

LEGEND OF THE FIVE RINGS • INTERACTIVE STORYLINE COLLECTIBLE CARD & ROLEPLAYING GAMES

THE  
IMPERIAL

# HERALD

VOL. 2 / NO. 21

Samurai



Edition

# RACE FOR THE THRONE





WHO CAN  
STOP ME?



**KHAN'S**  
DEFIANCE



Released January 22, 2007.  
Watch the Khan's Defiance movie preview at  
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THE  
IMPERIAL

# HERALD

THE OFFICIAL LEGEND OF THE FIVE RINGS™ QUARTERLY • VOL. 2, NO. 21

Welcome to the latest issue of the Imperial Herald. As you'll soon see, this issue is a little different as we have a major announcement to tell you about, the Race for the Throne! This sweeping "mega-game" will allow you to use all your skills to help your Clan achieve the greatest prize of all: The Imperial Throne! Not only will your skills in the CCG earn points towards your Clan, but also your fan sites, fan fiction, charity food drives, koku redemption, and many more things! It's all in this issue.

We also give you a look at the menacing Spider Clan. Will they weave a web over the whole Empire? Do they really keep oni in the basement, or have they given up that side of the Shadowlands? Time will tell!

We hope you enjoy this issue of the Imperial Herald as much as we've enjoyed preparing for the Race for the Throne!

Todd C. Rowland  
Brand Manager, Legend of the Five Rings

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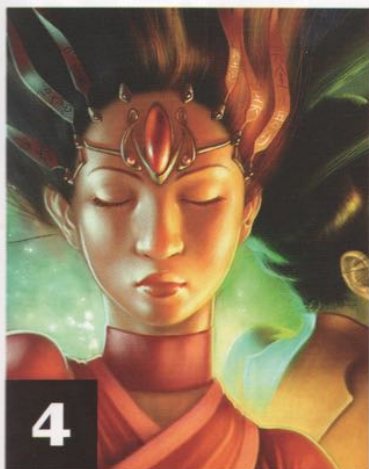
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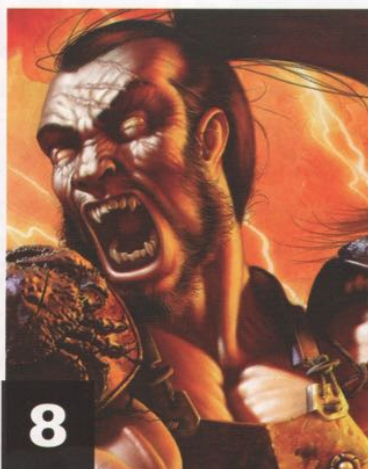
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By Shawn Carman  
Fred Wan

## THE WORD OF HEAVEN

*Kyuden Isawa, year 1168, month of the Ox*

Shiba Ningen sat motionless in a small dark room somewhere in the confines of the Isawa family estate. Everything had been removed from the room save for a single candle, Ningen, and the object of his scrutiny. The lone candle cast little light, draping the room in deep shadows. Ningen sat in lotus position, his brow furrowed as he reached out with his senses, plumbing the Void for any connection he could find to the mysterious artifact before him.

The Egg of the Void. It had been removed from the Tomb of the Seven Thunders by Shiba Aikune, then returned to Phoenix lands by the Dragon monk Hitomi Maya after Aikune's death. It was Ningen who identified it, although in all honesty he did not know how. He had never heard of such an artifact, and yet he had sensed its approach and known what it was the moment he had seen it. Even now, he did not know what it meant. All he

knew was that it was important.

Hours stretched on as he sat in the near-darkness. The candle burned lower and lower until it was little more than a lump of wax with a tiny flame atop it. Perspiration beaded up on Ningen's forehead with the strain of casting his senses farther and farther into the gulf, searching for the egg's presence. It seemed that the emptiness surrounding it was without limit, and that he would never find it in the darkness. And then...

*Greetings, little Phoenix.*

Ningen inhaled sharply. *Greetings, great one*, he said without speaking. *I... forgive my intrusion. I wish only to understand the Egg.*

*Of course*, the voice returned. *There are no bounds to the curiosity of humans, it seems. Yet I must confess that none has ever succeeded in reaching across the Void to me. You are not without talent, perhaps.*

*I am honored beyond words, great one*, Ningen answered. *I wish to understand the Egg, if it is your will for me to do so.*

*My will.* The Void Dragon's voice was bemused. *The Egg is the embodiment of the elements, and the embodiment of their absence. It is a moment of convergence between Ningen-do and Tengoku. It is the means by which particularly gifted mortals can reach across the gulf and reach my kind, the dragons.*

"Magnificent," Ningen breathed. "I am not worthy, great one."

No, the dragon agreed. *You are not.* Ningen drew back in surprise. "But... you said that I was the first."

*You are*, it replied. *You are skilled, and powerful, but not yet worthy.*

Ningen closed his eyes and struggled for a moment with the disappointment. "How can I find one who is, great one?"

*There is one among you already, the*

dragon said. *One who is pure. One who is wise. One who is worthy. Bring this one before me, and the Egg's purpose will be fulfilled.*

With that, Ningen was alone in the chamber once more.

Tamori Nakamuro and Shiba Ningen walked the hallway together in silence. Nakamuro stroked his beard casually, his mind lost in thought. After a while, he nodded. "We have spent too many years too far from the path. We have forgotten the lessons of Shinsei, and of our ancestors. It is no wonder the dragons have passed judgment on us."

"We call ourselves Masters," Ningen said. "What arrogance."

"It is tradition," Nakamuro countered.

"That does not make it right," Ningen said. "We have to earn the right. We have to find the path again. I must find the one the dragons have judged worthy."

"Ochiai."

Ningen cast an irritated look sideways. "Your reverence for your sister is admirable, but this is a bit much."

"She will not take a life, even in war. She seeks another way, no matter the cost. Can you think of anything more true to the path of Shinsei? To the ideal that the Phoenix are meant to embody?"

Ningen frowned. "Perhaps... perhaps you have a point," he said. "When she returns from the Winter Court, then she and I will speak."

"Good," Nakamuro said. "And the Council must speak of the Khan soon." His mouth became a grim line. "The Phoenix must choose. Are we meant to speak of peace, or bring it about? And if we mean to bring it about, by what means is that acceptable?"





# RACE FOR THE THRONE

The Race for the Throne is the first time that every aspect of being a Legend of the Five Rings fan will directly contribute to your ability to help your Clan in the storyline.

For many years the collectible card game has been the primary way to influence the epic story of L5R. While the CCG is a major influence, we felt there should be more ways to get the fans involved. And with a huge plot point involved, the actual rulership of the Empire, we knew we had to let every member of every Clan have a chance to affect the outcome. Thus, the Race for the Throne was born.

The Race is what we are referring to as the L5R "Mega-Game." In the Race, your abilities in the card game, role-playing game, Clan promotion, event organization and many other things will directly earn your chosen Clan points. These points will help them gain dominance over various Spheres of influence, such as Economics, Military and Politics. By controlling

one of these Spheres, a Clan can earn themselves a title, such as Imperial Chancellor for Politics. If the Clan has the best overall rankings in all the Spheres combined at the end of the Race, they will claim the Imperial Throne and the next Divine Emperor will rise from that Clan.

So what are all these different ways you can affect the Race? Among them are the best Clan attire. Do you have the coolest Dragon kimono? Did you make a custom Crab tetsubo or banner? Better bring them to all the major events this year, as you may win points for your Clan as well as prizes for yourself! Like to organize events? Organize the best event in 2007 or 2008 (voted by players) and you'll earn points for your Clan!

Best of all, many of the ways that you earn points for your Clan also qualify you for the Samurai Fund! Not only will you be helping your Clan gain the Imperial Throne, you'll earn

a portion of the Samurai Fund for yourself!

Here is how the whole thing works:

## **OBJECT OF THE GAME**

Each Clan is trying to seize the throne and rule Rokugan. To do so, the Clans must achieve dominance in five Spheres of power: Military, Economy, Politics, Knowledge and Spirit. During the course of the Mega-Game, the Clans accumulate points in each Sphere, and are ranked in the Sphere based on point totals compared to other Clans. At the end the Clan with the best combined rankings (adding all five spheres together for each Clan) will take the throne at the end of The Samurai Championships.

## **PARTICIPATING CLANS**

Crab, Crane, Dragon, Lion, Mantis, Phoenix, Scorpion, Spider and Unicorn. Points won by Shadowlands will count for Spider.



## THE PRIZE OF POWER

At the end of the Mega-Game (marked by the Samurai Championships), there will be a story prize for the top-ranked Clan in each Sphere, regardless of overall winner. The prize for each Sphere, the dominating Clan will place a member in a major court position, as follows:

- Military: Shogun
- Economy: Imperial Treasurer
- Politics: Imperial Chancellor
- Knowledge: Imperial Advisor
- Spirit: Voice of the Emperor
- Highest ranking total in all Spheres combined: Emperor

## SECTIONS OF THE RACE

The Race begins in January 2007. There will be 7 legs of the Race. At the end of each leg we will calculate who is leading in each category. There will be prizes for each leg's best Clan in the different Spheres.

It is important to win the legs because the top Clan in each Sphere of a given leg will receive a point bonus during the next leg in that Sphere.

If a Clan is dominant in at least three Spheres at the end of any given leg, they will put someone as the leading contender for the throne, giving them a large advantage over other Clans not currently in power. The final actual Emperor will be decided at the Samurai Championships. If a Clan has the leading contender (3 Spheres or better) at the end of a leg they will gain an additional point bonus for all Spheres during the next leg.

1st Leg Preseason: Kotei 2007 -  
March - May 31, 2007

2nd Leg: June 1, 2007 -  
September 30, 2007

3rd Leg: October 1, 2007 -  
December 31, 2007

4th Leg: January 1, 2008 -  
March 31, 2008

5th Leg: April 1, 2008 -  
June 30, 2008

6th Leg: July 1, 2008 - Just before  
Samurai Championships

7th (and final) Leg:  
Samurai Championships, featuring  
a major point prize for competitions  
in all five Spheres

## STORY PRIZES FOR WINNING LEGS

In addition to the above-mentioned bonus, during each leg there will be a prize for Top of Sphere during that leg - and a penalty for being bottom! Sometimes, the two will be tied together and sometimes they will be separate.

## TEMPTATIONS

Any time a Clan either tops a specific Sphere two or more legs in a row, or tops two or more Spheres in a single leg, members of the Imperial Assembly registered to that Clan will have a chance to accept or refuse a temptation by popular vote from those registered to that Clan. An example of such could be a box of boosters sent to all members of the Clan, or special promo cards which only registered members of that Clan will receive. Whatever form it takes, the price for accepting is always the same: the Clan will only receive half the points in its top-ranked Sphere during the next leg, and loses any additional bonuses in other Spheres for that leg.

