



Legend of the Five Rings Interactive Storyline Collectible Card and Role Playing Games

June 2014 Special Edition

## Clan Strategies for *The Coming Storm*

By Dave Laderoute

Greetings, samurai of Rokugan!

This edition of The Imperial Herald has a particular focus—strategies for each of the Clans following the release of *The Coming Storm* expansion. This is another way in which we want the Herald to serve you, the players, by offering you insights from the game's Designers and Playtesters regarding using the cards available to you to maximum effect. Each of the following articles has been written by someone on the Design and/or Playtest Teams. They're not intended to represent the final word in deck design, by any means; rather, the intent is to offer you some suggestions, perhaps give you some ideas for cards you hadn't previously thought of, and generally inspire you when you're building your decks.

A few caveats, though. First, we're not attempting to provide you with a review of every card in *The Coming Storm*. That would be time-consuming and, in isolation, a pretty sterile exercise. Rather, we want to offer to you ways of using particular cards in your decks, to generally improve their performance. If you'd like to review all of the cards in the set yourself, you can easily do so using [The Oracle of the Void](#).

Second, you'll notice lots of cards are included in the sample decks provided that our writer's don't describe. These are generally cards from the sets prior to *The Coming Storm*. We've linked them to their Oracle of the Void entries for your convenience.

Third, you'll notice that there is only one sample deck list for each Clan. Obviously, each Clan can have more than one type of deck; for example, we present a Crab military deck, but Crab are capable of fielding a strong Dishonor Control deck, as well. This is a practical constraint; our Designers and Playtesters are busy folks and we can only prevail upon them to write so much. That said, we don't want to ignore these other deck strategies. Once the Imperial Herald is ensconced in its new home in the Imperial Assembly website, we'll have more scope to present ongoing articles about a wide range of deck types and game strategies.

Finally, we've attempted to make the strategy articles and deck lists as friendly to new players as possible. That said, we haven't tried to skimp the deck lists in terms of rare cards; you'll see some lists include "chase" Rare cards such as [Unsettling Gathering](#), [Jade Pearl Inn](#) and [Suana Dojo](#). We want to be realistic regarding how to make L5R decks competitive, after all. If you're a newer player and/or just have difficulty getting your hands on some of these harder-to-get rare cards, you can certainly make do the best you can from the cards you have available. In the end, as long as you're having fun playing, that's what counts, right?



Before we launch into the articles, let's take a brief look at how the various clans have been doing during Ivory Edition in general, and the Kotei season in particular, to this point.

**Crab** has fought an uphill battle through the Kotei season, finding some success with military decks that take advantage of their Personalities' good Force to Gold cost ratios. Their recent (at the time of writing) win further exploited Crab's notably high Force by using some dueling, which default to duels of Force with several of their personalities.

**Crane** dominated the first half of the Kotei season, but did dip somewhat in performance with the errata to their [Sensei](#) and [Stronghold](#). Most of their success has come from decks that rely on the Scout Keyword, using their strong Personality base combined with various Followers. Most such decks make extensive use of movement, Ranged Attacks and Force penalties.

**Dragon** has seen limited success thus far, with their only Kotei win (at the time of writing) being achieved by a fast Air Monk deck. However, Dragon still has strong decks built around Dueling, either with their own Personalities or using Fallen Personalities. Their strengths come from their ability to destroy or control whole units with duels and their resistance to bow effects, since many of their decks start with the [Ring of Air](#) in play.

**Lion** have achieved considerable success by using aggressive decks that employ "harpoon" effects to pull opponents' units into unfavourable battles. Their decks' strength generally comes from solid Battle Actions that manipulate Force or send home key units, and almost always

having more, relatively cheap units in battle than their opponent.

**Mantis** has seen recent success from a rather unusual deck, a fast Ogre dueling deck. This is an aggressive deck that relies on the clan's superior economy and offensive duels, that seeks to end the game as quickly as possible. That said, with their abundant Ranged Attacks backed up by the Naval Keyword, Mantis decks generally need to be treated with respect.

**Phoenix** has been one of the poorest-performing clans so far, having only recently obtained their first Kotei win of the season. The decks that have seen reasonable success have been a varied mix, ranging from military decks that use no Spells, to Spell-heavy military, to "All-Star" Shugenja decks that take advantage of the buying power of [School of Wizardry](#).

**Scorpion** have quietly been enjoying quite a successful Kotei season. They have achieved wins with both Dishonor and military decks, and have had a good number of players make it into the Top 4 of events. The keys to their Dishonor decks' success—besides being able to generate Honor losses—are overwhelming numbers of send home actions, card draw advantage, and various forms of Open-action control.

**Spider** has struggled through the Kotei season so far, failing (at the time of writing) to achieve any wins. Their old nemesis, Dishonor decks, have been strong in the environment, but they do have decks that offer very strong military games. Their best personality by far is [Ninube Shiho](#) and, with the addition of [Susumu Takuan](#), make attachments a necessity when facing them. One of their strongest assets has been their Stronghold, which does a good job of offsetting the likelihood of losing a province to clans that go before them—which is every other clan.

**Unicorn** have been an absolute powerhouse since the errata to the Crane Sensei and Stronghold, in part to their strong economy, a solid personality base, and the power of Cavalry to either take provinces unopposed or cause battles to be slanted in their favor. Most of the popular decks focus on attachment protection, Force manipulation and some Ranged Attacks.

Finally, make sure to check out [the various Clan forums](#), as well as the [Deck List sub-forum](#) on the [AEG Forums](#). These are all good places to not just find deck lists others have created, but to discuss cards, deck lists and deck strategies with other players!





# The Crab Clan

By Aaron Frede

Aaron Frede takes us through what new tools *The Coming Storm* has brought to the Defenders of the Wall, and how you can use them to crush your enemies under the sheer, raw might of the Crab.



For the Crab Clan, the results of this year's Kotei season so far have, admittedly, been somewhat disappointing. In fact, the Crab currently have only a single Kotei win at the time this was written. So, if the other Clans will not give you the respect you deserve, then you must take it from them by force. With the release of *The Coming Storm*, you have a fresh environment and a fresh set of tools to make that happen.

So, what to do as a Crab player? Looking at

what we're up against, we need to build a deck that is resilient to dueling and Ranged Attacks, and that can win battles where lots of Force manipulation is involved. A good defense against Cavalry would also be advantageous.

A swarm-type of military deck gives us defense against dueling and Open action-control, by simply having more Personalities than can be easily controlled. It also assists with defending against Cavalry units, as you're more likely to be able to oppose them with your numerous, smaller units. These smaller and relatively unprotected Personalities are, however, vulnerable to Ranged and Melee Attacks, although the [Crab Stronghold](#) can help mitigate that somewhat with its blanket opposed Force bonus. For a Gold scheme, we want something smooth and efficient so that we can produce our low cost Personalities at a fast rate. The "Farm" scheme can provide some great card-cycling potential, and has much-increased stability with the inclusion of [Bountiful Fields](#) in *The Coming Storm*.

As for the Fate deck, we want to be able to win opposed battles—a pretty basic concept for the L5R CCG. Most of the currently-good military decks are utilizing a combination of Force manipulation backed up by some combination of Ranged Attacks, bowing, or send home effects. The Crab "do Force" better than anyone, so let's play to that strength and eliminate our opponents' force by bowing their cards. We also need to make sure we keep the right people in battle; [Hida Toranosuke](#) will help with that, but a few more movement cards would be a good idea. Adding some of the big Cavalry followers helps to give some punch against control-oriented decks, provides additional defense against Cavalry (and especially Unicorn), while the Followers also provide protection against Ranged and Melee Attacks.

Perhaps the greatest strength that Crab possesses in the fight against other military decks is a high Province strength. Decks that go first against Crab, such as those of the Lion, Crane and Unicorn, will have to work hard simply to crack a Province on their first attack, by over-spending on Attachments or just by using too many cards. If we can stop that first attack with a minimal card and Personality expenditure, then the game can change dramatically in our favor as we seize a major tempo boost.

[Advance Warning](#) and [Strategic Withdrawal](#) are both excellent cards for this purpose. Advance Warning is obviously superior, since it can be used offensively as well and there is no direct counter for it. Another good card for this is [Thoughtless Sacrifice](#), which can be played very effectively by Crab. Lion players use Thoughtless Sacrifice very effectively, since in most cases they are destroying a 6F unit i.e. as a result of a 3F Personality combined with a 3PH. Crab Personalities generally don't have the similarly high PH, but they tend to have higher Force, with a Stronghold that adds 1 on top of that. This results in a lot of Personalities that can use Thoughtless Sacrifice to destroy a 5 or 6 Force unit. Note that it isn't the necessarily the best card for stopping that first attack, since you will want that Personality to launch your own attack on your turn, but can be an absolutely devastating card when your opponent swings in for his second attack.

