

Rules for the Hermetic Tourney

Every seven years, the Normandy Tribunal sponsors the Hermetic Tourney, a splendid contest of magic in which covenants and magi from throughout the Order compete for prizes including vis, enchanted items, and books. The rules here provide guidelines on how a Storyguide might adjudicate the tourney in play. The Hermetic Tourney was first described on pages 31-33 of *The Lion & the Lily*, but these rules make some additions, changes, and clarifications.

THE AUTHOR'S SAGA

These rules were developed for the author's saga, The Hermetic Round Table, which chronicles the covenant of Mensa Magisterium (the Table of Masters), a large covenant of newly-Gauntleted magi themed around King Arthur's round table and led by Artorius filius Celeres of Bonisagus, who is described on page 110 of *The Lion and the Lily*. Various elements of these rules were detailed to fit the Hermetic Round Table saga and, more specifically, the tournament of 1221. For example, the sixth event in the tourney is decided by the host covenant; in the author's saga, the host covenant was Montverte and their chosen event was a contest of Hermetic Archery in which magi threw aimed spells at a distant target. In addition, additional covenants and teams not detailed in *The Lion & the Lily* were imagined for this tourney. Further notes on the playtest tourney, including the final results and analysis, can be found at the end of these rules. Your saga may vary.

THE HERMETIC TOURNEY IN BRIEF

In these rules, the tourney takes place over three days, with two events per day, in the order they are described on page 32 of *The Lion & the Lily*. During the hastiludium, joust, certamen and dimicatio events, four or five rounds are required to determine a winner. Each round takes about 30 minutes, with multiple matches taking place at once. The melee is done as a single event with all teams competing at once; it takes about an hour from initial preparations to final score. Finally, the Hermetic Archery event takes place over a series of elimination rounds, with every team competing and those who qualify moving on to successively harder rounds. It also takes about an hour.

- **Day One:** Opening ceremonies are held soon after dawn, followed by the hastiludium. A break is held for lunch and then the joust takes place in the afternoon. Feasting and celebrations fill the evening.
- **Day Two:** The certamen tournament is held in the morning, followed by lunch. The melee takes place in the afternoon. By dinner, the winners and losers are starting to become clear, and last minute intrigues take place.
- **Day Three:** The dimicatio is held in the morning. After lunch, the host's choice event—in this case a contest of Hermetic Archery—is held. Scores are tabulated and the winners announced. Prizes are selected immediately. After sunset, there are final feasts of celebration or conciliation, and in the morning everyone heads home.

These rules present the six events of the Hermetic Tourney as a series of minigames. Twenty four teams enter the tourney, and each team is assigned ratings that measure the team's competence in each event. Each team also has one or more special rules. These special rules and the team's rating for each event are listed on a physical card which represents the team, and which serves as a place to record each team's score and other events that occur during the tourney.

For most events—the hastiludium, certamen, joust, and dimicatio—matches are created by drawing cards. A die is rolled for each team, their rating in the event is added to this roll, and any special rules are applied. The team with the highest result wins that match and moves on to the next round of the event. Two events—the melee and Hermetic Archery—are held with all teams competing simultaneously.

These rules are generally not used when the player characters are directly involved. That is, these rules help the storyguide and other players determine how all the rest of the teams at the tourney perform, but when the player characters face off against an opposing team, the standard *Ars Magica* rules for certamen, dimicatio, and so on are used. When a player character is not involved, all players at the table can help assign teams to matches, resolve special abilities and the result of each match, and keep score.

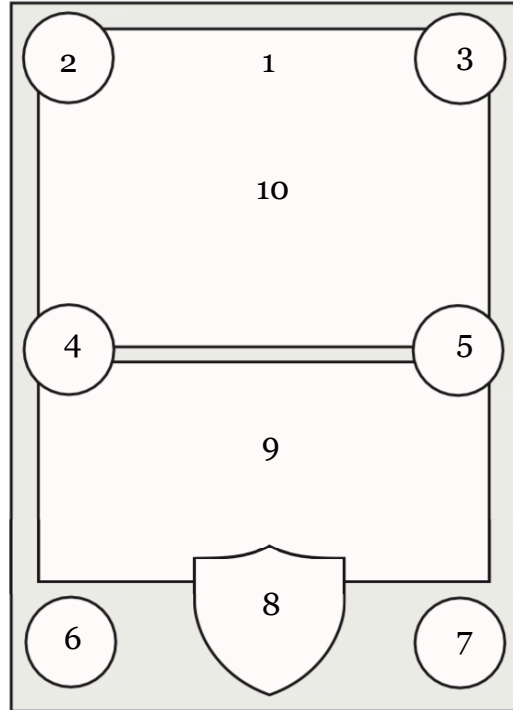
Once the results of each event are determined, points can be awarded as detailed on page 31 of *The Lion & the Lily*, and each team can be assigned a final score.

ANATOMY OF A CARD

Each team is represented by a card that details the team's rating in each event, special rules, and other factors.

1. The team's name
2. The team's hastiludium rating
3. The team's certamen rating
4. The team's joust rating
5. The team's melee ratings—Sprint and Block—separated by a slash
6. The team's dimicatio rating
7. The team's Hermetic Archery rating
8. The team's current points
9. Any special rules that apply to the team
10. Notes can be recorded in this field

If a team has a dash (—) in place of a rating, the team does not compete in that event. In the hastiludium, certamen, joust, and dimicatio, the team is still used to create matches, but they forfeit the first match (that is, their opponent automatically advances to the next round) and receive no points. In the melee and Hermetic Archery events, the team simply does not take the field.



DETERMINING RATINGS

The standard rules for *Ars Magica* influence a team's rating in each event. You may have game statistics for specific magi; for example, Rotgiars of Tremere has complete game statistics, as do all the magi of the Covenant of the Northern Seas. However, where statistics for a specific competitor are not available, these rules make assumptions based on a competitor's Hermetic age (that is, the number of years they have been a magus). But while older magi are better at the various Arts and abilities required for tourney, physical harm is common and as magi age, they become increasingly reluctant to risk life and limb on the jousting field.

Determine the age bracket of a magus competing in the tourney according to Table 1: Hermetic Age Bracket.

