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Gen Con Winners Roundtable

Brian David-Marshall
 The Week That Was
 Friday, August 24, 2007



The summer can be a little rough when you are in the tournament commentary and coverage game. The last Pro Tour ended on the first day of July and the last Grand Prix occurred the week before that. We had a brief respite with U.S. and U.K. Nationals getting some big-box coverage, but other than that it has been a pretty sparse schedule of events to report on in this column.



Well apparently tournaments are like buses...none come along for months and then eight come along at once. This past weekend saw \$1,000 Constructed tournaments, multiple PTQs, several different Championship events, and a triple-digit Melee tournament all taking place at Gen Con. You can read about the events – and a whole bunch of other Wizards related stuff regarding Gleemax, Dreamblade, and Dungeons & Dragons – on the [coverage page from the four-day weekend of gaming in Indianapolis](#). It also provided me the perfect opportunity to bring back the roundtable format for this week as I caught up with seven different winners from the weekend.

Here are the participants:

Name: Stephen Menendian
Age: 27
Occupation: Attorney
Hometown: Columbus, Ohio
Favorite book: To Kill a Mockingbird
Favorite movie: Citizen Kane and basically any David Lean film (Doctor Zhivago, Laurence of Arabia, Gandhi, etc). I know it's a cliché, but I consider Kane the quintessential American story—a man who could have been something great had he not been corrupted by influence of money.
Favorite Magic Card: Moat and Lion's Eye Diamond
Favorite deck of all time: The Deck
Previous Magic Accomplishments: Nearly a dozen SCG P9 Top8s. I've won thousands of dollars in "Power" (i.e. Moxen, etc), over the years. Most recently, I got 21st at Grand Prix—Columbus in a field of nearly 900. I've been writing for SCG for five years. Perhaps the accomplishment I'm most proud of is bringing Type Four to the Magic community.



Stephen Menendian

Name: Brandon Scheel
Age: 23
Occupation: Student/Pizza Delivery
Hometown: Ames, Iowa
Favorite book: My opponents
Favorite movie: Gladiator
Favorite Magic Card: Mindslaver
Favorite deck of all time: Turboland
Previous Magic Accomplishments: 11th at Pro Tour—Charleston, 11th at Nationals 2006.

Name: Sam Black
Age: 25
Occupation: Game store owner
Hometown: Madison, WI
Favorite deck of all time: 1x Birds (the Chord of Calling deck I won 2006 Midwest Regionals with)
Previous Magic Accomplishments: 2006 Midwest Regionals winner, Top 32 Grand Prix—Saint Louis, Qualified for Pro Tour—Honolulu, Day 2 at Pro Tour—Kobe, Geneva, and San Diego. Qualified for all of those through PTQs



Name: Matt Hansen, a.k.a Cheeks
Age: 19
Occupation: None really, starting college on the 27th
Hometown: Ames, Iowa
Favorite book: Haven't read a book in forever, but I guess Lord of the Rings Trilogy
Favorite movie: Rounders or Pulp Fiction
Favorite Magic Card: Tooth and Nail
Favorite deck of all time: Tooth and Nail
Previous Magic Accomplishments: 10th at Grand Prix—St. Louis
 12th at Pro Tour—Charleston

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Name: Kyle Boggemes
Age: 18
Occupation: Student at Oakland University
Hometown: Waterford, MI
Favorite Magic Card: Remand
Favorite Deck: MBC (odyssey block)
Previous Magic Accomplishments: 2005-2006 Constructed State Champion, 5 JSS Top 8s; 5 GPT Top 8s, 7 PTQ Top 8s, Legacy Championship Top 8, Day Two Pro Tour–Charleston

Name: Peter Olszewski
Age: 28
Occupation: Graduate Student + MCAT/DAT/SAT Instructor
Hometown: Toronto, CA
Previous Magic Accomplishments: 3 Top 4 finishes and 1 Top 8 finish at Starcitygames Power 9 events in the last 2 years. Other than those events much of my tourney success has been at a local level.



Name: Owen Turtenwald
Age: 18
Occupation: Unemployed
Hometown: Milwaukee Wisconsin
Favorite movie: Anchorman
Favorite Magic Card: Tarmogoyf
Favorite deck of all time: Goblins =)
Previous Magic Accomplishments: 1 GP T8, 10+ PTQ T8s *Peter Olszewski*

TWTW: *Why did you go to Gen Con and how many times have you been before?*

Brandon: I went to play **Magic** for four days and to hang out with friends. It was my first Gen Con. I also went because Gerry Thompson invited us to stay at his place, which was only 20 minutes away from the convention center.

