MECHA

CHRIS PERRIN

METAL AND FLESH

In battlefields on Earth, in space, and on realms known only to imagination, brave men and women answer the call of fate. They leave behind their simple lives and become pilots of giant armed robots, called mecha, opening a world filled with excitement and danger.

LIVE AND DIE

No matter their beginnings, mecha are tools of war! Pilots will soon learn that with the awesome responsibility to fight the evil gods of the Living City, put down the Separatist Guard's shameful rebellions, topple unjust kings and his lackies, the Arbor Defense Force, find love with a Cheerleader Captain, and get to class before the Vice Principal finds out. Such is the life of a mecha pilot.

TOGETHER AS ONE

No pilot faces these trials alone. A pilot will always have his mecha to be strong where he is weak and protect him in the face of unspeakable danger. Also, the pilot will always be there for this mecha, who needs to be led to glory on the battlefield.

MECHA... THE RPG

This is mecha-style anime role playing at its finest. Grab some friends, some dice, and this book and get ready to relive the best robot anime you've ever seen and tell mecha anime-stories no one has dreamed of yet. This is mecha.

MECHA

Written by Chris Perrin

Heroic Journey Publishing

CHRONICLE CITY

A BIG THANK YOU GOES OUT TO...

This book owes to a lot to so many people. In no particular order, these people include:

Clint and Aaron ... you guys are awesome. This game exists because you believed in it. Same goes to Mark Reed at Heroic Journey Publishing. Thanks for giving Mecha a home.

Master Miners... Thanks for getting me through those first awkward months when I was trying to figure this game design thing out. You were there to hold my hand and tell me everything was going to be okay. Matthew Gandy in particular, thanks for working on Seiyuu. It made Mecha better. Also, Fred Hicks thanks for telling me to shut up and write the game I wanted.

Thanks to all my Playtesters... Amy Garcia, Julie Lower, Daniel Perez, Josh Hoade, David Moore, Chris Norwood, Dane Black, Matt Gandy, Lenny Balsera, Itamar Weisberg, Andy Kitkowski, Robert Carson, Mike Silva, Geoff Seutter, Cassie Krause and Tina Perrin.

My wife... thanks for letting me shut the door and get some writing done.

Lastly, Harmony Gold... Three syllables: Ro-bo-tech.

DEDICATION

This book goes out to my son. You're small and you're stubborn, but anything I ever create pales in comparison to you.

Love you booger.

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FOREWORD

Mecha has been in design for at least two decades now, even if I didn't know it.

There was once a younger Chris Perrin who sat in front of a television and saw one, exactly one, episode of the original Robotech, and knew that he was hooked. It took that Chris Perrin several years to watch another episode, but there was just something about watching a robot turn into an airplane and back again. I haven't forgotten that day.

More important that the visuals, though, was the fact that in that Robotech episode, a main character died. I remember thinking just how different that was from G.I. Joe. No one ever died in G.I. Joe. At least not anyone with a name. That left me feeling like there was something better about Robotech. It dealt with real issues in a way that wasn't as cartoony as what I had been used to.

In between the first episode of Robotech I watched and the second there was a span of about four years, give or take. During that time, I fed on a steady diet of Transformers, Gobots, and Voltron. So, in other words, even though I wasn't watching any classic anime series, I was nurturing my love of giant robots.

Then it happened. One day I walked into my local comic book store and happened to run across Robotech the RPG from Palladium Books. I had already played Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Other Strangeness, the old Marvel Superheroes game, and probably Battletech, so I wasn't new to role playing games. But this was different. This was a giant robot role playing game that was based on an anime series.

There Mecha was born. Once I got it in my head that a robot game could be written, I started writing. In particular, I remember penning one game called LaserTech featuring giant robots called Techs. /shudder

Bad memories. Anyway, I wrote this because I think it's important you know this book was not merely a passing fancy. Mecha is the game I've always wanted to play. I have a deep passion for giant robots who walk around and blow each other up (did I mention I saw Robot Jox twice?). I also have a passion for mecha anime and I believe I have created a book that is the ultimate expression of both.

Am I saying that this game is better than any other mecha game? Certainly not. I still eagerly await new Robotech books, paid nearly $100 for a BattleTech game, and generally make it a point to buy giant fighting robot games when I find them. However, I will promise you that Mecha has a unique voice amongst mecha anime role playing games. (Incidentally, this was a point I tried to make in the First Edition Foreword and failed miserably. Sorry about that...)

Anyway, put your mecha into overdrive, pick up your visual scanning and get ready for some awesome mecha anime action.

Chris

INTRODUCTION

WHAT'S NEW

This is the second edition of the Mecha role playing game. The good news is that precious little has changed between the first and second editions. What you have in your hand has a new cover done by the awesome Paul Bourne, some revised text, and an expanded chapter on world building. This edition is completely backwards compatible with the First Edition.

Oh, and one more thing, this book will often refer to itself as Mecha Core or Mo (that's M-Zero.) This is to differentiate itself from Mecha Combiners, Mecha Mercenaries, or any of the other Mecha rules sets.

Okay, now let's get to the action.

WHAT ARE MECHA?

Okay, first thing's first. Before we go any further, let's define what we're talking about when we say "mecha."

There are countless definitions out there about what is and is not a mecha. The definition in Wikipedia, for instance, is six paragraphs long before it even gets to the table of contents. Instead of trying to filter out the meat of those definitions, let's talk about a

> **A MECHA IS A MANNED, HUMANOID WAR MACHINE.**

what "mecha" means within the scope of this game

Not too specific, huh? This definition of mecha is left intentionally broad so that it can encompass a number of different mecha anime styles. Mecha might be organic, robotic, some crazy hybrid, or something no one has thought of yet.

The important thing is that a mecha is separate from its pilot/operator and that a mecha allows its pilot to be better in combat then he or she would be without it.

Also, there is a great deal of debate over whether mecha is plural and mech is singular or whether mecha can be used in both situations. The text will use mecha for one construct or many. Linguistically, I feel justified doing this since the noun "mecha" stems from an adjective. It comes from the Japanese "meka" which refers to anything mechanical. This does not imply singular or plural and therefore we use mecha to refer to either.

Plus, "mecha" is, after all, the name of the book.

WHAT IS MECHA?

Mecha is a role playing game.

This game provides a complete set of rules for players to come together and take on the roles of pilots who, by choice or fate, have been given a mecha and are asked to perform great feats of valor, heroism, or evil (depending on who's doing the asking.) They may or

may not want to fight and they may not even support the cause they are fighting for, but their fate is inextricably tied to combat nonetheless anyway.

Throughout the course of the game, players will be forced to make tough decisions for their pilots. In return, pilots will grow in ability, reputation, and perhaps glory (or infamy.) Pilots will face challenges, some they will overcome and some they will not. They will face change and become different people, just like pilots in a mecha anime series. This is at the heart of Mecha as a role playing game.

Mecha also provides all of the rules that players need to create a setting for the game (time period, types of mecha, etc.), create their own pilots, and allow their pilots to interact with each other and with the rest of the world.

A ROLE PLAYING GAME?

Role playing games are games in which players take on the roles of fictional characters, much like a seiyu (Japanese voice talent) would take on the role of a character in an anime series.

Most people have been role playing their entire lives and not known it. If you ever played cops and robbers, house, or doctor, you were role playing. You took on a role that was different than who you were and you did and said things different based on that role.

Of course, if your friends were anything like mine, things started to break down the minute cap guns came out. If memory serves, whether I was the cop

or the robber, I was one heck of a shot. I never missed! Still, my target never seemed to realize he'd been hit. It was amazing how cap gun fights turned into shoving matches…

Anyway, that's why Mecha is a role playing game, not an exercise in role playing.

In Mecha, there is going to be conflict. Players are going to be taking on the roles of pilots who may have enemies, inner demons, or other issues. More importantly, those pilots are going to get into a fight one way or the other. So there needs to be rules to resolve those conflicts and that way has to be fair. That's what the following rules are all about.

Also, there is going to be story in Mecha, which arise from conflicts. As pilots struggle with their own issues and as battles are won or lost, a tale emerges that stars each of the characters in their own role. The good news is that there are rules (or at least guidelines) for how this story should emerge. Oh, and obviously, with this game's focus on mecha anime, the stories that get told should include mecha in all their glory.

Of course, the rules are going to need a little help. Rules cannot cover every situation and the story needs a narrator or a guide. That's why we divide the players into two groups: the players and the Game Master.

Players are responsible for creating their own mecha and pilot and understanding their respective strengths and weaknesses. Throughout the game, they will be responsible for adding to

the story through their pilot. They will make decisions for the character, decide what the character is going to do, and roll dice to see if the character succeeds or fails.

The Game Master (GM) plays the world in which the pilots live and all of the people in it. This means they play allies and their enemies, make decisions for them, and roll dice as necessary. They are the stewards of the story. They get it going by kicking off the action and they keep that action high by picking fights and then controlling the enemy force. There is a special section for how to do all of this (called running the game) which gives lots of tips for being a GM as well as some adventure ideas.

Oh, and one last thing: equipment. In order to play the game you are going to need a lot of six-sided dice (eight per player should be about right), pen and paper, friends, etc. Snacks are always helpful, too, but make sure they are not too messy.

CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS BOOK

In order to help players new to the game, new terms will be presented in bold the first time they are defined.

Also included in this book is a guide, so look out for her. Her name's Mara, that's Lieutenant Mara Callahan to you, and she's been a pilot with the 91st Separatist Guard since the war broke out. She held Brighton Pass against an ADF counterattack when everyone else was running for the hills. At the battle of Grave Canyon, her team made it out alive when half the other Separatist Guard units were blowing up around her. Command trusts her to take on the missions that can't fail. So listen up when she talks and you might just stay alive. She also knows she's in a game, so she can talk frank about the rules of the game.

In terms of gender, this book uses "she" to refer to the GM and "he" to refer to one or more players or their pilots. This is intended to provide clarity and should not be used to infer that men cannot be GMs or women cannot be players.

DEFINITIONS

Here is a quick reference of a few terms that get used a lot in the book. All of the terms are explained in further detail in their respective sections, but if you see a term with which you are unfamiliar, you can always check here first.

Advancement Points (AP): Points awarded by the GM for playing the game, good role playing and for achieving goals. They can be spent to improve the pilot.

Archetypes: A framework for the pilot's basic profession, demeanor, and life experience. An archetype helps determine the pilot's strengths and weaknesses.

Base Stats: Measures capabilities of the pilot and his mecha. Base stats range from 1-6 and define how smart, strong, fast or willful a pilot is and how armed, fast, and well built a mecha is.

Bullseye Battlemap: All combat takes place on a circular playing area called the Bullseye Battlemap. It is made up of Quadrants and Sectors.

Configurations: A Configuration is an onboard system that allows a mecha to perform special actions in combat.

Damage Type: The category of damage caused by an attack. The default types are missile, wave, impact, and energy.

Knockback: The act of moving a defending mecha after a successful attack.

Linking: When a pilot is in a mecha, his base stats pair with his mecha's base stats. For instance, the pilot may add his Agility to his mecha's Speed stat to determine the Movement linked stat. This is called linking.

Link Array: Link Array refers to the specific way that a given pilot's stats link with mecha that he pilots. A pilot and a mecha's stats always link the same way, the Link Array just records how they link. The link array is tied to the pilot and is consistent regardless of what mecha he is piloting.

Linked Stats: Four stats which are used when the pilot and the mecha are working together. They determine how well the mecha Attacks, Defends, moves, and does in initiative rolls.

Model: A mecha's model defines its capabilities, systems, and base stats. In game terms, the model will define baselines for each of the mecha's four base stats and may predetermine with which Configurations a mecha comes preinstalled.

Movement Point: Normally generated by rolling successes in a Movement roll, it costs one Movement Point to move one sector on the Bullseye Battlemap and two to move into a different Quadrant.

Optimum Range: The range at which a weapon is most effective. When a weapon is not at optimum range, it suffers dice penalties to hit. Range is measured in Movement Points.

Overdrive: A resource used by the players and GM alike to activate Configurations and buy extra successes.

Quadrant: One fourth of the Bullseye Battlemap. If the bullseye battlemap is shaped like a pie, each Quadrant is roughly shaped like a slice of that pie. Going from one quadrant to the other requires extra Movement Points. Also, if you see the term "Opposite" Quadrant, that refers to the only Quadrant with does not touch a given Quadrant.

Range: The distance between a mecha and its target. It is measured in Movement Points.

Sector: An individual area on the Bullseye Battlemap. Each Quadrant has three of them plus there is one sector shared by all quadrants in the middle.

Setting Reference Schematic (SRS): The Mecha term for a "setting." The SRS defines the game's time period, type of mecha, major factions, and what the conflict is.

Stat Optimization Points: Points granted by a mecha model or pilot Archetype which can be used to increase a base stat.

HOW TO BUILD MECHA AND GENERATE PILOTS

In Mecha, pilot generation and mecha generation are done simultaneously. This is because in many examples of great mecha anime, the machine is the reflection of the pilot who commands it. In some cases, the mecha reflects the strengths and weaknesses of its pilot, while in others, the two form a symbiotic relationship where the mecha's strengths make up for the pilot's weaknesses and vice versa.

Building your mecha and your pilot is a multi-step process, but most of the steps are fairly short. However, before you can being character generation, discuss with the GM and your fellow players about what type of game you want to play and which SRS you are using. These decisions will influence the character generation process.

STEP 1: CREATE THE PILOT AND MECHA CONCEPT

Before you build your pilot and the mecha he operates, you need to know what you are building. Do you want a hot shot egomaniac or a quiet force of destruction? Did you see a character in a television show (mecha anime or not) that you would like to play in this game? This is the character's concept.

Mecha anime protagonists tend to fall into five easily recognizable including:

- The Arrogant Hot-Shot who thinks he knows everything about fighting and probably does.
- The Warrior Seeking Atonement who did something bad in the past and is seeking to make up for it.
- The Spiky Haired Emo Teen who has been thrown into bat-

tle against his will.

- The Rookie Phenomenon who shows up in episode 1 with no battle experience and by the end of the episode 3 is in charge of his squad.
- The Not-So-Phenomenal Rookie who shows up in episode 1 and remains terrified of battle for the rest of the series.

Of course, there are other combinations of these concepts and many more to boot. Still, you can start to get an idea of your concept from this list.

If you are still stumped, each SRS has a list of pilot Archetypes which reflect what types of pilots you can play. These can help you create a concept as well.

If you still have no idea what you want to play, you can always ask the other players or the GM for ideas. If you are still stuck, you can always use this questionnaire to help you flesh out the type of pilot you want to be:

- Do you like piloting a mecha? Why or why not?
- Why do you fight and how do you feel about the cause for which you fight?
- Do you want the fighting to end?
- What do you value more than your mecha?
- If you were not fighting, what would you be doing?
- How do you feel about your teammates?

This should give you a general sense of who your pilot is. If you have only a vague sense, don't worry. The concept will be refined throughout the rest of the pilot generation process.

STEP 2: CHOOSE A MECHA MODEL

Each SRS has a list of mecha models for you to choose from. A mecha model is a "factory standard" version of the mecha and defines its basic capabilities. The model also determines the starting level for each base Stat and grants a number of Stat Optimization points you can spend to improve your mecha.

Mecha have four base stats which range from 1-6, though the highest value a base stat can start with 4. The mecha base stats are:

WEAPONS

The number of weapons systems the mecha starts with. This stat is always used to determine the Attack linked stat.

ARMOR

A measure of the mecha's resistance to damage. This stat is always used to determine the Defense linked stat.

TECHNOLOGY

A measure of the sturdiness and efficiency of the mecha's internal systems. This stat is always paired with another stat to determine Engineering.

SPEED

How fast the mecha moves. This stat is always paired with another stat to determine the Movement linked stat.

Some models will define which weapon systems a mecha comes off the assembly line with and may also determine which Configurations the mecha has. However, this is entirely dependent on the SRS.

To complete this step, review the list of SRS-specific models and select one. Write it down on your character sheet, note the starting levels for each of your mecha's base stats and record anything else the Model confers.

STEP 3: SELECT AN ARCHETYPE

Every SRS has a list of pilot Archetypes which defines the character's innate or inborn attributes. Each Archetype gives you a starting value for each of the pilot's base stats and will specify a number of Stat Optimization points you can spend to improve your pilot's base stats. Later, it will also determine your characters' skills.

Pilots also have four base stats which range from 1-6, though the highest a base stat can start at is 4. A pilot's base stats are:

STRENGTH
How physically strong the character is and how well he can resist damage.

AGILITY
How graceful and dexterous the character is.

INTELLIGENCE
How fast the character's mind works. This is also used for book smarts.

WILL
The character's determination and social acumen.

Beyond stats, many Archetypes will define which Traits a character starts with and may provide some general role playing hints.

To complete this step, review the list of SRS-specific Archetypes and select one. Write your selection down on your character sheet, note the starting levels for each of the pilot's base stats and record anything else the Archetype confers.

STEP 4: SPEND STAT OPTIMIZATION POINTS

As noted above, every mecha model and pilot Archetype specifies a number of Stat Optimization Points which can be used to purchase additional levels of the mecha's and the pilot's base

FOR EXAMPLE
The base Weapons stat for a Liberator class mecha from the *Godblind* SRS is 1. If you wanted to increase this to 2, you would spend 1 optimization point. If you wanted to increase the total to 3, you would spend 2 points.

stats, respectively. When spending stat optimization points, it costs 1 point to raise a base stat by 1.

To complete this step, spend all stat optimization points and record their final levels on your character sheet. Note: you can only spend Stat Optimization points from Archetypes on pilots and Stat Optimization points from a mecha model on the mecha. And it should be noted that the highest a Stat (pilot or otherwise) can start with is 4.

STEP 5: LINK STATS

Something special happens when a pilot enters his mecha. The two become one, each greater than they are alone. What this means in the game is that any time a pilot is controlling a mecha, their stats are add together to determine how many dice to roll.

Linked stats can range from 2-12, but the highest they can start is 8. The linked stats are:

ATTACK
The mecha's offensive strength.

DEFENSE
The mecha's defensive strength.

ENGINEERING
The mecha's initiative.

MOVEMENT
The mecha's speed.

Linked stats are determined by taking one of the mecha's attributes and adding them to one of the pilot's stats. The mecha stat is always predetermined for each linked stat, but it is up to the player to determine which of his pilot's stats is linked to which mecha stat.

In other words:

Attack = Weapons + Pilot's Stat
Defense = Armor + Pilot's Stat
Engineering = Technology + Pilot's Stat
Movement = Speed + Pilot's Stat

Conceptually, this makes sense. The number of weapons a mecha has impacts its ability to attack, not its ability to move. Armor is used to defend the mecha, not improve its technology. Of course, the mecha's stats are only half the equation.

Any of the pilot's base stats can contribute to a linked stat. For instance, one pilot may choose to link Intelligence to Attack while another may choose to link Strength to Attack. How the base stats are linked is completely up to you, however you have to link every one of your pilot's stats to a mecha stat and you cannot link any base stat more than once.

The order in which mecha and pilot base stats are combined is called the Link Array.

Linking Weapons and Will is just one example of linking attributes. Here are a few others:

Linking Weapons and Intelligence. The pilot is technical and strives for the shot that will do maximum damage, find a chink in the other mecha's armor, or has the perfect angle to score a critical hit.

Linking Technology and Intelligence. The pilot is a master tactician.

Instead of wading into battle, the pilot strikes where the enemy is most vulnerable. The opposite would be linking Technology and Will. In this case, the pilot would wade into combat, hoping that his sudden appearance will strike surprise or fear into the enemy.

Linking Armor and Strength. In this case, the pilot and his mecha are tough. The pilot is not going to run or even do very much to dodge, choosing instead to take the hit so they he can hit right back. Linking Armor and Agility is just the opposite, where the mecha relies

on dodging and not being where the enemy is attack to avoid damage.

No matter how you choose to link, keep in mind that your pilot's Link Array stays the same for every mecha the pilot enters.

Here's a full example:

Pilot A has:
Strength 3
Agility 4
Intelligence 2
Will 2

And he hops into a mecha with:
Weapons 4
Armor 3
Technology 2
Speed 3

For this example the pilot links Strength to Armor, Agility to Weapons, Will to Speed, and Intelligence to Technology. This would mean that as long as the two are acting together, the mecha's stats are:

Attack 8 (4 Weapons + 4 Agility)
Defense 6 (3 Armor + 3 Strength)
Engineering 4 (2 Technology + 2 Intelligence)
Movement 5 (3 Speed + 2 Will)

This is only an example. Each player may chose to link stats as he sees fit.

Also, the mecha cannot take advantage of linking if it has been destroyed.

The question is always asked "Can I link my stats however I want?" Yes. You can choose any character stat to link to any mecha stat as long as you only link each of your pilot's stats once. So with one character, you may link Will to

Speed. With your next character, you might link Strength to Speed.

Mechanically, this means that you add the two stats together to figure out how many dice to roll. When role playing, you should describe your actions based on how you link your stats. For instance, if you linked Strength to Defense, you should envision that when your mecha is attacked, you slough off the damage because of your size and toughness. If you linked Agility to Defense, you should describe your mecha has nimbly dodging every incoming attack.

To complete this step, create your link array by pairing each of your pilot's base stats with your mecha's base stats and record the resulting value of your linked stats.

STEP 6: PURCHASE SKILLS

In addition to determining the minimum level of each of your base stats, your pilot's Archetypes will have minimum levels for each of the pilot's skills. No matter what, every pilot has at least a 1 in every skill. This goes back to the idea that this is mecha anime and there is little in mecha anime that a pilot cannot do. However, some pilots are better at certain things than others, so different Archetypes start with more levels in certain skills.

Here are the skills in Mecha:

MECHA COMBAT

How well the character can fight in a mecha. This covers both movement and making attacks.

PERSONAL COMBAT

How well the character can fight outside a mecha. This covers the pilot's movement and attacks outside of his mecha.

SOCIAL

The character's ability to interact with others in order to charm, persuade, or anger them.

FIELD OPS

A skill which governs a range of skills from espionage, recon, stealth, breaking and entering and theft. It confers a tactical advantage before the start of combat.

REPAIR

A character's ability to repair damaged mecha

MEDIC

A character's ability to heal wounded pilots.

Along with the minimum level for each skill, your archetype will also grant you a number of skill points you can use to increase your skills. These work exactly like Stat Optimization Points with 1 skill point raising a skill by 1. No skill may start higher than 3 and no skill may ever go above 5.

STEP 7: CHOOSE OR APPLY MECHA CONFIGURATIONS

In Mecha core, every mecha has exactly two Configurations. A Configuration is a package of related systems that help the mecha operate more efficiently or do fantastic things like transform into a jet. More importantly, Configurations offer mechanical advantages and

rules exceptions during combat.

However, Configurations are more than just a way to do cool things on the battlefield. They also affect who your character is and how he sees the world. Because of the synthesis between pilot and mecha, your choice of Configurations helps define your pilot's personality.

CONFIGURATION	BONUSES CONFERRED	CHARACTER TRAITS
Analyzer	The player may spend one Overdrive to give another player 2 dice on their next attack or defense roll.	Analytical Oblivious
Assassin	Spend 1 Overdrive to deal damage directly to the pilot and the mecha	Stealthy Brutal
Berserker	Spend 1 Overdrive to attack twice with weapons of same damage type, rolling separately for each attack. Even if you have Supercharged, though, you cannot fire the same weapon in the same turn.	Explosive Calm
Boomer	Spend 1 Overdrive to simultaneously attack all targets in a sector. The attack roll is made only once, but all targets (enemy and friendly) must roll Defense against that number of successes.	Loud Quiet
Booster	Spend 1 Overdrive. The player may allocate any number of dice from Defense to Movement.	Optimistic Pessimistic
Brawler	Spend 1 Overdrive to treat any weapon as a range 0 weapon.	Gruff Delicate
Bulwark	Spend 1 Overdrive to allocate as many dice as desired from Movement to Attack.	Supportive Caustic

Counterfire	Spend 1 Overdrive to allocate any number of dice from Attack to Defense.	Scattered Focused
Defender	Pick a damage type. Spend 1 Overdrive to take no damage from that damage type this round. Must be declared on your turn.	Protective Foolhardy
Disruptor	If an attack does damage, spend 1 Overdrive to prevent the mecha from moving on its next turn.	Static Dynamic
Ejector	Spend 1 Overdrive to activate Ejector. Once active, if the mecha becomes junked, the pilot will eject and can be placed anywhere on the battlemap.	Cowardly Prepared
Engineer	Spend 1 Overdrive to heal 1 damage on another mecha. May only spend 1 Overdrive per mecha per turn.	Helpful Self-Centered
Flanker	Spend 1 Overdrive to move to the same sector in the opposite quadrant.	Fast Lumbering
Heavy Metal	Spend 1 Overdrive to allocate any number of Movement dice to Defense.	Stout Flighty
Hot Shot	Spend 1 Overdrive to allocate as many dice as desired from Defense to Attack.	Brash Cool
Jammer	Spend 1 overdrive to grant +2 Defense dice to all mecha in the same sector.	Confused Open
Jackhammer	Spend 1 Overdrive to double the amount of Knockback.	Pushy Pushover
Prowler	Spend 1 Overdrive so that the mecha cannot be hit with by opponents at range 2 or greater.	Sneaky Obvious
Ripper	Spend 1 Overdrive to cause a successful Attack to inflict two points 2 of damage instead of 1.	Violent Peaceful
Scanner	Spend 1 overdrive to negate the effects of Jammers, Prowlers, Flankers, Engineers, Brawlers, Snipers and Boomers.	Curious Oblivious
Slayer	Spend 1 Overdrive to give a successfully damaged target -1 on its stability roll	Fighter Lover
Sniper	Spend 1 Overdrive to treat any weapon like a range 4 weapon.	Direct Indirect
Stalwart	Spend 1 Overdrive to receive +1 to all stability rolls for the turn.	Tough Weak
Stonewall	If an opponent's attack does damage, spend 1 Overdrive to reduce the total amount of Knockback to 1.	Stony Open
Striker	Spend 1 Overdrive to treat any weapon like a range 3 weapon.	Sharp Blunt
Supercharged	Spend 1 Overdrive to fire a weapon experiencing cool down.	Energetic Lazy
Transformer	Spend 1 overdrive to swap out this Configuration for any other Configuration.	Steadfast Flexible

This means that when you select a Configuration (or when you choose a mecha model with a Configuration built into it), you must also choose one of the Traits associated with that Configuration for your pilot. In other words, the way the mecha is used on the battlefield is a reflection of, or has shaped, the pilot who commands it.

To complete this step, check your mecha model. If it specifies one or both of the mecha's Configurations write them down and then consult the following table to pick one of the two Traits associated with that Configuration. If the model does not specify, then use the following table to select two Configurations for your mecha and then select one of the two Traits associated with each Configuration.

By the end of this step, you should have two Configurations and two Traits. For more detailed rules on Configurations, see Page 23.

Note: Your SRS will determine exactly which Configurations are available for Mecha in the setting.

STEP 8: CHOOSE TRAITS

Pilots have Traits, which are short, one or two word descriptors that determine how the character should be played. Traits do two things. First, they define how a pilot is role played. If your pilot is loud, quiet, flighty, sharp, or tough, then during role playing scenes, it is to your advantage to role play to those Traits.

Traits are also how you, as a player, can earn Advancement Points for your pilot. After each session your pilot gains one Advancement Point for each of his traits that you have incorporated into your role-playing.

All pilots have exactly four Traits. By the beginning of Step 8, you should already have two of them. Now, you can select/generate the other two.

