

Legend  
of the  
Five Rings™



# Imperial Herald

## Issue #13

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The **SOLD OUT!**  
*Siege*  
of Sleeping Mountain

**SOLD OUT!**  
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Bound

**SOLD OUT!**  
Ambitions  
Debt

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**February 2000**

## A Message from the Brand Manager

Why 2 C?

Much like my last article, this article finds me sitting behind my messy desk. To my left is my luggage from my last trip (a distributor open house). By the time you all will read this article, I will have used that luggage for no less than 7 more trips, including the Y2C party in L.A. Of all my planned trips, this is the one that I look forward to the most. Why am I so looking forward to it? Well, much like GenCon, the Y2C event represents the best of gaming.

But the Y2C party is something a little different - more focused if you will. It is a celebration of community.

When people asked why I wanted to throw this party, the answer was not easy to vocalize. I just knew it was the right thing to do. Now that I've had time to think about it, the answer to that question is clearer to me. 2000 cards is a milestone for any game, because there are probably just a handful of games that ever get this far. But why is this milestone so important that we have to throw a big (and painfully expensive) party? Magic didn't do it, and that game is way past 2000 cards.

I look at it this way, Magic climbed to the top of this mountain based on many factors; it was first, it is a great game, has big cash tournaments, etc... But L5R got to 2000 cards based almost entirely on the fanaticism of its' players. Through good times and bad, L5R players were our best advertisements. That's why the Y2C party was all about the fans, not the designer of the 2000th card, or

the Brand Manager of the 2000th card, but for the FANS of all 2000 cards.

I often have to separate the business of L5R from my role as a fan. Normally, I'm very successful at this, but every now and then the line would blur. I'd be at a store playing and someone would ask me to teach them. So I teach them. Am I acting as an employee or just a dedicated fan? It seemed to me that even though I was drawing a salary from this game, at that point - my free time on a weekend at a game store - I was just being an average L5R fan. That is why this party is being thrown for the fans. Without that kind of dedication from our fans, L5R would not be in the thriving state that it is today.

I know that every fan couldn't make it to the party, but I hope all the fans take pride in their part of the L5R success. L5R is not just a game you buy and play, it's more than that - it's a game that you own and should feel proud about your contribution to.

If you're a new player to L5R, I challenge you to accept your role as those who have gone before you, and take pride in spreading the word about this great game. Be a gracious winner, a pleasant loser, a kind player to those who need help, and most of all be honorable. Your actions will be compared to the L5R players around you, so learn from them and welcome to the L5R team!

*Luke Peterschmidt*  
Brand Manager

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# An Ambition's Debt pre-release Report

by Michael Underwood

On the weekend of October 23rd, L5R players across North America waited in anticipation for the newest addition to the Emerald Empire. The greatest gathering of players was at the Your 2000th Card celebration, where players were honored for their contributions to the game. But for this little Mantis, the story was different.

Having awakened early and traveled to my local stronghold, I wasted time desperately, trying to hurry the day along. And finally, at noon, we began the Ambition's Debt pre-release. There were 12 of us, exactly one box of starters worth. I pulled Lion, and prepared to revel in darkness for a day. I received a large selection of Force boosting Fate cards, including the classic Charge, Ashigaru Levies, and the Way of the Zokujin. This Fate support was Lion's strength, allowing Daoquan or Ryoza to take a 2nd turn province. With only 10 gold producers, I was often able to run off the stronghold without much difficulty for several turns. I faced two Naga, another Lion, and a Shadowlands, winning each time. I beat Naga by losing honor quickly to ensure Daoquan was large, then Charged/Levied/Zokujined to victory. Against the Lion, I raced down in honor below him, then rolled over him as he tried to deal with an insufficient gold scheme against my lucky pull of two Daoquans in the first two turns. Against the Shadowlands player, I pulled Ryoza and the exp 2 (who?) and ran over him with Ugulus in tow. I won only because I kept his 14+ Force unit of Ugulu and many followers away for three successive turns with Blocked Supply Lines and an Imperial Summons (this card won me the tournament, I'm convinced). And just like that, I had won the tournament (we only went 4 rounds because many people needed to leave).

For the Ambition's Debt pre-release, each faction had to exploit their strength to win. Lion had to make a quick attack with Fate support and Ryoza/Daoquan as spearhead to win against the building tactics of Naga and Shadowlands. The Naga had a scary buildup potential with Naga Shugenja and Olyah, giving a potential +5 or +6 force bonus to all Naga in the late game. Shadowlands pulled the short end of the stick, with a strange gold scheme and a lack of Personalities off-the-

box. With a 4 Gold Production, they would have been all over the place. The Spawning Grounds, like the Sepulchur, are a build-up stronghold. They need more time to build up, which they have some of with their higher Province Strength of 7.

The Ambition's Debt pre-releases were the second L5R event where players were using almost entirely new cards to make up the majority of their decks. Pre-releases require all of the best qualities in a game player, and give new players an equal standing with old veterans as far as cards go. Players need to be able to build decks on the spot, quickly scanning and judging cards. In a pre-release, some cards will be much more effective than others. Force boosters are incredible in a limited environment, as are 'go-away' actions, such as Blocked Supply lines or Refugees. Each personality is more valuable, and more likely to be loaded up to make a big unit for attacking.

The Ambition's Debt environment was almost completely military, with the highest starting honor belonging to Naga, sporting a mighty 2. In a pre-release, a player needs to be ready to accommodate for nearly anything, since you may see a card for the first time as it threatens to win the game for your opponent. This kind of game makes for good players, players who are adaptable and inventive, ready for any strategy in any form. Many Lion players raced to -19 honor, 'knowing' that dishonor was not existent in this set. They were wrong. Fallen Lion Fortress probably led to many surprising Lion losses. The players who got Fallen Lion Fortress may have noticed the huge potential of a card in a limited environment to win some games. But they also had to be wary of the possible power it gave to Shadowlands. This card should have a much smaller effect outside of sealed play, but may have been very crucial in some events. But the way players react to a loss like that is what determines their skill as pre-release players. The bad players cursed and did nothing different, while good players became wary and changed their play style, going only to -13, knowing if it can happen once, it will happen again. By the end of the tournament, those who stood victorious were the adaptable, the imaginative, the masters of the pre-release format. The pre-release master

is a slightly different player than the constructed master, but just as impressive a player. Imagine what a pre-release master can do with \*all\* the cards after squeezing all they can out of a limited selection?

Pre-releases are a big part of the future of Rokugan. Be ready, or be left in the dust, as players hone their skills on a limited format in preparation for constructed

play. New players can accommodate for their lack of cards with skill acquired in pre-releases. Older players can quickly master the newer cards and have a head start once the cards are in the constructed environment. Will you be ready?

Michael Underwood \* Mantis Clan Go-Between

## Y2C, Ambition's Debt, and More

by Mindy Sherwood-Lewis

The Ambition's Debt pre-release seems to have been a success. There were 128 Stronghold stores in North America that participated, and from the reports coming in, they all seem to have had a fairly decent turnout. Of course, there were some adventures in getting everyone everything on time, but that's part of the challenge of pre-release tournaments.

At the Y2C party, we had a total of 44 eight-person Ambition's Debt tournaments. At the start of the day (10am) we had over 160 people for the first round of those tournaments. As soon as people started getting knocked out of the first tournaments, we rounded them up into new groups and let them start the next tournament. Each player was allowed to play in three tournaments if they wanted so that they all had the chance to get one of each of the decks. We kept prizes simple for these tournaments, an Ambition's Debt poster to the winner, along with 10 picks from the "Box of Greed", and 5 picks from the box for the second place player.

Knowing that L5R players never go to even a sealed deck tournament without their cards, we also ran a mostly impromptu constructed deck tournament at 3:00pm. 64 players signed up and played to win the grand prize of an original piece of L5R art (donated by AEG, thanks!) from Imperial Edition - Dragon Helm by William



O'Conner. Since the tournament was single elimination, we decided that consolation prizes were in order. The people that got knocked out in the first round were allowed to draw three cards from the Box of Greed and received one of the generic booster packs of cards from Obsidian and ToV. We added

to that for each round, until we got to the final round, by which time the players got a rather nice handful of loot. Everyone seemed to enjoy this method of "rewards" so expect to see it make another appearance at conventions that we are at.

The Y2C event was, all in all, a lot of fun, with players coming in costume, and a lot of good competition on the card tables. AEG also ran some Clan War demonstrations, and at least one session of the RPG was run. Sensei Tony Kull and some students (including Dave Williams) did a kenjitsu demonstration that was very cool to watch, and of course, the evening finished off with Power Play

Productions LARP, which was very well attended. Thanks to everyone who worked hard to make it a good event (Michael Brooks, Kim Gorsuch, David Wilson, Michael Wypzinski, and the rest of the Andon staff, Tess Zachary of PowerPlay Productions, and everyone from AEG ) and to all of the players who came and made it so much fun!



# The Tao of the DCI

By Andy Heckt

*One seeks the past to better the future.*

*Enlightenment is no more than understanding your place in all things.*

-Kaede Sensei

The DCI is Wizards of the Coast's department for Organized Play. Our goals are to encourage fun and fair competition amongst our customers and to provide them with exciting opportunities, like tournaments and fan-clubs, in which to meet others who play our games. For a list of contacts see the end of this document.

March 1 of 1999 the DCI began to sanction tournaments for FRPG games, including L5R. The switchover and changes have confused some who played before and begun an interest in others who have only begun to play L5R in tournaments. Herein I hope to briefly explain the how, what, who, when and where of the DCI and L5R tournaments. More complete information is located elsewhere and many references to that information are located provided here.

Bringing L5R into the structure of the DCI continues to be a learning experience for everyone involved. It does not fit the same structures that the DCI built for Magic - and it is not intended to become so. Instead the DCI is adapting to the differences found in L5R. L5R has affiliations, story tournaments, and its players have a very different sense of competitive play. Often times competitive L5R players sacrifice power in their decks for the story they wish their decks to tell.

All current members received new membership cards with new DCI numbers shortly before the tournaments transitioned to the DCI. All ranking points they accumulated under AEG were transferred to these numbers. Additionally all past members were assigned DCI numbers and their points also transferred. If you do not know your DCI number, any tournament organizer can use the DCI CD-ROM to look it up for you. Anyone who wants a DCI number can get one by attending and playing in a sanctioned tournament where any individual without a number must fill out a card to participate.

**For a list of sanctioned tournaments, visit:**

<http://events.wizards.com/dcitournament/Default.asp?game=5R>

The most important things to remember when you get here are to change the Status field to reflect what you are looking for.

**Rated** - To look at events that have been received and processed. {note that if your tournament doesn't show up here look under 'All' before despairing}

**Future** - To search for tournaments that have not occurred yet.

**Other** - Not Received, delinquent, cancelled, invalidated

**All** - All the above.

When looking up tournaments that have already been held, check the status of the tournament.

**Not Received** - up to two weeks after the event, no report has been received

**Delinquent** - from two to four weeks after the event, no report has been received

**Invalidated** - more than four weeks after the event, no report has been received

**Cancelled** - when the Organizer of the event cancels it.

If a tournament you participate in is Delinquent or Invalidated contact the tournament's organizer and inform them of the status of the tournament. If you participated in a 'cancelled' tournament, please contact the investigations section of the DCI (see contacts on page 20).

## Rankings and DCI numbers

DCI numbers are used to uniquely identify individuals because just too many of you are named Chris Brown. By each player having a unique means of being identified in the database we are able to keep an individual's rankings and membership separate from others with similar names or addresses. You do not need a DCI number unless you join the Imperial Assembly or participate in a sanctioned tournament.

Rankings are a system by which players can compare their tournament activity and finishes with players from around their area and around the world. The amount of

ratings points a tournament is worth depends on the number of players involved and the classification of the tournament. Players who participate in a tournament but don't provide a DCI number are not counted as having participated and thus lessen the value of the tournament, so encourage people to note their DCI numbers.

If you discover you have more than one DCI number associated with yourself you should get those rankings combined so that your points combine and your ranking is accurately reflected. To do so either fill out a change of information card at your next sanctioned tournament and where it lists "other DCI numbers" put the ones you don't want to keep or email [dc@wizards.com](mailto:dc@wizards.com) with all the relevant information.

To view your L5R ranking visit:

<http://events.wizards.com/DCIRanking/Default.asp?game=5R>

Once here you'll need to input your DCI# where is says "Membership Number" and hit 'SEARCH'.

To better understand what you'll find here, take a look at Togashi Mitsu. He resides in Washington State.

Each area has the following in common:

*Points*—total points for this area (Clan/ faction or Game)

*Events*—total number of events where they played that clan.

*Global, North America, United States, Washington*—are each the placement of Togashi Mitsu vs all other players who live in that area.

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## **Togashi Mitsu, Seattle, Washington, United States**

### **Legend of the Five Rings**

#### **All Clans**

310 Points      2 Events\*

#### **Personal Rankings**

488 Global    438 North America      22 United States      7 Washington

All Clans is a summary of where Togashi Mitsu stands as a player regardless of what clans he has played. He has 310 points to date. This is the sum of all his clan scores (36+169 - see below), plus the score for any tournaments where he was not affiliated with a particular clan(+105).

\*All Clan Events are ones in which no clan was noted in the results turned in to the DCI. Mitsu participated in 2 such events, as shown above. One of these events may be his points transferred from AEG.

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#### **Dragon**

169 Points      5 Events

#### **Personal Rankings**

209 Global    197 North America    7 United States      2 Washington

Mitsu has participated in five contests (tournaments) playing a Dragon Clan Stronghold. Amongst those matches he has earned 169 points. This makes him ranked the 209th highest Dragon Clan player in the world, 197th in North America, 7th in his home country of the United States, and 2nd in his home state of Washington.

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#### **Toturis Army**

36 Points      1 Events

#### **Personal Rankings**

353 Global    280 North America      16 United States      7 Washington

In his one tournament playing with a Toturi's Army Stronghold he earned 36 points. From there you can see how that ranks him amongst other players from various areas.

(continued on page 20)

# Hida Sukune and the Box of Greed A Report from the Y2C Party

by Wolfgang Baur

The moment I handed Richard my Hida Sukune Exp, I knew I had made a mistake--I could feel the great big gaping hole in my collection. I'd had the promo card ever since it arrived with my issue of the Herald long ago, and I only agreed to trade it to Richard after months of his bartering, harassment, and pleading. Now I had to find a way to replace it; such as, for instance, by going to a major L5R convention.

So, I signed up for the Y2C Party, and I went to Anaheim with a plan: let nothing stop me from getting a Hida Sukune Exp. to replace the one I traded away. This seemed like a good plan, a simple plan. Heck, even before the registration booth opened, there were SoCal players standing around with fat binders full of Swords, promos, Kaede Sensei, Kolat Masters, and other goodies. They all wanted \$20 for Hida Sukune Exp. That just wasn't going to happen.

## A Setsuban Festival

So, I played a couple rounds of cards with a Steven Grant from Castro Valley, and then went in for dinner and some speeches. The torii arch over the buffet table was a nice touch, as were the taiko drums set up on stage-and those drums got a serious workout later in the evening by the UCLA Kyodo Taiko Drummers. Man, those things are just plain amazing. Apparently they do weddings, too.

First things first, though. Ed Bolme and Luke Peterschmidt did the Master of Ceremonies thing, getting a loud "Banzai!" cheer for every winner of one of the Imperial Favor awards. The FRPG gang also read a letter from Ree, got some volunteers from the audience to put on rat-noses and act out a play, and finally, unveiled the 2000th card (you've seen it by now, the Legion of 2000-but the promo version has the card name in pretty red foil, and different flavor text).

## The Imperial Favor Awards

Since Friday evening was devoted to the fans, we got to hear a long string of speeches by and about the winners. Furthermore, Luke Peterschmidt got up in between acceptance speeches to play MC; by the end of the night the party had degenerated into a giant hippy love-fest. In

case you haven't already seen it, here's the list of the winners of the Imperial Favor Awards and a few highlights:

Jeff Kyer was recognized for running an excellent Canadian Kotei Championship (on just three weeks notice). He's so pleased with the award that he'll be doing it again in 2000-and will run it at the same bar, with the help of the Taddle Creek Irregulars.

Jean-Marie Baveux flew over from France for the party and to receive the International award for organizing the Imperial Daimyos (a group of ambassadors who demo the game in Europe), as well as two massive tournaments known as the 1st French Nationals and the 2nd French Nationals, which attracted 186 participants. He made a short, elegant speech about loyalty and friendship among players-quite a trick when you're not speaking your native language.

The biggest Fan contest resulted in a tie between two videos, both excellent. Neal Allen Fischer put together "Five Rings and a Wife." In his acceptance speech he explained that he was introduced to the game by his mother, who sent him a few packs as a present while he was abroad in Japan. His advice to Mom after seeing these few cards? "Mom, buy boxes."

The other winning entry for Biggest Fan went to two Australians, Harrison Chadd and Rick McLeod. "The Kuni Witch Project" was such a searing portrait of one

man's descent into obsession that a special pass was required to see it. During the acceptance speech, we got a rendition of what could be a spin-off project: "Some people call it a sling blade, I call it an Obsidian Blade." Both of the winning videos were shown all day Saturday and gathered a crowd.



Neal Allen Fischer

## Imperial Favor Awards

### Historian

Jeff Alexander

### Finances

Mr. and Mrs. Zinser

### Web Site

Andy Cowell

### Artist

Brian Snoddy

### International

Jean-Marie Baveux

### Tournament Organizer

Jeff Kyer

### Magistrate

Joe Keyser

### Trading Grounds

All Star Games

### Unsung Heroes

Dark Edge Gaming

### Biggest Fan

Neal Allen Fischer

### Biggest Fan

Harrison Chadd & Rick McLeod



*Brian Snoddy at the signing table*

## The Box of Greed

The following day, it was time for the prerelease. Everyone got a starter and three boosters, and about half an hour for deck construction. Then it was single elimination; winners got an Ambition's Debt poster (very spiff), and a few draws from the Box of Greed. What is the Box of Greed? One of Taka's finest inventions: a big cardboard box filled with old rares and uncommons, a heaping helping of promo cards, a fistful of rares, and even a Wedge. First place winners got to draw ten cards; second place got five.

With this prize as motivation, I managed to take 2nd place twice, getting myself a 10-card draw from the Box. I got some fine cards (Flying Carpet, headless Oni no Ogon, as well as Kaiu Pass, Concealed Weapon, and other "lesser" cards), but no Hida Sukune Exp. I went back to the traders who wanted cash and got my Hida Sukune for \$10. "Not a bad price," I thought to myself. Then the fellow tells me that extra draws can be had from the box for \$5 for 10 draws. Argh! Like the drooling fanboy I am, I return to the Box, plunk down my cash, and draw—a Time of the Void and a Hida Sukune. I can die happy now.

