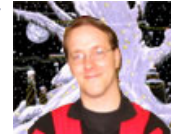


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# The Ascension Begins

John Carter  
Saturday School  
Saturday, May 14, 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](#).

The [Kamigawa block constructed Pro Tour](#) is one week behind us, and next weekend is [the Saviors of Kamigawa prerelease](#). If PT Philadelphia was any indication, the rest of Kamigawa will be populated with a wild array of colorful characters and giant monsters. What new twists does the conclusion of the Kami / Human war bring? Look no further than today's preview for just one such twist. May I present, Sasaya, Orochi Ascendant:



Sasaya is a legendary permanent in both of its forms-- a legendary creature that flips into a legendary enchantment. And since the base form is a legendary creature (unlike previous flippers), you can indeed **Time of Need** for Sasaya. Also unlike previous flippers, flipping Sasaya will make some enchantments fall off-- specifically "enchant creature" enchantments such as [Cage of Hands](#). Things like [Confiscate](#), which is an "enchant permanent" enchantment, still stay on Sasaya regardless of form.

Also notice that revealing your hand is a cost. Revealing things usually waits until resolution, but costs are done on announcement. So what's to stop you from revealing seven lands and then **Brainstorming** to put some back before the ability flips Sasaya? Revealing cards as a cost means the cards stayed revealed until the effect resolves or leaves the stack-- this is a new update to how "reveal" works (specifically for costs). If you remember ninjutsu, this is the same idea (the Ninja is revealed and stays that way until it hops into play), except now the idea can apply in other areas. So if you activate Sasaya, and the contents of your hand change while the ability is on the stack, your opponents will be able to see what's in your hand. Once the ability resolves or leaves the stack (**Time Stop**, **Squelch**), your hand will stop being revealed. If you do something that requires looking at cards in your library such as [Sensei's Divining Top](#), those cards won't be revealed because they're not actually in your hand. What's to stop you from using the ability repeatedly just to waste time? The ill will of your friends and the ire of judges who will be forced to penalize a player for being unsporting (wasting time is not sporting).

So we've got the first form out of the way, what about that second part? Yes, that is a mana flare gone wild. If you control five Forests and tap one for mana with Sasaya's Essence, you'll get ♀ from the Forest, and Essence ability will give you ♀♀♀♀♀. That's 25 green mana from five Forests. And we're not talking about just basic lands-- you tap one of your four [Urza's Towers](#), you'll get 1 or 3 from the Tower based on whether you also have both [Urza's Mine](#) and [Urza's Power Plant](#), but you'll also get 1 for the other Towers-- so 1 or 3 from the land and 3 more from the Essence-- potentially 6 from the one tap. Of course, this only counts lands in play. Knowing you

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have four of something in the deck doesn't mean you get a bonus; the lands must be in play for the Essence to kick in.

What about lands that produce multiple colors? It depends on how they're producing multiple colors. **Mossfire Valley** makes both  and  at the same time. You can choose either  or  for each of the other Valleys you control-- mix and match is fine. But if it's a land like **Brushland**, that makes only one color at a time-- you only get more of the color you just made without the option of the other colors (or colorless) the land could make.

## Early Epics

**Q:** If the epic spell is countered, are you still required to copy the spell at each or your upkeeps, and, more importantly, refrain from playing spells for the rest of the game? --Chris T.

**A:** No, if the original epic is countered, the ability will never make copies, and you won't be restricted from playing spells.

**\*Extra\*:** Copies of epic spells are spells, too, so they can be countered. Countering a copy made by the epic ability won't undo the fact you're not allowed to play spells nor will it stop the epic from picking back up on your next turn.

**Q:** I have a **Vedalken Orrery** in play, I declare epic spell number one, but before epic spell number one resolves I play epic spell number two. What happens when the spells resolve and what happens in my following upkeeps? --Elwin V.

**A:** Both spells will resolve normally and set up their own epics. The fact you had a spell on the stack when an epic resolved does matter-- epic only stops playing spells, not already existent ones or effects like epic that say to put a copy on the stack. On each of your upkeeps you'll stack the two epics in whichever order you prefer, and they'll resolve normally.

**\*Extra\*:** Part of epic's copying says it doesn't copy the epic ability. This keeps the epic constant (usually at one) for future turns. If the epic were copied, then the copies would double on each additional turn!



**Q:** Enduring Ideal, if it is copied by **Uyo**, **Silent Prophet**, will the epic ability being copied as well allow you to search for multiple enchantment cards in your library each upkeep? --Michael L.

