

# A GAME OF THRONES

## THE CARD GAME

SECOND EDITION



## TOURNAMENT RULES

VERSION 2.0 / UPDATED 12.31.2015

### SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN THIS VERSION

- ADDED ROUND STRUCTURE, PAGE 4
- REWORDED MELEE SCORING WHEN GOING TO TIME, PAGE 5

All changes and additions made to this document since the previous version are marked in red.

All tournaments supported by the Organized Play program for the *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition*, sponsored by Fantasy Flight Games (FFG) and its international partners, follow the rules provided herein.

The beginning of this document provides tiers of tournament play and details of the *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* tournament structure for the Joust and Melee formats. Following are the deck building rules to be used in conjunction with the *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* rulebook. At the end of the document are rules on conduct and components legal in tournament play.

This document must be followed for all competitive and premier *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* tournaments. A tournament organizer (TO) may deviate from these rules at casual-level events, but we strongly recommend communicating the differences with your players.

## RULES AND CARD INTERPRETATIONS

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Tournaments are played using the rules provided in the *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* Learn to Play and Rules Reference books, both of which may be downloaded from the *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* Support page at any time.

If players have a dispute during a tournament, they should call a judge to resolve it and provide any rulings on card text or icons. The head judge is the final authority for all card interpretations during a tournament and may overrule the FAQ when a mistake or error is discovered.

## TIERS OF TOURNAMENT PLAY

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FFG's Organized Play events are broken into three tiers of play. Each tier communicates the expectations players, judges, and tournament organizers should have when they are involved with an *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* tournament. In addition, the competitive and premier tiers ensure that no matter where a tournament is held, it will be run with the same standards of play and rules enforcement as other tournaments of the same kind in different countries.

## CASUAL

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Casual events emphasize fun and a friendly atmosphere. These events help build local communities and are a great way for new players to experience their favorite game without worrying whether they know every rule in detail. This tier may include leagues, weekly game nights, and any event using an *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* variant.

## COMPETITIVE

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Competitive events require players to have general knowledge of a game's rules. While experienced players will come to these events to compete for prizes, players should not be punished for their lack of understanding in the finer points of *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* rules. Players can come to these events expecting a consistent experience from store to store. This tier includes Store Championships and one-off FFG-sanctioned events.

## PREMIER

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Premier events are the highest level of competition for FFG tournaments, and all players, judges, and tournament organizers involved are held to the highest levels of conduct. Players are assumed to be familiar with the game's rules, as well as the latest FAQ and tournament rules, and should expect all rules to be strictly enforced. Regional Championships, National Championships, and World Championships are premier events.

## SETUP

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Players follow the setup rules detailed in the Rules Reference book with one addition. During step 6 of setup, each player must shuffle their deck using a variety of shuffling techniques to ensure their deck is sufficiently randomized. After shuffling their own deck, each player must present their deck to their opponent, allowing the opponent an opportunity to shuffle or cut the deck.

# JOUST TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

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Joust tournaments for *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* are held in a series of 55-minute, head-to-head tournament rounds. Each tournament round, players score tournament points based on the result of their game. After a predetermined number of rounds based on the number of players, the top point-scorer is the winner of the tournament unless there are elimination rounds scheduled (see “Round Structure” on page 4).

## PAIRINGS

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Swiss pairings are used for *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* Joust tournaments. For the first round, players are paired randomly. For casual-level events, players may request the TO to not match them against family members or travel partners, if at all possible, for the first round.

For each round after the first, players are paired at random against another player with the same number of tournament points. If there is an odd number of players with the same number of tournament points, one player chosen at random is paired against a random player from the group with the next most number of tournament points. If there is an odd number of players in the tournament, the lowest ranked player receives a bye (see “Byes” below).

The tournament organizer should make sure that no two players are paired against one another more than once before the end of the tournament or the beginning of elimination rounds, whichever comes first. If two players have played each other, the TO instead pairs them with a different player he or she has not played who has the same number of tournament points.

