

THE
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SEASON OF THE
CRANE
REVEALED

GIFT FREELY
GIVEN

by Shawn Carman

THE FOUR WINDS IN

2nd Ed

An Oni's Fury

Full Preview Inside

ALSO:

ZEN'S CARD FOCUS

KOKU REDEMPTION

波





SEASON OF THE Crane

It is a dark time for the children of Lady Doji. Their great power in the court has slowly diminished. Their wealth has been exhausted in a vain war over the Yasuki lands. Countless enemies lie in the shadows, waiting for the day when the clan of the Crane will show its weakness...

The enemies of the Crane think that day has come.

They are wrong.

The Crane are not finished yet. Lord Doji Kurohito is no fool, and has put into action plans that will restore his clan to glory. He offers you one chance to join him as an ally.

What will your answer be?



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THE
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PREVIEWS

An Oni's Fury 4
CCG: Season of Crane ... 8

CLAN WAR

The Construction
of Clan War 18

FICTION

Gift Freely Given 10
Seeds of War 25

the REST

Card Combos 6
Assembly Membership .. 15
Koku Redemption 16
RPG: The Four Winds ... 20
The Year In Review 24
Zen's Card Focus 30

L5R NEWS

It's the end of the year, and there's still so much to do. I was told once never to look back; always forward. Then again, I might just be remembering a quote from a recent movie. It's all sort of a blur.

These past few months have been more than just a blur — they've been a fantastic ride. As I write this, Rokugan, perhaps AEG's greatest RPG book to date, is about to release. An Oni's Fury will be out in scant weeks, and its mechanics and design easily match any of the best sets we've ever done. Season of the Crane is getting ready to ship; it has the complete rules for Strategic L5R and a big full-color map to play it on.

L5R has never looked this strong. We've slated new promotional programs to acquire new players, and we're working hard to satisfy our current customers. Internet tournament reporting is almost up and running.

Even with so many exciting things to come, I always remember that came to work at AEG because of its excellent customer service. I was treated well when I was a fan, so above all else, my goal is to make sure that L5R treats you well. If you have suggestions, comments, or even complaints, my door is always open.

Ray Lau
L5R Brand Manager





AN ONI'S FURY

by Jeff Alexander

Though GenCon 2001 was held a mere four months ago, its storyline repercussions are already appearing in *An Oni's Fury*. But the final round of the World Championship wasn't the only game with important storyline repercussions. The convention's many side-tournaments also determined outcomes of the early days of the Crab-Crane and Dragon-Phoenix wars. Players who fought and won for their Clans get to see the rewards of loyalty in this set.

Back to Basics

The fundamental Holding structure of decks changed little from *Imperial Edition* through the middle of *Hidden Emperor*: Small Farms, Merchant Caravans, your particular Clan's 2-for-3 Holding, *Jade Works*, and *Sanctified Temples* were all staples in non-corrupt decks. *Large Farms*, *Kabuki Theater Troupes*, and *The Hiruma Dojo* were refreshing changes of pace at first but quickly became the new standards.

Gencon 2001: Participation Reflected

An Oni's Fury once again gives players more new options in the fundamental gold department: small Holdings that produce usable amounts of Gold along with having one or two useful abilities. Look at the *House of the Red Lotus*, for example. A Holding that merely costs 2 Gold and produces 2 would be used as often as Crab players use *Stables*. But the *House* can also reduce some of your opponent's honor gains. True, its effect isn't as strong as those of *Master of Bushido* or *Imperial Ambassador* in the Open environment, but those Holdings can't pay for things...

As an added benefit, these new cards also give Sealed Deck players a more comfortable balance of gold sources without the need to add *Gold Edition* boosters. We expect these cards

will be popular in the future, and more are already planned for later sets.

Dragon Give Greater Focus

The legacy of Togashi lives on. In addition to the everpresent *ise zumi*, the Dragon retain the emphasis on prophecy and foreknowledge as represented by card manipulation, drawing, and cycling that they initially received from such staples as *Agasha Gennai*. Renowned Kakita duelists will find themselves facing once-familiar opponents with renewed fury in Rokugan's most auspicious kenjutsu dojos as the bushi of the Dragon Clan hone their two-sword technique for the coming campaign.

Unicorn Rethought and Restructured

The Unicorn Clan has had a five-gold Stronghold since the very beginning, and they've needed it to pay for their expensive cavalry cards. Those higher costs have historically made it difficult for Unicorn decks to bring new units into play at the steady rates most other clans can manage, which hurts them at every stage of the game. The entire pricing scheme for cavalry cards has been closely re-examined and adjusted to be more in line with what, say, the Phoenix Clan needs to pay for its shugenja, or what a Lion Clan player can expect one of his Tacticians to cost.

An Oni's Fury also gives Unicorn more emphasis on maneuverability during battle. After all, they don't just ride their horses to the fight — they ride them *in* it! Expect to see more Unicorns with abilities that either help them move around once a battle starts or punish an adversary who foolishly tries to outmaneuver mounted bushi on foot.

The Horde

The Shadowlands gain a heightened focus on Fear in this set, with the keystone effect going onto the Stronghold itself. The terror of Jigoku can strike into the heart of any mortal foolish enough to challenge the Shadowlands without adequate preparation; a *Citadel of Daigotsu* player can use his cards' Fear effects to bow Personalities who oppose their units without first equipping themselves with a worthy item or a hardy squad of footsoldiers. Naturally, Fear remains a staple component of many Shadowlands cards.

Something for Everyone

As the political struggle for the throne continues, all of the Winds hold sway over the court, if only briefly. Four new "Word of..." cards give you benefits similar to what the Winds normally provide at a key moment in the game without designing your entire deck around that Wind.

New Followers are available as the Great Clans devote more of

their resources to internal warfare. These elite units, like *Hoturi's Blade* and *Hoshi's Talons*, will follow a commander of any alignment but require a leader from their own clan to use their special abilities in battle.

Dragon Mishmash Deck

Jed writes: "This deck can be difficult to play. It focuses on trying to achieve an Honor victory, but if it looks like that's not going to happen, it can quickly switch to Military. This deck can defend itself particularly well, and contains tricks to gain Honor in spurts. It's much like the Dragon philosophy: a collection of different things that work well together."

Jeff Alexander writes: "Against another dueling deck, try to put *Judgement on Rosanjin*. *Judgement's* +2 Chi is nice, but not enough to reliably win against dueling decks. *Biting Steel* bestows a solid Chi bonus, but is card-intensive, and *Dragon Tattoo* interacts poorly with *Judgement's* bow-to-challenge action."

"When *Dragon Tattoo*-ing your shugenja, don't automatically add all three fire tokens. Fewer tokens means quicker straightening, and 5 Chi is enough to *Wind's Truth* the loss from *Ambush* and the gain from a lost *Iaijutsu Challenge* or *Duel*, or to bow most Personalities with *Purity of Spirit*. You can always add more tokens if you need the shugenja to challenge.

"*In Search of the Future* may or may not be useful, depending on what decks are popular in your area, and that room could easily be used for *Superior* or *Diversionary Tactics*. *Ambush* is also notoriously uncertain in this deck as well, and is somewhat redundant with *Touch of Death*, so *Kolat Assassin* may be a better choice, although its high gold cost makes that hard to say without a lot of playing.

"The lack of *Iaijutsu Duels* seems odd at first, but there are reasons. The deck is not built for battle tricks, spreading its focus means it won't get shut down by a deck built exclusively to Chi-duel, and going light on duel-starting cards lets the Fate deck's average Focus be higher."

"Dragon Mishmash"

by Jed Carleton
& Scott Hadsall

Stronghold:
Iron Mountain

Wind:
Toturi Sezaru

Personalities:
1 Ki-Rin
3 Kitsune
3 Mirumoto Daisuke
3 Mirumoto Rosanjin
3 Tamori Chieko
3 Tamori Shaitung
2 Tamori Chosai
1 Togashi Hoshi
1 Togashi Satsu

Holdings:
3 Gold Mine
2 Hiruma Dojo
3 Jade Works
2 Large Farm
3 Sanctified Temple
3 Small Farm
1 Temple of the Dragon

Regions:
2 Farmlands

Events:
Imperial Gift
Welcome Home

Actions:
2 Ambush
2 Block Supply Lines
2 Counterattack
2 Dragon Tattoo
3 Iaijutsu Challenge
2 In Search of Future
2 Shame
2 Snow Crane Tattoo
3 Test of Might

Spells:
2 Biting Steel
2 Secrets on the Wind
2 Touch of Death
3 Walking the Way

Kihos:
3 The Wind's Truth
3 Purity of Spirit

Followers:
1 Mirumoto House Guard

Items:
1 Bitter
1 Celestial Sword of the Dragon
1 Judgement

Rings:
Ring of the Void



Illus. Stephanie Pui-mun Law © 2001 AEG

What good is a card game where you can't combine your cards in new and interesting ways? Here are several new combos you'll need to plan for — or against — in *An Oni's Fury*.

Follow the Path + Citadel of Daigotsu

The obvious use of this combo is to move a large or otherwise Fear-immune Follower off a weak opposing Personality so the *Citadel's* power can be used against it. The slightly less-obvious combo is to move a large Follower onto a Personality that you've already bowed.



Sacred Tunnels + Ninja Spy

Don't forget that a *Ninja Spy* can look at your own Provinces! This combo saves you 2 gold almost every turn.



Accessible Terrain + Slaughter the Scout or Moto Chagatai, Exp.

Play *Accessible Terrain* at an empty Province and, as your next action, move a unit in.

If you have *Slaughter the Scout*, make it your smallest unit. Use that unit to destroy the one your opponent moves in if she decides to start building an opposing army for you. If she doesn't, move in just enough extra units to destroy the Province.

You always have that first Personality ready and waiting if she changes her mind. If you have *Chagatai*, it's much safer to move your biggest unit. *Chagatai* can shift your first unit to yet another Province if your opponent tries to use the terrain against you.

Another option, should your opponent begin moving units in as well, is to use *Chagatai* to add a second unit and then the terrain to add a third. You get an early jump this way and make it nearly impossible for your opponent to get far enough ahead of you in Force that she can destroy your terrain and leave you stranded with the smaller army.



Lobbyist + Toturi Tsudao

For low-honor decks, this effectively turns the *Lobbyist* into a *Block Supply Lines* that doesn't require you to have a unit in the battle. He's all that plus an extra use of the Favor for high-honor decks.





Hitomi Kagetora + Naga Tattoo

Kagetora is already tattooed, so he can take a *Naga Tattoo* with no preparation. Once he moves into a different battle with his own ability, he can then use his tattoo to pull in another. A similar combo can be found in...

Bayushi Paneki + Luring Tactics

This combo is even more flexible since you move your opponent's cards as well as your own, especially if you're facing another Scorpion!



Ninja Spy or Know the Truth + Stolen Records

Think of *Stolen Records* as a *New Year's Celebration* that doesn't ruin your own hand and that you can time, and it's already a good card. Using *Ninja Spy*, *Know the Truth*, or even *Inside Agent* first goes a long way towards helping you play it at the best possible moment... or afterward, to insure that you haven't accidentally given your opponent a better hand than before.



Gold Lions Roar!

At its core, this deck is designed to be flexible, as well as unpredictable. The force total that it shows at the end of the battle will often be drastically different from the total it arrived with, between force bonuses from actions and from the tacticians.

The Dynasty deck is focused on overcoming the gold disadvantage that Lion faces, mostly using *Akodo Kaneka's* Imperial Favor ability. All of the holdings are 3 Gold or less, and therefore can enter play free from the *Crossroads* — using *Kaneka* doubles the chances that a province with *Crossroads* will contain the “free holding.” If the first turn does not reveal a significant gold holding, a first turn Personality can nearly always grab the Imperial Favor on the second turn to guarantee good gold production from then on. *Regions of Rokugan* can place *Crossroads* under a holding to pop it out for free, and eventually *Peasant Revolt* will bow any significant defenders that may be in the way of your attackers, giving you free rein to assault your opponent.

The Fate side of the deck is built to provide some force from followers and actions, but more importantly it controls the battles with “send home” cards such as *Return for Training*, *Block Supply Lines*, and *Refugees*. *Test of Might* and *Arrows from the Woods* give additional control over your opponent's Personalities. In the end, it's this threat of being able to quickly and drastically sway the battle that will make even a single defender appear very dangerous to your opponent and cause important hesitations.

