The Muster of Middle-earth

A Guide to Themed Forces

Theming your force around a particular race or event is a great way of adding character to it. Here, Alessio Cavatore provides guidelines for creating pure and allied armies.

Alessio: the last Grand Tournament I had quite a few conversations with players who were asking advice about what constitutes a “themed” The Lord of The Rings force.

You see, in tournaments we often encourage people to decide the composition of their forces by following a specific theme. This is normally done by awarding them bonus points if their force is “themed” rather than just a generic, and often ugly, pick-and-mix of the strongest elements available to Good or Evil. I’ll give you a few examples of what I’m talking about, just to clarify what I mean. Let’s say that Player A has a Good force consisting of High Elf archers and Riders of Rohan led by Aragorn and Elendil, while Player B has Haldor, and Théoden leading a force of Wood Elves and Warriors of Rohan, and finally Player C has Boromir and Faramir leading a mix of Warriors of Minas Tirith and Rangers of Gondor. It seems pretty clear to me that Player A has picked very powerful models to get a very competitive force, without paying the slightest regard to how plausible his force is in the history of Middle-earth. We all know that Aragorn and Elendil lived several thousand years apart and that High Elves of the Second Age have probably never fought alongside the relatively young race of the Rohirrim.

If we consider Player C’s pure Gondor force it’s actually easy to see that, differently from Player A, he has made perfectly reasonable choices, obtaining a force that is strongly themed and quite effective in gaming terms as well.

The last example is different from either one, since Player B’s force is a mix of Wood Elves and Rohirrim, but is clearly themed to the defence of Helm’s Deep (the film’s version of it at least…).

Some people would prefer only ‘pure’ forces (i.e. those made of Warriors and Heroes of the same race) to score the Themed points, but I disagree as I think that would be too limiting and I like the freedom offered by the ability of mixing allied forces. I also think it’s more in keeping with Tolkien’s own positive message of the Free Peoples joining forces against the Darkness.

One of the problems that arise with such freedom is that some people embark in strange and far-fetched explanations and stories in order to justify what really is just a riff-raff of powerful models. This sometimes puts the players in the odd position of facing an opponent that is pushing things a bit too far and having to decide for themselves if the line of good taste has been crossed (“No! It’s perfectly acceptable that Shelob could have led a force of Barrow-marsh and Mordor Trolls in the right circumstances, as explained in my background text”).

Unfortunately there is no definitive and precise way of deciding when a force is

Rob Wood’s force is themed around the Last Alliance.
themed and when it's not. Different people will have different opinions regarding this matter and the Themed points can become a potential for misunderstanding and tension, something nobody really wants...

I have therefore decided to give you a series of guidelines, or rather examples of what can be considered a themed force, in order to allow you to make up your own.

I will first show you some 'pure' forces, consisting of models of the same race or culture (eg. all Dwarves, all Gondor, all Rohan), and then proceed to show you some allied forces, made by combining warriors from two or more pure forces. When making up an allied force, it's normally a good idea to make sure that if you include warriors from a certain force you also include at least one from the same race or culture. For example, if you mix Wood Elves and Warriors of Rohan, it should be better to include at least one Wood Elf Hero and Hero of Rohan. This is needed to make an allied contingent feel like two or more different forces fighting together on terms of parity as true allies. It also helps reinforcing the idea that these warriors would travel around Middle-earth on war errands under the guidance of a charismatic leader.

Enough said, let's have a look at these forces:

Note: the Fellowship/Special list includes some Good Heroes that do not belong to any one specific force or culture, either because they spent their lives travelling around Middle-earth (like Gandalf) or because they live in regions we have not explored in our books as yet and therefore they have no list to sit in (like the Hobbits, until we do a Shire supplement). In the future they might get a list, but as they can also be fielded in allied forces and even alongside most Good pure forces, using a bit of common sense (Aragorn with a Minas Tirith force, for example).

IN CONCLUSION...

