

Jousting

Jousting is seen as the highest form of chivalry and knighthood. It is a contest of bravery and battle prowess. Most jousting tournaments are held in public arenas and have very nuanced rules as described below.

Gameplay Mechanic

Necessary Equipment

Far more than a saddled horse and lance are required to be a proper joust. Knights must be adorned in plate armor to participate, half plate armor is allowed though frowned upon and seen as a sign of a poor knight. A sturdy shield is also a requirement. Knights must also purchase at their own expense enough tournament lances to complete a contest. (Described below) In addition knights are expected to have an additional melee weapon to resolve draws.

Horses are of vast importance to jousting. A warhorse is a must. This horse must be equipped with a bit and bridle, a military saddle, and it is customary to armor the horse in splint mail or heavier barding. The wealthiest of Lords often pay for much more elaborate armor for their mounts.

A squire is also seen as a necessity. If the knight does not have an follower or companion to fill this role, squires are treated as skilled hirelings.

In addition a listing fee is a common occurrence, and are required to enter a tournament.

New Equipment

Tournament Lance

Cost: 3gp

Damage: d6-3 bludgeoning damage.

Weight: 6 pounds.

Reach: Special

Special- Tournament lances may be used one hand while mounted. If they inflict damage they are instantly broken and useless.

Rules for Jousting

A proper joust generally consists of four tilts. Where the two knights mounted charge each other and attempt to strike their opponent breaking lances, and ideally knocking them off their horse. Each tilt is scored as follows.

Scoring:

1 point scored for breaking a lance on an opponent (hitting and damaging opponent).

2 points scored for striking an opponent in their helm (a critical hit).

3 points scored for unhorsing an opponent, which also generally results in an automatic victory (Rider taking damage and failing an Athletics check of 8+damage is unseated).

If both opponents are unhorsed, they determine the winner is the knight with most points. In the event of a tie, the two knights engage in melee combat. Depending on the tournament, the length of these melees vary; some go until first blood, and some until unconsciousness.

Four tilts that do not result in any points is seen as a sign of poor knighthood, and generally both knights are considered to have lost the round.

Four tilts that end in a tie can be resolved by a melee, much like if both contestants were dismounted.

A knight that intentionally injures another's horse is disqualified, and it is customary to offer his own horse as repayment.

Mechanics for Running the Joust

The Charge: To begin a joust there is no initiative roll, attacks and checks are considered to happen simultaneously. However knights must spur their steeds into a charge. This is done making a dc 10 animal handling check. If one side succeeds in the check and the other fails the successor will make their attack with advantage. There is no advantage if neither side fails this check, or if both side succeed in this check.

The Strike: Each side makes an standard attack roll versus the other side's armor class. If they come within two of the opponent's armor class they struck the shield breaking their lance but not requiring a check to see if the opponent remains mounted, this scores the attacker a point. If they strike the armor class they then roll damage. (d6-3 + strength bonus) The opponent then takes the damage and will have to make a check to stay in the saddle. Regardless of the outcome of the ride check this will keep score the attacker a point. If the results were a critical hit, they have successfully attacked the helm. Double the damage dice as usual, and for striking the helm this nets the attacker at least two points.

If an attacker rolls a 1, they have struck the opponent's mount. Roll a second attack and if this is successful versus the horse's armor class, inflict the damage to the horse. Such attackers are generally disqualified and have to hand over their own mount as repayment.

Staying in the Saddle Check:

If a rider is ever reduced to zero hit points he automatically fails this step. If a rider is struck he must roll an Athletics check versus the difficulty of 8 + the damage he was dealt. If he succeeds the check, he stays in the saddle, if he fails he is thrown to the ground and takes 1d6 damage. If a knight successfully dismounts his opponent and stays on his own steed he is declared the victor.

Both knights dismounted:

If both knights are dismounted, and still rise to their feet, whoever has more points at the moment is declared the winner. If the score is tied the command is given to "Draw steel!" This means both knights are to draw their melee weapons and engage the enemy. Initiative is rolled as usual. These melees continue until one side yields or the tournament lord declares the conditions of melee have been met. These could include the first to successfully damage their opponent, to bloody an opponent (bring below half hit points), or to knock an opponent unconscious.

Alternate Rules

Brackets: Many tournaments are set up in bracket format, leading to an eventual tournament champion.

Rest between rounds: In lengthy tournaments victors could sustain quite a bit of damage. Short rests and hit points are considered the only acceptable means of recovery. Magic used for these purposes is considered unchivalrous and if discovered, will generally disqualify a competitor. Severely weakened knights are expected to withdraw.

Claiming Rights: Some more high stakes tournaments grant the victor to claim an item from their opponent. Standard claiming rights are typically one of the following: melee weapon, armor, war horse, or barding.

"It's personal!": Some jousts are not for sport but to resolve a dispute of honor. Nobles sometimes make these sorts of challenges in severe situations. In personal matches standard lances may be used. These matches generally end when an opponent has been unhorsed. If both sides are unhorsed they melee sometimes till death.