

## CZ0518: COMMANDER STAPLES THAT AREN'T WORTH THE PRICE

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### \*\*\*CLAP AND SLATE\*\*\*

1) INTRO Josh & Rachel

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*Magic cards can be expensive, but price doesn't always indicate power, especially in Commander. Today we're covering the Commander staples that maintain a high price tag, but just aren't worth the money. We'll be covering a list of cards that aren't worth the splurge and the cheaper cards that can go in their place. If you want to pick up these cheaper replacements go to...*

**\*\*CARD KINGDOM\*\* \*\*ULTRAPRO #1\*\* \*\*PATREON: ADAM SHEPHERD\*\***

### 2) MAIN TOPIC: **COMMANDER STAPLES THAT AREN'T WORTH THE PRICE**

Today, we'll be covering the Commander staples that come with a heavy price and just aren't worth it. Some of them are competitive format staples, which drives the price up. Some are overrated Commander cards. Others are the very best version of their effect, but can be reasonably replaced by cheaper alternatives.

#### 1. **AVACYN, ANGEL OF HOPE \$50**

*Indestructible is not the protection that it used to be. It protects your board from approximately half the most common board wipes and approximately half the most common targeted removal spells. But if you're committed to indestructible, there are cheaper ways to do that.*

##### a. Board Protection

- i. Selfless Spirit \$2.30
- ii. Linvala, Shield of Sea Gate \$0.35
- iii. Your Temple is Under Attack \$0.70
- iv. Grand Crescendo \$9

##### b. There are also cheaper big, scary angels.

- i. Serra's Emissary \$3.50
- ii. Akroma, Angel of Wrath \$4
- iii. Sephara, Sky Blade \$4
- iv. Akroma, Vision of Ixidor \$5

## 2. **BURGEONING** \$18

- a. *Extra land drops* >
  - i. Exploration \$12
  - ii. Oracle of Mul Daya \$7.50
  - iii. Druid Class \$1
  - iv. Explore \$0.25
- b. *Put into play creatures* >
  - i. Walking Atlas \$1
  - ii. Sakura-Tribe Scout \$2.50
  - iii. Llanowar Scout \$0.25
  - iv. Skyshroud Ranger \$1

## 3. **CRATERHOOF BEHEMOTH** \$33

See also: Finale of Devastation \$55

- a. Green has a ton of ways to end the game. While Craterhoof is the most efficient, it's not *\*that\** much better than more budget overruns
- b. Triumph of the Hordes \$14
- c. Overwhelming Stampede \$4
- d. Nissa, Ascended Animist \$12
- e. Kamahl, Heart of Krosa \$2.80
- f. Earthshaker Giant \$6
- g. End-Raze Forerunners \$0.40
- h. Once your opponents are dead, it doesn't matter how much they're dead.

## 4. **DOUBLING SEASON** \$100

See also: Vorinclex, Monstrous Raider \$50

- a. These cards are powerful, but often too high mana value to make a real impact.
- b. With all of the new proliferate stuff, there is plenty of support without dropping \$50–\$100
- c. *Doubling counters* >
  - i. Deepglow Skate \$3
  - ii. Vorel of the Hull Clade \$0.35
- d. *+1/+1 counters* >
  - i. Branching Evolution \$23
  - ii. Hardened Scales \$4.50
  - iii. Corpsejack Menace \$1
  - iv. Winding Constrictor \$0.70
  - v. *Or just double their power* > Unnatural Growth \$7
- e. *Loyalty counters* >
  - i. Pir, Imaginative Rascal \$6.50
  - ii. Evolution Sage \$1
  - iii. Carth the Lion \$0.35

**5. FIERCE GUARDIANSHIP \$70**

*See also: Force of Will \$85, Mana Drain \$43, Flusterstorm \$33, Swan Song \$15.30*

- a. Counterspell \$1.30
- b. Arcane Denial \$3.50
- c. Delay \$1.80
- d. An Offer You Can't Refuse \$3
- e. Stubborn Denial \$1.50

**6. FIERY EMANCIPATION \$30**

- a. Angrath's Marauders \$1.80
- b. Gratuitous Violence \$3
- c. Solphim, Mayhem Dominus \$6
- d. Jeska, Thrice Reborn \$4.50

**7. IMPERIAL SEAL \$90**

- a. If you're going to spend the money...
  - i. Demonic Tutor \$48
  - ii. Vampiric Tutor \$40
  - iii. Grim Tutor \$21
- b. Or save a few dollars with more budget options...
  - i. Diabolic Intent \$9
  - ii. Scheming Symmetry \$7.50
  - iii. Wishclaw Talisman \$3.50
  - iv. Sidisi, Undead Vizier \$8
- c. Trying to up the tutor density? What exactly are you looking for?
  - i. *Will Transmute cards get you there?*
    - 1. Dimir House Guard \$1
    - 2. Shred Memory \$1.30
    - 3. Dimir Machinations \$1.50
    - 4. Brainspoil \$0.40
    - 5. Fleshwrither \$1.80
  - ii. *Maybe you just want a big draw spell?*
    - 1. Syphon Mind \$0.60
    - 2. Painful Truths \$0.35
    - 3. Greed \$0.35
    - 4. Disciple of Bolas \$0.35
    - 5. Stinging Study \$7

