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10 Decks in 10 Weeks: Grim Outlook

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Building on a Budget
Monday, March 26, 2007



10 Decks in 10 Weeks

Welcome back to Building on a Budget! We're on week four of ten on our quest to jump from one deck to the next! For those

just joining us – Ten Decks in Ten Weeks is an experiment in which I build a two-color deck, test and tune it, and then keep all the cards of one of the colors as my starting point for the following week. Last week's deck was a Red/Blue Aeon Chronieler deck. Here's what we got going on to start this week:

- 10 Decks in 10 Weeks! Each week, I evolve a 2-Color Standard-legal deck that costs 30 tickets or less. At the beginning of the next week, I keep all of the cards of one of the two colors, and then switch to a different color combination, and begin Building from there!
- Week 1: G/W - [The Two Ladies](#)
- Week 2: G/R - [A Wild Pair](#)
- Week 3: R/U - [Aeon in Flux](#)
- **Week 4: U/B - Grim Outlook**
- Week 5: B/W - Rescue Me
- Week 6: W/U - A Blink In Time
- Week 7: W/R - ???
- Week 8: R/B - ???
- Week 9: B/G - ???
- Week 10: G/U - Fungal Behemoth



PRO TOUR-VALENCIA



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Update on Rain Delay

Aeon in Flux no Red

Main Deck
49 cards

4 Dimir Aqueduct	4 Aeon Chronieler	4 Compulsive Research
4 Island	1 Riftwing Cloudskate	4 Dimir Signet
4 Swamp		4 Mana Leak
4 Urza's Mine	5 creatures	4 Repeat
4 Urza's Power Plant		4 Rune Snag
4 Urza's Tower		20 other spells
24 lands		

Before we get started on this week's evolution, let me address one concern about the Ten Decks in Ten Weeks project. There have been two concerns expressed, which are seemingly at odds with one another:

You don't keep enough of the cards from the beginning color of the build in the end result of the build.

and

You start out by keeping too many cards from the beginning color of the build when they are obviously not optimal for the new deck.

To this I answer: You know those theme deck evolutions I've done in the past? The 10 Decks in 10 Weeks owes a lot to those columns. How so? Well, take a look again at this week's deck. I'm starting with 47 of the 60 cards for my deck! Some of these might not be the best choices when I'm transitioning from a blue-red control deck to a blue-black discard deck, but it's a really good jumping-off point to build a deck from. If a card blatantly doesn't belong in the deck, it usually gets taken out by the first changes to the deck. Sometimes a card might surprise me. Either way, this method is similar to how I used to build decks back in the day – take cards from a previous deck that I liked, and see how they operate when partnered up with a new color.

For reference, here's what I took out of the deck:

Out: 4 Mountain, 4 Izzet Signet, 4 Izzet Boilerworks, 1 Invoke the Firemind, 4 Pyroclasm, 1 Shard Phoenix, 1 Jaya Ballard, Task Mage, 4 Conflagrate

For simplicity, I also swapped out the appropriate basic lands, signets, and bounce lands from Izzet to Dimir.

In: 4 Swamp, 4 Dimir Signet, 4 Dimir Aqueduct

For those who have been long-time readers of Building on a Budget, [my first column ever](#) was a black-blue discard deck. I built that deck around Megrin, and it didn't work out too well. Here's what I had to say about Megrin last year:

"..."



In reviewing that column, I realized that I didn't really do a good job of explaining why **Megrim** did not work in that deck. Allow me to clarify: **Megrim** is a do-nothing card. That is, in-and-of itself, it does nothing. If you play **Megrim** on turn three, all you've done is put an enchantment on the board that needs other cards to work. **Megrim** is entirely passive, and relies 100% on other cards to do anything.

Moreover, most good discard spells cost one, two, or three mana. Discard is maximally effective early in the game – the longer the game drags on, the quicker your opponent can empty their hand by casting spells. If your opponent has four cards in hand on turn three, would you rather play **Megrim** and let him play three of those spells the following turn, or play **Stupor** and strip out half of his hand? Do you hold off casting **Cry of Contrition** on turn one so you can cast it on turn four after **Megrim** is on the board? Holding back early-game discard seems counterintuitive when your game plan is to knock out your opponent's hand as quickly as possible and send them into top-deck mode.

For these reasons, I made a conscious decision to completely avoid **Megrim** this time around. Now, before you break out the pitchforks and protest boards, fear not! You wanted a black-blue discard deck, and you're getting a black-blue discard deck.

