

FANTASY HERO TOURNAMENTS

Every year, all year, the Tournament is held in Arindel. Once a month the knights meet to battle and prove their prowess, and the favor of Princess Celethien is held in such esteem that the tournament is popular not only in the Westermark but across Morien and even in other nations such as Treich. Rain or shine, the tournament is one of the most popular events in the kingdom and brings showers of silver to the coffers of Arindel merchants.

THE TOURNAMENT

The tournament lasts a week, and in that time, there are constant parties and festivals. The opening day is a day-long festival with speeches, dances, acrobats, magical displays, dinners, and so forth. No events are held that day, but the knights register their coats of arms and games, issue challenges to each other, establish the quality of their ladies, and so on. The tournament challenges are set up and the following morning at dawn, the games begin with a shower of magical fireworks and a trump that can be heard for dozens of miles – its not so much loud as magical.

The games are held in a special green set up for the events, with seating, it's shaped like a huge stone oval-shaped coliseum called The Tournament Green with enchanted seats that are somewhat padded and protected from sun and rain. Vendors with food and drinks move about, vendors with banners, armbands, and tabards of various knights work outside. Acrobats, jugglers, rare animal displays, prostitutes, hucksters, salesmen, merchants, and pickpockets work the crowd, and in the green between Arindel and the Tournament Green a market is set up the entire week.

PRIZES

The winner of each individual game gets a prize, as does the winner of each joust, and the winner of the overall games. In addition, the best knight is chosen by the princess for overall chivalry, valor, gamesmanship, attitude, skill, and style. Then there are the side bets, which often add up to far more than the prizes

- Winning a single joust earns you 10 silver
- Winning a game wins you 100 silver, with a trophy of Urln.
- Winning the overall competition earns you 3 gold, a token from the princess, and a large trophy of urln and Velune.
- Winning the best knight earns you a new horse, a new suit of armor, a token from the princess, and 5 gold.



THE GAMES

Although the joust is the main event, there are many different games and events that go on in the Tournament. Each of the games is a separate event, although there is a “master of the tournament” title that goes to someone who does best in all the games overall. The games are judged by a point system or by direct performance, based on each event.

ARCHERY

This is a very difficult competition that only the most skilled have any hope of entering, let alone victory. There are three variants in the archery competition.

TARGETS: Archery with bows and crossbows is tested here, from varying distances with small targets. Each competitor fires 72 arrows at a target 70 meters distant. A bullseye is worth 10 points, and the target is 80 cm (about 30”) across. On the target are 5 concentric circles and an x in the exact middle. Striking the rings are worth various points: closer to the center worth 1 more than the outside. The rings in order are: White - Black - Light Blue - Red - Yellow. Consult the table below for the DCV and point value of each ring:

COLOR	DCV	PTS
White	6	2
Black	7	4
Light Blue	8	6
Red	9	8
Yellow	10	10

Competitors must fire within 2 minutes, and must fire 4 times in six minutes. Competitors also may only fire standing position, but may use any bow and arrows they own *provided they are not enchanted in any way* and may not use any magical gear or items, nor enchantments on themselves. The local mages keep a close eye on this.

RULES

In game terms, this means you are firing at a target 35” away for a -6 base range modifier. Due to the standing position, characters may not brace, only set. The Bull’s Eye, dead center, has an effective DCV of 17.



A hit on the target is in the side if the DCV is barely hit, or in the middle if it is the DCV+1 (in other words, if a character hits the center target with a 10 DCV by 1, hitting an 11 DCV, then they hit dead center. Hitting a 10 merely hits within the color but not the center.

Missing the target does not necessarily mean a complete miss, characters will hit the target as long as they hit the DCV of one of the rings. They only miss entirely if they cannot hit at least a 6 DCV

ARCHERY (INDIRECT): This is similar to the target shooting, but the targets are set behind a raised bar, and the shots must clear the bar before striking the target. Each round the bar is raised 2 meters (1 game inch), and each setting is results in a -2 penalty to OCV to hit the target. Otherwise the rules are largely the same as the original, except the target is a single 10 DCV yellow circle, with a hit being worth 10 points and a miss worth nothing.

ARCHERY (MOUNTED): The archers are mounted and in motion when firing. They fire only a dozen arrows, and must be moving at a gallop, firing at a target 122 cm across (about 4 feet).

RULES

The target is only 4 DCV, and one need not target any specific spot to score, but the rider must be doing a half move at full speed on horseback (10-12” depending on the horse), and is thus -2 OCV due to the motion and need to control the horse (assuming the character has the mounted combat familiarity). A successful riding roll reduces this penalty by half to a -1 OCV.

DUEL: This is simply a duel between two contestants using blunted weapons (normal rather than killing damage, of the same Damage Class total). The duel ends when the first combatant scores 3 successful hits on his opponent (other than the shield) with 1 extra point given for striking the head or disarming the enemy. Each successful hit is worth one point. Once an enemy is disarmed, the combat stops until the opponent can arm himself again, then the fight starts over.

JOUST: This is the main event, two knights on horse-back with lances charging at each other down a fenced line. The tilt (the fence) is five feet high and protects the legs and most of the horse's body from hits, while providing a line for the competitors to move along opposite sides toward each other. This field is one hundred yards wide and three hundred yards long, and the tournament typically has three of these running at the same time to accommodate the number of contestants.

