

WAR OF THE RING (2ND EDITION)

ANNOTATED EXAMPLE of PLAY

Goodgulf won the BGG 2012 Online War of the Ring Tournament against Uthoroc, who had cruised into the final with no losses. This example of play is taken from a subsequent match played online using the java client developed by Sean McCarthy and expanded by Andrew Poulter. With hardly a wasted move, this rematch exemplifies the game's drama, careful balance of asymmetric goals, and ever-uncertain outcome. If you are learning the game, you may want to set up the board and follow along move by move.

Play commences: Uthoroc takes the Free Peoples and Goodgulf takes the Shadow.

TURN 1: THE RING SETS OUT

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc takes his four starting Action dice and draws **The Eagles Are Coming!** for his Character card and **The Red Arrow** for his Strategy card; Goodgulf takes the Shadow's seven starting Action dice and draws **Give It To Uss!** and **The Shadow Lengthens**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Uthoroc foregoes Gandalf's special card drawing Guide ability and chooses to make Strider the initial guide instead. This will allow him to hide the Fellowship using any Action die, not just a Character die, in case a Hunt tile reveals the Fellowship.

3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf chooses to allocate no Eyes to the Hunt. While this risks giving the Fellowship a free run this turn, it maximizes his chance of rolling Musters to bring Shadow nations to war.

4) Action Roll:



Luckily for Goodgulf, his roll produces an Eye, which goes immediately to the Hunt Box.

5) Action Resolution: The Free Peoples player always begins this phase, then play alternates. *Note that **either** player may elect to pass any time he has fewer actions remaining than his opponent.*



Uthoroc uses his Character die to move the Fellowship and adds the die to the Hunt Box. The single Eye in the Hunt Box allows Goodgulf to roll one six-sided die to Hunt the Fellowship. He needs a 6 to succeed and in fact rolls a 6, allowing him to

draw a Hunt tile. The tile is a 0-reveal, meaning there is no Hunt damage, but the Fellowship is **revealed** in a new location one region away from its last known position, Rivendell. Uthoroc moves the Fellowship figure to Fords of Bruinen and resets the Fellowship progress counter to zero.



Goodgulf uses his Muster die to advance Isengard's political marker to the At War box on the political track.



Strider's ability as the Guide of the Fellowship allows Uthoroc to use an Army/Muster die result to hide the Fellowship, instead of the usual Character die.



Because Isengard is now at war, Goodgulf is able to muster Saruman, using a Muster result from one of his Army/Muster dice to do so. He places Saruman in Orthanc and adds an additional Shadow Action die to his Action Dice pool for next turn. *A Shadow Minion is now in play, so if Gandalf the Grey is eliminated or leaves the Fellowship, a Will of the West can bring Gandalf the White into play.*

(Uthoroc has fewer actions remaining, and chooses to pass.)



Goodgulf uses an Army/Muster die as a Muster to advance Sauron to war on the political track.

(Uthoroc still has fewer actions remaining, and chooses to pass again.)




Goodgulf uses his Event die to draw a Strategy card, in this case the Army card **Shadows Gather**.





Uthoroc no longer has fewer actions than Goodgulf, so he must take an action now. He uses an Elven ring to change his second Army/Muster to a Character die and uses it to separate Companions from the Fellowship. Gandalf the Grey, Gimli, and Merry separate as a group and may move up to three regions (Gandalf's level is 3). If the Fellowship marker were at 1 or higher, the Companions could move that many spaces further. Instead, Uthoroc

WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY

moves them to Moria, only two regions away, because Companions must stop when entering a Shadow Stronghold.

 Goodgulf uses an Army/Muster die to move two armies. He moves the forces in Barad-Dur to Gorgoroth. The army in Gorgoroth is two units shy of the stacking limit of 10. Goodgulf's other army move is to bring the two Sauron regulars in Nurn to Gorgoroth as well. He now has a force of 9 regulars, one elite, and one Nazgûl leader there.

 Uthoroc uses his Will of the West to bring Gandalf the White into play, adding an Action die to his pool for future turns. Because Gandalf the Grey is on the board (i.e. not dead), Gandalf the White appears there. *If you do not have a separate figure for Gandalf the White, place his Companion token under the Gandalf figure. Gandalf the Grey may not be promoted to Gandalf the White while still in the Fellowship.*

 Goodgulf uses the last Army/Muster die as a Muster result to advance the Southrons & Easterlings on the political track, to one step away from At War.

TURN 2: THE RING GOES SOUTH

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his four used Action dice plus the new one for Gandalf the White. He draws **There Is Another Way** for his Character card and **Dain Ironfoot's Guard** for his Strategy card; Goodgulf recovers his original seven Action dice plus an eighth one for Saruman and draws **Foul Thing from the Deep** and **The Fighting Uruk-hai**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Strider must remain the Guide because with Gandalf separated, Strider is the only Level 3 Companion in the Fellowship and outranks everyone else.


3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf must allocate one Eye to the Hunt because the Fellowship moved last turn. He places one Action die in the Hunt Box.


4) Action Roll:





The Hunt Box gains no additional Eye results from the Shadow action roll.

5) Action Resolution


 Uthoroc moves the Fellowship, sliding the Fellowship progress counter to 1 on the Fellowship track and adding the Character die to the Hunt Box. Goodgulf rolls a one die for the single Eye that is in the Hunt Box and produces a 2, well short of the necessary 6.

