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THE HALL OF FIRE FAN WEBZINE

Zirakzgil by John Howe



GREETINGS,

SALUTATIONS... HELLO ALL!

Hello, Hello! It is a pleasure to be writing this month's introduction for The Hall of Fire webzine, and helping out our overworked, underpaid (or should I say "un" paid) editor Matthew Kearns and design editor Doug Joos. We're still plugging away here at Hall of Fire and, with many incredible submissions from readers and hard work by staff members, are attempting to give you a webzine whose quality is on par with ones you'd normally have to pay for!

I also want to mention our first contest winner, for the Fell Creature competition that ended March 11th, is Evan Davis (mordorurukhai) for his Hounds of Valinor submission. You can see the fruits of his labour in this issue's Featured Creatures section. There are still two more categories that are in need of your submissions (an original Hostile Haunt due on April 16th, and an original adventure set in northern Middle-earth due on May 13th) so keep 'em coming! For more details, check out last month's issue of *The Hall of Fire* (issue 16) or the "sticky" message entitled *Hall of Fire Contest* on the Decipher LOTR RPG message boards. If you've never submitted your personal work for a contest like this before and are afraid of rejection, I say GO FOR IT! You may surprise yourself!

This month's issue should be a real treat for all! Held within these pages are some awesome new Allies and Adversaries by Ron Williams, a great Fan Flavor submission regarding weapons and spells by Floyd Haywood, information on how to create magical items, a kickin' new Hostile Haunt, The Effective....Noble, the second part of the Ecology of Mûmakil Chapter, and more.

Thanks for reading and please stick around!

Enjoy!

Josh Kapfer
aka ReptileJK
Staff Writer



IN THIS ISSUE

GREETINGS	1
ADVENTURING IN...	2
▪ The Lost Realm of Arnor	
IT'S ALL OPTIONAL...	8
▪ Crafting Magical Items, New Weapon Descriptions	
HOSTILE HAUNTS...	10
▪ Den of a City Rat	
FAN FLAVOUR...	12
▪ New Spells, New Weapons and Miscellaneous, The Effective Noble	
ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES	22
▪ Elladan, Elrohir, Mornech - Master Thief	
FEATURED CREATURES	26
▪ The Hounds of Valinor	
A FIELD GUIDE TO THE CREATURES OF MIDDLE-EARTH...	27
▪ Mûmaks, Part II	
POSTMASTER...	31
WHAT'S OUT THERE...	34
CALLING ALL GAMERS...	35



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ADVENTURING IN

THE LOST REALM OF ARNOR

by Ron Williams

“At its greatest Arnor included all Eriador, except the regions beyond the Lune, and the lands east of the Greyflood and Loudwater, in which lay Rivendell and Hollin.”

- Appendices, The Return of the King

The Elder Days

Before the Ages of the Sun and Moon, Eriador was largely uninhabited, except possibly for some Silvan elves who lived in the woods that covered Minhiriath and Enedwaith.

The First Age

With the rising of the Sun and the Moon, Men awoke in the East, and some journeyed west. Within the first few hundred years of the First Age of the Sun, the first Men entered Eriador. These were later known as the

Edain, and were opposed to the Shadow. These Men soon were sundered, however, as some passed over the Blue Mountains into Beleriand. At the end of the First Age, these Men sailed over the Sea and became the Númenoreans.

The Second Age

In the 600th year of the Second Age, the Númenoreans returned to the shores of Middle-earth. They were re-introduced to their Edain brothers by Gil-galad, the Elven king of Lindon.

At that time, the Edain lived between the Hills of Evendim and the Weather Hills. They were separate in speech and culture from the Bree-men, who lived further south. The Númenoreans built a haven at the mouth of the Gwathló (Greyflood River) around SA750, named Vinyalonde, and later called Lond Daer Ened.

In about 1697 of the Second Age, Sauron invaded Eriador with a large army of Orcs. This war, the War of Elves and Sauron, ravaged Eriador, and many of the Men who lived there were killed. The Men of Númenor sailed to the aid of Gil-galad, and Sauron was driven back through the Gap of Calenardhon (later named the Gap of Rohan).

By about SA1800, the Men of Númenor began to colonize Middle-earth in large numbers. The Haven of Tharbad was built, upstream from Lond Daer. From that time forward, the great forests of Minhiriath were felled for shipbuilding.

In SA3320, after the sinking of Númenor, Elendil founded the Kingdoms of Gondor and Arnor in Middle-earth. Arnor was set down in Eriador, and encompassed all the lands between the Lune and the Misty Mountains, from Forochel to the Greyflood. Elendil set his capital at Annúminas, on the shores of Lake Evendim. The city of Fornost was also built, and the city of Tharbad swelled in importance.





The Third Age

Arnor remained strong and unified for over 800 years, but in 861 of the Third Age, the High King Eärendur died, and the kingdom was split between his three sons. The successor states of Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur emerged. The three kingdoms warred for several hundred years, especially over control of the fortress of Amon Sûl (Weathertop), and the palantir kept within. These wars weakened the Dúnedain of all three kingdoms. Of all the three kingdoms, however, Arthedain remained the strongest and was the only one to keep the bloodline of Eärendur pure.

In TA1300 the Witch-king of Angmar arose to the north. Unknown to all, this was the King of the Nazgûl, who was sent north to destroy the weakened Dúnedain kingdoms.

By the mid 14th century, no successor to Isildur remained in Rhudaur. The leadership of the country fell to the Hill-men, who were indigenous to the region. The Hill-man king made a secret alliance with the Witch-king, and vowed to serve him.

Rhudaur became a puppet state to Angmar and the few remaining Dúnedain of that kingdom were either killed or driven off. In TA1356 Angmar and Rhudaur attack Arthedain in the First Northern War.

In TA1409, Angmar and Rhudaur again attacked Arthedain and Cardolan, in the Second Northern War. The Tower of Amon Sûl was destroyed, but Cardolan received the brunt of the attack. The royal house of Cardolan was slain, as were all their knights, effectively ending the Dúnedain rule in Cardolan. Tharbad remained untouched, but central authority ended in that realm. Likewise, the Hill-men of Rhudaur were also decimated, with nearly every man slain.

After the Second Northern War, Rhudaur ceased to exist as a nation. The remaining Hill-men were too few to control the land, and it became a wild, dangerous land.

In TA1635 the Great Plague struck Middle-earth. Cardolan was decimated, and virtually all the remaining Dúnedain of that realm died. Arthedain was little hurt by the Plague, since it weakened as it traveled north. By TA1635, Arthedain was the only successor state of Arnor remaining. In TA1974, Angmar again launched an offensive against Arthedain. In this offensive the tower of Amon Sûl was again destroyed, Fornost Erain was overrun, and the kingdom of Arthedain ceased to exist. The Witch-king claimed Fornost Erain as his capital, and sent many fell things to live in the city.

The last king of Arthedain, Arvedui, was pursued with his personal guard far north, into the foothills of the Blue Mountains. There he hid in the old Dwarf mines, until hunger forced him to seek the aid of the Lossoth of Forochel. Círdan, lord of the Grey Havens, sent a ship north into the Ice Bay of Forochel to rescue Arvedui. The Ice Bay was treacherous in winter, however, and the ship sank, killing the crew and King Arvedui.

In TA1975, the Witch-king was driven out of Eriador, and his kingdom destroyed, by a force from Gondor, the remaining knights of Arthedain, and the Elves of Lindon.



Rangers of the North

After Angmar was defeated, Aranarth, son of King Arvedui, refuses the Scepter of Annúminas, saying there were too few Dúnedain left to rule. He took the title 'Chieftain of the Dúnedain' and gave the heirlooms of the kingdom to Elrond Halfelven of Rivendell.

For over 1,000 years, the Dúnedain descendants of Arthedain protected their lands from the forces of Shadow. As the Rangers of the North, they wandered forgotten paths, holding Orcs, Trolls, and other things at bay. Although they remembered their heritage, almost everyone else in Eriador forgot, and no longer associated the wandering Rangers with the tales of the tall Sea-kings.

The Rangers live primarily in the Angle of Rhudaur, but they travel, guard and scout all over Arthedain and Cardolan. There are only 200-300 Rangers of the North left at the time of the War of the Ring.



In the year 15 of the Fourth Age, Annúminas was rebuilt by King Elessar and the Reunited Kingdom of Arnor and Gondor were restored. Fornost was rebuilt, and Tharbad was returned to past glory. The Rangers were then restored as the lords of Arnor.



ARTHEDAIN

Arthedain stretches from the Ice Bay of Forochel, south to the Great East Road. From west to east, it stretches from the River Lune to the Weather Hills. It does not include the realms of Bree-land or the Shire.

Northern Eriador is a country of hills, downs and highland plains. Most of the woods are of pine. Temperatures are mild in the summer and bitter cold in the winter, although snow is not common.

Beyond the North Downs, towards the Ice Bay of Forochel, the land becomes a rough, uneven plain. Few trees are found north of the North Downs, and the land becomes tundra near the Ice Bay of Forochel.

The Hills of Evendim are heavily wooded, primarily with pine trees. The North Downs and Tower Hills, however, are not heavily wooded. Most of these hills are downs: low hills where erosion has exposed rocks from underneath in many places. While most of the hilltops there are barren, there are trees nestled in the ravines and valleys between hills.

Arthedain is a dangerous land. It is filled with wolves, roaming bands of Orcs from Mount Gram, occasional Trolls from Rhudaur, Wights, Ghosts, and other fell things. No settlements of Elves, Dwarves, Men or Hobbits are to be found throughout its desolation. Only the very brave or very foolish travel the ancient paths north of Bree.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Annúminas

Annúminas was once the capital of Arnor, and established by Elendil himself. The city remained until 861 of the Third Age, when Arnor split into three kingdoms. The king of Arthedain then moved his throne to Fornost Erain. Annúminas was left abandoned and soon fell into ruin.

Deadman's Dike

The capital of Arthedain was the city of Fornost Erain ('North Fortress of the King'). Once a thriving center of commerce and politics, the city fell in the final war with Angmar. Now, only crumbled stones, foundations of battlements and walls remain.

The city has not forgotten the Witch-king, however. Many evil things still lurk in the ruins, and no one dares live within many miles of the site.

The Greenway

Once known as the Old South Road in the days of the kingdom of Arnor, the Greenway is now an unpaved, grass grown path, leading from Deadman's Dike to Tharbad.

Hills of Evendim

The most sacred of place to the Dúnedain of the North kingdom, the Hills of Evendim overlook Lake Evendim (Nenuial), on whose shores the old capital of Arnor, Annúminas, once stood. No Dúnedain ever lived in these wooded hills, rather they were seen as a place to renew their spirit and seek contemplation.

Lake Evendim (Nenuial)

The largest lake in Eriador, it is a serene, still body of water, which reflects the hills on the eastern shore. The ruins of Annúminas, the old capital of Arnor, lies on the southern shore.



The Lone Lands

The Lone Lands are the name of the uninhabited hills and woods between the Weather Hills and the Hoarwell River. These lands are lightly forested, rough, and with few trails.

Weather Hills (Eryn Sûl)

The Weather Hills are a barren, rocky collection of uneven hills and plateaus. Few trees grow on the hillsides, and most of the rain runoff pools into the Midgewater Marsh, to the west of the hills.

Never populated, these hills were fortified against the realms of Rhudaur and Angmar.

Weathertop (Amon Sûl)

At the far south end of the Weather Hills lies the greatest mound of the chain, Weathertop (Amon Sûl). Weathertop was the lynchpin of Dúnedain defense against Angmar and Rhudaur. On top of this hill, over 1000 feet above the surrounding countryside, lies the ruins of the Tower of Amon Sûl. This great keep once guarded the Great East Road and was home to the chief *palantir* of Arnor.

The *palantir* of Amon Sûl was one of the two large seeing stones. It was over 3' in diameter, and took two men to move it.

When the North Kingdom was destroyed in the Third Northern War, King Arvedui took the stone and fled north, to Forodwaith. The *palantir* and king were both lost when their Elven rescue ship sank in the Ice Bay of Forochel.





CARDOLAN

Cardolan is better known as Minhiriath in the late Third Age. Literally, ‘the land between the rivers’, it lies between the Brandywine River (Baranduin) to the northwest and the Greyflood (Gwathló) to the southeast. It stretches from the Sea eastward to the Hoarwell River (Mitheithel).

West of the Old South Road, Minhiriath is a land of rolling plains and meadows. To the east of the Old South Road, the land gradually raises into the South Downs (Tyrn Gorthad) and into Eregion (Hollin). During the Second Age, the Númenoreans built havens in Minhiriath, at the mouth of the Greyflood, called Vinyalonde (later Lond Daer Ened), and at Tharbad, where the Old South Road crosses the Greyflood. Once heavily forested, the Númenoreans consumed most of the woods for their many fleets during the Second Age.

During the time of kingdom of Arnor, Cardolan was heavily populated, with most folks living along the Brandywine and Greyflood. Large farms and manors dotted the countryside. The Wars of Angmar and the Great Plague devastated the land, with the vast majority being killed.

Lond Daer Ened was destroyed at the end of the Second Age, but Tharbad continued as a major trade city throughout the first half of the Third Age. Over the second half of the Third Age, Tharbad had declined to a small town, like Bree. It was finally destroyed in the flood that followed the Fell Winter, in TA 2912.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Andrath

The ‘Long Road’. Andrath is the name of the section of the Old South Road that climbs from the lowland plains of Minhiriath to the higher country at Bree. Uninhabited due to its proximity to the Barrow Downs, its name comes from the lack of amenities found on it, as well as the climb northbound travelers must endure.

