

CZO500: THE BROTHERS WAR - MELD COMMANDERS

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- 1) INTRO JIMMY & JLK

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*The Brothers' War is bringing back a very interesting mechanic called Meld. *Explain what Meld is* We've seen it once before in Eldritch Moon. But up till now there was only one Legendary "Meld" creature who could be in your Command Zone (Gisela, The Broken Blade)- The Brothers' War is adding three more (which kind of equates to nine total cards) so we figured they deserved their own episode.*

BUT FIRST:

****CARDKINGDOM.COM/COMMAND** **ULTRAPRO #1** **PATREON:BRIAN PRAAMSMA****

- 2) **MAIN TOPIC: MELD COMMANDERS FROM THE BROTHER'S WAR**

Let's go over some quick Meld rules first:

MELD RULES

HOW DOES IT WITH COMMANDER DAMAGE?

Commander damage (and commander-ness) is tied to the physical card. So the new Mishara's combat damage, whether it comes from his singular form or his meld card, will be cumulative. They will be added together and counted as the same.

Similarly, the melded creature will count as your Commander for cards like Bastion Protector or Deflecting Swat.

HOW DOES IT WORK WITH THE COMMAND ZONE?

If a melded creature you control changes zones, and one of the cards in that meld combination is your commander, you may choose to put that card into the command zone. However, the 2nd card will still go to the place it should have gone from the removal effect (graveyard, bounced to hand, exiled, etc). "712.4 If a melded permanent leaves the battlefield, one permanent leaves the battlefield and two cards are put into the appropriate zone."

HOW DOES IT WORK WITH COMMANDER TAX?

If your melded Commander is removed, you will still have to pay the extra mana the next time you cast it because Commander Tax simply cares about how many times you've cast your Commander from the command zone this game.

HOW DOES IT WORK WITH CLONING/COPYING?

To successfully meld two cards, both must be actual cards. So if you have 4+ lands in your graveyard, a land named Argoth Sanctum of Nature and a clone or copy of Titania, Voice of Gaea - well the land and Titania are going to get exiled but they will not return because you do not have the right cards in exile.

If you want to clone, then you need to clone the melded side once the two halves are joined together. A meld card is a singular permanent/object that is being represented by two cards.

WHAT IS THE MANA VALUE?

Note: The Mana Value of a melded creature is the combined value of its front faces. A copy of a melded creature has no front faces and its mana value is zero.

Ok. Now that we're done going over how meld works. Let's talk about the meld Commanders from this set:

MISHRA, CLAIMED BY GIX

Prof's deck for Game Knights: <https://tappedout.net/mtg-decks/profs-mishra-deck-game-knights-58/>

- **ASSEMBLE AN ARMY** Worth noting, Mishra himself doesn't have to attack, he just has to be on the battlefield. So you just want to go wide fast and get a hoard of bodies on the board as soon as possible so that he can start draining out your opponents. Cheap cards that make tokens every turn like **Bitterblossom**, and **Loyal Apprentice** work really well. Also works great with cards that make tokens when they attack like **Tilonalli's Summoner** or **Hanweir Garrison** (Which can also meld for double the fun with **Hanweir Battlements**) because you can order the triggers so they tokens are created before Mishra's drain ability. Finally, it's nice to include some mass token generation like **Tempt With Vengeance** and **Rise of the Dread Marn** both of which can lead to having a lethal presence on board out of nowhere.
- **ATTACK ATTACK ATTACK** You really want to hit over and over and over again with Mishra, so you can drain the whole board. It doesn't even really matter if your creatures connect, they just need to swing as many times as possible. **Combat Celebrant**, **Aggravated Assault**, and **Moraug, Fury of Akoum** are great repeated ways to do that. The relatively new **Karlach, Fury of Avernus** even gives your things first strike to make the attack extra safe
- **LIFE DRAIN PAYOFF** You're going to gain a lot of life and do a ton of damage every time you attack with Mishra on the board, so you can pull off some great payoffs for all that damage in things like **Florian, Voldaren Scion** and **Neheb the Eternal** (SO MUCH MANA!) Then with the lifegain, you can keep your board and hand full with things like **Witch of the Moors**, and **Veinwitch Coven**. **Vito, Thorn of the Dusk Rose** also lets you turn that life into even more direct damage



