



# CHARIOTS OF ROME

RULEBOOK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Game Overview..... 2	X. Endurance..... 8
II. Preparing For Race Day..... 3	XI. Rattled..... 8
III. Racing a Round..... 4	XII. Chariot Elimination . 8 The Wreckage.....8 A Matter of Life or Death.....9
IV. Initiative Phase..... 4	XIII. The Finish Line & Victory ..... 9 The Sole Survivor.....9 The First Place Finish.....9
V. Favor of the Gods ..... 4	XIV. Optional Rules..... 9 Completing the 7 Laps.....9 Charioteer Drafting.....9 Racing Teams.....9 Alternate Tracks.....9
VI. Charioteers Phase..... 4 Speed Step.....4 Adjustments Step.....4 Driving Step.....5	XV. Special Reminders ..... 9 Game Credits..... 9
VII. Tactics ..... 6 Spending Tactics.....6	XVI. Extended Example of Play ..... 10
VIII. Action Card Effects ..... 7 Hazard Timing.....7 Hazard Effects.....7 Swerving.....7 Wounding.....8	
IX. Crashing ..... 8	

# CHARIOTS OF ROME

*“Two things only the people anxiously desire: bread and circuses.” - Juvenal*

Rome, 10 BC: Caesar Augustus has erected a mighty obelisk in the center of the Circus Maximus in tribute to his conquest of Egypt. Filling the arena are more than 150,000 Romans of all classes, from Senator to slave. While this is normally an uncommon sight, they have assembled to watch the *ludi circenses*, the chariot races.

Banners of the Red, White, Green, and Blue factions wave in the stands as the fans cheer on their favorite drivers and teams. Soon, the thunder of a dozen *quadriga*, four-horse-drawn chariots, will roar as they race at breakneck speeds. Only the whims of the gods and the skill of the drivers, or *aurigae*, will determine the victor.

## I. GAME OVERVIEW

*Chariots of Rome* is a competitive, chariot-racing board game for 2 to 8 cunning drivers set in Ancient Rome's grand stadium, the Circus Maximus. Each player controls a unique charioteer competing on the giant oval track for two laps. You can also play with up to four teams of two chariots, each representing a Roman color faction.

There is more to winning the laurel wreath of victory than just handling dangerous corners! Charioteers can whip and ram their opponents to hinder them during the race (*much to the crowd's delight*). Along with the tens of thousands in the crowd, the gods are watching, and they may be inclined to influence the race in their favor!

So mount your chariot, tie the reins around your waist, tightly grasp your whip, and pay tribute to Caesar in *Chariots of Rome!*

## GAME COMPONENTS

- 1 Stadium map
- [##] Charioteer cards
- [##] Fate cards
- 64 Action cards
- [##] Chariot tokens
- [##] Initiative cards
- [##] Chariot mats
- [##] Endurance markers
- [##] Tactics markers
- [##] Rattled markers
- [##] Speed Level markers
- [##] Lap markers
- [##] Start markers
- [##] Wreck markers
- 3 Debris marker
- 1 Egg marker
- 1 Dolphin marker
- 1 Fate die
- 1 Tri die

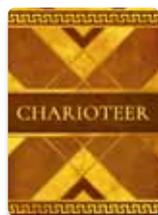
### IMPORTANT!

ALL CARD TEXT  
SUPERSEDES THESE  
RULES. WHEN THERE  
IS A CONFLICT, USE  
THE CARD TEXT!



### Action Cards

Action cards determine the ill effects suffered when rounding a corner at breakneck speed, when attacked, or when placed in danger.



### Charioteer Cards

These cards highlight the special ability of your charioteer. Cards with once-per-round effects should be rotated 90 degrees after use as a reminder that their ability has been used, and should be set back to normal when the next round begins.



### Fate Cards

Fate is no less a player in *Chariots of Rome*. The fickle gods and rowdy crowd can interfere with any player, so stay alert!



### Initiative Cards

Initiative cards determine who takes the next turn each round, by color and stripe.



Speed  
Level



Lap



Start

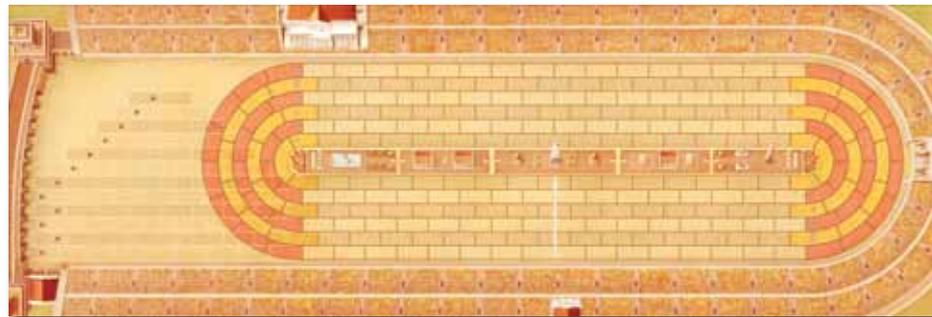


Debris



Wreck

### Circus Maximus Stadium



### Chariot Mat



The Status Track records your horses' Endurance (*max 12*), your driver's Tactics (*max 8*), and your team's Rattled (*reaching 6 causes you to crash*). Speed Level indicates how many spaces your chariot moves (*Speed*), its control (*in terms of resources gained and lost*), and the Speed Level you can change to on the next turn.

### Resource Markers



The Endurance marker represents that team's level of fatigue, ranging from 12 (*fresh, the maximum*) to 0 (*spent, and that chariot is removed from play*). Endurance is lost in many ways, such as moving at high speed, whipping the team for extra movement, and through various penalties and dangers. Endurance can be recovered primarily from resting the horses a bit when moving at low speed.



Tactics represent your charioteer's energy, skill, and focus during the race. You spend Tactics to attack opponents and to mitigate losses from their attacks and other racing hazards. You gain Tactics primarily from thoughtful cornering and moving at low speed.



The Rattled marker reflects the declining status of the charioteer's balance, nerve, control, and the condition of the chariot itself, ranging from 0 (*fit*) to 6 (*fallen, at which point that chariot is removed from play*). Rattled is increased primarily by hazards and it is decreased primarily from slowing down.

## II. PREPARING FOR RACE DAY

### A. Entering the Stadium

Place the Stadium map in the center of the table where all players can reach it. Banners, drums, and trumpet fanfares are optional.

### B. Charioteers Arrive to an Ovation

Shuffle the Charioteer cards and deal them to each player, one per chariot in the race. Players (*spectators and touts*) should read each charioteer's ability and start formulating a strategy. As it is still a friendly race at this point, players may, by unanimous consent, allow a redraw of their charioteer, if requested.



Charioteer cards with the 3+ in their lower right hand corner can only be used in races with three or more chariots.

### C. Chariot Teams are Readied

Each player selects one Chariot mat and receives the corresponding components. If racing both chariots of the same color team, also take its other Chariot mat and corresponding components:

- A Lap marker; place it on the 0 space in the lower-left corner.
- An Endurance marker; place it on the 12 (*XII*) space.
- A Tactics marker; place it in the space corresponding to the number of chariots that are in the race (*up to a maximum of 8*).
- A Rattled marker; place it above the main track on the word "Faction." (*Think of that as the 0 space for the main track and offer sacrifices to ensure your Rattled marker stays there!*)
- A Speed Level marker; place it above the Speed Level section of the mat. (*Think of that as the "dead stop" space for speed.*)
- A Start marker, Chariot token, and Initiative card; place these in front of you for now.

Return any unused components to the box.

### D. Caesar is Hailed and Seated

Separately shuffle the Fate and Action cards to form their respective Draw piles and place them near the stadium.

Collect each competing chariot's Initiative card and shuffle those together to form the Initiative stack.

### E. Mount Your Chariot and Take Your Position

Reveal the cards in the Initiative stack one at a time. As each is revealed, the indicated chariot is placed on a Start space (*a carceres: the starting triangle space printed on the track*) of its owner's choosing from among those not yet occupied. The horses go in front, by the way!

### F. Caesar Proclaims, "Let the Race Begin!"

You are ready to play the first round! In *Chariots of Rome*, a typical race is 2 laps long, but before commencing, players can agree by unanimous consent (*or by decree of the Mater Familias*) to play a 1-lap, or a grueling 3-lap, race. Your strategy must adapt to the length of the race; pace yourself accordingly!



Shuffle each deck and place within easy reach of all players. Reveal Initiative cards one at a time and place chariots.



