

10:00:58 am - Jonah Kellman:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening, and welcome to the final broadcast of this first week. I'm Jonah joined by my good friend, Eric, Dustin Brown. And my other good friend, Eric Levine, I'm gonna call them both Eric, We're gonna get confused and then we're gonna talk a little bit about Commander, the social contract, the logistics of the above two things, and that'll probably take about five minutes. And then we'll be rail completely and talk about a bunch of other stuff. The pre broadcast prep was Very orderly and formal and professional.

10:01:32 am - You:

Absolutely just super formal like very well thought out, super bulleted and structure.

10:01:37 am - Eric Levine:

We're we're very formal and structured people. Those of you who know us already know that about us as a group,

10:01:43 am - You:

Yeah, highly trained professionals.

10:01:43 am - Jonah Kellman:

Yeah. We surprisingly though, we are.

10:01:49 am - You:

So, it's weird, right?

10:01:49 am - Eric Levine:

It's very strange. All right, I just opened I just opened chat. Just now, for example, I'm highly

10:01:55 am - Jonah Kellman:

Okay, fantastic.

10:01:55 am - Eric Levine:

trained.

10:01:57 am - Jonah Kellman:

So we're gonna just start with a couple of introductions, from the two of you. Let you talk, I'll be back in like five minutes. When the two we're done discussing that. Let's start with Eric, why don't you introduce yourself? Your name who you are as a judge and your history with Commander just to get that baseline in.

10:02:15 am - You:

All right, so on Eric Dustin Brown. Okay, I suppose you did there.

10:02:18 am - Eric Levine:

I love that. We both knew that you were going first, like we both.

10:02:21 am - You:

Oh she did. Here we do, we do.

10:02:22 am - Eric Levine:

We both knew that you were going first.

10:02:25 am - You:

All right, Eric, Dustin Brown. Hi, I'm, this is the first time I've been on this side of the broadcast. Usually, I produced these twitch streams for Judge Academy, but I'm a little three judge, I'm Judge Academy strategy champion recently, I took over judge conferences as well. So that's what I do for the organization. I have been a magic judge since 2004, I've been in large tournaments since 2010, and I've been playing commander Almost the whole time, it's been a thing. Like I still call it Elder Dragon Highlander and Edh like colloquially. So, I am also producing it now that is correct. I am currently operating OBS and a guest on this program. Surely nothing will go wrong.

10:03:04 am - Jonah Kellman:

It'll be fine.

10:03:06 am - You:

but yeah, I've been playing commander since basically, it's inception. I started off with like, in Azusa lost but seeking deck whenever Kohl was still legal. Kill people would like, chemical

10:03:17 am - Jonah Kellman:

When when was that?

10:03:17 am - You:

erratic portal after. Uh tool. Zendikar.

10:03:24 am - Jonah Kellman:

Okay.

10:03:24 am - You:

Ish.

10:03:26 am - Eric Levine:

Well. Yeah, Emircle was still legally like 2010. Because I remember Amber Cole happening. At the Judge House at PT San Juan. But not much thereafter.

10:03:39 am - You:

I used to just flicker her with erratic portal and just win the game that way. Yeah. Like taking it turns and monogram, it was fine.

10:03:51 am - Jonah Kellman:

Fantastic.

10:03:52 am - Eric Levine:

And I'm Eric Levine, I'm a Level three judge. I've been a judge since 2008. I want to say I certified at Percher Hollywood that year. Um I have been a level three since a long time, I don't know. It feels like a long time. I, I had judged a mythic championship once we'll see. If that mistake ever gets me to get if they ever let me do something like that again. Um but I've been playing commander basically. Since I I started also in Edh days, like I remember back in my day, you went to go on the Commander forums and and register your your general as it was called the Time. Um, so that you when you showed up to the pro tour or Grand Prix, you wouldn't be playing the same commander as someone else because

10:04:37 am - You:

That's a little before one time.

10:04:38 am - Eric Levine:

that was important at the time.

10:04:39 am - You:

Little before mine little before my

10:04:42 am - Jonah Kellman:

I mean, with the number of commanders

10:04:42 am - You:

time.

10:04:43 am - Jonah Kellman:

available, I think that's still generally feasible.

10:04:46 am - Eric Levine:

It's a lot easier now, that's for sure. But I remember showing up with my Brian Stout arm deck, ready to, you know, ready to throw stuff at people, it was great. But before before we get too deep into this Jonah, I have a question for you. I actually, I want to pitch something to you, Jonah.

10:05:01 am - Jonah Kellman:

Oh boy.

10:05:02 am - Eric Levine:

Actually right now.

10:05:03 am - Jonah Kellman:

I'm prepared for this.

10:05:04 am - Eric Levine:

so, I I and I'm gonna totally derail things right off the bat, but I think it's very important that we that we get this going. I had an idea this morning, I woke up with this wonderful idea. Where,

you know, y'all y'all have made the mistake already putting me and Eric on on the screen at the same time, right? But I thought what's what's better

10:05:22 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah.

10:05:23 am - Eric Levine:
than making that mistake once? Let's make that mistake twice or maybe every month with the the Eric and Eric awesome show. Great job power our call in show where judges call in or type in and with their with their various problems and and we try, you know, we try to solve them and maybe if we have no idea how to solve their problems which are probably happened, I need to 95% of the time we'll just sort of vamp. Eric will tell a story about how how their problem is very similar to this time that the truck didn't show up for a GP or we had to move halls or whatever. And I'll just advice you to DQ everyone. I, I think that would be great. I think we should just wait. What do you think about this Eric? Actually, now that I'm bringing this

10:06:04 am - You:
Actually, you know what?

10:06:04 am - Eric Levine:
on both,

10:06:05 am - You:
Eric actually think. This is a fantastic idea. And like Jonah. And here's some more reasons why like Eric? This is a fantastic idea. This is a fantastic idea. And like Jonah. And here's some more reasons why like

10:06:10 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah. Here.

10:06:11 am - You:
I'm I'm producing the broadcast and you

10:06:11 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah. Please. I need convincing.

10:06:13 am - You:
can't stop me. You just you just can't stop me.

10:06:17 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah. I'm very much on board for this because like, I think that the two of you have a lot of experience that you can bring. I remember there is a Grand Prix that we're just God, we're done that one, way off screen, there's a grand Creed Canada, where Dustin Brown and I needed to remember two rows for Two-headed giant. We were both level three at the time.

10:06:42 am - Eric Levine:
Mmm.

10:06:44 am - Jonah Kellman:
Eric had been working for Channel fireball events for a while or CFP events for a while. It took us six attempts to get it right?

10:06:51 am - You:
I remember that that show was chaos too. This bill was wild. Yeah. No. And like I I consider myself to

10:06:58 am - Jonah Kellman:
and like,

10:07:01 am - You:
be pretty good judge. I'm pretty well experienced. I'm doing this a long time. I'm very good at a lot of things. numbering tables quickly is not one of them, I just

10:07:09 am - Jonah Kellman:
Strategy. Camping logistics champion.

10:07:11 am - You:
I, I just the table map, like, I just

10:07:12 am - Jonah Kellman:
Mailing it

10:07:13 am - You:
can't rock it quickly. I have to check it over like five or six times, it's for whatever reason. Like, that is my magic Judge Achilles heel.

10:07:21 am - Eric Levine:
well, that's because you never had to

10:07:21 am - You:
I just can't.

10:07:22 am - Eric Levine:
go to Kevin Dupre as table numbering Fantasy camp. Also known as the Grand Prix. Head Judge Program like

10:07:28 am - Jonah Kellman:
it's

10:07:28 am - You:
I did not, I did not go to Kevin to praise table.

10:07:30 am - Eric Levine:
gone to

10:07:31 am - You:
Memories

10:07:31 am - Jonah Kellman:
I would I would go to that.

10:07:32 am - Eric Levine:
numbering fantasy camp. You know, how to do this. I had to do, I need to know how to do

10:07:35 am - Jonah Kellman:
but,

10:07:36 am - Eric Levine:
Trios is it's a wild world.

10:07:40 am - Jonah Kellman:
Oh no trails. You just put like one table number down per row and you're fine.

10:07:44 am - Eric Levine:
It just you just scattered table

10:07:44 am - You:
Yeah.

10:07:46 am - Eric Levine:
numbers around the hall at random and you, you figure, the players will

10:07:48 am - You:
Player. Look players are smart.

10:07:49 am - Eric Levine:
figure it out.

10:07:49 am - You:
they're playing it so they've got the figure out. It's fine.

10:07:55 am - Jonah Kellman:
By the way, this is a thing that's going to be happening. Just Letting you know, I see you there at the chat letting you know that this is happening. Um,

10:08:05 am - Eric Levine:
But yes. Now that now I've gotten my my Now, that now, I've gotten my my unauthorized pitch
But yes. Okay. Now, that now, I've gotten my my unauthorized pitch of the way.

10:08:10 am - Jonah Kellman:
that's the only one you have. That's the only surprise.