Scoring at the joust is based on how you strike the opponent with your lance and general bravery. There is a point system, which is allotted to each knight:

JOUST SCORING	
PTS	ACTION
3	Unhorsing opponent with a lance break
3	Causing opponent to drop lance because of lance blow
3	Breaking lance by hitting tip of opponents lance
2	Breaking a lance at the base
1	Breaking a lance between saddle and helm
1	Knocking opponent out
0	Breaking a lance within one foot of tip
-1	Breaking a lance on hitting saddle
-1	Failure to present self as target (horse swerves, etc)
-2	Hitting the tilt once with lance
-3	Hitting the tilt twice with lance
DQ	Strike a horse with lance
DQ	Striking a man whose back is turned
DQ	Hitting the tilt three times
DQ	Killing your opponent

DQ=Disqualified, removed from the joust

Passes are made until one or both knights are dismounted. If both are dismounted in a single pass, then both knights will fight a duel as outlined above with blunted weapons. The lances are blunted for normal damage, and many are designed to shatter on impact, making the damage reduced penetration (also halving the body of the lance). A lance impacting any surface on the target deals half damage to the lance because of the deflection from the armor and shield (and because a knight's armored body isn't designed to damage a lance).

Here's a hit location chart for jousting, which is slightly different than the typical battle:

JOUSTING HIT LOCATION TABLE				
ROLL	LOCATION	STUN	BODY	DCV
3	Lance	--	x1 ½	-6
4-5	Head	x2	x2	-5
6-8	Horse	x1	x1	-2
9-12	Shield	x½	x½	-2
13-15	Body	x1	x1	-2
16-17	Arms	x½	x½	-3
18	Saddle	--	x1	-4

The horses will be up to full combat speed (about 10-12" run for most war horses), and a riding roll is required to force the horse to stay on target while someone points a long stick at them. At this speed, the move through can do significant damage (+3-4 DC), but is also a -2 OCV, plus an additional -1 for attacking after a half move (unless the combatant has Rapid Attack). On the bright side, with both horses running toward each other, the movement DCV is negated, and a seated knight is not a particularly challenging target to hit. On the minus side, their shield gives +4 DCV because of its size and design (curved to deflect attacks) but the shield weighs twice as much and has +2 Body.

Any hit that misses because of the shield (an attack that would have hit but the shield gave enough DCV to avoid) was deflected and did no damage. A shield hit on the location chart above struck the shield squarely enough to do damage. Hitting the saddle does no damage to the opponent, but might shatter the lance and possibly damage the special oversized jousting saddle. Hitting the saddle might unseat an opponent, see below.

If the attack misses, then it is a pass without impact, although a miss by 5 or more means that the character actually hit the tilt rather than the target and sucks so bad at this they are disqualified for incompetence if they do it twice more.

UNSEATING

Striking your opponent may knock them off their mount, and here's where it becomes difficult for the knights. If your lance shatters, it might not have enough energy behind it to knock your enemy off. If it doesn't shatter, then your attack doesn't count – it might have simply been that your opponent unbalanced and fell rather than was driven out of his seat by your attack.

When the attack hits, check for knockback (2 dice, because the attack is normal). With the horse's momentum (but not strength, the knight is holding the lance), this attack can exceed 10D6, which is pretty likely to generate some knockback. The struck character must make a riding skill roll at -1 per 1" of knockback to stay seated, but the special saddle used gives +2 to this roll (+1 for the saddle and +1 for its special jousting design). A stunned or unconscious foe naturally gets no riding roll at all and simply falls out if more than 2" of knockback are done (the saddle giving a roll of 2 by its design).

A hit to the saddle increases the riding roll penalty by -1 due to impact and damage to the saddle. However, as long as the lance doesn't break, this is no penalty (it is no bonus either, unless you unseat your foe).

The character may brace himself with strength; however doing so reduces strength to hold their lance, they can choose either to hold the lance with their might or prevent being knocked off. For each 5 STR used this way, the riding roll is +1 to stay seated. Some mounted combat maneuvers grant extra strength only for this purpose.

Characters knocked out of their seats land on the ground at half their horse's speed and take 1D6 from the fall and roll forward half the horse's movement speed. It takes a half phase to get up, and then if the opponent was also knocked down, the characters must fight: the tilt is designed to open at regular intervals just in the case of such an occurrence.

OBSTACLE COURSE: This is simply a series of challenging jumps, turns, and objects for the rider to avoid while riding a horse at best speed to finish the course first. The objective is to be the fastest, but a second is added to the rider's time if he does not deal with an obstacle. Obviously falling off (some of the obstacles need to be ducked under or dodged and will knock you flying) adds time by requiring the rider to get their steed back and remount. Riders are not armored nor armed in this contest; they are showing their skill at riding only. Typically this consists of 5-8 difficult (-3 riding) challenges plus 2-4 challenges requiring a perception roll and dodge to avoid or be knocked off your mount.

RING TILT: This is like a solo joust, showing weapon and riding skill. A fully armored knight with a lance attempts to, at full speed, catch a ring with a colorful ribbon on it on the end of his lance. They are given three passes each, and a tiebreaker round after. The ring is 8 DCV due to size, and the knight is moving at full speed, thus the -3 OCV of jousting above applies.

Winning any one of these events gains a prize, especially the joust, which is the crowd favorite. Winning more than one wins greater prizes, and the most capable and valorous competitor wins a special prize.