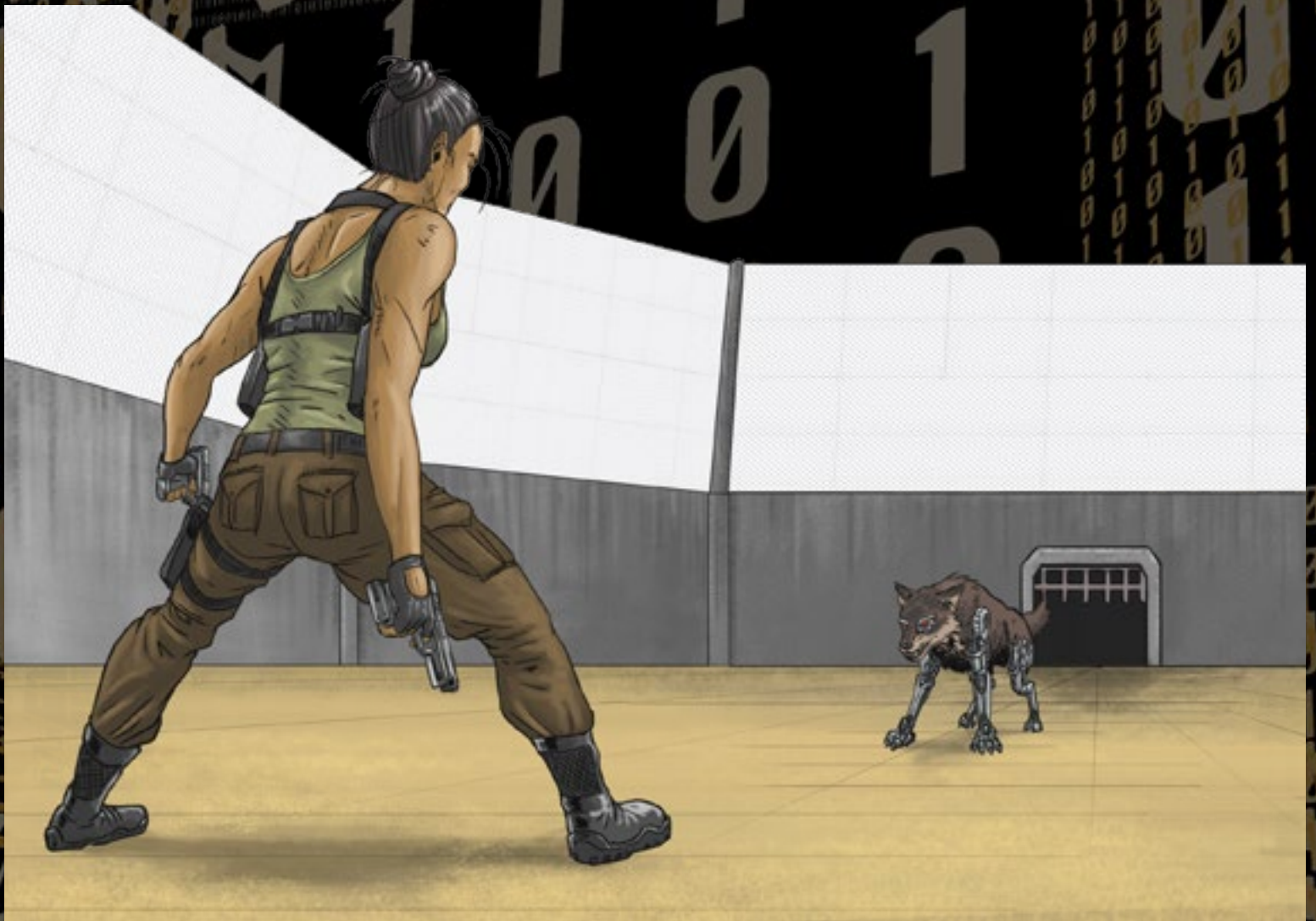




# PSI-PUNK

World's Edge Arena



By  
Jacob Wood

## Old Meets New

In the southernmost city in the world, thousands of people come and brave the unforgiving weather to watch the *World's Edge Arena*, a televised bloodsport for the modern era. Thanks to the Arena's success, the once-quiet town of Punta Arenas is now an industrious boomtown where warriors compete for prize money, entrepreneurs compete for a share of the tourism, and locals compete for the scraps of what's left.

