Abua Shi deck build (Jungle Elves)

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Abua Shi's Jungle Elves are a very flexible and strong faction. Flexible because you can easily build one deck that can be used aggressive or defensive and either with commons or champions all depending on the situation and opposition. Key to playing him well is to know when to go for what option and to manage your magic as you can run out easily. This guide will not include second summoner units and mercenaries. Those will probably be added in an update to this post once I have had experience with them. Summoner Wars is a game by Plaid Hat Games. It's available on android / iOS / Vassal.

Basic idea

The basic idea in this deck build is to either assassinate or to draw out aggression from your enemy and then counter attack. The events are especially geared towards assassination and are best used with the high movement / high dice commons. If a more defensive or slow approach is required you can go pretty champion heavy as those can be used for assassination as well and they can duke it out with most other champions due to their range, abilities and costs. His main weakness is that most of his units have relatively low health and high cost. So key to playing him is making sure you position your units so that you don't get bad trades. All in all I consider his deck top-tier because of the high flexibility / pressure you can exert.

Some tactic and combo suggestions:

– All his events except for Chant of Life can be combined insanely effective. This can often result in game winning turns in which you in example play two chants of haste and a chant of deception all at once. Key is to position your walls / units in advance so you can execute these turns.

– Be careful not to waste your more expensive units, especially the Lioneers / Gorilla's. Also having a Lioneer on the board is often a continuous threat which will force the opposition to play more defensively.

– Due to the high mobility you can easily switch your whole army from one side of

the board while the opposition isn't able to match your movement speed. The high cost means you probably shouldn't split up your forces. Having two different fronts can result in you not bringing enough force to where you need it.
– Your events determine your threat level. Once you use them it becomes much easier to play against the Jungle Elves. So make them be really useful.

Deck build (20 / 24 magic for the champions / commons)
– 1 Makeinda Ru
– 1 Miti Mumway
– 1 Shikwa
– 5 Lioness (2 initially)
– 4 Archer (2 initially)
– 3 Lioneer (1 initially)
– 5 Gorilla
– 1 Elephant

Choosing which champions to use is pretty easy as there are only four. And I feel Kadara is clearly the weakest of those in most situations. If I had to switch one out to include her I'd probably take out Shikwa as I feel Makeinda Ru is stronger and most useful against factions that are hard to attack against. Miti Mumway is the MVP in my opinion as he's tough, hard hitting and his Trample is excellent to get in close with a summoner.

For the commons I've selected the one's that serve the assassination theme best and are not too expensive. I dislike the Elephant and Jungle Guard, partly because of their cost / low dice but also because they can't be used with Chant of Haste. The Lioneers are included because of their three dice and high movement. The Lioness and Gorilla cards are to make sure I can build them while still drawing enough of them to do assassinations. Generally I'll build the archers unless there's a specific situation which they can be useful in. Overall I'd say this deck build means you should be summoning your commons in response to the enemy / an opportunity as all the commons I selected have low HP.

Playing the faction

Interestingly enough this is one of the factions I wouldn't necessarily recommend playing too aggressively with in the start unless you are pretty sure to kill one of his units for one of your own. This is because of your low health units and that having some magic to summon extra commons to assassinate with is very effective. I'd recommend maneuvering slowly until you have a nice hand to do an aggressive combo with. During this phase I often kill the archers for magic (ideally after they did an attack first). A nice hand has ~2-3 good events and ~2-3 good commons to summon from an advanced wall (with 3-6 magic). That's perfect for an early assassination. Basically you want your threat radius to extend to the whole board.

Your opponent will especially feel threatened if you haven't played all your Chant of Haste's and you have a decent amount of magic. This can mean an instant champion or 2-3 Lionesses / Gorilla's with 1-2 Chant of Haste's. This will often force them to be very careful with their summoner. Because of this I'd highly recommend cycling through your commons and lesser events pretty fast so you get that magic. If an opportunity for assassination presents itself, you'll want to use opportunities in which you are very likely to actually kill the enemy summoner with the attack (or not be likely to be attacked back). Otherwise you'll be set back economically very substantially. Use Chant of Negation to protect your units after / in these big turns.

If your opponent is playing very defensively you can use your Lionesses or archers aggressively against walls to draw out a response. Makeinda Ru or Miti is perfect for this situation as well. Ideally you'll be responding to your opponents advance / his summons so you can get the first strike on his units. Also, you don't want to have too many attacks going on at once as you can only do two attacks if you use Chant of Growth. If it comes down to the end game you'll be very dependent on how well the trades you made were. I don't consider Abua's end

game to be the best, so I'd prefer to end it before that point.

Match up analysis

I might do a faction by faction analysis eventually, but I'll start this off with a few general observations. Factions that have anti common or anti event cards are very annoying. Also, the same goes for factions that can do assassination combo's on your summoner as Abua Shi only has five health.