Enter the **The Rack**. Here are 5 reasons why I like **The Rack** better than **Megrim**:

- The Rack takes less color-specific mana to play.
- The Rack costs less mana to play.
- You can drop **The Rack** on the board after your discard spells, and have it deal maximum damage. **Megrim** is strictly beforesies.
- **The Rack** features art from **Stuffy Doll**. **Megrim** artworks generally resemble visualized headaches.
- I actually have a long history with **The Rack**. Grok this:



Ben's Old Discard Deck		
December, 1994		
Main Deck	Sideboard	
62 cards		
4 Badlands	4 Animate Dead	2 Deathgrip
2 Mountain	1 Black Lotus	3 Gloom
3 Strip Mine	4 Dark Ritual	4 Red Elemental Blast
7 Swamp	1 Demonic Tutor	3 Shatter
16 lands	3 Disrupting Scepter	3 Terror
	4 Hymn to Tourach	15 sideboard cards
	4 Millstone	
2 Atog	1 Mind Twist	
4 Hypnotic Specter	1 Mox Emerald	
3 Orcish Spy	1 Mox Jet	
4 Sengir Vampire	1 Mox Pearl	
13 creatures	1 Mox Ruby	
	1 Mox Sapphire	
	1 Sol Ring	
	1 Storm World	
	4 The Rack	
	33 other spells	

Yup, back when Magic was first in its infancy, I was playing a Black/Red discard deck centered around **Hypnotic Specter**, **Hymn to Tourach**, and **The Rack**! You can find a description of the deck, written by yours truly on December 12th, 1994, [here](#).

Okay, be honest here. Were you alive when I built that deck in December of 1994?

Yes, I was alive and kicking!
 No, I wasn't even born yet!

In: 4 **The Rack**

Another advantage **The Rack** has over **Megrim** is that it is harder to play around. With **Megrim**, your opponent can empty their hand, and dodge your discard spells. Can't make someone discard from a hand of zero! **The Rack**, however, causes tension. Let's say your opponent has two cards in hand, and you've got **The Rack** on the board. Do they play those cards, and risk taking more damage? Or do they hold the cards, and hope you don't draw a discard spell? **The Rack** forces your opponent into a disadvantageous situation, which can cause them to make bad judgment calls based on the game state.

The first thing I did when making up the Grim Outlook deck was to make a list of all the discard spells available in Standard. The second thing I did was make a list of all the cards in Standard that forced an opponent to remove a card in their hand from the game. Remember – the goal for **The Rack** isn't necessarily to have an opponent send a card from their hand to the graveyard – it's to make them have no cards in hand. **Castigate** and **Coercion** work equally well in this regard!

For the first build of Grim Outlook, I was torn between wanting to put in powerful one-shot discard spells (**Stupor**, **Persecute**) or powerful repeating discard spells. Due to my low creature count (the only creatures left in my deck were four **Aeon Chroniclers** and a **Riftwing Cloudskate**), I decided to go the latter route. This left me the following choices:

Blizzard Specter
Dementia Sliver
Dimir Cutpurse
Dimir Guildmage
Hypnotic Specter
Lore Broker
Riptide Pilferer

Hypnotic Specter was immediately out because of budget – they run around 8 tickets each on Magic Online, so a playset of four would be more than the entire cost of this deck! I also didn't want to run **Dementia Sliver** or **Dimir Guildmage** – I've had experiences with the latter in other BoaB decks, and I've found it to be too slow. The Sliver would be equally torturous to use. **Lore Broker** would help my opponent as much as hinder them, and doesn't actually make them lose cards from the hand – it's suited for **Megrim**, but not **The Rack**.

This left **Blizzard Specter**, **Dimir Cutpurse**, and **Riptide Pilferer** as my choices. I decided to start **Dimir Cutpurse**, since it swings a two-card advantage – your opponent discards, *and* you draw a card. This combines well with **Aeon Chronicler**, which is already in the deck.

In: 4 **Dimir Cutpurse**

While deciding which creature to use for the last three slots, inspiration hit. I remembered that for a brief time, there had been a card used frequently with the Urzatron in white-blue decks. This card was one near-and-dear to my own heart (in fact, my use of it predated more widespread use), and would be perfect for this deck. It strips the opponent's hand, is mana-hungry for an Urzatron, and doesn't have color requirements.

