

TACTICA



LORDS OF LIGHT

Having waxed lyrical about the villainous Heroes of Evil a couple of months ago, Adam Troke now turns his hand toward the forces of Good.

It's hardly surprising, after I chewed the ears off of the *White Dwarf* team with all manner of "cool tactics" for The Lord of The Rings, that the magazine staff finally relented and allowed me to put together another tactica.

This month, I'm going to look at Good Heroes – a subject that I really enjoy. Like most fans of The Lord of The Rings, my fascination with the story started with the adventures of The Fellowship and how their actions shaped the War of The Ring. Like in the books and film, Heroes can make a massive difference to the outcome of any game that you play. Well used, Aragorn, Boromir, and their like can almost assure victory. Their Might Points can change the flow of a game entirely, while their awesome fighting abilities can hold back swarms of Moria Goblins or Uruk-hai. Other Heroes, like Gandalf or Arwen have a subtler (but no less influential) use on the battlefield that can determine the

course of a battle just as surely as a strong sword arm. Now, there are loads of ways to get the best out of your Good Heroes when you play, and I've found a few that seem to work particularly well. So, prepare to be dazzled by wondrous tactics, a few cunning tricks, and one really cheesy ploy.

Just like the Heroes that fight for the forces of Evil, Good Heroes come in all shapes and sizes, and it really is a case of there being "one for every occasion." Loosely grouped, Good Heroes tend to fall into a few categories, depending on where they excel. The summary below lists these categories as I see them and gives an indication of what each involves.

Veteran players will observe that some of the categories overlap a little, and that many Heroes can fit into more than one. That's a good thing. The more categories a Hero fits into, the more you can rely on him to do, and the greater choice you get on the battlefield.

Hero Categories

The Jack of All Trades

Jack of All Trades Heroes are those characters who can do everything. They can fight like the mightiest Heroes of legend, lead by example, slay monsters, and sometimes even shoot.

The Born Leader

Born Leaders are those Heroes who, whether by charisma, example, or magic, can inspire warriors to greater feats. Born Leaders allow the warriors to fight harder, resist breaking in the face of the enemy, or gain any number of other (Courage-related) advantages.

The Anvil

Anvils are Heroes who can stop a Mûmak dead in its tracks, hold the breach against a flood of Mordor Trolls, or go the full five rounds against a

Balrog. These Heroes by necessity have a great Defense value and can form the backbone of your strategy.

The Killing Machine

These gents are much like the "Mass Destruction" Heroes from my Evil tactica (*White Dwarf* 327) and are by far the easiest Heroes for a Good general to use. They kill stuff by the boat-load, and that is that.

The Trickster

These Heroes have a quality that is hard to define but that makes them completely indispensable on the battlefield. They are often overlooked, but when used properly, they can be more destructive than any others (here lies shameful "cheesiness").

THE JACK OF ALL TRADES

Tier one: Aragorn, Imrahil, Glorfindel, Elendil, Galadriel Lady of the Galadhrim.
Tier two: Legolas, Gimli, Haldir, Éomer, Eorl the Young, Arvedui, Théodred, Erebor.

Fellowships



Aragorn with Anduril, bow, and Elven cloak
265 (Grey Company)
Halbarad
65 (Grey Company)
Legolas with Elven cloak
100 (The Fellowship)

Elladan and Elrohir, with armor and Elven cloaks
170 (Grey Company)
Gimli with Elven cloak
100 (The Fellowship)
Total Points: 700

Something I have experimented with recently is the idea of creating armies composed entirely of Heroes. Used wisely, these forces are deadly and can win games against far larger forces. The Hero forces I have found most effective consist entirely of One-Man-Band characters. Because the force is small, each model needs to be able to fend for itself as well as function as part of a unit.

The force I'm currently playing with is a "Paths of the Dead" army – Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli, Elladan & Elrohir, and Halbarad. That's a nice mixture of three Heroes from each tier. The basic principle with the force is that I pair up the Heroes (Aragorn and Halbarad, Legolas and Gimli, and Elladan & Elrohir), and use each part autonomously. The whole force focuses on directing all of its aggression against a single portion of the enemy. It's proven quite effective in my games and even helped me to a respectable 15th place at this year's U.K. Grand Tournament.

