

Adam's Custom Characters – About

A *Magical Athlete* variant by Adam Sequoyah

Welcome to “Adam’s Custom Characters”!

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Here are all the parts that make up this variant. (To get right to what you most need to play the game, skip all this and go straight to the document “**Magical Athlete - Adam's Custom Characters - Cards.pdf.**”)

1. **About** (this document, 6 pages)

This is a kind of “readme,” an introduction to this variant. It describes the variant’s purpose and how to use it.

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2. **Cards** (the document “Magical Athlete - Adam's Custom Characters - Cards.pdf,” 24 pages)

These are the printable cards you need to play *Magical Athlete* with these custom characters!

3. **Character Abilities + FAQ** (the document “Magical Athlete - Adam's Custom Characters - Character Abilities + FAQ.pdf,” 36 pages)

Reference documents, for printing or keeping a digital copy.

- Character Abilities, pp. 1-29
- FAQ, pp. 30-36

What Is This?

“Adam’s Custom Characters” is a compilation of old and new playable characters for *Magical Athlete*. It includes all the original characters plus many, many custom creations!

Why This Variant?

What is the point, you ask? You have seen custom-made characters online and you wonder why I have reworked them here? Here is what I wanted to do with this project:

1. **Clarify & standardize ability rules.**

The first several times I played with custom characters I found online, lots of questions were raised about how abilities worked. It was frustrating because it was easy to expect one thing from a character and then have everyone question it when you tried to use it. My goal here was to clarify how & when to play

each ability. I also wanted to give a more structured framework for the rules, including consistent wording throughout. And I've included all the characters from the original game. Hopefully this improves on the original *Magical Athlete* rules, which describe character abilities in at least 4 different places!

2. **Make printable cards.**

I'm a bit of an Excel geek, and I got a layout in Excel to work for me. This will also allow for easy updates in the future. The hard part was fitting the abilities on the cards – and making them intelligible enough for first-time players, but with enough description to navigate [most] extraordinary situations. The compromise was to include a supplemental document to clarify some of the more complex ability interactions.

3. **Edit text.**

I'm an editor at heart (and by trade, part-time). I cleaned up the existing custom characters' text with some copyediting.

4. **Standardize character genders.**

Partly I wanted to clarify genders in the variant, since some of them didn't make thematic sense and some weren't specified. Additionally, I wanted to see more female characters – both to make the game more inclusive and to let Cupid's ability come into play more often. I assigned random genders to custom characters who didn't need to be male or female. This entire scope of characters is now 37% female, compared to 28% in the original game.

5. **Show extra materials needed.**

Sadly, not everyone keeps on hand a supply of 20d6, extra character stands, and mounds of random game tokens. I wanted people to know what kinds of components they might need before playing this variant and to easily see the specific components for each character when playing.

6. **Add my own custom characters.**

This was a really fun outcome that I didn't intend when I started working on this!

7. **Tone down overpowered abilities.**

I appreciate abilities that have some punch, but after playing some of these custom characters, I found them a little overpowered. Overpowered like consistently finishing a race in 3 or even 2 turns!

8. **Draw out more theme.**

I love rich theme and story in games. I love some of the character abilities people have come up with for this variant. And I wanted to emphasize those new powers with spiced up names that better fit the game's magical or fantasy theme.

Setup and How to Play

To play *Magical Athlete* with "Adam's Custom Characters," you mainly need the character cards. Print these 144 cards, and you will have all 119 custom characters plus new copies of the 25 original characters that came with *Magical Athlete*. I recommend printing in color, but the cards should still be functional in grayscale. (Then see the section "Directions for Cutting Cards" below.)

Currently I do not have character art or art for the card backs. You can print the cards on cardstock. Or you can print on normal copy paper and sleeve the cards, each with another Standard Card Game-sized card (such as from *Magic: The Gathering*) to provide a back for the character card, in 2½" x 3½" (63.5mm x 88mm) sleeves.

