

# MIDDLE-EARTH: THE BALROG™

## Rules Summary & Play Tips

### INTRODUCTION

There are two different *Middle-earth: The Balrog* (*MEBA*™) boxes—The Shadow-deeps (reddish) and the Balrog's Host (bluish). Together, these two boxes contain at least one copy of each of the 104 *MEBA* expansion cards. So, if you have purchased both boxes, you have a complete set of the *MEBA* cards.

Each *MEBA* box contains all of the cards for a preconstructed *Middle-earth Collectible Card Game*™ (*MECCG*™) deck—everything you need, except for a pair of dice, to challenge any opponent to a fun and competitive match of *MECCG*.

This rulesbook has four parts:

- The specific rules for *MEBA*
- The play tips and deck lists for the two preconstructed *MEBA* decks
- The *MECCG* rules summary
- The card diagrams and Middle-earth map

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# SPECIFIC RULES FOR MIDDLE-EARTH: THE BALROG

This is an expansion set of over 100 cards for the *Middle-earth Collectible Card Game*. While it is fully compatible with both *Middle-earth: The Wizards* and *Middle-earth: The Lidless Eye*, *Middle-earth: The Balrog* focuses on a player using resources from *The Lidless Eye*.

The Balrog is supremely confident of his own immense personal power. After all, just like Sauron, he was one of Morgoth's chief lieutenants. The Balrog tends to rely on brute force and direct confrontation rather than more subtle approaches often used by Ringwraiths and Wizards. His goals are basic and simple—accumulate power and destroy his enemies. If he can do this, he can become a dominant power in Middle-earth—a factor to which both the Dark Lord and the Free Peoples will be forced react.

**Note:** *Middle-earth: The Balrog* introduces a new classification of creatures called "Spawn." These monstrous creatures were created by Morgoth or other fallen spirits. Like the Balrog, a few Spawn survived the War of the Wrath and hid deep underground.

## A BALROG PLAYER

A Balrog player acts as a Ringwraith player. Any card and rules text applying to a Ringwraith also applies to The Balrog (e.g., if a card refers to a Ringwraith, it now applies to "a Ringwraith or The Balrog").

However, instead of using the special rules listed on page 19 of this booklet (or on page 59 of the *MELE* rules), a Balrog player uses the following special rules:

- Any ring in The Balrog's company at the beginning of the end-of-turn phase is automatically tested. Any ring test in The Balrog's company is a modified by -2.
- The Balrog may carry items (including rings) but may not use them (i.e., an item has no effect on The Balrog's company or on his attributes and abilities).
- The Balrog never makes corruption checks and corruption cards may not be played on The Balrog.
- Normally, The Balrog may not use starter and region movement (as stated on his card). However, the play of certain resources can expand his movement capabilities.
- The Balrog's company is always overt.

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

As a Balrog player, you may win in the same way a *MELE* Ringwraith wins: your opponent is eliminated or you recover *The One Ring* or you have the most marshalling points at the Audience with Sauron. The following exceptions apply:

- In order to win by recovering *The One Ring*, at least one *Challenge the Power* card must be played and the conditions outlined on that card must be met.
- The Audience with Sauron is handled normally, and victory is determined in the standard way by comparing marshalling points. However, to you (The Balrog) it is called your **Day of Decision** and your marshalling points reflect how far you have progressed towards taking your true place in Middle-earth. You must play *Sudden Call* to call your Day of Decision.

## GETTING READY TO PLAY

A Balrog player prepares for play just as a Ringwraith player does, with the following exceptions:

### Declaring that You Are a Balrog Player

If you include The Balrog card (the character card with the special reddish background) in your deck or sideboard, you are a "Balrog player." In this case, you *must* tell your opponent before choosing starting companies.

**Note:** You and your opponent may both be Balrog players, but the winner will probably be the first player to get his Balrog into play.

### Your Location Deck and Sites

Your location deck may include one copy of each of the minion site cards with the following exceptions:

- Instead of the normal minion site cards use the Balrog-specific site cards for:
  - Moria, Carn Dûm, Dol Guldur, Minas Morgul
  - All Under-deeps site cards
  - All Dark-holds (Barad-dûr, Cirith Ungol, Cirith Gorgor)
- Since they are your only Darkhavens, The Under-gates and Moria are the only site cards that you may include multiple copies of in your location deck.
- Geann a-Lisch is a Ruins & Lairs with no Darkhaven effects.

### Your Starting Company, Play Deck, and Sideboard

Your starting company and play deck (and your sideboard) may be constructed like any other Ringwraith's—with the following exceptions:

- Only Orc, Troll, Dragon, Wolf, and Animal factions may be included.

- Only Orc and Troll minion characters may be included.
- Unless they are "Balrog specific," only Orc and Troll characters with a mind less than 9 may be included.
- "Balrog specific" cards may be included. Such cards may only be included in a Balrog player's deck. Playing "Balrog specific" cards does not require that The Balrog be in play, only that you are a Balrog player.
- Agents only count as hazards, not as characters.
- A Balrog player may not include any of the following cards:

Above the Abyss	Kill All But NOT the Halflings
Bade to Rule	The Lidless Eye
The Balrog (Ally)	Morgul-blade
Balrog of Moria	News of the Shire
The Black Council	Open to the Summons
Black Horse	Orders From Lugburz
Black Rider	Padding Feet
By the Ringwraith's Word	The Ring Leaves its Mark
Creature of Another World	Ringwraith cards
Fell Rider	Ringwraith Unleashed cards
The Fiery Blade	Sauron
Helm of Fear	They Ride Together
Heralded Lord	Use Your Legs
Durin's Bane	While the Yellow Face Sleeps

#### Starting Site

You may have up to two starting companies—they may begin play at Moria and/or The Under-gates.

#### MOVEMENT

There are three types of basic movement in MECCG: starter movement, region movement, and Under-deeps movement.

- Balrog companies can never use starter movement.
- When one of your Balrog companies moves to a site, you and your opponent draw cards based upon the site being moved to. This applies even if moving to one of your Darkhavens.

#### CHARACTERS AND COMPANIES

- The Balrog must come into play at The Under-gates (i.e., he may not come into play at Moria).
- Characters with a home site of "Any Dark-hold" have a home site of "Any non-Dark-hold Under-deeps site" instead.
- During his organization phase, a Balrog player may bring into play (and/or remove from play) up to two characters—the second character must be non-unique. The normal requirements for bringing into play (or removing from play) a character must still be met.

- When a Balrog player brings into play a non-unique character with a mind of 3 or less, that character may come from his hand, his discard pile, or his sideboard.
- Agents may not be played as characters.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

- If you are a Balrog player, your opponent may not play any of the following cards: *The Balrog* (Ally), *The Black Council*, *Durin's Bane*, *Balrog of Moria*, *Reluctant Final Parting*.

However, if at any time your opponent has one of these cards in his hand, he may remove it from play and bring a card from his sideboard into his play deck.

- Rings are not automatically tested for a Balrog player at Barad-dûr.
- A Balrog player may not store anything at Barad-dûr.
- *Shelob, Spider of Môrlat*, and *Balrog of Moria* are Spawn.
- A non-Balrog player cannot use Balrog sites. However, for the purposes of playing certain hazards, a non-Balrog player's location deck may include one copy each of: Ancient Deep-hold, The Wind-deeps, The Drowning Deeps, The Rusted-deeps, and Remains of Thangorodrim (i.e., the Balrog sites for which there is no corresponding hero or minion site).
- If The Balrog is in play or has been defeated, ignore all Balrog automatic-attacks (i.e., at The Under-gates).

#### DEFATING A

#### PERMANENT-EVENT (Clarification)

Certain hazard permanent-events indicate that they give "kill" marshalling points (e.g., Dragon "Ahunt" and "At Home" cards, the "Spawn" hazards from *ME: The Balrog*, etc.). Each of these cards has an attack associated with it. If such an attack is defeated, treat the associated card as a defeated creature.

#### CARDS WITH MULTIPLE

#### ACTIONS (Clarification)

If a card specifies that more than one action occurs when the card is itself resolved in a chain of effects, all of these actions are to be resolved in the card's chain of effects uninterrupted and in the order listed on the card. No actions may be declared to occur between these multiple actions. The actions listed on the card are considered to have been declared in the reverse order as they are printed. As an exception, in one of the effects of a card is an attack, cards may be played that cancel the attack, cancel one of the strikes, or that otherwise are playable during the strike sequence.

## PLACEMENT OF CARDS

### "OFF TO THE SIDE" (Clarification)

Certain cards and effects require other cards be placed "off to the side" (e.g., *Press Gang*). Cards placed off to the side are placed on the playing surface, usually off to the side of the normal area of play. Such cards are kept with their host permanent-event that caused this effect. Any such card absolutely cannot be targeted or otherwise affected by the game except by cards that specifically affect cards placed "off to the side."

