

# Ret-Talus vs Abua Shi

2015/09/27

This is a very interesting match-up as the Jungle Elves should be played aggressively / assassination oriented and Ret-Talus is vulnerable to that and best played more defensively. On android / iOS the statistics are heavily in favor of the Jungle Elves (2 to 1). The reason for that is in my opinion that the Jungle Elves have better events, commons and champions for fighting and assassinating (a Fallen Kingdom champion for instance can easily get killed in one turn by the Jungle Elves). The only thing Ret-Talus has going for him are his cheaper champions and potential economic advantage. In this play through I'll describe my deck build, basic strategy and how the individual turns went. At the end there'll be an overview of the game and a conclusion. Both decks have no mercenaries or second summoner units in them. Summoner Wars is a game by Plaid Hat Games.

## **My thoughts going in to this match-up**

First of all I have to avoid being assassinated, so I can't be too aggressive with Ret-Talus himself. Secondly I want to extend the game as much as possible as a longer game will allow me to make the most out of my events / Raise the Dead. If I can manage that I'll probably have a good chance of winning as economically Ret-Talus will beat Abua Shi. Thirdly I want to avoid taking wounds on my summoner at all if possible so I can at least use one of my Forced Summons. And finally my commons aren't awful in this match-up as the Jungle Elves units are pretty low health and costly, so they can't afford to one for one trade common units. Because of all this my basic strategy will be to keep back, block off assassination route's with my units / walls and try to make economic use of my events and commons. If that works, this will be a longer game which I can win unless the dice favor him. His strategy, in my opinion, should be to try to set up assassination options initially by applying some pressure with his first commons (losing one for 1-2 wounds on my summoner is completely worth it as Forced Summon is worth 4 magic. If I'm still alive after that, he should finish me off with his champions / summoner. Most worrisome to me are his champions, especially Miti Mumway as the base Fallen Kingdom only has its champions to do a decent amount of damage. And even those don't have too many hit points.

Deck Turn 1 Turn 2 Turn 3 Turn 4 Turn 5 Turn 6 Turn 7 Turn 8 Turn 9 Turn 10 Turn 11 Turn 12 Turn 13 Turn 14 Turn 15 Turn 16 Conclusion



The starting setup. I'm first.

### Deck build

- 1 Elut-Bal
- 1 Anica
- 1 Skhull
- 3 Skeletal Archer (2 initially)
- 1 Reaper (1 initially)
- 4 Zombie Warrior (1 initially)
- 5 Phantom
- 4 Cultist
- 1 Reaver



I like going second as Fallen Kingdom as it can allow you to immediately pull off a Elut-Bal combination with all your first units (and a possible magic drain as well). This time I'm not displeased to go first though as him going first could have enabled him to do an extremely aggressive opening turn (hitting all three of my right side units with the Lioneer, Abua Shi and the Lioness). It's a bit risky, but I don't think it's a bad move. Anyway, for my turn I was troubled with how to go about this. I don't want him to be able to hit Ret-Talus from the left side, so that Archer there remains alive / there. Secondly I would like to kill that Lioness, but I don't want my Zombie Warrior to get killed by Abua Shi. Because of that I decided on moving my archer in front of the Zombie warrior and moving it back one square. In retrospect moving it back one more might have been better as he can set up an Abua Shi / Archer chain which might kill both my units. If the Zombie warrior is one more square backwards it's much more risky for Abua Shi. He can also still move the Lioneer forward, but I only have two moves, so not much I can do about that. At least I kill the Lioness, so that's a good dice throwing start!







