

KEYFORGE



Tournament Regulations

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Summary of changes in this version

- Corrected typos and edited language for clarification

All changes and additions made to this document since the previous version are marked in **red**.



Tournaments supported by the Organized Play (“OP”) program for *KeyForge*, sponsored by Fantasy Flight Games (“FFG”) and its international partners, follow the rules provided in this document.

Introduction

A tournament is a competition between *KeyForge* players. After enrolling in the tournament, competitors are paired against one another in an organized fashion to play a game. After multiple games against different opponents, players are ranked according to their performance. Most tournaments conclude with the awarding of prizes to top finishers.

Tournaments are played using the rules provided in the *KeyForge* Rulebook and most recent FAQ, both of which may be downloaded from the *KeyForge* website at any time. Additional rules for playing games in a tournament are detailed in this document.

This document explains important tournament concepts and provides the details for the two main types of tournaments: Sealed tournaments and Archon tournaments. Sealed tournaments are tournaments where players open a brand new *KeyForge* deck at the tournament and are given only a few moments to look through it before they begin playing. Archon tournaments are tournaments where each player brings one of their own decks to use at the event.

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Tournament Participant Roles

Every person present at a tournament is a participant. Participants fulfill specific roles based on their responsibilities to the tournament. All participants share the responsibility of acting in a respectful manner toward one another. Please read the Fundamental Event Document for a detailed explanation of these roles. Participant leader roles are: organizer, marshal, and judge. Other roles include player and spectator.

Organizer

An event must have exactly one organizer. The organizer is responsible for the oversight of the entire event, including both planning and execution. If the organizer does not assign a marshal for the event, the organizer must perform the responsibilities of the marshal role.

Marshal

An event may have any number of marshals, including none. A marshal is an expert on the game's rules and regulations and the final authority on their application during a tournament. A marshal also determines if unsporting conduct has occurred and what the appropriate remedy is, referring any recommendations for disqualification to the organizer. When a marshal is not actively performing his or her duties, he or she is a spectator and should communicate this change in status clearly.

Judge

An event may have any number of judges, including none. A judge is well-versed in the game's rules and regulations. A judge's responsibilities include assisting players to resolve disputes and answering questions regarding the game's rules. When a judge is not actively performing judge duties, he or she is a spectator and should communicate this change in status clearly.

When a judge is observing a game or an issue is brought to his or her attention, the judge should inform players when they are not following the game rules. Players have an initial opportunity to resolve any situation among themselves, but any player may alternatively ask the judge to make a ruling. At a player's request, a marshal can review a judge ruling and provide a final determination.

Player

A player is an individual that plays *KeyForge* at the tournament. A player must bring all components they need to play a game of *KeyForge*. This includes their own unique deck for Archon tournaments. For Sealed tournaments, a player does not need to bring a deck with them. When a player is not actively engaged in a game of *KeyForge*, he or she is a spectator.

Spectator

A spectator is any individual physically at a tournament not actively engaging in another role. Spectators must not disturb an ongoing game, and cannot provide any input or assistance to players during their games. If a spectator believes they have witnessed a breach of the rules in a game they are watching, other than a missed opportunity, he or she may bring it to the attention of a leader.

Leader Participation

A leader may participate as a player in a Relaxed tier tournament for which he or she is responsible only if there is at least one other leader present. Additional leaders must be announced at the beginning of the tournament and are responsible for all rulings for games in which the first leader is playing. If there is a chance that two leaders will play against one another, a third leader—preferably a marshal—must be present to take responsibility for any rulings during that game.

During Formal and Premier tier tournaments, leaders cannot participate as a player. Leaders for Formal and Premier tier tournaments are expected to commit their full attention to overseeing the event. For a more in-depth explanation of the different tournament tiers, please refer to the last page of this document.

Conduct

All tournament participants are expected to act in a respectful manner during a tournament. If players have a dispute during a competition and cannot resolve it themselves, they must call for a judge to resolve it and provide any rulings that are needed. All card interpretations during a tournament are a marshal's responsibility, and he or she may overrule the rules documents when a mistake or error is discovered.

