

Selundar deck build (Shadow Elves)

2015/11/07

Selundar's Shadow Elves are one of the weaker factions in the game. However they can be quite enjoyable as they allow for some very aggressive play (and a very pretty color for the faction). The main reason I feel they are relatively weak is that they can't deal well with heavy turtling. This guide will go into more detail on how to play them well. It will not include mercenaries for now or Alliances units. 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

This is another faction with which you want to be aggressive. Except for Taliya and Into Darkness you lack the tools to gain a magic advantage. Luckily all your other events and a lot of your commons (Hunters especially) are well suited to assaults. Still, because your units generally are also low health you can't really be trading units one on one (unless you have Shadows up), so you need to get an real advantage with your aggression. This is the big weakness of the faction, against a good opponent they will build a lot of magic to try to get a quick champion / more walls out and they will try to keep their summoner safe against your tricks.



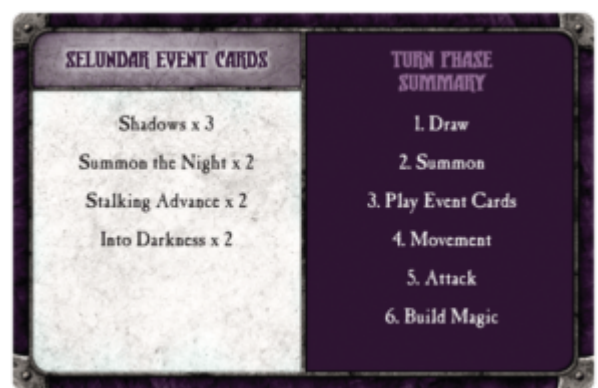
Your level of aggression should depend strongly on your opposition / the starting position. In some situations it's better to quickly build towards a champion (Hydrake probably) and use that as a mobile summoning spot for your aggression. Going fully defensive is possible, especially with your summoner power and Hydrake, but in most matchups that's a recipe for losing slowly but surely. All in all, I feel Selundar is below average in terms of strength (I'd rank him as better than the Cave Goblins but worse than pretty much all other aggressive factions). He lacks an answer to strong economic advantages, lacks ways to remove or go past early walls / champions and has too many low health commons.

Basic tactic and combo suggestions:

- Stalking Advance and Summon the Night combo well with Selundar's ability. Use these to be way more aggressive with your summoner and other ranged units.
- The same goes for Into Darkness (to remove blockers) and Stalking Advance / units with extra movement. This can also be used to do wall blocking. Into Darkness its main weakness is that it can't handle commons that cost three magic.
- Hunters are incredible at getting a few extra dice in against a summoner as they can be summoned right next to whatever unit is attacking (or wall block).

Deck build (19 / 18 magic for the champions / commons)

- 1 Hydrake
- 1 Melek
- 1 Kuldrid
- 6 Swordsman (3 initially)
- 3 Ranger (2 initially)
- 2 Scout (1 initially)
- 5 Hunter (I'd include a 6th on the app, leaving out a Ranger)
- 2 Blade Master



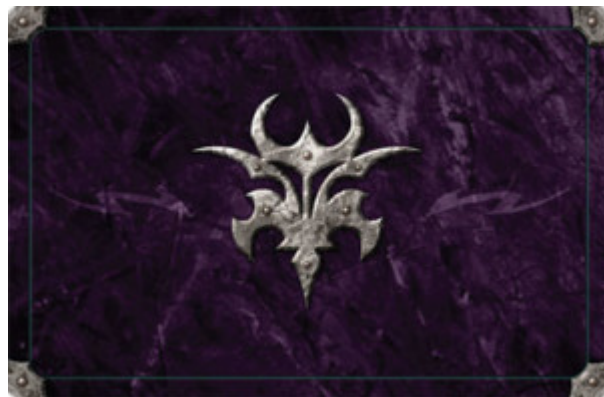
Choosing the right champions is not that easy. I really like Hydrake for being a big summoning spot, but other than that he doesn't fit that well in an aggressive oriented deck due to his high cost. I still included him though. The other two champions I ended up including are Melek and Kuldrid. Melek and Xaserbane kinda fit a similar purpose and I feel Melek is the stronger one as he has one more health and the better ability. I've included Kuldrid mostly as a finisher and because he has three ranged dice. His ability is very annoying but I feel the deck really needs his strong ranged attack. I might swap him out for Xaserbane (for an extra finisher / alternative to Melek) or Taliya (one less attack dice for a better ability) if I get too annoyed by him.

