

WHISPERS OF THE WOOD



**FAME
SYSTEMS**
INC.

PO Box 160129 Miami, FL 33116-0129

forwarding & address correction requested



MAILED
JUL - 1988
FL
U.S. POSTAGE
0.52

WORDS FROM THE WOOD

My birthday is next month (no, I'm not going to rant about getting older--that's NEXT month's column!) and this got me to thinking about my childhood. As I ruminated on those bygone days, I was reminded of some of the things my parents would say to me, things that, even today, still do not make sense. For example, it's a summer day and I'm out with the gang playing War. Only it's time to come inside. I then ask my mom if I can stay outside a little while longer. She, of course, says no. So I reply with the standard--"But everyone else gets to stay out longer!" To which she replies: "If everyone jumped off a bridge, would you jump too?" Now, this makes no sense to me! Of COURSE I wouldn't! I'm talking about staying outside a half hour longer and she's asking me if I'll do a lemming impersonation. The scary thing is, what if I use that same line with my kids. . . ?

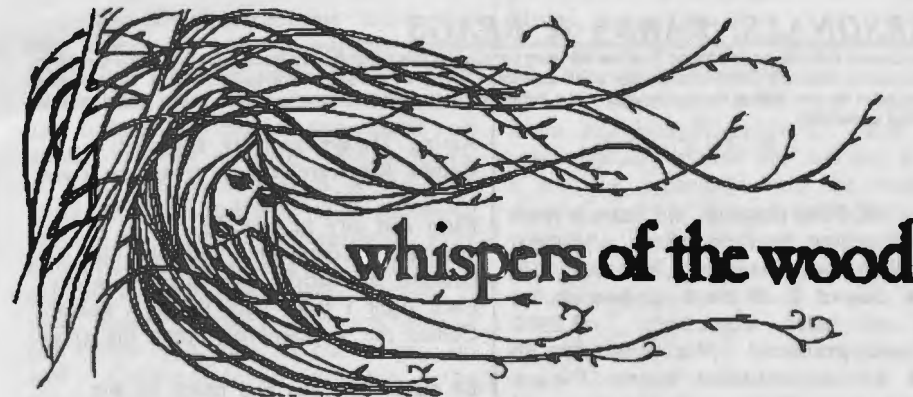
O.K., so you've got your Middle-earth: The Wizards cards and you're ready to conquer worlds. But wait! Now there is more that can improve your deck and your play! That's right, The ME: TW Companion has been released. This nifty player's guide has the complete rules, card lists and new scenarios to play. It's a must have for those serious ME: TW players. The Unlimited cards have also been released and we can get you all the cards you need. Starter packs are \$9.95 and the boosters are \$2.95. And if that wasn't enough, ME: TW-The Dragons expansion set has just been released. These expansion packs are \$2.95 as well and you get one rare, 4 uncommon and 10 common cards. It's a deal that can't be beat--and we're the company that can get the cards for you. So if you play Middle-earth: The Wizards, we're your one stop shopping center. If you don't play--why not?

Well, we have our first Fourth Age Whispers submission printed in this issue. It's an account of game events that have taken place and it's written by Eric Gallant. For those of you who are curious about the new Fourth Age scenario, here's a glimpse into the new vistas opening up soon. So make sure you take a gander.

O.K., it's time for the convention update. As you faithful readers know, GSI will be attending both Origins and GenCon, and we will be holding seminars at both conventions. At Origins, the seminar will be held on Friday, 7/5 at 6:30 PM and the event # is 434. Peter Stassun and Bill Feild will be on hand to answer your questions. We will also have a booth, #413, so stop by and say hi. We will be holding two seminars at GenCon--Friday, 8/9 and Saturday, 8/10 (which also happens to be my birthday!) at 8 PM. The event # is 700048. We will be on the dealer's floor in booth #28 and Peter, Bill and yours truly will be on hand to field questions and meet the players we only know by voice or email! So if you are going to be attending, be sure and stop by.

For those of you who have America OnLine, GSI now has our own area in the PBM Vendor section. It's our very own spot for people to congregate and talk about the game with other players and with the GSI staff. We will be monitoring the area to answer any questions which may be posed. We also have copies of the nation description sheets in the library and we hope to have an abridged copy of the rules online very soon. It's the perfect place to meet like minded players and talk about ME-PBM. So check it out!

While we're on the subject of email, you might want to drop in on our WWW page. As mentioned last month, we have made some changes to improve the site and we're pretty happy with the result. As mentioned in previous issues,



whispers of the wood

ALONG THE PATHWAYS

Words From the Wood.....	Inside Cover
EDITOR'S COLUMN	
Personals.....	1
COMMUNICATIONS.	
Unleashing the Dogs of War-Army Movement in Middle-earth.....	6
STRATEGY.	
Story of Spite.....	12
FICTION.	
Hall of Heroes	14
THE VICTORS.	

WHISPERS OF THE WOOD is a monthly publication primarily for the use and enjoyment of GSI players of STATE OF WAR and ME-PBM™. Subscription rates: \$15.00 for one year (12 issues) or \$25.00 for two years (24 issues). Individual issues cost \$1.75. GSI reserves the right to change these prices without prior notice of any type.

All material submitted to GSI for publication in WHISPERS OF THE WOOD becomes the property of GSI and can be utilized without author permission and/or author recompense for GSI self promotion, reprints and advertising purposes.

Credits

Editor.....Stuart Taft
Staff.....Yaman Battikhi, Frank Delarosa, Harold Ford, Michelle Heath, Stephanie Jones, Sabrina McNeely, Anthony Vialon
Publishers.....Pete Stassun & Bill Feild Jr

Editor's Note: GSI neither confirms nor denies the accuracy of any figures or the efficiency of any strategies published herein.

