

SIR GORIN'S

BOOK

OF

WAR

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
WHAT IS A BATTLE GAME?	4
WHAT MAKES A GAME FUN?	4
WHAT MAKES A GAME NOT FUN?	5
THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMON LANGUAGE	6
GAME DESIGN ELEMENTS	
THE FIELD	7
SPAWN POINTS	7
BASES	7
TERRAIN	8
SIEGE WEAPONS	9
OBJECTIVES	9
KILL OBJECTIVES	10
CAPTURE OBJECTIVES	10
DEFEND OBJECTIVES	10
PUZZLE OBJECTIVES	11
TRAVEL OBJECTIVES	11
TAGS	11
OBJECT TAGS	11
TARGET / VICTIM TAGS	12
BALANCING GAMES	13
BALANCING WITH PLAYERS	13
BALANCING WITH TERRAIN	13
BALANCING WITH MECHANICS	14

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

BATTLE GAMES	15
BATTLE GAME TEMPLATE	16
BASIC BATTLE GAMES	19
BLOOD POOL	20
MEAT GRINDER	21
CAPTAIN BATTLE	22
CAPTURE THE FLAG	23
TAKE AND HOLD	24
ADVANCED BATTLE GAMES	25
BRIDGE CONTROL	26
GRAVITY FLAG	27
CHARIOT RACE	28
CASTLE CRASHERS	29
FAT PRINCESS	30
STRONGHOLD DEFENSE	31
IT TAKES AN ARMY TO RAZE A VILLAGE	32
PIRATE BATTLE	33
FULL-SCALE WAR	34
TOURNAMENTS	
INTRODUCTION TO TOURNAMENTS	35
TOURNAMENT FORMAT	36
BOUT FORMAT	37
FILLING IN BRACKETS	37
TOURNAMENT TEMPLATES	
8-MAN DOUBLE ELIMINATION	38
8-MAN SINGLE ELIMINATION	39
16-MAN DOUBLE ELIMINATION	40
16-MAN SINGLE ELIMINATION	41
ROUND ROBIN	42
IRONMAN	43

# INTRODUCTION

Arguably, the most important activity in Amtgard is the Full Class Battle Game. The majority of our rule-book is devoted to it, and the vast majority of our members are drawn into the organization through participating in these events. Our membership is made up of a diverse group of people with a variety of interests. I believe that class battles are the key to tapping into the passion associated with those interests.

I've spent more than ten years in Amtgard office and throughout this time, I have consistently found that having high levels of engagement, variety, and inclusion in your battle games will greatly contribute to the success of your park. Thus, I can't stress enough how important it can be to have someone in your park that is willing to learn how to design and execute really good battle games. It will be priceless for the growth and success of your kingdom / chapter.

~Gorin

## WHAT IS A BATTLE GAME?

We've all participated in really bad battle games. Likewise, I'm sure that we've all participated in games that can only be described as "Epic". Those games that create memories that are shared around an event campfire for years to come. So what makes these games so terrible or so amazing?

To start, let's take a look at the elements that make up a battle game, as well as variables that can be used to create games that are different, exciting, and most of all, inclusive!

A battle game is a lot of things to a lot of people. But at it's very basic it is a competitive struggle between two or more groups. While this may seem obvious and basic, it is the canvas upon which you will lay a variety of other elements to create your game.

From this very basic point, you have two questions to answer:

- ***Who is struggling?***
- ***How will they struggle?***

The "Who" is pretty easy to work out. Generally the answer to this is "Two or more teams teams of players". However, it can be defined in narrower terms as well such as "Nobility and Peasants" or "Players and Monsters" etc.

The "how" is where you will find your opportunity to really make things interesting. This is the part of the battle game where you get to define the parameters of the struggle.

## WHAT MAKES A GAME FUN?

Think back on some of your favorite battle game moments. What, specifically, do you remember about them? Why is it that this memory stands out to you? For many, there are three key things that make a battle game particularly enjoyable:

### ◆ **The requirement for teamwork**

When a team has to work together to achieve victory, they are creating a shared experience. This shared experience often helps to create lasting memories that people enjoy retelling and recreating. For the most part, everyone enjoys being on a team that works together. A positive teamwork environment can often be far more rewarding than actually winning.

### ◆ **A 50/50 chance of victory**

Often, the struggle itself is more enjoyable than the outcome. When victory teeters back and forth between teams, and a clear winner is only established in the final moments, it often doesn't matter who that victor is. Players will walk away from the game not caring who won because of how much they enjoyed the struggle. While a perfectly balanced game may never happen, it's a goal to strive for at every opportunity.

#### ◆ **Being a component of success - “Being the hero”**

It’s important to realize that people have different strengths. When you allow players to utilize those strengths to achieve victory, you allow them to “be the hero”. By incorporating victory conditions that play to a variety of strengths, you will create games that a wider variety of people can enjoy. Add objectives that reward speed, stealth, teamwork, or strategy.

## WHAT MAKES A GAME NOT FUN?

There are a variety of things that can very quickly ruin a battle game for those participating. Let’s take a look at some of the more common elements:

#### ◆ **Lack of Clarity**

When the rules of the game are not clearly explained or understood, you’ll find that players will not enjoy the game. I refer to this as the “**Confusion Factor**”™ of the game and you should attempt to keep it minimal. Take the time to ensure that the rules of the game and any battle game elements are clearly understood by all of the

players and, maybe even more importantly, your referees.

#### ◆ **Complexity**

Another culprit often responsible for raising the Confusion Factor to unacceptable levels is too much complexity. Battle games do not need to be complex to be enjoyable. Remember, our players already have 70-100 pages of rules to be familiar with. Adding 10 pages of rules for a single battle game will almost always result in failure. Both new and veteran players should be able to easily understand the game, what is expected of them, and how to achieve victory.

#### ◆ **Not getting to play**

It’s hard to enjoy a game if you don’t get to play. Luckily, things have changed a lot since the old days and we no longer have to spend 5 minutes under the effect of an iceball. Needless to say, the more you keep your players actively participating in the game, the more opportunity they will have to enjoy themselves. At all costs, avoid creating or using battle game elements that are based around inactivity / not getting to play.



### ◆Cheating

This one might seem pretty obvious, but it can't be stated enough. We use a very in-depth rulebook to provide a framework for our games. When players act outside of this framework, it creates a great deal of frustration amongst other participants who are honoring it. Luckily, in my experience, this most often occurs due to a lack of knowledge or understanding. Keep this under control by knowing your group and assigning enough knowledgeable reeves. Make your reeves effective with things like bright gold tabards and whistles, and hold them to a high standard of professionalism.

### ◆Not feeling effective

I saved this one for last because I feel that it is absolutely the most important. A good, healthy group will have a mix of skills, abilities, and talents amongst its members. Unfortunately, we often cater to specific skills and abilities while neglecting others. Pure fighting skill is a good example. It is absolutely imperative that you design games that allow more than just the good fighters the opportunity to be a hero. Examples on how to accomplish this will be discussed a little farther on. Needless to say, you will not retain members if they consistently feel unimportant / useless when they play.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A COMMON LANGUAGE

Okay, so all of these thoughts and ideas are well and good, but HOW do you actually accomplish any of it? Well, we have our "Who" (is struggling) and our "How" (are they struggling). In just a moment we'll take a look at some different elements that we can use to help us build and define battle game as well as discussing their implementation. But before we do that, I'd like to take a moment to talk about the idea of a "common language".

So let's say you've planned a great battle game, and you have explained the rules to everyone, and the reeves are all on board. What do you consider next? This is your opportunity to look at the bigger picture of your park's battle games and ask yourself: "Am I being consistent?". This is where Common Language comes in.

In order to keep the "Confusion Factor"<sup>™</sup> as low as possible, it's critical that game concepts remain the same. This doesn't mean run the same battle game every week. It means that the ideas used in a battle game remain as constant as possible.

For example: Your park frequently makes use of "Boundaries" in your battle games due to space limitations. The penalty for "going out of bounds" is death. But what does "going out of bounds" mean? A single step over the line? Both feet being over the line? Being over the line for more than 5 seconds? It is important that the definition of "Out of Bounds" remains constant. Even if you clearly explain the rules every battle game, these smaller "definitions" should remain the same. By doing so, you create a "Common Language" that will vastly speed up your ability to explain game rules, give the players less to focus on and allow them to enjoy the game while minimizing needless arguments. This eventually grows into a cultural element and allows your veterans to quickly and confidently help new players understand games.



# THE BATTLE FIELD

Now let's open up the box of tools you will begin using to design your battle games. There are two main parts of this tool box, the first containing Field elements, and the second containing Objectives. We're going to focus on field elements first.

There is a lot to consider when deciding which field or how much of a field you're going to use. This may take some trial and error, but there are a couple of key points to keep in mind: Field Size and Fighter Density.

## ◆Field Size

The larger your field is, the more time your players will spend travelling instead of fighting. This is important to remember because players would generally prefer fighting over walking. However, having players continuously spawn 10 feet from where they died makes a boring battle game. I usually find that, as a general rule, 100 feet is a good distance from end to end. This number is frequently adjusted based on the game itself, number of players, etc.

## ◆Fighter Density

The more tightly your players are packed together, the more intense the action will be, however there will be less opportunity for maneuvering, ranged support and restorative elements. This can be either good or bad depending on the game. Fighter density can be controlled through a number of design elements, including: Field Size, Terrain, and Death Count.

Reducing field size will result in a higher fighter density or, terrain can be used to create pockets of higher fighter density while utilizing a larger field. A good example of this would be a bridge/chokepoint. A lower/higher Death Count can adjust the fighter density by increasing / decreasing the number of active players at any given time. Once you've decided on the

field size and considered your desired fighter density, it's time to consider spawn points and bases!

## ◆Spawn Points

This is a game element that is often relegated to the position of "afterthought". However, it is a crucial element of the battle field and should be given due consideration. Spawn points decide where your players will be entering the battle field and this can have serious impact on the game. Have you ever had the misfortune of playing a game where the spawn point and objectives are near (or even on top of) each other? Additionally, spawn points can be used to control the Fighter Density, and game flow based on their distance and relative position to objectives, enemy spawn points, etc. Ensure that spawn points are clearly identifiable and marked (preferably in team colors).



## ◆Bases

Bases are sometimes forgotten in battle games as they are not always designated to have an effect beyond repairing equipment or stopping Monks in Sanctuary. It is important to use a base, and to ensure your players are familiar with it. This will ensure that there is little confusion when the base is used as part of an objective or other important effect. As with spawn points, bases should be visibly marked and clearly identifiable.



# TERRAIN

Now that you've got the bare-bones of your field set up, with size, spawn points, and bases, it's time to decide if you need / want to add terrain!

Terrain can drastically affect a battle game and can add a fresh twist to old games. The terrain below is not an exhaustive list, and you may have ideas for different kinds of terrain. The most important thing to keep in mind is that terrain should be deliberately placed for an intended effect. Keep it as simple as possible so that it becomes a fun game element and not something that players need to think too hard to interact with.

Interacting with terrain should be fairly simple, and as such, I recommend the following interaction types: Entering, Touching, Engulfing.

Terrain effects that require the player to **enter** the terrain area are activated if the player has both feet inside of the marked terrain area. Terrain effects that require the player to **touch** the terrain are activated if any part of their body comes into contact with the marked terrain area. **Engulfing** terrain effects are activated if any part of the player, their held equipment, or garb / worn equipment come into contact with the marked terrain area. An interesting / Fun way to interact with terrain is to allow insubstantial players to ignore their effects. If you decide to do this, do it ALWAYS or you will have confused, unhappy players.

## TERRAIN EXAMPLES

### ◆Water

WATER

Water is one of the more common types of terrain used in battle games. Standard water requires any player that enters it to WALK while they are inside of the terrain area.

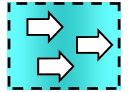
### ◆Deep Water

DEEP

Deep Water requires players to WALK as above. Additionally, all players that enter the terrain are considered FRAGILE and any player with 3 or more points of armor drowns (is killed).

### ◆Moving Water

Players within the boundaries of this terrain effect must WALK and are considered FRAGILE. Additionally, the flow of water will be designated by a Reeve. Every other step a player takes must be in the designated direction.



### ◆Impaired Vision

This terrain includes Darkness, Fog, Blinding Light, etc. Players that enter this terrain effect must WALK. Additionally, they may not be directly targeted by projectiles or any ability with a range greater than touch. Bounces and deflections that result in an otherwise legal hit will count.



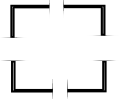
### ◆Deadly

This terrain encompasses any terrain that would cause the death of a player upon touching it (Fire, Poison, Acid, Bottomless Pit, etc). Any player that places ANY part of their body into the terrain is killed. This effect ignores Armor, Enchantments, Abilities, etc.



### ◆Walls

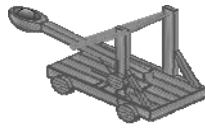
There are generally two types of walls: Imaginary and Physical. Imaginary walls are usually represented by a piece of rope or surveyor's tape, while physical walls are represented by solid walls. I find that simple is always better with walls, therefore my recommendation is that Physical Walls Block line of site and physical strikes that they \*actually\* block and that Imaginary Walls block EVERYTHING that would have to cross the line representing the wall. Period.





