

Tavern Brawl: Face-Off at the Frozen Throne

Premise: A celebration of the climactic encounter between Illidan Stormrage and Arthas Menethil at the roof of the world. Players are randomly assigned Illidan or Arthas and battle over the four Icecrown Obelisks protecting The Lich King. They are given custom decks with unique cards, hero powers and weapons.



Tavern Brawl: Face-Off at the Frozen Throne

Objectives: There are two win conditions to the battle. The first one is simply reducing your opponent's health to zero, winning the match. The other, which is unique to Face-Off at the Frozen Throne, requires one player to be in control of all four Icecrown Obelisks at the start of their turn. Players gain control of an Icecrown Obelisk by destroying Obelisks in their opponent's control. Each player starts the match with two Icecrown Obelisks.

Objective Card:



Special Rules:

- Arthas starts at 2 mana and has Frostmourne equipped.
- Illidan starts with Dual Warglaives equipped and always draws and uses Metamorphosis on turn 8.



Arthas Menethil: Champion of the Scourge



Core Gameplay: Arthas' design is centered on using his health and minions as resources to fuel Frostmourne. With a low health total compared to Illidan, Arthas must frequently utilize his hero power, Death Pact, to sacrifice his undead minions, healing him and maintaining Frostmourne's durability. Additionally, Arthas must use his health pool to play several of his spells and minions. Conversely, Arthas also excels at healing his minions with the use of spells like Death Coil and minions such as Obsidian Statue. Starting with two mana crystals, as well as several card draw options, Arthas is designed to control the early game, until Illidan undergoes Metamorphosis.

Arthas Menethil: Core Spells



Arthas Menethil: Core Minions



Arthas Menethil: Decklist



Arthas Menethil: Detailed Card Notes



- Because the Obsidian Statue transforms into the Obsidian Destroyer, it's important to attack with the Obsidian Statue before using an Obsidian Construct on it.



- With stealth, the Crypt Fiend can be held as a future Death Pact or Dark Ritual Target with relative safety.



- Because Sapphiron freezes Arthas, it's important to attack with Frostmourne before playing him.
- Sapphiron can act as a powerful defense against a post-metamorphosis Illidan, denying him an entire turn of attacking.
- Sapphiron comes at a hefty health cost; Arthas needs to watch his health when playing him.



- If an enemy minion dealt lethal damage to Elven Banshee, she will take control of it whether or not she attacked into the enemy or the enemy attacked into her.
- If Elven Banshee is destroyed by spells or weapons, then she will not possess an enemy minion, even if one damaged her.

Arthas Menethil: Detailed Card Notes



- Frostmourne cannot gain durability; it can only not lose durability when triggered.
- There is no way to replace Frostmourne once broken, so each attack that loses durability must be considered.
- Because an undead minion must die on Arthas' turn for Frostmourne to not lose durability, it is important for Illidan to constantly clear Arthas' undead minion.



- With four copies of this spell in his deck, Arthas must decide whether he wants to have two Obsidian Destroyers or many Obsidian Statues.
- If Arthas wants to guarantee getting an Obsidian Destroyer, he needs to wait until he has two copies of the spell in hand.



