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Deck Challenge III Final 4

Bennie Smith
Into the Aether
Thursday, July 6, 2006



Okay, the results are in and the Final Four are set! Congratulations to Agentkirb, Crusader, Kiendrid601, and R41d. I've got a tough choice ahead of me, with Possession decks spanning four different formats: Extended, Vanguard, Standard, and *Ravnica* Block constructed. In the coming week I'll be testing each of these decks in its relative format to get a feel for how well it plays, how powerful it is, and just how much fun it is to play. If you see me online and have a deck of the appropriate format, drop me a message and we'll play if I'm not already in the middle of something, though please don't put together an anti-Possession deck just to be cute.

Which Psychic Possession Deck Do You Like Best?			
Deck#7: Leveler Possession (Extended) by Agentkirb	1322	36.0%	
Deck#10: Chronatog Possession (Vanguard) by Crusader	658	17.9%	
Deck #1: Niv-Mizzet Possession (RBC) by Kiendrid601	369	10.0%	
Deck#5: Puzzlebox Possession (Standard) by R41d	340	9.3%	
Deck#9: Malignant Possession by mejes	296	8.1%	
Deck#3: Enchanting Possession by IntoTheRain	246	6.7%	
Deck#2: Niv-Mizzet Wizards by amethystmage	150	4.1%	
Deck#4: Wasting Possession by omenofthephoenix	145	3.9%	
Deck#8: Descendant Possession by russel_lunt	75	2.0%	
Deck#6: Puzzlebox Possession (Extended) by Amethyst Shadow	72	2.0%	
Total	3673	100.0%	

A couple quick notes in case you did not catch them in the forums from last week: due to the relatively low fix value of premium **Psychic Possessions**, the winner of Into The Aether Deck Challenge III will **also get his three requested booster packs** in addition to the four premium Possessions originally announced as the grand prize. Also, regarding Agentkirb's submitted deck, I will be testing a revised decklist which includes basic lands for his **Sakura-Tribe Elders** to fetch (while tinkering with his decklist, he'd taken out all the basics before sending it in). Here's Agentkirb's revised decklist:

Deck#7: LEVELER POSSESSION V.2

by Agentkirb (Extended)

Main Deck 60 cards	Sideboard
4 City of Brass	1 Annul
4 Flooded Strand	3 Beacon of Destruction
2 Sacred Foundry	1 Krosan Reclamation
4 Steam Vents	1 Mana Short
1 Forest	1 Naturalize
1 Mountain	1 Privileged Position
1 Plains	1 Stifle
1 Island	1 Sylvan Might
4 Breeding Pool	4 Aether Burst
2 Hallowed Fountain	1 Condemn
28 other spells	
24 lands	15 sideboard cards
4 Leveler	
4 Sakura-Tribe Elder	
8 creatures	

Tribal Wars - Standard 4x Open

Sunday June 25, 2006
78 players

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The end of June brought the first big Premier Event featuring the new Tribal Wars format – Standard. However, due to a mix-up, **Umezawa's Jitte** was not banned this time. Sometime in July we should be getting another Jitte-less Tribal Wars 4x, but in the meantime it's interesting to see what the new Tribal Wars looks like.

Kamigawa's Snake Tribe made a big splash with three entries in the Top 8, and Humans and Spirits nabbed two spots each. ineedabucket's Elves rounded out the top spots, employing a little spiritual help in the form of **Seedborn Muse**, which nicely turbo-charges **Selesnya Guildmage**, **Vitu-Ghazi**, and **Glare of Subdual**. The Spirit decks both made nice use of **Greater Good** for powerful card-drawing and the lock-down combo with **Yosei**. At least two of the Snakes decks also utilized **Glare of Subdual** to allow their small brethren to lock down larger foes until **Seshiro** could come out to lead the slithery troops to victory. Both of the Human decks were of the Orzhov variety, riding on the back of **Dark Confidant** and Black/White power cards.