Eryn Vorn

An untamed forest in the peninsula of the same name. The forest is home to deer, bears, and wild boar.

The Eryn Vorn is also home to Wild Men related to the Drúedain of the White Mountains. These tribesmen live by hunting and spear fishing, and guard their home fiercely, and those few who know of its existence give it a wide berth.

Lond Daer Ened

Once the harbor of Vinyalonde, built by the Númenoreans in the early Second Age, Lond Daer Ened is now only a submerged ruins, and fallen towers and battlements.

Located at the mouth of the Greyflood River, the ruins have been abandoned since the Downfall of Númenor.

South Downs

A low line of hills stretching southeast from Bree, towards Eregion. The South Downs are barren, with few trees. Tall grasses and rocky outcroppings are the dominant features. During the reign of the kingdoms of Cardolan, these downs were occupied by herdsmen.

Tharbad

The oldest city in Eriador, Tharbad was built as a Númenorean haven in the mid-Second Age. It was the center of Númenorean culture in Eriador until Elendil and the exiles landed in Lindon. Tharbad prospered as a trading center throughout the first half of the Third Age.

After Cardolan fell in the Northern Wars with Angmar, and after the Great Plague, Tharbad was greatly reduced in population and importance. It was finally destroyed in the floods after the Fell Winter of 2911.

After 3000 TA, when Saruman began uniting some Dunlending tribes against Rohan, and war was on the horizon, many Dunlendings migrated north, across the Greyflood, to avoid the conflict. This forced the few remaining indigenous Men left to migrate north up the Greenway, towards Bree. These ‘Southrons’ as the Bree-men called them, were Men of Minhiriath, the last remnants of the people of Cardolan. The Dunlendings began to set up communities on the north side of the river, along the Greenway and river bank. Tharbad, however, remained ruins until the Fourth Age.

Greyflood River (Gwathló)

The greatest river west of the Misty Mountains, the Greyflood marked the old south boundary of the kingdom of Arnor. A wide, fast moving river, the Greyflood is fed by many tributaries, including the great rivers Hoarwell, Loudwater, and Swanfleet. It is also very deep south of the Swanfleet tributary. The river is impassible, except for the ford at Tharbad.



RHUDAUR

Rhudaaur is the name of the region that lies between the Weather Hills and the Misty Mountains, from the Ettenmoors south to the convergence of the Hoarwell River (*Mitheithel*) and the Loudwater River (*Bruinen*). In the late Third Age, Rhudaaur is synonymous with the Trollshaws.

Rhudaaur is a wild and dangerous land, full of Trolls, Orcs, and Wargs. It is a land of ominous ruins, perched upon hill tops. It is also the home of the remaining Dúnedain of the North. It is a land of cliffs, tall hills, deep ravines, dark forests, and little rivers, and isolated farmsteads.

Between the Weather Hills and the Hoarwell River Rhudaaur is a semi-arid plateau, with few trees. Most of the foliage is in the form of low, gnarled bushes. While generally flat, the terrain is rough, with low ravines cutting across the countryside. These are the 'Lone Lands'. There are no settlements and no inns between the Hills and the River.

Between the Hoarwell and the Loudwater, the land quickly rises, becoming steep cliffs, ravines, and hills. The forests thicken, with oak giving way to pine. This region is named the Trollshaws. It is a wild, untamed wilderness.

There are few paths through the Trollshaws. What few paths there are treacherous, and often misleading.

Rhudaaur also has many ruins of stone towers and fortifications. All of these date back to the time of the Dúnedain kingdom, over 1500 years ago.

PLACES OF INTEREST

The Angle

The region south of the Great East Road, between the Hoarwell and Loudwater Rivers. The Angle is home to most of the remaining Dúnedain families in Eriador.

Coldfells

The rough foothills of the Misty Mountains, northeast of the Trollshaws. Eternally mist covered, the Coldfells are home to wolves, Wargs, and Trolls.

Ettenmoors

The region north of the Trollshaws. The Ettenmoors are a cold, damp, boggy highland area. The area is stiff with Trolls.

Ford of Bruinen

The shallow rocky area where the Great East Road crosses the Loudwater (Bruinen). It is the only place on the river that can be forded. The ford also marks the end of the traditional boundary of Rhudaaur and the beginning of the realm of Rivendell.

Hoarwell River

The Hoarwell River is also known as the Mitheithel. A cold, fast moving river that separates the Trollshaws from western Rhudaaur. The river is impassable except for at The Last Bridge.

The Last Bridge

An ancient stone bridge that crosses the Hoarwell at the Great East Road. The Bridge was built by the Dúnedain at the end of the Second Age, when Arnor was founded.

Loudwater River

Also known as the Bruinen. The Loudwater marks the eastern border of Rhudaaur. It is a fast moving, cold river that can only be crossed at the Ford of Bruinen.





IT'S ALL OPTIONAL

CRAFTING MAGICAL ITEMS by Mathew Kearns

As there are deficiencies in this system for simple crafting and creating of items, it is so for crafting magical items. Even though Middle-earth has much more organic magic where it infuses everything and overtly displayed as it is in other worlds, magical items, good and evil, do exist and this article will build upon the ideas of the previous issue's article by Camdin concerning minor magical rings.

Items and Crafting

Use whatever means for crafting an item is suggested by the Narrator (out of the book, altered rules from my previous article in Issue 5, etc.). Items don't have to be elaborate or grandiose in nature -- the One Ring was a simple gold band and quite innocuous-looking. Any sort of item that can be crafted is able to be imbued with powers from wine flacons to weapons to jewelry. Though a character could carry or wear many items of power, only one item worn (clothing, jewelry, etc.) and one item held (staff, weapon, etc.) may be active at any given time, the item considered to be more powerful is the item currently activated (shield and armor = yes; ring and boots = no). The only exception is a Staff of Power held by Wizards.

ABILITY

Item of Power

Prerequisites: The Art or Enchantment

Effect: While Enchantment ability grants a character the ability to create minor magical items, this ability allows a craftsman to create an item of Power (ring, jewel, weapon, etc.). He must have the powers that will be woven into the item. As the character spends his personal power - his accumulated power of being - into the item's creation, he loses whatever powers that are placed into the item (specialties, ranks in skills, etc.); these powers may be reacquired upon subsequent advancements. When adding attribute, reaction, and skill bonuses/points, the character loses a number of points/ranks equal to the imbued bonus (see Table 1). Creating items of power, no matter how trivial is taxing to the mind and body. The craftsman must make a Weariness test per effect with a TN of 7 + number of days for the effect to be imbued (see Table 2). The imbued effects are always active while the item is worn.

Points/Ranks	Bonus
1-6	+1
7-9	+2
10-11	+3
12+	+ (X-4)/2*

* - X = bonus; round the result down

Days	Effect
1	Specialty
2	+1 Skill Bonus
3	Edge or upgrade, +1 Reaction Bonus
4	Ability or upgrade
5	+1 Attribute point
6	Basic Order
7	Elite Order

ATTRIBUTES, REACTIONS, SKILLS

See Table 2 for the number of days required for adding the effect to the item. Bonuses to attributes, reactions, and skills are applied to the corresponding test results, not the wearer's actual scores/ranks. An item that has a Wits bonus woven into it can influence its wearer if he acts in a way contrary to the personality of its maker. If the wearer attempts such an action, he must make a Willpower vs. Corruption test with a TN equal to the maker's Bearing score at the time of the item's creation.

ABILITIES

See Table 2 for the number of days required for adding the effect to the item. Items with Order abilities woven into them require the wearer to have the particular Order to gain the use of the ability, though all other ability prerequisites are waived. An ability gained via an item may also count for the prerequisite of other abilities and powers gained through normal advancement, see Orders below for more information.

EDGES

See Table 2 for the number of days required for adding the effect to the item. For traits with upgrades, treat each upgrade as an individual edge where time for imbuing the effect is concerned.

SPELLS AND SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES

Adding a spell or spell-like ability to an item requires 1 day per spell pick; only spells that the Narrator deems appropriate to the specific item may be imbued in this manner (for example, Change Hue for a cloak or ring while Bane would be best for



weapons). The same number of actions to invoke the spell are still required. Unless the character has spent spell picks to remove spell components or to add effects to the spell, a spell imbued into an item is cast in the normal manner and has the standard effects based on the item wearer's stats.

If a spell is a Sorcery spell and if not used as a counterspell, the item becomes corrupt, though any item created by a Corrupt individual will always be corrupt. Having a corrupt item in a character's possession causes him to immediately gain 1 Corruption point and must make a Corruption test every week with a TN equal to the creator's Bearing at the time of creation.

ORDERS

See Table 2 for the number of days required for adding the effect to the item. If an item has an Order woven into it, the wearer gains the benefits of having that Order, but if the item is ever taken off they are lost and any effects that require the Order become inactive until the item is put on again.

NEW WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS Author Unknown

Armed Combat Weapons

Weapon	Damage*	Parry	Size	Weight	Price	Special
<i>Axe, Battle</i>	2d5+5	+1	M	8 lbs	3SP, 1sp	Ignore 2 points of armor protection
<i>Axe, Hand</i>	2d6+2	-1	S	3 lbs	2SP, 2sp	Ignore 1 point of armor protection, may be thrown
<i>Axe, Great</i> ^	3d6+5	+1	L	17 lbs	4SP, 1sp	Requires Str of 12+, ignore 3 pts of armor, 2 actions to use
<i>Club</i>	2d6+2	+1	M	4 lbs	Free	+3 damage with Extraordinary Success
<i>Dagger</i>	1d6+2	-2	S	1 lbs	1SP, 2sp	+3 AC & +3 Damage when used by surprise or behind
<i>Morning Star</i>	2d6+7	-2	L	15 lbs	3SP, 1sp	Entangles opponent/weapon on Superior, 2 actions to use
<i>Hammer</i> ^	2d6+4	0	M	8 lbs	3SP	Ignore 2 points of armor, -1 to armor on a Superior Success
<i>Mace</i>	2d6+3	+1	M	9 lbs	2SP, 3sp	Ignore 1 point of armor, -1 to armor on Extraord. Success
<i>Mattock</i> ^	2d6+5	0	M	10 lbs	3SP	Ignores all armor but requires 1 action to pull free
<i>Long Knife</i>	1d6+3	0	M	1.5 lbs	1SP, 3sp	+2 AC & +4 Damage when used by surprise or behind
<i>Pikestaff</i> ^	2d6+4	0	L	15 lbs	2SP,3sp	Reach up to 3 yds, +5 if set vs a charge (opp. Swift test)
<i>Spear</i>	2d6+3	+1	L	7 lbs	2SP,3sp	Reach up to 2 yds, +3 if set vs a charge (opp. Swift test)
<i>Staff</i>	2d6	+2	M	4 lbs	Free	Reach up to 2 yds, +1 to Weariness & Acrobatics tests
<i>Long Sword</i>	2d6+5	+2	M	4 -8 lbs	3SP, 1sp	+ 1d6 damage on Extraordinary Success
<i>Short Sword</i>	2d6+3	+1	M	3 -5 lbs	2SP, 3sp	+1d4 damage on Extraordinary Success
<i>Scimitar</i>	2d6+4	+2	M	4 -8 lbs	3SP	+ 1d6 damage on Extraordinary Success
<i>Great Sword</i> ^	2d6+7	+1	L	15 lbs	3SP,3sp	Requires Str of 10+, 2 actions to use, ignore 2 pts of armor
<i>Shield, Large</i>	2d6+3	+5	L	10 lbs	2SP	x2 damage with Extraordinary Success
<i>Shield, Small</i>	2d6	+3	M	6 lbs	1SP	x1.5 damage with Extraordinary Success
<i>Whip</i>	1d6+2	-3	M	1 lb	1SP	May entangle enemy with a Superior Success; opp Str test

* Include Strength bonus in damage ^ Two-handed weapon



Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Range	Weight	Price	Special
<i>Short Bow</i> ^	2d6+2	5/ 25/ 50/ 100	2 lbs	2SP	Maybe used from horseback with no penalty
<i>Long Bow</i> ^	2d6+4	5/ 30/ 60/ 150	3 lbs	2SP, 2sp	Requires Str of 8+ & must be Medium Size
<i>Elvish Bow</i> ^	2d6+5	5/ 35/ 70/ 175	3 lbs	Priceless	Requires Str of 10, +Str to Damage, +1RC, Elves Only
<i>Steel Bow</i> ^	2d6+6	5/ 40/ 80/ 200	3 lbs	Priceless	Requires Str of 12+, Medium Size, & +Str to Damage
<i>Crossbow</i> ^	3d6+5	5/ 30/ 60/ 120	15 lbs	4SP, 1sp	Ignores 3 points of armor, 3 actions to use
<i>Dagger, thrown</i>	1d6+2	5/ 10/ 20/ 40	1 lbs	2SP, 2sp	+3 Damage when used by surprise
<i>Spear, thrown</i>	2d6+3	5/ 10/ 20/ 40	7 lbs	2SP, 2sp	Knock foe to ground (DoS: Large-X; Medium-S; Small-C)
<i>Javelin, thrown</i>	2d6+4	5/ 15/ 45/ 90	2 lbs	3SP	Ignores 2 points of armor on Extraordinary Success
<i>Stone, thrown</i>	1d6	5/ 10/ 20/ 30	0.5 lbs	Free	1d6+5 damage if used with a sling-shot, +5 to all ranges
<i>Hand Axe, thrown</i>	2d6+2	5/ 10/ 20/ 30	3 lbs	2SP, 2sp	Ignores 1 point of armor

* Include Strength bonus in damage ^ Two-handed weapon

HOSTILE HAUNTS

DEN OF A CITY RAT by Mathew Kearns

The home of Mornech is within the third ring of Minas Tirith, not a place of lavishness, but still above most common folk. In the event of his parents' death, he made a few alterations to the place, such as building the closet for which to conceal the basement entrance and making it look as sparse as possible. The home is 30'x30' with a fireplace opposite the front door.

