

The Sapphire Tournament

This adventure is designed to run as an Interactive, in essence a LARP (Live Action Role-Playing) event, in which the players portray their characters directly for much of the time. The total event should, if possible, be run in a five-hour time slot to give the players the maximum time to accomplish their goals. Running longer than five hours is generally counter-productive, due to fatigue.

We encourage conventions which run this event to incorporate additional “flavor” elements, such as costumes, authentic props, or catered Japanese food. These will add considerably to the experience of the adventure.

Restrictions on Player Actions

During the Interactive, all players and judges should observe the following restrictions and guidelines in order to ensure that the event runs smoothly.

- **No Touching.** Touching in public is a major Rokugani taboo, and should be observed in play. Any player who willingly touches another automatically loses a point of Honor. Repeated offenses can result in the expulsion of the player from the Interactive.
- **Resolving Events.** Players should seek, whenever possible, to resolve their interactions through role-play rather than by rolling dice. If a player absolutely wishes to perform an action that requires rolling dice, s/he should seek out one of the event judges to have their action adjudicated.
- **If you say it, they hear it.** If players do not want other players to overhear their words, they should act appropriately – e.g. hide their mouths, speak in low voices, go into the next room, etc.
- **Treaty limitations.** PCs are only empowered to negotiate the specific items on their Clan objective sheets (the Tournament outcome and where Miya Shikan spends the winter). They can propose other treaties or agreements to their superiors, but it is the discretion of the Campaign Admin whether any such agreements go forward.
- All statements and actions are considered to be “in character” unless specifically stated otherwise.

Judges

It is recommended that there should be two judges for the Interactive, a “chief judge” and a “secondary judge.”

The **chief judge** should play the role of Miya Shikan, the Imperial Herald, who is the sponsor of the Sapphire Tournament. This judge is in charge of monitoring the overall

Interactive, and of resolving any specific actions or plots which the players may put in motion. At the end of the Interactive, the chief judge should compile the results of the event, specifically who wins the Sapphire Tournament and how the Clans deploy their influence with respect to which Clan hosts Miya Shikan for the winter.

The **secondary judge** plays the role of Shikan's assistant, Miya Hanzu, and is in charge of organizing the actual tournament portion of the Interactive. This will include making paper "chits" with the names of each contestant, drawing them out to create match-ups in the one-on-one competitions, and keeping track of the overall score to determine the winner.

Getting Ready

The PCs and NPCs have gathered at Kyuden Miya, the seat of the Miya family, for the latest of a series of Sapphire Tournaments. Most, possibly even all of the PCs will be competing in the tournament. In addition, there is a diplomatic matter to be settled at the tournament: which Clan will be honored to host Miya Shikan at their Winter Court.

At the beginning of the Interactive, all players should be given a copy of the Objectives Sheet for their Clan or faction. Ronin PCs do not have an Objective Sheet of their own – they will have to fend for themselves, or find a Clan/Imperial PC to sponsor or hire them. (They can still compete in the Sapphire Tournament, of course.)

Chronology

The Interactive takes place over the course of a single day of game-time – the duration of the Sapphire Tournament.

At the beginning of the Interactive, Miya Shikan announces the beginning of the tournament: ***"Honorable samurai! I am Miya Shikan, the Imperial Herald. It is my humble duty to bid you welcome to the castle of my ancestors, and to the latest of the Sapphire Tournaments. The office of the Sapphire Magistrates has been created, through the wisdom of Emperor Toturi XII, in order to support the Miya family's quest for peace and harmony throughout the Empire. It is the task of the Sapphire Magistrates to travel across the Empire, enforcing the peace and punishing those criminals who actions threaten it. At this tournament, we shall choose the next samurai to serve as one of these magistrates. Let those who would compete step forward!"***

At this point, Miya Hanzu should begin recording the names of those who wish to compete in the tournament, and create "chits" which can be drawn to pair them up in the competitions.

The First Competition: Art

“The way of peace is the way of beauty, honor, and harmony. In order to be able to defend the peace of Rokugan, you must also be able to appreciate and express the beauty of peace yourself. Therefore, the first competition will be one of artistic expression. You must create a work of art – a poem, a painting, an origami, even an ikebana – expressing the ideal of peace. Begin immediately!”

