

# The Red Book of Westmarch: The Official Council of Elrond Newsletter

Issue 2  
November 2006

For the *Middle-earth  
Collectible Card  
Game* Community



## CONTENTS OF THE RED BOOK

- 1-2 | Fellowship
- 1-2 | Play of the Month
- 3-8 | Conduct&Hobbitship
- 9-10 | Test of Form
- 11 | Test of Lore
- 12-13 | The Playing Field
- 14-16 | Cards of M-Earth
- 17-19 | Wizard's Voice
- 20 | The Horn of Anor
- 21 | Riddling Talk
- 21 | Letters to the Editor
- 22 | Tournament Calendar



## THE FELLOWSHIP: COMMENTS FROM THE COE The Judge Certification Program by Mark Alfano, Chair CoE

This month, I'd like to take a little time to discuss the Judge Certification Program (JCP). Last year, CoE launched this program, which had two goals: "(1) to improve community-wide rules knowledge by creating helpful tutorials on the game and (2) to establish a hierarchy of rules wizards who can act as judges during tournaments." We hope some day to combine all the extant rules and rulings into one master document: the Universal Rulesbook. Although there was a flood of applicants during the initial sign-up, progress has been more of the slow-and-steady variety. Dave Barton and Kris Van Beurden attained level 1 judge-ship within a year of the charter of the program, then there

was a slight lull.

This month, however, marks the return of the JCP, with fully five people being certified as Level 1 Judges: Brian Min, Joe Bisz, Jonathan Yost, Manuel Cabezali, and Kuba Krchak! In this article, I hope to highlight their work and thank them for their dedication.

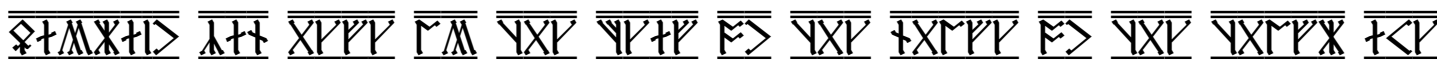
Joe Bisz is the author of the Play and Examples File, available here. He has put in literally years of work compiling nuanced examples of legal and illegal play. Unlike the CRF, Joe's document not only tells you in general what you can do, but also illustrates how best to do it. The file

## PLAY OF THE MONTH

An Alternative Ending to The Two Towers – Procrastination at Entmoot!  
by Jamie Pollock

I'd been trying for several games to get my Ent-raising Fallen Radagast deck more fluid and tuned without much success. The general idea is to rouse some Ents using a small company and Friend of Secret Things, acquire a regiment of crows and go pound on some hapless heroes in the neighbourhood. So my latest incarnation was directed against b\_took (Ben Sorenson) late one night on GCCG.

It just so happened that Ben opted for Fallen Saruman, his most beloved avatar. So there's me thinking this setting is quite thematic – we have Saruman, fallen from his grand mission to save Middle-earth and instead looking to further his own desires for power, and Radagast, distracted from his mission by the pleasures of nature and using it to further his own dark agenda. So, the basic plan was to raise the Ents and pay the "Sorryman" and his entourage of ne'er-







## Counter-argument to Jon Yost's “Sportsmanship and Take-backs”

By Brian “Bitter Sauron” Min

Let's consider another example. Player A places a card on-guard and then says wait I put the wrong card on guard and replaces it with a different card. Player B has Withdrawn to

I believe in Nationals and Worlds players should not allow take-backs and should play by the rule set defined. To allow take-backs doesn't help a player improve his skills and takes away from the big tournaments.







## Rebuttal to Brian Min

By Jonathan “the Brown” Yost

# Rebuttal to Brian and Jon

## By Jamie Pollock



The concept of sportsmanship is often a personal one that varies from person to person. The exercise of examining such leniencies as take-backs is not one which is meant to define a style of play or an accepted tournament rule-set, but one to make everyone think critically about what sportsmanship is and how it relates to a game based on a work of literature so rooted in the concept of goodness and honor defeating evil and selfishness. It's an idea too complex and personal to delve into the examples of exactly when, why, and against who such sportsmanship should or shouldn't be shown. It's too situational to say that that it's right or wrong in the final move of the final game that would mean winning or losing a national championship or in the first round of a local tournament against a new player that is still trying hard to remember everything that goes into a game this complex. There are far too many situations, circumstances, and variation of personal views to ever clearly define when it's prudent to show such leniency. For some, it may be never and that's their right. For others, they may be willing to give up a national championship to show such leniency and that's their right too. In the end, the hopes of these discussions are to make people think of how they handle themselves in those many situations and what they really feel is right or wrong. There is no right or wrong answer, but hopefully everyone will reach a conclusion which is honorable and deserving of the work of art this game is based on.

4

Heh, both sides raise good points actually.

I definitely agree that the idea of sportsmanship in a card game can be situational. The one and only tournament I played in was at an a convention in Edinburgh and it was very laid back, but then there were only 4 players. A couple weren't experienced and weren't familiar with minion and so rather than punishing them I helped them out during their turns, reminding them on when they could and couldn't do things, like still being able to try to remove corruption cards when wounded, etc. Everyone still wanted to do well and win the prizes, and that's a good thing because you need a competitive edge to any game that's not Patience!

