DCCD – Fallen-wizard – Saruman – Seek for the Nine

*“His knowledge is deep, but his pride has grown with it, and he takes ill any meddling. The lore of the Elven-Rings, great and small, is his province. He has long studied it, seeking the lost secrets of their making.”* ***--LotRII***

*“It was by the devices of Saruman that we drove The Necromancer from Dol Guldur. It might be that he had found some weapons that would drive back the Nine…but it is clear now that even at the Council his feet were already on a crooked path. He knew that the Ring was not lost forever, but wished us to think so; for he began to lust for it for himself****.” --LotRII***

Saruman and Sauron were both servants of Aulë, the smith. Whether from being kindred spirits, or rather as contesting powers, Saruman has always looked to Sauron in envy. He sought to equal Sauron’s knowledge and lore of the artifacts of power in Middle Earth. At first his aim was to understand the designs of Sauron, and to thwart them if he could. But ever was present in the back of his mind, the desire to create order out of chaos, and to bend all to his will that would go against it. To this end Saruman even forged his own ring, augmenting the powers of his voice, so he could sway the minds of lesser folk.

By the Valar he is not permitted to seek dominion over Men. But what would he not give to obtain a Ring of Power, and set a thrall on his throne instead, much as Sauron has done with the Nine? To this end, Saruman has gathered ambitious men from all over Middle Earth on his travels to the East, and sets out on a dangerous quest: to steal a Ring for Mortal Men from the Necromancer in Dol Guldur. He knows the treacherous ways into that hill of sorcery, for he has been there before.

**Starting company**: Layos (Myrmidon), Abur (Binding Ring), Khursh (Black Arrow), Nevido Smod, Ceorl

**Starting stage/events:** Many-coloured Robes, Thrall of the Voice, Whispers of Rings

**Starting site:** Isengard

**DC level**: **\*\*** *DC Graduate* (dc intensity 35%)

1. The object of this deck is to play one or more *Rings for Mortal Men* (sideboard). This is no easy feat. You must enter Dol Guldur with a character bearing a ring special item (to lure Sauron out), face a strike at 20 prowess, and failing this strike the character is immediately eliminated. So you could use some prowess help. Ideally, you have Abur taking the strike holding *Glamdring/Magic Ring of Fury*, play *Tormented Earth/ Wizard’s Flame*, use a *Swift Strokes* and tap a *Black Arrow* and/or some characters to support. Then, you might live.
2. Saruman is of course the spell and sorcery master. Tap him to bring some cards to your discard pile from sideboard to start recycling: spells like *White Light Broken, Tormented Earth, Wizard’s Flame* (in case you did not draw these yet from deck), which Saruman can get, *Lordly Presence/Ringlore* which his Robes can get, and a Gold Ring which you can get with *Rings of Power*. Try to keep Saruman untapped until end of turn phase, or untap him (*And Forth He Hastened*/avatar copy/*Hundreds of Butterflies*), to get spells back. You can also go for a *Magic Ring of Weals* on Hador to recycle sorcery.
3. A couple of characters in deck (Hador, Leärdinoth, Náin) help you get into Dol Guldur more easily (tap for automatic-attack). Save *Thrall of the Voice* to play the bigger ones at Isengard, use a *Chance Meeting*, or play them at their home site Dol Guldur itself. Go to Strayhold to test a ring (and play Leärdinoth), or to Sarn Goriwing to play *Glamdring* (and Eradan). Big Man characters are also the candidates for bearing a *Ring for Mortal Men*, as they have a high mind stat (discard *Thrall of the Voice* to increase their mind when bearing the ring).
4. There are not that many MP resources straight in the deck, so do not throw any away lightly. Recycling is nice, but also slows you down. The trick is to judge which resource (e.g. *Ringlore* or *Lordly Presence*) you need at the right time.
5. Obtaining a *Ring for Mortal Men* is crucial to your success, because then you can play *Seeking for the Nine*. This stage card will give you full MP’s for Men/Dúnadan characters and factions, and even allows you to play big mind characters like Ulrac (both are in sideboard).
6. **Final tips:**

* Try to get a Dwarven Ring on Náin. This allows you to recycle rings more easily.
* Play *Wizard’s Flame* or *White Light Broken* if possible on Saruman during the organization phase, *after* you tapped for sideboarding. Making many corruption checks is nothing to sniff at, one of them is sure to go wrong.
* Of course Saruman needs to stir a little mayhem at a Border-hold (*Mischief in a Mean Way* in sideboard) to crown his new thrall and give him a kingdom.
* As per UEP, *Many Coloured Robes* taps, not Saruman!
* Bearers of stature cards have their corruption checks modified by adding half their mind stat, so do not be alarmed by the amount of corruption the ring and stature card give. Get *King of Mighty Words* from sideboard to crown your king, play Men characters easily, and find some *Slaves to the Ring*! (both sideboard).