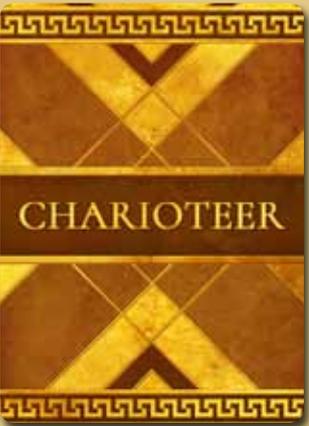




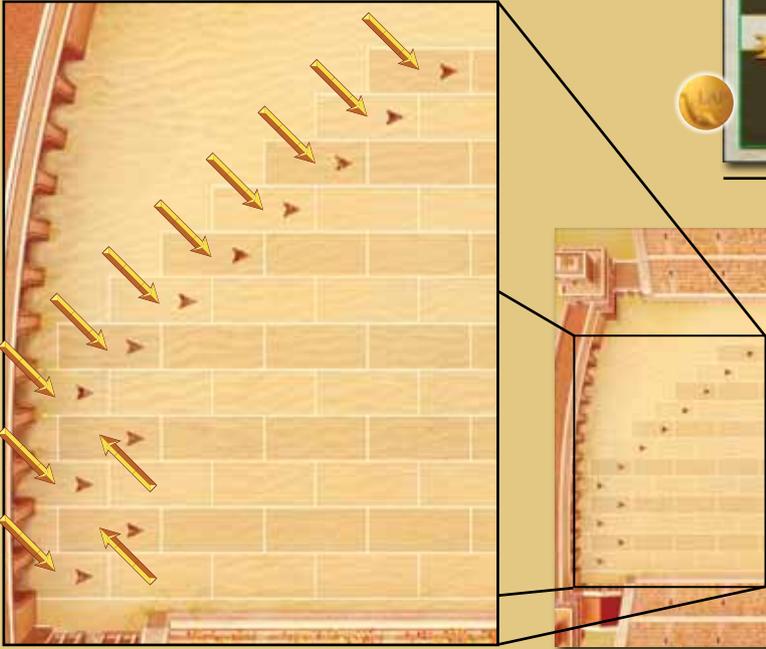
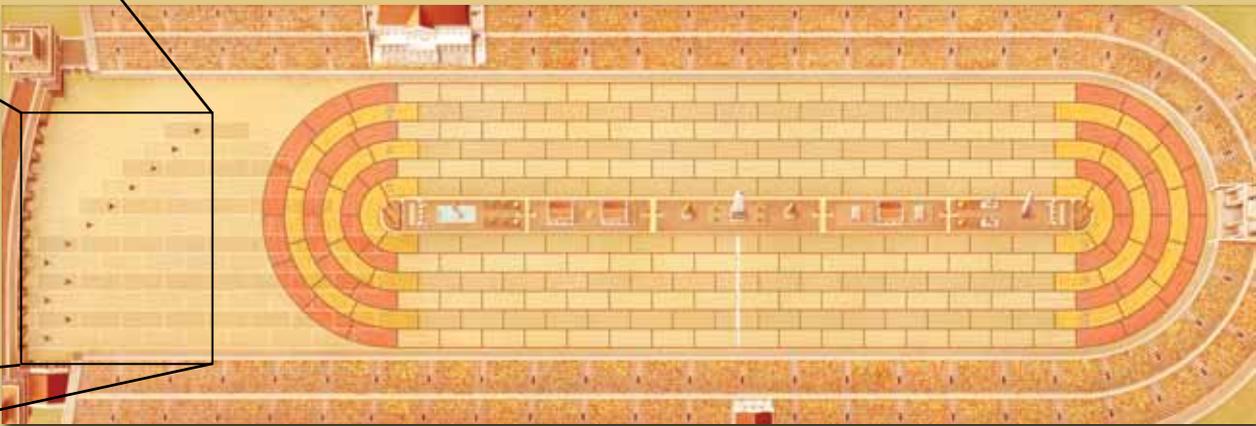
In initiative order, each chariot is placed on an empty starting space of the owning player's choice.

— EACH PLAYER RECEIVES\* —





\*Double this if playing both chariots of the same color team.

### III. RACING A ROUND

Each round of play has these phases completed in order:

1. Initiative (*compose the Initiative stack for that round*)
2. Charioteers (*once per chariot in Initiative order*)
  - Favor of the Gods (*first charioteer that round, only*)

Once the last charioteer that round has completed the Charioteers phase, a new round begins unless at least one chariot has crossed the Finish Line on the final lap (*at which point, that charioteer has won*).

### IV. INITIATIVE PHASE

The Initiative phase determines the chariots' turn order that round. Each round, gather the Initiative cards for the surviving chariots, shuffle them, and place them face down to form the Initiative stack.

Reveal the top card of the Initiative stack; that chariot now performs its turn. After that chariot completes its turn, reveal the next card to determine the next chariot to perform its turn, and continue doing so until the Initiative stack is exhausted (*i.e., after all chariots have had their turn that round*).

If the race continues, reshuffle the Initiative stack and place it face down to complete the next round's Initiative phase.

### V. FAVOR OF THE GODS

**Skip this step until all the chariots have exited the track's first corner.**

Only the first charioteer each round (*the first one drawn from the Initiative stack*) rolls to determine the Favor of the Gods. This first charioteer precedes their turn by rolling the Fate die to determine, and then apply, the Favor of the Gods – and only afterwards performs their turn.

This Fate roll reflects certain random events often originating from the crowd's energy and actions, or credited to the influence of the gods when imponderables occur. The Fate roll outcomes are:



**Neptune Blesses Horses:** Each chariot immediately gains 1 Endurance (*up to a maximum of 12*).



**Minerva Steadies Drivers:** Each charioteer immediately removes 1 Rattled (*to a minimum of 0*).



**Mendacius Whispers to Drivers:** Each charioteer immediately gains 1 Tactics (*to a maximum of 8*).



**Jupiter's Wager (Vox Dei):** Reveal the top card of the Fate deck, read it aloud, resolve its effects, and place it in a Discard pile next to its Draw pile. Some effects are immediate while others occur throughout that round. When exhausted (*Ye gods!*), reshuffle the discards to form a new Fate deck and continue.

### VI. CHARIOTEERS PHASE

Each chariot takes its turn in Initiative order, and each turn is composed of three steps:

1. Speed Step (*set as desired and allowed*);
2. Adjustments Step (*chivvy your horses, if desired*); and
3. Driving Step (*mark your position with that chariot's Start marker and drive as if the Furies were pursuing you*).

After a charioteer completes their turn, determine which charioteer's turn is next by revealing the next card in the Initiative stack. Continue play with that charioteer's turn. The round ends when all chariots have taken their turn, after which (*if there is not yet a winner*) a new round begins.

#### SPEED STEP

Beginning every race from a standing start, all chariots must set their Speed Level marker to Speed Level I (*4 spaces*) on their first turn. Do not adjust resources (*Endurance, Tactics, and Rattled*) for moving at Speed Level I on the first turn of a race!

**Skip this step if your chariot has a Cornering stack from its last turn (see VI Charioteer Phase: Driving Step 3b).**

To perform the Speed Step: Adjust your chariot's Speed Level marker to the base speed at which you will drive your chariot this turn (*i.e., 4, 7, or 10 spaces*). You may maintain your current Speed Level, increase it by one level (*maximum*), or decrease it by any amount desired (*or required*). Whatever Speed Level you select (*or maintain*), it has an immediate effect, as listed below:

#### Speed Level I (Minimus)

This is a very safe speed for cornering and when you need to recover from a run of bad luck.

Your base movement is now 4 spaces. This speed allows you to regain control over your chariot and horse team, as follows:

Gain 1 Endurance (*up to a maximum of 12*);

Gain 1 Tactics (*up to a maximum of 8*); and

Lose 2 Rattled (*down to a minimum of 0*).

#### Speed Level II (Medius)

This is a competitive pace. It is okay for taking wide turns and affords you a moment to think and compose your spirit.

Your base movement is now 7 spaces. For not stressing yourself or your horses: Lose 1 Rattled (*down to a minimum of 0*).

#### Speed Level III (Maximus)

The crowd will cheer when you are driving at this all-out, breakneck pace. This is fine on straightaways but dangerous in turns, and maintaining this speed will exhaust your horses.

Your base movement is now 10 spaces. By risking everything, there is no recovery for you: Lose 1 Endurance (*or 1 Tactics, per VII Tactics: Sparing the Horses*).

*Exempli Gratia: Vitellius' Chariot mat looks grim, showing 5 Endurance, 1 Tactics, and 4 Rattled. He selects Speed Level I as his stratagem. Although he is granted only 4 spaces of movement this turn, his team regains 1 Endurance (now raised to 6), 1 Tactics (increasing it to 2), and his dangerous Rattled of 4 is reduced to a much less fearful 2.*

#### ADJUSTMENTS STEP

You may adjust your chariot's movement before maneuvering it along the track this turn.

##### 1. Special Adjustments

Some Charioteer and Fate cards' effects occur during the Adjustments step, as explained on those cards. Unless otherwise stated on the card itself, these Special Adjustments are resolved before your decision to do Hard Driving.