TABLE 1: HERMETIC AGE BRACKET

Hermetic Age	Age Bracket
0-5	Newly-Gauntleted
6-20	Young
21-40	Mature
41-80	Elder
81+	Archmage

The power level of magi, and the value an individual magus can expect to have in Abilities such as Finesse and Parma Magica, varies widely from saga to saga. If, in your campaign, the values used below are not reflective of the magi in your campaign, you can change them.

Regardless, determine a team's rating for each event according to the guidelines below, then modify those scores up or down by a point or two as you feel appropriate.

Hastiludium

Begin with the sum of the rider's Int + Finesse. Assume 3 for newly-Gauntleted magi, 4 for young magi, 6 for mature magi, 8 for elder magi, and 9 for an archmage. If the mount flies as fast as a bird, +6. If as fast as a horse, +3. More than any other event, the hastiludium requires specialized magic. First-time competitors have a -3 penalty. Spring covenants have a -1 penalty. Autumn Covenants get a +3 bonus. Apply an additional -1 penalty for teams from outside the tribunal (who are less likely to be prepared), and a +3 bonus to the 5 liege covenants, who have a lot of practice at this event.

Certamen

Age is the most important factor in Certamen; young magi are more likely to have a 0 in an Art, and a mature magus's Art score is high enough to make Characteristics and even Abilities irrelevant. Assume an average Certamen-relevant characteristic of 1, or 2 for a Certamen-focused character. Add the competitor's average score in Finesse, Parma, and Penetration: 1 for newly-Gauntleted magi, 2 for young magi, 5 for a mature magus, 7 for an elder magus, 8 for an archmage; add +1 to all these for a Certamen-focused character. To this add Art score: +10 for a newly-Gauntleted magus, young magus +13, mature magus +17, elder magus +20, archmage +25. A single highly-competent magus can do very well in this event but is at a liability because their strengths and weaknesses are well known and can be countered; apply a final modifier based on team size. A team of 1: -3. Team size of 2: -1. Team size of 4: +1. Team size of 5: +3. Tremere get a +3 bonus. Oleron, the current champion, gets a +3 bonus.

Joust

Rules for the Hermetic Tourney assumes rules detailed in *Lords of Men*, specifically Charging on Horseback and Option: Shock of the Charge on pages 126-127, are in effect. In a joust, there's two important scores: the attack roll while charging, and the "resist charge while mounted" roll. For the first, add Dex + (Single Weapon x 2) + Ride (to a maximum of +3). For the second, add Dex + Ride. Average these and apply the following modifiers: the magnitude of the most powerful magical effect the joust benefits from, +1 for each additional beneficial magical effect; -1 to +3 to reflect the rider's mount (a rouncy is -1, a charger is default, a mundane destrier is +1, a magical horse or other familiar is +2, and more fantastic and powerful creatures like a flying mount add +3). In almost all cases, you'll have to estimate the magnitude and number of magical defenses a magus uses, but Rotgiers is a useful example; his *Gift of the Bear's Fortitude* is directly useful in the joust, for a bonus of +5. His 3 custom spells, each level 20, add an additional +1 each. In addition, his armor is described as having "protective effects," so an additional +2 is added for that. His mace talisman, and his other spells, do not seem as immediately applicable to the joust and do not add to his rating for this event.

Melee

This event has special rules; see below. Every team has 2 ratings: Sprint (equal to the cursor's Qik + Athletics + Size - Encumbrance) and Block (equal to a defender's Qik + [Weapon or Brawl] + Size - Encumbrance).

Dimicatio

Success at this event depends on quick casting and high Art scores. To determine a team's rating in dimicatio, begin with the contestant's Qik + Finesse, with any bonuses for Fast-Cast spell mastery or the Fast-Caster virtue; assume 1 for newly gauntleted magi, 2 for young magi, 4 for mature magi, 6 for elder magi, and 8 for an Archmage. To this add the magnitude of the competitor's best offensive spell or twice the magnitude of the competitor's fast-cast defensive spell (usually spontaneous magic), whichever is lower. Assume 2 for newly-Gauntleted magi, 4 for young magi, 6 for mature magi, 7 for an elder magus, and 8 for an Archmage. For teams where the exact stats of the contestants are unknown, modify score by the size of the team, as a large team is more likely to have someone with mastered defensive spells, a high Quickness, the Fast Caster virtue, or unusually potent offensive or defensive spells: +1 for two members, +2 for three, +3 for four, and +4 for five. Don't apply this to teams where the champion's scores are known and have been accounted for.

Hermetic Archery

Use the single best Per + Finesse on the team, assuming that character can cast an aimed spell. Assume 1 for newly-Gauntleted magi, 2 for young magi, 4 for mature magi, 6 for elder magi, and 7 for an archmage. If the team is made up of anonymous magi of the same age, modify for team size, as larger teams are more likely to have a specialist with high Perception or Finesse: +1 for teams of 2-3 or +2 for teams of 4-5.

Special Abilities

Each team has been assigned one or more special abilities which further differentiates them from other teams. While most of these special abilities are beneficial, some are penalties. If a special ability lists one or more events in parenthesis, the special ability only applies during the events listed. Special abilities that describe an "opponent" can be used only in the hastiludium, certamen, joust, and dimicatio events. Feel free to change special abilities, invent new ones, or swap them among teams as you feel appropriate to your saga.

EVENT RESOLUTION

Four events in the tourney—the hastiludium, certamen, joust, and dimicatio—are played out with similar rules. The melee and Hermetic Archery require special rules and are detailed later.

The cards for every team are collected together, shuffled, and placed face down in two columns or rows so that every team is paired with another team. One at a time, each of these pairs is flipped over, revealing a match. If one of the teams in the match is the player character covenant, the match is played out under normal Ars Magica rules; otherwise, each team is assigned to a player. If a team has a score of “—“ in the event, they forfeit; the opposing team automatically advances. Although most events give a point to every team that participates, teams that forfeit get 0 points for that event. Special abilities are consulted and implemented when appropriate. Each of the two players assigned a team rolls a stress die and adds their team’s rating in the relevant event. If either side rolls a 0, see “Botches,” below. The team with the highest result wins the match and advances; the other team loses and is out of the event.