Stephen: To compete in the Eternal events. This is my fourth Gen Con experience.

Sam: I've been every year since 1994 except for the first year it was in Indy. I go every year because I like the con, but this year I was also there for the Dreamblade 50K, [staying] in the hotel room Wizards provided me for being the highest ranked Dreamblade player.

Peter: I went once previously in 2004. I decided to make this trip to get away from work, which was getting quite taxing and I needed a vacation. Plus, this was a chance to reconnect with some of my friends and acquaintances that I hadn't seen or spoken to in many months.

Owen: I went for Legacy Worlds and *Time Spiral* Block Championships, and I've been four times before.

Matt: I went to Gen Con because I knew there were going to be two PTQs there and Gerry Thompson said my friends and I could stay at his house. This was my first Gen Con.

Kyle: I went to Gen Con because there were two PTQs and a bunch of my friends from out of state were going to be there. I have gone the past three years.

TWTW: *How would you describe going to Gen Con to someone who has never been there before?*

Owen: Non-stop gaming! Tournaments for every skill level at every hour of the night.



Kyle: It's the best four days in gaming!

Matt: It was a blast. Tons of tournaments, lots of stuff to do, a million gamers.

Peter: I can't say—I wasn't there for the convention, and had little interest in any events beyond the Legacy and Vintage Champs and Prelims.

Sam: There are a ton of people and you can play basically any game in a casual or competitive setting 24 hours a day.

Brandon: It's a chance to fully immerse yourself in the games you enjoy.

Stephen: The biggest and most spectacular gaming convention in the world.

TWTW: *What event did you win and what deck did you play?*

Stephen: The Vintage World Championships. I played GroAtog.

Steve Menendian -- GAT		
2007 Vintage Championship Winner		
Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
3 Flooded Strand	4 Brainstorm	2 Pithing Needle

3 Polluted Delta	4 Gush	3 Yixlid Jailer
1 Island	4 Duress	1 Ancient Grudge
1 Volcanic Island	4 Merchant Scroll	1 Berserk
2 Tropical Island	4 Force of Will	1 Fire // Ice
3 Underground Sea	2 Mana Drain	1 Oxidize
1 Library of Alexandria	2 Misdirection	2 Pyroblast
14 lands	1 Ancestral Recall	1 Rack and Ruin
	1 Time Walk	1 Red Elemental Blast
	1 Mystical Tutor	1 Rushing River
4 Quirion Dryad	1 Demonic Tutor	1 Island
1 Psychatog	1 Yawgmoth's Will	15 sideboard cards
5 creatures	1 Fastbond	
	1 Cunning Wish	
	3 Opt	
	1 Red Elemental Blast	
	1 Vampiric Tutor	
	1 Mox Jet	
	1 Mox Ruby	
	1 Mox Emerald	
	1 Mox Sapphire	
	1 Black Lotus	
	41 other spells	

Sam: TSP Champs, Gerry's deck with Blessings instead of Takes basically... so we'll call it "Bless Gerry.T."

Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
5 Island	4 Careful Consideration	3 Spell Burst
4 Terramorphic Expanse	4 Damnation	3 Detritivore
4 River of Tears	4 Prismatic Lens	2 Temporal Isolation
4 Tolaria West	3 Coalition Relic	1 Imp's Mischief
1 Forest	3 Gaea's Blessing	1 Slaughter Pact
1 Swamp	4 Mystical Teachings	1 Sudden Death
1 Plains	2 Tendrils of Corruption	1 Pull from Eternity
1 Mountain	1 Slaughter Pact	1 Ancient Grudge
1 Molten Slagheap	1 Pact of Negation	1 Venser, Shaper Savant
1 Dreadship Reef	1 Strangling Soot	1 Pact of Negation
1 Urza's Factory	1 Haunting Hymn	15 sideboard cards
3 Urborg, Tomb of Yawgmoth	28 other spells	
27 lands		
4 Shadowmage Infiltrator		
1 Bogardan Hellkite		
5 creatures		

Peter: I won the Legacy Champs event with blue-green Threshold, a deck designed by Lam Phan, my teammate.

Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
2 Island	4 Force of Will	4 Counterbalance
1 Breeding Pool	4 Daze	3 Sensei's Divining Top
2 Wooded Foothills	4 Stifle	4 Umezawa's Jitte
3 Flooded Strand	4 Predict	2 Krosan Grip
2 Polluted Delta	4 Portent	2 Hail Storm
4 Tropical Island	4 Brainstorm	15 sideboard cards
4 Wasteland	4 Spell Snare	
18 lands	1 Rushing River	
	1 Snapback	
	30 other spells	
4 Tarmogoyf		
4 Werebear		
4 Nimble Mongoose		
12 creatures		

Brandon: I split with Owen Turtenwald in the finals of the 1K Time Spiral Limited tournament. Top 8 was TPF draft. Owen the enchanter was directly passing to me from the right. I went into slivers with a third-pick **Telekinetic Sliver** and a fourth-pick **Watcher Sliver**. I also was able to deal 10 points of damage with **Shadow Sliver** in the Top 4.

Matt: I won the first Valencia PTQ. I had been playing Teachings control the whole season and had Top 8'd three out of three PTQs but I just didn't like it very much and decided to switch to monoblue after talking to Owen Turtenwald the night before.

Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
4 Dreadship Reef	4 Ancestral Vision	1 Cancel
4 Desert	1 Pact of Negation	1 Serrated Arrows
4 Tolaria West	2 Serrated Arrows	3 Spell Burst
1 Urza's Factory	3 Cancel	3 Aeon Chronicler
1 Academy Ruins	4 Delay	4 Damnation
13 Island	14 other spells	3 Urborg, Tomb of Yawgmoth
27 lands		15 sideboard cards
3 Teferi, Mage of Zhalfir		
1 Triskelavus		
2 Willbender		
2 Venser, Shaper Savant		
4 Vesuvan Shapeshifter		
3 Brine Elemental		
4 Riftwing Cloudskate		
19 creatures		

Kyle: I won the second PTQ for Valencia with a Teachings deck that DJ Kastner got second with the night before.

Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
3 Tolaria West	1 Haunting Hymn	3 Detritivore
1 Academy Ruins	1 Slaughter Pact	2 Spell Burst
4 River of Tears	1 Spell Burst	1 Pull from Eternity
4 Terramorphic Expanse	1 Strangling Soot	1 Return to Dust
2 Urza's Factory	1 Pull from Eternity	1 Ancient Grudge
3 Urborg, Tomb of Yawgmoth	1 Pact of Negation	1 Tendrils of Corruption
1 Mountain	3 Mystical Teachings	3 Slaughter Pact
1 Swamp	4 Coalition Relic	1 Spin into Myth
1 Plains	4 Careful Consideration	2 Imp's Mischief
4 Island	4 Damnation	15 sideboard cards
1 Dreadship Reef	2 Tendrils of Corruption	
1 Molten Slagheap	4 Prismatic Lens	
26 lands	1 Foresee	
	28 other spells	
1 Bogardan Hellkite		
4 Shadowmage Infiltrator		
1 Triskelavus		
6 creatures		

Owen: I won the Extended 1k and I played a red deck of my own creation: "Chocolate Rain."

Main Deck 60 cards		Sideboard
4 Wooded Foothills	4 Rift Bolt	4 Sulfuric Vortex
4 Bloodstained Mire		4 Ancient Grudge

4 Stomping Ground	4 Incinerate	4 Pyrostatic Pillar
4 Barbarian Ring	4 Molten Rain	3 Smother
1 Blood Crypt	4 Firebolt	15 sideboard cards
6 Mountain	1 Pulse of the Forge	
23 lands	17 other spells	
4 Kird Ape		
4 Mogg Fanatic		
4 Grim Lavamancer		
4 Tarmogoyf		
4 Blistering Firecat		
20 creatures		

TWTW: Why did you choose to play in that particular tournament and how much prep did you put in before the event?

Peter: I originally had no intention of playing as my interest lies primarily in Vintage, but was convinced to play by my teammates Lam Phan and Richard Mattiuzzo. I had a preconception that Legacy was a boring format controlled by two archetypes (Goblins and Threshold), but I was pleasantly surprised by the diversity and by how exciting Legacy is right now post Flash banning and the printing of **Tarmogoyf**.