Ultimately though, it's a game and therefore should be an enjoyable experience for all. If this facet should ever be lost, whether it's in a tournament or casual play, then it can be the game itself that loses out in the long term, as you may find yourself alienating players, particularly if they're new or inexperienced.

I believe a sensible gamer should therefore gauge the nature and experience of their opposition, possibly taking into account the stakes involved, before deciding one way or another. Certainly, in this respect one size certainly doesn't fit all. Like Brian, I also believe there's an element of pride to be had in the bigger situations, whereby dealing with your mistakes should be part of the process. To date, I've only ever played one game on GCCG when I thought the player I was playing against was taking the piss...

If you're the better and more experienced player, then perhaps giving some slack and lending some advice is more appropriate. If you're both on a par, then perhaps setting a desirable example is the best way; just like perhaps Mark did in the Worlds final. He leaves with his head high and set a good example to the others around him. Who knows, perhaps in the years to come Mark might end up being the beneficiary?

4





## CONDUCT AND hOBBITShIP

What is Cheeze?

By Mark Alfano

This is the first in what we at CoE hope will be a series of articles on cheeze in ME:CCG. I believe that my own definition is quite narrow in scope, and so I will explain it here and await replies (either as letters to the editor or as full-fledged articles).

I divide cheeze into two types: benign and malignant. This distinction is one of scale. Whereas benign cheeze only rises to the level of minor cheezy plays within an overarching non-cheezy deck, malignant cheeze constitutes the heart of its deck, and can be game-killing. Before I go any further with this idea, however, I should give my definition.

### Necessary and Sufficient Conditions

A certain use of cards is cheezy if, and only if, it

- (1) is non-thematic,
- (2) is non-counterable,
- (3) is not the intended use of card(s),
- (4) probably would have been errata'd if ICE were still around, and
- (5) can be used in a very powerful deck.

### Examples

To my mind, the play of Pallando and Cirdan squatting at the Grey Havens and scoring the Elves of Lindon, while perhaps lame, is far from cheezy. It is thematic: that's why they have that home site. It is counterable: Stormcrow / Doors of Night. It is the intended use of the cards. It was possible during ICE's tenure, and they never attempted to errata it in any way. The only criterion it actually meets is (5), since it obviously can be used in a very powerful deck. If you like, we could say the P/C/E is only 20% cheezy.

At the opposite extreme is the Balrog's ability to play 3-mind characters directly from his sideboard with We Have Come to Kill. I would call this the cheeziest play in the game. It is not thematic, since in most cases the character then proceeds to play a War-Wolf (he should fight in cvcc). It is not really counterable, since the only counter is to run 3x Shut Yer Mouth, which against almost any other deck type is quite weak. It is not the intended use of the 3-mind rule, since (at least in my opinion) that rule was meant to give the balrog player 2 hill trolls his first turn before leaving Moria or the Under-Gates. I expect that ICE would therefore have issued some kind of erratum against it. And the

results of Worlds 2006, at which 3 of 4 finalists used this trick, is strong evidence that it can be used in very powerful decks. WHCTK from the sideboard is 100% cheezy.

There are, of course, many plays in-between these two extremes. Some players seem to consider all hazard-limit reduction abilities as cheezy. I would beg to differ. Such play is always thematic. On the hero side, it is easily counterable with a Doors of Night Strategy, or even the well-timed play of Twilight. On the minion side, corruption cards can be devastating to magic users. The cards clearly have No Better/Other Use, so they fail to activate criterion (3). ICE had plenty of time to errata them, and didn't. But of course they can be used in very powerful decks. Again, only 20% cheezy at most.

### Cheeze and the UEPs

You can see a number of attempts to eliminate cheeze through the Unofficial Errata Proposals here. I disagree with most of these, because I see them limiting strong deck types rather than adding to their ranks.

I cannot see how River stands in need of being nerfed, as the ability to cancel all rivers with a single ranger would do. River is thematic, counterable, never errata'd by ICE even though it was in the Wizards set, clearly the intended use of the card, and not necessary for a powerful deck. In my view, it is at most 20% cheezy.

Similarly, I don't see any need to change Sneakin'. Although there is no counter to the ability to add characters to a company after Sneakin' has been played, the trick is so hard to use that it doesn't really activate criterion (5). Sneakin' is perhaps 60% cheezy.

Finally, I don't think the Elf-Lord needs a nerf. There are a huge number of counters to him as he already exists. The lack of Doors of Night is quite thematic (he's bold after all - doesn't need to the encouragement of GoM, only the lack of discouragement from DoN). I doubt ICE would have issued an errata against him, especially with so many players clamoring against the omnipotence of minion decks. He's being used for his intended purpose in such a deck as well. Perhaps the Elf-chump is 20% cheezy, but that's a very low level to motivate nerfing.

