# An Archetypal Analysis of "Favorite" Cards: Jaden Yuki's Legacy

## Introduction: The "Favorite" Cards - A Legacy of Jaden Yuki

In the vast and ever-evolving landscape of the *Yu-Gi-Oh! Trading Card Game*, archetypes typically consist of a group of thematically and mechanically linked monsters, spells, and traps designed to function as a cohesive strategy. The "Favorite" archetype, however, defies this conventional structure. It is not a standalone deck but rather a "legacy support" series—a collection of powerful, thematically resonant cards designed to bolster pre-existing archetypes deeply connected to one of the game's most iconic protagonists: Jaden Yuki from the *Yu-Gi-Oh! GX* anime.1 This design philosophy represents a modern trend in the TCG, where the rich narrative history of the franchise is leveraged to revitalize older, fan-favorite strategies with contemporary power levels.

The thematic core of the "Favorite" cards is a direct translation of Jaden Yuki's personal journey into tangible game mechanics. The very name of the archetype is a direct reference to a memorable line from the English dub of the anime, where Jaden, upon summoning his signature monster, declares, "Here he is, my favorite card!".1 This monster,

Elemental HERO Flame Wingman, serves as the initial inspiration for the series. Each "Favorite" card can be seen as a snapshot of a different, crucial phase of Jaden's character arc. The early cards celebrate his initial exuberance and his bond with his first ace monster and his spirit partner, Winged Kuriboh. Subsequent cards reflect his evolution as a duelist and his mastery of Elemental HERO Neos and Contact Fusion. Finally, the series culminates in a card that embodies the mature, post-series resolution of his greatest internal conflict: his profound and symbiotic fusion with the spirit Yubel.4

This report will provide an exhaustive analysis of the four cards that comprise the "Favorite" archetype. It will delve into their individual mechanics, their strategic applications within their intended decks, and the rich thematic lore that underpins their design.

| Card Name | Card Type | Primary Archetype Synergy | Key Function |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Favorite Hero | Equip Spell | Elemental HERO | Battle Phase Enhancement & OTK Enabler |
| Favorite Contact | Normal Trap | Elemental HERO (Neos) | Resource-Recycling Fusion & Disruption |
| Winged Kuriboh LV6 | Effect Monster | Elemental HERO / Winged Kuriboh | Monster Effect Disruption & Burn Damage |
| Eternal Favorite | Continuous Trap | Yubel | Recursion & Opponent-Turn Fusion |

A close examination of these cards reveals an intentional dichotomy in their design. The "Favorite" archetype is deliberately split into two mechanically and thematically distinct branches that, while originating from the same character, are not intended to synergize directly. The first branch, consisting of Favorite Hero, Favorite Contact, and Winged Kuriboh LV6, is explicitly designed to support the various "HERO" strategies, which are typically aggressive and focused on Fusion Summoning powerful monsters to control the board and achieve a One-Turn Kill (OTK).5 The second branch, represented solely by

Eternal Favorite, is exclusively tailored for the "Yubel" archetype.8 The Yubel strategy is fundamentally different, operating as a control-oriented deck that uses Yubel's unique destruction-reflection and burn effects to out-resource the opponent in a protracted grind game.

The only link between these disparate strategies is the narrative of Jaden Yuki. The HERO cards represent his public persona and dominant dueling style for the majority of the *GX* series. In contrast, the Yubel card represents his deeply personal, internal journey and the ultimate resolution of his greatest conflict, transforming a primary antagonist into his most powerful partner.4 This indicates that the "Favorite" moniker is not a mechanical signifier meant to create a single, cohesive strategy, but rather a

*narrative label*. It signifies "a card representing a deep, formative bond of Jaden Yuki's." This design philosophy suggests that future "Favorite" cards are more likely to support other Jaden-related themes, such as the Neo-Spacians or even the Supreme King, rather than attempting to bridge the fundamental mechanical gap between the HERO and Yubel strategies.

