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Tactics for Cavalry in The Lord of The Rings

Cavalry bring a whole new dimension to The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game. Whether you prefer to marshal the forces of Good or the hordes of Evil, you now have the option to include these highly effective warriors in your force.

THE BASICS

The key advantages that cavalry have over infantry are the extra speed that a mount gives its rider and the extra visibility due to increased height. Put simply, a cavalryman can move faster and see farther than if he were on foot. Thus, where cavalry come into their own is when matched against infantry. Cavalry models can prove quite lethal to infantry as their extra speed allows them to get into combat quickly, and their extra mass gives them an edge in the ensuing fight. This situation yields two distinct advantages. The extra Attack means that they are more likely to win, and if they beat their opponent, they are able to make double strikes as the sheer momentum bowls the enemy to the floor.

Getting onto specifics, there are three main forms of cavalry available to you.

WARRIORS WITH HAND WEAPONS

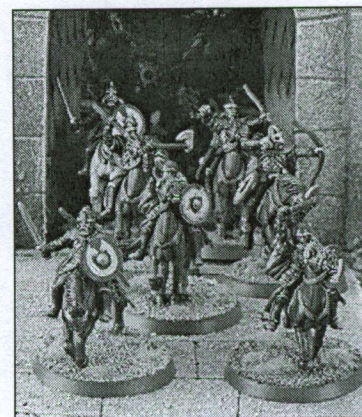
Faster, and with a significant edge over infantry in combat, the usefulness of a simple Orc or Warrior of Rohan is increased twofold if they are given access to a steed. Generally speaking, if you have a large number of cavalry in your force, you should be able to pick your fights quite easily -- and you'll need to pick them well. While cavalry are very strong against infantry on the charge, it is still possible to be overwhelmed by sheer numbers. Also, be wary of enemy cavalry -- it only takes one counter-charging Warg Rider to remove all the bonuses of your cavalry charge and leave you at the mercy of superior numbers.

WARRIORS WITH MISSILE WEAPONS

The most flexible kind of cavalrymen are those armed with missile weapons, whether that be throwing spears or bows. With the extra mobility given by the steed, these troops can easily skirt infantry and rain down archery wherever the enemy gathers. Greater care needs to be taken with these troops though, as most of the time they have lower Defense stats than non-missile cavalry and can make a tempting target for enemy archers. On the plus side, they still benefit from all the combat advantages against infantry, which makes them very useful in supporting your main attack. Soften up the enemy with a few rounds of archery and then charge them in alongside your main force.

HEROES

If adding a steed increases the usefulness of an ordinary warrior by a factor of two, then it increase the value of a Hero by considerably more. Not only does the steed offer a measure of additional protection (not to be sniffed at with low-Defense Heroes), the extra movement and Attacks coupled with a Hero's reserve of Might can achieve marvelous results. Close-combat Heroes, such as Aragorn and Boromir, are suddenly far harder to lock down; and Heroes with ranged powers, such as Legolas and Gandalf, can get into position far easier. I tend to use this extra mobility to knock out enemy Heroes by skirting their bodyguards and then mercilessly pummeling them with spells and arrows. Also keep in mind that the extra reach of a cavalry-based Heroic move can open up new tactical options and quite often can take your opponent by surprise.



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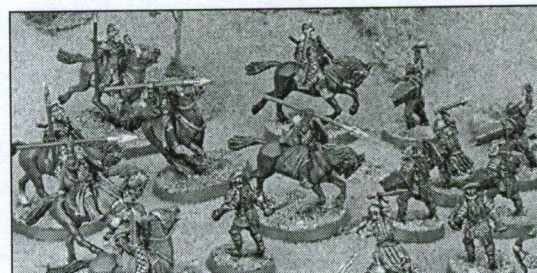
Tactics for Cavalry in The Lord of The Rings

ADVANCED TACTICS

With those general tactics out of the way, I'd like to highlight a few specific tactics that I've discovered work well for a cavalry-heavy force.

HIT AND RUN

As the name suggests, this tactic utilizes the speed advantage of your cavalry. Since you are able to measure at any point in The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game, it is simplicity itself to stay out of your opponent's charge range yet still be able to charge yourself. When performing a hit and run strike, it is often better not to get Priority in the turn you plan to charge -- let your opponent move and then pick off easy targets. In the next turn, get as many of your troops out of the way as possible and then charge again. I've found that the most effective hit and run is achieved by charging down your opponent's infantry with a handful of cavalry and a Hero. If you're not careful, though, this approach can lead to you being counter-charged at the start of the next turn with a horde of infantry. To avoid this danger, at the start of the turn, you can use your Heroic Move to scoot your forces out of danger and prepare them to make another attack in the following turn.