Note that the Cavalry followers aren't included to simply help beat Honor and Dishonor opponents (which they do, but allowing you to take early, unopposed Provinces and make even opposed defenses against you less effective). Against military decks, use Cavalry aggressively in the style of the Unicorn, splitting your forces to attack two (or more) provinces, forcing your opponent into a sub-optimum defense so you can use the Absent Engage action of Cavalry to turn a close battle into a lopsided one. Then, rely on your defensive cards to stop attacks with the minimum possible effort on your part, to help you win the "province-trading" trading game.

Putting all that together gives us the deck below. It is, of course, an outline from which you can build. You will probably find that some cards will work well for your local environment and your play style, while others won't. For instance, you may find you need more proactive bow actions and less movement, or maybe more straightening effects and less Force manipulation. For example, [Hida Tadama](#) is a great target for [Way of the Crab](#) and Thoughtless Sacrifice, but maybe you play in a dueling heavy environment and you really need [Hiruma Nikaru](#) in that slot to help against those decks.

Stronghold (1)  
[The Impregnable Fortress of the Crab](#)

Dynasty Deck (40)

Events (1)  
1 [Dark Audience](#)

Holdings (18)  
3 [Iron Mine](#)  
3 [Vast Paddy Fields](#)  
3 [Famous Bazaar](#)  
3 [Bountiful Fields](#)  
2 [Ashigaru Fort](#)  
2 [Akodo Dojo](#)  
1 [Temple of Tengen](#)  
1 [Oracle of the Void - Experienced](#)

Personalities (21)  
3 [Hida Zaiberu](#)  
3 [Hida Saiyuki](#)  
3 [Hida Toranosuke](#)  
3 [Hida Ayahi](#)  
3 [Hiruma Itta](#)  
3 [Hida Iguchi](#)  
1 [Nishoji, the Steel-Eyed](#)  
1 [Hida O-Ushi - Inexperienced](#)  
1 [Hida Tadama](#)

Fate Deck (40)

Strategies (30)  
3 [Advance Warning](#)  
3 [Breaking the Rhythm](#)  
2 [Strength in Subtlety](#)  
2 [Back to the Front](#)  
2 [Sudden Movement](#)  
2 [The Crystal Tears](#)  
2 [Lakeside Retreat](#)  
2 [Entrenched Position](#)  
2 [Way of the Crab](#)  
2 [Unsettling Gathering](#)  
2 [Versatile Army](#)  
2 [Thoughtless Sacrifice](#)  
1 [For the Fallen](#)  
1 [Holding Cells](#)  
1 [Strategic Withdrawal](#)  
1 [Creating Order](#)

Followers (7)  
3 [Camel Mounts](#)  
2 [Elephant Cavalry](#)  
2 [Cavalry Escort](#)

Rings (3)  
[Ring of Earth](#)  
[Ring of Air](#)  
[Ring of the Void](#)

A final point—clearly, this isn't the only effective deck the Crab can field. In fact, the release of *The Coming Storm* has given a variety of new tools for the Crab to use in fielding a strong Dishonor deck, using economic control tactics and based around the Clan's Yasuki Family Personalities. These include [Yasuki Aitoko](#), who turns any holding into one that generates Honor losses, and [Yasuki Shairei](#), who gives your opponent a hard choice between spending Gold and losing Honor. Combined with Personalities from earlier sets, such as [Yasuki Jiro](#) and [Yasuki Makoto](#), such a deck now enjoys a strong overall Personality base. Including strong Dishonor-related cards such as [Brilliant Cascade Inn](#), [Exquisite Silk Works](#), and Battle Actions such as [Oppression](#) and [Ramifications](#), would allow you to field a Dishonor control deck nearly as good as any built by a Scorpion player. If you want to try something different for the Children of Hida, then by all means, give some thought to the underhanded shenanigans of the Yasuki Family.





# The Crane Clan

By Jordan Uy

Jordan Uy reviews the new cards that *The Coming Storm* has brought for the Children of Doji, and shows us that, as effective as the Iron Crane have been for the Clan so far, perhaps it's time for the Duelists to step forward and show their stance.



Crane finals were common, due to the sheer flexibility that the Stronghold and the various, strong themes enjoyed by the Clan.

Then came the hammer. Crane proved to be performing *too* well. [Akagi Sensei](#) was changed to work only with Scouts, and also lost its Province Strength bonus, while the [Stronghold](#) was powered down by having its Gold production bonus restricted to only being available in the Action Phase. The Clan was still very strong, but many of the non-loyalists shifted away from playing Crane. Tournament performance continued to be quite good, but Crane ceased to be as utterly dominant as it was.

So, now that *The Coming Storm* has arrived, how do the Crane fare?

Crane duelling actually gets a big boost this set. I mean no disrespect to Crane Scout military or Crane defensive Honour decks. I just feel that Crane, as a clan, is defined by its Duelists. After all, the greatest controversy in Rokugan has always been about Kakita's stance versus Mirumoto's Niten, hasn't it? So how does this translate into the CCG with our new tools from *The Coming Storm*? Below is a deck list that I think will show you.

Note that this isn't a "traditional" Honor duelling deck, that seeks to stay as much as possible at Home, gaining Honor and defending against attacks. This is an offensive duelling deck, one that was designed to take the battle to other decks. There's a lot of flexibility in this deck, which you can further adjust depending on the metagame in your area. For example, is Dishonor a bit heavy in your local gaming group? Then substitute in [Military Alliance](#) and a [Poorly Placed Gardens](#), and that should buy you enough time to send your Duelists to destroy their Provinces. Or, do you face a lot of Honor players? If so, you can substitute in a set of [Exquisite Silk Works](#) for one set of the 4 Gold-cost holdings to give you additional time. Note also that some of your duels actually Dishonor opposing Personalities, so this can further delay their victory condition. As for military decks, if you have swarms ganging up on you, you can add another [Come One At A Time](#), and maybe two [The Turtle's Shell](#) to stop them from killing your duelling defender with a Ranged or Melee Attack. And if big units are an issue, then [Treachery and Deceit](#) helps remove them from battle.

The best opening I've ever had with the deck was against a Crab player. My opening flip was two [Marketplace](#), [Kakita Ichigiku - Experienced](#), and [Dark Audience](#). Dark Audience allowed me to offer my opponent an opportunity to remove either [Versatile Blade](#) or [Justice of the Crane](#) from the game, while putting the other attachment in my hand; I ended up keeping Justice of the Crane. I bought two Marketplace on Turn 1, on Turn 2 I bought buy Ichigiku and a [General's Hatamoto](#). On Turn 3, I used the Stronghold's Limited Action to increase a Marketplace's Gold production to 4, used that to Equip the Justice of the Crane to Ichigiku, and attacked. Ichigiku singlehandedly destroyed a Crab province with 11 Force—her own 3F, +3F from her own Battle Action, +3F from the Justice of the Crane, and +2F from the General's Hatamoto. From then on, she was a Province-crushing machine. When my opponent defended against her, she would just duel them with a battle duel, such as [Stand or Run](#), [Way of the Crane](#) or [Weakness Exposed](#) and destroy the Province. Now, not every game is going to go this way, of course. I only offer this as an example of how the deck is an offensive one, capable of generating high Force backed up by strong Battle Actions.

Before getting to the deck list, I'd like to briefly review what *The Coming Storm* offered for other types of Crane decks. The set has definitely given Crane players new tools for their Scout deck. [Daidoji Ryushi](#) and [Daidoji Sutebo](#) synergize well, with Ryushi raising his own 2F to 4F with his own Interrupt if you Recruit him using his Reserve Keyword in battle; Sutebo can increase that to an impressive 6F. More generally, Sutebo isn't likely to lack for targets for his Battle Action, as he can give your own Personalities +2F as they move into Battles or, conversely, punish opposing Personalities with a -2F penalty as they try to match your movement. Another good addition to the deck is [Zenathaar](#), a Naga Scout. With an excellent Force to Gold cost ratio and a low Gold cost, Zenathaar is a strong addition to the deck, particularly if you are also running [The Shakash](#) (and you should be; even without the Scout Keyword, The Shakash is a tremendous asset to the deck with 6F and a powerful Battle Action). Zenathaar also works extremely well with cards based on Personal Honor, such as [Thoughtless Sacrifice](#), because of her Trait that offers a +1 Personal Honor bonus to other Naga Personalities.

*The Coming Storm* also offers two new actions aimed particularly at Scouts—[Scout Training](#) and [Signal the Scouts](#). Scout Training is a useful Force bonus, but its real strength is in its ability to negate an Engage Action from a Strategy. This can shut down effects like [New Cavalry Tactics](#), [Sneak Attack](#), [Recovering What Was Lost](#) and [Swan Technique](#), to name a few. Signal the Scouts promotes the use of Reserve Personalities and, with an Invest of 1 Gold, allows you to draw a card if the Personality also happens to be a Scout.

