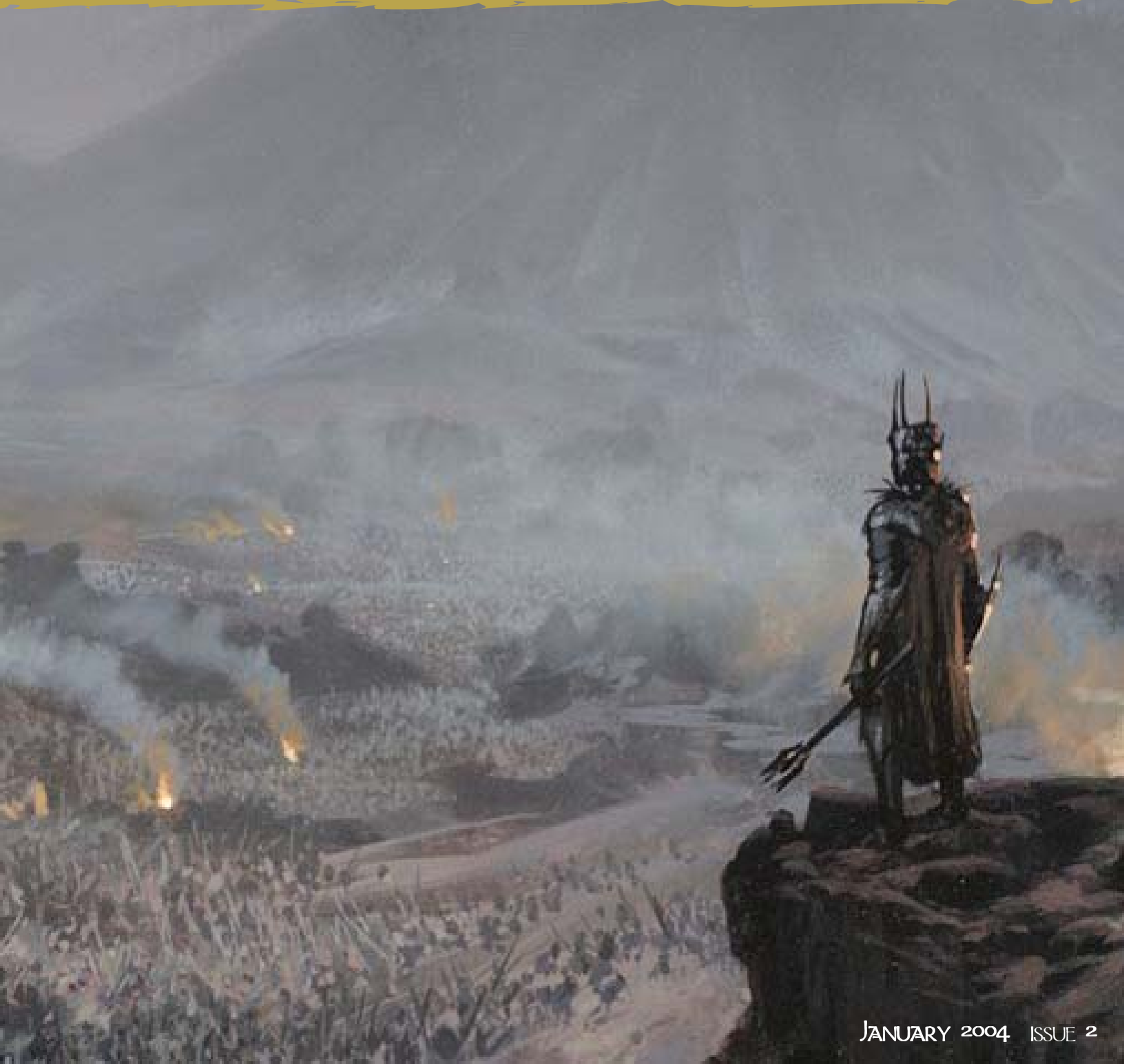


THE ARKKX:KH·CM

HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine



THE HALL OF FIRE

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CONTACT THE HALL OF FIRE AT:
codawebzine@hotmail.com



GREETINGS

GREETINGS, SALUTATIONS... HELLO ALL!

Let me be the first to say Happy New Years to all of you; I hope that all your roleplaying needs were met over the holidays (well, the ones that could be sated). And now to business... Well WOW! I must say the initial response to the webzine has been very gratifying to say the least. Within the first few minutes of my advertisement of its release, praise and helpful comments began pouring in and I'd like to say thank you to all who have written in showing your interest for submitting your own content. For those that have requested it and for future reference, here are the guidelines for your fan submittals

Articles

- Length: >500 words, 1000+ would be nice
- Font: Courier, Size: 12 pt
- Style format: Standard paragraph
- File format: Text (*.txt) or Word (*.doc)

Fan Flavour or Allies and Adversaries or Featured Creatures

Have the format of your write-up be in the same format as Decipher's published works.

Calling All Gamers!

The advertisement is to be less than 100 words and if you would like a graphic to go with it, it can be no more than 1" x 1".

With the support of you, the dedicated readers and fans, this publication can only get better.

There is one more item I would like to mention, an interview I'll be having with Doug Burke, Decipher's liason to their RPG messageboards. If you would like to ask him a question, then send an email to the webzine's email address with your question to the webzine with "INTERVIEW" in the subject line. As he gets constantly asked about the rules on the messageboards, I would like to keep the questions more to things that you, the readers, would like to know about him, his job, etc.

Once again, thank you for interest and happy gaming!