Have each PC describe or write down what their artistic creation is and then make an appropriate skill roll. Award 1 or 2 Free Raises based on the creativity and originality of the idea. The upper one-fourth (rounded off) of the entries are awarded two points each. The top entry (by modified skill roll) receives an additional point.

The Second Competition: Debate

“In order to support the peace of the Empire, your words must be able to sway those who are confused in their understanding, and overcome those who would be foolish enough to argue for war. Your words must be your finest weapons, and the courts will be your battleground. You shall face each other in a contest of argumentation, discussing between you the question: Who was the greatest hero of Rokugan?”

The PCs are paired up using the chits created at the start of the tournament. If there are an odd number of competitors, the extra one debates Miya Hanzu, who will advocate Doji Kiriko, who selflessly endured the wrath of Isawa Asahina in order to sooth his wrath and save the peasants from his power, the greatest hero of the Empire.

This competition is an opposed Social roll of Awareness/Courtier. All School Techniques apply, as do Advantages that enhance such rolls (and Disadvantages that penalize them). The PCs can choose whether to simply roll, or to role-play out the discussion before rolling. If they role-play, they should receive 1 Free Raise for their rolls. If one of them actually forces the other to concede in such an argument, that PC automatically wins without rolling.

PCs who win their debates earn 2 points.

The Third Competition: Law

“The Sapphire Magistrates are protectors of the peace. But they are still magistrates, charged with investigating crimes and enforcing the Imperial laws. In order to perform your duties you must know the laws you enforce. I require you each to write an essay on the laws of our Empire. The superior writers shall prevail. Pair up and begin!”

Again, the PCs are paired up with chit draws and must make Opposed Rolls of Intelligence/Lore (Law). PCs may gain Free Raises on their rolls by rolling Awareness/Calligraphy at TN 20 (one Free Raise at TN 20, one additional Free Raise for every Raise they call on that roll).

The winner of each match earns 2 points.

The Final Competition: Combat

“There may be times, unavoidably, when you will have to use force in the name of peace. When the only way to preserve the Empire from far greater bloodshed is to take a life. Therefore, the Sapphire Magistrates must be skilled in the ways of arms. Since you will be facing all manner of dishonorable foes in the enforcement of your duties, this is not a competition in the glorious art of Iaijutsu. It is, instead, a competition in the practical skills of hand-to-hand combat. There is, however, one vital rule to this contest: if your opponent is slain, or permanently maimed, you will immediately fail, and be expelled from the tournament. Pair up and begin!”

Again, the chits are used to pair-up the PCs. In this case, however, a leftover PC gets a “bye” (credit for a win) instead of facing a proxy. Each battle is fought until one combatant yields or is rendered unable to continue. (Imperial shugenja heal up any injuries after each match.) If anyone is killed or maimed, their opponent is expelled from the tournament and disgraced, gaining a full rank of Infamy (and probably losing Honor as well).

No spells may be cast prior to the combat, and offensive spells are not considered valid weapons in the contest. A shugenja PC may, however, cast other spells on him/herself during the fight (such as protective spells or healing spells).

After each round, the remaining combatants are matched again, continuing to a final match. If there are ever only three combatants left, the one with the lowest total score (in the tournament up to this point) is dropped.

Each victory won during this competition awards that PC 1 point.

Conclusion

At the end of the interactive, Miya Shikan awards the appointment as Sapphire Magistrate to the winner of the tournament, with great fanfare and celebration. The chief judge should record the Clan whose member won this office and forward it promptly to the Campaign Admin at youta@rollanet.org.

In addition, the chief judge should record the clan delegations’ votes on which Clan will host Miya Shikan for the winter. Each Clan delegation, and the Imperial delegation (if any), must vote unanimously in order to be worth a “full” vote. If a delegation splits, the split votes are worth only 1/3 of a unified vote. Minor Clan votes are worth only 1/3 to begin with, and have no value if they are split. Ronin do not get a vote. These results should likewise be sent to the Campaign Admin.

Finally, the chief judge should compile and report any other potential agreements which the PCs may be proposing to their superiors.

All PCs who participate in the Interactive earn 2 XP. Honor and Glory awards may also be made, and the discretion of the judges.

Crab Clan

This tournament will choose a new Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

We have little interest in a so-called “magistrate” who serves the foolish dreams of Miya Shikan. It might be a good idea to enter the contest simply to keep the position out of the hands of those Clans who might abuse it, especially the Crane and Scorpion. Perhaps we can bargain our performance in the tournament in exchange for support on Miya’s Blessing.