Ground Level

To keep with the Spartan lifestyle he attempts to portray, he has most of his possessions here. There is a small bed with a straw mattress, a long table with benches, two open pantries mostly bare with a few household supplies, and two barrels of food stores with things such as vegetables, salted pork, dried fish, etc.

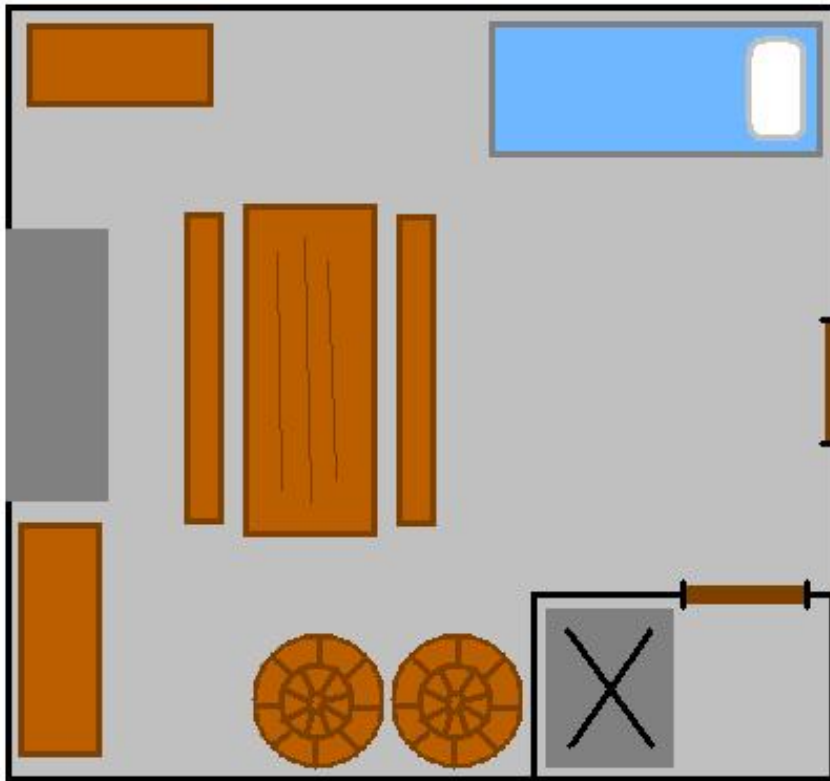
What makes this place interesting are the hidden items about the place. First, there are hidden weapons (1d6 daggers) at the bottom of both barrels so that if they are knocked over, they are within easy reach. Second, the secret entrance to the basement is located within the closet. To find it a TN 20 Search test of the room is needed; if looking in just the closet, the test is reduced by 5 or a TN 20 Observe (Spot) test is needed. The mechanism is a small pressure plate along the back wall of the closet. Finally, there is the key to his hidden cache. This is located within his mattress and would require either a TN 25 Search or TN 30 Observe (Spot) test to find.

Basement

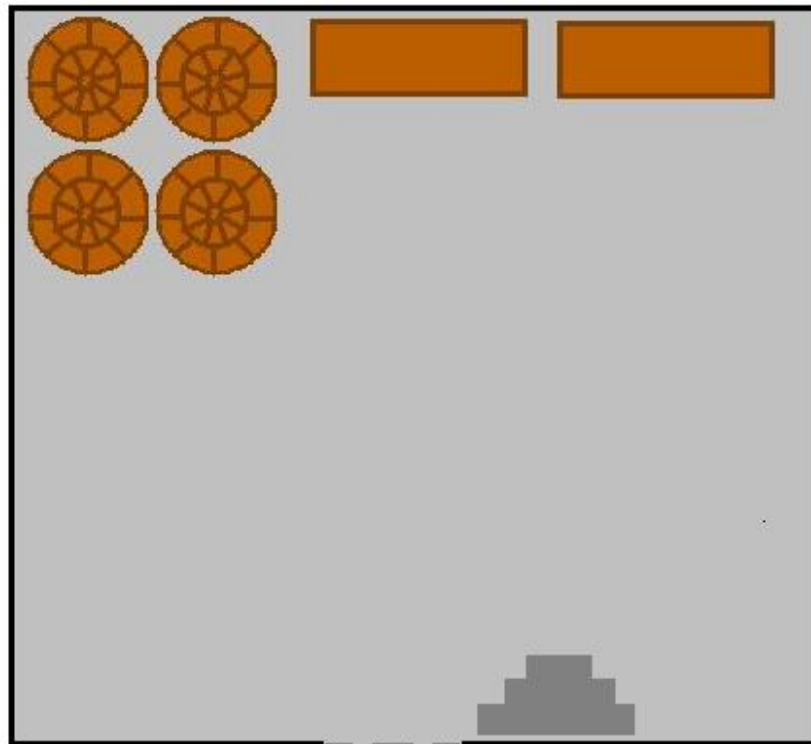
If the secret entrance is found, a panel of the flagstone that makes up the floor of the closet will slide away, revealing stairs to the basement. Although this seems highly unusual for someone of Mornech's station, all that is found in plain sight is more foodstuffs in barrels (no weapons here though) and two more open pantries with a healthy stock household supplies.

Now if suspicion still remains and a search is made of the basement, Mornech's secret cache could be found. To find the cache, a TN 23 Search or TN 28 Observe (Spot) test is required. All that is found is a loose brick in the wall that reveals a small hole, which incidentally is a lock that can be opened either with the key found upstairs or by a TN 20 Legerdemain (Pick Lock) test.

Upon a successful lock-picking test or opening the cache via the key, a panel of the bricks slide away, revealing a small chest with dimensions of 2'x2'x2'. Within it are items worth 1-2 Hoard value from various nobles of Minas Tirith or possibly visiting merchants, but do not include the family rings that he takes as his signature.



Mornech's Apartment - Ground Level



Mornech's Apartment - Secret Basement



FAN FLAVOUR

NEW SPELLS By Floyd Haywood

CORRUPTING AFFLICTION

“But Melkor has cast his shadow upon it, and confounded it with darkness, and brought forth evil out of good, and fear out of hope.” -

-The Silmarillion

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Duration: Indefinite

Weariness TN: 12

Cost: 4 spell picks

Requisite: Corrupted (The caster must himself be overcome and corrupted by evil)

Method: Standard, Song, Rune, Ability

Specialty: Sorcery

Effect: The caster makes an Intimidate (Torture) test. By using torturous devices he can twist an individual to his dark purposes, thusly corrupting the target's essence. The victim may oppose with a Willpower vs. Domination test with the TN equal to the caster's Intimidate result. The one who succeeds is given a bonus of 1 for a Marginal or Complete Success, 2 for a Superior Success, and 3 for an Extraordinary Success. If the caster is the one who wins, the target will gain a number of Corruption points equal to the bonus. If the target is the one who wins, he applies the bonus to the result of his next Willpower vs. Domination or Corruption test influenced by the caster only through the use of this spell or other means; normal Corruption rules apply.

TWISTING SHADOW

“...And by slow arts of cruelty were corrupted and enslaved; and thus did Melkor breed the hideous race...”

-The Silmarillion

Casting Time: Special

Range: Touch

Duration: Indefinite

Weariness TN: 15

Cost: 5 spell picks

Requisite: Corrupting Affliction

Method: Standard, Song, Rune

Specialty: Sorcery

Effect: If a target is tainted and overcome by the power of the Shadow, he becomes corrupted and falls under its influence. The caster and target enter a Contest of Wills. If the caster achieves a Superior Success at any time, one ability (spell or otherwise) is endowed to the target if the caster wins the contest; an Extraordinary Success grants two abilities. The spell(s) or advancement equivalent(s) that is the basis of the ability(s) cannot have a total spell or advancement pick cost greater than half the caster's base Wisdom score, rounded down. This process takes one day per spell or advancement pick of the ability(s) bestowed. Endowing a target with an ability is mentally and physically taxing each day the caster must make a TN 10 weariness test each day or stop the casting. If two consecutive Weariness tests fail or halts its weaving, the spell is broken and must be started again from the beginning. Each time the spell is rewoven it becomes increasingly harder. The Willpower test will have a cumulative +2 TN each time the spell has to be recast upon the same individual.

BURDEN OF EVIL

"...And she swooned before the menace of the fell spirit in his eyes and the foul vapour of his breath."

-The Silmarillion

Casting Time: 2 actions

Range: 10 ft. per point of Bearing

Duration: Bearing modifier in minutes

Weariness TN: 15

Cost: 3 spell picks

Requisite: None

Method: Standard, Song, Rune, Ability

Specialty: Sorcery

Effect: The oppression of evil abounds around the most dreaded of the Enemy's servants. The air thickens, weighing down the spirit and fatiguing all who oppose them. The caster makes an Intimidate test vs. Stamina of all non-corrupted characters within the spell's range. For all those that fail the test, they succumb to the oppression of his evil presence and lose one Weariness Level per degree of failure.

Improvement: For every additional spell pick spent, the caster improves the range of the spell by 10 ft or may gain an additional +2 bonus to the Intimidate test (max +6 total).

LIGHT OF THE VALAR

Casting Time: 2 actions

Range: Self

Duration: Bearing modifier in rounds

Weariness TN: 10 + Spell Effect Modifiers

Cost: 3 spell picks

Requisite: Blinding Flash, Flame of Anor

Method: Standard, Song

Specialty: Secret Fire

Effects: The Spell has three selectable effects; the selected effect(s) will augment the Weariness TN. First, the spell confers 2 points of armor that is stackable with any existing armor or Armor of Heroes edge, conferring +2 TN to the Weariness test. Second, it can allow the character to parry/block ranged attacks with a staff or other weapon, conferring a +3 TN to the Weariness test. Third, a brilliant globe of white light surrounds the caster. The light illuminates an area with a radius equal to the caster's Bearing in feet and imposes a penalty to all attack rolls against the caster equal to the caster's Bearing modifier. This effect does not confer a Weariness test modifier.

Improvement: Each time the caster spends two spell picks to improve this spell, choose one effect to enhance: add +1 points of armor, add a +2 bonus to parry/block test (conferring +2 TN each time), or impose a -1 penalty to attacks against the caster. Each improved effect confers a +2 TN modifier to the Weariness test each time it is selected.

INVIGORATING POWER

"Thou shalt rekindle hearts to valour of old in a world that now grows chill."

-The Silmarillion

Casting Time: 2 rounds

Range: 10 ft per point of Bearing

Duration: Bearing modifier in minutes

Weariness TN: 15

Cost: 3 spell picks

Requisite: Display of Power, Resist Fear

Method: Standard, Song, Ability

Specialty: Secret Fire

Effect: The caster makes and Inspire test at a TN 15. For each level of success, temporarily reduce the physical test penalty due to loss Weariness and/or Wound Levels for all non-Corrupt characters, excluding the caster, by 1 Weariness or Wound





Level per level of success (apply to Weariness Levels before Wound Levels). For example, the caster makes a Superior Success (reduce 3 levels) and a character has lost 2 Weariness Levels and 2 Wound Levels. Being affected by this spell, he would have a temporary penalty of only -1 as the penalty for 2 lost Weariness Levels and 1 lost Wound Level are negated for the duration of the spell.

Improvement: For every additional spell pick spent, the caster improves the range of the spell by 10 ft or may gain an additional +2 bonus to the Inspire test (max +6 total).

MIGHT OF TULKAS

“Fëlagund put forth all of his power and burst his bonds; and wrestled with the werewolf and slew it with his hands and teeth”.

-Silmarillion

Casting Time: 2 actions

Range: Touch

Duration: Special

Weariness TN: 12

Cost: 4

Requisite: None

Method: Standard, Song, Ability

Specialty: None

Effect: Select two of the listed effects (caster's choice): increase Health by 1 or 2 for an Extraordinary Success, increase Strength score by 1 + 1/level of success, increase Vitality score by 1 + 1/level of success, or a bonus to Unarmed Combat tests of 1 + 1/level of success. Any damage that is taken with the temporarily increased Health is negated at the end of the spell.

NEW WEAPONS AND MISCELLANEOUS

Blades of Angband

These foul blades were designed by Morgoth for his trusted Captains. They are exceedingly sharp, and deadly cutting through even metal armors. They were forged by the Great Enemy out of hate and fear of the Noldor and the men who had risen to help them. They are often slathered with a dreaded poison brewed in the pits of Angband. Besides being coated in an evil poison, they have these dread effects: Fell-handed +2 (Men, Elves) and reduces Armor by half, rounded up.

