

CZ0571: THE MOST POWERFUL COMMANDERS IN LCI

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CLAP AND SLATE

ROOM TONE

- 1) INTRO JOSH & RACHEL

@joshleekwai - @wachelreeks - @commandcast

Lost Caverns of Ixalan is just about here and with it comes a wave of new legendary creatures! Today, we're showcasing the best of the best. We're covering the most powerful Commanders in the set. BUT FIRST:

****CARD KINGDOM** **ULTRAPRO #1** **PATREON: ALEX QUINTERO****

GAME KNIGHTS AUDITION ANNOUNCEMENT:

Stay tuned for the end of this episode because we're going to be announcing the winners of this year's Game Knights fan auditions.

*****TIKTOK*****

2) MAIN TOPIC: **MOST POWERFUL COMMANDERS - LOST CAVERNS OF IXALAN**

Power can be difficult to measure, and of course, these are merely first impressions of these cards. One legendary creature may rise to power that we didn't anticipate! But the Commanders we're talking about today have the brute strength, lethal efficiency, or built in resilience of other historically powerful Commanders. And we expect these legends to see lots of play as a result.

Caveat: We have done our best to learn the pronunciation of these commanders, but many of the pronunciations are not clear at time of recording.

ANIM PAKAL, THOUSANDTH MOON

Only one counter per attack, you need other ways to get counters on her.

Reminds me of Krenko, Tin Street Kingpin, but cares about counters specifically

+1/+1 COUNTERS

- *Red and white weirdly aren't great at putting a LOT of counters on at once*
- *Put Counters > Cathars' Crusade; Agitator Ant; Virtue of Loyalty; Noble Heritage;*
 - *Enhancers > Laezel, Vlaakith's Champion; The Ozolith; Basri's Lieutenant;*
- *Modular > Turn Anim into an artifact (Liquimetal Torque, etc); Steel Overseer; Arcbound Ravager;*

GNOME SWEET GNOME

- *More Gnomes* > Anointed Procession; Mondrak, Glory Dominus; Ojer Taq, Deepest Foundation (new card); Divine Visitation; Strionic Resonator;
 - *Notably Divine Visitation turns them into non-Gnome creatures*
- *Gnome Damage* > Impact Tremors; Purphoros, God of the Forge; Alibou, Ancient Witness; Goblin Bombardment; Hissing Iguanar
- *Big Gnomes* > Mercadia's Downfall; Graaz, Unstoppable Juggernaut; Tempered Steel; Metallic Mimic;
- *Extra Combats* > Mana Echoes/Phyrexian Altar + Aggravated Assault (Haste; Anger, etc);

Play patterns - You probably want a high number of 1-drop aggro creatures (Ragavan, Nimble Pilferer; Gingerbrute, et al)

CARMEN, CRUEL SKYMARCHER

A commander with an attack trigger means haste is essential (Lightning Greaves)

SAC YOUR STUFF

- *Fetchlands* > (want as many as you can get because they're also "ramp" with Carmen)
- *Treasures* > Black Market Connections; Deadly Dispute; Grim Hireling; Lotho, Corrupt Shirriff; Life Insurance; Forge, Neverwinter Charlatan
 - *Generally permanents are better here because you can bring them back with Carmen!*
- *Combo-tastic* > Pitiless Plunderer; Reassembling Skeleton/Gravecrawler/etc. + Ashnod's or Phyrexian Altar; Altar of Dementia; Teysa Karlov;
 - (Pawn of Ulamog can do a decent Pitiless Plunderer impression)
- *Artifact-o-crats* > Scrap Trawler; Myr Retriever; Krark-Clan Ironworks;

BRING IT BACK

- *Recursion* > Brought Back; Sevinne's Reclamation; Sun Titan; Cosmic Intervention; Serra Paragon;
- *This deck is permanent based and wants to sacrifice its stuff, make sure Carmen isn't the only way you have to reanimate things.*

SAC THEIR STUFF

- *Carmen does say "whenever A player" so it will trigger if opponents sac stuff.*
- *Edicts* > Fleshbag Marauder; Plaguecrafter; Demon's Disciple; Merciless Executioner; Doom Foretold;
 - *It's very powerful to make everyone sac their stuff all the time, but it's also very frustrating for your opponents. They. Will. Not. Like. It.*

BE SURE YOU CAN WIN

If you go that route, at least make sure you can end the game somehow instead of just stall it out so nothing happens:

- *The usual suspects* > Torment of Hailfire; Exsanguinate; Debt to the Deathless; Gray Merchant of Asphodel

JLK: You can be mean or you can be cute. Don't try to be both. Use the usual game enders.