*For example, if Crane top Politics and Military in the 3rd leg, they could receive an offer for a special alternative art card for every Crane assembly member. If they do not accept, then all*

*points they win in Military and Politics during the 4th leg will gain the point bonus. If they take the temptation, then they get no bonuses, and all points in their best Sphere during the 4th leg are cut in half.*

## GAINING POINTS IN EACH LEG

In each Sphere there will be pre-scheduled events or contests where players will gain points for their Clan in that Sphere for winning. There are also some methods of earning points that do not adhere to a specific schedule and that players may be involved in or organize at any time.

## WAYS TO EARN POINTS IN EACH SPHERE: MILITARY

Your victories at CCG events translate to victory for your Clan on the field of battle in Rokugan.

### Scheduled Major Events

These will be on the schedule on the AEG web site, including Kotei, Gencon Indy, European Championships, Jewel Championships, etc.

### Sanctioned Samurai Fund

**Events.** AEG will make a Samurai Fund Prize Kit and sanctioning available to T.O.'s starting in June 2007. No events will be sanctioned prior due to Kotei. Events must purchase the Samurai Fund Prize Kit and have a minimum of 50 participants for the event in order for it to count for points in the Race. Proceeds from the sale of the Samurai Fund Prize Kit go to the Samurai Fund. T.O.'s and players will be given the opportunity to host events that will allow the winner to qualify for a spot at the Samurai Championships. Details on how to organize these events to follow.





## ECONOMY

Your use of Koku will help your Clan dominate the markets and trade routes of Rokugan.

**Scheduled Events.** These will include: Koku Auctions, Largest Kotei, Best Samurai Fund Promotion, Store Makeover Contest, etc.

**Koku Redemption.** Points will be earned during each leg for koku sent and redeemed at the AEG offices. All koku sent to the AEG offices after January 1 can be pledged to a specific Clan. Points will be awarded to the Clan that sends in the largest total amount of koku and for the single largest koku purchase. Keep an eye on the AEG site for special Race for the Throne koku offers.

## POLITICS

How you present yourself in words, attire and character will sway the courts of Rokugan in your Clan's favor.

**Scheduled Events.** These will include: Winter Court, Secrets Votes, Best Kotei Vote, L5R Attire Contests, Clan Courts, fan site contests, etc.

**Court Intrigue.** Players will have the ability to earn regular points through RPG events and through long-term in-game loyalty to a specific Clan.

## KNOWLEDGE

Your knowledge of the traditions, lore, and history of L5R will give your Clan control over secrets, spells, and other information in Rokugan.

**Scheduled Events.** Things like L5R Scavenger Hunt, L5R Biggest Fan Contest, Fan Fiction Contest, hidden questions on the web, etc.

**Walking the Way.** Points will be earned for each leg through regular trivia quizzes and Imperial Assembly contests.

## SPIRIT

Your generosity and sportsmanship will win the hearts and minds of the people of Rokugan.

**Scheduled Events.** These will include Charity Events, Food Drives, Challenge Booth and more.

**Imperial Gift.** Players and Clans will be able to gain points in the Spirit Sphere for food and charitable donations made in the name of their Clan and verified by the charity receiving the donation.

## SAMURAI CHAMPIONSHIPS AND THE SAMURAI FUND

The Race for the Throne culminates at the 2008 Samurai Championships. The Samurai Fund is a reward for qualifying for and attending the

Samurai Championships in 2008.

This fund represents the actions of the players and will grow over time. Anyone who qualifies for the Fund will receive a share of the Fund at the Samurai Championships. The Fund will be divided based on how many qualifying players attend.


## CURRENT FUND

AEG has primed the Fund with \$10,000. The 2007 and 2008 Kotei seasons will also add to the Fund. Other events around the world are getting involved to add to the Fund, including the Test of the Topaz Champion. If you want to help grow the Fund with your events, please contact us. Don't miss your chance to help grow the Samurai Fund and also get a piece of it!

There is much more to Legend of the Five Rings than just winning at the CCG, so you will see we have many ways for people to qualify outside of just their card-playing talents. The Samurai Fund is directly tied to the Race for the Throne and we will be updating the options for players as the schedule for each leg is revealed.

For a complete list of ways to qualify for the Fund, visit [www.samuraiedition.com](http://www.samuraiedition.com). New ways to qualify will be added all the time!





By Rusty Priske  
Fred Wan

## ARMED AND READY

The great hall of Kyuden Hida had coldness about it. It was not just the temperature, which did give indications of the winter outside, but also it was the lack of comforts that would welcome a visitor. The walls and floor were rough stone and bare of adornments.

That was not to say that the room felt empty – not with Hida Kuon there. The Crab Champion was a large man with a larger presence. Even in the vast hall, he filled the space.

Kuon sat on the large, rough throne that dominated one end of the hall. He crumpled a parchment in disgust and threw it to the floor.

Kuon's wife Hida Reiha and Hiruma Oda stood nearby. They knew the missive came from Toritaka Tatsune, but they were not privy to its contents. Reiha looked at the paper on the floor and then back at Kuon. "What word from Winter Court?"

Kuon scowled. "They continue to play their petty political games. It is a

time for leaders, not for sycophants! Apparently the Empress," there was a hint of sarcasm in his voice as he said the word, "has appointed Bayushi Norachai the 'Protector of Toshi Ranbo'. She has essentially handed the Empire over to the Scorpion, what with Kaukatsu already on one side and now Norachai on the other."

Oda tapped his chin as he said, "Odd that she would lean on the Scorpion rather than the Lion, since that was her clan before she was Empress. We can only assume that the Scorpion are manipulating her somehow."

Kuon's voice lowered to a menacing tone. "When do they not? They believe that they have their hooks in every facet of Rokugan. They are wrong."

Reiha's voice remained even as she said, "What else did Tatsune say?"

"Norachai is abusing his position already. He has demanded that each clan send two thousand men to Toshi Ranbo to serve under him." He gestured roughly toward the door that eventually led to the harsh winter conditions outside. "Does the man have no inkling of the logistics involved in moving so many men? He is mad if he thinks such a thing is possible. And two thousand? Per clan? The Shogun himself maintains a force only slightly smaller than that in the capital."

Oda shook his head. "I'm sure the Empress understands military requirements. As a former Lion she must realize that we cannot spare troops. We are the line of defense against the Shadowlands. Sending two thousand away would be madness!"

Reiha nodded. "Our extra troops are already accounted for. Lord Kuon's grandfather is fighting the Shadowlands directly and we need the remaining men for our excursions against the Scorpion."

"Which they are also talking about in court," Kuon snarled. "The Scorpion are talking about 'unprovoked' attacks against them. No formal accusations have been made, and I doubt they will be. If this were to become an open discussion, then the details of their cowardly assassination attempts against Kisada would also be revealed. The Scorpion do not like to stand in the light of Lord Sun."

"What are we going to do in light of this new information from the court, Lord Kuon?" Reiha asked.

"We are not yielding to an obvious Scorpion ploy. It is clear that the Empress lacks the strength of will that Naseru possessed in abundance. I cannot believe that the Emperor thought her worthy of the throne."

Oda shrugged. "We do not know that he did. He left no word that she was to take the Steel Throne after he died. It could be that he wanted the throne to pass to another."

"He never liked the Shogun," Reiha said. "It seems unlikely that he would want him to be his successor."

Kuon shook his head. "The Emperor was a practical man. He would not let personal feelings interfere with what the Empire needs. It is clear we need someone strong to sit on the Steel Throne – someone who cannot be manipulated by the Scorpion. The Empire sits on a precipice and all of the talk in the world will not save us from tumbling into the abyss." He stood and grabbed the parchment from the floor where he had thrown it. "No, Norachai and Kurako will not commandeer the Crab legions, but if a worthy man with the strength to hold the Empire together were to sit on the Steel Throne, I would pledge our legions to follow him to the ends of the earth."





*"A samurai need not prepare for war. He is always prepared." – Heigai*

War is life for a samurai. They train for it every day. In Rokugan it is a near daily part of life. From the ability to accurately swing your katana to the deadly precision of an archer, war is all encompassing. As such Military is going to be a very active Sphere in the Race for the Throne. Simply put, win the tournaments and your Clan will control the Military Sphere.

However, times for military decks are turbulent. Just before the beginning of the Kotei season, a range seeing over 50 points available for Military, the entire environment will be changing with Khan's Defiance. No major events occur before the Kotei start, so the first several events will be a real testing ground to see how things shake up. The Crab look very strong with their resistance-based mechanics, but Phoenix has also gained a lot of power via their new efficient spells in Khan's Defiance. Magistrates out of Scorpion and Mantis might be a dark horse contender. The Khan himself is a powerhouse and certainly shouldn't be discounted.

How will you prepare for the Military

Sphere? It may be wise to look back at the guidance of great minds.

*"Any enemy who is completely assured that he has the advantage is at a disadvantage." - Sun Tao*

Several Clans are riding high right now. Crab, as mentioned, have very strong cards coming out of Khan's Defiance as do Phoenix. Be prepared for many strong decks by those players. Study their decks. Learn the cracks in their armor.

*"The true greatness of a general lies in the greatness of his advisors." -Sun Tao*

Use your Clan fan sites! There are thousands of players out there posting and critiquing new decks every day. Use their knowledge. Don't be afraid to take some criticism. Chances are someone has already tried what you are thinking of and together you may take it in new directions.

*"No enemy was ever overcome by repeating the same strategy. Innovation creates victory." – Akodo's Leadership*

Change your deck. Tear it apart and rebuild. If your Lion harpoon deck isn't working, try something else. Don't allow yourself to put on blinders as to what your Clan is capable of. Chances

are your opponent has, and your innovation will catch them off guard.

*"Sending an army without a scout is like leaping from a mountain without looking below" - Akodo's Leadership*

Just as you can use your Clan's fan sites to improve your own deck, use the other Clans' sites to learn about theirs. You may have a dedicated Scorpion player that you fight against every weekend, but he is only one Scorpion. The Scorpions you will see from other areas at Kotei may have wildly different play styles. Learn them.

As the Race continues we will see the introduction of the Truest Test, and by the time GenCon and Worlds roll around, Samurai Edition itself will be in full swing. The entirely new tournament environment will keep the Military Sphere in flux. You will have to stay on top of the scene at all times to keep your Clan ahead!