Crane defensive Honor decks were boosted by the addition of [Carpenter Shrine](#), a Holding with the Fortification Keyword (meaning it attaches to the Province from which it entered play). Fortifications generally got a boost from this expansion, with the release of [Defensive Memorial](#) and [Tunnel Network](#). A Crane deck using these Fortifications would be an interesting alternative, taking advantage of [Kaiu Engineers](#) to move important Fortifications out of harm's way, and [Kakita Jikeru](#), who causes a player to gain or lose 1 Honor when a targeted Personality attacks a Province with a Fortification attached. And let's not forget [Doji Natsuyo](#), who allows you to discard the Imperial Favor to gain Honor.

Whatever your challenge is, the deck list below offers many answers, and can certainly be customized for your local environment and play style. So, assume your stance and prepare to bring honor and glory to the Crane!

## Stronghold (1)

1 [The Exquisite Palace of the Crane](#)

## Dynasty Deck (40)

### Events (2)

1 [An End to Hostilities](#)

1 [Dark Audience](#)

### Holdings (18)

3 [Productive Mine](#)

3 [Nexus of Lies](#)

3 [Marketplace](#)

3 [Bountiful Fields](#)

3 [Jade Pearl Inn](#)

1 [Yukihime's Hot Springs](#)

2 [General's Hatamoto](#)

### Personalities (20)

3 [Kakita Ibara](#)

3 [Kakita Izumiko](#)

1 [Suzume Shindo, the Final Blade](#)

3 [Kakita Burei](#)

3 [Kakita Mitohime](#)

3 [Kakita Ujirou](#)

1 [Doji Hakuseki - Experienced](#) 3

1 [Kakita Ichigiku - Experienced](#)

1 [Doji Makoto, the Smiling Blade - Experienced](#)

1 [Doji Hoturi - Inexperienced](#)

## Fate (40)

### Items (10)

1 [The Egg of P'an Ku - Experienced](#)

3 [Justice of the Crane](#)

2 [Utaku's Destiny](#)

2 [Versatile Blade](#)

2 [Singing Blade](#)

### Rings (3)

1 [Ring of Air](#)

1 [Ring of Earth](#)

1 [Ring of the Void](#)

### Strategy (27)

3 [Sanctioned Duel](#)

3 [Stand or Run](#)

3 [Sudden Movement](#)

2 [Thousand Year Rivalry](#)

2 [Come One at a Time](#)

3 [Way of the Crane](#)

3 [Weakness Exposed](#)

2 [Treachery and Deceit](#)

2 [Reprisal](#)

2 [Flashy Technique](#)

1 [A Game of Dice](#)

1 [Creating Order](#)





# The Dragon Clan

By Aaron Frede

Aaron Frede brings us insights into how the enigmatic Dragon can employ the new cards offered to them by *The Coming Storm*, with a deck that arms the clan’s Kensai for battle, a weapon in each hand in the Niten style of their ancestors.



The Spring has been a tumultuous one for Togashi’s disciples. Dragon decks have been consistently making the cut into the elimination rounds at various Kotei (in fact, Dragon has, at the time of writing, the fourth-best ratio of players attending Kotei to players making the cut, out of the nine clans). However, they've been lacking what's needed to make that final push, to get through to the end of the field and emerge victorious. On a positive note, Dragon have seen success with several different deck-types, from Kensai and dueling decks that focus

on winning in the mid-game (i.e. generally turns 4 to 6) and even very fast dueling decks, with this being the only Dragon deck to win a Kotei thus far.

For Dragon, *The Coming Storm* should shake up the environment somewhat, albeit not too dramatically. Lets review the new cards Dragon gets in the expansion, and then examine what the new environment should look like and what types of Dragon decks could do well.

We’ll begin with [Kitsuki Kira](#). This personality is in an odd spot right now, as there isn’t a dedicated Magistrate/Courtier Dishonor deck really available for Dragon, despite there being several useful pieces available. Kira could possibly find a home in an Honor deck based on Tamori Family Personalities, but right now, he isn't likely to make a large impact for Dragon. That could certainly change, of course, as more cards are printed in future expansions and Dragon Dishonor using Courtiers and Magistrates becomes more viable.

Next, I would group [Togashi Yayoi](#) and [Mirumoto Takanori](#) together, since I believe they will both fill a similar role in many decks. Either or both of them would fit well into a Dragon swarm military deck, adding to the number of 5 Gold-cost Personalities Dragon can field. Both have good Force to Gold ratio and a good, situational Ability.

[Tamori Junya](#) and [Tamori Touya](#) represent a theme that "sat on the backburner" during most of Emperor Edition, that being the Tamori defensive Honor deck. In Ivory Edition, however, it is starting to get some solid support. As a defensive Honor deck, it can be very strong against military opponents. It will, however, struggle against other Honor decks, since it trades some of its speed for resilience. That said, this deck is starting to have the pieces it needs to become competitive, and the addition of [Look Into the Soul](#) helps to make its former, almost automatic loss against Crane Honor into a winnable match-up. It, in fact, be might be a "dark horse" for Dragon in the new, post-*The Coming Storm* play environment.

In [Mirumoto Reiji](#), I'm think saving the best Dragon Personality from *The Coming Storm* for last. Kensai and Cavalry is an intimidating combination of Keywords. With the success Unicorn have been having in the latter stages of the first half of the Kotei season, Reiji becomes a good meta option to provide you with some defense against Cavalry opponents, while also allowing you to Equip him with Weapons and enjoy some offensive Cavalry power of your own.

As for Fate cards, [Singing Blade](#) represents an interesting card for dueling decks. It is less efficient for strict Kensai decks, but where this card will really shine is in Kensai/dueling hybrid decks. This inexpensive weapon can generate high Force quickly as a result of successful duels, while leaving your Personality's other hand available for a sword with more initial force or a good ability. Since Singing Blade also has a Chi bonus, it should enable the wielder to duel effectively even without the Duelist Keyword.

[Death From Above](#) is a nice tool for Kensai decks, allowing them to either not over-commit against other military decks, or to defend against those pesky Cavalry units. You can combine this card with the Conqueror Keyword, whether printed on a Personality, or granted by cards like [Oriole Katana](#), for maximum flexibility on both the offense and defense.

Dueling decks also get a nice boost in yet another potentially lethal duel, [The Eternal Chase](#). The Focus Value of 2 on this card can be dangerous, especially if you're already running cards like [Weakness Exposed](#) and [Come One At A Time](#). However, the ability to run nine Fate cards that can destroy units—even those with attachments—is virtually unheard of in the Ivory environment.

[Auspicious Arrival](#) could be a godsend for Enlightenment decks that are having difficulty crafting a Fate deck to accommodate so many different working "parts". The [Ring of Air](#) can be frustrating to get into play, with Honor decks typically controlling the Imperial Favor. Having a such cheap tool in the Dynasty deck to help allow for the required Favor Actions should increase the stability of Enlightenment decks by letting you dedicate more of your Fate deck to getting the other Rings into play.

The deck below is a Kensai Dueling hybrid. It is intended as a good starting point for a deck for a versatile military deck. I have deliberately included only two copies of many cards to offer options for players, in order to adapt it to their play style and local metgame environment.

To that end, I have also offered a "sideboard" of cards to keep in mind and potentially test as alternatives to the ones presented in the deck. I would generally suggest starting with the Ring of Air in play, although the [Ring of Earth](#) is a good metagame choice against decks that you expect to make extensive use of movement and send-home actions.

Stronghold (1)  
[The Remote Monastery of the Dragon](#)

Sensei (1)  
[Hojatsu Sensei](#)

Dynasty Deck (40)

Personalities (22)  
3 [Mirumoto Niwa](#)  
3 [Mirumoto Reiji](#)  
3 [Mirumoto Tsuda](#)  
3 [Oneiyara](#)  
2 [Mirumoto Takanori](#)  
2 [Mirumoto Nekkai](#)  
2 [Tamori Jinai](#)  
1 [Kitsuki Kinaro](#) - Experienced  
1 [Mirumoto Shikei](#) - Experienced  
1 [Togashi Mits](#) - Inexperienced  
1 [Togashi Noboru](#) -Experienced

# Holdings (18)  
3 [Gold Mine](#)  
3 [Jade Pearl Inn](#)  
3 [Famous Bazaar](#)  
3 [Productive Mine](#)  
3 [Nexus of Lies](#)  
1 [Deep Harbor](#)  
1 [Yukihime’s Hot Springs](#)  
1 [Bamboo Harvesters](#) - Experienced

Fate Deck (40)

Strategies (27)  
3 [Come One At A Time](#)  
3 [Weakness Exposed](#)  
3 [Demonstrating Technique](#)  
2 [The Eternal Chase](#)  
2 [Entrenched Position](#)  
2 [Do Not Delay](#)  
2 [Sudden Movement](#)  
2 [Back to the Front](#)  
2 [Breaking the Rhythm](#)  
2 [Reprisal](#)  
1 [Thousand Year Rivalry](#)  
1 [Creating Order](#)  
1 [A Game of Dice](#)  
1 [Elemental Adroitness](#)

Weapons (10)  
3 [Justice of the Crane](#)  
2 [Family Sword](#)  
2 [Singing Blade](#)  
2 [Storm Forged Blade](#)  
1 [Ancestral Armor of the Dragon Clan](#)

Rings (3)  
1 [Ring of Air](#)  
1 [Ring of Earth](#)  
1 [Ring of The Void](#)

Here are some other cards you could consider, replacing some of those above.