OUTFLANK

Although not obviously effective in a skirmish game like The Lord of The Rings, an outflanking maneuver still has value. The main use of outflanking is against opponents who rely heavily on spears and pikes -- usually a deathtrap for cavalry. To get the most use out of these weapons, the enemy has to keep its models in a compact formation, which means outmaneuvering them is incredibly straightforward for a cavalry force. By sending a portion of your warriors around the flanks of this formation, you can force your opponent to do one of two things: spread out to stop you or ignore it. If they spread out, you can simply switch to hit and run tactics and take them apart piecemeal. If they ignore the outflanking models, they leave you at liberty to have your flanking force charge the rear of their formation -- effectively robbing them of the advantage of their spears and pikes.

HARASS

Perhaps the most straightforward tactic, but still a useful one, is to use your missile cavalry to pepper your opponent with arrows while remaining outside of their charge range. This tactic can quickly prove effective against an infantry force with a minimum number of archers of its own. Be warned, though, that this tactic requires careful thought as to how far to move each turn -- it is better to move the full rate and not shoot rather than get caught.

STIRRUPPED INFANTRY

In some scenarios, each of your cavalry models can carry a single passenger. That passenger cannot fight or act in any way while being carried, but the steed is not slowed in any way. What this means, of course, is that you can use the cavalry element of your force to transport your infantry into advantageous positions long before they could get there on foot. This tactic is a particularly useful way of increasing the movement rate of Heroes that do not come with options for steeds (such as Saruman or Haldir), and it can be used to secure objectives quickly or simply pave the way for a hit and run. Be warned, though: this tactic is not without its disadvantages, not least of which is the fact that if the model is charged while the passenger is still riding, the passenger may not fight. Another consideration is that if the steed is slain, both the rider and passenger may end up stranded away from the action. Even worse, a Sorcerous Blast will hit not only the rider and steed, but the passenger as well. Finally, a cavalry model is considerably more expensive to field than an equivalent infantry, so it is advisable not to base your whole strategy on this tactic as it will leave you with a very small force.

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DEALING WITH CAVALRY

As I've hopefully shown, cavalry are a deadly force on the battlefield and an asset to any commander, but what do you do if you have no cavalry? You may be playing a thematic force and may not have access to cavalry, or you may simply be playing a scenario that does not permit you to field it. If that's the case, then don't panic -- there are a few simple things you can do to make life more difficult for your four-legged opponents.

USE YOUR TERRAIN

My solid advice, regardless of your enemy, is to use the terrain to your advantage. Against cavalry, though, this tactic takes on special importance. Cavalry models do not operate well in difficult terrain. Any form of difficult terrain reduces cavalry to a quarter of their normal movement. By giving your opponent the choice of taking either the long way around or a slow haul through undergrowth, you can use difficult terrain to shield vulnerable warriors from the threat of cavalry.



COUNTERCHARGE

One key point about a cavalry charge is that the effects of it can be countered if the initial charger is countercharged by another cavalry model. With the bonuses for cavalry versus infantry removed, your warriors are then effectively fighting another infantry model (albeit with a larger base). Remember, though, that a counter-charge is only effective if it is performed with another cavalry model -- infantry will not negate the cavalry bonuses (although there is something to be said for adding more dice to the combat).

SHOOT 'EM

Although it is not necessarily true that a horse has all of the brains of a cavalryman, it does have a good chunk of the mobility. As shooting hits on cavalry are randomized between horse and rider, there is a good chance you can slay the steed. "Why should I hope to kill the steed? Surely 'tis better to kill the rider," I hear you say. True enough, it is far better to kill the rider. However, steeds generally have a lower Defense value than their riders and are therefore more likely to be slain. With the steed taken out of the picture, the rider is reduced to the level of a normal infantryman of the same type. Slower, and without the bonuses that cavalry get, he should be far easier pickings for your troops. Of course, if you kill the rider, then so much the better, but bear in mind that it is a lot easier to neutralize mounted Heroes (such as Aragorn or Boromir) by killing the horse than killing the Hero. As a bonus, a forcibly dismounted warrior has a 1 in 6 chance of falling over, and will count as trapped in combat as long as he remains on the ground (cue evil laughter). It is also worth mentioning Sorcerous Blast. As previously stated, a successful Sorcerous Blast will not only hit the rider, but also the steed and any passenger (on the initial target and any hit by the initial target), making it an ideal tool to prevent the enemy from bunching their expensive cavalry together.

AND FINALLY

At the end of the day, cavalry provide an excellent addition to any force and open up a wealth of possibilities. As I've mentioned, don't worry too much if you don't have a way to fit cavalry into your current force -- just think carefully about how you're going to deal with them. For the rest of you lucky enough to field cavalry: may the ground be firm and your steeds never tire!

