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Eight-Post

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Building on a Budget
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Howdy everyone, and welcome to the last new Building on a Budget article of this year! When I first took over this column from the ever-not-as-bald-as-me JMS in April of this year, I had no idea what to expect. From the highs to the lows, we had quite a rollercoaster ride, didn't we?

- Building on a Budget is dedicated to making decks that cost 30 tickets or less on *Magic Online*. Weekly deck testing is done using *Magic Online*.
- This week's deck is wicked-bad good. Totally, fer sure.
- The format? Extended. This includes 7th Edition, 8th Edition, 9th Edition, *Invasion* block, *Odyssey* Block, *Onslaught* Block, *Mirrodin* Block, *Kamigawa* Block, *Ravnica* Block, *Coldsnap*, *Time Spiral*, and Fred.
- Please don't blame me if this deck ends up all over the casual rooms.

So, did we have a rollercoaster ride?

Yes, and now I am motion sick. BLARRGHGHHG!!!

I have not yet left my chair, Bleiweiss.

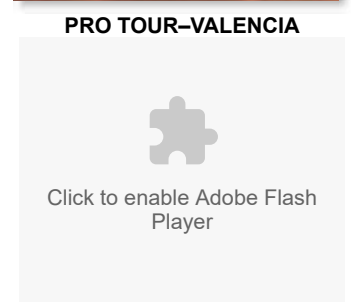
I've put my hands in the air like I just don't care.

When *Time Spiral* was first released, there was a card that I immediately wanted to play with. This card is not the most flashy of cards, or the most desirable (good for the budget!), but it works well with a card from **Magic's** past. That card?



Vesuva.

Its partner?



Cloudpost.

Back in the day, the French developed a **Tooth and Nail** deck revolving around **Cloudposts**. They would use **Sylvan Scrying** plus **Reap and Sow** to get multiple **Cloudposts** into play, and use them to fuel an entwined **Tooth and Nail**. They named this deck Twelve-Post, although they could only actually have 4 **Cloudpost** out at a time.

Enough of the history lesson! **Vesuva** allows you to copy any land, and that includes **Cloudpost**. This means that if you play with four **Cloudposts** and four **Vesuvus**, you have access to a potential *eight* **Cloudpost**! What does this mean for your mana?

One **Cloudpost** = 1 Mana
Two **Cloudpost** = 4 Mana
Three **Cloudpost** = 9 Mana
Four **Cloudpost** = 16 Mana
Five **Cloudpost** = 25 Mana
Six **Cloudpost** = 36 Mana
Seven **Cloudpost** = 49 Mana
Eight **Cloudpost** = 64 Mana
Nine **Cloudpost** = Either you're playing the mirror match, or you're a dirty cheater!

Compare this to the Urzatron, and you'll see that a focus on the locus comes out way ahead! If you're playing **Urza's Mine**, **Urza's Power Plant**, and **Urza's Tower**, you need to get three different lands out at once, and then they produce seven mana. You only need one **Cloudpost** to get things going, since any combination of **Cloudposts** and **Vesuvus** past the first will act identically to one another. Three **Cloudposts** equals nine mana - outpacing Urza lands by two mana.

Now, let's say you build a deck around **Cloudpost** and **Vesuva**. What do you do with such an engine? Let's take this step by step.

Step One: Searching for Land

In order to make sure you get **Cloudposts** and **Vesuva**, you need ways to search for these lands. Technically Eight-Post could start as any color deck, as **Cloudpost** produces colorless mana. Green has the best cards to search for non-basic lands, and the original duo of **Sylvan Scrying** and **Reap and Sow** seem fine for use as ways to search for **Cloudpost**.

Step Two: Searching for Land, Part Two

One old tried-and-true trick for setting up your draws is to run **Sensei's Divining Top** in a deck that uses multiple shuffle effects. I've already got eight in the deck. **Sakura-Tribe Elder** is a natural fit in this deck. Without **Sakura-Tribe Elder**, this deck can get stuck not having enough colored mana sources. With **Sakura-Tribe Elder**, the deck can play turn-one **Cloudpost**, turn-two Forest, and then have access to two colored mana the rest of the game while dropping **Cloudposts/Vesuvus** every turn.

Step Three: Finding a Use for 64 mana (a.k.a., Profit!)

You've got eight **Cloudposts** in play. Now what? The skies are the limit, my friend! Use **Wurmcalling** to make 60/60 Wurms each turn! Cast and activate a turn-four **Mindslaver**! Wipe the board clean with **Oblivion Stone**, using only one land!

