

# WIZARDBALL

You are all students at Mystic Haven Wizard Academy. You've spent most of your childhood there, studying magic to prepare for your adult life as part of the secret world of wizards that hides its existence for the modern world. You're also all on the school's Wizardball team, which will be playing a crucial game against your bitter rivals from the Dragon's Peak Institute for the Arcane this afternoon. Then tonight you'll be attending the Academy's annual Wizard Ball, a feast and dance for students, teachers and notable graduates. Today will be an opportunity to record your name forever alongside the school's most famous students, to start or solidify friendships or romances, to make important connections that could benefit you the rest of your life. Or you could end up embarrassed, the laughingstock of the school, spurned in love and fighting with your friends.

WIZARDBALL is a game for 4-7 people, with one acting as game master (GM) and the rest playing as student athletes from Mystic Haven.

## 1. Make Your Characters

First, all players should come up with a background and personality for their characters. Then, from a pool of 10 total attribute points, assign values to each of the character's four attributes - **Magic**, **Agility**, **Strength** and **Charisma**. No player character's attribute can be a higher starting value than 4.

**Magic** - Determines how well a character uses and understands magic, as well as how effective he or she is at resisting or countering others' magic spells.

**Agility** - Represents factors like a character's speed, his or her ability to evade others, and the ability to perform complex athletic maneuvers with precision.

**Strength** - Determines a character's physical power, his or her ability to overpower others, to resist physical, non-magical attacks, and to hit things (like, say, a ball) hard.

**Charisma** - Represents a character's force of personality and social graces, determines his or her ability to do things like inspire, intimidate or distract others with words or a look alone, to perform music or poetry, or to quickly pick up on social situations or read body language. *(Note for GMs - Charisma tests shouldn't ever be used to win friends or attract romantic interests, but should be used to pick up on hints from other people or to present the right demeanor when speaking. What a player says when role-playing an interaction with another character should always have more impact on their success or failure than the result of a Charisma Ability Test).*

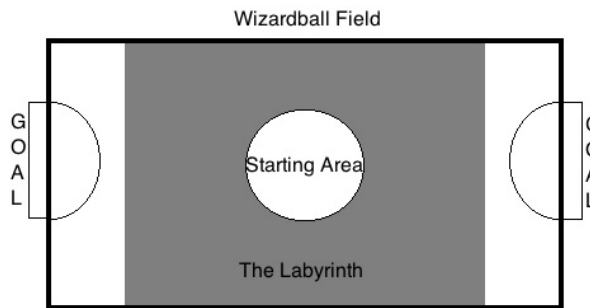
## Character Goals

Before play, each player should announce two goals for their character. One that they wish to achieve during the game of Wizardball (prevent a specific player on the other team from scoring, score two goals, etc) and one they hope to achieve at the Wizard Ball (meet and befriend a famous wizard, embarrass a rival, impress a romantic interest, etc.)

## 2. Play Wizardball

### The Rules of Wizardball

-Wizardball is played on a rectangular field with two goals on either side, a layout similar to what Americans call soccer, what the rest of the world called football, and what wizards call "That boring sport where no one ever accidentally collides with solid rock at improbably high speeds". The field itself is surrounded by tall stone walls, and, with the exception of a circle in the center of the field and the two ends of the field near the goals, the field is covered by a labyrinth of stone walls, with corridors wide enough to let 5 people walking side by side pass through.



-Each team attempts to put the ball into the opposing team's goal to score a point. The ball can be struck with any part of a player's body, except the arms or hands. It cannot be picked up or carried in any way. The only exception is that each team may designate one player as its goalkeeper. That player may use their arms and hands to hit, carry or throw the ball as long as they're within 35 feet of their own goal, an area noted by a half-circle on the field.

-Play begins in the center circle, with the visiting team starting with the ball in the first half and the home team starting with the ball in the second half. If a goal is scored, play resumes in the center circle with the ball given to the team that didn't score.