*Pairing Example: John, Sara, and Brent all have 15 tournament points. Justin has 13 tournament points. Sara is paired against Brent because she has already played John, and John is paired against Justin because there are no players with 15 tournament points left.*

### Byes

Occasionally, Joust tournaments involve an odd number of competitors, resulting in one competitor having no opponent for the round and immediately being

transferred to the following round. This is called “getting a bye.” The player who receives a bye is determined randomly in the first round. In later rounds, the bye is given to the player with the fewest tournament points who hasn’t already received a bye. In the case of multiple players with the fewest number of tournament points, the lowest-ranked player as determined by tiebreakers (see “Tiebreakers” on page 4) is given the bye.

When a player receives a bye, he or she receives a win and no modification to his or her Strength of Schedule and Extended Strength of Schedule.

## END OF MATCH

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Each Joust tournament match ends in one of the following ways:

- ✦ A player meets his or her deck’s victory condition. The player who meets their victory condition earns a win, and their opponent receives a loss.
- ✦ The time limit for the round is reached. The players should finish the current game round through the taxation phase. If neither player has won by the end of the game round, the player closest to his or her victory total in power earns a modified win, and his or her opponent receives a modified loss. If both players are equally close to their victory total, both players receive a draw.

*End of Match Example: Time is called for the round. Dan and Emily are currently in the challenges phase, so they finish the game round. At the end of the round, Dan has 11 power and Emily has 13 power. Emily only needs 2 more power for a victory, while Dan needs 4 more power. Since Emily is closer to victory, she receives a modified win and Dan receives a modified loss.*

## SCORING

Players earn tournament points at the end of each match as follows:

- ✦ Win = 5 points
- ✦ Modified Win = 4 points
- ✦ Draw = 2 points
- ✦ Modified Loss = 1 point
- ✦ Loss = 0 points

These points are used to determine the winner of the tournament if there are no elimination rounds. If there will be elimination rounds, they are instead used to determine who makes the cut to elimination rounds.

### *Tiebreakers*

If multiple players have the same number of tournament points, any player that has played and defeated all other players with the same number of tournament points is ranked above the other players. This is called a Head-to-Head tiebreaker.

If players are still tied after Head-to-Head tiebreakers, the tie is broken based on a player's Strength of Schedule. To calculate a player's Strength of Schedule, find the average tournament points each of their opponents earned across all rounds they played, combine those averages together, then divide the total by the number of opponents. The player with the highest Strength of Schedule wins the tie and is ranked above all other players with the same number of tournament points.

If players are still tied after Strength of Schedule, any tied players are separated by Extended Strength of Schedule. To calculate a player's Extended Strength of Schedule, combine the Strength of Schedule for all of their opponents and divide by the number of opponents.

If players are tied after Extended Strength of Schedule, any tied players are sorted at random.

## ROUND STRUCTURE

The length and structure of a tournament is determined by the number of players. For casual tournaments, tournament organizers may choose a number of rounds they feel best fits the needs of the tournament and players.

The suggested number of Swiss rounds for a competitive-level *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* tournament are outlined below. Competitive and premier tournaments must have at least 4 players.

| NUMBER OF PLAYERS | NUMBER OF ROUNDS |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 4-8               | 3                |
| 9-24              | 4                |
| 25-44             | 5                |
| 45-148            | 6                |
| 149 AND ABOVE     | 7                |

The suggested cut for elimination rounds for a competitive-level *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* tournament are outlined below.

| NUMBER OF PLAYERS | SIZE OF CUT |
|-------------------|-------------|
| 4-16              | NONE        |
| 17-40             | TOP 4       |
| 41-76             | TOP 8       |
| 77 AND ABOVE      | TOP 16      |

## ELIMINATION ROUNDS

In larger tournaments, the TO may "make a cut" after a predetermined number of rounds. The TO must announce if there will be elimination rounds and what size the cut will be before the start of the tournament.

