

Tournament Structure

Overview

We will play **4 rounds of Swiss**, and each match will be a **2-game match**. In each match, you play once as Shadow and once as Free! Randomly decide who plays which side in game 1, then reverse that for game 2. The results can be 2-0, 1-1, or 0-2.

Players must report their match results on the <http://challonge.com/WotR2022> site and upload their game logs via the form <https://tinyurl.com/WotRReport>, including passwords. Regardless of who wins the game, please put the FP player's name first in the game log. For example: IraFP_SummerSP_Round1.log. All tournament games will be ladder games. Please join the Discord if you haven't already: <https://discord.com/invite/5nmpShVW94>

(Video link for how to report results forthcoming)

Time Limits

Each match will span 3 weeks, and **you'll need to play 2 games in that time** (or 3 games during Top Cut). Please strive to get your games completed ASAP, since future rounds can be delayed by even a single late match.

If you play only a single game in 3 weeks, the head tournament organizer will adjudicate your match as needed, using his judgement. Possible outcomes include:

- Extending the time limit for the round, so you can finish your match.
- Awarding both players a double-loss, 0-0 match result (if both players put insufficient effort into scheduling games)
- Awarding one player an automatic loss, 2-0 or 1-1 result (if one player put insufficient effort into scheduling games)
- Leaving the result as 1-0 (this is very weird, effectively 2-0 because of challonge settings, and will likely be avoided)

We will strive to minimize byes and automatic wins because of dropped opponents. Therefore:

- Before each round, you must react to a message on Discord confirming that you will indeed play 2 games in the next 3 weeks. If you do not respond in a timely manner (<48 hours), you may be dropped from the tournament. The tournament organizer will only use this as a last resort, and this rule is intended to set expectations of reasonable response times on Discord.
- Please, please **let the tournament organizers know ASAP if you need to drop** from the tournament. This is the biggest cause of hassle and headache when running a tournament, so please be considerate to everyone by letting the organizers know if you need to drop.

Best Rookie

The best rookie prize will be awarded to whichever rookie has the best result in the Top Cut, with ties broken by Swiss results. If no rookie makes it to the Top Cut, then Swiss results will determine the winner.

Top Cut

After 4 rounds of Swiss, we will use the following table to determine the size of the Top Cut:

Players in the Tournament	Top Cut Size
40 or less	8
41-99	16
100 or more	32

Final Standings

There is a known bug in Challonge rankings that gives dropped players automatic wins, instead of automatic losses. Therefore, the **final standings of the Swiss stage will be fixed by hand**. *Note that pairings will not be modified due to that bug*; only the final standings will be corrected, if needed.

We will use the tiebreakers for determining placement in the swiss tournament:

- 1) Head to head results
- 2) Median-Buchholz (i.e. strength of opponents, ignore the lowest and highest, accurately counting dropped players as scoring 0 points after drop)
- 3) Buchholz (i.e. strength of opponents without ignoring anything, and accurately counting dropped players as scoring 0 points after drop)
- 4) Random

The Top Cut is a single elimination tournament. Single elimination matches are best-of-3. The higher seed from Swiss gets to pick which side to play first in the best-of-3 match. If both players win 1 game and a tiebreaker game is needed, it must be played as a base game with FP awarded two [action tokens](#). The higher seed from Swiss gets to pick their side for game 3, so players are still encouraged to do well in Swiss.

FAQ Regarding Action Tokens in Top Cut Tiebreaker Games

Q: Why do we need tiebreaker games?

A: In swiss, it's fine to have a tie after two games of the match, 1-1. But the Top Cut is an elimination tournament to crown a single winner, and therefore we must have decisive match results, and ties aren't acceptable. One possible solution is to allow the players to keep playing pairs of games until a decisive result is reached, but that could take a really long time and therefore we need a tiebreaker game.

Q: OK, so we need a tiebreaker game, but why add extra rules?

A: A large amount of data suggests that Shadow has a small advantage in the base game. Therefore, to make a "fair" tiebreaker game, Free should get some benefit.

Q: OK, so we need extra rules, but why choose Action Tokens instead of Dwarven Rings?

A: Both Dwarven Rings and Action Tokens are technically house rules, but Action Tokens are at least **somewhat more official**, since Ares has published rules for using them. Both balancing methods change the game, but Dwarven Rings change the overall strategy (push towards destroying the ring fast) and Action Tokens change a few interesting tactical choices (tempo advantage for FP during action resolution), which is a **smaller change overall**.