10:08:12 am - Eric Levine:
Well, I don't want to say, I don't want to commit to anything.

10:08:18 am - Jonah Kellman:
Other than a monthly broadcast for the rest of forever.

10:08:22 am - You:
Yeah.

10:08:23 am - Jonah Kellman:
All right. Fantastic. Right, so question number two, did you were you finished? Introducing yourself, are you

10:08:30 am - Eric Levine:
But yeah, sure.

10:08:33 am - Jonah Kellman:
so, we got a little bit of Dustin. She's I called both of you Eric all the time and it's

10:08:42 am - You:
We're used to it, okay.

10:08:43 am - Jonah Kellman:
Eric Dustin

10:08:43 am - Eric Levine:
That's part of the brand.

10:08:44 am - Jonah Kellman:
your history with Commander in your first commander.

10:08:48 am - You:
Yeah.

10:08:49 am - Jonah Kellman:
Levine, where did? You start who's your first commander?

10:08:53 am - Eric Levine:
My first community.

10:08:54 am - Jonah Kellman:
first Commander who was your first like, I'm gonna push the boundaries on this game, like I want to actually like make a strong deck.

10:09:02 am - Eric Levine:

Um, so my first, I think the first Commander deck I built was that Brian Stadtarm Jack that I brought to Grand Prix, Denver 2008. Um, but my, I think the first deck where I was just like, okay, I'm really gonna push the envelope. Um, and this is actually relevant to our our discussion today. Um, In the early days of Commander. I don't, you know, this, this might be hard to believe, but the the idea of power level mismatching was was, was definitely a thing, right? That was absolutely a thing just as much as it is today and the, the There were definitely some pub stompers in my area to put it mildly. And I thought that I perhaps should take sort of a vigilante approach to handling the pub stoppers. And so I felt built an arkham dagson artifact combo deck, that was extremely rude and often resulted in me being the only person with permanence. And and that was, that was sort of

10:10:03 am - Jonah Kellman:

Yeah.

10:10:05 am - Eric Levine:

the first time that I said, All right, you know what I I I'm gonna take the, I'm gonna put on the the legacy legacy, we have at home goggles and, and build this very rude deck to tell people. All right, you know what you think you've built the powerful deck, you have not the the edges of this format have yet to be explored this deck east and even in its final form, etc. And I don't know how much success I had driving up the pub stoppers but I do remember I was at Toby Elliot's house. at one point after an event or something, And there was a commander game going on upstairs, and I was downstairs. And Carter comes downstairs. John Carter comes down and he says, Levine can I use one of your commander decks? Were about to start a game and I was like, Yeah, the boxes in my bag. Just grab it. Take, whichever deck you want. It's fine. And so Carter Leaf, stroll in my decks goes past all of the like social chill ones, grabs Arkham, dags and proceeds, to me type table. I have just a miserable time, it was great.

10:11:08 am - You:

but,

10:11:09 am - Jonah Kellman:

so,

10:11:09 am - Eric Levine:

It was short, at least it was very funny.

10:11:11 am - Jonah Kellman:

I have a similar my first commander Deck was Sulkanar the swamp king who

10:11:17 am - You:

Oh yeah.

10:11:17 am - Jonah Kellman:

is not a particularly competitive

10:11:17 am - Eric Levine:
Mmm.

10:11:19 am - You:
Oh no.

10:11:20 am - Jonah Kellman:
commander.

10:11:21 am - Eric Levine:
The recently returned silicon are.

10:11:21 am - Jonah Kellman:
like, Yeah, I'm very excited for that.

10:11:23 am - You:
You back.

10:11:25 am - Jonah Kellman:
of brothers or all of David anyways. Second one was arc of bags.

10:11:29 am - You:
I'm definitely not excited about

10:11:30 am - Jonah Kellman:
Then Second one was arc of bags. Then the game is over on turn four.

10:11:31 am - You:
brothers four here.

10:11:33 am - Jonah Kellman:
Ah, and I actually had a lot of fun playing arch enemy with my friends.

10:11:37 am - Eric Levine:
Yes.

10:11:38 am - Jonah Kellman:
And like it was the deck to be so people like I have a new strong deck bring out Arkham and I'm like, okay. You're dead. That was fun. So, Dustin Brown, where did you start? Did you ever push the boundaries of fun and fair?

10:11:54 am - You:
Immediately. No, no, it's okay. So I was one of. So, here's the thing. So when I started, I was one of those people that that Eric Levine was out to deliver desert justice to because,

10:12:03 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah.

10:12:03 am - You:
because, and it wasn't that I was trying to, like, make people miserable. It's because at the time, like, I was, I was not really judging actively yet, I was like, grinding, like I was doing Star City opens, and like playing in GPS. And so, I came into this, with a competitive mindset and my brain immediately looked at it as like, Oh, they hate playing against Eric from good. Oh, so I just came into it as Oh this is like a hundred card playground where I can just do whatever I want and immediately approached it then and still approach it now is like a deck building exercise more than anything else and it just really, really depends on like what the end goal. Is there. Where when I was younger? It was win. It was when as quickly as possible it was do things like Oh you know what would be fun? You a bunch of card name garbage real quick like generate enough mana to make everyone's lands creatures with Kamal fist of Crosa and then throw them all up into the air with Predator flagship and and then kill them all with squawmonger like That was the kind of stuff that I really like to do it.

10:13:15 am - Jonah Kellman:
That's a wonderful.

10:13:16 am - You:
I got better. Um, and similar similar to Eric. Like now I have like I have like my ah, I see that's the game, we're playing deck like that's my temeci deck right now. Um, but when I was working in game stores in the Richmond area, I quickly identified who my grievers were but also identified the folks that in my crowd that I could sit on people. like I had this this one dude with a model white Frankie peanuts deck and it was just a prison deck and whenever someone came into the lgs and was just had an attitude or was making people, Have a bad time. I would just like give them a pack to like, just go, go put, the put a stop to this person. It was worth the pack every single time.

10:14:00 am - Jonah Kellman:
Oh absolutely, I love that. Um, so let's I do want to talk about What the social contract and rule zero mean to us before we talk about how we deal with people who break them because maybe we should lay that foundation, of course, right? Because I want to hear more like that story about seeking Frankie peanuts on people.

10:14:22 am - You:
What a sentence?

10:14:22 am - Jonah Kellman:
That's a way. That enforce the social contract to degree. But what are those two terms mean to the two of you? Because while there are definitions in descriptions of the philosophy on Various Websites. It's also a little bit of personal interpretation because commander is a game that everybody takes in their own way because it's, you know, a game, you build yourself. So let's just start with social contract. What on earth does that mean and what does it mean to you? And to events that you run, Let's start with Levine.

10:14:57 am - You:
I was gonna say let's start over there

10:14:58 am - Jonah Kellman:
No.

10:14:58 am - Eric Levine:
Yeah, that's what's great. I mean so the the philosophy document

10:15:00 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah.

10:15:03 am - Eric Levine:
on the like Official Commanders website starts with the the foremost important words that that really define this commanders for fun. And the, the big question then is, What is fun? What does that mean, right? Like What, what is what does that mean to each individual person involved in a game of commander because the the I find that problems arise. When fun is not defined the same way by everybody at the table, right? Like, for some people fun is getting to do their their special thing that their deck does, that's the thing that they want to do. And that's what's fun for some people just, you know, like playing playing a game where everybody gets to do stuff and there's interaction and you know, like nobody gets madness screwed or whatever. That's fun for some people. Winning is fun. And that's what's fun is winning and losing is not fun, and winning is fun. And there are a million other answers to what is fun, right? And those are By and large fine, you know? Well, we'll take, we'll take the, the people who define fun as things that harm other people. We're gonna put that in the box over here. And we're gonna say, Let's, let's move away from that, please. But pretty much everything else is a valid interpretation of fun, right?

10:16:16 am - You:
That box is a surprise tool that we'll use later when we talk about. when we talk about logistics,

10:16:22 am - Eric Levine:
Yes.

10:16:23 am - You:
Remember that.

10:16:23 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah. Yeah.

10:16:24 am - You:
Remember the boo box, just remember that.

10:16:27 am - Eric Levine:
But, but if you're not like out to cause harm to others, right? You know, in a, in a outside, the game, for right, like, obviously, blowing up my permanence and, and making me Eric, Levine and unhappy person or are two different things. Um, because I don't care if you blow up my

permits, probably should quite frankly, my permits are probably not good for you, but like I think, I think the, the social contract that it's core, is the idea that like, We should all agree. Not just not just to try to have fun on our own, but to try to make sure that the other people the table have a chance to have fun, right? Like I can't make you have fun. I can contribute to an environment where it's possible for you to have fun. I talked about this in a commander article a long time ago when I was starting business school. This was a decade ago. Um yeah, right. When I was a mere 28 years old and

10:17:21 am - You:
Hmm.

