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## After the Kami War comes Regionals

John Carter  
Saturday School  
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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 has been fully unveiled, and Snakes and Spirits are running rampant. *Saviors of Kamigawa* is already playable in Limited formats (draft and sealed deck), and it will be legal for Constructed formats (Standard, Block, etc.) on June 20th.

**Q:** If my opponent counters a copy of my **Undying Flames** (not the initial), do the cards from my library still get removed? --Erik

**A:** No, **Undying Flames'** effect, which includes removing cards, doesn't happen at all if the spell (or spell copy) is countered.

**Q:** I have in play **Oyobi**, **Who Split the Heavens** and **Briarknit Kami**. Does the **Briarknit Kami** ability happen when spirits come in to play from **Oyobi**? --Ben B.

**A:** No, **Oyobi's** ability isn't the same as playing a Spirit. Playing a Spirit (or Arcane) spell means you're putting the spell on the stack (and doing the various steps that go along with that).

**Q:** If I have four **Locust Misers** on the field and I **Unsummoned** my opponent's creature, what would happen to the creature? --Mat E.

**A:** Nothing happens until your opponent's cleanup step. Once he or she goes into their cleanup, chances are the creature will be discarded.

**\*Extra\*:** Effects that say you have no maximum hand size (like **Spellbook**) negate the effects from effects that reduce hand size-- reducing something that's limitless has no noticeable effect.



**Q:** Can the ability of a Patron (such as rat offering) be countered by ordinary counterspells? --Carlos M.

**A:** The Offering ability only allows you to play the spell at odd times—it's not doing anything about what can counter it. The spell you're playing is still a spell and can be countered like any other spell.

**Q:** If I use **Sensei Golden-Tail's** ability and target a creature multiple times, will it get multiple training counters and thus get bushido points equal to the total number of training counters on it? --Xuan

**A:** Yes, each effect will be separate, but the sum result will be a bushido bonus equal to the number of counters.

**\*Extra\*:** The counters are just a memory aid. If something happened to those counters (**Power Conduit**, for example), the Sensei effect is still there-- unlike many other counters, training counters are just reminders.

**Q:** According to the Comprehensive Rules [CR 216.3], if a token leaves play, it can't come back. Is this the case with a card like **Otherworldly Journey**, or is the card superseding the game rules? --John W.

**A:** The card's not trying to supersede the rules-- it really wants the token to come back, but since it ceased to exist way back when state-based effects where check just after the Journey began, there's no token in existence anymore to be brought back.

**\*Extra\*:** **Flicker**, which removes and then brings something back while resolving (before SBEs would check) avoids conflicting with tokens not returning by cleverly specifying a "nontoken permanent."

## It's Twins!

**Q:** Is it possible to copy an instant creature card or a sorcery made instant by **Vedalken Orrery** using **Twincast**? --Steve C.

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**A:** First of all, **Twincast** can copy sorceries regardless of when they're played-- no complication there. However, **Vedalken Orrery** doesn't change the type of spell being played or make them instants. The Orrery just changes the times at which the spell can be played. So a creature spell played while **Vedalken Orrery** is out is still just a creature spell-- it's never an "instant creature."

**Q:** If you played **Twincast** targeting any spell, and then another **Twincast** targeting the first one would it create an infinite loop allowing you to play a huge **Brain Freeze**? --Daniel F.

**A:** No, the **Brain Freeze** only counts spells played. Copying a spell puts it directly on the stack without actually "playing" it [CR 503.10].

**\*Extra\*:** While you can loop the **Twincast** copying another **Twincast**, you pick a number of times to go through that loop [CR 421.2]. In tournaments, judges will take action if someone is trying to use a loop only to run the clock out of time. In casual play with friends, you may have to prod the guy to move the game along.



**Q:** My opponent plays a **Fireball** that would deal lethal damage to me, and I respond by playing a **Twincast** to copy his **Fireball**. If my copy would do lethal damage to him, do I win? --Aaron F.

**A:** Yes, the copy of the **Fireball** will resolve first. After resolving any spell or ability, the active player would get priority, but state-based effects are checked. This SBE check will see a charred husk where your opponent used to be, the game ends, and the original **Fireball** poofs away into nothingness.

**Q:** Is there a difference between how **Fork** and **Twincast** copy spells (Ignoring **Fork**'s "remains red" clause)? **Fork** says, "Put a copy... onto the stack", but **Twincast** just says, "Copy target ..." --Matthew

**A:** Minus the color clause, **Twincast** and **Fork** are functionally the same. The different wording represents different approaches over time when it comes to card templating. I believe people would agree that their intuitive response to either wording produces the same outcome, and the shorter, tighter wording is generally preferred when the effect is understood either way.

