



10 Decks in 10 Weeks: Fungal Behemoth (U/G)

Ben Bleiweiss
Building on a Budget
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I'm constantly looking for new ways to evolve *Building on a Budget*. Of all the columns on the site, *BoaB* is the one that has the greatest amount of reader input regarding content. This is intentional—I strive to incorporate as many reader ideas as possible, and to give you, the reader, the chance to influence upcoming columns.

The biggest problem I face is the ability to incorporate reader input in a timely fashion. This is because of my deadlines—articles that are posted at midnight on Wednesday are due in at 1 p.m. EST on Monday. This leaves me only five days to use poll results/forum ideas before my next article is due.

Ten Decks in Ten Weeks originated as an idea I pitched to Scott Johns and Kelly Digges—a way to give weekly continuity to the column, and to allow readers to determine deck focuses weeks in advance. I really, truly believed that *10 Decks in 10 Weeks* would be the series within *Building on a Budget* that really made this column my own—something completely unique that neither Nate Heiss nor JMS had done before. I am thankful that Scott and Kelly let me run with this series, because it did indeed end up being the most popular segment of *Building on a Budget* from this past year. Here is the final part of the *10 Decks in 10 Weeks* series, which includes links to the other parts.

While I probably won't do an exact copy of *10 Decks in 10 Weeks* next year, I do have an idea for a continuous deck evolution that I think will blow people away. Look for it early next year!

This article originally ran May 7, 2007

hey everyone, and welcome to the last week of *10 Decks in 10 Weeks*! It's been two and a half months since I started this experiment, and I think that overall it's been pretty successful. Some deck transitions were smoother than others, and some decks performed better than others, but there were a lot of good ideas, some pretty killer decks, and a whole lot of budgeting going on!

The most requested follow-up to this series was definitely a *Battle Royale* in which all ten decks squared off against one another to see which would come out on top. I'm not averse to figuring out how to do this if it's something you, the reader, really want to see—so if you wow my socks off on these poll results, I'll see what could be arranged!

Do you want to see a *Battle Royale* between these 10 decks?

- Yes! Which deck will reign supreme?
- Just get on with building more decks, you budgeteer!

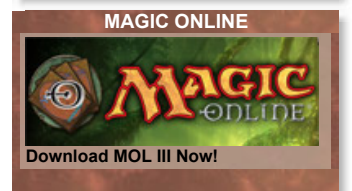
Submit my Vote

This week's article focuses around *Fungal Behemoth*, a rare from *Planar Chaos*. *Fungal Behemoth* is part of the same cycle of creatures as *Aeon Chronicler*. Functionally, I could describe *Fungal Behemoth* as the mismatched offspring of *Hunting Moa* and *Emperor Crocodile*. Like the former, it gives +1/+1 counters to other creatures. Like the latter, if you control no other creatures, it dies.

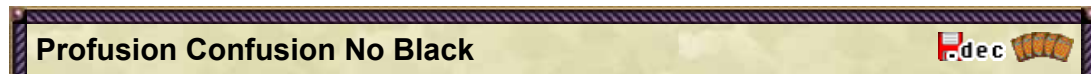
That's the rub against *Fungal Behemoth*—in almost all situations, it cannot be your only creature on the board. If you don't either suspend it put a counter on other creatures, or have other creatures in play with +1/+1 counters, it dies. In order to build a successful *Fungal Behemoth* deck, you need creatures with +1/+1 counters—lots of them.

In order to get started, let's take out the black from last week's deck.

Out: 4 Chromatic Star, 1 Consume Spirit, 1 Diabolic Tutor, 4 Null Profusion, 10 Swamp, 1 Urborg, Tomb of Yawgmoth, 1 Forest



- 10 Decks in 10 Weeks! Each week, I evolve a two-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 - [Sheer Pandemonium](#)
- Week 8: B/R - [Madness](#)
- Week 9: B/G - [Profusion Confusion](#)
- Week 10: G/U - **Fungal Behemoth**



Main Deck		
36 cards		
9 Forest	0 creatures	4 Early Harvest
9 lands		1 Gaea's Blessing
		4 Harmonize
		1 Mirari
		4 Overgrowth
		4 Rampant Growth
		3 Reclaim
		3 Search for Tomorrow
		3 Summer Bloom
		27 other spells

I've taken out a **Forest** in order to make room for **Simic Growth Chambers**. In this deck, we're definitely going to need the color fixing, because the focus of this deck is creatures with +1/+1 counters. Which creatures have the most +1/+1 counters? The green spikes and the Simic graft creatures from *Dissension!*

