

# NE~~X~~US

ARENA COMBAT SYSTEM



# RULES MANUAL

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# ABOUT THE GAME



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NEXUS is all about having fun. This is achieved by antagonizing and competing with your friends through bloody, brutal, and often fatal combat. There is nothing co-operative about it, but you will find camaraderie in the hopelessness of trying to command these giant meat-bags called **Helots (pg.46)** to execute your orders. In NEXUS you play the part of a coach/fight promoter commanding these genetically engineered warriors to kill each other in arenas aboard giant space barges. And as you do, both the crowd and arena are indiscriminately trying to kill everyone involved. *Sounds fun, right?!*

## YOU ARE A LANISTA

Let's get one thing straight: you are not here to lead your helot to victory! You are a **Lanista (pg.45)**! And that means that you are here for your own fortune and glory! Let nothing as trivial as the life of your helot keep you from attaining it!

**ALWAYS REMEMBER** that You are engaged in a battle for the crowd's attention, and you are not just competing against the other lanista's helots! You are also trying to steal the attention away from the barge arena itself, with its brutal helot-carving hazards.

Your helot is a mindless hunk of flesh that relies on your commands to put it in the best position possible to win. It is up to you to keep aware of its surroundings and take advantage of the opportunities that the proper positioning of your champion brings.

Delegate your helot's command points between movement and action, all the while letting the roar of the crowd be your guide. Instruct your helot to assault its opponent with frenzied wild attacks, or to strike specific locations with laser precision.

**NEVER FORGET** that nobody plays fair in NEXUS! A good lanista is always waiting for the right opportunity to deceive their opponent and is more than willing to use their influence to tip the odds in their own favor!

One last tip, **ALWAYS BE READY**, because at any moment, the tides of battle can work with you or against you! Turning Points are unpredictable and can affect the match in unexpected ways! A good lanista will be on their toes and prepared for anything.

Being a lanista in the NEXUS is not for the faint of heart. Use your cunning to strategize your ascent to fame and glory, or fade into obscurity like billions before you! Are you up to the challenge?

## WHO IS D-VERSE PUBLISHING?

D-Verse Publishing, LLC was founded by Jason Goike and J. Scott Rumptz in 2017 with the intention of creating high quality games with nostalgic roots. They began work on "NEXUS", their debut title, as childhood friends in the late 80's. Growing up in Detroit on a steady diet of RPGs and board games, Jay and Scott are now bringing talented artists together from across the globe to create vibrant, immersive and imagination-driven game worlds. With expansions already in the works, NEXUS is the first of many planned titles.

*The following pages explain the core rules of the NEXUS Arena Combat System. Visit <https://d-verse.com> for FAQs, instructional videos, and other goodies. If you have any questions or suggestions please don't hesitate to contact us at [feedback@d-verse.com](mailto:feedback@d-verse.com).*



# GAME COMPONENTS

1. 17"x 17" Gameboard | 1
2. Gameboard Frame | 1 frame in 8 pieces
3. Motivation Miniatures | 4
4. Hazard Miniatures | 16, 4 of each hazard
5. Pillar Miniatures | 4
6. Blood Tiles | 10
7. Guts Tiles | 10
8. Status Indicators | 44, 4 Flaming, 4 Bleeding, 4 Prone, 4 Grappled, 4 Armed, 12 SDS Defend, and 12 SDS Attack
9. Command Tokens | 20
10. Deception Tokens | 10
11. Action Menus | 4
12. Lanista Cards | 8
13. Helot Motivation Cards | 4
14. Weapon Cards | 14
15. Influence Cards | 24
16. Hazard Cards | 4
17. Turning Point Cards | 25
18. Cred Coins | 700, 175 per Player
19. Directional Compass Die | 1
20. Grid Dice | 2, 1 Green D8, 1 Orange D8
21. Trait Dice | 4, 1 per Player
22. Ratio Dice | Black D6 / 4, 1 per Player
23. Attack Dice | 5 Red D6
24. Defense Dice | 5 Blue D6
25. Trait Counter Dice | Numbered 0-5 D6 / 24, 6 per Player

# COMPONENT SUMMARY



Scan for more details

## GAMEBOARD (1)

The same gameboard is used for every NEXUS bout, but it can represent different barges. The gameboard is a 17 x 17-inch gameboard featuring an 8 x 8 numbered grid with 50mm squares. The North end of the board is clearly marked.

## GAMEBOARD FRAME (1 frame in 8 pieces)

There are (4) separate aerie command panels, each in two pieces, that can be placed together to create a frame around the gameboard. The frame pieces have magnets that lock things into their proper place and the aerie command panels themselves serve many purposes. For starters, they provide a nice visual perimeter around the board that represents the surrounding walls. The command panels also track Turning Points, combat initiative, and your helot's health; They also hold various cards, ratio dice, and trait counters.

## MOTIVATION MINIATURES (4)

Each helot is represented by a miniature. The open nature of NEXUS allows for players to use any miniature to represent the motivation they are playing but each miniature is named after the motivation that influenced its design.

## HAZARD MINIATURES (16, 4 of each hazard)

These miniatures represent the various hazards that can occupy a NEXUS arena. All these miniatures are not necessarily used in every NEXUS bout. Generally, players will encounter 2-3 different types of hazards, depending on the barge selected.

## PILLAR MINIATURES (4)

These pillars are standard obstacles that are placed before every bout.

## BLOOD TILES (10)

These tiles are standard obstacles that are commonly placed before and during most bouts.

## GUTS TILES (10)

These tiles are standard obstacles that are commonly placed before and during most bouts.

## STATUS INDICATORS (44)

Status indicators are placed in the status slots on the aerie command panel. They indicate the various status effects that are affecting a player's helot.

## COMMAND (20) & DECEPTION (10) TOKENS

These tokens represent the remaining command and deception available to each player.

## ACTION MENU (4)

A quick player reference sheet with available commands, situational rules, reference charts, and other helpful information.

## LANISTA CARDS (8)

(8) cards featuring of the NEXUS's finest up-and-coming lanistas. Complete with color illustrations and character game stats.

### HELOT MOTIVATION CARDS (4)

These cards feature the trait bonuses and unique trait abilities of each helot motivation.

### WEAPON CARDS (14)

Weapon cards are placed in a pile to the side of the board. During a bout, a player may be asked to select a specific card or draw (1) at random.

### INFLUENCE CARDS (24)

Influence cards are usually instant play actions. Cards are evenly distributed before the match and players may keep the number of cards equal to their lanista's influence.

### HAZARD CARDS (4)

Quick-reference tarot-sized cards featuring hazard rules and any applicable tables.

### TURNING POINT CARDS (25)

Turning Point Cards are kept shuffled in a stack near the board. When a player fills their tuning point counter, they will draw a card.

### CRED COINS (700)

Cred Coins represent fame and wealth, making the player who amasses the most the winner of a NEXUS bout.

### DIRECTIONAL COMPASS DIE (1)

This eight-sided specialty die features all cardinal and intercardinal directions. It will be used at various times during bouts when a random direction is called for.



### GRID DICE (2)

These (2) eight-sided dice, (1) green and (1) orange, will be used to generate random locations on the NEXUS gameboard.

### TRAIT DICE (4)

A six-sided white die, featuring each of the (6) traits, that is used during the initiative round to both determine initiative and increase the player's trait reserves.

### RATIO DICE (4)

This black six-sided die is used by players during the initiative round to determine their movement/action ratio, aid in determining initiative, and to fill the player's Turning Point Counter.

### ATTACK DICE (5)

A select number of these six-sided red dice are rolled by the attacking player to resolve combat actions.

### DEFENSE DICE (5)

A select number of these six-sided blue dice are rolled by the defending player to resolve defensive actions.

### TRAIT COUNTER DICE (24)

These six-sided black dice are numbered from (0) to (5) and used to track a player's helot trait reserves.

# BARGE BOUT WALK-THROUGH



Scan for more details

## SETUP STEP 1: PICK A LANISTA (PG.6)

- First, each player picks a pre-generated lanista from the deck of **Lanista Cards (pg.6)**.

## SETUP STEP 2: SELECT YOUR HELOTS (PG.7)

- Second, select a **Helot Motivation Card (pg.7)** and place it in front of the player along with an **Action Menu** (a quick reference sheet of rules and commands).
- Now, place the appropriate amount of Cred Coins into the **Overall and Location Conditions (pg.26)** of each player's **Aerie Command Panel (pg.37)**.
- Finally, set all **Trait Counters** to (0) and then add each helot's **Motivation Trait Advantages (pg.7)** to the corresponding Trait Counter Values on the Aerie Command Panel.

## SETUP STEP 3: DISTRIBUTE INFLUENCE CARDS (PG.8)

- Shuffle the deck of **Influence Cards (pg.8)** and **distribute ALL cards evenly** face down to each player. The players may now look at their cards and **keep the number of cards equal to their lanista's influence** to use during the bout. The remaining cards are then discarded back into the deck. Influence cards are not revealed to the opposing player until used. So, players should keep them hidden from one another.

## SETUP STEP 4: SET UP THE BARGE (PG.9)

- Pick an **Unsanctioned Barge** to host the barge bout.
- Players may use their own custom arena designs or select a **Barge Schematic (pg.38)** to determine the location and placement of all necessary obstacles and hazards.
- Now, all players should familiarize themselves with each of the featured **Hazard Rule Sets (pg.40)**.
- Now, Place (5) **Cred Coins** per player into the **Crowd Coin Pile (pg.12)**.
- When ready, shuffle the **Turning Point Cards** and place the helots in their **Starting Positions (pg.9)**.

## THE COMMAND CYCLE (PG.10)

- To begin each action cycle, an **Initiative Roll** is made with each player simultaneously rolling a **Ratio Die** along with a **Trait Die** to determine the following...
  - The player **Command Round** turn order.
  - The **Action/Movement Ratio (pg.16)** of each player's helot.
  - Updates to the player's **Helot Trait Counter (pg.14)**.
- Once turn order has been established, players may make updates to their **Turning Point Counter (pg.15)** and execute their helot's **Command Round**, in order, one at a time, until the final player has finished. The Command Cycle has now ended.
- **Repeat The Command Cycle** until all but (1) of the helots are **Killed** or **Incapacitated**.

## DETERMINE THE WINNER (PG.13)

- When only (1) helot remains, award the player a **(10) Cred Last Helot Standing Bonus** from the Crowd Coin Pile.
- Count the Crowd Coin Pile and each individual player's Cred Coins, the highest total is declared the winner.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Players will be keeping track of TURNING POINT COUNTERS, TRAIT COUNTERS, TURNING POINT CARDS, as well as any HAZARD-related game mechanics, etc. It is a good idea to delegate some of these responsibilities to a Pit Boss if one is available.

# SETUP



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## STEP 1: PICKING YOUR LANISTA

You will find that there are (8) pre-generated lanistas to choose from.

## LANISTA CARDS

Each features a different pre-generated lanista along with their own influence, deception, and command values.



**HREONLRLYINS**

**INFLUENCE**  
2

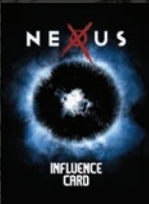
**DECEPTION**  
0

**COMMAND**  
4



## LANISTA STATS

Each of the (8) Lanista Cards feature a pre-generated lanista with the following statistics **Influence**, **Command** and **Deception**.



### INFLUENCE

This represents the number of Influence Cards you will be able to keep beginning the bout. Influence cards represent the bribes, cashed in favors, and extortion attempts that occurred before the bout began. Consult the individual influence cards for descriptions of their effects and rules for their use.



### DECEPTION

This stat represents the number of times you can dictate your opponent's Movement/Action Ratio instead of them. Opponents may spend (2) Deception to block your Deception; This also prevents you from using another Deception against your opponent during this Command Round, even if you have another available.



### COMMAND

This represents expendable bonus Command Points that may be used to increase MP or AP during your own Command Rounds over the course of the bout. Once used, these tokens are discarded.



## STEP 2: SELECTING YOUR HELOT

There are (4) different motivations (pg.35) to select from, each with its own inherent strengths and special abilities.

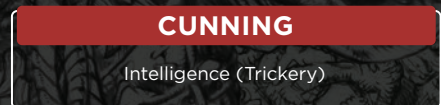
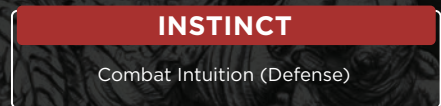
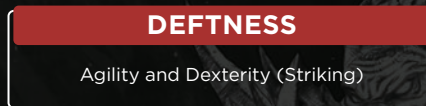
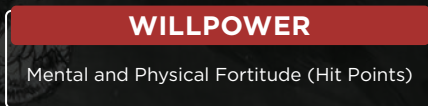
### MOTIVATION CARDS

Each card features a different helot motivation along with their own trait bonuses, unique trait abilities, and a special talent.



### HELOT TRAITS

Each helot has the following traits: **Willpower**, **Instinct**, **Physicality**, **Deftness**, **Swagger** and **Cunning**. The helot's trait advantage value will increase the corresponding trait counters before the start of the bout.



### HELOT HEALTH

Each helot begins with (50) **Overall Condition** and varying **Location Condition** values.

#### OVERALL CONDITION (pg.26)

This is your helot's overall health and endurance. If this value is brought to (0), your helot will collapse due to exhaustion. Each helot starts with (50)

#### BODY LOCATION CONDITION (pg.26)

Each location has its own health value along with its own consequences upon reaching (0). These consequences range from attacking and defensive penalties to unconsciousness or death. **Refer to page 26 for starting values.**

### HELOT SPECIAL ABILITIES

Each helot has its own set of special defensive maneuvers, attacks and abilities that are inherent or may be utilized at the cost of Trait Reserves. These reserves are tracked by each player's Trait Advantage Counter.

