

# Yet Another Weapon Guide - Sword and Shield

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## Intro

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The Sword and Shield is a fast, versatile weapon, capable of a little bit of every other type of weapon. It has the ability to block, forward roll, has gapclosers, has both strong and weak attacks, and can even do a little bit of KO damage. The main draw to Sword and Shield is the ability to use items whilst unsheathed, making this a perfect weapon for newcomers to the series. With the addition of oils, SnS play is a bit deeper for those who have already mastered SnS.

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**By no means will contact result in changes to the guide.**

## Purpose

This guide is meant for new players of Monster Hunter Generations Ultimate (MHGU) or for players who haven't played Blademaster in the old-school games, and wish to play as Sword and Shield. Note that this guide will not assume any prior knowledge, regardless of games played before in the Monster Hunter series.

## Guide Contents

This guide will contain a comprehensive guide on Sword and Shield controls, commentary on SnS styles and combinations, recommendations on progression SnSs, and a final note on matchups against all monsters in the game.

## At A Glance

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### How Do I Play Sword and Shield?

- X-Button attacks are typically fast but deal less damage. A-Button attacks are more powerful but they have different effects, depending on if you hold in a direction during those attacks or not.
- X + A from idle is a leaping slash that takes you a little bit forward. Is effective when used to start attacking a monster.

- Pressing and holding R will let you guard incoming attacks in the direction you're facing. The SnS Guard is particularly weak, so this should be treated as an emergency use only.
- Pressing R and Y at the same time will let you consume any currently-selected item in your item bar without sheathing first. This lets you do stuff like heal, sharpen, lay down traps, or apply oils without the need to sheathe.
- If you bring Oils, you may use them on your Sword and Shield to provide various effects.

## Hot Tips

1. **The leaping slash attack provides knockback resistance for a while after using it.** So, you can perform things like knockback-less item use while doing so.
2. **Some styles have a Back + A Charged Slash attack.** Make sure you release A when the flash occurs, otherwise you'll just perform a short-range slash.
3. **Certain SnS attacks can knock your teammates around, so it's advisable to not use them.** Otherwise you might get angry teammates as well as an angry monster.
4. **Pressing X + A mid-combo will instantly make you perform the Roundslash.** Use as a combo finisher.

## Meta Stuff

- **SnS loves long Sharpness grades.** Similarly to DBs, SnS hits a lot, making longer Sharpness bars more valuable than a shorter, higher grade of Sharpness.
- Also like DBs, **SnS loves elemental and status damage due to their hit count.** Unlike DBs though, SnS's status values are actually somewhat considerable, making Status SnS better than Status DBs.
- SnS's Oils should be selected partially based on the monster, but **the Oils typically used are Affinity Oil and Mind's Eye Oil**, the former for obvious reasons, and the latter for its sharpness-restoration effect when combined with Chaos Oil.
- **Striker SnS is the most popular way to play SnS due to its access to 3 HA slots.** The only thing you lose with Striker is the backstep charge attack to extend your combos, which isn't really needed unless you're fully locking down the monster. SnS has fantastic arts as well, which we'll get to later.
- Guild SnS has the full combo chaining capabilities of SnS but lacks the HA slot that Striker has.

- Aerial SnS can perform the same thing Guild SnS can when jumping off a ledge, except at any time you can hop off of a monster instead of being restricted to ledges.
- Adept SnS has the unique ability to perform Adept Dodges via backstepping as well as by rolling normally and counterattacks with the leaping slash.
- Valor SnS's crazy gameplay involves lots of backflips which have iframes and cover a lot of distance, as well as letting you precisely control where you go.
- Alchemy SnS removes SnS's more... questionable attacks in favor of faster access to the Round Slash and the Alchemy Barrel.
- **All of SnS's HA are fantastic, and you can't go wrong with any of them...** mostly. Sword Dance being a lengthy offensive HA is used less though it has the potential to deal lots of elemental damage when a monster is down.
- Round Force is sometimes treated as a more offensive version of Absolute Evasion though I swear to *god* if you use the level 3 version online I will find you.
- Shoryugeki has the potential to deal a ton of KO damage even without Stamina Oil applied. Just have to be accurate with it.
- Finally, Chaos Oil applies the effects of *all* oils in the game at once and lets you stack regular oils *on top of that*. I hope you like to fight Hyper Silver and Hyper Gold at the same time to unlock the level 3 version though.
- Deviant Boost is really valuable since gameplay focuses on getting your fantastic HAs up and running, especially Chaos Oil. So much so that all of the best SnSs are Deviant-sourced. I hope you like grinding.

## Cool Tips

- You can perform a leaping slash into a ledge to jump up it and attack, like you would when you're going down a ledge using the leaping slash.
- With Stamina Oil you can quickly rack up KO damage since your attacks are fast and furious. Stacking it with Chaos Oil increase that KO and Stamina damage, letting you KO monsters even easier.
- Affinity Oil increases your Affinity by 30%, and stacking with Chaos Oil boosts your Affinity by 60%! Potent enough to drop even WE if you wanted to.

- Destroyer Oil increases your stagger damage by 15% and stacking with Chaos Oil doubles the effect! Use on Astalos or any monster where you need to stagger them to weaken their attacks or effects.
- Mind's Eye Oil does what it says on the tin: Prevents you from bouncing off of monsters. When Chaos Oil is stacked with this effect it instantly recovers 100 units of Sharpness, making these Oils a quicker Whetstone that doesn't make you sheathe afterwards.
- All Oils last for 120 seconds, but the duration can be increased by way of the armor skill "Item Use Up", which will extend the duration to 180 seconds.
- Most items when used via R + Y won't make you sheath afterwards, except for Whetstones and other items that make you sheathe at the end of the animation.
- The Directional A-Button attacks involving your shield will knock around hunters. If you see a pesky LS user constantly tripping you, knock 'em into the air.
- Attacks involving a sword have a slight sharpness modifier applied to them letting you bounce less.
- After some attacks, like the Rush Slash or after rolling, you can reorient yourself in a direction slightly, letting you be more accurate with your attacks.

## Controls & Style Rundown

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### Guild Style

Two Hunter Art slots (1 SP Art). Endlessly chain your attacks with the potent backstep charge attack, use items while unsheathed, quickly attack with a flurry of slashes, and do a little bit of everything!

- X + A or Forward + X while sheathed - **Rush Slash** (*provides Super Armor for a brief period*)
- After Rush Slash, X - **Up Slash**
- X or after Up Slash - **Down Slash**
- After Down Slash, X - **Side Slash**
- After Side Slash, X - **Shield Combo**
- A - **Strong Side Slash**
- After Strong Side Slash, A - **Strong Up Slash**
- After any attack, X + A or after Strong Up Slash, A - **Round Slash**
- Forward + A - **Shield Bash**
- After Shield Bash, A - **Shield Thrust**
- After any attack, Back + A - **Backstep Charge** (*requires Stamina to perform*)
- During Backstep Charge, release - **Backstep Charge Attack (weak)**
- During Backstep Charge, wait until flash, release - **Backstep Charge Attack**
- While in midair, X - **Jumping Slash**

- X + A off a ledge - **Rising Jump Slash**
- X + A up a ledge - **Climbing Jump Slash**
- R (hold) - **Guard**
- While Guarding, X - **Up Slash**
- While Guarding, A - **Guard Slash**
- While Guarding, Y - **Use Item**

**Guild Style** features all of the classical Sword and Shield moves, including the bad ones which you never want to use. It also features the ability to chain into most other moves at any time, whether it's with the Round Slash or with the Backstep Charge. This makes Guild SnS quite versatile and easy to use to boot.

#### **Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Readiness
- Chaos Oil III

#### **Basic Hack 'n Slash**

X + A, X, X, X, A, A, A.

*A basic gap-closing combo.*

#### **Quick Hitter**

X + A, X, X, X + A, Back + A (hold to flash), release.