In: 8 Island, 4 **Simic Growth Chamber**

I'm not going to lie—a lot of the green combo pieces from last week's deck aren't going to end up making the next cut—but I'm leaving them in to see what happens just in case. To start the deck off, I added in 4 **Vinelasher Kudzu**. This is one of the earliest drops that can get +1/+1 counters, and it works extremely well with **Rampant Growth** and **Search for Tomorrow**. Naturally, 4 copies of **Fungal Behemoth** need to be in the deck, and I've returned **Draining Whelk** from *A Blink in Time* to make a repeat appearance, four weeks later. I don't expect this version to play very well (there aren't enough creatures to reliably be able to play **Fungal Behemoth**), but I want to see how the cards interact.

In: 4 **Vinelasher Kudzu**, 4 **Fungal Behemoth**, 2 **Draining Whelk**



UG Fungal Behemoth 1		
Main Deck		
60 cards		
11 Forest	2 Draining Whelk	4 Early Harvest
8 Island	4 Fungal Behemoth	1 Gaea's Blessing
4 Simic Growth Chamber	4 Vinelasher Kudzu	4 Harmonize
23 lands	10 creatures	1 Mirari
		4 Overgrowth
		4 Rampant Growth
		3 Reclaim
		3 Search for Tomorrow
		3 Summer Bloom
		27 other spells

Game 1: Oldmanwinter (Mono-Blue Control)

I get an early **Vinelasher Kudzu** and follow it with **Overgrowth**. He tries to **Boomerang** it, and I play **Early Harvest**, untap, and **Draining Whelk**. I then get double **Harmonize**, **Reclaim**, two more **Overgrowths**, and another **Early Harvest**. He counters a couple of spells with **Muddle the Mixture** and **Boomerangs** my Kudzu, but the Whelk goes all the way.

Record: 1-0

Yeah, pretty much what I thought—I had lots of mana generation and barely any creatures. To fix the deck from this point, I took out a lot of the *Null Profusion* engine pieces, and added in some good blue, green, and artifact creatures that deal in +1/+1 counters. **Plaxcaster Frogling** is a 3/3 for three and **Cytoplast Root-Kin** is a 4/4 for four, and both give great benefits to other creatures with +1/+1 counters—they are auto-includes in this type of deck. I also added one each of four utility creatures—**Triskelavus** (a large flyer and tim), **Spike Feeder** (lifegain, and the ability to move around +1/+1 counters), **Spike Tiller** (another Spike, and one that can make three more creatures with +1/+1 counters), and **Cytoplast Manipulator** (a limited Control Magic).

Out: 4 **Early Harvest**, 3 **Summer Bloom**, 1 **Mirari**, 4 **Overgrowth**

In: 4 **Cytoplast Root-Kin**, 4 **Plaxcaster Frogling**, 1 **Triskelavus**, 1 **Spike Feeder**, 1 **Spike Tiller**, 1 **Cytoplast Manipulator**

UG Fungal Behemoth 2		
Main Deck		
60 cards		

11 Forest	1 Cytoplast Manipulator	1 Gaea's Blessing
8 Island	4 Cytoplast Root-Kin	4 Harmonize
4 Simic Growth Chamber	2 Draining Whelk	4 Rampant Growth
23 lands	4 Fungal Behemoth	3 Reclaim
	4 Plaxcaster Frogling	3 Search for Tomorrow
	1 Spike Feeder	15 other spells
	1 Spike Tiller	
	1 Triskelavus	
	4 Vinelasher Kudzu	
	22 creatures	

Game 2: Joysynthesis (U/B Control)

I get stuck on three mana, and he plays **Dimir Guildmage** and **Nekrataal** on my **Vinelasher Kudzu**. I then get **Reclaim** into **Rampant Growth** for a fourth land and play **Cytoplast Manipulator** and **Plaxcaster Frogling**. They die, one to blocking his **Dimir Guildmage** and one to a **Consume Spirit**. When I try to play another **Frogling**, he answers with **Remove Soul** and I lose.

