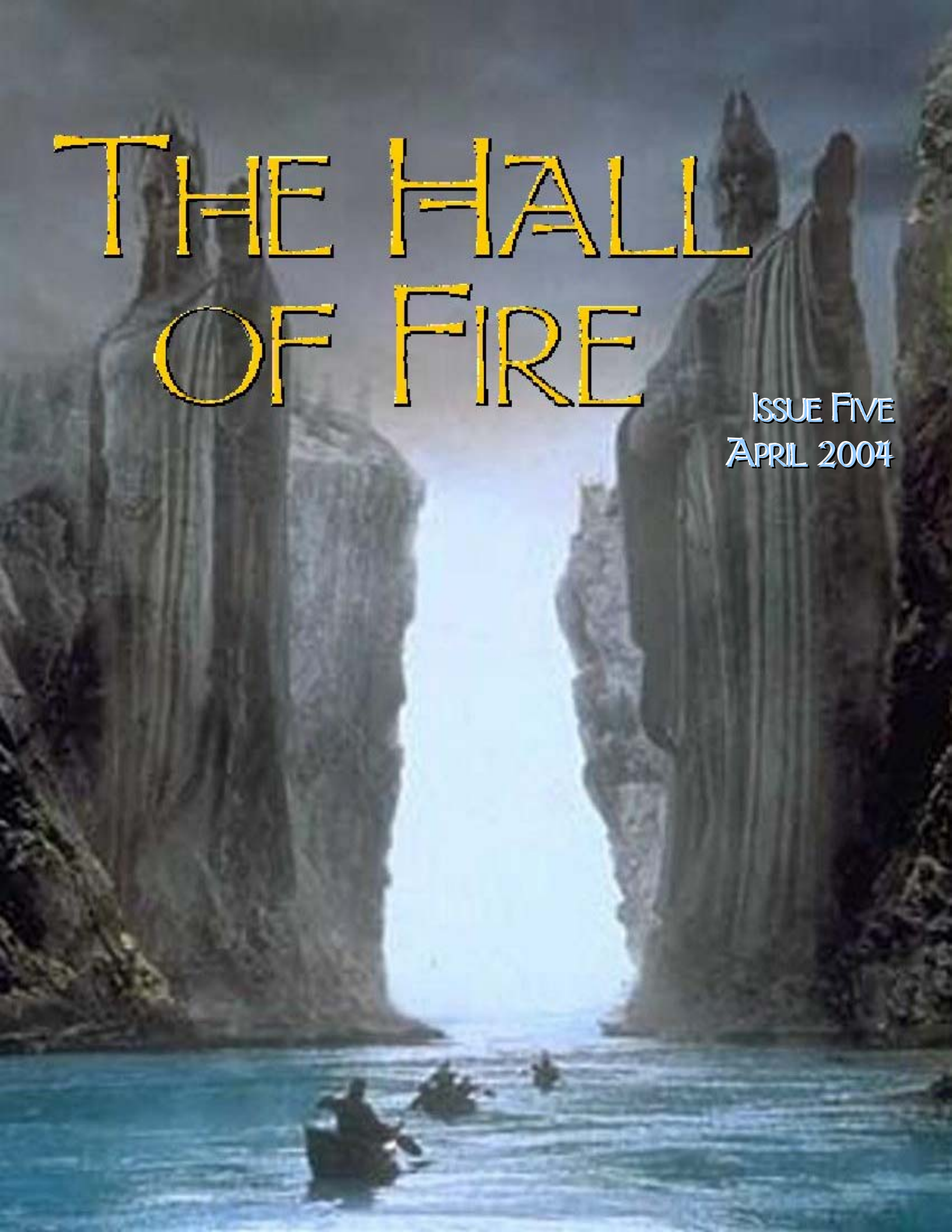


# THE HALL OF FIRE

ISSUE FIVE  
APRIL 2004



# THE HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine

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# GREETINGS

Greetings... it is now my fortune to welcome you all to another issue of *The Hall of Fire* webzine! Let me first introduce myself - my name is Doug Joos, although many of you will know me better by my alias, Tomcat, from the gameboards. I have been playing RPG's since the early 1980's when I got turned on to this game called *Dungeons and Dragons*™. Actually, I think it went by another name at the time, which I don't remember; only that it was printed up in small paper booklets. From that point on, I enjoyed the evolution of that game and other games like it that came along. These games were good but I always wanted an opportunity to roam the lands of Middle-earth or to be able to game master a story within the rich setting. Unfortunately, I never thought that these other roleplaying games had the right feel to re-create Tolkien's world - not even the one that was based directly upon it.

This all changed when Decipher finally released *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game*! I hesitantly bought it after a recommendation from my local gameshop owner and have been part of it ever since. I have enjoyed narrating stories and also contributing material through this wonderful webzine. I think that Scottomir said it best... "*The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* is something special--a mechanically flexible, dramatically narrative, readily customizable game beautifully grounded in literary source material." What more needs said than that? Only to ask, where is the game headed now?

After a very disappointing update from Decipher, which is to say little at all, *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* looks as if it may be at its production conclusion - at least with Decipher. It doesn't need to end here - with the support of readers and contributors, *The Hall of Fire* will continue to bring new material (albeit not official) to players of the game. From the highest peaks of the Misty Mountains to the craggiest depths of the Eryn Muil, our webzine will continue to bring you articles to enrich your stories with information about places in Middle-earth and the people that live there; to enhance your optional rules so that you can further enjoy the game that started all of this.

I remember when TSR ended all of its official material on their *Greyhawk* setting, which happened to be my favorite (outside of Middle-earth) - it was quite a bummer. The great thing was that the Internet opened up a door for people to make their own material available to others. There was a great webzine on the subject called the Oerth Journal. Like the Oerth Journal, *The Hall of Fire* will be there to keep Middle-earth evolving. My associates and I will continue to do our part by bringing you this webzine - please do your part by continuing your support and contributions to it. If you are interested in contributing, check out the end of this issue for more information.

I would also like to introduce a new staff writer for *The Hall of Fire*, Josh - also known as ReptileJK from the messageboards. Welcome aboard Josh!

Hi Folks. I'm new to *The Hall of Fire* staff and am incredibly excited about being involved in helping make *The Lord of the Rings* gaming community a better place! I've been allowed to come on board because of my background as a wildlife ecologist. It's my job to write in-depth articles regarding the critters (both fair and foul) that you might include or encounter during your gaming sessions. I'm currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in Zoology (with an emphasis on amphibians and reptiles), and I've loved the works of Dr. Tolkien since early childhood. I've also been an avid gamer since high school, but have always been troubled by the lack of info on many of the creatures found in "Monster Manual-type" RPG books. In my opinion, most of these books focus on how the critter in question performs in combat.

Therefore, the purpose of my articles, in the new column entitled "A Field Guide to the Creatures of Middle Earth", will be to give these animals greater depth so that they can become a more realistic and appreciated part of your campaigns. I take my point of view on these animals from a scientific standpoint, which I hope will add a bit of realism to them in game terms. These articles will also include ideas for Narrators on incorporating them into adventures; famous personalities associated with these races; as well as updated archetypal versions of individuals in these races. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I enjoy writing them.

Thanks, Josh Kapfer (ReptileJK)

Enjoy the issue,

Doug Joos  
aka Tomcat  
Writer/Layout

# A FIELD GUIDE

## TO THE CREATURES OF MIDDLE-EARTH

### DRAGONS, PART I

*"...for the coming of the dragons was with great thunder, and lightning, and a tempest of fire...."*

- *The Silmarillion*

#### Overview

**Note:** Due to its size, this article is broken down into three parts for easier reader consumption.

*Dragons (a.k.a. worms or drakes)* – The mechanisms behind their anatomy, physiology, behavior, and ecology have baffled even the most able of zoologists for many years. Their ways are both fascinating and horrible. Their power is so awesome that no other creature in Middle Earth, save perhaps Balrogs, rivals it. Furthermore, most of those whom attempt to study these animals in any sort of detail usually do not live to tell the tale. Thus, dragons have kept their secrets for hundreds of thousands of years.....until now.

*Physical Appearance* – Dragons are incredibly large beasts of amazing ability (often growing several hundred feet in total body length). Their appearance is similar to reptiles and they are, in fact, related to animals such as lizards and snakes. All dragons have long necks and equally long tails, and while some have monstrous wings that are rumored to spread for miles, others are said to breathe fire. Dragons are heavily armored with thick, shiny scales and specialized skeletal elements, which protect them from attack. Many also have heads and backs that are covered with horns and/or bony protrusions, which are used during mating. Dragons eyes are yellow or red, or in very rare occasions, black. All of these properties make their appearance terrifying to a degree that is unmatched by most evil creatures in Middle Earth.

*History* – Morgoth created the first dragons in the breeding pits of Utumno during the early First Age of Middle Earth. They were constructions of his evil will and in them he instilled his love of destruction, his intelligence, and his greed. Yet, he did not give them so much power as to threaten his own reign. Therefore, he also gave them internal functions that work at a much slower pace than his other, less powerful creations. Because of this, dragons cannot consistently remain active at the level necessary to rule Middle Earth, and thus will never rival any Dark Lord (i.e. Morgoth or Sauron) for total power over their realms.

Though the first dragons of Middle Earth were created in the pits of Utumno, the greatest dragons of the First Age were

bred in the Halls of Thangorodrim (the Mountains of Tyranny; Morgoth's Fortress) in Angband. The First Age was the greatest period in Middle Earth's history for dragons, and the mightiest of their kind existed then. For example, Glaurung, who is considered the father of all dragons, was born during the First Age. Also, Ancalagon the Black, one of Glaurung's brood but more powerful, was a flying drake so large that his wings were said to blacken the sky. When he fell after his demise at the end of the First Age his body was said to have shattered Thangorodrim under its great bulk. Furthermore, these were not the only dragons in existence at that time, either; in fact, tales tell that Glaurung led armies of his offspring against the free peoples during the Fifth Battle of the First Age (the Battle of Unnumbered Tears).

After Morgoth's fall at the end of the First Age, however, many of the dragons that had been sired over centuries were destroyed, leaving only the most mighty and cunning individuals. These then slipped into hibernation and remained that way for hundreds of years, awaking only occasionally to wreak havoc upon the lands. In the Third Age of Middle Earth, only a handful of powerful dragons still remain: Scatha the Worm, Smaug the Golden, Langdoriuch the Red, and Dekinroth the Grey. Furthermore, several lesser drakes as well as juvenile dragons exist in the withered heath, and also there is Abadallact The Ancient One, the eldest dragon still living during the age.

### PART 1 - Anatomy and Physiology

#### Unique Morphological Characteristics

There are many features of a dragon's external anatomy that are unusual for a reptilian species. Aside from the numerous horn-like projections and adornments found in the head region and along the mid-line of the back, dragon scales, hands, feet, and tails are unlike those found in any other reptile.

*"My armour is like ten-fold shields..."*

-*Smaug, The Hobbit*

*The Scales* – Dragon scales, which are dermal and/or keratin in nature, are derived from a layer of tissue called the *sub-stratum germantidermum*, that exists just below the most recently produced scale layer. Unlike reptiles, dragons do not undergo ecdysis (skin moulting) as they grow. In fact, layers of dead scales are simply retained while newer scales form beneath (a phenomenon called *stratematication*). Because new scales form many times during development, eventually a dragon's hide becomes a dense, armor-like covering that consists of layer upon layer of old scales. The process of



stratematication gives the scales a glittering shiny facade that has been likened to the appearance of being jewel-encrusted. Furthermore, these multiple layers of dead scales do not inhibit the movement of limbs because stratematication is heaviest in areas that do not cover their flexing joints.

Because outer dragon scales are not living, nor connected directly to the sub-dermal tissues, they frequently break off and are replaced by new growth. However, it does occur that small patches of sub-dermal tissue will be exposed during periods when many scales fall off due to wear. Although these occurrences are extremely rare, it is during this time when dragons may be vulnerable to attack.

This, coupled with the sub-dermal ossicles found in most dragons (see the section entitled *Unique Skeletal Structures* listed below), gives these beasts a hide that is nearly impenetrable by conventional weapons.

*The Hands and Feet* – Unlike other reptiles, dragon hands and feet have opposable, grasping digits that are particularly useful when climbing through mountainous terrains. All digits are tipped with long sharp claws, the purposes of which are more likely for digging and defense than prey-capture, although they are occasionally used while hunting.

“...the shock of my tail, a thunderbolt....”  
-Smaug, *The Hobbit*

*The Tail* – A dragon’s tail is usually incredibly long, which serves several purposes. Firstly, whether a dragon has been imbued with the ability to fly or not, they are all superb climbers. Dragon tails are prehensile (i.e. can act as an extra grasping limb when climbing), which comes in very handy as they climb among craggy mountain passes and sheer cliffs faces associated with their preferred habitat: mountain ranges. In addition, dragon tails are also long and whip-like, which is incredibly important as a counter-balance both when flying (in species blessed with flight) and climbing.

This long extra appendage is also of critical importance in defense. Not only can dragons use their prehensile tails to disarm a singular opponent, but a dragon’s tail can also be swept through a group of attackers, throwing them to the ground or breaking their bones. To learn how to use a dragon’s tail in game terms, see the forthcoming *Special Abilities* section.

