

INFESTED INSIDER

BUG WEB NEWS

#4 | JANUARY 2026



INFESTED INSIDER BUG WEB NEWS

COMMUNITY MANAGER'S CORNER - SHARD BUGS SWEEPS THE 2025 TCG NEWS INDIE TCG AWARDS

GREETINGS HIVE!

KEVMO HERE. SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF INFESTED INSIDER, SEVERAL EXCITING AND NOTEWORTHY THINGS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE WORLD OF SHARD BUGS, SO LET'S GET YOU ALL CAUGHT UP! FIRST OF ALL, THE SHARD BUGS TEAM HAS BEEN HARD AT WORK CONTINUOUSLY ONBOARDING MORE LGS PARTNERS NOT ONLY WITHIN THE US, BUT INTERNATIONALLY AS WELL. WE ARE EXCITED TO SHARE OUR FIRST INTERNATIONAL LGS PARTNER, KAUYUMARI GAMES, LOCATED IN ZAPOPAN, MEXICO! WE ARE CURRENTLY WORKING ON SOME MORE POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH ADDITIONAL STORES IN MEXICO, AS WELL AS A COUPLE OF OTHER COUNTRIES, SO HOPEFULLY WE'LL HAVE SOME MORE INFO TO SHARE ON THIS SOON.



KEVMO, SHARD BUGS TCG COMMUNITY MANAGER

SECONDLY, WE HAD ANOTHER CONVENTION APPEARANCE. COLLECT-A-CON SAN ANTONIO TOOK PLACE FROM DECEMBER 6TH-7TH, AND TEAM SHARD BUGS WAS IN ATTENDANCE HOSTING LEARN TO PLAY GAMES, SELLING PRODUCTS, AND SHOWING

OFF SOME TEASERS FOR OUR UPCOMING SETS. MORE IMPORTANTLY, HOWEVER, WE WERE ALSO HANDING OUT SOME CONVENTION-EXCLUSIVE PROMO CARDS, SPECIFICALLY OUR SUPER COOL BIOLUMINESCENT SLIME CARDS WHICH ACTUALLY GLOW WHEN HELD UNDER A BLACK LIGHT. THESE WERE A HUGE HIT, AS THE ARTWORK IS NOT ONLY SUPER CUTE, BUT ALSO BECAUSE THE GLOWING EFFECT IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND FOR SHARD BUGS, SHOWCASING OUR WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO EXPERIMENT WITH FUN NEW CARD TREATMENTS. YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT WE MIGHT DO NEXT!

SPEAKING OF CARDS, WE FINALLY RECEIVED OUR PRINTED BATCHES OF CORRECTED MISPRINTED CARDS FROM THE STANDARD EDITION OF SET 1: THE BUG-INNING, WHICH YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SWAP FOR YOUR MISPRINTED VERSIONS VIA OUR MAIL-IN PROGRAM. THE TWO CARDS FROM THE STANDARD EDITION WERE THE BASIC PRINTED VERSIONS OF RINFAP AND URAMA. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO EXCHANGE YOUR MISPRINTED CARDS FOR THE CORRECTED VERSION, YOU CAN MAIL THEM TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS, OR EMAIL US AT INFO@SHARDBUGSTCG.COM.

SHARD BUGS LLC
4030 S TAMAMI TRL, UNIT D
PORT CHARLOTTE, FL 33952

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, SHARD BUGS WAS NOMINATED FOR THE TCG NEWS INDIE TCG AWARDS. THE INDIE TCG AWARDS ARE HOSTED BY INDIETCG.COM, AND VOTED ON BY THEIR FOLLOWERS. THE AWARDS WERE



REVEALED VIA THE INDIETCG AWARDS YOUTUBE CHANNEL, AND WE ARE BOTH PROUD AND EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE WON SIX AWARDS OUT OF NINE TOTAL CATEGORIES, EARNING SECOND PLACE IN CROWDFUNDING CAMPAIGN, AND FIRST PLACE IN BEST GAMEPLAY, BEST ARTWORK & VISUAL DESIGN, BEST DEBUT GAME, COMMUNITY INDIE TCG OF THE YEAR, AND INDIE TCG OF THE YEAR.



THIS WAS BIG NEWS FOR US, AND WE WERE SUPER EXCITED TO END 2025 ON SUCH A HIGH NOTE. WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT OUR AMAZING COMMUNITY SUPPORTING US EVERY STEP OF THE WAY. WE WERE SO EXCITED IN FACT, WE EVEN STAYED UP LATE FOR NEW YEARS AND DROPPED A SUPER EXCITING NEW YEARS SPOILER FROM OUR UPCOMING STANDARD EDITION OF SET 2: FIRST BOUNTY! YOU CAN CHECK THAT OUT IN THE ANNOUNCEMENTS CHANNEL OF OUR OFFICIAL DISCORD SERVER.