Have you come seeking fame and fortune at the risk of finding an early grave, or are you an old-timer who wants to see the city returned to its old ways? Whether you're here to compete or you're just trying to eke out a living in this rapidly changing city, one thing's for certain: your life will never be the same thanks to the *World's Edge Arena*.

This book includes:

- A detailed look at the city of Punta Arenas, Chile, in the year 2096. A look at its interesting places, people, night life, and other features which make the city a prime place to set a campaign.
- Guidelines for running an Arena tournament using *Psi-punk*. Characters battle in ever-shifting terrain against all manner of beasts and warriors.
- A new "Fan Favor" mechanic for players to earn bonuses by wooing crowds and earning fan loyalty.
- New statblocks for over two dozen opponents, including psychically-controlled, cybernetically enhanced beasts such as kodiak bears and komodo dragons. Plenty of human opponents for use in any *Psi-punk* game.
- Sample background hooks for new character archetypes such as the Beast Trainer, Controller, Promoter, Street Rat, and Security guard.
- 6 new adventure seeds set in and around the city of Punta Arenas. Inspiration for Game Masters who'd like to craft non-combat encounters.





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## About Fudge

Fudge is a roleplaying game written by Steffan O’Sullivan, with extensive input from the Usenet community of rec.games.design and other online forums. The core rules of Fudge are available free on the Internet at <http://www.fudgerpg.com> and other sites. Fudge was designed to be customized, and may be used with any gaming genre. Fudge gamemasters and game designers are encouraged to modify Fudge to suit their needs, and to share their modifications and additions with the Fudge community. The Fudge game system is copyrighted ©2000, 2005 by Grey Ghost Press, Inc., and is available for use under the Open Game License. See the [fudgerpg.com](http://www.fudgerpg.com) website for more information.

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# The Most Dangerous Game

At the edge of the world, in the largely untamed land of Patagonia, there is a place where athletes, soldiers, street runners, and thrill-seekers gather to test their mettle. The land is harsh, with relatively low average temperatures and intense winds, but that's not what draws these people here. In this remote and unforgiving landscape lies a gladiatorial arena where men, women, and animals of all stripes compete in deadly blood sports far from the watchful gaze of governments and mega-corps.

Known as the World's Edge Arena, this 50,000 square-foot stadium of death was built in 2085 by young trillionaire Steve Donohue. When asked why he built the complex in Patagonia, Donohue responded:

"I heard about this place in Chile called Punta Arenas. Arenas. That's just perfect for an arena, you know?"

The fact that Punta Arenas means "Sandy Point" was completely lost on Donohue.

Regardless of his motives, Donohue built the World's Edge Arena to sate the public's growing hunger for blood sports. In an interview, he once said that athletic competitions throughout the world are too safe, and what the public really wanted to see was blood and gore and death. World's Edge offers all three.

"Why do people watch American-style football, or ice hockey, or rugby?" asked Donohue rhetorically. "For the violence, man! Deep down, we all want to see people get crushed. And with the restrictions on cybernetics in contact sports, we're just not getting that anymore."

"Sure," he added, "you can always tune into the cyberweight kickboxing leagues, and that's cool. I really love Tommy 'Two Tons' Thompson as much as the next guy. But it's like, at the end of the day, those guys just get slapped with a couple stem packs and they're good as new. Everyone knows there's no risk. People like risk. It's exciting!"

At World's Edge Arena, contestants enter a stadium with constantly shifting terrain and environmental hazards. Men and women from all

walks of life enter in teams of one to eight and battle against carnivorous animals, androids, and—during the Season finals—other teams of live humans.

