

Munera Sine Missione

Rules for Gladiatorial Combat (v1.2)

By Alan Saunders

(After Gary Comardo - v1.2 ammendments by Kevin Holland)

Introduction

The mechanisms of these rules are not original, and are lifted wholesale from 'We Who Are About To Die Demand a Recount' by Gary Comardo and published in Issue 67 of 'Saga'. What I have done is added more detail to allow a wider variety of gladiators and the possibility of campaigns and so forth. The original rules impressed me, giving an intelligent game of manoeuvre with very simple mechanisms, and with a bout lasting no more than five or ten minutes.

These rules are (c) Alan Saunders, 2002.

Please feel free to distribute them as you will. Comments and further ideas are always welcome.

The Game

You will need:

A hex grid for the arena. For a straight fight between two to four gladiators I have found a grid 10 hexes by 12 quite adequate. More gladiators necessitate a larger grid.

Some model gladiators. These should, if possible, be mounted on hexagonal bases so it is obvious where the front it.

Some six-sided dice (D6).

Pencil and paper.

The Gladiators

Each gladiator has a strength rating, which is determined by rolling 3D6 and totalling the two highest scores.

You need to determine how the gladiator is armed and what armour and protection he has. A sample set of common gladiator types is given at the end of these rules. If you want to define your own figures, however, then the following will tell you how to do it.

Weapons are easy. Note down what the gladiator has, and in which hand he uses it.

Shields can be none, small, large or extra-large. Note that the latter was really only used by the Hoplomachii.

Armour can none, light or heavy. Heavy is the full mail protection of the Cataphractarius; most gladiators have light armour. I tend to ignore helmets, reasoning that the increased protection is offset by a reduced ability to see the blow coming.

Determine the 'weight' of the gladiator. This is done by calculating how encumbered he is:

Armour/Shield	Weight
Light armour	1
Heavy armour	2
Large shield	1
X-Large shield	2

Total the weight of armour and shield to give the following ratings:

Weight carried	Gladiator is:
0	Light
1	Medium
2	Heavy
3	Extra Heavy
4	Not allowed

Note that since a gladiator can lose his shield, any gladiator having a shield will have two ratings, one with it and one without.

Example: A gladiator has light armour (weight 1) and a large shield (weight 1). With a total weight of 2 the gladiator is Heavy. If he loses his shield he only has the armour (weight 1) to contend with and becomes Medium.

The armour and shield a gladiator has determines his save roll. This should be accumulated as below:

Armour/Shield	Save Modifier
No armour	+0
Light armour	+1
Heavy armour	+3
No shield	+0
Small shield	+1
Large shield	+2
X-Large shield	+3

Example: The gladiator above has light armour (+1) and a large shield (+2), for a total save of +3. If he loses his shield then his save drops to +1.

Sequence of Play

Dice to see which gladiator goes first. Each gladiator takes their turn, and play then passes to the next. Keep going until someone wins.

On his turn a gladiator does the following:

- 1) Roll a D6 to see how many Action Points (AP) he has.
- 2) Spend his AP to move and to attack other gladiators.

Action Points

At the start of his turn a gladiator rolls a D6 to determine how many AP he has. He gets AP equal to the roll of the die modified as follows:

X-Heavy gladiator	-2
Heavy gladiator	-1
Medium gladiator	0
Light gladiator	+1
Light wound (At least one point of strength lost)	-1
Serious wound (Half or more of strength lost)	-2
Entangled	-3
Off-balance	-2

AP can be spent as follows:

Move 1 hex directly forward	1AP
Move 1 hex in any other direction, no facing change.	2AP
Change facing by one hexside	1AP
Attack with weapon	1AP
Attack with net or lasso	2AP
Attempt to cut free of net or lasso	1AP
Pick up weapon in same hex	1AP
Shoot bow	2AP

Movement

Only one gladiator is allowed per hex, and gladiators may not pass through hexes containing other gladiators. If a gladiator is in a hex adjacent to another, he may not move directly to another hex adjacent to that same gladiator; he must first step back so that there is an empty hex between them.

Facing

The adjacent hex in directly in front of a gladiator is his front hex.