*The Stench* – Because of their unique metabolisms, carnivorous diets, and foul smelling secretions used to mark territory, dragons often have an unbearable stench associated with them. This foul smell will quickly permeate any lair that they inhabit, making it difficult for adventurers who are not stalwart of character to enter. The smell can be so overpowering that it causes the eyes to water and may even induce vomiting. This alone is often enough to send even the greediest of treasure-hungry pillagers scrambling for fresh air. To see the effects of The Stench in game terms, see the forthcoming *Special Abilities* section.

## Unique Skeletal Structures

Most major skeletal elements found in dragons are similar to those existing in many reptiles. Dragons have extremely rigid bone structures, which include many skeletal fusions that offer incredibly rigidity (e.g. fusions of several lower vertebrae, called the *synsacrum*, as well as fusion of bony elements in the limbs). In addition, the bones of many species that have been gifted with flight are *pneumatized* (having internal spaces). Pneumatization keeps the bones light in weight but does not compromise their firmness and is an amazing adaptation for flight. Furthermore, several major bone complexes found in dragons exist nowhere else in nature. These bones are almost entirely associated with the wings of species that can fly, and are derived from an extra set of fore limbs, that were once possibly used strictly for terrestrial locomotion in this group of animals. This would suggest that when Morgoth was perfecting the form of his flying dragons, many early failed attempts were likely sextapods (having six limbs) and flightless.

*Flight Bone Complex* - This complex of flight bones, called the *femoralis complex*, arises from the scapula in the pectoral girdle of dragons. It is made up of two main long bones, the *femoribia*, which is connected directly to the scapula, and another shorter bone called the *radiularis*, which attaches directly to the femoribia. The femoribia is a heavily pneumatized bone that flattens and widens at both ends to accommodate the attachment of the many muscles and tendons required for flight. On the other hand, while still pneumatized, the radiularis is shorter than the femoribia, and its main purpose is for the attachment of multiple *phalangares*. Phalangares are long, finger-like bones that extend off of the radiularis. The presence of these bones gives the wing, if it were devoid of flesh and sinew, the appearance of a hand (which, indeed, it is thought to be derived from). In life, a thin membrane of skin stretches across all the phalangares and attaches to the dragon’s body, slightly off-center from the mid-line of the back. This membrane is also covered in ridges of thick dermal scales, which offer stringency while not inhibiting the movement of the membrane in flight.

*Ossicles* - In addition to skeletal enhancements for flight, dragons have several bizarre bony elements existing below the *sub-stratum germantidermum* (the layer of tissue that gives rise to their dermal scales). These are incredibly hard dermal plates called *ossicles*, which exist over the majority body (including portions of the head and jaws) and helps protect the beasts’ muscles and internal organs. Ossicles range from 6” to several feet in length and do not fuse to one another, but are separated by a thin seam of cartilage. This prohibits the ossicles from hindering the beasts’ movement, acting almost like an internal suit of plate-armor. It should be noted, that several portions at the base of the neck cannot accommodate ossicles without severely limiting the neck’s range of motion. Therefore, the base of the neck may be an area of weakness in some dragon species, and adventurers may wish to focus on this if engaging in combat with one of the beasts.

*Pelvic Girdles* - Aside from unique flight bones and ossicles, the only other skeletal anomalies found in dragons exist in females. Female dragons have several skeletal enhancements that reside in the bones of their lower extremities. Most notably, these include a thickening and reinforcement of the bones associated with the pelvic girdle. This is presumably to help support the immense weight of male dragons during copulation.

## **Unique Internal Anatomical Elements**

Many of the main internal organs found in dragons are largely similar to other reptiles. These would include the pulmonary system (despite having a 4-chambered heart, unlike reptiles), the digestive and reproductive systems, as well as the central nervous systems.

*The Brain* - The only major difference between the organ systems of dragons and most other animals is found in the central nervous system and, in particular, the brain. Dragon brains are proportionally much larger than any brain possessed by an animal in Middle Earth. Consequently, they are the only animals found in the natural world having an intelligence level that rivals (and often exceeds) human beings. Specifically, dragon brains have incredibly enlarged frontal lobes compared to other animals, which controls the ability to form independent thoughts (i.e. thoughts that are free from the influence of instinct) and reason. Furthermore, a specialized region in the left frontal lobe, involved in the ability to transfer thoughts to words (called *Broca's Lobe*) is incredibly large in dragons. This is what gives the beasts their ability to speak. In addition, dragon brains also have relatively large olfactory and sensory lobes.

*The Digestive System* – The digestive system found in dragons is largely the same as that found in other reptiles. Ectothermic (cold-blooded) metabolisms are generally more efficient than endothermic (warm-blooded) metabolisms. Because of this, for example, a lizard converts energy consumed (i.e. food) into biomass (i.e. biological tissue or growth) at approximately 50% efficiency, while a mammal of similar size only converts energy into biomass at only 2% efficiency. Therefore, a reptile has to consume less food for biological maintenance (and thus produces less waste) than does a mammal of comparable size, and a dragon is no different. Because they are ectothermic (see also the forthcoming section entitled *Unique Physiological Characteristics*), dragons already produce less waste than other large animals in Middle Earth (e.g. Oliphaunts). In addition to this, the digestive system of these beasts contains a very unique intestinal tract. The inner most tissue layer of a dragon's intestines is highly convoluted (i.e. containing many folds), which creates a surface area larger than those found in intestines of other reptiles. The purposes of this inner tissue layer (and associated convolutions) are to absorb nutrients from foods that have been consumed and are being digested in the bowels. The increased amount of surface area coming into contact with digesting foods results in a large amount of said digesting foods being re-absorbed by the animal. The purpose

of this is to extract all possible nutrients from food that has been consumed for the creation of fat stores that are important during hibernation. The result is that the beast produces very little waste. In fact, a dragon usually only feels the need to excrete waste occasionally when active (and feeding), but never when hibernating.

*Breath Weapon* – Aside from the modified central nervous system, there are several organ systems found in dragons that are distinctive from those in other animals. These involve the breath weapon (in dragons that can spit fire).

“...and my breath....*DEATH!*”  
-Smaug, *The Hobbit*

The organ system that allows firedrakes to spit flames is a highly specialized one consisting of dual glandular complexes found running horizontally along the inner edges of either side of the lower jaws. These complexes (called *Duvernoy's complexes*) consist of two glands, one slightly behind the other, and a collecting duct that exits out of the mouth. Each gland houses unique protein-based fluids that are secreted into the collecting duct, which exists anterior to the glands. In this collecting duct, the fluids are mixed, creating a volatile concoction. After mixing, the fluids are retained in the collecting duct for a period 10 seconds. Next, specialized muscles around the glands are contracted, which forces the mixture to be expelled from the duct and out of the mouth. Once the mixture comes into contact with the air, it becomes unstable, causing an excessive amount of heat to be produced. At this point, the fluid actually bursts into flames, creating a cone shaped wall of fire. This deadly band of flames is an incredibly efficient means of protection and is frequently utilized by dragons that are blessed with such abilities.

It should be noted that Duvernoy's complexes do not produce their secretions until after sexual maturity. Therefore, juvenile dragons (whether they are of the fire breathing strain or not) do not spit fire. To determine the effects of the breath weapon in game terms, see the section entitled *Special Abilities* listed below.

*Sensory Organs* – A dragon's primary sensory organs are sight and olfaction. The olfactory system includes a long eversible tongue and a specialized olfactory organ, called the *Jakubs Organ*, which is located in the roof of the mouth. When scent particles are captured by the tongue or inhaled they are brought into the Jakubs organ where they are recognized and then sent to the brain for processing.

Aside from olfaction, sight is probably the most important type of sense used by these animals. Sight is achieved through the use of very complex eyes that have many of the same characteristics as far-seeing birds (such as hawks and eagles). The retinas of dragon eyes have more cones than rods, which allow sharp color vision that is essential for capturing prey. The elliptical shape of these beasts' pupils helps their eyes more efficiently capture light and, thus, dragons can see quite well in extremely dark conditions, some even suggest that they can see in total darkness.



*"Few have there been that have ever achieved a deed of such prowess as the slaying of a drake, nor might any even of such doughty ones taste their blood and live, for it is as a poison of fires that slays all save the most godlike in strength."*

*-The Book of Lost Tales II*

*Dragon Fluids (blood and saliva)* – A dragon's blood, much like its saliva, is often referred to as venomous. Nothing could be further from the truth. In reality, a dragon's blood is not venomous, but extremely acidic and burns flesh on contact. The purpose of this acidity is positively known. However, it is suspected that the acidic nature of dragon blood evolved in response to a blood disease (caused by a protozoan) that is believed to have arisen during the late first age. The acidity of the blood is so great that, in fact, it prohibits its infection with any sort of blood-borne pathogen, which are generally highly susceptible to acidic conditions. To determine the effects of a dragon's blood in game terms, see *Special Abilities* below.

A dragon's saliva is often confused with the protein-based fluids that are secreted as part of the beast's breath weapon. This is not the case. A dragon's saliva has no connection whatsoever with its breath weapon and has had no negative effects on those who are known to have touched it.

### Unique physiological characteristics

Nothing about a dragon's physiology is normal. The workings of their metabolism are unique in many ways. Though superficially resembling the basic ectothermic (cold-blooded) metabolism found in the reptiles, the physiology of dragons is highly evolved and much more advanced. Though dragons *are* ultimately cold-blooded, their unique metabolism allows them more flexibility in their habitat selection and behavior than other reptiles. This includes a mosaic of activity levels that may range from completely catatonic to a fully vigorous and dynamic state, during which the activity and metabolism of these beasts rivals that of endothermic (warm-blooded) animals.

*Metabolism* - At a very basic level, dragons are cold-blooded. Technically, this means that they cannot produce their own body heat and that heat must be derived from outside sources. In the case of less-advanced reptile species, outside heat is derived from, for example, the sun. Because body temperature dictates many physiological and behavioral processes in cold-blooded animals (e.g., digestion, immune response, prey capture, predator avoidance, etc.), the maintenance of a constant body temperature is critically important to their survival. Therefore, reptiles must spend a large percentage of their time moving in and out of areas of varying temperatures to actively maintain their body temperature so that it remains at a constant and acceptable level. Because of this, the mean annual air temperatures in certain regions limit the geographical distribution of true reptiles (i.e. most true reptiles

prefer warmer climes). Dragons, on the other hand, have a highly advanced ectothermic metabolism (called *gigantothermy*), which does not require them to regulate their body temperature as other reptiles do. The premise behind the mechanism of gigantothermy states that, due to their large size and surface area to volume ratio, dragons are able to retain body heat at a level similar to mammals. Because of this, and as long as they do not become suddenly inactive for a period of more than a week, dragons can remain dynamic for a prolonged period (potentially months) without having to aggressively maintain their body temperatures.

The mechanism for body temperature maintenance in dragons is also superior to other ectotherms due to a phenomenon called *shivering thermogenesis*. Shivering thermogenesis occurs as an ancillary result of muscular contraction. When muscles are contracted, not only can limbs be flexed, but also a small amount of heat is produced and released (i.e. entropy). Therefore, dragons can produce some body heat internally, not through metabolic processes, but by continual muscular contractions. These muscular contractions are incredibly small, little more than a slight tremor (or shiver). Furthermore, they are barely perceptible to those confronted with dragons, yet the result is very efficient.

There are other factors that must be considered as well when discussing dragon metabolic processes. For example, lying below the thick dermal plates and ossicles that constitute a dragon's hide is a thick layer of dense fatty tissue. This fatty tissue acts as an insulator, which very effectively retains body heat. In addition, most dragons make their homes in large caverns that exist deep within mountainous regions. These sorts of below ground habitats are renown for having very constant internal air temperatures. In addition, many dragons purposefully seek out caverns with fault lines that connect to deep underground pits of molten rock and hot springs (see also the forthcoming section entitled *Habitat Requirements*).

A downfall of gigantothermy is that, although heat is lost at an incredibly slow rate, once that heat is lost, it is very difficult for the animal to regain it. While shivering thermogenesis helps maintain body temperatures when active, once activity has ceased for a prolonged period, the dragon's body heat and metabolic activity declines significantly. What results is the worm slipping into a torpor, during which metabolic processes come to a screeching halt. During this time the animal does not need to feed because no energy is being expended, and it can remain completely inactive for extended periods, living off of its dense fat stores. The result is that dragons have extremely punctuated seasons of dynamic activity (during which they feed, breed and increase their wealth) interspersed with long periods of "hibernation".

*Next month's issue will have Dragons, Part II, detailing the ecology of these ancient and powerful beasts.*

# IT'S ALL OPTIONAL

## MIDDLE-EARTH MOUNTS

By Scottomir

Théoden and Snowmane. Glorfindel and Asfaloth. Aragorn and Brego... I meant, Roheryn. Horses are the cherished partners of Middle-earth's heroes, each one a unique animal with personal qualities. Shadowfax is willful and lordly. Asfaloth is obedient and patient. Arod and Hasufel are deferential and loving (at least for Shadowfax). In *The Lord of the Rings* RPG, acquiring a steed -- a partner -- can be one of the most memorable moments in a character's life. Indeed, owning a special horse can be like playing a second character.

Unfortunately, neither the core book nor *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic* provides a way to customize special mounts. Furthermore, game statistics for mounts are badly muddled. Strength scores are either curiously low or ridiculously high. All mounts have so many ranks in the Run skill that there is hardly any distinction. Horses are given the Observe (Spot) specialty, when anybody who has been around horses can tell you their sight is feeble but their hearing is excellent. Even worse, there is hardly any qualitative difference between your typical warhorse, a lordly *mear*, and a noble elf-horse. But, most disappointing is the lack of customizable abilities to create unique steeds distinguished by quality. This article attempts to redress these shortcomings, providing alternative game statistics that really differentiate the types of mounts; it also provides a list of special abilities that can be used to flesh-out a unique mount based on quality.

