

Grievances

The ring of warriors closed around the two combatants. Commander Mauro Wynter was stripped down to a ragged loin cloth, hand wraps, and sandals. His opponent, a Mando warrior he had never seen prior to Festivus was similarly attired. While the men had no true grievances, the tradition of working out differences in sweat and blood. The two squared up on opposite ends of the ring, and surveyed the faces of the friends and acquaintances there assembled. They bowed to each other and slowly started to circle like caged beasts contesting a small meal.

The Mando's name was Ivar, or so Wynter was lead to believe. He stood nearly six feet tall and was built stoutly but with an athletic tone. The man was approximately in his early thirties and had a bronzed complexion. Golden brown hair was cropped close to the scalp. He was rugged and defiant looking. Wynter admired his opponent and was prepared to fight him with honor.

Ivar was a shrewd fighter, not risking the first move and too busy studying his opponents actions. Wynter was no great melee fighter, but he could hold his own well enough. He made a feint to the left and charged to the right, trying to tackle the Mando low. The rouse was too poorly timed, too obvious to work and Ivar side-stepped the attack, landing a passing punch to Wynter's gut as he moved passed his intended target.

Mauro stumbled from the impact. It was a powerful blow, but not enough to knock him off his feet. The two men continued to circle each other again. Wynter was now more cautious, and Ivar more bold. The Mando was quicker and stronger than Mauro, that was not in dispute. It would come down to a matter of wits and determination.

The Mando chased Wynter, attempting to intimidate him and use his superior strength to throw him off guard. Mauro stood firm and planted his feet. As the Mando was upon him, Wynter stooped low and Ivar tumbled over him. Wynter was now upon him raining down blows, pummeling Ivar with his fists. The thronged crowd wailed in cheers and bawdy gestures at the melee ensued.

Ivar was far too skilled as a warrior to stay down. He recovered, grabbing Mauro by the legs and yanking him strongly to the ground. It was now a rolling match, with each man jockeying for position and leverage on the other. They took to their feet once again, and once more circled each other, albeit far less speedily. In time, each man raised their arm in salute to the other and charged headlong to the fold.

Mauro was lucky, in that he was able to trip up Ivar and a grapple ensued yet again. The two thrashed about on the ground until Ivar grabbed Wynter's head forcefully and smashed it to the ground. By laws of combat, the fight was over. Both then rose to their feet and clasped each other's arms in a sign of respect. The crowd cheered.