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# Twincast



Adrian Sullivan · *Single-Card Strategies*  
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For years, **Fork** was out there. It's always been a stabbing kind of spell, good at making pronged **Lightning Bolts**, but not really ever seeing much play.

Of all of the times I've seen **Fork** played, the only player I ever remember doing anything useful with it is Madison export Brian Larson. He would treat that **Fork** like a little sliver of gold and wait for some time before casting it. This was years ago, and Brian primarily played Type 1, using a home-brewed version of Keeper. At the proper moment, he would cast **Time Walk**, **Fork** it, and generally win the game. Sure, he would occasionally **Fork** something else (**Ancestral Recall** comes to mind), but usually he held onto that **Fork** and used it with such style I couldn't help but remember it later.

Of course, his deck was warped a bit to use the **Fork**. He added quite a bit more Red to his deck than he might have otherwise, and in lieu of **Serra Angel** he had **Shivan Dragon**. Exciting, yes, but this stretch hurt his deck. Over time, I tried to find decks with room for **Fork**, but it never seemed to fit, even where you think it would be perfect. My red-based 5-color *seemed* perfect (**Forking** your opponent's **Contract from Below** seemed okay), but **Fork** isn't generally what Red seems to want to do. Red doesn't usually want to be reactive. It wants to be active, causing problems *now*. Sneaky Blue, that is the color for a card like **Fork**. Blue, though, strikes me as more Spooky than **Forky**...



## The Making of a Spoon

**Twincast**'s properties are pretty important to understand. Essentially, **Twincast** follows all of the general rules of copying: it is another version of that exact same spell, but you get to decide where it goes. Of course, it is a bit more complicated than that, but that is the basic idea. **Twincast** does the copying job of an **Uyo**, **Silent Prophet**, but it adds in the potential for surprise value (unless you are expecting to activate a **Sneak Attack** in response to a spell so an **Uyo** can copy it.)

### The targets

As I said, **Twincast** lets you choose the target for your version of the spell you're copying. That said, you are still able to copy a spell which doesn't target anything, like **Harrow** or **Earthquake**. Furthermore, you aren't required to choose any new targets for your copy, you just have to make legal decisions.

### The details

**Twincast** may let you choose targets, but it doesn't let you copy all of the decisions that may have gone into casting the spell. For example, if your opponent chooses **Fire** on **Fire/Ice**, you can copy **Fire**. A **Rude Awakening** used to untap lands can't be copied and made into the other version. Conversely, a spliced spell can be a great choice. A **Reach through Mists** with **Glacial Ray** and **Evermind** spliced onto it is completely copied by a **Twincast** -- the only drawback is you can't splice anything new onto it yourself. If you have trouble picturing what is going on, think of it like this: you are making a copy of the spell your opponent played. This one is *your* spell, so you get to choose how it works out, but you're still copying the same basic effect.



### The costs

One of the great boons of **Twincast** is cost. You are investing a mere  $\{2}$  and getting back a copy of whatever spell someone decided to pay for. If that someone is you, you're talking about a bit more intensive mana investment. If that someone is your opponent, you're getting a bargain.

You don't need to pay any of the extra costs for anything you're copying. Whether it is kicker or buyback or a more painful cost (such as sacrificing an artifact to a **Shrapnel Blast**), you don't have to worry about that at all.  $\{2}$  is all the cost you'll be paying, and you get back all of the effect.

## Breaking the Cost/Effect Barrier

There are some cards that skipping the cost is pretty phenomenal. Here are just a few examples:

**Nostalgic Dreams** – While you can insert any of the Dreams here (except **Insidious Dreams**), **Nostalgic Dreams** is a great example of the exact kind of thing I'm thinking of when it comes to adding on the cost of a **Twincast**. The actual mana cost for playing both cards is pretty small, but the cost of discarding a bunch of cards to the **Nostalgic Dreams** is actually pretty high. The return, however, is generally incredible. To get that same return with a **Twincast** without actually ditching the cards is pretty extraordinary.

