

The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age FAQ/Walkthrough

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Lord of the Rings: The Third Age for Game Boy Advance
FAQ/Walkthrough (c) Copyright 2005-6 Delcan Eser
Version 1.3 (Incomplete!)

Any additional information, comments, questions, criticism, flames, and even suggestions for improvement can be sent to

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Complete:

Talents description.

Hero statistics.

Walkthrough for "The Fellowship of the Ring".

Walkthrough for "The Two Towers".

Walkthrough for "The Return of the King".

To Do:

Complete ALL unit statistics.

Complete strategies for last three secret levels.

Version 1.3: Added the walkthrough for most of Chapter 3 of the game, writing just enough walkthrough for a person to play using my strategy advice from start to finish! Also added little details on the last three battles, and FINALLY finished all the Skills costs. This FAQ has been filled in quite enough to call it done!

Version 1.2: Added the walkthrough for Chapter 2 of the game, finally following through on this otherwise dead-in-the-water project. Wheeee! Also did some minor editing to make things a bit easier to read, as well as some addition of stats, special heroes, and correction of a few piddly mistakes in Chapter 1.

Version 1.11: Corrected a silly mistake on my part about a nonexistent Mumakil bug, and bad formatting throughout the walkthrough section.

Version 1.1: Added the walkthrough for Chapter 1 of the game. Huzzah!

Version 1.0: The first writeup. Covered Primary, Secondary, and Special Heroes, Hero Synergy, Talents and partial Skills, Unlockables. Unfortunately, it was written up with the intent of being a Units/Heroes FAQ, and thus was shot down because there was already one on GameFAQs. Well, ha ha, we'll just be fixing that...

---1. Introduction---

The "Lord of the Rings" movie trilogy was awesome, what can I say? It may not have been ENTIRELY faithful to the books, but what it did do was make a fantasy epic beautiful and awe-inspiring to watch. The battle scenes depicted in all three movies inspired a slew of copycat war movies, like "Kingdom of Heaven" and "Troy", which didn't do so well, primarily because these movies didn't have elves and wizards in them, but also because they weren't based on a solid fantasy story.

"Lord of the Rings: The Third Age" for Game Boy Advance works like the movie did for the book. It might not be entirely faithful to the movie, but it takes the battles depicted in it and makes them fun to play. It lets you run through the main battles of the movie, plenty of the smaller battles, and even some that are entirely apocryphal, and decide who took the victory. Whether you're playing to save or destroy the world of men, it's an excellent strategy game all around.

This FAQ is written to help out the gamer who wants to get the most out of the game. It details full descriptions of each hero, their attributes, and what they're good at, and offers a little advice on how to play them. I am but one gamer and I'm certainly not an expert on strategy, but what I recommend works for me. YMMV.

---2. Primary Heroes---

The main men (and wraith, and elf, and two wizards - oh, whatever) of the game. They have the skills, the weapons, and the abilities to carry you through the game. Each of them has their own specialty and their own style of play, so try all of them to get a good feel for the overall game.

---Aragorn, Heir to Gondor---

HP: 25
Spirit: 8
Move: 3
Attack: 6
Range: 4
Morale: Fearless
Leadership: 1-4

Skills: Arms Mastery, Sweep Attack, Inspire, Curse of the Dead.

Aragorn's Items

Heavy Armor, 35xp: +4 hit points.
Anduril, 95xp: +1 damage in melee, and +10% chance of Rally.
Brooch, 40xp: +3 Spirit Points.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Lembas Bread, Entwater.

Aragorn is your basic, all-out leader of all six initial choices. Sweep Attack and Arms Mastery make him the man in combat, and Inspire gives the Command Points necessary to really bring out the best in the troops. And Curse of the Dead is great for causing all sorts of random pokes to the enemy. Anduril is the only thing that really shines - +10% Rally might not seem like that much, but when you get a Rally, you WILL notice. Overall, he's pretty decent in all fields.

Aragorn's weakness is his breadth. He specializes in nothing much, and it sorta hurts when you need something really specific to happen in battle. Because of that, he relies on his secondary heroes a lot. However, this weakness can actually turn out to be a good way to learn the game - just what a hero can do, and just what you need out of your secondaries.

---Gandalf the White---

HP: 23
Spirit: 10
Move: 3
Attack: 5
Range: 6
Morale: Fearless
Leadership: 1-3
Talent: Regeneration

Skills: Evasion, Stealth, Inspire, Blinding Light.

Gandalf's Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.
Glamdring, 75xp: +2 damage in melee, and negates Disorder.
Elven Amulet, 40xp: +3 Spirit Points.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Entwater, Lembas Bread

Gandalf, strangely enough, is a combat machine. Evasion and Stealth give him the ability to zoom right up into battle without too much trouble, and Inspire is good for bringing his men with him. Blinding Light, though, is what sets him apart. At full blast, the Blinding Light makes it extremely difficult for the enemy to even TOUCH him. Oh, and he regenerates too. He's just that fun.

His biggest weakness is, obviously, his hit points. If he does get into a bad situation, it doesn't take a lot for him to fall. Also, his missile attack (while pretty) is all show and no real bite. Somebody get this man a bow like all the other ranged attackers.

---Elrond, Lord of Rivendell---

HP: 22
Spirit: 12
Move: 3
Attack: 6
Range: 5
Morale: Fearless
Leadership: 1-3
Talent: Elf Archery

Skills: Hold Fast!, Keen Eyes, Defensive Stance, Elven Duress.

Elrond's Items

Heavy Armor, 35xp: +4 hit points.

Elven Blade, 30xp: +2 damage in melee.
Elven Cloak, 45xp: -1 damage from all attacks.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Galadrim Lock, Elven Phial

Elrond is a leader that is wholly focused on making enemies fall down, whether he does it or someone else does. Hold Fast makes his army last in melee, and Keen Eyes makes his army last far away from melee. Defensive Stance makes HIM last, anywhere. But the real beauty of his abilities is Elven Duress, a skill that makes enemies LOSE Command Points. Elrond is what you would expect from an elven commander: swift, accurate, and almost scary to watch.

His relative lack of hit points is depressing, but keep in mind that Elrond is an elf, with a bow - he should only be in melee if there's an absolute emergency. If you love face-to-face battle, though, Elrond's Defensive Stance makes him almost unstoppable, especially if you've got the Spirit Points to back him up with the occasional Hold Fast!.

His weakness really stinks, but it's sort of fitting - after all those thousands of years of experience, he doesn't have that much to upgrade in terms of equipment anymore. Where Aragorn and Gandalf get some really nice upgrades, Elrond gets shafted, and has to rely on his skills - and without the Brooch upgrade, even his skills are hard to build up in combat.

---Saruman of Many Colors---

HP: 15
Spirit: 10
Move: 3
Attack: 4
Range: 6
Morale: Average
Leadership: 1-3
Talent: Magic Attack

Skills: Rage, On Your Feet!, Curse of Orthanc, Swarm of Crebain.

Saruman's Items

Mordor Cloak, 55xp: -1 damage from all attacks.
Palantir, 110xp: +1 Range, and +2 to maximum Command Points.
Black Amulet, 45xp: +3 Spirit Points.
Usables: Troll Meat, Spoils of War, Spoils of War

Saruman is the best out-and-out leader of the Evil Dream Team. With Rage and On Your Feet, his huge range, and stunning magic attack, he's best used way back in the line while your normal units charge forward. Unlike Gandalf, Saruman's ranged attack is pretty AND powerful. Swarm of Crebain helps add to the damage to specific opponents, and Curse of Orthanc really helps take down heroes a notch. Add the Palantir, and his ability to command large amounts of units becomes unmatched. That's a maximum of 5 Command Points a round - making him the most effective unit leader in the game, period. (His ability to hold two Spoils of War is pretty awesome in this regard, too.)

Saruman's only big weakness is his obscenely low hit points. Keep him out of melee at all costs, or else you lose one heck of a leader.

---The Witch-king of Angmar, Greatest of the Nine---

HP: 28
Spirit: 9
Move: 3
Attack: 6

Range: 1
Morale: Fearless
Leadership: 0-3
Talent: Shock

Skills: Flurry, Rage, Terror, Invulnerability.

The Witch-king's Items

Heavy Armor, 35xp: +4 hit points.
Morgul Mace, 80xp: +1 damage, and +15% chance of Onslaught.
Armor Spikes, 10xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Troll Meat, Shelob Poison, Berserker Root

Two words for the Witch-king: combat monster. Angie is specifically built for doing horrible things to Good's front line. Terror keeps the enemy still so they can't attack well - and can't advance - while Flurry and Rage make sure that those enemies go down FAST. Invulnerability means that even if he does take damage, once he hits 1 hit point it doesn't MEAN anything. His item arsenal just adds to the abuse.

Angie's weakness? He's the worst leader of all, Good OR Evil. 0-3 Command Points is still good, but when everybody else gets at least 1 a turn, you'll feel the loss during bad situations. Also, while the Witch-king is a horror in combat, it's easy to use him too much, and find him falling in hit points quicker than you'd like.

---The Mouth of Sauron---

HP: 22
Spirit: 12
Move: 3
Attack: 6
Range: 1
Morale: Average
Leadership: 1-3

Skills: Strength of Mordor, Rage, Intimidate, Eye of Sauron.

The Mouth's Items

Heavy Armor, 35xp: +4 hit points.
Morgul Blade, 95xp: +3 damage.
Armor Spikes, 10xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Troll Meat, Spoils of War, Berserker Root

The Mouth is a slaughterhouse of a different sort than the Witch-king. Where Angie likes to do it himself, the Mouth prefers to wade in right with his minions. Rage and Strength of Mordor are for keeping the enemy on the run, while Intimidate is for keeping your units on the move forward. And Eye of Sauron is the perfect tool for making sure those heroes die. Now. Interestingly enough, after upgrades the Mouth of Sauron is the most powerful hero in the game. (However, the Witch-king still beats him - while the Mouth has 10 Attack power maximum, Angie gets 8 Attack power and Flurry, which Angie just can't match.)

The Mouth's only real weakness is that he doesn't last long in melee with his buddies. All too soon he'll have to fall back, and once that happens he's like Saruman, only without any ranged attacks and less command points. Which needless to say is not much of a hero at all.

---3. Secondary Units---

These units, choosable before battle, will accompany your primary hero into a mission. Each of them works just like your primary hero, only with a single Skill, and less impressive statistics all around. Many of them have special abilities that your primary hero can't duplicate, making them exceedingly useful in the right situation.

---Good:

-Theoden, King of Rohan-
Primary Purpose: Leader

Theoden is the best secondary leader you have. Inspire is his biggest asset, and with a maximum of 8 movement in a round, you can get him where he's needed fast. Add the Helm of the Rohirrim and he's up to a maximum of 4 Command Points a round.

HP: 17
Spirit: 9
Move: 4
Attack: 4
Range: 1
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 0-3
Talents: Shock, Double Move.

Skill: Inspire

Items

-Heavy Armor, 35xp: +4 hit points.
-Helm of the Rohirrim, 55xp: +1 maximum Command Points, +10% chance of Recovery.
-Whetstone, 25xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Entwater, Lembas Bread.

-Eomer, Marshall of Rohan-
Primary Purpose: Front Line

Eomer is a Rohan rider on steroids. More damage, more hit points, more everything. He's great on the front line - sneak him in between normal units, deal damage, and run off. He works best with other mounted soldiers.

HP: 26
Spirit: 6
Move: 3
Attack: 5
Range: 1
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 1-2
Talents: Shock, Double Move.

Skill: Arms Mastery

Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.

Standard of Rohan, 70xp: +1 maximum Command Points, +10% chance of Onslaught.
Whetstone, 25xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Lembas Bread, Entwater.

-Boromir, Son of Denethor-
Primary Purpose: Tank

Boromir just refuses to die sometimes. He takes it, and takes it, and takes it, and yet he remains standing. Defensive Stance helps ensure this... at its maximum, he takes 25% of all damage dealt. The Horn of Gondor is another useful tool; it keeps ALL the units on his flank from taking too much damage. Take Boromir when you want to survive.

(On an interesting note: I don't know if this can be confirmed, but Boromir seems to be a magnet for missile fire. I've seen enemies aim at him at the expense of primary goals - in the Mt. Mindolluin mission, goblins were aiming at him instead of Pippin. A bad joke on behalf of the game designers?)

HP: 19
Spirit: 6
Move: 3
Attack: 6
Range: 4
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 0-4

Skill: Defensive Stance

Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.
Horn of Gondor, 50xp: Use as skill. Allies get defense bonus, enemies get morale penalty.
Whetstone, 25xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Entwater, Lembas Bread

-Gimli, Son of Gloin-
Primary Purpose: Damage

Gimli hurts. A lot. He's not too good at getting into melee, but once he's there he's a little ball of destruction. Arms Mastery and his axe upgrade turn him into a real engine of death. He's not a tank - he does take damage like a sponge, and can't run away very well. But if you want what's in front of your hero to die, Gimli is your man.

HP: 28
Spirit: 6
Move: 2
Attack: 6
Range: 3
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 1-2

Skill: Arms Mastery

Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.
Gloin's Axe, 50xp: +2 damage.
Whetstone, 25xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Galadrim Lock, Entwater.

-Eowyn, White Lady of Rohan-
Primary Purpose: Assassin

You saw that right: assassin. Eowyn is specifically designed to destroy enemy leaders. She deals +3 damage to heroes without any upgrades... Hold Fast makes her hard to keep damaged, Armor of Rohan makes her hard to STOP, and everything else after that is just watching the leaders die. She's awfully nice with the Spirit Points though, so sometimes it's a tradeoff between keeping her alive and making the enemy die.

HP: 17
Spirit: 12
Move: 4
Attack: 5
Range: 1
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 1-3
Talents: Shieldmaiden.

Skill: Hold Fast!

Items

Brooch, 40xp: +3 Spirit Points.
Armor of Rohan, 40xp: -1 damage from all attacks, +2 hit points, grants Stealth at level 2.
Whetstone, 25xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Lembas Bread, Elven Phial.

-Legolas, Prince of Mirkwood-
Primary Purpose: Sniper

Legolas not only ignores range when dealing damage, but also terrain. Behind walls? Buildings? Legolas doesn't care, he can shoot 'em. He deals a lot of missile damage, and with Sweep Attack he deals a lot to a lot of people. Use him to pick off enemies that are low on hit points. His bow upgrade gives him even more range, and after that this elven prince is abusive, plain and simple.