First summoner specific cards

Card	Deck	Notes
	Base	Three ranged attack is nothing to scoff at, so he's very useful to have participate in attacks. Actually, as his ability costs one magic to use, you'll want to be attacking with him if it's possible safely. I say safely because his five health means he's not too sturdy. His ability is pretty powerful especially on Shikwa. However consider carefully whether or not the magic is worth the extra damage / chance at a kill as it is a pretty magic intensive ability. I'd recommend using it very selectively.
	Base (x2)	Very useful event to get your heavy hitters in the right spot. Lioneers and champions (Makeinda!) especially are very useful to swap for assassination attempts. It can also combo very well with Chant of Haste and Chant of Negation to make for insane turns. Note that this can also be used defensively to get Abua Shi out of tight / too agressive spots.
	Base (x2)	Another excellent event. Especially with 3 Lionesses or Gorilla's you can very easily setup 6+ dice attacks. Combine two of these for enormous reach. Another useful use is to put it on Miti to have him trample up to 3 x 2 squares.
	Base (x2)	Not a very bad event, but quite a bit worse then the others. I'd definitely build this one if I got it at the wrong time (i.e. first hand with better events in hand). You are basically paying 1 magic per 1 wound. It might even be better to build this most of the time (assuming you are not swimming in magic).

Card	Deck	Notes
	Base (x2)	A very match up dependent event. Against certain factions / boards you probably don't want to play this as it also removes negative effects. It will often be incredibly powerful though. I'd ideally use it to remove defensive abilities or to protect my units from a counter attack after having been aggressive. Also note that it works for newly summoned units.
	Base	Ideally I don't want to play this as all cards will come by eventually anyway ;-). However, this is great to dig out a wall early or to get another combo event card from my deck to make a one turn kill possible. I'd probably build this if I don't need the combo / already have other great combo events in my hand.

Generic cards

Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Base	0	Miti Mumway is very useful for assassination as he can move through commons to attack a summoner and probably survive to do another hit the next turn. Especially with a chant of haste on him it's very hard to stop him and against low health factions you'll be taking out commons at the same time. Having said that, he'll also be able to fight one on one against most champions due to having eight health and three dice. Great champion.
	Base	-1	By not moving her you get a four dice ranged champion which is very good for six magic. And she's great for match ups in which both sides are not attacking as she's an excellent wall killer. Just be sure to flank her as her five health isn't that great. For a nice trick use her together with chant of deception as that doesn't constitute as movement.

Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Base	-2	Her ability is very useful against low health units as you can probably take out two in one turn (especially with Chant of Growth). And you can do four ranged damage in one turn at the cost of one magic which makes Abua's ability worth it against a lot of targets. Still I'd rate her as slightly worse as the other two base champions.
	Base (x8)	1	They are useful for getting in surprise extra dice on a target of choice for a relatively low magic cost (and you can kill your lioness after their attack to break even if you kill your target). This makes going aggressive against the Jungle Elves pretty dangerous. Especially since these are also great for Chant of Haste as that way you can move them out of the way of your other units so that they can move as well. One thing to realize is also that their special ability means that you can move more then three units a turn.
	Base (x6)	1	These are ok'ish. They should primarily be used behind another unit (preferably not a lioness). If you have two melee champions battling it out and two of these behind your champion you can get two extra dice in as they also shoot over your own units. However as they only have one dice your attacks are often better spent on bigger dice units.
	Base (x4)	0	Very useful unit. If you can summon two of these for an assassination you can get 7 dice instantly on a target (+1 for chant of growth). Note however that Chant of Haste doesn't work on them, Chant of Deception however does which can be as dangerous. They are also useful in defense due to their high dice and hight movement. And they'll still be able to be useful afterwards as they'll often get instant kills. Take care using them though as they only have two health and are affected by common specific event.

Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Base (x3)	W	
	Reinf	0	The ideal situation with Kadara is that you can get an attack in against an unit that won't be able to attack you the turn afterwards (melee unit at 4 spaces away). Once summoned however this is relatively easy to prevent most of the time. So I'm not a big fan of hers. I'd only use her if I needed lower cost champions or if I don't want to use Shikwa due to the magic cost.
	Reinf (x5)	0	I don't like this one too much as his surprise factor will generally only help you one turn (maximum of two dice on a target). Without it he's a 4-health champion for 4 magic that does 2 damage melee or 1 ranged (and is affected by common spells). Which feels underwhelming for the cost. So if you use this guy, I'd recommend packing just one for the surprise or mind games if he ends up in your discard pile.
	Reinf (x5)	0	Note that you can't use Chant of Haste on this common either. His Trample ability is pretty ok as you can both do damage with Trample and attack. I'd recommend using it defensively mostly (or you'll get your 3 magic unit killed). Unless ofcourse he's intended for a cheap assassination shot. Not the best of the commons in my opinion.

Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Reinf (x5)	0	This is easily the most controversial common in the whole deck. Statistically speaking in terms of probable damage output it's incredible value for it's cost, so I definitely consider it as one of the best commons. Interestingly enough it's best to use CoG on it if you're attacking 2 health units or 4 and higher health units. For 3 health units the probable chance to kill it actually goes down. Also note that you can use the two attacks on separate targets so it's very good against two 1 or 2 health commons. Also, it works with Chant of Haste, so you can instantly put three of these next to an enemy summoner in some situations. Very versatile common. Just be careful to not overestimate it as it doesn't survive very well.

* SSSCF = Super Simple Summoning cost formula = attack value + base health + 1 if ranged - (2 if common OR -3 if champion) - magic cost. I haven't included the worth of the ability as that's generally controversial.

References

– All Jungle Elves cards (especially strategy section and comments are useful)

– A Doug’s Guide To Summoner Wars podcast (strategy discussion and community news)

– Mythacle Battleplan for Summoner Wars (deck builder)