PHYREXIAN DRAGON ENGINE

TEXT DESCRIPTION

- **GRAVEYARD TUTORS** The Dragon Engine isn't the most impressive card in its own right, but it plays very well from the graveyard. If it's sitting on the battlefield it's going to draw hate so people can stop your merge, and it doesn't even have haste if you play it from your hand. So to get it there you're going to want to run tutors like **Entomb**, **Buried Alive**, **Unmarked Grave**, and **Goblin Engineer**
- **EXCAVATE THE ENGINE** Phyrexian Dragon Engine already has Unearth, so that can get the job done pretty effectively, but 5 mana is expensive and cards like **Unearth** and **Underworld Breach** can save you a lot of mana. If you decide to use the engine's mini-wheel, Breach also lets you play the cards you dump from your hand. **Mishra, Tamer of Mak Faw** is a great flavor win and lowers the cost of the unearth as does **Convergence of Dominion**.
- **WHEELIE GOOD** It's a wheel! So cards with things like madness or flashback play very well with Phyrexian Dragon Engine. **Bone Miser** can get you cards, mana, and bodies, **Phyrexian Reclamation** makes sure you can get key pieces back into your hand. **Terminal Agony** and **Big Game Hunter** can turn into removal. **From Under the Floorboards** will let you fill the board with zombies for an extra-big attack with Mishra



MISHRA, LOST TO PHYREXIA

I dunno, Phyrexia seems pretty cool to be lost to if this is the end result.

- **TOOLBOX OF HORRORS** Mishra, Lost to Phyrexia has so many options you can cater your choices to the board. The combination of opponents' creatures getting -1/-1 and your creatures getting Menace and Trample can lead to some really devastating attacks. The Powerstones are a great option if you think Mishra might die in the attack or get removed, since they can be used to pay the cost of unearthing the Dragon Engine again for next time.
- **IS IT A DOWNGRADE?** In a lot of cases you probably aren't going to even want to flip Mishra. The meld side is extremely powerful, but if you've already got a board that could drain your opponents out, flipping Mishra turns that ability off and leaves you reliant on combat damage to get the job done. Still, it's very very cool that can't be denied.
- **EVEN MORE TRIGGERS** Flip Mishra also plays extremely well with the extra attacks that the front side wants so that you can get more of his trigger. **DON'T FLICKER HIM THOUGH!** Even though it's an ETB trigger, meld cards unmeld after going into exile, so that's not a viable way to get more of Mishra's abilities. There's always **Strionic Resonator** instead



URZA, LORD PROTECTOR

Lexi's deck for Game Knights <https://tappedout.net/mtg-decks/lexis-urza-deck-game-knights-58/>

- **MAJOR REDUCTION** This hits three major types of spells - compare this to **Foundry Inspector** or **Cloud Key** or **Semblance Anvil** which provides a similar discount but only for ONE of the types here. By itself, Urza seems playable in any spellslinger deck that plays UW, and especially artifact decks. Playable both ways with **Shorikai**, **Genesis Engine**; particularly crazy with **Grand Arbiter Augustin IV**
- **COSTS ZERO** When you double or triple spell cost reduction, you can get cards to cost 0 and have huge turns where you're constantly recurring and playing Artifacts over and over again with cards like **Scrap Trawler**; **Myr Retriever**; **Junk Diver**; **Teshar, Ancestor's Apostle**; and using cards like **Krark Klan Ironworks** or combos of untappers like **Mirran Spy**; **Aphetto Alchemist**; **Vizier of Tumbling Sands**; **Fatestitcher** with cards like **Emry, Lurker of the Loch**; **Metalworker**; **Grim Monolith / Sol Ring**; **Mystic Forge** to churn through your deck and get to your wincons.
- **GET TO THE MELD** There's very little reason not to run **The Mightstone and Weakstone** in an Urza deck, so search it out with **Enlightened Tutor**; **Fabricate**; **Inventor's Fair**; **Kuldotha Forgemaster**; **Moonsilver Key** (wow this seems great); **Reshape**; **Oswald Fiddlebender** (not as reliable, but this card is obviously just good in the deck); **Whir of Invention** - basically, there's no shortage of artifact tutors / ways to get the Mightstone and Weakstone onto the battlefield.