I put in no hours of preparation for either the Vintage or Legacy events, as I had little time to prepare. Fortunately, I received some valuable advice from Lam on how to most effectively play the deck, and I used the prelims (where I went 3-2 before scooping in round 6) as an opportunity to prepare for the Championship. I was also influenced by my match against Chris Coppola in the prelims, who demonstrated the effectiveness of the **Counterbalance** + **Divining Top** combination in the Threshold mirror. Lam and I decided to incorporate this combo into our sideboards for the Championship event, and it was definitely instrumental in winning a significant number of matches. In fact, I rarely needed anything else out of the sideboard in almost every match that I played.

Kyle: I played in the PTQ because I wanted a plane ticket to Valencia and to play on the Pro Tour. I practiced Block Constructed by playing numerous **Magic Online** premier events, seven PTQs, and many hours of games in practice rooms.

Sam: It was the most profitable tournament in its time slot. I've been playing PTQs every week, and been playing only this deck since the Kentucky Open.

Matt: I chose to play in the PTQ because I wasn't qualified for Valencia yet. I didn't put in much prep before that specific event, but I did a lot of testing throughout the season and felt like I had a good handle on the format.

Owen: It was \$1,000 in prizes and seemed like good practice for the upcoming Pro Tour—Valencia. A few weeks of casual playtesting on **Magic Online**.

Brandon: I love playing Limited. I've played in many sealed tournaments with *Time Spiral* and I draft online.

Stephen: The DCI unrestricted **Gush**, which made this previously banned deck a metagame competitor. A decent amount of testing and local tournaments.

TWTW: How many other events did you have a chance to participate in? Did you come close to winning/win anything else?

Brandon: I got 11th in the Legacy Champs playing a TurboLoam deck that Gerry Thompson loaned me. I lost in the Top 4 of the Extended 1K tournament playing TEPS—a deck that I hadn't played much since last Extended season when I stormed into a PTQ win.

Stephen: I played in only two other events: the Thursday four-round Vintage tournament and the Friday night Vintage Preliminary tournament (55 players). I won the Prelim tournament and went 3-1 in the Thursday event.

Sam: I 3-2/dropped the PTQ and finished in an extremely disappointing top 32 in the Dreamblade 50K.

Peter: 3-0-1 in the Vintage side event on Thursday with WGDx; 3-3 Legacy Prelims with blue-green Threshold; 3-3-2 Vintage Champs with Gush-Tog.

Matt: I played in the *Time Spiral* Block Championship the night before the PTQ and went 3-2-1 which was kinda what made me switch decks. Then on Saturday night I played in the 1K Extended Tournament, I messed up in sideboarding in the round playing for Top 8 and lost.

Kyle: I played both PTQs and the *Time Spiral* Block Championship. I went x-2 drop in all of the other tournaments.

Owen: I played in four events: *Time Spiral* Championship where I lost in the first round of Top 8; Legacy Championship where I dropped at 4-2; the Sealed \$1K where I split in the finals; and the Extended \$1K where I finished first.



TWTW: Was there a key play or decision that your victory hinged on and can you describe it?

Stephen: In the final game of the final match, Rich Shay tried to provoke a counterwar over my Fastbond. I let him counter it despite having a **Force of Will** in hand. He topdecked **Yawgmoth's Will** and my Force ensured that I won the game.

Owen: There wasn't any one particular decision I made that won me the tournament but I played a red deck so there was a decision to be made on every turn.

Peter: My key play of the event came in the first game of the finals against Ryan Trepanier, playing "43 land" (with 42 lands). I did not like my chances pre-sideboard, as Ryan has a lot of stoppers (man-lands, Maze of Ith, **Tabernacle**, and **Wasteland**) and recursive ability (**Life from the Loam**).

Ryan got off to a fast start with his Loam recursion and a Maze of Ith, which was quickly joined by a Tabernacle. The key play was when I avoided Stifling a **Wasteland** on my **Tropical Island** when very low on lands in play; because that **Stifle** needed to be saved for an event that transpired 4-5 turns later. I had two Mongoose in play that were dealing damage past the Maze of Ith, and they were supported by two unwasteable **Islands** against the Tabernacle. The problem cards were Ryan's man-lands that he eventually played to stop the damage, but a Mongoose managed to devour a key **Mishra's Factory** with the assistance of a **Stifle** that I saved earlier, which was used to prevent the Factory from inflating itself to a 3/3 and kill the Mongoose.