[In Stillness Forge the Soul](#)  
[Coward!](#)  
[Ruthless Determination](#)  
[Vigilant Eyes](#)  
[Army Like a Tide](#)  
[Oriole Katana](#)  
[Sadamune Blade](#)  
[Togashi Yayoi](#)





# The Lion Clan

By Brandon Snyder

Brandon Snyder’s take on the Emperor’s Right Hand is a straightforward one. He offers us a fast military deck boosted with new cards from *The Coming Storm*, to take the fight to your enemies quickly, and keep them engaged until victory is yours.



The Lion Clan has enjoyed a relatively successful Kotei season, thanks to a good selection of efficient Personalities deploying out of a Stronghold whose starting Family Honor means we always go first (except to other Lion players, of course). *The Coming Storm* brings some new, subtle and interesting support choices for the Lion clan. Before we get into the specifics of a deck list, let's take a moment to look at some of these new cards.

[Akodo Iketsu](#) provides the Lion Clan with another Tactician, helping to round out that type of deck. Just as importantly, his Battle Action provides a powerful movement effect, helping to offset the impact of opposing Cavalry, who can threaten multiple provinces and then concentrate on one. [Ikoma Keisuke](#) and [Ikoma Shungo](#) bring us new Scout Personalities, helping to develop that deck type, while [Kitsu Asato](#) and [Kitsu Leiko](#) flesh out the Shugenja support for an Ancestor-based Honor deck. I've chosen to use Leiko in the deck below, however, even though it's fundamentally a military deck; her ability to create new Personalities as an Open Action is extremely powerful, helping to swell the ranks of our armies before we send them to battle. I've only included 1 copy, however, as her Honor Requirement of 10 could be a problem if she shows up before we've been able to gain Family Honor while Proclaiming a recruited Personality.

Regarding the Kitsu, there are now six non-Unique Kitsu Shugenja available to the Lion Clan. A defensive Honor deck based on these Personalities is a definite possibility, but it will probably struggle against faster Honor decks using powerful Courtier-based Actions to gain Honor. The Lion lack Courtiers, unfortunately, but cards like [Look Into the Soul](#), and the older card [Invocation](#), can offers some assistance in that match-up by slowing down your Honor-running opponent. The deck below is a military deck, but players could certainly experiment with a Kitsu Shugenja-based defensive Honor deck, given the new tools offered to the Clan in *The Coming Storm*.

In terms of Holdings, we gain [Voice of Experience](#), an excellent 3-for-3 Holding. This is an obvious choice for decks using Tacticians, as each one can increase the Force bonus from the Tactical Advantage Action by 1 and doesn't have to bow to do so. Even if you're not running a deck dedicated to Tacticians, though, it's still superior to [Traveling Market](#), as both are Kharmic and Traveling Market has no other Traits or Abilities. The Voice of Experience effectively replaces that card, therefore, in our Gold scheme.

On the Fate side of the deck, *The Coming Storm* offers us some interesting Followers. [Samurai Lancers](#) get better thanks to Voice of Experience, which increases the strength of its Fear effect. [Zlykt's Family](#) works well with [Okura Is Released](#), allowing for the possibility of killing an entire unit by destroying its Personality. Finally, you may be tempted to discount [Cavalry Escort](#) in a Lion deck, thanks to the relatively low Force of our Personalities. However, using Cavalry Escort to bring in a Tactician, whose Tactical Advantage Force bonus is then increased by Voice of Experience, can dramatically swing a battle. Just remember that Cavalry Escort adds a significant increase to the cost of the Personality you're bringing into play, and Lion Gold is always at a premium!

There is also several Strategies that stand out for the Lion Clan. [Inspired Leadership](#) and [Discovering the Seeds of the Void](#) each offer excellent support for Tacticians. [Discovering The Daisho of Water](#) is also a strong card for Lion, as it provides a straighten effect in battle—always a good thing—but also allows you to take an additional Action from the Personality it targets. Finally, [Way of the Lion](#) can bow an opposing Personality without Followers, but it also helps get rid of Followers by destroying them after they bow from the Fear effect. This not only strips protection from an opposing Personality, it removes the Followers' Force and any Battle Actions printed on it. Since it has Discipline for Lion players, it is a recyclable resource that is bound to prove very useful!

Finally, while *The Coming Storm* certainly offers many new Items, including Weapons and Armor, most of these are either too expensive for Lion or don't synergize well with our strengths. One exception to this is [Kikko](#). I've included [Haramaki-do](#) in the deck below, but Kikko is very similar, an Armor Item costing 1 less Gold for a Fear 2 effect rather than a Fear 3. Kikko may fit our Gold scheme better, and while the reduced Fear may seem like a drawback, don't forget that you can combine Fear effects from cards in the same unit. So, if you have both Kikko and Zlkyt's Family on the same Personality, you can generate a Fear 6 effect that will bypass Followers when you're attacking. That said, I've decided to stick with Haramaki-do, but this is a personal preference.

So, taking all of the above into account, below you'll find a Lion deck modified with cards from the Coming Storm. It's a pretty straightforward military deck, which you can certainly modify as you play it, and then adapt it to your own play style and your particular gaming environment. Remember to attack quickly and often; Courage is a Bushido Virtue and the honorable Lion don't prevail on the battlefield by being meek, after all!

Stronghold (1)  
1 [The Honorable Garrison of the Lion](#)

Dynasty Deck (40)

Holdings (19)  
1 [Bamboo Harvesters - Experienced](#)  
3 [Copper Mine](#)  
1 [Counting House](#)  
2 [Deep Harbor](#)  
3 [Famous Bazaar](#)  
3 [Jade Pearl Inn](#)  
1 [Oracle of the Void - Experienced](#)  
3 [Suana Dojo](#)  
2 [Voice of Experience](#)

Personalities (21)  
2 [Akodo Daiken](#)  
1 [Akodo Dairuko, the Steel Lion - Experienced](#)  
2 [Akodo Kamina - Experienced](#)  
1 [Kitsu Leiko](#)  
3 [Ikoma Ichimoko](#)  
3 [Ikoma Yoshimoko](#)  
3 [Matsu Agai](#)  
2 [Matsu Misato](#)  
3 [Matsu Miura](#)  
1 [Matsu Nimuro - Experienced](#)  
2 [Morito Inoue, Scourge of the Plains](#)

Fate Deck (41)

Followers (6)  
3 [Kikage Zumi Initiates](#)  
3 [Zlkyt's Family](#)

Items (6)  
3 [Haramaki-do](#)  
3 [Khalimpeh-jiak](#)

Rings (2)  
1 [Ring of Earth](#)  
1 [Ring of the Void](#)

Strategies (27)  
1 [Advance Warning](#)  
2 [Back to the Front](#)  
1 [Creating Order](#)  
2 [Deliberations](#)  
2 [Discovering the Daisho of Water](#)  
2 [For the Fallen](#)  
2 [Okura Is Released](#)  
3 [Soul's Sacrifice](#)  
3 [The Crystal Tears](#)  
3 [The Turtle's Shell](#)  
2 [Thoughtless Sacrifice](#)  
2 [Unsettling Gathering](#)  
2 [Way of the Lion](#)





# The Mantis Clan

By Aaron Frede

Aaron Frede embraces the storm, this expansion's namesake, to show us how the Children of Thunder can roll over their enemies with the lawful power of Magistrates.



Mantis Ogre Dueling deck.

However, there are several good deck options for Mantis going into the latter part of the Kotei season and beyond. Aside from the Ogre Dueling deck, which should continue to be strong, Mantis can field a variety of military builds, with or without [Gidayu Sensei](#). These decks can include Scouts, Shugenja or Magistrates, backed up by one of the strongest sets of unique personalities of any clan.

Kitsune Defensive Honor is becoming more viable thanks to new cards from *The Coming Storm*, and can do very well against military decks. It does struggle against other Honor decks, though, as it has a lower starting Family Honor behind is generally slower in terms of gaining Honor overall, since it generally lacks access to actions that require the Courtier Keyword. The fact it is immune to [Invocation](#), thanks to having numerous Spirit Personalities, means a Mantis player can run it as Honor meta himself. Meanwhile, [Look Into the Soul](#) can slow down other Honor decks enough to offer the Mantis player a reasonable chance at a win.