Acid poison of Morgoth

Stages: 2d6+4

Period: Days

TN: 15

Healing TN: 15

Primary Effect- The target loses 1 Wound Level and must make a TN 15 Willpower test vs. Domination to resist falling into a deep black sleep. On subsequent days, the Willpower TN increases by +1 each day and the same Stamina test is required to resist losing another 1/2 Wound Level (rounded up to nearest Wound Point) of damage until the Healing check is made or the duration is met.

Secondary Effect- The target is reduced by 1/2 a Wound Level (rounded up to nearest Wound Point) and must then make a TN 12 Willpower test vs. Domination to resist falling into the dark slumber. If the first Willpower test succeeds, its TN increases by +1 every two days but no further damage is sustained.

Special Ability: Acid - This product of the enemy eats its way through metal armor and clothing inflicting an additional 1d6 damage on contact and causing burn scars upon the victim. A TN 7 Healing check can be made to remove the acid, but the scars from such wounds can plague the person for the rest of their lives making one remember the diabolical devices of the Enemy for all their days.

THE EFFECTIVE NOBLE

by Jim "Ineti" Johnson



First published on www.guildcompanion.com in March 2004

'[Sam] could see Faramir's face, which was now unmasked: it was stern and commanding, and a keen wit lay behind his searching glance.'
— *The Two Towers*

In a time of rising conflict and deepening Shadow, the Free Peoples of Middle-earth look to their leaders for guidance, support, and inspiration. They look to their Nobles—their community leaders, captains, liege lords, and kings. Trained to excel in social and political situations and possessing the flexibility to handle most any other form of conflict, the Nobles of Middle-earth are equipped to handle whatever the Dark Enemy may throw at the people of the West.

Decipher's *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* provides you with the ability to play such Nobles—an ageless Elven lord, a gentle Hobbit of the Shire's landed gentry, or even a bold Gondorian Knight. This article is for you, the player of such a Noble. It provides suggestions on creating your character's background; effectively selecting skills, traits, and order abilities; tips on advancing your Noble; and ideas on how most effectively to play your Noble hero.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE NOBLE

'Pippin looked at [Beregond]: tall and proud and noble, as all the men that he had yet seen in that land; and with a glitter in his eye as he thought of the battle.'
— *The Return of the King*

While *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* core book provides general information on creating a Noble, there naturally was not enough space in the book to go into comprehensive detail on creating a hero of each order. Following are a number of tips and suggestions to consider when creating a Noble hero for your Narrator's adventures.

CREATING A BACKGROUND

Perhaps the most important aspect of your character, especially in a roleplaying-focused game such as *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game*, is your hero's background. Where is he from, who does he know, what are his goals and hopes and dreams? What does he want out of life? You should have some idea in mind what the answers are to these questions when creating your hero.



You should work with your Narrator and fellow players when creating a background for your hero. The Narrator may have specific ideas on where heroes should be from, so that they fit best into her story ideas. You may find inspiration by talking to your fellow players and listening to what their ideas are for their characters. You might even be able to create a mutual history or share a past event with another player's hero. Perhaps your Rohirric Noble spent time in Minas Tirith and became friends with another player's Gondorian minstrel. Perhaps a fellow player's Elven lordling from Mirkwood spent a lot of time interacting with your hero, who might be the son of a border lord.

A good background for your character does not necessarily require a long narrative, though your Narrator would almost certainly appreciate it. A simple list of ideas or a thumbnail sketch of your hero's background should (in most cases) be sufficient. Sometimes it is more enjoyable to create your hero's past as he encounters new situations in your Narrator's chronicle.



SELECTING EFFECTIVE NOBLE STATISTICS

Once you have some form of background for your character created and approved by your Narrator (if she requires such approval), it is time to select statistics that most effectively represent your character's history and abilities. If your character's background mentions that he consistently won the local archery tournaments, you would be well advised to give him a good to high Nimbleness in addition to several ranks in Ranged Combat. If your hero is known for his ability to diplomatically talk down potential fights, then you would be best served by representing that ability through a high Bearing attribute and several ranks of Debate or Persuade. Whatever the case, your hero's background should serve as the foundation for his statistics, at least at the start of his adventuring career.



ATTRIBUTES

Bearing is by far the most important attribute for any Noble hero. Since Nobles are expected to be influential members of their society (if not explicitly leaders in their own right), and since most of the key skills Nobles tend to use have Bearing as their ideal governing attribute, any Noble worth his or her position should have a high score in Bearing. In fact, Bearing should probably be your character's *highest* attribute, though it does not necessarily have to be one of his two *favoured* attributes.

Before choosing your attributes, you should have at least a general idea of what advancement path your Noble hero may choose to follow once he begins to gain advancements. Will he become a Knight of the realm? If so, plan for a few advancements of Warrior and consider making Nimbleness or Strength a favoured attribute. Maybe you wish your Noble to pursue a learned path and move towards gaining several Loremaster or even Magician order advancements. If either of these are the case, Wits and Perception may be better choices for favoured attributes. Select your attributes with the long term, as well as the short term, in mind. You will not be able to change your mind later once your attributes are set, and improving attributes with advancement picks later is an expensive endeavour.

REACTIONS

Willpower usually proves to be the most effective reaction for Nobles, though a Noble with a more martial bent may choose to favour Stamina or Swiftiness. The reaction you feel will fit your character's focus best should probably be his favoured reaction. Having a clear character concept in mind during character creation will serve you in selecting the best option for your hero.

SKILLS

Without a doubt, the Noble's talents focus on the social skills, being Debate, Inquire, Insight, Inspire, Intimidate, Perform, and Persuade. You should plan to have good to high scores in several of these skills, depending on where you want your Noble hero to focus. Perhaps you envision adding a few advancements of Minstrel to your Noble—if so, you will want a few ranks of Insight, Inspire, and Perform. Maybe you see your Noble becoming a master negotiator: in this case, it would be useful to have several ranks in Debate, Insight, and Persuade.



An area where the Noble proves to be a valuable order is in its flexibility. The Noble considers Armed Combat, Craft, Language, Lore, Observe, Ranged Combat, and Ride as order skills in addition to most of the social skills mentioned above. Because of this, the Noble has access to most of the key skills any good hero of Middle-earth may need in the fight against the Shadow. This flexibility in order skills is one of the Noble's greatest strengths, especially when combined with the option to attain additional orders.

A Noble with a future as a Warrior or a Knight can readily develop his martial skills. One with a destiny as a Minstrel could improve his observation skills and his ability to perform with voice or instrument. A Noble seeking higher learning has access to lore and language skills, which would serve well for a future as a Loremaster or Magician. Having at least a general idea of what your character may aspire toward will help you select skills during character generation.

RACIAL BACKGROUND SKILLS

Each starting hero gets six picks to spend on skills and/or edges, which represent the character's background before taking on an order. While you could select a background racial package from the core book, you should probably spend those six picks in a customized and specific fashion.

Note that two of the more useful skills for a Noble hero—Insight and Perform—are *not* Noble order skills. As a result, any time you wish to improve these skills with advancement picks you will end up paying more for them than for an order skill. You might want to assign some of your six racial background picks to these two skills if you plan to have your Noble hero make use of either of them. Since all races have these two skills as options in their racial backgrounds, you are free to select them.

It is usually not an effective use of these six picks to select ranks in order skills or on Language or Lore skills. You will be able to select ranks in order skills with the 20 order skill picks, and you will gain a wealth of Language and Lore skills elsewhere during character creation. Therefore, it would be more effective to spend these six racial background picks either on skills that you will not be able to improve easily later, or on edges that enhance your hero's skills and abilities.

LANGUAGE AND LORE SKILLS

Taking your Wits score and multiplying it by three gives you a pool of skill picks used to select your Noble's Language and Lore skills. Nobles tend to need the ability to speak in more than one language, and generally have a broad knowledge, even if only of their own people and culture. If your hero has a high Wits score, feel free to take a wide variety of Language and Lore skills, even if you only place 1 to 3 ranks in each skill. These racial skills are inexpensive to improve, so you should feel free to give your Noble hero as wide a knowledge base as is practicable to reflect his background.

ORDER SKILLS

There are 20 order skill picks to spend among the previously mentioned order skills. You could simply select one of the pre-generated order packages, but since you have been completely customizing your character up to this point, you might as well continue to do so and spend those 20 picks in exactly the skills you feel would benefit your hero most. The only limitation you have to consider is that no zero-advancement character may have more than 6 ranks in any one skill. So you should feel



free to assign up to 6 ranks in the one skill for which you feel your hero should be renowned. Spend the remainder of the points as you see fit, but do consider that a balance of skills is preferable to having just a handful at high ranks. Order skills are inexpensive to improve, so feel free to spend those 20 picks liberally among the Noble's order skills.

A note on skill specialties: Remember that you may select one free specialty per skill during character generation. The immediate +2 bonus a specialty provides to its related skill is a benefit you should not ignore. Whenever possible, select a specialty for each skill in which you spent at least one rank. Do not forget that Insight and Inspire, two key Noble order skills, may have specialties per the official errata.

While you can spend skill picks on additional specialties, you will likely not need more than one specialty per skill as a starting hero. Concentrate more on spending the skill picks on skill ranks than on skill specialties. It costs just one advancement pick to select a new skill specialization, and there will be many an opportunity to do so as your hero gains advancements.

FREE PICKS

The last step of character generation is receiving five free picks and spending them as you would an advancement's worth of picks. You can gain more ranks in skills, buy additional edges, or improve your attributes. You cannot purchase additional order abilities with these free picks. The most effective use of these picks would be to spend them on skill ranks, increasing those skills you already selected, or taking a rank or two in a new skill or skills.



ORDER ABILITIES

The core rulebook provides only five order abilities for the Noble order. You will want to select one that either complements your hero's selected strengths or helps to shore up any weaknesses you built into your character. Let us look at the order abilities to determine which may be the most effective selection for your Noble hero.

Courtier: This order ability grants you a +2 bonus to all Persuade and Debate tests and gives you some assistance when using Insight. This would be a good order ability to take if you intentionally slighted those two skills when assigning skill picks, or if you want your hero to have a special focus in those two skills.

Cross-order Skill: This order ability illustrates the flexibility of the Noble order. In addition to the broad range of order skills, this ability allows you to treat one other non-order skill as an order skill. This would be useful if you are looking to make your hero a jack-of-all-trades.

Deference: The bonuses this order ability provides toward social situations make this very effective as an ability. Even though it requires you to have a relevant Duty flaw, its bonuses more than outweigh the flaw.

Domain: Depending on your Narrator's chronicle, this order ability may prove to be either very useful or nearly useless. As it effectively ties a Noble to a particular location, you should select this ability only after consulting your Narrator.

Noble Mien: Similar in construction to Courtier, this order ability grants a +2 bonus to all Inspire and Intimidate tests. This would be a good order ability to choose if you intentionally shorted those two skills when assigning skill picks, or if you want your hero to have a special focus in those two skills.

TRAITS

Now that you have selected your attributes, reactions, skills, and order abilities, it is time to add some flavour (represented by edges and flaws) to your Noble and make him a truly unique hero of Middle-earth. You have several opportunities during character generation to select edges and flaws. With the six racial background picks, you may pick one edge per pick. You gain one order edge from your order package, and you may select up to four flaws and receive either an edge or 1 skill rank in recompense. Finally, you may spend one or more of the five free picks at the end of character generation on edges. However, be sure to check with your Narrator as she may have set a limit on how many edges a starting hero may have at the beginning of a chronicle.



EDGES

Some edges are better suited for a Noble hero than others. Following are brief descriptions of several edges, highlighting their value to a Noble hero.

Ally: Most Nobles have at least one ally they can call upon for aid. Some, like Lord Elrond of Rivendell and the Steward Denethor of Gondor, have dozens.



Command: Some Nobles, especially those with martial training, make good leaders on the field of battle. They often have the ability to command a military force, the size of which depends in part upon their rank and position.

Elf-friend: This is a very useful edge, especially considering that you can expand it into an 'X-friend' edge, where 'X' represents any culture or group. (For example, you could choose Dwarf-friend, Hobbit-friend, or Friend of the Riddermark.)

Friends: Many Nobles have friends they can call upon for information. This would be a good edge to take if you want to have a number of contacts throughout Middle-earth.

Hoard: Many a Noble boasts a sizeable fortune. In uncertain times, having a cache of wealth could prove most useful.

Rank: Perhaps the most important edge for a Noble; at least one pick in Rank is mandatory for any Noble hero (i.e., every zero-advancement Noble must have at least Rank 1). Without some form of rank, a Noble is little more than another member of society. It is their rank in society that makes them noble; hence this requirement.

Stern: Leaders are often required to present a stern and commanding voice and demeanour. The 2 bonus to Debate and Intimidate tests that this edge confers could either support weak skills or enhance already-strong ones.

Warwise: Nobles geared toward being leaders on the field of battle, such as Éomer and Elfhelm, would benefit from this edge.

Wise: Some Nobles, such as Elrond of Rivendell, are renowned for their intelligence and wisdom. Taking this edge suggests your hero is sought after in times when a bright mind, and clear, is needed.

FLAWS

Likewise, some flaws are better suited for a Noble hero than others. Following is a short list and description of some ideal flaws for Nobles.

Arrogant: Some Nobles have little respect for the people beneath their station. Take this flaw if your hero is of that sort.

Duty: Many Nobles have one or more duties placed upon them thanks to their position or rank in society. In order to take the Deference order ability, your hero must have at least one appropriate Duty flaw.



