

RED SAND, BLUE SKY

TWO HOUR WARGAMES

RED SAND, BLUE SKY

By Patrick H. Lewis and Ed Teixeira
Gladiator figures by Alpha Miniatures

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www.alphaminiatures.co.nz/

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INTRODUCTION

The gladiatorial contests were a central part of ancient Roman culture. While scholars debate the origins of this blood sport, it is generally believed that the Roman gladiatorial contests can be traced to the year 264 BC when three pairs of fighters fought to the death in a cattle market as part of a funeral rite (the *munus*).

Eventually, these practices became commonplace and grew into ever-larger events that were held in purpose-built amphitheatres, the most stunning of which still stands in Rome: the Flavian Amphitheater, better known as the Colosseum. Over time, amphitheatres would be found throughout the Empire; there are at least 186 known sites and possibly 86 more. Schools were created for the training of gladiators, many of them slaves, but it was not unknown for freemen to volunteer their services in the hope of wealth and glory. Ultimately, the whole "industry" came to be regulated by the Empire.

Vast sums of money were spent throughout the Empire to present these bloody and often deadly spectacles. The games were often used to add to the prestige and honor of the person that presented them (the *editor*), whether it was a senator trying to gain influence or an emperor trying to win or maintain the loyalty of his subjects. Some of this money would eventually find its way into the hands of the *lanista* that owned the troupe of gladiators (*familia gladiatoria*) and the men (and on occasion, women) that risked their lives for this entertainment. If the fighters were skillful and lucky, they might earn their freedom and retire from the arena with enough money to live a relatively comfortable life, or they might go on to help train others in their deadly profession or start their own troupe.

With the decline of the Empire and the rise of Christianity, the games, too, began to fade away but lingered on until perhaps as late as AD 440. They were officially banned in AD 681.

Red Sand, Blue Sky is **Two Hour Wargames'** look at this fascinating period of history. While many aspects of combat in the arena are represented, it should be remembered that our intention is to provide a fast, fun, and easy-to-learn game; something that can be enjoyed when players have some spare time and want a quick game that requires minimal set-up time and space. It is not a detailed "simulation" that bogs the players down with the minutiae of man-to-man combat, nor is it a model of the historical economic realities of presenting the games and running a troupe of gladiators, etc. There is no plotting of simultaneous movement, and unlike many other games about this subject, it is possible and, it is hoped, *enjoyable* to play solitaire.

This rules set makes no provisions for fighting animals or mounted characters (either on horseback or while on a chariot) with the exception of "big cats" that, for game purposes, only appear in the Colosseum. (They are controlled by the game mechanics and are provided to give some extra excitement for the matches fought in Rome. See the Campaign Rules for details.)

The rules for fighting animals and mounted characters will be presented in greater detail as a *free* supplement (**RSBS: Venator**) that will be available at the **Two Hour Wargames Support Group** on Yahoo. Owners of **RSBS** that have Internet access are encouraged to visit and join the group to ask questions, post comments, and share scenarios and variants, etc. You will also find support for all of **THW's** other games that cover a wide range of eras and subjects.

With the rules presented here, players can create a character and follow his career to fame and fortune (should he live that long), or become a *lanista* and create a *familia gladiatoria*, or they may do both. Players are encouraged to "tweak" the game as they see fit and develop their own scenarios inspired by their own research, books or movies. So, without further ado, we would like to present...

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EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

To play RSBS you will need the following items:

- Four or more ten-sided dice. (Four per player works even better.)
- One ruler or a measuring tape.
- One standard deck of playing cards with jokers removed. Aces are high.
- Figures or counters in a consistent scale and based alike.
- A flat surface at least 2x2 feet with the perimeter of the arena marked in some way.
- Material to represent walls or other terrain features as desired.
- Pencils and erasers for each player for recording information on the Character Sheet.
- A copy of the Character Sheet (see Charts and Tables in the rear of the book) for each character used for recording the statistics of their characters and tracking damage and other important information during the course of the game. Players may make photocopies of the one provided or they may use scratch paper.
- Markers or chits to indicate which characters are eligible to "catch their breath". (These are only needed for matches where more than two characters are present.)

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- Players may want to use coins, poker chips or other tokens to represent their dice pool (see Dice Pool below) instead of keeping track of it on paper. This is purely optional.

SCALE AND FIGURES

RSBS can be played with any scale figures even if they are based for a different game, but you may wish to make adjustments to the unit of measurement depending on their size. All figures are based individually.

15mm and 20mm (1/72nd) figures can be mounted on ½ inch squares; halve all distances referred to in the rules.

25mm –28mm figures can be based on ¾" to 1" squares; no adjustment to distance measurement is required.

54mm figures can be based on 1½" to 2" squares. Players may want to double all measurements referred to in the rules.

Regardless of the size, your figure should be fixed to the base so that it is facing one flat side. This defines the figure's front while the opposite side is the figure's rear; the flat edges to either side are its flanks.

If round bases are used, the front is indicated by the direction the figure is facing; the rear is the opposite side; players will have to come to some agreement as to what constitutes a figure's flanks and perhaps mark the base in some way to indicate them.

READING THE DICE

All die rolls are made using 10-sided dice, referred to in the rules as a "d10". The die will generate a number between 1 and 10 with the 0 on the die read as 10.

Whenever a number appears in front of the d10, this is the number of d10 that are to be used. *Example: 3d10 means the player rolls 3 10-sided dice.*

Sometimes there will be a reference to something occurring followed by a number or numbers in parentheses. This means that a 1d10 roll is required with the result occurring if the 1d10 die roll falls within a certain range of numbers.

Example: right arm (1 – 5), left arm (6 – 10). This means that on a roll of 1 through 5, the right arm is affected, a roll of 6 through 8 indicates the left arm is affected.

DIE ROLLS and REP: "Passing" Die Rolls

During the game, players will be called upon to roll 1 or more dice and compare them to their Rep. When doing so each die score is compared to the Rep individually. If the die score is equal to or less than the character's Rep., he is said to have "passed" that die.

DICE POOL

Each character has a "Dice Pool". This is the total number of dice that may be "burned" during the match. Think of the Dice Pool as the character's stamina. At the beginning of each match a character starts with 5 times its Rep in dice.

This is the total number of dice the character has available during the match, not the number of dice each player must actually have in front of him!

BURNING DICE

Each time a character performs one of the actions listed below he removes (burns) that number of dice from his Dice Pool.

- 1 to 4 dice when involved in a melee.
- 1 die when conducting a missile attack (Deadly Missile Weapons or Sand Attack).

In addition, characters will burn additional dice when they receive a wound, fail a Maneuver check or as the result of certain attacks; this is noted on all of the relevant charts and tables. Note also that a character that has been knocked to the ground will burn twice the dice allocated when fighting a melee round.

When the character has reduced his dice pool to zero, he is physically "spent" and may be at the mercy of the spectators. This is the classic moment when the gladiator raises his hand for mercy. Refer to the "Appealing for Mercy" section elsewhere in the rules.

FIRST THINGS FIRST: Getting Started

Before you can enter the arena for the first time there are certain preparations you have to make. They are:

- Determine your character's Reputation
- Choose your character's fighting style or styles.
- Familiarize yourself with your Armor Value.
- Familiarize yourself with your weapons
- Determine your Dice Pool.

The Character Sheet

Players fill in the information about their characters on the Character Sheet. The sheet has spaces to list all of the information required for your character. It is used to keep track of wounds, the armor class (AC) of the various hit locations, weapons used, shield type, the Dice Pool, etc. There is a section for notes that can be used to keep track of various temporary situations like being stunned or blinded, or if a character has used an expendable weapon like a pilum or net, etc.

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REPUTATION

“Reputation”, or “Rep” for short, represents a combination of training, ability, agility, stamina, experience, and “killer instinct”. It is an expression of the character’s overall quality; the higher the Rep of a character, the better he is. Regardless of any modifiers to the character’s Rep, it may never be less than 1 nor greater than 9. The 8 different Rep levels possible are:

Reputation 9

- These are the “larger than life” heroes of the arena. They are very rarely, if ever, encountered as they have usually earned their freedom.

Reputation 8

- These are gladiators of “great renown” and are rarely encountered.

Reputation 7

- These are veterans of long and successful service in the arena.

Reputation 6

- These are reliable gladiators with some experience.

Reputation 5

- These are newly trained in one or another form of weaponry but short on experience.

Reputation 4

- Untested men with more attitude than skill.

Reputation 3

- The average man ripped from his home.

Reputation 2

- The elderly, sick, and infirm or the truly inept individual. Lion feed.

CHOOSING YOUR REPUTATION

Normally a player will start at Rep 4. He has some skill but no experience, “fresh off the farm” so to speak. However, a player may start at whatever Rep they desire.

Keep in mind that the Rep of the player will determine the “locale” in which he starts the Campaign Game. (For more information about this refer to the Campaign Rules).

CHOOSING YOUR FIGHTING STYLE

The armor and weapons of the gladiator define his style of fighting. PCs have a Primary fighting style and may have up to two other Secondary styles. PCs fight at their full Rep in their Primary style and at one Rep level lower in their Secondary styles. (However, see “Advancing Rep” in the Campaign Rules.) Players may choose their Primary and Secondary styles from the list that follows, but some styles are for NPC’s only and this is noted at the end of their description. The ones that may be used as a Primary style have a “1” after the name of it: A Primary style *may* be used as a Secondary style, if the player wishes. Those

followed by a “2” may only be used as Secondary styles. The styles are:

- **Retiarius (1):** This gladiator was lightly armored and didn’t wear a helmet. His only armor was on his left arm and that was some sort of protective sleeve called a *manica* usually made of quilted fabric, and a bronze shoulder guard called a *galerus*. He may have also worn leather gaiters on his lower legs. He was armed with a long three-pronged spear called a trident, and a net. He would try to ensnare his opponent with the net, while keeping him at bay with the trident. He was also armed with a dagger that was usually used to finish off his opponent at the end of the match. His traditional opponent was the Secutor, but he could be paired with the Murmillo occasionally. His name comes from the Latin word “rete” meaning “net”.
- **Secutor (1):** This was the main opponent of the Retiarius. This style replaced the earlier Samnite. He was armed with a short sword called a gladius from which the word “gladiator” is derived. He carried a large rectangular shield (*scutum*) and his head was entirely enclosed in a helmet of iron or bronze, which, unlike the ornate helmets used by others, was very plain and smooth except for a small fin on its crest that made him look somewhat like a fish. The relative simplicity of the design reduced the chances that his helmet would be snagged by the net of the Retiarius. His sword arm was protected by a *manica* and he wore a metal greave called an *ocrea* on his left leg. The word “secutor” means “chaser” in Latin.
- **Hoplomachus (1):** This gladiator was armed with a long spear, and a long dagger that he carried in his shield hand. He carried a round shield (usually a small one), and his head was entirely enclosed in a helmet. His usual opponent was the Murmillo. His lower legs were protected with high metal *ocreae*; quilted fabric protected his upper legs. His name comes from the Greek word “hoplon” meaning “weapon”, but it is usually associated with the Greek shield.
- **Provocator (1):** This gladiator was armed with a gladius. His head was entirely encased in a helmet and he carried a *scutum*. Unlike most other gladiators, he had an armored breastplate that covered his upper chest and heart called a *cardiophylax*. The lower left leg was protected with an *ocrea*, and his sword arm was protected by a *manica*. He was usually paired with another Provocator. His name is the Latin word for “challenger”.
- **Murmillo (1):** This gladiator was armed with a gladius. His head was entirely encased in a

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helmet (often surmounted with an image of a fish), and he carried a large shield. His lower left leg was protected by an *ocrea*, and the sword arm was covered with a *manica*. His name is believed to come from a Greek word for a fish. His usual opponent was the Thraex, but he was sometimes paired with the Retarius.

- **Thraex (1):** This gladiator was armed with either a gladius or a curved dagger called a *sica*. His head was entirely enclosed in a helmet that often bore the crest of the mythological griffin; the griffin being the companion of Nemesis, the goddess of fate. He carried a small rectangular shield, and each leg was protected by an *ocrea* that came up to beyond his knees. His name means "Thracian". His usual opponent was the Murmillo.
- **Dimachaerus (2):** Not much is known about this style of gladiator other than that he was armed with two swords or long daggers and therefore didn't carry a shield. He may have been a separate category of gladiator, or he may have been a fighting style used by other categories of fighters. There are no depictions from ancient times of this gladiator, so his armor, if any, is open to speculation. His name means "two-weapon man". It is not known who his usual opponents were.
- **Laquerarius (2):** This gladiator was armed with a rope and either a spear or a sword. He would try to lasso his opponents and then finish them off with his other weapon. He is believed to have worn little if any protection similar to the Retarius. His usual opponents are unknown.
- **Sagittarius (2):** This, as you probably know from the signs of the zodiac, is an archer. He was probably lightly armored, if at all, and may have worn an open helmet. His usual opponents are unknown.
- **Armored or Unarmored Captives:** These are most often prisoners of war sent into the arena in their native costume and equipped with their traditional weapons and armor. They can be opposed by most other styles. (NPC only)
- **Condemned Legionary:** This is a legionary sent to the arena for punishment. He is equipped and armed as a standard legionary. He can be opposed by most other styles. (NPC only)

FEMALE GLADIATORS

It is known that the Roman emperor Septimus Severus, who ruled from 193 to 211 AD, allowed women to fight in the arena although he subsequently banned them in 200 AD.

Recently, in an area of London, England, the remains of what could have been a female gladiator (a *gladiatrix*) were excavated. Although there is some evidence to support the idea that this

20-year-old woman was a gladiatrix, no one is certain.

What we can be sure of is that Red Sand, Blue Sky allows women in the arena, so if you have gladiatrix figures in your collection, go for it!

To account for the lesser upper body strength of females, -1" for their range for throwing a spear or firing a bow. On the positive side, they are allowed to add 2 to their initial Dice Pool to reflect their greater endurance.

ARMOR CLASSES

A character's body is divided into 11 locations. They are the head, right and left arms, chest, upper back, belly, lower back, and upper and lower right and left legs. Each location on a gladiator has an Armor Class (AC). This information can be found on the "Character Statistics Sheet" in the back of the rules. The value of the AC is derived using the following criteria:

- Parts of the body not covered by armor have an AC of 3.
- Parts of the body covered substantially by leather or fabric armor have an AC of 4. (Note: the gladiators that have an AC of 4 on their belly/lower back locations are wearing the *balteus*; a broad leather belt often covered with metal decorations.)
- Areas of the body that are protected by metal armor have an AC of 5. This will usually be found on the arms and legs.
- Helmets that enclose the head entirely have an AC of 7. Other helmets, such as those that leave the face exposed, have an AC of 5.
- Some animals may have an AC higher than 5 even though they do not have any armor. This reflects the inherent toughness of their hides and the mass of their bodies.
- Use of a shield adds either 1 (if small) or 2 (if large) to the AC of the gladiator if he is attacked from the front or shielded flank. See the section on "Use of Shields" below

Note: If players have figures that are armed and armored differently than the way they are listed on the Character Statistics Sheet, they should feel free to alter the values using the descriptions of the Armor Classes above as a guideline. Please try to use some common sense: a simple leather wristband or small strap shouldn't be interpreted as being substantial enough to be classified as armor.