Cards placed off to the side are only in play for the purposes of uniqueness. Unless stated otherwise, when a host permanent-event is removed from the playing surface, any cards placed off to the side under it are discarded. Usually the host card will state a mechanic that affects the cards placed off to the side with it. Unless stated otherwise on its host card, a card placed off to the side will give its marshalling points to its owner. As a major exception, "taking prisoners" cards (primarily from *Middle-earth: Dark Minions*) yield negative marshalling points for characters taken prisoner.

### DISCARDING CARDS (Clarification)

When a card leaves active play (discarded, eliminated, returned to hand, etc.), discard all cards played on it.

## TOURNAMENT RULES

- Spawn hazard permanent-events count as half a creature for the Council of Lórien 12-creature minimum.
- A Balrog player has an extra +5 general influence that cannot be used to control characters.

## THE UNDER-DEEPS

**Note:** Created by streams of molten rock and expanded by geothermal eruptions of super-hot gas, the Under-deeps are a result of a combination of natural and supernatural forces. The hand of Morgoth joined what was once a collection of sundered cavern complexes. His greater servants used this maze of tunnels and chambers to travel surreptitiously throughout Endor.

Although Endor changed during the Elder Days, the core of the Under-deeps survive. Travel between the underground sites is now difficult, if not impossible, for all but the greatest (and luckiest) explorers. Blocked or twisting away from their original course, the Under-deeps seem broken. Junctions and strongholds seem lost. Many appear as simple caves or side passages. Others lie hidden behind veils of rock. Nearly all are still there, though, awaiting discovery.

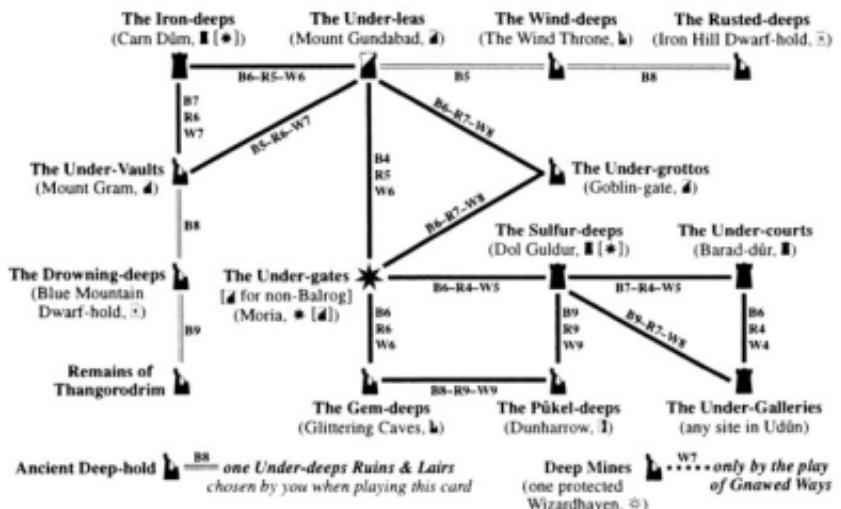
An Under-deeps site card has "Under-deeps" in the section that normally gives the site's region. An Under-deeps site is just like any other site with the following exceptions:

- Unlike other sites, each Under-deeps site is **not** considered to be in a region—instead it is located below another site, called the Under-deeps site's *surface site*.
- Instead of a nearest Haven, each Under-deeps site lists all of its "Adjacent Sites." Each Under-deeps site is adjacent to its one surface site and a number of other Under-deeps sites. The first adjacent site listed is always the Under-deeps site's surface site.
- *Eagle-mounts* and *Gwaihir* cannot be used to move to or from an Under-deeps site.
- A company moving to and/or from an Under-deeps site has no site path. So, hazards may only be played keyed to the company's new site.
- An environment card that changes site type (e.g., *Choking Shadows*, *Quiet Lands*, etc.) cannot be used to change the site type of an Under-deeps site.
- *Unless you are a Balrog player*, you may not consider marshalling points associated with a company at an Under-deeps site for the purposes of calling the Free Council, Audience with Sauron, or Day of Decision.
- Normally, when you successfully play an item, faction, ally, or information at a site, the site card is tapped and another character may tap to play a minor item. At an Under-deeps site, you can play any item playable at the site instead of this minor item.
- For the purposes of playing hazards, a Free-hold is never considered to be the surface site of an Under-deeps site.

**Example:** Azog taps and plays *High Helm* (a major item) at The Gem-deeps and the site taps. Then, a Hill-troll in Azog's company could tap to play a minor item at a non-Under-deeps site. But The Gem-deeps is an Under-deeps site, so the Hill-troll can tap to play any item playable at The Gem-deeps: a minor item, a major item, or a gold ring. He taps and plays *A Little Gold Ring*.

### Under-deep Site Movement

One of your companies that begins its turn at the surface site of an Under-deeps site can move normally or it can move to its adjacent Under-deeps site (i.e., the company moves to an Under-deeps site from its surface site). One of your companies that begins its turn at an Under-deeps site may only move to one of the adjacent sites listed on the Under-deeps site card.



Each adjacent site is followed by a number in parentheses—this number indicates how difficult it is to move from the Under-deeps site to the adjacent site. When an adjacent site is revealed by one of your companies whose site of origin is an Under-deeps site, you must make a roll (2D6). If the result is greater than or equal to the number in parentheses following the adjacent site as listed on its site of origin, the movement/hazard phase proceeds normally. Otherwise, the company returns to

**Note:** A company moving from a surface site to its Under-deeps site does not need to make a roll. As an exception to this, a Balrog company moving between the Blue Mountain Dwarf-hold and the The Drowning-deeps (or between the Iron Hill Dwarf-hold and the The Rusted-deeps) must roll the number given on the Under-deeps site, which is normally 13 and impossible to roll.

**Note:** Movement between an Under-deeps site and its surface site is not affected by modifications that affect movement *between* adjacent Under-deeps sites. Modifications to movement *to* adjacent Under-deeps sites do apply.

its site of origin (no cards are drawn) and the movement/hazard phase proceeds as if the company had not moved.

**Example:** A Balrog company that starts at Carn Dûm can move normally or it can move to The Iron-deeps—The Iron-deeps lists Carn Dûm as an adjacent site. Similarly, a minion company that starts at The Iron-deeps may attempt to move to any adjacent site listed: Carn Dûm (0), The Under-leas (6), or The Under-vaults (7). However, after committing to movement, the moving player must roll a 6 or better to successfully move to The Under-leas or a 7 or better to successfully move to The Under-vaults.

**Example:** A company is moving from The Under-grottos to Goblin-gate with *Long Winter* in play. *Long Winter*'s effect of returning a company to the site of origin has no effect, since it depends on the company's site path, and the company has no site path. *Long Winter*'s effect of tapping a site will work, since that effect depends on the site's site path, which still exists. Finally, creatures can only be played keyed to the Shadow-hold of Goblin-gate.

# THE SHADOW-DEEPS PLAY TIPS

This deck features the Balrog's Great Shadow form—which is his stealthiest and most reclusive—along with bold adventuring in Sauron's domains. The Under-deeps beneath the Dark Lord's holds tempt the Balrog with the lingering power of Morgoth, the creator and Black Enemy. The Balrog dispatches his Orcs and Trolls to retrieve what they can here and from the strongholds above. The deck's hazards center on Spiders and Animals and the horrible Spawn of Morgoth, newly unearthed for this expansion.

## Starting Company at Moria

- Azog controls two Mountain-maggots, Búthrákaur controls the Orc Veteran. Instead of two minor items, start with *Orders from the Great Demon* on the company and *Gangways over the Fire*.