I was pretty happy with my opponent's turn. He didn't go full on aggressive and only took out the Skeletal Archer. And it didn't even go to his magic pile! Nice. I think he should have done the more aggressive move here as he had a good chance of taking out both units (although a Forced Summon + a champion would have been 2-3 potential wounds on Abua Shi). Note that he also killed one of his archers, which is a good sign as apparently he won't be going full on aggressive (it does prevent a possible magic drain, which is why he probably did it). The most worrisome thing of his turn was the wall on the right side, I need to do something about that. Here's where I make one of the defining moves of the game; I place a wall one square to the left and below his wall and place my Reaper in front of it. This creates a choke point to the left of my wall and if he hits my wall with a Lioneer from the top I threaten to kill it from the left (also note that he can't use both the Lioneer and Abua Shi on it in the same turn). I move the zombie warrior so he can't get hit as easily and I feel the right side is now safest, so Ret-Talus goes there as well. I'm not unhappy with my draw as the two Phantom's can get built instantly (can summon them later anyway) and having Skhull is great as long as that Lioneer is running around.



Sadly I'm missing one screenshot here (the only missing one in this game). If I recall correctly he killed his second archer and moved his Lioneer in for the

attack on the wall. A good move in my opinion as the archer is not that useful anymore (killing the Lioness might also be interesting as the archer can eventually ping my wall from range). Secondly he moved his Lioness to attack my wall, which is also a good move. Yes, I can summon a champion to kill it, but I might not even kill it and he can retaliate with both Abua Shi and the Lioness / Lioness. I don't want that to happen. In my turn I got a Magic Drain. After some consideration I decided to Dark Sacrifice my Zombie Warrior and Skeletal Archer (which went to my discard pile I think) so that I could Magic Drain. That's why I suddenly jump up to 8 magic from 3 magic (2 from magic drain, 1 from the zombie and 2 from building 2 cards). What I'm hoping to happen is that he'll move his Lioness to the left of my wall so I can more safely take it out (with possibly 2 champions if I get a forced summon). Note: As he only has 1 magic, the only thing I have to worry about is the Lioness with Chant of Deception, so Ret-Talus is safe.



I think he should have killed his Lioness here, it's not doing anything and he does have 2 magic I could have magic drained here. I do think he made the right move of just continuing to hit my wall (and he's 6 out of 6 so far) as he'll kill it eventually. It's not too bad though as it gives me the time I wanted to fish for my Forced Summon's and start gaining the economical edge with those and Magic Drain. Because of that my move here was pretty straight forward. I built both of



the commons and didn't do much else. I did consider summoning the Cultist and hitting the Lioneer but I decided against it as I want to summon as few 2 cost units normally as possible (as I can summon it slightly cheaper with Raise the Dead later). It might also have been a decent move though. I'm hoping he will stay in this position and kill my wall next turn as that will open up his Lioneer to an attack from below as well.



Darn. He didn't kill my wall. Maybe he should have let Abua Shi hit the wall and move the Lioneer back to the left. Not sure. He did kill his Lioness now, so we're on parity with units again and he's up to 4 magic (2 potential gorilla's). Luckily he's not building too many cards (which I feel is a slight mistake, he should at least threaten me with a bit more magic built up). I did consider a double gorilla play with two chant of haste's here, but considering he didn't build too many

cards I figured it'd be extremely unlikely so I didn't move Ret-Talus into the corner. I explicitly didn't kill my wall as that would leave me open to all kind of combo's and I don't feel it's worth it to summon another unit just to get that one magic. Ideally he'll once again leave his Lioneer in the same spot and I'll be able to kill it. My turn was pretty boring; build the two commons and attack his wall; so now I'm up to 12 magic. I'm pretty much fishing for my Forced Summons.



The wall dies. He makes the correct move of doing the honors with Abua Shi instead of the Lioneer (I wonder if moving it behind his own wall would have been better, hmmm). He also builds up to six magic, so now I have to really watch out for all kinds of combinations (also with Shikwa and Makeinda Ru). Basically I can't do nothing any longer, I need to make a move. Sadly I still didn't draw my Forced Summons (and I can't set up a good kill on the Lioneer anyway) so I decide this is a good opportunity to use my first Legions of the Dead. I can always



Dark Sacrifice these units to heal one of my champions in the future / do my second Magic Drain. I decide on the set-up you can see in the second screenshot as ideal. It even protects (mostly) from a possible Jungle Guard that might be worth it for him here as he can score two hits on Ret-Talus with it. He could have still played it though, but I would have strong counter play with 10 magic and 2 champions in hand. I explicitly didn't move Ret-Talus one further because of the Jungle Guard option and he might even just kill his own wall to get hits on me.



