

MIDDLE-EARTH™

STRATEGY BATTLE GAME

THE
LORD OF THE RINGS

THE
HOBBIT
MOTION PICTURE TRILOGY

MIDDLE-EARTH STRATEGY BATTLE GAME RULES MANUAL

Designer's Commentary, February 2024

The following commentary is intended to complement the Middle-earth Strategy Battle Game rules manual. It is presented as a series of questions and answers; the questions are based on ones that have been asked by players, and the answers are provided by the rules writing team and explain how the rules are intended to be used. The commentaries help provide a default setting for your games, but players should always feel free to discuss the rules before a game, and change things as they see fit if they both want to do so (changes like this are usually referred to as 'house rules').

Our commentaries are updated regularly; when changes are made any changes from the previous version will be highlighted in magenta. Where the stated update has a note, e.g. 'Regional update', this means it has had a local update, only in that language, to clarify a translation issue or other minor correction.

These questions have been gathered from many sources. We are always happy to consider more questions, so please send any queries to:

middle-earthfaq@gwplc.com

Q: If a model begins its move within an enemy model's Control Zone and chooses to move away (as one of the options listed), can the model moving away still Charge a different enemy model? (p.26)

A: Yes.

Q: If a model making a Duel roll would have a modifier applied to their roll, and they choose to re-roll due to the effect of a banner, special rule or some other effect, does the modifier also apply to the re-roll? (p.45)

A: Yes.

Q: Some special rules refer to checking to see if a model would be Trapped if it loses the Fight. When should this be checked and what exactly does it mean? (p.47)

A: This should be applied at the time the special rule in question comes into effect. For example, some may say 'at the start of the Fight phase', in which case you would check to see if the model is Trapped at the start of the Fight phase. Others might say 'during a Fight' or similar, in which case you would check at the start of that Fight before any dice are rolled. In all instances of this type of rule, a model would be considered Trapped if, should they lose the ensuing Fight, they would be unable to Back Away as normal. If the model would be able to Back Away as a result of a friendly model deciding to Make Way, then they would not be considered Trapped for the purpose of the special rule.

*Q: Do the likes of inanimate objects, such as a **Siege Engine**, demolition charge, the Mirror of Galadriel, and so on, count as a model for the purpose of an army's Break Point or for holding Objectives? (p.56 & 134)*

A: No.

Q: Some special rules, such as the Goblin King's Blubbery Mass or Malbeth the Seer's Gift of Foresight, allow models to ignore Wounds on a dice roll as if a point of Fate had been spent. Can Might be used to alter such rolls? (p.69)

A: Yes.

*Q: If a model with a spear was supporting a **Hero** model that declared a Heroic Combat, and the **Hero** subsequently charged another enemy model whilst remaining in base contact with their original spear support, can the model with the spear support them again? (p.71 & 86)*

A: No.

Q: If a model armed with a spear is engaged in a fight and after the fight is resolved they find themselves in base contact with another friendly model (such as if they Back Away), can they still spear support even though they have already been involved in a fight? (p.71 & 86)

A: No. The only exception to this is if the spear-armed model was engaged in a fight (though not supporting) alongside a friendly **Hero** model who successfully declared a Heroic Combat, in which case after moving as part of the Heroic Combat, the spear-armed model could provide support in this second combat.

Q: If a **Hero** has declared a Heroic Defence and would normally be wounded on a 6/4+, then do both rolls now have to be a natural 6 as per the rules for Heroic Defence? (p.74)

A: Yes.

Q: Can a **Monster** that has been Immobilised/Transfixed still use Brutal Power Attacks? (p.79)

A: No.

Q: If a **Hero** with a two-handed weapon rolls a 6 in their Duel roll, which then suffers a -1 penalty due to the rules for two-handed weapons, can they then use a Might point to boost the rolls back up to a 6? (p.85)

A: Yes. The roll has essentially been changed from a 6 to a 5, and so the Might point can be used to boost it back up to a 6.

Q: If a model has two weapons (such as a Dragon Cult Acolyte or a Corsair Reaver) and wishes to swap them for a different type of weapon for 1 point, can they only swap one and therefore use either their original Special Strike and the one for the new weapon? (p.88)

A: No. If such a model pays a point to swap their weapons in this manner, they must swap both of them for the same type of weapon.