 Goodgulf plays **Foul Thing from the Deep** allowing him to draw a Hunt tile and forcing Uthoroc to resolve the damage by eliminating a random Companion. He draws a 0-reveal, causing no Hunt damage but slowing the Fellowship by forcing it to **reveal** in a new location. Uthoroc chooses to head south toward Moria rather than over the High Pass (the route to Mordor is one shorter via Moria), moves the Fellowship figure to Hollin, and resets the Fellowship track.


 Uthoroc uses Strider's ability to hide the Fellowship with any die result.


 Goodgulf advances the Southrons & Easterlings political marker one step box on the political track to At War. Now all three Shadow nations are at war, satisfying a prerequisite for the play of certain Shadow Strategy Event cards.


(Uthoroc passes.)


 Goodgulf moves two armies: Three regulars and an elite (3/1/0) from Far Harad to Near Harad and a 3/1/0 force from South Rhun to East Rhun.

(Uthoroc passes again.)

 Goodgulf moves two other armies: five Sauron regulars and one Nazgûl (5/0/1) from Minas Morgul to North Ithilien and nine regulars, one elite and a Nazgul (9/1/1) from Gorgoroth to Minas Morgul.

 Uthoroc advances Gondor on the political track to one step away from At War. *Gondor cannot be advanced to At War until it is activated by an attack or the arrival of an appropriate Companion or the Fellowship itself in a Gondor City or Stronghold.*

 Goodgulf uses the Army result of an Army/Muster die to move two armies. The enlarged 6/2/0 army in Near Harad moves to West Harondor and the 9/1/1 in Minas Morgul moves to South Ithilien.

 Uthoroc advances Rohan on the political track to two steps from At War.

WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY



Goodgulf uses the Army result of an Army/Muster die to have the 6/2/0 S&E army in West Harondor attack the single Gondor regular in Pelargir.

- The attack immediately activates Gondor, flipping the Gondor political marker to its active side. The attack also advances Gondor a step on the political track, to At War.
- As the attacker, Goodgulf declares first whether he will use a Combat Card. He chooses not to. Uthoroc selects and plays a Combat Card: Scouts (the bottom half of **The Red Arrow** Event card).
- Scouts preempts any combat rolls and allows Uthoroc to retreat his Army in Pelargir (one Gondor regular) to an adjacent region that is not under enemy control. He chooses Osgiliath, adding to its existing garrison of two regulars.
- Goodgulf advances the attacking Army from West Harondor into Pelargir and places a control marker to indicate the capture of the City, which is worth 1 Victory Point. *If Gondor were not already at war, the capture of one of its settlements would have advanced it an additional step on the political track.*



Uthoroc uses the Muster result of his Army/Muster die to recruit a Gondor elite unit in Dol Amroth (a legal action now that Gondor is at war).



Now that both Sauron and at least one Free Peoples nation are at war, Goodgulf is able to muster the Witch-King in a Sauron Army anywhere on the board. He places the Black Captain in South Ithilien, adding two more leadership points, and adds an additional die to the Shadow's Action Dice pool. Goodgulf flips the Rohan, Dwarven, and North political markers to their active side because the Witch-King's arrival activates all passive Free Peoples nations.

TURN 3: THE WITCH-KING ATTACKS

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his five used Action dice and draws **Bilbo's Song** for his Character card and **Through a Day and a Night** for his Strategy card; Goodgulf recovers his eight Action dice adding a ninth one for the Witch-King. He draws **Worn With Sorrow and Toil** and **Corsairs of Umbar**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Strider must remain the Guide.

3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf opts to allocate two Eyes to the Hunt, increasing his odds of a successful Hunt ahead of the Fellowship's likely move into Moria and an additional Hunt tile draw if they are revealed passing into or through the Shadow Stronghold.

4) Action Roll:



The Hunt Box gains no additional Eye results from the Shadow action roll.

5) Action Resolution



The Fellowship moves. *Uthoroc uses the Will of the West result as a Character die, possibly for fear that Goodgulf has the card Day Without Dawn in his hand, which requires all Shadow nations to be at war and will eliminate all unused Will dice.*



- With two Eyes in the Hunt Box, Goodgulf rolls two dice for the Hunt and gets a 5 and a 6: one success! He draws a 3 Hunt tile.
- Uthoroc does not want to lose Strider or risk him as a random casualty, so he opts to 'use the ring' and moves the Corruption marker from 0 to 3 on the Fellowship track.



Move Nazgûl and Minions. Goodgulf flies one Nazgûl from Morannon to the Fellowship's last known location in Hollin, while two others from Dol Guldur and North Ithilien fly to join the Witch-King's army in South Ithilien.



The Fellowship moves again, from step 1 to step 2. The Free Peoples Action Die already in the Hunt Box adds one to each Hunt die, so Goodgulf only needs to roll 5 or higher on either of his Hunt dice. He rolls two 2s, but the presence of a Nazgûl in the Fellowship's last known location (Hollin) allows him a single re-roll, which yields a 1. The Fellowship is safe for now.




Goodgulf plays **Worn With Sorrow and Toil** to the table. Every time the Fellowship loses a Companion as a casualty it will cost Uthoroc a Character event card as well.





(Uthoroc passes.)


WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY

 A Southron & Easterlings elite is mustered in North Rhun.


(Uthoroc passes again.)

 A second Southron & Easterlings elite is mustered in North Rhun.

 Move Companions. Gimli (Level 2) moves from Moria to North Anduin Vale. Gandalf the White (Level 4 when traveling alone or with a hobbit) moves to Fangorn with Merry.

 The Witch-King's army in South Ithilien attacks Gondor's three regulars in Osgiliath. Goodgulf selects a Combat Card, then Uthoroc does.

