

Kiii-YAAAH!

THE JOURNAL OF THE SHADOWFIST SECRET WAR SOCIETY



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7 MASTERS VERSUS THE UNDERWORLD

From the desk of THE UNSPOKEN NAME

Shadowfist was one of the first CCGs to have storyline affect cards. Starting January 2004, the storyline is in the players' hands! The next expansion, set in the pulp era of the 1930s, details the struggle for a new juncture in the Secret War, just opened and not yet owned by any faction. You, the players, will determine who controls this juncture, possibly causing a critical shift in the Shadowfist timeline. By winning in Proving Ground leagues and in Final Brawl events at designated cons, you edge all factions in your winning deck closer to control of the 1930s juncture. The faction(s) with the most points AFTER Gencon Indy 2004 will rule the pulp juncture. Visit www.shadowfist.com/html/news.htm for details.

The war for the 1930s began Monday, January 12 -- your faction needs you!



Recent Rulings and Clarifications from the Rules Team



MISTAKES WILL BE MADE; The Unspoken Name can order those responsible killed, but the mistakes still need to be cleaned up. Here is a consolidated listing of all errata to Z-Man cards that have been made since their last printing.

Art of War (Netherworld 2): This card is still **Unique**.

Chinese Doctor (Shaolin Showdown): He provides a resource.

Zheng Yi Quan (Shaolin Showdown): His subtitle should be "Kung Fu Master".

Memory Reprocessing (Dark Future): You ignore resource conditions on the Event you play from an opponent's smoked pile.

Pocket Demon (10,000 Bullets - Monarch): The last part of the card's text is missing. It should be "...minus the number of cards in your burned-for-victory pile."

Purist Aspirant (10,000 Bullets): These do not provide a resource.

The following Feng Shui Sites in 10,000 Bullets are missing "Netherworld" from their subtitle:

- **Field of Tentacles** (Lotus deck)
- **Garden of Bronze** (Purist deck)

NEW ERRATA - Spin Doctoring (Red Wedding): This card managed to make it through playtest allowing easy, reliable infinite combos, by using Plains of Ash to prune your smoked pile. To remove this problem, the card can now trigger only once per turn. The trigger is still mandatory; the first time an appropriate Character is smoked, every Spin Doctoring you control will return a card to your hand.

NEW ERRATA - Tank Warfare (Flashpoint, 10,000 Bullets): This is not a card you would think of as broken; indeed, many people don't even consider it all that good. But allowing unrestricted recycling of cards in the smoked pile, and giving you a price break to boot, creates problems for us

when creating certain types of cards. (Specifically, cheap **Tank** cards, and effects that do interesting things with designators.) Because of the expense of the **Tanks** currently in existence, this problem isn't normally encountered in practice, as you cannot afford to play many **Tanks** in a turn, anyway.

Now, you must turn Tank Warfare in order to use its ability. You still need to follow the normal rules on when you can play States, so you can't normally use it outside of your Main Shot, unless combining it with Spirit Pole or the like.

The State is now played when the effect resolves. This means that spending Power on the **Tank** and choosing its subject don't have to be done until then, so if your intended subject dies, you still play the **Tank** elsewhere.

NEW ERRATA - Fatty Cho (Boom Chaka Laka): "when you play Fatty Cho" should be "when Fatty Cho enters play", in order for him to work properly when returned by a Golden Comeback or the like.

NEW ERRATA - Ice Courtier (Netherworld): A minor change in use of terminology in the 10,000 Bullets rules caused this card to be no longer able to counter continuous abilities that steal characters. To correct this, she now says "...to cancel an effect or continuous ability..."

NEW ERRATA - Jimmy Wai (Netherworld), **Whirlpool of Blood** (Netherworld, Throne War): The same rules change that affected Ice Courtier has caused some players to question whether these cards can cancel an ongoing turn and maintain. They can.

A couple of bits of non-errata for the next newsletter, related to promo cards:

Burn for Victory Markers: Despite their appearance, these are not playable Feng Shui Sites. They exist to indicate the size of a player's burned-for-victory pile, while reducing the chances of an actual card accidentally changing hands. Since some cards care who owns the cards in BFV piles, you might find it helpful to sign your BFV Markers.

Next Set Promos: With each booster set Z-Man puts out, we print a promotional card for the next set, containing art and a brief description of what the future has in store. Once the set these cards advertise has come out, they are considered to be playable copies of the final version of the card, with all of its rules text. To date, there have been six of these cards: Once and Future Champion, The Eastern King, Primus, Funky Monkey, Silver Jet, and Ho Chen. The final rules text of each promo follows:

Once and Future Champion Unique. Heals 1 damage at the start of your turn. Each time he turns to attack, he gains +1 Fighting and may inflict 1 damage on a Character. Once per turn, you may toast a card when he smokes it in combat.

The Eastern King Unique. Uncopyable. Not a legal target for Events. When you play him, and at the start of each turn, he gains the rules text of target **Lodge** Character until the target leaves play or the end of the turn.

Primus Unique. When Primus enters play, target an opponent, who cannot respond with Events :: Target player cannot play cards this turn.