Unsporting Conduct

All tournament participants are expected to behave in a mature and considerate manner. Additionally, players are expected to play within the rules of the game and not abuse them. This policy prohibits intentionally stalling a game for time, placing components with excessive force, inappropriate behavior, treating an opponent with a lack of courtesy or respect, cheating, etc. Collusion among players to manipulate scoring is expressly forbidden. Mishandling, tampering with, or intentionally damaging or destroying other players' cards or components is grounds for immediate removal from tournament play.

The organizer, at his or her sole discretion, may remove players from the tournament for unsporting conduct.

Tournament Materials

There are several materials and game components needed to facilitate a tournament. The organizer and players are both responsible for supplying certain items.

Organizer Materials

In addition to arranging a location, the organizer is responsible for securing tables and chairs for each player. The organizer should have table numbers on hand or some other method of demarcation so players can easily find their seats at the beginning of each tournament round.

Finally, the organizer is also responsible for having all required rules documents on hand for reference during the event. This includes the *KeyForge* Rulebook, *KeyForge* Tournament Regulations (this document), and any Event Outline or other document relevant to the event. Most of these documents can be found on the *KeyForge* website.

Player Materials

Players are responsible for bringing all of the game components they need to play a game of *KeyForge*. This includes *Æ*Ember tokens, damage counters, a chain tracker, and status cards. For Archon tournaments, players must also bring their own unique deck, including the deck's identity card.

Regarding Player Decks

Each *KeyForge* deck is unique, and no player-driven deckbuilding can occur at any time. Any player who attempts to alter the contents of their deck so that it contains anything other than what is listed on its identity card is not eligible to compete in a *KeyForge* tournament. If, during the course of the tournament, a player is discovered to have altered their deck, that player is disqualified and his or her opponent receives a win for the round.

Players must use the same deck for the duration of the tournament.

NOTE: Miss "Onyx" Censorius and Radiant Argus the Supreme are the two starter decks included in the core box of *KeyForge*. These decks are not eligible for tournament play because they are not unique.

Identity Cards

Each *KeyForge* deck has an identity card that displays the deck's name along with a list of all the cards within that deck. Each player's identity card must be visible and accessible at all times. In the Archon format, **players are only able to review their opponent's list prior to the match** (standard 2 minute time limit). In the Sealed format, **players are not allowed to review their opponent's list**.

Each player must present his or her deck's identity card in order to register for a *KeyForge* tournament. If a player cannot present the identity card, then the associated deck is not valid and cannot be used in that tournament.

Card Sleeves

Players are required to sleeve their deck in opaque sleeves for Premier tier tournaments. All sleeves within a single deck must be identical in size, color, texture, and condition. At Relaxed and Formal tier events, players may use transparent sleeves so long as there are no distinguishing marks on any of the card backs in the deck. The organizer can determine whether or not a particular deck needs opaque sleeves at these events. Players are not required to sleeve their deck's identity card. Players should bring a few spare sleeves for their deck in case a card sleeve breaks or becomes unusable during a tournament.

Because of the nature of *KeyForge*'s unique deck mechanic, a player may check the printed deck name on the face of any card in play at any time. If the deck name on a card does not match the name of the deck being used, that constitutes altering a deck's contents and the player using that deck is disqualified, granting his or her opponent a win for the round.

Lost and Damaged Cards

Players should take extreme care not to lose a card from their deck. Because of the nature of *KeyForge*'s unique deck mechanic, it is not possible to find replacements for lost cards. Any player that discovers they are missing a card at the beginning of a round should notify a leader. The leader will give the player a short time extension to their game in order to search among their belongings to find the card. If the player cannot find the card within that time, they must concede the game. If the player cannot find the card before the start of the next round, they should be removed from the tournament.

During a game, if a player discovers they are missing a card from their deck, they must concede the game. If the card simply fell on the floor due to carelessness, give the player a warning, fix the problem, and allow them to continue the game.

If a player's card becomes damaged during the course of the tournament, at a leader's discretion a proxy card may be used. A leader will create the proxy, including the card name, the deck name, any information that is no longer legible or available on the damaged card, the name of the leader who created it, and the date it was created. The original card must be kept facedown and nearby, available for reference when the proxy card is played.

Tokens and Status Cards

Tokens are representations of information about the game or game state. The presence of tokens is marked by one or more indicators. Indicators may also be used to represent multiple tokens, or other open or derived information.

