

This is 2.1, a Netrunner Reboot Project podcast.

Episode 107.

What did you see?

Hey, this is Remy.

The title card of this week's episode is Psych Mike , a shaper resource from Rain and Reverie, the final deluxe expansion for Android Nut Runner.

The flavor text is breathe, girl, breathe.

Mike flickered into focus as she brushed to Kiko's tears away.

What did you see?

I. Kiko hesitated.

Everything.

I'm not going to analyze this.

There is something on the NRDB review that talks about maybe what's going on with the flavor here for from user Hotline.

But basically, this episode is going to be my bridge episode between the deep past and the much more recent past.

We've gone all the way up to Data and Destiny from the original Fantasy Flight cardpool.

And now, I'm going to hit fast forward.

You know, I've made some mistakes here and there as I've gone through this podcast.

It seems like almost every episode, I put a word wrong somewhere.

I would say the chances of that happening this episode are significantly higher than usual, because I'm going to be covering a lot of ground as well, there's easily the opportunity to mischaracterize something or misstate something or misattribute something.

Please feel free to correct me or add to the conversation.

But before getting into the booster packs, that reboot offers, which Psych Mike appears in the first booster pack, I'm going to do a brief overview.

We'll see how brief it actually is, of the second half of Android Nut Runner's existence with Fantasy Flight Games.

If we call data and Destiny sort of halftime, what comes next?

So that's what I'm going to do.

And I'm just going I'm not going to bother breaking this up into segments.

I'm just going to jump in into it.

So, next up, after Data and Destiny, is the Mumbad cycle.

It starts with the first data pack Kalagoda.

As I've mentioned before, it was released at the end of January 2016, about three months after Data and Destiny and really close to six months , after everybody knew about it.

So people were waiting for months new card information.

As usual, Lucas Litzinger provided an overview of the Mumbad cycle in the announcement for the first pack, so I will read that.

Mumbad is the most populous city in the Indian Union, and it offers a new stage for Android and Net Runner, complete with new faces and new dangers.

The question of whether or not clones should be granted citizenship has divided the nation , and the advocates who argue that clones are people are being countered at every turn by Jinteke, who has applied the full extent of its lobbying mite toward the issue.

Following on the heels of the sand sand cycle, we wanted to create another cycle that evoked a sense of place.

We'd been to the moon, but we hadn't yet traveled the planet, far from New Angeles.

With its booming export industry and teeming population, Mumbad is the perfect place for the continued exploration of futuristic cybercrime.

In Mumbad, it's easy for a runner to disappear into the crowds or for a corp to offload production.

Meanwhile, there are significant differences between Mumbad and the megacorp controlled regions in and near New Angeles.

In Mumbad, local organizations and corps still hold more sway.

This means the game's four meacorporations must forge strategic alliances , which affects the way they do business.

Runners will also find that new options are opened up to them, with the relaxed restrictions on technology, allowing them to double down on important cards.

Even though the Mumbad cycle explores a lot of new ground, it does so with very little rules overhead.

We are still committed to keeping the game as clean and simple as possible, spurring its evolution without relying on new mechanics.

This helps keep the barrier of entry low, and new players who dive straight into Mumbad after their corsets should find the concepts familiar, even when playing against the most grizzled veteran.

For all its new cards, the Mumbai cycle is classic cybercrime at its best, and we hope you have fun exploring all the new deck building options that it opens up.

So there are new IDs for only four of the factions throughout the Mumbad cycle.

Ginteki received Palana foods. First time the runner draws the card each turn, gain a credit .

And Bien, Harish Chandra entertainment.

If a runner is tagged, they play with their cards revealed.

Criminals received Nero Severn.

Once per turn, you could jack out when encountering a sentry, and Shaper's Jasminder Serene, who would prevent a tag each run.

There were new card types that came in Mumbad, and we heard Lucas refer to a couple of them there.

There's the, he mentioned about the Megacorp forging screen strategic alliances.

So there were these alliance cards that were influence , had influence, of course, but they were influence free if you met certain deck building restrictions.

And because of this, they printed some much more strong neutral cards, which we'll talk about a little bit later.

And runners received consumer grade hardware, as well as an event for each faction that were limit six per deck, rather than limit three.

There were also political assets.

These were just a subtitle of assets that received a benefit if they weren't protected by ice.

There was an icebreaker suite called the Deva Suite, which could swap pieces out mid-run.

And one other notable card was Rebirth, a neutral event that would let you actually switch your ID .

Again, this is in the interest of this being a brief overview, I'll come back and talk about some of these things later with other quotes and comments, but let me move forward from this point.

About, let's see, this would be about three months after Kalagoda was released was the announcement for the following cycle, the Flashpoint cycle, the first data pack in that cycle was 23 seconds.

And at this point, Lucas Litzinger is no longer the lead designer.

It's Damon Stone.

So here is the comment from, well, first, from the article describing what 23 seconds is , and then the comment from Damon.

For 23 seconds, the world's largest bank and backer of the world's most important currency goes dark.

Trillions of credits are lost, stolen, or simply erased.

Each corp blames the others.

Economies, industries, lives, collapse.

And that's just the beginning.

At the beginning of the flashpoint cycle, 23 seconds provides us our first glimpses of the android world after the 23 seconds incident.

Wounded and desperate, the corpse act more aggressively than ever.

Even as runners try to take advantage of the chaos, the corpse begin to implement extremely powerful, often hostile, ice and operations that come with trash costs.

And as the bodies start piling up, they unleash new terminal operations, like hard-hitting news that are so powerful, they immediately drain the corpse remaining clicks once they're played.

Trillions of credits, millions of lives, and the survival of the world's largest meacorpse, the stakes in 23 seconds and the flashpoint cycle are as high as they've ever been.

Amid the chaos, who will be the first to emerge with a semblance of control?

Will it be you?

Where the two previous cycles, San San and Mumbad rooted themselves in the meat space they explore.

The flashpoint cycle follows the course of a world- changing event.

It returns to new Angelus, and the city's familiar cast of corpse and characters, by this time , everything has changed.

Here is Damon's comment.

Thematically, the flashpoint cycle is about what happens when the largest city in the solar system suffers a cyber attack of unheralded proportions.

Titan Transnational, the Goliath of the New Angeles Financial market., suffers a breach of security.

For 23 seconds, all its sysops are locked out and all its defenses are down, simultaneously.

For those 23 seconds, all its logs are erased , millions of microtract transactions take place in each fraction of each second, but for 23 seconds, no transactions are being logged.

No one knows who owns what.

This creates a powder keg.

Then it becomes known that one Titan executive who left the Wayland consortium just 24 hours earlier is now employed by Jintেকে.

The match has been lit, and conspiracy theories race across the net.

Her death sparks a war in the streets and it's corp against Corp.

The idea of open warfare between the corpse sounds like a runner's dream, but mercenaries and pr acts are not well known for their discrimination.

During the chaos, phrases like acceptable losses and collateral damage go hand in hand.

Flashpoint looks at what happens when the corpse decide they are a law unto themselves.

Runners try to survive against much more hostile measures than are usually employed, even while they try to use the chaos as a means to grab fame, make a quick credit, or expose malasanse.

I was quite poetic, I guess, but it doesn't really explain to me what's going on in this cycle.

Well, I mean, we heard about the new types of cards, including ice and events that can be trashed.

So a way to make something stronger there, and also terminal operations.

One example is HB's violetlevel clearance, which would let you gain eight credits and draw four cards, or, as mentioned, NBN's hard-hitting news that if the runner made a run the previous turned you do a trace four to hit them for four tags .

These are very powerful cards.

There are also new IDs for each faction, two, for Anarchc.

The IDs are for HB, architects of tomorrow, the first time a broid is passed, another broid for four credits less.

Jintেকে potential unleashed.

When the runner takes net damage, also trashed the top card to their stack.

NBN received controlling the message, the first time the runner trashes an installed corp card do a trace four to hit them for a tag that can't be avoided .

That is, often abbreviated as CTM.

Wayland's Builder of Nations, the first time an encounter with an advanced ice ends, do a meat damage.

Anarch received null, once per turn, trash a card from your hand to give an ice minus 2 strength , and Omar Kyung, once per turn, basically do a sneakdoor beta run into either HKQ or R&D. Criminals received con.

The first time you pass ice, install a breaker from your hand for less than one credit, or one credit less , and Shery received LE.

Smoke Scovak, who has just a recurring credit that can be used on programs, also in the stealth subtype.

So it's a stealth recurring credit.

Some other notable cards are the Fairchild Ice Suite, Fairchild 1, Fairchild 2, Fairchild 3, the first three clicker, and also then the full-on Fairchild.

I talked about this Iweet, oh, man, I should have checked which episode that was.

It was many episodes ago when talking about something because Liga Milch Collegena made a comment about what the theme behind these was.

There are a new suite of breakers called the Bin Breakers that could be installed from the heap when you're encountering the ice.

Some very strong ice.

In addition to the Fairchild cards, you have DNA tracker in Chiashi out of Genteke IP block out of NBN.

Some very strong economy in the terms in the Timusin contract , which just would load you up on money for making runs and Aaron Moron, who could get rid of tags really easily, to which I guess is useful if you've got MBN landing tags like crazy.

A very quickly restricted card called Ciffer , which once per turn, would lower an ice strength to zero if you took a temporary minus 1 to your hand size.

And then each mini faction also got an extra card.

Plus, we saw the second world champion card, the first world champion card card was architect , the second one in honor of Dan G Argenio's 2014 win, Deuce is Wild.

So a little less than six months later, in October of 2016, was the opening of the red sand cycle.

There's no developer comment on this one. , so I'm not going to read just the fluff from maybe I should.

Nah, I'm not going to read it.

But this one is set on Mars and you see see here new IDs for just four of the factions.

Genteki gets agin fusion .

Once per turn, instead of resising in ice, you can trash it to deflect the runner to another server.

Awayland gets gemas and astronautics, that whenever you forfeit an agenda, you place some counter advancements on a card equal to that agenda point value plus one.

N Ars received another one in Alice Merchant.

The first time you run archives, Corp trashes a card from HQ, and criminals got Los first time the corp reses and IC each turn you gain two credits.

