



FAMILIA GLADIATORIA

DESCRIPTION OF *EVENTUM* CARDS: SPOTLIGHTS ON the *GLADIATURA*

LATIN GLOSSARY

Italic type indicate latin words.

We chose to keep 'latin language' terms to bring back to life the feel of this ancient time, and to allow players to know the battle-cries that were shouted from the Imperial podium or from the sands of the *Colosseum*. To avoid unnecessary complications and to facilitate the understanding of these terms we chose to no use latin declension.

- *armatura*: a set of offensive and defensive equipment and fencing techniques that distinguish the different gladiator classes;
- *auctoratus*: a free roman citizen who has renounced his freedom to gladiator;
- *captivus*: a prisoner of war;
- *comprobatio*: the approval of the crowd in a gladiator's duel;
- *damnatus*: a felon convicted to become a gladiator;
- *editor*: a magistrate or even the Emperor himself, the *editor* is the patron offering the spectacle to the people, hiring gladiators and paying them with his own coins;
- *familia Gladiatoria*: the company, the staff and gladiators owned by a single *lanista* and working in the same *ludus*;
- *forum*: the marketplace, the public square, the center of business, news and opportunities;
- *gladiator*: the leading fighter of the arena, the gladiator is the hero and the victim of the arena;
- *lanista*: the owner and manager of a *ludus*;
- *ludus*: the school-barracks in which the Gladiators are trained;
- *munus*: the term means the "offer" and it is a gladiatorial show given by a magistrate (*editor*) to the people;
- *munera*: plural term for *munus*;
- *primus palus*: an experienced gladiator, an example for his brothers in the *ludus*. He was usually called *primus palus* (literally "first post") probably because this gladiator trained in front of his fellow gladiators to show his fencing techniques;
- *pugna*: a duel between two gladiators fighting in the arena (literally *pugna* means "battle");
- *rudis*: the stick of power, wielded also by the legion centurions. It was traditionally a vine stick;
- *servus*: a slave;
- *stantes missi*: two gladiators both declared winners in a duel were called *stantes missi*, which means "dismissed standing";
- *tiro*: a rookie, a gladiator with little or no arena experience;
- *veteranus*: an expert gladiator who has already faced a number of duels: his fame begins to spread;
- *virtus*: the valor, literally the quality of the *vir* (the man).

The Roman numbers:

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

EVENTUM CARDS

In *MUNERA: FAMILIA GLADIATORIA* 45 *EVENTUM* cards are used. Some of them are self-explanatory and represent events easy to understand, some others need further explanations. These are listed below with the appropriate description.



Figures of the underworld

There were two figures in the arena that personified the characters of the Myth: Charon and Hermes Psychopomp, the carriers of souls. They were charged to ensure the death of gladiators, sentenced by the crowd: the bodies of condemned gladiators were beaten with an iron stick and, if the loser still stirred, a club was used to end his agony.

Last supper

The night before fighting, the games' patron used to host a banquet (*cena libera* in latin) during which he showed the Gladiators that would fight on the next day. During this event the *lanista* had the opportunity to show his champions.

Gladiators Equites

Always present at the beginning of a gladiator show, the *equites* gladiators originated from the soldiers named *celeres* (fast): agile light infantry fighting both on horseback and on foot. These gladiators usually began duelling horseback with spears, but ended on foot with blade and shield.

The rules of the arena

Established by Emperor *Augustus*, these laws (*leges gladiatoriae* in latin) were created to form a set of rules for gladiator fights, to make them more balanced and as safe as possible: the gladiator was supposed to bring his adversary to the point of surrender and let the public choose between the life or death of the defeated. The *arbiter*'s role is to ensure the observance of these laws.

Morituri

If the gladiator was condemned by the sentence of the crowd, not only was he supposed to die without question or hesitation, but he was actually expected to kill himself with the help of the winning adversary. The death of the gladiator was in fact a suicide in which the winner participates as a simple support, helping the defeated to accomplish his tragic duty.

Riot between supporters

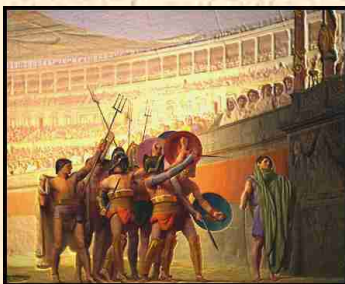
Just like today's football matches, there were raving fans in the ancient Roman Empire that rooted for a particular champion, *armatura* or *gymnasium*. Sometimes fans from opposing *gymnasiums* or gladiators could get so caught up in their support that fights would erupt between the two sides. Some spectacles even escalated into open riots, as happened during the games held in Pompeii in 59 A.D.

No hope

Sine missione (without escape) was the most lethal of all the arena's rules. It cancelled the possibility of *missio* (ie salvation) for the losers, which were always killed. The spectacles of this kind became increasingly common during the decadence of the Empire, while at the peak of its glory only 10% of defeated gladiators were sentenced to death by the crowd.

Suicide

Far from being an act of desperation, the suicide was, in ancient times, seen as the ultimate demonstration of independence and freedom, even for the highest-ranking citizens (such as Brutus and Cassius, murderers of Caesar). Unwilling to submit their lives to the sentence of the crowd, some gladiators proudly chose to commit suicide as a last gesture of rebellion, a bitter demonstration of freedom.