Jack of All Trades Heroes can do a little of everything. They are the Heroes around whom you can reliably build an entire army and expect a reasonable amount of success. I personally place these Heroes into two distinctive tiers – levels of power by which we can effectively rate them.

The first tier, and the most tempting to select for your army, contains those Heroes who are just a cut above the ordinary. They are excellent warriors, with a high Fight value and solid leadership ability. The list at the top of the page includes some (but not all) examples of these. Consider Glorfindel, for example. With a Fight value of 7, he can take on almost any enemy Warrior or Hero on his own terms. Add to that a healthy store of Might and a Courage of 7, and you have a Hero that you can rely on against almost any odds.

The thing that really distinguishes this category of Heroes is their ability to turn their hand to almost anything. If you are unsure of the scenarios that you are going to be playing or the style of army that your opponent prefers these are the best Heroes to use. I always try and include at least one "Tier One" Hero in my Good armies.

The second tier is no less valuable, and these Heroes are great for bulking out the rest of your line. Heroes of this level also

have the advantage of being cheaper than their tier one counterparts. The likes of Éomer or Halbarad have dug me out of serious trouble many times. They typically have a good store of Might, and their Fight value is better than the enemy's rank and file. Such Heroes can lead elements of your force, provide Heroic actions, or (in a pinch) hunt down and kill dangerous elements in your opponent's army. As they're relatively cheap, you can take more than one.

Elendil, the High King of Gondor

I believe that, point-for-point, Elendil is the finest Hero available to the Good side. He is simply awesome, and here's why. With a Fight Value of 7, he can beat every Evil Warrior except a Mordor Troll in a fight (and he draws against Mordor Trolls). The only Evil Heroes with a better Fight Value cost twice as many points as he does. He has a great Defense of 7, making him incredibly durable, and a solid Courage of 6 for those sticky *Stand Fast!* rolls. Oh, and he's got Narsil, which is just fabulous!



Adam's favorite Hero and the original Narsil-wielding king of Gondor, Elendil



Gandalf the White

One of the finest Born Leaders in the game, Gandalf the White is hard for the enemy to get to grips with and very hard to kill. Add in his 12"/28 cm *Stand Fast!*, a Courage value of 7, and a free Will Point each turn, and Gandalf is, in my opinion, simply the best thing since Lembas.

THE BORN LEADER

Glorfindel, Gil-Galad, Imrahil, Dain Ironfoot, Celeborn, Círdan, Gandalf (Grey and White), Radagast, Saruman the White.

Born Leaders are the Heroes who will keep your force together and fighting, no matter what calamities befall you. The first and most obvious attribute for this category is a high Courage value, which can keep your models in the game once your force is broken. Those Heroes with a truly exceptional Courage value (7 or better, in my opinion) can get into this category on that merit alone. However, most require something more.

That is where Special Rules come in. Some Heroes, like Dain and Imrahil, have an increased *Stand Fast!* range. There aren't that many Heroes who can boast that ability, but it really can be a game-winning one. If it looks like the battle is going against you, do everything you can

to protect your Born Leaders from harm, as you're going to need them when your army breaks. Likewise, try and save a Might Point or 2 for a Heroic Move. A model can only call a *Stand Fast!* if it can move – the last thing you want is to get charged and pinned down. Try assigning some Warriors with shields, or even a lesser Hero, to protect your Born Leaders.

There are other abilities that make Heroes good at leading the force, and they tend to be some of the more esoteric Special Rules – it's surprising how easily overlooked they can be. Celeborn and Círdan, for example, both have the Aura of Command magical power, which enables all friendly models, even other Heroes, within range to pass Courage tests automatically.