“Katsu”

by David Williams

Stronghold:

Ancient Halls
of the Lion

Wind:

Akodo Kaneka

Personalities:

1 Akodo Ginawa
3 Akodo Iijasu
2 Akodo Setai
3 Ikoma Otemi
2 Ikoma Sume
3 Matsu Domotai
1 Matsu Domotai, Exp
1 Matsu Hataki, Exp
1 Miya Yemi
1 Ninja Spy

Holdings:

1 Bushi Dojo
3 Copper Mine
3 Dragon Dancers
3 Gambling House
3 Jade Works
1 Large Farm
3 Small Farm

Regions:

3 Crossroads

Events:

A Plague Spreads
Imperial Gift
Peasant Revolt
Regions of Rokugan
Welcome Home

Actions:

1 A Test of Courage
1 Ambush
1 Arrows from the Woods
2 Block Supply Lines
3 Charge
3 Counterattack
1 Focus
3 Rallying Cry
2 Refugees
3 Return for Training
3 Strength of Purity
2 Superior Strategist
3 Superior Tactics
2 Test of Might
1 To Do What We Must

Followers:

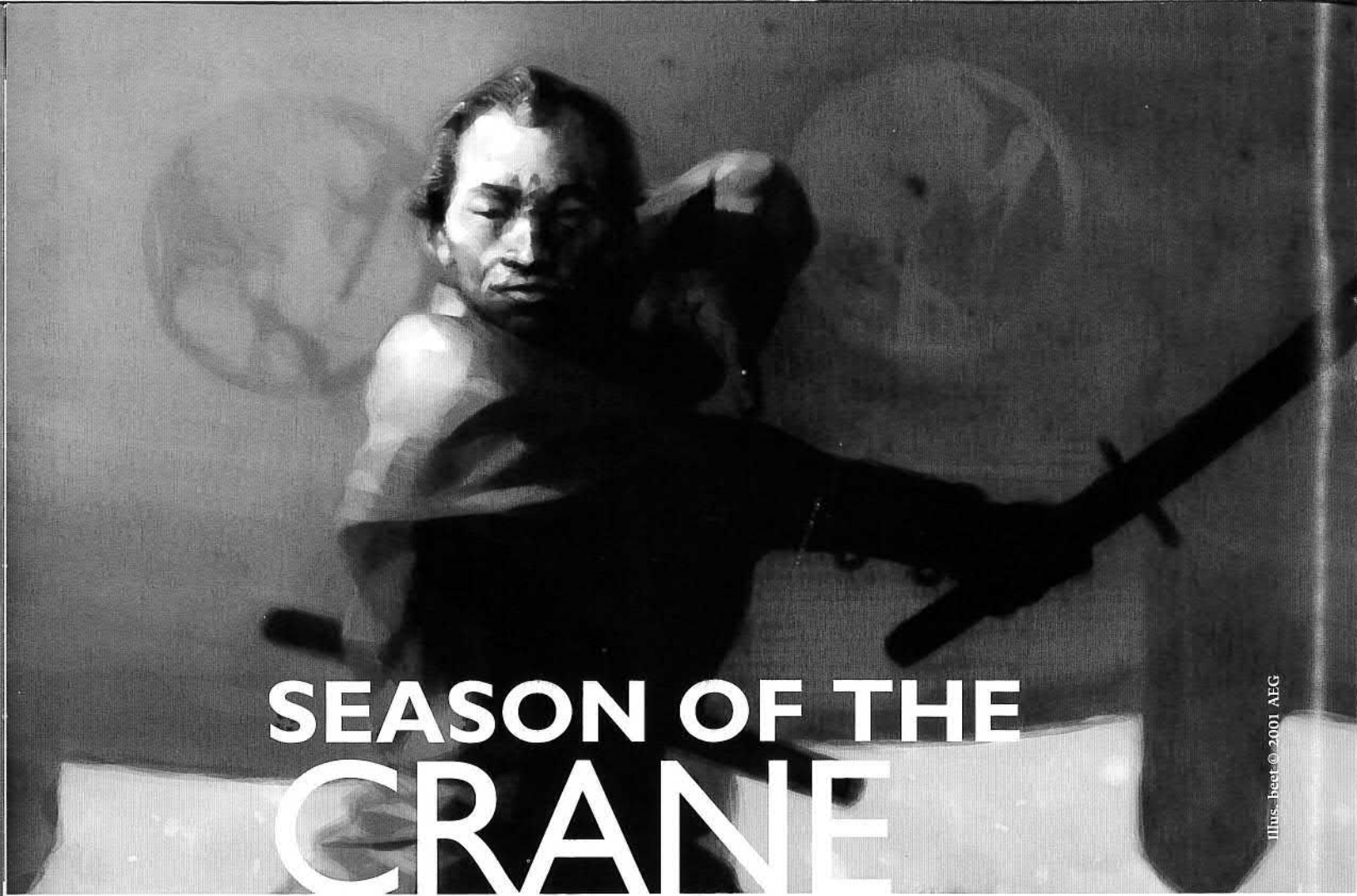
1 Elite Light Infantry
3 Elite Pikemen
1 Matsu House Guard
2 Strong Guard

Items:

1 Celestial Sword
of the Lion

Rings:

Ring of the Void



SEASON OF THE CRANE

Illus. by © 2001 AEG

Introduced in 1997 at a small Los Angeles convention, Strategic L5R offers a refreshing new way to play *Legend of the Five Rings*. Described as a cross between a board game, a strategy game and a card game, Strategic L5R offers players a unique look at large scale combat in Rokugan.

When Strategic L5R was first introduced, it wasn't clear that it would do well, but everyone was pleasantly surprised. Requests for more Strategic L5R events began to flood the CCG Events team. It wasn't long before those requests included complete rules by which the players themselves could run Strategic L5R. AEG is proud to announce that complete rules for Strategic L5R will be published in the Season of the Crane, so that you no longer need to come to a con to experience it.

Strategic L5R's ancestors are popular classic games such as Avalon Hill's *Diplomacy*™ and Hasbro's *Risk*™. Integrating political and strategic values of each game, players decide to work together or

Strategic L5R offers players a unique look at large scale combat in Rokugan.

against each other for complete domination of Rokugan. Armies move on the whim of each player, but resolution of any forthcoming battle is determined with a quick game of L5R.

Game Play

Originally designed for up to 40 players, Strategic easily accommodates large groups of players. Abridged versions of the game have also been developed for smaller groups all the way down to 8 total players.

The Players

Before the game begins, players separate into teams of 1 to 5 (depending on the total number of players). Each team represents a Clan and all players in that team must play a deck from that Clan. Each team has one Daimyo (leader), one Karo (runner/advisor), and three Generals. Daimyo are the

strategic leaders of their clan. They send orders to each of their armies telling them where to move. Daimyo are the only players that have complete view of the board and who may talk to the other Daimyo from the other Clans.

Daimyo have the sacred trust of their people to make treaties, issue orders, and in some cases, stab other clans in the back.

Generals are the leaders on the field of battle. They are the players representing their Clan's armies and play their L5R decks against their opponents to win control of provinces. Generals are never allowed to see the overall map nor are they allowed to directly talk to their Daimyo. They carry the faith in their Daimyo's order that he will lead them to victory.

Karo have the most unusual job. While the Daimyo and Generals are assigned to different rooms and may never directly

by Raymond Lau

Season of the Crane Storyline Effects

The events that unfold due to the results of the Season of the Crane depend upon the clan you choose to represent, and its performance relative to the other clans. Though the Crane Clan is spotlighted in many of these events, all clans will be affected by the outcome of the events. The results of this tournament affect not only the winning clan, but every clan.

Phoenix & Crane

Robbed of his rightful claim to the Yasuki lands, Crane Champion Doji Kurohito has turned to the Phoenix Clan. Phoenix Champion Shiba Aikune sees the advantage

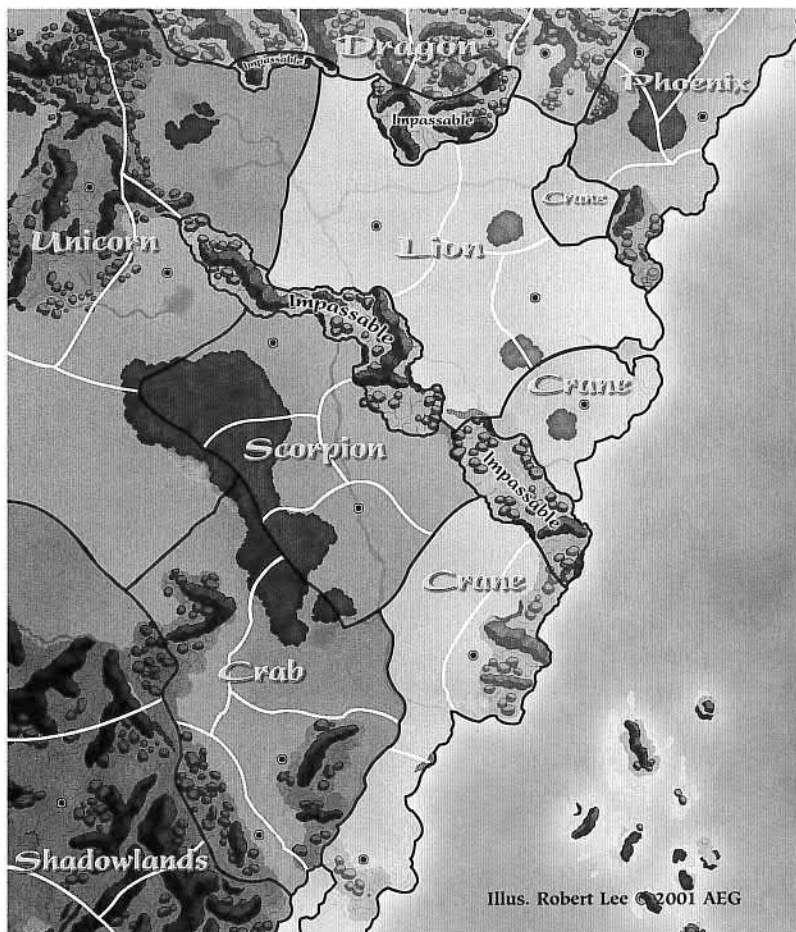
of such an alliance, but only to his own ends. The Phoenix or Crane shall form an alliance, but the clan who wins will put the troops of their ally to use against their enemies.

Unicorn & Scorpion

The Unicorn stand beside Akodo Kaneka, attacking the Crane's interests. The Scorpion undermine the Crane's political influence in the courts. Both are powerful enemies. No one knows this better than the Crane, who plan to turn one against the other. Either the Unicorn or Scorpion will strike first, seizing a city ruled by the other.

communicate, each Karo must relay messages between the players in his team. Karo are in the exclusive position of seeing both the Daimyo's war map and the evolving outcome of a General's battle. It is the Karo who

advises both the Daimyo on where to move and what treaties to keep. It is the Karo who pass on what a General needs or does not need to know. It is the Karo's job to keep his Clan working together.



The Map

The goal of the game is to control as many provinces and castles as possible before time ends. Like many board games, Rokugan has been divided into many sections or provinces where armies can occupy and make battle. Some of those provinces hold castles, which serve as the heart of the province and can be strategic to the production and development of your Clan.

Movement and Battle

Armies that are not in battle may move to adjacent provinces every 15 minutes. When two or more armies from different clans attempt to occupy the same province, battle commences. The Generals of those armies are called forth to duel it out in a game of *L5R*. The winning General gets to stay in the province and the losing General must return to one of his Clan's starting castles.

You can find rules to this great game in the *Season of the Crane* event at a local store near you. It also comes with a full-color map, clan banners to represent your armies and a brand new storyline tournament that can be played out in Strategic *L5R*. By the time you read this, it should already be in stores. If your local store hasn't ordered *Season of the Crane*, ask them to get on through their distributor. This event and kit are only available for a limited time. Experience *L5R* the way it was meant to be played!

"Crane Honorable Thugs" Deck

This deck's basic idea is to employ the standard Crane tactic of buying personalities for honor and supplementing them with honor-producing holdings. The deck defends fairly well. Its last province, especially if it contains a Temples of the New Tao, is almost impossible to take unless you just don't have any personalities left in your deck.