I still needed a top-deck to punch through Ryan's last line of defense (a **Treetop Village** and **Nantuko Monastery**, only one of which could be activated), although I had five outs (two **Stifle**, two **Wasteland**, and one **Snapback**). I managed to draw the **Snapback** to bounce the man-land once it was activated and punch through a Mongoose for the win. I believe that I did everything in my power in that game to maximize my chances, even though the odds were very much against me and the situation looked quite hopeless in Game 1.

Kyle: Playing around **Take Possession** by transmuting for **Urza's Factory** instead of **Academy Ruins**, then playing the Ruins once the **Take Possession** was played. In a few turns, my opponent scooped to the **Triskelavus** recursion.

Matt: Unfortunately I can't really think of a really awesome play that I made. I mainly just played tight and capitalized on my opponents' mistakes throughout the tournament.

Sam: I decided it would be a good idea to draw running outs against white weenie in the Top 4 when I was at two and he had two guys. First Consideration into **Damnation**. Then he played two more guys and I drew Teachings to get Tendrils.

Brandon: I could have done better in the two Legacy matches I lost if I played **Engineered Explosives** over **Swords to Plowshares** like Gerry told me to.

TWTW: What did you win for your efforts and how do you plan on using your prize?

Brandon: \$625 minus splits, 24 Boosters of TPF, 1 Kamahl deck box, 1 2HG stocking cap, 1 Italian Legends booster, 1 Italian Revised booster, 1 Revised starter, 1 foil promo **Reya Dawnbringer**, 6 10th edition booster packs, 1 Kamahl life counter, 1 collector's Akroma card binder, and a swag bag.

Spending the money on Valencia and hopefully Worlds.

Stephen: **Mox Jet** painting by Volkan Baga. It is on the market!

Sam: Four foil sets of **Time Spiral** (with Timeshifted cards) and **Planar Chaos**. Not **Future Sight**, as I split the finals. Already sold it. No special plans for the money.

Peter: I won three oversized cards ("Legacy staples": **Force of Will**, **Goblin Warchief**, and **Bloodstained Mire**). I also picked up some booster packs as prizes.

Unfortunately, all of the prizes had to be sold off because it was entirely unfeasible to transport such prizes in a van crammed with 6 people taking a nine-hour trip. I must say that I am very disappointed by the prize support for an event touted as the Legacy World Championships. While I played primarily for the enjoyment, it would have been nice to receive, for instance, commemorative cards for the event that could actually be used in decks.

Matt: A trip to Pro Tour–Valencia. I plan on attending the Pro Tour and hopefully Top 32ing so I can go to Worlds too!

Kyle: I won a plane ticket to Valencia, an invite to Pro Tour–Valencia, a box of draft sets and a Top 8 pin. I am going to go to take a week off from school and go to Spain.

Owen: I won \$500 in the Extended 1K and \$375 in the Sealed 1K. I plan on using the money I won to get a plane ticket to Valencia.

TWTW: When did you start playing Magic and how did you get started with the game?



Stephen: When I was in middle school. I went to a summer camp, probably the summer of my 7th or 8th grade year (1993?), and a kid there had a starter deck that had **Juggernaut**. He taught me to play and I played it until I quit my sophomore year of high school due to the phasing out of Type 1 (the creation of Type 2). My last tournament was the *Alliances* prerelease. I got back into **Magic** in late 2000.

Brandon: Started playing casually with *Tempest*. Started drafting at card shops with *Odyssey*.

Sam: 1994, taught by a friend.

Peter: I started playing in 1994 with my cousin who was visiting from Germany and we wanted to find a game to play. I saw a Duelist by chance and saw a picture of a **Beta Icy Manipulator**, which I thought looked amazing, so I decided to try out MTG.



Matt: I started playing in *Legions* and basically jumped right into tournaments. I never really played casually. My friend Aakash Sethe showed me the game.

Kyle: I started playing **Magic** in 1998, my cousin taught me.

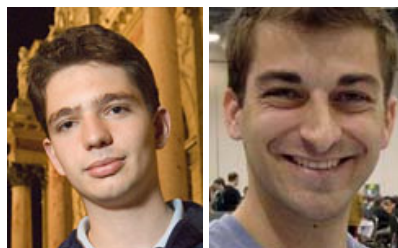
Owen: I've been playing **Magic** for six years and got start through a friend at a local game store.