Each event is broadcast worldwide to millions of viewers in any country where the matches haven't yet been banned. An additional 100,000 rabid fans pack the stadium each night. Despite the broadcast already being in its 11<sup>th</sup> Season, World's Edge ratings are still climbing at a steady rate.

"I moved to Patagonia just to get to attend every match live," says super-fan Mike Wood, 30. "I just couldn't justify the travel expenses to my wife anymore. It's like, I was spending so much time here, I might as well just make Argentina my home."

When corrected about Punta Arenas being in Chile, not Argentina, Wood added: "Oh, right. Chile. Whatever. Hey, is this going to be in the news? Hi Lisa! Wish you were here!"

## The Real Full-Contact Sport

Donohue's arena features what he claims to be "the most realistic blood sport since Roman times." Indeed, he modeled the competition after ancient gladiatorial combat, albeit with a modern twist.

"We just replace spears and nets with guns and Tasers. Instead of just throwing people to mundane lions, we pit them against cybernetically enhanced, mind-controlled beasts capable of human reasoning. Those old-fashioned lions wouldn't be much of a challenge against modern weapons, you know?"

It isn't just an open battlefield where opponents clash and claw at each other until only one is left standing, either. Donohue's arena emulates natural terrain with plenty of room to maneuver and hide. It takes a skilled hunter to track and kill his enemy and an alert hunter to avoid getting mauled to death by a panther.

The varying terrain would make for a terrible viewing experience if it weren't for the chase cams each contestant (including the animals) wears. Viewers are treated to a first-person view of all of the action, and real-time predictive algorithms are in place to ensure the best view at all times.

"I just love when they cut to a shot of a panther stalking up on some guy," says Alita Monroe, 24. "The last thing he sees is his life flash before his eyes, but we get to see the back of his exposed neck as the cat rips into it!"

"It's a jungle in zere," remarks Gunther P., a college student from the GEU. "You never know who ist going to get ze drop on whom."

One might wonder how the Arena manages to attract so many contestants when they each know their life may be forfeit just for entering. To date, World's Edge has a death toll of 257 men and women, not to mention many more animals. Despite the decreased life expectancy of anyone who enters, the sport's numbers aren't diminishing.

"We offer great cash prizes to all of the winners," explains Donohue. "If you win an evening at the World's Edge, you're set for a year at least. The lucky few who take first place might be set for life. However long that may be."

When asked about the supply of animals, many of which are endangered species, Donohue reveals his secret: "The animals, they're all clones. We've got those stupid animal rights activists barking at us all the time as it is, there's no way we could get away with using the real thing. But clones, there's an endless supply of those. And we recycle the parts."

## Never Back Down

Despite its popularity, many world powers have tried to bring an end to Donohue's operations. Governments, mega-corps, and local authorities have all made unsuccessful attempts to shut down the World's Edge but Donohue isn't worried.

"We're a totally legit operation, you know?" Donohue said. "We pay our one-percent tax to Chile, and blood sports were totally made legal just before we moved in."

Donohue continues: "But other countries and companies want to shut me down. MarkeTech doesn't like that I run a sporting event they don't own. The NAU doesn't like that I'm an expatriate and spending all my money in a foreign country. And Punta Arenas, well, their cops are a bit concerned about the increased crime rate as children emulate what they're seeing on TV and at our stadium."

Even though he has a lot of enemies in high places, Donohue has a lot of friends in high places, too. World's Edge is a popular sporting event in the Oceanic League, the Asia-Pacific Union, and throughout the Greater European Union. Only the Arab League and Sub-Sahara seem to have any complaints about his broadcasts, and Donohue doesn't seem bothered by that.

"You know, they don't have to like it. If it's not for them, that's cool." Says Donohue. "But the NAU, you know. They eat this stuff up, but their government just wants to collect. They're not getting any from me."

## The Future of World's Edge

World's Edge Arena is in its 11<sup>th</sup> Season and still going strong. This year they expect to see less growth than in previous years, but Donohue believes that's because they've already reached their saturation point. Despite that, World's Edge Arena is constantly looking for new recruits to participate in the sport.