I took a look at the cost of these cards on **Magic Online** and found that they were all surprisingly cheap – perfect for a budget deck. Let's look at a breakdown for the deck.



Card	Cost in tickets
Cloudpost	4 for 1
Vesuva	2 each
Sylvan Scrying	4 for 1
Sensei's Divining Top	4 for 3
Mindslaver	2 each
Oblivion Stone	2 for 3

Sakura-Tribe Elder	4 for 1
Wurmcalling	2 for 1

The total cost on four **Cloudpost**, four **Vesuva**, four **Sylvan Scrying**, four **Sensei's Divining Top**, three **Mindslaver**, four **Sakura-Tribe Elder**, three **Oblivion Stone**, and two **Wurmcalling**? 25.5 tickets. This leaves us with 4.5 tickets to work with, and 32 more cards to fit into the deck.

Since we're running **Sylvan Scrying** and **Reap and Sow**, it's easy to fit in any other non-basic lands that might tickle our fancy – they are easy to search out! As a kill condition, I added in the mother of all mana-intensive lands, **Dark Depths** (30 mana? No problem – that's only four **Cloudposts** over two turns!)

I also decided that I could easily support a second color of mana. In particular, the ability to recur **Mindslaver** appealed to me, so I put in the blue and added a single copy of **Academy Ruins**. Once I got up to thirteen mana (three **Cloudposts**, an Island, an **Academy Ruins**, and any other two lands), I would be able to completely lock down the game with this artifact. I could activate **Mindslaver**, put it back on the top of my deck, and control every turn my opponent had for the rest of the game.

Once I had added **Academy Ruins**, I also wanted a B-plan for killing my opponent with a recurring artifact. I settled for **Triskelion**. The Blue also enabled me to add in another spell which takes advantage of having a trillion mana: **Spell Burst**. Once I get multiple **Cloudposts** into play, I can essentially counter a spell a turn for each Island I have in play.

Card	Cost in Tickets
13 Forests/3 Islands	Half a ticket
Triskelion	Half a ticket
Spell Burst and Reap and Sow	Half a ticket
Dark Depths	1 each
Academy Ruins	1 each

With one **Triskelion**, two **Spell Burst**, four **Reap and Sow**, one **Dark Depths**, one **Academy Ruins** and the basic lands, I was up to 53 cards and 29 tickets. For the last ticket worth of cards, I went with three **Moment's Peace** (to stave off weenie rush) and four **Krosan Tusker** (another shuffling/land search mechanism), bringing the total cost of the deck to thirty tickets.

Here's the deck:

Eight-Post		Main Deck 60 cards	
4 Cloudpost	4 Krosan Tusker	3 Mindslaver	
13 Forest	4 Sakura-Tribe Elder	3 Moment's Peace	
3 Island	1 Triskelion	3 Oblivion Stone	
1 Academy Ruins	9 creatures	4 Reap and Sow	
1 Dark Depths		4 Sensei's Divining Top	
4 Vesuva		4 Sylvan Scrying	
26 lands		2 Spell Burst	
		2 Wurmcalling	
		25 other spells	

How did the deck do? Better than I could ever imagine in my wildest dreams. When I play in Extended [Pro Tour Qualifiers](#) in January, I'm going to use this deck as the starting point for qualification. Let's take a look at the game logs.

Game 1: Brothwin (W/G Beatdown)

He gets quick **Phantom Centaur**, and I get **Cloudpost**, **Vesuva**, then **Reap and Sow** for a third **Cloudpost**. He swings in for 10, but I get **Oblivion Stone**, **Reap and Sow** (destroying one of his lands) for an **Academy Ruins** to recur **Oblivion Stone**, and lock him under **Spell Burst**. He concedes before I can find a **Mindslaver**.

Record: 1-0

Game 2: Zeffrin (R/W/U Good Stuff)

I drop **Cloudpost**. He drops **Bloodstained Mire** and sacrifices it for **Sacred Foundry**. I drop **Vesuva**, play **Top**, and set up another **Cloudpost**. He drops **Hallowed Fountain** and **Silver Knight**, then **Steam Vents** and **Chrome Mox**, powering out a quick **Lightning Angel**. I play and activate a fourth-turn **Mindslaver**.

He plays **Fact or Fiction** for 0 (thanks to my **Mindslaver** turn!), and I **Reap and Sow** for **Academy Ruins** on my turn. He attacks, and I **Moment's Peace**, drop **Triskelion** and a **Vesuva**, and put **Mindslaver** back on top of my deck. He **Absorbs** it on my next turn, but I put it back on top of my deck, activate **Sensei's Divining Top** to draw it,

and replay/use it for the second time that turn. He concedes, since that allows me to lock him down for the rest of the game.