To complete this step, look at your pilot Archetype. It may dictate how you choose one or both of your other two Traits. If you are given a choice make it or just write down the Trait choices given to you. If your Archetype did not specify or if don't have four Traits, create your own.

To create your own, think of adjectives to describe your character. If the word has more than one meaning, so much the better. If you get stuck, you can pick from the list of Traits shown above in the Configuration section.

STEP 9: CHOOSE WEAPON SYSTEMS

A mecha has to fight and needs weapons to do this. All weapons have three important characteristics: Name, Optimal range, and Damage type.

NAME

The name of the weapon system gives it flavor. The name can be anything as long as it fits in the SRS. Examples include:

Sonic flail
Mini-missile launcher
Gatling gun
PX-341 Tactical Shotgun

The name of the weapon will help the players and the GM visualize the battle and narrate what happens during combat in more detail. Other than that, it confers no mechanical advantage.

OPTIMAL RANGE

Every weapon has an optimal range which is the range at which it is most effective. This is covered fully in the Combat section, so for now all you need to know is three things:

1. Ranges go from 0 (same sector) to 6 (all the way across the board)
2. Because weapons have a range at where they work best, it's often a good idea to have weapons with a variety of different optimum ranges.

DAMAGE TYPE

The other important part of a weapon is its damage type. The basic damage types are Impact, Missile, and Energy. Unless the rules explicitly state, all damage types work equally well against all targets.

To complete this step, select one weapon system for every level of the mecha's Weapons base stat. Selecting a weapon includes giving it name, choosing a range, and giving it a damage type.

All Mecha also gain:

Physical Attack (0/Impact): Reflects the mecha's ability to kick, punch, dropkick or ram a target. However, when using the Physical Attack, you can only roll a number of dice equal to your mecha's Weapons stat rather than your linked Attack stat.

MARA SEZ

Some models will come with a preset loadout which should be noted on the character sheet. If a mecha's Weapons stat is higher than the number of standard issue weapons for the model, the player may choose additional weapon systems so that the number of weapons on the mecha is equal to its weapons stat.

STEP 10: GIVE YOUR PILOT A GOAL

Pilots begin the game with a goal, which is exactly what it sounds like. It is a burning desire of the character that is achievable throughout the course of a game. Goals in Mecha do not have to be combat related, they can be as diverse as the goals people have in real life.

Throughout playtesting, we have seen a number of interesting goals:

• Prove to the world I'm better than my brother
• Impress my commanding officer
• Bring the walls down (from Godlblind SRS)
• Get a girlfriend
• Survive to fight again

The important thing is that these goals are all achievable in the game and that they hint at some sort of conflict, tension, or strife that must be overcome to achieve them.

Once you decide that you have met your goal, you inform the GM. As long as the GM agrees that the goal has been

met, you will receive one Advancement Point for every game session that you had that goal. So if you achieve the goal after one night of play, you get 1 AP. If you do not achieve it until you have played 5 times, you get 5 AP.

To complete this step, find your pilot's goal and write it down on your character sheet.

STEP 11: GIVE YOUR MECHA A PROTOCOL

There is one more thing that makes your mecha special. There may be many mecha of the same model, but there was something, call it fate or kismet or karma, that linked this one mecha to your pilot. Even if the mecha is not sentient, there will be something that the mecha wants. Perhaps the mecha wants revenge on those who forged it or perhaps the mecha wants to protect its pilot or go down in history. This is called the mecha's protocol.

Again, through playing the game, a number of interesting mecha protocols have been created:

- I will protect my pilot from himself
- Bring the pain!
- I am an artificial construct, I want to be alive!
- To be a legend
- To kill my pilot

Like a character's goal, the mecha's goal should be achievable and lead the character and the mecha into conflicts, tensions, and or put them in situations which could lead to trouble.

Once you think that the mecha has reached its Protocol, inform the GM. Again, as long as the GM agrees, you will earn 1 AP for each session that you have had the Protocol. Then you will select another Protocol and start over again.

To complete this step, choose a protocol for the mecha and note it on the character sheet.

STEP 12: CHOOSE YOUR PILOT'S EQUIPMENT

There are two types of equipment: weapons and armor.

Your pilot's weapons function just like mecha weaponry. This means they have a name, an optimal range, and a damage type.

Armor protects the wearer from damage. A pilot may wear one piece of armor which grants the wearer a bonus die when making a Defense roll in personal combat.

To complete this step, decide whether your pilot carries two weapons or one weapon and armor. When choosing weapons, create a name, range, and damage type (or select them from those listed in your SRS).

STEP 13: STARTING OVERDRIVE

Overdrive is a special power-up that fuels Configurations and can be used to purchase extra successes. All characters start the game with 1 Overdrive.

Okay, that's it. Now fight!

CONFIGURATIONS

Configurations are special systems and equipment that give mecha an edge in combat. Using a Configuration requires that the player spend an Overdrive before they make the appropriate roll (Movement, Attack, Defense, or Stability.) However, unless otherwise noted, once the Overdrive is spent, the effects of the Configuration are active until the start of the character's next turn in combat.

The listings that follow describe all Configurations available to basic Mecha SRSes. Each listing presents important information about the Configuration.

MARA SEZ

Some of the rules below mention that dice may be allocated from one Linked stat to another. What this means is that the player may choose to subtract dice from one Linked Stat and add them to another. This effect is always temporary and will last until the start of the player's next turn.

When allocating dice, no Linked stat can drop below 1! So, if a player has Movement 5, Defense 4 and the Heavy Metal Configuration, he could allocate up to 4 of those Movement dice to Defense. That would mean for the turn, he would roll 1 Movement dice and 9 Defense dice.

That makes her hard to shoot, but slooooooow.

This includes basic information like the Configuration's name, a quote from a famous mecha pilot about the Configuration, a brief description, and rules on how to use it in the game. The listing also includes the Trait choices that the Configuration confers to the pilot.

NAME: ANALYZER

"The P114 tactical computer is one of the most advanced pieces of technology on the battlefield. It needs only .4198 seconds to scan an enemy mecha and it knows everything. Weapons load out, damage mix, special equipment, even the pilot's identification number. There are no secrets from the P114." -Captain Myron Tarawaza, Leader Beta Recon Platoon, *Steel Gunner*

Traits: Analytical, Oblivious

Description: Analyzer mecha are the command and control units of the modern battlefield. More than just a collection of scanning equipment, their tactical computers are able to analyze a mecha and determine the most efficient way to defeat it.

Game Effects: Before making an Attack roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to active Analyzer. They then choose an enemy mecha to scan and an ally to receive battle information. On that ally's next Attack roll against the analyzed mecha, he rolls 2 additional dice. Also, the entire squad can know the weapons carried on the mecha and how many boxes were marked out on

the mecha's Stability Track at the time of the analysis.

NAME: ASSASSIN

"Kururugi's reports are most distressing. Apparently the opposing Gladiator's missiles had a design enhancement we never anticipated. If they got past his armor, they released an energy field which caused his synthetic heart to stop beating. If he hadn't torn the poor bastard's mecha's head off, Kururugi might have died." -Stablemaster Thomas Quinto, Fire Lion Stables, Neoborn Battle Slave

Traits: Stealthy, Brutal

Description: Assassins are equipped with special two-stage weapon systems, that when activated, are capable of damage not only to a targeted mecha, but also the pilot inside.

Game Effects: After making a successful Attack roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to active Assassin. If the Attack is successful, the target must check off damage from both the pilot's and the mecha's Stability Track. Both then must make a Stability Roll.

NAME: BERSERKER

"Yes, I fight angry. I am the GOD OF ANGER. But make no mistake. My rage serves a higher purpose." –Yamaraj, god, *Godblind*

Traits: Explosive, Calm

Description: Berserkers can effectively fire multiple weapons which can be devastating to the enemy. However, there are limits to the berserker's ability and many find themselves without a weapon to fire in the heat of battle.

Game Effects: Before making an Attack roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to activate Berserker. This allows the player to attack using two (and only two) weapons of the same damage type. The attacking player rolls two separate Attack rolls and each Attack is Defended against separately. Both of the Attacker's weapons must cooldown as normal.

NAME: BRAWLER

"I want to see the enemy, to stand near him and lash out with hands and fists. The might of the gods does not concern me, only seeing the fear in their eyes as they die." -Max, *Godblind*, *Godblind*

Traits: Gruff, Delicate

Description: Brawlers excel at close-in combat. They are able to take any weapon system and use it in close quarters combat, ignoring the standard suboptimal range penalties.

Game Effects: Before making an Attack roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to active Brawler. The attacking player may choose to have all weapons of a particular damage type have an optimal range of 0 until the beginning of the player's next turn.

NAME: BOOMER

"Yeah it was weird, we end up chasing after this mecha when all the sudden this ADF patrol arrives. And it was a big one, too. Tanks, infantry, a couple of steel gunners. So I bring the pain and three shots later all that's left are the two gunners and neither of them look like they're having a good day... " -First Lieutenant Paul "Waxer" Wannamaker, Alpha Attack Squad, *Steel Gunner*

Traits: Loud, Quiet

Description: Boomers deal damage over a wide area. They are able to scatter, spread, or spray their attack over an entire tactical area rather than concentrate on one target. However, they attack everything in that sector, even their friends.

Game Effects: Before making an Attack roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to activate Boomer. The attacking player then selects a Sector and makes an Attack roll. Every mecha, pilot outside of a mecha, mook, and terrain (if using the optional rules) is hit with a number of successes equal to that Attack roll. That includes friendly, neutral, and enemy units.

NAME: BOOSTER

"Battles are not won with defense, but by holding the high ground." -Calph Antonio Ricard, Battle Leader, Silent Sultanate

Traits: Optimistic, Pessimistic

Description: Boosters opt for speed over defense. They trade their ability to defend themselves for the ability to get into the perfect tactical position or a hasty tactical withdrawal.

Game Effects: Before making a Movement roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to activate Booster. The player may choose to allocate any number of dice from Defense and add them to their Movement stat until the start of their next turn.

NAME: BULWARK

"I can't say where I first got my hands on this baby. In my business, it's not good to reveal one's sources. But, I will say that once I plugged this little glowing box into my primary fire control I suddenly got to live my dream. No moving, all shooting." -Second Lieutenant Liam Sanchez, Beta Assault Squad, *Steel Gunner*

Traits: Supportive, Caustic

Description: Bulwarks are slow and lumbering, but pack a deadly punch. They are able to trade their maneuverability for offensive strength.

Game Effects: Before making a Movement or Attack roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to activate Bulwark. The player may choose to allocate as many dice from Movement to Attack until the start of the player's next turn.

NAME: DEFENDER

"Nope." -Jorge, son of Mammon, *Godblind*

Traits: Protective, Foolhardy

Description: Defenders carry countermeasures, shields, or other tools to prevent damage from certain types of weapons. They do have one weakness: a Defender cannot protect against everything at once.

Game Effects: On the player's turn, he may spend 1 point of Overdrive to activate Defender. The player chooses one damage type. No attacks from weapons that use that damage type will cause damage to the mecha or its pilot until the start of their next turn. The Attacker may still roll normally and count successes. The Defender can roll Defense if they want to earn Overdrive or a Cut Scene, but it is not required. You may also spend 2 points of Overdrive to activate Defender anytime.

NAME: DISRUPTER

"Something just happened. I took a hit, but the battle computers say it was minimal. Still, I can't move my legs. Joints are inoperative. Help! I'm a sitting duck out here." –Second Lieutenant Thomasina Deville, Alpha Recon Squad, *Steel Gunner*

Traits: Static, Dynamic

Description: Disruptors can wreak havoc on their opponent's mobility. Their special weapons can prevent a mecha from being able to move.

Game Effects: After making a successful Attack roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to activate Disrupter. A point of damage is checked off the target's Stability Track and the mecha is unable to move, use Configurations which take dice from or add dice to the Movement stat, or use the Flanker configuration on its next turn.

NAME: EJECTOR

"Playing football outside your mecha is against official JMSA rules, but that's why my school ride doesn't have this baby. See, the ejection seat's for street ball when things get a little rough." -Todo Ito, starting back, Special Research School

Traits: Cowardly, Prepared

Description: Every Ejector comes with a special cockpit that can safely get the pilot out of harm's way and keep them in the fight.

Game Effects: At any time, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to activate Ejector. Until the start of his next turn, if he fails any Stability Roll, his mecha still suffers the consequences of failing the roll for its current Damage Phase. However, instead of taking pilot damage or dying, he is placed in a sector a D3 (see page 34 for the rules on how to roll a D3) Movement Points from his mecha. He is then able to carry on the fight on foot.

NAME: ENGINEER

"We are trying to rebuild our world. We need all the mecha we can get." -Victor Brand, leader, Dirge of the Dying Earth

Traits: Helpful, Self-Centered

Description: Engineers are able to perform quick battlefield repairs during the heat of combat.

Game Effects: At any time during the player's turn, he can spend Overdrive to repair (see page 42) damage to any mecha's Stability Track if the target mecha is in the same sector. It costs 1 point of Overdrive to repair one point of damage and only 1 point can be spent per mecha per turn. A mecha may not strafe and use Engineer in the same turn.

NAME: FLANKER

"I'm always where you least expect me." –Nick Nova, quarterback, Special research School

Traits: Fast, Lumbering

Description: Flankers are excellent at tactical positioning. Their special gear allows them to dive, dodge, roll, and move into an advantageous position nearly anywhere on the battlemap.

Game Effects: Before making a Movement roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive. The player then rolls Movement normally. Either before or

after moving, the mecha may move to the same Sector in the opposite Quadrant. A mecha cannot move, then Flank and the move some more. See the illustration below for an illustration of "opposite Quadrants."

Mecha A starts on the lower right hand quadrant and then moves to the upper left hand quadrant. Mecha B starts in the lower left hand quadrant and Flanks into the upper right hand Quadrant.
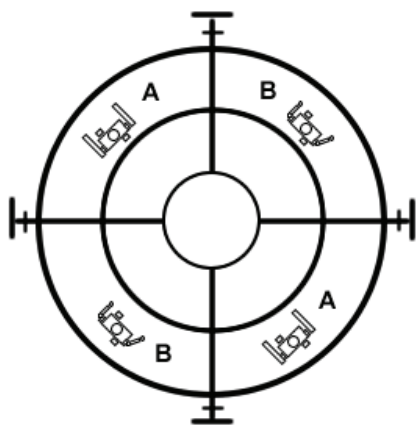
NAME: COUNTERFIRE

"Before, in a normal mecha fight, the chances of shooting down an incoming missile or successfully deflecting a precisely targeted laser is 781 to 1. That's why I invented this little baby. Now I can make my guns stop their guns." -Second Lieutenant Josephine "Joe" Cooper, Bravo Assault Squad, *Steel Gunner*

Traits: Scattered, Focused

Description: Flakers are built around the principle that a good offense is a great defense. They are able to fire controlled bursts, counter missiles, or point defense weapons which assist in their defense.

Game Effects: Before making an Attack roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to active Counterfire. The player may then allocate as many of his Attack dice to Defense as he would like. The dice remain allocated until the beginning of the player's next turn.

NAME: HEAVY METAL

"I may be slow, but you can't hurt me." –Hinden, god, *Godblind*

Traits: Stout, Flighty

Description: Heavy Metal mecha trade maneuverability for defense. They may be fast or slow, but when they need to hold a position they become very stout, almost like they are rooted to the ground.

Game Effects: Before making a Movement roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to activate Heavy Metal. The player may then allocate as many Movement dice to Defense as he would like. These dice remain allocated until the start of the player's next turn. Using Heavy Metal prevents strafing.

NAME: HOT SHOT

"It don't matter that my rig gets shot up… I come home. The bad guys don't." –Claire Torinaga, Alpha Assault Squad, *Steel Gunner*

Traits: Brash, Cool

Description: A Hot Shot mecha throws caution to the wind. Instead of playing it safe, they pile on the damage and hope they don't get hit in return.

Game Effects: Before making an Attack roll, the player may spend 1 point of Overdrive to activate Hot Shot. The player may then allocate as many De-

fense dice into Attack as he would like. These dice remain allocated until the beginning of the player's next turn.

NAME: JACKHAMMER

"Sometimes you want to push the other team a little bit and sometimes you want push them way the hell over." –Mike Sanders, fullback, Special Research School

Traits: Pushy, Pushover

Description: Jackhammers excel at controlling tactical waypoints. Any enemy that tries to take the high ground may find that a barrage from a Jackhammer moves them halfway across the battlefield.

Game Effects: If a player makes a successful Attack roll, the player may elect to spend Overdrive to double the amount of Knockback for his Attack. This Overdrive must be spent before the player moves the target mecha as a result of a successful Attack.

NAME: JAMMER

"Just try to see past my jamming. Just try. Go ahead, I dare you." -Mara, *Godblind*, *Godblind*

Traits: Confusing, Open

Description: Jammers are masters of Defense. Any friendly unit who enters the same sector as a Jammer will find that enemies have a much harder time targeting them.

Game Effects: Before the end of the player's turn, he may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Jammer. Once activated, all friendly mecha in the same sector gain 2 dice to all their Defense rolls until the

beginning of the player's next turn.

NAME: PROWLER

"Now you see me. Now you don't." -Captain Seamus Edney, Alpha Recon Squad, *Steel Gunner*

Traits: Reserved, Boisterous

Description: Prowlers are masters of invisibility. They are able to move around the battlefield with impunity, safely knowing that their equipment prevents all but the closest mecha from targeting them.

Game Effects: Before making a Movement roll, the player may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Prowler. Once activated, the mecha cannot be targeted by any mecha who are more than 1 Movement point away. This effect lasts until the start of the player's next turn.

NAME: RIPPER

"Don't worry, it's just a flesh wound." -last recording of a Male Warrior before dying of massive internal injuries, *Godblind*

Traits: Violent, Peaceful

Description: Rippers equip special ammunition which causes extra damage if they come in contact with internal systems.

Game Effects: After making a successful Attack roll, the player may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Ripper. The successful Attack counts as double successes against mooks and check off two boxes on an enemy's Stability Track.

NAME: SCANNER

"The worst thing's when you have someone on the other team who's good

at hustling, you know getting to where you want be before you or just getting good optimum range. That's why I like one of the linemen to have good sensors. That way we know what's up." -Nick Nova, quarterback, Special Research School

Traits: Curious, Oblivious

Description: Scanners mount specialized combat hardware which counteracts the enemy's special hardware. When a Scanner activates, an enemy mecha cannot take advantage of their Configurations.

Game Effects: Before making an Attack roll, the player may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Scanner. The player chooses a target mecha and until the start of the player's next turn, that mecha loses the ability to activate all Configurations. All currently activated Configurations no longer grant their bonus.

NAME: SLAYER

"Now, I ain't supposed to talk about this, but I gotta say something. Intel showed footage of a trial using a prototype of some weapons they 'borrowed' from an ADF convoy. This arming cannon looked normal 'cept when it opened up, the enemy gunner started freaking out, shaking, pieces falling off. I swear that thing was hit once and it just shook itself apart. Ejection seat didn't even work. Count me out, boys. Count me out." -Captain Hohiro "Boiler" Kuzikawa, Bravo Assault Squad, *Steel Gunner*

Traits: Fighter, Lover

Description: Slayers mount weapons and ammunition which can greatly,

though temporarily, reduce the stability of an enemy mecha. This can take out a mecha which might otherwise have sustained only minor damage.

Game Effects: After making a successful Attack roll, the player may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Slayer. The targeted mecha's player must subtract 1 from their Stability roll.

NAME: SNIPER

"If I can see it, I can kill." -Khali, god, *Godblind*

Traits: Direct, Indirect

Description: Snipers can make a shot well outside of the range of most mecha weaponry. They can reconfigure any weapon system so that it can strike from halfway across the battlefield.

Game Effects: Before making an Attack roll, the player may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Sniper. The player then chooses a damage type. All weapons of that damage type are treated as though

they have an optimum range of 4. This lasts until the start of the player's next turn.

NAME: STALWART

"Yeah, the weapons we use in football don't really hurt. Football launches, spit wads, dirty jokes, whatever. But sometimes out in the street, it gets real. I don't know about you, but I like to come home with my ride." -Theodore Yu, SRS East student, Special Research School

Traits: Tough, Weak

Description: Stalwart mecha are built a little tougher than the rest. They are able to wade into battle, knowing their mecha's stability will keep them in the fight.

Game Effects: If the mecha takes damage from an Attack, the player may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Stalwart. Until the start of the player's next turn, the player may add 1 to any Stability roll. This ability can only be activated once per turn.

NAME: STONEWALL

"Scoring a touchdown is getting into the end zone and staying in the end zone. I don't want to knock on the door, only to get pushed out." -Tucker Keller, lineman at SRS West, Special Reseach School

Traits: Stony, Open

Description: Stonewalls are great at maintaining tactical positioning. Even if they take a direct hit that would knock a mecha around, a Stonewall mecha barely moves.

Game Effects: If the mecha takes damage from an attack, the player may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Stonewall. Until the start of the player's next turn, any time the mecha is successfully Attacked, it is only moved by 1 Movement Point. Each successive Attack may move the Stonewall 1 Movement Point.

NAME: STRIKER

"To get too close to one's foes is to invite disaster. However, to stay back is just not fun at all." -Liget, god, *Godblind*

Traits: Sharp, Blunt

Description: Strikers excel at medium range combat. They are able to adjust their weapon systems so that anything in their arsenal can make a successful attack at medium range.

Game Effects: Before making an Attack roll, the player may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Striker. The player then declares a damage type. Until the beginning of the next turn, all weapons of that damage type are considered to have an optimal range of 3.

NAME: SUPERCHARGED

"My mecha has a 98% capacity for storing energy. I can then send that energy directly into the cooling systems which allows me to do pretty much anything I want to when I help my brother out on the field. You didn't know I was a jock did you? Yep, I play all the time. And I score, too. Do you like to score? How about a date?" -Melvin Dunkard, student at SRS East, Special Research School

Traits: Energetic, Lethargic

Description: Supercharged mecha carry special equipment, capacitors, and cooling devices which allow them to fire their weapons at a faster than normal rate.

Game Effects: Before making an At-

tack roll, the player may spend 1 Overdrive to activate Supercharged. The player then chooses a weapon which may ignore the rules for cool down on that turn. That weapon may be fired immediately.

NAME: TRANSFORMER

"My mecha's conversion into jet mode allows me free travel from the Living City back up to Heaven. It's also useful when those fool Godblind blow up the elevator." -Geoff, son of Mammon, *Godblind*

Traits: Steadfast, Malleable

Description: Transformers are the most versatile mecha on the field. They are able to reconfigure themselves at any time in order to take advantage of battlefield conditions.

Game Effects: Before making an At-

tack or Movement roll, the player may spend Overdrive to activate Transformer. The player then chooses a Configuration which his mecha will gain. It still requires Overdrive to activate the new Configuration.

Unlike other Configurations, the effects of Transformer do not end at the beginning of the player's next turn. In fact, it is considered to have its new Configuration until another point of Overdrive is spent to change it. All other rules of the Configuration apply.

CHANGING CONFIGURATIONS

Configurations make a mecha far more effective in battle, but they also have a profound impact on the pilot who selects then. Each Configuration offers two Trait choices to the pilot, one of which her player must select.

Because of the natural linkage between Configuration and pilot, it is not recommended that Configurations be changed quickly or on a whim. There may be certain situations in the course of a game where technology shifts or new Configurations become available and it may be that a player chooses a Configuration at the start of the game that they just do not like. In this case, rather than ruin players' fun, GMs can always allow her players to change their Configurations.

If this happens, the player loses the Trait associated with their old Configuration and choose a new from the Traits listed in the new Configuration's write

up. If the player no longer has the Trait associated with the old Configuration, they should lose their oldest Trait and replace it with one of the Traits listed with the new Configuration.

GETTING A NEW MECHA

A character's mecha is a part of who they are. It is created at character generation along with the character, it can be improved by spending AP, and the choices that players make about their characters' mecha affect who that character is.

With that being said, there may come a time when a better ride comes along and the character would have significantly improved stats because of it. In this case, the character may discard his current mecha for a new one, but will change accordingly as well.

By accepting the new mecha, the character must immediately replace both his Traits that came from the previous mecha's Configurations. The player must replace the discarded Traits with one of the Trait choices from the new mecha's Configurations just as if the mecha were selected during character generation.
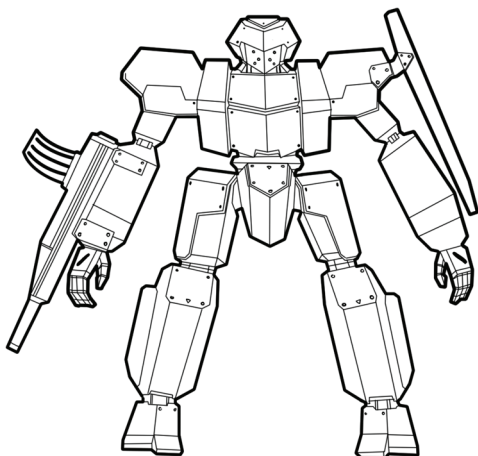
If the character does not have one of the Traits from the previous mecha's Configurations (because he was felled on the field of battle or changed them via role playing), the player should remove his character's oldest Trait. If the character does not have either Trait from his previous mecha, the two oldest Traits should be removed. The player must then select two new Traits as the rules above.

ROLE PLAYING CONFIGURATIONS

The question inevitably arises, "If I choose Transformer, can I turn into a jet plane?" My answer to this question has always been yes. In fact, during non-combat scenes, I try to weave in the effects of the Configurations into the game's fiction. Prowlers turn invisible, Flankers move quickly, Heavy Metal mecha shake the earth with their steps. However, this narration is most effective when it is SRS-specific.

In general, GMs should use the Configurations to flavor the narration of the game. As you read through the rules for the various scenes, you'll see that bits of color like flight or invisibility make the game more interesting to play while rarely having any sort of mechanical impact outside of combat.

RULES OF THE GAME

The following section discusses the basic concepts of how the game is played. At its heart, Mecha uses dice to provide dramatic tension and make things unpredictable. The following sections will tell you what and when to roll.

GOING TO DICE

Mecha uses six-sided dice exclusively, (abbreviated D6). Mecha has fairly specific rules about when dice get rolled. In combat, dice are rolled often. Outside of combat, they are rolled far less frequently.

However, certain things remain the same in all rolling situations. First, you will almost always roll a number of dice equal to whichever stat is relevant. For instance, when shooting, the Attack linked stat is used. When trying to figure out a puzzle, the pilot's Intelligence is used.

Secondly, you are always rolling against one of your skills. Once you roll the dice, check to see which dice are equal to or lower than your skill level. For instance, if your character's Social Skill is 3, all dice which show 3 or less are Successes. All else are Misses.

Last, it's important to note that 1s explode. This means that if you roll a 1, it counts as a Success and you may re-roll it. If that reroll is a Success, it adds to your total. If it's a Miss, it does not.

Even better, if the reroll is a 1, you count it as a Success and may continue rolling until you have a Success that is not a 1 or a Miss. In this way, a small number of dice can still turn into a large number of Successes.

MARGIN OF SUCCESS

In some situations, it is important to note not only if the roll succeeds, but also by how much. The difference between the roll and the target number is the margin of success.

GREAT SUCCESSES

If the person rolling ends up with 5 or more successes, the roll is a Great Success and the player gains a point of Overdrive (see page 36). Note: you cannot roll 4 Successes and spend a point of Overdrive and get your point back. However, if you roll 5 Successes and spend a point of Overdrive to make it 6, you do gain a point of Overdrive. As long as your roll gains a minimum of 5 Successes, you've earned yourself a point of Overdrive.

