

Review 9474: The Battle of Helm's Deep

Defend the fortress at Helm's Deep from the assault of the Uruk-hai army.

By Legotron (A. Bellón)

Set: The Battle of Helm's Deep

Set number: 9474

Parts: 1368

Minifigs: 8

This is the biggest set of the new LEGO® theme related to The Lord of The Rings (LOTR). It depicts the mighty fortress located at the Helm's Deep in the lands of Rohan, where the inhabitants of this reign take shelter to defend themselves from the attack of Saruman's army.

As a big fan of the LOTR trilogy by Peter Jackson, the fact of seeing that LEGO® had obtained the license to produce this new line of sets has been a great joy. Since I began to see the first photos of the sets, this set was on the first place on my list of favorites. When I had the opportunity to buy it I didn't wait a minute, although expensive I bought it, because this set contains everything you need to play one of the most important scenes of the movie of The Two Towers: the Battle of Helm's Deep.

Before I could buy the set I reviewed countless photos about it that were published on the Internet. I looked for all the

details, the gadgets and everything else. When I got it, I had the opportunity to build it with other fellows of HispaBrick Magazine®. We were attending the Fanvencion 2012 event, and we did a live construction of this set, my set! This first built was great fun, and I noticed that it was really interesting. After the event I dismantled the set and packed everything carefully, in order to avoid losing any piece on the way home. I wanted to build it again, but more slowly, little by little to have the great experience of building such a great set. This time I decided to go through the steps of the instructions, which are perfectly stored in a small bag with a cardboard backing, a much appreciated detail, since instructions usually take some damage in these big sets. It was very exciting, because I remembered all the movie scenes in every step of the building process. And that was like a story becoming a reality through the LEGO® pieces.

One of the things I noticed when I built the set was all the details on the walls and other parts of the building. Until now, most of the castles from LEGO® were designed with very simple walls, straight, and without any kind of detail in the foundations. But this castle was different, the walls of the fortress are placed over a rocky terrain, built with many slopes,





that give the impression of a very robust construction. The curved form of the main wall and the different types of bricks, like the brick 1x2 modified with masonry pattern and the sand green colour bricks, used to represent the stones of the wall, were very interesting. The first element I built was the main entrance with the ramp. This part had several gadgets from the movie, like the secret door that was used by Aragorn and Gimli to attack the Uruk Hai troops standing on the ramp. The LEGO® recreation was very well designed. There was also a shed to take cover and to throw stones against the enemy soldiers in the top of the wall.

Then I built the main tower, where the great horn of Helm Hammerhand was located. This was the least interesting part of the whole set, because it is very simple with very few details compared to the rest of the fortress. There is a nice touch with the buttresses, but the rest of the tower is very simple. After that I built the low wall, located near the tower, which includes another one of those details that make this set something special. The wall contains a small spillway where a little stream comes out, and where you can place an explosive device to blow up the wall. This explosion is recreated with a mechanism



to remove a very big section of the wall. A perfect detail.

But it was not finished. After finishing the outer wall and the fortress there was another element, the inner part of the Hornburg fortress. I built this small section, that was designed with the same level of detail than the rest of the fortress. It was curved as well as the main gate section. This inner wall runs parallel to the other wall, but in the interior part it is built as a throne room, with many details, like weapons racks, the throne of Rohan and some furniture. This was the last part of the building process. When I put all the elements together the sight was amazing, the awesome Hornburg fortress.

There are more elements apart from the fortress: the minifigs. I waited till the end to build the minifigs. There are 4 minifigs to represent a small unit of the Uruk Hai army, that come with a large ladder to assault the wall. All

the minifigs have both sides of their torsos printed, and also the legs come with printed details. 3 of them are regular Uruk Hai soldiers with their weapons, but the fourth was a berserker, equipped with an explosive device to blow up the wall. The defending force was represented by some main characters of the LOTR story: Aragorn and Gimli. Also the commander of the fortress and King of Rohan, Theoden, who is riding one of the new horses and comes with a masterfully detailed armour. The last minifig is the one of Haldir, an elf who went to help the defenders. It would have been great if it had come with a soldier, in order to have a vassal to defend the king. Anyway, the quality of the minifigs is great, and there are enough to recreate many of the scenes of the battle.

My conclusion: This is a great set, with a very entertaining construction and many interesting details. Furthermore, it contains a large selection of minifigs, so it is an indispensable reference in the LOTR theme. This is the most expensive set of those available in the first wave, but definitely it's worth it. The sheer number and versatility of the pieces, the design of the fortress, the minifigs, and the endless possibilities of this set make it very attractive. But that's not all, there is another set than can be combined with this to get a bigger fortress with more defenders and attacking minifigs. I'm talking about the set 9471 Uruk-hai army. This set is an extension of the Battle of Helm's Deep. The wall can be attached to the main fortress wall to get a bigger construction, a perfect addition to decide the fate of the Middle-earth in the decisive battle of Helm's Deep.

As a final comment, it would be nice to add the rest of the inner part of the fortress, with the arches carved in the rocky mountain, the Rohirrim riders charging against the Uruk hai line, uhm... I guess that this is something I have to think about in order to modify this wonderful set in a future.

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