##### 2. Hard Driving (*Chivvying the Horses*)

The Adjustment step is when your driver shows his skill, chivvying your chariot's horse team by shouting at them, snapping the reins, and cracking the whip above them to startle these magnificent beasts to move a few additional spaces this turn.

Spend 1 Endurance OR 1 Tactics from your Chariot mat to chivvy the chariot's horses. Then, roll the Tri die and add that many spaces (*1, 2, or 3*) to your chariot's movement this turn.

##### 3. Total Spaces to Move

Determine the total number of spaces to move this turn by adding together the chariot's current Speed Level, any Special Adjustments, and Hard Driving. That is the total number of spaces it moves during the ensuing Driving step.

*Exempli Gratia Continue: Vitellius, having chosen to move at Speed Level I (moving only 4 spaces in exchange for improving the situation on his Chariot mat), is worried about falling farther behind in the race.*

*Fortunately, during the Adjustments step this round, there is a Fate card to resolve, Castor and Pollux Arrive (granting two gifts, from the gods, of his choice: +1 space of movement; +1 Endurance; or -1 Rattled). Cursing his slow movement, Vitellius chooses from the gods the +1 space blessing twice (for +2 spaces), meaning his chariot will now be moving 6 (4 + 2 = 6) spaces this turn.*

*Not satisfied with that, he spends 1 Endurance (reducing it to 5) to chivvy the horses and, on the Tri die, he rolls a III (3). Thanking the goddess Fortuna for that roll, Vitellius will move 9 (4 + 2 + 3 = 9) spaces this turn and maintain his competitive position in the race.*

## DRIVING STEP

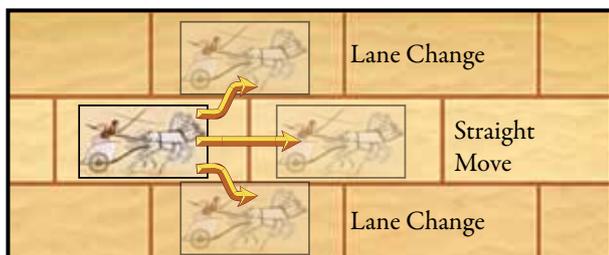
This step is, of course, the heart of *Chariots of Rome*. You must employ consummate skill and guile to drive effectively and win.

### 1. Taking the Reins

During the Driving step, you maneuver your chariot forward the required number of spaces (*determined during its Speed and Adjustments steps*) and may make one Attack. Before moving, place your chariot's Start marker in its space as a reminder (*players often count out alternate paths before deciding which to take, and it is easy to forget where you began that turn*).

### 2. Down the Straightaways

When advancing spaces along a straight section of the track, you must enter the next space straight ahead of the chariot OR make a lane change into an adjacent, forward-diagonal space, as illustrated here:



### 3. Around the Corners

The shaded spaces where the track bends around are corner spaces. Once a chariot enters the first space of a corner, and until it enters the last space of its cornering lane, it can no longer maneuver to its left in that corner (*i.e., it cannot take that corner any "tighter" once it enters the corner, moving or ramming to the "inside;" it is simply too dangerous*).

There are two other matters to attend to when entering a corner: Cornering Tactics (*which you can spend to assist in taking that corner*) and assessing Cornering Hazards, as explained below.

#### a. Cornering Tactics

Each lap, the first chariot to enter a space of each corner gains no (0) Tactics. Each following chariot gains 1 Tactics immediately upon entering their first space of that corner, except for the last chariot. The last chariot gains 2 Tactics instead.

**Reminder:** 8 Tactics is a chariot's maximum!

#### b. Cornering Hazards

After receiving any (*or no*) Tactics for entering the first space of a corner, add how fast your chariot is moving (*i.e., the number of spaces it is moving that turn*) to how Rattled that charioteer is. From that sum, subtract the Safe Speed posted on that lane's corner entry space.

If the result is 0 or less, your chariot draws no (0) Action cards and continues its movement through the corner, either straight ahead or making desired lane changes to the right (*that is, into a longer, "outside" lane*).

If the result is 1 or more, count that number of Action cards off the top of the Action deck, face down, to create that chariot's Cornering stack. See VII Tactics: Defense Tactics.

*Exempli Gratia: During his Driving step, Apollinaris enters a corner lane where the Safe Speed is VI (that's 6, for Roman numeral learners). As the first chariot into that corner, he gains no Tactics.*

*To determine the Cornering Hazards, the chariot is moving 9 spaces this turn and has 2 Rattled on its Chariot mat, making a total of 11. From that sum, subtract the Safe Speed of 6. This means Apollinaris counts off a Cornering stack of 5 cards (11 - 6 = 5) from the Action deck.*

*Thinking that 5 cards is a lot to hazard, Apollinaris decides to spend 1 Tactics at this juncture to return one card from his Cornering stack back to the top of the Action deck. His Cornering stack of 4 Action cards now awaits his trip around this corner.*

Reveal and resolve 1 Action card's Corner result from that chariot's Cornering stack at each space your chariot enters after the first space of that corner (*where it acquired its Cornering stack*), until its Cornering stack is exhausted. See VIII Action Card Effects.

Yes, this requirement means a chariot could be resolving its Cornering stack cards even after exiting a curve! It continues moving normally after completely resolving its Cornering stack.

And, yes, this requirement also means a chariot could continue to resolve its Cornering stack on its next turn! When this occurs, skip its Speed step that turn. It can still do Hard Driving (*per VI Charioteers Phase: Adjustments Step 2*), if desired.

Chariots assess Cornering Hazards only once per corner, per lap, and only as they enter the first space of their chosen lane at that corner. You do not make any recalculations mid-corner for acquiring Rattled or if that chariot begins its next turn still in that corner and changes speed. That corner's hazards have already been determined!

### 4. The Overtake Maneuver

Only one chariot, wreck, debris, or other obstruction can remain in a space. There is no "stacking" allowed at the end of any move.

While it is preferable to find a clear path along which to maneuver your chariot, when other chariots or debris block your chariot's path, you must then gird your loins and attempt an Overtake Maneuver to drive through them.

#### a. Going the Distance (*or Not*)

To overtake, your chariot must have enough remaining spaces left to move in order to reach an unobstructed space just beyond whatever is blocking it.

If it lacks sufficient spaces to move beyond the obstacle, that chariot must stop short, ending its move immediately behind that obstruction. It then loses either 1 Endurance or 1 Tactics.

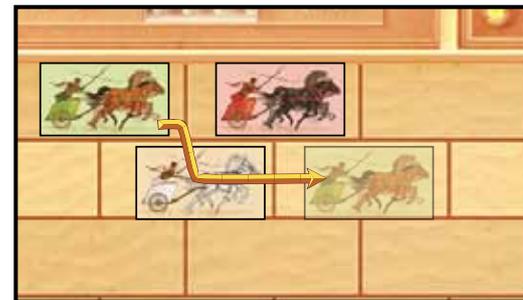
#### b. Hazarding this Maneuver

Skip this penalty until all chariots have exited the race's first corner. Thus, at the start of a race, players can overtake in a civilized manner and without risk as charioteers vie for position coming out of the first corner.

After reaching an unobstructed space beyond the obstacle(s), draw 1 Action card per obstacle space traversed and immediately apply its (their) Danger result(s) (*See VII Tactics: Defense Tactics, and VIII Action Card Effects*).

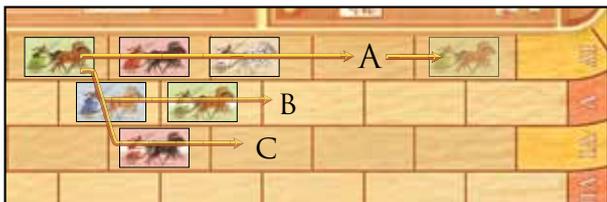
#### c. Concentrate!

A chariot cannot Attack while overtaking. It must move from its overtaking exit space before being eligible to Attack.



*Exempli Gratia Unus: The green chariot is literally and figuratively against the wall (or spina). Red and white have conspired to box him in.*

*Consequently, green must overtake, and in this case can exit in front of either red or white with equal risk. The green driver opts to overtake the white chariot (seeking more room to maneuver on the other side) and moves 2 spaces to the one just past this now-overtaken obstacle. Upon reaching that space, green draws one Action card and resolves its Danger result (in this case, suffering 2 Rattled) before continuing the rest of his move.*



*Exempli Gratia Duo: Facing two obstacles to progress, the green chariot at the back of the pack is in a world of hurt (orbis mala).*

Not wanting a Speed Level that will be risky, the green driver chooses Speed Level I (4 spaces) and refuses to chivvy his horses. He must choose space A, B, or C in order to come out from behind the obstacles. Deciding to forge straight ahead, the green chariot moves to space A and draws two Action card Danger results for overtaking the two spaces (with the red and white chariots). In an incredible stroke of luck, only 1 Rattled results from that hair-raising overtake maneuver, and the green chariot stops on its fourth space, directly in front of the IV turn lane. Hopefully, green's options will look brighter next turn!

