



News From Bree



The Official *Middle-earth™* PBM Newsletter
Issue 34, March '08

"Strange as News from Bree..."

The Lord of the Rings Chapter 9

The Talk at the Prancing Pony...

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Middle-earth PBM

Middle-earth PBM is a turn-based strategic game set in the world of Tolkien's Middle-earth. For more details, please take a look at our website: www.middleearthgames.com

Featured Artist

Nathan Furman

"The Untold *War of the Ring™* – Teamwork and Decision Making

By Sam Roads

Genesis

Ronald Storm, a Doctoral Candidate at the Argosy University Tampa, has commissioned us to create a module – *The Untold War of the Ring*. We have worked on the module with the aim of both fulfilling the needs of the academic study, and also to produce an exciting new mini module for experienced Middle-earth PBM players – to keep you happy while we finish coding the Kin-strife module.

The Scenario

This scenario has been developed to investigate decision making in gaming in an environment where a group of four people have decisions to make both about their own resources, and also about shared resources – decisions that will impact on their team's success.

Each of the two sides in the game consist of 5 nations: four individual nations and one group nation. For the Free People the individual nations are the Northmen, the Riders of Rohan, the Silvan Elves and the Dwarves, whilst the group nation is the mighty Noldo. For the Dark Servants the individual nations are the Witch-king, the Dog Lord, the Fire King and the White Wizard, whilst the group nation is the potent Dragon Lord.

Each of the four players on each side will run one of the Individual Nations. In addition they will also run the Group Nation by consensus, agreeing on the orders for each character and accepting joint ownership of the nation.

Victory is based entirely on a new set of victory conditions for which points are awarded, with the team with the most points at the end of the game being the winner. There is no individual victory. The game lasts for a short fixed duration, usually ten turns.

Submitting Orders for the Group Nation

The responsibility for submitting the orders for the Group Nation will rotate through the team, starting with the player who is controlling the lowest ID Individual Nation (that's the Northmen and the Witch-king), and then going to the next highest nation ID on the following turn.

The Group Nations fighting the Covert War

The individual nations start with the usual 8 characters whilst the group nations have 12 characters of a much higher quality than is average in the individual nations. More

importantly, most of the crucial characters who will engage in the covert aspects of MEPBM are within these group nations, characters like the sons of Elrond - Elrohir and Elladan – or the Nazgûl Jí Indûr and Khamûl.

**Free Game of
*The Untold
War of the Ring™***

The first 20 players to contact us, subject to conditions, will get to play in a free game of the Untold War of the Ring.

These characters will fight the covert war through orders such as 'Assassinate' and 'Kidnap', and spells like 'Sickness' and 'Curses'. The success of these agent actions and 'curse squads' relies on full teamwork – including the sharing and wise use of artefacts, the formation of cross-nation companies and multiple source information gathering.

For example, each time that Ji Indur manages to kill an enemy commander, he will have relied on the actions of around 6 other characters: he will use artefacts from two other characters, be in a company led by another character, and be making his choices based on the scouting of another character and the spells of many seers. The teamwork required to organise a 'curse squad' is generally even more complex.

Games Starting Soon

The following new games are filling up, so if you wish to play, get in touch!

[Bracketed dates give the date the game started filling up.]

UW 203 2k [Game 203]:

1 nation available. [11/2]

1650 Normal GB 2wk [Game 71]:

6 duos available, GB rules 7 with 30 word diplo, Player pool. [23/9]

2950 2wk [Game 22]:

14 nations available. [2/11]

1650 2wk [Game 81]:

16 nations available. [18/02]

1000 2wk [Game 47]:

17 nations available [21/1]

Face to Face Games

We are able to organise Face to Face Games between teams in separate locations, and we currently have a US team looking to play a game over the weekend. So if you would be interested in playing, please get in touch.

A Face to Face What?!

Face to Face Events are weekend-long games of Middle-earth which take place, as the name suggests, at a single location. Turns are run at regular intervals through the weekend, and teams are assigned their own private areas to plan and write orders.

A fixed cost is paid for the entire weekend instead of per turn, the pace is hectic, and it is great fun - virtually everyone who has played one of these games is dying to play another one as soon as they can. It's a great way to learn a lot about the game, to chat to fellow players, and to meet us. Sleeping space is always available, but don't expect much sleep!

The Story so Far

The module has been released for only a few weeks, but the 5th game is starting as I write, and interest has been very strong. The map is changed and many characters and artefacts moved to different nations, so that each nation is of equivalent value to the team.

Players are reporting that it is a refreshing change to the other modules, with the army levels of 1650 and the character strength of 2950. However, the scenario is different to either in that the economies, armies and coverters are equally balanced, so that the tension in the game comes from the difficulty in scoring victory points in a fixed time.

We also have a format suited to new players, where the rule-set is very simple at game start, and new rules are introduced each turn, until by game end the player is using the full rules.

The Group Nations' Military Significance

There are very significant bonus points on offer for winning the fight in the very centre of the map, centred about Lothlorien and Dol Guldur. This battlefield is in reach of all the individual nations, who can choose how many forces to divert from their own home territory to fight, but essentially the Noldo and the Dragon Lord will determine what happens here.

Both capitals are hidden and fortified, requiring significant expenditure of team resources before an attack can be launched on the enemy capital. And, given the enormous numbers of troops that can be thrown into this crucible, the military choices made by the two Group Nations will have enormous significance to the success of the team.

Simple Tip

Some Gunboat games allow a limited form of diplomacy. Use it, as even if information isn't useful to you, it may be useful to others in the game, whether it be a list of artefacts you own (or have lost), PCs you own (or have lost), activity in your area, plans for aggression, etc.



General Teamwork

Aside from this, all the nations will need to look after each other economically. One often cannot predict where the opponents will strike, and a nation which does well in one game may be persecuted in another game. A good team will have to adapt to the changing economic fortunes of each nation and organise support where needed.

The Untold War points system, which determines victory, rewards teams which protect all five of their nations, and are able to launch strikes at significant holdings belonging to each of the opposing five nations. The teams that score well will need good teamwork and good team morale – individual brilliance won't help if the teamwork is not there.

However, a dogmatic approach to the team will also likely lead to trouble. There are sufficient different demands on a team in MEPBM that it is always impossible to deal with all threats. A team which is able to listen to the input of all four members will strike a good balance in judging which threats are severe, and which are correct to ignore. A team with a single dominant voice will over-commit resources to a single arena, and will suffer as a result.

More Details

If you think that you might be interested in playing the Untold War of the Ring, please visit our website:

www.middleearthgames.com/moduw.html

Heroic Failure and the will of God in *The Lord of the Rings*[™]

By John Davis

A hero, as generally conceived of by modern Western society, is a person who performs great deeds, and who, moreover, is successful in performing those great deeds. This might involve the giving of their lives in the process, but still, the element of success seems to be of primary importance. So much so that if the hero is seen to fail, then this fact requires a qualifying description: a heroic defeat, a heroic failure, etc., implying that normally the hero is one who succeeds.

But this, the idea of a hero being one who strives and succeeds, is a Western classical view of the heroic, with its basis found perhaps in the Greek heroes, and later those of Medieval romances. Other cultures, however, can have a very different concept of the heroic. And the most relevant of these to this discussion is that of the ancient Norse and Finnish cultures. Here, there seems to be found an understanding that to be a warrior is to inevitably die, and to be a hero is ultimately to fail, as made evident in perhaps the most famous example of this mentality, the myth of Ragnarok, the 'Fate of the Gods', where the gods, the heroes, are overthrown and killed, and the universe itself destroyed in the process. Relevant, of course, because Tolkien was greatly influenced by these myths in his writing.

As might be expected, then, many of the heroes of *The Lord of the Rings* fail, in one way or another. Boromir fails to resist the lure of the Ring, and then to save Merry and Pippin from being captured by Orcs, even though the attempt costs him his life. Faramir fails to hold the river against the Witch-king's host. Theoden fails to kill the Witch-king. And most famously of all, of course, Frodo fails to destroy the One Ring.

And yet despite this, we still think of each of these characters as heroic. And moreover, tend to think of their actions not as failures but, ultimately, as successes. So why is this? The reason, I think, lies in what Chad Chisholm (Mallorn 45: "Demons, Choices, and Grace in *The Lord of the Rings*") describes as Tolkien's "grace", the pity he takes on those who struggle to do what is right. Now the concept of Tolkien himself bestowing his grace on characters in his novel is, it seems to me, a flawed one, confusing the book's internal reality with the intent of that reality's author. After all, we would not think to describe Sauron's cruelty as belonging to Tolkien. But that said, this bestowing of grace does seem to be a very real thing, even within the secondary reality which Tolkien created.

Boromir fails, but through the attempt redeems himself and regains his nobility, whilst even his failure turns out to be, in a sense, a good thing: the hobbits do not perish, whilst their ordeal hardens them and sends them further into the world to play their parts in the war. And even Boromir's failure to resist the lure of the Ring, leading to the splitting of the company itself, could be seen in retrospect to have been beneficial, Frodo and Sam having greater chance of making it unseen to Mordor if travelling alone.

Faramir also fails, but in the end does not perish, nor does the city he fought to save. Theoden fails to kill the Witch-king, but the attempt alone makes him worthy, in his own eyes, of joining his ancestors, whilst the Witch-king is then defeated by Eowyn and Merry, the injury Eowyn sustains leading her to meet with Faramir, who she finds love with. And of course, when Frodo lacks the will to finally cast the Ring into the Crack of Doom, it is Gollum, previously spared by Frodo's pity, who unwittingly commits the Ring to the fires, again turning failure into success.

Where lies the cause of this grace, then? In coincidence? Some critics have accused Tolkien of just this, claiming that his works are riddled with unlikely coincidences which exist to solve problems of plotting. However, I believe that this is to miss the point of these 'coincidences'. Tolkien, a devout Catholic, always claimed that *The Lord of the Rings*, and indeed all his writings about Middle-earth, were of a Christian nature, this despite the fact that the world of Middle-earth is clearly a pre-Christian pagan one, with God, at least in *The Lord of the Rings*, scarcely even mentioned. So assuming Tolkien was not mistaken about his own creation, then, where is this Christian God to be found in his writing?

