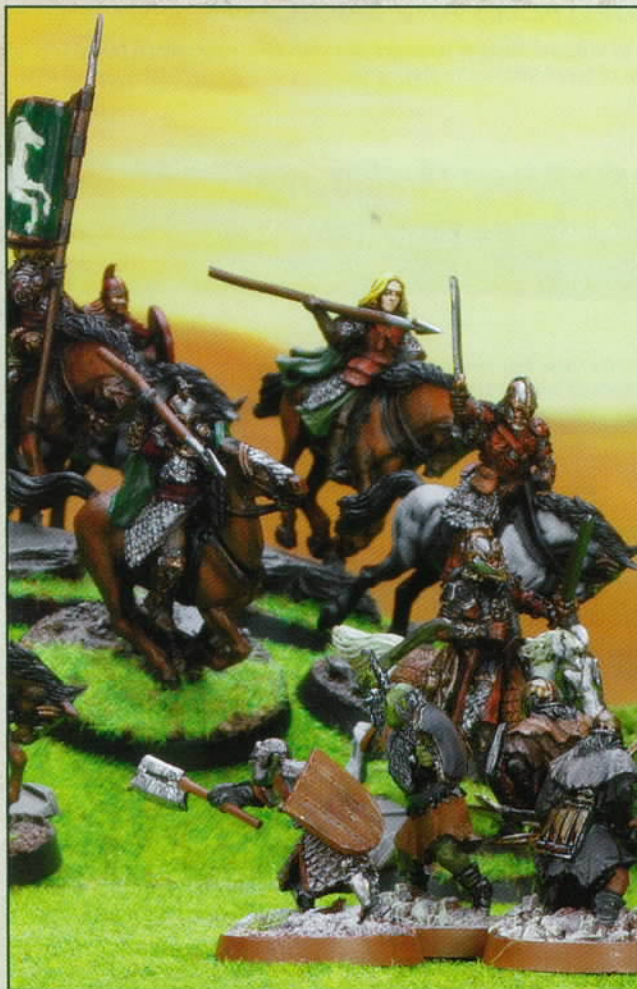This month, we return to the hobby adventures of Steve and Adrian Wood, authors of the "A Tale of Good and Evil" series of articles, detailing how these hobbyists collected their forces for The Lord of The Rings game. This month, to accompany the coastal raids rules, we return to see how these two gaming lunatics are getting along and to get a few tips for building coastline terrain for a standard gaming table.

BUILDING COASTAL TERRAIN

By Steve Cumiskey

Adi and I have both been collecting forces for The Lord of The Rings game for over a year now and have managed to build up a good selection of models for our chosen sides. While we've both started to build forces from the opposing side to complement our existing models, we've also been spending more time trying out some of the more unusual ways to play the game.

We'd already built our own castle for siege games, and it seemed like a good idea to keep adding something to our terrain collection with each new scenario we played. Thus, when we got involved in trying out the new rules for coastal raids, it seemed natural to have a go at building a coastline to game on.

We didn't want to build a fully modeled table on which to play our coastal raid. Covering half the board with sea terrain would make the table difficult to use for anything else. Instead, we decided to build a section of sea and coast that would fit on top of our existing board.
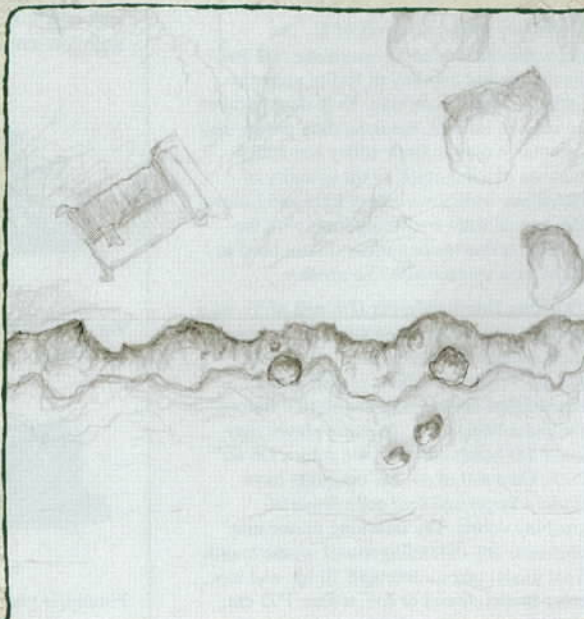
PLANNING