There are triple operations that showed up in this cycle as well, and some other notable cards are shipment from Tenin, a Ginte operation to place two advancements on a card for just one click .

Amakua, a powerful criminal AI breaker, a turtle is in the image, so it's sometimes just called turtle, salvaged Venatus armory.

You can trash it to force the corp to trash cards from R&D equal to whatever damage you have solved.ered, that turn .

Blue Moose, a neutral resource that when the turn begins, you'd remove a card from your heap, and then gain two credits, and Mad Dash, a neutral run event that if you stole an agenda after playing it, would make Mad Dash worth a point.

Just a month later was an announcement on Terminal Directive, and then it was released actually in the middle of of the Red Sand cycle.

This was another new expansion, but it was a campaign expansion, not a regular delux expansion.

It was meant to be the game in a box.

I think maybe you needed the corset, but otherwise, you could just play with the corset and this, and then, you know, you the two players, one would pick and one would pick Corp and go through this campaign where they would change their deck from one game to the next.

It was, I played it.

It was fine.

It wasn't what I'd hoped for.

The story could have been a little more.

I mean, it was really long-winded, and I had a really hard time following it.

It needed to be a little more punchy so that you didn't finish a game, and then both players just have their heads down for five or 10 minutes reading their story.

Anyway, there are only four IDs in this campaign expansion.

HB got cider, or maybe it's Cedar Laboratories.

The first time the runner loses or sp spends a click during a run, you add a card from archives to R&D. When got Scorpions's defense systems.

Once per turn, you can force a runner.

When a runner trashes a card, you can refer to force it to be removed from the C instead.

Criminals got Steve Cambridge, the first time you successfully run HQ.

You choose two cards in your heap.

The corp removes a one from the game, and then you draw the other one.

And then Shaper got Ela Baos Rahim, which has its interesting mechanism where before you draw your starting hand, you take four out of the the top six cards of your stack, and then you set them aside as something called NVRAM .

And then that just sits there as this little pool of cards that you can click at any point during the game to take one of.

Other notable cards included Estelle Moon.

Not everything in the campaign could be used in the regular game, about half the cards, something like that, which were just for the campaign.

But then about half of them were tournament legal.

Among those were Estelle Moon, an asset that would gain power counters on cards installed in servers, and then you would trash it to draw one and gain two credits per power counter.

So that would be a simple, like, click that.

You know, I'm not going to explain this.

Moving on.

Maryland campaign, which was like launch campaign, but gave you a couple bucks more.

And instead of being going into archives when trash just goes back into R&D, IPO, a neutral terminal transaction, which basically is like restructure and that gives you five credits , but because it's neutral and terminal, it's cheaper to play.

And Eli 2.0, which is not actually a notable card.

It is not very good.

And the runner cards, I couldn't tell you which of those were, particularly useful.

Anyway, so then in a few months later, in early February of 2017, it was announced that Damon Stone was no longer the lead designer slash developer.

And he was replaced by Michael Boggs , who, after Net Runner, went on to be the lead designer of Marvel champions.

Then the Katara cycle and the revised corset were announced about six months after that in September of 2017, almost exactly five years to the day after the original corset dropped.

This is a recurring theme with fantasy flight.

They refresh their corsets every five years.

And that same day, rotation was announced as going into effect October 1st, and then both Katara and the Revised Corps were released in December.

Katara came with these new IDs, one for each faction.

HB got ASA Group.

The first time you install a card, install an additional non-agenda card in or protecting that server.

Genteke got MT imwakundo.

Once per turn, when a runner approaches a server, you can insert an extra ice in front of them that they have to encounter , and be end received as Mari Edtech when you' turn turn ends, name a card type, and then gain two credits the first time the runner plays that type.

Wayland SSO Industries, when your turn ends, place ex advancement tokens of on unadvanced ice where X is the total of points on all face-up agendas.

Anarch got Freedom Kumbo.

Once per turn, you'd remove X virus counters to trash a card you accessed that was equaled to X. Criminals 419, the first time the corp installed a card, expose it , unless the court pays a credit, and Shaperser's Kab Woo, whose ability was to click to search for a nonvirus program and install it for less than one credit less.

And then at the end of the tour, you'd remove it from the game if it were still installed.

Some notable cards I recognize the names of include Ani, a strong Jint ice, Rashida Jim, a neutral asset that you would just trash to gain three credits and draw three cards.

Diversion of funds, known as Doof , which was a double event meant to replace siphons, which had rotated out with the revised core.

The Corp loses five credits, and you gain an equivalent amount, so definitely not exactly the same as siphon.

And I notice Lamb and Angolo, a fractor and decoder that, for shapaper that have a built-in paintbrush ability, like kit's ability.

And each manufaction got two cards, and they all were five influence.

The next deluxe expansion, although people did not know at this point that it was the final deluxe expansion, it was announced six months after those sets were announced, or three months after the first cycle, the last Qatara cycle started.

That is raining rain and reverie.

This came with Wayne, two, three.

Yeah, everybody got a new ID in this one, too.

Anarch received Nathaniel Nat Hall.

When your turn begins, gain one credit .

If you have two or fewer cards in your hand, Criminals got Liza Talking Thunder.

The first time you successfully run a Central, draw two cards and take a tag.

Shapers aiko when accessing R&D, do a side game.

And if you win it, access another card.

HB got Sports Medal when an agenda is scored or stolen, either gain two credits or draw two cards.

J Sarasati Nemonics.

If you wear a click and one credit, install a card from HQ in a remote and advance it, although you can't score or res it until the next turn .

And BN received Acme consulting.

D encounters with the outermost ice, the runner has considered to have an extra tag, or just one tag, if previously zero.

I'm getting a text, apparently.

Let me mute that.

Jinte, you got the outfit.

When you take bad publicity , gain three credits.

As for notable cards, man, I don't even know.

I don't even recognize the names of most of these cards.

I simply, I don't think I played any games of Net Runner with this, any of these cards.

I mean, it came out in mid- 2018.

I remember teaching somebody the revised core, but I don't, I just don't think I played any games with these.

I looked at them and I put them in my binder.

I saw the one about Giordano Memorial Field. And you know, Giardano's is a pizza place in Chicago.

I know noticed there's a 6'2 Genteke agenda.

That's pretty cool.

And each mini faction got another card.

So that's the announcement about rain and reverie.

And the end of my brief overview.

How brief was it?

Yeah, like 20 minutes.

It might have been too long even.

Maybe I didn't need to read all those IDs out, but definitely if you didn't play with the these cards, these did not ring any bells.

But a lot of them at least rang some bells in my head.

All right.

Now what?

Now, let me.

So this was announced Rain and Reverie was announced, March of 2018.

Two months later , the user Cry of Frustration wrote The History of Competitive Nut Runner 2015 to 2018, which is about the most perfectly positioned article that I could find to cover this time frame, because it picks up right at the end of the sand sand cycle and runs you right to the end of the Katara cycle, or very close to the end of it.

So I am going to lift and read this whole thing.

However, of course, I will provide a link to the link to it in the show notes.

It might be worth taking a look at because a lot of these comments , there are links to various cards or decks or other things.

So So it is a useful thing in text form.

But otherwise I'll jump into it.

I've noticed a lot of posts in online forums by people who quit the game sometime in 2015, during the San San D&D era, or shortly thereafter, wondering what happened in the competitive meta game since they last played.

I started writing a response to one such question and it quickly ballooned to several thousand words.

I therefore decided to give it a more permanent home here, since it seems to be a question that gets asked several times a week, and it would be handy to have a potted answer people can simply link to.

If, therefore, you quit some time in the last three years and are wondering what did I miss, your answer is The San En cycle meta was when I started turning from a filthy casual into being interested in the competitive scenes, which was really the first scene I can talk about firsthand.

For earlier, go find some grizzled veterans, a check tournament results on au.net or always be running.net, or check the A&R history of archetypes, maintained by Retor Kata 124.

The following is just based on my subjective memories, with no quantitative research.

During Sanan, the decks that emerged as powerful during lunar continued to be popular, replicating perfection and NEH astrobiotics on the corpse side , Andy Sucker and prepaid Kate on the runner side.

However, the release of Breaker Bay saw the old redcoats style ETF Glacier get a big boost in the form of Breaker Bay Bay grid, allowing their campaigns and defensive upgrades to be res for free , and touring, which was a cheap and taxing code gate that let ETF players save influence for a second caprice nay.

On the runner side, Haley Kaplan came out in the same pack, and although initially judged as inferior to Kate, she would eventually be destined to become the new queen of Sh Shaper shenanigans.

Earlier in the cycle, we had the release of another new iconic runner in the form of Geist, who has gradually risen from a fringe criminal ID to a unique archetype unto himself, although amusingly, many of the best cards that were subsequently released to support him were also co-opted by Haley Dax that did the Geist thing better.

But possibly the most important card in the cycle was Faust, which, although I suspect it was thematically designed for Geist, made it into absolutely every faction, and was the scourge of corpse for years to come.

In the short term, though, it was mostly seen in noise shop decks, which combined it with adjusted chronotype, Wildside, the so called Wild Cakes combo, and ESops to both feed Faust and find their viruses.

The end of the Sen cycle saw the release of Wireless Net Pavilion, a card that allowed runners to go tag me and not leave lose their resources so easily, suddenly making data leak reversal top tier.

The release of Global Food Initiative, in Data and Destiny, saw glacier decks get a big boost too, so the strongest corp decks at worlds were polar opposites.

NHrobiotics on the one hand, Glacier ETF, food coats, on the other.

Runners were mostly split between prepaid Kate and various anarchs, both DLR and regular decks, with Dave Loylan Hoylan's Leela being the only criminal in the top 16, due to crimiminal's weakness against glacier.

Dan D'Agenio won it with DLR Val and food coats securing his second consecutive world's win.

After that, Lucas handed lead designer of the game over to Damon so he could go make Star Wars dice.

And we all spent a few weeks playing around with the new manufacture runners that came out in D&D, all of whom sucked, but two and a half years later of finally becoming decent.

Damon then dropped a bombshell on New Year's Eve, introducing a soft, restricted list to the game, hitting the most powerful deck archetypes by making some of their best cards cost extra influence, and prepaid Kate hardest of all.