With my mission accomplished, I played a few more games, wandered over the kenjutsu demo that David Williams and Tony Kull were holding, talked to Brian Snoddy, and even watched the Doji House Guard charge off a hill and into massed ranks of Naga archers in a Clan Wars game.



*Costumed LARP participants*

Elsewhere, the last prerelease tournaments were winding down, and the LARP, Clan Wars, Open tournament, and other events were wrapped up by 10 o'clock-twelve full hours of L5R. About 48 different people won the various rounds of the Ambition's Debt prerelease (each was an 8-person, single elimination mini-tournament), and Jason Marliiss won the Open tournament with the Brotherhood. I had taken my shot at Hida Sukune Exp. and wound up with two, and that was enough for me. Long live the Shadow Samurai!

# L5R: Australia

by Zen Faulkes

A few – very few – Australians have been playing L5R since the days of Imperial Edition. L5R reached “critical mass” in larger cities considerably later. In Melbourne, the game took off around the release of Anvil of Despair, in Brisbane, L5R didn’t achieve much popularity until Pearl Edition and The Hidden Emperor. Now, several large cities have a stronghold store (see list below), and players from outlying regions will often make journeys of a couple of hours to play in tournaments.

Melbourne is arguably Australia’s most active L5R center (although Sydney players, following a long tradition of inter-city rivalry, will probably disagree!). Melbourne hosted the 1999 Australian Kotei Event, drawing well over 30 players, with some coming from Sydney and Canberra (including then Canberra resident Paul Nicholls, winning for Phoenix).

Although players discovered L5R at different times, some themes are consistent. Many players were introduced to Rokugan by way of the RPG. Even for non-role-players, the story-telling nature of the CCG is a major selling point. Players’ love of the story made The Storming of Morikage Castle a high point for L5R play throughout Australia. Tournament organizers drew their best numbers ever, rivaling even the Australian Kotei Emperor tournament.

In general, Australian players have a small number of clans that they tend to play. They stick with those clans in competitive play, rather than abandoning them for the “flavor of the week.” It’s not ignorance of tournament trends overseas that keeps player loyal; a good number of Australians participate on the l5rinfo discussion list.

L5R continues to grow in Australia. Although only one Australian made the long trip to GenCon in 1999, L5R’s consistently increasing popularity means you can probably expect to meet a few more Aussies at GenCon next year.

A discussion list, [austl5r](mailto:austl5r), is available specifically for Australian L5R players. To join, go to

<http://www.onelist.com>

## Australian Stronghold Stores

Australian Games Wizards  
22a Currie Street  
Adelaide SA 5000  
Phone: 61-88-410-4010

## Alternate Worlds – Albury

1A/451 Swift Street  
Albury NSW 2640  
Phone: 06-04-15-592

## Alternate Worlds – Camberwell

744 Burke Road  
Camberwell VIC 3124  
Phone: 03-98-82-03-48

## Alternate Worlds – Windsor

76 Chapel Street  
Windsor VIC 3181  
Phone: 03-95-29-22-55

## The Hit Point

PO Box 364  
Nundah, QLD 4012  
Phone: 07-32-56-75-60

## Mind Games

244 Swanston Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
Phone: 03-96-63-46-03

## The Tin Soldier

1st Floor, 97-99 Argyle Street  
Parramatta NSW 2150  
Phone: 02-96-89-35-22

## Australian Top 10

1	Andrew Smith	8	306	38	344	Unicorn
2	Chris Sullivan	9	318	25	343	Phoenix
3	Mark Rajic	2	215	75	290	
4	John Guthrie	8	254	17	271	Scorpion
5	Joseph Italiano	11	227	17	244	Crab
6	Paul Nichols	1	175	8	183	Phoenix
7	Paul Wright	3	160	15	175	Crane
8	Craig Edwards	4	160	8	168	Lion
9	Paul Ryan	3	155	11	166	Crane
10	Nathan Twigg	6	145	13	158	Naga



The sun goddess has veiled her face in mourning, turning the sky blood red. The moon has fallen, slain at last by a creature with the power of a god in her blood and the will of a mortal in her soul. In the Grove of Three Sisters, the lone samurai-ko flicks the blood from her blade and sheathes it. After a moment's reflection, she turns away from the father of the Empire and embraces her destiny.

At the moment, however, the eyes of the clans are not on the actions of Hitomi. All eyes are turned to Ootosan Uchi, as the gathered armies war over the future of the Jade Throne and the so-called usurper who claims it. No one notices as Hitomi walks the darkened lands alone. She takes tea with Togashi Hoshi, never once speaking a word. Perhaps in all the world, he understands, but if he does, he says nothing. Instead, he ascends the highest tower of Shiro Togashi, and watches as she leaves her homeland for the last time.

Beneath a brooding blood-red sky, she walks west to the Unicorn lands, and takes tea with Kamoko's appointed deputy, again remaining perfectly silent. This done, she turns to the south, walking evenly both night and day, though with the sun gone, there is very little difference. She walks with Unicorn cavalry flanking her, an unwitting honor guard on her final journey. Meanwhile, the Unicorn scouts disperse among the Empire, bringing word of her actions to all of Rokugan.

Hitomi is on the move.

She moves through the Empire, visiting each clan in turn, never once saying a word. At times, crowds of hungry peasants, nervous and hungry in the ongoing dark, gather to watch her pass, and wonder if Hitomi searches for hope – or looks to destroy it. Elsewhere, family daimyos marshal their troops to try and interrupt her movements, but when they face her at last, no samurai

has the courage to stand in the way of her steady, silent path, and she passes through their lines unhindered.

At what would be the dawn of the twenty-seventh day of darkness, Hitomi arrives at the Shrine of Osano-Wo. A tattooed man awaits her, holding a white kimono. Hitomi dresses. She kneels, faces east, and begins to meditate, preparing her mortal soul for the ultimate test.

As midnight approaches, she stands and turns. Her bright right eye, glowing gold amidst her obsidian skin, pierces the darkness with perfect clarity. A handful of samurai stand at a respectful distance behind her in the gloom, as well as a Naga, and, though she cannot see it, she knows that one of Fu Leng's first minions hides nearby. She hears the Empire approach, sees their movements on the path. But still she stares at an empty sky, awaiting the choices of destiny.

Strike at Midnight is the next global storyline tournament for Legend of the Five Rings. Hitomi, the Moonlayer, prepares to ascend to the sky as the New Moon. But to do so, she must purge her body of the frail mortal that inhabits half of it, for a mortal cannot be a god. She must commit seppuku. This, and only this, will free the divine obsidian half of her to ascend to the firmament.

But bushido requires that a samurai have a second when committing seppuku. It is the second's duty to decapitate the samurai before she cries out in pain. To cry out is dishonorable, and were Hitomi to cry out at the last second before her apotheosis, it would be an evil portent for the Empire. Each clan has sent one representative to be Hitomi's second, but only one will be chosen.

Only one, and no one knows who it will be...

Seize your destiny! This is your chance to impact the story – you personally – at your favorite local Stronghold store. On the weekend of February 18-20, game stores around the globe will be holding Strike at Midnight tournaments. We will aggregate the results of all these tournaments to determine whom Hitomi chooses for her second. The scoring will be based both on victories and on raw participation, so even if you just show up with your favorite clan's deck, you are helping your clan's representative to be chosen.

Check our website for the list of participating retailers. And tune in starting January 22nd to watch the unfolding story of Hitomi's travels during the 27 Days of Darkness...

# Premier Tournaments in 2000

by Mindy Sherwood-Lewis

This is the list of premiere level tournaments that will be occurring in 2000. With the exception of the Kotei and GenCon events, the storyline tournaments may be held at any Stronghold store, and we are working hard to get the pre-releases at Stronghold stores outside of North America.

As always, storyline and pre-release tournaments will have special applications that will need to be filled out and returned by the deadline if a store wants to participate. Those applications will leave my office on the dates indicated with each tournament date and will need to be returned to me by the deadlines shown. I encourage all of you to encourage your local Stronghold stores to pay close attention to those dates, as we will not be able to allow stragglers into the tournaments. We will also be posting this information on our website, and will make any changes to the schedule there.

## February 18 to 20

### *Strike at Midnight Global Storyline Tournament*

Applications to go out mid-Nov. 1999, and will be due by Dec. 15, 1999. Extended Jade format.

## March 11 & 12

### *Fire and Shadow Pre-release Tournament*

Applications to go out mid-Dec. 1999, and will be due by Jan. 14, 2000. Sealed deck format.

## May 12 to 14

### *Unnamed Global Storyline Tournament*

Applications to go out early Feb. 2000, and will be due by March 3, 2000. Strict Jade format.

## May 20th to June 30th

### *North American Kotei Tournaments*

Locations to be announced in the February issue of the Imperial Herald. Open format.

## July 1 & 2

### *Soul of the Empire (name may change) Pre-release Tournament*

Applications to go out late March 2000, and will be due back by April 28, 2000. Sealed deck format.

## August 10 to 13

### *GenCon Storyline Tournament qualifiers and finals.*

Open format.

## October 13 to 15

### *Unnamed Global Storyline Tournament*

Applications to go out early July 2000, and will be due back by Aug. 2, 2000. Strict Jade format.

## November 4 & 5

### *Unnamed Expansion Pre-release Tournament*

Applications to go out late July 2000, and will be due back by Sept. 1, 2000. Sealed deck format.

# Top 10's

## Crab

1	Douglas Wimberley	474
2	Martin Renner	382
3	Louis Branch	374
4	Pete Shirley	355
5	Brian L. L. Olea	330
6	Matt Pettella	326
7	Keven Walker	322
8	Henry Lopez	299
9	Ed Thompson	298
10	John Walker	284

## Crane

1	Erie S Wiener	1284
2	Neil Canvel	614
3	Wolfgang Baur	454
4	Vaughn Derderian	438
5	Jason Gorkisch	392
6	Erie L. Lardizabal	391
7	Edward Averett	362
8	Mike Koa	341
9	Mark E. Vrooman	297
10	Paul Johnson	294

# Top 10's

## Dragon

1	Matt Loomis	498
2	Jesse J. Michalica	368
3	Raul Caballero	361
4	Ken Yeung	347
5	Jeremy M. Nagorny	331
6	Dave Arndorfer	277
7	Robert Atkinson	277
8	Christopher J King	262
9	Steve Werner	217
10	Noel Montealegre	217

## Lion

1	Brian Farmer	729
2	Noel Meyer	470
3	Brian Welshans	408
4	Travis Watts	285
5	Marty M Schuchman	279
6	Bhong Olayon	254
7	Bryan Oflana	243
8	Michael A McWilliams	238
9	Rob Tolleison	237
10	Eric J Belser	236

## Naga

1	Michael J Watkins	415
2	Paul Gerardi	312
3	Bob Brown	295
4	Luis Matos	280
5	Shanna D Johniting	217
6	Shane Gibbons	189
7	Jacob Snow	169
8	Chadwick Van Sweden	166
9	Joseph Peters	165
10	Barbara Johnson	164

## Phoenix

1	Jim Beck	1244
2	Paul M Higgins	1191
3	Unavailable Unavailable	1078
4	Brian James	867
5	Richard D Williams	682
6	Michael Catinari	521
7	Dein Precourt	477
8	Scott Hadsall	419
9	Mark Stevenson	378
10	Afshin Coleman	370

## Scorpion

1	Brian Floyd	525
2	Torrey C Martinez	377
3	Stephen Milobar	373
4	Dennis J. Quearry	352
5	Jason N Peto	325
6	Wade Greninger	321
7	David Chow	291
8	Ryan Young	281
9	James Wilkinson	277
10	John Guthrie	271

## The Brotherhood - Monks

1	Bret Swanson	617
2	Matthew Farney	546
3	Stefan J. Zarzynski	503
4	Jonathan Scharrer	297
5	Thomas Cottone	193
6	Lawayne Bowcing	116
7	Shawn Knupper	110
8	Jack Lascey	107
9	Keith Tyra	107
10	Ted Boss	107

## The Shadowlands Horde

1	Ramon Pena	935
2	Todd Leistra	807
3	Aampi Thillai	360
4	Scott Andrews	297
5	Adam Martinez	261
6	Robert Hutchinson	242
7	Darrian Dalangin	226
8	Jason Finkbeiner	217
9	Randy Johson	217
10	Dave Salsmon	217

## Yoritomo's Alliance

1	Jeff Schomoke	496
2	Jody Mooney	426
3	Demetrios Saltes	503
4	Jeff Kyer	260
5	Jacobe Callahan	256
6	Jeff Hicks	248
7	Chad Jones	220
8	Aran Thillainadarajah	206
9	Barbara Johnson	185
10	Patrick Brooks	173

## Toturis Army

1	Jon Paulson	782
2	Ronald Carlson	665
3	Seth Mason	575
4	Brian James	567
5	Stephen G Horvath	490
6	Freddy Sarmiento	483
7	Michael G Jahnke	479
8	Conrad Jackson	454
9	Adam Schroeder	427
10	Brian Welshans	349

## Unicorn

1	Richard Riley	1074
2	Bryan Reese	789
3	Dustin Clark	629
4	Sean Nordell	576
5	Sandra Bozan	517
6	Jorge Pereira	501
7	Ray Daugherty	496
8	Daniel Metaute	474
9	Sergio Martin	470
10	Erik Butt	425

# The Naga

by Edward Bolme

The Naga are a race of amphibious serpent people, with green skin, slitted eyes, tails up to thirty yards long, and an unnerving awareness of the world. It is said that their females can change shape, sometimes appearing with a long tail, and other times appearing with legs. They live deep in the Shinomen Forest, and are perhaps the greatest archers the samurai of the Emerald Empire have ever encountered, and their pearl magic defies human understanding.

When the Empire was founded at the beginning of time (at least by human reckoning), the Naga were already an ancient race. For centuries humans were not aware of them, for the entire Naga race slept, dreaming, in the decaying ruins of their civilization. Their collective racial consciousness was turned into itself in a meditative manner, and was content to remain that way.

It was not until the Scorpion Clan Coup that the Naga began to awaken, for it was shortly after the Coup that Yogo Junzo, a Scorpion Clan shugenja, opened the first of the Black Scrolls and began to unwittingly unleash Fu Leng's power into the world. The Naga felt these horrid tremors in their dreams, and grew concerned.

Slowly the Naga began to awaken, and scouts began to filter out of Shinomen forest. To their amazement, an entire civilization of squabbling upright leg-walking 'humans' had arisen as if overnight. Although the initial contacts with humans were very tentative, the Naga did at last encounter Mirumoto Daini, a Dragon Clan samurai who made a sincere effort to understand their race. Together they realized that they indeed have a common enemy: the Shadowlands, whose power was growing while the Great Clans warred amongst themselves.

Mirumoto Daini was instrumental in bringing together the Dragon Clan, the Naga, and Toturi's Army of ronin, all of whom agreed to put petty politicking aside and concentrate their power against Fu Leng and his now-corrupt servant, Yogo Junzo. Daini, known as "The Daini" among the Naga, finally recognized that the Naga do not in fact have names, as they are all part of one great Akasha consciousness. They have titles, which describe the duties and specializations of the individual.

The Naga fought side by side with the Great Clans at the Day of Thunder, and Emperor Toturi the First formally recognized them as allies and friends of the Emerald Empire.

After the Day of Thunder, the Naga joined with the Crab Clan, intending to help them reclaim territory lost to the Shadowlands over the years. Side by side they fought, eventually helping to retake Hiruma Castle, but suddenly, in a

moment of great need, they abandoned the Crab and moved swiftly towards Dragon lands.

Deep in the Dragon strongholds, they could tell that Hitomi, the champion of the Dragon, was experimenting with The Shadow, the only thing that had been left unnamed at the beginning of time. The Shadow itself had the power to unname that which it had in its grasp, a power that could ultimately lead to the unmaking of the world. The Naga would not allow this, and with the help of the Brotherhood of Shinsei, they laid siege to Hitomi's fortress on Sleeping Mountain. Mirumoto Daini turned his back upon his clan and joined with the Naga, himself believing that Hitomi was working evil.

The Dragon appealed to the Empire for help, and Toturi's Army, formerly his band of battle-hardened ronin and now his personal Imperial Army, allied with the Dragon Clan, claiming the Naga had broken the treaty Toturi had signed with them.

In the end, the Naga siege was broken. The Naga opened a portal back to the Shinomen forest and stepped through. From there, they moved quickly south to Crab lands, where the Crab were preparing to cremate Hida Yakamo, their champion, who had been killed in the Shadowlands. The Naga interrupted the funeral and took Yakamo's body from the pyre, telling the assembled Crab samurai that Yakamo must not be destroyed.

They took him back to the forests of Shinomen, and brought him before the Shashakar, the greatest of the Naga shugenja. "If we cannot defeat Hitomi," they reasoned, "we must create a warrior who can defeat The Shadow."

The Shashakar took a black pearl, the rarest and most powerful of pearls, and performed an arcane ritual. This ritual restored life to Hida Yakamo, but at a great cost: it permanently removed the Shashakar's soul from the Naga Akasha, never to be reborn.

Now known as The Yakamo, the towering Crab champion has the slitted pupils of the Naga in his eyes and the echo of the Shashakar in his soul. He is a part of the Akasha, neither fully serpent nor fully human. Yet he brings the Naga and the Crab together in a powerful alliance, for the grim fortitude of the Crab and the powerful magic of the Naga is a combination that is all but unstoppable.

# Naga Deck

by Edward Bolme

This Open-format Naga deck is a different look than most; 75% of the personalities are shugenja. This gives the central shugenja, Qakar, a lot of chi to work with.

Qakar is the linchpin of the deck. Give him a bloodsword, and he is a dueling maniac. Whether issuing challenges like Hitomi or making someone face their devils, he can't be stopped. And, given the Power of Incompleteness, he can crush provinces single-handedly.

The River Deltas are included to give Qakar and the other shugenja some shielding against ranged attacks. Losing followers is inconsequential; losing shugenja is this deck's Achilles heel. The Dragonfly fortresses also help protect your shugenja against various chi-reduction tricks.

## Rares and Fixed Cards Used

The Naga Stronghold is the easiest to get; given the amount of Siege that sold, I doubt these are all being used; you should be able to pick them up for next to nothing. Very few people seem to like this stronghold, but I find it useful for this deck; it lets you flush mercilessly at the start of the game without permanently losing key cards like Qamar.

Dashmar is around to allow you a de facto honor victory, but this deck can be pretty potent militarily, so he is not entirely necessary. If you don't have him, add in an experienced Radakast who can eat the cursed jackals.

The Naga Stronghold		Deep Forest	3
No Sensei Card		Forest	3
		Fortress of the Dragonfly	2
		Jade Works	3
		Pearl Bed	3
Dynasty Deck (40 cards)		Regions	
Personalities		River Delta	2
		Events	
Ashan	3	Blessings of Isawa	1
Dashmar	1	New Taxes	1
Ghedai	3	Soul of Thunder, A	1
Naga Abomination	1	Tao of the Naga, The	1
Naga Shugenja	3		
Olyah	3		
Qakar	3		
Qamar	1		
Radakast	2		
Holdings			

## Fate Deck (40 cards)

### Actions

The Naga Abomination is just around for fun. He can easily be canned and replaced with another shugenja.

