

# A ♦ S ♦ H ♦ E ♦ S

## RULES FOR ORGANIZED PLAY



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*hen the last Phoenixborn emerges screaming from the womb, a lust for war shall enter the hearts of all their siblings. For those saviors who delivered humanity from the Chimera are but pieces of a whole, and the whole shall demand assemblage. Not breeding, not morality, nor purity of spirit shall deliver the children of the Phoenix from madness and bloodshed. They shall rage against each other, consume one another, and their hunger will not be assuaged until but a single remaining survivor arises as a true Phoenix, and mounting the throne of God, rules over this world, the next, and all the realms that lie in-between.*

I remember when I first heard Alibrimbor's prophecy. I was drunk in a Gorrenrock brothel, and when I heard those fateful words, I laughed and threw my cup at the messenger who was interrupting my fun. The notion that my blessing could be my doom seemed so absurd, but perhaps if I had been sober I would have thought about how my dreams had started to turn strange. Perhaps then I would not have been so quick to scoff. But I have never been one to dwell overlong on serious matters.

Later in the fifth year of two thousand, I was a passenger on a boat that took port in Silverwood, and there I met Maeoni Viper. How could I land in that city and not seek out the Viper? Arranging a meeting was more difficult than I expected – she had little interest in seeing me. When I finally saw her, and heard those first words fall from her mouth, I was immediately overwhelmed by the tremendous presence the woman possessed. I fell in love with her then and there, though I'll admit falling in love has never been too difficult for me. We shared an awkward lunch on a patio outside her home. She was all formal pleasantries, and I played

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## Introduction

Ashes Organized Play (“AOP”) is a tournament system for Ashes, created by Plaid Hat Games. During Ashes Organized Play events, players will control deadly Phoenixborn in titanic battles. Guide your chosen Phoenixborn to defeat your opponent. Your victories will allow you to rise through the ranks of legend. But just as you have proven your own skill, know that the Phoenixborn you have yet to face will employ similar cunning and strength.

During Ashes Organized Play, players should remember to be respectful to others. By participating in Ashes Organized Play, you are joining with other players who enjoy the game of *Ashes: Rise of the Phoenixborn* and choose to participate in a competitive event. It is important to remember that our fellow players are also part of this community. All players should respect each other and the intent of Ashes Organized Play to be a competitive atmosphere, by following the rules and instructions for the event.





## Elements of Organized Play

### The Organizer

The Organizer is a member of the Plaid Hat Corps who has volunteered to organize an Ashes Organized Play event. The Organizer presides over the event and has final authority on any aspect of the event or the game not explicit in another official *Ashes* document. The Organizer should have a good attitude and should treat all participants with respect. Participants should respect Organizers and their decisions.

### The Rules and the FAQ

Both the official *Ashes* Rulebook and FAQ are available on the Plaid Hat Games website.

- ◇ **Rulebook:** [www.plaidhatgames.com/AshesRules](http://www.plaidhatgames.com/AshesRules)
- ◇ **FAQ :** [www.plaidhatgames.com/AshesFAQ](http://www.plaidhatgames.com/AshesFAQ)

Players must follow all rules as presented in both of these places and are expected to be aware of their contents. In the event of a dispute, the Organizer has final authority.

### Players

*Ashes: Rise of the Phoenixborn* players are members of a community of gamers, whether they know it or not. Anyone who plays the game is automatically a valued member of the community and should be treated with respect and encouragement. Plaid Hat has grown due primarily to the amazing communities that have formed around our games. We need everyone's help to ensure that these communities remain as welcoming, friendly, and good-spirited as possible.

## Formats for Organized Play

### Two-Player Built Decks

In this format, matches will be between two opponents. Players are expected to construct their own decks and dice pools prior to the start of the Organized Play event. Decks must be constructed according to the rules found on page 14 of the *Ashes: Rise of the Phoenixborn* rulebook. This format is the standard format. If the Organizer has not announced any alternative format for an AOP event, players should assume that this format will followed.

### Two-player Drafted Decks

In this format, matches will be between two opponents. Players will construct their decks and dice pools at the beginning of the AOP event and will continue to use the drafted decks for the entirety of the event. Decks will be drafted according to the rules found on page 16 of the *Ashes: Rise of the Phoenixborn* rulebook. When drafting, the organizer should divide the players into groups. The groups should consist of two, three, or four players each. Each group should have the same number of players when possible. Each group must draft from an identical set of components. If any dice or cards from expansions are used, all groups must have access to 10 of the dice and the cards. If not, they may not be used in the draft.

