

TOURNAMENTS

OPTIONAL RULES

This download takes a look at some of the favored sports in Rassilon, as well as rules for tournaments. While the word “tournament” may conjure up images of knights in plate armor tilting on the lists, this is not an image befitting Rassilon. While the same basic principal applies, the events are vastly different.

Many tournaments are held in settlements across the length and breadth of the land, though regional variations to the rules often apply. For instance, the horse warriors of the Drachenlands favor mounted archery at a gallop over static shooting. Only two rules are universal—magic may not be used to affect the outcome of a contest and armor and weapons are generally forbidden.

Naturally, weapons are required for archery and javelin contests. Cross-country skiers with any sense wear leather armor and carry a single weapon as a minimum, for there are many dangers in the wilds. Use of weapons against a fellow competitor is strictly forbidden.

NUMBER OF DISCIPLINES & DURATION

Tournaments can be local, regional, or national. Local event encompasses one village and its immediate neighbors. Regional tournaments a town and its supporting villages or which occur in a larger geographic region, such as an important noble’s holdings. National events are extremely rare, and would likely be sponsored by the domain’s ruler. Only one such regular event occurs—the annual Grand Moot held in Royalmark.

The six main sports and their various disciplines make up a total of 12 different possible events. Not every event need be hosted at every tournament. Indeed, not every location can support all the events—a village with no access to water can hardly be expected to host a swimming competition, and a summer fair in the Hearthlands to honor Sigel won’t see much skiing unless there are some very big mountains nearby.

The minimum number of disciplines held varies by the size of the event. The GM should determine the specific disciplines available. Remember, these are minimums—an event may always include more.

Tournaments also have a minimum duration. Again, factors such as season, location, reasons for the tournament, and the number and type of contests may modify this.

Event	Min Disciplines	Min Duration
Local	Two	One day
Regional	Five	Four days (half week)
National	Nine	Eight days (one week)

NUMBER OF TOURNAMENTS

Tournaments are held all year round, but often take place on the same day (for religious reasons, primarily). Because of this, it is difficult to attend more than a handful each year. To prevent players abusing these rules to earn quick cash and Glory in preference over adventuring, the GM should limit the number of tournaments the heroes can attend in a given year.

Basic guidelines are to limit the number of national tournaments to one per year, regional one or two per year, and local ones to four per year. Glory awards (see page xxx) are restricted to +20 Glory per year through tournaments.

Tournaments are ideal ways to continue playing when a player cannot make a game, especially if an adventure has just ended. The missing hero may be off on a minor quest or recovering from injury. Meanwhile, his comrades discover a country fair and tournament are being held nearby. The GM need only use the Allied Personality table to turn faceless NPCs into characters the heroes can interact with and perhaps create a simple plot, like a robbery or murder.

EVENTS

Tournaments in Rassilon comprise six core events—archery, javelin throwing, knattleikr (a ball game played by teams), skiing, swimming, and wrestling. Many of these are then further divided into different disciplines, resulting in a larger number of actual events.

ARCHERY

Archery contests focus on accuracy. Contestants are given five arrows apiece. Each shaft is marked with colored ribbon to denote the thrower’s identity. A shield is placed at Short, Medium, and Long ranges. The metal boss is removed and replaced with a wooden plug. This is painted white.

Each contestant may freely choose which shield he wishes to shot. The points scored depend on the range

HELLFROST

and the accuracy of the shot, as shown below. Thus, while a contestant can play safe and stick to Short range, one good score at longer range earns far more points. A trick shot, such as splitting an opponent's arrow, gives a -4 to the Shooting roll. However, it scores an additional 2 points.

SCORING TABLE

Range	Success	Raise
Short	1	2
Medium	3	5
Long	6	10

Time is not generally an issue, so all contestants may Aim before firing. Rushed format contests involve firing in rapid succession, which precludes aiming unless the contestant has the Marksman Edge. In most competitions, rushed format is reserved solely for warriors, hunters, and clerics of Ullr, professions considered specialists with a bow, while the standard format is open to anyone capable of pulling a bowstring.