*An extended combo, featuring the round slash and the charged slash. Use for slightly longer openings.*

#### **Extreme Combo Extend**

X + A, X, X, X, A, A, A, Back + A (hold to flash), release, (repeat from X)

*The legendary infinite combo. In practice you won't use it that much because no monster will let you loop more than once while it's down, but it's there.*

#### **Short Sweeps**

X + A, X, X, A, (repeat) X, X, A

*A shorter infinite variant without the Charged Slash. Round Slash away.*

#### **Super Armored Item Use**

X + A, R + Y.

*This short combo will allow you to use items without knockback. Convenient when you're chugging a Potion.*

### **Striker Style**

Three Hunter Art slots (1 SP Art). Lose access to the backstep charge attack in exchange for an additional HA slot, as well as Super Armor whenever you use an item while unsheathed.

- **Cannot perform Backstep Charge.**

- Has natural Super Armor when using items while unsheathed.

**Striker Style** only loses the Backstep Charge, which removes your ability to infinitely extend your combo, but gains infinitely more use in the form of that 3rd HA Slot. With it you can run one more of SnS's fantastic arts, which is usually going to be Round Force. Be honest, you weren't *really* using that combo extend capability were you?

**Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Readiness
- Round Force II (III if solo)
- Chaos Oil III

*No new combos.*

## Aerial Style

One Hunter Art slot (1 SP Art). Loses access to the A-Button Sword-based attacks in exchange for the Aerial Hop to perform Aerial-based attacks whenever you jump on a monster.

- **Cannot perform Strong Side Slash.**
- A - **Shield Bash**
- B - **Aerial Hop**
- Post-Aerial Hop - **Aerial Rising Slash**
- After Aerial Rising Slash, X - **Aerial Downward Slash**

**Aerial Style** is kinda underwhelming since it only lets you perform the ledge-based attacks after you Aerial Hop. Plus it makes you lose the Strong Sword Attacks, forcing you to perform the really-bad-to-use Shield-based attacks, which will knock other people around. So I guess you can only use the X button attacks on the ground.

**Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Readiness

## Hop 'n Down

B, then Post-Aerial Hop, X.

*Uh yeah, this combo is pretty basic. This is basically the only combo you can do after you hop off of monsters, but you can do it after you jump into the air with basically anything?*

## Short Combo

X + A, X, X, X, X, X + A.

*A slightly extended combo string ending in a Round Slash.*

## Adept Style

One Hunter Art slot (1 SP Art). Dodge attacks to perform an Insta-Evade and counterattack with jumping attacks! Can even dodge backwards with the backstep attack.

- **Cannot perform Backstep Charge Attack.**

- **Cannot perform Strong Side Slash.**
- Can trigger Adept Dodge from the Backstep Charge.
- B - **Adept Dodge**
- Post-Adept Dodge, X - **Adept Jumping Slashes**
- Post-Adept Dodge, X + A - **Adept Lunging Slashes**
- Post-Adept Dodge from the Backstep Charge, X - **Adept Backstep Counter**

**Adept Style** removes more moves compared to Aerial Style somehow and puts your power behind more midair-based attacks. Sure I guess you don't need to hop off of the monster anymore or use a ledge, but sometimes dodging attacks isn't really viable or recommended. You can perform really cool moves with the Backstep Charge Adept Evade though, letting you perform attacks from that if you manage to master it.

#### **Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Readiness

#### **Post-Dodge Distance Closing**

B, then after successfully dodging an attack, X + A, X.

*Use this if the monster is far away from you after you Adept Dodge.*

#### **Post-Dodge Leaping Assault**

B, then after successfully dodging an attack, X, X.

*The basic Post-Adept Dodge combo for close-range monsters.*

#### **Backstep Strike**

X + A, X, X, X, Back + A, then after successfully dodging an attack, X, (repeat from first X)

*This combo utilizes the Backstep Charge Adept Dodge, and generally makes you look cool as hell if you can pull it off.*

## **Valor Style**

One Hunter Art slot (1 SP Art). Charge the Valor Gauge with Valor Sheathe-based attacks to gain access to an enhanced backstep and combos from that backstep!

*In any state:*

- **Cannot perform Round Slash.**
- Y - **Valor Sheathe**
- While Valor Sheathing, X - **Valor Lunging Slashes**
- While Valor Sheathing, A - **Valor Round Slash**

*Outside of Valor State:*

- **Cannot perform Backstep Charge.**

*In Valor State:*

- After Down Slash, X + A - **Valor Backflip**
- After Valor Backflip - **Valor Backflip Followup**
- After Valor Backflip Followup, A - **Valor Round Slashes**



- After Valor Backflip Followup, X + A - **Valor Rushing Slashes**

**Valor Style** locks many of your stronger moves behind Valor State and prevents you from combo extending or finishing off your combos with the Round Slash. Master the backflip however and you can leap all over the place by repositioning quickly, and follow up with strong attacks.

**Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Readiness

**Valor Charge 'n Rush**

Y, X, X, X, X.

*This combo quickly charges the Valor Gauge and leads into the normal combo.*

**Valor Strong Sweep**

Y, A.

*This is a truncated form of the above, for shorter openings and situations where you might not be able to execute longer combos.*

**Valor Backflip Assault**

While in Valor State: X, X, X + A, wait for followup, A.

*The trickiest part of mastering Valor SnS is waiting and not button mashing. Getting through that impulse to buffer your attacks will reward you with powerful attacks.*

**Valor Backflip Rush**

While in Valor State: X, X, X + A, wait for followup, X + A.

*This variant uses the Rushing Slashes to close in on monsters.*

## Alchemy Style

Three Hunter Art slots (3 SP Arts). Lose many of the more annoying attacks to perform Round Slashes faster and earlier in a combo, as well as gain access to the Alchemy Barrel.

- **Cannot perform Shield Combo.**
- **Cannot perform Shield Thrust.**
- **Cannot perform Strong Up Slash.**
- **Cannot perform Backstep Charge.**
- **Cannot perform Round Slash mid-combo with X + A.**
- After Side Slash, X or after Strong Side Slash, A - **Round Slash**
- To charge the Alchemy Barrel quickly, perform **Round Slash**.

**Alchemy Style** is actually very solid on SnS, putting away the really crappy moves that toss around other people in exchange for Round Slash as a combo finisher. You also lack the combo extending capability of other styles but you can even use the Alchemy Barrel after X + A to prevent knockback while you're shaking that barrel.

**Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Readiness (SP)
- Round Force II (III if solo) (SP)
- Chaos Oil III

#### **X Spam:**

X + A, X, X, X, X.

*This combo is faster and less-damaging. Doesn't charge the Alchemy Barrel much though.*

#### **A Spam:**

X + A, A, A, A, A.

*This combo is slower, but deal more damage and charges the Alchemy Barrel more quickly too.*

#### **No-Knockback Barrel:**

With Alchemy Barrel selected in the Item Bar and unsheathed: X + A, R + Y.

*This uses the Super Armor granted by X+A to freely shake the barrel for a few seconds, which can be useful if you're next to the monster for some reason.*

The style hierarchy goes Striker > Everything else. Kinda simple right? SnS arts are pretty damn great so having three of them really goes a long way. Guild and Alchemy are slight standouts among the rest with their basic gameplay, Guild having true combo extensions and Alchemy having faster combos and instant barrel-ing from unsheathed. Aerial, Adept, and Valor all have gimmicks tying down their gameplay, but is otherwise okay.

## Hunter Arts

### **Sword Dance**

Executes a series of slash attacks with your sword. Increasing ranks of this HA adds more hits to the combo.

HA Rank	To Charge	Total MV
I	830 (1196 SP)	25 + 14 + 15 + 15 + 40 = 109 / 5 hits
II	920 (1304 SP)	25 + 14 + 15 + 15 + 14 + 15 + 40 = 138 / 7 hits
III	1250 (1700 SP)	25 + 14 + 15 + 15 + 14 + 15 + 20 + 7 + 45 = 170 / 9 hits

The worst HA among the bunch, but that's not saying much since all of SnS's arts are pretty stellar. This even has the saving grace of dealing a bunch of hits, easily applying elemental or status damage without bouncing much. This can, say, let you hit Silver Rathalos's head with a bunch of Water damage. Beyond that though, this HA also suffers from the critical error of all offensive HAs of "needing time to execute the attack".