#### 5. Attacking

Attacking is prohibited until all chariots have exited the race's first corner. Charioteers must maintain, at least for a short duration, the pretense of conducting a "clean race."

##### a. Restrictions

A charioteer can make only 1 Attack per Driving step from any space along its route that turn; however:

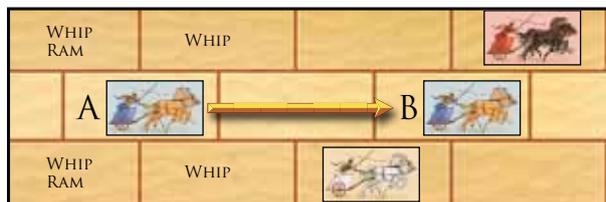
- That chariot must have moved at least 1 space prior to Attacking.
- It cannot Attack while overtaking obstacles, including from the overtaking exit space. It must move at least 1 space from its overtaking exit space prior to Attacking.

##### b. Cost

Pay 1 Tactics to launch an Attack. Your charioteer must then declare the type of Attack (*Ram or Whip*) and designate the target chariot.

##### c. Attack Zones

Ram and Whip Attacks each have different "Attack Zones" where they can strike. You can only conduct Ram Attacks versus a chariot you are passing. While cornering, you can only conduct Ram Attacks versus a chariot immediately to your right. You can make Whip Attacks as you reach or pass the target chariot, as illustrated in the next column.



*Exempli Gratia: Here you see the Attack Zones for the blue chariot in space A. As that chariot moves straight ahead 2 spaces to B, it pauses there to announce an Attack.*

After spending 1 Tactics, the blue driver must declare if he is making his one Attack that turn a Whip Attack versus the red chariot, or a Ram or Whip Attack versus the white chariot.

##### d. Ram Attacks

Ram Attacks are effective at reducing the target chariot's Endurance and offer a high chance of forcing it to swerve away from the attacker, but there is also risk to the attacking chariot.

After paying for and declaring the target of a Ram Attack (*making sure it is to your right while in a corner; you cannot maneuver toward the "inside" while cornering*), that opponent immediately draws 3 Action cards and applies their Ram results, one at a time, in the order drawn.

**Note:** Unlike a Cornering stack, these all take effect immediately.

Afterward, the attacking chariot draws 1 Action card and immediately applies its Ram result. If the attacking chariot's result is to Swerve, it must do so into the target chariot's space if it is vacant, or away from the target chariot's space if it is not vacant (*See VIII Action Card Effects*).

##### e. Whip Attacks

The larger Attack Zone for Whip Attacks makes them easier to conduct. Whipping produces a wider variety of results (*although less devastating than Ram Attacks*) and, best of all, there is no backlash to the attacking chariot.

After paying for and declaring the target of a Whip Attack, that opponent immediately draws 3 Action cards and applies their Whip results, one at a time, in the order drawn.

**Note:** Unlike a Cornering stack, these all take effect immediately.

##### f. Defense Tactics

See VII Tactics: Defense Tactics.

#### 6. Earning a Lap

When a chariot crosses the Finish Line after completing a lap around the track (*i.e., not when just starting the race*), advance the Lap marker on its Chariot mat.

When the first charioteer completes the last lap of the race (*usually the second, unless a different race length was agreed upon*), the race is over at the end of that round. (*See XIII The Finish Line & Victory.*)

## VII. TACTICS

Tactics are the "universal resource" for charioteers, representing their driving skill, experience, pluck, and cunning.

Tactics are acquired from driving at Speed Level I, following into a corner (*instead of leading into it*), through some charioteers' special abilities, and by the will of the gods.

No chariot can acquire more than 8 Tactics (*maximum, as indicated on each Chariot mat*).

## SPENDING TACTICS

You spend Tactics for the following benefits:

##### • Attacking

It costs 1 Tactics to make an Attack (*See VI Charioteers Phase: Driving Step 5c*).

##### • Defense Tactics

Whenever you draw an Action card or cards, prior to revealing the first one (*if there is more than one drawn*), you may spend Tactics to reduce the number of cards you must reveal and resolve (*up to all of them*) on a one-for-one basis. That is, each Tactics spent reduces that chariot's Action card obligation by one.

Return these unrevealed cards back to the top of the Action deck and thank the gods you do not have to deal with them.

*Exempli Gratia: When you are attacked, overtake obstacles, speed through a corner, crash, or suffer from other hazards, if your charioteer has sufficient Tactics to spend, he can avoid the pending hazards of one or more Action cards.*

*It is quite exhilarating to speed through a corner where you would draw 7 Action cards, and then spend 7 Tactics to brush them away and safely take the lead!*

##### • Sparing the Horses

When your chariot's team of horses suffers an Endurance loss for any reason (*such as from choosing Speed Level III, chivvying the horses, Action card results, etc.*), you may choose to spend a Tactics instead. That is, 1 Tactics = 1 Endurance, as desired. It is generally easier to recover Tactics than Endurance.

Since losing your last Endurance means elimination from the race, in this case you must lose Tactics instead of Endurance, if able.

*Exempli Gratia: Crysapsis begins his turn by increasing his chariot's Speed Level from II to III. Rather than losing 1 Endurance for moving at Speed Level III, he "sparing the horses" and spends 1 Tactics instead.*

*Then, Crysapsis chivvies the horses, causing another loss of 1 Endurance, and again he spends 1 Tactics instead. The crowd goes wild as he speeds past!*

## VIII. ACTION CARD EFFECTS

Your chariot draws Action cards when hazarding corners, attacks, obstacles, etc.

### Defense Tactics to Reduce the Action Draw

Whenever your chariot receives one or more Action cards, prior to revealing the first Action card from the triggering occurrence, you may employ Defense Tactics to reduce the number of Action cards you must resolve (*See VII Tactics: Defense Tactics*).

When the Action card Draw pile is exhausted, immediately reshuffle its Discard pile to form a new Action card Draw pile.

## HAZARD TIMING

After employing Defense Tactics (*VII Tactics: Defense Tactics*) or not, all Action cards received from an occurrence are resolved one by one in the order in which they were drawn.

- **Cornering**

Action cards are resolved one per space advanced when they have formed a Cornering stack (*per VI Charioteers Phase: Driving Step 3b*). Resolving these might be spread out over multiple turns.

- **All Other Occasions**

Other than from cornering, all Action cards are resolved immediately, before the next activity takes place.

## HAZARD EFFECTS

Each Action card has four different hazard effects: Whip, Ram, Corner, and Danger. Apply the appropriate result(s) when consulting each Action card. These results include:

- No Effect (*Lucky you; nothing happens*).
- Lose 1 Endurance (*or Tactics, if you have any; upon reaching 0 or fewer, that chariot is eliminated; see XII Tactics*).
- Lose 1 Tactics (*if you have none to lose, gain 1 Rattled instead*).
- Gain 1 Rattled (*upon reaching 6 or more Rattled, that chariot is eliminated; see XII Tactics*).
- Swerve 1 lane away from that hazard (*see VIII Action Card Effects: Swerving*).
- Charioteer is Wounded (*see VIII Action Card Effects: Wounding*).

*Exempli Gratia: Oriens is the target of a Whip Attack and draws 3 Action cards. Employing no Defense Tactics, he peels off the top 3 cards from the Action deck and creates a mini Whip Attack stack that must be resolved immediately, in its entirety, and in the order drawn.*

*Reading the Whip effect on each card, he receives: 1 No Effect (whew!), 1 Rattled, and 1 Endurance. Adjusting his Chariot mat, Oriens increases his Rattled by 1 and decreases his horses' Endurance by 1; but then, thinking better of that, he quickly restores the Endurance and decreases his Tactics by 1 instead (see VII Tactics: Sparing the Horses).*

## SWERVING

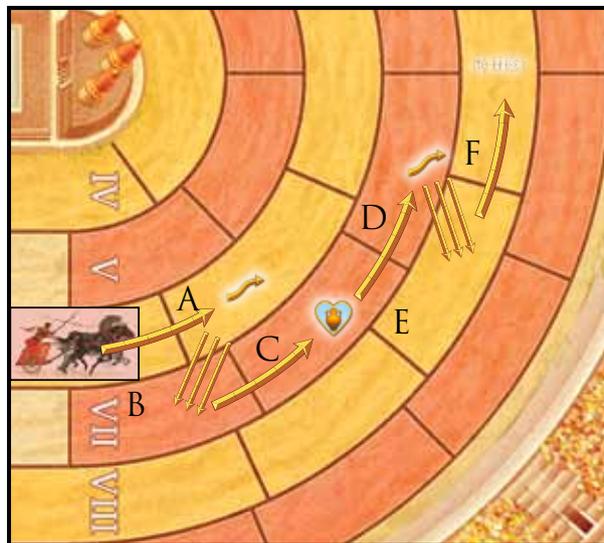
Swerving is not movement, per se; it does not count against spaces that chariot can or has moved.

