CONTENTS

Game Overview.....2-3
Preferred School.....3
Deck Setup.....4
Troupe Setup 4
Card Information.....4
Game Play.....5
Round End.....5
Game End.....5
Support Tokens.....6
3-Player Examples.....6
4-Player Examples..6-7
Team Examples.....7
Glossary.....8
2-Player Setup.....8
Team Variant.....8
Reminders.....8

SETTING

The year is 66 B.C. and gladiator games are at their most violent and bloody. Craving more political power, you excite the masses by announcing Gorus Maximus: Exceptionally bloody games.

You approach the owners of five gladiator schools to recruit their strongest gladiators and most ferocious beasts. These games will also allow you to do away with the criminals, deserters, and nay-sayers standing in your way.

Unfortunately, you are not the only one with such schemes! As the games draw near, you hear of political opponents with similar plans: to sacrifice gladiators for crowd favour and political support. Each of you will dispatch gladiators, ensuring the most exciting and gruesome games.

You are confident great things await you...
And it will be well worth all the blood on your hands!

OBJECTIVE

When the sun sets on the soiled battlefield, you want the spectators chanting your name. Earn their blood-thirsty support by giving them the most gruesome games and earning the title: ***Champion of Gorus Maximus***.

Game Designers: Conor & Dominique McGoey
Artist: Kwanchai Moriya | Editor: Daniel Mansfield

Questions or comments?
Contact info@insideupgames.com
To keep updated!
InsideUpGames

© 2018 Inside Up Games

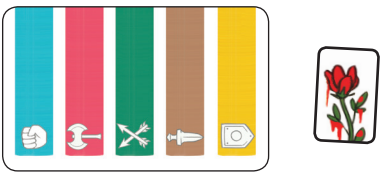
P.O.Box 26033 Memorial PO
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 0B2 Canada

GAME OVERVIEW

The deck contains 80 gladiators (cards) made up of 16 gladiators from each of the five schools (suits), with strength ranked from high (15) to low (0).

The five schools are represented by different colours and icons. Each school has one gladiator of each rank; a stronger gladiator beats a weaker gladiator of the same school.

In each round of the game, one school will be preferred over all the others (trump). Any gladiator in this ***preferred school*** will win against all gladiators not in the preferred school. (See Preferred School, p. 3.)



Depending on player count, a set number of gladiators from a set number of schools will be shuffled together. Each player will be dealt 10 gladiators to create their ***troupe*** (hand). In a clockwise manner, each player will contribute one gladiator, chosen from their troupe, to create a ***bout*** (trick).

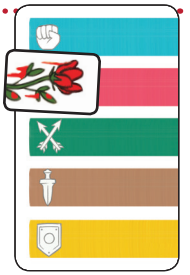
To begin the round, the player to the left of the dealer plays any gladiator from any school. The school of this first gladiator of the round is *both* the ***initiating school*** (called for) and the ***preferred school*** (trump).

If a player has a gladiator from the initiating school in their troupe, they ***must*** enter one of those gladiators into the bout, with one exception:

A Challenge: can occur when a player matches the rank of the last gladiator played; this immediately changes the preferred school to the school of this new gladiator.

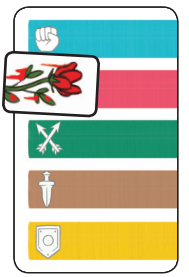
GAME OVERVIEW CONTINUED

If a player does not have a gladiator from the initiating school, and they do not wish to Challenge, any gladiator from their troupe may enter the bout to fight (***sluff***), including one from the preferred school.



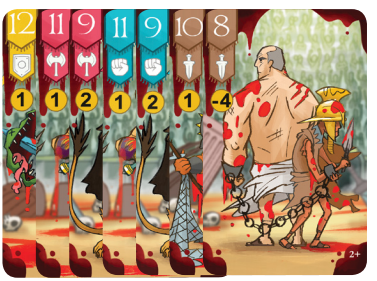
The highest-ranked gladiator from the preferred school will win the bout. If no gladiator from the preferred school entered the bout, then the highest-ranked gladiator from the initiating school will win.

The winner of the bout collects the spent gladiators and places them facedown in front of themselves. The preferred school will carry over between bouts, but not between rounds.



Each bout's winner leads the next bout with any gladiator they desire. That gladiator's school will be the new initiating school and could be from the preferred school if desired.

