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Full Circle

Noah Weil
Limited Information
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We had a little bit of confusion when the draft began. Planar Chaos developer Devin Low was slated to be involved, but at the last second lost his seat to the agile Mark Gottlieb. Devin was not happy about the situation, although Mark and Aaron (and the rest of the table) found it hilarious.



Mark Gottlieb savors victory.

With the confusion cleared up, we began the draft detailed above.



Clockwise from front and center: Mike Turian, Randy Buehler, Paul Sottosanti, Mark Globus, Mark Gottlieb, Aaron Forsythe, Noah Weil, and Scott Johns. Not pictured: Devin Low.

This turned out to be a very interesting draft. P1p1 was silly, both for card quality and signaling.

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One of these cards is not like the others.

I took **Sulfurous Blast** on the belief it was the strongest card, although some argument could be made for the Dragon or even the Rift Bolt via splash potential. The surprise was how open blue remained, especially at a table with all these Pro Tour hot shots. I enjoy R/U in TTP, and I decided to go for it with the second pick **Ancestral Vision**. At P1p5 I started to hedge my bets. Green was examined if the blue plan, or even the red plan, didn't work out. Green ended up being abandoned when the **Think Twice** came very late, and especially when **Fledgling Mawcor** was opened in P2p1. After that it was clear sailing. The only pick I really regret was P2p6, with **Orgg** over **Tolarian Sentinel** or **Foriysian Totem**. I've always been a fan of **Orgg**, but this wasn't the deck for it. **Orgg** goes into heavy removal decks, not decks with light removal and good weenie suppression. In hindsight, either one of the other cards would have been a much better fit.



The pick I'm most happy with was P3p2, the Numot over **Shivan Meteor** and **Ovinize**. Normally I wouldn't muck up the mana base that much for a creature, even a Dragon creature. The other two are totally fine, and come with the benefit of not needing a third color. However, on the hope that blue remained opened in PC and that people weren't down with the **Dreamscape Artist** technology, I took the Dragon with the plan of picking up Harrow-man down the road. And that was a gamble that paid off. Here's the final deck, as well as the decks off all the other competitors.



Paul Sottosanti 


Main Deck
40 cards

8 Forest	1 Phantom Wurm	1 Utopia Vow
7 Swamp	1 Rathi Trapper	1 Mindstab
1 Urborg, Tomb of Yawgmoth	1 Spinneret Sliver	2 Search for Tomorrow
16 lands	1 Penumbra Spider	2 Tendrils of Corruption
	1 Mire Boa	2 Midnight Charm
	1 Sporesower Thallid	1 Strangling Soot
	1 Magus of the Mirror	1 Melancholy
	1 Jedit Ojanen of Efrava	10 other spells
	1 Giant Dustwasp	
	1 Durkwood Tracker	
	1 Mana Skimmer	
	1 Citanul Woodreaders	
	1 Yavimaya Dryad	
	1 Viscid Lemures	
	14 creatures	

Noah Weil 

Main Deck
40 cards

9 Island	1 Orgg	1 Dismal Failure
1 Plains	1 Viscerid Deepwalker	1 Empty the Warrens
1 Urza's Factory	1 Fledgling Mawcor	1 Ancestral Vision
7 Mountain	1 Numot, the Devastator	1 Orcish Cannonade
18 lands	2 Keldon Halberdier	1 Sulfurous Blast
	1 Mogg War Marshal	2 Think Twice
	1 Prodigal Pyromancer	7 other spells
	1 Dream Stalker	
	2 Shaper Parasite	
	1 Stormcloud Djinn	
	2 Dreamscape Artist	
	1 Veiling Oddity	
	15 creatures	