"We'll take anyone with combat training, whether it's formal or informal," says Donohue. "We've had everything from GEU soldiers to cab drivers with a lot of pent-up road rage."

Donohue assures us the next Season of World's Edge is going to be huge. "It's going to be bigger and bloodier than ever. We're still looking for a few more teams for next Season. And we have this big new event planned that I don't want to give away but let's just say it goes 'RAAR!'"

*This story brought to you by Ronald Pyatt,  
Independent News Network*

# World's Edge Arena

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The World's Edge Arena is a popular place for thrill-seekers and warriors to visit. There's nothing like the real threat of death in exchange for the real promise of money to get people out of their urban slums and into the stadium.

As it relates to your game of *Psi-punk*, the World's Edge Arena is a great place to set a game. The players may form a team of combatants to enter the Arena and test their mettle in exchange for getting some cold, hard, Neu-marks. It's like doing a run for a dealer but more prestigious. The fame alone may lead to endorsements and other mercenary gigs if the players are able to catch the eye of the right person or group.

For players and Game Masters who prefer a combat-heavy game, the World's Edge Arena makes a great setting backdrop. There's plenty of room for story and intrigue, though. Betting, match fixing, fan service, and all manner of events might take place in and around the stadium. There's plenty to do at World's Edge that doesn't involve fighting for one's life.

## The Arena

World's Edge Arena is 50,000 square feet of ever-shifting terrain. Each Season is notable for having a unique terrain theme, though it isn't unheard of for a theme to be revisited over time. In the past, the Arena has had desert, jungle, mountainous, cavernous, urban, and even lunar terrain themes. Next Season's terrain is anyone's guess.

Using sophisticated *control animate/inanimate* tech, the Arena is capable of altering its form dramatically in just a few hours, ensuring a new layout for each match. Though teams may get used to battling in a certain type of terrain, they'll never truly get comfortable with their surroundings.

The Arena itself is located about 20 miles outside the town of Punta Arenas, Chile, in far southern Patagonia. A single access road leads to the Arena complex from Punta Arenas, and

it's usually packed with traffic moving into and out of town.

The outer structure of the Arena is built to withstand a nuclear blast. A carbon-nanotube frame supports the structure, while kinetic and thermal dampening magic reduces the intensity of any blast by about 90 percent. Not that Mr. Donohue expects anyone to assault the Arena, but the same tech is used within to keep the structure safe from all of the potent psionic and ballistic damage being done to the interior on any given night.

Fans of the show watch from the relative safety of the stadium seating areas, which are separated from the battle zone by about 1,000 feet and a magically-reinforced barrier. Despite being there to see the show live, the audience watches through 160-foot view screens which show the same action anyone at home would be privy to. The benefit to attending a live show is having the option to see the contestants before and after the match, and the option to vote on which contestants were the stars of the evening.

## Match Structure

Each Season, eight teams of contestants enter the Arena and vie for the top spot. For their first match, every team faces off against psychically controlled, cybernetically enhanced animals. If they survive their entry-level match, they'll face even tougher creatures in a second round.

After two matches, any leftover teams face off in a single-elimination tournament. If the starting number of teams at this tier is odd, the result could be a three-team Battle Royale to determine the winner.

Teams may start with as many as eight players but anyone who dies during the Season may not be replaced. If a team enters with eight contestants and makes it to the final match with only four remaining, that's their problem. Each match is a last-man-standing fight. A team must incapacitate or eliminate all opponents to achieve victory and win that night's cash prize.



Once a team enters the Arena, no team member may leave until the fight is over. Forfeit is not an option.

The events are televised live. Every match represents one Episode of the Season, and only one match is aired each night. That means there may be several days, even up to a week, between matches for any given team. What that team does with its downtime is entirely up to them, but if they don't show up for their next scheduled match it could spell bad news.

## Earnings

Contestants are awarded a certain amount of money for each match they win. They're paid nightly, because in many cases the contestants only have a few days of downtime to spend their cash before they're eliminated permanently.

The amount of money contestants earn is based on how many matches they've won thus far and how many members are on their team. The amount of Wealth given on the following chart must be divided evenly (round down) amongst all living team members.