HP: 16
Spirit: 9
Move: 4
Attack: 4
Range: 7
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 0-3
Talents: Elf Sharpshooter.

Skill: Sweep Attack

Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.
Galadrim Bow, 35xp: +2 Range.
Brooch, 40xp: +3 Spirit Points.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Lembas Bread, Elven Phial.

-Faramir, son of Denethor-
Primary Purpose: Skill Support and Jack-of-all-trades

When in doubt, use Faramir. Faramir offers average skill in combat, but with all his upgrades he offers a wealth of Spirit Points for your primary hero to monopolize. He's also good in close combat, good far away, a decent leader, and he can get to where you need him with Evasion.

HP: 18
Spirit: 9
Move: 3
Attack: 4
Range: 5
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 1-3
Talents: Sharpshooter.

Skill: Evasion

Items

Brooch, 40xp: +3 Spirit Points.
Armor of Gondor, 40xp: +1 Spirit Point, +5 hit points.
Whetstone, 25xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Entwater, Elven Phial.

-Haldir, Captain of Lothlorien-

Primary Purpose: Raw, Unchecked Power

Unlockable by beating "The Black Gate Opens" on the side of Good on Hard difficulty, Haldir is an impressive reward for battle skill. The Captain of Lothlorien has higher HP and Attack power than even some primary heroes, and a Range of 6 gives him commanding reach in missile range. His 24 HP can be augmented further by his upgrades, that reduce damage almsot all around. His Keen Eyes skill is occasionally useful, but most often to give Haldir his immense power anywhere you need it. If you can use him, use him - you'll never be sorry you did.

HP: 24
Spirit: 8
Move: 4
Attack: 6
Range: 6
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 0-3
Talents: Elf Archery

Skill: Keen Eyes

Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.
Elven Hood, 20xp: +2 hit points, grants Stealth at level 2.
Elven Cloak, 45xp: -1 damage from all attacks.
Usables: Kingsfoil, Galadrim Lock, Elven Phial.

---Evil:

-Grishnakh, Hunter of Mordor-

Primary Purpose: Cleanup

Grishnakh moves in when the enemy is starting to suffer. In the middle of combat, he does best to stay back and use Take Cover! to protect his minions; after that, it's time to move him in to finish the job. Fair warning... his morale is in the dumps.

HP: 21
Spirit: 7
Move: 4
Attack: 5
Range: 4
Morale: Cowardly
Leadership: 1-2
Talent: Shock

Skill: Take Cover!

Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.
Black Cleaver, 30xp: +2 damage in melee, and +2 more damage on Grishnakh's first attack.
Mordor Cloak, 55xp: -1 damage from all attacks.
Usables: Troll Meat, Berserker Root, Berserker Root.

-Gorbag, Captain of Minas Morgul-
Primary Purpose: Damage

Now Gorbag belongs right in the action. He does plenty of damage, and Rage helps those numbers a LOT. His morale is a LOT better, too, so he won't just turn tail when you need him most. Just remember to pull him back once he starts suffering, or you'll have a real gap where leadership is concerned.

HP: 19
Spirit: 6
Move: 4
Attack: 6
Range: 4
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 0-3

Skill: Rage

Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.
Udun Sword, 15xp: +1 damage in melee.
Armor Spikes, 10xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Troll Meat, Shelob Poison, Berserker Root

-Lurtz, Uruk-hai Scout-
Primary Purpose: Sniper

Lurtz is the evil take on Legolas. He does the same thing, but he likes to get closer to the action - especially with his bow upgrade, which grants him a nice bonus at point-blank range. He's got real staying power, and he's actually a great choice for almost any situation.

HP: 20
Spirit: 8
Move: 3

Attack: 7
Range: 4
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 0-3

Skill: Flurry

Items

Heavy Armor, 35xp: +4 hit points.
Uruk Great Bow, 55xp: +1 Range, +1 Damage at point-blank (Range 1).
Black Amulet, 45xp: +3 Spirit Points.
Usables: Troll Meat, Hand of Saruman, Berserker Root

-Sharku, Captain of the Warg Riders-
Primary Purpose: Front Line

Gorbag might be the damage monster, but Sharku is the real front linesman. He's got the moves to slip in and out of melee, Strength of Mordor is great for automatic morale failures, and he's even got a ranged attack. He's just not that great a leader, is all. That said, Disorder is a really, really annoying thing to have happen to you, and that whip of his can be reason alone to pull Sharku into battle.

HP: 25
Spirit: 5
Move: 3
Attack: 5
Range: 4
Morale: Average
Leadership: 1-2
Talents: Shock, Double Move.

Skill: Strength of Mordor

Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.
Orthanc Whip, 25xp: +1 damage in melee, negates Disorder.
Mordor Cloak, 55xp: -1 damage from all attacks.
Usables: Troll Meat, Spoils of War, Hand of Saruman

-Ugluk, Uruk-hai Captain-
Primary Purpose: Tank

This guy is horrendous. Not only is he nearly indestructible, but he packs a hideous punch. With On Your Feet, his hit point upgrades, and his sheer power, there's just no way he can be anywhere else than right in the middle of things.

HP: 25
Spirit: 11
Move: 3
Attack: 8
Range: 1
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 0-2

Skill: On Your Feet!

Items

Light Armor, 15xp: +2 hit points.
Mordor Greathelm, 35xp: +3 hit points.
Armor Spikes, 10xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Troll Meat, Spoils of War, Hand of Saruman

-Grima Wormtongue-

Primary Purpose: Guaranteed Leader

There's one reason and one only that you use Wormtongue: 2-3 Command Points. That's right, 2-3 Command Points. At LEAST two per turn. No other hero in the game can guarantee such flexibility. When you know you need to move, Wormtongue is the man.

Other than that, he's a bit of an enigma to use. His hit points and morale are dismal, but with his upgrades he does MASSIVE damage on the first strike, and Curse of Orthanc belongs right on the main heroes. He falls to missile fire, though. Use him when you want plenty of Command Points, but shy away if there's archers to worry about.

HP: 9
Spirit: 8
Move: 4
Attack: 3
Range: 1
Morale: Cowardly
Leadership: 2-3
Talents: Regeneration.

Skill: Curse of Orthanc

Items

Mordor Cloak, 55xp: -1 damage from all attacks.
Vial of Poison, 25xp: +5 damage on Grima's first attack.
Black Amulet, 45xp: +3 Spirit Points.
Usables: Troll Meat, Hand of Saruman, Shelob Poison

-Gothmog, Lieutenant of Minas Morgul-

Primary Purpose: Leader

Gothmog isn't all that great in combat, but Intimidate and his Command Points equal to most decent heroes makes him a great secondary leader. His only big drawback is that his main upgrades really aren't that good. He's a wonderful leader though, and that counts for a lot.

HP: 18
Spirit: 10
Move: 3
Attack: 6
Range: 1
Morale: Average
Leadership: 1-3

Skill: Intimidate

Items

Heavy Armor, 35xp: +4 hit points.
Morannon Blade, 20xp: +1 damage, grants the Shock talent.
Black Amulet, 45xp: +3 Spirit Points.
Usables: Troll Meat, Spoils of War, Berserker Root

-Shagrat, Captain of Cirith Ungol-
Primary Purpose: Raw, Unchecked Power

Beat "The Black Gate Opens" with Evil on Hard difficulty, and you unlock this beast from Mordor. Shagrat is fast, tough, powerful in melee AND missile, and is a decent leader on top of all of it. Unlike Haldir, who becomes more impressive with archers around him, Shagrat is a monster in and of himself, capable of holding his own long after most evil heroes have already fallen. You earned this battlefield master - so use him.

HP: 21
Spirit: 8
Move: 4
Attack: 7
Range: 5
Morale: Brave
Leadership: 1-3

Skill: Rage

Items

Heavy Armor, 35xp: +4 hit points.
Ungol Greatsword, 30xp: +1 damage in melee, +10% chance of Onslaught.
Armor Spikes, 10xp: +1 damage.
Usables: Troll Meat, Shelob Poison, Berserker Root.

---4. Special Heroes---

These heroes come ready-made, no upgrades or experience required, with all skills at level 2. They are only used for the battle at hand, and are there sort of like your normal units. Most of them are nameless, generic leaders of men or orcs, but there are a few unique faces to be seen.

---Theodred, Heir to Rohan---

HP: 17
Spirit: 8
Move: 3
Attack: 5
Range: 1
Morale: Average
Leadership: 0-3

Skills: Hold Fast!

Theodred is essentially a placeholder in "Crossing of the Ford" where you could have placed a secondary hero you liked. He has no notable talents except for being an exceptionally easy target to hit and giving you an average number of Command Points. He's just mediocre, is all.

---Treebeard, Shepherd of the Trees---

HP: 30
Spirit: 7
Move: 2

Attack: 10
Range: 6
Morale: Fearless
Leadership: 1-3
Talents: Regeneration.

Skills: Keen Eyes, Defensive Stance

Treebeard speaks for the trees, and the trees say "GRAAARGH." The eldest of the Ents has the same combat abilities as his fellows, but he needs no improvement there. The raw power of Fangorn is amplified by his improved hit points, his murderous Keen Eyes, and the amazing staying power he gets with his Defensive Stance. All that, and he's a pretty good leader, too; it's too bad you only get to use him twice.

---Isildur, Archaic King of Gondor---

HP: 29
Spirit: 12
Move: 3
Attack: 6
Range: 1
Morale: Fearless
Leadership: 1-3

Skills: Arms Mastery, Stealth, Sweep Attack, Defensive Stance

Isildur is not done justice in the tutorial battle. In "Sauron Comes", Isildur is probably the only man that has any chance of standing up to Sauron in direct combat. Stealth and Sweep Attack are a minor help with Sauron's goblin fodder, and Arms Mastery and Defensive Stance are at least something to stand tall in melee with the Dark Lord himself. But don't fool yourself; he's not as good as your primary, no matter what you do with him.

---Sauron, Lord of the Rings---

HP: 34
Spirit: 15
Move: 3
Attack: 10
Range: 2
Morale: Fearless
Leadership: 1-4

Skills: Intimidate, Strength of Mordor, Flurry, Invulnerability

Sauron, on the other hand, is an atom bomb on the battlefield, a hero that supersedes the normal Evil primary heroes. His HP and Spirit Points are astronomical, and attacks with terrifying force - and with Strength of Mordor and Flurry, you can wade into battle and send smaller units flying, just like in the movie! Intimidate gives Sauron the ability to push the forces of Mordor into motion, and Invulnerability just makes sure that if he does come down to low hit points, it's not the end of things.

Sauron's weakness? He doesn't have one. He may not have a useful ranged attack, but that's more of a gripe than a weakness. With high HP and Spirit Points, bone-crushing power, unstoppable morale, and hefty Leadership, he's the ultimate Evil leader - as he should be. When you play Sauron, your primary hero is now a secondary.

---5. Hero Synergy?---

You might find later in the game that certain heroes do immensely well with each other; while others just do not fit well. I haven't noticed too many bad combinations, but I've noticed a lot of good ones - and in fact, some of them are straight from the books. Feel free to e-mail me with more suggestions, as well as any BAD combinations you've seen.

Boromir and Faramir - The solid Gondor combo. Boromir wades in for the attack while Faramir covers him from a distance and quickly dashes in if needs be.

Theoden and Eomer - The solid Rohan combo. Theoden is faster on his horse and a better leader overall, while Eomer provides a solid punch. Use these two with the cavalry for the most fun.

Elrond and Legolas - Keen Eyes can increase range by 3. Legolas upgraded has 9 Range already. Put these two in with a ranged-attack group, and believe me - you'll never want to go into melee again.

Elrond, Legolas, and Haldir - Oh. My. God. Legolas from a distance, Elrond and Haldir up front, elven archers and swordsmen to the sides - this is the unstoppable combination of the game. Play with this trio in "The Last Alliance" mission, and you'll find out very quickly who pulls the real weight in the alliance of elves and men.

Saruman and Wormtongue - 1-5 Command Points, plus 2-3 Command Points, equals a fast-moving army. 'Nuff said.

The Witch-king and Gothmog - Gothmog fills in the gap that Angie can't fill in Command Points; that plus Intimidate gets you an army that can really rally around these two.

---6. Talents---

Talents are special abilities that are always active. Most are offensive in nature, although there are some that help in defense.

-Double Move-

What It Does: Instead of moving, then attacking, units may move, attack, and then move again. They effectively gain double their movement.

Who Gets It: Any unit on a mount.

Why It's Useful: Run forwards, hit, run away. Run forwards, hit, run away. Repeat until enemy is completely destroyed. It's useful for getting to the battle fast too, but aggressive evasion is what you'll be mostly using it for.

-Elven Archery-

What It Does: Ranged attacks ignore terrain.

Who Gets It: Any elf with a bow.

Why It's Useful: Walls in the way? Enemy's in an enclosed space? Big deal, you can shoot them no problem. Units like to hide, and this is the solution. Too bad elves don't make that common an appearance.

-Elven Sharpshooter-

What It Does: Ranged attacks ignore terrain AND damage penalties.

Who Gets It: Legolas.

Why It's Useful: This, my friend, is an abuse of the system. Legolas gets to

ignore range penalties... he gets to ignore terrain... and once he has his item upgrade, he can practically ignore distance. There's no other word for this than killer.

-Inaccurate-

What It Does: All attacks have a 50% chance of missing.

Who Gets It: Any siege weapon.

Why It Sucks: It figures that the most powerful weapons in the game miss half the time. This makes them very unreliable as damage dealers.

-Magic Attack-

What It Does: Unit ignores damage penalties due to range, and has a bonus to causing morale failures.

Who Gets It: Saruman.

Why It's Useful: Saruman deals a lot of damage. Pound for pound, he's more likely to cause morale failures than most creatures in the game - the only exception I can think of is trolls. Plus his range is extensive, so you can do it to almost anybody you like!

-Regeneration-

What It Does: Unit recovers 1 hit point per turn.

Who Gets It: Ents, Gandalf the White, Grima Wormtongue, and Saruman.

Why It's Useful: Do I really need to explain why units who heal naturally are useful? Actually, the only big complaint is that it's a little slow for regeneration. But believe me, when you're playing AGAINST regenerating creatures, you won't mind how slow it is at all.

-Sharpshooter-

What It Does: Unit ignores damage penalties due to range.

Who Gets It: Faramir, the Haradrim, and Rangers.