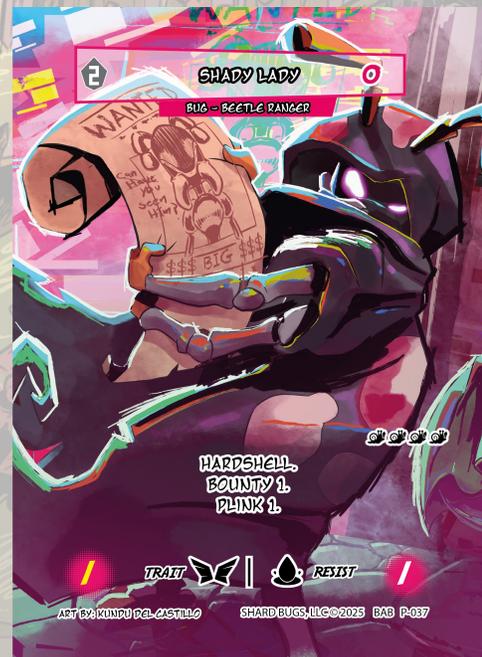
WE HAVE A LOT OF EXCITING THINGS IN STORE FOR 2026, AND WE CANNOT WAIT FOR THE COMMUNITY TO GET THEIR HANDS ON THE STANDARD EDITION OF SET 2: FIRST BOUNTY, WHICH RELEASES ON JANUARY 17TH! FOR NOW, HOWEVER, WE CAN SHARE THAT WE WILL BE ATTENDING MIAMI TCG CONVENTION ON JANUARY 17TH-18TH, WHERE WE WILL BE HOSTING A FREE 64 PERSON CONSTRUCTED TOURNAMENT ON SATURDAY, AS WELL AS A LEARN TO PLAY

EVENT BEFOREHAND. SUNDAY WE WILL BE HOSTING A FREE 64 PERSON DRAFT TOURNAMENT. THIS WILL ALSO BE THE LAST OPPORTUNITY TO WIN SOME OF THE EXCLUSIVE CHAMPION PACKS, SO COME WIN THEM WHILE YOU CAN! SEE YOU THERE!

- KEVIN, AKA KEVMO, SHARD BUGS COMMUNITY MANAGER

SPOILER ALERT! - SHADY LADY BUY-A-BOX PROMO

SHARD BUGS FANS HAVE BEEN SPOILED WITH A VARIETY OF COOL PROMOS, FROM CONVENTION EXCLUSIVES, TO THE COVETED CARDS WITHIN CHAMPION PACKS. WITH THE RELEASE OF FIRST BOUNTY'S STANDARD EDITION ON THE HORIZON, PLAYERS WILL BE ABLE TO EARN A SWEET BUY-A-BOX PROMO. BUT WHAT CARD IS IT?



IT'S NONE OTHER THAN THE QUEEN OF KEYWORD SOUP, SHADY LADY, WITH A SWEET BORDERLESS TREATMENT TO BOOT. TO





**SHARD
SBUGS**

AT

Miami

TCG



TOURNAMENTS - PRIZES - PRODUCTS

JANUARY 17-18, 2026

MIAMI AIRPORT CONVENTION CENTER

711 NW 72ND AVE, MIAMI, FL 33126

EARN THIS PROMO, PLAYERS MUST PURCHASE A BOOSTER BOX OF FIRST BOUNTY'S STANDARD EDITION FROM AN LGS. FIRST BOUNTY'S STANDARD EDITION HITS STORE SHELVES ON JANUARY 17TH, SO DON'T DELAY!

BUGS WITH BRIGHT - THE BIG APPLE

IN THIS EDITION OF BUGS WITH BRIGHT, I'M GOING TO BE TALKING ABOUT THE "BUG" BEHIND THE CARD BIG APPLE FROM THE BUG-INNING. BIG APPLE IS BASED ON THE MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY AMPULLARIIDAE, ALSO KNOWN AS APPLE SNAILS.



THIS APPLE SNAIL IS HAPPILY RELAXING ON A ROCK.
PHOTOGRAPHER - MIKE HILL PHOTOGRAPHY

APPLE SNAILS ARE COMMON IN THE AQUARIUM TRADE AND ARE ALSO KNOWN AS MYSTERY SNAILS. SOME MEMBERS OF THIS FAMILY CAN REACH LENGTHS OF 5.9 INCHES OR LONGER. THESE SNAILS ARE ALSO AN AGRICULTURAL PEST, AS THEY'LL CONSUME ANY PLANT MATTER THEY CAN. IN LARGE POPULATIONS, THESE SNAILS CAN DECIMATE ECOSYSTEMS.

APPLE SNAILS CAN ALSO BE A DANGER TO HUMAN HEALTH. THEY ARE AN INTERMEDIATE HOST TO RAT LUNGWORM, WHICH CAN INFECT HUMANS AND OTHER MAMMALS. WHILE THIS ORGANISM DOES NOT

USUALLY KILL HUMANS, IT IS STILL A HEALTH RISK.



IN MY HOME STATE OF FLORIDA, THERE ARE FIVE DIFFERENT SPECIES OF APPLE SNAILS. OF THESE SNAILS, ONLY ONE IS NATIVE, AND THE OTHER FOUR ARE INVASIVE SPECIES. THE NATIVE FLORIDA APPLE SNAIL, KNOWN SCIENTIFICALLY AS *POMACEA PALUDOSA*, LAYS EGG CLUTCHES OF 20 TO 80 EGGS. MEANWHILE, THE CLUTCHES OF THE INVASIVE SPECIES' CAN REACH UP TO 2000 EGGS! DUE TO THIS MASSIVE DIFFERENCE IN CLUTCH SIZE, THERE ARE CONCERNS OVER THE FUTURE OF THE FLORIDA APPLE SNAIL.