1st place, Antivamp - Spirits
 2nd place, VeryBadDay - Snakes
 4th place, Octopus Disco - Spirits
 4th place, BoShek - Humans
 8th place, Capser - Snakes
 8th place, ineedabucket - Elves
 8th place, Brainbug - Snakes
 8th place, Sti - Humans

Spirits, by Antivamp (1st Place, Tribal Wars, Standard) Fdec

Main Deck
60 cards

3 Brushland 1 Eiganjo Castle 4 Godless Shrine 4 Golgari Rot Farm 1 Miren, the Moaning Well 1 Okina, Temple to the Grandfathers 4 Overgrown Tomb 1 Shizo, Death's Storehouse 4 Temple Garden 1 Vitu-Ghazi, the City-Tree	4 Carven Caryatid 4 Ghost Council of Orzhova 2 Kagemaro, First to Suffer 4 Kodama of the North Tree 4 Yosei, the Morning Star	4 Farseek 4 Greater Good 2 Hideous Laughter 4 Putrefy 4 Wrath of God
24 lands	18 creatures	18 other spells

Antivamp:

"The reason I built this deck was due to the fact that each deck had to contain at least 20 creatures. Most people would build a fast deck to be able to use Jitte. I decided to run board sweeping effects to stop the many creatures that would be in play by turn 3-4, and drop a larger creature to win by himself or combo with Yosei like a Gifts deck would. I only found out a few minutes before the tournament that Jitte was legal this last time, so the Putrefies went in replacing Mortifies. I think that slower decks will become more prevalent now that Jitte is gone. I don't believe it was as format defining as people thought, as I only lost 1 or 2 games to it in the tournament. My version has changed a bit since then. With artifacts scarce in the environment, the Mortifies are back in."

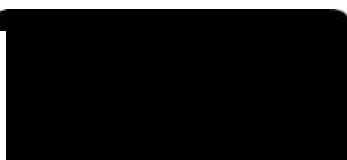
Snakes, by VeryBadDay (2nd Place, Tribal Wars, Standard) Fdec

Main Deck
60 cards

3 Forest 1 Island 1 Minamo, School at Water's Edge 1 Okina, Temple to the Grandfathers 1 Plains 1 Selesnya Sanctuary 4 Temple Garden 2 Yavimaya Coast 4 Breeding Pool 1 Novijen, Heart of Progress 3 Simic Growth Chamber	1 Kashi-Tribe Elite 1 Meloku the Clouded Mirror 4 Sakura-Tribe Elder 4 Sakura-Tribe Scout 3 Seshiro the Anointed 4 Coiling Oracle 2 Indrik Stomphowler 4 Patagia Viper 1 Simic Sky Swallower	2 Chord of Calling 2 Glare of Subdual 4 Sosuke's Summons 2 Sundering Vitae 4 Umezawa's Jitte
22 lands	24 creatures	14 other spells

VeryBadDay:

"As you can see, it's all about generating lots of mana as a means to abuse **Sosuke's Summons**. When you have enough, just slap down **Seshiro** to ensure a quick "Good Game." Specific card choices - I chose to play **Chord of Callings** as additional search for **Seshiro**, **Jitte-killing-Indrik** or just good-ol'-**Meloku**. **Kashi-Tribe Elite** is as a trick to save



your Seshiro (Chord in response to killing). I don't play Sashi, but I may. My last minute changes included swapping **Naturalize** to **Sundering Vitae** (strictly better in this deck) and adding **Glare of Subdual** (thanks to jurand for the idea).

"This tournament was mostly about whose Jitte stays in the longest, that's why I play 10 cards that can destroy it --4 Jitte, 2 Vitae, 2 Indrik and 2 Chords to search them. As for matchups - I was playing mostly vs. WB humans or spirits the whole day, and the main problem was **Orzhov Pontiff** (you can bypass it with Seshiro, adding Sashi or just not over-extending) or a quick **Tallowisp/Confidant** to generate card advantage for him. The hardest matchup is for sure the GWB spirits control I played in the semis (but my luck helped).

"As for the banning of Jitte ... well, I think this deck won't be the same without it. Mostly because you won't have any removal unless you splash black or red (I mean hard removal, not Glare). With Jitte gone you not only have 4 empty slots in their place, but also 1 Indrik can be sent away. In their place I think I'd like to put in 3rd Glare (maybe even 4th one), maybe Sachi and **Voidslimes**. I wanted to put them in the original deck, but I didn't have any room. Plus, this can be the answer you need for the Spirits control deck. Post-Jitte, I predict the metagame will mostly consist of spirits control, snakes, White/Black humans, White/Black spirits, and maybe elves."