If you thought Net Rudner fans were nerdy before, you haven't seen them tapping away on their phones in panic and excitement in the middle of a new year's Eve party.

The 2016 store championships season rolled around, and with all the hitch to the strongest decks, people defaulted to fastrobiotics and a newly popular deck developed by Abram, the big boy Jop, go read his blog, Dumbblefork.

Dumbblefork, unlike the El for J wizard that had been popular for a while, iss eschewed standard breakers for the Faust Wildcakes engine, supported by David and all the ice destruction they could fit in, cutlery parasites, and lots of recursion to bring them back.

It was about the only deck that that could keep up with all the assets NEH could spew out, while also being able to deal with a few corpps left still trying to play the glacier game.

I miss.

Anyway.

Despite astroscript and Sense that he grid all costing an extra influence per copy , NEH fastrobinics remained a powerful deck, especially with shapers, who could effectively clot lock them, having been hit so hard by the MWL 2.

As the Mumbad cycle brought about even more powerful assets, especially ones that allowed for infinite recursion, like Museum of History, Wizard became ever more dominant as those three three recurring credits went a very long way.

Museum of History, a neutral alliance asset when your turn begins, shuffle a card from archives into R&D. Key among those assets were the political assets, which were extremely powerful, but could only be placed in un iced remotes and had low trash costs.

As a result of these assets, the late spring and summer of 2016 was dominated by oppressive prison style decks , based either out of industrial genomics or gaggerin, G IDs which could protect their easy to trash but high impact political assets..

And Dumblefork was the only thing keeping them at bay.

A lot of people found playing against such decks frustrating, as they were very grindy, every match was a slog, and people felt those decks bypassed important elements of Netrunner, such as interaction between ice and breakers.

A further round of erada and MWL restrictions helped hit those decks where it hurt, right in the recursion by making museum unique and slapping extra influence on some of the more powerful assets.

It also fixed the way Heritage Committee interacted with Mumbad City Hall.

So Heritage Committee Agent Techie, alliance operation that would draw three cards and then add one from HQ to the top of R&D. And then Mumbad City Hall, a Wayland asset, where you'd click to search R&D for an alliance card , then reveal it and play it.

Whereby due to the order of nested triggers, corpse could shuffle agendas safely into R&D when they tooted or heritage through MCH rather than putting them on top.

On the runner side, many cards in the Dumble fork machine were added to the list leading to monochrome anarchy decks that used the MWL as a shopping list rather than a restricted list, splashing only for one or two copies of employee Strike.

It also further curved NBN Fast advance by changing Astroscript to being limit one per deck and slapping extra influence on breaking news, which was well timed, as the upcoming release brought us perhaps the most powerful NBN identity to date, controlling the the message.

The Flashpoint cycle was a departure for the game Fluffwise, in that instead of exploring a mechanic like the first two cycles, or a setting, like lunar Sanan and Mumbod, it explored a narrative event.

In this case, the hacking of Titan Transational, loss of several trillion credits, and the resulting chaos and anarchy in.

It also included a wave of farewell cards that were themed around the runner identities that were soon to rotate, although one of those cards turned out to be a red herring.

This cycle was also Damon's attempt to rectify the accusation that card design was too conservative in terms of power level, and it showed from the very first pack, which included some powerful cards that defined the metagame for months to come, such as controlling the message and hard-hitting news.

Sandberg briefly gave new life to the glacier game, Sandberg a neutral asset where if you had at least 10 credits, each piece of ice had plus one strength per five credits.

So at least plus two, right?

But that dream was soon shattered with the next pack, blood money, which swung balance wildly to the runner's favor with cards, such as paperclip.

That's one of the bin breakers.

Rumor mill, an anarch current event where the text box of each unique non-region asset and upgrade is blank, and Tamujin contracts, which is again the one that gets loaded with money and then you make money for running, basically. Which went into every runner deck from every faction, even after it went onto the MWL and got an extra influence slapped on it.

The best decks quickly coalesced into CTM on the one side and wizard of a few different varieties, some with Faust and siphons, others with regular breakers and tugins.

On the other, and those were the decks that dominated worlds, which happened midway through Flashpoint.

Despite the low variety of viable decks, many of the top players remember this time fondly, as the wizard CTM matchup was extremely interesting and skill intensive.

To this day, Chris Dyer's 2016 champion decks are the closest thing you can buy to a pair of fun, balanced dueling decks.

However, there were a lot of good cards for other factions, too, in Flashpoint, and it was particularly notable for a much-needed increase in the power level of ice, which for too long had not been impactful enough.

In particular, code gates like DNA Tracker and Fairchild 3.0, with their steep brake costs and punishing face checks, pushed to the design of ice forwards, and laid the groundwork for the return of ice-based corpse.

The last pack of the cycle capped off a sequence of very impactful releases by blowing the lid off the power curve completely, with cards like Ciffer, completely negating ice, and Aaron Marone making a mockery of ts.

For a while, it looked like corpses were screwed, but soon after, terminal directive came about and gave rise to a powerful new corp deck, Moononites.

I think that's how you pronounce that.

Moononites.

This was usually played out of ETF and leveraged distell Moon and a ridiculous number of assets to score out quickly.

Even Wizards struggled to keep up.

Moonites being so dominant bizarrely brought new balance to the game, not only in terms of side balance, but also in faction balance.

Due to how fast Estelle Mooncks were, runners had to tech heavily to beat them.

This made those runners that did so weaker against other more conventional corp decks.

So for a while , we had a surprising amount of variety in the metagames.

Although some matchups were blowouts, the sheer variety was fun, and there was a lot of skill in knowing how to handle each matchup.

Moon's ETF dominated the first day ever European championship, although the top spot was won by a sink kill deck.

Bef Before Terminal Directive actually came out, though, Damon Stone announced that he was leaving F.F.G and was replaced by Michael Boggs, the first lead designer of the game who started out as a player and fan, rather than having had a hand in the genesis of the game.

The first release releases under his tenure were Terminal Directive and the Red Sand Cycle, all designed under Damon.

Nevertheless, Boggs got to stamp his own personal design philosophy into the game by releasing a new, bolder, and more punitive iteration of the most wanted list a few months after taking over .

This new list introduced multiple tiers, with some of the most egregious offenders, like Faust, rumor missed., and Censi Actors Union, a political asset that when your turn begins, you would draw three cards, if no ice was protecting it, and then add one card from HQ to the bottom of R&D. Now costing not one, but three additional influence per copy.

The extra influence were also changed from a reduction in your ID information influence limit to a real cost , putting an end to monochromatic anarch decks that basically included 20 plus influence points worth of anarch cards and a single employee strike.

It was also notable for including Sifer at Level 3, even though it had been out less than three months at the time , and was the quickest card to be restricted so far.

Nevertheless, most of the Level 3 cards saw some play in tournaments, including Euros, where Princess Space Kitten came out of retirement to troll Estelle Moon.

that's.. Artwork on Rumor.

In U.S Nationals, the top runner was Cold Ones, a Shaper combo deck that included both Faust and Rumor Mill and a massive six in influence tax.

Terminal Directive broke from other big boxes because it was released partway through red sand rather than in between two cycles.

Although we talked about its impact in the competitive game with Estelle, it was also notable in getting a lot of lapsed players to come back to the game.

The narrative campaign didn't light the world on fire, with most people complaining that the story was linear and your choices didn't impact it.

But because it was designed to be played with just TD and a single corset, it was a great throwback to the early days of Net Runner, and lots of players came back to play it for that reason.

It also included some decent Whalland ice, which was a bit of shock to everyone, since that hadn't happened since the corset.

Looking back on Red Sand, it's hard to think of things that stand out from it.

It seems a transitional meta between the turmoil of flashpoint and a hugely transformative event of rotation.

There were certainly some cool cards released, such as agin fusion, which gave rise to some of the most interesting glacier decks around, and Jemon, which, although fun, hasn't really been successful competitively.

One new archetype that seemed like it would become good was tag me Clanark decks, but they haven't made it to the big time yet.

A dumb combo deck which milled the whole corp deck into oblivion also briefly flared up and then was gone.

Anarchs got other toys as well, though, such as mining accident.

They became a powerful staple in many decks, mining accident, and event.

You could only play it if you successfully ran a central and then the corp had to pay five credits or take a bad publicity, and then you'd remove mining event from the game.

And Oakua, a criminal AI breaker that at one influence found a natural home in Valencia, who stole Andy's crown as the most popular aggressive run-based runner.

In the criminal faction of itself, Oookua was, and continues to be, used in a range of decks based around exposing and de-resing the corpse ice.

After red sand was finished, there was a long gap with no new releases and no news about the future of the game.

So I will insert here, the final pack released in a red sand released in mid-August of 2017.

The announcements about the revised core and rotation were mid-September, just a month later, although they didn't drop until three months after that.

So there was a gap of four and a half months between new contact, but this lack of news about the future actually dated back to mid-May.

That's when the final pack of red sand was announced.

So from mid-May to mid-September, again, four months, there was no news about the game.

And from one month of that, mid-August to mid-September, there was no idea if there was going to be another pack.

And that four-month time span went through both origins and notably, Gen Con.

These are two tournaments, these are two conventions.

Rather, Gen Con is traditionally where FFG has had a or had doesn't anymore.

I don't know, a big splashy announcement , nothing about that runner.

Back to the article.

This led to widespread frustration, fatigue with the moon's dominated meta, and speculation that the game was dead, whether because FFG had lost the license or because it just wasn't profitable enough anymore.

The buildup and hype preceding the release of the revamped version of Legend of the Five Rings and the fact that many prominent nutrunner players quit the game to play that all contributed to the feeling that the player community was being neglected.

Convention after convention passed with FFG making major new announcements about other games , with no mention of Net Runner, until finally, player dissatisfaction and online doomsaying had reached such a fever pitch. , dot, dot, dot.

To be continued..

I'm going to pause right there for a second and fast forward to some of that fever pitch.

So, about a week or two after that last part of the last pack in Red Sand came out , which means also after Gen Khan and no announcement, and also about a month before the announcement I'm going to talk about next, was this StimM hack thread, which unfortunately, I did not grab the username, the person who started it, and the Stim hack forums seem to have disappeared .

