Cosmic Encounter

Updated May 06, 2009

Following are the frequently asked questions, errata, and clarifications for the *Cosmic Encounter* board game. Material that is new to this version of the FAQ is highlighted in red.

Errata and Clarifications

Losing Alien Powers

A player loses his or her alien power whenever he or she has fewer than three home colonies (two in a four planet game) rather than basing this on the number of home colonies a player has lost.

Macron Alien Power

Macron should read "You have the power of Mass. When you are the offense, use this power before launching in an encounter. When you are an ally, use this power after allies are invited. If you are the offense or an ally, you may only send one ship into the encounter.

As a main player or an ally, use this power after cards are revealed. Each of your ships adds 4 to your side's total in the encounter instead of 1.

When collecting compensation or rewards, each of your ships is worth two ships."

This clarifies that Macron may be zapped either when sending ships into the encounter (to allow him to send up to 4 ships worth 1 each) or after cards are revealed (in which case he's just out of luck).

Spiff Alien Power

Spiff should read "...if both players revealed attack cards and you lose the encounter by 10 or more" rather than "...if both players revealed attack cards and your total was 10 or more less than the defense's". This allows Spiff to still use his power in encounters where the low total wins, as it originally did.

Warrior Alien Power

Warrior's first paragraph should read "You have the power of Mastery. After an encounter in which you were a main player, add one token to this sheet if you won that encounter (or made a deal during it) or two tokens if you lost that encounter (or failed to make a deal during it). In either case, add one extra token if playing with four planets per player." This allows Warrior to collect tokens even if his power was zapped during the encounter.

Mind Flare

The wild flare should read, "Whenever another player draws a card from the deck, you may use this flare. For the rest of this encounter, each time that player must draw a card from the deck, you may draw it instead, look at it, and then give it to him or her. You may not share this information with the other players."

Reincarnator Flare

The wild flare should read, "After another player besides the Reincarnator loses an encounter or fails to make a deal, you may give this flare to that player. Immediately after the end of this encounter, that player must discard his or her current power and draw a new one. Aliens with Game Setup text or that are not allowed in the current game should be discarded and the player allowed to draw again."

General Questions

Q: What is a "challenge"?

A: "Challenge" is an old term for "encounter" that slipped through in a couple of places.

Q: What is the "cone"?

A: "Cone" is an old term for the "hyperspace gate" that slipped through in a couple of places.

Q: What happens if a player needs to draw a new hand and both the cosmic deck and discard pile are empty?

A: Cosmic Quake! Every player discards his or her hand, and the discard pile is shuffled to make a new deck, then 8 cards are dealt to each player.

Q: When should alert levels on aliens be mixed?

A: It is recommended that players start with green aliens only with no flares when first playing, then add flares. Play a couple of games, then introduce yellows to the green alert. Play a few more games with those, then add the red level aliens. The alert level is not how powerful they are, but how experienced your group should be to include them in the game.

Q: Do I receive compensation if my ships do not go to the warp (because I am the Zombie or because I lost to the Void, for instance)?

A: No. You only receive compensation for ships you lose to the warp.

Q: What cards can be played when you have a lien on your hand (that is, someone is trying to collect compensation from you)?

A: Any cards that may legally be played before compensation is taken may be played. So, you could play a reinforcement card to get it out of your hand before compensation is taken, for instance.

Q: Can you play reinforcements on your side if you played an attack, but your opponent played a negotiate?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there a difference between winning an encounter and having a successful encounter?

A: No.

Q: After you play a flare, at what point does it re-enter your hand?

A: Immediately after resolving its effect. So, for instance, when playing the Oracle Wild flare, you play the flare faceup in front of you, mix your hands together, get your new hand at random from the mixed cards, and then return the Oracle flare to your hand (since its effect is now finished).

Q: How does Mobius Tubes work if you have no planets?

A: Your ships exit the warp, then any ships that have no colony to return to are returned to the warp. If you are the offense, you may place up to four of your ships in the hyperspace gate before the others are lost to the warp.

Q: What is the different between the Start Turn phase and the Regroup phase?

A: The Start Turn phase only occurs once at the start of a player's turn and precedes that player's first regroup phase. The regroup phase occurs at the start of each of a player's encounters, so potentially it can happen twice per turn.