## Round Force

Spins in a circle, damaging anything and everything around you. During execution, you are invulnerable to all attacks and effects.

HA Rank	To Charge	Total MV	Additional Effects
I	250 (500 SP)	30 / 1 hit	<i>None</i>
II	250 (500 SP)	20 + 30 = 50 / 2 hits	Wider Range
III	290 (548 SP)	20 + 20 + 30 = 70 / 3 hits	Wider Range + Knocks Hunters into the air.

The most pertinent reason as to why this HA is used is because of the invulnerability effect. The short charge time is equivalent to Absolute Evasion, effectively making this an offensive version of Evasion with damage attached to it. However, you should never, ever run Rank III seriously in public halls. Doing so will net you an instant kick because you're an ass for interrupting other people's combos to knock them up into the air. Providing invincibility and saying that you're 'helping' doesn't excuse the possibility that if you time it horribly, horribly wrong you could cart other hunters. Run Rank II in multiplayer, always. No exceptions.

## Shoryugeki

Perform a short shield-based combo that will launch you skyward into the air, shield-first. Has the potential to deal a bunch of KO and Exhaust damage if you land this properly on the monster's head.

HA Rank	To Charge	Total MV	KO Damage	Exhaust Damage
I	670 (1004 SP)	10 + 60 = 70 / 2 hits	0 + 75	0 + 70
II	750 (1100 SP)	10 + 35 + 60 = 105 / 3 hits	0 + 100 + 50	0 + 50 + 40
III	830 (1196 SP)	10 + 35 + 60 + 30 = 135 / 4 hits	0 + 100 + 50 + 50	0 + 50 + 40 + 40

Used to be used a lot in Gen until Chaos Oil came along and was like "hey bby I can give you 60% Affinity for free" and we were all like "holy fuck". Less used not because it was nerfed, but because it was outclassed. If you do use this as, say, a replacement for Round Force and stack it with Chaos Oil and Stamina Oil you can practically beat the shit out of any monster with your not-Hammer Sword and KO things really easily. The one downside is that you have to aim it properly and hope that the opening slash doesn't make you go past the monster's head.

## Chaos Oil

Lunges forward, then slash horizontally while applying the effects of all Oils to your sword. For a while afterwards, your sword-based attacks has the effects of all oils applied at the same time.

HA Rank	To Charge	Duration	Base Effects
I	920 (1304 SP)	135 seconds	15% Affinity, 4 KO, 5 Exhaust, 10% Stagger, Mind's Eye
II	1000 (1400 SP)	180	15% Affinity, 4 KO, 5 Exhaust, 10% Stagger, Mind's Eye
III	1000 (1400 SP)	120	30% Affinity, 7 KO, 8 Exhaust, 15% Stagger, Mind's Eye

*The opening slash has an MV of 30, and doesn't apply this HA's effects. While this HA is active, you apply oils in one stroke, rather than three. Furthermore, you may apply one more oil on top of Chaos Oil, improving its effects, as shown below:*

HA Rank	+Affinity Oil	+Stamina Oil	+Destroyer Oil	+Mind's Eye Oil
I/II	30% Affinity	8 KO, 10 Exhaust	+20% Stagger	Restores 100 Sharpness
III	60% Affinity	12 KO, 13 Exhaust	+30% Stagger	Restores 100 Sharpness

Chaos Oil makes you become a god for 2 minutes when you use level 3. The other two levels, while nice, only apply oils at half strength rather than at full strength, and overlaying oils on top of them only brings their effectiveness back up to their original level. But holy crap look at the 60% Affinity from overlaying Affinity and Chaos Oil at the same time. It's insane. That alone skyrockets this HA to almost-permanent use. Despite how godly this is though you can't really use this all the time due to the lengthy charge time and the fact that the rank 3 version of this art is locked behind Hyper Silver Rathalos and Hyper Gold Rathian at the same time. If you do get this art however, this is basically a must-use on any style with more than one HA slot.

## What SnSs to Use?

SnSes focus on element first and foremost due to their hitcount, which is second only to Dual Blades. With their potent HAs, endgame SnS users should aspire towards Deviant weapons, and particularly elemental Deviant weapons due to the Deviant Boost effect speeding up HA gain. Finally, SnS relies on longer Sharpness grades rather than higher Sharpness grades, again due to the high hitcount of the weapon.

## Progression Recommendations

Low Rank (Village 1-6\*, Hub 1-3\*)

- **Petrified Sword**

Decent raw and Green Sharpness once you get this SnS to level 4, but also works for self-defense while you're going out and grabbing materials for things in general early game.

- **Velocidrome Bite**

Made from Velocidrome materials and has a bunch of Green Sharpness as early as Village 2\*, which makes it great to use this early in the game. Also has decent raw, so you'll use this throughout Village 2\* and 3\* before you get the Petrified Sword up to the right level.

- **Hidden Edge**

Nargacuga's SnS has a ton of Green Sharpness, decent raw, and great Affinity to use it after Petrified Sword gets hard-locked in terms of upgrades, and it's nice later due to the time at which you can upgrade it.

- **Djinn**

A solid Fire SnS that you can get by first downing a Rathalos. Has a decent length of Green Sharpness with solid raw and a great amount of Fire, with 24 when first crafted. Maintainable in early High Rank, though it does upgrade later than the Glavenus SnS, making this SnS slightly less usable until you get to High Rank Rathian.

- **Hana no Nagoriwo**

The Mizutsune SnS is the best Water SnS you can get by this point with great raw and solid Water, as well as a slot to boot. It also upgrades again early on in High Rank, gaining another edge over the other Water SnSs.

- **Verdant Rapier**

The Astalos SnS is solid in terms of stats and is upgradeable early on into High Rank, needing just Carbalite Ore to do so. It's also one of the only Thunder SnSs that gets Blue early on in High Rank.

- **Frost Edge**

Nothing's better for Ice damage than a literal icicle right? This weapon is a little lacking on the raw end and it doesn't upgrade well into High Rank, but you should keep this upgraded for some solid Ice damage.

- **Sucher-Ankh**

Likely the only Dragon SnS you'll have access to by this point and it's not that bad either. Decent raw and Dragon, good length of Green Sharpness, and some Affinity as well.

## High Rank (Village 7-10\*, Hub 4-7\*)

- **Obsidian Sword**

Due to being a raw-focused SnS, this SnS has quite a bit of raw damage backing it up, and when you upgrade it with High Rank materials it gains a little bit of Blue Sharpness, which only increases with level. Good for getting you through the first bits of High Rank.

- **Hidden Edge**

Nargacuga's SnS gains a little bit of natural White Sharpness when you upgrade it later on in High Rank, which makes it more useful than the Obsidian Sword by the end of High Rank.

- **Burning Prominar**

Glavenus SnS finally start to scale up better than Djinn at this point, mostly because you probably don't have the resources to upgrade it to Daze Eye, which requires Hyper Hunter tickets in order to upgrade. When you do get this, it gains Blue and a high amount of raw, which is pretty respectable by this point in the game.

- **Hana no Nagoriwo**

Mizutsune's SnS is the most solid option among the Water SnSs you have access to by this point in High Rank, as it has a touch of Blue Sharpness and a solid amount of raw - 170 - with a little bit of Affinity and 28 Water.

- **Verdant Rapier**

The other Thunder SnS options fall short of Astalos's SnS. With a high amount of Blue, and with Hyper materials, a touch of White Sharpness and a bunch of Thunder damage, you can't go wrong here.

- **Icicle Spike**

Barioth's SnS shares many of the same attributes as a Nargacuga SnS, but with actually good raw, high Ice, and a high Affinity in exchange for having lower Sharpness grades than a typical Nargacuga weapon. But this weapon still packs one hell of a punch.

- **Silverwing Swiftblade**

The Valstrax SnS has a ton of White Sharpness which helps with Sharpness upkeep greatly. One of the few SnSs you can make earlier in the game and have it be good endgame, and is one of two best Dragon SnSs.