Why It's Useful: Sharpshooters never have to enter melee combat. You heard right, never. They deal their normal damage wherever they are. You can keep these guys completely safe, and still deal damage as if you're locked in melee with them.

The only problem is, the enemy AI knows this, and will concentrate on Sharpshooters quite a bit. Still, they're some of the best units in the game.

-Shieldmaiden-

What It Does: Unit deals +3 damage to Evil heroes.

Who Gets It: Eowyn.

Why It's Useful: Can you say assassination? I knew you could.

-Shock-

What It Does: Unit has a bonus to causing morale failures.

Who Gets It: All horsemen, the Witch-king, and the Ringwraiths. Also, some heroes may gain items that grant this skill.

Why It's Useful: Morale failures are like free candy. The enemy unit is dealt with for one turn, and you don't have to worry about him! Shock lets it happen more often, which gives you yet another reason to use those horsemen besides their hideously large damage, hefty HP, and double move capability.

-Trample-

What It Does: Unit can move through other units and push them away. Units that are pushed away automatically fail a morale check, and any unit unable to run is instantly killed.

Who Gets It: The Mumakil.

Why It's Useful: SMASH! The two battles you get to play with a Mumak, you can utterly devastate the opposing team. Not only is instant morale failure a great way to control the battlefield, but you can instantly kill anyone if you line up the march right. Anyone! Even heroes! In fact, the "Pelennor Fields" battle

is a perfect opportunity for stomping over Aragorn and Legolas before they have a good chance to react.

---7. Skills---

Skills, unlike Talents, have to be used. They cost Spirit Points, which build up over the course of a battle. The more Spirit Points you have between all your heroes, the faster it builds up. Only heroes get skills. All but one of them only work for the turn they're used, and a hero can only use any given skill once a turn. On the plus side, none of them are ever useless, and you can pour experience points into them, building them up to impressive and tide-turning powers.

The format for these is as follows:

Skill Name

Experience Cost for Skill Level: 1, 2, 3

Game description of Skill

-Personal description of Skill

XX - I don't know the experience needed for this skill level - or more likely, I should have written it down and didn't. E-mail me the amount, and I can make this FAQ more complete. Thanks!

---Good Skills

Sweep Attack

25, 75, 125

The hero can take an additional attack/level against different opponents. -Well, you can't just load one orc full of arrows, but this certainly helps whittle down the competition. Especially good on Legolas, who is positively frightening with this ability.

Arms Mastery

15, 50, 75

The hero deals 1 extra damage/level. -Sometimes you really, really need that extra damage. This ability isn't as great as most of the others, but it WILL come in handy.

Blinding Light

15, 55, 95

Forces a morale check on all enemy units on the hero's flank, with increasing difficulty at levels 2 and 3. -One of the ultimate defensive skills, Gandalf has the ability to make opponents simply run away. Pump this up to level 3 by the time you get to Helm's Deep, because it's invaluable.

Inspire

25, 75, 125

At levels 1 and 2, adds 1 Command Point to hero's flank per level. At level 3, adds 2 Command Points to hero's flank AND 1 Command Point to the other flanks.

-This is it... the killer ability. Maxed out, Inspire gives you 4 - that's FOUR - extra Command Points. This is a tide-turner, folks... if your hero doesn't have it, use Theoden, for god's sake, because he's the only secondary who has it.

Curse of the Dead

20, 50, 100

The Army of the Dead rise up and attack 1-5 units on Aragorn's flank, +1 unit per level. The Army deals 1-4 points of damage to each unit.

-Not as good as it sounds. The damage done is usually miniscule, and the units struck are completely random. But if you have more Spirit Points than you know what to do with, random flank damage is nothing to sneeze at.

Defensive Stance

15, 50, 80

Hero takes 25% less damage/level for one turn.

-This one is fun, and immensely useful. 75% less damage, coupled with the fact that enemy units will almost ALWAYS concentrate on heroes, makes for a very powerful ability to keep around.

Hold Fast!

10, 50, 100

Units on hero's flank are healed 1-2 hp/level.

-No further explanation is required. This skill will save your life, and the lives of your units.

Evasion

10, 30, 60

The hero gains +1 Move/level, and can ignore enemy units when moving.

-It sounds less than useful - only as an escape route, really. But a lot of battles in this game require you to reach flags. And if you can reach a flag with one impressive sprint and win the battle, then Evasion is an obviously powerful resource.

Keen Eyes

25, 45, 60

Hero gains Sharpshooter trait for one turn. All units on hero's flank get +1 Range/level.

-This ability would only be mildly interesting... except for the fact that the only heroes who get Keen Eyes are Elrond, Treebeard, and Haldir - who are all extremely competent missile users, AND will deal impressive damage in missile range. The addition to range is cool, but the only reason you'll REALLY use this ability is to see something get utterly toasted from nearly two screens away. It's like Arms Mastery. Only better.

Elven Duress

30, 80, 120

Enemies on hero's flank lose 1 Command Point/level next turn, and suffer a +10% chance/level of Disorder.

-This is why Elrond is cool. Fighting elves is SCARY. It's a pricey ability, but it offers the only way in the game to actually sabotage the enemy side without actually killing leaders. Try to use it only when Elrond has LOTS of help with Spirit Points, though, because it's also the most expensive skill in the game.

Stealth

10, 30, 60

Hero takes 33% less damage/level from missile attacks.

-Not quite as useful as Defensive Stance, but still a key ability. Besides, when maxed out the unit doesn't TAKE damage in missile range, and that just rocks.

---Evil Skills

On Your Feet!

15, 50, 85

Effectively the same as Hold Fast!.

-Notable for Saruman having the ability, which makes him an even better commander. Otherwise, see Hold Fast!.

Rage

20, 60, 90

Effectively the same as Arms Mastery.

-A lot more Evil heroes have Rage than Good heroes have Arms Mastery. This says something about what Evil likes to focus on.

Swarm of Crebain

25, 50, 100

A murder of Orthanc crows peck and claw at any one unit within Range 7, dealing 1-4 points of damage per level and stunning the target.

-Saruman's answer to Aragorn's Curse of the Dead deals more damage to a single unit, and prevents them from acting next turn. The damage is good, but a guaranteed stunning attack at Range 7 is what makes this ability supreme.

Curse of Orthanc

25, 35, 45

A single unit within Range 7 suffers a morale penalty. At level 2, the unit also suffers -1 to Attack; at level 3, this increases to -2. Penalties last 10 turns.

-It's not so useful, but it's cheap - and when you can nail a Good hero with an Attack penalty, this skill can be very appreciated.

Terror

15, 50, 90

All enemy units on hero's flank lose one Movement Point per level.

-Many battles are lost or won by how quickly the two sides can move their units into position. Terror lets YOU decide who gets an advantageous position first. Especially useful in battles where a turn limit decides points.

Flurry

25, 75, 125

Effectively the same as Sweep Attack.

-The Witch-King appreciates this skill more than any other Evil unit. Otherwise, see Sweep Attack.

Invulnerability

15, 50, 75

The hero takes 15% less damage from non-hero units per level. If the hero's HP is brought to less than 1 by a non-hero unit, it is instead reduced to 1.

-Unfortunately, 45% less damage doesn't stretch quite as much as you'd like. Good's Defensive Stance is a superior skill. But once you reach 1 HP, this ability becomes a lot more special.

Strength of Mordor

25, 35, 45

Any enemy unit the hero attacks is driven back from 1 to 2+level spaces.

-Can you say 'instant morale failure'? I knew you could. Anything that removes ANY unit's ability to attack you for a turn, however small, is an awesome ability.

Intimidate

25, 75, 140

Effectively the same as Inspire.

-Good heroes say "You can do it, little guy!" Evil units say "GET OUT THERE AND KILL THEM ALL!" Either way, same result.

Eye of Sauron

20, 60, 90

All Evil units on the Mouth's flank deal +1 damage to heroes per level.
-Assassination! It's like Rage, only everybody gets in on the fun, which makes this skill superior in every way. True, you only hit the heroes harder, but who ELSE would you want to beat on as hard as you can?

Take Cover!

10, 60, 80

All units on the hero's flank take 25% less damage per level from missile attacks.

-When Legolas makes more appearances than most other secondary heroes when you're playing Evil, it's good to know that you at least have some defense against his never-miss arrows.

---8. Walkthrough for "The Fellowship of the Ring"---

SPOILER WARNING: Don't read this section unless you want an actual walkthrough of the battles. It is recommended that you try to beat each battle until you either succeed - and thus don't need this guide - or get extremely frustrated and need a spoiler to prevent yourself from breaking your game.

That said, on to the walkthrough!

-1. Basic Tutorial-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat an enemy flagbearer: +2 points

Required to Win: 2 points

Advantage: n/a

This isn't a competitive battle, merely an educational one. Simply follow the instructions, and learn the basics of how to move units, attack from melee and missile range, and how Command Points work. From here, we move on to...

-2. Advanced Tutorial-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat an enemy hero: +2 points

Required to Win: 2 points

Advantage: None

Good Units: Isildur, a few Rangers

Evil Units: Orc Chief, a few Morannon Orcs

Here, you get to flex your tactical muscle a little. The strategy is the same for both Good and Evil - remove the problematic minions, and then set in on the enemy hero. Make sure to keep your own hero out of harm's way, especially if playing Evil, since Rangers are crack shots. Neither side is at advantage, so intelligent fighting wins the day. The basic ideas you'll figure out in this mission will carry you well into the game, long enough for you to figure out more specialized tactics on your own.

-3. Mission from Rivendell-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Good hero: +2 points (Evil)

Good hero reaches the bridge flag: +4 points (Good)

Required to Win: 4 points

Advantage: Good

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, several Elven Archers, several High Elf Swordsmen.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, many Morannon Orcs.

Good Strategy:

The fun kicks in full-blast for Good, as you come into the game with your chosen hero, two secondaries, and a full complement of Elven military. Overwhelming brute force is the idea for Good in this first real battle, as Elven Archers have excellent versatility in the wooded areas and Elven Swordsmen are devastating melee fighters. Expect your Swordsmen to either cut down the Morannon Orcs in one solid blow, or reduce them to a sufficient level that a single Archer can finish it off.

Feel free to wipe the floor with the opposition. Since you get experience points for killing enemy units, and not for winning points, try to kill ALL the units on the same turn that a hero reaches the flag, to help maximise the benefit of experience.

Evil Strategy:

Evil has a bit tougher time of it here, for the same reason that Good has an easy time - elves are dangerous. Gang up and eradicate the High Elf Swordsmen as soon as you possibly can; don't be afraid to push your heroes into position to deal some extra damage if you need it. Once the swordsmen are down, concentrate on the Captains, and the battle should be over fairly quickly. Unlike Good, which can drag this battle out for XP, Evil will have to wait a few battles for a good knock-down drag-out XP-fest.

The middle flank will most likely go almost ignored by Good, so feel free to send your spare middle units to the left and right to reinforce where needed. Elrond will probably not join in the battle until it's too late, so don't worry about him.

For Either Side:

This is a good time to get a feel for how your primary and secondary heroes play. If you happen to not like the way your primary hero plays at ALL, this is the best time to decide to change who you play. It probably won't be an issue though, since each hero is playable in their own entertaining way.

-4. Darkness Upon Bree-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Good hero: +2 points (Evil)

Defeat a Ringwraith: +2 points (Good)

Defeat a Dark Rider or Evil hero: +3 points (Good)

Evil hero reaches a flag: +6 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Primary hero, several Peasants, several Woodsmen.

Evil Units: Primary hero, four of the Nine - two Ringwraiths, two Dark Riders.

Good Strategy:

It's gonna be brutal, I can tell you that. The Nine (well, the Five) are

each in their own right very strong opponents, and all your non-hero units are very weak. The Woodsmen might survive a hit or two, but you'll be lucky if a Peasant survives a hit, AND makes his Morale check. The only way to survive the Nazgul attack is to gang up on them, one at a time. If the Witch-king happens to come into range, hammer him with everything you have and never let up. Use your Free Moves to bring in as many men from the left and right flanks as you can.

A little juicy battle tidbit: There's a peasant or two at the upper portions of town on the left and right flanks. Push them on the attack, but keep them on the flanks. If you're lucky, you can get in a whole bunch of cheap shots on the Ringwraiths, and maybe even take one of them down.

Evil Strategy:

The Rivendell battle wasn't so hot for you. But this one is a massacre. Every unit on the side of Good is weak, frail, and easily frightened. The Nazgul are vastly powerful, tough as nails, and fearless. However, this does not mean that they're invincible.

A good way to go about this battle is to send your Ringwraiths down the flanks they're next to, and have them kill as many units as they can before they drop. This will keep the flank fodder from joining the center. While you do that, park the Dark Riders outside of town, just a little out of reach, and have them charge back and forth killing whoever comes within reach. After you've taken out a fair sampling of units, send them in, and go straight for that brat Aragorn who's probably been pelting you every now and again with Curse of the Dead. Once he's out of the picture, harvest the rest of the Peasants and Woodsmen at your leisure.

-5. Attack on Fangorn-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat an Orc or Uruk-Hai: +1 point (Good)

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Evil unit reaches a flag and sets a tree on fire: +2 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 12 points

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Primary hero, one secondary hero, a few Rohan Soldiers, a few Elven Archers, a few Woodsmen, one Ent.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, several Goblins, several Morannon Orcs, several Uruk-Hai.

Good Strategy:

It's another tough time of things, unfortunately. You're helped out by an indirect advantage, though; your objectives are easier. For Evil to win here, you basically have to lose every single unit you have. You just have to take out some orcs and a hero or two. That, and the heroes you're up against are very low on hit points.

Before you do anything, try to kill the goblins as quickly as possible. They're annoying, and they make a particularly satisfying noise when they crumple. Legolas excels here, particularly if he has his bow upgrade. Move him into position, and potshot Wormtongue until he drops. After that, start shooting Saruman. This strategy, however, requires that you keep Legolas very well defended, which can be tough. The Uruk-Hai are your second big problem, which is where your primary hero and the Ent come into play. Gang up on each Uruk-Hai one at a time. If Morannon Orcs harass you, take them down as needed. The Uruk-Hai are your big worry after the heroes.

If you can take down at least Grima, you'll be in good shape for the rest of the battle. Don't worry too much about the left flank until it starts getting

annoying. Don't worry at ALL about the trees; they'll never reach enough to win.

Evil Strategy:

First things first, move an Orc onto the lowest flag on the left flank. Easy two points. Then, send in the Goblins to harass the Elven Archers and Rohan Soldiers. They'll die, but Good doesn't get any points for dead Goblins.