Also, you cannot spend Overdrive on the same roll in which you earn it.

THEN INEVITABLE EXCEPTIONS

For every rule, there is an exception(s). In a very limited number of cases, for instance using the Ejector configuration, a roll will call for a D3. A D3 is just a D6 where the result is divided by 2 (rounded up.) This generates a number between 1 and 3.

You also consult this chart to see how you rolled.

Roll	Result
1-2	1
3-4	2
5-6	3

Also, the rules may call for a D66 roll. This means rolling two D6s and noting each result. This is used when consulting random tables where one dice will indicate a row and the other will indicate a column.

CUT SCENES

If the player rolls 8 or more successes, he's earned a Cut Scene. Remember the really cool scenes in mecha anime where the speed lines get going, the pilot says something cool and then makes their mecha do something awesome? That's a cut scene.

When a player rolls a cut scene, he should describe his character doing something amazingly cool, something that defies physics, something that makes the fans cheer.

The player earning the cut scene describes what his character is doing and then gains a half combat action. This half action can be used for strafing, even if the mecha has moved that turn. If the half action is used for Attack, the Attack ignores optimum range penalties. Cool down is still in effect.

Similar to a Great Success, you cannot roll 7 Successes and spend a point of Overdrive to earn a Cut Scene. However, if you roll 8 or more successes and then spend Overdrive, you still earn the Cut Scene.

TYPES OF ROLLS

There are two types of rolls in Mecha: standard and contested.

STANDARD ROLL

A standard roll occurs when you are rolling against a passive opponent: be it fate, a door, your body as you try to heal, etc.

To make a Standard Roll, roll your dice as described above and then note your number of Successes. As long as you get 1 Success, you have passed your roll, but there are times when rolling more Successes will grant additional benefits in the story.

For instance, Bob is trying to pass a Field Ops scene. His Intelligence stat is 3 and his Field Ops skill is 3. This means he rolls 3 dice (Intelligence 3) and is looking for 3 or less on the dice (Field Ops 3.) He rolls 1,3,5. Because 1s explode, the 1 is rolled again. This time Bob rolls a 2 which means he gets 3 Successes.

CONTESTED ROLLS

In a contested roll, two players choose one stat and one relevant skill and roll. Once they have added up their Successes, whoever has the higher number of Successes wins the roll.

All combat rolls are Contested Rolls. The Attacker wants to hit his target. The Defender wants to avoid damage. They both roll and the player with the higher number of Successes gets what they want.

OVERDRIVE

Overdrive may be the most important resource available to players and named NPCs in the game. A point of Overdrive can be spent at any time to gain a success on a roll. There is no limit to the number of points of Overdrive that can be spent on a given roll.

Even more importantly, all Configurations cost 1 Overdrive to activate. The rules for when Overdrive can be spent to activate a Configuration are listed in the Configuration descriptions.

Use beads, tokens, or something else non-edible to represent Overdrive in the game.

HOW TO GAIN OVERDRIVE

Overdrive is gained in several ways:
1. When you create a new character, he or she starts with 1 point of Overdrive.
2. Making a successful Social roll during a Social Scene (see page 40) is another way to get a point of Overdrive.
3. The most common way to get more Overdrive is by rolling a Great Success on any roll.
4. Before the beginning of play, 2 Overdrive can be purchased for 1 Advancement Point. See page 63.

GM OVERDRIVE

GMs start each session with a pool of Overdrive equal to the number of players minus 1. They, too, earn Overdrive when NPCs roll 5 or more successes and GMs can take advantage of Cut Scenes. Mooks do not earn overdrive.

ALLY OVERDRIVE

An ally is an NPC who fights on the same side as the PCs. Allies do earn Overdrive, but it can only be spent to buy Successes on their own rolls or activate their own Configurations.

PLAY STRUCTURE

Mecha breaks down game play into a structure. The largest, least specific unit of play is called a campaign.

A campaign is roughly analogous to a mecha anime series, season, or in some cases, a movie. A campaign is defined by a single story arc that has a beginning, middle, and an end. Typically, this happens over the course of several nights of play, which are called sessions. Campaigns typically begin with a Prologue, which sets up the action and provides any useful back story before play begins.

A session is a single instance of the players getting together and playing the game. Sessions are one of the most meaningful divisions of the game because they have a definitive start and end (when the game starts and when the group breaks for the evening.) Sessions are important because advancement points are awarded at the end of a session.

A session is composed of one or more Episodes. An episode consists of one Scene for each player, a Scene for the GM, and one combat. Episodes are explained in greater detail below.

The final unit of Mecha is called the Scene, which can be compared to a scene in an anime or movie scene. Each player gets a Scene in which they can perform one action.

SCENE BREAKDOWN

Mecha formalizes scenes into a set structure, which helps the players and GM to pace the game's story. This structure works a lot like the round/turn structure used in combat.

The Scene Structure works like this:
- The player to the left of the GM gets a Scene
- Play progresses clockwise around the table until each player has had a Scene
- The GM takes gets a scene
- Then there's the inevitable... Fight!

Starting with the player to the GM's left and going clockwise around the table, each player will get a Scene. For the player's Scene, he may choose one type of action which will require a specific Skill roll to achieve a desired outcome. The player may also declare certain story objectives (see page 45). All of this is discussed in greater detail below.

At the end of the scene, the player makes a skill roll to see if he earned the reward for the Scene and if he achieved any story objectives. The types of Scenes and the rewards for passing them are discussed below.

After the player makes his skill roll, there may be a bit more role playing describing the aftermath of the roll. Then the next player gets his scene.

That player decides what type of scene he wants, there is some role playing, and then the player rolls to see if he achieved the scene and story objective.

Play continues around the table until every player has had a scene. Then it is the GM's turn to have a scene. On her turn, the GM has two very important jobs. First, she has to set up the reason for the next fight. There are many reasons why a fight might break out ranging from a random encounter to a battle which will be a major turning point in the game.

Of equal importance, the GM is responsible for moving the story along. The players, through their scene selection and the choice of story objective, will take a greater hand in driving the story forward that they, or the GM, may be used to. However, the GM is still responsible for weaving together all the different plot elements to create a cohesive story.

Some thoughts on how to do this are included in the GM's section. In brief, the GM has at least four tools at her disposal:

- The "meta" storyline. Every SRS has at least three, if not more, story stages which can be used to provide major turning points in the story.
- The GM's own story. The GM can, at her leisure, use some, all, or none of those stages to tell her own story.
- Loose threads from player scenes. If the player suddenly brings up his long lost sister, there's no reason not to incorporate her into a GM scene at some point during the game.
- The Random Event table. Need an idea? Roll D66 and consult the GM Random Event table and let your imagination fly.
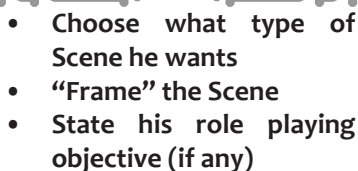
Once the GM has had her turn, it's time for combat, either in mecha or out of them. But rest assured, there will be combat.

After the combat is over, the GM should take the results of combat into account to narrate the aftermath. If the players win the combat, they can suggest a positive outcome of the battle. If the GM wins, she can determine what happens. Most of the time this should not make the characters' lives any easier. This ends the Episode.

Then a new Episode is begun starting with the player to the GM's left.

DECLARING A SCENE

On the player's turn, he must declare his Scene. To do this, the player must:

- **Choose what type of Scene he wants**
- **"Frame" the Scene**
- **State his role playing objective (if any)**

CHOOSING A SCENE

Look over the list of scene types beginning on page 38 and decide which scene you want to play.

GM Table	Mecha 1	Personal 2	Natural 3	Technological 4	Short Term 5	Long Term 6
Minor 1	Weapon Malfunction	NPC Relationship Changes	Bad Storm	Enemy Unveils New Weapon	Minor Offensive Nearby	Endless Patrolling
Major 2	Arm falls off	New Enemy NPC emerges	Natural Disaster	Enemy Makes Technological Breakthrough	Major Offensive Nearby	Parts Shortage
Severe 3	Legs fall off	NPC Relationship Dies	Disease/ Plague	Technological Shortage	Destruction of Famous Landmark	Major Campaign
Helpful 4	Repair Crew Visits	New Friendly Team is Created	Storm Clears An Obstacle	Technological Improvement	Supplies Arrive	Training
Neutral 5	Mecha Moves By Itself	NPC is Born	Seasons Change	New Manuals/ Schematics Are Released	Spring Cleaning	Drill... Lots of Drill
Wild Card 6	Power Fluctuations	New Rival Team is Created	Storm Unveils a New Discovery	New Prototype is Released	An Enemy Makes a Discovery	Reroll Twice

FRAMING THE SCENE

Next, frame the scene. All this means is giving an introduction to what is going on before any role playing is done. Decide where it takes place, who might be there, what time of day it is, etc. Do not discuss any actions or say what the people in the scene might do. All you are doing is providing a starting point.

STATING A STORY OBJECTIVE

Lastly, the player will state if he has a story objective. A story objective is a secondary goal in the scene. It gives the PC the opportunity to play to his Traits, accomplish his Goal, and generally do things which advance the story. Remember, in anime, each Scene exists to develop the character. Use your story objectives to show more about the character and add more detail to him.

Players may know their objective before they start a Scene or they may figure it out along the way. Either way, the GM should know what it is before

SITUATION	Difficulty	Target Number
Asking a girl who likes you to go out with her Impressing the rookie pilot Hacking a non-military computer	Normal	1
Asking a girl out at a bar Impressing your CO Hacking a military computer	Tough	2
Getting a girl to cancel her plans and go out with you Impressing your tough as nails ex-drill sergeant Hacking into an enemy computer	Hard	3
Getting the head cheerleader to break up with the jock Impressing a General Decoding secured enemy communications	Very hard	4
Getting the head cheerleader to go out with your friend the uber-nerd Impressing an enemy ace Understanding the end of Neon Genesis Evangelion	Only in Anime	5

the roll is made.

Right before the roll, the GM should assign a target number (TN) based on the story objective. The TN reflects the number of Successes the player rolling will need to meet his story objective. For instance, if a roll's TN is 3 and you roll a total of 2 Successes, you will still fail the roll. However, if roll 3 or more Successes you will pass the roll.

Use the following chart for guidelines to help determine the TN in a number of different situations.

These are just guidelines. The GM should raise or lower the Target Number based on how well the players role played the Scene.

EXAMPLE OF STORY OBJECTIVES

Major d'Artangan desperately wants to take over his brother's unit and gains an audience with the regimental CO. After a short discussion on d'Artangan's plans for rebuilding the unit, the CO seems generally in favor of the idea, but he will have to pull a few strings to make it happen. The GM decides to set a TN of 2 to meet the Story Objective.

PLAYING THE SCENE

After the Scene has been framed, it is time to role play. Players may narrate what their character is doing, how their characters are interacting with other player characters and NPCs, etc.

After the role playing is finished, it is time to make a Standard roll. The GM is the final arbiter of which Stat and skill should be used in the roll, but players should feel empowered to suggest a Stat or skill. After the roll, the GM and players should role play the aftermath of the roll and bring the Scene to a close.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE IN A SCENE ROLL

Once the roll is made, as long as the player rolls a single Success, his character will earn the Scene reward (listed as the Scene's Objective.) If the player also rolls enough Successes to beat the TN for the story objective, the GM should take that into account during any additional role playing.

TYPES OF SCENES

SOCIAL SCENE

Social Scenes have also been used for interrogations, flashbacks, family disputes, and convincing the guards to slip the characters a key.

EXAMPLE

Continuing from above, D'Artangan's player rolls four dice for his Will and compares to his Social Skill of 2. However, he only rolls 1 Success so he passes the Scene, but does not roll well enough to achieve his story objective. Because this is a Social Scene (more on that below), D'Artangan's player earns 1 point of Overdrive, but will not be getting that promotion after all.

Objective: To gain 1 point of Overdrive

Governing Skill: Social

Description: During Social Scenes, players put their characters into situations where they have to interact with other PCs or NPCs. Oftentimes, social scenes are also the most likely to have role playing objectives due to their heavy use of role playing. Story objective or not, if the player rolls 1 Success, they get the point of Overdrive.

Sample Role Playing Objectives: Get the girl/boy to go out with you, play a prank without getting caught, convincing the rebels to join your cause

Suggestions for Character Development: Social Scenes are the primary vehicle for building character through interaction with other characters. Use Social Scenes when a character want to tell another character how she feels

(whether it's love, hate, disgust, loyalty, apathy, etc.). These are also good for when a character is trying to persuade his boss for a promotion, his friend to share his favorite mecha, or the local misfit to join the team.

FIELD OPS SCENE

Field Ops Scenes have been used for interrogations, building devices to listen in on enemy communications, doing recon on an area, or talking with natives about how best to defend their city. (Somehow the mayor or barkeep's daughter always finds her way into these meetings…)

Objective: To gain the upper hand in the battlefield by gaining 1 Tactical Point (see page 50.)

Governing Skill: Field Ops

Description: Field Ops scenes cover a number of different criminal, covert, recon, or below-the-board activities which, ultimately, will gain the PCs an advantage in the next battle. Should the players be successful in the roll, they will earn a Tactical Point which can be used to move the Tactical Waypoint or any mecha's starting position by 1. This type of Scene is Pass/Fail. If the player rolls 1 success, they get the Tactical Point.

Sample Role Playing Objectives: Uncover information about a captured friend, see if an ally is really an enemy spy, build an intel device

Suggestions for Character Development: Field Ops Scenes build a character by showing them be clever, cautious, or sneaky. Use Field Ops Scenes whenever a character likes to have the upper hand in battle by spying, hacking, or preparing defensive positions for an upcoming battle. The actions the character takes during a Field Ops Scene will describe the character on their own, however, do not be afraid to invite other characters into the Scene and interact with them.

RECOVERY SCENE

Recovery scenes have been used for a little comic levity after a battle (primarily because of Nurse Dotte) and for wondering why the pilot was knocked out when their teammates needed them.

Objective: To heal one or more pilots

Governing Skill: Medic

Description: Hospital scenes involve one or more pilots undergoing treatment, receiving first aid, seeking counseling or resting in order to heal mind and body. The Medic roll can be made by the player or by another player if their PC is brought into the scene
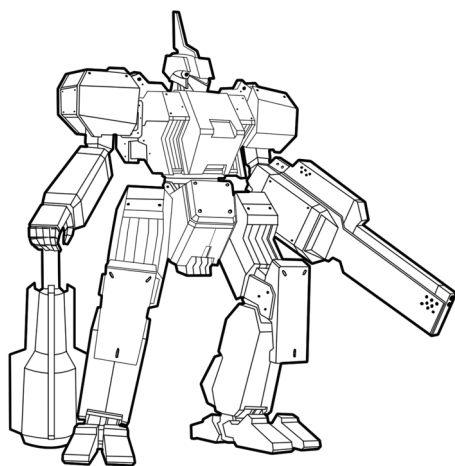
(see page 36.) Successes can be spread across multiple players without bringing them into the scene.

Sample Role Playing Objectives: Get Nurse Dotte to go out with you, work with a therapist to quiet those nightmares

Suggestions for Character Development: Recovery Scenes provide opportunities for character development through social interaction and personal introspection. If a character is laid up in the hospital, it's a great time to chat. It's also a time to sit in a hospital bed and wonder about why they got injured and worry that they failed their team.

Repair Scene

Repair rolls have been used to hit on the repair chief, improve the efficiency of a mecha's guns, and working on building whole new mecha from the ground up.

Objective: To repair one or more mecha

Governing Skill: Repair

Description: Repair scenes are to mecha what Hospital Scenes are to pilots. They give the PCs the chance to patch up the mecha, restore Configurations, change weapon load outs, and very, very rarely, change Configurations.

Successes must be spent to repair damage. It costs 2 Success to bring a Configuration online and 1 Success to repair (uncheck) one Stability Box. Weapons can always be changed for free as long as one Success is rolled. Changing Configurations and restoring them is Pass/Fail.

Like healing, one PC can make a Repair roll and repair another PC's Configurations or spread out the Successes to other PCs' mecha.

Sample Role Playing Objectives: Making the repair crew see that you know your way around a mecha, hitting on the repair crew chief

Suggestions for Character Development: Repair Scenes also provide opportunities to develop character through social interaction and by doing interesting things with mecha. Oftentimes one or more characters will work together to fix the team's mecha, which provides the character making the Repair roll the opportunity to talk with other player characters, the team doing the repairs, or others in the unit who might be in the repair bay. Also, characters can make Repair rolls to work on special pet projects, tinker with their mecha, and generally do what gearheads do. Special projects and tinkering will not have any mechanical effect beyond repairing damage, but it is a good way to show the character's interests.

NOT SURE WHAT TO DO ON YOUR SCENE

There may come a time when you, the player, have no idea what to do with your turn. If so, that's okay. You can always ask other players for ideas, let another player go before you, or you can consult the table below for ideas.

To use the table, roll a D66 and find a short, (hopefully) evocative description of a scene to play.

PLAYER TABLE	Mecha 1	Personal 2	Natural 3	Technological 4	Short Term 5	Long Term 6
Minor 1	Weapon Malfunction	Relative is Injured	The Character Gets Sick	One piece of Equipment is missing	The after-action reports from the last battle are in ...	A love interest reveals herself
Major 2	Arm falls off	Distant Relative Passes Away	The Character Contracts a Bad Disease	One piece of Equipment degrades	The enemy is sighted near home	The enemy launches a campaign targeted a place the character loves
Severe 3	Legs fall off	Close Relative Passes Away	The Character is Poisoned	One piece of Equipment is junked	The Enemy Attacks home	A favorite NPC is reassigned
Helpful 4	Repair Crew Visits	Relative Visits/ Makes Contact	Extra R&R Time Can Heal	One piece of Equipment improves	The Goal is right in front of their eyes	The Goal is right in front of their eyes
Neutral 5	Mecha Moves By Itself	NPC Team Member Wants to Talk	Character is sunburned, frost bit, windblown, etc.	One piece of Equipment malfunctions for a second	Your mecha is repainted	You are assigned a patrol
Wild Card 6	Power Fluctuations	A New Friend Enters the Picture	The character is caught in a natural event	A package arrives	A friend is caught up in battle	You've been volunteered

PLAYING THE SCENE

Once you have chosen your scene and laid the foundation, it's time to play the scene, but what, exactly, does it mean to play the scene?

The exact process of playing a scene varies from group-to-group and player-to-player. For players who really like to get into character, examine personal issues, and talk about what their characters are doing, playing scenes will be more like impromptu acting. Players may speak using accents or make jokes.

Other groups may be much more "matter-of-fact." There will be little acting or examining character issues. Instead, scenes will be declared only for their tactical value: get Overdrive, fix the mecha, get Tactical Points, etc. That's fine, too.

Most groups use a mix of these two approaches. Some players will just want to fight it out, while others want to talk in character and look at issues. That's also great. As long as everyone gets at least some of what they want. The GM's section has tips for how to handle both extremes.

No matter what approach the players take to playing their game, once actions have come to a head (or the action starts to trail off and playing gets boring), it's time to roll the dice. Any players in the scene can roll if they wish (see a more in-depth discussion of this below, but keep in mind that players can only roll once per episode.) To do so, each player makes an appropriate skill check.

If Successes are rolled, then the rules for the Scene Type are consulted and the appropriate actions are taken (Overdrive is handed over, a Tactical Point is earned, mecha are repaired, etc.) Also, the GM should have a TN in her head using the guidelines above. This is the number of successes the players need to meet their role playing objective.

This TN should be determined through role playing. If the player did things which would help them achieve their goal, the TN should be lower (as low as 1). If the player did things which hurt them, the TN should be higher.

If the player rolls a number of successes that matches or beats the TN, the player also

achieves their role playing objective and the GM should take that account into future role playing.

MULTIPLE PCS IN ONE SCENE

On a players' turn, he can invite other players into the scene. This is a fairly informal process and usually happens when the player announces what he wants to do. "I want to go to talk with Bob about the last battle" or "I go meet with the Captain" are both pretty good ways to invite another player into the scene. The other player may refuse.

On the other hand, another player may ask to be included in the scene. The active player can always opt out of the player's request if they think it will interfere with their objective for the scene. It is always the active player's decision to allow another player into his Scene.

The thing to remember about being in other scenes is that you may only roll
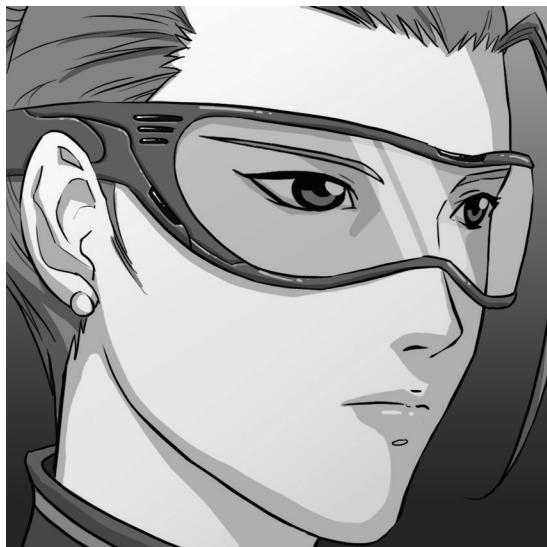
for scene and role playing objectives once per episode. So if you have your scene, then you are invited into another scene, and then you ask your way into a third, you can still only roll once. However, when you roll, you may make whatever type of roll you wish.

This means that if you are asked into a Social Scene, you may make a Repair or Acquire roll. You just have to explain what you were doing so you get to make that roll.

Now, if you have already rolled for a scene objective before your turn, you do not have to forfeit your turn in the episode. If you have some role playing you would like to do (and don't need to make a role playing objective roll) you are still permitted to do so.

It should be noted that for groups much larger than 4 players, the GM may ask that multiple players take their scene together.

HOW DO I FIGURE OUT AN OBJECTIVE?

Role playing objectives are optional for a player when he decides what he is going to do in a scene. They provide an extra objective to achieve which will drive the story forward in ways that are interesting to the player.

Each Scene Type suggests what is going to happen in the Scene. During a Repair Scene, chances are you are going to be either pouring over technical manuals or working on mecha with tools that probably have futuristic names or are huge versions of standard wrenches, hammers, and screwdrivers.

During a Hospital Scene, chances are the scene is going to take place inside of a medical area of some sort, and it will involve healing.

However, within that basic foundation, there is still the possibility for a lot of character interaction and smaller actions which serve the story. Maybe while waiting for the doctor, the character can be sifting through intel documents looking for traces of his father. During a repair scene, a rookie pilot can talk about the last battle with a veteran pilot and ask for tips.

Should the player fail his role playing objective, GMs should not do the player any serious damage (NPCs are another matter...) In fact, sometimes failing the role playing objective roll is more fun than actually making it.

Mainly, the role playing objective exists so players can guide the story. GMs should note if a player asks for something to be a role playing objective, it is important to him. Also, role playing objectives are great ways to earn AP by using Traits and meeting Goals.

WHAT TO DO WHEN IT'S NOT MY SCENE

During another player's scene, non-active players have several things they can/should do. Most importantly, non-active players need to pay some attention to what the active player is doing. Storytelling in Mecha can really go into overdrive when players start riffing off one another.

Mecha is also more fun if the players are helping to tell the story, so if one player isn't sure what he should do for his scene, this is the time for non-active players to make suggestions. Also, there are many times when the active player will declare his scene and other players will add their own suggestions.

Incorporating these ideas almost always lead to a better overall game experience for everyone. It can also lead to players asking to involve their characters into the scene, which usually makes for better role play.

Apart from involving their own characters in the scene, the GM may request that other players can take on the roles of NPCs in the Scene or to otherwise help in the narration.

Lastly, on the GM's turn, as she is setting up the combat for this episode, feel free to suggest bits of narration or recommend the outcomes of winning or losing a battle. This will make winning that much more important.

Why a set scene structure?

Let me start off by saying that when I first heard about turn-based games like what I designed for Mecha, I hated the idea. Absolutely hated it. (Kind of like games where all PCs can only take a set amount of damage before blowing up… Hrmm…) So, I am writing this section mainly to the myself of yore.

As late as v0.8 of the game, which included Traits, Goals, and mecha Protocols, I was still getting the question "What do you do in this game?" And I was like "You fight in Mecha and try to meet your goals and stuff."

Granted, I think it's a fine answer and it would have worked. However, in the end it wasn't enough.
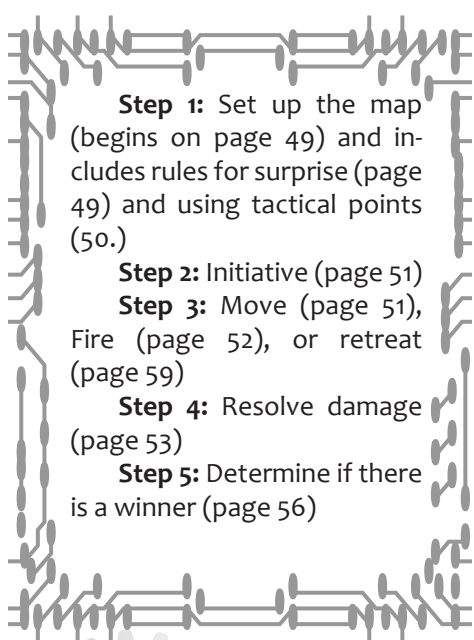
My playtesters came to me with the idea of having set scenes and I was pretty resistant. But I gave it a try nonetheless and it worked. The players had fun, as the GM, I was able to build on their ideas, and everyone at the table was able to work under the same set of expectations. This meant I knew how to guide the story and the players knew how they could affect it and when they had the most control.

MECHA COMBAT

A QUICK NOTE ABOUT COMBAT

As you read the section, you may start to feel overwhelmed by the combat in Mecha. It feels like there's a lot of rules for a game that claims to be "rules light." Have no fear, while the rules section is a bit longer than you might expect, the rules are not complicated. In fact, the basic rules for the entire game fit onto a single sheet of paper (see page 186.)

However, if you get lost, here is a quick reference for where to find the rules on combat.

Step 1: Set up the map (begins on page 49) and includes rules for surprise (page 49) and using tactical points (50.)

Step 2: Initiative (page 51)

Step 3: Move (page 51), Fire (page 52), or retreat (page 59)

Step 4: Resolve damage (page 53)

Step 5: Determine if there is a winner (page 56)

Now, let's get to the details.

BULLSEYE

Mecha Combat occurs on the Bullseye Battlemap.
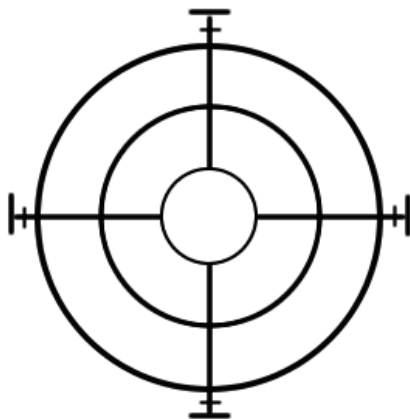
To have a Bullseye Battlemap of your very own, I suggest drawing one on a dry erase mat. There is also one included in the back of the book or available for download on mecharpg.com.

The Bullseye Battlemap is not supposed to represent a set number of meters or any concrete distance. Instead, it is an abstract measure of the relative positions of the various mecha, infantry, tanks, and buildings that are found on the battlefield. This allows combat to scale from the smallest unit to the largest and for battles to occur over a few meters of turf or hundreds of kilometers.