I was pretty puzzled with this play at the time. It's very defensive and allows me at least one attack on his summoner with not much cost to me. However, considering the amount of magic I'm floating it's understandable. A very aggressive play would probably have been economic suicide. This is why I think I'm in a better position here, I now have the tools to start pressuring the Jungle Elves and he can no longer very easily assassinate my summoner (and it still has



full life!). I decide to continue the slow pressure game (and as all my champions are mêlée, I can't be too aggressive anyway). I place the wall above and to the right of my first wall, there by recreating the earlier chokepoint (and blocking it off will allow me to hit that unit from the left). Secondly I move the Reaper up to score one hit on his summoner and then kill it from behind with the Skeletal Archer. Sadly I miss on the Summoner, oh well. And I'm back up to 12 magic.



Interesting move. I was kind of expecting the Lioneer move to the left. I'm not too worried about it coming down as it would get easily killed (or I can just put the Zombie Warrior in front of it to draw it in even further for the kill). Him moving Abua Shi back as well, invites me to move my units forward. I am kind of expecting a Chant of Deception by this point as Abua Shi is pretty alone there and if I summon two or three champions he probably needs to get the hell away from where he is. Note: He's still at 6 magic, so I'm not worried about Miti Mumway trampling over my units (another reason he should definitely be at 8 by now). I'm a bit annoyed I still haven't gotten a Forced Summon, but I can probably afford to



summon one champion off-hand and potentially not use one Forced Summon (or use it instead of Elut-Bal's ability). So I do that. This allows me to kill the wall and still protect Skhull by putting the Skeletal archer in front of him. Makeinda Ru or Shikwa hitting me from the left is troublesome, but I figure I can then hit it with at least 2 champions and use dark sacrifice to potentially heal Skhull (and he can't use Chant of Growth with only 6 magic). And both his Lioneer and Summoner aren't in a good position to him being able to kill Skhull. One questionable move I did here was build one of my Dark Sacrifices, it might have been better to hold on to that one.



He uses Chant of Deception to move Abua Shi to the other side. This was kinda expected by now, but still troublesome. All my units are not at that side of the map which means it's much harder to pressure him and still protect the flanks of my champions. And I prefer not to summon non-champions off of my own walls as it's generally better to use Legion of the Dead / Dark Sacrifice. Still I got a wall of his in return for one of mine, so I'm still pleased. I did finally get the Forced Summons I was looking for so I decide it's time to summon a second champion. This will allow me to hit his last wall with both my champions (and I can use the



Skeletal archer to take a shot at the Lioneer). A big consideration here was also that he can't play Makeinda Ru effectively and both my champions can only be attacked from one side (unless he does a crazy double gorilla + chant of haste play, in which case I'm pretty ok with the amount of resources he spent). That's also why I didn't summon any unit below Skhull. I did decide to keep the Cultist in my hand to potentially be able to summon it if he goes on Skhull (and he can't effectively move commons next to Skhull anyway). Note that I'm threatening to kill his wall the next turn if I get Elut-Bal in hand.



