

Hello everyone!

It's been just over a month since Flash was banned in EDH, and Ikorra product has been in people's hands for a week or two now. When Flash was banned, I launched a new version of the Metagame Project collection survey (here: <https://forms.gle/LpF8Bnu2pkxocLYH7>) to start getting some information on what the new metagame might look like, and since launching the form we've gotten 90 usable submissions.

What does this mean? Well, it means you get the disclaimer right here: With so few data points entered, this information is merely a snippet of what's actually being played. If we could see every single game being played we might see very different numbers, or maybe very similar numbers. As always, this means that what's included here is simply shared to see some different ideas about what you might run into, and should not be taken as a hard fact. My editorializing on the different items will also be less here, since there's just too little to work with for a bigger picture. As always, if you'd like to look at the numbers yourself, you can find the spreadsheet here: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1wsW2uCact-s9XraBUS22OGJRhyZTR7sL>

OVERVIEW

As noted, we had 90 usable submissions for this first monthly update for the Project. With the various restrictions around the globe right now, I'm not particularly surprised we had a lower number of submissions. Across those 90 games, however, we saw a large amount of different decks being explored--83 in all. That represents nearly a quarter of the total different submissions for the entirety of the first version of this project in about 1/9 the total submissions (83 different decks in 90 pods compared to 260 in 836 pods). We had 38 of those decks record at least 1 win, meaning 42.22% of lists got on the scoreboard--only a bit lower than the 48.85% of decks with a win at the conclusion of the first iteration of the project.

With the global pandemic going on, I found the data on how the games were played to be pretty interesting. 80 submissions included how the game was played--the most common method of playing was playing with a blind (unknown) group via Webcam, with 24 of those 80 games played that way. However, the second most common method of playing (of the submitted answers) was with a trusted group in paper--22 games submitted that way. Given the various restrictions in different places, it was somewhat surprising that a number of those submissions were in the earlier games submitted, when various lockdown procedures were being put in place, rather than later (as they are lifted in various areas). This leads us to a weakness of this simple survey: the question is broad enough that

Game Type	Number	%
Blind Digital	10	12.5
Blind Paper	1	1.25
Blind Webcam	24	30
Trusted Digital	13	16.25
Trusted Paper	22	27.5
Trusted Webcam	10	12.5
Total	80	100

people could be playing with their trusted paper group using a different method of play (such as webcams), and either answer could be interpreted as the right way to answer it.

One of the constants across each update of the first version of the project was that the player going first appeared to have an advantage in their win percentage. That trend has continued, with 35.56% of games won by the first player. The player going second also had a strong rate during this time, racking up 28.89% of the wins, while the 3rd and 4th players in order both sat under 20% in win share (18.89% and 16.67% respectively). The rate for Player 1 tracks fairly closely to the rate shown throughout the first version (33.37% win rate), while Player 2 was slightly higher--at the expense of the 3rd and 4th players. With more submissions, it could be that the win rate for all players could move more toward what would be even (25% for each), or perhaps we will see something similar to what occurred throughout the first version of the project: Player 1 with a clear advantage, while Players 2, 3, and 4 all are closer to one another. Time will tell.

