

A fierce game of deadly combat...



Based on original design by Reiner Knizia

# the arena

#### **1. Introduction**

This is a fantasy combat game for two to five players (the more the better). You are a fan at the imperial arena wagering on the outcome of five rounds of battle between eight combatants. Each round ends with the death of one of the participants. As the rounds proceed, you wager progessively smaller bets until you have placed all five of your allowed wagers. Only bets on the three surviving creatures at game end succeed.

However, you do more than wager on the grisly outcome. Each player, in turn, plays strength cards which bring life and death – each trying to guide his favorites safely through the ordeal. As the *backer* of a creature you may also wield that creature's power in combat to augment your creature's fighting ability or cripple another's.

Adding to the mayhem are eleven crazed spectators who jump into the arena to help their favorites and rob the combatants of their powers. Even the imperial referees get into the act with a few outrageous calls to influence the outcome.

#### 2. Components

The game contains the following materials:

- this rule book
- · 25 plastic wagering chips; five each of five different colors
- 110 cards: (8 creatures, 11 spectators, 3 referees, 88 strength cards)
- one Draw/Discard tray

For replacement parts, rules questions, or the latest information on our bi-monthly magazine The GENERAL, our national championships convention AVALONCON, or any of our other products, write TAHGC, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214 or e-mail us at ahgames@aol.com or visit our web page at http://www.avalonhill.com. Questions by mail must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope bearing first class return postage.

# **Prepare to Play**

#### 3. Prepare to Play

- Give each player five plastic betting chips of the same color.
- Form a face up column of the eight red-backed creature cards.
- Shuffle the remaining blue-backed cards and deal eight face down to each player. Place the rest of the deck face down in the Draw pile.

#### 4. Creatures

The eight creatures of Titan Arena are depicted on the eight red-backed



cards shown at right. Each has a unique color background which is emphasized by the flags flying in the Arena background and on its power plate at the bottom of the card.

Each creature has 11 strength cards of the same color, such as the one at left, containing a numerical strength in the upper left corner ranging from a low of 0 to a high of 10. The top strength card played in the row of its matching creature depicts its current combat value.

Each creature also has a power described at the bottom of its card and each of its strength cards.

That power can only be used by the player (hereafter referred to as the *backer*) who has the most ducats *revealed* on that creature *and* who has just played a strength card of that creature on its row.



#### 5. Plays

INITIAL PLAY: The player going first to start play is determined by verbal bid. Inspect your hand and bid the *number* of a strength card you are willing to play on your first turn in order to start the game. There is no order to bids; you may start the bidding or increase your bid at any time. The player bidding highest, gets the first turn. If two or more players each bid the highest, the one who bid initially goes first. You may increase your bid, but not decrease it. The player winning the bid must play a card of the strength bid. The other players may play any card regardless of their bid.

If, in your fervor to get the first turn, you bid higher than you can play, you are penalized by having a seven-card Hand Capacity instead of the normal eight-card Hand Capacity for the rest of the game.

Thereafter, play proceeds in clockwise order around the table with each player taking his complete turn, followed by the next player taking his complete turn, and so on. You must play a card in your turn. You may not pass unless you have no playable cards remaining. If you pass, you must reveal all your remaining cards.

Players may not examine cards beneath an already played or discarded card.

Table talk suggesting alliances and/or a specific course of action is permitted and can be as specific as individual groups can tolerate. However, such verbal agreements are not binding. The only penalty for failing to keep a promise is possible loss of future credibility. Despite this "anything goes" mentality, you may never show any card in your Hand to another player before playing or discarding it, except as required by the Titan's power. You may promise to play a specific card, but you may not augment your sales pitch by actually showing the card as proof of your good intentions.

# 6. Sequence of Play

Each player turn consists of the following four steps taken in order:

- You may place a wager on any creature without a chip in the current round, make or reveal a secret bet, or pass.
- Play a card in the current combat column, or play a referee card, or pass by revealing your Hand to prove you have no playable cards.
- Discard up to three strength cards of eliminated creatures at your option.
- Draw enough cards from the Draw pile to refill your Hand to eight cards.

## 7. Wagers

There are two types of wagers: visible and secret. You may make five bets in each game, but never more than one per turn. Each bet uses one of your five chips.

SECRET: You may make one secret bet per game. It must be made during the first round of combat. Once a creature dies, no more secret bets are allowed. The secret bet is your only allowable five-ducat bet. Visible wagers are limited to one per creature per round. If you do not make a secret bet before the first round ends, you may make five visible bets instead. A secret bet is made by selecting a *strength* card of the creature on which you wish to wager from your Hand and placing it face down before you beneath a chip. This constitutes both your sole wager and *only* card play for that turn. You may fill your Hand back to eight cards, but otherwise your turn is over.