Q: What order do cards go into the discard pile? Normally this doesn't matter, but the Fido flare was in the game, and it calls on forcing a player to draw the top card of the discard pile... several times the two encounter cards hitting the pile were very different (the 40 and a Negotiate went in one time).

A: The defense's card goes on top.

Q: Can CE be played with only 2 players?

A: There is no official 2 player variant for the current edition yet. There are existing 2 player rules for the Eon edition that can be found on the web. We will be releasing official 2 player rules for the current edition as soon as we get a chance.

Q: When you draw your own color from the destiny pile, and you want to automatically establish a colony on your planet, do you go through all of the challenge phases? Do you go through any of them past "destiny"?

A: No.

Q: If you have no ships outside the encounter, can you still invoke effects that require sacrificing a ship from outside the encounter (such as Wild Void) by sacrificing one that's in it?

A: No.

Q: If a flare that can be played at any time changes hands, can it be used a second time in the encounter by the new owner?

A: No. Any given flare may only be played once per encounter.

Q: If you must lose ships that aren't in the current encounter (such as Grudge), what happens if you have no ships outside the encounter?

A: You lose nothing.

Q: Is it allowable to say what is in your hand? The rules explicitly say you can't show your hand to anyone, but it's vague on the telling. During a deal, for instance, can you say, "I'll give you a Negotiate and an Attack 10" as part of the negotiations? Can you lie?

A: You may make whatever ludicrous claims about what you have in your hand, but you cannot SHOW your cards to anyone else (unless a game effect causes you to do so).

Q: If you attempt to play a flare but it gets Card Zapped (or for some other reason it is cancelled), does that count against a player's limit of one flare per encounter?

A: Yes it does count.

Q: Does a Morph count as an attack card if it duplicated an attack card?

A: Yes. Once it has duplicated your opponent's card, it is treated as that card in all ways.

Q: If a power such as Calculator, Mirror, or Tripler affects a card, does a Morph copy the card's value before or after the modification?

A: The Morph copies whatever value is initially revealed. If that value is later modified, the Morph's value does not change with it. However, the Morph's value may be affected by modifications separately.

For instance, if the Tripler revealed a Morph and his opponent revealed a 12, the Morph would become a 12 and then get divided to a 4 by Tripler's power. On the other hand, if Tripler revealed the 12 and his opponent revealed the Morph, the Morph would become a 12, but would not get divided to a 4 just because the card it morphed into did.

Deal Questions

Q: Do you have to vacate a colony to exchange them in a deal?

A: No. Your ships coexist with the other player in the deal.

Q: In a deal, do both players have to give something to the other, or can a successful deal be "one-sided"?

A: The deal may be one-sided, however at least 1 colony or card must change hands.

Q: Are the terms of a deal EXPLICITLY RESTRICTED to one or more of the following categories:

* granting a single colony on a planet you already occupy

* giving cards from your hand

*specialized use of your power where indicated (such as Zombie's regeneration)

A: No, but either colonies or cards must change hands. Anything else you choose to negotiate with is up to you. Any other terms you set are not enforced (i.e. if you agree not to ally against each other, either of you may break that portion of the deal.)

Q: Can you trade tech cards in a deal?

A: No.

Cosmic Zap Questions

Q: Can you Cosmic Zap a flare when the player is using it to use his own power (say as an ally when otherwise he can't use his power as an ally)?

A: Yes.

Q: Some powers have different phases highlighted for use that the Super flare doesn't correspond to. Can you still zap them?

A: Yes.

Q: If you Cosmic Zap a player that is using his Super flare, does he discard the flare, or does he have to play the wild?

A: Neither. The flare remains in his hand, but he may use the wild flare while his power is zapped.

Technology Questions

Q: Can you research and reveal a tech card at the same time? (So, if the tech needs 2 ships, could you place the second ship on the tech and reveal it in the same regroup phase?)

A: You may not both research and complete a tech in the same encounter. However, some techs are only revealed upon certain conditions, such as the Gluon Mines. Such techs may be both researched and revealed during the same encounter.

Q: Can you trade techs in a deal?

A: Not officially, no, but it could be a fun house rule.

Q: Do you have to reveal what card you take from the discard pile when you use the Delta Scanner?

