

MORITURI TE SALUTANT

Bringing gladiatorial games to your campaign setting!

From the slave-pits of the provinces to the blood-soaked sands of the Colosseum, gladiators fought and died in the thousands for the glory of Rome. These rules are designed to allow you to introduce the gore and glory of gladiatorial games into your own campaign setting.

GLADIATORS, LANISTAE, AND MUNERATORS

Gladiators are warriors trained to fight in ritualized battles known as **gladiatorial games**. Gladiators are typically slaves, prisoners of war, or indentured servants who have been forced to become gladiators to pay off a debt. The character entitled to the gladiator's services is called his **lanista** and is responsible for the training, discipline, upkeep, and sale of the gladiator's services. Gladiators (or the contracts for the gladiator's services) are property and can be bought and sold in urban settlements at prices ranging from 250gp and up.

A lanista earns money by **renting** the services of his gladiators to **munerators**, wealthy aristocrats who sponsor gladiatorial games. A lanista typically rents out each of his gladiators three times per year. Each time a gladiator is rented out, his lanista receives a fee equal to 60% of the gladiator's cost for ordinary gladiators and 62.5% of the gladiator's cost for veterans and champions, twice that for a bout to the death. When rented out, the gladiator will fight in a **bout** in the games. If the gladiator wins his bout, the lanista will pay him a prize equal to 20% of the rental fee. Round all values to the nearest 5gp.

Under the usual terms between gladiator and lanista, a gladiator who has won 10 victories or survived 15 matches wins his freedom. With 15-20% of gladiatorial battles ending in the death of one of the combatants, few gladiators survive to retirement. Those that do usually become gladiator trainers or overseers. Some leave the arena to pursue adventuring or mercenary work. A few are lured back to the arena to become **champions**. Champions sign up for another contract (10 victories or 15 matches) in exchange for a large signing bonus, and continue to receive 20% of their rental fee thereafter. Occasionally a renowned champion may be paid his rental fee directly in exchange for a one time appearance in a game.

In realms where gladiatorial games are popular, there will be around 1 gladiator per 150 urban families in any settlement of Class IV or better. 50% of these gladiators will be 0-level characters with a single class proficiency. 35% will be 1st level and 9% will be 2nd level. The remainder will be champions of between 3rd and 5th level. Round fractions to the nearest whole, rounding 0.5 up if even, down if odd. The Gladiator Rank and Cost table summarizes this information.

| Gladiator Rank (Level) | GP Cost | Rental Fee | Victory Bonus | Demographics |
|---|----------|------------|---------------|--------------|
| Ordinary Gladiator (0) | 250gp | 150gp | 30gp | 50% |
| Veteran Gladiator (1) | 425gp | 265gp | 55gp | 35% |
| Veteran Gladiator (2) | 900gp | 560gp | 110gp | 9% |
| Champion Gladiator (3) | 1,800gp* | 1,125gp | 225gp | 3% |
| Champion Gladiator (4) | 3,600gp* | 2,250gp | 450gp | 2% |
| Champion Gladiator (5) | 7,200gp* | 4,500gp | 900gp | 1% |
| *Paid to the gladiator as his signing contract when he renews | | | | |

GLADIATOR TYPES

Every gladiator has a **gladiator type**, which describes the gladiator's style of equipment and training. The gladiator types described in this article are some of those that appear in the Auran Empire setting, and were inspired by the classical gladiator types of Ancient Rome. The name, equipment, and proficiency of each type is listed on the Gladiator Type table below. The Latin (Roman) name of each type is also listed for Judges interested in ancient history. Judges should feel free to re-name the gladiator types, or create new types, as desired.

| Gladiator Type | Roman Name | Equipment | Proficiency |
|----------------|--------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Spearfighter | <i>Hoplomachus</i> | Heavy arena armor, heavy helmet, shield, spear, short sword | Fighting Style (weapon & shield) |
| Challenger | <i>Provocator</i> | Heavy arena armor, heavy helmet, shield, sword | Combat Reflexes |
| Striker | <i>Thraex</i> | Heavy arena armor, light helmet, shield, short sword, dagger | Weapon Focus (swords & daggers) |
| Shieldbearer | <i>Murmillio</i> | Light arena armor, heavy helmet, shield, sword | Fighting Style (weapon & shield) |
| Pursuer | <i>Secutor</i> | Light arena armor, heavy helmet, shield, short sword, dagger | Combat Reflexes |
| Netfighter | <i>Retarius</i> | Light arena armor, no helmet (AC 1), spear, net, pair of daggers | Swashbuckling |
| Dualwielder | <i>Dimachaerus</i> | Light arena armor, no helmet, pair of short swords, dagger | Fighting Style (two weapon fighting) |

The Gladiator Characteristics table, below, provides combat characteristics for an ordinary gladiator of each type.

| Gladiator Type | ENC | MV | AC | HD | #AT | DMG | ML | Notes |
|----------------|-------|------|----|-----|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Spearfighter | 7 1/6 | 60' | 6 | 1-1 | 1 spear or short sword 11+ | 1d6 | +2 / -4 | - |
| Challenger | 6 1/6 | 90' | 5 | 1-1 | 1 sword 11+ | 1d6 | +2 / -4 | +1 initiative |
| Striker | 5 1/6 | 90' | 5 | 1-1 | 1 short sword or dagger 11+ | 1d6 or 1d4 | +2 / -4 | Double damage on 20 |
| Shieldbearer | 4 1/6 | 120' | 4 | 1-1 | 1 sword 11+ | 1d6 | +1 / -4 | - |
| Pursuer | 4 1/6 | 120' | 3 | 1-1 | 1 short sword or dagger 11+ | 1d6 or 1d4 | +1 / -4 | - |
| Netfighter | 4 1/6 | 120' | 2 | 1-1 | 1 spear or dagger 11+, net 13+ | 1d6, 1d4, or wrestle | +1 / -4 | - |
| Dualwielder | 2 2/6 | 120' | 1 | 1-1 | 2 short swords 9+, dagger 11+ | 1d6 or 1d4 | +1 / -4 | - |

Note that unlike other hirelings, gladiators have two morale scores – an arena morale score ranging from 0 to +2, and a lanista morale score which always starts at -4. A gladiator's arena morale score is used to determine his bravery in the arena, while his lanista morale score determines his loyalty to his owner.

GLADIATORIAL SCHOOLS AND AMPHITHEATERS

In realms where gladiatorial games are held, every urban settlement is likely to have a **gladiatorial amphitheater**, with a regular schedule of games, and one or more **gladiatorial schools** that service the settlement.

AMPHITHEATERS

Amphitheaters can range in size from simple pits with wooden bleachers for 3,000 spectators to enormous multi-level structures capable of seating 80,000 spectators. The appropriate size of an amphitheater is based on the urban settlement's market class and population, as shown on the Amphitheater Size table, below.

| Settlement Population | Market Class | Appropriate Amphitheater Size |
|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| 75-249 | Class VI | None |
| 250-624 | Class V | None |
| 626-2,499 | Class IV | 5 seats per family |
| 2,500-4,999 | Class III | 7,500 seats plus 3 seats per family over 2,500 |
| 5,000-19,999 | Class II | 15,000 seats plus 1 per family over 5,000 |
| 20,000-100,000 | Class I | 30,000 seats plus 1 per 4 families over 20,000 |

A pre-existing urban settlement is assumed to have an amphitheater of appropriate size unless the Judge rules otherwise. An adventurer who establishes or conquers an urban settlement may build a gladiatorial amphitheater for his settlement. The cost of an amphitheater of appropriate size for an urban settlement counts as urban investment expenditure. Any additional cost is considered to be money spent to no tangible game benefit and increases the adventurer's reserve XP fund.

CONSTRUCTING AN AMPHITHEATER

Amphitheaters are ellipse-shaped structures with a walled, open-air interior arena surrounded by elevated seating. The exterior and interior dimensions of an amphitheater, as well as its cost, are determined by the amphitheater's seating capacity and stories, as shown on the Amphitheater Characteristics table, below. The cost of the amphitheater includes all the necessary subterranean vaults and passages, arena and spectator gates, and so on.