10:17:23 am - Eric Levine:
and I I and I I talked about because I was taking an accounting class at the time. And so I talked about a, an analogy called the The Fun Equity Account where, basically, everyone is paying into the Fun Equity account and the fun equity account does accrue interest over the course of the game, but you don't want to be the person embezzling from the Fun Fun Equity account and causing the game to to go Chapter 11, bankruptcy on you. That's no good. We don't want that. But like the idea that you are Or we are, we are we have this. And that, that analogy is a little more capitalistic now than I'd like it to be. I'd like a more, a more socialist analogy, but, you know, every everyone is contributing to this, this idea of let's have fun together.

10:18:10 am - You:
Socialist commander is just everyone has fun. That's all like.

10:18:13 am - Eric Levine:
Yes. Yeah.

10:18:14 am - You:
A capitalism commander is Cedh. Changed my mind. Okay.

10:18:20 am - Eric Levine:
It's easy.

10:18:21 am - Jonah Kellman:
I feel like some people have opinions

10:18:21 am - Eric Levine:
It's not there for capitalist.

10:18:22 am - Jonah Kellman:
about that.

10:18:23 am - You:
Oh, I I probably just poked multiple bears. Like, let's go.

10:18:26 am - Eric Levine:

Oh, you just you just made the Internet mad. Oh,

10:18:30 am - You:

Good.

10:18:31 am - Eric Levine:

But I think that's the importance. The willingness to invest in the idea that other people having fun in a game that you're playing, is important. I think that's what the social, the core of the social contract for me.

10:18:46 am - You:

Basically nothing to add to that. Like, it's not probably know of no surprise, it's like, Eric will be in, and I have played a lot of commander together over the years, and we're in like a regular spell table group. And so, as a result, when you play with people for a long time, you tend to like accumulate, more people who share your general philosophy, um, What I will add is like, for me, like the social contract is very much that like, we're all here to try to help each other have fun in some way. And like, and sometimes like, that means, like, when you sit down and you have that conversation with folks, and this happens in our playgroup, like we each have decks that like, varying degrees of power level, but sometimes it's like, Oh yeah, let's just, I'm gonna get this one out. Like, I'm gonna get out to Messi. And then here comes in like, everyone's just like, all right, we're gonna bring our H and our nines then. And we're just, we are just gonna try to kill each other as quickly as possible, but like, we're setting that expectation at the start of the game. um, rather than like Assuming that that's the case kind of thing. And I think that's a big part of the social contract for me and like, kind of, let's so in, at least in my head, like less. So the rules zero conversation, the rules, zero, conversation being being more. Okay, we've established. Our contract is, this is how we would like to play this game. Rule, zero is okay. What restrictions or anything do we want to put on this game? Like, for instance, if I ever play a good friend, Jeff Foster, if he and I ever play heads up Commander, we just partial parent, just immediately, partial Paris any soul rings. Like, soul ring and heads up. It's just like gone, which is like the stone opposite of like Cdh, right? But we're just like, no. It's just actually like playing magic. And I think those kinds of conversations in rules. Zero are really, really important to make sure people are still having fun.

10:20:24 am - Eric Levine:

Right, and if we're gonna talk about Rule 0, I think that that rules zero is is about that that deviation from the mean, right? Like Are we cool with me, Flip playing Right? Rule 0, I think that that rules zero I think that that rules zero is is about that that deviation from the mean, right? Like Are we cool with me? Flip playing Frankie Peanuts is my commander and if not, I have another option set up so that this is not some kind of like weaponized threat of like Are you cool with me playing Frankie peanuts as as my commander because if not see ya, right? Like, you know, not not making it a day. A something that's held over other people's head like Hey, I want to do this. I think it's cool for the following ways, I think it contributes to the overall fun of the game, you know, can is, Is it cool? If I do this offbeat thing that that's not normal or like, hey do you want to just not, you know, just take our soul rings and and put them over here for for this game. Like I think that would be more fun for us after the experience as we've had or like, you

know, hey could we stop playing so many war worlds. I really don't like playing against work world for the following reason and

10:21:21 am - You:

For the record. I snap concede. For more resolves.

10:21:24 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:21:25 am - You:

I just pick up my cards and go. Can we just play the next game? Like this card is not fun for some people. It's, it's a lot of fun because they're Dex design around war world,

10:21:33 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:21:33 am - You:

but as someone who likes spells, that's a little tougher for me and usually results in me having nothing and so I'm gonna go Make a sandwich and I'll be back in 10 minutes after you're done, resolving this war world.

10:21:48 am - Eric Levine:

So, the big, like I think the big difference between like the concept of the social contract and the concept of rule zero is that the social contract is often just unspoken thing, right? Whereas, a rule zero, that phrase is usually followed by the word discussion, Right? You know, we were gonna like, before we start the game, I, I want to talk about, like, you know, I want, I want to have a dialogue about my my deck that has two, two of the partners from Unfiniti, right? Um, you know, because all of my cards start with the letter K and that's the whole point, right?

10:22:22 am - You:

And like gold bordered cards and like

10:22:22 am - Eric Levine:

Um,

10:22:24 am - You:

collectors edition and things like that.

10:22:26 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:22:27 am - You:

The rules zero conversation is also a really good time to have those kind of conversations and establish what cards or non cards the people in your pot are comfortable with using

10:22:38 am - Eric Levine:

Right, yeah. Yeah. And that's obviously that that changes when you're running Right. Yeah. And that's obviously, that that changes when you're running a sanctioned event, of course, when when you're running a sanctioned event, just a reminder for everybody because I see this come up a lot. Sanction events. Got to use real cards, y'all. And real cards does not mean gold bordered World Championship cards. It does not mean magic 30th Anniversary Tropical Islands, Right? It means it means real, you know, cards printed to be played. Internments.

10:23:03 am - Jonah Kellman:

my read of Rule, 0 is generally asking for permission to deviate just be like, Hey, can I Can I do something wacky here?

10:23:12 am - Eric Levine:

Right.

10:23:12 am - You:

Yeah, that's that's about where I'm on cards. Have traditionally in like the groups that I play and it's always been like some weird uncard that someone wants to play for me, for a long time. It was Carnivorous death parrot because at light a pirate deck, like how can you not have a parent, like

10:23:24 am - Jonah Kellman:

All right. Yeah.

10:23:28 am - You:

Like Beckett Brass needed a parrot and so like I just there's like Hey is it cool? I have this really bad on glued card Is this fine kind of thing.

10:23:36 am - Jonah Kellman:

yeah, one of my buddies runs three movies in his deck because he really likes moo and I'm like

10:23:41 am - You:

It was good boy.

10:23:42 am - Jonah Kellman:

great.

10:23:43 am - Eric Levine:

Sure. Yeah, one of the goodest.

10:23:47 am - Jonah Kellman:

Fantastic. So, How does that come into play? When you're running Commander events. I don't know how often you two have. been organizing things either local or large event level, but

10:24:00 am - You:

I I have actually organized quite a few magic tournaments this year. I was Event managing

manage the gathering at a bunch of different conventions on the West Coast seed sdcc. Rose City, Emerald, City Iran. A lot of commander events this year and that social contract, like Kind of have. Just my experience, like you have to kind of come in with the stance of like how you feel about it and like you're not gonna be able to force the way. You have fun onto people, but you can kind of you can establish the kind of environment that you want to play. Like I have had a non-zero number of conversations of like because for us, In these events, they were geared towards people who just purchased a pre-con on site. And so the people that are coming in, they're like, Can I play with my deck? It's immediately Okay? Yes however comma We're gonna take everyone with a pre-con. We're gonna put everyone with a precon in their own pods and they're gonna take all of you. People, we're gonna put all of that over here because all of you are gonna say your deck is a seven when actually they're all nines or tens. Um, and so you all can just go over there. Just be just beat the hell out of each other over there. That's fine. I'm gonna let all these new players have fun over here. Um, and I think that's, that goes a long way in in helping with that social contract at a show is Hmm. I strong opinions about about competitive Commander tournaments, but I think we'll get to later in the later. In this outline. Probably. I'll look at it here in a second. But like if you want your tournament to be about fun, like if you're like barely using the word tournament which is how I like to run commander events, like this is an opportunity for everyone to just like sit down and not have to do the legwork in defining people to play with and then just trying to separate those folks. Things get weird once you start Adding like round structure and like price support and things like that.

10:26:05 am - Jonah Kellman:
Anything to add on that Levine any

10:26:07 am - Eric Levine:
Yeah.

10:26:08 am - Jonah Kellman:
event.

10:26:08 am - Eric Levine:
I mean, the idea of like making sure that in

10:26:09 am - Jonah Kellman:
You've won recently.

10:26:12 am - Eric Levine:
idea of like making sure that in an just picked up a just picked up a an event like that where people have just picked up a precon and then we have some people who have their own decks you know doing doing a little bit of tracking for those groups is is good right making sure that those those groups are properly matched up is is important. Um I have run, I used to run a commander league of the Channel fireball store back in the day, and it looks like we're gonna talk a little bit about point systems later.

10:26:38 am - You:
Hmm. Hmm.