VISIBLE: You begin your turn with the option to place a visible wager on any creature which has not yet received a wager in the current round. Two visible bets cannot be placed on the same creature in the same round. Wager by placing your chip in the row of that creature in the current round's column. Each wager made in the first

round is worth four ducats, those in the second round are worth three, those in the third round are worth two, and those in the fourth round are worth one ducat. Bets are not allowed in the final round. Chips unwagered after four rounds are forfeit. You need not play a card on the same creature on which you place a visible wager.

You may reveal your Secret bet at the start of your turn instead of placing a bet by flipping it face up and placing it in the column beyond the matching creature next to your wagered chip. Doing so may make you the creature's backer by having the most visible ducats bet on it.

There is no limit to number of wagers placed in a round. You may bet all five of your chips in five player turns of the first round as four-ducat bets if given the chance.

**Example:** Player A bid 8 for the right to go first which proved to be the highest bid. He places a chip on the Cyclops for a 4-ducat bet that makes him its backer and then plays his aqua "8" in the Cyclops row to complete his bid. Having played a strength card on his own creature, Player A uses the Cyclops' power to force Player B to randomly and temporarily set aside half his Hand.

Player B, now restricted to a choice of only four cards, bets on the Ranger while playing a brown "2" on the Troll. He draws a card and picks up his other four cards to return his Hand to eight cards.





# 8. Combat

A round of combat consists of players, in turn, playing a card from their hand in the row of a matching creature. Card values are not cumulative; if a second card is played on the same creature in the current round, it covers and replaces the first card which may no longer be inspected.

When every creature has a card in the column of the current round at the end of a player turn, that round ends and the creature with the lowest card is eliminated. Remove that creature and all bets placed on it from play. Put its row of cards in the Discard tray.

Another round then begins with the next player in clockwise order playing a card in a new column to start that round. Continue until only three creatures remain.

TIES: If two or more creatures each have the lowest card in the current combat column once all creatures have a played card, the round continues until only one has the lowest card. Players may continue to play cards on any of the combatants – not just the tied creatures – until only one has the lowest card and all creatures have a card in the current combat column.

**Example:** The round shown above is not over because two creatures (Hydra and Warlock) are tied for lowest card. Play will continue until all creatures have a card and only one is the lowest in that round.

## 9. Spectators

There are eleven spectators in the arena whose blood lust is such that they can't resist interfering to help their wagers.



Each is depicted on a full color background with colored flags matching the colors of all eight creatures (signifying that it can be played on any creature). In essence, a spectator is a wild card which can be played on any creature's row to change its current combat value.

A spectator also voids the special power of any creature on which it is played until the player turn *after* it is covered by another

strength card or the start of a new combat round (whichever occurs first).

**Example:** Player C controls the Hydra and has secretly bet on the Warlock. He wants to play a yellow "2" on the Hydra and use its power to play a second card (a purple "3") on the Warlock to save it (thereby killing the Unicorn which would then become the weakest). However, the spectator (Serpent 0) on the Hydra voids its power, so Player C cannot play a second card. Instead he plays the yellow "0" on the Hydra, restoring its power, and hopes for another turn to cover it before the round ends.



# **10. Referees**

Referees

Other than making a secret bet in the first round, the only way to avoid playing a card in the current combat round column during your turn is by playing a Referee card or revealing your Hand to prove you do not have a playable card.

The Head Referee card is played in the revealed secret bet column *beyond* any creature – *not* in the current combat column. When the Head Referee selects a creature, all secret bets using that creature's strength card must be revealed and placed in the secret bet column with its strength card in clockwise order. If doing so changes the creature's backer, control of its power is immediately transferred.

The other two Referees allow you to claim any *visible* strength card and place it in your Hand by discarding a Referee card. A visible card is any card *atop* the face up Discard pile, current or past combat columns, or the revealed secret bet column. You may not claim a spectator or any card beneath an already played card of any kind.

Playing a Referee is your only allowable play for that turn.

**Example:** Continuing the previous example, Player D plays a Referee card to claim the yellow "0" on the Hydra for his Hand. He had neither a yellow or purple strength card with which to end the round, so he chose to once again deprive the Hydra of its power by exposing the spectator Serpent 0 beneath the yellow "0". If the Hydra survives the round, Player D will have a powerful weapon to use against it in the form of the yellow "0".