**Table 1.1: Arena Earnings**

Match #	Earnings
1	Great [16]
2	Superb [32]
3	Wonderful [64]
4	Phenomenal [128]
5	Extraordinary [256]

Clearly, the fewer contestants on a team, the more money each individual earns as they rise through the ranks. That's by design. Crowds love to root for the underdog, and watching an eight-man team slaughter a bunch of animals is less exciting than watching a grueling match between a four-man team and the same pack of creatures.

It's unlikely that all members of a team will be killed during one of their first two matches. In the history of the World's Edge, this hasn't happened. That means every Season to date has culminated in an 8-team single-elimination tournament. Of course, not every team has as many members in their later matches as they had in their earlier fights.



# Rules of Engagement

One simple rule governs each match: the last team standing wins. Death is real, and the Arena's kill count is significant, but an incapacitated character is just as defeated as one whose grey matter is removed from its case. Beyond that, anything goes. Contestants may use any tool at their disposal to achieve victory over their opponents. Psionics, cybernetics, massive firepower, and other weapons are not just allowed but encouraged.

With that being said, no weapons or gear of any kind are supplied to any contestant. They must bring their own equipment before the games begin. World's Edge Arena has an extensive armory of tools and toys available for purchase (at full price, of course) should any of the contestants need to buy new equipment before or between matches.

World's Edge does not, however, have a cyber clinic on site. Nearby Punta Arenas has a facility run by Nuevo Horizonte Medico, a leading medical services company in South America. Bear in mind though, it takes time to have new cyberware installed. Depending on the implant, there may not be enough time to have them installed and functioning with enough time to recover before the next match begins. *In game terms, any cyberware requiring two Gifts or more cannot be installed between matches.*

## Gaming the Fans

Millions of people worldwide tune into World's Edge each night, and roughly 100,000 others come to watch the games live. With all of those eyes on the contestants, it's in a warrior's best interest to increase their team's fan appeal. Well-liked teams and warriors may even gain small benefits from pleasing the crowd.

Fan Favor is a numeric bonus given to warriors and their teams for performing certain actions. Each team begins with 0 Fan Favor but that number may increase quickly as they wow the audience. Fan Favor is cumulative and carries over between matches, so a truly impressive team may have plenty of Favor by the end of the Season.

Below is a short list of actions characters may perform to alter their team's Fan Favor. Warriors are part of a team, so their actions reflect upon their team as a whole—increases and decreases to Fan Favor apply to the entire group.

**Table 1.2: Fan Favor**

Action	Fan Favor
Incapacitate or Kill a Wounded Opponent	+1 Favor
Incapacitate or Kill an Unwounded Opponent	+2 Favor
Incapacitate or Kill Two or More Opponents in One Round	+2 Favor <sup>1</sup>
Astonishing Degree of Success on a Roll/Check	+1 Favor
Do Something that Makes People Cheer <sup>2</sup>	+1 Favor
Victory Against Overwhelming Odds <sup>3</sup>	+2 Favor
Heal a Creature During a Match	-1 Favor
Execute an Incapacitated Creature <sup>4</sup>	-2 Favor
Spend Fan Favor	Special <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the bonus gained for killing each opponent.

<sup>2</sup> This is a meta-game element. If you describe an action that makes everyone at the table shout, give high-fives, etc., your GM may award you with +1 Favor. As with any subjective reward, GMs should be careful not to allow players to game the system. Optionally, a character may spend an action to make a skill check specifically designed to wow the crowd; a Superb success may grant the team this bonus.

<sup>3</sup> If a single warrior faces three or more opponents at once and comes out on top, they are awarded +2 Favor.

<sup>4</sup> The crowd may be bloodthirsty but it's not as interesting to watch an execution as it is to watch a fair fight. Taking the time to kill someone who's already down is considered bad form.

<sup>5</sup> See "Spending Fan Favor" below.



At least one player (and possibly the GM) should keep track of the team's Fan Favor throughout the Season. Fan Favor carries over between matches.

