



# THE HALL OF FIRE FAN WEBZINE

ISSUE TWENTY-THREE  
OCTOBER 2005

*The Light of Valinor on the Western Sea - by Ted Nasmith*



## GREETINGS,

### SALUTATIONS... HELLO ALL!

Welcome to the new issue of The Hall of Fire! I am very glad you find joy in both Decipher's game and in reading our webzine; it makes all the work all the more satisfying. As for Decipher, they have finally announced what will happen with the rest of the slated releases for the Lord of the Rings and Star Trek RPGs, go to <http://decipher.fanhq.com/Articles/Article.aspx?ID=921> for more information. They didn't give an exact date for the release of the Paths of the Wise \*.pdf, but maybe that's the best they could do for now... we shall see.

There I go again with the doom and gloom... pay no more heed to it and on with this great issue! This month we are again fortunate to have another Adventuring In... about the Woodland-realm skillfully illustrated by Peter Merryman, The Effective... Minstrel, more breeds of Trolls, a "flavourful" Fan Flavour, plus a whole lot more!

**Matthew A. Kearns**  
aka GandalfOfBorg  
Editor

PS - Hey Everyone, Tomcat here!

I would love to get everyone's input of the new look to the Hall of Fire. I am re-tooling it to make the document an easier template to lay out each month. Love you input!

# THE MIDDLE-EARTH HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine

## IN THIS ISSUE

GREETINGS	1
ADVENTURING IN...	2
▪ The Woodland Realm	
▪ The Peoples of Middle-earth – Elves of the Woodland Realm	
IT'S ALL OPTIONAL...	6
▪ New House Rule: Unarmed Combat vs. Armed Combat	
▪ New Edge: Experienced, Open-Handed Defence, Spread of Burst Shot from a Bow	
▪ Weapon Rules	
FAN FLAVOUR...	10
▪ The Effective Minstrel	
▪ Items Defined	
ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES	15
▪ High King Eldarion	
FEATURED CREATURES	16
▪ Trolls	
THE ROAD GOES EVER ON...	18
▪ Dreams and Legends	
WHAT'S OUT THERE...	26
CALLING ALL GAMERS...	27



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# ADVENTURING IN

## THE WOODLAND REALM AND HALLS OF THRANDUIL

by Mathew Kearns (GandalfofBorg); pictures by Peter Merryman

### HISTORY

The Wood-elves, as they came to be called - as most were of the Silvan line, though a few Sindar were among them including the royal line - were forced to retreat from their home into the far north of the forest where the king kept a summer retreat. It was here that the elves delved once again. Oropher, Thranduil (S. "Taudor-ardhuin"), and their craftsmen wove great magic of warding and protection to keep out all, including their kindred, unless, the master of the realm allowed it. When the Battle of the Last Alliance came, Oropher led a great many of his people to meet with their allies against Sauron. He, with a large majority of his warriors, was lost in the battle and Thranduil came to power and subsequently had a son, Legolas of the Fellowship of the Ring.



### NOTABLE FEATURES

#### Entrance Hall

The gates to the Halls of Thranduil are truly a wonder. At the mouth of the Entrance there is a bridge over a guarding stream and then the great stone gates, which open and close only upon the king's will. These kinds of features would normally be visible, but thanks to the power of the elves, they are hidden from view or not recognizable by the average eye, in a manner similar to that of dwarf-made portals. Within the portal many spells are woven: Exclusion, Opening-spell, and Shutting-spell to name a few that protect the stronghold from intruders and sieges. If they are ever discovered by an enemy, the walls and door of the Entrance are reinforced to withstand a great assault. Once these doors shut, there is no other means of leaving the halls save the trap door below the storerooms.

**Curse:** "None shall enter alone that seek to harm the kingdom without the king's knowledge." The king of the Woodland-realm shall be alerted to any illegal entry by a spy or enemy that is not accompanied by a friend or subject.

- **Exclusion - Provision:** Any Elf and any other accompanied by an Elf of the Woodland-realm.

**Opening-spell -** Willpower TN 22, succeeding against this TN shall break and nullify the permanent Shutting-spell upon the doors.

**Structure:** 20

**Protection:** 8

Being enchanted by such great magic, the gates may not be dealt damage by any means save by those imbued with enchantments and spells of ruin.

#### Main Hall

The largest and most fabulous room in this stronghold, the Main Hall is completely made of worked stone. From the dais and throne to the water-catchers collecting water from small springs and the bas-relief, everything is cut and shaped from the living earth. This is also one of the few rooms in these halls that has access to the outside -- there are long narrow shafts to allow fresh air into the room along with light from the morning sun and the evening moon. It is here that the king spends his time if he is not on a hunt with his favorite hounds or feasting in the nearby forest.





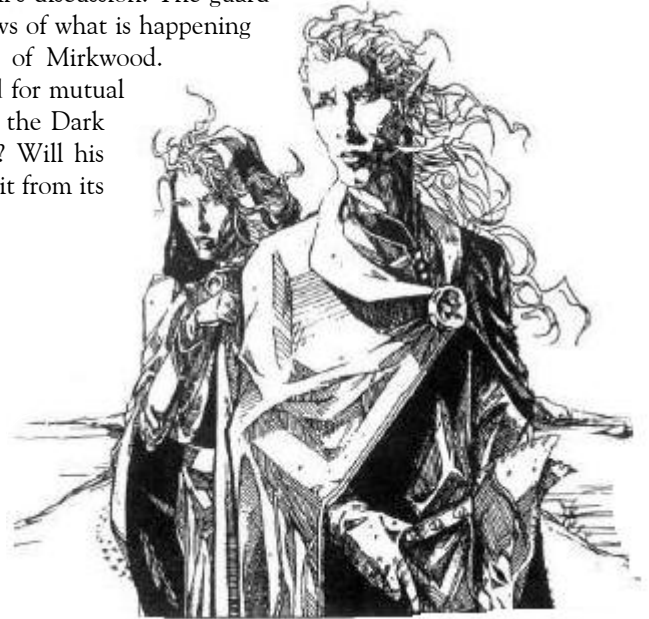
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hamlet of Dale comes to Thranduil to aid in this common threat. What is to be done? Are there more in the region? Is it even possible to kill or drive off this wurm?

**A Tangled Web Woven:** Encounters with the giant spiders of Mirkwood have increased and their numbers and influence have multiplied over the last few years. Scouts have reported that closer to the Mountains of Mirkwood, the populations are denser and more powerful. They seem poised to strike again at the elf-kingdom, but will they stop there or go on to attack the outposts of Men along either side of the wood or even the home of Radagast? Are they still under the influence of Amon Lanc?

2. **The Shadow Converges:** The emissaries that accompanied prince Legolas to Rivendell have returned and relayed to the king the news of his son's whereabouts and what transpired during the council's discussion. The guard and patrols are increased and scouts range farther abroad seeking news of what is happening at Gundabad and south towards Dol Guldur and the Mountains of Mirkwood.

Alliances with the Men of Dale and Dwarves of Erebor are rekindled for mutual defense and aid. When will the hammer fall and in what form? Has the Dark Lord managed to recruit any more great wyrms from the far North? Will his forces converge upon the tiny forest kingdom from all sides to isolate it from its allies?



## PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH – ELVES OF THE WOODLAND REALM

by GandalfOfBorg

“Though their magic was strong, even in those days they were wary. They differed from the High Elves of the West, and were more dangerous and less wise. For most of them (together with their scattered relations in the hills and mountains) were descended from the ancient tribes that never went to Faerie in the West.”

- *The Hobbit*

**Elves of Emyr-nu-Fuin** - Armed Combat +1, Climb +1, Ranged Combat +1, Smithcraft +1, Survival (Forests or Mountains) +1, Night-eyed

**Elves of Ithilien** - Armed Combat +1, Climb +1, Craft +1, Ranged Combat +1, Stealth (Sneak) +1, Survival (Forests) +1

### HISTORY & LANDS

It was early in the life of the world when the Eldar were found by Oromë and then led to the Great Sea, where many embarked upon an island to Valinor. Though many left, many stayed in the lands of Middle-earth that they loved so much. With their king, Elwë aka Elu Thingol, they created a great kingdom in the forests of Beleriand. Time passed and wars raged and the kingdom fell along with the continent of Beleriand. Many of the elf-kindred in Thingol's land escaped to Lindon, a region in the north of the current form of Middle-earth that surrounds the Gulf of Luin.



# q p r u v w x y z a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Seeing the land overcrowded by refugees of Elves, Men, and Dwarves, a large contingent followed Oropher and his son Thranduil across the great Misty Mountains and into the wild lands near the East. It was in the Eryn Lasgalen that they found a small range of isolated mountains (Eryn-nu-Fuin, S. Mountains of Mirkwood) and delved their own kingdom. Peace lasted here for some years but soon the spread of darkness began to fill the wood and evil giant spiders invaded the northern reaches, bringing death with them and rumors that they came from within Amon Lanc. Soon this forest of delight was renamed Mirkwood.