## STEP 3: DISTRIBUTING INFLUENCE CARDS

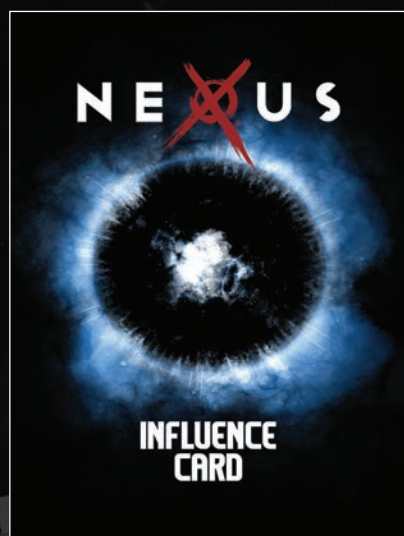
Influence cards represent the bribes, cashed in favors and extortion attempts that occurred before the bout began. Consult the individual influence cards for descriptions of their effects and the rules for their use.

- Take the deck of Influence Cards and shuffle them thoroughly.
- Keeping the cards face down, distribute all (24) cards evenly to each player.
- Without revealing any of the cards to their opponent, each player keeps the number of cards equal to their lanista's influence and places the remaining cards into a discard stack.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Influence cards are not revealed to the opposing player until used; With this in mind, players should keep them hidden from one another.*

## INFLUENCE CARDS

Representing bribes and other pre-fight arrangements, these cards are a player's ace in the hole.



## STEP 4: SETTING UP THE BARGE

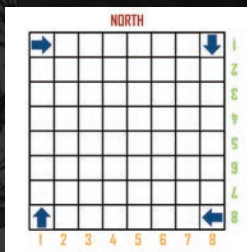
Every barge has its own set of obstacles and hazards...

### SELECTING A BARGE TO HOST THE BOUT

The players can select a schematic from page 38 of this rulebook, they can agree on thier own barge setup, or they can visit <https://d-verse.com> to view or download additional schematics for an unsanctioned barge to host the bout. Each barge is unique with its own obstacles and hazards for helots to contend with.



more barge schematics at  
<https://d-verse.com>



### PLACING HELOTS

(2) players sit across from one another at the north and south ends of the game board, with additional players sitting in an available east or west position. Each players' helot enters the barge arena in that player's closest leftmost square with the helot's **Forward-Facing Direction (FFD)** facing away from the player.

### PLACING BARGE OBSTACLES

Refer to a barge's arena schematics for the placement of barge Obstacles.

### PLACING BARGE HAZARDS

First, check the barge's arena schematics for the placement of barge hazards, you will find barge-specific hazard locations there on occasion. More likely, you will find information regarding the placement of barge hazards under that particular hazard's rule entry in the Barge Hazard section of this manual (pg.40).

### RANDOMLY PLACED OBJECTS (RPO'S)

Randomly Placed Objects (RPOs) are determined by rolling one (1) Green and one (1) Orange eight-sided die. The resulting numbers are then used to place the object. The **ORANGE die** is used to determine the East/West location of the object, with (1) being the West most square and (8) being the East most square. The **GREEN die** is used to determine the North/South location of the object, with (1) being the North most square and (8) being the South most square. Refer to each specific object's rules for information about handling already occupied squares.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Many hazards use RPOs to determine their placement or spawning position.

# PLAYING THROUGH THE COMMAND CYCLE

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more details



This is the meat of the game and where all the fun begins. Each **Command Cycle** consists of an **Initiative Round** followed by the execution of each player's **Command Round**.

## INITIATIVE ROUND

To begin a Command Cycle, each player rolls a Trait Die along with a Ratio Die to determine the player's initiative as well as their helot's movement point/action point ratio.

### Each player rolls a Trait Die along with a Ratio Die (Black d6)

#### Players now determine Initiative

- Looking at the Trait Die values, first order the player's results using the following ranking system
- INST > DEFT > CUNN > ALL OTHER VALUES
- Now use the rolled d6 value (from highest to lowest) to resolve tiebreakers.
- In the rare event that there is still a tie, tied players roll A PAIR OF DIFFERENT (Red or Blue) d6s to resolve initiative (again, ordered from highest to lowest value).

#### Players now lock in their helot's Action/Movement Ratio

- Place the rolled ratio die, keeping its original value, into the determined initiative number slot on each player's Aerie Command Panel.

#### Players now update their helot's Trait Advantage Counter (pg.14)

- Refer to the value of the rolled trait die and increase the corresponding trait counter on your Aerie Command Panel by (1).

## COMMAND ROUNDS

Now that initiative order has been determined, each player takes turns executing their Command Round one at a time in order of initiative. The Command Round order of operations is as follows...

### Update your Turning Point Counter and execute any related actions (pg.15)

- Taking a Cred Coin from the Crowd Coin Pile, update your Turning Point Counter using your Ratio Die (Black d6) value.
- Now resolve any Turning Point Events in their order of execution (pg.15).

### Declare your helot's Action/Movement Ratio (pg.16)

- You have (6) Command Points to spend each action round that must be split between Movement Points and Action Points.
- Using the locked in value of your Ratio Die, allocate those Command Points to your helot's Movement Point Reserve or its Action Point Reserve.
- The surplus Command Points are then allocated to the remaining reserve.

### Spend your helot's Action Points and Movement Points using Commands (pg.17)

- Drawing from their reserve, spend your helot's Action and Movement Points by executing movements and actions in any order combination you desire (e.g. move, attack, then move again).
- Any unused Action or Movement Points at the end of your action round will cause you to forfeit (1) Cred per unused Point, adding the Cred to the Crowd Coin Pile.
- If you have unspent points but have no cred, your helot will take (1) damage to their Overall Condition per unused point instead, adding the Cred Coin(s) to the Crowd Coin Pile.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Command Points DO NOT carry over to the helot's next Command Round. Any of their helot's unused Action or Movement Points are forfeited at the end of a helot's Command Round.*

# CRED COINS



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Cred Coins are used for tracking a helot's health, Turning Points, the crowd's enjoyment of the bout, and a lanista's increase of fame and fortune throughout it. Ultimately these Cred Coins represent endgame victory points.

## HELOT CONDITION TRACKING

Use Cred Coins to track your helot's Overall and Location Conditions on your Aerie Command Panel.

## PLAYER CRED COIN PILES

Each player will amass and expend Cred Coins throughout the bout. An individual player's accumulation of Cred Coins is referred to as the Player's Cred. Much like a helot's existence is in servitude to you, as a lanista, you exist in servitude to the pursuit of fame and fortune. In the NEXUS Arena Combat System, this is represented and measured by your accumulation of Cred Coins during the bout.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *These are the only Cred Coins counted toward the end game victory conditions.*

### Gaining Cred Coins

- **Damaging an opposing helot:** Any damage dealt by your helot to an opponent's helot is transferred directly into your Player Cred Coin Pile. This includes both Location and Overall Condition damage.
- **Successfully land a Turning Point Damage Modifier (TPDM):** After the successful execution of your Turning Point Damage Modifier (TPDM), take the (6) Cred Coins in your Turning Point Counter and place them into your Player Cred Coin Pile.
- **Fame Commands:** Gloating doubles the rewards of a successful attack at the cost of a temporary defensive penalty. These Cred Coins are taken directly from the Crowd Coin Pile, only if available.
- **Turning Point Cards and other narrative sources:** You may be instructed to take Cred Coins from the Crowd Coin Pile or another Player via Turning Point or Influence Cards.
- **Finishing Blow:** You are rewarded with bonus Cred Coins from the Crowd Coin Pile if your helot lands a Killing (10 Cred Coins) or an Incapacitating (5 Cred Coins) blow to another helot.
- **Last Helot Standing:** Receive a (10) Cred Coin bonus from the Crowd Coin Pile if your helot is the last one standing.

### Losing Cred Coins

- **Helot Command costs:** Some Commands require Cred Coins from your Player Cred Coin Pile to execute them. For Example, Clinch draws Cred Coins from the Player Cred Pile to regain Overall Condition.
- **Unspent MP or AP:** You may choose, or be unable, to spend your helot's entire MP or AP during a Command Round. When this happens, you will transfer a Cred Coin from your Player Cred Pile to the Crowd Coin Pile for each unspent point.
- **Turning Point Cards and other narrative sources:** You may be instructed to give Cred Coins to another player or the Crowd Coin Pile via Turning Point or Influence Cards.

## THE CROWD COIN PILE

At the start of each bout (5) Cred Coins per player are placed into a special area designated as the Crowd Coin Pile. This pile of Cred Coins represents the entertainment value of the match and the crowd's perception of the players' performances. At the conclusion of the bout this pile will measure if the crowd felt a player deserved the win or thought they just got lucky.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *The initial Crowd Coin Pile coins are taken directly from the box, not the players.*

### Increasing The Crowd Coin Pile

- **Damage done by Hazards, Turning Points, or any other non-helot entities:** Helots may be damaged by Floor Saws, assassins or even the crowd itself; Place these Cred Coins into the Crowd Coin Pile.
- **Overall Condition costs for various Commands:** Some Commands take a toll on your helot's Overall Condition; Place these Cred Coins into the Crowd Coin Pile.
- **Unspent MP or AP Penalty:** Whether you are drawing from your own cred or your helot's Overall Condition, place these Cred Coins into the Crowd Coin Pile.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If the Crowd Coin Pile is empty, the only time you may draw more coins from the box is if a player needs a coin to mark their Turning Point Counter. Otherwise, coins are unavailable.*



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# ENDING THE BOUT & DETERMINING THE WINNER

Winning a NEXUS bout is not as straightforward as it would seem. It is not as simple as merely defeating your opponent's helots.

## ENDING THE BOUT

There is only one way to end a NEXUS bout; The incapacitation or death of all but (1) competing helot; On rare occasion, all competing helots will expire!

### Incapacitation

A helot is incapacitated if its Overall Condition is reduced to (0).

- Award (5) bonus Cred Coins from the Crowd Coin Pile to the helot landing the incapacitating blow.
- The attacking helot receives an extra two (2) AP Prone Bonus (pg.30) against the incapacitated helot.
- When a helot is incapacitated and the attacker has remaining AP, it can be spent attacking the helot, giving damage to the player's Cred Pile as normal; The remaining attacks are automatically successful, rolling only for damage against a defensive roll of (0).
- If the attacking helot takes its victim from incapacitation to death, its owner will receive an additional (5) Cred Coins.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *When incapacitating a helot, the attacking helot may finish its current command round as normal, but afterwards the incapacitated helot is replaced with a Guts Tile.*

### Death

A helot is killed if its Head or Chest Location is reduced to (0).

- Award (10) bonus Cred Coins from the Crowd Coin Pile to the helot landing the killing blow.

## DETERMINING THE WINNER

Once the bout has ended, it is time to declare the true winner of the event. Who has done the most to advance their own fame, bit cache, and reputation during the match?!

- First, award the owner of the last standing helot a (10) Cred Coin bonus from the Crowd Coin Pile.
- Now, tally up each Cred Coin in the Crowd Coin Pile as well as the Cred Coins in each player's Cred Coin Pile, Ignoring any remaining Cred Coins on the player's Aerie Command Panels.
- The player with the most Cred Coins, if their total is greater than that of the Crowd Coin Pile, is declared the winner.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If the Crowd Coin Pile coin total is greater than the highest Player Cred Coin count, the bout is considered a draw.*

# TRAIT RESERVE COUNTERS



Scan for more details

Trait Reserve Counters are located between a player's status display and Turning Point Counter on their Aerie Command Panel and are used to track your helot's Trait Reserves. Trait Reserves represent opportunities for your helot to perform special actions. Some of these actions are common and some are unique to your helot's motivation. These opportunities will become available to your helot as you grow your Trait Reserves during the initiative rounds throughout the course of the bout.

## BEGINNING TRAIT RESERVE VALUES

Each helot motivation features one or more trait advantages on their helot motivation card. These are the starting values of each helot's Trait Reserves. Each player's Trait Counter is adjusted to reflect these values before the bout begins.

## INCREASING TRAIT RESERVES

During the initiative round players will roll a Trait Die along with their Ratio Die. Noting the resulting trait of the roll, increase its corresponding Trait Reserve value by (1). Trait Reserve values can never rise above (5) and remain at that limit until spent.

## SPENDING TRAIT RESERVES

You can spend your Trait Reserves in various ways throughout the bout.

- **Trait Abilities:** These are an universally shared list of abilities that any helot may perform by having the necessary Trait Points in their reserves.
- **Unique Trait Abilities:** These abilities are listed on a helot's motivation card. Just like regular Trait Abilities, a helot may perform them by having the necessary Trait Points in their reserves.
- **Cancel the negative effects of a Turning Point:** Certain Turning Point Cards will detail trait spend values that, if paid, will allow the player the opportunity to negate the negative effects of the card towards their helot.

The following **Trait Abilities** are available to all helots, regardless of their motivation. See pages 32-34 for more details.