## Spending Fan Favor

Warriors may spend some of their team's Fan Favor to gain temporary benefits. Unless otherwise noted, characters may spend Fan Favor to alter a roll *after* the initial roll is made.

Below is a short list of uses for Fan Favor. GMs are encouraged to allow other creative uses.

### Spending Fan Favor

Action	Fan Favor
Add +1 to a roll	-1 Favor
Re-roll all dice and take the better result	-2 Favor
Force opponent to re-roll all dice and take the worse result	-3 Favor
Reduce an Incapacitated Wound to a Very Hurt Wound	-2 Favor

## Bestiary

Every team must face two rounds of combat against psychically controlled, cybernetically enhanced predators. These cloned animals range from big cats to birds of prey, and they don't act on instinct. Someone with *mind control* power (or magic) is assigned to each creature to give the animal human-level decision making skills. Add to that the fact that these creatures were built (from an evolutionary perspective and in the lab) to hunt and kill, and you have one hell of a challenge.

For the combatants' first match, they're pitted against smaller and more agile creatures, such as hawks, cougars, and wolves. For the second round, should they make it that far, competitors face off against eagles, tigers, brown bears, and other large and powerful beasts. The Season's writers try to match creatures to their terrain theme, so warriors are more likely to face panthers in a jungle and Kodiak bears in a sub-arctic climate.

In the first round, warriors face one creature for each member of their team (so if there are five team members, they face five creatures). In the second round, they face one creature for every two members of the team. If the number of team members is odd, add a weaker First-Round creature (so if the team has five members, there are two creatures from the Second Round list and one from the First Round list).

## Cyberware and Psionics

All of the creatures' natural bodies are augmented with state-of-the-art cyberware. Razor-sharp talons become titanium talons, a weak hide becomes rhino hide, and a panther gets thermal vision to go with his naturally keen senses. After a great deal of experimentation, the scientists working on building better beasts learned to enhance a creature's natural strengths rather than to alter the animal for some unintended purpose.

## Round One Creatures

### Black Bear

**Terrain:** Temperate Forests

**ODFs:** +3; **DDFs:** +4

**Survival:** Superb;

**Specialization:** Tracking by scent

**Notice:** Fair or Wonderful (smell);

**Specialization:** Smell

**Combat (Melee):** Great

**Gifts:** Titanium Claws/Teeth, Advanced Olfactory Augmentation

**Weapons:** Claws, bite

**Wound Levels:** 1-2 (Scratched); 3-4 (Hurt); 5-6 (Very Hurt); 7+ (Incapacitated)

Black bears are smaller than their brown-furred cousins but are nevertheless powerful and frightening creatures. They reside primarily in temperate forests and usually only attack humans if they feel threatened, unless they happen to be psychically controlled and bred for such purposes.

Black bears stand about four feet tall at the shoulder and weigh around 500 pounds. When standing on their hind legs, they reach heights of about seven feet. Their immense strength allows them to lift objects of around 400 pounds, and even when not being mind-controlled by a super genius, they've been shown to possess reasoning skills on par with most canines.

### Coyote

**Terrain:** Coyotes are highly adaptable and survive in almost any temperate or arid climate

**ODFs:** +3; **DDFs:** +3

**Combat (Melee):** Great;

**Specialization:** Bite

**Notice:** Superb;

**Specialization:** Smell

**Combat (Non-Physical):** Great;

**Specialization:** Pack tactics

**Covert:** Good

**Gifts:** Titanium Teeth; *Sonic Howl* (*sonarkinesis* device PR 1, capable of making a sonic attack against all creatures within Mediocre range.)

**Weapons:** Bite

**Wound Levels:** 1-2 (Scratched) ; 3-4 (Hurt); 5+ (Incapacitated)

Individual coyote attacks on humans rarely result in a loss of human life, but coyotes are pack animals and rarely hunt alone. Several coyotes, attacking in unison, can bring down much larger prey, especially when using their keen instinctual tactics.