## Suggested Sites for Resources

**Black Mace** (x2)—Cirith Gorgor, Minas Morgul, Barad-dûr, or Remains of Thangorodrim (after tapping otherwise)

**Cave Troll**—(tapped) The Sulfur-deeps, The Iron-deeps, The Under-courts, or The Under-galleries

**Descent through Fire**—The Under-courts or The Under-galleries

**Evil Things Lingering**—The Under-courts, Remains of Thangorodrim, or The Under-galleries

**Great Troll**—The Under-grottos, The Iron-deeps, The Under-vaults, The Under-leas, The Sulfur-deeps, or The Drowning-deeps

**High Helm**—any major item Under-deeps site (after tapping otherwise), Cirith Ungol, Carn Dûm, or Barad-dûr

**Iron Shield of Old** (x2)—(after tapping otherwise)

The Under-grottos, The Under-vaults, The Under-leas, The Drowning-deeps, or Remains of Thangorodrim

**Maker's Map**—Dol-Guldur, Remains of Thangorodrim, or The Under-galleries

**Orcs of Mirkwood**—Sarn Gorwing

**Orcs of Moria**—Moria

**Sable Shield**—any major item Under-deeps site (after tapping otherwise), Cirith Ungol, Carn Dûm, or Barad-dûr

**Stinker**—Goblin-gate

**Tempest of Fire**—Dead Marshes

**Breach the Hold** (sideboard)—The Drowning-deeps

**Roots of the Earth** (sideboard)—The Drowning-deeps

## Resource Play

The power of this deck improves dramatically using *Great Shadow*'s ability to recycle non-short-event resources and characters. Guiltlessly discard inconvenient MP sources drawn early in the game, because you can recycle and redraw them later. Access additional resources from the sideboard by tapping The Balrog to bring five to your discard pile, cycling these using *Great Shadow*'s ability. Cycle and recycle *Skies of Fire* to foil an opponent's *Doors of Night* strategy.

The deck relies on one or more high prowess non-Balrog companies to roam the heart of Mordor and beyond. There are plenty of cards in the deck to make your characters colossal fighters. *I'll Report You* (x2), *Black Mace* (x2), and *Descent Through Fire* are the main ones, so take special care to play these.

The only underground route to The Under-galleries and The Under-courts—the two most important sites—goes through The Sulfur-deeps. Therefore, avoid tapping The Sulfur-deeps until playing *Descent Through Fire* and tapping both later sites. Also, avoid tapping The Under-leas and The Under-vaults too early.

## The Balrog

As soon as convenient, tap The Balrog to bring to the discard pile *Breach the Hold*, *Roots of the Earth*, *Memoires of Old Torture*, *Flame of Udûn*, and a sideboard resource that reacts to your opponent. These cards are now ready to easily pop into the play deck using *Great Shadow*'s ability, and without taxing play.

In *Great Shadow* form The Balrog should always be accompanied by his minions outside of a Darkhaven. While waiting to draw *Great Troll* and *Descent Through Fire*, he should stay in Moria, conveniently bringing in characters and playing *Ancient Secrets*. When the *Orcs of Moria* faction shows up, snag it for 3 MPs.

Once The Balrog plays *Descent Through Fire*—the deck's most important card—bring in *Breach the Hold* and *Roots of the Earth* from the sideboard. Send the Balrog north to The Drowning-deeps/Remains of Thangorodrim area once you draw one of them. Most MP sources are playable between these two sites. Expect to have an excess of MP sources in hand as the game wears on if you have been recycling discarded ones. Consider *Flame of Udûn* to maximize the Balrog's battle-readiness, though this minimizes playing additional MP cards.

Eventually, *Out He Sprang* will hit the table, allowing The Balrog to surface for company vs. company combat against a hero opponent. To optimally prepare for attacking, bring in *Flame of Udûn*, as The Balrog cannot move on the surface with *Great Shadow*.

## Hazard Play

The hazard mix contains plenty of Spiders, a handful of Animals, and enhancers for both. A few basic utility cards are included to cover blind spots. Certain enhancers—called Spawn—form a natural sub-theme of their own. Three of the deck's hazards depend on the number of Spawn in play. Take special care with the Spawn

*Monstrosity of Diverse Shape.* It provides an ability of which you will no doubt make efficient use. However, it also creates a vicious automatic-attack at The Drowning-deeps and Remains of Thangorodrim. You must be prepared to either discard this hazard yourself, cancel its attack, or sacrifice some scrub Orcs to its horribly twisted mass.

• • •

## DECK LIST

Total: 132 cards — Cards in brackets [] are from earlier expansions.

<u>At Start</u> (7)	<u>Resources</u> (32)	<u>Hazards</u> (32)	<u>Sideboard</u> (28)
<i>Gangways over the Fire</i>	<i>MP Sources:</i>	<i>Creatures:</i>	<i>Resources</i>
<i>Orders from the Great Demon</i>	Cave Troll	Beorning Skin-changers	Breach the Hold
Azog	Descent through Fire	Carrion Feeders	Cloaked by Darkness
Bûthrákaur	Evil Things Lingering	Monstrosity of	Crook-legged Orc
Mountain-maggot (x2)	Great Troll	Diverse Shape	Darkness Wielded
[Orc Veteran]	Maker's Map	Shelob's Brood (x2)	Flame of Udûn
<i>Other Characters</i> (10)	Tempest of Fire	Spawn of Ungolian	Hill-troll
The Balrog (x3)	[Black Mace (x2)]	Ungolian's	Memories of Old Torture
[Bûrat]	[High Helm]	Foul Issue	Roots of the Earth
[Gorbag]	[Iron Shield of Old (x2)]	Ungolian's Progeny	Terror Heralds Doom
[Orc Tracker (x2)]	[Orcs of Mirkwood]	[Giant Spiders (x3)]	[I'll Be at Your Heels]
[Shagrat]	[Orcs of Moria]	[Half-trolls of	[Orc Veteran (x2)]
[Tûma]	[Sable Shield]	Far Harad (x2)]	[Piercing All Shadows]
[Wîluag]	[Stinker]	[Lesser Spiders (x3)]	[Skies of Fire (x2)]
<i>Sites</i> (20)	<i>Supporting Resources:</i>	[Neeker-breekers (x2)]	[Sudden Call]
Moria	Ancient Secrets (x2)		[The Under-roads (x2)]
The Under-gates	Angband Revisited	<i>Events:</i>	<i>Hazards</i>
The Drowning-deeps	Caverns Unchoked	Black Vapour	Desire All for They Belly
The Iron-deeps	Foe Dismayed	Darkness Made By Malice	Glance of Arien
The Sulfur-deeps	Going Ever Under Dark	The Reek	The Sun Shone Fiercely
The Under-courts	Great Fissure (x2)	Unabated in Malice	[Corsairs of Umbar]
The Under-galleries	Great Shadow (x2)	[Foolish Words (x2)]	[Covetous Thoughts (x2)]
The Under-grottos	Out He Sprang	[Full of Froth	[Muster Disperses (x2)]
The Under-leas	Vanguard of Might	and Rage (x3)]	[Stench of Mordor]
The Under-vaults	[Bold Thrust (x3)]	[Greed]	[The Way Is Shut]
Barad-dûr	[I'll Report You (x2)]	[Lure of Expedience (x2)]	
Caran Dûm		[Twilight (x2)]	
Cirith Gorgor			
Cirith Ungol			
Dol Guldur			
Minas Morgul			
Remains of Thangorodrim			
[Dead Marshes]			
[Goblin-gate]			
[Sam Gorwing]			

## EXTRA CARDS (3)

- Longbottom Leaf
- No Better Use
- Rumours of Rings

# BALROG'S HOST PLAY TIPS

The Balrog uses his Strangling Coils form in this deck to maximize direct influence and faction recruiting. He wants all Orc factions of the Misty Mountains in his Great Army. When the time is right, the Balrog burrows into the Iron Hill Dwarf-hold from the Under-deeps to claim the realm as his own—much as he took Khazad-dûm, now called Moria. The hazards contain a mix of two sub-themes: Dragons/Drakes and roadblock.

## Starting Company in Moria

- Umagaur controls Bolg, Old Troll starts under general influence. Instead of two minor items, start with *Orders from the Great Demon* on the company and *Gangways over the Fire*.

## Suggested Sites for Resources

*A Few Recruits*—Gondmaeglon (tapped)

*Breach the Hold*—The Rusted-deeps

*Goblins of Goblin-gate*—Goblin-gate

*Grey Mountain Goblins*—Gondmaeglon

*Iron Shield of Old*—(after tapping otherwise)

The Under-leas or any non-Darkhaven

Under-deeps Ruins & Lairs

*Nasty Slimy Thing*—The Gem-deeps, The Pûkel-deeps, The Under-vaults or The Under-grottos

*Orcs of Angmar*—Mount Gram

*Orcs of Gundabad*—Mount Gundabad

*Orcs of Moria*—Moria

*People Diminished*—Eagle's Eyrie, Beorn's House, Thranduil's Halls, or Wellinghall

*Roots of the Earth*—The Rusted-deeps

*Stabbing Tongue of Fire*—(after tapping otherwise) any non-Darkhaven Under-deeps site

*Whip of Many Thongs*—(after tapping otherwise) any non-Darkhaven Under-deeps site

*Eddy in Fate's Tide* (sideboard)—Wellinghall, Eagle's Eyrie, Thranduil's Halls, Beorn's House

*Invoke Their Domain* (sideboard)—

Iron Hill Dwarf-hold

*Lord and Usurper* (sideboard)—

Iron Hill Dwarf-hold

## Resource Play

You must recruit at least four of the five unique Orc factions to receive two marshalling points from *Great Army of the North*. Therefore, do not discard unique Orc factions without attempting to influence them. On the other hand, *A Few Recruits* is an excellent discard choice, unless you have *Grey Mountain Goblins* in hand or in play and Gondmaeglon is available.