*"I rather enjoyed the war, myself," Katoa observed casually. "At least it wasn't boring."*

Kotei Dominance – The winner of each Kotei will earn 1 Military point for their Clan, along with any other chosen awards.



By Shawn Carman  
Fred Wan

## WILL OF IRON

*Kyuden Doji, year 1168, month of the Ox*

Doji Domotai strode into one of her private audience chambers and removed her helm, shaking her head to free her short, bleached hair as she did so. Despite the scar that marred her otherwise perfect features, she still had the look of one far too young for a position of such importance as the Crane Clan Champion. It was ironic, perhaps, because of late she felt very, very old.

"Domotai-chan," a voice called. She looked up and smiled. "Kusari," she said. "I thought you would not return from the coast until tomorrow."

"I only arrived a short time ago," Doji Kusari said. "I finished the negotiations early and... I was concerned about you."

Domotai could not help but feel tremendous appreciation at his words, more so because of his Lion upbringing. Such things were difficult for him, and her as well, if the truth were told. She had trained with the Matsu, after all. "I am well," she said, "but I thank you for your concern."

"The battle?" he asked.

She sighed and sat her helm upon a low table. "As well as can be expected," she said. "The front is at a standstill with the onset of winter. Neither we nor the Dragon can make any significant advances without the risk of sudden weather completely stranding our forces without shelter and supplies. It will likely be so for at least a month, perhaps longer."

"The winter will end it," Kusari said. "The Dragon cannot endure for long after a winter trapped in the mountains. They have not the supplies to survive it and launch a war effort when the thaws come."

"If this war has taught us anything, it should be that the Dragon cannot be anticipated," Domotai said grimly. "Their strength is in surprise more than anything."

"True," Kusari admitted. "What of the Daidoji?"

Domotai grimaced. "They are... difficult. They obey orders as always, but Kikaze's disgrace seems to have crushed their spirit. Some fight to regain their honor, while others seem only to hope for death in battle."

"Deathseekers among the Crane," Kusari said. "That I should live to see such a thing... amazing."

"I am quite certain I will be remembered as the Champion who ushered in the disgrace of the Iron Crane," Domotai said. "What a legacy to leave to our children. My father would be most proud."

"You are always so sour when maneuvers go badly," Kusari observed. "They must have been cut short by the snow."

She glared at him for a moment, then looked away and smiled, shaking her head. "You are ever so perceptive. I should have sent you to Winter Court, perhaps." Her smile faded when she looked back and saw the grim expression he bore. "What has happened?" she demanded. "Something at court?"

"Nothing insurmountable," he said slowly. "There was... let us say, an incident. With the Imperial Chancellor, no less."

"Kaukatsu?" Domotai demanded. "What happened?"

"It is a bit unclear," Kusari said slowly. "It seems one of the elder Crane representatives responded poorly to Kaukatsu's manipulations. He had an episode of some sort, and made several public statements that portrayed us in a less than favorable light."

Domotai cursed. "Who was it? Not Seishiro?"

"No," Kusari answered. "It seems Seishiro and his niece have tried to gain control of the situation. The responsible party has committed seppuku, and Seishiro has made a token apologetic offer to the Scorpion." He visibly braced himself. "Some of which will doubtless find its way to the Dragon lands."

Domotai cursed much more loudly. "What is Kaukatsu's game?"

"So near as can be determined, he seems intent on pitting the Empress against the Shogun."

She shook her head. "No, he wants to pit their adherents against one another."

Kusari nodded. "That may well be the case. Regardless, he is creating a political environment almost completely suited to his needs. With each passing day he controls more of what goes on in the court. Soon, he will be an insurmountable opponent."

"I think not," Domotai said. "Otomo Hoketuhime is among our strongest allies. If we anchor our support around her, not even Kaukatsu can attack her openly."

Her husband considered it for a moment. "A dangerous play, to place all our support in a single individual. Hoketuhime is not a young woman."

"She is strong enough," Domotai said. "With the Crane, she will be even stronger."





# POLITICS

The story of L5R has most often been driven by those victorious in the CCG but it has been lived and told by the players showing devotion to their clans in far more than mere CCG play. All over the world people live their clan in the RPG and Live Action game. L5R events are graced by players in excellent L5R Garb or a fanatic Clan supporter dressed to the hilt in the logos and colors of his or her Clan. Clan banners grace the CCG halls, and cries of "BANZAI!!!" echo through the entire convention center. The Political Sphere of the Race for the Throne is all about showing your loyalty to the clan, with emphasis on clan pride at CCG events and a very healthy dose of RPG influence.

In Rokugan honor is a force stronger than steel and war is a tool of the courts. In the realm of politics, clans rise and fall as they broker deals, negotiate treaties, form and break alliances and claim important positions in the governing of the Empire. Who will govern the capital city? Who will represent Rokugan when trading with foreign powers? Who will decide the guilt or innocence in the highest courts of the land? As the clans wheel and deal, entire provinces change hands with a few whispered phrases. Samurai who ruled vast lands find themselves suddenly exiled or even executed. No clan can afford to ignore the court. The Scorpion and Crane thrive there, but militant clans like the Crab and Unicorn must also be able to function there lest they find themselves all alone surrounded by enemies and uncaring

bystanders. Even the Shadowlands has come to recognize that it can not hope to defeat the clans and destroy the Empire without first insinuating itself into the politics of the clans.

While clans compete in the Political Sphere winners will host future winter courts, while a losing clan will find itself not invited. Lands will change hands, with winners preying on the losers. The Empress and Imperial families will also get involved, helping or harming clans as their fortunes rise and fall.

This year's political machinations start with the experimental but very well received L5R Online Winter Court. (You can check it out at [www.l5r/wintercourt.com](http://www.l5r/wintercourt.com)) This online RPG session features 100 actors playing roles for their clans and helping to decide the political landscape of Rokugan when the snows melt and war begins again in spring. The top actors as voted on by their peers will gain honor and points for their clans in the Race for the Throne and the clan that is decided to have been most dominant during the event will gain additional bonus points towards this Sphere.

Between now and the Samurai Championships you can expect to see special RPG adventures that are tied to the competition. The decisions made during home and convention sessions will also affect the outcome of the Race.

During the entire Race we will be watching to see how you represent your clan. Clan loyalty from event to event will count in the Race and we will be

looking for standout representatives to earn bonus points for their clan - be it through clan garb, banners and clan mon attire, websites, sig lines in forums, etc.

Bring out your clan colors! At each Kotei the player who is voted to have shown the most Clan pride - be it through costume, actions, or any other method you can think of to show how great your clan is - will earn one point for their clan in the Political Sphere.

## Winter Court Best Actors

The Clan that player is playing will gain points as follows:

First – 5 Points

Second – 4 Points

Third – 3 Points

Fourth – 2 Points

Fifth – 1 Point

Winter Court Dominant Clan: Players in the Court will vote on the Clan which has been dominant in the event. A player may not vote for the clan they are playing. Winning Clan will gain 5 points.

Clan Attire at Kotei: Person voted to have the best Clan attire or costume at each Kotei will gain 1 point for their clan in the Politics sphere. Winners may submit pictures to AEG for a vote by players around the world. Top 5 will earn a seat at the Samurai Championships.



By Shawn Carman  
Fred Wan

## PLOTTING THE COURSE

*The Islands of Silk and Spice, Month  
of the Ox, year 1168*

Yoritomo Naizen threw open the doors of his private chambers at Kyuden Gotei and stormed inside. He crossed quickly to a small table and took up a bottle of water, emptying it with one long drink. Setting the bottle aside, he removed his blades and placed them on a black lacquered rack sitting next to an elaborate stand holding a unique helm. The Mantis Champion paused for a moment to bow slightly before the helm, then began unlacing his domaru. Only when his armor was removed and he had covered his bare chest with a simple green kimono did he return to the doorway through which he had entered. He swung it open and fixed one of the servants with a commanding gaze. "Sake," he ordered. "And see to it a bath is prepared." The servant hurried away, and the Champion turned his attention to the two samurai that waited. "Enter," he ordered. "There is no sense in waiting."

The two samurai bowed and stepped into Naizen's chambers. One, like the Champion, bore all the signs of just having come from the docks. "The men have been dismissed, my lord, with orders to return for departure in one week's time."

"That will have to suffice," Naizen grunted. "It seems unlikely that all the things requiring my attention will be dealt with in so short a time, but then that is why I have such talented advisors to tend to such things in my absence. Is that not correct, Eihime?"

"Of course," the woman replied smoothly. "Failure to delegate is the sign of an unworthy leader, after all. Only the strong have the courage to do so, Naizen-sama."

Naizen smirked and glanced at the young woman. "I never cease to be surprised at your choice of attire, Eihime."

The shugenja smiled. Her trappings were hardly normal for a priest, revealing her shoulders, arms, and much of her legs as well. "We each walk our own path, my lord."

"And apparently your path is quite warm," he retorted. "What news from court?"

"All goes well," Eihime replied. "A messenger arrived two days ago with a full report from Yoyonagi. She feels confident that the season will end well for our clan. The Phoenix seem to have lost interest in their petition to remove our status as a Great Clan."

"Doubtful," Naizen said darkly. "At best they may be distracted, but they will remember in time." He turned to the young man standing quietly near the door. "Kalani, see to it that our navigator is informed that we will be departing for Broken Wave City upon our departure."

"Hai, Naizen-sama," the man said with a bow. "Shall I alter the departure date?"

"No," he answered. "There is too much to do already in too little time."

"As you command," Kalani said. The sailor turned and quickly disappeared into the corridor beyond to enact his orders.

Eihime watched the man leave curiously. "You did not wish to discuss further news with him present?"

"That is not your concern," Naizen said sharply. "Kalani is an excellent second-in-command, but he has little concern for matters of commerce. Now, what other news?"

"The last of the supplies traded to the Unicorn were delivered some time ago. We received confirmation shortly after your last departure. The report from court seems to indicate that the Khan has supplanted his supplies with it, and traded the surplus of rice to the Dragon and Scorpion."

"Who need it badly," Naizen nodded. "Purchasing compliance. Interesting."

"We have reason to believe that the Crane are manipulating trade with the Crab in their favor, which the Crab have recently discovered."

"I am certain that will end will for the Crane," Naizen mused.

"More relevant to our circumstances, there appear to be some among the Phoenix that are blaming us for certain inconsistencies in their own trading agreements. They believe we are manipulating prices to their disadvantage."

Naizen frowned. "I recall giving no instructions to do so."

"We are not," Eihime explained. "It was determined that doing so would yield too little result to be worthwhile."

"Then who is responsible?"

Eihime frowned and looked down. "We do not know, Naizen-sama."