"Crane Honorable Thugs"

by Jed Carleton

Stronghold:

Kosaten Shiro

Wind:

Toturi Tsudao

Personalities:

2 Daidoji Megumi
3 Doji Yasuyo
3 Doji Kurohito
1 Doji Kurohito, Exp
1 Doji Reju, Exp2
1 Daidoji Rekai, Exp2
1 Kakita Kaiten, Exp
3 Yasuki Hachi

Holdings:

3 Hiruma Dojo
3 Jade Works
2 Kabuki Theater Troupe
3 Marketplace
3 Silk Works
2 Poorly Placed Garden
2 Port

Regions:

3 Temples of the New Tao

Events:

Imperial Gift
A Plague Spreads
Chrysanthemum Festival
Welcome Home

Actions:

3 Avoid Fate
3 Block Supply Lines
3 Counterattack
3 Deeds not Words
2 For the Empire
3 Iaijutsu Duel
3 Imperial Edicts
2 Outmaneuvered By Force
3 Superior Tactics
3 To Do What We Must

Followers:

3 Asahina Archers
1 Doji House Guard
3 Elite Spearmen
1 Empress' Guard
1 Hunting Tiger

Items:

1 Celestial Sword
of the Crane
1 The Imperial Standard

Rings:

Ring of Earth
Ring of the Void



GIFT FREELY GIVEN

Illus. Quinton Hoover © 2001 AEG

Tsuruchi Okame stepped easily from the deck of the kobune onto the dock, grateful for the feel of solid ground beneath his feet once more. He had long ago become accustomed to the rigors of travel by sea, but though he could endure it he would never truly feel comfortable with it. The Yoritomo seemed perfectly at home upon the sea, but in Okame's eyes the vessels they used were exceedingly fragile, like eggshells cast into a stream.

"Every time we leave the sea," a gruff voice behind Okame spoke, "you look as if you will kiss the ground and thank the kami for your safe return. But I suppose I should expect as much from one so young." Okame turned to face a much older man clad in the red robes of the Moshi family, a well-worn scroll satchel hanging naturally from one hip. The young bounty hunter arched an eyebrow.

"Perhaps," he retorted, "I am simply young enough to remember that I am still alive."

The shugenja snorted. "Crawling through the forests of the Empire in search of long-forgotten fugitives? I am not so certain that qualifies as a fulfilling life, Okame-san. Why you and I have been paired together I cannot imagine, but I am certain it is a punishment for some heinous crime I committed in a past life."

Okame grinned broadly. Moshi Gohiro was most cantankerous and complaint-prone individual he had ever encountered, yet somehow the two had become great friends. Not that the old shugenja would ever

admit such a thing, of course. He seemed to communicate entirely through gruff complaints. Still, there was no denying that the two made an effective team.

Together, they had spent over a month combing the Empire with the seemingly impossible task of locating a single ronin based on an account of his exploits at the Battle of Oblivion's Gate. Somehow, they pulled it off. And now, as per their assignment, they returned with him to the Islands of Silk and Spice.

Close behind Gohiro, the old ronin Tsodai departed the kobune. Though even older than Gohiro, Tsodai was almost the complete opposite of the Moshi. The wave man had spoken barely a single word the entire journey, consenting to accompany Okame for reasons the young hunter could not begin to understand. Upon locating the ronin, Okame's instructions had simply been to hand over a sealed scroll and await a response. The ronin had taken the scroll in slowly, thought for a time, then nodded. "I am to accompany you to your lord," was all he had said. Okame had not heard him speak since.

Okame turned to his two companions. "Come," he said. "We must make ourselves presentable before going before Komori-sama."

It watched from the shadows as the three men left the docks and walked toward one of the nicer inns within the port town. So long it had lurked in this pitiful cesspool of a town, desperately seeking a suitable soul. The men here were rugged, independent, and completely devoid of any true substance.

by Shawn Carman

But these three! So much conflict within them! So many desires and regrets! They would be of great use to it. With them, perhaps it could find that which so far eluded it. Somewhere on this island was a soul in pain, divided against itself. Settozai could sense it, but not locate it. Now, perhaps, the means by which it would find the truth behind the power arrived. Planting the seeds would be so easy.

Unseen by mortal eyes, it moved through the shadows in pursuit of the three travelers

With a hot bath and clean clothes, Okame felt the stress of the long voyage melt away. He was refreshed, fulfilled in the completion of another assignment. Already, his mind turned to the next challenge. Would Komori have another impossible quarry for him to seek out? He could only hope. The soul of a samurai thrived on challenge set by one's lord.

With a slight frown, Okame regarded the wakizashi that set upon the stand in his chamber. When abroad, he often chose not to wear the blade. In his mind, he was not truly a member of the Mantis Clan. He had been born and would ever remain a Wasp. And like his first lord Tsuruchi, long since retired, a true Wasp did not believe in the status imparted by a piece of steel.

A man's actions were the only measure that mattered.

Sighing, Okame took the blade and roughly placed it in his obi. When dealing with the Yoritomo, it was best to keep up appearances. Even, it seemed, when one's lord was as eccentric as his own happened to be. With the distasteful weight of the blade upon his hip, Okame carefully unfolded a ribbon of black silk. Upon the ribbon, woven intricately with overlapping strands of yellow silk, was the mon of the Wasp Clan. Carefully, reverently, he tied the ribbon around his left arm, the arm with which he drew his bow. So long as he wore it, he would never accept that his glorious clan had all but disappeared within the Mantis.

He was born a Wasp. He would die as one.

Properly attired, prepared in mind and body, Tsuruchi Okame left his chambers to collect his companions and go before his lord.

Surprisingly, it was Tsodai who spoke first. "Yoritomo Komori lives here?" he asked, failing to keep the incredulity from his voice.

"Indeed he does," answered Gohiro curtly. "There is no accounting for taste, I suppose."

The three men stood before a stark monastery that overlooked the ocean. It stood well outside the city, taking nearly half the day to reach by horse. It was built upon the western coast of the island, the side most often ravaged by the great storms that the seas so often spawned. The order of monks that constructed the temple, however, were devotees of Osano-Wo. Despite the countless storms, the building remained after all others along this stretch of the coast had fallen. In time, the monastery became the lone structure for miles in every direction. The monks seemed to prefer it that way.

As he approached the gate, Okame saw two of the monastery's brothers emerge from the door within the gate itself. Each bowed very low, a gesture of respect that Okame returned. "Tell lord Komori-sama that Tsuruchi Okame and Moshi Gohiro beg an audience with him."

"Komori is aware of your arrival," one stated flatly. "He awaits within."

As they entered the monastery, Okame reflected, not for the first time, that this was an exceptionally odd arrangement. Yoritomo Komori had been one of Aramasu's chief advisors, perhaps the most important shugenja in the entire Mantis Clan. When Aramasu died, assassinated by the treacherous Scorpion Clan, Komori had immediately shaved his head and entered the monastery. Yet somehow, he continued to contact a small handful of samurai in his service and task them to perform assignments in his name. It was an unorthodox practice, yet Okame believed the oaths he had sworn still held true. So long as Komori required his service, he would provide it.

Komori sat within a large chamber, barren of all but the most ascetic trappings of a monk. He seemed deep in meditation, a thin line of incense-fueled smoke wafting around the dais upon which he sat. His gaunt features possessed a severity that was once well known in the court of the Mantis Clan. Now, Komori seemed troubled rather than serene, driven rather than enlightened. Okame had never known him to appear otherwise.

The aging Mantis shugenja opened his eyes as Okame and his companions approached. "Okame-san, Gohiro-san. Shall I assume this man you bring to me is the one I seek? Is this Tsodai?"

Okame knelt as was fitting. "It is, my lord."

Komori nodded. "You serve me loyally and well, Tsuruchi Okame and Moshi Gohiro. Each of your families shall be made aware of the glory and honor you bring before to the Mantis in their names. Now, if you please, I would speak with Tsodai alone."

Gohiro nodded in assent, rising wordlessly to depart the chamber. But Okame found himself unable to leave. "Komori-sama," he said, startled to discover himself voicing his concerns, "might I ask why you set such a task before us? What purpose does this man serve to one such as you?"

An ominous silence followed. Komori's brow furrowed, and Gohiro seemed aghast. "It is unseemly for a samurai to question his lord, Okame." The edge to Komori's words was sharp, one that brooked no further discussion. "You are excused until I send for you once more." Nodding mutely, Okame stifled the other questions burning in his mind and exited the chamber dutifully behind Gohiro.

The moment the doors closed, the elder shugenja spun to face Okame. "Have you taken leave of your senses? What were you thinking? There are many ways to describe Komori, but tolerant is not one I would use easily!"

The young Wasp shook his head slowly. "Are you not curious, Gohiro? This is the third such individual we

have tracked down on Komori's behalf. Three wave men, all aged and nearly impossible to locate. Yet he spares no expense to find them, only to send them on their way after a mysterious conference. Do you not yearn to know the truth?"

"No!" Gohiro hissed. "And neither should you! I have seen odd behavior from you before, Okame, but this... this is madness." The shugenja leaned back suddenly, regarding Okame with great scrutiny. "Are you well? Have you taken the fever again? These damnable jungles can often have that effect, even on those as young and sturdy as yourself."

"Do not be ridiculous," Okame scoffed. "I merely wish to know for what purpose I spend my days 'crawling through the forests of the Empire,' as you say."

Shaking his head, Gohiro opened his mouth to reply, but the opportunity was lost. With a loud groan of ancient wood, the doors to Komori's chamber swung open. Tsodai strode out, a perplexed look on his face. He looked from one to the other wordlessly before looking at a scroll he held in his hands, clenched tightly in one fist. "I thank you both for bringing me here. Your lord has offered me a sizeable sum to undertake a mission for him in the far western reaches of the Unicorn lands. I must leave immediately." He looked up to them both once more, bowing quickly. "You have my thanks."

Watching the old wave man disappear down the monastery hallway, Okame turned to Gohiro. "Do you not find that strange? Do you not wish to know what is going on here?"

"Yes," admitted Gohiro, staring intently at his friend. "I do."

Night descended upon the island. Lady Moon hung halfway across the sky, her light shining brightly upon the Mantis lands. Okame sat upon that tatami mat in his chambers back in the inn. He was to leave in the morning, bound for Rokugan once more. It seemed Komori had one more charge to be located, and only he and Gohiro were to be trusted with the task.

But Okame could not undertake another such mission. Not without answers. All three of them men he brought before Komori had departed almost immediately for the most distant and inhospitable regions of the Empire. Why? For what purpose? Did Komori send them away to protect them from something? To protect himself? He could not leave the islands without an answer.

Okame slipped silently from his room, down the hallway and out into the street. A lifetime of hunting fugitives gave him the gift of stealth, even though it was supposedly beneath a true samurai. Slipping past the sentries at the town's edge was simple; they were taught to watch for creatures emerging from the jungle, not those exiting the town. Once inside the jungle, he gained ground much faster, moving through the dense brush like a predator.

"That is far enough, Okame." Despite shattering the night's silence, the voice was even, calm. Instinctively, the hunter pulled his knife from his obi, whirling to face whatever foe dared face him. What he saw surprised him.

"Gohiro? What are you doing here?"

The old man shook his head. "I believe that is a question you should answer. I had planned to follow you and discover what has possessed your mind, but I would soon lose you in this place." He waved his hand about absently. "So if I cannot follow you, I must stop you."

"No!" insisted Okame, a dangerous glint in his eyes. "Don't you understand? Komori is using information that I gathered for him! It is mine! I have earned his confidence! But if he will not give it to me, then I will take it!"

"Listen to yourself, Okame!" Gohiro pleaded with him. "You are not yourself! You sound like..." Understanding dawned in the old shugenja's eyes as his voice trailed off. "You sound like a mercenary and a thief. How others judge the Mantis." Gohiro quickly glanced about, as if scanning the underbrush for something.

Okame growled like an animal. "I am a not a Mantis, I am a Wasp! I will take what I deserve. And since you stand in my way, you must die!" He leapt suddenly across the space between the two men, lashing out savagely with his knife. A hastily-summoned gust of air knocked him away before he could pin Gohiro beneath him, but not before his blade tasted flesh. Okame grinned savagely.

The dazed shugenja pulled his hands away from his abdomen, both wet with blood. A faint smile crossed his lips. "I... did not think... the hold on you was strong enough. It... it is my own fault. Curse me for a fool." He fell to his knees, his life draining away. "Okame," he rasped. "I have something for you."

The bloodthirsty Wasp crept closer to the dying Gohiro, his curiosity overwhelming him. "What is it?" When he was within reach, the old man's hand darted out and seized Okame's wrist, smearing it with blood.

"I give my life freely," whispered Gohiro, "to free you from the beast's grasp. The spirit of larceny that has taken your soul can only steal; it cannot accept what is freely given."

The words sent a jolt through Okame's body. Every muscle seemed to try and tear itself from his bones. He screamed in agony...

His scream was answered. Something deep within the shadows of the jungle shrieked in pain. Okame turned to look toward the source of the sound. In the darkness, he could see only glimpses of it. It was green, the color of diseased plants, and it stank like rotten flesh. There were great spikes covering it. Was the thing wearing armor? He could not tell. It was like something from a horrible nightmare made flesh. It shrieked again, a sound that made Okame's soul ache with pain. It lunged toward Okame, swinging two great arms covered in spikes and crooked blades. Okame quickly rolled backwards, disappearing into the shadows of the forest. The thing paused only a moment, glancing about in confusion, unable to locate the Wasp.