Once the first round is resolved and all teams have either won or lost their match, cards for the team’s that won are gathered together, shuffled, and placed face down again for the second round. In most events, there will be no more than 12 teams in the second round, forming 6 matches. These matches are resolved in the same manner as the first round, and should result in 6 or fewer teams progressing to the next round.

The “Buy”

Only 4 teams can compete in the semifinals, but the nature of the tournament means as many as 6 teams will advance to the third round.

- **If you have 5 teams in Round 3:** Place two teams face down, turn the cards over, and resolve the match. The losing team is out of the event. This should leave you with four teams, who all progress to the fourth round, which is the semifinals.
- **If you have 6 teams in Round 3:** Place four teams face down, pair them up into matches, and then turn the cards over. Resolve both matches as described above. The losers are out of the event. Return the two winning teams to your hand, with the two teams that did not compete. These four teams proceed to the fourth round, which is the semifinals.

Semifinals and Final Round

Once each event is down to 4 teams, resolve these final matches as described above. In every event but the melee, every team that competed gains 1 point, while semi finalists and finalists receive extra points:

Event	Winner	Finalist	Semifinalists	Other Competitors
Hastiludium	21 points	11 points	6 points each	1 point each
Certamen	26 points	16 points	9 points each	1 point each
Joust	21 points	9 points	4 points each	1 point each
Dimicatio	24 points	13 points	7 points each	1 point each

Botches

Accidents are common in tournament and can result in injury or even death. But some events are more dangerous than others. In some events, inflicting an injury on an opposing player gets a team disqualified, but in others, injuries are just another risk competitors take. The rules for botches vary depending on the event.

TABLE 2: BOTCH TABLE

1d10 Wound

1-4 Light Wound

5-7 Medium Wound

8-9 Heavy Wound

10 Roll again; 1-9 Incapacitating Wound, 10 Dead

Hastiludium

This is a dangerous event. Inflicting an injury brings a vis penalty to the offending team, and causing the death of a competitor results in forfeiture. On a roll of 0, the team has botched, injuring a member of the opposing team. Treat the result of the die as 0 and roll on **Table 2: Botch Table**. Inflicting a Light Wound penalizes the botching team 4 pawns, a Medium Wound is a 5 pawn penalty, a Heavy Wound is a 6 pawn penalty, and an Incapacitating Wound is a 7 pawn penalty. Teams that are penalized are not disqualified and can still win the event (but, as noted, their die roll is treated as 0, so their total is equal to their rating). If the team kills a member of the opposing team, the botching team forfeits the event, gets no points, and the team member who inflicted the Wound is disqualified from the tournament; that individual cannot compete in the remaining events of this tournament and cannot be replaced on the team.

Certamen

Accidents can happen in Certamen, but they are rare. On a roll of 0, roll again. On a second result of 0, the team has botched and the die roll is treated as 0, roll on **Table 2: Botch Table**; otherwise, no botch occurs and the die roll is 0. A team that inflicts a Wound on the opposing team is penalized in the same way as described for the hastiludium, including disqualification for anyone who kills an opponent in a freak certamen accident.

Joust

The joust is the most dangerous event and jousters who injure their opponents are not penalized; injury is a risk each competitor agrees to take. On a roll of 0, the jouster has botched, made a critical error, and become injured; roll on **Table 2: Botch Table** and apply the wound to the team that rolled the 0. Their die roll is 0, but they can still win if their rating is high enough.

Dimicatio

This event is dangerous, but the consequences of a botch are somewhat unusual. On a roll of 0, the storyguide must determine if the team that rolled a 0 is using damaging spells. If no, then simply treat the roll as a 0 and determine the results normally. If the team is using damaging spells, they have botched; roll on **Table 2: Botch Table**. The opposing team is wounded as indicated, the botching team forfeits, and the individual who inflicted the wound is charged with a Hermetic crime. There's no immediate vis penalty *per se*, but this is the least of the competitor's problems, as the crime is likely to come with a substantial fine.

THE LISTS

The number of teams competing in a Hermetic Tourney varies, but is usually over twenty. There are 15-20 covenants in Normandy; the exact number varies by saga. Not every covenant fields a team, however. Additional teams are made up of magi from both inside and outside the tribunal.

The 24 teams described below participated in the Hermetic Tourney of 1221, in the author's saga. They are listed in order of seniority, with every covenant of the Normandy tribunal first, followed by other teams. Seniority is used to break ties among teams with the same final score at the end of the tourney. Each team has a score for each of the six events, a number of starting points, and a special ability; these can be found on **Table 3: Teams**.

The Covenant of Confluensis. (*The Lion & the Lily* p133) The covenant is 6 magi. Their champion is Valerian, Senior Hoplite for the Normandy Tribunal. A Terram specialist, he is slow but methodical in his approach, waiting for his enemies to wear themselves out before he crushes them. In the joust, he rides an earth elemental, and he also competes in certamen and Hermetic Archery.

The Covenant of Florum. (*The Lion & the Lily* p96) The covenant has 6 magi, including 2 who were recently recalled from Spider's Palace. The magi of Florum don't like tournament and consider it a waste of resources, but their emphasis on Rego Craft. magic ensures they excel at contests requiring Finesse. Their champion is Alroy of Flambeau, a weary veteran seeking a worthy challenge.

A "Die-Rolling Exercise"

There is almost no strategy in *Rules for Hermetic Tourney*. A team's die rolls and ratings determine the winner. The fun comes from the stories created by those random die rolls. When a lesser-known team scores an upset victory, when a defending champion botches, when a team injures—or even kills—their opponent, these are the events that make the tournament memorable. Plus, of course, the actions of the player characters. The author did originally set out to create mini-games for each event, games with interesting strategic choices. But then he realized the scope of the tournament. A hastiludium mini game would need to be played about 20 times for the results to be determined, and there's 6 events! Ultimately, the only way to simulate the Hermetic Tourney on a scale most gaming groups can participate in is a single die roll for each match.

