might of Oaks	3 Guerrilla Tactics
2 Skarrg, the Rage Pits	3 Moldervine Cloak	3 Naturalize
4 Stomping Ground	3 Seal of Fire	3 Threaten
4 Volcanic Hammer		
21 lands	17 other spells	15 sideboard cards
4 Burning-Tree Shaman		
3 Giant Solifuge		
4 Kird Ape		
3 Llanowar Elves		
3 Scab-Clan Mauler		
3 Silhana Ledgewalker		
3 Tin Street Hooligan		
23 creatures		

Hiroyuki Ogawa - Aggro Green Black

2nd place 2006 Chuubu Regionals



Main Deck

60 cards

6 Forest
4 Llanowar Wastes
1 Okina, Temple to the Grandfathers
4 Overgrown Tomb
1 Shizo, Death's Storehouse
6 Swamp

22 lands

4 Birds of Paradise
4 Elves of Deep Shadow
4 Hand of Cruelty
4 Hypnotic Specter
2 Ink-Eyes, Servant of Oni
3 Nekkartaal
4 Silhana Ledgewalker

25 creatures

3 Giant Growth
4 Moldervine Cloak
2 Putrefy
4 Umezawa's Jitte

13 other spells

Sideboard

3 Cranial Extraction
3 Darkblast
1 Giant Growth
1 Nekkartaal
2 Nightmare Void
3 Phyrexian Arena
2 Putrefy

15 sideboard cards

Hiroki Ootsuka - Dark Boros Deck Wins

3rd place 2006 Chuubu Regionals



Main Deck

60 cards

4 Battlefield Forge
4 Blood Crypt
2 Caves of Koilos
1 Eiganjo Castle
4 Godless Shrine
1 Mikokoro, Center of the Sea
1 Plains
4 Sacred Foundry

21 lands

4 Dark Confidant
4 Isamaru, Hound of Konda
2 Lantern Kami
4 Leonin Skyhunter
3 Paladin en-Vec
2 Skyknight Legionnaire
2 Suntail Hawk

21 creatures

3 Char
2 Demonfire
4 Lightning Helix
2 Mortify
4 Seal of Fire
3 Umezawa's Jitte

18 other spells

Sideboard

1 Demonfire
3 Giant Solifuge
2 Lava Spike
2 Mortify
3 Okiba-Gang Shinobi
3 Rain of Gore
1 Sulfurous Springs

15 sideboard cards

Yuuki Tezuka - Aggro Black-White

4th place 2006 Chuubu Regionals



Main Deck

60 cards

4 Caves of Koilos
1 Eiganjo Castle
4 Godless Shrine
4 Orzhov Basilica
5 Plains
1 Shizo, Death's Storehouse
4 Swamp

23 lands

4 Dark Confidant
3 Descendant of Kiyomaro
4 Ghost Council of Orzhova
3 Paladin en-Vec

4 Castigate
4 Mortify
2 Phyrexian Arena
3 Umezawa's Jitte
3 Wrath of God

16 other spells

Sideboard

2 Eradicate
2 Ink-Eyes, Servant of Oni
2 Nekkartaal
3 Okiba-Gang Shinobi
1 Paladin en-Vec
1 Phyrexian Arena
2 Slay
1 Umezawa's Jitte
1 Wrath of God

15 sideboard cards

4 Ravenous Rats
 3 Shrieking Grotosque

21 creatures

In Osaka five players qualified using straight Swiss results after seven rounds. If you happen to see me hanging around the tournament practice room on MTGO, there is a high percentage chance that I will be testing Jinpei Hassaku's third-place deck which combines the Urza pieces with Godo – unless I am running the red-green graft deck that finished fourth.

Yasuhiro Kuniyoshi - Boros Deck Wins

1st Place Osaka Regionals #1



Main Deck 60 cards

4 Battlefield Forge
 1 Eiganjo Castle
 3 Mountain
 8 Plains
 4 Sacred Foundry
 1 Shinka, the Bloodsoaked Keep

4 Char
 2 Flames of the Blood Hand
 4 Lightning Helix
 4 Stone Rain
 4 Umezawa's Jitte

18 other spells

21 lands

3 Eight-and-a-Half-Tails
 4 Isamaru, Hound of Konda
 2 Kami of Ancient Law
 4 Leonin Skyhunter
 4 Paladin en-Vec
 4 Savannah Lions

21 creatures

Sideboard

3 Blood Moon
 2 Bottled Cloister
 2 Descendant of Kiyomaro
 2 Flames of the Blood Hand
 3 Hide/Seek
 3 Volcanic Hammer

15 sideboard cards

Kentaro Nonaka - Izzetron

2nd Place Osaka Regionals #1



Main Deck 60 cards

2 Island
 1 Miren, the Moaning Well
 4 Shivan Reef
 4 Steam Vents
 4 Urza's Mine
 4 Urza's Power Plant
 4 Urza's Tower

4 Compulsive Research
 2 Demonfire
 2 Dimir Signet
 3 Electrolyze
 4 Izzet Signet
 4 Mana Leak
 4 Remand
 4 Repeal
 2 Tidings
 3 Wildfire

32 other spells

23 lands

4 Keiga, the Tide Star
 1 Meloku the Clouded Mirror

5 creatures

Sideboard

3 Annex
 1 Meloku the Clouded Mirror
 2 Plagiarize
 2 Rewind
 3 Spell Snare
 4 Volcanic Hammer

15 sideboard cards

Jinpei Hassaku - Jitte-tron

3rd Place Osaka Regionals #1



Main Deck 60 cards

3 Island
 1 Minamo, School at Water's Edge
 4 Shivan Reef
 4 Steam Vents
 4 Urza's Mine
 4 Urza's Power Plant
 4 Urza's Tower