ARMOR VALUE

The Armor Value (AV) of a character is the sum of all of the numerical values used for the Armor Class (AC) of the various hit locations. The AV is used in calculating the cost of a gladiator

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when he is bought (see "Cost of Gladiators" in the Campaign Rules).

In general, the more armor the gladiator wears, the slower he moves. Consult the **Character Statistics Sheet** in the back of the book to see the AV and movement rate of each gladiator.

CHARACTER SIZE

Characters are also classified by their relative size. The four size classifications are:

1. **Small (S):** Dwarfs or other exceptionally short characters. Rare, but not unknown.
2. **Man-sized (M):** A fighter of average height. Most gladiators fall into this category.
3. **Large (L):** Taller and a bit more "beefy" than your average fighter.
4. **Extra-large (XL):** Characters of exceptional height and bulk. Extremely rare individuals.

Determining the Character's Size

Players may agree to have all of their characters considered "man-sized", but if players want to add some variety to their characters and opponents, they may determine the character's size randomly. Roll 1d10:

- Small (1)
- Man-sized (2-8)
- Large (9)
- Extra-large (10) When this result is rolled, roll 1d10 again: He will be Large (1-8), Extra-large (9, 10).

The size of a character is taken into consideration during melee and shooting, and is also important when determining the results of a collision.

USE OF SHIELDS

Shields will only protect characters when attacked from their front facing or their shielded flank (usually the left flank) and cannot be used if wielding a 2 Handed Weapon.

Note: The "shielded flank" coincides with the arm that is carrying the shield: if the left arm is carrying a shield, then the left flank is considered shielded.

- **Large shields** add +2 to a character's AC if attacked from the front or shielded flank. A character with a large shield may perform a "Bash Attack" against their opponent in an attempt to knock him down.
- **Small shields** add +1 to a character's AC if attacked from the front or shielded flank.
- **A Net** may count as a small shield for a Retiarius if he is using a HH class weapon, or if he is using a 2H weapon in one hand, and holding the net in the other. The net will only

count as a shield if attacked from the front or from the flank that coincides with the arm that is holding the net (usually the right arm).

- **A standing Retiarius** may count his shoulder guard (*galerus*) as a small shield (+1 to AC) for any attacks against his head that come from his front facing or from the flank that coincides with the arm that is wearing it (usually the left). If he has been knocked to the ground, this does not apply.

Example: Tiberius is attacked from his front and is hit on his right arm that has an AC of 5. Since he has a small shield, he will add +1 to his AC of 5 giving him a total AC of 6.

WEAPONS

Melee and missile weapons are the most common means of causing damage in the arena. Some weapons may have a modifier for melee. For a summary of various weapons and their Modifiers, consult the "Weapons" table in the back of the rules on the Charts and Tables Sheet. Weapons are classed as follows:

Two Handed Weapons (2H)

This group includes the spear and trident, large axes, swords, and other weapons that must be used with both hands. Spears and tridents can be used against characters that are not adjacent to them up to a range of 1". The use of a 2H weapon does not allow the use of a shield. 2H weapons have an Armor Protection Table modifier of +1 to the die roll.

Hand Held Weapons (HH)

Those weapons used primarily with one hand. This includes spears and tridents wielded with one hand, maces, hand axes, swords, and daggers. They are usually carried with a shield. All missile-armed characters will also have this type of weapon serving as a sidearm for melee.

Some gladiators replace the shield with another hand held weapon (e.g. *Dimachaerus*). When doing so they count a +1 modifier to the Armor Protection die roll.

Throwing Spear (TS)

This category includes any hand tossed weapons such as axe, javelin, etc. Once thrown the weapon may not be retrieved. Players may carry up to 2 throwing weapons. This category also includes any other weapon that the gladiator chooses to throw; this is usually done in desperation!

Bows (BW)

This category covers the various types of small bows used in this era. They are considered to have an unlimited number of arrows for game

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purposes, but players may limit the supply if they wish.

Pilum (PI)

This category includes the Roman Legionary pilum or heavy throwing spear. A condemned legionary may carry one pilum only. When a hit is scored on a shielded target, roll 1d10. A roll of 1 – 8 hits a large shield while a roll of 1 – 6 hits a small shield. If the shield is hit it is rendered useless and dropped to the ground. Any other result means the pilum hit the target's body and it is treated as a normal Throwing Spear.

Net (NT) or Rope (RP)

Nets or ropes are used to ensnare and hinder targets, not cause injury. These weapons have their own peculiar form of attack and it is explained elsewhere in the rules. A net counts as a shield, effectively adding +1 to the users AC if he is:

1. Attacked from his front facing or the flank that coincides with the arm that is holding the net (usually the right), and
2. only if he is using a HH weapon, or a 2H in one hand (with the damage now counting as a HH).

BEFORE THE MATCH

Now that characters and fighting styles have been defined and his statistics recorded on the character sheet, your character is just about ready to enter the arena, but there are still a few things that must be done before the match can take place. This section will cover what needs to be done before the match can begin.

Pre-Match Sequence

The following things need to be determined before the first match can take place:

- Determine the locale.
- Determine the number of combatants.
- Set up the terrain in the arena (if any).
- Determine the opponent match-up.
- Determine the Rep of the opponents.
- Determine if the match is "to the death" (see "Fighting to the Death" below).
- Determine the entry point of the arena for the characters.

Determining the Locale

Matches can be fought in one of four locales. During the Campaign Game, The Rep of your gladiator will determine where in the empire he will start his career and fight his matches. If players are doing a non-campaign game, they can pick a locale of their choice, or determine the locale of the match randomly using the following table:

Roll 1d10 to determine where the match will occur.

- 1 – 5 = "fringe of the empire".
- 6 – 7 = "heart of the empire".
- 8 – 9 = "outside Rome".
- 10 = The Colosseum

The details of each locale can be found in the section entitled "Locales" in the Campaign Rules.

Number of Combatants

Gladiatorial matches ranged in size from small affairs of one pair of gladiators to huge spectacles involving dozens.

During the Campaign Game, each gladiator in a school will fight one match against an individual opponent. The number of gladiators available for matches will vary depending on how many were purchased by the school and/or are healthy enough to participate.

Battles between groups of gladiators will only happen at the Colosseum. The Colosseum will also be the setting for the more spectacular kinds of matches involving some of the more exotic fighting styles and situations. (For details about group combats and other aspects of fighting in the Colosseum, see the Campaign Rules section.)

Those not playing the campaign game are free to use their imaginations to create one-of-a-kind spectacular scenarios that feature unusual style pairings, exotic settings with unusual terrain features, group battles, naval battles (*naumachia*), etc. However, players should keep in mind that the more characters and novel features they add, the longer it will take to play the game. Players should be able to handle comfortably 4-6 characters at a time once they are familiar with the rules. (Your mileage may vary.)

Setting the Scene in the Arena

The arena can be square, circular, or, as was usually the case, oval like many of the amphitheaters and the Colosseum in Rome. For game purposes, the playing area may be 12" to 48" across. The arena is considered to have a high wall around its perimeter whether or not it is actually represented on the table. There are at least two, and there may be as many as four, separate entry points to the arena with each pair of entrances set directly across from each other.

Usually, the arena is just a flat, featureless expanse of sand. In fact, the word "arena" comes from *harena*, the Latin word for sand. However, the Romans would occasionally transform the arena of the Colosseum into a fantastic artificial forest by placing dozens of trees in it for the *venationes*, or "hunts", that were staged for the entertainment of the crowd where hundreds, if not thousands of animals were slaughtered. The Romans would also add artificial hills and other scenery when special presentations were performed that might represent

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an incident from mythology or when re-staging a battle from the past.

Contrary to popular belief, the Colosseum was not routinely flooded for naval battles called *naumachiae*. This was only possible before the emperor Domitian added the subterranean structures below the wooden floor of the arena. This area (the *hypogeum*) provided passageways and storage rooms for animals, scenery, and gladiators and it had lifts and ramps that could be used to make them appear suddenly in the arena. Players are encouraged to come up with their own spectacles for the Colosseum and make life a bit more “interesting” for the fighters, but especially the crowd.

Opponent Match-ups

Historically, gladiators were routinely paired with certain opponents. Two of the classic pairings were the match between the Retiarius and the Secutor, and the Murmillo versus the Thraex, but there are several styles about which little is known regarding who their opponents were.

When playing solo, players will use the “Opponent Match-up Table” (see Charts and Tables in the back of the book) to see who their characters will fight. The table will allow for historical pairings more often than not, but some liberties have been taken because of the lack of certainty regarding certain styles and their opponents, and to add variety. For PCs and NPCs controlled by the player, roll 1d10 and then look at the possible opponents listed across from the fighting style of their characters. Where there is more than one possible opponent listed, there is a range of numbers in parentheses that indicates the die roll needed to select that opponent.

It will be noticed that the table isn’t symmetrical: certain fighting styles aren’t able to fight certain other styles even though they might be opponents elsewhere on the table. (*Example: you’ll notice that the Murmillo style does not have the Laquerarius as one of its opponents, while the Laquerarius style does list the Murmillo as one of its opponents.*) This is intentional because of the “weighting” of the choices on the table toward the historical opponents, where known. To make the table absolutely symmetrical would have reduced the probability of fighting the historical opponent too much. However, players should feel free to substitute opponents as they wish, but they should keep in mind that the pairings were done historically to contrast the advantages and disadvantages of the different fighting styles; you’d never see a Retiarius fighting another Retiarius, for example.

If players are competing against a “live” opponent and each of them is running a troupe of gladiators (*familia gladiatoria*), the opponents are limited to the fighters on hand, so if you want some

variety in your matches, make sure you diversify the fighting styles of your characters.

Determining the Opponent’s Rep

The locale of the contest will determine the Rep of the opponent.

- Gladiators on the “fringe of the empire” are either Rep 3 (1 – 7) or Rep 4 (8 – 10).
- Gladiators in the “heart of the empire” are either Rep 5 (1 – 7) or Rep 6 (8 – 10).
- Gladiators “outside of Rome” are either Rep 7 (1 – 7) or Rep 8 (8 – 10).
- Gladiators in Rome are either Rep 7 (1 – 4), Rep 8 (5 – 9), or Rep 9 (10).

ENTERING THE ARENA

Opposing individual gladiators or groups will enter the arena from opposite entrances, or players may start the match with the fighters in the arena standing at an agreed distance from one another.

THE RULES OF COMBAT

“Uri, uinciri, uerberari, ferroque necari”

“To endure burning with fire, shackling with chains, to be whipped with rods and killed with steel.”

The gladiator’s oath of submission.

This section covers the rules of combat used for the gladiatorial contests of Red Sand, Blue Sky. In general, there are two types of combat: missile attacks conducted with bows, throwing spears and other thrown weapons (with the exception of the net and rope), and melees, which are fought with hand-to-hand weapons.

Note: the rules that follow are for combat between human characters. Combat with animals uses many of the same mechanics but there are many exceptions to the way they are handled. This information will be available as a *free* supplement available at the THW Support Group on Yahoo.

MEASUREMENT OF DISTANCE

Players may always measure distances before moving and shooting. Measurement of distance while moving is made from the figure’s base edge. Measurement of distances between characters is from base edge to base edge.

ROUNDING OF FRACTIONS

Whenever a number is divided for any reason, round any remaining fraction up.

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PLAYER AND NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

RSBS is played with individual figures called “characters”. Before play can start, we must define these characters.

There are two types of characters: player characters (PCs) representing the players themselves, and non-player characters (NPCs) that don’t represent the players. NPCs may or may not be controlled by the PCs. NPCs not controlled by a PC are “hostile”; those controlled by the PC are “friendly”.

Note: Uncontrolled NPCs are usually encountered when playing RSBS solo. When playing against another “live” opponent, the other player will control the actions of the hostile NPCs.

THE GAME TURN

The playing of RSBS is divided into “game turns”. Each game turn is divided into two “player turns during which only one player is “active”. Each player turn consists of a “movement phase” followed by a “combat phase”. (Note: some attacks will be done immediately after movement. See below for details.)

At the start of each game turn, players will determine which player or side is active first. The player or side not currently active is called “inactive”.

When a player becomes active, all of the characters he controls may perform an “action”. When a player is playing solo, there are some restrictions on the actions of hostile NPCs (see “Hostile NPC Actions” below).

After all of the active characters have performed their actions, any characters that are eligible to engage in combat will do so. Once all combat has been resolved, the previously inactive player becomes active and conducts his turn.

After both players have finished their turns, they once again determine which side is active by drawing cards, then perform actions, etc., and will continue this process until one side is victorious.

DETERMINING WHICH SIDE IS ACTIVE

Movement and combat is not simultaneous; only one side is “active” at a time during the game turn. Players may only use voluntary movement and initiate combat when their characters are “active”.

Before the match begins, take the deck of cards and shuffle it, then place it face down on the table. Each side then picks a card color, usually either black or red. This will be their color for the duration of the match. To determine which side is “active”, draw two cards and turn them face up:

If both cards are the same color:

- Then the corresponding side will move first. After all characters of the active side have finished their movement and combat the

opposite side becomes active and can move and conduct combat. This concludes the turn.

If both cards are a different color:

- Then the highest card determines which side moves first. Ties cause 2 new cards to be drawn. After all characters of the active side have finished their movement and combat, the opposing side becomes active and can move and conduct combat. This concludes the turn.

Drawing Cards

If all of the cards have been drawn from the deck, shuffle them again and continue the game.

ACTIONS

When a character is active, he may do one of the following actions voluntarily (Note: there are restrictions on the actions taken by uncontrolled NPCs. See below.):

- **Move** up to full distance of his movement rate.
- **Catch his breath.** If a player has burned at least half of his Dice Pool, he may add 1 die back to it for any activation in which he meets all of the following conditions:
 1. Doesn’t move more than half his movement rate voluntarily. (NPCs may not move at all.)
 2. Isn’t forced to move involuntarily.
 3. Doesn’t, make a reaction move.
 4. Isn’t involved in any form of combat.

This can be done during his own activation, and it can also be done at the end of his *opponent’s* activation after all movement and combat has been completed. When playing with several characters on a side, players may find it convenient to indicate which characters are potentially eligible to catch their breath (burned at least half their Dice Pool) by placing a marker next to them. If anything happens to the character during the course of an activation that violates the conditions of being able to catch their breath, the marker is removed and no die will be restored to the Dice Pool.