Perhaps it is in these very coincidences, which are in fact instances of God's will at work. A fanciful justification of unlikely plot devices? Perhaps. Yet to believe this would be to ignore Tolkien's own writing, when, albeit more explicitly in the film than in the book, Gandalf implies that Frodo is somehow meant to bear the Ring. That there is, in other words, an unseen guiding force behind the events taking place. (This to leave aside the evidence for *The Lord of the Rings* being a Christian parable, with its central concept of undeserved forgiveness and pity being the saving grace of not only the character forgiven but also the one who forgives. For, whether or not this is the case, it is a truth to be found only through a meta-reading of the story, not through viewing the story as a reality of its own, as it is being considered here.)

And here, with the introduction of the concept of a Christian God into a pre-Christian world, we return to the influence of Nordic mythical traditions on Tolkien's writing, and perhaps the most famous of Scandinavian myths, that of Beowulf. Tolkien, as is well known, was one of the world's leading *Beowulf* scholars. In both *Beowulf* and *The Lord of the Rings* we can see the same conflict between Christian and pre-Christian frameworks of belief, explicitly in *Beowulf*, implicitly in *The Lord of the Rings*. And in both these works, we can see a Christian author struggling with how to incorporate his beliefs into the pre-Christian world he is writing of and clearly has a love for. In *Beowulf*, this struggle speaks loudly from the pages, with Christian impulses and outpourings given to primarily pagan heroes. In *The Lord of the Rings*, on the other hand, it is a more subtle thing, easily missed, but there nevertheless. And nowhere is it more present, perhaps, than in the grace bestowed upon those who struggle and who fail, those who, despite their actions, are rightly perceived of as heroic.

Hall of Fame: Game Winners

Game 3

*1650 module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 37, 21/03/07*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Michael Reisfeld
Dragon Lord	Bob Chronley
Dog Lord	Anders Stockmarr
Cloud Lord	Gerhard Kille
Blind Sorcerer	Mike Barber
Ice King	Gary Hood
Quiet Avenger	Gerhard Kille
Fire King	Adrian Baker
Long Rider	Anja Kaehler
Dark Lieutenants	Michael Kamine
Corsairs	Michael Reisfeld
Dunlendings	Claus Jacobsen
Easterlings	Keith Bowen

Game 23

*2950 module, Grudge Game
Ended on turn 9, 10/01/08*

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	Scott Mckennon
Northmen	Robert Hine
Riders of Rohan	David Ruzic
Dunadan Rangers	James Adams
Silvan Elves	Web Ewell
Northern Gondor	Brian Jurczyk
Southern Gondor	Rick Halvorsen
Dwarves	Cameron Ewell
Sinda Elves	Molly Halvorsen
Noldo Elves	David Ruzic
Dunlendings	Eric Lundahl
White Wizard	T. Maccabe III

Game 26

*2950 Module, Grudge Game, 12 vs. 12
Ended on turn 25, 08/08/07*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	David Ruzic
Dragon Lord	Brian Jurczyk
Dog Lord	James Adams
Cloud Lord	Scott Mckennon
Blind Sorcerer	Molly Halvorsen
Ice King	Rick Halvorsen
Quiet Avenger	Marian Ewell
Fire King	Robert Hine
Long Rider	David Ruzic
Dark Lieutenants	Web Ewell
Corsairs	T. Maccabe III
Khand Easterlings	Eric Lundahl

Game 27

*2950 module, Grudge Game, 12 vs. 12
Ended on turn 6, 11/04/07*

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	Brian Martin
Northmen	Chris Lewis
Riders of Rohan	Greg Doerfler
Dunadan Rangers	Charles Sutherland
Silvan Elves	Lynn Still
Northern Gondor	Steven Mariner
Southern Gondor	Perry Carlson
Dwarves	Steven Mariner
Sinda Elves	Clif Weatherford
Noldo Elves	Perry Carlson
Dunlendings	Charles Sutherland
White Wizard	Greg Doerfler

Game 29

*2950 Module, Grudge Game
Ended on turn 16, 15/11/07*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Brian Martin
Dragon Lord	Clif Weatherford
Dog Lord	Greg Doerfler
Cloud Lord	Clif Weatherford
Blind Sorcerer	Perry Carlson
Ice King	Chris Lewis
Quiet Avenger	Lynn Still
Fire King	Charles Sutherland
Long Rider	Steven Mariner
Dark Lieutenants	Steven Mariner
Corsairs	Perry Carlson
Khand Easterlings	Greg Doerfler

Game 30

*1650 module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 32, 04/10/07*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Gregory Reid
Dragon Lord	Joseph Williams
Dog Lord	P. D. Porta Rodiani
Cloud Lord	Guy Roppa
Blind Sorcerer	Charles Crooks
Ice King	Stephen Allen
Quiet Avenger	David Lovett
Fire King	Eric Osborne
Long Rider	Jeffrey Horne
Dark Lieutenants	Michael Welsch
Haradwaith	Tony Ackroyd
Rhudaaur	Ian Madden
Easterlings	Paul Moreno

Game 31

*1650 Module, Gunboat Game
Ended on turn 34, 28/09/07*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Paul Keyworth
Dragon Lord	Chris Geggus
Dog Lord	John Stagoll
Cloud Lord	James Christensen
Blind Sorcerer	John Stagoll
Ice King	Nick Barnett
Quiet Avenger	Chris Geggus
Fire King	Faisal Ahmed
Long Rider	Nick Barnett
Dark Lieutenants	Paul Keyworth
Corsairs	Chris Geggus
Rhudaaur	James Christensen

Game 33

*1650 Module, Grudge Game, 12 vs. 12
Ended on turn 28, 01/08/07*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	David Holt
Dragon Lord	Drew Carson
Dog Lord	Tony Huiatt
Cloud Lord	R. Kevin Given
Blind Sorcerer	Drew Carson
Ice King	Timothy Huiatt
Quiet Avenger	Martin Cinke
Fire King	Bernd Luehrsen
Long Rider	James Howl
Dark Lieutenants	Bernd Luehrsen
Haradwaith	Martin Cinke
Rhudaaur	Tony Huiatt

Game 35

*1650 Module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 22, 31/07/07*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Robert Svenkerud
Dragon Lord	Terence Wilson
Dog Lord	Simon Arnold
Cloud Lord	Joshua Spink
Blind Sorcerer	Mike Wilby
Ice King	Stephen Fortson
Quiet Avenger	Richard Wilson
Fire King	Jerry Fair
Long Rider	John Wall
Dark Lieutenants	John Wall
Corsairs	Andy Farmer
Haradwaith	James Mcisaac
Easterlings	Bryn Lloyd

Simple Tip

Information spells used to track some less famous names can you give you an indication as to what the enemy plans in all aspects of game play. Invariably the bigger enemy names (Ji Indur, Elrond, etc.) are followed, but keeping a track on Chilperic for example (a Woodman starting character), can lead to interesting information gains.

Game 37

1650 Module, Grudge Game
Ended on turn 28, 14/11/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	Andrew Jones
Northmen	Alain Deurwaerder
Eothraim	Alain Deurwaerder
Arthedain	J. Wemmergard
Cardolan	F. X. Gil Martin
Northern Gondor	Thomas Brendel
Southern Gondor	M. Schroedter
Dwarves	Alexander Nagel
Sinda Elves	Alex Varas
Noldo Elves	Thilo Rammholdt
Corsairs	Andrew Jones
Dunlendings	J. B'z-Samuelson

Game 40

1000 Module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 43, 29/05/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

South Kingdom	David Crane
Insidious Ones	Philip Wardlow
Dark Riders	Michael Mulka
Morgor	Thom Burnett
Uedregoth	Randall Brady
Balchoth	Kenneth O' Neal
Clan Uruk Hai	Joe Aragon
Shadow Riders	Charles Baltés
Sharp Claws	Thom Burnett
Fang Faces	Randall Brady
Rakkasans	Darrell Swoap

Game 41

1000 Module, Grudge Game
Ended on turn 27, 24/10/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

North Kingdom	Web Ewell
South Kingdom	David Ruzic
Drekkamen	Eric Lundahl
Western Clans	Robert Hine
Sickeningsouthern	Ethan Rockett
Stone Curtain	Robert Turkot
Pirate Coast	Brian Jurczyk
Tar-Numenori	Angus Rockett
Lossanyar	Marian Ewell
Sea Princes	James Adams
Stradas	Michael Childs
Seahorsemen	Scott Mckennon

Game 42

1000 Module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 23, 07/01/08

Victory went to the Free Peoples

North Kingdom	Ernest Hakey
Hwyfrydig	Timothy Solomon
Lancer Legion	Jason Roberts
Sons of Tempus	Jerry Roberts
Maronites	Rollin Roberts
Giliath	Brian Mason
Hamaarstrom	Ray Ulman
Duredhil	Rollin Roberts
Kravenites	Paul Moreno
Datani Rangers	Ray Ulman
Shortshifters	Neil Blair
Hags of Dunmoor	Ernest Hakey
Rab Hadarran	Ian Koxvold
Dunedain Exiles	Gavin Kenny

Game 44

1000 Module, GB Game
Ended on turn 40, 11/05/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

South Kingdom	Michael Mulka
Gamil Azanul	Gregory Bair
Wolves of Langren	Gregory Bair
New Kingdom	Michael Mulka
Elder Ones	Michael Mulka
Edain	Mark Farrior
Avari	Mike Farrior
Mages of Darwin	John Lechner
Imperium Domnicia	John Lechner
Acoma	Wolfgang Geyer
Golden	Wolfgang Geyer

Game 45

1000 Module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 30, 13/06/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Obsidian Order	Michael Mulka
Dark Numenorians	Adam Januszewski
Exodus of Light	Oystein Tvedten
Vice Lords	Jerry Roberts
Wraith Riders	Roger Hawkins
Idiot Savants	Michael Mulka
Macabre	Jason Roberts
Realm of Darkness	Robb Black
Barbarian Horde	Roger Hawkins