EXAMPLE: The amphitheater at Arganos has been destroyed, and Sürius, prefect of Arganos, wants to rebuild it. Arganos is a Class III market with 4,000 families, so its amphitheater should seat $[(7,500) + (4,000 - 2,500) \times 3]$ 12,000 spectators. With 12,000 seats, it can be either a one- or two-story structure. Sürius chooses to construct a two-story amphitheater. Its interior area (the actual arena or fighting pit) is therefore $(12,000 / 2 \times 8.25)$ 49,500 square feet. Its interior width is $(49,500 / 3.75)^{0.5}$ or 115 feet. Its interior length is (115×1.2) 138 feet. Its interior height (the tallness of the arena walls) is 15'. Its exterior area is $(49,500 \times 6)$ 297,000 square feet. Its exterior width is $(297,000 / 3.75)^{0.5}$ or 281 feet. Its exterior length is (281×1.2) 337 feet. Its exterior height is (2×35) 70 feet. It has $(297,000 / 12,000)$ 25 gates. The amphitheater's total cost is 180,000gp.

| Characteristic | Value / Formula |
|-------------------|---|
| No. of Seats | No less than 100 seats; no more than 100,000 seats |
| No. of Stories | 1 story plus up to 1 additional story per 20,000 seats |
| Interior Area | $(\text{No. of Seats} / \text{No. of Stories}) \times 8.25$ square feet |
| Interior Height | 15 feet |
| Interior Width | $(\text{Interior Area} / 3.75)^{0.5}$ feet |
| Interior Length | Interior Width $\times 1.2$ feet |
| Exterior Area | Interior Area $\times 6$ square feet |
| Exterior Height | No. of Stories $\times 35$ feet |
| Exterior Width | $(\text{Exterior Area} / 3.75)^{0.5}$ |
| Exterior Length | Exterior Width $\times 1.2$ feet |
| No. of Gates | Exterior Area / 12,000 |
| Amphitheater Cost | No. of Seats $\times 15$ gp |

The historical Colosseum is a four story structure with a 615' exterior length, 510' exterior width, 287' interior length, 180' interior width. Its interior area is 162,212 square feet. It historically seated around 80,000. We calculate seating at $(162,212 / 8.25 \times 4)$ 78,648.

SPONSORING A GLADIATORIAL GAME

The ruler of an urban settlement with an amphitheater, or any character acting with that ruler's permission, may sponsor a gladiatorial game. The character sponsoring the game is called its **munerator**, and is responsible for paying for the entire cost of the game. The minimum cost to sponsor a gladiator game is 0.5gp per urban family, but more may be spent if desired. The cost counts as a festival expense (per *ACKS*) or a liturgy expense (per *Axioms III*) for the urban settlement, regardless of whether the ruler or another character sponsors the game.

Spending the Budget: The cost of the gladiatorial game is allocated by the munerator to rent gladiators from any available lanistae. The munerator may allow the lanistae to choose which gladiators to provide, or he may personally allocate the cost to his choice of ordinary gladiators, veterans, champions, exotic creatures, and/or condemned prisoners. Typically 50% of the cost is allocated to ordinary gladiators so that there are more combatants. The cost to rent a gladiator for a bout is 60% of the gladiator's value (62.5% for veterans), or twice that if the bout is to the death. The cost to buy an exotic creature is equal to its trained value. The cost to buy a prisoner is typically 40gp.

Munerators typically spread the funds across the gladiatorial schools pro rata based on the number of gladiators each lanista owns. However, a munerator who personally owns gladiators, creatures, or prisoners may provide them for use in his own games. The cost of these combatants is still counted as a festival or liturgy expense even though no money trades hands. The crowd doesn't care!

EXAMPLE: Sürius is prefect of Arganos. He decides to institute regular games in the city. As there are 26 gladiators in Arganos, there can be up to $(26/7)$ 4 games per year. Sürius decides he will hold games once per season, spending 1gp per urban family at each game. This means he will spend $(4,000 \times 1\text{gp})$ 4,000gp on each game. Assume there are three schools in town, with 9, 9, and 8 gladiators respectively. He allocates 1350gp, 1350gp, and 1,300gp to the three schools.

Scheduling the Bouts: Each gladiator, creature, or prisoner must be assigned, either individually or with other combatants, to a bout against an opponent or group of opponents. Typically 50% or more of the bouts are one-on-one matches. As gladiatorial games are intended to be fair contests, the total gp value of all combatants on each side of a bout must be approximately equal (within 10%). Bouts with creatures or prisoners may be unequal if desired. It is considered dishonorable for gladiators to fight on the same side of with prisoners.

Bouts may be either **bouts to the death** or **bouts to incapacitation**. Bouts to incapacitation end when one side cannot go on – but may still result in death for the loser, either by accident or from the bloodlust of a demanding crowd. Any bout with prisoners or with creatures of animal intelligence is always to the death. The choice of whether a bout is to be to incapacitation or death is made by the munerator when he allocates funds, as it determines how much he must pay to rent the gladiators involved.

No more than 12 bouts can be held per day. If the number of bouts exceeds 12, the gladiatorial game extends over multiple days. This does not impact the cost, but may be relevant for campaign purposes.

Traditional Match-Ups: By tradition, each gladiator was matched in bouts based on his type. The Gladiator Match-Up table, below, is inspired by the classical match-ups that were used in Ancient Rome. If these traditions are followed, the munerator should schedule his bouts accordingly.

| Match Ups | Spearfighter | Challenger | Striker | Shieldbearer | Pursuer | Netfighter | Dualwielder |
|--------------|--------------|------------|----------|--------------|----------|------------|-------------|
| Spearfighter | -- | Opponent | Opponent | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Challenger | Opponent | Opponent | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Striker | Opponent | -- | -- | Opponent | -- | -- | -- |
| Shieldbearer | -- | -- | Opponent | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Pursuer | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | Opponent | Opponent |
| Netfighter | -- | -- | -- | Opponent | Opponent | -- | -- |
| Dualwielder | -- | -- | -- | -- | Opponent | -- | Opponent |

GLADIATORIAL SCHOOLS

Gladiatorial schools are judged by how many gladiators they own. A small gladiatorial school may own just a half-dozen gladiators, an average-sized school in a provincial capital may field 25-40 gladiators, and a huge gladiatorial school in a metropolis will have 120 or more gladiators.

Each urban settlement can sustain no more than 1 gladiator per 150 families (rounded up) total. Any urban settlement with an amphitheater will always have 1d4 schools in operation, which will already own 50%+2d20% of the maximum number of gladiators (rounded down). Divide these gladiators between the pre-existing schools as evenly as possible. A new, adventurer-run settlement, will not have a gladiator school unless the adventurer chooses to build one.

Any adventurer can establish a gladiatorial school. Gladiatorial schools can be established in any urban settlement, but because of the risk of rebellion and violence posed by gladiators, the permission of the settlement's ruler is required. Gladiatorial games are popular, but there are nevertheless limits on the market demand for them, so the maximum size of a new gladiatorial school is limited by the number of pre-existing gladiatorial schools.

EXAMPLE: Titus wants to know if he can establish a gladiatorial school in the Class III market city of Arganos (4,000 families). At 1 gladiator per 150 urban families, Arganos can maintain no more than 26 gladiators. As Arganos is a pre-existing settlement, it already has at least one gladiatorial school. The Judge rolls 1d4 and determines Arganos has two existing gladiator schools. The Judge rolls 2d20+50 and determines that 69% of the maximum number of gladiators are already working at these existing schools – 17 gladiators total. There Judge divides these gladiators as evenly as possible, so one school has 9 gladiators and one has 8 gladiators. That means there's room for another (26-17) 9 gladiators in Arganos. Titus sees an opportunity!

ACQUIRING GLADIATORS

To stock his newly-founded school, a lanista can **buy trained gladiators**, **buy gladiatorial candidates**, **impress prisoners of war**, or **acquire exotic creatures**.

Buying Trained Gladiators: Fully-trained gladiators can only be purchased from another school. The new lanista can make purchases in his own settlement, or travel to another settlement and buy gladiators there. A reaction roll of 9+ is required to persuade a gladiator's owner to sell a gladiator for his listed cost. If the current owner is a rival operating in the same settlement, the purchaser suffers a -3 on the die roll. If the purchaser is the urban settlement's ruler, he gains a +3 on the die roll. The die roll can also be modified by adjusting the offer price by +/-1 per 10% variance. See the Gladiator Rank and Cost table, above.

EXAMPLE: Titus considers buying gladiators in Arganos. The two existing gladiatorial schools have 17 trained gladiators. Of these, 9 are ordinary gladiators costing 250gp each, 6 are 1st level veterans costing 425gp each, and 2 are 2nd level veterans costing 900gp each. Because these gladiators are owned by rival schools, Titus will need a reaction roll of 12+ for each gladiator he wishes to buy.