The two hexes on each side of this are the gladiator's side hexes. If the gladiator has a shield then one of these is the 'shield side'. If he is carrying a weapon in the appropriate hand then that side is the 'weapon side'.

The other three hexes are the gladiator's rear hexes.

Attacks

These rule apply to swords and other simple weapons. Special weapons are described after the main rules.

In order to attack a gladiator must have his opponent directly in front of him and in an adjacent hex. Determine if you are attacking the front, side or rear hex of your opponent.

Some weapons can attack targets that are not adjacent. These must be within the front arc of the attacker. This arc will pass through the middle of some hexes; in the case of the target being in one of these hexes, assume that the gladiator can hit ones on the same side as the weapon being used (usually the right-hand ones). If you are attacking from one of these split hexes, you will have a choice of target hexsides. In this case, again, take the hexside that corresponds to the hand the weapon is being used in (again, probably the right-hand one). This is a lot simpler to see on the tabletop than explain!

A gladiator may only attack with a particular weapon once per turn.

The attack procedure is as follows:

- 1) Both attacker and defender roll a D6. Determine any special events (see below).
- 2) If the roll was not a double, then the attacker modifies his roll, and then subtracts the defender's roll from the total.
- 3) If his score is positive, then he has hit the defender. The defender must roll a D6 to see if he saves.
- 4) If his score is negative or they are equal, then the defender jumps back a hex.
- 5) Reduce the defender's strength by any wounds caused (if any).

Both attacker and defender roll a D6. If both roll the same number then a special event has occurred and the attack ends. If the numbers are different then modify the attacker's roll as follows:

Attacking from opponent's front	+0
Attacking shield side (X-Large shield)	+0
Attacking shield side (Large)	+1
Attacking shield side (Small shield or net)	+2
Attacking weapon side	+2
Attacking any side with no weapon or shield if gladiator has heavy armour	+2
Attacking any side with no weapon or shield on any other gladiator	+3
Attacking rear	+3
Defender entangled	+1
Unarmed	-3
Disadvantaged weapon	-1
Each other gladiator that has the defender adjacent and in his front hex	+1

Subtract the defender's roll from the attacker's total. If the score is greater than zero, then the defender must make an armour save, or subtract that many wounds from his strength.

If the final score is zero or less, then the attack misses, and the defender is pushed back. A push back moves the defender into the adjacent hex opposite that from which the attack came. If the defender cannot enter that hex, because of another gladiator, or the edge of the arena, then he stays where he is but is considered off-balance.

To make an armour save roll a D6, and add the defender's save modifier. If the final score is 7 or more, then the blow has glanced off the armour or shield, and no wounds are scored. Note that a gladiator with no save modifier automatically takes wounds if hit!

If both attacker and defender roll the same number, then check the following table to see which special event has occurred:

Double 6	Defending gladiator is killed outright.
Double 5	Defender loses shield, net or lasso. These cannot be regained.
Double 4	Defender knocked off balance. -2AP on his next turn.
Double 3	Attacker knocked off balance. -2AP on his next turn.
Double 2	If the attacker is adjacent, then the defender is floored, and must appeal to the crowd. The fight is over. Otherwise treat as 'Defender knocked off balance'.
Double 1	A weapon breaks or is otherwise lost for good. On a 1-3 it is that of the attacker, on a 4-6 it is that of the defender. A gladiator without a weapon fights with the unarmed modifier.

Effects of Wounds

A gladiator that has taken at least one wound is lightly wounded.

If he has taken half or more of his strength in wounds then he is considered seriously wounded.

If his strength drops to 0 or less, then he is beaten, and must appeal to the crowd.

If his strength drops to -3 or less then he is dead.

OPTIONAL RULES

Appeals to the Crowd

In order to appeal to the crowd, a gladiator must roll 2D6 and apply the following modifiers:

+1	Started fight as a Light gladiator
-1	Started fight as Heavy or X-Heavy gladiator
-2	If unwounded.
+1	If seriously wounded.
-1	If the gladiator has not inflicted any wounds on his opponents.
+1	For each gladiator he has seriously wounded
+2	For each gladiator he has defeated (killed or spared by the crowd).
-1	For each gladiator the crowd has spared today.