	WILL(pg.32)	INST(pg.32)	PHYS(pg.33)	DEFT(pg.33)	SWAG(pg.34)	CUNN(pg.34)
5	<b>Perseverance</b> Re-Roll any roll for any reason	<b>Elusive</b> +SDS to Defend for this Command Round	<b>Haymaker</b> +(4) Damage Bonus to a successful attack	<b>Tunnel Vision</b> +SDS to Attack for this Command Round	<b>Talk Shit</b> Opponent is -SDS to Attack for this Command Round	<b>Made You Look</b> Change opponents FFD 180 Degrees
4	<b>Merely a Flesh Wound</b> Ignore Overall Condition Damage	<b>Combo Breaker</b> Stop a combo after a successful Focused Attack	<b>Push</b> Move opponent back (1) Square. Your helot remains in it's current location.	<b>Tripping</b> If opponent leaves any adjacent square, you instantly render them prone	<b>Win Them Over</b> Gain (5) Cred from Crowd Pile	<b>Can't Fool Me</b> Ignore a Deception or Influence Card
3	<b>I'm Still Standing</b> Resist Prone, even after a failed roll	<b>Counterattack</b> On a successful block, treat as a standard attack. Only used against Melee Attack Commands. Must be called before rolls are made.	<b>Unshackled</b> Instantly remove Grappled Status	<b>Hurdle</b> Leap over an Obstacle or Hazard	<b>Turn Crowd</b> Opponent Loses (3) Cred to the Crowd Pile	<b>Jack of All Traits</b> Increase any other trait counter by (1)



# TURNING POINTS



Scan for more details

Turning Points and the Turning Point Counter represent big swings in momentum during a bout. It is important to understand how they are tracked, what their effects are and the order of Turning Point Events.

## THE TURNING POINT COUNTER

Each player has their own Turning Point Counter consisting of (6) placeholders individually numbered from (1) to (6). As these values are rolled during the Initiative Round, they are marked, just once, on that player's Turning Point Counter. When a player has filled all (6) of their slots, that is referred to as a **TURNING POINT** and they will then draw a card from the Turning Point Card Deck. A Turning Point Card is a short narrative that has some positive or negative effect on the helots in the bout. In addition to drawing a card, their helot also receives a +(6) damage modifier on their next successful Non-Wild Attack Command.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If, when making an initiative roll, a player rolls a previously rolled number, they DO NOT mark it a second time on their Turning Point Counter.*

## TURNING POINTS

Turning Points can affect a barge bout and its helots in various ways. Turning Points are used to both trigger and conclude various events during a bout. Turning Points also provide the triggering player's helot with a damage bonus on their next successful attack.

Here is a list of Turning Point Events in their order of execution

1. **Execute any instructions from previously drawn cards or abilities.** There are myriad reasons you or your opponent may be anticipating or dreading the next Turning Point. Helots' abilities and Turning Point Cards may have specific instructions that pertain to the NEXT Turning Point or possibly the FIRST. These instructions are to be carried out FIRST when a Turning Point is reached.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If there is ever more than (1) helot simultaneously affected by a Turning Point or Hazard event, start with the triggering player, and then move clockwise around the table.*

2. **Barge Hazards are triggered (if applicable).** The opposing helots are not the only thing trying to kill your champion! If the barge hosting the bout has Barge Hazards with specific instructions for each Turning Point, carry those out now. Barge Hazards should be lined up and triggered in order from left to right.
3. **The player triggering the Turning Point draws a TURNING POINT CARD and executes its instructions.** Draw a Turning Point Card from the deck.
4. **The helot belonging to the player who triggered the Turning Point will receive a Turning Point Damage Modifier (TPDM).** That player's helot now receives a +(6) Damage Bonus on their next successful attack. (Excluding WILD and GRAPPLE).

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *The helot must use their current Turning Point Damage Modifier before any of the player's rolls count towards their next Turning Point. Only after landing an attack with the TPDM do you collect the (6) Turning Point Cred Coins and place them in your Cred Pile.*

5. **If possible, the player may then allocate Command Points to Movement Points and Action Points and complete their Command Round.** Now continue the Command Round as per usual.

## TURNING POINT CARDS

Narrative cards that can impact one or all the competing helots.

Scan for  
more details



# COMMAND, MOVEMENT & ACTION POINTS

As a lanista, it is your job to allocate Command Points between movements and actions. You must then use your commands to put your helots in the best position to survive and possibly win their bout.

## COMMAND POINTS

At the start of their Command Round each player is given a pool of (6) Command Points.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Look at your selected lanista's stats, Command (pg.6) represents the number of expendable bonus Command Points that may be used during your own Command Rounds over the course of the bout. These points may be used at any time during your command round to increase either MP or AP.

### Declaring your helot's action/movement ratio

You allocate your **Command Points** between your helot's **Movement Point Reserve** and its **Action Point Reserve** based on your ratio die value, rolled during the Initiative Round. The ratio die value represents the Command Points that can be allocated to the reserve of the player's choosing, with the remaining Command Points being allocated to the unselected reserve. For example, let's say you have rolled a (2). You may spend (2) on action, leaving (4) for movement, or spend (2) on movement, leaving (4) for action.

## MOVEMENT POINTS (MP)

These are points that may be spent commanding your helot to move, rotate, stand-up or possibly even free itself from an opponent's grapple.

## ACTION POINTS (AP)

These are points that may be spent commanding your helot to attack, take aim, grapple, or even mock an opponent.

### Spending your helot's movement points & action points

You will spend your helot's MP and AP by selecting from a list of **Commands** (pg.17). You can execute your commands in any order you desire. You can even mix them up and start with a movement command, instruct your helot to perform an action and then finish with another movement.

### Unspent points

There are penalties for wasting your helot's MP and AP. The crowd expects action and grow annoyed when they feel your helot is not reaching its full potential. Due to this, you will lose (1) Cred for each unspent MP or AP at the end of your Command Round. Have no Cred? Well then, start deducting from your helot's Overall Condition instead; This is due to the crowd throwing debris at your helot to show their lack of support. All unspent point penalties are paid to the Crowd Coin Pile.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** "Wait! The fight just begun, and I have no Cred yet! Is my helot already losing Overall Condition?!" Yep. I guess you better get it over there to fight.

# COMMANDS



Scan for more details

As a lanista it is your job to put your helot in its best position to win via your commands. Each command has its own Action Point Cost (APC) or Movement Point Cost (MPC). These tables detail the APC or MPC necessary for your helot to execute or attempt each of your available commands. See pages 18-25 for details.

MPC	MOVEMENT COMMANDS (pg.18)	d6 ROLL
1	<b>Move forward</b> Keeping FFD	NA
1	<b>Rotate FFD 90°</b> Limit (2) per square	NA
2	<b>Move backward</b> Keeping FFD	NA
2	<b>Move left or right</b> Keeping FFD	NA

APC	GRAPPLE COMMANDS (pg.22)	SD
1 & -1 Cred	<b>Clinch</b> Regenerate a helot's Overall Condition	NA
Normal MP Cost	<b>Drag</b>	SD
1	<b>Takedown</b> Random LD & leaves opponent Prone	+SDS
2	<b>Throw</b> (2) AP per square	-SDS
1	<b>Crush</b> Overall Condition damage	SD

MPC	ADVANCED MOVEMENT COMMANDS (pg.19)	d6 ROLL
1	<b>Standup</b> Removes the Prone State	4+
1 & -1 OC	<b>Liberate</b> Removes the Grappled State	4+
1	<b>Backflip</b> Keeping FFD	4+
1	<b>Sidestep</b> Keeping FFD	4+

APC	AIM COMMANDS (pg.24)	SD
2	<b>AIM wild</b> Overall Condition Damage Only	-SDS
3	<b>AIM standard</b> Overall Condition and Random LD	SD
4	<b>AIM focused</b> Overall Condition and Targeted LD	-SDS

APC	MELEE ATTACK COMMANDS (pg.20)	SD
1 & -1 OC	<b>Wild Attack</b> Overall Condition damage only	-SDS
2	<b>Standard Attack</b> Overall Condition & random LD	SD
3	<b>Focused Attack</b> Overall Condition & targeted LD	-SDS
2	<b>Grapple</b> Precursor to all Grapple Actions	SD
2	<b>Feint</b> +SDS to the next attack	NA
3+ 1 Per SA	<b>Combo</b> A focused ATK followed by standard ATK's for (1) AP each. After missing the opening attack all subsequent attacks miss.	VARIES

APC	DEFENSE COMMANDS (pg.25)	SD
NA	<b>Defend</b> Automatic with no AP cost	SD
2	<b>Mend</b> Removes the Bleeding State	NA
3	<b>Stop, Drop &amp; Roll</b> Removes the Flaming State, but leaves the helot Prone	NA

APC	FAME COMMANDS (pg.25)	SD
1	<b>Gloating</b> Doubles your Cred after a successful attack but also leaves your helot -SDS until its next turn	NA

## MOVEMENT COMMANDS

The most basic commands deal with navigating your helot around the barge arena. There is no die roll needed to perform them; you simply must have enough Movement Points available to fulfill the MPC requirements. It is important to keep up with your helot's Forward-Facing Direction (FFD), as even rotating your helot 90-degrees has an MPC value.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Your helot's Forward-Facing Direction (FFD) cannot be changed without spending (1) Movement Point per 90-degree turn!

### MOVE FORWARD

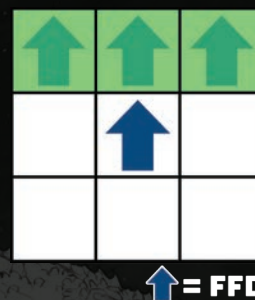
**Description:** Command your helot to move (1) square Forward or Side-slipping into an unoccupied space in any of the (3) adjoining forward squares relative to the attacker's FFD.

**Cost:** (1) MPC

**d6 Roll Result Needed:** NA

**Success Result:** Move your helot (1) square forward.

**Failure Repercussions:** NA



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Moving your helot forward at a 45-degree angle (diagonally) while keeping their FFD is considered (1) forward move.

### ROTATE

**Description:** Instruct your helot to Rotate their FFD 90-degrees.

**Cost:** (1) MPC

**d6 Roll Result Needed:** NA

**Success Result:** Rotate your helot's FFD 90-degrees left or right.

**Failure Repercussions:** NA



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Your helot is limited to (2) consecutive rotation movements in any single space and both rotations must be in the same direction.

### MOVE BACKWARD, LEFT or RIGHT

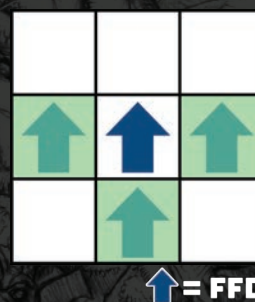
**Description:** Tell your helot to move (1) square Backward, Left or Right while maintaining their current FFD.

**Cost:** (2) MPC

**d6 Roll Result Needed:** NA

**Success Result:** Move your helot (1) square backward, left, or right while keeping their current FFD.

**Failure Repercussions:** NA



## ADVANCED MOVEMENT COMMANDS

Not all movement is automatic and without risk. The following commands not only require the necessary Movement Points be available, but also hinge their success or failure on the result of a d6 roll.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *The chance of failure is what separates Advanced Movement from Standard Movement Commands.*

### STAND-UP

**Description:** Tell your helot to Stand-Up. Certain attacks or events can result in a helot being in a Prone position (knocked down). When a helot is Prone, they must Stand-Up before taking any other commands.

**Cost:** (1) MPC

**d6 Roll Result Needed:** (4) or greater

**Success Result:** Your helot is Erect and no longer Prone.

**Failure Repercussions:** If the helot fails, they remain Prone and may continue making attempts to Stand-Up if they have the available Movement Points.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If a helot is Prone during an opponent's command round, the opposing helot receives an additional (2) Action Points that may only be used to attack the prone helot.*

### BACKFLIP and SIDESTEP

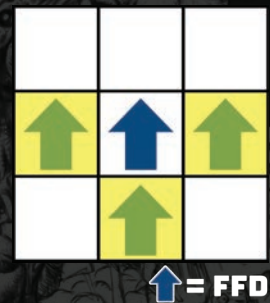
**Description:** Instruct your helot to quickly backup or sidestep to the left or right. These are risky maneuvers that potentially come with a modest reward. When executing a backflip or sidestep, you may move your helot (1) square Backward, Left or Right, while maintaining their current FFD for only (1) MPC instead of the normal (2) MPC required for executing a standard movement in the same direction.

**Cost:** (1) MPC

**d6 Roll Result Needed:** (4) or greater

**Success Result:** Move your helot (1) square backward, left, or right while keeping their current FFD.

**Failure Repercussions:** Failure renders your helot Prone in the square they were attempting to move to, maintaining their original FFD.



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *It is impossible to perform Backflip or Sidestep while Grappling. It is always (2) MPC for backwards and side movement while Grappling.*

### LIBERATE

**Description:** Command your helot to Liberate itself from its opponent's grasp. If your helot is Grappled at the beginning of their Action Round, they will need to Liberate before taking any other commands.

**Cost:** (1) MPC and -(1) OC (Overall Condition) to be transferred to the Crowd Coin Pile

**d6 Roll Result Needed:** (4) or greater

**Success Result:** Your helot is now Free and no longer Grappled.

**Failure Repercussions:** If the helot fails, they remain Grappled and may continue making attempts to Liberate if they have the available Movement Points.

## MELEE ATTACK COMMANDS

There are multiple attack methods available to your helot. Each with its own effects, Action Point Costs, and SDS Modifiers. The attempted execution of some of these commands may even take away from your helot's Overall Condition.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** All attacks are automatically defended with no Action Point Cost to the opposing helot.

### WILD ATTACK

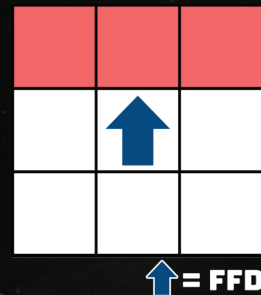
**Description:** Tell your helot to make a flailing attack intended to make any kind of contact with its opponent.

**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot is in any of the (3) adjoining forward squares relative to the attacking helot's FFD.

**Damages:** The opposing helot's Overall Condition.

**Cost:** (1) APC and -(1) OC (Overall Condition) to be transferred to the Crowd Coin Pile

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** -SDS



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Damage Bonuses (other than Weapons) do not apply to Wild Attacks. However, Damage Penalties do still apply.

