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# Triple Crowned Table

Brian David-Marshall  
The Week That Was  
Friday, November 3, 2006



You may remember a column from a couple months back when then-Assistant Brand Manager Jake Theis (he is currently working in R&D, which will surely be a subject for an upcoming installment of Five Questions) promised a "ridiculous" prize to any of the potential winners of the [Champs Triple Crown](#).

When the shuffling began last Saturday, nine North American players had the crown in their sights: Aaron Breider (Michigan), Robert Kadlec (Indiana), Guillaume Daoust (Quebec), Tommy Evaristo (Delaware), Brett McCleaf (Kansas), Wilbert Yeung (Rhode Island), Semion Bezrukov (Maryland), Tom Ross (Texas/Louisiana), and Scott Markeson (Minnesota). In a stunning turn of events, FIVE of the nine players – Robert, Guillaume, Tommy, Brett, and Wilbert – completed the sweep of the three events. Tom and Scott made it to the Top 8 of their states, while Semion and Aaron fell short of the single-elim mark.



In an even more stunning turn of events, four of the five triply crowned champions responded to my questions in time to be included in this week's Triple Crowned Table.

**BDM:** Thanks for taking time from your responsibilities as a Triple Crown holder to take part in this interview. Obviously, the first question is what deck did you play for the tournament?

**Brett:** I chose to play Solar Pox.

**Brett McCleaf**  
1st Place - Kansas

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Main Deck 60 cards	Sideboard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Dimir Aqueduct</li> <li>4 Flagstones of Trokair</li> <li>2 Gemstone Mine</li> <li>2 Ghost Quarter</li> <li>4 Godless Shrine</li> <li>2 Hallowed Fountain</li> <li>1 Island</li> <li>1 Orzhov Basilica</li> <li>1 Plains</li> <li>2 Swamp</li> <li>4 Watery Grave</li> </ul> <p>24 lands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Akroma, Angel of Wrath</li> <li>2 Angel of Despair</li> <li>4 Court Hussar</li> <li>2 Haakon, Stromgald Scourge</li> <li>1 Skeletal Vampire</li> </ul> <p>11 creatures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 Compulsive Research</li> <li>1 Condemn</li> <li>2 Darkblast</li> <li>3 Dread Return</li> <li>3 Mortify</li> <li>3 Orzhov Signet</li> <li>1 Peace of Mind</li> <li>1 Phyrexian Totem</li> <li>4 Smallpox</li> <li>4 Wrath of God</li> </ul> <p>25 other spells</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 Circle of Protection: Red</li> <li>1 Condemn</li> <li>2 Deathmark</li> <li>2 Faith's Fetters</li> <li>1 Haakon, Stromgald Scourge</li> <li>2 Nightmare Void</li> <li>1 Peace of Mind</li> <li>3 Shadow of Doubt</li> </ul> <p>15 sideboard cards</p>

**Tommy:** I played a blue/red control deck, similar to the one from last season. I ran a bunch of counterspells, maindeck Volcanic Hammer and Electrolyze, and killed with two Niv-Mizzet, the Firemind, two Teferi, Mage of Zhalfir, two Demonfire, and one Bogardan Hellkite. The build is largely influenced by a decklist Mike McGee piloted to Top 4 at Regionals this past year, minus Keiga. Teferi was by far the MVP of the day, creating an end-of-turn threat that would put myself into such an advantageous position. I mean, any time you get to say, "End-of-turn Niv-Mizzet" has to be good, right?"

*Decklist not available at time of publication.*

**Wilbert:** I played a blue/white control deck, splashing red for Firemane Angels and Lightning Helixes. Essentially the plan was to win through Sacred Mesa, and occasionally a Firemane Angel brought back from the graveyard.

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Some interesting features of the deck included running **Calciform Pools** main, since these are great for pumping out Pegasus tokens, returning Firemane to play, or in the blue/white mirror match where it's easy to get into a counter battle. Also, the board featured 4x **Flashfreeze**, which proved to be decisive in many matches. There were 3x Teferi in the board also, since these are nuts in the blue-white mirror.