Matthew A. Kearns
aka GandalfOfBorg
Editor

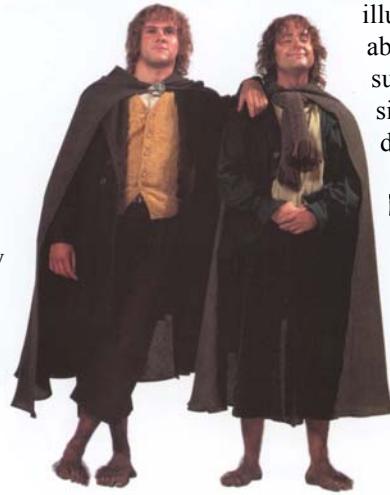
It's ALL OPTIONAL

COMBAT PACING

by Scottmir

Frodo has disappeared in the woods around the Falls of Rauros, and his cousins Merry and Pippin run off to search for him. Tasked by a suspicious Aragorn with protecting the young hobbits, Boromir, the captain-general of Gondor, chases after them. Suddenly, orcs of Isengard and Mordor pour into the woods and charge the hobbits, thinking that Merry or Pippin may be the little person whom Saruman seeks. Boromir arrives on the scene in the nick of time, wading into the Uruk-hai with sword and shield. But, the big man is badly outnumbered and repeatedly suffers grievous wounds. Then, the little hobbits leap upon the orcs with their knives. Due to their small size, they easily stab the bigger orcs and more easily avoid their clumsy blows. While Boromir is badly hurt and forced to retreat, the heroic hobbits defend him and slay the attacking Uruk-hai...

At least that's how the scene plays out using the accelerated combat pacing by Decipher (see *The Lord of the Rings RPG* Core Rule Book, p. 270). This accelerated system (sometimes called "mook" rules) is designed to speed up combat by treating hordes of enemies as one-success, two-success, or three-success targets. The foe's Health and armor as well as the hero's Strength and weapon don't matter at all. If a character gets a complete success on his attack test (regardless of his weapon type or Strength), it counts as a "one success" hit; a superior success counts as a "two success" hit, and an extraordinary success is a "three success" hit. A marginal success on the attack test is ignored, considered to be a hit that is not hard enough to hurt the foe. This system does indeed speed up combat, but you'll quickly find out that it strongly favors the small and agile and completely nullifies the advantages of big, strong characters with heavy weapons. This article will try to



illustrate the problems inherent in the overly abstract standard "mook" system, and then will suggest a variant system that is still fast and simple but incorporates Health and weapon damage.

Hobbits, the Ultimate Warriors??

Here's the crux of the problem with the Core Rule Book's recommended system: damage doesn't matter, only accuracy. All that matters is getting a higher degree of success, not hitting harder or wielding a more damaging weapon. With this system, you'll have players lining up to use Precise Attack while blanching at the thought of Power Attack or Two-Handed Attack. The staff (or better yet a shield bash) is the ultimate weapon, since damage doesn't matter but the parry bonus still does. Heck, whether you are attacking with a great-axe or a dagger is irrelevant; all damage is the same.

Which brings us to the hobbits. According to the size rules, attacks made by bigger combatants versus smaller targets suffer a +2 TN modifier per size-level difference, while attacks made by the smaller combatant against the bigger foe benefit from a -2 TN modifier per size-level difference. Thus, when hobbits fight Uruk-hai, the orcs' Defence is effectively 2 lower while the hobbits' Defence is 2 higher. So in our example above, the orcs are going to have a considerably easier time hitting Boromir than Merry and Pippin, and the hobbits will find it easier to hit

the orcs than their skill level warrants. Boromir's only advantage is his higher ranks in Armed Combat. In fact, if Merry and Pippin had an equal number of ranks as Boromir, they would be much better at fighting orcs than Boromir ever could hope to be, for he will never benefit from the +2/-2 size modifiers.

Boromir's mighty longsword and superior strength don't matter using the core book's

system. The Uruks' Health rating, Tough Skin, and armor don't matter either. Each Uruk is merely a "three success" target brought down after a combination of successful hits — whether those hits are from a longsword or a hobbit knife makes no difference. Boromir might as well have 4 instead of 12 Strength and the Uruk-hai might as well wear lingerie as orc-mail.



An Accelerated Alternative

So, what is an alternative that keeps combat pacing simple and quick but doesn't ignore Health and weapon damage? A very effective fix is simply to replace the one-, two-, three-success structure with a specific amount of damage that reflects the opponent's Health and Wound Levels. If a creature in a horde takes damage equaling at least half of its full Health Levels (round up) from a single attack, it falls "mortally wounded" and is removed from combat (just like a "three success" hit in the standard system). If the creature takes damage equaling at least two full Health Levels from a single attack, it is "seriously wounded" (comparable to a "two success" hit) and will likely to try to flee on its next action. If the creature takes damage equaling at least half of its Health score (round up) from a single attack, it is "lightly wounded" (comparable to a "one success" hit). Any attack that inflicts less damage than half the creature's Health score is a "glancing blow" that is ignored (like a marginal success in the standard system).