After that, it's time to move the Uruk-Hai into position. Uruk-Hai are your best overall unit in the game - they're strong, they've got an impressive ranged weapon, and they take quite a lot of punishment. Fire liberally at the Ent, because that thing needs to die, and fast. The Elven Archers are actually not so much a problem in this battle, unless they get up the strength to gang up on individual Uruk-Hai.

Send one of your secondaries and a small detachment of Orcs and Uruk-Hai into the lower right flank. The Woodsmen there provide pathetic resistance, and you get four points from the flag and the Captain there. After you take down Gandalf and the rest of the Archers, the rest of the battle is a cakewalk.

-6. Flight from Moria-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero or Cave Troll: +2 points
Defeat all Elven Archers: +4 points (Evil)
Defeat all Woodsmen: +4 points (Evil)
Battle lasts 20 turns: +6 points (Good)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: None

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, Pippin, a few Elven Archers, several Woodsmen.

Evil Units: Primary hero, an Orc Chief, mass amounts of Goblins, one Cave Troll (reinforcement Goblins and Cave Troll en route).

Good Strategy:

First things first, RETREAT! The Cave Troll cometh, and it's every bit as nasty as you think it is. Not only that, but the goblins that will fight around it if you engage now will run harassment that not even three heroes can handle. My advice is to send two heroes left and one right - you'll want all the Command Points you can muster with the Elven Archers, and the Woodsmen just need a little bit of support to rip apart the Goblins on their side.

Now, the most important thing to keep in mind for this battle is that the goal isn't to kill them all - it's to survive. If you kill the Cave Troll and a single hero, all you have to do is last long enough for the turn 20 mark to pass by, and victory is yours. This is not as hard as it seems - in fact, once the Troll's out of the way, it's pretty simple. The Troll will pick a side to attack, and probably advance with only a Goblin or two. Ignore the Goblins, and hammer the Troll with whatever you can hit it with. If it goes left, you'll have an easy time of things - send the burlier Hero of the two into melee with it (or both, if they're both pretty tough), and hammer it from missile with the Archers. It'll go down faster than you think, but it'll deal some painful blows before it does. If it goes right, send Woodsmen en masse to meet it in melee, while your Hero stays out until you're sure you can deal a killing blow.

Once the Troll's dead, the rest of the battle is simple. Slaughter the Goblins as they come for you, and eventually an Orc Chief will come your way. Use the same tactics you did against the Troll, and victory is yours. Nearing turn 20, reinforcements for Evil will show up from the cave mouth, including yet another Cave Troll. If you're a good player, you can mount an offensive to take

it down, but more than likely turn 20 will pass by before you're able. Either way, you have little to worry about from this brute. (If you're an excellent player, you might be able to kill the last goblins before the second wave of reinforcements even arrives!)

Evil Strategy:

This one isn't as easy as it looks. You've got three decent units, and a sea of cannon-fodder. The lesson we'll be learning here, then, is how to use cannon-fodder to the best advantage.

On the right flank, you'll have Goblins vs. Woodsmen with your primary as overseer. Despite temptation, keep your hero on this side. Killing all the Woodsmen is important to winning this battle, because the Elven Archers aren't going to go down as easy. Besides which, the Woodsmen are without leadership, and no leadership equals swift death in this game.

On the middle flank, move the Cave Troll forward, but with lots of Goblin support. Start harassing Gimli and Boromir quickly. Boromir will more than likely try to sit in the middle and wade through the sea of Goblins; Gimli will probably take a defensive position in the rough terrain to the left flank. Send the troll after Gimli first. Make sure to bring a few Goblins with you to press the attack. Gimli will not fall quickly, but he will fall; the Troll will probably be at half health or so. Boromir will probably not last against said sea of Goblins.

Ignore Aragorn. It's Hobbit Hunting Time! Send as many Goblins as possible past Aragorn and into missile range of Pippin, and let him have it. Merry and Pippin drop like rocks in this game, and you should take advantage of that at all possible opportunities. If you've taken out the Woodsmen flank by now, when Pippin falls you've won, and you won't even have to worry about Aragorn and his nancing Archers.

-7. Conquest of Osgiliath-

Mission Objectives:

Capture a building: +2 points (Good)

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Battle lasts 20 turns: +8 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: None

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, many Gondor Soldiers, a few Rangers, a few Gondor Riders (reinforcement Gondor Soldiers and Gondor Riders en route).

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, many Morannon Orcs, an Orcish Flagbearer (reinforcement Morannon Orcs, Uruk-Hai Brutes, and an Uruk-Hai Captain en route)

Good Strategy:

Shoe's on the other foot now - YOU have to watch the clock in this battle. To win, you have to be fast and hit hard - and what do you know, you've got mounted cavalry to do just that. This is a straightforward, simple win if you can keep your powerful units alive.

The Rangers on your left flank are more useful than you'd imagine - use them to potshot the Orcs on the left flank, and get a building empty for your use. Legolas or Faramir are good to put with the Rangers here (or Haldir, but if you've got him why do you need this walkthrough?). You can try to run out to meet the Mouth in combat, but it's more likely he won't make much of an appearance in this battle except to occasionally Intimidate his forces into action. On the right, get your Soldiers up to the building right in front of you, and throw all your weight onto it. It shouldn't be too hard to capture

the flag there, or in the tiny building on the left flank. There's four points right there.

If the Mouth does move, you'd better smack him fast, or else he'll be a major thorn in your left side. Rangers are good for this, and any primary hero will likely outperform the Mouth in direct combat at this point (especially since the pansy has a terminal case of morale failure).

On the middle flank, massacre the Morannon Orcs with your Riders, with added help from the Soldiers. Eventually, the crowd will sparse out enough for you to make a concentrated attack on the rear buildings. You can choose both to claim, or go for one and smash the Evil hero on the middle flank. Usually killing heroes is easier than taking flags, but don't let that stop your own grandiose schemes.

Make sure to employ a simple tactic with your mounted riders - charge forward, attack, charge back. Slaughter, rinse, repeat. Your Riders will stay alive longer, and thus kill more Orcs for you. Reinforcements will come in on the right flank for Evil in a very big way, but it's likely they won't be too much trouble at all.

Evil Strategy:

It's your turn to survive now. All you need to do is pop a Hero or two, and wait for the blessed 20 turn mark to pass by, and you're set. If you play it smart, this shouldn't be too much of a problem.

Faramir and his revolting Rangers are on the left flank, they're going to have to die. Send Morannon Orcs onto and near their platform, shooting and slashing when at all capable. Take out the Rangers first, then Faramir - they're all Sharpshooters, and the damage they deal is really pretty similar. It's useful to have a good missile hero on the left flank for this battle; I recommend Lurtz or Sharku. You'll probably lose the building on the lower left flank, so don't defend it too vitriolically. Choose your skirmishes.

On the right flank, you have a Captain and several Gondor Soldiers to slaughter. You'll probably have a difficult time of it, until the Uruk-Hai reinforcements arrive. Uruk-Hai Brutes are brutal damage-dealers in melee, so get them out onto the front line immediately. If you have to let the lower right building fall to Good, then so be it.

Clearing the side flanks of Good is the priority in this battle. Once you can confine them to the center flank, you've probably already killed Faramir and the Captain, and you can just relax and wage a comfortable little battle. You may even be able to completely annihilate the forces of Good, and skip the turn 20 deadline entirely.

-8. Amon Hen-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Defeat an Uruk-Hai: +1 point (Good)

Required to Win: 12 points

Advantage: None

Good Units: Primary hero, three secondary heroes, Merry, Pippin.

Evil Units: Primary hero, many Uruk-Hai, a few Uruk-Hai Berserkers.

Good Strategy:

Huddle up! Get your burliest, brawniest Heroes in a tight little ball, somewhere very defensible in the woods, and gang up on one Uruk-Hai at a time. Accept the fact that Merry and Pippin are gonna get the little hobbit stuffing beaten out of them - hey, it happened in the books and the movie, didn't it? Hopefully by now your heroes have a few of their Skills built up, and here's where you're gonna need them most. Paltry skills like Arms Mastery will be

very useful here, and Sweep Attack is particularly effective against the mob.

If Legolas or Faramir are in the battle, there's a fun little bonus for archers here. On the bottom left of the battle map, there's a small ruin with stairs leading to its roof. It's defensive ground, and an excellent spot for an archer to lay into the enemy. You can build your entire strategy around this little ruin, actually; it's one of the most defensible positions on the map. Elrond and Legolas together, with a little melee backup, turn this little ruin into an impenetrable garrison against orcish assault.

Evil Strategy:

This is a tough one. You do happen to have a very heavy detachment of Uruk-Hai AND Berserkers, but their side is nothing but heroes. You-against-hero battles are nasty, that's all you can say about it, and the trick here is to pound each one of them into submission in turn. On the plus side, meet the fighting Uruk-hai. These are by and large the most powerful, well-rounded, diehard troops in the game, and you're going to be enjoying them a LOT come Chapter 2.

If you can induce morale failures well, then do it as much as you possibly can. Saruman in particular excels in this battle if you can keep him alive long enough to throw out Swarm of Crebain at the most opportune moment. Legolas in particular needs to die quickly; his Sweep Attack is going to be painful. Boromir is also a hassle; with all those heroes, he's going to be able to use Defensive Stance almost constantly.

If you have nothing much that you can do on the right flank, kill the hobbits. Otherwise, forget them; the little idiots will actually charge into melee eventually, inviting their own horrible fate.

Above all, keep your hero alive. Without him, you lose, plain and simple. 0-1 Command Points a round just won't cut it against 6 moves a turn on the Good side.

Beat this battle, and Chapter 2 is unlocked. "Balin's Tomb" only appears if you've beaten the game on Normal difficulty playing Good, and is entirely optional.

-9. Balin's Tomb-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Good hero: +2 points (Evil)

Defeat a Cave Troll: +2 points (Good)

Defeat all Goblins: +8 points (Good)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Primary hero, three secondary heroes, Pippin.

Evil Units: Primary hero, an Orc Chief, one Cave Troll, mass amounts of Goblins.

Good Strategy:

BEFORE you even START this battle, make sure you bring at least one secondary hero with an excellent ranged attack. Legolas is the best choice, but Faramir will do in a pinch. When the battle starts up, you'll be putting Legolas at the lowest starting point on the map.

Looks overwhelming, doesn't it? Well, don't worry, because this battle is very winnable - if you play your cards right. See Pippin over on the right flank? Well, you can TRY to save him, but it's easier to just let him drop (and try to take one or two Goblins with him).

You can try to defend the center of the map at all costs, using the tomb as good cover, but I don't recommend it. What I recommend is running, very fast, to the lower left corner of the map. What you'll do is wade through the Goblin

fodder there, pick off their leader, run up the stairs, and take a defensive position from there. This way, you can take on the Troll on your own terms, instead of theirs. Ideally, you'll keep all your heroes hard up against the wall and whittle it down from missile range, but if you prefer you can take your buffest heroes and charge the big oaf when you feel comfortable.

Your archer on the lower level cannot be reached by anyone except the Goblins that are already on his ledge, and otherwise can only be hit by missile fire. Use that to your advantage by taking a step back from the edge, and potshotting the troll constantly. If Goblins come to harass him, kill them first, but otherwise the Troll is his top priority.

Once the Troll is dead, it's a Goblin massacre, so you can relax a bit. Their leaders will have to be dealt with, though; if they do come in range, bumrush them with several heroes at once. If you play this scenario well, you'll have all four of your heroes alive and relatively well after Balin's tomb is sanitized of Goblin stink, and only Pippin, the poor sod, will have dropped. Just like Randy Newman said, short people got no reason to live.

Evil Strategy:

You've fought this battle before. Well, you've fought it twice, actually. The first time was "Flight from Moria", the second time was "Amon Hen". The strategies you used in that battle hold true just as well as they did in this battle.

Legolas in particular will be a major irritation, because you won't be able to reach him in melee except with a few Goblins. Use those few Goblins as aggressively as you can, and they may just be enough to take the elf down before he becomes a real threat to victory.

Make sure to get your hero on the center flank quickly, to ensure a goodly amount of Command Points with which to steer the Cave Troll.

---9. Walkthrough for "The Two Towers"---

-1. Crossing of the Ford-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Defeat a Standard Bearer: +1 point

Capture the South Flag: +8 points (Good)

Capture a fort: +3 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: The side with more patience.

Good Units: Primary hero, Theodred, two Standard Bearers, three Rohan Riders, and many Rohan Warriors.

Evil Units: Primary hero, three Uruk-hai Flagbearers, two Warg Riders, many Uruk-hai, and one or two Uruk-hai Berserkers.

Universal Strategy:

See that three-tile-wide shallow spot in the river? In terms of battlefield strategy, that's called a 'bottleneck'. First one through it loses, and this is why: while you can only put two or three units in there at one time, they can fire and melee at you with all the units they want, at a comparatively safe distance. And the same goes for them if they try for it first. The idea of this fight is patience; wait for the other side to send in a paltry few. Then kill them. Repeat until you feel confident enough that the other side can no longer retaliate with blistering attacks when YOU cross the river, and make the rest of the fight after the wait an easy mop-up.

Good Strategy:

Theodred has a small squad of Rohan Warriors with him already on the other side of the river. They're gonna die, so you'd better come to terms with that. However, Theodred doesn't have to kick the bucket; pull him back NOW, and save his Command Points, since you'll want as many as you can muster to retaliate when Uruk-hai start coming for you. Pull your Standard Bearer on the left and your primary on the right into the center, and just hold strong. Use Theodred's Hold Fast! ability judiciously; you want to keep your units alive for as long as possible, since Uruk-hai will ALWAYS win a fair fight against ground units.

Also, keep your men outside of crossbow range on your side of the river as much as possible; they've got range advantage on your troops as well. Whenever you have the opportunity with Free Moves or Command Points on the right flank, try to pull Rohan Riders into position so they can deliver a righteous smackdown to any Uruk-hai that break through.

If you find yourself getting pushed back, a distinct possibility, fall back to the forts. They provide an excellent degree of protection against any attack, and usually will give you just enough edge to repel the orcish press.

Once you've gotten a distinct advantage on the battlefield, send a Rohan Rider in to claim the southern flag. By now, that should earn you the win.

Evil Strategy:

This is an endurance fight above all else. And guess what? Uruk-hai win endurance fights. Every. Single. Time.

