

# The Lord of the Rings

## Strategy Battle Game

### Helms Deep

#### The Assault against the Deeping Wall

##### Introduction

This battle report is based upon the scenario from Games Workshops The Lord of the Rings, Strategy Battle Game, The Two Towers Journey Book.

It concerns the desperate plight of the forces of Rohan, as they have fled to the fortress refuge of Helms Deep. Here they seek to defend themselves from the onslaught of the forces of Isengard, as Saruman, the traitor, unleashes his forces upon the world of men.

The forces concerned in this scenario, as with many others from the GW Journey books, allow for the variation in story between the actual source material of the books by JRR Tolkien, and the cinematic release directed by Peter Jackson.

As such, this scenario, will follow more closely the book, and will see the men of Rohan, assisted by the “Heroes of Helms Deep”; Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli. Against them will be arrayed the might of Isengard, featuring foul Orcs and their larger cousins, the Fighting Uruk-Hai.

##### The Scenario

The scenario was played out on a custom made 2' x 4' board, which had a gully dug into it from the centre of one of the narrow ends, and that curved away to the left side. This represented the Deeping stream. Over this stream was positioned a custom made set of sectional walls to represent the Deeping wall. The centre section, which features the culvert at its base, through which the stream flowed, is pivotal to this scenario, and can be removed and replaced with a collapsed section of wall to represent the wall being breached.

Other than the stream and the wall, there were no other terrain features, the board being given a coating of sand textured paint and painted grey to represent the rough stone valley floor. It was agreed the stream would be purely decorative and have no effect of movement of models.

##### The Forces

The forces of Good, who defend the wall are as follows:  
Aragorn (as Strider) with Anduril—Flame of the West.  
Legolas.

Gimli.

8 x Warrior of Rohan with sword and shield.

8 x Warrior of Rohan with throwing spear and shield.

8 x Warrior of Rohan with bow.

The forces of Evil, who assault the walls are as follows:

Uruk-Hai Captain with shield

Uruk-Hai Banner

10 x Uruk-Hai with sword and shield

10 x Uruk-Hai with pike

3 x Uruk-Hai Berserkers

3 x Uruk-Hai Demolition Teams

Orc Captain with shield

Orc Banner

6 x Orc with sword and shield

6 x Orc with Bow

6 x Orc with Two-handed Weapon.

A Siege Assault Ballista with Uruk-Hai crew

4 Scaling ladders

It should be noted that the scenario as per the GW Journey book, suggests use of Dunlending warriors in place of the Orcs, but as I don't have any Dunlendings at present, I substituted the Orcs, which also seemed in keeping with the story from the book.

##### Scenario special rules

The culvert in the Deeping Wall, is its only weak point, and any demolition charges that are set off here will always count as having achieved a titanic explosion, each rolling 2D6 for damage effects as per rulebook.

##### Victory conditions

For the evil side to win, they must get 10 models into the courtyard area behind the wall, before they are broken. A force is broken once it loses 50% of its starting strength.

The good side win if they break they evil force before they invade the courtyard.

##### To Battle!

The game was played on 28th August '09, between Fusiliers Scott Bowman and Chris Pollard.

After a quick deliberation, Chris decided to take Rohan and defend the walls, and I would attack with the Uruks.

Chris deployed first, and strung his defenders along the length of the wall, keeping a couple of warriors back in the courtyard as a reserve. Legolas was positioned on the left of the wall while Aragorn and Gimli held the right.

The Uruks then deployed 24" away from the wall. A central pike phalanx screened the engineers with bombs, while a mixture of Orcs and Uruks led two scaling ladders up each flank. The Orc bows were split up 3 to each flank. The siege ballista was in the rear and was immediately in range of the walls.

Here follows a very pictorial battle report! I hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoyed playing it.