The Covenant of Montverte. (*The Lion & the Lily* p58) The largest covenant in the Normandy Tribunal with 10 magi, Montverte is also the reigning champion in the joust. Their champion is Rotgiers of Tremere, who leads a team of 4 young magi and personally competes in certamen, joust, and dimicatio. He does not ride in the hastiludium, but has taught *The Firm Buttocked Knight* to another magus who does. Barnabé (*The Lion & the Lily* p20) is their cursor and competes in the melee. In the author's saga, Montverte was the host of the Hermetic Tourney of 1221, and they chose Hermetic Archery as the special event knowing they'd be bad at it, as is traditional.

The Covenant of Oleron. (*The Lion & the Lily* p70) This covenant of 5 magi has recently lost two members and replaced them by inviting lesser magi from vassal covenants to move to Oleron. Their champion is Caprican, who in the author's saga is the defending certamen champion. (I decided this based on the fact that Caprican must defend his position as leader of Oleron against all comers, and has been so successful doing so that he is worried he will die without an heir.) Oleron has a long rivalry with Fudarus and its vassals.

The Covenant of Nidi. (*The Lion & the Lily* p74) This small covenant of urban shapechangers has only 3 members. They are a vassal of Oleron and intentionally weak, part of an elaborate trap aimed at Fudarus and their vassals. Regulus is their jouster.

Montverte Vassals. This saga-specific covenant is unnamed and the 4 magi who live there are not detailed. They are vassals of Montverte, and are afraid to upstage or humiliate their liege.

Oleron Vassals. Similar to the Montverte vassals, above, this is a covenant of 3 unnamed magi who are vassals to the covenant of Oleron. One of their number recently left to join Oleron after a magus there went missing. They have trained to defeat Fudarus and their vassals.

The Covenant of Obsidio. This covenant of 4 magi is part of the author's saga. They are located on the summit of Mount Auxios in Burgundy (*The Lion & the Lily* p113) and were once vassals of Lapis Crudis (*The Lion & the Lily* p89), but after that covenant slipped into a regio, Obsidio took the opportunity to become independent. At the tribunal meeting immediately preceding the Hermetic Tourney of 1221, Lapis Crudis argued that their liege status over Lapis Crudis should be reinstated, but the vote narrowly failed and Obsidio's independence was confirmed. Lapis Crudis is not in a position to compete at the tourney, but agents of that covenant are at tourney actively sabotaging Obsidio's efforts.

The Covenant of Atsingani. (*The Lion & the Lily* p76) This covenant of 4 magi is led by Viviana Ex Miscellanea, a seer who can see the future; she competes at Hermetic Archery. Their champion is Jacques of Flambeau, who fights in dimicatio and the joust, and their turb includes a violent band of veteran mercenaries good at the melee.

The Covenant of Cunfin. (*The Lion & the Lily* p106) This covenant of 4 magi is the defending champion of the hastiludium. Archmage Celeres handles certamen, Renaúd of Mercere the joust, and Eloi Hermetic Archery. Note that Artorius filius Celeres, described as a resident of this covenant, has left in the author's saga to found the covenant of Mensa Magisterium.

The Covenant of Exspectatio. (*The Lion & the Lily* p45) This covenant was founded by 6 mature Tytalus magi seeking refuge from the competing Primi at Fudarus. They are personally well prepared for tourney but do not have access to the resources of Fudarus. Adanos handles the joust, riding a stone horse.

The Covenant of Atramentum Renuus. (*The Lion & the Lily* p114). This covenant of 4 magi is only briefly described in the source material, but one of their number—Iacula of Bonisagus—is a specialist in projectile motion, especially useful in the hastiludium and this year's special event, the contest of Hermetic Marksmanship. Gullo of Bjornaer can joust, but poorly.

Fengeld Chapter House. The covenant of Fengeld, in the Rhine Tribunal, has a chapter house in the city of Cherbourg. Only a single maga, Marguerite of Flambeau, lives there. See *Guardians of the Forest* p83 and pages 28 and 57 of *The Lion & the Lily*. Marguerite cannot compete in the hastiludium (which requires a team of 3 magi) and doesn't have the skills for the joust, but is well supported by Fengeld and is able to enter all other events.

The Covenant of the Northern Seas. This covenant of 6 magi, led by Carles Magnus, is detailed in the first chapter of *Through the Aegis*. Carles leads a team of 4 newly-Gauntleted magi; Hilde Oddfish does not attend. While *Through the Aegis* does not describe the Covenant of the Northern Seas as participating in the tourney, there's no reason why they shouldn't. Carles is a capable champion, competing in certamen and dimicatio, but no one on the team can joust. Matilda Paige competes in Hermetic Archery and has developed a ReTe spell for the hastiludium.

The Covenant of Mensa Magisterium. This is the player-character covenant in the author's saga. At the time of the tourney, it included 9 magi, making it second in size only to Montverte. It is led by

Artorius filius Celeres of Bonisagus and is a vassal of Confluensis, founded in 1220 in the regio at Corseul described on page 36 of *The Lion & the Lily*.

The Covenant of Valle Secretorum. This covenant of 4 newly-Gauntleted magi was created in the author's saga. They have no liege, and are generally despised for their refusal to obey the tribunal's traditions. The covenant was founded in 1221 in a valleys southwest of Tours described on page 64 of *The Lion & the Lily*. They are led by a young Tremere named Juno.

Archmage Atlantos Mauros. Archmage Atlantos, "The Black Atlas," is a Tytalus Archmage from North Africa. He was created in the author's saga as a potential spoiler candidate for the position of Tytalus Primus. Atlantos is infamous among his house for his scandalous behavior: he never lies, cheats, or steals, always keeps his word, is charitable to the poor, and generally acts in every instance in the most honorable and principled way possible. Atlantos argues that deceit, selfishness, and cruelty is the easy route to navigating the world's many challenges, and by being "good," he is choosing the harder path and creating challenges for himself to overcome. That is, he is honorable not to obey social mores (which his house finds deplorable) but because it is hard, and he chooses to do what is hard. He cannot compete in the hastiludium and has no grogs to fight in the melee, but competes in all other events alone, jousting on a Wizard's Mount.