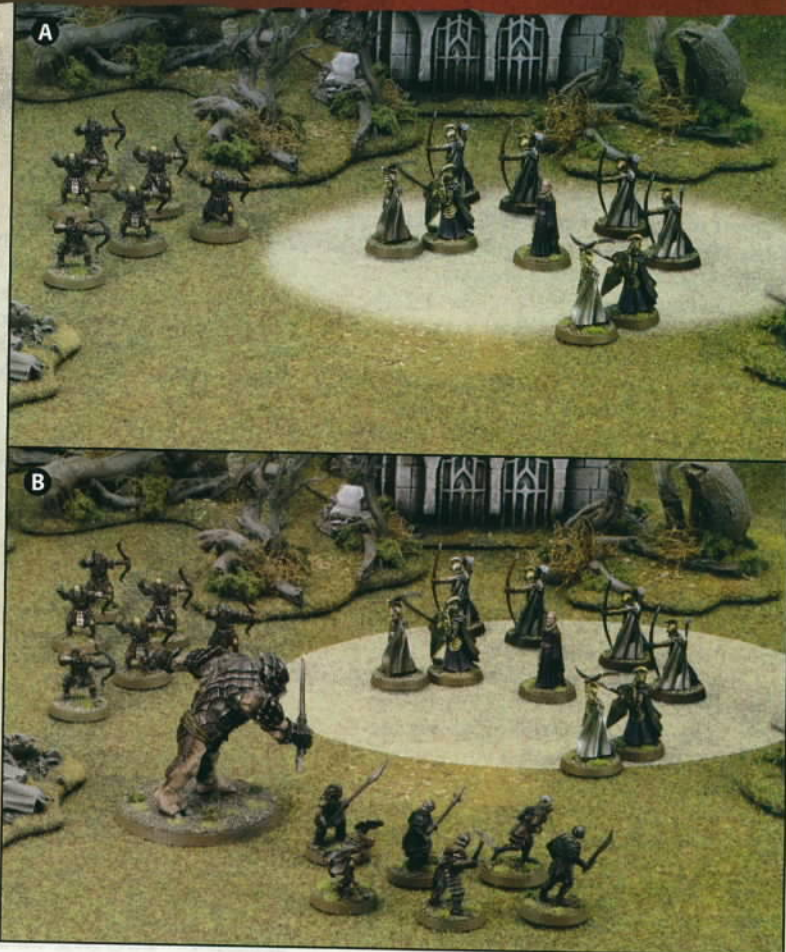
Círdan Leads the Way

My relationship with Círdan got off to a rough start when I was playtesting the Fall of the Necromancer supplement. He's not very tough (in fact, he's *really* not tough), and it took me a fair while to get to grips with the best way to use him. Here it is.

Círdan, in the 1st turn of the game should cast *Blinding Light* (A), which gives protection against missile attacks to Círdan and all nearby friends. In the 2nd turn, Círdan should cast *Aura of Command* (B), allowing all nearby models to pass Courage tests automatically. Note, models don't even need to see Círdan for this spell to effect them and need only be within 6"/14 cm. This magical power even enables friendly models to charge *Terror*-causing enemies without testing (just great when your opponent fields models with *Harbinger of Evil* or similar rules). For the rest of the game, Círdan simply avoids trouble but stays close enough to the action to benefit his comrades.



There's more to this wizened Elf than meets the eye.



THE ANVIL

Dain, Durin, Gimli, Balin, Boromir (either version), Imrahil, Glorfindel Lord of the West, Gil-Galad, Treebeard.

The Anvils are Heroes that I really enjoy using – there's a certain charm in having a Hero stop an offensive mid-charge just through sheer pig-headed stubbornness – and there are a surprising number to choose from. The main criterion for an Anvil is that he needs to be able to soak up vast amounts of damage and stay on his feet. This supernatural endurance can come in the form of lots of Fate Points, lots of Wounds, a very high Defense value, or even better, all three.

The first and most obvious way to use an Anvil is to throw him into the middle of the enemy's force and let him cause a big distraction. Sometimes, this tactic is a really useful one (it's a simple way of throwing the enemy's plans into confusion). Unfortunately, this approach doesn't get the most from your super-hard Hero.

