

Home > Games > Magic > Magicthegathering.com > Columns



# Drafting with Rich and Quentin

Quentin Martin  
Limited Information  
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**PRODUCTS**

PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

I have a special guest with us this week. I am still stuck in Asia and cannot draft, so I have asked Limited genius Richard Hoan to provide us with one of his own. This is from an 8-4 queue, and it presents us with some interesting decisions. Rich's style of drafting is very similar to my own, but we differ when it comes to favourite colour combinations, as becomes evident in this draft. I will be looking at how this colour preference would've caused two completely different decks to be drafted, both of which were very strong in their own right.

## Pack 1, Pick 1

Goblin Skycutter, Crookclaw Transmuter, Strength in Numbers, Zealot *il-Vec*, Urborg Syphon-Mage, Screeching Sliver, Momentary Blink, Ancient Grudge, Greenseeker, Foriysian Interceptor, Faceless Devourer, Foriysian Totem, Haunting Hymn, Lim-Dûl the Necromancer, Fire Whip

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This pack is incredibly deep, so one of the first things both Rich and I did was to examine what cards we thought would wheel. They would probably be the *Zealot il-Vec*, the *Greenseeker* and one of the black cards, I suspect the *Faceless Devourer*. This doesn't give us as much information as I would like, because upon first examination it looked like more than one black card would table, suggesting going black in the picks ahead; this is still fairly likely as *Haunting Hymn* is still underrated.



Our options are *Crookclaw Transmuter*, *Strength in Numbers* and *Fire Whip*. Both *Momentary Blink* and *Urborg Syphon-Mage* are too weak to be considered, as the first commits you to two colours and the second simply isn't powerful enough. The *Strength* and *Transmuter* are very close in power level. *Strength* got better as more expansions were released due to the lack of other pump spells, whereas the *Transmuter* gained more cards to trick with and more 3/3 flyers it can trade with. In a vacuum, Rich and I would differ in our pick, because they are so close in power level that it only comes down to colour preference—and he prefers green, whereas I take blue.

Luckily for us, it is not a void, as the *Fire Whip* is still present. The *Whip* is a reasonably strong card, more powerful than the other cards in the pack, as it is often a post combat trick that few people see coming. It turns a random dork into a great card, and can be used to deal two damage straight off the bat if needed. At the end of the day, it is removal.

Pick: *Fire Whip*

## Pack 1, Pick 2

*Errant Ephemeron*, *Strangling Soot*, *Gemhide Sliver*, *Mindstab*, *Gaze of Justice*, *Wormwood Dryad*, *Mystical Teachings*, *Two-Headed Sliver*, *Prismatic Lens*, *Clockspinning*, *Stormcloud Djinn*, *Volcanic Awakening*, *Thick-Skinned Goblin*, *Wall of Roots*

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Again, we have a very deep pack with plenty of good playables. Unfortunately, none of them can be guaranteed to wheel, so we will just be looking at the decision we have to make. Narrowing our choice down is easy as nothing in the pack comes close in power to the *Errant Ephemeron* and the *Strangling Soot*.

This is a really difficult choice. In a void, both of us agreed that the *Ephemeron* is the better card, but to quote Rich: "I don't think *Ephemeron* is THAT much better, so it's just what you feel like playing basically." There are several factors to take into account. Firstly, what colours is the player on our left most likely to be playing? They had the option of *Transmuter* or *Strength* in the first pack, and will pick whichever card we do not take from this pack. That's not too much information to go on. If anything can be divined from it, then it will be that maybe they picked a blue card, but if we take the *Ephemeron* then he will take the *Soot* and we can cut blue easily enough to force them to abandon the colour.

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The other factor that we can take into account is what will wheel from our first pack. There will be no guarantee, but as I mentioned earlier, it is likely that a black card will come back, and picking up a free playable is nothing to sniff at. Here's what Rich had to say on the matter:

*"Red-black is probably my favourite archetype in the format. I figured **Crookclaw Transmuter** would be taken second, so I'd be fighting in pack two unless I cut him off, but that's in no way a sure thing—that I could cut it off, or that he would have taken it. In the end, I made this pick based on personal preference."*



It is here that Rich and I differ, and much like the Strength / Transmuter pick, it again comes completely down to colour preference. I think that Ephemeron is better than Soot and I dislike the Soot's inherent commitment to two colours (it is great just in black, but then when compared to Ephemeron is far weaker), even though our first pick was red, we might be forced to abandon one or both picks (although if we were forced to abandon both colours, we would probably end up either green or blue, and both colours have fixers accessible to splash the Soot); I also prefer blue to black.