Spirits, by Octopus Disco (3rd Place, Tribal Wars, Standard) F.dec

Main Deck 60 cards		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Forest 4 Godless Shrine 1 Miren, the Moaning Well 1 Okina, Temple to the Grandfathers 2 Orzhov Basilica 4 Overgrown Tomb 1 Plains 1 Shizo, Death's Storehouse 1 Swamp 4 Temple Garden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Arashi, the Sky Asunder 4 Carven Caryatid 3 Dimir House Guard 1 Ghost Council of Orzhova 2 Kagemaro, First to Suffer 3 Kodama of the North Tree 4 Kokusho, the Evening Star 4 Sakura-Tribe Elder 4 Yosei, the Morning Star 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Faith's Fetters 3 Farseek 4 Greater Good 3 Wrath of God
22 lands	27 creatures	11 other spells

Octopus Disco:

"I went 13-0 with this deck before I lost 2 games in row because of too many mulligans in the semifinal. My opinion is that **Greater Good** is the best deck in the current metagame, and a metagame without Jitte will probably make it better against non-blue decks. I think blue decks with wizards might be popular with a metagame that hasn't got Jitte. **Pithing Needle** and **Castigate** will be an obvious choice for decks that couldn't defeat **Greater Good** earlier."

Standard 4x Open IPA QT

Saturday July 1, 2006
164 players

The Standard 4x Top 8 featured a lot of aggressive decks, with the Black/White aggro rising to the tip top, but a lot of red nipping at its heels. Perhaps due to the holiday weekend, I only got a single response from the Top 4 to share decklists, but it's a nice one! Fcormier's Ninja Stompy deck looks like a beating of a good time. Looking at the replays, Tunan's Black/White deck had the usual suspects including Jitte, **Hand of Cruelty**, and **Castigate**. Bugaooo's deck splashed blue for Keiga. DHG's Black/Red deck was stuffed to the gills with removal and burn, fed by **Dark Confidant**, and clearing the way for **Rakdos Guildmage** and **Genju of the Spires**.

- 1st place, Tunan - Black/White Beatdown
- 2nd place, Bugaooo – Green/White/Blue Aggro/Control
- 4th place, DHG – Black/Red Burn
- 4th place, Fcormier – Green/Blue/Red Ninja Stompy
- 8th place, itilgor – Black/White Aggro/Control
- 8th place, rdw05 – Red/Green Beatdown
- 8th place, Judah – Blue/Red Tron Wildfire
- 8th place, neossif – Green/Red/White Zoo

Black/White Beatdown by Tunan (1st place, Standard) F.dec

Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
4 Caves of Koilos	3 Castigate	1 Castigate
1 Eiganjo Castle	3 Mortify	3 Empty-Shrine Kannushi
4 Godless Shrine	4 Promise of Bunrei	1 Ghost Council of Orzhova
5 Plains	3 Umezawa's Jitte	4 Mindslicer
1 Shizo, Death's Storehouse	13 other spells	1 Mortify
7 Swamp		1 Orzhov Pontiff
<hr/>		3 Persecute
22 lands		1 Umezawa's Jitte
<hr/>		15 sideboard cards
4 Dark Confidant		
2 Ghost Council of Orzhova		
4 Hand of Cruelty		
3 Isamaru, Hound of Konda		
3 Nantuko Husk		
3 Orzhov Pontiff		
4 Plagued Rusalka		
2 Savannah Lions		
<hr/>		
25 creatures		

Green/White/Blue Aggro/Control by Bugaooo (2nd place, Standard)			
Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard	
1 Selesnya Sanctuary	4 Umezawa's Jitte	3 Carven Caryatid	
3 Forest	4 Remand	2 Arashi, the Sky Asunder	
3 Island	4 Mana Leak	1 Keiga, the Tide Star	
1 Plains	3 Glare of Subdual	3 Naturalize	
4 Breeding Pool	15 other spells	1 Life from the Loam	
2 Temple Garden		2 Voidslime	
4 Yavimaya Coast		2 Gifts Ungiven	
1 Adarkar Wastes		1 Ghost Quarter	
1 Okina, Temple to the Grandfathers		<hr/>	
1 Minamo, School at Water's Edge		15 sideboard cards	
2 Vitu-Ghazi, the City-Tree			
<hr/>			
23 lands			
<hr/>			
4 Sakura-Tribe Elder			
3 Llanowar Elves			
4 Wood Elves			
4 Loxodon Hierarch			
2 Kodama of the North Tree			
3 Meloku the Clouded Mirror			
2 Keiga, the Tide Star			
<hr/>			
22 creatures			