The Wolves. This team is a Tremere delegation from the Transylvania Tribunal. It is led by Archmage Monica Ierne (detailed on pXX of *Against the Dark*) and also includes the House's Certamen champion, which in the author's saga is Scamandrius (whose stats can be found here: <https://sites.google.com/site/hboarsmagica/ars-magica-the-hbo-series/setting/greater-alps/scamandrius>). A third member was left undescribed, but died on the first day of the tourney (see The Playtest, elsewhere in this document.) Monica competes in dimicatio and Hermetic Archery, Scamandrius in certamen. The team does not compete in the joust, not only both because House Doctrine does not approve of the use of horses as mounts, but also to avoid conflict with Rotgiers, current joust champion. House Tremere competes in the tourney to demonstrate the House's values and to uphold its reputation in certamen. Its famous shield grogs, the Black Cloaks, make up the melee team. At the start of tourney, the team's intent is to redistribute any winnings to other less fortunate but deserving covenants, to undermine what the house sees as a poor way of allocating scarce resources.

The Golden Coins. These three mysterious magi make up the Cabal of the Golden Coins (*The Lion & the Lily* p.31). For three tournaments, they have always come in 14th, a very rewarding position. They are mature magi well prepared for Tourney, but use bribery and other methods to attain their goals.

The Band of Brothers. This team is made up of 3 mature magi who have been friends for decades. They meet up every 7 years to compete in tourney and renew their friendship.

Flames of the Founder. This team of 4 mature Flambeau have come from Provençal in search of glory. They're favored to win the dimicatio.

The Romans. This is a team of 3 mature magi from the Roman Tribunal, where vis is almost as hard to come by as it is in Normandy. They're seeking vis, not victory, and are willing to lose contests in exchange for vis bribes.

The Young Masters. These 5 young magi are from various covenants in the Normandy Tribunal. They didn't make it onto their covenant teams, and have banded together to compete.

Leaena Nemea. This newly-Gauntleted Bjornaer maga has the Heartbeast of a lioness (which gives her a slight advantage in Certamen thanks to an extra fatigue level). She is from Provençal and is an expert jouster. She has entered the tourney to seek glory and perhaps earn a spot in a covenant.

The Problem of Renaúd

Renaúd the Redcap is described on pages 110-111 of *The Lion & the Lily*, where he is explicitly described as a foundling brought to the covenant by Eloï (and so probably the rescued son of a nobleman). But he is also a member of Cunfin's champion hastiludium team. This is problematic for several reasons. The hastiludium is a contest of magic, with one magus riding a flying mount and two others casting spells from the sidelines. There is no role in this event for someone without the ability to cast spells. It is theoretically possible that Renaúd simply holds on to the mount while one of the other Cunfin magi controls it from afar, but this is a tremendous liability. To resolve this, I made Renaúd a magical Mercere, a descendant of Mercere the Founder with the capacity to work magic. My saga has no magical Mercere in it, so Renaúd was the first. And although this reverses his story—from a foundling showered with undeserved privileges to a spoiled heir—it works very well for my saga.

Table 3: Teams

Team Name	Special Rules	H	C	J	M	D	A	Starting Points
Montverte	Cheating (Joust) You can roll 1 die and subtract half the total from your opponent's total. If you roll a 0 on this die, your cheating is discovered and you are disqualified from this event. Cautious Sorcerer (Dimicatio) If you roll a 0, reroll.	11	30	23	10/10	10	3	10
Mensa Magisterium	Player Characters Do not roll. Play the event using the normal game rules.							9
Confluensis	Slow and Steady (Certamen, Joust) After each round, add a cumulative +1 to your roll for that event.	14	25	17	8/6	12	5	6
Exspectatio	House Tytalus Once during each event, you can add +3 to a roll. You cannot use this ability in the melee.	12	29	16	7/10	14	4	6
Florum	Ennui (Certamen, Joust, Dimicatio) You have an Ennui score of 1. Each match you lose, increase Ennui by 1. At the beginning of every match, roll a die. If the result is equal to or less than Ennui, add +3 to all future rolls and stop rolling Ennui.	12	25	13	7/5	13	8	6
Northern Seas	Inspirational Once in each event, you can reroll a die.	5	21	—	6/9	6	3	6
Oleron	Rivalry If your opponent is Fudarus or any of its vassals, roll twice and take the best result.	14	32	16	9/10	14	6	5
Atramentum Renatus	Projectile Motion (Hermetic Archery) Roll twice and take the best result.	9	17	7	8/5	10	6	4
Atsingani	Seer Before every event, roll a die. Once during the event, you can substitute the result of this die for your roll or your opponent's roll.	10	24	17	7/7	10	4	4
Montverte vassals	Cruel Liege If your opponent is Montverte, you lose.	9	24	14	8/7	13	4	4
Obsidio	Sabotage In every event except the melee, you roll twice and take the worst result. If both rolls are a 0, reroll once and stop using Sabotage.	9	24	13	8/6	13	4	4
Valle Secretorum	Resented If your opponent is a liege or vassal covenant, they add +1 to their rolls.	5	18	10	6/5	8	3	4

Team Name	Special Rules	H	C	J	M	D	A	Starting Points
Cunfin	Hastiludium Champions (Hastiludium) Roll twice and take the best result.	13	28	12	8/5	13	4	4
Nidi	Honey Pot If your opponent is Fudarus or any of its vassals, you lose.	11	23	15	6/5	11	3	3
Oleron vassals	Lesser Rivalry If your opponent is Fudarus or any of its vassals, you can reroll the die once in each match.	9	22	12	7/5	12	4	3
Fengeld chapter house	Well-Prepared If you roll a 0, reroll. If you roll a 0 again, you cannot reroll it.	—	20	—	8/10	10	3	1
Golden Coins	Intrigue Before every round, you offer a bribe of 5 pawns to your opponent. If they accept this bribe, you win. The SG determines if the bribe is accepted. You cannot use Intrigue in the melee or Hermetic Archery.	12	24	14	8/5	12	5	1
Flames of the Founder	Dimicatio Specialists (Dimicatio) Roll twice and take the best result.	3	17	13	—	16	4	1
The Wolves	Black Cloaks (melee) When you roll a 0, you can reroll once.	6	36	—	8/8	18	7	1
Young Masters	Reckless If you roll an odd number, add 3. If you roll an even number, subtract 3.	3	15	11	—	10	3	1
Band of Brothers	True Friends If a member of the team is wounded, add +1 to subsequent rolls. If a member of the team is killed, add +3 instead.	10	23	14	—	12	5	1
Atlantos Mauros	Self-Confident Once in the Tourney, you can add +3 to a roll.	—	31	17	—	18	5	1
The Romans	Bribable You will take 5 pawns of vis to lose an event. The SG determines if the opponent agrees and pays you the vis. Do not use Bribable in the melee or Hermetic Archery.	6	16	11	6/5	9	4	1
Leaena of Bjornaer	Heartbeast (Certamen) You can reroll. If you do, you have a -1 penalty on future Certamen rolls.	—	11	19	—	6	4	1

