

Circus Minimus Rules (Contains errata as of 10-25-2001 and Optional Rules)

Designer: Dean N. Essig

Map and Counter Illustrations: David Pentland

Logo Artwork: Jeff Hill

Graphics: Dean N. Essig

Editing: Sara Essig, Dave Demko

Translators: Udo Grebe (German), Ernesto Sassot (Spanish), Roy van Veen (Dutch & Russian), Mauro de Vita (Italian), Masahiro Yamazaki (Japanese)

Playtesters: John Best, Dirk Blech, Falk Breuer, Joe Essig, John Essig, Rosalind Essig, Carl Evans, Anders Fager, Jim Ferguson, Lee Forester, Bruce Gletty, Udo Grebe, Tom Hire, Edith Hunter, Stefan Olsson, Elias Nordling, Ernesto Sassot, Matthias Timmer, Magnus Westerlund

Introduction

Circus Minimus is an easy-to-play game of Roman chariot racing for players as young as 10 years old; younger children may need help with the reading and arithmetic. The game is the most fun with many players (the set of playing pieces can support up to seven). Additional sets of playing pieces can be purchased to allow for more players. The Chariot Control sheet on the back of the rules can be photocopied to allow players to have their controls independent of those on the map.

The playing pieces are called "counters." Counters used to record information in the Chariot Control Boxes are also called "markers" or "chits."

Basic Information

- 1) Hexagons and Rectangles are used to show map positioning. For simplicity, both are called "spaces" and the sides of both are called "edges."
- 2) Chariots and Teams must have the same "facing" and must "face" toward the same edge. The Team must be in front and the Chariot directly behind. In hexes, each has its own hex; in rectangles, both the Team and the Chariot occupy the same rectangle (see Facing diagram). The half-hexes between the two grid types **also** represent a space. Place the Chariot as needed to be directly behind its Team.
- 3) For the rules that require a Chariot to be "adjacent" to another for an effect to occur, there is no need to be "adjacent" in any specific direction and **diagonally adjacent** is OK. **Exception:** For a ramming attack, the two Chariots must be "side by side."
- 4) Decorations on the track (the guards, broken wheels, etc.) do not affect play.
- 5) The White Borders are the walls and cannot be crossed except by running Charioteers who climb onto the median (the space between the track's two straight sections). Chariots forced to hit a wall suffer an accidental ramming attack and roll for damage.
- 6) To "roll" means to roll either one die or two dice, as indicated on the appropriate table on the map. For example, "roll for damage" means to roll one die and apply the result indicated on the Damage Table.

Game Length

A game consists of three laps.

Place the Gold Dolphins (Lap Indicators) opposite the red radial line in the boxes provided. Remove one each time the lead Chariot crosses the red dashed "Lap Radial." When all the Gold Dolphins are removed, the game ends on the first round in which any player crosses the finish line.

How to Set Up

1) Each player chooses one Chariot by color. The player needs Chariot, Team, Speed, Fatigue x10, Fatigue x1, and Whip markers. The Whip is used to mark Control position. Gather the Dead Driver, Running Driver, and Unmanned Chariot markers associated with your Chariot and place them in the box provided for potential future use.

Play Note: *The Chariot coloration is intentionally limited and you might wonder if you will have difficulty remembering which chariot is yours. Once play begins, though, you will have no difficulty at all tracking your team—as you will be able to tell “your guy” by location and situation without any reference to the color codes. The color codes only exist so you can sort the various markers belonging to a team to make sure everything is present.*

2) Place the Team and Chariot in a rectangle starting just before the starting/finishing line (the red line opposite the Emperor’s Tent) (the track has an arrow showing the race’s direction). The inside lane is more valuable than those further out, so set up in order from youngest player to oldest and allow each player to select his starting position. Only one Chariot can set up in each rectangle. If more than 7 are in play, begin filling up a second row to the rear of the first—a row that will be filled by the cunning and crafty older players in the game!

3) On any Chariot Control Box desired (pick one as yours), place the Speed Marker on “0” on the Speed track, place both Fatigue markers in the “0” box on the Fatigue Track; place the Whip Marker anywhere on the Control Track (its real position will be selected in the player’s first move).

4) Players desiring to purchase Weapons, War Chariots, Extra Whips, or other items pay for these items at this point. Make a note of these extras, place chits in the Equipment Box, or inflict their effects on other players, as appropriate.

5) Chariots and Drivers **generally** begin a race without any damage, fatigue, injury, or turn chits, regardless of earlier games. However, some Purchased Extras do affect Damage or Fatigue at the start of the race.

How to Play

1) **Corpse Movement:** Before any player takes their turn, all corpses are moved. Corpse movement includes loose horses, unmanned chariots and running charioteers. Only chariots that were manned at the start of the Corpse Phase move in the Regular Movement phase. For example, a running driver gets into an unmanned chariot. Although it is now a manned chariot, it cannot move until the Regular Movement phase of the next turn. Corpses use the same rules as manned chariots to determine order of movement (front to rear, inside to outside in the case of ties). In the turns, use the radial lines provided to determine who is in front of whom. In cases involving running charioteers on the median, determine the order randomly (coin flip, die roll).