Competition rules can vary immensely, and participants are expected to know which set of rules is being used in advance. Claiming not to know the rules is taken as a sign of incompetence concealed behind a lie.

In short form archery, the highest scorer after five shots wins. If there is a tie for first place, those contestants fire a second round of five arrows to decide the overall winner. Other contests eliminate those who failed to reach a certain score. Those who make the cut fire again, this time with a higher pass mark to reach. Some make the warriors release three rounds of five arrows, with the closest shield being removed after the first round and the next closest shield after the second. Points scored over the three rounds are then tallied to find the victor.

JAVELIN

Javelin throwing is broken down into two categories—range and accuracy.

RANGE

Throwing for range has nothing to do with accuracy—it is simply a test of strength and technique. The throw is highly inaccurate, and thus never used in battle unless facing massed ranks (where accuracy is less important), showing off to try and intimidate rivals, or trying to make a point (i.e. cross this point and you might be killed).

Because no accuracy is involved, range modifiers are irrelevant. Instead, contestants simply make a Throwing roll. Whoever scores the highest wins. Short tournaments allow just a single throw, whereas longer formats allow multiple throws.

ACCURACY

Typically, this event involves striking a round shield

attached to a wooden post, though other objects may be used. Before the Anari conquered their lands, Saxa threw their spears at convicts tied to stakes, with points awarded for the part of the hapless victim they struck. The rules are identical to those for archery contests.

SKIING

Nowhere in Rassilon escapes winter. Skiing is thus as much a way of life as it is a recreational activity. In competition, skiing takes the form of straight downhill racing, slalom, and cross-country.

DOWNHILL

Because it requires a decent slope, downhill competitions are only held in mountainous or extremely hilly areas. Running a downhill contest uses the Chase rules.

Place ten markers on the tabletop to represent the course. The markers aren't intended to represent any specific distance—they are simply to show relative positions along the length of the course. The Obstacle rules are not used; courses are cleared of obstacles before the race begins to prevent accidents.

All contestants race simultaneously, using the action cards and Agility rolls. Each contestant begins off the marker track—his first success moves him onto the first marker. Shoulder barging opponents, kicking up snow, and cutting in front of opponents to force them off balance are all part of the game. Hence, the standard Stunts and Maneuvers can all be used. However, striking a rival is prohibited and results in instant disqualification.

A contestant who goes out of control for any reason and who rolls Skid, Spin, or Slip suffers a -2 penalty to his next Agility roll. Any other result causes the skier to fall (whereupon he suffers 2d6 nonlethal damage), ending his challenge automatically.

Whoever passes beyond the tenth marker first wins the race.

CROSS-COUNTRY

Whereas downhill is about pure speed and slalom is about technique, cross-country skiing is a test of endurance (and speed, since it is a race).

The quickest way to run one of these contests is using the Chase rules as for the downhill contests (see below). Each token used to denote Range Increments can be anywhere from one mile to as much as 10 miles, depending on the length of the course.

The third, fifth, and eighth markers should be of a different color to the others. When a skier reaches one of these he must make a Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue. Over short courses, the race is essentially a sprint and the skiers are pushing hard for the duration. In long distance races, the skiers have to cover the distance by nightfall and thus must continually push onward, albeit at a slower rate than on short tracks.

A level of Fatigue can be removed by using the Steady

maneuver—that is, the skier remains stationary this round. In reality he’s likely covering a short distance rather than stopping, but it’s not enough to warrant a die roll. Whoever moves past the final marker first wins the race.

Because of the slower speeds involved compared to a true chase, the GM can waive the Obstacles rules if he wishes. Alternately, he can use the Club value to represent difficult terrain, such as forest or uneven ground, or a specific problem that slows the skier, like fording a river or repairing a broken ski. The card value gives the skier a modifier to his Agility roll for the current round.