That has a, we're going to call this a counterpoint, a much less glowing counter to what to what Cry frustration has been talking about here.

I don't know whether you say cry frustration is glowing.

It's generally positive while acknowledging the flaws.

And this upcoming forum post is going to be mainly just focusing on the flaws.

So I'm going to read through it here.

I thought it would be useful to have a comprehensive timeline of how FFG killed the ANR player base.

You get a sense of which direction this is going, right?

To show people thinking of getting into Legend of the 5 ringings, L5R, and hopefully to serve as a what-notto do for anyone launching a card game in the future.

I have written it in a way that hopefully non-Nrunner players can understand what I'm talking about.

The only thing is, I've only been playing the past couple of years, so could someone help fill in any details from the early years that I missed, other feedback is welcome as well, then maybe we can publish it as an article.

How FFG Killed the NetT Runner fan base.

November 2014.

Fantasy Flight announces a rotation out of old packs.

After the eighth cycle of D packs is released, only the first two cycles will rotate out, leaving the cardpool at a minimum of \$3 , \$15 packs, four \$30 big boxes, and three \$40 copies of the corset.

Most fans feel this is still too large of a card pool to attract new players.

Mid 2015.

After original Netrunner lead designer Lucas Litinger moves on to Star Wars destiny, FFGG appoints his codesigner Damon Stone as the lone developer of the fifth cycle and designer developer of the sixth and seventh cycles.

Promoting the codesigner might make sense if he wasn't well known for designing extremely broken cards for Call of Cthulhu and a Game of Thrones.

Even the best of designers is unlikely to create perfectly balanced cards on their own without a developer to help balance them.

And let me just insert here.

Coming up is going to be a lot of pushback to some of these perspectives.

So I'm not going to try to give any pushback on it right now.

First half of 2016, an overpowered card called Faust causes virtually everyone to play the same runner deck for the first half of the year, using an ID called wizard that can dis dismantle the corpse board state.

On the corp side, things aren't as unanimous, but two of the top decks, industrial genomics, and Gan win with slow grindy prison decks, that are considered negative player experiences by most.

Regional championships during this period lose about 40% of their players from the year before.

August 2016.

A new most wanted list, Nut Runner's way of limiting how many overpowered cards you can play, goes into effect, shaking up the meta for the first time in ages.

A fun, 200 plus person tournament happens at Gen Con with the new rules, but later in the month, the pack with two of the most broken runner cards ever printed is released, Rumor mill and Temujin Contract .

The interesting post-MWL meta lasts less than a month.

It will take eight months for these cards to finally be put on the MWL.

November 2016.

At the World Championships, 16 out of the top 16 corporations are MBN, and 14 of the top 16 top runners are Narchs.

The matches are interesting and strategic, but the lack of variety bums out many, especially the more casual players who don't like being forced to play the top factions.

Early 2017.

Store championship season for 2017 is marked by powerful new runner cars, making it difficult to win as the corporation.

This only gets worse when the new runner card cher is released that is so oppressive.

Damon Stone warns on a podcast that, quote, people will want it on the MWL on day one .

April 2017.

A new MWL is finally released that substantially improves the game.

However, there had been no communication about when it would be released, so the community had been depressed for months before it dropped.

Even with the improved game, regional attendance is about half of the year before and a quarter of two years prior.

Also, April 2017, a new new pandemic legacy style expansion for Net Runner called Terminal Directive is released and only requires TD and one copy of the corset to play .

It is clearly intended to attract new players, but with the community being so small and dispirited by this point, many stores had small or non-existent playgroups to hype the product.

The campaign mode got mixed reviews.

Summer 2017. 100 days pass without any new Net Runner products being announced, leading some to speculate that they're saving a big announcement for Gen Con.

Instead, fantasy flight does not acknowledge Net Runner at Gen Con, except during the Q&A when someone asks when the next cycle comes out , and they cannot confirm that it will come out this year.

The North American Championships at Gen Con have less than half the attendees of the year before.

I will just include a couple of the responses It ended up being quite a long thread, but I'll just include a couple of the early responses.

User Vargar said, While the timeline is correct, I feel that it dodges the fact that large swaths of the MWL arc cards that Lucas designed , including Faust and the Mumbad cycle.

Well, Damon has released bad cards.

I do feel like he was left holding the bag when it comes to Mumbad.

Eric Twice, some pushback.

Damon had the chance to do something about those cards, but didn't.

He never put Censi Actors Union on the MWL and did nothing on bioethics.

He could have restricted blackmail or limit Faust, but he decided not to, and he's responsible for that.

Ultimately, Damon killed the game by both printing overpowered cards rumor mill, CTM, and refusing to use the MWL to deal with well-n problems, since the Actors Union.

Had he acted on that regard, I think the game would have had a much healthier player base than it does right now.

There used to be three or four netr groups in mid Madrid, and they started disappearing around this time.

I remember how they all came to me for advice because they thought they were seeing a ton of powerful broken cars they couldn't beat.

And I had none for them because I had the same issue.

I almost quit the game myself over Ciffer.

Now those groups are gone, and the core hardcore players at organized tournaments are leaving to play L5R.

I haven't played the game in ages and haven't even bought the last few data packs.

I'm afraid the game, if it isn't dead already, soon will be.

Even the Net Runner WhatsApp group is full of L5R talk, not Net Runner.

It makes me extremely sad to say those words.

I truly love this game, and I've had some incredible experiences with it.

I wish I could play it forever and share it with as many people as possible as one of the best games ever made.

And it hurts to think that it might become unplayable in the future.

I truly hope I'm wrong, but I find it hard to be optimistic about the future .

And user fighting Wal says, in my 10mon play, Net Runner, having experienced a few issues, there have certainly been challenges to playing the game and getting invested.

It's hard to find face-to-face games.

It's number two, where's number one?

I don't know.

It's hard to find face-to-face games .

Many do not have any regular Netrunner nights, and those that do are frequently down to a handful of players.

If you cannot play on the one night per week that Net Runner gets played in a store that is not too far from where you live, then you are likely not playing regularly at all.

The game has a very steep learning curve, so new players will lose a lot.

Other than experienced players intentionally playing weak decks, there is no handicap system that allows newer players to get an edge up to have a better chance of scratching out a few wins here and there against the hardcore remaining players .

Related to all of the above, the people who have hung on and still play regularly tend to be the more competitive players who like to play decks that are not vanilla classic net runner.

So the new player not only is in for a thrashing much of the time, he or she is getting beat by a deck that is designed to not play old school Net Runner.

Finally, because of all the things that FFG has done is outlined in the original post, new player entering the committee enter the committee and exposed not to enthusiasm and excitement about the game, but to a chorus of complaints and cries about how the game is dead or dying or just in a terrible place.

All of the complaints about FFG seem valid from my limited perspective, but I personally experienced it had to basically ignore the doom talk when I bought into the game.

And if I listened to it, I probably would have dropped out a month or two after I started.

I don't know how the player community can overcome these challenges.

When I visit a store where there is a magic the gathering draft because going on or a bunch of people playing commander, I do see casual players having fun.

I know the old casual versus competitive issue got raised a year or so ago, and the voice of the community seemed to say that people calling for more casual play should not complain so much.

But if the game is going to grow or stabilize, it seems to me like it needs to intentionally reach out to create casual and noob- friendly formats .

FFG needs to do some things differently.

But we here on this forum can't force FFG to do anything.

The only part of this problem that we can fix is the part we control.

It wasn't a crazy, unbalanced comment there at the end, but yes, there is a sense of what to return to Cry of Frustrations article, of what what he was talking about here with online doomsaying reaching a fever pitch, to continue that article now, that the company was forced to preempt their long-planned big announcement and tip their hand early.

No, the game wasn't dead.

The truth was even stranger , the long rumored but never confirmed, Core 2.0 was real.

Core 2.0 had been something that people had claimed was coming since 2015, citing unidentified sources among the game's playtesters.

But many were convinced it was real, others, by myself included, believed it to be a crazy conspiracy theory, repeated ad nauseum by people who simply wanted it to be true.

Those last few months before its announcement were full of people on Reddit and social media advising newcomers not to buy the original corset, because Core 2.0 is coming any day now, which I found immensely frustrating.

But it turned out to be true, though perhaps not in the form people expected it would be.

I'm sure few would have believed that iconic cards like Account siphon, scorched earthge and accelerated beta test, would be gone from the game.

The fact that all the new cards in the box were from Genesis and Spin, though, meaning existing players already owned all the cards, was widely appreciated.

The bad news, though, was that manufacturing delays meant that the game's eighth cycle, Kara, as well as Core 2.0, wouldn't be coming out for months yet.

Recognizing that six months of meta stagnation would be fatal for the game, they announced that rotation , including the original corset, would be decoupled from set releases, and worlds would happen in a post-rotation environment.

To go with this announcement, Boggs released a a new MWL, which took a radical new form.

Instead of an influence penalty, this was a true banned and restricted list, with a list of restricted cards, which each deck was only allowed one of , and a list of cards that were entirely banned.

This was a major departure, and made choosing from among your possibilities for restriricted cards, a fascinating little subgame in the deck building process.

While also making the process of figuring out what your opponent's restricted card is , a crucial part of playing a game.

The complete removal of some problem cards, like Friends in High Places, a terminal operation that installed up to two cars from archives, Cher and Fowlust was also welcomed, and salvaged Venatus Armory became the record holder for quickest card to be banned, to universal acclaim.

Overnight, the game was completely different.

Old, familiar deck archetypes were toast, new decks arose, everyone was testing furiously, and nobody knew what the best decks would be.

In the midst of the pre worldwor's testing frenzy, a scandal broke out when it was revealed that a group of U.S. West Coast players known as the Glassouse Testing Group had written a bot that scraped unpublished decks from networkrunner DB.com and matched it to usernames in order to figure out what the top players were running.

Many considered this to be outright cheating and were hurt and offended by these actions.

When worlds did eventually roll around, the meadow was varied and crazy.

Virtually every faction was well represented with even Wayland, having multiple decks in the top 50. Though nowhere near the cut.

The one tragic exception was criminal, for whom the loss of a account siphon and desperado to rotation and of toujin to the ban list was devastating.. Except for Geist, who lost almost nothing to rotation, was even represented in the top 16.