The Bullseye Battlemap is laid out as follows:
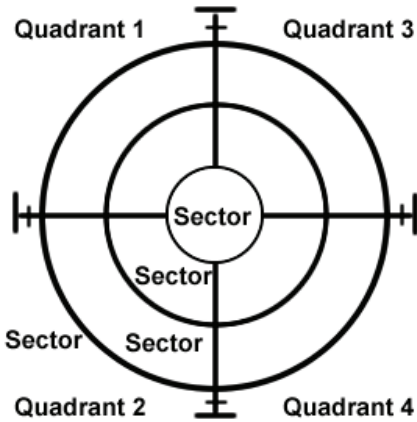
As you can see, the Bullseye Battlemap is divided into four quadrants which share a center sector. Note, the area outside the outermost circle is also considered a sector and mecha may line up, move and fight in these areas.

The sectors are numbered like this:
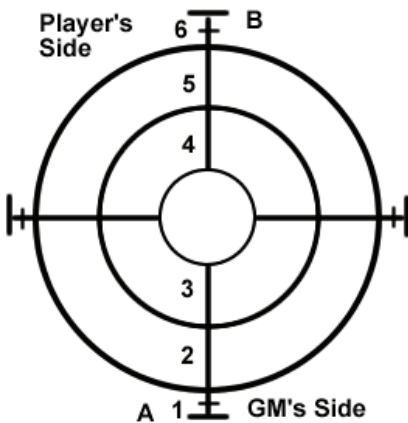
Using this scheme, random positions can be determined by rolling 2 D6s. The first determines the A (roll of 1-3) or B (roll of 4-6) half. And the second roll determines which sector in that half.

HOW TO FIGHT

Every combat starts off with the players and the GM working together to set up the fight. Together, the GM and the players do the following two things:
- Place units and buildings on the Bullseye Battlemap (also called setup)
- Determine initiative

Once the combat is set up, it can begin in earnest. Combat is broken up into rounds with each player getting a turn. During their turn, each player may take a full combat action. Once all players have had their turn, a new round begins.

The sequence looks like this:
- The mecha or pilot with the highest initiative may take a full combat action or choose to hold and act at a later point in the round
- The next highest initiative may take a full combat action
- And so on until all units have taken their full combat action
- Combat goes back to the top of the order with the highest initiative getting another full combat action
- Combat will continue until one side starts their turn in the Tactical Waypoint, one side is totally junked or the other side has completely retreated

A QUICK NOTE ON NARRATION

Part of the mecha anime genre involves visuals of the mecha running across terrain, dodging missiles and laser blasts, and using a variety of amazing weaponry to bring the pain on their foes. Mecha can be more fun for many players if they narrate their mecha doing these actions during combat.

As such, it is highly encouraged that instead of just rolling dice and comparing numbers, players narrate how their mecha is moving. Is the mecha crashing into buildings, leaving a trail of destruction behind it or is slowly advancing, using the surrounding buildings as cover? Either way, the mecha will still move the same number of Movement Points, but a little narration can help create a more enjoyable mecha story.

SETTING UP THE BULLSEYE BATTLEMAP

Opponents usually start at opposite ends of the Bullseye Battlemap. In a typical two-sided battle, each side must set up on half (so quadrants 1-2 or 3-4) of the battlemap on the outermost sectors.

In a three- or four-sided battle, each side may choose one of the quadrants. Any more than four and the sides will have to start doubling up.

Here is an example of a starting placement for two mecha that have decided to square off.
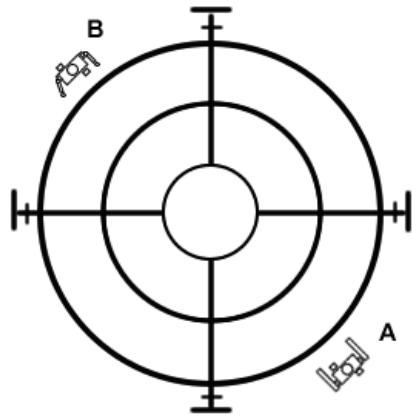
SURPRISE

Some battles may begin in an ambush. This means that one side was unaware of the other. When this happens the side that knows of the other is called the **ambushers**. They may choose to setup anywhere on the Bullseye battlemap while the other side lines up on the far edge as normal. Also, depending on the GM's call, it may mean the ambushed side cannot act for an initial **surprise turn**.

If there is a surprise turn, for the first turn of combat the side being ambushed does not roll Initiative. The ambushers roll as normal and may act as normal. All the surprised side can do is roll Defense and activate any allowable Configurations. After the all of the ambushers have had their turn, the surprised side rolls Initiative and battle proceeds as normal.

Note: if a mecha is surprised/ambushed, it cannot act. This means that the surprise round does not count as

any one's "first turn." The surprise round must be played out and then another full round is played before a mecha can control a tactical waypoint.

It is up to the GM to determine when one side is being ambushed.

Also, during this step, the GM will place **buildings** in the various sectors if any buildings are to be used. See page 59 for more on buildings and terrain.

THE TACTICAL WAYPOINT

The Tactical Waypoint is a single sector on the Bullseye battlemap that represents the tactical high ground. It might be an escape route, a mobile headquarters, or a strategically advantageous position which, if held, will lead to the certain destruction of the other side. If any mecha starts their turn in this square (except for the very first turn), that mecha's side wins the battle.

To determine where the Tactical Waypoint lies, roll 2 D6s. The first die will determine on which half of the battlemap the Tactical Waypoint will lie. The second die determines the actual sector (see above for how to read the various rolls.) Place a marker in that sector to represent the Tactical Waypoint.

The group should decide together what the Tactical Waypoint represents. If no other justification can be found, the Tactical Waypoint simply represents the possibility of victory through superior tactics and maneuvering.

There is one thing the Tactical Waypoint is not. It is not an overwhelming victory. If the players take the Tactical Waypoint, the GM can determine which of the enemies survive. If the GM takes the Tactical Waypoint, the players are roughed up, they take 1 point of damage, but they are not destroyed.

FIGHTING WITHOUT A TACTICAL WAYPOINT

If the player wants to fight a battle to the death, usually in a duel against an enemy ace, the players can opt to not use the Tactical Waypoint. This makes the battle last longer, but it is more dramatic and more suited to the climatic final battle of an anime story arc.

If this is this case, simply do not place the Tactical Waypoint on the battlefield.

SPENDING TACTICAL POINTS

The last step in set up is to players may spend their Tactical Points. Players do not have to spend their Tactical Points in a battle and multiple players can pool their Tactical Points together.

Tactical Points can be used to do two things:
- Move the Tactical Waypoint
- Move enemy or friendly mecha around the board

Tactical Points can move the Tactical Waypoint or a mecha 1 Movement Point per Tactical Point. It still costs 2 Movement Points to move a mecha or the Tactical Waypoint across a quadrant boundary (a straight line on the Bullseye Battlemap.) Multiple mecha can be moved this way, but it still costs 1 Tactical Point per Movement Point.

INITIATIVE

To determine initiative, make an Engineering roll against Mecha Combat and count Successes. The player with the highest total goes first, the second highest goes next, and so on. If there is a tie, the player that rolled the fewest number of dice goes first. If there is a still a tie, roll 1D6. Highest roll goes first. You can spend Overdrive on this roll if you would like.

If a player rolls a Great Success, the player gains a point of Overdrive as normal.

If a player rolls a Cut Scene, the player may take a half action as normal. This half action is treated like a surprise round. If the player moves into the Tactical Waypoint, they must still wait until the start of their second turn to win the game. Also, as a side note, any dice earned during strafing last until the beginning of the player's next turn.

FULL COMBAT ACTIONS

In combat, every player gets a full combat action, which consists of one Movement roll and one Attack roll. A player cannot move or fire twice in the same turn unless they get a Cut Scene (see page 34) or have a Configuration which allows them to do so. Players can elect to neither move nor fire at their discretion.

In some places, you will see the term "half combat action." This refers to either moving or firing, but not both. Also, if rules ever ask a player to sacrifice a half action, the choice is typically left to the player whether they choose not to move or not to fire.

HOLDING

Holding refers to waiting to take your full combat action. Mecha that have high Engineering may find it useful to not move or fire until some or all of the other combatants have had their turns. In this case, the player can declare that they are holding and not take either of their half combat actions.

The player may take their turn after any other player's turn has completed, but may not act in the middle of another player's (or the GM's) turn.

You cannot hold unless you have a full combat action.

MOVEMENT

In order to move a unit across the Bullseye Battlemap, the player makes a Movement roll based off the mecha's Movement Linked stat and the character's Mecha Combat skill as their target. Each Success grants the player one Movement Point for the turn.

It costs 1 Movement Point to move from sector-to-sector (cross a curved line) and 2 movement points to cross a straight line (go from one quadrant to another). There is one caveat: a mecha cannot cross two quadrants in a row in the same turn. So on turn one, if the player crosses a quadrant, she must then cross a sector or wait until turn two to move across another quadrant.

Also, it is not possible to move farther out than the outside of the outer edge of the Bullseye Battlemap.

Here is an example of movement. The two sides start out opposed. Note that mecha A and mecha B cannot move

farther way from the Bullseye Battle-map than they are in this illustration.
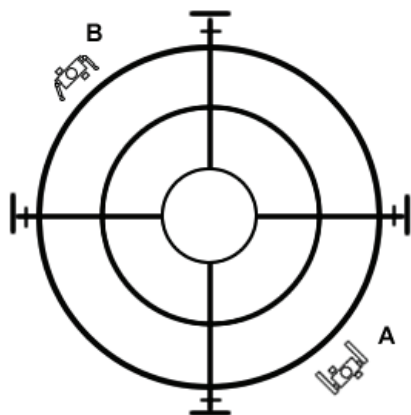
On their separate turns, the mecha moves as the arrows indicate (below). It will cost mecha A 2 movement points to cross the quadrant. It costs mecha B 1 point to change sectors.
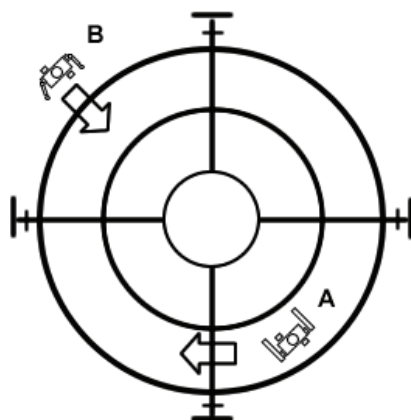
This is how the mecha end up after the Movement:
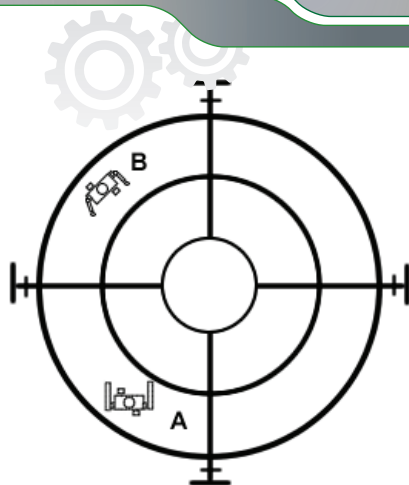
STRAFING

If the player so chooses, the mecha may stay in the same sector for that turn and strafe instead of moving. This means that instead of changing sectors or quadrants any Successes gained in a Movement roll will form a pool that remains until the beginning of the player's next turn. The dice in this pool can be split across several Defense rolls, but they can only be used once. In other words, they can be split up during the turn, but go away at the start of the player's next turn.

Players should be forced to declare their intention to strafe before they roll, but in practice it's okay to allow a player to check their roll and then decide to move or not.

RANGE

All weapons have an optimum range which is a number between 0 and 6. If the target is that exact number of Movement Points away, the weapon attacks at full strength. This means that the player attacks with a number of

dice equal to the mecha's linked Attack stat. However, for every movement point difference from the optimum range, the attacker subtracts one die from their Attack pool.

To determine range, use the most direct route.
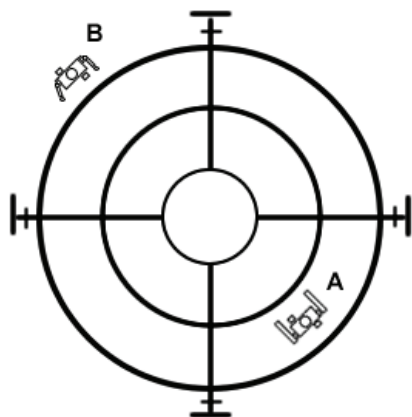
In this example, mecha A is at range 5 to mecha B. If mecha A tries to fire a weapon with an optimum range of 3, the attacker will roll two fewer Attack dice. If mecha B has a weapon with an optimum range 5, it rolls a number of dice equal to its Attack stat.

Other examples of range:
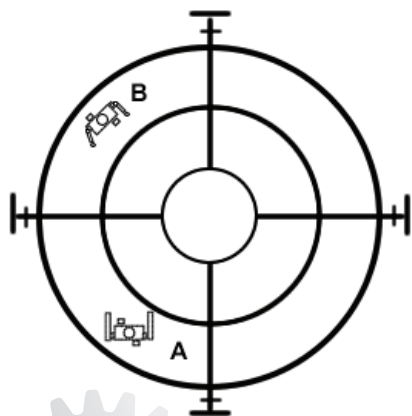
The mecha in this example are at range 2.
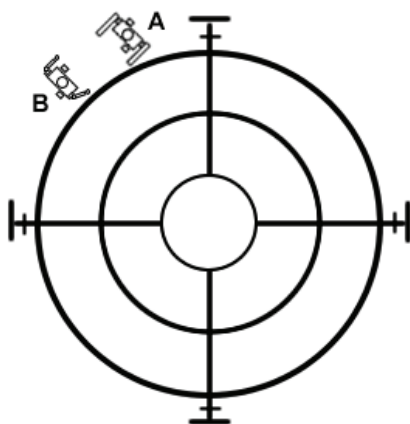
The mecha in this example are at range 0.

DEALING DAMAGE

To deal damage, the attacker rolls dice equal to its Attack linked stat minus any dice for range. The skill used in this roll is the pilot's Mecha Combat skill. The target rolls dice equal to its Defense rating against their Mecha Combat skill.

If the attacker rolls more Successes, the target marks off 1 point of damage on its Stability Track and must follow the rules for damage.

DAMAGE

There are three phases to damage in Mecha: Stability phase, Severe phase, and the Lethal phase.

STABILITY PHASE

Undamaged mecha start in the Stability Phase and will stay there until they fail a Stability Roll. Then they may move to the Severe Phase.

In the Stability Phase, all damage is recorded on one of two Stability Tracks. Both pilots and mecha have their own Stability Tracks, each of which are six boxes long. If an Attack is successful (meaning that the attacker rolls more successes than the defender), the defender marks off one box on the appropriate Stability Track.

Which Stability Track is marked off? If a pilot is in his mecha, then the mecha's Stability Track is marked off. If the pilot is outside his mecha, the pilot's Stability Track is marked off.

Pilot Stability Rolls

If the defending player's pilot had to mark off a damage box, he must then make a Stability Roll. The defending player rolls 1D6. If the result is higher than the number of damage boxes

DESIGNER NOTE

At first glance, this may not sound very logical, but hours of watching mecha anime have shown that a mecha might be able to shoot a weapon big enough to shatter a mountain, but that same weapon turned against one of the of the stars of the show is usually only good enough to throw the poor guy in the air and land him in the hospital with a bandage on his cheek.

This general principle doesn't apply to mooks, however, as anime directors tend to love to show mooks dying in massive numbers from even the smallest of wounds.

checked off the Pilot Stability Track, the pilot continues to fight as normal. If the result is less than or equal to the number of boxes checked off, the pilot is knocked out of the fight and must be removed from the combat. However, the pilot is not dead, rather he is out of the fight and wakes up in the hospital on his turn.

Example: While attempting to infiltrate a base, Sergeant Jones is attacked by two guards on patrol. The guards roll higher on the initiative and go first. The first guard attacks and gets 3 Successes, while Jones only rolls 1 Success. He has to mark off a point on his pilot Stability Track and make a Stability Roll. He gets a 5 which is higher than 1. He keeps fighting.

A few turns later, the same guard rolls 4 successes to Jones' 3, which means he must mark off a second box from his pilot Stability Track. Again, Jones' player has to make a Stability Roll. He gets a 2, which is not higher than the number of boxes checked. Jones has been taken out of the combat and will likely find himself awake in an enemy prison.

Mecha Stability Rolls

If the defending player's mecha had to mark off a damage box, he must then make a Stability Roll for the mecha. The defending player rolls 1D6. If the result is higher than the number of damage boxes checked off, the mecha continues to fight as normal. If the result is less than or equal to the number of boxes checked off, the defender has two options. First, they can accept they have been knocked out of the battle, remove their mecha from the Bullseye Battlemap and sit out the rest of the

combat.

Or second, the defender can chose to fight on. In this case, the mecha must deal with the consequences of the damage phase it is in.

If the mecha is in the Stability phase (having never failed a roll), fails a roll, and chooses to keep fighting, it enters the Severe Damage phase. The defending player must immediately choose one Configuration to go offline. This means that the Configuration can no longer be activated during battle and must be repaired before any Stability Track damage (see the section on repairs on page 42.)

Example: Jones escapes the prison hospital and manages to steal a Ghost Fox Steel Gunner. He is quickly pursued by an enemy ace in a Howling Dragon who fires one of her field guns at Jones and rolls 5 Successes. Luck is not with Jones and he rolls only 1 Success for Defense and takes a point off his mecha's Stability Track. He rolls a 1D6 and gets a 1.

This is not Jones' lucky day! However, he does not want to end up back in prison, so he chooses to go into the Severe Damage Phase. He selects his Prowler Configuration to go offline which means he cannot use it until he gets it repaired, which won't be until after the battle!

There are two exceptions to when a player can go into the Severe Damage Phase.

- If the mecha only has one Configuration remaining, it goes offline and the mecha instead goes to the Lethal Damage phase.
- If the mecha has no Configurations remaining, the defender cannot choose to go to another Damage phase and is instead removed from combat.

The GM or other players may never force this decision on the defending player. The defender must make the choice alone.

SEVERE DAMAGE PHASE

In the Severe Damage phase, the mecha continues to operate as normal. However, if the player fails another Stability Roll, the player can decide to be knocked out of the battle or the player can choose to go the Lethal Damage phase.

To go to the Lethal Damage, the player's other Configuration goes offline and must be repaired before it can be activated. Also, the pilot gains a free point of Overdrive because he's going to need it. This is because if the mecha fails a third Stability Roll, the pilot dies. End of story.

Example: Back to Jones. That Howling Dragon ace has his number and she scores a second hit, this time with a flak cannon. Jones marks off a second box on his mecha Stability Track and rolls 1D6 for another 1! He managed to fail his Stability Roll again.

Jones' player thinks for a second and decides it's do or die time. He is going to the Lethal Damage Phase. This means that Jones loses his other Configuration, but he gains 1 point of Overdrive.

LETHAL DAMAGE PHASE

This is it. By entering the Lethal Damage phase, the player is signaling to the GM that it's okay to kill this character. The mecha may fight on as normal, though without use of its Configurations, but if the mecha fails a third Stability Roll, that's it.

The mecha explodes in a fiery, yet dramatic explosion and the pilot inside dies, immolated by the death throes of the mecha he piloted into many glorious battles. Teammates will wail, villains will laugh and somewhere a beautiful maiden (or shojen) falls to her knees shedding first one tear and then many. Haunting music plays.

It's time to roll a new character. However, the good news is that new characters usually take mecha anime in new directions. Plus, your new character gets to start with the same amount of AP as the old one!

MOOKS

Damage against mooks works differently. When attacking a mook squad, the player makes an Attack roll, but there is no Defense roll. Instead, a mook squad can take up to five Successes worth of damage before being eradicated. The Attacking player must choose which squad they are attacking and if that squad is eradicated, the damage does not carryover.

KNOCKBACK

If a mecha takes damage, it also suffers knockback. For every success the Attacker rolls in excess of the defense roll he may move the targeted mecha or pilot 1 Movement Point on the Bullseye Battlemap.

DAMAGE TYPE

All weapons have a type: projectile, energy, plasma, missile, melee, etc. This comes into play when using certain Configurations and when using optional rules.

WEAPON COOL DOWN

One weapon and one weapon only, can be fired per turn unless a Configuration is used. It is the player's choice which weapon is used with the caveat that a weapon cannot be fired on successive turns. If a weapon was fired the previous turn, it must cool down and cannot be fired again until next turn without the use of a Configuration.

WINNING COMBAT

Combat will continue with all players and the GM taking turns, mecha fighting mecha, mooks fighting and dying horribly, banter going back and forth, etc. until one of three victory conditions occurs.

1. All but one side is completely scrapped. When only one side has functioning units, that side wins the conflict.
2. Any unit that begins its turn (after the first turn in which they can act) in same sector as the Tactical Waypoint. That unit's side wins the battle. The other side is forced to retreat or be destroyed. In doing so, they take 1 point of damage on the appropriate Stability Track. No Stability Roll is needed.
3. All but one side leaves the battlefield. This is essentially the same condition as #1. But if no mecha or mooks exist on all but one side because they retreated, that is a win for the remaining side.

There should be story ramifications for winning or losing a combat. After a battle is won or lost, the GM should narrate the aftermath of combat with the help of the winning players. It can be as simple as the enemy commander (or the PCs) getting captured, a narrow escape, or if the battle takes place in a larger conflict, this one key battle may decide the fate of the entire struggle!

In terms of how to narrate the aftermath of combat, the GM should describe outcomes favorable to the players if they win and not-so-favorable if they lose. The GM can also involve the players in a little role play after the combat, but nothing that should require a skill roll.

SITUATIONAL RULES

The following rules cover a variety of special circumstances that can occur in combat, etc

TAKING THE BULLET

If two mecha are in the same sector, one may take the bullet for the other. Taking the bullet costs 1 Movement Point and once one mecha is covering the other, neither mecha may move, strafe, or use Configurations which prevent strafing.

Both the covering and the covered mecha may still Attack. However, whenever an Attacker targets the covered the mecha, both the covered and covering players roll Defense and the higher result is used. If the Attack is successful, the attacker determines which mecha takes damage.

Any mecha in the same Sector may dislodge the covering mecha by making a successful Attack on the covering mecha. The Attack, which does not use the Taking the Bullet rules since the covering mecha is targeted directly, does damage as normal. It also means that the covering mecha cannot take the bullet until it spends a Movement action again to do so.

Pilots and characters outside of mecha may also take the bullet. The rules work the same, though using the pilot's stats only. For obvious reasons, pilots can only cover other pilots or mooks.

COMBAT OUTSIDE OF MECHA

Combat outside of a mecha follows the same basic rules as fighting in mecha. The main difference is which stats are used for various actions. Linked stats are not available, so the player must make rolls using the character's stats only. However, even though a character cannot use his linked Stats, the effect of linking still remains.

Outside of a mecha, when a pilot wants to attack, his player rolls the Base Stat he has linked to Weapons to find the Attack Linked Stat. When he wants to move, his player rolls the Base Stat he assigned to the Movement Linked Stat. When the pilot wants to roll Defense, he uses the stat that is Linked to his Defense stat. Finally, for determining Initiative, the pilot's player uses the same Base Stat that is linked to Engineering.

Example: Let's say Major D'Artagnan has the following Link Array: Attack 8 (Will 4 + Weapons 4), Defense 7 (Intelligence 4 + Armor 3), Engineering 4 (Agility 2 + Tecnology 2), and Movement 3 (Strength 1 + Speed 2).

In his mecha, the major rolls 8 dice to Attack, 7 to Defend, rolls 4 to his Initiative, and rolls 3 dice for Movement. Outside of his mecha, he will roll 4 dice when he Attacks (because of his Will of 4 which is Linked to Attack), 4 dice to Defend (because of his 4 in Intelligence which is Linked to Defense), he rolls 2 for Initiative (because of his 2 Agility which is Linked to Engineering), and rolls 1 die to move (because of his 1 in Strength which is Linked to Movement.)

Just like in his mecha, the major uses his willpower to make furious assaults and his smarts to keep him safe from harm. Then he uses his agility to get the drop on his foes while his meager strength keeps him barely moving along.

PERSONAL WEAPONS

Personal weapons have an optimum range and a damage type just like mecha weapons. They also cannot be fired in subsequent turns, meaning that once a weapon has been fired, it must cool down and cannot be used until the next turn. Weapons are described in greater detail in the Equipment section.

UNARMED COMBAT

Characters can always make an unarmed combat Attack. This is a 0/Impact attack that doesn't need to cool down.

BOARDING A MECHA

Should the need arise; it requires 1 Movement point to board a mecha.

Conversely, if a character starts in the same sector as an unpiloted mecha, the player may choose not to roll Movement and may enter the mecha automatically. (In other words, because Movement rolls are supposed to represent combatants positioning themselves on the battlefield, they should be able to board their mecha.)

FIRING IT UP

It requires a half action to activate a mecha which becomes fully active. This typically means that during the turn the mecha becomes active, the mecha will not have a action until the start of the player's next turn.

BUILDINGS

Any structure, be it a tent, a gun emplacement, or sky scraper is considered a building, though buildings that exist only for story purposes (i.e. the players are not using the optional rules for terrain and the buildings do not have weapons with which to attack) should not be placed on the Bullseye Battlemap.

Those buildings that affect combat have the same four stats as mecha with the personnel operating the building as their "pilot." Unlike mecha, though, their Linked stats are not capped at 12. Buildings may also have Configurations. The one major difference is that buildings do not make Movement rolls. Their Movement stat is always at 0.

Buildings also have a Stability Track with 6 boxes. If the building fails its Stability Roll, it crumbles and is destroyed.

LET THIS BE OUR FINAL BATTLE

Sometimes the battle is lost and discretion becomes the better part of valor. To retreat from battle, the player must wait until his turn and declare that he is retreating instead of rolling for Movement. As long as no opposing player protests, the mecha may attack and then is taken off the Bullseye Battlemap for the rest of combat.

However, any opposing player can declare "Let this be our final battle!" If this happens, the player who wishes to retreat makes a contested Movement roll against all opposition players who wish to block the retreat. If the retreating player wins the retreat roll, he retreats as normal. If the opposition players win, the player can use any successes in the Contested roll to move as normal, but the mecha does not leave battle.

Once a pilot has retreated, he and his mecha cannot enter the battle again.

TERRAIN (OPTIONAL)

Terrain represents features in the environment which make it harder to move, block line of sight, and make it easier to shoot, or make it more difficult to be shot. This includes things like buildings, large trees, and hills.

The following are some examples of terrain which can be included in a game of Mecha.

EXAMPLE TERRAIN: COPSE OF TREES

This represents a dense group of trees that a mecha can enter. The trees slow down the mecha's movement, but help protect it from enemy fire.

Bonuses and penalties:

- It costs two Movement points to enter a Copse of Trees
- A Copse of Trees grants +1 Defense Dice
- Any weapon of type wave, fire, laser, plasma, etc. will set the trees fire. Any mecha entering a sector with trees on fire must defend against a level 4 Attack rolled by the GM.

EXAMPLE TERRAIN: FOG

Fog is an atmospheric condition that makes it very difficult to see and target enemy mecha.

Bonuses and penalties:

- All mecha who fire at targets more than 2 range units away are at -1 Attack Dice.

EXAMPLE TERRAIN: HILLS

Hills are tall earth formations that provide any mecha on top of them excellent line of sight over the entire Bullseye Battlemap. They also make the mecha easier to spot and shoot.