Record: 1-1

Game 3: Countrythug (Mono-White Rescue)

I get **Vinelasher Kudzu**, it hits once as a 4/4, and he plays **Devouring Light** to kill it. **Sunlance** kills **Spike Feeder**, but I land another **Kudzu**, follow it with **Triskelavus**, and watch him block with **Aven Riftwatcher** and **Dust Elemental** to gain 4 life and stop a creature. He then does that again, except with **Whitemane Lion**. When he tries to put **Griffin Guide** on his **Lion** the next turn, I kill it with **Triskelavus** tokens in response. I get **Plaxcaster Frogling** to the board, and it protects me the rest of the way for the win.

Record: 2-1

Game 4: Garthug (U/W Urzatron)

Mulligan a one-land hand into some offense. After a long game, he plays double **Ancestral Vision** and double **Tidings**, gets double **Urzatron** and triple **Wrath of God**, and beats me while at 4 life. I have a ton of offense and he's almost dead, but he locks me down with **Spell Burst**. I nearly beat him three times, once with **Triskelavus**, once with **Spike Tiller** plus **Fungal Behemoth**, and once with **Cytoplast Root-Kin** and **Draining Whelk**.

Record: 2-2

Game 5: hirohito_0 (Slivers)

I get turn-two **Vinelasher Kudzu**, turn-three **Rampant Growth**, turn-four **Plaxcaster Frogling**, turn five suspend **Fungal Behemoth**, turn six unsuspend, play **Cytoplast Root-Kin**, attack with an 8/8 **Kudzu** and a 15/15 **Behemoth**.

Record: 3-2



I'll say this—when the deck works, it works fast. **Fungal Behemoth** virtually doubles the power I have on the board at the time, since almost all of my creatures are 0/0 dudes with +1/+1 counters.

To make the deck more explosive, I took out more engine pieces (**Reclaim** was nice, but hardly necessary to smash down on an opponent), and added in **Terramorphic Expanses** (there are great with **Vinelasher Kudzu**—I play the **Expanse**, the **Kudzu** gets +1/+1, and I sacrifice the **Expanse** to get another land and another +1/+1 counter), **Llanowar Elves** (to speed up the deck a turn, and to give me another creature for the deck), and a second **Spike Tiller**—so far, I've been happy whenever I drew the first.

Out: 3 **Reclaim**, 1 **Gaea's Blessing**, 1 **Island**, 1 **Forest**, 3 **Search for Tomorrow**

In: 4 **Terramorphic Expanse**, 4 **Llanowar Elves**, 1 **Spike Tiller**

UG Fungal Behemoth 3		
Main Deck		
60 cards		
10 Forest	1 Cytoplast Manipulator	4 Harmonize
7 Island	4 Cytoplast Root-Kin	4 Rampant Growth
4 Simic Growth Chamber	2 Draining Whelk	8 other spells
4 Terramorphic Expanse	4 Fungal Behemoth	
25 lands	4 Llanowar Elves	
	4 Plaxcaster Frogling	
	1 Spike Feeder	
	2 Spike Tiller	
	1 Triskelavus	
	4 Vinelasher Kudzu	
	27 creatures	

Game 6: Dartslogger (R/W Rescue)

I get turn-one **Llanowar Elves**, turn two suspend **Fungal Behemoth**. I'm playing for the win—if he can't kill my

Elves, I get a 2/2 Elves, with a **Cytoplast Root-Kin** in hand, to make my Elves 3/3 with a 6/6 hasty **Fungal Behemoth** coming down on turn three. He has **Magus of the Scroll** on the board. He aims for my Elves and hits them with **Stingscourger**. My Behemoth dies, and my **Cytoplast Root-Kin** gets hit by **Stingscourger** three straight turns thanks to **Whitemane Lion**. Record: 3-3

Game 7: Splashdown (W/U Control)

He gets an early **Weathered Wayfarer**, and I let him get lands as I build up with **Llanowar Elves** and **Spike Tiller**. He tries to play **Crovax**, **Ascendant Hero**, and I hit it with **Draining Whelk**. That's all she wrote, as my 7/7 flyer dominates the rest of the game.

Record: 4-3

Game 8: Lexcupid (Mono-Blue)

I get a turn-three Kudzu, follow it with **Spike Feeder**, suspend **Fungal Behemoth**, land it, and then drop **Plaxcaster Frogling** to protect the rest of my guys plus swing with my 9/9 hasty creature. He has a **Lotus Bloom** suspended but not much other action, and he rolls over and plays dead.

Record: 5-3

Game 9: Rapid0 (Thallids)

He starts with **Essence Warden**. Here's how my turns go:

Turn one: **Forest**, **Llanowar Elves**.

Turn two: **Vinelasher Kudzu**, **Island** (2/2 Kudzu).