Before presenting a sample deck list, let's examine some of the new card options available to the Mantis from *The Coming Storm*.

First, the Kitsune Defensive Honor deck has received a boost in the form of [Kitsune Beiko](#). Like the other Kitsune Shugenja, Beiko summons a Spirit when she enters play—in her case, a powerful Bear Spirit. With 5F on the defense and a Fear 4 effect, the Bear is a potent defender; in the meantime, Beiko herself can exploit her Shugenja Keyword, using spells such as [Seeking the Way](#) to send enemy units Home while gaining Honor, or giving defending Spirits strong Force bonuses from [Soul of Earth](#).

[Yoritomo Yusuke](#) offers several opportunities. Not only does he produce Gold, but with his low Gold cost, he's also a good candidate for inclusion in a military swarm deck—or any military deck, for that matter. His Magistrate Keyword is an additional benefit, giving you access to powerful cards such as [Sleight of Hand](#), [Tale of the Disgraced](#) and [Uncovering the Culprit](#).

In the meantime, [Tsuruchi Hikari](#), [Tsuruchi Yashiro](#) and [Yoritomo Shotsuo](#), all of whom have the Scout Keyword, dramatically increase the power of a Mantis Scout deck. Hikari and Yashiro offer more Ranged Attacks, while Shotsuo can offer protection against enemy counterattacks by gaining the Conqueror Keyword when you Invest in him. Crane players have demonstrated the power of Scouts in the current environment, so a Scout deck is a good option for Mantis players to try. [Advance Warning](#) and [Steal an Advantage](#) are both strong actions in a Scout deck.

[Way of the Mantis](#) is an excellent card—perhaps one of the best of the "Way of" series from the expansion. Simply being able to straighten a Personality in battle is always strong. Combine this with allowing a second use of a Ranged Attack, and a battle can be swung decisively in the Mantis player's favor.

[Strike as the Earth](#) also supports Ranged Attacks. Reducing an opposing target's Force in battle before killing it generally represents a tempo loss. With this card, you can start setting up cards for Ranged Attacks as an Engage Action, to make your first Action in the battle a devastating one.

More generally, since Mantis goes second to the majority of the field, you can generally count on your Stronghold's going-second benefit of producing 2 Gold once per game being available in most games. On average, you will have 10 Gold available on your second turn, more than any other clan barring, perhaps, Unicorn. This means you can get Personalities onto the field early and immediately attack aggressively or, alternatively, build a strong economy and simply out produce opponents in the mid-game.

As mentioned above, Mantis also have some very powerful Unique Personalities. You can start dropping threats onto the table, such as [Yoritomo Hiromi](#), [Tochiko](#) or [Tsuruchi](#), that many decks will struggle against. Both versions of Hiromi are worth playing and Tsuruchi has, hands-down, one of the best kill Actions in the game. Moreover, [A Champion's Strike](#), which requires a Unique Samurai to play, is an excellent way of removing Followers from opposing units and making them vulnerable to your Ranged Attacks. After all, why waste a Ranged Attack to kill a

single, weak Follower, when you can eliminate several at once?

Here's a sample deck list of a mid-game military deck that uses Magistrates, as well as

Stronghold (1)  
[The Fruitful Port of the Mantis](#)

Dynasty Deck (40)

Events (1)  
1 [Dark Audience](#)

Holdings (17)  
3 [Famous Bazaar](#)  
3 [Kobune Port](#)  
3 [Slave Pits](#)  
3 [Jade Mine](#)  
2 [Shrine to Hachiman](#)  
2 [Jade Pearl Inn](#)  
1 [Deep Harbor](#)

Personalities (22)  
1 [Moshi Rukia - Experienced](#)  
1 [Okazaki, Breaker of Wills](#)  
1 [Tochiko, the Jagged Tusk of Death](#)  
1 [Tsuruchi - Inexperienced](#)  
1 [Tsuruchi Yashiro, Defender of the Obsidian Blades - Experienced](#)  
1 [Yoritomo Hiromi, the Growing Storm - Experienced 2](#)  
1 [Yoritomo Minori - Experienced](#)  
1 [Yoritomo Yashinko - Experienced](#)  
3 [Yoritomo Yusuke](#)  
3 [Yoritomo Toganin](#)  
3 [Yoritomo Tonogi](#)  
3 [Tsuruchi Rin](#)  
2 [Tsuruchi Goshō](#)

Fate Deck (40)

Strategies (28)  
3 [Tale of the Disgraced](#)  
3 [Unholy Strike](#)  
3 [Uncovering the Culprit](#)  
2 [Relentless](#)  
2 [Strike as the Earth](#)  
2 [Sudden Movement](#)  
2 [The Crystal Tears](#)  
2 [Blanketed Forest](#)  
2 [Breaking the Rhythm](#)  
2 [Unsettling Gathering](#)  
1 [Deliberations](#)  
1 [Ivory Magistrate Outpost](#)  
1 [Way of the Mantis](#)  
1 [A Champion's Strike](#)  
1 [Creating Order](#)

Followers (3)  
3 [Yomanri Archers](#)

Items (6)  
1 [Koan's Staff](#)  
3 [Justice of the Crane](#)  
2 [Khalimpah-jiak](#)

Rings (3)  
1 [Ring of Air](#)  
1 [Ring of Earth](#)  
1 [False Ring of Air](#)





# The Phoenix Clan

By Aaron Frede

Aaron Frede digs deep into the libraries of the Isawa, finding potent new Spells from *The Coming Storm* to dramatically increase the power of the Phoenix on the battlefield.



Phoenix has been in a difficult place through much of this Kotei season, as shown by the clan's relatively weak overall performance. However, the fire has once again started to burn with the Phoenix winning a Kotei in late May. The arrival of *The Coming Storm* will, hopefully, stoke that new flame into a powerful blaze. In this article, we'll evaluate the cards that will be useful for Phoenix players in this new expansion, then present a sample deck list that you will hopefully be able to refine into a tournament

contender.

*The Coming Storm* offers Phoenix players a variety of new spells—powerful battle Spells, protective Spells and even Spells that will function as meta-choices to help address various match-ups.

For those of you that were wondering when we'd see a successor to Kuro's Fire and Channeling the Fallen, your wait is over. With one of the potentially strongest Ranged Attacks in Ivory Edition, and the ability to generate +3F by Investing, [The Dragon's Talon](#) will likely become a Spell that opponents dread seeing hit the board. Conversely, [Legacy of Tadaka](#) offers protection from Melee and Ranged Attacks, and Fear effects—and it does so as an Interrupt from your Fate hand. Its comparable Strategy is [Iron and Stone](#), which I think you'll agree is good, but nowhere near as powerful as this Spell.

Speaking of successors, [Interrupt The Void's Flow](#) will evoke fond memories of Suitengu's Surge to many Phoenix players—and less fond ones to your opponents. This card offers amazing protection for big unit decks, frustrating your opponent by disabling his best battle action. Just remember that you lose the use of the unit until the end of the turn!

Finally, Phoenix Honor decks have been challenged to perform so far in Ivory Edition simply due to the superiority of Courtier-based Honor decks. However, [Look Into The Soul](#) can do a great deal to change that. Even if Honor isn't your deck of choice, this card also works well to support Dishonor, as well as providing a good Honor countermeasure for military decks.

Let's next consider the new Phoenix Personalities. While not all of them will find homes in every deck, they have a common thread of being both cheap and versatile, giving Phoenix players a variety of options. [Shiba Kakei](#) is possibly the best new Personality for Phoenix in this set, having a good Force to Gold ratio, useful Keywords and, in conjunction with your Shugenja, an ability that can be quite powerful. He also makes a good target for [Thoughtless Sacrifice](#), especially if you find yourself in a "province-trading" game, and particularly against decks employing Cavalry, such as Unicorn. Thwarting a single attack by destroying a key unit can dramatically swing such a game in your favor.

Appearances can be deceiving, and such is the case with [Shiba Yuuchi](#). Your opponents might not think much of a 0F Yojimbo that can bow for a Melee 2 Attack, but his Battle Action will see him often increased to 4F with regularity. With clever use of Force penalties, his Melee Attack can become a definite threat. And, as an inexpensive Yojimbo, he's an obvious target for [Final Sacrifice](#), preserving one of your more critical units.

With only 2C, [Isawa Muira](#) may seem unappealing, since many of the best Battle Actions on Spells are linked to Chi. However, he's a good support Personality; for example, he could be a platform for casting Interrupt the Void's Flow, which has no dependency on Chi. Alternatively, as a Conqueror with 3F, he could become a potentially powerful attacker and defender in his own right, if he's given the right Spells and other Attachments.

For only 3 Gold, [Isawa Genma](#) is a very useful Personality. Her ability to straighten herself as a Tireless Open Action makes her an obvious choice for Lobbying for the Imperial Favor. Likewise, she can be used to enable the Stronghold Ability or sit at home and frustrate opponents with [Ward of Air](#) (remember that Traits aren't subject to the Rule of Location). And her Cavalry Keyword allows you to use her to gain presence against Cavalry opponents, or set up [Sudden Movement](#) with a much larger unit, allowing you to take a weakly-defended or undefended province.