## 8. LAND TAX \$38

*Land Tax is NOT ramping. It's drawing cards.*

- a. Draw
  - i. Rumor Gatherer \$0.25
  - ii. Tocasia's Welcome \$2.50
  - iii. Master of Ceremonies \$5
- b. Land Search
  - i. Weathered Wayfarer \$3
  - ii. Gift of Estates \$1.30
  - iii. Oreskos Explorer \$0.35
- c. Upgrade to actual ramp
  - i. Archaeomancer's Map \$12
  - ii. Keeper of the Accord \$6

## 9. LILIANA, DREADHORDE GENERAL \$28

- a. Dark Prophecy \$3.60
- b. Erebos, Bleak-Hearted \$2.80
- c. Body Count \$2
- d. Plumb the Forbidden \$2.80
- e. Grim Haruspex \$0.80
- f. Midnight Reaper \$1

## 10. MANA CRYPT \$200

See also: Mana Vault \$43, Mox Opal \$85, Jeweled Lotus \$120

- a. Adding one of these doesn't really change the overall power level of your deck. It's the density of fast mana that will change the math.
- b. Your odds of drawing a Sol Ring on turn 1 - 8.1%
  - i. Drawing it by turn 3 - 10.1%
- c. Your odds of drawing a Sol Ring or a Mana Crypt on turn 1 - 15.6%
  - i. Drawing it by turn 3 - 19.3%
- d. Your odds of drawing a Sol Ring, Mana Crypt or Jeweled Lotus on turn 1 - 22.5%
  - i. Drawing it by turn 3 - 27.6%
- e. There's no denying fast mana makes your deck better, but is that 7-10% worth the \$40-\$200

## 11. ORIGINAL DUALS

See: Taiga \$378, Tundra \$550, Scrubland \$315, Badlands \$432, Plateau \$390, Volcanic Island \$950, Tropical Island \$700, Underground Sea \$810, Savannah \$360, Bayou \$530

- a. If these are 100% better than any give basic—twice as many colors, untapped, fetchable, no downsides—swapping any given basic for a dual land improves your deck 1%
- b. But how much better are these than triomes?
  - i. 33% more colors, tapped, fetchable, cycling

- c. What about Battlebond lands?
- d. If I wanted to improve my shockland mana base, fetchlands go further than dual lands
- e. *Untapped* > Battlebond Lands; Pain Lands; Slow Lands; Check Lands
- f. *Fetchable* > Shocklands; Triomes; Tango Lands

## 12. PHYREXIAN ALTAR \$30

- a. Are you using the colored mana for something or is it just functioning as a free sacrifice outlet? Phyrexian Altar is very powerful, but it isn't necessary unless you feel like you can actually \*use\* the colored mana.
- b. *Want mana, but not specific colors?*
  - i. Ashnod's Altar \$7
  - ii. Thermopod \$1
- c. *Just want a sac outlet?*
  - i. Altar of Dementia \$5
  - ii. Viscera Seer \$0.80
  - iii. Yahenni, Undying Partisan \$2

## 13. RHYSTIC STUDY \$45

- a. *No Synergy Required* >
  - i. Mystic Remora \$7
  - ii. Reality Chip \$3
  - iii. Ghostly Pilferer \$0.35
  - iv. Nezahal, Primal Tide \$5
  - v. Midnight Clock \$0.60
- b. *Meta Dependent* >
  - i. Verity Circle \$0.35
  - ii. Insight \$0.80
  - iii. Psychic Possession \$2.25
- c. *Synergy Required* >
  - i. Archmage Emeritus \$6
  - ii. Reconnaissance Mission \$1
  - iii. Kindred Discovery \$6.50
  - iv. Idol of Oblivion \$0.80

## 14. RISE OF THE DARK REALMS \$21

- a. *You reanimate from all graveyards* >
  - i. Command the Dreadhorde \$0.40
  - ii. Grave Betrayal \$3.50
- b. *You reanimate all creatures, time dependent* >
  - i. Myojin of Grim Betrayal \$0.35
  - ii. Thrilling Encore \$3
- c. *Just reanimate your graveyard* >

- i. Finale of Eternity \$1.50
- ii. Haunting Voyage \$6
- d. *Each player reanimates their graveyard >*
  - i. Living Death \$5
  - ii. Twilight's Call \$1.50
- e. *You reanimate one from each graveyard >*
  - i. Sepulchral Primordial \$1.80
  - ii. Ghouls Night Out \$0.40
  - iii. Dredge the Mire \$0.35
- f. There are other, more effective black finishers that are significantly cheaper

#### 15. **STRIP MINE \$14**

See also: Wasteland \$25

- a. If your plan is only to use these as land removal for problematic lands like Nykthos, Shrine to Nix, Cabal Coffers, etc., then there are reasonable budget replacements.
  - i. Ghost Quarter \$0.50
  - ii. Demolition Field \$1
- b. If your plan is repeatable land destruction, then go ahead and splurge.

#### 16. **WHEEL OF FORTUNE \$330**

- a. Wheel of Misfortune \$5
- b. Reforge the Soul \$6
- c. Imposing Grandeur \$1.30
- d. Runehorn Hellkite \$1.80

### 3) **TO THE LISTENERS**

Do you agree with our conclusions? Which Commander staples do you think aren't worth the price tag? What cards do you use instead?

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

### 4) **THE END STEP**

Something cool outside the world of Magic

### 5) **CLEAN-UP STEP**

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