- **Deadly Strife** will add 2 to all combat and leader re-roll dice results. **Confusion** will cause any natural 1s rolled in the Shadow army's combat roll to count as hits against itself.
- **Sorcerer:** When the Shadow plays a Combat Card in the first round of a battle including the Witch-King, he may immediately draw another event card of the same type. Deadly Strife was part of the Corsairs of Umbar strategy event card, so Goodgulf draws from that deck and gets **Denethor's Folly**.
- The Fortification in Osgiliath means the Shadow would normally need 6s to hit, but Deadly Strife reduces the target number to 4. Goodgulf rolls 1 2 2 2 6, yielding one hit on himself and one against the defenders. That leaves three misses to re-roll, producing 1 5 6: two more hits! (The 1 is not a Confusion hit because the card only affected the combat roll, not the leader re-roll.)
- The defender's combat roll is 5 4 3: three hits back! Defending forces always need a 5 or better to hit, but the Shadow's combat card lowered that to a 3.
- The three regulars in Gondor are eliminated and returned to the game box. Goodgulf eliminates four regulars from the attacking army and advances it into Osgiliath. Shadow casualties are returned to the reinforcements pool.

 Uthoroc recruits an elite in Minas Tirith. *Once the Shadow lays siege to Minas Tirith, Uthoroc will no longer be able to recruit units there except with an event card. Adding this elite brings the garrison to its maximum stacking limit of five units (leaders are not units and do not count toward the limit).*



Two army moves: 1) A Sauron regular splits off from the Witch-King's army in Osgiliath to occupy Lossarnach. *(Because the Settlement in Lossarnach is undefended it is considered 'free for the purpose of army movement', and counts as a move rather than an attack. Goodgulf places a control marker in Lossarnach to show it is under Shadow control, but it is not worth any victory points.)* 2) The army of five regulars in North Ithilien reinforce the Witch-King's 4/1/5 army, maxing out the stacking limit of ten units. *(The numbers denoting an army's composition represent regulars/elites/points of leadership. In this case there are three Nazgûl and the Witch-King present, but his leadership of 2 brings the total possible leader re-rolls to 5.)*



Playing **Dain Ironfoot's Guard** adds a Dwarven elite and a Dwarven leader to Erebor. *Goodgulf's mustering of additional elites in North Rhun earlier in the turn signaled that Erebor, Woodland Realm, and Dale could soon face attack.*



Goodgulf plays **Give It To Uss!** and sets aside the appropriate special Hunt tile for when the Fellowship reaches Mordor. *Event cards can also be played using an Action Die appropriate to the card's type. While the action might have been used to move or attack with an army with leadership, Goodgulf held five cards in his hand and would have to discard a card after drawing two more next turn to maintain the hand limit of six.*

TURN 4: MINAS TIRITH BESIEGED

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his five used Action dice and draws **Elven Cloaks** and **King Brand's Men**; Goodgulf recovers his nine Action dice. He draws **The Nazgûl Strike!** and **Return to Valinor**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Strider must remain the Guide. Uthoroc opts to **declare** the Fellowship, moving its last known position two regions to Dimrill Dale and resetting the Fellowship progress counter. *Because the Fellowship is **declaring** rather than **revealing** its position involuntarily, there is no Hunt tile drawn for traversing a Shadow Stronghold.*

3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf opts to allocate the minimum one Eye to the Hunt, not adding any now that the Fellowship has safely avoided a possible extra tile draw for Moria.

WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY

4) Action Roll:



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The one Eye result is added to the Hunt Box. *The high number of Event die results rolled means the Shadow's moves are more constrained for this turn.*

5) Action Resolution



Sensing that the Witch-King may soon lay siege to Minas Tirith, Uthoroc ignores the Fellowship and instead recruits a leader there, and a second leader in Dol Amroth. *When recruiting more than one unit, they must be mustered in two separate Settlements.*



The Shadow obliges with an attack on Minas Tirith by the Witch-King's army. The defender's choose not to fight a field battle and retreat into the Stronghold. *The units are moved to the Minas Tirith Stronghold box on the western edge of the board, leaving room on the map board for the Shadow army to move in. (Placing a Free Peoples control marker with the Shadow army can serve as a reminder that there are still defenders present.)*



The Fellowship moves from step 0 to step 1 on the Fellowship track. Both Hunt dice miss (3, 1).



Two Nazgûl recruited, one in Moria, the other in Dol Guldur.



King Brand's Men recruits two North regulars in Dale and grants a Strategy Event card. Uthoroc draws **Eomer, Son of Eomund**.



Goodgulf plays **Denethor's Folly** to the table, denying Uthoroc the ability to play Combat Cards in Minas Tirith and eliminating a Gondor leader there.

(Uthoroc passes.)



Two army moves: a Sauron regular and Nazgûl move from Moria to Dimrill Dale and five Sauron regulars in Morannon move to Dagorlad.

(Uthoroc passes again.)



The Nazgûl Strike! allows Goodgulf to move all the Nazgûl, moving the one in Hollin and the one in Dol Guldur to North Rhun.

- Because there is a Nazgûl at the Fellowship's last known position, he also gets to roll for the Hunt and can add one because there is a Free Peoples Action die in the Hunt Box.

- The roll produces one success (6, 1) and, though the Shadow army unit and the Nazgûl each provide a re-roll, there is only one re-roll (which misses with a 4) because only one Hunt die was a miss.
- The Hunt tile draw is a 1-reveal. Uthoroc **reveals** the Fellowship one region away in Parth Celebrant, resets the Fellowship progress counter, and takes the 1 point of Hunt damage as Corruption, as it is not worth losing a Strider or a Level 2 Companion as a random casualty.