There are also several new Strategy cards from *The Coming Storm* that should stand out for Phoenix players. Your selection of Strategies will, however, have to be careful, because you may find yourself using more Spells than you did previously, thanks to the new and powerful Spells in the expansion.

[Way of the Phoenix](#) is another card that may appear rather uninspiring at first glance; certainly, it may only warrant including 1 or 2 copies in your Fate deck. However, using this card to get a second use from a strong spell, such as The Dragon's Talon, late in a battle could prove to be decisive.

Phoenix have traditionally been a clan of pacifists, which is reflected the commonly lower Force to Gold ratios on their Personalities—particularly their Isawa Shugenja. [Strength in Subtlety](#) will pull double duty for you, reducing your opponent's Force to enable Ranged Attacks from your cards, while also increasing your own Force. Even if you don't need the Force, you can use the Kharmic Keyword to draw another card, and still benefit from the -2F penalty to your opponent.

Players sometimes lament that Spells are hard to use, since they are usually telegraphed to your opponent. In Emperor Edition, you could attach a Spell in battle and immediately use it, but that's no longer the case in Ivory Edition. However, with [Proper Equipment](#) joining [Unchecked Fury](#) in the card pool, you should be able to replicate much of that Emperor Edition surprise effect for your Spells. Note that you can use Proper Equipment unopposed, with a card like The Dragon's Talon, to gain Province-taking Force against an unsuspecting opponent.

Let's now consider how to add new cards from *The Coming Storm* to a Phoenix deck and maximize its strengths. You will go first against many Clans, and have access to many cards that other Clans generally can't, or aren't likely to play, such as Spells. We'll use these facts to our advantage. Note that attacking on the third turn can be difficult for Phoenix, so sometimes it's better to build for an extra turn and then attack in force on Turn 4. You can combine this crushing your opponent if they come at you first. This deck list should provide a good framework that you can tweak and adjust to suit your play-style and local metagame environment as you prepare for tournament play.

Stronghold (1)  
[Eternal Temple of the Phoenix](#)

Dynasty Deck (40)  
Holdings (18)  
3 [Productive Mine](#)  
3 [Nexus of Lies](#)  
3 [Bountiful Fields](#)  
3 [Jade Pearl Inn](#)  
3 [Silver Mine](#)  
1 [Yukihime's Hot Springs](#)  
1 [Bookkeeper](#)  
1 [Bamboo Harvesters -Experienced](#)

Personalities (22)  
1 [Asako Kaitoko Experienced](#)  
1 [Isawa Shunryu, The Infinite Eye](#)  
1 [Shiba Iamiko Experienced](#)  
1 [Natsumi Experienced](#)  
1 [Isawa Kaname Experienced](#)  
3 [Isawa Ikariya](#)  
3 [Shiba Kakei](#)  
3 [Shiba Yuuchi](#)  
2 [Agasha Kyokuta](#)  
2 [Isawa Genma](#)  
2 [Isawa Hibana](#)  
2 [Komori Taruko](#)

Fate Deck (40)  
Strategies (23)  
3 [Strength in Subtlety](#)  
2 [Final Sacrifice](#)  
2 [Thoughtless Sacrifice](#)  
2 [The Crystal Tears](#)  
2 [Discovering the Anvil of Earth](#)  
2 [Breaking the Rhythm](#)  
2 [Unsettling Gathering](#)  
2 [Sudden Movement](#)  
2 [Army Like a Tide](#)  
1 [Deliberations](#)  
1 [Move the Troops](#)  
1 [Way of the Phoenix](#)  
1 [Creating Order](#)

Spells (15)  
3 [Ward of Air](#)  
3 [Interrupt the Void's Flow](#)  
3 [The Dragon's Talon](#)  
2 [Yojimbo of Earth](#)  
2 [Servitors of Stone](#)  
2 [Steal the Candle's Flame](#)

Rings (2)  
1 [Ring of Air](#)  
1 [Ring of Earth](#)





# The Scorpion Clan

By Jordan Uy

Jordan Uy gives us his take on the new cards from *The Coming Storm* for the Scorpion, and how you can use them to further the ends of the Clan of Secrets.



The Scorpion have always been about Loyalty—to one another, yes, but particularly to the Empire. There is no one better placed than us, the Children of Bayushi, to protect the Empire from the threats that it cannot or will not see. We don't hesitate to bring to light the faults and failures of those who threaten Rokugan, and to neutralize them before the threat they represent is realized.

In the L5R CCG, there is no better way the Scorpion display their focus on Loyalty to the Empire than through political control. We

have seen an above-average performance during the 2014 Kotei season with 11 appearances in the various finals, even with the power of Crane and, more recently, Unicorn decks in the environment. So what does that mean for the Scorpion in *The Coming Storm*?

In *The Coming Storm*, we see our second Scorpion Kensai for the Ivory Arc, in the form of [Bayushi Akagi](#). Akagi is a great personality for his cost. For 5 Gold, you get a 3F/3C personality with the ability to reduce an enemy Personality's Force by his own Force. A penalty of -3F is a recurring theme among Scorpion personalities, with [Bayushi Akane](#), [Bayushi Mifuyu](#), and [Bayushi Meiko](#) all having the ability to inflict this same Force penalty. What sets Akagi apart, however, is the potential to increase this penalty, because it is dependent on his Force. As we've seen in Dragon and Spider decks using Kensai, Personalities with this Keyword often achieve 7F-8F, based on whatever Weapons they have Equipped, at a lower initial Gold Cost than either Mifuyu or Meiko. Look for Akagi to be a cornerstone of Scorpion military decks generally, and—if we keep getting good Bitter Lies Personalities who are Kensai—of future Scorpion Kensai decks in particular.

As for other Personalities, *The Coming Storm* offers us something we haven't seen in quite some time—a Scorpion Junshin, in the person of [Bayushi Kotomuri](#). For those unfamiliar with the term, Junshin refers to those among the Scorpion who truly believe in Bushido and try to follow its tenets despite the Clans' willingness to put Honor aside for the good of the Empire. Kotomuri is obviously best played out of a deck using Jutsushi Sensei, as this will often give Kotomuri 4F when you pay his Invest Cost, Dishonoring one or two Personalities prior to facing them in battle.

[Shosuro Kayo](#) is probably the most efficient personality in terms of Gold Cost in the deck. For 4 Gold, you get a 2F/2C Personality that produces a Melee 2 Attack, or Melee 3 if the targeted Personality is Dishonorable. Don't forget that he also has the Yojimbo Keyword, which makes him the perfect target for a [Final Sacrifice](#) once he bows for his Melee attack.

[Bayushi Fuyuko](#) helps our political campaign of dishonoring our enemies with her ability to cause 1 point of Honor loss as an Open Action. Combined with a few cards to straighten her (for example, [Jiramu's Court](#), [Creating Order](#), [Discovering the Shakuhachi of Air](#) or the [Ring of Air](#)) she can use her Ability every turn with great efficiency since, as a Dishonor deck, you'll rarely be out of targets. It also helps that her own Trait enables her Ability, should your opponent be a little careless and decides to Lobby for the Imperial Favor.

As favorably as I've spoken about the Scorpion Personalities from *The Coming Storm* so far, I'd like to focus on the two personalities for Scorpion from this set that really excite me. [Shosuro Sadao](#) brings back my favorite Scorpion theme, that of Poison. Over past editions of the CCG, we've had several iterations of the Poison concept, beginning with one that reduced both Force and Chi, that evolved to one that only reduced Force. I, for one, am glad that Design decided to reinstate the effect Poison was really meant to have, which is weaken and, ultimately, kill. Understandably, Design is very wary of making so-called "Chi kill" decks too strong, so even with cards like [Red Hunger's Fang](#), [Bayushi Jin-e](#), [Unsanctioned Strike](#) and [Wounded in Battle](#) available, this type of deck certainly doesn't represent a "top tier" contender. However, be aware that some people may decide to give a deck focusing on "Chi kill" a go in your local tournaments. Combined with effects that target Chi, such as Dueling, this could still be a strong deck type regardless.

[Bayushi Jinn-Ja](#) is different. Experienced players often recommend that you should always look for things that "break" the standard flow of the game. Discipline, as a game mechanic, is one of those things. Being able to play cards from your Fate Deck's Discard pile for a few extra Gold is certainly worth it, which is why the Designers have been every careful about giving this Keyword to cards. But what about those Political Strategies that don't have the Discipline Keyword, such as [Favors](#), [Relocating the Court](#), [The Company You Keep](#), [Faint Praise](#), [Ramifications](#) and so on? Bayushi Jinn-Ja can fetch these cards for you as he comes into play,

and then get on with the important business of being a Courtier to support playing them. And as more CCG expansions come out, he will only get better with more cards to choose from.