Funky Monkey Unique. Opponents cannot steal Power from you. Once each turn, you may give another Character +1 Fighting until the end of the turn.

Silver Jet Unique. Independent. Toughness: 1. When you declare him as an attacker, name a card, which cannot be played in response :: His target's controller must show you his or her hand and discard all cards with that title.

Ho Chen You'll just have to wait and see.

For more info on all recent rulings, consult the online FAQ at

www.shadowfist.com/html/news_faqs.htm



GenCon SoCal Winning Deck

deck design by Steve Valladolid; winning player Jan Malina

THE NAME OF THE DECK derives from one of the main peasant farmers in Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*. It is meant to be a 4-player deck but can work in a slower 3-player environment by using the Leaders to steal your opponent's foundation characters, slowing their development while you progress normally. I'm mostly happy with the deck but it needs a bit more work. It would definitely add a second Sacred Heart Hospital. I'd switch out either the Stone Dolmens or an Eagle Mountain for a second copy.

The deck isn't meant to be played as a powerhouse style deck. Rather, it is a finesse deck that should be played in a pesky and opportunistic fashion, using the Peasant Leaders to control the board. Use your opponent's characters against each other. If player A attacks you, steal Player B's character to intercept. If there is a particularly juicy character on the board that you'd like to steal, use your Nightclubs, interceptors, attackers or sites to make sure it survives combat in a sufficiently weakened state to be brainwashed by some Peasant Leader propaganda. The two Nightclubs, the two Senshi Chambers and Desolate Ridge allow you to further manipulate opponent's fighting value.

The Peasant Leaders are very effective cards but they are extremely fragile. Most of the card choices are meant to address this or to boost their fighting. Additionally, I splashed Lotus into the deck to be able to use/abuse Inauspicious Return to effectively give me more Peasant Leaders and they tend to be born with a large target tattooed on their foreheads. Cards like Turtle Beach, the two Senshi Chambers, and the Iron and Silks should be used, where possible, to protect the Peasant Leaders.

SPECIFIC COMBOS

Golden Candle Society/Hands Without Shadow. This is one of the ways that the deck can address larger fighting characters, the other being Robust Feng Shui. Attack your opponent's Eastern King with your Golden Candle Society, show him your fancy Hands Without Shadow stance, and brainwash him with one of your Leaders. If you have an unturned Sacred Heart Hospital, you can bandage him up and attack with him immediately. If not, you will have to wait and turn and heal him and use him in the future or just run him into something to get it off the board.

Turtle Island/Storm of the Just. Peasant Leaders only check for fighting when they generate their effect. One of the conditions for Storm of the Just to trigger is that one of your opponents control one of your sites. Turtle Island cannot be burned which normally results in it being seized rather than smoked. Once you meet the SotJ's play conditions, play it to boost your Leader's fighting and take control of opponent's beefy 4 cost hitters. Try and make sure you have as many Leaders in play as possible to make it as brutally effective as possible when you can pull it off. Don't forget to search for one using Shield of Pure Soul when one of your sites gets taken. The Turtle Islands also tend to slow the game down a bit by since they cannot be burned for power. This is advantageous for this deck as it has the most problems with large character decks.

"Manzo"

FOUNDATION

- 5 Golden Candle Society
- 3 Buddhist Monk
- 1 Wandering Monk
- 4 Sinister Priest

CHARACTERS

- 5 Peasant Leader
- 3 Blue Monk
- 2 Fist of Shadow
- 1 Iron Monkey
- 1 Leung Mui
- 1 Hung Hei Kwon

EVENTS

- 4 Inauspicious Return
- 2 Storm of the Just
- 3 Iron and Silk
- 2 Confucian Stability
- 1 Secrets of Shaolin
- 2 Robust Feng Shui
- 1 Rigorous Discipline
- 3 Violet Meditation

STATES / EDGES

- 2 Shield of Pure Soul
- 2 Hands Without Shadow

FENG SHUI

- 4 Turtle Island
- 2 Night Club
- 1 Eagle Mountain
- 1 Stone Dolmens
- 1 Turtle Beach
- 1 Sacred Heart Hospital
- 1 Temple of Angry Spirits
- 1 Fox Pass
- 1 Desolate Ridge
- 1 Whirlpool of Blood
- 1 Temple of the Shaolin Dragon

NON-FENG SHUI

- 1 Green Senshi Chamber
- 1 Yellow Senshi Chamber

Evolution of the Jammers, pt 2

by Jim Sensenbrenner



[The first part of this article ran last issue; we mangled it pretty completely, right down to misattributing its author. Brian Bankler has written several pieces of Shadowfist fiction and strategy articles, but this one belonged to Jim Sensenbrenner. We also ran with an early version of the article instead of Jim's final; I've corrected this by starting with an overview of the first article's high points. Then we'll continue with this month's deck and writeup.]

THIS SERIES OF ARTICLES will look at the evolution of the Jammers from a player's point of view. The faction will be examined in three blocks. The first block (Old Skool) is cards published by Daedalus. The second block (Critical Shift) will be Z-Man cards through Dark Future. The final block (Newbie) will be Boom Chaka Laka to the current expansion. We'll design, playtest and critique a multiplayer deck for each block. This process could easily be applied to your favorite faction – it's interesting to see how deckbuilding choices have evolved with each new block of expansions.