Strider conveniently hides the Fellowship using his Guide ability. *Doing so immediately after being revealed is a good idea as some particularly nasty Shadow Character event cards can only be played on the Fellowship when it is revealed.*



Goodgulf draws a Shadow Character Event card, **Wormtongue**.



Uthoroc plays **Eomer, Son of Eomund** to recruit a Rohan elite and leader in Edoras.



Goodgulf uses the Dark Ring he received in Turn 1 to change an Event die to a face that allows him to attack (Army or Character, it does not matter which in this case). He declares Minas Tirith as the target and plays a Combat Card without having to worry about a Free Peoples Combat Card because of Denethor's Folly on the table.

- He plays **Foul Stench** (from the Wormtongue event card) to cancel the defender's leader re-roll and to activate the Witch-King's ability to draw another Event card of the same type: **Grond, Hammer of the Underworld**.
- Goodgulf rolls 5 combat dice needing 6s to hit. His roll (4, 4, 6, 5, 6) scores two hits and the leader re-roll (3, 2, 3) scores none.
- Uthoroc's answering roll scores three hits (6, 2, 5, 6, 3) but Foul Stench prevents a re-roll for his leader.
- Goodgulf removes three Sauron regulars and Uthoroc removes a Gondor elite to absorb two hits, leaving the defending garrison at 3/1/1.

The Stronghold prevents Goodgulf from automatically extending a siege battle: he must reduce an elite in the besieging army, eliminating it and replacing it with a regular, in order to continue for another round.

WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY

- Goodgulf plays **Deadly Strife**, the lower half of the Return to Valinor event card, for his Combat Card, allowing him to hit on 4 or higher, and Uthoroc to hit on 3 or higher.
- The Shadow's combat roll scores three hits (4, 1, 5, 3, 4) and the re-roll lands one more (6, 1).
- The Gondor army scores two hits (3, 2, 2, 6) and the leader re-roll adds one more (3).
- Goodgulf removes three more Sauron regulars while Uthoroc eliminates two Gondor regulars and an elite to absorb the four hits he took.



Goodgulf has no more elites to reduce so the fighting must halt here, with his 4/0/5 army besieging the 1/0/1 defenders.

TURN 5: MINAS TIRITH RESISTS

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his five used Action dice and draws **Athelas** and **Grimbeorn, Son of Beorn**; Goodgulf recovers his nine Action dice. He draws **The Lidless Eye** and **Horde from the East**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Strider is still the Guide; the Fellowship's progress is currently zero so it may not be declared in a new location.

3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf allocates two Eyes.

4) Action Roll:



No additional Eyes are added to the Hunt Box.

5) Action Resolution



The Fellowship moves from step 0 to step 1 on the Fellowship track. Both Hunt dice miss (5, 4).



The 6/2/0 army in Pelargir takes Lamedon and the 1/0/1 army in Dimrill Dale heads to the Fellowship's last known location in Parth Celebrant. Goodgulf places a Shadow control marker in Lamedon.



With Shadow forces approaching, Uthoroc recruits an elite to form a (3/2/1) army in Dol Amroth.



The Witch-King attacks Minas Tirith again, without a card this time. Uthoroc cannot play any still.



- None of the Shadow's four combat dice or re-rolls produces a 6. The defender's single die comes up short of a 5 on both the combat and leader re-roll.

- Without an elite to reduce to prolong the siege battle, Goodgulf ends the action.



Athelas allows Uthoroc to roll three dice to heal the Ringbearers, and because Strider is the guide he needs 3s or better, instead of the usual 5s. He rolls (2, 4, 6) to heal two points and slides the Corruption marker from four down to two.



The Witch-King again attempts to conquer Minas Tirith without a Combat Card. All his dice come up short, but the lone defender's roll is a 6, taking the attacking army down from (4/0/5) to (3/0/5).

(Uthoroc passes.)



Goodgulf recruits an elite in Minas Morgul.

(Uthoroc passes again.)



Two army moves: the 5/0/0 army in Dagorlad and the elite in Minas Morgul converge in North Ithilien.



Elven Cloaks brings the 0 special Hunt tile into play to await the Fellowship's arrival in Mordor.



The Shadow Lengthens allows two Shadow armies to each move two regions to end in a region already containing a Shadow army. The (5/1/0) in North Ithilien joins the Witch-King's army in Minas Tirith and a (4/1/0) force in Dol Guldur leaves one regular behind to scour the Fellowship's last known location in Parth Celebrant.



The Fellowship moves again, from step 1 to step 2.

The Free Peoples Action Die in the Hunt box means Goodgulf needs to roll 5 or better on his Hunt dice, and the presence of Nazgûl and Shadow army units each grant a re-roll.

- The Hunt roll misses (1, 1), however the two re-rolls produce a success (4, 6). The tile drawn is an Eye, **revealing** the Fellowship and causing damage equal to the number of successes (one in this case).
- Uthoroc adds one Corruption, flips and resets the Fellowship progress counter from 2 to 0, and moves the Fellowship figure two regions to Druadan Forest.



Horde from the East adds five S&E regulars to the 3/1/0 army in East Rhun. *They cannot be recruited in North Rhun because the card stipulates the region must be adjacent to the eastern edge of the board.*

WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY

TURN 6: AN HEIR AMID THE ASHES

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his five used Action dice and draws **Axe and Bow** and **Kindred of Glorfindel**; Goodgulf recovers his nine Action dice. He draws **Balrog of Moria** and **Stormcrow**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Strider remains the Guide.