- **Draw a weapon** (Usually done by a missile armed character getting ready to fight with a side arm.)
- **Stand in place and change facing.**
- **Stand in place and fire or reload.**
- **Stand in place, change facing, and fire or reload.**
- **Move into contact with an opponent** (touch bases) in order to initiate hand-to-hand combat with an opponent in the combat phase of the player’s activation. When a character is moved into contact, the moving character will align the front facing of his base with his opponent’s

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base by placing it flat against and aligning it with the facing contacted regardless of the angle at which the contact occurred.

- **Attempt to flank and attack an opponent.** A character that is in contact with or within 1/2 inch of an opponent's front facing may attempt to flank and attack him (see "Flank and Attack" in the "Melee Combat" section of the rules for details and procedure).
- **Make a Net Attack.** Characters that have a net or rope may make a Net Attack if they have moved 2" or less. The actual tossing of the net or rope costs an additional 1" of movement. (In other words, in order for a character to move 2" and toss his net, he must be capable of moving 3" total. See "Voluntary Movement for details.)
- **Remove Net.** A character that has been ensnared by a net or rope may attempt to remove it if he is not currently involved in hand-to-hand combat. To do so, roll 1d10 and compare it to his Rep. If the die roll is equal to or less than his Rep he has removed the net. If the die roll is higher, he has failed and will continue to fight at a disadvantage (-2 to Rep for all hand-to-hand combat). Whether the attempt was successful or not, he will burn 1d10.
- **Make a Bash Attack.** Characters that have a large shield and certain animals may make a Bash Attack during movement, but must spend 1" of movement in addition to the distance moved. (See "Voluntary Movement for details.)
- **Stand up and move.** Standing costs 2" of his movement rate. He may stand even if he is adjacent to his opponent, but in order to move away from his adjacent opponent, he must attempt to "Break Off" (see Break Off From Melee below). A character will not be able to stand if wounds to his legs have reduced his movement rate to below 2" per turn.
- **Stand up and melee.** A character that stands up and is adjacent to an opponent will fight that melee round at -1 to Rep.
- **Continue a round of melee.** (See "The Melee Round" below.)
- **Break off a round of melee** (see Break Off From Melee below).

Friendly NPC Actions

The PC may perform actions with his friendly NPCs as he wishes; however, he may not disengage a friendly NPC currently in a melee to assist another friendly character that is also in melee. (In other words, you can't gang up on a hostile character if there are an equal number of combatants.)

Actions for Uncontrolled NPCs

While players are, for the most part, in control of the actions of their PC and any friendly NPCs, the actions of NPCs not controlled by a PC are controlled by the game mechanics as follows:

- NPCs will always move directly toward the nearest unengaged opponents and attempt to engage them in melee. (Exception: missile armed characters. See below.)
- NPCs, which are capable of a hand-to-hand attack, may attempt to flank and attack their opponent under certain circumstances. (See "Flank and Attack" in the "Melee" section of the rules for more details.)
- Hostile NPCs may only "gang up" on friendly characters if there are more hostile than friendly NPCs. Any unengaged hostile NPC will move toward the nearest engaged friendly NPC and join in the attack.
- Missile armed NPCs will always remain in place and shoot their weapon at the closest target that is in range and in its line of sight, or having shot previously, reload. If no target is in range or line of sight, they will move so that a target becomes available.
- NPCs that have a net or rope will move to place a target in range if they do not have a target. They will move the minimum distance required to place it in range
- NPCs that have a net or a rope will move away from a target if they fail to make a net attack (see below).

Before Moving Active Uncontrolled NPCs

Before moving active uncontrolled NPCs, players will have to determine whether or not the NPC is ensnared. If the character is ensnared he will attempt to remove the net or rope if he is able (see "Remove Net" under "Actions" above).

If the character is not ensnared or is unable to remove the net or rope, check to see if the character is "catching his breath" (if allowed), or failing that, what type of attack the NPC will make. Those characters that are eligible for "catching their breath" will check for that first and if they don't catch their breath, they will then roll for the type of attack. This is determined by rolling 1d10 before moving each active uncontrolled NPC.

- NPCs may "**catch their breath**" when they become active during any turn in which they've burned at least half of their dice pool, have not moved in any way, and have not been involved in any kind of combat. When a character "catches his breath", he adds 1 die back to his Dice Pool. Eligible active NPCs will check to see if they are catching their breath before they are moved

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during their activation. They may also check again at the end of the other player's activation after all movement and combat has been resolved. The chances of a NPC catching his breath depends on how many dice he has left in his dice pool and whether or not he caught his breath in the previous turn:

- **If the character has half or less but more than a quarter of his dice pool remaining**, roll 1d10: catches his breath (1-3)
- **If the character has a quarter or less of his dice pool remaining**: catches his breath (1-6)
- **If the character caught his breath during the last activation**, he adds +2 to the die roll.
- **NPCs may not move while they are catching their breath.**

For those characters that were ineligible to catch their breath or failed to do so, roll 1d10 to determine what, if any, attack will be made by the NPC.

- **Bash attack (1-3)**: A result of 1-3 means the gladiator will attempt a Bash Attack, but only if he has a large shield and is close enough to attack. (Keep in mind the additional 1" the attack costs.) The character attacked by a Bash Attack will allocate his dice before the NPC allocates his dice.
- **Net attack (1-8)**: A result of 1-8 means the NPC will attempt a Net Attack but only if he has a net or rope and the target is in range (1"-6" away). If the attack is made, the target of a Net Attack will allocate his dice before the NPC allocates his dice. If a net attack is not made, the NPC will move away from a potential target if the target is closer than 6" but will only move as far as necessary to keep the target at his maximum range (6").
- **Sand Attack (10)**: A result of "10" means a human NPC might try a Sand Attack if he is no closer than 1" but no farther away than 3". Roll 1d10: **Sand Attack (1-5), Hand-to-Hand Melee (6-10)**. If not in range, he will close with opponent and conduct hand-to-hand melee. (However, see next entry regarding long weapons.)
- **Any other result** means the NPC will close with his opponent and make a hand-to-hand melee attack if his movement brings him into contact (bases touching). If the NPC begins his movement either adjacent

to or within ½ inch of the front facing of his opponent, he may attempt to "flank and attack" him. (See "Flank and Attack" in the "Melee Combat" section of the rules below.) Those with long weapons like a spear or trident that can attack non-adjacent targets, will close to within 1" and make an attack from there.

MOVEMENT

There are three types of movement: voluntary, involuntary, and reaction. Voluntary movement is made only when the character is "active". Involuntary movement is in response to an action taken against the character. An inactive character may make a reaction move when an active character moves adjacent to its flank or rear.

VOLUNTARY MOVEMENT

- **Characters may move their full listed movement rate when active.** (Note: this may be reduced because of wounds to the legs, see "Wounds" below.) Movement rates are listed on the Character Statistics Sheet in the back of the book.
- **Characters may change the way they are facing** by turning in place (pivoting on center) up to 90 degrees at no additional cost to movement, but must spend 1" of movement if they change facing more than 90 degrees. Facing may be changed at any point during the move and as many times as desired, but the character must move at least a ½" before another facing change can be made. *Example: A character that turns 180 degrees in place must spend an additional inch of movement.*
- **Characters may move backward at half speed.** (1" moved backward costs 2" of movement.)
- **Gladiators wanting to make a Bash Attack** must spend an additional 1" of movement. *Example: A Murmillo with a 3" movement rate wants to close with his opponent and conduct a "bash". However, his opponent is 3" away, so he will not be able to "bash" because the 3" distance plus the 1" additional needed to conduct the attack is greater than his movement rate. (3"+1" = 4", 4" is > 3".) He may only close with his opponent and conduct a hand-to-hand melee attack.*
- **Gladiators making a Net Attack** must spend an additional 1" of movement.
- **Drawing a sword or dagger** takes the character one turn (activation). This usually takes place after the gladiator has thrown a weapon. If attacked before drawing his weapon, he melees normally but his results only count for defensive purposes: if he passes more d10 than the attacker he is allowed to give ground

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1" without taking damage; he will not be able to damage his opponent.

INVOLUNTARY MOVEMENT

Characters may be forced to move involuntarily. The possible forms of involuntary movement are:

1. **Hesitate:** Character remains in place and immediately "burns" 1d10. (Note: this is not a "move" as such as it will only happen during the other player's activation and then only as a result of Deadly Missile Fire and rolling on the Armor Protection table. There is no other effect than burning 1d10; the character does not forfeit his next activation.)
2. **Give Ground:** A character that is forced to give ground will move directly away from enemy for a given distance and direction depending on the cause and result and will end the move facing as desired. If a character on the ground is forced to give ground, he will instead "roll" either to the left or right, PC's choice, or if NPC, left (1 – 5) or right (6 – 10) that many inches. Those with their backs to the wall (rear facing of the figure's base is touching the wall) and unable to give ground will instead "burn" 1d10. A "give ground" result may also cause a "collision" (see "Collisions" below).
3. **Dodge:** A character may be forced to dodge as the result of a Net Attack.
4. **Knocked or Pull to the Ground:** Characters knocked or pulled to the ground may not stand until active. Under certain circumstances, the character that knocked or pulled them down will attack them immediately. Any movement necessary by the attacker to reach the fallen character and attack him is done immediately. If a character is already on the ground and receives another "knocked to the ground" result, there is no additional penalty, but the character may be attacked again immediately if the result calls for it. A character on the ground will "burn" twice the number of dice he allocated when involved in a melee.

Character facing while on the Ground

When a character has been knocked or pulled to the ground he will end up in one of two positions depending on the circumstances; he will either be "face up" or "face down".

The circumstances and the resulting facings are:

- **If the character was moving backward** when he fell to the ground, he will be "face up" with his head pointing in the direction he was moving.

- **If the character was moving forward** when he fell to the ground, he will be "face down" with his head pointing in the direction he was moving.
- **If the character was not moving** and falls as the result of a missile or hand-to-hand attack, he will land "face up" with his head pointing away from the direction of the attack
- **If the character falls to the ground** as the result of having been pulled down by a net attack, he will land "face down" with his head pointing toward his attacker.

Whether a character is "face up" or "face down" will have an effect on the character's ability to fight and "hit location" during melee (see below).

REACTION MOVEMENT

If an active character begins its move more than 1/2 inch away from an inactive character and the active character moves adjacent to the inactive character's flank or rear facing, the inactive character may turn to face it under the following conditions:

- If the moving active character began his move in the line of sight of the inactive character, the inactive character may turn to face his opponent at no penalty.
- If the moving active character began his move out of the line of sight of the inactive character, but eventually moved into sight, the inactive character may turn to face, but must burn 1d10.
- If the moving active character began his move out of the line of sight of the inactive character and remained out of sight for the entire move, the inactive character will roll for Reaction Move on the Maneuver Table. PCs may choose not to roll on the Maneuver Table if they wish, but NPCs will *always* attempt to react.

"Line of sight" is defined under the Missile Combat rules (see below).

Note: The above conditions are for characters that *do not* meet the conditions for attempting the "flank and attack" action. (See "Flank and Attack" in the "Melee" section of the rules for details and procedure.)

GROUP MOVEMENT AND COMBAT

A side that includes more than one character is called a "group". When groups become

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active, **PCs may move at any time during the activation, but NPCs will move in the order of their Rep** with the highest Rep moving first, then the next highest, and so on. If NPCs have the same Rep, roll 1d10 to determine activation, with the high roller becoming active. Re-roll ties.

After the active side has moved, those NPCs in single combat with another character conduct melee combat in order of Rep resolving any ties in Rep as above. **A melee involving a PC may be resolved at any time.**

When all single combats have been fought, all melees involving more than two characters are fought in order starting with the one with the fewest characters involved then going to next largest group and so on. If there are melees with the same number of characters involved in each, determine the order randomly. (See Multiple Melees below.)

COLLISIONS

Characters that have “given ground”, but are unable to move the entire distance required, due to coming into contact with an obstacle are said to have had a “collision”. An obstacle is any terrain feature, character (either standing or fallen, living or dead), or any other item that blocks the character’s path. An obstruction that is at or below the knees of the character is considered a “tripping hazard” and may affect the character’s chances on the Maneuver Table.

- If the character comes into contact with an inanimate object (arena wall, terrain feature, dead body, etc.), the character must halt and test on the Maneuver Table immediately. If he doesn’t fall down, he remains halted at the point of contact.
- If the character comes into contact with a live character, both characters will test on the Maneuver Table with the character causing the collision testing first.

In either of the above cases, if the object collided with is larger than the character that collided with it, subtract 1 from the Rep of the smaller character for each difference in size. Conversely, add +1 to the Rep of the larger character for each difference of size. A character’s Rep may never be less than 1 or greater than 9. **Note:** the perimeter wall of the arena is always considered an extra-large obstacle in a collision.

Example: An M-sized Murmillo (Rep 4) is forced to give ground 1”, but there is a perimeter wall (XL) blocking his path ½” away from him. The Murmillo moves backward ½” and collides with the wall. He then stops in place to test on the Maneuver

Table. Since he is man-sized (M), two sizes smaller than wall (XL), he must subtract 2 from his Rep before testing on the Maneuver table.

COMBAT

Combat is either shooting (Missile Combat) or Melee (hand-to-hand, bash, or net attack).

MISSILE COMBAT

For missile combat to occur, a target must be within range and in an arc 180 degrees from the shooting character’s front. This is called the shooter’s Line of Sight.

Field of Vision and Line of Sight

Characters may see anything that is within their field of vision; this is a 180-degree arc that runs from the exact middle of one flank facing, then continues across the entire front facing, and ends on the exact middle of the other flank facing. Targets are not in the “line of sight” if there are any figures, terrain, or other obstacles along a straight line between the shooter and target. Use a ruler or straight edge to determine this.

Types of Missile Attacks

There are two types of missile attacks and the player must declare the type of attack before rolling the dice. They are:

1. Deadly Missile Attack
2. Sand Attack

Each type of missile attack burns 1d10 from the shooter’s Dice Pool.

DEADLY MISSILE ATTACK

This is an attack with any missile weapon. To score a hit when using this type of attack, the player rolls 1d10 and adds it to the shooter’s Rep. He then consults the Missile To Hit Table (see Charts and Tables in the back of the book). The 1d10 used for the attack is “burned” from the shooter’s Dice Pool.

Shooting Into Melee

Characters engaged in melee (adjacent) are eligible targets for missile attack. However, it is possible that a friendly character in the melee may be hit by mistake. If a character is shooting into a melee and scores a miss, then re-roll on the To Hit table with the friendly character counting as the target.

Missing a Target

If a character misses his target when shooting at an individual character, or in the case of shooting into melee where the shot missed any potential target (see above), the missile will

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continue on until it reaches its maximum range or until it hits a character or obstacle. Any character or object along this path (the line of sight) is eligible to be hit and has to be rolled for on the Missile To Hit Table.