This Month's Cover: "Awakening" by Bryan Chapman

Volume XIII Issue #4
Published by GAME SYSTEMS INC
JULY 1, 1996
Copyright GSI 1996

(continued on p. 13)

PERSONALS: BARBS & BRAGS

Every current GSI player is entitled to a free 60 word personal in this column each issue, for each game they're in. Submissions require a \$2.00 charge for each additional set of 40 words (61-100 is \$2.00 etc.). Submissions should be in by the 15th of the month prior to the publishing date. GSI reserves the right to edit or refuse material deemed unsuitable.

GENERAL

ME-PBM players! We have a team of 12 willing to face 13 in a Super-grudge game! Dare you face us? We have played 2 of these games so far and we have won both! @2950 scenario preferred. We would like to face an experienced team. Please contact Eric Gallant at Mowbray@aol.com.

STATE OF WAR

GAME 85

Darkness has encompassed the land. Now the light that Lucifer brings will dawn upon a new era.

Florida, Louisiana, Maine, Utah & Texas all have fallen. Bruce, where were you? Our alliance reigns supreme. SOW is over.

Rip and tear the book from binding
Wood and steel with joy are grinding
Federal spies we still are finding
Turn the lies back on the giver
Comes the werewolves 'cross the river

Storm-blown trees and widow's rain
When said and done, twas all in vain
Restless still, we all must train
To care and give or stand and deliver
Comes the werewolves 'cross the river

Old age or youth be of concern
When this phrase is to discern:
"For your own good" politicians yearn

Acting always morally superior
Comes the werewolves 'cross the river

Farm and city in ruin lie
and yet to come more millions die
Disease, starvation, the children 's cry
Each fight I fight with death is nearer
Comes the werewolves 'cross the river

Be slight of ways and quick of wit
Or with the catbird will you sit
The hate and pain-when does it quit
War and politics, extensions of the other
Comes the werewolves 'cross the river

Middle-earth™ PBM circa 1650

GAME 103

Our cause is doomed. Three years of war and hopes are in ashes. Towns burn, the vile Free rage out of control, and few still stand to hold the remaining bastions of darkness. The long night is ending and dawn comes. North Gondor, Noldo, Sinda, Dunlendings, and Arthedain--It seems I bend knee to you at last!

Rhys

GAME 178

We the Free Peoples have given Sauron's remaining minions too much time to rebuild themselves. What seemed to be sure victory is now clouded. The struggle continues and it's for freedom.

Zarendarger

The Great Akhōrahil breaks his long silence to issue a warning to the final few who oppose him. Your fascination with the vocal Witch-king has bought us the precious time we needed to grow powerful. From 10 vs. 4, to 5 vs. 4, and soon to be less. Surrender now and live as a pampered slave in one of Sauron's Fine Enterprises. Resist and be fertilizer in one of Sauron's thorn fields. Listen to your former citizens who are joining our ranks each turn as our Emissaries and Commanders explain the Advantages of the Dark Side. Future offers will be more painful and humiliating. Join now with no sign-up fee! Please send replies to your nearest burning pop center.

Akhōrahil

Dear Z-man,

After repeated invitations, I have decided to visit your capital. I am sure it will be a most profitable and enjoyable trip

Sneaker (16)

GAME 195

"I know it's time to leave but my commanders want to continue the fight till we find the one. So be it. We march to our deaths."

Excerpts from

"Bain I, the Years of Trial"

GAME 199

Dear Princess Barfanhil of the Rude-ar, In response to your message/tantrum sent in May--before you point that Carrion stained paw at me, Know this.

#1 My lack of assisting the D.S.

In fact, until turn 10 when all Freeps in the east dropped, I was in combat with both Gondors, the Woodmen, Sinda, & the Northmen. 7

primary Freep characters fell on my blades during that time.

#2 My attacks on allies

I have not done one thing to harm my Nazgûl brothers. You and your neutral buddies are not my allies. I am not impressed with the way all neutrals boldly jumped in to help the winning side. There have not been more than 6 Freep nations active at one time since turn #1.

#3 My leeching off dead nations

The only dead nation I have leeched off of thus far is the Easterlings. They were, as you know, quite active when I started. The penalty for rushing to save me, from the non-existent Freeps, on turn #15!

You and the Haradwaith are yourselves vultures. If you had any spine you would have sided against us. That at least would have been entertaining. You chose the path that would put all 3 of you in the winners circle.

#4 Your single-handed defense of the Witch-king vs. the Noldo & Arthedain.

That should not even be a challenge!! Even a poor tactician would have conquered them by now. However, I just stole 7000 from the Arthedain this month. From his capital! With one attempt!!

I shall enjoy helping the Freeps crush a weakling such as you!

#5 Hoping to meet up with me in another game

I'm sure it will happen. From what I've seen of your abilities so far I pray we're on opposing sides. I find your pathetic existence to be amusing.

Let the battle begin!!!!!!

Orillion Darkblade

GAME 205

Finally, on turn 24, the Duns figure out how to use a dagger. Congratulations!! You have been the

first to inflict losses among my characters. I suggest you keep moving. Death follows you now.

Orillion Darkblade

Orillion the Gayblade,

As of May 28, 1996, Ren was no longer accounted among the living. Pick a new moron to lead your brood.

Lord Bowler

P.S. He did scream, beg, and whine before my agent ended his miserable life.

P.P.S. I told Lor the Fly to say hi to him from you before he died.

Aredhel smiled with a crazed gleam in his eyes. The second wave had proved successful, destruction was complete for the TWO. Leaning back in his throne of iron he took pause, then rang for his servants. "Prepare my chariot. I go to speak with our Lord Master."

All the Nazgûl stood in a stunned silence, huh? From what I've heard there are not many Nazgûl left. Let's see. Ren the Unclean... dead. Hoarmûrath... dead. Akhorahil... dead. Jí Indûr...dead. Úrzahil (not a Nazgûl but) ...dead. And Mûrazôr... dead. I would have to disagree, Mr. Darkblade.

GAME 209

Finally, the sleeping giants of the Free People awake! Maybe now things will get interesting.