3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf allocates two Eyes.

4) Action Roll:



Three additional Eyes are added to the Hunt Box. *This turn the Shadow will have fewer actions than the Free Peoples.*

5) Action Resolution



Strider hides the Fellowship using his special Guide ability.



The Witch-King's army storms Minas Tirith's walls again, without a card. The combat roll at last produces the needed hit (6, 4, 4, 2, 4). The lone defender misses on both the combat and leader re-roll. Minas Tirith falls, giving the Shadow two more victory points for a total of three with Pelargir. The preconditions for **Denethor's Folly** (Minas Tirith under siege by a Shadow army) are no longer met, so it is removed from the board and discarded.



Uthoroc plays **Axe and Bow** to the table.



The Witch-King's army in Minas Tirith splits using two army moves and leaves one regular to hold Minas Tirith. A regular and a Nazgûl move to Osgiliath and the Witch-King with a 6/1/2 force enters Druadan Forest. Both moves appear designed to ensure maximum re-rolls when the Fellowship attempts to leave Druadan Forest.



Uthoroc moves the Fellowship against five Eyes and two re-rolls. Goodgulf fails to roll any 6s.



Saruman uses his Voice ability to recruit three Isengard regulars, one in each of his Settlements.



Uthoroc uses his second Elven ring to change a die to a Character action and separates three Companions (Strider, Boromir, and Pippin) to Dol Amroth. Strider's Level of 3 plus the Fellowship progress counter at step 1 allow the group to just reach the Stronghold, four regions away from the

Fellowship's last known position. Legolas remains with the Ringbearers and becomes the Guide by default. *With a Will of the West still among his actions, Uthoroc is likely planning to promote Strider to Aragorn in the one remaining location where he still can.*



Shadows Gather allows one Shadow army to move up to three regions to join another Shadow force, and Goodgulf uses it to move a regular, an elite, the Witch-King and two Nazgûl from Druadan Forest to Lamedon, swelling the 6/2/0 S&E army there to a ten unit maximum.



Strider announces he is the Heir of Isildur! Uthoroc adds Aragorn's die to his Action Dice pool for next turn. *With a 7/3/4 army at his doorstep, Uthoroc is taking a risk by promoting Strider: he only gains one additional point of leadership, an extra action for maybe just one turn, but paints an even bigger target on Dol Amroth. Crushing it will give Goodgulf 2 more VPs and cap Uthoroc at five action dice.*

6) Victory Check: With just 3 VPs, the Shadow is still far from the necessary 10 for a military victory.

TURN 7: CARNAGE AT DOL AMROTH

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his five used Action dice plus a sixth for Aragorn and draws **Sméagol Helps Nice Master** and **Fear! Fire! Foes!**; he is one over the hand limit and chooses to discard the **Grimbeorn** muster event card. Goodgulf recovers his nine Action dice. He draws **Dreadful Spells** and **Many Kings to the Service of Mordor**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Legolas is the Guide. The Fellowship **declares** in Dead Marshes to avoid the Shadow forces in Osgiliath and resets the progress marker to zero.

3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf allocates one Eye, required because the Fellowship moved last turn.

4) Action Roll:



One Eye is added to the one already allocated to the Hunt Box.

5) Action Resolution





Uthoroc recruits a Gondor elite in Dol Amroth. The army is too large to retreat into siege without




WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY


sending a unit back to reinforcements, so Uthoroc may be contemplating a **field battle** first.


 The Nazgûl scramble: Parth Celebrant's lone Nazgûl flies to the Fellowship's last known position in Dead Marshes, while the two in North Rhun and the one in Osgiliath join the Witch-King's army in Lamedon.

 Uthoroc recruits a single regular in Dol Amroth. *There are no Gondor elites left, no other Free Peoples nations at war, and no other unconquered Settlements where he can recruit a second regular or leader.*


 The Witch-King attacks Dol Amroth! Aragorn leads his forces into a field battle (both sides will score hits on 5 or better). Each side chooses a Combat Card, and Goodgulf draws **Cruel Weather** for the Witch-King's ability.


- The Shadow combat card is **Dread and Despair**; Goodgulf forfeits four points of Nazgûl Leadership, reducing the combat strength of Aragorn's army from five to one. The Free Peoples card is **Advantageous Position**, subtracting one from each combat die in the Shadow's combat roll.
- Goodgulf rolls five combat dice and will have up to three re-rolls (7 leadership minus 4 forfeited for his combat card). He scores one hit in his combat roll (a 6) and two more in the leader re-roll (a 6 and a 5). Uthoroc's one combat die misses but the leader re-roll connects with a 5, dealing one hit back.
- Goodgulf continues the attack, so Uthoroc retreats his remaining 3/2/5 force into the Stronghold and the Witch-King's 6/3/7 army lays siege.

 The Fellowship moves to step one on the Fellowship track. Goodgulf rolls 6 and 1 for one success and re-roll for the Nazgûl fails to produce a second success. A 1-reveal tile is drawn. Uthoroc discards **Axe and Bow from** the table to reduce the Hunt damage and **reveals** the Fellowship in North Ithilien, resetting the Fellowship track to 0.

 Goodgulf plays **Dreadful Spells** against the garrison in Dol Amroth and, though the Witch-King and five Nazgûl are present, a maximum of five dice may be rolled. 4 5 6 2 6 yields three hits. Uthoroc

eliminates one elite and reduces the other to a regular, bringing Aragorn's army to 4/0/5.