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Core Tactics for The Lord of The Rings

Alessio Cavatore delves into some of the tricks and tactics that can be used in The Lord of The Rings strategy battle game, proving that the game is not as simplistic as it might first appear.

The first thing that hits you after playing a few games of The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game is that it is most definitely an interesting and challenging game!

The true novelty of The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game shows in how it differs from Games Workshop's other main games. Our other games have one player complete his entire turn, then the other player completes his turn, then back to the first player, and so on.

The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game is very different, because it starts with both players moving their pieces, then both players shooting, and then both players finish the turn by resolving close-quarter fights. This gaming system creates a completely different experience from our other games. For Games Workshop veterans like myself who have grown up with an alternating turn system, adjusting to this new way can take some time. While I was coming to grips with this new system, I made a lot of silly mistakes. For example, I would move my archers to get a clear line of sight to my opponent's models and think that I had a great set up for the Shoot Phase. Of course, that plan overlooked the fact that my opponent could still move (usually behind cover) and thus negate my lovely line of sight. D'oh!

Obviously, I reconditioned my gamer brain enough to help write The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game rulebook! If I can do it, I'm sure you can too. To help you along the way, allow me to share a few tips that I picked up as I playtested this different and exciting game system.

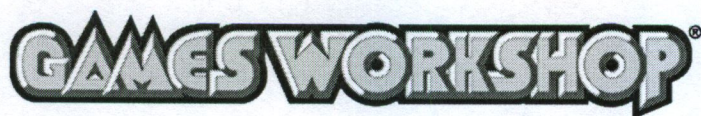


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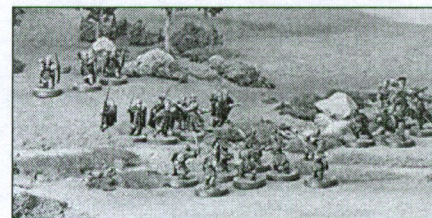
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Core Tactics - Priority and Move Phase

PRIORITY PHASE

The only tactic I can recommend for this phase, which consists of a single roll-off, is "roll well." I'd just like to point out that rolling well does not necessarily mean you want to win the Priority roll! You will soon realize that in the early turns of the game, when the models are too far away for close combat, it is actually better to lose the roll and go second. This result allows you to see what your opponent is doing and react to his moves. Later on, when the models are in charge range, going first becomes a vital advantage, allowing you to pin enemies in place before they can move and even stop Heroes from using their special powers!

Not as straightforward as it first seemed, is it?



MOVE PHASE

This is certainly the most interesting phase in the game, when you can show all your tactical acumen! Your strategy in the Move Phase depends on how you fared in the Priority Phase, so I'm going to take a look at each case (moving with and without priority).

If you have priority, remember that the enemy will move after you and before you get to do anything else! If you want to charge, try to surround each enemy with at least three models in order to trap them. Remember that if you charge a model and engage it in combat, it won't be able to move, cast spells, or shoot, so it is often well worth getting stuck in close combat. If you don't want to charge because you are clearly outmatched in close combat or you want to shoot or wait for reinforcements, keep a distance from the enemy that is double the enemy's Move value if at all possible. This distance is necessary because if the enemy wins priority in the next turn (and they are more likely to win it than you are), they will move again before you can do anything. Therefore, you need to be two moves away from the enemy to be safe. It's always important to think 1 turn ahead, especially in The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game, and that makes the game very interesting. Also, as you move, always remember to cast your spells, to move only half distance if you want to shoot, and to position your archers so that the enemy cannot hide from them.

If you don't have priority, observe the enemy's moves and react to them. Try to charge against enemy models that have ganged up on some of your models to balance the fight. Move your models so that there is some structure between them and enemy archers that will be free to shoot (anything will do, like a house or a hill). Finally, consider that in the subsequent turn, you have a better chance of getting priority. Thus, planning for this roll, you can place your models in a position from where they can launch an attack if they get to move first in the next turn.

Cavalry is very powerful on the charge, so make sure you do get to move against the enemy by exploiting your superior movement. Sometimes, it's tricky to use cavalry well. You must always watch out for double moves when you have priority - if you move your cavalry too close, the opponent's infantry can move closer to your cavalry and then, if they win priority in the following turn, they can charge your cavalry, robbing them of their advantages.

Support your infantry with cavalry, so that if the enemy cavalry charges your infantry, you can counter-charge with your own mounted troops and deny the enemy any advantage!

You have probably noticed by now that for both players, it's vital not to think exclusively about the current turn but about the next as well. This requirement makes for a very challenging game where you must constantly think ahead because the consequences are usually grim if you let your opponent surprise you with a double move that you were not expecting.