Mike Turian 

Main Deck
40 cards

3 Island	1 Amrou Seekers	1 Erratic Mutation
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7 Mountain	1 Benalish Cavalry	1 Fortify
7 Plains	1 Dust Elemental	1 Rift Bolt
<hr/>	1 Battering Sliver	1 Momentary Blink
17 lands	1 Vesuvan Shapeshifter	
	1 Flowstone Channeler	4 other spells
	1 Prodigal Pyromancer	
	2 Mogg War Marshal	
	1 Chronosavant	
	1 Cautery Sliver	
	1 Errant Doomsayers	
	1 Amrou Scout	
	1 Valor	
	1 Stingscourger	
	1 Needlepeak Spider	
	1 Aquamorph Entity	
	1 Saltfield Recluse	
	1 Lightning Angel	
	<hr/>	
	19 creatures	

Scott Johns



Main Deck 40 cards

8 Forest	2 Ashcoat Bear	1 Shivan Meteor
9 Mountain	1 Jolrael, Empress of Beasts	1 Reiterate
<hr/>	1 Essence Warden	1 Fury Charm
17 lands	1 Flowstone Channeler	1 Lightning Axe
	1 Ironclaw Buzzardiers	1 Brute Force
	1 Reckless Wurm	1 Strength in Numbers
	1 Vashino Bladescout	1 Shivan Meteor
	1 Mindless Automaton	1 Lightning Axe
	1 Basalt Gargoyle	
	1 Citanul Woodreaders	8 other spells
	1 Bogardan Hellkite	
	1 Sulfur Elemental	
	1 Kavu Predator	
	1 Scarwood Treefolk	
	<hr/>	
	15 creatures	

Mark Gottlieb



Main Deck 40 cards

9 Plains	1 Amrou Seekers	1 Funeral Charm
8 Swamp	1 Aven Riftwatcher	1 Melancholy
<hr/>	1 Blightspeaker	1 Phyrexian Totem
17 lands	1 Calcidern	4 Temporal Isolation
	1 Endrek Sahr, Master Breeder	1 Thunder Totem
	2 Ivory Giant	8 other spells
	1 Pit Keeper	
	1 Poultrice Sliver	
	1 Pulmonic Sliver	
	1 Ridged Kusite	
	1 Riftmarked Knight	
	1 Saltfield Recluse	
	1 Spitting Sliver	
	1 Vampiric Sliver	
	<hr/>	
	15 creatures	

Mark Globus



Main Deck 40 cards

1 Arena	1 Gossamer Phantasm	1 Ovinize
16 Island	2 Viscerid Deepwalker	1 Temporal Eddy
<hr/>	1 Spiketail Drakeling	1 Piracy Charm
17 lands	1 Crookclaw Transmuter	2 Think Twice
	1 Chronozoa	

1 Primal Plasma	5 other spells
2 Errant Ephemeron	
1 Merfolk Thaumaturgist	
2 Brine Elemental	
1 Drifter il-Dal	
1 Tidewalker	
1 Sage of Epityr	
1 Fathom Seer	
1 Voidmage Prodigy	
1 Veiling Oddity	
<hr/>	
18 creatures	

Aaron Forsythe		
Main Deck 40 cards		
9 Mountain	1 Keldon Halberdier	1 Grapeshot
6 Swamp	2 Corpulent Corpse	1 Orcish Cannonade
2 Forest	1 Keldon Marauders	1 Pyrohemia
<hr/>	1 Stingscourger	1 Midnight Charm
17 lands	1 Blood Knight	1 Strangling Soot
	1 Blazing Blade Askari	1 Enslave
	1 Basalt Gargoyle	1 Tromp the Domains
	1 Prodigal Pyromancer	1 Phyrexian Totem
	1 Lavacore Elemental	1 Foriysian Totem
	1 Skirk Shaman	<hr/>
	1 Ib Halfheart, Goblin Tactician	9 other spells
	1 Urborg Syphon-Mage	
	1 Vhati il-Dal	
	<hr/>	
14 creatures		