This article is not an exhaustive and complete summary of all the themed forces that can be created with the LOTR strategy battle game. Also, with the publication of new supplements for the game, the possibilities available to people are destined to increase more and more. On top of that, the book and the film sometimes offer different views on the troops present at a battle (Helm's Deep, Pelennor Fields...), giving the players the choice of fielding either the film or the book's version of a force.

Players should then use the lists published here as examples and as an inspiration to theme their own forces. Please feel free to submit your ideas to us for a themed Good and Evil force and some might even be published (especially if they have some nice photographs of your finished forces included with them).

In tournament conditions you know that if you stick to these lists you are sure to get those composition points, but they shouldn't stop you from personalising your army even more. As a great example of a themed force I always remember playing against Matteo Cocco's impressive Gladden Fields force, which features a host of Warriors of Gondor led by Isildur and his three sons Elenur, Aratan and Ciryon (they use Captains of Gondor's profiles).

So delve into Tolkien's huge wealth of material and come up with a suitable theme for your army, and then see for yourself how much better it is to play with a themed force!
### The Lord of The Rings Pure Force Lists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minas Tirith</th>
<th>Rohan</th>
<th>Lothlorien</th>
<th>The Faithful</th>
<th>Erebor</th>
<th>Rivendell</th>
<th>Eregion (2nd Age)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Warriors of Minas Tirith</td>
<td>• Wood Elf Warriors</td>
<td>• Warriors of Rohan</td>
<td>• Warriors of Gondor</td>
<td>• Wood Elf Warriors</td>
<td>• High Elf Warriors</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Knights of Minas Tirith</td>
<td>• Riders of Rohan</td>
<td>• Riders of Rohan</td>
<td>• Dwarf Warriors</td>
<td>• Riders of Rohan</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Guard of the Fountain Court</td>
<td>• Rohan Royal Guard</td>
<td>• Rohan Royal Guard</td>
<td>• Rohan Royal Guard</td>
<td>• Rohan Royal Guard</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Citadel Guard</td>
<td>• Avenger Bolt Thrower</td>
<td>• Battlecry Trebuchet</td>
<td>• Wood Elf Warriors</td>
<td>• Battlecry Trebuchet</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Avenger Bolt Thrower</td>
<td>• Battlecry Trebuchet</td>
<td>• Battlecry Trebuchet</td>
<td>• Wood Elf Warriors</td>
<td>• Battlecry Trebuchet</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Warriors of Gondor</td>
<td>• Warriors of Gondor</td>
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### Heroes

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<tr>
<th>Minas Tirith</th>
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<th>Erebor</th>
<th>Rivendell</th>
<th>Eregion (2nd Age)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Captain of Men (Gondor)</td>
<td>• Captain of Men (Rohan)</td>
<td>• Captain of Men (Rohan)</td>
<td>• Captain of Men (Gondor)</td>
<td>• Captain of Men (Gondor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Denethor</td>
<td>• Eomer</td>
<td>• Eowyn</td>
<td>• Gamling</td>
<td>• Gamling</td>
<td>• Gamling</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Faramir</td>
<td>• Kings of Men</td>
<td>• Kings of Men</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Kings of Men</td>
<td>• Beregond of Gondor</td>
<td>• Boromir</td>
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### The Lord of The Rings Allied Force Lists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pelennor Fields (Good)</th>
<th>Pelennor Fields (Evil)</th>
<th>Morannon (Good)</th>
<th>Helm's Deep</th>
<th>Last Alliance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Minas Tirith</td>
<td>• Mordor</td>
<td>• Minas Tirith</td>
<td>• Rohan</td>
<td>• Eregion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rohan</td>
<td>• Harad</td>
<td>• Rohan</td>
<td>• The Faithful</td>
<td>• The Faithful</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Dunharrow</td>
<td>• Dol Amroth</td>
<td>• Rohan</td>
<td>• Rohan</td>
<td>• Rohan</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Dol Amroth</td>
<td>• Rohan</td>
<td>• Rohan</td>
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### Extra Models