A BETTER LOOK AT THE FLESHY UNDERSIDE OF AN APPLE SNAIL. PHOTOGRAPHER - CYNOCUB



INSECTS: THE PUZZLE-ING

N F X S B K C Q F J U P S I T U A O T J
 W U U M H H R F R O S T B I T E B G I U
 O O T H E C A E J F R O D K Y Q X G F T
 C B V Z W G F I D G B T A R A C H N I D
 K O L N E R R C N E A A H L T R C W T I
 E U S A B I I E F V M N I E M Y P S E J
 V S E M C O F E E F E P C C C Q W T R I
 M F C A I K U S X D W R T P S A F E M I
 O D L R C C L N L A Y A T I I P U N I N
 O Z V O A P C O T V W D F E O N T S T F
 U Y G E R P K R C Y M A U Y B N C N E E
 Y D F C J I A F U U H M K C C R I E V S
 Y Z N C V G D R X S S U A E K C A F R T
 T M D T K J Y A M T H T N N N Y Y T B E
 E X O S K E L E T O N E L T T E Y G E D
 R H L K E V F M S W R I R I E I D K Y U
 R K H Z L V G V P R A O Z S K R S G I Z
 A L N C S L P V R F O Z A Z D R Y A D A
 N K K J I Z Z H L K Q G V E S Y W H Q F
 W D Y X G E N T O M O L O G I S T M G P

ARACHNID	BOUNTY HUNTER	EXOSKELETON	FROST BITE	INFESTED	OOTHECA	SCRAP ARMOR
AWAKENED	COSMIC CRUSHERS	FLORIDA	GREEDY DUCKY	KEVMO	PINCER	TERMITE
BLACK LOCUST	ENTOMOLOGIST	FOR THE CAUSE	INVERTEBRATE	MANTIS	REDEMPTION	TERRAN



ENTOMOLOGISTS THROUGHOUT HISTORY - MARIA SIBYLLA MERIAN

MARIA SIBYLLA MERIAN (1647-1717) WAS A GERMAN ENTOMOLOGIST, NATURALIST, AND SCIENTIFIC ILLUSTRATOR. MERIAN'S STEPFATHER, JACOB MARREL, A STILL LIFE PAINTER AND STUDENT OF GEORG FLEGEL, ENCOURAGED HER TO PAINT FROM AN EARLY AGE. AT AGE 13, MERIAN STARTED RAISING SILKWORMS, AND SOON BEGAN PAINTING INSECTS THAT SHE RAISED OR CAPTURED. IN MERIAN'S PUBLICATION METAMORPHOSIS INSECTORUM SURINAMENSIIUM (1705), SHE WROTE THAT SHE DEVELOPED AN INTEREST IN METAMORPHOSIS AS A CHILD, LEADING HER TO COLLECT AS MANY CATERPILLARS AS POSSIBLE TO EXPERIENCE THEIR LIFE CYCLE.



PORTRAIT OF MARIA SIBYLLA MERIAN.
ARTIST - JACOB MARREL (1679)

FOLLOWING MERIAN'S MARRIAGE TO HER STEPFATHER'S APPRENTICE IN 1665, SHE CONTINUED TO FIND NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDY AND PAINT INSECTS. FOR A TIME, MERIAN TUTORED THE DAUGHTERS OF WEALTHY FAMILIES IN DRAWING, AND MADE

GOOD USE OF THE BEAUTIFUL GARDENS ON THEIR ESTATES TO FURTHER HER ENTOMOLOGICAL INTERESTS. DURING ONE OF HER PERIODS LIVING IN THE NETHERLANDS, MERIAN STUDIED THE LIFE CYCLE OF FROGS, PERFORMING MANY DISSECTIONS DURING THIS TIME.



MERIAN'S MAULBEERBAUM SAMT FRUCHT (1679), WHICH DEPICTS THE EGGS AND LARVAE OF THE SILKWORM MOTHS AMONGST THE FRUIT AND LEAVES OF A MULBERRY TREE.

IN 1692, MERIAN'S DAUGHTER JOANNA MARRIED MERCHANT JAKOB HENDRIK HEROLT, BRINGING HER AN OPPORTUNITY TO START SELLING HER PAINTINGS. THE SALE OF MERIAN'S PAINTINGS FINANCED HER 1699 EXPEDITION TO SURINAME, IN SOUTH AMERICA, WHERE SHE INTENDED TO STUDY AND ILLUSTRATE INSECTS FOR FIVE YEARS. WHILE THERE, MERIAN ALSO DOCUMENTED LOCAL FLORAE AND FAUNA, MOST NOTABLY PINEAPPLES. MERIAN FELL ILL AFTER LESS THAN TWO YEARS, POSSIBLY WITH MALARIA, AND RETURNED TO THE DUTCH REPUBLIC. UPON HER RECOVERY, MERIAN OPENED A SHOP WHERE SHE SOLD HER PAINTINGS AND



ENGRAVINGS, AS WELL AS MANY OF THE SPECIMENS SHE COLLECTED WHILE ABROAD. IT WAS DURING THIS TIME THAT SHE PUBLISHED HER AFOREMENTIONED BOOK, WHICH DOCUMENTED THE INSECTS SHE DISCOVERED IN SURINAME.