## Cheeze and Being a Nice Guy

I would never play the Carambor Infinite-Move Deck against someone who wasn't in a joking mood (or at World Finals ). It's between 80% and 100% cheezy. I've heard, however, numerous complaints about the use of 20% to 60% cheezy tricks. In a tournament setting, I would always respond to such grumbling with a "Tough luck, buddy." During a tournament one is not expected to be a nice guy. In casual play, by contrast, or when teaching someone the ropes, it's generally advisable to avoid even the faintest scent of cheezy plays. In such a context, I would recommend playing a hero deck that moves every turn and does not attempt to cancel all hazards played on it. I would also advise against influence attempts and cvcc against your opponent. To the poor neophyte, these high-octane resource-as-hazard plays can be devastating and depressing. Perhaps the best way to go is simply to play a challenge deck.

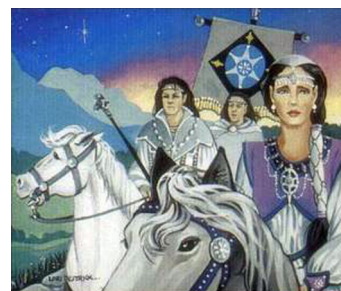
In other words, benign cheeze (20-60%) only needs to be skipped against newby opponents. Malignant cheeze should be saved for tournaments. It's really quite Aristotelean: the right play, at the right time, for the right purpose, and the right audience....

¶



## Counter-argument to Mark Alfano

By Jamie Pollock



COUNTER

I was asked if I would provide a direct reply to Mark's "What is Cheeze?" article since because I am a big proponent of UEPs it was thought I would have an opposing view. Having read over Mark's article I'm not sure my view on Cheeze is necessarily that opposing, but what it may be instead is just a little less narrow in scope. Anyway, I thought I'd write this article off-the-cuff and see where I end up.

To begin with, I think each player out there probably has slightly differing views of what constitutes Cheeze and therefore there probably isn't just one definition. Personally, I believe Cheeze is a style of play to which each player has a varying tendency towards. I'd argue that we could split the Cheeze aspect of someone's play into resource Cheeze and hazard Cheeze, with some having a tendency towards the former, some the latter, and some ultimately towards both.

So, what makes a hazard / resource card or strategy Cheezy? For hazards I think it's mainly due to certain non-unique cards that are easy to play and yet extremely powerful – these I'll call the "no-brainer" type. Enter the staple no-brainers like River, Beorning Skin-Changers (vs. hero only) and Unabated in Malice. You can put these into any hazard deck without much thought and know they'll cause most opponents hassle. You don't need a combo, although combos can be quite devastating with these cards (e.g. Tidings of Bold Spies). You can play them readily (River and Skin-changers can be dumped even if they're not going to do damage) and therefore they don't clog the hand, which is major plus. The reason I haven't included uniques is because of just that – they're unique and therefore potentially unreliable.

For resources, cards that exploit loopholes (e.g. Sneakin' and Paths of the Dead) or strategies that are known for giving high reward for little danger are generally more likely to be regarded as Cheezier than others. For example, the Balrog 3-mind rule and squatter decks like Pallando, Cirdan and Elves of Lindon, Fallen Radagast at Rhosgobel, Balrog with Orcs of Moria and Stinker and the minion Aiglos/Dragon-helm.

In terms of Mark's "necessary and sufficient conditions" -





In conclusion, why do I believe this other cate-

W





Karsten had played Lure of the Senses on him. I tried to remove the Lure several times, even with Glamour of Surpassing Excellance, but to no avail. At council I rolled five, and Halbarad ran like he has never run before. I still had enough points to win though, 4-2 not to break the trend.

I got second place with my deck, and I was pleased with it since there wasn't much more I could have done. Next were the sealed tournaments, but I didn't play since both had an even number of players, and I was starting to feel very tired by now. So I ran Minion sealed instead, while Martin and Wim took care of the Hero Crap sealed. I had time to watch the games, and I remember Eero having Saruman alone at Isengard, playing Burglary and getting some item. I guess even the great wizards can forget their keys on the table. By the time all games were over and we got to our hotel, it was nearly 2 am. We got some sleep, had a nice breakfast, and headed for the gaming location one more time at 10 o'clock Sunday morning.

### Sunday, bloody Sunday

Now it was time for Highlander 2-deck General Opponent and we were down to ten players. In this tournament I played a FW Pallando coastal/Eriador deck. I was allowed to have only one wizard in my deck, but with Saw Further and Deeper and Truths of Doom that wasn't a problem.

The first round I faced Teemu Drews. He was playing Hero dwarves in Eriador/north. He managed to outdraw me a bit, playing Glamdring and Tom just before I was going to play them. My deck was solid though, and I nearly had double MPs, but was forced to settle with a 5-1 win. Not a bad start.