Once players have exhausted their troupes by contributing to each bout, they will tally their Crowd Favour (see Card Information, p. 4). The player with the most favour will earn 1 Crowd Support. This support is tracked with Support Tokens (see p. 6).



Crowd Favour
1+1+2+1+2+1=8
8-4=4

Support Token

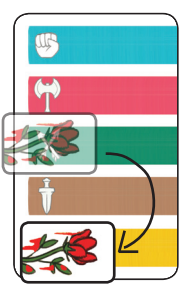
Next, all gladiators will be shuffled together so that new troupes can be dealt out.

The game ends when one player has earned the support of the masses by earning 3 Crowd Support, signifying they have satisfied the crowd's lust for blood and earned their political support.

PREFERRED SCHOOL

During each bout, one school will be preferred over all the others (trump). As the preferred school can change quickly, we highly recommend using the Preferred School Card and Marker. When the preferred school is established, or changes, one player should immediately make this change on the card so that all players can see and take note.

Players should not use this card to track the initiating school, as that can be easily seen by looking at the first gladiator played in each bout.



DECK SETUP

Player Count	Number of Schools	Gladiators/ School	Total Deck Size
2 or 3	3	10 (0, 4-12)	30
4	4	10 (0, 4-12)	40
5	5	10 (0, 4-12)	50
6	5	12 (0, 3-13)	60
7	5	14 (0, 2-14)	70
8	5	16 (0-15)	80

To help with setup, on the bottom right of each card there is a number for player count (see ***"Card Information"*** below).

For example, in a six-player game, use all the gladiators with "2+" and "6+" in all five schools.

In a two-player game, take only three of the five schools, and use only the gladiators with "2+" at the bottom.

All "2+" gladiators would be used in a 2-, 3-, 4- or 5-player game, but the number of schools needed would change. Three schools for 2 or 3 players, four schools for 4 players, and five schools for 5 players.

TROUPE SETUP

Create the deck using the setup grid above, shuffle the cards and then deal out all gladiators to create each player's troupe of 10 gladiators. It is recommended to sort your gladiators into their schools by rank.

2-Player Setup: Deal out 10 gladiators to each player, and the remaining gladiators are placed facedown in a draw pile. After a gladiator is played, draw a new gladiator from the draw pile. Once the draw pile is empty, play as usual until your troupe is exhausted.

CARD INFORMATION

A - The gladiator's ***rank*** within the school; 15 high to 0 low.

B - The gladiator's ***school***, denoted by both colour and icon.
(Blue Fists, Brown Swords, Green Arrows, Pink Axes & Yellow Shields.)

C - Crowd Favour (CF) value. Only on select gladiators. Collected values are calculated at the end of each round, and the player with the highest total earns 1 Crowd Support (see Support Tokens p. 6).

Important: During bouts 0 are not worth any CF. At the end of the round, check which school is preferred. The 0 from that school, and only that school, is now worth 5 CF. All other 0s are not worth any CF.

D - Player count. Used for that number of players, or more.
(See "***Deck Setup***" above.)

GAME PLAY

The first bout begins with the player to the left of the dealer leading with any gladiator. This ***first*** gladiator played each ***round*** denotes which school begins as the ***preferred school***, and also the ***initiating school***.

> ***Rule:*** Each player, in clockwise order, must play a gladiator from the initiating school, if able.

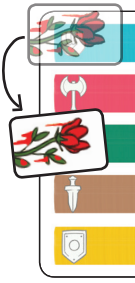
If a player does not have a gladiator from that school, they may play from any school, including the preferred school.

> ***Exception:*** Players may ***Challenge*** by matching the ***rank*** of the last gladiator played, instead of the school. The Challenge results in the preferred school ***immediately*** changing to the school of this new gladiator.

Note: Players must follow the school of the first gladiator played ***(called for)*** even if the preferred school changes. It is recommended that players place their chosen gladiator in front of them, not in a pile, so players can easily see which gladiator was played last, and which school is the initiating school.

Upon winning a bout, that player collects the gladiators involved and places them facedown in front of themselves. ***Play continues with the winner of each bout leading the next bout,*** with any gladiator from any school. The preferred school will carry over between bouts until the end of the round. Any player is allowed to look back at the gladiators involved in the last bout, but no further. Crowd Favour (CF) should not be calculated until after all ten bouts are resolved, and the round is over. ***The preferred school does not carry over between rounds.***

When each player's troupes are exhausted, players will calculate their Crowd Favour, and the player with the highest total will earn 1 Crowd Support.
Then the player to the left of the dealer will become the new dealer, and will shuffle and distribute all the gladiators to create new troupes.