MERIAN SUFFERED A STROKE IN 1719, BECOMING PARTIALLY PARALYSED. DESPITE THIS, SHE CONTINUED HER WORK FOR THE REMAINDER OF HER LIFE. MERIAN DIED IN 1717. HER DAUGHTER DOROTHEA POSTHUMOUSLY PUBLISHED ERUCARUM ORTUS ALIMENTUM ET PARADOXA METAMORPHOSIS, A COLLECTION OF MERIAN'S WORK. MERIAN HAS SINCE HAD NUMEROUS TAXA, AND TWO GENERA, NAMED AFTER HER. THREE BUTTERFLIES HAVE BEEN NAMED AFTER HER - OPSIPHANES CASSINA MERIANAE, A TYPE OF SPLIT-BANDED OWLET BUTTERFLY, HELICONIUS MELPOMENE MERIANA, A SPECIES OF THE COMMON POSTMAN BUTTERFLY, AND CATASTICTA SIBYLLAE, A RARE SPECIES FROM PANAMA. ONE OR MORE MOTHS, MANTIDS, BEES, SPIDERS, LIZARDS, TOADS, AND BIRDS HAVE ALSO BEEN NAMED AFTER MERIAN, AS WELL AS A FEW PLANT SPECIES.

EXAMINING WEEKS 9-12 OF THE FIRST BOUNTY ONLINE METAGAME

THE META OF THE SHARD BUGS ONLINE LEAGUE HAS CONTINUED TO EVOLVE FOLLOWING THE BAN OF THE META DOMINATING CARD FOR THE CAUSE. DURING THESE FOUR WEEKS, MARS TOOK 44% OF THE TOP FOUR FINISHES. LUNA FOLLOWED CLOSELY BEHIND WITH 38% OF THE TOP FOUR. SOL AND SOL, AVATAR OF BRILLIANCE WERE AT THE BOTTOM, TAKING 12% AND 6%

PERCENT OF THE FINISHES, RESPECTIVELY.

THE SHINING STAR OF THIS FOUR WEEK CYCLE WAS YOUNGSTER ZAC PRAGER, WHO EARNED THREE FIRST PLACE FINISHES WITH LUNA MIDRANGE. HERE'S HIS WINNING LIST FROM WEEK 12.

AVATAR - LUNA

BUGS - 50

- 4 ADVENTUROUS EARTHWORM
- 3 ARILYN THE MOONBLADE
- 5 BIG APPLE
- 3 BIRDEATER BEHEMOTH
- 3 BOBBIT LEVIATHAN
- 3 CLOAKED GHOST
- 5 CLOTH MOTH
- 4 DARKNESS DEVOTEE
- 3 DARWIN, DEMOLITION EXPERT
- 3 HAZE GUARDIAN
- 3 LUNA'S FAVORED
- 4 MECHANIZED TORTOISE
- 2 MORGANA THE ATLAS
- 5 MOTH OF PEPPERED FLAME

SUPPORT - 3

- 3 BLESSING OF LUNA

EQUIPMENT - 7

- 2 BLACK LOCUST
- 3 BOTTLECAP SHIELD
- 2 COSMIC COCOON

ACTIONS - 3

- 3 MOON BEAM

QUICK ACTIONS - 3

- 3 STATIC CHARGE

VISIT THE OFFICIAL SHARD BUGS DISCORD SERVER TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EXCITING SHARD BUGS ONLINE LEAGUE!



HIVE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - DAKOTA ROBERTS/@DAKOTA

INFESTED INSIDER - I'M HERE WITH THE SHARD BUGS \$10K SPLAT ROYALE CHAMPION DAKOTA ROBERTS/@DAKOTA. DAKOTA, WHERE ARE YOU FROM AND HOW DID YOU GET INTO SHARD BUGS?

DAKOTA ROBERTS - SO I'M FROM SARASOTA, FLORIDA. THE DARK SIDE IS MY HOME STORE. THE DARK SIDE'S OWNER, RICK, TOLD ME HE WANTED TO SHOW ME A NEW TCG THAT WAS PRODUCED LOCALLY. I WANT TO SAY WE STARTED AROUND 8:00 PM, AND I DON'T THINK WE STOPPED PLAYING UNTIL AROUND 4:00 AM. I IMMEDIATELY FELL IN LOVE WITH THE GAME. THEN I GOT INTO THE COMPETITIVE SCENE, LEARNED A LOT ABOUT THE GAME, AND FOUND MY TRUE LOVE, MARS.

II - IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU ENJOY SHARD BUGS MECHANICALLY. WHAT ARE YOU ENJOYING SPECIFICALLY?

DR - THERE'S SEVERAL THINGS. SO I'VE PLAYED MAGIC: THE GATHERING FOR A WHILE, AND A BIG THING IN MAGIC IS THAT YOU CAN EXPERIENCE NON-GAMES BECAUSE OF LANDS. IN SOME GAMES, YOU EITHER DRAW TOO MANY OR TOO FEW LANDS. THE THING I LOVE ABOUT SHARD BUGS IS THAT IT'S MOSTLY ELIMINATED BECAUSE YOU PLAY YOUR BUGS INTO YOUR HIVE. THERE'S THE STRATEGY OF METHODICALLY CHOOSING WHICH BUGS YOU WANT TO PLAY IN YOUR HIVE. IT AFFECTS DECK BUILDING TOO. THERE ARE BUGS THAT ARE GOOD IN CERTAIN MATCHUPS, BUT YOU CAN PLAY THEM TO THE HIVE AND EXHAUST THEM FOR DUST, TOO. I ENJOY THAT PREBOARDING IS BUILT INTO SHARD BUGS.