## **G-Rank (Hub G1-G4\*)**

- **Elder Sword**

With a touch of White Sharpness and 260 raw, you can never go wrong when it comes to the Elder series of weapons when you progress through G-Rank.

- **Daze Eye**

Upgrading from Djinn using Hyper materials yields you this Rathalos SnS. When you upgrade it with G-Rank Rathalos materials from G3, you'll get a very solid SnS with solid raw, high Fire, and natural White Sharpness.

- **Dual Crustacio**

The Hermitaur/Ceanataur SnS finally gets its time in the limelight, since the other Water SnSs require HR Break in order to be useful. You can even fully upgrade this SnS before HR Break since the latest requirement of Hyper Ceanataur is from G3. It packs natural Purple, some Defense, a solid 310 raw, and an average 31 Water.

- **Dread Razor**

The Khezu SnS can be fully upgraded before HR Break and packs a solid array of stats, with 320 raw, 40 Thunder, 15% Affinity, and natural White Sharpness, making this a force to be reckoned with, and the choice for fighting Ahtal Ka.

- **Nardebosche**

Barioth's SnS without taking the sidegrade is infinitely better since it has an okay 270 raw, 37 Ice, 30% Affinity, and natural White Sharpness. Solid all-around, especially for fighting Ice-weak monsters.

- **Dragonstar Alcor**

Has a solid amount of raw at 280, Dragon at 42, and 2 slots make this a great Dragon weapon. Oh, and the infinite White doesn't hurt either.

## Endgame SnS Recommendations

- **Firewaltz Edge**

The power of Deviant Boost, high Fire, solid raw, and Purple with Sharpness +2 means that this is the Fire SnS of choice. I hope you can stomach Dreading for 15 levels though, just like other weapons on this list.

- **Sanitsurau**

The Souseur SnS packs Deviant Boost and hits a solid balance between raw and element, with 320 raw, 30 Water, and 20% natural Affinity (!). With this setup you can even drop Weakness Exploit and rely on Chaos Oil + Affinity Oil to boost your Affinity to 80% without armor skills, and slapping Critical Eye +2 on top grants 100%. Potent!

- **Thunderlord Skybolt**

Has a great amount of Thunder, solid raw, and Purple with Sharpness +2, as well as Deviant Boost to boot. Is definitely better than the other Thunder Deviant, Boltreaver's SnS purely due to the numbers outweighing Boltreaver's equipment.

- **Elderfrost Giant Slalom**

I dunno what a 'slalom' is but Elderfrost's SnS really packs a punch with a monstrous 380 raw and White with Sharpness +2. The only places where it falls short on is the Ice, which is miniscule, and the low natural Affinity, but Chaos Oil + Affinity Oil mostly solves that issue

anyway. Compounded with Deviant Boost, this SnS is pretty great for those raw-weak monsters.

- **Permafrost Edge**

Useful if you're fighting one of those rare but pesky Ice-weak-but-not-raw-weak monsters that pops up every so often. Lacks Deviant Boost, but has a decent 310 raw and a pretty high 48 Ice, and it comes with two slots too.

- **Altheos Zodiarch**

The first of the two Dragon SnSs, the Alatreon SnS has a maxed out Sharpness bar with natural Purple, freeing you from the requirement of S+2. Has a sub-par 280 raw, but has an absolutely powerful 55 Dragon. Use on shorter hunts where the monster is weak to Dragon.

- **Magnastar Akri**

The alternative to the Alatreon SnS, Valstrax's SnS packs an average 300 raw and has 44 Dragon. In addition, it has a ton of White, common amongst Valstrax weapons, and two slots for some set flexibility. Use in longer hunts.

### **Status SnS Recommendations**

*Status SnS is usually the way to go if you really need to go Status in this game, as Status DBs have had their Status values nerfed.*

- **Dreadqueen Rapierina**

Has a below-average 290 raw, but also has natural Purple and 44 Poison, as well as a slight 10% Affinity bonus, as well as the classic Deviant Boost. If you need to poison something, this is the way to do it.

- **Deathgrip**

The classic Gendrome SnS returns from Gen once more as the king of Para in this game. Cannot attain Purple Sharpness through any means, but has an average 300 raw, and a decent 32 Para, along with two slots.

- **Dream Archduke Shura**

One of two solid Sleep SnSs, the Malfestio SnS has an on-par 300 raw and a good 28 Sleep. Use with Sharpness +2 to get Purple, and watch monsters fall asleep quickly.

- **Shadow Nerwrithe**

The other Sleep SnS is Nerscylla's SnS. Has less raw than Malfestio's, at 270, and also has less Sleep, at 22. However this weapon does have 30% natural Affinity and a lot of natural White, which can let you drop Razor Sharp and Sharpness +2.

- **Absolute Ruiner Sword**

The Crimson Fatalis SnS is great for multi-monster hunts, as it has a great 330 raw, solid 34 Blast, triple slots, and the ability to get Purple Sharpness with Sharpness +2.



- **Magma Nova**

The Hellblade SnS has an average 300 raw and a decent 30 Blast, but drops the Sharpness +2 requirement entirely, compared to the Crimson Fatalis SnS. It also packs Deviant Boost, making it more useful for Striker or Alchemy SnS users.

## What Skills Should I Use?

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In terms of recommended skills, SnS pretty much needs Razor Sharp all of the time, whereas Sharpness +2, like all weapon types, usage can vary based on the weapon. Unlike other weapons though, Weakness Exploit can be dropped since the combination of Chaos Oil and Affinity Oil can get you up to 60% Affinity at a time. However, you can choose to keep it, especially since Chaos Oil needs a little bit of time to charge up first, and you only have a limited amount of Affinity Oil, so it's your choice.

### Progression Armor Sets

#### Low Rank (Village 1-6\*, Hub 1-3\*)

- **BuJaBu**

The classic recommendation progression option, use Bulldrome Cap, Jaggi Mail, Bulldrome Vambraces, Jaggi Faulds, and Bulldrome Greaves and gem for additional Attack to get Attack Up (L) super early in the game.

- **Ceanataur**

Ceanataur's armor set, with its Critical Eye and Razor Sharp skillset, really helps out SnS, even much so that you should probably replace your BuJaBu set with this. Do note that this early in the game Critical Eye will be less impactful than BuJaBu.

- **Rathalos**

The Rathalos armor set packs both Attack Up and Weakness Exploit, and can be gemmed for even more Attack. This makes this set an upgrade to BuJaBu, and due to the placement in progression, can be used to transition to High Rank easily.

- **Rathalos Mixset**

By using Rathalos Cap, Rathalos Mail, Ceanataur Vambraces, Rathalos Faulds, and Bnahabra Boost, you can trade a few Attack points for points in Razor Sharp, which makes this set way more useful for SnS. I definitely recommend this if you can spare the Defense.

#### High Rank (Village 7-10\*, Hub 4-7\*)

- **BuJaBu S**

Basically the same as standard BuJaBu, except for High Rank. You should really only get this if you're really hurting for Defense and you skipped Rathalos's set.

- **Ceanataur S**

Ceanataur's set in High Rank is more of the same from Low Rank Ceanataur's. More Critical Eye while Razor Sharp stays the same. Definitely get for SnS.

- **Rathalos S**

Still more of the same for Rathalos's High Rank set, with more Attack points than Low Rank. Because of this it's still a great progression set, and remains useful even for transitioning to G-Rank.

- **Rathalos Mixset S**

Replace all the parts of the Low Rank version of the mixset and you get this version with more points in Attack than before, so this set is quite effective for the SnS user when transitioning to G-Rank.

- **Silver Sol**

Silver Sol is a fine set if you want to suffer fighting Silver Rathalos, and works as an alternative set to progress to G-Rank. Packing both Weakness Exploit and Critical Boost, this set can pack a punch as long as you can hit weakspots consistently, which SnS can't always do.

- **Hayasol**

The Gen meta set of legend makes its return as a late-High Rank set, capable of taking people who are willing to grind for the Hayabusa Feather all the way to HR Break, so long as the user is skilled enough.