### ◆ Catapult / Siege Weapon

There are a variety of ways in which a siege weapon can be represented and utilized in a battle game. This method is designed for ease of use, and ability for any park to implement it. The basic materials needed to represent this catapult is a hula-hoop and three large (8"-12") foam balls (nerf soccer balls work great).



The catapult requires three people to operate: One person steps inside the hula-hoop while one person stands on either side and hold the hula-hoop in one hand. The player in the center represents the arm of the catapult and the players on the side represent the wheels. The players retain all of their class abilities and equipment which function normally. These players are required to have one hand free/holding the catapult at all times while operating the catapult. Wounds act as normal and may hamper a player's ability to operate the catapult. Killing a player destroys that section of the catapult. If the arm is destroyed, the siege engine cannot fire but can still move. If one wheel is destroyed, the catapult may rotate around the center player. If both wheels are destroyed, the catapult may still fire, but is affected as per STOPPED (this may not be avoided / removed). Typically, the catapult will only have a fixed number of shots (usually 3) before having to reload. The catapult may be repaired / reloaded in the designated area in a 30 count. At the end of the 30 count, players may be swapped out in order to repair the catapult. If the entire catapult is destroyed, it will respawn in the designated area after a 150 count.

Alternatively, casting MEND on a broken section of the Catapult will allow a new player to take over a section of the catapult in order to repair it.

## OBJECTIVES



Objectives are used to determine the victors in any particular battle game. Every game has a PRIMARY objective. Occasionally, games will also contain SECONDARY objectives.

Primary objectives are the focus of the game and should be the easiest way to achieve victory, while being difficult to achieve. Secondary objectives are often easier to achieve and give the players another way to influence the outcome of the game, and are often the key to ensuring that a game does not result in a draw. Secondary objectives should be simpler to complete and/or have more numerous opportunities to complete while not easily achieving victory by themselves.

*For example: In a Capture the Flag game, the primary objective is to take the flag from the opposing base and return it to your own. However, to ensure that there is plenty of mayhem and slaughter, the game designer has assigned a secondary objective called "Meatgrinder" where teams earn points for each enemy player they kill.*

In the above example Capturing the enemy flag is assigned a value of 20 points, while killing an enemy player is assigned a value of 1 point. The game is scheduled for 30 minutes with the team accumulating the most points being declared the victors.

There are a wide variety of objectives that can be assigned to a game. And a game can have as many objectives as you desire (though remember to keep it simple). This document will list 20 common objectives grouped into 5 broad categories, however you will undoubtedly come up with objectives of your own. When doing so, remember to utilize common language, don't contribute to the confusion factor™ and keep it as simple as possible.



## KILL OBJECTIVES

These objectives require causing the death / destruction of a player or object. When the objective is to kill a player, it is the responsibility of the target to honorably report their death to the reeve.

### ◆ KILL PLAYER IN TERRAIN

Also called “Fishing”. Any enemy that dies because of, or inside of a terrain effect completes the objective.

### ◆ KILL INSUBSTANTIAL PLAYER

Also called a “Ghost Hunt”. Killing any enemy under the effects of the INSUBSTANTIAL state or within 5 seconds of removal of the state will complete the objective.

### ◆ KILL ENEMY PLAYER or “Meatgrinder”

Killing any enemy player completes the objective.

### ◆ KILL TITLED PLAYER

Also called a “Peasant Revolt”, killing any enemy with a title / office completes the objective.

### ◆ KILL WITH PROJECTILE or “Pincushion”

Using a projectile weapon or spell ball to kill an enemy player will complete the objective.

### ◆ KILL OTHER TEAM or “Slaughter”

This objective requires players or teams to have a finite number of lives. In this case, the objective is complete when all the players on a team are out of lives.

### ◆ KILL STOPPED PLAYER or “Trapper”

Killing an enemy player under the effects of the STOPPED state will complete the objective.

### ◆ VANDALISM

Players must strike or otherwise engage in combat with an object. Doing so completes the objective.

### ◆ VIP

One or more players on a team are designated as a TARGET. Killing these players completes the objective.

### ◆ KILL SPELLCASTER or “Witch Hunt”

Also called a “Witch Hunt”. Killing any enemy spell caster completes the objective.



## CAPTURE OBJECTIVES



Capture objectives require players to physically capture a player, object, or area. Unless otherwise stated, a capture object must be held in an open hand in full view of other players and may not be used to block

### ◆ CONQUER

Also called “Node Capture”. The objective is complete by capturing a STATIC capture item.

### ◆ HARVEST

This objective consists of capturing multiple, small, items and returning them to a collection point.

### ◆ LARCENY

Most commonly, Capture the Flag. Objective is completed by returning an object to the scoring area.

### ◆ RESCUE

One or more players are assigned as VICTIMS. These players are [BOUND] until freed by a friendly player. In order to Free the VICTIM, a friendly player must place a single hand on their shoulder and give a verbal 10 count. Once freed, the VICTIM must attempt to reach the friendly scoring area.

## DEFEND OBJECTIVES



These objectives revolve around preventing the other team from capturing / destroying a person, area, or object. There is almost always a time limit.

### ◆ FORTIFY

This objective requires the team to successfully prevent an area from being captured.

### ◆ SAFEGUARD

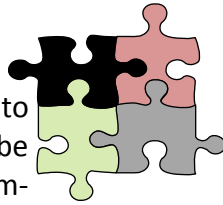
This objective is achieved if the team successfully prevents the capture / destruction of an object.

### ◆ SHIELD

This objective is achieved if the team successfully prevents the capture / death of a TARGET player.

## PUZZLE OBJECTIVES

These objectives require the players to solve some sort of puzzle in order to be successful. There are an infinite number of examples: Riddles, Actual Puzzles, heavily knotted ropes to untie, Cyphers and Codes, Cards, etc.



## TAGS

Objective tags are words or phrases designed to quickly explain rules and objectives to the players. This is a part of the “Common Language” discussed above. Once your players / chapter become used to these tags battle games become incredibly easy to play, reeve, and enjoy! Tags are assigned to an objective element in order to help describe how it functions or differentiate it from a similar objective element.



## TRAVEL OBJECTIVES

These objectives require the players to move along a path in order to claim success.



### ◆ESCAPE ROUTE(#)

This objective requires an enemy team to get a number of players equal to the assigned number from Point A to Point B. This number can be static or a fraction of the team. For example: ESCAPE ROUTE(12) means that at least 12 players must make it from point A to B, while ESCAPE ROUTE(½) means that ½ the total number of players on the team must make it. There is often a time limit for this objective.

### ◆VIP ESCORT

The objective is to safely escort a TARGET / VICTIM along the path from Point A to Point B.

### ◆CARAVAN

Also called “Caravan”, this objective requires an enemy team to move an object from Point A to Point B. This object invariably carries one or more TAGs (See below)

## OBJECT TAGS

While, theoretically, these tags could be used on anything in a battle game, they are most commonly assigned to scoring objects, such as flags.

### [RETURNING]

A RETURNING object must be returned to a capture point in order to complete the objective.

### [LOCKED]

A LOCKED object cannot be moved or otherwise manipulated until its locked status is removed. This is done by placing two open hands on the object and incanting “Unlocking 1 ... Unlocking 10”. Once the incant is complete, the object is no longer locked.

### [COMPLEX]

A COMPLEX object cannot be captured until its COMPLEX status is removed. This is done by setting the object in its capture location and incanting “Capturing 1...Capturing 10”.

### [HEAVY(#)]

A HEAVY object must be held with a number of hands equal to the number in parentheses. For example, HEAVY(4) requires at least Four hands to be touching the object in order to move it. Additionally, it cannot be moved at a pace faster than a walk.

### [STATIC]

A STATIC object is not moveable. It is already in its scoring area and is capture by placing a hand upon it (unless it is LOCKED or COMPLEX).



# TARGET / VICTIM TAGS



These tags are applied to players that have been designated as TARGET or VICTIM objectives.

## [LIEUTENANT]

A TARGET player with the [LIEUTENANT] tag is immune to the INSUBSTANTIAL state and may not wear enchantments

## [CAPTAIN]

A TARGET player with the [CAPTAIN] tag is affected as follows:

- All class abilities, traits, and magic are removed.
- May only use Short Weapons / Medium Shields
- Gain immunity to the following:
  - Projectiles
  - Magic
  - Frozen, Stopped, Stunned, Suppressed, Insubstantial
- Gain HEAL(ex)(unlim)
- Gain MEND(ex)(unlim)

## [GENERAL]

A TARGET player with the [GENERAL] tag is affected as follows:

- As per CAPTAIN
- Gain Armor Breaking
- Gain 2 points of Natural Ancestral Armor

## [POW]

A RESCUE player with the [POW] tag is affected as follows:

- Instead of being killed, the player is immediately healed of all wounds and STUNNED for 60 seconds. This state may not be removed by any other means.
- While stunned, may be directed by an enemy player to WALK in any direction by placing an empty hand on the POW's shoulder.
- Gains immunity to INSUBSTANTIAL and FROZEN states.
- Upon returning to the scoring area, loses the [POW] tag and becomes a standard class.
- My utilize any melee weapons / shields given to them by their rescuers.

## [HOSTAGE]

A VICTIM player with the [HOSTAGE] tag is affected as follows:

- Gains immunity to the INSUBSTANTIAL state
- May not wear enchantments.
- Upon returning to the scoring area, return to the hostage spawn area at the discretion of the reeve.
- May use a single dagger or short sword, if supplied by their rescuers.

## [DIPLOMAT]

A TARGET or VICTIM player with the [DIPLOMAT] tag is affected as follows:

- May use a single dagger that is affected as per POISON.
- May only be affected by STUNNED, STOPPED, FROZEN, or INSUBSTANTIAL for 10 seconds, after which time the state is removed.

## [BOUND]

A TARGET or VICTIM player or object that is BOUND is not allowed to leave a specified area.

## [SLOW]

A TARGET or VICTIM player or object that is SLOW must have one foot on the ground at all times.



# BALANCING A GAME

There is a lot of different approaches to balancing a game, some good and some not so much. Balancing teams **prior** to the start of the game should always be your goal as it will likely be the most successful approach. Balancing mid game is challenging and can drastically impact the confusion factor of your game as players won't know exactly what's happening.

So how do you balance a game, you ask? Well, there are several approaches:

## BALANCING WITH PLAYERS

This is, by far, the most common method of balancing. It is also, in my experience, executed very poorly. Basically, this method consists of letting the players choose teams, and then moving various players around until you feel the teams are balanced. This often results in "powerful" players being consistently placed on opposing teams and often leaves team captains feeling cheated when they chose a player only to have them placed on the other team. This method makes it difficult for players to play with others of their choosing and can directly impact the fun they will have in your games (which should be your main focus). To create teams that are more balanced to begin with, ensure that you are choosing intelligent and experienced captains that will choose appropriately. Also, there are a variety of alternate "Team Picking" methods that you can use that will result in more event teams:

### ◆The "Choose by role" Method

This method has the team captains making alternating choices but instead of choosing from the entire pool of players, they instead choose from a group of players of a similar role. Armored players, Bow Users, Spellcasters, etc. This will at least help to ensure that a variety of roles are represented on each team.

### ◆The "Pick 2, Lose 1" Method

This method requires the team captains to put on their thinking caps. The first captain chooses two players. The second captain then chooses which of the two he wishes to keep and the remaining player goes to the first captain. They alternate through this method until teams are complete. This helps to pair off players of equal effectiveness and helps to create more even teams.

### ◆The "Choose by rank" Method

This method requires that the reeve have solid knowledge of the effectiveness of each player, but can be a lot of fun. Each player is assigned an effectiveness rating from 1 to 5. Captain 1 then chooses a player, noting his rank. Captain 2 may choose any number of players equal to the rank of the player than Captain 1 chose. This can result in games where one team has many effective players on it but is woefully outnumbered. These games can still be evenly matched.

## BALANCING WITH TERRAIN

The placement of Terrain, Nirvana, Bases, etc can all be used to balance teams, and is an effective way to balance teams once they have been chosen.

Moving defensive terrain so that it is more accessible / closer to one side can improve their effectiveness tremendously. Moving dangerous terrain closer to the stronger team can make the game more challenging for them.

In games with unlimited lives (which is most of them), having a team's nirvana closer to an objective means that they have less down-time. This essentially reduces the time between respawns and allows them to put more pressure on the other team while being able to more frequently leverage their per-life abilities.

This sort of balancing is nice because it is more subtle, and players often don't even notice it.

## BALANCING WITH MECHANICS

Another subtle / behind-the-scenes method of team balancing is to change the mechanics of the game for each team. Reduce the death count of a weaker team to allow them to come alive faster. Change the number of points each objective is worth for each team. Grant additional lives to a team during games in which lives are used. Grant occasional refreshes to a weaker team.

Using these alternate balancing elements will allow you to host a wider variety of games. Games in which players will more often be able to play with their friends, companies, etc. It also allows for numerically unbalanced games that give experienced / skilled players a challenge.

# BATTLE GAMES

In the following section you will find a variety of battle games that have proven successful on both large and small fields over the course of several years.