This deck contains two *Out He Sprangs* to help The Balrog reach an opponent's company for company vs. company combat. If you have a site where an opponent's company is present, attack them if at all convenient. It may be worth holding *Great Fissure* in your hand indefinitely as insurance waiting for the chance. Bring in *Flame of Udûn* and *Scourge of Fire* from the sideboard if your opponent travels a lot around the Misty Mountains. Against a minion opponent, bring in *Prone to Violence* as soon as possible.

The deck's resources threaten your opponent as much as your hazards. Specifically, you have the potential to strip out MPs. Besides the potential of company vs. company combat, you have *People Diminished*, *Crowned with Storm*, *Eddy in Fate's Tide*, *Invoke Their Domain*, *Mine or No One's*, and *Scourge of Fire*, which is probably the most powerful.

Ultimately, you want to complete this expansion's ultimate quest—invading the Iron Hill Dwarf-hold. Leisurely play *Roots of the Earth* and *Breach the Hold* as your draw them. They do not have to be played in order, and each keeps The Rusted-deeps in play without committing a character garrison. After you have cycled about half your deck, bring in *Invoke Their Domain* and *Lord and Usurper*. Keep a couple tactical cards in hand to insure their successful play.

The only underground route to The Rusted-deeps goes through The Under-leas and The Wind-deeps. Therefore, avoid tapping these two sites at least until The Balrog is at The Rusted-deeps and prepared to play *Invoke Their Domain*.

## The Balrog

The Balrog with *Strangling Coils* recruits factions very well without enhancement—and usually requires no tactical cards to remain untapped against creatures. When he is not attacking an opponent, The Balrog is your number one option for gathering the Great Army. You will need The Balrog to tap to bring a few cards in from the sideboard. Do not forget to bring in *Sudden Call* before the first deck cycle ends.

## Hazard Play

The hazards feature several Dragon Ahunt manifestations, powerful Drakes, *Long Winter* to tap your opponent's deep Wilderness sites, and *Doors of Night* to make everything function efficiently. This deck's hazards slam opponents travelling around the Misty Mountains and Dragon country. Unfortunately the hazards are rather weak against Gondor decks, and only mediocre against Mordor and Under-deeps minion decks. Bring in *Covetous Thoughts* as soon as possible against a minion opponent.

Use *An Unexpected Outpost* to recycle *Twilights*, *Long Winters*, *Doors of Night*, and itself as you determine their necessity against each opponent. You need to consider your own movement when playing *Long Winter* because it taps your deep Wilderness sites too. You need to consider your own movement when playing the Dragon Ahunt cards as your surface movement may take you through hunting grounds.

## DECK LIST

**Total:** 132 cards — Cards in brackets [] are from earlier expansions.

### At Start (5)

*Gangways over the Fire*

*Orders from the*

*Great Demon*

Bolg

Umaguar

[Old Troll]

### Other Characters (9)

The Balrog (x3)

[Búrat]

[Túma]

[Wúluag]

[Orc Tracker (x2)]

[Orc Captain]

### Sites (20)

Moria

The Under-gates

Ancient Deep-hold

The Gem-deeps

The Púkel-deeps

The Rusted-deeps

The Under-grottos

The Under-leas

The Under-vaults

The Wind-deeps

[Beom's House]

[Eagle's Eyrie]

[Goblin-gate]

[Gondmaeglon]

[Iron-hill Dwarf-hold]

[Mount Gram]

[Mount Gundabad]

[Thranduil's Halls]

[Wellinghall]

[The Wind Throne]

### Resources (31)

#### *MP Sources:*

A Few Recruits

Breach the Hold

Great Army of the North

Nasty Slimy Thing

People Diminished

Roots of the Earth

Stabbing

Tongue of Fire

Whip of

Many Tongues

[Iron Shield of Old]

[Goblins of Goblin-gate]

[Grey Mountain Goblins]

[Orcs of Angmar]

[Orcs of Gundabad]

[Orcs of Moria]

#### *Supporting Resources:*

A More Evil Hour

Ancient Secrets

Anghard Revisited (x2)

Caverns Unchoked

Foe Dismayed (x2)

Great Fissure

Obey Him or Die

Out He Sprang (x2)

Strangling Coils (x2)

[Crept Along Cleverly]

[Swift Strokes (x2)]

[Voices of Malice]

### Hazards (31)

#### *Creatures:*

[Bairanax Ahunt]

[Ghosts (x2)]

[Marsh-drake (x2)]

[Nameless Thing (x2)]

[Sellswords

Between Charters (x2)]

[Scatha Ahunt]

[Scorba Ahunt]

[Smaug Ahunt]

[True Fire-drake (x2)]

#### *Events:*

[An Unexpected

Outpost (x3)]

[Doors of Night (x3)]

[Foolish Words (x2)]

[From the

Pits of Anghard (x2)]

[Long Winter (x3)]

[Mordor in Arms]

[Stench of Mordor]

[Twilight (x2)]

### Sideboard (25)

#### *Resources*

Crook-legged Orc

Crowned with Storm

Eddy in Fate's Tide

Flame of Udûn

Heart of Dark Fire

Hill-troll

Invade Their Domain

Lord and Usurper

Mine or No One's

Mountain-maggot

Prone to Violence

Roam the Waste

Scourge of Fire

[Piercing

All Shadows (x2)]

[Sudden Call]

#### *Hazards*

Diminish and Depart

Fled into Darkness

Olog Warlords

Press Gang

[Covetous Thoughts (x2)]

[Eärcaraxé Ahunt]

[Muster Disperses]

[Stench of Mordor]