KICKING SAND: Sand attacks

Active gladiators may opt to kick sand at their opponent. A sand attack may only be tried at a range of no less than 1" and no greater than 3". The target must be to the kicker's front. The kicker burns 1d10 and then rolls another 1d10 and adds it to his Rep as if shooting a weapon on the Missile To Hit Table. Subtract 1 from the kickers Rep for each wound on the leg he is using, PC's choice. If NPC, use least wounded leg. Target size is not taken into account for a sand attack.

If a score of 13 or more is made, the sand may have hit the target. The target must then roll 2d10, compare it to his Rep., then consult the Sand Attack Table (see Charts and Tables in the back of the book).

The Effects of Being Blinded by Sand

A character that has been blinded by sand will fight at -1 to Rep in melee and will burn 1d10 more than was allocated. Any Maneuver check done while blinded is done at -1 to Rep. A character blinded by sand cannot initiate a melee round but may defend. This condition will persist until his eyes clear. (See below.)

Recovering From a Successful Sand Attack

If a character was struck in the eyes with sand (blinded), he will check to see if his eyes clear on his next activation by rolling 1d10. On a roll of 1-5 his eyes clear. If his eyes do not clear, he will check again on his next activation, but will subtract 1 from the die roll. If his eyes are still not cleared, he will continue to subtract 1 from the die roll for each check thereafter until his eyes clear, with the subtractions being cumulative. (-1 for the second time he checks, -2 for the third time, -3 for the fourth time, and so on.) His eyes will clear automatically on his sixth activation after being blinded.

MELEE COMBAT

There are four types of melee attacks. They are:

- **Hand-to-Hand attack:** This occurs when the front facing of a character's base touches an opponent's base. The attack is made with the weapon the gladiator is holding, or in the case of animals, their teeth, claws, etc. Gladiators armed with a spear, trident, or similar weapon may also make an attack against targets that are not adjacent but within 1" range.
- **Flank and attack:** This action is a maneuver that may be attempted by an active character

during his movement and represents a sudden move at close range in an attempt to gain a temporary positional advantage over his opponent. Regardless of the result, the maneuver will end in a hand-to-hand attack. (See below for details.)

- **Bash attack:** In this attack the gladiator tries to knock his opponent to the ground with his shield. Bash attacks are conducted during movement and have their own results on the Melee Results Table.
- **Net attack:** This is carried out by Net or Rope armed gladiators at a distance of between 1 to 6 inches from the target. The gladiator attempts to ensnare his opponent and pull him to the ground.

PC Dice Allocation in Melee

Player characters must allocate 1-4 dice from their Dice Pool for use in any kind of melee attack whether it is a hand-to-hand, net, or bash. When playing against a "live" opponent, players should do this secretly by placing a 1d10 under cover that has one of its faces turned up that matches the number of dice they wish to allocate. After all PCs have allocated, the choice is revealed. *Example: The PC decides to allocate three dice to his Net attack and places the "3" face up on the die and covers it with his hand. He and his opponent then reveal their allocation at the same time.*

NPC Dice Allocation in Melee

Anytime a NPC is involved in a melee, roll 1d10 and compare it its current Dice Pool to determine how many dice the NPC will allocate for that attack (see NPC Dice Allocation Table in the Charts and Tables section in the rear of the book). PCs determine their allocation *before* the NPC's result is rolled.

Initiating Hand-to-Hand Combat

A character may only initiate hand-to-hand combat against a character that is touching the front facing of his base, but a character may be attacked from any direction.

Modifiers to Melee Combat

Each character in melee modifies their Rep. by the modifiers listed below:

- If in melee with more than 1 character: -1 to Rep for each additional character over the first (-3 maximum).
- If a character is ensnared, he fights all hand-to-hand combat at -2 to Rep.
- If the character stood up to melee an adjacent opponent, -1 to Rep.

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- Characters armed primarily with missile weapons in melee subtract 1 from Rep if they draw and use a side arm.
- A character that is on a higher elevation or taller than his target has a height advantage and adds +1 to his Rep.
- A character blinded by sand fights at -1 to Rep.

Note: For game purposes all characters are considered to be the same height with the exception of dwarfs, and large and extra-large individuals. An average height human (M) fighting a dwarf will have a height advantage over the dwarf and will add +1 to his Rep.

Large and extra-large characters will add +1 to Rep for height advantage when fighting either dwarfs or man-sized characters; but if (L) and (XL) characters are fighting each other they are considered the same height.

Any standing character is considered to have a height advantage over any fallen character regardless of size.

Resolving Melee Attacks

First, each character in melee rolls 1 to 4 dice, depending on how many were allocated. Each die is then compared to their Rep. If the die score is equal to or less than the character's Rep, he is said to have "passed" that die.

Next, each opponent involved in the melee compares the number of "passed dice" to the other opponent. Those that pass more die rolls than their opponent are considered to be the "higher" referred to in the Melee Results Table.

Regardless of the number of dice passed, a player can never score better than 2d10 more than his opponent.

Note: Any character that is attacked by a non-adjacent (bases not touching) opponent that's armed with a long weapon like a spear or trident may not score any better than "Pass same number of dice" if he is not similarly armed; he cannot inflict any damage in this situation.

Finally, the result of the comparison and the condition under which the melee was conducted are found on the Melee Results Table and the instructions there are carried out before resolving the next melee. (See the Melee Results Table in the Charts and Tables section in the back of the book.)

Example: Player "A" with a Rep of 5 rolls 4d10 and then compares them to his Rep. He finds that all 4d10 are equal or less than his Rep, so he has "passed" 4d10. His opponent, "B" with a Rep of 5, rolls 3d10 and compares them to his Rep. He finds that only 1d10 is equal to or less than his Rep, so he has "passed" 1d10.

Both players now compare the number of dice passed. Player "A" passed 4d10 compared to player "B's" 1d10, so player "A" has passed 3d10 more than his opponent (4-1=3). But since no player can pass more than 2d10 more than the other, player "A" looks at the Melee Table under the section that reads "Pass 2d10 more than the other", finds the condition that applied to that attack and then applies the result.

FLANK AND ATTACK

During his turn, an active PC may declare that he is going to attempt to "flank and attack" his opponent if he is:

- Either adjacent to his opponent's front facing or,
- Is within ½ inch of it.

NPCs will attempt to "flank and attack" if they are in position to do so (either adjacent to or within ½ inch of an opponent's front facing) AND they allocate more dice for melee than their opponent

Before moving the NPC, the PC will allocate his dice, then check for the dice allocation of the NPC. If the NPC allocated more dice than the PC, the NPC will attempt to "flank and attack". If the NPC doesn't allocate more dice than the PC, the NPC will simply move into contact with the front facing of his opponent and fight a round of melee, or will fight a round of melee if already in contact.

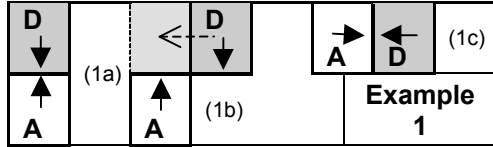
Procedure:

- The active PC declares which flank he is attempting to move against; NPCs will always attempt to move against the unshielded flank. If a character is not directly in front of his opponent he may only attempt to move against the flank that is closest to him (this only applies to characters that are not adjacent).
- The active figure is then moved so that the front corner of its base is touching the front corner of his opponent's base on the flank he is trying to reach.
- Both characters roll 2d10 and compare them to their Rep. After the dice are rolled, the characters compare dice. The characters will either pass the same number of dice, 1 die more than their opponent, or 2 dice more than their opponent.
- After this has been determined, the "Flank and Attack Table" is consulted, and the results are applied. A round of melee is fought immediately. (See "Flank and Attack Table" in the "Charts and Tables" section for results.)

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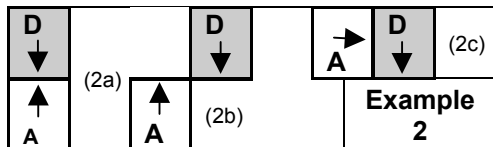
- If a character was flanked during this round, and is still adjacent to his opponent at the end of the round, he will turn to face him automatically.

Examples of “Flank and Attack” (Refer to the diagrams for the following examples. The dark arrow indicates the facing of the characters)



Example 1

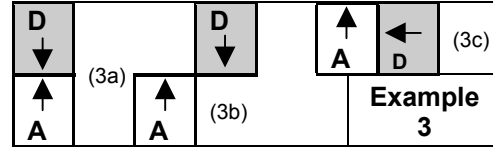
- 1a:** (Starting position) the attacker “A” begins his movement adjacent to the defender “D”. “A” declares his intention to “flank and attack” “D” on the defender’s right flank. “A” then moves his character so that the front right corner of the figure’s base touches “D’s” right front corner. This places both characters in the position seen in **1b**.
- 1b:** Both characters now roll 2d10 and compare the results. If both characters pass the same number of dice, the attacker will be unable to flank the defender and “D” will shift his character to the right and block “A’s” movement as indicated by the dashed arrow on “D’s” right flank. A round of melee will be fought in this position. If either “A” or “D” had passed 1d10 more than his opponent, “A” would move to “D’s” right flank and “D” would turn to face “A” which would result in the characters being in the position seen at **1c**.
- 1c:** If “A” had passed 1d10 more than “D”, then “D” would have to burn 1d10; if “D” had passed 1d10 more than “A”, then “A” would have to burn 1d10. A round of melee is fought in this position.



Example 2

- 2a:** (Starting position) the procedure is the same as Example 1.
- 2b:** Both characters roll 2d10, but in this instance “A” passed 2d10 more than “D”. “A” moves to “D’s” flank and turns to face it; “D” is unable to turn and face “A”. This results in the figures being in the position seen in **2c**.

- 2c:** A round of melee will be fought in this position. “D” is flanked and will burn 1d10 more than was allocated and will fight at –1 to Rep for this round. If both characters are still adjacent at the end of the round, “D” will turn to face “A” automatically.



Example 3

- 3a:** (Starting position) the procedure is the same as the previous examples
- 3b:** Both characters roll 2d10, but in this instance “D” passes 2d10 more than “A”. “A” then moves adjacent to “D’s” right flank, *but does not turn to face*. “D” then turns to face “A’s” exposed flank. This results in the figures being in the position seen in **3c**.
- 3c:** “A” is flanked and will burn 1d10 more than was allocated and will fight at –1 to Rep for this round. If both characters are still adjacent at the end of the round, “A” will turn to face “D” automatically.

BASH ATTACKS

An active character that is eligible to make a Bash Attack (he is in range and has a large shield) announces his intention to his opponent before moving and then moves the basher into contact with his target. A round of melee is then fought with dice allocation and resolution of the round performed using the normal procedure, but the Rep of the characters involved may be modified by their size. *The Melee Modifier for “height advantage” is not used for Bash Attacks.*

- If the basher is larger than his target:** add +1 to the basher’s Rep for each difference in size.
- If the basher is smaller than his target:** subtract 1 from the basher’s Rep for each difference in size
- If the target is larger than the basher:** add +1 to the target’s Rep for each difference in size.
- If the target is smaller than the basher:** subtract 1 from the target’s Rep for each difference in size.

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NET ATTACKS

This is a special attack that can only be done by characters equipped with either a net or a rope. The object is to ensnare and then attack the target with a trident or spear. To conduct a Net Attack the attacker must be active and have a target in its line of sight, and within a range of no closer than 1" to no farther than 6". The attacker may move up to 2" before casting the net. He must expend an additional 1" of his movement rate for the actual cast.

Resolving the Net Attack

Net attacks are resolved using the same procedure as melee attacks regarding number of dice used and allocation, etc, but the results of the net attack are found on the Net Attack Table. Compare the dice passed by each character involved in the net attack, then consult the Net Attack Table and apply the results (see Charts and Tables section in the back of the book).

Net Retrieval

After a net or rope has been cast, it may be retrieved automatically unless lost due to a result on the Net Attack Table, or it has successfully ensnared a target. The net may not be reused if an ensnared target was able to remove it; it is considered too damaged to be of use. A net is an expendable "single use" type of weapon.

THE MELEE ROUND

A round of melee is fought each time a character in melee is active. *Example: "B" is active and moves into contact with "C". A round of melee is fought with both sides rolling dice. During "C"'s activation, "C" is still in melee, so another round of melee is fought*

BREAKING OFF FROM MELEE

If a character wants to break off contact during a melee, he must conduct a round of melee as normal. If the figure wishing to "break off" passes the same number of dice or more than his opponent, he is allowed to move back 2". Otherwise, carry out the melee result as normal.

NUMBERS IN MELEE

Small (S), man-size (M) and large (L) characters may be meleed by up to 5 characters: 2 from the front, 1 to each flank, and 1 to the rear.

Extra-large size (XL) characters may be meleed by up to 6 characters: 2 to the front, 1 to either flank, and 2 to the rear.

MULTIPLE CHARACTER MELEES

A character may be meleed by more than one opponent and all of the attacks against him will be resolved at the same time.

Dice Distribution in Multiple Character Melees

A single NPC in a melee with more than one character will distribute his dice against his opponents based on their position relative to him in this order ranked from highest to lowest priority:

1. Front
2. Weapon side flank
3. Other flank
4. Rear

The NPC will attempt to distribute his dice as evenly as possible but cannot distribute any dice to another facing until all opponents in a higher priority facing are opposed by at least 1d10. If the NPC has distributed at least one die per opponent, any extra dice will be distributed using the above priorities. **PCs may distribute their dice as they wish.**

It is possible that the character will not have enough dice to distribute among all of the attackers due to the lack of dice or because of priority considerations. For attacks in which he is unable to roll dice, these will be considered "unopposed" and will count as "0 dice passed" for comparison against that opponent.

Example: A NPC has an attacker to his front and another to his rear. He has 3 dice to distribute between the attacks from his allocation. He distributes 1 die to each attacker, then distributes the extra die to the frontal attack since the character on his front has priority over the character at his rear.

If both attackers in the above example had been to the character's front, he would have rolled a die for each attacking character to determine where the odd die was distributed with the high roller getting the extra die.

Resolving Multiple Character Melees

Once all distributions have been made, the dice are rolled and compared for each pair of opponents and the results from the Melee Table are carried out, but with the following change to the usual procedure:

All hits and damage are determined and recorded as they occur, but any consequences from damage (incapacity, unconsciousness, etc.), and any Maneuver tests that are required *for the single character* are not carried out until the end of combat. A character that is attacked by more than one character will only make one Maneuver test, but will make the test at minus 1 to Rep for each test called for after the first with a maximum deduction of -3.

Example: 5 opponents attacked a single character and it was determined that there were 5 tests called for on the Maneuver Table. The single

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character ignores the first test called for and only counts 3 of the remaining 4 as a penalty since -3 is the maximum deduction to Rep allowed.

If the characters in a multiple character melee *other than the single character* suffer damage and/or are required to test on the Maneuver Table, they will apply the effects of the damage and make the test whenever it is called for and not wait until the end of combat.

