

Gunboat – A Module Variant

Version 26

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Introduction

A Gunboat game is one where each player plays two or three nations (chosen from pre-paired nations), and there is no communication allowed.

Any modifications to the following rules for a specific game can be found in the main body of the email containing your turn. PLEASE always check for any changes to the basic rules covered here.

Neutral nations are pre-aligned (they begin the game either on the side of the Free Peoples or the Dark Servants). One of the Neutral nations is not played to ensure an even number of nations on each side at the start of the game. Its population centres, armies and characters are removed from the game, and any artefacts it might have are dropped at random locations on the map.

This document details the normal (basic) Gunboat rules. However, these are subject to change for specific games, so before playing, please check for any special alterations to the rules.

With the exception of rules detailed in this document, the rules used in Gunboat games are those for the normal Middle-earth PBM game, as found in the Middle-earth Guide (available on request or from our website: www.middleearthgames.com).

Please note that the rules in this document are for our *standard* Gunboat games. We also run several variants (Rewards, Discord diplomacy, etc.). Any specific rules for these variants will take precedence over those found in this document.

Nation Duos

Nation Duos (also known as pairings) are the pre-paired nations available to play.

1650 Game

Free People

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
1/4	Woodmen/Arthedain
2/8	Northmen/Dwarves*
3/7	Eothraim/South Gondor
5/9	Cardolan/Sindar
6/23	North Gondor/Dunlendings
10/22	Noldo/Harad

Dark Servants

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
11/20	Witch King/Dark Lieutenants
12/21	Dragon Lord/Corsairs
13/15	Dog Lord/Blind Sorcerer
14/24	Cloud Lord/Rhudaur**
16/19	Ice King/Long Rider
17/18	Quiet Avenger/Fire King

*The Northmen get a Fort on 4217

**The Cloud Lord town at 3428 is reduced to a village, and the Cloud Lord town at 3629 is upgraded to a Major Town. Rhudaur get a fort on 1910.

2950 Game

Free People

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
1/7	Woodmen/South Gondor
2/8	North Men/Dwarves
3/10	Riders of Rohan/Noldo
4/9	Dunadan/Sindar Elves
5/24	Silvan Elves /White Wizard
6/23	North Gondor /Dunlendings

Dark Servants

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
11/21	Witch King/Corsairs
12/25	Dragon Lord/Khand Easterlings
13/14	Dog Lord/Cloud Lord
15/16	Blind Sorcerer/Ice King
17/19	Quiet Avenger/Long Rider
18/20	Fire King/Dark Lieutenants

Kin-stripe Game

Free People

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
1/2	Eldacar / Rebels
3/5	Rhovanion / Kingdom of Arnor
4/6	Horselords / Quendi

Dark Servants

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
11/31	Castamir / Elendin
14/15	Southron Kingdoms / Morlaen
12/16	Morlaen / Witch-realm

Nation Trios

Nation Trios are the pre-paired nations available to play in 3-nation Gunboat Games.

1650 Game

Free People

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
1/8/9	Woodmen / Dwarves / Sinda Elves
2/3/6	Northmen / Eothraim / North Gondor*
4/5/10	Arthedain / Cardolan / Noldo Elves
7/22/23	Southern Gondor / Haradwaith / Dunlendings

Dark Servants

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
11/14/24**	Witch King / Cloud Lord / Rhudaur
12/13/20	Dragon Lord / Dog Lord / Dark Lieutenants
15/16/18	Blind Sorcerer / Ice King / Fire King
17/19/21	Quiet Avenger / Long Rider / Corsairs

**The Northmen get a Fort on 4217*

***The Cloud Lord town at 3428 is reduced to a village, and the Cloud Lord town at 3629 is upgraded to a Major Town. Rhudaur get a fort on 1910.*

2950 Game

Free People

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
1/8/10	Woodmen / Dwarves / Noldo Elves
2/6/7	Northmen / North Gondor / South Gondor
3/5/24	Riders of Rohan / Silvan Elves / White Wizard
4/9/23	Dunadan Rangers / Sinda Elves / Dunlendings

Dark Servants

<i>Nation IDs</i>	<i>Nations</i>
11/12/18	Witch-king / Dragon Lord / Fire King
13/16/19	Dog Lord / Ice King / Long Rider
14/15/20	Cloud Lord / Blind Sorcerer / Dark Lieutenants
17/21/25	Quiet Avenger / Corsairs / Khand Easterlings

Splitting a Duo or Trio

If you only wish to play one nation, you may choose to start up with another player or two players as a team, with each of you playing one nation.

