

Medusa Rulesheet

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Version: 1.0, released Dec. 17, 2015

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Acknowledgements

Thanks to Seymour-Shabow (Scott, CARGPB #29) for explaining a lot of the rules in his RGP posts, and thanks to Aurich for reviewing this.

Introduction

Medusa has a single-level playfield, but in many ways it plays like a 2-level game. In this document, "Olympus" refers to the area with the 7-bank of drop targets and saucer, bounded by the zipper flippers at the bottom, and the exits at the left and right. I decided that the lower part of the playfield needs a name too. The Colossus stood over the island city of Rhodes until it was toppled by an earthquake, so "Rhodes" seems fitting. In this document, "Rhodes" refers to the lower 2/3 of the playfield, including the two "orbit" shots up the left and right sides.

In terms of scoring, Olympus and Rhodes are completely independent. The upper playfield and saucer don't contribute anything to the lower playfield bonus, and the lower playfield has no effect on the Olympus bonus. The spinner in the middle of the playfield doesn't really belong to either group, so we'll talk about it first...

Skill Shot, Gorgons and the Spinner

There are 5 lit star rollovers at the top of the shooter lane, each corresponding to one Gorgon insert below the spinner on the playfield. Hitting a rollover at the moment it is lit lights one Gorgon, awards 10,000 points, and adds 3 to the Medusa Bonus. The goal is to light all 5 Gorgons, which takes the right combination of timing and ball speed. A soft plunge generally works best, and also helps the ball stay in the upper playfield, instead of going down the left side. The spinner is worth 500 for each lit Gorgon, up to 2,500 per spin. If the spinner is working well, it can be worth 20-40k for a solid hit, with all Gorgons lit.

Part I: Olympus (upper playfield)

The main goals while in Olympus are to hit the A-B standing targets, complete the drop targets, and collect the value at the saucer whenever it's lit. Avoid the red standup target in the middle of

the drop target bank, and the “drains” on either side. If you drain directly between the 2 small flippers, get your right hand ready to use the Shield of the Gods.

Drop Targets

Knocking down any drop target scores 100 points, and closes the zipper flippers for 10 seconds. Hitting another drop target will add another 10 seconds (switch 8 = ON), or reset the counter back to 10 seconds (switch 8 = OFF). Olympus starts with 1 drop target, and advances to groups of 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and finally all 7 drop targets. Note that the drop targets themselves are pretty worthless; they simply advance the Olympus Bonus, which can only be collected at the saucer, “Neptune’s Cove”.

Olympus Bonus

The Olympus Bonus is indicated by a row of 21 red LEDs. This bonus increases (LEDs are awarded) each time a set of drop targets is completed. The number of LEDs to be awarded is shown near Zeus’s head (see next section), but it’s doubled if both A and B are lit - so you can earn up to 6 LEDs per drop target completion.

The flashing LED indicates the next threshold that must be reached to increase the saucer value by 50k. For example, if there are 2 lights out between the solid lights and the flashing one, you’ll need to advance the bonus by 3. Threshold values are fixed at positions 6, 11, 16 and 21.

When you hit a drop target, the LEDs strobe way out to the right, as if to say “Look at Me!”. This is just to distract you, so it’s best to ignore it if you can.

Olympus “Advance Value”

The 3 green inserts around Zeus’s head (1, 2 and 3) are the Olympus Bonus Advance Value. The lit insert indicates the number of LEDs that will be awarded for the next completion of a set of drop targets. The Advance Value starts at ‘3’, and changes according to switch 20 and 21 settings. The more “conservative” the setting is, the faster this value goes down. With both switches ON, ‘3’ remains lit for the whole game (“liberal” setting). If you’re Conquering Olympus too easily, try setting switches 20 and 21 to OFF.

Standup Targets

Hitting both the A and B standup targets doubles the lit Advance Value for the Olympus Bonus (for the next drop target completion). Hitting the center standup target removes one lit LED from the bonus bar, if switch 6 is OFF.

Neptune’s Cove

The green arrow near the saucer lights each time a set of drop targets is completed, and goes out again when the saucer shot is made. The saucer’s value increases by 50k each time the “threshold” (flashing LED) is reached on the Olympus Bonus bar, and it carries over to the next ball, if switch 30 is ON. Shooting the saucer while the green arrow is lit scores the bonus value

plus 1,000 for each lit Olympus Bonus bar LED. The saucer scores 500 points when it's not lit, and 3,000 if the first Olympus threshold hasn't been reached yet.