# 11. Discards & Draws

DISCARDS: The only cards you can normally discard out of play from your Hand are strength cards of an already eliminated creature. You may discard face up a maximum of three strength cards per turn. All discards must be revealed to prove that they belong to eliminated creatures *unless* you are discarding with the Warlock power. Therefore, no cards can be discarded from your Hand without using the Warlock power before the second combat round since no creature is eliminated until the first round ends. You do *not* discard excess cards just because your Hand exceeds the eight-card limit.

DRAWS: End your turn by filling your Hand to capacity (eight cards) from the Draw pile. If you already have eight or more cards in your Hand, you may not draw until the end of a turn in which you have less than eight cards.

If insufficient cards remain in the Draw pile, play short-handed. Otherwise, there is no limit to the cards you draw to replenish your Hand except their availability. If the Draw pile is empty, you must finish the game with the cards remaining in your Hand.

# 12. How to Win

The game ends after five rounds of combat. Reveal all remaining secret bets. The player whose surviving bets are worth the most ducats after five rounds is the winner.

If there is a tie for most ducats, the winner is the tied player who played last.



# 13. Campaign Game

For a longer contest, agree beforehand to play three games. Accumulate scores from one game to the next. The cumulative high scorer after three games is the winner.

# 14. Stalemate

It is possible to reach an impasse in which a round cannot end due to lack of cards to fill each row of that combat column. A stalemate is declared if no player can make a legal play. A stalemate may also be declared voluntarily by any player at the start of the player turn of the player who originally began the current combat round. If any player objects to that stalemate, play continues until no player can make a legal play.

Once a stalemate is declared, all played cards in the first round (but not their wagers) are shuffled to create a new Draw pile. Each player draws one card. However, unless you use the Ranger's power, you may draw only one card per turn for the rest of the game. Players then bid for the first turn of the stalemate just as they did for the right to play first at the start of the game. See rule 5. Play then continues in clockwise order.

#### 15. Powers

Each creature has a power which you may use only if you are its backer by having the most revealed ducats wagered on that creature. You may reveal your secret bet *at the start of your own turn* – even if the creature is dead – *instead* of placing a wager. If, due to the placement of later bets or the revellation of secret bets, several players each have the highest amount of revealed ducats on a creature, its power may not be used. Similarly, a creature without revealed ducats has no power.

All powers require the backer to play a *strength* card of that creature atop its current combat column in order to use its power. You may not use your creature's power if you

play a spectator on it, or if it already has a spectator atop its current combat column. Loss of a power to spectator interference or lost backer status does not affect strength cards previously played or set aside by that power.

**15.1** CYCLOPS: As the Cyclops backer, you may force any one player to temporarily reduce his current Hand by half for one turn when using the Cyclops' power. Randomly draw half (fractions rounded up) of the victim's cards from his Hand and set them aside unseen face down before him. The victim must play and/or discard solely from the remaining portion of his Hand during his next turn. This restriction remains in effect even if the current round ends before the victim's next turn.

After discarding any eligible cards from his reduced Hand, the victim reclaims the set-aside portion of his Hand, and draws enough cards to return his total Hand to eight cards.

**15.2** DRAGON: As the Dragon backer, you *may* discard any one *already played* visible card on *another* creature in the current combat column when using the Dragon's power.

Any card beneath a discarded strength or spectator card is again in play projecting the combat value of that creature. If it happens to be a spectator, it again nullifies that creature's power. Once you've lifted a card to burn it off, you cannot change your mind upon seeing the card beneath it.





**15.3** HYDRA: As the backer of the Hydra, you may play two cards in your turn instead of one when using its power by first playing a yellow strength card.

Powers de

If you are the backer of both the Hydra and another creature, you may be able to use both of their powers in the same turn when playing both their respective strength cards by playing on the Hydra first.

The second card in a two-card play enabled by the Hydra's power may not be used to place a secret bet, since wagers must be played before cards.

**15.4** RANGER: As the backer of the Ranger, you may draw three cards from the Draw pile when using its power. If this causes your Hand to exceed the eight-card limit, you may not draw again (even if you discard eliminated strength cards) until you again play a green strength card or until your Hand has less than eight cards at the end of your turn.

If the presence of a spectator or the loss of your backer status ends your control of the Ranger's power, you do not have to discard excess cards. You simply cannot draw new cards which would exceed the normal Hand Capacity of eight.

If there are no cards remaining in the Draw pile when the Ranger power is used, it has no effect.