Card	Penalty
Deuce	-4
3-6	-2
7-10	-1
Jack-Ace	0

SLALOM

Slalom skiing involves deliberately placed obstacles the skier must avoid or jump. The basic format is the same as downhill skiing, except every other Range Increment marker represents an obstacle of some kind. These may be posts the skier must move between or avoid, or banks or fallen logs which must be jumped.

When a character reaches an obstacle, he must make an Agility roll as a free action. Each obstacle has a modifier of 0, -1, -2, -4, or -6, which applies to the Agility roll. A hero who fails his obstacle Agility roll crashes out of the contest. In the event all skiers fail to reach the end, whoever moved the furthest wins the race.

SWIMMING

Like skiing, swimming takes one of three forms.

DISTANCE

Distance swimming is about endurance. The swimmers begin on the beach and head out to sea (or a large lake or upriver). It uses the rules for chases, with Swimming as the controlling skill. However, the line of markers is essentially endless as there is no finishing line. Typically, each Range Increment represents one mile.

Every third marker should be a different color to the others. Like cross-country skiing, a hero passing one of these markers must make a Vigor roll or suffer Fatigue. Unlike in skiing, though, each special marker after the first gives a cumulative -1 penalty (so a swimmer reaching the third colored marker rolls at -2). In addition, a failed Swimming roll forces the character to make a Vigor roll to avoid Fatigue. A swimmer cannot rest in order to recover—he must either quit or keep going.

Use of any Stunt or Maneuver except Push is forbidden and results in instant disqualification. The Steady maneuver represents treading water, which is banned.

Whoever travels the greatest distance before he turns back (or drowns) is the winner.

SPEED

Speed swimmers also begin on the shore and head out to sea, but they are trying to reach a designated finishing line first. Use the basic rules for downhill skiing, but substituting Swimming for Agility. Distract and Push are the only permitted Stunts and Maneuvers.

WRESTLING

Water wrestling is immensely popular with crowds. It is rarely a quick contest, as the aim is to hold your opponent’s head under water until he gives up or passes out, whichever comes first. The contest is run using the standard combat rules, except only the Grapple maneuver may be used—no regular blows are permissible.

Once a grapple has been achieved, the attacker must make a Strength roll opposed by his opponent. With success, the defender’s head is under water. Each round the grapple is maintained, the victim remains submerged.

A contestant can survive beneath the water for a number of rounds equal to his Vigor. After this time, he must make a Vigor roll each round with a cumulative -1 penalty per round after the first since he ran out of air. Failure causes a level of Fatigue. Recovery is as per drowning. Submission can be signaled at any time.

Example: A hero with d10 Vigor can stay submerged safely for 10 rounds. On the next round, round 11, he must make an unmodified Vigor roll. On round 12, he rolls at -1, on round 13 at -2, and so on.

WRESTLING

Depending on the type of contest, wrestling can focus on technique or brute strength. In general, contests are run as eliminations, with the winner progressing to a draw for the next round. As such, the number of competitors is limited to a power of two (2, 4, 8, 16, and so on). Whoever wins the final bout is the champion.

GLÍMA

More commonly known as Saxa wrestling, glíma involves throwing your opponent through technique rather than brute force. It is handled like regular combat, except only the Grapple special maneuver may be used—no punching, kicking, biting, head butting, elbowing, or similar is allowed.

Wrestlers may not inflict damage on each other. Instead, the attacker may try to throw his opponent on subsequent rounds his grapple is maintained.

The attack makes an Agility roll (remember, technique is being judged, not strength) opposed by his victim’s Agility or Strength (defender’s choice). If the attacker scores a success and beats his victim’s roll, then the defender is thrown, earning the attacker one point. A raise is worth two points. The first to reach three points wins the bout.

HISTORICAL KNATTLEIKR

Knattleikr was an actual Viking ball game. Although the details of how the game was played have been lost, some facts have passed down to us. Rather than try to piece together our own version of how the game was played, the Mass Battle rules allow for a quick system to resolve matches.