The Imperial Herald is a meddling fool with a head full of dreams. It would be a fitting punishment for him to be forced to spend the winter with us and see the true nature of the Empire’s enemies. If the other Clans are too selfish to allow us to have this modest honor, we should at least see to it that the wealthy and useless Cranes and the pretentious Phoenix are not allowed to have it.

Crane Clan

This tournament will choose a new Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

Clearly, no Clan is better suited to defend the peace and harmony of the Empire than the honorable, peaceful, and generous Crane Clan. Furthermore, we are in need of every political gain. We should strive at all costs to win this tournament. In the unlikely event that we cannot win, we should see to it that the Lion and Scorpion cannot win.

Miya Shikan should obviously spend the winter with us, especially in light of the Emperor already honoring the Phoenix. No other Clan has suffered a loss such as we have suffered this year: the death by murder of family daimyo Daidoji Hayashi. The other Clans will certainly resist our just claim, so we must show that their position is dishonorable. If in the end it proves impossible for us to gain Shikan's visit, we should bargain our support to another Clan (not the Scorpion or Lion) for the highest possible price. At the very least, victory in the Sapphire Tournament, and perhaps also a disruption in the diplomatic plots of our enemies.

Dragon Clan: Mirumoto and Tonbo

This tournament will choose a new Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

The time approaches for our vengeance against the Lion. We must therefore prevent the Lion Clan from gaining any positions within this new office of Sapphire Magistrates – positions which they might use to obstruct us in a future conflict. Whether we ourselves win the tournament is irrelevant, so long as the Lion do not.

We have no interest in sharing our winter with Miya Shikan, who continues to meddle and obstruct against our quest for righteous vengeance. We should instead bargain our support on this matter to win further friendship from the Crane or the Scorpion, both of whom have already formed partnerships with our Clan.

Dragon Clan: Kitsuki, Tamori, and Tattooed Orders

This tournament will choose a new Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

The Empire needs peace, especially in troubled times, and only a Clan as enlightened as ours can be trusted to administer it. Furthermore, other Clans would certainly exploit the Sapphire Magistrates for their own political ends. With our political power on the rise after Kitsuki Jiro's victory in the Emerald Tournament, we must see to it that a Dragon wins this tournament as well.

We have gone to great effort to show our support for Miya Shikan's policies of peace, and winning his presence at our Winter Court would be a fine way to cap these accomplishments. No doubt the Crane will seek the prize for themselves, but it may be possible to persuade them to support us as a means of maintaining our alliance. And of course it is quite important to keep it out of the hands of our political opponents: the Scorpion and the Phoenix.

Lion Clan

This tournament will choose a new Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

Clearly, no Clan is better suited to maintain the peace than the Clan which defends it through force of arms: our Clan. We must strive with all power to win this tournament. Nothing less than total victory will be acceptable to the honor and power of the Lion.

The meddlesome Miya Shikan is no prize, but rather a burden to inflict on our enemies. The Unicorn, so full of barbaric aggression and ambition, would be suitable hosts, especially since their weak political position would gain little benefit from his favor. We should see to it that they win this "honor."

Mantis Clan

This tournament will choose a Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

Our political power in the Empire is dangerously weak, and we have only just begun to change that. Another step in that direction would certainly be winning the Sapphire Tournament. Our friends in the Scorpion Clan may well be able to help us in this endeavor.

Hosting the Imperial Herald, Miya Shikan, would be another step forward in building up our prestige. The Scorpion may well be able to assist us on this matter, especially since it will keep the honor out of the hands of their many rivals.

Minor Clans

This tournament will choose a Sapphire Magistrates, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

Winning the Sapphire Tournament would be a great boost to our humble Clan, and we should strive as best we can to achieve it.

Sadly, it is most unlikely that we can win Miya Shikan's visit for ourselves. But perhaps, by placing our modest influence at the service of a larger Clan in this matter, we can earn their gratitude for the future.

Phoenix Clan

This tournament will choose a Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

As a Clan which has always supported the cause of peace, we are the logical and honorable choice for the Sapphire Magistrates, and we should see to it that one of our candidates is victorious. Surely the other Clans can be persuaded to accept our true fitness for the office.