## Card Analysis I: Favorite Hero - The Embodiment of an Ace Monster

### Card Profile and Mechanical Breakdown

* **Card Name:** Favorite Hero
* **Card Type:** Equip Spell
* **Effect Text:** *Equip only to a Level 5 or higher "HERO" monster. If you control a card in your Field Zone, the equipped monster gains ATK equal to its original DEF, also your opponent cannot target it with card effects. At the start of the Battle Phase: You can activate 1 Field Spell directly from your hand or Deck. You can only use this effect of "Favorite Hero" once per turn. When the equipped monster attacks and destroys an opponent's monster by battle: You can send this card to the GY; the attacking monster can make a second attack in a row.* 5

Favorite Hero is a multi-faceted Equip Spell that provides a significant boost in offensive capability and protection, designed to turn a powerful HERO monster into a game-ending threat. Its effects can be broken down into three distinct components.

First is the conditional power-up. If the player controls any card in their Field Zone, the equipped monster receives two benefits: a substantial ATK boost equal to its own original DEF, and protection from being targeted by the opponent's card effects.11 This dual benefit is potent; the targeting protection shields the monster from many common forms of removal, while the ATK gain can be immense. For instance, equipping this to a monster like

Destiny HERO - Defender, which has a mere 100 ATK but a colossal 2700 DEF, would transform it into a 2800 ATK powerhouse immune to targeting.5

Second is its powerful consistency effect. Once per turn, at the start of the Battle Phase, the controller of Favorite Hero can activate one Field Spell directly from their hand or, more importantly, their Deck.13 This ability to tutor and activate a Field Spell is a significant strategic advantage, allowing the HERO player to access iconic and powerful cards like

Skyscraper or Skyscraper 2 - Hero City on demand, ensuring the condition for the first effect is met while also gaining the Field Spell's own benefits.14

Third is the finishing blow. When the monster equipped with Favorite Hero destroys an opponent's monster by battle, this card can be sent from the field to the Graveyard to allow that monster to make a second attack in a row.5 This effect is a classic OTK enabler, perfectly suited to the aggressive, high-damage philosophy of many HERO builds.

### Thematic Resonance: A Love Letter to Flame Wingman

Favorite Hero is, in every aspect of its design, a direct and heartfelt homage to Jaden's original ace, Elemental HERO Flame Wingman. The card's artwork prominently features Flame Wingman soaring above a city, ready for battle.3 The name of the card is a direct quote from Jaden, who frequently referred to Flame Wingman as his "Favorite Hero".1 The card's effects are a mechanical translation of the role Flame Wingman played in the anime: a reliable, powerful finisher that Jaden would summon to turn the tide and win the duel. The ATK boost, the protection from harm, and the ability to press the advantage with a second attack all evoke the spirit of Jaden's go-to monster from the early days of Duel Academy.

### Strategic Application and Combos

Favorite Hero is a cornerstone of aggressive, battle-focused HERO strategies. Its requirement of a Level 5 or higher "HERO" monster makes it compatible with the vast majority of the archetype's Fusion Monsters.

* **Optimal Targets:** Prime candidates for this Equip Spell are monsters that already possess strong offensive or utility effects. Elemental HERO Sunrise is an excellent choice, as its own effect can search for Miracle Fusion, setting up further plays, and it provides an ATK boost to other HERO monsters. Masked HERO Koga is another synergistic target; its ability to lower an opponent's monster's ATK can help ensure it wins the first battle, triggering the second-attack effect of Favorite Hero.14 Even the formidable  
  Destiny HERO - Destroyer Phoenix Enforcer (DPE) becomes an even greater threat when equipped, gaining a significant ATK boost and targeting protection on top of its already powerful recursion and destruction effects.
* **Example Combo:** A classic and effective OTK combo demonstrates the card's power. The player can use the Quick-Play Spell Mask Change on a LIGHT-Attribute HERO monster, such as Elemental HERO Neos Alius, to Special Summon Masked HERO Koga from the Extra Deck. They can then equip Favorite Hero to Koga. At the start of the Battle Phase, Favorite Hero's effect can be used to activate a Field Spell like Skyscraper 2 - Hero City directly from the Deck. During battle, Koga's effect can be used to decrease an opponent's monster's ATK, while Koga itself gains ATK equal to its DEF from Favorite Hero. After destroying the weakened monster, the player can send Favorite Hero to the Graveyard, allowing the now-massive Koga to attack a second time, often for game-winning damage.14

