

## ARENA

Across Theros, contest grounds host athletic competitions and often serve as places to worship the god Iroas. The grandest hippodrome in Akros holds thousands of spectators, but more modest stadiums can be found throughout the land, serving as proving grounds for athletes and entertainment for the rich and poor. Foot and chariot races, hurling competitions, and combat sports (wrestling, boxing, and pankration) are all common events in arenas, especially during the Iroan Games, an annual series of athletic competitions held in Akros.

### ARENA ADVENTURES

Adventures in an arena often feature the characters as contestants in an athletic competition. The reward for winning could be treasure, a favor, or an audience with a person of importance—even Iroas himself, in the case of the Iroan Games. The Arena Adventures table offers ideas for adventures that could occur in such a place.

#### ARENA ADVENTURES

##### d8 Adventure Goal

- 1 Help an unfit participant survive an athletic competition.
- 2 Convincingly lose an athletic competition so a gambler can win big.
- 3 Sabotage a star athlete's chances of winning.
- 4 Attend tryouts to become members of a chariot racing team.
- 5 Assassinate a person watching a competition before the final match ends.
- 6 Save a wrestler from a planned murder in the arena.
- 7 Capture a beast that has escaped from the stadium.
- 8 Recover a blessed trophy and award it to a contest's rightful victor.

### ARENA MAP

The arena shown in map 4.5 has a ring of raised benches and private boxes around its sandy floor. The map of the arena's upper levels depicts the exterior seating and the interior halls below (both of which are largely mirrored on the map's opposite site). Tunnels and trapdoors allow competitors to enter the arena from almost any angle. A large tarpaulin attached to the roof can be unfurled to shade the arena's audience. An awards platform serves as a shrine to Iroas. Winners of athletic competitions stand here to receive medals, wreaths, rewards, the blessings of priests, and the praise of the crowd.

Outside the arena and beneath the seats are open areas and alcoves where vendors sell concessions and trinkets, along with booths for making bets.

The space under the arena holds gymnasia, an equipment hall, and several staging areas and specialty rooms used as locker rooms, animal pens, and separate training areas for various creatures.

### ARENA VILLAINS

All sorts of unsavory elements can be found in an arena—backstabbing competitors, desperate gamblers, cruel trainers, savage animals, and worse. The Arena Villains table presents just a few ne'er-do-wells who might frequent physical contests.

#### ARENA VILLAINS

##### d8 Villain

- 1 A champion pankratiast (**Akroan hoplite**; see chapter 6) has her cronies lock everyone in the arena. She allows none to leave until a challenger defeats her.
- 2 A **minotaur** frees all the beasts in the amphitheater during a well-attended event.
- 3 A chariot racer (**gladiator**) poisons members of a rival team, causing them to fall asleep during competition.
- 4 A **mage** uses magic to spy on athletes' conversations and then blackmails them with the information.
- 5 A **stone giant** interrupts a session of games and demands a chance to compete.
- 6 A promoter forces athletes to overexert themselves, causing dangerous accidents during competitions.
- 7 An **archmage** enchants or polymorphs innocents, forcing them to participate in brutal contests.
- 8 A **druid** uses the *awaken* spell on beasts in the arena to make them more capable competitors.