 The Fellowship hides. Since Strider is no longer the guide, the die used must be Character or Will of the West result.

 The siege of Dol Amroth continues, with **Great Host** played against **Shield-Wall** for combat cards. The Witch-King draws **Threats and Promises** for his first-round Sorcerer ability.

- Goodgulf rolls 1 3 6 2 6 for two hits; none of the three missed dice hit on the re-roll. Uthoroc rolls 6 3 6 1 6 for three hits and misses both re-rolls (he rolled five dice because both Boromir and Aragorn have the Captain of the West ability that increases combat strength by one).
- Shield-wall reduces Uthoroc's casualties by one, but Goodgulf eliminates an elite and a regular to ensure he has double the defender's number of units to activate Great Host.

Goodgulf reduces an elite to prolong siege battle by another round, leaving him with 6/1/7 facing Aragorn, Boromir, Pippin, a leader and two regulars. However, with two Captains of the West in the mix, Uthoroc will still roll four combat dice.

- Goodgulf and Uthoroc select combat cards, playing another **Great Host** and **Heroic Death**.
- Goodgulf's combat roll misses but the leader re-roll produces two 6s. Uthoroc scores one hit in the combat roll and two of his three re-rolls also hit.
- Boromir dies heroically, absorbing the two hits dealt by the Shadow's attack, while Goodgulf loses three regulars. His 3/1/7 force still has double the number of army units as the defenders, so Uthoroc loses one of his two regulars to Great Host.

Figuring four regulars to one will do the job, Goodgulf reduces his last elite and continues the siege battle for a third round.

- Combat cards are **Words of Power** against another **Heroic Death** (losing Uthoroc a very nice event for the Fellowship, **There Is Another Way**). Goodgulf cancels Aragorn's abilities, negating both his leadership and more significantly the combat strength he adds.

WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY

- Goodgulf rolls one hit on four combat dice, and misses all three re-rolls. Uthoroc's single die misses both times.
- Pippin dies heroically, preventing the Stronghold's fall. Without more elites to reduce, the Witch-King must cease the attack for now.



The Fellowship moves to step 1. Goodgulf needs 5s or better but both Hunt dice miss. The only thing that will prevent the Fellowship from **declaring** in Mordor next turn is if Goodgulf plays **Cruel Weather**.



Goodgulf draws a Character Event card, **The Black Captain Commands**.



Uthoroc decides not to chance it, and moves the Fellowship an extra step to eliminate the threat of Cruel Weather. Goodgulf now needs 4s or better but misses again. *While the extra move risked being revealed in Minas Morgul, and costing an additional action next turn to hide in Mordor, on balance that was preferable to being shut out of Mordor for yet another turn.*



Goodgulf renews the attack on Dol Amroth with his 4/0/7 army against the lone defending regular, a leader, and Aragorn.

- Goodgulf plays **Cruel As Death**, the combat card half of Cruel Weather (the event is now useless). His combat roll now hits on 5s or better. Uthoroc plays no combat card.
- The Shadow's combat and leader re-rolls all miss! Uthoroc's two combat dice both hit! The Witch-King's army is down to just two regulars.

(Uthoroc is now out of actions.)



Using a dark Elven ring, Goodgulf changes the muster die to an attack die (Character or Army) and makes one more go for Dol Amroth. *If he kills Aragorn now, Uthoroc will have one less action die for the crucial endgame in Mordor. Will the risk be worth it? Another lucky roll by Uthoroc could destroy the Witch-King and his army!*



- Goodgulf plays **Foul Stench**, denying the defenders a leader re-roll and draws **Flocks of Crebain**. Uthoroc plays no combat card.
- The Shadow dice produce no 6s, but one of Uthoroc's combat dice hits. The Witch-King is down to a single regular.

TURN 8: NO TURNING BACK

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his six used Action dice and draws **Mithril Coat and Sting** and **Book of Mazarbul**.

Goodgulf recovers his nine Action dice and draws **The Breaking of the Fellowship** and **Shadows on the Misty Mountains**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Legolas guides Frodo and Sam into the Black Land. The Fellowship figure moves to the beginning of the Mordor track. The one previously drawn Eye tile and the special Hunt tiles for **Elven Cloaks** and **Give It To Uss!** are now added to the Hunt Pool.

3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf allocates one Eye, required because the Fellowship moved last turn. He cannot allot additional ones because there is only one Companion in the Fellowship.

4) Action Roll:



No additional Eyes are added to the Hunt Box.

5) Action Resolution



Aragorn seizes the chance to eliminate the Witch-King and sorties from Dol Amroth, two combat dice against one. *Success will slow the Shadow militarily.*


- For a **sortie**, both sides need to roll 5s or better. Uthoroc chooses **Advantageous Position**, raising the number Goodgulf needs on his combat roll to 6. Goodgulf plays **They Are Terrible**, lowering the number his leader re-roll needs to 4. Goodgulf also draws **The Ring Is Mine!** for the Witch-King's Sorcerer ability.
- Uthoroc rolls 1 6 and hits! Goodgulf rolls a 5 (miss) and then a 2 (also a miss). The Sauron regular, five Nazgûl, and the Witch-King are eliminated. *While the others return to reinforcements, the Minion is lost for the rest of the game.*
- Aragorn and his small army move from the Dol Amroth Stronghold box back onto the map board at Dol Amroth.





