

Home > Games > Magic > Magicthegathering.com > Columns



The Wisdom of Youth

Brian David-Marshall
The Week That Was
Friday, August 4, 2006



The Magic Weekend is over and everyone is dissecting the [U.S. Nationals](#) decklists. Mostly the talk has centered around the impact of Solar Flare, and to a lesser extent Tron, on the Standard metagame in the coming weeks. For many players – myself included – who do not play a ton of Constructed **Magic Online**, Solar Flare came as something of a surprise. A couple of players who were not surprised were the finalists in the JSS Championships Arthur Stewart and Blaine Hatab.

Both players selected their decks specifically because of the buzz surrounding Solar Flare and its continuing success in premier events online. Blaine audibled from a black-white beatdown deck to his streamlined Heartbeat combo deck only a week before the tournament. Heartbeat's dominating matchup against Solar Flare was his primary reason for making the call.

JSS Champion Arthur Stewart played **Magnivore** for the same reasons – although he did not like the deck's matchup with the blue-white French Weenie decks from that country's National Championships. I was walking around the JSS area for the final few rounds for [my JSS feature](#) and watched Arthur square off with Gavin Verhey in the penultimate round of Swiss. Gavin was playing a modified version of the French Nationals winning deck and Arthur all but conceded the match before playing. Recalling Tomohiro Kaji's words prior to their Finals matchup in Charleston, Arthur declared that he would need a miracle to win.



Arthur Stewart pocketed a large scholarship check last weekend.

The matchup turned out to not only be better than he expected but I would venture to say a good one for the Vore deck. Arthur not only won his match with Gavin, insuring that he could draw into the Top 8, but he emerged victorious in a similar matchup during the semifinals.

"I tested the Vore deck all day Wednesday on MTGO 8-man's. My friend on MTGO was having a lot of success with the deck and I just modified his list," Arthur explained. "It had good matchups against Tron and Solar Flare and really no bad matchups. Even the French Weenie deck was much easier to beat then I expected."

Arthur was the only player from the bracketed rounds of the Championship to have appeared in the Top 8 last year as well. When the Top 8 pairings were posted he briefly worried that he was going to fall short.

"I was pretty sure I would go all the way and all my friends told me I was going to win," he recalled and yet... "I lost to my quarterfinals opponent in the Swiss with him getting back-to-back rips to win. I was a little worried."

Arthur is a rabid **Magic Online** player and familiar with the rapidly shifting metagame within that digital landscape – one that has already shifted based on the result from this past weekend. Arthur has already abandoned the **Magnivore** in favor of a newer list.

"I've been online about two years and I play once a week usually. I'm definitely very good at Constructed and don't play Limited that much. It really depends on the metagame of the event but right now I have been having success online with black-white aggro with **Shining**

Shoals and **Descendant of Kiyomaro**."

"I'm planning to go to Grand Prix and Pro Tours if school doesn't conflict," said Stewart, who is no longer JSS eligible. He has been making plans to attend Grand Prix-Phoenix to see if he has what it takes to play on a higher level. "I think the competition will be tough and there will be better players but nothing I can't handle."

Players such as Gadiel Szeifer, Kyle Goodman, and Jeff Garza have all made easy transitions from Junior Super Series to the Pro ranks. We'll find out if Stewart has what it takes to follow in their footsteps in the coming months. Last year's JSS finalist Jason Rosselini, a friend of Stewart's, played in Nationals this year and, despite a mediocre Limited performance, ended up in 14th place. Rosselini took some time to talk to me about his attempt to launch his post-JSS career.

"I played in an Extended PTQ for Honolulu and made the Top 8 with **Tooth and Nail**. I played in another Extended PTQ for Honolulu and made Top 16 – I needed one more win to Top 8 that one," recalled Rosselini. "I played in my Regionals and went 6-0-2 getting my only draw in Round 5 to Paul Cheon (the eventual National Champion.) and the other was a draw in to Top 8. Unfortunately, I lost the first round to land flood and took fifth place. I played in a sealed PTQ for Prague and went 5-1-1 to Top 8 that. Then I went on to win out in the Top 8 and qualified for Prague. I could not attend the PT because of school but was very happy to say that I made the Pro Tour for the first time."

PRODUCTS

MAGIC ONLINE

MESSAGE BOARDS

MAGIC General Forum

magicthegathering.com Forum

RULES



Despite the loss in the quarterfinals of his Regionals, Rosselini managed to qualify for Nats on the basis of his rating. He was 78th overall, and had some hope that his Top 16 finish at Nats would elevate his rating enough to qualify him for another Championship. His only concern was his Limited performance.

"I played **Firemane Angel** and went 5-1-1 in Constructed," he continued. "My only loss was Round 1 to Benjamin Lundquist, the national finalist. I did pretty badly in Limited. I liked both of my decks but the RGD draft did not go my way. I went 4-3 overall for Limited. Day One I went 1-3 in RGD and Day Two I went 3-0 with *Coldsnap*. I hope to Q for Worlds off of rating and play in (Paris) this year."