## **G-Rank (Hub G1-G4\*)**

- **Ceanataur X/GX/XR**

The Ceanataur armor set variants can all be useful for relatively early SnS armor progression, since they all pack Razor Sharp. Depending on the variant, the method to boost Affinity differs, with GX providing Repeat Offender, X providing more Critical Eye points, and XR providing points in Handicraft and Razor Sharp, but being available later.

- **Rathalos X**

Rathalos X provides Attack, Weakness Exploit, and a few points in Earplugs, making this an easy-to-make and easy-to-use progression set, perfect for taking on Ahtal Ka.

- **Rathalos Mixset X**

This variation on the classic Rathalos mixset provides Razor Sharp in exchange for the points in Hearing, which isn't necessarily needed on SnS. To make, simply use Rathalos Helm X, Rathalos Mail X, Rathalos Vambraces X, Vaik Faulds X, and Bnahabra Boots X, along with a few appropriate decorations.

- **Jho Ceana**

By itself, Jho Ceana provides Sharpness +2 and Razor Sharp, and features a lot of armor slots, letting you customize this set well. To make, simply put together Esurient XR and Ceanataur XR alternating.

## Skill Recommendations

- **Razor Sharp**

Crucial to Sharpness upkeep on SnS, since SnS hits quickly compared to other weapon types. You nearly always need Razor Sharp unless you encounter the rare long length of Sharpness Gauge, such as on Valstrax's SnS.

- **Weakness Exploit**

Provides +50% Affinity when you strike weakspots of monsters. Incredibly powerful, as long as you can hit weakspots, which you might not be able to do as SnS. See: Deviljho's chest.

- **Repeat Offender**

A good alternative for Weakness Exploit for when you can't hit weakspots consistently, this grants up to 30% Affinity when you consecutively hit monsters, making it only a slightly weaker choice of skill when compared to Weakness Exploit.

- **Sharpness +2**

Like all weapon types, this skill's usefulness varies depending on the weapon you use it with. For SnS, there's only a few situations where S+2 isn't useful, such as when you can't get a higher Sharpness grade with S+2, or if the Sharpness gauge on the weapon is full.

- **Critical Boost**

Increases the damage of your critical hits from 1.25x to 1.40x. Needless to say, if you have a ton of Affinity already, which is easy to do with SnS's Chaos Oil + Affinity Oil, this skill amplifies your damage even further. There's not really a situation with SnS where you don't need to use this.

- **Critical Eye +1/2/3**

Classic Affinity booster, most often used to round out a set. Do make sure you don't overload on Affinity though.

- **Challenger +1/2**

An alternative to Critical Eye. Challenger is useful in G-Rank because most monsters enrage frequently and quickly, providing you with a nearly-constant raw and Affinity boost.

- **[Element] Atk +1/2 and Elem Atk Up, Status Atk +1/2**

Since you're SnS, you can take advantage of the unique powers behind SnS and boost your alternative form of damage by taking one of these skills. Doing so won't decrease your damage too much, so feel free to use these as an alternative to the classical crit meta.

- **Elemental Crit**

Elemental Crit combines the potency of the crit meta with the elemental power of SnS. As SnS, you get 35% more Element damage whenever you crit, so if you can stack a lot of Affinity, which again is easy to do as SnS, this skill can be powerful.

## Monster Matchups

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**Please note that this section is mostly based on personal opinion and should not be taken at face value. Matchups can vary wildly between skill levels and even between individuals.**

In this section I'll be going over monster matchups in the order that the monsters are arranged in the Hunter's Notes, except for one monster, which I'll talk about at the end in order to avoid spoilers.

I'll be using a /10 rating system for this, the higher the number the better the matchup is for you, with 10 being a great matchup for you and 0 being a pretty bad matchup. Keep in mind that this is based off of Guild/No Arts as a baseline, because you can tapdance over most things with Adept or Valor. This section won't cover in detail the monster either.

### Neopterons and Temnocerans

**Seltas: 10/10** (Thunder/Blast)

Seltas is quite easy when he's by himself. Sidestep his aerial charges and knock him out of the air to trip him, then whale on him.

**Seltas Queen: 8/10** (Fire/Blast)

The queen may not like you hitting her from the front, as that will leave you open to her other frontal attacks, like her charges or her hydro cannon. To counteract this, attack her legs and wait for openings, like when Seltas drops her or when she does a hipcheck, then attack the head.

**Nerscylla: 9/10** (Fire/Thunder/Blast)

Nerscylla's head isn't accessible much to SnS, unless you use like Shoryugeki or something. You're probably gonna want to stick to the legs and attack those until they break, or wait for Nerscylla to extend its poison fangs, then attack those to trip it. Nerscylla's attacks in general are quick, but dodgeable.

### Piscine Wyverns

**Cephadrome: 9/10** (Ice)

Annoying as heck to fight, but is weak as paper once you actually get it to get out of the sand. Sticking to the legs might get you hipchecked a little, but overall this fight is pain-free aside from getting Cephadrome out of the sand in the first place.

**Plesioth: 5/10** (Thunder)

One tall boy, and one that won't let you hit its weakspots that easily. Staying by Plesioth's legs can and will get you hipchecked, so wait out Plesioth's attacks and wait for the water beams, which force Plesioth to stand still for the duration, leaving its legs open. Also, don't try to block the water beams, since you can't.

**Lavasioth: 4/10** (Water)

Just as annoying as Plesioth, but has attacks that can frustrate Blademasters, especially the super body slam. Be very careful if you attack it on land since it can hipcheck or dance all over you. Wait for it to shoot the projectiles, or for it to pop out of the lava, since then you can force it out and attack it. If you're precise, you may be able to use Shoryugeki on the head.

## Bird Wyverns

**The Dromes: 10/10** (Velocidrome: Ice, Giadrome: Fire, Gendrome: Thunder/Ice, Iodrome: Water/Thunder)

All fairly easy as SnS since you have the mobility to get around their fast attacks and hit them. The only difficult part about these fights is trying not to fall asleep, or hitting their minions instead of the dromes themselves.

**Great Maccao: 10/10** (Fire)

Great Maccao is trivial to fight as SnS, since you can maneuver around its moves easily. The most deadly thing about this fight is either trying to knock Great Maccao off its tail or trying to eliminate all the Maccaos around you.

**Yian Kut-Ku: 9/10** (Ice)

Can be frustrating to fight if you're just starting out, but try to stay to Kut-Ku's sides as you're fighting it and you'll avoid most troubles with it. Just don't stay too long since staying to Kut-Ku's sides can make you eat a tail whip, and if you stay even longer Kut-Ku might turn around and turn your side attack into a frontal assault, which Kut-Ku will respond to in kind.

**Gypceros: 9/10** (Fire)

Gypceros is similar to Kut-Ku except it has poison and the ability to stun you instead. Fortunately for you, you can just block the flash and you'll ignore the stun effect that comes afterward. But you probably don't want to do that for long, so break Gypceros's crest and you'll turn that flash into an opportunity for you to hit Gypceros.

**Yian Garuga: 7/10** (Water)

Garuga can be devastating to the spammy Blademaster, but keep your cool and hold yourself back to wait out its attacks. The main windows of opportunity you're looking for is when Garuga shoots fireballs and, when enraged, when it tries to beak slams you. If you take Shoryugeki and Exhaust Oil, Garuga is quite easy to stun.

**Deadeye Yian Garuga: 8/10 (Water)**

Deadeye is Garuga designed for the modern age, which mostly translates into additional windows of opportunity without making Deadeye excessively spammy. Also like Garuga, Deadeye shares Garuga's weakness to Stun and Exhaust effects. However, once you get further into G-Rank, Deadeye's tendency to backstep really creates issues for Blademasters, since Deadeye can chain those into fireballs, or worse, beak slams. Watch out if Deadeye backsteps.

**Malfestio: 10/10 (Water)**

Trivial owl is trivial to fight. Just adapt to the confusion effect if you are hit by it, and bring Energy Drinks if you're inflicted with Sleep. In G-Rank, all you have to watch out for are the wings slams, but you'll know if it's about to do those since it can only chain into those.