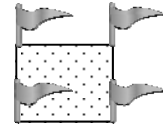
Each of the battle games detailed in this document will use the following symbols to denote various design elements:



TEAM BASE



NIRVANA



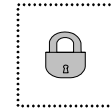
SCORING AREA



CAPTURE  
OBJECT



CAPTURE AREA  
(NODE)



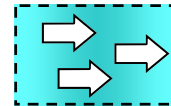
BOUNDING  
AREA



WATER



DEEP  
WATER



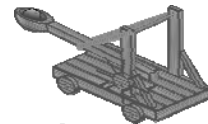
MOVING  
WATER



IMPAIRED  
VISION



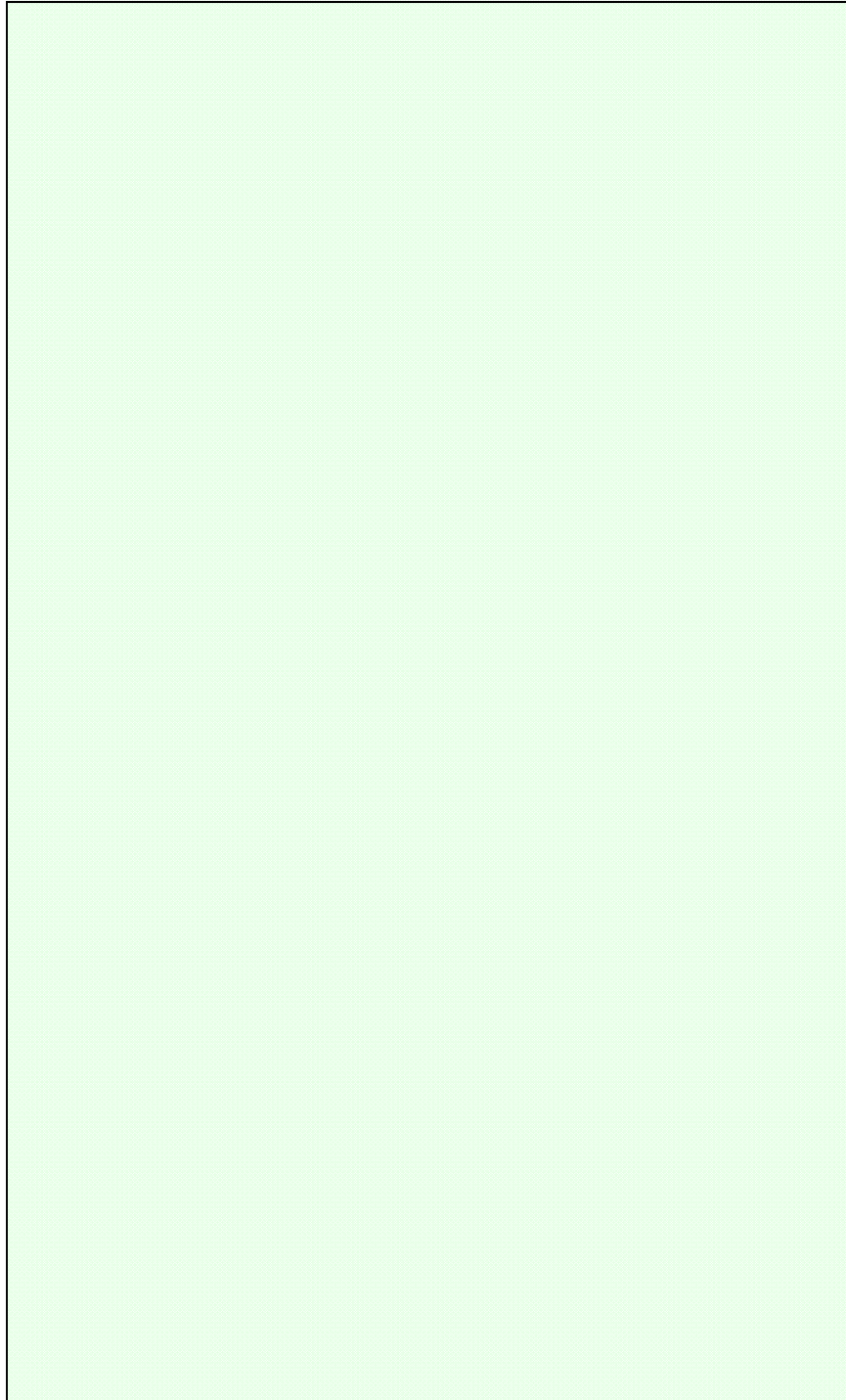
DEADLY  
TERRAIN



CATAPULT /  
SIEGE WEAPON









# BASIC BATTLE GAMES

The following battle games are easy to set up, quick to play, and have only a single objective.

# BLOOD POOL

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Slaughter

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

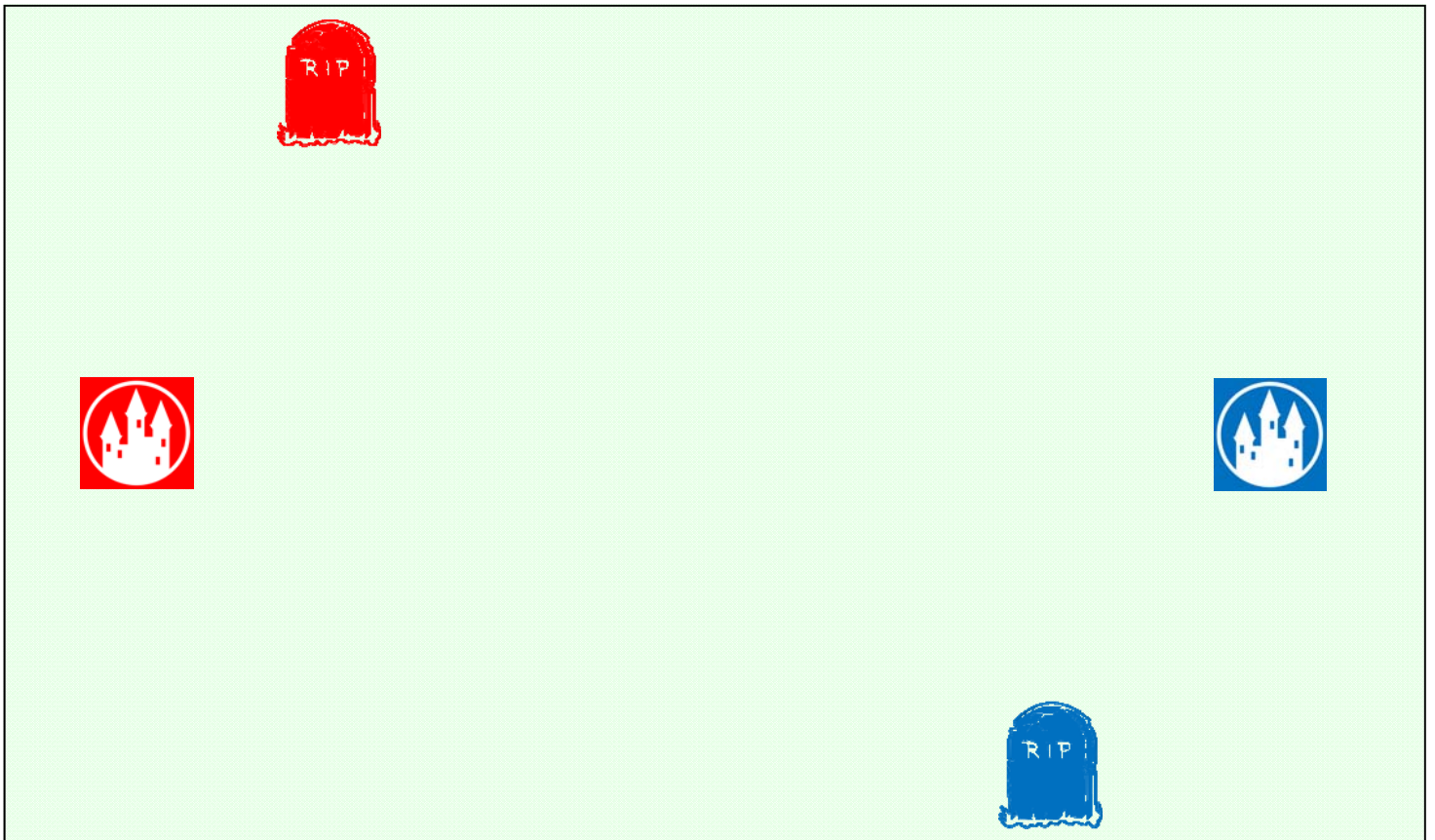
**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

In this very basic battle game, each team receives a total number of lives equal to 5 times the total number of players on the field. Each time a player respawns a life is subtracted from the team total. When one team runs out of lives, the other team is declared the victor. Lives can be kept track of by a reeve at each Nirvana, or in some other fashion. I prefer giving each team a gummy bear for each life and requiring that they eat one each time they respawn.



# MEAT GRINDER

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Kill Enemy Player

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

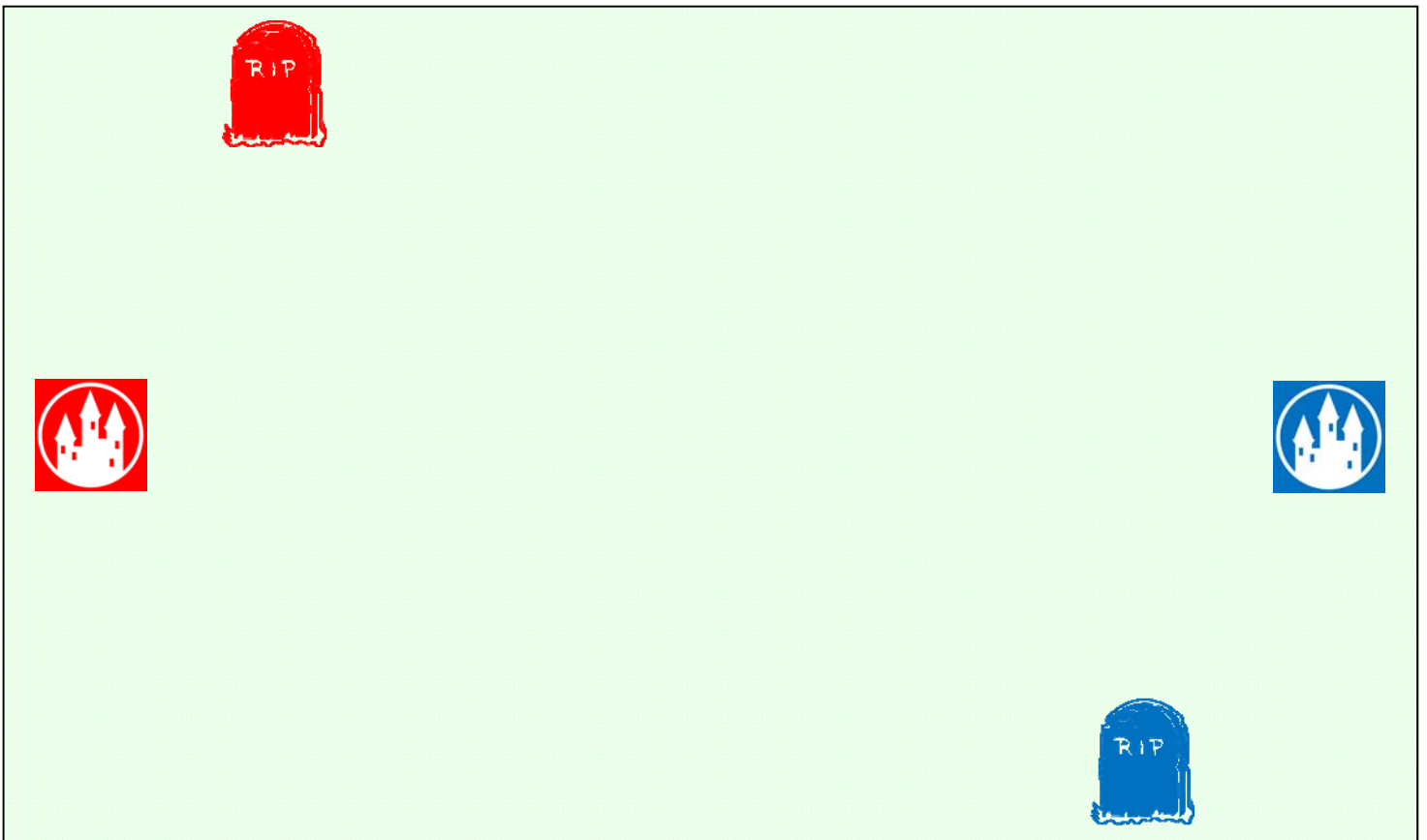
**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 10 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

When a player is killed, they must report their death to a reeve. They may avoid this by being resurrected, however, they may not stay on the field for more than 30 seconds after dying. At the end of the game, the team with the fewest number of deaths is declared the victor.