GAME 212

Now, "drifter," you've insulted the benevolent ruler of Cardolan. The exacted price you will pay with, is your capital. Hallas brings forth his

war machine, all crumble before it. Hallas Brokenribs

GAME 215

Baranor was dragged in chains to Sir Psycho.

"I have come to surrender to your greatness."

"How did such a weakling come to rule South Gondor?"

"Your ally, Jí Indûr, killed the rest of the heirs to the throne."

"Yes, his agents were very successful. You will wish they had killed you too. Take him away and rip him limb from limb, but do it slowly."

As Baranor was taken away kicking and screaming he cried, "But you promised, no torture!"

"I lied." came the reply.

Sir Psycho

GAME 216

As Úvatha looked out at the three armies--Sinda, Easterlings, and his own--he knew much blood would be spilled, especially elven blood...Amusingly, this would be the first test of his troops in a real battle. The assault on Rhubar hardly counted, the "militia" being totally outclassed. Of course, both his force and that of the Easterlings out numbered the poorly led force facing them, and he had seen little evidence of cavalry ahead. He chuckled, thinking of his own force of infantry. Perhaps, indeed, it was time to recruit cavalry once more, so he could reclaim the title of Long Rider...

"Sir we must move."

ChoRam knew what had to be done. 9000 strong and it had been 4 months since battle. Ovatha nodded.

"Open the last seal and carry out your orders. Gondor, Mirkwood and the hills."

GAME 218

Two neutral nations have declared for the Free, but there is an air of uncertainty over Middle-earth.

The Witch-king and Dragon Lord are gone. So too is the nation of Southern Gondor. All wait to see which way the tide will turn.

GAME 219

"Sir, great news, the Witch-king has taken an early retirement package."

Elrond smiled. Now Rhudaur and the Dungs would pay for their treachery.

GAME 221

Killing in the name of...

Rage of "The Prophet"

P.S. Don't mess with the clergy!

GAME 225

Long Rider,

What goes around comes around. El & the Vaders

GAME 228

Let's see, it's turn 8. Dol Guldur fell last turn, Witch-king and Long Rider cower in their capitals, the Dog Lord and Dark Lieutenants armies are smashed, and the other Nazgûl can't even take Osgiliath. And let's not forget the Eothraim own all of Eastern Mordor! Hey Darkies, where's the beef?

Grystl for the Eothraim

GAME 231

How goes the war? All is quiet on the eastern front. We'll destroy the Quiet--Avenger that is.

The Prophet

P.S. Don't mess with the clergy!

GAME 237

The brave and honorable troops of Lord Argeleb salute the other armies in Angmar. (a friendly salutation to the armies of light and neutrals, a hand gesture salute to the Witch-king and his low life, scum sucking, dirt licking, bad ugly, cradle robbing, candy stealing, flower stomping, sheep violating, ignorant, enslaved troops). We understand early summer is the best time to visit the Grey Mountains. Once we clean out the vermin the pop centers there should generate some nice income. To the neutrals we send an invitation to join in the fun recreational activities and claim a few prizes for yourselves. Hope to see you soon.

Argeleb II

Mûrazôr,

I just got my degree in proctology, and I will not use a glove!!!

Hallas

Hey Ice Man,

I'm putting a contract out on you!

The Godfather (6)

Dear Next of Kin,

Ashturg was playing with his boats and sailed into the wake of my fleet. We turned to avoid him but our ships were so numerous that not all completed the turn in time. We searched for survivors but all hands on board were killed. We found your son clinging to a mast, but alas, he was dead.

Our most heartfelt condolences, Taurnil, Lord of the Sinda fleet
P.S. I've reprimanded the captain who hit your son's fleet. Hope you feel better.

GAME 238

The Duns have decided.
More messages to follow soon.
Enion

Adûnaphel,
DIE!! DIE!! DIE!!
Haruth and Carlon

GAME 239

Of the four horsemen: Death kills you immediately and honorably. War kills many and causes mass destruction. Disease kills you slowly, but you have pleasure while catching it and you can pass it on to someone else and still receive more pleasure. I kill you slowly with an agonizing emptiness, taking away your strength, causing your belly to grow though it is empty. I am--"Famine".

The Prophet
Sir Psycho
Famine

GAME 242

Greetings Fellow Dark Brothers,
Hail from Angmar, the polar wastes of the North. I promise to bring an early thaw for my foolish Free neighbors. Good hunting in the South! (I can be reached on email at wizard6@novalink.com) If I can be of any assistance, please write or email me.

Hail Sauron
Mûrazôr

Waulfa belched and yawned. "Send out scouts, the Sinda claim the Nazgûl are active."

"But my lord we have, and they have seen nothing. Of course, several are a week overdue, but nothing to worry about."

"Oh, okay, forget it."
Woodmen

Ohhh, the pain. What a hangover! Will the throbbing never end? Angamaitë was not a happy camper; he was also finishing off his sixth mug of ale this morning--after all, it was well past six o'clock and rapidly approaching eight. What is an unemployed pirate supposed to do when the world goes to war and there are no merchant vessels riding the waves loaded with gold and goods? Maybe apply for the government retraining program? He was going to have to come up with a job real quick: baby needs a new pair of shoes. Anybody out there have a job for an out of work, honest (well, this may be left out of the final resume), hard working pirate?

High Plains Drifter

GAME 243

Once again, the so-called Free Peoples have brought war to Middle-earth. The tyrant Elrond and his lackeys will not rest until all of Middle-earth is under their domination.

The Morgul Liberation Front

Middle-earth™ PBM
circa 2950

GAME 26

Rhûn is a wasted place. Only camps and villages remain of which was once major towns and towns. This is what we fight for now. The Khand army is being dealt with while a large Blind Sorcerer army is terrorizing our camps. What next?

Zarendarger

GAME 28

So, QA & Dog Lord are out. Now the endgame begins.
Thranduil

GAME 31

"My lord, we have destroyed four Dark Servant armies at our capital and now a fifth will meet its demise."
"Good, good," rumbled the voice, "let them come as flies to honey, for we will break them all."