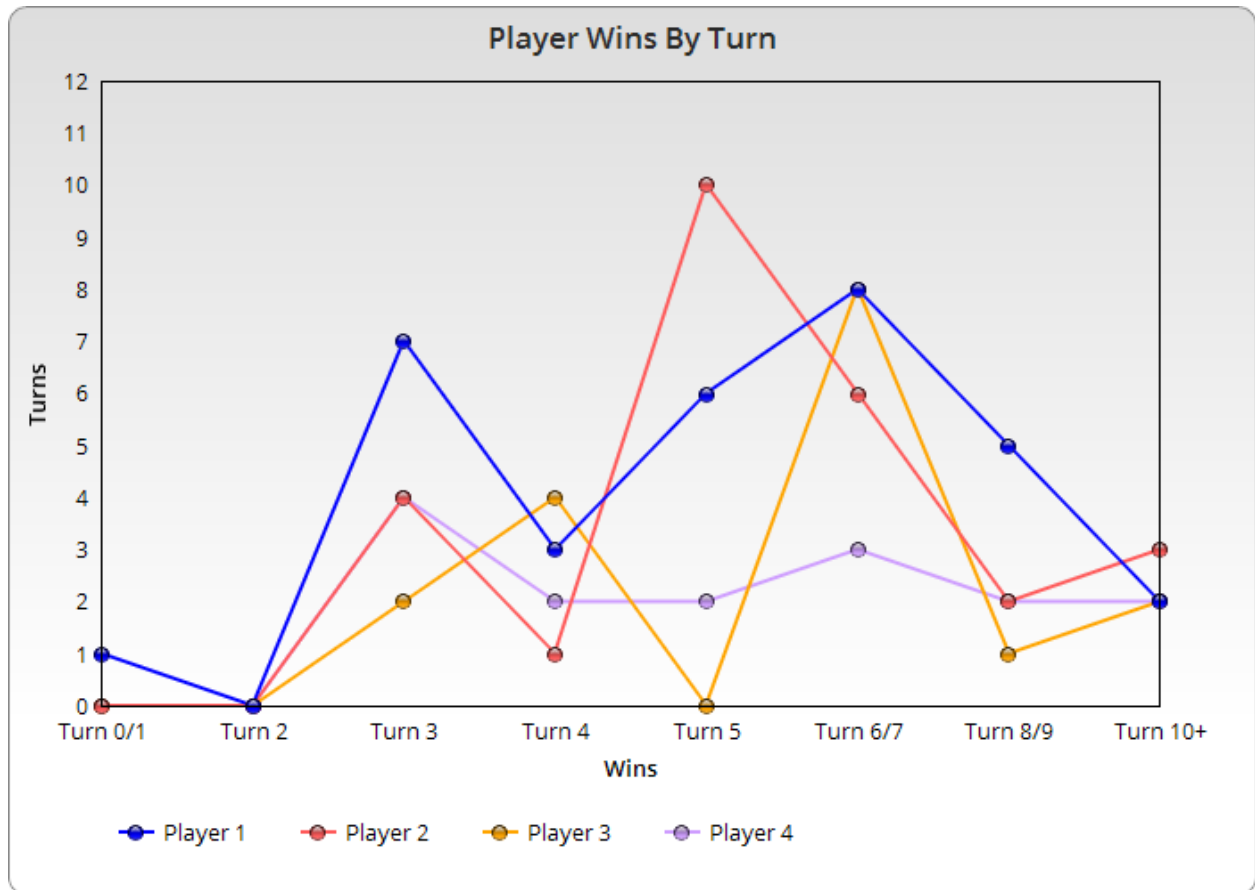
Winning Player	Wins	%
Player 1	32	35.56
Player 2	26	28.89
Player 3	17	18.89
Player 4	15	16.67
Totals	90	100.01

Ending Turn	Wins	%
Turn 0/1	1	1.11
Turn 2	0	0
Turn 3	17	18.89
Turn 4	10	11.11
Turn 5	18	20
Turn 6/7	25	27.78
Turn 8/9	10	11.11
Turn 10+	9	10
Totals	90	100