"Unacceptable," Naizen said. "The Mantis have survived for centuries by manipulating trade to our benefit. If we have a new opponent, then we must identify them at once."

"Of course, my lord. I will see to it at once."





# ECONOMY

## A HEALTHY EMPIRE IS A STRONG EMPIRE

A big part of building the Race for the Throne was taking things that players are already doing and rewarding them in a way that we have not rewarded them in the past. You are already buying product, you are already collecting Koku, and you are already traveling great distances to see friends and play. What has not mattered in the past is where players' loyalties lie when they make their purchases or send in their Koku. Now sending in Koku is an act of Clan loyalty, traveling across a country or continent to play in an event represents someone from your favored Clan taking a great journey to spread the influence of that Clan.

Taka may not have been an emperor but he knew that a strong economy and trade made for a healthy empire. Every great general knows that a starving army loses battles, and every Emperor has known that it is easier to gain the support of a man with rice in his belly. Most recently the Khan has used his Clan's Koku to buy passage through Dragon and Scorpion lands. Koku pays for Crab armor, Mantis ships, Lion swords and Scorpion bribes.

Every Koku sent to AEG may be

pledged to the Clan of your choice and will build points for your Clan in the Economy Sphere, and clans will get bonuses for largest purchases and most Koku sent in during any leg of the Race. You can also expect that your Koku will buy new and exciting things, so keep an eye on the Koku page for these new items.

The Economy Sphere does not end with how much Koku you can save or send to AEG. It will also include things like distributor sales contests and store makeover contests. We will also be rewarding stores and players for hosting large events and promoting and building the Samurai Fund which helps all players. The popular Koku Auction from Gencon will return to major events, and certain cards in your set that may have seemed like coasters before may very well gain value as the Race for the Throne marches on and Koku becomes scarce.

Since we are talking about Economy, this would be a good time to remind you that in order to qualify for a "temptation" you need to either hold one Sphere for two consecutive legs or lead two Spheres in any one leg. Even if your clan does not decide to take the temptation it is better for your clan to hold the option rather than leave that

power with one of the other Clans. Temptations will have both a storyline and real world value to all Assembly Members from that Clan. (Okay, so that is a good reason to renew your membership soon.) We already have a list of wonderful things to tempt anyone who dares to take the early lead.

**Koku Pledge** – 1 point will be gained for every 3000 Koku pledged through the Koku redemption program.

**Largest Single Koku order in first leg (Individual or Group)** will gain 3 points.

**Most Koku in total sent in by all players for their chosen Clan,** that Clan will gain 5 points.

**Largest Kotei** – The T.O of the largest Kotei will qualify for a piece of the Samurai Fund and will also be able to pledge 5 points in the Economy Sphere for the Clan of his or her choice.

**Distributor sales** – The Top 5 distributor sales staff for Samurai Edition will each get to pledge 1 point in the Economy sphere to the clan of their choice. The top seller will be invited to the Samurai Championships.

**Farthest Traveled for each Kotei** – The player who travels the farthest to each individual Kotei will gain 1 point in Economy for the Clan of his choice. The five people who travel the farthest to any Kotei will qualify for seats at the Samurai Championships (based on distance from home address to Kotei address using computer program of AEG's choice).





By Rusty Priske  
Fred Wan

## KNOWLEDGE FIRST

Bayushi Paneki stood in his chambers, looking over some papers on a side table. He heard the squeak of a floorboard, the telltale sound indicating someone outside the entrance to his room.

"Enter."

He turned as the screen opened soundlessly and Shosuro Madoka slipped into the room. Paneki was aware that Madoka knew of the squeak in the floor and did not need to break her silence. She did so to allow Paneki the luxury of not seeming surprised when she arrived. He appreciated the gesture, though he had known of her approach minutes earlier. Madoka also knew that this would be the case, but made the gesture anyway.

The life of a Scorpion was a complex one.

Madoka bowed deeply, without saying a word. Paneki nodded. "Report."

"I have word from the court at Kyuden Otomo, Paneki-sama, as well as other information from our sources."

"Begin with the court."

"Norachai was named Protector of the Imperial City, as expected, and immediately asked for two thousand troops from each clan to help defend it. It is uncertain at this time which clans will agree to his request. Apparently the Unicorn have agreed to take on the cost of housing these troops. It seems unlikely the Crab will comply, despite the wishes of their court representatives."

Paneki smiled slightly at that. "What other news is of immediate concern?"

Madoka frowned. "There was a... misunderstanding between Higatsuku and Yasuki Miliko, which led to our man being banished from court. The issue of the Crab attacks on our villages has been breached, but of course no actual accusations have been made."

"What of their actions outside of court?"

"As I mentioned, our agents report that Kuon is unlikely to submit any troops to Norachai's command. Also, it seems that Kisada is working with the Damned now."

"I see," Paneki said with a nod.

"That suits him. What else?"

"The war between the Dragon and the Crane continues, though it seems that very few people know why they are fighting. I was unable to ascertain..."

Paneki waved her off. "We know. Continue."

"The most interesting news is about the Unicorn. We know they have been fighting on two fronts, against the Lion and the Nezumi. We do not know what set the Nezumi upon them, but we have confirmation that they are moving through Lion lands. They are marching toward Toshi Ranbo."

Paneki pursed his lips. "We guessed as much. Aside from the obvious, what other reasons do we have to believe the Khan is marching on the throne?"

Madoka shook her head. "We know that he does not believe that the Empress can hold power, but it is not clear if he wants to hold it for himself or..."

Paneki silenced her with a gesture. "He is not fighting the Lion in order to help the Empress. He seeks to put

someone upon the Throne. Which of the Clans support him in this?"

"The Lion oppose him, obviously, as do the Crane. We know that the Mantis have been covertly providing the Unicorn surplus food supplies. What the Khan does need has been sent to the Dragon."

"Interesting."

"We surmise from this that the Mantis support the Khan and that the Unicorn are supporting the Dragon's war with the Crane."

Paneki nodded. "If nothing else, doing so will keep the Crane occupied. A sound strategy. Chagatai must have been planning this for quite some time. Perhaps there is more depth to him than we believed."

"We are unsure about the Phoenix, as we have not determined whether the Khan wishes to place himself or the Shogun upon the Throne. The Mantis are more likely to support the Shogun than the Khan, but seem favorably disposed towards both."

"And the Crab will support the winner."

Madoka shrugged. "We haven't confirmed but that is their normal pattern."

"The Crab have never been inclined to carefully reflect upon matters prior to a course of action."

Madoka waited for a moment and then asked, "Do you have further instructions, Paneki-sama?"

Paneki turned briefly to the papers on the side table, read something and then turned back to Madoka. "We need to know Chagatai's ultimate intentions. Also find out why the Mantis are supporting him. Find out what Mirabu and the Elemental Masters are planning. Confirm whether the Dragon and the Crane are going to remain occupied. Try to see what set the Nezumi on the Unicorn and see if they will divert their attentions at all. And find out what Sezar's position is on this and what he is likely to do. The Empire seems to have forgotten that Kaneka was not the Emperor's only brother."

Madoka's expression was grim. "Perhaps they do not wish to dwell upon the notion of Sezar seeking the throne."

Paneki nodded. "There is little good that could come of such a thing."





# KNOWLEDGE

A secret fighting technique passed from one generation to the next... A spell known only to a select few used as a devastating surprise when least expected... A map with the enemy's troop movement and supply lines... A method of folding steel one thousand times, taught to only one worthy smith in a lifetime... An important courtier's secret shamed, which can be used to gain a favor or even drive him to break the bonds of honor... The true name of an oni, with which it can be chained with links stronger than the most solid Crab iron...

These are but a few of the ways information is hoarded and used on a daily basis in Rokugan. No matter what the clan, information is a precious commodity in high demand. A Crane diplomat must know the perfect gift to offer and how to acquire it. Any time a new twisted creature from the darkness of the Shadowlands is slain, the Kuni seek to learn its inner workings so fewer Crab may die against its cousin. Entire traditions of etiquette with fans hiding the mouth have emerged in vain hopes of foiling Scorpion spies. Scouts are sent out daily to report on the position of enemy armies. In shadowy corners of the Empire, conspiracies ranging from the Kolat to the Gozoku to the last shreds of the Shadowed Tower arrange all manner of tricks and traps to stay out of sight of the magistrates.

Whether you are working for or against the Empire, knowledge is an essential tool.

In the Race for the Throne, the Knowledge Sphere represents all this sort of information and knowledge, both in character and out of it. As players advancing your clan in the Race, you will be called on to show what you know of Rokugan and Legend of the Five Rings. During each Kotei all players will be given an opportunity to take a quiz, with the player who does best winning acclaim for his clan. Questions will range from the history of L5R, such as naming past tournament winners or others involved in creating the game, to questions about the storyline both old and recent. If it relates to L5R or its setting in any manner, do not be surprised to see it asked. As the Race continues, watch both the main web site and the fan sites for more trivia questions – some easy, some very difficult. It would be a good idea to start reading your clan histories, the RPG books, old stories, and old L5R news sites to prepare. During the past 12 years some remarkable web sites have been created, and they can be powerful tools for helping your clan claim the position of Imperial Advisor, and possibly even Emperor.

This Sphere is not all questions, though. As the Race progresses, you will also be called upon to show your

creativity. One of the greatest strengths of the L5R community is the large number of talented writers – not just the story team, but all players who take the time to write stories about the characters they love in the land of Rokugan. You will be called upon to chronicle the exploits of your clan, with the best works gaining prestige for your clan. Similarly, there will be contests for flavor text and art. There will even be a time to design a card for your clan, with winning entries helping the clan in the Race and appearing as printed cards.

The stakes are high: During the Race winning clans will steal secrets from losing clans, spies from one clan will infiltrate another, one clan will be called upon to write a history of the Toturi family while another clan's historical archives burn, and major artifacts infused with powerful ancient spirits will change hands as the clans struggle to control the flow of Knowledge in the Empire. Will your clan rise to the top, or will it sit in ignorance as the other clans flourish?

**Kotei Quiz** – The quiz winner from each Kotei will gain 1 point for their Clan in Knowledge. Five random quiz winners will earn a seat at the Samurai Championships.

**Online Trivia** – There will be four trivia contests on the website during the first leg. The first person to correctly answer or solve each contest will earn 2 points for their Clan.



By Rusty Priske  
Fred Wan

## REFLECTED PURITY

Hitomi Kagetora looked over the windswept mountains. Wind signified change to many. It brought fresh ideas while sweeping away the old. The wind could not still; to do so would mean its death.