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**Pool**

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# Hero Character (7)

1 Abur (SL)

1 Ceorl (TI)

1 Harngorin (SL)

1 Khursh (BO)

1 Peath (TW)

1 Wacho (TW)

1 Éothain (TI)

# Hero Resource (1)

1 Black Arrow (PR)

# Minion Character (3)

1 Dunlending Spy (LE)

1 Layos (LE)

1 Nevido Smôd (LE)

# Minion Resource (2)

1 Binding-ring (LE)

1 Whispers of Rings (BA)

# Stage Resource (3)

1 Many-coloured Robes (WH)

1 Thrall of the Voice (WH)

1 Wizard's Myrmidon (WH)

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**Deck**

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# Hazard (33)

1 An Unexpected Outpost (DM)

1 Angurth Ahunt (GW)

2 Black Crows (FB)

1 Cruel Caradhras (TD)

1 Despair of the Heart (LE)

1 Elven Wards (FB)

1 Enchanted Stream (AS)

2 Ent in Search of the Entwives (LE)

1 Foolish Words (TD)

1 Frightful Guardian (GW)

1 Great Northern Bear (GW)

1 Grima Wormtongue (TI)

1 Lord of the Eagles (DF)

1 Lure of the Senses (LE)

1 Marsh-drake (TD)

1 Men of the Wood (GW)

2 Mensharag (TI)

1 Old Man Willow (TW)

1 Out of Practise (DF)

1 Rain-drake (TD)

1 Shut Yer Mouth (LE)

1 Slayer (TW)

1 Snow in the Mountains (NW)

1 Taint of Ambition (WR)

1 Taint of Glory (WR)

1 Taint of the Wilds (RS)

2 Twilight (LE)

1 Watcher in the Water (LE)

1 Weariness of the Heart (TW)

# Fallen-wizard Character (4)

4 Saruman [F] (WH)

# Minion Character (4)

1 Eradan (LE)

1 Hador (LE)

1 Leärdinoth (NE)

1 Náin (LE)

# Dual Resource (4)

2 Mighty Steed (TI)

2 Rings of Power (NM)

# Hero Resource (21)

1 A Chance Meeting (TW)

1 And Forth He Hastened (TD)

1 Concealment (TW)

1 Dark Quarrels (TW)

1 Erû's Gift (NM)

2 Fair Gold Ring (TW)

1 Glamdring (TW)

1 Hundreds of Butterflies (DM)

1 Longbottom Leaf (BA)

1 Lucky Strike (TW)

1 Men of Dorwinion [H] (TW)

2 Rumours of Danger (WR)

2 Smoke Rings (DM)

1 The Wind Is Turning (WR)

1 Trickery (TD)

1 Wain-easterlings [H] (AS)

1 When I Know Anything (TD)

1 Wizard's Flame (TW)

# Minion Resource (4)

2 Swift Strokes (LE)

1 The Tormented Earth (AS)

1 Voices of Malice (LE)

# Stage Resource (4)

1 He Walks Here and There (TI)

1 Lore of the Rings (RS)

1 Never Refuse (WH)

1 The Forge-master (WH)

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**Sideboard**

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# Dual Resource (2)

1 King of Mighty Words (NM)

1 Slaves to the Ring (NM)

# Hazard (3)

1 Lure of Magic (NE)

1 Many Burdens (RS)

1 Too Much to Ask (WR)

# Hero Resource (6)

1 Beautiful Gold Ring (TW)

1 Lordly Presence (TW)

2 Ring for Mortal Men [H] (NM)

1 Ringlore (TW)

1 Wizard's Flame (TW)

# Minion Character (1)

1 Ulrac (NE)

# Minion Resource (6)

1 Dwarven Ring of Barin's Tribe [M] (LE)

1 Magic Ring of Fury (LE)

1 Magic Ring of Weals (LE)

1 Minor Ring (LE)

1 The Tormented Earth (AS)

1 White Light Broken (WH)

# Stage Resource (2)

1 Mischief in a Mean Way (WH)

1 Seek for the Nine (NM)

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**Sites**

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# Fallen-wizard Site (2)

2 Isengard [F] (WH)

# Hero Site (23)

1 Amon Hen [H] (TW)

1 Amon Lhaw [H] (TI)

1 Bandit Lair [H] (TW)

1 Buhr Widu [H] (TD)

1 Caras Amarth [H] (FB)

1 Cor Angaladh [H] (FB)

1 Dol Guldur [H] (TW)

1 Dunharrow [H] (TW)

1 Easterling Camp [H] (TW)

1 Gladden Fields [H] (TW)

1 Glittering Caves [H] (TW)

1 Goblin-gate [H] (TW)

1 Gyogorasag Sanctuary [H] (GW)

1 Moria [H] (TW)

1 Raider-hold [H] (AS)

1 Rhosgobel [H] (TW)

1 Sarn Goriwing [H] (TW)

1 Shrel-Kain [H] (TW)

1 Strayhold [H] (NE)

1 The Carrock [H] (DF)

1 Tol Buruth [H] (NE)

1 Turukulon's Lair [H] (TI)

1 Wain-Easterling Camp [H] (CP)