Though a varied metagame, one ID on each side emerged as the clear best.

On the corpse side, this was cerebral imaging, which, as many had predicted, had a distinct advantage over other corpps and not being as vulnerable to agenda flooding, now that our Lord and Savior Jackson Hower had ascended to rotation.

This was not, however, your dad's seven-point combo CI, although some combo CI decks existed, the most success successful of which was a kill combo using brain rewiring and show of force, and a few Estell Moon CI's, the majority of CI decks played more conventional net runner, scoring through a combination of ice and fast advance.

On the runner side, a variety of different Haley decks held the top spots, some based around cloneship, others using leve as their restricted card, both reliedlyng on power drawing through their deck to get to their variety of silver bullets to deal with any matchup.

Wilfie Horg, co-host of the winning agenda, now known as Jess Horg, took first place with Stinson reversed CI and Laguna Haley.

There were a large range of other successful decks on both sides.

Controlling the message proved surprisingly resilient in spite of NBN losing their best cards, and a variety of Jintke decks, some based on potential unleashed, aiming to deck out the runner so they would be unable to steal Obocata, which is a 53ocata protocol, a 53 Gintucky agenda as an additional cost to steal it due four net damage.

Others playing a glacier game out of agenfusion, rounded out the top 16.

Anarchs took up most of the rest of the top spots on the runner side, most out of Valencia, with film critic.

Katara took a while to get here, but it was greeted with a lot of fanfare.

Although we didn't get another MWL update until several packs in, new cards keep shifting the balance with every single pack.

In particular, conventional glacier decks got a big palate boost with NGO front, one of the most well-designed cards we've seen in a while .

This is a neutral advanceable asset that if you trash it with one counter on it, it gains five credit, you gain five credits.

If you trash it with two, you gain eight.

At the moment, two thirds of the way through the cycle, the metagame is wide open, with a huge variety of huge decks with competitive potential.

In Titan fast advance, the Whalland may have a tier 1 deck for the first time in years, and on the runner's side, we've even had IDs like Adam and Nero winning store championships.

As I write this, the fifth pack has just been released, and it promises to shake up the metagame even more.

It's anyone's guess, what rain and reverie will bring?

We're in for quite a ride..

And then five weeks later, the game was announced that it was ending.

Oh, what a gut punch.

but.. Like I said, one reason why it's timed so well.

This article is timed so well.

So June, early June of 2018 was the article Jacking Out , announcing the the end of Android Nut Runner on Fantasy Flight's site.

And I will read this article as well, because, hey, this episode is already, really long and it's only going to get longer.

In 2012, Fantasy Flight Games launched Android Nut Runner, the card game, with innovative mechanics revised from the classic collectible card game combined with the dystopian Cyberpunk Future of the Android Universe, Android Netrunner has enthralled thousands of players over the course of its two corsets , a campaign expansion, five deluxe expansions, and eight cycles of data packs.

Wizards of the Coast has been a fantastic partner to us over the past six years, and we at fantasy Flight games are incredibly thankful to them for letting us play with the game system that they pioneered.

However, as much as we have enjoyed developing Android Net Runner, our current licensing term is coming to an end.

And today, Fantasy Flight Games must announce the end of Androidut Run.ner, the card game.

Starting on October 22nd, 2018, Fantasy Flight Games will no longer offer for sale any Net Runner products, including plane mats and card sleeves.

Before we reach that point, we still have one more stop to make.

The rain and Reverie deluxe expansion will be the final product for the game.

Featuring cards for every faction, rain and reverie is a celebration of all things Nutrunner, and an appropriately climactic conclusion to the game's six-year run.

What's more, while Nut Runner is coming to an end, the world's vandroid will continue to be explored from the gritty streets of sand sand to the warring colonies of Mars in future products from fantasy Flight Games.

As Nutrunner draws to a close, organized play for the game is also coming to an end.

And then, oh, there's a link to the world championship and organized play.

Well, I'm talk about that in a second.

For more details and thoughts on the end of Nutrunner from lead developer Michael Boggs and Fantasy Flight Games head of studio Andrew Navarro read .

Here is Boggs.

When I was first told Android Net Rut Runner was ending, I was something.

I don't really know the name of the emotion that I was feeling.

It was a mix of sadness, confusion, and nostalgia.

It was weird.

Maybe you're feeling the same way.

Over the next couple weeks, I took time to digest.

Somber as I was, I came to a stark realization.

My love for Netrunner did not come from its mechanics or theme.

I liked those things a lot, maybe an unhealthy amount, but they weren't what kept me playing the game day after day, year after year.

The sole driving force for my continued play, for my absolute session with the game, was the community.

My first experience with the game was learning from my lifelong friend.

Initially, just being able to play against him was enough.

When I got to Busan, I found a small but amazing group of friends who pushed and challenged me to be a better player.

We would meet weekly, and sometimes more than that, to play, to practice, to strive, to compete.

After moving to Seoul, I found a thriving player base, and though my time in this group was limited, they taught me that even with all my years of experience, there was still so much more that I had to learn.

Once I started working on that runner, I was stunned by the sheer number and diversity of people who enjoyed this game as much as I did.

The communities I belonged to in South Korea were somewhat insulated from the greater Net Runner populace, and it was fascinating to witness the widespread love for the game.

The passion of the players, the content makers, and the fans , helped keep what I was doing and who I was doing it for, in perspective.

Net Runner was something extraordinary.

It was unique in its theme and mechanics, sure, but its true specialty came from the people around it.

I hope and believe the community will keep it alive for years to come.

And now, Andrew Navarro.

With the announcement of the end of the Net Runner products line, I'm sure many of you are wondering why.

Well, I cannot speak to the specifics.

I would like to provide as much insight as I can and hopefully lessen the consternation that this announcement has undoubtedly caused.

I'm sure this news comes as an unwelcome surprise to many of you.

Given that we recently released the revised corset and the rotation has finally got into effect, it seems like the timing couldn't be worse.

To announce the end of the game line.

With the success that Nutrunner has enjoyed over the last six years, I don't think there would ever have been a good time to end it, in the eyes of many fans, and the eyes of many of us here at the studio.

But the license agreement has reached its conclusion, and so the product line must do the same.

Nut Runner has been a joy to work on, and it has been equally fun watching the tremendous following that the game has garnered throughout the years.

I am extremely grateful for everyone who contributed to the game's success, from Richard Garfield to the developers, to the artists and art directors, to the organized play team and everyone in between.

Nut Runner got a lot of love and attention from a lot of talented and passionate people here at the studio and at As.mo Day .

I am extremely proud of the product line from start to finish.

But no amount of passion from us could in and of itself make the game a success.

We all we all of all of that to the fans.

Players, retailers, tournament organizers, podcasters, and video content creators whose love of the game surpassed all of our expectations.

Thank you so, so much for making Nut Runner a part of your lives and for your support along the way.

Thank you.

I hope that you continued to enjoy Nut Runner for me many years to come.

Just because we won't be printing it anymore doesn't suddenly turn it into a game that's not worth playing, it's an excellent game.

About 20 years ago, the Net Runner CCG was discontinued after a much shorter run than the LCG enjoyed, and fans continued to play that version of the game for years without any official support from its publisher.

Their patience and dedication were eventually rewarded by the resurrection of the game they loved.

Personally, I hold out hope that one day Nut Runner will return, and that our part in its history will be regarded as a significant chapter of its much longer journey.

Until then, always be running.

One week later is the first post on StT Hack about Project N, which is now currently null signal games.

But at the time, that stood for Next Runner, International Support and Extension Expansion Initiative.

And so, in fact, the community had picked it up and ran with it.

But this is not a podcastaster about Null Signal games.

There are several of those, and you're welcome to go check those out.

The final tournament was held in, I think, October, maybe it was September, called Magnum Opus.

And here, what came out of this was the final set of champion cards, although they were perhaps undertested, going all the way back to Dan G Argenio's 2015 world championship card, as well as two cards that were group designed at that final event.

And then official support ended October 22nd of 2018.

Now, what I was interested in, I was glad to have Crya Frustrations article.

Otherwise, I had this forum post.

But I was curious about. Just kind of what the perspectives are now, you know, seven years on, on the other side of null signal having carried the game at this point for longer than fantasy Flight did.

And so I put up a Reddit thread where I said, hey, I'm interested in what people, some positive opinions of the post-D&D period.

I referred to it as the post-Lucas period, which was inaccurate and caused its own kind of responses.

And I just wanted to some more positive than this, that forum post that I just read.

And so I'm going to refer talk about some of the comments I got from people there.

First one is Swel, SWABL.

He said, I started playing in 2016, so my opinion is going to be shaped by having not experienced pre-Mumbad, but Mumbad was undested, and as a result, the first true prison corp decks emerged, which were obnoxiously powerful, and not what most people consider fun.

This had a negative impact on the player base, compounded by the game having been out for about four years at that point, and three or four years is generally about how long the average person sticks with a hobby like this.

Combined, there was a notable drop in players.

Flashpoint was a major power spike, which was not unwelcome.

It led to some very exciting and dynamic games, but those games were also very sharp.

And tags for tempo with CTM and heart-hitting news became extremely prevalent, which resulted in much more unforgiving games.

And until bands and tech came out, that style of gameplay was extremely centralizing.

Shout out to 14 of the top 16 at Worlds 2016 being CTM.

Basically, older styles of gameplay weren't as popular as viable, and new new spikier, unfamiliar styles gained prominence, coming right off the back of what was a miserable cycle for many.

It was a rough one-two punch.

But after that, once things settled, it was fine, only.

There was stuff going on, there were two powerful cards, there was broken stuff, just as there had always been and always are in card games.

A lot of the Damon era reputation comes from the legacy of Mumbad and the immediate effect Flashpoint hat on the game.

Subsequently, Swayble came back to say, he didn't intend this to apportion blame or credit, just just that Damon was lead designer , as others have mentioned and will mentioned, Lucas did most of the design on Mumbad. .

I think there also was a sense that they didn't expect the game to last past four cycles and four big boxes, so maybe scrambling to figure out where to take things next and how to do that.

And arguably, it showed in the designs.