### EXTRA CARDS (11)

Challenge the Power

Crept Along Carefully

Elven Rope

Grond

Imprisoned and Mocked

Long, Grievous Siege

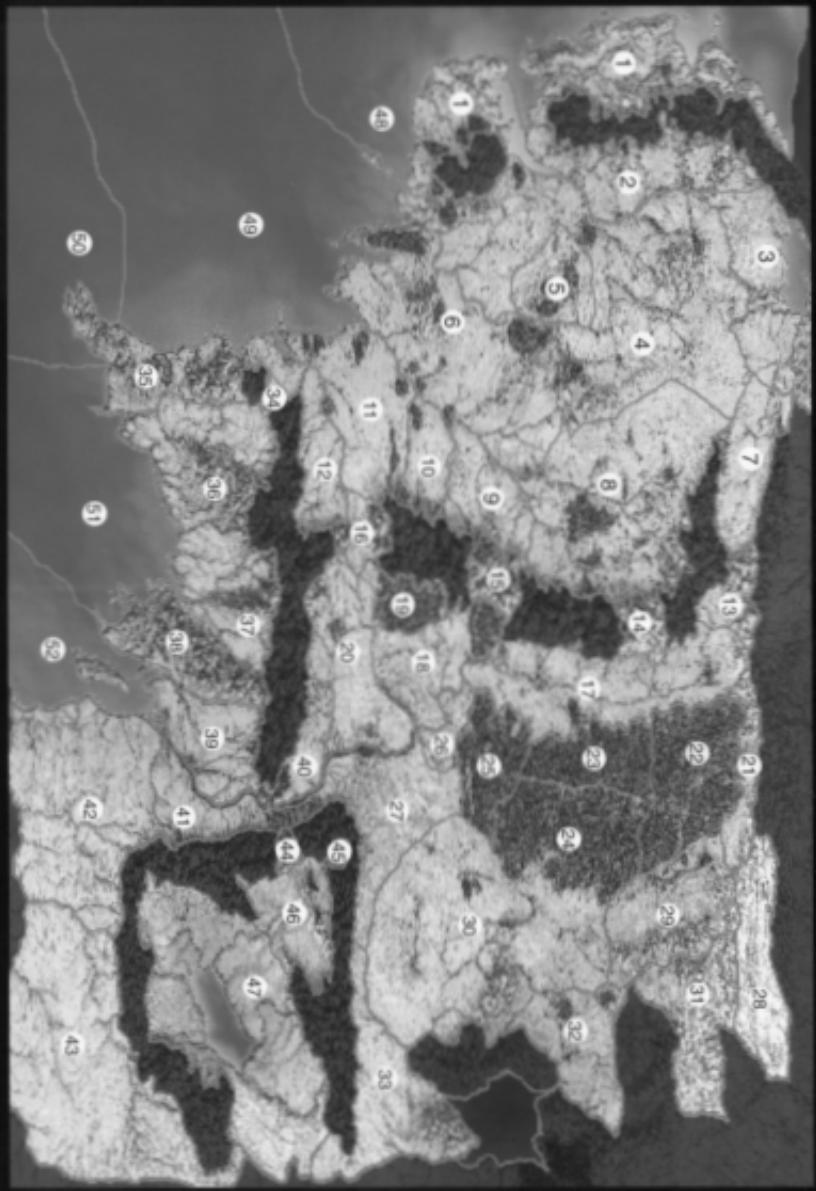
Sauron

Show Things Unbidden

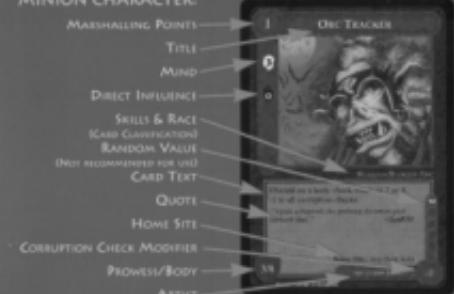
Strider

To Fealty Sworn

Whispers of Rings



#### MINION CHARACTER-



#### **HAZARD CREATURE:**



A card from the game featuring a portrait of a man with a mustache and a woman in traditional dress. The text on the card reads: "Das Gläubik", "Wert: 100000 Marken", and "Pflicht: Versteigerung, Zinsen, Miete, u. Abgaben".



#### REGION MAP KEY

#	Region Name	Type	#	Region Name	Type
1	Lindon	2	27	Dagorlad	4
2	Númeniador	4	28	Withered Heath	3
3	Forochel	4	29	Northern Rhovanion	3
4	Arthedain	4	30	Southern Rhovanion	3
5	The Shire	2	31	Iron Hills	3
6	Cardolan	4	32	Dorwinion	3
7	Ansgar	4	33	Horse Plains	4
8	Rhudaur	4	34	Old Pilgrim Gap	3
9	Hollin	4	35	Andrast	3
10	Dunland	4	36	Anfalas	3
11	Eredwîthian	4	37	Lamondon	3
12	Old Pilgrim-land	4	38	Belfalas	3
13	Gondor	2	39	Lebennin	3
14	High Pass	4	40	Anórien	3
15	Redhorn Gate	4	41	Ithilien	4
16	Gap of Isen	2	42	Harondor	3
17	Anduin Vales	2	43	Khand	4
18	Wild & Foothills	4	44	Inlاد Morgul	4
19	Fangorn	4	45	Udûn	4
20	Rohan	2	46	Gorgoroth	4
21	Grey Mountain Narrows	4	47	Nurn	3
22	Woodland Realm	2	48	Elven Shores	3
23	Western Mirkwood	4	49	Eriadoran Coast	3
24	Heart of Mirkwood	4	50	Andrast Coast	3
25	Southern Mirkwood	4	51	Bay of Belfalas	3
26	Brown Lands	4	52	Mouths of the Anduin	3

## SYMBOL KEY

<b>Region Type</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Site Type</b>	<b>Symbol</b>
Coastal Seas	■	Darkhaven	*
Free-domains	○	Free-holds	·
Border-lands	‡	Border-holds	1
Wilderness	■	Ruins & Lairs	▲
Shadow-lands	■	Shadow-holds	▲
Dark-domains	■	Dark-holds	■
		Other	Symbol
		Mind	
		Direct Influence	□

## COMBAT MODIFICATIONS

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Target's Prowess</b>
Unwounded, tapped character	-1
Wounded character	-2
For each unused strike allocated	-1
Untapped character decides not to tap	-3
For each character tapped to support	+1
Up to 1 resource card requiring skill	varies
Other resource cards	varies
Wound cards	varies

# MECCG RULES SUMMARY

This is a general *MECCG* rules summary, so remember that rules applying to Ringwraiths also apply to The Balrog unless specifically excepted to in the Specific Rules for *MEBA* (see p. 2-5).

## • PART I • BEFORE YOU PLAY

This rules summary assumes you are playing the 2-deck game with the standard rules. When this summary, or a hazard card, refers to a Haven/Darkhaven, read it as Haven if you are playing a Wizard and Darkhaven if you are playing a Ringwraith.

### 1 • OVERVIEW

In *MECCG* you play one of the Wizards or Ringwraiths, trying to influence The Free Peoples or Sauron into letting you lead their armies.

You control one or more companies, which are groups of characters. These companies move around Middle-earth from site to site. At the sites they can gain resources, which provide you with marshalling points (MPs). The MPs for a card are in the upper left-hand corner of the card. The accumulation of marshalling points is the primary way of winning the game.

During the game you may "reveal" yourself. To do this you play a Ringwraith or Wizard card. That card represents you in the game. If that card is eliminated, through combat or corruption, then you lose the game.

While your opponent is moving, you get to play hazards on his companies. These hazards represent the creatures and events your opponent must deal with while traveling in Middle-earth.

### 2 • VICTORY CONDITIONS

The game ends when one of the following occurs during play:

- 1) If your Wizard or Ringwraith is "eliminated." In this case your opponent automatically wins. As an exception in tournament play, the game continues. However, the player whose Wizard or Ringwraith is eliminated loses five MPs off his final total, and cannot reveal a new Wizard or Ringwraith.
- 2) A Wizard player calls the Free Council. The Free Council may be called either:
  - After you have exhausted your play deck for the second time, you may choose to call the council. The council starts at the end of your opponent's next turn. This gives your opponent one last turn to catch up to you.

- After you have exhausted your play deck for the first time, you may choose to call the council if you have accumulated at least 25 marshalling points. The council starts at the end of your opponent's next turn.
  - When each play deck has been exhausted twice, the council starts at the end of the current turn.
- 3) A Ringwraith player calls the Audience with Sauron. The audience may be called either:
- When each play deck has been exhausted twice, the audience starts at the end of the current turn.
  - After you have exhausted your play deck twice you may choose to play *Sudden Call* as a resource. If you do so, the audience starts at the end of your opponent's next turn.
  - After you have exhausted your play deck for the first time, you may choose to play *Sudden Call* as a resource, if you have at least 25 marshalling points. If you do so, the audience starts at the end of your opponent's next turn.
  - After your opponent has exhausted his deck twice you may play *Sudden Call* as a hazard. If you do so, the audience is called after your next turn.
  - After your opponent has exhausted his play deck once, if he has at least 25 marshalling points, you may play *Sudden Call* as a hazard. If you do so, the audience is called after your next turn.

If your opponent has no marshalling points in a category (besides kill and miscellaneous), you may double your points in that category. No more than half of your positive MPs may come from one category.

This is called the two-deck form of play. Other games are possible (*METW* Rules, p.49; *MELE* Rules, p.51).

### 3 • THE DIFFERENT CARDS

There are four different types of cards in *MECCG*: sites, characters, hazards and resources. Images of the various card types are shown on the color inserts in the center of the book.

Site cards have a map image on the card back, and a white or gray parchment background. The site type is indicated by a symbol in the upper left-hand corner of the card. A key to these symbols is on the back of this booklet. Havens for Wizard players, and Darkhavens for Ringwraith players, are special sites with a star icon in the upper left corner.

Character cards have a blue background for Wizard decks, and a rusted purplish iron background for

Ringwraith decks. Characters in Wizard decks are called heroes, and characters in Ringwraith decks are called minions.

Hazards have a dark gray metal background. These cards represent obstacles that your companies will face.

Resources have a copper background in Wizard decks, and a grey-blue steel background in Ringwraith decks. These cards are your main source of MPs, and they help you overcome hazards.

## 4 • GETTING READY TO PLAY

Before you play the game, you must separate your cards into the appropriate decks. You also need a pair of six-sided dice.

Look in the Play Tips (p. 6). There will be a list of what cards go in your play deck, site deck, starting company, and sideboard. Separate all of these cards out. Put your starting company in front of you, along with your starting site. For a Wizard the starting site is Rivendell, for a Ringwraith it is Minas Morgul or Dol Guldur, and for the Balrog it is Moria or The Under-gates. Shuffle the cards that go into your play deck. Let your opponent cut your play deck, and draw eight cards for your starting hand.

Once both players have separated their decks, shuffled their play decks, and drawn their opening hand, each player should roll two dice. The player with the higher roll must go first.

During the course of play, certain cards will be eliminated, particularly characters. These cards are removed from active play and placed in an *out-of-play pile*. Certain cards you play for MPs will be placed in a *marshalling point pile*.