Ancient Spear of the Naga is a heavy bonus, but is not necessary. If you draw it, give it to Radakast. If you don't have one, replace it with the Black Pearl, plus scrap the Radakasts and add more shugenja.

The Tao of the Naga is helpful when facing high-honor decks, and should be hunted down if you don't have it. It's in Pearl, so getting it should not be too difficult.

Qamar is probably the most important card here, because he allows you to straighten your heavy hitters. In an ideal world, you send Radakast off to attack with the Ancient Spear, let him take his free challenge to bow the most powerful opponent, then after he wrecks the province, Qamar gives him a quart of Gatorade and he's ready to defend you against all attacks. That combo alone handily won a 4-player game for an early incarnation of this deck.

Kuro's Fire is from Ambition's Debt. Again, it is not necessary, but once you get a Qakar with a juicy bloodsword, the threat of 30 points of ranged attacks split any way you like is pretty intimidating.

## Deck Format Variants

Sorry, not much to do here. You could try to do this deck in Jade format with just a bunch of Naga cards and the Ancient Spear, but then you're pinning your entire deck strategy on a single card. Best have that Imperial Gift and three copies of Walking the Way.

## "Shashakar"

Bend Like a Reed	1	Kihos	
Breaking Blow	1	Facing Your Devils	3
Iaijutsu Duel	3	Hitomi's Defeat	2
People's Champion, The	2	Kaze-Do	1
Ring of Air	1	Power of Incompleteness, The	3
Ring of the Void	1	Void Strike	1
Rise, Brother	1	Spells	
Strike with No-Thought	1	Curse of the Jackal	2
Strike Without Striking	1	Earthquake	1
Test of Might	3	Essence of Water	1
Followers		Kuro's Fire	1
Naga Apprentice	3	Osano-Wo's Breath	1
		Stifling Wind	1
Items			
Ancient Spear of the Naga	1		
Bloodsword	3		
The Star of Laramun	1		

# Nightmares

by Ree Soesbee

*Ten months after the Fall of the Scorpion Clan Coup...*

Around her, the forest crackled and twisted, turning every step into a shout. Even the greatest hunters cannot be silent in Kitsune Mori – unless they are one of the spirits who live there. Branches creaked overhead, but their noise was no more than a greeting to the young samurai-ko that moved beneath them. Her footfalls caressed the dry branches, the crackling leaves, and yet the only sound that escaped was the soft sigh of the wind.

Kitsune Mori was her home.

“Follow your own path,” Shinsei taught, “Or you will fall into the pitfalls left behind by others.”

The forest sounds grew thicker, heavier in the dusky twilight. There was not much time now, and soon the night would cover all paths and blur all ways. The forest would sleep – but the spirits of the kitsune who lived there, would awaken. The sword hung at her side, slung across her back by a thin cord of her own hair.

It, too was sleeping.

Her dark red-brown hair, a rarity in Rokugan, hung thickly about her face, pulled lightly back with a forgotten piece of twine. Once, it had been dyed black, but the walnut stain had lessened over her long journey, and hints of its true color gleamed through. Green-brown eyes, their color reflecting her heritage, shone under the knitted brows. Her fingers were slender, but calloused from use of the nagimaki she carried, and her sleeve bore the mon of the Fox.

“Ryosei,” the wind whispered, and the vines beneath her feet shivered. She took another step toward the ancient grove, and the trees shook again. “Ryosei...”

This time, the voice was audible. The samurai-ko stopped, peering through the brush to her left, and saw a white flash.

With a faint smile, the daughter of Kitsune Gohei, daimyo of the Fox, knelt on one knee in the forests of Kitsune Mori and awaited the spirit’s message.

It was small, as spirits go, darting from bush to bush in a near-frantic attempt to stay hidden and yet carry its message to her. “Stop, Ryosei,” it snarled softly. Red ears pricked behind a thornbush, and the flash of a white-furred breast shone through the vines beneath an ancient oak. “Stop.” The kitsune spirit shivered in the shadow of a pine tree, leaping across a fallen branch in its excitement. Twilight deepened.

“Greetings, honorable one,” Ryosei nodded politely. “I salute you with blessings.” She reached into a small bag tied at her waist in order to pull out one of the sweetened candies there. “Take this, and let your daughter pass.”

But the kitsune ignored her, staring to the west as if in fear. Its foxlike nose quivered once, then the too-bright green eyes of the spirit turned again to her. “Please... stop.”

A howl pierced the night, keen and clear, and the little kitsune leapt away, twisting its body in midair as if caught by a snare. Ryosei stared after it as another howl rang out, then a third. A fourth. The small one barked sharply, stared longingly at Ryosei as if to speak more, and then, as a fifth howl rang out only a few steps from their side, it fled into the forest with a broken sob. Fox feet scrambled at branches and leaves until the spirit vanished into the underbrush, lost to the forest and to its pursuers.

Ryosei stared in shock as the forest moved around her. For an instant, she was frozen, and then her nagimaki was in her hand.

Four more kitsune stepped from the brushes, one lifting its head in a long howl of remorse and woe. The eldest one, the largest, had patches of silver behind his greying ears, and one green eye was dulled with age. Seeing her, the others paused in their chase and the hair on their hackles raised in tension. Ryosei slowly lowered her weapon – these were spirits, after all – and carefully bowed to the kitsune.

The spirits nodded, and the three younger foxes looked at each other with narrowed green eyes. “You are Ryosei-

chan?" the elder barked gently, though he knew the answer.

"Hai, Genkuro-sama. On a mission for my father... to complete my gempukku." Though she looked younger, Ryosei had seen sixteen winters, and the spirits of the forest had run with her from the day she was born. The old kitsune nodded.

"Do not let us disturb you, child," he sniffed. "We hunt a traitor."

"Traitor...?"

"Iye." The old fox refused her question. "This is not the business of mortals." The other kitsune began to sniff the air, catching scents as they passed in the wind. "You will not be allowed to interfere... indeed, as we are not allowed to interfere, ourselves." With that, one of the kitsune howled, catching the scent, and the pack moved.

Genkuro, the grey kitsune spirit, paused. "Mark this day well, childling," he whispered before fading into the trees. "And remember... dreams are truths."

With that, the path was silent again, and Ryosei knelt alone in the brush of a chilly evening, more aware than ever of the lack of sun through the trees. Shaking her head slightly at the strangeness of the evening and the enigmatic words of the ancient kitsune, Ryosei stood and placed her nagimaki back in its carrying sheath. Then, with a sigh, she leapt into a jog down the twisting forest path. Her father was waiting, and she must not be late.

The grove of Inari is one of the most sacred place in Fox land, a place where the ancient kitsune spirits first approached her ancestors, bringing words of peace and gratitude. The branches of the grove spread open before her as Ryosei stepped into the clearing, and the bitter smell of lantern-oil tinged the forest air.

"Father?" She murmured, moving forward again.

"Here, daughter." Gohei's voice was as brittle as pine, and his age covered his face with deep wrinkles and liver stains. He nodded his head politely as Ryosei knelt and formally bowed, and his dark eyes shone with anticipation. Two foxes turned toward her, startled, and fled through the trees. As she murmured words of respect, Ryosei caught a glimpse of their eyes. Brown. These were simple forest-beasts, nothing more. Not that she should have expected the spirits to be here - the kitsune had never been close to her father, for reasons Ryosei did not understand.

"I have completed my task, father," She said proudly, as she had the night before in the audience hall of the Fox Clan. "I bring you the sword of our ancestors, so long lost beneath the mountains of Otosan Uchi, hidden in deep caverns and behind guarded paths." And, as he had asked, she had come tonight to present the weapon to him privately, a task set from father to daughter to honor the blood between them. Ryosei withdrew the weapon from its saya, laying it upon the ground in homage to the ancestors of the Fox.

As she did, the wind began to whisper, and the trees shook with sudden fear.

"Lost..." Kitsune Gohei murmured, kneeling to accept the blade. "For nine hundred years, hidden. Since the time of the First War against the Dark One, the ancestral blade of the Fox has remained hidden from the light. Taken by the Emperor, the Shining Prince, son of the first Hantei, to honor our path as Shinjo's children, it was reforged at the hands of Togashi Nyoko, and its hilt is bound with the silk woven from the Kami's own hair. And then, lost to us for nine hundred years." His hands shook as he ran the palms over the smooth black cords that wound around the hilt of the katana like a thick web of darkness.

"Stolen by the Scorpion." Ryosei completed the tale bitterly.

"They needed it." Gohei stood, carrying the blade as if it were a treasure greater than life. "And now, in this time of darkness, they need it even more." Ryosei looked up at her father with the question clearly written on her fine features, but he paid no attention. With a gentle hand, he placed the sword atop the carved white fox statue of Inari that served as a low ritual table for the grove.

"The hilt, wound with the hair of a true Kami... where better, to hide their secrets?" Gohei's hands unwound the silk reverently, pausing as his old hands shook with the failing disease of an ancient man. "Where else... to protect their lies?"

From her stance at the edge of the grove, Ryosei saw the silk fall away from the sword's hilt in soft patches, rotted with age but still gleaming and fine. Beneath the silk, the soft, carved wood frame of the tsuka began to show, and beneath that... The wind tugged at her clothing, and the earth's deep fastness shivered faintly beneath her feet.

Ryosei squinted in surprise.

Beneath the wooden tsuka of the katana's hilt, a scrap of black paper had been wedged. As Gohei began to slide the tsuka free, Ryosei could see the metal tang of the sword's blade, wrapped within a scroll of strange black paper. Paper made out of a sheet so thick it could have been taken from a man's own skin...

"Father..." Ryosei said, standing as the wind began to whip the trees and tear at the earth beneath her. "Father,

what are you doing?"

"Immortality, child," he laughed, holding aloft the scroll. "You have brought me immortality... and I am seizing it!" His howling cries echoed through the grove, and the ancient katana fell to the ground, its blade's sheen darkened by dirt... and by Gohei's own blood.

"I call to you, Yogo Junzo... bearer of the Scorpion's honor... betrayer of the light... I call to you, Fu Leng... Ancient father..." he chanted, and Ryosei's screams were battered by a bloody wind.

"Father, no!" She screamed, reaching for her nagimaki and staggering as the earth beneath Kitsune Mori shook the forest with a pounding blow. "You cannot do this!" The ground steadied, then bucked again, and her weapon flew to the ground as she fell.

"And with your blood, daughter," the creature who had been her father turned toward her, but his brown eyes had become cavernous, hidden like cysts in a face of ruined tissue and swollen muscle. "I dedicate this sacrifice to the Dark Lord!" The sword of the Fox, a steel tooth with no hilt, shone in one hand as the scroll began to unroll upon the broken back of the white fox table. "Fu Leng. Make me your walking horror, to rule the night at your command. Give me immortality!" The last word was a high-pitched scream, swallowed by the night and the roar of wind.

As the Fox Clan sword raised above her, the earth shuddered and rolled. Trapped on the lip of a tremendous chasm, Ryosei could not move, could not roll, could not escape the downward plunge of the blade. She saw her father's maggot-infested hand shake once more, and then he screamed again. This was not a scream of triumph, but of rage. He turned, grasping at his back, and Ryosei saw the reason her life had been saved.

A small kitsune with a gleaming white breast, hung by its teeth from the side of Kitsune Gohei's throat. Blood poured from the wound, and a savage blow of lighting reflected in the green eyes of the spirit creature.

"Run..." Ryosei heard it yelp, as her father's sword tore into its side and threw the kitsune to the ground. "Run!"

Another lurch of the earth threw Ryosei to her knees on the far side of a rapidly widening cleft. Her father screamed in outrage, lifting the sword again, and again, stabbing into the heart of the kitsune at his feet.

Knowing she could not win the battle, the daughter of Gohei fled into the woods, reaching for the ancient oaks to give her shelter from the blood and the storm.

Morning parted the clouds, and a ray of light spilled onto Ryosei's face as she sat suddenly up from her sleeping futon. The palace of the Kitsune seemed strangely quiet after the night's festivities, and Ryosei remembered the gay laughter of her gempukku ceremony. Images flashed through her mind as reality... kneeling before the court, seeing her father's proud congratulations. Could it have been a dream? Her muscles began to relax in relief, as she turned to look at the ornate sword-stand on the low table.

It was empty.

Beneath it, in a small and bloody pile, lay the skinned pelt of a white-breasted fox.

"Dreams are truths." The ancient kitsune's voice rang in her head. "And we are not allowed to interfere."

Ryosei knelt before the bloody pelt on the floor with reverence, bowing her head to the kitsune's courage. "I know that you cannot interfere in my destiny without penalty, my kitsune brothers," Ryosei swore, "But I can seize the future... and change it to my own."

"One day, I will find you, father... I swear that I will."



# Introduction to the Fox Clan

by Ree Soesbee

*"Even the largest mountains are made of small stones."  
- Ryosei*

Near the wide plains of the Scorpion lands, a tremendous forest spreads through valley and dale. This forest, though not as old and grand as the ancient Shinomen, holds secrets and hidden glens whose beauty has often been lauded by Crane poets. The forest, known as the Kitsune Mori (Fox Forest) is the homeland of the oldest and most well respected of all the minor clans: the Fox. The lands are fertile, though tangled with forest and unable to support any but the most rudimentary rice production. The peasants live on the bounty of the forest, from the quail and other game birds, to the berries, acorns, fruits and nuts that are plentiful through the lands.

The Fox Clan was born of the remnants of the KiRin, when Shinjo led her children over the northern mountains toward distant and unknown lands. They are the survivors of the Ancient War with the Shadowlands, and for seven hundred years, they were considered the voice of Shinjo's children within the Emperor's court.

For nearly a generation, the Clan of the Fox lived in the Unicorn lands, building Otaku palace with their own hands and gathering the food and rice that they tilled from the fields. The Fox were clever farmers - too clever for their own good. They used the rich land to their advantage, and soon, caught the notice of the nearby Ikoma scouts.

With a command from the Emperor's court, and a deed instructing them to distribute the lands to their peasants and tithe a greater share to the graineries of Otosan Uchi, the Lion marched an army to the border of the Fox lands, expecting to battle over the lands. Bravely, the warriors of the Fox fought, but were utterly crushed by the Lion. In time, the much smaller Fox Clan had no choice but to do as the Lion requested; they could not hope to fight against the greatest military force in Rokugan. The Emperor, to bring peace, resettled the Fox in the lands below the southern Spine of the World mountains, hoping that the distance and hard terrain between the Fox and the Lion would end their battles. In some ways, it did: the Lion no longer wanted the Fox Clan's land, and so

they did not pursue combat with the followers of Shinjo. However, the Fox have never forgotten their harsh treatment at the hands of the Lion, and the enmity between the two has never diminished.

When the battered remnants of the Fox arrived at the forest which would be their new home, they were a ragged, battered band. They had brought only what they could carry, and had no provisions for store. In desperation, they turned to game-hunting to feed their children, weeping at the need to kill and eat the flesh of animals - even that of rabbits and other small game.

Until one day, the daimyo of the Fox discovered a dead female fox in one of his traps, her two small cubs mewing at her side. For a week, he struggled to feed the small ones out of a sense of guilt and respect for their mother's spirit, but to no avail. He brought them to a shugenja of his clan, and there, the secret of the kitsune was revealed. The fox that had died in the trap was the last of the ancient kitsune, who had remained behind when the kami fell to earth and ordered the spirits home. She had been unable to travel to the Celestial Heavens, because her kits were too young to make the journey. And now, she lay dead at the hunter's feet, and her cubs were his to raise. The Fox daimyo, Shinun, accepted the burden as his rightful penance for breaking the laws and dirtying his flesh with the meat of animals.

The shugenja saved the lives of the cubs by transforming them into human form, so that the clan could care for them as sons of the Empire. Those two, a man and a woman are legend among the Fox as the founders of the Kitsune line. Their names were Osusuki and Akomachi, and when they were old enough to marry, Osusuki took a wife from the children of Shinjo, and Akomachi became a fox, and married with the spirits of the land. They form the bond between the Fox and the kitsune, and truly, all the children of Kitsune Mori are of one line.

*As the title says, this is merely an introduction. The rest of the material on the Fox Clan will be found in issue #14 of the Imperial Herald. We look forward to sharing it with you!*



(continued from page 7)

On March 1st, 1999 the DCI imported the rankings that Imperial Assembly members had developed while the tournaments were tracked by AEG. This appears as a single event under each person's clan affiliation. So above, if Mitsu had been an Assembly member of the Dragon Clan previously, one of the five events would be this import. AEG has confirmed that all their records of events prior to March 1 were transferred to the DCI. There is no means to change any of this information or appeal how it was applied.

Once a tournament has been held the organizer of that tournament has two weeks to get their results back to the DCI before the tournament becomes delinquent. Within five working days of receipt of the results, the tournament is listed as received. Once received, the ratings for everyone get updated on the 15th and 30th of each month. The update process takes 2-3 days to run.

If you believe that a tournament is showing inaccurate results you now have the ability to appeal. Information can be found at <http://www.wizards.com/DCI/appeals.asp>

Before going there we suggest that you first follow these three simple steps:

1. Search for your tournament in the database under 'All' - if it doesn't show up the event was not sanctioned and therefore we have no involvement and cannot change your rankings.

2. Look at the status of the tournament.

- a) If it has rankings, review them for accuracy.

- b) If it shows as received but does not show rankings please await the next ratings run (the 15th or 30th of the month).

- c) If it shows as delinquent call the organizer and pressure them to turn in their results.

- d) If it shows as cancelled but you participated, call the DCI at 1-800-324-6496 and ask for Investigations.

3. If you believe a received tournaments rankings are inaccurate you can submit a final appeals form - see

<http://www.wizards.com/DCI/appeals.asp>

**Rules for L5R tournaments are found at:**

[http://www.wizards.com/DCI/UTR\\_L5R.asp](http://www.wizards.com/DCI/UTR_L5R.asp)

(You can also find them in this Herald, beginning on page 28, as well.)

The DCI Universal Tournament Rules and L5R Floor rules were written to help maintain fair tournament play wherever L5R tournaments are taking place. In this way everyone plays by the same rules, rankings reflect similar circumstances, and rules in major events are familiar to players who play in smaller events.

## Sanctioning a tournament

Sanctioning a tournament involves only minor organization and effort in comparison to actually marketing and holding one. To get your tournament sanctioned read <http://www.wizards.com/DCI/Sanctioning.asp>, fill out the form and send it in. After you run your event, turn in your results. It's that easy.

You must have four players to hold a tournament. The organizer and judge cannot participate, unless you have at least 8 people, then you can run the 3-Judge system in which the judges can also play.