The next technique is to tie up a particularly dangerous enemy Hero or Warrior (like a Troll Chieftain). There's no great art to this tactic other than doggedly chasing after enemies and trying to nibble away at them. What you're hoping to achieve here is wearing enemies down before they kill you – so pick your fights carefully. Most of the Heroes named above could take out a Cave Troll or even a Mordor Troll given time. However, for the really big enemies, you have to be really tough or lucky. I wouldn't recommend trying to take on a Balrog or Sauron one on one – numerical superiority is the only way to beat those guys. However, I've brought down just about every other Evil model this way at some point or another.

Another thing worth bearing in mind when it comes to Anvils is that there are ways to keep them in the fight longer. Elrond and Radagast the Brown both have the Renew magical power (enabling them to heal the wounds of friendly Heroes). Careful use of this power can keep an Anvil going much longer than normal. The real art to this tactic is not spending the Anvil's Fate Points while his comrade is around to heal him. Since we know Radagast can give Dain a Wound back in the following Move Phase, for example, we need to spend Dain's Fate only if he's in serious danger of dying that turn.

Oh, and if an Anvil can have a shield, take it! Imrahil, for example, has 6 Attacks at Fight Value 6 if he shields. There's almost no chance of Orcs or Goblins getting through that.

Durin

For my money, there is only one "Lord of the Anvils" and that's Durin. First, he causes *Terror*, thanks to the Horn of Zirak-zigil, which means it's very hard for enemies to surround him properly. Even if they do manage it, he has a Defense value of 9 and the Crown of Kings (for a 6+ Fate roll against all wounds suffered). Thus, there's not much that can kill him without a real fight.

Of course, all those defenses are only really worth considering if anything actually gets a chance to strike him. He has 3 Attacks, a Fight value of 6, and an axe so finely crafted that he gets a reroll to see who wins the fight. He's as close to an unstoppable waist-high, Mithril-clad juggernaut as you can get, and all for just 160 points.



Durin – irresistible force and immovable object in one Dwarf-sized package

The Speed Bump



This tactic is perfect for stopping a Mûmak dead in its tracks. It also works just fine against powerful Evil Warriors and Heroes, although it requires a little more finesse in those cases.

1 Select Durin or Dain (either is fine), and a wedge of Khazâd Guard to help him.

2 Position them as shown in the picture above, and wait for the Mûmak to ram you and, hopefully, bounce off the mighty Dwarf Lord.

3 Sweep the flanks of your formation in and administer much choppy death to the over-sized Oliphaunt.

THE KILLING MACHINE

Aragorn (especially with Anduril), Boromir (both types), Durin, Dain, Imrahil, Eorl the Young, Isildur, Elendil, Elrond, Glorfindel.



Boromir of the White Tower

There are loads of Killing Machines I could have chosen to focus on, but for sheer belligerent killiness, my pick of the bunch has to be Boromir of the White Tower.

A staggering 6 Might Points, a horse, and the Horn of Gondor enable Boromir to run roughshod over entire enemy forces. Imrahil may be able to hit harder with his lance, and Glorfindel may have a better Fight value, but that Might store and the chance to win any fight on the basis of an Evil Courage check can't be overrated.

Use Boromir's Might Points to call Heroic Moves and Heroic Combats, and you won't go far wrong!

The only word of caution I would give is to be careful not to let Boromir get shot too badly on the way into action. There's no point getting his horse killed if you can avoid it. Besides, we've all seen what happens when Boromir and arrows collide...

Killing Machines are the unsubtle bludgeoning instruments of death that Good players can use to win battles – simple in principle but often a little more complicated in practice.

The first law (according to me) when using Killing Machines is to buy them horses if they're available. If you want maximum carnage for your points, a horse will help you get it. If you can get your grubby paws on a lance too, so much the better!

The second law is to target the places in the enemy force where your Hero will have the greatest impact – generally this involves crashing into exposed infantry formations and picking on Warriors and weaker Heroes. If your Killing Machine is

equal to the task (Heroes with a Fight value of 7, generally) of tackling Trolls and the like, then feel free to do so – only beware of the risks of getting bogged down by such a foe. The Evil player is probably hoping his Troll will be an Anvil for him, so choose your fights carefully.

The third law when using Killing Machines is like the second – don't stop and never let yourself get bogged down. Spend Might Points to fight Heroic Combats and declare Heroic Moves (something Aragorn, Elendil, and Eorl the Young are especially good at). If your Hero is mounted, this advice becomes especially important; mounted models get the knockdown bonus only when they are charging – you want to be doing it often!