And then it was gone.

Okame stood alone in the jungle. His mind was clear once again. "Gohiro," he whispered. He ran to his friend's side. The old man was still alive, his lips flecked



Illus. Carlos Taylor © 2001 AEG

with blood. Okame opened his mouth, but no words would come. Nothing he could say would wipe away the shame of what he had done to the old man.

"Say nothing," Gohiro said, his voice barely a whisper. "You know what you must do, Tsuruchi Okame. You must hunt the hunters. You must redeem the unredeemable."

Moshi Gohiro closed his eyes and breathed his last.

Okame rose from where he lay in the jungle. Komori must know what had happened, even if it meant

Okame's dismissal from his service. It was his duty to report this event. With one last look at Gohiro, Okame made a solemn oath.

"I will find the beast that made me do this, Gohiro," he whispered. "I will avenge your death, my friend." His fingers brushed the yellow and black ribbon tied about his arm. "I swear it."

The young Wasp disappeared into the night.

KOTEI

Kotei tournaments are run each year to crown regional champions, who are invited to the World Championships at GenCon. These top players have the honor of representing their regions and are automatically seeded into the tournament.

Past Kotei events have been tremendously successful; some tournaments have had over 130 participants. Prizes are traditionally awarded for best sportsmanship, most unique deck, best team player, top clan

placers, etc. A Kotei is always more than just a tournament; Kotei participants never forget the experience.

It's time to start planning for those cool Kotei events again. Almost anyone can run one of these events, but Tournament Organizers (TO) interested in running a Kotei must compete with other TOs in their region; there are about two dozen regions worldwide.

Each interested TO must submit a completed Request for

Proposal and Bid to run a Kotei. Each bid should include planned events, location, staff support, and any other reasons the TO feels that he or she should be awarded the Kotei. Kotei are awarded to the best TO based on the strength of their proposal, their past experience, and their enthusiasm.

Interested in being a TO? Know someone else who would be interested? More details can be found on our website at l5r.alderac.com.

THE L5R EXPERIENCE



In the next few months, look for a new promotion called the *L5R Experience*. To promote the CCG, we're sending all Imperial Assembly members an *L5R Experience Kit* designed to introduce new players to L5R.

Each kit contains two demo decks and an *L5R Experience* booklet. There's story information, a chance to vote, tournament events, storyline effects, L5R history, and more.

We encourage everyone to give this kit to somebody you know that might be interested in getting into L5R. This kit shows new players that L5R is more than just a card game; it's a new experience. It's more than just a tournament; it's an evolving world. It's more than just a Japanese game; it's a way of life.

Show them that L5R is more than just a game and offer them the experience!

THE IMPERIAL ASSEMBLY

News

It's good to be back! As you've probably noticed, the Imperial Herald has a whole new look. It's the first of many improvements planned for the Imperial Assembly Fan Club. Look for more in future issues.

Membership Number

Your new membership number is located on the address label of your Imperial Herald. For those of you with a DCI #, please take note of it; we're working DCI #'s out of our system.

Call to Arms

The Emperor is no more and chaos is slowly infecting the Empire. Delay no longer; the time has come to gather your forces! Without support your clan is doomed to failure and death. Call together your samurai and speak as one. The time is now. For a limited time, when you

refer a new player who joins the Imperial Assembly, *your own subscription will be extended for an additional 2 issues (6 months)*. When they fill out the form below, just make sure your name and membership number or DCI # is included in the space provided.

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If you're not sure if you need to renew, look at the address label on the envelope that contained your Imperial Herald. Your last issue number is printed there.

Remember, members of the Imperial Assembly get all of the following benefits:

- At least 4 exclusive cards each year only available to Imperial Assembly members.
- A year's subscription to the quarterly Imperial Herald.
- Special offers exclusive to Imperial Assembly members.

- Advance notice of promotions, news, and updates for all Legend of the Five Rings games.

- Special opportunities to affect the storyline through Imperial Assembly voting.

You can join or renew by one of the following methods:

- Call (909) 390-5444 (Please have your credit card # ready).
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Q & A

For any questions regarding membership benefits, Koku redemption, or changes of address please contact Customer Service at (909) 390-5444 or email at fanclubs@alderac.com.

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If you are looking for 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 (photocopies are accepted). All artwork is © 2001 AEG and used with permission. Cards are **20 Koku each.**

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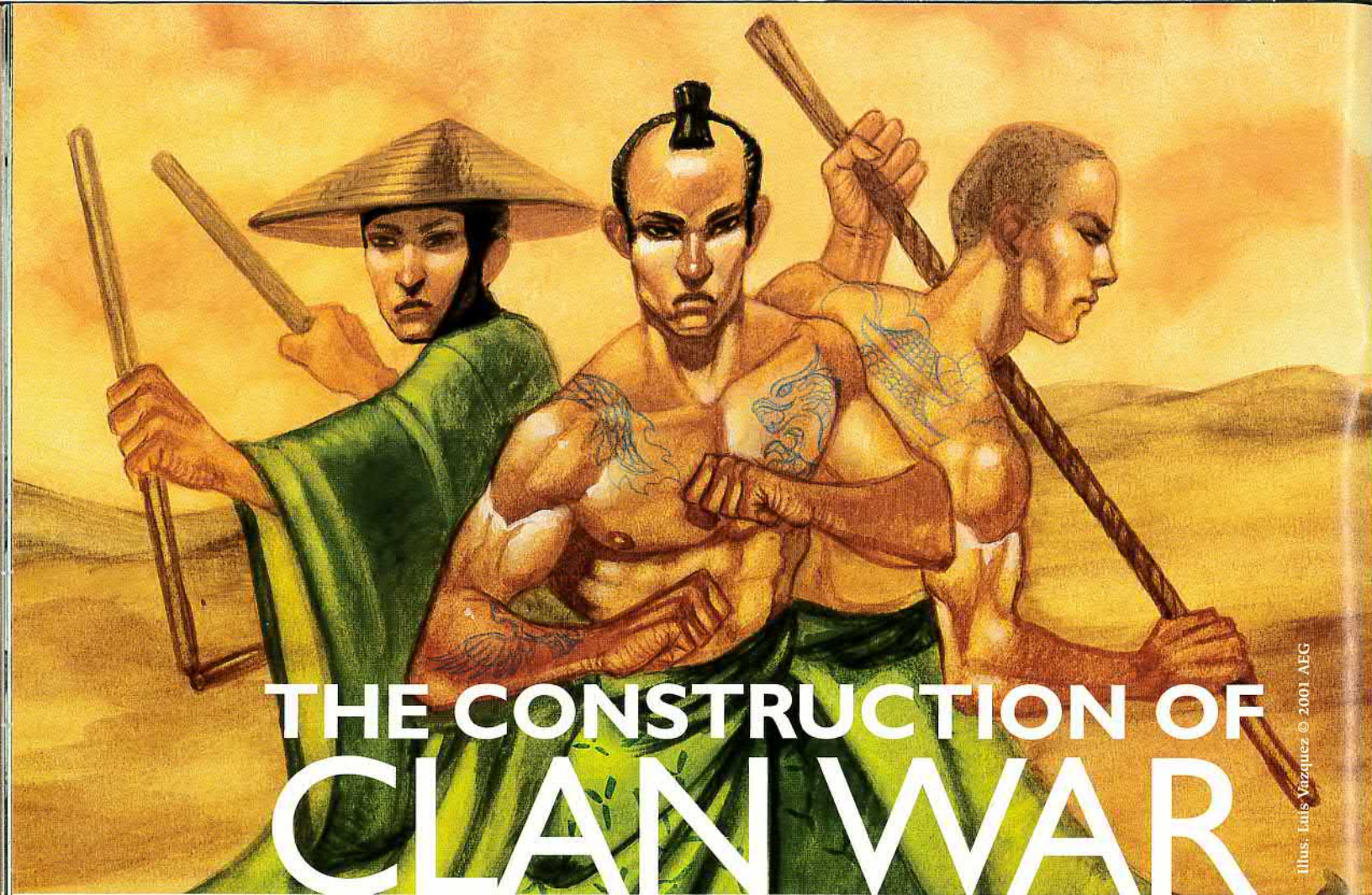
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THE CONSTRUCTION OF CLAN WAR

by Ken Carpenter

When *Clan War Daimyo Edition* went to press, the design team still hungered for a little more space. AEG had given the game a generous 320 pages, but there were still a couple of areas that could have used more explanation. The army construction section on page 300 was such an area. While the specifics addressed in that section are useful, the section does not present a step-by-step process which can prevent differences in interpretation. We hope the following material will fill that void.

This step-by-step assumes you've already determined the scenario and decided on the total koku allowed in the construction of your army.

1. Select Your Army's Affiliation

You may either select an affiliation and then pick a general from that affiliation, or you may select the personality that you wish to serve as general of your army and use his affiliation to determine the affiliation for the army. Either way,

Clan War Army Construction: Step-by-Step

the affiliation of the army general will match the affiliation of the army, as required within the rules (both those listed for Army General, page 53, and for Select an Affiliation, page 301).

It is important to remember that a personality who has taken an Oath of Fealty may not serve as army general under any circumstances. Note that this means a personality that has sworn an Oath of Fealty to the Shadowlands may not be given an Overlord Package, which would require the personality to become the army general.

Once you've decided on your general, you may purchase appropriate equipment, items and spells. Combine the koku cost of the personality and all changes or additions, then deduct the total from the koku allowed for the army.

Example: Kevin is building a Crab army, and decides that his Army General will be the experienced version of Hida Yakamo (448 koku). He adds the Jade Hand, at the reduced cost of 20 koku, and also decides to equip the Golden Obi of the Sun Goddess (65 koku). That brings the total cost of the Hida Yakamo to 533.

2. Select Troops for a Unit

It's much easier to build an army one unit at a time. Decide on the troops for a unit first, and then add an appropriate leader and possibly a secondary commander when the unit is otherwise complete. In the case of the army general's unit, you may have already selected the general and are buying the unit for him, which is fine.

Select the troops for a unit, both the troop type and the quantity, making any legal changes or additions. Calculate the total cost of the troops and any additions, then resolve any multipliers that might apply

(e.g. for purchasing troops out of affiliation). Deduct the total cost of the troops from the army's remaining koku.

Remember that all troops in a unit must be the same type: a unit may not contain 12 Hida House Guard models and 8 Crab Heavy Elite models. This is true of all unit types, including shugenja units.

Example: Kevin decides to recruit a unit of 15 Dragon Clan Agasha Fireblossoms for his Crab army. The basic cost of the unit is 225, but Kevin opts to pay the 15 extra koku for the added damage to Trap! cards, bringing the troop's cost to 240. Next Kevin refers to the Recruitment Table on page 302 and notes that when the Crab Clan recruits Dragon Clan troops or personalities, the Crab pay the standard koku cost +20%. That multiplier brings the cost of the Fireblossom unit to 288 koku (a total cost of 19.2 koku per model, which is used for determining Victory Points and VP thresholds, see Victory Points, page 57).

3. Select a Unit Commander for the Unit (optional)

A unit does not need a Unit Commander to be fielded, but most units benefit greatly from the presence of a Unit Commander (whether Personality or Leadership Package).

A Leadership Package is assumed to have the same equipment as the troops of the unit, but a Personality is not. As noted on page 303, a Personality may pay a specified amount of koku in order to add certain equipment if his unit is similarly equipped. Purchase appropriate spells and items as desired and as appropriate. Combine all costs for the Unit Commander, including basic cost, equipment additions, spells and items. If the personality is being recruited out of faction and/or is taking an Oath of Fealty (see Oath of Fealty, page 145), such multipliers are applied to the combined cost of the personality. Reduce the army's remaining koku by the cost of the Unit Commander.

Example: Later, Kevin is purchasing a Unit Commander for his 8 man Tsuru's Legion unit, but wants to use Matsu Agetoki as the Unit Commander. Agetoki's basic cost is 230. Because Kevin really wants to protect Tsuru's Legion from ranged attacks, he buys Agetoki the Yari of Air (65 koku) which, when added to the penalties already imposed by Agetoki, will give a -3 ATT to ranged attacks targeting any model in the unit. Unfortunately, Kevin realizes that the only way Agetoki can lead Tsuru's Legion is if he's taken an Oath of Fealty to the Crab. Compiling all of the increases to cost, Kevin sees that Crab pays an additional 25% when recruiting Lion; adding to that the 10% Oath cost + 4% (2% per point for Agetoki's Honor of 2) brings the cost increase to 39%. Agetoki's combined cost is 295 before the multiplier, so his final cost to Kevin's army is 411 koku (always round up costs).