2) **Regular Movement:** Players move one at a time. Each player runs his controls and moves his Chariot before the next player does anything.

Players move in the order from **front to the rear** of the pack and then from **inside to the outside** lane in the case of ties. In the turns, use the radial lines provided to determine who is in front of whom.

A “move” is all the activity of one player when it’s that player’s turn to move: selecting a control, adjusting speed, moving the Chariot, making attacks, and checking for crashes. A “round” is one move for every player in the game. A “race” is as many rounds as it takes to determine a winner. (A “turn” is a change in direction.)

Players are free to use every trick they can think of to win the game—including ramming other players’ Chariots, whipping their Drivers or their horses, using weapons, paying bribes, cutting them off, and so on.

Each player’s Chariot Control shows the order of events using Roman Numerals (*what else?*) in yellow circles. Players will not go wrong if they follow these. Some steps might not require the player to do anything every Move (if the player did not make any turns last time and has no Turn Chits, for example), but check off each item anyway just to make sure the order is maintained. **The listed order is very important.**

A) Chariot Control Event Order

I) Determine your Fatigue Point change based on your previous Move's Speed and the Speed Track's colored zones (to the left of the Speed Track). Add (or subtract) these Fatigue Points on the Fatigue Point Track. Fatigue can be zero or any positive number, but never less than zero. Use the x10 Fatigue Marker to indicate the tens digit and the x1 marker to show the ones.

II) Total the number of Fatigue Points and Damage Points. This number is the baseline for speed change (slower as Fatigue and Damage increase). Adjust the Speed Marker on the Speed Track **down** to the Speed showing a range that contains the new value. This number is located in the lower right hand corner. If your current Speed shows a range containing or greater than the value determined, leave the marker where it is. Never **increase** the speed marker based on the number found!

III) Count the number of Turn Chits (from your last Move, if any). Reduce the Speed Marker **one** for each chit (but not below zero) and remove the Turn Chits (including any excess). Speed never goes below Zero.

IV) Adjust the Whip/Reins Marker to any desired Control Box. If the player has no Whip, use only the Reins side and it can now only be used in control positions **not** requiring a Whip. Apply the chosen control position's speed effects as listed on the Chariot Control Box (increase or decrease speed as appropriate). Add one fatigue point if you select Hard Whip, regardless of the speed eventually added.

If a die roll is required (Whip and Hard Whip), roll one die. For Hard Whip, speed can increase by the die roll or 3 (whichever is more). For Whip, divide that roll by 2 (round up) and apply the result. In all cases, you must increase your speed by the resulting roll (or the 3 minimum, in the case of Hard Whip)—you **cannot** select to use less than the roll you get (**Exception:** No Chariot can have a speed greater than 10, so increases to speeds greater than 10 would be wasted).

Examples: The player chooses Whip and rolls a 5 on one die. Divide the 5 by 2 to get 2.5 and round to 3. The player must increase his speed by three. Another player chooses Hard Whip and rolls a 2...he must add three to his speed (Hard Whip requires the die roll or three, whichever is more). The last player also selects Hard Whip, and rolls a 6. He must increase his speed by 6, but since his speed was already 7, he is limited to increasing it to 10 (the remaining increase is wasted).

The other control positions give a choice of speed changes possible. You must use one of these.

V) Move your Chariot.

Movement

1) Move the Team marker, leaving Chariot behind (as a reminder of where you started), and only consider Team location when thinking about collisions, etc., as if both Team and Chariot were in the same space. The Chariot is "invisible" for the moving Chariot, but not the others in play.

2) The Team **must move** the number of spaces equal to its final Speed (movement done **during** skids or swerves is free). The partial spaces between the hexagonal and rectangular grid areas count normally.

3) A player can neither move more (**except** for the free movement in skids and swerves or the Underdog Bonus, below), nor less than his speed. The movement distance based on speed must be used, even if it means the player will crash into some obstacle. Players cannot save movement for the next Move, skip spaces, jump over other Chariots, and so on.

4) Once the move is done, move the Chariot marker up directly in back of the Team (if this position requires the Chariot to be placed across a wall edge or in the same space as another Chariot or Team, execute the collision and readjust the Team and Chariot's facing according to the collision).

5) Teams and Chariots can never enter the spaces of other Teams or Chariots (they **can** pass through the space of running Charioteers, dropped weapons, whips, bodies, or Chariot wrecks).

Turns and Swerves

A Turn is a maneuver to change the Team's facing by one hexagon edge clockwise or counterclockwise from its current position. A Swerve is essentially a lateral lane change without changing direction.