Common wise I felt it was easier. The Sworsdman are a very solid common and I dislike the Scouts (Cannon Fodder) and Rangers (too costly to use its ability / too weak). This leaves the Blade Masters and the Hunter's. The Hunters are quite expensive for their health (use a Swordsman if you just need two quick attack dice), however they are ideal for assassination's due to you being able to summon

them anywhere next to your units. I've also included the Blade Master, but I think I'll mostly build them unless a specific situation appears in which I need to attack two different one health commons close to each other (or if I need its two health).

Playing the faction

This is a faction with which you might want to go first. One reason can be that you'd otherwise lose too many commons at once, another is to use them aggressively or to kill them off yourself instead. Your starting position isn't that good; especially the bottom-left Ranger and Selundar are too far from the action. And two of your



Swordsmen are pretty likely to quickly get killed. In general I'd recommend killing off some of your own commons (basically anything but the Swordsmen). Partly because of Into Darkness, partly because a champion is a better summoning spot for your hunters, partly because your units are so fragile and finally because it costs more movement turns to move some of your units in a good position then to summon new, better positioned units.

Remember that if you draw a Shadows you can pretty safely be very aggressive with your units. Also, any early reaction you can force out (i.e. an extra common summoned) is a step towards being able to use Into Darkness / causes it to probably take longer for a champion to come out. Because of this same reason I wouldn't summon new units unless it's a champion / really accomplishes something useful. Definitely build magic aggressively so you can summon (or threaten to summon) a champion or hunter's. And it's because you don't really want to be attacking when all three walls are already up. Selundar should also be going towards the front line's, but just like with Krusk you don't want to be too exposed unless it's to do a safe four dice attack or an assassination. Finally, always watch out for those assassination opportunities, especially in the early game against an opponent killing his own units / with not that many walls yet.

Towards the mid game an ideal scenario would be getting Hydrake out or getting an opportunity to throw a lot of dice on a summoner. Try not to get Hydrake stuck one on one with an enemy unit, but ideally he'll get behind the enemy walls while still exposing only one flank. That way you can use him as a mobile summoning spot for a








while and either overwhelm the walls or get a two-pronged assault going on the summoner. Stalking Advance, Summon the Night and Into Darkness are your key events in this stage to make stuff happen in general. Try not to use these needlessly / give away that you were forced to build them as a Shadow Elf player is much more predictable once these have been played / built. Economically the only real way to outlast your opponent is to be aggressive and because of that manage to get better trades off (for instance forcing him to summon a champion and instant killing that from three directions).


In an end game situation your units are pretty ok. Naturally if you still have some of your events left, Selundar can do a huge amount of damage with his ability. Other than that there are no really big advantages you can capitalize on with these champions / common's. Also don't be too afraid to build a champion with this faction, you are very likely to not get all three out as you also need the Hunters / Swordsman to assassinate.

Match up analysis





I might do a faction by faction analysis eventually, but I'll start this off with a few general observations. Watch out for factions that can turtle really well. Also factions with high health commons that cost more than two magic are really obnoxious as you can't use Into Darkness on them.






