

## **Official Batterack Rules**

### **Preamble**

Batterack is fierce foam fighting. The game simulates medieval combat, but uses foam-padded weapons to reduce pain and injury. Players generally divide into teams and fight until one side is eliminated; however, there are many different competitive scenarios that use the same rules.

### **Article 1: Combat Rules**

#### **Section 1: Weapons**

Weapons used in Batterack should be safe. Generally, Batterack weapons are also legal in other foam-based games. As a basic rule, weapons should have 2/3 of their length covered in padding. Allowed cores include PVC, bamboo, kite spar, and graphite golf clubs. The ends of the core should be made dull and unable to cut into padding. One way to do this is to cap each end with a PVC slip cap. The diameter of the padded weapon should be at least 2.5 inches. The diameter prevents the weapon from entering an eye socket. Both ends of the weapon should have 1.5 inches, or more, of camp pad (closed-cell polyethylene) foam. The padded sections of weapons should be covered in opaque fabric.

A sword that is less than or equal to 18" in length is called a dagger. A sword that is between 18" and 36" is a short sword. A sword between 36" and 48" is a long sword.

Weapons longer than 48" are pole arms. Double-bladed weapons are also allowed, but should have at least 1/3 padded on each side. Both of these weapon types may be restricted based on the scenario.

There is an additional weapon: magic ball. A magic ball should be about 4" in diameter, made primarily of foam, and not cause injury. It should be heavy enough that the target can feel that they were hit. A magic ball is the only weapon that may be thrown. A magic ball causes hits just like any other weapon.

A player may only carry two weapons, or one weapon and a shield, onto the battlefield. A player may only carry one item in each hand.

#### **Section 2: Shields**

Shields need to be safe to use. A player may use only one shield at a time, and may not throw it or bash other players with it. If the shield has a solid core like plywood or boogie board foam, it must be padded with at least 1" of foam on all exposed sides (non-interior). A shield made using plank foam does not need additional padding. All exposed sides of the shield should be covered with fabric, regardless of the core used. Shields may not be thrown.

#### **Section 3: Hits**

A limb hit can be on an arm or a leg. Each leg can only be hit, or wounded, once. Additional hits on that leg do not count. A leg starts at the thigh, and ends at the foot. If a foot is on the ground, it does not count as a hit. A hit on the hip counts as a body hit, not a limb hit. An arm may be hit more than once. A second hit on the same arm counts as a second limb hit. An arm starts just below the shoulder (starting with the humerus bone) and extends to the hand. A hand on your own weapon does not count as a hit. Grabbing another player's weapon instantly results in death.

A hit on the torso from the shoulders to the hips counts as a body hit. Hits that connect with the neck or head do not count, even if they hit a valid location first. Hitting players in the head is dangerous and is discouraged in Batterack. If a player is hit in the head, they are allowed to step away from combat for as long as they need to recover. The same rule applies to any injury. Once they are ready, the player can return to the combat without penalty.

The goal of any hit is to make contact, not harm the target player. The contact should be firm enough that the recipient knows they have been hit, but it should not inflict pain.

When an arm is wounded, it should be placed behind the player's back and not used. Any objects held by the wounded arm should be dropped to the ground, and cannot be directly transferred to the other arm or hand.

When a leg is wounded, the knee of the wounded leg should be placed on the ground. If physical limitations prevent the player from placing a knee on the ground, then the knee should be locked instead. The purpose is to simulate the loss of the leg; so, the wounded leg should not be used for leaping. Hopping around on one leg is dangerous and is not a valid way to represent a wounded leg.

#### **Section 4: Death in Batterack**

If you receive two limb hits, or one body hit, you are dead. Once you are dead, you should place your weapon or hand on your head to signal to the other players that you are out. You should then move out-of-bounds, and avoid obstructing the on-going combat.

#### **Section 5: Illegal Hits**

Only padded portions of a weapon are legal for hitting. If you hit another player with an unpadded portion, the hit does not count, and the striking player is dead. If multiple illegal hits are likely with a weapon, it should not be used in Batterack.

### **Article 2: Combat Scenarios**

Combat scenarios, also referred to as battle games, can vary greatly in Batterack. This is a short guide to the scenarios that create variety in Batterack.

#### **Section 1: Combat Scenario Elements**

**Death** is an important part of every scenario is death. How long do players stay dead? Do players have unlimited lives, or only one? If the object of your scenario is eliminating the other team, then it might make sense to not allow players to return from death. If your scenario has a different kind of objective, then you may only need to adjust the number of seconds a player remains dead.