Fealty: Most Nobles have sworn some form of allegiance to a leader or lord. Note that you may only have Fealty toward another person; you may never have fealty toward a place. Duty, or perhaps an Oath, would better handle such a characterization.

Oath: Some Nobles have sworn a powerfully binding oath - one that would have dreadful ramifications if it were to be broken.

Enemy: Many Nobles have the misfortune to develop dedicated enemies over the course of their lives. If you want your hero to have a consistent foe that turns up in the chronicle on a regular basis, select this flaw.

Rival: Some Nobles, especially those with court positions, may have a rival who vies for the hero's position or is envious of the attention your hero receives from those in places of power and authority.

ADVANCEMENT

As your Noble gains advancements, you will want to improve his skills and abilities in such a way that he remains an effective and valuable member of your group of heroes. Having a plan of advancement (whether short term or long term) is a good idea, if only to get a gauge of the direction in which you would like to see your hero grow. Perhaps you want your Noble to become a noble knight of the realm (something like Prince Imrahil) or perhaps you would like to see him grow into an effective leader of men (such as Faramir).



MULTIPLE ORDERS

While *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* allows a Noble hero to multi-order with any of the other eight basic orders, some of those orders are more complementary to the Noble than others. Following are brief descriptions of how each basic order might complement the existing Noble hero.

Barbarian: Unless your hero is of a less-than-civilized people such as the Dunlendings or the Drúedain, taking advancements in this order is not a good option for a Noble hero.

Craftsman: Many a shopkeeper has a streak of nobility in him. If your hero aspires to a craft, or perhaps desires to own an inn or run a business, taking an advancement or two in this order could be worthwhile.

Loremaster: Taking a few advancements in Loremaster is good for the Noble concentrated on learning or one who may be interested in adding minor spellcasting abilities to his repertoire of talents. Denethor, Steward of Gondor, is a good example of a Noble Loremaster.

Magician: Nobles inclined to learn more of the arcane arts would naturally benefit from several advancements in Magician.

Mariner: Taking a few advancements in Mariner would be useful for those nobles who tend lands and people along the many coastlines of the West. Prince Imrahil of Dol Amroth likely has a couple of advancements in Mariner.

Minstrel: Many a bard possesses noble blood, especially those who entertain at the court of a realm's leader. If your hero's Perform, Inspire, or Persuade skills are high, he might benefit from an advancement or two in this order.

Rogue: While we can consider few Rogues to be truly noble, there are always exceptions. It would make for an interesting chronicle if a Noble were to take advancements in Rogue.

Warrior: As Middle-earth is a world full of conflict and danger, a Noble would certainly benefit from a few advancements in Warrior, especially if the hero planned to take command of military units.



ELITE ORDERS

A Noble hero, whether multi-ordered or not, may aspire to achieve advancements in any of the elite orders presented in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game*. Like the basic orders, though, some elite orders are more complementary toward the Noble than others are. Following are brief descriptions of how each elite order might work with a Noble hero.

Archer: A Noble interested in taking his ranged combat abilities to the utmost level would do well to aspire toward this elite order. Having a few advancements in Warrior would support this, as well.

Captain: The leadership quality inherent in many Nobles makes them a good choice for commanding troops, especially when combined with the martial abilities of a Warrior. Several ranks in Captain adequately represent the idea of a Noble commander leading his troops on the field. Faramir of Gondor is an example of a Noble\Warrior\Captain.

Knight: Some Noble\Warriors who do not choose to lead men opt to attain the pinnacle of martial nobility—the accolade of knighthood. Prince Imrahil of Dol Amroth makes for a good example of a dashing Knight, and true.

Ranger: This elite order would be a good choice for those Nobles who tend to patrol the lands surrounding a lord's realm or those who have developed wanderlust and travel from realm to realm.

Spy: Nobles who have advancements in Minstrel or Rogue (as just two examples) could conceivably be tapped to act as an informant or spy for his liege lord (or other personages in higher positions).

Wizard: Nobles interested in pursuing the mystical arts and who have advancements in either Loremaster or Magician (or both) can continue their development in that area by taking this elite order.

SPELLS

If you decide to add advancements of a spellcasting order to your Noble hero, consider selecting the following spells, ideally suited for a Noble.

Display of Power: The significant bonuses this spell imparts to Inspire and Intimidate tests could prove to be the decisive edge in a critical scene.

Invoke Awe: Similar to *Display of Power*, this spell imparts a significant bonus to an Intimidate test.

Reading the Heart: Many leaders possess an uncanny ability to see into the hearts of their subjects. This spell can help your Noble hero do just that.

Victory-spell: This spell could be used to encourage soldiers to greater efforts, a tactic any war-minded Noble would be wise to utilize.

Voice of Suasion: A Noble who focuses on diplomacy and negotiating would find this a very useful spell, though it's use could be considered underhanded and devious.

PLAYING A NOBLE

While no one person or article can tell you how best to play your character, the following guidelines may prove useful when playing your Noble hero.

The primary strength of the Noble order is in social skills. You should not be afraid to make use of these skills as needed. If someone in the party needs to step up and make a persuasive speech to prevent a band of raiders from attacking, that someone should in all likelihood be your hero. If the heroes need to strike a hard bargain with a wily merchant, your Noble will likely be the one handling the negotiations. If an inspirational speech needs to be made at a critical juncture of an adventure and your hero is in position to make it, do so. Do not be afraid to make the best of your hero's strengths.

Nobles tend to be leaders of their people, and as a result are often deferred to at times when a decision must be made. Even if your hero does not have the Deference order ability, you may find that other heroes and non-player characters defer to your



character. What this means for you is that sometimes your hero will be expected or even required to make a decision. If you are a more passive player, or are the type who prefers others to make decisions, you will find that you may need to flex your playing style just enough to make a decision.

Another aspect of deference is that sometimes non-player characters will be willing to do your bidding. If you have a position of authority over someone, or are of a higher social rank than a person is, you might be able to use your position and rank to “lean” on someone a little to either get something you need or to simply get your way. You will want to be careful how you approach this however, as your Narrator may choose to have non-player characters react to your requests in a different way than you might have expected.



CONCLUSION

As Noble characters play important roles in *The Lord of the Rings*, so should Noble player characters in any given chronicle. It is hoped that the advice detailed in this article will aid you in creating and playing interesting, exciting, and effective Noble heroes. Build your characters intelligently and have them take their place among the brave and daring leaders of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth.

ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES

ELLADAN by Christopher “Scofflaw” Daniel

“ ‘And have you marked the brethren Elladan and Elrohir? Less sombre is their gear than the others’, and they are fair and gallant as Elven-lords; and that is not to be wondered at in the sons of Elrond of Rivendell.’ “

- The Return of the King

RACE: Elf (Half-elven - parts Sinda, Noldo, and Dúnadan)

RACIAL ABILITIES: The Art, Beast Skill, Comfort, Elven-form, Elven-sense, Elven-sleep, Farsightedness, Ghost-scorn, Lightfootedness, Musical Gifts, Swift Healing

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 13 (+3)*, Nimbleness 12 (+3), Perception 12 (+3)*, Strength 10 (+2), Vitality 12 (+3), Wits 11 (+2)

REACTIONS: Stamina +3, Swiftess +3, Willpower +3, Wisdom +5*

DEFENCE: 13

ORDERS: Noble*, Warrior, Ranger*



ORDER ABILITIES: Deference, Domain (Imladris, Fourth Age only), Noble Mien, Evasion, Warrior Born, Swift Strike, Battle-Hardened, Hard March, Protector (Elves, Free Men of the North), Walk Without Trace, Wilderness Lore

ADVANCEMENTS: 65

SKILLS: Acrobatics (Balance, Tumble) +4, Appraise (Jewelry, Weapons, Armor) +2, Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +10, Armed Combat: Polearms (Spears) +6, Climb +5, Debate (Negotiate, Parley) +4, Healing (Treat Wounds, Herbal Remedies) +4, Inquire (Converse, Interrogate) +3, Insight +10, Inspire +4, Jump +4, Language: Orkish (Angmar, Misty Mountains, Moria) +3, Language: Quenya +3, Language: Sindarin +8, Language: Silvan (Lórien dialect) +2, Language: Westron +8, Lore: Herbs +3, Lore: History (Beleriand, Dúnedain, Elves, Northern Middle-earth, Valinor) +8, Lore: Race (Elves, Men, Orcs) +8, Lore: Realm (Arthedain, Rhudaur, Cardolan, Gondor, Imladris, Lindon, Lothlórien, Rohan) +8, Lore: Region (Misty Mountains, Northern Mirkwood) +8, Mimicry (Birds, Beasts, Orcs) +7, Observe (Hear, Spot, Sense Power) +6, Perform (Play Harp, Recite Verse, Sing) +3, Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) +6, Ride (Horse) +8, Run +5, Sea-craft (Boating) +3, Search +6, Swim +4, Track (Orcs, Men, Elves) +8, Unarmed Combat: Brawling +2, Weather-sense +4

SPECIAL ABILITY: Twin Empathy

EDGES: Allies 8 (Elrond, Arwen, Aragorn, Gandalf, Círdan, Galadriel, Celeborn, other Elf lords), Bold, Eloquent, Fair, Faithful (Elves), Fell-handed 2 (All Orcs), Friends (Rangers of the North, the Wandering Companies), Hardy, Hoard 5 (Rivendell), Honour's Insight 2, Incorruptible 2, Indomitable 2, Keen-eyed, Night-eyed 2, Rank 1 (Son of Elrond), Strong-willed, Swift Recovery, Valiant, Valour, Warwise, Wary, Wise, Woodcrafty

FLAWS: Duty (to Rivendell and his father), Enemies (The Shadow and its servants), Hatred (Orcs)

SIZE: Medium (6 Wound Levels, 1 Healthy)

HEALTH: 15

COURAGE: 6

RENOWN: 25

GEAR: Ithilnaur (Elven Longsword), Elven Steed, Elven Cloak, Mithril Chainmail Hauberk, Miruvor

ELROHIR by Christopher "Scofflaw" Daniel

RACE: Elf (Half-elven - parts Sinda, Noldo, and Dúnedan)

RACIAL ABILITIES: The Art, Beast Skill, Comfort, Elven-form, Elven-sense, Elven-sleep, Farsightedness, Ghost-scorn, Lightfootedness, Musical Gifts, Swift Healing

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing: 12 (+3), Nimbleness 11 (+2), Perception 11 (+2), Strength 12 (+3)*, Vitality 12 (+3), Wits: 13 (+3)*

REACTIONS: Stamina +3, Swiftness +2, Willpower +5*, Wisdom +3

DEFENCE: 12

ORDERS: Noble*, Warrior, Ranger*

ORDER ABILITIES: Evasion, Battle-Hardened, Swift Strike, Warrior Born, Courtier, Deference, Domain (Imladris, Fourth Age only), Hard March, Protector (Elves, Free Men of the North), Walk Without Trace, Wilderness Lore

ADVANCEMENTS: 65

SKILLS: Acrobatics (Balance, Tumble) +4, Appraise (Weapons, Armor) +2, Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +10, Armed Combat: Polearms (Spears) +8, Climb +5, Debate (Negotiate, Parley) +7, Healing (Treat Wounds) +2, Inquire (Converse, Interrogate) +9, Insight +5, Inspire +8, Jump +4, Language: Orkish (Angmar, Misty Mountains, Moria) +3, Language: Quenya +2, Language: Sindarin +8, Language: Silvan (Lórien dialect) +1, Language: Westron +8, Lore: History (Beleriand, Elves, Dúnedain, Northern Middle-earth, Valinor) +6, Lore: Race (Elves, Men, Orcs) +8, Lore: Realm (Arthedain, Cardolan, Imladris, Lindon, Lothlórien, Rhudaur) +8, Lore: Region (Misty Mountains, Northern Mirkwood) +8, Observe (Hear, Spot, Sense Power) +4, Perform (Play Flute, Recite Verse, Sing) +3, Persuade (Oratory) +9, Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) +6, Ride (Elven Steed) +12, Run +6, Sea-craft (Boating) +3, Search +6, Siegecraft (Defense) +2, Stealth (Sneak, Hide) +8, Survival (Forests, Hills, Plains, Mountains) +6, Swim +4, Track (Orcs, Men, Elves) +8, Unarmed Combat: Brawling +2, Weather-sense +4

SPECIAL ABILITY: Twin Empathy



EDGES: Allies 8 (Elrond, Arwen, Aragorn, Gandalf, Glorfindel, Círdan, Galadriel, Celeborn, other Elf Lords), Bold, Eloquent, Faithful (Elves), Fell-handed 2 (all Orcs), Fair, Friends (Rangers of the North, the Wandering Companies), Hardy, Hoard 5 (Rivendell), Honey-tongued 2, Incorruptible 2, Indomitable 2, Keen-eyed, Night-eyed 2, Travel-sense, Valiant, Valour, Warrior's Heart, Woodcrafty, Rank 1 (son of Elrond)

FLAWS: Duty (to Rivendell and his father), Enemies (The Shadow and its servants), Hatred (Orcs)

SIZE: Medium (6 Wound Levels, 1 Healthy)

HEALTH: 16

COURAGE: 6

RENOWN: 25

GEAR: Elenruth (Elven Longsword), Elven Steed, Elven Cloak, Silver Horn, Mithril Chainmail hauberk

Twin Empathy: Because of their close bond, Elladan and Elrohir can know what the other is thinking without speech, and thus coordinate their actions with a minimum of communication. When acting together on any Combined Test, they receive an additional bonus of +2.

