



Corrida!

Bullfighting in Estalia

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BULLFIGHTING IN ESTALIA

Steeped in tradition and machismo, drawing crowds of eager spectators, nobles and commoners alike, the *corrida* (bullfight) is a popular form of entertainment in Estalia, a show, a display where the death of the bull is inevitable, but the artistry leading up to its death is the spectacle.

From Bilbali to Magritta, in city and town alike, *plaza de toros* (bullrings) exist, large circular arenas of packed sand or dirt surrounded by large wooden fences, rows of wooden benches, and canopied seating boxes for the influential and well-to-do. Used much of the time as cattle markets, they are cleared for each *corrida*, shades erected over some benches, a *corrida* always starting in late afternoon. The organisers of the *corrida* make their monies by charging for seating according to closeness to the arena, the provision of shade, the possible hire of a small cushion to make seating more comfortable, and the purchase of refreshments or red roses to throw at the matador in appreciation. Box seats are expensive, and generally one place is always reserved for the most powerful local noble.

Teams of bullfighters participate in a *corrida*, attempting to win admiration, fame, and perhaps noble sponsorship, the bullfighting team always consisting of a strict membership, set by tradition. The star of the team is the Matador, the bullfighter equipped with cape and fencing sword who enters the field last and is responsible for despatching the bull with as much style as possible. Supporting the Matador are three Banderilleros — bullfighters wielding a pair of *banderillas* (decorative darts) each, who enrage and weaken the bull prior to the Matador's entry — and two Picadors, mounted spear-wielding bullfighters who engage the bull first to harry and anger it.

Each *corrida* follows a time-honoured series of events, the ritual part of the show itself.

Firstly, the bullfighting team enters the *plaza de toros*, parading and saluting to the cheers and adulation of the crowd, many throwing red roses into the crowd in appreciation of their support in the display yet to come.

When the team leaves the plaza, only the Picadors remain, and the bull is released into the plaza to the fanfare of trumpets and cheers of the crowd. The Picadors ride around the plaza, working together to goad and anger the bull, prodding it with their spears (*vara*), while also deftly attempting to avoid its angered

charges. Each Picador is forbidden to pierce the bull's flesh anywhere but in the thick muscle on the back of its neck, and must be careful not to weaken the bull with more than one such strike or too strong a strike lest the show end to the crowd's derision. Lacking in armour as they do, it is not uncommon for the Picador's horses to be gored, or the Picador's themselves thrown or trampled.

As the Picadors leave, the Banderilleros enter, each intent on infuriating the bull further and piercing the thick neck muscle of the bull with a pair of *banderillas*. Lacking defensive capes or horses, Banderilleros may flee the plaza if their attacks fail or they are injured, with no great shame or loss of face. Again, as with the Picadors, the Banderilleros must take care only to weaken the bull and not to slay it.

Finally, to the jubilation of the *aficionados*, the Matador enters the plaza, a lone figure against the bull, armed only at first with the large, two-handed *capote*, a yellow and purple or red cape. For a handful of minutes the Matador is expected to display, grace, control, and style in evading the charges of the bull with dramatic flourishes of the *capote*. Satisfied with the artistic display of their prowess, the Matador finally casts aside the *capote* and picks up the *espada* (fencing sword) and *muleta* (small red cape supported by a stick) to bring an end to the show with the bull's death, dedicating the bull's death to an individual or the audience as a whole. Taunting the bull into one or more fatal charges, the Matador evades them and strikes, death by a single quick thrust being considered the ultimate expression of skill. Should the Matador be seriously injured or otherwise incapacitated, the rest of the team re-enter the plaza to finish the bull and retrieve the Matador; it is considered shameful for a Matador to flee the bull.

If the Matador kills the bull cleanly and demonstrates great *panache* in doing so, the audience will throw red roses into the plaza and implore the most important spectator to award the matador, granting them an ear, two ears, or a tail, cut from the bull, in accordance with the magnificence of the display. The greatest triumph, however, is for the impassioned Estalians to run into the plaza themselves and bear the Matador out of the plaza atop their shoulders.

The bull's carcass is quickly removed from the plaza, dragged out by horses to be sold in the local market or by local butchers, the worth of its meat determined by the strength the bull evidenced.