On the second round I got to play against Kris, the winner of the main event. He had won his first game 6-0, and I don't think he was prepared for what was about to happen. He was playing Hero dwarves in the east. Thráin, Gimli and Glóin managed to get Men of Dorwinion. Meanwhile I was fighting his orcs/trolls/men succesfully and racking up points as well. Then Kris went to Lonely Mountain, as I had expected. I played Unabated and Tidings. Gimli got wounded. Mouth of Sauron and Tidings got Glóin killed. The following turn he went to Lórien, and Gimli got killed on the way there by a Cave-drake. He played Thranduil and moved with him in one company and Thráin in another. Thráin faced a Cave Worm and that was the end of him. His entire starting company had been wiped out! Gandalf popped up and went to some Dragon's Lair. I played a Rain-drake, Kris wanted to Flatter it away but I responded with Many Sorrows Befall, forcing Gandalf to fight. Sadly Gandalf did win that one, and met Balin at the site. On his last turn Kris moved Gandalf to Iron Hill Dwarf-hold, hoping to get some extra points from his Alliance of Free Peoples, but I stopped him with a River. This was my best game at Nordic



Cup, and my first 6-0 win.

In the last round I faced a Swedish player, Henrik Klippström. He had just defeated Martin's FW Pallando 5-1, so I was very interested to see what he could do against me. He played Hero with Glorfindel, Beorn and Beretar in his starting company. They moved to Mt Gundabad and Beretar played Wormsbane. I revealed an on-guard Lure of Expedience, and sure enough he rolled four, solving his GI problem. I couldn't draw anything to play for the first two turns. Meanwhile he got Gollum and went to Thranduil's Halls. I managed to keep them at bay for two turns with Adûnaphel and Mouth of Sauron, and his Gandalf got Rivered on the way to Beorn's House. Henrik's hazards didn't really affect me that much, so once I drew something to play it was a relatively easy 6-0 for me.

I won the Highlander tournament with an impressive record, giving away only one tournament point. After the tournament we went to eat and everyone seemed pleased with the event. All in all Nordic Cup was very much fun, and I'm already looking forward to organizing it next year. A big thanks to all who attended, and of course to Martin for organizing such a great event.

¶



## A Review of Manuel Cabezali's deck "The Dwarves are Making MPs!"

By Mark Alfano

Manuel Cabezali recently made a contribution to the “complete” resource strategy taxonomy with his deck “The Dwarves are Making MPs!” This is an Eriador-based hero deck that relies on shuttling a number of small but strong companies around in localized portion of the map to draw tons of cards (using A Short Rest and Radagast’s special ability) and play several easy MP-cards per turn (e.g. Tom Bombadil, Blue Mountain Dwarves, Durin’s Axe) with the help of A Chance Meeting in the wizard’s company (like other Eriador-churners).

Decks like this have become very popular recently. I played a version that uses Strider at North American Championships, and Kris van Beurden played one that exploits Pallando's hand size boost to play Gates of Morning combos. The choice amongst Manuel's, Kris's, and my versions of the deck is difficult, and largely a matter of taste, I think. In any case, each of them is very strong, and in this article I'd like to examine why.

I call decks of this sort ‘hero versions of minion decks’. The reason for this appellation is that minion decks were the first (and perhaps the best) to use character-playing ability in the site phase to (1) strengthen a company, (2) guarantee an untapped character during the site phase, and (3) gain points. They often do so by playing smaller characters under the direct influence of one of the Lieutenants, or by boosting general influence with *Bade to Rule*, *Lidless Eye*, *Sauron*, or *Great Shadow*. The *Balrog* has perfected this tactic with the play of 3-mind characters directly from the sideboard with *We Have Come to Kill*. Well, recent history shows us that hero decks can perform this trick admirably as well. A wizard with 10 direct influence is the perfect character to bring into play two 5-mind characters with *A Chance Meeting*, assuring two easy site phase actions and 4 marshalling points.

Manuel's deck, for example, can score 12 character points with ease, and still have 6 general influence to spare against Call of Home, Muster Disperses, and the influence attempts of his opponent. If the median number of character points for

a hero MP-deck is 8.5 (which I would estimate it is), Manuel can score 3 fewer non-character points than the typical opponent and still win. Fail that influence attempt against the Blue Mountain Dwarves? No problem – Gloin and Balin will make up for it!

Another virtue of Manuel's deck is its extreme speed. If he has a decent draw and is able to play Radagast and a couple of Short Rests early, he can exhaust in 4 or even 3 turns. But beware the minion manifestation of the Arkenstone which gives all dwarves +1 mind. This is the best counter to Thrain's 5 direct influence and Gloin & Balin's 3 direct influence against followers.