Here our drafts diverge. For the second pack, it should be noted that Rich passed all the blue left, so the quality of the cards that I will pick will be slightly worse than had I actually picked the Ephemeron, but I will keep looking at these shadow picks as the draft progresses.

Rich's Pick: **Strangling Soot**

Q's Pick: **Errant Ephemeron**

### Pack 1, Pick 3

**Coal Stoker, Durkwood Baloth, Coral Trickster, Ivory Giant, Deathspore Thallid, Sidewinder Sliver, Viscid Lemures, Mwonvuli Acid-Moss, Two-Headed Sliver, Brine Elemental, Assembly-Worker, Celestial Crusader, Evil Eye of Orms-by-Gore**

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This pack comes down to whether to pick the **Coal Stoker**, the **Durkwood Baloth** or the **Brine Elemental**. Out of these cards, the Briney is far superior to the others, and for my pick is the easy option. Rich has a tougher path to take.

Dipping into green here for the Baloth is a fine option, and does not abandon either of our first two picks as we will probably pick up some fixers. **Coal Stoker** is a great card in both blue-red and red-black, as it allows you to gain some advantage through the massive tempo swing it provides. Both colour combinations seldom mana burn off of it, because their three-drops are either colourless or red (more often than not). Rich could dip into blue for the superior Elemental, but when I asked him, he felt that after passing the Ephemeron, he would rather continue to go red-black and that the Stoker was especially great in that colour combination.

Rich's Pick: **Coal Stoker**

Q's Pick: **Brine Elemental**

### Pack 1, Pick 4

**Temporal Isolation, Empty the Warrens, Strength in Numbers, Errant Doomsayers, Foriysian Interceptor, Aetherflame Wall, Detainment Spell, Thallid Shell-Dweller, Bewilder, Vampiric Sliver, Haunting Hymn, Evil Eye of Orms-by-Gore**

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More packs with a higher than average quality, providing yet another choice for us. Here we have to decide between **Temporal Isolation**, **Strength in Numbers**, **Empty the Warrens** and **Vampiric Sliver**. The Isolation is still a very tempting pick for both of us. For me, I can happily abandon the **Fire Whip** for the Isolation. That the Isolation is still here in the pack after two picks is indicative that white is open and it is normally best to follow the signals you receive third/fourth pick than the earlier ones. I agreed with Rich that the Strength really wasn't an option here, as we had passed too much good green already and we are both in two colours already and feel that if we were to take a third colour it would be white from this pack.

For Rich, the **Vampiric Sliver** is also an option, as solid, sizeable guys are hard to come by in red-black. He does however have a **Coal Stoker** already, meaning the Empty is already a strong card. I am not yet locked into red, and I will pass up on the Empty, which isn't too powerful for me as I do not have the **Coal Stoker**, and I'll take the Isolation, keeping my options open and taking what is by far the strongest card in the pack and also the strongest signal of the draft that hasn't suggested blue.

Rich's Pick: **Empty the Warrens**

Q's Pick: **Temporal Isolation**

### Pack 1, Pick 5

**Temporal Eddy, Mogg War Marshal, Drudge Reavers, Screeching Sliver, Psychotic Episode, Jedit's Dragoons, Sprout, Basalt Gargoyle, Dreadship Reef, Auratog, Ophidian Eye**

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Dreadship Reef, Temporal Eddy, Mogg War Marshal and Basalt Gargoyle are the options here. For Rich the pick is simple; the Reef can be discounted because there is little reason to splash blue in red-black, and the Gargoyle is way superior to the Goblin.