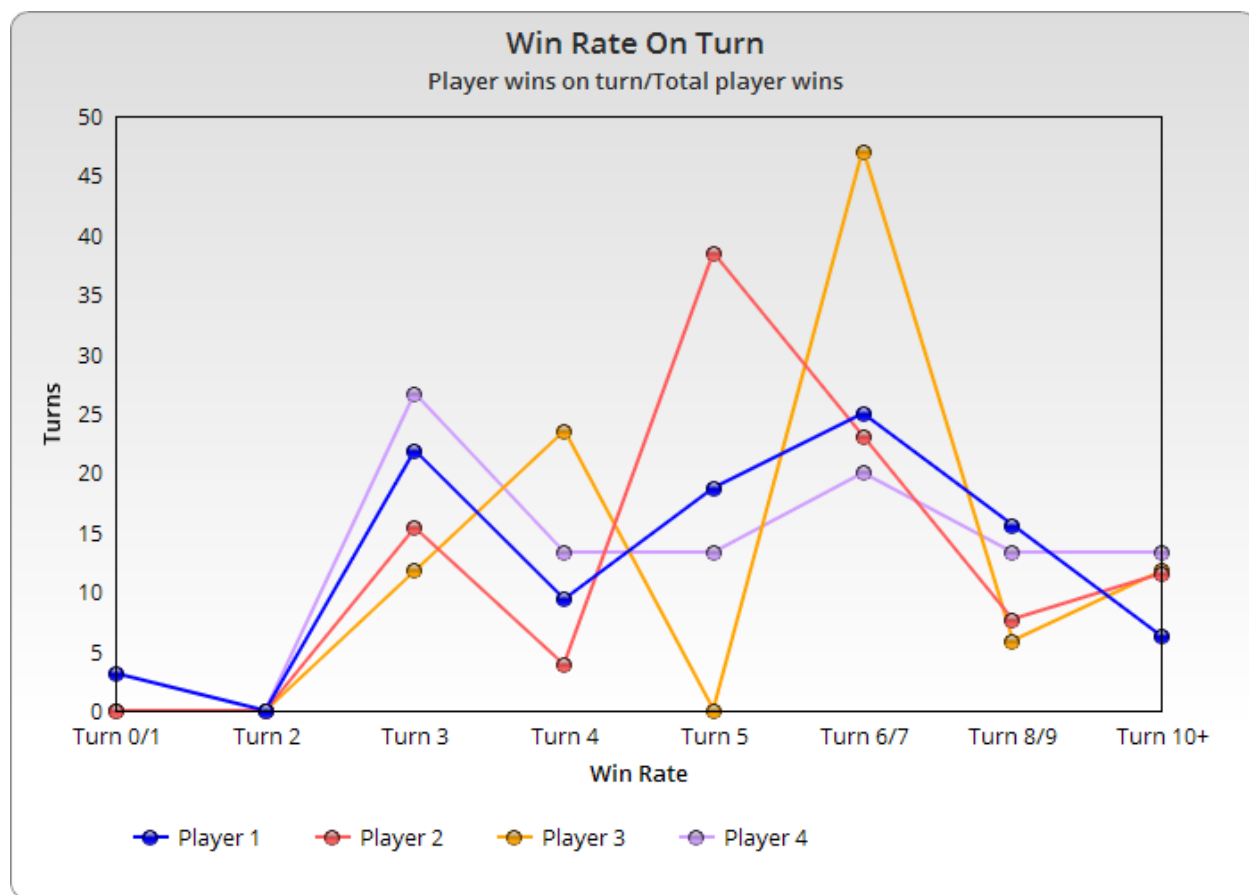
Another trend continuing through the project is turns 6/7 being the modal turn(s) for the game to end on, followed by turn 5. 25 games ending on turns 6/7 accounts for over a quarter of all games ending on those turns, while another 18 games ending on turn 5 means that turns 5, 6, and 7 account for nearly half of all games ending in those turns. The other information on ending turn cycles did not match that closely with the previously known information we had from the first version of the project. We had a small number of turn 1 wins (just 1), but no turn 2 victories--and more turn 3 victories than turn 4 wins (17 to 10). The share of games ending before turn 6 was 51.11%, with games ending turn 6 or later at 48.89%, meaning a slightly higher percentage of games ended prior to turn 6 than we saw at the end of the first version of the project. That said, it could easily be a result of the limited data as well.

This graph shows the total number of wins for each player on a given turn. Unlike with previous updates from the first iteration of the project, we don't see much of a discernable pattern between players here. This is likely a side effect of the low number of submitted games more