Buying Gladiatorial Candidates: Gladiatorial candidates can be purchased in any urban settlement. Each month, there will be 1 candidate per 450 urban families in the settlement available, rounded up. (However, a settlement that is already at its maximum number of gladiators does not produce additional candidates.) Market transactions might represent buying slaves, purchasing condemned criminals, paying off a debtor's obligations in exchange for service, or paying a bounty to volunteers. Regardless of the nature of the transactions, the cost is 40gp per candidate.

Impressing Prisoners to be Gladiatorial Candidates: Gladiatorial candidates can be acquired in war. 10% of prisoners captured in battle will be suitable in age, temperament, and physique to become gladiators. Just 2.5% of prisoners taken when pillaging a domain will be suitable. If the adventurer has captured the prisoners himself, he does not have to pay for the prisoners, but otherwise he must pay their cost (typically 40gp per candidate) to the army leader who captured them. Enslaving Lawful or Neutral creatures is a Chaotic act, but Chaotic creatures can be enslaved without penalty.

EXAMPLE: Titus doesn't have an army with which to capture prisoners, nor does he have the charisma to persuade his rivals to sell him some of their gladiators. He decides to just stock his school with raw recruits. Since Arganos has a population of 4,000 families, there are (4,000 / 450) 8.88 candidates available, which rounds to 9. It costs him (9 x 40gp) 360gp to purchase these nine candidates.

Acquiring Exotic Creatures: Lanista who wish to field exotic creatures may purchase untrained creatures in market transactions, or may acquire them on adventurers. Exotic creatures of animal intelligence must then be trained and tamed to hunter roles before they can be safely deployed in a crowded arena filled with spectators. See *Lairs & Encounters* for costs and details.

Unworthy Candidates: The guidelines above assume that the lanista is pre-screening to select candidates within a narrow range of age, fitness, and ability. A desperate lanista can enroll unworthy candidates, but they are unlikely to graduate from training (see below). If unworthy candidates are used, another 90% of prisoners captured in battle and another 22.5% of prisoners taken when pillaging a domain will be unworthy candidates. Up to 1 unworthy candidate per 50 urban families can be bought in market.

Upkeep: Once acquired, gladiators and gladiator candidates cost 2gp per month in upkeep. Exotic creatures must be paid their supply cost (listed in *Lairs & Encounters* and *Domains at War*). Failure to pay upkeep may spark a **gladiator uprising** (see below). Supplemental pay, better food, access to women, and so on can increase morale over time.

STAFFING AND MAINTAINING THE SCHOOL

Running a gladiator school requires a variety of hirelings and specialists. The more gladiators a school has, the larger a staff it needs! The Gladiator School Staff table shows the type of hirelings needed, the number required, and the monthly cost for each. Round the number required up in all cases. A school may hire extra trainers if desired in order to train more types. Note that gladiator candidates count as gladiators for purposes of staff requirements.

Creature Handler/Trainer (25gp to 250gp/month): A creature handler/trainer is a specialist capable of taming, training, and handle hunting or guard creatures. One creature handler is required per 6 creatures being trained, or per 6 hunting or 20 guard animals being housed in the school. See *Lairs & Encounters* for more details on taming and training creatures.

Gladiator Trainer (30gp to 250gp per month): A gladiator trainer is a type of marshal specialized in working with gladiators. An ordinary trainer is a 1st level fighter or related class with at least one of the proficiencies on the Gladiator Type list and one rank of Manual of Arms. A master trainer is a 5th level fighter or higher with at least two of the proficiencies listed on the Gladiator Type list and at least two ranks of Manual of Arms.

| Hireling | No. Required | Monthly Cost |
|--|----------------------|------------------|
| Creature Handler | 1 per 6/20 creatures | By creature type |
| Gladiator Trainer (Master) | 1 per 120 gladiators | 250gp |
| Gladiator Trainer (Ordinary) | 1 per 6 gladiators | 60gp |
| Guard | 1 per 20 gladiators | 25gp |
| Healer (Chirurgeon) | 1 per 60 gladiators | 100gp* |
| *A small gladiatorial school may hire a chirurgeon as needed at a cost of 2gp per gladiator per month. | | |

A gladiator school must have 1 ordinary trainer per 6 gladiators or gladiator candidates, and at least 1 master trainer per 120 gladiators. A lanista who meets the qualifications can serve as a master trainer or trainer in his school. A gladiator school can only train gladiators of a particular type if it employs at least one trainer who knows the required proficiency.

EXAMPLE: Titus is staffing his school of 9 gladiators. Titus himself is a 5th level fighter with Fighting Style (weapon & shield), Combat Reflexes, and Manual of Arms 2, so he qualifies to serve as master trainer himself. He hires two ordinary gladiator trainers, one with Weapon Focus (swords & daggers) and one with Swashbuckling. Titus's school will be able to train gladiators of the spearfighter, challenger, striker, shieldbearer, and netfighter types. His school will not be able to train dualwielders, as neither he nor his trainers know the required proficiency.

Guard: Gladiators are prone to violent rebellion if not kept under guard. A minimum of 1 guard per 20 gladiators is required. Additional guards decrease the chance of a gladiator uprising (see below). Gladiator guards are typically veteran (1st level) heavy infantry – regular troops don't have the fighting skills to stand against gladiators.

Healer: Healers are trained to treat wounds and diagnose illnesses. The vigorous training and frequent injuries sustained by gladiators require the best medical care available. One chirurgeon is required per 60 gladiators. A small gladiatorial school may hire a chirurgeon as needed at a cost of 2gp per gladiator per month.

EXAMPLE #1: Titus is staffing his school of 9 gladiators. He will serve as master trainer himself. He hires a guard and two gladiator trainers, for a total cost of (25 + 60 + 60) 145gp per month. He will hire a part time chirurgeon at a cost of (9 x 2) 18gp per month. His total staff costs are 163gp per month.

EXAMPLE #2: The Imperial Gladiator School in Aura has 120 gladiators. It has one master trainer (250gp/month), 2 chirurgeons (200gp/month total), 6 guards (150gp/month total), and 20 trainers (1,200gp/month total), for a total of 1,800gp per month or 15gp per gladiator. (Note that an elite heavy infantry soldier costs 15gp per month in wages, so a gladiator is an equivalent investment.)

CONSTRUCTING THE SCHOOL

Establishing a gladiator school requires buying or building a structure where the gladiators and associated staff can live and train. A typical gladiator school will include a training pit or training arena as well as crude barracks for the gladiators, slightly better accommodations for the guards, and private quarters for the trainers, chirurgeons, and master trainer. Schools that maintain exotic creatures must have a menagerie (kennel, stables, rookery, etc.). By default, school structures are made of wood, but if desired, a school can be constructed of stone or concrete walls with wood, tile, or concrete floors for doubles the cost.

| Structure | Cost |
|--|------------------------|
| Barracks, Specialist (wood walls, earthen floor, one 10' x 10' room per specialist) | 30gp / specialist |
| Barracks, Guards (wood walls, earthen floor, one 10' x 10' room per two guards) | 25gp / guard |
| Barracks, Gladiator (wood walls, earthen floor, one 8' x 8' room per two gladiators) | 15gp / gladiator |
| Menagerie (wood walls, earthen floor, scaled to creature size) | 10% of creature's cost |
| Training Pit (wood walls, earthen floor, 5' x 5' per gladiator) | 12gp / gladiator |

EXAMPLE #1: Titus is establishing a school of 9 gladiators. A school with living quarters for a master trainer and two trainers (90gp total), a barracks for the guard (25gp), barracks for nine gladiators (135gp), and a training pit for nine gladiators (108gp), costs a total of 358gp. Titus also decides he will add a menagerie with room for a pair of lions, as he plans to expand into beast bouts. Lions cost 750gp each, so the menagerie costs (750gp x 10% x 2) 150gp.

EXAMPLE #2: The Imperial Gladiator School in Aura is constructed of stone with concrete floors. It has living quarters for a master trainer, 2 chirurgeons, and 20 trainers (1,380gp), barracks for 6 guards (300gp), barracks for 120 gladiators (1,800gp), and a training pit for 120 gladiators (2,880gp), for a total cost of 6,360gp.

TRAINING GLADIATORIAL CANDIDATES

A lanista who acquires fully-trained gladiators can begin to rent them out immediately. Once they are acquired, the candidate must be trained. Training is a rigorous six-month process in which the candidates learn the rituals of the arena as well as specific armed and unarmed fighting techniques that constitute a gladiator type. Gladiator training is demanding and brutal; candidates are often beaten or whipped, discipline is strict, and freedom is minimal.