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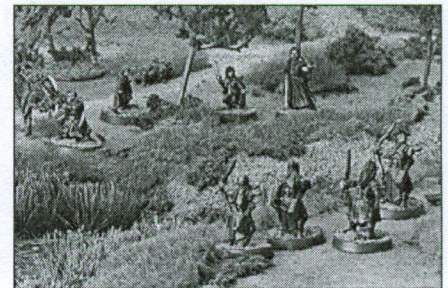
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Core Tactics - The Shoot Phase

Well, there is just one thing to remember about shooting: your enemies cannot shoot you if they are dead.

In other words, if you have priority, it's normally a good idea to target enemy archers and try to take them out before they can shoot. Another good reason to aim at archers is that they normally have a lower Defense value than close-combat troops armed with shields, which makes it easier for you to score a Wound if you hit. In any case, always try to keep an eye on the Wound Chart and select softer targets. This tactic is particularly important if your bows have Strength 2 (i.e., you're not an Elf!), in which case it's better not to shoot at anything with a Defense of 5 or more, because you will need to roll at least a 6 to Wound.



Some bows have Strength 3, which makes them far more efficient than Strength 2 ones, especially when coupled with Elf archers and their great shooting value of 3+. Lethal!

Crossbows are also very powerful (Strength 4!), but the fact that you cannot move and shoot with them means that once more you have to think 1 turn ahead and position your crossbowmen where you think the enemy is going to be in the next turn. They are also useful in covering a part of the battlefield, sending to the enemy the clear message: "If you come this way, prepare to be shot a lot!"

Of course, even the lowliest Moria Goblin has a chance of wounding the mightiest of Heroes with his bow (and without risking his neck in hand-to-hand combat!). It is true that your chances of scoring a Wound against models with very high Defenses are not too good, but remember that all things can be deadly in great numbers (as the death of Boromir showed all too clearly).

Volley Fire is another useful tactic, especially if you are fighting defensively. The volley allows you to bombard enemies that are in cover or otherwise out of sight of your archers, as long as one of your models can point out where to shoot. Normally this barrage gives you a tactical advantage, forcing the enemy to try and do something against your archers. As usual, if both players have bows, the best thing is to target your volleys at the enemy bowmen -the first player to establish superior firepower will dictate how the rest of the game will develop.

One last thing - always keep your objective in mind for each scenario. Sometimes you can get a bit too carried away with your shooting, and that will slow you down long enough for the enemy to beat you to the victory conditions. If you are shooting, you can move only at half speed, and that might cost you dearly. Sometimes it's better just to forget your bows and rush towards your objective (especially if you hit only on a 5+).

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Core Tactics - Fight Phase and Weapons

FIGHT PHASE

In this phase more than any other, numbers count for a great deal. If you manage to surround and trap an enemy, your chances of winning the fight and taking him out are vastly improved.

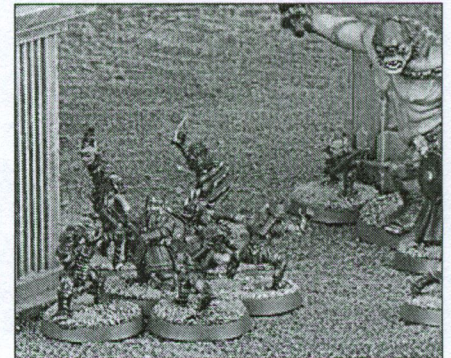
Heroes present a different problem because, having a very high Fighting value and several points of Might, they are likely to win fights even when completely surrounded by scores of lowly enemies. Patience is the best solution here - Heroes' reserves of Might are not unlimited and once they use them up, they become vulnerable when you mob them and keep attacking. Soon, they will grow tired and then you'll be able to hit them. In the long term against Heroes, perseverance (some may call it stubbornness) does pay out.

ABOUT WEAPONS

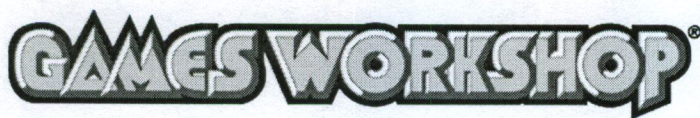
Spears are brilliant because they allow you to concentrate more manpower where you need it without exposing your models to enemy counterattacks. I would recommend that you always buy a spear-armed model for each of your sword and shield-wielding models when you are selecting your force, and you might consider doing the same for your archers.

Two-handed weapons are trickier to use. It's true that you're more likely to kill your opponent if you hit him, but your chance of winning the fight and consequently your chance of striking your blow are greatly reduced. I would say always use these models in conjunction with others equipped with normal weapons. With such clumsy weapons, teamwork is essential.