Joining A Game

To join a game, send us at least three Duos or Trios that you are willing to play, in order of preference. When the game is full, we will then allocate you a Duo or Trio to play. You will usually be able to play your first or second choice.

Neutral Nations

Starting Allegiances in 1650

Dark Servants: Corsairs and Rhudaur
Free People: Harad and Dunlendings
Not played: Easterlings

Starting Allegiances in 2950

Dark Servants: Corsairs and the Khand Easterlings
Free People: Dunlendings and the White Wizard
Not Played: Rhun Easterlings

Starting Allegiances in Kin-ship

Not Played: Khazad, Tirkhor

Nation Relations

Your relations to other nations should have been altered as appropriate (nations on your side should be Tolerated, nations on the opposing side should be Disliked). However, please check these, and if there are any errors, let us know.

Offensive Actions Against Characters

Your Own Nations

You can take any actions you wish against characters of your own nations.

Characters At Your Population Centres

You are permitted to take offensive actions against unknown characters at your own population centres.

Characters At Other Locations

You may not take offensive actions against unknown characters, or characters of nations on your team being run by other players, at population centres which you do not own or who are not at population centres. Offensive actions include but are not limited to doubling, influencing, stealing, sabotaging, cursing, etc. If you are unsure whether something is permitted, please ask us before attempting it.

Characters from Dead Nations

If you know for certain that a nation on your team is dead, you may challenge or assassinate their characters in order to gain their artefacts, even if they are not on your population centre.

Doubling

In line with the above, doubling is permitted on any enemy character, or character belonging to your other nation/s. But you may not double characters that you know belong to nations of your allegiance run by other players.

Offensive Actions Against Allies

You may not take offensive actions against known allied armies, characters or population centres of nations on your team being run by other players. Offensive actions include but are not limited to doubling, influencing, stealing, sabotaging, cursing, etc. If you are unsure whether something is permitted, please ask us before attempting it.

Offensive Actions Against Your Own Nations

You can take any actions you wish against your own nation/s.

Nation Lists

Every 3 turns (or whenever we get the chance) we will update the lists of nation Duos, dead nations, etc., that are made available. Inactive nations will, by default, be revealed, but not specifically mentioned. If you think we have made an error, or forgotten to update the lists, please remind us!.

Dropped Nations

A player cannot normally run more than two nations in a 2-nation game, or three nations in a 3-nation game. If a nation or nations become available due to a player dropping, we will first attempt to find a player to take them over who is not currently playing in the game, before, if necessary, splitting up the nations and offering them singularly to existing players within the game. The following, then, is the full procedure in the event of a player dropping:

Multiple Nations

1. The nations will be advertised as available to our pool of players who have shown an interest in taking over dropped nations.
2. If no one who is not already playing the game is interested in taking them over, the nations will be split, and offered individually to any players on the same team who do not have 2/3 nations.
3. If we still can't find a player to take them up, then we reserve the right to offer them to the players on the team who already have 2/3 nations, whilst keeping the balance of the game as best we can. If this results in a single player running all remaining nations in a Kin-strife game, or at least half of the remaining nations in a 1650, 2950 or Fourth-age game, opponents are informed, and are then allowed to communicate as they would in a normal game.

Single Nations

1. The nation is offered to other players on the same team who only have one nation.
4. If no one on the team is interested in playing the nation, it will be advertised as available to our pool of players who have shown an interest in taking over dropped nations.
5. If we still can't find a player to take over the nation, we reserve the right to offer it to the players who already have 2/3 nations, whilst keeping the balance of the game as best we can. If this results in a single player running all remaining nations in a Kin-strife game, or at least half of the remaining nations in a 1650, 2950 or Fourth-age game, opponents are informed, and are then allowed to communicate as they would in a normal game.

Offering a Position

Where more than one player is interested in a position, we will seek to keep strong combinations of players apart, in order to ensure as challenging and even a game as possible.