Game 48

1000 Module, Gunboat Game
Ended on turn 39, 16/11/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

North Kingdom	John Seals
Enedrim	Kenneth Weed
Wild Hunters	Kenneth Weed
Kelvar Holdings	Kenneth Weed
Atarin	David Holt
Gypsies	David Holt
Grunge	David Holt
Sunspear Raiders	Chris Guise
RisingSun	Chris Guise
Tiste Andii	John Seals
Kravenites	Paul Moreno

Game 51

1650 Module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 37, 07/08/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	Bob Chronley
Northmen	Terence Wilson
Eothraim	Sverre Rusten
Arthedain	Andrew Schultz
Cardolan	James Mcisaac
Northern Gondor	Daniel Cosby
Southern Gondor	Tim Watts
Dwarves	Mike Bateman
Sinda Elves	Erik Duffey
Noldo Elves	Jason Vafiades
Dunlendings	Jason Vafiades

Game 52

1650 Module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 11, 14/06/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Tony Ackroyd
Dragon Lord	Jesper Nielsen
Dog Lord	Erik Duffey
Cloud Lord	Anders Stockmarr
Blind Sorcerer	Dave Griffiths
Ice King	Robert Glass
Quiet Avenger	Richard Farrer
Fire King	Ian Etchells
Long Rider	Holger Koster
Dark Lieutenants	Paul Wilcox
Haradwaith	John Strachan
Dunlendings	Michael Kamine
Rhudaur	John Folz

Game 54

1650 module, Gunboat Game,
Ended on turn 21, 05/10/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	Alan Jeffrey
Northmen	Jason Vafiades
Eothraim	Daniel Cosby
Arthedain	Alan Jeffrey
Cardolan	Jeff Glover
Northern Gondor	Robert Glass
Southern Gondor	Daniel Cosby
Dwarves	Jason Vafiades
Sinda Elves	Jeff Glover
Noldo Elves	Guy Roppa
Haradwaith	Guy Roppa
Dunlendings	Robert Glass

Game 56

1650 Module, Grudge Game
Ended on turn 19, 05/10/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Wade Frost
Dragon Lord	Troy Rein
Dog Lord	James Rousselle
Cloud Lord	John Lamulle
Blind Sorcerer	Otis David Pearson
Ice King	Otis David Pearson
Quiet Avenger	John Lamulle
Fire King	James Rousselle
Long Rider	Troy Rein
Dark Lieutenants	Wade Frost
Haradwaith	Brad Brunet
Rhudaur	Brad Brunet

Game 57

1650 Module, Grudge Game
Ended on turn 22, 12/11/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Drew Carson
Dragon Lord	Drew Carson
Dog Lord	Andrew Jones
Cloud Lord	Tony Zbaraschuk
Blind Sorcerer	John Briggs
Ice King	Andrew Jones
Quiet Avenger	Laurence Tilley
Fire King	Jonathan Steer
Long Rider	Laurence Tilley
Dark Lieutenants	Jonathan Steer
Haradwaith	John Briggs
Rhudaur	Tony Zbaraschuk

Game 58

1650 Module, Grudge Game, 12 vs. 12
Ended on turn 15, 05/09/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	Clint Oldridge
Northmen	Tim Jones
Eothraim	Tim Jones
Arthedain	Mark Jeffries
Cardolan	Ed Lane
Northern Gondor	Sam Roads
Southern Gondor	Sam Roads
Dwarves	Clint Oldridge
Sinda Elves	Clint Oldridge
Noldo Elves	Mark Jeffries
Corsairs	Sam Roads
Dunlendings	Ed Lane

Game 59

1650 Module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 23, 11/02/08

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Alan Gowler
Dragon Lord	Paul Roberts
Dog Lord	Joe Karls
Cloud Lord	Martin Cinke
Blind Sorcerer	Joshua Spink
Ice King	Daniel Crouse
Quiet Avenger	Whit Cooper
Fire King	Mark Lyon
Long Rider	James Karls
Dark Lieutenants	Samuel Karls
Corsairs	Whit Cooper
Dunlendings	Thomas Mcnamara
Easterlings	Paul Wilcox

Game 63

1650 Module, Gunboat Game
Ended on turn 12, 13/09/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	Tony Huiatt
Northmen	John Folz
Eothraim	Bernd Luehrsen
Arthedain	Tony Huiatt
Cardolan	Alain Deurwaerder
Northern Gondor	John Stagoll
Southern Gondor	Martin Cinke
Dwarves	John Folz
Sinda Elves	Alain Deurwaerder
Noldo Elves	Kim Andersen
Haradwaith	Kim Andersen
Dunlendings	John Stagoll

Game 64

1650 Module, Grudge Game
Ended on turn 16, 23/01/08

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	M. L. Belancio
Northmen	Martin Pfendtner
Eothraim	Chad Gilbert
Arthedain	Bradden Jenison
Cardolan	Paul Moreno
Northern Gondor	Timothy Huiatt
Southern Gondor	John Simpson
Dwarves	John Simpson
Sinda Elves	Bettina Wagner
Noldo Elves	Stuart Milligan
Corsairs	M. Grazebrook
Dunlendings	John Taylor

Game 66

1650 Module, Individual Game
Ended on turn 20, 22/01/08

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Michael Grazebrook
Dragon Lord	Terence Wilson
Dog Lord	James Mcisaac
Cloud Lord	John Wall
Blind Sorcerer	Mike Bateman
Ice King	Bettina Wagner
Fire King	Whit Cooper
Long Rider	Daniel Cosby
Dark Lieutenants	Adam Januszewski
Dunlendings	Brad Brunet
Easterlings	Bob Chronley

Game 94

1650 Module, Gunboat Game
Ended on turn 43, 15/03/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Clint Oldridge
Dragon Lord	Bernd Luehrsen
Dog Lord	Mark Stuckey
Cloud Lord	Paul Roberts
Blind Sorcerer	Kim Andersen
Ice King	Kim Andersen
Quiet Avenger	Kim Andersen
Fire King	Paul Roberts
Long Rider	Clint Oldridge
Dark Lieutenants	Clint Oldridge
Corsairs	Martin Cinke
Rhudaar	Chris Courtiour

Game 97

1650 Module, Gunboat Game
Ended on turn 37, 06/03/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	John Seals
Dragon Lord	Jason Roberts
Dog Lord	Jesper Lyster
Cloud Lord	Corbin Nash
Blind Sorcerer	Jesper Lyster
Ice King	Wade Buhr
Quiet Avenger	Mike Sankey
Fire King	Mike Sankey
Long Rider	Wade Buhr
Dark Lieutenants	Gregory Shaffer
Corsairs	Jesper Lyster
Rhudaar	Corbin Nash

Game 112

BOFA Module, Beginners' Game
Ended on turn 8, 20/04/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Elves	Stephen Backhus
Dwarves	Jorda Borstelmann
Men	Alan Rukin

Game 113

BOFA Module, Beginners' Game
Ended on turn 10, 25/05/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Goblins	Dilip Silva
Warg Riders	John Seals

Game 113 (II)

BOFA Module, Beginners' Game
Ended on turn 8, 27/11/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Elves	Alan Jeffrey
Dwarves	Nick Rowe
Men	Jonathan Dale

Game 114

BOFA Veterans' Game
Ended on turn 9, 31/05/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Elves	Mike Barber
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Game 116

BOFA Module, Veterans' Game
Ended on turn 14, 20/08/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Elves	Mark Jeffries
Dwarves	Mark Jeffries
Men	Mark Jeffries

Game 117

BOFA Module, Veterans' Game
Ended on turn 4, 21/05/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Elves	Kim Andersen
Dwarves	Kim Andersen
Men	Kim Andersen

Game 118

BOFA Beginners' Game
Ended on turn 10, 24/08/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Goblins	Brandon Huebner
Warg Riders	John Seals

Game 119

BOFA Beginners' Game
Ended on turn 10, 11/09/07

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Elves	David Clarke
Dwarves	Alan Jeffrey
Men	Stuart Connor

Game 220

2950 Module, Gunboat Game
Ended on turn 30, 18/07/07

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Mark Farrior
Dragon Lord	Jeff Glover
Dog Lord	Jeff Glover
Cloud Lord	Mike Farrior
Blind Sorcerer	Eric Trznadel
Ice King	Steven Mcabee
Quiet Avenger	Carlos Zeituni
Fire King	Jeff Glover
Long Rider	Jeff Glover
Dark Lieutenants	Frederick Young
Corsairs	Mike Farrior
White Wizard	Carlos Zeituni

Game 94 Report

By Kim Andersen

A-Z of Tolkien...

Taken from tolkiengateway.net

Radagast the Brown

Radagast, like the other Wizards, came from Valinor around the year 1000 of the Third Age and was one of the Maiar. His original name was Aiwendil, meaning Bird Friend in Quenya. The Vala Yavanna forced Saruman to accept Radagast as a companion, which may have been one of the reasons Saruman was contemptuous of him.

The wizard's home was in Rhosgobel on the western borders of Mirkwood. He was a friend of Beorn as well as a friend to the forest's many creatures, especially birds whom he communicated with. Despite this, Gandalf was still more knowledgeable of the animals, and more respected by them than Radagast. Radagast spent most of his time with the wildlife instead of Men and Elves, whom he found more difficult to deal with. Radagast grew neglectful and easygoing, and he lacked courage, however he remained of good will.

In the summer of 3018 Radagast was unwittingly used by Saruman to lure Gandalf to Orthanc, where Gandalf was captured. However, Radagast also unwittingly helped rescue the grey wizard by alerting the Eagles of Gandalf's journey there.

Radagast is without a doubt a mysterious character. While there is little doubt that his heart was in the right place, he did not possess that same selflessness that allowed Gandalf to fulfill the task set to him by the Valar, to aid the free people. Diegning to leave his wooded home, Radagast remained in Northern Mirkwood with the birds and the beasts and the trees. So in the end, it seems that Radagast was among the four wizards who failed in their tasks to help fight against Sauron. While he was not ambitious and cruel like Saruman, he did not contribute to Sauron's downfall.