THE MIGHTSTONE AND WEAKSTONE

Card draw or removal as well as ramp on a SINGLE card? The play pattern is simple - play Urza, play this for 4, then tap it with your lands to meld the two.

- **DRAW OR REMOVE?** The flexibility on this is really great, allowing you to kill most Commanders or just draw some cards. Could also be a great way to get a temporary ally since everyone will know what you're trying to do (meld). Also keep in mind that the Melded Urza has card draw, ramp, and removal (that's exile) so if you think you'll make it there, that might also affect your decision.
- **POWERSTONES** Powerstones are now a part of Magic and they all have the text "this mana can't be spent to cast nonartifact spells". This may seem bad at first glance, but there are other ways to use this mana - Activated abilities, additional costs (like cracking a Clue or paying for Ward) all work with the Powerstone restrictions.
- **LEGENDARY MATTERS** Aside from the tutors we mentioned above, you can also find this card with tutors for Legendary cards like **Thalia's Lancers** and **Search for Glory**.
- **DO YOU PLAY...** **Pull From Eternity** in a deck like this? If The Mightstone and Weakstone get exiled, that's a big part of your deck's power and wincon.



URZA, PLANESWALKER

This card is ridiculous.

- **THIS ONE GOES TO 11** Getting to use two abilities a turn means you can +2 Urza twice and get him to 11 Loyalty, then ultimate him the next turn. Given that the +2 stacks on top of each other, this means you could cast a card like **Time Warp** for just UU, **Expropriate** for 3UU and then continue to absolutely win the game. Otherwise you can essentially cast any 4-drop artifact and below for free - **Phyrexian Metamorph**; **Mystic Forge**; **Solemn Simulacrum**; **Jhoira's Familiar**; **Aetherflux Reservoir**.
- **PICK A DUO, ANY DUO** There are so many options when Urza melds into this form to affect the board. Since you're likely spending most of your mana just to Meld, the +2 may not be as relevant unless you're playing untappers (listed above) or spells like **Dramatic Reversal** to keep the value train choo-choo-ing along. If you've already drawn cards when you played The Mightstone and Weakstone, maybe you'd rather -3 and exile a nonland and create two 1/1 Soldier artifact creature tokens?
- **WINNING THE GAME** Once Urza is out, you will immediately draw the attention of the table so it becomes a matter of staying alive until you can ultimate or cast some boardwipes for cheap thanks to his +2 - **Urza's Ruinous Blast**, **Cyclonic Rift**, etc. Then combine with extra turn spells or just hold up counter magic until you can assemble the win.



TITANIA, VOICE OF GAEA

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your LANDS!

- **LIFE LANDS** Your fetchlands that you normally pay 1 life for now gain you a life. And when fetching out Shocklands you're only losing 1 life total in the exchange. If you also happen to discard them to your graveyard or mill them, you also gain 2 life.
- **LANDS TO GRAVEYARD** There are so many different utility lands that will make their way to your graveyard with their activation: **Wasteland**, **Strip Mine**, **Dustbowl**, **Tectonic Edge**, and a new card from BRO - **Demolition Field**. Cards like **Crucible of Worlds** and **Splendid Reclamation** would do work in a deck like this, but also effects like **Zuran Orb** or **World Shaper** paired with a **Aetherflux Reservoir** could just get you there. Also, running a **Life from the Loam** or **Scapeshift** seems great. Cards like **Jolrael, Empress of Beasts** or **Shigeki, Jukai Visionary** or **Crop Rotation / Harrow** are good fits into a deck like this.
- **IN THE 99?** Titania seems like a great addition to most Lands Matters decks both by herself and with Meld potential - **Soul of Windgrace**; **Gitrog Monster**; **Sidisi, Undead Vizier**; **Titania, Protector of Argoth**; and **Hazon, Shaper of Sand** seems great if you're running all the deserts that sacrifice themselves for their abilities
- **EASE OF MELD?** Comparing to the other two Meld Commanders above, Titania still needs a little bit of setup to Meld, but it requires no activation cost (Urza) or an obvious combat step (Mishra). Still, you'll need 4 lands in your graveyard and a specific land on the battlefield.