Finally, let's not forget about the [Way of the Scorpion](#). This card inflicts an Honor loss with no actual cap. Given the right situation, there is currently no other card in Ivory that can generate such an Honor loss. For example, assume you're facing a Lion opponent with a Dishonorable [Akodo Dairuko](#). Play two copies of Way of the Scorpion and that's a full loss of 10 Honor, and potentially another 10 Honor loss on his turn if you can afford the Discipline cost of the cards. For a net expenditure of 4 Gold (1 Gold to play the card initially, then a total of 3 more Gold to play it again using Discipline), and assuming a Dishonorable personality with 3 Personal Honor, you would inflict a total Honor loss of 6—and that's only from a single copy of this card. Any Honor deck would struggle to recover from a loss like that. Of course, against opponents whose personalities have very low Personal Honor, this card is much less effective, but it does, at least, still let you look at face-down cards in his Hand or Provinces.

So these are the highlights for Scorpion players from *The Coming Storm*. We have lots of options, and here's one of them. I've always been a fan of Scorpion control decks; in fact, this is the only Edition in which I've played another clan aside from Scorpion, in honor of Victor Palileo, our local rules guru and loyal Unicorn player. Here's such a control deck that you can try out, to show your Loyalty to the Scorpion and the Empire as you protect it from unseen threats.

Stronghold (1)

1 [The Shadowed Estate of the Scorpion](#)

Dynasty Deck (40)

Events (3)

3 [A Fever in the Blood](#)

Holdings (17)

3 [Small-Time Bully](#)

3 [Jade Pearl Inn](#)

3 [Exquisite Silk Works](#)

3 [Brilliant Cascade Inn](#)

1 [Counting House](#)

1 [Bamboo Harvesters – Experienced](#)

3 [House of Disgrace](#)

Personalities (20)

3 [Bayushi Akane](#)

3 [Bayushi Fuyuko](#)

3 [Yogo Takashi](#)

1 [Iuchi Wattu](#)

1 [Bayushi Kachiko - Experienced CoM](#)

1 [Bayushi Nitoshi - Experienced](#)

1 [Bayushi Nitoshi, the Poison Mask - Experienced 2](#)

1 [Shosuro Kameyoi - Experienced](#)

3 [Bayushi Shizuka](#)

3 [Bayushi Jinn-Ja](#)

Fate (40)

Items (2)

1 [Ancestral Armor of the Scorpion Clan](#)

1 [Heart of Fudo - Experienced 2](#)

Rings (2)

1 [Ring of Earth](#)

1 [Ring of the Void](#)

Strategies (36)

3 [Flashy Technique](#)

2 [Unseemly Alliance](#)

3 [Strategic Withdrawal](#)

2 [Mercantile Conflict](#)

3 [Encircled Terrain](#)

3 [Tactical Setback](#)

3 [Block Supply Lines](#)

3 [Ramifications](#)

3 [Inexplicable Challenge](#)

3 [Oppression](#)

2 [Favors](#)

1 [A Game of Dice](#)

3 [Way of the Scorpion](#)

2 [A Growing Rift](#)

Note that Iuchi Wattu isn't intended to bring into play; he simply thins your Dynasty deck by one card. Heart of Fudo allows you to fetch any card you want from your Fate Deck. House of Disgrace is an excellent 2-for-3 Gold holding, that also enables Bayushi Fuyuko, Ramifications, and A Growing Rift even if you lack Dishonored targets. Some of the Political Strategies have been cut down to copies of two, since Bayushi Jinn-Ja allows you to get back the cards that you need. This also gives you more flexibility to substitute cards that better fit your local play environment. Try it out; I hope you enjoy playing it!





# The Spider Clan

By Ben Cumming

Ben Cumming leads us into the sinister darkness that is the Spider Clan, showing us the new powers offered to them by *The Coming Storm* and how they can be used to crush any who would oppose the Followers of Daigotsu.



The Spider are the newest and strangest of the Great Clans. They were once the Lost, bitter enemies of the Empire. Now, their Imperial mandate to conquer in the Empress' name was given to them by the Iweko herself on the day they joined the Empire. As Conquerors, they have little presence in the courts of the Empire—at least, for now. While the Susumu family works to change that, the rest of the Spider Clan struggles to earn glory and power in battle. Translating this into CCG mechanics, it means that Spider rely on military decks first and foremost. The Susumu courtiers are evolving into Honor deck—and an interesting one, at that—

but it will probably take another expansion or so before they're fully fleshed out. That leaves the Samurai of the Daigotsu Family and the Sohei, the militant Monks of the Spider monastic orders to bring victory to the Clan.

The Spider have many strong Personalities to work with to earn these military victories, and they'll need those strengths and a good bit of player skill to get them there. The Clan has to overcome perhaps the biggest hurdle in the game—going second to every other non-Spider deck. Other military decks will almost always get the first attack in the game, while Honor and Dishonor decks will have an extra turn to prepare for a Spider player's initial attack. The good news is that you can essentially always plan to use the "going second" side of their Stronghold (unless you're battling another Spider player, of course).

The Spider Stronghold does, of course, have built-in resistance to military decks with its ability to refill a Province face-up if you've lost a Province. That means you can often decline defending against your opponent's first attack and still effectively have four provinces. This means many games against military decks will see your opponent destroying your province first, then you destroying one of theirs, and so on. Maintaining an extra "virtual" province thanks to your Stronghold's Trait will help you greatly in such a province-trading game.

Opponents playing Honor or Dishonor decks, which are sometime known as "clock" decks, don't have as predictable a game plan as a military opponent. They'll be trying to gain Honor or cause you Honor losses faster than you can defeat them militarily. The Spider stronghold doesn't help as much in these matches as it does against a military opponent, since these decks almost never attack. Your best option for facing such a deck is to make sure you develop your Gold production as much as you can early on, so that you can afford to keep buying more and more military threats like Personalities and Attachments as the game goes on.

Below is a sample for a Spider military deck that includes cards from *The Coming Storm*. It includes [Nao](#), a relatively inexpensive Monk with a powerful Trait that causes Fear from an Action in Nao's unit, or an Action that targeted him, to kill Followers. It also includes [Daigotsu Atsushi](#). Note that he's not included because of his Duelist Keyword, but rather because he is simply an efficient Personality with a good Force to Gold cost ratio and a useful Fear Ability. Don't forget that Fear effects can be combined from cards in the same unit, so if Atsushi has [Zlkyt's Family](#) or a [Tested Blade](#) attached, for example, then you can generate a Fear 6 or Fear 5 effect, respectively, that can target a Personality with Followers!

Many of the Strategy cards in the deck will allow you to directly and proactively affect your battles. Meanwhile, cards like [Back to the Front](#), [Ritual Preparation](#) and [Losing Favor](#) help you counter your opponent's plans. [Journey's End Siege](#) may seem an odd choice, but it works well with Spider; against military decks, you'll almost always be a province behind, so why not use this event to try gain a province back against them? It also keeps your opponent from playing Terrains on the defense for the turn, which is very handy against Honor and Dishonor decks which often use [Encircled Terrain](#) and [Hold the Walls](#) to stymie your attacks.

There are other cards you could consider including from *The Coming Storm*. [Way of the Spider](#), for example, is a great addition to the deck that gives you extra Follower removal or another Fear effect and, since you're a Spider player, you can get additional use out of it thanks to its Discipline Keyword. Another interesting inclusion is [Daigotsu Teruo](#). Teruo is a very useful, albeit very strange Personality. He allows you to rearrange the top 5 cards of your Fate deck, then draw one—and then draw another one as he destroys himself with his Ability and his Expendable Keyword is triggered. So, for 5 Gold, you get to draw two cards of your choice from your top 5 and set the others up as you want—a very potent effect!

Finally, you'll note that this Deck isn't focused on any particular Keyword. While most of the Personalities are Samurai, the deck doesn't depend on that Keyword. The intent is to imply use the best cards available. Try the deck out a few times, then make changes to suit your play style and local gaming environment. Hopefully, you'll soon have your opponents bowing before the dark might of the Spider Clan!