### STANDARD ATTACK

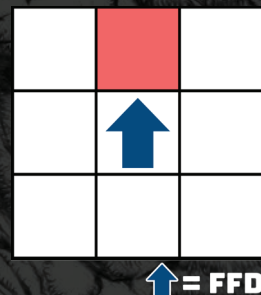
**Description:** Instruct your helot to make a premeditated and substantial attack.

**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot occupies the center adjoining forward square relative to the attacking helot's FFD.

**Damages:** The opposing helot's Overall Condition as well as a Random d6 Body Location. After rolling a successful attack and calculating damage amount, roll a d6 to determine what Body Location (pg.26) to apply the damage to.

**Cost:** (2) APC

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** NONE



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** It is impossible to do damage to an opposing helot's Head Location with a Standard Attack.

### FOCUSED ATTACK

**Description:** Command your helot to attack the specific body location of an opposing helot.

**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot occupies the center adjoining forward square relative to the attacking helot's FFD.

**Damages:** The opposing helot's Overall Condition as well as a Specified Body Location.

**Cost:** (3) APC

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** -SDS



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Focused attacks are the only way to do damage to an opposing helot's Head Location.

## GRAPPLE

**Description:** Command your helot to grapple an opponent as a precursor to the Clinch, Drag, Throw, Crush, and Takedown Command.

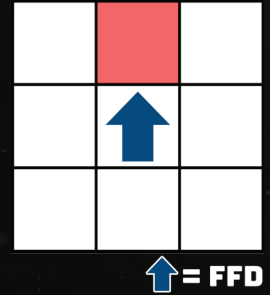
**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot occupies the center adjoining forward square relative to the attacking helot's FFD.

**Damage:** None.

**Cost:** (2) APC

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** None.

**Success Result:** The opposing helot is now Grappled, opening the Clinch, Drag, Throw, Crush, and Takedown commands to your helot.



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** You must have a functional Left Upper AND Right Upper to Grapple. Furthermore, you may not Grapple with an unsheathed weapon.

**ANOTHER IMPORTANT NOTE:** You may Grapple a Prone opponent. If the attack results in a SUCCESS, the opponent is Grappled and no longer Prone. On a failure however, the opponent remains Prone.

**YET ANOTHER IMPORTANT NOTE:** You may not Grapple the grappled. If two helots are already engaged in a grapple, a third helot cannot attempt to grapple either one of them.

## COMBO

**Description:** A consecutive series of premeditated attacks that must begin with a Focused Attack and is followed by any number of predeclared Standard Attacks. If the opening attack is a success, each subsequent Standard Attack costs only (1) AP instead of the standard (2) AP.

**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot occupies the center adjoining forward square relative to the attacking helot's FFD.

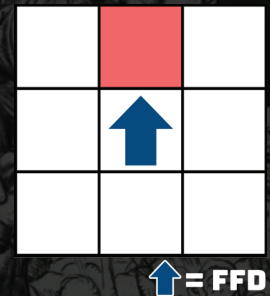
**Damage:** Varies (See Focused and Standard Attacks).

**Cost:** (3) APC +(1) APC for each declared Standard Attack

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** Varies (See Focused and Standard Attacks).

**Success Result:** If the opening Focused Attack succeeds, all remaining Standard Attacks are played out regardless of their outcome.

**Failure Repercussions:** If the opening Focused Attack is defended, the remaining Standard Attacks are automatically defended as well.



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** You must declare all subsequent Standard Attacks before executing the opening Focused Attack.

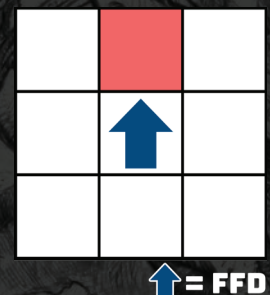
## FEINT

**Description:** Faking or feinting an attack for the purpose of setting up the next Attack.

**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot occupies the center adjoining forward square relative to the attacking helot's FFD.

**Cost:** (2) APC

**Effect:** +SDS bonus to the next Attack.



## GRAPPLE COMMANDS

Once the helot successfully Grapples an opponent, you have a lot of command options, each with their own damages, effects, and Action Point Costs.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *An opposing helot remains grappled until performing a successful Liberate. Failing the following Grapple Commands does not Liberate the defending helot unless explicitly stated.*

### CLINCH

**Description:** Order your helot to tie up its opponent and recuperate some energy at the cost of the crowd's wrath.

**Position:** This command is only available if the helot is either grappled or grappling.

**Damages:** None; Your helot recovers (1) Overall Condition by pulling (1) Cred Coin from your Player Cred Pile.

**Cost:** (1) APC and (1) Cred Coin to be transferred from your Cred Pile to your helot's Overall Condition counter.

**Success Result:** Your helot recovers (1) Overall Condition and there is no change to Grappled status.

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** Automatic Success

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If you have no cred available in your cred pile your helot cannot Clinch.*

### DRAG

**Description:** Instruct your helot to transport the opponent to a less desirable location against its will.

**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot is grappled by the attacking helot.

**Damages:** None.

**Cost:** Normal Movement Point Cost with no Action Point Cost.

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** None. Roll for each movement command.

**Success Result:** The opposing helot is placed in its new location, keeping its FFD relative to the attacker, and remaining Grappled.

**Failure Repercussions:** None; The opposing helot remains grappled and both helots remain in the same position.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Dragging an opponent into a hazard requires a d6 roll of 4+ to prevent your helot from being pulled into the hazard with them. If pulled in, resolve the opposing helot's position first.*

**ANOTHER IMPORTANT NOTE:** *You cannot drag your opponent through a hazard. If rotation carries an opponent through a hazard, the opponent was carried over it and suffers no ill effects.*

### THROW

**Description:** Command your helot to pick an opposing helot up and toss it to a new, likely unpleasant, location.

**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot is grappled by the attacking helot.

**Damages:** None.

**Cost:** (2) APC per square.

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** -SDS

**Success Result:** The opposing helot is placed prone in its new location, no longer grappled, and keeping its original FFD.

**Failure Repercussions:** The opposing helot is no longer grappled.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Throwing an opposing helot into a Spike Trap or Floor Saw is the only way to ensure there is no chance of your helot being pulled in with it.*



## TAKEDOWN

**Description:** Command your helot to throw its opponent to the ground with tremendous force.

**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot is grappled by the attacking helot.

**Damages:** The opponent's Overall Condition as well as a Random d6 Body Location. After rolling a successful attack and calculating damage amount, roll a d6 to determine what Body Location (pg.26) to apply the damage to.

**Cost:** (1) APC

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** +SDS

**Success Result:** The opposing helot is placed prone, no longer grappled, and keeping its original FFD.

**Failure Repercussions:** None; The opposing helot remains grappled and both helots remain in the same position.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *After a successful takedown, your helot will immediately receive its (2) AP bonus against a prone opponent.*

## CRUSH

**Description:** Instruct your helot to squeeze the life out of their opponent.

**Position:** This command is only available if the opposing helot is grappled by the attacking helot.

**Damages:** The opponent's Overall Condition.

**Cost:** (1) APC

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** None.

**Success Result:** The opposing helot takes Overall Condition damage.

**Failure Repercussions:** None; The opposing helot remains grappled and both helots remain in the same position.



## AIM COMMANDS

Aim Actions encompass the use of ranged as well as thrown weapons.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *All aim commands require Line of Sight (pg.27).*

### AIM WILD

**Description:** Command your helot to make a quick and inaccurate attack with ranged or thrown weapon.

**Position:** The opposing helot must be within the attacker's Line of Sight (pg. 27).

**Range:** Based on the Weapon's Optimal Distance.

**Damages:** The opposing helot's Overall Condition as well as a Random d6 Body Location. After rolling a successful attack and calculating damage amount, roll a d6 to determine what Body Location (pg.26) to apply the damage to.

**Cost:** (2) APC

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** -SDS at Optimal Distance

**Success Result:** The defending helot takes damage equal to the weapon's Damage Value. Reduce ranged weapon ammo or place a thrown weapon in accordance with the weapon's rules.

**Failure Repercussions:** Reduce ranged weapon ammo or place a thrown weapon in accordance with the weapon's rules.

### AIM STANDARD

**Description:** Instruct your helot to make a quality ranged or thrown attack.

**Position:** The opposing helot must be within the attacker's Line of Sight (pg.27).

**Range:** Based on the Weapon's Optimal Distance.

**Damages:** The opposing helot's Overall Condition as well as a Random d6 Body Location. After rolling a successful attack and calculating damage amount, roll a d6 to determine what Body Location (pg.26) to apply the damage to.

**Cost:** (3) APC

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** None at Optimal Distance

**Success Result:** The defending helot takes damage equal to the weapon's Damage Value. Reduce ranged weapon ammo or place a thrown weapon in accordance with the weapon's rules.

**Failure Repercussions:** Reduce ranged weapon ammo or place a thrown weapon in accordance with the weapon's rules.

### AIM FOCUSED

**Description:** Tell your helot to target a specific body location with ranged or thrown weapon.

**Position:** The opposing helot must be within the attacker's Line of Sight (pg.27).

**Range:** Based on the Weapon's Optimal Distance.

**Damages:** The opposing helot's Overall Condition as well as a Specified Body Location.

**Cost:** (4) APC

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** -SDS at Optimal Distance

**Success Result:** The defending helot takes damage equal to the weapon's Damage Value. Reduce ranged weapon ammo or place a thrown weapon in accordance with the weapon's rules.

**Failure Repercussions:** Reduce ranged weapon ammo or place a thrown weapon in accordance with the weapon's rules.

## DEFENSE COMMANDS

Luckily, you do not have to instruct a helot to defend themselves! They have self-preservation instincts galore, despite a low success rate. There is no Action Point Cost for a helot to defend itself against an opponent's attack and all attacks are all defended initially without penalty. Your helot will however pay an AP cost to treat its wounds.

### DEFEND

**Description:** Every attack against a helot is defended by a standard 2d6 roll.

**Cost:** None.

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** None.

**Success Result:** The defending helot thwarts the attack, taking no damage and incurring no negative status effects.

**Failure Repercussions:** Varies depending on the attack type.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Ties always go to the defending helot.*

### MEND

**Description:** It doesn't seem like much, but if left untreated your helot could bleed out.

**Cost:** (2) AP

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** None.

**Effect:** Removes the Bleeding State from your helot.

### STOP, DROP, AND ROLL

**Description:** Your helot is on fire; you might want to do something about that.

**Cost:** (3) AP

**SDS Bonus or Penalty:** None.

**Effect:** Removes the Flaming State from your helot and renders it Prone.

## FAME COMMANDS

Instructing your helot to work the crowd may seem counterproductive and a bit arrogant. That is because it is. If you had any concern for your helot, you might think twice about instructing it to perform these maneuvers. Fortunately, you do not.

### GLOATING

**Description:** Instruct your helot to taunt, gloat, and otherwise humiliate and discredit their opponent's abilities and accomplishments.

**Availability:** This command is only available immediately after your helot performs a successful Attack, Aim or Grapple command. Gloating can only be used once per command round.

**Cost:** (1) AP

**Effect:** Double your cred rewards gained from damaging an opponent by pulling cred from the Crowd Coin Pile. Your helot is now -SDS to Defend until your next Command Round.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Gloating can only draw from Cred Coins available in the Crowd Coin Pile.*

# HELOT HIT POINTS AND LOCATIONS



Scan for more details

Before talking more about combat we really need to address your helot's health.

## OVERALL CONDITION (HP VALUE: 50)

This is a helot's Overall Condition. Think of it like endurance. If this number drops to (0), the helot collapses and is Incapacitated but is not dead. A helot who is Incapacitated is prone and can no longer defend or strike. They are at the mercy of their opponent. Attacks and any other attacking action against an incapacitated helot result in an automatic success with the only roll needed being for damage against a defensive roll of (0).

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Any damage done to any Body Location is ALSO done to the combatant's Overall Condition.

## BODY LOCATIONS

There are (7) Body Locations. Each with their own condition values.

### HEAD (HP Value: 10)

This is the condition of a helot's skull and brain. If this number falls below (0), the helot is Killed.

### CHEST (HP Value: 15)

This is the condition of a helot's Ribs, Back, and Lungs. If this number falls below (0), the helot is Killed.

### MIDSECTION (HP Value: 15)

This is the condition of a helot's Liver and Stomach. If this number falls below (0), the helot is now **-SDS to Attack and Defend** for the remainder of the bout.

### RIGHT AND LEFT UPPER APPENDAGES (HP Value: 12)

This is the condition of all the helot's upper appendages on their right or left side. If this number falls below (0), the helot is now **-SDS to Attack** for the remainder of the bout.

### RIGHT AND LEFT LOWER APPENDAGES (HP Value: 12)

This is the condition of all the helot's lower appendages on their right or left side. If this number falls below (0), the helot is now **-SDS to Defend** for the remainder of the bout.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Once a Body Location has been depleted, damage to that Body Location is no longer done to the helot's Overall Condition. Tell your helot to use its dead arm as a shield!

## RANDOM BODY LOCATION TABLE

1. Left Upper
2. Chest
3. Right Upper
4. Left Lower
5. Midsection
6. Right Lower

# THE BASIC RULES OF COMBAT



Scan for more details

Yes, even in NEXUS there are rules.

## DEFENDING

Every attack is defended by a standard 2d6 roll (including any bonuses or penalties).