Q: In what order are Special Strikes and Shielding declared? (p.88)

A: During a Duel roll, the player with Priority gets the first opportunity to declare their model's Special Strikes, though they can choose to pass if they wish. The player without Priority then gets the opportunity to declare their model's Special Strikes. If they also pass, then the Duel roll takes place and no further Special Strikes can be declared. If they opt to declare any Special Strikes then their opponent may then choose to respond by declaring any Special Strikes if able. This continues until both players have finished declaring Special Strikes. It is important to note that once a model has declared a Special Strike of any kind, they cannot change their mind after an opposing model declares a Special Strike. Treat Shielding as a Special Strike for the purpose of deciding the order that they are declared.

Q: Does the Piercing Strike Special Strike increase a model's Strength for the purpose of special rules such as Monstrous Charge? (p.89 & 110)

A: No. Piercing Strike only increases a model's Strength for the purpose of making Strikes.

Q: If a model has a special rule that allows specific friendly models (such as those with the required Keywords or profile names) to count as in range of a banner, do those specific models have to be in range of the model with the special rule, or do they just need to be involved in a fight that is in range of the model with the special rule? (p.91)

A: In these instances, it is important to remember that the model with the special rule is not actually a banner themselves. As a result, the models that count as in range of a banner must themselves be within range of the model with the special rule in order to benefit from it. Additionally, only the models that benefit from such a special rule may re-roll a dice in the Duel roll, so it is important to make a note of which dice can benefit and which ones cannot.

Q: Can a model affected by the Immobilise/Transfix Magical Power interact with anything else during the turn in which they are affected, such as detonating a demolition charge, interacting with objectives in Scenarios that allow this, use a special rule from a Legendary Legion that requires them to act, shout or similar (such as Death! from the Riders of Théoden Legendary Legion), or any other similar situation? (p.98)

A: No. A degree of common sense is required when working out what a model affected by the Immobilise/Transfix Magical Power can do. If the model would theoretically need to move to do it, then they are unable to do so.

Q: If a **Cavalry** model has the Fortify Spirit Magical Power cast upon them, will the mount also gain the benefits if they are subsequently targeted separately by an enemy Magical Power? (p.101)

A: Yes.

Q: Can a **Hero** that is under the effects of the Paralyse Magical Power use Might to affect their own roll to see if they recover at the end of the turn? (p.102)

A: Yes, as it states that Might may be used to modify the roll.

Q: If a model has its melee weapons shattered by the Shatter Magical Power but still has a ranged weapon, does it still count as unarmed? (p.103)

A: Yes, as it has no melee weapons.

Q: Who exactly can attempt to resist the Tremor Magical Power? Only the initial target, or any model under the line? (p.105)

A: The Tremor Magical Power states that it will target the initial target and any model under the line; therefore either the initial target or any model under the line may attempt to resist the Magical Power.

Q: Does a model with the Swift Movement special rule still measure the vertical distance when moving over obstacles? (p.107)

A: Yes.

Q: Do models have to be on the board to be able to use special rules? (p.107)

A: Yes, unless the special rule only works when the model is off the board such as Madril's Master of Ambush or Guritz's Master of Reserves.

Q: Do inanimate objects such as a **Siege Engine**, demolition charge, the Mirror of Galadriel and so on count as terrain for the purpose of the Stalk Unseen special rule? (p.110)

A: Yes.

Q: When a **Siege Engine** fires using Severed Heads, does the shot still scatter as normal resulting in the model the shot scatters onto being the initial target for the purpose of Severed Heads? (p.119)

A: Yes.

Q: In a Scenario where you deploy your army in a corner (such as Divide & Conquer or Storm the Camp), which table edge counts as the player's board edge for the purpose of deploying a **Siege Engine**? (p.121)

A: The player who decides their table edge first may choose any table edge touching their deployment zone as their table edge. However, in these Scenarios a **Siege Engine** must still be deployed in your deployment zone as normal.

Q: When a demolition charge explodes, does it hit models that are in range, but on the other side of a piece of tall impassable terrain such as a wall, rockface or equivalent? (p.122)

A: No.

Q: Can a model be deployed in or on a piece of terrain that would make it impossible for other models to reach them during the course of a game, such as on top of a pillar, sheer cliff or building with no way to climb? (p.142)

A: No.

ERRATA:

Page 28 – Pairing Off Fights

Delete the third sentence of the second paragraph which reads: At the end of the Move phase, opponents are always paired off into one-on-one Fights where possible.

Page 39 – In The Way

Add the following paragraph to the end of the section: When a model makes a shooting attack that targets a **War Beast** or a **Monster** with the Fly special rule, when they are determining models that are In The Way, they ignore models (both friendly and enemy) that do not have any of the following keywords: **Monster**, **Siege Engine**, **War Beast**. If the target model is Engaged in a fight, then the In The Way test for being in combat is still applied.