*The defenders of Rohan line the Deeping Wall.*

*The Uruks and Orcs of Isengard deploy.*

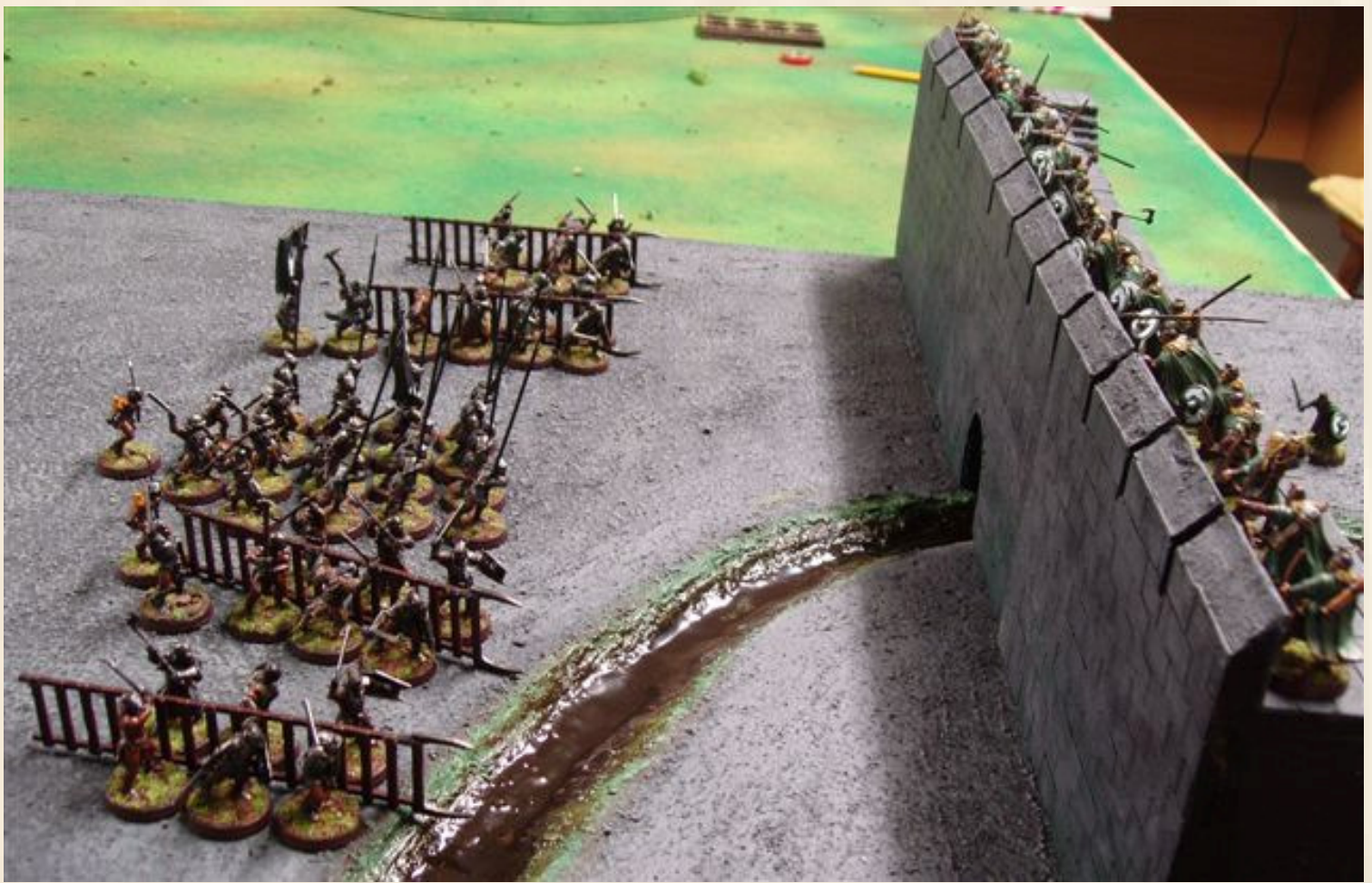


The defenders, on the side of good, won the first turn and did a little shuffling around, and held their fire until the evil forces moved into range. The first couple of turns saw the Evil forces move up as quickly as possible, enduring archery from the walls, whilst returning fire from the ballista. The Orc archers were singled out for attention and all killed within a couple of turns. They had only really got in range and fired a couple of shots before being pin-cushioned to death. The ballista found difficulty hitting a target and getting past the defense of the wall, but when it did strike it sent the unfortunate warrior flyers backwards over the ramparts to his death below!