2007 Magic Invitational: The Field is Set

Congratulations to Paulo Vitor Damo Da Rosa as the [Fan Favorite](#) for this year's [Magic Invitational](#) at Spiel in Essen. Paulo was a runaway winner but the battle for the second and third positions was quite tight between Olivier Ruel, Craig Jones, and Andre Coimbra. That battle could be pretty relevant if the rumors that World Champion Makahito Mihara cannot attend turn out to be accurate.

The R&D slot went to none other than the newly crowned Vintage Champion Stephen Menendian. Aaron Forsythe has [more on the selection in his column](#).



South African Nationals: Bad Moon Rising

Are you looking for something for Standard that is both aggressive and not Gruul? How about giving South African National Champion Seraj Haroun's monoblack beatdown machine a try? Seraj barreled his deck through a Gruul build in the quarterfinals, a black-white Rack deck in the semis, and Blink deck in the finals. Joining Seraj on the team are John Wood, David Hofmeyer, and Werner Cloete all playing distinctly different decks.

If you are more of a combo sort you should check out the deck played by Cloete. If Werner's name seems familiar to you, it is because he was one of the players who forged Hatori Hanzo Tron at Worlds a couple of years back. Werner was playing the Aussie Storm deck that uses *Pyromancer's Swath* to power up lethal *Grapeshots*. We have seen tournament-quality decks with *Dragonstorm*, *Ignite Memories*, *Empty the Warrens*, and now *Grapeshot*—can the tournament debut of *Ground Rift* be far behind?

Seraj Haroun, First Place		2007 South Africa National Championships			
Main Deck		Sideboard			
60 cards					
23 Swamp	4 Bad Moon	4 Deathmark			
23 lands	2 Consume Spirit	2 Extirpate			
	4 Phyrexian Totem	3 Damnation			
	4 Sudden Death	2 Pithing Needle			
		4 Stupor			

4 Stromgald Crusader
 4 Dark Confidant
 3 Dauthi Slayer
 4 Korklash, Heir to Blackblade
 4 Nether Traitor
 4 Plagued Rusalka

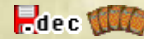
14 other spells

15 sideboard cards

23 creatures

John Wood, Second Place

2007 South Africa National Championships



Main Deck 60 cards

1 Battlefield Forge
 1 Hallowed Fountain
 3 Island
 2 Izzet Boilerworks
 3 Nimbus Maze
 3 Plains
 4 Sacred Foundry
 2 Shivan Reef
 4 Steam Vents

23 lands

3 Grand Arbiter Augustin IV
 2 Akroma, Angel of Fury
 4 Court Hussar
 4 Lightning Angel
 4 Riftwing Cloudskate
 3 Venser, Shaper Savant

20 creatures

4 Azorius Signet
 2 Demonfire
 4 Lightning Helix
 3 Momentary Blink
 4 Remand

17 other spells

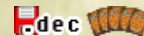
Sideboard

4 Avalanche Riders
 4 Aven Riftwatcher
 4 Cryoclast
 3 Wrath of God

15 sideboard cards

David Hofmeyer, Third Place

2007 South Africa National Championships



Main Deck 60 cards

1 Snow-Covered Swamp
 3 Caves of Koilos
 4 Flagstones of Trokair
 4 Godless Shrine
 1 Orzhov Basilica
 1 Plains
 3 Spawning Pool
 3 Swamp
 1 Urborg, Tomb of Yawgmoth

21 lands

4 Augur of Skulls
 4 Dark Confidant
 2 Epochrasite
 3 Jotun Grunt
 2 Serra Avenger

15 creatures

1 Castigate
 4 Cry of Contrition
 1 Damnation
 4 Funeral Charm
 1 Mortify
 3 Slaughter Pact
 4 Smallpox
 2 Stupor
 4 The Rack