Ithilnaur (“Moon Fire”) and Ellenruth (“Star Fury”): These blades were forged in Eregion during the Second Age and had service in the War of the Elves and Sauron. Elrond brought these blades with him when he founded Imladris. When his sons came of age, he gave them these blades for service in their errandries. They have all the qualities of elven blades like Glamdring and Orcrist, as set out in the Core Book and Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic.

BACKGROUND: Elladan and Elrohir are the sons of Elrond, born in the second century of the Third Age. Twins, they are much alike in looks and mien; tall and fair, graceful and reserved. They are much alike in thought and action, and they much resemble their father, appearing lordly, wise and ageless, neither young nor old. But it is the memory of their mother and her torment at the hands of Orcs that drives them to active deeds against the Shadow's encroachment in the North. They dwell in Rivendell, but are often abroad, guarding the lands about and pursuing their feud with the Orcs.

Being of the few children born to the Eldar in the Third Age, Elladan and Elrohir are not so touched with the sadness and memory of the remaining High Elves. They take a more active role in the affairs of Middle-earth, not having grown weary of it, and by their energy and commitment can be seen the valor and glory of the Elf-lords of the Elder Days. This is not to be wondered at in them, for like their father and Arwen, their sister, the blood of the great lords and heroes of both the Eldar and the Edain of the First Age is preserved.

With Glorfindel and Erebor, they are leaders in the defence of Rivendell. They also serve their father as emissaries and councilors to Rivendell's allies. In their travels and missions in the North they often take action and council with the Rangers of the North. They also serve as escorts for the people of Rivendell who travel to and from its borders.

Throughout the Third Age they have acted in their father's interests and have played key roles in the historical events in the North that concerned Elrond, particularly those of Arnor, the North Kingdom of the Dúnedain. No doubt they served as ambassadors to the Dúnedain lords and served as captains in the armies of Lindon and Imladris against the incursions of Angmar. In TA 2509, their mother, Celebrian, was waylaid and captured by Orcs in the Misty Mountains while traveling home from Lórien. Her sons soon came to her rescue, but not before she endured great torment. She soon grew weary of her life and took ship to the Undying Lands. This event marked the brethren's lives for centuries to come and prompted their bitter feud with the Orcs. In this feud they work much with the remnant of the Dúnedain of Arthedain, the Rangers of the North, and traveled often with them on missions of errantry, particularly in the campaigns of TA 2784, when the Orcs of the Misty Mountains appeared again in great strength. They were with Arathorn, father of Aragorn, when he was slain by an Orc arrow. In his young adulthood, Aragorn set out with them to accomplish great deeds and it is not to be doubted that much of his Orc-lore was learned under their tutelage.

During the War of the Ring they rode with Halbarad and a company of the Rangers to Aragorn in Rohan. With him they walked the Paths of the Dead and fought the Corsairs at Pelargir and on to the Battle of the Pelennor Fields. They were with the armies of the West at the Black Gate and witnessed the fall of Barad-dur. After Elrond departed Middle-earth, they remained for a long time as the lords of Rivendell. What their eventual fate was, and whether they chose to be of Elf-kind or to accept mortality as Men, is not told. But it is certain that whatever the choice, it was the same for them both.

Of the twins, Elladan is the elder. His name means “Elf-man” or “Elf-lord”, and implies his status as Elrond's firstborn and immediate heir. As such, he has taken more to the study of the affairs of Rivendell and his father's lore. He is the more reserved of the two and is often the councilor to his brother when they act together.

Elrohir, the younger of the twins, is the more martial of the two. His name means “Elf-knight” and it shows in his great affinity for horses and his forwardness. He often speaks for the both of them and acts as herald to his father. When journeying, it is Elrohir who takes the lead, while Elladan guards the rear.

MORNECH, MASTER THIEF

by Mathew Kearns

25



RACE: Man, Dúnadan (Man of Minas Tirith)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptable (Stamina), Dominion of Man, Skilled (Persuade +2)

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 9 (+1)*, Nimbleness 11 (+2), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 7 (+0), Vitality 6 (+0), Wits 11 (+2)*

REACTIONS: Stamina +2, Swiftiness +2*, Willpower +2, Wisdom +1

DEFENCE: 12

ORDERS: Rogue

ORDER ABILITIES: Lurking in Shadows, Sanctuary, Scoundrel's Fortune

ADVANCEMENTS: 8

SKILLS: Acrobatics (Balance, Swing, Tumble) +5, Appraise (Jewelry) +3, Armed Combat: Blades (Dagger) +4, Climb +4, Conceal (Cache, Weapon) +4, Language: Quenya +4, Language: Sindarin +6, Language: Westron +6, Legerdemain (Pick Locks) +5, Lore: History (Gondor) +4, Lore: Minas Tirith +6, Lore: Minas Tirith Thieves' Guild +2, Lore: Minas Tirith Nobility +3, Lore: Realm (Gondor) +5, Observe (Hear, Sport) +3, Persuade (Fast Talk) +4, Ranged Combat: Thrown (Dagger) +3, Search +5, Stealth (Hide, Sneak) +5, Survival (Urban) +4

SPELLS: None

EDGES: Dodge, Friends (Minas Tirith thieves), Furtive, Wary

FLAWS: Arrogant, Code of Honour

SIZE: Medium (6 Wound Levels, 1 Healthy)

HEALTH: 6

COURAGE: 4

RENOWN: 5

GEAR: See description

BACKGROUND: Mornech was born to one of the few remaining Dúnadan houses of Gondor that weren't considered part of the nobility. Railing against his station, Mornech sought to rectify the disparity between him and those of "noble" birth. His parents not amounting to much in his eyes, died fairly young and not leaving him much but the meager possessions they had and their small home within the third ring of the city of Minas Tirith. Plying his hands at odd jobs, the ambitious Mornech found that he wasn't qualified for much and so eventually got himself into trouble by borrowing from people that he shouldn't have. Unable to pay his debts, Mornech came into the employ of his debtor and became a common thief to pay off his debt.

After a couple times of getting nabbed for carelessness, a week in the stocks taught him to be more careful. Deciding to get out from underneath the heel of his debt, he made up his mind to go for the big score. Casing out a few of the middle-level nobles of the city who weren't that well-respected and whose homes were easier to get to, he found one in particular – Galdor Silion, a man who also was known for living beyond even his means and one who owed the same man Mornech did.

On a night of one of the many spring festivals, Mornech slipped into Galdor's home in the guise of house-servant. In under thirty minutes, he had relieved the opulent man of a few works of art and a ring of his family as a souvenir, then departing with none the wiser. This feat earned him both freedom from debt and renown for his daring and thus set Mornech on the path of a most dangerous game. Using both his new-found affinity for disguises and Dúnadan bearing, he insinuates himself into the graces of the nobility of Minas Tirith and robs them in ever so subtle fashion: never taking more than one item at a time and not hitting a home more than once in a long stretch time, such as a few weeks, to keep suspicion off of him.



FEATURED CREATURES

THE HOUNDS OF VALINOR

Now the chief of the wolfhounds that followed Celegorm was named Huan. He was not born in Middle-earth, but came from the Blessed Realm...

- The Silmarillion

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 11 (+2), Nimbleness 9 (+1), Vitality 12 (+3)*, Strength 10 (+2)*, Perception 10 (+2), Wits 8 (+1)

REACTIONS: Stamina +3*, Swiftmess +2, Willpower +2, Wisdom +2

DEFENCE: 11

MOVEMENT RATE: 6

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Bite) +4, Intimidate (Majesty) +1, Jump +8, Language: Understand one Language +6, Observe (Smell) +10, Run +9, Survival (choose one) +3, Swim +4, Track (Scent) +9

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Awakened, Blessing of Oromë, Ferocious (in defense of master, and while hunting prey), Natural Weapons (Bite, 2d6 +1)

EDGES: Keen-nosed, Keen-eared

SIZE: Medium (6 Wound Levels, 1 Healthy)

HEALTH: 14

COURAGE: 2

RENOWN: 19

TN EQUIVALENT: 10

Unique Special Abilities

Awakened - A Hound of Valinor may act independently and obtain orders similar to a PC.

Blessing of Oromë - The Hounds of Valinor were of old hunting companions, serving Oromë in his hunts for the creatures of Middle-earth. His blessing lives with them still, and makes them that much more dangerous to their foes. All Hounds of Valinor have the effects of Vala Virtue: Oromë, and have Armor (3) to reflect the protection that the light of Aman has granted unto them.

DESCRIPTION: The Hounds of Valinor do not differ from their more common brethren, except for the quality of their physique. Looking the same as other canines of Middle-earth, these hounds of noble lineage are easily identified by their large size, lustrous coat, and great strength. Most Hounds of Valinor have thinner coats due to their ancestry in temperate climates of Valinor and, later, Beleriand, but those that are of more northerly strains have thick, shaggy fur, and have grey or white coloration rather than the typical brown. Hounds have long, drooping ears and long snouts, and are of build similar to other domestic canines (though slightly larger and more muscular). Possessing better eyesight, hearing, and sense of smell than most canines, Hounds are natural hunters and normally have ample opportunity to put their superior skill to use.

HISTORY: The Hounds of Valinor came from beyond the sea, where they once served Oromë in his hunts. When the Noldor rebelled and left the Blessed Realm, some of these hounds came with them, formerly being gifts from Oromë or simply bred from his hounds. Once in Middle-earth, they interbred with other canines—though *never* with Wargs—and often became leaders of the groups of dogs that they stayed with. Most famous of the Hounds of Valinor is Huan, traveling companion of Beren and Luthien and slayer of Carcharoth, the wolf of Angband. By the late Third Age, few remain, though some still have blood pure enough to possess the traits of their lofty ancestors.

HABITAT: Hounds are often companions of nobles or hunters and can be found in the kennels of more wealthy huntsmen; however, these magnificent beasts also run wild in many woodlands and fields, and could potentially be found anywhere in Middle-earth.

SOCIETY: Hounds of Valinor dwell among other dogs, or sometimes wolves. They are usually pack leaders and are given deference by the lesser members of the pack. Their intelligence often aids the group in finding food and water, and where to best find shelter from harsh weather and the creatures of Sauron.

USAGE: Hounds of Valinor work well both as facilitators and antagonists (though certainly not the prime antagonist of a chronicle.) These hounds may aid PCs in any number of adventures, especially in a First Age chronicle. Alternatively, even the beasts of Oromë are not immune to the Shadow's corrupting influence and may be found as pets (and, incidentally, protection) for an antagonist, or may head a pack of wolves that harass towns and farms near their den.



A FIELD GUIDE TO THE CREATURES OF MIDDLE-EARTH...

MÛMAKS (OLIPHANTS) AND OTHER PROBOSCIDEANS, PART II

"Sam drew a deep breath. 'An Oliphaunt it was!' he said. 'So there are Oliphaunts, and I have seen one. What a life! But no one at home will ever believe me'."
-The Two Towers

III: The Ecology of Mûmaks

Mûmaks and elephants are believed to play vital roles in the ecosystems in which they exist. For example, they are thought to be very important agents of seed dispersal. While feeding, these creatures devour large amounts of vegetation and seeds. The seeds that are consumed then pass through the digestive system and are dispersed in the fecal material of the beasts as they travel throughout their home ranges. This excrement then, with the help of insects such as dung beetles, also returns nutrients to soil, which further aids the growth of new vegetation. These are merely a few of several possible ways in which Mûmaks and elephants affect the other organisms that share their habitats. To give another example: as these beasts migrate throughout



Figure 2. A matriarch female elephant.
Source:<http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu>

their habitats, they tromp over the grasses and other vegetation, causing much disturbance. Such disturbances agitate large swarms of insects that usually hide at the base of the foliage (where they normally are not available to birds and others that feed on them). When such agitation occurs, however, these swarms of insects fly into the air where they can more easily be consumed by flocks of birds. As a result, large flocks of birds are often seen following elephant and Mûmak groups, and it is likely that anyone witnessing these beasts in the wild will also see many birds nearby. These are but a few examples of how the many animal species living in such ecosystems are interconnected.

Geographical Distribution - Due to their preference for warm climates, the geographical distribution of Mûmaks and elephants is very limited. In fact, because of their rarity, these beasts are considered to be little more than myth by people living in the far western lands of Middle Earth. Mûmaks and their relatives, for example, are found naturally only in far southeastern Middle Earth. This includes far Harad and parts of Khand. Though also once commonly found in Harondor and even into southern Gondor, neither Mûmaks nor true elephants have been reported in either region for many years.



There is a marked difference in population densities of Mûmaks and elephants as it relates to geographic location. These two types of animals cannot easily co-exist in an area. Although both species are found in Khand and Harad, it is reported that the density of elephant populations increases as one moves west from the western edges of Harad into eastern Khand. Conversely, Mûmak population densities increase as one moves east into far Harad.

Habitat Preferences - As has been stated elsewhere, these beasts prefer primarily open, arid, and warm habitats. Thus, they often inhabit savannahs, but, depending on species, will occasionally graze along the edges of adjacent forests from time to time. Whether Mûmaks or elephants, a water source is usually desired, both for drinking and also for taking “mud-baths”. Mûmaks and elephants frequently wallow in mud because it helps protect their skin from the

hot sun and insects. When mud is not available, these animals will pick up dirt or dust with their trunks and fling it over their shoulders to help shoo away insects.