Finally, a word on shields. If you're definitely outmatched in combat and you have reinforcements on the way, it's often a good idea to 'defend by shielding' to buy some time, but I would not overuse this tactic. The fact that you cannot strike while shielding means that you cannot take advantage of those rare situations when an enemy, even a very powerful one, has a particularly bad roll offering you a precious occasion to damage him. Having shielded in these cases is really frustrating - trust me!


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Core Tactics - Courage, Heroes, and Heroics

ABOUT COURAGE

The most common circumstance when Courage affects a game of The Lord of The Rings is when half or more of your models have been killed. At this critical point, Good armies still have a vague chance of continuing the fight on account of their superior Courage value (especially if they are Elves!). It is more difficult to reach this breaking point for Evil players, because their forces are normally larger than the Good ones. On the other hand, if they do reach it, Evil usually cannot rally, and the game is over. Left to his own devices when the situation becomes difficult, your average Orc will turn tail and run (only the Uruk-Hai have a decent Courage). My advice for the Evil player is to take good care of your Heroes, because their superior Courage is invaluable in keeping your force going once half of it has been killed. Shamans also make a great buy, as the Fury they infuse into your troops is sure to keep them going!

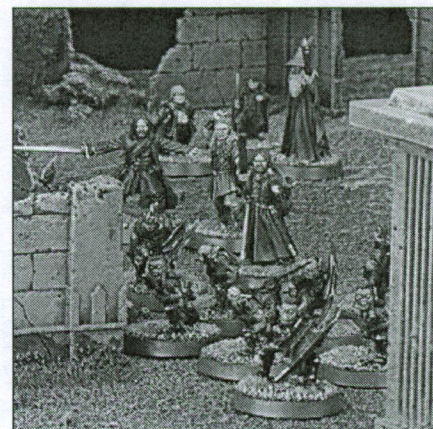
HEROES AND HEROICS

In The Lord of The Rings game, Heroes are very, very powerful. A Hero with a lot of Attacks, a very high Fighting value, and a reserve of Might points is nearly invincible in close quarters against normal warriors. If you can use your Might to raise your Combat score to 6, your superior Fighting will ensure that you win any fight against any number of enemies. This reliability is decisive in many cases, allowing you to win difficult fights and get out of the most carefully laid traps. The only problem is that your reserves of Might have a limit, so you can't stay at a super-human level for too long (unless you're Aragorn, that is!). In short, don't waste your points - use them well!

Magical powers are often very useful, but once again, you cannot keep casting endlessly, because you'll soon use up your Will and render yourself both powerless and vulnerable to the magic of the enemy.

I'll conclude by exploring one of the reasons why Heroes are so powerful in The Lord of The Rings game. By spending a point of Might, Heroes and models around them can move/shoot/fight out of sequence and snatch the initiative from the player with priority and counteract his moves. This feat can sometimes prove decisive and it certainly adds a layer of unpredictability to the game. Players not only have to think ahead, but must also consider what would happen if the enemy was to sacrifice his precious Might and do something Heroic. The only chance you have of tackling such outbursts is to commit your own Heroes and anticipate the Heroics of the enemy with your own. This process can easily escalate and lead to a huge waste of Might points in order to 'out-Hero' the enemy, and players really need to keep their nerve and be cautious about an excessive use of this powerful tactic.

Anyway, we are now entering the realm of quite advanced tactics, and I recommend that you begin playing The Lord of The Rings game without these advanced rules. I hope I have managed to convince you that The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game not as simple as it might first appear, but rather a very sophisticated and challenging representation of skirmishes in Middle-earth.

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Using Might, Will, and Fate

Adam Troke looks at the heroic trinity of Might, Will, and Fate, and how they can be used in games of The Lord of The Rings to achieve the best results.

One of the things that has always captivated me about story of The Lord of The Rings is how it focuses on the heroes and their grand deeds - mighty warriors involved in tremendous adventures, stirring the hearts of those around them, and conquering Evil (or perpetrating it) through strength of will and force of arms. And that's one of the great things about The Lord of The Rings strategy battle game. It captures the same sense of heroism and allows players to create heroic moments of their own as they play.

The thing that really separates the Heroes from the Warriors in The Lord of The Rings is their heroic characteristics. A well-spent Might Point can be the difference between a dozen models fleeing the board in cowardice or standing their ground courageously. It's all a matter of knowing when it is worth using your Heroes' heroic characteristics and spending valuable Might, Will, and Fate Points to turn the tide of the battle or to save the life of a valuable member of your force.