PART 1 - OLD SCHOOL

The Jammers have the fewest cards through Flashpoint. Their biggest weakness is no alternate power generation. This is going to drive the deck design more than anything else. I

cannot rely on good comeback if I get beat down, and I cannot rely on having power to play expensive characters. With these critical points in mind, I begin looking for a strategy.

Believe it or not, the solution lies in a foundation character, Portal Jockey. Portal Jockey is inexpensive ambush, for a fast start and fast comeback. His ability to be put into play for free will also help with comeback; ambush is more important, however. Early in the game it will be used to wipe out other foundation characters, forcing other players to choose between building site structures or playing replacement characters for protection. Late in the game, it will be combined with cards like Homemade Tank to punch through for victory. The fact that the ambush only lasts for the turn is actually beneficial – after the attack, opponents will not feel the need to eliminate him before he can attack again like other ambushers. The liberal use of In Your Face Again will also discourage attacks. Opponents will not want the Jockey in the smoked pile where he can come out with ambush again.

Other characters support the Jockeys and keep the deck going when more muscle is needed. Battlechimp Potemkin allows Jockeys to make additional ambush attacks. Three Battlechimps is a good number to ensure that one is drawn without having multiples clog your hand. Two \$10,000 Men and two Dallas Rockets provide added muscle; both are solid and can be unturned by Potemkin. Two Demolition Experts and one Gearhead round out the characters.

Event selection is easy – five In Your Face Again and five Death-O-Rama. In Your Face Again will have Jockeys coming back to ambush over and over. Death-O-Rama will let the Jockeys blow through four fighting characters on their way to sites.

"Old Skool Monkeys"

FOUNDATION

5 Portal Jockeys
5 Resistance Squads

CHARACTERS

2 Demolitions Experts
1 Gearhead
2 Dallas Rockets
2 \$10,000 Man
3 Battlechimp Potemkin

0-1 COST EVENTS / STATES

5 In Your Face Again
5 Death-O-Rama

OTHER

2 Satellite Intelligence
3 Homemade Tank
3 Pump-Action Shotguns
2 Explosives

FENG SHUI

1 Ancestral Sanctuary
1 Birdhouse Café
2 City Park
3 Festival Circles
1 Hidden Sanctuary
2 Pinball Halls

PART 2 - CRITICAL SHIFT

After the critical shift, Jammers start to rebuild their power base quickly in Throne War with cards like Scrounging, Payback Time, and Napalm Addict. Netherworld 2 adds back staples used in the Old Skool Monkeys. Shaolin Showdown adds a few utility cards. Dark Future, however, is the set that really makes the Jammers hum. Battle-Matic in particular just screams to have a deck built around it. Toughness:1 and +X fighting for only 1 power is a bargain. We just need to get the resources and lots of states into the smoked pile.



Most decks I build start at 62 cards: 13 foundation, 13 Feng Shui, 12 characters, 12 low cost events or states, and 12 miscellaneous cards. Foundation characters will be straightforward: Just Another Consumer for fast Jammer resources, Resistance Squad for tech resources, Portal Jockey because he's so good, and Low-Rent Cyborg for more tech and a hitter in a pinch.

Character selection was influenced by resources. Old school Jammers had very low resource requirements: [Jam] for Potemkin and [Tech] for \$10,000 Man. Now most Jammer hitters take at least [Jam][Jam] and an additional [Tech] for a monkey. Jack of All Trades is a perfect fit. At a cost of 1[Jam], he provides [Jam][Tech] and his ability to smoke states to draw others is a must have for this deck. It will power up the Battle-Matics and make sure one is always available. Dallas Rocket and Napalm Addict fill out the midrange hitters. They ensure the deck can still perform if it comes up short on [Tech]. Also, either will be extremely effective once they're in a good sized tank. The high end hitters are Battlechimp, Titanium Johnson, and King Kung.

Low cost events and states are going to focus on states to build up Battle-Matics. The only events included are Close Call, Who's the Monkey Now, and Satellite Intelligence. The main focus is trying to prevent my characters from being removed after they have states on them. My metagame is low on direct character removal denial so the Close Calls will provide more protection. Satellite Intelligence is great for either denial or a surprise win. Battle-Matics and Homemade Grenades make up the balance of this group. Homemade Grenades are amazingly effective and combine great with the Battle-Matics.

The Other category has additional states and sources of alternate power generation. Pump-Action Shotguns are the final weapon states. Alternate power generation comes from Scrounging, Jury-Rigged Dynamo, Payback Time, Secret Laboratory and The Junkyard.

Feng Shui sites are selected for additional power generation, comeback, defense, and punch through. Power generation is funded by Monkey House and Mobius Garden. Comeback is granted from Nine Dragon Temple. Defense is provided by Puzzle Garden, Floating Restaurant, and Ring of Gates. Punch through comes from Eagle Mountain and Petroglyphs.