**Q:** During the prerelease I copied a **Myojin of Cleansing Fire** (without its counter) with **Sakashima the Impostor**. Nobody wanted me to get the divinity counter because when Sakashima copies the creature he is already in play.

**A:** A Sakashima that you played from your hand (put on the stack and all the spell business) will get a divinity counter if it copies a Myojin. Check out [CR 503.5] and review the parenthetical comment for more on why it gets a counter.

## 9 Questions from a Beginner

**Q:** I'm a beginner from Denmark who wants to ask you about something...

**A:** Excellent! People often ask about helping new people learn, and this is a look at some types of questions an inquisitive new player has while being introduced to the game. Let's chat...

**Q1:** May I discard as many cards as I want when I play **Sonic Burst**, or only one?

**A:** Just one.

**Q2:** Does a creature leave play when it phases out? And does the creature come into play when it phases in?

**A:** Phasing does take a creature out of and back into play. The pieces to remember are that phasing **does** trigger leaves-play triggered abilities but **doesn't** trigger comes-into-play abilities.

**Q3:** If you sacrifice an **Ancient Silverback** to a **Carrion Feeder**, you can't regenerate it, right?

**A:** Correct. Regeneration can't stop a sacrifice.

**Q4:** Can I make endless Kaldras if I have all the "Kaldra-parts" and **Mirror Gallery** out?

**A:** You can make as many as your mana can afford. The last one created will wind up with all the Kaldra clothes on it.



**Q5:** What is the stack?

**A:** Technically, it's a "zone." Realistically speaking, it's a system for saying in what order things occur. Things go onto the stack and then come off the stack in the opposite order they were put on (called "Last In First Out" or LIFO). "Stack" just sounds way better than "interactive prioritization mechanism."

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**Q6:** If I have one **Silvos, Rogue Elemental** in play and I play a second one, do they both die, because of the new legend rule?

**A:** Yes, they'll be put into the graveyard just after the second one is put into play.

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**Q7:** If I play a **Counterspell** copy from an imprinted **Isochron Scepter**, does the **Counterspell** go to the graveyard?

**A:** Yes, but the copy ceases to exist right after arriving in the graveyard.

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**Q8:** What is an activated ability, and what is a triggered ability?

**A:** Activated abilities are abilities that are used only when you choose and have a cost associated to that use. They all have a ":" in their text. Triggered abilities are abilities that look for an event or a game state, and then they trigger automatically-- you don't choose to use them, and they don't have a cost, but the effect itself may give you a choice or ask for some sort of payment. Triggered abilities are easy to spot if you look for the words "when", "whenever", or "at."

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**Q9:** Do tokens go to the graveyard when they die?

--Peter P.

**A:** Yes. Like the Isochron **Counterspells**, tokens go to the graveyard and then cease to exist.

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## Onward and Older

**Q:** The card **Shifting Borders** says "Exchange control of two target lands." Does that really mean I can play it and steal two lands from my opponent?  
--Ty

**A:** "Exchange" means you're swapping two lands. You get one of his for one of yours. Thief.

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**Q:** What happens with **Vedalken Shackles** after **March of the Machines** comes into play? --Konstantin Z.

**A:** The Shackles animates, which will mean you can tap it for its ability unless you haven't controlled it continuously since your most recent turn began (ie: it's summoning sick). Otherwise, it's going to keep hold on to any creature it already has, and it can still use its stealing ability to snag somebody if there's a tasty critter needing a new controller. Making the Shackles into a creature doesn't automatically take away its abilities.

**\*Extra\*:** **March of the Machines'** quirky predecessor, **Titania's Song**, did actually remove abilities while animating artifacts.

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**Q:** The Oracle text of **Tower of Coireall** still states "Wall". Did they just forget to change it to "creature with defender" or is it really still the creature type wall? --Norman

**A:** It really does affect only Walls. In looking at what needed changes when defender was introduced, the key element is asking if "Wall" was used only to keep something from attacking or if the intent was aimed at something actually being a physical wall.

**\*Extra\*:** **Ali Baba** and **Tunnel** are other examples of cards that really do intend to affect Walls and don't care if something has defender.

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**Q:** If a creature is dealt lethal damage because of combat and then regenerated, can it deal and receive more combat damage? --Kevin H.

