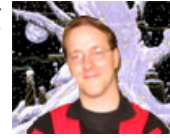


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The Year of the Rising Sun

John Carter
Saturday School
Saturday, February 12, 2005



Send your rules questions to **Magic Rules Manager John Carter**. Can't find the answer to your question somewhere else, like the [Magic Comprehensive Rules](#)? Maybe he's already answered it! Try the [Saturday School Searchable Rules Database](#).

2005 does seem to be a year of Japanese-themed **Magic**. The year is off to an excellent start for our fellow players in the Land of the Rising Sun-- Masashi Oiso won the Extended format Grand Prix Boston just weeks after Shu Komuro won the *Champions of Kamigawa* Rochester Draft format Pro Tour Nagoya. *Betrayers of Kamigawa* has been out for just over a week now, and the questions are rolling in, so let's take a look.



Masashi Oiso, Champion GP Boston '05

Q: Does Ninjutsu actually target a creature? Could I use Ninjutsu with a **Blastoderm**? --Jeff C.

A: Ninjutsu doesn't target creatures. Returning the creature is actually a part of the cost (on announcement), not a part of the effect (on resolution), so returning untargetable creatures works fine.

Q: I attack my opponent with an **Ornithopter**, which he didn't block it. Then, I pay the Ninjutsu cost to put **Higure, the Still Wind** into play, but in response, my opponent plays **Shock** on my **Ornithopter**, and said I can't put out my Higure, since **Ornithopter** leaves play. Is he correct? --Liang

A: No, the **Ornithopter** was returned to your hand while you announced the Ninjutsu ability. That's a key difference between costs and effects-- costs are paid while you announce a spell or ability, and effects have to wait for a spell or ability to resolve. When you announced Ninjutsu, you returned the unblocked **Ornithopter** and paid mana as the cost. When Ninjutsu resolved, you put Higure into play as part of the effect. Your opponent couldn't even target the **Ornithopter** once you announced Ninjutsu because it would be in your hand by the time he gets priority.

Q: If I have a **Fumiko the Lowblood** and a **Ghostly Prison** in play, does this force my opponent to tap most of his lands and attack every turn? --Alvanson S.

A: No, Fumiko forces creatures to attack "if able". Creatures that are in Prison aren't "able" to attack unless their controller pays the 2 bail to get them out on furlough.

Q: Will **Neko-Te** keep animated lands tapped after they stop being creatures? --Jeff

A: Yes, the **Neko-Te** effect will lock down lands even after they stop being creatures. The use of "that creature doesn't untap" is referring to a specific permanent referenced by the first part of the triggered ability-- "that creature" is functionally equivalent to "that object", but putting "that object" on a card would make the card sound hideous.

Q: Does **Radiate** work with **Stir the Grave**? --Dan

A: No, **Radiate** specifically says "...that targets only a single permanent or player..." **Stir the Grave** targets a creature card in your graveyard, not a permanent (or player).

Q: With **Toshiro Umezawa** in play and **Sickening Shoal** in my graveyard, can I remove a black card from my hand to play **Sickening Shoal** off Toshiro's trigger? --Brian K.

A: Yes, you can. Toshiro only breaks the rules for where and when spells can be played. His ability has nothing to do with an alternate method (the "how") of playing the spell [CR 409.1b].

Extra An example of conflicting alternate methods of playing a spell would be trying to play a Morph creature with **Fist of Suns** (spending ♣♣♣♣♣).

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Q: If I have **Shirei, Shizo's Caretaker** and **Shimatsu the Bloodcloaked** in play with more than 1 +1/+1 counter on it, and the Shimatsu is destroyed, will it come back at the end of the turn? --Dave

A: No. Shirei looks at the power the creature had just before leaving play. It doesn't care what the number actually printed on the card is, or what its power is while it's in the graveyard. This means things like **Kodama's Might** and counters will be included in the total.

Extra If you kill the Shimatsu by giving it -X/-X until its toughness is 0, then it will return (assuming nothing is pumping the resulting power over 1).

Q: Concerning **Minamo's Meddling**, I can see several ways to interpret this sentence. Let's consider these in regards to a specific example for clarity: a player plays a **Lava Spike** with a **Glacial Ray**, and a **Kodama's Might** spliced on. --Robbie E.

A: The key is "each card with the same name as a card spliced". The **Lava Spike** gets countered, and that player discards all cards named "Glacial Ray" and "Kodama's Might" in his or her hand. This will mean they discard multiple copies of the Ray or Might if they're holding multiples.