He finally makes his move! Until now he had only played the one card (Chant of Deception) and still had 15 cards in his draw pile against only 6 in my draw pile. If I recall correctly he didn't use Chant of Growth on the Gorilla (which is probably the right call as it increases the potential amount of damage) and the Skeletal Archer went to my discard pile (:)). Luckily his Gorilla misses mostly and I only get one hit on Anica. Still, good set-up from him. Now the dice will start determining whether I can solidify my advantage. I was a bit disappointed I didn't draw Elut-Bal here as I could have killed his wall then (I'd need 6 out of 9). I did



draw my second magic drain which could be useful for when he finally summons his first champion. My next move was pretty calculated. I don't want him to have two units hitting any one of my champions, so I don't hit the Gorilla from both sides (counting on Skhull to kill it). I also summon a Phantom to block off the bottom summoning point so Skhull won't get hit from behind. I think my move was correct as it's otherwise too easy to kill Anica with just the Lioneer and one of Shikwa / Makeinda Ru (+ Chant of Growth if I don't kill the Gorilla with Anica). Sadly Skhull doesn't kill the Gorilla though :(. As I really want Elut-Bal, I build both commons.



Shikwa! I think he once again placed his units well. Because there are only two units attacking he can boost one of them with Chant of Growth. He got 3 out of 4 with his Gorilla and 2 out of 4 with Shikwa. That means it's time to use the Dark Sacrifice. Sadly I still can't easily flank his units due to him being able to hit that flanking unit from range (and with his Lioneer). However, due to the Gorilla surviving I can now use Dark Sacrifice to also do a Magic Drain (removing the threat of a chant of growth next turn!). This thereby came a huge combo turn:

- Dark Sacrifice to remove four of my units and heal Anica for three and Skhull



for one (I go up to 10 magic).

- Magic Drain (as I have 3 units to his 4). This leaves him at zero magic (I go up to 12 magic).

- Use Forced Summon to summon Elut-Bal for 2 magic (I go down to 10 magic).

My attacking was pretty good; the Gorilla finally died (not draining any magic though) and Skhull hit 2 out of 3 and Elut-Bal 3 out of 4. And I'm back at 11 magic to use for Legions of the Dead and such. The only mistake I feel I made is that I probably shouldn't have moved Ret-Talus up so far. I did it to be able to do an aggressive Legions of the Dead, but it complicated matters in the next turn.



A chant of negation. Not extreme useful, but it does cause problems for Ret-Talus as he can't do a Legions of the Dead (I should have anticipated that). Here my Ret-Talus positioning hurts a bit as I need to keep him safe from above (now a dead Anica means a shot from Abua Shi on Ret-Talus which is unacceptable). I also need to either kill that wall or keep blocking it off as otherwise Ret-Talus dies. In the end I decide to attack Shikwa with Elut-Bal (as killing Shikwa is



\*very\* useful as he won't be able to throw four dice next turn). Secondly I retreat with Ret-Talus and move Skhull to make 100% sure he can't get a hit in on Ret-Talus (not even with an archer). This does give him the potential chance to kill two of my champions next turn though. If I didn't have to move Ret-Talus I probably would have put Skhull in front to increase the chance of killing the Lioneer. In the end I hit on the more important target; Shikwa dies and I miss on the Lioneer leaving my opponent with a fighting chance. The alternate move here would have been to go for the wall, I didn't choose to go that route because he only has three magic, so can't summon too much threatening stuff.



He went for his (in my opinion) biggest chance. He positioned his units so he could kill off both Skhull and Anica in one turn. And he summoned a Gorilla to potentially put 4 wounds on Elut-Bal. If any of that had succeeded as planned I would have been in a much, much worse position. Which shows how important one less than optimal move with your summoner can be. Luckily he missed with his Gorilla and only managed to kill Anica with Abua Shi meaning I'm in a won position as long as I don't get myself assassinated. Finally he placed his third wall



to protect his Lioneer from Ret-Talus. I'm not sure I agree on the placement as it's basically an all-in once the other wall dies, but I can understand the reasoning (I need to block it). He is also building magic extremely fast now though, which is a good move as he needs to summon more stuff. I was mostly worried he was building up towards Miti Mumway (I had seen Makeinda Ru in the discard pile by now) which was in my opinion the main chance he still had.