- 1) Chariots **must** move at least **one space** before Turning or Swerving (do not count the free movement in swerves or skids) and can only turn once per space moved. If that one movement space is **not** available (because of other Chariots or walls) to a chariot which is just starting its move, the player **can** swerve or turn **without** moving a space first. This is the **only** exception, and if this is not enough to avoid an obstacle, then the player must crash.
- 2) A Team cannot combine a Turn and Swerve at the same time, nor can it execute more than one of each at one time (unless a Skid forces this to happen).
- 3) A Turn or Swerve always calls for a roll on the Skid Table as well. The Skid Table gives results that apply Turn Chits to the moving Chariot, potential Fatigue and Damage, skidding movement, and the potential for a flip.
- 4) A Chariot can turn only in the **hexagonal grid**—turns may be made, at the latest, in the transitional half-hexes between the hex and rectangular areas. A Chariot can swerve in either the hex or rectangular grid areas.
- 5) Swerves in the rectangular area are always directly left or right. Swerves in the hex area are either “back to the right” or “back to the left.”
- 6) The space moved in a swerve does not count against those required because of the Chariot’s speed.

Cockiness

Being vain, the leader tends to forget the race as he basks in the cheers of the crowd and waves at the fans. Therefore he might not go as fast as he should to maintain his lead. For this rule to apply, the leader must be **at least 3 spaces** ahead of the next Chariot at the start of his move. The leader (as defined in the previous sentence) **must use** Reins or Brake (he cannot use Hard Whip or Whip).

If more than one Chariot is tied for first place, this rule does not apply.

Optional: The player must (literally) wave with one hand at the other players, nose in the air, while he moves his Chariot.

Underdog Boost

As the opposite of the cocky leader, all the guys behind him put in maximum effort to catch up. Apply this rule to **every** manned Chariot which isn’t the pack’s leader (regardless if the Cockiness rule applies or not). Do not apply this effect in the first round of the game.

Each applicable Chariot, regardless of its final speed, gets to move **two** free spaces. These spaces **do not** count as “speed” when determining Turn Table rolls or for future Fatigue.

The two free spaces moved can be either at the start or the end of the player’s move. When moving these two free spaces, the moving Chariot or Driver cannot swerve, turn, or make any sort of attack. The player can elect to use only one such space (or neither of them), if desired.

Design Note: *Some might wonder about the above two rules. Literally, they force the pack to remain fairly close together. Historically <cough> they can be justified by examining the role of the Roman gods in the races—for their own amusement, they tend to trip up the leader and help the guys in back who are trying hard.*

Special Situations

Each of the following occurs at times, some fairly often, others very rarely. They are grouped here to help separate these (sometimes very odd) events from the basic rules to make the basics easier to learn and these easier to find when they come up.

1) Skids

A) A skid can result from a too-fast turn or swerve entry and the result of the Skid Table roll made for each Turn/Swerve attempt.

B) Every Skid requires a “Shift Space.” This is an extra Space of movement in the **original** direction of travel (before refacing) during a Turn attempt OR an extra sideways Swerve in the same direction as the intended Swerve. The extra space **does not** count against the movement total required for the Move. In Turns, make the desired refacing in the new, shifted, space. If the “Shift Space” requires the Team to enter a hex containing another Chariot or Team, do not shift the Team’s location (make required refacing in place instead) and execute the resulting unintentional ramming attack.

C) For skids generated in Turns, an **extra refacing** might be called for. Turn the Team one **additional** facing in the same direction as the desired turn in the shifted space. Ignore this result in Swerves or in any skid occurring within the rectangular portion of the track.

D) Add any Damage Points required according to the Skid Table Result and make any required Flip Roll. (Add damage from the current skid **before** making the Flip Roll.)

***Design Note:** Running into a corner too fast can generate some really “unique” fish-tailing opportunities. Skilled players might be able to position themselves at high speed in such a way as to take advantage of this effect. Of course, the minute they do, the gods will ensure that they don’t fish-tail right at the moment they need it the most!*

2) Flips

Flips involve your Chariot turning over and becoming a wreck on the track. Your Driver ends up being dragged by the Team and makes a frantic effort to cut loose from the reins before being dragged to death. This is bad. Even though your Chariot might flip, you are not out of the race! Cut loose and then use your running Driver to attempt to either steal another player’s Chariot, acquire an empty Chariot, or to ride a Team that does not have a Chariot. You are down, but not out.

A) Flip Rolls

1) If a Flip Roll is called for from the Skid Table, roll one die. If the result is less than or equal to the Chariot’s current number of Damage Points (to include any from the Skid Table result calling for the Flip Roll in the first place), the Chariot Flips. Otherwise there is no additional effect.

2) Execute the flip routine (below) immediately when a flip result occurs (even if the Team had movement remaining). Once flipped, the Chariot moves no further, while the unhitched Team finishes the move.

3) Flip (literally) the Chariot counter to its wrecked side in back of the space containing the Team making it a permanent obstacle. Place the Dragged Driver in the same space. The Team completes its remaining movement dragging the Driver (he cannot cut lose until the next move).