These Wood-elves, as they came to be called -- as most were of the Silvan line though a few Sindar were among them including the royal line -- were forced to retreat from their home into the far north of the forest where the king kept a summer retreat. It was here that the elves delved once again. Oropher, Thranduil, and their craftsmen wove great magic of warding and protection to keep out all, including their kindred, unless the master of the realm allowed it. When the Battle of the Last Alliance came, Oropher led a great many of his people to meet with their allies against Sauron. He, with a large majority of his warriors, was lost in the battle and Thranduil came to power and subsequently had a son, Legolas of the Fellowship of the Ring.

Not much happened in the realm but constant skirmishes with the giant spiders that took hold of Mirkwood, and occasionally a dragon out of the North would harry Men, Dwarves, and the Elves of this realm. Orcs of Gundabad were another constant threat in the area. Life played out like this for many years until nigh the end of the Third Age.

Amid the average struggles of this small realm, the Wood-elves once again became embroiled in the dealings of the larger world. First, Thranduil captured and held Bilbo and the Dwarves when they were lost in Mirkwood and begging for food, and later the Wood-elves played a role in helping vanquish the forces of Gundabad. Next, they acted as Gollum's jailers after he was given to their care by Aragorn and Gandalf. Finally, they offered up their emissary and heir, Legolas, to the quest of destroying the One Ring.

Once the War of the Ring was concluded, life returned to what normalcy could be found and it continued on as it should. Thranduil and Celeborn met one last time to decide how Mirkwood would be divided for governing and surveillance. Legolas, with his new found fame, led a small contingent of Wood-elves to Ithilien to tend to the jewel of Gondor with the permission of Elessar and Prince Faramir.

## Mountains of Mirkwood\*

In the central parts of northern Mirkwood, north of the Old Forest Road, lay a scattered range of hills. A jumble of fir-covered, low-lying hills to the west rose to reach greater heights in the east, together forming a range nearly one hundred miles in length. Historically, the Second Age saw these mountains inhabited by Silvan Elves, who knew the range as the Eryn Duir, the Dark Mountains.

During the Third Age, the power of Sauron spread across the Mountains as it did throughout the rest of the Forest, and they became populated by hideous creatures. Just as Greenwood the Great was renamed Mirkwood at this time, its northern hills also took on a new name: Eryn-nu-Fuin, the Mountains of Mirkwood.

## PHYSICAL INFORMATION

Like all elves, Wood-elves are tall and fair. They have sharp eyes about them, a certain wildness from living a simple life among the remote forests away from the cares of the rest of the world. Their clothes of greens and browns are both aesthetically pleasing and functional when about in the wood.

## SOCIAL INFORMATION

Elves of the Woodland-realm rarely mingle with those outside the boundaries of their lands; they are a very suspicious and quick-to-react people, much like their ruler, Thranduil. The little contact they have with outsiders is with the traders and ferrymen who travel down the Forest River to Lake-town, the remnants of the kingdom of Dale after Smaug destroyed it and the dwarf-kingdom in Erebor. Though quick-tempered and haughty, the Wood-elves are a fair and gentle people who even treat their enemies (unless they be spiders or Orcs) with a kindness not found in many other places.

## Silvan Language\*

It must have been in the time these Elves were living closely together that the Silvan Elvish language appeared. As history passed, the Elves would move away from one another, and mingle with other Elvish peoples, so that the Silvan branch of Elvish would eventually become extinct. Nonetheless, relics of that ancient tongue survived in some well-known place-names and personal names, such as Caras Galadhon, Amroth and even Lórien itself.

## ECONOMICS

The Wood-elves are able to sustain themselves on whatever they can find in the forest, but they do trade with the Men of Lake-town and regions beyond like Dorwinion for exotic items that they cannot get themselves or would prefer to obtain from the outside.





# IT'S ALL OPTIONAL

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## NEW HOUSE RULE: UNARMED COMBAT VERSUS ARMED COMBAT

by Doug Joos

A character may use an Unarmed Block action to parry an Armed attack, but will only get a specialty bonus from the *Brawling* skill group and the test result must be a minimum of a Superior Success. Any lesser result will cause the character to take the damage from the weapon based on the chart below:

**Any Failure** = Full Damage\*

**Marginal Success** = 3/4 of Damage\*

**Complete Success** = 1/2 of Damage\*

**Superior Success or greater** = No Damage

\* *armour applies in all instances*

## NEW EDGE: OPEN-HANDED DEFENSE

by Doug Joos

You are very adept at unarmed melee against opponents that carry weapons, whether they be sword, polearm, or hafted. Your prowess allows you to better open-handedly defend against weapon-bearing opponents.

**Cost:** 2 Picks

**Effect:** This Edge reduces the Degree of Success necessary to avoid being harmed by an attack from a Superior Success to a Complete Success. It also reduces the amount of damage suffered on a Marginal Success from 3/4 of the damage rolled by the attacker to 1/2.

**Pre-requisites:** The character must have an 8+ Nimbleness and +4 Skill ranks in Unarmed Combat (Brawling).

**Improvements:** None

## NEW EDGE: EXPERIENCED

by Mathew Kearns

Through continuous use and/or study, you have become very accomplished in the use of a particular specialty of a skill.

**Prerequisite:** Skill +6

**Effect:** Select a skill and specialty with the exception of combat skills. The bonus when using this skill and specialty increases by +2.

**Improvement:** Yes, twice requiring Skill +8 and Skill +10, respectively. Every time you acquire this edge, you gain an additional +2 bonus when using this skill and specialty (max +6 bonus from edge) or select a new specialty with the same skill or a different skill.

## NEW EDGE: SPREAD OR BURST SHOT FROM A BOW

by Mathew Kearns

We've all seen it in the movies, from Legolas in *The Lord of the Rings* to Robin Hood in *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* -- an archer takes two or more arrows, pulls back and fires upon a number of enemies. How realistic is this? Well, not too much, but there are those who'd like to pull it off regardless of it being possibly not too representative of Tolkien. I say "What the heck!", why not provide the means to achieve this anyway.







# Weapons

Wear Table	Quality							
	Outdoor	Battle	Outdoor	Battle	Outdoor	Battle	Outdoor	Battle
Wear	Poor (-1 Damage)		Average (+0 Damage)		Excellent (+1 Damage)		Masterwork (Heroic/Enchant.)	
Pristine	-----		-----		-----		-----	
Nicked (-1)	1 Year	1 Battle	2 Years	2 Battles	3 Years	3 Battles	5 Years	4 Battles
Well Worn (-2)	6 Months	"	1 Years	1 Battle	1½ Years	2 Battles	4 Years	3 Battles
Used (-3)	3 Months	"	6 Months	"	1 Year	1 Battle	3 Years	2 Battles
Pitted (-1D)	1 Month	"	3 Months	"	6 Months	"	2 Years	1 Battle
Worn Out (Half Damage)	½ Month	"	1 Month	"	3 Month	"	1 Year	"
Useless (No Damage)	-----	-----	½ Month	"	1 Month	"	6 Months	"
Shattered (No Damage)	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

## Mud, Dirt, Grime, Blood:

If a blade is caked with debris or a similar element, cut all times pertaining to outdoor wear in half.

## Acid and Flame:

Any type of fire (i.e. Dragon Fire) or acid that can damage a blade in a few seconds forces a test at TN 9. (This roll has a modifier of +1 for average weapons, +2 for excellent, +3 for Masterwork, and +4 for enchanted weapons.) Any success results in no change. Failure results in the weapon being downgraded by two levels. (A complete Failure or lower might result in weapon destruction, at the Narrator's discretion.)

## Complications: (On test result 2)

Hilted Weapons: Broken Hilt (-1 Parry)

Hafted Weapons: Imbalanced (-1 Init.)

Pole Weapons: Half Shaft (½ Reach)

All Weapons: Notched (-1 Damage, +1 Inspire)

(Weapon notched on a 6 on a D6 with an extraordinary success or disastrous failure.)

Hilted Weapons: Dagger, Long Knife, Long sword, Scimitar, Short sword.

Hafted Weapons: Axe, Great Axe, Club, Hammer, Mace, Mattock.

Pole Weapons: Pike staff, Spear

## Quality:

- Poor – This is the quality that an apprentice or early smith would create, or when blades are mass produced. Examples include: Scimitars or Blades given to Orc or Uruk-Hai grunts. (Suffer a -1 to all Damage rolls.) (May never be greater than “Nicked” wear.)
- Average – As suggested, this is the quality of an average smith, after several years of apprenticeship. (These weapons follow normal rules for their type)
- Excellent – Of lesser quality than Masterwork but greater than average, these blades might include those of the Tower Guard of Gondor and the Royal Guard of Rohan. Blades might come to this quality as the greater works of average smiths or the moderate creations of a gifted smith. (Receive a +1 to all Damage rolls) (May be enchanted to a lesser extent than Masterwork weapons.)
- Masterwork: Quality of the most powerful weapons of Middle Earth. (Follow the normal rules for Masterwork weapons represented in the rules.)