DON ANDRES, THE RENEGADE

Jimmy is playing this on Game Knights

CRIME PAYS

- *Cast Noncreature from Library* > Share the Spoils; Stolen Strategy; Gonti, Lord of Luxury; Xanathar, Guild Kingpin; Thief of Sanity; Plargg and Nassari; Wand of Wonder; Decadent Dragon; Tibalt, Cosmic Imposter;
- *Cast Noncreature from Graveyard* > Memory Plunder; Diluvian Primordial; Halo Forager; Dire Fleet Daredevil; Rise of the Dark Realms; Reanimate;
 - *Note: A lot of this stuff casts from your opponent's graveyards, so you might want a little bit of Mass Mill (Mesmeric Orb, etc).*
- *Weaponize Treasures* > Mirkwood Bats; Reckless Fireweaver; Disciple of the Vault; Monumental Corruption; Tezzeret, Master of the Bridge; Cyberdrive Awakener; Rise and Shine;
- *The payoff for casting your opponent's noncreature spells is much stronger than the payoff for stealing their creatures, but I think the win con is still stealing your opponents creatures.*

EMPTY THREATS

- *Threaten Effects* > Coercive Recruiter; Zara, Renegade Recruiter; Thieving Amalgam; Mob Rule; Seize the Spotlight; Insurrection;
 - *JLK Pet Card* > Chamber of Manipulation
- *Theft* > Agent of Treachery; Control Magic;
- *Sac Outlets* > Greater Gargadon; Altar of Dementia (all of the Altars); High Market; Deadly Dispute; Costly Plunder;

OJER AXONIL, DEEPEST MIGHT

NOTE: This only enhances damage done to players, NOT creatures.

NOTE: It returns to the battlefield tapped, then has to be tapped to be transformed.

DAMAGE

- *Punishy* > Manabarbs; Rampaging Ferocidon; Defiler of Instinct; Repercussion;
 - *Valakut, the Molten Pinnacle, while it probably still goes in this deck, is NOT a red source.*
- *Tokeny* > Hellrider; Purphoros, God of the Forge; Impact Tremors; Zurzoth, Chaos Rider; Flame Fusillade;
- *Stormy* > Kessig Flamebreather; Firebrand Archer; Thermo-Alchemist; Urabrask
 - *I&S* > End the Festivities; Grapeshot; Fiery Confluence; Spikefield Hazard;
- *Wheely* > Glint-Horn Buccaneer; Brallin, Skyshark Rider
- *Pyrohemia (+Tyrite Sanctum and Mana Geyser/Jeska's Will)*
- *You'll want some spells that reliably do 4 damage to flip him back over.* > Spear Spewer; Flame Rift; Delayed Blast Fireball;

MORE DAMAGE

- *Other enhancers* > Fiery Emancipation; City on Fire; Solphim, Mayhem Dominus
 - *Note: Axonil doesn't scale particularly well with some enhancers because of the way replacement effects work*
 - *For example, Torbran, Thane of Red Fell*
 - *You probably still want some enhancers in case your commander dies too many times.*

- Watch the “You’re Reading Cards Wrong” episode to learn all about having multiple replacement effects. You’re going to need it.

BUFFS

- At 4 power, you have to deal damage to each player 10 times to achieve lethal
 - At 5 power, you have to deal damage to each player 8 times
 - At 6 power, you have to deal damage to each player 7 times
 - At 7 power, you have to deal damage to each player 6 times
 - At 8 power, you have to deal damage to each player 5 times
- Cheap Buffs > Hero’s Blade; Bonesplitter; Umezawa’s Jitte; Monstrous Rage;
- Big Turn Buffs > Unleash Fury; Infuriate; Rush of Blood; Fatal Frenzy;

Make sure you have some sac outlets.