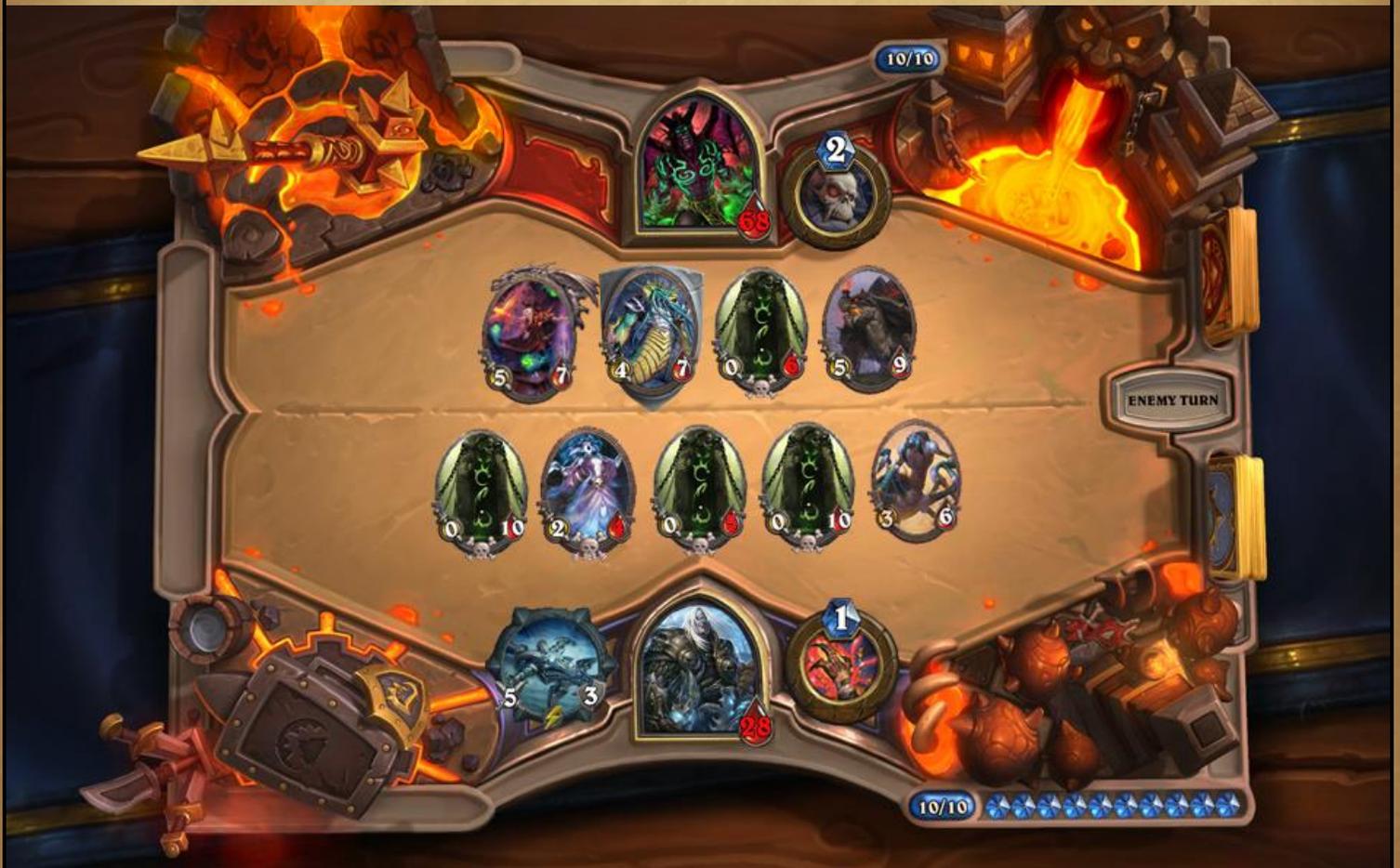
- Like Resurrection, Animate Dead can summon minions that died, but were not played such as Obsidian Destroyers or Skeleton Warriors.
- A devastating combo is to trade an Obsidian Destroyer, summon it back with Animate Dead and immediately attack with it again.



- As Arthas' only Area of Effect spell, it's wise to save it for when Illidan plays his Naga Summoners, who have 1 Health and Stealth.
- Because of how important control over the Obelisks is, freezing enemies can be a win condition for Arthas.

Arthas Menethil: Gameplay Example

Scenario: Despite controlling the early game, Arthas has lost board presence and is struggling to keep up with a post-Metamorphosis Illidan. However, he currently holds three of the four Icecrown Obelisks. Find the best play Arthas can make to secure all four Icecrown Obelisks before Illidan gets out of control. Check the board and cards below. Answer on the next page.



Arthas Menethil: Gameplay Example

Solution:

- I. Trade the Elven Banshee into the Naga Myrmidon. After the Elven Banshee is destroyed, she takes control of the Naga Myrmidon, removing Illidan's taunt.
- II. Attack Illidan's last Icecrown Obelisk with the Crypt Fiend and Frostmourne, destroying it and gaining control of all four Icecrown Obelisks.
- III. Play Sapphiron for 7 mana, freezing all characters and crippling Illidan's ability to regain an Icecrown Obelisk next turn. Arthas takes 6 damage, reducing your health to 22.
- IV. Play Necropolis Acolyte for 1 mana, healing your damaged Icecrown Obelisk at the end of your turn.
- V. Use your Hero Power, Death Pact, on the Crypt Fiend for 1 mana to heal yourself for 12 health, putting Arthas' health total at 34.

Illidan Stormrage: The Betrayer



Core Gameplay: Illidan's playstyle is focused on his transformation and using his hero power to gain a board presence. Illidan always draws and plays Metamorphosis on turn 8, a spell that gives him a new weapon with Mega-Windfury. Until then, Illidan relies on his high-value minions to take damage and contest board while he waits to play his higher-curve of minions. Unlike Arthas, Illidan lacks early card draw options and must carefully get as much value out of each card as possible. Lastly, several of Illidan's powerful spells overload him, forcing him to carefully plan out his following turns.