GAME 33

The Woodmen are coming! The Woodmen are coming! Certain events may have shifted the power, so watch out. To the rest of the Free thanks.
Storm Bringer

GAME 46

"Goods--we thought you quit? It seemed after 8 turns you had given up, the nobler of you that is. Our team agreed to face 13 opponents but now

there is only 3 of you and your bruised egos won't allow you to quit. Please give up. Our \$6.50 means something to us. Do the right thing."

GAME 48

Gothmog studied the towns and villages surrounding the Sea of Rhûn. He did not fear the armies of his foes, but their navies made the towns and villages undefendable. He sighed, turned to his aide, and said, "We burn them." Culgor grinned.

GAME 50

No bridge at Pelargir, are the Gondors feeling the heat? The Woodmen making threats, Northmen in Mordor--what's next? If you're a Free person you don't want to know... 'cause it's gonna hurt. See ya soon cowards of Gondor & allies of incompetence.

Storm Bringer

UNLEASHING THE DOGS OF WAR PART 1: ARMY MOVEMENT IN MIDDLE-EARTH

by
Bradford Fisher

"Lord Theoden, I bring grave tidings from Denethor, Steward of Minas Tirith."

"Speak, Herald. The cut upon your brow tells me of much, but I would know the details. What news from Northern Gondor?"

"We are sorely beset at Minas Tirith. Host of the Enemy have crushed our outposts in Illithien and crossed the Anduin. Denethor reminds you of the old ties between our realms and begs for the aid of the House of Eorl. The valor of the Riddermark is renown. With the aid of your riders we could yet stem the dark tide." The herald sighed. "But, it is too late. Several orcish divisions hold the road between Rhohan and Minas Tirith."

Theoden nodded. "Our scouts reported as much. But no matter. Lord Denethor aided us in our hour of need when the orcs streamed south from Dol

Guldur. No mere orcish legions shall bar our way. Tell your lord that we shall come..."

Every realm in Middle-earth has armies at its disposal with which to defend the kingdom and assault the fools attempting to defy you. Yet somehow nothing goes right. Your armies are outmaneuvered, your cities are burning, and your commanders seem to be leading your armies randomly across the plains. How did this happen? Why didn't your army move? How did that army slip past your defenses? Does he have enough forces to seize your town/tower? This article clarifies some of the mechanics of army movement and combat. While much of this article may be applied to navies, navies are not discussed here. The examples in this article use "Gothmog's Army" as an example. Part II will focus primarily on army combat.

Gothmog's Army: Currently located at 3221, Dark Lieutenant City. Army has a 50 morale, and belongs to the Dark Lieutenants.

Army Commander Gothmog 80 (100) Command, 40 agent
Sub-commander I, Vikenor 33 (45) Command 80 agent, 20 mage
Sub-commander II, Masraden 40 Command, 20 agent, +500 combat artifact.

1500 Heavy Cavalry (20 training, 20 weapon), 60 armor (steel)
1000 Heavy Infantry (10 training, 10 weapon), no armor
1000 Light Infantry (10 training, 10 weapon) no armor

Army Movement:

There are three orders that involve army "movement".

850 Move Army: Your army gets 12 movement points.

860 Force March Army: Your army gets 14 movement points, and your army morale will be reduced. (Not a big deal.) In all other respects it is identical to the 850 Move Army order.

840 Stand and Defend: The army remains in the same hex, but lines up along three hex-sides to prevent enemy armies from leaving the hex in those directions. This is a great order, and underutilized. Use it to hold the enemy armies your army encountered in place so they remain there until help arrives the following turn. This order is explained in greater detail later.

Calculating Army Movement: To calculate if your army can get somewhere, look at the "Army Movement Terrain Costs" chart in the rulebook. That chart lists how many movement points are used by the army to move into that hex, assuming the army has food. When you no longer have enough movement points to move into the hex you want to go into, your army stops moving. Terrain costs are based on the "slowest" troop type in the army (infantry). Therefore, unless you have an all-cavalry army (HC and LC only), you're going to use the "infantry" column.

Example A: Gothmog's army wants to force march out of the mountains from his city (hex 3221) northeast through four plains hexes and then northwest through a plains hex to attack the town/tower at 3316. Army orders: NE (3), NE (3), NE (3), NE (3), NW (3). (Movement point costs are listed to the right of each order throughout this article.) Gothmog's army cannot reach the town/tower moving this way. Assuming his army has food, it would cost him 15 movement points. (His army is a mix of cavalry and infantry, so it uses the infantry table). Therefore his army will stop in hex 3417, because his two movement points

remaining aren't enough to enter hex 3316, a plains hex (which costs 3 for an army with infantry in it)..

Example A, modified: Note that if Gothmog issued a "split army" order, and transferred 1000 HI and 1000 LI to Vikenor, he wouldn't have any problems reaching the town/tower. Gothmog's army would consist entirely of cavalry by the time the force march order was issued, and thus would use the reduced movement costs for cavalry. Vikenor's army (1000 HI and 1000 LI) would remain in hex 3221, while Gothmog's army (now 1500 HC) moves rapidly into Rhovanion. Army Orders: NE (2), NE (2), NE (2), NE (2), NW (2), for a total of 10 movement points used, with 4 still remaining. This also illustrates the need to pay close attention to the order of events... Gothmog was able to split off troops before moving his army!

Roads:

Roads reduce the movement cost of the army only if you are entering the hex by marching down a road (use common sense!). Merely entering a hex with a road in it does not give you the reduced movement cost.

Example B: Look at Gothmog's army in example A. It cost him three movement points to move from hex 3417 to 3316, even though there is a road in hex 3316 because he is not using the road to enter the hex! Gothmog could reach the town/tower at 3316 if he modified his movement slightly to take advantage of the road in hex 3120.