The mountains, however, were resolute. They did not change easily and stood for strength and an unyielding nature. So how do wind and mountains co-exist? How does one embrace change while remaining steadfast?

Kagetora turned and entered the monastic building overlooking the craggy peaks. Among the Dragon, no monastery was more revered, as it was the center of the Togashi order. It was first created in the early days, at the dawn of the empire, in order to better learn from their great kami, Togashi. This was where the monks of that time came to be tattooed with the blood of their god.

A single monk near the door bowed when Kagetora entered and motioned for the head of the Hitomi order to follow him. He led him to a room deep within the cloister where he joined two other monks, waiting for him, therein.

"Thank you Razan," spoke one of the waiting monks and Kagetora's escort withdrew, closing the screen behind him.

Kagetora bowed to the two men in the room. "Wayan. Nyima."

They returned his greeting, with Nyima bowing lower than the others. Hoshi Wayan gave a half-hearted smile. "This must be serious if Lord Satsu asked the heads of the Orders to convene. Will he be joining us?"

Nyima shook his head. "He will not. He asked that I sit in as his duties with the clan take him away from his duties as head of the Togashi."

"Very well," said Kagetora. "We recognize your authority here. What has Satsu asked us to meet about?"

Nyima motioned for them to sit on the tatami mats arranged on the floor. Once seated, he drew a deep, cleansing breath and began. "Lord Satsu has recently come into possession of a powerful relic. This item has been put into the safekeeping of the Dragon and under grave circumstances. Lord Satsu has asked as to deliberate as to whether the item should be used, and if so, how."

Kagetora pursed his lips. "What is the item?"

"Might we ask what the circumstances are that you spoke of?" asked Wayan. "The path taken by this relic could tell us much about its purpose."

Nyima nodded. "It was taken by Mirumoto Rosanjin from the Tomb of the Seven Thunders at the behest of the Emperor. Rosanjin died so that it, and other relics from the Tomb, could

be returned to the Empire."

Wayan's face darkened. "That is an inauspicious path, as it is connected with the Emperor himself."

"Yet the Emperor wished it placed into our care," said Kagetora. "His decision is not for such as us to judge; we can only determine how we can proceed."

"Destiny is a powerful force," Wayan added. "If this item came to us, of all the clans, then there must be a purpose to it. We must determine what that purpose is, and if we are capable of fulfilling it. Nyima, may we see it?"

The Togashi nodded and rose. From behind a screen partition he brought a covered item. He discarded the cover and exposed a mirror, ringed completely in jade. He kept the surface angled away so that the occupants of the room cast no reflection in it. "This jade mirror is what Rosanjin retrieved from the Tomb of the Seven Thunders. Lord Satsu has studied it, and he is convinced that it has great power. Anything that is reflected within it shows its true self, no matter its outward form. No secrets are safe in its glass."

Kagetora's eyebrows shot up. "Then we must question why it was brought to us. We study mysteries, not secrets. Should this not be wielded by the Scorpion?"

Wayan shook his head. "I have great respect for the Scorpion, but in giving it to them we would subject them to enormous temptation to use it for themselves. With it, they could expose secrets in the hearts of men. No, it was brought to us. It is our burden, not the Scorpion's."

"If we use it only in the service of the Empire, there is much good we could do." Kagetora pondered.

"And much ill," Nyima said ominously. "Some secrets should remain."





Throughout the plains in the heart of Rokugan you hear sounds of clashing steel as Lion samurai train in the ways of their ancestors. Chanting and the constant turning of prayer wheels fills the peaks of the mountains in Dragon lands. Good natured swearing and songs vie with the splash of waves in the Mantis Isles. Biwa music and haiku fill the Kakita Academy. The exquisite silence of Noh theater fills Scorpion halls. It is the same through the entire empire and the same in every L5R game and event from the smallest to largest. L5R is an experience that we script but the players create.

When we conceived the idea of an interactive storyline game we knew it was a unique idea but we could never have foreseen the reaction we would get from players. From the beginning the players have infused L5R with a "spirit" that is missing from other games, such as players stepping aside from playing to run events for other players to bounties to lure top players to play for the glory of the Clan they love. L5R is the only game where you would decide to put a card in your deck that may not be optimum for the deck strategy, but works perfectly for the story you are telling.

**Charity Past and Future.** During the 11 years that AEG has published games we have been honored to be

a part of the charity that our players show to each other and to their community. From the Make a Wish Foundation to the Shriner's Burn Unit to local food drives, the list of charities who have benefited from the charity of L5R players is too numerous to list in this article, but it was an easy inspiration for the final Sphere of the Race for the Throne. "Spirit" encompasses the charity of the player to the world, local community and to each other.

In the Race for the Throne Spirit Sphere, players start gaining points by demonstrating great sportsmanship in their game play at the Kotei and being awarded Best Sportsman. This player will earn one point for their Clan in Spirit. Players will also be able to gain favor for their Clan through acts of art such as the poster design contest and an L5R poetry contest. In the future the Spirit Sphere will include the Challenge Booth at conventions, any and all charity drives, contests to find fun L5R references in the real world of pictures of you playing L5R in strange or exotic places. Spirit is a catchall for everything else that is great about L5R, so we are looking for unique ideas from players as well.

**Poster Contest** – Players may submit designs for an L5R poster to AEG until May 1. AEG retailers and distributors will vote on the entries. The winning entry will be printed and distributed to game stores worldwide. The Top 2 will qualify for a seat at the Samurai Championships. The Top 5 will gain points for their Clan as follows.

- First – 5 points
- Second – 4 points
- Third – 3 points
- Fourth – 2 points
- Fifth – 1 point

**Most Character Copies Sent To AEG** – Alive or dead, common, uncommon, rare or promo., the Clans who send in the most copies of a single character will gain the following:

- First – 5 points
- Second – 3 points
- Third – 1 point

In addition, the top 3 characters will get a story written about them - if the character is dead, it will be about past deeds. We recommend you make a decision at each Clan site before sending cards in.

**Gama Retailer What Clan Are you** – Retailers will have the opportunity to take the "Which Clan are you?" quiz at GAMA in April. Clans will gain points based on which Clan is selected by retailers most often., as follows:

- First – 5 points
- Second – 3 points
- Third – 1 point

**Kotei Sportsmanship Award** – Players that are voted Best Sportsman at each Kotei will gain 1 point for their Clan of choice.



By Brian Yoon  
Shawn Carman



## SWIFT AS THE WIND

The vast fields in the Utaku lands stretched on for miles, uninterrupted by landmarks or hills. The long grass continued on every direction like a sea of green and gold. Shinjo Shria galloped through the grass at full speed, her long hair flowing wildly in the wind. Shria loved her gallops. Whenever she rode her steed in the Utaku Plains, she could forget all of her worries. With the wind on her face and the grass passing by in a blur, she felt as free as the wind itself.

After an hour, she looked up, and the smile faded from her face. She touched her horse on her neck and whispered a gentle word in his ear. The horse raised his head and neighed softly at his rider. He slowed down to a trot as the pair approached a wooden outpost at the edge of the plain. Though it was a small, simple building, the lack of other large landmarks in the horizon marked it clearly across long distances. As she drew closer, Shria could see a horse drinking from a trough placed next to the outpost. She called out, searching for friend or foe.

A samurai stepped out of the outpost and waved at the incoming rider. His purple robes and the mon embroidered on his shoulder clearly marked him as an officer of the Baraunghar. Shria stopped the horse in front of the man and smiled.

"Greetings, Bitomu-kun," Shria said. She dismounted quickly and offered her hand to the other samurai. He took it without hesitation and shook hands in the Unicorn fashion.

The officer looked around, smiling. "I see why you requested this station, Shria-chan. It is so peaceful. Even the kami feel more relaxed here, so far from war."

Shria nodded. "I cannot sense the kami, but their effects reach those who are blind to their ways. The plains soothe me. Still, this must be no courtesy visit. What news from the generals, Bitomu?"

Bitomu's grin disappeared. "Lixue-sama has asked for all the reserves to return to Shiro Moto. The Baraunghar will move out when we have enough forces for our mission."

Shria's eyes widened. "Autumn has ended. Does the Khan expect us to attack now?"

"Your mother was a shugenja, Shria-san. You are no stranger to the power of the kami when they are invoked to our aid."

Shria shook her head. "The kami can perform actions that resemble miracles, but they cannot replace logistics, food, preparation. No army moves during the winter for good reason. Even the Baraunghar will have troubles maintaining anything more than simple maneuvering."

"And yet General Lixue plans to

execute several raids along enemy lands, to draw focus away from the movements of the Khan's army. Do you question your superior's judgment, Shria-san? Do you presume to know more than your superiors?"

Shria knew Bitomu as a gentle man, yet she could see cold anger burning in his eyes. She shook her long hair away from her and stared defiantly into his eyes.

"I simply ask what any intelligent warrior would ask," Shria answered. "I do not doubt my orders. I realize that other plans and contingencies must be in place. I also know that those plans will not be revealed to me until the time is right. I simply wished to state my concerns aloud to an old, childhood friend. Have I overstepped my bounds?"

The anger faded from Bitomu's eyes. He smiled at Shria. "I am your friend, Shria-chan, but I am also your commanding officer. Sometimes it is difficult to notice the separate parts of my life. I apologize if I misread the intention behind your words."

"No apologies are necessary. The mistake is mine," Shria replied, then bowed. Bitomu bowed back. "When must I arrive at Shiro Moto?" Shria continued.

"The campaign will begin in three weeks when the army assembles.

"Three weeks?" Shria said and raised an eyebrow. "That is more preparation than I had expected. Have the Baraunghar lost our reputation for rapidity?"

Bitomu stared at the fields of grass, away from Shria. "I came to notify you first, before I moved on to other reservists. I cannot say why, but I felt some desire to see this field. It does me well to be here."

Shria smiled at Bitomu. War had finally come to her remote corner of the Utaku plains. Despite the impending war, when Shria looked at Bitomu she felt a warmth that soothed her soul like a brisk ride in her beloved plains.





# KOTEI 2007

The 2007 Kotei Season brings us the kickoff of the Race for the Throne. Each Kotei winner will qualify for the Samurai Fund and be allowed to choose from several options for their Clan. The introduction of Khan's Defiance just before the season will add an element of surprise to the early events as well. All things considered, 2007 should be one of the most exciting Kotei seasons ever.

As mentioned above, the winners of the Kotei will have several choices to make. Each winner automatically earns their Clan a point in the Military Sphere of the Race for the Throne. After that they must choose from four options:

1. Support the Khan for the Throne
2. Stand Against the Khan for the Throne
3. Claim a Boon for their Clan
4. Claim Enemy Territory for their Clan

Pretty tempting choices, no? Should the Khan end the season with more points than his opposition, he will take the Throne of the Empire, supported by the Imperial Legions.