The Training and Equipment Time and Cost table shows the time and cost to train the different types of gladiators. The gladiator's type must be selected when he begins his training. Note that lightly-equipped gladiators are assumed to receive more training to compensate for their lighter arms and armor. The training costs are for a 120-gladiator school with optimal numbers of staff, and determine the market price of gladiators. For adventurer-run schools, use the actual staff cost calculated earlier (which will be higher for small schools). Judges may simply require 6 months of training and 200gp per gladiator if a simpler alternative is desired.

At the conclusion of the candidate's training, roll 1d20. On a roll of 1, the gladiator has been maimed, killed, or otherwise unable to graduate. Unworthy candidates are maimed or killed on a roll of 1-10. Otherwise, the candidate becomes an ordinary gladiator.

| Training and Equipment Time and Cost | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Gladiator Type | Training Time | Upkeep Cost (2gp/month) | Staff Cost* (15gp/month) | Equipment Cost | Typical Cost |
| Spearfighter | 6 months | 12gp | 90gp | 90gp | 192gp |
| Challenger | 6 months | 12gp | 90gp | 90gp | 192gp |
| Striker | 7.5 months | 15gp | 112.5gp | 70gp | 197.5gp |
| Shieldbearer | 7.5 months | 15gp | 112.5gp | 70gp | 197.5gp |
| Pursuer | 7.5 months | 15gp | 112.5gp | 70gp | 197.5gp |
| Netfighter | 9 months | 18gp | 135gp | 47gp | 200gp |
| Dualwielder | 9 months | 18gp | 135gp | 47gp | 200gp |

*Assuming a 120-gladiator school with optimal numbers of staff. For adventurer-run schools, use the actual staff cost calculated earlier.

Note: An ordinary gladiator's market value is technically equal to (cost of candidate) + (cost of training and equipment) x (20/19). For instance, a spearfighter is worth $(40 + 192) \times (20/19)$ 244gp, while a dualwielder is worth $(40 + 200) \times (20/19)$ 252gp. For simplicity we have set the value of all ordinary gladiators at 250gp.

Training of exotic creatures for use in gladiatorial games is outside the scope of this article, but detailed rules are available in our *Lairs & Encounters* supplement.

RUNNING THE SCHOOL

A gladiator school can be run as a business by an adventurer or adventurer's henchmen as part of ongoing ACKS campaign play.

Each month, a lanista will receive payment from munerator for the use of his gladiators and/or creatures or prisoners. The amount will be $(\frac{1}{2}\text{gp per urban family}) \times (\text{number of gladiators owned by the lanista}) / (\text{total number of gladiators in the urban settlement})$.

Unless the Judge (role-playing as the munerator) says otherwise, the lanista may choose which of his gladiators to rent out, and which creatures or prisoners to sell. The fee for selling an exotic creature is equal to its trained value. The fee for selling a prisoner is typically 40gp. The fee for renting a gladiator for a bout is 60% of the gladiator's value (62.5% for veterans), twice that if the bout is to the death. No gladiator may be rented out more than three times per year without risking a gladiator uprising. If a lanista cannot provide enough gladiators at the right rents, he can adjust his prices downward (putting a higher-level gladiator at risk for a lower fee); otherwise the funds are spent on rival schools. A gladiator is still entitled to his full prize even if rent is discounted.

Creatures and prisoners are assumed to be slain in the arena or afterwards, and are not returned. (Astute lanista will have noted that there is no profit margin in buying trained creatures for use in gladiator games – he must acquire untrained creatures and then tame and train them.)

Gladiators typically live to fight again another day. For each gladiator that the lanista rents out, the lanista rolls 1d10. On a 1-2, the gladiator is slain in the arena. On a 3-5, the gladiator loses his bout, but survives to return to his lanista. On a 6-10, the gladiator wins his bout and returns to his lanista. Gladiators rented in bouts to the death die on a 1-5 and win on a 6-10. A victorious gladiator must be paid a prize by the lanista equal to 20% of his rental fee. Failure to pay prizes may spark a gladiator uprising. Victorious gladiators earn XP and may advance in level, as described below.

After paying bonuses, the lanista must pay for upkeep of his gladiators and wages for his staff out of his fees. He may use any remaining funds to replace lost gladiators, re-invest in his school, or retain it as profit.

EXAMPLE: Titus's school is now up and running with nine ordinary gladiators (250gp cost, 150gp rent). Each month, the munerators of Arganos expend (4,000 families x 0.5gp) 2,000gp on gladiatorial games. Since Titus owns 9 of the 26 gladiators in Arganos, he is entitled to around 34% (9/26) of the money, or 680gp. Titus decides to rent three ordinary gladiators in bouts to incapacitation (450gp total) and one ordinary gladiator in a bout to the death. Normally a bout to the death would rent for 300gp, but there's only 680gp, so Titus gives the munerator a bargain and charges just 220gp. Titus is renting only four of his nine gladiators, but that's fine because there's a game every month while each gladiator can only fight three times per year.

For each gladiator, Titus now rolls 1d10. First he rolls for the gladiators fighting in bouts to incapacitation. The die rolls are 6, 3, and 2. Gladiator #1 won his bout and must be paid a prize of (150 x 20%) 30gp. Gladiators #2 lost his bout, but was spared by the crowd. Gladiator #3 lost his bout and was slain. Now he rolls for the gladiator fighting to the death. The die roll is a 7 - gladiator #4 was victorious and must be paid a prize of (300gp x 20%) 60gp prize. (The gladiator's prize is *not* discounted, even though the rent was.)

After collecting his rent, Titus pays out the prizes to his two winning gladiators, costing him (30gp + 60gp) 90gp total. He also pays 250gp to buy a new gladiators; 18gp for upkeep on nine gladiators; and 163gp in staff costs (see the example earlier for how Titus's staff costs were calculated). His total cost is therefore (90gp + 250gp + 18gp + 163gp) 521gp. His profit for the month is (680gp - 521gp) 159gp, enough to afford himself an affluent lifestyle.

Note, however, that if gladiator #4 lost his bout to the death, Titus would have kept the prize (60gp) but then had to replace him (250gp), for a cost of 190gp. That would have put him 31gp in the red! Running a small gladiatorial school can be a risky business.

GLADIATOR UPRISINGS

Beneath the glory and glamour, gladiators are slaves - or, at best, desperate men risking death because they have no other options. The conditions in which gladiators are kept can be brutal, and more than one gladiator has decided that the risk of dying in a slave revolt is preferable to death for the amusement of a cheering crowd. All it takes to set off a gladiatorial uprising is the right **spark**.

The following circumstances can spark a gladiator uprising:

- Killing or injuring a gladiator for no reason
- Failing to pay one of the school's victorious gladiator his victory prize.
- Failing to spend at least 2gp in upkeep on all of the school's gladiators.
- Failing to maintain at least 1 guard per 20 gladiators.
- Renting out a gladiator more than 3 times per year.
- Losing 33% or more of the school's gladiators in any given gladiatorial game.

When one of the sparks for a gladiator uprising occurs, the Judge should roll on the Gladiator Uprising table for each of the lanista's gladiators. Apply the gladiator's lanista morale score to the roll. For very large schools, the Judge may roll in batches of 5, 10, 25, or even 100 where appropriate. Apply the modifiers shown on the Uprising Modifiers table where appropriate.

Lead uprising means that the gladiator will lead an uprising as soon as at least 25% of the total number of gladiators support it (e.g. are uprising or conspiring). If not enough other gladiators support the uprising, the gladiator will not rebel at this time, but his lanista morale score is reduced by 2 permanently.

| Gladiator Uprising | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Adjusted Die Roll (2d6) | Result |
| 2- | Lead Uprising |
| 3-5 | Join Uprising |
| 6-8 | Hesitate |
| 9-11 | Stay Loyal |
| 12+ | Stay Firmly Loyal |

| Uprising Modifiers | |
|--|-----------|
| Circumstance | Modifier |
| Lanista's CHA modifier | +modifier |
| Lanista has Intimidation proficiency | +2 |
| Lanista is 5 th level or higher | +1 |
| Lanista is himself a gladiator trainer | +1 |
| Lanista is himself a master trainer | +2 |
| Lanista pays extra upkeep | +1/gp |
| Lanista pays inadequate upkeep | -1/gp |
| Each extra guard per 20 gladiators | +1/extra |
| Insufficient guards, 1 per 15 | -1 |
| Insufficient guards, 1 per 10 | -2 |
| Insufficient guards, 1 per 5 | -3 |
| Insufficient guards, none | -4 |
| Spark was not lanista's fault | +1 |

Support uprising means that the gladiator will join an uprising if someone else will lead it, or will lead an uprising if at least 50% of the total number of gladiators are ready to support it. If not enough other gladiators support the uprising, the gladiator will not rebel at this time but his lanista morale score is increased by 1 permanently.