## • PART II • TURN SEQUENCE

Player's alternate taking turns, following the sequence outlined below. You may play resources any time during your turn, unless card text states otherwise. You may play hazards only during your opponent's movement/hazard phase. If both players wish to play cards at the same time, see p. 20.

### 1 • UNTAP PHASE

During play, you will have to tap cards, usually to indicate that they have been used this turn. To tap a card, rotate it 90°, so that it is sideways on the table.

During combat (p. 16) character may become wounded. To wound a character, rotate his card 180°, so that it is upside down on the table.

Perform the following steps, in this order:

- 1) Untap your tapped character cards.
- 2) Heal any wounded characters you have at a Haven/Darkhaven. These characters move from wounded to tapped.
- 3) Untap your non-character, non-site cards. Sites, including Havens/Darkhavens, do not untap.

### 2 • ORGANIZATION PHASE

Your organization phase is when you assign your characters into companies, and plan your movement for the next turn. During your organization phase, you may perform the following steps in any order:

- Bring a new character into play at a Haven/Darkhaven or their home site, or reveal your Wizard or Ringwraith. A Wizard may be revealed at Rivendell or his home site. A Ringwraith may be revealed at Minas Morgul, Dol Guldur, or his home site.
- Reorganize your characters and companies, including changing followers and company composition.
- Transfer and store items.
- Play a new site card for each company that you want to move.

**Note:** All company composition changes, including reorganizing companies and bringing characters into play, must all be done at the same time during the organization phase. No other actions may be taken while you are making company composition changes.

### BRINGING A CHARACTER INTO PLAY

To bring a character into play you must have enough influence to control him. Each player has a pool of 20 general influence with which to control characters. Each point of general influence can be used to control one point of mind. A character's mind is shown in the white head symbol on the left side of the character card. A character with eight mind would use eight points of general influence. If a character is brought in under general influence, and there is not enough influence to control him at the end of the organization phase, that character is returned to your hand.

Some characters also have direct influence, shown in the black hand under their mind. Characters may use direct influence to control other characters. Characters must be fully controlled by either general influence or one character's direct influence. A character controlled by direct influence is called a follower. Followers may not control other characters.

Each deck has a Wizard or Ringwraith in it. You may play this character without using influence to control him, as the card represents you in the game. Once your Wizard or Ringwraith is in play, you may not play other characters unless either your Wizard/Ringwraith is at the site where you play the character, or you bring the character into play with direct influence. If playing a Ringwraith, see p. 19.

## REORGANIZING COMPANIES

Characters are organized into companies, and each company moves together as a unit. A company's size is equal to the number of characters in it. When calculating company size, Hobbits and Orc scouts count as half a character (round up). A company's hazard limit is equal to two or the company's size, whichever is greater. The hazard limit is the number of hazards that may be played on a company each turn, and is set at the end of the organization phase.

Any time two of your companies move to the same non-Haven/non-Darkhaven site, they will combine. Any company may split into multiple companies during the organization phase. However, if they are not at a Haven/Darkhaven, then only one company may stay at the site, and all other companies must try to move to different sites that turn.

## TRANSFERRING/STORING ITEMS

During the organization phase, you may transfer items from one character to another character. Both characters must be in the same company, and the character with the item must make a corruption check (p. 19). If the character does not fail the corruption check, the item may be moved to another character.

An item may also be stored at a Haven/Darkhaven. The character must still make a corruption check, and if he does not fail, then the item is placed in your marshallion point pile. Stored items may not be retrieved.

Some resource events may also be stored, as indicated in their card text. No corruption check is required, unless otherwise specified on the card.

## PLAYING A NEW SITE CARD

You must choose where each company is moving during the organization phase, by placing a new site card with each company. A company does not have to move. If you want to move a company, place the new site card representing their destination face down next to the site card representing their current site. You may look through your location deck and pick this card, you do not have to draw it randomly.

If you wish to move a company to a site that is face down on the table (for another company), tell your op-

ponent which site the company is moving to. If you wish to move a company to a site that is face up on the table (because another company is also moving there), tell your opponent the company is moving to a face up site.

The new site you choose must meet certain criteria. You may reach a site by either starter movement, or by region movement. Ringwraiths may not use region movement.

### Starter Movement

If you are at a Haven/Darkhaven, the new site may be a site that lists your current site as its nearest Haven/Darkhaven. The new site may also be another Haven/Darkhaven that lists a site path to your current Haven/Darkhaven.

If you are not at a Haven/Darkhaven, the new site must be the nearest Haven/Darkhaven as listed on the site card.

### Region Movement

If you are using region movement, the new site must be within four regions of the current site. This includes the regions containing the new site and the current site, as listed on the site cards. In the middle of these rules is a color map showing the regions of Middle-earth, showing which regions are adjacent to each other. A series of regions connects two sites if:

- The first region contains the current site, and
- The second region is adjacent to the first region on the map (two regions are adjacent if they are separated by one red line edge), and
- The third region is adjacent to the second region, and
- The fourth region is adjacent to the third region, and contains the new site.
- If the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd region contains the new site, do not worry about the other regions. Only consider regions containing the sites, and any intervening regions.

### Site Paths

A site path is the sequence of regions between a site and its nearest Haven/Darkhaven. Each region in the sequence is indicated by its type, not by its name. For starter movement a company's site path is listed on the left side of the non-Haven/non-Darkhaven card they are moving to or from, or in the text box of the Haven/Darkhaven if moving between Havens/Darkhavens. For region movement, a company's site path is determined by the regions moved through.

Site paths are mostly used to determine if an opponent can play a particular creature on a company. Some hazards refer to the site's site path, which is always the one listed on the site card. Havens/Darkhavens have no site path.

## 3 • LONG-EVENT PHASE

During this phase do the following in this order:

- 1) Discard all of your resource long-events.
- 2) Discard all of your opponent's hazard long-events.
- 3) If you have any resource long-events in your hand, you may play them at this time.

Resource long-events may only be played during this phase. You play hazard long-events during your opponent's movement/hazard phase.

## 4 • MOVEMENT/HAZARD PHASE

The movement/hazard phase is when your companies move from site to site, and is also when your opponent has a chance to play hazards on your companies. Each of your companies has a movement/hazard phase, even if it does not move. You choose the order to resolve your companies' movement/hazard phases. For each company, follow these steps in order:

- 1) If the company has a face down site card, turn it over. This is your company's *new site*, and their current site becomes their *site of origin*. If there is no new site, no cards are drawn. If the new site is a Haven/Darkhaven, each player *may* draw the number of cards indicated on the site of origin. Otherwise, each player *may* draw the number of cards indicated on the new site. Each player must draw at least one card.
- 2) Your opponent plays hazards on the company (see below). A number of hazards equal to the company's hazard limit (p. 14) may be played. Hazards may not be played that target another company, or an entity associated with another company. If a hazard requires the company to return to its site of origin, return the new site card to the location deck (discard it if tapped) and proceed to step 4 (the site of origin becomes its current site). No additional hazards may be played on a company once it returns to its site of origin.
- 3) Remove the company's site of origin. Discard the site card if it is tapped and not a Haven/Darkhaven. Otherwise, return it to the location deck.
- 4) You must discard any cards in excess of eight in your hand; your opponent does the same for his hand. If you have fewer than eight cards, you must draw cards until your hand has eight cards; your opponent does the same for his hand.

Once all of your companies have resolved their movement/hazard phases, any two of your companies at the same non-Haven/non-Darkhaven site combine (companies at Havens/Darkhavens may combine if they wish). Your companies are now considered to be at their new site (that is, the new site becomes its current site).

## PLAYING HAZARDS

When your opponent moves his companies, you may play hazards on them. Hazard events may be played on any company, unless otherwise specified on the card. The creature hazards you can play depend on how the company is moving.

Creature hazards must be keyed to a company's site path or site. This means you must match one of the symbols along the left side of the creature to one of the symbols in the company's site path, or the symbol representing their site type. You only have to match two of the symbols if a symbol is repeated on the creature card. In this case there must be two of that particular symbol in the company's site path in order to key that creature to that symbol. Matching symbols like this is called keying a creature by type. Some creatures may be "played in" certain regions by name, or sites in those regions. Matching names like this is called keying a creature by name.

If the company is not moving, you may only key creatures to their current site, by name or type.

If the company is moving, you may key creatures to their new site, by name or type. You may key creatures by type to the regions of their site path. If the company is using starter movement, you may key creatures by name to the regions containing the site of origin and the new site. If the company is using region movement, you may key creatures by name to any regions the company passes through.

## Placing Cards On-Guard

During your opponent's movement/hazard phase, you may place one card *on-guard* for each of your opponent's companies. This card is placed face down next to the company's new site (current site if they did not move). Any card can be placed on-guard, even a resource, but placing a card on-guard counts against the hazard limit.