For me, a similar process of elimination is at work. The Reef is a great card. I wouldn't mind picking up some Ichor Slicks and Death Rattles in the last pack, especially because if I get any Dreamscape Artists the option becomes even easier. I think the Eddy is an underrated card whose massive tempo swing will often win games, but I think my deck will shape up as a control deck with the expensive spells I already have, so I do not need to win through tempo alone. The Jedit's Dragoons is also tempting as I would follow the Isolation in colour, but it is not strong enough to do so. This means it is a pick between the definitely on-colour Eddy and the possibly on colour, and stronger, Basalt Gargoyle. I'll take the Gargoyle because I prefer blue-red to blue-white, and I think it is the stronger card.

Rich's Pick: Basalt Gargoyle

Q's Pick: Basalt Gargoyle

#### Pack 1, Pick 6

Flowstone Channeler, Trespasser *il-Vec*, Blazing Blade Askari, Shadow Sliver, Ophidian Eye, Watcher Sliver, Thrill of the Hunt, Barbed Shocker, Return to Dust, Forest

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Flowstone Channeler, Trespasser *il-Vec*, and Blazing Blade Askari is a choice that gives me pause. For Rich, the Trespasser is by far the stronger card, and I always feel that the Channeler is better than the Askari, although this is often because I tend to draft more controlling decks than aggressive ones. The Watcher Sliver is tempting, and probably stronger in power than my other options, but I have yet to see a good on-colour Sliver, meaning I don't really have any reason to place my trust in a Sliver plan. I will keep going red and see what happens.

Rich's Pick: Trespasser *il-Vec*

Q's Pick: Flowstone Channeler

#### Pack 1, Pick 7

Tolarian Sentinel, Benalish Cavalry, Clockspinning, Bogardan Rager, Sangrophage, D'Avenant Healer, Aspect of Mongoose, Quilled Sliver, Ghostflame Sliver

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It is unusual to get decisions this late in, but here we are faced by the Tolarian Sentinel, Bogardan Rager and Ghostflame Sliver. Unless I have already picked up some neat tricks with the Sentinel I tend to pick the Rager, although I think it is a really close pick. If I know a Dream Stalker or another Sentinel will wheel, then I opt for the flyer because I think, in blue-red, that there are too many combos to pass up—Subterranean Shambler, Stingscourger, Shaper Parasite, Flowstone Embrace, and Fatal Attraction, to mention but a few. However, I think the Rager is a large enough body that hits hard and causes problems when it holds or smashes the ground. Interestingly, had I taken the Watcher Sliver, I would've followed it with the Quilled Sliver, but it still isn't enough of an engine yet.

For Rich, red-black really needs its aggressive solid two-drops, which is exactly something that the Sliver delivers. The Rager is also awesome in this colour combination, but red-black can pick up its large late game creatures in *Future Sight*, where Mass of Ghouls and Fomori Nomad go late.

Rich's Pick: Ghostflame Sliver

Q's Pick: Bogardan Rager

#### Pack 1, Pick 8

Ironclaw Buzzardiers, Call to the Netherworld, Cyclopean Giant, Brass Gnat, Savage Thallid, Opaline Sliver, Krosan Grip, Grinning Totem

Rich's Pick: Grinning Totem

Q's Pick: Ironclaw Buzzardiers

#### Pack 1, Pick 9

Zealot *il-Vec*, Screeching Sliver, Ancient Grudge, Greenseeker, Foriysian Interceptor, Foriysian Totem, Haunting Hymn

Pick: Foriysian Totem

#### Pack 1, Pick 10

Gaze of Justice, Wormwood Dryad, Two-Headed Sliver, Clockspinning, Volcanic Awakening, Thick-Skinned Goblin

Pick: Thick-Skinned Goblin

#### Pack 1, Pick 11

Sidewinder Sliver, Viscid Lemures, Mwonvuli Acid-Moss, Assembly-Worker, Evil Eye of Orms-by-Gore

Pick: Evil Eye of Orms-by-Gore

### Pack 1, Pick 12

Foriysian Interceptor, Aetherflame Wall, Detainment Spell, Bewilder

Pick: Aetherflame Wall

### Pack 1, Pick 13

Drudge Reavers, Screeching Sliver, Auratog

Pick: Drudge Reavers

### Pack 1, Pick 14

Shadow Sliver, Barbed Shocker

Pick: Barbed Shocker

### Pack 1, Pick 15

Sangrophage

The late-pick **Foriysian Totem** was a steal, as well as the **Thick-Skinned Goblin**. Both decks are shaping up nicely, with good mana curves. Rich has more removal so far in Soot, but for now we have nothing either of us need to scabble for, and we can just take it as it comes, although it would be nice to pick up some more removal for my deck. I'm aware that for my deck, the next few picks will be distorted because Rich passed the blue cards, but we passed very little blue after the first few cards, so it should work out well.