Modified force march orders: NW (2), NE (3), NE (3), NE (3), NE (3). This used a total of 14 movement points, so Gothmog's army will arrive at the town/tower as planned with these orders. In this example, Gothmog's army moved along the road from hex 3221 to hex 3120, so he gets the reduced "road" cost for entering hex 3120. He still doesn't get a reduced cost to enter hex 3316, because he didn't use a road to do it.

Food:

Food tends to cause some confusion.

1) It costs one-third more movement points (rounded up, per hex) to enter each hex if you do not have food. This extra movement point cost is calculated for each individual hex, not overall.

Example C: Suppose Gothmog's army still wants force march to 3316 (using the orders in Example B), but he doesn't have food.

If he had food: NW (2), NE (3), NE (3), NE (3), NE (3) = 14 movement points.

No food: NW (2+1), NE (3+1), NE (3+1), NE (3+1), NE (3+1) = 19 movement points. Gothmog's army will stop after the second NE move, in hex 3218, having used 11 movement points.

Note that the extra movement cost was added per hex, rounded up. $2 + (1/3 \text{ of } 2 = .666 = 1)$, go onto the next hex, etc. You do not add up the movement points for all the hexes then add a third to it. (It makes no difference in this example, but it does in other situations.)

2) Food is consumed before the army moves but after buys from the market, see the "sequence of events" chart. An army is considered to be without food if it has no food remaining in the baggage train after consumption. It doesn't matter whether the army was fed by a population center, it is still considered to be without food if it has no food in its baggage train after consumption.

Example C, modified: Gothmog's army has no food in the baggage train. The city feeds all of the troops, but they still move as per the "no food" in

example C because they have no food in the baggage train. If Vikenor transfers even a single food unit into the army baggage train (or buys a single food from the market) then the army will move as per the "with food" in the example C above. Based on the sequence of events, Vikenor buys food unit (or transfers it into the army), the city feeds the army, and then the army marches out with a food unit still in the baggage train.

Notice that newly hired armies (770 order) do not consume food that turn. So if Vikenor hired a new army at 3221 of 400 HI with a single food unit in the baggage train, Vikenor's new army could move as if it has food for that turn. This is why it is so convenient to hire an army with a single food unit in it... you'll get one turn where the army gets to move normally before lack of food slows it down.

3) Troops killed in battle do not eat food. This is clear from the sequence of events chart. Battles occur before consumption, so an army that doesn't appear to have enough food to feed everyone might if a battle occurs (you don't have to feed the dead). This also means you could capture food from an enemy army and use it to feed your own troops the same turn. (Though it's risky to assume your opponent will have food).

Encountering the Enemy:

Armies stop moving when they run into enemy armies. But when are armies considered to be located in a particular hex? Who moves first? Does one randomly selected army move its full 14 movement points, then the next army, etc.? What happens when your army commander is assassinated? How can you foil your enemy's plans?

The Mechanics of GSI's program: How Army Movement Works:

First, all armies are considered to be in the hex into which they are moving. This is extremely important.

Example D: Suppose there is an Éothraim army in the rough hex of 3121, and it is ordered to move army directly east into the mountains of 3221 (using all 12 movement points). The Éothraim army is considered to be located in hex 3221 during the entire turn, and not in the rough of 3121. Evil armies moving up and down the road through 3121 will not encounter the Éothraim army, because it is located in 3221...in the hex it was moving into.

Second, every single army will get to move its first movement point before anyone uses their second movement point. Then every army gets to its second movement point before any one gets to move their third movement point, etc. The computer randomly picks an army to use its movement point "first". An exception is the first movement point, when everyone moves at the same time...(This is to avoid an army getting caught in the hex it started in by a faster army in an adjacent hex "chasing" after it).

Summary of the Army Movement Mechanics, plus examples:

- 1) All armies move their first movement point at the same time. Exception: If two armies are moving "at" each other from adjacent hexes, they cannot "pass in the night", the computer will pick one to move first.
- 2) An army is randomly selected to move movement point 2. Then another army is selected, etc. until all armies have moved their second movement point.
- 3) Repeat the process until all movement points are used.

Remember that all armies are considered to be located in the hex that they are moving into!

Example E: Suppose Gothmog's army is force marching with food from 3221 to the town/tower at 3316: Army orders: NW (2), NE (3), NE (3), NE (3), NE (3). When it uses movement point 1, it is considered to be located in hex 3120, and will be there until it expends its third movement point into hex 3319.

Gothmog's army location: Points 1,2: hex 3120. Points 3,4,5: hex 3219. Points 6,7,8: hex 3218. Points 9,10,11: hex 3317. Points 12,13,14: hex 3316.

Example E modified: Suppose an Éothraim army (an enemy) entered 3218 using its 8th movement point. The Éothraim army would halt Gothmog's army there.

Example E, modified: Suppose an Éothraim army entered 3218 using its 9th movement point first, which is picked randomly by the computer. If the Éothraim get to use their 9th movement point before Gothmog, then Gothmog will still be in hex 3218 when the Éothraim arrive and Gothmog's army will be stopped there. (Gothmog's army has used 8 movement points so far, while the Éothraim have used 9. Thus the Éothraim got lucky). If Gothmog's army gets to use its 9th movement point before the Éothraim, then Gothmog's army will be in hex 3317 when the Éothraim move into hex 3218, and Gothmog's army will continue on towards 3116 unhindered.

Example F: Suppose Gothmog's army plans to move as in Example D, but the Éothraim army is located at 3121 and has been ordered to move east into 3221. Thus, the Éothraim are moving east into 3221 on their first movement point while Gothmog's army plans to move northwest out of 3221 on its first movement point. The Éothraim army cannot stop Gothmog's army in hex 3221, because the "exception" applies: Every army moves its first movement point simultaneously. (The computer does NOT randomly pick one of the two armies to move first in this example.)