For my turn this was pretty interesting. I need to not allow a Jungle Guard or an archer a shot at Ret-Talus. And I want to Legions of the Dead one spot above my current position so I can block off two wall summoning spots with no movement. This pretty much meant I had to move Ret-Talus, Skhull and Elut-Bal as shown in the second screenshot. I also summoned a Reaver to prevent a possible Jungle Guard win. Skhull and Elut-Bal killed both his commons :).





Not much he can do now. His gorilla failed on the reaver and his archer failed on the Cultist (which I didn't care about either way as it would have killed the archer as well). The only thing I need to worry about now is keeping Ret-Talus safe from his last card. I figured the best way to do that would be to block off his last summoning spot on the right wall and kill his gorilla and his first wall. Which all succeeded leaving him with no summoning spots. Note: His Chant of Haste's were also in his discard pile for a while as otherwise he could have hasted his archer for the kill.





Abua Shi kills Skhull, but that's not important anymore. He can't summon units so as soon as the Archer is dead it's just Abua Shi versus the Fallen Kingdom army. I decide to go directly for the kill and start hitting Abua Shi.





The archer killed itself on the cultist. I kill Abua Shi with Elut-Bal and that's game. Note: His last champion was Kadara and it was also built, so there was never a realistic threat of Miti Mumway.

I am pretty happy with how this game went. I definitely made some mistakes, but overall I think I used the economic power of the Fallen Kingdom pretty optimally. It goes to show in my opinion that if you don't pressure the Fallen Kingdom with an economically inferior faction you are asking for trouble. In that regard they become pretty powerful among the first summoners. There was still one point in the game in which it could have swung back his way. I probably could have played that part slightly better, but still I forced him into a situation in which he pretty much had to roll quite good or he'd lose. I think that's often the best you can do in Summoner Wars; force your opponent to continually roll to survive and if he does roll well every time, then it's just bad luck. His play was pretty interesting in my opinion (especially the moving all units to the other side instead of engaging and great position of units), but just not using the Jungle Elves advantages enough. Only one Chant of Negation and Deception were played. Also a Miti Mumway with two Chant of Health's could have been a huge problem for the Fallen Kingdom; not including that champion in this match-up was a big mistake in my opinion.

### Lessons learnt

- My basic strategy against the Jungle Elves was in my opinion the right one. Keep them from using their events / champions too advantageously and focus on



gaining an economic lead. And naturally keep your summoner safe. Wall placement was crucial in this regard.

- Thinking ahead 1, 2 or 3 turns is very crucial. Not doing that enough is something that almost cost me the game in 1-2 situations. Especially with the limit of three moves per turn.

- Not summoning from walls to gain maximum economic advantage is great. However, nearing the end of the game this does leave you with more limited options as you can basically only summon next to your summoner. This makes you more predictable and could have been used to flank my champions from the left side (as I couldn't summon good units from my walls).

## Turn overview



Screensho  
t\_2015-01-  
28-21-01-3  
0



Screensho  
t\_2015-01-  
28-23-04-2  
4



Screensho  
t\_2015-01-  
31-20-18-4  
2



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
01-00-39-0  
1



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
01-21-59-4  
6



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
07-00-02-4  
5



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
07-01-04-5  
9



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
07-13-30-1  
6



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
07-13-47-1  
4



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
07-14-45-2  
8



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
07-15-00-2



0



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
07-16-07-4

2



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
08-00-35-2

9



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
08-18-51-4

4



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
08-19-37-5

3



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
09-00-01-1

8



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
11-22-32-2

7



Screensho

t\_2015-02-  
13-01-24-4  
1



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
13-14-04-0  
7



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
13-19-54-3  
2



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
13-20-11-0  
0



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
13-21-44-1  
9



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
13-22-18-0  
5



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
13-22-57-4  
9





Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
13-23-42-5  
4



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
14-00-13-2  
9



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
14-00-43-5  
9



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
14-10-35-3  
6



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
14-10-40-0  
6



Screensho  
t\_2015-02-  
14-10-43-3  
6