The design of Favorite Hero serves a subtle but important function within the broader "HERO" super-archetype. The "HERO" archetype is famously fragmented into numerous sub-archetypes: Elemental, Destiny, Vision, Evil, and Masked HEROes, each with its own dedicated support cards. Many of these support cards are restrictive, only working for monsters of their specific sub-archetype. Favorite Hero, however, only requires a "Level 5 or higher 'HERO' monster," a generic condition that encompasses boss monsters from nearly every sub-archetype.5 This makes

Favorite Hero a rare and valuable unifying piece of support. A player can use a Vision HERO engine to facilitate the summon of a Destiny HERO Fusion monster, and then equip that monster with Favorite Hero. It actively encourages and rewards hybrid deck building, allowing the various disparate parts of Jaden's and Aster Phoenix's legacies to share a single, powerful finishing tool. In this way, Favorite Hero is more than just a nostalgia piece; it is a piece of game design that incentivizes players to explore the full, rich breadth of the "HERO" card pool, creating a "greatest hits" style of deck that is thematically perfect for a card celebrating Jaden's history.

## Card Analysis II: Favorite Contact - Redefining HERO Fusion

### Card Profile and Mechanical Breakdown

* **Card Name:** Favorite Contact
* **Card Type:** Normal Trap
* **Effect Text:** *Special Summon 1 Fusion Monster from your Extra Deck that mentions a "HERO" monster as material, ignoring its Summoning conditions, by placing the Fusion Materials mentioned on it on the bottom of the Deck in any order, from among cards in your hand, field, GY, and/or your banished cards. If you placed "Elemental HERO Neos" into the Deck, neither player can return the monster Special Summoned by this effect to the Extra Deck. You can only activate 1 "Favorite Contact" per turn.* 6

Favorite Contact is a Normal Trap card that provides an incredibly versatile and resource-efficient method of Fusion Summoning, specifically tailored for the Elemental HERO Neos strategy. Its mechanics are twofold and exceptionally powerful in the modern game.

The primary mechanic is its unique summoning method. Unlike traditional Fusion Spells that send materials to the Graveyard, Favorite Contact shuffles the required materials back into the Deck from almost any conceivable location: the hand, field, Graveyard, and even the banished zone.6 This "shuffle back" effect is immensely valuable, as it recycles key one-of monsters like

Elemental HERO Neos and the various Neo-Spacians, preventing the player from running out of resources in a prolonged duel. The ability to use materials from anywhere makes it extraordinarily flexible, allowing a player to recover from board wipes or utilize resources they have milled or banished earlier in the game.

The secondary mechanic is its potent protection clause. If Elemental HERO Neos is used as one of the materials for the Fusion Summon, the resulting monster gains a powerful immunity: neither player can return it to the Extra Deck.6 In the contemporary Yu-Gi-Oh! metagame, non-destruction removal that returns monsters to the Extra Deck (such as the effects of

Knightmare Unicorn, Compulsory Evacuation Device, or Ice Dragon's Prison) is one of the most common and effective ways to deal with powerful boss monsters. This clause provides a formidable layer of protection against a huge swath of the game's most popular removal options, making the summoned monster incredibly difficult to deal with.

### Advanced Rulings and Interactions

A critical nuance of Favorite Contact's protection is its specificity. The text explicitly prevents the monster from being returned to the "Extra Deck".6 This means that effects which return monsters to the

*hand* are not covered by this protection. As clarified in player discussions, a card like Marincess Aqua Argonaut, whose effect returns a monster to the hand, would successfully bypass this immunity and remove the monster from the field.16 This distinction is vital for competitive players to understand, as it defines the precise scope of the card's defensive capabilities.

### Thematic Resonance: The Evolution of Contact Fusion

The design of Favorite Contact is a masterful blend of Jaden's dueling history. The name itself is a portmanteau of "Favorite Hero" and "Contact Fusion," the unique summoning mechanic pioneered by Elemental HERO Neos and his Neo-Spacian allies.17 The "shuffle materials back into the Deck" effect is a direct mechanical callback to the original Contact Fusion, which did not use

Polymerization and returned its materials to the Deck at the end of the turn. The card's artwork powerfully captures this synthesis, depicting Elemental HERO Neos and Elemental HERO Shining Flare Wingman (an evolution of Jaden's first ace) seemingly merging to form Elemental HERO Shining Neos Wingman, a monster that represents the union of Jaden's old and new signature cards.17