But there were powerful and creative card designs that opened up a lot of space, and once things settled a bit, and the worst of the power was reined in, asset-based gameplay found a real place, and, in my opinion, one of the more fun engaging in skill testing forms of Net Runner in ways that didn't really exist under Lucas.

I think Null signal, especially have made that side a lot more interesting and less tech reliant runners side, too.

Then we had the Bogs era, and things really started looking up and looking exciting.

Revised Corps was a well-received and necessary refresh of the core pool , and Katara had a ton of brilliant designs and cool decks come out of it.

When the game ended, things were really on the up, really.

But there was a good job chance that by that time, the sentiment was changing for the better.

The decision to pull the plug based on the post-MBA data had already been made, D. It was too little, too late.

But that momentum was channeled into NSG, and now I'm smashing this out half an hour before I leave for Edinburgh to attend the biggest world championship since FFG's Swan's song, Magnum Opus, and maybe ever.

And that the final FFG Worlds was, but maybe not any longer; the biggest worlds ever for the game shows or the game hadn't been abandoned by players, and indeed had begun to grow again at the end.

So, no, it wasn't all doom and gloom.

Doom and gloom was the phrase that I used, I think.

There was a one-to punch that had a sharp negative effect on the player base that only started recovering from years later, but the game gameplay in that time was still engaging, fun, and creative, even if powerful, sharp, and challenging, that could be a bit too demanding.

The second comment is from Bubba the Goat.

I think the biggest change along the dividing line you're talking about isn't Lucas or Damon, but play testing.

The core set and first two cycles were co-developed and tested extensively by FFG's internal test teams.

Later cycles relied mostly on external playtesters, volunteers from the ANR community.

The external playtesters' cycle had slow and limited feedback loops and design iterations.

As far as most external playtesters could tell, cards went through a quick, internal development cycle, then got printed once for tests.

After testers provided feedback, the cards went to print.

Sometimes, cards were completely redesigned between test and full release, meaning the cards that actually went into wide distribution had very little or no external testing and limited internal testing.

Now, back to the testing phase itself.

Testers were limited to playing with other testers, with physical cards, and as often as they could meet up.

The full A&R community could and did play and test on Jentucky dot.net.

Obviously, scheduling, deck building, and even playtime are all dramatically accelerated by playing online.

Long story short, the A&R community would play more games with new cards in their first week of release. Than the entire testing phase could manage.

This resulted in much more tuned decks than testing could produce.

Even when play testing identified a card is very good powerful, Faust, they may identify it as a problem, but the full extent of its impact wasn't clear until after release.

Dumblefork.

All this, contributed to frustration in the competitive community.

The casual community was probably more frustrated with the competitive community would drive two hours to play to store championship in another state, bringing net decks on 100 hours of play testing into a little community of six players who were looking forward to deciding which of their own group was the best .

But none could compete with the maniacs who rolled into town and stole all the their prizes.

The casual community was already declining, either from disliking new cards, disliking the competitive attitude of tournaments, or just the game running its course for them.

As individual store groups declined, more people slowly exited the game.

If anyone wants to come back, it is difficult to be competitive without investing hundreds of hours of practice and testing to do so, making it difficult to grow the base.

I love the game, but I just don't have the bandwidth to play.

Another comment from Jinteki Komayu.

Nutrunner veteran here, playing FFG's Nutrunner from 2013 until NSG's borealis cycle.

For me, it's still my 10 out of 10 game, and I recall so many many great memories of events, places, and people I met in my low tier player career.

From my point of view, the game had a flaw from the start, and that was the LCG model.

I admit, I thought it was all great and pretty perfect at first because you could always get all the cards if you keep up with the small monthly card subscription.

However, the system proved to be flawed, which is probably why FFG has now discontinued all competitive LCs and only uses the model for co-op LCGs.

Netdecking became a problem.

Everyone has all the cards anyway, so why not copy the best decks?

That killed creativity..

Shops earned less money with it than with displays and boosters, so I assumed they didn't necessarily give Nutrunner preference over classic TCGs.

This meant that a proper player base could never really be established.

Litzinger, Stone, and Bogs did a good job, and they can all be criticized for not using the MWL tool more consistently, but what ultimately killed the game was not the designers, but the LCG model.

Super Selkath responded, I don't really agree with the net decking point.

If the only reason your card pool is diverse is because people can't afford the best cards, that's not a good situation, but it's also not an accurate situation.

An MTG, MTG Magic the Gathering, tournaments with money on the line. Player's will absolutely fork over the money to get all their fetch lands.

At a competitive level, the models should have very little effect on net decking.

In theory, LCG should make having a ban list easier, not not harder.

In magic, if your deck gets banned out from under you, you could be out hundreds of dollars in the now useless cards and have to buy a new deck .

An LCG, you already have the cards.

Just build your next one.

The problem is fantasy flight didn't utilize this advantage at all.

Their hesitation to ban cards is probably what killed the game.

I mean, Wizards of the Coast killed the game, but contract negotiations fell apart because after a decline in revenue, Fantasy Flight wasn't willing to pay WotC as much for the license.

A response to that from user Ookun, there was no meaningful decline in revenue.

It was the number one most profitable game at Fantasy Flight.

X-Wing and Armada technically made more money, but there were higher expenses, which is why they weren't as profitable.

WotC wanted orders of magnitude more money for licensing because Cyberpunk 2077 was due, and the perception was the property was going to surge in value.

Unbeknownst to them, that game would be delayed and flawed, and FFG was closing negotiations with Marvel.

There just wasn't any financial reason to pay so much more that the game would make less profit than the most conservative projections for a Marvel LCG.

Responding to the first commenter here, not the very first, but Jintki Komayuu.

This is Shoku Jiko.

Hard disagree about n-decking being a problem.

Consolidation to a couple top tier lists happens with any competitive card game.

But in other games, it's just a barrier for players who can't afford to invest hundreds of dollars into cards they might only need for one tournament.

There has always been a huge amount of creativity in deck building, and it had more to do with the card pool itself, narrowing to a couple optimal strategies.

In fact, the deck building in Netrunner has always been inherently creative because of the asymmetrical element, influence, and identity abilities.

I mean, having from a business perspective, not having a predatory secondary market certainly makes you less money.

What actually killed the game was WotC not renewing the license.

It's very silly for me to, to me, to suggest the LCG model was to blame when it thematically works well for a game that's largely about fighting corporate greed.

Duckcliff asked, does the LCG model work better for NSG because the cards are more balanced?

Or does it still not work?

Ergonomic Cat says, I completely disagree that it didn't work.

It didn't create chase cards and a secondary market, which probably restricted the appeal to retailers.

But from a consumer perspective, I haven't played a CCG in 15 years, but I own every card game FG ever put out with an LCG model.

Other than Poke and Magic, basically every competitive card game is a niche hobby that lives and dies by the people playing.

If you have locals to to play with, you can do it forever.

If you don't, it dies.

Lorcana, Blood and Steel, even Yu-Gi-h and the like, need local support.

That support didn't disappear because people couldn't buy an extra copy of Desperado for \$25 or because no one was trading anarchs for criminals.

Another comment to original comment to my opening comment was from cry of frustration.

So hello again.

This, of course, now seven years after writing up that whole blog post that I originally read, who said, in response to the Doom and Gloom Forum post, where they're talking about the death of the community, old tired arguments, to be quite honest.

Whatever issues the game had stemmed less from any particular person working on it, and more from systemic problems within FFG, such as a tendency by upper management to micromanaged designer decisions , horrible supply chain problems, and inherent conservatism with regard to their formats, and an inability to capitalize on the heat the game had around the 2014 15 period to keep new players coming in.

The game had incredible public publicity from Quin of Shut Up and Sit Down, who managed to get articles about it into mainstream websites like The Guardian and the BBC.

FFG did absolutely nothing to capitalize on that.

And when Quinn stopped writing about it, because he was reviewing board games for an actual living, and of course he burned out trying to be a competitive player for a very deep and complex lifestyle game, there was just nothing to fill the gap.

FFG did nothing to cultivate other content creators for the game, maintain the hype that Quinn had created or keep it in the public conversation .

Inst said, they were always focused on promoting their newest games, Star Wars Destiny, a Game of Thrones 2, X-Wing, Legend of the 5 Rings, and finally Key Forge, all came out during Net Runner's FFG run, which were cannibalizing the players of their existing games, including Net Runner.

The fact that most successful card games today are run by companies for whom that game is their entire business model with magic, as the exception, given Hasbro's D&D licensing profits probably eclipse magic, should suggest that trying to maintain 12 different LCGs at the same time is not viable, given there's a big overlap between the fan bases for each.

Net Runner wasn't even the first game to fall victim to this.

Out of the six or seven LCGs that are mentioned at the 2014 announcement that rotation would be implemented, only Net Runner survived long enough to actually reach rotation.

The lack of any officially supported small card pool format, small card pool, made the game extremely difficult for beginners to get into.

The cost of buying everything new by 2017 would have been about a grand, and that's if you could find them , with popular packs like opening moves, because Jackson, being constantly out of stock, and the immense number of individual skews making it a massive pain for retailers to stock and forcing players to source packs from different places.

And that's not even getting into how daunting it would be for a beginner to learn that massive cardpool.

When the announced rotation for L55R, they placed it as happening when the fifth cycle would be released, rather than the eighth, like with Nut Runner.

So they learned that mistake, at least.

And I can personally tell you that the big rotation that accompanied elevations release that's the null signal , brought a lot of new players to Net Runner.

People want a game that's easy to get into.

And FFG was inflexible in that regard because one of their key key selling points for the LCG format was that it wouldn't invalidate your purchases with frequent rotations and bands like the top CCGs did.

And they were quite conservative about introducing either rotation or ban lists because of that.

Add to that the logistics problems during 2017 that led to a huge gap between releases.

And, of course, people started losing interest in drifting away, with the rest speculating that the game might be on his last legs, while at the same time, very few new players would join the game due to the issues I mentioned above above.

And of course , the scene contracted massively.

I'm not sure if Katara and revised Corps really helped that much.

There was genuinely a feeling that things were on the up.

But that didn't translate to new people coming to meetups and tournaments, at least in my meta or any of the nearby ones that I had friends in.