## Wear:

- Pristine: A blade in this state is as it was when it was forged. This blade suffers no penalties.
- Nicked: This blade is in near perfect shape, though it may have seen a battle. It might have wear on the flat of the blade, and minor dull areas on the edge. (-1 penalty to Damage)
- Well Worn: The flat of this blade is heavily scratched, spots on the edge are dull, and there are light stress lines on the blade. (-2 to Damage)
- Used: A blade at this state of wear has a major problem. This could range from one side being very dull, to major stress lines in the blade, to pitting in the flat of the blade. (-3 to Damage)



# Weapon Damage

- **Pitted:** The edge of this weapon has minor notches in it, causing major drag in combat. (-1D to Damage)
- **Worn Out:** This blade has all the characteristics of the levels before it and is almost completely dull. (-1D or ½ Damage, whichever is greater.)
- **Useless:** This blade is completely dull and is nothing more than a sword shaped club. (No damage, strength modifier only.) (when a weapon is used at this level of wear, roll 1D6, on a 4-6 the weapon shatters.)
- **Shattered:** Weapon is completely useless, but may be reforged if all pieces are found. (Narrator's discretion on Damage.)

**Complications:** On a critical failure, these complications might occur with a weapon.

- **Hilted Weapons:** The hilt breaks, and the weapon suffers a -1 to parry due to the awkwardness of steering strikes away from your hand.
- **Hafted Weapons:** Damage causes the weapon to become imbalanced, making it difficult to recover from a swing or to wield, giving it a -1 to initiative.
- **Pole Weapons:** The shaft is broken, giving the weapon only ½ reach.
- **Notched:** A deep notch is cut into the blade, as Boromir's blade was at the camber of Marzubarel, or Gimli's axe at the Battle of Helms Deep. This gives a -1 to damage rolls, but gives a +1 to inspire in appropriate situations due to the combat it represents.

## Other Damage:

- **Mud, Dirt, Grime, Blood, Elements:** So long as a weapon is covered, it begins to wear and rust more quickly. Therefore, halve all time for a weapon to drop a level of wear.
- **Acid and Flame:** Any acid or flame capable of doing significant damage to a weapon quickly causes a TN 9 test. Add +1 to the roll for an average blade, +2 if excellent, +3 if Masterwork, and +4 if Enchanted. Failure results in immediate downgrade by two levels of wear. (A complete failure or lower may result in weapon destruction at the Narrator's discretion) Success indicates no change. These rolls continue each round until the source is removed.

## Weapon Maintenance and Repair:

Weapons at any level can be maintained at their current level by using proper tools and working with the blade for 15 minutes. This resets the time that the weapon has been used. (If a blade is sharpened in this way within a reasonable time after a battle, it can be maintained at its current level.)

## Repair by Level of Wear:

- **Nicked (-1):** With appropriate tools and a half-hour of work, this weapon recovers to pristine. (Does not affect poor quality blades.)
- **Well Worn (-2):** With appropriate tools and an hour of work, the blade recovers to "Nicked".
- **Used (-3):** This damage requires specialized tools (dependent upon the weapon) and 2 hours worth of work. The blade recovers to "Well Worn".
- **Pitted (-1D):** Weapons in this condition cannot easily be repaired in the field. It requires a smithy, but makeshift tools can be used, though this increases the test TN by +5. The base smith roll is TN 5. (After repair, the blade returns to "Well Worn")
- **Worn Out (½ Damage or -1D):** At this stage a blade must be reforged by a qualified smith. The TN for this Smithing test is based on the quality of the blade in question. 5 for poor, 10 for average, 12 for excellent, 15 for masterwork or enchanted. Any level in success upgrades the blade to "Nicked". Failure reduces it to "Useless".
- **Useless (No Damage):** This weapon has now taken so much damage it can only be reforged with great difficulty. Previous rules apply, but now the TN is: 10 for poor, 15 for average, 17 for excellent, and 20 for masterwork/enchanted. Success upgrades the blade to "Pitted". Failure effectively shatters the blade.
- **Shattered (Cannot be used):** The blade of the weapon is now broken. It can be reforged with a smithing test if all the pieces are received. (This therefore precludes any blades disintegrated by acid, fire, or magic.) The TN for this test is: 20 for average, 22 for excellent, and 25 for masterwork/enchanted. (Poor quality blades cannot be reforged from this state.) When a blade is reforged it drops a level of quality. (Average to Poor, Excellent to Average, Masterwork to Excellent.) A masterwork or enchanted blade can maintain its level of quality if the blade was originally of Elven or Dwarven make, but it must be reforged by a member of the appropriate race of sufficient renown and power. (Such as the elves of Imladris or a Dwarf Master-Craftsman.) (Generally, a Masterwork weapon forged by men can be reforged in this way by any of these three races.)



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## FAN FLAVOUR

### THE EFFECTIVE MINSTREL by Mathew Kearns

Regardless of the Age in which your game is set, the Minstrel is ever-present in the world -- even a large contingent of the Elves in the world would either be of this Order or have many related skills and abilities geared towards the relaxing pastime of playing instruments, singing, and telling stories. Audiences are ready-made as it is the Minstrels, along with the Loremasters, in the world that are the record- and history-keepers in all realms, be it in the form of writing, paintings and murals, or information passed orally in the form of song or story or even dance.

#### BACKGROUND

The CODA system and the game itself almost beckons that you create your character's concept and background before rolling the dice. The Minstrel is a viable Order that can be used at almost any time and anywhere. Think about where he comes from, his motivations and maybe even sketch out a few of his personal goals. This will help both you in focusing your roleplaying and your Narrator for creating side adventures for developing your character. Work with your Narrator to come up with something suitable for the game in which you will be playing.

#### RACE

All the available races for PC's have some sort of tradition of performance, be it the haunting orchestral Dwarves or bittersweet singing and delicate instruments of the Elves. They also have a variety of functions: Men have Minstrels as courtiers, performing for lords and ladies, while a large portion of the Elven, especially Sindar, and Dwarven common folk have some sort of musical inclination (song, dance, instruments, etc.). The rustic Hobbits and Men have music for all sorts of occasions, typically played not by a professional group, but by locals who, aside from their agrarian or like expertise, have picked up their musical talent from their forefathers.



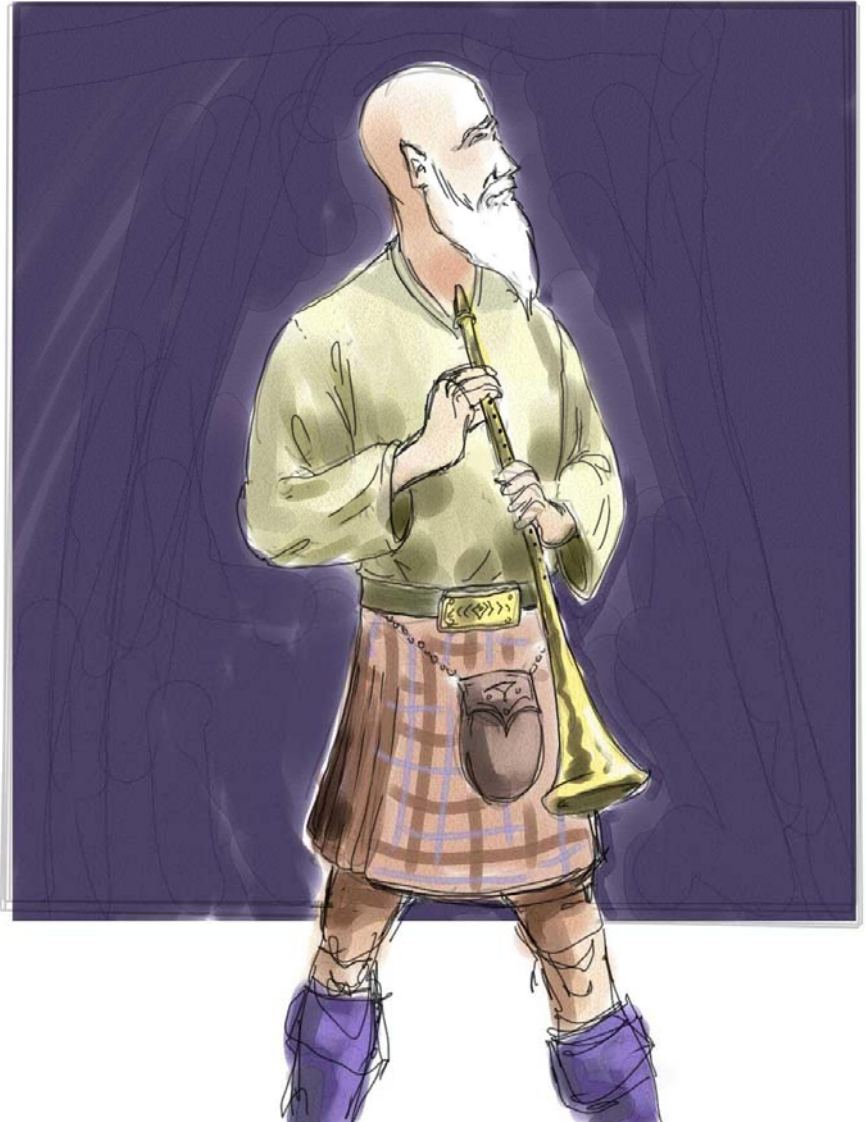
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## ATTRIBUTES