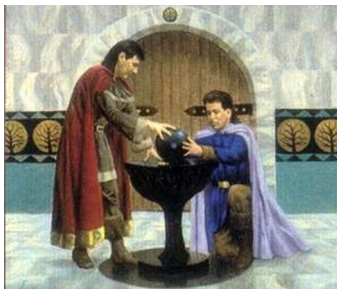


By Charles Jenkins

Hill can similarly change a site path to fizzle certain hazards. A key example would be changing a borderland to a wilderness on the way to Isengard to fizzle a Slayer. Not all considerations are combat based. Cards like A Friend or Three fit into any sealed deck as they allow bonuses to influence attempts and corruption checks. Pledge of Conduct is a great card for sealed deck play (provided the company contains a diplomat) allowing the automatic transfer of an item. Useful indeed. Withdrawn to Mordor works well in sealed deck as one can discard an onguard creature or corruption card, destroying a carefully laid trap. A Short Rest and Washed and Refreshed can both be used to great effect, allowing the draw of multiple cards or the untapping of multiple characters. Probably the least used category of resource events is Spells and that's a shame. Where else but in the limited arena of sealed deck can a Wizard come out and dominate with his innate abilities? The ability to stay untapped or to untap is the prime consideration. And Forth He Hastened and Vanishment are powerful in sealed deck and the corruption checks are manageable; but so are lesser-used cards like Wizard's Flame which lowers the prowess of all attacks by 2 for the rest of the turn. Since many players run close to the GI limit in sealed play, an untapped Wizard tapping to influence away an MP source is quite devastating to the opponent. Last but not least is A Chance Meeting. This card can allow the play of a character (which will be worth MP's) and allow the play of a marshalling point source by an otherwise tapped out company. On the minion side of things, a mode card can be just the ticket to allow the Ringwraith to move and score some points. The last category of resource are permanent events that are of dubious value but can clear the hand of cards such as Armory.

## Creatures

Ah, now the fun starts. Creatures are the backbone of sealed deck hazard play. Typically, there just won't be enough effective hazard events. Most sealed deck formats require a 25 resource/25 hazard deck containing at least 10 creatures (sometimes 12). The more good creatures, the better. Cave Drakes are obvious choices. Wargs are a great sealed deck creature, hitting borderland, single wilderness and shadowland with a not-to-be underestimated 2 strikes at 9 prowess. Ahunt dragons, if available, are also great choices. They speed game play and can slam a company stumbling into dragon land. Creatures with multiple strikes are also desirable. One must be wise in sealed deck and set up the hazards properly. Examples include play of a multiple strike weak creature to tap the weaker characters. The creature will probably be defeated for an opponent MP. Next, hit with a stronger creature to tap the remaining strong characters, possibly losing yet another MP. Then, sweep with a big gun like Giant, Cave Worm or a Troll Brother. Expect to lose some creature MPs with the ultimate goal of tapping and wounding. A one deck sealed game is over



very quickly and a wounded company is fatal to the opponent. One not need be quite so wise in Lidless Eye sealed deck. Since most creatures do not yield points to minions, throw in as many creatures as possible and hammer away!

## Hazard Events

As always, focus on maximum effect and playability. All Rivers drawn (up to three of course) should go into the hazard portion. Any corruption cards are also prime candidates. However, don't just throw limited corruption cards on the field. Hit Target-Boy with a Lure of Nature while he's carrying a Sword of Gondolin, not on turn 1 when he has nothing. Call of Home is highly playable. The final hard hitter in sealed deck is Foolish Words. Played on guard this card will make most faction attempts into a luck-sack competition.

## Gameplay

If possible restrict movement to single region types so that some of the opponent's creatures cannot be played. An example is travelling to the Ruined Signal Tower from Rivendell (wwwR) to score a major item rather than travelling to Isengard or the Glittering Caves (wwwbR). Not only can a Slayer hit the latter site path, but so can the big, bad, ugly Cave Worm (yikes!). Staying away from shadowlands and shadow/dark holds can also limit the opponent's creature play. Right off the bat, the stronger orcs and undead are nullified. The scatter and run strategy can be effective, using low hazard limits, generating card draw and allowing at least one company to score points. Just remember that the opponent will also be able to draw lots of cards, play his highly playable creatures and set up his hand for his turn. With everything else being equal, it usually makes sense to go after an in-hand faction rather than an item. Sealed decks don't have many factions, so make the first attempt as early as possible, especially before the influencer can be wounded or die (or get Foolish Words). An often-overlooked factor is knowing one's deck. Many players approach sealed deck games like every turn is a surprise, from a hazard and a resource perspective. Companies move around haphazardly and that one Lure of Nature is played early in the game on a character with no other corruption sources. Know what has already been played and what is likely to come up soon!

## Conclusion

Former World Champion Brian Wong advised me long ago that there is no substitute for big and fast (and smart). Try to adhere to that advice as much as possible. Sooner or later, the dice will come into play so try to minimize the impact of the dice. Above all, have fun! Hey, it's sealed deck, so players don't have to take responsibility for a lousy deck and can even derive some enjoyment from watching their own guys get squished.



## The Typical Meccg Collector; or, Awakening the Gollum in You

By Wolfgang Penetsdorfer

But after all I also finished this task (just a few months ago)!

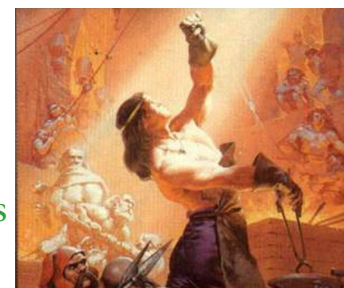
Chasing after all of these items may take a very long time. And even if you think you have got them all, the collector is never spared the feeling, that there is still something out there. So it happened to me, that an american ex-player offered me some Lidless Eye stickers. In addition he sent me

In case the Gollum in many of you has just been awakened, the author of this article is not to be blamed of course.