# CAPTAIN BATTLE

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** VIP

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

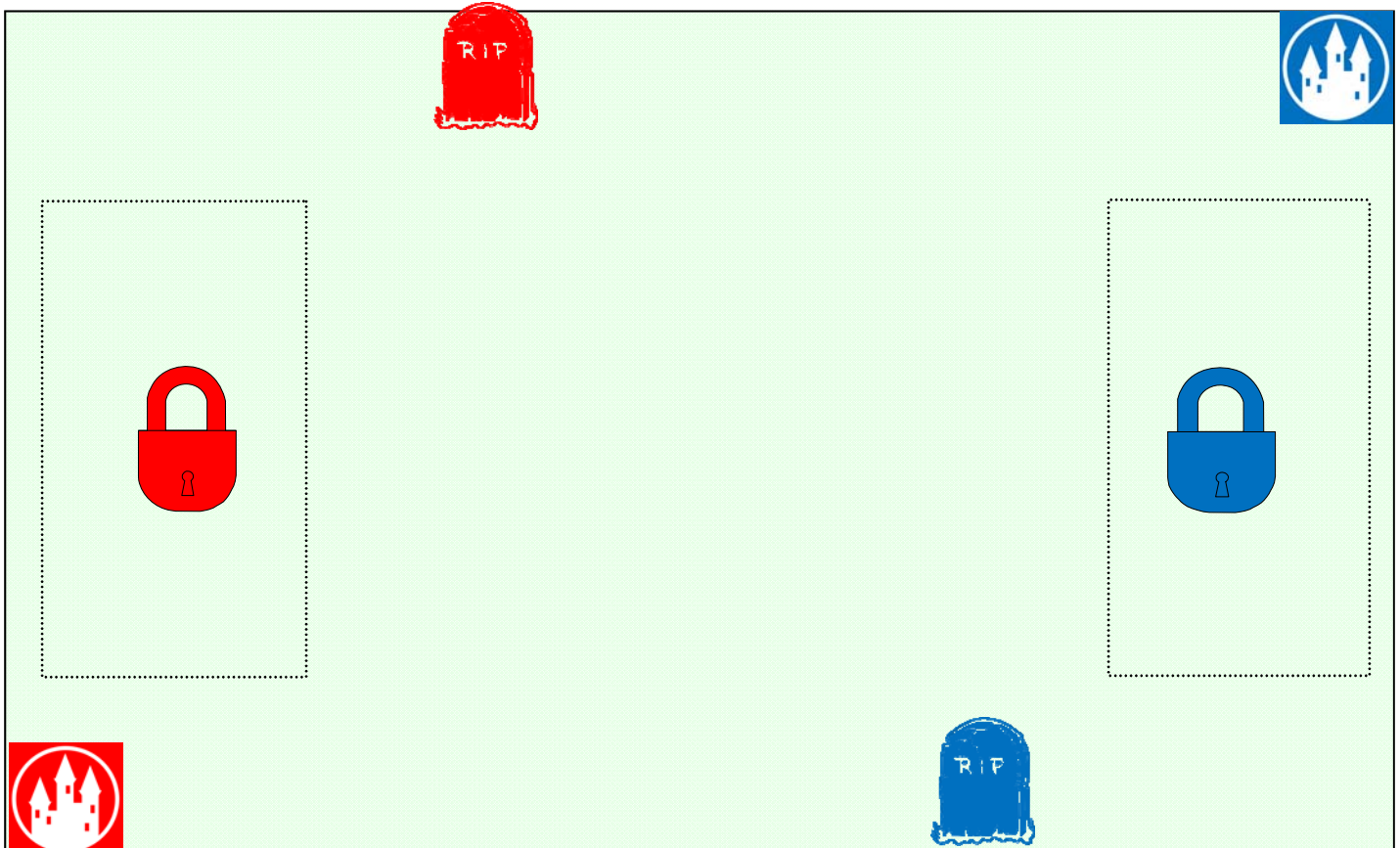
**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

Each team must designate a TARGET player. This player is [BOUND] and must stay within the bounding area. By default, the TARGET player is tagged as a [LIEUTENANT] If there are more than 10 players on each team, tag the TARGET player as a [CAPTAIN] and if there are more than 20 players on each team, tag the TARGET player as a [GENERAL]. Each TARGET player has 5 lives. If a TARGET is killed, play is halted and players return to their base. Once a TARGET is killed and has no lives remaining, the opposing team is declared the victor.



# CAPTURE THE FLAG

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Larceny

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

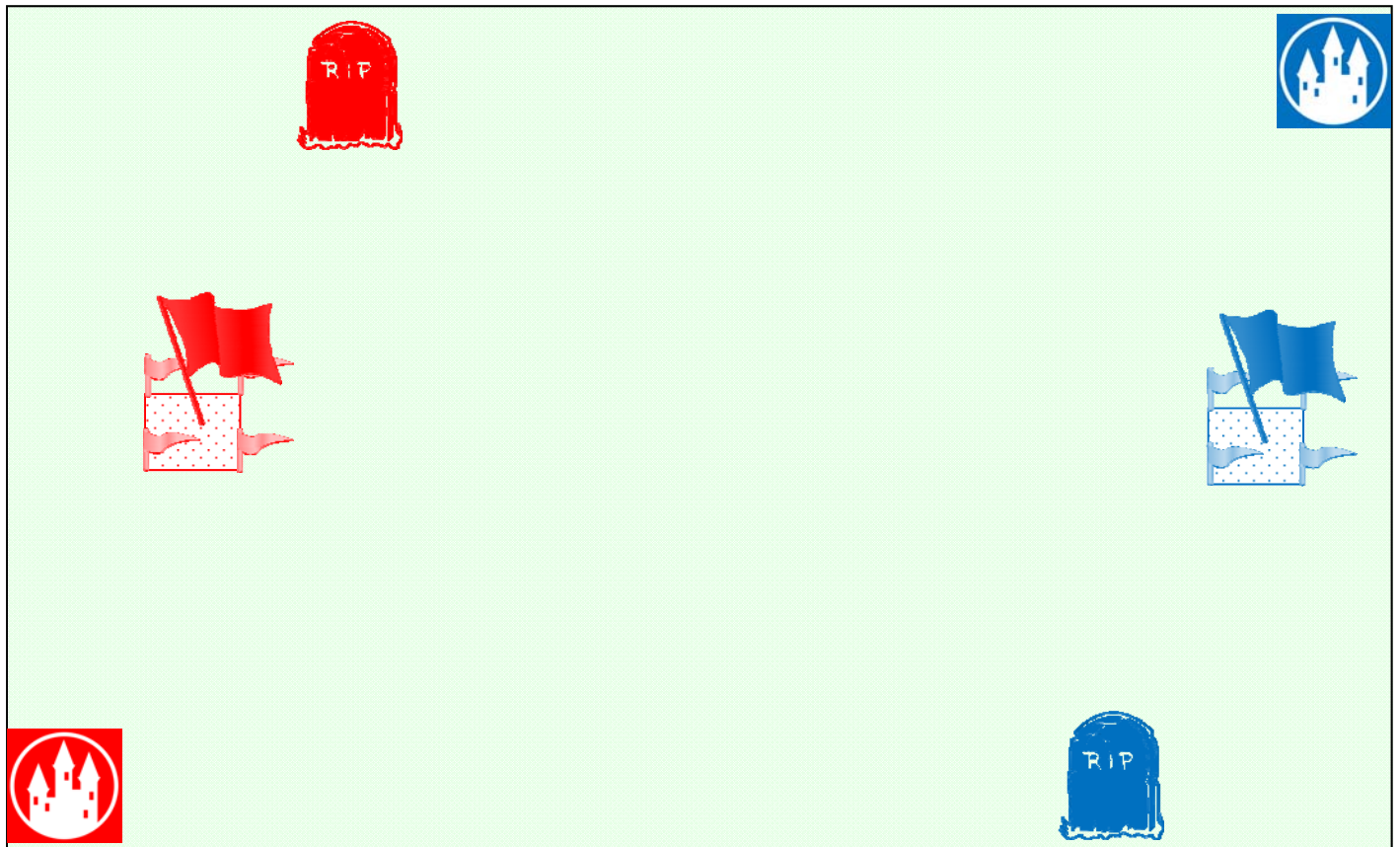
**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

To earn a point, bring the opposing team's flag to your capture point. A reeve will return the flag after each successful capture. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins.

To make the game more challenging, consider making the flag [HEAVY2], [LOCKED] or [COMPLEX].



# TAKE AND HOLD

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** CONQUER

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

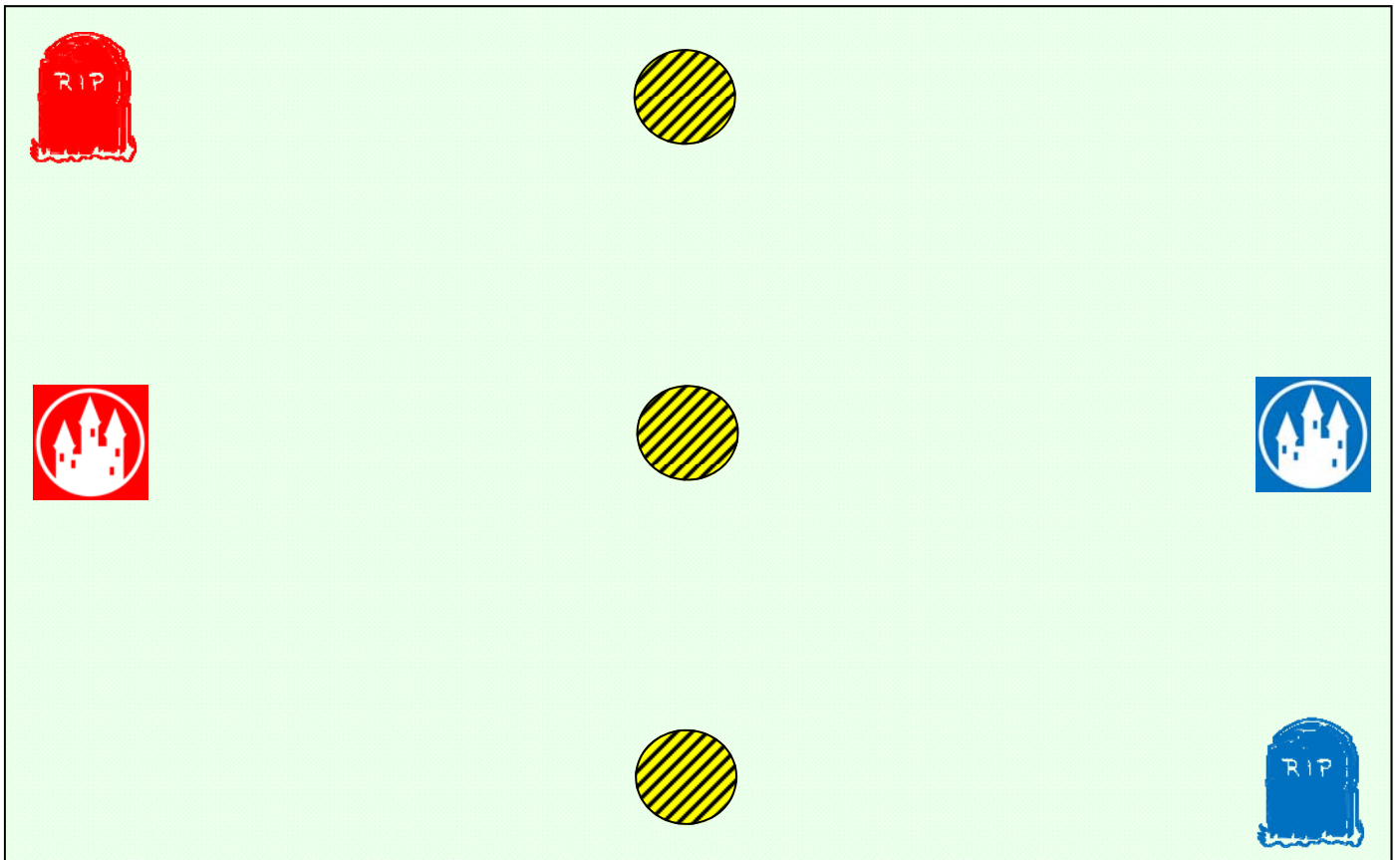
**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

Each team must attempt to capture the three [STATIC], [COMPLEX] markers in order to gain control of a small area. Every 5 minutes, the reeve will silently award a point for each area a team controls. Suitable markers are soccer cones, large wooden circles, etc. They should be color coded to represent which team controls the marker.





# ADVANCED BATTLE GAMES

These games feature more than one objective, as well as terrain and other, more complex elements.