ANOTHER PART OF SHARD BUGS I LOVE IS THE MULLIGAN SYSTEM. IT'S VERY FORGIVING, AND IT PROVIDES THE BEST POSSIBLE HANDS THAT YOU CAN GET OUT OF YOUR DECK, WHICH THERE ARE ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST. TO ME, BETWEEN THE DUST SYSTEM AND THE MULLIGAN, COMPETITIVELY, YOU'RE SQUEEZING THE BEST POSSIBLE CARDS OUT OF A DECK AND BEST POSSIBLE PLAYS OUT OF A DECK SO THAT WHEN TWO PLAYERS MEET, IT'S GOING TO BE MORE OF AN EXPRESSION OF SKILL BECAUSE THE DECKS ARE PERFORMING THE BEST THEY CAN. IT FEELS VERY REWARDING TO WIN AGAINST A SKILLED PLAYER EVEN MORE BECAUSE YOU KNOW IT'S NOT JUST THAT THEIR DECK LEFT THEM HANGING. THEY HAD EVERY OPPORTUNITY, BUT YOU STILL BEAT THEM.

II - WHAT A GREAT CASE YOU'VE MADE FOR SHARD BUGS. YOU TOLD ME YOUR FIRST PLAY SESSION WAS EIGHT HOURS. WHAT'S YOUR WEEKLY SHARD BUGS REGIMEN LIKE? HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND PLAYING AT THE DARK SIDE, AND ONLINE?

DR - SO I PLAYTEST REGULARLY, ESPECIALLY WITH @FILTHYGRUXMAIN, WHO'S ANOTHER COMPETITIVE PLAYER. HE'S EARNED SEVERAL TOP FOUR FINISHES ONLINE, AND EARNED 1ST AND 3RD IN TWO OF THE PAST \$1KS. WE PLAYTEST ONLINE PROBABLY AT LEAST TWICE WEEKLY, AND TRY TO FIND NEW DECKS AND BREAK THE META, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE FOR THE CAUSE BAN. I RUN THE DARK SIDE'S WEEKLY EVENT, BUT THAT'S MORE OF A CASUAL EVENT. I'LL USUALLY BRING SOME SORT OF GOOFY DECK. I'VE BEEN TRYING SOL A LOT RECENTLY BECAUSE IT'S VERY UNEXPLORED. I DEDICATE A LOT OF TIME TO TESTING AND PLAYING ONLINE.



WWW.SHARDBUGSTCG.COM



SET

2

FIRST BOUNTY

STANDARD EDITION

JANUARY

17TH



AVAILABLE AT PARTICIPATING LGS'S

I'M ABOUT TO START PLAYING MORE IN THE WEEKLY ONLINE LEAGUE. I'M CONSTANTLY THINKING ABOUT SHARD BUGS. I'VE MADE A SPREADSHEET OF ALL THE CARDS, AND I'M ALWAYS TRYING TO MAKE CONNECTIONS WITH THE DIFFERENT CARDS AND THEORY CRAFT WHAT'S GOING TO BE COMING OUT IN INFESTATION. I'M SO EXCITED FOR THE LAST THREE AVATARS TO COME OUT. I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING HOW FLESHED OUT SHARD BUGS BECOMES.

II - SO WHAT HAS YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION BEEN WITH THE FOR THE CAUSE BAN, AND WHAT ARE THE CARDS OR AVATARS THAT YOU'VE ENJOYED FOLLOWING THE SHAKEUP?

DR - I THINK THE FOR THE CAUSE BAN WAS NECESSARY, BUT IT WAS KIND OF BITTERSWEET, BECAUSE I LOVE BEATING FOR THE CAUSE PLAYERS. I WANT TO SAY DURING THE SPLAT ROYALE \$10K, I PLAYED AGAINST EIGHT DIFFERENT FOR THE CAUSE PLAYERS, AND I BEAT SEVEN OF THEM. I WAS HEDGING MY BETS IN FAVOR OF MOST DECKS PLAYING FOR THE CAUSE. I'M GLAD IT'S BANNED FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS. IT VERY MUCH LIMITED THE COMPETITIVE META, TO THE POINT YOU HAD TO HAVE A VERY GOOD REASON TO NOT PLAY FOR THE CAUSE, AND A VERY SMALL PERCENTAGE OF DECKS VERY CONSISTENTLY BEAT IT. MOST PLAYERS GRAVITATED TO FOR THE CAUSE DECKS. ANOTHER REASON I'M GLAD IT GOT BANNED - I'VE PLAYED GAMES AGAINST PLAYERS RUNNING FOR THE CAUSE, AND THERE WERE CORE MECHANICS OF THE GAME THEY IGNORED, LIKE ATTACKING AND DEFENDING, BECAUSE MOST OF THE TIME WITH A FOR THE CAUSE DECK, YOU USUALLY DIDN'T NEED TO ATTACK AT ALL.

IT WAS FUNNY SEEING PLAYERS WHO HAD PLAYED FOR A WHILE NOT UNDERSTAND THAT ASPECT OF THE GAME BECAUSE THEY HAD BEEN PLAYING A DECK THAT JUST WINS FROM THEIR HAND. IT'S BOTH RELIEVING AND SCARY HOW MUCH THE META OPENED UP BY JUST BANNING ONE CARD. NOW THERE'S SEVERAL DECKS FIGHTING FOR THE TOP POSITION. MARS CONTROL HAS DONE WELL, AND SOL HAS BEEN HIDING IN THE SHADOWS WITH THE INVIGORATING BREEZE COMBO. I KNOW THAT SOME PLAYERS HAVE BEEN HAVING SUCCESS WITH LUNA AGGRO, WHICH IS A COMBINATION OF WORDS I DIDN'T EVEN THINK I'D PUT TOGETHER. SO I'M VERY SATISFIED WITH THE FOR THE CAUSE BAN AND HOW MUCH IT'S OPENED UP THE META.