Q: The new un-godly **Betrayers of Kamigawa** card **Final Judgment** states that it removes "all creatures from the game". Please explain the extent of "all". --Michael P.

A: Is that un-godly (good), or un-godly (bad)? Considering it shuts down soulshift, and those nasty Dragons, I have to admit that I like it. In any case, "all creatures" means all permanents in play that are creatures as **Final Judgment** resolves. It affects creatures, artifact creatures, token creatures, and "animated" permanents (like an activated **Blinkmoth Nexus**). **Final Judgment** does not touch "creature cards"-- in your hand, graveyard, library, or elsewhere.



Q: I have a **Kira, Great Glass-Spinner** and **Horobi, Death's Wail**. If I control both will I be allowed to choose which replacement effect occurs, or will Horobi just overwrite and my creatures die? --Randolph E.

A: "Whenever" is a trigger word, not a replacement word (that would be "instead"). With Kira and Horobi, both abilities will trigger, and the creature will be sacrificed regardless of what order the triggers are stacked in. Countering the targeted spell or ability doesn't stop Horobi from having seen it.

Q: With the **Glasskites** (except the Legendary one) the wording seems to imply that while the spell is on the stack, it will counter the first counterspell to target it. Is this the correct interpretation, or am I reading it wrong, or is there a rule about that kind of ability on spells that become permanents? Is this intentional? --Bob Q.

A: The Glasskite ability only applies while they're permanents. Are wording choices like this intentional? Yes, very much so. In Research and Development, the very technical scripting of cards is called "templating". In templating terms, we write triggered abilities of permanents using "When/Whenever/At..." An ability of a spell that stops it from being countered is written as "CARDNAME can't be countered." A counter-resistant Glasskite would read something like "CARDNAME can't be countered by the first spell or ability that targets it." This would be Decidedly Weird™, so please don't mention it to Mark Rosewater, or we might wind up talking to the **Magic** editors about how it actually should be worded.

In general, if an ability doesn't say what zone it applies in, but it would be meaningful when the card is in play, then it only works while the card is in play.

Q: I use **Frostwielder** to do a point to a creature, the **Frostwielder** dies, and after that the creature dies. Does the creature damaged by the **Frostwielder** get removed?

A: No, it doesn't unless the **Frostwielder** is still in play. Since the **Frostwielder** is gone, the continuous effect from its static ability that removes damaged creatures from the game won't be there to apply to the creature.

Extra The damaged creature would be removed if they go away at the same time, but not if the **Frostwielder** leaves first.

Q: With **Uyo, Silent Prophet**, where does the said instant or sorcery have to be-- on the stack, in your hand, or in the graveyard? --David

A: Uyo targets an "instant or sorcery spell", and spells are only on the stack. Everywhere else and they'd be "instant or sorcery cards" (see **Reversal of Fortune**).



Q: If I play a **Terror** on a Snake and then copy it using **Uyo, Silent Prophet** for three more copies, countering the first copy doesn't stop the ones after it right? --Robert

A: It depends on the timing of the counter. In your scenario, you have the original spell and three activations of **Uyo** all of which target the original. With the counter coming last, the original would be removed, and then **Uyo's** ability would be countered for lack of target in all three cases.

Extra Rather than making three copies at once, you can make copies one at a time. Let each copy resolve before making the next, and you'll minimize your potential losses. If a player responds to the first copy making by trying to counter the original, you can respond to the counter to make another copy.

MTGO and Kamigawa

Q: I played a spell on **Magic Online** and tried to copy it, but I wasn't able to. Why not?

A: Chances are that you're passing priority in MTGO without taking the opportunity to respond to your own spell. The way you tell MTGO that you have responses to your own spells (whether it's using **Uyo** on a well-spiced **Glacial Ray** or activating regeneration on your creature in response to your own **Earthquake**) is to hold down the Ctrl key while you play the spell or ability you want to respond to. Otherwise, the server will assume you intend to pass priority whenever you finish playing something.

Q: I played an Arcane spell on **Magic Online** and had **Glacial Ray** in my hand, but it wouldn't let me splice on the **Glacial Ray**. Why not?

A: Either you chose to "Play" the spell as opposed to "Play and Splice additional spells" or you have your settings tuned to count the mana in your pool. The "Play" problem is easy-- choose the "Play and Splice..." option. For the mana pool issue, there are two solutions. One solution is to calculate how much mana the spell and the splice will cost, put all that mana in your pool, and then play the Arcane spell. The other option is to adjust your settings. Go into your Settings and look for your Game Play tab. On the right side is an option that reads "You can only announce a spell or activated ability if you have the mana in your mana pool to pay for it." If you have this selected, you have to put your entire spell and splice mana in your pool first. If you unselect it then you'll be able to announce the spell and splice onto it with the server prompting for mana with each splice.