Wilbert Yeung		1st Place - Rhode Island	
<b>Main Deck</b> 60 cards		<b>Sideboard</b>	
3 <b>Calciform Pools</b>	4 <b>Cancel</b>	3 <b>Disenchant</b>	
2 <b>Flagstones of Trokair</b>	4 <b>Careful Consideration</b>	4 <b>Flashfreeze</b>	
4 <b>Hallowed Fountain</b>	4 <b>Condemn</b>	2 <b>Ghost Quarter</b>	
5 <b>Island</b>	2 <b>Lightning Helix</b>	3 <b>Teferi, Mage of Zhalfir</b>	
3 <b>Plains</b>	3 <b>Mana Leak</b>	3 <b>Trickbind</b>	
4 <b>Sacred Foundry</b>	4 <b>Remand</b>		
4 <b>Steam Vents</b>	2 <b>Rewind</b>		
25 lands	2 <b>Sacred Mesa</b>		
	4 <b>Think Twice</b>		
	3 <b>Wrath of God</b>		
3 <b>Firemane Angel</b>	32 other spells		
3 creatures			15 sideboard cards

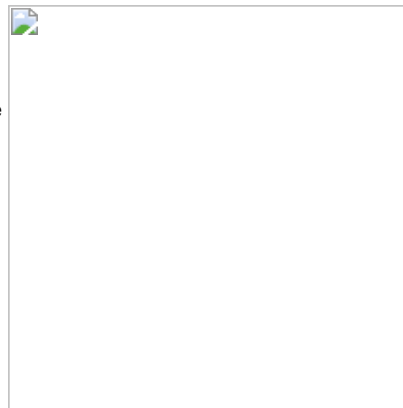
**Robert:** I played Solar Pox in the tournament.

Robert Kadlec		1st Place - Indiana	
<b>Main Deck</b> 60 cards		<b>Sideboard</b>	
1 <b>Dimir Aqueduct</b>	4 <b>Castigate</b>	3 <b>Circle of Protection: Red</b>	
4 <b>Flagstones of Trokair</b>	4 <b>Compulsive Research</b>	2 <b>Disenchant</b>	
3 <b>Godless Shrine</b>	3 <b>Condemn</b>	3 <b>Mortify</b>	
2 <b>Hallowed Fountain</b>	2 <b>Dread Return</b>	4 <b>Persecute</b>	
1 <b>Orzhov Basilica</b>	4 <b>Orzhov Signet</b>	3 <b>Sacred Mesa</b>	
1 <b>Plains</b>	4 <b>Smallpox</b>		
2 <b>Swamp</b>	4 <b>Wrath of God</b>		
4 <b>Underground River</b>	25 other spells		15 sideboard cards
2 <b>Urza's Factory</b>			
4 <b>Watery Grave</b>			
24 lands			
4 <b>Angel of Despair</b>			
4 <b>Court Hussar</b>			
3 <b>Haakon, Stromgald Scourge</b>			
11 creatures			

**BDM:** How did you prepare and who did you work with?

**Robert:** The night before the tournament I asked Gerry Thompson what was the deck to play and he really wasn't sure. He went to work and I started talking to people online about what to play. CEDRIC "Stangs215 (4:45:02 AM): could I get a name drop" PHILLIPS said that he liked the Solar Pox deck Mike Flores wrote about but I said the list looked terrible with all the one-ofs. When Gerry T got home at 4 a.m. we talked about it and he gave me his list for it, which I like much better. His list was 61 cards and I made the cut the morning of because Mike Day asked me to borrow a **Condemn** and I only had 4 with me and that became my cut.

**Wilbert:** I predominantly built and tested with a bunch of friends who play locally, including Paul Lyons (my Two-Headed Giant partner), Justin Strauss, Melissa DeTora, and Brian Lynch. Obviously, Brian is the best known of this group, having won Massachusetts States a number of times, consistently done well at the North American Challenge, and generally being one of the top players in New England. Over the past couple years, he has consistently done very well with control decks in Type II, and so he was an obvious choice to work with. The deck is essentially his build, with the exception of **Flagstones of Trokair** and some sideboard



Robert Kadlec

cards. In the week prior to States, we built a number of decks to test against including a number of aggro variations, the Ghazi-Glare deck that Paul ultimately ran, and the red-green land destruction deck that Justin ran. The control deck seemed to be favored against almost all of them, so that's what I ultimately chose.