Now that the Fellowship is on the Mordor track, Goodgulf can muster a third Minion, the Mouth of Sauron. He can place him in any unconquered Sauron Stronghold and chooses Dol Guldur.





WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY

 Uthoroc plays **Sméagol Helps Nice Master** and, because the Fellowship is now in Mordor, he adds the blue -1 Hunt tile directly to the Hunt Pool.


 Goodgulf plays **The Ring Is Mine!** and, because the Fellowship is now in Mordor, he adds the red Eye Hunt tile directly to the Hunt Pool.


 Uthoroc plays **Mithril Coat and Sting** to the table. *Used at the right time, this card can make a crucial difference in the Fellowship's progress in Mordor by potentially bypassing a damaging Eye tile or the stop effect of a red Hunt tile.*

 Goodgulf draws a Character Event card, in the hope it may be another special Hunt tile or a card that corrupts the Fellowship. It is **On, On They Went**, the red 3 tile.

 The Fellowship takes its first step in Mordor. Goodgulf draws a 2-reveal. *Drawing Hunt tiles is now automatic, there is no Hunt roll in Mordor.*


- Uthoroc opts to take the Corruption, moving the counter from 3 to 5 and flipping the Fellowship progress counter to revealed. *Although sacrificing Legolas could have shielded the Ringbearers from any Corruption, **Worn With Sorrow and Toil** would allow Goodgulf to discard either **Mithril Coat and Sting** or a Character Event card from Uthoroc's hand. He currently holds the valuable healing card **Bilbo's Song**.*


 Goodgulf plays **On, On They Went** and adds the red 3 Hunt tile directly to the Hunt Pool. *Goodgulf had two cards in his hand to play on a revealed Fellowship, but chose not to play either. The Breaking of the Fellowship risked drawing a useless Eye or a zero tile, but Morgul Wound would have been an automatic point of Corruption.*

 Uthoroc hides the Fellowship.


 **Shadows on the Misty Mountains** recruits two elites and a Nazgûl in Moria.


(Uthoroc passes.)

 Goodgulf musters a Sauron elite in Moria. (Uthoroc passes again.)

 The army in East Rhun attacks Iron Hills. *(Because the 8/1/0 S&E army has no leaders, attacking with it requires an Army action die result.)* The attack moves the Dwarves one step on the political track.

- Both players decline to use combat cards. The Shadow's five combat dice score two hits, more than enough to eliminate the lone Dwarf regular, who in turn scores a hit.
- The S&E army, now 7/1/0, advances into the empty Dwarven Town, triggering another advance for the Dwarves on the political track, to one step away from At War.

 Uthoroc plays **Bilbo's Song**, healing one Corruption. *It would have been ideal to play this for two points of healing once Gollum was the guide, but losing Legolas risked losing the card.*

 Two army moves: the 2/2/0 army in North Rhun to Vale of the Carnen and the 1/3/1 army in Moria to Dimrill Dale.

TURN 9: The Shadow Regroups

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his six used Action dice and draws **Ents Awake: Entmoot** and **A Power Too Great**. Goodgulf recovers his nine Action dice (one less for losing the Witch-King but one more for the Mouth of Sauron) and draws **Lure of the Ring** and **The Shadow Is Moving**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Legolas still guides.


3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf allocates one Eye.

4) Action Roll:




Two Eyes are added to the Hunt Box, totaling three.

5) Action Resolution

 The Fellowship moves to the second step in Mordor, and the tile draw is a 3. Uthoroc opts to sacrifice the Guide for 2 points, and Gollum immediately becomes the guide, revealing the Fellowship to negate the last point of Corruption.

- Goodgulf uses **Worn With Sorrow and Toil** to discard **Mithril Coat and Sting** from the table. *Although he could not know what Character card Uthoroc had just drawn, eliminating the one on the table was a safe bet.*

 Goodgulf plays **The Breaking of the Fellowship** to push the Corruption counter one more point to 5. *When Gollum is the Guide, no tile is drawn, so there was no risk of depleting the Hunt Pool by one Eye tile for no effect.*

WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY



Uthoroc hides the Fellowship.



The Shadow Is Moving gives Goodgulf four army moves:

- 0/2/0 split from Vale of the Carnen to join the 7/1/0 in Iron Hills.
- 5/1/0 from Parth Celebrant joins the 1/3/1 in Dimrill Dale.
- 3/0/0 from Umbar to West Harondor.
- 2/0/0 from South Dunland to Gap of Rohan.



Uthoroc draws from the Character Event deck, and gets **Phial of Galadriel**.



Goodgulf attacks Erebor from Iron Hills. The garrison retreats into siege. The attack pushes the Dwarves one more step on the political track to At War.



Uthoroc advances the Elves one step on the political track, placing them two steps from At War.



Goodgulf uses the Voice of Saruman to upgrade two regulars in Orthanc to elites.



Uthoroc advances Rohan on the political track to one step away from At War.



Goodgulf draws an event card from his strategy deck and gets **Pits of Mordor**.



Uthoroc plays **Phial of Galadriel** and adds the -2 blue Hunt tile to the Hunt Pool.



Goodgulf uses the Mouth of Sauron's special ability to use a Muster result as an Army result to initiate a siege battle at Erebor.

- Goodgulf selects **Desperate Battle** as his combat card, adding one to all die results on both sides of the battle for this round. Uthoroc foregoes a combat card.
- Three out of five of Goodgulf's combat dice hit. Uthoroc's four combat dice produce three hits, and the leader re-roll delivers a fourth.
- Uthoroc reduces his three Dwarven elites to regulars. Goodgulf eliminates four S&E regulars and chooses not to reduce an elite to extend the battle.