Note that a Personality is not able to purchase a clan specific item of his future clan before he takes the oath, and all items must be purchased before final cost is determined, thus a Personality about to take an Oath of Fealty may not be equipped with an item that is specific to either the clan he is leaving or the clan he is joining. He may, however, be equipped with any appropriate items that are not clan-specific.

4. Select an Associated Personality or Secondary Commander (optional)

Resolve this step exactly as step three, with the exception that an Associated Personality or Secondary Commander may not purchase equipment to match that of the unit. Remember that a unit led by a Personality may have a Secondary Commander that is either a Personality or a Leadership Package but that a unit led by a Leadership Package may only have a Secondary Commander that is a Leadership Package of lower rank (Secondary Commanders, page 54). A unit led by a Leadership Package may not have an Associated Personality

and no unit may have more than one Associated Personality (Associated Personalities, page 51). Note also that a unit may have a Secondary Commander or an Associated Personality, not both (the second paragraph of Associated Personalities, on page 51, makes the same statement, but the above language is more concise). Shugenja units work a little differently, allowing up to 4 shugenja personalities to reside within the unit. No non-shugenja personalities may be placed in the unit unless that personality has the Yojimbo trait and takes the place of one of the unit's yojimbo.

Finally, shugenja may not normally associate with or lead combat units (Shugenja, Magic and Spells, page 90).

5. Repeat steps 2-4

Repeat steps 2 through 4, building units for your army until you've exhausted the allotted koku for the army. Having a few unspent koku remaining after you're done shouldn't make a difference, but if a significant number of koku remain your army may be operating at a disadvantage

6. Tactical Deck

An army's Tactical Deck can have a major influence on how well it performs on the battlefield, a potential arsenal of tactical actions that can be employed by astute leaders.

Because some Tactical cards have a cost, you must keep track of these additional expenses and make sure the army can pay for them from its koku budget. Some are easier to remember because they are associated with a unit (such as the Trap! card's additional damage when paying a slightly higher cost for a unit of Daidoji Saboteurs or Agasha Fireblossoms). Other cards, such as the Ninja Assassin card, are a little harder to remember, especially since the total cost of adding the card(s) to your deck depends on the number of cards being added.

The basic rules, however, are simple: 1) No more than three (3) copies of any specific card can be added to your deck, unless it has the Unique trait, in which case

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19:

your deck may only contain one (1) copy, 2) Cards with the Restricted trait are only allowed in your deck if there is a personality or force whose effect allows the addition of the card (such as the Daidoji Saboteurs, who allow one Trap! card for each Saboteur unit in your army).

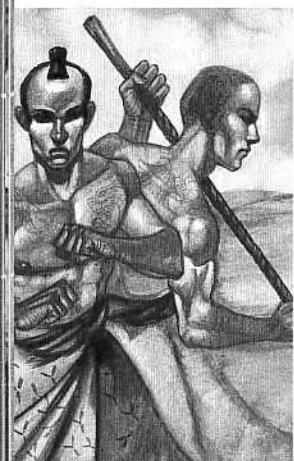
As a final note, it is possible that the cards themselves may include text which allow the rules to be broken, such as with the Blackmail card, whose text states

that it ignores the usual maximum of three cards in the Tactical Deck.

Having an idea of what capabilities you desire for your army, and what strengths you wish to emphasize, will save a lot of time in construction.

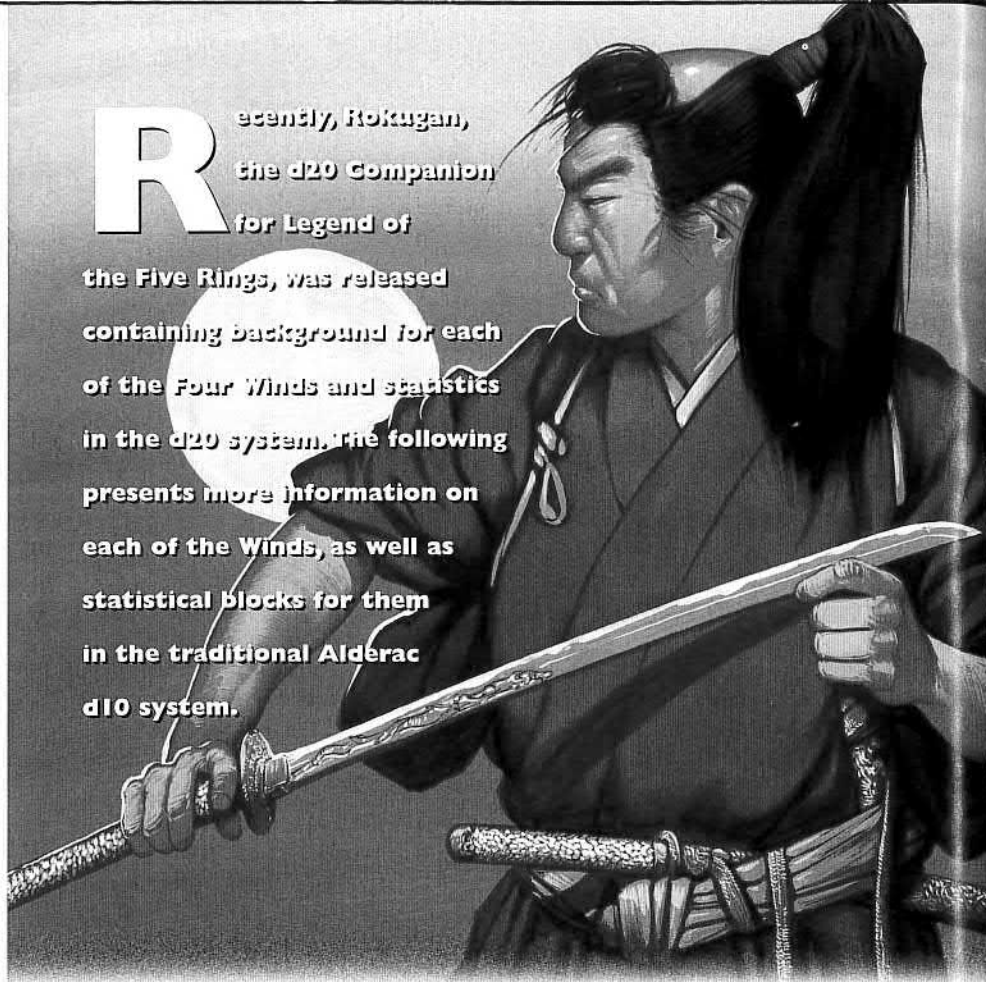
If you build an army without a goal for that army's abilities, you will end up with a patchwork of units that do not support each other well on the battlefield.

The designers of Clan War and the staff of AEG would like to thank you for your continuing patronage of Clan War and support for the Legend of the Five Rings product lines. The success of L5R can be tied directly to the wonderful people who play in the world of Rokugan.



Recently, Rokugan, the d20 Companion for Legend of

the Five Rings, was released containing background for each of the Four Winds and statistics in the d20 system. The following presents more information on each of the Winds, as well as statistical blocks for them in the traditional Alderac d10 system.



Akodo Kaneka, "The Bastard"

Earth: 5

Water: 6

Fire: 4

Agility: 8

Air: 3

Reflexes: 6

Void: 5

Techniques: Akodo Bushi 1-5, A Samurai's Fury, Gaze of Sun Tao, Child of Water

Honor: 3.2

Glory: 7.9

Kata: Fury Without End, Striking as Fire

Advantages: Allies, Blood of Toturi, Social Position (Son of the Emperor), True Friend (Akodo Ginawa), Way of the Land (Lion, Unicorn, Imperial lands)

Disadvantages: Bad Reputation (Bastard), Brash, Overconfident, Sworn Enemy (Hantei Naseru), Unluck (3)

Skills: Athletics 6, Bard 2, Battle 5, Defense 4, Etiquette 3, Falconry 2, History 4, Horsemanship 4, Hunting 6, Iaijutsu 7, Intimidation 5,

Jiujutsu 5, Katana 4, Kenjutsu 9, Kyujutsu 5, Law 3, Shintao 3, Weaponsmith 2, Yari 3

Akodo Kaneka is the eldest of the Four Winds, the child of Emperor Toturi and the geisha Hatsuko. Born before Toturi ascended to the throne, Kaneka and his mother were spirited away from certain death during the Clan War by the enigmatic Water Dragon, who kept them safe and ageless until depositing them back in Rokugan shortly before the Battle at Oblivion's Gate. No one in the Empire had any idea of his heritage, and Kaneka spent the first half of his life as a ronin.

Akodo Kaneka is a very stubborn, but honorable man. Many see him as a mirror image of his father, and expect him to fulfill a similar destiny. Kaneka respects his father, but refuses to disappear into the shadow of Toturi I. He often acts wildly and unpredictably, usually when others assume he will follow his father's example. Kaneka is a deadly



Illustration: Brian Spohrer, Ramon Perez, and Pat Guerra © 2001 AEG

THE FOUR WINDS

swordsman and a skilled duelist who made his living as a mercenary long before he took the Akodo name.

Shortly after his mother's death, Kaneka announced his heritage in Ryoko Owari Toshi, causing an uproar throughout the Empire. While Toturi never officially recognized Kaneka, Akodo Ginawa, daimyo of the Akodo family, granted the ronin a place within his family. Lion Clan Champion Matsu Nimuro offered to allow Kaneka to take his place as Lion Champion, but Kaneka refused, stating that he had not earned the position. The fact that Toturi took offense at neither Ginawa's nor Nimuro's actions is proof enough to many in Rokugan that Kaneka is in fact the son of Toturi as he claims.

Emperor Toturi's murder occurred en route to a meeting with Kaneka, a meeting during which many believe the Emperor would have officially declared Kaneka his heir. Toturi's death prevented that event from taking place, but Kaede chose to

recognize Kaneka equally as a son of her late husband. Unfortunately, Kaede did not declare Kaneka the heir and vanished before a successor could be chosen. Now Kaneka finds himself embroiled in a conflict with his half-siblings to determine who will become the next Emperor of Rokugan.

Toturi Tsudao, "The Sword"

Earth: 4

Water: 5

Perception: 6

Fire: 6

Agility: 7

Air: 3

Reflexes: 7

Void: 5

Techniques: Lion Bushi 5,
Seppun Miharuru 3

Kata: Striking as Fire, Sword
of the Sun

Honor: 3.2 (2.2)

Glory: 9.9

Advantages: Balance, Blood
of Toturi, Daredevil, Higher
Purpose (bring order to
Rokugan), Tactician

Disadvantages: Can't Lie,
Idealistic, Soft Hearted

Skills: Athletics 5, Battle 9,
Courtier 2, Defense 5,
Diplomacy 7, Etiquette 3,
Horsemanship 3, Iaijutsu 5,
Intimidate 4, Investigation 5,
Katana 5, Kenjutsu 6,
Kyujutsu 4, Law 6, Lore:
Bushido 5, Shintao 5, Tanto 3

Toturi Tsudao is the eldest child of Toturi and Kaede, the second eldest of the Four Winds. She is a prodigy in the art of swordplay and battle, having defeated the most renowned Lion sensei even before her gempukku. She received a post in the Imperial Legions soon after she gaining her daisho, and soon rose into a position of command in the prestigious First Legion. Critics who assumed her connection to Toturi was the sole reason for her assignment fell silent when Tsudao's Legions easily crushed a large group of invading Yobanjin barbarians. Tsudao proved early on that her cunning tactical prowess and battlefield charisma combined with deadly efficiency.

by Rich Wulf
& Shawn Carman

New Advantage: Blood of Toturi (Special)

Only members of Emperor Toturi I's bloodline (i.e. the Four Winds) may take this advantage. Under normal circumstances, a player character should not have this advantage, though if the GM intends to make significant alterations to the campaign, he may allow it.

This advantage counts as Ear of the Emperor, and further allows members of Toturi's house to take any skills, advantages, or disadvantages that are normally clan specific. They may also attend any school of their choosing and can take Multiple Schools if they wish.

This advantage also counts as either Great Destiny or Dark Fate. Only the GM knows which of the two ultimately applies. In addition, as a member of the Imperial bloodline the character will be manipulated and monitored by both allies and enemies seeking to gain an upper hand, so this is as much a disadvantage as an advantage.

Note that a character need not have this advantage to swear fealty to the Toturi family; they need only be a legitimate heir to the Steel Throne. The Toturi family bonus is +1 Perception.

