

THE SIEGE OF BARAD-DUR, 3430

Designed by Scott Rusch

Near the End of the Second Age of the Middle Earth, in the year 3430, the Last Alliance of men and elves was forced to combat the resurgent power of Sauron. Led by Gil-Galad the elvin King, and the high King of Men Elendil, the Army of the Last Alliance decisively defeated the Dark Lord (Sauron) in the battle of Celebrant. Sauron (and presumably his evil servants the Nazgul, said by some to be his Children) fled to his Fortress-Prison, the Barad-Dur or Dark Tower. It withstood a Seven Year Siege, and then fell when hunger swept the ranks of the Orcs (the Army of Sauron mostly consisted of these Creatures. They came in assorted sizes, had a leatherly hide and unpleasant temper, and would as soon kill each other as the enemy but for the powerful leadership of Sauron) and reduced the garrison to a point of being too weak to hold the fort. The final weeks of this siege and the final assault form the subject of this game.

For more information, refer to the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, specifically the War of the Rings.


Sequence of Play

The game is played in turns. There are, strictly speaking, two kinds of turns. Weekly turns reflect the long-drawn-out art of siege-craft. If, in one or more of these turns, one or more of the players wish a battle (either a sortie by Sauron or an Assault by the ALA) a special sequence of tactical turns is slipped into the game.

Weekly turns:

1. The ALA build their bridge section. To do this, place one of the bridge counters on one of the 3 hexes marked with "B". This hex must always be the one farthest from the Tower which does not have a bridge counter on it.
2. Sauron now gets to fire his catapults at the bridge in an attempt to destroy it. A die roll of "1" or "2" results in destruction of the Bridge counter. Each Catapult may fire once at the bridge in each weekly turn, assuming that it is in range.
3. The ALA Player announces whether or not he wishes to make an assault.
4. If the ALA player did not wish to assault, the Sauron Player may wish to make a sortie. If so, he announces the fact.
5. The tactical rules are used to fight the battle, assuming one or the other player wished to fight it. If not, skip this phase. The Player who is the instigator of the fight will move first.
6. Sauron must now explain what his Orcs are eating for their supper this week. Note that he starts with 25 units, and has only 200 food factors. As each factor feeds 1 unit for one week, this is enough for only 10 units for the 20 turns of the game. This is better explained in the "food" section.
7. The ALA replaces three of its lost units.
8. The Passage of a turn is recorded.

The Mapsheet.

The Hexes filled with the shading represent the Heavy Stone Walls of the Dark Tower. These may be considered to be wide enough to maneuver a Battalion-sized force, and to be solid. Units may maneuver on such hexes freely, the problem starts when the unit tries to go up or get down. To get up you have two choices: A Ladder, as per  or Assaulting. Only ALA can assault, and on-



ly from the outside. It is assumed that they are using some kind of ladders. Climbing a Ladder is automatically successful, costs 2 movement points, but any unit at the top gets a bonus of having its defense factor doubled. Assault costs all movement factors, and can only be done by Sword and Bow units. It is only successful on a die roll of "1" or "2" and any enemy unit on top of the wall is tripled. Naturally, when trying to climb a wall, the enemy unit on top must be removed from his location first.

Note that the castle is divided in two by a lateral wall. Note that this wall and the Northern Half of the outer wall are higher than the Southern half, and are connected by a ladder.

The shaded ring around the Tower represents the side of the mountain on which the Tower stands. These are slope hexes, and cost 2 to enter. Also, such hexes have an effect on Archery ranges, as follows: When shooting down hill, the range of the weapon is extended by one if the line of fire crosses or extends into a slope hex. Also, when firing down, the fact that a fire unit is on the walls of the tower also adds one to the range. Also, fire is not allowed to pass through two hexes of the walls unless the target is also a wall hex.



Fire directed up at the units on top of the wall suffers from that height. If the line of fire crosses a wall hex the max allowable range is reduced by one. The slope does not affect this.

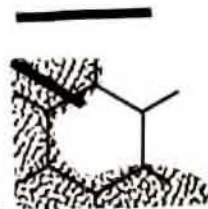
Units at ground level may fire only through one wall hex side. Units on the wall may only fire through one wall hex side if the target is not on a wall hex.