Just like in the standard system, the hits stack: a creature that is "lightly wounded" (one-success hit) twice becomes "seriously wounded" (two-success hit), and a creature that is "lightly wounded" three times or "lightly wounded" once and then "seriously wounded" becomes "mortally wounded" (three-success hit). Just like in the standard system, you do not need to track Health boxes or worry about wound penalties. However, it should be pointed out here that, using the Core Book's rules, it is quite difficult for even a terrifically strong warrior to deal enough damage to "mortally wound" the typical foe in a single blow. Even making a Two-Handed Attack with a longsword a 12 Strength, the warrior's maximum possible damage is 24 (2d6+5+3+4). Using our variant system, that would be enough to "mortally wound" a medium-size creature with a Health score of 8 (and no armor). A Narrator who wishes to use this variant system for accelerated combat pacing but still wants to see lots of foes dropping in a single blow is advised to consider optional rules that increase the possible range of damage a hero can inflict. See "It's All Optional: Dealing More Damage" in issue #1 of *The Hall of Fire* for more information.

Let's now apply our modified "mook" rules to the horde of Uruk-hai attacking Merry, Pippin, and Boromir. According to *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*, Uruk-hai have 6 total Health Levels and a Health score of 12. In

order to "mortally wound" an Uruk in a single blow, a hero would need to inflict 36 or more points of damage on the orc (three full Health levels). To "seriously wound" an Uruk in single blow, the hero would need to inflict at least 24 points of damage (two full Health levels). To "lightly wound" an Uruk, the hero would only have to inflict at least 6 points of damage (half of the Health score). Any blow that inflicts less than 6 points of damage is a "glancing blow" that the Uruk shrugs off.

The Narrator simply has to jot down the number of Uruk-hai on a piece of scrap paper, leaving space to write "L" (lightly wounded), "S" (seriously wounded) or "M"

(mortally wounded) next to each Uruk-hai. At the top of the paper he writes "6/24/36" to indicate the damage ranges. Since the Uruk-hai have Tough Skin (1 AR) and probably wear orc-mail (6 AR), the hero actually has to deal out higher amounts of damage; the Narrator could just write "7 AR" next to the 6/24/36 range to remind him or he could put the armor

right into the damage ranges (13/31/43).

So now Merry and Pippin, despite their size advantage, are going to have a hard time with their little knives inflicting even a light wound on the orcs. Boromir, with his great strength and mighty longsword, is much more likely to hurt the orcs and they, in turn, will be very happy they are wearing their mail! In conclusion, this variant system puts poor Merry and Pippin in the danger Tolkien meant them to be in and restores the lordly Boromir to his rightful place as their would-be rescuer.



ALLIES & ADVERSARIES

FREDREGAR 'FATTY' BOLGER by Jason Dúral

*'Fond as he was of Frodo, Fatty
Bolger had no desire to leave the Shire,
nor to see what lay beyond it.'*
— *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Race: Hobbit (Fallohide)

Racial Abilities: Six Meals a Day, Small Folk, Soft-footed, Sure at the Mark, Tough as Old Tree-Roots

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

Reactions: Stamina +2, Swiftiness +1*, Willpower +1*, Wisdom +1*

Order: Noble

Order Abilities: Cross-Order Skill (Teamster)

Advancements: 1

Skills: Armed Combat: Clubs (Club) +2, Climb +1, Craft: Cooking +2, Craft: Hatmaking +3, Debate (Bargain) +4, Games (Eating Contests) +1, Inquire (Converse) +2, Insight +1, Inspire +2, Intimidate +2, Language: Westron (Common, Hobbit-dialect) +5, Lore: History (The Shire) +3, Lore: Other (Ghost Stories) +2, Lore: Race (Hobbits) +2, Lore: Realm (The Shire) +4, Lore: Realm (Old Forest) +3, Observe (Taste) +5, Persuade (Charm) +3, Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons (Stone) +2, Ride (Pony) +2, Stealth (Sneak) +2, Teamster (Carts) +1

Edges: Friends (Bilbo & Frodo Baggins), Hoard 2, Rank, Wary

Flaws: Craven, Weak-willed

Health: 11

Courage: 3

Renown: 1

Gear: Clothing, walking stick, cart and pony.

* Favored attribute or reaction.

In the Novels

If there were a fifth Hobbit in the Fellowship of the Ring, it would be none other than Fredregar "Fatty" Bolger, cousin and friend to Frodo Baggins, Meriadoc Brandybuck, and Peregrin Took.

Born to Odovacar and Rosamunda Bolger in 1368 Shire Reckoning (SR), Fredregar grew up in the Eastfarthing, in the town of Budgefield in the Bridgefields. Though he has Tookish blood running in his veins from his mother's side of the family, he inherited little of their adventuresome nature. Twelve years younger than Frodo, Fredregar was practically a nephew to Bilbo, a good and loyal friend to Frodo, and was equally close to their cousins, Meriadoc

and Pippin. As a child, Fredregar, or "Fatty" as he was called due to his girth, was favorite of Bilbo Baggins, frequenting Bag End often to hear Bilbo's wonderful stories, his childhood dreams inspired by the older hobbit's adventures. Ironically, though, he has no desire to travel, even as far as the Brandywine Bridge. After a childhood filled with the bogey-stories of his nurses and Bilbo's own stories, Fredregar is filled with dread about the Old Forest, believing it filled with goblins, wolves, and other nasty creatures who cause folks to disappear and to never return. Fredregar led a fairly sedate life, working as an apprentice in his father's hat-making shop, and serving to keep the folks of Eastfarthing in quality headwear.

When Bilbo left the Shire most unexpectedly, Fredregar still regularly attended the birthday parties Frodo continued to throw for Bilbo despite his absence, and, as such, Fredregar was privy to the significance of the Ring, and knew of the importance that Gandalf ascribed to it. His loyalty to Frodo and his cousins, plus the desire to be a part of some great adventure (but still remain in the Shire), impelled him to help his fellow Hobbits as best he could.

