



In the first of two parts, we revisit the thrill of conducting piratical raids with expanded rules for fighting on waterways from Gondor to the Lindon.

Some of the most memorable moments in *The Lord of the Rings* center around rivers and boats. Aragorn's arrival at Pelennor Fields, Gothmog's assault on Osgiliath, and the passage of the Anduin are but a few examples. The story is full of many more. Some time ago, I introduced the rules for boats and rivers, and I've now decided that it's about time that I took it a stage further.

The fantastic thing about playing scenarios in this game is the depth to which you can take them. Once you've decided what, where,

why, and who (no small task in itself), then there's always the how. "How" is what we're going to take a look at in this article. By the time we're done, you'll be crafting your own scenarios and events in the world of Middle-earth. First, however, let's refresh our memories about the rules for boats.

BOATS AND SHIPS IN THE GAME

The first part of this article summarizes the "River Assault Rules" article published in WD290. These rules work perfectly well for

battles with small craft along coastlines and rivers. For rules for larger ships or for battles on the open sea, see the two articles entitled "All at Sea," both published in WD297.

DRIFT

At the start of the game, players determine the rate and direction of Drift in the river or sea. Players are free to decide upon the amount and direction of Drift – either D3"/D6 cm (standard current) or D6"/2D6cm (strong current). In the Priority Phase, each model in the water (including boats) moves in the direction and speed of the Drift. The player with Priority may choose the order in which the models move.

MOVING BOATS

Boats are under the control of the player with the greatest number of models touching the sails and/or the oars of the boat (calculate before any models move). However, if your boat model does not have a visible method of propulsion, simply count all the models on board. Models that are lying down or incapacitated for any reason (e.g., as the result of a Paralyze spell) do not count for the purpose of determining control. Models with a Strength of 6 or greater count as three models for the purposes of determining control. If both players have an equal number of models touching the sails and/or the oars of the boat, neither player has control; as such, neither can move the boat this turn.

Boats move in the controlling player's Move Phase. Boats may be turned to face any direction at the start of their move – they may not turn later in their move. Roll on the Handling Chart to determine how far the boat can move. The boat can move at full speed if



Rangers of Gondor attempt to repel an Orc raid.

HANDLING CHART

D6 Result

- 1 The boat goes out of control. The warriors spend the rest of their Move Phase trying to regain control. The boat may not move this turn but will Drift with the current as normal.
- 2-5 The boat must move up to D6"/2D6 cm. It may move an additional 1"/2 cm for each additional model beyond the fourth that is propelling the boat (e.g., a boat propelled by six models could move D6+2" or 2D6+4 cm).
- 6 The crew displays excellent seamanship. The boat may move up to 6"/14 cm plus 1"/2 cm for each additional model beyond the fourth that is propelling the boat.



For boats of this size, use the rules for ships published in WD297.

there are four or more models propelling the boat; if there are fewer than four models, then the speed of the boat is halved. Note that boats are not affected by Heroic Moves.

If a boat collides with a model with a Strength of 5 or less, the model is pushed 1 1/2 cm back from the boat, and the boat completes its move as normal. If a boat collides with a model with a Strength of 6 or greater or another boat, it immediately comes to a halt. In both cases, if the boat has traveled 4"/10 cm or more, both it and whatever it collides with suffer a Strength 8 hit for each 1 1/2 cm of unused movement.

DOCKING

With careful guidance, a vessel can be directed to dock at a certain place or to form a "raft" with another boat without suffering damage. To do so, the controlling player must nominate where the boat is going to dock or raft up before any dice are rolled on the Handling Chart. If the boat reaches the chosen vessel or coastline during its move, it has been guided well and neither suffers nor inflicts damage as a result of the collision.

EMBARKING AND DISEMBARKING

Any model may make a Jump roll to embark or disembark per the normal Jump rules. If a 1 is rolled on the Jump roll, then the model falls into the water. If a model attempts to Jump onto a defended obstacle (the side of a boat or a bank defended by the enemy), treat

the situation as though an attacker were charging a defended obstacle.

WARRIORS IN BOATS

While in a boat, Warriors and Heroes may move, fight, and shoot as normal – they count as being stationary for the purposes of shooting, even if the boat has moved.

MODELS IN THE WATER

Warriors and Heroes may attempt to swim through deep water. Indeed, if they have been tipped into a river as a result of a boat sinking, they'll have no other choice. Mounted models may not attempt to swim – though they may dismount and attempt to cross without their mount. Swimming models are moved in the controlling player's Move Phase. Roll a D6 for each swimming model and consult the Swimming Chart.