Hesitate means that the gladiator feels conflicting loyalties. He will join an uprising after one occurs, but not help one get started.

Stay loyal means that the gladiator remains loyal to his school and will not join an uprising. **Stay firmly loyal** means the gladiator is so devoted to the school that he will fight against an uprising, if any; his lanista morale score is increased by 1 permanently.

EXAMPLE: Titus's school suffers a bout of bad luck, and loses three of its nine gladiators in the latest games. Losing 33% of the school's gladiators might spark an uprising! The Judge must roll on the Gladiator Uprising table for each of Titus's six surviving gladiators. All of the gladiators have lanista morale scores of -4. Titus is 5th level and qualifies as a master trainer, so the die roll is modified by a total of +3. The spark was not Titus's fault, so the die roll is modified by another +1. The total modifier is therefore (-4 +3 +1) 0 on each roll. The Judge rolls 2d6 six times and gets 11, 8, 2, 4, 6, and 7. Gladiator #1 stays loyal to Titus. Gladiator's #2, #5, and #6 are hesitating. Gladiator #4 supports an uprising, while Gladiator #3 is ready to lead an uprising if 25% or more of the 2 of 6 is 33%, so Gladiator #3 leads an uprising, supported by Gladiator #4 and joined when it occurs by Gladiator's #2, #5, and #6. #1 stays loyal to Titus, but does not fight against his comrades. Titus has trouble on his hands!

RUNNING GLADIATORIAL BOUTS IN ACKS

Gladiatorial bouts may be resolved as a combat encounter using the rules in *ACKS*. This is a fun option for beloved NPC gladiators, or if adventurers take to the arena themselves.

In most cases, the opponents begin in the arena at a distance of 120' from each other and begin to fight immediately. Munerators may occasionally organize special bouts with unusual starting conditions. For instance, a munerator might construct a pair of galleys side by side in the arena, and have combatants begin on the galleys. Such special bouts are left to the players and Judge to describe.

Begin the bout with initiative rolls by all of the combatants and resolve it as a series of combat rounds, continuing until the bout ends. Special rules apply depending whether the bout is to the death or to incapacitation.

BOUTS TO THE DEATH

Bouts to the death end when all combatants on one side are reduced to 0hp or less. When the bout ends, immediately roll on the Mortal Wounds table for each incapacitated combatant on the *winning* side as if treated by a healer using *cure light wounds* within one round (+5). The result of this roll reveals the state of each incapacitated combatant on the winning side. Do *not* roll on the Mortal Wounds table for incapacitated combatants on the *losing* side. All combatants on the losing side are slain by the surviving victors or (if the surviving winners can't or won't do so) by officials of the game.

BOUTS TO INCAPACITATION

During bouts to incapacitation, all attacks must either be special maneuvers or incapacitating attacks (per *ACKS*, an incapacitating attack imposes a -4 penalty on the attack throw, but deals nonlethal damage). The penalty to attack throws tends to lengthen the bouts, much to the pleasure of the spectators.

Cheating: If a gladiator makes any normal attack during a bout to incapacitation, he is considered to have **cheated**. As soon as a gladiator cheats, his opponent(s) in that bout and *all future bouts* may thereafter use normal attacks against the gladiator without being considered cheating. This penalty lasts until the gladiator wins a bout without cheating. Cheating gladiators who lose a bout are much more likely to be slain by the crowd. Cheating gladiators who win suffer no penalty, however. Everyone loves a winner!

Surrender: When a gladiator is reduced to 1/2hp or less during a bout to incapacitation, he must immediately make a morale roll of 2d6. Add the gladiator's arena morale score to the result. If the total is 5 or less, the gladiator surrenders. PC gladiators do not need to make morale rolls.

Ending the Bout: Bouts to incapacitation end when all combatants on one side have surrendered or are reduced to 0hp or less. When the bout ends, roll on the Mortal Wounds table for each incapacitated combatant as if treated by a healer using *cure light wounds* within one round (+5). Modify the die roll by +1 per point of nonlethal damage dealt before the combatant was knocked unconscious. The result of this roll reveals the state of each incapacitated combatant.

Reaction of the Crowd: The fate of any surviving gladiators on the losing side is now decided by the crowd. Roll 2d6 on the Crowd Roll table for each losing survivor. If the survivor is a regular gladiator, always add +1. For veterans, apply the modifiers shown on the Bout Modifiers table as well as any reaction roll modifiers that might otherwise apply (such as a Mystic Aura proficiency bonus or a Thrassian's Fear and Revulsion penalty).

A **hateful** crowd is disgusted by the survivor's cowardly behavior. The gladiator is slain in a torturous, humiliating, and shameful manner. The gladiator's owner must refund the munerator for the cost of the rental of his pathetic gladiator. A **bloodthirsty** crowd is unimpressed with the valor of the defeated gladiator, and demands his blood. The defeated gladiator is swiftly slain by a surviving victor or (if one can't or won't do so) by officials of the game. An **uncertain** crowd is wavering, conflicted between its respect for the defeated gladiator's fighting prowess and its lust for blood. If the munerator is a PC, he may decide whether to treat this as a bloodthirsty or merciful result. Otherwise, roll again. A second uncertain result means that the gladiator is spared, but gains a negative sobriquet such as "second-chance" or "shivering" (see below). A **merciful** crowd favors the defeated gladiator with its mercy. He will live to fight again! An **enthusiastic** crowd cheers with wild acclaim for the defeated gladiator. Despite his loss, he holds their favor. He lives to fight again another day, and gains a sobriquet inspired by his glorious defeat, such as "iron-skinned" or "blood-hardened" (see below).

GAINING A SOBRIQUET

Sobriquets are short nicknames and are always related to the circumstances under which they are gained. Sobriquets may be positive or negative. A positive sobriquet increases the gladiator's morale score by 1 point, and improves the crowd's reaction to the gladiator if he is defeated. A negative sobriquet has the opposite effect. A gladiator may have only one sobriquet at a time.

A victorious gladiator gains a positive sobriquet at the end of a bout if he wins with just one attack; if he defeats an opponent in the bout with an attack rolling an unmodified 20; or if he defeats an opponent with a positive sobriquet while he has none. A defeated gladiator gains a positive sobriquet if he receives the enthusiasm of the crowd (as above). A defeated gladiator gains a negative sobriquet if he is spared by an uncertain crowd (see above). The sobriquet gained is determined by the Judge.

EARNINGS AND EXPERIENCE

A gladiator who wins a bout is awarded a prize by his lanista. The prize is equal to 20% of his defeated opponent's rent. A lanista who does not award prizes to his victorious gladiators may spark a gladiator uprising (discussed later).

Gladiators earn XP each time they win a bout. As encounters in an arena are kill-or-be-killed with no opportunity for diplomacy, magic, or retreat, they are worth more XP than adventure encounters. Victorious gladiators share XP equal to the gp value of the defeated opponent or opponents.

EXAMPLE: Marcus, a 2nd level fighter, has been enslaved as a gladiator. In his first bout, he defeats Antonius, a 2nd level fighter. Normally defeating a 2nd HD opponent would only be worth 38 XP, but because Marcus is facing an opponent in a gladiatorial game, he gains XP equal to Antonius's gp value. As a 2nd level gladiator, Antonius has a gp value of 900gp, so Marcus gains 900xp.