A: No, you do not need to reveal it.

Q: What exactly can the Genesis planet be used for? There's confusion about how many planets to maintain your power.

A: The Genesis planet is an extra planet that you may place colonies on. This provides you one additional planet that can be lost before your power turns off. (See Errata and Clarifications)

Q: If the Omega Missile destroys a planet, do you still need three home colonies to retain your power?

A: Yes.

Q: Does the Qax have to be re-researched when given, or can it be re-played as soon as the next encounter?

A: It does not need to be re-researched, and yes it may be played as soon as the next encounter.

Q: If the Qax forces Amoeba to ally, can he then play his Super and escape?

A: Yes.

Q: Does the Qax force Macron to bring 4 ships?

A: No. The Qax does not give the Macron any special ability to bring 4 ships, so Macron's power works as normal.

Q: Does the defense choose which ships die to Gluon Mines? Can allies be removed from an encounter completely because of them, and are they considered to have allied in the first place?

A: The defense chooses which ships die, and yes allies can be completely removed. They are still considered to have allied, however.

Q: If the Genesis Bomb is used twice in a game, does the second user simply move the planet to his own system, keeping all previously-placed ships on it?

A: Yes, he then gains a colony on the Genesis planet, placing any of the ships used to research the tech onto the planet.

Q: Can the Lunar Cannon and the Prometheus be "stolen" in the same way?

A: No, the Lunar Cannon and the Prometheus cannot be stolen the same way because their tech card remains in play once researched. If the associated tech card is discarded, the tech itself is lost.

Q: Can Parasite ally with the defense even if the Energy Cloak is used? (Since the Energy Cloak only stops invitations, not allies themselves.)

A: Yes, Parasite may ally with the defense.

Alien-Specific Questions

Amoeba

Q: Can Amoeba ooze all 20 ships into the hyperspace gate, or would he lose his power immediately upon reducing his home colonies to 2? What happens to the tokens that were removed from home colony #3?

A: He may ooze all 20 ships, as the power happens all at once. Once all 20 have been moved, then yes, he would lose his power.

Q: If Super Amoeba oozes all of his ships out of an encounter as an ally, is he considered to have allied in the first place (for effects such as Grudge and Wild Mutant)?

A: Yes.

Q: Can a player use Wild Amoeba to increase his ship count if he has no ships as the defense?

A: Yes.

Anti-Matter

Q: If Anti-Matter's flare is used to prevent another flare being played, is the prevented flare kept in hand? Also, does it count against that player's limit of one flare per encounter?

A: The prevented flare is kept in hand. Since the player was prevented from playing the flare (rather than having it be cancelled), the prevented flare does not count against the player's limit of one flare per encounter. However, remember that the prevented flare may not be played again that encounter.

Chosen

Q: Does Chosen's Super flare have to be played before or after he looks at the cards he's drawn?

A: After.

Citadel

Q: If the Citadel's power is lost or discarded, are the citadels discarded or not?

A: No, they remain in play, but serve no function.

Clone

Q: If Sorcerer switches cards, which card does Clone or Filch take?

A: Clone takes the card that ends the encounter in front of him, Filch takes the card that ends the encounter in front of his opponent.

Q: Do Clone, Filch, and Fido have any precedence over each other? (I'm guessing Clone has precedence since he keeps instead of discarding, while Filch and Fido can only claim discarded cards.)

A: Clone does take precedence, while Filch and Fido are subject to the standard timing rules.

Fido

Q: Can Fido pick from any encounter cards discarded in the encounter (such as those lost by the Plague), or must he pick from the ones that were actually played?

A: He must pick from the cards actually played.

Q: Do Clone, Filch, and Fido have any precedence over each other? (I'm guessing Clone has precedence since he keeps instead of discarding, while Filch and Fido can only claim discarded cards.)

A: Clone does keep, Filch and Fido are subject to the standard timing rules.

Filch

Q: Do Clone, Filch, and Fido have any precedence over each other? (I'm guessing Clone has precedence since he keeps instead of discarding, while Filch and Fido can only claim discarded cards.)

A: Clone does keep, Filch and Fido are subject to the standard timing rules.

Q: If Sorcerer switches cards, which card does Clone or Filch take?

A: Clone takes the card that ends the encounter in front of him, Filch takes the card that ends the encounter in front of his opponent.