Extended Play

To qualify Extended Play, advance the Olympus Bonus past the flashing LED on the back panel three times, then shoot the saucer. If Extended Play is earned, the ball is returned after the last ball drains, and continues to return to the shooter lane until the "Extended Play Time Units" expire. Once this timer expires, play continues until the ball drains. Time units are accumulated during play (and Extended Play) by completing the 1-2-3 targets (worth 10 units) or the 4-bank of drop targets (worth 5 units). Shooting the saucer, A or B will award 1 unit each. During Extended Play, a good strategy is to keep going for completion of the 1-2-3 standups and the 4 right side drop targets.

Part II: Rhodes (lower playfield)

Medusa Bonus

The 7 lower playfield targets, 2 star rollovers and 2 outlane switches add to the Medusa Bonus. 3 advances are also awarded for each lit Gorgon (see "Skill Shot"). Lit bonus values of 20, 40, 60 and 80 are always carry over to the next ball (this is the standard Bally "Super Bonus"). If switch 24 is ON, 1-19 bonus lights also carry over.

Colossus Bonus

The Colossus Bonus value is indicated by the six small inserts just above the slings (5 blue, and 1 red). Completing either the 4 right side drops or the left side 1-2-3 standups awards this bonus and advances it by 30k, maxing out at 150k. The 6th completion awards a Special. The bonus value carries over to the next ball if switch 7 is ON.

"Orbit" Shots

The right and left "orbit" shots only register the lit award when the ball is travelling up (to Olympus). There are 2 rollunder switches for each side, to detect the ball's direction. There's no reward for shooting a complete orbit; it just returns the ball to the lower playfield. Shooting either orbit adds 1 "Shield of the Gods". Keep an eye on your shields, and shoot an orbit when you get low.

The left orbit increases the Bonus Multiplier, up to 5X. The fourth and subsequent shots score 50k points. The right orbit awards the lit value and advances it by 10k (up to 50k). Shooting the right orbit 6 times awards a SPECIAL. After the special is collected, the right orbit awards 50k.

Right Side Drop Targets

Completing all 4 drop targets awards and advances the Colossus Bonus, freezes the right digit on the "Like Numbers" display, and adds 5 units to Extended Play.

Left Side Standing Targets

Completing the 1, 2 and 3 targets in sequence awards and advances the Colossus Bonus, freezes the left digit on the “Like Numbers” display, and adds 10 units to Extended Play. Lit numbers carry over to the next ball if switch 15 is ON. Hitting the 1-2-3 targets out of sequence doesn’t hurt, you just need to light them in order to complete them.

“Like Numbers”

The middle 2 digits on the playfield display work together. The left digit counts up (0-9), while the right digit counts down (9-0). An Extra Ball is awarded if you manage to “freeze” both digits at the same value. Once both digits are stopped, you must shoot either orbit to start them up again. If Extra Balls are disabled (coin door setting 16 is not 02 or 03), don’t waste your time on this feature.

Shield of the Gods

10,000 points are awarded for each leftover shield at the end of the game. If you’ve been shooting lots of orbits and not using any shields, this can add up. But of course, do use the Shield when you need it to save the ball! It’s very satisfying to pop the ball all the way back to Olympus with it.

End of Ball Bonus

The Medusa Bonus is awarded at the end of the ball (with multipliers), if the game wasn’t tilted.

Specials

A Special is awarded when the Medusa Bonus reaches 60k (if switch 16 is ON), 100k, and every 40k after. Confusingly, Special is lit at 40k and 80k, you need another 20 in bonus to collect it.

Specials are also awarded for maxing out either the Colossus Bonus or the right orbit shot.

If coin door setting 16 is set to ‘01’ (novelty), specials are worth 50,000, and a successful Match on the “Like Numbers” feature is worth 25,000.

Strategies / Tips

Depending on the game’s setup, the saucer can be hard to hit directly. Often, a good bounce off the upper right slingshot will work best. Always collect the saucer as soon as it’s lit for 50k or more.

Extended Play is lucrative, and you’ll need to light 16 LEDs to qualify it. Lighting A and B to double the Advance Value helps you get there faster, and also increases the saucer value faster.

If you light 3 or more Gorgons with the skill shot, rip the spinner as often as possible.

Keep the ball in Olympus as long as you can, but don't neglect Rhodes. Although it's more dangerous, you can rack up points faster there. This is also an opportunity to go for the extra ball, and to max out the scoring opportunities for your Extended Play ball.

Use the rubber posts to nudge the ball away from the in/outlanes, but if the ball gets through you can shake it back into play.

As with any Bally, lock in the super-bonus (20/40/60/80), if you're getting close to those thresholds.

If your Medusa Bonus is climbing, shoot the left orbit to increase the multiplier.