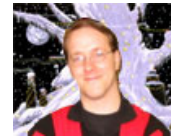


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# Westward Ho

John Carter  
Saturday School  
Saturday, August 20, 2005



Send your rules questions to Level Four Judge [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](#).

Another [US Nationals](#) is behind us (along with several other countries' Nationals as well). Antonino De Rosa will be taking Neil Reeves and Jonathan Sonne to Yokohama, Japan as the US National team for the 2005 World Championship competition in late November and early December. Here is a small sampling of questions from either the JSS Championship, US Nationals, or the online coverage of last week's event...

**Q:** My opponent plays a sorcery or instant with [Boseiju, Who Shelters All](#), so that spell can't be countered. I play [Quash](#) targeting the spell. Do I still get to remove copies of the spell from the game?

**A:** Yes. [Quash](#) instructs you to do two things. First, it tells you to counter the targeted spell—nothing happens with this part since it can't be countered, but the spell is still a legal target, so the [Quash](#) does resolve as best it can. Next, the [Quash](#) tells you to search the player's graveyard, hand, and library for cards with the same name. You don't have to be able to do the first part in order to get the second part.

**\*Extra\*:** [Quash](#) would have to have "if you do..." or "countered in this way" if it required the spell to be countered before letting you search for copies.

**Q:** Can I [Twincast](#) a spell after [Quash](#)-ing it?

**A:** Generally, no. Once the [Quash](#) resolves, the spell should usually be removed from the stack. However, if the spell was an instant or sorcery played with mana from [Boseiju, Who Shelters All](#), then the uncounterable original spell will still be on the stack and ready for [Twincast](#) after the [Quash](#) resolves.



**Q:** Why does US Nationals have two finals rounds?

**A:** Obviously we want a US Nationals Champion, so the first and second place playoff is self-explanatory. Additionally, everyone who makes the top-4 of US Nationals is invited to Worlds. But national teams are made up of three players, and the other finals match is to determine who makes the national team and who is the team's alternate player.

**\*Extra\*:** Most events would use the standings from the Swiss rounds in the event to determine who is third and fourth after the semi-finals. However, determining a National team is important enough that an exception is made to let face-to-face competition determine the last member.

**Q:** What is the Abyss-like [Culling Scales](#) / [Sensei's Divining Top](#) combination mentioned in the US Nationals coverage?

**A:** The *Legends* expansion set has a World Enchantment called [The Abyss](#). Each turn, [The Abyss](#) destroys a non-artifact creature. [Culling Scales](#) is thematically similar in that it destroys a permanent regularly, but the Scales are limited to the lowest mana cost among permanents, and it triggers only on its controller's turn. The issue is that [Culling Scales](#) has a converted mana cost of three, so it's not long before the Scales destroys itself. That's where [Sensei's Divining Top](#) comes in. With a Top in play, the Scales controller can target the Top with the Scales' ability and then use the Top to draw a card. This keeps the Scales from destroying itself turn after turn. If the opponent puts a nonland permanent into play that costs three or less, then the Top player can use the Top before his or her turn starts. Thus, the newly played permanent instead of the Top would become the target of the Scales ability.

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## On Other Fronts

**Q:** If I play **One With Nothing** then play **Twincast** choosing my opponent as the target does he discard his hand? After the **Twincast** resolves, can I counter my **One With Nothing**? Or is that card just ridiculously stupid? -- Chris T.

**A:** **One With Nothing** doesn't target, so the fact that **Twincast** lets you choose new targets for the copy doesn't matter. **Twincasting** your own **One With Nothing** just means you'll be discarding your hand twice (the second time is not likely to be impressive). You could potentially counter the original One (**Daring Apprentice**, maybe?), but with no hand, it's not highly necessary. In short, using **Twincast** on **One With Nothing** really is as bad as you think it is.

**Q:** If a player can't remember the name of a card while resolving **Cranial Extraction**, can he mention one or any of its characteristics (like cost, P/T, etc.)?