This deck will almost certainly play kind of stormy. You’ll spend the early part of the game setting up to do a sequence of 3-4 things all at once and kill everyone out of nowhere (or get stopped).

MIDROLL POINT #1

SOVEREIGN OKINEC AHAU

Word soup. Let’s go over an explanation of how it works.

BUFF EM UP

- Equipment > Bonesplitter; Blackblade Reforged;
- Counters Matter > Clamavus;
- Anthem > Marshal’s Anthem; Unnatural Growth;
- Overrun > Overwhelming Stampede; Craterhoof Behemoth;

+1/+1 COUNTERS

- 0/0 Bases > Walking Ballista; Faeburrow Elder; Multani, Yavimaya’s Avatar; Mindless Automaton; Phantom Nishoba; Shanna, Sisay’s Legacy; Botanical Brawler;
 - Modular Theme could work with Okinec.
- Lil’ Bases > Crystalline Crawler; Heronblade Elite; Kami of Whispered Hopes; Serra Ascendant; Kazandu Mammoth;
- Counters > Hamza, Guardian of Arashin; Sigarda’s Summons; Kodama of the West Tree; Damning Verdict; Arwen, Weaver of Hope; Defiler of Vigor; Felidar Retreat; Conclave Sledge-Captain;
- Outlast Lords > Abzan Battle Priest; Abzan Falconer;

TETZIN, GNOME CHAMPION

Note: Tetzin cannot be removed in response to paying for the craft ability, it is exiled as part of the cost. It also cannot be crafted in response to a removal spell as you can only craft as a sorcery.

THAT’S A ‘FACT

This deck needs to be FULL of artifacts. Artifact lands, artifact tokens, you need a LOT of them to reliably flip this.

- Seat of the Synod, Razortide Bridge; Noble's Purse;
- *Artifacts that send themselves to the yard (and give value on the way):*
 - Aether Spellbomb; Mnemonic Sphere; Glassdust Hulk; Brainstone;

SELF MILL

Exiling from the graveyard is generally better than from the battlefield.

- Emry, Lurker of the Loch
- *Mill Artifacts* > Codex Shredder; Altar of Dementia; Grinding Station; Mesmeric Orb; Palantir of Orthanc; Perpetual Timepiece;
- *Wheels* > Windfall, Wheel of Misfortune
- *Looting / Rummaging* > Cathartic Reunion; Anvil of Bogarden;

DOUBLE-SIDED ARTIFACTS

There aren't many of these, so you're probably including a lot of craft cards from this set.

- *2-sides* > Azor's Gateway; Conqueror's Galleon; Dowsing Dagger; Golden Guardian; Chalice of Life; Jetfire, Ingenious Scientist; Primal Amulet; Incubator Tokens;
- *New cards* > The Everflowing Well; Matzalantli, the Great Door
- *Tutors* > Whir of Invention; Enlightened Tutor;

The timing on this deck is everything. You need to develop the pieces you need to craft and make sure that you have a double-sided artifact to transform to make sure you're getting value from crafting. You really want to be able to cast the double-sided artifact and craft on the same turn, or your opponents are not going to let you untap with your commander.

THE MYCOTYRANT

Josh is playing this on Game Knights

DESCEND

- *Get cards in the yard* > Golgari Grave-Troll; Hermit Druid; Altar of Dementia; Lethal Scheme; Doom Whisperer; Path of Discovery; Underrealm Lich; Skull Prophet;

FUN GUYS

- *Saprolings* > Tendershoot Dryad; Fungal Sprouting; Nemata, Primeval Warden; Life and Limb;
- *Fungi* > Mycoloth;

WIN CONDITIONS

You can go a LOT of different ways with this deck, but I like going with a little of everything.