Line Breaker



This tactic is nice and straightforward, and I've used it more times than I can recall. Most players deploy their forces in a battle line, with Warriors armed with shields in the front, spears behind, and a banner at the rear supporting the formation. It's a strong and sound tactic. Line-breaking relies on using a Killing Machine to smash through the enemy battle line and do damage where the enemy are squishiest.

In this example, Gil-Galad calls a Heroic combat, kills the shielding Orc

(easily), advances into his space, and engages the spear-armed Orc behind (and kills him too, most likely).

In the following turns, Gil-Galad heads straight for the banner bearer and the Orcs with spears. He thus takes pressure off the Elves, who would have been fighting against the odds. Meanwhile, the High Elves stand firm, using Warriors with shields to prevent the Orc Heroes from achieving a similar breakthrough.

THE TRICKSTER

Gandalf (White or Grey), Radagast the Brown, Saruman the White, Elrond, Arwen, Legolas.

The Heroes I consider to be Tricksters are those who have a single, really devious trick that they can perform. Those listed above are the ones that I consider to be the best examples of Tricksters – there are more but none quite so brilliant as these, in my opinion.

Radagast has an awesome supply of Will, and the spell Aura of Dismay. Against low-Courage Evil models, it's incredibly effective. My favorite tactic with Radagast is to use the spell to allow my archers to fire uninterrupted. It works great both with Dwarves and Wood Elves. On a side note, Panic Steed is worth its weight in gold too; try panicking a Fell Beast to see my point!

Gandalf and Saruman both have Sorcerous Blast. It's probably the most disruptive and effective spell in the game, when it is used properly. Target Warriors, preferably those who will be blown into

their comrades (and thus cause maximum damage). Try to avoid casting it against Heroes directly, as they can attempt to resist it with Will Points.

Legolas, by contrast, uses no magical high jinks with his little trick but raw talent. Three shots a turn is great and not to be sniffed at, but what really takes the biscuit with him is his ability to hit once each turn if he needs to. This special rule can allow him to target banner bearers and other prime targets with lethal accuracy. His stock of 3 Might Points means that when he hits them, they die.

Whatever Trickster Hero you select, work out what his chief trick actually is and use it as part of your plan. I've seen people who've had a very impressive battle plan all laid out throw the game away when they lose their nerve. Stay on target, and you won't go far wrong.



Arwen Evenstar

Arwen costs just 60 points, and for that, you get Nature's Wrath! This spell knocks all enemies within 6"/14 cm to the ground – perfect for giving the advantage to your Elves of Rivendell.

Elves with Cheese

Elrond
170 (Rivendell)
Gandalf the Grey
170 (The Wizards)
5 Elves with heavy armor and Elven blades
50
5 Elves with heavy armor, spears, and shields
55
5 Elves with heavy armor and Elf bows
55

Total Points: 500



Okay, this is the promised cheesy plan – a sure-fire way to leave your opponent reeling in shock. It requires a cool head and a certain degree of patience, but it very seldom fails.

The plan requires Gandalf and Arwen or Elrond to be included in the force, that's a seriously costly investment in points, but it's well worth it. Here's why. Use Gandalf to cast Blinding Light – protecting your Warriors from incoming fire – then position yourself to cast Nature's Wrath at the right moment. The Trick is to cast it when you can get as many enemy Warriors (preferably not Heroes with Will Points) in range as possible. Even if the Warriors are already locked in combat against your

models, they will be affected – so wait for just the right moment. Once you have successfully cast it (use at least two dice and consider using all three), you give all your models involved in the combat a massively increased chance of killing their foes when your troops win their fights and, in so doing, also protect them from harm.

Here is the cheesy bit. In the same turn that you cast Nature's Wrath, use Gandalf to cast Strengthen will on Elrond (or Arwen, if you've taken her). In the following turn, before using Elrond again, strengthen his Will again with Gandalf. This way, you can once again cast Nature's Wrath with two dice. If you haven't won by this point, simply repeat.