**Brett:** I prepared with friends Shawn Burkholder and Shane Houston. We used proxy decks mostly and also a little bit on the *Magic Online* beta.

**Tommy:** I playtested with my group of friends at Days of Knights in Newark, Delaware while keeping in touch with my friends from Illusions Gamestore in Salisbury, Maryland. Mostly I play tested with Troy Brestel, a close friend of mine.

**BDM:** What did you expect the field to look like?

**Brett:** I expected a lot of *Dragonstorm* and Glare – along with quite a few "Char aggro decks" like Rakkos and Boros.

**Robert:** I had no real idea what the field was going to look like.

**Wilbert:** Most people who I had seen testing locally were looking at aggro decks, and States always seems to be at least 50 percent aggro anyway – of these, likely all of them would be running red, green, or both. It also seemed that Solar Flare would be a good choice for people to play, since it generally does well against the aggro decks. Solar Pox had just gotten a lot of publicity in the past week, and was all the buzz in the week leading up to States. And of course, there figured to be a number of blue/white control variants similar to the deck I was running. Finally, there were rumors that some of the better players in the state were working on strong *Dragonstorm* and monowhite control decklists.

**Tommy:** I expected *Dragonstorm*, Snow White, Zoo, and Solar Pox to show up. I actually changed my board from the one I ran at FNM to add two *Millstones* so I could have a match against the Snow White deck.

**BDM:** Did you feel some extra pressure to prepare in light of the threepart prize offer?

**Brett:** Absolutely. I had no idea what it might be. It's like the Family Guy episode where Peter has a choice between a boat and the mystery box ... who can resist the mystery box?

**Tommy:** To clarify, this is the fourth Delaware State championship I've won [Thomas was the 2005 Delaware Champs winner]. I actually felt more pressure at the Limited States event, because in my mind I was determined to be the first to win all three different States events in Delaware at least. But I found most of the day I was on autopilot just trying to be in the moment. Most players were more curious than I was as to what the prize would be.

**Wilbert:** I did. There were definitely people who were rooting for me, as well as people who were out to try to sink me. There were rumors about the big prize, and I think the fact that speculation got wild caused even more hype. In addition, I've only been playing competitive *Magic* for a couple years now, and given my work schedule am unclear whether I will ever be able to devote more time in the future to improve my game further. So I knew I might never be in position to play for a title bigger than this.

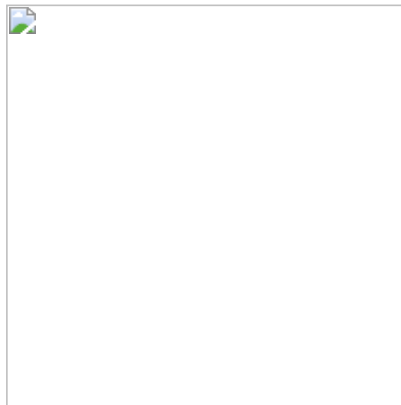
**BDM:** How close were you to identifying the field correctly?

**Brett:** There was A LOT of *Dragonstorm* and Glare. I was way off the Boros and Rakkos though – only a couple Boros and nobody played Rakkos.

**Wilbert:** I think we were right on in our estimation that aggro would be all over the place. Or so I've been told – unfortunately my matches almost always ran full time because I was playing control, and hence I didn't watch many other matches. I don't think Solar Flare showed up very much at all, and I don't know of anyone running Solar Pox (at least not at the top tables).

There were a number of non-blue control decks which seemed very good (including black-white-green and black-white-red) that we really hadn't tested against or anticipated. A few blue-white control deck variants showed up and generally seemed to do well. Andy Probasco (of Great Designer Search fame) was running *Dragonstorm* – though this may not have been the best deck in the room, Brassman is such a good player that you almost expect him to pull a win out of nowhere at anytime.

