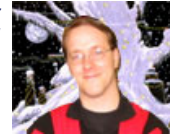


Home > Games > Magic > Magicthegathering.com > Columns

Year of the Rising Sun

John Carter
Saturday School
Saturday, December 10, 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](#).

The year is swiftly drawing to a close, and in case you've been out to early holiday parties so much you didn't see the coverage (available [here](#)), Japan has taken over **Magic**. Japanese players claimed all the big trophies for 2005: Player of the Year, Team Champions, and World Champion. With 2006 just around the corner, it's almost time to start making history again, but the question right now is if there's anyone out there that can stand up to the momentum generated at Yokohama.

Q: A friend of mine has just found an interesting combo using [Coalhauler Swine](#), [Pariah's Shield](#) and the [Shield of Kaldra](#). But wouldn't this set up an "infinite loop" as soon as the Swine takes damage? --Adam S.

A: It would be a loop, but it probably wouldn't be infinite. To be unbounded, it would have to keep looping repeatedly, but since (almost) everyone is taking damage, the loop ends because everybody (else) dies.

***Extra*:** If you had something to keep yourself alive (like [Worship](#) or [Platinum Angel](#)), then the loop would be unbounded. In a group game, you and the Swine herder would tie after everyone else gets done dying.

Q: I imprint a card with transmute (like [Dimir Machinations](#)) onto a [Panoptic Mirror](#). When I get my free copy, can I use the transmute ability or am I restricted to the actual spell? --Mark M.

A: You either play the copy, or you don't play it. Using the transmute ability (which isn't "playing the copy") isn't possible with [Panoptic Mirror](#).

Q: If I attack with two creatures, can my opponent block one with [Thundersong Trumpeter](#) and use its ability to make the other not attack? --Lorne

A: Using the ability at that time is legal, but it won't undo the fact the creature is already attacking.

***Extra*:** If your opponent plays something like [Savage Beating](#) after you've blocked, using the Trumpeter could minimize the carnage by making one of the creatures unable to attack in the pending combat.

Q: If I regenerate [Necroplasm](#) with three +1/+1 counters, will he be safe, or will he die with the rest of the 3 drops? --James B.

A: When the [Necroplasm's](#) effect destroys creatures with converted mana cost of three, the regeneration shield will be used up, and the [Necroplasm](#) will live.

Q: When you use [Golgari Guildmage](#) to sack a creature, can you get back the creature sacked with his ability? Why or why not? --Brandan S.

A: Targets are chosen before costs. [CR 409.1c, h] You'll have to target a dead creature first, then you sac a live one.

Q: I have [Eye of the Storm](#) out with a [Boomerang](#) removed, and then my opponent plays [Shock](#). Can I [Counterspell](#) the [Shock](#) before the Eye removes it from game? Does he still get a copy of the [Boomerang](#) even if his [Shock](#) is countered? --Tommy F.

A: You can [Counterspell](#) in response to the Eye trigger. This sets up a new trigger that removes the [Counterspell](#) and then copies the [Counterspell](#) and the [Boomerang](#). The new [Counterspell](#) copy will be what actually counters the [Shock](#). When the [Shock](#) is put into the graveyard, the first Eye trigger loses track of it. When that first trigger resolves, there will be a [Counterspell](#) and a [Boomerang](#) removed by the Eye that your opponent may play.

***Extra*:** If [Eye of the Storm](#) leaves play before one of its triggers resolves, it will know what cards were removed by it when it was last in play and allow copies of those cards to be played.



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Q: Can I set off the **Rats of Rath's** ability on one of my permanents and then change the target with **Reroute** to one of my opponent's permanents? --Trevon T.

A: No, **Rats of Rath's** target includes "you control." **Reroute** can change which permanent the ability targets, but it still has to be one that you control.

Q: My opponent sacrificed **Kagemaro, First to Suffer**. This would kill the board, including my **Selesnya Guildmage**. Is there anyway to put the Guildmage's Saproling ability onto the stack so that it resolves after Kagemaro's ability? --Nathaniel H.