Once we'd decided on the notion of building a coastline, the first thing we had to do was to decide what form it should take. A quayside seemed to be the obvious choice. However, when we started to think about it, we realized that, to make such a coastline look right, we would need to have a stone-colored table and a fair number of buildings. Our table is modeled to look like grassland, and we have only a handful of building models. In the end, we decided to make a beach instead.
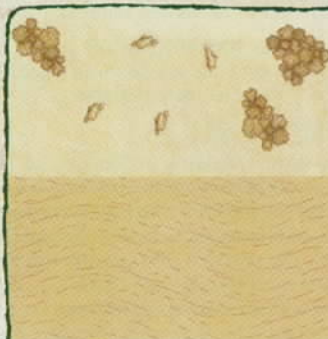
Looking at the scenario map, we realized that the simplest thing to do would be to make a flat board that covered half the existing table. This plan did have the slight drawback of making the sea level higher than the land, which would look very strange unless we could disguise it in some way.
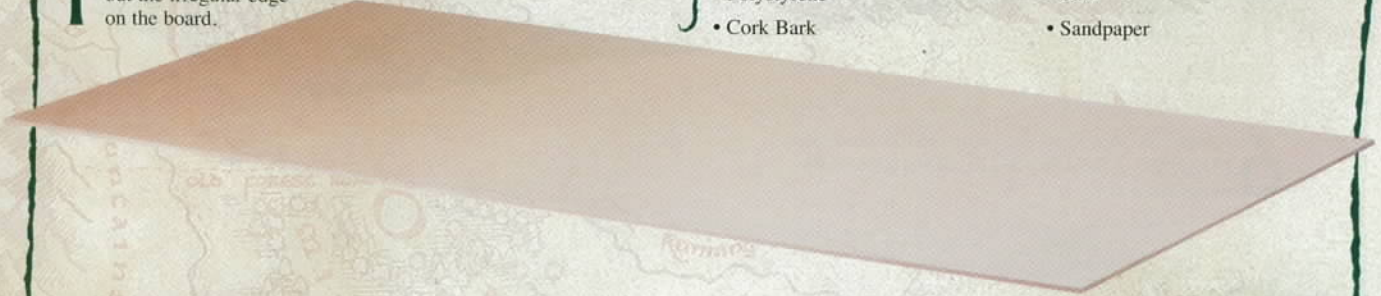
Thankfully, we just had to resort to the same method commonly used to create rivers on a gaming table – build up the bank around the edges and thereby make the difference in level less obvious.

This seemed like a perfectly acceptable way to solve the problem. We decided to use a row of dunes to serve as our raised bank, with the edge of the board cut into an irregular line to help make transition from board to table less obvious.

Theoden leads the the charge of the Rohirrim.

BUILDING THE BOARD

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- 2' x 4' Piece of Hardboard
- Static Grass
- Lichen
- Polystyrene
- Cork Bark
- Spackle
- Modeling Sand and Gravel
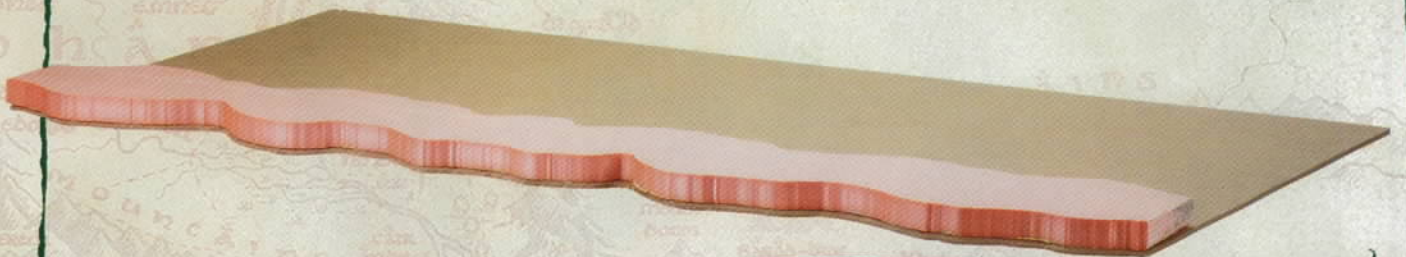- Woodworking Glue
- Sharp Knife
- Saw
- Sandpaper

1 We began by marking out the irregular edge on the board.

2 With the line marked out, we used a saw to cut the board to shape. To make the edge of the board blend better with the gaming table, we rounded off the edge with a knife.

3 We then built up the blocks of polystyrene that would form the dunes.

4 At this point, we were able to carve the shape of the dunes from the polystyrene. With the basic shapes formed, we used sandpaper to clean and smooth the dunes.

5 To help make the dunes less plain, we glued pieces of cork bark, sand, and gravel in place to represent rocks of various sizes.

6 Finally, we used spackling compound to create wave-like shapes in the water and to fill any gaps on the dunes and rocks.

Gandalf leads the charge up the beach.

PAINTING THE SAND

1 With the construction complete, we began to paint the dunes by applying a basecoat of Bestial Brown.

2 Next, we drybrushed the sand with Snakebite Leather.

3 We then drybrushed the sand with Vomit Brown.

4 We painted a layer of Bleached Bone to brighten up the color.

5 To break up the flat yellow color, we drybrushed small patches of Catachan Green.

6 With the painting of the beach complete, we added patches of static grass and lichen to the dunes to help blend them into the rest of the board.

PAINTING THE SEA

1 We started painting the sea with a basecoat of Chaos Black. Then, we painted it with a layer of Dark Angels Green.

2 Once the Dark Angels Green layer had dried, we followed it with a layer of Scaly Green.

3 Then we applied a layer of Ultramarines Blue near the shore.

4 With the basic color of the sea complete, we painted the tops of the waves with Skull White.

5 To create a suitably wet-looking surface for the water, we applied a layer of Gloss Varnish.

Despite its size, the coastal terrain was quick and easy to build and makes the coastal raids scenario come to life in a way that simply working with improvised terrain never could. This project may seem like a lot of effort for a single scenario, but by building one scenario piece for each scenario you play, you can build up a collection of terrain that can add a great deal of variety to all of the games you play.