C) Equipment disposition

Place any extra equipment the player might have had (whips, weapons, etc.) in the wreck’s space. No equipment remains with the dragged Driver.

D) Changes to Chariot Control

Remove the player’s Damage Markers (the Chariot’s damage no longer slows the Team) and the Whip/Reins Marker. There are no control decisions with the now-loose Team.

3) Drivers

A) Injuries

Drivers are injured by being dragged by their Team or by attacked with weapons or whips. Each Injury Point counts toward the effect on the Driver; Injury Points never are reduced or healed during a race. Keep Driver Injury markers in the box provided on the Chariot Control. The effects of accumulated injuries are shown on the Driver Injury Effects Chart on the map. Injuries remain for the entire race during which the Driver incurred them—they do not carry over to future games (unless the Driver is killed!)

B) Dragged Drivers

1) A Dragged Driver remains in back of the Team until he either cuts himself loose or dies trying. The Driver can make one attempt to cut loose each Move (do this before moving the Team). Roll one die, on a 5 or 6 the attempt is successful, otherwise, the Driver gets dragged another Move and gets one Injury Point. Only **living** Drivers can attempt to cut loose. **Exception:** If the dragged Driver is attached to a Team that is not moving (Speed 0), cutting loose is automatic (no die roll).

2) If the Driver successfully cuts loose, replace the dragged Driver with the running Charioteer wherever he happens to be. He begins to "run" in the next Move.

C) Running Charioteers

There are several ways a Driver might end up on the track without a Chariot: If the player is involved in a flip and the Driver manages to cut himself loose or if the Whip Attack Table or a Weapons Table result gives "knocked off" result. In the case of a Charioteer being knocked off, but not involved in a wreck, place the Unmanned Chariot marker in back of the Team. All extras which were not dropped remain in the empty Chariot.

In either case, the Charioteer moves up to **two spaces** each Move, in any direction—to include diagonally in the rectangles (no facing or turn rules needed).

D) Running over Charioteers and Corpses

Manned Chariots **can** enter spaces containing running Charioteers. Roll one die for each such occurrence—the number rolled is the number of Injury Points the running Charioteer sustains (if this kills him, place the corpse in that space). The moving Chariot is unaffected by running over any running Charioteer or corpse.

A Chariot cannot "ram" a running Driver by using a swerve. In order to attack a running Driver, a Chariot must enter the Driver's space directly.

E) Use of the Median

Running Charioteers can enter the median (the part of the stadium separating the track) which is normally not in play. Entry can be made from any point, but the player must then select one of the two ends from which to re-enter play. Once selected, the end cannot be changed without jumping on the track and starting the process again.

To enter the median, the running Charioteer must begin his move adjacent to the median (in the innermost lane). He then uses his whole move to enter it. On the next move, he must select his "end" and move to it. On any move thereafter, he can make his move by jumping down onto the track into any of the **hexagonal (not rectangular)** spaces at or within 2 spaces of his end (he can jump into the lane adjacent to the median **or** the next lane further out).

When re-entering play, the Charioteer can jump into an empty space or on top of another Chariot (manned or unmanned). If the Chariot is manned, execute the routine described in rule J4b, Capture, below. If unmanned, he stops the Team and begins anew in the next move.

While the player can use the median, running Drivers are removed from play if they exit the track via the stands instead.

F) Killed in Action

Drivers die if they get 6 Injuries. If still on their chariot when this happens, they remain in the chariot until another player pushes them off (after a chariot capture). When ever a dead driver appears on the track, show him with the "road kill" corpse counter associated with him. These have no effect on play (unless players choose to make a "sq-WHIT" sound (optional) whenever they move through such a space).

4) Chariots

A) Damage

1) Damage happens due to ramming (intentional or unintentional) and from running over Chariot wrecks. Damage Points add to the current Fatigue Total to determine the base-line for speed change.

2) Damage can never be reduced (or fixed).

3) When a Flip Roll is required, roll one die—if the roll is equal to or less than the current number of Damage Points, then the Chariot flips.

4) If a regular Chariot acquires 10 Damage Points, it automatically wrecks at the start of its move—follow the same procedure as a failed Flip Roll. This same rule applies to War Chariots, except that the maximum is 15 instead (see rule J2).

5) Indicate damage to a Chariot by placing Damage chits in the box next to the Fatigue track in the Chariot Control Box.

B) Capture

A running Charioteer can attempt to “steal” another player’s Chariot.

1) From an Adjacent Space: To do this, announce the intention of jumping on any Chariot that passes by (but not **through**) the Driver’s space! During the Chariot’s move. Roll one die. On a 4-6, the other player is knocked off his Chariot and the former runner has the Chariot. On any other roll, the attacking Charioteer remains in his space unaffected.