Since we are already so honored by the Emperor's impending visit, the presence of Miya Shikan would be extravagance. There are several other Clans which are worthy of his presence. Therefore we should bargain our support for the Blessing (keeping it, if possible, out of the hands of the warmongering Unicorn and Dragon) in return for assistance in the Tournament.

Scorpion Clan

This tournament will choose a new Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

Although many of our candidates would be a fine choice for Sapphire Magistrate, the other Clans will doubtless not trust us with such power. And in any case, there are Clans which are more suitable for this office. The Mantis, for example, who live apart from the rest of the Empire and can therefore be trusted to be impartial in protecting its peace. We should try to see to it that a Mantis wins the tournament. If that prove impossible, the honorable Unicorn would certainly make fine Sapphire Magistrates as well.

On the other hand, we would certainly be honored by the presence of Miya Shikan this winter, and if the other Clans insist, we would not refuse. Still, it may be more profitable for us to direct this gift elsewhere as well. The Crane should not receive it, of course, while the Lion are too arrogant and the Crab too brutish to be allowed such a gift. The clever Mantis or the enlightened Dragon, however, would be worthy recipients.

Unicorn Clan

This tournament will choose a new Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

The Unicorn have protected the Empire for countless generations against enemies both within and without. Therefore, at this tournament a Unicorn should without question be the one to claim the title of Sapphire Magistrate.

Although the other Clans will seek their own advantage in the tournament, we may be able to bend their positions by negotiating our support for Miya Shikan's winter host. We have no interest in this... "honor" ...for ourselves, so by skillfully throwing our voice behind another Clan in exchange for their assistance in the Tournament, we can improve our chances greatly.

Imperial Families

This tournament will choose a new Sapphire Magistrate, an office created by Imperial Herald Miya Shikan to promote peace and harmony throughout the Empire. The Clan which claims one of these positions will undoubtedly gain considerable prestige.

The presence of the Imperial Herald at this first tournament also offers another opportunity. Although the Emperor has already proclaimed that he will spend the next Winter Court with the Phoenix Clan, the Imperial Herald has not yet made his decision. Whichever Clan wins this honor will, of course, gain a political boost.

The Imperial families have no interest in claiming such offices for themselves, but we should see to it that no more of the warlike Lion win in these tournaments. The aggressive Dragon and Unicorn should also be obstructed, so long as we can do so without any unseemly public exposure.

Miya Shikan has expressed no personal preference in where he spends the Winter, but there seems no doubt that he would prefer to politically strengthen those Clans who support his policies, rather than those who advocate war.

Miya Shikan, Imperial Herald, Miya Family Daimyo

Status: 9.0

Personality: Fanatical, obsessive, arrogant, narcissistic, driven, utopian, idealistic.

Notes: Miya Shikan believes that peace is the highest good, and torments himself endlessly with thoughts of the suffering and misery brought on the people of the Empire by its endless wars. He has made it his life's goal to end these wars, not just within his lifetime but for all time. The office of the Sapphire Magistrates is his brainchild, intended to ensure the work of peace continues long after he is gone. Still, Shikan worries that without his guidance, even the Sapphire Magistrates may not be enough to preserve the peace.

Shikan is a harsh, judgmental man, absolutely convinced of his own righteousness and virtue, and full of contempt for anyone who disagrees with his views.

Miya Hanzu, Personal Assistant to Miya Shikan

Status: 5.0

Personality: Loyal, subtle, manipulative, ruthless, self-effacing, bland.

Notes: Hanzu is a slavishly loyal follower of Miya Shikan, and believes absolutely in Shikan's ideals of universal peace. He is willing to do anything to further Shikan's ideals. At this tournament, his task is relatively simple, however: organize the Sapphire Tournament and record the scores and results.

There is one competition in the Tournament in which Hanzu may have to debate a competitor in order to prevent a "bye." This will be an Opposed Social roll of Awareness/Courtier (Hanzu rolls 6k3), but if the debate is role-played and one participant forces the other to acknowledge defeat, no roll is needed. The debate will be a discussion of who was the greatest hero of the Empire. Miya Hanzu will advocate Doji Kiriko, who selflessly endured the wrath of Isawa Asahina in order to sooth his anger and save the peasants from his power. He was so moved by her sacrifice that he healed her, married her, and founded the pacifist Asahina family.