- Many settlements had a team. Knattleikr was a popular spectator event, drawing large crowds.
- The aim was to hit a ball with a bat.
- Body contact was permissible (death and injury occurred), and intimidation played an important role.
- The game lasted many hours, often from dawn till dusk.
- Each team had a captain.
- Penalties existed, though what the infringements were for has not survived.
- [Conjecture] The playing field, which could be grass or ice, had lines on.
- [Conjecture] Special clothes needed to be worn, though again details are lost.

NO HOLDS BARRED

This works as above with three small adjustments. First, Strength may be used to throw opponents. Second, unlike glíma, it is quite permissible to inflict nonlethal damage on your opponent through locks or strangulation (but not blows). Points are awarded for throws as with glíma, but a hero wins by default if his rival falls unconscious. Third, Tricks may be used to catch an opponent off guard.

KNATTLEIKR

Saxa for “ball game,” knattleikr is a popular yet dangerous sport, more akin to warfare than a way to pass a few hours with friends. While most competitors end up with bruises, death is not uncommon. Knattleikr, as the name suggests, is played using a ball. The aim is to strike the ball with a ball, though hands may also be used. Body contact is permitted, as is intimidation and taunting.

Played by two teams over a long-period, it is a popular spectator sport. Most Saxa villages have teams, which compete against each other at great markets, important religious occasions, and at regional moots. Many bloody feuds have started over the result of a game of knattleikr, but just as many have been settled this way.

Knattleikr uses the Mass Battle rules, although with some changes.

- Both sides equal tokens. These are used to represent the score, not the players. A team which loses tokens is losing the match. The team which loses all their tokens loses the match. In the event both teams lose all their tokens in the same round, the match is a draw.
- There are no Battle Modifiers except for tokens—teams which are losing tend to be dispirited, while their rivals are better motivated.

- Team captains (which replace commanders) may use Knowledge (Battle) or Smarts for their Battle rolls.

- Both teams may attempt to earn crowd support. This involves rousing speeches and proud boasts. The team captain on each side may make a Persuasion roll before the match begins. Teammates may use the Cooperative rules to assist. If a team has home field advantage, the home captain has +2 to his roll. Each success and raise earns their side a benny. Any player on that team may use these bennies during the match.

- In place of the usual Characters in Mass Battle rolls, a hero may use Agility, Strength, Fighting, Intimidation, Taunt, and Throwing. The results are unchanged—as mentioned above, death can, and does, occur.

- Unlike other sports, knattleikr allows for healing (magical and mundane) during play. Anyone wishing such aid incurs a penalty and must sit out for one complete battle round. The loss of a key player, as heroes are by their Wild Card nature, gives the opposing side a +1 bonus per Wild Card sitting out during the Battle Roll phase. If the hero receiving treatment happens to be the team leader, he must appoint another player to be captain for the round.

- There is no Morale phase.

- While a typical game of knattleikr lasts an entire day, actual tournaments are held on major festive occasions. These often last for over a week, and sometimes stretch toward two weeks. Some events are elimination contests, while others are played in league fashion. Regardless, a team which wins a match automatically gains one team benny for its next match due to crowd support. In a round robin contest, the losing team gains one less benny, to a minimum of zero, in its next match.

RANDOM OPPONENTS

The quality of opposition in a contest depends on the type of tournament. For instance, a local fair probably attracts participants from the community and those close by, whereas a regional tournament attracts better skilled contestants. A national event may attract competitors from far and wide. One quick way to determine a hero's opponents is to draw cards.

NUMBER OF OPPONENTS

For every player character taking part in a solo event, there are three NPCs. Players whose character is not participating in an event should be given a share of the NPCs to control to keep the players active in the game. For knattleikr, the number of additional teams should be one, three, or seven, depending on the length and style of the tournament.