PLAYING THE DECK. The deck has been reliably able to get the resources for the Battle-Matics. This usually is done by playing a Resistance Squad or Jack of All Trades early along with another foundation. Once a Jack of All Trades is in play, cycle through states quickly and effectively. Declare an attack. Put a shotgun on the attacker. Pump the shotgun to get +3 damage. Sacrifice the shotgun to Jack to pull out a Battle-Matic. Play the Battle-Matic. Your attacker is now toughness: 1 (or 2 if attacking from Eagle Mountain), at least +1 fighting, and +3 damage. If the attacker is a first turn Jockey, he also has Ambush, or a Napalm Addict will have Guts. Either will wreak havoc on your opponent. Once a character is in a Battle-Matic, use the Homemade Grenades as much as possible. Doing up to 3 damage to all interceptors makes toughness more effective. Also, the Grenade will increase the fighting bonus without having a character and state smoked.



"Battle Addicts"

FOUNDATION

- 5 Just Another Consumers
- 3 Portal Jockeys
- 4 Resistance Squads
- 1 Low-Rent Cyborg

CHARACTERS

- 4 Jack of All Trades
- 2 Dallas Rockets
- 3 Napalm Addicts
- 1 Battlechimp Potemkin (DF)
- 1 Titanium Johnson
- 1 King Kung

0-1 COST EVENTS / STATES

- 2 Close Calls
- 1 Who's the Monkey Now
- 1 Satellite Intelligence
- 5 Battle-Matics
- 3 Homemade Grenades

OTHER

- 5 Pump-Action Shotguns
- 2 Scrounging
- 1 Jury-Rigged Dynamo
- 2 Payback Times
- 1 Secret Laboratory
- 1 The Junkyard

FENG SHUI

- 2 Eagle Mountains
- 2 Floating Restaurants
- 1 Monkey House
- 1 Mobius Gardens
- 2 Nine Dragon Temples
- 1 Petroglyphs
- 2 Puzzle Gardens
- 2 Ring of Gates

by Bryant Durrell



SO HERE'S THE SITUATION. You're sitting at a table across from two other players. One of them is attacking the other guy's damaged Nine Dragon Temple with a Fist of the Bear. It's for the win. You have a Nerve Gas in hand, but nobody knows that. Nine Dragon Temple guy has Sergeant Blightman in front of the Nine Dragon Temple. He declines to intercept.

Now, you were saving that Nerve Gas for Blightman, because the other Architect player is also at four Feng Shui sites and he's going to use Blightman to take the last one. But if you don't Nerve Gas the Fist of the Bear, you're both going to lose. You're being blackmailed. What are you going to do? What's the right thing to do?

Blackmail is one of the most annoying things that can happen in a game of Shadowfist. Shadowfist is generally considered a strong multi-player game, and most of us like playing multi-player a lot, but there are certain types of interaction that drive people up the wall. Blackmail is one of those, because you're being forced to use your resources against your will. Well, we're going to talk a little about blackmail: how to avoid it and whether or not it's a legitimate tactic.

"YOU BASTARD!"

Let's get the touchy subject out of the way first. Blackmail is a perfectly legitimate way to play the game. It's just another way to make someone else spend resources so that you can win. If you aren't thinking about ways to make someone else gimp for you, you're denying yourself a useful tactic.

But it's also perfectly legitimate to stand up to the blackmailer, and this is where most of the arguments start. In the situation described above, you might decide not to Nerve Gas the Fist of the Bear, and that's your right. Maybe the other guy has a Nerve Gas. Maybe the attacker will win the game. You have the right to take risks.

Good Shadowfist play goes beyond the immediate game to the metagame. We often think of the metagame as influencing what cards to play. "Hey, there are a lot of Whirlpools in decks around here; I better stock some of my own if I want to play Proving Grounds." However, it also influences play style.

As such, you might well want to get a reputation as being the kind of person who won't be blackmailed. If you never succumb to blackmail, people may be less likely to use it against you. Or, depending on your local group, they might keep up the pressure on the grounds that you'll get sick of losing games eventually. Like so many other aspects of the game, it depends on your playgroup.

Tournaments are a special case. If you're playing at GenCon, it's not going to do you much good to stand up to a blackmailer. You won't have time during the course of a tournament to develop a reputation. It's not against tournament rules to stand aside while someone else wins, but it's clearly bad play in that situation and you should be ready for people to be upset with you.

"I WON'T PAY THE RENT!"

When you get right down to it, mind you, the best way to stand up to blackmail is to avoid winding up in a situation in which someone can blackmail you at all. If you don't have denial showing, people won't be able to count on you to use it.

If you have unturned characters, people will know you can use them. If you aren't attacking with your characters, people will often make you use them for defense. This is especially true if you're the only one not attacking, but even if there are other unturned characters on the board, you may wind up stuck as the gimp.

Maybe you're the kind of player who likes to stock a lot of denial. If you get to be known in your playgroup as that kind of player, they'll start relying on you to

stop the big attacks. There aren't any hard and fast rules for avoiding this; it's more a matter of judging the mood of your fellow players. If you notice people talking about how you're the guy with the Nerve Gas and Neutron Bomb, consider playing a different style of deck for a while.