And finally, there was one monowhite control/lifegain deck – this deck was an absolute monster, as very few decks had answers to it and everyone was afraid of what would happen if this deck made Top 8. I had seen some lists for it in the weeks leading up to the tournament, and knew that it would be very hard for me to beat it even after sideboarding because of my colors (generally it seemed like the deck would be in trouble if the opponent was playing *Persecute* or significant land destruction). I had basically given up on this matchup for several reasons – 1) it didn't seem like very many people would run it, 2) if Solar Flare or



Brett McCleaf



other black-white control decks showed up in significant numbers, the deck likely could be kept out of Top 8, and 3) sideboard options against it weren't very good in my colors anyway.

As it turned out, Solar Flare hardly showed, and he hit only one red-green land destruction deck in the Swiss (which he lost to). The deck was finally eliminated in the last round of the Swiss by a blue-white-green deck that could never have killed him via damage, but was able to win the only game of that match by casting triple **Compulsive Research** on the final turn to deck the monowhite player.

**Tommy:** Well, Delaware is a small state, so I knew most of the players playing. This means that my expectations were really accurate. I had great matchups all day long, and got to play a lot of great players. The problem with that is they're all my friends.

**BDM:** Can you give me a quick rundown of the types of deck you faced?

**Tommy:** Round 1 I played against Solar Pox  
Round 2 I forgot, sorry  
Round 3 I played against white-blue aggro (Finkels, Hippies, and **Dark Confidant**)  
Round 4 drew with **Dragonstorm**  
Round 5 drew with **Dragonstorm**

**Robert:** I played three mirror matches during the Swiss and played one of them again in the finals. I didn't get to cast **Condemn** against an aggro deck the whole tourney which was a little disappointing. I also played against one monowhite Tron, 1 almost-monowhite Firemane control that was only playing Helix and Firemane as the non-white cards in the deck, and the other deck was a Boros deck with infi burn spells and only like 16 creatures.

**Wilbert:** First round was against a blue-white control deck running Akroma. I unfortunately had to play a good friend and he didn't seem to get very good draws. Second round was against a red-white-blue aggro deck running a combination of cheap fliers, angels, and **Char/Psionic Blast** plus other burn. My sideboard definitely carried me in this one as 4x **Flashfreeze** gave me the extra counters necessary to keep him from running me over.

Third round was against a black-white-green control deck running Hierarchs, **Angel of Despair**, **Grave-Shell Scarab**. While the deck seemed very good, the fact that he wasn't playing blue allowed me to actually be more aggressive in running cards like **Sacred Mesa** and **Firemane Angel** out there. It wasn't a big deal if Firemane got killed, and I always had enough mana left to counter the few removal spells that he could level at the Mesa. Fourth round I lost to a blue-white-green control deck – the deck simply ran more counters than I did, and had an uncounterable win condition in Vitu Ghazi. This deck definitely seemed like the favorite head-to-head against me, though I would wonder if it would be worse against most aggro decks.

Fifth round was tight against a red-green aggro deck – while we had certainly tested against this deck, he ran some unconventional cards that I didn't have answers for in Game 1. But games 2 and 3 were heavily in my favor after I could bring in **Flashfreeze**. Sixth round was a draw against a red-green land destruction deck that I would ultimately face in the round of 4.

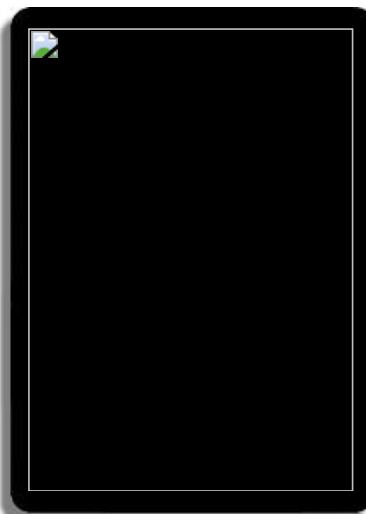
First round of the Top 8 had me paired against my friend Paul Lyons playing his Ghazi-Glare with blue variant. We knew from testing that this was probably in my favor, and he eventually lost both games to **Sacred Mesa** even after bringing **Krosan Grip** and **Stonewood Invocation** in from the board. Semifinals of top 8 was against a red-green land destruction deck with mana acceleration that tried to destroy lands on turns 2 and 3, and to follow up with **Wildfire/Magnivore**. He had a lousy draw in Game 1 (including multiple **Savage Twisters**), and was again in bad shape in Game 2 due to **Flashfreeze** coming in. The finals had me facing the blue-white-green control deck that I had lost to earlier. We split the first two games of the match, and he ultimately conceded to me since he knew what was on the line for me.

