

# LORD<sup>®</sup> of the RINGS

## THE DUEL

Fantastic duel for 2 players aged 10 and up

### OVERVIEW

Gandalf encounters the Balrog in the under mountain Caves of Moria. The result is a fantastic duel of their magical powers on a small bridge over a deep chasm. Here, players replay that duel with the help of cards, which have magical symbols on the left and right, representing the strengths of the adversaries. The symbols on the cards represent the offensive (right) and defensive (left) strengths of the adversaries: each unblocked symbol is lost energy for that player.

### GOAL

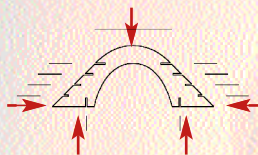
The game consists of four duels: 3 preliminary duels and one final duel. After each duel, the player with the most remaining magical energy moves forward on the bridge. At game end, the player who has moved furthest on the bridge is the winner!

### CONTENTS

1 game board, 1 bridge (to assemble), 1 gray Gandalf figure, 1 red Balrog figure, 2 energy markers, 54 cards

### PREPARATION

- Before the first game, carefully remove the pieces of the bridge from their frame and assemble the bridge as shown in the diagram to the right.
- One player takes the role of Gandalf; the other, the Balrog.
- Place the game board on the table between the players (Gandalf and the Balrog) as shown on the right.
- Place the bridge on the board over the chasm.
- Each player takes his figure and places it on the board before the bridge on his side of the bridge.
- Each player takes his energy marker and places it on the starting space (marked with the white-colored starting space on the energy track).
- Gandalf takes the 27 Gandalf cards; Balrog takes the 27 Balrog cards.
- Each player shuffles his cards and places them face down on the table next to his side of the board as his card supply.





## PLAYING THE GAME

The game consists of three preliminary duels and one final duel. For the first duel, each player draws the top-most 9 cards from his card supply as his starting hand. Each player will use 6 of these cards for the first duel and will set aside the other 3 for the final duel.

Gandalf begins the first duel.

## THE DUEL

### first exchange: play cards

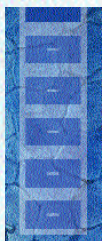
- Gandalf selects one of the 9 cards in his hand and lays it next to the board as the first card (see picture on page 1).
- Then, the Balrog selects a card from his hand to answer Gandalf's attack and lays it next to (right of) Gandalf's card.

*Note: as the Balrog is a creature of fire and smoke, the picture on many of the Balrog cards has no obvious top or bottom. However, the cards **must** be played with the proper orientation (with the top of each card closer to the board than the bottom). The frame on the front of the card is somewhat darker on the bottom of the card. Also, on the back of the cards, the flame rises from the bottom of the card just as Gandalf's wand rises from the bottom of his cards.*

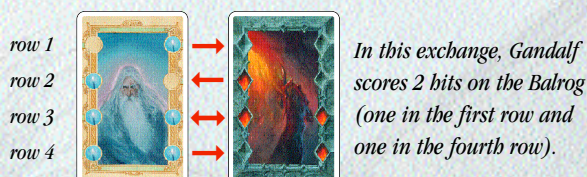
### first exchange: scoring

The magical symbols on right side of each card represent the offensive strength and those on the left side the defensive strength. The players compare the column of magical symbols on the right side of the attacking card (left) to the column of magical symbols on the left side of the defending card (right).

- If a row has magical symbols on **both** cards, they neutralize each other for no effect.
- If a row has a magical symbol **only on one** of the cards (the other is empty), the player without the symbol loses energy. He must move his energy marker down (toward the negative) 1 space on the energy track.
- If a row has no magical symbols on either card, there is no effect.