Pay attention to board position. Don't use effects that bring back denial from the smoked pile until you have to. If you have, say, an Arcanotechnician on the board, use it to bring back something harmless from your smoked pile before interceptors are declared; that way, your opponents won't try and make you bring back that Nerve Gas.

Don't reveal your site-based denial until you have to. Ask yourself if you really want to hold onto that site if the attack isn't for the win. Don't ever reveal a defensive Feng Shui site to stop someone else from losing a site. Cultivate the attitude that defense is a problem best left to the person being attacked.

Finally, watch the other players closely. You'll never know for sure if the other guy has a Nerve Gas in hand, but you might be able to make a pretty good guess. Someone could write an entire article on reading the board and making predictions, but in the meantime, think about what the other guy has been doing. Did he carefully save a point of power during his turn? That could be a sign that he has a Nerve Gas. Has he played Expendable Unit this game? Maybe he has another one in his hand. Does he seem worried? Well, he's probably faking that last.

Most importantly, though, don't get upset when someone blackmails you and don't get upset when someone refuses to be blackmailed. It's all part of the game, whether or not you're enjoying it at that particular moment.



"Thing from Another Time"

FOUNDATION

- 5 Sinister Priest
- 5 Purist Initiate
- 4 Mathemagician

CHARACTERS

- 3 Zen Logician
- 3 Inoue Oram
- 2 Evil Twin
- 1 Dr Timbul Damiri
- 3 Dr. Celeste Carter
- 3 Mutator
- 3 Thing w/ 1000 Tongues
- 1 Jeuding Shelun v2

EVENTS / STATES / EDGES

- 2 Amulet of the Turtle
- 2 Portal Nexus
- 1 Paradigm Recoding
- 4 Quantum Sorcery
- 3 Pocket Demon
- 3 Tortured Memories
- 2 Entropy Sphere
- 2 Inauspicious Return
- 1 Secret Pact
- 1 Discerning Fire
- 1 Scroll of Incantation

FENG SHUI

- 1 Morning Tree
- 1 Maze of Stairs
- 1 Puzzle Garden
- 1 Proving Ground
- 1 Gambling House
- 1 Petroglyphs
- 2 Festival Circle
- 2 Stone Dolmens
- 1 Sacred Heart Hospital
- 1 Hot Springs
- 1 Whirlpool of Blood
- 1 Hartwell Ironworks

"I'VE BEEN NEGLECTED LATELY."

Forgotten, almost. You've left me in your "home" card box; I don't even get to travel with you any more. You took another hitter to GenCon, didn't you? And this trip you have planned for December—you aren't bringing me, are you? Of course not. I'm old. Well, Mr.-I-think-you-look-just-fine-the-way-you-are, I want to be beautiful again! You can have your Gao Zhang, and your Shi Zhi Hui, and your, your, your Lai Kuang! They're all a bunch of stupid Eunuchs! I'm going out with the girls tonight!"

... And so the Thing with 1000 Tongues moves in with the Purists while you two figure out your differences.

Thing w/1000 Tongues has been splashable since Limited, but rarely a better choice than the first Queen of the Ice Pagoda. However, the Purists need punch-through. Rhys Engle and the Queen are prime candidates by themselves, but their special abilities are easily mimicked by feng shui sites at this point.

A more robust fighter like the Thing fits in the "big hitter" slot quite well, and compliments Dr. Celeste in a number of ways. Both rely on small characters to pump their abilities, but in different ways. Dr. Celeste hates global damage events; Thing laughs them off. Quantum Sorcery is much like Dr. Celeste in needing Mag bobos, but the addition of Lotus gives you Inauspicious Return to bring the Thing's breakfast back to make money or draw cards. Jeuding is merely the icing on the cake in this situation.

The mix of Purist "good stuff" (Entropy Sphere, Portal Nexus, Mutator) works well with Thing, who doesn't need a lot of unique site-based protection that inhibits the use of the typical Purist defensive cards. These high-utility cards help generate additional options when manipulating the playing field. They also allow for significant single card options, as you will be drawing a lot of cards due to the low cost of the majority of the deck as well as the raw drawing power of Quantum Sorcery. Odd sites like Mourning Tree

can fit into the deck when a bruiser like Thing handles the offense. Being able to omit additional Amulets of the Turtle and zaps helps the deck with resiliency.

Match-ups tend to be decided by your play style. The dreaded Shadowy Mentor is difficult, as always, but Stone Dolmens means never having to say you're sorry for not having something to deal with the problem right away. Thing also gives you Mentor defense, but it isn't exactly enviable. Dr. Timbul Damiri helps as well.

Architect, Hand, and Magic-based zaps are relatively easy to overcome with Festival Circle, Dr. Damiri, and the low cost of most of your cards. Unfortunately, the low cost benefit of zapping your mid-range ladies and spirits puts a big bull's eye on Thing and Dr. Celeste when she "goes for the value meal". Lacking Golden Comeback, or similar effects, you need to shepherd your offense, or push to overwhelm with threats. Evil Twin, Tortured Memories, and Mutator tricks with power-generating sites should help you to get out of these situations when Quantum Sorcery needs to be used to draw another threat.