Bonuses and penalties:

- It costs two Movement points to enter a sector with Hills
- Hills grant +1 Attack Dice to anyone in the same sector as the Hills.

- Any mecha on the Hills are at -1 Defense dice when attacked by units not at range 0.

EXAMPLE TERRAIN: MOUNTAIN

Mountains represent very tall rock structures that are impassible and too tall to see over.

Bonuses and penalties:

- Mountains are impassable. Mecha cannot enter a sector with mountains.
- Mountains block line of sight. This means any mecha in the same quadrant cannot see the mecha if they are on the opposite side of the mountains.

EXAMPLE TERRAIN: OFFICE BUILDING

An office building is a typical, non-descript building found in suburbs and cities everywhere.

Bonuses and penalties:

- It costs 2 Movement points to enter a sector with Office Buildings.
- Impact weapons do double damage against buildings.

Any of these examples can be used as a template for other types of terrain.

Terrain should be placed on the Bullseye Battlemap during the setup phase. The GM should choose which terrain or terrains inhabit a sector. The bonuses and penalties for different types of terrain stack. Also, if a sector has terrain, the entire sector has the terrain.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

An SRS is peopled by more than just the player characters. The GM controlled characters are called Non-Player Characters, or NPCs. In Mecha, there are four types of non-player characters: solders, aces, allies and mooks.

SOLDIERS

A soldier is an enemy NPC important enough to be piloting a mecha, but not important enough to be an ace. They are the rank and file of the enemy army, though they are basically nameless and faceless soldiers doing their duty. It is not important to know their name, the Traits, or their goals. All that matters is the Mecha or Personal Combat skill and their final Linked Stats.

Soldiers don't earn Overdrive if they roll 5 Successes, but they can get a Cut Scene if they roll 8+ successes. However, they are removed from the battlefield if they fail a Stability Roll.

When looking at NPC write ups in the various SRSes, any NPC that is not specifically noted as an ace is a as a soldier (unless the GM promotes them).

ACES

An ace is distinguished by their importance in the scope of the campaign; hence the GM should give them a name. (Hint: think of something better than Bob or Dave. Though I suppose Bob the Barbarian or Dave the Destroyer is okay, if a bit uninspiring.)

Generating NPCs should be done like generating player-characters. They will have a set of linked stats fed by character and mecha stats. Their mecha have Configurations and they have Traits. In combat, they will try to fight their hardest and then retreat before losing so they can fight another day.

Also, aces earn Overdrive for the GM in the same way PCs earn Overdrive for their players. Anytime an ace rolls 5 Successes, it earns one Overdrive.

When looking at NPC write ups in the various SRSes, some NPCs will be specified as aces (the gods in *Godblind* for instance). NPCs that do not specify may be played as soldiers or aces.

ALLIES

Named NPCs can also be allies. If they are fighting for the players, to assist them, or help them achieve their goals, then the NPC is an ally. Allies have names and relevant stats just like other named NPCs, but they do not earn Overdrive for the GM. Instead, they earn Overdrive that can be spent only to improve their own rolls and to activate their own Configurations.

MOOKS

The other type of NPC is the mook. Mooks play two very important jobs in mecha anime, and hence, in Mecha. Their most important job is to explode as the main characters dissolve into a blur of awesome and speed lines and missiles and bullets.

Their other, far less important job is to provide covering fire and support to the soldiers and aces. Both jobs are important, though they seem to be better at the whole exploding bit.
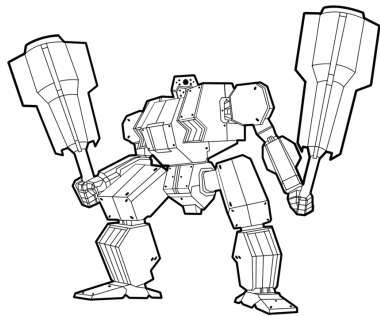
Mooks come in three varieties: Base 2, Base 3, and Base 4. This determines how many dice they have when rolling Movement and Attacking. It also determines their skill in Mecha Piloting and Mecha Combat.

Base	2	3	4
Movement	2	3	4
Attack	2	3	4
Mecha or Personal Combat	2	3	3

Mooks come armed with two weapons, however, the GM may feel free to change the weapons load out as needed.

<div align="center">

Mook Cannon (3/Impact*)
Mook Sword (0/Impact*)

</div>

* GMs should feel free to change these damage types to fit the SRS.

REMEMBERING A FALLEN HERO

In Mecha, every character lives, but not every character truly dies. In fact, character death in Mecha is a very rare occurrence. Even failing a Stability Roll means that the character's mecha is junked, not destroyed.

There are two cases in which a character can die. The first is failing a Stability Roll in the Lethal Damage phase. Though for a character to even be in the Lethal Damage phase, the player has to make the decision to put his character's life in danger. Again, looking to mecha anime, characters rarely die on the battlefield. Even as their mecha is being shot into a million pieces, they still manage to eject and escape to safety.

The second way a character can die is what we call the "dramatically significant"

death. This means that the character leaves the anime series for reasons which further the storyline. Sometimes this means that the character passes away or suffers a significant injury which forces them to leave active duty or they get their chance to retire or the stay behind to help the natives rebuild their destroyed village, etc., but it's all done in service to the story.

In Mecha, players may request that their character suffer a dramatically significant death. If the GM feels that it would be dramatically significant, the character dies/retires/transfers at the end of the fight round. In some cases, the GM may ask if she can use the character as a NPC, though it's the player's option to allow this.

No matter how the character leaves the story, via failing a Lethal Damage phase Stability Roll or through a dramatically significant exit, the player can create a new character that has earned the same amount of AP as the previous character. Also, if the previous character had a Goal that dealt with them dying (for instance "Go down in a blaze of glory" or "Return to civilian life") the new character can have the AP from accomplishing that Goal. If the previous character's Goal had nothing to do with dying, then the new character does not gain the AP.

LOSING YOUR MECHA

The way character generation works, the mecha and the pilot are tied together from the beginning. However, there may be a time when the action of the story makes it so that mecha is somehow lost. In this case, there will be another of the same type and with the same stats waiting for the pilot on their turn.

The GM can never take away a player's mecha in a story.

CHARACTER AND MECHA ADVANCEMENT

Throughout the course of a campaign, characters will grow and advance. This is represented by players gaining and spending Advancement Points (AP). AP is awarded at the end of a session by the GM using the chart below and can be spent by the players before the start of the next session.

AP is awarded by the GM using the following criteria.

1. Playing in the session: 1 AP
2. Playing to Character Traits: 1 AP per Trait
3. Making the table laugh: 1 AP
4. Introducing intense emotion because of the story, not by being a jerk: 2 AP
5. Achieving a major goal or passion: varies* AP
6. End of a story arc (GM's discretion) 1-5 AP
7. Helping the GM to recap the story or refresh players' memories about the previous session: 1 AP (must be done before the start of a new session)

At the end of every game session, players should go around the table and describe how they role played to their Traits. As long as the player's description makes sense, the AP should be awarded. However, if description is too much of a stretch or if the player is obviously just making things up to gain the extra AP, the GM should feel free to veto it.

Players can also decide whether or not they achieved their character's goal or their Mecha's Protocol. However, the number of AP earned is equal to the number of sessions the player has pursued that goal.

AP can be spent in one of three ways. First, they can be spent to increase a mecha or character stat. The cost is 2 x the new level desired. So, for instance, if a player wants his character to go from 3 to 4, this will cost 8 points.

Secondly, skills can be improved or purchased new. To increase a skill, the cost is 5 x the new level. So to increase one's Mecha Piloting skill from 4 to 5, the cost is 30 AP.

Lastly, before a session starts, 1 AP can be used to purchase 2 Overdrive.

THE WORLD

Every player is going to create a character, who is the player's alter ego in the world. While the players may not own a mecha or pilot it in combat, they can still experience doing that through the eyes of their characters.

However, before creating that character and playing the game, everyone should have a pretty good idea of what the world looks like, the nature of the mecha that can be piloted, the factions who vie for power, and the government and major religions of the world. In some cases, these details may be superfluous, but in some cases they will make a major difference.

In Mecha we refer to all of this information as the setting of the game. Mecha packages all this information into a setting reference schematic (SRS). This document is the master reference for all things related to the setting.

The core Mecha rulebook has three SRSes in the back of the book, each portraying a totally separate set of setting details. However, you may wish to create your own setting. That's awesome! Do it and feel free to drop us an email about the setting you create.

To generate your own setting, this book presents a series of questions which flesh out the world and its inhabitants. Some of these questions will be fairly simple to answer (What is the time period of the game?) Others will be tougher (What characters archetypes and models of mecha are available?)

Whether you pick a premade setting or build your own, all players should agree on which SRS to use before stating MechaGen/CharGen.

SRS CREATION

Mecha comes with three different SRSes that you can use to begin play immediately and more will be coming from Heroic Journey Publishing. However, there are many more settings and conflicts that can be found in mecha anime than we can ever put into words.

We highly encourage fans of the game to create their own SRSes and have provided the tools to do so. To create a setting, start by answering the following questions. This will give you a general idea of what happens in the setting and what players should expect.

THE SETTING QUESTIONS

1. **Time period.** Is it modern day, the far future, the past, an alternate history.
2. **The Nature of Mecha.** Are mecha technological, flesh and blood, are they alive? How did they come to be? What type of equipment does a standard mecha have?
3. **Availability of Mecha.** Does everyone have a mecha? Are they military equipment only? Are they rare? If they're rare, how did the PCs find them?
4. **Models of Mecha.** Every SRS needs at least one model. You

can repurpose any mecha used in this book or any supplement or create your own. Typically, mecha are built with 8 stat points distributed amongst the four stats with 3 bonus points left for players to spend.

5. **Archetypes Available.** Next, your SRS will need at least one character archetype. Again, feel free to repurpose any of the Archetypes in this book or any supplement. You can also create your own by allocate 8 stat points amongst 4 stats with 3 bonus points.

6. **Determine Traits.** Every character starts with two Traits from their mecha's Configurations. Now, every SRS has different ways to figure out from where the other two come. In *Godblind*, the players choose their last two. In *Steel Gunner*, the Archetypes dictate the final two Traits. In Special Research School, the final two Traits are selected from two lists. All approaches are valid as are any other ways for determining Traits.

7. **History.** Outline at least a few major events of the world's history, especially those which have lead to the upcoming conflict.

8. **Religion.** Monotheistic, Polytheistic, None, The Force, Gaia, etc. This may or may not have an effect on how the game is played.

9. **Political Units.** Major Nations, Space Colonies, Tribal Governments, etc. These political units will form the factions for which the PCs will eventually fight.

10. **Economy.** Feudal, Corporate, Class Division, All Share, Haves/Have Nots. This may describe why the PCs fight.

11. **Theme.** A theme for the game. What are some of the major messages in the game? Is there a message? Is it only about mecha?

12. **Conflict.** Who's fighting? Mecha are kind of boring if they just stand there. There need to be at least two (though more is good, too) factions battling it out for victory.

Put all of this together and you have the start of pretty cool SRS.

SETTING GUIDELINES

There are a few other things that an SRS must have.

- Answers to all of the questions above, especially the Classes and Archetypes
- A list of allowable damage types. Some SRSes may want more or fewer damage types.
- A list of Configurations. SRS creators are welcome to make up their own Configurations, though we have worked pretty hard to balance the Configurations in game play.
- The Story Stages. An SRS should consist of at least three Story Stages with their Initial Conditions, List of Actions, and

Story Milestones. We highly recommend that even for SRS-es that you create, still have Story Stages. They will make your job as the GM much, much easier.

Beyond that, an SRS will benefit by the amount of work you put into it. Good luck!

SETTING CREATION TAKE 2

What a difference a few years makes. After looking at the SRS Creation section, I can't help but think it needs a lot of work.

Sadly, I had to be told this. In a post online, a few helpful fans of the game pointed out that the SRS creation rules in the Mecha core book needed a little TLC. It didn't take me too long to decide they were right.

This discovery led to a series of brainstorming sessions and a rather long blog post which attempted to summarize all of the accumulated wisdom about SRS Creation in one place. That blog post has been included here after being cleaned up and edited.

SRSES AND MECHA

Before creating your own setting, there is one thing you must understand about Mecha and any SRS you create for it. In Mecha, setting is both really important and totally irrelevant. The "me" who wrote the SRS Creation section so long ago understood that at a

fundamental level, but didn't articulate it very well.

Why is setting in Mecha irrelevant? Mechanically, setting makes no difference. In terms of the rules of the game, fighting in a swamp in power armor and fighting in space while piloting semi-organic mechanical wolves makes no difference. This isn't a game like, for instance, Burning Empires where there is a world to burn and that world will affect available dice or anything like that.

On the other hand, setting is irrevocably tied to the game because without an engrossing setting there's no conflict, and without conflict there's no reason to play. In other words, there's no reason to play Mecha unless you are fighting for something. Believe me, counting exploding D6 dice pools isn't much fun unless there is something on the line.

THE PROBLEM WITH PROVIDING SETTING CREATION GUIDELINES

Because settings do lead to fun, there is a need for them. Still, because one setting feature over another doesn't lead to any tangible mechanical benefits, I don't see the need to have a strict set of rules for building them. Instead, the SRS creation "rules" that follow are really the best advice I can give on how to optimize the creative process. In doing so, I will document the process I have gone through to create SRSes and present it to potential SRS builders.

The original post used an example put together by Wayne Humfleet and I to illustrate the process. You can look on the Mecha RPG blog (mecharpg.

com) and read that example. This essay also appears in Mecha Combiners talking about the steps I went through to build out Ronin Fusion Superblade. In here, I'll talk about building *Godblind*.

Again, I shall leave it to you, O gentle reader to see if this process is repeatable and makes sense. If not, let me know?

NEW SRS CREATION

A quick note: these rules will refer to "the group." I have done a 180 on this issue and I now believe SRS Creation can be a lot of fun if done as a group activity (whereas I used to assume that GMs would create and present a fully fleshed out SRS at the start of a campaign.) Still, if you, the reader, are looking to create a setting on your own, that's cool… you're just a group of 1!

STEP 1: THE IDEA (AKA BUT WITH OR MEETS)

In the beginning, there is an idea.

The best ideas for Mecha SRS Creation usually starts off with a single sentence consisting of two (hopefully unrelated ideas) joined together with "but with" or "meets." (Or some similiar phrase.)

For example:

- Big O meets Dark City (This was the original concept for Revolution Deity *Godblind*)
- Mobile Suit Gundam, but with a Supernatural Element (The

original concept for *Steel Gunner*, as I understand it.)
- American Graffiti, but with mecha (The original concept for Special Research School.)
- And the idea that sparked Ronin Fusion Superblade: Chushingura (aka Forty-seven Ronin) in supernatural Japan, but with mecha.

I have found that to make the SRS interesting and noteworthy, the theme should be a blend of at least two ideas. Just doing Big O isn't interesting by itself (it's already been done) which makes it a copyright violation, and Dark City isn't really a Mecha setting. Only when two ideas are mixed does the setting potentially become something worth considering further.

There's a small part of me that wishes "but with mecha" wasn't the only interesting enough twist for some settings. I would prefer two unrelated things to come together with mecha lovingly spooned on top, like perhaps Kiss Saves the Universe meets X-Files, but with mecha (or something.) However, the existence of mecha in a time where there were not mecha–or where common setting tropes don't allow for them– is often interesting enough to move SRS creation to the next step. Especially for those who think mecha are awesome. (Like me.)

STEP 2: ACTIVITY BRAIN OVERWARP!

Step 2 is really just brainstorming, but I wanted to give it a cheesy anime title. Actually, let's just call it brainstorming.

If this step is being done in a group of 2 or more, the lines between GM and player should be pretty blurry right now. Everyone should be free to add details, suggest modifications, request the removal of certain details, etc. At this point, the GM is more of the moderator than a master and should not force anything. If ideas are flowing, the best thing the GM master can do is just let them happen. Oh, and someone should be taking notes.

Overall, brainstorming is the most fun part of setting creation, especially with a group. The idea here is to start asking a lot of "What" and "How" questions.

What does it mean that there are cruel gods living in Heaven? How does Heaven affect people when it's only a few hundred feet above the Living City? Why can't the *Godblind* be targeted by the gods? What are those gods up to anyway?

- What do mecha look like?
- Does everyone know they exist?
- How many are there?
- Wait…the gods have children?

Of course, ideas don't always flow. If they're not, check with the group to be sure they really like the idea. If not, move on. Don't force an idea that no one likes on the group. Typically, that is path to boring games. On the other hand, if the group likes the idea and just needs a jumpstart, here are some charts to get the brainstorming going.

TYPE OF MECHA

What are mecha made of? Metal and missiles and everything nice? Or something else?

Roll 2D6	Type
2	Parts of Heavenly Bodies (Moonrock, Starstone)
3	Aquatic Vessels (Boats, Submarines, Passenger Liners)
4	Automobiles (Motorcycles, Lamborghinis)
5	Heavy Equipment (Trucks, Bulldozers, Cranes)
6	Animals (Lions, Wolves, Penguins, Insects)
7	Humanoid (Elf, Dwarf, Ogre, Human)
8	Insects/Bugs (Lady Bug, Butterfly, Cockroach)
9	Planes (Jets, Helicopters, Commercial Liners)
10	Garbage (Food Containers, Medical Waste)
11	Household Items (Toaster, Refrigerator, Knife Sharpener)
12	Plants (Trees, Flowers, Venus Flytrap, Branches)

Availability of Mecha

How prevalent are mecha in the SRS? Could it be that only the players have mecha or does everyone have one? Roll on this chart to decide.

Roll 1D6	Availability
1	Only the PCs have mecha
2	Mecha are starting to be prevalent or once were
3	The military/government controls most mecha
4	The military/government controls most mecha, but some private citizens have them
5	Everyone has mecha, but the PCs are more powerful/ experimental
6	Everyone has mecha. The PCs are no more powerful

Factions

First, roll 1D6+1 (because there have to be more than 1) to determine how many factions there are. Then roll 6D6 for each faction. This will give you an overview of the faction that you can flesh out.

Roll 1D6	Faction Nature
1	Government
2	Small Private Army
3	Military
4	Intelligence Agency
5	Citizen's Group
6	Meritocracy (Union of skilled geeks, powerful psions, etc.)

Roll 1D6	Faction Attitude
1	Paranoid
2	Hostile
3	Pacifist
4	Expansionist
5	Altruistic
6	Neutral

Roll 1D6	Faction Size
1	Tiny (2-10 people)
2	Small (11-75 people)
3	Medium (76-200)
4	Larger (201-5,000)
5	Huge (5,000+)
6	Everywhere (Lots)

Roll 1D6	Faction Resources
1	Poor
2	Middle Class
3	Wealthy
4	Rich
5	Rich from Private funding
6	Unlimited

Roll 1D6	Style
1	Public
2	Stealthy
3	Secret
4	Direct
5	Manipulative
6	Entrenched in the halls of power

Roll 1D6	Faction Tech
1	Mostly non-Mecha
2	Equivalent to the players
3	Super powered mecha
4	Weird technology (psi, magic, etc.)
5	Super technology
6	Cutting Edge technology 50+ years in the future

There is no definite time period for brainstorming. It should last as long as the group has enthusiasm for adding details. Use the charts above as needed to keep ideas flowing.

This stage will have a natural ebb and flow that is largely driven by the frequency (and forcefulness) of participation. Of course, in a group of more than 1, not all players are going to just shout things out, so the GM should be sure that everyone has had a chance to speak before moving on to the next step.

Once everyone has had their say, move to Step 3.

STEP 3: THE CHECKLIST
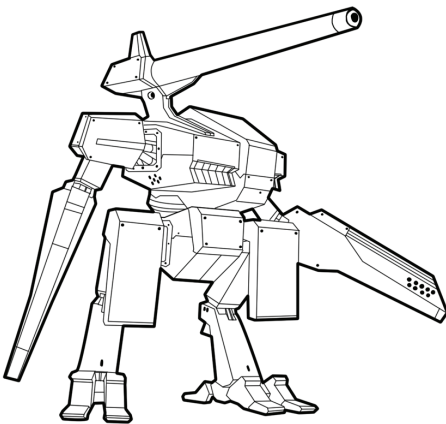
Once brainstorming has died down, the group should have a pretty good idea of what the SRS will be about. Still, there are some things that are almost required in a Mecha SRS. The GM should take a minute and run through the following checklist just to make sure everyone has agreed on all of the critical SRS details. It is important that everyone involved in the SRS creation agree on these since those decisions will form the backbone of the setting.

- Time period
- Overall technology
- The Nature of Mecha
- Availability of Mecha
- Number of Mecha Models
- Types of Archetypes
- History of the World
- Who is trying to kill who?
- Theme
- Mooks (what form--tanks, infantry, helicopters, power armor, heavy lifters)

As an aside, the checklist is basically taken directly from the Setting Creation section with some of the less interesting parts removed.

Going back to *Godblind*, let's answer all of the questions from the checklist.

- **Time period.** Well, I can't say too much. That would give it away. But it's definitely the future, despite the fact that the human race is still living in basically a modern city. So, near future with some advance tech.

- **Overall technology.** About what you'd find in a big city today, but with mecha.
- **Nature of mecha.** Mecha are gifts from a rogue, cancerous element of the Living City. They are not generally available! Only *Godblind* can operate them and there is only one model and two archetypes who can pilot them,
- **History of the world and who is trying to kill who.** Well…the gods want to kill the *Godblind* because of the threat they represent. The *Godblind* want to kill the gods because of their tyranny. The Godseed want… well…whatever they want.

You can start to see how this works and how each of the questions combines to form a complete picture of the SRS and the world the characters will inhabit. Once the world is fleshed out to this level can the players and the GM have a shared sense of this new world they are about to go make better/sow chaos/destroy.

STEP 4: WHO IS TRYING TO KILL WHO?

Step 4 should be covered in Step 3, but if not, give factions all the TLC they deserve.

Next to the Idea in Step 1, factions and why they are trying to kill each other are the most important parts of the SRS. As far as I am concerned, Mecha has to have a minimum of two sides that are opposed to each other or the game falls flat. Now, just because I advocate two sides, please don't hear that as a vote for black-vs.-white, us=good and them=bad storylines. There has to be depth and complexity. The best stories are when all sides think they are doing right, it's just that their "right" puts them at odds with each other.

In Mecha, there has to be a reason to fight and a clear group to fight. (This is due, in no small part, to fact that GMs are mandated by the rules to pick a fight with players once an episode.) Having factions opposed to each other helps drive that.

You can have games without clear factions, but it's harder to drive the story. In the name of pure honesty, I hate running Special Research School games because there is no defined enemy.

In SRS games, during character creation, the group picks an enemy group (usually football jocks) to hate. But given the open nature of the setting, that falls away because there is no pressure for the group to work together and, in fact, they often don't. This means that characters get pulled into fights for no reason (or the school geek learns to throw a tight spiral on the mecha football field.)

In *Godblind*, on the other hand, the bad guys are a group of 8 feet tall "gods" who will kill you on sight. That's conflict.

To put it differently, if you leave Step 4 and the SRS doesn't automatically suggest a clear conflict, I strongly recommend you go back and add a few.

Oh, as a side note. During Step 3

and 4, it's not uncommon for a player to decide he really likes a faction. This is good because he will take ownership of the faction and oftentimes ends up spending far more time adding depth to it than someone who doesn't feel the same passion. On the other hand, don't let the player who likes a faction dominate the conversation or try to only get the best stuff for his side.

Also, when fleshing out factions, don't just include descriptions. Factions need NPCs. The GM may have to flesh out the NPCs, but the group should get the chance to decide who the major figures are in each faction.

STEP 5: THE RULES

Once the story elements are locked down, it's time to get mechanical. At this stage, a number of things should happen (and in this approximate order.)

- Determine damage types (this is largely for flavor, but good to have)
- Disallow Configurations (do any not make sense?)
- Determine any special rules (Combiners? New skills? Anything else needed?)
- Offer to assign the task of creating Models to the group (In a group of more than 1, players may wish to create mecha models to use in the game.)
- Offer to assign creation of Archetypes to the group (Again, if there is more than 1 person in the group, let players create

Archetypes.)
- Offer to assign non-mecha units (let players design mooks and sturdy, non-mecha units like tanks.)
- Offer to assign NPCs (This is at the GM's discretion, but players may want to generate a few famous enemy aces. That level of ownership makes the enemies that much more fun to crush on the battlefield.)

With *Godblind*, most of these decisions were easy except damage types. *Godblind* was the setting that was used to playtest a lot of Mecha when it was on its way to becoming what it is now. I really wanted anything goes for the damage types, but eventually settled on the standard damage types adding only Water and Sonic in homage to some cool playtests we had.

Given the weirdly technological nature of the setting, none of the Configurations were disallowed. The special rules were few and actually grew out of some things that were in the original draft and kept because they made the setting pop. This includes needing the Free City to repair and the *Godblind*'s invisibility.

After that, the Model, the Archetypes, the mooks, and the NPCs were assigned to writers (me) and …

…that's setting creation. When it's all said and done, it's time to generate player characters and start playing.

THE GAME MASTER (GM) SECTION

This final section is full of as much advice about how to run the game as I could remember from numerous play tests. Mecha is a more formal role playing game than many with its turn structure and its source material. That is not to say that there is any one definitive way to run the game, but there are things that may make the game more fun.

KNOW THE SOURCE MATERIAL

Watching hours of mecha anime is not required to enjoy Mecha. However, watching anime is fun and it can help understand why the game is structured the way it is. It also will give you ideas for storylines in your game.

If you don't have time to delve deeply into mecha anime, here's a brief summary about what I think mecha anime is about:

First and foremost, mecha anime is not about mecha fighting. Watch Gundam Wing and notice how much of the battle footage is reused over and over. A fight is just a fight. It is the circumstances surrounding that fight that make mecha anime interesting. Mecha, then, become double edge swords. On one hand, characters are tested, beaten, nearly broken, and being forced to make terrible decisions because they are mecha pilots. On the other, they are

given the power to change the world because of their mecha.

Mecha fighting is cool. Let's face it, there's just something fun about watching giant robots blowing each other up. The missiles and explosions and crazy laser swords…it's fun. And it both builds tension and breaks it up.

Which brings us back to the scene structure. The reason Mecha features the turn-based approach to scenes is to emulate this very fact. Let the players help tell the story they want and then use the mecha fighting to be a fun diversion or let it build on the storyline.

There are a few differences between Mecha and mecha anime. It's worth pointing out that mecha anime is usually centered around one primary protagonist (normally it's a teenaged boy) and his adventures. Mecha is very much a team game with the Scene economy best suited to player character parties of three or more.

What we found in playtest is that the Scene structure allows each person to be in the spotlight on their own Scene. We have found that this is a very good thing because it creates dynamic stories with multiple threads going at once. Although, this is not always the case, sometimes one character's story becomes the dominant storyline, but every time this happened in playtesting it was because the players made the

decision to spend their Scenes supporting the other character and were not forced by the other player or the GM.

Also, because combat is such a part of Mecha, the opposition levels in the game tend to be higher than the opposition levels in many mecha shows. In anime, it's not atypical to see one of the protagonist's mecha take on hundreds of nameless, faceless mecha and come out without a scratch. While that makes for good anime, it's not as much fun in the game and as a result, the enemy opposition in Mecha tends to be a bit sturdier.