The Fortress of Barad-Dur has gates, as at right. These can allow the free passage of troops if open, and only Sauron or a Battering ram can open them. Troops on Wall top hexes may move across such hexes by stating that they are remaining at wall top level and are crossing on catwalks. If a gate is closed, a unit cannot enter it excepting on the top of the wall.



Assuming that a battering ram can be gotten to a gate of the Tower, the ALA can attempt to smash the gate on his tactical turn. The ram can only be moved to the Tower on a bridge. A die roll of 1 or 2 smashes the gate and three units may move into that hex. The gate stays smashed for good.

An important factor of the siege was the habit of the Orcs of sortieing out from the Barad-Dur by way of tunnels, dug out from the basement. The Dungeon (or basement. A floor level under the ground level) is portrayed to the right of the main map by a small map. A unit can enter the dungeon from the tunnels and/or the trap-doors. These have certain special rules.



Trap doors cost 3 movement points, and double the strength of the defender, regardless of the direction of crossing. Note that this is a verticle movement, and involves only putting the unit on the other map.

Moving through tunnels costs 1 point per hex, defense is doubled should anyone wish to fight in one of them. The tunnel exits, marked as at right on the map, are presumed to be hidden and can only be opened or dug out by the orcs from the inside. However, once a tunnel is open, it remains so unless closed. Opening and closing a tunnel takes two movement points by a unit in that hex. As there is now way to hide the ends of those tunnels, it is necessary to have a surprise rule. Which is, that when a unit desires to try to exit from a tunnel whose exit is occupied by an enemy unit, a coin is tossed,



and the winner is the surpriser, and immediately can attack the other unit. Stacking is not allowed in tunnels excepting leaders.

The area within the walls is assumed to be occupied, and otherwise cluttered, by shacks and huts. For this reason, the defense factor of all units is doubled, and missile fire only goes one hex.

A Orc unit in the Dungeon may dig one hex of tunnel each weekly turn. Naturally, two units cannot dig two hexes of tunnel if the second could only be reached by way of the first, which is not finished until the end of that turn.

The basement is considered to be a built-up area and is treated exactly as the courtyard.

THE ORDER OF BATTLE

SAURON: 25 Oro, Sauron, 9 Singwraiths, 6 catapult.
 ALA : 25 Sword, 10 Bowmen (Human), 20 Bowmen(elf)
 10 Shields, 3 battering rams, six heroes,
 six catapults.

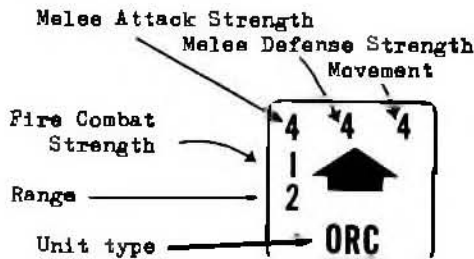
TACTICAL RULES

In each tactical sequence, play is divided into player turns, coming in rotational sequence. Units begin where they stopped last time.

The rules are based loosely upon the now-discontinued SPI Game "Dark Ages". They have been simplified somewhat by the Editors to reduce bulk and to encourage a non-fantasy gamer to give it a try. This also allows you to play it immediately with no additional material required.

The Units:

Each unit represents about 400 warm bodies or Orcs. The various numbers indicate the relative strength in various activities.



- Melee attack - Relative combat power on attack
- Melee Defense - Relative combat power on defense
- Movement - Maximum number of hexagons (hexes) which a unit can move in one turn. May be reduced by terrain
- Fire Combat Strn - Amount of arrows, rocks, etc that the unit can project in one turn.
- Range - How far they can throw it.
- Type - what the unit is.

Note that Orc units have both offensive Melee and fire factors. This is due to the mixing of bowmen and swordmen in the units.

General Sequence of Play

The first player is the one who started the battle. The other is the second player.

Player turns alternate to form tactical turns. Each is made up of phases, as follows:

First Player Turn

Movement: 1st Player moves within limits of the rules on movement.

Allocations: 1st Player indicates which units will attack which enemy units.