### Strategic Application in Neos Decks

Favorite Contact is the central and most powerful card in modern Elemental HERO Neos strategies. Its status as a Trap Card, combined with its searchability, allows it to function as the deck's primary form of interaction and disruption during the opponent's turn. It is typically searched by the effect of a monster like Elemental HERO Flame Wingman - Infernal Rage and set, waiting to be activated at the most impactful moment.18

* **Primary Target: Elemental HERO Cosmo Neos:** The most devastating application of Favorite Contact is to summon Elemental HERO Cosmo Neos during the opponent's Draw or Standby Phase. Cosmo Neos possesses a powerful floodgate effect that, for the rest of the turn, prevents the opponent from activating monster effects on the field and also negates the effects of all face-up monsters they currently control. When activated this early in the opponent's turn, this effect can be utterly crippling, effectively skipping their turn entirely as most modern decks rely on their monster effects to build a board.18 This single play is the deck's premier "going-first" win condition.
* **Other Key Targets:** When a floodgate is not needed, Elemental HERO Shining Neos Wingman is another prime target, offering powerful board-wiping potential and high ATK for offensive pressure. Elemental HERO Nebula Neos can be summoned to provide hand disruption by shuffling away the opponent's entire hand.18

The introduction of Favorite Contact has caused a fundamental paradigm shift in the strategic identity of Neos-focused HERO decks. Historically, the HERO archetype has been a quintessential "go-second" OTK strategy. Its game plan revolved around using powerful board-breaking cards to dismantle an opponent's established field and then win in a single, overwhelming Battle Phase. The archetype traditionally lacked powerful options for going first or interacting meaningfully on the opponent's turn, with notable but often specific exceptions like Masked HERO Dark Law or Destiny HERO - Destroyer Phoenix Enforcer.

Favorite Contact, being a Trap Card, is inherently designed for opponent-turn interaction. Its most potent target, Cosmo Neos, has a floodgate effect that is only truly effective when used *before* the opponent has a chance to commit their resources to the board.18 The existence of this searchable trap card gives the Neos variant of HERO a consistent and formidable "going-first" strategy for the first time in its history. It transforms the deck from a purely reactive, board-breaking strategy into a proactive, control-oriented one that can now choose to go first, confident in its ability to establish a powerful lock that can shut down the opponent's entire game plan. This has had a ripple effect on how the deck is constructed, played, and perceived within the competitive landscape.

## Card Analysis III: Winged Kuriboh LV6 - A Spirit Partner's Tribute

### Card Profile and Mechanical Breakdown

* **Card Name:** Winged Kuriboh LV6
* **Attribute:** LIGHT
* **Level:** 6
* **Type:** Fairy / Effect
* **ATK/DEF:** 300/200
* **Effect Text:** *(This card is always treated as an "Elemental HERO" and "Favorite" card.) Cannot be Normal Summoned/Set. Must be Special Summoned (from your hand or GY) by banishing 1 "Elemental HERO" Fusion Monster or 1 "Winged Kuriboh" from your hand, face-up field, or GY. You can only Special Summon "Winged Kuriboh LV6" once per turn this way. When an opponent's monster declares an attack, or your opponent activates a monster effect on the field (Quick Effect): You can Tribute this card; destroy that 1 monster, and if you do, inflict damage to your opponent equal to its original ATK.* 7

Winged Kuriboh LV6 is a unique monster that functions as a piece of recursive disruption for HERO decks. Its mechanics are noteworthy for both their simplicity and their underlying complexity.

Its summoning method is an inherent Special Summon, meaning the act of summoning it does not start a Chain.19 This is a crucial distinction in high-level play. It cannot be negated by cards that respond to the activation of an effect, such as

Baronne de Fleur. Furthermore, because it is a summoning condition and not an effect that activates in the Graveyard, it can bypass certain floodgates that restrict Graveyard effects, such as Necrovalley.20 This makes its recursion from the Graveyard surprisingly resilient.

Its primary function is its Quick Effect. By tributing itself, it can destroy a monster on the field that either declares an attack or activates its effect, and then inflict that monster's original ATK as effect damage to the opponent.21 This effect is functionally similar to the popular hand trap

Ghost Ogre & Snow Rabbit, providing a reactive form of removal that can disrupt an opponent's combo by destroying a key monster. The added burn damage is a direct thematic callback to its inspiration.