What became of Radagast the Brown in the Fourth Age is left to speculation. It is possible that he was allowed to return to Valinor, but this seems unlikely. Radagast may have left to wander Middle-earth, or he may have stayed with his beloved birds and beasts, content to while away the days in Mirkwood until he himself withered away and became part of the forest he loved so much.

Turn 0:

IK: OK setup. Virsh received +10 stealth, will be useful later on, but no artefact spells. So what to do with starting armies? Largest threat is a Eot HC assault on my capital, so I decide to move entire army up to block/take at 3020. Plans are to retire Abdahkil and make 4 emis and a new 40 agent. As the military aspect is pretty important early on for DS and I didn't start with any locate spells, I decide to use Hoarmurath and Khathog for combat purpose in the start.

QA: Ok setup. Adunaphel received +10 to emis, but didn't start at capital. Decided to make a 10/20 C/A instead with first slot. What to do with my armies? I think I will try an ambush on 2635 with the LC from 2135 and move out a blocking army from capital to block possible SG army landing at 2734.

Turn 1:

IK: Khathog learned summon storms and joined the entire capital army at 3020, which is undefended. Seems like NG tries to save Minas Ithril as he has gathered all armies here, hope DS have plenty of armies here. Downgraded taxes to 39.

QA: Removed some ports, moved 900 LC to 2337 and 900 MA to 2834 which will stay to block possible armies. Uhhh, Harad have armies in all visible southern centers including 2833.

Turn 2:

IK: Yes, best news is DS capturing of Minas Ithril. Captured 3020 and blocked a small Eot army at 3119 patrolling the road. Another FP army has been blocked at 3118. Economy looking fine, with 60k gold in reserves.

QA: Harad awaited me at 2635 with an army and I was blocked at 2834 as expected. Harad seem to use navy commander to remove ports all over. New emis 40 created.

Turn 3:

IK: Uhhh Eot had 900 HC and 100 LC, but my challenge, downgrade and "Summon storms" spell wiped him clean only taking 30% casualties. Moved on to 3118 together with 1200 Hi from capital under Hoarmurath to finish off the remaining FP forces, where I meet a small eot army again. Map shows only DS armies at Osgiliath.

QA: Drat, plans vs 2635 went up in smoke as Harad had one of his HC starting armies defending. Even worse he captured my army commander Harad also defeated me at 2834, but I moved in 1700HI, 600Ar to 2935, from capital. Harad is playing quite well, I need more advanced plans to surprise him. Two new emis with one starting at level 48 !!!!

Turn 4:

IK: WHAAAAT ???

Confident that Gisulf would refuse challenge, I just issue attack and move with both armies, and blind challenge Macheder with Khathog. But Gisulf decides to challenge Hoarmurath and of course gets wiped clean ??? I don't understand this at all, had he challenged Hukor instead he might have taken out my 3000 troops instead, why challenge Hoarmurath, afraid of getting captured? Anyway arrive at 3316 only to find it already taken by DoL. First three camps created. FP have arrived at Osgiliath with armies which is still MT/F.

QA: SG arrives at 3533 with 300HC/300LC, nothing I could do to save that. Failed with two 40 emis to create camps...great. My tactic manoeuvre to reach 2835 gets thwarted once again, as Harad blocks my main army of 1700 HI at 2836, while the 500 AR split off to block Harad at 2935 only blocks a small Harad army. There is no doubt a very skilful player behind the Harad/Noldo combo. I can see I must work very hard to make any progress here. Taxes raised to 60%.

Turn 5:

IK: From 3316 I have various options, but I decide to go for the Eot complex, hoping that DoL has made some impact or decide to sent some aid seeing my huge army at his center. I combine the armies under Hoarmurath and get blocked at 3214 by Uirdiks as expected, with 1100 troops. Created two new camps. Economy still good with 70k gold in reserve. FP armies defeated at Osgilath, seems like it has been threatened, as its still MT.

Simple Tip
Have a plan...!

Other names

The Brown
Aiwendil
Bird Friend
Tender of Beasts

Radagast the Bird-tamer
Radagast the Simple
Radagast the Fool
(These last three names were mockingly given to Radagast by Saruman.)

Etymology

According to the essay "The Istari" from the *Unfinished Tales*, the name Radagast means "tender of beasts" in Adûnaic, the language of Númenor. However, in a later note Tolkien said that the name is in the language of the Men of the Vales of Anduin, and that its meaning is not interpretable. The name Radagast may actually be Anglo-Saxon. The word *gast* means "ghost, spirit, angel." The element *rad* could be derived from *rudu*, meaning "ruddy, reddish." If this is the case, his name could be translated as "Ruddy Angel." Since the Maiar are Tolkien's 'lesser angels', Radagast would mean simply "Ruddy Maia", perhaps in reference to his cloak's color (brown, or perhaps ruddy brown). But this may be too much speculation. See Radagast (god) for meaning of the name in Slavic languages from which Tolkien possibly drew the name.



QA: SG destroyed 3533 as expected, but this turn all four emis succeeded in creating camps. On the military front I lost both battles to Harad. A new army of 2700 mixed troops is moved out from Vamag to 2337.

Turn 6:

IK: Incredible, from 3214 I actually manage to reach 3113 undefended through 3114 with my large army after defeating 1100 eot HI. Why on earth didn't he block me outside ? This is very good news, as 3113 now will be destroyed. Duns moved an army to 3020, wonder if this is his cav army.

QA: Silence before the storm. 1200HI moved from capital to 2935 to stress Harad. The other 2700 mixed troops arrives at 2436, ready for the assault on Harad. Hopefully Corsairs joins me as well, so we can wipe some of his centers.

Turn 7:

IK: Yes, the dragons have arrived, first dragon encounter on Nimanaur. Destroys 3113 with main army and moves down to 3115 and recon, to find that 3116 is still NG town. As Eot had plenty of armies, my plan is now to move around and attack 2912 from the back. Another 1600HI moved up to 3020, which Duns just captured from me with cav, and he was blocked by DS at 3119. Now 80k gold in reserve, incredible I can make max sales each turn. Ohh no, FP icon at FK backup capital.

QA: My 2700 mixed troops arrives at 2535 to find it only a Harad C/F, GREAT job Corsairs. Recon shows two corsairs armies at 2436, a SG army/navy at 2534 and Harad armies at in all both centers around. Glad I could join the onslaught. At 2834 my 1200 Hi blocks a huge Harad army, probably filled with warmashines...uhhhh... good call I moved up and blocked. I guess Harad has abandoned his western position to focus on eliminating QA. Also Elladan shows up at my new camp at 3533, guess he plans an invasion to knock me out. Well two recruitable dragons has just showed up in my MM camps, so prepare for a few surprises Harad/Noldo, you will not get my capital that easy.

Turn 8:

IK: Nimanaur joins my main army moving to 2915, still Sinda village. 1314 HI moves to 2917 to find it a Dun camp. Map shows FK backup destroyed, and FP armies at Osgiliath again. This is not looking good, at least prices are still high, so I hope they can hold the gate...

QA: DISASTER strikes. Out of two recruitable dragons showing up, both of them moves on. Secondly Harad sends in another army to my capital, so I can't even

upgrade to city, while I block his huge army just outside my capital. That's just fucking great, there goes QA capital. Harad is turning out to be bigger pain in the arse that I expected, and then he has the devils luck as well. I would not be surprised if Clint is playing this combo. In the west I reach 2635 with 2700 troops, still Harad town being defended by a small Harad army. At least I shall have some payback destroying this town.

Turn 9:

IK: Main army of 2000 mixed troops takes 2915 and moves up to 2813, a good strategic place threatening a lot of places. Woodmen arrive at 2915 with an army. Also my 1400 hi arrive at 3116 to find it a DaL town, where he is recruiting. Hmmm, maybe Eot is being butchered? My plan to steal Dwarven ring of power from Bain failed, as Bain did not command his army anymore. Hmmm, where did he go...?

QA: Harad arrives at QA capital as expected with his huge army. I manage to get loyalty up to 94, but that is probably not enough to save it. IK sends 30k gold, so a reserve of 85k should be enough for now, even though capital goes. Camp limit has been reached, so now its upgrade time. 2635 is destroyed, by now SG arrives with huge army and Corsairs arrive with some troops as well. I hope these damn dragons soon show up again, because we certainly need them now if we are to turn this war around.

Turn 10:

IK: Yes, main army arrives at 2912 with only a small Eot army defending, with Khathog casting storms, there should be a good chance of wiping this MT. Other 1300hi army gets blocked at 3214 by an Eot army, but DaL is here as well with a small army. Finances look good with 95k in reserves. I have decided to ditch the plan to steal Bains com artefacts for now and instead focus on getting my agents up and going as fast as possible. Turn map shows front mordor under control.

QA: WHAT ??? Harad only attacks my capital with the small army, leaving him only with 3500 HI staying put, which surely is not enough to storm my capital. What on earth is going on, did he make an error or is he moving in more troops ? At 2635 only Harad attacks, meaning that he gets wiped. But where are the huge SG army and the remains of the corsairs army, hopefully he didn't get overrun. #39 is held at Meriot in coastal waters 2134, but FP navy is present as well.

Turn 11:

IK: Yeaaa, second Eot MT wiped, 2912 is no more !!! At 3214 Dal and I wiped 1400 eot hi. Cirdan has #9 at 2715, so the Noldo agents are coming down towards Corsairs, not good, but of course expected. IK has three agents out stealing and three more getting ready for thefts. Recruitable dragons have showed up again.

QA: Harad charge my capital and bring the castle down to tower and lays it ruins. He moves on to 2936 where he reinforces this powerful army with troops from 2835. Ohhh dear, Corsairs is dead meat when he reaches his capital. Luckily three recruitable dragons have showed up. I will go completely berserk if they all move away again. Thank goodness my new capital at 2135 is upgraded to city same turn, this will aid my course greatly. At 2635 I gather some 1700 HI, but are met by two Harad armies. Also I encounter a Harad navy at 2334. No navies at 2134 though, has Meriot and the agent artefact sunk to the bottom ?