## ATTACKING

When a player declares an attack command, they must specify the type of attack (including location if necessary) and then roll the corresponding amount of dice. The opposing helot always defends attacks with no action or movement point cost necessary. Once the rolls have been made and bonuses have been applied, the player's roll with the highest numeric value is awarded the successful action.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Ties always go to the Defense Roll.*

## DETERMINING MELEE DAMAGE

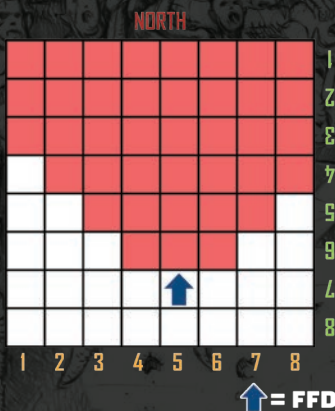
If the attack was a success, you now subtract the defensive roll total from the attacking roll total and add any bonuses and weapon damage, that is the damage caused by the attack. Now simply deduct that damage from the opposing helot's Overall Condition and any other appropriate locations dictated by the attack type. If the defense is successful, then no damage is caused to either helot.

## DETERMINING RANGED DAMAGE

If the attack was a success, the defending helot takes damage equal to the weapons damage value along with any appropriate bonuses or penalties; Simply deduct that damage from the opposing helot's Overall Condition and any other appropriate locations.

## LINE OF SIGHT RULES

When attempting a ranged attack, the attacking helot must have a Line of Sight to their target. Line of Sight is a range of squares from 45 Degrees Left to 45 Degrees Right of the attacker's FFD.



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Barge Obstacles and other objects that may be used as cover will block squares from an attacker's Line of Sight.*



## OPTIMAL DISTANCE

Each ranged weapon has its own optimal distance which represents the number of squares the weapon can be used without penalty. Helots are -SDS for each square the target is located outside of a weapon's Optimal Distance. Optimal Distance is calculated by counting the forward squares only, with no regard for left and right.

# COMBAT BONUSES AND PENALTIES



Scan for more details

While damage bonuses and penalties use a simple positive or negative numerical value, attack and defense roll bonuses use our Sliding Dice Scale, also known as the SDS system.

## THE SLIDING DICE SCALE

It is quite simple and can be remembered without reference quickly. A standard roll on the SDS system is 2d6. An advantage modifier would move that roll to +SDS represented by a roll of 3d6, keeping the highest (2) values. +2SDS would be 4d6, again keeping the highest (2) values. For each + you add that many d6 to the 2d6 base and keep the highest (2) values. Penalty modifiers to a standard roll would add the same amount of dice, but this time keeping the lowest (2) values. So, -2SDS would represent a roll of 4d6 keeping the lowest (2) values.

### THE SLIDING DICE SCALE

- 3SDS** Roll **5d6** and combine the **lowest (2)** values
- 2SDS** Roll **4d6** and combine the **lowest (2)** values
- SDS** Roll **3d6** and combine the **lowest (2)** values
- SD** Roll **2d6**
- +SDS** Roll **3d6** and combine the **highest (2)** values
- +2SDS** Roll **4d6** and combine the **highest (2)** values
- +3SDS** Roll **5d6** and combine the **highest (2)** values



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** +/- 3SDS is the maximum range

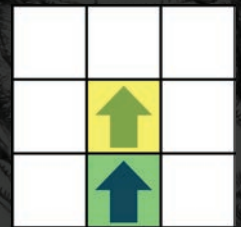
## POSITION BONUSES

Put your helot in the best position to win!

### REAR ATTACK BONUS

If the attacking helot occupies the square directly behind its opponent, the helot is +SDS to attacking commands. This includes Grapple, but not the Grapple Commands group.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** There is no rear attack bonus to Aim Commands.

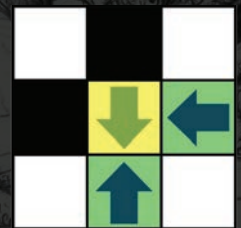


↑ = FFD

### AGAINST THE WALL

If a defending helot finds itself directly between an object and its attacker, it will take an additional (2) damage from a successful Standard or Focused Attack Command. This Bonus is added to both the Location and Overall Condition damage.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** An object can be anything, even another helot!

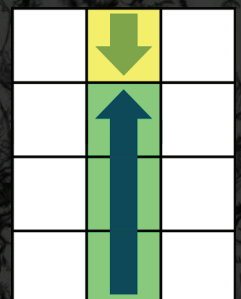


■ = OBJECT ↑ = FFD

### RUNNING STRIKE

If your helot moves forward into (2) consecutive unoccupied squares directly between itself and its opponent and follows the movement with a successful Standard or Focused Attack Command, the defending helot must roll a d6 with a result of (4) or higher to prevent being knocked Prone.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The squares must be absent of Blood and Guts.



↑ = FFD

## SITUATIONAL RULES

Stay alert for these situational rules!

### CROWD PLEASER

On any attack or defense roll, if both of a helot's utilized d6 values match, the player is awarded an extra (1) Cred from the Crowd Coin Pile in addition to any other cred rewards. Even if the attack or defense attempt was unsuccessful!

### TURNING POINT DAMAGE MODIFIER (TPDM)

Once a Turning Point is achieved, the player's helot receives a +(6) damage modifier on their next successful Non-Wild Attack Command.

### STAGGERING BLOW

If an attack results in (4) or more damage to a helot's Head or Midsection Location, its owner must roll a d6 with a result of (4) or higher to prevent the helot from being knocked Prone.

### FINISHING BLOWS

If your helot's attack results in the Killing (10 Cred Coins) or Incapacitation (5 Cred Coins) of an opposing helot, you are rewarded a Cred Coin bonus to be transferred from the Crowd Coin Pile to your Player Cred Pile.

### LAST HELOT STANDING

The owner of the last surviving helot receives a (10) Cred Coin bonus to be taken from the Crowd Coin Pile.

### MOTIVATION BUTTON

Spend all (6) Command Points on Action or Movement at the cost of (5) Overall Condition damage to your helot, adding it to the Crowd Coin Pile.

### UNSPENT AP & MP PENALTY

If your helot has remaining AP or MP at the end of a Command Round, you lose Cred for each unspent point, adding it to the Crowd Coin Pile. If no Cred is available, draw from your helot's Overall Condition instead.

### BODY LOCATION LOSS & BLOOD TILES

Whenever an appendage or body location has been depleted and the unfortunate victim has left the square it had occupied when said event occurred, place a Blood Tile in that square.

### ELIMINATED HELOTS & GUTS TILES

Whenever a helot has been incapacitated or killed, place a Guts Tile in its previously occupied square.

# HELOT STATES



Scan for more details

Some attacks, hazards and cards have lasting effects that change a helot's state. Each of these states are represented by status indicators.



## THE PRONE STATE

When a helot is in the Prone state, they are on the ground in an unfavorable melee attacking position. These helots will not have the ability to attack until they have regained their erect position. While prone, the helot's opponents will enjoy an extra (2) AP to only be used against the helpless target.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Helots defend attacks as normal from the PRONE position.



## THE GRAPPLED STATE

When a helot is in the Grappled state, they are at the mercy of their captor until liberated. A Grappled helot may spend MP during their Command Round to attempt to Liberate, but if all their attempts fail, they will forfeit their remaining AP and suffer the appropriate penalties.



## THE ARMED STATE

A helot must spend Action Points to draw or store a weapon, the amount spent is determined by the weapon. When a weapon is drawn, the helot is in the Armed State. A helot always has the option of dropping a weapon at (0) AP cost, removing the weapon from the game.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** A helot cannot grapple while armed.

**ANOTHER IMPORTANT NOTE:** Ranged weapons must be holstered (AP cost) or dropped (0 AP cost) before performing a melee attack action.



## THE BLEEDING STATE

Helots who find themselves Bleeding at the start of their Command Round take (1) Overall Condition damage to be paid directly to the Crowd Coin Pile. To cease Bleeding a helot must Mend for (2) AP.



## THE FLAMING STATE

Helots who find themselves Flaming at the start of their Command Round take (5) Overall Condition damage to be paid directly to the Crowd Coin Pile. To cease Flaming a helot must Stop, Drop & Roll for (3) AP rendering the helot Prone and keeping the same FFD. A helot cannot perform this action in squares within a fire's area of effect.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Grappling an opponent who is flaming also renders the attacking helot flaming as well.

**ANOTHER IMPORTANT NOTE:** A helot who defeats an opponent while on fire receives a (10) Cred bonus! Everyone loves a flaming helot!



# WEAPONS



Scan for more details

Whoever said, "It's not the weapon, it's the helot behind it." was an idiot. On unsanctioned barges, weapons are uncommon. These bouts will hardly draw enough attention to invest in top-of-the-line D-Mart weaponry. However, it isn't unheard of to find a crude weapon stashed in a barge Crate or to have a hoarder produce one from an unmentionable location.

## DRAWING AND STORING A WEAPON

- A helot must spend Action Points to draw or store a weapon, the amount spent is determined by the weapon.
- A helot always has the option of dropping a weapon at (0) AP cost. This removes that instance of the weapon from the game.
- When a weapon is drawn, the helot is in the Armed State (pg.30).
- A Weapon may restrict certain commands while in the Armed State.

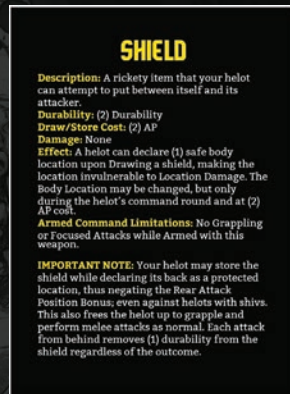
## WEAPON DURABILITY AND AMMO

Weapon durability and ammo represent the number of times a weapon can be used before it breaks or runs out of ammo, becoming useless.

- Weapon Ammo is expended each time it is used, regardless of the result.
- Melee Weapon Durability is only decreased when an Attack Command is successfully defended.
- Shield Weapon Durability is only decreased after a successful attack by the opposition upon the declared protected location.

## WEAPON CARDS

Each card features a weapon type and its pertinent information.



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Your helot may only carry one weapon at a time. If it encounters another weapon, it must pick between them and the other is permanently lost.

# TRAIT ABILITIES



Scan for  
more details

These are a universally shared list of abilities that any helot may perform by having the necessary Trait Points in their reserves. They are instant and can be used at any time during any player's command round unless otherwise noted.

## WILLPOWER ABILITIES

Somebody's been eating their Wheaties! Capitalize on your helot's apparent physical and mental fortitude.

### I'M STILL STANDING

**Description:** Your helot will not take this lying down, literally.

**Cost:** (3) Willpower Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Instantly stand from a prone position.

**Special Instructions:** Use to nullify a prone stance or after a failed prone roll. Can be used at any time.

### MERELY A FLESH WOUND

**Description:** That attack looked worse than it was. 'Tis but a scratch.

**Cost:** (4) Willpower Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Ignore Overall Condition damage. If the attack damaged a location, take location damage as normal.

**Special Instructions:** Use after a successful attack has been inflicted on your helot.

### PERSEVERANCE

**Description:** Don't give up. You can do it!

**Cost:** (5) Willpower Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Re-Roll dice after an undesired outcome.

**Special Instructions:** This can be used at any time for any reason.

## INSTINCT ABILITIES

Your helot seems to be in the defensive zone, make it work for you.

### COUNTERATTACK

**Description:** The best defense is a good offense!

**Cost:** (3) Instinct Trait Reserves

**Effect:** If the attack is successfully defended, treat your defensive roll as a standard attack roll using the opponent's attack roll as the defensive roll against it.

**Special Instructions:** Must be called before rolling to defend an incoming attack towards your helot.

### COMBO BREAKER

**Description:** Nobody saw that coming, except for your helot.

**Cost:** (4) Instinct Trait Reserves

**Effect:** After an opponent's successful focus attack to begin their helot's combo, you may use this ability to automatically defend the remaining standard attacks.

**Special Instructions:** The initial focus attack damages your helot as normal.

## ELUSIVE

**Description:** Your helot is a slippery little sucker.

**Cost:** (5) Instinct Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Your helot is +SDS to defend for this entire command cycle.

**Special Instructions:** For each opponent's command round during this command cycle your helot +SDS to defend.

## PHYSICALITY ABILITIES

Use your helot's strength to your advantage.

### UNSHACKLED

**Description:** Your helot is free at last!

**Cost:** (3) Physicality Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Immediately remove the Grappled state from your helot.

**Special Instructions:** This can be used at any time during any player's command round.

### PUSH

**Description:** Back off!

**Cost:** (4) Physicality Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Move the opposing helot (1) square in the direction of your helot's FFD. Your helot remains in its current location. If the opposing helot's destination space cannot be occupied, this ability cannot be used.

**Special Instructions:** This ability requires standard attack positioning and can only be used during your own command round.

### HAYMAKER

**Description:** Tell your helot to lean into this one.

**Cost:** (5) Physicality Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Add (4) damage to a successful attack.

**Special Instructions:** This ability is declared after a successful attack.

## DEFTNESS ABILITIES

Your helot is unusually quick and nimble, you must strike while the iron is hot!

### HURDLE

**Description:** Your helot is moving like it has springs on its feet!

**Cost:** (3) Deftness Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Keeping its FFD, move your helot two squares forward over a Hazard or Obstacle.

**Special Instructions:** This ability can only be used during your own command round. It cannot be used to leap over another helot, Pillar or Dart Column. Furthermore, it can only be used on a Brazier if the Brazier is knocked over.

### TRIPPING

**Description:** The opposing helots had better watch their step.

**Cost:** (4) Deftness Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Instantly render an opposing helot attempting to leave any square adjacent to your helot prone.

**Special Instructions:** If they have the available MPs the opponent's helot can attempt a stand action afterwards.

## TUNNEL VISION

**Description:** Your helot's attacks appear laser guided.

**Cost:** (5) Deftness Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Your helot is +SDS to attack and aim commands for this command round.

**Special Instructions:** Grapple commands are excluded.

## SWAGGER ABILITIES

Your helot is really working that crowd!