2) From the Median: To do this, announce the intention of jumping on any Chariot that passes at or within 2 spaces of a running Charioteer on the end of the median. Roll one die. On a 4-6, the player is knocked off his Chariot and the jumping runner has the Chariot. On any other roll, the attacking Charioteer drops on the track in the space the attempt was made but is otherwise unaffected.

3) From your own Chariot: A mounted Charioteer can also try to take over another player’s Chariot. The two Chariots must end a move side-by-side, adjacent, at the same speed and in the straight-away. If those conditions are met, follow the same procedure as unmounted Charioteers, above. If the attempt fails, the Driver attempting the capture remains on his original Chariot.

C) Wrecks

A Chariot wreck can result from a failed Flip Roll or from excessive Damage Points. Once the Wreck Marker is placed in a hex, it never moves or is destroyed. Hitting (running through the space of) a Wreck results in the following: Roll for damage to the moving Chariot using the Damage Table. Apply that damage, **and** make a Flip Roll. If the moving Chariot flips, place the wreck in the first space the moving Chariot would have entered **after** moving through the wreck’s space (adjacent to the wreck). The existing wreck is unaffected.

D) Unmanned Chariots

If the Charioteer is in a space that any Unmanned Chariot enters, the Chariot stops in the space (the Driver grabs the reins) and the dismounted Driver remounts. Reset the Speed for that move to zero. He resumes the race normally in the next Move (using the new Chariot’s data) and the Driver gets any equipment that happen to be loaded in the Chariot. Mounted Charioteers can take over an unmanned Chariot by ending the move side-by-side, adjacent, at the same speed, and in the straight-away. If the conditions are met, the transfer is automatic.

5) Whip Attacks

If the player selects a control position on his Chariot Control showing the Whip Icon in the Weapon Attacks Allowed column, he can whip any Driver or Team his Chariot passes or to which he starts (or ends) the move adjacent.

As the attacking Chariot moves adjacent to any other Chariot, roll on the [Whip Attack](#) Table. Make one roll per Chariot attacked. The moving player may attack any number of Chariots in a single move.

You may not whip opponents before they cross the starting line (no cheating before the Emperor’s hankie hits the ground!).

As an alternative, you may whip the opposing Chariot's Team instead of the Driver. When whipping a team, roll one die and add the resulting number to that Team's Chariot's speed. If the defending Chariot has already moved, add that extra speed to that Chariot in its next move (**the speed is added as the very last control function, after the player has done everything else**). If the defender has not moved yet, add the speed increase to the player's control effects for this turn.

You must select whipping the Driver or the Team in each case—you cannot do both at the same time. Choose to whip or not as the opportunity presents itself (no need to pre-plan the attacks).

A) Relative location of target and attacker

To make a whip attack, the attacker's Chariot (not Team) must be adjacent to the target. In the straight-away, this means the two **must** be side by side, with the target directly behind the attacker **OR** diagonally to the rear (see b below). In the hex area, the attacking Chariot must be adjacent to the hex containing the desired target (Driver or Team).

Whip attacks are not allowed against targets in the same space.

B) Direct rear is OK...but can't hit Driver

If the target Chariot is directly in back of the attacker, a whip attack is allowed, but the attack can only be against the Team, not the Driver.

C) Whipping and Ramming at the same time

Given the other restrictions above, it is allowed to whip and ram a target Chariot at the same time.

6) Ramming

Ramming is a tool you can use to damage other player's Chariots—or it can be something that just happens to you if you go out of control and hit a wall or another Chariot.

A) Intentional Ramming

Players can ram others any time they pass or end their move adjacent to another Chariot.

To make a ramming attack, execute a swerve into the target at the moment your Chariot is adjacent to it (however momentarily). Do not execute a lane shift, but if a Shift Space is required, make **two** attacks rather than one. For each attack, make one roll on the Damage Table for each Chariot involved.

If a Chariot being rammed is directly between a wall edge and the attacker, execute an accidental collision (with the wall) as well as the original ramming attack (the ramming occurs first). If the target Chariot is pinned against a wall when the attacking Chariot skids, make **four** (!) attacks on the defender.

B) Accidental Ramming

Accidental collisions can occur when a Chariot is unable to turn to avoid an obstacle, or as the result of a skidded turn or swerve.

1) Make one roll on the Damage Table for each Chariot involved.

2) Realign the moving Chariot to match the target object (Chariot or wall) by selecting the direction most nearly parallel to the target.

C) Direct into another Chariot or Wall

If a Chariot is unable to complete its move without hitting another Chariot or wall (even after making the swerves allowed below), stop the Chariot on impact (it moves no further this turn) and, for the *moving Chariot*, make one roll on the Damage Table for **each space required but not moved**. For the *non-moving Chariot*, roll once for **every two spaces** the moving one could not complete (rounded down). Do not roll for damage against walls. Realign the moving Chariot to the same facing as the Chariot or wall it hit and make no Turn Table roll.