Example, Ann starts the round by leading with the Blue Fists' 4, making it the ***initiating school*** as well as the ***preferred school.*** Daniel plays the Blue 10, as this school was called for, and beats Ann's 4. Maureen has a Blue 9, but instead of playing it and losing to Daniel's 10, she Challenges, playing her Green 10, immediately changing the ***preferred school*** (not the initiating school), winning the bout and 2 Crowd Favour (1 CF for each 10). Maureen will now collect the gladiators, place them facedown in front of her, and she may lead the next bout with any gladiator from her troupe.
(The preferred school is now Green Arrows, until it is Challenged.)

ROUND END

At the end of each round, when troupes are exhausted, the player with the highest Crowd Favour will earn 1 Crowd Support, tracked with a Support Token taken from the general supply. (In the unlikely event of a tie, all tied players receive 1 Crowd Support.)

GAME END

The game ends when one player has won the support of the masses by earning 3 Crowd Support. If two or more players earn their third Crowd Support at the same time, whichever of these players collected the 0 wins. If none have the 0, whichever has collected the fewest gladiators this round wins.

SUPPORT TOKENS

The player with the most Crowd Favour at the end of each round earns 1 Crowd Support, which is tracked with Support Tokens (ST). Players can make change with these tokens as needed.
(For a longer or shorter game, players can increase or decrease the amount of Crowd Support needed to win.)

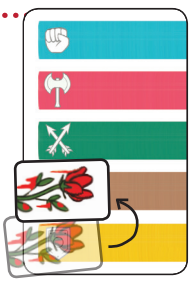
Any of these ST combinations wins the game.

3-PLAYER EXAMPLES

Sluffing: Yellow Shields is the preferred school. Daniel won the previous bout and he decides to lead with the Brown Swords' 5. Maureen does not have any Brown, so she plays the Blue Fists' 8 to give her opponent -4 CF. Ann avoids the negative CF by playing her Brown 1.

Daniel wins the bout and receives -4 CF.

Bad Idea: Yellow Shields is still the preferred school. Daniel won the previous bout, so he decides to lead with the Blue Fists' 6. Maureen does not have any Blue, so she plays the Pink Axes' 8. Ann gets excited and throws down her Brown Swords' 8, hoping to give Daniel another -4 CF. Unfortunately, since Ann Challenged by matching the rank of the last gladiator played, she changes the preferred school to Brown Swords and wins the bout!



Ann wins the bout and receives -8 CF.

4-PLAYER EXAMPLES

Sneaky Idea: Green Arrows is the preferred school. Maureen won the previous bout, so she decides to lead with the Blue Fists' 9. Carter, having no Blue, is happy to get rid of his Pink Axes' 8. Ann follows the initiating school and plays her Blue 5. Daniel has Blue, but seeing an opportunity to hurt Carter, who has a Support Token already, he Challenges by playing his Pink Axes' 5, matching the previous gladiator's rank and immediately changing the preferred school to Pink Axes. This means Carter has the strongest gladiator from the preferred school, and therefore wins the bout.

Carter wins the bout and receives -2 CF.

4-PLAYER EXAMPLES CONTINUED

Big Finish: Blue Fists is the preferred school, and all players have only one gladiator left in their troupe. Carter leads with the Green Arrows' 12. Ann tosses in the Blue 7. Daniel plays the Blue 0, which could be worth 5 CF as it is currently the preferred school. However, Maureen plays her Brown Swords' 0, matching the last gladiator played. This Challenge changes the preferred school to Brown Swords. As the round is over, and the preferred school can no longer change, her Brown 0 is worth 5 CF. The Blue Fists' 0 is now worthless.

Maureen wins the bout and receives 6 CF.

TEAM EXAMPLES

(See Team Variant on p. 8.)

Point Thief: Pink Axes is the preferred school. Maureen won the previous bout, so she decides to lead with the Pink Axes' 10. Carter follows with the 7. Hudson, one of Maureen's teammates, decides to throw 2 CF for his team and contributes the 9. Ann follows the initiating school and adds the 4, as does Daniel with the 6. Greg wants the CF so he matches Daniel's 6, changing the preferred school to Brown Swords and winning the bout for the blue team.