Let's start with the alternate game statistics. The goal here was to do a better job of distinguishing between the animals characters would most likely use as mounts. Warhorses are considerably more potent than ponies and riding horses, and *mearas* and Elf-steeds are more formidable than regular warhorses. Additionally, the *mearas* depicted below are not necessarily inferior to elven mounts. Decipher's position is that elven steeds are the finest in Middle-earth. This is debatable: elven steeds are descended from the animals brought by Fingolfin and the Noldor from the Blessed Realm in the First Age, but *mearas* are descended through Felaróf from the line of Nahar, the divine steed of Oromë the Vala! As presented below, Elven-steeds are smarter and swifter while *mearas* have greater bearing and an extra special ability.

**Note:** The statistics below use a common revision for attribute scores below 6 (-1 modifier for 4-5, -2 for 2-3, -3 for 0-1), but the modifiers listed in parentheses can be used to assign standard attribute scores as shown in the core book.

### PONY

**Attributes:** Bearing 1 (-3), Nimbleness 6 (0), Perception 6 (0), Strength 12 (+3), Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 1 (-3)

**Reactions:** Stamina +3\*, Swiftiness +0, Willpower -3, Wisdom +0

**Defence:** 10

**Movement Rate:** Walk (1 action) 9/Canter (1 action) 18/Run (2 actions) 54/Gallop (Full-Round) 72

**Skills:** Armed Combat: Natural (Bite, Kick) +1, Jump +5, Observe (Hear) +3, Run +6, Stealth (Sneak) +2, Survival (Plains) +4

**Special Abilities:** Natural Weapons (Bite 1d3, Kick 1d6); extra Special Abilities (0/1/2)

**Size:** Medium

**Health:** 11

### RIDING HORSE

**Attributes:** Bearing 2 (-2), Nimbleness 6 (0), Perception 6 (0), Strength 14 (+4), Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 1 (-3)

**Reactions:** Stamina +4\*, Swiftiness +0, Willpower -2, Wisdom +0

**Defence:** 10

**Movement Rate:** Walk (1 action) 12/Canter (1 action) 24/Run (2 actions) 72/Gallop (Full-Round) 96

**Skills:** Armed Combat: Natural (Bite, Kick) +3, Intimidate (Power) +1, Jump +7, Observe (Hear) +4, Run +7, Stealth (Sneak) +3, Survival (Plains) +4, Swim +3

**Special Abilities:** Natural Weapons (Bite 1d6, Kick 2d6); extra Special Abilities (0/1/2)

**Size:** Large

**Health:** 14 (1 extra Healthy level)

### WARHORSE

**Attributes:** Bearing 4 (-1), Nimbleness 7 (0), Perception 6 (0), Strength 16 (+5), Vitality 12 (+3), Wits 2 (-2)

**Reactions:** Stamina +5\*, Swiftiness +1, Willpower +0, Wisdom +0

**Defence:** 10

**Movement Rate:** Walk (1 action) 12/Canter (1 action) 24/Run (2 actions) 72/Gallop (Full-Round) 96

**Skills:** Armed Combat: Natural (Bite, Kick) +5, Intimidate (Power) +3, Jump +8, Observe (Hear) +4, Run +8, Stealth (Sneak) +1, Survival (Plains) +4, Swim +5

**Special Abilities:** Natural Weapons (Bite 1d6, Kick 2d6); Steady; War-trained; extra Special Abilities (1/2/3)

**Size:** Large

**Health:** 17 (1 extra Healthy level)

### MEARAS

**Attributes:** Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 7 (0), Strength 18 (+6), Vitality 13 (+3), Wits 6 (0)

**Reactions:** Stamina +6\*, Swiftiness +2, Willpower +3, Wisdom +1

**Defence:** 11

**Movement Rate:** Walk (1 action) 12/Canter (1 action) 24/Run (2 actions) 72/Gallop (Full-Round) 96



**Skills:** Armed Combat: Natural (Bite, Kick) +7, Intimidate (Power) +5, Jump +10, Language: Understand Rohirric/Westron +4, Observe (Hear) +6, Ride (Keep Rider) +2, Run +10, Stealth (Sneak) +4, Survival (Plains) +5, Swim +6

**Special Abilities:** Natural Weapons (Bite 1d6, Kick 2d6); Rulers of Horses (all other warhorses receive +1 Willpower while within 30 yards of a *meat*); Steady; War-trained; extra Special Abilities (2/3/4)

**Size:** Large

**Health:** 19 (1 extra Healthy level)

## ELVEN STEEDS

**Attributes:** Bearing 6 (0), Nimbleness 10 (+2), Perception 9 (+1), Strength 18 (+6), Vitality 14 (+4), Wits 8 (+1)

**Reactions:** Stamina +6\*, Swiftiness +4, Willpower +3, Wisdom +3

**Defence:** 12

**Movement Rate:** Walk (1 action) 12/Canter (1 action) 24/Run (2 actions) 72/Gallop (Full-Round) 96

**Skills:** Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Bite, Kick) +9, Intimidate (Power) +5, Jump +10, Language: Understand Quenya & Sindarin +3, Observe (Hear) +8, Ride (Keep Rider) +6, Run +10, Stealth (Sneak) +6, Survival (Plains) +7, Swim +6

**Special Abilities:** Natural Weapons (Bite 1d6, Kick 2d6); Steady; War-trained; extra Special Abilities (2/3/4)

**Size:** Large

**Health:** 20 (1 extra Healthy level)

Simply giving Middle-earth horses a set of better-balanced game statistics is not enough. Every Middle-earth mount should be unique. Mounts require special qualities that can be used to set the apart and make them memorable. That's where the special abilities described below come in. In the game statistic blocks above, each mount type contains the entry "extra Special Abilities" with three numbers listed (1/2/3, for example). This is the number of Mount Special Abilities recommended for that animal based on its quality--the first number is for an animal of regular quality, the second for an animal of superior quality, and the third for an animal of extraordinary quality. Obviously, "regular" is a relative descriptor when talking about a *meat* or elven-steed, even the lowliest of which receives a couple special abilities. By way of contrast, only the most extraordinary riding horse should receive two special abilities. The Mount Special Abilities are described below, and unless noted otherwise each ability may be selected only once. Also, some of the abilities below are taken from the core book but fleshed-out in a little more useful detail.

## MOUNT SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Steady:** The mount is not easily spooked in battle, and the rider does not suffer the normal -1 to -4 penalty on Ride tests in battle. The mount is also less likely to panic, receiving a +3 bonus on tests to resist fear.

**War-trained:** The mount is never panicked by the mundane sights, smells, and sounds of battle, and it is trained to attack in battle without causing a problem for its rider. The mount

receives one extra action per round when ridden, which it can use to attack any target designated by its rider.

**Fleet-hoofed:** The mount is particularly swift upon its hooves. The horse's base movement rates for Canter, Run, and Gallop are increased by +25%.

**Mighty Charge:** The mount charges with great ferociousness. When charging, the mount (or its rider) receives a +3 (rather than +1) bonus to Armed Combat tests and a successful attack does twice-normal damage (rather than 1.5 times normal damage).

**Trample Under Hoof:** The mount can use its speed and weight to charge over the top of its opponents. By making a full-round move action through an opponent's position, the mount can knock prone and trample a target, inflicting 2d6 points of damage (+ Strength bonus). The horse must win a Strength test opposed by the target's Strength test or (if the opponent spends an action) Dodge result.

**Mighty Stallion:** The mount is a remarkable male specimen. He gains +2 Strength and +1 Stamina.

**Swift Mare:** The mount is a remarkable female specimen. She gains +2 Nimbleness and +1 Swiftiness.

**Bellicose Steed:** The mount is particularly warlike and revels in battle. The mount gains +2 to Armed Combat: Natural Weapons. The horse also inflicts +1 extra point of damage on a successful bite or kick attack.

**Majestic Steed:** The mount possesses an air of special nobility and majesty. It gains +2 Bearing, +1 Willpower, and +2 to Intimidate.

**Mindful Steed:** The mount is particularly alert and prescient. It gains +2 Perception, +1 Wisdom, and +2 to Observe.

**Patient Steed:** The mount is particularly gentle and careful. It gains Ride (Keep Rider) +2 and grants the rider +2 on any Ride and falling tests.

**Robust Steed:** The mount is particularly virile and fit. It gains +1 Vitality (and Health) and +2 to Jump, Run, and Swim.

**Spirited Steed:** The mount possesses a special bravery that allows it to accomplish great deeds. It gains 1 Courage point. *This ability may be taken more than once.*

**Edge:** The mount gains any one Edge approved by the Narrator. Armour of Heroes, Dodge, Doughty, Hardy, Swift Recovery, Tireless, Valour, Wakefulness, and Wary are recommended choices. *This ability may be taken more than once.*

Seeing horse and rider join together in battle as a single fighting force can be very dramatic and exciting, and the core book (along with its official errata) does provide some guidance on how to accomplish this. Unfortunately, the rules are muddled in

places (like horse movement) and are completely missing important elements in other places. To conclude this article, I will spell out some useful rules for using horses in battle.

Horses with riders do not take separate **move actions**. The rider substitutes the horse's movement rate for his own and uses the horse's Run skill for movement tests: Walk and Canter cost 1 action, Run costs 2 actions and requires a Run test at TN 5, and Gallop is a full-round action and requires a Run test at TN 10. **Ride tests** are required only in difficult situations and are normally free actions (if the mount is panicked, a Ride test costs the rider 1 action). There normally is a -1 to -4 test penalty (based on the size and noisiness of the battle) to Ride tests in combat, unless the horse possesses the Steady ability. If ever the rider falls off (or is knocked off) his horse, he must make an Acrobatics (TN 10) or Jump test (TN 15) as a free action. If he fails he falls prone and takes 1d6+1 falling damage (+1d6 on a complete failure, +2d6 on disastrous); he avoids damage if he succeeds, and on a superior success or better he lands on his feet (instead of prone).

**Ranged Combat** tests are more difficult while mounted: the attacker suffers a -2 penalty, -3 at a Canter, -4 at a Run, -5 at a

Gallop. A mounted attacker is in a fully advantageous position (-3 TN) for **Armed Combat** tests against a dismounted foe (this benefit is negated if the foe is armed with a long-reach weapon, like a pikestaff). A rider normally cannot make unarmed attacks or close-combat attacks with a small weapon against a dismounted target (a tiny dagger is just too short to reach a foe on foot). Also, it is possible to **charge** while mounted: the rider may move up to the horse's Run distance and make one armed attack at a cost of 2 actions, and the horse is required to make a Run test at TN 10 (on a disastrous failure the horse trips and falls prone, and the rider also may be thrown unless he makes a Ride test at TN 15). Furthermore, when making an attack during or immediately after moving (including a charge), the rider can substitute the horse's Strength for his own for the purposes of determining damage (and, for a charge, the TN of the target's test to avoid being knocked prone). Attacking while moving increases the difficulty of any required Ride tests by +5 TN.

The optional system presented in this article should suffice to provide every kind of hero with a suitable and unique mount. No veteran hero in Middle-earth is complete without a special equine partner -- be it a Shadowfax or a Bill the Pony.

## CRAFTING ARMOUR AND WEAPONS

*Elendil falls and Narsil breaks beneath him...*

*Merry, on hands and knees, along with Eowyn stab at the incorporeal form of the Witch-king and their blades are destroyed...*

*The reforging of Narsil by the Elven-smiths of Rivendell...*

These are all examples of items being worked upon or destroyed by fate or magic, but how should the average character or Narrator deal with weapon and armoursmithing? The rules set forth by Decipher are sketchy at best on this and so I have come with a way, albeit a bit crunchy with plenty of tables, to deal with the health and worth of the items which stand between a character's life and death. These variant rules that I have devised are essentially the same for both weapons and armour and could possibly be used as a basis for your own house rules for creating other items such as jewelry and such. I would also add a suggestion that if you do incorporate these rules or something similar, you may want to retool the Bladeshattering spell to reflect their use.

### SMITHCRAFT SKILL

First, I redefine the Smithcraft skill from being a base skill with just specialties to a skill group to encompass many skills such as

Armour and Weapons. This way a Craftsman character can better specialize in certain armours or weapons, as he likes.

#### Example:

Smithcraft: Armour (Chain)

Smithcraft: Weapons (Longsword)

**Note:** Even though shields are kind of like armour in this game, they are created under the Weapons skill because they can be used as a weapon.

With this skill redefinition in mind, I will create a character to be used in subsequent examples in this article: Frarin, a dwarven craftsman of the Lonely Mountain with Smithcraft: Armour (Dwarf Chain) +5 and Smithcraft: Weapons (Battle Axe, Great Axe) +5.

Now, before we get to the rules, there is some new terminology that you will need to know to understand the procedures set forth later on.

### ARMOUR ATTRIBUTES

**Armour Rating (AR)** – This, as described in the Core Rule Book (CRB), is the amount of damage reduced or absorbed by the armour from a given attack before any damage gets through to harm the character.

**Total Damage Absorbed (TDA)** – This is the maximum amount of damage the armour may absorb before it becomes totally useless based upon its Armour Rating.