Once a tournament is sanctioned its gets posted to the web within 2 working days. Organizers of tournaments are supposed to apply for sanctioning no less than 30 days prior to their event, but often we are lenient on this matter - however that leaves less time for players to find their event.

Judging an L5R tournament requires no formal certification program. Judges are expected to be knowledgeable of the latest rules and have access to the most recent Accumulated Rulings found at Jeff Alexander's site at

[www.zdi.net/jwa/l5r/l5r.faq.3.9.html](http://www.zdi.net/jwa/l5r/l5r.faq.3.9.html)

## CONTACTS:

The following people are key contacts for the L5R community.

**Linda Roberts:** [lindar@wizards.com](mailto:lindar@wizards.com)

Sanctions all non-Premier tournaments

**DCI Appeals Board:** [dciappeals@wizards.com](mailto:dciappeals@wizards.com)

The body that handles appeals on ratings

**Elaine Ferrao:** [elaine@wizards.com](mailto:elaine@wizards.com)

Investigates any problems that occur in a tournament

**RE Dalrymple:** [thedci@wizards.com](mailto:thedci@wizards.com)

Big Guy. Writes Policies, manages others, etc...

**Andrew Heckt:** [frpg@frpg.com](mailto:frpg@frpg.com)

Imperial Assembly and Koku redemption

**Mindy Sherwood-Lewis:** [mouseatwork@frpg.com](mailto:mouseatwork@frpg.com)

Premier-Events coordinator

You can find more information on the DCI by visiting these websites.

## General Info:

<http://www.wizards.com/events/Welcome.asp>

## DCI:

<http://www.wizards.com/DCI/Welcome.asp>

## L5R floor rules:

[http://www.wizards.com/DCI/UTR\\_L5R.asp](http://www.wizards.com/DCI/UTR_L5R.asp)

# Zen's Card Focus: Kage Sensei

by Zen Faulkes

Admit it. You've always suspected it.

Everybody's a Kolat.

Since L5R's early days, folks speculated about whether the Kolat would get a stronghold. The designers decided long ago that the Kolat were far too elusive to get a conventional stronghold. But now, every stronghold can be a Kolat stronghold with Kage Sensei. Why should the Kolat need their own stronghold when it's so easy to take over other's?

With Kage Sensei, your Kolat become clan members (more momentarily), and they get two abilities.

First, your Kolat generate Sleeper tokens. Tokens alone aren't very interesting unless you're using Oni no Sanru (bet most of you don't even know who that is!) or Shuten Doji. No, it's the second ability taught by

Kage Sensei that brings us to the heart of the matter: Kolat personalities can destroy those Sleeper tokens to cancel a personality's actions.

Kage Sensei is worded very broadly. You may have seen some questions in older FAQ lists about what it means when a personality is "performing" an action; this falls into the same category.

"Taking an action" includes:

- \* Using an ability.
- \* Most actions where a controller targets his or her personality (e.g., Iaijutsu Challenge, Careful Planning);
- \* Lobbying for the Favor (get out those Political Mistakes!).
- \* Attaching cards. If you cancel an

attachment, the card goes back into the hand, and the player then has another chance to try attaching it.

Conversely, anything that isn't an action (e.g., committing a unit to battle, a samurai committing seppuku), or is produced by a card other than a personality (spells, items) can't be cancelled by destroying the Sleeper tokens.

Since you have to bow a Personality to place a token, and bow a personality to cancel an action, you'll need a lot of Kolat. The number of warm bodies matters most; abilities and special traits are gravy. Forget about making people Kolat with Toturi the First or Kolat Master;

it's easier just to recruit known agents.

Unfortunately, hiring Kolat can drive your human resource department to drink. Kolat are not straightforward employees. Some backstab you: Kado's got his hand in the cash register (raising your cards' costs), and Kouta works for anyone who pays her. Others are expensive (even with a clan discount), unique, or both, slowing your Sleeper token production. Finally, the Kolat are a bewilderingly heterogeneous group, with few Kolat combining well with other Kolat. Luckily, a few personalities fall into none of these categories.

Yazaki is awesome with Kage Sensei because he's free (isn't "free" a lovely word?). His trait – keeping your cards safe from prying eyes – is active whether he's bowed or not, providing you with a nice little

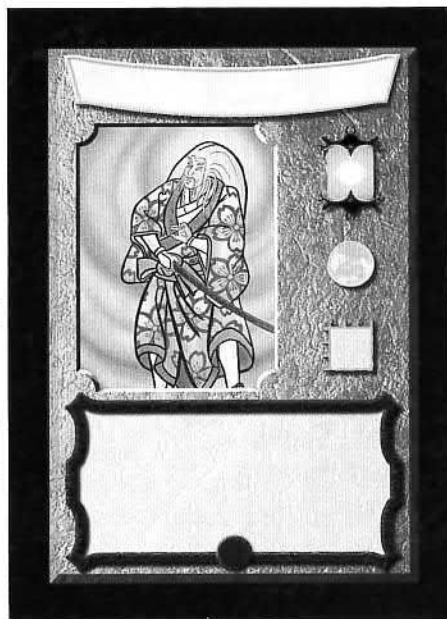
bonus as he creates Sleeper tokens. The Experienced Yasuki Taka is a good choice for Kage Sensei decks for the same reason: his great trait gives an advantage even as he's spreading and destroying Sleeper tokens.

Ichiin is cheap, which again generates plenty of Sleeper tokens early. Plus, his Fate hand manipulation is good for situations where you don't need him for Sleeper tokens.

Finally, consider Chinoko. With Kage Sensei, she costs a mere 5 gold. This is good value when you consider that she reduces the gold cost of Kolat cards by 4, and can do this the first turn she comes into play, which helps you to

recruit more Kolat personalities. Plus, she makes non-personality Kolat cards – like Kolat Oyabun, Kolat Assassin or Counterfeit – cheaper, and provides you with protection against other Kolat.

Like most Sensei, there is a price associated with the nifty abilities; your starting honor is reduced by 2. This is not a great detriment to most Kolat decks, since almost all Kolat have "-" honor requirements, and only a couple have "0". The one exception? Ironically, with his honor requirement of 10, the hardest Kolat to play with Kage Sensei is... the Experienced Akodo Kage!



# News from Court

by Andy Heckt

Fellow members of The Assembly, I bring you word from the Court of Toturi the First. My last message to you expressed plans that I had placed in action to increase our benefits for being in this august assembly and I encouraged each of you to express some of your desires to me. I have had a few conversations to date, and so to encourage the rest of you to speak out. I have placed a survey within this communication which I would ask you to return.

## The Favor

I had hinted of plans that included our great friend, Yasuki Taka. Indeed I have convinced him to continue to offer the increased number of cards you saw last time and that you see this time. Also the negotiations to provide us with merchandise only available to us continues, as you have already likely seen on your cover letters. Some have complained that Taka's prices on these items are too high and I continue to negotiate the matter with him, even though we have already made some progress. For those of you who missed last issue's offer for the Buttonmen Collection, I ask your patience and understanding. These offers may return in future issues.

This issue's member-only merchandise comes from a merchant in the heart of the Empire. Flying Tricycle produces counters with which you can track your honor in your games. They have agreed to personalize them for Assembly Members who take advantage of this issue's member-only offer. I have asked Taka to speak more on the details in his section as others may see and wish to join our assembly so they can get similar offers in the future.

## Swords

Some of you have asked why Taka is no longer selling the Ancestral Katana. There was of course no single factor in the decision, but it instead comes from many. Taka had troubles with getting swords into some people's homes without the guards at the door seizing them. Taka has plans for similar 'high end' items he wants to offer soon and room had to made in his offices for the new items. Also offering them for sales and for tournament prizes, lessened their importance as prizes. I hesitate to speak of what item he has planned until he procures it, but it will be something new that everyone will desire.

## Access to the Chancellor

Any questions you have on membership benefits, koku redemption, changes of address, contact me at:

Telephone: 800 324 6496 or 888 4-5RINGS. Email:

[frpg@frpg.com](mailto:frpg@frpg.com)

Mail: Fan Clubs at The DCI

PO Box 707

Renton, WA 98057-0707

## Regional Offices

To better service our members in Europe and South Africa, basic operations for these members have been relocated to Regional offices. For contact information please see the order form in Taka's Treasures.

## Membership Drive

The first set of 33 foils from Honor Bound goes to Jennifer Holland, sponsored by Scott Wells.

Many of you have memberships that expire in February 2000 (look at your membership cards) and we want to encourage you all to renew. As you may know the Emperor is producing 33 foil cards with each of the current sets of cards (starting with Honor Bound). When completed, the full set of 99 total cards will tell the tale of the Clan War that brought him to power. The Emperor has gifted me with a few of these. As you have seen I have already awarded the set from Honor Bound and now wait to award the set from Ambition's Debt (the drawing will come from new memberships or renewals received by March 8, 2000). On the membership form herein you'll note a space to enter the person who is encouraging you to join. This person will also receive a set of 33 cards. The winners will be contacted and announced in the next issue. I shall continue to award a set of 33 cards, each issue, for each of the three sets. In issue #16 one member who has joined or renewed since issue #12 will receive a complete 99-card set with another full set gifted to the member who encouraged them to join.

## Imperial Assembly Membership Form - Issue #13

Make checks out to "The DCI" \$15 US / \$25 International

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DCI # \_\_\_\_\_ Clan Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

CIRCLE ONE:      New member      I'm renewing  
Payment (circle one): CHECK      MONEY ORDER      VISA      MASTERCARD  
Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Drive

Who encouraged you to join: \_\_\_\_\_ DCI # \_\_\_\_\_

## What are Koku and Dinari?

You can find koku or dinari on the back of every booster pack and on one of the inside flaps of every deck box. If

you can find Taka, you'll have even more access to the wealth you deserve.

So, how do you use the koku or dinari once you've found them? Send them to Taka to exchange them for L5R and LBS cards, t-shirts and other merchandise! However, make sure to follow the shipping and handling directions carefully, and pay close attention to the order form for the address of the office closest to you to send your koku orders to.

And because Taka is such a wily businessman, and has made deals with everyone he is accepting points from any of the FRPG games. That's right, koku, dinari, teeth, spice, and ghost rock are interchangeable at Taka's Treasures!



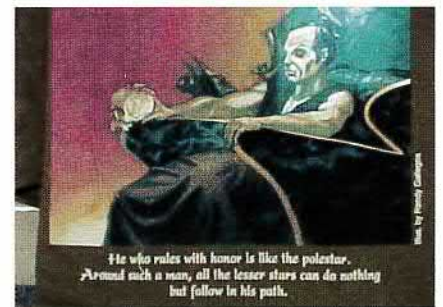
# Taka's Treasures

NEW! Members-only offer

**13-1 Personalized Clan Honor Counters** Flying Tricycle produces high quality counters to track your honor through your game. The 22-karat gold leaf faceplate artwork truly make these counters a treasured tool for your gaming pleasure. Upon the face of each is printed "For the coward there is no life. For the hero there is no death." While the base-plate has engraved upon it "Imperial Assembly Member 2000", the name of the Assembly Member, and their DCI#. Each Clan mon is available as is the Five Ring Logo. See your cover letter for details.



**13-2 L5R Clan Shirts** Each shirt has the clan mon on the front, a clan-specific piece of art on the back and is in a color that relates to that clan. 100% pre-shrunk cotton, available in L, XL, XXL and XXXL. Currently unavailable at stores. Be sure to specify size and clan when ordering. **500 Koku, plus \$4 S&H domestic, \$10 S&H foreign**



**13-3 LBS Clan Shirts** Each shirt has the clan name on the front, and they all have the same artwork on the back. 100% pre-shrunk cotton, available in L, XL, XXL and XXXL. Currently unavailable at stores. Be sure to specify size and clan when ordering. **500 Dinari, plus \$4 S&H domestic, \$10 S&H foreign**



# The Card Shop

All selections are limited by availability – first come, first served. Only request one of each card per order, please!

If you are looking for a little something to give you an extra edge against your opponents, here are some cards that may help you in your quest. Each order must be accompanied by the order form, and any protective materials you want your cards to travel in. All artwork © 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999 by respective artists and used by permission. **Cards are 20 koku or dinari each.**

13-A Ambition



13-B Firebird Falls



13-C Golden Sun Plain



13-D Heroic Opportunities



13-E Hidden Blade



13-F Kitsuki's Coin



13-G Let Him Escape



13-H Lord Moon's Blood



13-I Maho-Tsukai



13-J Mantle of the Jade Champion



13-K Nightmares of Iuchiban



13-L Rebuilding the Temples



13-M Retired Advisor



13-N Ropp'tch'tch



13-O Shinko Kamiko



13-P Shiryo no Goju



13-Q Shiryo no Kuni



13-R Shiryo no Yurei



13-S The Daimyo's Command



13-T Held Terrain



13-U Seppun Toshiken



13-V Toritaka Genzo



13-W Tsuruchi exp



13-X Twilight Mountains



13-AA Enala

13-AB Hitomi  
Tashima

13-AC Jangir exp



13-AD Judgement



13-AE Kiyoshi exp



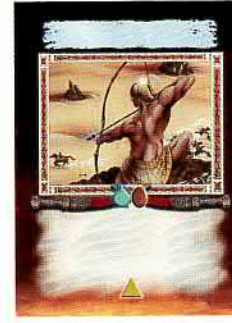
13-AF Mubarak

13-AG Noble House  
of al-Haffit13-AH Ropp 'Cht  
'Cht (awaken)13-AI Stealing From  
the Dead13-AJ The Circle of  
Three13-AK The City of  
Orphans

13-AL The Last Oasis



13-AM The Maze

13-AN The Obsidian  
Mirror13-AO The Tale of Selqet  
and the Eye of Night13-AP The Wrath of  
the Khadi13-AQ Words of  
Glass13-AR You Don't Get  
Away That Easy

#### Legend of the Five Rings Order Form - Herald #12

Redemption Policy: Send your orders via Certified mail or other traceable means. We are not responsible for lost orders. All selections are limited by availability. Imperial Assembly members who provide their DCI# on the outside of their envelopes, receive priority. During the first four weeks from the postmark of this issue, only one request of each card, per customer will be taken. Additional requests during this period will not be processed until after this period expires. If an item you have ordered is not in stock, we will select from your listed substitutes or return your koku if no substitutes are provided. SASE for card orders are no longer required. Shipping and Handling for all other items is still required. Write down orders by item number. Please allow two to six weeks for delivery.

Item #'s: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Alternate choices (card requests): \_\_\_\_\_ Shipping & Handling Total: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DCI #: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

#### SEND ORDERS TO:

(for the Americas &  
Asia/Pacific)  
Fan Clubs / Taka's Treasures  
PO Box 707  
Renton, WA  
98057-0707 USA

(for the UK, Ireland, S. Africa)  
WotC UK, Ltd.  
Customer Service  
PO Box 61  
Maidenhead Berkshire  
SL6 1FX ENGLAND

(for France)  
WotC France  
Customer Service  
BP 103  
94222 Charenton Cedex  
FRANCE

(for Italy)  
WotC Italia  
Customer Service  
Via Giovanni da Udine 34  
20156 Milano ITALY

(for the rest of Europe)  
WotC Belgium  
Customer Service  
PB 2031  
2600 Berchem  
BELGIUM



**13-4 L5R Logo Shirts** The L5R logo is splashed in full color on the back of a black t-shirt.

**13-5 LBS Logo Shirts** The LBS logo in full color on the back of a blue t-shirt.

Both shirts are 100% pre-shrunk cotton, available in L, XL, XXL and XXXL. Currently unavailable at stores. Be sure to specify size when ordering. **250 Koku or Dinari, plus \$4 S&H domestic, \$10 S&H foreign**

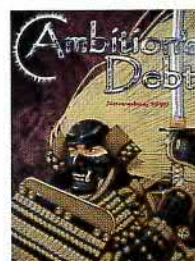


**13-6 Y2C Shirt** This is the shirt that was available at the Y2C event, and we had some left over, so we're offering them to you. Pre-shrunk 100% cotton. Has the Y2C logo on the front, in the pocket area and the 2,000th card on the back. We only have these available in XL (blue) and XXXL (grey-shown). Please specify size when ordering. A special deal at **200 Koku, plus \$4 S&H domestic, \$10 S&H foreign.**



### 13-7 Ambition's Debt Posters

The posters that match the fronts of each of the decks from the set. Poster measures 18" x 24" Specify Choice from Oni, Lion, or Naga and one alternate. **50 Koku each- \$1 S&H US / \$2S&H Foreign**



CLAN WAR HAS ARRIVED! IQ award winner for best Wargame of 1998 from InQuest magazine. 1998 Origins Award Nominee for best miniature game. Some of you have been waiting for this, others will want them for their RPGing experience, or to represent their army 'attacking that right-most province over there.'

For further details on Clan War Koku visit [www.clanwar.com](http://www.clanwar.com)

**NEW! Figures! (with base) - 30 Koku each + \$1 S&H US / \$2S&H Foreign**

**13-8 Demon Bride of Fu Leng**

**13-9 Hiruma Tikedra**

**13-10 Moto Tsume**

**13-11 Naga Abomination**



**NEW! Force and Tactical Cards! - 30 Koku / set**

**13-12 4, Uninvited Guest Force Cards (for the figures at left)**

**13-13 3, Blank Personality Force Cards**

**13-14 3 Amaterasu Smiles Promo Tactical Card**



# LBS Card Focus

by Brent Keith

## A Better World

0W 0C 6F

*Flavor: "Perhaps in the end," Adira considered, taking hold of the last of the Caliph's banners and tearing it down, "the best legacy we can hope for is to leave a better world behind than the one we were born into." - "The End of Age," Fin*

As much as any card can, this card and its flavor text mark the end of the first story arc of Legend of the Burning Sands. The Jewel of the Desert has been ransacked, the Assassins' curse is ended, the great work of the Ra'Shari and the Ashalan is complete, and the Caliph has finally been destroyed and her centuries of tyranny brought to a close. While there are portents of dangerous times to come with warring Jinn, invaders from the Yodatai and Ivory Kingdoms, and the work of the Qolat among the Dahab, they are part of a new story in a new age. The rise of Adira as the new Caliph marks the end of the Tyrant, and the old ways are transformed into the new.

The use of "A Better World" is tied to no specific action, but to an understanding of the many workings of Legend of the Burning Sands. With no actions or effects printed on the card, there is no specific use for the card by itself. The only notable feature about the card is its fate value: six! This is higher than any other card in the game. The faction champions all have fives, and nothing else is higher than a four. Much like Focus in a certain other game, the whole point of the card is that number. So what good does the fate value do? Why is it useful enough to include in a deck, instead of something with a lower fate value and some other use?