### TURN CROWD

**Description:** Your helot manipulates the crowd to make an opposing helot look a fool.

**Cost:** (3) Swagger Trait Reserves

**Effect:** An opposing player of your choice loses (3) Cred Coins to the crowd pile.

### WIN THEM OVER

**Description:** Your helot is the belle of the bout!

**Cost:** (4) Swagger Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Take (5) Cred Coins from the crowd pile.

### TALK SHIT

**Description:** Your helot is running its mouth and getting under the opposition's skin or scales or whatever...

**Cost:** (5) Swagger Trait Reserves

**Effect:** An opposing helot of your choice is -SDS to attack for this command round.

## CUNNING ABILITIES

Is your helot thinking on its own?! You'll have to straighten it out later, but for now take advantage!

### JACK OF ALL TRAITS

**Description:** Your helot has been taking notes and seems to be improving.

**Cost:** (3) Cunning Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Increase any other trait reserve by (1).

### CAN'T FOOL ME

**Description:** Your helot has unexpectedly outsmarted your opponent. How delightfully humiliating!

**Cost:** (4) Cunning Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Ignore a deception or an influence card.

### MADE YOU LOOK

**Description:** Your helot has distracted the opposing helot.

**Cost:** (5) Cunning Trait Reserves

**Effect:** Change an opposing helot's FFD 180-degrees.

**Special Instructions:** This is instant and can be used at any time during any player's command round.

# MOTIVATIONS



Scan for more details

Where a helot finds its will to fight and survive in the NEXUS. From an early age, they are given a series of tests by their **Gnoem** (pg.46) creators to determine the helot's motivation to survive.



## HOARDER

"Oh! Oh! That's mine! I'm keeping it!" is the battle cry of a Hoarder. Collecting ANYTHING they see lying around, hoarders can't wait for their next match to see what treasures it will bring! They are surprisingly quick and agile, darting in and out of combat and grabbing what they can. While they love their trinkets, they hate the crowd, viewing them as competition. At any second, the crowd could rush the field and grab all the Hoarder's stuff!

Hoarders are also quite crafty and sly. They have a real talent for sneaking things both on and off the barges. It isn't uncommon to see a hoarder produce a ranged weapon from some unmentionable hiding spot. While not INC approved, it certainly isn't discouraged; the fans love it too much!

## FAMISHED

When all other options have failed, gnoems turn to this tried-and-true motivation. Famished are starved and only allowed to eat their opponents. Intrinsicly gnoems have no issues with this, but feel it is a waste of perfectly good biomatter. Famished are an extremely dangerous bunch with above-average stature and an excellent, almost primal fighting instinct.

The INC recently passed a special amendment concerning the spleen team's handling of leftover biomatter in fights involving famished. After a cost analysis of recycled biomatter savings against the costs of replacing Spleen Team workers, they decided to only gather the losing helot's equipment.





## SUPREMACIST

This helot believes they are the superior species and wants to shed blood to prove it. This is a sought after prize of the Meat Gardens. Strong, proud, and good with a crowd, these helots have no shortage of confidence in their professed genetic advantages. They take it upon themselves to be the champion of their entire species, becoming incredibly outspoken. Yet rarely, if ever, do their species want them to speak on their behalf. This never stops them from doing so.

Always a crowd favorite, the Supremacist loves fighting a Critiqueur. Any opportunity to sing the praises of their species while pointing out the flaws of others on an interdimensional stage is always a treat for them. They truly hate all other species. In fact, it isn't uncommon to see a Supremacist trying to liberate themselves during a barge bout, mostly motivated by their desire not to cohabit with lesser lifeforms.

## ZEALOT

The one redeeming quality of a Zealot is their eagerness to kill for their beliefs. A Zealot fights to spread the word of their religion and show off the power of their god (or gods). They believe we were all put here for a reason, and if their opponent doesn't believe in their higher purpose, they are more than happy to spill blood to prove their divine mission is pure.

A Zealot's faith is quite potent and makes them ridiculously hard to kill. The only thing a Zealot craves more than the healing power of their faith is fame. Much like any fame whore, there aren't a lot of boundaries when it comes to achieving attention. In the end, fame will always win over any conflicts with their religious tenets.

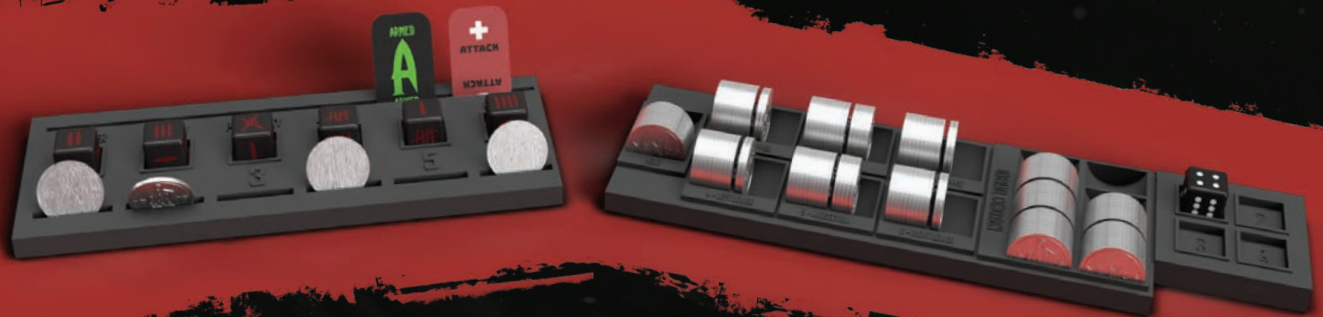


# AERIE COMMAND PANELS



Scan for more details

Each player has their own Aerie Command Panel to aid in the tracking of various helot states, conditions, and advantages. Players will also use these panels to track their turn order as well as Turning Points. Each Aerie Command Panel is comprised of (2) sections that can be separated or held together by their internal magnets. Players can also make use of these internal magnets to form a frame around the NEXUS arena board using all (4) of the included Aerie Command Panels.



**Status Token Holder**  
Used to track your helot's States and hold weapon cards.



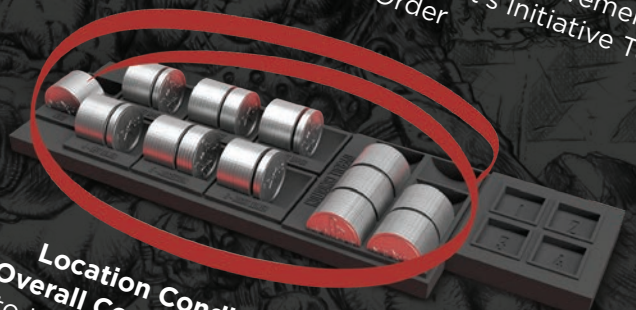
**Trait Counters**  
Used to track your helot's Trait Reserve values. This section also features a quick reference for trait initiative order.



**Turning Point Counter**  
Used to track the player's Turning Point rolls.



**Initiative Tracker & Ratio Lock-In**  
Used to track your helot's Movement/Action Ratio & your helot's Initiative Turn Order



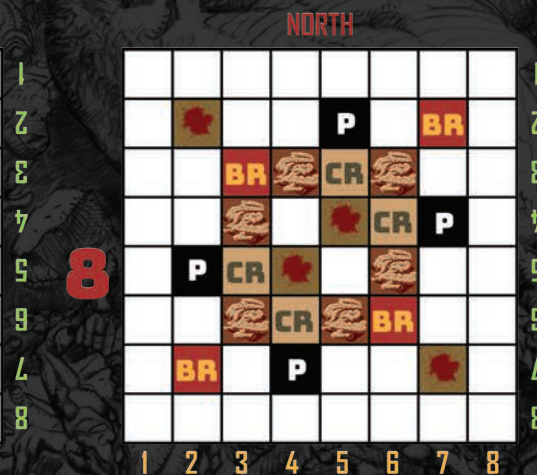
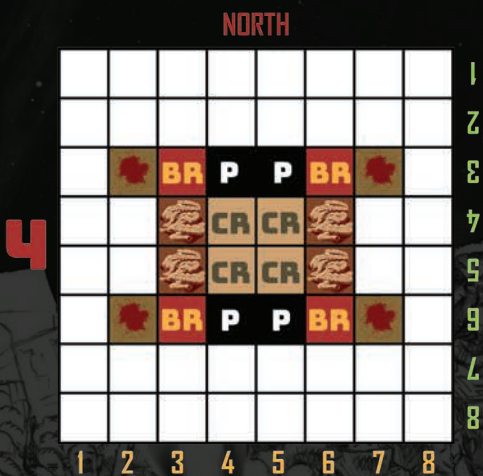
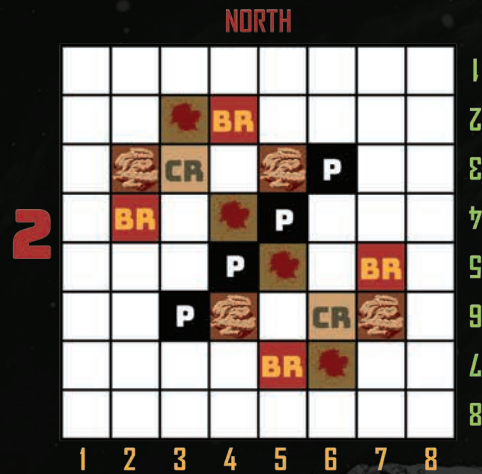
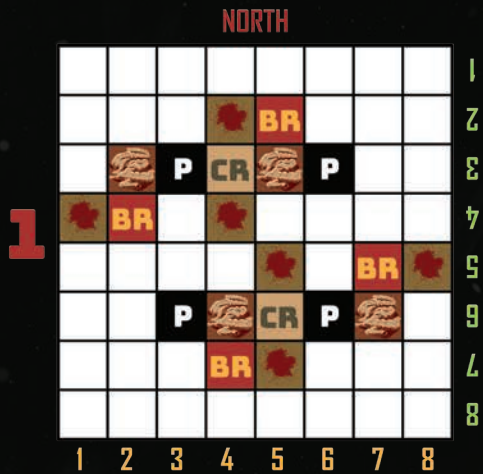
**Location Condition & Overall Condition Trackers**  
Used to track your helot's Location & Overall Condition. This section also features a quick reference for Random Body Location rolls.

# BARGE SCHEMATICS



Scan for more details

Below you will find an assortment of pre-generated barge arena layouts for players to use. The players can select any of the schematics below, use a d8 to select one at random, or simply create their own. Players are also encouraged to add **FLOOR SAWS** or **FLOOR SPIKES** to these schematics... or maybe **BOTH!**



**PILLAR = P**   **BLOOD = [Red Star]**   **GUTS = [Guts Icon]**   **BRAZIER = BR**   **CRATE = CR**



# OBSTACLES



Scan for more details

Obstacles are always placed first when setting up the Barge Arena. An obstacle occupies a square rendering it inaccessible or giving it special movement rules. Some obstacles are destructible, and some are not.

## WALLS

They are not just there to keep the helots in and the fans out! These giant stone structures are placed primarily to give the helots a convenient and solid surface to crack open each other's skulls.

- Indestructible Structures that render squares inaccessible.
- (See Against the Wall rules pg.28)

## PILLARS

A Pillar is a large stone column stained in blood and typically adorned with bits of skull, flesh, and hair clinging to its coarse surface.

- Indestructible Structures that render squares inaccessible.
- May be used as cover.
- (See Against the Wall rules pg.28)



## CRATES

A Crate is a rickety wooden box that looks as if a good kick would bring it tumbling down. Who knows what treasures might be contained inside! (See Crates pg.42)

- Destructible Structures that render squares inaccessible unless destroyed.
- Spend (3) AP to instruct your helot to destroy a Crate. (See Crates pg.42)
- May be used as cover until destroyed.
- (See Against the Wall rules pg.28)



## BLOOD TILES

When a helot is fighting for their life, good traction is important. Floors can become slippery for any number of reasons. The most common is blood. Lots and lots of blood.

- Destructible and cannot be used for cover.
- When entering, or rotating in, a space containing blood, use the Compass die to move the helot to a new space keeping its original FFD. If rotating in a blood covered space, rotate first, keeping the new FFD.
- If the new space is occupied by another helot or Obstacle, your helot retains its position in the original blood covered space.
- If a helot finds itself occupying a blood covered space while being attacked, the helot is -SDS to attack and defend, due to poor footing.
- You can always exit a blood covered space without risk of a movement penalty.
- Does not qualify for Against the Wall rules and entering the space cancels a Running Strike.
- After a helot loses a limb, place a blood tile on its space upon exiting.



## GUTS TILES

It is sticky, gross, and stuck to the bottom of your helot's tentacle or foot... Oh! It is the decaying remains of another helot!

- Destructible and cannot be used for cover.
- Your helot enters the space as normal, but it doubles any MP cost once inside this square.
- Does not qualify for Against the Wall rules and entering the space cancels a Running Strike.
- Replace a DEAD helot with a guts tile.



# HAZARDS



Scan for  
more details

Once the obstacles have been placed, it is time to lay the Hazards. In a barge bout, Hazards are the great equalizer. A cunning player will use them to their advantage.

## PLACEMENT

The placement of Hazards and obstacles can be done in various ways.

- **Schematics:** The Barge Schematics section (pg.38) details a number of pre-generated Unsanctioned Barge schematics along with a key, indicating symbols for each obstacle and hazard.
- **RPOs:** Randomly Placed Objects (RPOs) are determined by rolling one (1) Green and one (1) Orange eight sided die. The resulting numbers are then used to place the object. The **ORANGE die** is used to determine the East/West location of the object, with (1) being the West most square and (8) being the East most square. The **GREEN die** is used to determine the North/South location of the object, with (1) being the North most square and (8) being the South most square. Refer to each specific object's rules for information about handling already occupied squares.
- **Mutual Agreement:** You and your opponents can simply agree as to where to place obstacles and hazards.

## ACTIVATION TYPES

There are several different ways in which a hazard may be activated.