New Ronin Technique: Child of Water

Type: Otokodate

Required Traits: Water 5

Required Skills: Battle 5, Kenjutsu 5

Other Requirements: Must have Honor of at least 3.0

Location: Mobile

Technique: (15 points) The fluid, graceful essence of the Water Dragon permeates your actions. During the first round of any combat, you may add double your Water Ring to your initiative. Additionally, you may add double his Water Ring to the first attack roll you makes each round, whether it is a duel, skirmish, or battle.

This is single otokodate-style technique is currently known only to Kaneka himself. While it is possible that he could teach it to others, Kaneka is very wary of sharing his secrets.

If Tsudao has one true weakness, it is that she is only assertive and confident where the execution of justice is concerned. Away from her armor and sword, she is shy and uncertain. She tends to rely upon her brother, Naseru, in such situations and avoids entangling politics.

The current division between the Four Winds pains Tsudao deeply. She cannot accept that such anger and division has torn her family apart. To deal with her grief, she has thrown herself into her duties, hunting the mysterious Tsuno to the ends of the earth. Unfortunately, her campaign against the Tsuno means that she is not in Otosan Uchi taking the throne, where many of her supporters wish she could be.

Toturi Sezarū, "The Wolf"

Earth: 3

Willpower: 6

Water: 3

Fire: 6

Intelligence: 7

Air: 2

Reflexes: 5

Void: 6

School: Isawa Ishiken 5,

Tamori Shugenja 3

Honor: 3.2

Glory: 9.4

Advantages: Blood of Toturi, Clear Thinker, Great Potential (Void), Ishiken-do, Multiple Schools

Disadvantages: Antisocial (4), Bad Reputation, Driven (Find his father's killer), Sworn Enemy (Daigotsu)

Skills: Battle 4, Calligraphy 5, Courtier 2, Defense 4, Etiquette 2, Heraldry 4, Investigation 6, Kagaku 5, Kenjutsu 2, Lore: Maho 5, Lore: Shadowlands 6, Lore: Spirit Realms 4, Lore: Void Magic 9, Medicine 4, Meditation 7, Research 5, Shintao 6, Spellcraft 6, Tanto 5, Tea Ceremony 2

Spells: (Note: As one of the most respected shugenja in Rokugan, Toturi Sezarū has access to any spell scrolls he desires at any time he desires them. The following are the scrolls he typically carries with him when he travels. Spells marked with "*" are memorized) Benevolent

Protection of Shinsei, Burn the Soul,* By the Light of Lord Moon, Castle of Fire, Commune,* Depth of the Void, Divine the Future,* Drawing the Void, Essence of Void, Evil Ward,* Fires From Within,* Hands of Jurojin, Katana of Fire, Moment of Clarity, Path to Inner Peace,* Reflective Pool, Rise From the Ashes,* Rise, Flame,* Secrets on the Wind, Sense Void,* Sense,* Silent Waters, Strength of the Crow, Summon,* Sympathetic Energies, The Fires That Cleanse, Tsuke's Call of Heaven, Wings of Fire.



Toturi Sezarū is the eldest son of the Emperor Toturi I and Isawa Kaede, their second oldest child, and the third eldest of the Four Winds. Even as a child, he displayed an incredible talent for summoning the kami. He began training with the Phoenix as an Ishiken at a very early age, and underwent his gempukku as the youngest shugenja in record to achieve that distinction. Even further, he attacked and killed an oni summoned by the Bloodspeakers to assassinate him during the ceremony. Afterwards, Sezarū adopted the nickname "the Wolf" for reasons known only to himself.

Following his tenure with the Phoenix, Sezarū requested and received permission to study magic with the Tamori family of the

Dragon, and later was educated in the organization of the Spirit Realms by the Kitsu family. Though still young, he has become one of the most powerful shugenja in the Empire, a rival for any of the Elemental Masters. Taking the throne holds little interest for Sezaru, despite his enormous popularity among Rokugan's religious community.

Sezaru can be an incredibly cold and distant person. His great magical power has altered his perceptions of reality, and he sometimes has difficulty relating to "ordinary" people. Despite this fact, the Wolf has a strong sense of duty and sees it as his responsibility to protect others. He is currently absorbed in a lonely quest to punish the person or creature responsible for his father's murder.

Hantei Naseru, "The Anvil"

Earth: 3

Willpower: 5

Water: 3

Perception: 6

Fire: 6

Intelligence: 6

Air: 5

Awareness: 9

Void: 5

School/Rank: Doji Courtier 3,
Bayushi Courtier 3, Miya 1,
Naseru 1

Honor: 3.2 (2.2)

Glory: 9.9

Advantages: Allies (various),
Perceived Honor (2), Benten's
Blessing, Blackmail (various)

Blood of Toturi, Cadence,
Heartless

Disadvantages: Missing Eye,
Contrary, Meddler

Skills: Battle 4, Courtier 9,
Defense 4, Diplomacy 8,
Etiquette 8, Forgery 4, Go 7,
Gossip 6, History 5, Iaijutsu 4,
Investigation 6, Kenjutsu 5,
Law 6, Shintao 4, Sincerity 9,
Stealth 3, Tessen 4

Through a treaty that peacefully ended the War of Spirits, one of Toturi's children was apprenticed to the Hantei XVI, the wicked Iron Chrysanthemum, and take the Hantei name. That child was Hantei Naseru, son of Toturi and Kaede, youngest of the Four Winds. Though Naseru spent a great deal of time training with Hantei XVI, his loyalties never bent to the Hantei's will.

Instead, the cruelties Naseru suffered during his education to the old spirit molded him into a cold, cunning, and patient man. Naseru recognized that his lessons were a necessary evil, done for the peace of the Empire. Rather than simply suffer and bemoan his lot, he learned everything he could from the manipulative old Hantei. When the man later died under mysterious circumstances, it was no surprise that Naseru concealed all connection between himself and the incident.

Hantei Naseru has come to be regarded as one of the most cunning and capable politicians in Rokugan. Before his father died, he made himself indispensable to Toturi. The young courtier often caught nuances of politics that even his perceptive father missed.

With the death of his father, Naseru sees it as his responsibility to seize the throne for himself. In his opinion, neither Sezaru nor Tsudao are truly qualified to rule the Empire and Kaneka is an upstart ronin whose very existence sullies Toturi's name. While Naseru would not willingly allow harm to befall his siblings (with the exception of Kaneka) he has made plans to remove each of them from his path to succession.

Sword of the Sun

School: Akodo Bushi 2 and Seppun Miharuru 2

Time: 10

Rank: 4

Cost: 8

Other: This kata must be used with a sword, and only in the light of the sun.

Effect: Toturi Tsudao recently developed this kata and though she will gladly teach it to any who would learn, thus far only Kitsu Dejiko has mastered the form. Using this kata, you may make a complex overhead stroke that reflects the rays of the sun directly into an opponent's eyes. This opponent must make a Perception check vs. your Agility X 5 or be stunned by the brilliance of the sun for 1-10 rounds. If your opponent is stunned, you deal an extra 1k1 damage with this attack, and all further attacks you make against him while he is blinded. This maneuver may only be attempted once per opponent per use of the kata.

Multiple Shugenja Schools

Although shugenja schools typically have widely varying theories and techniques, all of them are founded upon the same basic precepts. This means that while some schools, such as those maintained by the Asahina and the Kuni for example, differ wildly in their approach to magic, others, such as the Asahina and the Soshi, are very similar in theory if not in application.

For certain individuals it is possible, albeit extremely rare, to move between the different schools and combine the knowledge gained. For shugenja who attend multiple schools, add the ranks of their various schools together, as well as all Affinities and Deficiencies. Full rules for using the Multiple Schools advantage with shugenja will be included in the forthcoming supplement Way of the Shugenja.



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Year in Review

2001

2001 saw the fewest new cards since the debut of *Legend of the Five Rings*.

When you look at a reprint basic set and a meager two expansions, you might think there wasn't much L5R news to report on for the year. Nothing could be further from the truth, could it?

The year will always be remembered for the sale of L5R by Wizards of the Coast. Just before Christmas, 2000, Wizards, under orders from the Hasbro, Inc. head office, fired a sizable fraction of its staff. This ended up including virtually all the L5R staffers, and the game itself went up for sale. Fortunately, Wizards' ex-L5R staff all seem to have landed on their feet, most finding jobs with other game companies.

The fate of the game, however, seemed to be up in the air longer than the fates of the people who worked on it. News of the sale kept getting pushed back... and back... and back. My answer when people questioned me about the sale was always, "As long as *Gold Edition* is out by GenCon, everything will be fine." When the dust cleared, L5R was back in the hands of AEG, *Gold Edition* was out by GenCon, and everything was fine.

Gold Edition, originally scheduled for February, came out in June, and the third major storyline, *The Four Winds*, commenced in earnest. Despite my early conviction that players would

snub the "Gold" format and refuse to put away their old cards (as they did at the start of *Jade Edition*) "Gold" has become the default style of play for many.

Possibly even cooler than the release of *Gold Edition* was *Edition D'Or* — the first L5R set translated to another language (French). I hope to see L5R in even more languages one day, maybe even the language of the land that inspired it. Seeing kanji in L5R text boxes would be so cool!

During the Gold preview seminar at GenCon 2000, Paul Timm was quoted saying the Shadowlands would be "a thing to fear," and that they would be "smart and organized." These statements proved strangely prophetic at GenCon 2001, when goblins ran rampant and Shadowlands won the world championship. Prior to GenCon, players argued more than once that Shadowlands personalities were too expensive for them to be much of a threat at GenCon — which had a grain of truth in it, since the secret of the winning deck's success was arguably the masses of low-cost, high-force tainted followers.

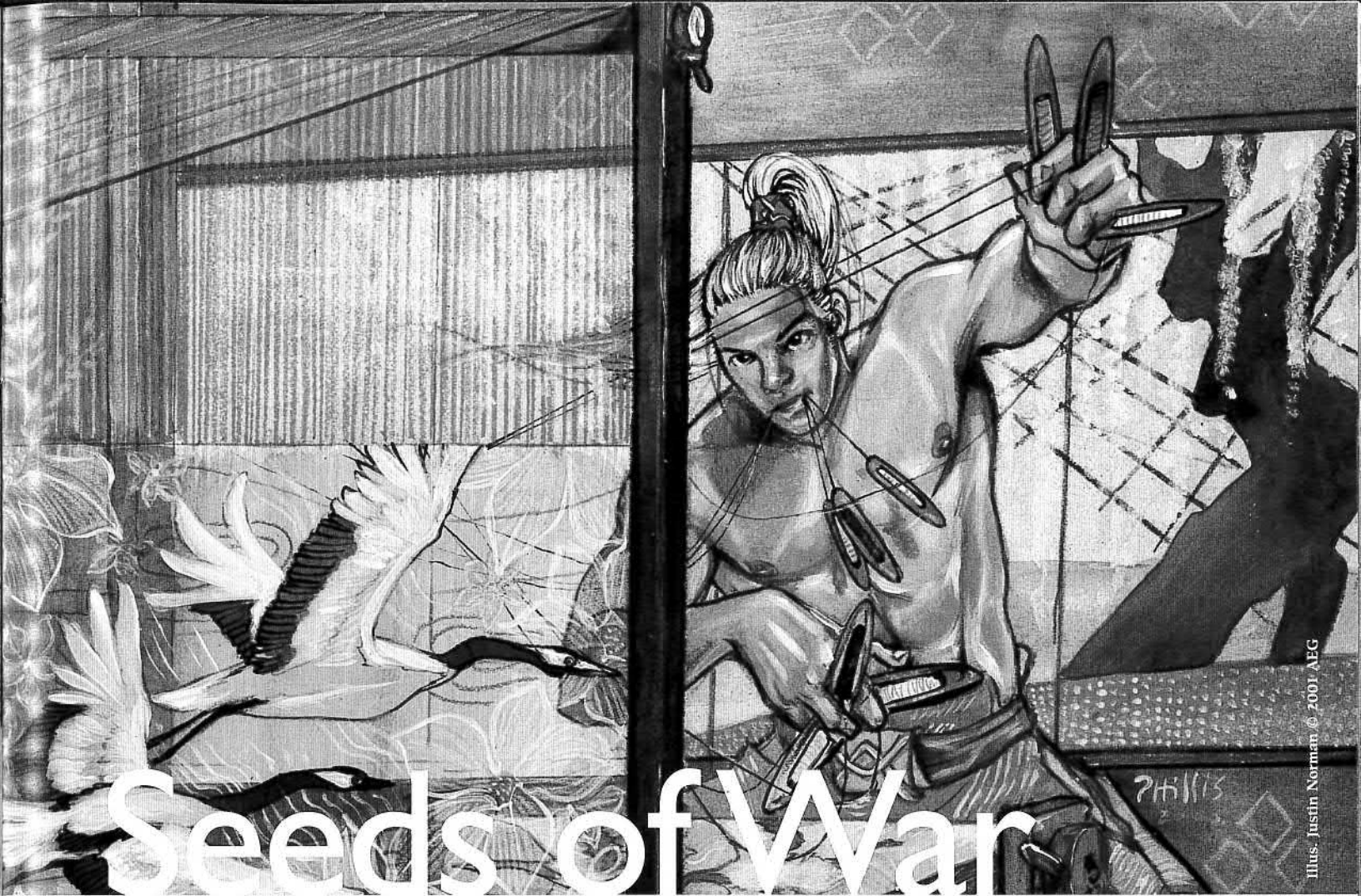
After GenCon, if there were any doubts as to the health of L5R, they were laid to rest by the staggering prices *The Emperor's Under-Hand* fetched at auction! Copies sold for US\$80 more than once, smashing the \$30 average

prices set by favorites like *Shinsei's Shrine*, *Wedge*, and *Ancestral Swords*. But people had serious concerns that the card's overwhelming prices were only matched by its overwhelming power. Thus, 2001 marked an event that was, if not unprecedented, certainly unusual: the *Emperor's Under-Hand* was basically re-written via an erratum. You don't see them selling for \$80 any more.