Ninja Stompy by Fcormier (4th place, Standard)		
Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
4 Forest	3 Char	1 Electrolyze
2 Izzet Boilerworks	3 Electrolyze	1 Meloku the Clouded Mirror
2 Shivan Reef	3 Mana Leak	4 Threads of Disloyalty
4 Steam Vents	3 Moldervine Cloak	3 Tin Street Hooligan
4 Stomping Ground	4 Remand	3 Plaxmanta
4 Breeding Pool	1 Demonfire	3 Pure/Simple
<hr/>		15 sideboard cards
20 lands	17 other spells	
<hr/>		
4 Birds of Paradise		
4 Burning-Tree Shaman		
2 Dryad Sophisticate		
4 Kird Ape		
3 Llanowar Elves		
4 Ninja of the Deep Hours		
2 Rumbling Slum		

Fcormier:

"I got the deck last minute from Pierre Canali and it was quite untested on his part but it seemed to destroy U/R decks of any variety and that's what I was looking for, so I sleeved it up..."



"I went 6-0 in the Swiss before double drawing... beating 2 Tron decks and 2 **Magnivore** along the way, so I guess it was a good choice. Lost in top 4 to Hand in hand because I can't draw enough **Electrolyzes!**

"I think the deck is pretty solid... the only very hard matchup is Zoo because his guys are better and his burn is better. But ninja and counters are insane versus any kind of control deck. The sideboard is decent, although I didn't side Threads much (didn't play vs. Zoo). Tin Street should be a 4-of, as they are good vs. everything, killing Signet vs. Tron or Jitte, **Pure // Simple** is there mainly for Glare matchup, but I killed a **Faith's Fetters** and a Jitte with it by playing the Simple part off a **Birds of Paradise**. It looks like a promising deck to be if I can find a way to beat aggro more reliably."

9E Sealed 4x Open IPA QT

Sunday July 2, 2006

189 players

Since there doesn't appear to be too much out there on *9th Edition* Sealed, I thought it would be nice to touch base with the 1st and 2nd place players from the recent 4x PE, which had a huge turnout. If you're a little tired of *Ravnica* Block Sealed and are looking for something different while you wait for *Coldsnap's* release online, you may want to give *9th Edition* a try!

Jeffrey Szelzki A.K.A. DaMift:

"Regarding the 9th Edition Sealed format, I strongly believe that it's a wide open format that is intended for any player at all levels. Unlike some formats there is the obvious turnout of particular people and or competitive skill level. 9th edition is a set that is strongly based around old favorites as in **Birds of Paradise**, and **Hypnotic Specter** etc. Although for my beginning from my journey to how I won any player can achieve with patience and knowledge of this format."

9th Edition Sealed Deck, by DaMift (7-1)		
Main Deck		Sideboard
40 cards		
8 Forest	1 Fellwar Stone	1 Angelic Blessing
2 Mountain	1 Glorious Anthem	1 Aven Windreader
7 Plains	1 Guerrilla Tactics	1 Balduvian Barbarians
17 lands	1 Overgrowth	1 Baleful Stare
	1 Rampant Growth	1 Bog Imp
	1 Shock	1 Boomerang
	6 other spells	1 Cruel Edict
1 Aven Cloudchaser		1 Daring Apprentice
1 Aven Flock		1 Dehydration
1 Beast of Burden		1 Exhaustion
1 Blessed Orator		1 Firebreathing
1 Elvish Bard		1 Foul Imp
1 Giant Spider		1 Fugitive Wizard
1 Kavu Climber		1 Giant Cockroach
1 Master Decoy		1 Goblin Chariot
1 Order of the Sacred Bell		1 Goblin Sky Raider
1 River Bear		1 Gravedigger
1 Samite Healer		1 Holy Day
1 Scaled Wurm		1 Honor Guard
1 Skyhunter Prowler		1 Horned Turtle
1 Soul Warden		1 Island
1 Verdant Force		1 Kami of Old Stone
1 Veteran Cavalier		1 Mana Leak
1 Zodiac Monkey		1 Megrim
17 creatures		1 Mind Rot
		1 Naturalize
		1 Natural Spring
		1 Norwood Ranger
		1 Ogre Taskmaster
		1 Panic Attack
		1 Plague Beetle
		1 Plains
		1 Puppeteer
		1 Raging Goblin
		1 Raise Dead
		1 Ravenous Rats