Typically, players use the cardboard tokens included in official product as indicators. However, players may choose to use other items as indicators, so long as they do not obscure significant component information, are resistant to accidental modification, and their purpose of use is clear to both players. The marshal is responsible for determining the legality of an indicator and its reasonable use during a match if objected to by its owner's opponent.

NOTE: The use of dice of any kind is not permitted in *KeyForge* Organized Play.

Similar to tokens, Power and Stun status cards are used as indicators for certain information throughout the course of the game. Players may choose to use other items (except dice) to represent these as well, and once again the marshal is responsible for determining the substitutes' legality and reasonable use.

Legal Products

Players may use only official *KeyForge* components in tournament play, with the following exceptions for third-party replacements:

- Tokens that do not obscure card information
- Power/Stun cards (or tokens) that are clearly distinguishable
- Key tokens that have distinct, easily-discernable differences between their "A" and "B" sides
- A chain tracker card and its associated token, so long as the former is clearly legible and does not omit any information compared to the official component.

Determining the legality of any questionable third-party tokens is the marshal's responsibility. Proxies of cards are not allowed unless used under the rules of "Lost and Damaged Cards" on page 5.

All official promotional status cards, tokens, and other components given out at events or tournaments are legal in any tournaments where the original version of those components are legal.

For all tournaments, all product is legal in North America upon the product's official release.

Tournament Play

This section provides information and considerations for playing a game of *KeyForge* at a tournament.

Tournament Setup

Before the tournament begins, the organizer must set up tables suitable for tournament play. Each seat should be arranged so that players have enough space on the table to comfortably place all of their cards and tokens over the course of a game. In addition, the organizer should clearly communicate the details of the tournament to players ahead of time.

Game Setup

The following steps must be performed before players can begin their first game each tournament round.

1. Each player places their damage tokens, *Æ*Ember tokens, and status cards within easy reach of their play area.

2. Each player places their deck, identity card, and three key tokens in their own preferred arrangement, so long as it is clear to their opponent where everything is located.
3. Players do not consciously choose a first player for the first game each round. Instead, the first player is determined via a random method, such as flipping a coin (“heads means I go first, tails means you go first,” for example). Should players request it, a judge can carry out this step. If this game is part of a series of games between the same two opponents, then for each game after the first the player who lost the previous game may choose which player is the first player.
4. Each player shuffles their deck thoroughly and presents it to their opponent. The opponent may shuffle and cut the deck if desired. After the opponent has had a chance to shuffle the deck, each player places it within easy reach in their play area.
5. The first player draws a starting hand of seven cards while the second player draws a starting hand of six cards.
6. Starting with the first player, each player has an opportunity to shuffle their starting hand back into their deck, referred to as a “mulligan.” If a player does this, that player draws a new starting hand with one fewer card than before.

Once players complete setup, they must wait for a leader to announce the start of the round before beginning their game. If the round has already begun, players may begin playing immediately upon completing these steps.

Missed Opportunities

Players are expected to follow the game’s rules, remembering to perform actions and use card effects when indicated. It is all players’ responsibility to maintain a proper game state, and to ensure that all mandatory abilities and game steps are acknowledged. If a player forgets to use an effect during the timing specified by that effect, he or she cannot retroactively use it without the consent of his or her opponent. Players are expected to act with respect and not intentionally distract or rush an opponent with the intent of forcing a missed opportunity.

Taking Notes and Outside Material

Players cannot take notes or reference outside material or information during a tournament round. However, players may reference official rule documents at any time or ask a judge for clarification from official rule documents. Official rule documents include all rules documents and inserts available on the *KeyForge* page of our website, those found in an *KeyForge* product, or any portion thereof.

Tournament Concepts

The tournament concepts create the framework for any *KeyForge* tournament.

Tournament Round Times

Each tournament round of *KeyForge* is a predetermined length, giving players a certain amount of time to complete their games. A leader should start the timer for a tournament round after most players have found their seats and begun to set up. If a game has not concluded when the time for a tournament round runs out, a winner is determined through the “End of Game” procedure on page 8. A tournament round’s length varies depending on the type of round and format.