Swerving displaces a chariot by one lane away from the hazard (*with some exceptions noted below*) and backward by one space. If a chariot must resolve multiple swerves, it moves multiple lanes away and multiple spaces backward.

Each type of hazard that causes a chariot to swerve works differently.

### In Corners

When cornering, swerving forces that chariot to move into the adjacent outer lane as there is no maneuvering allowed toward the inside lane while in a corner. If there is an obstacle there, then see Swerving into Obstacles in the next column.



*Exempli Gratia: Apollinaris, at Speed Level II with +3 from chivvying his horses, is moving 10 spaces this turn. He enters the VI lane of the corner as his 7th space. As the first chariot into this corner, he gains no Tactics, which is a shame as he currently has none and really could use some!*

*Going “4 over the speed limit” (10 – 6 = 4) and unable to spend Tactics to reduce the number of Action cards drawn, he places in front of himself a Cornering stack of 4 Action cards and drives boldly into the corner, the crowd on their feet!*

*On his 8th space, he enters space A and reveals the first card of his Cornering stack. Its Corner result is Swerve, and so the red chariot must move over 1 lane to the outside of that curve and back 1 space, ending that swerve in space B.*

*From space B, his 9th space sees the path straight ahead clear of obstacles. He proceeds straight ahead to space C, where the next of the three remaining cards in his Cornering stack reveals an Endurance result. Again, having no Tactics to lose instead, he reduces his horses' Endurance by 1.*

*From space C, his 10th and final space takes him straight ahead to space D where the penultimate card in his Cornering stack is another Swerve! Again, the red chariot must move over 1 lane to the outside of that curve and back 1 space, ending that swerve in space E.*

*Because he still has a Cornering stack remaining, on his next turn, Apollinaris cannot increase his Speed Level (*per VI Charioteers Phase: Speed Step*). Thus, during his next Driving step, he will still be at Speed Level II (*moving 7 spaces*).*

*On that turn, Apollinaris sticks with a basic 7 space move to complete the corner. (He does not want to lose more Endurance by chivvying his horses.) From space E he advances forward to space F and reveals the last card of his Cornering stack which, thank the gods, is No Effect. Moving ahead his remaining 6 spaces, he proceeds around the corner without further incident.*

### From a Ram Attack

If the attacking chariot swerves as a result of its own Ram Attack, it must occupy the space the target chariot was in when Attacked (*momentum carries it there*). If the target chariot is still in that space (*i.e., it was not forced to swerve away from the Ram Attack*), then the attacking chariot must swerve away from the target chariot (*“bouncing off” the target chariot*).

### Up Against the Wall

A chariot cannot be forced to swerve into a wall (*i.e., go off the track*). If it otherwise would have to, that chariot ignores the lane change part of the Swerve result (*remaining adjacent to the wall*) and moves directly back 1 space at a time until it finally reaches a clear space (*i.e., one without an obstacle*). Afterward, it crashes (*See IX Crashing*).

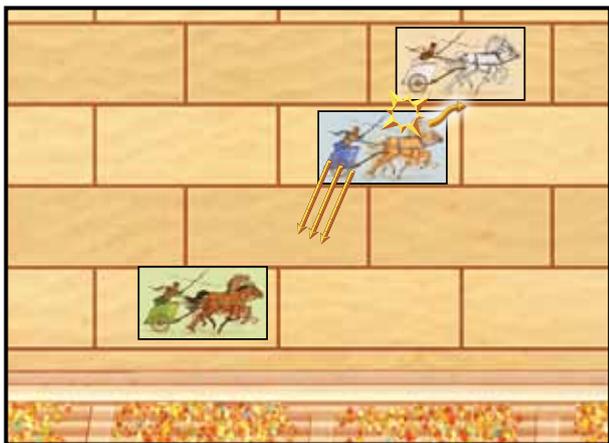
### Swerving into Obstacles

A swerving chariot, either by its forced lane change or displacement directly backward 1 space, can enter a space with an obstacle.

If that obstacle is immobile, such as a wreck or debris, the swerving chariot must swerve an additional space in the same direction and crash (*See IX Crashing*).

If that obstacle is another chariot, both must swerve. First, the target chariot enters the obstacle chariot's space and crashes (*See IX Crashing*). Then, the obstacle chariot swerves in the same direction and it crashes!

Note that it is possible for a “traffic jam” to cascade, creating even more forced swerving events, with each chariot swerving back in the same direction and crashing in turn!



*Exempli Gratia:* The white chariot moves into position and conducts a Ram Attack against the blue chariot. The first Action card Ram result suffered is a Swerve, causing the blue chariot to be displaced 1 lane away from the attacking white chariot and 1 space back, as shown by the diagram above.

If another Ram result from that Attack was a second Swerve, the blue chariot would then have to move a second lane over, causing it to crash into the green chariot's space. This would force the green chariot to swerve from its space in the same direction to make room for the blue chariot, and then the green chariot would also crash!

Then the white chariot draws its Action card from this Ram Attack, resulting in a swerve. It must move into the space it attacked (i.e., where blue was originally), since that space is vacant (per VIII Action Card Effects: From a Ram Attack).

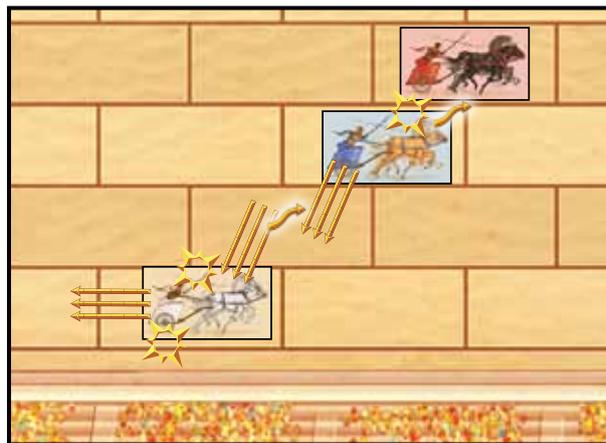
## WOUNDING

It is a rare Danger effect that wounds a charioteer, but such are the hazards of racing. When wounded, that charioteer loses his special ability; flip his Charioteer card face down to show this.

Should he suffer a second wound, that charioteer is killed and his chariot is eliminated (See XII Chariot Elimination).

## IX. CRASHING

A Crash occurs when a chariot must swerve into a wall or a space containing an obstacle (i.e., a wreck, debris, or another chariot). After its displacement from that crash, the crashing chariot draws 1 Action card and immediately resolves its Danger effect. This could happen multiple consecutive times!

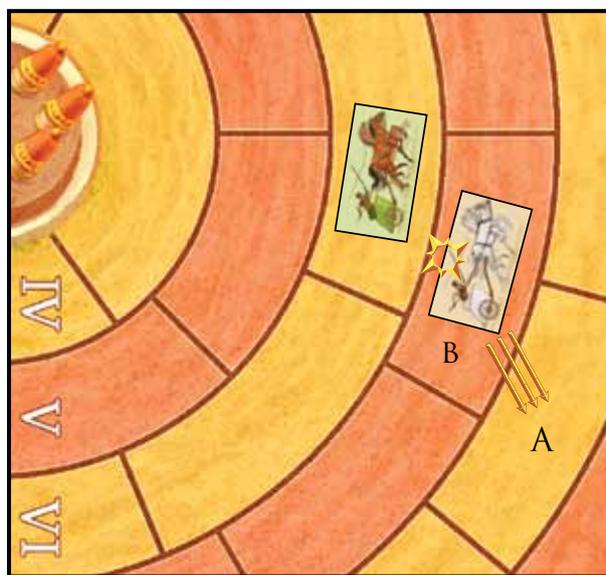


*Exempli Gratia Unus:* The red chariot Ram Attacks the blue chariot as the crowd gasps.

Blue draws 2 Swerve results, causing the blue chariot to swerve 2 lanes away and 2 spaces back from the red chariot (as shown).

This causes the blue chariot to crash into the white chariot as it is an obstacle for the purposes of blue's second swerve. Blue takes the white chariot's space and draws 1 Action card and resolves its Danger effect from crashing. Displacing the white chariot occurs next.

It cannot swerve in the same direction because of the wall (which it hits). The white chariot must move straight back 1 space, and crashes twice — once from the swerving blue chariot and again from hitting the wall! The white chariot draws 2 Action cards and resolves their Danger effects.



*Exempli Gratia Duo:* Zephyrus, in the green chariot, makes a Whip Attack against the white chariot to his right and behind him in the curve. The first Action card's Whip result is Swerve. The white chariot must move toward the outside of the curve and back 1 space, and so is displaced to space A.