A straight roll of '12' indicates that the crowd are automatically merciful, a straight roll of '2' means that the gladiator is killed. Otherwise, on an adjusted score of 8 or more, the crowd spare the gladiator. Otherwise he is dispatched. As you can see, the crowd like to have seen lots of blood, think armoured gladiators shouldn't get defeated and only has a limited supply of mercy

Experience

This is for continuing campaigns, or if you wish to pit one skilled gladiator against several less-skilled ones. A gladiator can have up to four skills. These are:

Reflexes	+1 AP
Attack	+1 to attack die roll
Dodge	+1 to defence die roll
Stamina	+2 to strength roll
Charisma	+1 to "Appeals to the Crowd" rolls (Note: may be taken more than once)
Favoured of the Gods	Gain a 5+ roll to avoid the Double 6 "Defending Gladiator Killed" Special Event

Other than "Charisma" a gladiator may only have each skill once. At the end of a bout, a gladiator may gain one skill if he has defeated another gladiator with the same or more skills. In other words, in order to progress you must beat gladiators at least as good as yourself.

Example: Quintus and Julius both have no skills. Quintus beats Julius in a bout, so gains one skill. A few weeks later they meet again, and Quintus beats Julius once more. Because Quintus has more skills than Julius, however, he gains no new skill.

Appendix 1 - Weapons

The above rules assume that the gladiators are armed with a sword, long dagger or some equivalent short hand weapon. The following rules cover more exotic weapons.

Trident - The weapon of the Retiarius. This is treated as a normal weapon, but is used in the left-hand.

Dagger - A secondary weapon for some gladiators. Always treat as a disadvantaged weapon.

Long Spear - This can attack targets that are adjacent or two hexes away. When attacking an adjacent target, however, it is treated as a disadvantaged weapon.

Throwing darts - The weapon of the Gaetolian. The darts can be thrown at a target between two and six hexes away, using the normal combat rules. At 5 hexes range they are disadvantaged. At 6 hexes they are doubly disadvantaged (-2). If they cause a wound, are deflected by armour or cause a special event, then they are lost. Otherwise they land in a randomly determined hex adjacent to the target if the attackers roll was even, or in the target hex if the roll was odd. Make this roll before the defender is pushed back. If the Gaetolian is in the same hex as a dart he may pick it up at the cost of 1AP. Darts may not be used against a target adjacent to the gladiator.

Javelin - The weapon of the Velite. May be used to attack targets that are adjacent or two hexes away, but is disadvantaged at two hexes range. Since it was tied to the Velite's wrist it may not be used at ranges greater than this.

Two-Handed Swords, Axes or Clubs - For more exotic gladiators. It costs 2AP to strike a blow with one of these weapons, but if they hit the target's armour save is reduced by 1.

Net - The weapon of the Retiarius. Used in the right hand to entangle an opponent. It may be used at up to 2 hexes, needing a 6 to entangle an opponent in an adjacent hex and a 5-6 to entangle an opponent 2 hexes away. If the cast misses, the defender is pushed back. Once an opponent is entangled the net is lost. An entangled opponent may make up to one attempt to cut free each turn, at a cost of 1AP, and needs a 5-6 to succeed. As long as the Retiarius has his net, he is considered to have a weapon in his right hand.

Lasso - The weapon of the Laquearii. This is treated as a net, except that it does not count as a 'weapon' for defence purposes. It may be used to entangle a target at two or three hexes, needing a 6 at two hexes and a 5-6 at three hexes.

Cone - A specialist tool of the Contra-Retiarius. If a gladiator with a cone is attacked by a net, roll a D6. On a 5-6 they have caught and shredded the net, regardless of whether it hit or not.

Bows - The weapon of the Sagittarius. A bow can be shot at a target between two and eight hexes away, using the normal combat rules. At 2 or 7 hexes range they are disadvantaged. At 8 hexes they are doubly disadvantaged (-2). Arrows are lost or recovered in the same manner as throwing darts (see above). A bow costs 2AP to shoot.

Gladiators with more than one weapon may strike with each once per turn. Thus a Retiarius may cast his net (2AP) and then attack with his trident (for 1AP).

Appendix 2 - Sample Gladiators

These are based on the 25mm figures made by Gladiator Miniatures.