STORY STRUCTURE

Most mecha anime follows a similar set of story arcs. For series where the main character(s) begin the story as civilians or soldiers, but not mecha pilots, a series tends to look like this:

1. Character is chosen to be a pilot by the military/fate/creepy father (who might even wear glasses and stare from behind his hands to be a mecha pilot.)
2. The series has a relatively uneventful period where the mecha's capabilities are displayed. The main character(s) will either learn to love or just accept the burden of piloting the mecha.
3. Something goes horribly wrong and piloting a mecha becomes a lot less fun and a whole lot more like a terrible burden.

4. Main character(s) suffer injury, doubt, pain, loss of loved ones, etc.
5. Main character(s) persevere and defeat main enemy, often at the cost of further injury, pain, loved ones, or even at the cost of his life.

Mecha series where the main character starts out as a mecha pilot tend to skip step 1 and sometimes 2. Sometimes steps 2-4 are repeated several times.

You should consider using this outline to begin with as it's familiar, but at the same time flexible enough that any number of stories may arise out of it.

A FEW COMMON TROPES

If you're still stuck about what type of game to run, first consult the SRSes directly. All three SRSes in this book, and any to come, have a fairly distinct flavor and should come with several stages of play. These should give you the seed of your campaign.

If you want more ideas, mecha anime tends to have a number of tropes that run through it. To understand these tropes better, it's important to realize that mecha anime tends to break down into two major classifications. According to tvtropes.org, mecha anime can be divided into Real Robots and Super Robots.

REAL ROBOTS

Real Robots, as their name suggests, takes a more realistic view of mecha, if such a thing can be said of

ten meter tall walking tanks. With Real Robots, mecha are mass produced and are virtually indistinguishable from one another. In Real Robots, the pilots are usually just soldiers, no matter how skilled they are, they have no super powers or special abilities. Fate has not granted them the power of the king or anything, they just happen to be in the right place at the right time.

In Real Robot mecha, the robots follow the laws of physics. Their weapons are often limited to bullets and missiles and the types of weaponry that one could find the military using. (In fact, because of their age, most modern armies field equipment more powerful than what you can find on a Real Robot except for the technology to make the mecha itself.) In Real Robot mecha, pilots often have to worry about real world things like how many shots they have left in their rifles or how much fuel they have remaining. There is usually very little mecha doing flips, avoiding swarms of missiles, or transforming.

Typically, Real Robot stories deal with the pilots who are forced to fight, whether they want to or not, and how they deal with combat. For the most part, you could pluck a Real Robot storyline out of the mecha genre and plop it down into a World War II or Iraq war storyline and tell roughly the same stories. In many of these cases, the mecha are largely used for visuals rather than for their combat abilities.

This is not to say that there is anything wrong or intellectually dishonest about the Real Robot genre. I have watched a number of these series and have enjoyed them, though usually it's for different reasons than I enjoy Su-

per Robot-style mecha. In most cases, Real Robot anime is far more serious than Super Robot and deals with real world problems with only the thinnest amount of dressing to make it feel like a story.

The poster child for Real Robot mecha, as far as I am concerned, is Mobile Suit Gundam: The 08th MS Team, even though it, technically, is not pure Real Robot because it features a sort of reality-defying super mecha at the end and its surreal final ending with the strange children (who many have been the type of super human pilots featured in Super Robot mecha.)

SUPER ROBOT ANIME

Super RobotAnime leaves reality behind in a cloud of hyperbooster equipped, megacannon armed mecha dust. Super Robot anime has been likened to comic book superhero stories where everyone drives around in mecha, which is fairly accurate.

In Super Robot anime, there is a fair amount of hand waving that goes on to bring mecha into the world. For instance, Super Robot anime is normally dependent on some substance which has not been discovered yet, or cannot possibly exist, such as sakuradite, Protoculture, or gundanium. These mysterious substances allow Super Robot mecha to transform into jets, tanks, or animals, fire weapons which can destroy cities in a single burst, and render them impervious to damage from weapons fired by mooks and pilots who are not enemy aces.

Even more impressive, Super Ro-

bot mecha are more agile than a gymnast. Normally, they can gracefully leap through the air, doing circles and pirouettes while accurately slicing up the bad guys, then landing on both feet and walking away while the enemy erupts in explosions. It's the kind of thing that, even as an adult, sometimes makes me sit up and go "Whoa… cool!"

Many times in the Super Robot anime genre, the pilots themselves are also super powered. They may be trained at birth to fight against an oppressive government or a witch may have granted them special powers, but the stars of mecha anime tend to be superhumanly agile and perceptive and a natural in a mecha cockpit even if they have never piloted one before.

In terms of tone, Super Robot anime is rarely as serious as Real Robot anime. While there may be poignant moments in Super Robot anime, for the most part, Super Robot anime is more upbeat (and often funnier) than Real Robot anime. It's hard to stay dark and moody when you have mecha jumping through the air hacking at each other with magical beam swords.

That is not to say that the themes in Super Robot anime are not as serious. In fact, Super Robot anime covers the same themes a Real Robot anime, but using more fantastical elements to tell its stories. This can make the stories more approachable, though it has the side effect of sometimes hiding what the show is really getting at behind a swarm of mini-rocket explosions.
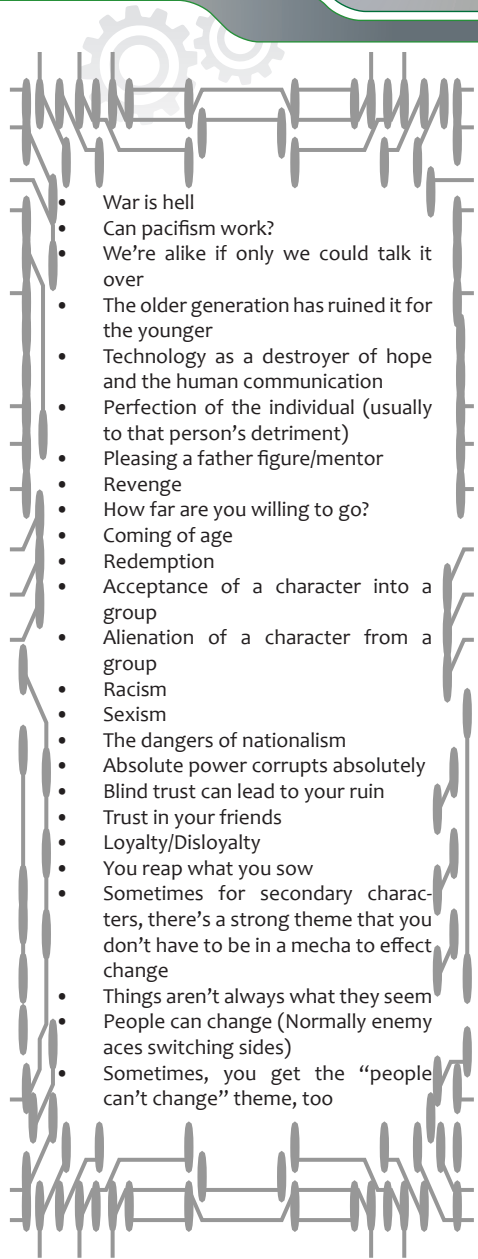
- War is hell
- Can pacifism work?
- We're alike if only we could talk it over
- The older generation has ruined it for the younger
- Technology as a destroyer of hope and the human communication
- Perfection of the individual (usually to that person's detriment)
- Pleasing a father figure/mentor
- Revenge
- How far are you willing to go?
- Coming of age
- Redemption
- Acceptance of a character into a group
- Alienation of a character from a group
- Racism
- Sexism
- The dangers of nationalism
- Absolute power corrupts absolutely
- Blind trust can lead to your ruin
- Trust in your friends
- Loyalty/Disloyalty
- You reap what you sow
- Sometimes for secondary characters, there's a strong theme that you don't have to be in a mecha to effect change
- Things aren't always what they seem
- People can change (Normally enemy aces switching sides)
- Sometimes, you get the "people can't change" theme, too

HYBRID ANIME

The distinctions above are useful when approaching the genre; however, they are largely artificial as no mecha anime being produced today is purely Real Robot. Most of the anime series

coming out tend to lean towards Super Robot style. I think it's safe to say that most mecha anime produce is really a hybrid, taking the best elements of both styles and telling the stories they want.

STORIES IN MECHA ANIME

What kinds of stories get told in mecha anime? The simple answer is that just about every story type is represented in mecha anime, and usually three or four stories are blended together into one series. For instance, the driving theme behind many of the Gundam series is "War is hell." However, under this overarching theme, there is also subthemes of "Technology as a destroyer of hope and the human condition", "Pleasing a father figure/mentor", "Coming of age" and even "Redemption."

Yes, these are all general, but at one level they are meant to be so they can be applied to any game you may wish to play.

PREPARING FOR A GAME OF MECHA

Mecha requires next to no preparation to start a campaign. If you want, you can use the Stages as defined in each SRS, a few rolls on the GM Event table and the players themselves to jump-start your start your own Mecha campaign.

Normally, what I do is ask the players to create characters. With the combination of player Traits and Goals, you should have a good idea of what the players want from the game. Ob-

viously, if a player has the goal "Get a girlfriend" they want their character to take the steps necessary to find a girlfriend. It's your job to lead them down this path so that they can try to win a girl's affection.

It's also your job to make sure the player doesn't get one…at least not easily. (See Bring the Pain below.)

Also, use the GM Event chart as your ally. It's there to spur ideas when you and the players don't have any. There will be times in a longer campaign when a story arc wraps up and no one has any firm ideas. That's the time to make a roll and see what type of chaos can ensue. Unless I have a strong idea for an initial scene, I roll on the GM Event table every time I start a new campaign and let whatever roll I get guide my GM's turn.

Most of the results on that table are designed to Bring the Pain, though a few will help the team. Sometimes rolls result in interesting events. Other times, they won't. However, you, the GM, should not feel ashamed to ever roll on that table. On the other hand, there is no pressure to do so.

So I advise you to not come in with a very strong, firm idea of where you want the story to go. The players, with their ability to take turns easily have the power to derail just about any plans you make. So instead about worrying about a storyline, have a general sketch in your mind, but let the players guide the story, too.

CAMPAIGN PROLOGUE

After all players have their characters, it's time for the Prologue. The Prologue establishes the time period within the setting, it may introduce major NPCs, and it establishes how the characters know each other.

Basically, it consists of two parts.

HOW DID THE CHARACTERS MEET?

First, ask the question about how your characters know each other. Even if they are an ad hoc military squad thrown together out of the pieces of old units, give the players the chance to have an interesting history. This helps support role playing and gives you extra fodder for pain bringing throughout the course of role play,

Remember, anything a character mentions is fodder for the campaign (unless, of course, the player brings it up specifically because they do not want it discussed.) The classic example is that one character dated the other character's sister who is now presumed dead. This one trope, which was brought up in two playtests of Mecha can give a GM hours of role playing fun.

From this one relationship, there are so many questions to be asked:

- How did the brother feel about the relationship and about the other player?
- How did the player in the relationship feel about the sister?
- Do they blame each other for the sister's death? Openly or privately?
- Is the sister really dead?
- If she's really dead, is there an alien, ghost, twin, or artificial life form that can look like her?

Yep, character relationships are great fodder for GMs!

If you need to roll up a relationship quick or just want to get things rolling, roll 2D6. The first die reflects the type of the relationship. The second die reflects the type of emotion.

Roll 1D6	Nature
1	None
2	Friends
3	Siblings
4	Parent
5	Former Squadmate
6	Former Commanding Officer

Roll 1D6	Emotion
1	Hatred
2	Dislike
3	Absolutely no feeling
4	Never met, but generally likes
5	Strongly like
6	Love

ESTABLISH THE STORY

Once the characters' previous relationships have been established, it's time to start telling the story. Basically, during the Prologue, you need to set the stage. The players should know when and where they are, if there are

any important NPCs, etc.

This can be as simple as giving a quick description of the high school or military base of the location in which play begins. It can also be full on role playing. I prefer establishing the particulars of the campaign and then rolling on the GM table.

I have found that since the Prologue happens without the players having a Scene, I don't always have a good idea of where the action is going to go, so sometimes I will roll on the GM table to get the action going. I don't always do this, but I have found it can add an interesting twist to the story.

COMBAT AFTER THE PROLOGUE

The Prologue is basically like a GM's turn, but it only happens when a campaign is launched. Some GMs will be tempted to start a combat right after the Prologue, others won't. In playtesting, we let players take their scenes after the Prologue, but there were times a quick combat would not have been a bad idea.

However, if you do start a combat before the players have had their turns; it's probably not the best time to massacre them with a huge number of enemies. Remember, the players have not had time to earn Tactical Points, extra Overdrive or new gear, which they would otherwise have.

WHAT TO DO ON YOUR TURN

The GM's responsibilities on her turn were fairly well described in the

section on the Scene Structure, specifically on page 36. However, I wanted to go into a bit more detail in this section to give you some thoughts on the GM's turn and some advice on what has worked throughout play testing.

THE GOAL OF THE GM'S TURN

The goal of the GM's turn is to give the players a reason to fight. Now, there are many ways to achieve this goal, which is where your job as a GM comes into play.

The easiest, most boring way to get players to combat, is to only say "You guys are ambushed by an enemy squad, roll for Initiative." I'm not going to tell you what to do, but that would be an utter waste of your turn.

Hopefully, as you have gone around the table, you've collected bits and pieces from each player's Scene. This may not always be the case (for instance after a bloody battle, everyone may spend their Scene repairing their mecha, but hopefully that's rare.) Still, between what the players offer and the story line you have gone through, there should be something to do make players want to fight.

Remember, I said that players should have a reason to fight. I chose those words carefully.

Having an enemy mecha point a rocket launcher at a character will make the character want to fight, it's just boring. Instead, use the story and the goals of each player to give them reasons to risk their character's lives. Show them an objective or a way they can further their goals and suddenly the battle will not feel like rolling dice, it will mean something. It might even cause the players to do something tactically suboptimal, just because there

is a role playing reason to do it.

I'll give you an example. In a playtest of *Steel Gunner*, I was playing 3rd Prince Schnizel d'Artagnan who had a Goal to prove that he was the better than his brother (who happened to be a media darling and a certified war hero to boot. Oh, and Schnizel's commanding officer…) At one point, the elder d'Artagnan orders my character to go liberate an occupied village.

It was not a tough mission, but this was the first episode after a major battle in which we captured an enemy supermecha and sort of lost our space fort. We needed a breather.

Anyway, I said to the GM at the time "If this city burns, my brother is going to be just as mad at me as if I had lost the battle." He agreed and suddenly the battle became less about winning than about winning while not doing any damage to the city itself (which we used the Tactical Waypoint to designate.) This was made worse by the fact I was in a Howling Dragon class mecha and was suddenly less willing to use Boomer against targets in the city.

Did I have to limit myself in this way? No, I could have never said a thing to the GM and we could have played the combat out normally, but it was just more fun that way.

So what I am getting at here is find ways to personalize the combat. Use combat to put things that the characters/players care about in jeopardy. Make them able to keep/save/protect what they love only if they win. It's more fun that way. There are buttons that every character has that the GM should feel free to push when a combat is started.

HOW TO START A FIGHT

The impetus for the fight varies from game to game and SRS to SRS. In *Godblind*, the characters should pretty much want to fight all the time. There's not a lot of setting material dedicated to sitting around and singing songs by the campfire. The fiction in *Godblind* is that this supernatural entity gave you mecha to fight and now you need to go fight.

Therefore in *Godblind*, after narrating the aftermath of combat, I tend to ask what targets the players want to hit next. I let them spend their part of the episode preparing for that battle so on the GM's turn I can narrate the beginning of that battle.

Steel Gunner, on the other hand, tends to be a bit more story-driven. Having run and played in *Steel Gunner* games, the setting allows for fights the players choose themselves as well as when enemies come looking for the PCs. Therefore, on those turns I tend to go with the flow a bit. If the players choose to do something which would provoke enemy action, there's the next fight. If not, I might choose to advance the story by revealing a new enemy or consulting the Story Stages to look to see what a good next step might be to advance the action.

Special Research School tends to be the SRS where most of the conflict is internally generated. There are so many different enemies (rival high schools, jocks, nerds, hall monitors, etc.) that I tend to go into an Special Research School game with virtually no preparation at all. I let the characters pick their fights and provide suitable bad guys. Wackiness ensues.

What all of that means is that there are several ways to start a combat. On

occasion, you might have to have a "random encounter" style combat where the players just happen to run into an enemy mecha squad who just happens to need to be blown up. That's fine, but in the aftermath, makes sure you know why they were there (reconnaissance mission, a rogue element, black ops, friendlies piloting enemy mecha, etc.) Honestly, in many games, the example of Prince d'Artagnan's city fight could be considered a random encounter.

After that, it becomes a matter of serving the story. If you find the enemy super mecha, there's a good chance the bad guys are coming to attack your space fort. The gods in *Godblind* are going to retaliate sooner than later.

I can't give you specific, concrete advice because I'm not sitting next to you or at your table (most likely…), but more often than not, ideas for the next combat should generate themselves. That's why all SRSes have Story Stages. And if the players didn't suggest any good ideas and you don't want to advance along the Story Stage (or if you are playing your own SRS –good for you!—roll on the GM table. It's there to build ideas.)

And if you still don't have anything, find 4 NPC mechas and throw them at the players. Just be real mysterious about why they're there. Normally the players will make a guess and you'll have your next story hook!

BRING THE PAIN

I'm not sure who coined the term, but I can't think of a better way to GM this game. As the GM, it's your job to figure out the players' buttons and push them just hard enough that they have fun. I am not advising that you be a jerk or pick on players, though.

Instead, the players, through their choice of Archetype, Traits, Goals, and Protocols, have given you, the GM, a pretty clear indication of your players' buttons. Again, if a character has a goal "To get a girlfriend" the player is signaling he wants his character to have the opportunity to have girlfriend. However, I believe it's part of the social contract of gaming that the player also knows that you, the GM, is not going to make it easy.

That's part of the fun. If you give the players everything they want, there's no challenge and no feeling that anything is earned.

The same goes on the battlefield. There is a section below where I talk about how to set up the enemy mecha force, but the gist of the section is to not be nice. Don't take it easy on the players, they won't enjoy it.

In general, the seminal rule of bringing the pain is this. If you have several options in which the story can go, choose the one that adds an additional challenge to make the player's life more interesting (not difficult.)

I'll take an example from one of Mecha's playtesters. He was playing a game which called for him to roll a random event. As luck would have it, the result rolled was that a major city changed hands. As the story goes, he thought about making one of the less important cities (to the story) change hands, but instead he opted to choose the city that was most important to the players.

This led to the entire play group freaking out and having a blast saving the refugees from the city and plotting their revenge. The players had a great time and actually got more caught up in the story

because something about which they cared was threatened and they had to save it.

That's bringing the pain.

Of course, there are times when you can stop bringing the pain. If this is session 97 and the player still hasn't gotten a girlfriend because the girl he loves spurned him, then dated his best friend, then moved to Australia, then came back and was presumed dead, then was resurrected as a cybermecha who the player then rescued, who now has amnesia and thinks she's in love with a movie star... maybe it's time to let the player meet his goal and think of a new one. I think he's earned it.

I suppose really the seminal rule should be to add an additional challenge as long as doing so will increase the fun. It's not as hard and fast as the first stating of the rule, but sometimes knowing when to stop pushing buttons is the most important skill a GM can have.

Still, as long as bringing the pain serves the story and player seems to be having a good time, go for it. Send in the ninjas. Let the temple burn. Bring the pain.

SIZING THE OPPOSITION

How big of a force should a GM throw at the PCs? Enough. Just enough

Okay, that's a really bad answer, but it's the truth. As the GM you need to figure out how many mecha to throw at the players, how many mooks, and how tough to make them.

First, let me say that I grew up playing Battletech™, so I always think of me-

cha squads being done in multiples of four. That's how we've always run the game (because we tend to have two or four players so it works) and most of my thoughts on how to achieve different outcomes in battle are based on there being four mecha on the PCs sides (even if some are NPC allies).

Second, battles in Mecha tend to have three outcomes that the GM is trying to achieve. This will determine how large and how capable the enemy forces are.

A Skirmish
A Battle
A Desperate Stand

A SKIRMISH

Skirmishes are short firefights between the PCs and the enemy where the GM is not necessarily trying to win a crushing victory. While victory can still come from a skirmish, the enemy isn't going to be very deadly.

A skirmish force should have no more than one mecha for every player and should shy away from some of the more powerful Configurations (no Assassin, Slayer, etc.) Many times skirmishes can replace one or two of the mecha with 2 squads of mooks per mecha (so if 1 mecha is replaced, 2 mooks can take its place. If 2 mecha replaces, up to 4 mook squads can take its place.)

Now, the question is why a GM would ever want to skirmish. Really, there are two times when I use these probing attacks. Normally, the first combat of a campaign or the first combat after a huge game changing battle is a skirmish. This lets everyone ramp up, lets new players get a feel for the battle, and it lets war weary players catch their breath.

The other time I use skirmishes is for pacing purposes. The lead up to and af-

termath of a combat is a great storytelling device. Part of your role as the GM is to have there be something at stake for the battle. They should want to win because it will help further their goals or the overall storyline. There are times that I, as the GM, will want the players to succeed at the combat to set up the next element in the story. In this case, I just don't want to foul up a perfectly good story with the players getting their mecha shot out from under them so I let the players fight it out, beat up one some poor enemy NPCs and move on.

Now, the key thing to remember is that once I commit forces to a battle, even if they are a skirmish, I still play hard. It's not exactly fair to the players to not give them a challenge or the thrill of battle. That's why I handicap myself in the beginning and then fight as hard as I can once the mecha are on the map.

An Even Battle

An even battle is the normal style of combat I shoot for in Mecha, basically in an even battle, I pick a force that is roughly the same numerically as the PCs and their allies. I might toss in an extra mecha or an extra mook squad or two, depending on how tense I want to make the combat.

In an even battle, I still restrict the number of really powerful Configurations since in most cases, the PCs will not have access to some of the Configurations that GMs do. But I try to make sure that the enemies have a few powerful weapons to counteract the PCs.

If a GM wants an even battle, she should have no more than half again as many units (mooks and mecha) as the PCs. This means for a PC force of 4 mecha, the enemies should have no more than 6 opponents.

A Desperate Battle

Let me start of by saying, be very careful with this type of battle. Herein lays the formula for defeating the players nearly every time.

Really, I only mention this outcome as a precaution. I am not in favor of introducing heinously difficult opposition just because I want the PCs to be captured. However, I have played the game enough to know that when the PCs are outnumbered 2-to-1, there's a really good chance they are going to lose the battle unless they get lucky with the setup of the Tactical Waypoint.

If you are looking to bring the pain on the battlefield, a good way to do that is by creating really difficult Configuration mixes. Any mecha that has Defender is going to be a pain in the rear to stop. A Jammer/Analyzer combination is pretty difficult as they can make it difficult for themselves (and others) to be hit and can confer bonuses to Attack rolls for other mecha.

The most deadly combination, though, is Ripper/Slayer. If you activate both Configurations and score a hit, the target mecha takes two damage and is rolling -1 on their Stability roll. Conversely, Ripper/Assassin would suck because the pilot and the mecha take two points of damage.

Don't use these combinations often, just when you really want to make a battle hard. Oh, and roll a lot of Great Successes… you'll need all the Overdrive you can get.

Again, use this information to play hard, don't use it slaughter the players because you can. If you want the team captured, use your GM turn to do it and let them react in combat.

THE ROLE OF MOOKS

Mooks play a few vital roles in combat. First, they cause the players to spend at least one turn blowing them up. Mooks seem to be bullet magnets since they appear easy to kill.

In addition to the lost turn, mooks also seem to cause players to spend Overdrive. This can help the GM drain their opposition of Overdrive while she gets to keep hers.

However, the most important role that mooks play is taking and holding ground. If mooks start their turn in the same sector as the Tactical Waypoint, the GM wins the battle.

How you use mooks is up to you and how the players handle their presence is up to them, but just because they are called mooks doesn't mean you should ignore them. They don't pack a lot of a punch, but they do soak up some damage and they can win a battle for you.

TURNS IN THE MIDST OF A BATTLE

In a few cases, usually large-scale battles at the climax of a story, there may come a time when the players want to start a new episode so that they can try a Social Scene or just to break up the battle.

Obviously, if one side has won the combat, but there is battle raging all around the combatants, the normal rules for episodes can be used. The GM narrates the aftermath of the combat, the players take their Scenes and then a different fight in the large scale battle is initiated.

However, there are some times when the player wants to talk to the other side's ace or wants to do so something to add a little role playing to the battle. Remember the example above with the player dating another's sister? This occurred in an actual play test and both the brother and the boyfriend wanted to convince the sister she was fighting for the wrong side.

In this case, the GM can decide to give everyone a Scene. All types of Scenes are allowed, though Field Ops work better as Flashbacks to suddenly explain why they suddenly get the benefit of some field operation.

The important thing to note when taking turns in the midst of battle is that the battlemap should not be cleared. All combatants stay exactly where they are and if a unit is standing in the Tactical Waypoint, it will win the combat when it starts its next round. However, any Overdrive gained from Social Scenes can be spent in combat and any Tactical Points can be used to move the Tactical Waypoint before combat is resumed.

Doing this should be the exception, not the rule. Do not let players call for Social Scenes to talk to faceless enemy soldiers because they want Overdrive. Instead, take turns during battle as the natural outgrowth of the story.

SPLITTING COMBAT

Sometimes throughout the course of the game, the players will split up into one or more groups. This can hap-

pen if you have 2 players or 20. When this happens, handle the episode as normal. Every player gets their turn, but players who are separated geographically should not be in the same scene unless they are communicating over a phone or comm system or the Internet, etc.

When it comes time for combat, the GM has two choices. She can either run two or more separate combat sessions. However, this puts some of the players out of action for a while and even though combat in Mecha is fast, it can still take some time. Instead, for smaller numbers of players (say 5 or less), two combats can happen simultaneously on the same map at the same time.

This requires a few extra considerations since there will need to be two Tactical Waypoints on the map, but it does speed things up since everything else is normal. All sides roll for Initiative and fight as normal. However, PCs from the two combats cannot help each other and the same with NPCs. Even though they are on the same battlemap, they are still separated by distance. This is a way to speed up combats only, not introduce additional wonkiness.

SPENDING OVERDRIVE

The final topic in the Mecha Master section is when and how to spend Overdrive. So there are two things you should know about Overdrive:

GMs only roll dice during combat, so their only chance to even spend Overdrive is the 2-4 combats during a session.

A GM will almost always have more Overdrive than the players. Remember, all of her Overdrive goes into a common pool so an enemy ace can be rolling Great Successes and Cutscenes to fuel 3rd Lieutenant Newbie's Boomer attacks.

Still, how you use Overdrive should depend on your own personal play style. With that said, throughout numerous playtests, I can say that more often than not, Mecha GMs tend not to spend much Overdrive on Configurations. Of all the Configurations available to mecha under my command, I think the Configuration I've use the most is Flanker.

Personally, I tend to use my Overdrive to keep my mecha in the fight. Whenever a situation comes up where a mecha is going to take damage, that's when I spend my Overdrive.

However, I have seen GMs use Overdrive for just the opposite effect. Some GMs will use their Overdrive to pump up their Attack rolls, buying extra Successes to get past the PCs' Defense rolls and cause damage to the Stability track.
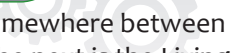
The key thing to remember is that generating Overdrive in combat is pretty easy, especially if you have 3-4 aces on your side. Chances are every three or four rolls, you should be getting another point, so don't worry about saving up all your Overdrive for one critical moment. You should have enough to spend them in a constant stream.

Okay GM, get out there and fight!