24 other spells

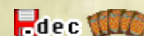
Sideboard

4 Aven Riftwatcher
 2 Castigate
 2 Damnation
 2 Disenchant
 2 Tombstalker
 3 Withered Wretch

15 sideboard cards

Werner Cloete, Fourth Place

2007 South Africa National Championships



Main Deck 60 cards

1 Fungal Reaches
 8 Island
 2 Molten Slagheap

4 Claws of Gix
 3 Empty the Warrens
 1 Gigadrowse
 4 Grapeshot

Sideboard

1 Empty the Warrens
 2 Gigadrowse
 1 Magus of the Moon
 4 Martyr of Ashes
 1 Repeal

4 Shivan Reef
4 Steam Vents

19 lands

3 Magus of the Moon

3 creatures

4 Hatching Plans
4 Lotus Bloom
3 Perilous Research
4 Pyromancer's Swath
4 Remand
4 Repeal
4 Rite of Flame

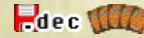
38 other spells

3 Trickbind
3 Wheel of Fate

15 sideboard cards

Michael Redford, Fifth Place

2007 South Africa National Championships



Main Deck 60 cards

1 Pendelhaven
2 Brushland
4 Forest
3 Gemstone Mine
1 Godless Shrine
1 Horizon Canopy
1 Llanowar Wastes
3 Overgrown Tomb
1 Plains
2 Swamp
3 Temple Garden

22 lands

1 Sek'Kuar, Deathkeeper
4 Birds of Paradise
3 Crypt Champion
4 Dark Confidant
3 Essence Warden
4 Loxodon Hierarch
3 Saffi Eriksdotter
1 Teneb, the Harvester
1 Teysa, Orzhov Scion
3 Wall of Roots
1 Withered Wretch

28 creatures

3 Castigate
4 Chord of Calling
3 Glittering Wish

10 other spells

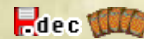
Sideboard

1 Debtors' Knell
3 Spectral Force
1 Castigate
3 Congregation at Dawn
1 Mortify
1 Putrefy
1 Saffi Eriksdotter
3 Terror
1 Teysa, Orzhov Scion

15 sideboard cards

Christof Kuun, Sixth Place

2007 South Africa National Championships



Main Deck 60 cards

4 Breeding Pool
4 Flagstones of Trokair
1 Forest
1 Hallowed Fountain
1 Horizon Canopy
2 Island
1 Plains
2 Temple Garden
4 Treetop Village
4 Yavimaya Coast

24 lands

3 Aeon Chronicler
4 Loxodon Hierarch
2 Mystic Snake
4 Riftwing Cloudskate
4 Tarmogoyf
3 Venser, Shaper Savant
4 Wall of Roots

24 creatures

4 Edge of Autumn
4 Momentary Blink
4 Remand

12 other spells

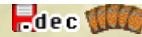
Sideboard

3 Akroma, Angel of Fury
4 Aven Riftwatcher
1 Mystic Snake
3 Riftsweeper
4 Serrated Arrows

15 sideboard cards

Kayolan Petkov, Seventh Place

2007 South Africa National Championships



Main Deck

60 cards

2 Golgari Rot Farm
4 Llanowar Wastes
2 Urborg, Tomb of Yawgmoth
4 Overgrown Tomb
7 Swamp
3 Treetop Village

22 lands

4 Augur of Skulls
4 Dark Confidant
3 Ravenous Rats
4 Tarmogoyf

15 creatures

4 Cry of Conitriion
4 Funeral Charm
3 Putrefy
4 Smallpox
4 Stupor
4 The Rack

23 other spells

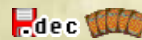
Sideboard

4 Extirpate
3 Gathan Raiders
2 Quagnoth
3 Slaughter Pact
3 Tombstalker

15 sideboard cards

Dale Fienberg, Eighth Place

2007 South Africa National Championships



Main Deck

61 cards

4 Karplusan Forest
7 Mountain
2 Pendelhaven
4 Stomping Ground
4 Treetop Village

21 lands

3 Keldon Marauders
3 Scorched Rusalka
3 Greater Gargadon
4 Mogg Fanatic
4 Mogg War Marshal
4 Tarmogoyf
3 Tin Street Hooligan

24 creatures

4 Char
4 Incinerate
4 Rift Bolt
4 Seal of Fire

16 other spells

Sideboard

2 Ancient Grudge
4 Cryoclast
2 Magus of the Moon
4 Martyr of Ashes
3 Threaten

15 sideboard cards

Firestarter: Following the Invitational

I'm going to piggyback on Aaron's poll this week, which asks "Are you more or less interested in following the **Magic** Invitational now that people like Evan Erwin and Stephen Menendian are included along with the top pros?" The options given were "more," "less," or "the same." Expand on those choices with full sentences by going to the forums!

*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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