[Figured it out yet?](#)

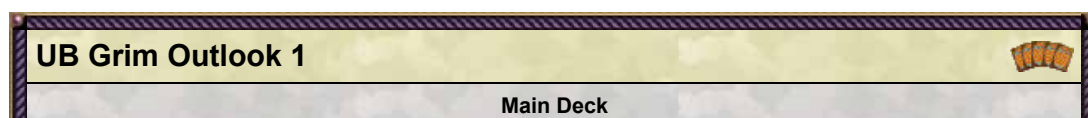
That's right – my [old friend](#) **Muse Vessel**! It was time to dig the ol son-of-a-Scepter out of retirement and give him a dusting off. Last time I played with **Muse Vessel**, my goal was to deny my opponent lands, use **Muse Vessel** to strip their hand, and then beat them to death with their own kill spells.

This time around, **Muse Vessel** is an improved version of **Disrupting Scepter**. Although it costs one more mana than the Scepter, **Muse Vessel** has the same activation cost once it hits the table. For that one mana up-front investment you get the following improvements:

- Removing cards from the game rather than discard – important for Dredge cards, Reanimator decks, or decks that can Recollect spells.
- The ability to, once in a while, use your opponent's cards.

Note that this time around, **Muse Vessel** is there to strip an opponent's hand for **The Rack** – if #2 happens, it's just gravy on the train!

In: 3 **Muse Vessel**



60 cards

4 Dimir Aqueduct	4 Dimir Cutpurse	4 Compulsive Research
4 Island	4 Aeon Chronicler	4 Dimir Signet
4 Swamp	1 Riftwing Cloudskate	4 Mana Leak
4 Urza's Mine		4 Repeal
4 Urza's Power Plant	9 creatures	4 The Rack
4 Urza's Tower		3 Muse Vessel
		4 Rune Snag
24 lands		
		27 other spells

The Blue/Red **Aeon Chronicler** deck was focused solely on winning through drawing lots of cards and killing with either **Aeon Chronicler** or **Conflagrate**. This blue-black deck still leans heavily on **Aeon Chronicler** for the win, but seeks to win through card advantage rather than pure card drawing – I have **The Rack** and **Dimir Cutpurse** as an alternate win condition, and so this hybrid discard/card-drawing deck has two routes to victory, rather than just the one from last week.

Game 1: Ickiwon (Red/Blue/Green Land Destruction)

I get all three Urza Lands by turn three, with two **Dimir Signets** to boot. This allows me to both suspend two **Aeon Chroniclers** and **Rune Snag** his land destruction spells, ending the game in a hurry.

Record: 1-0

Game 2: Scree (Black/Blue Milling)

He gets stuck with only blue mana, and I am able to take advantage of his slow start by dropping a third-turn **Dimir Cutpurse** and ripping his hand apart. By the time he draws a black mana and plays **Evil Eye of Urborg**, I have removed his entire hand with **Muse Vessel** and the Cutpurse, and have **The Rack** on the board to eat his life total.

Record: 2-0

Game 3: Tiddlyflop (Mono-Red Burn/Storm)

He starts by burning me down to 10, but I get an early Urzatron thanks to **Compulsive Research** and drop back-to-back **Muse Vessels**. He tries to go off with storm by play **Seething Song**, but I counter it to keep him from getting his mana count up. I then drop **The Rack**, hit him for three for five consecutive turns, and then finish him off with a second copy of **The Rack** on turn number six.

Record: 3-0

Game 4: Meshin (B/U/G Control)

He **Boomerangs** my turn-two **Dimir Aqueduct** and plays double **Farseek**, which puts him a full three land drops ahead of me! I manage to drop the first creature with a **Dimir Cutpurse**, and he answers with **Plague Sliver**. I attempt to **Repeal** the Sliver, but he has **Remand**. He drops **Coiling Oracle** and swings in for 5. I swing in with my Cutpurse, draw a chump block, and **Repeal** **Plague Sliver** off the board. He plays **Assassinate** on my Cutpurse on his turn, but walks his **Plague Sliver** into a **Mana Leak**.