Q: OK, so we'll use Action Tokens. Why specify 2 now, instead of bidding?

A: By announcing the rules now, everyone can practice with Action Tokens if they want. Also, [anecdotal polling](#) suggests that 2 action tokens yields the best balance, and thus bidding is unnecessary. The higher seed from Swiss will still retain an advantage of picking which side they prefer. (Also, after this tournament, we'll have additional data to see how many people picked FP vs. SP, and if those games were balanced or not.)

Q: OK, so we'll use exactly 2 Action Tokens for tiebreaker games in the Top Cut. Will you change this rule?

A: These rules are set for the 2022 tournament and will not change. It's impossible to make everyone happy, but hopefully anyone doubting these rules will try it and see what they think. We will solicit feedback from players after the tournament, and always try to make it better each year!

Game Etiquette

Please agree on any etiquette in advance with your opponent, but barring discussion, assume the following rules apply to all games:

- If extra action dice are rolled, remove excess dice from the right, as shown in the game log.
- If too few action dice are rolled and it's caught before any player takes an action, immediately roll it (without changing eye allocations). If an action has been taken already, it's a mess and you should ask a judge, but probably the die should be forfeit.
- If extra combat dice are rolled, treat them as leader rerolls.
- If extra leader dice are rolled, ignore the results from right to left, as shown in the game log.
- The turn ends when the active player uses "Escape" to clear the action die. Before that (assuming no dice have been rolled, or tiles/cards drawn, etc.), the player is free to undo assuming no new information has been revealed.
- Rearguards: unless otherwise noted, assume no rearguard. The attacking force will consist of all the units, leaders, and minions. Of course, before the battle, players can specify any rearguard they want.
- It's the Shadow player's responsibility to remember Worn with Sorrow and Toil, because it is an optional effect. The FP player should not rush or distract Shadow to cause them to forget this effect. Especially when playing with rookies, it would be reasonable to tell them outright, or at least confirm "OK to proceed?" before taking your action (if the hunt happened on their turn due to a Shadow hunt card).
 - If it was Shadow's turn, the opportunity to trigger the effect ends when shadow clears the die (for the last tile drawn on Shadow's turn) or as soon as Shadow draws another tile (for any time multiple tiles are drawn)
 - If it was FP's turn, the opportunity ends when shadow passes or starts to take their next action (for the last tile drawn on FP's turn) or as soon as Shadow draws another tile (for any time multiple tiles are drawn)
- It's the Shadow player's responsibility to remember to draw a card for the Witch-King's ability. The proper timing is after presses are declared and a unit is downgraded (in case of a siege battle).
 - If it was Shadow's turn, the opportunity to trigger the effect ends when Shadow clears the die (if there was only one round of combat) or declares a new combat card (if there was a second round of combat).
 - If it was FP's turn, the opportunity ends when Shadow starts to take their next action or passes (if there was only one round of combat) or Shadow declares a new combat card or no card (if there was a second round of combat).

- It's the FP player's responsibility to remember to draw a card for Gandalf the Grey's Guide ability. The proper timing is after the card is resolved, and before the P or W die is cleared. The opportunity to trigger the effect ends when FP clears the die.
- It's the FP player's responsibility to declare Gandalf the White's ability to cancel nazgul leadership. If FP is attacking, the ability must be declared before FP selects their combat card. If Shadow is attacking, Shadow must give FP a reasonable amount of time to declare the ability (at least ~15 seconds) before Shadow selects their combat card. At the start of the game (or any time prior to combat), FP may state a blanket rule that overrides this default, such as, "Gandalf will shine any time he's facing 1+ Nazgul," while retaining the option to modify that in a future combat with a specific comment. Any overrides apply only to the current game, and cannot carry over to future games.
- To discard Power Too Great or Tom Bombadil, the shadow player has two options: 1) Show the strategy card to confirm it has an army icon, or 2) Discard a strategy card secretly and share the password after the game for verification. For (2), if the discarded strategy card didn't have an army icon or the password isn't shared, shadow forfeits the game.
- If a player accidentally draws a card or tile at the wrong time, always undo it. Then, proceed with the game and draw the card/tile properly at the right time.
 - This issue arises most frequently when a player draws a card for the Witch-King's ability before deciding on presses and which unit to downgrade. It can also happen if Shadow draws a hunt tile while Wizard's Staff is in play, and FP didn't have the chance to declare that they were using it.
- Players may use voice communication or text communication when playing. If one player prefers voice and the other prefers text, the default is text via Java chat log.
- If you have any rules questions, first check the FAQ, since it may be answered already: <http://tinyurl.com/WotRFAQ> If you still have a question, please feel free to ask on Discord using the @Judge role, and you should get a quick answer from a judge.
- **Playing Rookies in Round 1:** There are quite a few rookies this year! It would be good etiquette (but not strictly required) for experienced players to remind them of all the little rules that are easy to miss, especially when you're getting familiar with a new interface. For example: WK card draw, WWSAT, Gandalf the White shining, etc. Let's all ensure everyone has a fun time, and wants to come back to play many more games!

