



Alessio Cavatore,
Ringbearer and head
of our The Lord of
The Rings Games
Development team,
waxes lyrical about
what's happening in

Middle-earth's gaming community...

THE RINGBEARER SPEAKS...

Shadow and Flame Designers' notes

Well, it's done! Shadow and Flame, the first supplement for our The Lord of The Rings strategy battle game, is a reality and is now out for release. In the following notes I will try to explain why this book has been the most difficult of my career, but also why it is the one I am most proud of.

THE QUEST FOR THE SUPPLEMENTS BEGINS.

You see, until now I've been writing army books for Warhammer and that certainly isn't an easy task, but at least it is a task where the objective is clear. We all have an idea of what an army book is: it gives you first and foremost an army list to field the models of a specific Warhammer race, the special rules for such a race and all its unique troops, background information, alternative lists and painting and modelling tips. It's therefore clear what you want to achieve, and the challenging part is to make sure that all these elements are presented in an exciting and balanced manner.

This wasn't the case with the completely new The Lord of The Rings game – no supplements had been published before, so there was no template to work from.

The new literary licence that Games Workshop has managed to acquire from Tolkien Enterprises gives us far more scope in what we can do. We can now produce material based not only on what is shown on the film, but on the novel's contents too. That sounds exciting, but as you can imagine it can also be a daunting prospect, within the huge breadth of Tolkien's masterpiece, to have to decide exactly what these new supplements will be like and what would they be about. As my boss Gordon Davidson immediately pointed out – “with great power comes great responsibility” (he's a bit of a Spiderman fan, you see...), and the scary task of putting together a set of proposals for these supplements was given to me, in my role as newly-appointed Ringbearer. Before I continue, I'd like to ask you to stop reading for a second and try to put yourselves in my shoes – what would you have done? What would you have liked these supplements to be like?

There were several different ways open in front of me, and I have to admit that at the beginning I was tempted to ‘play it safe’ and go for the ‘army book’ format. If, for



Balin and his Khazâd Guard attack a Moria Goblin warband.

example, I decided to have a book on the Elves, one on the Orcs, one on Men and so on, I would have tread on well-known ground and my job would have been easier. I considered this prospect first, and finally decided to shy away from it. My problem with ‘army book’ style supplements is that our The Lord of The Rings game is different in nature from our other core games. It is of course a skirmish system, but first and foremost it is a scenario-based game. As a result of this, players often collect models from more than one race, because they need both Good and Evil models to play the scenarios. In fact, individual races and armies are not as clearly defined as in our other games (an Orc, for example, could be part of either Sauron or Saruman's forces, and that difference can be easily marked out with a different paint job).

I like this uniquely distinctive style and I absolutely wanted to maintain it.

Keeping in mind all these considerations, I decided that my favourite solution for our The Lord of The Rings supplements, the one I would put forward to the ‘Powers That Be’ (PTB) for approval, was going to be the ‘gazetteer’ approach.

WHAT'S A GAZETTEER?

Well, the word gazetteer reminds me (and probably other veteran gamers too) of those sourcebooks that collected a great deal of information about a particular setting for role-playing game adventures. I thought that a similar format would be perfectly suitable for our new The Lord of The Rings supplements. I figured that each supplement should be based on either a geographic area (Mirkwood, Gondor, Mordor...) or an

historical event of a certain importance in Tolkien's works (the Last Alliance, the War of the Ring, the taking of Dol Guldur by the forces of the White Council...). I imagined that these books should provide the reader with the following contents:

- Background: information on the place/event the book is focusing on.
- Scenarios: possibly linked together, capturing the atmosphere of the place/event.
- Rules: for the new troop types included in the scenarios, for both Good and Evil.
- Modelling and painting: suggestions and examples for the new models.

Sounds good for a start, doesn't it? And of course I'd make sure that each supplement would include at least one map. I adore maps. Why is it that maps of fantasy realms have the power of keeping me enthralled for hours, daydreaming about travelling through mysterious lands? How evocative are the names found on those charts? Or is it just me?

NEW STUFF?

One of the exciting but scary elements of working with the licence is that we are allowed 'within reason' to add to the existing material, exploring beyond what is in the text and adding creatures, characters and even places of our own creation to the world of Middle-earth. I am obviously an enthusiastic The Lord of The Rings fan and would be the first to object to any crass exploitation of the world Tolkien created, so this put me in a difficult position; on one hand there is the joy of being able to create something new in a world that I have loved since my teens, and on the other a huge responsibility to do it properly. I am aware that it will be impossible to please everyone – there are purists who dislike anything other than the original texts, and those that would like to see ever more The Lord of The Rings material spun off from the core ideas. I think I'm somewhere in between, and I can only say that I will do my best to create cool new stuff without it being gratuitous or inappropriate. Hopefully the players of our game, and the fans of Tolkien, will be able to enjoy what we have created.

TO WRITE OR NOT TO WRITE?

The second problem that soon arose was whether we should include the brief pieces of fiction and very short stories which we always have in our Warhammer Armies books, Warhammer 40,000 Codexes and rulebooks. Often written from the point of view of the characters of the story, they are very useful to set a scene or convey to the reader a clear feel of what the book is about – heroic Space Marines in a last stand against hordes of Tyranids or brave Bretonnians charging into a trap set by the treacherous Skaven. So, should we be

writing for the new supplements a little story about an encounter between some Rangers of the North and the Ringwraiths near Weathertop, and then another half-pager about a small group of Elves defending the borders of Lorien against a marauding band of Orcs, and so on?

Well, the temptation was there, but then I decided against it because, to be frank, I was terrified of the comparison with the original novel. How do you write about Middle-earth without feeling inadequate? Also, the absence of stories would again mark these supplements as different from the other ones we produce – always a healthy idea.

What I definitely wanted to do is to sprinkle throughout the books a few very short quotes from The Lord of The Rings, to share with other fans the power of Tolkien's words and, who knows, maybe inspire a few people who haven't already done so to pick up the novel and read it.

A NEW FORMAT.

Another novelty and point of differentiation of these supplements is that they are in full colour, in keeping with the rest of The Lord of The Rings range. Also, we are now allowed to produce our own art to illustrate them and the choice of using sepia tones for these pictures makes them, in my opinion, unique and very classy. I really hope you'll agree with me how intriguing it is to see a double-page spread of Dave Gallagher's great sketches right next to film stills from The Fellowship of The Ring, as well as photographs of our models – so many forms of creativity coming together!

Not being forced to concentrate all the hobby material into one colour section (as normal with black and white army books) has the unexpected benefit that in these new supplements the bits about modelling and painting are interspersed among the 'rulesy'

bits. This, in my opinion, gives the entire book a better pace, more variety and an overall feel of integration between the various facets of our hobby.

WHY "SHADOW AND FLAME"?

Well, now that I had defined in my mind what I wanted these supplements to be like (and received the thumbs up signal from the PTB...), it was time to decide what exactly the first of them would have been about.

That wasn't difficult – it had to be Dwarves!

My imagination had been really stimulated by the feel of the ancient glory and the tragic present of the Dwarven race that permeates the entire passage through Moria in The Fellowship of The Ring. I couldn't help wondering what would lie in wait for the heroes if they had taken a different route, and in particular I couldn't help thinking about what Khazad-dûm would have been like in the past. The expedition of Balin and his Dwarves to try and reclaim their ancestral home would, in my opinion, make the perfect theme for our first supplement and offer a splendid excuse for people to add Dwarf models to their collection for The Lord of The Rings strategy battle game.

Soon the rules for Balin, the Dwarf Captains, the Khazad Guard and the Dwarf warriors were complete. Balin is certainly one of the most important Dwarves in Tolkien's stories. He is the one that gets closest to Bilbo, he fights bravely in the Battle of the Five Armies and then sets off to recapture Moria, becoming its Lord before meeting his tragic fate – a true Dwarf hero. The Perry twins made a great model for him and the Dwarf warriors turned out rather splendid too (a lot of people were pleased to see back in our range some Dwarves with bows!). For the Khazad

MODELLING THE DWARVES



Alan Perry



Michael Perry

The look of the Dwarves was based upon conceptual designs by Dave Gallagher with a little input by us, but we were all heavily influenced by numerous sources of Tolkien imagery.

They were a great project to work on as they are little more lithe than their Warhammer counterparts and thus allowed us to sculpt more movement and animation on the final models.