### Example:



*In this exchange, Gandalf scores 2 bits on the Balrog (one in the first row and one in the fourth row).*

*The Balrog scores 1 bit on Gandalf in the second row.*

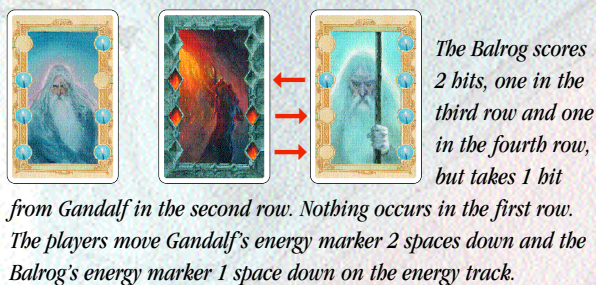
*In the third row, Gandalf's offensive magical symbol is blocked by the Balrog's defensive magical symbol.*

*The players move Gandalf's energy marker 1 space down and the Balrog's energy marker 2 spaces down.*

### next exchange

The card that the Balrog used to defend against Gandalf's attack now becomes the Balrog's attack against Gandalf. Now Gandalf must defend against that attack. He selects a card from his hand and lays it next to the Balrog card. Then the players score this exchange as they did the first by comparing the magical symbols on the cards row by row.

### The example continues:



The exchanges continue in this way until the end of the duel.

*Note: after the players lay 6 cards, they start a new row next to the first row (see picture on page 1). In this case, the exchange occurs between the right side of the 6th card and the left side of the 7th.*



### difference of 3 or larger

If, after an exchange is scored, there are **3 or more empty** spaces between the two energy markers on the energy track, the player, who is higher on the energy track, may look at the cards in his opponent's hand.

### Special cards



Some cards have text on them. When a player plays such a card, the players first score the exchange, as normal. Then, the players read the text on the card and resolve the effect of the special effect described. More information on these special cards is shown at the end of the rules.

### Gandalf's and the Balrog's trance



Two of the cards without text (one for each player) have **no** magical symbols on either side. On these cards, the player is weakest, having no strength at all.

*Tip: players should try to avoid using these cards as they represent their lowest point of strength.*

### THE END OF A DUEL

A duel ends,

- when each player has played 6 cards (9 in the final) from his hand *or*
- when the energy marker for either player reaches the negative area of the energy track.

#### Exception:

If both players are in the negative on the **same** space and one or both players have more than 3 cards left in their hands, they continue the duel. The duel ends when both players have just 3 cards left in their hands or when, at the end of an exchange, one player is below the other and in the negative area.

When a duel ends due to a player reaching the negative area on the energy track and the card played was a special card, the text is not read and the special effect is not used.

After a duel ends, do the following:

### AFTER A DUEL

Each player places his 3 unplayed cards face down to the side. These cards (after the three preliminary duels, there will be 9 cards) are used by the players for the final duel.

If a player has more than 3 cards left (when the duel ends with a player reaching the negative area), he chooses 3 cards for the final duel, places these face down to the side, and discards the rest face down in the box.

The winner of a duel is the player whose energy marker is higher (further from the negative) on the energy track at the end of the duel. The winner of the duel moves his **figure** up the steps of the bridge based on the number of empty spaces **between** his energy marker and his opponent's:

- for 0, 1, or 2 empty spaces, he moves 1 step,
- for 3 or 4 empty spaces, he moves 2 steps,
- for 5 or more empty spaces, he moves 3 steps.

If both energy markers are on the same space, the duel ends in a tie. In this case, **the loser is the starting player of the duel** (in the first duel, this is Gandalf). The winner moves his figure 1 step up on the bridge.

After the duel, the players place all played cards face down in the box. They will not be used further in the game.





### THE 2ND AND 3RD DUELS

Before beginning a new duel, the players place their energy markers on the starting space on the energy track. The figures of Gandalf and the Balrog remain where they are on the bridge. Each player draws the top-most 9 cards from his card supply as his new hand for the new duel.

After looking at his new cards, the loser of the previous duel decides who will start the new duel. The new duel is played in the same manner as the first duel described above.

After the end of the third duel (the players have drawn all their 27 cards), the players play the final duel.

### THE FINAL DUEL

With the few small changes described below, the final duel runs like the previous 3 duels:

- Each player takes the **9** cards he set aside in the previous duels (3 in each) as his hand for the final duel.
- For the final duel, the players start with more energy. The players place their energy markers on the orange-colored starting space at the top end of the energy track.
- The player, whose figure stands on the lower step on the bridge, decides who will start the final duel. If both players are on the same step (same height), the player who lost the previous duel decides.
- The final duel ends when a player reaches the negative area of the energy track, or when both players have played **all 9** cards from their hands, as there are no unplayed cards after the final duel.
- The winner of the final duel moves his figure 1, 2, or 3 steps up on the bridge, using the same scoring method as in the preliminary duels.