However, should he fail, his army will be utterly crushed and he will have a difficult time protecting his holdings once his surviving forces make their way back in retreat. But to keep things interesting... he's starting the season with five points in his column.

Should a player choose a Boon for their Clan, they will gain the prize as well as an additional point in the Sphere where the gift came from. Sound interesting? Take a look at the options:

## MILITARY

- Command over the Legion of the Sapphire Chrysanthemum
- Allegiance of the Wolf Legion
- Officer in the reformed Legion of Two Thousand
- A contingent of Asp warriors
- Commander of an Imperial Legion
- Seizure of a hidden bandit fortress in the unaligned lands
- Creation of a special contingent of samurai trained against a specific enemy
- Allegiance of the reborn Hidden Sword ronin band
- Capturing a major strategic supply path, such as a port or mountain pass
- Goblin troops

## ECONOMIC

- Teardrop Island in Ryoko Owari
- Nothern Hub Village Shipwrights
- Eastern Hub Village Port
- Western Hub Sake Works
- Southern Hub Silk Works
- The Pass of Night
- A trade route to Medinaat al-Salaam
- Captured smuggler routes through the Empire
- The opening of a diamond mine in the Shadowlands
- Creation of a new merchant caravan

## KNOWLEDGE

- The private journals of one of the Four Winds
- Full access to the Imperial libraries
- Knowledge of gaijin magic
- Emergence of a new Master artificer
- Re-discovery of a previously lost fighting style
- Spy network
- Discovery of a shrine to a forgotten Fortune
- Siege master
- Artifact to raise and command undead
- Position of Imperial Historian



## POLITICS

Imperial Favor from the capital city  
Provincial Governor in Toshi Ranbo  
The support of a Minor Clan  
An ambassador in Medinaat al-Salaam  
Chief Imperial Magistrate of Ryoko Owari  
Alliance with a nonhuman group  
Support of the Kanosei-Furudera Order of ronin shugenja  
Aid from the Kolat  
Publishing of a play based on the life of Emperor Toturi III  
Ambassador from one of the Spirit Realms

## SPIRIT

Master of the Tea Ceremony  
High Temple of Toshi Ranbo  
Master of Bushido  
Discovery of a new seer or prophet  
Master of Shourido  
Imperial Heralds (Miya family) support  
Publicly acknowledged guidance from the spirits of another Realm  
The blessings of a Keeper of the Elements  
The support of a monastic order  
Position as guardian of a major Temple in unaligned lands

## CLAN HEARTLANDS

Those winners who choose to neither support nor oppose the Khan, and who have no desire to claim a prize that will aide them in the Race for the Throne, can instead choose to seize territory from their enemies. A winner may declare from what Clan his faction is claiming territory. A list of target locations will be provided by the Story Team and the winner will choose which is taken. In the case of clans with strong alliances, such as the Lion-Crane and Dragon-Scorpion alliance, this action may result in a form of occupation other than a military seizure.

The ability to affect the Race does not end at the winners of the Kotei, far from it! Many Kotei attendees will aid their Clan in the Kotei events in the following spheres:

## ECONOMY

### Largest Kotei

The T.O. of the largest Kotei will qualify for a piece of the Samurai Fund and will also be able to pledge 5 points in the Economy Sphere for the Clan of his or her choice.

### Farthest Traveled for each Kotei

The player who traveled the farthest to each individual Kotei will gain 1 point in Economy for the Clan of his or her choice.

The five people who travel the farthest to any Kotei will qualify for a seat piece of the Samurai Fund (based on distance from home address to Kotei address using the computer program of AEG's choice).

## POLITICS

### Clan Attire at Kotei

The person voted to have the best Clan attire or costume at each Kotei will gain 1 point for their Clan in the Politics sphere. Winners may submit pictures of themselves in the winning attire to AEG for a vote by players around the world. The Top 5 in this vote will earn a seat at the Samurai Championships.

## KNOWLEDGE

### Kotei Quiz

Players at each Kotei will be given a quiz about L5R at their Kotei. The quiz will change each week of the Kotei. The quiz winner from each Kotei will gain 1 point for their clan in Knowledge. From all quizzes received by AEG from T.O.s, 5 will be drawn at random and each will earn a seat at the Samurai Championships.

## SPIRIT

### Kotei Sportmanship Award

Players that are voted best sportsman at each Kotei will gain one point in Spirit for their Clan of choice.

Now is the time to make your plans for attending as many Kotei as possible! Don't miss the chance to ride with the Unicorn to victory or to slam the Khan into the ground. The Crab can take their revenge on the Scorpion by taking their lands or the Phoenix could discover a new prophet to guide them into the future. We'll see you at the Kotei!







# DAWN OF THE SPIDER

Daigotsu Ogiwara knelt before his lord, his head bowed to the floor. He was not worthy to look upon the idols to the Dark Kami that stood in Daigotsu's personal temple. Even when the shuffling of robes halted immediately before him, he could not bring his eyes upward. The majesty of the splendor before him was too much. He could not bear it.

"Ogiwara." The voice was smooth, silken, almost serpentine. It was the voice of power, the sound of true majesty given human form.

"Yes, Master?" Ogiwara whispered.

"Are you prepared to do what must be done? Are you prepared to accept the burden and responsibility that comes with the oath you will make? Do you understand what it means to take this oath?"

"Yes, my lord," he croaked. "It is my great honor."

"Of course it is," Daigotsu said with a smile. "Your blade." Ogiwara drew his katana and held it before Daigotsu, finally bringing his gaze up to meet that of the Dark Lord of the Shadowlands. The blade was pitch black, as befitting one of the Lost's elite Obsidian Legion-

naires. "Will you spill your blood for me and mine?"

"Without hesitation," Ogiwara said instantly. "Every drop is yours."

"And will you give of your blood, your flesh, your very soul, in the name of our lord Fu Leng?"

"Yes," he answered reverently. "I desire nothing more."

"So be it," Daigotsu replied. He drew a curved, wicked-looking blade from within his obi and held it with its tip against his open palm. "As you shall bleed for me, so shall I bleed for you. And together, we will bleed for Fu Leng." He drew the edge across his palm slowly. The blood that bubbled out was impossibly bright, seeming all the more brilliant for all the obsidian that surrounded them. It spilled from Daigotsu's palm and onto Ogiwara's blade. He held the flat end up, allowing the blood to pool on the black steel just above the tsuba. Ogiwara stared at it, transfixed by the sanctity of it all.

"Place your palm upon the bloodied steel," Daigotsu instructed.

Reverently, Ogiwara placed his hand over the blood as instructed. The pain was sudden and intense, but brief.



The soldier did not move his hand away, despite the burning and the scent of seared flesh. After a moment, the sensation was gone, replaced with a cool, steady aching. "Take your hand from the blade, Ogiwara," Daigotsu instructed.

The legionnaire did as commanded. Slowly, he lifted his shaking hand to his face, staring at the palm, then the blade, and back again. On both, the image of a spider, looming and sinister, was emblazoned within a circle. It was a familiar style of image, one that Ogiwara had seen before, in a different lifetime. "A mon," he said softly.

"Our mon," Daigotsu corrected, shifting his stance to display the brilliant matching mon covering his own heart. "Stand, Daigotsu Ogiwara, servant of the Spider Clan. Stand, and join your brothers in renewed service of Fu Leng."

Had Ogiwara been a weaker man, he might have wept.

Daigotsu washed the blood from his palm in the basin of water near his seat. The others had gone now, their ceremonies completed. They had returned to their duties, renewed and reinvigorated. It was refreshing, really. He had not expected that. The blood washed off easily

enough, and he ran a single finger along his palm. The cut had already vanished, and no scar remained to indicate it had been there at all.

"The ceremony today was different."

He smiled without turning around. "Of course it was, Shahai-sama. It must be what is needed for each group. Today's group were particularly pious, devoted individuals. They needed to see that they would be treated with respect for their devotion."

"Interesting, I suppose," Shahai said, gazing out the opening that led to the balcony. She gently rocked the small cloth bundle in her arms. "And how do you find our new home?"

"One of our new homes, my love," Daigotsu said. "And while it pales in comparison to the Temple of the Ninth Kami, I think it shall suffice for now." He strode across the room and placed a hand at Shahai's elbow, guiding his wife and child out onto the balcony. "It is a grand beginning for our son's future Empire, don't you think?"

The vast Shinomen Mori stretched out before them, as far as the eye could see in every direction.







# THE SPIDER CLAN

The Khan's Defiance expansion heralds the first appearance of what will become a new faction in the Legend of the Five Rings: the Spider Clan. The Spider Clan are the chosen servants of Daigotsu, those among the Lost who possess the strength, the conviction and the power to do what must be done in the name of their Dark Lord and his sinister fallen god. But why now, after centuries, would the denizens of the Shadowlands demand the right to stand as a Great Clan? And even more importantly, who in the Empire would recognize or accept such a claim?

There is no question among those who study such unpleasant subjects that Daigotsu is the most successful leader that has ever arisen in the Shadowlands. It was under his guidance that the Lost were forged from a chaotic band of barely coherent madmen into a dark empire worthy of Fu Leng's blessing. He created the

City of the Lost and the Temple of the Ninth Kami. It was through his machinations that Fu Leng was able to escape Meido and ascend to Tengoku, where he waged his dark war against the forces of the Celestial Heavens before returning to his rightful place in the Realm of Evil. And yet, for all his successes, Daigotsu's ultimate plans were repeatedly thwarted, first by the Four Winds and later by the Bloodspeaker, Iuchiban. Defeat blossomed into hatred and Daigotsu longed to destroy Toturi III's empire.

In time, however, Daigotsu came to understand the error of his ways. Wrath and vengeance were the path to ultimate defeat, like that suffered by his predecessors. Subtlety was the key to victory, and a degree of subtlety that the Shadowlands had never thought to employ before. In order for the Shadowlands to be victorious, Daigotsu would have to prevent the clans from recognizing him as a threat, a situation

that inevitably resulted in their unifying against him. No, to defeat the clans they must be allowed to war with one another without pause, manipulated from behind the scenes by a force that slowly grew in power even as the clans were constantly weakened. And who better to enact such a plot than the Lost?