On a more personal note, I'll remember this year as the one I mourned the passing of my favorite character. I got into L5R after I saw *Hida O-Ushi's* picture in Brian Snoddy's portfolio. With her gone, L5R will never quite be the same for me. But that's okay. Characters are coming to the fore, and I'm realizing that I want to hear their tales, and I want to contribute to their stories. When he was first introduced, I didn't much care for *Hida Kuon*, but I'm starting to feel differently since seeing his Experienced version.

The greatest strength of Rokugan is that it's always changing. If change is the game's strength, L5R has seldom been strengthened more than in 2001.

by Zen Faulkes



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Three Months after the Test of the Jade Champion...

The spring blossoms had begun to fall, giving way to the rich greens of summer. Summer — a season of life and beauty, but also of death. The winter snows had long since melted. The spring months had given advance parties time enough to scout enemy fortifications. Already the front lines of the Great Clan armies moved into position, ready to throw the Empire into war.

Far from any obvious lines of conflict, Asahina Sekawa crept through a darkened forest. He dressed strangely for a shugenja, the light armor ashigaru soldiers preferred gleaming beneath his jade mantle. Traditionally shugenja wore no armor, but the months since his ascension to Jade Champion had taught Sekawa that one must not always stand on tradition. A jagged white scar traced a line from his chin to his left ear, a painful reminder of that lesson.

Two younger individuals followed Sekawa, both garbed in green mantles similar to his. One was a tall young woman dressed in the armor of a samurai. The other was a slightly pudgy young man, swathed in the robes of a shugenja. Both had bleached white hair indicating their Crane heritage.

Sekawa had learned from the disastrous battle at

Kyuden Nio the value of having good allies. He would not die alone like Kuni Utagu had... or his uncle Tamako. Asahina Keitaro and Daidoji Tae were inexperienced, but loyal. They were his first Jade Magistrates. With luck, they would not be the last.

Sekawa pushed a branch aside and peered carefully through the trees, searching for anything suspicious. A small temple sat in a clearing, a bronze bell echoing rhythmically within. As much as the young Jade Champion studied the temple, the scene remained resolutely innocent. That irritated him all the more. If he'd seen any sign of something awry — bloody fingerprints on the window screens, upturned earth signifying recently dug graves, the lack of natural wildlife — then he would at least know that there was danger and be somewhat in his element. No such luck. The birds were singing, the elements were in balance, and everything was peaceful.

Yet this was definitely the place.

"What do you make of it?" Sekawa whispered.

"I see nothing out of the ordinary," Tae said, squinting her eyes as she studied the small temple. Her hands tightened on the haft of her yari.

"Yet this is the place in the Asahina seers' visions," Keitaro added. "It must be within that temple. I am certain of it."

"As am I," Sekawa replied. "The sight puts my teeth on edge."

by Rich Wulf

Keitaro nodded. "After ten weeks of hunting bloodthirsty tsukai and beating back oni, nothing chills my spine like a quiet temple, Sekawa-sama. You don't suppose they have tea inside, do you?"

Sekawa scowled at the young man.

"A bit of humor, my lord," Keitaro said, bowing his head respectfully. "I only meant that perhaps this once we should take this respite from combat at face value, and embrace a chance at peaceful relaxation."

"The seers warned that what we found here would 'plant the seeds of war and set the Empire ablaze,'" Sekawa hissed. "You will pardon me if I do not take what we see at face value."

"Hai, Sekawa-sama," Keitaro said. "I meant no offense."

"Then wait here and meditate upon the proper place for jest," Sekawa said, fixing the younger shugenja with frosty eyes. Sekawa drew his wakizashi. "Tae and I will investigate. If you hear signs of trouble, summon mists to cover our withdrawal."

"Yes, Sekawa-sama," Keitaro nodded and drew a well-worn scroll from the pouch at his side.

Tae quickly took the lead, moving through the forest without a sound. Sekawa followed. He had no great skill at stealth, but a quick prayer to the air kami saw to it that the sounds of his progress were numbed.

Tae held her spear level across her slim body, prepared to lunge upon any threat that presented itself. Sekawa held an unfurled spell scroll in his free hand. The spells Sekawa's Asahina sensei taught him were not suited for combat. Most relied on the spirits of air, bestowing charm, poise, or good luck upon their recipient. This spell was a gift from an Iuchi he met shortly after the Jade Championship. It was nothing the Asahina would ever teach — a strange mix of fire and water magic that boiled a target's essence from within. Ugly, perhaps, but effective.

Tae held one hand out behind her, gesturing for Sekawa to halt. The Jade Champion paused, focusing his concentration on the temple ahead. Sekawa's vision was not as sharply trained as Tae's, but he had other advantages. He quietly called upon the air spirits to amplify his vision, focusing upon the temple. He could see a shadowy figure moving inside. Even from here, he sensed the spirits swirling about the stranger, like moths around a burning flame.

"Someone is there, Tae-san," Sekawa whispered. "A shugenja. A strong one."

Tae nodded and took two steps to the left, vanishing from the path. Sekawa knew better than to search for her. He would not find a Daidoji who did not wish to be found, not without calling upon more magic and wasting the kami's favor. He would simply trust her to be where she needed to be. He advanced upon the temple, still holding his wakizashi and scroll ready.

"Who are you?" called out a voice.

Sekawa turned quickly, startled. He leveled his blade and began to read the words scribed on the scroll, then quickly ceased when he saw the child standing behind

him. The boy was young, perhaps not even three years old. His hair was rumpled and unkempt in the way of children. He wore a loose brown shirt and no shoes, and held a long, forked stick in one hand. At end of the stick a colorful snake hung, twisting helplessly in midair. Sekawa noted the snake's thick body and large triangular head, and let out a sharp gasp.

"Careful, now boy," he said, stepping toward the child as slowly as he could.

Sekawa paused, suddenly noticing that the child's eyes were entirely golden and slit like a cat's.

"What in all the realms..." Sekawa whispered.

The child laughed playfully and flicked the stick, hurling the snake at Sekawa.

"Fortunes!" the Jade Champion swore, slashing at the creature with his wakizashi. A long-stemmed white lily fell to the ground. The Jade Champion's sword had sliced it neatly in two.

"What happened to the viper?" Sekawa asked, staring at the ground. He looked up at the child again. "Who are you?"

"There never was a viper, Asahina," laughed a booming voice from the temple.

Sekawa quickly looked back at the clearing. There was no way someone within the temple could hear him from that distance, but he nodded in understanding as he recognized the dark robed figure that emerged.

"Naka Tokei-sama," Sekawa said, sheathing his sword and bowing to the Grand Master. "It is good to see you again. I never had a chance to properly thank you for your assistance at the Test."

"No thanks are necessary," Tokei said, pausing only long enough to return Sekawa's bow. "I confess I had not expected you to be the one."



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"I beg your pardon?" Sekawa replied, somewhat confused. "What are you talking about? Who is this child?"



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"That question may take longer than both our lifetimes to answer," Tokei replied, looking down at the youngster. He looked back up at Tokei and smiled broadly. Tokei patted the boy on his head; the child giggled and scampered off, waving his stick. "When he arrived here, a message went to each of the great shugenja families, carried on the breath of eight dragons."

"I thought that there were only seven dragons, Tokei-sama," Sekawa said.

"You are wrong," Tokei corrected, his eyes meeting Sekawa's. The Jade Champion noticed that Tokei's eyes were flat black, with hardly any white around the edges. "The Kitsu, Isawa, Kuni, Moshi, Iuchi, Yogo, Tamori, and Ashura were also sent the message your Asahina seers received. You simply replied first, and fastest. The child is, for lack of a better word, my son. His name is Nizomi."

"Hope?" Sekawa asked. "That is an unusual name."

"He is an unusual child," the Grand Master said.

Sekawa looked through the woods, toward where the boy played alone. "Your son?" he looked at the child, then back at Tokei. "Who is his mother?"

"It is not so simple," Tokei said, wincing as if the memory pained him. "I was cast from this realm thirty-one years ago. I spent that time moving through the ten Spirit Realms, from blackest Jigoku to the Celestial Heavens of Tengoku. I saw sights that set my soul free. I saw visions that would crush a mortal's spirit. I have crossed through blood and thunder, until the time came for me to return. The flow of time is different in those... I hesitate to call them places; many of them are more a state of mind or an aspect of consciousness than a physical place. Others are so real they make this world seem a phantom." Tokei paused, his eyes focused on something Sekawa could not see. "The memories are... difficult." Tokei stumbled and Sekawa quickly seized the Grand Master's elbow to steady him. It was then that Sekawa noticed the fine wrinkles around Tokei's eyes, the streaks of gray well hidden among his thick head of hair.



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"Will you be all right, Tokei-sama?" Sekawa asked. "Should we return to the temple?"

"I will be fine," Tokei said, gruffly pushing the Jade Champion away. "Though perhaps returning to the temple would be best. Let us talk of more pleasant things."

"Of course," Sekawa bowed his head respectfully. Even the Jade Champion must show reverence to the Grand Master.

Tokei whistled sharply as they made their way to the temple. Nizomi appeared from nowhere, skipping at his father's side. Tokei looked down with a sad smile. The trio ascended the stairs into the temple. A small table was set in the center of the main room with several cups and a single steaming pot. Sekawa arched an eyebrow as he noted that Asahina Keitaro has been correct: there was indeed tea inside. Tokei and Sekawa seated themselves around the table, but Nizomi seemed uninterested in the tea. He continued capering about the room, waving his stick and singing to himself nonsensically.

"The language of children," Sekawa said as he sipped his tea. "Someday perhaps they will reveal its mysteries to us."

"That is not a child's nonsense," Tokei said sharply. "He sings in the language of the seven dragons."

"You said there were eight dragons, Tokei-sama," Sekawa corrected.

"I know what I said." Tokei looked at Sekawa pointedly. "He speaks in the language of seven."

"Tokei-sama, while I appreciate the honor of this visit, I must confess some confusion," Sekawa said, setting his teacup down with a click. "You tell me that you sent the vision the Asahina seers received, yet you do not explain what you want from us or why you sent the message."

"I did not say I sent the message," Tokei said. "I only said that it was sent. I did not summon you here, Jade Champion, esteemed daimyo of the Asahina. My son did. He seeks a protector."

"A protector?" Sekawa replied. "Surely your allies in the Monkey Clan would be more than happy to assist you in that measure. What can they protect him from that you cannot? What can I protect him from that you cannot?"

"Me," Tokei replied. "During my journey from the Spirit Realms, I saw sights that no man was meant to see. The visions I saw were necessary; I had been sent there for a reason. However, in the end the Elemental Dragons saw that I had suffered too much from the experience. They separated my soul into two halves. One half contained all the pain, agony, and darkness that I have experienced. The other contained the hope, wonder, and potential that lies within us all. That child is a part of me. He is the reason that I was called to the Spirit Realms. With what he knows, with what he has seen, he may be the next Uikku."

Sekawa looked across the temple. The child was staring at him intently with his strange golden eyes. "May be?" the Jade Champion asked.

"Indeed," Tokei said.

Sekawa frowned. "The seers said that what we found would 'plant the seeds of war and set the Empire ablaze.'" Sekawa said.