Example F, modified: Suppose the Éothraim army is in hex 3120 and is moving into 3221. Gothmog's army is in 3221 and is trying to move into 3120 (and from there to 3316). In other words, they're in adjacent hexes but now they're charging each other on their first movement point. The exception to the exception applies. The armies cannot "pass in the night" (which would occur if they moved their first movement point simultaneously, as is normal). In this circumstance, one army will be picked to move before the other, and they'll stop each other in 3221 or 3120 depending on who moves first.

Over-runs:

Tiny little armies shouldn't try to stop huge armies. The huge armies will simply annihilate the tiny army as it moves, killing all characters in the enemy army without stopping in the hex. The key "number" of troops (type of troops doesn't matter) the huge army needs to over-run an army seems to be around five to six times the smaller army's size. To over-run an army, the huge army needs to continue moving out of the hex--if it stops for some reason (fortifications, out of movement points, another larger army stopped it) it will not do an over-run.

Example G: Gothmog's army has 3500 troops. It will over-run enemy armies of 580 to 700 troops and smaller. Therefore, if the Éothraim army in Example F modified were only 550 Heavy cavalry, Gothmog's army would over-run the Éothraim army in hex 3221 or 3120 depending on who moved first, and would continue on to 3316.

Example G modified: The Éothraim will encounter Gothmog's army in 3221 or 3120. But suppose the Éothraim own a town/tower in 3120...Gothmog's army will be stopped in 3120 by the fortifications. Thus, if Gothmog's army moves first and arrives in 3120 it will not over-run the Éothraim army there, because it won't be able to move out of the hex... it will be stopped by the fortifications. Gothmog's army will over-run the Éothraim army if the Éothraim get "lucky" and move first, arriving in 3221 before Gothmog leaves. (The Éothraim army is too small to stop Gothmog's army in 3221, and thus will be destroyed when Gothmog's army leaves 3221.)

Stand and Defend, order 840:

Sometimes it's best to hold an enemy army in place rather than attacking it. That way the enemy army can't leave the area (in a particular direction), and you can wait for help to arrive or recruit additional troops to fight them with. This order is most often useful when a smaller army under a high challenge rank commander wishes to delay a larger enemy under a weaker commander.

Example H: Gothmog's army at 3221 has encountered an enemy army of Éothraim under Lord Marshall Mahrcared (challenge 150): 1000 HI wood/none. The Dark Lieutenants wish to march north up the road to capture the Éothraim's undefended population centers, while the Éothraim wish to delay Gothmog's army while they recruit heavy infantry back home and wait for Sinda agents to arrive. What should the Éothraim do?

1) Gothmog risks dying in a challenge from Mahrcared. Thus, one of Gothmog's orders will be to refuse challenge if he is wise, while the other order will be to move army or attack enemy. If he attacks, Gothmog's army destroys Mahrcared's but doesn't move (Gothmog doesn't have an order free to issue a force march order.) Thus, if Gothmog attacks, the Éothraim's mission of delaying Gothmog's army is accomplished. The only dangerous combination of orders for the Éothraim is for Gothmog to refuse challenge and move the army north.

2) Mahrcared should challenge Gothmog, but he has a choice for his other order. He can either attack enemy or stand and defend to the northwest. If Mahrcared attacks, his army is destroyed (doing minimal damage) and Gothmog moves northward unhindered. Thus, attacking accomplishes almost nothing, and is a bad idea. But what if Mahrcared stands and defends to the northwest? Gothmog must destroy Mahrcared's army or he will not be able to march north out of the hex to attack the Éothraim home areas. But if Gothmog issues an attack order to destroy Mahrcared's army, Gothmog won't have an order free to move the army! Gothmog's army will not be going anywhere no matter what Gothmog's orders are. (It is unlikely Gothmog will move his army southeast, since that is in the wrong direction.)

By standing and defending with Mahrcared's other order, the Éothraim hold Gothmog's army at 3221 while the Éothraim recruit troops near Mirkwood. Additionally, the Sinda agents will arrive in 3221 with plenty of targets for assassination waiting for them. It is far more effective for Mahrcared to stand and defend than to attack in this situation!

The Death of an Army Commander: When an army commander dies, control of the army immediately falls to the next highest natural commander in the army (excluding command artifacts!). Therefore it may be beneficial to have a backup commander issue move army or attack orders. This trick is most often useful when you are risking a challenge or assassination and absolutely must get the army out of the area.

Example H, modified: In example H, there was no way that the Dark Lieutenants could get Gothmog's army out of 3221, because Mahrcared was challenging Gothmog and standing and defending to the northwest. But there is a way! Note that Masraden will take charge of the army if Gothmog dies (as the next highest-ranked commander...not Vikenor, who has a 33 command without his command artifact). Suppose Gothmog and Masraden each issue attack enemy and command force march orders to the northwest. Mahrcared will challenge and (probably) kill Gothmog, but command of the army will immediately fall to Masraden (as the next highest commander). Masraden will then attack and destroy Mahrcared's army and force march the army northward unhindered, though at the cost of Gothmog's death. Command of the army falls to Masraden on order 210 (when Gothmog dies) so that Masraden's attack enemy order succeeds. If Gothmog manages to win the challenge, then both of Masraden's orders will fail because Masraden was not an army commander.

Example I: Suppose the Dark Lieutenants are worried about the deadly Sinda agent Linthel the Fair assassinating Gothmog (sound familiar anyone?), and the Dark Lieutenants don't want Gothmog's army to stick around in 3221 while more agents show up. If Masraden and Gothmog both issue move army orders, Gothmog's army will escape the hex even if Gothmog is assassinated. Masraden will take command of the army the instant Gothmog dies (order 690), and will move the army north.

Emmer, Captain of the Riddermark, gazed across the plain at the enemy host surrounding Minas Tirith. Their Riders had evaded or over-run the orcish divisions that had tried to bar the road and had arrived in time to lift the siege...perhaps...

Story of Spite

by

Eric Gallant

The war with the Pelorians continues.