**Gaea's Balance** – **Gaea's Balance** has an additional cost of sacrificing five lands. With **Twincast**, spend your six mana, lose five lands, and pull out two of each of the basic lands from your deck. Aside from simply netting four mana immediately, you are also netting five lands in the long term. That's a pretty hefty deal.


**Natural Order** – Make your own **Tooth and Nail**, but at almost half the price!

**The Brian Larson** – Copy those big power effects! Whether it is **Time Walk** or **Ancestral Recall**, a copy of a card like that is pretty much a doozy. Even if you are talking about Extended with a card like **Time Warp**, you are still talking about a powerful effect. A **Time Stretch** of any kind is generally an "I win" situation. Generally, those old Type 1 spells were restricted for a reason, and getting a double on them is nothing to sneeze at.



We can take a lesson from Brian Larson in another way as well. Take any big effect and make it double and you have an insane result. Even if it is really expensive, it can generally be worth it.

## Making the Mana

Unless you are monoblue, getting  is a burden. If you want to copy a big effect that doesn't belong to your opponent, you are looking at yet more of a burden. You'll most likely be wanting to do something about that.

You have the general green mana-fixing, of course. Birds and Tribe-Elders and Reaches, oh my! Some of the cards, like **Kodama's Reach** or **Harrow**, make for quite decent **Twincast** targets themselves. Take a **Harrow** at five mana, **Twincast** it, and you're left with eight land in play and four mana at the ready. Getting cards in your yard is part of the reason that a card like **Eternal Witness** is good!

The other methods for powering out the mana that really seem to work are the mana-doublers. **Mana Flare**, **Heartbeat of Spring**, and **Mirari's Wake** are all great here, but clearly **Wake** is the best of the bunch. Once you have one of these puppies going, you can pretty much expect to cast anything and be able to double it!

## The Environment

Sometimes we know the environment, and sometimes we don't. Take Regionals, for example. We don't *really* know what the environment is exactly going to be like when it comes to which decks will be big. We can guess, and even guess well, but there are bound to be the occasional mistake. In the upcoming Regionals tournament, if we use the Invitational decklists as a rough guide, we can come up with the following potential **Twincast** targets:

- **All Suns' Dawn** – Even if your deck isn't specifically built to abuse this card, it's still possible to turn this into a kind of instant-speed **Restock**.
- **Cranial Extraction** – Here is a great card to copy, stripping your opponent of a potential threat.
- **Persecute** and **Plow Under** – With both of these cards, you are looking at an incredible amount of potential disruption. By throwing it back at your opponent at an instant, you'll be able to be the first one to begin recovering.
- **Rude Awakening** – Usually this card is cast to kill. Copy it and you can probably net some mana if you want to, and if not, at least bring all of your lands online to defend.
- **Tooth and Nail** – Your own deck might not be able to make the best use of a **Tooth and Nail**, but you can always sideboard it so that that is possible. Even so, you're still getting quite a bang.
- **Magma Jet**, **Volcanic Hammer**, **Fireball** – In a tight game, any of these cards might be aimed at your dome to kill you. You can send a copy right back at your opponent, but yours will go off first. Even in a less end-game spot, you can suddenly start packing a little of your opponent's heat to take out their critters.
- **Beacon of Destruction** and **Pulse of the Forge** – Both of these cards have some unusual side effects from being cast – they might go back into your hand or deck! An opponent's **Pulse of the Forge** can be pretty awesome spell to copy at times. If they are just throwing it to your head as throwaway burn, you can generally make your **Twincast** come right back to your hand.

Of course there are plenty of other sorceries, but you get the idea. For **Twincast** to really be significant, look at the decks you expect to be out there and determine if there are enough cards to copy that are actually meaningful. In Extended, you might find that a Rock-heavy field leaves you unexcited by **Twincast** (ooh, an Edict!), but in other fields, it can be pretty amazing.