# The Japanese Middle-Earth Community, Japanese Cards, and Promos

by Steven Dajic



In total, there are only three sets of Middle Earth that were printed in Japanese: The Wizards, Dragons, and Dark-Minions. This is partly because of the late release in Japan and because of financial reasons. Yanoman had financial problems and filed for bankruptcy a little time after Dark Minions came out in Japan (my guess is 1999 but shortly before I.C.E. filed for bankruptcy). So how does this tie in with the promos? I would like to say because there were many people who played Middle Earth in Japan and that

Now that I am done explaining about the promos I would like to go on to explain about the sets of Middle Earth that were released in Japan. Going back to when I was in Japan in 2002/2003, I by accident stumbled upon.... not a ring but a stash of Japanese middle earth and in of all places: a department store. They were selling booster packs of the three sets: Wizards (unlimited only), Dragons and Dark minions for 100 yen per booster (That is approximately .85 USD, .67 EUR, .45 GBP and .95 CDN). I told my Japanese friends about this and they were so surprised and enthralled to hear about this one of them went to all of the company's department stores in the Greater Tokyo Area and bought out most of the middle earth he could find (Apparently, the Japanese middle earth community couldn't find Japanese middle earth for quite some time up until my discovery). Since then, it has been very difficult to find middle earth in anywhere in the Greater Tokyo Area. However, recently I

I hope I was able to shed a little light on the Japanese sets of Middle Earth and the conditions of acquiring them. Until the Japanese middle earth community becomes active and functions regularly once again there may be many turns and doublings in your pursuits. In the meanwhile I will keep you all posted!

Steven Dajic  
Dajicmagic83@hotmail.com





[illegible]

(5) There have been a number of discussions and questions about mind rings and their interaction with Rumor of the One.

Since Mind Rings are not sources of Marshalling Points (rather than being sources of 0 Marshalling Points, cf. TW Rules: Free Council), Rumor of the One only affects them insofar as it makes them worth an additional corruption point.

(6) Ben Sorensen asked “Would it be possible for you to clarify the CRF under Command Cards? Right now, as it reads, a command card causes all other command cards by the same name in play to be returned to the player’s hand.”

With pleasure. Each of the command cards (I’ll Report You, I’ll be at You Heels, and Smart and Secret) contains the following text: “Return all other command cards on target leader to your hand when this card is played.” The CRF entry by term ‘Command Cards’ says: “Command cards return other command cards of the same name to your hand.” This is a clarification of the text on each of the command cards. The question had previously arisen whether a player could stack multiple command cards of the same name on a given leader; this seemed to be a possible, if perverse, reading of the text of the command cards (in particular, of the word ‘other’). The entry in the CRF indicates that ‘other’ is to be taken in the token-sense, not the type-sense, as the perverse query had hoped. Thus, if a player puts I’ll Report You on a leader, and then attempts to play another copy of I’ll Report You on the same leader, the first copy will be returned to his hand. But if he plays the second copy on a different leader, both copies will stay in play.

(7) Two questions regarding fallen wizard decks have arisen:

(a) When is a fallen wizard player’s character considered hero, minion, or other?

(b) When is a fallen wizard player’s company considered hero, minion, covert, overt, or other?

Characters can be:

(a) for a hero player

(i) hero

(b) for a minion player

(i) minion

(c) for a fw player

(i) hero (non-orcs non-trolls)

(ii) minion (orcs including half-orcs, trolls)

Companies can be:

(a) for a hero player

(i) hero

(b) for a minion player

(i) covert minion

(ii) overt minion



(c) for a fw player

(i) covert hero (companies with nothing making them overt)

(ii) overt

(1) non-minion (due to overt-making non-orc non-troll ally, Freeze the Flesh, or Cast from the Order)

(2) minion (due to presence of an orc, a troll, or a half-orc with other characters than only half-orcs and men)

(8) The question has arisen about what happens to a company that may do nothing during its site phase (due to the effects of River, Lost in Free Domains, etc.) when it is faced with certain cards like Siege and Near to Hear a Whisper.

It was ruled previously that the company may do nothing whatsoever. This is not 100% correct. The company does not have a site phase and cannot enter the site. So the resource player may not play resources, unless in response to an attack, in which case these must be resources that affect the attack.

(9) The question has arisen whether there is such a thing as a ‘tie’ when it comes to corruption checks. In particular, the question has arisen whether a hobbit playing Cracks of Doom and Tookish Blood can roll the equivalent of his corruption point total and thereby fail to destroy the one ring.

According to the CRF Ruling by Term “Corruption”: “If an effect is in play that prevents a character from being discarded, the character is not considered to fail his corruption check if a result is achieved that would discard him.”

(10) The question has arisen as to exactly when one must discard Eagle-Mounts to counteract the site phase restriction on Fifteen Birds in Five Fir Trees.

Since it is possible not to discard Eagle-Mounts at all, such a discard is not an active condition of the play of Fifteen Birds in Five Fir Trees (FBiFFT). Therefore, by parity with reasoning with the argument for tapping a ranger to cross a River, the player has until the very beginning of the site phase to discard Eagle-Mounts.