# BRIDGE CONTROL

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** CONQUER

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** FISHING

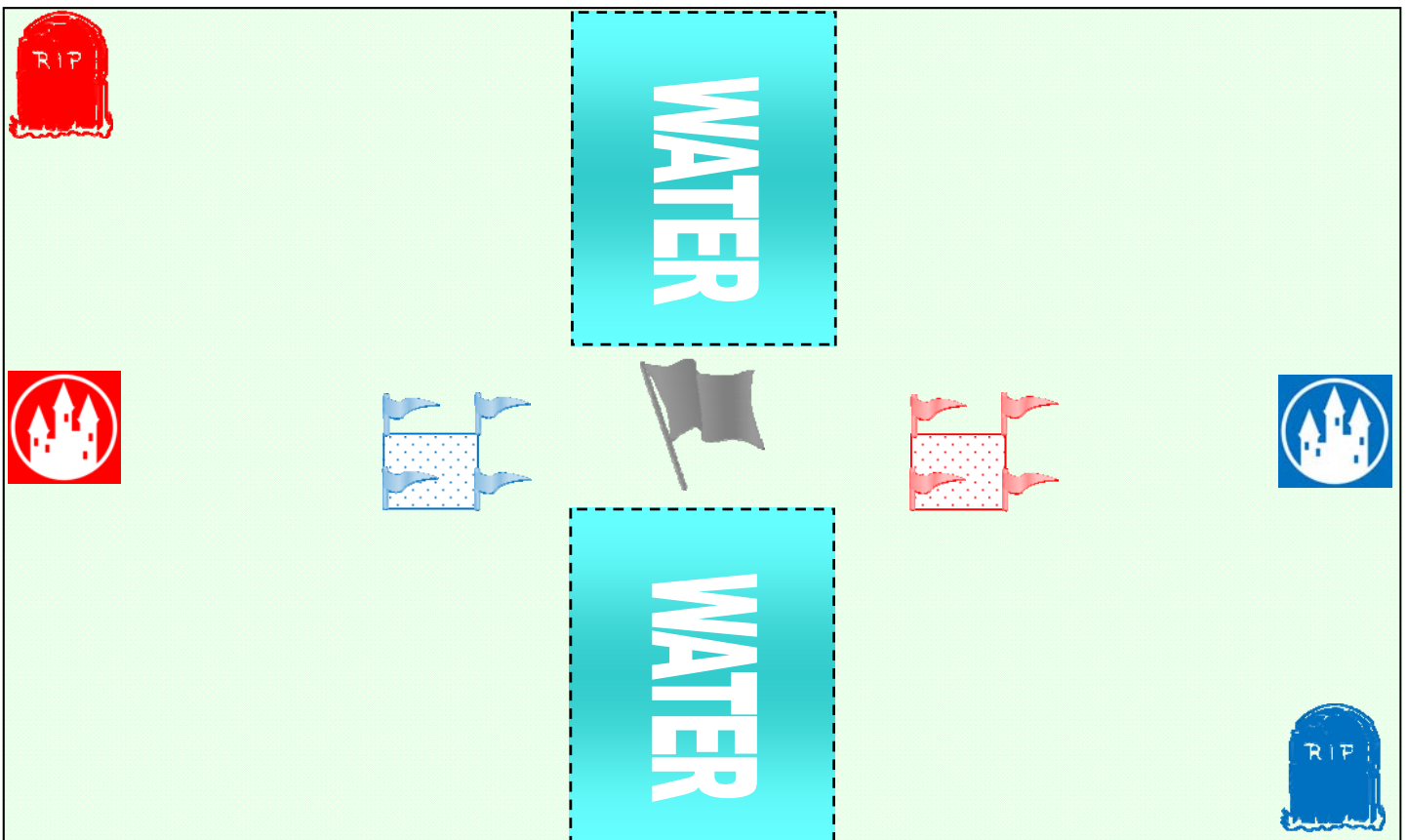
**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

In this game, the players are attempting to control the bridge. A team can take control of the bridge by moving the neutral flag located in the middle of the bridge and placing it in their scoring zone on the far side. Teams will earn 5 points for every minute they control the bridge. Additionally, a single point will be awarded for each enemy player that dies while in the water terrain. Any player that dies in the water must report to a reeve before proceeding to nirvana.



# GRAVITY FLAG

(INSPIRED BY FERRET AND DAWNLEAF OF ASTRAL WINDS)

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** LARCENY

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** HARVEST

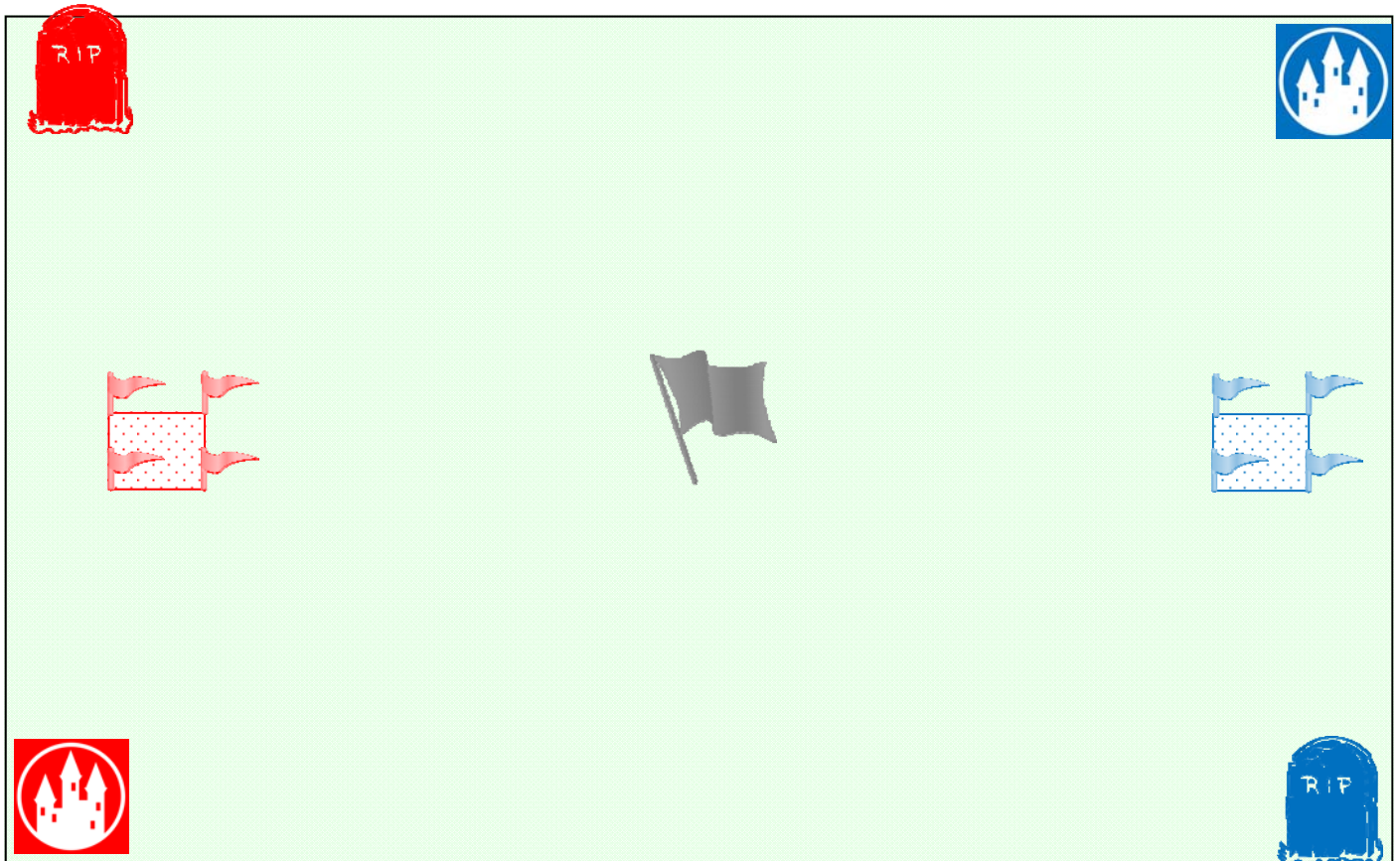
**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

Players must unlock the [LOCKED] [COMPLEX] Flag. This flag shall be held by a reeve. Once unlocked, the reeve will move at a walk, as directed by a friendly player, provided that a hand is placed on the reeve's shoulder. Should there not be a hand on the reeve's shoulder, the reeve shall count to 5. If the reeve finishes the count before contact is re-established, the reeve shall return to the center of the field and become [LOCKED] once again. Additionally, there will be resources (small objects) scattered about the field. These can be returned to the team's scoring zone earning them 1 point. Capturing the flag is worth 20 points AND will result in all captured resource objects being re-scattered about the field.



# CHARIOT RACE

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** CARAVAN

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** VIP

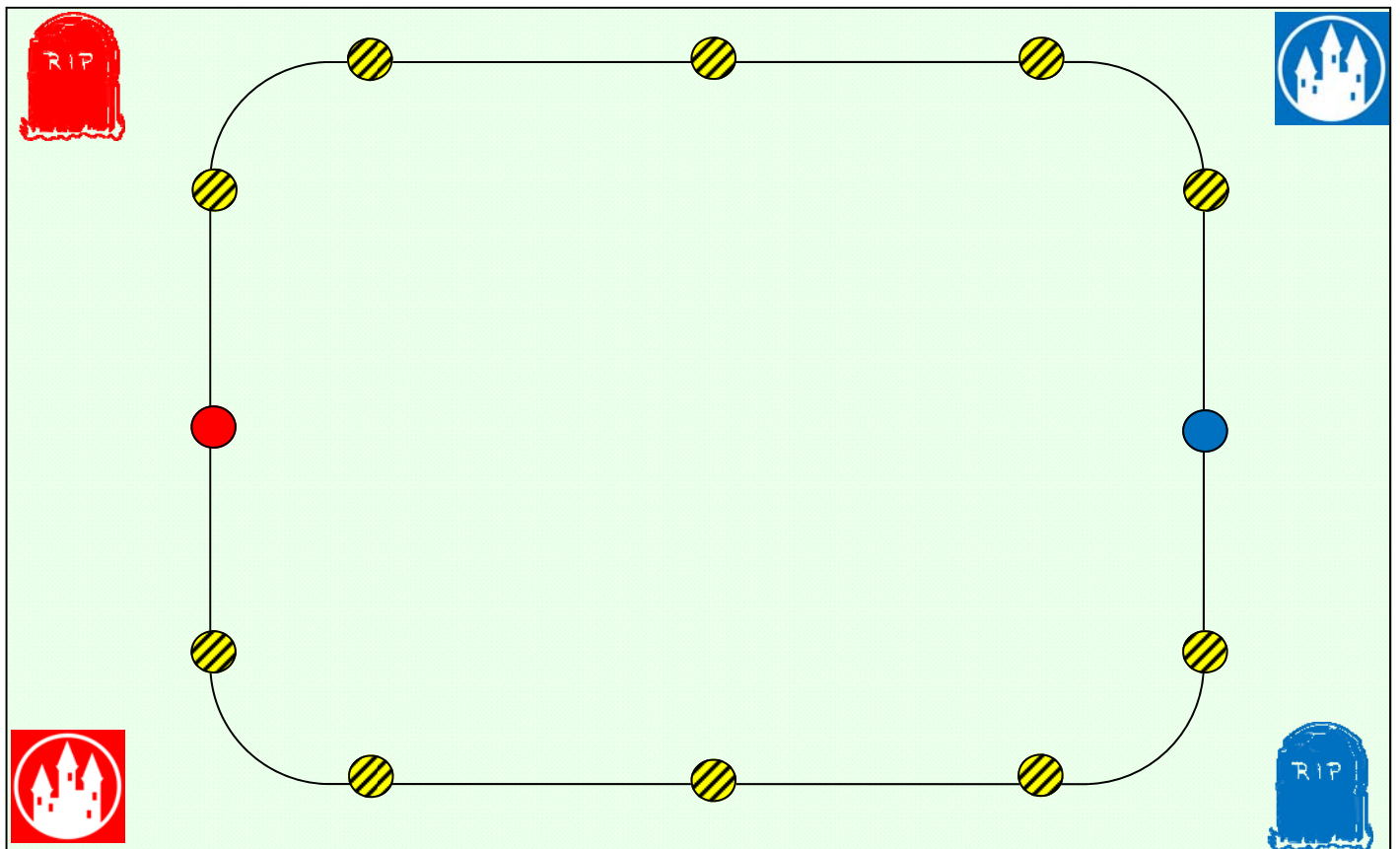
**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

Each team has a player designated as a [SLOW] TARGET. TARGET players begin the game on their home node and may only move in the direction of the next checkpoint. The path that the targets take can be the same or opposing. The last checkpoint passed will serve as NIRVANA for the TARGET player. Each time the TARGET passes the opposing team's home node, they will earn 10 points. Additionally, killing the opposing TARGET will earn a team 1 point.