To determine which players make a cut all players are ordered by tournament points from highest to lowest. If players are tied, they are sorted based on tiebreakers (see "Tiebreakers" on page 4). The top players then begin single-elimination rounds, and all other players are finished playing in the tournament.

The seeding for elimination rounds is determined by a player's ranking in the Swiss rounds; the player ranked highest is paired against the lowest ranked player who made the cut, the second-highest player is paired against the second-lowest player, and so on. Once seeded, the bracket for elimination rounds is set and not reseeded each round. When a player loses, he or she is eliminated from the bracket. When only one player remains, he or she is the tournament champion.

If a game reaches the time limit and would end in a draw during elimination rounds, the players complete one additional game round. The players repeat this process until one player wins or they finish a game round with one player closer to victory. The final game of elimination rounds is untimed.

## MELEE TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

Melee tournaments for *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* are held in a series of 90-minute, multiplayer tournament rounds. Each tournament round, players score tournament points based on the result of their game. After a predetermined number of rounds based on the number of players, the top point-scorer is the winner of the tournament unless there are elimination rounds scheduled (see “Elimination Rounds” on page 6).

### PAIRINGS

Modified Swiss pairings are used for *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* Melee tournaments. Each round, players are paired at random in groups of four.

If the total number of players is not divisible by four, players are paired into as many groups of four and as few groups of three as possible. No table should have less than three players. If any three-player tables are necessary, the lowest ranked players are assigned to the three-player table(s).

*Pairing Example: John is running a Melee tournament with 25 players. He pairs his players into four groups of four and three groups of three.*

### END OF MATCH

Each tournament match ends in one of the following ways:

- ✦ A player meets his or her deck’s victory condition. The player who meets their victory condition earns a win worth 15 points, and their opponents receive points based on the amount of power they have when the game ends (see “Scoring” below).

- ✦ The time limit for the round is reached. The players should finish the current game round through the Taxation phase. If no player has won by the end of the game round, the player closest to his or her victory total in power earns a win worth 15 points and all other players receive a number of points as outlined under “Scoring” below.

### SCORING

Players earn tournament points at the end of each match based on how much power they have accrued during the match. The winner of the table earns 15 points. All other players earn points equal to their power at the end of the game divided by their place at the table, rounded down. If two or more players are tied, they each earn points equal to the lowest of the positions for which they are tied.

These points are used to determine the winner of the tournament. If there will be elimination rounds, they are instead used to determine who makes the cut to elimination rounds.

*Scoring Example: Tom, Sara, Kat, and Brandon are competing at a table during a Melee tournament. Kat attains 15 power and immediately wins the table. Tom and Brandon both have 13 power, and Sara has 5 power. Kat earns 15 points for winning the table, Tom and Brandon earn 4 points, and Sara earns 1 point.*

If a match goes to time and two players are tied for first place, the points for first and second place are added together, using the players’ score to determine the number of points for second place. The tied players earn half of the total points, rounded down. If three players are tied for first, the points for all first, second, and third places are added together and tied players earn one third of the total points, rounded down. If four players are tied for first place, the points for first through fourth places are added together and tied players earn one quarter of the total points, rounded down.

*Tied First Place Example: Jeff, Jacquelyn, Jeremy, and Jesse are competing at a table during a Melee tournament. When time is called and they finish their current game round, Jeremy and Jacquelyn are tied with 12 power, Jesse has 11 power, and Jeff has 6 power. First place would earn 15 points and second place would earn 6 points for a total of 21 points. Jeremy and Jacquelyn split this total, rounded down, each earning 10 points. Jesse earns 3 points, and Jeff earns 1 point.*

## Tiebreakers

If multiple players have the same number of tournament points, any player that has played and defeated all other players with the same number of tournament points is ranked above the other players. This is called a Head-to-Head tiebreaker.