### Scenario Play (*Limited Format*)

Plaid Hat Games may release AOP kits that include special and limited rules, cards, dice, or other components. In this format, players will follow these special Scenario rules. When Scenario rules contradict standard rules, scenario rules shall govern during the AOP event. For Scenario Play format, the tournament rules otherwise follow that of Two-player Built Decks format, unless the special scenario rules indicate a different format or the Organizer has announced the Scenario Play event shall follow the Two-player Drafted Decks format. Scenario rules are limited and shall apply only during the scenario event.

# Before the Tournament Begins

## Verifying Your Deck and Your First Five

Players may not change their deck or dice pool at any time during the event, regardless of whether the decks were built or drafted. No substitutions of cards or dice are allowed at any point. Players are allowed to change their First Five from match to match. During AOP events, players should select their First Five after both players' play areas have been completely set up.

**Note:** *Under the standard Ashes rules, your First Five is selected after displaying your Phoenixborn only, and the AOP event rules are an intended departure from the standard rules.*

Before the matches begin, all players are required to present their decks and dice pools to the Organizer to confirm that the rules for deck building have been followed. The Organizer may require deck lists to be submitted. The Organizer should ensure that all decks contain exactly 30 cards, that there are no more than 3 copies of any one card in a deck, and that no unique cards have been improperly included in a deck. The Organizer should also ensure that all dice pools contain exactly 10 dice.

At the beginning of every match, all players must also present their First Five to the Organizer, who will confirm that their First Five is legal. The Organizer should ensure that no player has selected more than 1 copy of any one card in their First Five.

## Required Components

All players are expected to provide their own components during AOP events. This includes providing cards, dice, and tokens. Players may use another person's or the Organizer's cards, dice, or tokens if the owner explicitly allows such use.

Players may use substitute tokens to track exhaustion, wounds, or status as long as the tokens will not confuse other players or otherwise hinder play. If any player informs the Organizer that he is concerned that a particular set of substitute tokens brought to an event will present an issue and the concern is reasonable to the Organizer, the Organizer must ask that player to use the tokens provided in the core set of *Ashes: Rise of the Phoenixborn*.

Players may sleeve their own cards during Organized Play events, as long as the sleeves will not confuse other players or otherwise hinder play. Sleeves must allow players to differentiate between cards that

are placed in the Draw Pile and cards placed in the Conjunction Pile. If players choose to sleeve their cards, they are required to bring extra sleeves in case a card effect or other special instruction requires shuffling a card into the player's deck. If any player informs the Organizer that he is concerned that a particular set of sleeves brought to an event will present an issue and the concern is reasonable to the Organizer, the Organizer must ask that player to use a different set of sleeves or remove the sleeves.

Players may only use those cards and dice included in official *Ashes* products. Players may request that an Organizer inspect any dice or cards brought to an event to determine if a particular component would give one person an advantage or otherwise inhibit fairness. Such flaws may be due to minor variations in printing and are not necessarily caused by improper player conduct. The Organizer is the final authority over what components may be used in an AOP event.

## Setup of the Play Area

Players must set up their play area so that the location of the draw pile, discard pile, conjunction pile, exhausted dice, active dice, battlefield, and spellboard are clearly recognizable to their opponents. Players are not required to arrange their play area in the same arrangement described on page 5 of the *Ashes: Rise of the Phoenixborn* rulebook. If any player informs the Organizer that an arrangement is not clearly recognizable and the concern is reasonable to the Organizer, the Organizer must ask that player to use a different arrangement of their player area. The arrangement described in the rulebook provided in the core set of *Ashes* is assumed to be clearly recognizable.

## Matching Opponents Together

*Ashes Organized Play* uses a Swiss-system tournament structure, which is a non-elimination format. In all but the first round, players should be paired based on the number of Event Points each player has received. Players should be paired with opponents of the same or similar score. The Organizer has complete discretion to adjust player pairing to avoid players facing the same opponent multiple times or to ensure that fairness is maintained.

In the first round, players should be paired randomly. Organizers may adjust the random pairing as they see fit to ensure that fairness is maintained.

## Byes

In the event that an odd number of players attend an AOP event, one player each round will get a bye. When a player gets a bye, they do not participate in that round and are awarded Event Points as if they won a match on that round. Byes should be given to the lowest ranking player that has not yet gotten a bye. During the first round or in the event that multiple players are evenly ranked after later rounds, the Organizer may select which player gets a bye. The Organizer may select a player randomly or by any other method the Organizer chooses.



## During a Match

### Rules Interpretation

Players shall follow the most current rulebook for *Ashes: Rise of the Phoenixborn*, as made available on the Plaid Hat Games website (see page 3). For any issues not explicitly resolved in the rulebook, players should rely on the appropriate ruling from the most recent FAQ, also available on the Plaid Hat Games website (see page 3).

Rulings presented in either the Rulebook or the FAQ govern at all AOP events regarding any aspect of the events, including card and icon interpretation.. In the event of further argument regarding any aspect of an event, the Organizer has final authority to make rulings and settle disputes. If a player refuses to recognize the Organizer as the final authority, the Organizer may eject that player.