1	Razortooth Rats
1	Reclaim
1	Reflexes
1	Relentless Assault
1	Sandstone Warrior
1	Sift
1	Spineless Thug
1	Suntail Hawk
3	Swamp
1	Time Ebb
1	Urza's Tower
1	Viashino Sandstalker
1	Wanderguard Sentry
1	Wind Drake
52 sideboard cards	

DaMift:

"This was my pool of cards for the 4x 9th sealed on July 2nd. Right off the bat, I tallied the playables and separated the non-playables to make it easier to judge what direction I should go. The **Verdant Force** and **Glorious Anthem** stood out of game breaking cards. I followed by taking all the playable white and green cards and laid them out. It was pretty easy from that point to decide no other colors really had any edge close to their curve or sheer power. I have played many 9th Edition Sealed decks, and to my point of view, bombs do make the difference in tight games. What I recognized was that beyond the G/W base, there wasn't much solid removal to deal with troublesome creatures, so that's where the **Shock** and **Guerrilla Tactics** came in. With the aid of a **Fellwar Stone** and **Rampant Growth**, I thought I had no issues needing the mana at the beginning of the game and was keen on my build. For those interested, my blue base is pretty solid although the minimal creatures with the slight B- removal and non-bomb category featured nothing I felt it was the right decision. The black looks good from afar, although the count of playables ranges and it didn't range in the numbers that my deck needed. I find that if your deck is consistent and doesn't rely on 3-4 colors and or ridiculous draws that any deck is a machine waiting to be used.



"Throughout the 8 rounds today I was very satisfied of how my deck worked, although most importantly I felt I came to the conclusion to prove that bombs really are the A+ in victory. I counted my **Verdant Force** winning the game just by itself an impressive 7 games. No opponent could deal with it, and if by chance the **Glorious Anthem** happened to show up, packing up occurred. **Glorious Anthem** was my other "bomb" which derailed many armies and tempo draws by boosting my creatures to a power/defense advantage quite easily. The whole deck played out tremendously, and looking back at it, I wouldn't have changed a card in my deck. I feel that the rules for success to beat people are that you need to strongly swing towards consistency, and raw power. If your sealed deck or draft deck will not play a spell till turn 4-5, you should revisit your strategy or overall goal.

"I went 7-1 with this Sealed deck while losing to **Seething Song** and **Flame Wave** two games straight. I didn't get my hopes down though, while most players would be negative or derailed from confidence, I kept it high. The Top 8 draft consisted of a solid table of players. I was so hoping for a miracle or a donation. Here was the draft deck I constructed and my view and opinions of how it went."

DaMift Draft Deck		
Main Deck 40 cards		Sideboard
10 Forest	1 Blanchwood Armor	1 Coercion
7 Island	1 Boomerang	1 Daring Apprentice
17 lands	1 Counsel of the Soratami	1 Demystify
1 Aven Fisher	1 Dehydration	1 Fear
1 Craw Wurm	1 Exhaustion	1 Fishliver Oil
1 Elvish Bard	1 Giant Growth	1 Flight
1 Fleeting Image	1 Mana Leak	1 Forest
1 Giant Spider	1 Rewind	1 Hill Giant
1 Grizzly Bears	1 Sleight of Hand	3 Island
1 King Cheetah	1 Time Ebb	1 Kraken's Eye
1 Order of the Sacred Bell	10 other spells	1 Lava Axe
1 Rootwalla		1 Mind Bend
		6 Mountain
		1 Ogre Taskmaster
		1 Overgrowth

1 Thieving Magpie
 1 Trained Armodon
 1 Verdant Force
 1 Zodiac Monkey

13 creatures

1 Plains
 1 Shivan Dragon
 2 Swamp
 1 Wanderguard Sentry

27 sideboard cards

DaMift:

"My first pick was a **Thieving Magpie** over decent red creatures. Nothing else really caught my eye, since Magpie is evasion and is a force in the air. My second pick however made my day - I received my friend **Verdant Force** which I thought my colleague to my left was trying to force me into green perhaps. I followed suit throughout the pack and received some mediocre picks. My second pack has a treat in the form of **Fleeting Image** followed by **Blanchwood Armor**. This indicated that I was truly set for my colors and all that was left was to make sure I didn't send wrong signals or to pass into another color. Nothing spectacular came around, although I was hitting my playable card quota.