**Nightcloak Malfestio: 9/10 (Water)**

The same as Malfestio but with an invisibility gimmick that can be nullified if you break its head. The game plan's the same too, just watch for its attacks, particularly the super dive it can do out of invisibility, and keep on whacking it.

**Fanged Beasts****Bulldrome: 10/10 (Thunder)**

Just whack it on the butt and back off every now and again to avoid the anti-Blademaster melee attack that it can do. The charges may be unpredictable, but just don't try to attack when Bulldrome paws at the ground.

**Kecha Wacha: 10/10 (Fire)**

Kecha Wacha's insta-charges and frontal-based attacks are just recommendations for you to attack Kecha from behind. The occasional hovering Kecha may do is neat, but ultimately you don't have to care about it.

**Lagombi: 10/10 (Fire)**

Bunny is trivial to fight, just stay away from its front side or you might eat a slide. Stay behind it and whack the butt with Fire damage.

**Snowbaron Lagombi: 7/10 (Fire)**

Snowbaron's attacks can be overwhelming, but like Lagombi, can be (mostly) avoided by going to its rear end. The only attack you have to fear here is when it performs a circular slide, which, while guardable, does knock you back a lot. Being SnS though, you can more easily use Sonic Bombs while Snowbaron isn't enraged to stun it, and you can especially do this when it's about to toss a snownuke on your hunter friends.

**Arzueros: 10/10 (Fire)**

Bear arms against Arzuros and... pretty much do what you do against Lagombi. Circle around it with your mobility and whack it from behind, and Arzuros can't do much about it.

**Redhelm Arzuros: 7/10** (Ice/Status)

With the shitzones on Redhelm, your best bet is to use its 'weakness' of status and status application. For best results, use Para. The fight's also mostly the same as a standard Arzuros, but keep an eye out for some of Redhelm's more pivot-y attacks.

**Congalala: 10/10** (Fire)

Trivial monkey. Just move to the sides and Congalala can't do much. Keep an eye out for the occasional backstep to breath combo, and don't get farted on.

**Blangonga: 7/10** (Fire)

Watch out for clotheslines and stay to its sides as you fight him. If you're anywhere remotely far away from it, it'll try to clothesline ya, and it'll sometimes do it twice. That attack really hurts, so do your best to try to iframe the first and second, or block the second one. Try to attack when Blangonga either tries its ice breath, or in G-Rank, does the slam to super slam combo.

**Volvidon: 10/10** (Water)

You have a short range, so you can't really knock Volvidon out of its rolling attacks. You can definitely stand in front of Volvidon though and keep on attacking it, since staying behind or to the sides will probably make you get rolled over.

**Rajang: 7/10** (Ice)

Try to stick to Rajang's back legs as you attack Rajang, as some of its attacks can come out extremely quickly. If you don't feel comfortable reading Rajang, then you ought to stay back and wait out its attacks, waiting for Rajang to try shooting projectiles or the beam. Remember that you can block tremors with your shield.

**Furious Rajang: 7/10** (Ice)

Furious is more of the same dance as normal Rajang, except locked in a perma-rage state. The way you fight Furious is pretty much the same though, stick to the back legs and bait out its ranged attacks.

**Gammoth: 10/10** (Fire/Thunder)

Gammoth may be big, but you've got the mobility to run circles around her. Attack her legs to break the snow off then break em to make Gammoth's head and trunk way easier to hit. Just try to stay away if she feels stompy.

**Elderfrost Gammoth: 8/10** (Fire)

Elderfrost's front legs restriction to trip her is slightly annoying, and her ability to move you around doesn't really help either. However this fight is more or less the same as a normal Gammoth, except for a few attacks, like the super snowplow or the ice boulder slam. If you're really brave you can try to

stun Elderfrost out of the super snowplow. You'll get tremor'd if you fail to do so, letting you superman out of the way if necessary, so go for it!

## Amphibians

### **Tetsucabra: 10/10** (Water)

Trivial frog with a giant face means you can Shoryugeki it and break the fangs easily. If you can't do that, maneuver around to the backside and hit the legs or the tail if its puffed up.

### **Drilltusk Tetsucabra: 9/10** (Water)

Same as normal Tetsucabra except remotely threatening. Shoryugeki the face, break the fangs, then you can treat this guy as a normal Tetsucabra which can pull up giant rocks. Watch out for suplexes in G-Rank though, those have extra range.

### **Zamtrios: 10/10** (Fire/Thunder)

As SnS you can burn away Zamtrios's ice armor with Fire attacks, then you can trip it and eventually force it to puff up, revealing a great hitzone on the stomach. Remember that you can't block the beams that Zamtrios uses, so try to maneuver around to the side if you think Zamtrios is gonna do the normal version, and sheathe 'n dive if you expect the spinny version.

## Carapaceons

### **Daimyo Hermitaur: 10/10** (Thunder)

Give the crabbo a stabbo with Thunder damage. Stick either to the legs or to behind the legs in order to dodge the claw-based attacks and try to tip it, letting down the head for you to hit. You can use Shoryugeki on Daimyo's head normally and you'll hit it pretty consistently too.

### **Stonefist Hermitaur: 9/10** (Thunder)

The same as a normal Hermitaur except it's much larger and you can break the legs. Do that, and you'll make it trip. Be a friendly guy and attack Stonefist's larger claw whenever it does trip to break it permanently instead of the head. You can still attack the head with Shoryugeki though. Oh, and like Snowbaron, you can toss Sonic Bombs at Stonefist while it's guarding and you'll knock it out for a little bit. Do note that it won't work if Stonefist isn't 'fully guarding' though.

### **Shogun Ceanataur: 9/10** (Thunder)

Same as Daimyo but this guy's more aggressive, as shown by the swordy claws. The game plan's mostly the same too, stick to the legs with Thunder damage and trip the guy. However the largest difference comes with Shogun's jumping attacks, which can be dangerous if you try to guard them as they have two hitboxes you have to block. Simply maneuver behind Shogun if it tries to do it though.

### **Rustrazor Ceanataur: 9/10** (Thunder)

More of the same Ceanataur, but Gravios mode is sorta a different deal. No biggie for you though, just get close to it before it spams the beam attacks, which you can't block. Glavenus mode is very



similar to normal Ceanataur as well, but it has a bootleg Glavenus spin attack, so make some distance before it does that.

## Leviathans

### **Royal Ludroth: 10/10** (Fire)

Warm up this Royal Ludroth with Fire, and either choose to stay near the head and whack that, or stay safe and attack the tail and back legs. Also watch out for the giant AoE slam it gets in G-Rank, since that has a deceptively large hitbox.

### **Agnaktor: 8/10** (Water)

With your mobility you should be able to move around most of Agnaktor's attacks. You can opt to either go straight for Agnaktor's chest, which does leave you open to some of Agnaktor's attacks, or stick to the outside of its legs and attack those, in order to try to trip it and let you attack the chest more or less safely.

### **Nibelsnarf: 10/10** (Ice)

Big face means big KO potential, so bring them Stamina Oils. Nibelsnarf can be a little frustrating to fight anyhow, since it doesn't reveal any weakspots in particular throughout the fight, unless you Exhaust it (impossible when it's Hyper) or if you mount and subsequently break its parts. Bring bombs, then lure Nibelsnarf into eating those to let you fish it out of the sand.

### **Lagiacrus: 7/10** (Fire)

Very dangerous to fight, especially with the addition of those lightning bites it has in G-Rank. You can try to do the same thing as Agnaktor and try to stay to the outside of the legs. You can also try to stick to the tail as well. Just watch out for those lightning bites and hipchecks.

### **Mizutsune: 9/10** (Thunder)

With Mizutsune's head being close to the ground you can definitely Shoryugeki it. Otherwise, you should stick to the tail and try to attack that, since that's a good hitzone. Simple positioning and knowledge of what Mizutsune can do will get you through this fight.

### **Soulseer Mizutsune: 8/10** (Thunder)

You'll have to play along with Soulseer's gimmick of Bubbling to make it be enraged and make its hitzones better for you. Unless you like hitting bad hitzones, but that's you. Hit the licked spots and stay away from the front. Learn which attacks can chain into other attacks, and block if you're really in a sticky spot.