Kill Theodred FAST; Rohan will suffer from the lack of his Command Points. If you can, bring in one of your suicide-bomb Berserkers from the side to waste him quickly. After that, pop soldiers left and right until you've reclaimed your side of the river. While you busy yourself with killing the front line, use whatever free Command Points you have to bring those Flagbearers to the middle flank. Ignore units that have made morale failures; in the opening of this fight you just want to keep them from attacking effectively.

Same goes for the midgame. Deliver lethal pokes from crossbow range and the occasional withering melee strike to any unit that tries to cross the river. The Warg Riders are useful for the poking purpose, especially the one on the right flank; use him to jump forward, fire, and jump back for free damage sans the possibility of retaliation.

Once Rohan is thoroughly decimated, send Uruk-hai upriver and make for those forts for the win. No problem!

-2. Fall of Osgiliath-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points
Defeat an Evil unit: +1 point (Good)
Capture a front flag: +2 points (Evil)
Capture a rear flag: +3 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 12 points

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, a few Rangers, and several Gondor Soldiers.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, two Uruk-hai Flagbearers, and many Morannon Orcs, with a steady supply of more coming from the boats.

Good Strategy:

This is actually three battles in one; the left, middle, and right flanks all tend to play differently. For the left, you want a hard-hitting ranged attacker like Gimli, Boromir, or your primary; for the middle, you want a long-range attacker like Legolas or Faramir; for the right flank, you want complete

melee power.

Seems easy enough, doesn't it? Twelve dead orcs = win. Trouble is, that's slightly hard to do when the orcs just keep coming. If you don't slow them down enough in the first few turns, you will be completely overrun, and Mordor will gain an easy victory out of you. You can't hope to stop them all, but that's not the idea; you want to slow them down to the point where they can't attack without you picking them off with ease. And you can only do that for so long before your Soldiers die, and the Orcs start taking flags.

The left flank is going to give you the most problems, what with Gothmog AND an Orc Captain leading the attack. Luckily, you've got plenty of Ranger fire support there, so USE it. If you're dealing with mostly minions, pick them off as quickly as possible. Arms Mastery is useful here for that last extra push for damage. Whenever you've got a clean shot at a leader without any huge threats coming your way, slam him down with as much firepower as you've got.

Middle flank tends to be easy pickings. There's only a Flagbearer on this side, and he's the priority, but don't sweat him too much. If you've got an elf here on the middle flank as your hero, you might want to let him help out the left flank more than anything, since they'll need all the help they can get. Right flank isn't too bad if you play things right. Get your hero up one of the sides there to lure the enemy in, then paste them as they come in one at a time.

As always, concentrate your attacks on leaders whenever possible. Hopefully, by the time you're starting to suffer on one or more flanks, victory will just be two or three more orcs away.

Evil Strategy:

Forget those rear flags; in this battle, you're going to want Good leaders dead more than anything. Captains are on the left and right flanks, and Faramir is sitting pretty on a ledge in the middle. Kill them, and take the forward flags, and victory is yours without too much struggle.

Smart orc management is the key here. Remember, Good doesn't get any points for wounded orcs, just dead ones. Try to pull back injured units whenever possible, while busying yourself with mashing Good soldiers into paste one at a time. Don't bother spreading out damage; concentrate it on single units until they croak. You've got reinforcements. They don't. Wait for leaders to come to you instead of charging in for them, since the battle will be much more easily won on your terms instead of theirs. Osgiliath is a very well-protected stronghold, so you want them OUT of it, not in it, when you fight.

The left flank will be relatively easy as long as you press the attack with all haste. However, if you feel relatively comfortable with your position there, you might want to move one of your leaders onto the middle flank so you can stick Faramir more effectively.

-3. Edge of Fangorn-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat an Evil unit: +1 point (Good)

Defeat a Good unit: +2 points (Evil)

Defeat Merry: +5 points (Evil)

Defeat Pippin: +5 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 15 points

Advantage: Good

Good Units: Primary hero, one secondary hero, Merry, Pippin, and several Rohan Riders.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, and an infantry battalion of Morannon Orcs and Uruk-hai.

Good Strategy:

Heehee. Chaaaaaarge!

Overwhelming force is what you've got going on here tonight. While the Uruk-hai are powerful combatants in any situation, the Riders outclass them in melee, in terms of hit points and damage. And Morannon Orcs... well, let's just say this battle is going to be pretty for you, all around. Bring your hero on the right flank into the center, and send about four or five horses in a group forward to mercilessly rip into the orc encampment. If one gets too injured, pull him back and replace him with another from the rear. Two hits generally equals dead orc, and one point for you. Just press the assault with all you've got, and this battle is a cakewalk.

Except for one little detail. See Merry and Pippin way down there on the right flank? If you don't do something with them, they're gonna die, and them dying puts Evil in a very advantageous position points-wise. So get them moving UP, as quickly as possible. Pour Spirit Points into Evasion (when they need more speed) and Stealth (when they're getting shot at, and they WILL get shot at) to the exclusion of all other abilities. Once they're way back against the rear border of the map, and on the center flank, you can rest easy and enjoy the extra Command Points they're giving you.

However, you might want them out of the way permanently, just in case. (You might decide this if they took a bit too much damage scampering up the right.) If you do, there's a pathway into Fangorn Forest marked by flags on the left flank; a hobbit moved there is removed from the map, presumed to have escaped into the depths of Fangorn. If you move both hobbits there, one at a time or grouped up, they'll send back a friendly (and ferocious) Ent for your troubles.

Evil Strategy:

Um... yeah, you're screwed. You're completely outclassed in this battle, so don't expect to win playing fair; the only way you're going to repel Rohan is by slaughtering innocent, incompetent halflings. Just one KO should give you just enough edge to win; both Merry and Pippin down will make things much easier for you.

Park a hero (preferably Lurtz or Sharku) on the right flank with as many Uruk-hai as you can muster and shoot, shoot, shoot. Try to take the two of them down before they get too far towards the top, and definitely before they can start using Stealth to cover themselves from enemy fire.

Once they're dead, it's just a matter of ganging up on a Rider, three-to-one or better, and pounding them with every feeble attack you've got. Three dead will win the battle if you've plugged both Merry and Pippin; it'll take five if you could only bag one. And if a Good hero is stupid enough to attack alongside the horses, punish him for his idiocy.

-4. Ambush at Ithilien-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points
Defeat a Haradrim: +1 point (Good)
Defeat a Gondor Soldier: +1 point (Evil)
Defeat the Mumak: +5 points (Good)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Primary hero, four Captains, some Gondorian Rangers, and several Gondor Soldiers.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, several Easterlings, several Haradrim, and one economy-size Mumak.

Good Strategy:

See that? It's a Mumak. It's worth five points. Sic'em!

Forget the scouting report telling you to attack it from a distance. Swarm the monster with four or five soldiers at once, and pour damage into it as fast as humanly possible. The first round needs to be as painful as possible for it, because once it starts moving - and trampling your troops underfoot - it's going to be much harder to press the assault. If necessary, bring your Captains in from the middle flank for extra punch with their Arms Mastery skill and Command Points. Once the Mumak goes down, it's easy pickings taking down the Haradrim.

(By the way, the ones with spears, while more powerful, are Easterlings, NOT Haradrim. The Haradrim are the black-cloaked Sharpshooters. Kill the spearmen only if you absolutely have to, because it's not going to get you any points.)

Meanwhile, you'll have an easy bloodbath on the left flank with your primary hero and a few Rangers. Nothing special over there to worry about, although if the Mumak manages to wander far enough onto the middle flank and you're playing Elrond, you might like to try sniping it with him for the experience. Even without Elrond, you want to give the killing blows to your primary whenever possible, since this battle isn't so hot experience-wise for you.

Evil Strategy:

See that? It's a Mumak. It's yours. SMASH!

Oliphaunts are the toughest, strongest, and most devastating units you will ever use in this game. Used properly, no force of Good can ever hope to stop it. Too bad you only get to use them twice... so you'd better enjoy what time you have with the beasties.

When moving the Mumakil, you want to run them over as many Good units as you can. Units caught in an Oliphaunt's path will automatically fail their morale checks and be pushed away from it. If a unit has nowhere to run to when the Mumak's ponderous feet come down, that unit is d-e-d dead. And that's just the beginning.

Once you're done herding your Mumak into position, you should have at least one Gondor Soldier in range for it. Press A again while centered on the Mumak, and target whoever happens to be alive nearby, and marvel at the extreme damage you can do even if you don't manage to trample your enemies underfoot. And hey, after you attack, you can move him again!

What with the power you've got on your right flank, this battle is probably going to be amazingly easy. The only thing you'll have to bother with aside from your quota of ten Gondor Soldiers is the left flank, where you'll have some Rangers that are both annoying and worthless point-wise to bother with. Try to get some Haradrim sharpshooter shots out as much as possible towards whoever happens to be in range on the middle flank. Saruman works quite well on the left, but if you're playing the Mouth or Angie, you'll want them over on the right joining in the brutality with Jumbo.

-5. Scourging of the Villages-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Defeat all Uruk-hai: +4 points (Good)

Defeat all Wildmen: +4 points (Good)

Burn a house (move a unit onto a flag): +2 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 12 points

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, several Peasants and Woodsmen, and a few Rohan Soldiers.

Evil Units: Primary hero, a Wildman Chieftain, several Uruk-hai and Wildmen.

Good Strategy:

Things just aren't going your way in this part of the game. First Osgiliath,

then Ithilien, now Rohan, and every time you've got brutal overwhelming force against you. However, you should be getting the hang of these odds by now. The idea is always the same - it's not the size of your army, it's how you use it. This battle's better than the last two for that purpose - it teaches you how a superior enemy force becomes an inferior one.

In this case, the forces of Isengard become inferior by way of a very bad angle of attack. Evil's only paths to victory are narrow and extremely difficult to navigate, especially when you only have so many moves a turn. So wait for them to come to you, one at a time, and pound whoever's stupid enough to come in.

On the left flank, those two middle paths are going to be especially easy to keep covered, since there's no solid leadership there to keep the Uruk-hai moving. The center flank and its diagonal passage in is going to be harder to defend, since there's plenty of room and leadership to keep the Uruk-hai moving in and attacking with both greatsword and crossbow cover-fire. This is where you want Rohan Soldiers, Woodsmen, and your primary hero hammering the attackers hard. Right flank is probably not going to interact in this battle, except for maybe - MAYBE - an Uruk-hai or Wildman coming in on the far right to poke at you. So move your leader there onto the center to help.

Don't be afraid to lose a few buildings; what you're more worried about is your heroes. Keep them alive, and you win, plain and simple. Skills like Defensive Stance, Hold Fast!, and Stealth are most useful here, and for obvious reasons heroes like Boromir and Eowyn are particularly helpful. Eowyn is a good choice for the right flank, since you can sneak her over to the middle flank for timely uses of Hold Fast! and the occasional killing blow to an Evil hero.

Evil Strategy:

First off, it's easy to be very stupid here. You have the advantage of power, but the disadvantage that you're essentially attacking a big, thatch fortress. You want the hoity-toity peasantry of Rohan to come to YOU.

For your first turn or so, get into position at the tight bottlenecks on the left and center flanks, and park there with long-range fire. The whelps of Rohan will probably try coming up the sides with their paltry attempts at ranged attacks. Once they do, come forward and crush them in melee. The idea is to wait for Good to move towards you, so you can take a smaller step forward to teach them how painful courage can be. Two steps forward, one step back, that sort of thing.

Once a Good hero comes for you on one of your flanks, concentrate as much power as you can on them and hope you've got enough for cleanup duty afterwards. Burn buildings after you've killed heroes, or whenever you can do so while doing something more important - like slaughtering the innocent.

You'll probably be ignoring the right flank for the most part. The Chieftain over there is better suited to the middle flank with everyone else, with an occasional Curse of Orthanc casually dropped on a hero who deserves it; Wildmen are like weak Morannon Orcs with no ranged attack, and should be mostly ignored. Uruk-hai are where the action is.

-6. The Ride to Helm's Deep-

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Defeat a Warg Rider: +2 points (Good)

Defeat an Orc or Wildman: +1 point (Good)

Defeat a Peasant: +1 point (Evil)

Required to Win: 12 points

Advantage: None

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, a few Rohan Riders, several Rohan Soldiers, several Peasants.

Evil Units: Primary hero, several Warg Riders, and several Morannon Orcs, with more Riders, Orcs, and Wildmen plus commanders on the way.

Good Strategy:

This battle isn't as hard as it looks, since Evil needs to kill either your heroes or your Peasants to make any points - and you get points no matter who you kill. But you are sorta flanked, so you need to be careful where you focus your attack, and be careful where your heroes are when the forces of Orthanc make their move.

Lucky for you, Warg Riders are wimps. Bring your Riders to the edge of the right flank, and when a Warg Rider comes a-knockin', smack him down. It's almost guaranteed you'll score morale failures on these mangy wimps with a Rider on the offensive. Bring your hero on the left flank to the center, so you can make the best use of his Command Points.

Around turn 3 or so, Evil is gonna get reinforcements flanking you from both the top and the bottom. Try to make sure your heroes are well-guarded from inconvenient melee attacks at that point, and just keep pressing the attack on the wounded. As long as you keep your heroes safe, you should have little trouble killing enough orcs to make your quota, and the peons of Rohan can be cannon fodder without putting you in danger.

Evil Strategy:

While Good has the advantage points-wise, you have the advantage in position. So keep it.

Use your Warg Riders to charge forward, fire, and charge back. Lure the Rohan Riders to you and try to kill them one at a time. They're the biggest obstacle to victory for you, so they take priority over Peasant-popping. When reinforcements arrive, try to keep the same pattern going. Only attack Peasants when you're comfortable that doing so isn't going to get you punished when Good retaliates.

Above all, keep those Wargs alive at all costs! If one gets dangerously wounded, pull him back and get him out of the way. Gaining points faster than Good is the goal here, and losing a Warg Rider on the frontline is a lot better than losing a Warg Rider AND Good gaining 2 points.

-7. At the River Isen-

Mission Objectives

Defeat a Hero: +2 points (Evil)

Defeat an Ent: +1 point (Evil)

Destroy the River Dam: +10 points (Good)

(Destroying the dam is accomplished by keeping an Ent on each flag at the upper portion of the map, at the same time, for two consecutive turns.)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: Good

Good Units: Primary hero, one secondary hero, Treebeard, and a grove of Ents. (For lack of a better term, I'm calling a plural group of Ents a grove.)