### Shuffling and Rolling Dice

At any point when a player's cards must be shuffled, both at the beginning of the game or during the game, players must thoroughly shuffle their cards. Players must give their opponents the opportunity to shuffle the cards and/or cut the deck before continuing or beginning a match. Players may choose to ask the Organizer to shuffle or cut the deck instead.

At any point when a player's dice must be rolled, both at the beginning of the game or during the game, players must roll their dice well enough to achieve randomness. An opponent may request to roll the dice or to have an Organizer roll the dice, if the request is made before any dice are rolled. After dice are rolled, players should reorganize their dice by symbol, taking care not to change the facing of any die.

### Missed Opportunities and Missed Mandatory Effects

Players are expected to play optimally during an AOP event and are expected to remember to perform actions and use card effects when indicated. If a player fails to properly use an effect or take an action before play proceeds, they may not do so later without the explicit consent of their opponent and only when fairness will not be harmed. Players are expected to respect an opponent's desire not to allow retroactive use of the missed opportunity.

When a player had been required to take an action or effect but failed to do so (such as when the card read "must"), and the failure was noticed within a reasonable time, players should attempt to agree on a corrective

action. If the game will be materially altered or fairness will otherwise be harmed or the players cannot agree on a corrective action, the players should consult an Organizer, who will have final determination with regard to how to proceed. The Organizer may take any action necessary, including but not limited to declaring a win, a draw, or otherwise altering the game state.

Players are expected to act with respect and allow other players the opportunity to play optimally. Players should not rush their opponent or distract their opponent such that their opponent will miss an opportunity.

## Slow Play

Players are expected to play in a timely fashion, regardless of the complexity of the game situations. Players should be aware of the time limit for a match and should attempt to maintain a pace that would allow the match to finish within the time limit. Players may not intentionally stall or otherwise slow play. A player is allowed to request that an Organizer moderate to ensure that a player is not intentionally stalling. If an Organizer feels that a player's failure to play in a timely fashion has harmed fairness, the Organizer may take reasonable action to achieve fairness, including but not limited to requiring the stalling player to discard cards from their draw pile or declaring the game forfeited.

## Consulting Notes, Spectators, or Outside Materials

Players are not allowed to make or consult notes, consult with spectators or other players, or reference any other outside material or information (*other than the official Ashes rulebook or FAQ*). These restrictions apply both during a match and while drafting.

## Hidden Information

Players are also not allowed to review their opponent's conjuration pile during a match. Players are permitted to review their opponent's discard pile during a match. Players are warned that they should not stall a game by overly reviewing an opponent's discard pile, and that continually delaying the game through looking at the discard should be treated as a failure to play in a timely fashion (*covered under the Slow Play section above*).

If a ready spell that summons a conjuration is in play but no corresponding conjurations are in play, a player may request that his opponent allow him to view a copy of the corresponding conjuration from the conjuration pile at any time.

## Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Players are expected to behave in a mature and considerate manner, with respect to all other attendees and players at the event and with respect to the Organizer. Players should follow all rules and attempt to avoid any mistakes or accidents that would harm fairness. Players should not act with unsportsmanlike conduct, which includes and is not limited to stalling the game, confusing an opponent or Organizer, using excessive force, using unnecessarily dramatic body language, inappropriate language or behavior, or failing to treat opponents with respect and courtesy. The Organizer may remove players for unsportsmanlike conduct at his discretion.

## Cheating and Penalties

Cheating will not be tolerated. If an Organizer reasonably believes that a player has cheated or is cheating, the Organizer may impose any penalties they feel is warranted. This includes, but is not limited to, issuing a warning and correcting the incorrect play, declaring the match a loss for the cheating player, or removing that player from the event without refund of any entrance fees.



# At the End of a Match

## Ending a Match

Each match ends in one of three ways:

- ◇ One player's Phoenixborn has been destroyed. The Player with the surviving Phoenixborn receives a Win.

**Note:** Destruction is an effect of having sufficient wound tokens on a card, and the active player decides the order that simultaneous effects trigger. When both players' Phoenixborn have sufficient wounds, the active player would receive a Win.

- ◇ The match time limit has been called. If, after following the procedure for time being called neither player has won, both players receive a Draw.
- ◇ A player voluntarily concedes. Players may concede at any point, at which time the opponent receives a Win.

## Match Time Limit

Matches shall be 50 minutes in length. Time will begin only after the Organizer confirms that all players' First Five are legal and all play areas are set up. Time will begin when the Organizer declares the match to begin, at which point players with the First Player token may take their first actions. The Organizer should announce a 10-minute warning when players have ten minutes remaining to finish a match.