Turn 12:

IK: The remains of my two armies in eot land some 1000 mixed troops gather at 3113, still ruins. At my new camp at 2912 Din Ohtar pays me a visit. Two thousand Hi are sent out from capital, which is upgraded to city. RoW possessed by Gildor at Corsairs capital, ohhhh dear. What a disaster, this Noldo dude is really getting on my nerve. 6k gold stolen from SG this turn.

QA: YESSSS, at last I get to recruit those damn dragons and in the twelfth hour, as Harad has moved his huge army to 2838 just outside Corsairs turn map, ready to storm his capital. My 1700 Hi gets defeated by 3000 Harad troops at 2635. But Corsairs has sent an army up to battle the remains. At sea it's mutual destruction between Harads 10 warships and my 8 warships. On the downside my 48 agent gets captured on a theft attempt at SG camp

Turn 13:

IK: Recon at 3113 shows that 3012 is now Town/Fort – excellent, extremely pleased that my allied are helping out as well with Eot. But RoC is located on Elladan – how can we have allowed Noldo to get all the major artefacts? 2000 fresh Hi moving up towards Eot.

QA: Its Payback time - 500 QA cavalry escorted by two deadly dragons, arrives for the rescue at the VERY final hour at the big pirate city, just as Harad is about to turn it into a big pile of ruins. I bet Corsairs are happy to see me there. Of other good news I see Corsairs win the battle at 2635 and advance into 2634. Also he lands with a navy at 2632, about time Harad takes some casualties. And then I get encounter for two new recruitable dragons, I wish I had that luck earlier, when my capital was at risk. My capital gets upgraded to keep, so I should be secure for some time now. Economy is actually good with 29k reserve and 6k deficit.

Turn 14:

IK: I gather 3000 Hi at 3214, with intention to strike NM backland. I see Gothmog and a Woodmen army at my camp at 2912. Economy is beginning to shrink, with 25k reserve and 18k deficit, good that my thieves are beginning to generate income. Map shows battles at 3026 between FK and NG I guess, I better send some troops down to aid.

QA: How nice....3000 Harad troops and a lot of warmashines gets hammered at 2438, Corsairs wipes 2632 and Thergor gets his first kill, as he takes out a Harad armycom at 2631. Unfortunately Harad wins the battle at 2634 against Corsairs,

so he saves the town for now. I send out 1700 fresh HI from Vamag to 2335. Corsairs send out an army to 2636.

Turn 15:

IK: Yeaaaa, overrunning an Eot army and arriving at 3112 with 3000 hi and Smaug who just very convenient joined Hukors army. Facing an Eot MT with no fortification and defending armies under Woodmen and Mahrcarad. Ohhh boy, this shall be my third Eot MT razed, unless they have some very nasty backup in those armies. Also 1500 HI arrived at Osgilath, but as my main agent finally sabotages the Pelargir bridge and FK dealt with the intruders himself, I think he can handle 3028 himself. One bit of enjoyment was a failed attempt to upgraded relations with a 53 commander, resulting in a failed company creation. And of course Glorfindel has Tinculin down in corsairs land, this is really sad. I can't believe that Noldo managed to get every artefact of importance for himself.

QA: Crap - Melezar with 58 challenge dies in an artefact encounter. But elsewhere there is much action. My 1700 HI arrives at 2436 and Corsairs stayed at 2636 where Harad arrives as well. At sea Corsairs has encountered a FP navy at 2633. I have begun formalizing a plan to wipe Harad capital, as the ultimate revenge. The next couple of turns, will show how that plan goes...

Turn 16:

IK: Yeaaa, killed Mahrcared in combat and wiped the third Eot MT at 3112. That should be the end of Eot presence in Mirkwood. A new NM and Woodmen army has arrived though...new food for Smaug !!! Agent squad land at 2835, finding two low level targets, in part of the masterplan to wipe Harad capital. Economy has begun to tighten up, now at 13k deficit and 20k reserve, with minimal prices in all products, guess its time to raise taxes to 60% again. I don't know what's going on with DoL, this is now second turn with no troops in his capital. FP have invaded 3120, and more FP icons showing up.

QA: Yeaaa we are ready to rock and roll, 1500 HC with 36 warmashines and two dragons arrives at Corsairs capital. And my 1700 HI arrives at 2536 together with two Corsairs armies blocked by a Harad army. Its time for the kill...Economy is just running around with 5k deficit.

Turn 17:

IK: Ohhh dear.... At 3112 Khathog dies in the battle even though its mutual destruction, dropping artefacts to the ground. And my Harad campaign fails as I fail to wipe take out a 30 Harad commander, even though I have two agents on him...Damn shit. 2500 new HI are blocked at 3121 by a small Woodmen army. Agent squad moves on to 2534 where they find three DrL mages, well at least it's nice to see my allied participating in the curse business.

QA: This is just great. My 1500 HC gets blocked at 2835 (Harad town) as IK fail to wipe the armycom and Noldo send his agent squad to my capital. The Noldo dude is so lucky, I can't believe that he continues to ride on a wave of luck. He did in fact also upgrade capital to castle. What on earth do I do now ? He will certainly try and block me.

Turn 18:

IK: Woodmen is defeated at 3121, but 3120 gets taken, tower is gone and FP army have advanced into DoL capital and a new FP army at 3120. Ohhh dear, I hope not they have enough to storm it. Why on earth are DoL not hiring troops here ? Harad armycom wiped at 2634 and all IK agents gather here for a super company.

QA: As expected my capital armycom is kidnapped, even though my capital is a C/K at 100% loyalty, these Noldo dudes are just tough. I destroy 2835 and create a camp there transferring all TI and staying put, to make more warmashines. Harad moves out to block at 2736 as expected, leaving his capital empty. Ahhhh...I should have charged it, with two dragons I would have wiped it. My other army of 1500 HI moves to 2535 C/F joined by three emis.

Turn 19:

IK: My 2300 HI encounters a NG army at 3120 and the other FP army has moved on to 3222 met by DS armies, luckily 3221 still stands. But new FP icons have arrives at 3119 and 3017, IK needs new dragons ASAP. Down south another Harad commander kidnapped at 2634 and a HUGE showdown are triggered at 2534 as I move in 13 IK/QA characters including all IK and QA agents and 4 skilful emis. Thergors 75 double scout reveals a LOT of hostile and unknown FP characters including a Noldo agent, so no doubt Noldo have a squad here, it must be the powerful agent squad. Ohhh boy next turn shall be interesting it can either turn into a disaster or a big scoop. Hoarmurath locates RoW on the ground at 2635, what happened here, a showdown with Corsairs and Noldo ?

QA: My 1500 HI reaches 2534 which Harad upgrades to castle, but my army is met by 4000 corsairs troops as well, so we should have enough to wipe the center. I also see Corsairs arriving at 2634 with an army, so things are looking good. Next turn Harad should be down to his capital in the south !!! Seeing that I had two dragons and that I stayed at 2835, I though Harad would see the danger at his capital and hide it with mantel of Doriath, so I decide to move the HC to regain my lost capital at 3034. But again Harad capital is left empty and a new Harad army is blocked at 2835 where I build a tower. Drat, that's the second chance I had to wipe his capital which is not taken.

Turn 20:

IK: Ohhhhh nooooo, again my plans are thwarted by my puking unluck, it was the Noldo curse squad at 2534. This cannot be right, how the in heavens name can a 75 double scout fail to scout Non-agents like Elrond and Glorfindel ??? This Noldo dude is the most lucky creature I have played against. If I had known this I would have massacred his curse squad, instead he cursed out Gorthog one of my best agents and all my actions towards his expected agent squad fails. At least my best agent who is unknown to Noldo wipes the scouted Noldo agent, which apparently was the company commander, as it strands his Curse squad at 2534 where all my characters stayed put. I better have some luck next turn, I or shall go berserk. RoC is with Elladan at 2634 and Gildor is dead as expected. In the north my army wipes the NG HC army at 3120 and is greeted by a new large Sinda army and a FP and DaL army. At last a new dragon is encountered, which will go to Hukor at capital.

QA: Ohhh yea, both 2534 and 2634 are wiped leaving Harad only with his capital in the south. The Harad campaign is overall going well as other DS armies arrives at 2730 and 2632. 2534 is recamped, where Elrond, Cirdan and Glorfindel

shows up. My HC army stays at 3034, as I was certain Noldo would move in and hide capital, but once again his capital is empty. Corsairs armies gathering at 2735 and 2636, for the last push against his capital. Harad tries to destroy my C/T at 2835 but fails and he now has zero armies in the south. If he wants to save his capital, he can now only hide it.

Turn 21:

Yeaaa, the luck seems to have turned slightly. I manage to steal Tinculin and Noldos +50 mage artefact at 2534, and killing off a Harad guard as well, but in return he curses yet another 83 agent away and moves off. At least his curse squad is paralyzed for the time being with 90 points of mage artefacts removed. We manage to defeat the Sinda army at 3120 and I gather another 2000 HI + Angurth in there. I gather all my agents and mages at 3123. RoW is still on the ground at 2635, within striking distance, and my double agent Cirdan also located on RoW location. Ohhhh boy, what do I do now. Noldo will no doubt send everything in to recover RoW. Do I play it safe and just develop my curse squad now I have Tinculin or do I go for the big showdown where I could either lose or win big time?

More DS armies in northern Harad and a new QA HC army being build at 3136 for the destruction of Harad. Harad seems doomed. Emis are now also working on the most western dwarven pops.

Turn 22:

Yeaaaa haaaaaa, its party time....

I decided to pledge my mothers soul and put everything on black and roll the dice. I sent in 14 heroes, a nice mixture of mages, agents and emis and won first round as I managed to pick up RoW even though Noldo tried as well !!! As expected Noldo arrived as well with a full gang of his seven most powerful agents, emis and mages and some Harad backup, but where the hell is Elrond ? Don't tell me I scouted Elrohir and Cirdan, but not Elrond. This must be the showdown of the century; around 25 powerful characters, and all the nasty artefacts in play like RoW, RoC, Tinculin, Vilya...uhhhh I don't think I have the nerve to open my next turn. I have a few jokers in my sleeve though, which I hope will make my day. In the mean time I also gather 1700 QA HC with 40 warmashines at 3238, ready to ambush Harad capital. Its judgement day...