ATTACKED TO FLANK, REAR, OR WHILE ON GROUND

- **A character attacked on the ground** has no front, flank, or rear, but is either “face up” or “face down” (see Character Facing While on the Ground above).
- **A character on the ground** may count his shield as protection, but only if he is “face up”. A character with a small shield may protect any hit location except his upper and lower legs. A character with a large shield may protect any hit location except his lower legs.
- **A character attacked on his flank** will “burn” 1 extra die than was allocated for melee for each flank attacked (burn 2 extra dice max.).
- **A character attacked from the rear plus any other facing** cannot have a result any better than “Pass the same number of dice” against the rear character if the rear character was opposed in melee.
- **A character attacked from the rear** will “burn” 2 extra dice than were allocated for melee.
- **A character on the ground** will burn twice the dice allocated for melee. *Example: Theodorus is attacked on the ground and allocates 4 dice for melee. He would actually burn eight dice from his Dice Pool.*
- **A character that is “face down” when attacked** cannot score better than “Pass the same number of dice” on the Melee Table. At the end of the round, he is considered “face up”.
- **A character attacked in Melee from the flank and/or rear** that isn’t forced to “give ground” may turn to face his attacker or attackers at the end of that round of melee.

ASSESSING DAMAGE

To determine if missile fire or melee has caused any damage the following steps must be taken:

- The Hit Location must be determined.
- The Armor Protection roll may be taken.
- The Damage Table may be consulted.
- The Wound Table may be consulted.
- The Maneuver Table may be consulted.

Sometimes not all of the steps outlined above will be taken. The Hit Location is always the first step in determining damage. Sometimes players will be called upon to skip the Armor Protection Table and instead go directly to the Damage table. This is indicated on the various charts.

DETERMINING HIT LOCATION

Once a hit location result has occurred, either in melee or deadly missile attack, the attacking character uses the one of the Hit Location tables to determine where the blow landed.

There are two different hit location tables: one is for HH-class weapons and the other is for all other types of weapons.

Note: the HH table is modeled on a right-handed fighter and takes into account the limited reach of shorter weapons like the gladius, dagger, etc. The “Other Weapons” table takes into account all longer weapons like spears and tridents (when used with both hands), long two-handed swords, etc, as well as missile weapons. Their longer reach gives them the ability to hit more areas of the body. (See the “Hit Location Tables” in the “Charts and Tables Section”.)

Hit Location Procedure:

1. Determine what kind of weapon was used for the attack and then find the appropriate Hit Location table (either “HH” or “Other Weapons”).
2. Roll 1d10
3. Find the result in the “1d10” column of the appropriate table.
4. Cross-index the die roll with the column that corresponds to the facing of the defending character that is under attack (Front, R. Flank, L. Flank, Rear). This is the body area that was hit. If there is more than one body area listed, roll 1d10 to determine which of the two was hit.

Design Note: The model used for determining hit location is based on the assumption that the figure’s front is to the front of the base, his back is to the rear of the base and his arms and legs are to either side on the flanks of the base. Players should keep this in mind regardless of how their figures are actually posed. It is acknowledged that a “live” human could be in all sorts of contorted positions during the actual exchange of blows and might present many different targets and angles, even if only for a fleeting second. No claim is made here for this game being a “simulation”: it is a *game* above all else.

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Characters That Are “Face Up” or “Face Down” and Hit Location

- **Face Up:** Only the character’s belly, chest, arms, legs, and head can be hit when he is in this position. He will be able to use his shield to protect all locations except his legs. (This varies depending on the size of the shield. See “Attacked to Flank, Rear, or While on Ground above.”)
- **Face Down:** Only the character’s upper and lower back, arms, legs, and head can be hit when he is in this position. He will be unable to use his shield for protection.

ARMOR PROTECTION TABLE

When a result of “Armor Protection Table” occurs, the defender rolls 1d10 and modifies the score by his attacker’s weapon’s modifier, if it has one. In general, a character may be hit or forced to maneuver. (See “Armor Protection Table” in the Charts and Tables section of the rules.)

DAMAGE TABLE

When a result of Damage Table is called for from either a successful missile or melee attack the target rolls 2d10 versus his Rep and compares the result to the Damage Table (see the Damage Table in the Charts and Tables section of the rules).

WOUND TABLE

When a result of Wound is called for on the Damage Table, the target consults the Wound Table; finds the hit location, then carries out the instructions listed there. (See the Charts and Tables section of the rules.)

MANEUVER TABLE

When a result of “Maneuver” is indicated, it means the character has been forced to react to a situation that requires him to maneuver in some way. To determine his reaction, roll 2d10 and compare it to the Rep of the checker and refer to the situation that caused the test on the Maneuver Table (see the Charts and Tables section of the rules).

THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF WOUNDS

All wounds are cumulative and have varying effects depending on the hit location involved.

- **Head:** Two wounds to the head will cause death.

- **Chest/ Upper Back (upper torso):** Two wounds to the upper torso area will cause death.
- **Belly/ Lower Back (lower torso):** Two wounds to the lower torso will cause death.
- **Any combination of two wounds to the upper and/or lower torso will cause death.** (Example: a character with a wound to the upper chest and the lower back will die.)
- **Arms:** Each arm can take three wounds, however, on the second wound the arm becomes useless. If it is the shield arm, the shield will be dropped and the character will surrender. If it is the weapon arm, the weapon is considered dropped and the character will surrender. (However, see below for matches that are declared “*sine missione*”. Also see “Surrender” below.) A third wound to the arm causes unconsciousness.
- **Legs:** Each leg can take three wounds. The first wound to a leg has no effect on movement. The second wound on the same leg will cut the movement rate by half. The third wound to the same leg will cause the character to become unconscious. The effects on movement due to leg wounds are cumulative. It is possible for a character to have his movement halved for the wounds to one leg, and then halved again for wounds to the other leg. Players should keep in mind that it takes at least 2” of movement to be able to stand after being knocked down.

DEATH

Death may come as a result of a single blow during combat, from the cumulative effect of wounds, or after appealing for mercy.

ENDING THE MATCH

Play continues until one character or side is “spent”, unconscious, is unable to use a weapon, surrenders, or dies. (However, if both sides are “spent” at the end of an activation, use the procedure below.)

Note: Keep in mind that a character may be able to regain a die to his dice pool by “catching his breath” at the end of his opponents activation and thus become “unspent” if his opponent was unable to force him to move, engage him in combat, etc.

Surrender

Characters may surrender for a variety of reasons and this will bring the match to an end immediately. Once a character surrenders, he must appeal to the crowd for mercy (see “Appealing for Mercy” below). A character will surrender if:

- He was forced to drop his shield due to arm wounds, or,

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- He was forced to drop his weapon due to arm wounds, or,
- He is spent, his opponent is not spent, and he has more wounds than his opponent, or,
- He and his opponent are both spent, but he has more wounds than his opponent does, or,
- He is spent and on the ground and has more wounds than his opponent does, or,
- He is on the ground and is unable to stand because of wounds, or,
- He becomes unconscious.
- A PC may surrender voluntarily any time after he suffers a wound.

If Both Players are “Spent” at the End of an Activation: The *Diludium*

It would sometimes happen that a match would last longer than usual without a clear-cut winner. In a situation like this, the principle referee (the *summa rudis*) would call for a break in the action (a *diludium*) and the gladiators would separate. During the break, assistants (*harenarii* or *ministri*) would attend the gladiators giving them massages, refreshments, tend to small wounds, and doubtless give them a “pep talk” or advice. (Not unlike what happens between rounds in a modern boxing match.)

If both characters are spent at the end of any activation, and the referee has not previously called for a break, he will call for one if:

- Both are standing and have no wounds, or,
- Both are standing and have an equal number of wounds, or,
- Both are on the ground and have no wounds, or,
- Both are on the ground and are able to stand and have the same number of wound

If a break is called, each character adds 2 times his Rep level back to his dice pool. The match is restarted with the characters standing 5” apart or, if one of them is still armed with a net or rope, 8” apart. The match then continues until one of the conditions for ending the match has been met (see “Ending the Match” above). However, if both characters are again “spent” at the end of an activation, see “Dismissed Standing” below.

DISMISSED STANDING: *Stantes Missi*

Play continues until the conditions for ending the match as outlined above are met or both are once again spent. Should it happen again that a

break would be called for, the match is ended and both characters are “dismissed standing” (*stantes missi* in Latin); in other words, the match was a “draw”. When characters are “dismissed standing”, they each receive half of their opponents Rep value in APs (see Campaign Game for details).

APPEALING FOR MERCY

When a gladiator surrendered, very often his only hope for survival lay with the crowd of spectators he had entertained. Unless he had won the crowd over with his performance, he could expect a quick death at the hands his victorious opponent.

To determine how the crowd will react when the gladiator surrenders, the modified Rep of the gladiator is compared to the roll of 2d10 and the results are read on the “Fate of the Fallen” table (see Charts and Tables in the back of the book). If the crowd is undecided, it will look toward the Emperor or editor for a final decision (see “Imperial Intervention below”).

IMPERIAL INTERVENTION

For matches held in Rome, the Emperor (Rep 9) may be called upon to intervene if the crowd was undecided about the “fate of the fallen”. For matches that occur in other locales the “editor” (Rep 8), the fellow paying for the games, replaces the Emperor. (The editor was often a senator trying to “buy votes” or a wealthy patron of the city trying to gain reputation and political influence.)

The gladiator and the Emperor (or the editor in locales other than the Colosseum) both roll 2d10 and compare the dice to their Reps; the Emperor or editor will modify his Rep using the modifiers on the “Appealing for Mercy” table; the gladiator will roll against his Rep without modification. The Rep of the Emperor may not be greater than 9; the Rep of the editor may not be greater than 8.

FIGHTING TO THE DEATH: *Sine Missione*

Matches were sometimes fought to the death (*sine missione*). There was no surrender, no appeal for mercy would be considered, and the fighters could not be “dismissed standing”; there had to be a dead body on the sand at the end of the match. Certain locales may be more prone to declaring matches *sine missione* (see the Campaign Rules below), but if players are not playing campaign game, they are free to decide whether or not the match will be fought to the death. If matches are fought under this condition, there are a few changes regarding how a match will end.

- A character that dropped his shield will continue to fight without the protection of it.

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- A character that dropped his weapon because of wounds to the arm will switch his weapon to his “off hand”, but will fight hand-to-hand at a disadvantage (-1 to Rep). The switch of hands is done automatically.
- A character that becomes unconscious will be put to death.
- A character that has fallen and is unable to stand because of wounds will be put to death.
- If a character becomes “spent” but his opponent is not “spent”, the match will continue but the “spent” character will count as “zero dice passed” in any attacks against him until both characters become “spent” and a break is called for (see below).

If both characters become “spent” at the end of an activation during a fight to the death, the referee will call for a break. The characters will add 2 times their Rep level back to their dice pool and resume the match. The characters will start 5” apart or, if one of them is still armed with a net or rope, 8” apart. This process will be repeated until one of the characters is dead.

Winning Laurels

The victor of a match was traditionally given a palm branch that he would hold high above his head as he ran a victory lap around the arena while the admiring crowd cheered, but those fighters that truly distinguished themselves were awarded the *corona*, or laurel wreath. It was the highest honor a gladiator could receive next to his freedom.

To win a laurel wreath, a fighter will have to do exceptionally well. He will be awarded one if he meets all of the following conditions:

1. He defeated an opponent with a Rep equal to or greater than his.
2. He received no more than 2 wounds
3. He dealt out at least twice as many wounds as he received.
4. He ended the match with at least 5 dice in his dice pool.

Winning laurel wreaths will add to the gladiator’s fame (see below), and increase his value as a commodity should his owner decide to sell him.

Continuing the Story

If players are just interested in playing a single match, this is where the story would end, but if they wish to follow the career of their character, they may do so with the Campaign Game below.

THE CAMPAIGN GAME

There are three ways in which the campaign game may be played: a player may choose to follow the career of his character as an individual PC, operate a *familia gladiatoria*, or he may wish to be a PC *and* run a gladiatorial troupe.

As your character fights and wins matches, he will gain fame and experience. He will work his way up from the fringes of the sprawling Roman empire on a path that will take him (should Fortuna allow it) to the living heart of the Empire itself, the Colosseum in Rome, and possibly, freedom! What follows are the rules needed to link your matches together and tell your story.

TIME IN THE CAMPAIGN

Time in RSBS is tracked by monthly turns. For convenience, we follow the modern calendar. Characters will generally fight one match per month, but this may vary depending on certain circumstances.

(Historical note: In reality, most of the experienced gladiators would fight very few matches per year, one even complaining that he was wasting the best years of his career as he sat idle.)

The campaign starts in September 106 AD around the time of the Emperor Trajan’s victory over the Dacians. It was a time of Roman glory and many gladiatorial contests

(Historical note: The events of Trajan’s campaigns against the Dacians are depicted in great detail on the famous Trajan’s Column.)

The campaign game lasts as long as the players desire. Players will find that it is easy to stop the campaign, then return to it and resume their careers at a later date when they have time to play.

THE PLAYER’S JOURNAL or, “Dear Diary...”

It is a good idea for the player to keep some sort of journal for their character. This may be as simple or as elaborate as you wish. With skill and luck you will have a long and successful career and a journal can help to keep your character’s information straight.

AFTER THE MATCH or, “Once the Dust Settles”

Replenishing the dice pool

In some circumstances gladiators may be called upon to fight more than one match in the same day or more often than not, consecutive matches. In these cases the Dice Pool is replenished to normal after each match but the gladiator may not roll to recover from his wounds. They remain until all matches have been fought.

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Recovery from Wounds

At the end of the month, after all matches have been fought, any gladiators that were wounded are checked to see if they recover.

Recovery Procedure:

- Roll 1d10 for each wound individually. If the die roll is equal to or less than the character's Rep, he has recovered from that wound.
- For any wound that wasn't healed in the previous month, check again at the end of the next month after all matches have been fought, but subtract 1 from the die roll.
- For any wound that is still unhealed after the end of the second month, check again at the end of the third month, but subtract 2 from the die roll.
- If the gladiator hasn't totally recovered by the end of the third month, he is considered to be permanently lame and must be sold at his "slave value" (see below).

It should be noted that during the campaign game, a player might want to place a wounded gladiator on the "injured reserve" list and keep him from participating in future matches so he can try to recover fully and not have to worry about receiving additional wounds.

If the gladiator doesn't recover fully after 3 months, he is considered to be permanently lame and will be sold off at his "slave value", but the player is free to sell him off earlier if he wishes. The value of a gladiator sold off this way is calculated as follows:

- Rep minus 1 for each unhealed wound times 10 = slave value

This reduced value reflects the relative worth to the owner. Since the character is no longer a fighter, all he represents is "another mouth to feed" and a drain on the owner's purse; it's better to cut your losses and try to replace him with something better.