- *Reanimation* > Lich-Knights' Conquest; Living Death
- *Aristocrat* > Ayara, First of Lothwain; Syr Konrad, the Grim; Dreadhound; Slimefoot, the Stowaway; The Meathook Massacre;
- *Overrun* > Overwhelming Stampede; Beastmaster Ascension
- *Big Lad* > Jarad, Golgari Lich Lord;

WAYTA, TRAINER PRODIGY

ENRAGE

- Stuffy Doll; Brash Taunter; Fiendlash; Boros Reckoner; Donna Noble; Hornet Nest; Flumph; Ranging Raptors; Ripjaw Raptors; Elesh Norn; Vron diss, Rage of Ancients; Feldon, Ronom Excavator;
 - *Phyrexian Vindicator does not get doubled with Wayta.*
 - *Repercussion is doubled in a bad way*

PINGERS

- *Deal Damage* > Pyrohemias; Raging Swordtooth; Marauding Raptor; Goblin Sharpshooter; Aether Flash; Powerstone Minefield;
- *Damage Wipes* > Blasphemous Act; Chain Reaction; Fiery Confluence; Spiteful Banditry;

PROTECTION

- *Indestructible* > Flawless Maneuver; Heroic Intervention; Boros Charm; Tamiyo's Safekeeping; Boromir, Warden of the Tower; Shielded by Faith;

Obligatory mention for Drumbellower and Seedborn Muse.

MIDROLL POINT #2

XAVIER SAL, INFESTED CAPTAIN

That's right. You can remove any kind of counter.

GOOD COUNTERS

- *Sagas* > Urza's Saga; Kiora Bests the Sea God; Song of Earendil; The Huntsman's Redemption; Genesis of the Daleks;
- *Planeswalkers* > Lolth, Spider Queen; Liliana, Dreadhorde General; Tevesh Szat, Doom of Fools;
- *Age Counters* > Mystic Remora; Elephant Grass; Glacial Chasm

GOOD TOKENS

- *Reminder: Populate is only creature tokens*
- *Make Cool Tokens to Copy* > Cackling Counterpart; Astral Dragon; Helm of the Host; Irenicus's Vile Duplication; The Scarab God; Bramble Sovereign;
- *Counters + Tokens* > Avenger of Zendikar; Nadir Kraken; Fain, the Broker; Herd Baloth;

COMBO POTENTIAL

- *Infinite Dies, ETB, Counters, Proliferates* >
 - Scurry Oak + Intruder Alarm + Xavier Sal;
 - Intruder Alarm + Champion of Lambholt/Renata, Called to the Hunt + any creature token

Is it best to pick a lane here? Focus on populating with incidental counters or focus on proliferating with incidental tokens? Which would you pick?

XOLATOYAC, THE SMILING FLOOD

COUNT ME IN!

- *Charge Counters* > Coalition Relic; Everflowing Chalice; The One Ring; Strixhaven Stadium; Tome of Legends;
- *Creature Counters* > Goldberry, River-Daughter; Incubation Druid; Rishkar, Peema Renegade; Biophagus; Yisan, the Wanderer Bard; Armored Scrapgorger; Hangarback Walker; Danny Pink;

LAND COUNTS

- *Counters on Lands* > Blast Zone; Nesting Grounds; Vivid Creek; Vivid Grove; Crucible of the Spirit Dragon; Saprazzan Cove; Rushwood Grove; Arixmethes, Slumbering Isle;
- *Put Counters on Lands* > Nissa, Who Shakes the World; Quicksilver Fountain; The Flood of Mars;
- *Island Tech* > Carpet of Flowers; High Tide;

FLASH SPEED

- *All this untap doesn't count for anything if you don't have ways to use it. We've mentioned some activated abilities and mana sinks that are good options, but how do you... win?*
- Cyclonic Rift! Chord of Calling! Capsize! Nexus of Fate!
- You probably win by putting a lot of counters on your creatures and swinging out!
 - Herald of Secret Streams; Defiler of Vigor; Evolution Sage;
 - Agatha's Soul Cauldron + Walking Ballista? Crystalline Crawler? Sage of Hours

This set also comes with a selection of cards themed around the Jurassic World franchise. Of course, it comes with a few commanders and we had to cover the most powerful ones in this episode.