By far, Bearing is a Minstrel's most important attribute -- it is the driving force behind your performance-related skills and allows you to weave wondrous effects through your unique abilities. Wits is not far behind as it governs your ability to recall information and aids in your ability to learn new information. Perception is also a quality choice for a Minstrel, especially one who is a regular in the court of your lord, to see past the vague and obsequious overtures of other courtiers. Nimbleness comes in a distant fourth for importance and would be appropriate for those who practice flamboyant feats of prestidigitation or for an acrobat in a traveling show. Strength and Vitality aren't all that important to a Minstrel as they aren't requisites for your skills nor are you likely to encounter combat often.

## REACTIONS

Wisdom is probably the best choice for your primary reaction as it allows you to resist cunning words from a forceful personality or to extract the truth from a web of misinformation. Swiftiness is useful for those with quick hands or those who rely on their physical abilities for putting on a show. Willpower is up there with Swiftiness in usefulness, but would be most appropriate for one who turns into ambassador of your lord's court. Stamina is the least likely, except where playing or traveling for an extended period of time or resisting potential assassination attempts via poison.



## SKILLS

Your performance skills such as Acrobatics, Inspire, Legerdemain, Mimicry, Persuade, and most especially Perform, are the core of a Minstrel. The Perform skill itself is the basis for what the Minstrel is and essentially provides for the prerequisites of four of the six Order abilities. It may be tempting to max this skill out, but don't forget to put ranks into Lore and Language, as a Minstrel could make a decent replacement for a Loremaster.

## EDGES

There are many edges that enhance the effectiveness and give a bit of flavor to the Minstrel: Charmed Life, Curious, Eloquent, Favour of Fortune, Foresighted, Friends, Furtive, Gift of Tongues, Honey-tongued, Tireless, and Wise.



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## FLAWS

With the pros of being a Minstrel, there are always cons -- the flaws -- that reflect their standoffishness and/or flamboyant presence: Arrogant, Fealty, Grasping, Proud, Reckless, and Rival.

## ABILITIES

**Gladden** - This ability may appear weak, merely improving the rate of recovery of Weariness Levels, but for a traveling party or beleaguered people needing some peace, it is a godsend. It also provides you a way to show off your abilities and is a good chance for some roleplaying.

**Inspiring Performance** - A little more powerful than Gladden, and effective if you are the “face” of your fellowship or are renowned for your ability to inspire the people.

**Jugglery** - This is probably the weakest of the abilities. Though it gives a bonus to a range of dexterous skills, it's a one-time bonus, the ability cannot be improved, and it's not a prerequisite to any other abilities either.

**Natural Talent** - At first glance, this ability might seem weak. The added bonus from using Courage on the skills you're most likely to use is quite a boon, as just spending 2 Courage points is the equivalent of spending at least three normally.

**Voice of Power** - Now this ability is a bit overpriced for its effect. Increasing the effect of the “Power of Words” is well and good, but these are all subtle and fairly low-powered effects, aren't boosted all that much by the ability, and aren't (or shouldn't be) invoked often but for dramatic effect in the course of a chronicle, let alone a chapter.

**Woven Words** - This is one of not many abilities worth their prerequisites. Though not overall a mechanically powerful ability, the effects of conjuring the scenes you are intimating through your performance are intensely dramatic in effect and can make for a vivid and potent roleplaying experience if done right.

## MULTIPLE ORDERS

**Barbarian** - Regardless of how advanced a society is, the Minstrel is an applicable Order and one that is especially necessary for the less advanced ones as Minstrels are also the history-keepers and storytellers who pass on what is most important to the society's culture. In terms of mechanics, the abilities don't really mesh well with those of a Barbarian, but nonetheless could be useful in the right situations.

**Craftsman** - The Minstrel would really only acquire this Order if she wanted to create an instrument as a work of art -- a labor of love -- and/or to imbue it with enchantments to enhance her performance. Otherwise, this Order wouldn't offer much to a Minstrel.

**Loremaster** - Minstrels as scribes, storytellers, shamans, etc. would do well to acquire this Order for Vala Virtue and other abilities pertaining to lore and languages.

**Magician** - Since this Order mostly deals with spellcasting, it could enhance the Minstrel's effectiveness in performance or other social skills and situations, but wouldn't offer much more than being able to cast spells (which is easier to do than in the Loremaster Order).

**Mariner** - This is probably not a good fit with a Minstrel unless the character is a ship's record keeper or other such things.

**Noble** - Many Nobles in their youth learn to appreciate some form of performance art such as playing an instrument or singing. Music usually has its importance placed high up near that of lore, languages, and philosophy.

**Rogue** - A Minstrel's skills and abilities don't necessarily build upon that of a Rogue's, but they can offer intriguing options for certain types of characters like street performers and fair entertainers.

**Warrior** - Minstrels don't typically become fighters; however, Warriors may become Minstrels, traveling the lands, regaling court, tavern, or street corner audiences with tales of their past experiences on the battlefield and of the lands they have traveled. Mechanically, the Warrior offers the Minstrel, best of all, Evasion, which can come in handy for a variety of situations and not necessarily combat.

## Elite Orders

Currently, there are no Elite Orders that a Minstrel, on her own, would necessarily choose to join as an obvious choice unless she had multiple Orders, but here are two that could possibly be acquired by way of a specific career path in mind and good roleplaying.

**Archer** - Being nimble of hand, a Minstrel has Ranged Combat as an Order Skill so increasing the skill and acquiring bonuses won't be as expensive, but I'd suggest that you acquire Jugglery along the way.

**Spy** - Courtiers and entertainers have opportunities that others may not when it comes to espionage, giving them an edge both getting in where they shouldn't be and getting out of a jam if there is a way out.



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## SPELLS

If your Minstrel ever does acquire the Spellcasting ability, there are a few spells that would enhance her performance and abilities: Animal Messenger, Animal Summoning, Beast-speech, Blinding Flash, Burning Sparks, Create Light, Display of Power, Evoke Awe, Fireshaping, Fog-raising, Fog-weaving, Imitation-spell, Kindle Fire, Resist Fear, Scribe Moon-letters, Smoke-weaving, Voice of Suasion, and Water-shaping.

## PLAYING A MINSTREL

A Minstrel may not be a player's first choice for his character, but a Minstrel shouldn't be underestimated in his ability to contribute to a party or to a chronicle: they can be the record keeper of events, act as emissary for a lord, embolden comrades to greatness, or inspire them to push on when all action seems futile. There aren't really any examples of characters that are focused on the Minstrel's path, but his trade and the effects of his abilities can be found in many places from the dwarf song in Bilbo's home in The Hobbit to The Hall of Fire in Rivendell.

## ITEMS DEFINED by Unknown

### Cram

Otherwise known as hard tack, this bland-tasting biscuit is the mainstay in the trail rations of a typical rustic man such as might come from Dale, the lands about Mirkwood, or rural Gondor. It is made from flour, some water, salt, and lard mixed in a bowl and baked into flat cracker-like squares. Five pounds of cram will sustain a man for one week.

If kept dry, cram will remain edible for a long period of time. The manner in which it is eaten is that the cram is either dipped in water, brine, or some other liquid to soften it and give some flavor; if eaten without being dipped, it will suck all the moisture from a person's mouth, making it difficult to continue eating.

Those not knowing any better could mistake lembas of the elves for this, but lembas tastes and sustains a person much better.

**Preparation:** TN 5 Craft: Cooking

**Effects:** One large biscuit will sustain a man for one day.

Success	Effect
Marginal	Remains edible for up to 2 weeks
Complete	Remains edible for up to 1 month
Superior	Remains edible for up to 3 months, +1 bonus to Stamina v. Weariness tests
Extraordinary	Remains edible for up to 6 months, +2 bonus to Stamina v. Weariness tests

### CRAM RECIPE:

2 c flour  
 1/2 to 3/4 c water  
 1 tsp salt  
 Optional - 1 tbsp Crisco, butter, lard, etc.