The school will retain any armor that was purchased for the gladiator that was sold off this way and may use this equipment to outfit a replacement if one should be purchased, but the replacement must be the same size and use the fighting style of his predecessor. (This will help to reduce the cost of a replacement.)

GAINING ADVANCEMENT POINTS

Players gain Advancement Points (AP) in the following manner:

- Each time an opponent (gladiator or animal) of equal or lower Rep is defeated, your character receives AP equal to the Rep of the enemy.
- Each time a character defeats an enemy of higher Rep he receives AP equal to twice the Rep of the enemy.

ADVANCING REP

Successful characters in RSBS are rewarded with an increase to their Reputation. To increase his Rep the character must accumulate Advancement Points (AP).

As a character gains AP, keep track of it. When a character reaches the required number of AP listed for his current Rep on the Character Advancement table, he gains one level of Rep and his AP total is reduced to "0". He will then accumulate AP normally, and when he reaches the next level, he will again increase his Rep by 1 and reduce his AP to "0", and so on. (See the "Character Advancement Table" in the "Charts and Tables section.")

Characters that have Secondary fighting styles must keep track of the AP earned with that style separately. They may cash in AP to raise the Rep level of the secondary style using the Character Advancement Table.

A victorious gladiator always earns AP based on the Rep level of the fighting style used in the match by his defeated opponent.

Character may change locales based on the Rep level of their Primary fighting style.

AP points are applied to Rep advancement at the end of each match.

It isn't how many AP you accumulate that is important (but see Fame! Section.), rather it is how many AP you accumulate at your *current* Rep level. Advancement starts out rapidly but slows down as the Rep. levels get higher.

FAME! Or, "I Want To Live For Ever!"

In addition to an increase in Rep., gladiators may also earn an increase in Fame. Fame is the running total of AP a gladiator accumulates during his career. Even though APs are spent to increase the character's Rep, keep a record of all the APs he earns; every AP equals 1 point of Fame.

A character may also add to his fame by earning laurel wreaths (see above). Each laurel wreath earned will add 50 points to a character's fame. (Note: points awarded for laurel wreaths only add to a character's fame, they do not add to his Advancement Points.)

Every 100 points of Fame a character earns will make him more popular with the crowd and could help save his life; "everybody loves a

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winner"! (See the "Appealing for Mercy" section of the rules.)

LOCALES

Fringe of the Empire

Characters may start their careers in a locale that is one of the provinces on the "fringe of the empire". Examples of these are the provinces of Syria, Judea, Germania, Hispania, Cyrenaica, and Numdia. Gladiators available for purchase in these locales are either Rep 3 (1 – 5) or Rep 4 (6 – 10). Characters in these locales who become unconscious or "spent" will survive and continue to learn their trade; they do not have to appeal to the crowd for mercy, but it is still possible that they may be killed during the course of the match by an unfortunate wound. When the player reaches Rep 5, he is purchased by a school in the next locale and is then moved to the next level of arenas.

Heart of the Empire

As the gladiators increase to Rep 5 they will move to one of the provinces in the "heart of the empire". Examples of these are the provinces of Gallia, Aegyptus, and Africa. Gladiators available for purchase in these locales are either Rep 5 (1 – 5) or Rep 6 (6 – 10). Characters in these locales who are knocked unconscious, become "spent", or are forced to surrender are at the mercy of the crowd and must appeal for mercy. When the player reaches Rep 7 he is then moved to the next level of arenas.

Outside of Rome

As the gladiators increase to Rep 7 they will move to the arenas "outside of Rome". They have reached the home province of Italia and are closing in on the pinnacle of their profession. Gladiators available for purchase in these locales are either Rep 7 (1 – 7) or Rep 8 (8 – 10).

Matches fought outside of Rome may be fought to the death. Before each match, roll 1d10:

- Appeals to mercy may be made (1-9)
- Sine missione! (10)

When the player reaches Rep 8 he is then moved to Rome and the Colosseum.

Rome and the Colosseum

This is *it!* The "Big Time"! The Colosseum! This is the place every lanista dreams about: the place with the big purses! This is the place every gladiator hopes for as it is only here that he can hope to earn the wooden sword (the *rudis*), the symbol of his freedom. Gladiators in Rome are either Rep 7 (1 – 4), Rep 8 (5 – 9), or Rep 9 (10).

Matches in the Colosseum are under the watchful eyes of the crowd and more importantly, the Emperor. The Emperor and the crowd may consider appeals of mercy, or the matches may be declared "sine missione" which means that the match will be fought without reprieve: no appeals for mercy will be considered; there must be a dead body on the sand! Before each match, determine the condition under which it will be fought. Roll 1d10:

- Appeals for mercy may be made: (1-7)
- Sine missione! : (8-10)

Fighting in the Colosseum

When fighting in the Colosseum, roll 1d10 before the match. On a roll of 1 there is a possibility that "traps" are in the floor of the arena. A trap is a rectangular area 2" x 1" that contains a "large cat" (either a lion or tiger). If a trap is activated, the human character will not only have to worry about his human opponent, he'll have to keep a wary eye on the cat that wants to devour him!

At the start of each turn, each character rolls 1d10. On a score of 1 he has activated a trap 1d10 inches away from him with the distance measured from the flank edge of the character's base to the center of the trap. The long edge of the trap must be placed parallel with the perimeter wall's edge as closely as possible. Roll 1d10: the trap is to his left flank (1 – 5), or right flank (6 – 10). If the location for placing the trap is blocked by the perimeter wall, terrain, or other obstacle, place the trap as far away from the triggering character, but as close to the obstacle as possible. The maximum number of traps that may be activated during a match is 4. (Players are free to add or subtract from this number.)

If a character is standing on the trap when it opens, he must make a roll on the Maneuver Table immediately. Any "give ground" result is measured from his rear facing where he was standing and he will take the shortest route to get off of the trap. If he should fall, he will fall just off the edge of the trap that is nearest to him. He will most likely be the target of the big cat's attack!

Fighting Characteristics of Big Cats

The big cat is on a tether 5" long that is fixed to the center of the trap area. It will leap immediately from the trap and will charge toward and try to attack the closest target that's within its reach (contact with the front edge of its base). If targets are equidistant from the cat, determine the target randomly. If the cat doesn't have a target within reach, it will charge in the direction of the closest target to the full length of its tether. The cat will continue to try to attack any human target that

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comes into its 5" radius until it is killed, disabled, or the match ends.

Note: Players may want to mount their cat figures on bases. If so, mount them on rectangular bases that are just big enough to accommodate them in length and width; that is, the base should represent the "footprint" of the space it occupies. (How *big* is that big cat, anyway?)

A big cat has the following characteristics for combat:

- Once activated, it will move and/or fight at the beginning of each turn before any humans are activated. At the beginning of each turn, after cards have been drawn for activation, check to see if there are any human characters within range or currently engaged in combat with a cat. If so, move and conduct combat for all cats *first* before activating the first human character or group. If there are no human characters within range to attack, simply move the cat toward the nearest human to the extent of the cat's tether.
- It has a Rep of 6
- It has a Dice Pool of 30
- All of the cat's Hit Locations have an AC of 3. (See below for details regarding hit locations and wounds.)
- It adds +2 for its NPC Dice Allocation die roll for melee combat.
- It fights as if it has a HH class weapon.
- It does not "catch its breath".
- It will "give ground" the same as a human character.
- It will always turn to face its attacker if attacked by a single character. (It does not make "reaction moves".) If it is attacked by more than one character, it will turn to face the one nearest its front facing. (If characters are the same distance, determine which one it will face randomly.)
- If attacked by more than one character, it will allocate dice against them the same way a human NPC does.
- It never checks to see if it will "flank and attack".
- It may conduct a Bash Attack if it is in range to do so. When the cat becomes active, roll 1d10: Bash Attack (1-3). If it does bash attack it adds +1 to its Rep and the human will not have a height advantage. If it doesn't make the bash attack, it will close with its target and make a hand-to-hand attack.

- A human that wasn't bash attacked by a cat will have a height advantage over the cat in melee if the human is of (M) size or larger.
- If a cat kills a human, it will spend the remainder of the match devouring its victim and will no longer attack any human characters.

Hit Locations and Wounds for Big Cats

Hit locations and wounds are handled slightly differently for big cats. Hits are still rolled for on the Hit Location table, but a big cat's body is divided into the following hit locations:

- **Head:** A second wound to the cat's head kills it
- **Body:** Any hits on the Hit Location table to the chest/upper back, belly/lower back are considered "body" wounds on a big cat. The second body wound reduces the cat's Rep by 1; the third wound kills it.
- **Legs:** Any hits on the Hit Location table to the arm and upper/lower legs are considered "leg" wounds. The second leg wound reduces the cat's Rep by 1 and it will no longer be able to "bash attack". The third leg wound disables it and it falls unconscious; it will eventually die of its wounds. (An unconscious cat is considered a "kill" for the gladiator for the purposes of earning Advancement Points in the Campaign Game.)

The Flavian Amphitheater, or the Colosseum as it is commonly called, was begun by the Emperor Vespasian in 75 AD and was completed by his son Titus 5 years later. It measured 617 feet (188 m) by 512 feet (156 m). The arena itself was 250 feet (76 m) by 151 feet (46 m) while the four tier oval structure and some estimate that it could hold almost 50,000 If gaming in 25mm and assuming 1"=2 yards, the arena would be roughly 42 inches by 25 inches.

FREEDOM

Eventually, if the player is extremely fortunate, the player may find himself at Rep 9 with 150 AP. He has become the best of the best and is eligible for his freedom. At the end of each match the player may roll 1d10. On a roll of 5-10 he has garnered the Emperor's favor and has won his freedom. He may retire to a life of luxury...or not.

Players may choose instead to continue fighting, and covering themselves with glory by adding to their AP. This is totally up to the player's discretion.

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On the other hand, he may decide to buy a gladiator school, become a *lanista* and form a *familia gladiatoria*...

GLADIATOR SCHOOLS

A player may decide to run a gladiator school at any time during the campaign. Every gladiator in the game belongs to a school. The object of the school is to accumulate as much wealth as possible for the owner. The way to accumulate wealth is by winning in the arena and/or selling gladiators off.

STARTING BANK

Each school starts with a certain amount of *aurei* or gold coins in their bank. The amount available is as follows:

- Schools on the “fringe” start with 5,000 *aurei*.
- Schools in the “heart of the empire” start with 16,500 *aurei*.
- Schools “outside of Rome” start with 41,500 *aurei*.
- Schools in Rome herself start with 83,000 *aurei*.

Note: Players are free to adjust these levels as they see fit.

COST OF GLADIATORS

Gladiator costs are calculated in *aurei* as follows:

- For Rep 3 and 4 : Rep x 20
- For Rep 5 and 6: Rep x 50
- For Rep 7 and 8: Rep x 75
- For Rep 9: Rep x 100
- Add the Armor Value x 10 to the Rep value cost. (If armor has been purchased previously for a gladiator that died or was sold off, the armor may be used to equip a replacement as long as he uses the fighting style of his predecessor and is the same “size”.)

Example: A Rep 4 Murmillo with an armor value of 44 would cost 520 aurei. Rep cost (4 x 20= 80) plus the cost of armor (44 x 10=440)= 520

Note: If a gladiator is being sold off to raise money, his Fame must be taken into account as a famous gladiator will bring prestige to his owner, but that also has a price. The increase in value is as follows.

- Each full 100 points of fame the gladiator has will increase his value as calculated above by 20%

Schools may purchase as many gladiators as they want limited only by the amount of *aurei* they have in the bank, but players should keep in mind that they will need a certain amount of

“operating capital” for paying the money needed to compete in matches.

ACCUMULATING WEALTH: Winning Matches and Selling Gladiators

Winning Matches

The primary way to accumulate wealth is by winning in the arena. Matches are fought between two or more schools at a time. Each school puts a specific amount of *aurei* into a “purse” for each gladiator they enter in a match. When playing solo, the money of his opponents is anted by what is essentially a “non-player” school. When playing with other players, each school antes up from their own bank account. The amount depends upon the locale of the school. The winner of the match collects all of the money in the purse.

- Schools on the “fringe” ante 100 *aurei*.
- Schools in the “heart of the empire” ante 300 *aurei*.
- Schools “outside of Rome” ante 500 *aurei*.
- Schools in Rome ante 1000 *aurei*.

Winning school takes all.

Selling Gladiators

The other way to create wealth is to sell gladiators to other schools. A player may sell a gladiator at any time, but if through Rep advancement the Rep level of a gladiator exceeds the top Rep level available for the school’s current locale, the gladiator must be sold off to the next higher tier of schools and arenas. If playing the campaign solo, he sells it to a “non-player school”, essentially “cashing in” a gladiator for some operating capital. If playing with other players, he can offer the gladiator to them for outright purchase or he may hold an auction. If sold outright, he’ll receive the amount of money equivalent to the cost of the gladiator calculated using the formula in the “Cost of Gladiators” section.

If the gladiator is auctioned, the player will, of course, receive whatever the highest bidder was willing to pay. Players may auction off gladiators by using any method agreed upon by the players.

CHANGING GLADIATOR SCHOOL LOCALES

Just as gladiators rise in Rep and change locales so too can Gladiator Schools. Whenever a school has enough money in the bank that is at least equal to the “starting bank” level of the next highest locale, they may move the school to that locale.

Note: Players will want to examine their situation carefully. If they are close to the amount of money needed to change locale, they may want to consider selling off some or all their current roster of

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gladiators if it will put them at or over the money level required. They may want to start afresh by purchasing gladiators at the higher Rep levels available there. Taking along a bunch of fighters with a lower Rep level might end up costing you more in the long run. The decision is yours.

REPLACING GLADIATORS

As gladiators are lost due to death, sold back into slavery because they've gone lame, or sold because their Rep has "outgrown" the current locale, they can be replaced with new ones. Schools may buy new ones using the "Cost of Gladiators" section to determine their price using the Rep levels available for that locale. (See each locale for details.)

If more than one player is participating in the campaign, it may be possible to purchase additional gladiators by auction. (See "Accumulating Wealth" section.)

BANKRUPTCY

If the player gets to the point where he doesn't have enough money to ante up for even a single match in his current locale, he must raise the money by selling off some of his gladiators. If he no longer has any gladiators to sell and not enough money to buy more, he has gone bankrupt.

A player that goes bankrupt can start over at the next locale below where he was when it occurred. If a player goes bankrupt on the "fringe of the Empire", he might want to consider another line of work like becoming a gladiator for another school!

DESIGNER'S NOTES

First of all, thank you for purchasing RSBS! I hope you have as much fun playing it as I did in helping to design it.

My involvement with this game was the result of having purchased some of Ed's other titles. I had been looking for some skirmish rules that I could use for some WW 1 figures that I was in the process of painting, and I wanted something that was easy to learn, fast to play, and most of all, fun. I posted a message at **The Miniatures Page** asking if such a rules set existed. Someone suggested Ed's **Chain Reaction** rules for modern and near-future skirmishes at the **Two Hour Wargames** website.