Randy Buehler		
Main Deck 40 cards		
6 Mountain	1 Venser's Sliver	1 Dead // Gone
11 Plains	2 Shade of Trokair	1 Opal Guardian
<hr/>	1 Essence Sliver	1 Shivan Meteor
17 lands	1 Ghost Tactician	1 Word of Seizing
	1 Mangara of Corondor	1 Gaze of Justice
	1 Thick-Skinned Goblin	<hr/>
	1 Errant Doomsayers	5 other spells
	2 Revered Dead	
	1 Gustcloak Cavalier	
	1 Celestial Crusader	
	1 Watcher Sliver	
	1 Firemaw Kavu	
	1 Poultice Sliver	
	1 Pallid Mycoderm	
	1 Flickering Spirit	
	1 Children of Korlis	
	<hr/>	
18 creatures		

Not a bad deck at all, although none of these are "poor." I love Paul Sottosanti's varied use of Urborg here, as well as the insane Mark Globus mono-blue deck. How did the tournament go?

Quarterfinals

Aaron Forsythe versus Randy Buehler

Aaron had mana problems in the first game, being forced to **Grapeshot** a **Revered Dead** right before Randy played another one. The white creatures won that game. In the second Randy started off slow with **Opal Guardian** while Aaron built up for a blitz casting. After the Guardian got turned on, Aaron **Enslaved** it and made a big attack. Randy couldn't come back from the swing plus **Enslave** damage. In the third game Aaron again had **Enslave** but became severely mana flooded. Aaron tried to hold on, but Randy's big and little creatures slipped through to give Buehler the match.

Mark Globus versus Scott Johns

Mark kept an interesting hand of one **Island**, one **Sage of Epityr**, and two **Errant Ephemeron** on the play. His Sage gave him one more **Island** but no more lands. Scott, under little pressure, managed to craft a strong enough offense to force the Ephemeron on defense when they came into play. Basically goldfishing at that point, Scott just overran **Globus**. The second game saw **Globus'** full deck come out, specifically **Errant Ephemeron** alongside **Arena**. Of course the mono-blue deck had the largest creatures on the board. While Johns did fight back, he took too much card disadvantage along the way. The third game was quite similar, with **Tidewalker** and **Arena** being the assassin combo of choice. The 8/8 creature was just too large, and Scott had to pack it in.

Mike Turian versus Mark Gottlieb

Mike's extremely efficient agro deck was well-suited against Gottlieb's midrange B/W. In the first game Mike had a phenomenal draw with turn-two **Benalish Calvary**, turn-three morph, turn-four **Lightning Angel**, turn-five unmorph **Vesuvan Shapeshifter** to make another **Lightning Angel**. Gottlieb couldn't come back from that viciousness. In the second game Mark had more interaction, but a key **Dust Elemental** from Turian undoing all of Mark's **Temporal Isolation** forced Gottlieb into a first round loss.



Paul Sottosanti versus Noah Weil

Game 1: Things started off very well with a first turn **Ancestral Visions**, then **Keldon Halberdier** into **Prodigal Pyromancer**. At that point my goal was to just stay alive while the pinging and card advantage carried me to victory. **Orgg** kept some creatures off my back, but **Numot** took on **Utopia Vow**. The Pyromancer got **Midnight Charmed**, but not before being supplemented by **Fledgling Mawcor**. Paul was dealing damage when he could, bringing me down to 9 life via **Rathi Trapper** and **Melancholy**, but after **Empty the Warrens** made four guys the ground was completely locked up. **Dream Stalker** eventually rescued the dragon, and it plus **Stormcloud Djinn** took the first.

Game 2: On the draw, with no suspend cards (should have mulliganed?), I was on the backpedal from the get go. **Spinneret Sliver** did some major damage, and after black spells cleared the way, **Durkwood Tracker** came down as well. The biggest decision of the match came when I was at 10 life, at this point:



Sottosanti's Board: **Durkwood Tracker**, **Spinneret Sliver**
 My Board: Morph (**Shaper Parasite**; targeted by **Tendrils of Corruption** for 3) and **Dreamscape Artist**.