### Thematic Resonance: Flame Wingman Reincarnated

The design of Winged Kuriboh LV6 is a profound tribute to Elemental HERO Flame Wingman, filtered through the lens of Jaden's inseparable spirit partner, Winged Kuriboh. The monster's artwork depicts the small, fluffy creature adorned in armor and wings that are explicitly based on Flame Wingman's design.23 Several of its characteristics are direct references: its Level is 6, it is always treated as an "Elemental HERO" card, and its signature effect—destroying a monster and inflicting its original ATK as damage—is a direct mirror of Flame Wingman's iconic ability.23 This card beautifully represents the deep bond between Jaden and Winged Kuriboh, with the spirit partner paying homage to its master's first great ace.

### The Great Debate: Viable Tech or Unplayable Brick?

The release of Winged Kuriboh LV6 sparked considerable debate within the HERO player community regarding its practical viability. There are compelling arguments both for and against its inclusion in competitive decks.

* **The Argument For Inclusion:** Proponents view it as a valuable, searchable piece of disruption. The Fusion Monster Elemental HERO Flame Wingman - Infernal Rage has an effect that can search any card that mentions "Favorite Hero," which includes Winged Kuriboh LV6.18 This allows a player to end their primary combo by adding a piece of interaction to their hand or sending it to the Graveyard for later use. Its ability to be repeatedly summoned from the Graveyard turn after turn can create a persistent, annoying resource for the opponent to deal with. In this light, it is seen as a solid one-of tech card that enhances the deck's end board.25
* **The Argument Against Inclusion:** Detractors argue that the card is often a "brick"—a card that is useless in the opening hand. On turn one, a HERO player will rarely have an "Elemental HERO" Fusion Monster in the Graveyard to banish for its summon, making it unplayable.24 HERO decks are already notorious for their high engine requirements and their tendency to draw awkward, un-synergistic hands. Adding another situational, non-starter card is seen as a significant detriment to consistency. Many players feel that the deck slot is better used for more generic, less restrictive forms of disruption.25

The interaction between Winged Kuriboh LV6 and the Spell Card Sabatiel - The Philosopher's Stone perfectly encapsulates the core of this debate. Sabatiel is an incredibly powerful Spell that, if "Winged Kuriboh" is in the Graveyard, allows the player to add any "Polymerization" or "Fusion" Spell Card from their Deck to their hand. Since Winged Kuriboh LV6 is always treated as an "Elemental HERO," it can be easily sent from the Deck to the Graveyard by the effect of a card like Vision HERO Vyon. This would immediately fulfill Sabatiel's condition, allowing a player to search for a game-winning card like Fusion Destiny or Miracle Fusion.26

On paper, this "Sabatiel package" seems potent, turning a milled Winged Kuriboh LV6 into a search for the deck's best Spell. However, the practical cost is steep. Sabatiel itself is unsearchable and is a completely dead card without the proper setup. To make the combo consistent, a player would need to run multiple copies of Sabatiel, adding even more potential bricks to a deck already struggling with consistency.26 This scenario highlights a critical tension in modern deck building: the trade-off between a high-ceiling, synergistic "gimmick" and overall deck stability. While the combo is powerful when it works, the high risk of drawing an unplayable hand makes it an archetypal example of a strategy that thrives in casual, experimental play but is ultimately too unreliable for the optimized environment of competitive tournaments.

## Card Analysis IV: Eternal Favorite - A Bond Forged in Darkness

### Card Profile and Mechanical Breakdown

* **Card Name:** Eternal Favorite
* **Card Type:** Continuous Trap
* **Effect Text:** *Once per turn: You can activate 1 of these effects (but you can only use each effect of "Eternal Favorite" once per turn); ● Special Summon 1 of your "Yubel" monsters that is banished or in your GY. Neither player can activate cards or effects when that monster is Special Summoned. ● If you control "Yubel": Discard 1 card and send this face-up card to the GY; Fusion Summon 1 Fusion Monster from your Extra Deck, using monsters from either field as material, including a "Yubel" monster.* 9

Eternal Favorite is a Continuous Trap that serves as the central support piece for the modern Yubel archetype, providing both recursion and an unparalleled form of disruption.