Defensive Fire: Defensive units fire to disrupt attacking enemy units. Each may fire once. Remember that catapults can fire only one phase in each week.

Offensive fire: 1st player fires units in an attempt to disrupt defending units.

Combat Phase: Conducted according to the rules.

Second Player turn.

Just like the first except he moves his own units.

Movement

The factor represents total possible movement. It is not required to move all or even any units. There are no zones of control. Units may move through friendly units but not through enemy units. Up to three units, and three leaders, may stack in one hex at the end of a turn. Units may move once per turn. Units destroying another by Melee combat may occupy its hex with a view toward subsequent transportation of the bodies. Such movement after combat is limited to one hex and must be executed immediately. Movement points are not accumulative nor are they transferable.

There is no facing. However, a unit attacked from two directly opposite hexes by Melee attacks is reduced to one half of its defense factor.

COMBAT

Combat is divided into two types: Missile (or fire), and Melee (or Ground).

In both types of combat, the odds are determined by comparison of the Missile (or Melee) attack factor of the attacking unit(s) with the Missile (or Melee) defense factor of the units under attack. Note that in each player's turn, there is one phase where the opponent will be firing at your units. Of course, the ALA are, in the overall situation, attacking, however, it is generally considered that a given player is attacking on his game turn. However, the other player will have an attack right in the middle of that. So, just who is attacking and who is defending is decided at the instant the attack is made.

Units with no fire strength may not make fire attack and units with no offensive Melee strength may not attack by Melee. Orc units have both capabilities, but a given Orc unit cannot do both in one turn.

All units with a fire factor may fire when attacked by Melee. They may only fire at units actually attacking them. Units which move adjacent to enemy units are required to stop immediately and move no further during that turn.

Units may attack any one unit or stack of units to which they are adjacent.

Missile units may only fire at units within range, adjusted for terrain.

Units are integral wholes and cannot divide their factors to attack two separate units.

Fire units may not fire over other units unless the fire unit is firing downhill and the other units is below it.

Defensive fire is not mandatory, but at times is very much the right thing to do. The defensive fire is conducted after attacks are announced but before they are made and thus takes its toll and may reduce the odds at which the attack was announced.

Offensive fire takes place before melee combat and also may affect combat odds.

All attacking units, melee or fire, attacking a single hex must be totaled into a single attack.

Each type of terrain has a certain value assigned to it for fire protection. This is without regard to the number or type of occupants of the hex, nor to the type or number of units attacking by fire. This is called the Fire Protection Factor, and is as follows:

- Units in tunnels - 3
- Units on Walls (from below) - 4
- Clear terrain, bridge - 2

Built up area inside the
walls of Barad Dur -4
Units behind shields -6

All units on an attacked hex must defend
The defense factor of a stack of units is a total, as is the attack against that unit or stack.
Units attacked by melee defend with their melee defense strength. Units attacked by fire defend with a strength equal to the defense strength of the hex.

The attack factors are compared to the defense factors and the results expressed as an odds, with fractions going in favor of the defender.

The CRT is used to resolve attacks by comparing the odds with a random number. This is picked by die. The die is rolled separately for each unit in the stack. Thus some units could be destroyed and other unaffected by the same attack.

DEMORALIZATION

As a result of the CRT, a unit may be demoralized. A unit in this state has received some shock, either a massive fire attack or the whole front row killed, sufficient to prevent its performance of the function it was assigned. To reflect this, flip the unit upside down, reverting it to right side up at the end of the owning player's turn. Thus a unit demoralized by an attack is stuck for a whole turn, while a unit caught by defensive fire is stuck for only the following combat phase. Presumably, it will be attacked by the enemy on his turn and finished off.

Demoralized units which suffer a second such result while in the state originally are destroyed. Thus you see the advantage of firing arrows at someone, and following up immediately with a melee attack.

LEADERS

It is to be noted that each side has certain command or leader counters. These include the 9 Ringwraiths and the six Heroes.

These have the advantage that they can be added for free to a stack, and vastly increase its combat power. No more leaders may be in a stack than units, however. If a leader counter is in one stack which is attacking another, and the enemy stack does not contain a leader, or is not adjacent to one (naturally, on its own side) the unit is automatically disrupted. Alternatively, leaders may fight each other. If they are alone, simply use the chart. If with other units the leaders fight first, then the loser's units, if someone does lose, are disrupted and play continues.