With the board back at parity, I suspend **Aeon Chronicler** for three and draw into the Urzatron. The Chronicler hits once and is then **Assassinated**, but I draw **Muse Vessel** and begin taking out Meshin's hand. **Dimir Cutpurse** #2 joins the party, and Meshin is left with three cards in hand when I first swing. He attempts to get **Ashcoat Bear** into play, but I **Repeal** it *twice* to allow my Cutpurse to knock him down to one card – and then I drop all three copies of **The Rack** I had been holding in my hand. With the **Muse Vessel** already in play, Meshin is unable to dig himself out of a hole, and loses shortly thereafter.

Record: 4-0

The blue-red **Aeon Chronicler** deck took advantage of the three Urza Lands mainly through **Conflagrate** and **Aeon Chronicler**. This deck was taking advantage through **Aeon Chronicler** and **Muse Vessel**. Why not throw in a ridiculously expensive yet game-altering spell in-theme that can feed off of the seven mana produced by the Urzatron?

Out: 1 **Riftwing Cloudskate**, 1 **Swamp**

In: 2 **Wit's End**

That's right – **Wit's End**! For when you want to make sure your opponent doesn't have a hand, period, end of story. The **Cloudskate** wasn't really doing anything in this deck, and I felt like I could lose a basic land given the make-up of the colors of this deck. If I could power out a turn four or five **Wit's End** with Signets and the Urzatron, that would spell game over for many opponents – plus it would hasten a late-game win with **The Rack** if necessary.



UB Grim Outlook 2

Main Deck
60 cards

4 Dimir Aqueduct	4 Dimir Cutpurse	4 Compulsive Research
4 Island	4 Aeon Chronicler	4 Dimir Signet
3 Swamp		4 Mana Leak
4 Urza's Mine	8 creatures	4 Repeal
		4 The Rack

4 Urza's Power Plant	3 Muse Vessel
4 Urza's Tower	4 Rune Snag
23 lands	2 Wit's End
	29 other spells

Game 5: Luckzach (B/G/R/U Control)

We go back and forth dropping 2/2 creatures to the board – my two **Dimir Cutpurse** to his morphs. He tries to play **Indrik Stomphowler** to take out a **Dimir Signet**, and I attempt to **Mana Leak** it. Luckzach then flips **Willbender**, but cannot change the target of my **Mana Leak**.

Rules Lesson: A spell cannot target itself. The only two spells on the stack were the Stomphowler (which the **Mana Leak** was already targeting), and the **Mana Leak** itself. **Willbender** can't make the **Mana Leak** target itself, and it's already targeting the Stomphowler. This led to both a wasted **Willbender** and a resolution of my **Mana Leak**, stopping his beast.

I added insult to injury by playing **Wit's End** on my turn (which *would* have been directed right back at me with **Willbender!**), taking out **Mountain**, **Savage Twister**, **Harmonize**, and **Deadwood Treefolk**. One **The Rack** and one **Chronicler** later, and that was all she wrote.

Record: 5-0

Game 6: Spinach (B/W Orzhov)

Spinach starts out with **Mourning Thrull**. I counter **Agent of Masks**, but he follows up with **Skeletal Vampire** and **Teysa**. I get down **Aeon Chronicler**, and then strip his hand out with **Wit's End**. He draws **Pillory of the Sleepless**, shuts down my only threat, and beats me dead.

Record: 5-1

Game 7: Defosses (Red/Black)

He double mulligans, I get **Urzatron** on turn 5, drop **Muse Vessel**, and he concedes.

Record: 6-1

Game 8: Phoenixbrose (R/G **Stuffy Doll**)

He gets shorted on lands, but **Seething Songs** out a **Stuffy Doll** a turn after **Aeon Chronicler** unsuspends. I can't attack through the Doll, so I go to plan B – double **Muse Vessel** and **The Rack**. Without lands or cards in hand, Phoenixbrose dies to my artifact pair.

Record: 7-1

Game observer Nick Carraway comments: *There's something uniquely and exquisitely ironic about a stuffy doll on one side of the board and **The Rack** on the other.*



Indeed!

Game 9: Littleisland (R/U **Stuffy Doll**)

I get early **Signet** and turn-four **Urzatron**. This allows me to suspend one **Aeon Chronicler** for four, and then a second for two a couple of turns later. He attempts to **Seething Song**, but I **Mana Leak** it. Both of my **Chroniclers** unsuspend, and I play **Compulsive Research** to get my hand size up to 10. This allows me to swing in for 20 in one turn and win. Record: 8-1

Game 10: TuShan (B/G **Thallids**)

I get an uncontested turn three **Dimir Cutpurse**. He tries to play **Sporesower Thallid** on his fourth, but I counter it. He concedes.