**Example:** When Frarin creates a corset of chain armour, it has a TDA of 140. The character that wears the armour enters combat and is hit 3 times for 5, 6, and 4 damage. The armour absorbs 5 points of damage with each attack for a total of 14. This reduces the armour's TDA to 126.

**Armour Life (AL)** – This represents the number of years the armour lasts before becoming useless (barring spells, TDA is used up, etc.).

## WEAPON ATTRIBUTES

**Hit Points (HP)** – This is the amount of damage a weapon can take before it becomes broken and/or useless. It is at the Narrator's discretion to decide if the weapon can be reforged.

**Hardness (HD)** – This is the amount of damage the weapon can absorb when attacked directly before the weapon has damage taken from its hit points. The weapon doesn't take damage from being used as intended.

**Weapon Life (WL)** – This represents the number of years the weapon lasts before becoming useless (barring spells, HP is used up, etc.).

## CREATING AN ITEM

### PRICE OF MATERIALS

To create armour or weapons in a more realistic fashion, a craftsman must know how much the materials are going to cost him so he can determine what his profit will be.

The price of materials for armour is:

- 25% selling price of a corset + 1 sp/1 AR
- 50% selling price of a hauberk\* + 1 sp/1 AR

\*Hauberks cost 125% price for corset

**Example:** Frarin wants to make a jerkin of leather (corset).

$$25\% \text{ of } 2 \text{ SP} = 2 \text{ sp}$$

$$2 \text{ sp} + 2 \text{ sp} = 1 \text{ SP}$$

*The price for his materials is 1 SP.*

*He also gets an order for a hauberk of dwarf chain.*

$$125\% \text{ of } 7 \text{ SP} = 8 \text{ SP}, 3 \text{ sp (selling price of hauberk)}$$

$$50\% \text{ of } 8 \text{ SP}, 3 \text{ sp} = 4 \text{ SP}, 1 \text{ sp}, 50 \text{ cp}$$

$$4 \text{ SP}, 1 \text{ sp}, 50 \text{ cp} + 8 \text{ SP}, 1 \text{ sp}, 50 \text{ cp}$$

*The price for his materials is 6 SP, 1 sp, 50 cp.*

The price of materials for weapons is:  
25% of weapon's selling price + 1 sp/+1 damage bonus (DB)

**Example:**

*Frarin is going to create a battle-axe.*

$$25\% \text{ of } 3 \text{ SP} + 4 \text{ sp (1 SP)} = 1 \text{ SP}$$

*The price for his materials is 1 SP.*

## MAKING THE SKILL TEST

Roll the appropriate skill (Smithcraft or Craft for bows) five (5) times and add the totals together for your armour's Roll Total; note how many times you roll a total of 5 or less and double 1's (snake eyes).

## ITEMS ATTRIBUTES

This is how you determine the attributes of the armour you creating:

1. Calculate TDA (**Roll Total x AR**)
2. Calculate AL (**TDA / 5**)

This is how you determine the attributes of the weapon you creating:

1. Calculate HP\* (**RT / 10 (rounded down) - Size modifier**)  
\*minimum value of 1

### Size Modifiers

Small 5  
Medium 3  
Large 1

**Note:** A bow has half the HP, rounded down (minimum 1), as calculated above.

2. Calculate HD\* (**Weapon's average damage (rounded down) - Size modifier**)  
\*minimum value of 1

### Shields

Add 1 to HD (for each condition), if:  
- large  
- made of metal

**Note:** A bow has half the HD, rounded down (minimum 1), as calculated above.

3. WL = Roll Total

## ITEM FLAWS

For each roll result from the five skill rolls of 5 or less or double 1's (snake eyes) roll 2d6 on the appropriate table below.

### ARMOUR CREATION FAILURE TABLE

- 2 - Reduce AR by 1
- 3 - Reduce value of armour 10% (rounded down)
- 4 - Reduce final TDA by 3d6
- 5 - Reduce final TDA by 2d6
- 6 - Reduce final AL by 10
- 7 - Reduce final AL by 5
- 8 - Reduce final AL by 10
- 9 - Reduce final TDA by 2d6
- 10 - Reduce final TDA by 3d6
- 11 - Reduce value of armour 10% (rounded down)
- 12 - No penalty

### WEAPON CREATION FAILURE TABLE

- 2 - Reduce damage bonus by 1, minimum 0
- 3 - Reduce value of weapon 10% (rounded down)
- 4 - Reduce final HP by 1
- 5 - Reduce final HD by 1
- 6 - Reduce final WL by 10
- 7 - Reduce final WL by 5
- 8 - Reduce final WL by 10
- 9 - Reduce final HD by 1
- 10 - Reduce final HP by 1
- 11 - Reduce value of weapon 10% (rounded down)
- 12 - No penalty

## TEST RESULTS

### Armour

If the character was able to make a successful repair test, the type of success will determine the effectiveness of the repair (see table below).

### ARMOUR REPAIR SUCCESS TABLE

#### Degree of Success

*Marginal* - add 1 point of damage absorbed to TDA\*

*Complete* - add 25% of damage absorbed (rounded down) to TDA

*Superior* - add 50% of damage absorbed (rounded down) to TDA

*Extraordinary* - add 75% of damage absorbed (rounded down) to TDA

\* Damage absorbed since creation or last repair

#### Example:

If Frarin repairs the armour and get a superior success on TN 7, then the TDA is now 133.

\*Refer to the example above in the TDA example

If the character rolls a Failure, no damage absorbed is replenished. If the character rolls a Complete Failure, no damage absorbed is replenished and roll 1d6 on the table below.

### ARMOUR REPAIR COMPLETE FAILURE TABLE

- 1 - Reduce value of armour by 10% (rounded down)
- 2 - Reduce AL by 3
- 3 - Reduce TDA by 1d6
- 4 - Reduce value of armour by 10% (rounded down)
- 5 - Reduce AL by 3
- 6 - Reduce TDA by 1d6

## REPAIRING OR REFORGING AN ITEM

Before an item can be repaired or reformed, the proper tools must be available to accomplish this task.

### REPAIR TESTS

The TN for repairing armour that you have created is  $5 + \text{AR}$ ; for armour that you didn't make, it is an additional +3 TN.

The TN for repairing or reforming a weapon that you have created is  $5 + (\# \text{ of dice} + \text{damage modifier of weapon})$ ; for a weapon that you didn't make, it is an additional +3 TN.

The appropriate Smithcraft or Craft skill is used for performing repairs.



If the character rolls a Disastrous Failure, no damage absorbed is replenished and roll 1d6 on the table below.

### ARMOUR REPAIR DISASTROUS FAILURE TABLE

- 1 - Reduce the AR by 1
- 2 - Reduce AL by 5
- 3 - Reduce TDA by 2d6
- 4 - Reduce AL by 10
- 5 - Reduce TDA by 3d6
- 6 - Reduce value of armour by 50% (rounded down)

If the AR is reduced to 0 or the AL or TDA is reduced to or below 0 due to repair failure or combat, the armour has now become useless. If the armour's TDA is reduced to or below 0 in the middle of combat, all damage from subsequent attacks goes through to the character.

### Weapons

If the character was able to make a successful repair test, then the weapon regains its entire HP.

If the character rolls a Failure, the weapon is useless. If it is used in combat in this state, it will do only half damage (rounded down) on a successful attack and then break.

## APPRAISING WEAPONS OR ARMOUR

To appraise weapons or armour to correspond with creation steps above, roll Appraise (Weapon) or Appraise (Armour) three (3) times (To Narrators: you could also redefine the Appraise skill in a similar fashion to the Smithcraft skill). The assessed value of the weapon is based on these percentages:

- AR/HP: 50% of selling price
- TDA/DB: 25% of selling price
- AL/WL: 25% of selling price

Consult the following tables concerning the results of the Appraise checks of the item to determine what the character assesses the value to be.

### APPRAISAL SUCCESS TABLE

#### Degree of Success or Failure

*Superior* - 100% value of actual attribute

*Complete* - 90% value of actual attribute

*Marginal* - 75% value of actual attribute

*Failure* - +/- 25% value from actual attribute

*Complete* - +/- 50% value from actual attribute

*Disastrous* - +/- 75% value from actual attribute



# IN SHORT... GETTING ARCHERS TO FIGHT

by KingOfRohan

Some Narrators have trouble with the fact that there is an archer in their group who uses their bow almost exclusively, utterly forsaking standard weapons such as the sword and the dagger. If this is an issue for you, there are several ways to make sure that your archers use a healthy variety of weapons.

## LIMITED VISION

If an archer cannot see any farther than a few yards, whether it is due to fog, smoke, darkness, or other obstacles, it's unlikely he'll be able to snap off any shots in the time that it takes for an enemy to reach him after both the opponents have spotted one another.

## CLOSE QUARTERS

Working on the same principle as "Limited Vision," in a tight spot, like in Moria or the tunnels in the Misty Mountains, foes can trap the party, forcing themselves upon the party. This makes it impossible for an archer to fire, as he needs time and space, neither of which the Enemy has any intention of giving him.

## DIRE OBJECTIVES

Increase the tension while at the same time providing a challenge for the archers by making it imperative that they stop a group of foes from reaching a certain point (a helpless village for example). Shooting at an opponent and missing is not going to slow him up at all - the best way to impede his movement is stand in his way and force him to fight you. Doing this will, of course, require the use of close combat weapons.

## ARROW-RESISTANT FOES

The simplest way to protect an enemy from an archer is to give him a shield, implying a penalty to the archer's attack; this may persuade him to draw his dusty old blade instead. A more elaborate choice is to give them armor that is specifically designed to withstand and deflect arrows, but use this option with caution. Don't just give the enemy the armour, instead create a backstory that is at least slightly detailed such as a clan of orcs has been fighting solely against elves for centuries and have finally built armor to protect them from the "nasty elf arrows" or a particularly smart opponent (such as a sorcerer) has armed his horde with armor that he designed himself.

## WEAPON BREAKING

This is a rather blunt method and, if not used with care, you may be accused of being unfair or bent on defeating the heroes, therefore it should be used only in the right circumstances. Here are some ways to go about it:

1. Fumble Rule: Make a house rule that allows for the fumbling and breaking of weapons depending upon the success of a dice roll.
2. Special Trigger: Have a special event trigger the bow's destruction such as a great foe shattering it or if the player uses it in a haphazard way.
3. Count Arrows: This is the simplest method -- be strict about keeping track of how many arrows the character has left. While traveling for an extended period far from any friends that could restock their supply, they might run out of arrows and be compelled to rely on weapons other than their bow.



# ADVENTURING IN

## THE ROHIRRIM PART III: THE LAND

By Ron Williams

### OVERVIEW

The Kingdom of Rohan is located north of the White Mountains, south of the Limlight River, east of the Gap of Rohan, and west of the Mering Stream. The land was originally named *Calenardhon* (Sindarin for 'Green Province') and was the northern most province of the Kingdom of Gondor. After the Rohirrim were granted the land, it was renamed 'The Riddermark' by them, and 'Rohan' by Gondor.

The Rohirrim divided the land into two regions: The Eastmark, the Westmark. These are further divided into the Eastfold, Westfold, the East Emnet and the West Emnet. The Westfold and Eastfold are the most populous areas of Rohan, and lie at the foot of the White Mountains.

### THE FOLDES

The people of Rohan call the regions around the foothills and vales of the White Mountains the Foldes. They are lightly forested, with trees of ash, cedar and pine. The Foldes are well watered, from the many streams and creeks that carry the runoff from the snowy peaks of the White Mountains. Many deer and small mammals call the Foldes home; also bears can be found in the mountains above the vales.

### THE EMNETS

The Emnets (*plains*) of Rohan are its most noticeable feature. Stretching for uncounted miles, the Emnets are covered in lush, tall grasses. The Emnets are home to such animals as wild boar. The Emnets are further divided into East and West. The Rohirrim uses them for grazing their herds. The Emnets are the least populous region of Rohan. No permanent settlements are found here. The Wold is found in the East Emnet. The Wold is a rocky, highland region. Treeless, with no running water, it is inhospitable and not inhabited. Mountain goats can be found in the highest, most unreachable, crags of The Wold.

### THE GAP OF ROHAN

The Gap of Rohan is a 40-mile wide region between the end of the Misty Mountains and the northwestern tips of the White Mountains. The river Isen passes west through the Gap, as does the old North-South Road. The Road meets the Isen at the 'Crossing of the Isen', where the river slows, shallows, and widens, to allow crossing. Rising out of the middle of the ford is a small islet.



### THE WHITE MOUNTAINS

The White Mountains are the impassible southern border of Rohan. Snow capped year-round, there are no passes over the mountains, although several trails lead up into them. The three highest peaks in the White Mountains are Thrihyrne, over Helm's Deep; Irensaga, which looks down on Edoras; and Starkhold, under which the Path's of the Dead travel. The Mountains also are home to numerous caves and caverns, such as the Aglarond ('*Glittering Caves*') and the Path's of the Dead. These caverns were carved by underground rivers and pools, and can be found throughout the range.

### PLACES OF INTEREST

**AGLAROND:** Also known as 'The Glittering Caves'. Aglarond is a series of mineral and crystal rich caverns under Mount Thrihyrne, behind Helm's Deep. In the Fourth Age, Gimli the Dwarf founded a colony in the caves and became '*Lord of the Glittering Caves*'

**ALDBURG:** The first capital of Rohan. It is the oldest, and second largest town in Rohan. Aldburg is the home of the Third Marshal of the Mark and the provincial capital of the East Mark.