- **Turning Point Roll Duplicate:** If when marking your Turning Point during your command round, you find it has already been marked, that is a Turning Point Roll Duplicate.
- **Always Active:** These hazards are always in effect or simply activate upon contact or by helots being within an area effect range.
- **Turning Point:** These hazards activate whenever a player reaches a Turning Point.
- **Player Activated:** These hazards require some type of action by your helot to begin their reign of terror.

## ACTIVATION ORDER

The hazards' order of activation is agreed on by the players before the start of the match. Hazard cards should be arranged from left to right in the order that they are to be activated.

## HAZARD DAMAGE

All damage done by Hazards is paid to the Crowd Pile, with a couple exceptions...

- **Being Thrown, Dragged, or Pushed:** If a helot is forcibly relocated into a hazard against it's will by another helot, the attacking helot's lanista is awarded the FIRST round/instance of damage to their Player Cred Pile.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This means the initial location and overall damage from Floor Spikes, but not the bleeding damage each round and not the damage caused by the victim bouncing off a pillar and back into the Floor Spikes.

- **Being Grappled by or Grappling a Flaming Helot:** If a helot in the Flaming State grapples another opponent, the attacking helot's lanista will receive the initial round of (5) Overall Condition damage to their Player Cred Pile. Subsequent damage at the beginning of the victim's command rounds will go to the Crowd Pile. Alternatively, if a helot (not already in the Flaming State) willingly grapples an opposing helot (currently in the Flaming State), the grappling helot's lanista will also receive the initial round of (5) Overall Condition damage to their Player Cred Pile.

## BRAZIERS

**Description:** Braziers are harmless sources of light – until they are not. At any moment, a helot could knock one over, creating chaos the whole crowd can enjoy. Barge captains typically enhance this feature by putting a thick layer of dry straw on the floor before the match begins. Kicking over a Brazier is always a real crowd pleaser. As the inferno grows, so does the roar of the crowd.

**Structural Condition:** Braziers are Indestructible. However, fire is destructible.

**Used for Cover:** Yes, until knocked over.

**Activation:** Player Activated

- Braziers can be Knocked Over for a cost of (1) AP, setting fire to the barge arena.
- This command is only available if the Brazier is in any of the (3) adjoining forward squares relative to the helot's FFD.
- Once knocked over, its original square remains inaccessible and occupied by the Brazier, but place it on its side.
- Now, remove the flame from the top of the Brazier, place it in the opposite square from which the Brazier was knocked over.
- If there is an indestructible object in the way, roll a compass die (using that object's square as the center) until the value results in an empty square.
- If there is a destructible object in the way, like a Crate, the object is destroyed and replaced by the fire.
- If there is a helot in the way, then the helot immediately takes (5) Overall Condition damage and changes its status to Flaming (pg.30). That fire is now removed from the board.

**Re-Activation:** Turning Point Roll Duplicate

- If there are active fires on the arena floor, roll a compass die for each one and move them (1) square in that direction. This is the new location of the fire; the previous location has died down and is no longer in flames.
- If there is an indestructible object in the way, then the fire does not move.
- If there is a destructible object in the way, like a Crate, the object is destroyed and replaced by the fire.
- If there is a helot in the way, then the helot immediately takes (5) Overall Condition damage and changes its status to Flaming (pg.30). That fire is now removed from the board.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** To determine the movement order of multiple fires, start with the south-most space on the west edge of the board and follow it straight north. Repeat the process starting with the next south-most space one over to the west for the remainder of the board until all fires have been moved.

**Area of Effect:** The square itself and a (1) square radius around any fire that is NOT on a Brazier.

**Damage:**

- A helot, not in the Flaming State, leaving or rotating in any square within the fire's area of effect, takes (1) Overall Condition damage.
- A helot encountering the center square immediately takes (5) Overall Condition damage and changes its status to Flaming (pg.30).
- A helot in the Flaming State is immune to additional fire damage. They cannot be "more" on fire.



## CRATES

**Description:** Why would anyone put frail wooden boxes packed with deadly weapons in a barge arena during a bout? Is that a trick question?

**Structural Condition:** Destructible

**Used for Cover:** Yes, until destroyed.

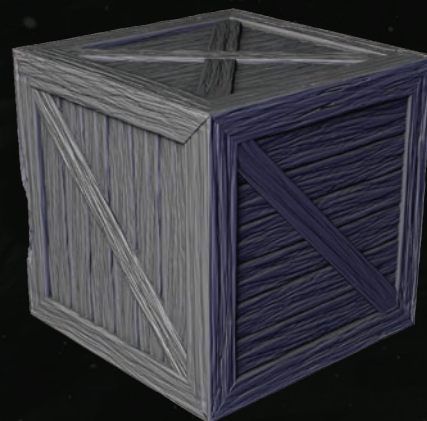
**Activation:** Player Activated

- Spend (3) AP to destroy a Crate. The helot must be in Standard Attack Positioning and retains its original position; the helot does not move forward into the now empty square.
- Once destroyed, the attacking helot's owner rolls on the Crate Contents Table to determine the contents of the Crate.
- Execute the resulting instructions.
- If the item contained is a weapon, find the weapon card and place it in front of the player. The weapon is automatically equipped, and the helot status is changed to Armed State.
- A helot can choose to drop the weapon (0) AP at any time. The weapon is then lost in the muck of the arena floor forever. The weapon is unable to be retrieved by anyone, even the helot that dropped it. Remove the weapon card from the player.

**Area of Effect:** The square occupied

### CRATE CONTENTS TABLE (Roll 2d6)

2. **WEAPON: Two-Handed Weapon**
3. **WEAPON: Shield**
4. **WEAPON: Shiv**
5. **Bomb: Your helot immediately loses (5) to a Random Location.**
6. **Roacguls: They immediately attack the next player's helot in initiative order, (3) damage to its weakest lower limb**
7. **WEAPON: Net**
8. **WEAPON: Bola**
9. **Flashbang: Your helot immediately forfeits any remaining AP/MP**
10. **Helot Aid: Immediately move (5) of your helot's Overall Condition to a body location or split between multiple body locations.**
11. **WEAPON: Ranged Weapon**
12. **WEAPON: One-Handed Weapon**



## FLOOR SAWS (THE RIPPIN' AND THE TEARIN')

**Description:** Floor Saws are circular discs with razor sharp and jagged edges that spring up randomly from the barge arena floors. Once they appear, they move in a straight line at ludicrous speeds, ripping through objects or anyone in their path. The fun does not end there, however. If they should contact a wall or column on their journey, the disk shatters, flinging shrapnel in all directions. Otherwise, the helots get the added thrill of navigating around it until the bout's conclusion.

**Structural Condition:** Indestructible

**Used for Cover:** No.

**Activation:** Turning Point Duplicate Roll

- RPO (pg.9) is used to see where (1) Floor Saw pops up.
- Afterwards the activating player rolls a compass die and a d8 to determines which direction and how many squares the saw travels. Floors saws can move diagonally.
- If the Floor Saw completes its journey without encountering any indestructible objects or a wall, it is left in that space until the conclusion of the bout.
- If the Floor Saw encounters an indestructible object or wall, it explodes in the space adjacent to the object sending damaging shrapnel in a (1) square radius around itself.
- If a Floor Saw encounters any destructible objects, they are removed from the board and the Floor Saw continues its journey.
- If a Floor Saw encounters a helot, the helot is damaged, and the Floor Saw continues its journey.
- If a Floor Saw concludes its journey in a square occupied by a helot, the helot is damaged and relocated to an adjacent square, keeping their FFD, determined by a compass die roll. If that square is occupied, the helot is thrown back into the Floor Saw, once again taking damage, and the process begins again with another compass die roll.

**Re-Activation:** Player Activated

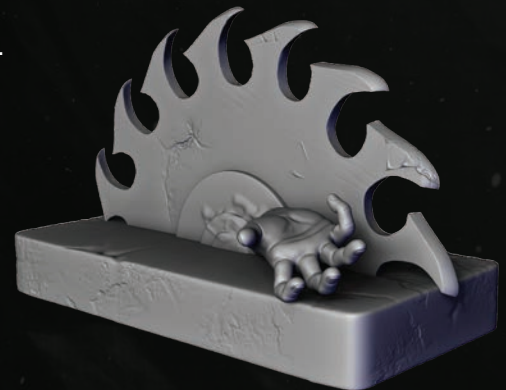
- A helot may push, throw, drag, etc. its opponent into any stationary Floor Saw. The helot is damaged and relocated to an adjacent square, keeping their FFD, determined by a compass die roll. If that square is occupied, the helot is thrown back into the Floor Saw, once again taking damage, and the process begins again with another compass die roll.

**Area of Effect:** Only its occupied square, unless exploding. When a Floor Saw explodes its area of effect is expanded to a (1) square radius around its center.

**Damage:**

- Direct hits deal (10) location damage and trigger the Bleeding State.
- Shrapnel does (5) location damage and triggers the Bleeding State.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** (2) Floor Saws colliding with each other will do (10) shrapnel damage.



## FLOOR SPIKES

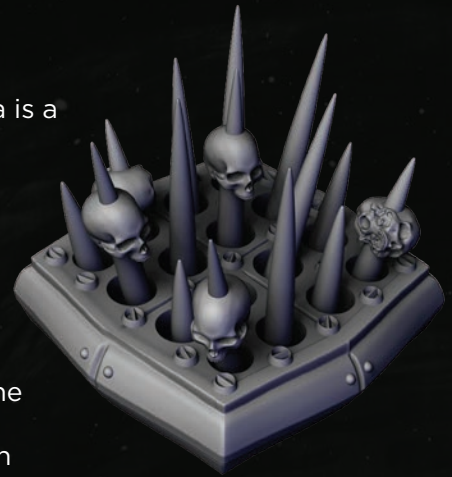
**Description:** Random. Dangerous. Sounds like fun! Any Square in the arena is a potential trap and a helot may find their feet impaled without warning.

**Structural Condition:** Indestructible

**Used for Cover:** No.

**Activation:** Turning Point Roll Duplicate

- RPO (pg.9) is used to see where (1) set of Floor Spikes pop up.
- If Floor Spikes are spawned underneath a destructible object, then the destructible object is destroyed and replaced by the Floor Spikes.
- If Floor Spikes are spawned underneath an indestructible object, then nothing happens.
- If Floor Spikes are spawned underneath a helot, then the helot loses its weakest Lower Appendage and triggers the Bleeding State. If both lower appendages are of equal condition, then the helot's owner chooses which one is lost.
- Once all (4) Floor Spikes are placed on the board, they remain in that location until the next Turning Point.



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** If Floor Spikes spawn underneath a Floor Saw, the Floor Saw is destroyed, doing (5) shrapnel damage, and replaced with the Floor Spikes.

**Re-Activation:** Turning Point

- Take all Floor Spikes off the board and roll RPO (pg.9) for each.

**Area of Effect:** The occupying square.

**Damage:**

- If dragged, thrown, or pushed into a Floor Spikes then the helot takes (10) location damage, also triggering the Bleeding State, and is placed in an unoccupied square determined by the compass die, keeping its original FFD. If that square is occupied, the helot is thrown back into the Floor Spikes, once again taking damage, and the process begins again with another compass die roll.
- If Floor Spikes are spawned underneath a helot, then the helot loses its weakest Lower Appendage and triggers the Bleeding State. If both lower appendages are of equal condition, then the helot's owner chooses which one is lost. The helot is then placed in an unoccupied square determined by the compass die, keeping its original FFD. If that square is occupied, the helot is thrown back into the Floor Spikes, once again taking damage, and the process begins again with another compass die roll.

# A NEW LANISTA'S GUIDE TO NEXUS



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## THE D-VERSE AND ITS NEXUS

Throughout the infinite expanse of time, every intelligent race eventually realizes their universe is expanding. Upon discovering this, it becomes apparent that while there is no end to space, there is, in fact, a center of it. For those possessing the technology and an adventurous drive, reaching this “middle” of their universe becomes an ultimate goal. Once there, they find an interdimensional gathering of the most advanced species in the multiverse and are considered to have “arrived” as an esteemed and respected member of the D-Verse. The D-Verse, as it has come to be called, refers to the seemingly infinite dimensions that share this junction at the center of their respective universes.

## LANISTAS

At this central meeting point of all known dimensions, a brutal and no-holds-barred bloodsport known as NEXUS is held. For eons, countless beings have converged to pit their greatest champions against one another aboard bloodstained barges. NEXUS bouts have become the most popular form of entertainment across the furthest corners of time and space. And overseeing it all, permeated with the stench of death and decadence, are the masters of this pandimensional dynasty—the lanistas.

Here is where we find you, a young entrepreneur looking for fame and fortune, out to make a name for yourself and your species among the legendary ranks of the lanistas. The long-storied history of lanistas is filled with rags-to-riches tales of interdimensional nobodies and their ascent to power. Those among this NEXUS elite are without equal in the prestige and influence they command. With success comes anything imaginable (universal fame, near-infinite wealth, endless political and judicial favors, etc.). Count yourself lucky—whether good luck or bad—to even be given this opportunity.

Welcome to the seedy, salacious, and oh-so-profitable underworld of NEXUS!

## REGISTRATION WITH THE INC

The Interdimensional NEXUS Commission (INC) is the regulating body behind NEXUS. After you file the proper documentation and bribe the necessary high-ranking board members, the INC will issue your lanista license. The INC oversees everything from barge inspections to helot cloning standards. If you are looking to be a major NEXUS player, then there is no way around dealing with the INC... except for when there is, of course. INC-sanctioned barge bouts broadcasted across blood.stream are the most viewed events in the D-Verse. It is there that your legacy will join the ranks of legend or fade into obscurity.