We gave them the same general physique as Gimli, not too stout and fairly broad shouldered, with long beards and plaits in evidence. As many images of the Dwarf kings and Gimli show both mail and scale armour it seemed appropriate to give the Moria Dwarves the same.

The basic Dwarf warriors were given shorter mail and scale shirts, assuming they would be less wealthy than the Guard. Circular course shields seemed appropriate to give them a Dark Age feel.

Tolkien mentions Dwarves using bows in the Battle of the Five Armies (in The Hobbit) which gave us good reason to arm the Moria Dwarves likewise. They also make for an unusual troop type as Warhammer Dwarves have always relied on the crossbow.

THE MAP



Nuala Kennedy

The amount of detail and information required on the double page Moria map made this quite a challenge to design.

However, with a lot of help from Matt and Alessio and much sweat, toil and cursing...

To start with I read and re-read the chapters concerning Moria in *The Lord of The Rings*, then spent an enjoyable afternoon watching the Moria section of the film and sketching notes. The excellent book *'The Atlas of Middle-earth'* by Karen Wynn Fonstad was invaluable in this process and an interesting read (if you like maps). Showing both a large plan map and a smaller side view map was the obvious way to get across 3D information. Cave

maps on the internet were useful reference, though the scale required for Moria made me give up on the amount of detail I would have loved to put in. I collated and drew elements of the map by hand (the parchment is made by the old trick, crumple up a piece of paper and stain it with tea) then scanned them and completed it on the computer.

I wanted the mines and tunnels to look unbelievably complex, a place to really get lost in but not graphically resemble a pile of spaghetti. This is why the focus of the map is on the route taken by the fellowship and the Redhorn Mines with a pattern of suggested tunnels passing over and under and fading off to either side. Despite being more of an underground diagram than a lavish map, I thought it would match the style of the project to show it as if it were on a piece of old parchment – a real tangible thing.

Guard I was inspired by Tolkien's description of the Dwarves of old going into battle wearing terrifying war-masks, and I thought that such great detail would suit an elite Bodyguard best. To give the Dwarves an overall common feel, I decided that their main trait would be their incredibly high Defence, which makes them the toughest race in the game system. I swear I'll make sure it stays that way.

To oppose the Dwarves I felt the need to expand a bit on the Moria Goblins forces. Their most characterful element I remember from the book is the ominous sound of the drums, which haunts the steps of the Fellowship as they try to escape from the

depths of Moria. The drum and drummer models were born, a gaming piece that emboldens the Goblins and attacks the morale of their enemies.

Next I assumed that the Goblins had some kind of leader, maybe a huge Goblin King. Durbûrz came into being, loosely based on the Great Goblin that anyone who has read *The Hobbit* will be familiar with.

I also imagined that the little critters would probably worship the Red Eye and see the Balrog as a manifestation of their evil divinity. The next step was to assume that there must have been a few figures whose role was to communicate with Mordor and make the will of Sauron known to the

Goblins. That's where the Goblin Shamans came from, and I made sure they were very low-power wizards in comparison with Gandalf and Saruman. In a way I wanted their powers to feel almost like something in between 'real' magic and just an extreme form of psychological boost on their superstitious kin. Is it true that they can invoke the power of the Red Eye to protect the warriors, or is it just that the warriors themselves, convinced of such protection, go beyond their normal limits and turn into frothing berserkers? I imagine that not even the Shamans themselves could really answer this question. As an example of this, remember Saruman's "You shall know no pain, you shall know no fear" speech in the film and think of the effect it had on Lurtz (chop one of his arms off, stab him through the guts and the monster still fights on... Aragorn has to decapitate him to persuade him to give up!).

Thinking of the scene above, I immediately decided that I wanted to do Shamans for the Uruk-hai as well, since they are our main Evil force out there in 2003.

I CANNOT DO THIS ALONE...

The next step was to write up and play-test the series of linked scenarios pitching the Dwarves against the Goblins, but I started to be troubled by the huge mountain of work that was accumulating on the horizon. You see, at the same time as writing *Shadow and Flame*, there were the plans for *The Return of The King* and the following supplements to be thought out, and the ongoing White Dwarf support, and the organisation of the first Grand Tournament... I was starting to bang my head against the wall in desperation when a new piece was set on



Mortal combat breaks out in the Redhorn Mines.

the chessboard. Luckily, as we were recruiting new designers for the Warhammer team, one of the applicants answered to the "What is your favourite film and book?" questions during the interview with the same answer: The Lord of The Rings. As you can guess, that was Matthew Ward, and his answer and the enthusiasm that he backed it up with got him a job, not in the Warhammer team, but as the second member of the newborn The Lord of The Rings team. Matthew was immediately thrown in the front line and took a lot of pressure off me by writing excellent White Dwarf material, but most importantly, he contributed greatly to Shadow and Flame. He has written most of the scenarios, done a lot of playtesting, and is the author of a large portion of the descriptive text in the book. He also worked closely with Nuala Kennedy, our master cartographer, as she was drawing the Map of Moria. This great piece of art turned out to be fantastically evocative, probably my favourite bit in the entire book. A very good job indeed! I must really thank Matt for helping me bear the weight of this Ring.

THE APPENDICES.

Having time to lift my head was a relief, but it also meant that I suddenly had enough time to ponder about adding another element to the book. For quite some time I had been cultivating the idea of introducing to the game a few of the elements of the novel that didn't make it into Peter Jackson's film. The question was: should they be put in a separate book or could they fit at the end of Shadow and Flame as appendix material? In the end I decided to let my passion drive me and, since I wanted to see them published as soon as possible, I went for the appendices idea. I am aware that their very different content might take some focus away from the main theme of the book, which is Moria, but I hope that people would forgive me on the account that they share my love for the characters that I included in the appendices.

The first appendix is the one that is dearest to me: The Barrow-downs. Writing up the rules for Tom Bombadil has been one of the funniest moment of my career. I really had a laugh with the overly powerful mysterious fellow, and you should have seen some people's expression when they saw his stat-line (question marks? Uh?), wargear options (white water lilies?) and special rules ('Hey! Come merry dol!'). I hope you understand the spirit with which he has been written and don't take the old Tom too seriously. After all, he can be used only in a very limited number of scenarios and 'Fog on the Barrow-downs' definitely has the feel of a mini-game to it, rather than that of a normal scenario. I also let Matt sink his teeth into rules writing for the first time and because of his alarming passion for Ringwraiths and other spectral denizens of

MATTHEW WARD



Despite coming into the project at quite a late stage, the brief that I was given for the scenarios was quite broad; four had to be set in Moria, and three had to be written for the appendices – other than that, I was free to do almost as I wished, allowing me to pick and choose. Playability aside, as far as I was concerned the most important thing was for the scenarios to gel as seamlessly as possible with Tolkien's works. In this regard at least, the lack of canon worked to my advantage, particularly with the Moria scenarios. After all, we all know that Balin and his companions died in Moria, we know how long they were there, and we even know a few details (courtesy of the Book of Mazarbul) but this still left me with a broad canvas to work on. The finished scenarios, all of which are based on sections of the Book of Mazarbul, are something I'm very pleased with. Everything I couldn't squeeze into the intro text or a scenario found a use elsewhere. Even though there is only a little recorded history of Moria, between the book and the film there really is a huge amount of visual and descriptive information, and everything I couldn't use elsewhere passed into Nuala's hands and became part of the absolutely fabulous map.

Middle-earth, I gave him the Barrow-wights to experiment with.

The second appendix is about some of the Elves of Rivendell that those who are less familiar with the books might not be so aware of – Glorfindel in particular seems very unfortunate in the way he is often overlooked, his part in various adaptations usually usurped by another, more central character. That is one of the most powerful Elf Lords in Middle-earth! The Bruinen Ford scene in the book always impresses me, when Glorfindel's appearance is enough to cause six of the Nazgûl's horses to jump in terror into the flooding waters, to their demise. How cool is that? Elladan and Elrohir have also always fascinated me. It is already a dramatic choice for Tolkien's half-elves to decide whether they'll follow the destiny of their Human or their Elven blood, but for the twins this is even more difficult and moving, because the choice of one will reflect so heavily on the other.