*The Uruk-Hai Siege Assault Ballista hurls its deadly missiles*

It was not many turns before the evil forces were threatening the base of the wall. Whilst the Orc archers had been easy meat for the archery of the defenders on the wall, including Rohan archers and Legolas's prolific skills with the bow, the more heavily armored Uruk soldiers were proving a much tougher nut to crack. However, at one point Legolas managed to drop two Uruks in a single round of shooting by expending two of his three might points.



*As the Uruks near the walls...*



*... the defenders look on.*



*The ladders are raised!*

As the Uruks approached the walls, they readied their ladders, and got them up against the wall to begin their assault. The special rules of the Ballista, allowing it to immediately erect a ladder, failed to work as shots missed when needed most! As the assaulting forces got their ladders in position the pike phalanx screening the engineers continued heading for the culvert in the wall, its soft underbelly, where the bombs would do their damage. Due to the press of Uruk pikemen, the engineers were never brought under fire. We had decided before the start of the game, that in replicating the conditions of the battle; at night in and the rain, the chance of singling out rear ranking figures for archery fire was unrealistic, and unless a target presented itself clearly, it could not be fired upon. Whilst I was happy I had managed to shield my bomb teams, I carelessly left my Uruk captain in the open, who quickly caught a couple of arrows for his trouble! Thankfully he was saved by a fate point!

As you can see from the picture I found a handy way of keeping figures on the ladders;

wedge a standard base between the rungs of the ladder, and blu-tac the model to that. This saved any unnecessary falls!

The leaders up the ladders were the Uruk berserkers, who had the most chance of success. But even they had a tough time of it. Assaulting a fortification by ladders is seldom easy!