(11) Joe Bisz asked: If I just played Sacrifice of Form on a Dragon-at-home at a Dragon’s Lair and killed the dragon during the site phase, may I: A) play King Under the

Mountain first, then two items using Legendary Hoard, and B) after the second item taps the site, play a Thor’s Map from Armory, and C) use the Map to untap the site? I know that hoard status is maintained until the end of the turn, but Thor’s Map requires “a site with a Dragon automatic-attack”, and technically the hoard ruling says nothing about the auto-attack staying around.”

-----A) Yes.

B) Yes.

C) No, for the very reason you pointed out.

(12) Joe Bisz asked: Armory says: "If you have at least three minor items under Armory, gain 1 marshalling point." If I have 3 copies of Armory on table and one of those copies has 3 minor items, do I gain 3 marshalling points? What if I have 9 minor items under one copy of Armory, and three copies of Armory on table?

-----  
You get the MP from a given token-Armory if and only if you have at least three minor items under that token. Ignore type-identity.

(13) Joe Bisz asked: Are cards that give a negative bonus, like a killed Frodo, worth 1 mp for FWs, or have their negative ignored?

-----  
According to CoE Digest 93: Cards that are worth negative marshalling points are worth 1 MP for Fallen Wizards, unless stage or Fallen Wizard cards modify this value. (e.g. Great Patron)

(14) Joe Bisz asked: Balrog rules on revealing onguard cards say onguard creature must be revealed "before an automatic attack is resolved", which leaves room to suggest that an onguard creature need not be revealed until strike resolution of the auto attack (as opposed to immediately upon entering the site). Is this correct?

-----  
The resolution of the automatic attack happens before strikes are assigned (after all, you can't assign strikes from an attack that hasn't resolved). Therefore, you need to reveal the creature before strikes are assigned.

(15) Joe Bisz asked: The CRF says: "If your opponent is playing the same Fallen-wizard as you, and he reveals that Fallen-wizard first, discard any Fallen-wizard specific stage resources that you have in play." Wim mentioned in the forums that "You may continue to play Fallen-wizard specific stage resources afterwards." Is this correct?

-----  
Yes.

(16) Joe Bisz asked: Is it true that the attack created by Troll-Purse is considered to be an automatic-attack?

-----  
No.

(17) Joe Bisz asked: I've heard that "immediately" means "in the very next chain of effects." Because you may play things in response to other things, you could effectively play several cards "immediately." For example: Dark



Numbers says "Playable on an untapped scout immediately after facing an Orc, Troll, or Man attack." If you just faced an Orc attack, before strike assignment you could tap Arwen and play Dark Numbers, then respond to that by tapping Aragorn and playing a second Dark Numbers, then respond to that by tapping Ioreth and playing Marvels Told on something. Everything would resolve in reverse order like this:

Marvels Told resolves, and cancels something  
Dark Numbers resolves, and is played on Aragorn  
Dark Numbers resolves, and is played on Arwen

-----  
I do not feel comfortable giving a pat interpretation of the word "immediately". In any case, the example is not right. In particular, the following is impossible: "If you just faced an Orc attack, before strike assignment..." If strikes have not been assigned and faced and all body checks etc. made, then the attack has not yet been faced. Ioreth could tap in response to the attack to play Marvels Told, but neither copy of Dark Numbers is playable until after the attack.

(18) Jamie Pollack asked: "Can I check whether playing a 'normal' character in the org phase then playing They Ride Together to play RW followers is legal or illegal? If this was done vice versa (i.e. TRT first then normal character) would this also be legal or illegal?"

-----  
They Ride Together is an exception to the one-character-per-turn limit, so any RW-followers played through it do not count against that limit. In other words: yes, you may play an additional character (regardless of order).

(19) The following questions have arisen: What kind of MPs do Neither so Ancient Nor so Potent, Returned Beyond All Hope, and Will Shaken give?

-----  
Neither So Ancient nor so Potent gives Kill MPs (I know, it's weird, but that's the way the rules work). Returned Beyond All Hope gives Kill MPs. Will Shaken gives (negative) Misc. MPs.

(20) One further thing: Please do not take everything I said in the past as the official word of the NetRep. Only pronouncements made in digests count as official.

Best,

Mark Alfano  
mark.alfano@gmail.com

Official Council of Elrond Netrep  
\*Prepared in collaboration with Mikko Vihtemäki and Nigel Buckle (NetRep Team), and Chad Martin, Wim Heemskerk, and Brian Min (NetRep Advisors).







# The horn of Anor: Call for volunteers for projects

by the Editor

Will you answer the call??

(And for missions!)

Dear MECCG Player: in case you haven't noticed, the Middle-earth community is growing.

That's right! And it's all because of talent--the talent of key, core players who are committed to keeping the game alive.

But the core players can't do it by themselves. In this column the COE will blow its bugle and call for volunteers for projects. There are some calls that require only reading some posts and contributing your input! We hope that you will find a project that meets your creative interest so that you will help us and your game to grow.

Finally, if you are already working on a project, and you'd like to advertise your project here and scout for helpers, please email the Editor and we'll do our best to muster up some beefy orcs (or at least hobbits) to put to work for you!