Q: Does the classic Filch flare have to be played to be used at all?

A: No, it is only revealed if the cheating player is caught, at which point it may be zapped.

Q: Can Filch take Gambler's unrevealed card, and if so, can he notify the table whether the truth was told?

A: Filch may take it, but he may not show it to the other players. He may make whatever claims about the Gambler's truthfulness he likes, of course.

Gambler

Q: Why does Gambler say "Do not use with Sorcerer"?

A: Because it's not much of a bluff if Sorcerer has already seen the card. But, if this doesn't bother you, feel free to go ahead and use them together, since other matchups in the game can be just about as bad.

Q: How does Gambler interact with Oracle since one forces reveal and one refuses to reveal?

A: Gambler must either reveal his card or bluff before Oracle chooses an encounter card.

Grudge

Q: If you send ships to ally with Grudge but then they leave the encounter (due to Amoeba's power or Force Field, for instance), are you then affected by Grudge?

A: No, as long as you initially ally with at least one ship, you do not receive a grudge token.

Hate

Q: Can Hate discard a Morph card when using his power? If so, does that mean no one else can discard one, or that whatever they discard will be the same as the Morph?

A: Yes. If Hate discards a Morph card, then everyone else must discard a Morph card or lose ships. Hurts, doesn't it?

Q: Does Hate have to be zapped before he chooses which card to discard?

A: No. If he is zapped after choosing a card to discard, he keeps that card instead.

Healer

Q: If Healer heals someone, are their ships removed from the warp or stopped from going to the warp? (Asked because, if ships are sent to the warp and then healed, Remora could cling and get ships every time Healer heals.)

A: The ships go to the warp and then are returned from the warp.

Q: Can Healer use his power before Zombie evades going to the warp?

A: No, because the Zombie's power kicks in before he goes to the warp at all.

Human

Q: Does Human's zap-him-to-win beat Pacifist's play-an-N-to-win?

A: Whichever effect goes off first wins. Use the standard timing rules to determine which effect goes off first.

Q: Can Human be zapped to win if both cards are Ns?

A: Yes. And yes, his opponent will receive compensation if the opponent loses ships to the warp.

Machine

Q: Does the Machine Wild flare mean you draw 8 new cards and keep the rest of your hand, or must you discard the Machine flare after you play it?

A: Machine Wild guarantees the player a second encounter and allows the player to draw a new hand if needed to make that encounter. First, the Machine flare is played faceup in front of the player, then the player discards his old hand and draws a new hand. Then, the player returns the Machine flare to his hand.

Macron

Q: When can you zap Macron? His power is used to bring only 1 ship in the gate, so is it then, or during resolution?

A: Macron's power may be zapped either when launching ships (to launch up to four ships worth 1 each) or after cards are revealed (to keep his ships from being worth 4 each). Macron's ability has been reworded in the errata section to clarify this intent.

Observer

Q: Can Observer, as an ally, lose ships outside the encounter? (Such as Grudge or Wild Void.)

A: No, Observer may protect ships outside the encounter, only if he is an ally.

Oracle

Q: How does Gambler interact with Oracle since one forces reveal and one refuses to reveal?

A: Gambler must either reveal his card or bluff before Oracle chooses an encounter card.

Pacifist

Q: If Pacifist must play an N when Loser calls upset, does he get compensation?

A: Yes.

Q: Does Human's zap-him-to-win beat Pacifist's play-an-N-to-win?

A: Whichever effect goes off first wins. Use the standard timing rules to determine which effect goes off first.

Parasite

Q: Can Parasite ally with the defense even if the Energy Cloak is used? (Since the Energy Cloak only stops invitations, not allies themselves.)

A: Yes, Parasite may ally with the defense.

Reincarnator

Q: If someone plays the Reincarnator flare on me, do I still get to use my power if it happens in the same phase as the flare?

A: The Reincarnator flare has been errata'ed to take place after the end of the encounter, so yes.

Q: Can I play the Reincarnator Wild flare on myself?

A: No, as the card says another player, rather than any player.

Shadow

Q: If Shadow draws a Wild Destiny, can he kill one player's ship and then attack someone else?

A: Yes.