Record: 9-1

I won't complain about a 9 and 1 record, but I will make some changes to the deck! Although the deck was working well, I've always been curious about **Blizzard Specter**. On paper, he's **Abyssal Specter** with perks – if your opponent has no hand, you get to **Sigil of Sleep** their worst permanent (since they choose what bounces). This overcomes one of the big disadvantages of discard creatures – they are useless and overcosted if your

opponent empties their hand. Nobody wants to pay four mana for a 2/3 vanilla flyer. Everyone wants a 2/3 flyer with perks regardless of opponent's hand size.

Blizzard Specter has the added bonus of working well with **Muse Vessel**. In my old **Muse Vessel** deck, I used **Temporal Adept** to both lock down my opponent's mana and feed cards into **Muse Vessel** against an empty hand. Blizzard Specter *can* serve the same purpose, but again it's mainly there for discard, with the *option* of bouncing permanents. If I hit an opponent with both Blizzard Specter and **Dimir Cutpurse** at the same time, I can stack the abilities in any order I want – meaning I can have the Specter bounce a permanent first, and then have the Cutpurse make my opponent discard that card.

In short, Grim Outlook is a synergy bistro.

I also wanted to add two **Gemstone Mines** to the deck. **Gemstone Mines** run about 3 tickets each on Magic Online right now, and the rest of the deck can be gotten for under 10 tickets. **Gemstone Mine** is a good land to have for any variety of decks that need multiple colors of mana, and so I don't mind throwing a couple into this deck. If you were to go out and buy/trade for **Gemstone Mines**, you'd be able to use them in virtually any deck you wanted (unlike a higher dollar, niche/color specific card such as **Persecute**. It also costs 3 tickets, but I avoided for this deck for that reason – it's specific to one color or deck type).

Two **Gemstone Mines** are fine, because they are there to capitalize on **Muse Vessel**. They work well with **Dimir Aqueduct**, because I can remove two counters from my Mines, and then bounce them with the Aqueduct, allowing me to play them fresh with three counters the turn after.

To make room for these cards, I took out an **Island** and a **Swamp** (for the Mines), and one Rune **Snag**, one **Chronicler**, and one **Repeal**. I chose those three cards because I figured I could lose a little utility in exchange for another creature/win condition. While it might seem counterintuitive to cut a Rune **Snag**, they are in there for the first Rune **Snag** (pay 2 mana) – any extras drawn are gravy, but I'm relying on them being **Mana Leaks** 5,6, and 7, and not as an über-counter.

UB Grim Outlook 3		
Main Deck		
60 cards		
4 Dimir Aqueduct	4 Dimir Cutpurse	4 Compulsive Research
2 Gemstone Mine	3 Aeon Chronicler	4 Dimir Signet
3 Island	3 Blizzard Specter	4 Mana Leak
2 Swamp		3 Repeal
4 Urza's Mine	10 creatures	4 The Rack
4 Urza's Power Plant		3 Muse Vessel
4 Urza's Tower		3 Rune Snag
		2 Wit's End
23 lands		27 other spells

Out: 1 **Rune Snag**, 1 **Aeon Chronicler**, 1 **Repeal**, 1 **Island**, 1 **Swamp**
In: 3 **Blizzard Specter**, 2 **Gemstone Mine**

Game 11: Recooome (Mono-Red Burn)

He gets **Boros Recruit** with double **Taste of Mayhem**. He quickly enables **Hellbent**, but I have two copies of **The Rack**. He's outracing me though, and I have to throw **Aeon Chronicler** in front of the **Recruit** to stay alive. On my last turn, I draw **Compulsive Research**, but my next three cards are not creatures or **Repeal**. If I had drawn **Repeal** this match, I would have probably pulled out the game – and I make a note to myself that I might want to return that fourth **Repeal** to the deck when I do my next revision!

Record: 9-2

Game 12: Celalsson (W/R/U Control)

We both build up mana, and I make the first move by suspending **Aeon Chronicler**. He **Cancel**s it, and I return volley with **Dimir Cutpurse**. The **Cutpurse** dies to **Lightning Helix**, and Celalsson tries to play **Numot, The Devastator**, but that walks it right into a **Rune Snag**. He runs out of gas, and I get another **Aeon Chronicler**, a **Dimir Cutpurse**, and a **Blizzard Specter**. After I strip his hand, he casts **Windreaver**, but I'm already too far ahead for him to catch back up. After playing double **Compulsive Research**, he concedes.