-The game lasts for two halves. The team that has scored the most points by the end of the second half wins. Wizardball games can end in a tie if the score is equal.

-The ball itself holds powerful protective enchantments that make it completely immune to any other magic. The ball can't be directly effected by magic in any way. It also can't be indirectly effected by magic. It won't, for example, be pushed along with a magically created explosion or magically summoned wind. Or struck or stopped by an object created by magic. It will be effected by a magically enhanced physical object, like a player's body.

-Players are not allowed to attempt to harm other players, either through magic or through normal physical means. Incidental physical or magical contact that is a side effect of players competing to gain or hold possession of the ball is allowed, although the referee may penalize extreme cases.

-Players are not allowed to use magic to control or impair the mental functions of opposing players. (These restrictions do not apply should a player wish to do this to players on their own team).

-Players may not impair an opposing player's ability to move freely, either through physical or magical means, except when it's a side effect of competing for possession of the ball (referee/GM discretion).

-Players may not leave the field of play, or use magic to bring objects or people from outside the field of play onto the field. Players are still considered to be inside the field of play as long as they're within the boundaries of the stone walls surrounding the field, no matter how high above the field they are.

-Penalties result in the ball being awarded to the opposing team, who may make an unopposed kick from the spot of the foul. The referee may choose to let play continue instead if it provides a better advantage to the team who'd receive the kick. Repeated, egregious penalties can result in a player being ejected from the game by the referee.

-The referee is under the effect of a powerful magic spell and so is aware of the position of the ball and all players in the game at all times, even if that location is in some way concealed. This ability cannot be countered.

### Role-Playing Wizardball

-The GM and Players should decide how many players there will be per side. Wizardball can be played with anywhere from 4-6 characters per team, with one acting as goalkeeper. Usually you won't want to have more characters on a Wizardball team than you have players, but if everyone agrees then the GM may control non-player characters on the Mystic Academy team. If the players prefer, the GM can play their goalkeeper as a non-player character.

-The GM should prepare the names, personalities, and ability scores of all non-player characters on the

opposing Dragon's Peak team, as well as any additional non-player characters on the Mystic Haven team, before play begins.

-The layout, contents and size of the Labyrinth area of the playing field are entirely up to the GM. It could be anything from an ordinary stone maze to a multi-level complex of ramps, puzzles and magic traps. Simpler layouts are suggested for first games.

-The game consists of two halves played in real time. At the beginning of each half, the GM declares "Now begins Wizardball!" and starts a timer (suggested time for each half is 15-20 minutes depending on number of players and how familiar they are with the game). When the timer ends, the GM may add up to 5 additional minutes at the end of each half. After the first half, the players should be given a break to plan and rethink strategy until they're ready for the second half to start. At the end of the added time after the second half, the game of Wizardball is over.

### *Magic Spells*

Before the start of a game of Wizardball, each player selects three spells for their characters to prepare. A spell can be anything described in a single sentence that begins "**(Character name) can . . .**" and doesn't use the words "and" or "or" in the sentence. The GM has the final right to request the player modify a sentence describing a spell if they believe it will be too powerful in a way that disrupts the game. A character's three prepared spells may be used at any time, any number of times per game, by making an Ability Test using the character's Magic score. Additionally all characters have the ability to counter or dispel magic created by other wizards. This is also done through a Magic Ability Test, often as a response to another character's action.

### **3. Attend the Wizard Ball**

After Wizardball is over, characters prepare to attend the Wizard Ball. Players may choose one new spell to replace one of their three prepared spells. They also write down a final, secret character goal they seek to achieve at the Wizard Ball, sharing this information only with the GM.