When Frodo put in motion his plan to leave the Shire, Fredregar helped Frodo secure a home in Crickhollow in Buckland, far enough away from Hobbiton that no one would notice that Frodo had gone. He took care of the paperwork, including the legal matters surrounding the move and, along with Merry, Pippin, and Folco, helped Frodo to pack. Fredregar was one of those who loaned his cart to help transport Frodo's belongings, and took the final load to the new house in Buckland, where he and Merry unpacked and arranged Frodo's things as if the young hobbit were going to live there. As Fredregar Bolger was not well known in Crickhollow, he volunteered to fend off inquisitive folks who wanted to know where Frodo had gone. Fredregar was to keep up the pretense that Frodo was in residence at Crickhollow, answering mail, tending to the place's upkeep, paying bills, and passing along news of the hobbit's departure to Gandalf should the wizard come seeking Frodo. None of the Hobbits had any idea that even this minor task would put Fatty into considerable danger.

When Fredregar had seen his friends off, he remained and acted according to plan. Shortly after their departure, however, three Nazgul visited the small house at Crickhollow! They did not find Fredregar at home as he had fled at the first sight of them, running a mile to the nearest neighbor's house stricken with fear. His warning gave the hobbits of the area a chance to raise their alarm. The Black Riders, realizing that Frodo and the Ring were not at Crickhollow, left without incident.

Perhaps emboldened by his brush with danger, Fredregar was among those to resist the ruffians who took over the Shire at the behest of the mysterious boss, Sharkey. While aiding rebels in the Brockenbores,

Fredregar was captured and imprisoned at the Lockholes in Michel Delving. His friends Frodo and Pippin later freed him after they had returned to the Shire. His captivity had been hard, though, and he was nearly starved during his time in the Lockholes. When Fredregar was released, his friends noted that he no longer suited his nickname of Fatty, and would henceforth just be Fredregar. Always practical, though, the first thing the newly-freed Fredregar asked when released from his cell was what the newly-grown Pippin's new hat size was.

In the Game

Fredregar Bolger prior to the War of the Ring would most likely be encountered in the Shire, spending time in Bag End or otherwise in the company of Frodo, Merry, Pippin, or Folco Boffin. Fredregar has a loving family with both parents still alive, a younger sister named Estella, who later married Meriadoc Brandybuck. As one of Bilbo's favorites, he is undoubtedly interested in encountering new folks, and hearing of strange and faraway lands, though he has little interest in going to any of them, and is prone to fear the unknown.

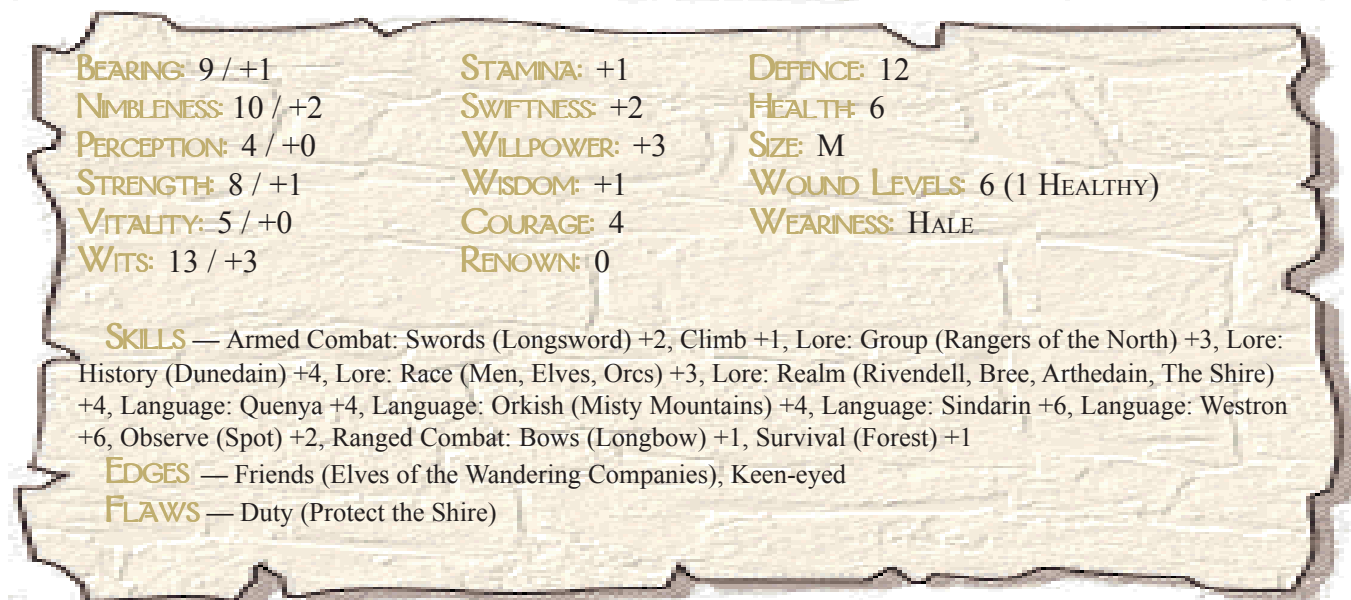
During the War of the Ring, Fredregar would be found in Frodo's new home in Crickhollow, trying to keep up the pretense of Frodo's residence. He is wary of strangers at this time, particularly ones who ask a lot of questions. If adventurers or heroes are trusted by Bilbo and/or Gandalf, Fredregar may involve them in schemes to keep the notion of Frodo's departure a secret, or could even send them out on errands to ask discreetly about if Gandalf has been seen in the area. After the scouring of the Shire, Fredregar is more than likely tending to his father's business, helping the hobbits in the restoration of the Shire, and perhaps assisting his friends in the matters that fell by the wayside while they were away on their great adventure.