6) Victory Check: The Shadow holds only 3 VPs but is besieging Erebor and threatening Lorien and Rohan. The Ringbearers, at 5 Corruption, need to move three more times without while taking less than 7 points of Corruption.

TURN 10: FRODO WEAKENS

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his six used Action dice and draws **Elven Rope** and **The Last Battle**. Goodgulf recovers his nine Action dice and draws **Orc Patrol** and **Olog-hai**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Gollum is the Guide.

3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf allocates one Eye.

4) Action Roll:



No Eyes are added to the Hunt Box.

5) Action Resolution



Uthoroc decides to forge ahead with the Fellowship. Goodgulf draws a 2. Gollum reveals the Fellowship to reduce damage by one. Corruption rises one point to 6. Two more successful moves will destroy the Ring.



Goodgulf plays **Lure of the Ring**, scoring a point Uthoroc could have avoided by remaining hidden. Corruption is at 7.



Uthoroc hides the Fellowship.



Goodgulf draws from the Character event deck and gets **The Ringwraiths Are Abroad**.

(Uthoroc passes.)



Two more Nazgûl muster, in Dol Guldur and Moria.

(Uthoroc passes again.)




Goodgulf plays **The Ringwraiths Are Abroad**, moving all four Nazgûl. All fly to Erebor and, per the card's second step, he can initiate a siege battle.


- Goodgulf plays no combat card, but Uthoroc plays **Daylight**, limiting the Shadow to three combat dice.
- The Dwarves take no hits, but deal one to the attackers.


After losing a regular and reducing an elite, Goodgulf extends the siege battle. Neither player uses a combat card, likely saving the cards they have to affect the fate of the Ring.

- The Shadow scores one hit, the Dwarves another three hits, leaving the Shadow with a 4/0/4 force facing the Dwarves 3/0/2. There are no more Shadow elites to extend the siege.


WAR OF THE RING (2E) ~ ANNOTATED EXAMPLE OF PLAY


 Uthoroc plays **Elven Rope** and adds the other blue 0 Hunt tile to the Hunt Pool.


 Goodgulf plays **Orc Patrol**, with a better than even chance of either corrupting the Ringbearers or discarding a blue Hunt tile. Instead, he draws the red Eye tile, and because the tile bears an Eye, there is no effect.

 Uthoroc advances Rohan to war on the political track.

 Goodgulf plays **Olog-hai** to reinforce the S&E army at Erebor with a Sauron elite.

 Uthoroc brings the 1/2/1 force in Edoras to Westemnet and merges it with a regular and a leader from the Fords of Isen.

 Goodgulf moves two regulars from Gap of Rohan to Orthanc and two regulars from Vale of the Carnen to Iron Hills.

 Uthoroc uses his last Elven ring to move the Fellowship to one step from the Cracks of Doom. Goodgulf draws a 3 tile.

- Uthoroc uses Gollum's ability to reduce damage to two by revealing the Fellowship. Corruption rises from 7 to 9.

 Goodgulf inflicts a **Morgul Wound** on the revealed Fellowship, moving Corruption to 10!

6) Victory Check: Shadow at 3 VPs. *With little progress on the military front, and the Fellowship one step from the Cracks of Doom, it is unlikely Goodgulf will have time to conquer 7 more points before the game is decided by the Quest of the Ring. With Corruption at 10, it will be a close result. It is critical that Goodgulf draw a Character Event that can corrupt the Ringbearers, but will he have the tempo to play it?*

TURN 11: THE HINGE OF FATE

1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards:

Uthoroc recovers his six used Action dice and draws **Deadmen of Dunharrow** and **Wisdom of Elrond**.

Goodgulf recovers nine Action dice and draws **The Palantir of Orthanc** and **Half-orcs and Goblin-men**.

2) Fellowship Phase: Gollum is the Guide.


3) Hunt Allocation: Goodgulf allocates one Eye.


4) Action Roll:





One badly needed Eye is added to the Hunt Box.

5) Action Resolution

 Uthoroc hides the Fellowship.


 Goodgulf uses the last Elven ring to change an action die to an Event die result and draw a Character event card: **Candles of Corpses**.

 Uthoroc calculates that, having hidden the Fellowship, he has already satisfied the requirement of moving or hiding once per turn in Mordor to avoid a penalty of one Corruption point. He recruits an elite in Westemnet, playing for time.

 Goodgulf plays **Candles of Corpses**, and needs to roll 6s rather than 4s because Gollum is the Guide.

- He rolls 6 2 3, pushing Corruption up to 11! *One more 6 and Goodgulf could have won the game.*

Uthoroc has run out of options, out of healing cards, and sees no point in drawing things out. The Hunt pool is mixed: 7 of the 13 tiles will deliver a Shadow corruption victory, 6 will leave Frodo unharmed and unmake Sauron's Ring.

 Uthoroc moves the Fellowship and draws the Elven Rope tile for 0 points. The Ring is unmade and Sauron destroyed.

A few important notes on Victory Conditions:

- Ring victories for either side end the game immediately, while military victories are determined at the end of the turn during the victory check phase.
- Shadow victory conditions supersede Free Peoples victory conditions, so even one more point of corruption on the final move would have handed the game to Goodgulf.
- The Fellowship can still win if revealed on the final step of the Mordor track, provided Corruption is at 11 or below. Had the tile draw gone differently here, Gollum could have revealed to negate the damage from a standard 1 tile, but the standard 2 tile would have done it for the Shadow.

- Rafamir