### THE END OF THE GAME

After the final duel, the winner is the player whose figure is higher on the bridge. If both figures stand at the same height, the winner is the player who won the final duel.

Sometimes, a game can end before the final duel. This occurs when a player's figure reaches the top-most step of the bridge after the second or third duel. The owner of that figure is the winner!

#### **Variant: switch roles**

Players may want to play a game where each player plays each role. To do this, the players can choose to play two normal games, one after the other. After the first normal game, the players switch roles and play a second normal game.

After each normal game, the players record their points as follows: if a figure still stands on the board, the player scores no points, if a figure stands on step 1, the player scores 1 point; if a figure stands on step 2, the player scores 2 points; and so on. After the two normal games, add the points from the games together. The player with the highest total points is the winner! In the case of a tie, the player who played Gandalf in the second normal game is the winner.

### THE SPECIAL CARDS

The players need not read through the text on the special cards nor these descriptions before the first game. If players have questions regarding the use of any special card, they should read the descriptions below.

#### **Balrog's Whip:**

- The Balrog player lays Balrog's Whip on the table before himself. Then, he takes one of his already-played cards (not a special card) from a row and places it at the end of the row(s) of cards. In the now-empty space, he places Balrog's Whip. Finally, he scores the card he placed at the end of the row(s).
- If the Balrog has played only special cards (or no cards) prior to playing the Whip, he plays it at the end of the row(s) and scores it normally. Balrog's Whip has no offensive nor defensive values.
- When Balrog's Whip is played after Gandalf's Mirror, it does not lose its special ability because it is not placed in the row next to Gandalf's Mirror.



- When Balrog's Whip is played after Gandalf's Rage, the special effect of Balrog's Whip still works as the card is not placed next to Gandalf's Rage in the row. The Gandalf's Rage effect remains.

**Balrog's Strength:**

If, through the defensive value of this card (left side of the card), the duel ends, the special effect of this card is not used.

**Balrog's Power:**

The energy markers are moved again, **after** the exchange. The position of the figures on the bridge determines the direction (up or down) and distance they are moved. They may not move higher than the starting space for the duel (preliminary or final).

- If the Balrog figure stands higher on the bridge than the Gandalf figure, the Balrog gains energy: the Balrog player moves his energy marker 1 space up on the energy track. Gandalf's energy marker remains where it is.
- If the Balrog figure stands at the same level on the bridge as the Gandalf figure, the Balrog gains energy and Gandalf loses energy: the Balrog player moves his energy marker 1 space up on the energy track and the Gandalf player moves his energy marker 1 space down on the energy track.
- If the Balrog figure stands lower on the bridge than the Gandalf figure, the Balrog gains energy and Gandalf loses energy: the Balrog player moves his energy marker 2 spaces up on the energy track and the Gandalf player moves his energy marker 1 space down on the energy track.
- The starting space of the figures before the bridge counts as a step.
- If the duel ends as a result of scoring the exchange (one of the energy markers reaches the negative area), the special effect of this card is not used.

**Balrog's Trick:**

- The Balrog player may look at the card after he draws it from Gandalf's hand.
- When Balrog's Trick is played in the final duel, it loses its special effect, but retains its offensive and defensive values.

**Balrog's Defense:**

- The card placed in the empty space, is not scored.
- When a special card is moved to be the answer to this card, it loses its special effect, but not its strength. However, Gandalf's Mirror retains its special effect.

**Gandalf's Balance:**

The energy markers are moved again, **after** the exchange. The positions of the energy markers on the energy track determine how far and in which direction the energy markers are moved. The highest a marker may move on the energy track is the starting position for that duel (preliminary or final).

- ">" means that Gandalf's energy marker is further from the negative area than the Balrog's. In this case, Gandalf moves his marker 1 space up (away from the negative) on the energy track. The Balrog's marker does not move.
- "=" means that both energy markers are on the same space on the energy track. Gandalf moves his marker 1 space up and he moves the Balrog's marker 1 space down on the energy track.
- "<" means Gandalf's marker is closer to the negative area than the Balrog's. Gandalf moves his marker 2 spaces up and he moves the Balrog's marker 1 space down on the energy track.
- If the duel ends as a result of scoring the exchange (one of the energy markers reaches the negative area), the special effect of this card is not used.