**15.5** TITAN: As the backer of the Titan, you may draw three cards at random from the Hand of any player when using the Titan's power. After inspecting the three cards privately, return two of them to the victim's Hand without revealing them to the other players. You may tell players what you've seen with varying degrees of truthfulness, but you may not show them. Add the other card to your own Hand. The victim may not replace the lost card until his next Draw step in which he has less than eight cards.

If the Titan power fills your Hand to its maximum capacity, you may not draw from the Draw pile that turn unless discards reduce your Hand beneath its maximum capacity of eight cards.

If the Titan uses its power against a player who is currently crippled by the Cyclops' stare, the snatched cards must be drawn solely from the playable portion of his Hand, not that portion which has been set aside until after the next turn.

**15.6** TROLL: As the backer of the Troll, you may pick up one visible brown strength card from any *former* combat column, revealed secret bet column, or discard pile when using the Troll's power.

The Troll may not pick up the strength card he just played to activate his power, or the one beneath it.









15.7 UNICORN: As the Unicorn backer, you may exchange the positions of any two visible strength cards of the same creature (including the Unicorn) when using the Unicorn's power. Teleportation is limited to a maximum of one strength card from two combat columns in each turn.

The Unicorn's power of teleportation of a creature's pair of visible strength cards *cannot* be used to also activate that creature's power even if the player happens to also be its backer because it is exchanging previously played cards rather than actually playing a new one.

15.8 WARLOCK: As the Warlock backer, you may discard any three or less strength cards from your Hand when using the Warlock's power. This is the only way a strength card of a living creature can ever be discarded from your Hand. Your discard limit is still three cards per turn - even if you have additional strength cards of dead creatures which you wish to discard.

Unlike the other players who must reveal their discards individually to verify that they are discarding only the strength cards of eliminated creatures, you may hide all but the top face up discard when using the Warlock's power. That top discard is still within reach of the Unicorn and Troll powers as long as it remains visible atop the Discard pile.

# Credits

**Development:** Don Greenwood Cover Art: Keith Parkinson Card Art: Kurt Miller Graphic Design: Tyson C. Milbert

Design: Based on an original design by Reiner Knizia **R&D Manager: Mark Hall** Logo: Steve Holmes Playtesting: Ben Knight, Stuart Tucker, Mark Simonitch, Bill Levay

#### **Backer Power Summary**

**CYCLOPS:** Force any player to play next turn with half Hand *after* playing on Cyclops. DRAGON: Discard one played card after playing on Dragon. HYDRA: Play another card after playing on the Hydra. RANGER: Draw three cards after playing on the Ranger. TITAN: Draw three cards from any Hand *after* playing on the Titan. Return two of them. TROLL: Reclaim one visible Troll strength card after playing on the Troll. UNICORN: Exchange two visible strength cards of a creature *after* playing on Unicorn. WARLOCK: Discard any three cards (or less) after playing on Warlock.

#### Sequence of Play

Each Player Turn consists of these four steps taken in order:

- · Place a wager on any creature without a chip in the current round, or make or reveal a secret bet, or pass.
- Play a card in the current combat column, or play a referee.
- Discard up to three strength cards of eliminated creatures at your option.

• Draw enough cards from the Draw pile to refill your Hand to eight cards.

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Part Number 6458001





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Snatch Away Backer draws three cards from any Hand after playing on Titan. Returns two.



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**Regenerative Power** Backer may reclaim one visible Troll Strength card after playing on Troll.



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**Teleportation** Backer may exchange any two visible Strength cards of any creature after playing on Unicorn.



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Creature of your choice must reveal all secret bets.



Add any visible Strength card to your Hand.



Add any visible Strength card to your Hand.





2 GARGOYLE **Voids Power** Voids creature power in this round until covered by a Strength card. **Voids Power** Voids creature power in this round until covered by a Strength card.



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# Titan the arena<sup>™</sup> where quick and deadly battles for survival take place. This non-collectible card game for 2–5 players involves



strategy, wagering, cunning, and a little good luck. You'll be backing several beasts and your challenge is to keep them alive until the game's end ... and victory.

#### Features:

Quick play - 30 - 45 minutes per game.
A game for the novice or the serious gamer.
Each monster has unique powers for devious players to wield.

## **Contents:**

- 110 playing cards including:
  - 8 major creatures
  - 88 creature strength cards
  - 11 minor creatures
  - 2 Referee cards
  - 1 Head Referee card
  - 25 wagering chips rule booklet storage tray



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