Tokei nodded.

"And you suspect Nizomi may be your darker half, and you may be the light." Sekawa said.

Tokei nodded. "Either the light in one of us is well-hidden, or the darkness is adept at playing games. Perhaps I merely cannot bring myself to judge that which is a part of me. I do not know the truth, Sekawa. Not yet. Until I do, I cannot risk his presence near me, lest one of us destroy the other before our message is delivered." Tokei looked at the child, then back at Sekawa. "You are the only one I trust in this, Jade Champion. The Asahina are men of peace. Perhaps if he is the dark creature I fear he may be, your family can still bring him to the light."

"We are not all men of peace," Sekawa said grimly.

"You are close enough," Tokei replied.

"And what of yourself?" Sekawa asked. "Who will insure that you do not fall to the darkness?"

"I have my anchor," Tokei said simply. "You should leave now, Sekawa-san. The sooner you take my son from here, the better."

Sekawa stepped from the temple, squinting in the bright light of the afternoon. It had been just past dawn when they had arrived. How long had he spent within the temple? His time with the Grand Master seemed blurred, disjointed. The only reality was the child trotting along at his side, waving his forked stick.

"Sekawa-sama!" Daidoji Tae shouted, leaping onto the path with her yari at the ready, prepared for combat.

"Tae-san?" Sekawa said, looking at her curiously.

Asahina Keitaro stood at her side, a scroll clutched in both hands. He looked terrified. "Sekawa-sama, where have you been?"

"I have been inside the temple," Sekawa said, gesturing behind him.

The temple was gone.

Sekawa quickly looked back at the two magistrates.

"How long have I been gone?"

"Ten hours," Tae said.

One for each of the Spirit Realms.

"Who is that child?" Tae asked, looking at the boy.

"His name is Nizomi," Sekawa said. "He is..." the Jade Champion paused.

He is the son of the Grand Master. He is the new Uikku. He is the doom of us all.

"He is the reason we have come here," Sekawa said, his tone forceful.

"Hai, Sekawa-sama," the magistrates said. Their curiosity was clearly not satisfied, but they were not about to question their master further.

"Nizomi, are you ready to leave?" Sekawa asked, smiling stiffly at the child.

"You have a cut on your face," the child said, pointing at Sekawa's chin.

"I had an argument with a bad man," Sekawa said, grinning more broadly.

"Did you win?" Nizomi cocked his head slightly.

"Yes I did," Sekawa said.

"It makes you look funny when you smile," Nizomi concluded.

"I suppose it does," Sekawa said. "Now let us hurry. We must return to town before it gets dark."

"Will we be going to Crane lands, as father said?" the child asked, reaching for Sekawa's hand.

"Yes, we will," Sekawa said, absently taking the child's hand in his own. "The seers will be eager to meet you, little one."

"I want to meet them, too," Nizomi said as they made their way through the forest. "I have much to teach them..."

Otomo Motoshi

Otomo Motoshi joins your clan right after you hire him.



What do a politician-for-hire and a foul-up in operational details have in common? Not much, really — except they're both featured in this column!

Otomo Motoshi is a courtier whose cost equals your stronghold's gold production, and he joins your clan right after you hire him. Motoshi can just be used as a "off the box" personality, but lots of other Personalities serve the same purpose. It's the Courtier trait that makes Motoshi interesting.

The number of Courtier cards — both Personalities and cards related to them — is slowly increasing. Interestingly, the older cards that relate specifically to courtiers are nasty: Fair Voice of Lies kills courtiers, and The Iron Cranes robs them of their abilities! The new event, Darkest Winter, continues the trend, putting a courtier six feet under when it resolves.

In the era of the Four Winds, however, politics is less of a dirty word, and there are actual courtier combos! During Rain of Emeralds, Motoshi gains the ability to bow and gain 1 honor. In a setting where many decks have zero courtiers (which I imagine will be fairly common), even one Motoshi will let you hold off a big enemy unit with Outmaneuvered in Court. Finally, you can protect your courtiers with Seppun Isei.

The Price of Innocence, new in An Oni's Fury, may be the best preview of what's in store for courtly battles. It requires you control a Courtier to play it, and punishes non-courtiers (dishonoring them and causing an honor loss) for trying to take the Favor.

Currently, most of the cards above make Motoshi attractive to clans that already have a solid base of in-house Courtier Personalities, namely Crane and Scorpion. Given time, though, I could see the "Courtier" trait becoming a Personality type almost as important as "Samurai" or "Shugenja."

Besides increased courtly battles, the Gold environment is also trying to promote strategic spending, as exemplified by Logistics Problem. Logistics Problem forces a player with more than five Personalities to return an entire unit to their deck, or pay Gold equal to the number of Personalities. But to use it on an opponent, you have to spend 2 gold on his or her turn. To use Logistics Problem effectively, you have to plan ahead.

First, you must keep the 2 gold available. Since players automatically look at your stronghold and holdings when they try to figure out if you have gold available, cards that generate gold apart from your holdings and strongholds are particularly useful.

Yoritomo Katoa's ability to make gold for actions can be very useful in paying for these sorts of "on opponent's turn" actions.

You also have to measure the opportunities for Logistics Problem on a moment-to-moment basis. Granted, it's pretty simple if you just want to force him or her to spend 5+ gold rather than losing a guy: play it right after your opponent's first action. On the other hand, if you want to force a unit to be discarded, you may want to hang on to that action to see if your opponent spends some gold paying for attachment cards.

There might rare circumstances where you'd want to play Logistics Problem on yourself. You might, for example, want to get rid of a bunch of annoying tokens on a Personality (since you can't shuffle tokens). Or you might want to shuffle back in a high honor Personality so you can gain honor for paying full price for him or her again.

At the start of this article, I said Otomo Motoshi and Logistics Problem don't have much in common, but they do. They're both indicators of where the Gold environment is headed. These cards themselves are not going to change the Gold environment — but enough cards like them probably will.

by Zen Faulkes

Scorpion Military Tricks

Scorpion players enjoy a strong military line-up in the Gold environment, with an abundance of 3 Force Samurai to choose from. This deck capitalizes on the quality base of Personalities available for 7 or 8 Gold.

Looking at the deck's Gold structure, you'll quickly notice that 19 cards are dedicated to producing or acquiring Gold in the Dynasty Deck. Because failure to realize Gold-producing Holdings during the first two turns of play can often mean losing the match, Crossroads have been added to speed the rate at which Gold is brought into play. The object is to have three Holdings on the board by the end of your second turn, which will enable the deck to steadily recruit two Personalities each turn thereafter.

Once a couple of Samurai are available to attack, it's time to take some Provinces. *Kolat Assassin* and *Kolat Master* are available to remove early game opposition, as well as deal with problematic Personalities during the mid- to late-game. If there isn't a threat to oppose your army, then attach some followers (*Bayushi Sunetra* and *Heavy Infantry* is an obvious combo) and attempt to quickly take a Province. *Refugees* in combination with *Arrows from the Woods*, *Street to Street*, or *Spearmen* provide the necessary means to remove pesky followers, so remember to use them.

Inner Fire and *Shosuro Technique* have been included for applying some "underhanded" tactics. *Bayushi Kwanchai* can always step in for one of his duel-challenged comrades, and *Shosuro Technique* guarantees that your opponent's Celestial Sword-wielding champion will go down with the martyr when "strike" is called.

Secret "tech" cards include *Plum Tree Training Ground*, very useful to round out a Gold scheme (a 2G Holding that produces 2 for all of your Personalities) and to remove *Farmland* tokens when your Samurai are defeated; as well as *Ikiryo*, to allow your 4 Chi Samurai to threaten opposing 4F or less Personalities with Followers attached. Always remember to look for tricks during combat; this deck contains plenty!

"Scorpion Military"

by Mark Jelfo

Stronghold:

The Towers of the Yogo

Wind:

Varies

Personalities:

3 Bayushi Churai
3 Bayushi Kwanchai
3 Bayushi Paneki
1 Bayushi Paneki, Exp
3 Bayushi Sunetra
2 Bayushi Tai
2 Soshi Tishi

Holdings:

1 Bushi Dojo
3 Geisha House
3 Jade Works
3 Large Farm
1 Plum Tree Training Ground
1 Scorpion Distractor
3 Small Farm
1 The Hiruma Dojo

Regions:

3 Crossroads

Events:

A Plague Spreads
Proposal of Peace

Actions:

3 A Test of Courage
2 Ambush
3 Arrows from the Woods
1 Counterattack
2 Inner Fire
2 Kolat Assassin
2 Kolat Master
1 Ninja Thief
3 Rallying Cry
2 Refugees
2 Shosuro Technique
2 Sneak Attack
2 Street to Street
3 Superior Tactics

Followers:

3 Heavy Infantry
2 Ikiryo
3 Spearmen

Items:

1 Celestial Sword of the Scorpion

Rings:

Ring of the Void

THE IMPERIAL HERALD

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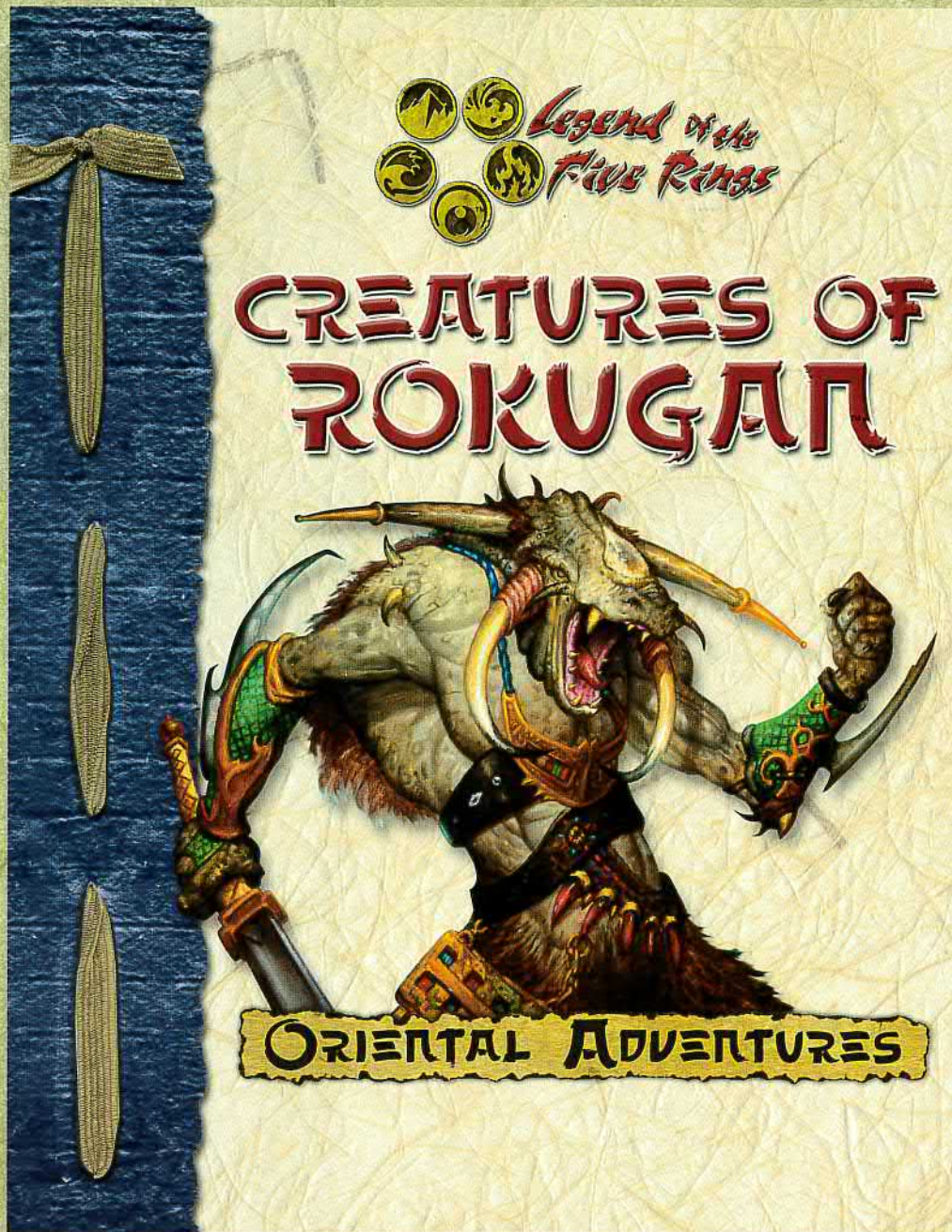
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"Mostly Harmless..."



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