It is acceptable to restrict the **Weapons** that are appropriate for your scenario. You can even have different restrictions for different teams or specific players.

The **Objective** is the most important part of the scenario. The objective can be almost anything. A few examples have been included below. These examples can be modified to create a wide variety of scenarios.

#### **Section 2: Standard Batterack Scenarios**

In addition to these scenarios, an unlimited number of variations and other games can be played using the basic Batterack rules. When using a non-standard scenario, please make sure all of the players know the rules you are going to be using.

**Ditch / Civil War:** The object is to kill the opposing team. Split the players into two equal teams. Players have only one life. The round ends when only one team is alive. The first killed or wounded player from the winning team joins the losing team, and the game is restarted.

**Warlord:** The goal is to become the only warlord. Each player starts on his own team. When a player is killed, he joins the team of the player who killed him. If the warlord of the team is killed, the team is disbanded and all of the members are on their own again. The game ends when all of the players are on the same team. In this game, dead players return to the game after a count of 10.

**Ogre / Weapon Treasure:** The goal is to acquire a weapon and kill the other players (treasure seekers). All of the weapons are placed in the middle of the battlefield. This objective works best if a circle is created using cones or rope. The circle size can vary, but a 20' diameter is a good start. One player is assigned to be the guardian of the weapon treasure (ogre). The guardian may start with whatever weapons he wants. The other players (treasure seekers) do not start with a weapon. The guardian should be restricted to a 5' diameter circle. If a circle is not available, you can have the guardian keep one foot in the middle. The treasure seekers do not need to kill the guardian to win. The guardian tries to kill the players to protect the treasure. Players have only one life. The round ends when there is only one treasure seeker alive. The winning player becomes the guardian for the next round.

**Rugby:** Mark off a small rectangular field. 15' by 30' is good starting size, but adjust it based on the number of players. Each end of the field is a goal line. Place a football in the center of the field. The goal is to carry the football across the goal line defended by the opposing team. The first team to score three goals wins. When a team scores, reset the ball to the center of the field. When a player is killed, he should quickly leave the field and immediately return alive from his own goal line. If this makes scoring impossible, have the players count to 10 before returning to the battle. The ball may be carried or passed laterally. The ball cannot be passed forward. You cannot carry the ball in the same hand as you are carrying a weapon. Each player may have one sword that is 48" or less in length. Shields and other weapons are not permitted.

**Round Robin:** This is a game designed for three players. The players start in a triangle. The goal is to kill the player to your right. If that player dies, you win the game regardless of who killed him.

**Hero:** Divide the players into four groups. The first group is the hero group. The heroes may use any combination of weapons they like; however, the other three groups (the bad guys) are limited to a single sword that is 48" or less in length. The bad guys also die from a single hit. The goal of the heroes is to kill all of the bad guys. The bad guys goal is to kill the heroes. The heroes engage one group of bad guys at a time. Once a group of bad guys is killed, the next group of bad guys may attack. The heroes keep any wounds they receive through each group of bad guys. Once the heroes succeed or are killed the round is over. Rotate the groups and play another round. Bad guys #1 become the heroes. Bad guys #2 become bad guys #1. Bad guys #3 become bad guys #2. Heroes become bad guys #3. The games ends when each group has had a chance to be the heroes.

**Ring the Bell / Capture the Flag:** Split the players into two or more teams. Each team has a base item (bell). When a player is killed, they should leave the field, count to 10, and then return to their bell/base alive. If playing Capture the Flag, then each team also has a flag at their base. The goal is to carry your opposing teams flag to your base while your own flag is there. Flags must be carried in an empty hand and player cannot have a shield on that arm. If playing Ring the Bell, the goal is simply to strike the opposing teams bell. After each point, the teams return to their own base before starting the next round. The first team to three points wins the game.

### **Article 3: Non-Combat Rules**

#### **Section 1: Names and Role-playing**

Players in Batterack use their real names and do not role-play a fictional persona. Players can earn the title of knight (or lady), or serve in other offices in their land. Games will sometimes have a fictional theme, but there is no alternate reality in Batterack.

#### **Section 2: Costumes**

Costumes are not required when playing Batterack. Please do not mock players who choose to wear costumes. Knights would often wear tabards over their armor that bore their unique heraldry device, and this practice is acceptable in Batterack. If you choose to wear a costume, costumes or clothing with a medieval Irish feel or style are encouraged. Any real armor worn should be safe and not pose a danger to other players. Real armor does not have any game effect.