It could be said that the Lost are the most pious of all mankind. Like all Great Clans, they hold incredible reverence for the Kami that created the traditions they embrace. Unlike the other clans, however, they hold Fu Leng above any and all others, eschewing the worship of the Fortunes, study of the Tao of Shinsei and all the other distractions that cripple the minds of their weaker cousins in Rokugan. The Lost are devoted to Fu Leng alone, whereas the other clans dilute their worship. Furthermore, the worship of Fallen Kami is one of absolute certainty. He is not revered



as an ancestor or as a historical figure, but as a literal and absolute deity, one whose blessings and retribution have been seen firsthand time and time again throughout the years. Why should Fu Leng not receive the same accolades as his lesser siblings? If the Great Clans exist merely because they were created by one of the Kami, or even by a Kami's descendant in the case of the Mantis Clan, then who are the Rokugani to claim that Fu Leng's adherents are not equally deserving of such a right?

The fact that Daigotsu formally petitioned the Emperor for the right to declare the creation of a Great Clan was a great shock to everyone in the Empire. Unfortunately, Emperor Toturi III died without passing judgment on the petition, and this gives the Dark Lord more leeway than might be expected. Only the Emperor can rule on such a petition, and even though Empress Kurako was quick to denounce the Lost and their request upon her ascendancy as regent, there are those in the Empire who question her ability or even her right to rule, and to accept her denouncement would be tacit approval of it. In this way, the constant political infighting of the clans serves the Shadowlands' agenda.

With the throne empty and the clans at one another's throats, the ideal conditions for Daigotsu's gambit now exist in the Empire. Months ago, the dark lord learned of a means by which repentant Lost were escaping the Shadowlands, escorted to safety within the Empire by traitors within his midst with the help of agents of his enemy, the Jade Champion. Using this means of entry, the Lost have been infiltrating the Empire for months, moving in small groups and establishing hidden strongholds in the most unlikely

places: the deepest reaches of the vast Shinomen Mori, the abandoned ruins of Otosan Uchi, and the collapsed and abandoned Beiden Pass. From these vantage points, the Lost are able to contact those that might serve as allies: the greedy, the vengeful, the weak-willed and the ambitious. These strange samurai, representatives of the Spider Clan, offer their targets their heart's desire, and for so small a price. Gradually the Spider's web entangles the foolish and selfish, until they are so hopelessly mired that they are the Lost's allies, willingly or otherwise.


Ultimately, what is Daigotsu's purpose in this bold new venture? What does he hope to accomplish in the creation of this Spider Clan? It is a gesture of respect for his god, the dark lord Fu Leng, that is true. It is likewise true that he wishes to incense the most righteous among the clans, driving them to fervor and misdirecting their wrath to straw men and sacrificial lambs. The entire endeavor is a plot to undermine and infiltrate the Great Clans to such an extent that it is possible for the Lost to finally seize control of the Empire of Rokugan. All of these things are true, and yet there is more: Daigotsu has a son. His son shall be the perfect union of Fu Leng's blessing and the Hantei bloodline. When he grows to a man, he will be a warrior and a sorcerer the likes of which the world has never known. Daigotsu has vowed that his son will, upon the day of his gempukku, inherit an empire, and from that empire he shall conquer the world. This much is certain. It has been foretold in a prophecy of blood, and nothing can avert it. Daigotsu has sworn that he shall be the herald of a new order, an order of darkness. There is no room for doubt.

And yet... one thing plagues the dark lord. One thing nags at the edge of his mind, fraying his certainty with questions. Even as the Lost have become the Spider Clan, there are others that have appeared among them. Strangers come from across the vast Burning Sands to seek his audience. They are called the Jackals, and they are vile, reprehensible creatures. Necromancers is the name they give themselves, but Daigotsu knows that they are little more than creative buffoons, binding the souls of the dead to ragged, nearly useless flesh. Were it not for the insistence of his ally the Ghul Lord, he would have destroyed them rather than favor them with an audience, but the Ghul Lord has beseeched him to pay heed to their warnings. The Jackals have urged Daigotsu to consolidate his power quickly. Something sinister is growing in power beyond the borders of Rokugan, something that will consume the Shadowlands and use its forces as pawns in its struggle.

There is a greater darkness in the world than the Spider Clan, and if Daigotsu cannot claim an empire in the name of his sinister god, then soon there may be precious little remaining to be claimed.







By Fred Wan  
Shawn Carman

# THE KHAN'S ARRIVAL

*The western Lion border, year 1168, Month of the Rat*

A lone Lion soldier trudged through the driving snow, his head bowed to shield his face from the worst of it. His elaborate kabuto had been designed to protect him from his enemies in battle. Today it was doing a terrible job, because the cold and wind was clearly his enemy, and the helm seemed to be doing nothing whatsoever to protect him. He glanced up a few times, squinting against the glare in hopes of keeping the slightly darker image of the building that was his destination. It was not unheard of in this post for a man to lose his way and die in the snow less than two hundred feet from the duty station. It was honorable to die in the execution of one's duties, but dying due to oversight or incompetence was unacceptable.

Finally, he felt rough wood beneath the numb, aching fingers of his outstretched left hand. Looking up, he realized he was on the western face of the wall. In the snow, he had nearly lost his way and wound up at the building from the wrong direction. Despite the incredible cold, he felt a slight chill. He could well have died for such a small mistake. It was not one he would make again. Moments later, he forced the door open and stepped inside.

The warmth of the room was like a comforting blanket. He stomped the snow from his legs and forced the door closed behind him. "The horses are safe, if not particularly happy," he grunted. "They've plenty to eat and the stable shields them from the wind. As long as they stay together, they should not suffer from the cold too much."

"Hai, gunso," one of the men said. "They will need to be checked again before dusk?"

"Yes, Kitai," the officer answered. "It is your turn, I believe."

Matsu Kitai grimaced, but nodded. "Of course, gunso."

"Be certain you leave enough time to get back before nightfall," the gunso cautioned. "If you are trapped there in the darkness... I do not wish to explain such a death to your family."

"Is it that bad?" Kitai asked.

The gunso nodded grimly. "The worst I've seen in many years."

"The first snowfall is rarely so severe," the shugenja sitting by the fire said quietly. He looked up from his calligraphy. "I cannot recall one like this in living memory."

The gunso frowned. The shugenja was not so much



older than he was, but Kitsu Takari had a zeal for history. If he could not recall such a winter, then it was truly something unusual. Unusual was rarely a good thing, in his experience.

The wind outside intensified, rattling the wooden building with its ferocity. "Expect morning patrols to be conducted as normal," the gunso ordered. "If the storm has abated, we will be going out. We may have to be on foot if the drifts are too high for the horses, so expect the routes to change accordingly."

"Hai, gunso," the others all said without hesitation. Changes to the patrol routes would make their duties far more difficult, but they gave no indication of dismay or discomfort. They were good men.

The wind outside blew again, even harder. Takari gasped and put his hand to his head. He groaned lightly, drawing strange looks from the others. "What is it, priest?" the gunso asked. "What's happening?"

"The storm," the Kitsu said. He ground his teeth. "The kami... something is wrong."

Instinct took over. The gunso ran to the door and tore it open, even as the wind blew again, harder than ever, hard enough to shake dust from the rafters above them. The wind tore into him like a blade, rattling his armor and causing his eyes to stream tears that very nearly froze on his cheeks. He ignored it, staring to the west, searching for the cause. For several moments, there was nothing but the blinding, searing whiteness of it all. And then, finally, he saw it. On the horizon. Rushing toward them.

"Gunso!" one of the men shouted. "Gunso! What is it? What do you see?"

"It is the Khan," he said plainly. "He's finally returned."

"What?" Kitai shouted over the wind. "In this storm?"

Takari staggered toward the door. "The Barunghar!" he wailed. "They are driving the storm, pushing the snow before them to clear their path! The wind! It is the wind!"

One of the men, an older Akodo, stepped forward. "What are your orders, gunso?" he asked. "What would you have us do?"

The officer watched as the snow whipped into a wave, a gigantic rolling wave that obscured the charging Unicorn. It rushed toward them like the tide. It would destroy everything in its path.

The gunso drew his sword. "We die like warriors," he said. "We die like Lion."

The men drew their blades. Even the shugenja steeled himself and drew his wakizashi. There were no words. None were needed. The men waited, looking to him for leadership. The gunso shouted the name of his family and ran toward the crashing wave of snow. He heard his men behind him, shouting their battle cries to the heavens.

He knew in his heart that the ancestors heard them.

It was mid-day when the patrol spotted the man approaching. Ikoma Ataken raised his hand for his men to hold. They would almost certainly welcome the rest, for making their way through the thick snow was difficult at best. At least the winds had died down from the previous day, although they had begun to hasten as the evening approached. He placed his hand on the hilt of his blade and watched as the man approached. Anyone out in this weather alone was either a madman or a fugitive, and he had little desire to face either. The man finally saw the patrol and stopped. He wavered for a moment, then collapsed into the snow.

Cursing the possible trap, Ataken dismounted and crossed the distance between the two, wary of any suspicious movement. There was none, and the man seemed more like a beggar than a threat. Ataken turned him over roughly and pulled the cloth away from his face.

The man's face had gone long past pale and white, and was almost entirely blue. His lips, nose, and ears had turned an alarming shade of red. Ataken knew by the look of him that he had been in the storm all night. The damage to his health would be severe, and would last the rest of his life. If he was fortunate, that might last beyond the next few days, but Ataken could not be certain; he knew little of treating illness and injury. "Who are you?" he demanded. "What has happened?"

The man rasped and tried to speak, but his ruined lips made it largely unintelligible. He kept repeating something over and over again.

"Water!" Ataken shouted. One of his men threw him a small clay bottle, and he gingerly splashed water on the stranger's lips. He winced as he did it, knowing that it was almost certainly painful and dangerous, but duty demanded that he know what was happening.

The stranger writhed and gasped when the water poured over his lips, but he did not call out. "The Khan," he gasped. "The Khan."

"What?" Ataken said sharply. "What do you mean?"



"He's coming," the stranger said weakly. "The Unicorn... overran the last station... commandeered all supplies... I escaped... to warn."

Ataken stared at the man incredulously, then reached down and pulled away the thick brown coat that obscured his clothing. Beneath it, he wore armor and bore the mon of an Ikoma warden. His chop was one that Ataken recognized. "Domai?" he said, staring at the face that the winter storm had all but destroyed. "Domai, is that you?"

"Warn them," Ikoma Domai rasped. "Warn them... the Khan." And then he was gone.

Ataken did not drop his friend immediately. He did not wish to touch the flesh of the dead, but Domai had been his friend for nearly ten years. They had taken their gempukku oaths side by side, but now he was gone. Gradually, he rose. He took his friend's blades and placed them in his obi, on the opposite side of his own. He turned to the patrol under his command. "The Unicorn have taken the western station," he said flatly. "They are marshalling supplies. They will almost certainly ride this way at first

light."