QUALITY OF OPPONENTS

As noted elsewhere, large tournaments attract better

quality contestants. Low Rank heroes who take part in such tournaments are not necessarily going to win. The setting does not automatically assume the heroes are special and always destined to be victorious—they must earn that recognition.

Cards are used to determine the quality of opponents based on the tournament scale, as detailed below. Check the suit against the appropriate entry on the table. In all cases, the Trait die value is used for every Trait the NPC might use in the contest.

The Rank listed in parentheses below is a rough guide of what Rank the heroes should be to stand a good chance of victory, and then only if they have the appropriate Traits. A Legendary hero with Shooting d4, for instance, is very unlikely to win any archery contest without some luck or very poor opposition. The Ranks are guidelines only—because of bennies, Acing, and the Wild Die, a low Rank hero may actually perform well in higher grade contests. Similarly, though, a Legendary hero may have an off day and lose even a local tournament.

Local (Novice–Seasoned): Draw one card for each NPC or team.

Regional (Veteran–Heroic): Draw two cards for each NPC or team and keep the best result.

National (Heroic–Legendary): Draw three cards for each NPC or team and keep the best result.

OPPONENT QUALITY TABLE

Value	Local	Regional	National
Deuce	d4	d6	d8
3–10	d6	d8	d10
Jack–King	d8	d10	d12
Ace	d10	d12	d12+1
Joker	If a Joker is drawn, the contestant also has a particular talent. He may be a Wild Card or have a suitable Edge, such as Marksman for an archery contest. The GM should determine the exact benefit. Draw a second card to determine the actual Trait die. If this is also a Joker, the person has two talents—he may be a Wild Card and have Marksman, for example. Draw a third card for the Trait die.		

REWARDS

Rewards come in two forms—monetary and Glory. While Glory is fixed to prevent player abuse, the rules for monetary rewards are guidelines.

MONETARY

All contests are considered of equal skill, since they are all tests in one way or another. That archery requires prowess with a bow makes it no less prestigious than

downhill skiing, for instance. As such, rewards are not generally divided into separate categories. Instead, the scale of the event determines the size of the reward.

Rewards are given as a random amount. Every event carries the same reward, so the GM need only roll once. Alternately, he may pick a value that best fits the sponsor's means. Remember, rewards are per individual event—a hero participating in multiple events could walk away a very rich man indeed.

Event	Reward	Reward Range
Local	20 + (1d4 x 5) gs	25–40 gs
Regional	100 + (1d10 x 10) gs	110–200 gs
National	200 + (1d4 x 50) gs	250–400 gs

GLORY

While winning an event can earn a hero Glory, it is unlikely to make him truly famous except under exceptional circumstances. The Glory rewards are weighted to prevent highly-skilled heroes from attending local events they are near guaranteed to win and scooping huge Glory awards—people may recall how an underdog won an event for years to come, but they won't have much good to say about a ringer. Note that only the winner of an event earns Glory—folk may recount how a hero did well enough to earn second place, but it won't affect his immediate Glory (it's covered in the general reward for achieving a new Rank).

A maximum of 20 Glory per year can be earned through tournaments.

SOLO EVENTS

Individual Glory is earned for each competition won. A truly skilled all-rounder may win multiple events in a single tournament. The Glory reward is based on the winner's Rank and the scale of the tournament, as shown below. Total all the individual awards a hero earns during the tournament and round down, to a minimum of one.

Tournament	Nov	Seas	Vet	Her	Leg
Local	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.25
Regional	2	2	1	1	0.5
National	4	3	2	1	0.5

TEAM EVENTS

For team events like knattleikr, Glory is calculated slightly differently. Being in the winning team at a local tournament is worth 1 point, a regional event two points, and a national competition four points. Bonuses for raises are calculated as normal for Mass Battles. However, the total a hero earns from playing knattleikr can never exceed +7 Glory.

The losers earn zero Glory, though individuals may still be recognized for exceptional play. Calculate each individual hero's raises, to a maximum of +3 Glory.