I'M EXCITED FOR WHAT INFESTATION BRINGS TO MARS, BECAUSE THE DESERT LOCUST AND FANATICAL LOCUST COMBO IS NASTY AS IT IS. IF THERE ARE MORE LOCUSTS THAT ARE WORTH PLAYING, I THINK MARS LOCUST IS DEFINITELY A VIABLE DECK.

II - YOUR DECK FROM THE \$10K WAS PUBLISHED IN INFESTED INSIDER #3. I WAS SURPRISED THAT IT WAS A 57 BUG DECK. TELL ME HOW YOU GOT TO THAT. SINCE IT WAS OBVIOUSLY GOOD AGAINST FOR THE CAUSE, DESCRIBE YOUR ONE LOSS FROM THE EVENT.

DR - SO A LITTLE BIT OF A STORY OF WHY MY DECK HAD 57 BUGS. I BELIEVE IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE A \$1K, AND @FILTHYGRUXMAIN AND I WERE TESTING. HE WAS PLAYING FOR THE CAUSE AND I WAS PLAYING A MARS CONTROL DECK, AND I WAS JUST GETTING WIPED AND IT WAS DISCOURAGING. I'M NOT SURE IF IT'S WELL



KNOWN, BUT @FILTHYGRUXMAIN, @SCRIBEX, AND @SHADI ARE ALL ROOMMATES AND THEY ALL PLAY FOR THE CAUSE AND THEY WERE ALL PLANNING TO CONTINUE TO DO SO. I THINK AFTER WE GOT DONE TESTING THAT NIGHT, I STAYED UP LATE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO ACTUALLY BEAT FOR THE CAUSE. IT TURNS OUT THAT YOU JUST NEED MORE LOW COST BUGS.

YOU NEED TO GET AS AGGRO AS POSSIBLE. WITH FIRST BOUNTY HAVING SHADY LADY AND CLOAKED GHOST, AND THE BUG-INNING MARS ALREADY BEING RECURRING REMOVAL, YOU DON'T REALLY NEED MORE REMOVAL. I WAS ACTUALLY THINKING ABOUT NOT EVEN HAVING THE THREE PANICS IN THERE. I WANT TO SAY THE DECK RAN 13 ONE DROPS, AND YOU HAVE TO BE VERY WELL PREPARED FOR ME DROPPING FOUR TO FIVE BUGS BY TURN TWO OR THREE. THERE'S SOME REALLY EXPLOSIVE HANDS YOU CAN GET. AT THE \$1K WE WERE PREPARING FOR, I DID VERY WELL.

BY THE TIME THE \$10K HAPPENED, I WAS VERY WELL PREPARED AND I HAD THE GOAL OF MAKING TOP 8. MY ONE LOSS IN THE \$10K WAS ACTUALLY AGAINST @SHADI. HE'S A VERY CONFIDENT PLAYER AND HE THOUGHT HE HAD MY DECK FIGURED OUT. TOP 8 WAS SO ROUGH. MY WORST MATCHUP IS MARS CONTROL, BUT I INCLUDED SOME OF THE BIGGER BUGS THAT MADE SENSE LIKE PILLBUG PARAGON AND METEOR MAMMOTH. THOSE ARE MY CRUTCHES WHEN I'M GOING AGAINST MARS CONTROL INSTEAD OF PLAYING ALL MY LOW TO THE GROUND BUGS.

EVENTUALLY, @SHADI AND I MADE IT TO THE FINALS. IT WAS AN EXTREMELY

INTENSE MATCH. WE DEFINITELY HAVE A RIVALRY GOING, AS HE HAD BEATEN ME IN THE TOP 8 OF A PREVIOUS \$1K. BEATING HIM FELT SURREAL, AND HAVING BRAGGING RIGHTS FOR WINNING THE FIRST SHARD BUGS \$10K WITHOUT FOR THE CAUSE WAS HUGE TOO.

II - AS LOW CURVE AS YOUR DECK IS, IT SEEMS LIKE BLESSING OF MARS COULD BE A GOOD CHOICE. WHY ARE THERE ZERO COPIES IN THERE?

DR - I FOUND THAT CARD DRAW IS REALLY GOOD, BUT WITH BLESSING OF MARS, LOSING THE ONE DEVOTION DOESN'T SEEM TO BE THAT BIG THE TURN THAT IT COMES DOWN, BUT IT'S VERY IMPACTFUL TO USE YOUR DEVOTION AND THREE DUST. I'M USUALLY TRYING TO WIN AROUND TURN FOUR, SO PLAYING THAT ON TURN THREE IS NO GOOD. ALSO, THE COST OF ONE DEVOTION ADDS UP QUICKLY. I LOVE BLESSING OF MARS AND I WANTED TO KEEP PLAYING IT, BUT I WAS GIVING MY OPPONENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO STABILIZE, AND THAT CROSSED THE LINE OF WINNING OR LOSING TOO OFTEN.