Turn three: **Forest** (3/3 Kudzu), suspend **Fungal Behemoth**, swing for 3.

Turn four: **Fungal Behemoth** unsuspends, puts a +1/+1 counter on **Llanowar Elves**. (Elves: 2/2). I play a **Forest** (Kudzu: 4/4) and play a **Cytoplast Root-Kin** (Elves: 3/3, Kudzu: 5/5, **Fungal Behemoth** 10/10). I swing for 18 on turn four, and kill him the next turn.

Record: 6-3

Game 10: jktk0401 (Orzhov)

I draw triple **Harmonize** and no creatures, and die to **Adarkar Valkyrie** and **Angel of Despair**.

Record: 6-4

Game 11: Varsity171 (R/G Aggro)

He gets turn-one **Rift Bolt**, turn-two **Skraggan Pit-Skulk** with **Dust Corona**, turn-four double **Brute Force**, and turn-five **Resize**, and then shows me a hand with **Llanowar Elves** and **Sparkmage Apprentice**. I had dropped a 4/4 **Vinelasher Kudzu**, was about to make it a 6/6, and had **Cytoplast Manipulator** on the board to grab his guy.

Record: 6-5

Just some minor tinkering here. I don't have a ton of graft guys to give my opponent's creatures +1/+1 counters, so **Cytoplast Manipulator** hasn't been a great deal at 2/2 for four. I also cut the **Spike Feeder** (I haven't needed to gain life) and a single **Harmonize**. I add in trips of **Coiling Oracle**, as another way to accelerate my mana early and to give me another early creature in case I draw an early **Fungal Behemoth**.

Out: **Cytoplast Manipulator**, **Harmonize**, **Spike Feeder**

In: 3 **Coiling Oracle**



UG Fungal Behemoth 4		
Main Deck		
60 cards		
10 Forest	3 Coiling Oracle	3 Harmonize
7 Island	4 Cytoplast Root-Kin	4 Rampant Growth
4 Simic Growth Chamber	2 Draining Whelk	7 other spells
4 Terramorphic Expanse	4 Fungal Behemoth	
25 lands	4 Llanowar Elves	
	4 Plaxcaster Frogling	
	2 Spike Tiller	
	1 Triskelavus	
	4 Vinelasher Kudzu	
	28 creatures	

Game 12: Diamondsnake (Mono-Red Goblins)

I get a second-turn **Rampant Growth**, then play **Plaxcaster Frogling** third turn, **Vinelasher Kudzu** and a suspended **Fungal Behemoth** fourth turn, and play **Cytoplast Root-Kin** on the fifth turn to swing for twenty-one and win. (5/5 **Plaxcaster**, 4/4 **Vinelasher Kudzu**, and 12/12 **Fungal Behemoth**).

Record: 7-5

Game 13: Denfun (B/G Control)

He gets triple **Putrefy** with **Recollect** and drops **Vulturous Zombie** with a **Moldervine Cloak**. I get a late **Triskelavus**, hold it off thanks to double **Cytoplast Root-Kin**, and then get **Spike Tiller** to push through just enough damage to kill him exactly. This game wouldn't have been as close, except I stacked my **Fungal Behemoth** wrong and had it come into play before giving a +1/+1 counter.

Record: 8-5

Game 14: FloozyBoozy (B/G Control)

He gets double **Putrefy**, double **Last Gasp** and double **Tendrils of Despair**. I can't keep a creature on the board, and I lose to **Phyrexian Totem** and double **Yavimaya Dryad**.

Record: 8-6

Game 15: Hisria (W/U Weenie)

He gets **Glorious Anthem** and **Azorius First-Wing**. I get **Llanowar Elves**, **Coiling Oracle**, and double suspended **Fungal Behemoth** plus **Llanowar Elves**, and then play **Spike Tiller** to make my guys huge. He concedes.

Record: 9-6

Game 16: Nicofree (U/B Discard/Mill)

He plays **Glimpse the Unthinkable**, then kills three of my guys. I land **Cytoplast Root-Kin**, and he knocks me down to one card with **Cry of Contrition** and **Consult the Necrosages**. That one card, though, is **Harmonize**, so I draw back up to a nearly full hand. When he tries to **Persecute**, I hit him back with **Draining Whelk**, and that ends the game.

Record: 10-6

Game 17: dvsone (R/G Aggro)

I draw **Coiling Oracle**, **Harmonize**, and twelve lands. By the time I get my first non-Oracle creature, I'm already at 6.