ARCHON

- *Swiss Rounds*: 35 minutes each for best of 1
- *Single Elimination, Single-Game Rounds*: 35 minutes each
- *Final Single Elimination, Single-Game Rounds*: 50 minutes
- *Single Elimination, Best-of-Three Rounds (except Final)*: 90 minutes each
- *Final Single Elimination, Best-of-Three Round*: 120 minutes

SEALED

- *Swiss Rounds*: 45 minutes each for best of 1
- *Single Elimination, Single-Game Rounds*: 45 minutes each
- *Final Single Elimination, Single-Game Rounds*: 60 minutes
- *Single Elimination, Best-of-Three Rounds (except Final)*: 100 minutes each
- *Final Single Elimination, Best-of-Three Round*: 125 minutes

Pairings

Each tournament round, players are paired with an opponent, against whom they play between one and three games of *KeyForge*. The method of pairing and number of rounds may change based on what type of rounds are being used. The organizer must announce the number and type(s) of rounds and what size any progression cuts will be before the start of the tournament.

When necessary, a player may be assigned a bye instead of being paired against an opponent. That player receives a win for that round of the tournament. The rules for when to assign a bye to a player are detailed in the relevant sections below.

Players should not be paired against the same opponent more than once during a single stage of a tournament. In general, a stage of a tournament ends when a progression cut is made.

If a player no longer wishes to continue playing, he or she can notify the organizer of their intent. The organizer will avoid pairing the player in future rounds by dropping the him or her from the tournament. Players are also dropped if they do not appear within a reasonable time limit for a round in which they are paired, or if they are no longer able to play for another reason. Players can request that the organizer allow them to rejoin an event from which they were dropped, being assigned unpaired losses for each round they did not attend. Players can rejoin an event only during the same stage in which they left. Disqualified players are removed from the tournament and cannot rejoin.

Swiss Rounds

Most *KeyForge* tournaments use a Swiss pairing system that awards tournament points to the winner of each game. Each Swiss round pairs players in one-on-one, single-game matches. Each round pairs players with the same number of tournament points together as much as possible while also preventing players from facing the same opponent more than once. At the end of Swiss rounds, the winner of the tournament is the player with the most tournament points unless there are single elimination rounds (see “Single Elimination Rounds” on page 8).

For the first round of Swiss pairings, players are matched randomly against an opponent. For each round after the first, players are paired at random against another player with the same number of tournament points.

To determine pairings, take the group of players with the most tournament points and pair them at random. If there is an odd number of players in that group, pair the remaining player with a random player from the group with the next most tournament points. Then, pair all remaining players in the second group at random. Continue this until all players are paired.

Pairing Example: *Henry, Lucinda, and Seth each have 5 tournament points, the most out of any player in the tournament. Henry is paired against Lucinda. Because there are no other players with 5 tournament points, Seth is paired against a random player from the next highest score group—in this case, players with 4 tournament points. Vance is selected at random from players with 4 tournament points and is paired against Seth.*

If there is an odd number of players in the tournament, a player at random receives the bye in the first round. In later rounds, if there is an odd number of players remaining in the tournament, the bye is given to the lowest ranked player who has not yet received a bye.

Progression Cut

Many *KeyForge* tournaments set a predetermined number of rounds, at the end of which all players that meet certain performance criteria advance to the next stage of the tournament while all other players are dropped. This is commonly referred to as “making a cut,” and is often accompanied by a change in the type of tournament rounds and the start of a new stage in the tournament.

These tournament regulations cover the type of cut used for the Basic and Advanced Tournament structures: a standings-based cut to the top 4, 8, 16, or 32 players. There are additional types of progression cuts detailed in the Fundamental Event Document, found on the *KeyForge* page of the FFG website.

If a player qualified for the standings-based cut drops from the tournament before any games are played in the next stage, the highest-ranking player that did not make the cut before should be added as the new lowest-ranked player in the cut.

Player Drop Example: *Lloyd finishes the Swiss rounds of a tournament in sixth place and makes the top 8 cut but has a family emergency come before the elimination rounds begin. He informs the organizer that he must leave the tournament and then departs. The organizer immediately calls over the ninth-place player, Linus, and informs him that he may play in the top 8 due to someone leaving.*

He accepts and is entered into the top 8 as eighth place. The former eighth place player moves to seventh place, and the former seventh place player moves to Lloyd's spot at sixth place. Then the organizer pairs all eight players based on these new rankings.

Once the next stage of the tournament has begun, no new players can be added in, even if someone drops out. If a player drops out during the elimination rounds, then that player's opponent receives a bye for the round.