A PC's SO-CALLED LIFE

CHARACTER CREATION, PART II

by Matthew Kearns

Last month I began creating a character from scratch. I rolled his attributes, determined his native skill and racial package, and then in the end I had a character that looked like this:



Now I shall continue on with the character creation process in this part where I choose his Order, Order Package, Order Ability, and finally spend the 5 Free Picks.

#5 ORDER DEVELOPMENT

The first part of Order Development is to choose your order. There are nine basic orders to choose from: Barbarian, Core Rule Book (CRB) p. 78; Craftsman, CRB p. 82; Loremaster, CRB p. 85; Magician, CRB p. 88; Mariner, CRB p. 91; Minstrel, CRB p. 94; Noble, CRB p. 96; Rogue, CRB p. 99; and, Warrior, CRB p. 101. Each has their strengths and weaknesses, but it doesn't really matter what you choose as each are unique unto themselves and offer different role-playing experiences to players. Decipher has also provided guidelines for creating No-Order characters, that is characters who start without an order in the tradition of such characters from *The Lord of the Rings* as Merry and Pippin. For my example character, I will make it a Rogue.

When you select your Order, the order descriptions give suggestions as to which attributes and reactions are good choices for favoured status. The benefits to favoured attributes and reactions are they are cheaper to increase when spending advancement picks. A second benefit as described in *The Two Towers Sourcebook* is favoured attributes have a possibility of being raised 1 point past

their already established limit of 12 + racial modifier, but is a very rare case in which it is allowed to be increased by the current rules. You are to select two favoured attributes and one favoured reaction. My example character's favoured attributes are Nimbleness and Strength and his favoured reaction is Swiftess.

Next select your Order Package, but if none of the packages listed are to your liking, disperse 15 picks to any of the listed order skills with no skill given more than 3 ranks. The rule concerning the first specialty is free is still in effect as well as you may purchase extra specialties with these picks on a 1:1 basis. With that done, you have an additional 5 picks to spend on any of the order skills or specialties for those skills. The Order Package I choose for my character is Outlaw. See Figure 8 (following page) for how I spent his order skill picks.

Fig 8: Order Package (Outlaw)

PACKAGE SPENT

Armed Combat +3	Armed Combat: Swords (Short Sword) +2
Climb +2	Climb +2
Conceal +2	Conceal (Hide Treasure) +2
Observe +2	Observe (Hear) +1
Ranged Combat +2	Ranged Combat: Bows +2
Stealth +3	Stealth (Hide, Sneak) +2
Survival +1	Survival +1
+5 picks	Legerdemain (Prestidigitation) +2
	Survival +1
	Games (Darts) +1
	Search +1

When you select an Order Package, there is also a list of five edges which complement the type of character you wish to play. You may select one of the five edges for free, but if you have one of the edges in the list already, you may not choose it again unless the edge's description allows it. In the Outlaw package, there is: Dodge, Friends, Hardy, Strong-willed, and Tireless. For my character I will choose Hardy.

When finished choosing your free edge, you have the option of selecting up to an additional four flaws (which *does* include the optional flaw acquired in #4) to buy you edges or ranks in order skills at 1:1 basis. I shall select Fey and Battle Fury I to buy Dodge and Strong-willed 1.

Now, the last part of Order Development is selecting your Order Ability. These are special powers which your character has. They range from the ability to roll an extra die to better your chances at success to granting extra actions in combat without penalty. The Order Ability I choose for my character is Lurking In Shadows.

#6 5 FREE PICKS

This is the last part of character creation dealing with the rules and mechanics. You are given five picks to spend on the Advancement Table (Table 11.1 in the CRB, p. 278) as if you were for an advancement, but there are restrictions. The items in the table you are not allowed to purchase are Order Abilities, Reactions, Health, or buy into another basic

order; the first three are because the character's attributes and reactions aren't finalized until after this phase and therefore making these items variable. The cap of 6 ranks still applies during this phase. The items I bought for the example character are shown in Figure 9.

So in the end, the final sheet for my character looks something like this:

Fig 9: 5 Free Picks

- 1) Observe +1
- 2) Search +2
- 3) <Spent>
- 4) Furtive
- 5) <Spent>

BEARING: 9 / +1

NIMBLENESS: 10 / +2

PERCEPTION: 4 / +0

STRENGTH: 8 / +1

VITALITY: 5 / +0

WITS: 13 / +3

STAMINA: +1

SWIFTNESS: +2

WILLPOWER: +3

WISDOM: +1

COURAGE: 4

RENOUN: 0

DEFENCE: 12

HEALTH: 6

SIZE: M

WOUND LEVELS: 6 (1 HEALTHY)

WEARINESS: HALE

SKILLS — Armed Combat: Swords (Longsword, Short Sword) +4, Climb +3, Conceal (Hide Treasure) +2, Games (Darts) +1, Language: Quenya +4, Language: Orkish (Misty Mountains) +4, Language: Sindarin +6, Language: Westron +6, Legerdemain (Prestidigitation) +2, Lore: Group (Rangers of the North) +3, Lore: History (Dunedain) +4, Lore: Race (Men, Elves, Orcs) +3, Lore: Realm (Rivendell, Bree, Arthedain, The Shire) +4, Observe (Hear, Spot) +4, Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) +3, Search +3, Stealth (Hide, Sneak) +2, Survival (Forest) +3

EDGES — Dodge, Friends (Elves of the Wandering Companies), Furtive, Hardy, Keen-eyed, Strong-willed

FLAWS — Battle-fury I, Duty (Protect the Shire), Fey

ORDER ABILITIES — Lurking in Shadows

Next month I shall continue with Part III by developing my character's background by using the attributes I have given him in the course of creating his character sheet.



Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game

Character Name: _____
 Player Name: _____ Creation Date: _____
 Race: _____ Nationality: _____
 Orders: _____
 Elite Orders: _____

Advances

ATTRIBUTES

- Bearing ☐
 Nimbleness ☐
 Perception ☐
 Strength ☐
 Vitality ☐
 Wits ☐

Die Roll	Racial Modifiers	Total	Accuracy Modifiers

REACTIONS

- Stamina ☐
 Swiftness ☐
 Willpower ☐
 Wisdom ☐

Accuracy Modifiers	Disc. Modifiers	Total

Defense 10+

Nonlethal Modifiers	Disc. Modifiers	Total

Subliminal Modifiers	Disc. Modifiers	Total

Initiative

Corruption

Renown

	Penalty	Total Health	health
healthy	0		
DAZED	-1		
INJURED	-3		
WOUNDED	-5		
INCAPACITATED	-7		
NEAR DEATH	-9		

WEARINESS

	Penalty (Dodge+Swi)
HALF (fully rested)	0
WINDLED	-1
TIRE	-2
WEARY	-4
SPENT	-8
EXHAUSTED	-10

ARMOR & SHIELD

Type Worn	None
Hauberk?	☐
Plates?	☐
Damage Absorbed	☐
Nimbleness Penalty	☐
Shield Carried	None
Parry Bonus	☐
Ranged Attack CDod	☐
Dodge Swiftness CDod	☐
Offhand Penalty	☐

WEAPONS

Weapon	Type	Damage plus Str CDod	Parry Bonus	Size	Weight	Ranges PB/S/M/L/X+S	Description/Special

Missile Weapon Ammunition

Type: _____ Quiver Capacity _____
 ||||| ||||| ||||| |||||

Equipment and Gear

weight

Courage

Disc. Modifiers	Total

||||| |||||

Equipment and Gear

weight

Minimum
Weight
Capacity

Symbol or Device

Current
EP

Age:

Gender:

Hair:

Eyes:

Size:

Weight:

Height:

Copper Pennies (cp)

Silver Pennies (sp) - 100 cp

Silver Pieces (SP) - 1 sp

Gold Pennies (gp) - 1 sp

Gold Pieces (GP) - 1 gp

skills

Skill Name	Train?	Non - specialized	Skill Category	Tool Category	Accuracy	Accuracy Modifier	Skill Rank	Disc. Modifier	Specialty Modifier	Total Rank
Climb				P	Scr					
Cruise	☐			A	Wits					
Insight				S	Per					
Inspire				S	Brg					
Jump				P	Scr					
Run				P	Scr					
Search				P	Per					
Swim				P	Scr					
Weather-Sense	☐			P	Per					
Skill Name	Train?	Group*/Specialized	Skill Category	Tool Category	Accuracy	Accuracy Modifier	Skill Rank	Disc. Modifier	Specialty Modifier	Total Rank
Acrobatics				P	Nim					
Appraise	☐			A	Wits					
Armed Combat*				P	Nim					
				P	Nim					
Conceal				P	Wits					
Craft*	☐			P	Nim					
	☐			P	Nim					
	☐			P	Nim					
Debate				S	Wits					
Games				P	Nim					
Healing	☐			P	Wits					
Inquire				S	Brg					
Intimidate				S	Brg					
Language*	☐			A	Wits					
	☐			A	Wits					
	☐			A	Wits					
Legerdemain	☐			P	Nim					
Lore*	☐			A	Wits					
	☐			A	Wits					
	☐			A	Wits					
Mimicry	☐			P	Brg					
Observe				P	Per					
Perform*				S	Brg					
Persuade				S	Brg					
Ranged Combat*				P	Nim					
				P	Nim					
Ride				P	Brg					
Sea-Craft	☐			P	Wits					
Siege-Craft	☐			P	Wits					
Smith-Craft	☐			P	Scr					
Stealth				P	Nim					
Stone-Craft	☐			P	Scr					
Survival				P	Per					
Teamster				P	Scr					
Track	☐			P	Wits					
Unarmed Combat*				P	Nim					

☐ - any skill marked with this box requires the character be trained in the particular skill to make any attempt, non-trained characters may not use the skill.

RACIAL ABILITIES

Name	Modifier	Effect

ORDER ABILITIES

Name	Modifier	Effect	# of LOOP
			1

ELITE ORDER ABILITIES

Name	Modifier	Effect	# of LOOP

EDGES

Name	Modifier	Effect	# of LOOP

PLAUS

Name	Modifier	Effect	# of LOOP

Miscellaneous Modifier Summary

[illegible]

Special Abilities
OR Notes

MOUNT OR FAMILIAR

FAN FLAVOUR

ELITE ORDER: COMMANDER

by Jason Dúráil

*‘... for he was the Captain of Ships,
and was supported by the people
of the coasts and of the great havens
of Pelargir and Umbar.’
— Appendix A, The Return of the King*

Skilled sailors and leaders of men, the commander is similar to a captain, though they are found at the helm of a ship rather than upon a battlefield. Whether they command navies of warships, or lead merchant fleets, commanders are at home upon the deck of a ship, having come to their position through rank, experience, or wealth.