To begin answering the first question, a look at the first three factions is in order. Back when LBS first began, the three factions were the Senpet with their focus on battles, the Moto with their focus on raids, and the Assassins with their focus on duelling. A Better World works solidly with any of these focuses. In battle, for each hero destroyed a card can be discarded to absorb damage equal to its fate value. While this will not help against those who

berserk, any other engagement is much less fatal. This means that Adnan and A Better World together can soak all the damage from Gaheris engaging! Speaking of Gaheris, fate values are critical to raids. Gaheris using a six to raid simply can not be beat. A wiser use, though, is on a raider with no raid bonus, or even a raid penalty. If Adnan goes raiding, few will bother to defend with a high valued card. Even after Adnan's penalty raiding

with A Better World still produces a five, which is higher than most people would consider using as raid defence. If Gaheris or someone else with a real raid bonus should also be trying to steal water, all the better. Of course, this works just as well

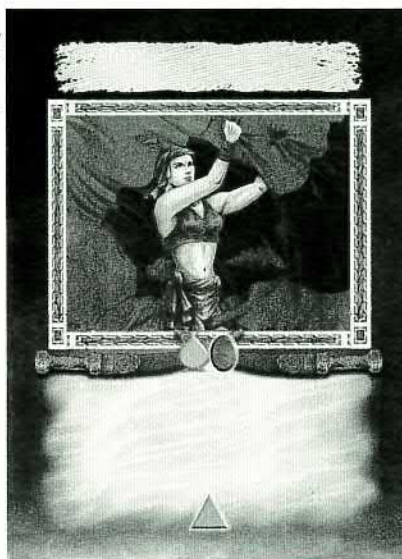
on the defense. Kabdar Fassal with A Better World will stop almost any raid, and again someone with a raid penalty still has a good chance of winning with that high a fate value.

If used correctly, a fate value of six is deadly in a duel. If used as a thrust, it will almost certainly do damage - a lot of it! Adding a point from A Dying Sahir's Tale to make it seven is generally consid-

ered excessive. What makes this more effective is the justifiable tendency to use fate values of two or three when trying to parry from the hand. Of course, trying to use A Better World as a parry tends to be suicidal unless working with inside information.

While these three uses are enough by themselves to make A Better World worth while, there are other cards which rely on fate values. Should it come up randomly in a draw and discard, it makes cards like Badr al Din's Chains of Binding, Rahmid, Discorporation, Tomb Raiding, or Divination considerably more potent. Adrianna becomes a monster, with a berserk damage of eight! Similarly, when Nekhebet performs archery, a card's fate value can be added to her attack, again making a total of eight. If an opponent refuses Dairy's innate challenge, losing six ka for the duration of the turn will kill almost any hero.

This still leaves the question of why to include A Better World instead of some card with a lower fate value. As with any card, the intent of the deck must be



(Continued on Page 28)

(Continued from Page 27)

considered. If the deck includes a lot of draw and discard actions, such as those listed above, having many cards with high fate values is important. In such a deck, the faction champion, the special item or items, and some stories all have a place and A Better World rounds out the collection of high fate values. For those in the enviable position of needing a couple of cards to fill the last

slots of a deck, high fate values fill out the gap nicely since they are used in so many basic game mechanics. In a deck with a focus on any of the three areas discussed above, having extra high fate value cards is useful.

Finally, there's the most trivial reason: if you happen to win a storyline tournament, who knows what effect the card may have on the story?

## Know the School

by Andy Heckt



The Y2C Event saw the first ever Storyline Buttonmen tournament. Fought to determine which technique would prove superior, it pitted the Crane's renowned One-sword technique mastered at their Kakita Kenjutsu School against the strange and difficult to master Mirumoto Two-Sword technique that few Dragon Samurai master.

Contestants were only allowed to enter the tournament once, and thus were forced to choose which side they would support. Costs were kept low (\$3 entered you and another \$2 got you the dice to use), in order to encourage play and somewhat over half of the Ambition's Debt pre-release players entered.

The tournament was a series of skirmishes played throughout the ten hours of play that day. Players would find another of opposing alignment between rounds of the pre-release or after short games. One would issue the challenge and find a level playing surface. The contests

were fierce and short. The Kakita advantage of lower focus stumbled from the first, giving the Mirumoto an initial three to one advantage.

Throughout the day, Phil Lewis and Ingrid Heckt taught those who didn't understand how to play in under three minutes, and took it upon themselves to accept a number of challenges. Sometimes they would issue a challenge of their own to someone just reporting their victories in an attempt to even the field.

More than once the Kakita worked on closing the gap, only to be punished once again. In the end the extra advantage of the second blade overcame the ability to strike faster. The Miromoto won the day with a three to two advantage.

With this information in the hands of Ree Soesbee and Dave Williams, expect to see the dominance of the Mirumoto two-sword technique in a forthcoming release.

# Who's Who: Ken Carpenter

As a long-time L5R fanatic, I was both excited and honored when asked to fill this space in the Herald. Despite the fact that this column seems to be semi-autobiographical in nature, I've done my best to avoid provocative statements about ex-wives, ex-managers, and former band members...

My name is Ken Carpenter and I'm the line developer and lead designer for Clan War, the Legend of the Five Rings miniatures game, produced by Alderac Entertainment Group under license from Wizards of the Coast.

I entered the gaming industry like many others - which is to say, through personal investment. I was working as a production planner in the defense industry, but my first love had always been gaming, so I convinced my wife that trying small press would be a good idea (she's usually very bright, but she loves me, so she gave in). We published a little-known booklet called Tradervale which actually paid for itself, but no more. Then I designed a character record sheet that Armory sold until very recently.

Finally, my big chance arrived. Tom Freman, a publisher looking to try his hand in the gaming industry, saw some of my painted miniatures in a local store and hunted me down. His magazine, Stroke & Dagger, was to be a miniatures-based Science Fiction and Fantasy publication. After having me write some sample articles on miniatures painting and modeling, he asked me to be the magazine's editor-in-chief. Those with experience in the industry know that the title "Editor-in-Chief" is interchangeable with "galley slave". I wrote, and I wrote, and I wrote... but I loved every minute of it.

The magazine stumbled and fell, as most gaming magazines do, but the desire to write continued - I couldn't just stop. A few months later I saw issue #9 of Shadis and contacted the guys at AEG about freelance writing. Back then, AEG was all of three energetic guys - John Zinser, Jolly Blackburn, and Dave Seay - operating out of a two-bedroom apartment. They agreed to give me a try and my material started appearing in Shadis #11. For the next few years I wrote many articles and columns for Shadis, White Wolf, and Dragon magazines.

When the opportunity to work on Clan War appeared, there

was no way that John and Dave could consider anyone else to develop it, mostly because they couldn't get past my tent on their front porch. It was a great match... AEG wanted to get a new miniatures line off the ground and my background in miniatures gaming had left me with a number of important contacts and the experience to generate a system with balanced mechanics.

But what about the game?! We designed Clan War specifically to be compatible with the L5R RPG, but even moreso to reflect the conventions of the CCG. It was important to all of us on the design team that the game preserve the flavor of Rokugan, but it also had to be a very tactical game. If our players are right, we managed to pull it off.

Clan War stresses the importance of rank-and-file troops, maneuvering, movement, and honor. While all miniatures games are abstract, Clan War removed the traditional

player-turn system used in most other games, and replaced it with a unit-based initiative system which, in addition to better representing the fluidity of battle, allows for true multi-player games.

We've done things with Clan War that no miniatures product has ever done before, and we've only been able to do that because of the overwhelming support the game has received from its players. We're also committed to the same customer service that L5R players are used to, so we've worked with the best and the brightest to support a couple of fine Internet sites. The Official Clan War site can be found at [www.clanwar.com](http://www.clanwar.com) and the Official FAQ/Errata site, Kyuden Hida, can be found at [www.ultranet.com/~valren/l5r.shtml](http://www.ultranet.com/~valren/l5r.shtml). We also support a Clan War listserver that you can subscribe to by sending an e-mail (without subject) to [majordomo@clanwar.com](mailto:majordomo@clanwar.com) with the text of the message saying "Subscribe Clanwar-l". Beyond that you can call us direct at (909) 390-5444 and ask for someone who can answer a Clan War question or e-mail us at [Alderac@aol.com](mailto:Alderac@aol.com).

Andy, Ed, Luke - thanks for this opportunity.

Ken Carpenter





# The Lion Clan

by Edward Bolme

The Lion Clan, often called "the Right Hand of the Emperor," is the clan tasked with destroying all the enemies of the one who sits on the Jade Throne. As a clan, they are renowned for their ferocity in battle, their tactical mastery, and their fearsome headlong charges. They are a proud and honorable clan, dressing in tans and earth tones, accented by gold and orange, and adorned with manes and talons and masks reminiscent of their namesakes.

At the founding of the Empire, so devoted was the first Akodo to the Emperor, it was prophesied that "when the last Akodo falls, so falls the Emperor." The Akodo family led the Lion Clan for a thousand years. In all that time, an army led by an Akodo general had never known defeat. That lasted until the fateful day that Bayushi Shojū of the Scorpion set his sights on Akodo Toturi.

The Scorpion had determined that an ancient prophecy was about to unfold, and that the last Hantei Emperor would bring the evil god Fu Leng back into the world, whereupon he could destroy Rokugan. The Scorpion determined that this could not happen, and decided to stage a coup, killing the Emperor to save the Empire. But to do this, they had to eliminate Akodo Toturi, the Lion Clan champion and perhaps the finest tactical mind the Lion Clan had ever seen.

Akodo Toturi was not only brilliant, but very honorable. He had no weakness, save only one... he was enamored of a geisha named Hatsuko. Bayushi Kachiko, the wife of Shojū, arranged to have the geisha poison Toturi, neatly removing him from the dangerous game the Scorpion Clan was undertaking. The coup was successful, and the Scorpion Clan captured Otosan Uchi, the Imperial capitol. Unfortunately for them, Toturi was sickened, but not killed, and returned to rally the other clans and crush the Scorpion.

The Emperor's son had escaped the Scorpion dragnet, and was installed as Emperor. As his first act, he cursed Toturi for failing to protect his father. He stripped the Akodo name not only from Toturi, but from his entire house. He stripped Toturi of his position, and made Matsu Tsuko, a hot-headed warrior, the Lion champion. Finally, he forbade Toturi the right to commit seppuku to purge his family of dishonor. Instead, Toturi was forced to

live out his days as a ronin, outcast and disgraced.

In the wake of the coup, the Clan War broke out, and a strange wasting disease spread across the land. The Emperor was struck ill, and his new wife, Bayushi Kachiko, tended to him. The Emperor grew no better, instead his condition continually worsened, until people became amazed that he did not die. However, the reason he did not die was that Fu Leng was becoming manifest and possessing the disease-ridden body of the last Hantei. The prophecy the Scorpion had so feared was coming to pass.

Eventually it became obvious to everyone that the Emperor was no longer the brash young boy who had ascended the throne, but evil incarnate. This broke the Lion Clan in two. As a clan they had sworn by their priceless honor to protect the Emperor, yet now the Emperor himself was the greatest threat Rokugan had faced in a thousand years. Some Lions forswore their oaths, breaking their sacred vows to fight the true evil, while others defended the cackling Emperor with their lives, tainting their souls to uphold their oaths. Matsu Tsuko herself could neither protect the evil Emperor nor break her vow, so she committed seppuku, asking the dishonored Toturi to save her clan.

Toturi rallied the two factions and led the armies to victory over Fu Leng, becoming the Emperor.

In the wake of the Clan Wars, Ikoma Tsanuri, the new Lion champion (who had led the faction that had broken their oaths), led the Lion Clan to help the Crab Clan, who were bitterly embattled by the forces of the Shadowlands led by a traitorous Crab shugenja. Meanwhile, while half of the Lion armies were far afield, the Unicorn Clan took the opportunity to attack the Lion homelands. Kitsū Motso (who had led the faction that had supported the Emperor) sent messengers to ask Tsanuri for help, but these messengers were caught and killed by Unicorn agents. This apparent lack of communication reopened the schism in the Lion Clan, and Kitsū Motso chose instead to turn to other help.

The Kitsū shugenja gathered together to summon an oni, the only help the Lion could find. Kitsū Okura, the Jade Champion and advisor to Emperor Toturi the First, headed the ritual, and bound the oni to the service of the Kitsū with his name. When the Lion unleashed Oni no Akura upon the Unicorn, the havoc the creature caused was amazing, and the Lion were relieved at their success... until the oni turned upon the Kitsū and demanded that her price be paid, paid with Kitsū blood.

As the Shadowlands taint spreads across the Lion Clan, their chance to save their clan grows dim...

# Lion Deck

The new Kitsu Tombs opens up a whole new can of worms for the Lion clan (Lion clan purists should burn this page before reading). This deck is a straight-up assassination deck. Give the shadowlands trait to whoever is a threat, and destroy them. Ideally, you'll use the Blessings of Isawa to make Rest, My Brother an innate ability on one of your shugenja, and then, paired with Jama Suru, you can snark one personality a turn.

With the enemy contaminated, bowed, or dead, Oni no Akuma and Kyoso no Oni are then free to go and crush provinces.

The Forgotten Tomb allows you to get your low-force Lion personalities out quickly, while the Farmlands provide oni food and protection against ranged attacks.

## Rares and Fixed Cards Used

The Charter of the Lion Clan, The Ikoma Tessen, The Lost Ono of Osano-Wo, The Kitsu Tombs, and Ikoma Ryoza (xx) are all fixed cards. You need the Pearl Shadowlands deck, and the Jade, Pearl, and Ambition's Debt Lion decks.

Ikoma Ryoza (x) and War in the Shadowlands both appeared in Hidden Emperor, and should be easy to pick up in the singles market. Likewise, Nightmares of Iuchiban, Shadowlands Contagion, and the Mantle of the

Jade Champion all appeared in Dark Journey Home, which is still available.

Bloodstrike, Shoji Sensei, and Iuchi Shahai (x) are from Honor Bound, and though Bloodstrike may be a little rough, you should be able to get the other two. After all, WotC did give away a bunch of rares at the HB prereleases.

The Hidden Heart of Iuchiban from Time of the Void may be your hardest find. It can be replaced by the Skull of Fu Leng, if you like.

There is No Hope, Oni no Akuma, Touch of Death, Imperial Gift, and Forgotten Tomb, while rare, have appeared in most editions of the game.

## Deck Format Variants

To make this deck legal for Strict Jade, replace the Forgotten Tomb with a Tomb of Iuchiban and a Writings of Kuni Yori, and replace Corrupted Ground with Encircled Terrain.

With open format, add in Kitsu Toju (of course), plus take a good look at Courage of Osano-Wo, Touch of Despair, Wasting Disease, Oni no Shiukibu, and, best of all, Purity of Kitsu, which lets you ignore all those nasty corruption and nightmare tokens!

## "Kitsu (a.k.a. 'Sick and Wrong')"

The Kitsu Tombs  
Shoji Sensei

## Dynasty Deck (40 cards)

### Personalities

Ikoma Ryoza (x) 1  
Ikoma Ryoza (xx) 1  
Iuchi Shahai (x) 1  
Jama Suru 3  
Kitsu Okura 3  
Kitsu Sanako 3  
Kyoso no Oni 3

Matsu Daoquan 3  
Oni no Akuma 1  
Oni no Akuma (x) 1

### Holdings

Charter of the Lion Clan 1  
Copper Mine 3  
Forgotten Tomb 2  
Hidden Heart of Iuchiban, The 1  
Hiruma Dojo, The 3  
Jade Works 3

### Events

Blessings of Isawa 1  
Imperial Gift 1  
There is No Hope 1  
War in the Shadowlands 1

## Regions

Farmlands 3

## Fate Deck (40 cards)

### Actions

Corrupted Ground 2  
Dark Moment, A 3  
Darkness beyond Darkness 3  
Night Battle 3  
Nightmares of Iuchiban 3  
Shadowlands Contagion 2  
Shadowlands Sickness 2

### Items

Ikoma Tessen, The 1

Lost Ono of Osano-Wo, The 1  
Mantle of the Jade Champion 1

### Kihos

Bloodstrike 3  
Drawing Out the Darkness 3  
Purity of Spirit 3  
Rest, My Brother 3

### Spells

Sympathetic Energies 3  
Tomb of Jade 2  
Touch of Death 1

# Clan of the Ki-Rin

by Patrick Kapera

Mechanics by Patrick Kapera, Kevin Wilson, Ray Yand, Eli Basquez, and Alex Fox

*"There are many stories told of our land, a burning waste far to the east of Rokugan, where Lady Sun has gone mad and Kaleel, the Lord of the Moon, is our only salvation from her bitter wrath. Many tales of how the clan called Unicorn ventured across the northern mountains to see what lie beyond - of what they encountered on the other side, and the horrors they faced before returning home. Perhaps the most important tale, however, is that of their first encounter with my people, the Ujik-hai..."*

- The Living Memory

Much of what has been told of the Unicorn's journey into the distant realm known as the Burning Sands is true. The rest is little more than a careful aberration of reality, constructed to impress their eastern kin. These lies were conceived and spread by several key members among the Unicorn who returned to the Empire two hundred years ago. These lies were not intended to hurt or deceive the Rokugani, but to protect them from several key revelations they discovered in the awful wastes - and to protect their allies in the desert as well.

The first lie they told was of the Ujik-hai, who were in actuality a peaceful group of wanderers, exiled from their home in the City of One Thousand Stories a generation before (after the Day of Wrath). These gypsies, keepers of the Great Chronicle of Age, welcomed the Unicorn into their ranks without menace; there was no violence between the groups. By painting the Ujik-hai as powerful adversaries, the Unicorn ensured that few would follow in their footsteps, maintaining the sanctity of distance between the two Empires, for the good of both.

Martazera, the gaijin woman who befriended Shinjo (and coincidentally an ancestor of the modern "Grey Woman"; see the Legend of the Burning Sands CCG) established a strong bond between the Ujik-hai and the Unicorn, forging a new faction that would eventually become known along the desert steppes as the Moto, or Ki-Rin Clan. This hybrid group would travel with the Unicorn for some time after their departure from the Ujik-hai (themselves to become known as the Ra'Shari in modern times), only branching out on their own after Shinjo and her disciples split apart following the famed Battle with the Rocs.

The Moto Clan were reunited with Shinjo and her followers two hundred years later, when Fu Leng and the Living Darkness appeared at the edge of the Great Waste. The legendary battle that finally shattered the rejuvenated Unicorn Clan has become legend, and many tales about it have been told. Again, some of these stories are true, while others are fabrications of the Unicorn who returned. One chapter of the saga that is accepted by all, however, is that of Shinjo's departure as a sweeping chain of light across the horizon before succumbing beneath a wave of Darkness. The Ki-Rin remember this event well, but also remember the Kami's Promise - that she would always return.

Though the Moto were cut off from their eastern cousins in the aftermath of the battle, one of their number, a warrior known as Sharad, recovered the Kami's weapon, an immense katana with a pommel of polished ivory, a gift from the gypsy Martazera. From this omen, it was obvious to the Moto that the splintered heritage of the Unicorn, Ujik-hai / Ra'Shari, and Ki-Rin would be mended once more; all they needed to do was wait, and keep the legend of their

Champion true until she returned to claim it.