D) Stuck in Back of another Chariot

Occasionally, someone might cut you off so your Chariot **cannot** move the one space required before swerving or turning. If this occurs, no ramming occurs (even if you want to!) and you are allowed to swerve or turn **without** the required space of movement. This can only be done for Chariots locked in back of another Chariot or wall at the **start** of its move. This rule can only be applied once at the start of a move (if that is not enough, execute the ramming effects in rule J6c. Handle the swerves (or turns) normally except that you do not need to move forward one before execution.

E) Loose Horses Don't Ram

Teams of horses (hitched or not) going around the track without a Driver **never** ram anything. They are required to turn (for free) in any manner to avoid all obstacles. Do the minimum amount of turning needed to get clear of the obstacle and then return to the required straight movement. This rule applies to wrecks, other Chariots and Teams, and the walls.

7) Going the Wrong Way

Teams can turn around and go in the direction opposite to the race (not sure why anybody would want to, but it is allowed). No Chariot can win the race crossing the finish line in the wrong direction!

8) Loose Teams

A "Loose Team" is a Team no longer attached to a manned Chariot, usually as the result of a Flip Roll. Another possibility is that the Driver was knocked off the Chariot. These rules apply the same in both cases.

1) Work the Team using the usual system except:

- You do not select a control setting.
- The Team does not make rolls on the Skid Table.
- The Team does not receive Turn Chits.

2) The Team goes **straight** (it could be required to change direction to avoid obstacles) until it must turn to follow the outside wall of the track with free turns. The loose Team does not accumulate turn chits and may not ram. Once on the outside wall, it follows the outside wall around for the rest of the race. The Team must continue in the same direction as the race.

3) If a Team has a Zero Speed, it remains in its hex as an obstacle.

9) Riding without a Chariot

A Driver can attempt to drive a Team that has no Chariot by riding on the back of the Team's horses. To climb on, capture the Team as you would an unmanned Chariot (see rule J4d). Once aboard, roll one die each move. On a roll of 1, the Driver slips and is killed under the Team. Otherwise continue the move normally.

Teams without Chariots move as any unmanned Team (turns are automatic, no ramming allowed, and no turn chits or damage awarded), except that the Driver can select any normal control position and the Team can turn as desired (without any Skid Table roll).

Teams with a Driver riding on their back can be rammed by other players—do not roll on the Damage Table. Instead, for each Ram attack, roll one die: on a 1 or 2 the Driver falls off as above.

A Driver cannot jump on the Team of another player while that player is still alive and in command of his Chariot.

10) Picking Up Equipment on the Track

Equipment that a Driver might need occasionally ends up on the track or in wrecked Chariots. He can obtain these items for his own use following these rules.

A) Dismounting to Pick Up

You can pick these things up by stopping your Chariot, dismounting your running Charioteer, moving the Charioteer normally into that space, and then back. You can also stop in the same space as the equipment and pick it up automatically for use in the next move. If you stop in the same space as a wreck, do not roll on the Damage Table.

B) Picking it up as you go by

You can attempt to pick up dropped equipment by grabbing it as you go by. To do this, move through the space containing the equipment and roll one die. If the result is 4 or more, the attempt is successful. Otherwise it is not.

11) Stopping Your Chariot

If your current speed is 4 or less and your control set to Brake, you can stop your Chariot. Move this turn normally and declare the stop. In whatever space you end the move, your Chariot comes to rest. Reset your speed to zero. You can begin again from that point when you are ready.

12) The Connection Between the Rectangular and Hexagonal Spaces

The grid converts from rectangles (used in the straight-away) and the hexagons (used in turns) and back again as the race proceeds. Where this connection occurs, there are red arrows showing the allowed pathways. To follow these arrows you either go straight or execute a normal turn. Execute any "shift space" results in the connection as the grid looks if the hexes continued. **Do not execute** any "additional refaces" in the connection if they would violate the arrows shown. Once in the rectangular part of the track, no turns are allowed ("additional refaces" from the Skid Table are ignored), swerves can be used to switch lanes or ram other players. In the hexagons, you can swerve or turn.

Winning the Game

A player is only qualified to win the race if his driver crosses the red lap radial line in the correct direction **on or after** the moment the leader causes the last Dolphin to be removed. The winner need not actually have a Chariot in play or to have completed all laps mounted on one to win. (See also rule M, Death to Mutants, below). For each qualified player (according to the above), the game ends during the round the first player crosses the finish line. Move all Chariots normally during this round. The race's winner is the qualified Chariot which crossed the finish line and ends up in front of all those that crossed the line (inside to outside, in the case of ties).

Design Note: *Not evaluating the winner until all Chariots have moved might lead to the **first** to cross the line **not** being the winner. That might be the case where two Chariots are close in relative position but the rearward one is going much faster. Suffice it to say that the faster one managed to physically cross the line first, despite the positional advantage of the one slightly in front of it (which, by way of the rules, "looked" as if it crossed first.*

Death to Mutants

Somewhere out there is some sick player who will come to a halt early in the race just before the red radial and wait there until the race's real leader crosses that radial to signify the beginning of the final lap. He will then use his fresh team to sprint into the lead and attempt to win the race from the real leader who'se team is exhausted from actually being in play. Any Driver who does this is executed immediately at the end of the race by the Imperial Guard and is disqualified from counting as the winner.