**A:** Previously there was a tendency to insist on perfection when it comes to card naming. However, years of event experience has taught people that that level of detail is not needed to play games. Add in the possibility of foreign languages and accents, and sometimes it's very hard to communicate even when using the right words. In general, use English names. If that doesn't work, use the name in your own country's language. If necessary, you can describe the card, but only if the description uniquely identifies the card.

For example: **Thirst For Knowledge** can be uniquely identified with "**Thirst For Knowledge**," "the blue instant that draws three and then discards two or an artifact," or even "the card drawing uncommon from **Mirrodin** showing a guy chugging blue Vedalken brain-swill."

**Q:** A player uses **Cranial Extraction** and removes cards from the game. Soon, that player uses another **Cranial Extraction** and notices that one of the cards that mentioned with the previous **Cranial Extraction** is still in the deck. What should be done in this case with the players and the card? -- Sigfredo S.

**A:** Card should be left where it is. Then the player should be reminded that searching hidden zones (such as the library) does not require you to find cards with given criteria. Just searching for a number of cards without a specific criteria (such as a particular name criteria) does require finding that many cards or as many as are there (**Demonic Tutor** and **Intuition** are tutors that work like this).

**Q:** If you attack with an **Ophidian**, and it's unblocked, could you use its ability to draw a card, then ninjutsu out a **Ninja of the Deep Hours**, returning the **Ophidian**, so you draw two cards in all? --Joel

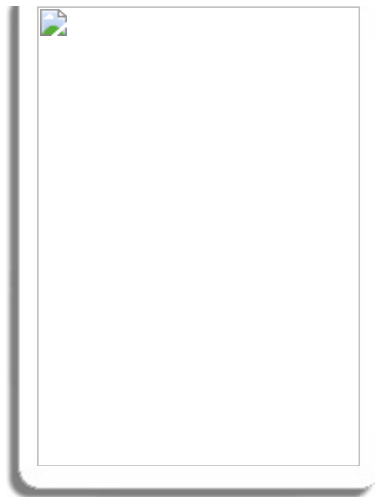
**A:** A creature that attacks and isn't blocked is also an unblocked creature. Once your opponent has declined to block **Ophidian** its ability triggers. As long as you ninjutsu the **Ophidian** before the damage goes on the stack, your **Ninja** will be ready to deal two and hand you another card.

**Q:** My opponent has a **Sakura-Tribe Elder** and I have a **Hearth Kami**, and my opponent then plays **Rend Flesh** (targeting his Elder) and splices on a **Glacial Ray** (targeting my **Hearth Kami**). He sacs his Elder to fetch a land. The question is: does the spell fizzle or not? Some say that if the "base spell" would fizzle, so would any spells spliced on to it. --Kostya R

**A:** The spell still resolves. The base portion does nothing, and then the text from the **Glacial Ray** makes **Rend Flesh** deal two to the Kami. What becomes of any other portion of a targeted spell doesn't matter for the other targets as long as there's at least one legal target left. Of course, if all the targeted portions have illegal or missing targets, then the entire spell (targeted and targeted) is countered.

**Q:** With both **Blood Moon** and **Sea's Claim** together, do they make the land tap for  or ? --Gus F.





**A:** *Sea's Claim* wins out because of a strange corner of the rules called dependency [CR 418.5b-g]. *Sea's Claim* and *Blood Moon* both change lands. *Sea's Claim* changes whatever land it's on, and *Blood Moon* changes only nonbasic lands. Normally things would be applied in the order of their timestamps (the later one wins), but since *Sea's Claim* makes the land it's on into an Island, *Blood Moon* wouldn't affect that land anymore if it previously was nonbasic. The *Sea's Claim* is handled first, and then *Blood Moon* doesn't apply.

**\*Extra\*:** If you had two *Sea's Claims*, one of which was changed to say "Forest" instead of "Island," then the land you wind up with wouldn't be subject to a dependency, and the normal timestamp ordering would apply.