"The western station?" one of the men said. "It would take days to reach the Unicorn border in these conditions, commander. How can the Unicorn have come so far?"

"I do not know," Ataken said. "But I intend to find out. Half of you will ride to Kyuden Ikoma and inform them of what is taking place. I will lead the others ahead and see what I can learn about the Khan's forces."

"Nearly all who ride ahead will die, commander," one of the men said.

"Perhaps," Ataken admitted. "Perhaps not. We must take the chance."

"Hai, gunso," his second said, stepping forward. One by one, the others all joined him.

Ataken frowned. "Kyuden Ikoma must be warned."

"Then you must choose one of us," his second said. "We will not volunteer to live while you face the Khan's forces alone."

Ikoma Ataken nodded, pride evident in his expression, and chose.





# THE L5R WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP AND THE TOMORROW DECK

History was made at the 2006 Legend of the Five Rings World Championships when Faber van Kraanen of Belgium brought the Nezumi their first World Championship win. Faber fought through a field of L5R's best and ended the day in an incredible, calculated game against Reda Lounis' Cranes. His Broken Shinbone Pack brought him the win, as the Crane were unable to create the duels they needed to gain the honor for a win.

After his hard-fought victory, Faber was the first to enter the Tomb of the Seven Thunders. Faber exited the Tomb carrying an hourglass. This mystical hourglass has brought the Nezumi to the brink of Tomorrow, but the fact that the Nezumi themselves chose to embrace Tomorrow will mean great things for the Race of Ratlings.

In the special Tomorrow deck you will not only find Faber's entire deck, but you will also find several new cards. These are based on the choices made by the other Top of Clan players at the World Championships. From the Tao of Fu Leng taken by the Crab for safekeeping to the strange foreign box taken by the Shadowlands, you will find cards not only of the items but also of the effects of the Clans having those items.

The 2006 World Championships changed the shape of the Clans and the direction they will take over the next several years. We congratulate all of the players who took part in the 2006 World Championships in Brussels, Belgium.



## BROKEN SHINBONE PACK

### DYNASTY (40)

#### SENSEI (1)

1x Tomorrow Sensei

### HOLDING (5)

2x Arms Smugglers

3x Gifts and Favors

### PERSONALITY (35)

4x Gran-otik

1x Gran-otik (Experienced)

4x Ik'chda

4x Ik'krt

1x Ik'krt (Experienced)

4x Ku'chek

4x Nem'tek

4x Oh-krch

4x P-o'tch

4x Tch'tek

1x Y'tchee

### DYNASTY (42)

#### ACTION (35)

3x A Hero's Gift

3x Advance Position

3x Border Skirmish

3x Forward Sentries

2x Preparation

3x Scouring the Shadows

3x Skirt the Edge

3x Snowy Overlook

3x Soften the Resistance

3x Tsuruchi Technique

3x Unexpected Find

3x Weakened Defenses

### FOLLOWER (4)

4x Crippled Bone Runner

### RING (2)

1x Ring of Air

1x Ring of Water



HI, I'M YORITOMO YASHINKO

AND I'M SHOSURO MARU

WELCOME TO THE...

**RACE FOR THE THRONE**

THE FIRST LEG IS A SIMPLE FOOT RACE, BUT ALL THE TOP CONTENDERS ARE HERE!

INDEED! KISADA, KURAKO, ER. NAGORI.

AH! HERE THEY GO!

OOH BAD START FOR NAGORI WHO JUST MET THE SHOGUN'S RIGHT HAND

SO IT SEEMS, YASHINKO-CHAN WHO KNOWS WHERE HE'LL LAND?

DAGOTSU ISN'T DOING WELL EITHER, IT LOOKS HE HAS UPSET SATSU...

YES, I THINK SATSU FELT PERSONALLY OFFENDED BY SOME COMMENTS ABOUT HIM AND SOME 'HOSTAGE BOMB'...

BY THE WAY, I NOTICE YOUR CLAN IS NOT TAKING PART IN THIS RACE

OH IT WOULD TAKE A FORTUNE FOR US TO TAKE PART IN THIS WAR!

YES, SAME FOR US!

OOH MEANWHILE, KISADA CAUGHT THE EMPRESS OFF-GUARD AND IS MAKING HIS COME-BACK!

INDEED, THE BEAR RETURNS DESPITE THE EMPRESS GUARD!

(WHERE DID I HEAR THAT?)

BUT THE KHAN SEEMS TO BE FAR AHEAD!

SO HE IS, MARU-CHAN, AND HE KNOWS IT!

HA HA HA!

VHO VILL ...

?

...ZTOP HIIIIIM!!

UTAKU KUMANAGAI, 2007



# IMPORTANT KOKU REDEMPTION SHIPPING NOTES

## POSTAGE:

- All postage is in U.S. currency only.
- Use U.S. stamps or International Reply Coupons only on your self-addressed stamped (S.A.S.E.) return envelope.
- DO NOT send foreign stamps or cash!

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- 10 cards = One regular envelope with 63 cents United States postage.
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## INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING:

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- International Reply Coupons can be substituted for U.S. stamps. See your local Post Office for more information.
- We recommend sending your Koku via certified mail or other traceable means. AEG is not responsible for lost orders.
- Allow two to six weeks for delivery. Contact the Fan Clubs department at (909) 390-5444 if you do not receive your order after six weeks.

# KOKU REDEMPTION ORDER FORM

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	DOJI DOMOTAI (Experienced 2)	20 KOKU
	TOGASHI SATSU (Experienced 3)	20 KOKU
	MATSU YOSHINO (Experienced)	20 KOKU
	YORITOMO TADAME	20 KOKU
	ASAKO BAIREI (Experienced 2)	20 KOKU
	K'CHEE	20 KOKU
	SOSHI TABITO (Experienced)	20 KOKU
	ONI NO AKUMA (Experienced 2)	20 KOKU
	HORIUCHI NOBANE (Experienced)	20 KOKU
	OBSIDIAN DRAGON	20 KOKU
	WEST HUB VILLAGE	20 KOKU
	SECOND DOOM OF THE DRAGON	20 KOKU
	SECOND DOOM OF THE SCORPION	20 KOKU
	STRONGER THAN STEEL	20 KOKU
	THE PRICE OF LOYALTY	20 KOKU
	THE SHOGUN'S LEFT HAND	20 KOKU
	THE SHOGUN'S RIGHT HAND	20 KOKU
	STRENGTH OF THE FORGE	20 KOKU
	TREACHEROUS PLAINS	20 KOKU
	<b>TOTAL KOKU ENCLOSED:</b>	

\* SASE: Self-addressed stamped envelope or two International Reply Coupons.

HLD21

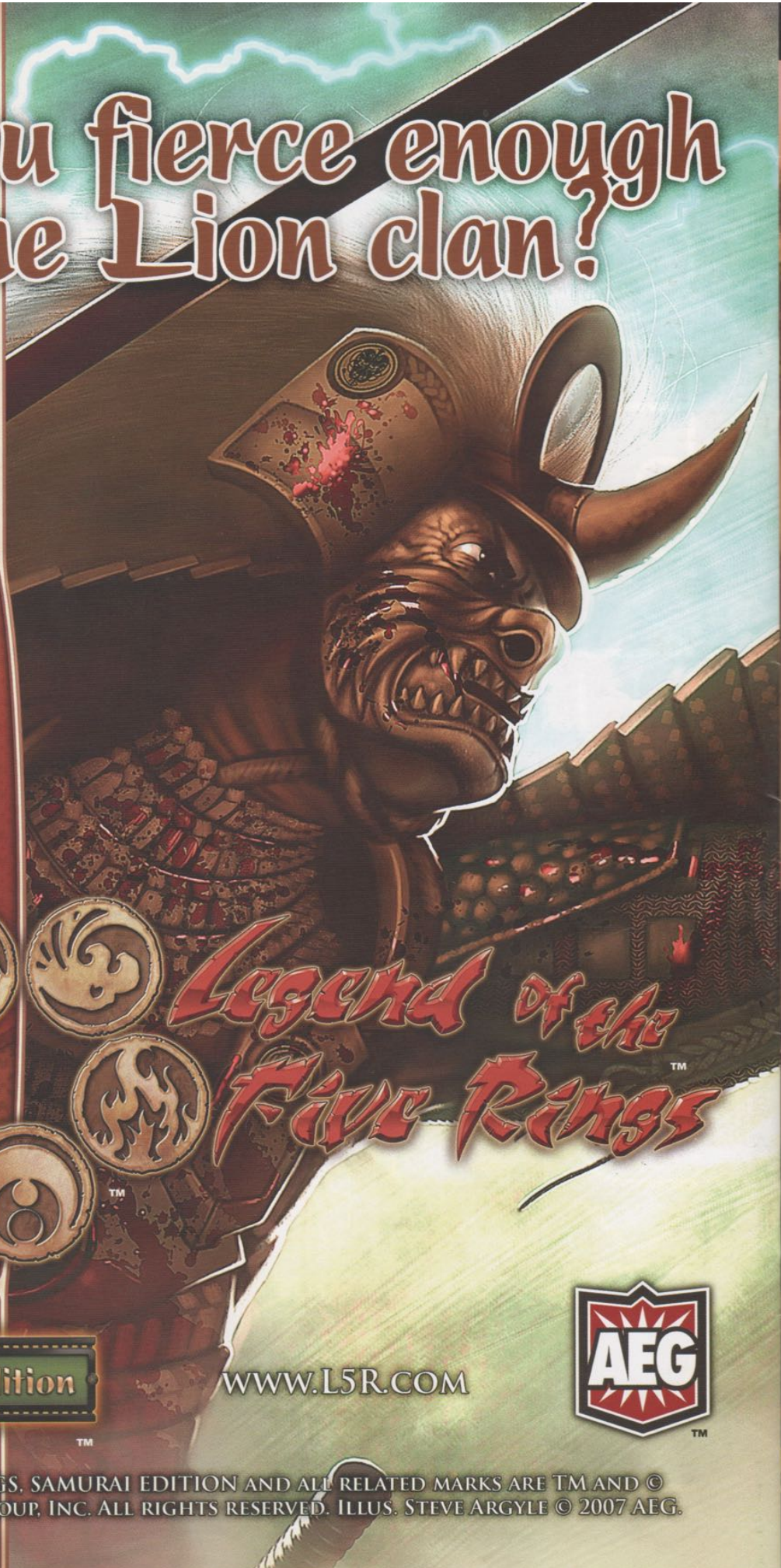








Are you fierce enough  
for the Lion clan?



*Legend of the  
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