The card will remain on the site until either:

- *The company decides to face the site's automatic-attack.* If the on-guard card is a hazard creature keyed to the site **or** a hazard that can modify the automatic-attack, then it may be revealed before the automatic-attack is resolved. Revealed hazard creatures attack after the automatic-attack.
- *The company plays a card that potentially would tap an untapped site.* If the on-guard card is a non-creature hazard, it may be revealed if it is a hazard that affects the company or a character in the company that site phase.
- *The site phase ends.* Return the card to your hand.

If an on-guard card is revealed, treat it as if it had been played during the movement/hazard phase. This means whatever it is played on must have existed during the movement/hazard phase.

An on-guard card cannot be revealed that:

- returns a company to its site of origin;
- taps a company's site;
- potentially removes a character from a company, other than through combat or corruption;
- Forces a company to do nothing during the site phase; or
- directly taps a character.

## COMBAT

Combat consists of one or more *attacks* that must be resolved one at a time. An attack consists of one or more *strikes*. Characters and attacks have prowess (the number before the slash in the lower left of the card), which is used to determine the outcome of strikes.

Strikes are assigned in the following manner:

- 1) The defending player may assign one strike each to any untapped characters he wants.
- 2) The attacking player may assign strikes to any characters that are not already assigned strikes.
- 3) If the attack has more strikes than there are characters in the company, each character is assigned one strike, and the excess strikes are assigned as -1 modifications to the prowesses of whichever characters the attacker chooses.

Once the strikes are assigned, the defending player resolves the strikes in any order he chooses.

### Resolving Strikes

For each strike, follow the sequence below:

- 1) The attacker may play hazard cards that affect the strike. These count toward the hazard limit
- 2) The attacker may decide to use any or all of his remaining -1 modifications from extra strikes
- 3) If an untapped character is facing the strike, he must tap or take a -3 modification to prowess. An already tapped character gets -1 to prowess, and a wounded character gets -2 to prowess.
- 4) An untapped defending character that is not himself the target of a strike may tap to give +1 to the prowess of a defending character.
- 5) The defending player may play resource cards that affect the strike, but only one that requires skill.

Next, the defender makes a roll, and adds his modified prowess (apply weapon modifiers before all other modifiers):

- If the result is greater than the strike's prowess, the strike *fails*. Such a strike is defeated if it fails a body check (see below).
- If the result is equal to the strike's prowess, the strike was *ineffectual*. Nothing happens.
- Otherwise, the strike was *successful*. The target character is wounded and must make a body check. If the attack was detainment (see below), the character is tapped, not wounded, and makes no body check.

### Body Checks

If a non-detainment strike against a character is successful, the character must make a *body check*. To make a body check, the **attacker** makes a roll; if this value is greater than the character's body, he is eliminated.

If a non-detainment strike fails against a character, it is automatically defeated if its body is "—" or if the **defender** makes a roll and the result is higher than the attack's body.

### Detainment Attacks

Detainment attacks tap rather than wound characters. Attacks are only detainment against hero companies if it says so on the card. An attack against a minion company is considered detainment in the following situations:

- If it states the attack is detainment on the card.
- All Nazgûl attacks.
- Any attack keyed to a Dark-domain, Shadow-hold, or Dark-hold.
- Any Orc, Troll, Undead, or Man attack keyed to Shadow-land.

The above parameters apply even if the attack is keyed to a region or site by name which has the appropriate type.

### Defeating an Attack

An attack by a hazard creature is defeated if it is not detainment, and all of its strikes are defeated (strikes assigned as -1 modifiers need not be defeated). When a hazard creature is defeated, the card is placed in the defender's MP pile.

If a hazard creature has multiple attacks, each must be defeated in order for the defender to receive MPs.

If one of the strikes was canceled or ineffectual, the attack is **not** defeated. If the attack was canceled, it is not defeated.

A Ringwraith player may only receive MPs from creatures with a \* next to the MPs. A Wizard player may only receive MPs from creatures without a \* next to the MPs.

If an Orc or Troll character faces a strike from an attack from an opponent's card that was defeated, you may place the creature's card under his control as a *trophy*. Trophies are considered minor items with zero corruption points. Trophies may not be transferred or stored. Discarded trophies that are worth marshalling points to you are placed in your marshalling point pile, otherwise, they are placed in your opponent's out-of-play pile.

Trophies give the following bonuses based on the MP value printed on the card, with or without a \*:

- 1 MP worth of trophies gives +1 direct influence.
- 2 MPs worth of trophies gives +1 direct influence and +1 prowess (to a maximum of 9)
- 3 MPs worth of trophies gives +2 direct influence and +1 prowess (to a maximum of 9)
- 4+ MPs worth of trophies gives +2 direct influence and +2 prowess (to a maximum of 9)

## 5 • SITE PHASE

Each of your companies has a site phase, and you may resolve them in any order you wish. In order to do anything during the site phase, you must first enter the site and then face any and all automatic-attacks listed on the site card (a character at his home site may tap to cancel one automatic-attack at his home site). See Combat, p. 16.

Once you have entered the site, you may:

- Play an item, faction, ally, or any resource playable at the site. Items, factions, and allies can only be played at an untapped site unless specifically allowed at a tapped sites on their card.
- Influence your opponent's resources at the site.
- Attack your opponent's company at the site.

### PLAYING AN ITEM

To play an item, the item must either state it is playable at the site, or the site must state that items of that type are playable at the site. You may tap an untapped character in a company at an untapped site and place the item with that character. This taps the site.

### PLAYING AN ALLY

Playing an ally is similar to an item. Tap an untapped character at an untapped site and place the ally with the character. This taps the site. Allies do not count as characters, except for combat and playing skill cards. They do not count for company size.

### PLAYING A FACTION

To play a faction, tap one character in the company to make an influence attempt. Roll the dice, add the character's unused direct influence, any standard modifications for the character's race (heroes) or other factions in play (minions), and any other modifications from other cards. If the result is higher than the number listed on the faction, put the faction in your MP pile, and tap the site. The site does not tap otherwise.

### PLAYING MINOR ITEMS

After playing a resource that taps the site, you may tap another character in the company to play a minor item. This may be done even if minor items are not normally playable at the site.

### INFLUENCING AN OPPONENT'S RESOURCES

If you are at the same site as an opponent's resource or character, you may tap a character and attempt to influence his card. If successful, the resource or character is discarded. You may reveal an identical card and play it.

You may make one influence attempt against your opponent per turn, you may not make one on the first turn, and your Wizard or Ringwraith may not make one on the turn he is revealed. You may not make an influence attempt against your opponent:

- if you have declared company vs. company combat this turn;
- against his Ringwraith or Wizard;
- against an item, ally, or follower controlled by his Ringwraith or Wizard.

### Influencing Characters

To attempt to influence a character, make a roll and:

- Add the influencing character's unused direct influence.
- Subtract your opponent's unused general influence.
- If the target character is a follower, subtract his controlling character's unused direct influence.
- Subtract the result of a roll by your opponent.
- Add any other modifications from special abilities and cards played before the roll.
- If you are a Ringwraith and your opponent is a Wizard, or vice versa, subtract five.

If the modified result is greater than the target's mind, the target character and all of his non-follower cards are discarded.

If you reveal an identical character card from your hand before making the roll, the target's mind is treated as if it were zero. If the attempt is unsuccessful, you must discard the character card you revealed. If the attempt is successful, in addition to discarding the target, you may immediately play your card at that site, regardless of his home site. You must have enough influence to control the character in order to play him.

### Influencing a Faction

To influence a faction, you must be at the site where the faction is playable. Make an influence check as for a character, except:

- Instead of mind, the result must be greater than the number normally required to play the faction.
- Apply any relevant standard modifications.
- Revealing an identical faction reduces the number to bring the faction into play to zero, and allows you to play that faction if the attempt is successful.

### Influencing an Ally

To influence an ally, make an influence attempt as for a character, except:

- Use the ally's mind instead of the character's.
- Subtract the unused direct influence of the character controlling the ally.
- Revealing an identical ally card reduces the ally's mind to zero and allows you to immediately play the ally with the influencing character if the influence check is successful.

### Influencing an Item

To influence an opponent's item, make an influence attempt as for a character, except:

- The mind of the controlling character is used.
- Subtract the unused direct influence of the item's controlling character.
- You *must* reveal an identical item card in order to make an influence attempt. If the influence attempt is successful, you may play your card with the influencing character.