Blue wins the bout and receives 3 CF.

Vindictive: Greg leads with the Brown Swords' 4, the preferred school. Janine adds her Brown 2, worth -1 CF. Patrick contributes the 9, and Maureen beats it with her 11. Carter Challenges by matching the 11, switching the preferred school to Yellow Shields, and attempting to steal the trick. Hudson doesn't have any Brown, so he plays a higher preferred gladiator, Yellow 15. Ann can't win, but she can play her Brown 8, negating her opponents' CF. Daniel, having no Brown, throws in his Pink Axes' 0, making sure his team has as many 0s as possible! Hudson's Yellow 15 wins the bout for the Red team.

Red wins the bout and 0 CF, but has a 0!

GLOSSARY

Bout - A bout is created by each player contributing one gladiator in a clockwise manner.

Challenge - Matching the rank of the last gladiator played. This immediately changes the preferred school to that of the new gladiator's.

Crowd Favour - The value of certain gladiators due to their effect on the bloodthirsty crowd. The player with the highest total at the end of each round earns 1 Crowd Support.

Gladiator - Any card, human or beast, from any school.

Initiating School - The school of the first gladiator to enter each bout. Players must play from this school, if able, or they may Challenge. If neither, then they must play a gladiator from any other school.

Preferred School - Gladiators from this school will beat any gladiator from any other school. Set by the first gladiator played in the first bout of a round. Can only be changed with a Challenge, or at the start of a new round.

Round - A round consists of 10 bouts.

Sluff - When a player does not have a gladiator from the initiating school, they may play a gladiator from any school, including the preferred school.

Support Token - Earned by the player with the most Crowd Favour at the end of each round. The first player with 3 Crowd Support wins the game.

Troupe - Each player is dealt 10 gladiators, which make up their troupe (hand) for the round.

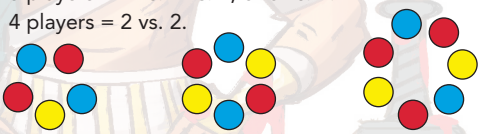
2-PLAYER SETUP

Create the deck as per the set up chart below. Deal out 10 gladiators to each player, and the remaining gladiators are placed facedown in a draw pile. After a gladiator is played, draw a new gladiator from the draw pile. Once the draw pile is empty, play as usual until your troupe is exhausted.

TEAM VARIANT

Team Game: With 4 or more players, players can play in teams, making sure teams sit in alternating order. One teammate should gather all gladiators from each bout won, and at the end of the round, they will total values of all Crowd Favour collected. The team with the highest Crowd Favour earns 1 Crowd Support. It is recommended that each team play for a number of Crowd Support equal to their team size plus one.

8 players = 2 vs. 2 vs. 2 vs. 2, or 4 vs. 4.
7 players = 2 vs. 2 vs. 2 vs. 1, or 3 vs. 2 vs. 2.
6 players = 2 vs. 2 vs. 2, or 3 vs. 3.
5 players = 2 vs. 2 vs. 1, or 3 vs. 2.
4 players = 2 vs. 2.



Team seating examples.

REMINDERS

Player Count	# of Suits	# of Cards/ Suit	Deck Size
2 or 3	3	10 (0, 4-12)	30
4	4	10 (0, 4-12)	40
5	5	10 (0, 4-12)	50
6	5	12 (0, 3-13)	60
7	5	14 (0, 2-14)	70
8	5	16 (0-15)	80

Create deck, shuffle and deal each player 10 cards.
First card played in first bout sets initiating ***and*** preferred school.
Each player, going clockwise, contributes one card.
Players must follow initiating school, or sluff, unless:
Challenge: matching rank immediately changes preferred school.
Strongest gladiator from preferred school wins bout. If none:
Strongest gladiator from initiating school wins bout.
Winner leads next bout with any gladiator. Sets initiating school.
Preferred school carries over between bouts (not rounds).
Highest CF at end of round earns 1 Crowd Support.
First player to earn 3 Crowd Support wins.

WHO WINS THE BOUT? ***1)*** The strongest gladiator from the ***preferred*** school. Or, if no gladiator from the preferred school entered the bout, ***2)*** The strongest gladiator from the ***initiating*** school.

No animals (or gladiators) were hurt in the making of this game