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# Eight-Post

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*Building on a Budget*  
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*My latest article before the break, but one that is relevant to the current Extended Metagame. This deck was my biggest success of the year, from a won/lost perspective (25-0), and was one of my favorites to play. Much like the Muse Vessel deck, the success of this deck sent the price of several cards skyrocketing, unfortunately making this deck budget prior to publication of the article, and slightly over budget post-publication.*

*There were some complaints on the forums that this deck wouldn't be competitive against tournament decks in the Pro Tour Qualifier environment. To date, I've had a 60% winning percentage in the tournament practice room with this deck, playing best two-out-of-three...without making any changes to the deck, and playing without a sideboard. Modified versions of this deck have started making regular appearances in the Top-8 of Magic Online Extended tournaments. At this point, I've personally hung this deck up for a while - it was a great deck, but I think it'll be proven to be too good for the casual room via tournament finishes over the next few months, and I don't believe that tournament-proven (note the word proven) decks belong in the casual room of Magic Online.*

*This article originally appeared on December 11, 2006*

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.

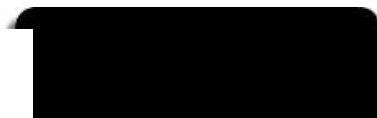
Submit my Vote

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?

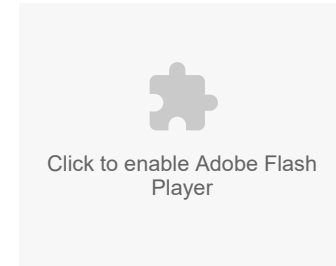


Vesuva.

Its partner?



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## 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
<a href="#">Triskelion</a>	Half a ticket
<a href="#">Spell Burst</a> and <a href="#">Reap and Sow</a>	Half a ticket
<a href="#">Dark Depths</a>	1 each
<a href="#">Academy Ruins</a>	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 <a href="#">Cloudpost</a>	4 <a href="#">Krosan Tusker</a>	3 <a href="#">Mindslaver</a>	
13 <a href="#">Forest</a>	4 <a href="#">Sakura-Tribe Elder</a>	3 <a href="#">Moment's Peace</a>	
3 <a href="#">Island</a>	1 <a href="#">Triskelion</a>	3 <a href="#">Oblivion Stone</a>	
1 <a href="#">Academy Ruins</a>		4 <a href="#">Reap and Sow</a>	
1 <a href="#">Dark Depths</a>	9 creatures	4 <a href="#">Sensei's Divining Top</a>	
4 <a href="#">Vesuva</a>		4 <a href="#">Sylvan Scrying</a>	
26 lands		2 <a href="#">Spell Burst</a>	
		2 <a href="#">Wurmcalling</a>	
		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

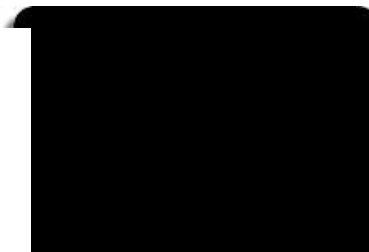
### Game 5: Bipaic (W/U Control)

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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