A: No. If you respond to the ability, the token and the Guildmage die once the Kagemaro ability has resolved. If you wait, the Guildmage will be in the graveyard before you can activate it. You don't get to do anything halfway through the resolution of Kagemaro's ability.

Q: Can I use **Sunforger** to get an instant like **Festival of the Guildpact**, or can I not because of its **X** cost? --Luis R.

A: You can, but the **X** will be treated as 0, so the **Festival of the Guildpact** won't be very effective.

Q: My opponent sacrifices **Savra, Queen of the Golgari** to his **Drooling Grootion** and then pays two life for Savra, making me sacrifice one of my creatures. Can he do this? --Christian S.

A: Yes. Savra's abilities are leaves-play abilities. When something happens, leaves-play abilities look at the game right before that event to see if they trigger. [CR 410.10d] Since Savra is both black and green, both her abilities trigger when she is sacrificed.

***Extra*:** Savra's triggers will stack on top of the Grootion's ability. Since it's your choice of what to sacrifice, you could sacrifice the creature (assuming you control it) that was destined for -2/-2 to Savra's effect. The other target creature will still get the +2/+2 from the Grootion effect.

Q: If you dredge something instead of the 'draw a card', would **Sensei's Divining Top** be put on top of the library before or after you dredge? --Ethan

A: Dredge first, then put the Top on top.

***Extra*:** Don't forget that a replacement effect is very specific about what it replaces. Replacing the draw portion of the Top with dredge doesn't change the rest of that Top effect.

Q: I have **Circu, Dimir Lobotomist** in play. If I play a **Forced Retreat**, will Circu remove the returned creature from the game? --Peter C.

A: No, Circu's ability will trigger and resolve before the spell that triggered it resolves.

Q: I have **Searing Meditation** in play. My opponent attacks with two **Grizzly Bears**. I play **Chant of Vitu-Ghazi**. How many times does **Searing Meditation** trigger? --Skippy

A: The Meditation triggers once. Combat damage resolves as a single event (unless first- or double strike cause a second combat damage step). The Chant turns that event from "deal 4" to "gain 4."

Q: I attack with **Grave-Shell Scarab** equipped with an **Umezawa's Jitte**, my opponent blocks with **Myojin of Cleansing Fire**. In my second main phase I remove the counters to give the Myojin -2/-2, why doesn't this put the Myojin into the graveyard? --Michael P.

A: Indestructible creatures (I'm assuming there's a divinity counter on Mr. Clean) ignore lethal damage. Damage first and toughness reduction second or vice versa doesn't matter if the creature still has one or more toughness--it's all lethal damage. [CR 420.5c]

***Extra*:** What you're looking for is zero-or-less-toughness to kill indestructibles. Once a creature's toughness hits zero, it's put into the graveyard as a state-based effect. [CR 420.5b] Dealing damage doesn't reduce toughness though.

Q: I play **Iname as One** from my hand and put **Kokusho, the Evening Star** into play. Then I do the same thing again. Would that work in such a way that both Kokusho go to the graveyard due to the legend rule and then I can remove both Iname from the game to bring both Kokusho back? --Bill C.




A: No. Here's how it breaks down: Iname #2 arrives. This triggers I#2. Then both I#1 and I#2 are put into the graveyard. This causes both to trigger: I#1, I#2a. Notice that Kokusho #1 is still in play, and Kokusho #2 hasn't shown up because the very first trigger is still on the stack. After you resolve I#1 and I#2a (in the order you prefer), then you resolve the first trigger and fetch a second Kokusho. And the legend rule kicks in and wipes out both Kokusho with much life draining.

***Extra*:** You could use one of the Iname's leaves-play trigger to put the other Iname back into play, but this won't trigger the comes-into-play trigger since it wasn't played from your hand.

Q: Is the affinity effect of the **Mycosynth Golem** compulsory? Is there any way for me to still be able to use the sunburst mechanic while I have a **Mycosynth Golem** in play? --Paul

A: It is compulsory. You can't choose to pay extra for a spell to benefit sunburst.

***Extra*:** **Fist of Suns** will allow you to pay  instead of whatever the resulting post-affinity cost would have been.