Mûmaks- Mûmaks, being far too large to inhabit the interior of any type of forested habitat, are found exclusively in savannahs. These savannahs are usually dominated by rolling landscapes covered in medium-sized vegetation interspersed with open grasslands. They will occasionally patrol the outer most boundaries of woodlands and feed on the leaves of any trees within their reach. The type of flora in these habitats includes scrubby and thorny bushes, small trees with short twisted trunks, long grasses, and the occasional large tree that the beasts can easily overturn (to feed upon its leaves). Wild Mûmaks seem to know no fear and vegetation is not necessary for use as cover, but



Figure 3. Savannah/open grassland habitat frequently used by Mûmaks and elephants.

Source:<http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu>

strictly as food. Vegetation abundance will vary with seasons—the rainy season obviously resulting in a greater amount of vegetation available for consumption by the beasts. Adequate amounts of vegetation are critically important for the survival of these creatures, as the volume of food they are able to consume is legendary. In rare instances, they will roam along very dry prairies that have almost desert-like conditions. In the dry season (mid-summer), Mûmaks are known to congregate around water sources, where food may be more plentiful. Interestingly, it is during this time, when the creatures are congregated, that the young are hunted and captured by the Haradrim to be used as beasts of burden and so on.

True Elephants - True elephants frequently use savannahs, like their larger relatives. It should be noted that Mûmaks and elephants will not co-habitat the same areas (there’s not enough vegetation in any area of Middle Earth to sustain a family group of elephants and Mûmaks feeding together). Unlike Mûmaks, however, elephants can occasionally inhabit forest edges and less dense forest interiors, where they hide from predators and threats (primarily from humans who hunt them, not for use as beasts of burden, but for their ivory tusks). As with Mûmaks, finding adequate amounts of food is critically important to the survival of elephants. Unlike Mûmaks, these creatures are frequently found near water sources (regardless of whether it is the rainy or dry season). Thus, they will often visit any rivers, lakes, or potholes that may exist in their territories and make it part of their daily routines.

Home Ranges - Mûmaks and elephants have large home ranges (10-100 sq km/7-62 sq mi) that they frequently patrol as a family group, but territoriality (i.e. the defense of territories) does not seem to occur. However, if resources, such as food, become limited during a particularly lean year, Mûmaks grow to be more wide-ranging, and if they come into contact with an existing elephant group, they will push the elephants out of their home ranges to gain new feeding grounds. This can be devastating for the elephant group



Figure 4. Elephants utilizing forest edge habitat

Source:<http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu>

involved, and during these times only the strongest individuals survive. Home ranges will almost always contain at least three water sources, one of which will usually be a river or other more permanent body of water (so that water can be acquired even during the dry seasons, and frequent mud baths are possible).

“Men of both sides fled before him, but many he overtook and crushed to the ground.”
-The Two Towers

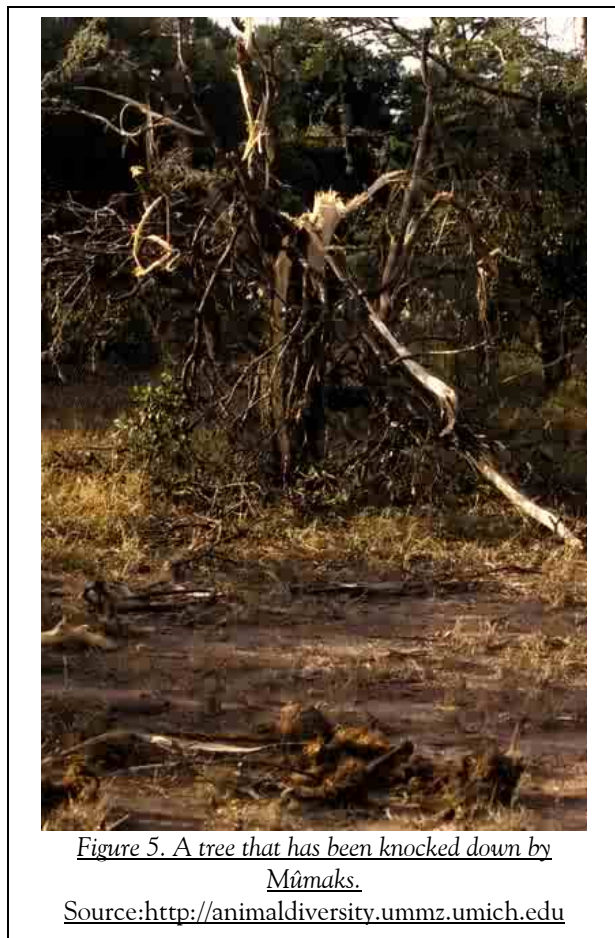


Figure 5. A tree that has been knocked down by Mûmaks.

Source:<http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu>

Feeding Habits - There is a significant difference in the food preference of Mûmaks and elephants. Mûmaks, being much taller than elephants, consume leaves and vegetation existing much higher off of the ground. These leaves may occur on both taller shrubs and also trees. Furthermore, they will, without hesitation, consume smaller twigs and branches, and not only the soft leafy parts of the tree. They will also peel bark from trees and shrubs, consuming both bark and the softer pulpy material beneath. It is believed, through observation, that both Mûmaks and elephants spent 18 to 20 hours a day feeding. During which time an unbelievable amount of vegetation is consumed (>400 kg per day in elephants; >800 kg per day in Mûmaks).

Elephants, unlike Mûmaks, consume primarily long grasses. Furthermore, a significant amount of their diet consists of low-growing shrubs and leaves from small trees. Both species will also push over larger trees, using their powerful muscles and tusks, to feed on the leaves that grow higher in the canopy. The tusks are also readily employed for rutting in shallow soil to find edible roots and tubers. Neither Mûmaks nor elephants seem to be bothered by the thorns or coarseness of the vegetation that they consume, the thick hide of their body and trunk protecting them from abrasion.

Predators - Due to their size and power, these beasts have few natural predators. In very rare instances, adults, both Mûmak and elephant, are reportedly consumed by dragons. In fact, dragons are believed to be the only known creatures large enough to physically overpower a healthy adult of either species. Infants and juveniles more frequently fall victim to predators, albeit not without difficulty due to the protective

nature of adults. Predators of juveniles range from group-living predators (such as lions and hyenas) to dragons, and most attacks occur during dusk or dawn. Predators that hunt in packs reportedly have a higher success rate when hunting baby Mûmaks or elephants. This is believed to be because pack hunters have the ability to confuse over-protective adults and separate juveniles from their mothers.

Each group of grazing Mûmaks posts two or three individuals as sentries, who circle the herd as it feeds, watching and sniffing for signs of predators. If a predator is located, the sentries raise an alarm call and the group immediately gathers all of their young and forms a protective circle around them. Such a line of defense is nearly impenetrable and is the reason why most attempts at predation on these creatures fail. Elephants employ a similar ant-predator behavior. Yet, they will also hide their juveniles in wooded habitats should a predator be located.

Communication - There are several ways in which Mûmaks and elephants communicate with each other. These include vocalizations and the stamping of feet. It is believed that individuals can hear such sounds up to a distance of over 2 km away from their source. In addition to sound production, the use of pheromones by females entering estrus is also a probable way in which they attract males during the breeding season. Tactile communication is also very important. The trunks of these creatures are so sensitive that it is believed that they can determine, by touch, individuals within their family groups.

Reproductive strategies - Reproduction in both Mûmaks and elephants is an infrequent occurrence. Once physically ready to reproduce, a female elephant will most likely only give birth to only 5-8 offspring throughout her life. Mûmaks, on the other hand, usually only give birth to 3 (despite being much longer lived). Their low reproductive yield is just one of the reasons why these beasts are not common in Middle Earth (even where the habitat is appropriate).



Because they live in *matriarchal* societies, females (in both Mûmaks and elephants) are the “choosy sex” when it comes to mate selection. Males, on the other hand, must vie for the attention of the female and are not picky when it comes to mating opportunities. Once the breeding season is underway, a female will emit pheromones to show that she is sexually available. These pheromones will attract males to existing family groups from great distances, and this is the only time that males are permitted to be part of the group by existing females. During this time, males will attempt to impress the females through feats of strength, which includes uprooting of trees and other vegetation. Males will also “wrestle” each other in an attempt to show females who is the strongest among them. These wrestling matches usually involve two males pushing against one another head-to-head. The male who gives way first is the loser. The winner then often creates a large scene, to draw attention to his victory. Victory displays, such as these, involve loud trumpeting, the throwing of vegetation and dust into the air, and the rising of the individual up on its hind legs for brief intervals.

Because size is definitely a factor in how often males reproduce, it is usually the largest males that are the most successful. Interestingly, although rare, male Mûmaks with four tusks win their bouts with other males almost immediately. In fact, those who have witnessed contests between four-tusked males and other males noted that the males with only two tusks submitted almost immediately. The reason for this is unknown, but it has led to wild speculation among the Haradrim that males with four tusks have extra strength in combat and make exceptional weapons of war.

When the female selects the male that she will breed with, copulation occurs almost immediately. After copulating several times, the female chases the male off. If he attempts to return, the largest females in the group will help let him know it's time to leave. Gestation takes an incredibly long time, averaging 22 months in elephants and 30 months in Mûmaks. Females usually give birth to a single calf, and in very rare instances two calves. Calves are given nourishment in the form of milk from the mother, yet all females in the herd share the responsibilities of all other aspects of caring for young.

Development - These creatures develop very slowly. Once born, calves are dependant on their mother (consuming nothing but her milk) for the first five years of life in elephants and 7 years in Mûmaks. It is not until after this time period that they can forage for themselves. Even after they are able to live independently from their mother, they will not reach adulthood for several decades. Neither Mûmaks nor elephants will become sexually active until they reach 20 or 30 years of age.



Figure 6. A family group of elephants. Note the grassland habitat.

Source:<http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu>

Mortality Rates and Longevity - Juvenile Mûmaks and elephants have very high survival rates. Because usually only one offspring is born per pregnant female, great care is taken by the group to

insure the survival of all offspring. Adult elephants have few natural predators and, unless killed for their ivory tusks by humans, can live to be anywhere from 50 to 80 years. Adult Mûmaks fall victim only to dragons, and otherwise will live well past 150 years. This longevity is tempered by an incredibly low reproductive yield and slow development, thus population sizes are always relatively small.

Society and Allegiances - Mûmaks and elephants are highly social creatures. The bonds between individuals are reported to be uncannily strong. Some even believe that when expressing the strength of these bonds, Mûmaks and elephants display very human-like emotions. They supposedly grieve the death of family members and attempt to console injured or sick members of their group. They are also believed to show joy at the return of a long missing family member, which is expressed by turning in circles, raising their heads and filling the air with a raucous symphony of trumpeting. These interpretations of such actions are purely conjecture, however.

These creatures exist in moderately sized matriarchal family groups containing four to five individuals in Mûmaks and five to ten individuals in elephants. Occasionally, several family groups will combine to form larger units called *herds*. Whether existing in herds or family groups, the oldest female (i.e. the matriarch) makes all decisions for the group. These decisions include in which direction the group will travel, when it is the appropriate time to find a water source, and so on. When the matriarch dies, her oldest offspring will take her place.

As was previously stated, females dominate family groups (Mûmak or elephant) and the matriarch ejects males from the herd when they reach adulthood (at approximately age 14). The matriarch only allows adult males (or bulls) to return to these family groups during the breeding season. Otherwise, they are forced to travel singly or with other males in, what are termed, “*bachelor herds*”. Adults vehemently protect infants and juveniles, whether they are their own offspring or not. In fact, when danger draws near, all adults in a group will surround the juveniles to shield them from danger. This makes capturing juveniles for domestication (which is preferred) particularly dangerous.

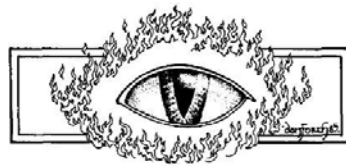


*“There came the great beasts, like moving houses in the red and fitful light, the Mûmakil of Harad dragging through the lanes amid the fires huge towers and engines.”
-The Return of the King*

Economic Uses - The only popular knowledge that people in the west have of these beasts includes their use as siege weapons (a use that they are particularly well adapted for). Many consider them evil beasts and servants of the Dark Lord and his minions. The truth is not quite so cut-and-dried, however. Although Mûmaks, for example, have been tainted by the Dark Lord’s hand, they are not inherently evil. Their violent natures, however, can be brought to the surface easily through cruel enslavement and training practices. Mûmaks are used primarily during warfare to break down large barriers (such as city walls) and destroy front lines of cavalry, for they seem to frighten horses. Elephants, on the other hand, are usually only used as beasts of burden. Though they are large enough to be fairly effective as siege weapons, their demeanor is not well suited for it. Because they hail from warm arid climates, these beasts only thrive as captives in regions that are environmentally similar. They do not respond well to damp or cold environments, and thus will fall victim to respiratory infections if kept in sub-optimal temperatures for extended periods.

Elephants may also be hunted for their ivory tusks. In the far southeastern portions of Middle Earth, ivory ornaments are frequently worn. Ivory can be carved for use as knife or sword handles, as well as personal decoration of various types (i.e. earrings nose rings, necklaces, etc.). Because their flesh is tough, and their thick hide is difficult to cut through, these animals are almost never eaten. Thus, if one is killed for its ivory, the rest of the body is often left to rot.