## COMPANY VS. COMPANY COMBAT

If you are at the same site as an opponent's company, and have not made an influence attempt against him this turn, you may engage that company in company vs. company combat. This attack is declared and enacted following all other actions your company takes during the site phase. Company vs. company combat must be Ringwraith vs. Wizard or vice versa.

Company vs. company combat is treated like an attack with a number of strikes equal to the number of

characters in the attacking company. Each strike has a prowess equal to the attacking character corresponding to the strike.

### Cards that Affect Company vs. Company Combat

Either player may play resources that affect the combat. However, only the defender may play cards that affect the attack as a whole. Hazards may not be played, and have no effect during company vs. company combat.

The attack may be canceled like an ordinary attack. However, cards that cancel attacks from specific race types only work if each character in the attacking company has one of the races listed on the card.

### Assigning Strikes

For company vs. company combat, assign strikes as follows:

- 1) The defender chooses which of his *untapped* characters will be the targets of given strikes.
- 2) The attacker choose which other defending characters not yet assigned a strike will be the target of any remaining unassigned strikes corresponding to his *untapped* characters.
- 3) The defender assigns any remaining strikes to his characters that have not been assigned strikes.

If there are more strikes than defending characters, the attacker may assign excess strikes as -1 modifiers to prowess, during the strike sequence outlined below.

### The Strike Sequence

Strikes are resolved one at a time in the order chosen by the defending player. For each strike, follow the sequence below:

- 1) The attacking player may play resource cards that affect the strike (up to one card that requires skill).
- 2) The attacker may decide to use any or all of his remaining -1 modifications from extra strikes.
- 3) An attacking untapped character may take a -3 modification to prowess so that he will not automatically tap. An already tapped character gets -1 to prowess, and a wounded character gets -2 to prowess.
- 4) A defending untapped character may take a -3 modification so that he will not automatically tap. An already tapped character gets -1 to prowess, and a wounded character gets -2 to prowess.
- 5) An untapped defending character that is not himself the target of a strike may tap to give +1 to the prowess of a defending character.
- 6) The defending player may play resource cards that affect the strike (up to one card that requires skill).

Next, the attacker makes a roll and adds his modified prowess to get the strike's *final prowess*.

Then, the defender makes a roll and adds his modified prowess:

- If this result is greater than the strike's final prowess, the strike *fails*. The character corresponding to the strike is wounded and must make a body check (p. 16).
- If this result is equal to the strike's final prowess, the strike was *ineffectual*. Nothing happens.
- Otherwise, the strike was *successful*. The target character is wounded and must make a body check.

If a character is defeated in company vs. company combat, the opposing player receives kill marshallings points as indicated on the character's card.

## 6 · END-OF-TURN PHASE

During the end-of-turn phase, you may discard one card. Then you must draw or discard cards until you have eight cards in hand. You must discard the card before you reset to hand size. Note that some effects can increase or decrease the number of cards in your hand.

## • PART III · SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Certain situations occur at multiple points in the turn sequence, and are covered here.

### 1 · CORRUPTION CHECKS

Each character has a corruption point total. This starts at zero, but certain cards will change this total during play. Only one corruption hazard may be played on a given character each turn. Normally, a character must tap to remove a corruption card. A character may attempt to remove a corruption card without tapping, at -3 to the roll. If this option is used, only one attempt to remove that corruption card may be made that turn.

#### CORRUPTION CHECKS

When a card or other effect indicates that one of your characters must make a corruption check, you must make a roll and add any appropriate modifications:

**Nothing Happens**—If the modified result is greater than the character's corruption point total, nothing happens.

**The Character is Discarded or Tapped**—If the modified result is equal to the character's corruption point total or one less than the total, a hero character *fails* the corruption check and you must discard him along with any non-follower cards he controls. A Wizard

failing in this manner is eliminated. If the character is a minion, he is not considered to have failed the check, and is tapped if not already tapped.

**The Character is Eliminated**—If the modified result is less than the character's corruption point total by two or more, the character *fails* the corruption check and is eliminated. Discard any non-follower cards he controls.

If a Wizard fails a corruption check, he is immediately eliminated. Ringwraiths never make corruption checks.

### 2 · RINGWRAITHS

Ringwraiths have many special effects, which are summarized below:

- A Ringwraith may only be in a company with non-Ringwraith characters if he is at a Darkhaven.
- Any ring in the Ringwraith's company at the beginning of the end-of-turn phase is automatically tested. Any test in a Ringwraith's company has a modification of -2
- A Ringwraith may carry items, but such items have no effect.
- Ringwraiths never make corruption checks, and corruption hazards may not be played on Ringwraiths.
- A Ringwraith may not use a site path that contains Coastal Sea regions.
- A Ringwraith's company may not use region movement.
- If a body check against a Ringwraith is exactly equal to 7 or 8, then Ringwraith is returned to your hand. You do not lose the game if your Ringwraith is removed in this fashion—you may bring such a Ringwraith back into play the same way you revealed him.
- The full *Middle-earth: Lidless Eye* rules include provisions for Ringwraith followers (p.58)

### 3 · RING ITEMS

Ring special items are more complicated to play than normal items. First, you must play a gold ring item at an appropriate site. Then you must have a card or effect that *tests* the gold ring. When you test a gold ring, make a roll. On the gold ring item will be a list of results, and what ring special items you can play. If you have one of the indicated special ring items in your hand, you may replace the gold ring item with the special ring item. In any case, discard the gold ring item when it is tested.

## 4 • SIDEBOARDS

Your sideboard allows you to make minor modifications to your deck during play.

### Using Your Sideboard When You Exhaust Your Deck

Whenever you exhaust your play deck, you may exchange (before reshuffling) up to 5 cards between your sideboard and discard pile. Each card taken from your sideboard must be replaced by a card from your discard pile.

### Using Your Sideboard When

#### You Tap Your Ringwraith or Wizard

During your organization phase, you may tap your Ringwraith or Wizard to bring up to 5 resource and/or character cards from your sideboard into your discard pile.

Alternatively, if your play deck has at least 5 cards, you may tap your Ringwraith or Wizard to bring one resource or character card from your sideboard into your play deck (reshuffle).

### Using Your Sideboard When

#### Your Opponent's Wizard or Ringwraith is in Play

At the end of your opponent's untap phase, if your opponent's Ringwraith or Wizard is in play, you may at this point bring up to five hazard cards from your sideboard to your discard pile; **or**, if your play deck has at least 5 cards, you may bring one hazard card from your sideboard into your play deck (reshuffle).

If you move cards from your sideboard in this fashion, the hazard limit for each of your opponent's companies is reduced to half of normal for the rest of the turn (round up).

## 5 • TIMING

You and your opponent may both want to perform actions at the same time or actions that are sequenced with respect to other actions. Such actions often include playing a card, tapping a character already in play, and revealing an on-guard card.

Your opponent may always declare an action in response before your action is resolved. You may respond to each other's actions until neither player can, or wants to, perform an action.

You must give your opponent a chance to respond to every action, and vice versa. If you perform an action and move on to another action without giving your opponent a chance to respond, you must "back-up" if he wants to respond.

A series of declared actions is called a chain of effects. You always have the option of declaring the first action in a chain of effects during your turn. The actions in a chain of effects are resolved one at a time from last declared to first declared. That is, the last declared action is resolved first, and the first declared action is resolved last. This is called last in first out, or LIFO, order of resolution.

An action in a chain of effects is negated if the conditions required to perform it are negated by another action that is resolved before it in the chain of effects.

Creature hazards may not be played in response to other actions. They must always start a chain of effects.

## 6 • UNIQUE, CANNOT BE DUPLICATED, & MANIFESTATIONS

If a card states that it is "unique" or that it "cannot be duplicated," only one such card (or its effects) may be in play at a time. Cards in the marshalling point and out-of-play piles are in play for this purpose. The first card played takes precedence (influence checks may change this). This restriction applies to all cards in play (both yours and your opponent's).

Some cards may not be duplicated on a specific target. Multiple copies of such a card can be in play, so long as each applies to a different target. A card that cannot be duplicated may be played when a copy is already in play only if the copy in play is currently being targeted by an effect that will discard it.

Certain entities have several different *manifestations*, each represented by a different card. If one manifestation of such an entity is in play, you may *not* play another manifestation of the same entity. If one manifestation of such an entity is in the out-of-play or marshalling point piles, you may not play any further manifestations of that entity.

Certain hero resources and minion resources have the same name. These resources are considered manifestations of each other.

## 7 • EXHAUSTING YOUR PLAY DECK

You exhaust your deck when you draw the final card from it. Discard any cards that are discarded when a deck is exhausted, and make any exchanges with the sideboard (see above). Then shuffle your discard pile. This becomes your new play deck. Place all of your discarded sites back into your location deck.