Stronghold (1)  
[The Sinister Citadel of the Spider](#)

Dynasty Deck (40)

Personalities (22)  
3 [Daigotsu Roburo](#)  
3 [Daigotsu Konishi](#)  
3 [Daigotsu Meguro](#)  
3 [Daigotsu Onosaka](#)  
3 [Daigotsu Atsushi](#)  
3 [Nao](#)  
1 [Daigotsu Kanpeki, the Shadow Emperor - Experienced 3](#)  
1 [Daigotsu Geiko](#)  
1 [Susumu Yanada](#)  
1 [M'rika](#)

Holdings (17)  
3 [Nexus of Lies](#)  
3 [Bountiful Fields](#)  
1 [Productive Mine](#)  
3 [Shinomen Marsh](#)  
2 [Ashigaru Fort](#)  
2 [Carrion's Breath](#)  
1 [Counting House](#)  
1 [Slave Pits](#)  
1 [Recruitment Station](#)

Events (1)  
[Journey's End Siege](#)

Fate Deck (40)

Strategies (22)  
3 [Allied Efforts](#)  
3 [Back to the Front](#)  
3 [Contentious Terrain](#)  
3 [Okura is Released](#)  
2 [Everpresent Fear](#)  
2 [Suffer the Consequences](#)  
2 [Tactical Setback](#)  
2 [Ritual Preparation](#)  
2 [Losing Favor](#)

Followers (9)  
3 [Kikage Zumi Initiates](#)  
3 [Skeletal Troops](#)  
3 [Zlkyt's Family](#)

Items (6)  
3 [Kaiu Axe](#)  
3 [Tested Blade](#)

Rings (3)  
[Ring of Air](#)  
[Ring of Earth](#)  
[Ring of Water](#)





# The Unicorn Clan

By François Martinez

François Martinez employs new cards from *The Coming Storm* to boost the power of the Unicorn, allowing the greatest riders of the Empire to trample their enemies beneath their thundering hooves.



At the beginning of Ivory Edition, Unicorn players found themselves facing a revolution. For the first time in the game's history, the Cavalry keyword had undergone a fundamental change. On the face of it, it would appear that changing from a form of Assignment to an Absent Engage Action, usable once per turn, was a major blow to the Clan. However, the Cavalry Keyword has become both more versatile and more appropriate to a balanced environment. As the Kotei season progressed, Unicorn players demonstrated their adaptability, gaining more and more success as time went on and they learned how to use

the Keyword to its greatest effect.

Let's examine the new Cavalry Keyword. It allows you to move a Cavalry unit—that is, one in which the Personality and any Followers have the Cavalry Keyword—to Province as an Absent Engage Action. This means you can use it to move into either an opposed or unopposed Battle. Note, though, that you have to be resolving the Battle to which you want to move your Cavalry unit when you use the Action. What this means for Unicorn (or anyone using Cavalry units, for that matter), is that, firstly, it's still possible to take Provinces early in the game unopposed. It's just harder, as only one unit can do so, so it must have enough Force to destroy the Province. Secondly, it's possible to use Cavalry units to disrupt your opponent's defence, as he must try to anticipate where your Cavalry is going to go; you can use Cavalry to swing a marginal battle clearly in your favour.

The Unicorn advantage here is the number of Cavalry Personalities we have, allowing us to quickly assemble an army of mostly Cavalry, giving us many options to exploit this powerful Keyword. We also have a second Cavalry-like Action on the Stronghold, albeit one that only allows movement into an opposed Battle. This mean we can move two Cavalry units; we can, for example, threaten three provinces with three units, but use movement to converge them all onto one. So, with just Cavalry units and the Stronghold, we have an huge advantage over other Clans.

So, how do we build a deck to exploit this advantage, and how can cards from *The Coming Storm* help us out?

If we use Followers, then cards like [Bleak Lands](#) allow us to gain Force at little cost and while unopposed. Followers also offer our Personalities protection from Ranged and Melee Attacks. So, if we're going to use Followers, which should we include?

[Cavalry Escort](#) is one of the strongest tools *The Coming Storm* offers to us. It allows us to Recruit a Personality from a Province in battle, attaching the Follower to him as we do. It requires us to have Presence at the Battlefield, but not opposition, making it extremely synergistic with the Cavalry Keyword. [Mobile Troops](#) and [Samurai Lancers](#) are also good Cavalry Followers, but I've chosen to include the older cards [Spitting Llama](#), mainly for the -3F penalty it gives as a Battle Action, and [Long-Range Scouts](#) for the versatility it brings. [New Cavalry Tactics](#) further supports our focus on Followers.

Regarding Personalities, a Unicorn player has plenty of choices. I want to focus on giving the deck as much stability and versatility as possible, as there are cards Ivory Edition that readily can kill an whole unit, such as [Planted Evidence](#) and [Come One At A Time](#). Investing a lot of resources into a few, large units therefore seems hazardous. Accordingly, I've decided to include as many 3F Cavalry Personalities with low Gold cost as possible, such as [Utaku Sang-Ju](#), [Shinjo Okiau](#) and [Kataoka](#). [Utaku Sayaka](#) can be a relatively cheap Follower platform or a 4F Personality depending of the amount of Gold you're prepared to Invest.

Another Personality we could include is [Utaku Saiken](#). This Personality is an "enabler", granting Reserve to another Personality in a Province as an Engage Action. This can be a very potent effect, allowing us to bring a new Personality into an opposed battle and potentially swing it in our favour. [Shinjo Ajasu](#), the Topaz Champion, is only 2F for 5 Gold, but he can deliver a Ranged 2 Attack by bowing and, if he's moved—for example, by means of the Stronghold Ability—he can immediately straighten. I haven't included these Personalities in this deck, but you certainly could to try them out.

Unicorn always has a good economy, but the addition of [Cloth Market](#) from *The Coming Storm* is a major boost. It gives us far more stability in terms of Gold production, reducing the chances of a poor economic start to our game.

In terms of Strategies in the Fate Deck, since our opponents will often be "on the run" trying to catch our Cavalry units, why not aggravate his difficulties by playing many effects that move him away from battles? [Incapacitated](#) sends home defending units, while [The False Route](#) allows us to pull an opposing unit away from a Battlefield, stranding him there when we use our Stronghold Ability to move our unit back to a Battlefield. [Sudden Movement](#) is an excellent card for Unicorn, further amplifying our ability to move, but also allowing us to switch opposing units in a way unfavourable to our opponent. The new card [Persuasive Tactics](#) is another "send

home" card you might want to try out; it does, however, cost Gold and inflicts a small Honor loss, so keep those points in mind.

Other cards that help out the deck include [Way of the Unicorn](#)—essentially, our Stronghold Ability on a Strategy, that can be replayed using Discipline (the art on the card is fantastic, too!) I've also included [Thoughtless Sacrifice](#) and [Advance Warning](#), both of which are strong effects both when attacking and defending.

Finally, I've chosen to include several terrains to help protect us from effects like [Blanketed Forest](#), [Come One At A Time](#) and [Encircled Terrain](#). I've already mentioned Bleak Lands, but I've included a copy of [Lakeside Retreat](#) to help straighten any personalities that happen to end up bowed in battle. And speaking of Come One At A Time, duels could give us problems. We could consider including meta-cards against duelling, such as [Relentless](#) or [Kharmic Strike](#), but I've chosen not to do so here. Of course, your own gaming environment might see lots of duelling; moreover, if duelling becomes particularly strong, then it may be a threat at large events, as well. If that's the case, you might want to consider including such cards to protect your units.

In the end, this is a pretty basic deck. However, you can custom it as you like; perhaps, for example, you'd rather use items instead of Followers, and *The Coming Storm* certainly provided some powerful ones. In any case, enjoy taking our mounted armies to battle and crushing your stunned opponents under our steel hooves !

Stronghold (1)  
[The Golden Plains of the Unicorn](#)

Dynasty (40)

Events (1)  
1 [Dark Audience](#)

Holdings (18)  
3 [Jade Pearl Inn](#)  
3 [Stables](#)  
1 [Temple of Tengen](#)  
3 [Deep Harbor](#)  
3 [Family Dojo](#)  
2 [Shrine to Hachiman](#)  
3 [Cloth Market](#)

Personalities (21)  
1 [Iuchi Karasu - Inexperienced](#)  
1 [Moto Ming-Gwok - Experienced](#)  
1 [Moto Naleesh, the Living Goddess - Experienced](#)  
1 [Shinjo Kinto - Experienced 2](#)  
3 [Shinjo Okiau](#)  
1 [Shinjo Tselu - Experienced](#)  
3 [Utaku Sang-Ju](#)  
2 [Utaku Sayaka](#)  
3 [Utaku Sakiko](#)  
3 [Kataoka](#)  
2 [Shinjo Yoshie](#)

Fate Deck (40)

Strategies (30)  
2 [Way of the Unicorn](#)  
1 [Creating Order](#)  
2 [Unsettling Gathering](#)  
3 [Soul's Sacrifice](#)  
3 [Incapacitated](#)  
3 [Expensive Achievement](#)  
2 [Thoughtless Sacrifice](#)  
3 [Advance Warning](#)  
3 [New Cavalry Tactics](#)  
2 [The False Route](#)  
1 [Lakeside Retreat](#)  
3 [Bleak Lands](#)  
2 [Sudden Movement](#)

Followers (8)  
3 [Spitting Llama](#)  
3 [Cavalry Escort](#)  
2 [Long-Range Scouts](#)

Rings (2)  
1 [Ring of Air](#)  
1 [Ring of Earth](#)