10:26:38 am - Eric Levine:
Um, but I have I have leveraged.

10:26:40 am - Jonah Kellman:
We can do that now.

10:26:42 am - Eric Levine:
What's? Well yeah, let's let's jump in so I

10:26:44 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah.

10:26:44 am - Eric Levine:
used to I used to run the Commander League where where it was a point system, right? In there were sort of a rotating series of objectives. You also got points for like winning the game and And things like that. one of the most important things for me was trying to spend time with those folks and when I could in making sure that like You know, I knew that I knew what different groups of our, our commander players thought was fun. Thought was not fun because if you know, if we all think the same things are not fun. Well, then great let's let's assign negative points to those things but we if we all think different things are fun, then let's try to incentivize those different things on different weeks, right? Try to try to try to mix things up. So that like okay, maybe maybe this week is, like, not the most hype week for my deck, my playstyle, whatever. But, but that means that, you know, Eric is paying attention. And next week, the things are gonna change and, and the points are gonna come around. And, and, and I'll be, I'll be properly served at some, you know, at various points this month this quarter, so that I can enjoy, you know, the the Commander League and also the other thing positive incentives was, it gave people reasons to build new decks and try new things. Obviously, as someone managing a card store, that was important to me. Um, Obvious reasons, you know, got a self cards but but I I as a commander player also think it's the commander is more fun when you build a new deck or swap in cards once in a while. I'm not saying that like everybody has to feel that way but I like making changes. I like building new decks, I like taking old decks apart when they they no longer serve my purposes and if you're if you're doing a point system, making sure that doesn't just get stale actively taking a hand in your league, to make sure the point system is not getting abused on the edges, right? Is is very important. It takes a lot of management to make that work.

10:28:47 am - Jonah Kellman:
Now, EDB, I see a note in the outline under the question.

10:28:51 am - You:
Now, what was my note that I left?

10:28:51 am - Jonah Kellman:
How do you feel about point systems? Would you like to read that note?

10:28:56 am - You:
Boom.

10:28:57 am - Jonah Kellman:
Would you like to expand on that

10:28:58 am - Eric Levine:
Hahaha.

10:28:59 am - Jonah Kellman:
note?

10:29:00 am - You:

So like Eric will be brings up a lot of good points in ways that point systems can work for the community. And I'll Preface with I'm Not, I don't believe there's an actual like, correct, a paint. A correct thought process Here. I think different things. Work for different play groups. My experience is, with running leaks, in Richmond, in Virginia it through that time period. Is that we actually found Less it was on a more macro level. Even than like stores individual play groups like different stores played in different ways. And so I used to run a City one and rotating formats and like the championship league in Richmond and store that I play that played at was very much considered the Commander store. We already gotten over our, let's kill each other as fast as possible and started to shift more into. Let's do big dumb things. That'll be fun, the other stores have not Their ptq grinders. And so they're showing up with sliver queen and combo decks and stuff like that. And so, I've tried a few different, like, variations on Point systems and leagues and things like that. And like your point to This week my my deck won't be so good but this other person's deck might be good in general. Like I just that feeling of like Dis incentivizing people from playing the game in a way that they want to play it. Um, I am not a fan of because I think without that kind of system, like, people are gonna be more inclined to do what they want. It leads more heavy on the like the rules, zero social contract. Like this is the kind of commander that we want to play to make sure everyone's having a good time. But I was not a big fan ever of like pigeonholing into people. It people into playing certain ways I can see doing it over like Like a specific like maybe for a specific event or like a specific serious thing. But it's not something that I would do with regularity.

10:30:51 am - Eric Levine:

Right. It was, it was a thing where, like, these folks had basically asked for, like, a point system, they had asked for a league structure, um, and I wanted to provide them with something that would allow them to, to like, you know, show up and do their thing and, and be rewarded for basically participating in the the league long term. But if you said, hey, like, we want to, if you said to me, Hey, Eric Levine, you've been transported back to the year, 20, 2011, and you now have to run this command early again. Are you gonna use a point system? My answer is no, just just to be clear. Like, I think they can work. I think they can be good. I think there are groups that that can benefit from them, but I would run the Commander League on a participation basis, um, run a like I would live probably literally run a seminar on how to properly evaluate the power level of your deck slash, let's get together and evaluate the power level of each other's decks because so you are the worst judge of the power level of your own deck, sorry you are

10:31:56 am - You:

Everything's a seven. We've all got seven.

10:31:57 am - Eric Levine:
Yeah.

10:31:57 am - You:
player sevens. No eight no nines. No tens. Definitely not a four. Seven always

10:32:04 am - Eric Levine:
Right. Like I, I know, I know that I have I have like messaged Eric and other people that we play with have been like, Hey, look at this deck or look at this, these cards or look at this interaction. Like, Is this too much for what we're doing, right? Like, is this gonna be fun for us? And like we've had these conversations multiple times as a group and like asking your friends or other people in your play group other other commander players, you know like Hey how powerful do you think this deck is right? And when you're thinking, if if you really need to evaluate how powerful your deck is, some some metrics to think about are like, Consistency, right? Like How, how deep are you in in the world of tutors, right? Because the more the more consistent, your deck is the more consistently. Your deck is going to do the thing that it wants to do and if that thing is powerful, if and only if that thing is powerful, then that's gonna increase the power level. You're deck. If you are someone like me and maybe you've built the deck with a bunch of tutors that that, you know, gets you some sort of combo that doesn't actually do anything, draws you a bunch of cards and then ultimately kills you, then the tutors Do not make your deck more powerful. It's contextual but consistency is important looking at the average man of value of your deck is important because you want to think about how, how often your opening hands are going to be just horrible garbage bricks, right?

10:33:28 am - You:
How hot and also like how, how often are you gonna break and the inverse of how quickly am I going to start casting two spells a turn? Like, how quickly do I do?

10:33:37 am - Eric Levine:
Right. Exactly.

10:33:38 am - You:
I start getting that action advantage over the rest of the table.

10:33:42 am - Eric Levine:
Right, things things like that are important metrics for trying to evaluate the power level of your own deck. But again, I I think that it's much easier for an outside party to look at your deck or a group of outside parties, look at your deck and be like, all right, let's compare these to the decks. We play compared these, things we've played, and then the other the other good way to evaluate the power level, your deck is just to go play it and tell your friends. Hey, I don't know how the powerful this deck is, Is it okay if I play it today, right? Like if you're trying to figure that

10:34:08 am - You:
I thought.

10:34:08 am - Eric Levine:

out, there's no better way than to play the deck, not just once because we have a hundred cards in this little box here, right? And you know, the, you're gonna play a bunch and you're, you're just never gonna draw that card. You're thinking of, you're gonna play 10 games and never draw it. So,

10:34:24 am - You:

I've had my sovereign deck for over a decade. When was Mazareth crawl death piece printed like with them in the Marin deck right? Right?

10:34:32 am - Eric Levine:

Oh yeah.

10:34:33 am - You:

Back in the early, 2010s, I Back in the early, 2010s. Back in the early, 2010s. Nazareth in a decade cards still Nazareth in a decade cards I I have I I have killed the table once with Nazareth Nazareth in a decade cards still exists. And it's not I I have killed the table once with Nazareth in a decade cards still exists. And it's not because the card's bad card, just doesn't always show up when the time is right. Um, but like the one time that it just got hit the table and it's just like, Oh, I see everyone's dead now. It's like you're gonna stick around and for me like in that consistency redundancy, like, I don't play tutors which is part of why like the situations where I'm like, oh that's where it could be real sweet. Hope I dredge into that, that's that makes it more fun for me, kind of controls the power level of my decks. I think I think across all of my decks right now. I have maybe two or three tutors that are not specifically for lands. And like even and even then it's like

10:35:13 am - Jonah Kellman:

I really

10:35:14 am - You:

they're usually there for something else. Like tesser at the Seeker is there to untap artifacts and turn things into five fives. Not specifically to Go get whatever but it can, if I need a pressure valve.

10:35:25 am - Jonah Kellman:

I really like the idea of going to your local community or like your local store and just like show up a half hour, earlier an hour early and be like here, my 20 decks, Let's evaluate the power level of all of them because not only do you get like you get to have show and tell with your deck you get to be like Look at this really cool all foil-out crenco deck. I'm really excited that I was able to get this card and foil because it's only available blah blah. And the other thing you can do is like look at other people's deck experience their stories and then be like Wait that's a sweet piece of tech. I want seven of those because it'll fit into these decks. I'll be right back. Hey shopkeep, I have a thing that I would like to purchase.

10:36:04 am - You:

This, that's the strategy view you could, you could potentially employ at your commander events

at well, at like at a, you know, a magic best environment or convention environment. Um, you don't get to have quite as detailed the conversation. But

10:36:17 am - Jonah Kellman:
Right.