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Mix all ingredients in a bowl then press batter onto a cookie sheet to a thickness of 1/2 inch.
3. Bake for 1 hour.
4. Remove and cut dough into 3-inch squares, punching holes into the dough using a fork.
5. Flip "crackers" over and bake an additional 30 minutes.
6. Optional - Continue to bake at 250 degrees to thoroughly dry out the bread.

## Beorn's Honeycakes

Besides being famous for their extraordinary physical traits, Beorn and those of his lineage also guard a baking secret that I'm sure even Hobbits would be jealous of -- the Beorning honeycakes. Simple in ingredients and make, the key to the Beorning honeycakes is of course the honey, which is harvested from the hives of their enormous bees.

The honey itself is extraordinary in its own right, but is enhanced by its use in these wonderful cakes. Honey is a natural antibiotic used in homeopathic remedies for staving off infection in open wounds when soap or like substances aren't available. In the case of Beorn's bees and honey, they are of great value to the Woodsmen of the Vale given the proximity to Mirkwood and the infestation of giant spiders within the wood. The cakes will remain fresh for a long time, losing none of their potency, unless their packaging is opened in some manner.



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**Preparation:** TN 10 Craft: Cooking

**Effects:** The effects below are for when one cake is eaten.

<u>Success</u>	<u>Effect</u>
<b>Marginal</b>	Remains fresh for 1 week
<b>Complete</b>	Remains fresh for 2 weeks, +1 Stamina v. Poison*
<b>Superior</b>	Remains fresh for 3 weeks, +2 Stamina v. Poison
<b>Extraordinary</b>	Remains fresh for 4 weeks, +4 Stamina v. Poison

\* - This bonus is only effective against natural poisons from plants and animals, especially against the poisons of the giant spiders of Mirkwood (additional +1 bonus to all levels of success, including Marginal).



## BEORN'S HONEYCAKES:

(courtesy of The Food Network):

- 1 tbsp butter
- 2 c fine dry bread crumbs
- 1 c honey
- 1/4 c brown sugar
- 4 eggs, separated
- 1 c toasted hazelnuts, chopped

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.
2. Brush brioche tins, cupcake tins, or similar baking tray or container with butter and sprinkle in some bread crumbs.
3. Place honey in a mixing bowl and set over a pot of steaming water (double boiler), letting it warm until loose.
4. Add sugar and egg yolks to honey, whisk until frothy.
5. Remove bowl from heat and whisk in remaining bread crumbs and hazelnuts.
6. In a separate bowl, whisk egg whites until stiff and fold into batter.
7. Place mixture in baking tin(s) of choice and bake for 45 minutes or until done.
8. Optional - When cool, top with a drizzle of honey and whipped cream.







# FEATURED CREATURES

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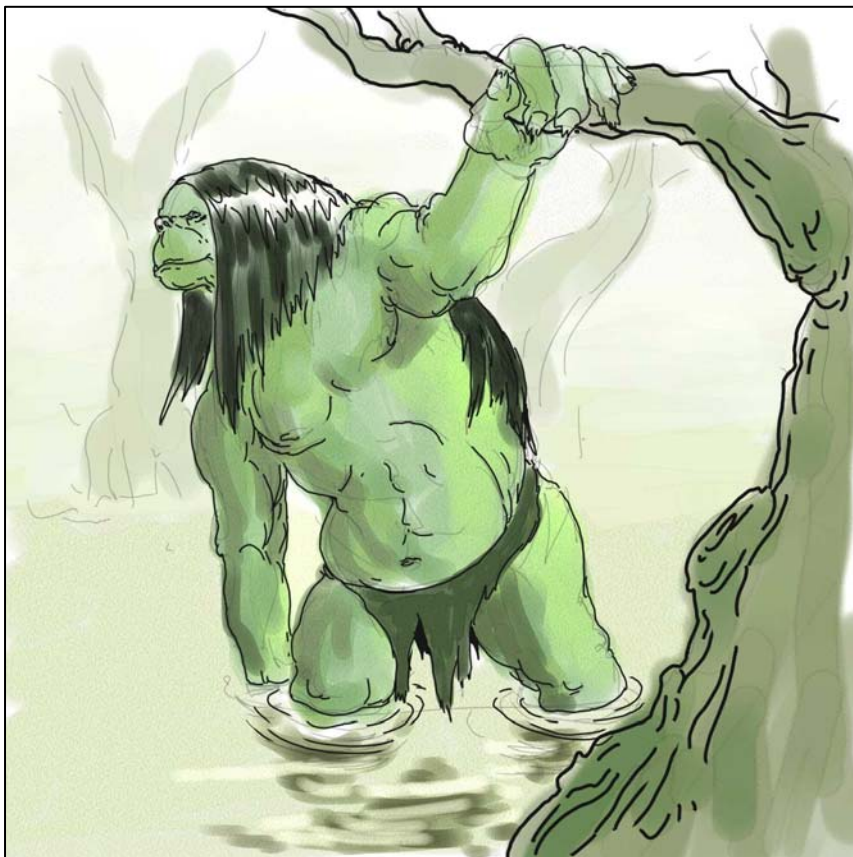
## TROLLS by Mathew Kearns

This article is a continuation of the Troll entry in the Fell Beasts & Wondrous Magic, filling in some of the unlisted breeds of orcs found in Middle-earth.

### JUNGLE TROLLS

Just as Sauron sent his Orcish forces out into the rest of Middle-earth, so did he with the trolls. Accompanying the contingents of Orcs sent South were trolls of similar ilk that adapted to the ways of the jungle. With little to no metal or rock to work with, these creatures typically uproot a nearby tree to suit their purposes when needing a weapon.

The jungles and forests of the South are quite dense and so these trolls were smaller than most other breeds, but were indeed just as powerful. In the far south, the sun blazes in the sky for most of the day, causing these trolls to eventually adapt to the presence of sunlight and not turn to stone because of it. It is from this stock that Sauron blended troll and man to create the terrible and fearsome Olog-hai.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 5 (+0), Perception 6 (+0), Strength 14 (+4)\*, Vitality 14 (+4)\*, Wits 5 (+0)

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +6\*, Swiftiness +0, Willpower +1, Wisdom +0

**DEFENCE:** 10

**MOVEMENT:** 12

**ORDER:** Warrior

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Favoured weapon (club)

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 0

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Clubs (Club) +7, Intimidate (Power) +5, Language: Black Speech +1, Language: Westron +4, Observe (Hear) +3, Ranged Combat: Throw (Rocks) +3, Survival (Jungle) +4, Track (Scent) +2

**EDGES:** Hardy, Night-eyed 2

**FLAWS:** Battle-fury 2

**SPECIAL ABILITIES:** Tough Skin (3 armour)

**SIZE:** Large (6 Wound Levels, 2 Healthy)

**HEALTH:** 18

**TN EQUIVALENT:** 5



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## SEA TROLLS

Like their Orc counterparts, this breed of troll was more numerous in the First Age, when the enemies of the Dark One held the coastlines where he had yet to gain a foothold. An offshoot of the snow troll, sea trolls were apt in the ways of water survival. Unlike their brethren who immediately sink in water, sea-trolls can swim swiftly and for great distances despite their bulk.

These trolls were ideal for water-based warfare: their skin is mottled greens and blues; they also have an affinity for using tridents and spears, and the ability to hold their breath for an extended period of time. Unfortunately towards the end, mighty sea battles and sieges of coastal strongholds depleted their numbers drastically, but sea-trolls still remain numerous enough to harry Gondor, Mithlond, and other coastal regions.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 9 (+1), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 7 (+0), Strength 13 (+3)\*, Vitality 15 (+4)\*, Wits 6 (+0)

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +6\*, Swiftiness +1, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

**DEFENCE:** 11

**MOVEMENT:** 12

**ORDER:** Mariner

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Diver

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 1

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Polearms (Spear or Trident) +7, Intimidate (Power) +5, Language: Black Speech +1, Language: Westron +4, Observe (Smell) +3, Ranged Combat: Throw (Spear or Trident) +3, Siegecraft +3, Survival (Sea) +4, Swim +2, Track (Scent) +2

**EDGES:** Hardy, Night-eyed 2

**FLAWS:** Battle-fury

**SPECIAL ABILITIES:** Tough Skin (2 armour)

**SIZE:** Large (6 Wound Levels, 2 Healthy)

**HEALTH:** 18

**TN EQUIVALENT:** 5



# THE ROAD GOES EVER ON...

## DREAMS AND LEGENDS by David "Issachar" DeBoe

**"These are indeed strange days. Dreams and legends spring to life out of the grass."**  
-Éomer, *The Two Towers*

A Lord of the Rings RPG adventure for 2-5 characters with 3-5 advancements each

### BACKGROUND

It is one week since Théodred, son of Théoden king of Rohan, fell defending the Fords of Isen against a large force of Orcs from Isengard. The king now sits in Edoras enthralled by the crafty words of his traitorous counselor Wormtongue, and does nothing to defend his people. Lord Erkenbrand of Westfold and other captains of the Rohirrim continued to hold the Fords for six days, but on the seventh day Saruman's forces prevailed, driving the men of Rohan back over the Isen. That night Orcs and Dunlendings attacked again, overrunning the camp of the Rohirrim. Many defenders were slain and many others fled. Erkenbrand was forced to retreat in haste.