Record: 10-7

The mana acceleration hasn't been working as well as I'd hoped, at least at the two-slot. **Llanowar Elves** have been great, because they allow a natural curve into **Plaxcaster Frogling**, or to play **Vinelasher Kudzu** on turn two and then play a land. **Coiling Oracle** and **Rampant Growth**, not so much.

Also, the deck is skewing heavily towards green. To further increase my chance of having an early creature for **Fungal Behemoth**, I add in **Aquastrand Spider** and **Whirling Dervish**, and take out a couple of **Islands** in favor of **Forests**. I want to always have at least one **Forest** in my opening hand for **Llanowar Elves**, and two green by turn two to play **Whirling Dervish**.

Out: 4 **Rampant Growth**, 1 **Terramorphic Expanse**, 3 **Coiling Oracle**, 2 **Island**

In: 4 **Aquastrand Spider**, 4 **Whirling Dervish**, 2 **Forest**



UG Fungal Behemoth 5		
Main Deck 60 cards		
12 Forest	4 Aquastrand Spider	3 Harmonize
5 Island	4 Cytoplast Root-Kin	3 other spells
4 Simic Growth Chamber	2 Draining Whelk	
3 Terramorphic Expanse	4 Fungal Behemoth	
24 lands	4 Llanowar Elves	
	4 Plaxcaster Frogling	
	2 Spike Tiller	
	1 Triskelavus	
	4 Vinelasher Kudzu	
	4 Whirling Dervish	
	33 creatures	

Game 18: Lobo20 (G/B/U Reanimator)

I drop turn-one **Llanowar Elves**, turn-two **Whirling Dervish**, turn-three **Vinelasher Kudzu** with **Terramorphic Expanse**, turn four suspend **Fungal Behemoth** with **Llanowar Elves** number two, turn-five **Plaxcaster Frogling** for the kill.

Record: 11-7

Game 19: LtCmdrJNA (Slivers)

He gets **Sidewinder**, **Firewake**, **Gemhide** and **Bonesplitter Sliver**, knocks me to three. I get **Llanowar Elves**, **Vinelasher Kudzu**, suspend **Fungal Behemoth** back-to-back turns, and drop **Aquastrand Spider** to drop him below zero on my turn five, on the draw.

Record: 12-7

Game 20: TheLostWiggin (U/W Momentary Blink)

He gets turn-one and -two **Ancestral Vision** and then drops **Teferi's Moat** naming green. That's that, as he proceeds to drop multiple **Riftwing Cloudskates**, **Faith's Fetters** my **Triskelavus**, and win.

Record: 12-8

I was pretty happy with the performance of **Fungal Behemoth**, and I was quite surprised by how quickly the marquee creature of this deck could come down and kill an opponent (sometimes as early as turn four!). This deck would probably be improved somewhat by adding in countermagic (**Remand/Mana Leak**) to stop a key spell around turn four or five at a key moment, and I'd probably take out the **Whirling Dervishes** to make room for that—but I've added in the 4-8 counterspells before, so you know how that works if you want to make that change!

Thank you for the great response to the 10 Decks in 10 Weeks experiment! I've been very happy with how it helped focus this column and allowed me to have continuity from week to week plus incorporate a ton of reader feedback (with the massive lead time on a lot of these deck ideas, I've had lots of time to get ideas from e-mail and the forums). I am sure that, in some way, shape or form, 10 Decks in 10 Weeks will be back again to Building on a Budget someday and will be tweaked to flow better and make the deck transitions a little smoother!

After 10 Decks in 10 Weeks, it's time to add Planar Chaos to my Battle of Wits deck. You decide:		
With Battle of Wits included.	3131	53.9%
Without Battle of Wits . I dare you!	2683	46.1%
Total	5814	100.0%

Next week: You voted for **Battle of Wits** with **Battle of Wits** with *Planar Chaos*, and so it is!



Which of the 10 Decks in 10 Weeks did you like the most?

- 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 – Sheer Pandemonium
- Week 8: B/R – Madness
- Week 9: B/G – Profusion Confusion
- Week 10: G/U – Fungal Behemoth

Submit my Vote

Which was your *least* favorite of the 10 Decks in 10 Weeks?

- 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 – Sheer Pandemonium
- Week 8: B/R – Madness
- Week 9: B/G – Profusion Confusion
- Week 10: G/U – Fungal Behemoth

Submit my Vote

*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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