# CASTLE CRASHERS

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Harvest

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Peasant Revolt

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** None

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

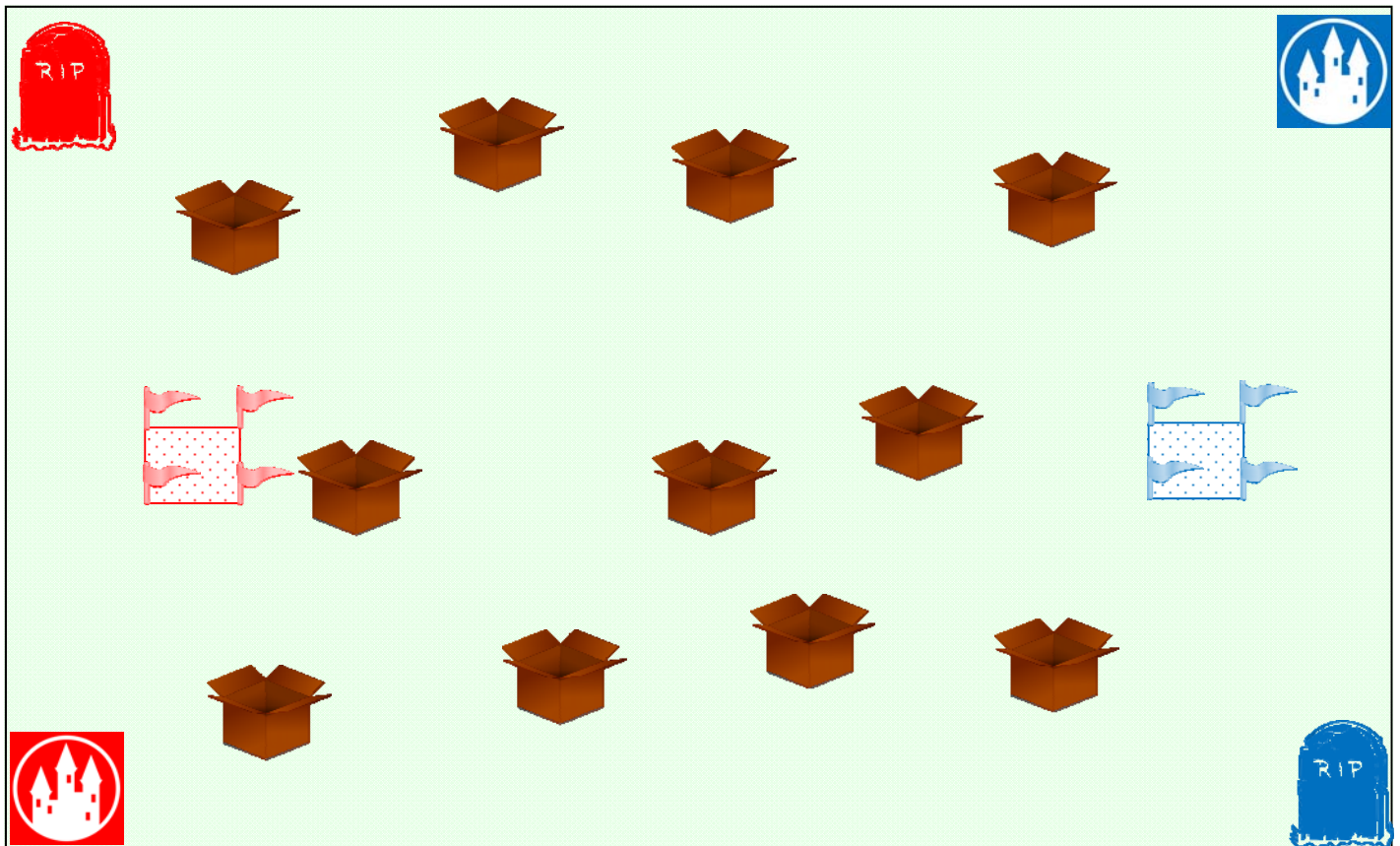
**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

This game is divided into 3, 10-minute rounds. Scattered about the field are a large number of small boxes. Players need to collect these boxes and return them to their scoring area where they must stack the boxes as high as possible. At the end of each round, the team with the tallest castle earns 20 points. Players may use any strike-legal equipment to attack the opposing castle in the hopes of knocking it down. Additionally, teams will earn 1 point for killing any enemy player with a Title / Office.

The scoring area should be no larger than 10ft by 10ft. Enemy players are not allowed to set foot in the scoring area, though they may attack anything inside.

\*Note: Boxes are considered game items .



# FAT PRINCESS

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Larceny

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Harvest

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Meatgrinder

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

Each team has an enemy princess (flag) in their scoring area (best represented by a reeve in a princess costume). Scattered about the field are several resource objects that will be periodically replenished by the reeves. Bringing three of these objects to the scoring area will result in a pink strip being tied onto the flag. Every so often, a reeve will remove 1 strip from each flag. The flags are considered [HEAVY "X"] where "X" is equal to the number of strips on the flag. There can never be more than 8 strips on a flag. Delivering the flag to the friendly scoring zone will earn 50 points. Additionally, every enemy killed will earn 1 point. Players may wait no more than 30 seconds on the field after dying after which they must proceed to the scoring reeve and then Nirvana.



# STRONGHOLD DEFENSE

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Fortify

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Witch Hunt

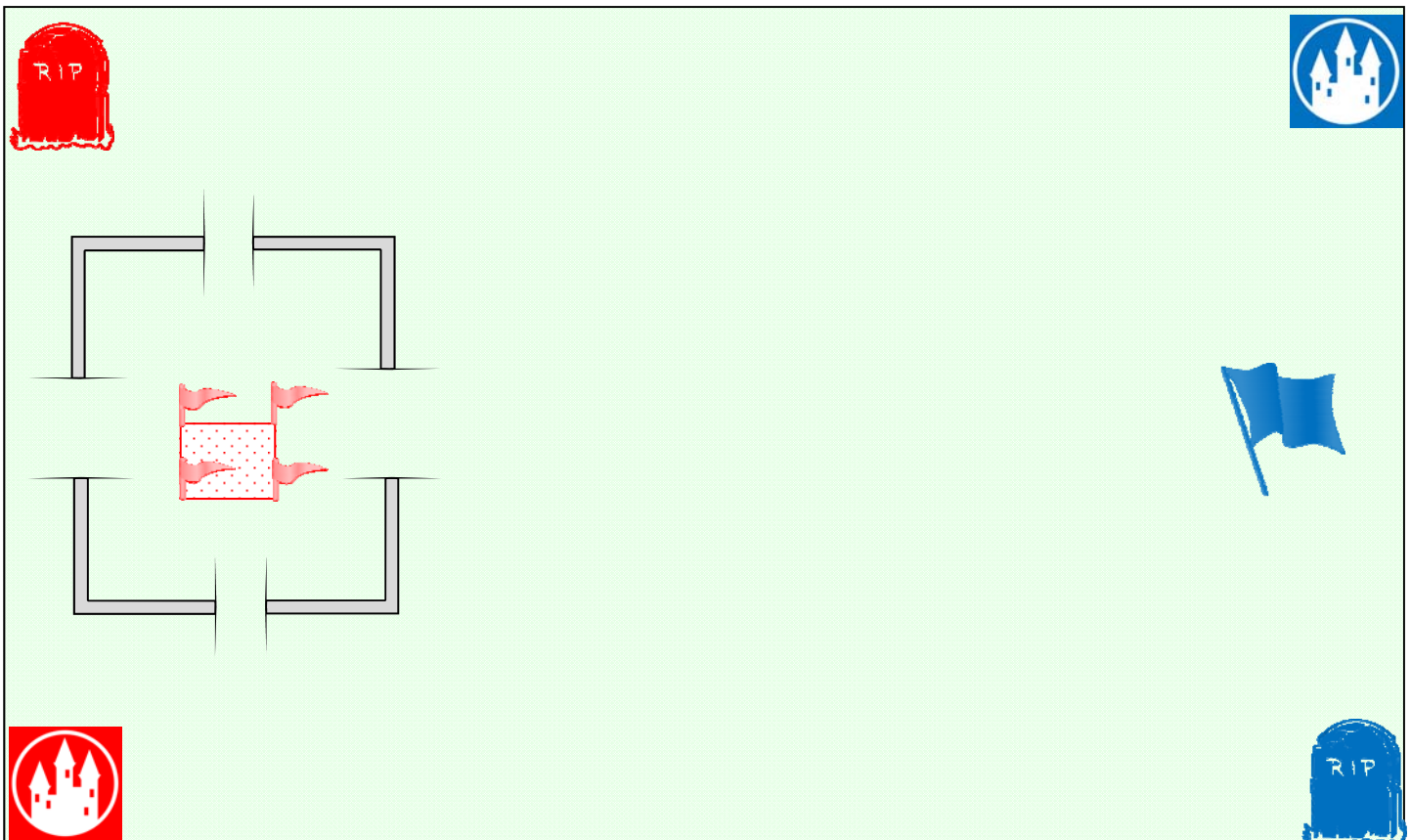
**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Pincushion

**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

One team will begin inside the castle and the other team will attempt to capture it. In order to capture the castle, the invading team must deliver their [HEAVY2] [COMPLEX] Flag to the scoring zone inside the castle. Once the flag has been successfully delivered, the game will pause, the teams will switch sides, and play will continue with the capturing team in control of the castle. Teams will accrue 5 points for each minute they successfully hold the castle. Additionally, teams will earn 1 point for killing an enemy spellcaster and 1 point for using a projectile weapon or spell ball to kill an enemy player. Using projectiles to kill spellcasters is considered good form.



# IT TAKES AN ARMY TO RAZE A VILLAGE

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Safeguard

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Vandalism

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:**

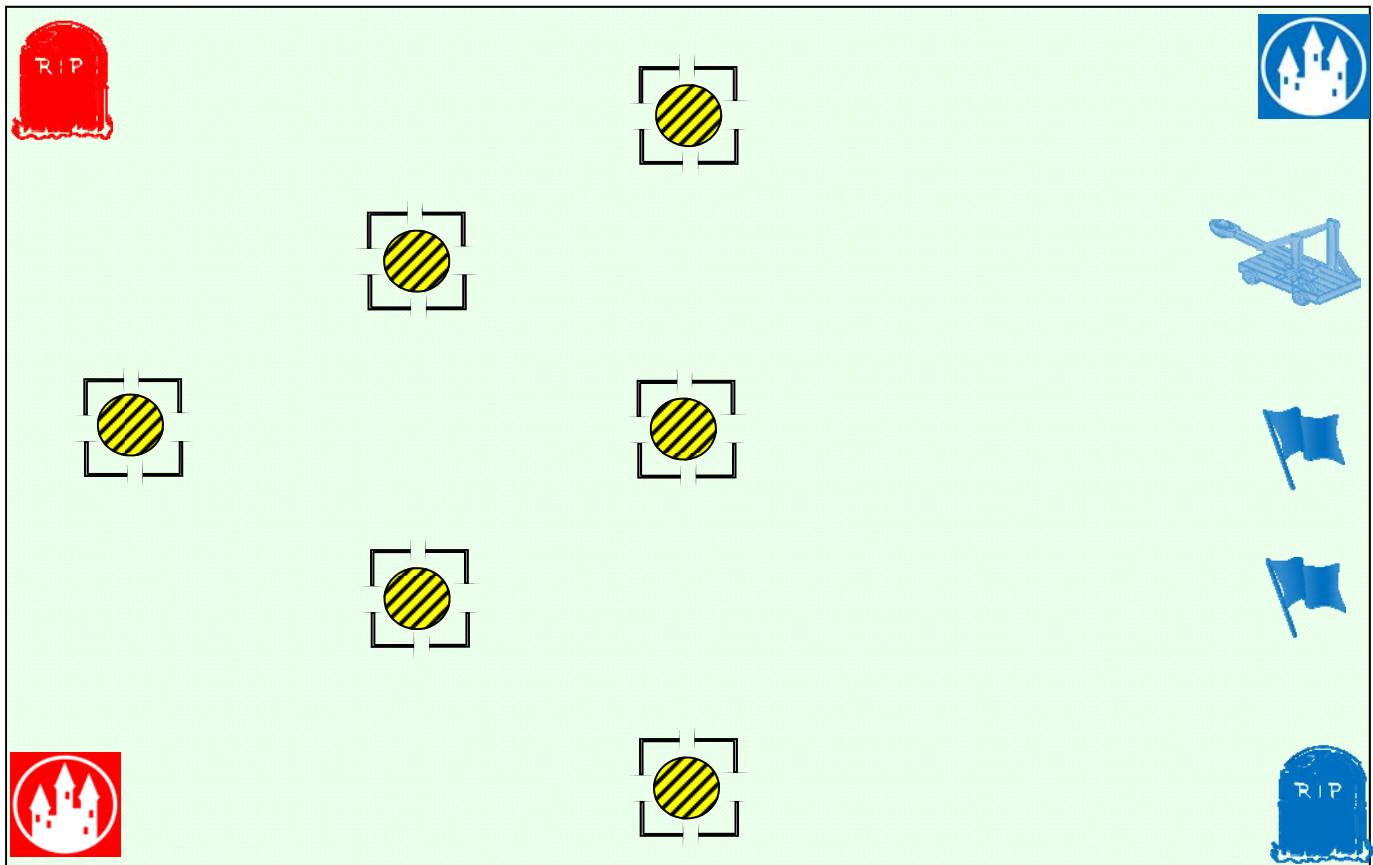
**TIME LIMIT:** 2 Rounds, 15-30 min each

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

The goal of this game is to destroy / defend the buildings. Destroying them is accomplished by striking the walls with the catapult or by successfully setting off a bomb within the boundaries of the building. The "bomb" is represented by a [COMPLEX] [HEAVY 2] Flag. Once an area has been destroyed by a flag, the flag will reset to its starting location after a 60 count. Teams will alternate roles of defender / attacker. Destroying one of the 3 buildings in the front row is worth 1 point. Destroying one of the 2 buildings in the second row is worth 2 points. Destroying the final building in the last row is worth 5 points. The team with the highest score wins.

Alternately, these scores can be multiplied by 10 (10, 20, 50) if you would like to add a lower-scoring secondary objective (like Meatgrinder).