If, instead, Zephyrus was being Whip Attacked by the white chariot (because charioteers can Whip Attack to their left in corners, but not Ram Attack; see VI Charioteers Phase:

*Driving Step 5d*), a Swerve result would be very dramatic! If Zephyrus had to swerve, moving 1 lane to the outside of the curve and back 1 space, that would displace him to space B where the white chariot is located. As a result, he would crash (drawing 1 Action card and resolving its Danger effect) and force the white chariot to swerve away and crash. No doubt the white charioteer regrets that Whip Attack on Zephyrus after being put in Danger by this chain of events!

## X. ENDURANCE

If a chariot's Endurance reaches 0, the horses collapse, eliminating that chariot (See XII Chariot Elimination).

**Reminder:** When a chariot loses Endurance, it can instead lose Tactics (See VII Tactics: Sparing the Horses).

## XI. RATTLED

There is much that can "rattle" a charioteer in the Action and Fate decks.

Rattled charioteers corner poorly (See VI Charioteer Phase: Driving Step 3b).

If a charioteer's Rattled is 6 or more, he has fallen out of the chariot, eliminating it (and himself!) from the race (See XII Chariot Elimination).

Fortunately, it is easy to reduce Rattled by driving at a lower Speed Level or, perhaps, from attracting the gods' favor.

## XII. CHARIOT ELIMINATION

A chariot is eliminated when any of the following calamities occurs:

- Its Endurance is 0 or less;
- Its Rattled is 6 or greater; or
- Its charioteer suffers a second Wound.

## THE WRECKAGE

When a charioteer is eliminated, perform these steps:

1. Remove its Initiative card from play.
2. Replace that Chariot in its space with a Wreck marker.
3. The eliminated charioteer rolls the Tri die and places this wreckage the indicated number of spaces forward on the track, without changing lanes (via momentum).

Should the wreckage reach a space containing an obstacle, it immediately stops. That obstacle then swerves away (per VIII Action Card Effects: Swerving into Obstacles) and, if the obstacle is a chariot, that chariot crashes (See IX Crashing).

## A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH

Charioteers tied the reins of all four horses around their waist so as not to drop any reins during the race. This had the unfortunate side effect of dragging that driver to his death in the event the chariot flipped. The countermeasure was that the driver carried a small, sharp knife to cut himself free. Some, unfortunately, were unable....

For your edification (*this has no gameplay effect*), to determine your charioteer's survival, roll the Fate die. The following has befallen your driver:

- Endurance = Killed on impact, splattered across the track.
- Rattled = Dragged to death, leaves a brutalized corpse.
- Tactics = Serious injuries, retires from chariot racing.
- Lightning Bolt = Minor injuries, returns to chariot racing.

## XIII. THE FINISH LINE & VICTORY

When the race ends, the victor receives a laurel amid the tumult from the spectators, *sestertii* change hands among those who have wagered, and the losers plot their revenge for the next race.

### THE SOLE SURVIVOR

If only one chariot remains in the race, the game ends immediately and that charioteer has won.

### THE FIRST PLACE FINISH

Typically, the race is over at the end of the round in which the first chariot crosses the Finish Line of its last lap. The number of laps is determined per II Preparing for Race Day: Caesar Proclaims, "Let the Race Begin!" and adjudicated per VI Charioteers Phase: Driving Step 6.

At the end of that round, after all chariots have had their turn, the winner is not necessarily the first to cross the Finish Line. Instead, victory goes to the chariot that ends up farthest past the Finish Line when that round is completed.

#### Breaking Ties

If charioteers tie for distance past the Finish Line, the winner is the chariot in the innermost lane, closest to the *spina*.

#### No Cornering Hazards

After crossing the Finish Line for the last time, should a chariot advance into the subsequent corner, do not resolve any speeding hazards (*i.e., ignore VI.C.3.b*). It is the number of spaces beyond the Finish Line that matter, not their type.

#### A Clean Finish

You cannot Attack a chariot that has crossed the Finish Line.

#### Move Aside!

However, you can perform Overtake Maneuvers after crossing the Finish Line, risking its hazards as usual (*See VI Charioteers Phase: Driving Step 4b*).

## XIV. OPTIONAL RULES

You may use any or all of these Optional Rules, in any combination desired, by mutual agreement.

### COMPLETING THE 7 LAPS

Although it will take a while to complete, a full race at the Circus Maximus was, in fact, seven laps. You will have to manage your resources very carefully during such a long race!

### CHARIOTEER DRAFTING

Instead of dealing charioteers out randomly (*per II Preparing for Race Day: Charioteers Arrive to an Ovation*), place face up on the track a number of Charioteer cards equal to the number of chariots in the race plus two.

Shuffle the Initiative cards and, in their order, each player chooses one charioteer from among those remaining on display.

After completing this, do not reshuffle the Initiative cards yet; when all chariots have drivers, in reverse Initiative order, place each chariot on a Start space (*per II Preparing for Race Day: Caesar Proclaims, "Let the race begin!"*).

### RACING TEAMS

*Chariots of Rome* includes pairs of chariots from different historical factions (*colors*), each designated by having a counter with or without a stripe. In this variant, each player represents a faction and operates both chariots of that color separately. Obviously, this doubles the number of chariots in the race, which can become very exciting in tight spots.

### ALTERNATE TRACKS

Around the Empire, there were chariot racing tracks other than the Circus Maximus in Rome. For your racing pleasure, when playing *Chariots of Rome*, we offer you these alternate courses:

#### The Provincial Track

This track typifies those found in a small Roman city (*where the races drew primarily local crowds*). Due to its size, a maximum of 8 chariots can race on this track.

#### The Talladegas Track

This fictitious small, narrow track in the province of Talladegas is unusual for having three corners. Like the Provincial track, only 8 chariots can compete on it. It is very popular with locals and travelers alike. This is the track that made the reputation of legendary charioteer Earnharticus, who won so often that he was able to buy his way out of slavery and continued his driving career as an *auriga* at the Circus Maximus in Rome.

#### The Daytonus Track

This fictitious, long, and dangerous track can handle a full 12 racing chariots. It is a grueling course and even one lap around it can cause severe fatigue and injury to charioteers and horses alike. Due to a landslide in 52 AD, the northern track section narrows to only two lanes, making passing very dangerous.

## XV. SPECIAL REMINDERS

On the first turn, there is neither a Speed step nor a benefit for moving at Speed Level I.

Until the last chariot exits the first corner, there are no Attacks allowed, no Favor of the Gods roll, and no hazard assessed for an Overtake Maneuver.

After a chariot crosses the finish line of its last lap, there are no Attacks allowed against it, but you can conduct Overtake Maneuvers as normal.

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## XVI. EXTENDED EXAMPLE OF PLAY

The chariots are out of the first corner (*lifting many prohibitions, see XV Special Reminders for a summary*) and heading into the second corner. The charioteers are as follows: White: Derisor, the Wrecker. Red: Acacius, the Vengeful. Green: Mercatius, the Champion Breeder. Blue: Crysapsis, the Whipcracking Artist.

The round begins with the Initiative phase, so the Initiative cards are shuffled. Mercatius then uses his abilities to look at the Initiative cards before any are drawn, and faces an interesting decision for this critical round. Mercatius sees, in order: White, Blue, Green (*his own card*), and Red. Deciding he wants to go last this round — which means he might be the last into the corner and, thus, gain 2 Tactics if this occurs — Mercatius changes the order of one Initiative card to move Red from last to second so that the Initiative order will be: White, Red, Blue, and Green. He is now going last.

The first Initiative card is revealed, and (*as you and Mercatius already know*) White goes first. Derisor, for going first, must conduct a Favor of the Gods roll to commence the round. He rolls a Lightning Bolt and draws a Fate card, On Mercury's Wings. What great timing, as everyone is about to enter the corner. This Fate card reduces the number of Cornering stack Action cards by 1 this round.

1) White now begins his turn by choosing his Speed Level. Being “The Wrecker,” Derisor decides he wants to make a Ram Attack on the way to the corner, but does not need to go at top speed to accomplish this. Setting his Speed Level to II, its movement of 7 spaces should be just right to both Ram Attack and enter the corner at only nominal peril. Having 3 Rattled, he loses 1 for traveling at Speed Level II, which lowers his Rattled to 2.

With no Fate cards or abilities to alter his base movement of 7 spaces, Derisor does not want to exhaust his white horse team and so does not roll the Tri die; 7 spaces it is!