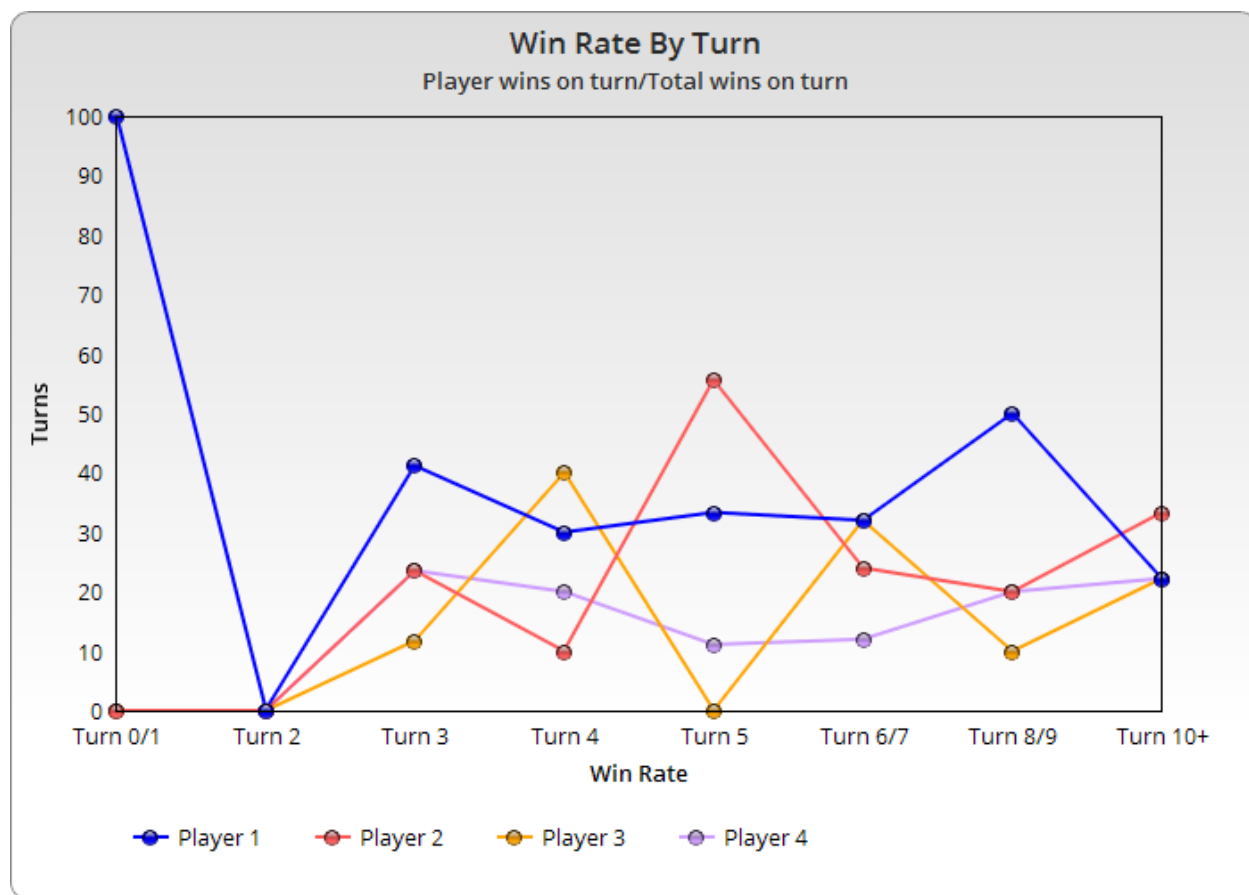
than anything else, but the variability of the wins on a given turn for each player is interesting. Two players, 1 and 3, share the most wins on turns 6/7, but player 2's highest win turn was turn 5. Player 4 had a much more even number of wins across the different turns, while the other players all had "double peaked" lines, with earlier peaks on turn 3 or 4, and a later peak on turn 5 or 6/7.



This next chart shows the win rate for each player on a given turn, taking their wins on that turn and dividing by that player's total wins. We see in this image that Player 4's win rate is highest in the early turns, but flattens quickly, and player's win rates match closely to the chart showing their raw wins on each turn. However, we see much more extreme peaks. For example, Player 3's peak win turn was 6/7, with 8 wins, but those wins accounted for nearly half of all of Player 3's victories. The next highest single Player/Turn win share was the nearly 40% of Player 2's wins that came on turn 5. We also see just how little the wins on the very earliest turns, on or before turn 2, impact the win rates overall for each player, showing that turn 3 is a potential choke point where you need to be prepared to either be the threat or answer the threat.