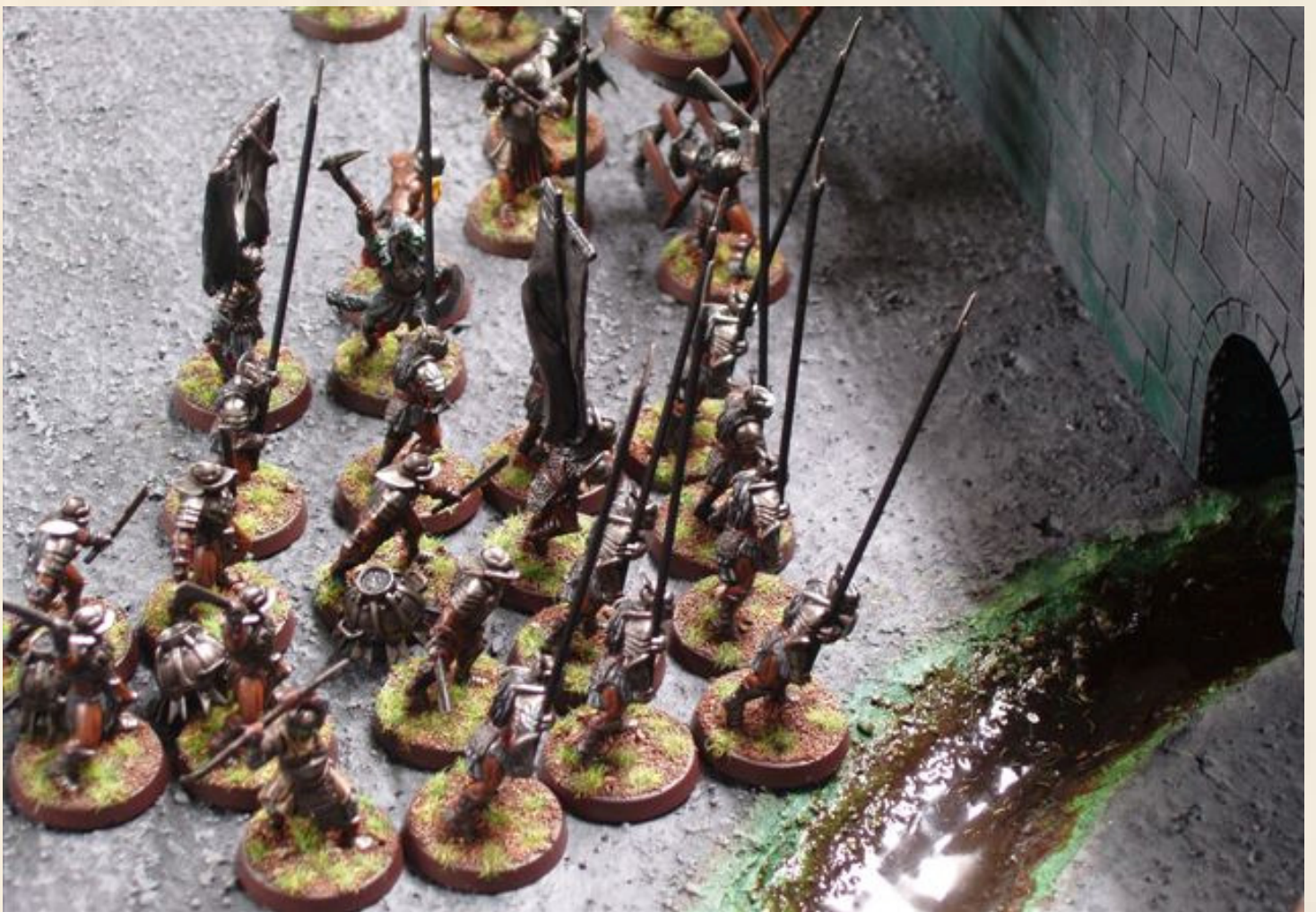
*Berserkers lead the ladder assault!*



One of the Uruk Berserkers managed to win through, killing a Rohan defender and taking his place on the rampart. However he was quickly surrounded and subdued before he could do further damage and any more Orcs could come to his aid. Meanwhile, the following Uruk captain, was slain and fell to his death from the ladder.



*Aragorn and Gimli defend the walls with the men of Rohan*



*The engineers and their supporting pikemen approach the culvert.*

The fighting on the ladders continued to rage, and many Uruks and Orcs were slain either by the defender or from falling from the ladders to their deaths below. The unengaged spearmen of Rohan rained their spears down on the pike phalanx approaching the base of the wall, in a desperate hope to stall the advance. Several Uruks fell, including the banner bearer, but the advance continued.



*The Uruk engineers place their demolition charges, then run to get out*



*The Uruk berserker wielding a flaming torch, runs to the charges and ignites them!*

The Uruk engineers manage to place their demolition charges in the culvert then scatter out of the way, knowing what comes next. The berserker wielding a flaming torch makes it to the culvert. Legolas, engaged in a melee on the ramparts with Uruks trying to cross, is unable to get off a shot! Sensing danger, the defenders atop the rampart above the culvert scatter just in time, as the berserker, having passed a courage test, ignites the three charges. A colossal explosion ensues and a huge breach is blown in the wall! As the dust clears, the Uruk and Orc forces, led by the Orc captain, pour through the breach, to meet the hastily assembled defense.



Legolas, Aragorn and Gimli race to the breach, as the archers who had previously fled the walls, unleash a volley of arrows at the oncoming Uruks and Orcs. They manage to drop enough of the evil forces, which takes them to their break point, and the game ends!

The forces of good emerge victorious by the condition of the scenario, but the Deeping Wall has been breached.

This is the second time we have played this scenario, and it ended at just about the same point last time, with the same result. So many Uruks and Orcs are slain from the fighting on the ladders, that it quickly brings them to their break point. But to hang back would just bring death by arrow and spear. I considered grouping all ladders together on one side, but figured Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli would just race to that location and be unmovable from behind the battlements. By spreading my ladders I hoped to spread the heroes across the wall, which worked and I even got a berserker across the wall at one point!

A great game complimented by some nice terrain and figures.

The Orc captain leads the charge through the breach, as Legolas, Aragorn and Gimli, race to head off the Orc and Uruk advance.

A shower of arrows from the men to Rohan brings the game to a conclusion, and victory for Chris and his defenders of Rohan!

A cracking game enjoyed by both players and the next scenario looms; "Into the Breach!"

Until next time dear reader...





The jubilant victorious general! Well done to Chris.

Mumble curses, foiled again...

...I'll get you next time Pollard! ;-)

Scott