Leaders cannot be replaced if lost. Human Archers cannot effect Sauron or the Ringwraiths.

Sauron cannot leave the keep until the inner court is breached. Then he can have combat, or try to get out of the castle by way of an unblocked tunnel.

If Sauron manages to exit the board, the nearest two leaders engage in combat with him. If Sauron can beat them, the game is a draw, regardless of anything else.

Sauron and the King of the Nazgul cannot be killed.

Leaders which are unstacked may be attacked. They can function as a normal ground combat unit.

Leaders can be removed by destroying the unit they are stacked with or by leader vs leader combat. If Sauron or the King of the Nazgul (wraiths) is "eliminated" by this method, he is considered to be captured, and removed from play.

SHIELDS

A shield is a semi-portable structure which is used to protect people from Arrow or Catapult fire. It has a defense factor of 6 against fire, and doubles the combat defense factor. Attack factors are halved for the unit in the shield. These bonuses are in effect only for attacks coming across the three sides bounded by heavy black lines.

FOOD

Only Sauron need be bothered with food. In the appropriate phase of each weekly turn, Sauron must total the number of his units (Orcs only, He and the RWraiths have their own food) and subtracts one factor from the food supply. If there are more orcs than food, the Sauron player must slaughter half of the unfed Orcs to feed the rest. This is on the basis of one unit feeding one unit. Slaughtering may take place when it is not necessary if you see a reason for it.

Also, if any unit is destroyed, it is replaced by a blank counter. (Leader and Hero units exempted). Should an Orc unit manage to get on top of this unit and carry it back inside the walls, one point is added to the food supply.

PANIC

At the first of a combat sequence, before doing any of the firing and meleeing, total the number of units on each side. Do not count catapults or bridges or even shields, just units. Heroes count double, The king of the Nazgul triple, and Sauron as four units. When either player's losses reach one half of his total initial forces, his Army Panics. The results are as follows:

If the ALA Panics, it simply withdraws all units to the edge hexes of the board and the battle is over, but the Orcs and haul off the dead bodies and destroy all of the bridge.

If the Orcs Panic, and no ALA units are on or within the walls, the Orc player must immediately move all of his units in a manner such as to return inside of the walls or tunnels as soon as possible. Any that do not make it that turn have a DF of 1 and are fair game until they can get home. When the last unit is inside, the battle is over.

If ALA units are on the Walls, the Orcs pull back one hex away from them and the battle is over.

If the ALA is inside the walls, the Orcs must pull out of the compound they occupy, back to the other one of the two. The Battle is then over.

Alternatively, all units are marked with something to indicate that they are panicked. These units cannot attack and have a defense factor one half normal until they are rallied by a leader. A Leader or Hero must move into their stack and roll a die, with a result of 1-5 indicating that the unit has rallied and reverts to normal operations.

ASSORTED FINAL CLARIFICATIONS AND THINGS THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN SAID ELSEWHERE

Fire attacks are made against the defense factor of the Terrain. Melee attacks against that printed on the counter.

If an Orc unit occupies a bridge hex not adjacent to an ALA unit at the end of the Orc Player's turn, it may destroy the Bridge hex.

Catapults can be attacked and destroyed by fire or Melee. They cannot be replaced. Remember that you are not dealing with only a machine but also a unit of trained and irreplaceable artillery.

Incoming ALA replacements are placed with other ALA units.

Leader/Hero/Command counters are not considered food and cannot carry corpses. ALA units may move corpses out of harm's way. Orc Corpses and ALA corpses are just as tasty to Orcs, both with feed them.

When a tactical scenario ends, the units remain more or less where they are, meaning that they can retreat or readjust their positions. A tactical battle is over when both players agree they have had enough.

Victory: If Barad-Dur falls in 15 weeks, it is a victory for the ALA. If in 16-19, forget it, it was a tie, and if in 20 or more weeks, a victory for Sauron.

Gamers with access to a Dark Ages set may enjoy playing this game with the rules from that game. At least, that is how Scott really intended it to be played.