Finally, the last character that I really love and wanted to include into the game as soon as possible was Radagast the Brown. Regardless of the scarce esteem that Saruman seems to hold him in, I think that as the archetype of all role-playing game Druids he more than deserves a place in our

If I had little to go on with the Dwarves I had even less for the Barrow-wights. As one of my favourite sections of the book, I really wanted to do the Barrow-wights justice. I had just a few sonorous descriptions from the book and my own memories of reading The Lord of The Rings at far too tender an age, but by the time I'd thrown all of the key elements into the mix this proved to be enough. Basing a scenario so closely on the book was something of a two-edged sword, but I wanted players to feel not so much like they were playing a scenario, but rather that they were stepping into the book itself. Ultimately, Fog on the Barrow-downs is easily my favourite scenario in Shadow and Flame, and the Barrow-wights themselves now have a permanent place in my tournament forces.

The last two scenarios in the book were possibly the most fun to write – even more so because I was able to pair the new characters (Radagast, Elladan, Elrohir, and Glorfindel) with some of my personal favourites (Arwen, Gwaihir, and Treebeard). Radagast himself was just as entertaining to write, and perhaps more so, simply because of the freedom of representing a character about whom so little is recorded.

Overall, Shadow and Flame has been great fun to work on and I can't wait to get started on the next supplement!

game. His rules are courtesy of Matthew too. Simply because of space considerations I have eventually decided to include Radagast and the two Shamans into the same appendix, under the common heading of "Magic in Middle-earth".

With the addition of the ever-useful reference page, the book was finally finished!

IN CONCLUSION.

Well, I sincerely hope that you people out there will enjoy the book as much as we enjoyed writing and testing it, and that collecting these models, painting them and playing through the scenarios will bring you many hours of good fun!

Darren Latham of our 'Eavy Metal team explains how he painted Durbûrz the Goblin King and Balin, sculpted by Alan Perry and Michael Perry...

PAINTING MASTERCLASS

Durbûrz the Goblin King and Balin

PREPARATION

The arms of the Goblin King were glued on and both models were then given an undercoat of Chaos Black spray. Any parts that the spray missed were then painted over with watered-down Chaos Black paint.

BALIN



An equal parts mix of Dark Angels Green and Snot Green was applied as a basecoat to the green cloth. This was followed by a layer of Snot

Green, with a highlight of Snot Green mixed with Bleached Bone.



The cloak was painted with a basecoat of Scab Red, followed by successive layers of Red Gore and an equal parts mix of Red Gore and

Blood Red paint. For the highlights, a small amount of Bleached Bone was added to the Red Gore and Blood Red mix.



Bronzed Flesh was used to paint the design onto the finished cloak and this was then highlighted with Golden Yellow.



Balin's hair and beard were painted with a layer of Scorched Brown. An equal parts mix of Scorched Brown and Codex Grey

was used for the first highlight. The amount of Codex Grey was gradually increased for successive layers, with a final highlight of Fortress Grey.



Tanned Flesh was used as a basecoat for the skin, followed by a layer of Dwarf Flesh. Highlights were painted by gradually adding Elf Flesh to the Dwarf Flesh and the final highlight was with pure Elf Flesh.



The gold armour and decoration were painted with Shining Gold with Chestnut Ink then applied over the top. The gold was then



highlighted with an equal parts mix of Shining Gold and Mithril Silver.



A layer of Boltgun Metal was applied to the remaining metal parts. This was then highlighted with Chainmail. Finally, the metal parts were given a wash of equal parts Black and Brown inks watered down.

As the battle rages both Balin and Durbûrz direct the attacks of their respective forces.



DURBÛRZ, THE GOBLIN KING.



The armour was drybrushed with Tin Bitz, followed by a more selective Boltgun Metal drybrush on the chainmail and armour plates. Finally Chainmail was drybrushed lightly onto the armour, followed by a highlight of Codex Grey on the edges of the armour plates.



The Goblin King's tunic was given a basecoat of Red Gore, followed by a layer of equal

parts Red Gore and Blood Red. A small amount of Bleached Bone was added to the mix for the final highlights.



The sword was drybrushed with Boltgun Metal followed by a further drybrush of Chainmail. A wash of equal parts Black and Brown inks then applied.



Catachan Green was used for the basecoat on the Goblin King's skin. Successive layers of paint were added to the skin, each time adding more Desert Yellow to the Catachan Green.



An equal parts mix of Chaos Black and Codex Grey was drybrushed onto the hair, followed by a highlight of pure Codex Grey.



The rock was drybrushed with Snakebite Leather, then with Fortress Grey.



The Goblin King's eyes were painted Vomit Brown. This was followed by an equal parts mix of Sunburst Yellow and Skull White with the centre of the eye being applied with Chaos Black.

BASING



The bases of both models were painted with Codex Grey. A very dilute wash of Chaos Black

paint was then applied and the bases were then drybrushed with Bleached Bone. The rims of the bases were left Codex Grey.



In the great ages of legend, long before the Fellowship took up its quest, titanic battles raged between the forces of Good and Evil. One such conflict was Balin's defence of Khazad-dûm from Durbûz, the Goblin King.

DESCRIPTION

Balin's attack on the gates was a success. We drove out the Goblins from the great gate and guardroom. With surprise on our side, we slew many in the bright sun in the dale. We have taken the twenty-first hall of North end to dwell in. There is a shaft there that leads to the lower mine workings. Balin has set his seat in the Chamber of Mazarbul and claimed Moria for his own. However, the truth is that we still must drive the Goblins from our home. We hear them in the dark below, down in the mines.

The Dwarves have successfully recaptured the upper levels of Moria, and Balin is now proclaimed as its lord. However, deep below in the mines, Durbûz the Goblin King assembles his army and prepares to drive the Dwarves from Moria. The two forces meet as Balin descends to the mines, and the battle for Moria begins in earnest!

PARTICIPANTS

The Good side consists of Balin, 2 Dwarf Captains, 8 Khazâd Guard, 10 Dwarves with axes and shields, 9 Dwarves with axes and Dwarf bows, and 5 Dwarves with two-handed axes. Balin has Durin's Axe. The Evil side consists of Durbûz, 1 Moria Goblin Drum, 1 Goblin Captain, 2 Goblin Shamans, 12 Moria Goblins with swords and shields, 12 Moria Goblins with spears, 12 Moria Goblins with Orc bows and 1 Cave Troll armed with either a Troll chain or a spear.

POINTS MATCH

If you want to play this game with other forces, choose 600 points of troops for both sides. Neither player may spend more than 50% of his points on Heroes and neither side may have more than a third (33%) of its models armed with bows.

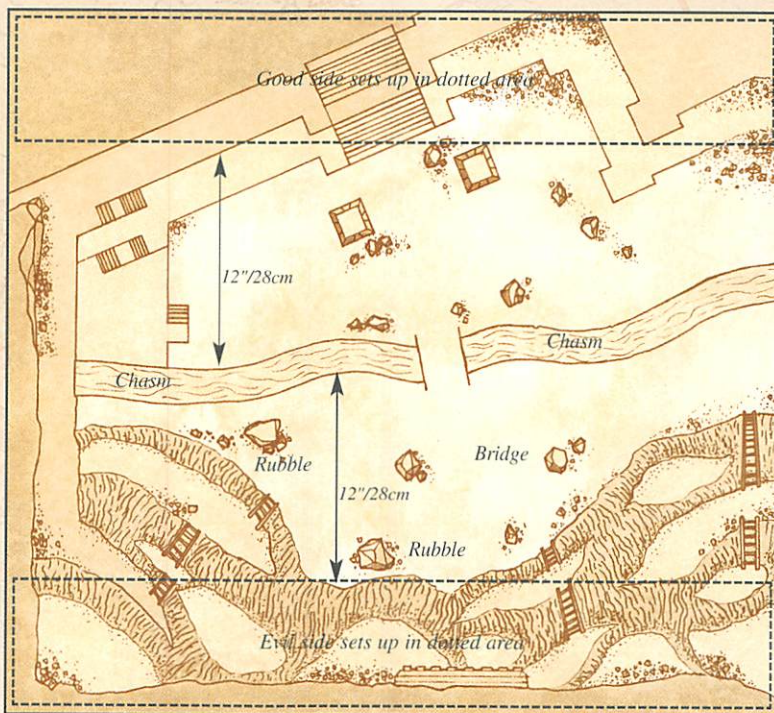
LAYOUT

This scenario is fought on a low level of the Mines of Moria, where the Dwarven living quarters meet the mine workings. A chasm runs through the centre of the board – this counts as impassable terrain but should be no more than 2"/4cm wide to allow all models to be able to attempt to leap it. A narrow bridge (approximately 4"/10cm wide) crosses the chasm in the middle of the board.