Today, nearly seven hundred years later, they are still waiting, and the Moto of the Burning Sands have gained their own identity, even if few recognize them for it. Since the coronation of the current Caliph and the inception of her sorcerous warriors (the Khadi), the Moto have not been welcome in Medinaat al-Salaam. Natives of the city despise them for their mixed heritage, remembering the "atrocities" of the Ra'Shari so many generations ago and the "anti-social brutes" from the east, whose blood they carry. The Senpet, three-hundred year-old allies of the Caliph, hunt them in the desert, calling them thieves and murderers (only half of that claim is true, and everyone must eat - even if they must steal to do so...)

The White Guard, who patrol the far side of the northern mountains and the borders of the Ivory Kingdom, remain in loose contact with the Moto of the Burning Sands. Given the distance involved, and the rigors of the terrain between the two realms, however, little information is traded between clans, and what does is a slow-moving trickle; messages sent into the desert typically do not return until long after the sender has passed on to his next life. The White Guard are only in contact with a small number of the Burning Sands Moto, who are unsure of their eastern cousins' role in Shinjo's eventual return. Occasionally - perhaps no more than once or twice a century - members of the desert raiders cross the White Guard line of defense and enter the Emerald Empire, taken by the same curiosity that brought their Champion to them a thousand years ago...

## The Clan of the Ki-Rin School

The Moto of the Burning Sands are a nomadic culture - by necessity more than by choice. Still affected by the Ra'Shari's dark history, they are unwelcome in most cities across the desert, and are actively hunted by the Senpet Legions. The Khadi delight in capturing them and penning them in the Jandaq slave caverns with the remnants of other cultures they have subjugated. The Houses of Dahab offer bounties on their heads, and hire armies to protect their merchant caravans, which has turned even the most pacifistic tribes of the Ivory Kingdoms against them. Within their own homeland, the Clan of the Ki-Rin have no allies to call upon, and lose as many of their children to hunger as to the knife.

But adversity has been the Moto's greatest teacher. Every child of the clan is taught from birth to survive in the harsh wastes, with or without the tools of civilization. They are shown how to train and ride the famed stallions of the desert, and how to use them in war. And they are taught how to defend themselves from the predators that hunt them - both human and otherwise.

The following school is designed for use in the Legend of the Five Rings RPG, and assumes that the player is creating a Ki-Rin character to be used in the Emerald Empire. If you are playing outside Rokugan, the social restrictions may be ignored.

## Social Restrictions

There are several key differences between Rokugan and the Burning Sands. One of the most important is that people raised in either culture see the other as barbaric, or at the least alien. Etiquette differs tremendously between the two lands, as do laws, ritual, and religion. As a result, when designing a Ki-Rin Moto (one

who has traveled across the Mountains to the north in their lifetime), certain Skills, Advantages, and Disadvantages are more costly, or not available.

*The following options are not available to Ki-Rin Moto characters:*

- 1) Blood of Osano-Wo (Advantage)
- 2) Chosen by the Oracles (Advantage)
- 3) Ear to the Emperor (Advantage)
- 4) Imperial Spouse (Advantage)
- 5) Moto Curse (Disadvantage). No Ki-Rin Moto are subject

to this malady.

- 6) Ninjutsu (Skill)

*The following options cost twice the normal CP (Character Points) to purchase, and advance during play:*

- 1) Courtier (Skill)
- 2) Craft: Mitsugusari (Skill)
- 3) Craft: Tattooing (Skill)
- 4) Etiquette (Skill)
- 5) Iaijutsu (Skill)
- 6) Sincerity (Skill)
- 7) Tea Ceremony (Skill)

**Benefit:** +1 Agility

**Skills:** Animal Husbandry, Horse Archery, Horsemanship, Hunting, Lore (Burning Sands), Scimitar\*, Stealth

**Beginning Honor:** 1, plus 0 boxes

**Special:** All Ki-Rin Moto begin play with one (1) piece of Gaijin Gear, per the Advantage. They also gain the Bad Reputation (Ki-Rin Moto) Disadvantage.

#### **Rank 1: Under Cover of Night**

At the first Rank, Ki-Rin Moto are trained to use shadows and the cover of night to move about without detection. They are also shown given their first Chronicle – their own passage in the continuing verbal tradition that the Moto keep to give to Shinjo on her return (this is very similar to the Ra'Shari Chronicle, being a collection of stories, verbal accounts, and anecdotes which form their understanding of the past). No matter where he walks, or upon what surface he travels upon, the Ki-Rin Moto leaves no trace of his passing (all tracking and Hunting rolls to find his trail automatically fail). Also, the Ki-Rin may choose one of his Skills as his "Chronicle" (what he is currently famous for among his clan), which is increased by one Rank. The maximum Rank this Skill may now reach is 6.

#### **Rank 2: Night's Sweet Sting**

By this stage of their development, Ki-Rin Moto are shown how to use the darkness to their advantage during combat, and how to manipulate the lingering moonlight to confuse their enemies. They are also given their second Chronicle. When fighting outdoors at night, the Ki-Rin gains 2 Free Raises to use as he pleases. These raises may be applied at any point during the combat, individually or together, to any Skill check. These Raises are not cumulative, and go away at the end of the combat if not used. At least five minutes must pass between combats for them to refresh for the new fight. Note that these Raises can be used in conjunction with the Ki-Rin's Rank 4 Technique (see below). Also, the Ki-Rin may choose one of his Skills as his "Chronicle" (what he is currently famous for among his clan), which is increased by one Rank. The maximum Rank this Skill may now reach is 6. This may not be a Skill which was previously chosen as a Chronicle during a former Rank.

#### **Rank 3: Ride Until Dawn**

Ki-Rin are next taught to endure the rigors often required in the desert wastes, as well as how to outlast their pursuers across the dunes. They are also provided with their third Chronicle. The Ki-Rin

may operate normally with minimal sleep (three hours per day) for a number of weeks equal to half his Earth Rank. At the end of this ordeal, he will require three extra hours of sleep each night, for a number of days equal to the number of weeks spent using the ability. Also, the Ki-Rin may choose one of his Skills as his "Chronicle" (what he is currently famous for among his clan), which is increased by one Rank. The maximum Rank this Skill may now reach is 6. This may not be a Skill which was previously chosen as a Chronicle during a former Rank.

#### **Rank 4: Night's Blind Fury**

At this, the last true stage of "development" for the Ki-Rin, each is shown the secret of combining all their previous knowledge into one startling (and quite vicious) attack. Though less than honorable by Rokugani standards, this ambush tactic is shockingly effective. They are also provided with their fourth Chronicle. At night and outdoors, the Ki-Rin may choose to ambush an opponent by making a Simple Agility + Stealth roll versus the a TN of the target's Perception x5. Success indicates that the Ki-Rin automatically gains the Initiative for the first round of combat; no rolls are made for Initiative. Further, for every five points the Ki-Rin surpasses the TN by, he gains one Raise during the first round of combat (only). These Raises may not be extended past the first round of combat, or used for anything other than an attack upon the chosen target. There is no limit to the number of Raises that may be gained for attack through use of this Technique. Also, the Ki-Rin may choose one of his Skills as his "Chronicle" (what he is currently famous for among his clan), which is increased by one Rank. The maximum Rank this Skill may now reach is 6. This may not be a Skill which was previously chosen as a Chronicle during a former Rank.

#### **Rank 5: The Final Chronicle**

By this stage in their life, Ki-Rin Moto have made a name for themselves among their own people (and probably beyond). They are legends among the Ki-Rin Clan, and will be remembered long after they have passed from this world. They are granted their final Chronicle, and recorded in the Great Chronicle of Age, a record of the greatest heroes of the Burning Sands Moto, which will pass directly into the hands of the Kami Shinjo upon her return. The Ki-Rin may choose any of the Skills formerly increased as a Chronicle, and increase it by one additional Rank. The maximum Rank this Skill may progress to is now 7. Finally, the Ki-Rin gains the Legendary Hero Advantage at this Rank for free.

#### **\* Scimitar (New Skill)**

Characters with this Skill are well-versed in the use of many bladed weapons of the Burning Sands, including the Scimitar (a 2k2 weapon).

#### **New Advantage: Legendary Hero (7 Points)**

Only Burning Sands characters may take this Advantage.

When a character has this Advantage, their die-rolling convention changes. If their Trait and Skill are high enough that he is rolling more than 10 dice, each unkept die beyond 10 is converted to one kept die. For example, if a Ki-Rin were rolling 11k7, they would actually roll 10k8. If a Ki-Rin character reaches 10k10 and still has unkept dice beyond that, each unkept die converts to a +10 modifier to the final rolled total (from 10k10). For example, 12k10 becomes 10k10+20. Note that this is an adjustment from the standard L5R rules, and is only applicable to Ki-Rin Moto.

# L5R FAQ

by Jeff Alexander

*Q: The Ambition's Debt rulebook says you don't lose from Dishonor until you start a turn at -19 or less. Why the change?*

A: It's not a change. It's an error. Dishonor is still an immediate elimination.

*Q: When do I start applying the +1/+1 bonus from the Spawning Grounds and the Shadowlands trait from the Kitsu Tombs? Which cards do they affect?*

A: These effects are continuous and apply to all appropriate cards on your side of the table – in your deck, Provinces, discard pile, etc. as well as in play. They are not just applied once, at the start of the game; cards which change controller will gain or lose these changes.

*Q: About Touching the Void... Wow! Is this for real? Just play it to draw four more cards, and only hurt my hand size if it's empty?*

A: In a word: no. This card is poorly worded. Your hand must be empty to produce both effects.

*Q: Would Yoritomo Furikae return to play if he's killed by something like a ranged attack? And does he return still in the battle or back in my fief?*

A: Furikae returns if he's "destroyed IN a battle", so, yes, that would include ranged attacks and such (if he had said "BY a battle", the answer would be different). He returns to play back in your fief.

*Q: Can I make multiple copies of an opponent's Unique region with Exile's Road?*

A: Yes.

*Q: If I'm playing The New Akasha and I turn up a dual-aligned Crab/Naga Personality, am I allowed to forego his honor and buy him for 2g less, or would that be a cost reduction and be prohibited by the clause about Crabs not having their costs reduced further?*

A: You can pay 2g less. You're not reducing the cost, you're only paying part of it. You can buy Hida Yakamo Exp3 for 12g if you don't want to gain his honor.

*Q: Speaking of Yakamo, he has the printed Naga trait now, so he's Nonhuman, right?*

A: Right.

*Q: If I play At'Tok'Tuk Sensei, do Ratling Personalities gain my clan affiliation?*

A: They don't actually gain any traits. "Ratling" does not become fully equivalent to your Clan's trait, either. Only effects that look for a generic "your clan" affiliation will see them as belonging to you.

*Q: Well that's annoying. But, hey, if I'm a Shadowlands player, I can finally start buying Personalities cheaply or for honor!*

A: Nope. Evil never gets a break. Check out this line from the "Clan Affiliations" section of a Pearl Edition or later rulebook: "The Gold cost reductions and Honor bonuses for bringing in members of your Clan do not apply if you are a Shadowlands player."

*Q: Okay now. This Plague of Locusts event. Will it just destroy Holdings with a printed cost of 0 or will it also kill ones whose costs were reduced?*

A: If it's gold cost was 0 for whatever reason when it was brought into play, it's bug food.

*Q: What about 0-cost holdings that I purposely spent gold on anyway?*

A: Gourmet bug food.

*Q: Will Fallen Lion Fortress cause 6 or 12 points of honor loss to a player who's both playing Lion and has brought out Shadowlands cards?*

A: Only 6.

*Q: Does being Undead make you automatically Nonhuman?*

A: No.

*Q: What, exactly, does Judgement of Toshiken negate?*

A: It negates reactions to the challenge or duel or to anything that happens during them. It negates any special effects of focussed cards, such as Strike of Flowing Water, Kharmic Strike, and Burning Your Essence. It negates effects that alter focus values or Chi during duels, such as Lord Moon's Blood, Ambition, and the Double Chi trait. It does not negate any effects which existed prior to the challenge, such as the +1C from Oath of Fealty or the +1 focus value from Touch of Amaterasu. It does not negate reactions that never affect the outcome of the duel, such as Feign Death and One Koku.

*Q: I presume Yasuki Taka's Experienced 2 form shares his Experienced version's restriction that he doesn't affect Holdings that can pay an unlimited amount for things.*

A: You presume correctly.

*Q: There's something funny with the rules on lobbying. They say that if my lobbying is contested for any reason, I have to beat everyone else's honor to get the Favor. That part is clear. Now here's the problem. If my lobbying is contested because someone else has the Favor already, it's that player whose honor gets increased by lobbying efforts opposing mine. But that player isn't necessarily the one my honor gets compared to at the end.*

A: You're right. That doesn't quite mesh. The lobbying efforts of players opposing you always add to the player whose honor you're trying to exceed, which is always the highest player other than yourself.

### Focus on... the Elemental Rings

You must have all five Rings in play together to achieve an Elemental Victory. Merely playing all five at some time during the game is insufficient. (The rulebook presents several slightly conflicting accounts of this rule.)

How a Ring got into play is immaterial. Effects which put a Ring into play without technically "playing" it, such as the Finding the Harmony kiho and House of Tao stronghold, are perfectly valid.

**The Rings are no longer Action Cards**, as per p. 11 of the *Ambition's Debt* rulebook. They are their own card type. Furthermore, as official Errata, playing and using them are also no longer Reactions (although they are no different timing-wise).

### Focus on... Family Names

Only names of an actual, most likely Rokugani, line, such as Hida, or Agasha, or Daidoji, can be chosen as a family name. You cannot pick the first word out of just any card's title.

A family can be as small as one person. (Examples: Miya, Naka).

Families can span multiple clan alignments. All Bayushi are the same family, as are all Moto.

Races and creature names don't count. "Ninja", "Naga", "Ratling", "Mujina", and "Oni" (and "Oni no") are all illegal choices for a family name.

A Personality with a one-word name cannot define a family name, but will be a member of that family if it's a valid family due to other cards. There is a "Hitomi" family, so Hitomi is part of it, but Sanzo is just Sanzo.

### Focus on... Sensei

You cannot voluntarily discard a Sensei or play a Sensei once the game begins without the use of a card effect.

As a new rule, Sensei cannot reduce Starting Honor below -19 or reduce Gold Production or Province Strength below 0. Strongholds with a -19 Starting Honor may begin the game with an Honor-reducing Sensei without immediately losing. Once the game begins, they may still freely play such Sensei because changes to Starting Honor do not affect current Honor. (The reduction in the Stronghold stat is *not* considered an honor loss, as was previously ruled.)

### Focus on... Action Traits

There's been a slight change in how to determine what traits an action carries. As of now, traits are normally determined solely by the card that the action's text is on. *If an action is not actually on a card, it does not acquire any traits from any cards involved in performing it.* Actions added to a card via copying or by an effect such as The Yogo Towers count as being "on the card". This is a partial REVERSAL of the ruling in the last *Imperial Herald*.

Some examples of actions which no longer take traits from the performing cards are discarding for a Tactician force bonus, attaching a card from your hand, and lobbying for the Favor (though this is still **Political** by the rulebook).

### Reprintings

Arrows From the Woods: gold cost is 0, not 7.

Kitsu Okura has a Minimum Honor of 0 once again.

Pitch and Fire: makes "two" attacks now instead of "2".

### Errata

**Tunnel System (foil)**: gold cost is still 2, not 7.

**Festering Pit of Fu Leng (foil)**: gold cost is still 2, not 7.

**Bakeneko**: its action is usable once per battle.

**Hirariko Exp**: her action is usable once per battle.

**Hida Amoro Exp2**: has the Shadowlands trait.

**Dead Eyes**: the reduction to 0 Personal Honor is permanent.

**Yukai no Junzo**: counts as Yogo Junzo for Uniqueness.

# LEGEND OF THE FIVE RINGS(tm) DCI(tm) FLOOR RULES

## CODE OF BUSHIDO

1999-2000 Tournament Season

Effective October 1, 1999

### Introduction

Samurai! The key to victory in any duel is thorough practice and an understanding of the environment in which the challenge is to take place. These rules-combined with the DCI Universal Tournament Rules-will help you navigate sanctioned tournament play properly, so you are fair and respectful to the other samurai you face in battle. What makes L5R contests special are the opponents you'll face-for they hold to the Code of Bushido: Courage, Courtesy, Honor, Excellence, Duty, Loyalty, and Compassion. Remember, these tournament rules only come into play if an opposing samurai or judge feels you have violated the Code-and these rules. Samurai who violate sections of the Floor Rules will be subject to the appropriate provisions of the DCI Penalty Guidelines.

Note: Key words and phrases are defined in appendix B of the Universal Tournament Rules-Definition of Terms.

*"In whatever field of endeavor, knowledge of how to avoid losing out to others, how to help oneself, and how to enhance one's honor, is part of military science."*

*-Miyamoto Musashi, A Book of Five Rings*

### Book of Earth

## 300. GENERAL TOURNAMENT RULES

### 300.1 Expectations of Samurai

To prepare for any contest in L5R, samurai must be knowledgeable of the most recent rules for the Legend of the Five Rings game and follow the interpretations and judgements of the organizer or head judge without question-or be subject to penalty.

### 301. Tournament Sanctioning and Rating Types

A variety of formats are available for samurai to participate in play, and organizers are encouraged to use their creativity when planning their tournaments. While creativity often helps identify new and exciting ways to play, any format featured at an FRPG/DCI event must be fair to all participants. The formats listed below are only suggestions; they are not required. In general, using these formats helps samurai know what to expect when they attend those events. See the Book of Water, Section 320-Tournament Formats, for more information on suggested formats.

### Suggested Formats:

Open  
Jade  
Jade Extended  
Sealed Deck

### Rankings:

Samurai rankings are calculated based on the Clan affiliations of their decks. In addition to samurai being ranked by Clan, they each receive an overall ranking that includes points from all Clans with which their tournament decks have been affiliated. For more information, see the Universal Tournament Rules, Appendix B-Point-Accumulation Rankings.

### 302. Required Materials-Displaying the Mon

This optional rule is in addition to the necessary tournament materials listed in section 3.0 of the Universal Tournament Rules.

The tournament organizer may ask samurai to wear or display a particular Clan shirt or other Clan-specific material as part of the contest. Organizers must announce the use of this requirement before the tournament begins, and the organizers must make the required Clan-specific items available to all participants as a part of the entry fee.

### 303. Before Play Begins

When entering a duel, samurai first reveal their allegiance by showing their Strongholds to their opponents. Samurai then shuffle their decks and present them to their opponents for further shuffling or cutting. Once both samurai have received their decks back from their opponents, they set up their Provinces and draw their hands.

### 304. Who Plays First

The samurai with the highest Family Honor begins play. In the case of a tie, both opponents cut their Fate decks and the player revealing the highest Focus value goes first. In the case of another tie, repeat until one samurai wins.