## When the Time Limit Is Reached

In the event that time is called and neither Phoenixborn has been destroyed, players should follow this structure to complete the round:

1. Active players should complete their turns.
2. Each player will then take two more complete turns each, alternating, and following the normal rules of the game.
3. If the round has not ended prior to each player taking two more complete turns, the round automatically ends.
4. Both players should complete the Recovery Phase and the Prepare Phase normally.
5. If, at this point, neither Phoenixborn has been destroyed, both players are awarded a Draw.

## Scoring

Players are awarded Event Points at the end of each match. For each Win, a player receives 3 Event Points. For each Draw, a player receives 1 Event Point. For each Loss, a player receives 0 Event Points.

Players are also awarded Blood Points at the end of each match. A player receives 1 Blood Point for each wound token on an opponent's Phoenixborn at the end of the match, or Blood Points equal to the opponent's Phoenixborn's life value if the opponent's Phoenixborn had been destroyed.

## Round Advancement and Concluding the Tournament

After every round, players should be paired based on the number of Event Points, so that players will compete against other players with the same or similar number of Event Points.

The event will continue for a predetermined number of rounds, as announced by the Organizer prior to the start of the event and determined based on the number of participants in the event. Once that predetermined number of rounds has been reached, the event has concluded. The winner of the tournament shall be the player with the most Event Points.

In the event of a tie, where two or more players have the same number of Event Points, ties shall be broken by each player's "average opponent's Event Points." The "average opponent's Event Points" shall be calculated by totaling the Event Points awarded by all of a player's opponents and dividing that total by the number of matches that player participated in, excluding byes.

In the event of a further tie, the player that dealt more total damage to all of his opponent's Phoenixborns shall be considered the winner. In the event of a further tie, the winner shall be determined randomly.

## Legendary Phoenixborn Bracket

During larger AOP events, the Organizer may decide to split the event into two phases. During the first phase, play shall continue as normal, using the Swiss-system described above. After a predetermined number of rounds, as announced by the Organizer prior to the start of the event, all players shall be ordered by the number of Event Points they have received. The top players are then allowed to proceed to the second phase. The number of players allowed to proceed shall be determined based on the number of participants in the event, and shall be announced by the Organizer.

prior to the start of the event. Those top players have qualified for the Legendary Phoenixborn Bracket.

In the event that players are tied in Event Points, determine which players qualify according to the tie breaking rules in a standard tournament, as described above.

During the Legendary Phoenixborn Bracket, players will initially be seeded based on the number of Event Points they received in the first phase. The player with the most Event Points will be paired against the player with the least, the second most with the second least, and so on. Players who lose in a Legendary Phoenixborn Bracket are eliminated, while those who win advance. In the event of a draw, the player with more Event Points in the first phase shall advance. In the event of a further tie, both players are eliminated, and their intended opponent is given a bye.

The Organizer may choose to not impose a time limit on the final match of a Legendary Phoenixborn Bracket, all matches in the Legendary bracket, or only some of the matches. The Organizer should announce the time limits for each match prior to the beginning of the event.

## Credits

**Game Designer:** Isaac Vega

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the bumbling, fawning fool. Me! But such was my unexpected love for her that I could bring none of my charms to bear.

That night I retired to a room her servants prepared for me. I had no interest in exploring the city's nightlife. I lay in bed and fell asleep thinking of her exquisite face.

But I did not sleep easy.

In my dream our bodies were entangled in a lover's embrace, my mouth tasting hers, and my dream self had lost all his awkwardness, and she was good and truly mine. But the dream changed in that way dreams do, the shift coming so subtly that it is impossible to identify, and suddenly we were not entwined in love, but in murderous violence. She screamed as I dug my clawed hands into her flesh, and from out of her burst fay fire. The flames licked my body, but they did not scorch or burn, but filled me with euphoria, and I tore her asunder like a dog rooting for a buried bone. Her wailing reached a terrible pitch and the fire consumed the last of her. I sucked my breath in with a mighty huff, and the fires filled my lungs. Maeoni was naught but hot ashes, and these I rubbed into my flesh with manic glee.

I awoke in tears and sweat, and instantly recalled Alibrimbor's prophecy. Suddenly my youthful frolics seemed so pointless. The future did not seem so sweet.

That night I fled Silverwood in shame. I made my way back to Frostfell and let the stinging cold there freeze away my feelings. And while I found some solace, the cold could not keep the dreams from coming. I have not always been a good man, but I have striven, in my own way, to do good. But now I see that such concerns are for mortals. For the children of the Phoenix there can be no peace, no solace. These people were my brothers and sisters. I have fought by their sides. I have loved them. But gods save me, I see what is coming, and so help me, I am going to kill them all.

**Rin Northfell**

*Frostfell, 2009*