Someone posted in the forums of last week's column that **Magic Weekend** looked like a great big **Magic** Convention, which was pretty much spot-on. In addition to the two centerpiece tournaments, there were scads of side events, artist signings, unique **Magic** experiences like the [Game of the Year](#), and contests such as [Create Your Own Magic](#).

Create Your Own Magic entrants made submissions in up to four different categories that included game design, fantasy art, fiction, and online coverage. One submission stood up in the last category but exceeded the word count in the submission guidelines – exceeded it by seven or eight thousand words. Ross Pohler took it upon himself to attend a JSS qualifier in Brooklyn and covered the entire event from top to bottom. He created a submission that looked exactly like our own online coverage – right down to the HTML for the brackets and inset card art and photos.

"Basically I was already qualified for the JSS Championship," Ross explained. "I decided to attend the (qualifier) and select a match to cover each round. I decided to write down all their plays, what happened, and what they said. When I got home I wrote a big article and used the formatting from [magicthegathering.com](#). I even cut and pasted to get the formatting right. I even brought a camera and in mid-game I would just take out my camera and snap pictures."

[Click here](#) to download his submission.

Unfortunately for Ross, the rules are the rules and his coverage from the event was not eligible for any prize in the contest. The entry was way too cool to go unrewarded though, and we gave him a crack at doing some coverage during the [quarterfinals of the JSS Championships](#).

"I got into learning about the Pro Tour about a year ago. It is fun to read, it's a good way to find out what happened, and it has always been interesting to me," Ross said when asked about why he was drawn to the reporting aspect of the game. He enjoys reading about the more colorful pros but one in particular stands out for him. "Mostly Gerard Fabiano because he has his own fan club and everything – that is kind of funny."

Ross played in the JSS Championship but had a quick "no comment" at the ready when asked about his performance. The New Jersey-based player seemed much more interested in what was going on in the Feature Match area of Nationals, where he was seen craning his neck for a better vantage with his trusty notebook in hand. I asked him what he looks for when covering a match:

"A lot of what interests me in a game of **Magic** is when players have to guess what is in their opponents' hand and think about whether or not they want to do anything – or fib or know if their opponent is fibbing. There is also the point where the players start fooling around that is interesting. Basically you can look at the game statistically with what each player played when, and that can be very interesting, but if you get into what is going on in the player's head – that is really interesting.

"Next year I will be in journalism – that is going to be a big start for me," Ross concluded hoping that he could parlay that into a career in the future. "That seems like it would be good for me. Anything journalism-related and **Magic** in particular would be very fine."

Hall of Fame: One Man's Ballot

Like we did during last year's [Hall of Fame](#) debate, we'll be publishing complete ballots and analysis from committee members throughout the month of August. The first such ballot submitted came from [Randy Buehler](#),



Ross strikes an appropriate pose for this column.

MAGIC WEEKEND CONTEST WINNERS

Contest of the Year

Richard Garfield's socks: Tony Petrocillo
Art: Robert Mangum
4x *Ice Age* Block: David Joshua Pruitt

Create Your Own Magic!

Game Design

1. Jed Schmidt
2. Dylan Fay
3. Justin McDonald

Fiction

1. Dylan Fay
2. Justin McDonald
3. Tom Emmons

Art

1. Danielle Mansur
2. John Garman
3. Daniel Garman

Online Writing

1. [Anthony Izzo](#)
2. Matt Nickolai
3. Justin McDonald

the voice of the Pro Tour (one of many roles he's assumed in the game, including current director of **Magic** R&D). Check it out and see which five players he believes should be inducted at Worlds. If other Selection Committee or Player Committee members wish to provide analysis and explanation of their votes for publication, [click here](#).



Friday Night Magic: August

Finish in the top two at Friday Night Magic in August and you'll walk away with this shiny prize. You'd be mad not to go play...



And while we're on the topic of Friday Night Magic, here's a big thanks to all the stores participating in the latest Super Friday Night Magic, which took place at Magic Weekend.