## NEXUS BARGES

INC-sanctioned barge bouts take place on NEXUS barges. When entering the D-Verse NEXUS the first thing you will see are hundreds of these barges tethered together. Some are quite ornate and massive while other seem hastily made and designed to draw as little attention as possible. Species from across the D-Verse are gathered here, placing bets, haggling with gnoems, or looking for marks. You will see INC officers everywhere looking for, and raiding, unsanctioned matches in hopes of making arrests (but more likely collecting bribes). Nothing prepares one for this strange sight of countless beings spread across hundreds of barges that are infested with violence and bustling with activity.

## **GNOEMS**

So, you want to buy a helot? Then you're looking for the gnoems. Gnoems were the first race to discover the D-Verse NEXUS. Ever since, they've been traveling between dimensions collecting and analyzing DNA from countless species. Their accumulated knowledge coupled with their familiarity with pandimensional lifeforms has earned them the nickname "Toy Makers," and makes them the only source of helots that are worthy to compete in NEXUS. Gnoem expertise, while unmatched, is still limited. Some of the nuances of other lifeforms tend to escape them. Gnoems, for example, have no gender, so their attempts at breeding species could get a bit unsettling. In fact, nothing is quite as terrifying as watching two males attempt to conceive a child for fear of torture by the gnoems' devices. Due to this, the INC established guidelines instructing gnoems to sell genetic clones of only the samples they have collected and discouraging them against further abduction of lifeforms from their home worlds.

## **HELOTS**

The official term for a NEXUS fighter is a helot, although they are more commonly known among gnoems as "mamluk" (the gnoem word for "meat." helots are grown by gnoems in what are known as the Meat Gardens. For a reasonable fee, aspiring lanistas can purchase their future champion from the Meat Garden's weekly harvest. Gnoem helots are in large demand; unless you're paying premium prices, you just get the next one off the line. No refunds. If you don't like the result, kill it, and buy another. If you're squeamish however, the gnoems will gladly destroy your unwanted helot for you (but they keep the leftover organic matter).

Gnoems have already handled everything concerning your new purchase. Helots come out of the gardens ready to fight. From an early age, they are given a series of tests to determine their motivation to survive. These tests involve analysis as subjects are exposed to extreme mental and physical stimulus. Gnoems will always find a way to motivate a helot. Upon purchasing your helot, you will receive his Biometric Species Analysis. This sheet will give you a comprehensive explanation of not only your helot's strengths and weaknesses, but also how to care for your helot. Be sure to keep the sheet and the information on it updated, as it will be handy if you are given the opportunity to sell any organic matter after the helot expires. This, however, is very unlikely; the Spleen Team is very thorough.

## **THE SPLEEN TEAM**

The official cleaning service of the INC. After any officially INC-sanctioned barge bout, there is a wealth of equipment and biological matter left behind. The Spleen Team is there to steal... err... "clean up" the mess. Any disregarded helot and their belongings are collected by the Spleen Team and redistributed by the INC's charitable Weapons for Tots program—furthering their mission of putting a weapon in every child's hand. As far as leftover biological matter, gnoems are always interested in collecting whatever the Spleen Team doesn't eat.

## **MORE ABOUT BARGES AND BARGE BOUTS**

There are a dizzying number of barges in the NEXUS, with new ones being flown in every day. It is every lanista's dream to one day have their own officially INC-sanctioned barge. The amount of money and resources involved is steep, and that's not accounting for the equally pricey under-the-table costs. This hindrance to free market violence means there are many unsanctioned barges to be found in the NEXUS. This is most likely where you will begin your career as a lanista. Not by owning an unsanctioned barge, mind you, but by having your helots compete on these floating piles of... well, sub-quality vessels.

This does, however, have its advantages. First off, you make far more bitcoin when avoiding the INC's bout fees. You usually must hire your own cleaning crew—that's good news because that means no Spleen Team involvement! You can collect all your dead helot's equipment and biomatter. And think of all the interesting people you'll meet!



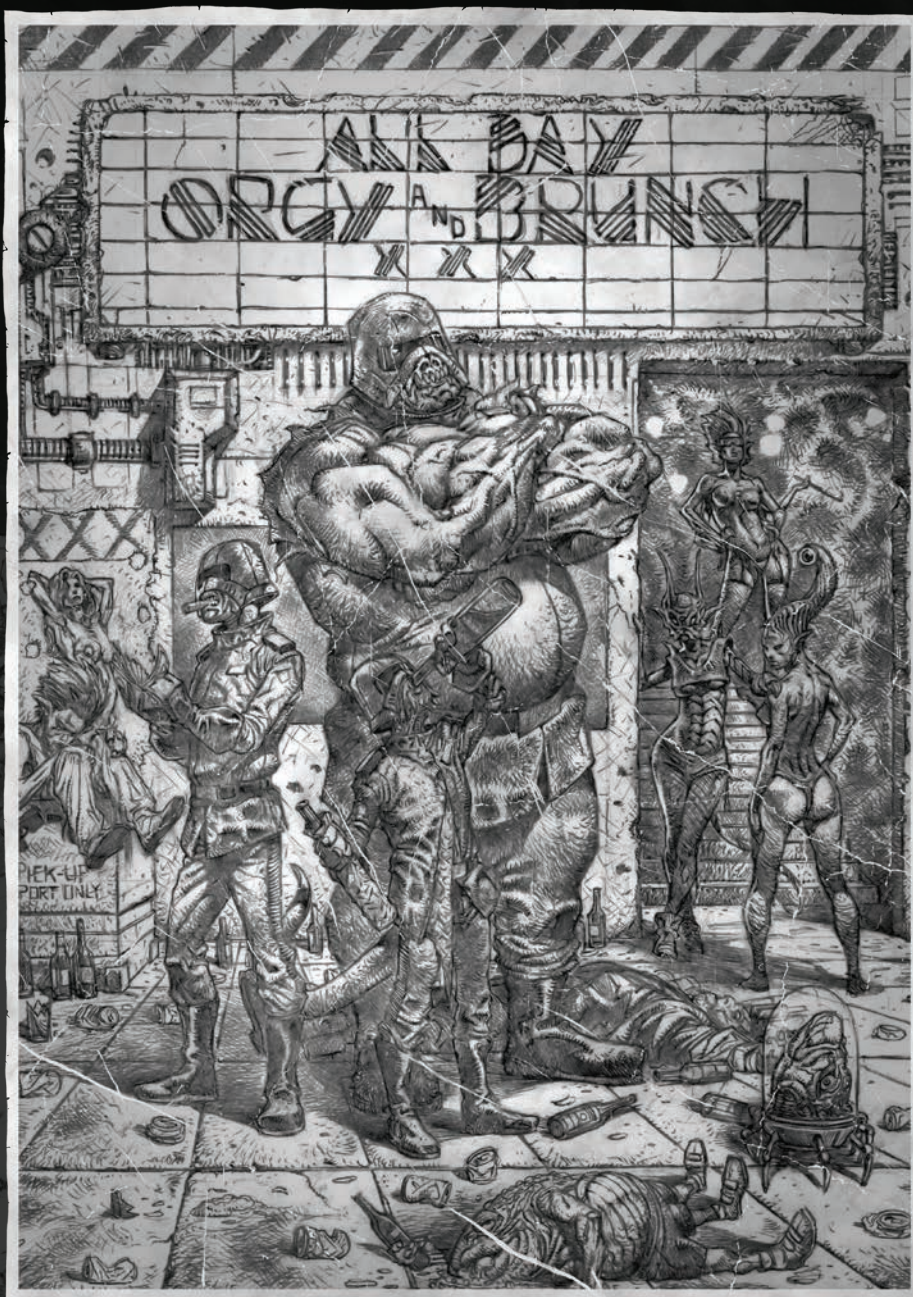
Now for the downsides.

First, unsanctioned bouts don't bring anywhere near the exposure of an officially INC-sanctioned barge. While you might grow in popularity among the "hardcore" fans, nobody important will know you or your helots exist—except the INC, which disapproves of not getting their cut.

This brings us to the second problem: Raids.

INC officers take their duties very seriously. They're quite vigilant in their search for rogue barges to shakedown for bribes. Whenever your helots engage in an unsanctioned barge bout, there's a chance of a raid. If this happens, you'll find the INC cut to be quite generous in comparison. It's a small comfort knowing that you'll have no choice in the beginning of your lanista career. Your crap helots will most likely die on crap barges after raids bleed you dry, and you'll fade into obscurity like billions before.

Good luck!



# GLOSSARY



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more details

**Action Point (AP):** Command points that have been designated to be spent on action commands.

**Action Point Cost (APC):** The amount of action points needed to perform an action command.

**Action Point Reserve:** The amount of unspent action points available to a player to command their helot.

**Action/Movement Ratio:** The allocation of command points between action and movement based on a player's ratio die roll.

**Aerie:** A craft that hovers above the barge arena giving a lanista the perfect view of the competing helots during a NEXUS bout.

**Aerie Command Panel:** Each player's section of the gameboard frame, used for tracking their helot's bonuses, opportunities, and condition.

**Barge:** Giant floating spacecraft that exist to play host to NEXUS arena bouts.

**Barge Arena:** The area represented by the NEXUS Gameboard.

**Barge Schematics:** Pre-generated barge arenas with instructions for placing obstacles and hazards.

**The Book:** The official odds-maker and bookie of NEXUS.

**Command Cycle:** An ordered execution of the initiative round followed by each player's command round.

**Command Points:** Each player is given (6) at the beginning of their command round to distribute between movements and actions based on their rolled ratio die value.

**Command Round:** Consists of (6) Command Points that are distributed into the helot's Movement Point Reserve or its Action Point Reserve.

**Command:** A lanista's stat that represents the amount of bonus command points that a player begins the bout with.

**Commands:** Movement or action instructions screamed down to your helot from high above atop your aerie.

**Cred:** The fame and fortune amassed by a lanista.

**Cred Coin:** Moving from pile to pile they may represent health, cred, Turning Point Counters or crowd frustration.

**Crowd Pile:** The amount of cred forfeited by the players to the crowd during a bout through their helots' inaction or by letting the hazards do all the dirty work for them.

**The Crypt:** An interdimensional hacker and thorn in the INC's side.

**Deception:** The act of forcefully deciding an opponent's action/movement ratio for them.

**Forward-Facing Direction (FFD):** The rotational position of a helot relative to its occupied space.

**Gnoems:** Creators of helots and the top of the evolutionary food chain.

**Hazard:** Something within a barge arena that indiscriminately injures and kills helots.

**Helot:** A genetically engineered warrior bred for combat by the gnomes in the Meat Gardens.

**Interdimensional NEXUS Commission (INC):** The regulating body behind NEXUS.

**Incapacitated:** A helot with an Overall Condition of (0).

**Influence:** A lanista's stat that represents the amount of influence cards a player begins the bout with.

**Influence Card:** A deck of actions available to a player representing bribes and other forms of cheating.

**Initiative:** A player's command round turn order or during the command cycle.

**Initiative Order:** The execution order of the participating players' command rounds.

**Initiative Round:** The process of determining players' command round turn orders and updating trait counters.

**Killed:** When a helot's head or chest location reaches (0).

**Lanista:** Interdimensional entrepreneurs looking for fame and fortune, out to make a name for themselves by commanding helots to fight in the NEXUS barge arenas!

**Location Condition:** The amount of hit points left in the Head, Chest, Midsection, Upper, or Lower Limbs. These location conditions are tracked with Cred Coins on the Aerie Command Panel.

**Meat Gardens:** The facility where helots are grown by gnoems.

**Motivation:** Where a helot finds its will to fight and survive in the NEXUS.

**Movement Point (MP):** Command points that have been designated to be spent on movement commands.

**Movement Point Cost (MPC):** The amount of movement points needed to perform a movement command.

**Movement Point Reserve:** The amount of unspent movement points available to a player to command their helot.

**Obstacle:** An object inside the arena that impedes a helot's movement or renders a space inaccessible.

**Optimal Distance:** This represents the number of squares the weapon can be used without penalty.

**Overall Condition (OC):** A helot's stamina and overall health. This is tracked with Cred Coins in the Overall section of the Aerie Command Panel.

**Pit Boss:** A neutral party that helps track and oversee the events of a NEXUS bout.

**Player Cred Coin Pile:** The amount of cred amassed by a player during the current bout.

**Randomly Placed Object (RPO):** An object that's location is determined by rolling (2) d8s and referring to the labeled grid on the gameboard.

**Ratio Die:** Used to determine the action/movement ratio.

**Roacguls:** Common vermin found aboard a majority of unsactioned NEXUS barges.

**Side-slip:** Moving your helot forward at a 45-degree angle (diagonally) while keeping their FFD

**Sliding Dice Scale (SDS):** A method for tracking helots' offensive and defensive combat advantages

**Spleen Team:** The official cleaning service of the INC.

**States:** A persistent effect that affects your helot until removed.

**Trait Abilities:** Abilities that may be performed by spending Trait Points.

**Trait Counter:** Where you track your helot's Trait Reserves on your aerie command panel.

**Trait Die:** A d6 featuring each of the (6) traits.

**Trait Reserves:** As trait values are rolled during the initiative round, they are collected in these reserves until they are spent on trait abilities.

**Traits:** Each helot has (6) traits; Willpower, Instinct, Physicality, Deftness, Swagger, and Cunning

**Turning Point:** The culmination of each number from (1) to (6) being rolled at least once by a player during their initiative round.

**Turning Point Counter:** The bottom left section of an aerie command panel that is used to track a player's Turning Points.

**Turning Point Damage Modifier (TPDM):** After reaching a Turning Point, the +(6) damage modifier to your next successful attack.

**Turning Point Roll Duplicate:** If when marking your Turning Point during your command round, you find it has already been marked, that is a Turning Point Roll Duplicate.

**Turning Point Events:** Hazards, cards and narrative events that start, stop, or reset when a Turning Point is reached.