## Snake Wyverns

### **Najarala: 6/10** (Ice)

This snake can be incredibly frustrating to fight in G-Rank, simply because of the homing scale of doom, which Najarala can combo you into because they also generate sound waves. Blocking them is also a task, since you need to block multiple times, and you don't have infinite Stamina. Try to

maneuver around the back legs while Najarala is tossing scales or trying to attack you, since it's a good hitzone and it trips Najarala into letting you hit the head.

## Brute Wyverns

**Barroth: 10/10** (Fire/Water)

Roll out of the way of the charges and then attack the front legs when Barroth turns around. You can also attack the legs but beware of the bites and tail whips that it can do.

**Deviljho: 8/10** (Thunder/Blast)

You won't have access to Deviljho's chest when it enrages, so you're stuck attacking the legs, which isn't bad, but it's not good either. You can block Deviljho's tremors with your shield though, so if you're by its left leg you can prevent yourself from being tremor'd.

**Savage Deviljho: 7/10** (Thunder)

More of the same Deviljho, but perma-enraged and likes to pin you a lot more than the standard Deviljho. Using an elemental weapon is more important than ever now, since Savage is weak to the elements, with a consistent 25 elemental hitzone all around the body. Savage will hit you incredibly hard if you let him though, so keep aware.

**Uragaan: 9/10** (Water/Dragon/Poison)

Remember that you can't block gas attacks, so you'll have to make distance to dodge Uragaan's gas-based attacks. Blocking the rolls is doable, though you'll take a little bit of chip damage doing so. You can opt to hit Uragaan's giant head to break it and reveal a better hitzone, or you can attack the weaker stomach. And fortunately you can stay below Uragaan for most of the fight and keep attacking the stomach.

**Crystalbeard Uragaan: 9/10** (Water/Dragon/Poison)

Has a lot of tremors to go through this fight but is mostly the same. Do watch out for the rolling attacks since those start to throw out rocks as Crystalbeard rolls, and hitzone-wise is more resistant to damage. Take poison to this fight if your teammates have enough damage.

**Duramboros: 9/10** (Fire/Poison)

Either stick to the face or near the tail, and counterattack it when Duramboros tries to slam you with it. Take advantage of when Duramboros flies way up into the air to attack the tail and break it. If you have a Pitfall Trap you can hit the back when it goes into it.

**Brachydios: 9/10** (Water)

You won't be able to hit the face or tail under normal circumstance since the arms are blocking you and the head is likely too far up for you to hit. You can hit it with Shoryugeki though, so that's an option. For most of Brachydios's attacks you can roll past and under it, so just keep on attacking the legs and fists.

**Raging Brachydios: 8/10 (Ice)**

Larger Brachydios with a defuse mechanic, which you can mostly tolerate since you can roll out of the way of the followup explosion. You can follow the same game plan for this fight as for Brachydios though, since Raging doesn't have new attacks.

**Glavenus: 10/10 (Water)**

Attacking Glavenus's head when it's enflamed is an easier option than you think, just roll out of the way when you think Glavenus is gonna attack. Attacking the tailblade is even easier, since Glavenus has a brief recovery period after those attacks. If you can't attack either, then attacking the legs is an okay option.

**Hellblade Glavenus: 8/10 (Ice)**

Hellblade's explosive personality is really only an issue if you're trying to attack the tailblade when it's explosive and stuff. When the head is explosive you can use Shoryugeki and nearly always make it explode, or if you bring Stamina Oil, you can even stun Hellblade for a brief period. Just watch out for the large AoE explosions, since they hurt.

**Flying Wyverns****Nargacuga: 9/10 (Fire/Thunder)**

Trying to block Nargacuga's attacks is hard as SnS, since Nargacuga will likely jump to your side and hit you with another swipe. Try to block one of the later parts of the swipe combo if you must block. Else, either stay to the side and hit the wingblades or attack the tail.

**Silverwind Nargacuga: 5/10 (Thunder)**

Silverwind has a tendency to stay away and shoot projectiles at you constantly, which as an SnS are hard to block. The fight itself is mostly the same as a standard Nargacuga though, but watch out for Full Moon Slashes that Silverwind may do in G-Rank, and try to close the gap as quickly as possible to prevent Silverwind from jumping away again.

**Barioth: 9/10 (Fire)**

Barioth's mobility can be hard to deal with at first, but try to break the arms and its mobility will go down drastically. Add a touch of Fire and Barioth will go down quickly enough.

**Rathian: 10/10 (Dragon)**

Rathian's head is quite weak to damage and to stun, so if you time Shoryugekis right you can apply a lot of Stun to her. If you can't attack the head safely then her legs are always a good option.

**Dreadqueen Rathian: 7/10 (Dragon)**

Dreadqueen's legs can be a little bit more dangerous to hang around since she has more attacks that hit under her. You can still stick to them though, just roll under her for those attacks. Watch out for Wyvernfires too, since they can hurt a lot even if you aren't directly taking the main blast.

**Gold Rathian: 4/10** (Thunder)

Goldian is very dangerous due to her high overall damage, which separates her from Dreadqueen's initial low damage but high poison damage. Firebreaths, tail flips, and frequent napalms will make you fear for your life throughout the entire fight, and she also has pretty bad hitzones throughout her body. Use Mind's Eye Oils in order to prevent yourself from being combo'd and stay to her right leg to dodge her firebreaths.

**Rathalos: 9/10** (Dragon)

Rathalos's tendency to stay in the air makes him frustrating to fight as an SnS user, but if you bring flashes that problem is mostly solved. In G-Rank, watch out for fireball takeoffs, as those can hurt a lot.

**Dreadking Rathalos: 6/10** (Dragon)

Fireballs that look like tiny suns are no joke to mess with. Dreadking is super mobile, being mostly aerial-based. As SnS, you can't even Flash Bomb him until you break at least one wing, so you're kinda screwed in that regard. If you can mount him, he has a low initial mount threshold, which can let you break a wing relatively easily, though the issue now is trying to mount him in the first place.

**Silver Rathalos: 5/10** (Water)

Rathalos, but with shitty hitzones for you to contend with. Mind's Eye Oil is your best friend here, as well as Flash Bombs. Use your high mobility to dodge out of the way of the poison claw to nuke combo, as G-Rank Silver Rathalos will use that constantly.

**Basarios: 9/10** (Water/Dragon/Blast)

Remember that you can't block Basarios's gas attacks. Attack the stomach to break it, or the legs to trip Basarios. You also might want to bring Mind's Eye Oil for this one. Also remember to back off every now and then to get out of the way of any gas attacks Basarios may want to do.

**Gravios: 9/10** (Water/Dragon/Blast)

Gravios is the same fight as Basarios except it's bigger and can shoot beams, which you can't block. Stay under Gravios, backing off when you expect a post-beam gas attack, and keep on attacking the legs to break them and expose the stomach.

**Khezu: 9/10** (Fire)

Either stay near the legs to trip Khezu or stay near the head to deal a lot of damage. Try to block the roars, otherwise you'll sit there for a while covering your ears. Try to attack the head when Khezu tries to fire projectiles at you too.

**Tigrex: 7/10** (Thunder)

Hard to chase since Tigrex likes to charge a lot. You'll want to try to stay near its backlegs when you do catch up to it, since that'll make it trip and let you attack it. Don't try to stay in front of it, but if you do find yourself there and Tigrex is about to charge, roll under its left leg and you'll be fine.

**Grimclaw Tigrex: 6/10** (Thunder)

Try to bait out the boulder to charge combos, since that'll let you attack its hind legs. Making it enrage is also useful since it'll then make the claws weak to damage, at which point a Flash Bomb will make it stay in place.

**Seregios: 9/10** (Thunder)

You can keep up with Seregios's attacks, but watch out for the Crescent Sweeps, which have a large area which they affect. Stay under it, attacking the legs or head when applicable, and roll out of the projectiles' bleeding effect.

**Astalos: 8/10** (Ice)

You'll likely not be able to hit Astalos's wings, limiting you to his head when you're attacking him. This will let you Shoryugeki him, but you'll also be susceptible to many attacks if you're fighting him this way. Fortunately you can probably roll under most of them, as long as you see them coming. In G-Rank, try not to eat too many Astalos combo attacks.