If players are still tied after Head-to-Head tiebreakers, the tie is broken based on a player's Strength of Schedule. To calculate a player's Strength of Schedule, find the average tournament points each of their opponents earned across all rounds they played, combine those averages together, then divide the total by the number of opponents. The player with the highest Strength of Schedule wins the tie and is ranked above all other players with the same number of tournament points.

If players are still tied after Strength of Schedule, any tied players are separated by Extended Strength of Schedule. To calculate a player's Extended Strength of Schedule, combine the Strength of Schedule for all of their opponents and divide by the number of opponents.

If players are tied after Extended Strength of Schedule, any tied players are sorted at random.

## ELIMINATION ROUNDS

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In larger tournaments, the TO may "make a cut" after a predetermined number of rounds. The TO must announce if there will be elimination rounds and whether the cut will be the top 4 or top 16 players before the start of the tournament.

To determine which players make a cut all players are ordered by tournament points from highest to lowest. If players are tied, all players with the same number of tournament points are ordered by Strength of Schedule from highest to lowest. If players are still tied, the process is repeated using Extended Strength of Schedule. The top players then begin single-elimination rounds, and all other players are finished playing in the tournament.

If a game reaches the time limit and would end with two or more players tied for the lead during elimination rounds, the players complete one additional game round. The players repeat this process until one player wins or they finish a game round with one player closer to victory. The final game of elimination rounds is untimed.

Pairings for elimination rounds are determined at random. If there are 16 players, the winner of each table in the first round of elimination rounds moves on to the final table and all other players are eliminated. The winner of the final table is the tournament champion.

For purposes of ranking, all players eliminated in the 16-player elimination round are ranked based on their table position first and then their total points.

*Ranking Example: John, Steve, Erica, Shawn, and Julie all place second at the top 16 tables during elimination rounds. For final rankings in the tournament, the players at the final table are ranked first through fourth, based on their final placement at that table; John, Steve, Erica, Shawn, and Julie are ranked fifth through ninth, based on their point totals; the players who finished third at each of their tables are ranked tenth through twelfth, based on their point totals; and the players who finished fourth at each of their tables are ranked thirteenth through sixteenth.*

## TABLE TALK

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During a Melee game, players may discuss the game with one another at any time. Of course, there is no guarantee that any player is telling the truth, and the wise *A Game of Thrones* player takes everything that is said with a grain of salt.

Players cannot show the contents of their hand, deck, unrevealed plot cards, or any other hidden cards to an opponent, unless a card or game effect instructs them to do so.

## ADDITIONAL RULES

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### CARD SLEEVES

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Players are required to sleeve all cards in their decks for any competitive- and premier-level tournament. We strongly recommend using different sleeves for your draw deck and plot deck so that the two are not easily shuffled together. If a player is using alternate art cards or cards that are distinguishable from other cards in one of their decks, their sleeves must be opaque.

## JUDGE PARTICIPATION

A judge may participate in a casual- or competitive-level tournament for which he or she is responsible only if there is a second judge present. The second judge must be announced at the beginning of the tournament and is responsible for all rulings for games in which the first judge is playing. If two judges play one another, the head judge is responsible for any rulings during the game.

## UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Players are expected to behave in a mature and considerate manner, and to play within both the letter and spirit of the rules and not abuse them. This prohibits intentionally stalling a game for time, placing or throwing components with excessive force, abusing an infinite combo, inappropriate behavior, treating an opponent or event staff with a lack of courtesy or respect, etc. Collusion among players to manipulate scoring is expressly forbidden.

The head judge, at his or her sole discretion, may remove players from the tournament for unsportsmanlike conduct.

## LEGAL PRODUCTS

Only official *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game Second Edition* cards are legal for use in tournament play. Proxies of cards cannot be used. Third-party tokens may be allowed at the head judge's discretion.

In North America, products are legal upon their release. Competitors outside North America should check with their TO to determine which products are tournament legal.

*This and other supported documents for FFG Organized Play can be accessed from the FFG Organized Play support page: <http://www.fantasyflightgames.com/opsupport>.*

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