## Wrapping Up

Before we tie things up with an example decklist, I wanted to share a couple of thoughts from the readers about last week's article. Several readers wrote in with a couple of the same points that didn't cover in looking at **Mikokoro, Center of the Sea**. The biggest point that the readers picked up on is using Mikokoro when your opponent's hand is already quite full. In essence, while you both are getting a card, you are getting a full **Jayemdae Tome** while your opponent is getting a **Jalum Tome**. Good catch, everyone that sent me this thought.

The second is something that I began to touch on in the section titled "A small mention of number management." While that section begins to talk about how it is useful to control your own hand size, I didn't mention how it can be useful to control your opponent's hand size. Aside from a card like Adamaro (or even a card that I had mentioned in that section already, like **Pox**), simple things like **Black Vise** and its many pretenders bear mentioning. Even advancing the cause for an **Underworld Dreams** can be a big deal. But now, onwards and upwards to this week's Twincast deck.

<b>Twincast Tooth</b>		
Food for thought for Regionals		
60 cards		
1 <b>Okina, Temple to the Grandfathers</b>	4 <b>Sakura-Tribe Elder</b>	3 <b>Peer Through Depths</b>
1 <b>Minamo, School at Water's Edge</b>	4 <b>Eternal Witness</b>	4 <b>Kodama's Reach</b>
1 <b>Oboro, Palace in the Clouds</b>	1 <b>Kiki-Jiki, Mirror Breaker</b>	1 <b>Rude Awakening</b>
2 <b>Tendo Ice Bridge</b>	1 <b>Sakashima the Impostor</b>	3 <b>Tooth and Nail</b>
12 <b>Forest</b>	1 <b>Sundering Titan</b>	3 <b>Plow Under</b>
6 <b>Island</b>	1 <b>Daring Apprentice</b>	4 <b>Reap and Sow</b>
	1 <b>Duplicant</b>	3 <b>Twincast</b>
	13 creatures	3 <b>Sensei's Divining Top</b>
23 land		24 other spells

This deck isn't ready for a tournament. For that matter, it might not ever be the kind of deck that is deserving of more work to make it tournament-worthy. This deck *does* show a lot of what a **Twincast** can do.

First of all, the deck has copious amount of mana fixing and acceleration. Even though it doesn't include a **Cloudpost** or **Urza-tron** to power things up, it does include four **Kodama's Reach**, four **Sakura-Tribe Elder** and four **Reap and Sow**. As a two-color deck playing double blue and double green, this kind of fixing is essential. In addition, expensive spells getting copied *does* require at least a little bit of mana.

Aside from the **Tooth and Nails**, there are several cards that are worthy of copying simply for their mana denial. Most of us that have been on the receiving end of a **Plow Under** followed on the next turn by an **Eternal Witness** and a **Plow Under** know that that is some pretty cruel stuff. **Twincast** on a **Plow Under** is even worse. Losing access to four land is an incredible amount to deal with, and having it all happen on one turn is rough. **Reap and Sow** helps punch that same thing home.

The **Tooth and Nail**, of course, is what gets you going. While **Reap and Sow** is generally going to be fetching some of the non-basic lands to keep **Sundering Titan** from damaging you as much, the typical **Tooth and Nail** will still generally search for Kiki-Jiki and the Titan. Much like Terry Soh's deck, this one only runs three **Tooth and Nail**, aided in this case by **Peer through Depths**. If you **Twincast** your **Tooth and Nail**, I would generally recommend getting Kiki-Jiki, Sakashima, **Sundering Titan**, and **Eternal Witness**. Sakashima, in this case, should probably copy the Kiki-Jiki, but copying either of the other two is reasonable as well.

While I've talked about the cards out there in Standard you can copy, this is a theoretical "Regionals Food for Thought" deck. Since you'll often find yourself copying your *opponent's* **Tooth and Nail**, we can make using a **Twincast** is



incredibly cruel. Twincasting their **Tooth and Nail**, you can retrieve Kiki-Jiki and a **Daring Apprentice**. Copy the Apprentice with the Kiki-Jiki and use the copy to counter the original **Tooth and Nail**. They'll be hard-pressed to get out of that one.

I hope you enjoyed this week's deck. Have a great rest of the week.

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