I went to the THW website and took a look at what was available. I decided that **CR** might just fill the bill, but while I was at it, I also ordered **Warrior Kings** (large-scale ancient and medieval battles), **Mayhem: Warrior Kings** (skirmish-level ancients and medieval battles), and, eventually **Bugs!** (Man -to-"bug" combat in the distant future), since *you can never own too many sets of rules.*

It wasn't long after placing my order online that I had the rules in my hands. I read through them and realized these rules were "different". There weren't any orders to be written, "bookkeeping" was minimal, and they all featured an interesting system of reaction checks that made it possible to play them solo. On top of all that, they looked like fun! (As Ed has said elsewhere, "Remember fun?")

After playing a couple games of **CR** solo using a few WW2 figures (I paint pretty slowly, so the WW 1 figures were still on the workbench), my initial impressions proved to be true. They were fun, fast, and not only that, they "worked". I soon joined the **THW Support Group on Yahoo** and found that it was easy to get any questions I had answered by Ed himself, or by others in the group that had more experience with the rules. (The Internet has been a real boon for those of us with online access, especially if you have an interest in a *niche* hobby like wargaming.)

Eventually, Ed posted a message saying he was looking for playtesters for his gladiatorial rules called **Red Sand, Blue Sky**. I've been interested in the subject for years, and I had played several gladiatorial games, but, in my opinion, all of them suffered from various problems and none of them were playable solo. I had even tried my hand at designing my own rules a few years ago, but I wasn't really satisfied with my attempt; it was a "Frankenstein's monster" of various concepts raggedly stitched together, but the lightning never struck to bring it to life. I volunteered to playtest Ed's game in the hope that he would use some of the same game mechanics that would make it as fast and fun as the other titles and that it would be playable solo. It wasn't long before I received Ed's draft of the game.

The initial draft was just a few pages long and had a few charts and tables with it, but there was enough there to play with. I began pushing it around and I realized there was a pretty good game in there, but it needed some "fleshing out", as it were. Soon, I was sending Ed playtest reports and asking a lot of questions and offering suggestions for new rules. As time went on, I also volunteered my services as an editor of sorts. Then one day, Ed sent me an email asking me if I'd like to become a co-designer of the game and take over the bulk of work on it, since he had several other projects in the works, not to mention a major "relocation" in his immediate future. Having tinkered with wargames rules for years and having designed other games for my own use, I jumped at the chance! That set me on the path to help create the rules you now hold in your hands.

I felt I had a pretty good grasp of Ed's design philosophy: I knew I had to keep the game fast, simple, fun and playable solo. Trust me, it's a lot easier for me to state that philosophy than it is to

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follow it. I always had a tendency to want to add this or that bit of “chrome” to the game. (This is probably a carryover effect from having come of age during the “golden age” of SPI and all of their “simulation” games.) These chrome bits seemed nice and harmless enough on their own, but when several of these were welded on to the basic system, they turned into “lead” that weighed heavily on the design and had to be discarded. (Some of these may end up being posted at the 2HW Support Group as optional rules or variants, however...use them at your own risk!) But having said that, there was an honest attempt made to add some period “flavor” to the game, it’s just that we didn’t concern ourselves with such things as breaking weapons, wrestling in the sand, parrying blows, etc. The trick was finding the right balance to provide a fun *game*. I hope we succeeded in that.

Perhaps the most difficult part of the design was working out the rules for NPCs that would essentially allow the game to play those characters for you. While every attempt has been made to make those rules as simple, clear and complete as possible, they are probably the ones that will generate the most questions, as it is impossible to cover every contingency. Players should find that these rules will become a lot easier with a bit of experience, and it shouldn’t take that long.

When playing against a “live” opponent, the rules will be learned even more quickly and players should find it possible to play a match in 10-15 minutes which is about how long the “real thing” took. One of my personal pet peeves with many of the other gladiatorial games I’ve played is that it took a half hour or more to determine the outcome of a match. After a few hours of this, I usually found my interest waning. **RSBS** is presented as a game that can be played whenever you have a few minutes and want something to fill the time, and it should be possible to play many matches in two hours.

Since the game was designed to portray combat that required split-second reactions/decisions in real life, the number of decisions that players are required to make are relatively few. Mostly, players will be concerned with management of their “dice pool”. After a few matches, players will find that burning four dice on each melee is a mistake (especially with characters that have low Reps), and is a sure-fire way to find themselves asking for mercy in short order. There are a few tactical decisions to make as well: Should I try to bash my opponent...When should I throw the net...should I try to “flank and attack” now...Should I surrender now and take my chances with the crowd...etc.

The card activation system keeps everybody from knowing what is going to happen next and generates lots excitement, and I find it preferable to having to write orders for my

characters. Some may like that sort of “guessing game” but I think the “action/reaction” mechanics used here (and in Ed’s other games) reflect the nature of combat better: few things in combat are simultaneous. The Maneuver table will also provide some interesting results, but that depends on if it just worked for you or against you!

In conclusion, I’d like to thank all of the playtesters and others for their valuable input and encouragement along the way. I’d especially like to thank Ed for giving me a good set of game mechanics as a foundation, and above all, for giving me the opportunity to try my hand at something I’ve wanted to do for a *very* long time. Thanks! Cheers!

Patrick H. Lewis
Winona, Minnesota
May, 2003

Suggested Reading

For additional information about the history and social aspects of the gladiatorial games, I’d like to suggest the following books:

Michael Grant, *Gladiators*, 1967

Roland Auget, *Cruelty and Civilization: The Roman Games*, 1972

Eckart Köhne and Cornelia Ewigleben (editors), *Gladiators and Caesars: Power and Spectacle in Ancient Rome*, 2000

Stephen Wisdom, illustrated by Angus McBride, *Gladiators: 100 BC-AD 200*, 2001

RSBS: Sample Game

Retiarius (R) vs. Secutor (B) (both are Rep 5)

This match was fought in the “heart of the Empire” so “Appeals to Mercy” could be made. The retiarius was activated on the red cards and the secutor was activated on the black cards. Both Characters were Player Characters (PCs). The fighters started 13” away from each other on opposite ends of the arena.

Turn 1 Card Draw: R3, B9. B is active first.

B active: Moves full movement rate toward R.

R active: Moves 3” toward B. (End of turn)

Turn 2 Card Draw: R8, B5. R is active first.

R active: Moves 2” and makes a Net Attack (+1”) =

3” moved. **Net Attack:** B in range at 5”. **Dice**

Allocation: R burns 2 dice, B burns 2 dice. R rolls

6,7 (no dice passed), B rolls 3,6 (1 die passed). The

Net Attack table is consulted. Since B passed 1 die

more than R, the result is a “**Tug of War!**” Both

burn 1 die and roll 1d10 and add Rep. R: Rep 5 +

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8= 13; B: Rep 5 + 5=10. R wins tug of war and retrieves net.

B active: Moves 3" toward R. Not adjacent to R, so not able to attack. (End of turn.)

Turn 3 Card Draw: B4, B4. B is active first.

B active: Moves 2" and makes a **Bash Attack** (+1")= 3" moved **Bash Attack:** B burns 2 dice; R burns 2 dice. R rolls 4, 6 (passed 1 die); B rolls 0,7 (passes 0 dice). Since R passed 1 more die than B, B must roll on **Maneuver** table. B rolls 1,8 (passed 1 die). Results = Give Ground 1" and burn 1 die. B moves back 1".

R active: Moves backward 1" (counts as 2" moved) and makes **Net Attack** (+1" moved)= 3" moved. **Net Attack:** B is in range at 2". R burns 2 dice and B burns 1 die. R rolls on Net Attack table: R rolls 3, 6 (passed 1 die), B rolls a 1 (passed 1 die). Since both passed the same number of dice, R retrieves the net and B dodges 1" to his left and faces toward R. Both burn 1 die. (End of turn.)

Turn 4 Card Draw: R6, B3. R is active first.

R active: Moves backward 1" and makes a Net attack (3" total movement used.) **Net Attack:** R burns 4 dice and B burns 4 dice. R rolls 3,6,6,7 (passes 1 die). B rolls 6, 6, 8, 0 (passes zero dice). B rolls on the **Maneuver** table and passes zero dice! B is ensnared and pulled to the ground; he is face down with his head pointing toward R. (Players may simply tilt the figure over on its base, face down.) R moves adjacent immediately to B and attacks him. **Now that B is ensnared, R drops the net and will lose the use of it for the remainder of the match and will use his trident with both hands so it will be considered a 2H weapon.**

A round of melee is fought. R allocates and burns 2 dice and B allocates and burns 2 dice, but since B is on the ground, he will burn twice the number allocated, so B burns 4 dice. R rolls 2,4 (passes both dice); B rolls 1,6 (passes 1 die). The result of "Pass 1d10 more than the other" on the **Melee** table indicates that R will roll on the **Hit Location** table, then a roll will be made on the **Armor Protection** table. Since R is using a weapon that is something other than a HH weapon, he will use the "**Other Weapons**" Hit Location table. Because B is face down, the attack is considered to come from B's rear facing. The **Hit Location** die roll is a 2, which is the Upper Back (UBAK). B rolls on the **Armor Protection** table and rolls a 6 and adds 1 for the weapon modifier. Since the total is greater than the **Armor Class** of his upper back (3), B marks the wound on his **Character Sheet** and then rolls 2d10 vs. his Rep on the **Damage** table. He passes 1 die and that makes him refer to the **Wound** table. The **Wound** table result for the **Upper Back** location causes him to burn 3 dice, then roll on the **Maneuver** table. He passes 1 die on his Maneuver roll and is forced to "give ground

1", but since he is on the ground, he must **roll 1**", so he decides to roll to his left and ends the move face up and burns 1 die. This ends R's activation.

B active: B now has two options: he may either attempt to **remove the net**, or he may **stand up**. He decides to stand up. (The figure is placed upright by simply standing it anywhere in the space the prone figure occupied.) This ends B's activation. (End of turn.)

Turn 5 Card Draw: R6, B10. B is active first.

B active: B decides to attempt to remove the net. He burns 1 die and rolls 1d10; the die roll = 4 which is less than or equal to his Rep, so he may remove the net. **R active:** R moves to within 1" of B and attacks B's front facing with his trident.

A round of melee is fought: R burns 4 dice; B burns 2 dice. R passes 1 die more than B on the Melee table. (Note: since B is not adjacent to R, B could not have done any better than "pass same number of dice".) R now rolls for **Hit Location** on the "**Front**" column; the die roll was an 8 indicating that either the right or left Upper Leg may be damaged He rolls a 5 on 1d10 and that indicates that the upper right leg (URL) was hit. The modified die roll on the Armor Protection table exceeded the Armor Class of the URL, so a wound is marked on the hit location on Character Sheet. The Wound table is now referred to and indicates that B must burn 2 more dice and roll on the Maneuver table.

Since B has a leg wound, he will subtract 1 from his Rep when rolling on the Maneuver table. He rolls a 5 and a 9, both are higher than his modified Rep (4), so he falls to the ground and burns a die. B decides to surrender before R attacks him even though he has 1 die left in his Dice Pool; he'll take his chances with the crowd.

Appealing for Mercy

B now goes to the "**Appealing for Mercy**" table and looks at the list of modifiers. There are no modifiers that apply to him, so he rolls 2d10 and gets a 6 and a 3 (passes 1 die). This results in the crowd's opinion being split, so the Editor will decide his fate. The Editor's Rep is 8 and there are no modifiers that apply so both the Editor and B roll 2d10 against their Rep and then compare results. B rolls 4,5 (passes 2 dice); the Editor rolls 1,0 (passes 1 die). The **Imperial Intervention** table is consulted. Since B passed 1 die more, he is spared.

R is victorious and earns 5 **Advancement Points** (opponent was equal to his Rep). He also earns a **Laurel** that gives him 50 Fame points because he inflicted twice the wounds he received and he had at least 5 dice left in his Dice Pool (he ended the match with 7 left!). B will have to wait until all matches have been fought for the month to see if will recover from his wounds...at least he's still alive!

WEAPONS TABLE		
WEAPON	RANGE	Armor Prot. Mod.
HH	X*	None
2H	X*	+1
TS	6"	None
BW	16"	-1
PL	6"	None
N or R	1"-6"	Special

*Note: Spears and Tridents may attack non-adjacent targets at a range of 1". See rules for details.

MELEE MODIFIERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If in melee with more than 1 character: -1 to Rep for each additional character over the first: (-3 max.) Primarily missile armed character in melee: -1 to Rep +1 to Rep for height advantage. -1 to Rep if character stood up before melee
MELEE RESULTS TABLE (2d10 vs. Rep)
<p>Pass the same number of dice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attack ineffectual. Combatants remain locked in combat if adjacent. <p>Pass 1d10 more than the other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bash attack causes other character to roll on Maneuver table. Defender on ground avoids attack but must remain on ground. Otherwise higher rolls on Hit Location table and then Armor Protection Table <p>Pass 2d10 more than the other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bash causes other character to roll on Maneuver table at -2 to Rep. Defender on ground avoids attack but remains on ground. Otherwise "higher" rolls Hit Location, then if hit location's AV=3 then "lower" goes to Damage Table, but if AV is greater than 3, go to Armor Protection Table.

MISSILE TO HIT TABLE (1d10+ Rep)	
3-10	Miss (S) (M) (L) Hit (XL)
11,12	Miss (S) (M) Hit (L) (XL)
13+	Hit All Sizes (Sand Attack Hit)

Deadly missile hit goes to HIT LOCATION then ARMOR PROTECTION TABLE
Sand Attack hit goes to SAND ATTACK TABLE

ARMOR PROTECTION TABLE (1d10 vs. AC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If score exceeds armor class, then defender goes to Damage table. If in melee and score does not exceed the armor class, then the target rolls on Maneuver table. If the target of a Missile Attack, and the score does not exceed the armor value, the target will Hesitate and burn 1d10

DAMAGE TABLE (2d10 vs. Rep of target)
<p>Pass 2d10: Scratch. Burn 1d10 Pass 1d10: Go to Wound Table Pass 0d10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head, Belly, Chest and Lower Back : roll 1d10 Death (1-3); otherwise go to Wound Table Leg or Arm locations burn 3 additional dice and to the appropriate location on Wound Table.