Weenie rush decks are tough, especially Street Riot decks. Being stripped of your power-generating characters is very bad for the deck. If these decks are prevalent in your area, you may want to pack Cloud Walking.

Banish, Shifting Loyalties, Underworld Tracker, and Verminous Rain were additional considerations for the deck; you shouldn't have any trouble subbing them in to combat specific strategies in your local play area.



Seven Masters vs. The Underworld

by David Eber



“TELL US A STORY, MASTER WU!
Tell us a story!”

“Eh?” Old Wu cocked open one eye. Beneath his grizzled eyebrow, he saw a dozen eager round faces, beaming at up him in the afternoon sun.

“Bah. Go away. Can’t you see Master Wu is taking a nap.” Old Wu closed his eyes, and pulled the brim of his hat down low over his forehead.

“Please, Master Wu,” the children said, their voices a mismatched chorus of tinkling bells. Old Wu opened his eyes again, then pushed his hat back and sat up.

“You are all naughty little urchins, depriving an old man of his rest. Very well, I see you will not be satisfied until I am in my grave.” Old Wu picked himself up, and the children let out a ragged cheer: “Li, fetch me my stool. Cho, a cup of water. Song, stop hitting your sister!” Old Wu stretched out his lanky frame and brushed off his tattered robes. The children all sat down in a loose semi-circle as he took a seat on his stool, took a cool draught of water, and then faced his young audience.

“Master Wu will tell you a story of long ago, a time when ghosts roamed the forests, and sorcerers walked the length of the land, seeking ancient secrets and hidden power. A time when the empire had been corrupted by evil men, and the world was in great danger from their villainous plans. And I will tell you of the masters of old who lived in the mountains, who had kung fu the likes of which have never been seen since. And I will tell you of how heroes rose up to face the evil that darkened our skies, and how they saved us all...”



*“You shall regret
your impertinence!
Grovel, and perhaps
I will choose to kill
you quickly.”*

In spring of 2004, Z-Man games takes you to a world of mighty warriors, wondrous sorcery, and ancient horrors with the release of their newest expansion, Seven Masters Versus the Underworld. Set in a mythical version of China, Seven Masters draws inspiration from films like A Chinese Ghost Story, Kung Fu Cult Master, Buddha’s Palm, and Legend of Zu to weave a story of heroism and magic, as the legendary Seven Masters take on the malevolent Xin Kai Sheng and his Poison Clan allies, and a familiar face teams up with an unlikely hero to save the world.

The most exciting new feature of Seven Masters is, of course, the Seven Masters themselves. This new mini-faction combines both magic and chi, and features a host of powerful new characters with low resource requirements, making them ideal for multifaction decks. In fact, the whole faction itself is based on the idea of multifactioning. Although you can play the Seven Masters on their own, you’ll definitely want to try them with other

factions. Add to this a new type of foundation card, new “alternate-play” conditions for some of the masters, and a selection of powerful abilities, the Seven Masters will be making a big splash in the Shadowfist scene.

Of course, since the Lotus are the main villains of the story, they’ve got a bunch of exciting new cards as well. This includes a new alternate-victory card, the return of the (much-improved) Hopping Vampire, and the single biggest Shadowfist character to date. Not that the other factions get neglected. Everyone gets something, including a new sub-faction for the Ascended, powerful new kung-fu “stances” that require both chi and magic to use, and a pair of new swords that are unlike any other swords you’ve seen before!

So sharpen your blades, practice your kung fu, and get your rice paper ready. Seven Masters Versus the Underworld offers over 100 new cards for Shadowfist players. Are you ready to take on the Underworld? Find out this spring!



Dragon and Four Monarch Faction Synergies

by Joshua Kronengold

MOST SHADOWFIST FACTIONS have at least some synergy; however, Dragons and Monarchs have more than most, on both story and game mechanic levels. With Red Wedding putting their alliance front and center, it's worth giving that pairing another look.

First, it's worth noting the several broad synergies between the factions. Dragon character support events allow them to make the most of low resource, high-cost hitters, which is a Monarchs defining trait. The Dragons have both very good states and Kar Fai's Crib to reduce their cost, while the Monarchs' Spirit Pole makes states much harder to get rid of; they also bring several very good states and state-carriers of their own. The Dragons tend to be extremely power hungry, with very conditional power-generating events, while the monarchs have easy access to Pocket Demon, Wedding Gifts, and Blood Lust, all with few preconditions. And while the Dragons tend to draw opponents' ire once they're doing well with events (to wipe out characters) and attacks (to destroy your site structure / power base) the combination of the Avenging cards, Brain Fire, and Never Surrender can allow you to discourage or even take advantage of drawing all that aggression.

There are other card combinations, though few as deck-defining.