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, one or two Uruk-hai Flagbearers, several Uruk-hai, and several Uruk-hai Pikemen.

Good Strategy:

Evil's been having a lot of fun lately, but now you get to hit back hard. Ents aren't as powerful... or as tough... or as fast even, as a Mumak. But what they do have is a phenomenal ranged attack, and the strength of vast, superior numbers. Ents are the answer to the fighting Uruk-hai - everything orcs do, Ents do meaner.

Begin the ponderous march forward, with special attention to the left and

right flanks; one of those flanks will likely hit harder than the other, and that's the one you want to spend your Free Moves on. Keep Treebeard back a decent distance; his attack power is the same as his fellow Ents, until you use Keen Eyes from eight spaces back to deal tremendous damage. This battle can be fought a bit simpler than most; whatever's closest, you kill, leader or no. Use whatever moves you can spare to bring Ents from the rear forward a little; if an Ent falls, focus on bringing up those rear-guard units to retaliate. You'll probably just lose one or two, if any at all.

Eventually, the only two Uruk-hai left will be the ones shaking in their suits on top of the dam. Feel free to either ignore them or loot their XP; either way you've already won.

Evil Strategy:

Oh, crap, here they come. Ents are BAD. Like the Mumak was good.

Attack with full force, and pound whichever Ent comes into pounding range. It doesn't matter how far away the Ents are when even their 6-spaces-away attack deals bone-crunching amounts of damage. Luckily Pikemen deal some pretty respectable damage too, because you're going to need every last point of it to win here.

Pay VERY careful attention to where Merry and Pippin are in this battle. Even if they're in missile range, you need to concentrate on felling Ents - damage is important here. But if you can get one suckered into melee, then destroy them without hesitation. Once again, the Golden Rule of Evil is that hobbits have to die.

Killing Merry, Pippin, and Treebeard is going to be the only way you're going to stand much of a chance in this battle. Ten Ents for ten points is not a good deal for your dollar, and Ents are as good as particularly ornery mall bushes without a good leader behind them - just about their only weakness that you can reliably act upon. If you're playing the Witch-king, Terror does beautiful things to Ents, but usually only if they need reinforcements and you're not letting them have any. Ents stuck in firing range aren't inconvenienced at all.

-8. Fall of Isengard-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Ent reaches a flag: +2 points (Good)

Battle lasts 10 turns: +5 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: Good

Good Units: Primary hero, one secondary hero, Merry, Pippin, Treebeard, and the raw brutality of Fangorn Forest come to life.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, tons of Uruk-hai and Uruk-hai Berserkers.

Good Strategy:

You'll note that Evil gets rewarded if they last 10 turns. That's because it is within your power to annihilate every single Evil unit on this map in... well, just about ten turns. That's how powerful an advantage you have.

Press the attack on all sides. Saruman has the advantage of Command Points here, so what you need to do is destroy his ability to USE them. Leaders aren't going to be in decent range for a while, so content yourself with laying waste to mass numbers of Uruk-hai. Berserkers are your priority to start - they hit HARD, and you don't want to take more hits from them than you can help. This is especially true on the right flank, where your hero and Merry are especially vulnerable.

Eventually, Saruman and Wormtongue are going to get impatient and arrogant,

and step forward to attack. This is a costly mistake, because both Saruman and Grima have crap for HP. Ents will crush the two of them like grapes, and once they're down, your victory is inevitable. Don't even bother heading for any of the flags; it's much more beneficial for you to swat every last Uruk on the map and claim the oodles of XP you deserve.

Evil Strategy:

Boy, you had it going good the first few battles of this chapter, and the Uruk-hai were the best thing that ever happened to you. Too bad those filthy little halflings had to call the Ents out to war. So guess who needs some punishment for what they've done to you? You guessed it: Merry and Pippin!

Cut down Ents when you have to, but the halflings are your priority once again. There's too much raw force in the army of Ents to win this battle by force, so you've got to make as many precision shots as you can. Luckily, the hobbits don't have anyone to cover for them but themselves, and they're unable to heal - so the damage you put on them stays on them.

Treebeard is going to be another matter. He's huge, burly, and his Defensive Stance is going to be an absolute pain to deal with, AND he regenerates. It's going to amount to just throwing minions at him until he topples. If you're playing Saruman, nail the Entlord with Swarm of Crebain at every opportunity; if you're playing the Mouth, hammer on Eye of Sauron or use Strength of Mordor to keep him from taking his Stance. If you're playing the Witch-king, whenever you have the advantage of numbers just send him in and pound him and his Ents for all the damage Angie can pour out.

-9. Helm's Deep Breach-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Battle lasts 20 turns: +10 points (Good)

Uruk-hai penetrate the breach and reach the center flag: +4 points (Evil)

Uruk-hai capture section of the Deeping Wall: +4 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 12 points

Advantage: None

Good Units: Primary hero, three secondary heroes, a small complement of Elvish Archers, and many Rohan Soldiers with more on the way.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, and an army of the fighting Uruk-hai, Pikemen, and Berserkers. More Pikemen are en route.

Good Strategy:

Your first endurance match in a while, and this one isn't too tough as long as you play your cards right. The important thing here is hero placement - the right heroes on the right flanks will get you the edge you need, exactly where you need it.

Your first concern is going to be on the left flank, where you want a very tough, HP-high hero (your primary is best, but Gimli or Boromir work too) to stand beside the elves of Lothlorien. Uruk-hai Berserkers are coming up the ladders to utterly crush you, and you sorta want to be able to survive that first crippling strike, and still be able to crush the Berserkers when it's your turn. Use those healing items, don't save them; this is the battle you want them in. Once you repel the Berserkers, Uruk-hai, and Captain coming up the ladder, Evil's left flank will likely consider you a lost cause and concentrate their forces on sending missile fire into the center. If you can repel the initial assault here and keep your hero alive, you'll have the energy necessary to use those Archers to seriously return the favor to Evil. Elrond absolutely excels up on that wall, since his Keen Eyes help the Archers deliver stinging blows throughout all 20 turns.

The right flank isn't going to be as bad, even with no hero on the wall. The attack on the right doesn't have the oomph it does on the left, and it's likely you'll be able to discourage them from taking the wall and still have one or two poor sap Soldiers up there to catch a smoke break. Once you manage that, send your hero into the center, where the REAL action is.

On the center flank, it's not your job to push the enemy back, or claim ground - your goal is to hold the line at all costs. To that end, you want to squash the units that come up to you, and when you've got nobody near enough for melee, send in more Rohan Soldiers from the back to reinforce the line. When the threat to your left and right flanks ebbs, send the heroes there (the ones that can get there, anyway; the guy up on the wall is kinda stuck) towards the center for both combat support and Command Points. Eventually, you'll have quite a few dead Rohan Soldiers, but your center will still stand - and you'll have a patch of reinforcing Rohan Soldiers to strengthen the line. At this point, you can sit back and repel Evil as it comes, confident in the fact that even with high explosives, Uruk-hai can't break the spirit of Rohan.

Evil Strategy:

To get the twelve points you need to cement your victory at the Deeping Wall, you'll need a combined strategy of assassination, and claiming walls. Actually breaching the line and grabbing that center flag might be a bit much to ask (unless you send someone like Sharku or Witch-king plus Invulnerability in for it), but pressing in to take the walls is very doable AND gains you a position of advantage for missile fire down onto the center flank.

The center's still worth fighting for, though, particularly to give you a windor for killing the second hero you'll need to win. Get your Berserkers lined up so they can hit the front line of Rohan Soldiers all at once, and hopefully paste three of them in a row. After this the Berserkers are forfeit, but you might get one or two more one-hit kills in. After that, move in the Pikemen and Uruk-hai and keep the assault going. Try to keep the Soldiers off those Ruins spots, as units there are a bit annoying to deal with.

On the left flank, Haldir needs to die, and fast. Concentrate as much force as you can on him, knocking down Archers when necessary. Once you've taken him down, don't stop until your Uruk-hai are the only living things on the wall. Six points, whoo! And a great place to camp and snipe at heroes.

On the right flank, you'll have an even easier time, since there's no Haldir or equivalent up there to harass you. Later in the battle, two more Rohan Soldiers will come in from the right, but they go down without difficulty.

Once you've claimed the two walls, pick the nearest, most vulnerable hero and snipe at him with every spare crossbow you have. If none are in easy reach, press your attack in the center and lure him in for the kill. Or if you've got a fast or durable hero, send him in and make a mad dash for the flag. But don't stall for XP too long, because if the forces of Helm's Deep last 20 turns, Good has you by the- er, Good is just one step to victory itself.

-10. Forth Eorlingas-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero or a siege weapon: +2 points

Required to Win: 8 points

Advantage: Good

Good Units: Primary hero, three secondary heroes, and the full might of the Rohan Riders.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, a heavy front line of Uruk-hai, Pikemen, and Berserkers, and a Catapult on the left and middle.

Good Strategy:

As day breaks on the fifth day, you enter the battle with massive force and commanding leadership on your side. In the situation you're currently in, Evil can attack your front line pretty much right off the bat with their most powerful units, but the same works for you - so charge! Slam those front lines with everything you've got, pounding individual Uruk-hai into oblivion while pushing the line forward. Keep your units together, moving them back when they get too wounded. Hold Fast! is a beautiful thing in this battle, so if you've got it, flaunt it.

Over on the right flank, your goal is to crush your way towards the center as soon as possible, and go to the Uruk-hai rear guard for some assassination duty. Attack a hero or a ballista above all else - both are threats in their own right and both are a quarter of the way towards victory.

Above all, be ultra-aggressive. This battle is like having twenty or so hero-level damage-dealers on your side, and getting to move eight or ten of them a turn. You have the upper hand, and this is Good's shining victory of "The Two Towers," so push those ugly buggers back to the depths from whence they came!

Evil Strategy:

If you're going by movie canon, this is a battle you're fated to lose. To successfully rewrite the history of Middle-Earth here, you'll have to put your priorities of combat in good order. Killing Rohan Riders is all well and good (and necessary) but it gets you nothing... if nothing else, the only Riders you should kill should be the ones that are preventing you from getting at the heroes. From left to right, your targets are Eomer, Gandalf, Theoden, and Gimli, and some of them are more important to kill than others.

Eomer is probably going to be a tough target, because everything you push the attack with is going to die painfully. Press the attack with your ballista (both if you can spare it) at every opportunity, and meanwhile cut into the trio of Riders he has at his disposal until he shows his ugly mug. Once he drops, you can take your left-flank units and press the attack on the right.

Gandalf is probably going to die last. He'll have Stealth on full blast almost constantly, making ballista fire useless against him, and his complement of Riders is a crushing force to face. It's going to be a tough, painful fight on the center flank, so fight smart, keep your orcs together, crank those supporting hero abilities up to max, and topple the cavalry one at a time until you can squeeze through and bring the pain to the White Wizard in melee. If you can deal melee damage to him, do it, but don't be desperate about it, since the dolt slowly heals over time.

Theoden SHOULD be an easy kill - on the right flank, just swarm him with Uruk-hai until he drops. Don't let up on him; he's an old codger, and HP-wise is weaker than the Riders who fight under him. Kill him, and Good gets its Command Point allotment set back big-time.

Gimli is tough to reach, but press the attack on him too with everything you can spare. But if you can use your units more effectively, do so; Gimli isn't much of a commander, and he's in a position where getting somewhere useful is nearly impossible for him. Try to fight this battle so he's the last leader to die.

As tempting as the XP for Riders is, keep your heroes out of this battle; you need all the leadership you can muster, and a dead hero is a crippling blow in this fight. However, if you end up leaving Gimli alive, you'll probably have plenty of opportunity to knock off the Riders one by one, and savor the sweet, sweet experience gain while Gimli blows smoke out his arse on the right flank.

Beat this battle, and Chapter 3 is unlocked. "Gap of Rohan" only appears if you've beaten the game on Normal difficulty, and is entirely optional.

-11. Gap of Rohan-

Mission Objectives:

Destroy all units!

Advantage: None

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, three Standard Bearers, many Rohan Soldiers, and several Rohan Riders.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, several Easterlings, several Morannon Orcs, three Uruk-hai Flagbearers, and several Warg Riders.

Universal Strategy:

Free-for-all! No point-grabbing gimmicks here, it's an all-out war, and last one standing wins.

By this time, you're quite familiar with how to place your units, how to press an assault and go on the defensive, and how to use terrain to your advantage, so I won't reiterate what you already know. However, I will note a few bits of tactical advantage involving the terrain.

The runic "Ruins" spots at the top and bottom are great defensive points, but the real battle is going to happen right in the middle of the field. On the left flank, you've got a lot of rough terrain that mounted units are going to excel in, and the middle flank is relatively clear. The right flank is going to be pretty narrow fighting, and has a bit of a bridge on the far right for ranged attackers to park themselves. Both sides will have plenty of Command Points on each turn, so you can be assured that this is going to be a very, very active battle.

For those of you lucky enough to have a friend to play against, this scenario is tailor-made for two-player battles. Indeed, you can play this battle a few ways in multiplayer. Your heroes will start alone on each flank, and you'll have the option to move them onto the runed spaces to call up the armies. If you like, you can agree with your opponent to make this a hero-on-hero fight, a full army battle, or a mix-up between the two. Just don't be a jerk and call up your troops when you and your opponent agreed not to.

---10. Walkthrough for "The Return of the King"---

-1. Assault on Osgiliath-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Battle lasts 10 turns: +5 points (Evil)

Battle lasts 15 turns: +3 points (Evil)

Good unit reaches a flag: +2 points (Good)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, and a cavalry of Gondor Riders.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, an occupation force of Morannon Orcs and Orc Brutes, and two long-range Catapults.

Good Strategy:

It's a long, hard road up to the ruined walls of Osgiliath, and you're not going to enjoy the trip. Unfortunately, there's no good way to fight this battle other than on Evil's terms, so here goes... chaaaaaaarge!

DO NOT approach with your heroes. A ballista shot may be inaccurate, but it's crippling when it hits, and none of your heroes can afford getting targeted by one of those bad boys for long. Gondor Riders may be great cannon-fodder, but try to reach the other end of the walls with maybe two on each flank, three if you can. When you get there, make it ugly, and make it fast. Two Rider hits

equal one dead orc, so you've got a powerful engine running when you get up there.

