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Sundering Titan



Adrian Sullivan · *Single-Card Strategies*
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Sitting here [in Kobe](#) makes it harder to focus on what is important in life. It's easy to go out on the town and have some sushi with the likes of [Nate Heiss](#). Such auspicious company does make it hard to focus on what to write about, however. I stole some computer time away from fellow Sideboard reporters and checked out the forums to see if any of you had thoughts about what I should be writing about this week. Between the forums and the e-mails, it was clear. It was time for Titan.

For those of you who don't know about Titan, Titan is "the fantasy monster slugathon". [Avalon Hill](#) made this incredibly good boardgame filled with monsters from back in the 80s. Basically, the game is so good that out of print versions of the game still sell for a lot. We're talking hundreds.

Well, **Sundering Titan**, in its own element is incredibly good too. This isn't a killer tournament card for a lot of people, but this card is exciting enough that a ton of you mentioned him so much, I couldn't help *not* write about him.



Looking at **Sundering Titan**, there are some obviously, incredibly powerful things going on. 7/10 by itself is nothing to sneeze at, especially at a premium price like 8 mana. Compare this to **Colossus of Sardis**. As a 9/9 for 9 mana, you had a slight bit more kick, but the huge drawback of having to spend 9 mana to untap the big monster typically made it unwieldy. To get around this drawback required either a lot of mana or a lot of **Twiddles**. Thankfully, the guy was big enough that if he got going you wouldn't need to do too much work to finish the job.

Sundering Titan lacks the ability to finish people off as quickly. Not only is the card not as large as the Colossus, but it also lacks trample. Chump blockers like Handsome Jens Thoren the **Solemn Simulacrum** are more than able to keep him off your back. A **Troll Ascetic**, **River Boa**, or some other regenerator gives the Titan a similar problem.

What the Titan lacks in damage dealing it makes up for even more with its ability to stunt the mana of people that

you're playing against. Against some decks, the Titan is especially well named; it's almost as though you've cast the spell **Sunder** on just your opponents. And even if the Titan is destroyed by a lucky opponent, he gives them back a parting shot, wrecking their mana even more. You would think that old-school cards like **Swords to Plowshares** or new ones like **Altar's Light** would get around the Titan's ability, but the Titan doesn't care if he dies. He just cares about if he leaves play.

The first question is: how do we get him into play?

Getting That Bad Boy Out There

One of the first ways that we can pump him out is simple. Mana. He only (haha) costs 8 colorless mana, and there are a ton of ways to get that mana. One option that has been very popular lately has been to run the Urzatron Lands. Get out an **Urza's Tower**, Power Plant, and Mine and you are seven-eighths of the way there. Right now people out in tournament-land and at home have had fun finding the Urza's Land with **Weathered Wayfarer**. Wayfarer is also good at getting **Cloudpost**. Three **Cloudpost** also pumps out enough mana to get this guy going.



Speaking of **Cloudpost**, even looking at this last week's **Pro-Tour Kobe** can show [how easy it is](#) to get a **Cloudpost** set going. With **Sylvan Scrying** to hunt down the post, and **Reap and Sow** to help things out even more, it can be really easy to grab the full set and lock and load. Hmm... It also looks as though **Reap and Sow** can be used to destroy someone else's mana. Maybe we can make use of that later on.

Tinker-like effects are another simple way to drop the **Sundering Titan** on the table. Tinker effects are the ones that can skip his expensive mana cost through some kind of sneakiness. **Tinker**, **Transmute Artifact**, and the newly printed **Reshape** all can turn one artifact into another. Sadly, **Reshape** doesn't get around the casting cost issue, but not every card like this is going to be perfect. Also similar is **Tooth and Nail**, which can, with enough mana, go and find a Titan and drop it (and a friend) into play from the middle of your deck. **Show and Tell** does the same neat trick, so long as you've already found the Titan.

Artifact mana is the other easy way to get things going. Cards like **Grim Monolith** and **Metalworker** were made to produce mad amounts of mana quickly. Throwing in a **Voltaic Key** or a **Twiddle** on the mana producers can make a Titan hit the board very, very early in the game. It isn't unusual to do something like use a **City of Traitors** to drop a **Grim Monolith** on one turn, tap both for mana (5 mana), lay another **City of Traitors** or **Ancient Tomb** to tap (7 mana), and finish off with a **Voltaic Key** or **Grim Monolith** for the final 8th mana to hit him on 2nd turn.

So, we can get him out there, but what happens next?