Contact	Store	Address	City	State	Zip	Phone	Email
Ed Walls	The Deep Comics & Games	2312 S. Memorial Pkwy Unit A	Huntsville	AL	35801	256-883-7327	Email
Dawn Fischer	Borderland Relics	7730-B Old Shell Road	Mobile	AL	36608	251-634-0222	Email
Ed Nehring	TBS Comics - Ft Walton Beach		Ft Walton Beach	FL	32548	(850) 244-5441	Email
G. Devin Barber	War Dogs Game Center	2777 University Blvd W #32	Jacksonville	FL	32217	904-399-1975	Email
Gladys Dollar	JJ's Comics & Cards	2401 Dawson Rd #W	Albany	GA	31707	(229) 883-0478	Email
Rudy Edwards	Player One Games	281 South Main Street 103-B	Alpharetta	GA	30004	(770) 772-4500	Email
John Doles	Grand Slam Sportscards & Collectibles	191 Alps Rd	Athens	GA	30606	(706) 613-6698	Email
Gil Kann	Northlake Stamp and Coin	4800 Briarcliff Rd #2040	Atlanta	GA	30345	(770) 938-7842	Email
Janice Williams	Anime Alley	1824 Wyllys Rd #A3	Augusta	GA	30909	706-737-5764	Email
Greg Gowens	Quest Comic Shop	106-B Rejen Drive	Carrollton	GA	30117-4269	(770) 832-0172	Email
Paula Golden	Gamer's Getaway	5923 Stewart Parkway	Douglasville	GA	30135	(770) 577-5399	Email
Pate Stevens	The Gaming Pit	1625 Pleasant Hill Rd #120	Duluth	GA	30096	(770) 921-5511	Email

Deke Young	The War Room	5950 State Bridge Road Suite 130	Duluth	GA	30097-6438	(770) 982-9438	Email
Jonathan Shuman	Karma Games	20 Lee Street, Jefferson Center, Suite 6 & 7	Jefferson	GA	30549	(706) 367-1117	Email
Keith Brown	Galactic Comics & Games	25 Siebald St	Statesboro	GA	30458	(912) 489-3123	Email
Mike McDaniel	Heroes and Villains	1245 Russell Parkway	Warner Robins	GA	31088	(478) 322-0004	Email
David Thompson	The Last Castle	1718 A Watson Blvd	WarnerRobins	GA	31093	(478) 923-3724	Email
Shawn Westerman	Plan B Collectibles	3100 Todds Rd #120	Lexington	KY	40517	(859) 263-4413	Email
Duane Allen	Coolector's Mall	401 E 18th St	Owensboro	KY	42303	(270) 314-1611	Email
Jennifer Lawrence	The Lotus Guardian	1645 A Triplett St	Owensboro	KY	42303	(270) 926-6765	Email
Keith Simpson	Warlords Unlimited	211 Geri Lane #D	Richmond	KY	40475	(859) 625-1212	Email
Scott Francis	Underground Games	8316 Pineville-Mathews Rd #903	Charlotte	NC	28226	(704) 543-0054	Email
Michael Thompson	Planet Comics	2704 North Main St	Anderson	SC	29621	(864) 261-3578	Email
Vern Black	Dueling Ground	4959 Socastee Blvd Macklen Plaza	Myrtle Beach	SC	29588	(843) 293-1406	Email
Daniel McAbee	The Tangled Web	414 W Black Stock Rd	Spartanburg	SC	29301	(864) 574-1713	Email
Wayne Baker	Mr. Wayne's	2516 Volunteer Parkway	Bristol	TN	37620	(423) 764-1720	Email
Larry Guffey	Dragon Caves	6787 Lee Highway	Chattanooga	TN	37421	(423) 499-4443	Email
Jeff Howell	Collector's Connection	1663 Hwy 51 By Pass	Dyersburg	TN	38024	(731) 285-6262	Email
Chan Tong	Collector's Item	581-F Old Hickory Blvd	Jackson	TN	38305	(731) 660-4899	Email
Dellis Hensley	Entertainment Overload	1190 Main Street	Sneedville	TN	37869	(423) 733-1113	Email

Grand Prix-Malmo DQ Fallout

If you read the coverage from Grand Prix-Malmo, you are aware that Olivier Ruel was disqualified from that tournament. The matter has been investigated by the DCI and the Head Judge's disqualification for Unsporting Conduct has been followed up with a six-month suspension for Olivier. The cost to Ruel from this suspension will be significant. When you consider his appearance fees for expected attendance at Pro Tours and Grand Prix (not even counting potential winnings), Olivier is out close to \$6,000. He ends the season with 38 points in the Player of the Year race, locking his Pro Players Club status at Level 4 to start next season (when his suspension expires). Attending just one more Pro Tour this season would have ensured him Level 5, which includes higher appearance fees and airfare to all Pro Tours and Worlds. He has also forfeited his position on this year's Pro Tour Hall of Fame Selection Committee due to his suspension ([as stated in the Hall of Fame rules](#)), and he will no longer be writing the Ask the Pro column on this site. A search for a new Ask the Pro writer has begun.

Firestarter: Open Topic

I'm sure you will find something to post about... Talk amongst yourselves in the forums.

*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.*



[Discuss](#) on the message boards



[Respond](#) via email



[Brian David-Marshall](#) archive

[About Us](#) | [Jobs](#) | [New to the Game?](#) | [Inside Wizards](#) | [Find a Store](#) | [Press](#) | [Help](#) | [Sitemap](#)

© 1995-2007 Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
[Terms of Use](#) - [Privacy Statement](#)