The rest of the board is built up as a succession of levels. These are smooth, finished stone on one side (the Dwarven living quarters) and rough scree on the

BATTLE FOR THE DWARROWDELF

A The Lord of The Rings Battle Report



other (mine workings). The floor is covered with rocks and debris.

STARTING POSITIONS

The Good player deploys half his force first, anywhere more than 12"/28cm from the chasm on the living quarters side of the board. The Evil player then deploys half of his force, anywhere more than 12"/28cm from the chasm on the mine workings side. Then the Good player deploys the rest of his force as described above, and finally the Evil player does the same.

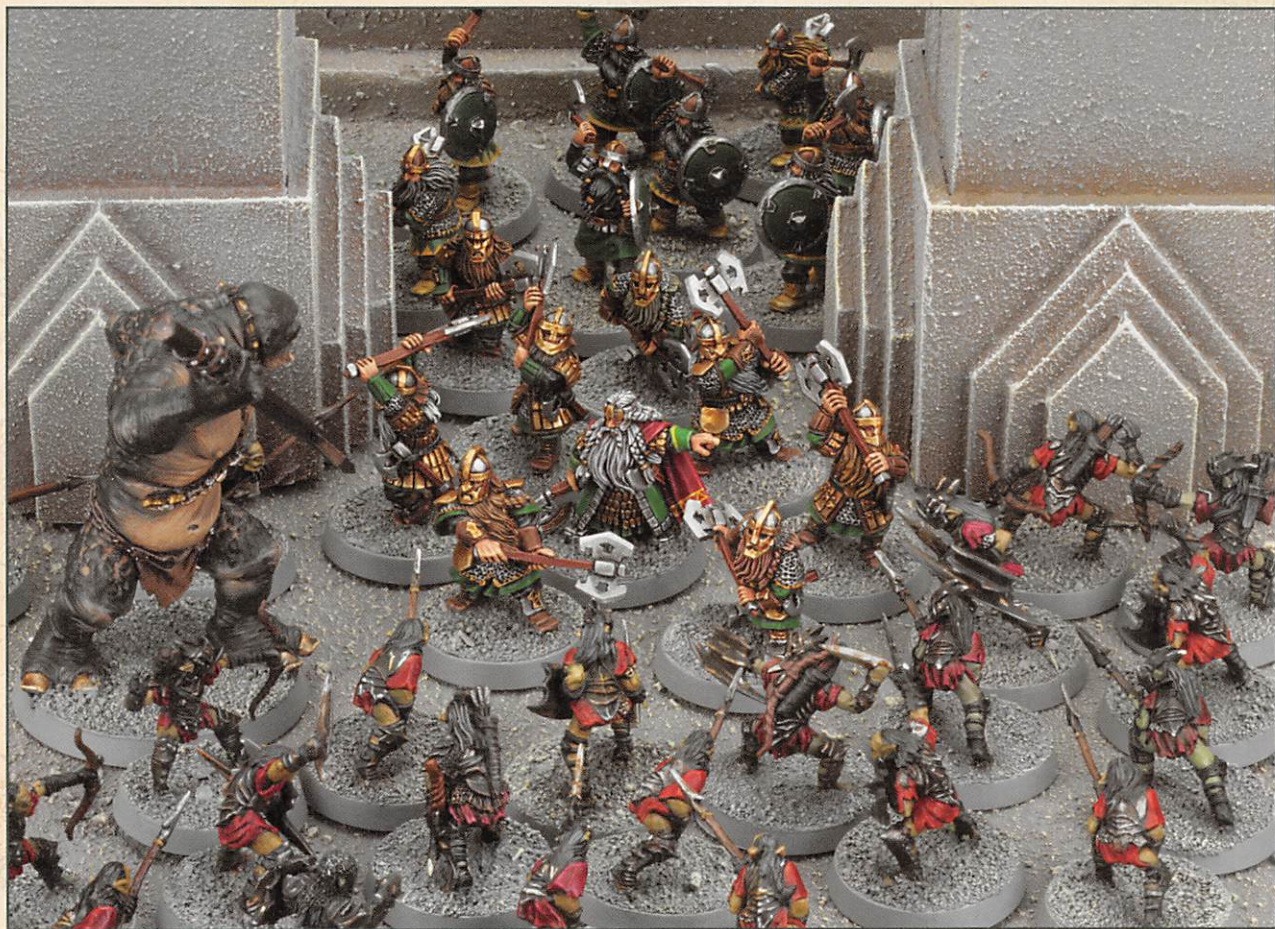
OBJECTIVES

The first force to reduce the opposition to a quarter (25%) of its original numbers at the end of any turn wins the game. Should both forces be reduced to a quarter of the original numbers at the end of the same turn, the final result is a draw.

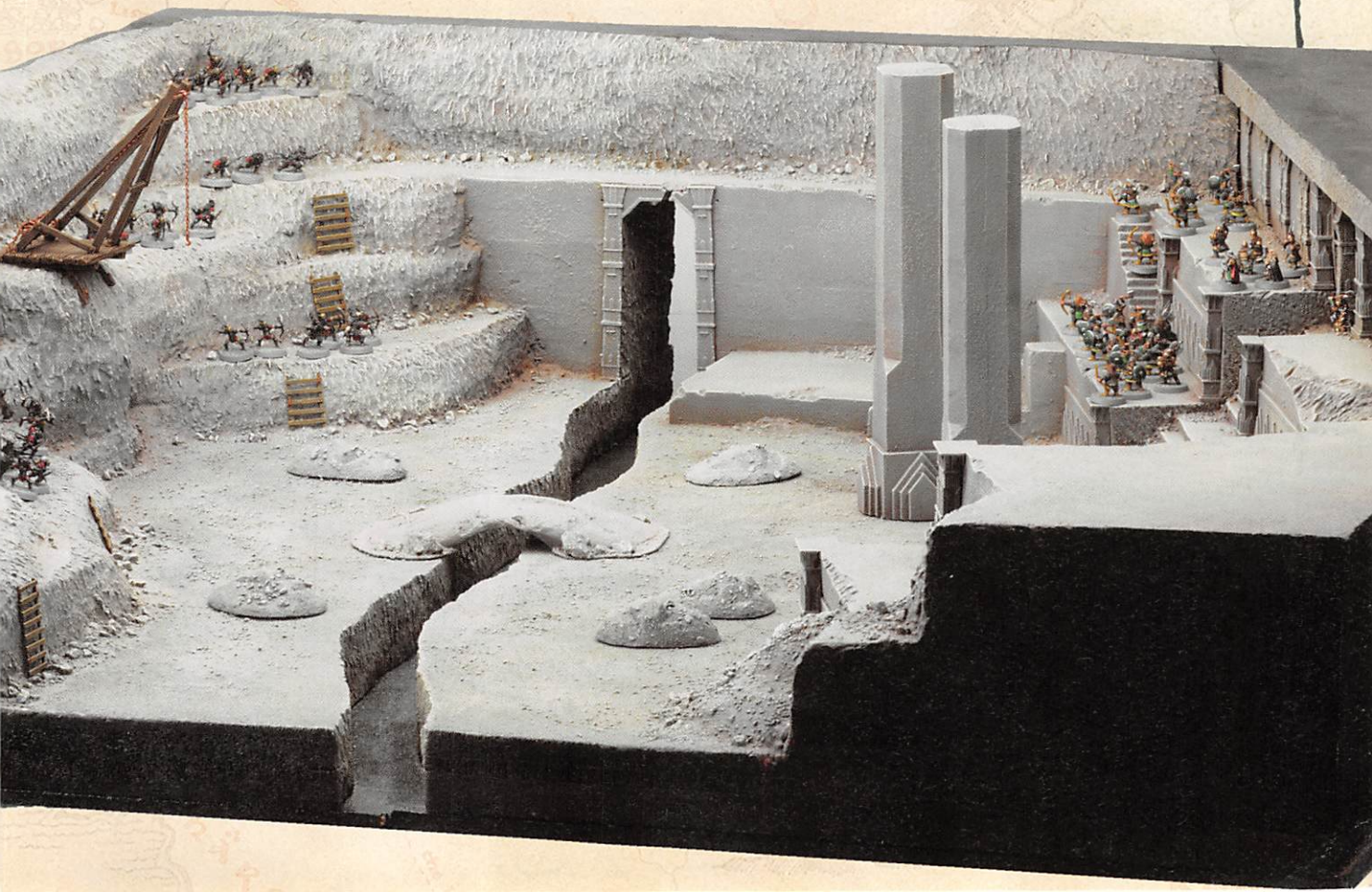
SPECIAL RULES

Chasm. The chasm is an obstacle and may be jumped as described in the main rules manual. However, if a model fails to jump the gap, they are removed as a casualty as they fall to their death.