Turn 23:

YEAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA.....SUCCESS !!!

I must be dreaming, this is out radius, this can't be true. But it is, what stunning success. With a mixture of unseen luck and great decisions I pull off what can only be described as divine success. I think these feelings needs to be experienced, words cannot describe them justified. I think this is one of the moments that really define why I play ME. I guess Noldo didn't expect me have transferred his mage artefacts to my main mages that fast and that I picked up some nice +2250 combat artefacts along the way !!! Here is what happened: Gaurhir (154 ch) challenged and killed Elladan (who had RoC) and assassinated a Harad agent. Hoarmurath (175 ch) challenged and killed Glorfindel who was also company commander. Elrohir (who apparently was supposed to have had RoC) tries to assassinate my 77 emis, but is instead killed himself in the attempt, handing over 6 juicy artefacts including Gurthanc, Elenya and Ring of Bleeding. The funny part is that I tried to double Elrohir with a 65 emis and failed, if I had succeeded, Elrohir would probably not have been killed in the attempt. So RoC must have been relocated to one of the Noldo emis, who doubled Gaurhir as expected.

My large HC army reaches Harad capital as well. Ohhh boy I would give my left arm to have seen this Noldo dudes face when he opened his turn....

Turn 24:

Yeaaaaaaa the success is complete. At 2635 I assassinate Cirdan and the Noldo emis with RoC, while Harad capital is destroyed !!! Noldo only escape with one single emis, who lives to tell the frightening tales of the Nasgul ambush. So in two-three turns I manage to slay Cirdan, Elladan, Elrohir, Glorfindel along with some agents and emis and acquire around 12 nasty artefacts, including two spirit, three top mage and three top agent artefacts, a +20 com and the "safe at sea" artifact. I think this is among one of the most successful ambushes I have done in my ME career, I nearly get tears in my eyes...

In the north IK arrives at 2619 with 2500HI + two dragons, only to see it belonging to DaL.

Turn 25:

OK, time to rearrange artefacts, characters and companies. With all these mage and spirit artefacts, first priority is to build my own curse squad as fast as possible. My three best mages are Gaurhir with 53, Hoarmurath with 65 and Akhorahil with 50 mage skill. This will take a long time to reach 200 total mage skill. To speed up time, I will name low level characters to challenge Gaurhir and Akhorahil up in skill. With the "safe at sea" artefact, I can make some nice surprise attacks on SG, so I move my HC towards Vamag where I still have my Vamag fleet stranded.

In the north my IK army arrives at 2421, which a Duns army is defending. Also the FP are working heavily on all my MM pops, they are really determined to remove our dragon capacity.

Turn 26:

We are back on the offensive. My agent squad arrives at 2430 Harad town, but nobody is home. Meanwhile I have studied the map and changed my military plans. My next main goal is SG, but the problem is that I cannot really get any troops into action, I only have my small fleet. But if I can capture Pelargir and rebuild the bridge, I could get all my HC across and attack SG supported with agents and curse.

At 2421 I fight 1200 Duns HC, but my dragon wipes him clean. A new FP army has arrived at 3120 though.

Turn 27:

My agent squad arrives at Pelargir, where Tarondor is present with 100 troops. But the best part is that the loyalty is down to 23%. NG must be in serious trouble. My plan is to sail in 750 HC St/St, so that I can destroy any defending army he may have or move in, so my emis can take the center.

IK arrives at 2622 also DaL pop with 1300 HI, but this time I'm greeted by a huge SG army. At 3120 FP destroys the DaL town. I send in a new wave of 2000 HI army which is blocked by a cardolan army. It's nice to see my allied DaL and DoL arriving as well to protect the front gates of Mordor.

Turn 28:

Can't believe I feel for that trick. NG had named a new character as "Regent Tarondor", and in my eager I didn't noticed in the scout report, so I targeted the wrong ID. Well, this will not save him, as my agents stayed put and the emis squad and the navy arrived as planned !!! The front gate of mordor looks quiet after we wiped the Cardolan army.

Turn 29:

Yeaaa first part o the NG plan succeeded. Agents took care of the three NG characters, navy destroyed the small NG army while emis cleaned up. Pelargir taken and timber transferred in. 2000 QA HC in place to move across the river, when the bridge gets rebuild. "Regent Tarondor" could only fool death for a single turn. Now we go for phase two - Minas Anor. Only annoyance is the assassination of an IK armycom at 3123 recruiting, so they have started targeting IK.

Turn 30:

More success, my Pelargir army (plus recruits) moves on to NG capital along with the emis and agent squad. Here I find 1100 NG troops defending a capital at 35 loyalty. The bridge gets rebuild and 2000 QA HC arrives at 2926 as well under Gargal who is now 80 skill. Also 1500 IK HC is moved down to 3028 to join the invasion as well.

Around Mordor Woodmen arrives at 3020 with an army and two agents show up at IK capital, hmmmmm. My three mages training for the curse squad are nearly ready. Just need two more spell learned, but they are stealing like crazy from me.

Turn 31:

Yep, the NG invasion is complete as Minas Anor fall as well to my emis raid, and two more NG commanders bites the dust. IK and QA combine 5000 HC and

64 warmashines at Pelargir. And my agents squad covers the IK capital and 3123 (from where I have had heavy thefts last couple of turns), so that the last mage can learn curse. I'm ready for a full scale surprise invasion on SG, with everything I have !!!

I now see three armies FP armies around front Mordor, where one is 1600 Woodmen HC which destroyed both the camp and tower at 3020. Hmmm, wonder what they are up to now...



Turn 32:

Excellent news as I see NG has been eliminated !!! There is nothing more satisfactory than a well laid plan which ends with the destruction of an enemy. Now I have SG on the menu.....I bet SG got quite a shock when he read his turn. Agent squad at SG capital where I also find a DrL agent squad, but no targets. QA land 3000 HC with 62 warmashines at 2527 unopposed. Curse/emis squad land at 2327 where I find 1000 SG troops. IK land 1500 HC at 2626 apposed by a small SG army. And last another emis squad hit 2427, so I can clear the way to SG capital..

The only downside is that got an Armycom with 500 HC kidnapped at 2924 City/citadel, must be the Duns as he knew that I was there. Better cast a LAT on the artefact he was wearing, so I get the name. On front Mordor three FP armies are moving around evasively...and I move out a blocking force not catching any.

Turn 33:

SG campaign continue smoothly as QA arrive at SG capital with 2700 HC and 60 warmashines under 84 armycom unopposed after taking 2527. Another high rank QA armycom moves around threatening new build camps/villages together with the emis squads, while the IK 1200 HC arrive at 2424. Expecting Duns to hit Pelargir, I try and ambush with my agent and curse squad, but again no targets I don't see any hostile armies and 2223 has been transferred to Eot, so is the rest really just mobbing up ? The only real annoyance is that I located the agent "Ilfirin" (who wiped my armycom at 2924) also at 2227. How on earth could he know I was moving here with my main army. Did he do a scoutarmyfollow ? Well it's still a 84 armycomm and I have a backup, so I ought to be OK, but I have an itchy feeling...

At 3120 I block a Woodmen army together with an DoL army and another FP army arrives just outside at 3219, hope not this is a huge HC army going for DoL. Good thing I have 2000 HC coming out from IK capital next turn, better give Dol some aid. What shall I do with my agent squad and curse, protect my main army at 2227 or go for the likely invasion on DoL ?

Turn 34:

OHHHHHHH dear, what a disastrous turn.

Almost everything that could go wrong goes wrong. I wipe SG capital, but both commanders get kidnapped removing 2000 HC and 60 warmashines, which was needed to take the Sind MT and 2223. Of course I also take the wrong decision with my agents/curse, so for the third round no targets at 2227 which has been pulverized. I'm being punished for my defensive play. I now hold all of the starting SG pops (except 2223), but SG encounters me with an army at 2425, where on earth did that come from ?

As expected a full FP invasion on DoL capital with three Arthedain/Woodmen armies totalling around 6000 troops, but my 2000 HC gets blocked at 3222 (together with a DaL army) which Arthedain has taken with emis....that sneaky little rat. I really fear for DoL and now IK is in danger as well. This is not good, not good at all...

Turn 35:

A mixed turn.

In the SG area SG fights back and retakes a center and wipes 1200 HC with his own HC army. Another Eot army arrives at another pop, so finally SG/Eot is fighting back. I only have 1000 HC in the area now....I really wish I had those 2000

extra HC which were kidnapped away. Time to start some new recruitment in this area, or he will retake it all again.

To counter the Duns agent threat, I rearrange my characters into a powerful agent/emis group, where Thergor receives RoW and double scouts with 116 skill !!! They move to the Eot MT at 2223, so I can remove this threat, but again no targets (really annoying)...except for the DrL agent squad showing up as well. Seems like the DrL player has exactly the same thoughts as me ...

At least I have more luck with my curse team landing at 3121, which Gaurhir with 80A30S also is part of. First of all I successfully block the Arthedain/Woodmen attempt to reach my capital exactly at 3121 with 1900 combined HC (after taking 3222). Secondly a FP agent squad shows up at my IK capital, with Artamir and Shapechanger showing up. These are the ones who harassed IK earlier on, so time to get some payback !!! Also Meneldir is still at 3221 with his large army...I'm really worried for IK now, seems like he is planning to knock out IK as well.

Turn 36:

A VERY eventful turn.

First of all my worst fear is realized as I learn that DoL has collapsed, so we are now three nations down, what a strike in the face. When the BIS nation is offered to the remaining team, I quickly request the position. Luckily I get the position and find that BIS is actually in pretty good condition, with 5 cities, (three at/near 100 loyalty), including the Arthedain starting capital at 1407. So how on earth could he let DoL collapse ? BIS has a curse squad at 1514 with 60% combined chance of a kill. Also three emis are located at Cardolan capital where they were tried challenged by Tharudan and Dudonis. Seems like BIS has focused on emis and mages.