Sacramentum gladiatorum

This is the oath of the gladiators: "*uri, vinciri, verberari, ferroque necari*" (I swear to be branded with fire, to be bounded with chains, to be whipped by the rod and to be killed by the sword"). Once that oath uttered, every gladiator, regardless of his origin, became a voluntary actor of the arena's tragic spectacle.

Bustuarii Gladiators

The first gladiator duels took place in front of a funeral pyre to honour the death of a noble citizen with blood. The *bustum* was the name of the funeral pyre and the gladiators who fought in front of it, outside of the arena's circuit, were known as *Butuarii*.

Insolvent debtor

One way to pay the debts was to sell the debtor himself as a slave to the creditor. If the creditor was a *lanista* and the debtor was a valid candidate, the latter could become a gladiator.

Noble birth

Sometimes the offspring of noble families decided to fight in the arena, craving for glory. Their names were sure to quickly pass from mouth to mouth among the spectators.

Disappointed editor

Whenever a fight ended too quickly, or if the winner proved himself particularly skilled, the *editor* could ask the winner to immediately fight a new adversary (and even more of them after the second).

Stingy editor

The *editor* always had to compensate financially the *lanista* every gladiator killed in his spectacle. As the costs for hosting a spectacle were often very high, sometimes the *editor* was incapable to bear further expenses. For this reason, although it was usual for the *editor* to follow the sentence of the crowd: he could decide to save a condemned gladiator.

Versatile gladiator

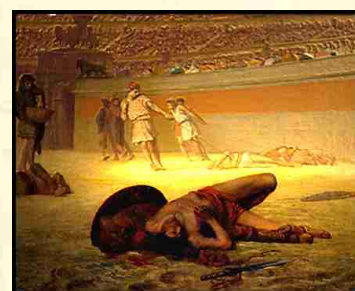
Though quite rare, it could happen that a gladiator proved himself particularly versatile in learning the fighting style of different classes, being able to enter the arena with different *armaturae*.

The spoils of the champion

When a great gladiator died in the arena, a part of his blood could be taken from his corpse as it was considered a powerful rejuvenating ointment. Everything that belonged to him became precious amulets, sold at a high price to desperate supporters or people looking for talismans.

Libellus gladiatorum

The *libellus gladiatorum* was the list of the gladiators and the description of events offered in an imminent spectacle. These announcements were often written (or painted) on the walls of the city that hosted the show.



Weddings with lupae

The presence of *lupae* (harlots) inside a *ludus* could sometimes lead to some stable unions with gladiators. The prospect of founding a family made sure the gladiators had something to fight for and made them more determined than others.

Sacrifice to Nemesis

Nemesis, daughter of Ocean and Night, was the deity of the arena and the gladiators turned to her for support.

Palm and crown

A glorious victory was sometimes rewarded by the editor with a gift, that honoured the winning gladiator, with symbolic prizes such as the palm branch and the laurel wreath as a mark of his fighting skills.



Freedom gained

A gladiator could win his freedom in the arena if he could prove himself worthy. In that case the *editor* rewarded him with freedom, dressing him with the *pileus*, a leather or canvas hat that had the symbolic value of freedom (the emancipated slaves wore this hat).

Pressed thumb

The gesture of pressed thumb is the one indicating to the winner to spare the loser. The gesture was done by making a fist, to indicate that the attack had to stop, thus averting the final blow.

Straight thumb

The straight thumb was the gesture condemning the loser to death. It was done by pointing the open hand aimed towards him, which was a signal to the winner of the fight, asking him to deliver the final blow.

Opening parade

The spectacles were preceded by a procession (in latin *pompa*) during which the *editor* was followed by the gladiators who were always equipped with the finest blades and gear, in order to showcase the importance and munificence of the magistrate to the crowd.

Sanavivaria gate

This was the name of the gate through which the surviving gladiators left the arena.

Velaria

A structure of cloth supported by pillars placed on the arena's top to protect the spectators from the sun during the warmest hours of day. In the *Colosseum* there was always a party of sailors from the imperial fleet assigned to operate these structures.

Uprising

Spartacus' uprising was a traumatic episode for Roman society. Having fled with a handful of gladiators, the fugitive organized a real army of slaves and waged a revolt that spread through Southern Italy and inflicted several defeats on Roman armies. Since then, surveillance became much more strict for all gladiators.

Victorious campaign

The victories of the military campaigns allowed the Romans to capture a large number of slaves. Many of these were professional warriors defeated in battle, perfect human material to be trained into magnificent gladiators.



The Emperor empties the prisons

During the largest spectacles, thousands of fighters were killed every day. To fulfill the blood lust of the arena sometimes the Emperors sent war prisoners to Gymnasiums, to replace the fallen gladiators.

Old enemies

There were many people at the borders of the Roman Empire who were sometimes fighting each other due to old rivalry. Only a strict discipline could force the athletes of the same Gymnasium to put aside the old hate and animosity they had towards each other before they took their gladiator's oath.



CREDITS: *Munera: Familia Gladiatoria* it's a game by ALBEPAVO

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