Don't bother about distance from the siege weaponry, they hit hard no matter where you are. And don't bother about distance from the orcs, they can't do any more than poke you occasionally. Blast your way through them in search of those flags, and if an orc leader sticks his nose in things, rip him apart. You need a combination of flags and leaders, five total, and as long as you've got the chutzpah to push such a desperate attack, you've got what it takes to win.

Evil Strategy:

Evil doesn't find itself in a good, solid defensive position very often - last battle where you had something this beneficial for you was in Conquest of Osgiliath. It's okay though, because the basic premise here is the same - hold out, whittle down to nothing whoever comes up to say hello, and strive for that turn 15 deadline. All you need is a single hero kill to cement your victory.

That in mind, you've got to burn through several Riders before one of Good's finest actually comes your way. As always with horsemen (and heroes for that matter), gang up three-to-one or better and pound them for all you're worth.

Forget that siege weapons are inaccurate, and use them constantly. When they do hit, they're amazing damage-dealers. If a hero is more than four squares off the bottom border of the map, they're in range; smash them, and ignore any other threat. After all, one hero is all you need to win this battle.

Once you've popped a Captain or Faramir, huddle up and repel with bow, blade, and ballista whichever Rider gets closest to offing a hero or taking a flag. Just 15 turns after you finish, and this battle is easily won for you.

-2. Defense of the Beacon-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Battle lasts 20 turns: +8 points (Good)

Evil unit reaches a flag: +4 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 10 points

Advantage: Good

Good Units: Primary hero, several Gondor Soldiers and Gondorian Rangers, one Standard Bearer, two Gondor Riders.

Evil Units: Primary hero, a platoon of Morannon Orcs, Orc Brutes, and Uruk-hai Brutes, and a small supporting force of Easterlings led by a Wildman Chieftain.

Good Strategy:

"Turtling" or "camping" is a strategy that involves sitting your butt in a defensive position and cutting down enemies who decide to try to oust you. It goes by these names mostly in fighter games and first-person multiplayer shooters, but the basic premise is as old as war itself. Castles, fortresses, trenches, and even little hillocks on a battlefield are just ways for armies (or individual soldiers) to make their defensive hold more effective. This battle, more than any other in the game, teaches you just how effective a good defensive barrier can be against an obviously superior force.

Park your units and Rangers in that little building, keep that one doorway unobstructed, and gun down every unit that comes through. They'll be hitting you, but thanks to that tiny little space, they only get one effective attack a turn while you get three or more. Add the fact that you're getting a defensive bonus from being in the building and you're sitting pretty in there, despite the fact that Angie and Gothmog have you totally outdone as far as leadership goes. The Easterlings to the left flank will harass you a little in the beginning of this battle, so you'll want to take care of them before you really start devoting yourself to holding out in the fort.

A few things will cement your position inside the walls. The first is taking a Gondor Rider up and parking him on the right flank with the Standard Bearer. Just one will do, you can use the other as replacement if the first dies. The second is bring your hero forward when you've killed at least one hero, and using him to add an extra wallop to your little force in there.

Evil Strategy:

Hoo, boy. Ever try to break open a walnut with your bare hands? Yeah, it's gonna be a little like that. But don't fret - this battle is very winnable. Defensive positions are awesome to start in, but they're even better to end in. What you want to do is get in there, and stay in there - because once you've mixed your Evil in with Good in that little box, the only thing that can come out is pain and suffering.

Obviously you're going to need all the Command Points you can get to pull this off, so pull that Wildman Chieftain into the middle flank (along with as many Easterlings as you can) and start huddling your units around that doorway. Don't step into the doorway, just stack your men around it and fire arrows at whoever's convenient. You'll do crap for damage, but be patient - your position is more important than your damage right now. A few Soldiers or Rangers might try to get into the doorway to attack, which leaves them undefended by their fort bonuses, so blast 'em when the time comes. A few might even go to the right flank to get their yuks in, and they won't be as easy to hit, but they'll be short-changed on Command Points by doing so as well, so don't worry about them unless they're easy marks.

Once the doorway is clear and you've got tiles just inside to maneuver in, take those units you've parked at the entryway and make two-tile moves right inside. Heeere's Johnnarg! With your orcs inside the fort, the juicy little tidbits inside lose their defensive bonus, and you can pound them into tiny bits at your discretion. Remember to keep pushing orcs towards that door, and letting them invite themselves in at all opportunities. Once you've claimed that fort, start squashing units on the way to that rear flag. Kill the enemy Captain and capture that, and you're done!

-3. Mt. Mindolluin-

Mission Objectives:

Pippin reaches a flag: Win for Good

Pippin dies: Win for Evil

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, Pippin.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes.

Note: Whichever side you're playing in a single-player game, the opposing side will have a handful of minion units. Figures.

Good Strategy:

This here is one of the harder missions of the game; it's the one I'm most often asked about personally. And no mistaking why - this is the one and only mission where your only goal is to protect a character. A weak, frail, short, gimpy character at that.

Don't charge forward yet; we're gonna stall to start. Get Pippin backed up hard against that bottom barrier, and bring your heroes up in front of him about three or four squares, picking off goblins where you can. Goblins will be an occasional annoyance, but your real worry is the orc leaders. The Orc Captain can wait, but Gorbag and Shagrat are two behemoths who can put the pain on Pippin fast if one of them gets through to fire at him. Two of them together, and it's Pippin Pate.

Once a leader comes into range, rush them and block them in melee with

ringing blows. Gimli and Eomer are killer in this battle, and this is one where Aragorn really shines through with his excellent hit points and endurance. All three heroes on one orc leader will crush one of the boar-toothed punks in no time flat. If all goes right, you'll have a six-head hero-on-hero melee that allows Pippin to simply slip by unscathed.

Now, how about moving Pippin up there? There's three ways you can do this:

1) Slaughter every last goblin, and move Pippin up at your leisure. Not the most elegant way to pull it off, but it's reliable.

2) Hammer on Evasion and Stealth, and haul Pippin's butt up towards the flag around the tower while Shag and 'Bag are occupied. He'll take hits from goblins though, so this is the most risky way to do it.

3) On each side flank, there's an underpath - a tiny hidden catwalk of sorts that bypasses the tower entirely. Take the hobbit down one of these, with much attention to the Stealth ability, and you might be able to sneak him right up to the flag without him getting enough attention to be a pincushion.

Any way you choose, COVER him. Use his skills to the exclusion of all others when he begins his ascent, and augment them when you can with Hold Fast! or even Horn of Gondor. If you have to, break off a hero to run alongside him and crush Goblin heads. Remember though... if he takes just that one point of damage, from four tiles away, to push him over the edge... well, you have to start over again.

Evil Strategy:

Hobbit Hunting Time once again! Yeah, you've got a lot of fodder in your way and those dirty heroes to boot, but remember - Pippin just needs one or two good solid hits to go down like a sack of poh-tay-tohs.

For this battle, you're going to want heroes with a lot of mobility and a lot of power. If you've been using the leadership power of Grima and Gothmog, now's the time to put them aside in favor of monsters like Gorbag or Ugluk. Sharku in particular is incredible in this battle, as his Strength of Mordor makes it hard for the good heroes to hit back. Regardless, take whoever you choose and group them together to smash Gondor Soldiers into the snow one by one. If a hero meddles, crush them - or even better, fix it so they can't stop you from moving towards the halfling. Saruman's Swarm of Crebain and the Mouth's Strength of Mordor are good for this purpose, and Angie's Terror is like a "win" button when used at the proper time.

Regardless of who you're using, once the hobbit comes into missile range, start pasting him with arrows and making your approach. If one of your heroes can get into melee with him after a little missile fire... well, you win. This is actually an easy one for you - so have fun wiping the smile off that fool of a Took.

-4. Charge of the Rohirrim-

Mission Objectives:

Destroy all units!

Advantage: None

Good Units: Primary hero, one secondary hero, five (count'em five) Standard Bearers, and the might of the Rohirrim.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, a sea of Morannon Orcs and Orc Brutes, and a big ol' crash of Mordor Trolls.

Good Strategy:

What a beautiful brawl! This can be a tough battle, but it's also one of the most exciting for Good, as this is the moment where the forces of Good really blaze forth - in the movie AND in the game. Those Trolls are a menacing bunch, but even Trolls cringe and falter before the Riders of Rohan.

You're really, really evenly matched here, despite the look of those Trolls. The trick is to move your troops and deal damage in such a way that prevents the Orcs and Trolls (and Angie and Gothmog) from dealing damage effectively against you. Good targeting and morale failures are the key, as Rohan Riders can quite easily put any unit on this map to running - except for the Witch-king, of course. Cover your heroes and your Standard Bearers well as you put the pain to the Trolls, and whichever leaders you can pinpoint. Once a Troll breaks and runs, ignore him for the rest of the turn and pick another - or the nearest Orc, if no standing Trolls are within range. At your best, you'll force Evil to attack with Morannon Orcs, who can do little more than pinprick your Riders.

On the right flank, you've got horses in a great position to harass Gothmog right into the grave. Gothmog's got crap for hit points, so you should be able to send him reeling without a problem. After you do, you can move your Standard Bearers on that flank to the middle, to help out your two primary heroes in wiping out those nasty Trolls.

On the left flank, getting through to the Ugluk clone is going to be nearly impossible, so make do with poking Trolls and hewing down Orcs where you can. Keep maybe one Standard Bearer over here, and move the other to the middle, where the real party is at.

The Witch-king of Angmar is the real target on the middle flank. His Terror ability is going to wreak havoc with your attacks, and Invulnerability is, needless to say, a pain in the arse. But once Gothmog goes down, his Spirit Points aren't going to hold out. Once three or so Trolls have been toppled, press the assault on Angie. Compared to the trolls, he won't last at all.

Once you've wiped out the Dastardly Duo, this battle is all yours - Evil has no chance without their leadership. Whoever needs experience, have them start doing in the enemy one by one, and rack up that XP sky-high. Take your time! You've got no hurry, and as long as you keep your hero healthy you can net them more XP than you can imagine.

Evil Strategy:

Last time you fought with trolls, you fought with one, and that was in Flight From Moria, and it was a measly Cave Troll. These are Mordor Trolls, and you've got a boatload of them to make your displeasure with Rohan known. BASH!!

The Riders already locked into melee with you come first - rip them apart. Once you cause a morale failure, move on to the next one; leave the Rohirrim ragged and chaotic, and unable to press their own attack when their turn comes around. You'll especially want to deal with that ratty old Gandalf up at top, so dispatch two (or three) Trolls his way and introduce them all. Once the pleasure's been all yours, break the Trolls off to each side and send them to give greetings to the Standard Bearers, too.

Above ALL, however, keep your leaders safe. Good's leadership is far more dependable than yours thanks to those Standard Bearers, and if one of your leaders drops you can pretty much kiss that flank goodbye. By now, your primary hero should have some excellent ability to ream individual units for trying to attack them - Saruman has Swarm of Crebain, the Mouth has Strength of Mordor, and Angie - well, Angie gets Terror, which reams everybody, but he also has Invulnerability to cover his butt (making him more defensively capable than most heroes are in Sauron's employ).

Unlike Good, who has different strategies for each flank, your strategy is pretty universal - cover your butt, crush theirs. Once two or three Standard Bearers go down, Gandalf is kissing the dirt, and Theoden is feeling some pressure, relax and enjoy the first fall of the Horselords. Enjoy it, because they're getting nastily powerful reinforcements come the Battle of Pelennor Fields.

-5. Walls of Minas Tirith-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a Hero: +2 points
Defeat a siege weapon: +1 point
Battle lasts 12 turns: +5 points (Good)
Evil unit takes the flag: +5 points (Evil)

Required to Win: 10 points
Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, several Gondor Soldiers, several Gondorian Rangers, and a Ballista on each side.

Evil Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, several Morannon Orcs and Orc Brutes, some Uruk-hai Flagbearers, and two big ol' Catapults.

Good Strategy:

You're in two positions simultaneously in this battle - a supremely defensive one, and a painfully open one. As long as you play your cards right, your only concern will be the latter.

Priority one is those two orcs already on the siege ladder. Kill them off quick, and after that concentrate your attacks on whatever Orcs happen to be closest up by the wall. Don't feel too bad about taking damage down there, 'cuz no matter what you do it's going to be a punishing fight.

Legolas is a godsend in this battle if you've got him. Use his phenomenal range and his Sweep Attack to bring down multiple orcs at once. If you want to try actually bringing your leaders down to assist, make sure they've got awesome defense, because Catapult hits still hurt immensely when they connect. Eowyn and Gandalf have Stealth, and Boromir and Elrond have Defensive Stance, and these will keep you in good stead - for a little while. I strongly recommend keeping non-Legolas heroes out of this battle until turn 12 passes by, and it's time to assassinate the enemy leadership.

Don't attack with the Ballistas either, unless it's all you can do. As impressive as they look, Ballista shots are pathetic at the extreme ends of their range; they're no real help to you. Gondor Soldiers and Rangers do much more damage, pound for pound, than any Ballista will ever do.

In any case, just hold out as long as you can, and bring down as many orcs as you can. Hopefully Gothmog and his crony leaders will eventually make a foolish advance, allowing you to concentrate your fire on them. If they don't, you'll probably lose every last unit down there, and will have to lay down your supreme defense right up at the siege tower with your heroes and Rangers. Which really isn't too difficult a stance to hold, especially if you're packing heroes with impressive ranged attacks. Gimli is an absolute rock on that siege tower, as any Orcs who attempt to come up will have to deal with his brutal throwing axes. Just hold that tower until the captains and lieutenants of the horde show up - after that, you know what to do.

Evil Strategy:

Good was introduced to "turtling" back in Defense of the Beacon. Here, Evil learns the art of siege - how to force an enemy on the defensive to abandon their position. No fortress can be held forever, and once a side has no choice but to leave it, they're at their most vulnerable.

First things first - grab that flag! Be aggressive enough with your two Orcs up there, and you might be able to get those 5 points before the battle's barely begun. It's not a great advantage - it just makes things a tad easier later on. But hey, you may as use those two decoys for something decent.

Unlike Good, whose siege weapons are worth less than the wood they're made of, your Catapults are brutal forces of death. Use them every turn, one unit after the other, making one kill at a time. Use them on Soldiers and Rangers at full health, as one shot from a Catapult is good enough to kill or cripple most units. Press the offensive with everything you have, and show no mercy at all. Soon enough, Gondor's finest will be so much pulp on the ground, and you'll just

have the Rangers and heroes on the wall to contend with.