Record: 2-0

Game 3: EMU345A (W/R/G Samurai/Genesis)

He gets a lot of Samurai, but I set up my board with **Moment's Peace** and get one of his turns with **Mindslaver**. This lets me empty out his hand to the board, setting up for a devastating **Oblivion Stone**. I get several **Cloudposts** to the board and drop **Dark Depths**, allowing me to kill him in one swing with **Marit Lage**.

Record: 3-0

Game 4: ae_33 (Affinity)

A turn by turn gamelog – the numbers in parenthesis are life totals.

Turn 1: **Cloudpost**.

AE Turn 1: **Great Furnace**, **Pyrite Spellbomb**

Turn 2: **Forest**

AE Turn 2: **Glimmervoid**, **Pyrite Spellbomb**, **Chromatic Star**, **Ornithopter**, **Frogmite**

Turn 3: **Forest**, **Oblivion Stone**

AE Turn 3: 2x **Spellbomb** me (16), attack with **Frogmite** (14), **Academy Ruins**.

Turn 4: **Cloudpost**, **Reap and Sow**, **Great Furnace**.

AE Turn 4: **Vault of Whispers**, **Shrapnel Blast**, **Chromatic Star** (9), attack with **Frogmite** (7).

Turn 5: **Forest**, **Triskelion**

AE Turn 5: **Attack**, I block **Frogmite**, it gets **Shrapnel Blasted** at me (2), **Seat of the Synod**.

Turn 6: **Forest**, **Reap/Sow** (entwined) on **Glimmervoid**, get **Cloudpost**, attack for 4 (16)

AE Turn 6: **Blinkmoth Nexus**, use **Academy Ruins** to put **Great Furnace** on top of deck.

Turn 7: **Attack** (he blocks with **Ornithopter**), **Mindslaver**.

AE Turn 7 (**Stuffy Doll** in hand): **Activate Blinkmoth Nexus** (shot with **Triskelion**), **activate Academy Ruins** to put **Ornithopter** on top.

Turn 8: **Cloudpost**, attack for (13)

AE Turn 8: **Great Furnace**, **Ornithopter**

Turn 9: **Attack** (he blocks), **Mindslaver**

AE Turn 9: **Draw Cranial Plating**, **activate Academy Ruins** with **Ornithopter** on top.

Turn 10: **Attack** (10)

AE Turn 10: **Ornithopter**, **Cranial Plating**, put **Plating** on **Ornithopter**.

Turn 11: **Shoot Ornithopter**, attack for 1 (9), cycle **Krosan Tusker**, get **Island**, **Wurmcalling**. Cast **Wurmcalling**, with buyback, for a 6/6 and a 5/5.

AE Turn 11: **Cast Thoughtcast**, play **Vault of Whispers**, concede.

Record: 4-0

Game 5: Bipaic (W/U Control)

I drop turn-one **Cloudpost**, turn-two **Sylvan Scrying**, turn-three **Cloudpost**, **Sakura-Tribe Elder**, and **Sensei's Divining Top**. He concedes.

Record: 5-0

Game 6: Garyind (W/G Good Stuff)

He gets **Watchwolf**, then **Vitu-Ghazi**. I get a fourth-turn **Triskelion**, then get **Wurmcalling** for five. He plays **Faith's Fetters** on my token and then **Thrive** on his guys. I **Reap/Sow** his **Vitu-Ghazi** and then **Mindslaver** him. I make him drop **Pentarch Paladin**, and go into **Mindslaver** recursion mode. Within a couple of turns, he's destroyed all of his own non-land permanents, and I have an army of 9/9 Wurms crashing into the Red Zone.

Record: 6-0

Game 7: Albaster Dragon (Mono-Black Madness)

He gets **Curse of the Cabal** – and I **Mindslaver** him. Note: You don't want to get hit by **Mindslaver** when you're playing **Curse of the Cabal**. I don't have enough to recur the **Slaver** (which would allow me to make him sacrifice all of his permanents, one turn at a time), but I do make him lose half his board, including all his good cards. He also plays **Trespasser il-Vec**, discarding all his cards. Eventually I get enough mana to lock him, and he dies to his own **Sangrophage**.

Record: 7-0

Game 8: Electrickill (W/R/G Legends)



He gets Godo with **Lightning Greaves** and **Loxodon Warhammer**. I **Moment's Peace**, and he drops Yosei. I drop **Oblivion Stone**, but he drops Yosei number two. I am forced to activate my **Oblivion Stone** in response so that I don't eat massive Godo death. He has a second Godo, which gets a second **Loxodon Warhammer**, and he swings me down to 8 before I can untap again. Once I do, though, I get **Mindslaver**, make him play another Godo (killing the one on the board), and lock the board down with **Academy Ruins**.