The amount of armor that a model is wearing can affect its ability to swim. The following modifiers represent the ability of a model wearing armor (including special kinds of regular armor, such as Dwarf armor). Apply the following modifiers to the Swimming Chart.

Model is wearing no armor/Mithril armor	+1
Model is wearing heavy armor/Dwarf heavy armor	-1
Model is carrying a shield	-1
Model carrying a shield and wearing heavy armor/Dwarf heavy armor	-2

Swimming models may not lie down, shoot, or carry burdens but will fight as normal. Swimming models count as being armed with daggers regardless of the weapon they are carrying. After the fight has been resolved, all combatants must roll on the Swimming Chart again. This roll is made simply to determine whether they have drowned as a result of the fight; they do not move further that turn as a result of the roll.

SWIMMING CHART

D6 Result

- 1 **Sink.** The model is overcome by the weight of his wargear and drowns. Remove the model as a casualty.
- 2-5 **Swim.** The model may move up to half its move through the water. If the model reaches the bank or a boat, it may not move further this turn but may make a Climb Test to pull itself out of the water and onto a bank or boat.
- 6 **Swim Strongly.** The model may make its normal move through the water. If the model reaches the bank or a boat, it may not move further this turn but may make a Climb Test to pull itself onto the bank or boat.

ATTACKING BOATS

Boats may be attacked like any other model and have the following profile.

Strength	Defense	Batter Points
Boat	8	4

Boats that are reduced to 0 Batter Points sink instantly, and any models inside are tipped into the water. Cavalry models that are cast into the water are treated as though they had just rolled a 1 on the Thrown Rider Chart. Models who have been tipped into the water may not move further that turn.

DROPPING ANCHOR

After a boat has moved, the controlling player may declare that it is dropping anchor. Mark the boat with a suitable counter or token. While anchored, a boat will not move or Drift – the anchor must be raised for it to do so. The controlling player may raise the anchor at the end of any subsequent Move Phase (after both players have moved). The boat will then move normally from the next turn onward.

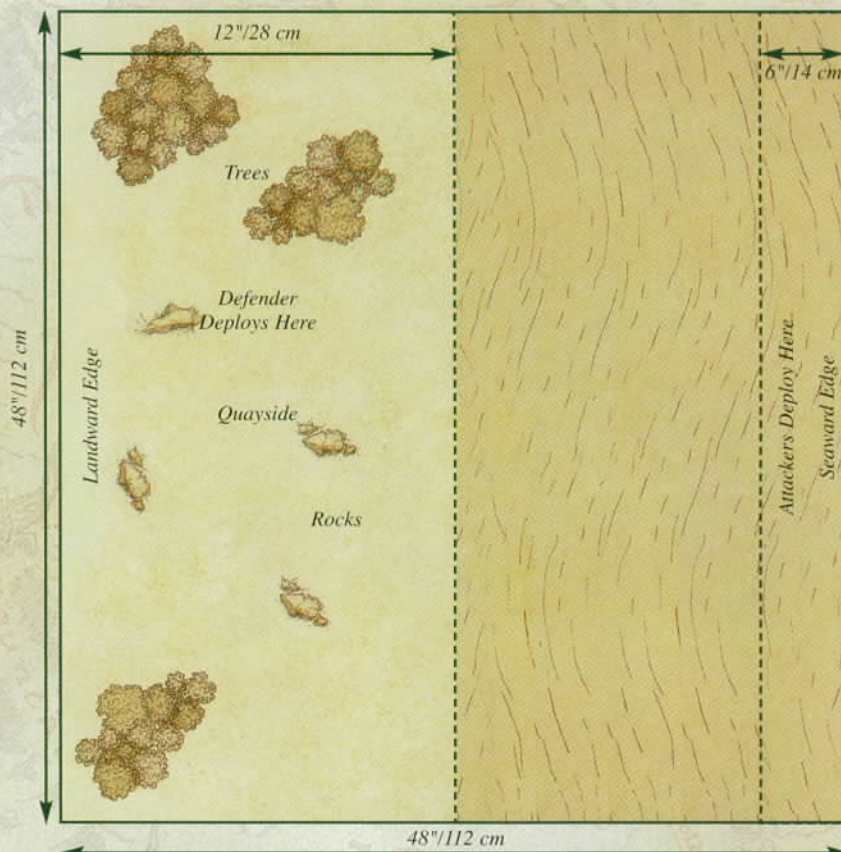
CHOOSING YOUR FORCES

Almost any protagonists will do for playing a coastal raid. Take a moment to think about the story that runs through your scenario. Will you re-create the folk of Anfalas defending their shores against Corsairs, for example? Are the Men of Númenor landing in Harad to end Sauron's control there once and for all? Only your imagination can limit the setting and scale of your game. Whatever your backdrop, both players should agree on a points value for the game – both the attacker and the defender should end up with equally sized forces.