Coyotes are smaller than wolves. They weigh about 75 pounds and are roughly three feet in length, not including the tail. They stand roughly two feet at the shoulder. Despite their relatively smaller size, they are expert predators and use their keen sense of smell and pack-hunting tactics to their advantage.

These coyotes are outfitted with *sonarkinesis* PR 1 devices which allow them to emit ultrasonic howl attacks. They deliver a *sonarkinesis* attack to all creatures (not including other coyotes) within Fair range. A pack of coyotes howling simultaneously may make a single attack and combine the PR of each. For example, three coyotes howling together can make three PR 1 attacks or one PR 3 attack.



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**Jackal****Terrain:** Desert, grasslands, coastal regions**ODFs:** +3; **DDFs:** +3**Combat (Melee):** Great;**Specialization:** Bite**Notice:** Great; **Specialization:** Smell**Combat (Non-Physical):** Great;**Specialization:** Pack tactics**Covert:** Great**Gifts:** Titanium Teeth; Diseased Bite**Weapons:** Bite**Wound Levels:** 1-2 (Scratched); 3-4 (Hurt); 5+ (Incapacitated)

Smaller than coyotes but even more vicious, jackals live and thrive in a variety of habitats including deserts, grasslands, and marshy coastal regions. They occasionally hunt alone but are particularly formidable pack hunters.

Jackals are about 1-½ feet tall and three feet long from nose to rump. They weigh about 30 pounds. Though they're relatively small compared to other predatory dogs, they are incredibly vicious and dominate many larger species.

These creatures are known for spreading diseases such as rabies. When a jackal bites a character, that character must make a Great (+2) Body check or contract a fast-acting form of rabies designed especially for Arena contestants. Failing the check means the character takes a -1 penalty on all checks as the disease begins to take hold of their nervous system. Within one hour, the character must make a second Great (+2) Body check to shake off the disease. Failure means the character takes a -2 penalty to all checks.

If the affected character isn't vaccinated within 24 hours, they must make a final Great (+2) Body check. If the character fails this check, they die a rather painful death. Luckily, the vaccine only costs a Fair [4] amount of Wealth.

**Jaguar / Black Panther****Terrain:** Jungle, forest, grasslands, mountains**ODFs:** +4; **DDFs:** +3**Combat (Melee):** Superb;**Specializations:** Claw, bite**Covert:** Superb; **Specialization:** Stealth**Athletics:** Great (+1 when jumping);**Specializations:** Jump; Swim**Notice:** Great**Gifts:** Titanium Claws/Fangs; cybernetic legs;*photokinesis* collar (**PR:** 3; reduce light only)**Wound Levels:** 1-2 (Scratched); 3-4 (Hurt); 5-6 (Very Hurt); 7+ (Incapacitated)

Jaguars are spotted creatures which inhabit a variety of territories. Most of the jaguars at World's Edge are of the rarer "black panther" variety and appear almost completely black. They are stealthy hunters and possess some of the strongest jaws in the animal kingdom; their teeth, even when not augmented by titanium, are capable of piercing turtle and armadillo shells, bovine skulls, and other incredibly tough objects.

Jaguars are the third largest of all cat species. They stand about 3 feet at the shoulder, stretch 6-½ feet from nose to the base of the tail, and can weigh up to 350 pounds. The jaguars at World's Edge are bred (or cloned) to be on the upper range of size for their species.

Once a jaguar gets hold of its prey, it doesn't let go. Any opponent who receives a Hurt Wound from a jaguar is grabbed by the creature. That target cannot move away from the jaguar, takes a -1 penalty to ODFs, and cannot use large weapons. If the creature is still alive on the following round, the jaguar automatically deals it another Hurt Wound in addition to any other attacks the jaguar may make that round. Forcing oneself free from the jaguar's grasp requires a Good (+1) Body check or some other creative means of escape.

**Ocelot****Terrain:** Tropical forests, swamps, savanna**ODFs:** +3; **DDFs:** +2**Combat (Melee):** Great;**Specialization:** Claws**Covert:** Great; **Specialization:** Stealth**Notice:** Great**Athletics:** Great (+1dF re-roll when jumping)