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Minas Tirith</th>
<th>Rohan</th>
<th>Lothlorien</th>
<th>The Faithful</th>
<th>Erebor</th>
<th>Rivendell</th>
<th>Eregion (2nd Age)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>• Gandalf The White</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gandalf The White</td>
<td>• Legolas</td>
<td>• Gandalf The White</td>
<td>• Gandalf The White</td>
<td>• Gandalf The White</td>
<td>• Gandalf The White</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Legolas</td>
<td>• Gimli</td>
<td>• Legolas</td>
<td>• Legolas</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gimli</td>
<td>• Merry</td>
<td>• Gimli</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• Pippin</td>
<td>• Merry</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Pippin</td>
<td>• Elladan + Elrohir</td>
<td>• Pippin</td>
<td>• Pippin</td>
<td>• Pippin</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Elladan + Elrohir</td>
<td>• Gwaihir</td>
<td>• Elladan + Elrohir</td>
<td>• Elladan + Elrohir</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gwaihir</td>
<td>• Rangers of the North</td>
<td>• Gwaihir</td>
<td>• Gwaihir</td>
<td>• Gwaihir</td>
<td>• Gwaihir</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Mordor
- Orc Warriors
- Uruk-hai (Mordor)
- Mordor Trolls
- Warg Riders
- Morannon Orcs
- Orc Warriors
- Orc Trackers
- War Catapults
- Siege Bows
- Easterlings

Isengard
- Uruk-hai
  (White Hand)
- Warg Riders
- Demolition Teams
- Siege Assault
  Ballistae
- Uruk-hai
  Berserkers
- Warg Riders

Moria
- Goblin
  Drums
- Cave Trolls
- Goblin
  Warriors

Dunharrow
- The Dead

Mirkwood
- Wood Elf
  Warriors

Angmar
- Orc
  Warriors
- Warg Riders

Harad
- Haradrim
  Warriors
- Haradrim
  Raiders

Dol Amroth
- Knights of
  Dol Amroth
- Warriors of
  Gondor
  (Eftedom
  Warriors)

Mouth of Sauron
- Gothmog
- Orc Shamans
- Grishnak
- Shagrat
- Gorbag
- Shelob
- Easterling
  Captains
- Sauron
- Ringwraiths
- Orc Captains
- Mordor Troll
  Chieftains
- Uruk-hai Captains
  (Mordor)

Dunlendings
- Dunlending
  Captains
- Dunlending
  Chieftains
- Sharku
- Orc Captain
- Lurtz
- Uruk-hai
  Shamans

Durbûrz.
- Goblin
  Shamans
- Goblin
  Captains
- Balrog

King of the
  Dead
- Legolas
- Gimli
- Aragorn
- Eldadan
  and Elrohir
- Rangers of
  the North
- Halbarad

Elven
Captains
(Wood Elf)
- Legolas

Witch-king
- Barrow
  Wights
- Orc
  Captains
- Orc
  Shamans

Hâshari
- Suladan
- Haradrim
  Chieftains
- Mûmakil

Captains of
  Gondor
- Prince
  Imrahil
- Kings of
  Men

Fellowship/Special
Gandalf
- Sam
Aragorn
- Merry
Boromir of
  Gondor
- Pippin
Gondor
Legolas
- Treebeard
Gimli
Gwaihir
Frodo
Radagast

Siege of Lorien
- Lothlorien
- Mirkwood

The White Council
- Lothlorien
- Mirkwood

Battle of the Five Armies
- Mickwood
- Erebor
- Rivendell

- Gandalf the Grey
- Radagast
- Gwaihir

- Gandalf the Grey
- Bilbo
- Warriors of Rohan
  (Men of Esagroth)
- Captains of Rohan
  (Men of Esagroth)
- Kings of Men
  (Men of Esagroth)
- Gwaihir