BOARD LAYOUT

Coastal raids are best played on a board 48"/112 cm x 48"/112 cm, although, of course, they can be played on gaming tables of any width or length. The quayside stretches 24"/56 cm out from the landward board edge and should be covered with suitable terrain. It's worth noting at this point that the term "quayside" is a term for a generic shoreline – it does not necessarily refer to an urbanized harbor. There is no reason why a quayside could not be a heavily wooded shore with just a few jetties to land boats, or perhaps it has no conventional landing points at all! As normal, it's always best if players agree on the terrain and its effects before the game begins, although it is worth noting that some objectives will require specific terrain types. The rest of the board is the sea (or river) itself and should be mostly empty of terrain, although there is no reason why there cannot be piers or jetties stretching into the water or rocks projecting through the waves.

When the board has been set up, the defending player may place 2D6 barricades (lines of obstacles up to 1"/2 cm high and 6"/14 cm long) anywhere along the quayside. In addition, he may place D3 boats of his own anywhere in the water, provided that they are touching the quayside itself or a pier or jetty.



DEPLOYMENT

Unless any of the special deployment conditions are being used, the defending player always deploys his forces first. In a basic game, the Defender should deploy on the quayside, within 12"/28 cm of the landward board edge (see map). When he has done so, the attacker deploys his boats (and their forces within them) no more than 6"/14 cm from the seaward table edge.

These rules are enough to play many coastal raids. That said, you can always vary the deployment a little to add more variation to your games by limiting where each side deploys, perhaps, or having them arrive late. To help add a little more variety to your games, I've created a series of tables for all manner of variations that you can add to your games – simply decide with your opponent which one you wish to use or roll a D6. This month, I've focused on Deployment options, Game Length, and Special Rules, but next time, I'll explore some Mission Objective variants to give your games extra variety.

DEPLOYMENT VARIANTS

Prepared Defenses (D6 roll of 1-2). The attackers have taken some time to get organized, thereby giving the defenders breathing space to redeploy. After both sides have set up, the defending player may move all of his barricades and 2D6 of his defenders up to 6"/14 cm.

Scattered Defenders (D6 roll of 3-4). The defenders are thinly spread and hold several positions against the incoming assault. At the start of the game, the defending player splits his force into equal halves and divides his Heroes equally between the two halves. He

deploys one half normally but keeps the other to one side. From the 2nd turn onward, the defending player rolls a D6 at the end of his Move Phase for each model put aside in this way. If the roll is lower than the current turn number, the model may move onto the board from anywhere along the quayside.

Flanking Maneuver (D6 roll of a 5-6). In an all-out attempt to thwart the defenses, the attackers have landed a portion of their warriors further along the shore. Before the game begins, the attacker may put up to a quarter of his force (including up to one Hero costing less than 60 points) on one side. The attacker deploys his remaining forces as normal and nominates which board edge his other warriors will enter from. From the 4th turn onward, the attacking player rolls a D6 at the end of his Move Phase. If the roll is lower than the current turn number, the models put aside at the start of the game may move onto the board from any point along the edge he nominated earlier.

END CONDITIONS

Coastal raid games can last a few turns, representing a lightning fast raid, or several hours, re-enacting a desperate fight for supremacy. Players can agree on the game length before they begin, but note that the game should always end once one side has been eliminated. Below are a few suggestions for End Conditions.

Secure the Quay (D6 roll of 1). The game lasts for at least 6 turns. If there are no attacking models on the quayside at the end of any turn from Turn 7 onward, the game ends.

Random Game Length (D6 roll of 2). The game lasts for at least 6 turns. From the end of the Turn 7 onward, the player with Priority rolls a D6. If the result is a 6, the game ends.

Leaderless Attackers (D6 roll of 3). The game continues until all of the Heroes on the attacking side are slain.

Leaderless Defenders (D6 roll of 4). The game continues until all of the Heroes on the defending side are slain.

War of Attrition (D6 roll of 5). The game continues until one side has been reduced to below 50% of its starting numbers.