Advanced Rules

A) Purchasing Extra Equipment (Advanced)

Each player can spend up to **three gold coins** during set up (plus any saved or earned in earlier races) to buy the items in rule B, or he can save them for later games. Players retain their unspent coins for future games unless they die. Use the coin markers provided to give player's their "retained" coins. (You can also use real coins if you like.) Remember, half the race occurs on the track; the rest is in the various "cheating" to gain advantage. You can choose to treat Extras as an advanced rule and leave it out of the game while you are first learning the basics of Chariot racing.

B) Extra Equipment (Advanced)

1) Coins Available

3 Coins per race plus any saved or earned in earlier races in a career.

2) Saving Coins

The player can save any coins he does not spend on equipment for future races in a career, provided he does not get killed.

3) Order of Purchase and Limitations on Quantity

Some extras can be bought multiple times for a single race. There are only so many counters for each of these items. The number available is the limitation on the number that can be brought into play (extra counter sheets are available, but it is suggested that the number provided be the limit for any game with 7 or fewer players).

Purchasing begins with the youngest player and proceeds by age order. In the event that a player wants to purchase an item which has already been "bought out," he can offer the current owner more coins than it is worth to buy it from him, or can "make a deal" about how the race will go (use your imagination here). If a player sells something he previously bought and ends up with coins he still wants to spend, he can spend them or save them as desired, after all players have had a chance to make their first purchases.

4) War Chariots

Cost: 2 Coins (Single purchase per player only)

Effects: These give benefits in ramming. War Chariots take more damage than other Chariots before becoming wrecks (15 instead of 10). Use the War Chariot counter instead of your regular Chariot.

Play Note: *War Chariots can be useful, but can be a double-edged sword. Some players find the extra ability to ram others too much of a temptation. While they are having fun running into every target in sight, they accumulate Turn Chits which require them to slow down (or hard whip to keep up). The result gives the player the idea that the thing is just too slow. Players should use the ramming ability sparingly and they'll get better results.*

5) Spare Whips

Cost: 1 Coin each (Multiple purchases allowed)

Effects: These are spares carried in the Chariot in case the player loses his "free" one.

Play Note: *A spare whip can be very valuable if you lose your original issue whip. Running the race with only your reins is difficult and not as much fun!*

6) Weapons

Cost: 1 Coin each (Multiple purchases allowed)

Effects

There are four of these: Sling, Sword, Trident, and Net. Weapons can only be used on other Drivers, never against the Teams. Weapons discarded on the track never damage Chariots, but can be picked up and used freely. All weapons (except the Sling) may only be used when two Chariots move adjacent to each other, or Chariots begin movement adjacent (no weapons can be used before a Chariot crosses the start line). Weapons can only be used on Control Settings that display that weapon's icon. Use the Weapons Table on the map to determine the effects of each attack.

A) Sling Rules

These can "fire" up to two spaces in any direction any time during the Move. Each sling comes with **six** shots. Once these are used up, the sling can no longer be used. Only one shot may be made per target per move.

B) Net Rules

A player armed with a net follows the attack procedure listed on the Weapons Table. If the target Driver is knocked off his Chariot, the net goes with him. He spends the next move getting out of the net (and cannot yet run). Once out of the net, he runs normally and has the net in his hands ready to use.

Play Note: *Weapons can be a lot of fun, though many players prefer their normal whip over the more "exotic" ones. Nets are nice (as they tend to knock players off their Chariots, which puts unmanned Chariots and running Drivers into the mix). The sling is cool because of the multiple shots available and range, but they have a low hit probability. The sword is good because of the high chance of hit and lethality.*

7) Talented Drivers

Cost: 3 Coins (Single purchase only) There are no counters for this, but any player can buy one). A talented Driver is free if earned in a career.

Effects: You get a +1 on all rolls on the Skid Table.

8) Drugged Opponent Teams

Cost: 2 Coins

Effects: The "potion" can only be used against one opposing Team. If used on a Team, give that Team 4 Fatigue Points before the game begins. That Team can never recover below 4 Fatigue Points.

9) Sabotage

Cost: 1 Coin each (Multiple purchases allowed. Use Damage Point counters for this.)

Effects: For each coin spent, give one Damage Marker to the "target" player's Chariot. Buy as many as you like. You can use them against any Chariots.

10) Fresh Horses

Cost: 1 Coin (Single purchase only) (No counter for this, any player can buy one...)

Effects: You have 6 free Fatigue point reductions. You may use one of these at a time (max) and may use them any time during the game. Use must be declared as the first thing in the player's move. When a Fresh Team is drugged, the two purchases cancel each other out.