10:36:19 am - You:
And depending on where you are, obviously some commander events get way too big for this but, like, over the summer and conventions. I'm running 20 to 30 person commander events, like That's enough. People that I can take five minutes before we pod out to kind of have a discourse with people. And maybe shift people around, depending on like, Hey, if you think, doomsday thoracle is fun. Go sit over there. and like and if you think like Felda Griff is fun, you go sit over there on but like you can have that kind of conversation with your players too, you know, time and logistics permitting but that, that kind of more That social contract, power level conversation with examples and interaction. I think

10:37:05 am - Jonah Kellman:
And I think that's like something that you get to take advantage of just having a player list for commander events, rather than being like, these are the people that you're playing with and I won't

10:37:14 am - Eric Levine:
Right.

10:37:14 am - Jonah Kellman:
this match of you for humans. It's one you don't want to play with these people because they're decks, are result of this match of you for humans. It's one you don't want to play with It's one you don't want to play with are you you think you're just gonna pub stomp and you don't want to do that. Let's just put you over with the three result of this match of you for humans. It's one you don't want to play with these people because they're decks are you you think you're just gonna pub stomp and you don't want to do that. Let's just put you over with the three other Arkham players who are all just gonna try and combo off on turn two, let's just put you over there and you'll you'll have fun with that.

10:37:33 am - Eric Levine:
Right, those folks will have a great time playing five or six games while everyone else. Finishes one game and everybody's gonna get what they want. And and like the other.

10:37:41 am - You:
You have another pressure valve there too, as the organizer.

10:37:45 am - Eric Levine:
Yes.

10:37:47 am - You:
Keep your price support flat. Like, if your price support has a flat structure. A disincentively

people are gamers are gonna game, right? Some people are still gonna go out and that's the thing they're gonna do, but like, you want to minimize their incentive to go out and just start stomping your commander pods at your event. Because like, if they're sitting down and like, all right, everyone gets a pack, just for sitting down the winner gets a second pack. someone who is there to just like grind value is gonna look at that and be like Oh that's not my EV is not very high there. I guess I won't do that and it's like, for me like that's by design because I want the people playing

10:38:24 am - Eric Levine:
Right.

10:38:25 am - You:
who like want to play commander and commander and aren't just there to prize, the big uncut sheet commander, who like want to play commander and aren't just there to get the, the big prize, the big uncut sheet off the wall, like I want to serve those players as well. But not with Commander Pods.

10:38:37 am - Jonah Kellman:
so, yeah, recently, I had a commander

10:38:37 am - Eric Levine:
Yeah.

10:38:41 am - Jonah Kellman:
event that was a grand melee player event with a hundred and two players.

10:38:47 am - You:
I'm leaving.

10:38:47 am - Jonah Kellman:
um,

10:38:49 am - You:
No.

10:38:50 am - Jonah Kellman:
One of the challenges we face was

10:38:51 am - Eric Levine:
Shut down.

10:38:53 am - Jonah Kellman:
that the price structure was, you

10:38:53 am - Eric Levine:
Turn off the screen.

10:38:55 am - Jonah Kellman:
got? essentially a pack for losing?

10:38:59 am - You:
Mmm.

10:39:00 am - Jonah Kellman:
And a pack for eliminating, a player. This broke things because there were roughly surprisingly only about five

10:39:07 am - You:
Uh-huh.

10:39:11 am - Jonah Kellman:
people who were playing. Cedh nines or tens. Are those people? We eventually We were able to at a certain point say I see you can kill everybody. We're just gonna give you a lot of prizes and ask you to leave nicely.

10:39:31 am - You:
Hmm. No, I think that's a great, a great decision. Like if this person over here is like

10:39:35 am - Eric Levine:
Yeah.

10:39:37 am - You:
trudging through their, the trail of their dead on their way to the rest of your hundred person grand melee event, you can head them off at the pass with some boosties.

10:39:46 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah.

10:39:46 am - You:
It's being like, please think of the children literally actually, I want

10:39:49 am - Jonah Kellman:
The other.

10:39:50 am - You:
these children to have fun. Don't do

10:39:52 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah, no.

10:39:52 am - Eric Levine:
Yeah.

10:39:53 am - Jonah Kellman:

Actual children did not have fun. The other idea was to just throw them into a prisoners island. It's just like, Okay, you've comboed off, you are unkillable. Let's just put you in a room with a bunch of other people who think they are. Also unkillable,

10:40:06 am - You:

To the Gulag with you.

10:40:06 am - Eric Levine:

Yes.

10:40:07 am - Jonah Kellman:

Because one of you will win but for a few you're infinities aren't actually as infinite as you think they are. I do

10:40:17 am - You:

This is a good question in chat, in

10:40:18 am - Eric Levine:

I,

10:40:19 am - You:

regards to this as well.

10:40:19 am - Jonah Kellman:

Yeah.

10:40:20 am - You:

So how do you feel about different price structures for EDH or CDH that you can opt into? I think up opt in is the key there? I think any tournament structure where if you're on demand events if you're offering Commander like it. And you're only offering commander, you want more flat price structure because you were trying to serve all of these players. But if you have the logistics and the means to literally just separate these players into different events, the price structure and like incentive structure of those events is a great way to to keep those those players where you want them and away from your your people. They're just trying to have fun and hang

10:41:01 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah, that was what we did at a

10:41:01 am - Jonah Kellman:

Yeah.

10:41:04 am - Eric Levine:

command fest Richmond. That's what the Star City folks were doing. They had separate cues for like Cedh and not Cedh and the not CDH plant prize structure was flat and the cedh price structure was not. And, you know, it, it brought people allowed people to go where they where

they needed to go and they're like, I didn't see, you know, I was supposedly on the stage, but I wasn't seeing or hearing about, you know, big power level mismatch problems at at the the flat, the flat price tables. I think the other Are the other important thing to remind people of when, when you are sort of matching people willy-nilly, um, keeping those f*** prize structures. Flat is good. Sorry, words are hard but the other I I think having a short A short conversation with with the table. What? Or with the group when you can is about just like, just about The experience that you're trying to create is important. I'll always remember this. This is something that stuck with me for many years. This was, Oh, gotta be over a decade ago At this point. I was playing commander in a, you

10:42:17 am - You:
Yeah, you got to stop dating us like

10:42:17 am - Eric Levine:
know.

10:42:18 am - You:
that.

10:42:20 am - Jonah Kellman:
It was like sick months ago,

10:42:21 am - Eric Levine:
No.

10:42:22 am - You:
You have to stop.

10:42:23 am - Eric Levine:
Well wait, wait for it.

10:42:24 am - You:
This last week this last week.

10:42:25 am - Eric Levine:
Wait for it. Yeah. What? Yes. Last week what? I was a level two judge.

10:42:29 am - You:
Uh-huh.

10:42:31 am - Eric Levine:
and I was playing commander in a hotel restaurant with Sheldon memory and a couple other people, I

10:42:38 am - You:
Yeah, super, super happened last week.

10:42:41 am - Eric Levine:

Last last week, um, you know, in like Nashville or wherever I I remember I was, I was stuck on land. I had two lance and one of them. One of them was a bounce land, right. One of them was a bounce lands and and so another, another player at the table, had borrowed one of my decks. Um, and I will I will I'll leave this person's name out of the story. And I don't think any of, you know them anyway, but they had like a strip mine or a wasteland, or something, some way to destroy my, my rabbit, a balanced land, right? Which was the source of two of my three mana. And I was like, they were like I think I need to destroy Levine's civic growth chamber. And I was like, Do you? I it's turned seven and I have three manas. I'm not sure you do. It's like but I just get I just get so much value out of destroying this thing and hard over it for a while and eventually. He did it. And I had a miserable game. Largely, because he did that. And I was very frustrated and late in the game. His response was like, Well what do you what do you want me to do? Like it was there on the table like I could do it. So I had to do it and sheltered.

10:43:58 am - You:

I don't know, Fam. It produces a colorless mana, too. Did you know that has this other activated ability on it? Like that's wild.

10:44:06 am - Eric Levine:

So Sheldon looks at them and just says, Own your actions And that was the end of the conversation. That was all he said and all he needed to say and it was it was just

10:44:16 am - You:

yeah, like

10:44:17 am - Eric Levine:

like it was a perfect encapsulation of like, you know what, the attitude that I think people need to have in these these situations like you like And it was it was just like it was a perfect encapsulation of like, you know what, the attitude that I think people need to have in these these situations. Like you like this is a game where you're gonna be destroying each other's game pieces with with effects, right? That's part of it. We're interacting, that's the point. But If you're going to do one of those things and you think Gosh am I gonna make somebody's somebody's game? Experience just miserable by doing this for in this event with a super flat prize structure? Absolutely, no gain for me, hmm. Perhaps I should think about this action before doing it, right? Like, you know it's it's something you know and and like It's, it can be very tempting. You know, sometimes sometimes you're you're playing your game of magic and you're you've you've you've been playing a few games and you're a little frustrated with vanilla ice over here. He's been, he's been playing a lot of fun cards but but now vanilla ice is stuck on man.

10:45:16 am - You:

Let's joey that my hands are not on the broadcast tools. Right now. I'm just letting everyone know.

