Magic The Gathering Level 1 Judge Testing Process

Introduction

We certify people as level 1 Magic judges for two main reasons, the first is that it brings them into our community and makes it easier for them to get help, the seconds is to mark them as someone who we want to represent us as judges. Certifying someone for level 1 is a badge of trust, it tells players that we have confidence in this person and that their events will be fun to play in. What we are really testing for is “How good an experience will this person give the players in their events?”

Refer to the judge level requirements on http://www.wizards.com/Magic/Magazine/Article.aspx?x=judge/welcome for more information on what a level 1 is. Before testing someone you should be confident that they either fulfil these requirements or will fulfil them by the end of the testing process. Talk with them and attend their events either as a player or judging with them to determine if they are ready for the test.

Preparation

The candidate must have read the Judging at Regular REL document (JAR). They must also be familiar with sections 2, 10 and Appendix B of the Magic Tournament Rules (MTR), as well as all sideboarding regulations. They should also be familiar with the basics of 2HG, suggest they read the 2HG FAQ. Suggest to the candidate that they do a few easy practice exams in judge center to get a feel for the style of question they will be asked. If there are any areas they are unsure of the Judge Classes are an amazing way to study.

You will need to create an exam in Judge Center and print off the test for the candidate.

When printing exams there have been problems and bugs where it will only print the first page, in particular when using Firefox. Some solutions people have found to work:

- Safari, on both Windows and Mac, this is a recommended solution.
- Chrome, with javascript disabled, on both Windows and Mac
- Internet Explorer 8 in Windows 7

Sitting The Exam

An exam can be done at any time, it doesn’t have to be during an event. If the candidate works in a store keep in mind when arranging a time for the exam that they will be unable to be doing other work while taking the exam, it is unlikely you will be able to test someone while they are trying to work on their own. The exam itself is untimed but will take most candidates around 90 minutes. Candidates are not allowed any notes (such as rules FAQs or the JAR) during the exam. Sit them down somewhere quiet and go over the following points before starting:

- The contents of the exam are confidential and they are only allowed to discuss it with you.
- The player whose name begins with “A” is the active player and the one whose name begins with “N” is the non-active player.
- Questions whose answers have a circle mean there’s only one correct answer. Those whose answers are squares means it’s a multiple question one, where the number of right answers might range from 0 to 5.
- You can also make notes or cross things out if it helps. It also helps to give the candidate a few basic lands to help visualise scenarios.
Once the candidate has finished give them a quick break while you mark the exam. A mark of 70%+ is required to pass the exam, even if a candidate fails you still need to sit down with them for the interview to help them find out where they went wrong and how to learn from it. You may find it helps to leave telling them their mark until after the interview so that as you go over questions they can figure out that they aren’t at a level 1 standard yet. If the candidate has failed the exam they can resit in 2 months, and should be encouraged to do so once they have revised the areas they got wrong. Don’t give up on a candidate unless they give up on themselves.

**Interview**

After the exam is a short interview, this your chance to sit down and talk about Magic and judging for a bit, as well as to confirm that the candidate would be a suitable member of our community, following policies and being willing to learn. This is our chance to use the results of the written exam to clear up any misconceptions and teach the correct answers to anything they got wrong. First of all go over anything the candidate has questions on or say they are unsure about, then go over any remaining wrong answers. If the candidate has failed reassure them that they even though they aren’t certified yet they are still a judge, that we still value them and that this test has just identified some areas for them to work on with our help. Scheduling a time or event for a retest gives the candidate a goal to work towards and encourages them to keep judging.

Some other points you may want to go over briefly:

- Reinforce the philosophy of regular REL – that it is about having fun and as judges we are here to help players and correct game states rather than punish people.
- Reinforce that unlike competitive REL game losses are only used as a last resort, after a player has made the same mistake or been asked to change behaviour many times. Things like problems with sideboarding or number of cards in a deck should not result in game losses at regular REL.
- If the candidate has done well and wants to work bigger events beyond regular REL you can try to mentor them further, try to get them judging at GPTs or PTQs to introduce them to competitive REL.

**Followup and Certification**

Once the exam is over whether the candidate passed or not you need to enter their answers into judge center by viewing the exam and selecting “Enter Candidate Answers”, record the exam ID number as you do. You then need to enter a review of them. Go the the reviews section and select “Interview”, if the candidate passed recommend their new level as 1, if they failed as 0. Enter a review of the candidate, this is likely the first review they have ever received to try to be as comprehensive as possible. Try to include all of the areas of both rules and policy they are strong in or need to work on as well as any other comments.

As the one who certified a level 1 you are likely their first point of contact with the judge program, you are like their elder brother or sister in our Magic Judge family. As such you need to help them get started as a judge and let them know about the resources that are available to them. Make sure you explain each of the following:

- **Judge Center** – they can also view their completed exam here if they want to reread anything.
- **http://dcifamily.org/askthejudge/** – the #mtgrules IRC channel for live chat rules answers (also the #mtgjudge channel for judge chats)
- **http://wiki.dcifamily.org/index.php/Main Page** – The Judge Wiki
- **The local judge sites and mailing lists** on the wiki, help them get on any that apply to them.
- **About a week after they have been certified make sure that they have been added to the DCIJudge-L Mailing List, suggest that they change their mode to “NODIGEST” to enable them to get emails as they are sent so they can more easily participate and follow topics.**

Level 1 certifications should not be announced on the judge list but announcing it on your local community forums or mailing list is great.

Keep in touch with the candidate and help them grow as a part of the Magic Judge Family!

If you have any feedback on the contents of this guide please contact Fabian Peck through the judge center (use the people section to send a message).