**DEEPING STREAM:** The small shallow stream that runs from Mount Thrihyrne, through Helm's Deep, to the Entwash River.

**DUNHARROW:** A small village in the mountains above Edoras. Dunharrow also doubles as a place of refuge for the lowland population during times of war.

**ENTWADE:** The Entwade is a shallow ford along the Entwash River, allowing crossing from the Eastfold to the East Emnet. Entwade is also the name of the village located at the crossing.

**ENTWASH:** The wide, slow moving river, which flows from Fangorn Forest to the Great River, Anduin.

**THE FOLDE:** The region east of Edoras, in the Eastfold is known as the Folde. It is a wide valley, where the town of Aldburg lay.

**GAP OF ROHAN:** The 40 mile-wide plain between the Ring of Isengard and the White Mountains. The River Isen flows through the Gap.

**HARROWDALE:** A small town near Edoras.

**ISEN:** The fast moving river that flows from Methedras, south through the Gap of Rohan. The river can only be forded at the Crossing of the Isen, in the Gap of Rohan. There the river widens, shallows and an islet, raised above the surroundings, is in the river.

**LIMLIGHT RIVER:** The northern border of Rohan. It is a slow, wide river that allows crossings at several places.

**MERING STREAM:** A small stream that separates Rohan from Gondor.

**METHEDRAS:** The last peak of the Misty Mountains, which overlooks Isengard.

**SNOWBOURN RIVER:** The small river that comes down from the White Mountains, passing Edoras, to meet the Entwash.

**THRIHYRNE:** The large peak in the White Mountains, under which the Aglarond lay. Helm's Deep is built into the base of the mountain.

**UPDEEPS:** The Updeeps are the bends in the great river Anduin, where the river widens and slows, allowing rafts to cross.

**THE WOLD:** The hilly, rocky, highland region of the East Emnet. No trees grow in the Wold, but it is covered in scrub and tough grasses.

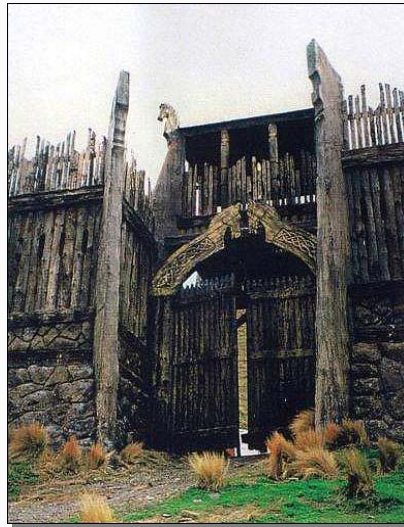
## PLACES OF NOTE



## EDORAS

Edoras is the chief town in Rohan, and its capital city. Completed by King Brego, in 2568, Edoras is classic Rohirrim architecture and style.

The town is built upon a rocky hill, near the base of the White Mountains. It is accessible by an unpaved road, which winds up to the Main Gate. Along the Road are the tombs of the Kings of the Mark. The tombs are covered in the white flower *Symbelmyne*. Surrounding the town is an un-mortared stonewall, topped by a wooden palisade of cut logs. The Gate is of heavy wooden planks, and is controlled by a wooden watchtower, which straddles it. Guard Towers periodically dot the wall, to ensure the towns safety.



Inside the walls, Edoras is a town of rustic charm. The lower levels of the hillside (the Terraces) are covered with homes, workshops, storefronts, stables, and inns. Buildings are of wood, with high-beamed, thatch roofs.

The middle level of the town is called the Midvale. This level is the home of wealthy Rohirrim, the merchants, etc.

The crown of the hill contains a mix of stone and wood buildings. The King's stables, armories, storage buildings, his *eored's* barracks, and housing for his court are all found here.

Also here is the Kings Hall of Meduseld. This great wood and stone structure is topped with a roof of copper and gold. Inside the Hall, the King of Rohan holds court, greets messengers, and entertains. The Hall is covered in horse-motif artwork, tapestries, and carvings, with a great fire-hearth in the center of the room.

## FANGORN FOREST

A remnant of the primeval forest that once stretched from the Vales of Anduin through the Gap of Rohan all the way to the Blue Mountains, Fangorn is, like the Old Forest, a place where the tress are unusually alert; some of them are even capable of moving their limbs, or of speech. This is due to the presence here of the few remaining Ents in Middle-earth. The eldest of the Ents, Treebeard (Fangorn), gave his name to the forest.

Few Ents remain outside Fangorn. Many of these and some within the Forest became so worn and embittered by the long years so that they were changed into Huorons, black-hearted creatures who hate all creatures that walk, be they Man, Orc, or beast. Huorons—indistinguishable from normal trees until they attack—infect the trees around them with their dark spirit.

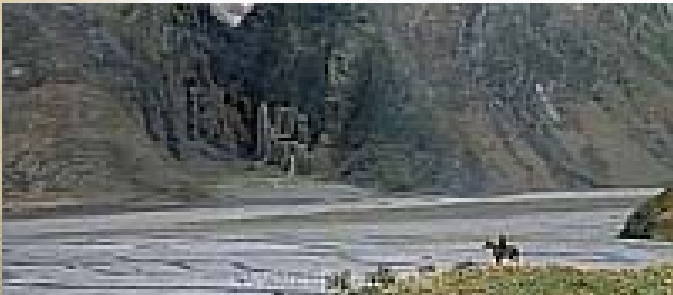
Fangorn is filled with trees of all kinds, including broadleaf deciduous trees such as oaks, and tall conifers such as pine, from



the tenderest shoots to the most ancient boles, all tenderly cared for by the Shepherds of the Trees. Hanging mosses from the branches and deep piles of shed leaves on the ground make it clear to any visitors that few outsiders come here. In many places, the trees are so tightly bunched together that it's impossible for anyone other than an Ent to walk through them. Even when there's room to walk, the forest is best described as 'stuffy'. Characters moving at any pace faster than a walk must make a TN 7 Nimbleness check each time they attempt a movement action. Those who fail fall prone over a tree root or tenacious shrub. Complete failure results in 1d6 points of damage in addition.

Travelers should beware, as many of the Ents have become dark of heart and mind. These Huorons, as they are called, are extremely hostile to any who might menace their trees and have long, long memories of every tree they have ever lost to axe or fire. Strangers do not find Fangorn a very welcome place. The Ents mistrust everyone except Elves, and among Huorons even the friendliest of the Elves wouldn't be safe.

In the Fourth Age, Fangorn Forest admits a few visitors (the Hobbits, Merry and Pippin, and the friends Legolas and Gimli). For the most part, though, it remains as it has age after age.



## HELM'S DEEP

Also called the Hornburg, Helm's Deep is the name of the ancient Númenorean fortress the Rohirrim inherited when they were gifted their land. It received the name Helm's Deep after King Helm Hammerhand retreated there during the Long Winter, and fought against the Dunlending invaders.

Helm's Deep lies in the Westfold, under the mountain Thrihyrne. It is the chief line of defense for the people of the Westfolde.

The fortress is built into a steep, shallow ravine at the base of the mountain, called the Deeping Coomb. The Deeping Stream flows out of the valley, through a small culvert in the Deeping Wall, and provides fresh water to the keep.

The fortress has many lines of defense. The ravine itself, with its narrow, deep valley gives it a good defensive location.



At the mouth of the ravine is Helm's Dike, a large earthen rampart, averaging 10' tall and over a mile long. The fortress itself consists of a 250' long Outer Wall of the Hornburg, which is 20' tall and wide enough for 4 men to walk abreast. The wall has four staircases on the inner side, giving access to the top.

North of the Deeping Wall is the main fortress, the Hornburg. The Hornburg rests on a spur of Thrihyrne some 50 feet above the valley floor. Two courtyards—an outer and an inner court—surround the citadel, each surrounded by walls at least as tall and as thick as the Deeping Wall. The outer wall of the Hornburg has three entrances: the Great Gates on the north side; the Postern Door next to the cliff; and the Rear Gate. At the top of the Great Gates stands a stone arch with a walkway at the rear.

Within the Inner Court lies the Hornburg Tower itself. The 'lofty keep' is about 150 feet tall, and its walls are several feet thick. The interior of the Hornburg has quarters for the Lord of the Westfold and his family, as well as a large chamber similar to the Golden Hall of Meduseld. Helm's Horn is housed in the top of the tower, where it can be sounded in time of need.

The Second Marshal of the Mark keeps his headquarters at the Hornburg. Besides month's worth of provisions and hundreds tools of war, a rotating garrison man the fortress at all times. During times of war, the Hornburg can easily garrison over 2,000 men.

<b>Helm's Deep</b>
<b>Deeping Wall</b> Protection: 7 Structure: 12
<b>Watchtower</b> Protection: 5 Structure: 50
<b>Hornburg, Outer Wall</b> Protection: 7 Structure: 10
<b>Hornburg, Inner Wall</b> Protection: 7 Structure: 8
<b>Great Gate of Hornburg</b> Protection: 7 Structure: 6
<b>Hornburg Tower</b> Protection: 6 Structure: 110
<b>Hornburg, Main Door</b> Protection: 5 Structure: 6
<b>Hornburg, Rear Door</b> Protection: 5 Structure: 5



# A PC's SO CALLED LIFE

## HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT, PART II

By Mathew Kearns

In the last issue, I detailed a scaled down example of combat between Toradan and a small group of orcs. The basics of a round (initiative, surprise, simple combat actions) were discussed and now in this issue, I will make things a little more complicated.

### Movement

On pg. 214 of the CRB, Table 9.1: Sample Movement Actions lists different movement actions and what their action cost is during combat. Most of these actions cost one combat action, but they are limited in scope of how far you can go as a standard action represents approximately three seconds in real time. The most "expensive" actions are running (2 actions) and sprinting (a full round), where a character must make a Run test against a listed TN modified by environmental conditions and personal modifiers. Now we shall return to the example combat session.

*Breaking from his cover, Toradan begins running in a direction away from the orcs' intended target, stopping when he can to pull off a shot at the nearest orc.*

*Toradan first runs, costing him two standard combat actions, and he rolls Run (6+5) + 1 - 2 (Untrained penalty) = 10. In the Run skill, it says that with this roll he moves 12-18 yards. Since it's not a definite distance, a simple house rule to determine the distance can be used: roll 1d6 and add it to 12 for the distance (1d6 = 5), so Toradan moves 17 yards. He will then stop to fire an arrow at the nearest orc (Orc3 or Orc4) as they were the closest to him when combat came back around to his action. Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) (5+4) + 5 + 2 - 5 = 11, which is enough to hit the orc.*

Combat continues like this for a number of rounds. By staying one step ahead, Toradan continues to use his bow to deadly effect, but eventually runs out of arrows and must draw his sword to take a stand. Fortunately he was able to kill the two lead orcs, Orc3 and Orc4, with his bow; Orc1 and Orc2 have only suffered minor damage.

### Combat Maneuvers

As mentioned before in the last issue, there is a list of combat actions and maneuvers on pages 228-229 in the CRB. To perform these actions or maneuvers, specific conditions must be met or certain tests made in combination with attack tests to create the desired effect.

*Toradan gives a battle cry and wades in with the remaining orcs, blade afire. With Toradan's decision to charge, he will meet Orc1 head-to-head.*

*To charge, there is a prerequisite of moving at least 3 yards, which Toradan easily does. By charging, he receives a +1 bonus to Armed Combat tests, but also a -3 penalty to any subsequent dodge or parry attempts for the rest of the round. Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) (5+4) + 6 + 1 = 16, this is enough to hit the orc. The orc attempts to parry his attack, but fails utterly to get his blade between himself and that of the Dunadan.*

*Now that he has made a successful attack, there are two more effects due to this maneuver that must be resolved. First, the damage inflicted is weapon damage plus 1.5 times the character's strength modifier; Longsword (5+4) + 5 + 2 = 16 damage. The second effect is a Strength check (TN = Attacker's Strength + 2) for the defender to determine if it falls to the ground (prone); Orc1's Strength check (5+4) + 1 = 10 and Toradan has a Strength = 8. As the tie goes to the one making the test, the orc remains standing, though now hurting.*

*Now with their chance to turn their blades to him, the orcs begin to get in their licks as well and the fight continues on. Unable to be heard above the din of the fight, a troll, attracted by the sounds of battle, comes to investigate. Seeing an easy meal within grasp, it bounds into the fray, club swinging.*

### Combat with Creatures of Different Sizes

As a topic of recent discussion on the messageboards, size modifiers in combat can be a tricky thing. Per the rules, the two most important things to remember is:

- Size modifiers affect the TN of the attack test (i.e. defender's Defence)
- Size modifiers aren't applied in parry/block tests

The modifier applied to the attack tests is +/-2 TN per size level difference. An example, being appropriate for this article, is an average man has a size of Medium, while a hill troll is Large. This makes the size modifier -2 TN for an attack by a Man against a hill troll when the size modifier for an attack the other way around is +2 TN.



The troll attempts to sweep all three meal-looking targets with his club.

1. **Armed Combat: Club (Troll club)**  $(6+6+2) + 11+2 - 6 = 21$   
*Orc1's Defence* =  $10 + 2 = 12$  HIT
2. **Armed Combat: Club (Troll club)**  $(4+4) + 11 + 2 - 6 = 15$   
*Orc2's Defence* =  $10 + 2 = 12$  HIT
3. **Armed Combat: Club (Troll club)**  $(6+5) + 11 + 2 - 6 = 18$   
*Toradan's Defence* =  $12 + 2 = 14$  HIT

All three attacks hit all three targets and none were able to parry as they were surprised by the attack. The Orc1 was immediately crushed while Orc2 and Toradan were thrown away from where they stood into the cover of the forest.