*Welcome to... Jurassic Park. *Queue music**

IAN MALCOLM, CHAOTICIAN

MUST GO FASTER

- *Draw 2* > Kami of the Crescent Moon; Dictate of Kruphix; Fevered Visions; Vision Skeins; Howling Mine; Noggle Ransacker; Ludevic, Necro-Alchemist; Emberwilde Captain; Arcane Denial;
 - *Payoff* > Alandra, Sky Dreamer; Faerie Mastermind;

EAT THE TOURISTS

- *Cast from Exile* > Wild-Magic Sorcerer; Passionate Archaeologist; Ghostly Pilferer; Extraordinary Journey; The Twelfth Doctor;
 - Careful! Your opponents can cast these too!

CHAOS THEORY

- *Sharing* > Share the Spoils; Wrong Turn; Reins of Power; Throes of Chaos; Chaos Wand; Game of Chaos; Chaos Mutation;

LIFE FINDS A WAY

- *Emergency Lever* > Homeward Path; Brand; Capsize; Remand; Wash Away; Chaos Warp; Narset's Reversal; Chain of Vapor; Delay; Eruth, Tormented Prophet;

Your cards want to be: Counterspells (especially that return to hand) or instant/sorcery that get value from graveyard (flashback, aftermath, retrace (Reality Scramble), etc)

INDOMINUS REX, ALPHA

KEYWORDS

- *You want individual cards with multiple keywords so you're not just looting, you're drawing cards.*
- *Prioritize protection and evasion (Hexproof, Flying, Indestructible, Vigilance), especially on cards that are playable on their own.*
 - *Currently impossible to give it double strike by discarding*
- *Multiple Strong Keywords > Scavenged Brawler; Elder Gargath; Baleful Strix; Nightveil Predator; Kefnet the Mindful; Yarok, The Desecrated; Earthquake Dragon;*
- *There are some cards like Thrasta, Tempest's Roar that have more specific keywords, in this case "Trample Over Planeswalkers" counts as a different keyword than "Trample" So you would discard Thrasta and draw 3 cards.*
- *Weird Keywords > Thrasta, Tempest's Roar; Eradicator Valkyrie;*

OTHER COUNTERS

- *Counters on ETB > Master Biomancer; The Great Henge;*
- *Counter Enhancers > Winding Constrictor; Vorinclex, Monstrous Raider;*
- *Counter Movers > The Ozolith; Goldberry, River Daughter; Aven Courier;*

REANIMATION

- *You're throwing a lot of creatures in your graveyard, but they don't have to stay there*
- *Living Death; Agadeem's Awakening; Stitch Together;*
- *Bag of Holding; Currency Converter;*

OUR FAVORITE COMMANDER

Josh = Xolatoyac, The Smiling Flood

Rachel = Ian Malcolm, Chaotician

MOST POWERFUL COMMANDER

Josh = Ojer Axonil, Deepest Mlght

Rachel = Ojer Axonil, Deepest Mlght

3) TO THE LISTENERS

Which commanders do you think are the most powerful Commanders in the set? Did we miss any? Are you planning on building any of the Commanders we talked about today? What are the hot pieces of tech that we missed?

****CARD KINGDOM #2** **ULTRA PRO #2****

AND THE WINNER IS...

We received hundreds of Game Knights audition submissions from our patrons. It was a really tough selection process. In the end, we selected two winners who will be flown out to LA to appear as a guest on an episode of Game Knights next year. Ok so let's meet them:

The first winner is **play Saul Padilla Clip**

The second winner is **play Allie Gier** (pronounced GUY-er)

CONGRATULATIONS SAUL AND ALLIE!

We're very excited! We will contact you soon over email.
Keep an eye out for Extra Turns auditions coming soon.

4) CLEAN-UP STEP

Big thanks to our amazing team here at The Command Zone! **Damen Lenz; Eric Lem; Megan Yip; Gaurav Gulati; Jordan Pridgen; Jamie Block; Arthur Meadowcroft; Manson Leung; Josh Murphy; Jake Boss; Sam Waldow; Evan Limberger; Katie Cole; Mitch Trafford; and Jimmy Wong.**