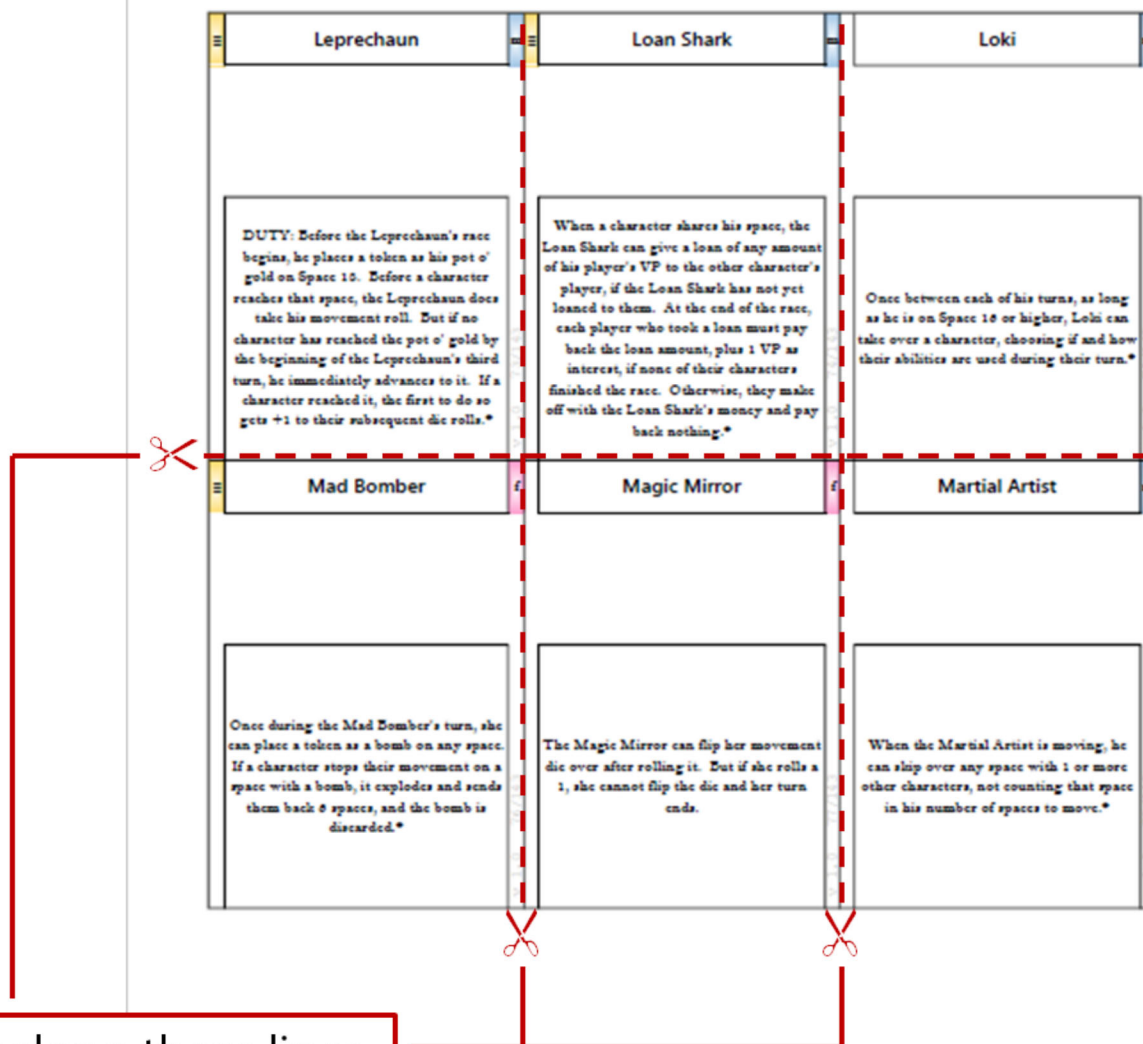
For the original characters, you can use the original game's pawns. For the custom characters, you can use any kind of pawns/meeples/miniatures/Shopkins that fit well on the game board. I have a bunch of random animal minis and discarded game tokens that I use, and I like to match the pawn to the character – for instance, a standee of Gandalf from *LotR* for the Wizard. Or I will give each player some pawn and have them use the same

one in the races for each character they've drafted; this makes it easier for each player to remember which pawn on the board is theirs.

You can use all or some of the characters in one game. My way to play is to throw everything in and shuffle it all together. But you may want to play with a limited number of characters, such as 25 like in the original game. Or you might want to select certain characters you'd like to show up for a particular game, so you could create the character deck with only those. You might even do this with a certain theme (e.g., "The Big City" or "Into the Woods")! However you'd like to do it is up to you.