Single Elimination Rounds

Many KeyForge tournaments use single elimination rounds, in which the winner of each pairing remains in the tournament and the losing player is eliminated and dropped from the tournament. Elimination rounds are usually used after a progression cut to the top 4, 8, 16, or 32 players and continue until only one player remains and is named the winner. During elimination rounds, players play either single-game or best-of-three matches, depending on the tournament.

For the first round of single elimination that follows a progression cut, pair the highest ranked player against the lowest ranked player who made the cut. This is Match #1. Pair the second-highest player against the second-lowest player who made the cut. This is Match #2. Continue in this manner until all players are paired.

For tournaments which begin with single elimination rounds, byes will need to be utilized for the first round if there are a number of players not equal to an exponential power of 2 (4, 8, 16, 32, and so on). Randomly assign byes to a number of players equal to the difference between the actual player count and the next-highest power of 2, then pair all remaining players against each other at random. Assign each pairing and player with a bye a match number in a random order, starting with Match #1.

For additional elimination rounds, pair the winner of Match #1 against the winner of the last match (the match with the highest number). This pairing is the new Match #1. Continue in this manner until all players are paired for the round.

In further single elimination rounds, follow the same method until all players are paired.

If a player drops from the tournament after single elimination rounds begin, that player's current opponent—or next opponent, if the player drops between rounds—receives a bye for the round.

End of Game

Each Swiss tournament round and some single elimination rounds consist of one game—the winner of the game is the winner of the round. Some single elimination rounds are made up of two or three games—the first person to win two games is the winner of the round. A game ends in one of the following ways:

- **Three Keys Forged:** One player managed to forge three Keys before the other player.
- **Time:** When time is called at the end of a tournament round, if neither player has three Keys forged, they follow the "Going to Time" rules below to determine a win.
- **Concession:** A player voluntarily concedes defeat at any point during the game. The conceding player receives a loss and the opponent receives a win.

Best-of-Three End of Game

When a game ends in a best-of-three match during single elimination rounds, unless one player has won two games in the match, the players begin setup for a new game (see "Game Setup" on page 5). The player who lost the previous game chooses which player will act as "first player."

If time is called at the end of the best-of-three match and players have the same number of wins (zero or one), then they follow the Going to Time rules below. Otherwise, whichever player won the first game of that match receives the win for the whole match and his or her opponent receives a loss.

Going to Time

When time is called for the round, the player who is currently taking their turn finishes their turn. If that player does not achieve victory by the end of their turn, then their opponent may take one last turn.

If neither player has achieved victory (forged three Keys) at the end of the opponent's last turn, they must follow the steps below, in order, to determine who receives a win for the current game. That player's opponent receives a loss for the game. If a single elimination round with a best-of-three match ends and only one player has a game win for the match, the player with a game win wins the match instead of players following the steps below.

Note: These steps take place in a post-game tiebreaker phase. While following these steps, neither player is considered to be currently taking their turn.

1. Each player who has 6 or more Æmber forges 1 Key (removing the 6 Æmber from their pool as usual). **Cards that affect Æmber costs have no effect during this step. Each player can only forge 1 key from this step.**
2. The player with the most Keys forged is the winner. If there is a tie, proceed to step 3.
3. The player with the most remaining Æmber in their pool is the winner. If there is still a tie, proceed to step 4.
4. Each player selects one of their houses. Then, each player totals the number of friendly creatures in play of that house and adds the amount of bonus Æmber from that house's cards still in their hand. This is that player's "potential Æmber." The player with the most potential Æmber is the winner. If there is still a tie, proceed to step 5.
5. The first player is the winner.

End of Game Example: *Time is called for the round. After finishing their last turns, neither Eric nor Travis has three forged Keys. They follow the rules for going to time. Eric has one Key forged and nine Æmber; Travis has two Keys forged and three Æmber. Based on step 1, Eric immediately forges a Key and removes 6 Æmber from his pool. Now both Eric and Travis have two forged Keys and three Æmber remaining in their pool. Because of this, they proceed to step 4.*

Eric chooses Brobnar while Travis chooses Mars. Eric has four Brobnar creatures in play and four Brobnar cards in hand that give an Æmber bonus, putting his potential Æmber total at 8. Travis has six Mars creatures in play and one Mars card in hand that gives an Æmber bonus, putting his potential Æmber total at 7. Eric has the higher potential Æmber total, so he receives a win and Travis receives a loss.