There's the classic Dragon/Magic cross – The Hungry and Bronze Sentinel mix amazingly, since the Sentinel works very well when you want to stay at one Feng Shui (with maybe a Trade Center or Secret Headquarters to hide your site behind) so you'll gain power for him eating your sites rather than losing it (generate 1 power, toast your FSS, play a FSS, gain another power) while The Hungry can make the boost you get for burning a site with the Sentinel into a huge one (though note the temptation and risks in playing more than one The Hungry).

The Fire subfaction of the Monarchs has a wealth of interesting combinations on its own. Baptism of Fire can allow the old Fire King to ping, and can be returned with Spirit Pole or reshuffled with the new King (and if you have the Crib, is free even when returned). Feeding the Fires combines very well with Dragon Independence, as does either King of the Fire Pagoda, but the card it combines best with is CB Radio. CB Radio is itself a very interesting card when combined with the Monarchs. Not only does it allow you to fail an attack at will, either to put a counter on Feeding, to get a ping for joining an opponent's attack, or both; it also gives new life to a card which is otherwise often confined to the dustbin of bad

cards – Fire Martyr. While Martyr can, like Dallas Rocket, give a powerful 3-for-6 punch, his inherent fragility often pushes him out of decks in favor of cards that can't be nullified by a single Final Brawl or threatened by a mere two fighting of interceptors. However, while the Dragons cannot negate his inherent weakness, their plethora of ways to untun characters (I count 4, plus K-house) can make the investment well worth the risk, as the second time he attacks in a turn, he is no less than 3 for 10, while the third time, he is 3 for 14 (plus any previous damage you've done with him if you've been using Back for Seconds, The Prof, or Got My Mojo Working. And to make things sweeter, the Dragons can easily grant Independent to Monarchs, Fire Martyrs, or all your characters for a turn via Ting Ting's Gambit.

There are far more cards appropriate to a Dragon/Monarch cross than I've mentioned, and several more viable archetypes (Ice Gun Deck with Is That All You've Got, perhaps?). But however you choose to mix them, the two factions are a match made, not in heaven, but in the Netherworld.



by John Castellucci



WHEN CONSTRUCTING A DECK, two important considerations are **Alternate Power Generation** and **Power Gain Effects**. Power Generation occurs during your Establishing Shot, and is determined by the sites you have in play. Power Gain Effects are cards that get you extra power, usually in a Main Shot.

One goal of alternate / extra power is to let you invest your power in cards other than sites. While your opponents are playing sites to maintain their power generation, you are getting power from other cards, letting you concentrate on your deck's theme. Extra power can also give you that explosion you need to win a game. The number of cards to devote to power gain is a bit tricky. Too few or too many and your deck will stall. I often start off with 2-4 each of both sites and events (for a 60 card deck), and then adjust the amount after I've played it. Obviously, a deck that needs to play expensive cards like the Reascended will need more power gain than a deck based around low-cost cards like Inauspicious Return.

There are three cards that give you an alternative to generating power with your sites – Pocket Demon, Violet Meditation and Scrounging. They are often referred to as comeback events, as they can get you back into the game when you're beaten down. If you have [Mag], [Chi] or [Jam] in your pool, these cards are usually your first choice for boosting power. Often you will see decks built around these events, leeching power off opponents, especially when combined with Proving Ground. Be careful of burning for victory using one of these decks – BfV reduces the power these events generate, and you can find yourself in a hole you can't climb out of.

While there are some characters that can gain you power (Johann Bonengel, Serena Chase), mostly you will rely on events for additional power. The list of these events is quite long, but I want to focus on a few of the best in each faction.

The Ascended have two old favorites from Standard. While Mole Network has taken a hit from Hacker, in multiplayer it's often a reliable source of power if you can play around Dragons. Bull Market must be played with care as it also gives your opponents power – Shadowy Mentor is a good way to take advantage of the power your opponents gain. The Dragons also have an excellent power stealer, Kiii-YAAAAH! which plays like the mole, and I can't say enough good things about Dirk Wisely's Gambit – it gives you a nice power boost when you can pull it off, and gives you a [Dra] and a very useful [Tec] resource. The Monarchs gained two top-notch events in Red Wedding – I've gotten up to 3 power on the first turn with Wedding Gifts in a Dra/Mon deck, and by mid-game, Blood Lust usually gets 1-2 power (or more), especially in combo with Mark of Fire. Dangerous Experiment has been a staple of the Architects, giving you 5 power, but I've taken to replacing them (and Helix Rethreads) with IKTV Special Report, which gives you a smaller gain, but doesn't have the major drawback of toasting a card. The Jammers best are two cards that I've already mentioned, Scrounging and IKTV. The Purists pretty much have to rely on Pocket Demon and Entropy Tap – deliberately playing high body sites is a must for the latter. When playing the Hand, I often find myself using non-Feng Shui sites like the Senshi Chambers for additional power, although Heat of Battle can also give a power boost, especially when combined with Proving Grounds. Last but not least is the Lotus, a faction that is the master of generating power. Not only do they have events like Evil Whispers and Glimpse of the Abyss that can gain you power, they also have two powerful Edges, Feast of Souls and Imperial Boon, that can also generate significant

amounts of power in the correct deck. Finally, Red Wedding's Secret Pact is a must in any multifaction deck.