## Pack 2, Pick 1

Erratic Mutation, Cradle to Grave, Reflex Sliver, Blightspeaker, Aquamorph Entity, Evolution Charm, Pallid Mycoderm, Brain Gorgers, Rathi Trapper, Primal Plasma, Skirk Shaman, Aether Membrane, Kavu Predator, Hedge Troll, Aeon Chronicler

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This is a very easy pick for both of us. Rich only has a single card to take—the **Rathi Trapper**—and for me the choice of **Erratic Mutation** versus **Aeon Chronicler** is no choice at all.

Rich's Pick: **Rathi Trapper**

Q's Pick: **Aeon Chronicler**



### Pack 2, Pick 2

Saltfield Recluse, Veiling Oddity, Midnight Charm, Shaper Parasite, Battering Sliver, Reality Acid, Blightspeaker, Evolution Charm, Vampiric Link, Gossamer Phantasm, Prodigal Pyromancer, Big Game Hunter, Keen Sense, Roiling Horror

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For Rich, it is an easy choice between **Big Game Hunter** and **Prodigal Pyromancer**, with the pinger winning by a long way. I have a much more difficult pick to make—the **Shaper Parasite** or the **Pyromancer**. If I have more ping effects to go with the **Fire Whip**, like **Fledgling Mawcor** or **Grapeshot**, then I am more tempted by the **Pyromancer**. Likewise, if I have ways of reusing the **Parasite**, I prefer it. However, I have no real other factors to take into account, so I opt for the naturally better morph.

Rich's Pick: **Prodigal Pyromancer**

Q's Pick: **Shaper Parasite**

### Pack 2, Pick 3

Stingscourger, Synchronous Sliver, Utopia Vow, Wistful Thinking, Dash Hopes, Reality Acid, Pallid Mycoderm, Prodigal Pyromancer, Vampiric Link, Piracy Charm, Sulfur Elemental, Riftmarked Knight, Null Profusion

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For me, **Pyromancer** is far superior to **Stingscourger**, leaving me with an easy pick. Rich's is also easy but might not appear so. It might be tempting to pick the second **Pyromancer**, to give him three ping effects that can add up and will probably win at least a third of his draft for him. However, **Null Profusion** is so powerful that if you are in black, it is virtually impossible to pass up. It will single-handedly win the game, as you generate more card advantage than Santa Claus.

Rich's Pick: **Null Profusion**

Q's Pick: **Prodigal Pyromancer**

### Pack 2, Pick 4

Ridged Kusite, Saltfield Recluse, Needlepeak Spider, Poultice Sliver, Firefight Mage, Blightspeaker, Ghost Tactician, Brute Force, Seal of Primordium, Dismal Failure, Life and Limb, Dismal Failure

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**Blightspeaker** is far from strong for Rich as he only has one Trapper so far; it is also likely that one of them will wheel later. This leaves him with what he wants out of the pack—the **Brute Force**. He needs it because it is a very strong combat trick in red-black, and is also cheap enough to help storm up an **Empty the Warrens**. My decision is a little easier as, great though **Dismal Failure** is, it is not as good as **Brute Force** for the previously mentioned reasons. I also think that one of the Failures might wheel, although I'm not holding my breath.