One soldier narrowly survived the attack. Aeldor son of Heruwine fell into the Isen and was carried far down river, buffeted by the waters until he seized a large branch and clung to it with his last strength. He drifted for miles, unable to fight the current, until the river swept him up onto a sandbank. Exhausted, Aeldor clambered up the river bank and collapsed, unconscious.

Aeldor is unlike other men. He has a special gift of dream-sight, visions of the future that come to him unbidden. Aeldor regards these visions as a curse upon him, or at least a troublesome burden. They have certainly brought him no happiness, and their meaning is seldom if ever clear. Sometimes he wonders whether the dream-sight is only a strange form of madness. In the next twenty-four hours, his doubts will be answered.

### TIMELINE

- Feb 25: 1st battle at Fords of Isen. Théodred slain.
- Feb 26: Merry and Pippin captured by Orcs at the Eryn Muil.
- Feb 27: Éomer, against orders, sets out from Eastfold to pursue the Orcs.
- Feb 28: Éomer overtakes the Orcs just outside Fangorn Forest.
- Feb 29: The Rohirrim destroy the Orcs.
- Feb 30: Éomer meets Aragorn while returning to Edoras.
- Mar 1: Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli meet Gandalf the White. They set out for Edoras.

**Mar 2:** Gandalf heals Théoden. The king rides west against Saruman. 2nd battle of Fords of Isen; Erkenbrand defeated. Ents attack Isengard at night.

**Mar 3:** Ents build dams to divert the Isen river; Isengard is flooded later that night. Théoden arrives at Helm's Deep. The fortress is besieged at night; battle of the Hornburg.

**Mar 4:** Victory at Helm's Deep.

### THE HEROES

The player characters should be Men, Elves or Dwarves who have some reason to be journeying in the Westfold of Rohan between the Isen river and the White Mountains. A Man might be a native of Rohan, a wandering Dúnadan, or a mountain-dwelling Gondorian. An Elf or Dwarf is most likely to be a wanderer.

### ACT I

**"Many fell in the battles of the Fords, but fewer than rumour made them. More were scattered than were slain..."**

### SCENE 1: A Dreamer Wakes

[March 3, Morning]

Tests	TN and Type
Determine who spots the body first	Opposed Observe (Spot)
Determine man's condition	TN 5 Healing
Recognize man's garb	TN 5 Lore:Heraldry or Realm (Rohan)

As the party approaches the banks of the Isen from the south, they spot the ragged body of a man lying limply by the water's edge. A successful Healing test reveals that the man is alive and not seriously injured, though his body is bruised, apparently from being swept down the Isen. The man wears the garb of a soldier





## SCENE 2: Memento Mori

[Early afternoon]

Tests	TN and Type
Traveling	TN 10 Stamina v. Weariness
Determine condition of body	TN 7 Healing
Understand words of dirge	TN 10 Language: Rohirric
Improve construction of cairn	TN 7 Stonecraft

The group journeys north along the Isen for about ten miles (approx. 4 hours) before they find the first evidence of the previous night's battle: a dead soldier of Rohan propped against a tree near the water's edge. At this point, each PC must make a Weariness test at TN 10 because of the exertion of the long journey.

The corpse is undefiled and it does not appear that any Orc pursued the soldier this far to slay him. A successful Healing test reveals that the man succumbed to wounds sustained earlier, before he could flee the battle. A poor makeshift bandage, dyed crimson with blood, is tied around his leg, but the wound was too great for the small strip of torn cloth to halt the man's bleeding.

Aeldor takes the dead man's sword for his own use, noting with approval the dark blood upon the blade: this soldier made the enemy pay a price for their victory. Aeldor swears an oath to the dead man that his sword will claim still more Orcs before the day ends.

Although the soldier was not personally known to Aeldor, he takes time to gather river-stones to pile atop the body. He speaks a quick soldier's rite over the cairn before rising to move on. PC's who make a successful Language: Rohirric test understand the words of the chanted verse:

*Where now the horse and the rider? Where is the horn that was blowing?*

*Where is the helm and the hauberk, and the bright hair flowing?*

*Where is the hand on the harpstring, and the red fire glowing?*

*Where is the spring and the harvest and the tall corn growing?*

*They have passed like rain on the mountain, like a wind in the meadow;*

*The days have gone down in the West behind the hills into shadow.*

*Who shall gather the smoke of the dead wood burning,*

*Or behold the flowing years from the Sea returning?*

The burial takes about half an hour, even if the PC's assist Aeldor in laying the soldier to rest. A successful Stonecraft test allows the cairn to be built with better resistance against the elements. Any PC's that rest while Aeldor works can recover one Weariness level.

## SCENE 3: Men of the Mark



[Afternoon]

Entering a copse of trees along the eastern riverbank, the party spies at a distance two wargs working over some carcasses, which turn out to be a pair of dead Orcs. Before the party can challenge the wargs, a wolfish howl from deeper within the trees draws the beasts away.

If the party inspects the corpses, they find Rohirric arrows protruding from the bodies of the Orcs. Clearly, some soldiers of Rohan survived long enough to fell a few of their pursuers. The wargs are now on the trail of these survivors, and within a couple of minutes the sounds of wolf-snarls and Mannish battle cries are faintly heard from the east. Aeldor hurries away in the direction of the sounds. When the party arrives at the scene of the battle (which takes about one minute), they find both wargs and wolf-rider Orcs attacking a group of four soldiers of Rohan. The soldiers include Grimbald, a renowned captain of the Rohirrim, and three other stout fighting men: Bearn, Bregdan and Leodthain.

**NOTE:** For a small or low-level party, the enemy consists of five wargs, two with Orc riders astride their backs. A larger or higher-level party might face seven wargs with three wolf-riders or even more. Take care to ensure that Aeldor survives the battle.

## ACT II

**“All Isengard must be emptied; and Saruman has armed the wild hillmen and herd-folk of Dunland beyond the rivers, and these also he loosed upon us. We were overmastered.”**

## SCENE 1: Marked Men

[Later that afternoon]

Tests	TN and Type
Combat fatigue	TN 10 Stamina v. Weariness
Traveling	TN 10 Stamina v. Weariness

Aeldor makes his report to Grimbald, his captain. Later, as the group leaves the copse of trees to continue to the overrun camp, Aeldor suddenly clasps his head and gives a stifled cry of pain, but quickly masters himself. He tells the PC's quietly that the dream-sight showed him an image of Grimbald's body, broken and bloodied on the field of battle. This was a grievous sight to



witness, as Aeldor's respect and admiration for the captain is very great.

Aeldor: "I saw men bearing away the dead from a great field of battle. One group of soldiers bore a litter on which lay a fallen warrior. Though the face was stained with blood, I could see it was that of my captain, Grimbold. Now, more than ever...do I hope to be no more than a madman."

After this episode of dream-sight, Aeldor appears to take it as his personal responsibility to guard Grimbold's life. He stays close by his captain for the rest of the journey; only Grimbold's or Erkenbrand's direct order or a TN 20 Persuade test will move him from his self-assigned post.

Over the next hour's march, two more groups of Rohirric soldiers meet with Grimbold's party. (1st group: 8 men; 2nd group: 12 men.) The campsite is now less than an hour away, and the combined group of men press on. Another Weariness test is required at this point in the journey.

[Late afternoon]

As the group draws near the captured camp, they notice the waters of the Isen lessening, soon diminishing to a shallow stream and revealing the drowned bodies of Men and Orcs weighted down by their armour, lying here and there along the riverbed. The soldiers of the Mark murmur their misgivings at this strange and portentous sight, and find to their even greater concern that they cannot agree on how many bodies there are, nor which are Men and which are Orcs. This unnerves the Rohirrim even more, for it seems to them that they are walking in a malefic dream-world, even though the real explanation is entirely natural: the waterlogged, dirt-covered bodies really do appear similar at a distance, and the men's nervousness and superstition do the rest.

### SCENE 2: Retaking the Camp

[Early evening]

Grimbold and his men assail the camp to retake it from the company of Orcs left behind as a guard. This is intended to play out as a mass battle in miniature, with approximately 30 men of Rohan (use the stats for Bearn, Bregdan and Leodthain) against the 40 Orcs and 10 Dunlendings who remain in the camp. If the battle goes badly for the Rohirrim, have other groups (10 soldiers in each) come to the rescue -- more survivors who have just now made their way back.