# PIRATE BATTLE

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Vandalism

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Fishing

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Conquer

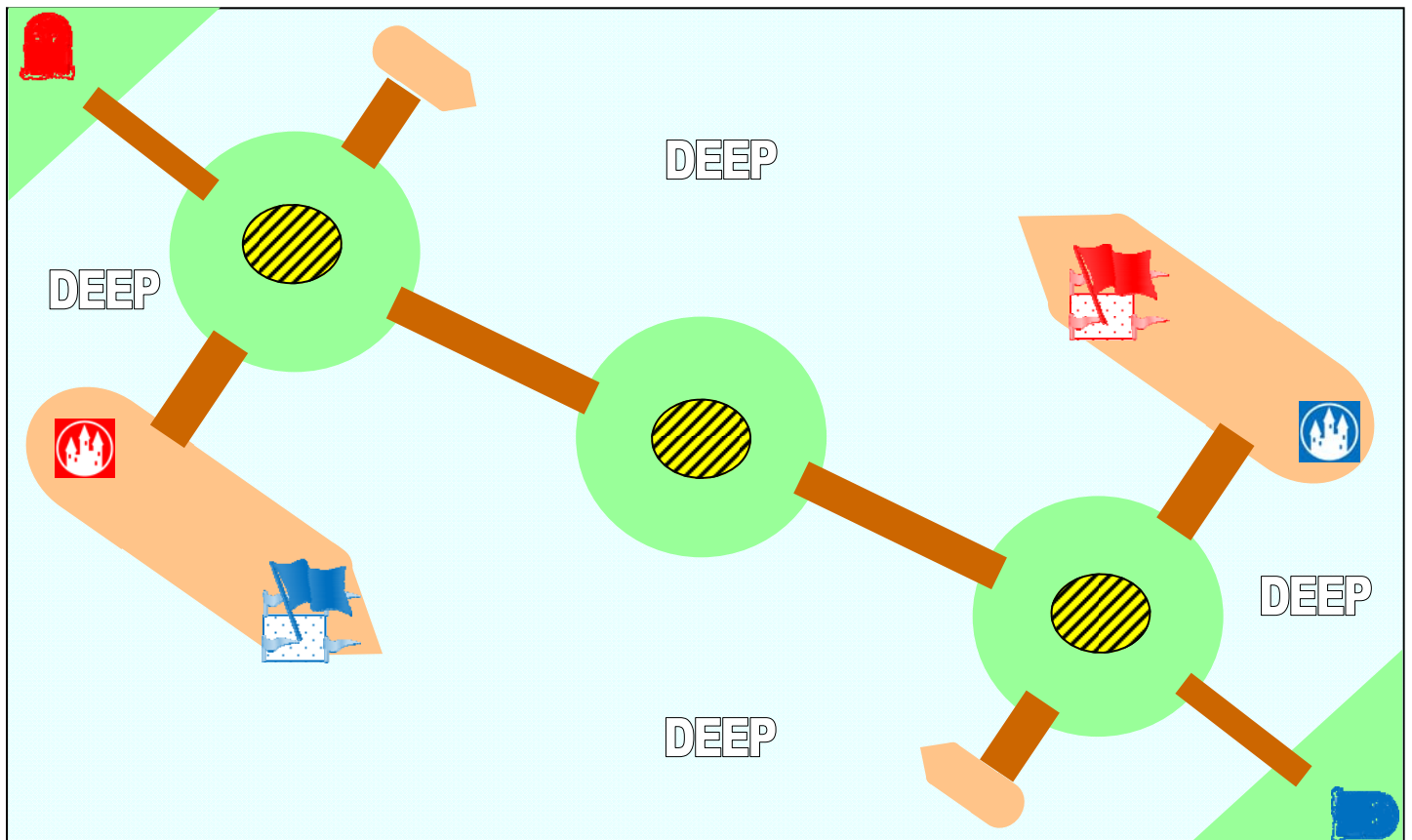
**TIME LIMIT:** 30 Minutes

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

Teams may earn points in three different ways:

- 1) Capture the [COMPLEX] [STATIC] objectives on each island. Every 5 minutes, 5 points will be awarded for each island a team controls.
- 2) Destroy an enemy ship by capturing the [COMPLEX] [STATIC] objective on each ship. This will immediately earn 20 points.
- 3) Killing an enemy player that is in the water will earn 1 point.
- 4) The small boats may be used by at least two players to move safely about the water. Anything that inflicts Shield Breaking , Shield Destroying, or Armor Destroying to the boat will destroy it, leaving it's occupants in the water.



# FULL-SCALE WAR

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** VIP

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Vandalism

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Safeguard

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Meatgrinder

**SECONDARY OBJECTIVE:** Larceny

**TIME LIMIT:** 45 Minutes (15 min rds x 3)

**DEATH COUNT:** 60 Seconds

## GAME DETAILS:

Each team is assigned a [CAPTAIN], a base, and a Catapult / Siege Weapon. The base will be made up of walls. Each wall will have its health visibly denoted. The walls can be damaged / destroyed by a catapult. The capture area is only useable so long as it contains the team's flag.

Points are assigned as follows:

Killing the Captain—50pts

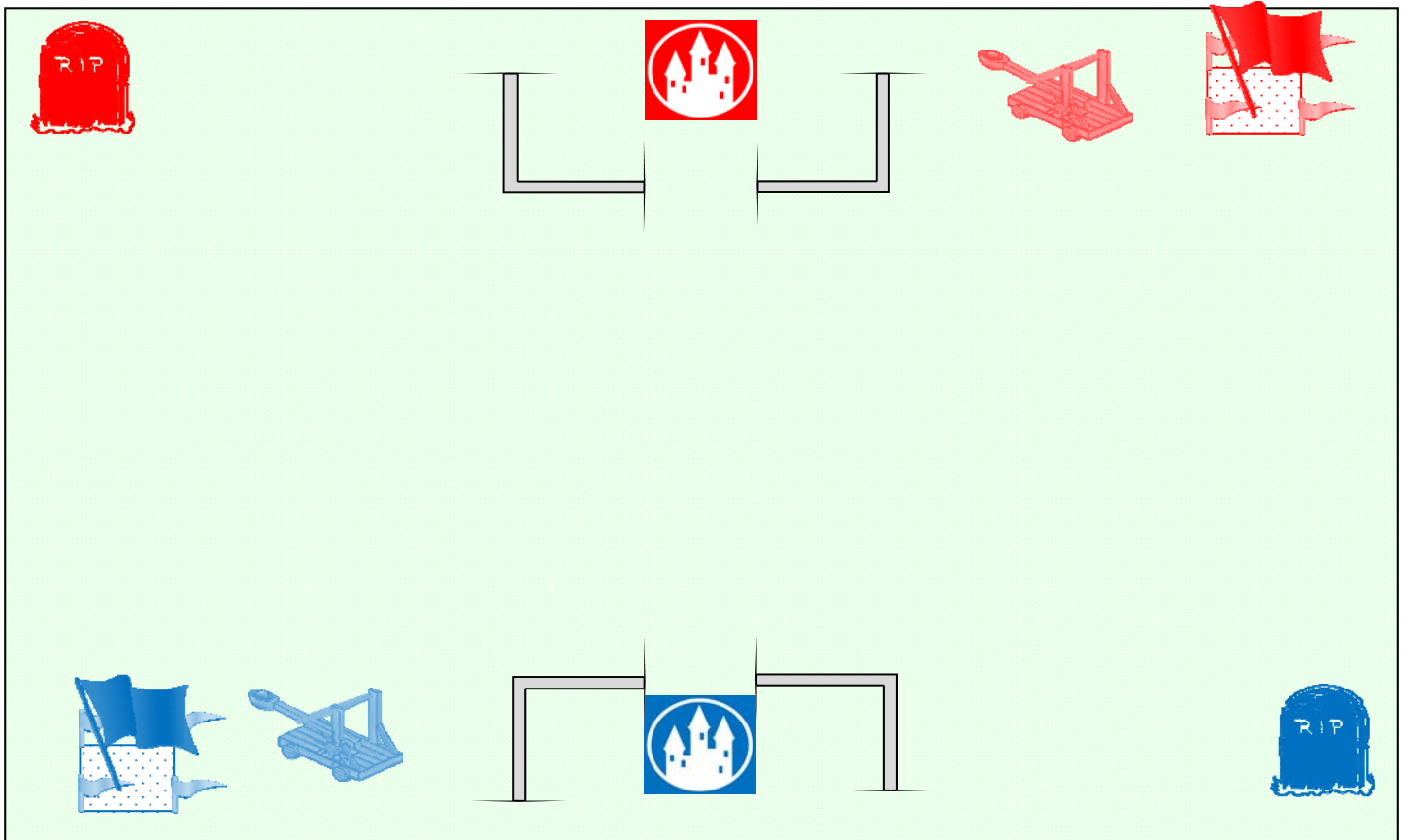
Defending a wall (each round) —25pts

Destroying enemy catapult—5pts

Destroying a wall—25pts

Capturing the flag—10pts

Killing an enemy player—1pt



# TOURNAMENTS

Some people dislike them, others live for them. Either way, it's important to get them right. Running a tournament can seem like a very daunting task at first, but once you get the hang of it, it's a breeze.

There are a wide varying schools of thought about the best way to run a tournament, and I'll attempt to detail a variety of them in this section. Regardless, the general goal of a tournament is to rank your entrants by performance and highlight those with the best.

There are several things to consider when selecting the format of a tournament. You'll want to understand the event details, choose a tournament type, advertise, gather your resources, assign reeves / officials, and prepare a location.

## Location

This will often be determined for you by those that are in charge of the event at which the tournament is occurring. However, the ideal environment has moderate temperatures, safe footing, and plenty of space.

## Event Details

This information will help you to decide how you want to run the tournament. This covers details such as:

- How much time do you have?
- Are there pre-existing rules (such as for crown quals)

Once you've got this figured out, you can start drafting your plans.

## Reeves / Officials

This is a fundamental aspect of tournament preparation. No matter how well you succeed in preparing for a tournament, a bad reeve can ruin it all. Remember that tournament reeving is very different from that of a battlegame. Rulebook knowledge is much less important than combat experience. Choose reeves that know how to follow a fight and are comfortable keeping track of the little details amidst the action.

Find officials that can help you organize entrants, fill

in brackets, make announcements, etc. This team will be the group that ensures your event goes smoothly.

One of the most important things you can do for your tournament is to actually meet with your officials. Explaining the rules of the tournament, how to handle things like ties, expectations regarding shot-calling, how to announce winners, etc will all go a long way towards achieving a smooth operation.

## Resources

There is a wide variety of supplies and equipment that will help you to run a tournament:

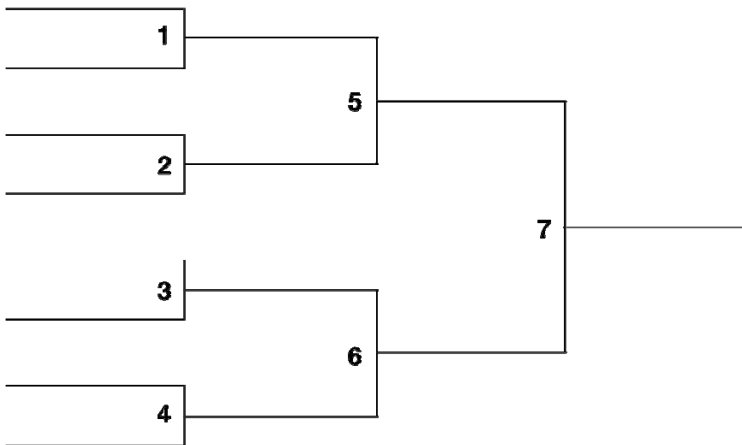
- Water - Ensure your entrants have access to plenty of water.
- Medical - At the bare minimum, have a good first aid kit on site.
- Administrative - Ensure you have all the brackets, sign up sheets, signs, etc. that you need to keep track of everything and direct your entrants to where they need to go.
- Loaner Gear - If you have some dedicated equipment that players can use, you'll save a lot of time as they won't have to look around to borrow one from someone else.
- Furniture - Tables, Chairs, Tents, and other items to keep your admin team comfortable.
- Signaling Device - Have equipment on hand to help you signal / communicate with the entrants / staff. For a small tournament, a referee whistle would suffice where as a larger tournament might be better suited to a megaphone or personal radios.
- Field Markers - Clearly marking areas that you wish your entrants to be aware of will make things run much smoother. Flags, driveway markers, flagging tape, etc. can all be used to help you with this.

# TOURNAMENT FORMAT

There are several types of tournament formats with variations within each type. We'll cover the four most common here.

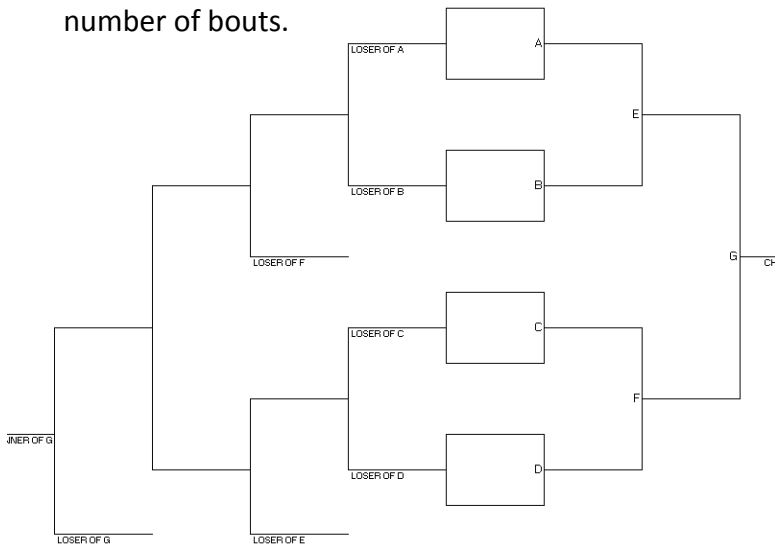
## Single Elimination Bracket

Single elimination brackets are very simple and consist of pairing all of your entrants and moving the winners to the next round. The losers are simply knocked out of the tournament. As each round removes half of the entrants, the tournaments tend to resolve quickly.



