

Middle-Earth World Championship Report

The format of the competition was Swiss-style. Each person played four rounds; the four top finishers advanced to the final round on Sunday. At the end of three rounds of competition, Omar Solano of Spain and the Council of Rivendell had to defeat his last opponent to continue. Seven of the twelve champions still had a chance to advance. Omar finished with a 3-1 victory and 17 points; his only loss against Johan Berrum of Sweden and the Council of Grey Havens. When asked after the first day if he was out to avenge his country's loss at the European

finals, Omar responded with an enthusiastic, "Yes!"

At dinner Saturday night, all of the champions received a memento for their accomplishments thus far: a sterling silver Wizard's Ring from the Middle-earth: The Wizards card set. The four finalists were given a complete set of cards from Middle-earth: The Wizards, Middle-earth: The Dragons and Middle-earth: Dark Minions sets.

The final round of the competition was played on Sunday. Each player played every other player once in this round-robin format. Being in the finals was nothing new to two of the four finalists.

Both Mario Pei-Lun of Spain and the Council of Rivendell and Johan Berrum of Sweden and the Council of Grey Havens had been in the finals of the European Championship held in Turnhout, Belgium, in November 1996. That competition ended with Johan of the Grey Havens defeating Mario of Rivendell.

That tournament was not forgotten by Johan and Mario. In a rematch of that final game Mario

met Johan once again, with the same results. Spain ultimately prevailed, however, as Mario's teammate, Omar Solano, won the 1996 MECCG World Invitational Championship.

Omar's resource strategy was built around the idea of multiple companies going to many sites quickly, to gather the marshalling points needed to win. He never got to fully test his strategy. Omar won his first two games against John Barnas of the USA and the Council of Lorien and Johan Berrum by killing their wizards. His game against John was very tight until Omar killed John's wizard, Alatar, using Stirring Bones while The Moon is Dead was in play.

Omar's next game versus Johan was not so close. Using three Assassins, two them against Johan's Wizard, Radagast, Omar killed off most of Johan's characters and then Radagast himself. Proving that "he who lives by the sword dies by the sword," Omar lost to Mario when his own Wizard was killed. Omar still managed to get the one point necessary to assure his world championship status. When asked what the highlight of the tournament was, Omar replied, "Defeating Johan in the finals!"

To keep the other champions occupied during the final round on Sunday, Iron Crown Enterprises sponsored a sealed deck tournament for those who did not advance. Most players were initially more interested in following the finals. However, the competitive drive that initially brought them to the world championship soon had them competing once again.

Even though the competition was fierce, the atmosphere was extremely congenial. In fact, many of the champions chummed around Oxford together when not competing. One of the highlights of the

sight-seeing was visiting *The Eagle and the Child*, a favorite hang-out of Tolkien's while living in Oxford and writing *The Lord of the Rings*.

Omar Solano's Winning Deck

Starting Characters with Minor Items

Annalena
Gloin with Cram
Glorfindel II with Cram
Kili

Wizard

2x Gandalf

Additional Characters

Alatar
Bard Bowman
Gimli
Haldalam
Legolas
Thorin

Resources

3x Concealment

3x Dark Quarrels

Easterlings

2x Escape

2x Gates of Morning

Gollum

Gwaihir

2x Iron Hill Dwarves

Marvels Told

Men of Dorwinion

The Mithril Coat

3x Muster

Noble Hound

Orcrist

Quickbeam

Risky Blow

Scroll of Isildur

3x Stealth

Wood-elves

Wormsbane

Hazards

Adunaphel

3x Assassins

3x Barrow-wights

3x Cave Worm

3x Chill Dousers

3x The Moon is Dead

Mouth of Sauron

3x Rain-drake

2x River

3x Slayer

3x Stirring Bones

2x Twilight

Uvatha the Horseman

Sideboard

2x A Friend or Three

2x Balance Between Powers

Call of Home

Earcaraxe Ahunt

Ents of Fangorn

Gates of Morning

Marvels Told

Muster Disperses

My Precious

2x Nameless Thing

Narsil

Noble Hound

Twilight

2x The Way is Shut

2x The Will of the Ring

Primary Sites

Moria

Mount Gram

The Lonely Mountain

Easterling Camp

Shrei-Kain

Thranduil's Halls

Iron Hill Dwarf-hold

Eagle's Eyrie

Wellinghall

Goblin-gate

Woodmen-town

Final Standings

Omar Solano, 6 pts. vs. John Barnas, 6 pts. vs. Johan Berrum, 1 pt. vs. Mario Pei-Lun, 13 pts. total
John Barnas, 0 pts. vs. Omar Solano, 6 pts. vs. Mario Pei-Lun, 6 pts. vs. Johan Berrum, 12 pts. total
Johan Berrum, 6 pts. vs. Mario Pei-Lun, 0 pts. vs. Omar Solano, 0 pts. vs. John Barnas, 6 pts. total
Mario Pei-Lun, 0 pts. vs. Johan Berrum, 0 pts. vs. John Barnas, 5 pts. vs. Omar Solano, 5 pts. total



Mike & Coleman with the US Champs



Mike Reynolds & World Champion Omar Solano



Lior, Coleman, Charletop (ICE), Omar Solano (Spain), Mike Reynolds (ICE), John Berrum (Sweden)

Initial Standings

Contestant	Hometown	Age	Record	Pts.
Mario Pei-Lun	Bajo, Spain	19	4-0	20
Omar Solano	Madrid, Spain	16	3-1	17
Johan Berrum	Alingas, Sweden	19	3-1	17
John Barnas	Amherst, New York	27	3-1	16
Clifford J. Yahnke	Plainfield, Illinois	31	2-2	14
Mathias Thornkuist	Gothenburg, Sweden	25	2-2	12
Wolfgang Zeller Mayer	Vienna, Austria	25	2-2	12
Arjan Schipstra	Arnhem, Netherlands	25	2-2	10
Wanja Hargens	Koustan, Germany	27	1-3	9
Mike Malyon	London, England	16	1-3	9
Christophe Poirson	Nancy, France	27	1-3	6
Leonard Philippe	Richardmeil, France	33	0-4	2