**Gandalf's List:**

- If the Balrog is playing with his cards face up on the table and Gandalf plays Gandalf's Enchantment, the Balrog takes his cards from the table and shuffles them so Gandalf can take a random card from his hand. The Balrog then puts his cards back on the table face up.
- If Gandalf earns the ability to look at the Balrog's hand by being ahead on the energy track by 3 spaces, the ability gains him nothing as he can already see Balrog's cards!
- At the end of the duel, the Balrog must choose the 3 cards for the final duel from the face up cards so that Gandalf knows which ones he chose.

**Gandalf's Magic:**

- Any Balrog card played after Gandalf's Magic may be chosen by Gandalf.
- Gandalf must decide immediately after a Balrog card is played whether to choose it or not, but may choose only 1 card in the duel.
- When Gandalf chooses a Balrog card, the Balrog plays a new card from his hand.
- When the Balrog has no more cards to play in the duel, the special effect expires.
- When Gandalf's Magic is played in the final duel, it loses its special effect, but not its offensive and defensive values.



#### **Gandalf's Mirror:**

- The magical symbols of the previous Balrog card (right side) is reflected back to the Balrog through the mirror, neutralizing that attack **and** is passed through Gandalf's Mirror, becoming Gandalf's attack. Thus, the Balrog must now answer his previous attack as though it were Gandalf's.
- If the Balrog answers Gandalf's Mirror with a special card, it loses its special effect, but not its magical strength. However, Balrog's Whip is not so affected as it is not played next to the mirror.
- If Balrog answers Gandalf's Mirror with Balrog's Defense, Gandalf's Mirror is moved to the new position with all its powers.
- If Gandalf's Mirror is played as the last card of a duel (each player has just 3 cards left in his hand, or no cards left in the final duel), the energy markers are not moved.

#### **Gandalf's Rage:**

- Balrog's Whip does not lose its special effect, as Balrog's Whip is not played next to Gandalf's Rage. The Gandalf's Rage effect remains.
- If the duel ends without the Balrog playing a special card, the effect of this card is lost.
- If Balrog's Trick is played as the next special card in the final duel, the Gandalf's Rage effect remains.

#### **Gandalf's Enchantment:**

- After Gandalf takes the card, he places it face up on the table for both players to see.
- Gandalf decides **before** Balrog plays a card (even the very next card after Gandalf's Enchantment is played) if Balrog must play the "enchanted" card instead.
- If Gandalf decides not to have the Balrog use the card in this duel, the Balrog may choose it as one of the 3 cards he sets aside for the final duel. Thus, if the Balrog ends the duel with more than 3 cards, he may choose the card as one of the 3 for the final duel or not.
- If Gandalf's Enchantment is played in the final duel and Gandalf decides not to choose the card, it is played as the last Balrog card in the duel unless the duel ends before all the cards are played.

#### **The author:**

Peter Neugebauer, born in 1956, lives with his wife Gaby in the Ruhr region of Germany and teaches school there. The Search, based on Tolkien's Middle Earth, was his first game for Rio Grande Games. He returns to Middle Earth for his second Rio Grande game, The Duel!

#### **The illustrator:**

The Canadian, John Howe, lives with his family in Switzerland. He is one of the most famous illustrators of Tolkien's works. He was instrumental in the designs for the sets for the movies.

**Development:** TM-Spiele

**Graphics:** Pohl & Rick Grafikdesign

**Photo:** Dirk Hoffmann

**English translation:** Anna & Jay Tummelson

The author and publisher thank all the playtesters and rule readers for their help with this game.

Art.-Nr. 689315

© 2002 Tolkien Enterprises

© 2002 Sophisticated Games Ltd.

© 2002 KOSMOS Verlag

Web: [www.riograndegames.com](http://www.riograndegames.com)

e-mail: [RioGames@aol.com](mailto:RioGames@aol.com)

All Rights Reserved.

The Lord of the Rings and the characters and places therein are trademarks of Tolkien Enterprises, Berkeley CA and are used, under license, by Sophisticated Games Ltd.