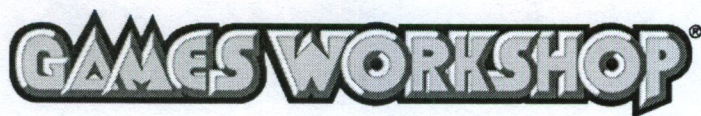
The heroic characteristics fall into three categories: Might, Will, and Fate. Each Hero has a space on its profile where these characteristics are recorded (even if the Hero in question has none), and each of these heroic characteristics can have a valuable and decisive effect on your game.



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Using Might

Might Points are often described as the backbone of an army. Many players measure the effectiveness of their force by the number of Might Points it can muster. Generally considered to be the most valuable of the heroic characteristics, Might certainly has the most uses, and only the greatest of Heroes ever has 3 or more Points of Might. Essentially, Might Points can do two things. They allow a Hero either to modify a die roll by 1 or to perform a Heroic Action.

MIGHT

Might Points are often described as the backbone of an army. Many players measure the effectiveness of their force by the number of Might Points it can muster. Generally considered to be the most valuable of the heroic characteristics, Might certainly has the most uses, and only the greatest of Heroes ever has 3 or more Points of Might. Essentially, Might Points can do two things. They allow a Hero either to modify a die roll by 1 or to perform a Heroic Action.

Picture of a miniature of Sam jumping a gap in Moria.

Save a Hero's Life. Here, Sam is attempting to leap a chasm in the Mines of Moria. Having rolled a 1 on his Jump Test, Sam will plummet to his death unless the Good player uses Sam's Might Point to raise the score of 1 to 2 and thereby save his life. Just as it is important to pass rolls like this one, it is often worth spending Might Points to raise failed Fate rolls (see the following pages for more on Fate) and turn them into successes, especially if the Hero would otherwise die.

Picture of miniatures of Boromir fighting with Uruk-hai.

Kill Enemy Models. When a Hero wins a fight and fails to score Wounds on enemy models, it is often worth spending Might Points to change failed rolls into successes. Here, Boromir needs a 5 or more to wound an Uruk-hai scout equipped with a shield. It's probably worth spending Might Points to change any scores of 4 to 5. Very often, time is of the essence in scenarios, and the stronger Heroes must kill their enemies quickly to enable the Heroes to protect their weaker friends.

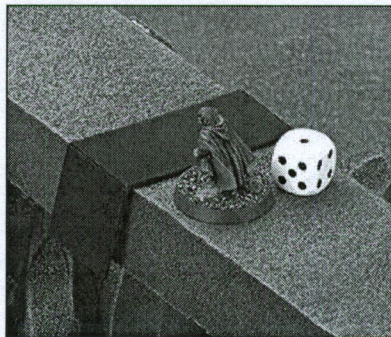
Changing Die Scores

Might can be used to change most die rolls that are made on behalf of a Hero. For each Might Point that you spend, you can alter the score of a die rolled on behalf of the Hero up or down by 1. There are some occasions that this ability is especially useful and worth using.

The golden rule to remember when using Might in this way is that you should always do so if it will save your Hero's life. Let's face it, there's no point saving Sam's Might for later if he slips and breaks his neck climbing a rock face now. The other time it becomes a very good idea is if it will allow you to slay an enemy model. Doing so reduces the forces arrayed against you and brings your enemy closer to 50% of its starting strength.

When NOT to Use Might to Change Die Scores

When rolling to hit in the Shoot Phase, it is almost never worth spending Might Points to increase your chances of hitting. Even if your shot hits, there's no guarantee that you'll have any luck on the roll to wound.



Save a Hero's Life. Here, Sam is attempting to leap a chasm in the Mines of Moria. Having rolled a 1 on his Jump Test, Sam will plummet to his death unless the Good player uses Sam's Might Point to raise the score of 1 to 2 and thereby save his life. Just as it is important to pass rolls like this one, it is often worth spending Might Points to raise failed Fate rolls (see the



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The Lord of The Rings Tactics - Using Might, Will, and Fate

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Heroic Moves

Compared to using Might to change your die scores, spending Might on Heroic Actions is quite complex and a little harder to do effectively. A Heroic Action can reverse the tide of a battle and turn a scenario from defeat to victory. The key is in knowing what Heroic Action to perform and when.



Allow/Prevent a Charge. Cavalry are truly effective in combat only if they have charged in that turn. By using Might Points to call Heroic Moves, you can ensure that your cavalry charge more often and gain the bonuses that charging affords them. Likewise, if you are facing an imminent threat of a cavalry charge, you can use a Heroic Move either to pull back out of the range of the attack and buying yourself some time or to charge first and rob the enemy cavalry of their charge bonus. Here, the Riders of Rohan have priority and are all set to smash into the Uruk-hai. Thanks to his Might Points, though, Lurtz can issue a Heroic Move and allow his warriors to charge the Rohirrim and deprive them of their valuable charge bonus.