#### Skill Tests During Combat

Attack, parry, and movement actions aren't the only actions a character can take while in combat; he can perform several skills such as Intimidate to cow an enemy, Inspire to embolden a comrade, or Stealth to hide from danger. For more information on the effects of a skill when performed in combat, check the

skill description; most all skill descriptions incorporate an action cost for performing a skill while in combat.

*The remaining orc, obviously afraid of the troll without the help of its kind, decides to get up and run, but being badly hurt, it won't be able to go far. Toradan, on the other hand, decides to stay right where he is and hide from the troll in the hope that it will chase the orc and be satisfied enough that it won't bother the small village as he is too injured to do much more; Stealth (Hide)  $(6+6+5) + 2 + 2 = 21$ . The troll didn't notice where Toradan landed nor is able to spot him, so he sees its only prey now as the orc and lumbers off to track it down.*

*Toradan rests for a while; waiting to make sure the troll doesn't come back, before struggling to his feet and stumbling in the direction of the small settlement. Lucky for him the orc blades had no poison on them, which would have made his plight all the direr.*

And so concludes my article about personal combat, both melee and ranged. I hope my examples have helped you better understand most of the major concepts of combat. Next month, with Toradan being severely hurt in combat, I will discuss the rules about injury and healing.

## FAN FLAVOUR

### NEW WEAPONS

#### THROWING AXE

**DESCRIPTION:** A small axe, slightly larger than a hatchet. With its balanced and weighted head and slender but strong wooden haft and handle, the axe is better suited for throwing than hand-to-hand combat.

**Damage:** 1d6+3

**Parry:** -1

**Range:** 5/10/30/50/+5

**Size:** Small

**Weight:** 2-3 lbs

**Price:** 1 SP, 3 sp



### NEW ELIXIRS

#### DRAUGHT OF HEALTH

**EFFECT:** Depending on the results that you roll for brewing the draught, its effects per dose is to remove from 1 Wound Level or 2 Wound Levels for an extraordinary success in its creation. The user must have 1 hour of undisturbed rest per Wound Level to be healed to obtain the benefit of the draught; only once the complete hour of rest has been had is the Wound Level(s) regained. Its effects are only beneficial once per week per person and healing continues as normal.

#### STRENGTHENING DRAUGHT

**EFFECT:** Its immediate effects are +2 Armed Combat, Ranged Combat, and Unarmed Combat and Willpower v. Fear for 1 minute / 2 points of creator's Bearing (rounded down); also for any Courage used gains +4 bonus instead of +3. Its subtle effects would be similar to miruvor where it enheartens, strengthens, and emboldens the hero to face the minions of the Shadow or other evil in the world.

# ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES

‘They were robed in white and grey. Swords were naked in their pale hands.  
... Their cold eyes glittered, and they called to him with fell voices.’

-- *The Fellowship of the Ring*

The Nazgûl are the most powerful of Sauron’s minions, nine shades who were once mighty kings of Men. Each one corrupted, they now serve his will as harbingers of evil throughout Middle-earth.

## AKHÔRAHIL: THE BLACK NÚMENOREAN

By Decipher/ICE/MERP, Contributed by Doug Joos

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 14 (+4), Nimbleness 12 (+3), Perception 12 (+3), Strength 11 (+2)\*, Vitality 12 (+3), Wits 13 (+3)\*

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +5\*, Swiftiness +7, Willpower +5, Wisdom +5

**DEFENCE:** 13

**MOVEMENT:** 6

**ORDERS:** Warrior, magician (sorcerer)

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Battle-hardened, Evasion, Spellcasting 8, Spell Specialty (Sorcery), Swift Strike, Tactics

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 40

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +10, Armed Combat: Clubs (Mace) +10, Inquire (Interrogate) +10, Inspire +5, Intimidate (Fear) +15, Language: Westron +6, Language: Black Speech +8, Lore: Realm (Harad, Mordor) +4, Lore: History (Men) +8, Lore: Magic +6, Lore: Servants of the Shadow +8, Lore: Rings of Power +7, Observe (Spot) +10, Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) +4, Ride (Hell-hawk, Horse) +9, Siegecraft (Unit Leadership) +8, Stealth (Sneak) +6, Track (Scent) +6

**EDGES:** Fell-handed (+3 against all enemies of Sauron), Night-eyed 2, Strong-willed, Warwise, Weapon Mastery (Sword), Wise

**FLAWS:** Fealty (absolutely bound and obedient to Sauron), Hatred (the living)

**SPELLS:** *Bane-spell, Bladeshattering, Command, Create Light, Display of Power, Dumbness, Enslave Beast, Evoke Fear, Forgetfulness, Holding-spell, Kindle Fire, Lightning, Opening-spell, Quench Fire, Ruin, Sense Power (ability), Shadow of Fear, Shutting-spell, Spellbinding, Veil, Voice of Command, Wizard’s Guise, Wizard’s Hand*

**SPECIAL ABILITIES:** Black Breath, Nazgûl Terror, Perceive Rings of Power, Persistent Existence, Purity of Running Water, Scent of Blood, Senses of the Dead, Undead Stamina, Wraithform

**SIZE:** Medium (5 Wound Levels, 1 Healthy)

**HEALTH:** 17

**COURAGE:** 5

**RENOWN:** 38

**TN EQUIVALENT:** 20





## UNIQUE SPECIAL ABILITIES

**BLACK BREATH** Those who run in fear at the sight of the Nazgûl are perhaps the wisest of all, as those who stand against them are susceptible to the Black Breath, a condition most dire. Any character who attacks a Nazgûl directly or is Unmanned in the presence of one must make an immediate Willpower test. Against the Lord of the Nazgûl, this test is TN 25. Characters who succeed in this test manage to stave off the effects for the moment, but if they fall otherwise unconscious while in combat with the Black Riders, they remain unconscious for 1d6 hours no matter what healing is brought to bear upon them. Failure at the Willpower test, on the other hand, results in unconsciousness for 1d6 days, Complete Failure in unconsciousness for 1d6 weeks, and Disastrous Failure in unconsciousness until the character can be brought to a house of great healing, as described under 'Advanced Treatment' on page 248 of the Core Rulebook. All characters rendered unconscious by the Black Breath must make a TN 10 Vitality test each day the condition lasts or lose 1 point of vitality and Strength. Any character reduced to 0 in either succumbs to death.

Characters roused from their unconsciousness continue to suffer intense feelings of dread, accompanied by terrible nightmares, for 1d6 days. These feelings impair all tests in that time, imposing a -2 penalty. Only a proper use of Inspire or Healing (TN 15) can end this period of lingering terror.

**NAZGÛL TERROR** In addition to having the effects of the standard special ability Terror, the Nazgûl can increase this effect when they gather in numbers. Although their opponents need not roll separately for each Nazgûl's Terror, the TN of the single test they must make is increased by one for each Nazgûl past the first. Furthermore, night imposes a -2 penalty to all reaction tests against Nazgûl Terror.

**PERCEIVE RINGS OF POWER** The existence of the Nazgûl is tied to the Rings of Power, and they can easily detect them. They receive a +4 *Sense Power* test modifier to perceive them.

**PERSISTENT EXISTENCE** Nazgûl with this ability cannot be slain while their Dark Lord lives. If 'slain', the Nazgûl reforms in Dol Guldur or Mordor, restored to full health.

**PURITY OF RUNNING WATER** All Nazgûl but the Witch-king are frustrated by the presence of running water. They suffer a -6 penalty to all tests while at the shores of a river or stream. They never ford deep rivers except in the most extreme of circumstances, preferring to cross on bridges or ferries.

**SCENT OF BLOOD** Nazgûl can smell blood as it pulses through the veins of living creatures, giving them a +2 to Observe (Scent) tests to find them. They also benefit from a +4 test modifier to track bleeding creatures.

**SENSES OF THE DEAD** The Nazgûl do not see the living beings of the world, but instead perceive the shadows they cast. To them, black seems white and darkness light. In sunlight, they suffer a -6 modifier to all Observe tests. At night, the penalty is only -3. When mounted on Black Horses or Hell-hawks, however, the Nazgûl do not suffer from this weakness, as they can instead see the world through the eyes of their mounts. The Lord of the Nazgûl's power is such that he may ignore the drawbacks of Senses of the Dead at will.

**UNDEAD STAMINA** Nazgûl need never eat or drink, take only half damage from physical attacks, and recover from injuries at five times the normal rate. Further, they do not have Weariness Levels and need never make a Stamina test to resist weariness for any reason.

**WRAITHFORM** The Nazgûl are invisible unless they garb themselves. However, their eyes – orbs of evil, red fire – can still be seen at times. Unless a Nazgûl wishes its eyes to be visible, spotting them requires a TN 15 Observe (spot) test.

## DESCRIPTION

The Nazgûl typically wear black, hooded, cloaks and blackened hauberks.

Underneath this garb, however, they are insubstantial spirits, their bodies long ago faded with the passage of time and the corrupting influence of Sauron.

Akhôrahil stood strong and straight; at 6'3" tall, he was a physically powerful figure, albeit graceless. His blindness added to his already aloof air, conveying the image of haughtiness. Still, he was proud of his handsome face and (in life) took care to never have it obscured. White garb and grey armor remained his favorite trappings, even after he became a Ringwraith. They went well with his silvery mithril-inlaid helm, which served as the Crown of Ciryatandor.

Akhôrahil's wife Akhôraphil gave birth to seven children, but only three (Lôkhazôr, Arkhahil, Ûndaphel) survived infancy.

## HABITAT

The Nazgûl require neither food nor shelter, dwelling effortlessly in any environment to which their master sends them. However, with the exception of the Lord of the Nazgûl, they are more capable at night, so they usually travel or do battle when the shadows are deeper.

## SOCIETY

The Nazgûl are completely devoted to and dominated by the will of Sauron. While the Lord of the Nazgûl is nominally in command of the other eight, his authority is a dim reflection of Sauron's. When the Nazgûl are within a few miles of one another, they can communicate through piercing wails that torture both the eardrums and the souls of living beings.

## USAGE

The Nazgûl are harbingers of doom, sowing fear and reaping terror wherever they may be. Anywhere heroes struggle against the Enemy, his servants may travel to stop them. The Nazgûl are among Sauron's most powerful servants, and a terrible challenge to any but the most powerful heroes. Those who expect to do anything other than avoid their attention or flee before them are certainly near the end of their chronicle, where peril is greatest and the consequences of failure most dire.





## HISTORY

Akhôrahil, the second of the fallen Númenorean lords to fall under the enduring spell of Sauron's Ruling Ring, was born at a manor overlooking the waters of Nisinen in Númenor in S.A. 1888. His father was Ciryamir, the third Friend or Tar-Ciryatan's brother Ciryatir (making him a cousin of Mûrazôr, the future Witch-king). An obviously brilliant young man, Akhôrahil was spoiled at an early age, for his family enjoyed great wealth and reaped many of the benefits derived from Tar-Ciryatan's aggressive overseas plundering.

Ciryamir was awarded the license to create and administer a Númenorean kingdom in Middle-earth on the very day his son reached the age of fifteen, and the next year (S.A. 1904) the family sailed east to the haven of Hyarn in southwest Endor. They landed at Midyears and journeyed up the river Aronduin to the newly built citadel of Marath Carnadúnê (Q. "Tower of the Red Sunset," S. "Barad Carannûn"). There, Ciryamir founded the Kingdom of Ciryatandor along the northern flank of Ered Laranor (S. "Yellow Mountains," Q. "Orolanari"), becoming a Client-king of Númenor.

Akhôrahil loved the new land and reveled in the virtually absolute power his father wielded over the subject peoples of the area. Like most of Ciryamir's Adan followers, he assumed himself to be superior and grew proud of his own name – as if it were a title. The Friend of the Lord became rich in his own right and began to experiment with the enchantments and incantations.

Unfortunately, the young man's thirst for wealth and power spurred him to covet his father's throne. Each year of waiting hurt more than the last. Then in the year S.A. 1918, Akhôrahil acted upon his desires. Signing a perverse pact with an aged Haradan Priest, he began the study of dark and sorcerous arts. During his studies, an accident while performing an incantation causes the young prince to lose his eyesight and his handsome face is scarred. Over time, Akhôrahil became mightier than his teacher – becoming the most powerful Sorcerer in the realm. Akhôrahil acquired control of his father's mind and instilled such despair that King Ciryamir took his own life.

Physically blind, but capable of magically sensing things about him, Akhôrahil ascended the throne of Ciryatandor on the first day of S.A. 1919. He proclaimed himself the Storm King and married his sister Akhôraphil within a week. Then, he levied a huge tax in order to placate the Númenorean court. Securely in control, the Blind Sorcerer proceeded to arm his young kingdom and conquer the neighboring lands along the southern edge of Far Harad: taking Chennacatt in S.A. 1929, Isra in S.A. 1933, and Kirmlesra in S.A. 1979. By S.A. 1999, his armies conquered Harshandt and claimed the western shores of the wide Bay of Ormal.