4 Compulsive Research
 4 Izzet Signet
 4 Mana Leak
 4 Remand
 1 Sensei's Divining Top
 2 Tatsumasa, the Dragon's Fang
 4 Telling Time
 3 Umezawa's Jitte

26 other spells

24 lands

2 Godo, Bandit Warlord

Sideboard

4 Electrolyze
 1 Godo, Bandit Warlord
 4 Seal of Fire
 1 Sensei's Divining Top
 4 Spell Snare
 1 Umezawa's Jitte

15 sideboard cards

4 Jushi Apprentice
4 Meloku the Clouded Mirror

10 creatures

Ryojyu Maeno - The Grafters

4th Place Osaka Regionals #1

Main Deck 60 cards

6 Forest
4 Karplusan Forest
7 Mountain
2 Skarrg, the Rage Pits
4 Stomping Ground

23 lands

4 Burning-Tree Shaman
3 Cytoplast Root-Kin
4 Kird Ape
4 Scab-Clan Mauler
4 Scorched Rusalka
4 Skarrgan Pit-Skulk
2 Tin Street Hooligan

25 creatures

4 Char
4 Demonfire
4 Seal of Fire

12 other spells

Sideboard

4 Flames of the Blood Hand
3 Ghost Quarter
3 Giant Solifuge
3 Moldervine Cloak
2 Tin Street Hooligan

15 sideboard cards

Toshio Suginaka Simic Tron

5th Place Osaka Regionals #1

Main Deck 60 cards

2 Breeding Pool
1 Karplusan Forest
3 Shivan Reef
4 Steam Vents
4 Urza's Mine
4 Urza's Power Plant
4 Urza's Tower
1 Yavimaya Coast

23 lands

3 Simic Sky Swallower

3 creatures

4 Compulsive Research
2 Demonfire
4 Electrolyze
3 Izzet Signet
3 Mana Leak
3 Pyroclasm
4 Remand
3 Savage Twister
3 Simic Signet
3 Spell Snare
2 Tidings

34 other spells

Sideboard

4 Annex
1 Confiscate
1 Keiga, the Tide Star
1 Meloku the Clouded Mirror
4 Smash
4 Wildfire

15 sideboard cards

Super Friday Night Magic

Jake Theis, Assistant Brand Manager for **Magic: The Gathering** is going to sabotage my article for a second to bring you some exciting news regarding Pro Tour-Charleston.

Hello compadres! I'm interrupting your regular broadcast schedule to let you in on a cool little secret.

Do want to rub elbows with the Pros? Do you own the tables at your local FNM? Do you want to go to Pro Tour-Charleston, but not miss out on handing out your weekly FNM beatdowns?

I have the event just for you. I am proud to announce that live from Pro Tour-Charleston, Wizards of the Coast will be offering Super Friday Night **Magic**. It's like FNM, but on MLB home run-record-shattering steroids!

What the heck is Super FNM? It's a one-night only spectacle where participating stores in the Southeastern U.S. will host a giant combined event from the show-floor at the Pro Tour. And anyone can sign up to win! You don't even need a deck! Enough jibber jabber...let's get to the juicy details!

Super FNM Format: *Ravnica* Block Sealed Deck

Prizes:

- Participation – 1 June FNM card per player (That's right, everyone wins!)

- First Place – The winner's choice of eight (8) FNM prize cards chosen from the current 2006 FNM card pool. Free Entry into any one (1) Pro Tour-Charleston Side Event
- Second Place – Four (4) FNM promos from the current 2006 FNM card pool.
- Third Place – Three (3) additional June FNM cards

Plus, if you make the Top 8, your name will be etched in **Magic** history, as you are added to our Pro Tour coverage!

TOURNAMENT LOCATION:

[Charleston Area Convention Center](#)

Halls B & C

5001 Coliseum Drive

North Charleston, South Carolina 29418

Super FNM kicks off at 6:00 p.m. EST. Make sure to show off your home store colors, too. Beyond the sweet prizes, this is about pride! Show up and show us your stuff!

Special Thanks to All the Participating Stores:

Haven Cards 'n Comics Orangeburg SC

Underworld Games Asheville NC

Dueling Ground Myrtle Beach SC

The Tangled Web Spartanburg SC

Batters Up Trading Cards New Bern NC

The Gaming Pit Duluth GA

Galactic Quest Buford GA

Player One Games Alpharetta GA

Rob's Trade Caravan Port Richey FL

All Fun & Games Cary NC

Anime Alley Augusta GA

Comic Connection Margate FL

War Dogs Game Center Jacksonville FL

The War Room Duluth GA

Underground Games "Charlotte, NC " NC

Grand Slam Sports Cards Jacksonville NC

Galactic Comics & Games Statesboro GA

Karma Games Jefferson GA

Fun Express Madeira Beach FL

TBS Comics - Ft Walton Beach Ft Walton Beach FL

TBS Comics - Pensacola Pensacola FL

Above Board Games Fort Mill SC

DJ's Cards & Stuff High Point NC

Ominverse Hobbies Ft Meyers FL

Morningstar Games Savannah GA

MC Collectibles Bradenton FL

Firestarter: Foil Fridays

The winner of the special Friday Night **Magic** tournament can get any permutation of eight foils from the 2006 FNM season. That means you can get eight different cards or eight copies of *Wild Mongrel* (that would actually be nine copies, since you get one for signing up but...). What would be the best way to go? Chime in on the forums and share your opinions on the matter – playsets of *Astral Slide* and *Goblin Warchief*? A pack of eight dogs?

*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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