BASIC CAREERS

— Banderillero —

— Banderillero Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+10%	—	—	+5%	+15%	—	+10%	+5%

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FB
—	+2	—	—	—	—	—	—

Skills: Common Knowledge (Estalia), Dodge Blow, Heal, Performer (Dancer), Speak Language (Estalian)

Talents: Ambidextrous or Hardy, Flee! or Swashbuckler, Lightning Reflexes, Stout-Hearted

Trappings: Pair of Banderillas, Traje de Luces (Suit of Lights)

Career Entries: Entertainer, Estalian Diestro, Peasant, Picador

Career Exits: Entertainer, Matador, Picador, Protagonist

Note: If you are rolling randomly for your Starting Career, you can substitute Banderillero for Militiaman with your GM's permission. If this is your Starting Career, you are from Estalia, but have come to the Empire to seek adventure.

— Picador —

— Picador Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+10%	—	—	+5%	+10%	—	+10%	+5%

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FB
—	+2	—	—	—	g	—	—

Skills: Animal Care, Animal Training or Charm Animal, Common Knowledge (Estalia), Heal, Ride, Speak Language (Estalian)

Talents: Lightning Reflexes, Stout-Hearted, Trick Riding

Trappings: Riding Horse with Saddle and

Harness, Traje de Luces (Suit of Lights), Vara (Spear), Wide-Brimmed Hat

Career Entries: Banderillero, Drover, Entertainer, Peasant

Career Exits: Banderillero, Drover, Entertainer, Mercenary, Outrider

Note: If you are rolling randomly for your Starting Career, you can substitute Picador for Messenger with your GM's permission. If this is your Starting Career, you are from Estalia, but have come to the Empire to seek adventure.

ADVANCED CAREERS

— Matador —

— Matador Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+20%	—	+5%	+10%	+30%	+5%	+20%	+10%

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FB
—	+6	—	—	—	—	—	—

Skills: Charm, Dodge Blow, Heal, Performer (Dancer)

Talents: Ambidextrous, Hardy, Public Speaking, Specialist Weapon Group (Cloak), Specialist Weapon Group (Fencing), Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Suave, Swashbuckler, Very Resilient

Trappings: Capote (Large Yellow and Red or Purple Cape), Dozen Red Roses, Espada (Fencing Sword), Muleta (Small red Cape supported with a stick), Puntillo (Dagger used to administer the coup de grace to an incapacitated bull), Traje de Luces (Suit of Lights)

Career Entries: Banderillero

Career Exits: Duellist

NEW EQUIPMENT

Banderilla: The weapon of a Banderillero, a banderilla is a short, brightly-painted wooden shaft tipped with a sharp metal point. It is held in one hand and used to stab.

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Name	Cost	Enc	Group	Damage	Qualities	Availability
Banderilla	1gc	20	Ordinary	SB-3	None	Scarce
Capote	10gc	20	Cloak	n/a	Special	Scarce
Cloak	5gc	10	Cloak	n/a	Defensive* Snare* Special	Plentiful
Muleta	6gc	10	Cloak	n/a	Defensive* Special	Scarce

Capote: Wielded in both hands, the capote is the large yellow and red or purple cape used by Matadors to display their prowess in dodging the violent charges of an enraged bull. Use of the capote in skilled hands provides a +10% bonus to Dodge Blow Skill Tests.

Cloak: In some duelling schools of Estalia and Tilea, the cloak is used in the off-hand as a defensive tool, to obfuscate attacks, and as a rudimentary entangling device. In skilled hands it provides a +5% bonus to the Opposed Weapon Skill test for the Feint action. Use of its Defensive Quality only provides a +5% bonus instead of the usual +10%, and when used to Snare, the target only needs to take a full action to remove the cloak, no Strength or Agility Test required.

Muleta: A muleta is the small red cape wielded in the off-hand by Matadors, supported by a stick, used to lure the bull and distract it, aiding evasion. In skilled hands it provides a +5% bonus to the Opposed Weapon Skill test for the Feint action, and provides a +5% bonus to Dodge Blow Skill Tests. Use of its Defensive Quality only provides a +5% bonus instead of the usual +10%.

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Horns

Slaughter Margin: Average

NEW ANIMAL

– Bull –

— Bull Statistics —

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33%	0%	45%	46%	30%	10%	20%	0%

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FB
1	18	4	4	6	0	0	0

Skills: Perception, Swim

Talents: Keen Senses, Natural Weapons, Strike Mighty Blow

Special Rules:

Horns: When a Bull makes a charge attack, its horns count as having the Impact Quality.