**Q:** Would a *Bazaar of Wonders* counter my *Vesuvan Doppelganger* if I play it naming a creature in play? --James F.

**A:** *Vesuvan Doppelganger* doesn't copy anything until it comes into play (just like *Clone* and *Sculpting Steel*). The only way *Bazaar of Wonders* would notice a Vesuvan being played is if there were a Vesuvan in play that hadn't copied anything as it came into play (or changes shapes to another creature)—an unlikely scenario.

**\*Extra\*:** Rumor is, there's an *Unhinged* guy that does strange things with *Bazaar of Wonders*, but when I try to come up with his name, I just draw a blank.

**Q:** I found an old *Mystical Tutor* in my cards and don't understand how it will play with the current rules. Do lands like Urza's (Tower/Plant/Mine) and basics count as mana sources? --Draksune

**A:** "Mana source" and "interrupt" are obsolete terms. For a time, *Dark Ritual* was an interrupt—it resolved before some other things based on a system that used batches and windows. Then it became a mana source—it resolved right away but was only used on spells (or to describe abilities) that added mana to a pool. When *Sixth Edition* came out, the extraneous terms were scrapped, and all mana sources and interrupts became instants. Abilities (such as lands adding mana or the ability of a *Fellwar Stone*) that add mana became known as mana abilities. Check out the latest wording of *Mystical Tutor* in [Gatherer](#) for more information.

**Q:** If I use *Dream Halls* to play *Tooth and Nail*, how would the entwine cost fit in or would I not be able to pay it? --Dan

**A:** You can pay the entwine costs for a spell in addition to discarding for *Dream Halls*. Entwine is an additional cost, which *Dream Halls* doesn't pay. For *Tooth and Nail*, you'll have to discard a green card and pay 2 to play it using *Dream Halls* with the entwine.



**Q:** Could you please explain the difference between permanents, spells, and abilities? --Zach M.

**A:** Spells cover most cards at some point or another. Lands aren't spells, but everything else is. Spells get played, and when they resolve, instants and sorceries go into the graveyard and artifacts, creatures, and enchantments are put into play. Once in play, those stop being spells. Everything that's in play is a permanent. Usually these are the lands you put into play and the artifact, creature, and enchantments that have resolved. Permanents don't exist anywhere except in play. Abilities come in all shapes and sizes. The easy way to spot abilities is to ask yourself if it's doing something—they're instructions. Abilities produce effects—what is done. For example, I could play a *Llanowar Elves* by taking the creature card in my hand and playing it—now it's a creature spell. As that spell resolves, the *Llanowar Elves* becomes a permanent in play—now it's a creature, and it has an ability. If I use the ability of the *Elves*, the effect is that the permanent which is a creature produces 1.

**Q:** What is a state-based effect? When are they checked? --Daniel

**A:** In generic terms, state-base effects are the janitors of **Magic**. If a creature is dead, they cart it away. If an Aura is attached to an illegal or missing permanent, they ship the Aura to the graveyard. If a player is dead, they turn out the lights and close the door. The full list of SBEs is in [CR 420]. State-based effects check only 1) when a player would get priority and 2) as the last action of the cleanup step. Players get priority many times over in a turn, so that covers plenty of the action in a game. However, players generally don't get priority during the cleanup step, so the game double checks to make sure the turn isn't ending with something going on that shouldn't be going on (such as a pumped creature losing its pumps and then being wiped out because of **Night of Soul's Betrayal**). Other key points about SBEs: they don't check except those two times—while resolving a spell or ability doesn't get checked (**Soul Feasting** yourself while at four life takes you from 4 to 0 to 4, and you'll live). Also, SBEs are checked, and if one or more of them does something, they recheck until nothing happens. Resolving a SBE's effect doesn't use the stack.

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If you happen to be in Indianapolis for the "best four days in gaming" (a.k.a. GenCon) this weekend, feel free to say hello. I'll be keeping my eye on the Vintage, Legacy, and 5-Color tournaments, and like many others, I'll be very interested in the Two-Headed Giant Standard Constructed \$5,000 tournament being held there.

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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