Honestly, we got more new players after cancellation than I after a revised Corps, because Netrunner's cancellation made the news in the gaming press.

In a way, no previously the way no previously canceled FFG game did, and there were many. Due to the game's long pedigree and its popularity due to Quinn's evangelizing.

That didn't lead to an overall increase in population, of course, because even more people quit, quit after cancellation than joined.

But that doesn't change the fact that cancellation was the best publicity move FFG ever made for Net Runner.

I don't think they even shared that billions episode with the Net Runner tournament on their socials when it happened.

The game wasn't killed by any designer.

It was killed by institutional sclerosis and man managerial neglect.

The reason is doing well under NSG and getting better every year is because everyone in there actually cares about the game , rather than about making a buck for from it.

And then followed up with this addendum, just wanted to add that while Quinn's contribution was enormous, there were several other people writing about Net Runner and mainstream websites, vice covered the game a lot.

Shout out to Daniel Joseph , Lee Alexander, James Chen wrote about it on an esports site that I can't find anymore.

And of course, Clayton Purdum on Killscreen, which is one of my favorite articles about the game.

It's called Why Nut Runner Matters.

And then cry of frustration comes back to say, to actually answer the question in the title, which which is what's a different perspective than the game went downhill after Lucas left.

My personal opinion is that the game is always the most exciting when you're new and bad at it.

The meta feels wider open, not necessarily because it is, but because nobody can evaluate cards as well.

And even the people who figure out the best decks don't know how to play them optimally.

So the delta between the top decks and the rest is smaller. Even listening to your podcast, that would be my podcast.

That would be this podcast.

And hearing you read out articles and foreign discussions from 10 years ago, some of the things people say about the game seem laughably naive now.

And we're talking about players whom I idolized back then.

So the first for the first two or three years of the game, the game was better because we were all worse at it.

If the game is objectively worse in any way now than it was then, it is in this respect.

New players today have far better resources and a much larger depth of knowledge to learn from than we did in 2013 to 15.

I see how quickly the people starting now pick it up and internalize things that it took me years to learn, and I am odd.

There were so many nut runner zoomers rampaging across the top tables at worlds last weekend and terrorizing people like me who've been playing for 10 years, I came 298th or something, that I wonder whether they had that stage of everything seeming possible and every card seeming exciting like we did, or if they went straight from learning what install costs are to making top cuts.

But if that's a downside to the way things are now, it's not really a huge one.

You know, I was worried that this episode was going to be two hours long when I started it.

Unfortunately, it looks like that's going to be about right.

But unexpectedly after all those multiple different comments I got, and I want to thank everybody who commented there in the thread.

Unexpectedly, Damon Stone himself dropped in.

I quoted him a little bit ago.

He was the user Olokun, who gave some insight about the profitability of the game.

And it seems like the place to conclude this discussion is giving him an opportunity to , you know, to actually make a statement.

He's likely done this other places over the years, but I don't know where those are.

And so I want to provide not only the platform that Reddit did, but I also want to provide his thoughts here.

I really thought that he made some nice points .

I thought he was able to express some of his frustrations in a dignified way, but also, you know, he was very balanced.

So here's the first comment that he made, in direct response to the negative things from that forum post on Stim Hack.

That was my original post.

He says, oof.

I was acting as lead designer before it was ever announced.

Several of the most beloved cards in that time were mine, and Lucas stopped being lead designer, but didn't stop designing or developing cards until the end of Flashpoint.

And some of the most broken cards were his.

Every designer on Net Runner made strong, weak, boring, and broken cards for Richard Garfield and Michael Boggs.

Most competitive gamers have no idea how games are designed, no understanding of the industry.

And as a result exist in a vacuum, and those who participate in online discussion platforms often get stuck in an echo chamber where things are great or terrible, positive or negative, but rarely balanced or objective in the views held.

Lucas was given an inordinately hard time for his designs through the lunar side cycle, but by the time Flashpoint rolled around, the exact same people complaining about his designs were giving him accolades and giving me a hard time about my designs.

Even when some of the cards they celebrated were mine, not his, and the newer cards they trash were his and not mine.

And it happened in reverse.

Cards he was attributed, they were said to be crappy, were mine, as were cards that he had done, I had done, thought to be great.

Picking on a designer who has fellow designers, developers, playtesters, and bosses, is an easy scapegoat, but is rarely going to be accurate at where blame is due.

As an example, there were cards that went through testing well- balanced, and right before being sent to the printer, someone decided to boost it.

That person was never me, but I didn't own the company, and I didn't manage the department.

I didn't get a veto.

When rotation was decided on, I wasn't consulted, not about if we should do it or how we would implement it.

When it came to the MWL and banning and restricting of cards, I was following competing demands, but I didn't get to add everything to the list I wanted, nor did I choose each card that ended up on the list.

Here is what lead designer meant at FFG.

You were responsible for the initial concept and theme of the cycle and created the pillars and examples of new mechanics.

The developers and testers made the choices that resulted in what cards would finally look like.

And for at least two cycles, we had one playtester who was actively trying to subvert the game in their own favor, and he's currently competing against NSG, since now he can remake the game in his own image.

So I will insert parenthetically, parenthetically here, this seems to be a clear reference to the big boy and the reboot project.

And Damon and the big boy, Abram, had a working relationship because the big boy was one of the teststers.

And the big boy did reach out to me separately and messaged me largely in response to some of these things that Damon mentioned.

And here's what he said about that.

The only thing I tried to manipulate was trying to get cards printed to make CTM less good, which I stand by being a noble effort.

That's part of why freedom was so strong.

And about half the testers were on this mission.

He's right about what most of what he says in his posts about the corporate hoops making it impossible to please everyone while keeping the game balanced.

Back to Damon.

Lastly, FFG is a for-profit company.

When the timeline says Net Runner was dying, it was the most profitable game in FFG's portfolio.

That would have been impossible if the game was actually dying.

Organized play is a great, visible way to keep an active community, but active players are loss leaders for a company like FFG.

You support them, so you can brag about them and drive social media posts and web traffic, and it keeps a nice visible presence in larger sizes in major markets, but that was never even 5% of the market.

Catering to that 5% runs the risk of losing a much larger and more profitable demographic.

Lucas, Michael, and I had jobs whose paycheck came from the other 95% of the players, and a mandate to keep the game accessible and fun for those people as best as we can while managing through card development, the vocal and visible 5% aided, and sometimes led by our oh, oh, I botched that.

And a mandate to keep the game accessible and fun for those people as best we can.

While managing through card development, the vocal invisible 5% aided and sometimes led by our organized play department, who had as much input and more control on what cards and rules changes would impact tournament play than any of us designers.

It sucks, being blamed for things that simply aren't true, in the same way that it sucks for Lucas to get blamed for older cards that I designed, or for either of us to have credit for things we did well.

Auburn to the other.

The internet being what it is, I'm sure people will argue with this or disregard it, but at least factual information is available to people who have mostly been speculating.

So I responded to that this way.

Thanks for your insightful and well-expressed reply.

I would like to apologize for any inaccuracies caused by the shorthand I used for this thread title or for any offense caused by digging up and quoting that old forum thread.

More precisely, my question could have been, what is an alternate narrative to the game got worse after Data and Destiny?

Or to put it in another way, since you are in a prime position to comment on this, do you feel that, on the whole, the game itself was better from Mumbad on than it had been at, say, the mid?point of the sand sand cycle, pre-Faust?

If so, could you elaborate on ways that you feel that is true?

If not, can you in retrospect identify reasons why it wasn't true?

I noticed several times in your comments there are other comments I'll get to in a second, that things were not implemented exactly as you would have preferred if you'd had complete control, setting aside the desirability of one person and having complete control, such as the MWL, or cards that received late and untested changes.

Those observations prompt a couple of additional questions.

What are some of the things that were out of your control that you would have done differently?

And do you feel that some of the things a competitive community complained about weren't actually problematic?

I understand that all of this happened close to a decade ago at this point, and perhaps you aren't interested in spending any more of your time revisiting it.

If that is the case, that I'm grateful for the time that you took to compose your previous post.

But if not, I am quite interested in hearing your perspective on this game that has been such a big part of my life.

Irrespective of whether you wish to comment on any of this, I want to thank you for the work you put into contributing to one of the best games of all time.

Damon's response.

My view and whether the game was better or worse at any point isn't all that relevant to most of the people here.

As a designer of the game, I can't be any more unbiased about the game than it's active at the time players .

I could argue I have a more holistic view.

For example, my impression is most of the posters on the online forums were competitive players, at the local and regional level, if not national and international level, and often were a mix between unaware of and uncaring of, the casual kitchen table players .

An analogy.

You love a local band who plays at Venue X once a week and pretty much every special occasion or holiday at the venue.

The band members and door person recognize you on site, if not necessarily by name.

You especially like certain songs from either their early or late work out of a subset of songs that show their virtuosity.

This music makes up only about 20% of their sets, even though you tell them in person and on their fan site, which you are very active on, how much you prefer this music.

What you are unaware or uncaring of is that you and your maids at the front of the stage dancing and singing along don't buy enough drinkings or merchandise to support the band or the bar.

It's the bridge and tunnel crowd who show up, albeit inconsistently , that are tipping the band, buying rounds of drinks for for their work friends or double dates, etc., and stream the music, etc.

Their casual fandom is why the band hasn't broken up, or can play music as frequently as they do, and why the bar keeps hiring the band, and their presence is what keeps the door cover low, they are supplementally supporting your hoppy.

As a designer, I have to keep these casual fans, people who are buying most of the product, happy.

When I do my job right, it also gives the competitive players fun and powerful cards, but I'm only human.

I'm going to mess up, like every other designer.

But I also have a team and a direct boss.

And I need to justify the decisions I make to them.

They also have some amount of control, from simple input to direct control over the final product.

And I need to keep them happy as well.

And then I have organized play, same as above.

And then, of course, there is the studio head and CTP.

That's Christian T. Peterson, the owner of Fantasy Flight at the time. All of whom, I again have to keep happy and who have direct control over the game.

So, narrowing my focus to say this period was a great time for the game for only a specific subset is incredibly difficult, because I'm a player also.

With my opinions and preferences and the kinds of games I like, I'm quite possibly the most biased while also being the most informed.