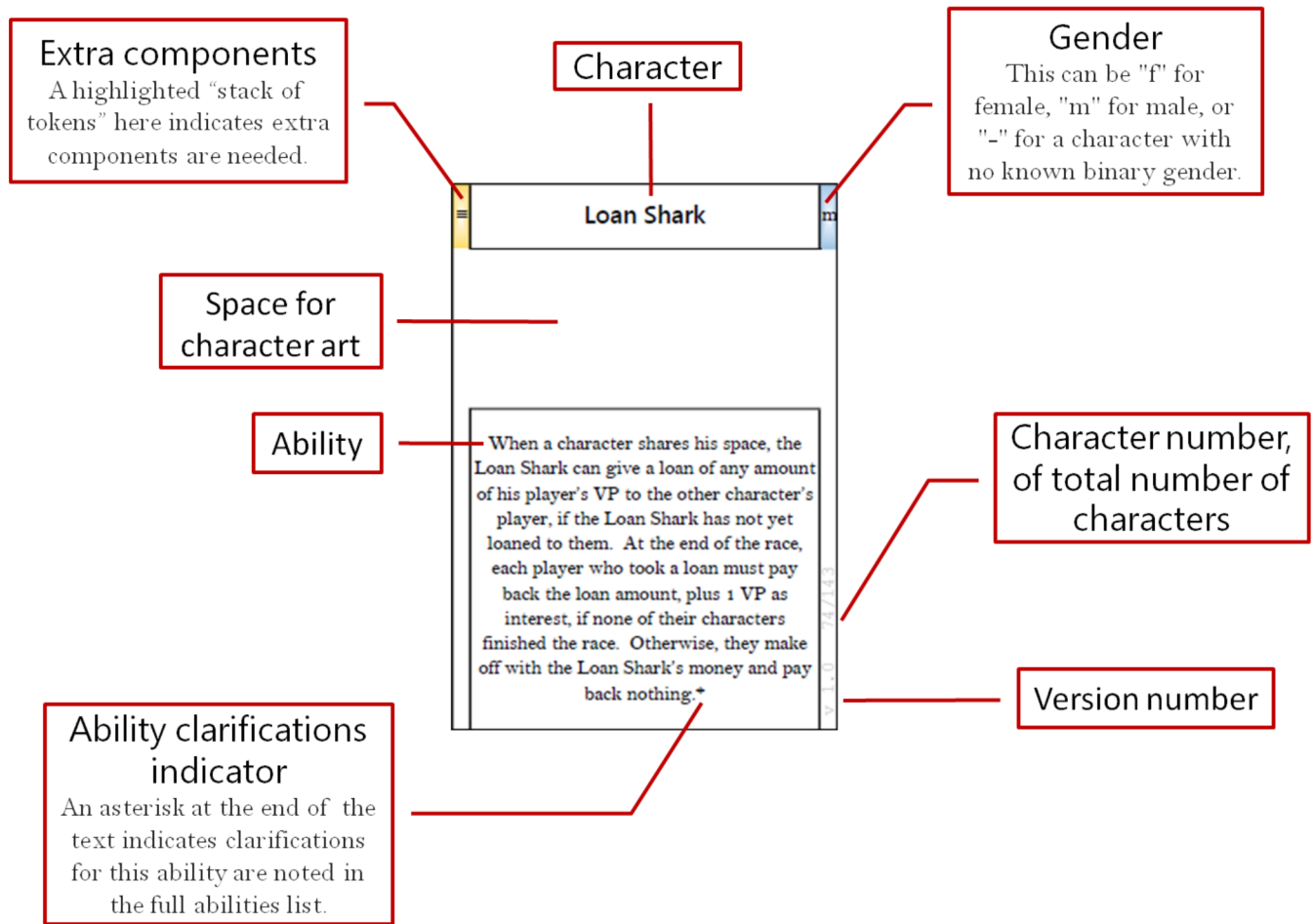
Otherwise, unless you want to use any other variants or additional rules, you're playing normal *Magical Athlete* but with extra characters that can come out in the draft!

Directions for Cutting Cards



Cut along these lines.

Card Anatomy



Mulligan Variant

Once per turn during the draft, only the active player can discard the drawn character and immediately draw a new one.

This can help prevent funky character interactions once you've witnessed some of the interplay between them. It can help add variety, both to introduce characters your group hasn't much played and to segregate too-similar abilities. And it can give players a chance to not have to play with some of those characters they just hate.

6+ Players Note

With this variant, you can now play *Magical Athlete* with more than 5 players!

If playing with 6 or 7 players, use the same numbers of VP, characters, and races as in a 5-player game.

If playing with 8 or more players, use:

- 6 VP each
- 3 characters for 3 races
- 1st/2nd place prizes:
 - Race 1: 3/1 VP
 - Race 2: 4/2 VP
 - Race 3: 5/3 VP

Be warned that with 6 or more players, the game length can extend to over 2 hours, especially if using the "Advanced Draft" variant (found in my "Advantages" variant) – but using the Advanced Draft allows for more choices in choosing characters.

Original Characters' Changes

Most of these are changes in semantics. They help clarify things and mostly alter nothing functional, but I thought you might like to know since they're changes to the original game's characters.

- The **Druid's** ability did not originally specify that it had to be used on another character besides the Druid. Now it does.
- The **Gladiator's** ability now requires him to advance, instead of gaining the option to, when he wins a duel.
- The **Ninja's** ability now specifies that he must announce shadowing before the other character begins moving or takes their movement roll.
- The **Prophet's** ability is now a duty ability. This allows for some additional Advantage effects (found in my "Advantages" variant).
- The **Spy's** ability can now be used multiple times. (This is how I've always played this character, and only as I formed this variant did I realize he is supposed to only have 1 use. I think that's underpowered.)
- The **Witch's** ability is the same as in the original rules, but "overtaking" in this variant is not defined quite the same as in the original rules' "FAQ" section.