SO I DECIDED RUNNING IT AS A GLASS CANNON AGGRO DECK WAS THE WAY TO GO. I'M GOING TO WIN WITH WHATEVER CARDS I HAVE IN MY HAND. AND THAT'S WHY PANIC'S KIND OF IN THERE JUST TO KIND OF INSULATE A LITTLE BIT WITH SOME CARD DRAW, BUT YOU REALLY DON'T NEED RECURRING CARD DRAW THAT TAKES AWAY FROM YOUR EARLY GAME AS MUCH AS BLESSING OF MARS DOES. I STILL THINK BLESSING OF MARS IS A GREAT CARD. I JUST DON'T THINK IT FITS IN THE SHELL AS WELL.

II - EARLIER YOU MENTIONED YOUR



SPREADSHEET AND HOW YOU'VE DONE SOME THEORY CRAFTING FOR WHAT COULD BE IN INFESTATION. WHAT ARE ONE OR TWO CARD CONCEPTS THAT YOU FEEL PRETTY CERTAIN WE WILL SEE?

DR - I THINK THERE'S GOING TO BE AN INSANE LUNA EQUIPMENT DECK COMING OUT OF IT, ESPECIALLY WITH THE NEW SPOILER, WORMBO WAGGINS. THAT CARD IS BASICALLY WHAT LUNA EQUIPMENT DECKS WERE MISSING. SCARAB JEWELER AND KITCHEN THIEVES FROM THE BUG-INNING ARE THE BONES FOR THE LUNA EQUIPMENT DECK, AND NOW THERE'S A BETTER PAYOFF. THERE'S THE DAVES THAT ARE YOUR ENFORCERS OF THE DECK THAT CAN TAKE AWAY YOUR OPPONENT'S DEVOTION AND BLOCK VERY WELL, BUT THE DECK NEEDED A BUG WITH HIGH DEVOTION, AND WORMBO WAGGINS DEVOTES FOR THREE, WHICH IS INSANE BECAUSE THERE'S ALREADY A LOT OF EQUIPMENT IN THE GAME THAT ADDS MORE DEVOTION. THAT'S SOMETHING THAT I'M VERY EXCITED TO PLAY.



WILL WORMBO WAGGINS BE THE NEW HOTNESS IN LUNA EQUIPMENT DECKS?

ANOTHER DECK IDEA THAT HAS BEEN ON MY MIND HAS BEEN MARS ANTS AND/OR TOKENS. WITH THE THEMES IN INFESTATION, THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING THAT'S GOING TO MAKE TOKENS EVEN MORE OF A THREAT, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE THEY'VE SPRINKLED LITTLE HINTS ALONG THE WAY WITH ANT MOUND AND MABU THE SCAR. I THINK WE'RE GETTING ANOTHER MABU AS WELL IN INFESTATION. I'M EXCITED FOR MARS ANTS AND DEFINITELY A STRONGER LUNA EQUIPMENT DECK.

II - DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO CLOSE OUT WITH?

DR - FIRST OFF, THANK YOU FOR THE INTERVIEW. ALSO, THANK YOU TO THE SHARD BUGS TEAM FOR CREATING SUCH A GREAT GAME, AND FOR LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY. I KNOW A LOT OF TRADING CARD GAMES AND COMPANIES WOULD NOT HAVE LISTENED TO THE COMMUNITY ABOUT FOR THE CAUSE AND SOME OF THE CHANGES THAT THEY'VE MADE AS WELL. I JUST WANT TO THANK THEM FOR BEING SO OPEN ABOUT EVERYTHING AND FOR JUST CREATING SUCH A WONDERFUL GAME.

THE ARTIST'S PALETTE - AN INTERVIEW WITH SHARD BUGS ARTIST RAY OF SAND

INFESTED INSIDER - HOW DID YOU GAIN AN INTEREST IN PRODUCING COMIC -STYLE ART?

RAY OF SAND - WHEN I WAS STUDYING ILLUSTRATION MORE THAN 10 YEARS AGO, I TOOK COMIC BOOK CLASSES AND I LIKED THE FORMAT, AND TODAY I'M STARTING TO



RETURN TO THAT NARRATIVE STYLE. I DID IT WITH THE SECOND VOLUME OF SHARD BUGS DAVE'S FIRST BOUNTY COMIC AND NOW I'M BEGINNING TO TELL STORIES THROUGH MY PERSONAL ART.

II - SO BEFORE THAT, WHAT MEDIUMS OR ARTISTS INTERESTED YOU?

RS - I'VE ALWAYS LOVED TRADITIONAL PAINTING, BUT THEN I HAD TO SWITCH TO DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION BECAUSE IT'S FASTER AND MORE EFFECTIVE. TODAY, I STILL CREATE SOME TRADITIONAL PIECES USING ACRYLICS, TEMPERA, OILS, OR PENCILS. I HAVE SEVERAL INFLUENCES, SUCH AS ALEX GREY, WHO CREATED ESOTERIC ART, AND I ALSO REALLY ADMIRE CLASSICAL ARTISTS LIKE GOYA, REMBRANDT, AND SOROLLA.

II - HAVE YOU BECOME A COMIC BOOK FAN SINCE DIVING INTO THAT SIDE OF ART?

RS - YES, ABSOLUTELY. IN FACT, NOW MORE THAN EVER, SINCE I'M DOING MORE COMICS, I'M BUYING MORE VOLUMES OF DIFFERENT STYLES, TITLES, AND THEMES TO GET IDEAS ON HOW OTHERS SOLVE NARRATIVE PROBLEMS IN PANELS. I RECENTLY BOUGHT SOME AVENGERS, X-MEN, TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES, AND SONIC COMICS.