### 305. Deck Construction

Each samurai's deck must contain a minimum of forty Dynasty cards and forty Fate cards (also known as a 40/40 deck). If organizers choose to establish different minimums for their events, they must select only from the following options:

\* 30/30: A minimum of thirty Dynasty cards and thirty Fate cards.

\* 50/50: A minimum of fifty Dynasty cards and fifty Fate cards.

Organizers selecting either 30/30 or 50/50 must announce the use of the different minimums before the tournament begins, and in all event advertising. If organizers do not specify minimums in this manner, deck-size requirements must follow the standard 40/40 model.

Other than these size requirements, samurai must follow the deck-construction rules listed in the latest Legend of the Five Rings game rulebook.

### 306. Event Cards

An Event card only resolves the first time it arises in a game. If another copy of the same Event comes up in another samurai's deck, it is discarded without taking effect.

*"The art of war consists of: 1) learning what is right and true 2) practice 3) understanding the harm and benefit in everything 4) seeing everything accurately 5) becoming aware of what is not obvious 6) being careful in small matters 7) not doing anything useless."*

*-Miyamoto Musashi, A Book of Five Rings*

### Book of Fire

#### 310. STRUCTURE OF THE DUEL

When samurai duel in rounds of a contest, a number of fundamental rules govern the structure, tempo, and stages of the duel. In a duel, these stages are called the Challenge, Focus, and Strike.

#### 311. Play Structure-Challenge

The recommended length of a round is forty minutes, with each match consisting of one game. Tournament organizers may change this time limit or number of games per match at their discretion, but they must announce the round time limit and number of games before the tournament begins.

##### 311.1 Tardiness

Samurai are expected to be in their seats when the judge announces the beginning of the round. Samurai arriving in their seats after this announcement are penalized by having their top ten Dynasty cards and top ten Fate cards removed from play. For each ten minutes of additional time, an additional ten Dynasty and ten Fate cards are removed from play. Samurai who fail to arrive in their seats by the end of the first round are ejected from the tournament.

#### 312. Tempo of Play-Focus

Samurai must take their turns in a timely manner. Whereas taking a reasonable amount of time to think through game strategy is acceptable, purposely failing to complete a turn in a reasonable amount of time is not. For this reason it is only required of a judge to announce the end of a round, and never how much time remains.

#### 313. Ending Lengthy Matches-Strike

If the end of a round is called for time, play continues until the end of the turn of the samurai who did not go first in the duel. (A samurai in mid-turn is one that has begun his or her Events Phase.) Use the following victory conditions to determine who wins:

+1/-1 per point of Honor currently held

+10 per Province destroyed when the samurai was the Attacker

+8 for each Elemental Ring in play

-15 for being eliminated (applicable only in multiplayer events)

*"Because you can win quickly by taking the lead, it is one of the most important things in strategy. There are several things involved in taking the lead. You must make the best of the situation, see through the enemy's spirit so that you grasp his strategy and defeat him."*

*-Miyamoto Musashi, A Book of Five Rings*

### Book of Water

#### 320. CONSTRUCTED TOURNAMENT FORMATS

Samurai must construct their decks prior to the tournament, and compete using only the cards included in their decks. These decks must comply with section 305 of the Book of Earth-Deck Construction.

Suggested Legend of the Five Rings Constructed formats include the following:

Open

Jade Extended

Strict Jade

#### 321. New Releases

New Legend of the Five Rings card sets are allowed in Constructed formats thirty days after their official street date.

#### 322. Promo Cards

Promo cards are allowed in sanctioned tournaments when the next released set is allowed in play. A promo card's legality in each format follows the same card-type restrictions placed on the set with which the promo entered tournament play.

Tournament organizers may choose to ban promo cards

from a Constructed event. They must give samurai ample notice, however, regarding which promo cards are banned, so participants can fix their decks if necessary before the event begins.

### 323. Open Format

Any card from any release can be included in a samurai's deck, once it qualifies under section 321 of the Book of Water-New Releases.

### 324. Jade-Extended Format

Samurai may include Holdings, Regions, Followers, Ancestors, Items, Actions, and Kihos from any Legend of the Five Rings release.

Strongholds, Personalities, Events, and Spells, however, are limited to cards printed in or after the Jade Edition(tm) card set. Personalities and cards released in prior episodes are allowed only if they-or a more experienced version-are reprinted in the Jade Edition or subsequent releases.

### 325. Strict-Jade Format

Samurai must construct their decks using only cards released in or after the Jade Edition set. Cards released in prior episodes are allowed only if they-or their more experienced versions-are reprinted in or after the Jade Edition.

## 330. SEALED-DECK FORMAT

Samurai compete using only decks and boosters they receive from the tournament organizer for that contest. Before the contest begins, samurai must be given time to construct their decks from the cards provided. A typical Sealed-Deck contest includes one deck and two booster packs for each samurai.

Any card a samurai receives from the event organizer at a Sealed-Deck tournament may be used in play at that event, regardless of the card's Clan affiliation.

## 340. STORYLINE EVENTS

The results of storyline contests have direct impact on the Legend of the Five Rings story. Because such a contest is supposed to reflect the storyline, some special rules not found in other events are often invoked for storyline play. These rules will be available through tournament organizers and the DCI before the date of the tournament.

### 341. Bribery and Collusion at Storyline Events

Bribery and collusion are legal for storyline contests only if done as part of the story effect. Bribery and collusion must be made known to the head judge immediately by the samurai involved, and the judge must okay the bribery or collusion. The head judge should note any such bribery or collusion in

his or her contest report.

## 342. Clan Affiliations at Sealed-Deck Storyline Events

Samurai in a Sealed-Deck storyline contest must list which Clan they're playing for in addition to what affiliation the deck features. The affiliation a samurai lists for himself affects the storyline. The samurai's deck affiliation affects his ranking points appropriately. The Clan a samurai plays and the Clan with which she affiliates herself need not be the same in Sealed-Deck storyline events.

*"In as much as men's opinions differ, so there must be differing ideas on the same matter. Thus no one man's conception is valid for any school."*

*-Miyamoto Musashi, A Book of Five Rings*

## Book of Air

## 350. HANDLING RULES DISPUTES & VIOLATIONS

### 351. Calling for a Judgment

If samurai cannot agree during a duel on a point of code or rule and need an outside interpretation, they should call upon a judge to make a decision. By entering a DCI-sanctioned Legend of the Five Rings contest, the samurai agree to abide by all rulings rendered by tournament officials.

### 352. A Samurai's Responsibility

It is the individual samurai's responsibility to promptly notify tournament officials of any condition he or she believes interferes with tournament play. By failing to immediately notify tournament officials of possible rules violations or unsporting conduct, witnesses and others waive any possible claims against tournament officials and/or the tournament organizers for not taking action. If a samurai notifies tournament officials about a possible conduct violation, the situation may be investigated at the officials' discretion. Any necessary penalties will be issued based solely on the outcome of the officials' investigation.

If the violation is a serious infraction (such as cheating), the DCI will further investigate the matter and may issue further penalties, including suspensions from tournament play.

*"With your spirit open and unconstricted, look at things from a high point of view. You must cultivate your wisdom and spirit. Polish your wisdom: learn public justice, distinguish between good and evil, study the Ways of different arts one by one. When you cannot be deceived by men you will have realized the wisdom of strategy."*

## Book of Void

### 360. THE CODE OF BUSHIDO

The Legend of the Five Rings game is all about story, community, verve, style, and honor. L5R players are part of this community and share in creating the fervor in which they surround the story and themselves. As with any new community, you may find its customs uncomfortable at first. Read the following code and understand that the customs within are optional. Tournament organizers who wish to penalize players for unsporting conduct for not performing the customs listed below must announce before the tournament begins that these etiquette rules of Bushido will be enforced.

**1. Honor**-The samurai has only one judge of his honor, and that is himself. Decisions you make and how these decisions are carried out are a reflection of who you truly are. You cannot hide from yourself.

Rule: At the beginning and end of a duel, samurai bow in respect to their opponent.

**2. Excellence**-While you rest, your enemy practices.

Rule: A player who forgets a mandatory action loses 1 Honor (which cannot be prevented or redirected). A player must request permission from her opponent to replay a portion of a turn. If her opponent allows it, she loses 3 Honor (loss cannot be prevented or redirected).

**3. Courage**-Samurai face adversity at need. You cannot live while hiding from life.

Note: What matters is not winning, but enjoying competi-

tive play. Only a coward is afraid to lose.

**4. Compassion**-A samurai has compassion. He helps his fellow people at every opportunity. If an opportunity does not arise, he goes out of his way to find one.

Note: Remember you didn't always know how to play. Offer to teach someone.

**5. Courtesy**-Samurai have no reason to be cruel. They do not need to prove their strength. A samurai is courteous even to her enemies. Without this outward show of respect we are nothing more than animals. A samurai is not only respected for her strength in battle, but also for her dealings with other people. The true inner strength of a samurai becomes very apparent during times of stress.

Rule: It is customary to ask an opponent before touching his or her cards. Players who do not ask before touching an opponent's cards lose 1 Honor each time.

**6. Duty and Loyalty**-For the samurai, having done some "thing" or said some "thing," he knows, he owns that "thing." He is responsible for it and all the consequences that follow. A samurai is intensely loyal to those in his care. To those for whom he is responsible, he remains fiercely true.

Note: Players represent the game itself while playing in a contest. Their actions and conduct reflect upon how those nearby perceive the game.

*"He who knows these things, and in fighting puts his knowledge into practice, will win his battles. He who knows them not, nor practices them, will surely be defeated."*

-Sun Tzu

## Choosing your clan

By Andy Heckt and Mindy Sherwood-Lewis

What is Choosing a Clan all about anyway? We get asked this question a lot, via email, at conventions, and on the phone. Usually it is in regards to joining the Imperial Assembly, but often it is a question from a new player trying to find a niche in the L5R world.

In the short term, it is about finding a group that you "identify" with, and want to be a part of, often in the story-line sense. This will most likely show itself in the decks that you choose to play in tournaments, the L5R related shirts you wear, and will affect the clan letter you receive. In the case of new players, we try to give them a brief flavor of what each clan is like, to help guide them in making a decision. We try to keep our personal biases out of those descriptions, so that they have a good overview of what is available, and can make a choice based on their own preferences, not ours.

In addition to "belonging" to a group within the L5R community, your clan choice shows up in other ways when you are part of the Imperial Assembly:

1. Your membership card will have that clan printed upon it.

2. The Clan Letter you receive with each issue will be for the clan you have chosen.

3. Player rankings are kept by clan. In this case, the rankings are actually kept by clans you've played, not just clan you are aligned

with. In the future, we may use that data for "special" tournament rankings (ie-playing your registered clan might be worth more in certain instances).

We can use the data on what clans are played regularly to keep track of which clans may be getting too powerful, or which ones may be too weak. This can be a very useful tool for our designers. We also use data on what clans are played and how well they do, to determine the direction that the story will be taking in the card game. There will be three worldwide story-line affecting tournaments in 2000 that players will be able to participate in for this purpose.

Currently you may only register for the Imperial Assembly using the following clan designations:

Brotherhood (or Monk), Crab, Crane, Dragon, Lion, Naga, Phoenix, Scorpion, Shadowlands, Toturi's Army, Unicorn, Yoritomo's Alliance

These are also the only clan designations that you should be noting when you are playing in a tournament, so that the data house can input the tournament results correctly.

Ninja affiliation is restricted to only players who have won a sanctioned tournament of 16+ players while playing a Ninja deck.

Badger, Wasp, Turtle, Monkey, etc... are not valid clans to select for the Assembly or for tournaments as they are not "major" clans.

# The Cards you may not use in an Extended Jade Tournament

Card type and name	Edition	Card type and name	Edition	Card type and name	Edition
<b>Events</b>		Light of the Sun Goddess	CJ	To Save an Empire	TOV
A Black Scroll is Opened	FK	Lions Attack the Crane	SCC1	Toturi's Last Stand	TOV
A Final Duel	SCC3	Mine Riots	CJ	Tsunami	CJ
A Soul of Thunder	TOV	Monsoon	AD	Winter Warfare	CJ
A Time of Legends	PRO	My Enemy's Weakness	SCC2	<b>Personalities</b>	
An Untold Cost	FK	Naming the True Evil	CJ	Agasha Heizo	CJ
Annexation	PRO	New Taxes	CJ	Agasha Koishi	AD
Are You With Me?	CJ	New Year's Celebration	SL	Agasha Mumoko	SCC3
Battle at Isawa Palace	CJ	Not this Day!	FK	Agasha Nabe	SCC2
Bloom of the White Orchid	IE	One Man's Honor	SCC2	Air Dragon	IE
Bon Festival	IE	Pearl of Wisdom	FK	Akiyoshi	FK
Bonds of Darkness	TOV	Plague	IE	Akiyoshi Exp	TOV
Celestial Alignment	IE	Rampant Plague	SL	Akodo Godaigo	FK
Dead Walk The Earth	IE	Rebuilding the Kaiu Walls	TOV	Akodo Hari	SCC3
Dealing With Shadows	FK	Regions of Rokugan	TOV	Akodo Ikawa	SCC3
Designer Wins	PRO	Retirement	AD	Akodo Matoko	SCC3
Desperate Measures	SL	Seize the Day	FK	al-Hazaad	TOV
Doom of the Crab	SL	Severed from the Emperor	CJ	Alhundro Cornejo	IE
Doom of the Crane	SL	Shadow of the Dark God	CJ	al-Rashid	TOV
Doom of the Dark Lord	PRO	Solar Eclipse	IE	Asahina Uojin	SCC2
Doom of the Dragon	SL	Strength of the Earth	FK	Asako Ishio	TOV
Doom of the Lion	SL	Summons From Beyond	CJ	Asako Oyo	FK
Doom of the Naga	SL	Teeth of the Serpent	TOV	Asako Togama	TOV
Doom of the Phoenix	SL	Test of Stone	IE	Asako Yasu	IE
Doom of the Scorpion	SL	The 38th Hantei Falls	SCC1	Ashan	TOV
Doom of the Unicorn	SL	The Celestial Pattern	AD	Bayushi Baku	FK
Duty to the Empire	AD	The Courage of Osano-Wo	SCC3	Bayushi Dairu	SCC2
Emergence of the Tortoise	IE	The Darkest Day	AD	Bayushi Kyono	SCC2
Enlightened Ruler	TOV	The Darkest Magics	TOV	Bayushi Kyoto	SL
Enlistment	TOV	The Death of Tsuko	CJ	Bayushi Marumo	TOV
Factionism	TOV	The Falling Darkness	SL	Bayushi Shoju	FK
Festival of Long Sticks	TOV	The Farther you Fall	PRO	Bayushi Shoju Inexp	SCC1
Fu Leng's Horde	AD	The Heavy Shadow of Fear	TOV	Bayushi Tange	AD
Give Me Your Hand	SCC3	The Hero's Triumph	TOV	Bayushi Tasu	CJ
Hototogitsu	AD	The Kharmic Wheel Spins	SCC2	Bayushi Togai	IE
Imperial Funeral	FK	The Longest Night	TOV	Bayushi Tomaru	SL
Imperial Levying	SL	The Price of War	FK	Bog Hag	FK
Imperial Quest	IE	The Return of Fu Leng	AD	Chinoko	CJ
In Time of War	TOV	The Rising Sun	SL	Daikua	SCC1
Kachiko's Kiss	PRO	The World Stood Still	SCC3	Dark Daughter of Fu Leng	FK
Kisada's Blockade	AD	Time of the Void	PRO	Doji Hoturi	IE

Card type and name	Edition	Card type and name	Edition	Card type and name	Edition
Doji Hoturi Exp	SL	Jade Dragon	TOV	Oni no Genso	CJ
Doji Hoturi Exp2	TOV	Kado	CJ	Oni no Ianwa	TOV
Doji Satsume	SCC2	Kaiu Kenru	FK	Oni no Jimen	FK
Doji Yosai	IE	Kaiu Utsu	AD	Oni no Kamu (Ogon/Titsu)	SL
Doji Yosai Exp	TOV	Kakita Foruku	FK	Oni no Kaze	FK
Dragon of Fire	IE	Kakita Shijin	AD	Oni no Mizu	FK
Earth Dragon	IE	Kakita Torikago	SL	Oni no Ogon	SL
Fusaki	FK	Kakita Yinobu	IE	Oni no Pekkile	TOV
Gekkai	TOV	Kakita Yogoso	SL	Oni no Sanru	SL
Goblin Shaman	SL	Kakita Yuri	IE	Oni no Seiryoku	FK
Hantei the 38th	SCC1	Kappa	SCC2	Oni no Shikibu	IE
Harima	TOV	Kasuga Kyoji	AD	Oni no Tadaka	AD
Hasagawa	SCC2	Kemmei	FK	Oni no Taki-Bi	FK
Hatsuko	SCC1	Ki-Rin	IE	Oni no Tsuburu	IE
Hida Kisada	IE	Kitsu Toju	IE	Orochi	CJ
Hida Kisada Inexp	SCC3	Kitsu Toju Exp	TOV	Otaku Kojiro	SL
Hida Matyu	SCC2	Koichi	CJ	Otomo Sorai	PRO
Hida Tampako	IE	Kolat Servant	IE	Qakar	AD
Hida Yakamo Oni	IE	Kolat Whisperer	FK	Qarash	FK
Hida Yakamo Oni Exp	AD	Kumo	SL	Ramash	FK
Hiruma Kage	SL	Kuni Sensin	TOV	Ranbe	SCC2
Hitoshi	CJ	Kusatte Iru	AD	Ratling Conjurer	AD
Horiuchi Shoan	IE	Kyojin	AD	Ratling Scavenger	SL
Hyobe	CJ	Lady Kitsune	TOV	Ratling Thief	SL
Ichiin	AD	Mara	SL	Seikua	FK
Ide Daikoku	FK	Matsu Chokoku	SL	Seikua Exp	TOV
Ide Tadaji	IE	Matsu Gohei	IE	Seppun Baka	PRO
Ikoma Kimura	AD	Matsu Gohei Exp	TOV	Shabura	SL
Ikoma Ujiaki	IE	Matsu Hokitare	SCC2	Shabura Exp	CJ
Ikoma Ujiaki Exp	FK	Matsu Imura	IE	Shazaar	SCC2
Isawa Natsune	FK	Matsu Tsuko	IE	Shiba Katsuda	IE
Isawa Suma	TOV	Matsu Tsuko Inexp	SCC2	Shiba Ujimitsu	IE
Isawa Sze	SCC2	Matsu Yojo	IE	Shinjo Goshi	SCC2
Isawa Tadaka	IE	Mikaru	AD	Shinjo Hanari	IE
Isawa Tadaka Exp	SL	Mikio	AD	Shinjo Hanari Exp	TOV
Isawa Tadaka Exp2	TOV	Mikio Exp	TOV	Shinjo Mosaku	FK
Isawa Tomo	IE	Mirumoto Satsu	SCC3	Shinjo Rojin	CJ
Isawa Tomo Exp	CJ	Mirumoto Yukihira	TOV	Shinjo Sadato	FK
Isawa Tsuke	IE	Miya Yoto	IE	Shinjo Yasamura Exp	TOV
Isawa Tsuke Exp	AD	Morito Tokei	IE	Shinjo Yasoma	AD
Isawa Ujina	SCC3	Mountain Goblin	SL	Shosuro Hametsu	SL
Isawa Uona	IE	Mujina Chieftain	TOV	Shosuro Hametsu Exp	TOV
Isawa Uona Exp	FK	Naga Abomination	PRO	Shosuro Ikawa	SCC1
Isawa Uona Exp2	TOV	Nobuo	CJ	Shosuro Sadato	CJ
Ishikawa	SCC1	Norio	CJ	Shosuro Tage	SL
Iuchi Daiyu	IE	Ogre Outlaw	CJ	Shuten Doji	IE
Iuchi Daiyu Exp	CJ	Oni no Akeru	FK	Soshi Bantaro	SL
Iuchi Takaai	IE	Oni no Chi	CJ	Soshi Bantaro Exp	CJ