Rich's Pick: **Brute Force**

Q's Pick: **Brute Force**

#### **Pack 2, Pick 5**

Dawn Charm, Spitting Sliver, Aven Riftwatcher, Keldon Marauders, Dust Corona, Uktabi Drake, Essence Warden, Gossamer Phantasm, Venarian Glimmer, Treacherous Urge, Temporal Extortion

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Rich's Pick: **Treacherous Urge**

Q's Pick: **Gossamer Phantasm**

#### **Pack 2, Pick 6**

Utopia Vow, Shade of Trokair, Fury Charm, Vitaspore Thallid, Deadly Grub, Aquamorph Entity, Seal of Primordium, Mana Tithe, Rathi Trapper, Psychotrope Thallid

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Rich's Pick: **Rathi Trapper**

Q's Pick: **Aquamorph Entity**

#### **Pack 2, Pick 7**

Dreamscape Artist, Fury Charm, Reality Acid, Deadly Grub, Melancholy, Gossamer Phantasm, Hammerheim Deadeye, Mycologist, Radha, Heir to Keld

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Rich can only really pick the **Hammerheim Deadeye** here. I have a trickier choice between it and **Dreamscape Artist**. The Deadeye is not quite as good as he looks, and I personally think the **Dreamscape Artist** is overrated. I play him almost all the time in a three-colour deck, but seldom in a more streamlined one. However, with **Errant Ephemeron**, **Brine Elemental**, **Bogardan Rager**, and **Aeon Chronicler**, I feel the deck will need mana.

Rich's Pick: **Hammerheim Deadeye**

Q's Pick: **Dreamscape Artist**

#### **Pack 2, Pick 8**

Ridged Kusite, Dawn Charm, Brain Gorgers, Keldon Marauders, Ghost Tactician, Fa'adiyah Seer, Revered Dead, Sophic Centaur

Rich's Pick: **Brain Gorgers**

Q's Pick: **Dawn Charm**

#### **Pack 2, Pick 9**

Reflex Sliver, Blightspeaker, Aquamorph Entity, Evolution Charm, Pallid Mycoderm, Brain Gorgers, Aether Membrane

Rich's Pick: **Blightspeaker**

Q's Pick: **Aether Membrane**

#### **Pack 2, Pick 10**

Midnight Charm, Reality Acid, Blightspeaker, Vampiric Link, Gossamer Phantasm, Roiling Horror

Rich's Pick: **Blightspeaker**

Q's Pick: **Midnight Charm**

#### **Pack 2, Pick 11**

Wistful Thinking, Dash Hopes, Reality Acid, Pallid Mycoderm, Vampiric Link

Rich's Pick: **Vampiric Link**

Q's Pick: **Reality Acid**

#### **Pack 2, Pick 12**

Ridged Kusite, Firefight Mage, Ghost Tactician, Seal of Primordium

Pick: **Ridged Kusite**

#### **Pack 2, Pick 13**

Keldon Marauders, Dust Corona, Temporal Extortion

Pick: Temporal Extortion

### Pack 2, Pick 14

Deadly Grub, Seal of Primordium

Pick: Deadly Grub

### Pack 2, Pick 15

Reality Acid

The second pack, as expected, didn't deliver too much stuff for my deck, but I still picked up plenty of playables; enough to stabilise the early game with the **Dreamscape Artist**, **Aether Membrane** and **Aquamorph Entity** and some removal and **Aeon Chronicler** to hold the fort later on. I am still looking for removal.

Rich was gifted with a very late Rebel chain and matches my **Aeon Chronicler** with his **Null Profusion**. Both decks are still on a surprisingly level footing. Rich's deck is very evenly spread and has the luxury of just picking the best card each time in *Future Sight*, as it has no holes to fill.

## Pack 3, Pick 1

Cutthroat *ii*-Dal, Gift of Granite, Quiet Disrepair, Foresee, Rift Elemental, Nessian Courser, Grave Scrabblers, Henchfiend of Ukor, Whip-Spine Drake, Lymph Sliver, Homing Sliver, Char-Rumbler, Llanowar Mentor, Sword of the Meek, Magus of the Vineyard

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A fairly empty booster for both of us. I have a slight choice between **Foresee** and **Whip-Spine Drake**, but both of us pick the easily more powerful cards.