H—The team's score in the hastiludium

C—The team's score in Certamen

J—The team's score in the joust

M—The team's scores in the melee, Sprint followed by Block

D—The team's score in the dimicatio

A—The team's score in Hermetic Archery The Grand

Melee

THE MELEE

The Melee is different than other events because it is not a series of elimination rounds leading up to a final. Instead, every team competes at the same time. In this Hermetic Tourney mini-game, the Grand Melee is given additional complexity and played out with a subsystem that is simplified compared to Ars Magica's standard rules, but more complex than the system used for other events in the tourney.

The Melee in Brief

All competing teams are arranged randomly around the edge of the play field. The center of the play field is "the Hazard," an obstacle course simulating a battlefield. Play proceeds with each team taking a turn, during which the team selects a target and tries to break the spell sustaining the target's castle, while one or more defenders try to stop these attacks. As castle spells are broken, teams are forced out of the event until only one remains.

Set Up

Gather the cards representing every team that competes in the melee. Shuffle the deck. Place the cards face up, in order, in a semicircle around the outside edge of the play area.

Teams

Each team has 3 members. It's assumed that these include:

- A **Cursor**, who tries to reach opposing castles and break their circles. Cursors add the team's Sprint rating to die rolls.
- A **Seneschal**, who stays at the castle and defends it against opposing teams. Seneschals add the team's Block rating to rolls.
- A **Vanguard**, who can defend the castle with the goalie or run interference for the cursor. Vanguard also add the team's Block rating to rolls.

Formations

There are, broadly speaking, one of five ways a team can arrange itself on the field. A team can change its formation every turn, unless it has members stuck in the Hazard.

- **Total Defense:** The vanguard and cursor assist the seneschal defending the castle. The team cannot attack opposing castles in this formation.
- **Standard Defense:** The vanguard remains behind with the seneschal, defending the castle, while the cursor attacks other castles alone.
- **Standard Offense:** The seneschal defends the castle while the vanguard and cursor attack one opposing castle.
- **Total Offense:** The seneschal abandons the castle and helps the vanguard and cursor attack an opposing castle. If any opposing team attacks the castle, this team is out of the event.
- **Split Offense:** The seneschal defends the castle while the vanguard and cursor each attack different castles.

Order of Play

The player character team goes first, and play then proceeds clockwise around the field, with each team getting a turn. As the event proceeds, teams will be forced out of the event. Teams that are still in the event are referred to as active teams.

Attacking

Each turn, a team can attack one castle. Trace a path around the outside edge of the field, from the attacking team to the castle that is their target. If there are no active teams between the attacker and the target castle, the team reaches its target. If there are active teams between the team and its target, the team must risk the Hazard (see below).

Once a team reaches its target, it can attack. To attack, each team member on the attacking team and defending castle roll, taking the highest result among all the dice they rolled. For example, if a cursor and vanguard are attacking a castle defended by a seneschal. The attacking team would roll Sprint and Block, taking the best result, and the defender would roll only Block. If the attacking team's result is higher than the defender's result, the attack succeeds and the defending castle is out of the melee.

When an attacker or defender roll a 0, they have injured a member of the opposing team. Roll on Table 4: Melee Injuries.

The Hazard

When the Grand Melee begins, approximately forty people—half of them armed and armored—run across the field towards their intended targets. The field itself is seldom flat and even, instead replicating a battlefield with barriers, ditches, hills, and other terrain. As competitors meet in this cluttered and dangerous field, there are many opportunities to trip, tackle, or otherwise interfere with opponents. This results in an ongoing skirmish in the middle of the field, with new arrivals constantly added to the mix while others slip out to continue their attack on a castle. This fast-moving mob of cursors and blockers in and around the battlefield is known as the Hazard.

The Hazard has a value equal to $6 +$ (one half the number of teams active in the Grand Melee, rounded down); for example, if 19 teams are competing in the Grand Melee, the Hazard begins with a value of 15. The simplest way to track this is to place a large twenty-sided die—the Hazard Die—on the field, adjusting the value shown on its face as teams are forced out of the event.

Any team that tries to attack a castle, and who must move past another active castle to do so, risks the Hazard. If the team is using its cursor, it rolls Sprint. If it is using its vanguard or senechal, it rolls Block. If it is using more than one of these at the same time—for instance, running a Standard Offense or Total Offense formation—it rolls for all team members that are attacking and uses the best result. A team running a Split Offense formation must roll separately for each team member who enters the Hazard.

If the team rolls equal to or better than the Hazard value, the team can continue to its attack. If it fails, it spends this round in the Hazard. If the roll was a 0, one member of the attacking team is injured. Roll on Table 4: Melee Injuries. It can be difficult to assign blame for an injury suffered in the Hazard, but if a Wound is inflicted, judges investigate. When a Wound is inflicted, roll a die. On a result of 1-5, the Wound is judged an accident or blame is assigned to the injured team member; there is no vis fine and no team is disqualified. On a result of 6-10, the Storyguide should adjudicate which team currently in the Hazard inflicted the Wound, rolling a die if necessary. A team blamed for a Wound is disqualified and fined the amount of vis detailed in Injuries, below.

Every round a team is in the Hazard, it gains a +1 on subsequent rolls to escape the Hazard until it escapes. At the same time, the Hazard value will continue to decrease as teams are forced out of the Melee.