Allow/Prevent a Stand Fast! Once a force is broken, each model must test against its Courage or be removed from play as a casualty. There is a serious risk that the warriors, with their lower Courage, will flee the battle unless Heroes can inspire them to stay and fight by passing a Stand Fast! Test. Since models that are already in combat with an enemy cannot take Courage Tests, it can be incredibly important to allow your Hero to make his Stand Fast! before he is charged. Likewise, you should take strenuous efforts to prevent your opponent's Heroes from using their Stand Fast! ability. In this picture, the Orcs have priority, so Elendil will benefit from making a Heroic Move so that he can call a Stand Fast! and keep the warriors around him steady before he is engaged.

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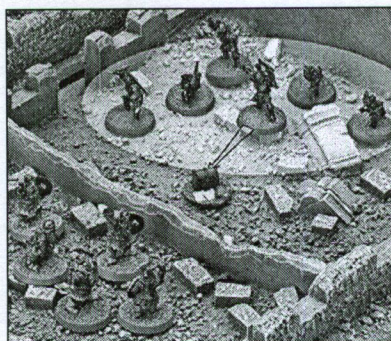
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Heroic Shooting

Heroic Shoot is the least used of the three Heroic Actions and requires lots of bow-armed troops to prove effective. There are times, however, when a well-timed Heroic Shoot can really help sway a battle in your favor. Generally, it's only useful to use a Might Point to do a Heroic Shoot, if not doing so would allow your enemies to kill your own bowmen (or something else valuable in your force).



Capturing an Objective. Often, in battle scenarios, the objective might be to secure an item or an area of the battlefield. Careful use of Heroic Moves can enable your warriors to reach such an item or area first and secure it for your side. Here, we can see a group of Goblins and Dwarves racing to take control of an objective. The Goblin Captain can use a Heroic Move to get his warriors onto the objective before the Dwarves and force the Dwarves to have a hard time pushing the Goblins off. Often, scenarios will end at a random point (usually determined by a die roll at the start of the turn). In these cases, it's handy to control the objective as quickly as possible.



Heroic Shooting. The key to Heroic Shooting is to fire at something that will really harm you unless you shoot at it. This Gondor Trebuchet, with a Captain crewing it, can fire at the Mûmak before its crew has the chance to fire back and hopefully destroy the howdah or at least some of the archers on board. The important thing to remember with Heroic Shooting is to kill the enemy before he kills you.

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Heroic Combat

Heroic Combats can be devastating if used correctly, as they allow a Hero to fight twice in the same Fight Phase. Heroic Combat is worked out before any other combats in that turn. If the Hero manages to slay all the enemy models he is fighting, he can still make a full move. This move allows him to charge (and fight) again if he wishes.

When Not to Call a Heroic Combat

It's important to remember that, for a Heroic Combat to work, the issuing Hero and any friends helping him need to be able to slay all the enemies involved in the fight. If he or they fail to do so, then the Might Point is wasted, and the Heroic Combat fails.

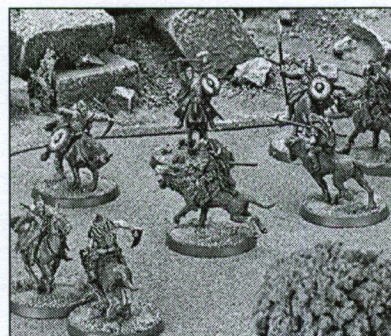
With that in mind, make sure that you never call a Heroic Combat if your Hero is unlikely to kill all of his foes (and don't even think of it if he is fighting more enemies than he has Attacks on his profile). Also, bear in mind any Fate Points your enemy might have. More than once, my plans have been ruined by an enemy Hero passing his Fate roll.



Remove Enemy Advantages. Heroic combats are ideal for eliminating valuable enemy warriors. Both banners and Goblin drums enable nearby friends to reroll dice. Killing them quickly can deprive your enemy of a significant advantage. Note that you can use this technique in concert with the "Kill More Enemies" play, allowing you to cut your way through enemy troops to engage your intended target.



Kill More Enemies. The most common use of a Heroic Combat is to allow a Hero to kill more enemies than normal. Since many scenarios are won when a force is reduced to a certain point, killing enemy models quickly via Heroic Combats is a great way to achieve a win. This technique is ideal for breaking the enemy force and forcing Courage Tests. Here, if Gothmog wins, he will knock down his opponents and probably kill them both, allowing him to move on and attack new enemies.