Rich's Pick: **Henchfiend of Ukor**

Q's Pick: **Foresee**



### Pack 3, Pick 2

Augur *ii*-Vec, Llanowar Empath, Grave Peril, Marshaling Cry, Kavu Primarch, Foresee, Sporoloth Ancient, Grave Scrabblers, Lumithread Field, Mesmeric Sliver, Deepcavern Imp, Spirit en-Dal, Cryptic Annelid, Pooling Venom

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Rich faces a depressing second pick between **Deepcavern Imp** and **Grave Scrabblers**. As he only has one madness outlet so far, the Imp is an easy pick. He can Rebel it up and use it as a madness outlet for any future cards. I face the classic decision between **Foresee** and **Cryptic Annelid**. I don't think the pick is even close, as they both dig through about the same number of cards, but Annelid provides you three insane cards almost every time and a very crucial 1/4 blocker; add to this the fact that he can be bounced and reused and you'll see why the pick isn't close.

Rich's Pick: **Deepcavern Imp**

Q's Pick: **Cryptic Annelid**

### Pack 3, Pick 3

Llanowar Empath, Marshaling Cry, Unblinking Bleb, Lost Hours, Wrap in Vigor, Mass of Ghouls, Lucent Liminid, Thornweald Archer, Flowstone Embrace, Dryad Arbor, Bonded Fetch, Snake Cult Initiation, Cloud Key

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**Flowstone Embrace** is the only card for Rich, but I have a much tighter option of Embrace versus **Bonded Fetch**. Normally, the Fetch is the stronger card, but I really need removal (as all I have is Parasite, Pyromancer, Fire Whip and Flowstone Channeler). I already have **Foresee**, **Annelid** and **Aeon Chronicler** for card advantage and for this pick I will help round the deck off rather than pick the most powerful card.

Rich's Pick: **Flowstone Embrace**

Q's Pick: **Flowstone Embrace**

### Pack 3, Pick 4

Saltskitter, Unblinking Bleb, Llanowar Augur, Venser's Diffusion, Deepcavern Imp, Fomori Nomad, Logic Knot, Lucent Liminid, Vedalken Aethermage, Virulent Sliver, Haze of Rage, Riftsweeper

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Rich's Pick: **Fomori Nomad**

Q's Pick: **Fomori Nomad**

### Pack 3, Pick 5

Emberwilde Augur, Putrid Cyclops, Augur *il*-Vec, Petrified Plating, Flowstone Embrace, Sarcomite Myr, Death Rattle, Homing Sliver, Keldon Megaliths, Sparkspitter, Riftsweeper

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Keldon Megaliths is a card I always find hard to rate. It really is awesome, but for this pick neither of us will take it. For Rich, **Death Rattle** is just a much stronger card, and for my deck, I doubt I will be hellbent often enough to make the Megaliths worth picking over the much needed **Flowstone Embrace**.

Rich's Pick: **Death Rattle**

Q's Pick: **Flowstone Embrace**

### Pack 3, Pick 6

Petrified Plating, Leaden Fists, Quiet Disrepair, Blind Phantasm, Lumithread Field, Grinning Ignus, Edge of Autumn, Delay, Festering March, Soultether Golem

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**Festering March** is a card I need to play more with. In 2HG it is really powerful because it has twice as many creatures to kill, and by itself in normal draft, I think it is a fine card. I seldom maindeck it unless I have lots of ping effects that I can combo with it, but I often sideboard it in against decks with multiple one-toughness guys. I disagree with Rich's pick here.

Rich's Pick: **Grinning Ignus**

Q's Pick: **Leaden Fists**

### Pack 3, Pick 7

Lost Hours, Frenzy Sliver, Mesmeric Sliver, Patrician's Scorn, Sarcomite Myr, Henchfiend of Ukor, Thornweald Archer, Skizzik Surger, Chronomantic Escape

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**Skizzik Surger** is a very underrated card. That late in the game, two lands is a trifling thing to pay for such a large body, and that is if it survives till your upkeep. It will often win the game the turn you play him. It will often get cut from decks in favour of other heavy drops but he should be considered far more often than he currently is. Rich is correct to pick the Henchfiend here because it has more of an impact on the game and is a very similar creature any way.