Anticipating a busy turn, Derisor places the white Start marker on his starting space (*to remind him where he began his turn*) and commences moving. He moves 3 spaces to position himself to Ram Attack Acacius in the red chariot. Pausing there (*see illustration*), Derisor spends 1 Tactics and Acacius draws 4 Action cards (*3 from the normal Ram Attack +1 for Derisor's ability as “The Wrecker”*); spending no Tactics in defense, all 4 cards are resolved in order, one at a time:

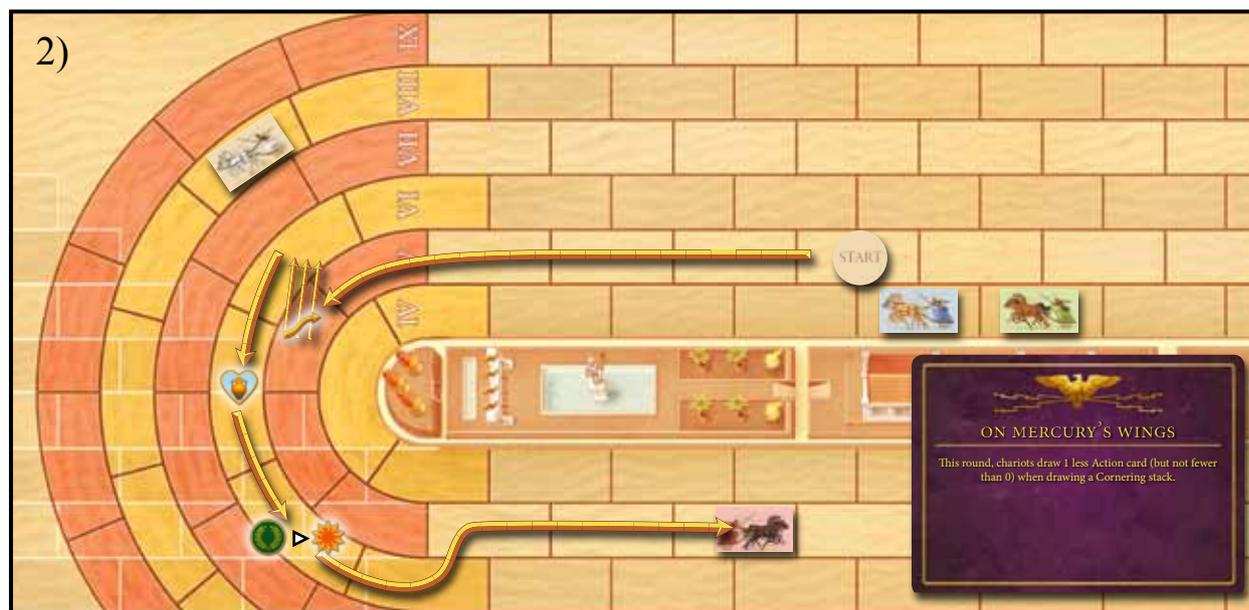
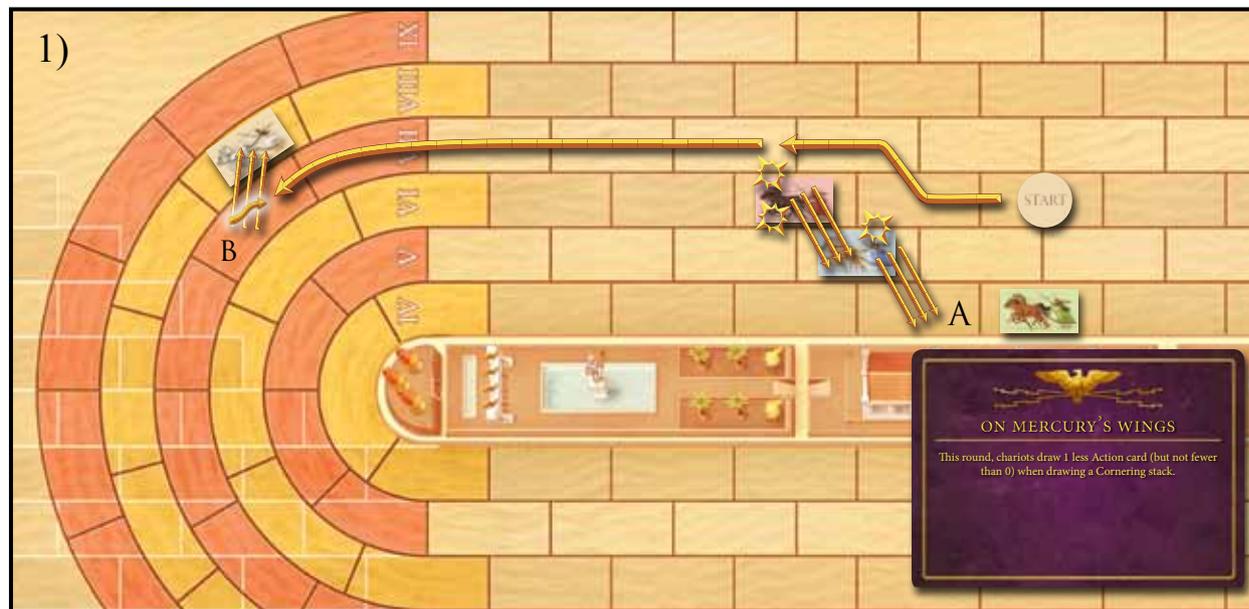
Acacius in the red chariot gains 1 Rattled, No Effect, No Effect, and Swerve. Derisor is elated that his ability caused the red chariot to swerve! Red swerves into the blue chariot (*taking blue's space*) and crashes (*i.e., drawing 1 Action card and applying its Danger result*) from the impact. Then, blue moves into space A and crashes.

Acacius' driver ability is to Whip Counterattack for 0 Tactics. Since Derisor is no longer in red's Attack Zone (*because the red chariot swerved away*), Derisor suffers no counterattack from Acacius.

With a truculent sneer, Derisor “The Wrecker” continues moving the white chariot, entering the corner in the VII (7) lane. He is moving 7 spaces this turn and has 2 Rattled, putting him at 2 over safe for that corner space. On Mercury's Wings applies this round, reducing his Cornering stack from 2 to 1 Action card. How bad could only one card be? With his last space of movement into space B, he reveals the only card in his Cornering stack. Its Cornering result is Swerve, so he enters his last space as shown. White's exciting turn is over, and he removes his Start marker from the board.

2) The next Initiative card reveals it is red's turn. Acacius, the red driver, ponders retribution against white, but opts for pure speed through the approaching corner instead, and accelerates from Speed Level II to III, losing 1 Endurance (*dropping from 8 to 7 Endurance*). He would like to “spare the horses” by spending 1 Tactics, but will need all his Tactics to race around the corner, and so loses 1 Endurance again (*dropping from 7 to 6 Endurance*). For this, he rolls the Tri die, only achieving a I, and so has 11 spaces to move this turn.

Acacius moves straight forward 4 spaces and enters the corner on the V (5) space at speed 11. He immediately gains 1 Tactics for not being the first chariot into the corner, raising his Tactics to 3. In addition to entering the corner at 6 “over the speed limit,” he has 1 Rattled, but that total of 7 penalty cards is reduced by 1 to 6 thanks to the On Mercury's Wings Fate card. Still, that's a 6-card Cornering stack he is looking at. Acacius decides to spend all 3 of his Tactics to cut his Cornering stack down to only 3 cards.



For its 5th space entered that turn, the red chariot proceeds directly ahead 1 space in the V lane and then reveals the first Action card in its Cornering stack; a Swerve result. This moves the red chariot to the next-higher numbered lane (*i.e., toward the outside wall, which is how centrifugal force works*) and backward one space.

For its 6th space that turn, red moves forward in its new (VI) lane and then reveals the second card in its Cornering stack; an Endurance result (*losing 1 Endurance brings the red horse team down to 5*). On its 7th space for that turn, moving straight ahead and revealing the final card in its Cornering stack, the red chariot must lose 1 Tactics. Since Acacius has no Tactics, having spent them all to reduce his Cornering stack, he must gain 1 Rattled instead. This increases his total to 2 Rattled. With his Cornering stack completed, he moves his remaining 4 spaces as shown and bursts out well ahead of the pack, beat up but making great time. “So long, Derisor!” he shouts while passing, “Wreck this!” he adds, waving his fool’s forefinger.

3) The next Initiative card reveals the blue chariot, driven by Crysapsis, who sets his Speed Level to II, allowing him to lose his last Rattled while maintaining a good pace into the approaching corner. Crysapsis, looking for additional movement, decides to chivvy his horses, spending 1 Endurance (*reducing his team to 7*). Because he is a crack whip artist (*or is that a whip crack artist?*), Crysapsis’ ability has him rolling the Tri die twice when coaxing his horses, resulting in a I and a III. With consummate guile, he chooses the I result, as moving 10 spaces this turn would be too hazardous through the corner. Touts say that Crysapsis’ horses understand him; that he is on good “speaking terms” with them, including the famous equine, Mr. Ediquette.

With a grim visage, blue drives straight ahead at an 8 space clip. He enters the corner’s IV (4) space (*i.e., the “inside lane”*) on the chariot’s 4th space of movement. Crysapsis gains 1 Tactics upon entering the corner, raising his total to 2 Tactics. Since he has no Rattled, the On Mercury’s Wings Fate card reduces him to just 3 over the safe speed. Still uneasy, he decides to spend 1 Tactics to reduce his Cornering stack to just 2 Action cards.