Common Rules Questions

There are extensive and clear rulings listed in the most recent version of the player-made FAQ, which are valid and should be referenced: <http://tinyurl.com/WotRFAQ>

If you have any questions about the rules or structure of the tournament, please ask @Tournament Organizers in the #tournament-general channel on Discord.

Game Structure Rules

Players may only modify the game rules in limited ways, and only if both players agree. By default, play the base game without any house rules. Below are acceptable modifications if both players agree, and the same rules are used for both games:

- Play using LoME and/or WoME for both games.
- Play 2 games, using dwarven rings and/or action tokens for both games.

Notably, you MAY NOT do the following:

- Play a single game worth 2 points (either 2-0 or 0-2).
- Play 0 games and agree to a draw (1-1).

Playing only a single game worth 2 points during Swiss is not allowed, and is considered collusion with your opponent. Intentionally drawing the match 1-1 is also not allowed. If your opponent proposes such a thing, please report it to the tournament organizer. The tournament rules *require you to try your best each game*.

All games should be reported via the [report form](#) including passwords and game logs. If suspected of collusion, the easiest way to prove your innocence will be to show two game logs. Note: The tournament organizers believe that people will choose to follow the rules, and not try to win by cheating. It is acceptable to concede a game after trying your best if you feel like you have no chances of winning.

Personnel

Judges

Please use @Judges on Discord to get quick responses from a judge. They are:

1. @SummerMcLovin - Andrew Summers (Head Judge)
2. @savedbyhim01 - Jason Dexter
3. @iacobus_maior - Jakob K
4. @roysubs - Roy Wiseman
5. @PouDaddy - Pouyan A
6. @ira - Ira Fay

Judges will obviously not make any rulings on games they are in. If a non-head-judge makes a ruling and a player wants to appeal it, they may appeal to the head judge, whose decision is final. If the head judge is involved with the game, then the 2nd judge will make the final call. If the game happens to be between the 1st and 2nd judges, and they can't resolve it themselves somehow (!), then the 3rd judge will make the final decision.

Tournament Organizers

Please use @Tournament Organizers on Discord to get quick responses from a tournament organizer. They are:

1. @ira - Ira Fay (Head Organizer)
2. @SummerMcLovin - Andrew Summers
3. @Treebeards Folly - Matt Carroll
4. @Wilson - Wilson H
5. @Mestre James - Renato Prates
6. @Gilefor - Andrey Lobov

Tournament organizers are responsible for the smooth flowing of the tournament. Any rules-specific issues in a game is the purview of judges; any scheduling or general tournament issue is the purview of tournament organizers.

Prizes

Since the tournament is free to enter, we can only support prizes based on donations. Please feel free to PayPal (<https://paypal.me/irafay>) or Venmo (@irafay) and mention "WotR prizes."

After Round 1, Ira will publicly announce the prizes available, but individual donations will be kept private since the



tournament truly is free – there won't be a list of who donated and who didn't, since that could make people feel bad. That said, particularly generous donations may be noted publicly with the permission of the donor, if the tournament organizers deem it appropriate (e.g. if we think it would be fun and wouldn't make other people feel bad).

In the past, we've been able to buy plaques for 1st and 2nd place, as well as sometimes 3rd place and best rookie. We also hope to give a plaque to the luckiest participant, which will be drawn randomly out of everyone who completed all 8 of their Swiss games, excluding anyone who is otherwise getting a plaque. The tournament champion is awarded the @Tournament Champion role, and we can also make roles for @Top Rookie and @Luckiest Participant. Plaque examples on the next page.





2020 WAR OF THE RING INTL. ONLINE TOURNAMENT
3RD PLACE
GLENN SHANLEY



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