Rich's Pick: **Henchfiend of Ukor**

Q's Pick: **Skizzik Surger**

### Pack 3, Pick 8

Oblivion Crown, Emberwilde Augur, Fatal Attraction, Frenzy Sliver, Patrician's Scorn, Minions' Murmurs, Tolaria West, Pyromancer's Swath

Pick: **Fatal Attraction**

### Pack 3, Pick 9

Cutthroat *il*-Dal, Quiet Disrepair, Rift Elemental, Lymph Sliver, Homing Sliver, Char-Rumbler, Llanowar Mentor

Rich's Pick: **Cutthroat *il*-Dal**

Q's Pick: **Homing Sliver**

### Pack 3, Pick 10

Augur *il*-Vec, Llanowar Empath, Grave Peril, Lumithread Field, Mesmeric Sliver, Pooling Venom

Pick: **Llanowar Empath**

### Pack 3, Pick 11

Lost Hours, Wrap in Vigor, Mass of Ghouls, Dryad Arbor, Cloud Key

Rich's Pick: **Mass of Ghouls**

Q's Pick: **Wrap in Vigor**

### Pack 3, Pick 12

Saltskitter, Llanowar Augur, Vedalken Aethermage, Haze of Rage

Pick: **Vedalken Aethermage**

### Pack 3, Pick 13

Putrid Cyclops, Sarcomite Myr, Homing Sliver

Pick: **Homing Sliver**

### Pack 3, Pick 14

Petrified Plating, Soultether Golem

Pick: Soultether Golem

### Pack 3, Pick 15

Lost Hours

*Future Sight*, as it has a tendency to do, rounded both of our decks off nicely. Rich picked up three removal spells and two of the hard-hitting Henchfiends. I snapped up three removal spells of my own and two great card advantage spells.

Rich's Deck		
<b>Main Deck</b> 40 cards		
9 Mountain	2 Blightspeaker	1 Brute Force
8 Swamp	2 Rathi Trapper	1 Fire Whip
17 lands	1 Thick-Skinned Goblin	1 Flowstone Embrace
	1 Basalt Gargoyle	1 Fatal Attraction
	1 Deepcavern Imp	1 Foriysian Totem
	1 Grinning Ignus	1 Strangling Soot
	1 Prodigal Pyromancer	1 Empty the Warrens
	1 Trespasser il-Vec	1 Death Rattle
	1 Coal Stoker	1 Null Profusion
	2 Henchfiend of Ukor	
	1 Fomori Nomad	
	14 creatures	9 other spells

Q's Deck		
<b>Main Deck</b> 40 cards		
9 Mountain	1 Thick-Skinned Goblin	1 Foriysian Totem
8 Island	1 Errant Ephemeron	1 Fire Whip
17 lands	1 Dreamscape Artist	1 Brute Force
	1 Basalt Gargoyle	1 Foresee
	1 Flowstone Channeler	2 Flowstone Embrace
	1 Shaper Parasite	1 Fatal Attraction
	1 Prodigal Pyromancer	1 Leaden Fists
	1 Aquamorph Entity	
	1 Aether Membrane	8 other spells
	1 Cryptic Annelid	
	1 Fomori Nomad	
	1 Aeon Chronicler	
	1 Skizzik Surger	
	1 Bogardan Rager	
	1 Brine Elemental	
	15 creatures	

It's difficult to say which deck wound up being better. Rich's is very solid, with a healthy Rebel chain providing both removal and the card advantage his deck needs. However, he has no bombs other than *Null Profusion*. My deck is far more bomb-heavy with *Aeon Chronicler*, *Errant Ephemeron* and *Brine Elemental*, but I feel it gains its edge over Rich's version because it has more card advantage. I feel especially happy given that Rich passed all the blue cards left in the first pack, and so my part of the draft was slightly distorted—and hence the deck would've been better if this were not so.

It should be noted that Rich didn't play the *Ghostflame Sliver* in the end, as the Rebels provided him with enough two-drops, and the *Thick-Skinned Goblin* is better because he has two echo creatures.

Which deck do you guys think worked out stronger and which way would you have drafted it? There was easily an option for going white after the *Temporal Isolation*, although the deck probably wouldn't have been as strong as either of these two. Voice your thoughts and opinions in the forums.

Q

*Widely considered one of the world's foremost Limited competitors, Quentin Martin has four Limited Grand Prix Top 8s and a Top 8 at Pro Tour–Prague 2006. Between his Magic expertise and a background in philosophy, it's no surprise Quentin is well known for his strategic insight and theories on the game.*



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