"Third pack I opened **Shivan Dragon**. My opinion is not many things can deal with **Shivan Dragon**, so I happily decided to take the chance and hate draft it, since my intent was to do well. Although on a separate note before third pack I have seen already a **Flame Wave**, 2 **Threaten**, 2 **Anaba Shaman**, and **Orcish Artillery**. So I figured that numerous people were fighting for red and I wasn't going to be a victim of their onslaught. I did end up with a semi-late **Elvish Bard**, which I was happy about but I wasn't certain on what exactly occurred, since the packs were drained very fast yet specific color signaling was obvious and some colors were very under drafted.

"First round I faced off vs. paparizzo. The three games we played were very close until in the deciding game my friendly Force showed up and he couldn't deal with it. The semi-finals had me playing vs. TackleMeElmo. His deck was a powerhouse, consisting of **Nightmare** plus numerous **Looming Shades** and **Enfeeblements**. I knew I had to get stellar draws against him. Game 1, he dominated me with **Looming Shade**, but while I really didn't have any chance, I needed to get some information out of him with what he was playing beyond the Shades and removal. Game 2 was totally in my control! **Counterspells** after **Exhaustion** kept his threats in check and then a **Thieving Magpie** hit the board, and he soon succumbed to the card advantage. Game 3 was very dramatic. In fact, I kept a sketchy hand hoping to draw an Island, which I did way down the line, although the pressure he put on me wasn't threatening, so I had time to gain board advantage and then my Armored Armodon took it away with key counters and bounce.

"Overall, I think 9th Edition is very open and anyone can take a run at a impressive finish. The value of 9th packs also tends to lure me to play 9th, since the other formats are quite in low demand while 9th is pretty high. If everyone has any comments, let me know what you think, but I truly think that 9th Edition is the way to go."

Here was TackleMeElmo's Sealed pool:

9th Edition Sealed Deck, by TackleMeElmo (7-0-1)		dec
Main Deck 40 cards		Sideboard
7 Forest	1 Blanchwood Armor	1 Aven Fisher
3 Mountain	1 Glorious Anthem	1 Aven Windreader
6 Plains	2 Pacifism	1 Bog Imp
16 lands	2 Volcanic Hammer	1 Confiscate
	6 other spells	1 Cruel Edict
1 Anaconda		1 Diabolic Tutor
1 Blessed Orator		2 Enrage
2 Crossbow Infantry		2 Fear
1 Elvish Warrior		2 Festering Goblin
1 Glory Seeker		1 Firebreathing
2 Grizzly Bears		2 Flight
2 Infantry Veteran		1 Forest
1 Master Decoy		2 Highway Robber
2 Rootwalla		2 Hollow Dogs
2 Trained Armodon		2 Lightning Elemental
1 Utopia Tree		2 Mending Hands
2 Zealous Inquisitor		1 Ogre Taskmaster
18 creatures		2 Plains
		1 Puppeteer
		2 Reclaim
		1 Relentless Assault

	1 Remove Soul
	2 Rogue Kavu
	1 Scaled Wurm
	1 Scathe Zombies
	2 Sea Monster
	2 Seething Song
	1 Sengir Vampire
	1 Soul Feast
	1 Spellbook
	1 Stone Rain
	2 Storm Crow
	3 Swamp
	1 Tanglebloom
	1 Tree Monkey
	1 Underground River
52 sideboard cards	

TackleMeElmo:

"I ended up going 7-0-1 with my completely insane aggro Green/White/Red deck. It seems like 9th Sealed is all about the late game and big creatures. While all of my opponents were trying to ramp up to their late game and big evasion creatures, my bears and cheap beaters were ending each game by turn 7. 2 **Pacifism** and 2 **Volcanic Hammer** "For The Win!" In the Top 8 I drafted mono-Black. That was fun. **Nightmare**, 2 **Looming Shades**, **Plague Wind**...

*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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