**A:** No, being regenerated (after receiving lethal double strike damage, for example) removes the creature from combat. The creature won't be in combat to be assigned any more damage (during the regular damage step).

**\*Extra\*:** Don't forget that if a creature has been assigned combat damage and then regenerates for some other reason (**Shock**, for example), the damage that has already been assigned will still hit the creature. Regenerating avoids further assignments on damage in that combat-- it doesn't undo any assignment that has already happened.

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**Q:** **Magistrate's Scepter** states that you get "another turn" after this one. What is the difference between "another turn" and an "extra turn"? If I use the Scepter during my opponent's turn, do I get the next two turns? --Shawn C.

**A:** "Take an extra turn" and "take another turn" are functionally the same. The difference is much like the answer about Fork and Twincast-- card wordings evolve over time.

**\*Extra\*:** The earliest playtest **Time Walk** wording said a player "loses next turn." The intent was that they lose the turn, but this was also read as loses the whole game. Luckily this was fixed before the game debuted.

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**Q:** A person uses **Cabal Therapy** naming **Goblin Warchief**. Am I not allowed to use my **Aether Vial** to bring my Goblin down before **Cabal Therapy** makes me discard it? --Carlos

**A:** The name isn't chosen for **Cabal Therapy** until the spell is resolving. You won't be able to use the Vial until after you've discarded. If you really want the Warchief in play, you have to use the Vial beforehand and hope the opponent isn't sure what to name for what's left in your hand.

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**Q:** I attack with **Auriok Glaivemaster**, and my friend blocks with a **Muscle Sliver**. I play **Blessed Breath** to give it protection from green. He says that the block then becomes illegal and that he can reassign a different blocker, in this case **Crypt Sliver**. Does my Glaivemaster get through? --Jacob A.

**A:** Blocks are checked for legality only while making them-- changes after that won't retroactively do anything to the blocks. Giving the Glaivemaster pro: green doesn't undo the **Muscle Sliver's** block, it just means the damage to the Glaivemaster will be prevented. It's too late to have the **Crypt Sliver** block.

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**Q:** Does the effect of **The Wretched** work if the other creature will be dead by the end of the combat (killed by **The Wretched**)? --Sardreius

**A:** No, creatures killed by **The Wretched** (or removed from combat, perhaps by regeneration from lethal damage) won't be "blocking The Wretched" anymore when the ability looks for who needs to be stolen.

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**Q:** I got 7 cards in my graveyard among which are 3 **Bladewing's Thrall** and an **Anger**. Does my **Fledgling Dragon** still have his threshold ability when the 3 **Bladewing's Thralls** are put into play? --Christian J.

**A:** Threshold checks constantly on permanents. Your **Fledgling Dragon** came into play as a winged 5/5 firebreathing Dragon, but once the Thralls started arriving, the Fledgling molted all the way down to a regular 2/2 flier. On the bright side, you now have four fliers that can attack for 11 points of damage thanks to **Anger**.



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## Mediating with Two Heads

**Q:** I was wondering about the rules for the turns in the new 2HG multiplayer format. What happens with cards like **Meditate** or **Time Stretch**? Do both players get the turn modification, or just the one that played it? Also, what happens with a **Mindslaver**? --Luke C.

**A:** Extra (or additional) turns are handled much like playing with a teammate who's been eliminated-- the person who gets the extra turn plays that turn, and his or her teammate tries to look menacing or otherwise just watches. If both players on a 2HG have turns pending, then they'd take a normal simultaneous turn. With **Mindslaver**, the person who is controlling the turn can make all the hideous decisions he or she wants for the Slavered person's turn, but the Slavered person won't interfere with the unSlavered head's decisions. For example, a Slavered head might decide to attack with 1/1s while 4/4s are waiting to block. The teammate might choose to send his or her own creatures along with the attack (perhaps with some evasion creatures) but they don't have to jump in. 2HG players are allowed to communicate and show each other their hands, but they're not required to-- don't expect to get a look at someone else's hand when you **Mindslaver** his or her teammate.

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What's up next on **Magic's** radar? **Regionals** is only two weeks away. That weekend will be the first weekend after **Saviors** is legal in Constructed, and new deck technology is constantly coming out. What's the latest thing? Take a shot at figuring out the best deck, or check back on **magicthegathering.com** after the weekend as the best decklists start pouring in. Or better yet, head to a Regionals yourself, and get a close-up view of the latest and greatest in Standard tournament play-- I know that's where I'll be.

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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