Anyway in the SG area I assassinate the SG armycom at 2425 removing the army and encounter the Eot HC army with 500 HC + smaug. I prepare to start new HC recruitment at Pelargir and 2327 where I move my last 300 HC army in the region. Sadly another Eot army shows up at 2924, which is down to 20 in loyalty. Also my emis/agent squad only gets 2223 down to two times marginal/rebellious, that's just my luck

Around front Mordor I curse out the prime FP agent at my capital and assassinate another woodmen agent at 3121 which I scouted. The FP turns out to have 2200 HC at 3121 and wins the battle, moving the remains around into 3222 together with General Melendir and his large army. I unite both my prime agent squad and curse team at IK capital to protect for the invasion I expect, but once again no targets except for Meneldir next to Dammit, they now have free access to inner Mordor and to IK capital, I really hope my DaL and FK allied can counter these armies. At least I have 1000 new HC with ST armor/weapon ready to move out. I upgrade IK capital to City/citadel (100), just in case they decide to go for IK.

Turn 37:

Excellent turn.

I try out a blind curse hit on Tharudan around 1513 and succeed with only 60% chance, the best part is that the two QA commanders (including Gargal at 84C) is released along with a high rank BIS emis !!! So it was Sinda that nasty rat who nailed my QA armies in SG. Bls also moves 1200 HI into 1817 which I find to be a Cardolan MT.

In SG a new Eot HC army arrives at 2527 along with two Corsairs armies and SG invades 2626 with an army. From a recon I learn that SG has a city at 2624, so this is where all his

troops are coming from, better pay it a visit soon. I start new HC recruitment at 2927 and 2327 which is being upgraded to MT. An emmie moving back to 2223 to finish the job now find it a dwarven MT. Dammit, he has transferred it to dwarves so he can start recruitment.

Around front Mordor I also curse out Meneldir, stranding his backup commander with the army at 3222. I encounter him with 1000 IK HC, which tried to reach DaL capital for the rescue. Apparently the other FP armies are being blocked just outside DaL capital at 3323. After a lot of defensive turns without targets, I go in the offensive and unite my agents/emis and curse squad at 1922 which I have learned is the new Duns capital. And finally I'm rewarded with not only one target, but as many as three targets.... and once again I'm joined by my mind-alike DrL allied. The good part is that Duns only has one (army)commander and 1922 is low on loyalty. Also I find a 70+ Sinda agent in here....mmmm jummy.

Turn 38:

At 1922 I slay all three targets, take the Duns capital with my emis and double the best of the DrL agents. I decide to reward the Corsairs/DrL player and transfer Gurthanc back to him, so he can rebuild his curse squad again. I move on to Cardolan capital at 1513 with the agent squad backed up by the BIS curse squad and find three more targets as well as an entire CL agent squad....how nice. My second curse squad move back to capital to finish off the remaining Arthedain army at 3222, and save capital in case he attempts to threaten it.

In SG area I suffer some setbacks as SG and Eot go in the offensive arriving with armies in several of my towns, retake Minas Arnor with emis and hit another town with emis. Guess its time to move in agents and curse full scale to clear up the mess once and for all.

Around Mordor the last FP presence is removed as Arthedain suicide against the walls of 3222 and DaL clear off the other FP armies next to his capital.

Turn 39:

Just as I was about to launch an attack on the Sinda MT at 2325 with 1500 HC and 30 warmashines, QA get two army commanders taken out at my new city at 2327. Thank goodness both armies had backups, so I saved the armies but I don't have clue if the intruders are still present. Ohh dear, this must be the work of SG/Eot, so they have assassins capable of taking out 70+ armycoms, really bad news. Well I shall have my revenge soon, as I land with 1400 HC at the new SG city capital at 2624 defended by a small army. Also I finally find the Eot Capital well hidden in the mountain of 2523.

I land my agent/emis squad at 2223 where I find a high level juicy Eot emis, while SG/Eot land in a few more centers with their remaining armies. No more playing around, it's time for punishment !!!

Turn 40:

An eventful turn with lots of action in the SG area. I land with single agents and curse teams around nearly all major centers I have around SG and find targets in nearly all of them, good lord next turn shall be bloody. My main squad land in Eot capital at 2523 where I find two more targets. I capture the SG capital and get blocked by an Eot army coming out from his capital. Thank goodness my other HC army survives at 2327, but I arrive at 2325 to find that Corsairs had already taken it and to make things worse I see from my Sinda

double agent that Sinda is present with his main agent squad as well....To make things worse I get the last armycom cursed out at 2327 and Eot suicide against the wall at Pelargir, while a lot of emis show up. The curse squad must be SG/Eot as I saw Uirdiks show up next to 2327 last turn. So now I also have to deal with a curse squad from this player. This guy is really beginning to annoy me, I thought the SG area would be an easy task with all the guns I brought in, but he is fighting back excellent. Also I locate on the artifacts the assassin took from my armycom and learn the name of his two assassins. And finally I learn that the new Duns capital is at 1520.

Turn 41:

SG/Eot was hit hard as I took out 6 of their characters with curse and assassins and removed all armies they had in the region as well !!! I figured that SG/Eot would hit my city at 2327 to remove my recruiting army, so I set up a trap. I moved my army out and instead moved in a single agent with a +2250 weapon, while moving a curse squad next to. And SG/Eot sure as hell didn't disappoint me, he arrives with both his curse team and his agent squad at the spot. I also scout the entire Eot emis squad at the former SG capital, so juicy targets here as well. My main agent/emis squad lands at 1520 the new Duns capital finding only a 60+ mage. I also land a BIS emis squad at the Eot capital and unite my remaining 1800 HC just outside Eot Capital, to finish him off. As expected SG/Eot take Pelargir from me (but he shall not hold it for long !!!) In the mean time IK is getting ready for a large scale HC invasion in Mirkwood....

Turn 42:

YEAAAAAAAAAAAAA....it's party time. This is just brilliant, an almost flawless turn with so much destruction that the SG/Eot player really must be shaking his head. If I was him I would run home to mamma now. At 2327 I challenge out his best agent and assassinate his second best agent, while my curse team successfully nails his best curse mage. At 2624 I take out an Eot emis/commander, stranding his entire emis squad...while I move in more agents to clean up :-). He of course takes the MT with his emis, but I move in 1000 HC, so its mine again next turn.

My main agent/emis squad takes out the Duns mage (gaining a lot of nice artifacts) and takes the MT, ending the life of Duns !!! Operation "Mirkwood wipe-out" begins as IK land 3500 HC at 2718 with 30 warmashines commanded by Hukor (level 94(134) com skill), ready to invade 2514, while my agent squad hit the Sinda capital at 2413, finding only a low level agent. My curse team sadly finds zero targets around 2414 to curse, but I expect the Sinda agent squad to hurry back for the rescue, so I think I will stay around.

Unfortunately I never learn the full effect of my Mirkwood invasion, as the FP concedes later in the turn....

Turn 43:

An excellent GB game ends which has given me some great moments. The end stats are as follows:

- 1) IK 1950 (2150)
- 2) QA 1600 (1800)
- 3) Corsairs 1441 (1641)

Thanks to everyone for a great game.....

Kim Anderesen

Player Ratings

For more information on how these ratings are calculated, and what each means, please take a look at our website:
www.middleearthgames.com

Valar Rating

Ranking	Rating	Player
1	1980	John Seals
↑2	1810	Andrew Jones
↑3	1787	David Ruzic
↑4	1787	James Adams
↑5	1763	Ben Shushan
↓6	1756	Sam Roads
↓7	1755	Steven Johnston
↑8	1751	Scott McKennon
↓9	1735	Clint Oldridge
↓10	1729	Mike Sankey

Maia Rating

Ranking	Rating	Player
1	1945	Ernest Hakey
2	1855	Andrew Jones
↑3	1838	John Briggs
↑4	1835	Paul Moreno
↑5	1835	David Holt
↓6	1832	Alan Jeffrey
↓7	1830	Alain Deurwaerder
↑8	1818	Bernd Luehrsen
=9	1812	Mike Barber
↑=9	1812	David Crane

Istari Rating

Ranking	Rating	Player
1	2322	Steven Mcabee
↑2	2102	Kim Andersen
↑3	2043	Andrew Jones
↓4	1980	Ernest Hakey
↑5	1949	Frederick Young
↓6	1947	Clint Oldridge
↓7	1874	Chelsey Coughlin
↓8	1848	Mike Sankey
↑9	1816	Eric Lundahl
↑10	1779	Robert Hine

Nazgul Rating

Ranking	Nazgul	Player	Games Played	Games Won	Games Dropped
↑=1	100%	David Ruzic	10	10	
=1	100%	James Adams	10	10	
↑3	100%	Brian Jurczyk	7	7	
↑4	100%	Stuart Milligan	5	5	
↑5	100%	Marcin Dylewski	5	5	
↑6	92%	Sam Roads	12	12	2
↑7	90%	Kim Andersen	10	9	
↑=8	89%	Steven Johnston	9	8	
↑=8	89%	Dave Griffiths	9	8	
↑10	86%	Mark Farrior	7	6	

Ainur Rating

Ranking	Rating	Team Name Or Captain
1	1920	David Ruzic
2	1799	GM
↑3	1780	John Simpson
4	1725	US 2
5	1720	The Sarumen – Retired
↓6	1689	Aussie
↑7	1676	US 1
↑8	1663	Jerry Mellerick
↑9	1659	Alain Deurwaerder
10	1654	Marc Pinsonneault

Council of the Wise – Enemy Player

Ranking	Votes	Player
↑1	9	Guy Roppa
↑2	9	John Briggs
↑3	8	Steve Muller
↑=4	7	David Holt
=4	7	Paul Brandon
=4	7	R. Kevin Given
↓=7	7	Clint Oldridge
↑=7	6	Matt Ashley
↑=9	5	Michael Welsch
↑=9	5	Mike Barber
↑=9	5	John Lamulle
↑=9	5	Ernest Hakey
↑=9	5	Alain Deurwaerder