ADVENTURES

For adventures which take place on the coast or the rivers, the commander is an essential member of any adventuring group, or as a valued NPC ally. Commanders are at home in campaigns involving naval combat, such as sorties against the Corsairs of Umbar. They can be dynamic and useful party members in any situation on sea-craft or boats, whether based in the sea-fleets of Pelargir and other Gondoran sea-cities.

Many Elves based out of the Grey Havens are commanders, guiding vessels over the sea to Valinor, the Undying West. The commander's usefulness is not restricted to the ocean, however, but also on the great waterways of Middle Earth, particularly the Great River, the Anduin, where they might make shorter trips back and forth for trade and transport. They are most suited as the naval counterparts to captains, leading warships in great sea-battles.

BACKGROUND

Most commanders begin their careers as mariners or warriors. These orders provide many of the skills a commander will need to captain sea-craft and lead navies on the waters of Middle Earth. Mariners, obviously, have many useful abilities which aid them well as commanders. At times, nobles may join their ranks as well.

GAME INFORMATION

Requisites

To become a commander, you must have Bearing 8+ and Sea-craft 10+.

Order Skills

The commander's order skills are: Armed Combat (Nim), Debate (Wit), Inspire (Brg), Intimidate (Brg), Lore (Wit), Observe (Per), Ranged Combat (Nim), Sea-craft (Wit), Swim (Str), Weather-sense (Per).

ABILITIES

When you create a captain, you may make one pick from the following special abilities:

Man-o-War

As the waters of Middle-earth are sometimes battlefields, you are skilled at the many elements of naval combat. This includes the use of tactics, strategies, awareness of the limitations of your vessel and others, assessing the "field," knowledge of ship-borne siege weapons such as catapults and rams, weather and its effects on naval combat, and understanding of the realities of shipboard combat. While you are in charge of a sea-vessel involved (or about to become involved) in naval combat, you can add +1 to your Sea-craft and Siegecraft skills. This ability also adds +1 to the commander's unit Strength and Morale when using the mass combat rules.

REQUISITES: Sea-craft 8+.

IMPROVEMENT: For each additional pick devoted to this ability, you can add another +1 to the bonuses described above.

Master of Ships

Because the tasks onboard a ship are complex, and the order of command is drilled into all who ply the waters of Middle Earth, the role of the commander demands an innate sense of respect and obedience to those who recognize it. While onboard, in charge of a vessel, or while dealing with other sea-folk or their ilk, the commander may add +2 to any checks for Bearing-based skills which could be influenced by their authority - including Debate, Inspire, Intimidate, and Persuade. It has an additional +2 against any who serve under the commander. Those affected by this ability include mariners, traders who deal with sea-merchants, and those who dwell on the ocean or waterways. This ability cannot be used if the commander is out of their element, so to speak, such as far inland, not currently in command of a vessel, has not identified themselves as a commander, or if they are dealing with beings which do not have a naval culture.

REQUISITES: Bearing 10+, Ship.

IMPROVEMENT: For each additional pick devoted to this ability, you can add another +2 to the bonus for the Bearing-related checks described above.

Port of Call

The commander has a port where they are always welcome and relatively safe, which has adequate facilities house their ship's crew, resources to restock and reprovision, and skilled persons capable of maintenance or repair to the commander's vessel. Furthermore, the port of call will have enough available manpower to replace any lost crewmen, whether they be normal sailors and mariners, or warriors accustomed to sea-battles. If the ship is a war vessel, there will be an armory available to replenish lost weapons, and if it is a trade ship, then there is enough harbor labor to load and unload goods. Merchant commanders should be able to unload any trade goods, and replenish them with new goods if desired. If the commander is a pirate or corsair, the port of call will be an outlaw harbor, a hidden port on some small freebooter island, or perhaps along the coast of Umbar.

Sea Legs

As with the mariner, you do not suffer the -2 (or greater) test penalty to all Nimbleness-related tests while onboard a sea- or river-vessel. You are also immune to sea-sickness, and never have to make Stamina tests to avoid being sea-sick.

Ship

Commanders are almost always in command of a sea-vessel. This ability is identical to the mariner order ability described on page 93 of the core rulebook. If the commander is a warrior or a noble, the vessel can be a war-ship. The Narrator and player should work together to determine the nature of the vessel, its crew, and by what conditions the commander has the vessel, whether it be merchantile, military, or transportation.

REQUISITES: Sea-craft +7, any other mariner or commander ability.

IMPROVEMENT: For each additional pick devoted to this ability, you have an additional ship under your command.

Ship Handling

Accustomed to a life onboard sea-craft, you have an instinctual feel for the way a ship moves. You know what its limitations and strengths are, and how to best use the ship's sails, oars, rudder, and manpower together to improve the way the ship handles. Additionally, you can take advantage of weather and water conditions when they are useful. While in command of any sea-vessel, you gain a +3 to any Sea-craft rolls you make.

Wave-rider

Accustomed to the waters of Middle-earth, you are able to coax your vessel's movement to get the best performance. With this order ability, you can increase your vessel's movement speed (in miles per hour) by 25%. If you are commanding a sailing vessel, you can consider Weather-sense as an affinity skill, if you possess any ranks in this skill. You can also add +1 to your vessel's Mobility value when using the mass combat system.

REQUISITES: Sea-craft 10+, Wind-mastery.