Tournament Points

Players earn tournament points at the end of each round. At the end of a tournament, the player with the most tournament points wins the tournament. In the case of a larger event, they are instead used to determine who makes the cut to elimination rounds. Players earn tournament points as follows:

- Win = 1 tournament point
- Loss = 0 tournament points

Tiebreakers

If two or more players have the same number of tournament points, tiebreakers are used to determine each player's standing within that group. Tiebreakers are used in the following order until all players within that group have been given a standing.

- **Strength of Schedule:** A player's strength of schedule is calculated by dividing each opponent's total tournament points by the number of rounds that opponent has played, adding the results of each opponent played, and then dividing that total by the number of opponents the player has played. The player with the highest strength of schedule is ranked above all other players in the group not yet ranked. The player with the second-highest strength of schedule is ranked second among all players in the group not yet ranked, and so on.
- **Extended Strength of Schedule:** A player's extended strength of schedule is calculated by adding each opponent's strength of schedule and then dividing by the number of opponents that player has played. The player with the highest extended strength of schedule is ranked above all other players in the group not yet ranked. The player with the second-highest extended strength of schedule is ranked second among all players in the group not yet ranked, and so on.
- **Random:** If any players are still tied after all other tiebreakers have been applied, then those players are ranked in a random order below any players already ranked in the group.

Tournament Structures

The structure of a tournament determines how many Swiss and single elimination rounds are used. All KeyForge tournaments must use one of the following three types.



Basic Structure

The basic tournament structure is designed to be very accessible, especially for newer participants. This structure provides a tournament experience that requires a modest commitment of time and resources from organizers and players. The Basic Structure is used for Store Championship events.

Number of Registered Players	Number of Swiss Rounds	Size of Cut
4-8	3	No Cut
9-16	4	No Cut
17-24	4	Top 4
25-40	5	Top 4
41-44	5	Top 8
45-76	6	Top 8
77-148	6	Top 16
149 and Above	7	Top 16

Advanced Structure

The Advanced tournament structure caters to participants that enjoy competition. This structure provides a robust tournament experience that requires a substantial commitment of time and resources from organizers and players. The Advanced Structure is used for Regional Championship events.

Number of Registered Players	Number of Swiss Rounds	Size of Cut
9-12	4	Top 4
13-24	4	Top 8
25-40	5	Top 8
41-76	6	Top 8
77-148	6	Top 16
149-288	6	Top 32
289-512	7	Top 32
513 and Above	8	Top 32

Custom Structure

The custom structure applies to all round structures other than the basic and advanced structures. Also included in the custom structure are tournaments that offer a number of rounds or size of cut that does not change based on attendance. The Event Outline of official custom tournaments will either include a specific structure tailored to that particular type of event or instruct the organizer to design a structure and communicate it to participants. The Custom Structure is used for official Premier events, such as National, North American, European, and World Championship events.

Tournament Tiers

FFG's OP events are broken into three tiers of play. These tiers serve to establish the expectations of a KeyForge tournament. Expectations are not intended to exclude people from participating, but to communicate the experience that players can expect from an event. Organizers of unofficial tournaments are encouraged to utilize the Relaxed tier, unless their tournament is specifically aimed at competitive players.

Relaxed

Tournaments at this level are welcoming to all players, regardless of experience level. Players are encouraged to help each other improve and learn, so long as it does not significantly disrupt the game. The focus is on creating a fun and friendly environment. The Relaxed Tier is used for Store Championship events.

Formal

This tournament level expects players to possess at least a minimal amount of experience. Players should be familiar with the game rules, and be prepared to exercise that knowledge to play at a reasonable pace. Players are expected to avoid confusion about their actions and refrain from other sloppy play mistakes. The focus is a friendly competitive environment. The Formal Tier is used for Regional Championship events.

Premier

Premier events are the highest level of competition for Fantasy Flight Games tournaments. At this top level of tournaments, players are expected to have a moderate amount of experience with the game. Players should be familiar with not only the game rules, but also the most recent Rulebook and Tournament Regulations. The focus is on a competitive and fair environment.

*This and other supported documents for KeyForge can be accessed from the game's page:
FantasyFlightGames.com/KeyForge*

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