### **Section 3: Chapters**

To create a new Batterack chapter (at least officially), you need a sponsor chapter. The sponsor chapter has the duty of helping you get started with Batterack. The sponsor chapter also vouches for the safety, stability, and adherence to the rules in your new chapter. Your sponsor will contact the Chancellor to officially add your chapter. Generally, you should have at least four regular members of your group before you become an official chapter of Batterack.

When naming your chapter, avoid using the name of the city you are in because it can create confusion. Names with an Irish feel or meaning are encouraged. As an example, rather than use “Barony of Maricopa”, you can use “Barony of Greann” or “Barony of Greann in Maricopa”. All new chapters begin as a barony and their monarchs (chapter presidents) as barons.

Batterack chapters can overlap geographically because the chapter is simply the people who gather together to play Batterack.

When your chapter sponsors a new chapter, the chapter is promoted to a county and its monarch becomes a count. When your chapter, or chapters you have sponsored, sponsor three lands, the chapter is promoted to a duchy and its monarch becomes a duke. When that number reaches seven, the chapter is promoted to a principality and its monarch becomes a prince. When that number reaches fifteen, the chapter is promoted to a kingdom and its monarch becomes a king.

The duty to help your sponsored chapters, including monitoring safety and adherence to the rules, does not end when the sponsored chapter becomes an official chapter of Batterack.

### **Annual Tournament**

Each chapter of Batterack should hold an annual tournament. If possible, a feast should accompany the tournament. The tournament is part of the election of a new Council of Knights and Monarch.

### **Section 4: Offices**

#### **Knight or Lady**

This is a title earned by winning at least one match in the annual tournament. The title is for one year, or until the next annual tournament. Knights and Ladies are members of the Council of Knights and eligible to vote for the monarch.

#### **Champion**

This title is awarded to the winner of the annual tournament. This title is for one year, or until the next annual tournament. The champion presides over the election of the new monarch after the annual tournament, and has two votes in that election.

#### **Captain of the Guard**

This office is appointed by the monarch. The Captain of the Guard is in charge of the physical safety of the land. The primary focus of that is making sure equipment used on the field is safe, and is being used safely.

### **Chamberlain**

This office is appointed by the monarch. The Chamberlain is in charge of scheduling and running events. The Chamberlain will also be in charge of record-keeping and finances as those duties become needed.

### **Monarch (Chapter President)**

This office is elected by the Council of Knights after the annual tournament. This office is generally for one year, or until the next tournament. The Monarch has all of the duties of the Captain of the Guard and the Chamberlain, and delegates those duties as he sees fit.

### **Chancellor**

This office is appointed by the previous Chancellor. This office is for an indefinite period of time. This office is not specific to an individual chapter. The Chancellor is in charge of maintaining the rules of Batterack and the main Batterack web site. The Chancellor has no special authority within individual chapters.

### **Section 5: Batterack for Younger Players**

Anyone can play Batterack unofficially; however, it is possible for players younger than 14 to officially participate in Batterack. This requires parent volunteers to coordinate and supervise events and battles. Weapons are limited to short swords which are described above.

Junior Batterack is for players from 10 to 13 years old. A Junior Batterack chapter has all of the same offices as a regular chapter, except the title of knight is replaced with squire.

Little Batterack is for players under 10 years old. A Little Batterack chapter has all of the same offices as a regular chapter, except the title of knight is replaced with page.

## **Article 4: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why is the game called Batterack?**

Bataireacht is an Irish word that describes the martial arts of stick-fighting. This stick-fighting was done at festivals, weddings, and other social gatherings as sport. This game is a simplified and Americanized form of that Irish martial art; so, its name is a simplified and Americanized form of bataireacht.

### **What is the symbol of Batterack?**

The gold cudgel-harp on a green field is based on the flag of Leinster. The flag of Leinster is a symbol of the entire island of Ireland and Irish nationalism. The Batterack symbol, in a similar fashion, represents all of the lands of Batterack.

### **Is Batterack safe to play?**

The players of Batterack strive to make the game safe to play. Accidents and injuries may occur as part of playing Batterack. By participating in Batterack, you assume the risk of injury. Before playing Batterack, you should determine if you have any physical or health conditions that would make playing Batterack more dangerous. Children under 14 should not play Batterack with those 14 and older.

### **Where is the official Batterack website?**

The official Batterack website is [www.batterack.com](http://www.batterack.com).

**What does the draft number mean?**

Each time a change is made to the Official Batterack Rules, the draft number is increased by 1. These can be major, minor, or typographical changes. If you see a copy of the rules with a higher draft number, that copy supersedes earlier drafts.