The last image shows the rate at which each player won games on a given turn, taking that player's wins on that turn and dividing by the total number of wins on that turn. With the only win on the first turn, Player 1 starts with 100% of the turn 0/1 wins. However, after that point, Player 1's share of the wins on any given turn is relatively flat--although it is higher than that of any other player, there's not much in the way of peaks. Player 2 and Player 3 each have a peak that rises above Player 1's win rate (Player 2 on turn 5 and Player 3 on turn 4) on earlier turns, while all the players level out in games going 10 turns or longer. This suggests that perhaps the advantages Player 1 has from their seating position fade some in long game, but the higher win rate even on turns 8/9 casts some doubt on that as well. Player 4's win rate has a mild bowl shape, with a peak on turn 3 and a peak on turns 10+, but also remains pretty flat throughout the middle turns (even with the dip).



KEY DECKS

In the first iteration, I put Key Decks as every deck with a Pod Occurrence rate over 5%. For this update, I decided to up that cut-off from 5% to 10%. This decision was partly due to the low number of submitted games, as 5 pods for a 5% cutoff seemed extraordinarily low. The decision was also partly out of keeping my own sanity, as there were a total of 23 decks that reached 5 pods. I will likely lower the cutoff back down to 5% once we get more submissions in, but with less than 100 submissions it just seemed too low to be worthwhile to look at in any meaningful way.

The cutoff being 10% was a clean cut at 9 pods (instead of 4.5 being rounded up), and left us with 12 different Key Decks. At the last update for the previous version of the project, there were 12 decks that crossed the 10% Pod Occurrence threshold, so the number is steady. With a similar number of decks cracking over 10% Pod Occurrence, we might wonder where the shares that Sushi Hulk held went, given it's occurrence rate was over 30%. It turns out that there are now 4 decks over 20% Pod Occurrence rate (First Sliver, T&T Midrange Consult, Gitrog, and Kess Consult), up from just two (Sushi and Gitrog).

With the banning of Flash, the Hulk decks have obviously disappeared from the Key decks. But so have a number of other lists: Heliod, Korvold, Tasigur, Curious Control, Inalla, Meta Pod, Tymna/Thrasios Scepter, Yisan and Yuriko did not hit the new requisite 9 pods (Heliod and Korvold did not even hit the 5% line). In addition to most of those lists falling between 5 and 10% Pod Occurrence, so too did Golos Turbo Naus, Kroxa, Divergent Kykar, and Zirda combo. Only Yuriko logged more than a single win of the former Key Decks lists, while Zirda, Golos, and Kykar all sported over 50% win rates in these limited appearances.

Here are the 12 Key Decks, in order of popularity:

1. First Sliver Food Chain (27 pods)
2. Tymna/Thrasios Midrange Consult (20)
3. Gitrog Combo (19)
4. Consultation Kess (18)
5. Najeela Tempo (15)
6. Elsha (14)
7. Kinnan, Bonder Prodigy (13)
8. Brallin/Shabraz (13)
9. Urza Scepter (11)
10. Chulane Aluren (10)
11. Godo Helm (9)
12. Kraum/Tymna Opus Thief (9)

I have included the “match-up” chart from the Key Decks against one another. As a reminder, the numbers in the boxes for each row represent the wins of the deck against the deck listed in each column. However, with so few matchups between Key Decks, and so few submitted games, I will not be going over this information much in this update.

Opposition → Winning Deck ↓	First Sliver Food Chain	T&T Mid. Consult	Gitrog Combo	Consult Kess	Najeela Tempo	Elsha	Kinnan	Brallin/ Shabraz	Chulane	Urza Scepter	Godo Helm	Opus Thief	Total Wins
First Sliver Food Chain		1			2	2				2		2	9
Tymna/Thrasios Midrange Consult	3		1	1	2							2	9
Gitrog Combo		2			1	1		2		1	1		8
Consultation Kess	3	1	4						1	2		1	12
Najeela Tempo		1					1		1				3
Elsha		1						3	1				5
Kinnan, Bonder Prodigy		1	1	1		2		1				1	7
Brallin/Shabraz			1		3								4
Chulane Aluren								2	2				4
Urza Scepter	2				1							1	4
Godo Helm	6								2				8
Kraum/Tymna Opus Thief									1	1	1		3
Total Losses	14	7	7	2	9	5	1	8	8	6	2	7	

Additionally, you can find a link to this picture, so that you can zoom in and see it better, here:
<https://imgur.com/a/Nmg37Pu>

With the limited number of games submitted, I'm going to do my observations a little differently, rather than going deck by deck.