Record: 8-0

Game 9: Norselord (Myrs)

He drops Myrs and **Genesis Chamber**, then **Mycosynth Golem**. I draw four **Cloudposts** and **Vesuvus**, play and activate a turn-four **Oblivion Stone**, and then **Reap and Sow** for **Dark Depths** the following turn (off of a Forest). Marit Lage comes in two turns later for a full twenty damage.

Record: 9-0

Game 10: Diego694 (Slivers)

He gets **Gemhide Sliver** and uses it to power out a quick army of Slivers, culminating in **Fury Sliver**. I drop to 8, but thankfully I've gotten several **Sylvan Scryings** and **Sakura-Tribe Elders**, and I ramp up to **Oblivion Stone**. He puts his Slivers back on top of the deck with **Pulmonic Sliver**, but I play **Mindslaver**, search for **Academy Ruins**, and lock him down. With **Dark Depths**, I am able to keep him locked and remove a counter a turn, killing him eleven turns later.

Record: 10-0

Game 11: The HarlequinofHate (Mono-U Control)

He **Boomerangs** and **Wipes Clean** my **Cloudpost** on turns two, three, four and five. Thankfully, he doesn't have any other action going, and I get multiple **Cloudposts** and **Vesuvus**, allowing me to attempt to hard-cast **Mindslaver**. The first gets **Remanded** and then **Rewound**, but I have **Academy Ruins** and can keep recurring **Mindslaver** until he runs out of countermagic. Four turns later, I finally stick the **Mindslaver** to the board and lock down the game for good.

Record: 11-0

Game 12: Omax24 (R/W Burn)

He gets a bunch of mana and drops quite a few weenies. I get an all-**Cloudpost/Vesuva** draw and **Oblivion Stone** on turn four. By turn seven, I have two Islands and five **Cloudposts** on the board, with a **Spell Burst** in hand. I draw **Dark Depths** and kill him quickly with a 20/20, without ever having drawn a Forest.

Record: 12-0

Game 13: Strauss4444 (Tron/Post)

He drops **Cloudpost**, I drop Forest. He then plays two **Urza's Mine** and an **Urza's Tower**, allowing me to **Sylvan Scrying** for **Vesuva** twice, giving me two **Cloudposts**. When I **Reap and Sow** his **Cloudpost** (entwined), he concedes.

Record: 13-0

Game 14: Dovehunter (G/W Tokens)

I drop a quick 7/7 Wurm, and he answers with **Ensnaring Bridge**. I ramp up to three **Cloudposts**, an Island, and a Forest, and then get **Spell Burst** online. He gets stuck at three lands, and I drop a Forest and **Reap/Sow** him back to two. I keep dropping 6/6 Wurms to the board and **Mindslaver** him into keeping enough cards in hand for me to attack with my guys.

Record: 14-0

Game 15: Mead (U/R Legends)

He gets down **Quicksilver Dragon** and **Shape Stealer**, but I blow **Mindslaver** and drop **Oblivion Stone**. He casts (under my tutelage) **Sakashima the Impostor** and **Clone**, killing them both. I blow the Stone, **Mindslaver** lock him, and make him **Incinerate** himself every turn with a freshly drawn **Jaya Ballard**.

Record: 15-0

Game 16: Shepard (B/W)

He gets stuck on two lands, and I go Forest, **Academy Ruins** (**Sylvan Scrying** for **Cloudpost**), **Cloudpost**, **Vesuva** (cycle **Tusker**), **Reap/Sow** entwined, with 2 more **Reap Sow** and a **Mindslaver** in hand. He concedes.

Record: 16-0



Game 17: Imatone (B/R)

He gets two quick **Ravenous Rats**. I block one with **Sakura-Tribe Elder**, and then Reap/Sow him on turn four (Turn 1 **Cloudpost**, turn 2 **Vesuva** and Top, turn 3 Forest plus Elder, turn 4 Reap/Sow entwined). I then proceed to tutor about eleven more lands out of my deck (including **Dark Depths**), **Mindslaver** him, and kill him with a 20/20.

Record: 17-0

Game 18: Blackhammer (U/G/B Momir Vig)

I get turn-three **Oblivion Stone** (**Cloudpost**, Forest, **Vesuva**), turn-four **Triskelion**, turn-five activate **Mindslaver**, turn-six **Wurmcalling** with buyback for 8. He concedes.