Its first effect offers consistent revival. Once per turn, it can Special Summon a "Yubel" monster from the Graveyard or banished zone.27 This is essential for maintaining the deck's board presence, as the Yubel strategy revolves around cycling through Yubel's various forms. The effect includes a crucial protection clause: "Neither player can activate cards or effects when that monster is Special Summoned".9 This ensures the summoned monster is safe from immediate removal by cards like

Torrential Tribute or negation from Solemn Judgment, guaranteeing it resolves safely on the field.

Its second effect is its most powerful and defining feature. While controlling a "Yubel" monster, the player can discard one card and send Eternal Favorite to the Graveyard to Fusion Summon a monster, using monsters from *either* field as material.9 This is a direct parallel to the famously powerful Quick-Play Spell

Super Polymerization. It allows the Yubel player to use their opponent's monsters as Fusion Material, simultaneously removing key threats from their board while summoning a powerful boss monster of their own. This is one of the most potent forms of removal in the game, as it does not target or destroy, bypassing most forms of protection.28

### Thematic Resonance: From Enemy to Eternal Partner

This card is steeped in the lore of *Yu-Gi-Oh! GX*'s final arcs. Unlike the other "Favorite" cards, which celebrate Jaden's heroic and publicly acclaimed ace monsters, Eternal Favorite represents the culmination of his most personal and tumultuous relationship: his fusion with the spirit Yubel.4 The card's powerful effects—protecting Yubel, reviving it from oblivion, and consuming the opponent's monsters to create something new and powerful—perfectly encapsulate the complex, possessive, and ultimately symbiotic bond between Jaden and Yubel. The name "Eternal Favorite" serves as a direct thematic counterpoint to the more straightforward "Favorite Hero," suggesting a bond that is deeper, more permanent, and forged through darkness and reconciliation.

### Strategic Application in Yubel Decks

Eternal Favorite is an indispensable, core component of the modern Yubel strategy. It is typically played at one or two copies, as it is easily searchable by the effect of Spirit of Yubel, making it a consistent part of the deck's game plan.9

* **Primary Combo:** The main objective is to activate the second effect during the opponent's turn to disrupt their plays. The Yubel player will use a "Yubel" monster they control along with one or more of the opponent's most threatening monsters to Fusion Summon Yubel - The Loving Defender Forever. This single action achieves two goals: it removes the opponent's key monsters from the field in a way that is very difficult to counter, and it summons a 0 ATK/0 DEF boss monster that cannot be destroyed by battle or card effects and inflicts massive damage to the opponent whenever it battles.8
* **Resource Loop:** The first effect is crucial for the deck's grind game. After using a Yubel monster for a Link Summon or as Fusion Material, Eternal Favorite can be used on a subsequent turn to bring it back, re-establishing the engine and setting up for another Fusion Summon.

The existence of Eternal Favorite fundamentally elevates the power level of the Yubel archetype. The Quick-Play Spell Super Polymerization has long been considered one of the most powerful "board-breaking" cards in the game, prized for its ability to remove an opponent's monsters without starting a Chain that can be responded to. Its primary balancing factor has always been its inconsistency; it is unsearchable in most decks and must be drawn naturally.

Eternal Favorite's second effect is, for all intents and purposes, a Super Polymerization that is *searchable*. The effect of Spirit of Yubel allows the player to add any Spell or Trap from their Deck to their hand that mentions "Yubel," a category that includes Eternal Favorite.9 This complete removal of the element of luck transforms the card's strategic role. It is no longer a fortunate draw that can turn a game around; it is a reliable and central piece of the deck's interactive toolkit. The Yubel player can consistently access a board-breaking, non-targeting removal effect in virtually every game. This allows the archetype to compete with top-tier modern decks that are capable of building seemingly unbreakable boards of monsters with multiple negates and immunities.

Eternal Favorite represents the "taming" of a famously powerful but chaotic game mechanic, integrating it as a consistent and predictable weapon within its own archetype's arsenal.

## Strategic Integration and Deck Building

The "Favorite" cards, being a support series, are not meant to be played together in a single deck. Instead, they form two distinct packages that are integrated into their respective archetypes, HERO and Yubel.