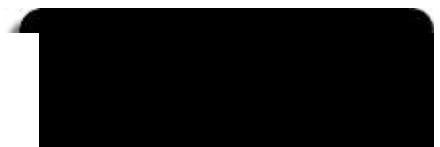
What's the Score Here? What Happens Next?

The next thing to figure out is how exactly the guy is going to affect your opponent and what you can do about it to make things as absolutely painful as possible. Aside from being large, it is obvious that the **Sundering Titan** is going to eat some lands.

Most people tend to run some basic lands, and in fact many of the ways that work best with **Sundering Titan** (Forests for the **Reap and Sow** versions, Plains for **Weathered Wayfarer**, and both if you want them both). Unfortunately, what that means is that you are going to lose 1 or 2 of your own land unless you are lucky enough to have an opponent that has that same land type to mess with.

The other thing to think about right now is that many people are only running one color. This does mean, then, that **Sundering Titan** is not going to completely cripple them, just hinder them. Losing only one land is not that big of a deal compared to having to deal with a 7/10, after all, especially if you are losing one of your own.

Where you get to really mess with people is if you are playing against your friends that have Dual Lands. The true Dual Lands are truly great. They make two colors of mana. They don't hurt you. They cost around ten dollars. And if you play against people that play a bunch of them,



Sundering Titan becomes something likely to make them want to just end it all. Dual Lands are lucky enough to be considered whatever kind of land that they make color for. Tropical Island is both an Island *and* a Forest. When you choose one of each basic land type, even though the Dual Lands aren't considered basic lands, you get to whack them all the same, usually resulting in a one-way near-**Armageddon**. It's the same in the Prismatic format on **Magic Online**. With everyone using their **Harrows**, a card like **Sundering Titan** can completely ruin someone's day.

One cute trick to use with the Titan to avoid the annoyance of his ability on your own lands is to run **Groundskeeper**. After you've lost any of your lands, you can pop them back really quickly and easily. It ain't much just on its own, but it's a nice bonus.

Eating your own **Sundering Titan** can also be fun and exciting. Using a **Transmute Artifact** or a **Tinker** on a **Sundering Titan** means that you will have had at least 3 Big Booms happen. That's got to be exciting. With a wee bit of bounce (like **Repulse** or **Echoing Truth**), you'll be able to recast him yet again.

This brings me back to **Reap and Sow**. What is so exciting about the card we mentioned way up in the previous section? Well, with the Titan not necessarily doing the job of completely wrecking someone's mana base (unless they are your friend with Dual Lands), **Reap and Sow** can really pile on the damage to a player's mana base. If you already know that you're going to set up the Titan, the **Reap and Sow** can find that third **Cloudpost** to cast the Titan as well as destroy a mana source that the Titan won't hit (like a non-basic land or an extra basic land). The other nice thing you can do with the **Reap and Sow** is to fetch some of the color producing lands that can't be eaten by a Titan, like **Mirrodin's Core** or other color producers with useful abilities like **Pendelhaven** and **Treetop Village**.



Bringing it all Together

I like the Reap and Sow idea the most as a launching spot. With that in mind I'm going to steal some of the ideas from Gabriel Nassif and use the Sylvan Scrying/Reap and Sow/Tooth and Nail engine. Here's a skeleton

4 **Sundering Titan**
4 **Sylvan Scrying**
4 **Reap and Sow**
4 **Tooth and Nail**

4 **Cloudpost**
4 **Treetop Village**
1 **Pendelhaven**
4 **Tree of Tales**
4 **Havenwood Battleground**
4 **Slippery Karst**
4 **Tranquil Thicket**

The Challenge

The challenge here is simple. Either fill in the blanks to the Reap and Sow **Sundering Titan** deck, or make another deck that best makes use of **Sundering Titan**, and [email it to me](#). Whichever deck is the most exciting, I'll put a spotlight on next week, [Mark Gottlieb](#) style. Make sure you put "Sundering Titan Challenge" in your topic line so that I'll get a look at yours more quickly.

I know that when I first saw the Titan, the first thing that I thought of was how incredible it was going to be when I played **5-color** against everyone that has all of their dual lands. Tinkering out a Titan would be the same as saying "You Lose" to most of my opponents just because they all had a great collection of duals to make their mana work. Glancing at what you can do with it a little more is fun stuff. Keep shooting me e-mails and posting in the forums about what you want to see, especially if you have some good ideas or a trick or two I can mention, and I'll be happy to mention your name if I write about that card or combo.

Until next week,

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