For those of you still interested in learning more, fear not! Information specifically for the Narrator is coming in next month’s issue. What type of statistics do these beasts have? How can they most effectively crush your adventuring party underfoot? Tune in next month to find out!



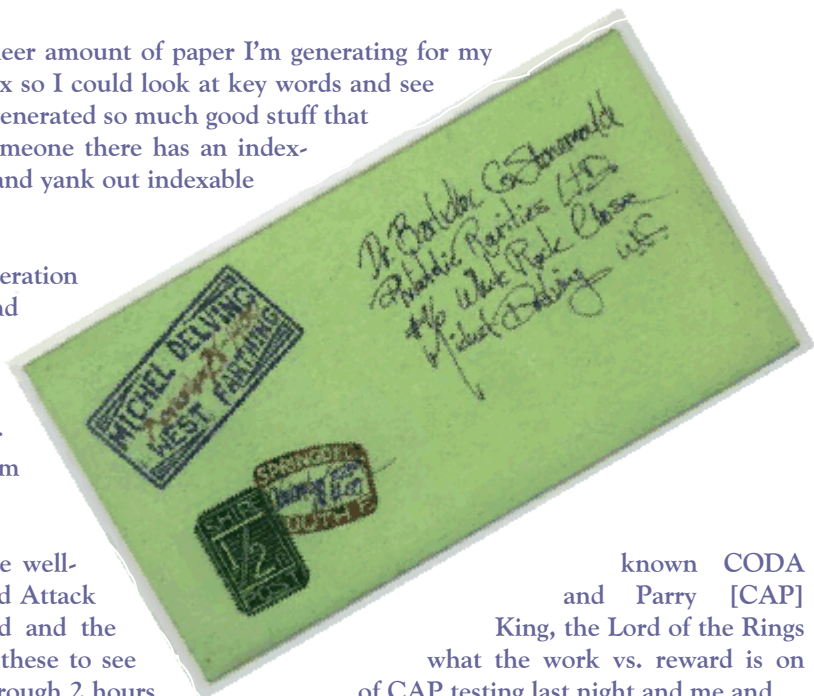
POSTMASTER

Randy Magruder writes:

1. It’s been a year, and especially given the sheer amount of paper I’m generating for my binder, I’d LOVE a complete Hall of Fire Index so I could look at key words and see which issue and page to look for. You’ve now generated so much good stuff that it’s actually work to find things! Hopefully someone there has an index-generator that might crawl through the issues and yank out indexable words.

2. I see lots of articles on character generation alternate rules to eliminate min maxing, and alternate combat resolution rules. What I don’t see is the answer to the problem: “My characters are 2 advancements into the game and I don’t want to take away their goodies. What do I do to prevent them from being so overpowering?”

3. A comparative review of some of the more well-variations on combat out there (The Combined Attack system, some of the variants on the Steward and the Compendium, etc). If anyone has play-tested these to see them, it would be neat to know. I just went through 2 hours



known CODA
and Parry [CAP]
King, the Lord of the Rings
what the work vs. reward is on
of CAP testing last night and me and



the player I tested with both felt that the original book was superior, in spite of our qualms with it.

4. In conjunction with #3, it would be neat if you guys could get Doug Burke, Steven Long, or other ex-Decipherians who worked on the CODA system to supply their feedback to the various gripes and problems we've had with CODA in the last couple of years. Maybe the "designer's insight" would help, as well as perhaps thoughts as to whether maybe they concede that such-and-such is a problem, and their opinions on fan-fixes.

5. Thoughts on 'advanced combat'. Here's what I'm thinking about. I have a party which includes a rather aggressive dwarf. They are set upon by a troll. I kid you not, I got these two different actions at different troll-dwarf combats:

- a. "As he swings the club, I let the club swing by, then jump into the air and hack of his arm above the elbow before he can backswing"
- b. "I slide under the troll, swinging the axe up into his gut as I slide through", immediately followed by:
- c. "Now that I'm behind him, I take an axe in both hands, and bury them in his back and use them to climb my way up to his head"

6. "I want to stab him in the chest, use the longsword as a pole vault onto his head, then pull out the sword and stab in the head with it".

1. Hall of Fire Index

While I think this is a good idea, it might be a little too difficult for us to do right now. Honestly, if a reader would like to put one together, maybe based off of the index included in one of the early issues of the HOF, it would be greatly appreciated.

2. "Overpowered" Characters at Low Level

Overpowered is really a relative term. If a Narrator thinks that his player's PC's are too competent in a certain area (at any time really), he could design the game to play against their weaknesses, pit them against hazards that are beyond their capability, etc. I'd advocate humbling them in a manner that would dissuade focus in one area, unless that is truly how they want their character to be and to have challenges in situations where they aren't all that capable or not at all.

3. Combined Attack and Parry (CAP) System for CODA

I've never done this and, personally, that smacks too much of d20 and doesn't feel as realistic as the current CODA system. I would suggest asking this question on the Decipher or other messageboards.

4. Designer Feedback on Questions and Proposed Fan Fixes

5. "Advanced" Combat

a. First, who has initiative? The answer to that would dictate how I'd answer, so I shall answer with all three possibilities.

TROLL FIRST

See the Tactical Advantage ability in the Fan Flavour section. Since he jumps into the air to avoid the attack, it is two separate actions: Dodge (first) and Jump Attack (second). Dodge has a TN of the troll's attack test and see the Fan Flavour section for the Jump Attack maneuver, which could incur a multiple action penalty (MAP).

DWARF FIRST

The ability wouldn't necessarily be needed but the maneuver could still be used as it is more conceivable that the dwarf could hold his action in anticipation of the troll's attack. The rest of the previous answer would still apply.

DWARF AND TROLL TOGETHER

Same as TROLL FIRST.

b. Acrobatics test may be required to slide under the troll (TN is Narrator-defined), costing 1 action. The attack could be considered a called shot to the torso as it is being made in conjunction with another action, also costing 1 action.

c. First, move from prone to standing, 1 action. Second, a successful attack must be made with enough damage to penetrate the troll's natural armor would be required to "bury" it in his back, costing 1 action. A further Climb test would be required to continue doing this (TN is Narrator-defined). If any attack test failed or didn't do enough damage to get past the troll's armor, the axe didn't bite. Something bad would happen depending on the failure of the test (most likely a Disastrous

Failure would cause the dwarf to fall, leaving the other axe in the troll's back). How much time or number of rounds this sort of thing would require is up to the Narrator.

6. "I want to stab him in the chest, use the longsword as a pole vault onto his head, then pull out the sword and stab in the head with it."

The first would require an attack test, probably a called shot to the torso, 1 action. An Acrobatics (Swing) or Jump (probably the former) test to "pole vault" to the head (TN is Narrator-defined, if at all within the realm of possibility), costing 1 action. If the creature has Armor, see the answer to 5c. An Acrobatics (Balance) would be needed to get the sword out of the opponent while landing on the head (TN is Narrator-defined), costing 1 action (probably has a MAP). The attack would be normal or maybe a called shot to the head, costing 1 action (probably has a MAP).



LORD OF THE RINGS RPG CONTEST

The Hall of Fire webzine would like to present a new contest for all those readers of the webzine and fans of The Lord of the Rings RPG by Decipher. As has been so generously donated by Brandir, we have three LOTR RPG items up for your chance to win: Fell Beasts & Wondrous Magic, Narrator's Screen, and The Fellowship of the Ring Sourcebook. Below are the rules for each contest item -- PLEASE read the rules carefully and in their entirety.

Fell Beasts & Wondrous Magic

- Create an entirely new Creature
- Use layout as seen in DEC publications and HOF
- Please make the creature as faithful to Tolkien's works as possible
- Original art, hand-drawn or computer-generated (*.jpg), is optional
- Word Limit: 500 words not including the stat block
- Deadline: Midnight March 11, 2005

Narrator's Screen

- Create a Hostile Haunt
 - Description of the setting
 - An original map, hand-drawn or computer-generated (*.jpg)
- Other original art is optional
- Refer to articles in previous issues for examples.
- Unique items, creatures, or subtle magical effects of the land should have write-ups consistent with DEC publications
- Word Limit: 750-1000 words, use the Creature guidelines above for unique creatures or important NPC's, 250 words for unique items or magical effects
- Deadline: Midnight April 16, 2005 (don't want to screw with getting taxes done if in the US)

Fellowship of the Ring SB

- Create an adventure set in the lands of the North during the 3rd Age or a parallel adventure to the FOTR set during the War of the Ring
 - Use the format and include things like those seen in the free adventure downloads from DEC:
 - Full write-ups for important NPC's and/or unique creatures
 - Plot summary, storyline, planned events, etc.
 - Random encounters*
 - Unique items*
 - Subtle magical effects of the land*
 - Please denote the best place(s) to break it into pieces for publication in multiple issues
 - Word Limit: 3000-3500 words, use the Creature guidelines above for unique creatures or important NPC's, 250 words for unique items or magical effects
 - Deadline: Midnight May 13, 2005
- * *Optional*

- Each submission must be an original creation.
 - It cannot be featured as a part of another submission, such as a creature in a Hostile Haunt or adventure.



- It cannot have been something an author has had featured in a previous issue of The Hall of Fire or any other publication.
- It cannot be something copied, tweaked, or converted from this RPG, Middle-earth RPG by ICE, or any other copyrighted property.
- One submission per author per major prize. There may be multiple authors to one submission, but it counts as each of the listed author's one submission for the particular contest.

- Editing of a submission for content and layout may be required for publication, but will not be done without prior approval of the author.

MAKING A SUBMISSION: Files are to be *.txt or *.doc files for text and *.jpg files for maps, pictures, and other artwork. In the subject line of the email, write "<item> Contest", where "<item>" is either Fell Beasts & Wondrous Magic, Narrator's Screen, or Fellowship of the Ring SB.

ELIGIBILITY: The staff of the HOF (GandalfOfBorg, Tomcat, Camdin, Ineti, and ReptileJK) will be reviewing the submissions and are thus ineligible to the contest.

PRIZES: Aside from the major prizes, the winners along with 1st and 2nd runners-up will also receive an HOF Year 1 CD. The winning submissions would be published in the following month's issue. The submissions from the 1st and 2nd runners-up would be published in subsequent issues. All other submissions would be available for download the month after the issue that contained the winning submission (May for Fell Beasts, June for Hostile Haunts, and July for adventures) at the HOF website and would also appear on the Year 2 CD. If a winning submission has multiple authors, it is their responsibility to decide the outcome of the prize(s) received. The winning submissions will be contacted via email for the mailing addresses for sending the prizes after the specific issue has been released.

DISCLAIMER: This contest is in no way sanctioned or sponsored by Decipher, Inc. or its affiliates. By making a submission to this contest, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the rules above as they are written.

WHAT'S OUT THERE

This is a list of websites along with Decipher's official websites. We have found they supply useful information to *Lord of the Rings* gamers.



DECIPHER'S LORD OF THE RINGS RPG HOME

<http://decipher.com/lordoftherings/rpg/index.html>

DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG BOARD

<http://forums.decipher.com/viewforum.php?f=44>

DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG SUPPORT DOCS

<http://decipher.com/lordoftherings/rpg/support/index.html>

THE HALL OF FIRE WEBZINE SITE

<http://halloffire.inspiring.us>

FAN MODULES FOR MIDDLE-EARTH

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules>

THE MAD IRISHMAN

<http://www.mad-irishman.net>

STARBASE CODA

<http://www.starbase-coda.com>

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARDA

<http://www.glyphweb.com/arda/default.htm>

RPG TOOLS FOR DECIPHER'S CODA GAMES

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpgtools/>

THE SLAVE PITS OF BARAD-DUR

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/smaugrob/lotrmain.html>

THE STEWARD AND THE KING

<http://www.stewardandking.net>

THE TOWER HILLS

<http://homepage.mac.com/jeremybaker/towerhills>

VALINOR

<http://sauron.misled.us>

TREK-RPG.NET

<http://forum.trek-rpg.net/index.php>

CODA WEBZINE REPOSITORY

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda_webzine

TOLKIEN ONLINE

<http://www.tolkienonline.com/>

CALLING ALL GAMERS!

Interested in submitting...

- A mini or side adventure?
- Racial/Personal Development or Order/Professional Development packages?
- New creatures, or fell beasts?
- New Orders or Elite Orders?
- NPC's?
- Weapons, equipment, or magical items?
- Fan Art?

If so, write to us for details on submission at: codawebzine@hotmail.com with "Fan Content" in the subject line. Please include your name and/or pseudonym (handle/online identity) and email address(es) with which one of our editors may contact you.

Please note that if you would like to submit a mini-adventure, Decipher will not consider it for publishing. Please do not directly submit your items to us without prior approval.

Fancy yourself a writer and would like to contribute to the webzine?

If so, write to us at codawebzine@hotmail.com with "Writer" in the subject line. One of the editors will get back to you with details about writing for **THE HALL OF FIRE**.

If you would like to post an advertisement for:

- A local or online RPG that you are hosting
- An RPG convention or tournament
- Or any events pertaining to The Lord of the Rings RPG or Star Trek RPG by Decipher

Write to us at codawebzine@hotmail.com with "Ad" in the subject line along with your advertisement. The advertisement is to be less than 100 words and a graphic to go with it no more than 1" x 1"

CREDITS AND CONTACTS

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