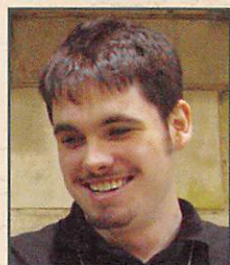


The Goblins rise up out of the deeps.



THE GOOD SIDE

HAMMER INTO ANVIL



Matthew Ward

To slightly misquote Goethe 'You must be anvil or hammer.' As I was to be fielding the Dwarves in this, the first battle report of

Shadow and Flame, this did

seem to be quite apt. Dwarves have a great love of metalworking and smithying, and so the philosophy of 'the Hammer and the Anvil' would doubtless be one that they would apply in their battles. The principal as I interpreted it was simple: either I could be hammered upon, or I could be the one that does the hammering – fairly obvious advice really, but when I thought about it in wider terms a cunning plan began to emerge...

Goblin tactics, when faced with a superior but less numerous foe (which, let's face it, is pretty much everyone but Dunlendings), tend to be to attack *en masse*, hoping to overwhelm a section of

the enemy line through sheer weight of numbers. Occasionally there will be a few stray Goblins to give the Evil player a little versatility but there will almost always be a main group – the Anvil. With this in mind I decided to use Balin and the majority of the Khazâd Guard as my 'Hammer', but the problem remained of how to keep the Anvil in one place long enough for me to hit it. To do this I would need a second group of Dwarves to hold the 'Anvil' in place long enough for me to strike it – not an enviable task, as they would be heavily outnumbered for several turns. If Alessio instead chose to go for an attack across the full frontage of the cavern, I would be equally happy as I could then throw my two groups at the weak spots in his line. Once the Goblins were broken the going would get a lot easier – if only I could keep my Dwarves intact long enough.

Three things in the Goblin force were worrying me: the Troll, the Shamans, and the Drum. The Shamans and the Drum would interfere with my intention of breaking the Goblins, making the late game that much harder. The Cave Troll is just annoyingly hard. With a higher Fight value than most of the Dwarves and

three Strength 6 attacks, this brute could easily tear through the heart of the Dwarven formation. My plan for dealing with it depends on where it goes. If it strays too far from support I could ambush it with a knot of Dwarves and hope that I get lucky. By far the best option, though, is to try and avoid it and, if necessary, sacrifice one Dwarf at a time to keep it locked down and away from the key fights.

With these thoughts in mind I chose to split my forces into two groups: a large force of warriors led by a Captain to cover both the ledge and form a solid defensive position below, while Balin and his guard formed the second group. The intention was to hope Alessio went after one group (to bring his superior numbers to bear), which could then hold the Goblin 'Anvil' in place long enough for the second group of Dwarves to 'Hammer' them apart. Of course, this whole plan relied solely on the unfortunate lure being able to survive long enough for help to arrive, but Dwarves are incredibly tough and I had every confidence that they would endure.

They would have to...

THE EVIL SIDE

WE HAVE A CAVE TROLL!



Alessio Cavatore

Let's face it, against enemies whose lowest Defence value is an outstanding 6, and will mostly be 7 with peaks of 8, a lumbering brute with Strength 6 is definitely going to be

your best friend. I will try and bring the Troll into combat without exposing it to too much bow fire and then support it with some of my Heroes that have Might. I'm thinking in particular of a combination Cave Troll/Durbûrz attack, maybe with a Shaman not too far behind.

To break the Dwarves I'll have to concentrate first on the Defence 6 warriors, which my Troll wounds on a nice 4, my mighty Heroes on a 5 and my archers on a 6 (better than needing a 6 followed by a 4...). The Dwarf archers and two-handed axemen are definitely

the softer targets, and I should go for them whenever the opportunity presents itself. Only after these have been cut down should I try and wound the much harder enemies, against which many an attack is bound to bounce off harmlessly. Hopefully, the Dwarves should break and this is when my Drum would prove itself very useful.

Another vital thing to keep in mind is trying to surround as many of the Dwarves as possible in order to use our numerical advantage to its maximum and bury as many enemies as possible under a veritable avalanche of Goblins.

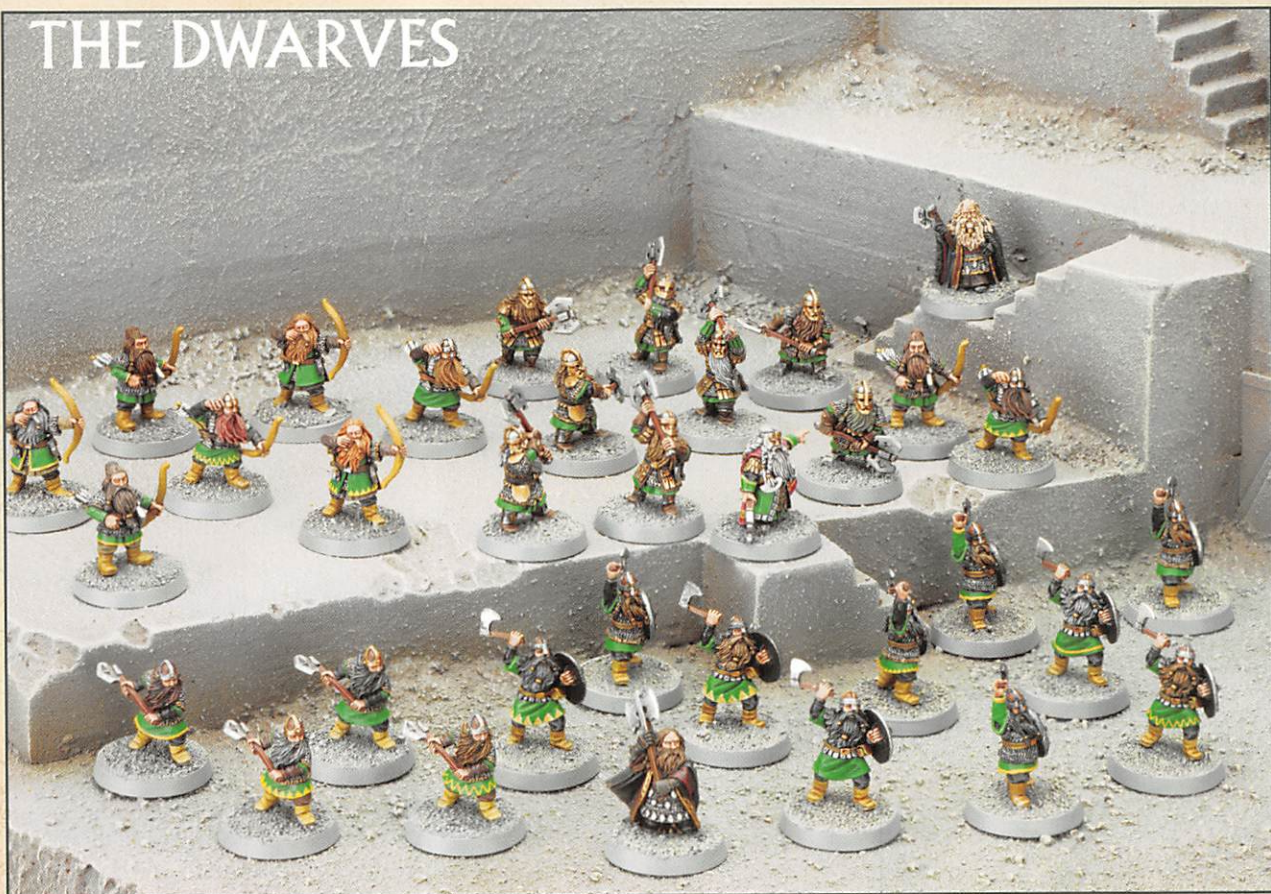
The dynamics of the game are intriguing; the Dwarves have a superior firepower, and that means that I have to close in quickly. Also, on the map it's easy to identify the two critical points of the table: the only two points where my Cave Troll could cross the chasm without risking a deadly fall – the bridge and the ledge on my left. I believe the Dwarves have two main tactical solutions available. They can concentrate on these two points, either coming forward to meet the Goblins as they

jump across the chasm and forcing them to fight with their backs to the abyss, or they can fight more defensively, letting the Goblins through and delaying contact as long as possible, to give time for their bows to reduce the enemy numbers as much as possible.