Shadow Orders

Obviously team mates cannot submit shadow orders in Gunboat games. Instead, if we do not receive orders from a player by the end of the day that the game is due to run, then the following day we (the GMs) will write basic shadow orders and use those to run the game. The player will be charged for these at normal turn cost.

Game End

In addition to the usual ways in which a game can be won, a Gunboat game can also end in one of the following three ways:

Vote

Any player may request that their team vote on whether or not to concede the game. This is done by emailing us with a request to hold a vote.

PLEASE DO NOT REQUEST A VOTE IF YOU ARE PLANNING ON DROPPING YOUR NATIONS ANYWAY! If you wish to drop because you think your nations are no longer viable, that is absolutely fine. But in that case please let us know, so that we can see if any of the other players wish to take them over.

Votes are confidential (including which player requested the vote), and are organised by ourselves. A vote can only take place a maximum of once every five turns.

When a vote occurs, you have three options:

- 1) You can vote to CONTINUE.
- 2) You can vote to CONCEDE.
- 3) Or, if you intend to drop your position/s regardless of the vote's result, you can DROP. In this case your nation/s are dropped *before* the vote and offered to your allies, so that they have the option of playing on should the game continue. There is no penalty for dropping in this way. Note that you cannot pick this option if you were the person who called the vote.

The voting deadline must be strictly adhered to. If you miss that deadline, your nations are considered to have voted to *continue*. However, we reserve the right to extend the deadline if a player votes to drop, so that we can offer those nations to allies.

Dead nations automatically vote to concede, and if **more** than 2/3 of the nations on the team vote to concede, the vote to concede is successful. At this point we will ask the players who voted to continue whether they would like to take over the positions of the players who voted to concede. If they do so, the game continues. If they do not wish to do so, then the game will end on the next turn.

The opposing team is not informed that a vote is taking place unless the game is due to end, at which point all players are notified, the final turn is run, and the game is concluded.

If the vote to concede fails, the game continues, you cannot call a further vote until at least 5 more turns have passed.

If you decide to vote to concede but the game continue onwards, then you are expected to continue the game.

Nation Advantage

If there is at any time there is a greater than 3:1 ratio of surviving nations on a particular allegiance, the game ends automatically with victory going to the allegiance with the greater number of nations. All players are notified, and turns will be run to end the game immediately.

After 50 Turns

After 50 turns (or 52 turns in a Fourth Age game) the game ends, and the allegiance with the most combined victory points wins.

If, however, the victory points of both allegiances are within 10% of each other, the game is considered a draw.

Communication

Almost no diplomacy is allowed in Gunboat games.

The only communication allowed between players of the same allegiance is a short diplomatic message, which should either be sent **via us** to all members of your team on certain specified turns, or via Discord if it is a 'Discord Diplomacy' variant (you will be informed of this at game start).

You will be told on which turns you are allowed to send diplos. For example, on turns 6/11/16/21, etc.

The message is limited to 50 words per active nation you are playing.

Hexes are one word, “Dark Lieutenant” and “Major Town” are each considered to be one word. “It’s” is two words. If in doubt, please ask us to clarify.

An important exception is when, as a result of players dropping, one player ends up running all remaining nations on a side in a Kin-strife game, or at least half the remaining nations in a 1650, 2950 or Fourth-age game. In this case, the opposing side will be informed, and both teams can then communicate without restrictions, and will gain access to their allies' results.

To send a diplo, email us in the following format:

Subject line: ME Game 77 Diplo for FPs.

Email body:

START

Dwarves need gold at 2004, under heavy attack. Quiet Avenger stealing gold from Iron hills.

END

No form of contact at all is permitted with players of other allegiances.

Information gathering

Techniques Permitted

Information from 925 orders, Lore spells, etc.

Transfer of products/gold from your nation to other nations in the game.

Any actions against your second nation from your first nation (or vice versa!).

Techniques Not Permitted

Information transfer of any kind. For example, transferring 23 gold to suggest an attack on nation 23, or 3221 gold to request an attack on a population centre at 3221. The essence of a Gunboat game is little or no communication, so any attempt against the spirit of this is strictly prohibited.

Trust

Gunboat games require an element of trust, both between us and yourselves, and between players. The essence of the game lies in the lack of communication, and we trust you not to seek to abuse this rule. If in doubt as to whether something is permitted, please contact us to ask before attempting it.