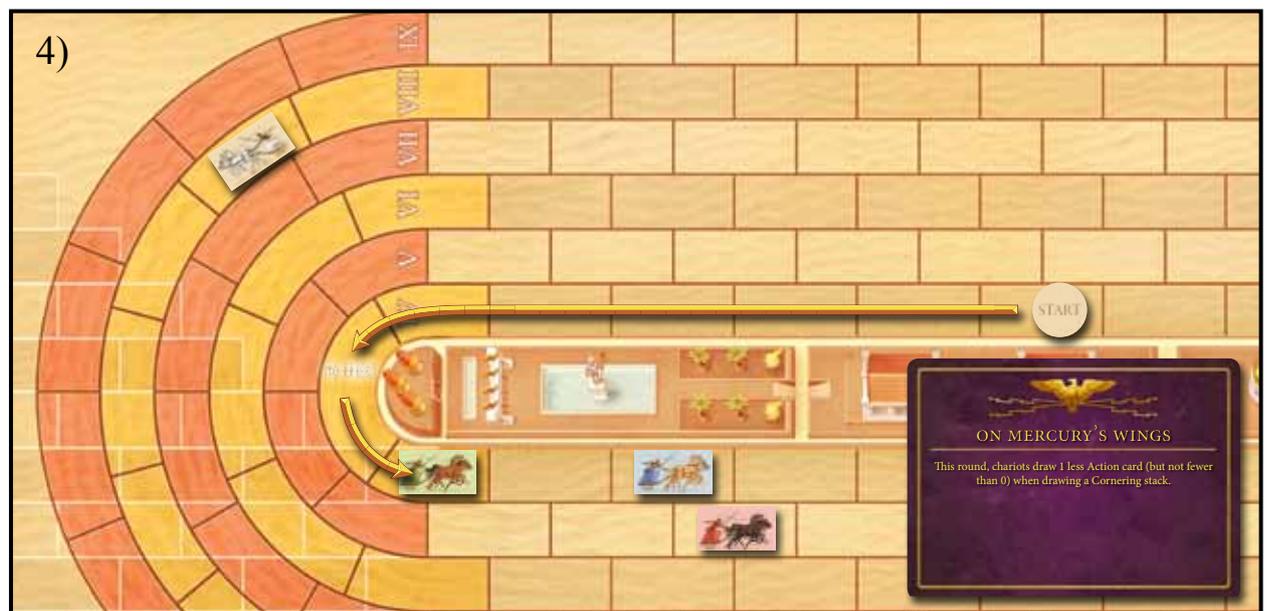
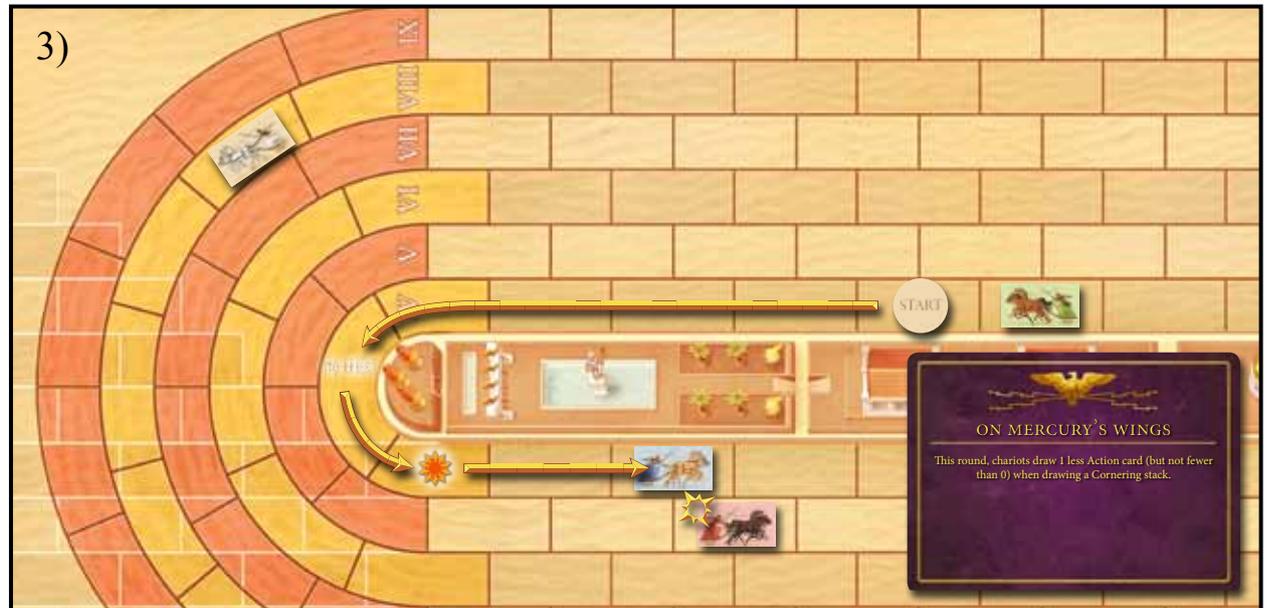
Proceeding into his 5th space, his Cornering stack’s first card’s Corner result is No Effect and, on his 6th space, the last card in his Cornering stack reveals a Rattled result. He finishes his 7th and 8th space movement in perfect position to Whip Attack red.

Spending his last Tactics to do so, red takes 3 Action cards of Whip damage for a loss of 1 Endurance, No Effect, and a gain of 1 Rattled. Red now has 4 Endurance, 3 Rattled, and 0 Tactics. Matters are not looking auspicious for red!

As he is adjacent to blue, however, Acacius uses his driver ability to make his free Whip Counterattack. From that, blue draws 2 Action cards. Blue suffers 1 Endurance and No Effect, bringing Crysapsis’s team to 6 Endurance. Blue’s turn is finished.

4) Mercatius has patiently allowed the other charioteers to fuss and fight through the corner, and now that green’s Initiative card is at last revealed, he wastes no time in slowing his horses to Speed Level II. This is prudent, as he wants to make the corner, just not too fast! He has no Rattled to lose from that Speed and, deciding not to chivvy his horses, Mercatius proceeds to move straight ahead his allotted 7 spaces.

At his 5th space of movement, green enters the IV (4) lane, gaining 2 Tactics for being the last chariot into that corner (*raising his total to 5 Tactics*). Traveling 3 over the speed limit, reduced to 2 over thanks to On Mercury’s Wings, Mercatius decides to spend 1 Tactics (*leaving him with 4*) to hazard only 1 Action card in his Cornering stack. He advances into the next space and his Cornering result is No Effect! Mercatius ends his move as shown and a new round begins.



## SEQUENCE OF PLAY

### INITIATIVE

Shuffle Initiative cards to determine charioteer Initiative.

### CHARIOTEER TURNS

Charioteers take their turns in Initiative order.

### FAVOR OF THE GODS

The charioteer who is first in the Initiative order rolls the Fate die and consults the chart.

## CHARIOTEER TURN

### CHOOSE SPEED LEVEL

Remain at current Speed Level

**-or-**

Increase Speed Level by one

**-or-**

Decrease Speed Level by one or two.

**-then-**

Resolve Speed Level effects.

### ADJUSTMENTS

Check for abilities and Event card effects. May Crack the Whip for extra movement.

Determine total movement.

### MOVE CHARIOT

Move equal to total movement.

May make one Attack during move.

## FAVOR OF THE GODS



All chariots gain one Endurance.



All chariots lose one Rattled.



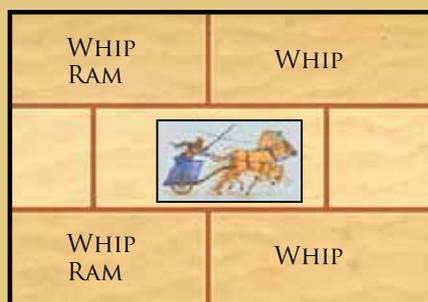
All chariots gain one Tactic.



Draw and resolve a Fate card.

## MAKING AN ATTACK

Attacker spends a Tactics to initiate attack.



**Whip Attack:** Target draws 3 Action cards.

**Ram Attack:** Target draws 3 Action cards and Attacker draws 1 Action card.

## TAKING A CORNER

If total movement for the turn plus number of Rattled is less than or equal to Safe Speed, draw no Action cards.

If total movement for the turn plus number of Rattled is over the Safe Speed, draw the difference in Action cards.

## TACTICS POINTS

Make an Attack.

Draw fewer Action cards.

Prevent Endurance loss.

*First chariot to enter a corner, gains no Tactics; the last to enter gains two Tactics & all others gain one.*

## ACTION CARD



Lose an Endurance



Lose a Tactic



Gain a Rattled



Swerve



Wounded

## SURVIVAL TABLE



Killed on Impact



Serious Injuries



Dragged to Death



Minor Injuries