Illidan Stormrage: Metamorphosis



Illidan Stormrage: Core Spells



Illidan Stormrage: Core Minions



Illidan Stormrage: Core Minions



Illidan Stormrage: Decklist



Illidan Stormrage: Detailed Card Notes



- Metamorphosis behaves like Burrowing Mine; an action happens out of the player's control when the card is drawn and then it is immediately discarded.
- Metamorphosis is always the card that is drawn on turn 8. Illidan will not draw any other cards that turn.
- Illidan will not lose his currently equipped weapon since he has to use his new Hero Power to equip Chaos Fury.



- Naga Siren can increase the Health of an Icecrown Obelisk, making it more difficult for Arthas to destroy it.



- The +1 attack from Might of Sargeras has strong synergy with the Chaos Fury weapon, granting Illidan an extra 4 points of damage.



- Though it looks like a drawback, the fact that Agonizing Flames destroys Illidan's weapon can be good for him as both have beneficial deathrattles.
- Attacking with a 1 durability Dual Warglaives, then using Illidan's Hero Power and then playing Agonizing Flames is a great way to fill Illidan's board with minions to challenge Arthas' early game dominance.

Illidan Stormrage: Detailed Card Notes



- Just like Wild Growth, if Illidan is at 10 mana, he will draw a card instead.



- Unlike Nerubian Egg, which spawns a minion when it is destroyed, Phoenix Egg only spawns a minion if it is not destroyed.



- The only reason Couatl cannot silence any minion is because the ability to silence Icecrown Obelisks would allow players to invalidate the new game objective.



- Lady Vashj's effect behaves similarly to Flamewaker's, except that she deals 2 damage three times while Flamewaker deals 1 damage twice.
- Lady Vashj's effect can hit the same target multiple times.

Illidan Stormrage: Gameplay Example

Scenario: It's turn 10 and despite reaching Metamorphosis, Illidan has lost board control to Arthas and has only a single Icecrown Obelisk. However, Arthas has not been using Death Pact to heal himself up, leaving him vulnerable to Illidan's burst. Find a way for Illidan to push through Arthas' taunt minion to finish him off. Check the board and cards below. Answer on the next page.



Illidan Stormrage: Gameplay Example

Solution:

- I. Spend 2 mana to hero power, equipping the 2/4 Mega-Windfury Chaos Fury.
- II. Play Might of Sargeras for 4 mana, destroying the Abomination taunt and dealing a total of 6 damage to Arthas (4 from Might of Sargeras, 2 from Abomination).
- III. Attack Arthas directly four times with chaos fury for 12 damage for a total of 18 damage to Arthas.
- IV. Use Agonizing Flames on Arthas for 2 mana, dealing 6 damage to Arthas for a total of 24 damage to Arthas.
- V. Play Immolation for 2 mana, dealing 2 damage to all characters for a total of 26 damage to Arthas for exact lethal.

Playtest Results

Test #	Initial Parameters	Result	Gameplay Narrative
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arthas and Illidan started at 1 mana Illidan did not start with a weapon Illidan always drew Metamorphosis and transformed on turn 8 Arthas went first 	Arthas won at the start of turn 8 by controlling the Icecrown Obelisks.	Illidan was behind the entire game, had no effective play turn 7 and lost. Naga Royal Guard kept him competitive turn 6, but Arthas drew too many cards with Unholy Frenzy and maintained control the entire game. Illidan never drew into AoE spells to catch up.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arthas and Illidan started at 1 mana Illidan started with a weapon Illidan always drew Metamorphosis and transformed on turn 8 Illidan went first 	Illidan won, Arthas conceded turn 9.	Arthas struggled early against the Flames of Azzinoth. He was even with Illidan until turn 8 when Illidan played a Dragon Turtle on curve and played Metamorphosis, quickly seizing board.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arthas started at 2 mana and Illidan started at 1 mana Illidan started with a weapon Illidan always drew Metamorphosis and transformed on turn 8 Illidan went first 	Arthas won turn 6 by controlling the Icecrown Obelisks.	Illidan had a weak start and Arthas aggressively used all charges of Frostmourne to gain control of every Icecrown Obelisk. Illidan desperately used overload spells to fight back for some of the Icecrown Obelisks, but was unable to maintain board. He would have won if he reached turn 8, however.