CARD CORNER: BANS IN TCGS

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Riftbound trading cards are laid out on a table. Riftbound just announced a 10 card ban list, getting rid of some of the most important cards in the game.

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the general feedback was that Riot had no idea what they were doing. Instead of being applauded for balancing their game properly, they were ridiculed for not getting it right on their first go. Since Riftbound is Riot's first TCG, people thought they were just inexperienced and lackluster with what they were doing.

As they've continued the pattern though, I feel like there's a general community shift towards a positive feeling on what they're doing. Instead of Riven and Kennen being the only two viable decks, they've now banned the overpowered cards, allowing a larger variety of decks to flourish in the format.

I personally share the opinion that these bans are good for the game. By admitting their mistakes and fixing them early, it allows players to have a fun time while not feeling any one card or deck is too overpowered.

In other games, specifically Pokémon, cards are rarely ever banned. For some context, Dragapult is currently the best deck in the game, and it hasn't been close for many months now. The way that Pokémon is dealing with the issue isn't the same as Riftbound though.

Pokémon takes the more traditional angle of letting the game play itself out. Instead of banning the cards that are problematic, they've tried to print cards that are stronger specifically against that deck. The issue with Dragapult though is not the attacker itself, but rather the draw engine behind it.

The Pokémon company tried to print a counter to the draw engine this latest set with "Legendary Lava Lake," but it's lackluster at best, being easily countered with a stadium of their own.

Many Pokémon players are now switching their viewpoints on bans and giving props to Riot for what they've done. Riot banned the cards that were keeping the meta stale, and as a result saw a massive increase in variety, and arguably enjoyability. Pokémon's strategy has been successful to an extent, yet it still allows Dragapult to be the highest played deck by a large margin.

So, what is the best way to deal with overpowered cards in TCGs? Riot has been pioneering the stance that bans are the way to go, while Pokémon likes to print counters and wait for rotation. Both systems have their own merits, but it seems like public sentiment is shifting in the direction of bans.

If you have thoughts, leave them in the comments on the website, and I'll do my best to respond!

Until then, I hope you all have an amazing Thanksgiving break, and get in some games of your favorite TCGs with the extra time! Lots of events, from Summoner Skirmishes to League Challenges will be happening, so make sure to check out your local game store to see what's going on.

Have a great break Huskies, and I'll catch you back in the Card Corner one more time before we're gone for winter break! As always, thanks for reading!



LOGO BY COLBI LORANGER, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



An example of a card from the game Riftbound. This card represents the character, Brynhir Thundersong.

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