No Quarter (D6 roll of 6). The game continues until one side has been reduced to below 25% of its starting numbers.

SPECIAL RULES

Of course, no scenario for The Lord of The Rings would be complete without a few special rules to keep both players on their toes, and coastal raids are no different. Once more, I've provided a few suitable examples. However, as you play more games, you'll probably start making up your own or borrowing some from other scenarios. Any of the examples given below can be combined in any way. Thus, you can have *Gusting Winds* and an *Opening Bombardment* in the same scenario, for example.

Gusting Winds (D6 roll of 1). The winds along this particular stretch of coast are incredibly treacherous, making it very dangerous to walk along the precipitous drops (or quaysides). If the Priority roll is ever drawn on the roll of 5 or 6, both players roll a D6 for each model that is within 2 3/4 cm of a sheer drop (e.g., a cliff, the top of a wall) or the edge of the quay. On a roll of 4+, the model loses its balance, tumbles off the edge, and takes falling damage or other effects as appropriate. If the model is within 2 3/4 cm of two or more hazards, the opposing player may nominate which way the model falls. Might may be used to modify this roll. In addition, reroll any successful Shooting hits.

Defensive Volley (D6 roll of 2). The defenders have seen the incoming raid and have prepared a volley of fire to greet the attackers. After both sides have deployed but before the 1st turn, the defending player may fire three volleys. Each volley has a total number of shots equal to the quantity of defenders with bows of any kind and follows the normal rules for Volley Fire, with the exception that the defenders do not need to be in base contact with one another.

Opening Bombardment (D6 roll of 3). As a prelude to a raid, vessels far offshore can use their armament to harry the forces of the defender (note that these vessels are not represented during the game itself). Before the game begins, the attacking player may make D3 bombardments. He rolls a D6 for each. On a roll of 4+, his catapults have found a target and sent out a wave of crushing debris. The attacking player may nominate any defending model on the board. That model takes a Strength 10 hit, and any other model, friend or foe, within 1 1/2 cm, takes a single Strength 6 hit as it is hit by rubble. Any survivors with a Strength of 6 or

less are knocked to the ground. If the attacking player rolls a 1, the same effect occurs, but the defending player may nominate the target. If a cavalry model is hit, both rider and steed take a Strength 6 hit; the rider is thrown; and both models are knocked to the ground.

Continuous Bombardment (D6 roll of 4). If the battle is hard-fought and desperate, leaders may risk firing siege engines into the thick of combat. If you use this special rule, the player who rolls the lowest die when determining Priority may make a single bombardment (as described above) in the Shooting Phase. If players tie in the Priority roll, then both players may make a bombardment in their respective Shooting Phases.

Redoubled Efforts (D6 roll of 5). The attackers, spurred on by their determination, have propelled their boats closer to the shore. At the start of the game, after both sides have deployed, the attacking player may move each of his boats D6"/2D6 cm (roll separately for each boat). Drift and other factors have no effect on this move.

Hearth and Home (D6 roll of 6). The defenders have pledged to repel the attackers or die trying. Defenders do not have to take Courage Tests in this scenario.

MISSION OBJECTIVES

We'll look at more detailed objectives next time, but most games can use the End Conditions to determine who has won. For example, if playing to the Secure the Quay End Conditions, the attacker will lose if his models are driven from the quayside or are eliminated. Similarly, if playing to the War of Attrition End Condition, the player who loses 50% of his force first loses the game. If playing the Random Game Length End Condition, the winner is the player with the most models left alive at the end of the game. Of course, there are plenty of ideas for goals in the various scenarios for The Lord of The Rings. Players should feel free to agree to these situations and objectives or to create some of their own design if they so choose.

Anyway, that's it for this time. Next month, we'll take a look at adding additional layers of detail to your coastal raids, with mission objectives to represent specific types of assault, from pillaging to kidnap. We'll also take a look at which races make for good seafarers, and those who really, really don't.

OBSTACLES AND BARRICADES

There are all manner of different kinds of obstacles that you can use for coastal raids, depending on the kind of board that you're playing on.



Stonework quaysides, like those that would normally be found in central Gondor, often look best with stone walls of various kinds, which can easily be constructed with a little foamcore.



For more rural settlements, such as the sparse villages of Anfalas and Minhiriath, simple wattle fences can be constructed from thin wire woven around bamboo skewers.



Finally, if your coastal raids are taking place along uninhabited terrain, why not make use of scattered rock piles, shaped from pieces of insulation foam.