Record: 10-2

Game 13: Moorofdemise (R/G Suspend)

He suspends **Greater Gargadon**, and I get an early **Urzatron**. He suspends a second **Gargadon**, and I suspend **Aeon Chronicler**. His first **Gargadon** hits the board, and I **Repeal** it. He sacrifices it to the second **Gargadon** so that I don't draw a card off of **Repeal**, and that allows me to hit him with a large **Chronicler**. I follow with **Dimir Cutpurse**, and get a hit in before **MoorofDemise** is in range to sacrifice all of his permanents to unsuspend the second **Gargadon**. When he attempts to do so, his beast eats a **Mana Leak**, and my guys get in for lethal damage.

Record: 11-2

Game 14: ickiwon (R/U/G LD)

He gets turn 1 **Birds of Paradise**, and then proceeds to **Stone Rain** my **Urza's Mine**, **Demonic** my **Urza's Tower**, **Annex** my **Urza's Power Plant**, and drop **Shivan Wumpus** followed by **Intet**. Although I still have lands and a **Signet**, he was on the play and I never got past one land on the board when it mattered. If I were playing (rather than drawing), I probably could have pulled this one off with the **Mana Leak** and **Rune Snag** in my hand, in

addition to **Wit's End**, and the Urzatron. Them's the break though, kids!
Record: 11-3

I make a note that the only way I could have won that game is if I had a way to kill a first-turn **Birds of Paradise**. I file this, along with the **Boros Recruit** game, under "games I lost to a one-toughness creature."

Game 14: Lajoy Lord (Mono-Green)

He gets **Silhana Ledgewalker**, **Giant Spider** and **Elvish Bard** against my board of **Blizzard Specter** and triple **Dimir Cutpurse**. When he attempts to play **Moldervine Cloak**, I counter it. Lajoy then plays scared of counters the rest of the game, never dredges the Cloak, and dies when I empty his hand with **Wit's End** and bounce his Spider with **Repeal**, allowing my Specter to come through. If he had dredged the Cloak at any time after my first **Repeal**, his Bard would have decimated my team.



Don't fear countermagic when you've got the Cloak!

Remember: **Dredge** cards don't fear countermagic. If a Blue player needs to **Counterspell** **Moldervine Cloak**, most times you want to keep dredging it back until it sticks. They have a limited number of counterspells (unless it's **Spell Burst** with buyback). You don't really have a limit on the number of times you can dredge your Cloak!
Record: 12-3

Game 15: NickD316 (Mono-Black Control)

He plays **Will-O'-The-Wisp**, **Royal Assassin**, and **Hypnotic Specter**. I drop a bunch of creatures but can't attack through his defenses. He gets **Loxodon Warhammer**, trades his Specter for a **Blizzard Specter**, and then drops **Herald of Leshrac**. The Herald hits me for 15 before it dies to its own cumulative upkeep, bringing me to 3. Before I can draw an answer, he gets another **Hypnotic Specter** and flies in for the win.
Record: 12-4

This is a third game that I've lost to one-toughness creatures. It's definitely time to address this issue. I know that there are spells suited for the task of dealing with a first-turn one-toughness creature, and I'm determined to bring them in at this point. The question is: Do I feel like a Funeral or a Pirate?

Funeral Charm and **Piracy Charm** are nearly identical, with the former giving **Swampwalk**, and the latter **Islandwalk**. However, if you have a choice between the two, **Piracy Charm** is almost strictly superior. Why? There are a *lot* more protection from black creatures out there than protection from blue, and for that reason, a blue removal spell that mirrors a black removal spell is more valuable. It helps that **Piracy Charm** also doubles as discard in a pinch, no?

I also add back in the fourth **Repeal** (oh, how I missed you!), and finish removing **Rune Snag** to make room for these cards. I also yank out one **Wit's End** – while it's a nice trick to draw, a lot of the time I am already facing an opponent with an empty hand when I draw it. One seems like enough.

