

Prelude to the Struggle



A two-player scenario for determining starting companies

by Nick Morawitz

"They first appeared in Middle-earth about the year 1000 of the Third Age, but for long they went about in simple guise, as it were of Men already old in years but hale in body, travellers and wanderers, gaining knowledge of Middle-earth and all that dwelt therein, but revealing to none their powers and purposes."

"The Istari," Unfinished Tales

In this scenario, you and your opponent are cloaked, unrevealed Wizards. You are each attempting to gather a company of characters together in Rivendell. In Middle-earth: The Wizards terms, this company will be your starting company that will adventure abroad in Middle-earth.

The Game

You must travel through Middle-earth visiting the home sites of the characters that you hope to recruit. You must attempt to persuade each character to journey to Rivendell and join the other characters in your fellowship. As these characters travel, they may acquire items and recruit other characters. Play proceeds as outlined in the standard ME:TW rules with the exceptions outlined below.

Getting Ready to Play

Follow the normal "Getting Ready to Play" process with the following exceptions:

- Start your Wizard at the *Grey Havens*. Place your Wizard's card face down to indicate that he is not revealed. None of his attributes and special abilities apply to this scenario.
- You may not start with any characters in play or in your play deck. Place all of your characters in an "available characters" pile—characters may

be brought into play by using the recruitment procedure (see below).

- You do not start with any minor items.
- You may not use a sideboard.

Your Wizard

Your Wizard may only do two things: he may move normally and he may attempt to bring characters into play (i.e., he may attempt to "recruit" characters). Specifically, the following restrictions apply:

- Your Wizard must move alone (i.e., when moving there may not be any other characters in his company).
- Your Wizard may not automatically bring characters into play—he must follow the recruitment procedure (see below).
- Your Wizard may not be attacked by hazard creatures, and he may not be targeted by any hazards.
- Your Wizard may not enter any sites; and, thus, he will not be able to play items, factions, allies, etc.
- Your Wizard may not use spells and resources that require skill.
- Your Wizard never makes corruption checks.
- Your Wizard may never tap for any reason.

Recruiting Characters

Your Wizard may attempt to bring a character into play at his current site during his organization phase. To attempt to bring a character into play, make a "recruitment" roll. If you have previously attempted to bring the character into play and failed, add four to the recruitment roll. The character only joins the Wizard's company if the result is greater than the character's mind attribute. The following restrictions apply to all recruitment attempts:

- A character may only be brought into play at his home site.



- During this scenario, you may only recruit one and only one character at each home site.
- A character may only be brought into play by following this recruitment process (e.g., cards like A Chance Meeting may not be used).

If you have a non-unique minor item in your hand when you recruit a character whose home site is not Rivendell, you may tap the character and play the item with him.

One of your characters may also attempt to bring a character into play following the procedure outlined above. However, the recruiting character's unused direct influence must be greater than or equal to the mind attribute of the character being recruited.

Special Rules

Any character that is normally required to be discarded, returned to your hand, or taken prisoner, is instead returned to your available characters pile.

The Victory Conditions

The normal victory conditions for a 1-deck game apply. However, instead of a marshalling point total you use the total of the mind attributes of your characters in Rivendell plus double the marshalling points for any items that they hold.

After the Scenario

Once this scenario has been completed, the players can play a completely normal ME:TW game. However, you may only start with those characters and their minor and major items that you had in Rivendell at the end of the scenario. No other cards from this scenario remain in play.

The winner of the scenario may start play with one additional minor item and/or one additional character with a mind attribute of four or less.