I can say this.

I enjoyed the game the most when the people I was playing with felt unsure about the cardpool, when everything feels possible and there is a sense of discovery about deck building and what you might face.

That was most prevalent during the core and first two cycles, Again during Flashpoint.

And again, with the revised Core Red Sand Katara.

There have always been overly strong and two- weak cards.

The testing cycle was just too short.

The play test grows too small and inconsistent in asking and quality of feedback because they were regular players with their own busy lives.

The game, too complex, and no meaningful digital testing tools available for it to ever be anything but.

NSG exists in a time and context where much of that is removed.

There are Their market is also vastly reduced, both in numerical size, but also in demographic.

They have a relatively small, dedicated group of players whose primary interest seems to have a focus on heavily optimized, competitive play in mostly casual contexts.

This, with no boss other than themselves, as I understand understand it, but I could be wrong about the structure here, affords them the ability to tune their cards for a particular play group without having to try and make wildly different interests happy and with no aggressive production goals or timelines, they are doing a bang-up job.

My latest game, plug for DC Forever, has the most relaxed design and development schedule I've ever had.

That isn't to say there aren't flaws, see above statement about being human, but it went through at least three times as much testing as the ANR corset did.

The game benefited from that immensely, just like NSG's releases do.

And I'm lucky that another number of those testers were, are, Netrunner players.

Testing is difficult, and sometimes thankless work.

They're the unsung heroes of every game.

Even when things are overlooked and discovered later, I'm just thankful for the things they did catch.

I think the thing that the competitive community repeatedly got right was the assumption that tournament results were indicative of the best cards, decks, and strategies in the game.

I've played tournament level CCGs since the first in-store tournaments of M Magic the Gathering until 2010.

I've had meta-defining decks and decks that broke the perceived meta, and my friends and training and deck building teams have done even more so on those levels, and far too frequently the crowd, of which I was a part of as a whole, was wrong.

In the games I've been involved with, people latched onto a deck with a strong show showing at a decently sized event.

And the number of times it is represented in future tournament skyrockets, asking with absolute statements about this card or that tactic being the best, or OP.

And the result is, about 30% of the time, the deck continues to be dominant until a new release.

About 50% of the time, some other decker strategy is discovered, and rivals it before a new release.

And about 20% of the time, it has a record not nearly consistent enough to support the previous claims.

More interestingly, when that release comes out, the meta shakeout has less to do with the release of new cards empowering new or old decks, and more the assumption that things are new and different.

So the annoying that the annoying things has been figured out is held to with less orthodoxy.

Not to be the old guy yelling at the clouds, but I believe net decking has been a net negative on the industry as a whole.

Looking up other people's decks and playing them yourself isn't specifically the problem, but it is the assumptions, human psychology, that go along with it, that I think deadens a lot of the creativity and wonder.

Richard Garfield felt so strongly he designed a whole game around trying to subvert that.

That would be Key Forge.

I'm not trying to yuck anyone's yum.

Would I enjoy playing tabletops games for isn't better or more correct than anyone else's reasons.

And even in that I am divided.

I want and prefer in my competitive games to prevent my opponent from being able to play at all, or only give them the impression of choice.

My corp decks were almost always prison or tempo control decks.

I'm a control player at heart.

But for casual games, I recognize that is an unhealthy play style, so I chose adaptive and misdirecting decks, things that let me test and probe the player and take advantage of weaknesses in their strategy or deck.

Here's a thing people can argue about.

Controversial hot take. Competitive players don't want balance.

They want to be the one imbalance is in favor of, and for no one else to know it.

The big boy in responding to me says, I don't think he's right that people net decked too much and didn't experiment.

Even if you look at 2015 where everyone played Astros or food codes, all the details of the decks are super different.

People clearly built their own versions and thought about every slot .

And I said, I know that this has been a big hobby horse for him.

Explore the world.

The big boy says, yeah, and people totally did.

Then they lost to Astros and switched to a deck that didn't lose to Astros as bad.

Every time a pack came out and I played in a GNK, that's a game night get, half the decks were people diving into some new thing.

I said, I think it heart Damon is more like me.

H to play tier 3 Jenkins decks, and it irritated him to some degree that people wanted consistent stuff for tournaments.

The big boy says, they should have leaned more into formats other than constructed for tournaments.

But I know that's not his department.

Super Selkath responding to that last comment from Damon, I'd like to get your perspective on this, then.

You've been maligned, but I haven't heard your side of the story.

What the heck went wrong with with Flashpoint?

For what I understand, CTP, or some other executive, if you prefer, came in and adjusted the power of the cards upwards.

I'm also interested in terminal directive.

The card designs are mostly pretty strong, but as an actual legacy product, I don't think it impressed many people.

Mercedes gave me a small presentation on it as an intern, but I still don't understand why it was made .

Trend chasing, pandemic legacy?

Having Wayland H.B Shaper criminal only meant the cardpool was mismatched in some weird ways where criminal, as noticably more cards than anarch, for instance, post-rotation.

A Where do the myopia on creating a real ban list come from?

Company policy, not to ban in LCG, or was it mostly Lucas?

So here in my final comment from Damon, I'm not going to throw anyone under the bus.

I still work in this industry.

And while I'm comfortable, saying that occasionally, things were boosted after testing and the people in the room can attest to this, even the testers have seen this, I won't say who was responsible for what card.

Each and every decision was made in good faith.

People make mistakes, even when given good information and with the best of intentions.

As her terminal directive, that product was redesigned on three separate occasions.

There were definitely competing visions on what that product should be and what place it was meant to hold.

The original original intent was to release multiple, so that the cardpool would more or less even out.

But like I said, the product went through several changes, both in how it played, what was included, and and the legacy mechanism itself.

About the only thing I feel comfortable concretely saying is there is a reason the box is as big as it is for the components. And then four emojis.

One, the huffing out, smoke out the nose, one, the crying streams of tears, one the downcast eyes and one the zipped mouth.

Regarding the MWL and band list, part of what part of that was Lucas believing the game didn't need it, that there were confirmed answers to every dominant deck.

Part of it was management and the desire to never invalidate a player's cards unless the card itself broke the game, not a hard rule, but soft policy..

A part of it was me thinking that Nutrunner had a built in system to handle cards that were too prevalent or metawarping.

The consensus was to ease people into the idea of increased influence via the MWL, to then create multiple tiers of increased influence, and then issue targeted erata for cards that couldn't be taken tamped down.

It's really easy in hindsight to see how things could have been improved more quickly with a more assertive action, but that ignored two things.

A vocal portion of the community disliked any action at all against their favorite cards or decks, some threatening to leave the game entirely.

The second was that in our other games, we did notice a distinct drop in competitive players following the implementation of band and eratted cards.

My argument was that a slower, softer approach would give us more grace, lessen the impact on the players, and let us make choices based on data.

What I did not account for was the level of orthodoxy and hegemony regarding the solved nature of the meta.

There was so little exploitation of inhouse solutions, or recalibration, the competitive mindset just leaned more into the existing decks , eliminating utility cards to make their decks even more narrow in focus.

The hope had been that with less ability to play with all the toys, players would reevaluate and existing dominant decks would splinter out, fork.

But no.

That was a failing on my part.

I should have predicted that, and included more cards and all the tears up front.

The banning of cards could have been announced as a thing that would follow the next and let everyone warm up to the idea.

I wanted to take my time, even though this is a long episode, but I really wanted to take my time to share all those thoughts that Damon had, because he came along a few days after the thread.

And so anybody who saw that thread initially and then didn't revisit it would have missed him.

And I just, I really appreciated those comments from Damon.

I will conclude here with some come more comments from the big boys that he made to me.

He said, by the way, another counter to the narrative you asked about is that San San and D&D were already a step in the wrong direction , and both were primarily Lucas.

The first three packs of Sanan were okay, but I think that was mostly luck, since the back half had a ton of problems, and D and D had one of the biggest mistakes ever, 247.

I think, really, A&R was an insanely hard game to design for, and they managed to not break it for a long time by mostly just printing not very good cards.

And when they got ambitious and started to push things, it got broken.

And I don't blame them.

It's not like I would have done better.

A complex meat space game, so you can't patch it, with a decently fast release schedule, and with people try hard testing decks with a free online client with all the cards unlocked , is just an impossible challenge, especially for a smallish team.

And I said, I also think there's an interesting parallel between Damon's saying that his favorite times in the game were when the meadow was wide open and undefined , not his exact words, but I think that was the underlying thing. Feeling.

And Richard Garfield, in interviews I've heard with him, saying something similar about the early days of magic and what he hoped for with Key Forge.

The LCG model would seem to feed into that possibility with its rapid release cycle, but then Janeet tacked back hard in the other direction.

The big boy says, yeah, people love the sense of wonder of a new game.

And game makers skew towards that perspective, because if you're going to keep making new games, you kind of need to be that way.

I said, I know it's part of what I like about the game and why both my game collection is filled with games that I've only played a couple of times and I've never gotten particularly skilled at Net Runner.

I just don't have the determination or desire, I guess, to keep playing the same deck over and over again.

Somebody, maybe you, said something similar about Alex Frog from the first year of the game .

He wrote a lot of stuff about the game, then disappeared, probably because it wasn't fresh anymore.

Cult of the new.

And that is where I am going to stop now.

So thanks for listening to this long-winded episode.

I wanted to do something like this to bridge the gap between the end of the fantasy F portion of the ridgeboot cardpool and the reboot boosters.

And I didn't necessarily want it to be a two-hour episode, but hey, we don't always get what we want.

I'm just glad that this recording was able to land on the day that daylight savings time ended.

So I had an extra hour to work with.

Next week.

Well, anyway, many of the cars discussed in this week's episode of linked toed in the show notes and these links to these various threads are as well.

Music is from Alexi Action, the website for the reboot Pro homepage is 2.1.com and you can come join us on the reboot Discord server orchie.fund to play some games.

So I'm going to skip again the Astrosk pilot program, Murta Time.

I intended to also use the very end of this episode to set up the book boosters.

As I said, I didn't intend it for a two-hour episode.

So I will do that.

I'll push that into next week's episode, and next week, we will get into the boosters.

Thanks for listening.

See you next time.