Grimbold seeks to attack the camp by surprise, sending groups of Rohirrim to the places where Orcs are most heavily congregated: the guard post on the west side of the camp and the

supply wagons on the southeast side. There are enough trees to afford some cover for soldiers attempting to get close to the camp before the attack. Make Stealth tests opposed by the Orcs' Observe tests.

For Narrators who wish to use the Battle Web option, treat the camp as having three primary arenas of combat, with unobstructed movement possible between all three:

1. The guard post on the west side of the camp, nearest the Fords of Isen. 20 Uruks are here.
2. The supply wagons, whose contents have already been broken open and spilled out. Another 20 Uruks are here.
3. The commander's pavilion, where the 10 Dunlendings have established themselves. The men of Dunland have as little to do with the Uruks as possible.

### SCENE 3: Tidings of War

[Evening]

Tests	TN and Type
Combat fatigue	TN 10 Stamina v. Weariness
First to discover Erkenbrand's horn	Opposed Observe (spot)

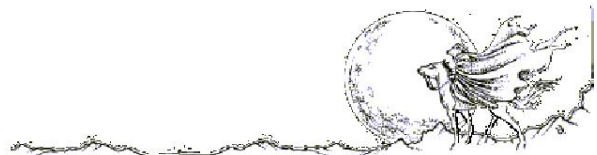
**THE HORN OF ERKENBRAND**

This ebon ox-horn bound in silver has been an heirloom of the Lord of Westfold for generations. The great horn is nearly two feet long and weighs eight pounds; a blast from it can be heard for many miles. An iron buckle fastens the broad leather strap about the waist or neck.

When the horn's bearer sounds a blast on it, he must make a Vitality test at TN 10. On a Marginal success, the horn is audible up to two leagues (six miles) away. For each degree of success above or below Marginal, add or subtract two miles from the horn's normal range. (Erkenbrand himself ignores any test result lower than a Marginal success.)

The party discovers Erkenbrand's black horn, which was struck from his grasp in the previous night's combat, on the body of an Orc who had claimed the horn as a trophy. There is also much work to be done in gathering the bodies of the dead Rohirrim and building pyres to burn them.

While the smoke rises from the funeral fires, Gandalf rides into the camp on Shadowfax. He tells Grimbold of Theoden's



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ride to Helm’s Deep, that more survivors are on the way, and that Grimbold’s men should march quickly to meet Erkenbrand. Gandalf rides away before anyone can engage him in lengthy conversation, but his sharp eyes note the presence of the PC’s in the camp. After waiting another half hour for a few more stragglers, Grimbold marches southeast with fifty soldiers of Rohan at his back. The PC’s can recover one Weariness level by resting as much as possible before the march.

## ACT III

**“I have but given good counsel in peril, and made use of the speed of Shadowfax. Your own valour has done more, and the stout legs of the Westfold-men marching through the night.”**

### SCENE 1: The Long March Begins

[Night]

<u>Tests</u>	<u>TN and Type</u>
Traveling	TN 10 Stamina v. Weariness

A two-hour march (requiring another Weariness test) brings Grimbold’s men to the field where Erkenbrand is mustering a force to bring to the aid of king Théoden at Helm’s Deep. Grimbold’s party is among the last to arrive, and there is scarcely an hour left to rest before the army, eight hundred strong, is to set forth. Once again, the PC’s can recover one Weariness level by taking advantage of the opportunity to rest here.

Erkenbrand is a physically imposing man, strong-limbed and tall even by Rohirrim standards. He is overjoyed at the recovery of his black horn, interpreting its return as a good omen. He thanks the PC’s for their service and asks whether they intend to follow his men even into the deadly battle that awaits at Helm’s Deep. If the PC’s affirm their intent to stay and fight for Rohan, Erkenbrand acknowledges their heroic commitment with solemnity. “It is long since the men of Rohan regarded other folk as our friends and allies. We did not ask for your aid, yet you have pledged it nonetheless: a noble and generous act. If we should prevail at Helm’s Deep, I will reward you as befitting true friends of Rohan.” Erkenbrand will spare a few more minutes to converse with the PC’s if they wish, but he counsels them to take such rest as they can before the long march.

[Later that night]



<u>Tests</u>	<u>TN and Type</u>
Recognize white tree and stars in vision	TN 10 Insight (affinity from Lore: Realm (Gondor)) -or- TN 10 Lore: History (Gondor)
Recognize trees (Ents, Huorns) in vision	TN 20 Insight (affinity from Lore: Race (Ents))

The army sets forth, marching in loose ranks. The men must travel twenty miles as the crow flies to reach Helm’s Deep. After every three hours on the march, they halt for a half hour to rest. Marching in army-fashion does not require Weariness tests, as lost Weariness levels are automatically gained back during the rest periods. Weariness levels lost prior to the march are not regained in this way – the rest periods are only sufficient to offset the rigors of the march.

During the first stop, Aeldor suffers another bout of dream-sight. When he returns to his senses, he tells the PC’s that he envisioned a stately white tree besieged by foes and ringed about with fire while seven bright stars shone in the night sky above. Yet soon other trees of many sorts came hastening to the rescue of the white tree. PC’s versed in Gondorian lore might recognize the stars and the white tree as the emblems of the king of Gondor, but even those learned in history and legend are unlikely to connect the other trees in the vision with Ents or Huorns, which have not been seen in the world of Men for many centuries.

### SCENE 2: The White Rider

[After midnight]

The army ends its first rest and moves on again. After nearly three hours have passed, hoofbeats are heard approaching rapidly from the north. It is Gandalf, bringing news that two hundred more men are following behind the main host and will catch up to them when the army next stops to rest. Erkenbrand calls a halt to wait for the reinforcements, who are not long in coming. With only a few miles left to go, the soldiers -- now numbering one thousand -- rise and resume the long night’s march.

PC’s who wish to converse with Gandalf may do so during this part of the adventure. In the books, although Gandalf himself is not surprised by the appearance of Ents and Huorns at Helm’s Deep, he allows the wonder of the others to pass without comment until well into the next day. He will not discuss the tree-men with the party or the Rohirrim except in enigmatic utterances. He will also not discuss the mission of the Ringbearer, though he might allude to a source of hope in the war against Sauron.



[Before dawn]

An hour later, a low thundering noise is heard in the distance to the east. The soldiers of Rohan prepare for battle, imagining a host of foes approaching. But no enemy comes, though the rumbling increases for a time until at last it gradually fades away in a southerly direction. Gandalf naturally guesses what the source of the noise is, and he remains calm while the great din lasts, though he does not explain anything directly about the Ents and Huorns. He might offer the simple statement, "let us wait and see what the light of morning will show."

The first dim light of pre-dawn is spreading over the land as Erkenbrand's army closes the last mile to Helm's Deep. The excitement and controlled fear of approaching death grows steadily among the men of the Mark. Aeldor himself strides ahead tirelessly, his expression set in granite.

### SCENE 3: The Legends of Our Time

[Dawn]

The tumult of battle ahead is drowned out by a deafening blast from the Horn of Helm. Erkenbrand's men take the last hill almost at a run. When they reach the top, they witness the valiant charge of King Theoden and his knights, driving the enemy before them. Erkenbrand gives a great shout and sounds a blast on his black horn as he leads the charge down the slope to meet the dismayed forces of Saruman. The last hour of the battle commences with the Orcs and Dunlendings caught between the defenders of Helm's Deep, Erkenbrand's army, and a dark, silent sea of trees that seems to have magically appeared to block the enemy's escape.

Although the account in *The Two Towers* makes the defeat of the Orcs seem swift, it is reasonable to conduct this final battle at dawn as an affair lasting up to an hour. While increasing numbers of Orcs flee into the deadly trees, some of the bolder Uruk captains might hold fast in pockets of the battlefield with several sturdy warriors around them. Many bands of Dunlendings might do the same before finally surrendering. Those enemies who are closest to Theoden's or Erkenbrand's group may have no choice but to fight in the first few minutes of the battle, while the army of Saruman is disorganized and the mass flight into the forest has not yet begun.

Because only the bravest and strongest of Saruman's soldiers are standing their ground against the Rohirrim, they should present a meaningful challenge to PC's who participate in the combat. At the same time, the tide of battle has so clearly swung against the Orcs and Dunlendings that the PC's should feel the exhilarating momentum of imminent victory. Conduct the battle

in several stages, with Saruman's army falling farther into retreat at the end of each stage.

### CONCLUSION

True to his word, Erkenbrand rewards each PC who survives the battle with a heavy golden ring and a fine horse from his own personal stables. The PC's are welcome guests in Rohan ever afterwards, and their names and deeds are made known to the lords of the Mark. Award each PC 2 Renown points upon completing the adventure in addition to their Experience earned, which should be calculated normally.

For his part, Aeldor continues in the service of Erkenbrand and rides with the Rohirrim to the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, where he is grieved to witness the accuracy of his vision foreseeing the death of Grimbald. After the War of the Ring, he comes to Edoras and attends king Éomer, serving the house of Eorl in honour for many years.