The campaigns waged by Akhôrahil's captains incited the Lord of the Rings to move against Ciryatandor. A sage emissary journeyed south from Mordor, offering the Black Númenorean a wealth of knowledge regarding magic and bearing the unlikely promise of immortality. Excited, the Blind Sorcerer agreed to ascribe to the Dark Lord's secretive treaty, thereby betraying his own King Tar-Ciryatan. The pact between Ciryatandor and Mordor was sealed when

Akhôrahil accepted the Ring of Power from Sauron in S.A. 2000. Thus, the Storm King became the fifth Lord of Men to become a Nazgûl.

### Akhôrahil the Ringwraith

Akhôrahil's greed led to the quick transformation of his position in the court at Barad Carannûn. Although he had always been considered bizarre, and while both his retainers and his immediate family feared him, the Storm King still interacted with his aides and household. This all changed after S.A. 2000.

Akhôrahil became a virtual recluse and his wife eventually fled the kingdom with her children, taking them to the Númenorean haven at Elorna. A purge ensued, and the men closest to the Númenorean King perished alongside the couriers that the Ringwraith considered too bold or independent. New governors assumed control of Ciryatandor's five provinces. Behind the scenes, Akhôrahil directed the careful metamorphosis of his realm, staying wary of upsetting the Adan monarch in Númenor. Tribute continued to flow westward over the sea to Armenelos, and no open relations with Mordor occurred during the next two hundred and fifty years.

By S.A. 2250, the Storm King presided over a client kingdom that was ostensibly Dúnadan but was in fact Black Númenorean. Akhôrahil ruled a domain that stretched from the Great Sea (Belegaer) to the huge Bay of Ormal on behalf of the Lord of the Rings. These strategic lands straddled all the routes across the Yellow Mountains and into southernmost Middle-earth. Sauron's hopes of keeping the Men of the West out of Far Harad rested with his Wraith-servant and preparations for the conquest of Harad and the regions along the northern and eastern coasts of the Ormal Sea neared completion when Akhôrahil declared himself independent of Númenor.

Tar-Atanamir the Great of Númenor died in S.A. 2221, the first King of Westernesse to pass without first relinquishing the scepter. His death brought Tar-Ancalimon to the throne and fostered a renewal of the programs that Tar-Atanamir had abandoned during the infirm years preceding his demise. After reordering



Númenor, the new King turned to his colonies in Endor and sought a reaffirmation of their loyalty. His special envoy to Ciryatandor arrived in the spring of S.A. 2250.

Akhôrahil realized that Númenor's desire for conquest remained unabated, and that Tar-Ancalimon planned to crush pretenders who sought to rule in his stead in the lands claimed by Númenor. The Nazgûl ordered the Númenorean emissary held as a hostage and renounced his ties to his island birthplace. Ciryatandor became an official ally of the Black Land.

Tar-Ancalimon ransomed his messenger and proceeded to plan the reconquest of the territory held in thrall by the Storm King. In S.A. 2280, the same armada that reinforced Umbar brought a fleet that landed in Tulwang, only two hundred miles to the northwest of the Ringwraith's citadel. Akhôrahil sent an army to contest the debarkment, but they arrived too late. Scouts reported the landfall and the Nazgûl's warlord ordered a retreat to the foothills of the kingdom. Unfortunately for Akhôrahil's host, the Númenoreans force-marched and caught them in arid lowlands near the Oasis of Fult. The Men of the West crushed the Endorians, leaving Ciryatandor's western borders virtually defenseless.

Akhôrahil fled his kingdom and went north to join his master in Mordor before suffering the embarrassment of seeing his own capital razed. His flight ended the brief era of Ciryatandor's independence and preserved the prospects for further Adan exploitation in Far Harad and the lands to the north.

Akhôrahil oversaw Nûrn in Mordor for the next nine hundred and eighty-one years. The slave-state served as the Black Land's breadbasket and the Storm King exacted torment from any subject who threatened Sauron's plans. His ruthless rule insured the supply of precious food for Sauron's burgeoning armies. Vast herds of wild beasts fed the vast Orc hordes, while grain from the fields around Nûrn nourished the Men of Mordor.

Ar-Pharazôn's invasion in S.A. 3261 precluded the completion of Sauron's armament, and the Evil One was forced to surrender in the face of the superior Adan arms (S.A. 3262). The Evil One journeyed out of the Black Land in order to avert the destruction of his kingdom at the hands of the Númenorean invaders, enabling the Nazgûl to flee into hiding. While Sauron went to Westeros in bondage, the Ringwraith's patiently awaited his return.

After the downfall of Númenor in S.A. 3319 and the reappearance of the Dark Lord in Middle-earth, Akhôrahil returned to his castle of Luglûrak on the southern shores of Nûrn. He remained there until S.A. 3429, when he led the host of Nûrn in the army that assailed Ithilien in Gondor. Although the invasion proved successful, the Last Alliance under Gil-galad and Elendil eventually crushed Mordor's mightiest forces and laid siege to the Dark Tower. Barad-dûr's defenses yielded in 3441, and both Sauron and his Nine Ringwraiths passed into the Shadow as the Second Age ended.

### The Third Age

Akhôrahil took form again in Middle-earth around T.A. 1050, but for the next five hundred and ninety years he resided in the Far South at Ny Chennacatt in the northern cliffs of the Yellow Mountains. Sauron called him north in T.A. 1640, and ordered the Storm-king to return to Nûrn and quietly replenish the strength of the fief in anticipation for the Dark Lord's reopening of Mordor. He joined four of his brethren and entered Gorgoroth later the same year. After slowly rebuilding the Dark Lord's strongholds on the adjoining plateau of Nûrn, the Blind Lord received a visit from the Witch-king in T.A. 1975.

The Lord of the Nazgûl arrived in Mordor after the fall of his kingdom in Angmar earlier that year. He gathered the Úlairi and plotted the final moves required to secure their master's home. During the next twenty-five years, they assembled their forces and laid the plans to surprise the Dúnadan city at Minas Ithil.

The Fell Riders struck in T.A. 2000, startling the valiant Gondorian garrison but failing to take the city. A two-year siege ensued. Culminating with a tremendous melee before the shattered gates of the marble-walled town, the last battle claimed every remaining defender. Minas Ithil and its palantir fell into the hands of the Ringwraiths in T.A. 2002, thereby ending any hold the south Kingdom retained over Mordor. From then onward, the moonlit city was called Minas Morgul.

Akhôrahil stayed in Minas Morgul until the end of the Third Age. Although he frequently journeyed to both Luglûrak in Nûrn and Barad-dûr in Gorgoroth, the Storm-king kept to the side of his captain, the Witch-king. Both fallen Númenorean Lords shared a similar past and enjoyed their special rapport. Each was a Sorcerer; so it was only natural that they spent a great deal of time together. Finally, although only fifth

in rank among the Nine, Akhôrahil became the Witch-king's most valued lieutenant.

In T.A. 3018, the Storm-king took part in the search for the Ruling Ring and eventually rode with the Witch-king to the borders of the elusive Shire in Eriador. The ultimately unsuccessful sojourn carried him through the Anduin Valley, past Isengard and the Gap of Rohan, and then through Tharbad and Andrath to the land called Súza. Akhôrahil stayed close by the side of the Lord of Morgul throughout the search. He entered Bree and was one of the Úlairi to encounter the Company on Weathertop. When the Nine rendezvoused in the Lone Lands and tried to cut off Frodo at the Ford of Bruinen, Akhôrahil and his black mount were the last to be drawn into the turbulent flood waters summoned by Elrond.

The fight at the Ford cost the Ringwraiths their horses but more importantly, cost them valuable time. Forced to return to Minas Morgul, the Storm-king would never again encounter the Ringbearer. The Nazgûl retired and thereafter relied upon their Fell Beasts for transport. Akhôrahil and four other Black Riders continued the search for the One Ring from the sky, but others prepared Sauron's warriors for the coming invasion into the Free Lands.

The Storm-king was one of the four Úlairi to take part in the epic battle of the Pelennor Fields, and there he saw his lord perish in single combat with Éowyn of Rohan. After the ensuing defeat and retreat, Akhôrahil flew to Udûn and joined the other seven remaining Nazgûl for the cataclysmic strike against the Army of the Free Peoples at Morannon. The Fell Rider's attack out of the cloudy sky and the subsequent melee with the Great Eagles was cut short, however, for Sauron realized that his end was sealed unless the Ringwraiths could stop Frodo and Sam from casting the One Ring into the fires of Mount Doom. All the eight surviving Nazgûl flew southward, but they never arrived. The Ruling Ring and all that was tied to it, perished in the wake of its fiery unmaking. Thus, Akhôrahil passed out of Éa.

*Over the next nine issues of The Hall of Fire, I am going to be expanding upon the known background of each of the nine Ringwraiths and "fleshing" them out. For some of you, parts of this information will be familiar as it was first presented by ICE/MERP in their Lords of Middle-earth Supplement. Understand it is in no way our intention at the Hall of Fire, to turn our webzine into a re-hash of old ICE/MERP material. But our publication is meant, for all purposes, to broaden the sources beyond canon that our readers can turn to or discard if they do not wish to put it in their game.*

"I am a wizard," continued Gandalf. I have heard of you, if you have not heard of me; but perhaps you have heard of my good cousin Radagast who lives near the Southern borders of Mirkwood?"

"Yes; not a bad fellow as wizards go, I believe. I used to see him now and again," said Beorn.

-- *The Hobbit*

## RADAGAST THE BROWN

**RACE:** From across the Sea

**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Agelessness

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 12 (+3)\*, Nimbleness 14 (+4), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 12 (+3)\*, Wits 11 (+2)

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +5\*, Swiftiness +4, Willpower +4, Wisdom +3

**DEFENCE:** 13

**MOVEMENT:** 6

**ORDERS:** Magician, Wizard

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Final Strike, Mastery of Magic, Sanctum (Rhosgobel), Sanctum Power, Spellcasting 7, Sense Power, Staff, Staff of Power, Wizard Spellcasting 3, Wizard's Heart, Wizardly Power

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 36

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Club (Staff) +6, Debate (Negotiate, Parley) +8, Guise +10, Healing (Herbal Remedies) +6, Insight +6, Intimidate (Power) +8, Language: Quenya +8, Language: Sindarin +10, Language: Westron +8, Lore: History (Elves, Men) +10, Lore: Magic +8, Lore: Rings of Power +4, Lore: Plants and Animals +12, Mimicry +10, Observe (Listen, Spot, Smell) +8, Persuade (Oratory) +6, Ride (Horse) +5, Search +5, Stealth (Hide, Sneak) +6, Survival (Forests, Mountains, Plains) +10, Weather-sense +10

**EDGES:** Ally 5 (Beorn, Gandalf, Gwaihir, others of the Wise), Friends (Birds, Men of Carrock, Woodmen), Hardy, Keen-eared, Keen-eyed, Keen-nosed, Travel-sense, Woodcrafty 2

**FLAWS:** Oath (to perform his mission for the Valar, foresworn), Duty (Protect nature)

**SPELLS:** *Animal Messenger, Beast Speech (ability), Beast Summoning, Change Hue, Create Light 2, Display of Power, Evoke Awe, Finding and Returning, Fog-raising, Fog-weaving, Imitation-spell, Lightning, Mastery of Shapes, Misdirection, Mist of Speed, Quench Fire, Power of the Land, Springtime, Veil, Wind Mastery, Wizard's Guise, Wizard's Fist, Wizard's Hand, Word of Command*

**SIZE:** Medium (5 Wound Levels, 1 Healthy)

**HEALTH:** 14

**COURAGE:** 4

**RENOWN:** 17

**GEAR:** Robes, staff of power, horse



## STAFF OF POWER

Like each of the others in the Order of Wizards, Radagast has fashioned a Staff of Power to act as a focus of his magical might. It is uniquely attuned to Radagast, and it can be fully wielded only by him. His is made of oak and appears still to be a living piece of wood as it has leaves sprout and flowers bloom during Spring and Summer with a vine of ivy coiling about it.

**Scribe Sign** - Radagast can scratch a short message onto any solid surface with a single sign. It appears as nothing more than an indecipherable rune. Radagast and any allies he designates understand the sign's message, which may be up to a dozen words in length. The sign lasts until Radagast erases it by striking it with his staff or one week passes. Radagast may only have three signs in existence at any given time.



**Spell Patterns 2** - Radagast may cast one spells per day of Weariness TN 5 or less without making a Stamina test nor does it count against total spells cast for subsequent Weariness tests for casting spells. His staff is also imbued with the spell Power of the Land.

**Strength of the Staff** - When recovering Weariness Levels, Radagast reduces the time needed by half. He can use his staff to recover a total of three Weariness Levels in this manner per day.

**Wizard's Endurance** - Once per day, Radagast may lean on his staff and ignore the effects of his Weariness Levels for one action. Any additional levels he incurs due to his action immediately add to his current level of fatigue after he completes his action.

## IN THE NOVEL

Radagast the Brown is one of the Order of Wizards, the five most powerful wizards of Middle Earth. Although he comes from across the Sea, he has the form of an elderly man, tall, but slightly taller than Gandalf. He wears simple brown robes with a hood of brown. He has a kindly nature about him, but can be distracted by his fervent devotion to nature.

His accomplishments are few, but have been enough to give even the smallest of aid to the Free Peoples of Middle Earth. After he arrived with Saruman, they traveled together for a while before he settled in Rhosgobel, between the Carrock and the Old Forest Road. Lesser in power than his brethren from across the Sea, he has been hard-pressed to help stem the tide of evil sweeping across the great wood. Along with the woodmen, Beornings, and elves of the Woodland Realm he has fought against giant spiders, orc raiders, dragons from the Grey Mountains, and general corruption of nature in the area.