A 0th level ordinary gladiator who earns 100 XP from adventuring advances to become a 1st level fighter. The character gains the fighter powers, attack throws, and saving throws, but does *not* gain a new class proficiency. The character re-rolls his hit points using his new class's Hit Die (1d8), keeping either his new hp total or his prior hp total if it was higher. The gladiator's ability scores can be determined at this time as well; roll 3d6 in order, but re-roll STR, DEX, and CON results of less than 9, representing his training.

| Crowd Reaction | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Adjusted Die Roll | Result |
| 2- | Hateful |
| 3-5 | Bloodthirsty |
| 6-8 | Uncertain |
| 9-11 | Merciful |
| 12+ | Enthusiastic |

| Bout Modifiers (veterans only) | | |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------|
| | Circumstance | Modifier |
| | Gladiator's CHA modifier | +modifier |
| | Gladiator has relevant Performance proficiency | +1/rank |
| | Gladiator has Manual of Arms proficiency | +1/rank |
| | Gladiator has won prior bouts | +1/win |
| | Gladiator has lost prior bouts | -1/loss |
| | Gladiator succeeded with special maneuvers | +1/maneuver |
| | Gladiator has positive sobriquet | +1 |
| | Gladiator has negative sobriquet | -1 |
| | Gladiator's morale broke | -2 |
| | Gladiator is a cheater | -5 |

BOUTS AGAINST CREATURES

While most gladiatorial bouts pit man against man, munerators often add to the thrill by introducing wild animals and exotic creatures to the arena. In ancient Rome, battle against beasts was the province of specialized fighters known as *bestiarius*. In the Auran Empire and other fantasy settings, any type of gladiator may encounter a creature in the arena. Bouts against creatures of animal intelligence are always to the death. They otherwise follow the standard rules.

The following animals were used historically in the games: bears (black and grizzly), cats (lions, mountain lions, panthers), dogs (hunting or war), elephants, herd animals, rhinoceroses, or wolves. In fantasy settings, the following additional animals would likely also be popular: apes (white), baboons (rock), bears (cave and polar), boars (giant), cats (tigers and sabre-tooth tigers), giant lizards (any), giant snakes (pythons) giant varmints (any), and wolves (dire). Prices for all of these creatures can be found in *Domains at War: Campaigns* and *Lairs & Encounters*. See Monstrous Gladiators, below, for further information on bouts against creatures.

GLADIATORIAL EQUIPMENT

| Armor | Cost | Description |
|--------------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Arena Armor, Heavy | 50gp | AC 4 |
| Arena Armor, Light | 30gp | AC 2 |
| Cestus | 3gp | Lethal brawling damage |
| Helmet, Heavy | 20gp | +2 v. mortal wounds |
| Helmet, Light | 0gp (5gp) | -1 AC if not present |

Arena Armor, Heavy: A set of stylized heavy armor designed to expose the wearer's attractive form and musculature while fighting. Depending on the wearer's taste and style, heavy arena armor can include form-fitting leather, scale, or lamellar; sections of mail; and/or solitary pieces of plate on limbs and vital areas. It provides 4 points of protection and weighs 4 stone, and counts as chain armor for game purposes. Historical examples of heavy arena armor include that of

the hoplomachus, provocator, and thraex types.

Arena Armor, Light: A set of stylized light armor designed to expose the wearer's attractive form and musculature while fighting. Depending on the wearer's taste and style, light arena armor can include form-fitting cloth or leather; thin straps of mail; and/or solitary pieces of plate on the limbs. It provides 2 points of protection and weighs 2 stone, and counts as leather armor for game purposes. Historical examples of light arena armor include that of the dimachaerus, myrmillo, retiarius, and secutor types.

Cestus: A pair of armored battle gloves, made with leather strips and fitted with blades, spikes, and/or iron plates. Characters equipped with cestus may deal 1d3 points of lethal damage with a punch.

Helmet, Heavy: This is a metal close-faced or visored helmet that completely covers the face, head, and neck. A heavy helmet must be purchased separately from a suit of armor. Wearing a heavy helm imposes a -1 penalty to surprise rolls and -4 penalty to proficiency throws to hear noise, but offers a +2 bonus on d20 rolls made on the Mortal Wounds table. Historical examples of heavy helmets include the classical Corinthian helmet, Roman gladiatorial helmets, and the medieval armet, barbute, close helm, great helm, and hounskull.

Helmet, Light: This is any leather or metal open-faced helmet designed to protect the head and neck while maintaining unrestricted sight and breathing. A light helmet is included in the cost of any suit of armor. If a suit of armor is worn without a helmet, decrease the character's armor class by 1 point. A light helmet can purchased separately from a suit of armor at a cost of 5gp, but provides no in-game benefit. Historical examples include the Illyrian, Phrygian, Boeotian, Attic, and Galean helmets of Antiquity, the medieval bascinet, nasal helm, and spangenhelm, and the Renaissance burgonet and sallet.

FANTASTICAL GAMES

In a world where adventurers can capture fantastic monsters and mages can hurl bolts of lightning across the heavens, gladiatorial games require some additional considerations. The Auran Empire setting is assumed as the default here, but the guidelines can be easily adapted to other settings.

ADVENTURERS AS GLADIATORS

Adventurers might become gladiators by coercion or by choice. If by choice, the adventurer must decide whether to sign a gladiatorial contract or fight bout-by-bout.

FIGHTING UNDER COERCION

Adventurers don't win every battle against monsters, and a party of defeated adventurers might be sold to fight in, e.g., the slave-pits of Kemesh. Such adventurers will be stripped of all their equipment and sent to gladiator training.

Adventurers might also be coerced into becoming gladiators if they run up debt or face punishment for a crime. A debtor can assign the value of his gladiatorial contract (his GP value) to his creditor. A perpetrator can assign the value of his gladiatorial contract to pay off his fine. A perpetrator who pays three times the amount of a fine can avoid other associated punishments for his crimes, so it is not uncommon for perpetrators facing death or maiming to become gladiators.

EXAMPLE: Reingo the Ruthless, a 4th level thief, is facing punitive punishment for robbery— execution and fined 1,200gp. Reingo sells himself as a gladiator. As a 4th level character, his contract is worth 3,600gp. That is three times his fine, so he avoids being executed.

Once enslaved as gladiators, they will live in chains in the gladiator school, fighting three times per year until they die or win their freedom under the customary terms – 10 victories or 15 bouts. The gladiator has a 25% chance per month of fighting a bout.

FIGHTING UNDER CONTRACT

Lanista are always looking for fresh talent for their schools. An adventurer who signs a contract will receive a signing bonus equal to his GP value. He will thereafter be paid 20% of his rental fee per win. In exchange, however, he must live at the school, training daily under the direction of its master trainer, until he has earned 10 victories or survived 15 bouts. The gladiator has a 25% chance per month of fighting a bout.

An adventurer's GP value under the customary contract (10 wins/15 bouts) will be equal to a gladiator of his level, or approximately (henchman wage + 3gp) x 16. (Note: This is less than the usual x33 implied by ACKS's secret ratio; the reason is that gladiators have short careers whereas the secret ratio assumes an annuity-like investment.) The value of the contract decreases by 1/10th per win or 1/6th per bout, whichever is greater.

An adventurer who tires of gladiatorial life may attempt to buy out his own contract. A reaction roll of 9+ is required to persuade a lanista to sell. The reaction roll is subject to the usual modifiers for ability scores and proficiencies, and by +/-1 per 10% variance in the offering price.

FIGHTING BOUT BY BOUT

An adventurer who fights bout-by-bout will simply be paid the appropriate rental fee of 62.5% of his implied GP cost. Since lanista prefer to use their own contracted fighters, a reaction roll of 12+ is required to persuade a lanista to use the adventurer instead. The reaction roll is subject to the usual modifiers for ability scores and proficiencies, and by +/-1 per 10% variance in the offering.

GLADIATOR TRAINING

All gladiators, adventurers or not, are expected to fight in one of the traditional styles. Adventurers who already have the appropriate class proficiencies, weapon selection, and armor selection may enter the arena after a short demonstration of their skills. Other adventurers will be expected to go through gladiator training. Adventurers who pursue training must succeed on a roll of 1d20 against the attack target value of a 13th level character of their own class (e.g. 2+ for fighters, 4+ for clerics, 6+ for mages). Apply the character's modifiers from STR, DEX, or CON to the roll. A natural 1 always fails. Failure means the character is maimed or killed (treat as a **dismember** spell). Success means the character learns the use of the weapons and armor related to the style, and may change one of his existing class proficiencies to the class proficiency he receives in training, even if otherwise forbidden to him.

At the Judge's discretion, adventurers might be treated as "extraordinary gladiators" who fight in a unique style in special matches against exotic creatures or other adventurers.

INFAMY

Gladiators are considered to be disreputable individuals. Adventurers who become gladiators suffer a permanent -2 penalty on reaction rolls with NPCs who are aware of their profession. Everyone already thinks the worst of Thrassian Gladiators, so the penalty does not apply to them. The penalty also does not apply when encountering NPCs in the trade (munerators, lanista, trainers, and other gladiators) or when using the Intimidation or Seduction proficiencies. The penalty is waived if and when the gladiator becomes a domain ruler.