### The HERO "Favorite" Package

A cohesive HERO deck can be built around the synergistic package of Favorite Contact, Winged Kuriboh LV6, and, in some builds, Favorite Hero. In modern, control-oriented Neos decks, the primary goal is to establish a board that can search and set Favorite Contact to be used for disruption on the opponent's turn.18 A key enabler for this strategy is

Elemental HERO Flame Wingman - Infernal Rage, a Fusion Monster that, upon being Special Summoned, can search for any Spell/Trap that mentions "Favorite Hero," including Favorite Contact. If Elemental HERO Neos was used as material for its summon, it can then tribute itself to Special Summon a monster like Winged Kuriboh LV6 from the deck, setting up an additional layer of disruption.18

Favorite Hero, with its focus on the Battle Phase, is better suited for more aggressive, "go-second" OTK variants of the HERO strategy and may be omitted from the control-focused Favorite Contact build.14

### The Yubel "Favorite" Engine

In the Yubel strategy, Eternal Favorite is the lynchpin of the deck's disruption and grind game. The deck's opening combos are designed to end on a board that facilitates its use. A common combo line involves using Samsara D Lotus or the Field Spell Nightmare Throne to Special Summon Spirit of Yubel from the Deck. Spirit of Yubel's effect is then used to search Eternal Favorite from the Deck and Set it directly to the field. This prepares the powerful Super Polymerization-like effect to be activated on the opponent's turn, disrupting their plays by summoning Yubel - The Loving Defender Forever.30

### "Favorite" Card Synergy Matrix

The following table provides a visual guide to the direct and indirect synergies between the "Favorite" cards and the key engine pieces of their respective archetypes, illustrating how each card is enabled and what its strategic role is within its deck.

| "Favorite" Card | Key Enabler(s) | Optimal Target(s) / Result | Strategic Role |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Favorite Hero** | Any Field Spell, Elemental HERO Sunrise | Masked HERO Koga, DPE | OTK Finisher |
| **Favorite Contact** | E. HERO Flame Wingman - Infernal Rage (Searcher), E. HERO Neos (for protection) | E. HERO Cosmo Neos, E. HERO Shining Neos Wingman | Going-First Control / Disruption |
| **Winged Kuriboh LV6** | E. HERO Fusion (in GY), Infernal Rage (Searcher) | Opponent's monster with an activated effect | Searchable Monster Disruption |
| **Eternal Favorite** | Spirit of Yubel (Searcher), Yubel (on field) | Yubel - The Loving Defender Forever | Searchable Board Breaker / Recursion |

## Concluding Analysis: The Past and Future of "Favorite" Cards

The "Favorite" archetype stands as a testament to a thoughtful and resonant design philosophy in the modern *Yu-Gi-Oh! TCG*. By forgoing the creation of a new, self-contained strategy, the designers have instead crafted a series of powerful support cards that breathe new life into beloved, classic archetypes. The HERO-focused cards have successfully modernized the Neos strategy, transforming it from a fragile, anime-recreation deck into a viable control strategy with a powerful going-first game plan. Simultaneously, Eternal Favorite has served as the cornerstone of the Yubel archetype's competitive renaissance, providing it with the consistency and high-impact disruption needed to contend in the current era of the game.

Ultimately, the "Favorite" archetype is a masterclass in using character narrative to drive game design. The mechanical evolution of the cards directly mirrors the personal evolution of Jaden Yuki, from his early days with Flame Wingman to his ultimate fusion with Yubel. This creates a deeply satisfying and resonant experience for long-time fans of the franchise, while simultaneously introducing potent and meta-relevant mechanics.

Based on this established design philosophy—that a "Favorite" card represents a key bond in Jaden's story—it is possible to speculate on the direction of future support. A card themed around Rainbow Neos, representing his bond with Jesse Anderson, is a plausible addition. A powerful Spell card, perhaps named "Favorite Fusion," that acts as a definitive Fusion Spell for the HERO archetype, is a common and logical request from the player base.1 Whatever the future holds, the "Favorite" cards have proven to be a successful model for legacy support, demonstrating how the rich history of Yu-Gi-Oh! can be a wellspring for creating cards that are both thematically compelling and strategically powerful.

#### Geciteerd werk

1. There are currently 4 "Favorite" Cards. What other "Favorite" cards do you all think we will see in the future? : r/yugioh - Reddit, geopend op oktober 4, 2025, <https://www.reddit.com/r/yugioh/comments/1akcqkr/there_are_currently_4_favorite_cards_what_other/>
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