Note: where two values are listed for save and weight, the first is with the shield, and the second without.

Samnite

Sword (right hand), Large Shield (left hand), Light armour. Save +3/+1. Heavy/Medium

Retiarius

Trident (left hand), Net (right hand), Light armour. Save +1. Medium.

Thracian or Secutor

Sword (right hand), Small Shield (left hand), Light armour. Save +2/+1. Medium

Myrmillo

Sword (right hand), Large Shield (left hand), No armour. Save +2/+0. Medium/Light

(Note - this figure seems to differ from the 'classic' Myrmillo, who in these rules would be identical to the Samnite.)

Hoplomachus

Long Spear (right hand), X-Large Shield (left hand), No armour. Save +3/+0. Heavy/Light

Cataphractarius

Sword (right hand), Heavy armour. Save +3. Heavy

Diamecheri

Sword (right hand), Sword (left hand), Light armour. Save +1. Medium

(Note - If the gladiator loses a weapon, the sword in the left hand is lost first.)

Laquearius

Lasso (right hand), Sword (right hand), No armour. Save +0. Light

Contra-Retiarius

Sword (right hand), Cone (left hand), Heavy armour. Save +3. Heavy

Velite

Javelin (right hand), Small Shield (left hand), No armour. Save +1/+0. Light

Gaetulian

Throwing darts (right hand), dagger (right hand), No armour. Save +0. Light (**Note - Four darts are carried**)

Provocator

Long Spear (right hand), Small Shield (left hand), Light armour. Save +2/+1. Medium

Sagittarius

Bow (left hand), dagger (right hand), No armour. Save +0. Light (**Note - Four arrows are carried**)

History

Version 1.0	19 March 2002	Initial version
Version 1.1	24 March 2002	Added push-back rules
Version 1.2	04 April 2003	Added Charisma and Favoured of the Gods skills.

MUNERA SINE MISSIONE

Quick-Play Sheet



AP Roll Modifiers	
X-Heavy gladiator	-2
Heavy gladiator	-1
Light gladiator	+1
Light wound (At least one point of strength lost)	-1
Serious wound (Half or more of strength lost)	-2
Entangled	-3
Off-balance	-2

AP Costs	
Move 1 hex directly forward	1AP
Move 1 hex in any other direction, without changing facing.	2AP
Change facing by one hexside	1AP
Attack with weapon	1AP
Attack with net or lasso	2AP
Attempt to cut free of net or lasso	1AP
Pick up weapon in same hex	1AP
Shoot bow	2AP

“To Hit” Roll Modifiers	
Attacking from opponent's front	+0
Attacking shield side (X-Large shield)	+0
Attacking shield side (Large)	+1
Attacking shield side (Small shield or net)	+2
Attacking weapon side	+2
Attacking any side with no weapon or shield if gladiator has heavy armour	+2
Attacking any side with no weapon or shield on any other gladiator	+3
Attacking rear	+3
Defender entangled	+1
Unarmed	-3
Disadvantaged weapon	-1
Each other gladiator that has the defender adjacent and in his front hex	+1

Doubles Effects	
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Appeals to the Crowd	
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-1	Started fight as Heavy or X-Heavy gladiator
-2	If unwounded.
+1	If seriously wounded.
-1	If the gladiator has not inflicted any wounds on his opponents.
+1	For each gladiator he has seriously wounded
+2	For each gladiator he has defeated (killed or spared by the crowd).
-1	For each gladiator the crowd has spared today.

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Gladiator Record Sheet

Name:

Type:

Strength:

AP Die Modifier:

with shield / without shield

Saving Throw Modifier:

(save requires roll of 7+)

with shield / without shield

Class: Light

Medium

Heavy

Extra-Heavy

Equipment:

Left hand:

Right hand:

Armour:

Skills:

Record:

W

L

Kills

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Gladiator Record Sheet

Name:

Type:

Strength:

AP Die Modifier:

with shield / without shield

Saving Throw Modifier:

(save requires roll of 7+)

with shield / without shield

Class: Light

Medium

Heavy

Extra-Heavy

Equipment:

Left hand:

Right hand:

Armour:

Skills:

Record:

W

L

Kills

