

Excalibur Columbus: Post-Conference Report

On Thursday, July 23, a regional judge conference was conducted ahead of Excalibur Events: Columbus. Designed to foster professional development, cross-system rules knowledge, and peer networking, the event brought together local and international judges. Despite a small total attendance of five participants, the conference successfully delivered interactive educational content, facilitated high-level certification mentoring, and encouraged valuable comparative discussions across multiple trading card game (TCG) judge frameworks.

Promotion and Communication Strategy

To drive awareness and encourage attendance among active and prospective judges, outreach was conducted across multiple digital channels targeting both regional and broader community networks:

- **Discord Channels:** Multi-server broadcast across several dedicated Judge Discord communities, as well as the official Excalibur Events Discord server.
- **Facebook Networks:** Event postings on the Excalibur Events official page and targeted regional outreach via the Magic Judges of the Midwest Facebook Group.
- **Social Media Outlets:** Promotional coverage via Excalibur Events' official Instagram account.

Program Agenda and Content

The conference structure balanced analytical policy work with hands-on gameplay to maximize engagement:

1. **Game Rules Violation (GRV) Workshop:** A collaborative session analyzing common policy infractions, procedural mistakes, and judge intervention strategies.
2. **Secrets of Strixhaven Sealed Tournament:** A concluding gameplay session providing practical context for limited-format rules enforcement, card interactions, and community engagement.



Participant Engagement and Methodology

The event emphasized active learning and direct peer collaboration rather than passive lectures:

- **Interactive Case Analysis:** Attendees actively worked through complex scenario breakdowns during the GRV Workshop.
- **Applied Gameplay:** The evening tournament format allowed participants to engage directly as players while discussing live operational questions in real time.

Key Achievements and Successes

- **Cross-Game Policy Synthesis:** Due to the diverse backgrounds of the attendees—several of whom primary games other than Magic: The Gathering—the group conducted a comprehensive comparative analysis of tournament structures, penalty guides, and operational philosophies across multiple TCG ecosystems, including Disney Lorcan, Pokémon, Riftbound, and Magic: The Gathering.
- **Advanced Level Mentoring:** Prior to the official start of the group program, dedicated 1:1 mentorship was provided to an attendee actively preparing for their Judge Foundry Level 3 Certification.
- **International Community Integration:** Hosted an visiting judge from Australia, utilizing the session to align on long-term judge goals, discuss certification pathways, and facilitate connection with leadership in the Oceanic Judge Association.

Areas for Improvement and Recommendations

- **Scheduling Optimization (Event Timing):** Feedback collected throughout the broader tournament weekend highlighted Thursday evening as a significant constraint on attendance.
 - **Recommendation:** Future pre-convention judge conferences should be scheduled for Friday evening. Shifting to Friday would better accommodate convention set-up staff, standard event staff arriving closer to the weekend, and local area judges who are unable to take time off work earlier in the week.