**A:** Yes, but only if Uyo copies the original spell-- the one that has the epic ability. This will set up two epics on your following upkeeps.

**\*Extra\*:** Uyo can copy the copies that get created on later upkeeps, but since they don't include the epic ability, the new copies will not set up any additional epics for later turns.

## Back to the Present

**Q:** How many times I can play the Ninjutsu ability with an unblocked creature? --Luis

**A:** Only once. Returning the creature is a cost, so by the time you could announce another Ninjutsu, the first unblocked creature is already back in your hand.

**Q:** If I use **Eight-and-a-Half-Tails** ability to give my Jitte protection from white, can it still be equipped to a white creature? --Mark

**A:** Yes, protection stops things from enchanting or equipping to something-- you can still enchant or be equipped with that thing though.

**Q:** Can you really use the **Sakura Tribe Elder** to block/attack, have it deal damage and then sac it to play his ability? --Nay

**A:** You can have it assign (ie: "stack") its damage (which will be dealt when it resolves) and then sacrifice the Elder. Waiting for damage to be dealt would be waiting too long. Remember: assign > respond > deal.



**Q:** My opponent attacks me with **Isao, Enlightened Bushi**. I use **Shock** on Isao, but my opponent regenerates it. Then, I use **Crushing Pain**. Do I kill Isao? --Rafael

**A:** Unless your opponent regenerates it again you will. As Isao regenerated, he was removed from combat, and damage on him was removed, but the game knows he was damaged this turn, so **Crushing Pain** can target him with no trouble.

**Q:** During my opponent's main phase he **Grab the Reins** an **Umezawa's Jitte** equipped token. I know if he swings and deals damage the Jitte gets two counters. The question is can he use the counters on the Jitte? --Justin A.

**A:** No, controlling a creature changes nothing about who controls any equipment attached to it. Your Jitte will get two counters, and your opponent won't be able to use them at all because you still control the Jitte.

**Q:** The cost of four Mountains for **Dragon Tyrant** to remain in play, it is after or before I untap my lands? Regeneration of damage on creatures, it's done between turns or in the turn of the creature's controller? --David M

**A:** Upkeep costs, like **Dragon Tyrant's**, are paid during upkeep-- after you've untapped. And don't forget that **♣** just means red mana, not sacrificing a Mountain. Rather than regeneration of damage, try using removal of damage-- we wouldn't want to confuse that with the keyword regeneration. In any case, removal of damage occurs every turn for everybody's creatures-- right before the turn ends (just after the player has discarded if they had too many cards).

**Q:** When the ability from **Jinxed Choker** is put on the stack, if I am the controller I can choose to pay **♣** to remove counters and lessen the damage when the ability resolves, correct? However, recently in a match I responded to the effect going onto the stack by activating my **Oblivion Stone**. When the Choker's ability resolved, the Choker was in the graveyard and with 0 counters. However, I still took damage equal to the number of counters that used to be on the choker and lost the game. --Tim

**A:** You're correct about responding to the trigger by removing counters-- you can lessen the potential damage by removing counters. You took damage in the **Oblivion Stone** case because the effect wasn't able to see how many counters were on the absent Choker, so it referred to the number it most recently had. In technical terms, we call this "last known information". The ability isn't going to try and figure out where the Choker went to-- it will use the number of counters it has if it in play or the number it had most recently if it's not.

**Q:** On **Whipcorder**, the text reads "**♣**, **♣**: Tap target creature." My opponent read this as "For each **♣** you spend, tap target creature," all because of the comma. --SG

**A:** **Whipcorder** requires all its costs, both tapping and spend one white mana, in order to get its effect. You cannot spend multiple **♣** on the **Whipcorder's** ability. Try comparing **Whipcorder** to **Atalya, Samite Master** for a white card that does allow using multiple white mana for one activation.

**Q:** If a player plays **Wild Growth** while **Confusion in the Ranks** is out, the player must exchange control of that enchantment, but does the target land remain the same? Can you now effectively mana burn your opponent if it does not move? --Travis C.

**A:** You can steal one of their enchantments and give them the **Wild Growth**-- much to your benefit. The **Wild Growth's** location won't change. However, they won't mana burn... **Wild Growth** and similar enchantments like **Fertile Ground** add mana to the enchanted land's controller's mana pool. The fact your opponent might get control of a **Wild Growth** that's on your land doesn't help him or her at all. The added **♣** goes into your pool.