The small Saratani army sat their steeds and looked out onto the three armies of the Pelorians. A large mass they were. Unruly and loud. Little did the Pelorians know of war. Their teachings were of treachery and lies. Soon they would learn a hard lesson. One the Saratani were happy to oblige them with.

The battle horns blared, harnesses jingled. The Saratani watched as the motley Pelorians advanced. Their obvious attempt to flank the Saratani did not go unnoticed by the Saratani commander. Beren looked upon his opposition and a tear rolled down his cheek. The Pelorians were sending boys! Boys leading boys. Perhaps that was their culture. More likely the Pelorians had no real men. But an enemy was an enemy and these boys would be granted no pardon for they were a soiled lot. Souless humans obeying an insane leader.

Beren waited until the Pelorians were spread out in a large mob. Their commanders, nothing more than local heroes or veterans, hid behind their troops. Beren's arm flew up and before he could grab the reins of his own mount,

his forces leapt forward. Thunder filled the air, the earth shook from the heavy chargers' strides. The steel hooves cut through the soil like sharpened blades, flinging it up into the riders' faces. Soon the two sides met and the mud changed to blood and flesh. With many a cut-short scream the Pelorians fell. The Saratani Heavy Cavalry mowed over the Pelorians. Little chance did the boys have. Most carried only crude weapons and none were supplied with armor. The Deaths of 1400 Pelorians was the result of that blood bath. The Pelorians had called their troops heavy infantry, but in reality they were little more than target dummies. The Saratani burned Pelorian bodies late into the night. It was a sad day and the Saratani had done all they could to avoid it. But treachery would be answered. The Saratani did not start this war, but they would finish it.

Elsewhere at the same time another Pelorian army was extinguished. This time the boys had marched right up to the Saratani capital. They had little chance against the Saratani forces assembled there. Commanders reported to the King that day they had burned 169 Pelorian bodies. It was also reported not a single Saratani was wounded, not even a horse. One Pelorian was found alive. The so called commander. A lad no more than 13, dressed in rags. He begged forgiveness. He claimed his leader was with disease and knew not what he did. The King looked upon this small, frail child and pity filled his heart. "A quick death shall be given to you, even though you are a Pelorian and have no soul, we grant you at least that." The boy never saw the blade that separated his head from his shoulders. "The next time I execute a Pelorian it will be their leader!" With that said the Saratani King began to prepare his nation for war.

The next week three more Pelorian armies arrayed outside the Town's walls. The garrison commander, Beren, looked down upon the faces of boys again. As he headed for his steed he wondered how many more children the Pelorians would lose before they surrendered.

Long Live the Saratani!

(continued from front cover)

the site has the nation description sheets, an abridged copy of the rules, the nation sheets themselves, old Whispers articles--just loads and loads of ME-PBM information. For those of you who may have missed it, the address again is: <http://www.gamesystems.com>. It's the perfect place for ME-PBM fans!

It's time once again for those game needs. We have three one week all email games that are currently filling--a 2950 and 1650 regular email game, and a 1650 grudge game. We need players for the 2950 and 1650 regular email games as well as a team of ten for the 1650 grudge game. The grudge game can accommodate a Dark Servant or Free People team, so you have your choice of sides. We also have a 1650 two week grudge game awaiting a Free People team and a 2950 two week grudge team awaiting a Free People team as well. So those of you who are itching for action, you now know where to get it.

That's it for this month. See you in thirty.

Stuart

The Hall Of Heroes

State of War Game #85 - Lady Lucifer and the Dukes of H.E.L.: #4, #6, #8 & #10

The United States, a nation wracked with civil war, has a new star on the horizon. Lady Lucifer and the Dukes of H.E.L., led by the Governor of Michigan, the illustrious Lady Lucifer herself, has stepped into the vacuum created by the civil strife and given the country a new seat of leadership and a new direction. No more will the tyrannical U.S. government keep the people of the country under their iron boot. A new era of freedom has begun--under Lady Lucifer and her Dukes of H.E.L. Congratulations on a job well done.

Game # 119 - The Dark Servants: #17 & #19

Adánaphel and Úvatha stand at Sauron's side, the flush of victory coursing through their corrupted veins. Their Dark Master sits on his throne, turning his baleful gaze on his two most prominent servants.

"You two, who have served me faithfully in the struggle with the accursed Free, now have free reign to do as you will in Middle-earth. As long as my demands are met, the kingdom is yours. Well done, my Nazgûl!"

The two Ringwraiths left with malicious thoughts circling in their demented minds. Their opponents were about to feel the error of opposing them in this war. Final standings are as follows:

#17 Quiet Avenger: 2300
#19 Long Rider: 1800
Top Free Peoples: #8 Dwarves: 1800

Interesting Notes:

Highest Challenge Rank - Malezar/Quiet Avenger: 210
Highest Net Commander Rank - Urdrath/Quiet Avenger: 114
Highest Net Mage Rank - Malezar/Quiet Avenger: 186
Highest Net Emissary Rank - Gorgün/Long Rider: 127
Highest Net Agent - Sindle/Long Rider: 150
Most Mithril - Quiet Avenger: 897
Most Artifacts - Long Rider: 30
Most Kills - Long Rider: 61

Game # 134 - The Dark Servants: #15, #14 & #10

Elrond slept fitfully, twitching and mumbling on his sweat soaked sheets. He dreamed the dreams of the hunted as he was pursued relentlessly by Akhórahil and Jí Indúr, Sauron's faithful hound dogs. At their backs rode hundreds of thousands of their foul minions--orcs, goblins, trolls, men and other creatures too vile to remember. And all of them chanted, over and over, the same thing: "No rest for the weary! No rest for the weary! No rest for the weary!"