REVOLUTION

DEITY GODBLIND:
THE LIVING CITY SRS
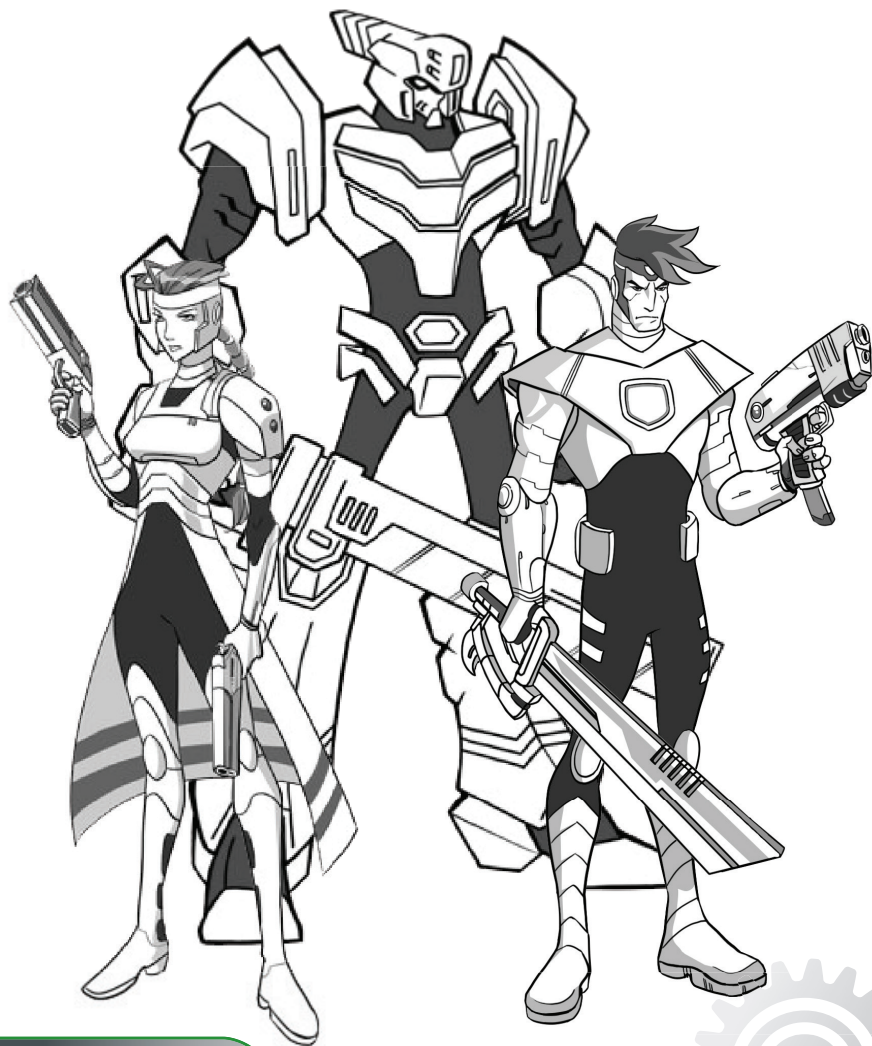
Sprawled somewhere between one world and the next is the Living City. No one knows where it came from or how it came to be, but we do know the Seven Gods promise severe reprisal to anyone who dares ask the question.

The gods have stolen the sun and replaced it with clouds. They take our women for their beauty. They take our men for their strength and their prowess. Our inventors and engineers are stolen away, never to return. A few touched by Madness have visions of orgies, battles and armies from the stars.

In return for this theft, the gods give us fear and their special brand of justice. To speak against them merits death. To organize in groups to protest merits death for the protestors and their families. Any attempt to learn how we came to the Living City merits death.

And the Living City itself does nothing. Whether it too trembles before the might of the gods or it is an ally of them, many who have thought or acted in ways the gods do not like find themselves lost in a part of the city they never knew. New walls block their path, making them easy marks for the gods' fire from above.

For as long as anyone's grandparents' grandparents can remember, the people have dwelt inside the city.

IS THIS WHAT LIFE HAS BEEN REDUCED TO?

Life in the living city progresses somewhat like it does in 20th Century Earth. The people wake up, get their children ready for school, and kiss their spouses before going to work. Children grow and get married and have kids and grand kids.

There are a few major differences. The first, and this is not noticeable by the people, is that their lifespan is only about twenty years, but they age four times as fast. Indeed, pregnancies are four times as fast. By the age of four, the people are just as mature as a sixteen year old in 21st Century Earth. By the age of six, most of the people are ready to marry. By age ten, mid-life has set in. No one knows why they age faster, but then again, the gods have failed to mention that anything might be different.

There is no sickness and disease.

Everyone is assigned a job. After graduating school during the fifth year of life, children are given a card with their job on it. The next day, they are to report to their new job. The general consensus is that each person is assigned jobs that fit their genetic capabilities. Those with high IQs are made scientists. Those who are good at the arts create masterpieces. There are few who have no concrete skills and are forced to work menial labor.

The variety of jobs in the Living City

is limited. They tend to focus on one of five areas: human improvement (doctors, nutritionists, psychologists), city improvement (architects, gardeners, builders), creative (poets, musicians, actors), research (metallurgists, social thinkers, engineers, physicists) and entertainment (athletes, beauty pageant contestants.) Those professions that deal with technology are asked to examine and reverse engineer weapons and electronics centuries beyond what the people use in the Living City. While the technology level of the Living City is about what it was in the year 2025 (in Earth reckoning), the engineers are studying particle cannons, gauss rifles, and particle shielding.

For the entertainers, the city is divided into tracts comprised of ten blocks each. Each tract has a football team, a pageant, and a theatre, each of which holds competitions. Football teams play other tracts. Pageant winners go on to compete in regional and city pageants. The best actors and writers compete in citywide competition.

There are no holidays, no vacation. Each worker is allowed one week off when they are married during which the gods encourage activities of procreation. After a child is born, the mother must relinquish her job and raise the children. The father continues to work after a three month break to help raise the child. Families are expected to respect one another and produce no less than four children each.

Failure to report to work is punish-able by death. Divorce is not permitted. The gods will strike dead a physically abusive spouse.

If a person becomes disabled, which is rare given the safety of the Living City's working conditions and the lack of life-threatening disease, the gods may transfer the person to another job or they may decide to terminate the person's life. Athletes injured in athletic competition are transferred to another job, typically entertainment where they work either as actors or craftspeople.

The loss of the second income does no harm to the family as the Living City ensures all needs are met by the city and the gods. The same six fruits and vegetables are available at any market, as are the same six grains and the same six types of meat. Water is available at a tap. Each room in every uniform home has a television. Children are given a new set of six toys every quarter of their lives until they are three. Working ensures access to everything.

Producing written materials without a job which allows writing is punishable by death. Literacy is considered essential, though a person might find they have the attention of the gods if their vocabulary is too large.

Air travel is forbidden as are kites, model airplanes, and buildings above five stories.

There are no pets.

THE LIVING CITY

The Living City is a perfect circle ten miles in diameter. The outer edge of the Living City is a wall ten meters tall. On the other side of the city is the Dropoff. A deep, dark abyss that leads nowhere. The gods strike down anyone who has tried to climb the wall so no one knows what happens if one were to fall.

The Living City provides everything. The metal used to make her buildings, the rocks that form the asphalt of her streets, the sand that makes her glass, everything. If raw materials are needed, all a builder needs to do is literally ask the City by concentrating and addressing it. The Living City will respond a short time later with what is needed. However, the gods know why a person is asking and will strike dead anyone who abuses the city's power or asks for things that are not for projects mandated by them.

Underneath the Living City is a set of catacombs. Many feel the catacombs are the Living City's bowels. Entering into the catacombs is said to be an act punishable by death of the transgressor and his or her entire family. Several have entered, but the gods lived up to their word long before reports could spread as to what is down there.

Above ground, there are many buildings. Of particular note is City Hall which contains all the offices for the pageant coordinators, sports administration, poets' guilds, and actors' unions. The leaders of these agencies form a sort of civic government that rules the Living City. Right next to City Hall is the elevator pad which is where the gods appear when they come down from heaven and where the chosen go up to be with the gods.

Interspersed throughout the city are strange buildings protected by Male and Female Warriors whose purpose is unknown.

THE GODS

There are seven gods who live in heaven:
- Liget's
- Khali
- Yamaraj
- Zanami
- Pentheus
- Mammon
- Hinden

Heaven is right above the clouds. Literally.

Heaven looks like the greatest bacchanalia ever. There are seven houses surrounded by verdant gardens, large pools, some for swimming, and others for aquatic life. Scantily clad gorgeous women and men walk from home to home, carrying trays of fruits, cheese, and meats. Liquor is plentiful.

Behind the homes are huge metallic buildings that hum with the sound of machinery. Finally, there is a large black building behind Yamaraj's home whose purpose is unknown.

The gods are:

LIGET

Strength: 4
Agility: 6
Intelligence: 4
Will: 3

Weapons: 5
Armor: 3
Technology: 5
Speed: 4

Links:
Attack-> Will
Defense-> Intelligence
Engineering-> Agility
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats
Attack: 8
Defense: 7
Engineering: 10
Movement: 8

Skills:
(Liget is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 4
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Battle Sword (0/Impact)
Missile Wave (2/Missile)
Laser Rifle (3/ Wave)
Sonicblade (0/Enregy)
Energy Dagger (0/Energy)

Configurations:
Flanker
Brawler

LIGET'S BIO-ARMOR

Weapons: 5
Armor: 3
Technology: 5
Speed: 4

Weapons:
Battle Sword (0/Impact)
Missile Wave (2/Missile)
Laser Rifle (3/ Wave)
Sonicblade (0/Energy)
Energy Dagger (0/Energy)

Configurations:
Flanker
Brawler

Liget is a large man, even for one of the enhanced gods. He is a generally unpleasant man who is nominally in charge of the other gods, if they can be said to have a have a leader. He never truly gets angry, but seems to always be in a state of irritation, especially at the other gods. They are never acting right nor are they doing what they should be. Something he is quick to mention.

In battle, he loves close combat and will wade in with a collection of impressive melee weapons.

His warriors wear the symbol of a white fist against a black background and his home is a god-scaled gothic temple.

KHALI

Strength: 3
Agility: 6
Intelligence: 3
Will: 4

Weapons: 5
Armor: 5
Technology: 3
Speed: 4

Links:
Attack-> Agility
Defense-> Strength
Engineering-> Intelligence
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats
Attack: 11
Defense: 8
Engineering: 6
Movement: 8

Skills: (Khali is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 5
Personal Combat 3
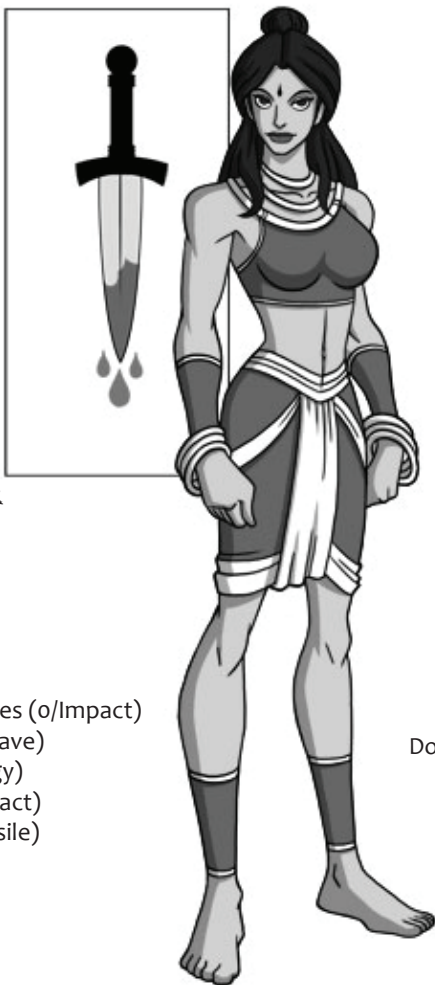
KHALI'S BIO-ARMOR

Weapons: 5
Armor: 5
Technology: 3
Speed: 4

Weapons:
Double Energy Blades (0/Impact)
Plasma Wave, (2/ Wave)
Laser Rifle (3/ Energy)
Plasma Whip (1/Impact)
Thunderbolt (0/Missile)

Configurations:
Assassin
Disrupter

Weapons:
Double Energy Blades (0/Impact)
Plasma Wave, (2/ Wave)
Laser Rifle (3/ Energy)
Plasma Whip (1/Impact)
Thunderbolt (0/Missle)

Configurations:
Assassin
Disrupter

Khali is the second most beautiful of all the gods and the one most concerned with the affairs of the humans in the Living City. She treats the humans like her pets and will care for those who please her well and will wreak great vengeance on those who displease her. Of all the gods who have ever unleashed the fire from the heavens, she has the most recorded incidents. And probably several more for which the records have vanished.

In battle, she loves to cause pain to her enemies at any range.

Her warriors wear the symbol of a bloody knife dripping on a white background and her home is a Dravidian-style Hindu temple.

YAMARAJ

Weapons: 6
Armor: 4
Technology: 4
Speed: 4

Links:
Attack-> Will
Defense-> Intelligence
Engineering-> Agility
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats:
Attack: 10
Defense: 8
Engineering: 10
Speed: 7

YAMARAJ'S BIO-ARMOR

Weapons: 6
Armor: 4
Technology: 4
Speed: 4

Skills: (Yamaraj is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 4
Personal Combat 4

Weapons:
Battle Pike (0/Impact)
Spike Lasso (0/Impact)
Machine Guns (1/Impact)
Laser Rifle (3/Energy)
Beam Attack (3/Energy)
Flamebolt (2/Energy)

Weapons:
Battle Pike (0/Impact)
Spike Lasso (0/Impact)
Machine Guns (1/Impact)
Laser Rifle (3/Energy)
Beam Attack (3/Energy)
Flamebolt (2/Energy)

Configurations:
Berserker
Supercharged

Configurations:
Berserker
Supercharged

To be a servant of Yamaraj is to know pain. Like Khali, Yamaraj spends his time playing with humans, but only the humans who he has chosen as his servants. He demands perfection from the men and women who attend him and if they show a blemish or make a mistake, he is quick to mete out punishment. No gods will speak of how he punishes them, but the screams of the sorry souls can be heard throughout heaven, though these servants are later seen without physical scars.

In battle, Yamaraj fights with total abandon, firing his weapons as much and as often as he can.

His warriors wear a golden lasso on a field of crimson and he lives in an Indian palace.

ZANAMI

Strength: 6
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 3
Will: 6

Weapons: 3
Armor: 3
Technology: 6
Speed: 6

Links:
Attack-> Agility
Defense-> Strength
Engineering-> Will
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 9
Engineering: 12
Movement: 9

Skills: (Zanami is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 4
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Ice Katana (3/Water)
Fire Wakizashi (0/Energy)
Missile Pod (4/Missile)

Configurations:
Sniper
Analyzer
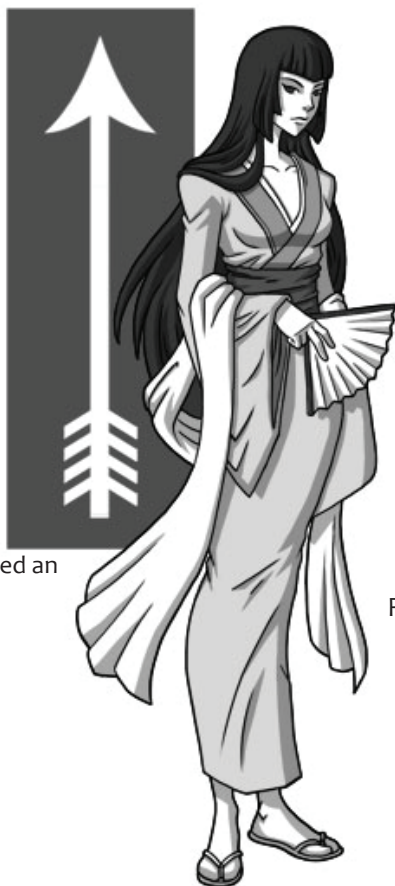
ZANAMI'S BIO-ARMOR

Weapons: 3
Armor: 3
Technology: 6
Speed: 6

Weapons:
Ice Katana (3/Water)
Fire Wakizashi (0/Energy)
Missile Pod (4/Missile)

Configurations:
Sniper
Analyzer

Zanami spends her days in quiet contemplation. Her servants, chosen for their mental attributes, more than their physical, are expected to spend part of their days in meditation and the other part celebrating life with wine, food, and passion. Most of the time, Zanami is cool, even serene. However, the rare times when she does lose her temper are the stuff of legend: fire from heaven, massacred servants, and buildings in Heaven destroyed. Fortunately, she is quick to cool and then to rebuild.

In battle, Zanami is cool and calculating. She can analyze a battle and use long range attacks to fell her opponents.

Her warriors wear a silver arrow on a field of blue and her home is a calm monastery.

PENTHEUS

Strength: 2
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 5
Will: 6

Weapon: 3
Armor: 5
Technology: 6
Speed: 5

Links:
Attack-> Strength
Defense-> Will
Engineering-> Agility
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 5
Defense: 11
Engineering: 9
Movement: 10

Skills: (Pentheus is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 5

Weapons:
Rocket Barrage (0/Missile)
Rocket Pistol (2/Missile)
Guided Missile (3/Missile)

Configurations:
Jammer
Scanner
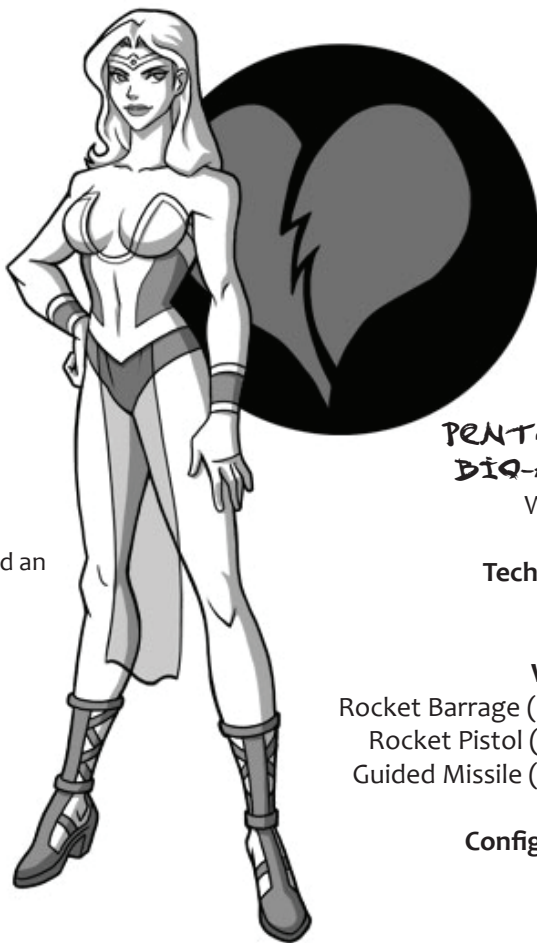
PENTHEUS'S BIO-ARMOR
Weapon: 3
Armor: 5
Technology: 6
Speed: 5

Weapons:
Rocket Barrage (0/Missile)
Rocket Pistol (2/Missile)
Guided Missile (3/Missile)

Configurations:
Jammer
Scanner

Pentheus is lust incarnate. The perfect vision of beauty and desire, Pentheus often earns the rest of the gods' ire because she cares for nothing other than pleasures of the flesh. While the rest of her fellow gods are not shy about obtaining pleasure, Pentheus does nothing else. She has turned both pleasure and pain into an art form.

If she enters battle, she is likely to stay back and frustrate the plans of other fighters.

Her few warriors wear the symbol of the red broken heart on a black field and her temple is a godsized Roman bath.

Strength: 2
Agility: 6
Intelligence: 6
Will: 2

Weapons: 4
Armor: 4
Technology: 4
Speed: 6

Links:
Attack-> Will
Defense-> Intelligence
Engineering-> Strength
Speed-> Agility

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 10
Engineering: 8
Movement: 12

Skills: (Mammon is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 4
Personal Combat 5

Weapons:
Plasma Wave (0/Energy)
Plasma Net (2/Energy)
Plasma Ejector (1/Energy)
Fortune Cannon (3/Impact)

Configurations:
Transformer
Boomer
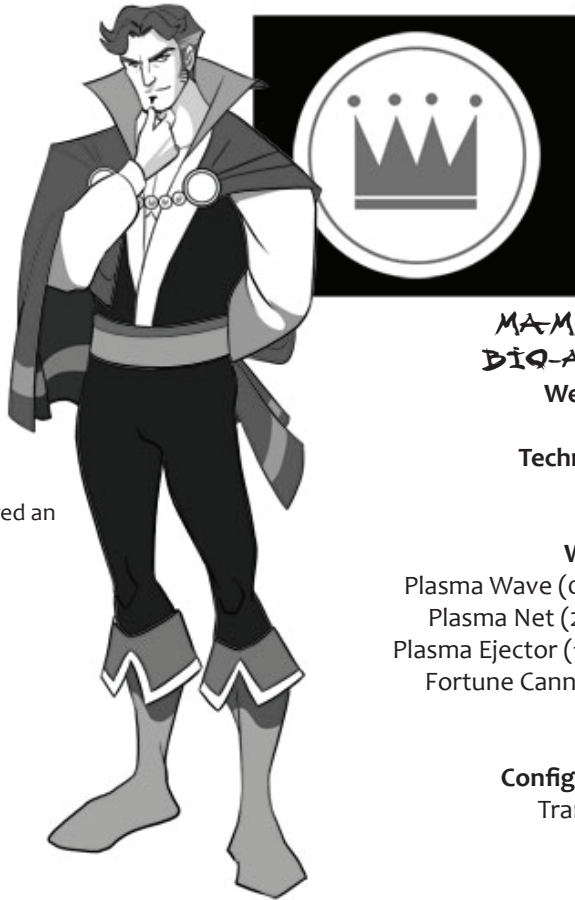
MAMMON

MAMMON'S BIO-ARMOR
Weapons: 4
Armor: 4
Technology: 4
Speed: 6

Weapons:
Plasma Wave (0/Energy)
Plasma Net (2/Energy)
Plasma Ejector (1/Energy)
Fortune Cannon (3/Impact)

Configurations:
Transformer
Boomer

If Pentheus is the picture of female beauty, Mammon is the ideal man. He is a bronzed Latin god able to make women swoon even without his god status. He is quite taken with pleasures of the flesh and keeps a legion of beautiful women near him wherever he goes. But he might be the most intelligent of all the gods after Hinden. He is quite knowledge about business, economics, and the study of people. This makes him a formidable enemy.

In battle, he is concerned about maximizing damage, which he does by raining destruction down on his foes while transforming his mecha to address whichever tactical challenges come his way.

His warriors wear a yellow coin on a black field and his home is an immense ziggurat.

Strength: 2
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 6
Will: 6

Weapons: 5
Armor: 6
Technology: 5
Speed: 2

Links:
Attack-> Intelligence
Defense-> Agility
Engineering-> Strength
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 11
Defense: 8
Engineering: 8
Movement: 8

Skills:
(Hinden is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 2

Weapons:
X-Cannon (3/Impact)
Impact Cannon (2/Impact)
Power Nunchaku (0/Energy)
Mini-Missile Assault (1/Missile)
Sonic Cannon (3/Wave)

Configurations:
Heavy Metal
Defender
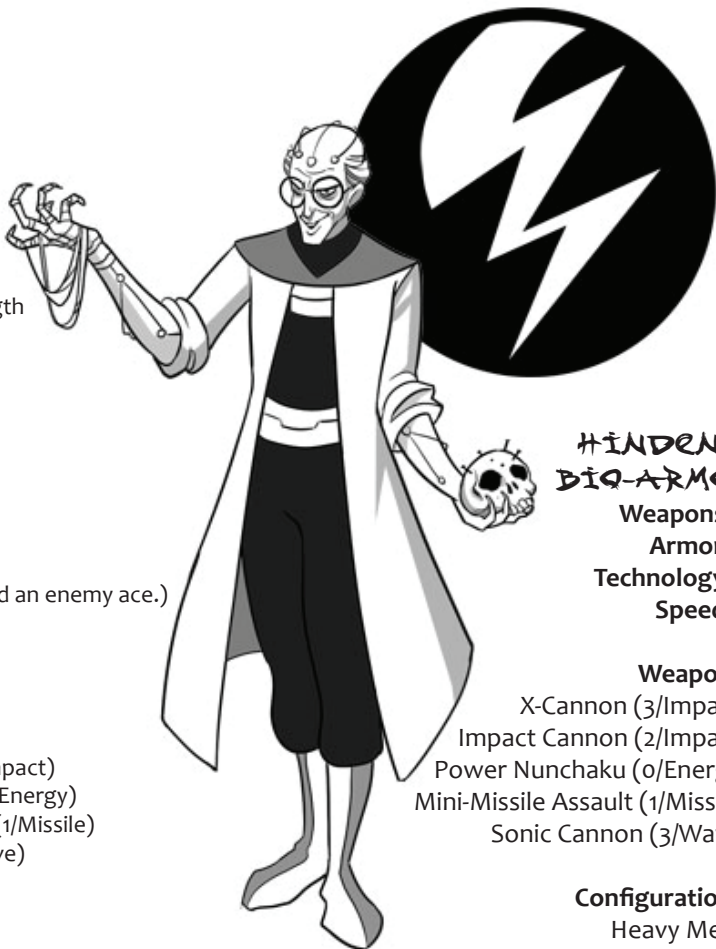
HINDEN

HINDEN'S BIO-ARMOR

Weapons: 5
Armor: 6
Technology: 5
Speed: 2

Weapons:
X-Cannon (3/Impact)
Impact Cannon (2/Impact)
Power Nunchaku (0/Energy)
Mini-Missile Assault (1/Missile)
Sonic Cannon (3/Wave)

Configurations:
Heavy Metal
Defender

Hinden is a slight (for a god), nerdy man, who still wears thick plastic glasses despite having perfect eyesight. He is utterly brilliant and is rumored to have developed most of the technology the gods use. However, he is a man lacking in all human compassion. He keeps a stable of men and women on whom he is rumored to abuse and perform bizarre experiments on his humans with no purpose. He is creepy and makes the other gods nervous.

In battle, he worries only about self-preservation.

His warriors wear a cerulean lightning bolt on a blood red field and his home is a many-battlemented castle.

What the gods do not mention and the people rarely know is that the gods have children, the Godseed, some of whom hope to one day to rise up and displace their deific parents.

GODSEED

The gods avail themselves of many opportunities to procreate and have as few as ten (Yamaraj) children and as many as sixty (Hinden) children. However, whereas the gods have received certain heavenly gifts which make them taller, stronger, and faster, the godseed are normal humans. Most of these children are lazy, oafish brutes that do little but revel in the bacchanalia of their existence.

But some are more astute. Some know that their parents can be killed and displaced.

For their parts, the gods give their children great freedom of action and will tolerate, to a point, the actions of their rebellious children. For a time. Whether this is because they hope to teach their children the arts of combat, to evaluate their performance for eventual godhood, or for other purposes is not known.

What is known is that should a godseed ever topple his or her parent, the gifts of the heavens are theirs for the taking.

ARMIES OF THE GODS

The gods have their armies. Any of the men and women they select can be injected with nano-treatments and made stronger, faster, and blessed with combat abilities. Should a threat ever materialize, the gods have thousands of men and women they can turn into these cyborgs and equip them with high technology bracelets, helmets, and greaves. The bracelets allow the creation of energy weapons, shielding, or just powerful blasts.