## NPC's

### Allies

#### ÆLDOR

**RACE:** Man (Middle Man: Rohirrim)

**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Adaptable (+2 to Stamina), Skilled

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 7, Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 10 (+2), Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 9 (+1), Wits 7

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +4, Swiftiness +2, Willpower +1, Wisdom +2

**DEFENCE:** 11

**ORDERS:** Warrior

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Evasion

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 3

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +7, Healing (Treat Wounds) +3, Insight +4, Language: Rohirric +5, Language: Westron +5, Lore: Realm (Rohan) +4, Lore: History (Rohan) +3, Observe (Spot) +4, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +4, Ride (Horse) +4, Run +2, Siegecraft (Defence) +4, Survival (Plains) +4

**EDGES:** Honour's Insight, Resolute, Dream-sight

**HEALTH:** 10

**COURAGE:** 4





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## GRIMBOLD

**RACE:** Man (Middle Man: Rohirrim)  
**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Adaptable (+2 to Stamina), Skilled  
**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 10 (+2), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 9 (+1), Vitality 9 (+1), Wits 7  
**REACTIONS:** Stamina +3, Swiftswiftness +5, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1  
**DEFENCE:** 11  
**ORDERS:** Warrior, Captain  
**ORDER ABILITIES:** Evasion, Warrior-Born, Swift Strike, Tactics, Air of Command, Leadership  
**ADVANCEMENTS:** 12  
**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +9, Healing (Treat Wounds) +2, Inspire +8, Intimidate (Power) +5, Language: Rohirric +5, Language: Westron +5, Lore: Realm (Rohan) +6, Lore: History (Rohan) +4, Observe (Spot) +4, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +6, Ride (Horse) +6, Run +2, Siegecraft (Unit Leadership) +8, Survival (Plains) +4  
**EDGES:** Honour's Insight, Night-Eyed, Dodge, Warwise, Bold, Command 2  
**FLAWS:** Fealty (Théoden), Duty 2  
**HEALTH:** 10  
**COURAGE:** 4

## BEARN, BREGDAN AND LEODTHAN

**RACE:** Man (Middle Man: Rohirrim)  
**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Adaptable (+2 to Stamina), Skilled  
**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 7, Nimbleness 9 (+1), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 9 (+1), Vitality 9 (+1), Wits 6  
**REACTIONS:** Stamina +4, Swiftswiftness +2, Willpower +1, Wisdom +2  
**DEFENCE:** 11  
**ORDERS:** Warrior  
**ORDER ABILITIES:** Evasion, Warrior-Born  
**ADVANCEMENTS:** 3  
**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +7, Healing (Treat Wounds) +3, Insight +3, Language: Rohirric +5, Language: Westron +5, Lore: Realm (Rohan) +4, Lore: History (Rohan) +3, Observe (Spot) +4, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +4, Ride (Horse) +4, Run +2, Siegecraft (Defence) +3, Survival (Plains) +4  
**EDGES:** Honour's Insight, Night-Eyed, Dodge, Faithful  
**HEALTH:** 10  
**COURAGE:** 4

## ERKENBRAND

(Use stats in the *Helm's Deep Sourcebook* instead, if available)

**RACE:** Man (Middle Man: Rohirrim)  
**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Adaptable (+2 to Stamina), Skilled  
**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 10(+2), Nimbleness 10(+2), Perception 10(+2), Strength 10(+2), Vitality 10(+2), Wits 8(+1)  
**REACTIONS:** Stamina +4, Swiftswiftness +4, Willpower +3, Wisdom +3  
**DEFENCE:** 12  
**ORDERS:** Noble, ~~Warrior~~, Captain  
**ORDER ABILITIES:** Deference, Noble Mien, Domain, Warrior-Born, Battle-Hardened, Swift Strike, Air of Command, Hero's Strength, Leadership  
**ADVANCEMENTS:** 20  
**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +10, Debate (Parley) +5, Inquire (Converse) +4, Insight +6, Inspire +8, Intimidate (Majesty) +6, Language: Rohirric +5, Language: Westron +5, Lore: Realm (Rohan, Gondor) +6, Lore: History (Rohan) +5, Observe (Spot) +5, Persuade (Oratory) +5, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +6, Ride (Horse) +6, Siegecraft (Unit Leadership) +9  
**EDGES:** Honour's Insight, Night-Eyed, Bold, Ally, Dodge, Stern, Warwise, Rank 2, Command 3  
**FLAWS:** Fealty (Theoden), Duty 3  
**HEALTH:** 12  
**COURAGE:** 4

## Foes

## URUK WOLF-RIDER

**RACE:** Uruk  
**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Claws (1 point damage), Tough Skin (1 point armour)  
**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 10 (+2), Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 7  
**REACTIONS:** Stamina +4, Swiftswiftness +2, Willpower +1, Wisdom +2  
**DEFENCE:** 11  
**ORDERS:** Warrior  
**ORDER ABILITIES:** Evasion  
**ADVANCEMENTS:** 3  
**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +7, Intimidate (Fear) +4, Language: Black Speech +4, Language: Westron +2, Language: Orcish(Isengard) +5, Lore: Race (Orc) +4, Observe (Spot) +6, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +5, Ride (Warg) +3, Run +4, Siegecraft (Defence) +5, Stealth (Sneak) +2, Track (Scent) +1  
**EDGES:** Night-Eyed 2  
**FLAWS:** Fealty (Saruman), Hatred (Elves)  
**HEALTH:** 12  
**COURAGE:** 1



# Uruk Captain

## URUK

**RACE:** Uruk

**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Claws (1 point damage), Tough Skin (1 point armour)

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 10 (+2), Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 7

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +4, Swiftswess +2, Willpower +1, Wisdom +2

**DEFENCE:** 11

**ORDERS:** Warrior

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Evasion

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 2

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +6, Intimidate (Fear) +4, Language: Black Speech +4, Language: Westron +2, Language: Orcish (Isengard) +5, Lore: Race (Orc) +4, Observe (Spot) +6, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +4, Run +5, Siegecraft (Defence) +3, Stealth (Sneak) +2, Track (Scent) +1

**EDGES:** Night-Eyed 2

**FLAWS:** Fealty (Saruman), Hatred (Elves)

**HEALTH:** 12

**COURAGE:** 1

## DUNLENDING

**RACE:** Man (Middle Man: Dunlending)

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

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 6, Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 6

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +4, Swiftswess +2, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

**DEFENCE:** 11

**ORDERS:** Warrior

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Evasion

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 2

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Short Sword) +6, Climb +2, Healing (Treat Wounds) +2, Intimidate (Power) +3, Jump +2, Language: Dunlendish +5, Language: Westron +4, Lore: Realm (Dunland) +4, Observe (Spot) +3, Ranged Combat: Spears (Javelin) +4, Ride (Horse) +2, Run +4, Siegecraft (Defence) +3, Survival (Hills) +2

**EDGES:** Warrior's Heart, Fell-Handed (Rohirrim)

**FLAWS:** Hatred (Rohirrim)

**HEALTH:** 9

**COURAGE:** 1

## URUK CAPTAIN

**RACE:** Uruk

**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Claws (1 point damage), Tough Skin (1 point armour)

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 10 (+2), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 11 (+2), Vitality 11 (+2), Wits 7

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +4, Swiftswess +3, Willpower +2, Wisdom +2

**DEFENCE:** 12

**ORDERS:** Warrior

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Evasion, Warrior-Born, Swift Strike

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 6

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +8, Intimidate (Fear) +6, Language: Black Speech +4, Language: Westron +2, Language: Orcish (Isengard) +5, Lore: Race (Orc) +4, Observe (Spot) +6, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +6, Run +5, Siegecraft (Unit Leadership) +3, Stealth (Sneak) +2, Track (Scent) +1

**EDGES:** Night-Eyed 2, Warrior's Heart, Fell-Handed (all Men), Command

**FLAWS:** Battle-Fury, Fealty (Saruman), Hatred (Elves)

**HEALTH:** 13

**COURAGE:** 2





## WHAT'S OUT THERE

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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.fanhq.com/viewforum.php?f=164>

DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG SUPPORT DOCS  
<http://decipher.com/lordoftherings/rpg/support/index.html>

THE HALL OF FIRE WEBZINE SITE  
<http://halloffire.org>

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>

SCOTT'S RPG CENTRAL  
[http://www.geocities.com/scott\\_metz/](http://www.geocities.com/scott_metz/)

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>

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

CODA WEBZINE REPOSITORY  
[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda\\_webzine](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda_webzine)

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

TALES OF MIDDLE-EARTH  
[http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/tales\\_of\\_mid](http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/tales_of_mid)

dle\_earth/  
CHRONICLES OF THE NORTH  
<http://roleplay.avioc.org/lotr/index.htm>

## CALLING ALL GAMERS!

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*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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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'