Card type and name	Edition	Card type and name	Edition	Card type and name	Edition
Sunabe	SCC3	Black Wind From The Soul	FK	Reversal of Fortunes	FK
Suzume Mukashino	AD	Blood of Midnight	SL	Shapeshifting	SL
Sysh	TOV	Call Upon The Wind	IE	Sharing the Strength of Many	FK
Taquar	TOV	Calling the Elements	FK	Soshi's Curse	SCC2
Taro	CJ	Castle of Water	IE	Spiritual Presence	AD
Tetsuya	CJ	Cloak of Night	IE	Stale Wind	SL
The Demon Bride of Fu'Leng	IE	Contemplate the Void	SL	Stealing the Soul	AD
The Exalted Ugu	SCC1	Counterspell	IE	Strength of Osano-Wo	TOV
The False Hoturi	PRO	Courage of the Seven Thunders	FK	Strength of the Dark One	TOV
The Hooded Ronin	SL	Curse of the Jackal	TOV	Strike at the Roots	FK
The Hooded Ronin Exp	CJ	Dark Divination	SL	Summon Faeries	IE
The Laughing Monk	SL	Defender From Beyond	AD	Summon Nightstalker	AD
The Monstrous War Machine of Fu Leng	PRO	Depth of the Void	TOV	Summon Swamp Spirits	IE
The Nameless One	SL	Disrupt the Aura	CJ	Summon Undead Champion	IE
Thunder Dragon	SL	Divine the Future	CJ	The Elements' Fury	FK
Togashi Gaijutsu	SL	Doom of Fu Leng	AD	The Fist of Osano Wo	IE
Togashi Kama	TOV	Elemental Ward	IE	The Iron Citadel	FK
Togashi Mikoto	FK	Energy Transference	IE	The Light of Amaterasu	TOV
Togashi Rinjin	FK	Essence of Air	TOV	The Path to Inner Peace	FK
Togashi Yama	AD	Essence of Earth	TOV	The Phoenix is Reborn	TOV
Togashi Yokuni	IE	Essence of Fire	AD	The Purity of Kitsu	SCC2
Togashi Yokuni Exp	AD	Essence of the Void	AD	The Soul of Shiba	SCC3
Togashi Yokuni Exp2	TOV	Essence of Water	AD	The Walking Horror of Fu Leng	FK
Tokiuiji	CJ	Evil Ward	SL	The Wasting Disease	FK
Tsukuro	AD	Fiery Wrath	CJ	Torrential Rain	IE
Tsuo	CJ	Fires of Purity	IE	Touch of Despair	SL
Void Dragon	IE	Flight of Doves	TOV	Touch of Fu Leng	SL
Water Dragon	IE	Flood	SCC1	Wheel of Fate	FK
Yasuki Kojiro	CJ	Fury of Osano Wo	IE	Whispering Winds	FK
Yazaki	SCC3	Gust of Wind	SL	Whispers of the Land	SCC3
Yogo Asami	FK	Heart of the Inferno	IE	Wind Born Speed	IE
Yogo Ichiba	AD	Hiruma's Last Breath	SCC1	Wind-Borne Slumbers	FK
Yogo Junzo	IE	Immortal Steel	IE	Winds of Change	IE
Yogo Junzo Exp	FK	Jade Strike	FK	Wings of Fire	IE
Yogo Oshio	TOV	Kuroshin's Prayer	SCC2		
Yotsu Seiki	IE	Legions of Fu Leng	TOV	<b>Strongholds</b>	
Yugoro	CJ	Look into the Void	IE	The Sacred Temple of the Phoenix	IE
Yuki No Onna	SL	Mighty Protection	TOV	The War Fortress of the Crab	IE
		Mirror Image	SCC3	The Ancestral Home of the Lion	IE
<b>Spells</b>		Mists of Illusion	IE	The Ruined Fortress of the Scorpion	SL
A Prophecy Fulfilled	AD	Mystical Terrain	TOV		
A Terrible Oath	FK	Oni Warding	CJ	<b>CARD LIST ERRATA</b>	
A Thunder's Sacrifice	AD	Osano-Wo's Breath	CJ	<u>Yodin Sensei</u> was never printed.	
Agasha's Illusion	SCC1	Possession	AD		
All distances are One	SCC3	Prophecy of the Hero	AD		
Animate the Dead	IE	Purity of the Seven Thunders	FK	<u>Obake</u> was only printed as a follow-	
Asahina's Breath	SCC3	Reflective Pool	IE	er, not a personality.	
Augury	TOV	Return of the Fallen Lord	FK		
Benevolent Protection of Shinsei	AD				

# Legend of the Burning Sands Combat FAQ

by David R. Henry, official rules compiler for LBS  
Version 3.0, Rev. 8/31/99

A lot of people seem to get confused when they first encounter a Legend of the Burning Sands combat. In particular, the act of engaging, and what exactly immunity to engaging damage does for you, seems to trip a lot of people up. Hopefully, this FAQ will clear up the matter so that more people can stop worrying about minutiae and start enjoying this fine game. Cheers!

## A LOOK AT THE COMBAT ROUND

Combat starts when somebody decides to start it. Most people don't seem to have problems with the assigning phase of combat (sending your units to what city section), or that ground units assign before

flying units, or that the attacker assigns before defender. It's what these units do when they get there that causes the trouble. So let's say that a city section has been picked to be resolved, that both sides have units there ready to rumble, and, now, what do we do?

## DEFENDER FIRST!

The Defender gets first chance to play an action. Yes, there are cards that change this. This is a CCG; there will always be cards to change any given general example. This FAQ will only concern itself with situations that are assumed not to be filled with a bunch of weird card-specific counterexamples.

Where were we? Oh, yeah, that Defender person. Well, the Defender gets first chance to play an action. Actions in combat that are possible include:

- Playing an Open or Battle action from your hand
- Using an Open or Battle action from a card you have in play
- Bowling one of your Heroes to remove that unit from the battle
- Bowling one or more of your cards to engage for damage.

It's the last one we're really concerned about here. The ability of the Defender to engage for damage first is a big advantage in LBS; indeed, the major advantage of flying units is that they can usually attack without being smushed themselves by a defending army, since they usually choose an undefended city section to pick on.

## ALL TOGETHER NOW!

So you engage for damage. How much damage can you engage for? What can you engage?

Well, you can only engage cards from one unit at a time, and you do so by bowing those cards. You can engage any Hero, with or without adding in any Followers on that Hero. You can even engage the Followers without engaging the Hero if you want to. You can engage one Follower, or three. You can engage the Hero and one Follower first, and save a second Follower for a later round. Any possible combination of Hero/Follower can be made... so long as the cards are from one unit. You can't bow the Hero from one unit and the Followers from another.

When you engage is also when you play Reactions that change the Strength of your engagement - such as the classic Wisdom of the Stars. This is also the time your opponent will play Reactions that decrease

the total Strength (sometimes called "damage" on the cards) of an engagement - the classic example here would be blowing up a Wheat Field.

In any case, after all your bowing and fiddling and playing Reactions, you will finally end up with a total engagement for X amount of Strength.

## YOU CAN'T HURT ME! I'M NIGH-INVULNERABLE!

So, you've engaged for X damage. What does that mean? That means the other army has to eat the damage... but only if it isn't immune to it.

Immune to it! What does that mean? Well, in LBS a card is immune to any damage which is less than its Strength. For instance: Sabina is a beefy 3 Strength Hero. Argoun is a bit more svelte, at 2 Strength.

Argoun engaging for 2S damage is a laugh to Sabina; she's immune to it, and doesn't have to suffer it if she doesn't want to. Note that the immunity is figured only after any and all Reactions to it have been summed out. Argoun engages with a Wisdom of the Stars for 4 Strength... but Sabina's player destroys two Wheat Fields to reduce that back down to a 2S engagement again. All Reactions are done, so the final strength of the engagement is 2... which Sabina is immune to.

But be careful with your assumptions, here! Just because a card is immune to damage doesn't mean that you can't choose the card to suffer the damage in place of some other target on your side. Why on earth would you want to do that, you ask? Well, this is mainly a concern with the Defender. Why? Because in a battle against a City Section, the City Section itself (and its all-important water tokens) are also assumed to be in the battle. Which means that the defender must often make some tough choices. Read on ahead to the

next section or two to figure out why, but for right now, remember this: Immunity means that you don't have to select the Hero or Follower in question to be the target of an assigned engagement, unless you want to.

Now, when a Hero engages with their Followers, or multiple Followers engage, you can add up their Strengths for one big engagement! Argoun normally is beneath Sabina's notice, but give him even a lowly Moto Steed, a 1 Strength Follower, and they can engage together for 3... enough to kill the haughty Assassin. To make up for the fact that they help on engagement, Followers help with immunity, too. Any Hero becomes immune to engagements that any one of their Followers would be immune to. Argoun is normally a 2S, but if he's leading some Elephants, a 4S Follower, then the Elephants grant him their immunity to engagements at less than 4S. However, the Moto Steeds we mentioned Argoun having earlier would not gain the immunity advantage from their fellow Follower, the Elephants. Followers only pass their immunity up to their Hero, not to their fellow Followers.

And, as a final reminder to my gentle readers: Immunity is ONLY figured out now, in this stage. Once you start actually assigning damage to opposing cards, then all immunities for that combat have been determined, and other changes to card Strengths during damage assignment (say, two Eylas on one side, one who dies before the other) will not change immunity.

### TAKE THAT, FIEND!

Hey, are we up to the killing Hero portion of combat already? Why, yes we are. When your enemy has generated their "cloud" of engaging damage, the damage has to go somewhere. But where?

Well, anywhere on your side, really. Again, you don't have to select one of your immune cards to take the damage, but it generally has to go somewhere (but see below for special bits about this!). You have to kill off as much Strength of cards as the Strength of the engagement. Someone engages you for 7S, you have to eat 7S of your own cards. There's a little bit of solace, here... if you kill a Hero (and only a Hero) with the damage inflicted, you have the option of discarding (to your Saved pile) a card from your hand, that will absorb an additional amount of damage equal to the Fate of the discard. You may do this each time you kill a Hero: you could kill Adnan (0S Hero), discard a 3-Fate card, and kill another Adnan and discard a 4-Fate card to eat a 7S engagement (replacing Adnan with Heroes with actual Strength is also an option). But you have to kill a hero before you discard that Fate card, and you can only do it once for each Hero dying.

But enough about Heroes dying... what about extras? Yes, Followers can die just as easily as Heroes, and they'll eat up damage just as nicely, too. The only weakness, as it were, with Followers is that you can't spend a Fate discard to reduce the engagement after killing a Follower. Only Heroes get that special option when they die.

Immune cards need not have damage assigned to them at all, but if you do decide to assign damage to them (and it's always an option you can use), they eat their full damage as normal. Even more important,

however, is that any card that takes even 1 point of piddly damage dies. Even mighty Gaheris, Moto Clan Champion, Le Beef Supreme, will die if you assign a 1-point engagement on him. Why on earth would

you ever assign a 1-point engagement on Gaheris, you ask? Well, I'm glad you asked! Read the very next section and find out!

### OUCH! THAT HURT!

Well, this is where it can start to be painful being the Defender. Because the Defender, you see, is assumed to have a City Section at the battle as well as any defending army... and even if their entire army is immune to the engaging damage, their water tokens and City Section may not.

The Attacker, on the other hand, has no City Section at risk. This means that immunity is usually worth a lot more to the Attacker than the Defender. If you're confused, let's run through some examples to show you why...

Sabina (3S) is attacking. Argoun (2S), her eternal enemy, is defending. Defender gets first action. Argoun could engage for 2S, but has no Reactions in hand to make him beefier, and Sabina is immune to a 2S engagement, being 3S herself. So the Defender passes. Sabina engages for 3. Argoun dies nobly, and the Defender plays a Fate discard for 1. Simple and straightforward. Now let's jazz it up.

Two Chandras (1S) are attacking the Moto's last city section, which is defended by mighty Gaheris (5S), but nobody else (the Moto have been having a spot of bad luck this game). There is one water left on the site. Gaheris, not being stupid and being the Defender, engages for 5 damage. Pow! One Chandra dies hiedously, and, since that player lost a Hero, they play a Fate discard... for 4 Fate value. That eats the entire 5S engagement, which means one Chandra is left to fight. That Chandra engages for 1. Gaheris, being 5S, is immune to it of course. However, if the Moto does not make Gaheris eat the damage, then the City Section or water tokens there must take the damage, if possible. And if the Moto loses their last water token... they lose the game (we'll assume they have no Heroes to play to raid more water). Complaining furiously at the clever Assassin's trap, the Moto player destroys Gaheris, saving his water for another turn.

Let's reverse the process to see immunity from the attacker's side. Gaheris is attacking this time, and the properly frightened opponent is blocking with his largest unit, Abresax (4S). Abresax engages for 4 damage, but Gaheris is immune to 4S engagements. And since Gaheris is attacking, not defending, there is no City Section for him to worry about, so the entire 4S engagement is lost. He then engages for 5S, probably nuking Abresax and one Fate discard.

That's the payoff for getting to go first as the Defender. You can draw the first blood, but your immunity is a lot less powerful. If someone engages for an amount you're immune to, you will still have to take it on your City Section or water tokens if you choose to save your Heroes/Followers. A tough choice in a fiercely-fought midgame; save your big beefy guy on defense, or take him out on a 2S engagement from a weenie horde to save your water? It is on such choices that the

selection of legendary new Sultans shall be made.

And that's the end! If there's any questions, comments, or improvements to be made to this FAQ, please contact the author at [dhenry@plains.nodak.edu](mailto:dhenry@plains.nodak.edu). I hope this was useful and easy to understand, and may Lady Sun bless you in all your endeavors and engagements

Coming next issue - Berserk and Archery fun!

## Fire & Shadow Art Sneak Peek



Dear Imperial Assembly member:

In an effort to make sure we are placing our attention in the proper places, we want to conduct the following survey. You are very important to us, and we want to make sure your membership is giving you what you are looking for. To compensate you for your time, we're putting together a special benefit to ship out to all who participate. All you need to do is answer the 10 questions below, and submit this survey back to the DCI by January 29, 2000. Thank you for your time, and we hope Assembly membership serves you well in 2000!

Please return your completed survey to: Imperial Assembly Survey  
Attn.: DCI Fan Club Coordinator  
P.O. Box 707  
Renton, WA 98057-0707

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DCI Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Please rate the benefits of Imperial Assembly membership listed below, in order of most important (1) to least important (4). You should only list a number once.**

- ☐ Promo Cards
- ☐ Ability to read about the L5R story in the Imperial Herald
- ☐ Ability to influence the storyline
- ☐ Special access to Taka's Treasures

**2. How long have you played L5R? (Circle One):**

0-6 months    7-11 months    1 year    2 or more years

**3. How soon after beginning to play L5R did you become a member of the Imperial Assembly?**

0-6 months    7-11 months    1 year    2 or more years

**4. What is your favorite promo card?** \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What of the following games based on the L5R storyline do you play? (Please check all that apply):**

- ☐ The L5R Trading-Card Game
- ☐ L5R Role-Playing Game
- ☐ Clan Wars Miniatures Game
- ☐ The Legend of the Burning Sands Trading-Card Game

**6. Please rate the content of the Imperial Herald below, in order of most important (1) to least important (8).**

- ☐ Deck Ideas
- ☐ Story elements
- ☐ Taka's Treasures
- ☐ Stronghold Store list
- ☐ Card-set checklists
- ☐ Information regarding Clan Wars miniatures and role-playing game
- ☐ Errata
- ☐ Strategy articles

**7. Please rate the emphasis you think each section listed below should receive, in order of most important (1) to least important (8).**

- ☐ Deck Ideas
- ☐ Story elements

- ☐ Taka's Treasures
- ☐ Stronghold Store list
- ☐ Card-set checklists
- ☐ Information regarding Clan Wars miniatures and role-playing game
- ☐ Errata
- ☐ Strategy articles

**8. How often do you play L5R? (Circle One):**

Weekly    Monthly    About six times a year    Once or twice a year

**How often do you play in non-sanctioned L5R tournaments? (Circle One):**

Weekly    Monthly    About six times a year    Once or twice a year

**How often do you play in sanctioned L5R tournaments? (Circle One):**

Weekly    Monthly    About six times a year    Once or twice a year

**If you play in sanctioned tournaments, what types of events are they? (Circle all that apply):**

Prereleases    Storyline events    Local sanctioned tournaments

**If you play in tournaments, do you play at stores? (Circle One)**

Yes    No

**How many different stores have you visited to play in tournaments (sanctioned or non-sanctioned)? Circle One:**

0    1    2    3    4 or more

**9. Please estimate the amount of koku you have hoarded away: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please estimate the amount of koku you have submitted to either AEG or the DCI in the past: \_\_\_\_\_**

**10. How likely are you to renew your membership in the Assembly? (Circle One)**

Definitely    Likely    Unlikely    Definitely Not

Thank you for your participation, and we hope you'll enjoy your special gift!

# CLAN WAR

The cover art depicts a samurai daimyo in the center, standing on a rocky outcrop. He is wearing a white and gold armor with a black cape and a helmet with a large crest. He holds a katana in his right hand. Behind him, several other samurai in similar armor are visible, some holding spears. The background is a dramatic, colorful sky with clouds in shades of yellow, orange, and purple. The title 'CLAN WAR' is at the top in a stylized yellow font with a black outline, and 'Daimyo Edition' is below it in a similar font. At the bottom, 'Summer 2000' is written in the same style. A small 'TM' symbol is in the top right corner.

Daimyo Edition

Summer 2000



One sword will be chosen --  
one cut will make the difference.

Feb. 18-20, 2000