II - MUCH LIKE KUNDU, YOUR INSTAGRAM IS FILLED WITH YOUR OWN POKEMON INSPIRED ART. WHAT THEMES DO YOU LIKE TO FOCUS ON WHEN YOU MAKE A POKEMON INSPIRED PIECE?

RS - OH YES. I LIKE POKEMON. MY PRIORITY WHEN ILLUSTRATING POKEMON IS TO DO THEM IN MY STYLE, WHICH I CALL "CRAYON!" SINCE IT'S MY MAIN STYLE, I TRY TO GIVE

EACH POKEMON THAT AESTHETIC. I ALSO LOOK FOR POKEMON THAT CATCH MY EYE SO I CAN DRAW THEM IN AN EPIC STYLE OR WITH ORNATE DETAILS IN THEIR LANDSCAPE AND FORM. AFTER THAT, I HAVE THEM MADE INTO PROXY CARDS AND PLAYMATS TO SELL AT MY ILLUSTRATION BOOTHS.

II - SPEAKING OF THAT, WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR ARTISTS ATTENDING AN ART SHOW OR COMIC CONVENTION, AS FAR AS RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL BOOTH?



RS - FIRST OF ALL, IT'S ABOUT GETTING STARTED. TRY TO FIND CHEAPER EVENTS; SOMETIMES YOU CAN SHARE A TABLE WITH ANOTHER ILLUSTRATOR AND PAY HALF PRICE, WHICH LOWERS COSTS. I ALSO RECOMMEND STARTING BY SELLING AN EASY-TO-PRODUCE PRODUCT LIKE PRINTS OR STICKERS, AS THIS HELPS SHOWCASE YOUR ART. ANOTHER IMPORTANT TIP IS TO ENGAGE WITH YOUR FOLLOWERS, SHOW THEM YOUR PRODUCT, AND TELL THEM A STORY ABOUT IT. THEN, WITH TIME AND EXPERIENCE AT CONVENTIONS, YOU'LL



GRADUALLY DEVELOP MORE PRODUCTS.

II - YOU WERE THE ARTIST FOR THE SECOND ISSUE OF THE SHARD BUGS COMIC BOOK. WHAT WAS THAT EXPERIENCE LIKE?

RS - IT WAS GREAT! BECAUSE I HAD TO REVISIT EVERYTHING I'D LEARNED BEFORE. GOING BACK TO DRAWING A COMIC FELT ENRICHING. I SEE EACH PAGE AS AN ILLUSTRATION IN ITSELF, AND I HAVE TO PUT ALL MY EFFORT INTO EACH ONE TO ACHIEVE GOOD COMPOSITION AND STORYTELLING. I STILL HAVE SO MUCH TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE WORLD OF SHARD BUGS! I'M REALLY EXCITED ABOUT WHAT'S TO COME.

II - DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH THE SHARD BUGS FANS?

RS - I DON'T THINK I CAN SAY ANYTHING ABOUT WHAT'S COMING, SINCE IT'S A SURPRISE, BUT BELIEVE ME, HUGE THINGS ARE COMING! AND I'M SO EXCITED TO BE PART OF THIS TEAM. WELL, SOME OF YOU WHO ATTENDED THE NOVEMBER TOURNAMENT (WHICH I ATTENDED) SAW THAT FIVE NEW SETS ARE COMING. I REALLY LIKED HOW THEY WERE PRESENTED, VERY MUCH IN THE STYLE OF MARVEL MOVIES! THE TEAM IS DOING A NEXT-LEVEL JOB IN EVERY WAY!

II - I'VE NOTICED YOU'VE HAD SHARD BUGS PRODUCT AT YOUR BOOTH. HOW HAS THAT BEEN RECEIVED?

RS - IT'S BEEN A GREAT SURPRISE FOR ME. THE TEAM ALWAYS SENDS ME A KIT WITH PRODUCTS FROM EACH EDITION TO CHILE, SO I HAVE SOME OF THOSE PRODUCTS, LIKE THE BOOSTERS, AT MY BOOTH, AND PEOPLE

HERE IN CHILE ARE REALLY INTRIGUED THAT IT'S AN INSECT GAME. OBVIOUSLY, I TELL THEM THE GAME'S PLOT, AND THEY'RE FASCINATED. I EVEN HAVE THE COMIC AND HAVE DRAWN SEVERAL CARDS FOR THEM LIVE. HOPEFULLY, THE GAME WILL COME TO MY COUNTRY SOMEDAY.

II - HOW CAN PEOPLE ENJOY YOUR WORK ONLINE?

RS - WE RECENTLY FINISHED MY WEBSITE AND I'D LOVE FOR YOU TO VISIT IT! IT'S WWW.RAYOFSAND.CL. IT'S WHERE WE'VE PUT A LOT OF MY ART FOR DIFFERENT THINGS, AND THE GREAT THING IS THAT IT'S MY PERSONAL ART SPACE FOR YOU ALL. IN THE INTRO, WE CREATED AN ANIMATED ILLUSTRATION THAT BELONGS TO THE RAYOVERSE, MY PERSONAL ART. BUT I'M ALSO ON INSTAGRAM AS @RAYOFSAND AND ON ARTSTATION WITH THE SAME NAME.

HIVE,
SEE YOU
NEXT MONTH!

VISIT US



ON DISCORD

SHARDBUGSTCG.COM/INFESTED-INSIDER