## Call for: Judge Certification

COE Chair Mark Alfano is running the "Judge Certification Program" where players work on a rules-related project, like a sealed deck tutorial, and are then given a quiz by a high-ranking Rules Judge. If the player passes, the player can move up to the next level of Rules Judge starting with Level 1. The main goal (hopefully not a "mission impossible") is to someday create a Unified Rulesbook. Interested? Contact: Mark Alfano (mark.alfano@gmail.com) so that he can allow you access to the Judge Certification Forum and you can see what projects have been done.

## Call for: Red Book Assistant Editor

The Editor of the Red Book Newsletter, Joe Bisz, is desperately looking for an Assistant Editor to help him. Responsibilities are flexible, but will probably include serving as a contact person on the forums for people who have questions about the newsletter; also gather MS-Word versions of the articles submitted; doing simple formatting of articles in MS-Word. He can even teach you QuarkXPress if you're interested (it's not that hard!). If the Assistant was eager enough, he or she could even take over some of the issues of the newsletter per year. At present the newsletter is published about every two months. Contact: Joe Bisz (joebisz@verizon.net)

## Call for: Worlds 2007

Worlds 2007 is coming up, and North America will be making a bid! That means the Americans will need help from other Americans to organize this grand event and make it as wonderful as possible. Some work will include gathering prizes, making t-shirts, putting together welcome packages for the non-Americans including hotel info, etc. Contact: Mark Alfano (mark.alfano@gmail.com) or Joe Bisz (joebisz@verizon.net).

## Call for: Web Designers

Anyone who can contribute a little artistic sense would be welcome to help the COE with its website and also with the upcoming Worlds 2007 (North America) website. Contact: Mark Alfano (mark.alfano@gmail.com)

## Call for: Virtual Cards

There are three calls related to this:

INDIVIDUAL: First, we need anyone who is good with design and thinks they could create card templates for the Virtual cards (templates are everything on the card except the image, although all we need is the bottom half).

INDIVIDUAL: Second, we need someone who knows XML (or at least how to edit XML) and/or has an idea how we can get the Virtual Card text information up on GCCG. It was already explained to us how to do it with XML, but we need someone with time to do this. It is our hopes that this will greatly assist in the playtesting process so that people can easily see what the new card texts do.

THE COMMUNITY: Lastly, we need people to playtest the Virtual Cards! We have had a good amount of people weighing in on the Virtual Card Discussion forum, but we need more comments that are based on actual game play data. This project will never see the light of real tournament play unless we get hard, empirical data on how effective these cards are. We realize that at present the cards are difficult to implement into GCCG. We are working on a solution to this, but hope that in the meanwhile people will still be willing to try certain "mission" decks that don't require virtualization of too many cards (and therefore make it easy to keep track of the next text—just email it to your opponent before the game!). Contact: Visit the Virtual Card forum (Meccg.net forums, Dream Cards and Scenarios, Virtual Card Discussion) and start playtesting. You can also send comments to Joe Bisz (joebisz@verizon.net)



## RIDDLING TALK



## LETTERS TO ELBERETH OR, THE EDITOR

## LET THE RIDDLE GAMES BEGIN

Riddle #1 by Mark Alfano  
mark.alfano@gmail.com

Name all cards that have a representation of Sauron in them! Winner gets a copy of The Lidless Eye (from me) and a pin made from the card Riddling Talk.

Riddle #2 by Joe Bisz  
joebisz@verizon.net

The header and footer of the newsletter contains a secret message written in the Cirith Erebor tongue. If you can decode this message and tell me what it means in English, you will receive a pair of miniature gold “riddle dice” and a pin made from the card Riddling Talk.

## RULES FOR THE RIDDLE GAMES

Do you think you know what we got in our pocketsses? When answering a riddle, be sure to email the author of the riddle (the person whose name is next to the riddle) at the email address indicated and to refer to the riddle by number. The first person who emails the author with a correct guess wins!

At the end of each year's worth of newsletter issues, we will calculate who has won the most amount of Riddle Games, and that person will be declared the Riddle Game Champion ("Luckwinner") and receive a special prize!

Would you like to submit a riddle? Please do! Send one to the editor at [joebisz@verizon.net](mailto:joebisz@verizon.net). We'll provide a Riddling Talk pin prize. If you can provide an additional prize, we'd appreciate it.

444

444

F I R S T L E T T E R

I have just read the CoE newsletter and I was enthralled to read it! To have a newsletter like this to make a stronger bond between the international MECCG community is great! The articles and tips and rules that were explained were all a great help and very entertaining! Please continue with this amazing newsletter and my hat off to you and all those who helped with its creation!

Stephen Dajic  
Japan

۷۷۷

444

## S E C O N D L E T T E R

Just wanted to say that I really enjoyed reading the first edition of the Newsletter. Glad to see that there will again be a regular newsletter for fans of MECCG to read and enjoy. Keep up the great work.

Cheers,

Tom Grozinger  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

November							December						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4						1	2
5	6	<b>7</b>	8	9	10	<b>11</b>	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	<b>23</b>	24	25	17	18	19	20	<b>21</b>	22	23
26	27	28	29	30			24	<b>25</b>	26	27	28	29	30
							<b>31</b>						