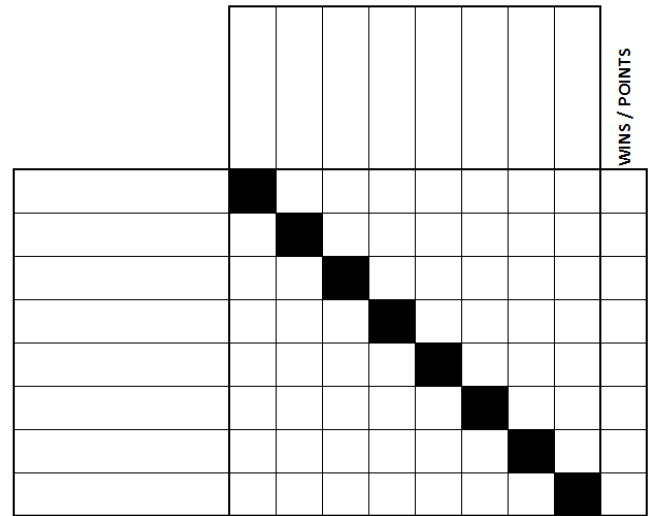
## Double Elimination Bracket

Double elimination brackets are similar to the single elimination bracket except that the first time an entrant loses they are placed in the "loser's bracket". This affords them the opportunity to fight their way back to the top by winning the loser's bracket. This takes more time as it involves a substantially higher number of bouts.



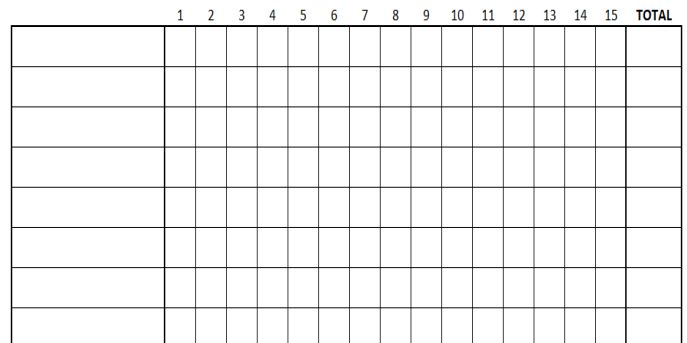
## Round-Robin

In a round robin tournament entrants will fight a pre-determined number of fights against different opponents (usually all opponents). The entrant with the highest number of wins is declared the victor. This tournament takes the most time, but is also the most inclusive as everyone gets to fight the same number of times. This style of tournament also generally produces the best results.



## Ironman

In an Ironman tournament, the entrants all form a line. Two fighters enter the arena and the loser goes to the end of the line. The winner stays and faces the next entrant in line. Victories are tallied, and the entrant with the most wins at the end of a specified time limit is declared the victor. This tournament format is useful when you have a very specific time slot.



## Mixed Tournament

A mixed tournament uses a variety of tournament formats to determine the victor. For example: using several smaller round-robin tournaments to feed into a single or double elimination bracket.

# BOUT FORMAT

In addition to deciding the format of the tournament, you'll also need to decide how you want to run each bout. This will affect the length of time it takes to run your tournament, the consistency of its results, and the level of participation.

## Single Bout

This is pretty simple. One fight, one winner. Ties are ignored.

## Best of Three

In this bout format, the goal is to achieve two victories before your opponent does. Ties are ignored.

## Race to Three

This format utilizes a scoring system, with a win being awarded two points, and a tie being awarded one point. The first entrant to achieve three points wins. If both players achieve three points at the same time, the bout continues until one player has achieved more points than their opponent.

## Fixed Number

This bout style is only used in conjunction with Round-robin tournaments. Entrants compete in a fixed number of bouts (usually two or three). A win is worth three points and a tie is worth one point. These points are then added to the entrants tournament totals.

# FILLING OUT A BRACKET

There are several ways that you can fill out a bracket for a tournament, but the most common are Random-Draw, and Seeded Tournaments.

## Random-Draw

This is probably the simplest method for filling a bracket. Place a numbered token for each entrant into a container (hat, box, bag, etc). These numbers correspond to the entrant's number on the sign-up sheet. As you draw the tokens out, place them into the bracket in according to the number system used to label each slot of the bracket (the first token drawn goes into slot 1, the second into slot 2, etc.). This will ensure that any byes in your tournament are equally distributed (a "bye" is an empty bracket

slot due to lack of participants, for example: having 15 entrants in a 16-man tournament would result in your tournament having a single "bye").

## Seeded Tournament

This type of tournament requires much more work on the part of the organizer. You'll need to have some sort of method to rank your fighters prior to the tournament. This is commonly accomplished through previous tournament wins, Orders of the Warrior, or the opinion of the organizer.

Once you've sorted them out, you place your best-ranked entrant in slot 1, second best-ranked entrant in slot 2, etc. Seeded brackets offer the most consistent results in ranking your top competitors.

## Scaling Brackets

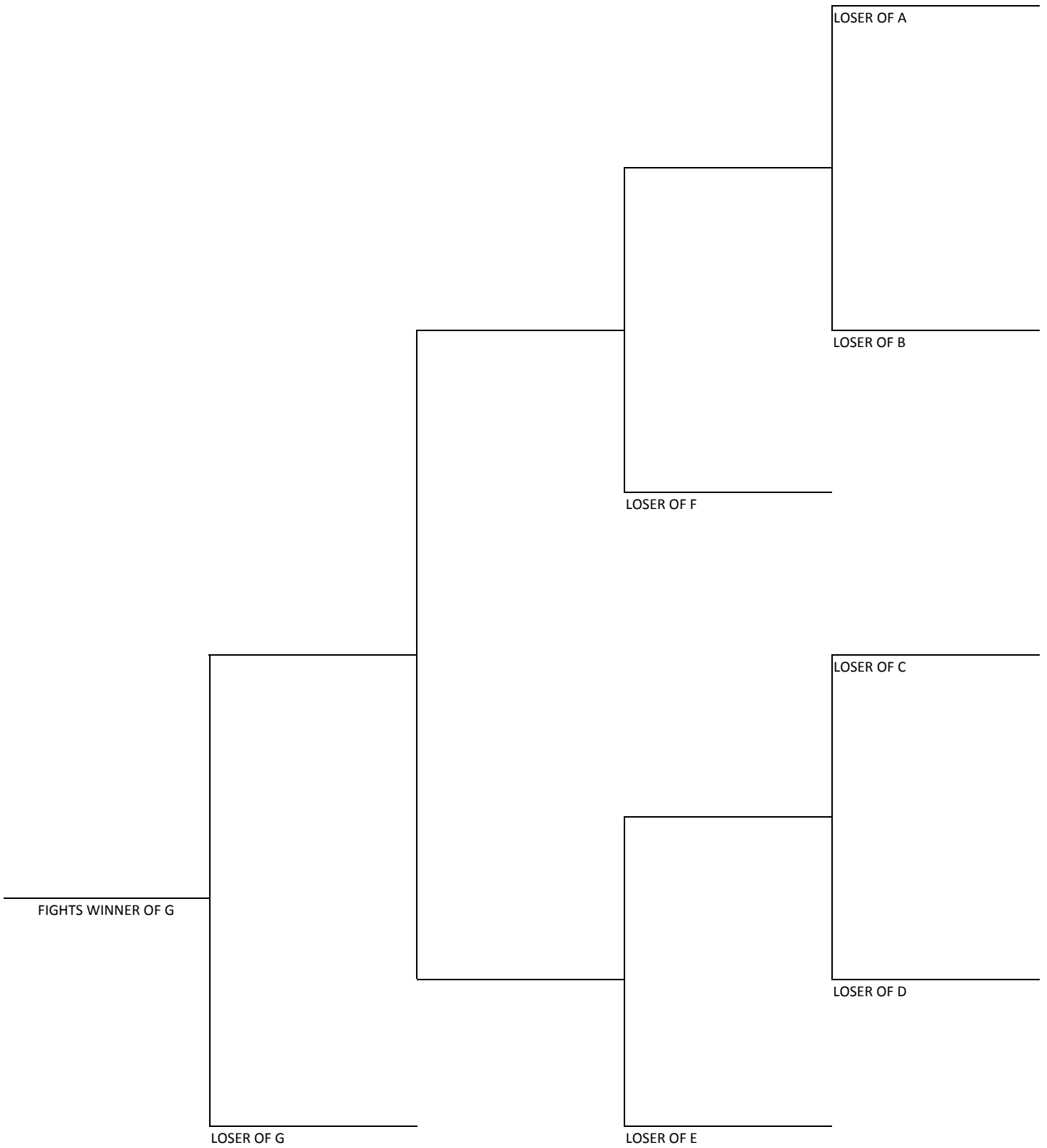
If you don't know how large your competitor turnout will be, it's easy to scale your tournament bracket if you remember that you can combine tournaments to fit just about any size. For example, a 16-Man bracket is really just two 8-Man brackets where the winner of each faces off to determine the champion. A 24-Man bracket is really just three 8 man brackets where the winners face each other in a three-man round-robin tournament.

If you don't have enough people to justify adding another 8 slots to a bracket (for example, 9 people sign up for a 8-man tournament), you can insert a three-person round-robin tournament in the place of one or more of the first-round bouts.

Alternatively, you can increase the size of the bracket and add "byes" to fill the vacant positions. I've found that a good rule of thumb is to not allow more than 2 "byes" per 8 entrants.



# 8 MAN—LOSER BRACKET

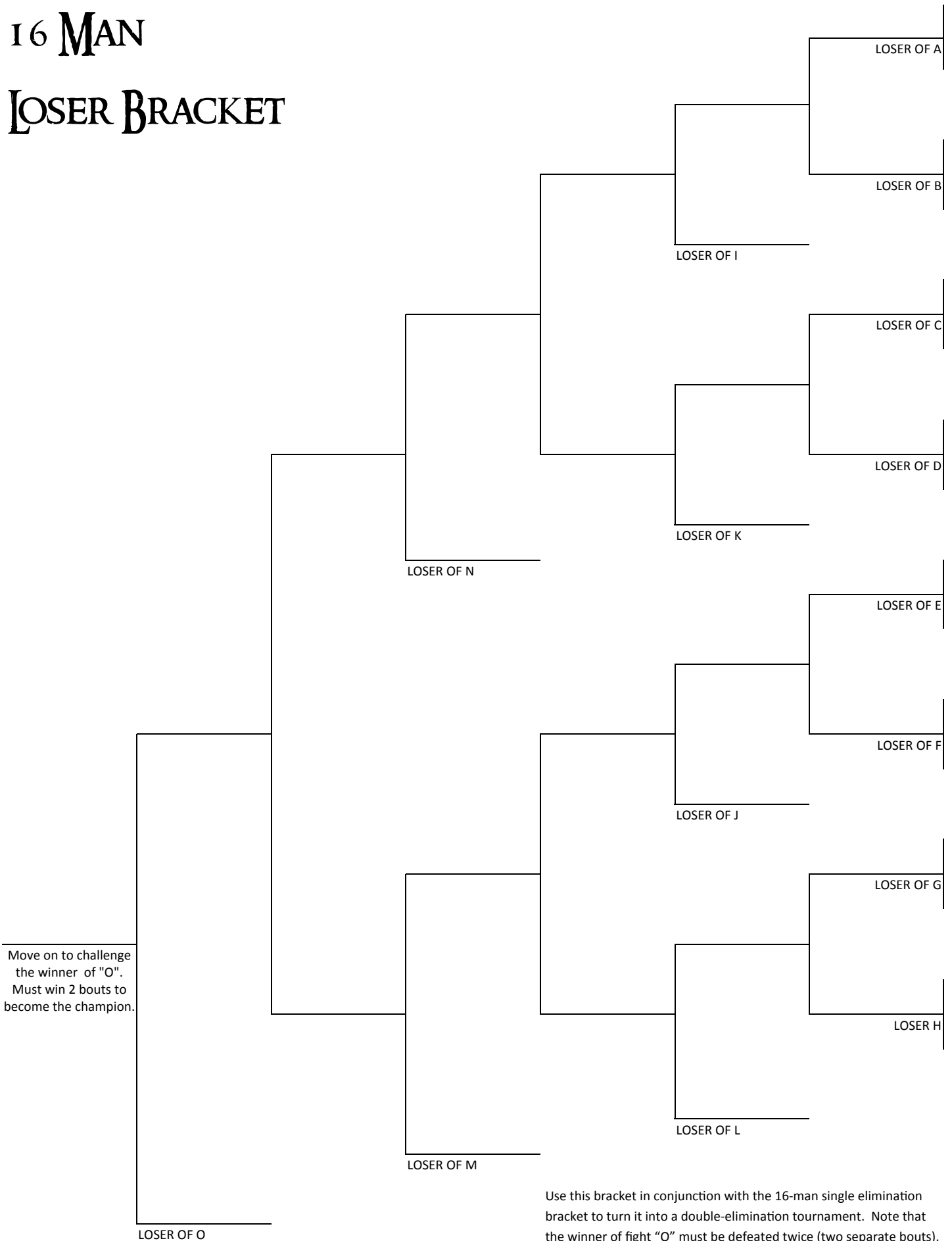


Use this bracket in conjunction with the 8-man single elimination bracket to turn it into a double-elimination tournament. Note that the winner of fight G must be defeated twice (two separate bouts).

# 8 MAN—SINGLE ELIMINATION



# 16 MAN LOSER BRACKET



Use this bracket in conjunction with the 16-man single elimination bracket to turn it into a double-elimination tournament. Note that the winner of fight "O" must be defeated twice (two separate bouts).



# 16 MAN—SINGLE ELIMINATION