10:45:22 am - Eric Levine:

Vanilla ice is stuck on mana.

10:45:22 am - You:
I've lost control of the broadcast.

10:45:25 am - Eric Levine:
And he's

10:45:25 am - Jonah Kellman:
Up.

10:45:26 am - Eric Levine:
he's no longer, he's no longer having a great time. Like, even vanilla ice to start to serve to have his secret growth shape or destroyed in this situation, even though he made cool as ice a terrible movie. You should not punish vanilla ice for this.

10:45:41 am - You:
That said, all of you should go watch cool as I starting manila ice it is. Nightmarishly bad. Um, but to add on owning your

10:45:48 am - Eric Levine:
It's so dreadful.

10:45:50 am - You:
actions. I actually think this is huge and look, I've played a lot of vintage as well. There's a pretty thriving vintage scene in the mid-Atlantic for a while and just I'm going on a small detour for vintage landing and coming back to Commander. I promise.

10:46:01 am - Jonah Kellman:
Sure.

10:46:02 am - You:
Um, someone and they're playing doomsday or something and they turned they turn zero me like I'm playing shops I'm on the draw. Those words mean something to most people I'm playing a prison deck that plays at sorcery speed. Um, I'm and I'm going second. They are playing Storm. and they just, Take me out before I can produce any game actions and they apologize to me. And I look up at them. And I'm like, Why are you apologizing to me? Because your deck does what it's supposed to do. Like What do you apologize for you don't like own your actions like and this is the thing in Commander. Like so I the way in like my deck building philosophy, kind of looks at it this way as well. So like all almost every deck, I build has some kind of back door pressure valve. Like I need to I need this game to end for whatever reason like but like, I stand back that stuff sometimes like I have like, okay, I've got pity list, plunder, and I've got Chatterfang Cool. Is that gonna be fun right now? No. Um, and so it's like I'm not gonna apologize to you for chatterfanging, you out. That's hilarious. Um,

10:47:10 am - Eric Levine:
Games got to end.

10:47:11 am - You:

I will apologize to you, if something unexpected happens and I end the game in a way that wasn't fun. So it's like Don't don't like sit there and feel bad that your debt killed someone but like just be cognizant of how your actions. This is good life advice, too be cognizant of how your actions are going to impact the people around you. And then own that. Yeah.

10:47:36 am - Eric Levine:

And in a more specific commander-related way, players have to be eliminated games have to end but do they have to end now and does it have to happen this way?

10:47:46 am - Jonah Kellman:

I think a great way to think about it is if you knew it was gonna happen and you knew it wasn't gonna be fun for other people. Reasonably like why did you do that

10:47:56 am - Eric Levine:

What you do that?

10:47:56 am - Jonah Kellman:

Now, if you didn't know it was gonna happen or you didn't know, it was not gonna be fun for other people. That's okay. Like you are just like, Oh, wait.

10:48:03 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:48:04 am - Jonah Kellman:

I have an infinite combo on the board. And I would feel real bad like, I can just kill all of you and you can all see it, and it feels like mean to just be like, I can kill you whenever I want, but I'm not gonna because the games, like I didn't mean to put this in my deck. Apparently it's here.

10:48:22 am - Eric Levine:

Right.

10:48:23 am - Jonah Kellman:

Sorry.

10:48:23 am - Eric Levine:

Cool.

10:48:23 am - You:

That that is actually how the first time. I chatterfang the table out. I actually didn't know about that combo. I'd not actually doing two together.

10:48:30 am - Jonah Kellman:

Mmm.

10:48:31 am - You:

I just put Chatterfang in this solver deck because I'm like, Oh I'm playing a black green tokens deck. This thing makes more tokens sick and then like, I ended up with it in pity was plunder and play and the whole table was like Oh we're dead. Like what?

10:48:45 am - Jonah Kellman:

Right.

10:48:45 am - You:

Oh, oh, okay, that's cool. And so, that was a situation where I was like, huh? And I think I was gonna end the game that quickly my bad. Oops.

10:48:55 am - Jonah Kellman:

Right.

10:48:55 am - You:

But

10:48:55 am - Jonah Kellman:

But if But if you want more world people and you're like Oh I'm sorry that I made you lose all your permanents.

10:48:59 am - You:

oh yeah,

10:49:00 am - Jonah Kellman:

It's like

10:49:00 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:49:01 am - You:

No,

10:49:01 am - Eric Levine:

Are you?

10:49:01 am - Jonah Kellman:

you that's what the spell says happen.

10:49:04 am - You:

The spell The spell to an exactly what it says

10:49:05 am - Eric Levine:

That's what it does.

10:49:06 am - You:
it does at it does at a thousand manner or whatever. It costs, definitely did not intend

10:49:09 am - Eric Levine:
Yeah.

10:49:10 am - You:
for this to happen.

10:49:12 am - Eric Levine:
yeah, like like

10:49:12 am - Jonah Kellman:
now, when you stick it on eye of the storm, and everybody gets it forever or like hive mind in their seven copies, You, you're not allowed to apologize because you

10:49:21 am - Eric Levine:
homework. You're just making the whole table do homework, right? Like That's, that's like, that's like what I? Okay. I'm gonna, I'm gonna tell on myself a little bit. I, before the days of Commander, you know, in I I used to play a lot of like six to eight player, multiplayer, 60, card, casual games. And I definitely had a deck that had, I think it was paradox haze and time sifter in it. Now, for those of you who don't know what time sifter does it is a bad card that changes it effectively changes the turn order by by having

10:49:51 am - Jonah Kellman:
I love it. It's my favorite card.

10:49:57 am - Eric Levine:
players revealed that their top part of their library and I think it gives an extra turn to the player with the the card with the highest man of value.

10:50:04 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yes.

10:50:05 am - Eric Levine:
Um, and so I had that and paradox haze and so at that point, the turn order of the game, became a sheet of paper because of course, we had all these extra turn stacking on on top of each other. And I even then knew that the most recently turned taking Current is created for first. So so we had this long list of like who's turn It was crossing people off adding people on and I was just like, you know what? That's not fun. Let's not. Do that ever again. I'm sorry it happened. That way. I shouldn't have done that. I should have foreseen this, that's on me.

10:50:43 am - You:
Yeah, let's funny though.

10:50:46 am - Jonah Kellman:
I, I have that deck on purpose.

10:50:47 am - You:
Not execute but I'm like on. Oh no the second you said Time center.

10:50:50 am - Eric Levine:
Right.

10:50:51 am - You:
I was like

10:50:54 am - Eric Levine:
Like it's a funny concept but it's not fun to do is the problem.

10:50:55 am - You:
Yeah, not right. Not right. Yeah. I've actually thrown away a ton Yeah, not right. Yeah, I've actually thrown away a ton of commander concepts that like Yeah. Not right. Yeah. I've actually thrown away a ton of commander concepts that like have cooked up and like I've sent to Eric and I'm like, Hey is this fun or does this just like kill everyone in an unfun way and like, if it's like that looks miserable to play against. It just goes into the garbage. Like every NIV, miss a deck I've ever tried to build.

10:51:12 am - Eric Levine:
You know.

10:51:15 am - You:
It is It is impossible to build that deck in a way where the in a way where the people around you it actually still be powerful. It is impossible to build that deck in a way where the people around you still have fun and actually still be powerful. So wow, I just got sent a cursed image over there. Y'all like Garfield. Um,

10:51:25 am - Eric Levine:
Oh no, oh no.

10:51:27 am - You:
It's not that bad, it's not but I lost my train of thought because that's it's yeah, it's um, if it's not fun, then I just I'm not gonna build it. It's kind of the long long, no, don't

10:51:42 am - Eric Levine:
Yeah.

10:51:45 am - You:
be sorry, that that thing is great.

10:51:49 am - Jonah Kellman:

So we're getting short on time, but let's what happens when you have a player. who's not following that social contract, either, and local store fat and is a regular or shows up to, Your cons, just like I'm just gonna kill people with Arkham.

10:52:09 am - You:

regular a regular I think is a lot easier, especially if it's someone

10:52:11 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:52:12 am - You:

you've probably have a rapport with this person and it makes it very easy for you to pull them aside and like, depending on your relationship with this person can be anywhere from the Come on. To like having like a genuine? Come to Arizona talk with them. It's a little bit harder for.

10:52:29 am - Jonah Kellman:

Point of order. Wouldn't it be don't play erza anymore? Not come to Arizona.

10:52:32 am - Eric Levine:

Right. First. I think I think Ursa is in the bad place. I think we've officially established that

10:52:38 am - You:

are was not a nice man accurate, um, a convention setting, it gets a little bit tougher and you have to actually generally, my experience like that situation needs to be handled a lot more delicately because like

10:52:56 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:52:57 am - You:

Anything like in this scale is depending on how miserable is this person making people, right? If this person is made three pods, super miserable, I might look up to him and be like, I'm not gonna sign you up for any more pods if you keep this up.