UB Grim Outlook 4		
Main Deck 60 cards		
4 Dimir Aqueduct	4 Dimir Cutpurse	4 Compulsive Research
2 Gemstone Mine	3 Aeon Chronicler	4 Dimir Signet
3 Island	3 Blizzard Specter	4 Mana Leak
2 Swamp		4 Repeal
4 Urza's Mine	10 creatures	4 The Rack
4 Urza's Power Plant		3 Muse Vessel
4 Urza's Tower		3 Piracy Charm
23 lands		1 Wit's End
		27 other spells

In: 1 **Repeal**, 3 **Piracy Charm**
Out: 3 **Rune Snag**, 1 **Wit's End**

Game 17: 22bebo (Slivers)

He gets **Vampiric Sliver**, **Psionic Sliver**, and double **Bonesplitter Sliver**. I thieve a **Vampiric Sliver** with **Muse Vessel** and hardcast double **Aeon Chronicler** and double **Dimir Cutpurse**. He waits until the end of my turn, taps down most of my guys with his Slivers, and then tries to kill me with one big strike. I have a **Repeal**, bouncing one of his **Bonesplitter Slivers**, and kill his **Psionic Sliver** with blockers. I then swing back in, draw into double **Repeal** that turn, and take the rest of his team off of the table.
Record: 13-4

Game 18: David Pearson (G/W/U Control)

He gets **Phytohydra** plus **Pariah's Shield**, and I answer with **Aeon Chronicler**. He **Faith's Fetters** my **Chronicler**, and uses **Brushlands** and **Yavimaya Coast** to make his **Phytohydra** into a 4/4. I drop **Muse Vessel**, strip **Wrath of God** from his hand, and **Wrath** the board with one of his **Brushlands** and one of my **Gemstone Mines**. He plays another **Phytohydra**, but I kill it with **Piracy Charm**. He gets **Faith's Fetters** on my **Muse Vessel**, but I **Repeal** it, strip his hand, and drop copies of **The Rack** on back to back turns. This earns me another win with Grim Outlook!
Record: 14-4

Game 19: biljac (Mono-White Aggro)

This is a really close game – he gets an early Knight of the Holy Nimbus and Paladin en-Vec, but I get double Dimir Cutpurse and he needs to hold back the Paladin to block. He gets two copies of Glorious Anthem, but I repeal his Paladin on back-to-back turns, and start getting card advantage. He suspends Ivory Giant, and we reach a stalemate were I take out his entire hand and drop a copy of The Rack, hitting him a couple of times. His Giant unsuspends and he takes me to two, but I have Aeon Chronicler on the board. On my turn, I play Compulsive Research and end up with a hand of Mana Leak, Blizzard Specter, Compulsive Research, and The Rack before discarding. His board is a Knight of the Holy Nimbus and the Ivory Giant, and mine is just the Chronicler and The Rack. I choose to discard Mana Leak and Compulsive Research, and then drop Blizzard Specter to chump block, and The Rack to race him for 6 damage this and next turn, which would win me the game...



Except, if you're paying attention, you'll notice that this left me with no cards in hand, making this the first time in two weeks that I killed my own Chronicler by having zero cards in hand. I got greedy for the win when I saw the second copy of The Rack, and instead of correctly discarding it and keeping the Compulsive Research and Blizzard Specter, I kept it and lost. D'oh!

Record: 14-5

Game 20: Rep177 (B/W Orzhov)

He gets early guys creatures, but I get double Dimir Cutpurse and multiple Repeals. He plays Wrath of God, and I answer with Wit's End, taking out his hand of expensive fatties and Debtors' Knell. I then draw back-to-back-to-back Aeon Chroniclers, arrange all three to unsuspend at the same time, and hit him with a trio of 10/10 creatures.

Record: 15-5

Of all the decks built for the Ten Decks in Ten Weeks experiment, this one and the previous one held over the highest number of cards from one week to the next. Despite this, both decks played completely differently – the red-blue Aeon Chronicler played control, creature kill, and then finished the game in one blaze of glory. Grim Outlook is a lot more forward – I dropped early creatures, attacked my opponent's hand aggressively, and left them with nothing in the end. If last week's deck could be categorized as combo-control, then this one would be an aggro-control deck – I won through aggression, but had control elements (some countermagic, some discard) to facilitate the victory.

Next Week: Out with the blue, in with the Rescue Mechanic!

This week's Building on a Budget:		
Just Right!	2269	64.8%
Too Short	906	25.9%
Too Long	327	9.3%
Total	3502	100.0%

In general, Building on a Budget is:		
Just Right!	1727	58.7%
Too Short	1025	34.8%
Too Long	190	6.5%
Total	2942	100.0%

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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