Now... we wait. Good can't win unless your heroes or Catapults get taken down, and after you dismantle their ground troops, the only way it can succeed is to go on the offensive far too late. Pop units one at a time as they come down the ladder, and stay the hell out of the way of Legolas' bow. If you want to chance it, send a tough hero up (preferably one with Take Cover! or at least a lot of hit points) and knock on Gondor's door. Howdy, neighbor! Graaaaargh!

-6. Siege of Minas Tirith-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a normal unit: +1 point

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Defeat a Troll: +5 points (Good)

Required to Win: 12 points

Advantage: Good

Good Units: Primary hero, Merry, many Gondor Soldiers and Gondorian Rangers, a Standard Bearer on the left flank, and two Ballistas.

Evil Units: Primary hero, a Mordor Troll, a few Morannon Orcs, and sporadic and random reinforcements coming from the gate that consist of Mordor Trolls, Orc Brutes, Morannon Orcs, and Haradrim.

Good Strategy:

You've got the upper hand here, as long as you know who needs to die. The answer to that question, of course, is 'The Trolls.'

As long as a Mordor Troll is on the screen and not running away, you're going to lose one man a turn. So gang up on that big lunker where he stands, and pour damage into him until he's full. Don't worry about the loss of life, you're either going to lose it in front of the Troll or lose it three spaces down when he advances. Best to keep him back as much as possible. While you're toppling the behemoth, or right after, try to get in two measly Orc kills as well.

Gothmog may advance and join the fight, but unless you have no other targets, ignore him. Killing him is actually a setback in this fight, as he's too much effort for only two points, and his Command Points are bringing the foe to YOU so you can engage them. Once the Troll is looking pretty wounded, try to get your hero up to the front as quick as possible for the muscle.

On the right flank, you'll have plenty of Rangers to assist you; on the left, you'll most likely be firing crap shots with the Ballista every once in a while. Just keep those troops buzzing at the front, keep those Orcs dying, and keep your score higher than Evil's - as long as you can do that, you're in good shape.

Evil Strategy:

The same idea that hampers Good bolsters you - an upright Mordor Troll means one Good unit dies per turn. However, you're going to be defending that investment a little more solidly.

Send in the Troll, but send in your Orcs to keep him company. Position them so Gondor has to get through them in order to poke the Troll in melee. Don't be too defensive, though, or else the Rangers will just have fun with you from long range.

When the Troll gets too injured, back him up! A worthless, living Troll is better than Good scoring five points off of his rotting carcass. In his place, send in the Orcs (and your Hero if he's not Saruman) and return fire in spades. As long as you keep your Troll alive, this battle is in the bag for you. (And if another Troll shows up in your reinforcements, then that's as good as a "You Win!" message right there.)

Don't worry about smiting heroes if they approach; Soldiers and Rangers are

squishier and easier to puree. Just keep the attacks quick and merciless, and you'll easily get the upper hand on points.

-7. Pelennor Fields-

Mission Objectives:

Destroy all units!

Advantage: None

Good Units: Primary hero, two secondary heroes, what little remains of the Rohan Riders, and on turn 2, the terrible wrath of the Army of the Dead.

Evil Units: Primary hero, one secondary hero, a ragtag grouping of Haradrim, Easterlings, Morannon Orcs, and Orc Brutes, and exactly one Mumak.

Good Strategy:

Pelennor Fields is a battlefield where attrition is king - units on both sides are going to be dropping left and right, and the only thing that will assure your victory is the forces of Mordor dying quicker than you do. To that end, there are two main things that you need to concentrate on.

One: the Mumak. The second appearance of the Mumakil is an immensely nasty one, as that sucker is going to stomp right over your Riders and bring the pain right to your leadership. You can't do much to stop it, so just try to outpace him, and gang up on him with hit-and-run horseman tactics for as long as you can manage. I won't kid you, it's most likely you're going to lose two of your heroes, quite possibly three. (I last won this battle with only Merry left leading the bunch.)

Two: enemy commanders. Evil has a massive advantage over you as far as Command Points goes, and what's more, those heroes are well-defended behind cannon fodder. However, one or two of them WILL try to press the attack, and once they do, grab that opportunity IMMEDIATELY.

When turn 2 for you comes along, you'll have reinforcements - and what reinforcements they are. The Army of the Dead is one of the ultimate ground troops for Good - ultra-fast, ultra-powerful, and immune to morale failure. Right off the bat, send the ones on the right flank in to pound on Angie until he croaks. Whenever you've got spare Command Points, send some of them forward on the left and middle to hammer your advantage home. But above all, you MUST destroy leaders, because after a dozen turns or so you're going to have nothing but scraps left - and the win will go to who can move more scraps than their opponent.

Evil Strategy:

Mordor doesn't play fair. To that end, pay very close attention, because we're about to commit an egregious crime with a Mumak.

First turn you've got, move the Mumak down ONE space. One space exactly. Leave him there, and attack the last remnants of the Rohirrim with gusto. Merry is an exceptionally tempting target, but chances are you won't be able to finish him off very quickly. Eowyn is also a good target up there, so send in your troops to bury her quick.

Good's turn 2 will be slightly worrismatic, as Aragorn and Legolas have just arrived... and the dead follow with them! It's most likely, however, that Aragorn is going to stay put, as your Mumak isn't within range to really squeeze in a good attack against it. So when turn 3 approaches, send Mr. Mumak three spaces down... then another three spaces down, pushing Aragorn right back out of this battle, and leaving you with one heck of an advantage.

Keep the pressure on the Riders and their leaders, while you busy yourself with running the Mumak far to the right. If you move quick enough, you can crush Legolas underfoot too! Once you manage that, it's time to take the Oliphaunt back towards the rest of the Army of the Dead. Run laps around them

while you sneak in brutal blows with his tusks. If you're good enough with moving that monster around, Good's reinforcements will be practically worthless, and you'll have bagged this victory easily.

-8. The Black Gate Opens-

Mission Objectives:

All Good units die: Victory for Evil

Frodo destroys the One Ring: Victory for Good

(Frodo destroys the One Ring at some random point after turn 15.)

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: The last remnants of the strength of Men. Rohan Soldiers, Gondor Soldiers, a few Standard Bearers, your primary hero, and two secondary heroes.

Evil Units: The power of Mordor. Primary hero, two secondary heroes, and a massive army of Morannon Orcs, Orc Brutes, Uruk-hai Brutes, and Mordor Trolls.

Good Strategy:

You are going to die. Plain and simple: you cannot win this fight. In fact, the whole idea of this suicidal stand is that, as long as Sauron is busy watching you suffer, he's too busy to pay attention to the fact that two hobbits have snuck into his backyard. So to keep the Dark Lord from spying on what REALLY matters, you need to keep that hopeless fight going for as long as you possibly can.

This is where all those points you put into your skills pay off, and you find out whether or not those secondary heroes you've chosen as favorites are good for the final conflict. Heroes like Gimli and Eomer aren't all that great here; they're superpowers in melee, but they don't have the leadership to keep folks alive. Heroes like Eowyn and Boromir, though, are amazing here - Boromir's Horn of Gondor is a great defensive work, and his Defensive Stance makes him an ideal decoy; while Eowyn's Hold Fast! and massive Spirit Points are exactly what you need.

Your primary hero will also dictate how you defend yourself in this battle. Aragorn is all about forcing the enemy back with sheer stubborn tenacity, with mass Inspire-driven attack, harassment with ranged Sweep Attacks, and of course the timely Rallies he's wont to encourage. If you're playing Gandalf, Blinding Light is what it's all about - you don't need anything else. Elrond owns this battle with Hold Fast!, decoy-level Defensive Stance, and if you've got the Points for it, the deceptively powerful Elven Duress.

However your hero tactics are set up, DO NOT PRESS THE ATTACK. Huddle up every single man in that center flank, and just defend, defend, defend. Don't stick your neck out to snap at Orcs firing from missile range; they're not worth it, and they're not dealing enough damage to worry you. Worry about the Trolls demolishing your front line, and worry about the heroes and Orcs who step into melee. Do whatever brings the most Evil units down in the least amount of time. Go for morale failures, overwhelming damage, perfect unit placement to harass and discourage a precise enemy strike, every trick you've learned so far and even a few you haven't had the opportunity to try. All that matters is that you keep as many units alive as you possibly can.

When turn 15 arrives, you're probably going to be on your last legs, with maybe one hero alive (two if you're lucky) and a handful of units left. Run away! Push yourself back into that little rocky passage, take those Rough terrain squares, and pray to the Secret Fire that you've got enough left to win. Victory might come quickly (turn 16) or it might be far, far too late (turn 22), so hang in there, and hope beyond hope that you'll make it. If you've played it right, you'll be biting your lip and grimacing, sure that you're not going to survive, right up until you see the message:

Frodo destroys the Ring!

and know that, somehow, you lucked out and you've defeated the forces of Sauron once and for all.

Evil Strategy:

Crush them.

You have all the muscle you need in this battle to turn the last of the free men of Middle-Earth into jerky. Here's the catch, though... you have to do it in 15 turns, as Sauron's on a schedule, and the One Ring isn't going to save itself from the fires of Doom.

Move in on all sides, and never attack in missile if you can get a good solid hit in melee. Use your troll as a trump card to pave the way towards smacking down Aragorn and Legolas. They're your priority, but EVERYTHING must die here, so don't be afraid to use an attack to smack down a dying Soldier. Once you can get the Troll into melee with a hero, make mincemeat of him.

Most importantly, keep moving units forward. You may have unstoppable power in this battle, but your orcs at the front will still die - and you want the ones in back close enough to keep the fight coming after they do. Any turn spent just bringing Orcs forward and not damaging anything is one turn more for Good to survive, and one turn closer to losing.

If you're playing Saruman, make use of Swarm of Crebain to incapacitate Good heroes while the Troll plays with them, and hammer on On Your Feet! to keep your front-line Orcs standing for a bit longer. Use the Witch-King like a second Troll, with special attention to Flurry and Terror. The Mouth owns this battle, with Strength of Mordor to stop the heroes in their tracks, Eye of Sauron to blast them to kingdom come, and Intimidate to bring EVERYBODY into the melee to take advantage of those last two. When all is said and done, by turn 14 there should be less than half a dozen Good units left, no heroes on their side, and your most powerful units right there to end the Third Age once and for all.

Beat this battle, and you've won! The following battles are entirely optional ones, unlocked for beating the game under certain conditions. If you've just won playing Evil on Normal difficulty, you'll have "The Last Alliance" waiting for you.

-9. The Last Alliance-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat a normal unit: +1 point

Defeat a Hero: +2 points

Required to Win: 30 points

Advantage: Good

Good Units: The Last Alliance of Elves and Men, consisting of several Wood Elf Archers, High Elf Swordsmen, Gondor Soldiers, your primary hero, and two secondary heroes.

Evil Units: The Armies of Sauron, consisting of several Goblins, Morannon Orcs, Orc Brutes, your primary hero, one secondary hero, and Sauron himself.

-10. Sauron Comes-

Mission Objectives:

Isildur dies: Victory for Evil

Sauron is vanquished: Victory for Good

Advantage: Evil

Good Units: Isildur, your primary hero, one secondary hero, two Trebuchets, two Ballistas, and several Gondor Soldiers.

Evil Units: Sauron, your primary hero, one secondary hero, two Catapults, two Ballistas, and several Goblins.

-11. The Board Is Set-

Mission Objectives:

Defeat the Enemy King! er... Commander.

Advantage: None

Good Units: 8 pawns (Gondor Soldiers), 2 rooks (Army of the Dead), 2 knights (Rohan Riders), 2 bishops (Wood Elf Archers), 1 king (primary hero), 1 queen (secondary hero).

Evil Units: 8 pawns (Goblins), 2 rooks (Mordor Trolls), 2 knights (Dark Riders), 2 bishops (Haradrim), 1 king (primary hero), 1 queen (secondary hero).

---11. Unlockables---

Like any self-respecting game, Lord of the Rings: The Third Age for GBA rewards you for beating it. What's fun is that it rewards you for beating it at successively more difficult levels of play. This is what you get for beating the game on certain difficulty levels.

For beating the game on Normal difficulty:

- You unlock the "Skip Combat" option, which allows you to press A to bypass the unit damage-dealing cutscene and thus save a great deal of time playing.
- You unlock the optional battle stage, "Gap of Rohan", an all-out free-for-all smackdown between Rohan and Orthanc.

Depending on which side you played, you also unlock one of the following.

- If you won on the side of Good, you also unlock the optional battle stage, "Balin's Tomb", in which four good heroes square off against a cave troll, a few orc leaders, and a metric ton of goblin cannon-fodder.
- If you won on the side of Evil, you instead unlock the optional battle stage, "The Last Alliance", in which the final battle of the Second Age is fought on the steps of Mount Doom. On the side of Good, this battle is unremarkable, but on the side of Evil, you get to play Sauron, and I don't think I need to tell you how awesome he is on the battlefield.

For beating the game on Hard difficulty:

- If you won on the side of Good, you unlock Haldir, the eighth secondary good hero. Check out his stats - he's an elven can of whoop-ass.
- If you won on the side of Evil, you unlock Shagrat, the eighth secondary evil hero. Like Haldir, he's an utter war machine.

For beating the game on Grueling difficulty:

- You unlock "The Board Is Set", a fairly gimmicky battle shaped like a big chessboard.

For beating the game on any difficulty, with Sauron Mode on:

- You unlock the optional battle stage, "Sauron Comes", in which Isildur and Sauron face off with a full complement of cannon-fodder units and siege weaponry. Good times, good times...

---12. Conclusion---

This FAQ is far from over, as is evident. What I need to do now is write up the statistics and abilities of ALL the units - from the lowly peasant to the highest non-unique hero. I've powered through the game and just about finished the main walkthrough, but more still remains to be written! Encourage me by e-mailing me more info about what I HAVE written here - experience point costs for Skills, hero synergies, whatever you'd like to help me out with, I'd appreciate it a lot - and so would a lot of GameFAQs readers, I'm sure.

Thanks to Griptonite Games, who got Electronic Arts off their lousy sports games kick and made a good movie-license game that's thoroughly playable and re-playable. Kudos!

Thanks also to all of you who e-mailed me asking questions about the game, while I left this FAQ incomplete and gathering dust for so long. It's been your questions that have encouraged me to complete this project, and you've even rekindled my interest in playing the game. Thanks a lot!

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