**Boltreaver Astalos: 7/10** (Ice)

Like a normal Astalos, but has more dangerous attacks. You can block the Boltblade, sure, but you'll take a ton of knockback and Stamina damage, so only do it if you're sure that you'll get hit otherwise. Again, this is like the normal Astalos fight, but with larger monsters and more damage.

**Diablos: 10/10** (Ice/Poison)

Try to hit Diablos's legs and trip it, but be wary of the attacks Diablos can do to hit under itself, like hipcheck or head swings, or tail whips. Fortunately for you the charges are easy to dodge, so just focus on trying to hit Diablos's legs.

**Bloodbath Diablos: 5/10** (Water)

Bloodbath Diablos is extremely dangerous for your typical Blademaster. Not only does Bloodbath have even more attacks that hit under and near itself, but it also has dangerous charges and the ability to chain its roar into a devastating charge. As SnS, you can block the roar, letting you have a little bit of time to hopefully block the upcoming charge or to just get out of the way entirely, but the rest of its attacks are hard to dodge regardless. Stay near the legs and try to break those, like regular Diablos, but you can also opt to hit the head, since that becomes a weakspot after you break one horn.

**Akantor: 7/10** (Thunder/Dragon)

Akantor's basically a giant Tigrex, and you should treat it like one, staying near the backlegs. What separates Akantor from Tigrex is the fact that Akantor has tail-based attacks, is way larger than your average Tigrex, and can inflict Defense Double Down. Severing the tail while staying away from the head is the game plan here, and you can also dodge the tail attacks by rolling under Akantor itself.

**Ukanlos: 8/10** (Fire/Thunder)

Essentially a cooler version of Akantor, but without the Defense Double Down and the ability to Snowman you. The plan's the same, stick to the back legs and sever the tail. The attacks to watch out for are the followup boulder shovel attack it can do in G-Rank as well as the swim attack, which you should know how to dodge, right?

???

#### **Gore Magala: 9/10 (Fire)**

Stay to its sides and take advantage of the many recovery times that Gore has. The insta-charges are dangerous enough to stay away from the front, and attacking the legs makes it trip. When it goes into Frenzy Mode, trying to trip it is more essential than ever, but you can also just go for the head after certain attacks in order to break it out of the Frenzy Mode.

#### **Chaotic Gore Magala: 8/10 (Fire/Dragon)**

The same as Gore Magala except it also has Shagaru Magala's attacks, which does make it more dangerous than the more common ilk. Still, the way you fight a normal Gore more or less works here, but watch out for the occasional Shagaru Magala attacks.

### **Fanged Wyverns**

#### **Zinogre: 10/10 (Ice)**

Zinogre is quite easy as SnS, since you can go around to its backlegs and trip it all day every day. Once that's done you can attack its head. Speaking of which, if you time your Shoryugeki right, Stunning Zinogre is quite easy, as it takes more Stun damage while Zinogre's charged.

#### **Thunderlord Zinogre: 9/10 (Ice)**

The attacks are more dangerous than a standard Zinogre's, but is more or less the same. However, staying in front of Thunderlord can and will get you combo'd, so staying near those backlegs and following them around is essential for getting through this fight.

### **Elder Dragons**

#### **Kirin: 10/10 (Fire/Water)**

Trivial boy, but you can't really use element on Kirin here. Fortunately you can use Stamina Oil and knock out Kirin easily, just wait for the times where Kirin takes a break.

#### **Shagaru Magala: 9/10 (Fire/Dragon)**

Lots of breath attacks means that getting under Shagaru is hard, but once you do, Shagaru can't really do much about you being there. It can hop forward and stuff, so staying in front of Shagaru is ill-advised. Just stick to the backlegs and remain mobile, in case Shagaru's DDR simulation tries to get the best of you.

#### **Valstrax: 7/10 (Fire/Water/Thunder/Ice)**

Staying under Valstrax, or toward its backlegs is the easiest way to deal with this fight, as most of Valstrax's attacks are frontal-focused, except for the rare downward Dragon blast that Valstrax do. You can block all of Valstrax's attacks, but you'll take a lot of stamina damage in the process, since Valstrax does like to combo its attacks, especially in G-Rank.

**Kushala Daora: 9/10** (Thunder/Dragon/Poison)

Attack the head when it either turns around or after Kushala's projectile attacks, since those have a bit of recovery time. Take a Thunder SnS if you already have a poison weapon on your team, or if you plan to mount Kushala, and Poison for pretty much every other circumstance. Also, use Flash Bombs if you feel that Kushala's tendency to stay in the air is a bit much.

**Chameleos: 9/10** (Fire/Dragon)

Resistance to raw damage doesn't mean much since you're an SnS and can apply lots of elemental damage. Damaging the backlegs is the best option here, since you can't really attack the head that much, and staying in front of Chameleos is a definite pain.

**Teostra: 9/10** (Water/Ice/Dragon)

Again, stay near the backlegs since Teostra can't really attack you much there, and keep a timer for when Teostra is about to explode. Wait out Teostra's attacks to wait for the ability to attack his backlegs.

**Lao-Shan Lung: 10/10** (Dragon)

Just use fixed weapon, cmon. Unless you really want to take Tremor Res.

**Alatreon: 8/10** (Dragon/Blast)

Uh yeah, stay near the backlegs. Man, this is getting repetitive isn't it? Well, at least Alatreon has a lot of damage, so you should stay away from the frontside pretty much all the time. Remember to Flash Bomb only when Alatreon isn't enraged, or when you don't see an aura surrounding the chest.

**Amatsu: 5/10** (Fire/Dragon)

Amatsu likes to float in the air a lot, and SnS doesn't have much vertical reach, making this fight kinda hard. Trying to hit the head can get you nailed with several attacks, but attacking the hind legs isn't the easiest of tasks either. Just hope you can knock Amatsu out of the tornado attack, or at least try to make enough distance so that the wind effect can't pull you in effectively, and just wait out this fight.

**Nakarkos: 9/10** (Dragon)

Punching bag squid is quite easy, just attack the tentacles to break em and then attack the exposed head or back weakspot. Not much to say otherwise, except to watch out if Nakarkos tries to pivot around to hit you, or to stay to the outside of Nakarkos's head to avoid the head slam attacks.

**Ahtal-Ka: 9/10** (Thunder)

Mech form is typical Blademaster fare, attack the legs to trip, climb on, break the walls and hit the cocoons to break em, then attack the giant cocoon. Rinse and repeat. Ahtal Ka herself poses little

threat, aside from her wide-ranging scythe swipes and her pheromone burst, which inflicts Defense Down. Stay to her sides, and she'll go down soon enough.

#### **Fatalis: 9/10** (Dragon)

Fatalis, like other monsters, is a game of staying near the backlegs and trying your best to attack them. This goes for pretty much all the other variants of Fatalis. If you do find yourself in front of Fatalis, quickly move around it or you'll be open to a bunch of attacks.

#### **Crimson Fatalis: 8/10** (Dragon)

The same as a normal Fatalis, except with meteors of doom. Remember the patterns that the meteors can fall in, and you'll be good.

#### **Old Fatalis: 6/10** (Dragon)

Old Fatalis can put itself into armor mode, which will bounce your attacks and make you do little damage while it's enraged. It also has devastating Thunder-based attacks with the same patterns as Crimson Fatalis, and it can also do lateral Thunder sweeps, which are dangerous to get hit by as they home in on your position. Use the fixed weapons when it goes into armor mode to make this fight as pain-free as possible.

## Final Thoughts

SnS fairs more in the middle of the pack in this game, but Chaos Oil, and all SnS HAs really, are fantastic. SnS isn't LS, where all the styles are above-average in quality, but Striker SnS really is a great style to use. The various matchups don't really change with SnS, though it does suffer against the more mobile monsters. As the basic starter weapon of the game, you can't go wrong with any SnS styles, which matches the 'beginner' weapon aspect that the devs likely wanted to convey with this.

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