Record: 18-0

Game 19: Pcdorney (Mono-Red LD)

I get **Cloudpost**, and he drops **Akki Raider**. I drop **Vesuva**, he **Stone Rains** it. I drop **Vesuva**, and he **Stone Rains** it again. He drops **Akki Blizzard-Herder** and a second Raider, but I have **Moment's Peace** to buy me time to get more lands into play. After his attacks, I drop **Oblivion Stone**, knocking him back down to two mana. He **Shocks** and **Firebolts** me down to 1, but I get **Wurmcalling**, drop a 9/9 Wurm, and swing in twice to knock him down to 2 before he draws a fifth land or another burn spell. **Triskelion** seals the deal.

Record: 19-0

Game 20: Silverspear (B/R Rakdos)

He gets an early morph and **Hellhole Rats**. I ramp up to **Oblivion Stone**, **Moment's Peace** twice, and then blow **Oblivion Stone** revealing **Liege of the Pit**. Then I get a **Mindslaver** lock, and he concedes after I am about to get his second **Liege of the Pit** morphed.

Record: 20-0

Game 21: ZaHand (B/G Zombies)

He gets early **Withered Wretch**. I **Oblivion Stone** it while he's tapped out, because I don't want to lose the ability to recur. He drops double **Rotlung Reanimator**, but I keep them at bay with **Triskelion**. He breaks that stalemate with **Undead Warchief**, but I block one Reanimator, shoot the other one with damage on the stack, and then recur **Oblivion Stone** to wipe his board clean. A **Sylvan Scrying** for **Dark Depths** allows me to kill him two turns later.

Record: 21-0

Game 22: Aearon (Sunburst)

He gets early **Draco** and **Etched Oracle**, and I can't draw any **Cloudposts**. I **Moment's Peace** for four straight turns, and end up with eleven non-**Cloudpost** lands on the board! This allows me to **Mindslaver** him, kill **Draco** by refusing to pay the zero upkeep, use **Engineered Explosives** to kill his own **Myr Retriever**, and then use the **Myr Retriever** to get back **Etched Oracle** to draw myself three cards! Within a couple of turns, I finally get two more lands down and **Mindslaver** lock him with **Academy Ruins**.

Record: 22-0

Game 23: Rocktomaspn (B/U Dimir)

He gets stuck on two lands, and I Reap/Sow both of them and start making ever-increasing Wurm tokens. He concedes after drawing no more lands.

Record: 23-0

Game 24: GuitarHero (U/B Ninjas)

He **Boomerangs** my first land, then drops two **Mistblade Shinobi**. He trades them for **Sakura-Tribe Elder** and then raw-dogs double **Ninja of the Deep Hours**. I make a 3/3 Wurm with buyback, he bounces it. I make a 2/2 Wurm, which leaves me enough mana to **Spell Burst** another bounce spell. He doesn't have one, and I draw four **Cloudposts**, allowing me to start dropping 6/6 Wurms with double **Spell Burst** backup.

Record: 24-0

Game 25: Quans (U/R Coinflip)

He gets **Krark's Thumb** and **Fabricates** for **Izzet Signet**. I Reap/Sow his **Steam Vents** and build up to **Mindslaver**. He has triple **Pulse of the Forge**, double **Mirror Gallery**, and **Squee's Revenge**. I Squee him for 10 (he gets double tails on a heads flip the first time) and then drop a 10/10 Wurm (no buyback) on my turn. He can't kill it, and I have triple Island, quadruple **Cloudpost**, a Forest, and **Spell Burst** in hand. He dies shortly thereafter to my Wurm.



Record: 25-0

Well, that concludes Building on a Budget for the year! I hope you all have a happy holiday season, a great New Year, and enjoy tinkering around with my Eight-Post deck! I didn't make any changes to the deck over twenty-five games (after all, why change any cards if you literally don't drop a game?), but there's a lot of things you can do if you have access to sixty-four mana!

Puny Hew-mans! I am Boab and I come with a warning for you all! This deck might cost thirty tickets now, but since that Bleiweiss made a deck that went undefeated, Boab anticipates much rising of prices of cards in this deck. Trade for them now, Hew-mans! Trade for them while you still can!



*Ben Bleiweiss has written about his obsession with **Magic: The Gathering** for over a decade. He's travelled the world because of **Magic**, both as a player and a writer. When not spending time playing **Magic**, writing about **Magic**, or thinking about **Magic**, Ben is employed by StarCityGames.com, where he works with **Magic** cards all day long. He lives with his wife in Virginia, and they sleep comfortably at night under their Orgg down comforter.*



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