Q: My friend has **Intruder Alarm**, **Highway Robber**, and **Hell's Caretaker** in play and another **Highway Robber** in his graveyard. At the beginning of his upkeep, can he sacrifice his Robber to grab the other one, untap his Caretaker, and repeat? --Alex

A: Yes. **Hell's Caretaker's** ability is playable only during the upkeep, but it's not limited to a particular number of times in an upkeep.

Q: How does **Soul Echo** interact with **Solitary Confinement**? I know that normally if two effects are trying to replace damage, the player receiving damage would get to choose which applies. However, the fact that **Soul Echo** says explicitly "an opponent chooses" has me wondering. --Eric E.

A: All the opponent chooses is if **Soul Echo's** counter removing is essentially turned "on" or "off." If they choose to have counters removed, then the Echoing Confined player would choose which one to apply. If they choose to not remove counters, then **Soul Echo** won't be trying to apply to the damage, so only **Solitary Confinement** would apply.

***Extra*:** Since **Soul Echo** isn't prevention, **Flaring Pain** and the like won't guarantee that damage is dealt, whereas **Solitary Confinement** with **Flaring Pain** would mean the Confinement can't prevent the damage.

Q: Can I block **Avatar of Might** with **Phyrexian Plaguelord** and give -4/-4 to the Avatar to kill it? --Tatu

A: Yes, just be sure to stack combat damage before using the Plaguelord's ability. Of course, the Plaguelord would have to not be summoning sick, and you're likely to take four points of damage from the trample, but such is life.

Q: Would a **Quagmire Lamprey's** ability be able to kill a blocking **Auriok Champion**? Would it automatically kill all 1-toughness creatures blocking it? --Justin

A: Yes, the ability isn't targeted or damage, so protection from black won't help. Almost all 1-toughness blockers wither under the mighty fish (**Dream Fighter**, for example, doesn't).

Q: Do his artifact lands untap as normal with **Winter Orb** in play, or does only one of them untap? --Myles

A: Artifact lands are still lands--only one untaps.

Q: I attempt to play **Mind's Desire**. Can my opponent counter the Desire, which would negate the copies of the spell taking effect? --Scott

A: Countering a spell with storm doesn't stop the storm. Storm triggers when the spell is played, not when it resolves.

Q: When **Oath of Druids** reveals a high cost creature and **Dragon Breath**, the creature is put into play and can have the Breath attached. Would the same ruling apply to an activated **Gamekeeper**? This affects a Legacy deck called "The Game" which is causing some confusion at a number of tournaments. --Nehptis

A: **Gamekeeper** doesn't trigger a simultaneously revealed **Dragon's Breath**. It is confusing, but the rules of English can help. **Oath of Druids** says, "...player **puts** that card into play and all other cards... into his or her graveyard." **Gamekeeper** says, "**Put** that card into play and **put** the other cards... into your graveyard." The key is in the verb(s). Oath does one thing to two sets of objects (put X and Y).



Gamekeeper does two things to one object each (put X and put Y). Those two verbs instead of one divides the effect into discreet actions. When the **Gamekeepered** creature enters play, the Breath isn't quite in the graveyard.

Q: What happens when **Talruum Champion** blocks a creature with double strike? --Eric W.

A: The Minotaur gets a big surprise. Since double strike isn't first strike, the Minotaur's ability does nothing. During the first combat damage step, the Minotaur and its double striking attacker will deal damage to each other.

Q: Do Cobra tokens from **Snake Basket** count as Snakes? --Zankoku

A: No, they're named Cobra and have the creature type Cobra. (Creature types on cards typically aren't updated unless the card is reprinted in new sets.)

If you've been playing **Magic Online** much lately you might have seen a **Snake Basket**, **Dream Fighter**, or **Soul Echo** this past week. Last Monday marked the successful launch of **Mirage** in the electronic world. The electronic versions of **Mirage** cards are still sporting their old frames, but you can get online foils even though **Mirage** originally never had foils. Judging by the response so far, the release of **Mirage** online looks to be a big hit with the players.



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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