Back to the Good Old Days

Q: Some of my friends claim lands are colorless... --Will V.

A: Let me stop you early, Will. Lands are colorless. Tapping a Mountain for red doesn't make the Mountain red (squeezing me too hard would make me produce red, too, but I'm not red either). Take **Royal Decree** for example - it mentions Mountains (and Swamps) and it mentions red permanents (and black ones). The reason it talks about red permanents and Mountains separately is because lands are normally colorless.

Extra An effect like **Treetop Village's** can give a land a color, but this only lasts as long as the effect in question.

Q: With **Goblin Charbelcher**, what happens if I trigger the ability and my library doesn't have any land card? --Felix B.

A: If you activate (trigger means something different in **Magic**) **Goblin Charbelcher** with no lands in your library you'll reveal your library until it's gone, count the cards, deal that much damage to your target, and then put the cards back in any order you choose. The Charbelcher stops when you hit a land or when you run out of unrevealed library.

Q: I am not certain why the same basic Oracle text was chosen for **Uncle Istvan** and cards like **Fog Bank**. It seems that the creators of **Istvan** meant to alter or amend the amount of damage that is being done to **Istvan**. For **Fog Bank** the damage is simply being avoided. Are there any creatures that can change the amount of damage that a creature does so that Trample damage (damage over and above the blocker's toughness amount) would be erased or prevented? --Scott

A: For the wording change, look to **6th Edition**. For the Trample issue, the change was slightly earlier.

Over the years templating terms have adjusted for various parts of **Magic**. The "reduced to 0", "does not deal or receive", and "neither deals nor receives" wordings were officially retired when **6th Edition** came out. Those previous wordings had been ruled in many ways, and they were consolidated into being prevention effects. If you look at **Fog Bank** and the **Uncle**, you'll see that **Uncle** still shuts down creature damage in and out of combat, and **Fog Bank** only deals with combat.

The more important change for your question came with **Urza's Saga**. The old system of "trample and spill" was deemed too confusing because of all the various ways trample could be fully (**Uncle**, **Protection**), partially (**toughness**, **prevention effects**), or not (**Fog Bank**, **Gaseous Form**) tampered with. Rather than have three or more answers for all trample scenarios, one system was devised. That change is the one we have now...



Trample = trampler's damage - (blocker's toughness - preexisting damage on the blocker).
This makes **Fog Bank** better against trample and **Uncle Istvan** worse, but the whole thing is much easier for players to understand.

Q: I was wondering about **Sutured Ghoul's** wording. The Comprehensive Rules distinctly names the 3 conjunctions, which precede a triggered ability ('when', 'whenever' and 'at'). **Sutured Ghoul** has an ability which appears to be a trigger, but with the conjunction 'as'. Does it still count as a triggered ability? --Eldariel

A: The **Sutured Ghoul's** is not a triggered ability; it's static [CR 410.10e]. The "as" construction is used to apply to something while something else is happening. "As **Sutured Ghoul** comes into play..." means "While you are putting **Sutured Ghoul** into play do this..." Handling "as" wordings happens just before you'd consider "when" wordings. If the Ghoul's ability were triggered, you'd put a 0/0 into play, trigger the ability, put the 0/0 into the graveyard, and then handle the ability (too late to save Extended's favorite Zombie).

Silver-Bordered Land

Q: Can you choose a color other than the normal five colors of mana, say pink, for something like **City of Ass**? -- Sam Sherman

A: In Silver-Bordered Land, you can name WUBRG or P(ink). In the "real" world, no.

Q: What happens if I stick my **S.N.O.T.** onto an opponent's **S.N.O.T.**? Who would control that **S.N.O.T.** pile? --Toni

A: The person who controlled the original boog... I mean **S.N.O.T.** will control the bigger, stickier **S.N.O.T.**

That's all for another week of School. Happy Valentine's Day come Monday!

Class dismissed.

--Carter

*Carter has been playing **Magic** since 1994 and has been a certified judge since 1997. He has judged at every size and type of event, and he's always interested in new ideas to make events and **Magic** better for the gaming community. Carter enjoys helping players understand the rules, even if his analogies aren't as funny as he thinks they are.*



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