Injuries

Injuries in the melee are common, but most are nonlethal. When an attacking player rolls a 0, they have injured an opposing player. Roll on the table below to determine the nature of the injury. A team that causes a Wound to a member of another team is disqualified from the event and fined vis: 8 pawns for a Light Wound, 10 pawns for a Medium Wound, 12 pawns for a Heavy Wound, 14 pawns for an Incapacitating Wound, and 16 pawns for a fatality.

Injuries must be tracked separately for each member of a team; the open space in the center of a team's card is a good place to track the penalties that accumulate from fatigue and wounds. All non-lethal wounds are healed at the end of the event. Vanguard and senechals wear armor that protects them from injury: reduce an injury's severity by 1 step for vanguards and 2 steps for senechals.

Table 4: Melee Injuries

1d10 Injury

1-4	One fatigue level
5-7	Two fatigue levels
8-9	Three fatigue levels
10	Serious Injury. Roll again. 1-4 Medium Wound, 5-7 Heavy Wound, 8-9 Incapacitating Wound, 10 Dead.

The Melee of 1221

There are 19 teams competing in the Melee. The following teams do NOT compete in this event:

- Archmage Atlantos Mauros
- Band of Brothers
- Flames of the Founders
- Leaena Nemaeus
- Young Masters

Targets

Most teams target castles next to them, avoiding the Hazard. However, there are a few established rivalries willing to risk the Hazard. The two great rivalries are Oleron's grudge against Tytalus covenants,

particularly Fudaris and its vassals, and the rivalry between Normandy and Brittany. Teams with a rivalry always target one of their rivals first; if a rival can be targeted without risking the Hazard, they target that rival. Otherwise, roll randomly to determine a target.

Rivalries

- Montverte, Atsingani, and the Montverte vassals attack Exspectatio or Mensa Magisterium
- Oleron attacks Exspectatio
- Oleron's vassals—Nidi and the Oleron Vassals—attack Atramentum Renatus
- Wolves of Tremere attack Atramentum Renatus (**Author's Note:** this was in response to events of the first day of the tournament, when Atramentum Renatus accidentally killed a member of the Tremere team in the hastiludium)

Resolution

The last team on the field is awarded points. The second-to-last team is awarded points. The third and fourth place teams are awarded points. No points are awarded for competing.

HERMETIC ARCHERY

In the first round of Hermetic Archery, each team sends a single champion to a line along one side of the playing field. A number of targets equal in number to the competitors are set up 50 paces away (that is, about as far as spells with Range Voice will reach); the targets are white and depict the outline of a man. At a given signal, all competitors cast an aimed spell at the target and roll a die, adding their rating in Hermetic Archery. Player characters add Perception + Finesse according to the normal rules for an aimed spell. Judges inspect the targets, one at a time; a competitor whose target cannot be clearly interpreted (for example, because the competitor threw an object so large that the target was completely obliterated) are disqualified. In the first round, the magi need only hit the target to advance; the Ease Factor is 6. It is important to record the results for every team, as the higher a team's result, the closer they are to the center of the target. Storyguides and players with many dice might find it helpful to simply roll a different die for each team and leave the die face up on the team's card until the round is resolved.

Competitors whose totals are 6 or better advance to a second round. Judges paint the top half of each target—approximately the area of the human torso—with yellow paint. The Ease Factor to hit the yellow part of the target is 9. At a given signal, everyone casts their spell and rolls a die, as in round one. Judges again inspect the targets, but only those competitors who hit the yellow portions of the target advance to round 3. If less than four competitors advance to round 3, the teams that came closest to reaching the Ease Factor of 9—that is, who came closest to hitting the yellow part of the target—are awarded fourth or, if necessary, third place.

For the third round, judges visit each target and paint the head of each target red. Hitting the red part of the target with an aimed spell is an Ease Factor 12. Everyone casts their spell on a given signal and then judges inspect the targets. If there is a clear winner—that is, one team got the highest result—they are awarded first place and the teams with the next three highest totals are awarded second through fourth place. If there is not a clear winner—in other words, in the event of a tie for first place—the lower ranking places are awarded and the teams that tied advance to a tie breaker round with an Ease Factor of 15. In this case, the judges visit each of the remaining targets and put a black spot in the middle of the red part of the target.

First place in Hermetic Archery awards 13 points. The second place finisher gets 9 points, and the third and fourth place competitors get 4 points each. Every other competitor gets 1 point.

THE PLAYTEST

Much has already been written in these rules about the playtest, which detailed the events of the tourney of 1221 in the author's home saga. Much was learned, and the rules here reflect many of those lessons. But there is certainly much more to be learned, especially when it comes to exceptions, gray areas, and unexpected player tactics that the current rules do not accommodate.

Events

The very first match in the very first event resulted in a fatality; the magi of Atramentum Renatus accidentally killed a member of the Tremere team, the Wolves. I created this team with 3 members, including Archmage Monica Irene (from *Against the Dark*), the House's Certamen champion (a recurring NPC from my sagas), and an anonymous third Tremere I had not detailed. Perhaps taking the cowardly way out, I chose to kill this anonymous "redshirt." I felt killing a highly placed member of House Tremere would overshadow the rest of the tourney and force the game to focus on the ramifications of that death, and I didn't want to sidetrack the game. You may have chosen differently. Regardless, the death of any Tremere is serious, and the goals of the Wolves changed because of this event. Instead of competing in the Tourney to demonstrate Tremere values and illustrate that the tourney is an inefficient and unjust method of allocating resources, the team became obsessed with winning to recoup the significant losses incurred by the death of a magus, and to get revenge on Atramentum Renatus. It should be noted that House Tremere is not well liked in the Normandy Tribunal and has a weak presence, so most of the other covenants (the PCs included) mostly just shrugged and ignored the whole affair.

On the topic of the hastiludium more broadly, I spent a lot of time thinking about this event when I thought I'd be designing a more robust mini game for it. I figured out the spells necessary to make the mount fly at various speeds, and considered tactics. Although I eventually realized I had to simplify most of the events in the interest of time and playability, I still got to use this early work when the PCs took the field. A PC Tremere used ReCo magic to transport to the opposing team's mount (which was a mill stone) and tackle the rider to the ground; since he had no ability with Animal or Herbam, he transported nude, which proved for a very memorable event, even though the PC covenant lost in a subsequent round when they faced Oleron.