**Brett:** Round 1: fungus fire  
Round 2: black-red-white Firemane.  
Round 3: Glare  
Round 4: Glare  
Round 5: Monowhite Urzatron  
Round 6: **Dragonstorm**  
Round 7: Monowhite Urzatron  
Top 8 Quarterfinal: 4-color Zoo  
Semifinal: **Dragonstorm**  
Final: Solar Flare

**BDM:** Were there any close calls along the way where you might not have won?

**Robert:** In the Top 8 against the red-green land destruction deck I came very close to losing but just got him by condemning my own **Angel of Despair** the turn before he drew the lethal burn spell.

**Brett:** I should have lost round 4 to Glare – my opponent forgot to save a Hermit with his Saffi. I won while at 1!



**Wilbert:** The red-green aggro deck that I faced in the fifth round was probably the most nerve-racking. He won game one on the strength of **Silhana Ledgewalker** with multiple **Moldervine Cloaks** strapped to it, followed up with burn. Games 2 and 3 were much better for me after boarding, but still he would frequently get me to around 5 life and having depleted almost all of the counters in my hand. I always felt pressed to draw Wrath, yet have mana up to counter the burn headed towards my face. That was probably my closest call besides the match that I lost.

**Tommy:** Yes. Round 1 of Top 8 I played a very close game with a great young player named Matt Grusenmeyer who was playing a fantastic deck that he got from an amazing player the night before. Just kidding, he asked me for my decklist, and I gave it to him. He made a few changes, and I actually liked his deck more than mine.

**BDM:** *Did players try a little harder to beat you since they knew you were a Triple Crown hopeful?*

**Robert:** I would not say that players tried harder at all or if they were it certainly was not noticeable.

**Tommy:** Let me start by saying most everyone at Delaware States knew each other, and while I'd consider most of them my friends, I think they all wanted to be the one to crush my dreams. Shawn Dougherty, the judge who ran the tournament, asked me about pressure the night before at Friday Night Magic, I told him that I try and win every tournament I play in, and tomorrow would be no different.

**Wilbert:** Fortunately only a few did. One fairly well-known local player who has enjoyed some success at higher levels made a point to target me specifically. It was somewhat disappointing, as it seemed largely out of jealousy and trying to prevent others from succeeding. It deteriorated further as he tried to scout and malign others towards me.

**BDM:** *How has the rest of the year been for you as far as Magic? Any PTs, notable GPs, or Nationals experiences?*

**Wilbert:** Since I'm relatively new to competitive **Magic**, I really haven't played any PTs, GPs, or Nationals. Mostly I play FNMs, where I generally do well. I'm looking forward to New Jersey though.

**Robert:** I have finished, as I do at all PTs, terribly. I have never truly prepared for an event. I think the only tournament I could have ever gone to and been able to say that I was prepared for it would have been the JSS Nationals the year that Gabe got second. We tested infi for that weekend and my parents would not let me go because it was too far away.

**Tommy:** **Magic's** been **Magic**. Lost out in a Grand Prix Trial earlier this year, but I won three State Champs tournaments, have you heard about that? I'm not on the Tour yet, and there was talk that winning the Triple Crown might get me on it. Not to say that a case won't be appreciated, I'd turn it in immediately to play on the Tour one time. I'm pretty sure Brad Swan and I are gonna be in San Diego next year, so maybe I won't have to turn in my product just yet.