ARGOTH, SANCTUM OF NATURE

Why the heck isn't this land Legendary?

- **TAPS FOR GREEN** At its worst this comes into play tapped and taps for green with some upside. Reminds us a lot of cards like **Castle Locthwain** or **Castle Vantress**.
- **BUILD A BEAR** 2GG for a 2/2 green Bear creature token is not a good rate, but it does make this land a perfect addition to **Ayula, Queen Among Bears**. Mill 3 is not particularly great for the same rate, and only as a sorcery. This probably is not good enough to be played in Mill heavy decks like **Sidisi, Undead Vizier** especially with the downside with it coming in tapped (doesn't look great in your opener).
- **FIND IT** Fortunately there are lots of ways to tutor up specific lands- **Expedition Map, Sylvan Scrying, Nylea's Intervention, Reap and Sow, Tempt with Discovery**, and a new addition to the game is **Rootpath Purifier** which will turn all your lands into basic, which means you can use cards like **Rampant Growth** and fetchlands like **Prismatic Vista** and **Fabled Passage** (but not fetches that specify land types like Forest) can find Argoth now. You can also use a Prismatic Vista to find a Fabled Passage to find an Evolving Wilds to finally find Argoth (and get 3 lands into your graveyard in the process)



TITANIA, GAEA INCARNATE

MOMMY TREE

- **BIG TIME LANDFALL** Similar to Splendid Reclamation when you first meld Titania - dropping 4+ lands onto the battlefield at once is going to have a big effect if you're playing any amount of landfall. New card **Titania, Nature's Force** cares about any forest landfall, double up landfall triggers with **Ancient Greenwarden**, go nuts with a **Scute Swarm** and **Tireless Provisioner** or **Rampaging Baloths**.
- **JUST KNOCK EM OUT** Vigilance, Reach, Trample, and Haste = ouchy time. If you are playing a card like **Amulet of Vigor**, you might be able to cast additional spells to really put the beatdown on - activate Titania a few times or play cards like **Kamahl's Will**, **Sylvan Awakening**, **Rude Awakening**, paired with **Unnatural Growth** to just swing in and win
- **IN THE 99?** Because Titania is pretty powerful on her own without being Melded and Argoth is a playable land in a lot of decks, it seems fairly reasonable to include these two cards in **Soul of Windgrace**, **Gitrog Monster**, and any of the other cards mentioned earlier. You don't even necessarily need to try and tutor out the Argoth for the Titania meld combo - you could just regularly draw into it and have the end result still be pretty good.

3) TO THE LISTENERS:

What do you think of the new MELD Commanders from The Brothers' War? Are you planning to build any of them? What synergistic cards for each one do you think we missed?

****CARDKINGDOM.COM/COMMAND** **CALL-OUT #2** **ULTRA PRO #2****

4) CLEAN-UP STEP

Special shout to **Ashlen Rose** who is leaving our team to pursue new career opportunities. (She'll still be around and appearing in our content from time-to-time though!)

Big thanks to our amazing team here at The Command Zone! **Damen Lenz, Arthur Meadowcroft, Ladee Danger, Manson Leung, Craig Blanchette, Josh Murphy, Jake Boss, Patrick Nan, Jordan Pridgen, Sam Waldow, Gaurav Gulati, Jamie Block, Mitch Trafford, and Evan Limberger. Plus three new team members: Gabriel Pozos, Megan Yip and Eric Lem.**

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