The certamen tournament played out about as expected, as this is the part of the tournament that players and storyguides are already most familiar with. Distilling an entire certamen bout down to a single die roll created a lot of "swing" that resulted in many upset victories and unanticipated defeats. I don't consider this a bad thing, or even out of line with *Ars Magica*. There are just so many variables in *Ars* that the outcome of something—even something so predicated on mastery of the Arts—is pretty unpredictable. The challenge, as Storyguide, came in explaining why an NPC expected to do very well in certamen (like Archmage Atlantos) instead got knocked out in an early round.

The second day began with a joust and, again, the very first event resulted in a near-fatality. Leaena Nemea, a knight-errant Bjornaer I had created as a potential recruit for the PC covenant, rolled two 1s in a row and should have died. But I liked her too much to kill her in her first appearance, so I had her saved at the last minute. Nevertheless, she was out of the joust, her best event, and ended up finishing the entire tourney in 23rd place, a humiliating loss. When it came time for the PC joust, I found that I simply wasn't prepared for the wide variety of magical mounts, unique spells, and other preparations NPC jousters might have ready for the tournament. In other words, rather than overwhelming the PC jouster (who was a young magus with no magical aids) with magic, I ended up adjudicating this based almost entirely on Single Weapon and Ride rolls. This negated much of the advantage of NPC magi, who were mostly older and better at the Arts than the PCs, so with a lot of Confidence points and some lucky rolls, the PC managed to get to 4th place. In the future, I'd like to make a d10 table for what sort of magical mount or other magical help (like wards against metal) a jouster might have.

The melee filled the second half of day two. At this time, we were still interpreting a botch as a failed defense roll, and thus the character that rolled the botch suffered injury. Players pointed out to me, in the melee event, that since injury often forced disqualification, a botch was actually bad for the attacker, which led to the rules as written here. Players also voiced a desire for tokens to keep track of individual team members in the melee; after all, we needed to track injuries for each player, and approximately where they were on the field. Wouldn't it be better to have markers or stand-ups for each? It would, but we'd need about 60 such markers to represent all the teams on the field. If I were to do this again, I might explore this and try to find a way to not only create tokens but also clearly differentiate 20 teams from one another.

The PCs defended their castle admirably for a couple of turns but eventually succumbed to multiple simultaneous attacks from Normandy rivals. We continued to play out the rest of the event, quickly discovering I'd initially set the Hazard difficulty so low that it never actually came into play.

The final day began with the *dimicatio*. I had two PCs ready to compete in this. The first wasn't able to attend the session. Random cards dictated that the PC covenant was the first match of the day, against the Golden Coins. When I noted there had been a fatality and a near-fatality in the first event of both previous days, the player decided to take a bribe from the Golden Coins and take a fall, rather than risk "the curse of the Tourney" and potentially die. So despite many hours of preparation, I didn't get to actually play out a *dimicatio* event. We rolled dice for the rest of the event, with the Flambeau team coming in second to Florum (whose champion had by this time shaken off his ennui).

Hermetic Archery was last and simplest. I initially set the ease factors too high, so that no competitor hit the target on the third round, and we had to figure out who had missed by the least. The players had ignored Hermetic Archery in their preparations for tourney; none of them had an aimed formulaic spell. An NPC maga at the covenant invented such a spell the season before the tourney just so the team could enter the event, and she ended up coming in 3rd through lucky rolls and Confidence.

The player covenant was very large, with 9 magi. In my saga, the only Normandy covenant larger is Montverte with 10. This gave the pc covenant a tremendous advantage. They entered the tournament in 2nd place. They entered every event and placed twice, coming in at a very fortunate 7th place, the Siege of Notatus. But a smaller covenant would have done much less well. The players enjoyed the tournament. We kept the dice rolling fast, resolving events as quickly as we could and then spending time after each event figuring out stories and narrating evening encounters. Players helped me track scores. Everything paused when the PC covenant came up in an event, as we switched to standard *Ars Magica* rules. Overall, it was a success.

Challenges

The Golden Coins are a real challenge to implement in this game. Their goal is to come in 14th. I was not clever enough to design rules that adequately simulated the schemes of a Tytalan cabal, but I learned a lot. It wasn't until the tourney was over that I understood what was necessary to come in 14th. In the playtest, the 14th team was the Northern Seas with 10 points. A couple of Normandy covenants got 9 points and Valle Secretorum came in 13th with 11 points. But the Golden Coins are not a covenant; they enter the tournament with only 1 point. I think the strategy for the Golden Coins is this: they must come in 3rd or 4th in two events. Then, they adjust their final score by entering or not entering later events, never placing but collecting only the 1 point for entering. The point is to initially overshoot their goal and then lower their standing by giving up points or intentionally losing to force other teams up in the ranking.

Ultimately, the Golden Coins achieve their goal by subtle intrigues that the die rolls used in these rules do not easily replicate. You may have a more successful strategy.

Final Scores

I discovered after the tourney was over that I had scored events improperly. Teams that scored points for coming in first, second, third, or fourth should have gotten an additional 1 point for entering. I realize this now, but the final scores listed here do not account for that. This is what playtests are for.

Team	Place	Points	Prize
Oleron	1	46	31
Florum	2	33	24
Montverte	3	31	18
Cunfin	4	30	15
The Wolves	5	29	13
Flames of the Founder	6	28	11
Mensa Magisterium	7	23	17
Exspectatio	8	22	8
Atramentum Renatus	9	22	7
Oleron Vassals	10	17	6
Atlantos Mauros	11	17	6
Confluensis	12	13	5
Valle Secretorum	13	11	0
Northern Seas	14	10	11
Montverte Vassals	15	9	3
Obsidio	16	9	5
Atsingani	17	9	4
Nidi	18	8	3
Golden Coins	19	6	5
Band of Brothers	20	6	1
The Romans	21	6	6
Young Masters	22	6	2
Leaena Nemaeus	23	5	2
Fengeld Chapter House	24	4	2