Having the advantage of deploying half of my force last, I will hold back my hardest things in the second half and decide whether to concentrate all my best stuff on a central assault or split them into two assault groups. This would be my favourite battle plan, having the main force led by Durbûrz, the Troll and a Shaman, and a second assault party under the Captain and the other Shaman.

The idea is to feint by initially threatening the Dwarves in two areas, in order to split them into two halves. If that works, then both of my assault groups will suddenly converge on one of the Dwarven halves and destroy it! Failing that, we'll keep our fingers crossed and hope the Cave Troll wins the game for us...

THE DWARVES



THE GOBLINS



The Dwarven contingent ready themselves for the onslaught of Durbûrz and his Goblin horde.

TURN ONE

With Balin's arrival at the entrance to the mines the first sparks of battle spread across the cavern. As the Dwarf Lord and his escort began to descend the stairs, the remainder of the Dwarves held their position remaining content to cede the narrow stone bridge and allow the Goblins into range of their bows. Across the chasm the Goblin horde began their climb down to the rocky floor, effortlessly skipping from rock to rock. The cavern rang to the guttural chanting as both Goblin Shamans cast Fury, inciting their companions to battle. With both armies out of bowshot the turn ended with no blood spilt.

TURN TWO

Spurred on by their fiendish commander, the Goblins stole Priority away from the Dwarves and continued to swarm towards them across the stalagmite-cluttered and debris-strewn floor. In the centre, Durbûrz led a cluster of Goblins towards the bridge, the Cave Troll striding easily on ahead, while the remainder of the vicious creatures moved into flanking positions either side of the main group, and a small force struck out across the ledge. On the other side of the subterranean vault Balin and his guard took up flanking positions on the stairs, willing to let the Goblins decide the strategy of the battle. On the southern end of the ledge the knot of

Dwarves reformed, readying themselves to counter the Goblins that threatened their position while Náli hurried forward to join them. As the Goblins had all surged forward at full speed, the Dwarves were unthreatened by archery, while a single Dwarf archer was able to take a hasty shot at a Goblin on the far side of the chasm. Some sixth sense warned the Goblin of the incoming missile and he crouched low behind his shield, the Dwarven arrow sticking fast into the crude surface and leaving him uninjured.

TURN THREE

With the Dwarves content to let the Goblins come to them, Priority remained with the Evil side and the Goblins advanced all across the vault, some of them readying their bows as they came. Again content to allow Durbûrz's tactics to reveal themselves, Balin commanded his folk to hold their positions, the only exception being Náli who finally reached the group by the ledge. In the Shoot phase a handful of Goblins let fly with their bows, but their aim was astray and nary a single Dwarf was hit. In return, fully half a dozen Dwarves took careful aim but though all the shots were true, only a single Goblin fell – one of the Drummers. Oblivious of his colleague's fate, the remaining Drummer played on...

TURN FOUR

Priority stayed with the Goblins, and Durbûrz made his strategy known. His group changed direction towards the bastion of archers and the eastern flanking group leapt the chasm and scampered on towards the Dwarves. In response, Balin commanded the other Dwarves to reform to meet the threat with half moving to join Balin's group and the rest moving eastwards to counter the Goblin force there. Only the archers remained in position, the better to lay down covering fire. Unfortunately for one bold Dwarven archer, the Goblin archery proved to be more accurate than the previous turn and he fell, pierced by many black-feathered bolts. Furious at the death of their kinsman, the marksmanship of the Dwarves proved to be mostly inaccurate with only a single Goblin plucked from Durbûrz's entourage.

TURN FIVE

Both forces were now within charge range of one another, making Priority crucial. In a stroke of fortune, Balin was able to steal the initiative from his loathsome opponent. In response to his orders the Dwarves on the eastern end of the battlefield bellowed their war cries and charged headlong into the Goblins, giving Durbûrz a tempting group to outflank and destroy. Balin held his group in check waiting to see if Durbûrz would go after the bait, hoping his forces could hold off long enough to close the trap



on the usurper. Seemingly unaware of the Dwarf Lord's strategy, Durbûrz led his group towards the eastern force of Dwarves but was unable to reach the combat that turn. Across the cavern, Goblin archers shuffled forward, searching for targets amongst the rubble. In the brief but fierce flurry of shots that followed, both sides suffered casualties, with three Goblins falling to Dwarven skill and only a single Dwarf archer slain in the return fire. In the Fight phase the impetus of the Dwarven charge helped them easily win their fights, but their axes failed to cleave even a single Goblin.

TURN SIX

Fortune and Priority remained with Balin this turn and he finally gave the order for his reinforced bodyguard to advance on the enemy. Further to the east, the two Dwarven Captains led the charge on the Goblins both atop the ledge and far below on the cavern floor. In response, Durbûrz mustered his group of Goblins forward but directed the

Cave Troll towards the Dwarf archers. Such a shallow wall was of no hindrance to the Troll and finding handhold after handhold he clambered up to engage the archers above him. Even losing three possible shots due to the charge of the Cave Troll, the Dwarf archery managed to claim another Goblin from Durbûrz's entourage. Better still, but for the intervention of Fate, a wound would have been scored on the Shaman atop the eastern ledge. Alas for the Dwarves, Goblin archery again took its toll, pitching yet another Dwarf archer onto his face. As the Fight phase commenced blow after blow rang out upon the ledge, but Náli and the Goblin Captain were apparently well matched and neither could find a weakness in their opponent's defence. Below them it was a completely different story and the Dwarves managed to crush two of their cursed foes beneath their keen axes. Finally, with a mighty bellow, the Cave Troll easily beat aside the defence of the Dwarf archers, plucking one off the ledge as he hauled himself up into the Dwarf's place.



Durbûrz orders his troops forward, under the protection of a vicious Cave Troll.

TURN SEVEN

With Priority being crucial in this turn, the Goblins managed to wrest the initiative from the Dwarves and Durbûrz urged his followers on. Seeing the danger at the foot of the ledge, Frár declared a Heroic Action, hoping to keep Durbûrz pinned that much closer to Balin. Conscious of the proximity of the Dwarves behind him, Durbûrz desperately countered the Captain's Heroic Move with one of his own, and with the dice roll favouring the forces of Evil, threw his forces into that of the beleaguered Captain, pinning him in place and leaving Balin without an opponent for another turn. Some way above the head of the Goblin King, the Goblin Captain once more led his group into combat against the Dwarves who challenged his control of the ledge. Further along, the Cave Troll charged into the remaining two archers who readied

themselves once more for an uneven fight. On the other side of the vault the western force of Goblins was slowly dragging itself into range of the action, its bows now in range of Balin and his entourage. When the Dwarves came to move Balin hustled his group forward, leaving behind a solitary axeman tasked with keeping the Cave Troll clear of the others should it manage to defeat the brave archers. In a change of tactics and to try and contain Durbûrz's group, the Dwarfven archers near the east ledge leapt down from step to step, reinforcing the outnumbered lower group. In the Shoot phase, all the Goblin archers on the far side of the chasm and on the bridge let fly at Balin's entourage but not a single shot hit home. With all the Dwarf archers otherwise engaged there was no return fire from Durin's folk, but they did manage to hack down two Goblins from Durbûrz's retinue in close combat. The



With the three Dwarves at the Cave Troll's mercy, Balin looks on in frustration.



Durbûrz throws himself into combat against a Dwarven captain.

feeling of ascendancy was fleeting however as Durbûrz claimed a kill, as did a Goblin spearman. On the ledge the tale was no better, as the darting blade of the Goblin Captain found a chink in the armour of the Dwarf Captain and scored a wound that fickle Fate did not prevent. At the close of the Fight phase the Cave Troll once more proved his worth, his hammer bludgeoning another Dwarf archer to a ruined mess on the ground.