IMPROVEMENT: For an additional pick devoted to this ability, you can add an additional 25% to the movement speed or a +1 to the Mobility value to any vessel under your command, to a maximum of two picks. Note that these bonuses are cumulative with those granted by the mariner order ability Wind-mastery, for a maximum improvement of 100% of normal speed.



FAN FLAVOUR

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND PACKAGES

by Jason Dufall

LOREMASTER PACKAGE

RIVENDELL HEALER: You have learned much of the healing arts by studying with Master Elrond, and now you seek to restore that is wounded in the outside world.

ORDER SKILLS: Healing +3, Insight +2, Language (Sindar) +2, Lore: History (Elves) +2, Lore: Herbs +3, any other one Lore skill +1, Observe +2.

PICK 5 BONUSES: +1 to any Order skill.

PICK 1 EDGE: Ally (Elrond), Elf-friend, Healing Hands, Incorruptible, Wise.

MARINER PACKAGE

PIRATE: Whether you're one of the Corsairs of Umbar, a privateer on Gondor's coast, or a water-bandit on one of the many great rivers, you have made a living preying on ships and coastal towns, taking wealth by force upon the waters of Middle Earth.

ORDER SKILLS: Armed Combat +2, Climb +2, Games +1, Jump +1, Observe +1, Ranged Combat +2, Sea-craft +3, Swim +2, Weather-sense +1.

PICK 5 BONUSES: +1 to any Order skill.

PICK 1 EDGE: Charmed Life, Dodge, Hoard, Keen-eyed, Two-handed Fighting.

MINSTREL PACKAGE

HERALD: You speak for nobles as their envoy and messenger, traveling about the land delivering important words or as part of a noble's retinue. Alternately, you are an important figure in court, familiar with the lords and ladies of the land and an advisor.

ORDER SKILLS: Debate +2, Inquire +1, Insight +1, Inspire +1, any one Language +2, any one other Language +1, Lore: Group (your own) +2, any other Lore: Realm (your own) +1, Observe +1, Persuade +2, Ride +1.

PICK 5 BONUSES: +1 to any Order skill.

PICK 1 EDGE: Ally, Eloquent, Friends, Gift of Tongues, Honey-tongued.

NOBLE PACKAGE

HOBBIT GENTRY: Born to privilege in the Shire or Bree-land, you are a Hobbit gentleman or gentlewoman of some wealth, and you bear a name of some import in your community. Though you may not be wealthy, you are considered to be of the upper-class, and other Hobbits will generally defer to you.

ORDER SKILLS: Debate +2, Inquire +2, Inspire +2, any one Language +2 (usually Sindarin), any one Lore +3, Observe +1, Persuade +3.

PICK 5 BONUSES: +1 to any Order skill.

PICK 1 EDGE: Charmed Life, Eloquent, Favor of Fortune, Hoard, Rank.

REQUISITE: Must be a Hobbit.

WARRIOR PACKAGES

BRAWLER: Whether you're fast, strong, or just tough as nails, you make your living with your fists. You travel from town to town scrapping with local champions in fisticuffs or wrestling, or compete for gold in fairs and tournaments.

ORDER SKILLS: Acrobatics +2, Climb +1, Games +2, Intimidate +3, Jump +1, Perform +1, Run +2, Unarmed Combat +3*.

PICK 5 BONUSES: +1 to any Order skill.

PICK 1 EDGE: Armor of Heroes, Dodge, Doughty, Hammerhand, Swift Recovery.

REQUISITE: Must be a Man.

** As per Decipher errata, Unarmed Combat is now considered a racial skill for Dwarves and Men.*

HUNTSMAN: You stalk, trap, and kill animals in the wild, whether for gold in the marketplace, at the service of a noble lord, or the very survival of your people.

ORDER SKILLS: Armed Combat +1, Conceal +1, Craft (Tanning) +1, Mimicry +1, Observe +1, Ranged Combat +3, Stealth +1, Survival +2, Track +3, Weather-Sense +1.

PICK 5 BONUSES: +1 to any Order skill.

PICK 1 EDGE: Accurate, Keen-eared, Keen-eyed, Keen-nosed, Night-eyed, Woodcrafty.

POSTMASTER

Why don't you make a printer-friendly version without all the graphics?

- Markraven

It does take time for the layout designers and editors to create the formal version of the webzine and though I can't guarantee that we could do this and produce the webzine in an efficient manner, we shall do our best to have a textual version available, more than likely only upon specific request by a reader.



Is it possible to translate the webzine into different languages (Portuguese, Spanish, French, German, etc.)?

- Rodrigo Spina

Yes, we believe it is and we shall endeavor to solicit those who are willing to help make this possible.

(Rodrigo, himself, has offered to translate *The Hall of Fire* into Portuguese.)

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 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 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:

- A local or online RPG that you are hosting
- An RPG convention or tournament
- Or any events pertaining to *The Lord of the Rings* RPG or *Star Trek* RPG by Decipher

Write to us at codawebzine@hotmail.com with “**Ad**” in the subject line along with your advertisement. The advertisement is to be less than 100 words and a graphic to go with it no more than 1" x 1".

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 WEBSITE

<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

MAD IRISHMAN

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

RPG TOOLS FOR DECIPHER'S CODA GAMES

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

THE SLAVE PITS 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.

CREW

Doug Joos (Tomcat), Writer, Layout

uvonbek@yahoo.com

Matthew Kearns, Editor, Writer, Layout

ultimac@hotmail.com

Jason Dural, Writer, Layout

tangent@shadowbane.com

Scottomir, Writer

http://www.geocities.com/scott_metz
scott_metz@yahoo.com

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