The Slingshot. Essentially, the "Slingshot" involves charging a single enemy warrior (or perhaps a pair of them). By slaying him (or them), your Hero is free to move again, allowing him to gain valuable ground, potentially get out of danger, or move near an objective. Here, if Sharku uses a Heroic Combat, he

can easily overwhelm the single warrior he is fighting and rush onward toward his objective.

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The Lord of The Rings Tactics - Using Might, Will, and Fate

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Using Will and Fate

WILL

Will is the measure of a Hero's ability to use and resist magical powers as well as his determination. Will Points can be spent like Might Points to pass Courage Tests and also to employ a magical power. A character with lots of Will Points will be determined and well-motivated, a powerful and dangerous user of magic or possibly just plain stubborn.

Resist Magical Powers

The second way to use Will Points is to resist magical powers. Often a magical power will have a negative effect on one or more of your models. Resisting spells, thus, can be very important. Each Will Point you spend in this way lets you roll one die to resist the enemy. To succeed, your score must equal or beat the highest die score your enemy rolled. Sometimes, if the magical power in question does not put your Hero into any significant danger, it's worth saving your Will Points for a more important moment later, but that should be judged on a case-by-base basis. If the power will slay (or seriously jeopardize) your Hero, it makes sense to try.

Passing Courage Tests

Just as Might Points can be used to pass Courage Tests, so can Will Points. Make sure to use Will Points in this way when there are no enemies on the board with magical powers, because you won't have to worry about resisting spells. Use all your Will Points to bolster your Courage rolls and keep your Heroes and Warriors fighting to the last.

FATE

Fate Points are a representation of a Hero's destiny and can preserve him from harm. Each Fate Point a Hero spends allows him to ignore the effect of a single Wound on a 4+. As soon as your Hero suffers a Wound, spend a Fate Point to prevent it. More than once, I've suffered a Wound with one of my Heroes and, in the excitement of battle, forgotten to spend my Fate Point. Normally, this isn't a problem, but in certain scenarios, it's important to have as many Wounds left on your Hero as possible. Take a look at Scenario 3: Cornered in the rules manual to see what I mean.

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, that's my take on using Might, Will, and Fate in your games. Most players will find that they quickly develop their own favorite tactics and methods to use them. It's clear to see that Fate is the most straightforward of the heroic characteristics to use, since there's nearly no decision required in using it. With both of the others, however, the best uses are fairly clear cut. With a little trial and error, you will soon find yourself launching daring heroic combats, cutting through your enemy, and transfixing his Heroes.



Use Magical Powers. The first way to use Will Points is to spend them to employ a magical power. For each Will Point you spend, you may roll one die in your attempt to make the power work. Since you must choose how many Will Points you are going to spend before you roll any of the dice, be sure that you use enough to get the job done - there's nothing more irritating than spending Will Points and then failing to make the spell work!

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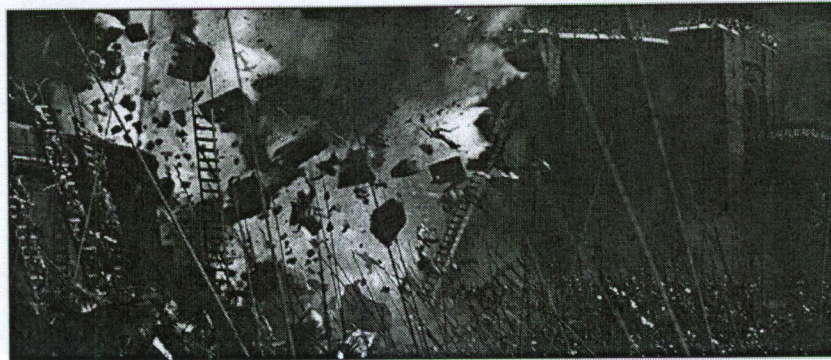
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Siege Tactics for The Lord of The Rings



Alessio Cavatore focuses on one of the most exciting areas of the The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game - siege warfare!

Siege! The new rulebook for our The Lord of The Rings Strategy Battle Game includes a section of rules entirely dedicated to siege warfare. To be more precise, these rules are about the bloodiest part of a siege, the actual assault against the defended walls. Historically, such assaults were seen as extreme measures only to be attempted when all other methods - such as starvation, destruction of the walls through bombardment or mining, diplomacy, bribery, and the like - had failed. Committing troops to assault well-defended walls with ladders and battering rams was certainly a hard decision for any general to make. Often, it was only the news of a relief force approaching that would force a commander to attempt an assault and accept the extremely high rate of casualties involved in such an attack. However, Saruman certainly didn't have any such scruples about sacrificing the lives of his minions!

In this article, I will take you through what I believe make sound tactics for both Defenders and Attackers in our game. Let's begin with the Defenders...

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