Generally the last stage of deck building for me is filling in the Feng Shui (and other) sites. If I feel the deck is going to need more power to play its cards, I load up on sites that can give me a power boost. Almost all of the extra-power sites depend on your opponents' actions, and the more difficult the trigger, the larger the power gain. I like to include a mix – for a larger gain, I like Nine Dragon Temple and Garden of Bronze, in the middle I like Blessed Orchard, and on the 1-point power gain I like Gambling House, Mobius Gardens and Phlogiston Mine, although there are many other good sites that may be tailor-made for your deck – a lot will depend on your play environment. When all else fails, there are three non-Feng Shui sites that can't be beat for a power boost – Drug Lab, Secret Headquarters and Bandit Hideout – you almost never go wrong including these in a deck.

One last method of power gain is Burning For Power. I most often (or at least try to) "power up" on the same turn as I spend a lot of power on characters – even though the White Ninja is great at taking down opponents' characters, if I just spent 6 power playing her, my first thought is going to be burning a site (unless doing so is going to let another player win before my next turn). If you expect your deck to BFP several times during a game, you may not need as many other ways to gain power. Be sure to be wary of Bite of the Jellyfish when burning for power, and a handy Hacker or Secrets of Shaolin can be the difference between winning and losing.

With the right amount of alternate/extra power, your deck will run like a finely-tuned engine, allowing you to crush your opponents with alarming regularity.



by Mr. X

WELCOME TO THE NEW SEGMENT in which I, your friendly neighborhood Lodge Mastermind, answer any letters you, my loyal and unknowing subjects, may have.

Jan Malina from San Francisco, California writes: How is it that Randal M! Gee was the first player to create the Burned for Victory card markers, yet Max Hufnagel gets a "Tip of the hat" on the Z-Man printed version?

X: *The ancient lore of the Snoopy Burned for Victory markers was not known to my associates when the cards were printed and Mr. Hufnagel is a very crafty individual indeed. All due praise should be given to Mr. Gee and Charles Schultz, without whom the card markers may have never existed.*

John Stacy from Tivoli, Italy writes:

If the lodge controls the modern day how is it that you would reveal yourselves in the form of a game?

X: *I know not of which game you speak John. Our agents should be arriving at your door shortly. Please use this time to say farewell to your loved ones and game mates.*

If you have any pressing questions please send them to me as they may be answered in future issues. Until then, may all your game be enjoyable and all your activities known to us.

Mr. X



1 You play Can o' Whupass on a character you control. That characters' fighting is now 6 times the original amount. What character was the Can played on?

2 Your opponent begins their turn with no characters but starts their main shot with six characters in play. How?

3 What Ascended characters have animal names but are not transformed animals?

4 What card shows a goldfish? Two bananas? A man with a knife in his back?

5 You draw a single card and know that you will lose this turn no matter what you do. How is this possible?

- 1 The Emperor, The Prof, or Dr. April Mucova.
- 2 They have a Destroyer in their smoked pile and five Underworld Trackers. You have a Tracker as well which you choose to return.
- 3 Adrienne Hart (Hart is a kind of deer). The Blue Cardinal's Guards (Cardinal is a kind of bird). Jan Zweret (Zweret is Czech for "animal").
- 4 Soul of the Sharks; Chumpazzer; Purral Sorcerer
- 5 Your deck contains only one card.

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Did you notice that Shadowfist starter and booster packaging has numbers in diamonds that look like the Power Generation stat from Feng Shui Sites? Well, they are, sort of.

Each starter box or booster wrapper is worth an amount of Power Points. You can trade them in at our website (see the Power for Promos program) for nifty promo stuff, while supplies last. Each booster is worth 2 Power (clip the 2 in

the diamond on the back of the wrapper) and each starter is worth 5 (clip the 5 on the box flap). Send your Power along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope (for players outside the US, please send the appropriate number of International Reply Coupons for airmail) and anything you'd like to protect your item to **Power for Promos, Z-Man Games, Inc., 6 Alan Drive, Mahopac, NY 10541.**



The stuff we offer for redemption will change over time. We'll keep a current list online (at www.shadowfist.com/buy) and we'll update the list in the FAQ whenever we update the FAQ.



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90 PPts for general public.
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Quantity: _____
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Nine Cuts

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.

Quantity: _____
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The Junkyard

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



Elephant Gun

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



4 Burn for Victory Counter Cards

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.

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(sets of 4)
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Che Gorilla

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.
70 PPts for registered Jammers SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



Funky Monkey

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.
70 PPts for registered Jammers SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



Once and Future Champion

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.
70 PPts for registered Four Monarchs SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



Silver Jet

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.
70 PPts for registered Four Monarchs SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



Wedding Gifts

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.
70 PPts for registered Four Monarchs or Dragons SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



Primus

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.
70 PPts for registered Purist SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



Time To Kick Ass!

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.
70 PPts for registered Dragon SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



Yung Chang

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.
70 PPts for registered Guiding Hand SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____



Ho Chen

90 PPts for general public.
80 PPts for SWS members.

Quantity: _____
Power Pts: _____

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