Paul pointed a three-point **Tendrils** at the facedown **Parasite**. I could flip it up, but who gets the effect? I could legitimately target three creatures. **Shaper** to save itself, **Durkwood Tracker** to make it a 6/1 (so **Dreamscape** holds it off), or outright kill the **Sliver**. The **Tracker** plan was interesting in that it saved me the most life, but it was fatal if Paul used his last mana to cast **Midnight Charm** on the spellshaper. Saving the **Parasite** was tempting in that it created a permanent blocker against the **Spinneret**, but at the cost of being hit by both this turn. Since I had nothing in my hand at this point, I had to play it safe and just kill off the **Sliver**. I took 4 (down to 6) and hoped to find some removal or a bigger blocker over the next few turns. It wasn't ideal, but each option had its problems. Ultimately, it turned out to be irrelevant as Paul continued to lay beats and suppress my meager defenses, ending the second game in a hurry.

Game 3: This game was exciting. Both of us went 1:1 for a long time, doing points when we could and stabilizing elsewhere. **Ancestral Vision** was a big help, but with the **Dragon** taking a **Vow** again and **Dream**



Stalker needed elsewhere, things wouldn't be so easy to punch through. Luckily I had an **Urza's Factory** to the rescue. Tokens were accumulating, and Paul certainly wasn't dealing much damage, but between Vision and **Dreamscape Artist**, my deck was starting to run thin. I was pushing in guys when I could but that wasn't very often, especially versus an active **Sporesower Thallid**. Eventually I formulated a plan, which was to hold onto a bunch of spells and make a **big Empty the Warrens**. Four cards left...three cards left...two cards left...when there was one card left in my library it became obvious Empty was the very bottom card. Things got a little tight. However the Factory was still working overtime, enough for one last rush on the final turn. Lucky for me, Paul had been a bit flooded by this point so he didn't have much spellage to stop the assault. When the dust had settled, I had done *exactly* enough damage to Paul for the win. Paul lamented not having just one more creature to stop a 2/2 and I showed him the **Sulfurous Blast** I had since turn thirteen. Satisfied, we shook hands over an excellent match.



Semifinals

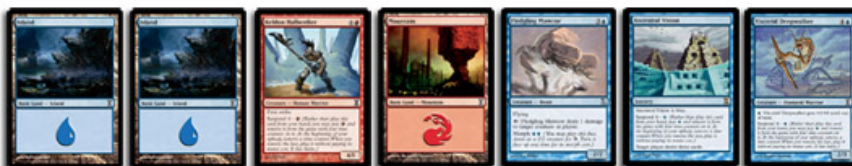
Randy Buehler versus Mike Turian

In two rather brutal games, Mike was quickly able to take down Randy. One game was due to mana troubles, the other being decided according to Randy "because **Pallid Mycoderm** doesn't make white Saprolings." What other color would they be? Turian's **Dust Elemental** again dealt the final points.

Mark Globus versus Noah Weil

Game 1: A pretty tough game, in which Globus started off with quick guys and a **Fathom Seer** to refill. **Crookclaw Transmuter** also started dealing serious points in the air. Down to very low life, I needed the exact next draw to be **Sulfurous Blast**... and it was! Gladdened, I began my quest to get as many 1/1s into play as soon as possible. Unfortunately, 1/1s make horrible blockers and pitiful attackers, dying in ways you'd probably expect these kinds of creatures to go down. Mark's **Primal Plasma** was quite large. Eventually it was down to the Plasma versus a fresh **Urza's Factory**. That sounds ok until you factor in the **Arena**. **Arena** there meant Mark was tapping four mana for every instance I needed to tap eight. That's a tough hole to climb out of, and Mark was able to ride the land advantage to victory.

Game 2:



Game 3: This game was a bit one-sided as well. **Dreamscape Artist** quickly accelerated me into **Numot, the Devastator**. The Devastator took a **Temporal Eddy**, then came down again to work his dragony ways. Surprisingly, I wasn't even upset when the targeted lands bounced back via **Fathom Seer**. Mark quickly became locked out of the game and the match.

The Finals

Whew! What an epic final matchup. The scrappy writer versus future hall of famer Michael Turian. How did the grand tourney end up? Click [here](#) to see.



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