**Q:** I want to know if an artifact can be sacrificed for two or more purposes? For example, **Megatog** and **Shrapnel Blast**... --Julian C.

**A:** No, sacrificing something to pay a cost means it's gone immediately. It won't be around to pay the other cost.

**\*Extra\*:** Non-sacrificial costs can sometimes be worked around. At PT Philadelphia, many players were playing **Honor-Worn Shaku** because it gets added use out of legendary permanents. I saw **Umezawa's Jitte**, **Isamaru, Hound of Konda**, and even **Day of Destiny** all get tapped to untap the Shaku-- all so the Shaku can generate more mana.

**Q:** The Alpha through Revised dual lands (**Tropical Island**, **Volcanic Island**, etc.) have two basic land types. Does each decrease **Draco's** cost by 4? --Randall

**A:** Assuming you don't have an overlap, yes, each dual will reduce **Draco's** cost by two. For example, a **Tundra** and a **Badlands** would count as Plains, Island, Swamp, and Mountain and reduce by 8. A **Scrubland** and an **Underground Sea** have Swamp twice plus Plains and Island, so the two of them would reduce only by 6.



**Q:** Do the dual lands untap if there's a **Back to Basics** on the table? Can I destroy a dual land with **Wasteland**? -- Victor H.

**A:** No, dual lands are non-basic, so **Back to Basics** will keep them tapped, and **Wasteland** will destroy them easily.

**\*Extra\*:** No matter how many basic land types a land has, it is basic only if it has the "Basic" supertype. In other words, if it doesn't say it's basic, then it isn't (older basic lands have official errata to add the word "Basic" to the type line).

The reason dual lands use wordings like "Land — Plains Forest" is because having a basic land type (even while being non-basic) gives a land the ability to add mana of the type associated to that land. It also allows dual lands to interact with cards like **Nature's Lore** and **Flooded Strand**, since those look for lands with a type rather than basic lands with a given type. As a matter of fact, dual lands, if printed today, would have no actual rules text in the box because the type line would do it all. (Reminder text would be a good idea, but it wouldn't technically be necessary.)

**Q:** I read that it is possible to move an enchantment to an untargetable creature (eg. **Deadly Insect**) by using **Enchantment Alteration**. Is this true? --Nick

**A:** Yes, it's true. "Untargetable" is a shorthand for "Can't be the target of spells or abilities." **Enchantment Alteration** doesn't target the creature, and the enchant itself is neither a spell nor an ability, so you can slide an enchantment onto an untargetable thing.

**\*Extra\*:** What you can't do is slide an enchantment onto something that says it can't be enchanted (such as a creature wearing an **Anti-Magic Aura**) or with protection from that enchantment's color (because protection grants not only "can't be the target of <foo>", but also "can't be enchanted/equipped by <foo>").

**Q:** If I have **Crystalline** and **Root Sliver** in play my Slivers abilities can still affect each other, right? --Xiox X.

**A:** Generally, yes, but not always. The abilities like **Muscle Sliver's** and **Mistform Sliver's** that don't target will have no trouble. However, some Slivers have abilities that target Slivers. While your Slivers might have the **Crypt Sliver** ability, they won't be able to use it because it requires targeting the Sliver that will be regenerated--something the **Crystalline** won't allow. Using the **Clot Sliver** version of regeneration works fine though.



**Q:** I have four **Llanowar Elves** in play. I play **Echoing Courage** on one of them, and I play **Radiate** on **Echoing Courage**, do all my Elves get the +2/+2 like **Echoing Courage** was just played four times? --Max

**A:** Yes, the original and each of the **Radiate** copies would echo through all your **Llanowar Elves**. Each one will wind up getting +8/+8.

**\*Extra\*:** If there are other creatures around, **Radiate** will make copies for them as well. If you have two **Priest of Titanias**, the **Radiated** copies will hit each one, and the echoing will make them get +4/+4 each. If you have twelve Snake tokens (from **Sosuke's Summons** or **Orochi Hatchery**, for example), then the **Radiating Echoing Courage** winds up giving +24/+24... Whether you make Tarzan noises when you attack with your emerald horde is up to you.

That's all for this week. Next week I'll be digging into questions about the preview cards here on [magicthegathering.com](http://magicthegathering.com) as well as covering regular reader submissions. Be sure to check it out as soon as possible so you have time to make it to [your local prerelease events](#). Best of luck, and have fun!

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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