KEY DECKS: WHAT'S OLD

A number of decks return to the Key Decks from before the Flash ban. These include First Sliver Food Chain, Gitrog Monster, Consultation Kess, Najeela Tempo, Elsha, Urza Scepter, Godo Helm, and Opus Thief. Of them, Najeela and Opus Thief both are down a bit on their usage rate; Urza Scepter, Gitrog, and Godo Helm are about the same; and Consult Kess and First Sliver have gained quite a bit in usage rate. This may be due to the low number of submissions, or perhaps it could be a trend relative to where these decks are in the relative rankings of power. Sliver and Kess gaining usage is somewhat unsurprising, as they are both decks that can leverage the Thassa's Oracle + Demonic Consultation package well in their game plans.

Of these decks, most sport strong win rates. Godo won 6 of its 10 games for an absurd 60% win rate (including the only turn 0/1 win of the submissions), while Kess rang in at 44% and Urza Scepter at 36%--all well above the expected win rate of 25%. Nearer to that baseline were Gitrog (26%), First Sliver (26%), and Elsha (21%). However, Najeela (12.5%) and Opus Thief (11%) both fell far short of expectations. Again, nothing too much to read into here due to the small number of games. For example, the 60% win rate for Godo Helm seems unlikely to hold up with more submissions, and many of the control-ish decks (like Opus Thief) fluctuated from update to update quite a bit, so it would be unsurprising to see a change there as well.

KEY DECKS: WHAT'S NEW

The decks making their new appearances in the Key Decks include the deck that is (I assume) the spiritual successor to Sushi Hulk as well as two new Ikor/C20 commanders. The most used new deck is that successor, Tymna/Thrasios Midrange Consult. As a quick note: I made the decision that midrange consult and Scepter were two distinct builds, assuming that Midrange consult would be grinder with cards such as Seedborn Muse, while Scepter lists would still be on the Dramatic Scepter plan, but there is likely enough overlap that the argument could be made they are worth lumping together. T&T Midrange racked up a 22% Pod Occurrence rate, while newcomers Kinnan and Brallin/Shabraz both accounted for 14% Pod Occurrence rates. Chulane rounded out the newcomers with an 11% Pod Occurrence rate (but had 12 appearances in those 10 pods).

In terms of win rate, T&T Midrange paced the newcomers with a 35% win rate, with Kinnan not far behind (31%). Brallin/Shabraz (15%) and Chulane (17%) both fell short of the 25% baseline where we would expect them to be. That actually represents a higher win rate for Chulane, up from 9.5% in the first iteration of the project. Again, not much stock should be put in these numbers being a true representation of our chunk of the format--with so few games, these numbers could fluctuate quite a bit with just a couple more pods won or lost. This is especially

true for Kinnan and Brallin/Shabraz, as they are new enough that continued work on those lists is likely to yield bigger gains (or losses) than work on building more established lists.

IS ORACLE THE BOOGEYMAN?

Can't say. There's just not enough submissions of games here to fully paint a picture of the success, or not, of Thassa's Oracle and Consultation (or the other effects that do what they do). Additionally, I'm not sure that even with more submissions that we could make such a judgment, given that there are more than just Oracle and Consult that do what they do--they just happen to be the most efficient. While we could add in a question about how a game actually ended, I'm hesitant to change the form more than already has been done to keep it easy and simple to use. Besides, even if Oracle was a boogeyman, there's not really anything to be done about it--I can't see a world where it gets offed, especially after Flash was fed into a woodchipper. And that's fine--while we can't be sure, it seems like there's a number of different directions people are taking Oracle strategies, and other non-Oracle strategies that are being utilized. And even if we're quick to call for Oracle's head, I think making such calls would be detrimental to the community at large, at a time when we're in a bit better standing than we previously have been.

PARTING THOUGHTS

As mentioned earlier, there's simply not enough numbers to do much with here. With the number of games I've seen being started through LFG channels on various discords, and guessing that there's plenty being played outside of that, this probably isn't even 1% of the cEDH games that have been played in the last month.

So how do we get better information? Submitting more games! Use this form if you haven't been: <https://forms.gle/LpF8Bnu2pkxocLYH7>