THRASSIAN GLADIATORS

In Kemesh, it is a mark of opulence and power for a munerator to field Thrassians in his gladiatorial games. The following special rules apply to Thrassian gladiators.

Gladiator Value: Due to their fighting prowess and prestige value, Thrassian gladiators are worth 20% more than comparable human gladiators. For instance, a 1st level Thrassian gladiator is worth 540gp instead of 450gp.

Gladiator Style: Thrassian gladiators are trained in one of the gladiatorial styles and in most bouts they will use the weapons and armor of their style. However, Thrassian gladiators may also be fought “as savages”. In such bouts, the Thrassian has no weapons and equipment at all. The traditional opponents for Thrassian gladiators fighting “as savages” are spearfighters. These bouts symbolize the Zaharan conquest of the Thrassian Empire, and the spearfighters’ arms and armor will be patterned in Antique Zaharan styles.

Ordinary Thrassian Gladiators: The Thrassian gladiators presented in the Player’s Companion are all already arena veterans (1st level characters). This necessarily implies the existence of 0-level ordinary Thrassians who are just entering the arena. A 0-level Thrassian gladiator is subject to the following rules:

- He has 1-1 HD instead of 1 HD.
- His attack throw is 11+ instead of 10+.
- His hide provides a +2 bonus to AC instead of +3.
- He does not gain his +1 bonus to damage.
- He becomes a 1st level Thrassian gladiator after acquiring 100 XP.

Gladiatorial Schools: At 9th level (Thrassian Warlord), a Thrassian gladiator can establish a **gladiatorial school** in lieu of a castle. If he does so, up to 1d4+1x10 0th level gladiator candidates will immediately be available for training. The Thrassian does not have to pay 40gp per candidate; this represents volunteers willing to risk everything for training by the Thrassian. The Thrassian will also get access to 1d6 additional gladiator of 1st-3rd level available for purchase. Due to his reputation for victory and rise from slave to champion, a Thrassian Warlord commands unusual loyalty from his gladiators. Their lanista loyalty score is 0 instead of -4.

BEASTMAN GLADIATORS

Beastmen gladiators are popular antagonists in the gladiator games. Bred for war, beastmen delight in the violence and bloodshed of the arena. Because of beastmen’s rapaciousness and cruelty, they are widely hated by mankind, so crowds are always thrilled to see a beastman’s life brought to a bloody and well-deserved end at the hands of a beloved champion.

ACQUIRING BEASTMEN GLADIATORS

Beastmen gladiators are typically acquired as prisoners of war. No more than 10% of beastmen prisoners captured in battle will be suitable in age, health, intelligence, and temperament to be gladiator candidates. If the lanista has captured the prisoners himself, he does not have to pay for the prisoners, but otherwise he must pay their cost. The cost to purchase a beastman gladiator candidate is shown on the Beastmen Gladiator table below. It is typically much higher than their cost as slave laborers.

TRAINING BEASTMEN GLADIATORS

Like other candidates, beastmen candidates must be trained as gladiators before entering the games. However, the training for beastmen gladiators is quite different than for humans and demi-humans. (Only hobgoblins actually gain proficiencies from training.) Beastmen have none of the aversion to violence that the more civilized races display, nor do they need much training in the use of weapons. Extensive training is required, however, to restrain their savagery. They must be literally beaten into submission, so that they fear the lanista more than anything else. The required training time is 6 months + 2 months x the beastman’s morale score.

A trained beastman has an arena morale score equal to his base morale score, and a lanista morale score of -4. An untrained beastman has a lanista morale score of -6, and if sent into the arena he must make a morale roll every round on the Gladiator Uprising table. If a **Join uprising** result is rolled, the beastman gladiator immediately rebels – he might attack the referee, clamber over the walls into the crowd, assault the guards, or cannibalize the fallen. This is, of course, a great embarrassment for the munerator and the lanista who provided the beastmen, although the crowds often find it amusing.

The Beastman Gladiator table, below, shows the races of beastmen along with the cost to buy the candidate, time required to train the candidate, cost to train and equip the candidate, GP cost, rental fee, and equipment. Traditionally, one or more beastmen gladiators are pitted against one or more spearfighters bearing arms and armor patterned after Auran League styles, in bouts that symbolize the combats of the Beastmen Wars.

| Beastman Race | Candidate Cost | Training Time | Training Cost* | Equipment Cost | GP Cost | Rental Fee | Equipment |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------|------------|--|
| Bugbear | 900gp | 10 months | 200gp | 10gp | 1,115gp | | Shield, battle axe, dagger |
| Gnoll | 375gp | 6 months | 120gp | 70gp | 575gp | | Light arena armor, heavy helmet, shield, battle axe, dagger |
| Goblin | 16gp | 4 months | 80gp | 70gp | 170gp | | Light arena armor, light helmet, shield, short sword, dagger |
| Hobgoblin | 250gp | 6 months | 120gp | 90gp | 475gp | | Heavy arena armor, heavy helmet, shield, spear, short sword |
| Kobold | 16gp | 2 months | 40gp | 70gp | 130gp | | Light arena armor, light helmet, shield, short sword, dagger |
| Lizardman | 500gp | 10 months | 200gp | 25gp | 750gp | | Light helmet, shield, short sword, dagger |
| Minotaur | 1,450gp | 14 months | 365gp | 10gp | 1850gp | | Great axe |
| Ogre | 1,000gp | 10 months | 260gp | 10gp | 1275gp | | Great axe |
| Orc | 40gp | 6 months | 120gp | 70gp | 230gp | | Light arena armor, light helmet, shield, short sword, dagger |
| Troll | 8,500gp | 8 months | 208gp | 0gp | 8,725gp | | None |

*Includes upkeep and staffing cost with extra guards 7 (to compensate for -6 morale).

HALFLING GLADIATORS

No civilized realm permits halflings to be gladiators, as this would make a mockery of the games. In Kemesh and the Ivory Kingdoms, however, halflings are sometimes fed to exotic creatures for the amusement of the crowds, in a type of half-time show.

MONSTROUS GLADIATORS

Munerators are often tempted to introduce monsters into their gladiatorial games. What could be more spectacular than to thrill the crowd with a fire-breathing hellhound, a soaring wyvern, or a mighty dragon! Such showmanship has lead to large-scale property destruction and mass casualties when the monsters got out of control.

The civilized realms of the Auran Empire region have therefore restricted the use of monsters in the arena:

- Only tame, trained monsters of animal intelligence can be used, or sapient creatures under contract. Charmed and polymorphed creatures are not permitted, as a simple **dispel magic** cast from the stands can be catastrophic.
- No monsters with area of effect abilities, magical abilities, or ranged attacks are permitted due to risk to the spectators. A mantichore is permitted if its tail spikes are removed.
- No burrowing monsters are permitted due to potential damage to the amphitheater.
- No flying monsters are permitted except in rare “aerial bouts” which require the permission of the realm ruler. Winged monsters may be used if they have had their wings clipped to prevent flight.
- No Lawful creatures, undead, or vermin are permitted in the games of the Auran Empire or Somirea. (Undead and vermin are permitted in games held in Celdorea, Kemesh, or the Ivory Kingdoms.)

The following monsters are favored by munerators: amphisbaena, griffon*, hippogriff*, hydra, hydra (any), owl bear, phase tiger, skittering maw, wyvern*, yali. (*The monster must have its wings clipped.) Prices for all of these creatures can be found in *Domains at War: Campaigns and Lairs & Encounters*. Many adventuring parties find profitable work in the capture and delivery of exotic creatures to munerators for their games.

Occasionally munerators are tempted to use **charm** spells to avoid the need for taming or training, or to use **polymorph** magic to introduce extremely rare monsters into their games. Such practices are illegal, and rulers or rivals may hire mages to cast **dispel magic** from the stands to easily expose them. If caught, the munerator will be charged with sedition, a crime punishable by proscription or execution.

MAGIC IN THE ARENA

By custom, the use of magical abilities, magical items, and spells is banned in the gladiatorial games. At the start of a gladiatorial game, all of the gladiators are brought together below the arena, where a spellcaster with Sensing Power proficiency assesses whether any of them are spellcasters. He then casts **detect magic** upon them and their equipment. Gladiators who are spellcasters, or who are under the effects of spells or carrying magical items, are barred from participating. After this process is completed, the gladiators are kept isolated in holding cells to ensure that they cannot be enchanted or re-equipped afterwards.

