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# Blue coin in Arena

## Drypassing on Blue Coin: Why?

In constructed Gwent, blue coin is one of the last things that you would like to see at the start of the game. However, I have good news for Arena players: it is not that bad and it can be even advantageous.

In constructed, winning round 1 has a great importance since taking the control of round 2 can allow players to bleed out valuable resources that should be preserved for round 3 such as **Villentretenmerth** or to force the opponent that would like to have a long round 3 to a short one. Therefore, drypassing is not that common in constructed.

In Arena, the amount of information about your opponent’s deck is very limited. Therefore, winning round one loses value compared to constructed. In addition, losing round 1 on even cards can easily lead to a card disadvantage. The situation looks like as follows:

* Case 1 - You have the better deck:

In this case, winning round 1 a card down and drypassing in round 2 to take the card back would result in a shorter round 3 on even cards.

* Case 2 - You and your opponent have a deck with equal quality:

The same situation with case 1 may occur, however, in this case, you are less likely to win round 1, losing round 1 on even cards would result with a card disadvantage in round 3 which is game losing.

* Case 3 - You have the worse deck:

You are very unlikely to win round 1 and probably you will lose card advantage going into round 3 which will result with a defeat.

Winning round 1 with a card down, drypassing on round 2 to take the card back becomes necessary because of the lack of information. In other words, playing round 2 to bleed your opponent without knowing what to bleed is too risky when compared to not being able to get a good pass to take the card back.

In other words, gaining the control of round 2 is less important in Arena and winning round 3 with one less card is harder. In all of the cases above, going into round 3 on even cards is the best outcome assuming players don’t put themselves in tough positions such as winning round 1 a card down and with less carryover than the opponent. Therefore, it is generally the correct play to drypass on blue coin, however, there are cases in which playing round 1 can be beneficial for certain kind of Arena decks.

## When to play Round 1 on Blue Coin?

The idea of drypassing in round 1 on blue coin assumes that the game will go into a long round 3 scenario. However, after drafting the deck it is not always possible to end up with a deck which is good in long rounds. Therefore, after the draft, the weaknesses of the deck should be identified and in certain cases, round 1 should be played in order to mitigate the weaknesses over the rounds. The most common weaknesses are:

* **Weather**

In the current card pool (bear season!), there are 13 unconditional weather clear cards. Out of more than 450 cards, it is very likely to end with a lack of weather clears. In long round 3 scenario, an uncleared weather gains a lot of value hence it must be answered. In the case of the lack of weather clears, playing round 1 would lead to a much shorter round 3 instead of a 12 card one.

* **Graveyard development**

Cards such as Shani and Priestess of Freya need graveyard developed in order to work. The one unit that is played to win a dry round may not be enough to use multiple resurrection cards. Playing round 1 can also provide multiple options to resurrect which makes your cards more flexible.

* **Too many units**

There are many cards that can provide more than 1 body when played. Having too many units on the board create weakness to AOE effects such as Vandergrift, Hefty Helge and Lacerate. Similarly with weather, it might be better to distribute the your units into rounds to avoid big point swings caused by AOEs in round 3.

* **Lack of Removal**

Lack of removal may lead to one or more engines to stick and provide value over time. In addition, lack of removal makes cards that require units in the opponent’s graveyard such as Caretaker, Yennefer: Necromancer and Hanmarvyn’s Blue Dream much worse.

* **Bronze-heavy deck**

If you end up with **15+ bronze cards** in your deck, playing round 1 might be better since it is very likely to get outvalued in a long round 3. Instead, you can play out round 1 to exchange your bronzes with the better cards of your opponents. Since getting outvalued is a very strong possibility for bronze-heavy Arena decks, searching for a good pass in round 1 preferably with carryover to avoid card disadvantage, becomes more important. As for the round 3, the limited resources of the bronze-heavy deck can be utilized to win round 3.

* **Meta**

Even though there are no decklists for Arena, there are certain tendencies of players while making their drafts. These include decisions such as giving a higher priority to draft removal cards instead of just value cards, since engine cards are gaining popularity. Another example can be weather cards, players may have lower priority for weather clears since playing weather cards is regarded as suboptimal.

In Arena, having all the answers is not always possible. Therefore, your Arena deck will have some of the weaknesses above. In the case of having multiple of the weaknesses, it might be better to play out round 1 on blue coin.

## How to Play Round 1 on Blue Coin

After making the decision to play round 1, **it is always better to keep round 3 in mind.** There are certain things that should be done in round 1 to provide options in order to maximize the value of your cards in round 3. For example, if you have multiple cards that can resurrect units from your graveyard, it is better to play the units that you would like to resurrect in round 3 than the units that you don’t want to. Another case can be made for the decks with weather weakness. In this case it is important to keep round 1 as long as possible to make round 3 as short as possible to have the effects caused by the weakness in round 1.

As mentioned above, **bronze-heavy decks should play round 1** to exchange low-value resources to opponent’s relatively higher-value resources. Keeping in mind the conditions that would lead to a round 3 victory such as a very short round with big finishers is very important and this kind of play style would change round 1 decisions drastically [кардинально]. In other words, utilizing [используя] bronze resources in round 1 to preserve [сохранить] golds and silvers to create round 3 circumstances that is winnable even with a worse deck than the opponent’s deck.

Of course, when it comes to playing round 1, **the passing decision is one of the most important skills** to have in Gwent. Even though this is a topic of another article, the basic idea is to invest as much as possible to round 3 while playing round 1. These investments can be providing several options for your resurrection cards or providing some sort a carryover such as playing Stefan Skellen, handbuffs or simply Olgierd/Morkvarg. In other words, it is a good idea to fulfill what you have to do to win round 3 before passing in round 1 and not losing card advantage on the way of doing so.

## Conclusion

In Arena, it is less risky to drypass round 1 on blue coin than playing it out because this way it is almost guaranteed to go into round 3 at least on even cards. However, this creates a long round 3 scenario where certain decks will perform worse than they would in medium length rounds.

Correctly identifying the weaknesses of your deck in the case of a long round 3 is a key element to succeed in Arena. By correctly analyzing the deck, playing round 1 on blue coin can set up circumstances in round 1 to ensure winning round 3.