

# BONE WARS

In **Bone Wars**, you play a paleontologist during the great Dinosaur Bone Rush of the late 19th Century. You have only one goal — winning prestige at any cost. Getting the most impressive skeletons into your museum is your key to scientific immortality. Of course, you have rivals who will stop at nothing to get the bones you want, be it explosives, spies, or abuse of the scientific process. Foil their plans by reaching the Prestige goal first!

## SETUP

**Bone Wars** is a card game for 2 to 4 players, ages 10 and up. A typical game takes about 30 minutes. The game contains 4 Paleontologist cards, 33 Bone cards, 18 Name cards, and 53 Event cards.

To start playing, choose a Paleontologist card and place it face up on the table in front of you. You'll need a marker of some kind (a penny or a washer works well) to track your progress along the Prestige track on the border of the card. Put your marker at 1. Set aside any unused Paleontologists.

Separate the Event and Bone cards into two piles (they have differently

colored backs to make this easy). Shuffle the Event cards and place them face down on the table. Do the same with the Bone cards.

Decide who goes first (possibly the youngest player, or the person who owns the set). All subsequent play is clockwise around the table.

Decide what Prestige Level to play to. The first player to reach that Prestige at the end of a turn has achieved "Scientific Immortality" and wins the game.

Suggested Prestige Levels	
2 players.....	12
3 players.....	10
4 players.....	8

If more than one player has reached or exceeded that Prestige at the end of a turn, the player with the highest Prestige wins. If they have the same Prestige, then the game is a tie.

## CARD TYPES

**Bone Wars** uses three types of cards, many of which include special rules.

*Whenever there is a conflict between the written rules and the rules on the cards, the cards take precedence.*

**Paleontologists:** There are four Paleontologist cards: Barnum Brown, Edward Cope, Othniel Marsh, and Charles Sternberg. Each has a special ability he can use throughout the game,

and each card is marked with a scale for tracking Prestige points. Paleontologist cards have a dark brown back.

**Bone Cards** also have a dark brown back. There are two kinds of Bone card:

(1) *Skeletal elements* are cards used to build dinosaur skeletons. Each card describes a dinosaur's head, vertebrae (backbone), or limbs. The card's color indicates which family the dinosaur belongs to. Each skeletal element is worth one Prestige point when it is used to describe a skeleton.

(2) *Fossil cards* describe dinosaur fossils that are not bones. You do not need a Name card to play these cards. Each is worth one Prestige point. Unlike skeletons, fossils cannot be revised.

**Event Cards** have a light brown back. There are three kinds of Event cards:

(1) *Names* are used to name dinosaurs. Each Name card has a dinosaur name, its family, when it lived, how big it was, and a description of its head, vertebrae, and limbs.

(2) *Field Crew* can be played during the Field Season phase. They are crew members hired to help on your dinosaur excavation; they also add special abilities to your Paleontologist. Unlike other Events, Field Crew cards remain in play until some other Event removes them. Place them face up next to your Paleontologist when you put them in play. Their special abilities take effect as soon as they are played. However, they don't affect things which have already happened.

(3) *Events:* Event cards allow you to take actions during the game. They may affect you or your opponents. Each Event card can **only** be played during the phase of the turn marked on the side of the card.

## TURN ORDER

Each turn has three phases which are played in the following order: (1) Field Season, (2) Museum Work, and

(3) Controversy.

During each phase, play goes around the table clockwise, starting with the first player. Each player, in order, may take one action (such as playing a card or describing or revising a skeleton), or may pass. There can be more than one round of play in each phase — play continues around the table until no one has any more actions to play. At this point, players move on to the next phase of the turn.

### During Each Turn

- Cards take effect as soon as they are played.
- Defensive cards which negate the effect of other cards may be played at any time.
- Unless otherwise specified on the card, each card affects only one player.

## PHASE 1: FIELD SEASON

Each player starts the turn by drawing four cards from the Event deck and four cards from the Bone deck. Draw cards

in the order of play, with each player drawing all four cards before moving on to the next person.

Following the standard order of play, players may then use Field Season Event cards to steal bones, interfere with other players' expeditions, and in general get as many bones as possible into their hot little hands. Players may only play one Event at a time, unless they are defending themselves against another player's action. You can play multiple defenses at once. All Event cards go back to the bottom of the Event deck when they are played.

## PHASE 2: MUSEUM WORK

During this phase, players may use the bones in their hands to describe new dinosaur species and display them in their museums (the space above their Paleontologist). **Only new skeletons or stand-alone fossils can be added in this phase. Existing ones cannot be changed at this time.**

To **describe** a new dinosaur, lay down a Name card and at least two Bone cards, all at the same time. None of the Bone cards have to be the same color as the Name card, but you cannot play more than one bone of the same type (i.e. head, limbs, vertebrae) in a skeleton.

You get one Prestige point for each bone you describe. Names do not give Prestige points. You may also use Museum Event cards when building skeletons. Events which increase a new skeleton's Prestige value must be

played at the same time the skeleton is presented. Other players can then play Event cards to reduce the skeleton's value, which may be countered by defensive cards.

Fossil cards can also be played at this time. They do not need a Name card and do not have to be played with a dinosaur. Skeletons and fossils in a museum remain out on the table for the rest of the game.

Don't have a Name card in your hand? Sit tight: your Bone cards will come in handy soon...

## PHASE 3: CONTROVERSY

Players can now **revise** dinosaurs in play. To revise a skeleton, you can either add skeletal elements to unfinished skeletons or replace Bone cards that do not perfectly match the Name card. In this phase, the color of a new Bone card **must match** the color of the Name card, and its description must be a **closer** match than the description on the card in play. If it is only equal, the bone can't be used for revision. The dinosaur's Name card cannot be changed. After replacing a Bone card, the old card goes back in the bone pile. Each player may also use Controversy Event cards as they make revisions, and play defensive cards as usual.

- If you revise a skeleton in **your own** museum, you gain one Prestige point for each card you add or replace, and don't lose any points.
- If you revise a skeleton in **a rival's** museum, you get one Prestige point and

your rival **loses** one Prestige point for each card you add or replace.

## At the end of Controversy phase

- All unused Bone cards go back into the bone pile, which is shuffled before the next turn.
- Discard all but four Event cards in your hand. (Bone cards don't count against this limit.)
- If any player has won the game, the game ends. Otherwise, start the next turn.

## WINNING THE GAME

The first player who reaches the agreed-upon Prestige level at the end of a turn has achieved "Scientific Immortality" and wins the game.

- If more than one player reaches or exceeds that level at the end of a turn, the player with the highest Prestige wins. If they have the same level of Prestige, the game is a tie.
- If the Bone deck is empty at the start of a turn, the game is over at the end of that turn and the player with the highest Prestige wins.

*Thanks for  
playing Bone Wars:  
The Game of Ruthless  
Paleontology. Look for more  
of our games in Summer  
2006.*

## CREDITS

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