Since the rewards of victory are great, and the costs of failure are high, some lanista attempt to break the prohibition against magic through bribery, charms, infiltration, etc. Judges may resolve such attempts as adventures in themselves, or treat them as Smuggling hijinks, applying a penalty to the proficiency throw equal to the level of the gladiator benefiting from the attempt (as more prominent champions are subject to more attention). Gladiatorial games are considered sacred festivals of the gods, so breaking the prohibition against magic is considered heresy, with punishment ranging from execution to fates worth than death.

SPELLCASTING

At the discretion of the munerator, and with the agreement of all the participating lanistae, some magic may be permitted in the gladiatorial bouts, usually between champions, or between champions and exotic creatures. Permitted spells and abilities might include **arcane striking**, **bless**, **death healing**, **haste**, **sharpness**, **shimmer**, **swift sword**, **striking**, or similar effects that enhance the gladiator's prowess in battle. Other effects may also be permitted depending on the nature of the combatants and the protections afforded by the amphitheater. Spells, items, and abilities that are virtually never permitted in a gladiatorial game include:

- Effects that could harm or manipulate spectators, such as area of effect blast magic, enchantments, or illusions
- Effects that could permit the gladiators to escape the arena, such as **dimension door**, **fly**, or **spider climb**
- Effects that could spoil the audience's view of the battle, such as **invisibility** or **phantasmal force**
- Effects that prevent the opponents from harming each other, such as **protection from normal weapons**
- Effects that could allow the enemy to be defeated without bloodshed, such as **charm person** or **disintegrate**

The permitted spells or abilities will be specified in advance in a contract between the munerator and lanistae. Because bouts are typically fought between opponents of equal value, when one gladiator is enhanced with magic, his opponent must be similarly augmented or the fight is considered unfair.

However, when a fighter or other nonmagical character is facing a spellcaster of similar level, it is generally considered fair to allow the opponent to enhance himself with his own abilities, subject to the rules above. For instance, if a 5th level fighter faces a 5th level bladedancer, it would be considered fair for the bladedancer to enhance herself with **swift sword** and **shimmer**.

When permanent magic items are used, the gladiator's value is considered to be increased by the magic item's base cost / 33. For instance, a **sword +1** costing 5,000gp increases a gladiator's value by 150gp. An ordinary gladiator with a +1 sword is worth (250gp + 150) 400gp, putting him almost on par with a 450gp 1st level veteran gladiator (their attack throws and damage will be the same, but the veteran will still have an edge in hit points).

RESTORATION OF LIFE AND LIMB

If a favored gladiator is maimed or accidentally slain in the arena, his lanista might pay a divine caster to cast **restore life and limb** on the gladiator. If so, the lanista will add the cost of the casting to the gladiator's contractual obligation. Divide the cost of the spell (500gp) by the gladiator's rent (rounded up) to determine how many extra bouts the gladiator must fight or win before gaining his freedom. The gladiator may return to the games as soon as he recovers from the restoration.

However, if a gladiator is slain in the arena in a bout to the death, or slain in a bout to incapacitation because the crowd called for his death, he is not permitted to return to the gladiatorial games even if restored to life. He is "dead to the games." Lanista do not typically consider restoring the gladiator to life to be a worthwhile investment in this case, unless they think the gladiator might be valuable as a master trainer.

Sometimes, a wealthy gladiator may make a contract with his lanista to restore him to life if slain. The gladiator must deposit a sum equal to both the cost of the spell (500gp) and half the value of the remainder of his contract with his lanista in advance, which the lanista keeps if the gladiator is slain and restored. Failing to honor such a contract may spark a gladiator uprising.

EXAMPLE: Marcus is a 5th level fighter under contract with Titus. A 5th level gladiator is worth 7,200gp. However, Marcus has won 7 bouts, so the value of his contract is reduced 7/10ths to 2,160gp. Marcus is worried that he might die before he wins his freedom, so he deposits [500gp + (2,160gp/2)] 1,580gp with Titus under contract to restore him if he is slain. (Note that if Marcus had a bit more money he could simply buy his freedom.)

GAMBLING ON THE GAMES

Adventurers may bet on the gladiatorial games. The maximum bet any adventurer may make during a gladiatorial game is 25gp per gladiator in the settlement. No character will be allowed to bet more than his monthly wage (it's too risky for the bookies). An adventurer's wager may be distributed across a variety of bouts, or placed on a single bout, as desired. Gladiatorial bouts are presumed to be fair, so a winning bet pays 1:1, less a 10% fee for the bookies.

EXAMPLE: Viktir is betting on the gladiatorial games in Arganos. There are 26 gladiators in Arganos, so the maximum permitted bet is 650gp. He bets all 650gp that Marcus will beat Rakh. If Marcus wins, Viktir will earn [650gp - (.10 x 650gp)] 585gp.

Those who would prefer a more robust system of calculating the odds between gladiators can use the following rules.

CALCULATE EXPECTED TIME TO VICTORY

A gladiator's **Expected Time to Victory (ETV)** is calculated as : (Opponent's hit points) / { [21 - (gladiator's attack throw + opponent's AC)] / 20 x (gladiator's average damage) }

If a gladiator's initiative bonus is greater than that of his opponent, decrease his ETV by the difference x 0.1. If a gladiator's initiative bonus is less than that of his opponent, increase his ETV by the difference x 0.1.

EXAMPLE: Marcellus is a 1st level fighter with STR 16 and Weapon and Shield proficiency equipped with heavy helmet, heavy arena armor, shield, and sword. His characteristics are AC 4, hp 7, attack throw 8+, damage 1d6+3 (average 6.5), initiative bonus 0. His opponent, Tavicus, is a 1st level fighter with DEX 14 and Swashbuckling proficiency equipped with light arena armor and two swords. His characteristics are AC 3, hp 6, attack throw 9+, damage 1d6+1 (average 4.5), initiative bonus +1.

Marcellus has an expected time to victory of $6 / \{ [21 - (8+3)] / 20 \times (6.5) \} = 1.8$ combat rounds. Since he has a one-point lower initiative bonus than his opponent, his expected time to victory is increased to 1.9. Tavicus has a time to victory of $7 / \{ [21 - (9+4)] / 20 \times (4.5) \} = 3.9$ combat rounds. Since he has a one-point better initiative bonus than his opponent, his expected time to victory is decreased to 3.8.

If a gladiator is equipped with a spear or polearm, increase his average damage and initiative bonus by 1 for purposes of calculating Expected Time to Victory.

EXAMPLE: If Marcellus were armed with a spear instead of (or in addition to) a sword, his average damage would be treated as 7.5 and his initiative bonus would be treated as +1. This would give him an expected time to victory of $6 / \{ [21 - (8+3)] / 20 \times (7.5) \} = 1.6$ combat rounds. Tavicus would have a time to victory of 3.9 combat rounds.

CALCULATE THE ODDS OF THE GLADIATORIAL BATTLE

The odds of a gladiator winning are calculated as [(Opponent's ETV) / (Gladiator's ETV)]² to 1. The odds determine the payout for characters that gamble on the battle.

EXAMPLE: Marcellus's odds of winning are $[(3.8) / (1.9)]^2 = 4$ to 1. Tavicus's odds of winning are $[(1.9) / (3.8)]^2 = 0.25$ to 1, or 1 to 4.

DETERMINE THE WINNER OF THE GLADIATORIAL BATTLE

Each gladiator rolls 2d6 and consults the Time to Victory table below. The gladiator's Time to Victory is equal to his Expected Time to Victory modified by the value on the table. Time to Victory cannot be reduced to less than 0.1.

EXAMPLE: Marcellus has an expected time to victory of 1.9 combat rounds. He rolls 2d6 and the result is a 7. His time to victory does not change. Tavicus has an expected time to victory of 3.8 combat rounds. He rolls 2d6 and the result is an 11. His time to victory decreases to 1.8 combat rounds. Tavicus wins in 1.8 combat rounds - an incredible upset!

| Die Roll | Time to Victory |
|----------|-----------------|
| 2 | +2.5 |
| 3 | +2.0 |
| 4 | +1.5 |
| 5 | +1.0 |
| 6 | +0.5 |
| 7 | No Change |
| 8 | -0.5 |
| 9 | -1.0 |
| 10 | -1.5 |
| 11 | -2.0 |
| 12 | -2.5 |