Q: If the offense draws more than one destiny card, does Shadow pick off one ship for each card, or one ship for whichever card the offense uses?

A: One for each card drawn.

Sorcerer

Q: If Sorcerer switches cards, which card does Clone or Filch take?

A: Clone takes the card that ends the encounter in front of him, Filch takes the card that ends the encounter in front of his opponent.

Q: Why does Gambler say "Do not use with Sorcerer"?

A: Because it's not much of a bluff if Sorcerer has already seen the card. But, if this doesn't bother you, feel free to go ahead and use them together, since other matchups in the game can be nearly as bad.

Tick-Tock

Q: If two players make a deal to win the game, and Tick-Tock discards his last token because a deal was made, does he win alongside them?

A: Yes, the game would end in a three-way win.

Trader

Q: If the Trader becomes the defense, but has no cards in his/her hand, does the Trader get to use his/her power to trade hands and give his opponent an empty hand?

A: No. The very first thing that happens during the Planning phase is that the defense draws a new hand if needed. No other Planning effects may occur before this takes place.

Vacuum

Q: Can Vacuum use its power on itself, and if so, can it cause an infinite loop?

A: No. Vacuum cannot use its power on itself. Just no.

Q: Perhaps this has already been answered elsewhere, but can the Vacuum, with his super flare, remove a Zombie colony? If Zombie has 4 foreign colonies with 1 ship each, and vacuum loses 4 ships, can the super remove all 4 of those colonies?

A: Yes, and yes. All losses that occur because of a single effect (such as Vacuum Super) happen at the same instant, so Zombie could not save one of his ships and send it to another colony that he is losing at the same moment.

Void

Q: If you fail to deal with Void, are your ships eradicated?

A: Yes

Q: Do you actually get compensation when losing with a negotiate to Void, since it says "when your ships go to the warp"?

A: No.

Q: Is there an official ruling on Zombie vs. Void?

A: Void trumps Zombie. Zombie's power kicks in when it should go to the warp, however the intent for Void is that it never sends its opponent's to the warp at all.

Vulch

Q: If Vulch gets zapped, does he get the Zap that zapped him?

A: No, as he does not have a power when that artifact would go to the discard pile.

Warpish

Q: If ships are sent to the warp during Reveal, does Warpish update his total accordingly?

A: If the ships are added to the warp prior to Warpish using his power, then yes. If not, then no. Refer to the timing rules if in doubt.

Warrior

Q: If Warrior gets zapped, does he still earn experience?

A: Yes. See Clarifications and Errata.

Q: If Warrior draws his own color and reclaims an empty home planet, does he collect experience?

A: Yes, he collects experience as though he won an encounter, since repopulating his home planet counts as a successful encounter.

Will

Q: Can Will attack Blue on Red's planet even if Blue has no colony there?

A: No. Blue doesn't have a colony there to attack, while Red may always be forced to defend his home planet.

Zombie

Q: Does the Zombie get compensation?

A: Not unless his ships actually go to the warp (such as when his power is zapped). Compensation is awarded based on ships going to the warp, after all. If Zombie's ships went to the warp and were then retrieved by his power, he would receive compensation, but Zombie's power prevents them from going to the warp in the first place.

Q: Is there a limit to how many ships Zombie can liberate at once as part of a deal?

A: No, there is no limit.

Q: Can Zombie use the Wild Kamikaze or similar cards that require sending ships to warp to use, and if so, are the ships actually sent to warp?

A: Yes, Zombie may use the card, and then may use his power to prevent those ships from entering the warp.

Q: Perhaps this has already been answered elsewhere, but can the Vacuum, with his super flare, remove a Zombie colony? If Zombie has 4 foreign colonies with 1 ship each, and vacuum loses 4 ships, can the super remove all 4 of those colonies?

A: Yes, and yes. All losses that occur because of a single effect (such as Vacuum Super) happen at the same instant, so Zombie could not save one of his ships and send it to another colony that he is losing at the same moment.

Q: Can Healer use his power before Zombie evades going to the warp?

A: No, because the Zombie's power kicks in before he goes to the warp at all.

Q: Is there an official ruling on Zombie vs. Void?

A: Void trumps Zombie. Zombie's power kicks in when it should go to the warp, however the intent for Void is that it never sends its opponent's to the warp at all.