Council of the Wise – Individual Player

Ranking	Votes	Player
1	31	Ernest Hakey
↑2	24	Brad Brunet
↑3	21	Clint Oldridge
↑4	18	Michael Welsch
↑=5	17	Derren Beyer
↑=5	17	David Holt
↑=7	15	Drew Carson
↑=7	15	Jeffrey Horne
↑=7	15	Ian Etechells
↑=10	14	John Lamulle
=10	14	John Gates
↓=10	14	Matt Ashley

Council Of the Wise – Team Player

Ranking	Votes	Player
↑1	27	Ernest Hakey
↑2	24	Brad Brunet
↑3	22	John Briggs
↑=4	19	Michael Welsch
↑=4	19	David Holt
↑6	18	Mike Barber
↑7	17	Ian Etechells
↑8	16	Drew Carson
↑=9	15	Laurence Tilley
↑=9	15	Stephen Allen



Echoes of the Past: Team Dynamics

By Wes Fortin

[This article first appeared in the *Mouth of Sauron*]

I am, by profession, a sales rep with 10 years experience, an Army vet, and a wargamer. As a result, I've been on lots of teams with varying goals, and have a decent understanding of the human mind (an understanding which I've been known to forget when something triggers my nasty temper - 10 years of experience and all common sense go out the window. I'm getting better though (sorry again, Game 32ers)). Personality conflicts do erupt and can USUALLY be overcome if all involved are willing to do so. However, there is another factor that greatly affects how team members interact. This factor is the perception of each member of "what a team is".

I perceive two basic categories of team mentalities, the Pack and the Hive. Each has strengths and weaknesses, and everyone I've ever worked with (including myself) falls into one or the other category. Think of these two categories as opposite poles. I suspect a cross section of society with these two extremes as poles, and in-between being degrees of commitment to that mentality, would yield a nice bell curve, but I digress.

The Pack

If you get ticked off at that guy that suggests army movements, recruiting, character actions, and such for several (maybe all) nations every turn, then you are probably in this category.

For you, the biggest issue is freedom! You want to run your nation the best way you can and don't want anyone else telling you what to do. You feel insulted and feel your competence is being questioned when someone tries to "run your nation for you". You are generally willing to help out your buddy, but on your terms. Your dream MEPBM team is a group of competent, like-minded and compatible personalities. Your group of 10 would represent the best players in the game and each of you would give their all to crush the enemy.

Maybe there is a Pack leader, but he's more of a cheerleader, rules guru, and sounding board for the Pack's ideas.

Strengths of the Pack:

This is, in my experience, the prevalent perception of "what a team should be" by most of the MEPBMs I've met. So, there's lots of you to enjoy team experiences together!

If the Pack leader gets knocked out or a team member turns out to be less than what you hoped, there is minimal impact to the rest of the team.

Packs can be tough to defeat (as a team) because each member views the game in terms of their position. If one member drops out, the impact on the rest is minimized because they have built their nations as best they can, so they can keep "running" with reasonable effectiveness.

Pack teams tend to be more unpredictable. The lack of a detailed global strategy by the pack means the opponents can never be sure what's going on. So, lots of effort can be spent by your enemy trying to prepare for the worst case scenario.

Good Pack teams tend to win quickly. You've got competent players hammering the opposition in the best way they can. This creates confusion in your enemy as they try to figure out how to stop the latest threat(s). A slow enemy gets overrun quickly by a good pack.

Weaknesses of the pack player/team:

Pack members tend to view the progress of the entire game through the eyes of their nation (yeah, I listed this as an advantage, but it's also a disadvantage). If they are losing, then things look bad for the team -- in their perception

Packs tend to collapse quickly in tough times. The whole Pack mentality lends itself to the quick strike. Patton's quote of "Hold 'em by the nose and kick 'em in the ass" is your motto. If your nation is crippled, you can't count on much long term help from the other members of the pack because they are trying to do their own thing with their own resources. Enough crippled Pack members greatly reduces the overall impact of the Pack.

Logistics is tough for pack members. It's important to you not to have everyone asking for your production (Gold, MO, LE, ST, whatever) every blasted turn. You'll do what you can, but have no desire to have one or more characters sit at your capitol issuing transport orders every turn to everyone else. Before you know it, all your orders are taken by someone else and you can't do any of those things you need to do to keep your nation strong and on the offence.

This is not to say Pack members don't cooperate. I know a MEPBMer that will give supplies, pop centres, whatever you ask. But if you try to tell him how to move his armies or characters, he's likely to tell you what to do with your plan and hold the flashlight for you!

Packs tend not to have focused attacks. Everyone does what they think is best (which is not a bad thing), but "what is best" may be different for each nation and may differ in the perception of each player.

Packs don't do well against Hives. One or two nations attacking the resources of 10 or more gets real ugly for the pack.

The Hive

If you like your team to have detailed plans each turn, to play your team like a single well run nation, then you are, most definitely, a hiver.

I was reluctant to use this term (hiver) because immediately, some folks will say "Wes, you're calling this type of gamer a drone" which is usually thought of as derogatory. Not so. Watch a bee hive or an ant community. Perhaps the Borg for you Trekkers out there. Every action of the individual is coordinated with the whole for maximum effect.

You aren't focused on individual achievement, but on team achievement. You give up some of your freedom to allow for the kind of close coordination the hive demands -- and you don't mind. You can't stand it when there isn't a detailed plan and full cooperation/disclosure from other players. Your dream MEPBM team is a group of competent, like-minded and compatible personalities. Your group of 10 would represent the best players in the game that worked closely together to crush the enemy and absorb the best attacks the enemy has to give.

Hives, like packs, don't require leaders -- but since they are planning for 10 or more nations each turn, someone has to collate the data and put out a plan for everyone to see, refine, and agree to.

Strengths of the Hive

Whatever the hive does, it is focused and brutal. When the hive attacks, you face the resources of every member of the hive. Maybe troops, agents, money, supplies, whatever (where the hell did the Blind Sorcerer get that Steel/Steel HC from!). Same is true on the defence. The hive is tough to crack. Even an average Hive in Mordor is VERY DIFFICULT to beat. When a member is getting pounded, he gets the supplies he needs, back up capitol sites, whatever. Forget trying to eliminate a hive nation-by-nation.

Logistics is a breeze. If you need something and someone can get it to you, you know WHO will do so and when. No guesswork about it! It's all in the plan.

Because of their close coordination, hive members can specialize their nation based on their nation's strengths or their play style. This doesn't mean one dimensional nations -- but there is a definite focus. This allows the team to maximize all the advantages they can.

Because everyone knows what everyone else is doing, and what resources are available, the team avoids redundancy and quickly builds what it needs. If the hive feels it needs more agents -- not a problem. If the hive's goal is to suck up all the artefacts, every mage on the team will have an assignment and more mages will be built if needed.

Hives keep building up steam. The longer the game runs, the more resources are available to the hive. If you are loosing to a hive, don't expect it to get any better.

Hives can react to losses faster. Hives think in terms of total resources. So, if they are loosing agents or tax base or whatever, they will notice quickly and compensate. Packs might not notice that the total number of emissaries on the team is too low (for example).

Weaknesses of the Hive player/team:

You are in the minority. Most others (being Pack types) will look at you like some sort of tyrant when you try to lay out a detailed plan - which is nearly impossible because the pack types will often outright refuse to give you all their information. Good luck in trying to find 10 good hive players.

Because of all the resource sharing, the capitols of the hive nations can be juicy targets for enemy agents. The Hive must make sure that the supply lines stay up.

Because the nations tend to be specialized, the loss of one impacts everyone else. If you put the hurt on, for example, their sugar daddy, you can cause several members of the hive to go bankrupt or scale back operations due to loss of funds.

Hives tend to be more predictable. The enemy will quickly figure out what the hive is up to and has the opportunity to respond -- if it can.

Hives have to work harder to compensate for a poor/obnoxious player. If you can't count on a hive member to issue orders competently, get turns in, or "play well with others" -- the whole plan may be effected since so many nations are interdependent. Yes, the hive can compensate, but the whole suffers.

Team type vs. Team type (all assume equal play)

Pack team vs. Hive team	the Pack gets swarmed (hehehe).
Pack vs. Pack	A fast paced and exciting game.
Hive vs. Hive	A VERY LONG game.

Mixing Mentalities on a team (some Pack types with some Hivers).

ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?!

The two don't mix well. Since most players are towards the middle (hence less polarized) part of the bell curve I mentioned earlier, people with slight but opposing tendencies can get along -- but things can get tense. Those toward the ends of the curve are like matter and antimatter. It is very important to identify the tendencies of everyone early on! Hivers are the guys that get comments like "do you wanna run my nation for me?" or "who died and made you god?". Pack types are usually the ones penning those comments. If you build your team carefully (team or grudge game), you'll ensure everyone is the same type.

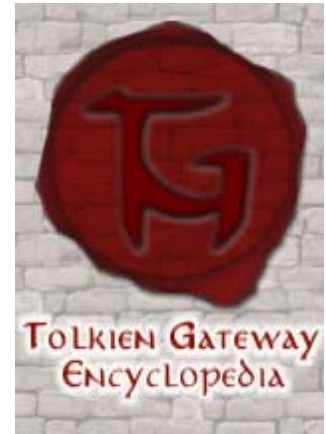
If you join a game as an individual (the standard game), try to be tolerant of your opposite. If you join as a team and find yourself unwittingly surrounded by your opposite, I pity you.

Just a side note: Almost everyone is a Pack type their first game. You want to explore the rules and find out what you can really do. After you settle in, then your natural tendencies of how you want to work with a team come out.

In summary, it is my opinion that MEPBM team conflicts are due, in part, to the wide variety of personality mixes. But I feel the biggest factor in the team dynamic is how the team fundamentally defines itself - a hive, or a pack.

Medium Tip

Navies with artefacts and spells are very effective in combat. They can change a loss into a mutual sunk navies result, and if you keep your transports back for a later navy move then there's no enemy navy to stop you.



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