TURN EIGHT

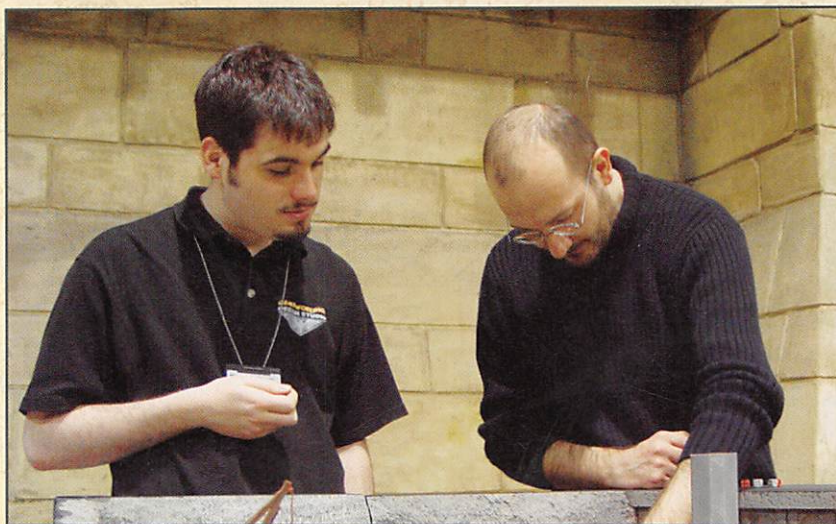
As he lost Priority to the Dwarves, Durbûrz declared another Heroic Move to try and retain advantage, bellowing at his underlings with a ferocity he probably thought was motivating. While the Goblins milled in disarray Frár made a Heroic Move of his own and led his warriors forward once more into the fray hoping to hold the Goblins at bay until Balin could reinforce him. Sensing victory slip away, Balin hurried his bodyguard forward, detaching two Dwarves to engage the Goblin archers by the bridge. Seemingly unworried by his near fatal wound, Náli clashed once more with his bitter rival upon the ledge. In a selfless display of bravery, the remaining archer opposing the Cave Troll hurled himself back into combat with the beast whilst the axeman held back once more to keep the Troll away from Balin, should it kill the archer. Possessing more than two Goblins for every Dwarf that opposed him, Durbûrz directed his forces in an attempt to maximise his chances, even flinging himself into combat with a Khazâd Guard.

Near the bridge, the western force finally made contact with the Dwarven lines, charging the two Dwarves that Balin had dispatched to guard his flank. In the Shoot phase the Goblin archers tried to pluck the lone Dwarven axeman into eternity, but all the shots went wide. In the Fight phase, Náli once more failed to fell his adversary – wasting 2 points of Might in the process. In the thick of the fight around Frár the tide of battle swung against the Dwarves with three falling in quick succession, one to the crooked sword of Durbûrz himself. In return, only two Goblins were felled, although the Goblin Shaman lost both the fight and the effects of Fury. In a desperate struggle Balin's rearguard were able to

contain the Goblins by the bridge but not inflict any damage. In a valiant effort, the Dwarf archer managed beat back the Cave Troll but failed to wound it.

TURN NINE

Fortune smiled on Balin this turn and Priority went to the Dwarves but, before Balin could capitalise on it, Durbûrz initiated a Heroic Move. The suddenness of the action took Balin by surprise and his attempt to counter the move failed, allowing Durbûrz to charge deeper into the roiling tide of life and death combat below the eastern ledge. Denied of his adversary, Balin had to content himself by hurling his



Matthew watches with interest as Alessio makes his move.



The battle rages in a circle of destruction.

guard into combat with stray Goblins around the edge of the fight, while two Khazâd Guard and a Dwarf axeman charged at a lone spearmen on the edge of the plinth that the two sides now fought over.

Náli once more charged forward into combat on the ledge, determined that this should be the final clash between him and his Goblin adversary. By the bridge the two members of Balin's rearguard charged headlong into combat once more, thinking nothing of their own lives, while the archer and the Cave Troll continued their deadly dance along the south wall of the cavern.

Both around Durbûrz and around the bridge the Goblins piled forward, trying to overwhelm the still outnumbered Dwarves, the Goblin Shaman near to Durbûrz casting Fury once more to bolster the flagging spirits of the Goblins. The handful of unengaged Goblin archers loosed their arrows at the Dwarf axeman once more but failed to strike him down. In the Fight phase, the lone Goblin spearman defending the plinth proceeded to kill two of his attackers and drive the other off, while Durbûrz managed to strike down another Dwarf. As yet another Dwarf vanished beneath a flood of Goblins, Frâr fended off his attackers, slicing one down as they

retreated before his rage. Against the south wall, the archer once more managed to parry the blows of the Cave Troll, while on the ledge Náli finally defeated the Goblin Captain that opposed him, inflicting four wounds on the hapless Goblin and hacking him to pieces. Last but not least, the Axe of Durin found a target as Balin effortlessly beheaded a Goblin archer in one massive sweep.

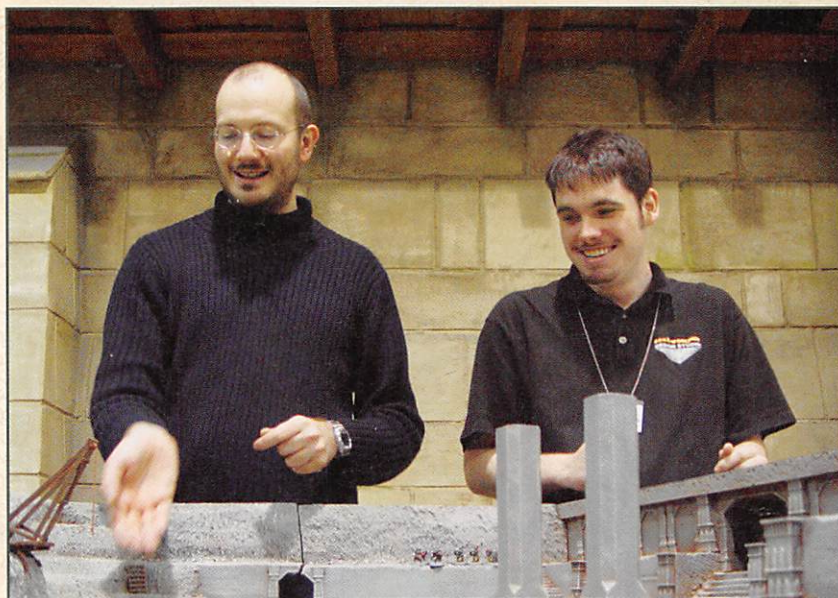
TURN TEN

Priority remained with Balin this turn, and with a grim flourish he threw himself into combat with Durbûrz. All across the

battlefield his folk followed his example, charging their nearest opponents in an attempt to hold back the flow of Goblins. With the exception of the archers on the other side of the chasm, and the remaining Drummer, all of the Goblins followed suit – one drawing Balin away from the Goblin King – and a series of vicious combats broke out across the cavern. Once more, the only shooting was on the side of the Goblins, and once more they failed to kill a single Dwarf. As the Fight phase started, Balin initiated a Heroic Combat, effortlessly cutting down his opponent and then following up into Durbûrz and dealing the brute two deep wounds. Fate however, was merciful to the Goblin King and he remained unhurt. Elsewhere, the same Goblin who had dispatched two opponents last turn again managed to kill a Khazâd Guard, while the Cave Troll managed to dismember the archer that had been bedevilling him for several turns. Seemingly inspired by Balin's example, the Dwarves were fighting ferociously all across the vault, four Goblins crushed beneath their might. Better yet, as both Goblin Shamans lost their combats, the effects of Fury were dissipated. In the closing stage of the turn, a lone Goblin struck down another Dwarf and uncertainty spread along the Dwarf lines – with half of their numbers lying dead or wounded, things were not going well for the Dwarves.