### *Role-Playing Wizard Ball*

When the players are read, the GM announces "Now begins Wizard Ball!" and asks the players to describe how they arrive at the banquet hall of Mystic Haven Wizard Academy. The events of the Ball are up to the GM, but usually involve at least an opening period of drinks and conversation (legal Wizard drinking age is 16), an elaborate feast, live music and dancing. Characters may take part in as much or as little of

this as they wish, and may even sneak away to wander the rest of the school grounds. Attendees are permitted to openly use magic as they see fit, and it's not unusual for some to try to show off by performing impressive feats in front of the crowds. Although the use of magic to harm or mentally control others is strictly forbidden and can be severely punished under Wizard Law.

Play continues as long as the GM and players wish. The GM should be sure to give each player opportunities to attempt to achieve their characters' goals, and even the official end of the Wizard Ball, which itself can last well past midnight, should not necessarily mean an end to the night's activities or the gameplay session. When the GM brings the session to a close, each player should be given the opportunity to give an epilogue to the day's events for their character. This begins with the player who accomplished the fewest of their goals and ends with the player who accomplished the most. In case of ties, the player who accomplished the most difficult goals, as chosen by the other players and the GM, speaks last.

### **Ability Tests**

Whenever a character attempts to take an action that is difficult and/or opposed by another character that player makes an Ability Test. There are two kinds of Ability Tests - Opposed Tests and Difficulty Tests.

#### *Opposed Tests*

When a character attempts to take an action against a another character, such as evading a defender, stealing the ball from a player, taking a shot on goal, blocking a shot on goal, or casting a spell against another character, that player rolls a number of 6 sided dice equal to their relevant ability score (GM's choice if there are multiple relevant scores). The GM then rolls 6 sided dice equal to the opposing character's ability score (unless the opposing character is controlled by another player in the game, in which case that player rolls). On a normal Ability Test any result of a 4 or higher is a success. The character with the most successes wins the Opposed Test. In case of ties, the character responding to the action wins.

#### *Difficulty Tests*

Some tests in WIZARDBALL will not be against an opposing character. Examples include a player casting a spell on him or herself or on a willing target, or making a long accurate pass to a teammate with no opposing characters in the way. For these

difficulty tests the GM selects a target number of successes a player must roll to succeed, and then the player rolls a number of six-sided dice equal to his or her relevant ability score. If the resulting number of successes (normally 4+) is equal to or greater than the target number, the character succeeds. Suggested target numbers are 1 for an easy test, 2 for a normal test, 3 for a difficult test, and higher for extremely difficult tests.

#### *Critical Failures and Successes*

If a player rolls a 1 on a test, he or she rolls that die again. On a 2-6, nothing happens. On a 1, the result is a critical failure. One of the successes on that roll is cancelled out, and the character suffers an injury, causing him or her to temporarily lose a point in the ability score used to make the test (ability scores can't be reduced below 1).

When a player makes a test if they roll a 6 on a die it's a critical success. He or she may choose to either roll an additional die in the test or recover a point to any ability score that was lost from a critical failure. Additional dice rolled in this way don't cause further critical successes or failures.

#### *Double Ability Tests in a Single Action*

In some cases, characters may take actions that require two different opposed tests. For example, a character may try to aim a shot on goal away from the goalkeeper (Agility) while kicking as hard as they can (Strength). Or they may try to create a distracting spray of flashing lights (Magic) as they kick the ball as hard as they can on goal (Strength). In these cases, the player taking the action chooses the order the tests will be taken. Whichever player wins the first opposed test reduces by one the dice result they need to get a success on the second test (so, on a normal test, they would need to roll a 3+ for a success instead of a 4+. Tests can't be reduced below 2+).

#### *Aiding Other Characters*

A character may attempt to act in aid of another character, either directly helping them or distracting or hindering the target of an Opposed Test. They may take a single Ability Test. If successful, they either reduce by 1 the target die roll number for success of the character they help (for example, from 4+ to 3+) or increase an opposing character's target number by 1 (so from 4+ to 5+, but never harder than 6+). The GM decides which effect happens based on how the player describes what the character does to help.