SAND ATTACK TABLE (2d10 vs. Rep)
<p>Pass 2d10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target gives ground 1" and avoids the sand <p>Pass 1d10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target is slightly hit by sand and must roll on Maneuver table. <p>Pass 0d10: Sand in eyes. Burn 1d10. Give ground 1". -1 to Rep and burns 1d10 more than allocated in melee until his eyes clear. On his next activation, roll 1d10: Clear (1-5). On each activation thereafter, subtract 1 from die roll. -1 to Rep when attempting Reaction Move while blinded.</p>

NET ATTACK TABLE (2d10 vs. Rep)
<p>Only made when active at range of 1"-6"</p> <p>Pass same number of dice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attacker: misses and net is retrieved. Burn 1d10. Target: Dodges 1" left, right, or back, PC choice. If NPC, left (1-3), right (4-6), back (7-10). Burn 1d10. <p>Passed 1d10 more than the other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attacker: Target must roll on Maneuver table. If target is not ensnared, net is retrieved. Attacker burns 1d10. Target: Tug of War! Both burn 1d10. Each rolls 1d10 and adds Rep; then compare scores. High score wins tug of war. If attacker wins, net is retrieved. If target wins, Net is lost for duration of the match. If the scores are tied, PC may let go, otherwise repeat the above procedure until winner is determined. <p>Passed 2d10 more than the other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attacker: Target has been ensnared and pulled to the ground. Attacker may move to the target and attack immediately. Burn 1d10. Target: cuts tether on the net and attacker may not use if for the duration of the match. Burn 1d10.

NPC DICE ALLOCATION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals always add +2 to their allocation roll. Those being attacked by more than one opponent always add +2 to their allocation roll Those attacked to flank will burn 1 more die than allocated. Those attacked to rear will burn 2 more dice than allocated. Those attacked while on the ground will burn twice the number of dice allocated. 	
NUMBER OF DICE AVAILABLE FOR ALLOCATION (1d10)	
<p>DP=45 to 36</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1-4) 2dice (5-7) 3 dice (8-10) 4 dice 	<p>DP=25 to 16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) 1 die (2-8) 2 dice (9-10) 3 dice
<p>DP=35 to 26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) 1 die (2-7) 2 dice (8-9) 3 dice (10) 4 dice 	<p>DP=15 or less</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1-2) 1 die (3-7) 2 dice (8-10) 3 dice

MANEUVER TABLE (2d10 vs. Rep)

Modifications to Rep

All testers: Subtract 1 from Rep for each leg wound. -1 to Rep if sand in eyes.

Collision:

- Add or subtract 1 from Rep for each difference in size.
- -2 to Rep if the tester was the "obstacle" and was struck from the rear.
- -1 to Rep if obstacle was a "tripping hazard".
No Rep may be less than 1 or greater than 9

Pass 2d10:

- **Non-Net Attack:** Give ground 1/2"
- **Net Attack:** Dodge 2". NPCs move: left (1-3) right (4-6), or backward (7-10), PCs choose direction. End move facing attacker, Burn 1d10 If contact obstacle while dodging, then roll 1d10 vs. Rep. If equal or less, no effect; if greater than, then ensnared and pulled to ground, attacker moves to fallen character and attacks immediately. Defender on ground will burn twice the number of dice allocated.
- **Collision:** Burn 1d10
- **Reaction Move:** Reactor will turn to face. May move 1" back (PC choice), or if NPC, roll 1d10: Move (1-5) Stand (6-10)

Pass 1d10:

- **Non-Net Attack:** Give ground 1", burn 1d10.
- **Net Attack:** Target is ensnared but remains standing. Attacker moves to ensnared character and attacks immediately. Target fights at -2 to Rep until net is removed.
- **Collision:** Knocked to ground. Burn 1d10.
- **Reaction Move:** Reactor may turn to face. Burn 1d10.

Pass 0d10:

- **All Attacks and Collision:** Knocked to ground and burn 1d10. If the result of an attack, opponent allowed to move to fallen character and attack immediately. If already on the ground and received this result again, there is no additional penalty, but may be attacked immediately if the test was caused by combat. Defender on ground will burn twice the dice allocated.
- **Reaction Move:** Cannot turn to face

WOUND TABLE

For all hit locations below, roll on Maneuver Table after burning the number of dice indicated.

Head

- Burn 2d10
- The character is stunned and must burn 1d10 in addition to dice allocated in melee and -1 to Rep until his head clears. May not initiate combat, but may defend. On next activation before movement (either player's), roll 1d10 vs. Rep. If pass, head clears. If not passed, remains stunned. Will continue to check on each activation until clear.
- Second wound to head **KILLS**.

Chest/ Upper Back (Upper Torso)

- Burn 3d10
- **Any** combination of 2 wounds to Upper and Lower Torso **KILLS**.

Belly/ Lower Back (Lower Torso)

- Burn 3d10
- **Any** combination of 2 wounds to Upper and Lower Torso **KILLS**.

Leg (upper and lower)

- Burn 2d10
- Second wound to leg reduces movement by half.
- Third wound to leg causes **unconsciousness**. (Any combination of 3 wounds to upper and lower locations of the same leg.)

Arm

- Burn 2d10
- Second wound to arm renders it useless and may not use shield or weapon depending on which arm is affected. If shield arm, shield is considered dropped and character may no longer count shield protection. If weapon arm, weapon may be shifted to "off hand" but this takes his entire next activation and he fights at -1 to Rep for duration of the match.
- Third wound to same arm causes **unconsciousness**.

HIT LOCATION: HH WEAPONS

1d10	Front	R. Flank	L. Flank	Rear
1	Head	Head	Head	Head
2-4	Chest	Chest	U. Back	U. Back
5, 6	Belly	Belly	L. Back	L. Back
7	L. Arm	R. Arm	L. Arm	R. Arm
8, 9	U.L. Leg	U.R. Leg	U.L. Leg	U.R. Leg
10	L.L. Leg	L.R. Leg	L.L. Leg	L.R. Leg

HIT LOCATION: OTHER WEAPONS

1d10	Front	R. Flank
1	Head	Head
2-4	Chest	CST (1-5) UBAK (6-10)
5, 6	Belly	BLY (1-5) LBAK (6-10)
7	RA (1-5) LA (6-10)	RA (1-8) LA (9, 10)
8, 9	URL (1-5) ULL (6-10)	URL (1-8) ULL (9, 10)
10	LRL (1-5) LLL (6-10)	LRL (1-8) LLL (9, 10)

1d10	L. Flank	Rear
1	Head	Head
2-4	CST (1-5) UBAK (6-10)	U. Back
5, 6	BLY (1-5) LBAK (6-10)	L. Back
7	LA (1-8) RA (9, 10)	R A (1-5) LA (6-10)
8, 9	ULL (1-8) URL (9, 10)	URL (1-5) ULL (6-10)
10	LLL (1-8) LRL (9, 10)	LRL (1-5) LLL (6-10)

APPEALING FOR MERCY

Modification to Appeal: The defeated gladiator's Rep is modified when appealing to the crowd on the "Fate of the Fallen" table. The Emperor's or editor's Rep is modified when rolling on the "Imperial Intervention" table. In either situation, **no Rep may be greater than 9 or less than 1.** The gladiator uses the numbers to the left of the slash when appealing to the crowd; the Emperor or editor uses the numbers to the right of the slash on the Imperial Intervention table.

- +1/-1 for each opponent the gladiator defeated this match
- +1/-1 if the gladiator is "spent". (Dice Pool is at zero.)
- +1/-1 for each wound the gladiator has dealt to other characters.
- -1/+1 for each **chest, belly, lower back** wound the gladiator has sustained.
- -1/+1 if the gladiator is **unconscious**.
- +1/-1 for each full 100 points of Fame.
- -1 /+1 if the gladiator's Dice Pool is at ½ or more of its original amount.
- -3 if the Emperor or editor intervened on the gladiator' behalf before. (Imperial Intervention table only.)

FATE OF THE FALLEN (2d10 vs. Rep defeated gladiator)

Pass 2d10: The crowd wants mercy and the Emperor/editor spares gladiator.

Pass 1d10: The crowd's opinion is split evenly and looks to the Emperor/editor to decide. (Roll on "Imperial Intervention table.")

Pass 0d10: DEATH The sentiment of the crowd was clearly against the fallen and the Emperor/editor makes a gesture that signifies death.

IMPERIAL INTERVENTION

Procedure: The defeated gladiator and the Emperor (or the editor) both roll 2d10 and compare them to their Rep. The Emperor or editor will modify his die rolls using the modifiers listed on the "Appealing for Mercy" table, the gladiator's Rep is unmodified.

- The Emperor has a Rep of 9.
- An editor has a Rep of 8.

If both sides pass the same number of dice:

- The Emperor hesitates as he judges the mood of the crowd. Both sides reduce their Rep by 1 and immediately re-roll.

If one side passes 1d10 more than the other:

- **Gladiator:** The Emperor declares "Spare him!" but the gladiator is sent to the "heart of the Empire" to fight his way back. (Note: the editor does not have the power to send the gladiator to another locale.)
- **Emperor:** The Emperor makes a gesture that signifies **death** and the gladiator is killed immediately.

One side passes 2d10 more than the other:

- **Gladiator:** The Emperor declares "Spare him!" and the gladiator is taken to safety and will be allowed to fight in the Colosseum again.
- **Emperor:** The Emperor makes a gesture that signifies **death** and the gladiator is killed immediately.

FLANK AND ATTACK TABLE (2d10 vs. Rep)

Pass Same Number of Dice:

Attacker is unable to flank and the defender blocks the move. Conduct melee combat round normally face to face. (Shift defending character over to align his front facing with attacking character's front facing.)

Pass 1d10 More Than Opponent:

- **If Attacker:** Attacker moves adjacent to the selected flank of the defender and turns to face it. The defender burns 1d10, then turns to face the attacker. Fight melee round normally.
- **If Defender:** The attacker moves to the selected flank of the defender and turns to face it, but the attacker burns 1d10. The defender turns to face the attacker. Fight melee round normally.

Pass 2d10 More Than Opponent:

- **If Attacker:** The attacker moves adjacent to the selected flank of the defender, turns to face it, and fights a round of melee. The defender is flanked, does not turn to face, and will fight at -1 to Rep for this melee round and burns 1 more die than allocated.
- **If Defender:** The attacker moves adjacent to the selected flank of the defender, *but does not turn to face it.* (His flank is now adjacent to the defenders flank and is exposed to the defender.) The defender then turns to face the flank of the attacker. The attacker will fight at -1 to Rep for this melee round and burns 1 more die than allocated.

If characters are still adjacent after the melee round, any character that was flanked may turn to face his opponent automatically at the end of the round.

RSBS CHARACTER STATISTICS SHEET

Character	Rep	Head	Chest	Belly	Right Arm	Left Arm	Upper Right Leg	Lower Right Leg	Upper Back	Lower Back	Upper Left Leg	Lower Left Leg	Armor Value	Weapon	Move
Retiarius	3-9	3	3	4	3	4 or 5	3	3 or 4	3	4	3	3 or 4	36-39	Trident, Dagger, Net	5
Secutor	"	7	3	4	4 or 5	3	3	3	3	4	3	5	40-41	Sword, Large Shield	3
Hoplomachus	"	7	3	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	4	5	46	Long Dagger, Spear, Small Shield	3
Provocator	"	7	5	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	5	45	Sword, Large Shield	3
Murmillo	"	7	3	4	4 or 5	3	3	4	3	4	3	5	43-44	Sword, Large Shield	3
Thraex	"	7	3	4	4 or 5	3	4	5	3	4	4	5	46-47	Sword, Small Shield	4
Dimachaerus	"	3 or 7	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	35-39	Two Swords	5
Laquerarius	"	3	3	3 or 4	3	3	3	3	3	3 or 4	3	3	33-35	Sword or Spear, and Rope	5
Sagittarius	"	3 or 5	3	3 or 4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	33-36	Bow, Sword	5
Armored Captive	2-9	3 or 5	4	4	3	3	3	3	3 or 4	3 or 4	3	3	35-39	Sword and/ or Throwing Spear, L. Shield	4
Unarmored Captive	2-9	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	33	Sword and/ or Throwing Spear, L. Shield	5
Condemned Legionary	3-9	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	5	5	3	3	43	Sword, Pilum, and Dagger Large Shield	4

OPPONENT MATCH-UP TABLE				CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT TABLE			
FIGHTING STYLE	OPPONENTS	FIGHTING STYLE	OPPONENTS	Rep	AP	Rep	AP
RETIARIUS	Secutor (1-7) Murmillo (8-10)	THRAEX	Murmillo (1-7) Hoplomachus (9,10)	3	12	7	64
SECUTOR	Retiarius (1-9) Cap. /Leg. (10)	DIMACHAERUS	Murmillo (1-3) Hoplomachus (4-6) Thraex (7-8) Cap. /Leg. (9,10)	4	16	8	80
HOPLOMACHUS	Murmillo (1-7) Thraex (8) Provocator (9) Cap. /Leg. (10)	LAQUERARIUS	Secutor (1-3) Murmillo (4-6) Hoplomachus (7,8) Cap. /Leg. (9,10)	5	24	9	150
MURMILLO	Thraex (1-7) Retiarius (8) Hoplomachus (9) Cap. /Leg.(10)	SAGITTARIUS	Hoplomachus (1-3) Murmillo (4-6) Thraex (7-8) Cap. /Leg. (9, 10)	6	48		
PROVOCATOR	Provocator (1-8) Hoplomachus (9,10)	Note: Where "Cap. /Leg" is option, roll 1d10: Captive (1-5), Leg. (6-10). If Cap., roll 1d10: Armored (1-5) Unarmored (6-10)					

NAME		LOC	A C	HITS	LOC	A C	HITS
STYLE		HD		1 D	LRL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
REP		CST		1 D	UBAK		1 D
MOVE		BLY		1 D	LBAK		1 D
WEAP.		RA		1 U 2	ULL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
SHIELD		LA		1 U 2	LLL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
SIZE		URL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO	D= dead U= useless ¹ / ₂ = half movement KO= unconscious		
DICE POOL				NOTES			

NAME		LOC	A C	HITS	LOC	A C	HITS
STYLE		HD		1 D	LRL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
REP		CST		1 D	UBAK		1 D
MOVE		BLY		1 D	LBAK		1 D
WEAP.		RA		1 U 2	ULL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
SHIELD		LA		1 U 2	LLL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
SIZE		URL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO	D= dead U= useless ¹ / ₂ = half movement KO= unconscious		
DICE POOL				NOTES			

NAME		LOC	A C	HITS	LOC	A C	HITS
STYLE		HD		1 D	LRL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
REP		CST		1 D	UBAK		1 D
MOVE		BLY		1 D	LBAK		1 D
WEAP.		RA		1 U 2	ULL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
SHIELD		LA		1 U 2	LLL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
SIZE		URL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO	D= dead U= useless ¹ / ₂ = half movement KO= unconscious		
DICE POOL				NOTES			

NAME		LOC	A C	HITS	LOC	A C	HITS
STYLE		HD		1 D	LRL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
REP		CST		1 D	UBAK		1 D
MOVE		BLY		1 D	LBAK		1 D
WEAP.		RA		1 U 2	ULL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
SHIELD		LA		1 U 2	LLL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO
SIZE		URL		1 ¹ / ₂ KO	D= dead U= useless ¹ / ₂ = half movement KO= unconscious		
DICE POOL				NOTES			