He participated with the others of the White Council, the wise and powerful of the elves along with Gandalf and Saruman, in the attack upon the Dol Guldur to force out the Necromancer, who was discovered to be Sauron in disguise. He then later returned to his home and continued his work there. Only once since, at the behest of Saruman (unknown to be corrupted at the time), did he leave his abode to go in search of Gandalf to warn him of the arrival of the Nazgul searching for The Shire and Baggins and answer a summons to Isengard by Saruman. Only through his request of Gwaihir was Gandalf saved from his imprisonment in Orthanc. Though grievously delayed, it gave him the ability to continue his work in helping the Free Peoples.



Yet Radagast remains in Middle Earth into the Fourth Age and his fate is unknown. Tolkien said that Gandalf was the only one of the five Istari to fulfill their mission in the fight against Sauron because Radagast became so enamored with the nature of Middle Earth that he had forsaken his mission to aid the Free Peoples. In his works concerning the history of Middle Earth, it is said that Radagast was chosen at the behest of Yavanna to care for the plants and animals because she was sure that that aspect would be overlooked in the coming conflict. It could be said that he lived up to his purpose in "going native" and focusing solely on the protection of nature. But it could also be argued that he failed in that respect, too, since Greenwood the Great became overrun with evil, corrupting the environment including almost all plant- and wildlife.

## IN THE GAME

Radagast lives a solitary life in Rhosgobel and only by the greatest of need driving him would he leave his home of Rhosgobel or the surrounding area of Greenwood the Great (now commonly known as 'Mirkwood'). Adventurers would only encounter him if they went to seek him directly at Rhosgobel or were found wandering in the forest.

He may also seek help from a group of adventurers to send them on a quest in an attempt to save or preserve the forest from some evil such as a nest of giant spiders, or a dragon laying waste to the forest, etc.

# FEATURED CREATURES

## WERE-WORMS

"Tell me what you want done, and I will try it, if I have to walk from here to the East of East and fight the wild Were-worms in the Last Desert"

-- Bilbo Baggins, *The Hobbit*

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 22 (+8), Nimbleness 15 (+4), Perception 22 (+8), Strength 22 (+8), Vitality 24 (+9)\*, Wits 23 (+8)\*

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +10, Swiftiness +8, Willpower +9\*, Wisdom +10

**DEFENCE:** 14

**MOVEMENT:** 96

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Claws, Maw, Tail) +15, Games (Riddles) +9, Inquire (Interrogate) +10, Insight +15, Intimidate (Fear) +27, Language: Sindarin +10, Language: Westron +8, Observe (Smell, Spot) +15, Persuade (Bewilder) +15

**SPELLS:** *Beast Speech, Break Binding, Display of Power, Dumbness, Enslave Beast, Forgetfulness, Reading the Heart, Voice of Suasion.* Some Were-Worms know additional spells such as *Mind-speech, Misdirection, and Power of the Land*

**SPECIAL ABILITIES:** Armour (16), Bewilder, Acid Breath, Multiple Attacks (claw, maw, tail), Natural Weapon (claws, 3d6), Natural Weapon (maw, 5d6), Natural Weapon (tail, 4d6), Slow Healing, Sweep of Tail, Terror

**HEALTH:** 34

**SIZE:** Gigantic (9 Wound Levels, 5 Healthy)

**COURAGE:** 4

**RENOWN:** 15

**TN EQUIVALENT:** 25

### UNIQUE SPECIAL ABILITIES

**BEWILDER** — Through its superior intellect, a Were-Worm can confuse any opponent with which it converses. Every round the Were-Worm speaks, all those able to hear its words must make opposed Wisdom tests against the dragon's Persuade (Bewilder) or lose an action to their confusion.

**ACID BREATH** — As a full-round action, a Were-Worm can expel a cone of acid in a cloud up to 50 yards long from its maw, as wide as the distance to the dragon at any given point. Those caught in the corrosive mist suffer 5d6 damage and 2d6 damage each subsequent round until neutralized.

**SLOW HEALING** — Were-Worms have an extremely slow rate of natural healing. After 10 years of rest, a Were-Worm regains 1 Health point per year.

**SWEEP OF TAIL** — Any creature that sustains damage from a Were-Worm's tail attack and fails a TN 15 Strength or Nimbleness test (target's choice) is knocked down.

### DESCRIPTION

Even though their hideous appearance may belie it, Were-Worms are not undead. They are a visage so emaciated that they appear skeletal with a translucent underbelly where you can see their very insides. Their scales are bone white and their eyes are sunken back so far into their skulls that only pale red glimmers can be seen when their ire is raised. Similar to their fire-breathing brethren, they project a cone of acidic gas stinking of death and decay, corroding everything in its area, except for things made of mithril or mithril alloy.

### HISTORY

Not a part of Morgoth's great arsenal before or during the Great Battle in Beleriand, Were-Worms were secretly sent away to the far reaches of Middle Earth to spread their dark lord's evil and destruction. Once they lost their guidance and will of Morgoth, they took up their own agendas in the distant deserts and mountains of far away regions and not taking part in the wars of Sauron. The Dúnedain encountered them occasionally when they were at their height in shipbuilding and exploration. Rumors and tales of them were so far reaching that even Bilbo Baggins, a hobbit of The Shire, has heard and made reference to them.

### HABITAT

Unlike any of their other brethren, Were-Worms have been known to take over and govern lands of Men, seeking to rule than



to hide. They can be found in great palaces carved out of mountains or grottos along the far southern coastlines, ruling their subjects with ruthlessness.

Those who have not chosen the path of dominion have taken to solitary and uneventful lives in the Last Desert and its surrounding mountains.

## SOCIETY

The Were-Worms only downfall is that they are unable to spawn, so their numbers are indeed quite few, fewer than any of the other dragon species even after the Great Battle. Because of this trait and their devious tendencies, they are

incredibly independent and seek to destroy any who wish to supplant them, including other Were-Worms. Were-Worm kingdoms are almost constantly at war with one another as well as they hunt other Were-Worms in the Last Desert to their destruction. Were-Worms that are of the Last Desert show naught but indifference when they encounter one another, but due to mistrust, always have an eye on the other.

## USAGE

As these dragons are so far away from the lands of Gondor, Rohan, and such, Were-Worms would only be encountered if a

party were exploring the far-reaching and unknown-to-be charted regions of Middle Earth of the Far East and South. They are such a formidable foe, that they should be used as the ultimate or penultimate adversary in a chronicle. Perhaps a group of adventurers in the Númenorean navy discover a Were-Worm kingdom or encounter a battle between two Were-Worms in the desert. In the Fourth Age, perhaps a Were-Worm king discovers that Sauron has been destroyed and it sends spies to learn about the secrets of Gondor in preparation for an invasion by its own kingdom.

# DUMBLEDOORS

"Insect eyes," [Bilbo] thought, "only they are much too big."

-- Bilbo Baggins, *The Hobbit*

**ATTRIBUTES:**\* Bearing (-1), Nimbleness 14 (+4)\*, Perception (+0), Strength (+0), Vitality 6\*, Wits (-3)

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +1, Swiftess +5\*, Willpower -1, Wisdom -1

**DEFENCE:** 14

**MOVEMENT:** 3 (crawling) / 24 (flying)

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Natural Weapon (Sting) +2, Observe (Spot) +3, Search +3, Survival (Forests) +2, Track (Small Game) +8

**SPECIAL ABILITIES:** Evasion, Flight (see Movement Rate), Natural Weapon: Bite (1d6), Venomous Sting (1d6)

**HEALTH:** 6

**SIZE:** Small (5 Wound Levels, 1 Healthy)

**TN EQUIVALENT:** 5

*\*Note: Since many players have voiced concern about the 4-7 attribute range in the standard rules, the statistics below in many cases list only attribute modifiers (rather than presenting scores below 8 aligned with either the standard rules or the common revision). If an attribute score is actually needed, the Narrator can choose whichever number below 8 he prefers fits with the given modifier. Vitality, since it determines Health, is assigned a score and, if 8 or above, a modifier; for scores below 8, the Narrator can choose whichever modifier he prefers.*

## UNIQUE SPECIAL ABILITIES

**EVASION** — Dumbledors are extremely agile in the air. Able to hover and change direction very quickly, they can prove a difficult target to hit. Whenever a dumbledor performs a Dodge action, it rolls 3d6 and keeps the best two dice (as the Warrior order ability).

**VENOMOUS STING** — A dumbledor's sting inflicts 1d6 damage and injects paralyzing venom into the victim. (Type: Injury; Onset: Immediate, then 1 minute per stage; Potency: +5 TN; Treatment: +5 TN; Effect: Strength and Vitality reduced by 1d6 immediately and by 1 additional point at

each stage [at 0 the victim falls unconscious, lost points return at the rate of 1 per hour]; Secondary Effect: 1d3 at onset, and only Vitality is reduced by 1 at each stage; Stages: 10).

## DESCRIPTION

Dumbledors are a fantastic kind of insect described in the Hobbit poem "Errantry" by Bilbo Baggins. They are giant hornets with colorful black-and-gold striping, each weighing as much as ten pounds and possessing a wingspan upwards of four feet. Dumbledors live in social nests, though they are solitary predators. They are surprisingly aggressive and often attack with little or no provocation. They are readily discernable,

even at a distance, by their colorful markings and the low, rumbling drone of their wings.

## HABITAT

Dumbledors are not magical, though they may be mythical. If any still exist (or ever existed) in Middle-earth, they probably dwell in isolated glens or wooded vales far away from the settlements of Men. Given that they are principally remembered in Hobbit lore, dumbledor habitat is likely the secluded vales of the upper Anduin from whence the Hobbits themselves originated.

# CALLING ALL GAMERS!

## *Interested in submitting...*

- A mini or side adventure?
- Racial/Personal Development or Order/Professional Development packages?
- New creatures, or fell beasts?
- New Orders or Elite Orders?
- NPC's?
- Weapons, equipment, or magical items?
- Fan Art?

If so, write to us for details on submission at: [codawebzine@hotmail.com](mailto:codawebzine@hotmail.com) with “**Fan Content**” in the subject line. Please include your name and/or pseudonym (handle/online identity) and email address(es) with which one of our editors may contact you.

Please note that if you would like to submit a mini-adventure, Decipher will not consider it for publishing. Please do not directly submit your items to us without prior approval.

## *Fancy yourself a writer and would like to contribute to the webzine?*

If so, write to us at [codawebzine@hotmail.com](mailto:codawebzine@hotmail.com) with “**Writer**” in the subject line. One of the editors will get back to you with details about writing for **THE HALL OF FIRE**.

## *If you would like to post an advertisement for:*

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## 2004 DECIPHER CONVENTION CALENDAR

Updated 3-1-04

Spring is almost here, and that means convention season is upon us! Check out the shows listed below that Decipher will be attending, and make your plans to join us at one or more for demos, tournaments, special guests, the Decipher Convention Store, and of course, DecipherCon at Gen Con Indy.

We'll add more information on each convention as it becomes available. Check back often for updates on what's happening on the Decipher convention front!

Dates	Convention	Location
June 24-27	Origins International Game Fair	Columbus, OH
July 21-25	Comic-Con International	San Diego, CA
August 13-15	Wizard World Chicago	Chicago, IL
<b>August 19-22</b>	<b>Gen Con Indy / DecipherCon 2004</b>	<b>Indianapolis, IN</b>
October 21-24	Spiel '04 / World Cup (Oct 20-23)	Essen, Germany

In addition, look for Decipher and the .hack//ENEMY TCG at the Bandai booth at these anime shows:

Dates	Anime Show	Location
May 28-31	Fanime	Santa Clara, CA
June 4-6	Project A-kon	Dallas, TX
July 2-5	Anime Expo	Long Beach, CA
July 30-August 1	Otakon	Baltimore, MD
September 24-26	Anime Weekend Atlanta	Atlanta, GA



# WHAT'S OUT THERE

This is a list of websites along with Decipher's official websites. We have found they supply useful information to *Lord of the Rings* gamers.

## DECIPHER'S LORD OF THE RINGS RPG HOME

<http://decipher.com/lordoftherings/rpg/index.html>

## DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG BOARD

<http://calder.decipher.com/cgi-bin/msgbd?lotr-rpg>

## DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG SUPPORT DOCS

<http://decipher.com/lordoftherings/rpg/support/index.html>

## THE HALL OF FIRE WEBZINE SITE

<http://home.bellsouth.net/p/pwp-lotrwebzine>

## FAN MODULES FOR MIDDLE-EARTH

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules>

## THE LORD OF THE RINGS CODA RPG GROUP

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lotrrpg\\_coda](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lotrrpg_coda)

## THE MAD IRISHMAN

<http://www.mad-irishman.net>

## RPG TOOLS FOR DECIPHER'S CODA GAMES

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpgtools/>

## THE SLAVE PITTS OF BARAD-DUR

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/smaugrob/lotrmain.html>

## THE STEWARD AND THE KING

<http://www.stewardandking.net>

## THE TOWER HILLS

<http://homepage.mac.com/jeremybaker/towerhills>

## TREK-RPG.NET

<http://forum.trek-rpg.net>

## VALINOR

<http://sauron.misled.us>

# CREDITS AND CONTACTS

All pictures and graphics were obtained from Decipher and New Line Cinema or from sources on the Internet. No claim of ownership is made through their use here.

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