10:53:07 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:53:07 am - You:

But if it's someone that like, Has a game where they lock everyone out and people aren't having fun. They might get a hey, now like That's not cool. Like, people are trying to have fun, you just can Try to talk to them. But ultimately you as the to like

10:53:21 am - Eric Levine:

Right.

10:53:23 am - You:

And the organization is your, I think. It is your responsibility to ensure that the greatest number of people in your room are having fun. I'm not gonna sit here and say everyone. That's not possible. Like you just have to kind of accept that, especially running a commander tournament. Like they're talking about so many different people with so many different decks and so many different Philosophies on magic the gathering and how they want to play it. You're not gonna make everyone happy but you just have to strive to set up an environment that you're gonna make the most people possible happy and like having that conversation with that player and just pulling aside, Hey, this is the environment that I'm trying to cultivate here. These are the This is the kind of event that I'm trying to run and you locking everyone out of the game with smoke deck. Smoke stack sundial the infinite while hilarious. Is not providing a good experience for all these other people could you. Could just stop pub stopping in my event, please.

10:54:17 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah. It's and it's one of the one of the tools that it, that makes that easier at Yeah, it's and it's one of the, one of the tools that it, that makes that easier at the convention level. Because, again, I Yeah. of the tools that it, that makes that tools that it, that makes that easier at the convention level because again, I agree that it's much, much easier at if it's your store regular or just someone who's showed up into your store in this, in this new environment. Even and says like, Hey here, I am with tiny bones to lock everybody out. And then you can be pulled, pulled them aside and be like, Hey, that's, you know, like I I think your tiny bone, detectives, very cool but that's not really what we're trying to do here. This is kind of what we're trying to do, you know, we obviously, you know, we'd love to have you, but if you could just, you know, play play a different deck or or do things differently in game, such that other people having fun, but at a convention that I think one of the best tools if you have time, and this is hard, right? Especially if you're launching a bunch of pot after pot after pot after pod, it can be very hard to do this. But like try to keep it an eye on the pulse of of the pods in your area, try like get involved. Not, you know, not in a game way. Don't sit down with your deck, right? That's probably not appropriate while you're working, but like get involved in the narrative. The game, from the perspective of an interested observer be like Oh that's very cool or if somebody you know somebody plays like a very scary card or is is looking like they're gonna come blow off and the players are are concerned and they're they're having a fun conversation about it. You can inject yourself into that conversation just a little so the players know Understand what's going on and and you care and something. Something is Jonah's making quite the face. Um, But but injecting yourself into that conversation, just a little, I need I need to look at the twitch It's becoming increasingly

10:55:52 am - Jonah Kellman:

No.

10:55:53 am - Eric Levine:

It's becoming increasingly clear. Oh

10:55:55 am - Jonah Kellman:

You reminded me of a story.

10:55:56 am - Eric Levine:
Okay good.

10:55:58 am - You:
I haven't done anything weird.

10:55:58 am - Eric Levine:
Um,

10:55:59 am - You:
I promise.

10:56:00 am - Eric Levine:
good. Okay, you both had your missed your faces on so I was just checking in

10:56:04 am - Jonah Kellman:
We always do.

10:56:04 am - You:
Evening, therefore I have mischief.

10:56:05 am - Jonah Kellman:
We always do.

10:56:06 am - You:
Say that's just the default for us. Like,

10:56:09 am - Eric Levine:
But but just getting yourself involved as like not just not this authority figure, right? Because with these commander events you don't want to be this like ultimate authority figure. You're not, you're not here in a hand down, you know, lightning bolts from on high and this is generally true at events. Anyway, you're you're an ally to these players. You're trying to make this event fair and fun for them and it commander events when people are just chilling out playing some casual pods and everybody's gotten free flat prizes. You get to show a lot more of your personality and be a lot of lean, a lot more towards your your regular self, and that can be a lot of fun. But, but when, once you show people that, that side, that you are a human person that cares about this event cares about the people and having fun, it becomes easier to have those conversations with people because it's not, you're not just some outside force that's coming in and saying, You can't do the thing. You want to do, you are a part of this ecosystem already. You have established yourself as as a character in this little play and you can say, Hey, like, I have been paying attention to this game. I have talked to some of the players from your previous pods. It doesn't seem like people are really enjoying this experience. This is not what we're trying to do. Can we talk can? Can you? And I talk about ways where we can create a solution, right? Because we don't want to get to the point where we have to say, I'm not letting you sign up for more pods. If, if you're gonna keep doing the thing, sometimes you have to do that. And that's that's what has to happen. But person who are making things unpleasant for people can work together to find a

solution and they can genuinely believe that, that that's your goal because you've been involved in, like the happenings of the events. You've been watching games and talking to players and acting friendly. That's a much more powerful way to solve that situation.

10:57:52 am - You:

We're ambassadors to the game, like,

10:57:52 am - Jonah Kellman:

One of the.

10:57:53 am - You:

Like, if you, if

10:57:54 am - Jonah Kellman:

Yeah.

10:57:54 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:57:55 am - You:

you've heard this term before, like it's very much true. We are ambassadors for magic. The gathering In having those kinds of attitudes and giving that kind of personality like you. You can do this, a regular competitive real tournament too. You don't have to be rules robot, you can ask anyone that worked, the pro

10:58:10 am - Eric Levine:

Yeah.

10:58:11 am - You:

The pro tour with me, I am a silly goose and I stayed in the pond at that pro tour. You can you can let yourself be yourself and and that can help show players that it's like you're not just here because you feel like being in an authoritarian position, you're here because you love matching the gathering and you can facilitate that fun in in this setting and give being warm and talking to folks and being involved in in your tournaments goes a long way for that. Showing these players that They don't have to have an adversarial relationship with their judge. They can have a symbiotic relationship with their judge because that's that is what it's supposed to be. We are here to make sure you don't break the game and make sure everyone has fun, right? Like, that's

10:58:55 am - Jonah Kellman:

I mean, yeah.

10:58:56 am - You:

Got my soapbox.

10:58:56 am - Jonah Kellman:

Being Being involved. you get to have more fun with the

10:58:57 am - You:
My two cents.

10:58:59 am - Jonah Kellman:
players. The story that I was thinking of was I was walking through an event home players like, Hey Judge, you've answered a couple calls at our table. We have a weird one for you. I am at zero life and I'm being attacked by 256 goblins. What will my life total be after combat damage? It matters because I want to cast goblin game and I want to know what happens when we have my life total.

10:59:24 am - You:
I'd walk away.

10:59:24 am - Jonah Kellman:
That's why I was making the face.

10:59:26 am - Eric Levine:
That rules.

10:59:27 am - You:
there was there was a pot, a common

10:59:28 am - Jonah Kellman:
and I was like,

10:59:29 am - You:
con like that they're like, Hey, we're just playing a casual part over here for funsies. Can you, can you help us out and that come out from behind a desk and I look over and I see Possibilities Storm. And I see a knowledge pool. It's like, no. And I just like, you all are on. This isn't a tournament. Y'all are on your own. I'm going elsewhere. I'm just not

10:59:48 am - Eric Levine:
I I want to go back to a thing that you said, Eric a couple minutes ago about about showing your personality, the tournament, This is this is not Commander specific but this is I think one of the best pieces of judge advice I ever received and so I'm going to give it to everybody for free. Um I had just finished head judging A Grand Prix. It was fairly early in my GP had judge tenure. And after the event, my, my good friend and and and then maybe then our seat then not RC. RC not RC. I don't remember Nicholas Saban came up to me and said he comes out to me and says, You know, hey I have some feedback for you And I said Great, please bring it on and he said so From a logistical and like operational standpoint. That was a good event. It did not feel like an Eric

11:00:35 am - You:
I know that.

11:00:36 am - Eric Levine:
event. and I said, Oh no. Thank you. Then I said, You know because because baseline obviously

I have to run like you logistically sound event do I do that? And make sure that it is It is generic Levine event. How do you run your events you know, logistically sound way and make sure that your event whether it's a commander event and fnm an rcq an event at dreamhack, what whatever it is and make sure that that event has your, you know, that that the judges remember the judges are working with the players, you're who are playing in your event, remember that event positively because of just a little bit of spin you put because baseline obviously I have to run like you logistically sound event but how do I do that? And make sure that it is It is generic Levine event. How do you run your events you know, logistically sound way and make sure that your event whether it's a commander event and fnm an rcq an event at dreamhack, what whatever it is and make sure that that event has your, you know, that that the judges remember the judges are working with the players, you're who are playing in your event, remember that event positively because of just a little bit of spin you put on it, you know? Just just making sure you inject a little bit of your personality into that event is really important. So, do keep that in mind.

11:01:24 am - Jonah Kellman:

Fantastic. So that brings us to a little bit after the hour we've been talking for an hour. Now I'm more than happy to keep on chatting with these two clowns of. So I'm gonna say to our viewers. Thank you for watching. Thank you for joining us and then I'm just gonna

11:01:38 am - You:

You don't want to ask this last one on the outline.