First summoner specific cards



Card	Deck	Notes
	Base	His ability is pretty powerful if you are able to use it. Getting four dice is very useful and he has seven health so he can survive a bit of damage. And because he's ranged he can draw in enemies by hitting them from range. You can use his events to make sure you can actually use his ability effectively. Make sure to make use of him as the Shadow Elves can't afford it to have him hang back too much.
	Base (x3)	This event is generally worth it as you are paying 1 magic to get 1 magic and you are denying your opponent 1 magic. This means you can be a bit more aggressive with your units. However, make sure you are accomplishing something with the units you lose as you only have three of these events and it is costing units on the board. Note that this event allows you to gain magic in the opponent's turn, which can be unexpected.
	Base (x2)	Another very valuable combo event to use while assassinating / attacking. Especially with ranged units as your enemy might not be able to get in range to hit them adjacently. It can also be used defensively to have a few weaker units attack a more powerful one from a distance. In general you'll not want to build this one.
	Base (x2)	This is a pretty powerful event. Especially if you can discard two two magic commons. It costs one magic so it's even cost effective to use to remove one common. It's especially useful to remove defenders when assassinating. Do remember that you don't get the magic, so if you can kill a common instead that can be preferable. The other drawback is that you need to have fewer units, which can be hard to accomplish.
	Base (x2)	Pretty self explanatory. Interesting is that there's no limit on which units or how many units, so all your units can move one. Also, you can combine this with a second Stalking Advance or an Into Darkness to first remove some blockers. All this combined means it needs you to set up the right circumstance for it to be useful. This is one of those events for which the threat is bigger than the execution, so if you have to build it, try to keep that hidden.

Card	Deck	Notes
	Base (x3)	

Generic cards

Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Base		Hydrake is the powerhouse of the Shadow Elves. He's very expensive but is very effective against multiple units diagonal to each other (for instance when they are attacking Hydrake). And you can use Stalking Advance to get into position. One of his best use though in my opinion as a potential summoning spot for Hunters (as he won't die fast). One on one against other champion's he's effective, but not very cost efficient.
	Base		An assassination oriented champion as you can move four squares and hit for three damage. He's also effective to be used in defense if you need a lot of dice on a target fast (and thus can't be counter attacked too easily). Beware of him dying instantly, so use him for the killing blow on something big / to clean up commons safely. Also: He loves Summon the Night and Stalking Advance.
	Base		This champion is somewhat underwhelming. Mostly because she only has three health, two attack dice and her ability isn't that useful in surviving if attacked by two units at once. Simply too fragile for her cost. The only situation in which she can be effective if there's only one avenue of attack.
	Base (x6)		As pretty much all commons with two attack die for one magic: Great common. His default three movement makes this an extremely versatile unit to be used if you need a quick two dice somewhere. Together with Stalking Advance these can get far. Just don't lose too many of them needlessly.

Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Base (x6)		I don't like this common too much. Mostly because of the one magic cost associated with the extra attack. You basically get another one die thrown for one magic. And it's ability won't trigger that often anyway. Do note that you are getting another attack in your turn by paying that magic (and can naturally hit from an unexpected direction). And you can kill your own units for the hit.
	Base (x6)		Another common that I don't like too much. Getting four or five moves often isn't that useful if those units can only attack three times in a turn. The only real use I'd see for them is an overwhelming advance in which you are trying to block off summoning spots quickly. If you are not in that situation you'll probably not be able to get their ability to trigger.
	Reinf		Interesting champion. She has a potentially devastatingly strong ability as commons that are played are often very strong and will cost magic to resummon. And she can recycle your own commons after they have attacked (for instance scouts or swordsmen). Devastating against the Filth commons.
	Reinf		Another interesting champion. Nice statline with three ranged attack and decently costed. His ability is worrisome though as you are often not able to destroy an unit in a turn with Kuldrid and you might quickly end up paying a lot for him. Another champion you really want to use very offensively therefore.
	Reinf		Very nice champion due to his great movement and three attack. Basically a Lioneer with more health. Also note the combination possibilities with Stalking Advance.

Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Reinf (x5)		It's key ability is that it can attack two different targets in one turn. Sadly due to it's one attack it's pretty underwhelming as a common. Generally you'll want to hit one target for two dice instead of two for one. And if so, you're better off using cheaper units that already do that. I don't really like them much as Hunter summoning spots as they die too quickly.
	Reinf (x5)		Next to the Swordsman easily the best common the Shadow Elves have. The ability to summon next to another Shadow Elves unit is very useful. Generally for offense, but it can also be nice in defense if your initial wall got taken down. Just make sure you only use them for assassinating something / or if they are well protected as they die very quickly.

* SSCF = Secret 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 Shadow Elves cards (especially strategy section and comments are useful)
- Mythacle Battleplan for Summoner Wars (deck builder)