**BDM:** *Anything else you want to add?*

**Tommy:** I think that Farhad Yosefi, the guy I beat in the finals, should have won the tournament. I'm glad he did well, but he was just about the only person I didn't want to play in that spot out of the whole room. He played a great green-white glare deck that was giving me a ton of trouble in testing, but postboard cleared up. He talked of putting the game down after the match and I just want him to know that it would be a shame to see a player as good as him quit before he truly peaked. Closing thoughts, shout to Kenny Mayer, Virginia States winner. Troy Brestel, thanks for tuning me for a tournament you couldn't play in. And finally, when my case comes in, call me for drafting.

**Robert** (on the subject of building all of Gabe Walls's decks): As for me building decks for Gabe, we have been sharing cards since I was 14. This has always been so that we could always play any deck when we were going to PTQs back in the day.

**Wilbert:** I hope that Wizards continues to promote and to support Champs even further in the future. If their goal is to provide a reasonably competitive tournament accessible to anyone who wants to try their hand at tournament-level **Magic**, then they have succeeded. Not all of us can or would aspire to compete consistently on the GP or PT circuit for various reasons. Standard States certainly brought out a lot of people who are not normally a part of the established **Magic** scene, as well as a number of players who hadn't played in several years. The only suggestion I would make is that it would be great if these tourneys could somehow funnel into Regionals/Nationals, much the same way the upcoming City [Championships] league will.

**Brett:** Thanks to everyone that lent me cards and helped me prepare. And watch out for the sixpeat.

## News and Notes...

- In case you were wondering about the prize each player won ... all the Triple Crown winners (I tried to get them to 'punish' Guillaume for not responding but alas it will be all of them) are going to be receiving a full case of *Time Spiral* boosters and a bevy of promotional foils, including many of the most popular foils and copies of high-end, hard-to-get foils such as Sol Ring.
- It will likely come as a surprise to no one that the most played Timeshifted card in the Top 8 of 2006 Champs was **Akroma, Angel of Wrath**. With Solar Flare, Solar Pox, and Solar Fire all showing up "in the money packs" it is no wonder that the Angel of Wrath was the most successfully Resurrected (literally and metaphorically) card this past weekend. The truly surprising item is the card that is not tied for dead last on that particular table.

With all the bile and venom that has been aimed at the lowly **Squire** in the past few weeks, one would suspect that there would have been zero copies of the timeshifted peon in Top 8 decklists. That dishonor was saved for past tournament playables like **Lord of Atlantis**, **Mindless Automaton**, **Dandan**, and **Orcish Librarian**. All of those cards, and plenty more, finished beneath the one **Squire** that was featured in Douglas Potter's sideboard. Douglas piloted his deck to a second place finish in Alberta Champs.



Doug Potter		2nd Place - Alberta	
<b>Main Deck</b> 60 cards		<b>Sideboard</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Azorius Chancery</li> <li>1 Dimir Aqueduct</li> <li>4 Flagstones of Trokair</li> <li>2 Gemstone Mine</li> <li>4 Godless Shrine</li> <li>2 Hallowed Fountain</li> <li>1 Orzhov Basilica</li> <li>1 Snow-Covered Island</li> <li>1 Snow-Covered Plains</li> <li>2 Snow-Covered Swamp</li> <li>1 Underground River</li> <li>4 Watery Grave</li> </ul> <hr/> 24 lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Azorius Signet</li> <li>4 Compulsive Research</li> <li>3 Condemn</li> <li>3 Dread Return</li> <li>2 Mortify</li> <li>1 Nightmare Void</li> <li>3 Orzhov Signet</li> <li>4 Smallpox</li> <li>4 Wrath of God</li> </ul> <hr/> 25 other spells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 Circle of Protection: Red</li> <li>2 Deathmark</li> <li>1 Disenchant</li> <li>2 Evangelize</li> <li>1 Faith's Fetters</li> <li>1 Haakon, Stromgald Scourge</li> <li>2 Muse Vessel</li> <li>1 Nightmare Void</li> <li>1 Ribbons of Night</li> <li>1 Squire</li> </ul> <hr/> 15 sideboard cards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Akroma, Angel of Wrath</li> <li>2 Angel of Despair</li> <li>4 Court Hussar</li> <li>2 Haakon, Stromgald Scourge</li> <li>1 Skeletal Vampire</li> </ul> <hr/> 11 creatures			

- Kenji Tsumura finished second at Hiroshima Champs with his Solar Fire deck. This deck eschews the black component of the Solar Flare and Solar Pox decks in favor of **Bogardan Hellkite** and Mike Flores' favorite X-spell, **Demonfire**. Here is Kenji's list and, perhaps more importantly, the deck that defeated him.