11:01:41 am - Eric Levine:

Do you have any questions for staying Jonah? Do you have any questions for staying?

11:01:44 am - You:

I was really excited.

11:01:44 am - Jonah Kellman:

I'm staying.

11:01:46 am - You:

Hold on. It's like explain to me. How Commander is just pretty much wrestling, but with cars you're not gonna give me an opportunity to do this. Is that

11:01:52 am - Jonah Kellman:

Home, I

11:01:53 am - You:

Is that your book on this?

11:01:53 am - Jonah Kellman:

I would I would get it there before I was in trouble. So okay, okay, so here's the thing, I'm gonna put the broadcast, not that I ever had control over the broadcast, but I'm gonna put the broadcast,

holy into the hands of Eric Dustin Brown. And we're gonna continue to chat until Eric Dustin Brown wants to go and celebrate birthday things because

11:02:10 am - You:
Dark

11:02:10 am - Jonah Kellman:
that's

11:02:10 am - Eric Levine:
Yes.

11:02:10 am - You:
Let's go.

11:02:10 am - Jonah Kellman:
that's So explain to me. This can either be live or not you can just end the broadcast, whatever thank you for watching. It was a pleasure hanging out with those of you the chat.

11:02:20 am - Eric Levine:
Thanks everybody. Stay for this. It's gonna be fun.

11:02:21 am - Jonah Kellman:
We're gonna own our chaotic actions.

11:02:23 am - You:
I, I actually did legitimately think about this question because

11:02:26 am - Jonah Kellman:
Yeah.

11:02:27 am - You:
Alright, so I talk about,

11:02:27 am - Eric Levine:
Me too.

11:02:28 am - Jonah Kellman:
but,

11:02:28 am - You:
about professional wrestling a lot. Um, I will go preface with a couple things. It's fake. I know. So is Star Wars. And it is a legitimate art, form is legitimate form of theater, in my opinion and one of the big things in professional wrestling is that you're playing in front of a crowd, right? And that crowd is at a distance and so you're you have this described sometimes choreographed fight. But you have to sell it right? And if this is this is this is anime, right? So think about the

Dragon Ball Z trope of like the big wind up punch and it takes 17 episodes. And then, on Episode 18, we finally connect kind of thing like, Wrestling. Embodies that in big over exaggerated movements, right? Like big windups for punches that wouldn't normally be effective in a fight, but that person up in the crowd, and in the nosebleeds, knows that something cools about to happen and I approach Commander. Very much like that. Like, I have described my decks as like Rube Goldberg machines for idiots, um, Like, what? I'm clearly up to something over here. Every piece of every weird cart that I play, like, Here's Carnival of Souls, it's like EDB. What are you up to? Why do you have Carnival of Souls? What's going on? But like my whole, my whole commander philosophy is like, just that like, something's happening, something's happening. Um, and so like and I think like, I saw this question and I was like, No this is like I think this is like a really cool question, and a really cool idea in a way to think about to think about your approach to playing match the gathering and the fun. You want to get out of it. I don't care if I don't care, if my stupid carnival is souls combo, kills everyone or not. Like eventually I'm gonna kill everyone with March to the machines, it'll happen. But like the fact that like, I tried and people got to see what weirdness I'm up to. Like, that's really exciting to me.

11:04:21 am - Eric Levine:

And I think that, that one of the other things features that, that commander and And professional wrestling share is, is an emphasis on narrative, right? Like Every what at the end of the day, I find that whatever commander player seems to want. Is a good story, right? We want to, we want a good story. We want to be able to say, Hey I went off with my with my, my Carnival of Souls combo and and killed everyone.

11:04:48 am - You:

I do notice that like you're looking weirdly at another monitor that may or may not have open broadcasting studio on it, like maybe.

11:04:54 am - Eric Levine:

Don't worry, don't don't worry about that.

11:04:55 am - You:

No. Okay, fair fair.

11:04:58 am - Eric Levine:

I would ask you not to not to concern yourself with that. I think and even better story, frankly, and and even better story, if you could swing it, it would take a lot of work. It would be hard, but if you could make it happen, Is a hang on. Hang on. We almost did that wrong.

11:05:16 am - You:

Actually, I didn't even think about how appropriate carnival souls was for this conversation.

11:05:19 am - Eric Levine:

Right. Well, that's the thing about Carnival of Souls.

11:05:22 am - You:

Apples birthday.

11:05:23 am - Eric Levine:

We protect on that card and let's let's pull that up. Let's let's just pull that up real quick. If we can hang on. Hang on. Can I hang on? Let's just, yep.

11:05:29 am - You:

A little bit more, a little bit more,

11:05:30 am - Eric Levine:

I might

11:05:30 am - You:

a little bit more.

11:05:31 am - Eric Levine:

Okay.

11:05:31 am - You:

There are more. there you go.

11:05:32 am - Eric Levine:

Now Now let's take a look at that flavor. Text Devil bless those elves, devil transport those troops, no one cares. That today is my birthday. Happy birthday.

11:05:41 am - You:

Thanks.

11:05:41 am - Eric Levine:

Eric Whitney a game with with Carnival of Souls, on your birthday would be pretty rad but like commanders, all about that is it's about that narrative, right? When you're playing, you know, a lot of the times when I'm playing an open world video game, right? I'm looking to to generate some weird nonsense narrative out of the weird choices that I'm making in order to do something unexpected, right? And that's a lot of commander and that's also something that happens a lot in professional wrestling, right? We have these, you know, there are professional wrestlers who are just like big meaty men who have the dorito bod and and they punch each other real hard. And that's what they do. And then there are the orange, Cassidy's of the world, who will do these, these exaggeratedly fake looking like, it's very slow shin kicks and the whole crowd goes Oh, and, and that's, that's About to make an appearance. Oh, that's it. Is it is our boy Orange Cassidy

11:06:34 am - You:

a beautiful boy, Orange Cassidy

11:06:40 am - Eric Levine:

When a commander. Deck is Jonah Commander, That's fine. You know, Do your thing, if that's what works for you, great. But for me Commander is I have this, this narrative thread of mechanics that I have. I have, I have woven through this list like, my, my jury deck here, right? It's not just like this, it's not just like, Oh, it's a sacrifice deck. It does sacrifice things. I am trying

to engineer a situation, or I can make a bunch of stuff and sacrifice a bunch of stuff. Make my board big make my board small and over over time. We just get to a point where I can just like Fling jury at someone, and that results in me, killing the entire table. But it's this ebb and flow over the game with all these. These permanents and effects. And there's this this psychological element to it of just like, Okay, when is when is this gonna happen? Does he have critical? Mass is, you know, is he missing it?

11:07:32 am - You:
Are they gonna kick out?

11:07:32 am - Eric Levine:
He's

11:07:33 am - You:
Are they gonna kick out?

11:07:34 am - Eric Levine:
right. Exactly.

11:07:35 am - You:
It's like does he have the deflecting

11:07:35 am - Eric Levine:
And that's, that's

11:07:37 am - You:
palm to kick out like

11:07:38 am - Eric Levine:
Yeah. And that's what makes it exciting and it's just as much fun when it works. And I get to do everything that I want to do. As it is, when I get right up to the point where I'm about to get to do everything and then Eric blows up all my cards, right? Like Eric says, he's about to win, I got to kill all his stuff, but the fact that I, I made him have to do that is just as much fun as actually doing it for me.

11:08:01 am - You:
I had to go under the ring for a

11:08:01 am - Eric Levine:
Well, maybe slightly

11:08:02 am - You:
chair, man. I needed. I needed a steel chair.

11:08:06 am - Eric Levine:

It. Yeah, but it's but it's all about narrative. It's it in a way that I think one one-on-one magic sometimes isn't

11:08:15 am - You:

Oh, that's launched me on a

11:08:16 am - Jonah Kellman:

Yeah.

11:08:16 am - You:

the rabbit hole about magic coverage but that's a whole other episode I think

11:08:20 am - Jonah Kellman:

I mean. I don't have anywhere to be for another two hours.

11:08:24 am - You:

It's my birthday. I want to go to the mall with my best friend.

11:08:27 am - Jonah Kellman:

Yeah. I think that is all the time we have. Thank you both so much for joining me. I'm I would not be surprised if this somehow happened again.

11:08:39 am - You:

I could, you know, the powers that be

11:08:41 am - Jonah Kellman:

To be fair.

11:08:43 am - You:

Might have a say in that we can talk to them and we can find out.

11:08:47 am - Jonah Kellman:

I might also be surprised if they let this happen again. True true. They can't stop us.

11:08:56 am - You:

Everything's fine.

11:08:57 am - Jonah Kellman:

They be us. I don't know what.

11:08:58 am - You:

Yeah.

11:09:01 am - Eric Levine:

Pretty sure I still have a stream

11:09:01 am - Jonah Kellman:
That is all have a wonderful weekend

11:09:03 am - Eric Levine:
keys.

11:09:04 am - Jonah Kellman:
and we'll talk to you all later.