11) Appeal to the Gods

Cost: 2 Coins

Effects: This can be used **Six** times during the game. In any case where any die roll (yours or another player's) made is not to your liking, you can re-roll it. Each time you do this counts against your three try total and you can use another re-roll on the same roll again if the second (third?) roll is still something you do not like.

12) Entertainment the Night Before

Cost: 1 Coin each (can only be inflicted once per game on a given Driver)

Effects: You pay to keep the opponent Driver up all the night before the race...he arrives at the Hippodrome late, tired, and hung-over. Give him a -1 to all his Skid Table rolls (which directly cancels out the Talented Driver effect, if applicable). **Four times** during the game, the player who paid for this "servicing" can reduce the targeted player's Control selection from Hard Whip to regular Whip.

C) Career Game

A career game of **Circus Minimus** is any set of races that follow the career of any Driver(s). Any number of Drivers in a race may be pursuing careers, at each player's choice. The goal is to gather enough prize money to buy your Driver's freedom. You gather money by saving what you don't spend on equipment or by collecting the winner's purse.

Any player can follow a career, even if others in the same game have nothing to do with it. Simply name your Driver and follow his career until he wins (gains his freedom) or is killed. A Driver can continue a career if he does not finish a race (provided he is not killed).

Equipment or extras bought for any race do not carry over from one race to the next, nor do Driver injuries, Chariot damage, or Fatigue. The only things the Driver can carry to the next race is any coins he has saved and automatic talent if that has been earned.

1) Winner's Purse

The winner of any race gains an additional **five** coins.

2) Killer's Purse

The player finishing the race with the greatest number of dead opposing Drivers to his "credit" gains an additional **three** coins. (A player can be eligible for both prizes.)

3) Automatic Talent

After winning two races, a Driver involved in a career automatically gets "Talented Driver" for free in every subsequent race.

4) Dead Men Keep No Coins

When your Driver dies, his career ends. Any coins he has saved are gone for good.

5) Buying Freedom (Winning a Career)

A Driver wins a career when he has saved 25 coins.

D) Embellishment

Many players of this game came forward wanting to add this or that additional effect. In my mind, these things, while all potentially adding "realism," cumulatively dragged the game down into the murk of difficult play. The concepts behind this game are simplicity, speed, and fun. Adding a load of minor modifiers and effects would destroy that goal for little gain (especially if **all** suggestions were taken).

That said, if **you** want to add any effects to salt the game to your own personal taste (not caring if some other guy halfway around the world likes or wants it), have at it. I would suggest that for tournament play, use only those rules here in black and white, without any house rules.

Optional Rules

A) Advanced Chariot Capture Rules

These are optional, use them instead of the regular rules for chariot jumping/capture if you like (we all find them to be a great hoot). In any case where a dismounted charioteer tries to get aboard another manned chariot (by jumping off the median or during the corpse move (moving the two spaces available to the running guy), roll one die to see if the attempt was successful. On a 5 or 6, the running charioteer successfully mounts the chariot (original driver remains in place) on any other roll, he is simply in that space, dismounted as before. There is no limit to the number of charioteers that can be in one chariot (but I've never seen more than two...). The chariot_s owner (the guy driving it when somebody jumps in) continues to drive his chariot normally (beware of the weapon restrictions based on Control selection...you can choose hard whip, just don't expect to use your sword, too). The chariot behaves normally for the owning player. During each move with such an arrangement in play, the corpse attacks once in his move (or he can jump off and give up). During the chariot_s move, the driver moves normally, can attack to running guy once, or can jump off himself. If (when?) one of the two guys gets killed in the fistfight, drop the corpse on the track at that point. The fistfight continues each move until someone is killed or gives up.

Design Notes

The genesis of this game was the method used in the old Avalon Hill game **Circus Maximus**. That game attempted to do many things in much greater detail than you see here. When I played that game I was struck by how much effort was being used for so little gain. Although loaded with rather detailed subsystems, simple things (such as the basic

laws of physics) were completely ignored. The game might have been state of the art 20 years ago, but I felt this subject could be done better.

Noting these things and working on my own theories of Control based Design, I decided to create a Design for Control game to show a chariot race. Design for Control is a term I coined to describe the layout of my computer-based Air Combat game (**ACM**, available for no fee at www.tgamers.com) The player has a handful of controls to adjust and all other game effects happen based on those selections. This system allows players to “run” various vehicles (aircraft in **ACM**, chariots here) with tactics limited only by the player’s imaginative use of those controls. It allows the player to feel more like the driver or pilot, but to do so very simply. To accent the difference of emphasis between my game and the older one, I chose the antithetical name—**Circus Minimus**.

The design effort was aimed at streamlining and gaining as much effect for as little effort as possible. The emphasis during play-testing was on covering the odd events that might happen. Rules such as the Cockiness and Underdog rules exist to keep the pack together, as much of the game’s fun comes from the interaction between the players and their chariots.

Have fun, because **here** that is the whole point!