With a scream Elrond woke, trembling with the memories of the nightmare. Outside he heard a commotion, sounds of fighting and screams of the dying. Looking out his window, he saw the phantoms of his dreams come to life. Akhórahil and Jí Indúr strode purposefully toward his domain. With a regretful thought toward his people, Elrond knew it was time to travel West. Final standings are as follows:

#15 Blind Sorcerer: 2400
#14 Cloud Lord: 2300
#10 Noldo Elves: 2000
Top Free Peoples: #10 Noldo Elves: 2000

(CONTINUED)

The Hall Of Heroes

Interesting Notes:

Highest Challenge Rank - Úrzahil/Cloud Lord: 290
Highest Net Commander Rank - Gothmog/Cloud Lord: 175
Highest Net Mage Rank - Úrzahil/Cloud Lord: 239
Highest Net Emissary Rank - Volog/Cloud Lord: 125
Highest Net Agent - Fornagath/Cloud Lord: 170
Most Mithril - Blind Sorcerer: 10933
Most Artifacts - Cloud Lord: 51
Most Kills - Cloud Lord: 80

Game # 187 - The Dark Servants: #20, #25 & #12

A mass of people numbering in the thousands surrounds a narrow wooden stage, outdoors beneath an overcast sky. They await Úrzahil, who is about to speak concerning the recent victory over the Free Peoples, and the new edicts which Sauron has declared law. A representative of each of the Dark Nations stands on the stage, awaiting Dendra Dwar's arrival. Khamdl, standing next to Ovatha II of the Easterlings, congratulates him on his choice of allegiance and subsequent victory.

"Well," he replies, "war isn't about being on the good side, or the evil side . . . it's about being on the winning side." Final standings are as follows:

#20 Dark Lieutenants: 2350
#25 Easterlings: 1900
#12 Dragon Lord: 1825
Top Free Peoples: #4 Arthedain : 1292

Interesting Notes:

Highest Challenge Rank - Maben/Dragon Lord: 182
Highest Net Commander Rank - Múrazôr/Witch-king - Gothmog/Dark Lieutenants: 135
Highest Net Mage Rank - Pëagwath/Dark Lieutenants: 144
Highest Net Emissary Rank - Ulath Gnalla/Dark Lieutenants: 124
Highest Net Agent - Tormog/Dark Lieutenants: 130
Most Mithril - Dark Lieutenants: 1225
Most Artifacts - Dark Lieutenants: 29
Most Kills - Long Riders: 8

Game #206 - Free Peoples: #6, #23, & #10

Across Middle-earth a joyous cry rings out, welling from the throats of thousands. The looming shadow of the Dark Servants has been banished by the unquenchable torch that is the union of Free Peoples, and the future of Middle-earth has been safely secured. Under the watchful eyes of Northern Gondor, the Dunlendings and the Noldo Elves, the good people of Middle-earth return to their daily ways of life, secure in the knowledge that the bones of their enemies lie scattered to the four corners of the world. Final Standings are as follows:

#6 Northern Gondor: 2183
#23 Dunlendings: 1967
#10 Noldo Elves: 1917
Top Dark Servant: #11 Witch-king: 633

Interesting Notes:

Highest Challenge Rank - Elrond/Noldo Elves: 372
Highest Net Commander Rank - Báin I/Dwarves: 237
Highest Net Mage Rank - Elrond/Noldo Elves: 311
Highest Net Emissary Rank - Urdiale/Southern Gondor: 107
Highest Net Agent - Elladan/Noldo Elves: 135
Most Mithril - Northmen: 1029
Most Artifacts - Noldo Elves: 31
Most Kills - Cloud Lord: 10

The Hall Of Heroes

Game #226 - Free Peoples: #10, #4, & #9

The combined forces of the Free Peoples, most notably the Arthedain, the Corsairs, and the Dwarves, have reclaimed the land of Middle-earth and disposed of Sauron's scum. No more shall any nation feel threatened by another, and no more shall Sauron threaten Middle-earth. Sauron's welling scream of rage is drowned out only by the cheers of victory given up by the Free People of Middle-earth. Final standings are as follows:

#10 Noldo Elves: 1575
#4 Arthedain: 1558
#9 Sinda Elves: 1500
Top Dark Servant: #20 Dark Lieutenants: 875

Interesting Notes:

Highest Challenge Rank - Erfbhen/Dunlendings: 181
Highest Net Commander Rank - Kaldúrmeir/Dog Lord : 135
Highest Net Mage Rank - Erfbhen/Dunlendings: 166
Highest Net Emissary Rank - Angólion/Witch-king: 108
Highest Net Agent - Pathan/Dunlendings: 103
Most Mithril - Dunlendings: 413
Most Artifacts - Sinda Elves/Dark Lieutenants: 12
Most Kills - Cloud Lord: 10

Game # 34 - Dark Servants: #13, #24, & #23

Deep in a hidden dungeon, piteous moans emanate from a darkened cell. Inside, the barely-recognizable form of the once-proud Beoraborn lies slumped in a corner, a tattered and filthy version of his former self. The cell door opens, and Dendra Dwar of the Dog Lord steps in, flanked by several well-armed guards.

"Ah, Beoraborn, dear Beoraborn, last of the surviving leaders of the Free Nations . . ." he begins, gazing at the crumpled figure on the floor. The figure turns his sightless eyes in the general direction of Dendra Dwar's voice.

"You should have died long ago, alongside your fellows in arms. No matter." He left the cell then, pausing before one of the guards.

"Kill him."

Final standings are as follows:

#13 Dog Lord: 1900
#24 White Wizard: 1800
#23 Dunlendings: 1725
Top Dark Servant: #1 Woodmen: 1158

Interesting Notes:

Highest Challenge Rank - Akhórahil/Blind Sorcerer: 203
Highest Net Commander Rank - Bulrakur/Dog Lord - Bugrug/White Wizard: 128
Highest Net Mage Rank - Akhórahil/Blind Sorcerer: 148
Highest Net Emissary Rank - Calmud/Dunlendings - Elharian/Dunlendings - Torgo Goatbrech/White Wizard: 89
Highest Net Agent - Hoarmúrath/Ice King: 122
Most Mithril - Dog Lord: 1688
Most Artifacts - White Wizard: 22
Most Kills - Ice King: 19