Yuuichi Kishimoto		2006 Hiroshima Standard Champs Winner	
<b>Main Deck</b> 60 cards		<b>Sideboard</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Adarkar Wastes</li> <li>4 Azorius Chancery</li> <li>1 Battlefield Forge</li> <li>1 Flagstones of Trokair</li> <li>1 Gemstone Caverns</li> <li>2 Hallowed Fountain</li> <li>2 Sacred Foundry</li> <li>4 Shivan Reef</li> <li>4 Snow-Covered Plains</li> <li>4 Steam Vents</li> </ul> <hr/> 23 lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 Azorius Signet</li> <li>2 Careful Consideration</li> <li>4 Compulsive Research</li> <li>4 Condemn</li> <li>2 Izzet Signet</li> <li>4 Remand</li> <li>3 Resurrection</li> <li>4 Wrath of God</li> </ul> <hr/> 27 other spells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Disenchant</li> <li>1 Evangelize</li> <li>4 Lightning Helix</li> <li>2 Plagiarize</li> <li>2 Teferi's Moat</li> <li>2 Willbender</li> <li>2 Zur's Weirding</li> </ul> <hr/> 15 sideboard cards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Akroma, Angel of Wrath</li> <li>4 Bogardan Hellkite</li> <li>4 Firemane Angel</li> </ul>			

**Kenji Tsumura**

2006 Hiroshima Standard Champs, 2nd place

**Main Deck**  
60 cards

3 Adarkar Wastes	2 Azorius Signet
2 Azorius Chancery	2 Boros Signet
2 Boros Garrison	2 Careful Consideration
1 Flagstones of Trokair	4 Compulsive Research
3 Hallowed Fountain	1 Demonfire
2 Island	2 Izzet Signet
2 Plains	3 Lightning Helix
1 Sacred Foundry	3 Remand
2 Shivan Reef	2 Resurrection
4 Steam Vents	1 Sacred Mesa
1 Urza's Factory	4 Wrath of God

23 lands

26 other spells

1 Akroma, Angel of Wrath  
 3 Bogardan Hellkite  
 3 Court Hussar  
 4 Lightning Angel

11 creatures

**Sideboard**

4 Annex  
 2 Circle of Protection: Red  
 3 Condemn  
 3 Disenchant  
 1 Sacred Mesa  
 2 Wildfire

15 sideboard cards

- If you checked this website on Wednesday and are 18 or younger, you may have [caught the item](#) about some pretty exciting changes to the Junior Super Series. The long-running program has been rechristened as the **Magic: The Gathering** Scholarship Series (or MSS) and is now open to all amateur players 18 years of age and younger. It is important to remember the changes that have been made to the tournament invitation policy. As long as a player has never played in a Pro Tour or Worlds, they are considered an amateurs. Players with Pro Points from Grand Prix finishes do not lose their amateur status, and those who had previously "lost" their amateur status due to earning Pro Points at Grand Prix will have that status re-instated. Look for more information later this month.
- Extended Season is coming ... reanimation spells are more popular than ever ... sounds like a good time to go win your local [Friday Night Magic](#) tournament. It is a matter of **Life // Death**.



## Firestarter: Friday Afternoon Quarterback

By now you have had a chance to [pore over the decklists from Champs](#). You have seen what won and heard from some of the winners themselves ([grats MichaelJ](#), [great job!](#)). Given the benefit of hindsight, what was the best deck to play this past weekend and why? March yourselves on over to the forums and share your postgame analysis skills there.

*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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