TURN ELEVEN

With the Dwarves now broken, the Goblins won Priority. Seeing their chances slip away, Balin declared a Heroic Move and, after passing his Courage test, once more clashed with the Goblin King, bringing the remains of his Khazâd Guard with him. Here and there lone Dwarves charged dense knots of Goblins hoping to buy Balin the time to slaughter his foe. With Balin's Heroic Move completed, the remaining Goblins barrelling into combat, the archers leaping the chasm to add their weight to the skirmish on the plinth. The Cave Troll chose to ignore the lone axeman by the south wall and instead charged into the fight around the Goblin King. As the lone Drummer continued to beat out his doom-laden rhythm, Nâli's nerve broke and he fled towards the entrance. Where possible the Dwarves were shielding, desperate to buy time for Balin to defeat Durbûrz in combat but even so, in the ensuing combats two more Dwarves fell to the Evil force, one pulverised by the Cave Troll and one skewered by the same Goblin spearman who had already killed three Dwarves. For their part, the Dwarves managed to kill another Goblin, and in the thick of the fight Balin and Durbûrz circled one another warily. With practised skill, Balin beat aside the feeble parries of his despotic opponent. As Balin raised his axe for the kill, Durbûrz tried to



Alessio and Matt manage to retain some humour in the bloody battle.

back away but found his path blocked by two Khazâd Guard. The Axe of Durin came flashing down, cleaving the usurper of Moria in twain, from head to toe. Breathing hard, Balin stepped back and looked about to assess the situation.

and fled towards the mines. The Drummer played on, seemingly unaware of what had occurred nearby. With his blood up, Balin disembowelled two more Goblins, while Frâr dispatched yet another. Even the Cave Troll suffered a wound, his tough hide penetrated by a

TURN TWELVE

The Goblins had broken with the death of Durbûrz, and both forces were now losing resolve. In the confusion Balin managed to steal the initiative, held his courage and threw his warriors into combat with redoubled effort. Nâli's courage failed him again and he continued towards the exit, as did the remaining Dwarf warrior at the bridge. Under the influence of the Drum, the Goblins nearest to the fight passed their Courage Tests, while those that were more distant turned their heels



Dwarven great-axe wielded with incomparable skill by a desperate Dwarf. Set against this was the death of another Dwarf who disappeared under a mass of Goblins led by one of the Shamans.

TURN THIRTEEN

Priority remained with the Dwarves and Balin charged down the Goblin spearman who had killed four Dwarves single-handedly. At the last second before contact, a finely-crafted hatchet left Balin's hand and buried itself deep in the Goblin's brain, leaving Balin free to engage another Goblin. Náli and the Dwarf warrior who had fled the previous turn kept on running for the exit, but otherwise the Dwarves kept their cool and launched themselves at the foe with a bitter enthusiasm. This enthusiasm was not matched within the ranks of the Goblins, and four Goblins fled the fight, although the rest were encouraged by the sonorous beat of the Drum. The Cave Troll, however, could take no solace from the sound, and lost his nerve. The Fight phase proved good for the Dwarves with another two Goblins slaughtered where they stood but, with another Dwarf pulled down by weight of numbers, the Goblins were now dangerously close to victory.

TURN FOURTEEN

The Goblins managed to steal Priority and, even worse for the Dwarves, almost all passed their Courage tests (the Cave Troll

being a notable exception) and set upon the Dwarves with renewed vigour. Save for the fleeing Captain and warrior – both of whom failed their Courage tests once more – the Dwarves were all engaged in combat and though they cut down another Goblin, two Dwarves fell in exchange.

TURN FIFTEEN

Priority remained with the Evil side this turn, but the Drummer finally lost his nerve and fled, leaving the Drum behind – a welcome sight indeed for the Dwarves. About Balin the combat went on as the Goblin Shaman rallied the remainder of the Goblins to the fight. Even the Cave Troll recovered his wits and lurched towards the fight. Once more, Balin passed his Courage test and battle was joined as Náli, whose will to fight must have been totally destroyed, came to within two moves of leaving the battleground. Around the Goblin Shaman and Balin the two sides clashed once more but this time no casualties were inflicted, although both Shamans lost their Fury.

TURN SIXTEEN

The Dwarves wearily prepared to rejoin battle once again, but before they could do so the courage of the Goblins evaporated and many of them darted away from the Dwarves. The Cave Troll, confused by the constant change, decided to go with the majority opinion and loped off after the fleeing Goblins. Once again, it came down

to the two Goblin Shamans to rally their forces and stand against Balin. Fortunately for the Dwarves the lone warrior by the south entrance recovered his nerve and moved towards the action, but Náli still fled towards safety. In combat the Goblins managed to pull down another Dwarf, while the combined efforts of Balin and his remaining Khazâd Guardsman managed to dispatch two more Goblins. With the Dwarves needing to kill only two more Goblins and the Goblins having to kill only one more Dwarf it was going to be a close finish.

TURN SEVENTEEN

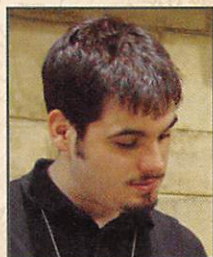
With a last desperate gamble Balin stole back the initiative, winning Priority and passing his Courage test and in a last effort the remaining Dwarves pitched in once more, even Náli recovering his courage on the very edge of the board. In comparison the Goblins appeared to have given up hope, with all the unengaged models fleeing the fight. In a very tense Fight phase, both Balin and Frár each killed a Goblin, reducing the enemy force to a quarter and claiming victory. As the remaining Goblins fled the blood-slicked rock the Dwarves were left as the undisputed masters of the field, but the price had been a high one...



Balin finally manages to defeat Durbûrz, and send the Goblin horde into disarray.

THE GOOD SIDE

THERE IS ONE DWARF YET IN MORIA THAT STILL DRAWS BREATH



Matthew Ward

Well okay, there's more than one, but that was far too close for comfort. With just barely a quarter of the Dwarves that entered the battle leaving it under their own steam,

Balin's lordship of Moria was earned at a very steep price indeed. An incredibly closely-fought battle, that could have so easily gone the other way at almost any point – if either of the fleeing Dwarves had left the board as they so very nearly did; if the Goblin Drummer had stayed at his post instead of fleeing; even Balin arriving into the fray a turn later would have probably cost the Dwarves victory.

By and large I think that my tactics worked, the 'Hammer and Anvil' approach paid off very nicely with the outnumbered Dwarves holding their ground long enough to give Balin a crack at Durbûrz which, in nicely dramatic terms, broke the Goblin force and probably changed the tide of the battle. Dwarves really are tough warriors for the points they cost, I really wouldn't have liked to try this with any other force – even High Elves. The extra



Matt takes the pain with a smile.

defence of the Heroes really does pay off and Balin's deadly swinging of Durin's Axe saved me more than once.

Speaking of Balin, he proved to be the star of the battle for me. Seemingly unstoppable, he cast aside dead Goblins wherever he went and generally engaged in displays of heroism and derring-do befitting a Dwarf of his rank. I was also incredibly fortunate in Alessio's abominable ill-fortune with the Cave

Troll who seemed to have real trouble clobbering his opponents, and then promptly dithered backwards and forwards across the battlefield when the Goblins finally broke. That said though, that damnable spearman who skewered four of my brave Dwarves more than made up for that (in my eyes anyway). All in all, a very closely fought game and tremendous fun.

THE EVIL SIDE

CAVE TROLL? WHAT CAVE TROLL?



Alessio Cavatore

One Dwarf! We only needed to kill one more Dwarf! If I had killed one more enemy in Turn Sixteen I would have won, and the result would have been a draw if I had done it in Turn Seventeen.

But it wasn't to be. The Goblins have been defeated and the Dwarves can have their mines back... for now. I think what lost the game for me was the appalling performance of the Cave Troll on the

ledge. It took him an unbelievably huge amount of close combat turns to kill just a couple of Defence 6 Dwarves. He was losing fights with three dice against one (and with a better Fight value!) and even when winning he was failing to roll the single 4 he needed to kill his opponent! How frustrating! How infuriating!

Being trapped on the ledge fighting archers he wasn't where I needed him the most – in the thick of the fray, where his Fight 6 value would have really helped.

If he had quickly dispatched the archers and jumped back down (as I was planning), I might have broken the Dwarves earlier on, which would have been decisive. Unfortunately though, I

was broken with the demise of Durbûrz, and the panic attack of my remaining Drummer sealed my fate.

I think I should make a special mention of the Goblin spearman that cut his way through no less than four Dwarves (wasn't one a Khazâd Guard?). How hard was the little fellow? Sadly the nasty Dwarves finally overpowered him through sheer weight of numbers...

All in all a very interesting game. Well played by Matt and very, very close.

Enjoy your pyrrhic victory, bearded ones! The conquering of the mines will eventually bring about your doom. Keep delving greedily and deep and see what you find... <chuckles maniacally>