At the head of these armies may be godseed who hope to gain greater skill in battle before challenging their fathers and mothers.

THE CANCER

There is hope.

The people have lived under the shadow of the gods for too long. Any legends of brave knights, mystic figures, or otherworldly saviors have long since been forgotten. The people's lives have fallen into routine. They are born. They live their twenty or so years. They die.

Perhaps if the gods had not driven the people into the ground, a few might have noticed the unrest amongst the younger residents of the Living City. Though the Living City is more than capable of erasing the stuff itself, actual graffiti has begun to appear. Crude renderings of the gods meant to taunt them appear for those on their way to their assigned jobs to see. Most of the people do not look. To see such things is blasphemy. Blasphemy means death.

But some of the people quietly wonder how the gods failed to see such blatant acts of revolt. Those who speak of it, even in their homes, are struck dead. Those who hear the words meet similar fates.

Before long the graffiti turns to arson with sections of the Living City burnt down to pink scar tissue. In those times, the ground itself shakes and the people are forced to cover their ears to screams of a City in pain. The arson stops soon after. Some blame the gods. Others notice no fires from the heavens answer the acts.

A few notice strange bubbles form on the surface of the Living City, some as large as a house. Around these blackened, damp bubbles, the Living City bleeds black ichors that must be its blood. It is not long before such growths are excised by beams from the heavens. They remove the cancer, but forever leave a scar. The scars are a reminder to the people.

The bubbles come and go. Some weeks there are five or ten of the cancerous lumps. Other weeks there will be none.

THE GODBLIND

The thought is felt by you, and a few other youth. Like other *godblind* throughout the city, you rise as one, standing up from your seats and walking out of your homes. Neighbors are ignored if they try to greet you. The dreariness of the city and the rain that soaks your clothing are nothing compared to the urgency that calls you. Those who witness you and the others see the vacant intensity in your eyes and can see you are walking with a purpose.

Your walking may have taken minutes or days, you do not know. But any thoughts other than finding your destination are banished as impertinent and unnecessary. Time passes and you find yourself on the outer edge of the Living City. Close to the wall. Before you is one of the cancers.

As you look, a seam forms in the cancer. As the seam tears, an otherworldly light shines forth even as the odor of decay and death clouds your nostrils and waters your eyes. As the cancer bursts, the stench makes you vomit. As your stomach empties you look up to see what at first appears to be a giant standing ten feet tall and carrying an awesome weapon. Soon, the ethereal light clears and the giant is revealed to be made of metal.

The giants' head opens up. There is enough room for you to climb in.

"Get in godblind. There is not much time."

Across the city, multiple people enter the mecha. They snap shut.

"For many years now, you have done things that would have gotten others smote by the fires of heaven. Yet you live.

"And do you know why? You live because due to an accident of your birth, the gods cannot see you. Their ears do not hear you. Their senses do not feel you. They cannot know your thoughts. For this, you are special.

"The people and the parts of me that are still beholden to the gods need your help. Free us if you can, destroy me if you must, but fight. I give you this liberator so that you may have what you need to carry the fight to the gods and their servants.

"Go now. And remember do not trust the Living City. Only I, the Free City, what the gods call the Cancer can aid you in this quest."

The skies begin to lighten.

"The gods have taken notice of my presence. Leave this place before it is too late."

Without a command, your mecha takes to the air and leaps away. Seconds later beams from the sky eradicate the very spot on which you were standing. Once the skin of the Living City is scoured clean, the beams stop. But you are un-

scathed by the wrath of the Gods.

After a few moments, your com crackles. "Hello, is anyone else out there…?"

MECHA MODELS

In *Godblind*, mecha are highly restricted. The gods would destroy anyone, except their seed, they knew to be operating such machines without a moment's hesitation.

Most of the challenge for players will be finding ways to get to where the gods are and defeating their super bio-armor.

For the player characters in *Godblind*, there is only one mecha model, but it is highly customizable.

In combat, the *Godblind* and their sometimes allies the Godseed can expect to face these models:
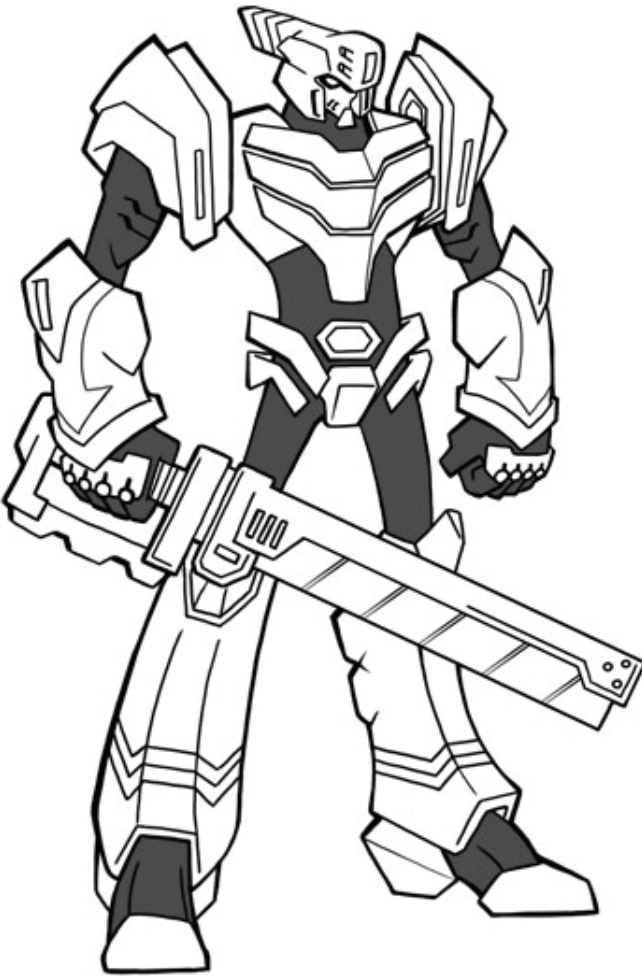
MODEL: LIBERATOR

Weapons: 1
Armor: 2
Technology: 2
Speed: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
Player's Choice

Configurations:
Pick any two

Special Rules:
• Cannot be seen by the Gods
• Can Communicate with Any *Godblind* or Godseeed
• May Communicate with the Free City
• Can only have Recovery Scenes near Cancer

MODEL:
MALE WARRIOR

Weapons: 3
Armor: 2
Technology: 2
Speed: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Base Model:
Weapons: 3
Armor: 3
Technology: 2
Speed: 3

Weapons:
Energy Sword (0/Energy)
Plasma Wave (1/Wave)
Laser Rifle (3/Energy)

Configurations:
Any
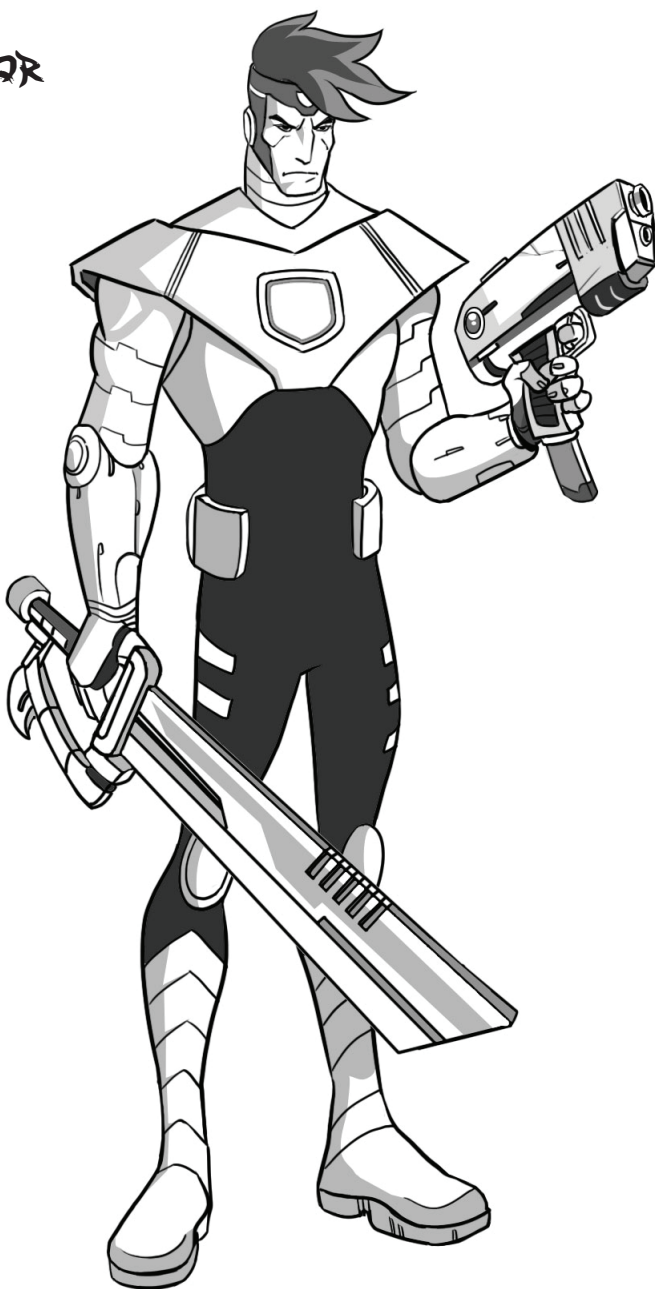
MODEL: FEMALE WARRIOR
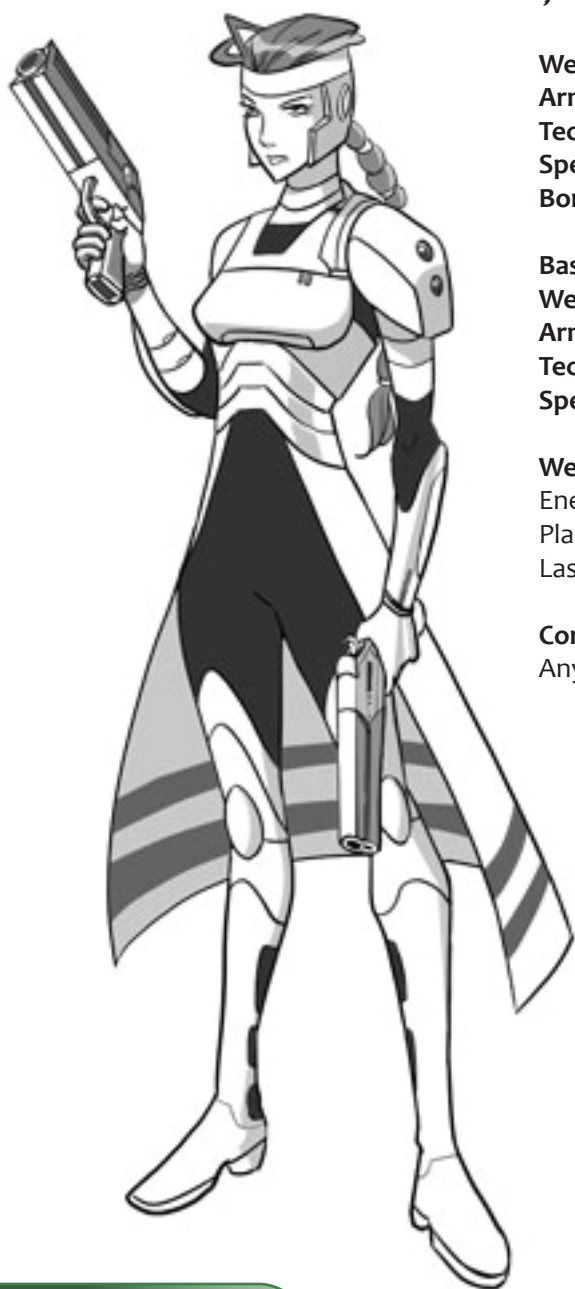
Weapons: 2
Armor: 2
Technology: 1
Speed: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Base Model:
Weapons: 3
Armor: 2
Technology: 3
Speed: 3

Weapons:
Energy Sword (0/Energy)
Plasma Wave (2/Wave)
Laser Rifle (3/Energy)

Configurations:
Any

THE GOD'S MECHA

The gods do not pilot mecha like the *Godblind*. Instead, their divine powers grant them the ability to interface with bio-armor. With a thought, they can call their own helmet, boots, greaves, and bracelets. This bio-armor is far more powerful and customized to the battle strategy of each god and makes them formidable in battle.

ARCHETYPES

ARCHETYPE: GODBLIND
Strength: 1
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 2
Will: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 3
Personal Combat: 2
Social: 1
Field Ops: 2
Repair: 1
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

ARCHETYPE: GODSEED
Strength: 1
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 4
Will: 3
Bonus Points: 2

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 3
Personal Combat: 1
Social: 2
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 2
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

NPC ARCHETYPE: MALE WARRIOR
Strength: 2
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 1
Will: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat 2

TYPICAL MALE WARRIOR
Strength: 3
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 1
Will: 2

Links:
Attack->Agility
Defense->Strength
Engineering->Intelligence
Speed->Will

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3

NPC ARCHETYPE: FEMALE WARRIOR
Strength: 2
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 2
Will: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat 4

TYPICAL FEMALE WARRIOR

Strength: 2
Agility: 5
Intelligence: 3
Will: 1

Links:
Attack-> Intelligence
Defense-> Agility
Technology-> Will
Speed->Strength

Skills:
Mecha Combat 4

SAMPLE NPC ENEMIES

FEMALE WARRIOR - ARTILLERY

Attack: 8
Defense: 6
Engineering: 4
Movement: 5

Weapons:
Energy Sword (0/Energy)
Plasma Wave (2/Wave)
Laser Rifle (3/Energy)
Laser Rife (3/Energy)

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3

Configurations: Boomer, Hot Shot

FEMALE WARRIOR - SILENT KNIFE

Attack: 7
Defense: 7
Engineering: 4
Movement: 5

Weapons:
Energy Sword (0/Energy)
Plasma Wave (2/Wave)
Laser Rifle (3/Energy)

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3

Configurations: Prowler, Assassin

FEMALE WARRIOR - LONG SHOT

Attack: 8
Defense: 6
Engineering: 4
Movement: 5

Weapons:
Energy Sword (0/Energy)
Plasma Wave (4/Wave)
Laser Rifle (3/Energy)
Missile Spread (2/Missile)

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3

Configurations: Sniper, Berserker

MALE WARRIOR - MELEE SPECIALIST

Attack: 7
Defense: 6
Engineering: 3
Movement: 5

Weapons:
Strike Sword (0/Impact)
Strike Blade (0/Impact)
Laser Rifle (3/Energy)
Flamebolt (2/Energy)

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3

Configurations: Flanker, Brawler

MALE WARRIOR - TURTLE

Attack: 8
Defense: 8
Engineering: 3
Movement: 3

Weapons:
Shrapnel Cannon (1/Impact)
Blast Cannon (4/Impact)
Laser Rifle (3/Energy)
Flamebolt (2/Energy)

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3

Configurations: Bulwark, Slayer

SECURITY GUARD

Strength: 2
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 1
Will: 2

Weapons:
Pistol (2/Impact)
Rifle (2/Impact)

Skills:
Personal Combat 2 or 3

FRIENDLY NPCS

NURSE DOTTE

Strength: 1
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 3
Will: 2

Skills:
Mecha Combat 5
Personal Combat 3
Stats of the Seven Gods

SPECIAL RULES

STARTING TRAITS

During character creation, two Traits come from the choice of the mecha's Configuration. The other two are selected by the player and can be anything the player chooses.

AVAILABLE DAMAGE TYPES

Godblind features the four standard damage types: Impact, Missile, Energy, and Wave and also allows Water and Sonic as possible damage types.

AVAILABLE CONFIGURATIONS

All Configurations are available in the *Godblind* setting. There are no SRS-specific Configurations.

REPAIRING MECHA

Mecha may only be repaired by taking essence from the cancer. Rather

than being a hard and fast mechanical rule, this is a role playing limitation. The GM will determine if a Free City cancer bubble is near and how many points it can heal. GMs should use this for dramatic tension, not to mess with the players.

SWAPPING MECHA SYSTEMS

Near the cancer, mecha may swap out Configurations. The cost of the swap in materials is 10 damage points that cancer might have otherwise healed.

THE SIGHT OF THE GODS

The gods can see all… except for the *godblind*. Their equipment just cannot detect them for reasons no one knows.

Beyond that, the gods can see what anyone is doing and can hear any seditious comment said above a whisper. Within 15 minutes of a treasonous act or seditious comment, a beam a light (fire from heaven) lances out from the skies and totally disrupts any organic matter it touches. This Attack automatically succeeds and does the equivalent of 100 boxes of damage. Fortunately, the beam is too narrow for area attacks and the *godblind* cannot be targeted.

A second beam, wider and more intense will target buildings or larger structures. If a player is hit by the beam, the GM rolls an Attack with 18 dice and a Mecha Combat skill of 5.

This Attack deals 5 points of Stability damage to anything it touches. The beam is 5 meters long.

GODBLIND'S RANGE

To the gods' sensors, everything within five meters of the *godblind* is undetectable. However, if the mecha stays stationary and fires weapons, the gods can target the mecha with 6 Successes of Attack. If the mecha is in combat, it is not "stationary."

The *Godblind*'s ability is genetic and cannot be countered with technology.

COMMUNICATING IN THE LIVING CITY

The Liberator mecha can communicate with both the Living City and the Free City using its com gear. The Living City may answer questions, but will always tell the players to give up and ask the gods for forgiveness. The Free City will offer advice.

EQUIPMENT FROM THE CANCER

Godblind can ask the Free City to produce a cancer with equipment in it. This can be anything from explosives to pistols to a new mecha. The GM should grant the request if it advances the Free City's agenda.

UNSEATING A GOD

Should, through the course of role play, a godseed character kill his parent god, that player will be given the God Treatment, which is a shot of some kind. The player character goes comatose for twelve hours and awakens to

find he is in perfect physical condition, standing two feet taller than when he started. All scars and medical conditions will be gone.

If the GM allows it, the player character's stats will be equal to their deceased parent's and the character will be able to use his parent's bio armor, control his parent's security systems and house controls in his new home, and all of the gods' surviving human servants will be scent bonded to the new god and will automatically serve them.

STORY STAGES

Story Stages are major arcs within a campaign. They are presented to players and GMs so that everyone is on the same page about where the game starts and what might happen during a *Godblind* campaign. These stages are just a suggestion and the GM should feel free to tell whatever story she would like.

Each stage lists three things: Initial Conditions, Types of Action, and Story Milestones.

Initial Conditions describe the status of the setting at the start of the stage. You should notice that the stages build on each other so that the types of action and milestones from one stage should lead naturally to the next. There are no rules that say a story has to go through each stage, or any of them. They are provided as a broad outline of how a game could go.

Types of Action list the different battles that players should expect. GMs can use the Types of Action list to give them some ideas of the types of battles they can setup.

Lastly, the Story Milestones give GMs some ideas of different things which might happen at each stage.

FIRST STAGE: FIRST CONTACT

Initial Conditions: During First Contact, the gods are still unaware that *godblind* exist. For a very short time, they will be able to operate with totally impunity. However, once the PCs blow up a few of the gods' installations, the gods will respond with great vengeance.

Types of Action: Minor skirmishes against Male and Female Warriors operating singly. A number of Male and Female Warriors will not be in bio armor. Attacks against minimally armored transmission and research stations the gods have sprinkled throughout the city.

Story Milestones: This stage is going to be very short. By the second or third attack, the gods are no longer going to be unaware of the chaos the *godblind* and godseed are causing.

SECOND STAGE: UNWANTED ATTENTION

Initial Conditions: The gods have undergone a program of warriorizing almost all of the humans they have with them in heaven. The warriorization process involves giving a human an injection which leaves them in utter agony for about six hours. During this process, nanobots are injected and

add roughly 12 inches to the recipient's height. The nanobots reinforce the humans' skeletal structure with a celestial metallic alloy, additional bones grow to cover vital organs, muscle tissue grows so they are somewhere between twenty and fifty times as strong as before. The nanobots then attach themselves to the humans' nervous system and form control links so the humans can control Bio-Armor.

Other than the six hours of agony, the main side effect of the warriorization process is the complete and utter lobotomy the nanobots perform as they reprogram their hosts' brains and optimize them for combat. The warriors lose their original personality and

most of their memories, but they learn how to shoot a rifle, gain an understanding of advanced combat strategy, and suddenly they know kung fu.

After the warriorization program, the warriors of the gods begin regular patrols of the Living City, creating a police state. The warriors will, at random, begin terrorizing the populace and generally taking out their aggressive

nature on the people. Every installation, every pageant director's office, and city hall will be guarded much more tightly.

Types of Action: Getting ambushed by or ambushing squads of warriors, attacks on much more heavily guarded installations, assassination attempts on

pageant and sporting event directors (because they serve the gods)

Story Milestones: The Unwanted Attention stage does not necessarily follow a set course. Instead, here are some major events that you might see during the course of the game. Note to GMs: consider staying in this stage to escalate the tension. Use cutaways to show how the gods are getting increasingly angered by the *Godblind* and then enter the third stage.

During one of these cutaways, the GM can, at her discretion, decide to mention whether the gods have ever had to deal with a *godblind* infestation or not or if there are other *godblind* groups active. This is useful for back-story.

A few events: Terror attacks by other groups of *godblind*, massacres of innocent civilians at the gods' order, humans finding the *godblind* (once a human finds a *godblind*, the gods' technology will let them know where the *godblind* are hiding), more attacks on heavily armored installations

THIRD STAGE: DEITY REVOLUTION

Initial Conditions: The gods are upset and they are ready to fight. Almost all of the humans have become Warriors and the gods are calling a massive round of pageants, competitions, and athletic competitions so they can build a reserve force.

Types of Action: Attacks against the pageant directors, attacks against city hall, generally disrupting the

pageant, more attacks by an even increasing number of Male and Female Warriors

Story Milestones: This stage can be as long as short as the GM wants, but it is defined by a single event: the pageant. At the end of the pageant, one or more of the gods will come down via the elevator next to city hall. This is the *godblind*'s time to strike.

FOURTH STAGE: HEAVEN IS BURNING

Initial Conditions: A god has died. The gods are in a panic. The Heavens are depleted of humans and without clear orders; the Warriors' aggression programming is starting to take over.

One of the godseed will now take over for the god, by taking a god injection, described above. There will be battles over who can take the god treatment. Children will turn on each other. The other gods may advance their own seed as candidates for the throne. There will be chaos.

Types of Action: Battles against other godseed in Liberator-class mecha, battles against gods who survived attempts to stop the Warriors' tyranny

Story Milestones: Again, any of these events can occur, but they do not necessarily need to happen.

The battle for the deceased gods' thrones ends when a successor is chosen, the gods turn on each other, more *Godblind* rise up to challenge the PCs, the Cancer takes over for the Living City

GODBLIND OR GODSEED?

It's an important question to ask the players. Do they want to play this from the perspective of *Godblind* or Godseed as this will radically alter how the game is played. If the game wants to take the perspective of the *Godblind*, the sessions will focus on the characters coming to understand their powers and the capabilities of their mecha through trial and error. Their journeys will be similar to Luke Skywalker's or Neo's because they are told they can achieve greatness, but aren't necessarily given all the steps to get there.

In *Godblind*-dominated games, Godseed should play more support characters. Since the Godseed have a greater understanding of what is really going on in Heaven, they can be the Obi-Wan or Morpheus characters and guide the *Godblind*, but they can also ruin the *Godblind*'s fun by just telling them everything all at once. Instead, the GM and the Godseed characters should let the characters come into their own at their own pace.

In a Godseed-dominated game, things are much different. The Godseed are rebellious children who left a life of luxury so they could eventually take their Godly parent's place as their own. There is less magic and wonder in a Godseed-dominated game since the Godseed pretty much know most of what is happening in the setting and it becomes more about how they use that knowledge to fight their parents. *Godblind* are more than welcome in a Godseed game, but they aren't going to be innocent or inexperienced. The Godseed should have filled them in on what they know.

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

That's for you to decide.

Now *Godblind*… go fight.

STEEL GUNNER: DESTINY TOMORROW

An SRS by Clint Krause and Chris Perrin

Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.

-- Matthew 12:25

Arion Mannis will rule Destiny Arbor. Only the Separatist Guard stands in his way.

Destiny Arbor is a system of eight planets, each terraformed and suitable for human life. Since the first colony-ships fell planet side years ago, the system has been ruled by an ancient monarchy: the Mannis Dynasty. Over the years, the Mannis family has, for the most part, been benevolent. They have ruled in the interest of the people and grown the fortunes of Destiny Arbor to rival any of the First Wave colonies.

That will soon change. It is the year 2237. As the elderly King Forrest Mannis slowly wastes away on his death bed, his youngest son, Prince Arion, awaits the day he will inherit the kingdom. Unlike his father, Prince Arion is manipulative and power hungry. Behind his dying father's back, he has taxed the worlds of Destiny Arbor into poverty, greedily consolidating the system's wealth for himself, with plans to amass a grand army and lead a crusading campaign to conquer the entire galaxy.

But Prince Arion's plan may be short-sighted. He has underestimated the will of his subjects. Under the strain of the mad prince's tyranny, five planetary baronies banded together in 2235 to form the Separatist Guard, an army of freedom-fighters dedicated to deposing the corrupt prince and establishing planetary independence. In response, the Mad Prince has rallied the forces of the Arbor Defense Force, who view the Separatists Guard as terrorist insurgents who stand in opposition the Prince's promises of peace and unity. The lines of battle are drawn and Destiny Arbor stands on the brink of civil war.

DESTINY ARBOR: WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR

Destiny Arbor is a heavily colonized solar system consisting of eight planets. When the nations of Earth first began to flee their dying planet and colonize neighboring star-systems, Destiny Arbor was among the second group chosen for habitation. The system gets its name from the fact that at a distance it forms a constellation that resembles a great tree. Destiny Prime, Destiny II, and Destiny III were the first of the system's planets to be colonized. These worlds were already Earth-like and thus easily habitable to humans. The other five planets, or "boughs" as they are called, Abrax, Gwandana, New Medina, Elrand, and Nevia were later settled by independent colonies of Earth refugees.

It should be noted that the planets were not colonized according to distance from the planetary star (dubbed Destiny by the first settlers.) In order from Destiny, the planets in the system are: Gwandana, New Medina, Destiny Prime, Destiny II, Destiny III, Nevia, Abrax, and Elrand.

Of the eight worlds, three are primarily aligned with the ADF are:

DESTINY PRIME

Destiny Prime is the crown gem of the Mannis Destiny. This Earth-like planet was the first in its system to be colonized by humans and was quickly established as the capital-world of the system. The world was granted to prince Gareth Mannis by the Union of Colonized Worlds as part of a charter that the Mannis family earned by helping to fund the formation of the Union shortly after the human exile from Earth.

Destiny Prime's surface is dotted with hundreds of advanced cities, space-ports, and bountiful farmlands. Its wide range of climatic biomes and plentiful water supply make Destiny Prime an extremely self-sufficient planet. In spite of this, Destiny Prime is the system's primary hub for intergalactic trade and commerce. The Royal Palace, as well as the headquarters of the ADF High Command are located on Destiny Prime.

Due to the fact the Mannis family claims ties to English royalty, the culture and customs of all three Destiny worlds resemble the Britain of literature. The citizens of the Destiny worlds have a slightly "upper class" accent, a regal bearing, and have a de facto class-based society with the nobility at the top and the peasant far below. The ADF (and Separatist Guard) is seen as the peasant's chance to earn a title and as the noble's chance to make a name outside of court politics.

DESTINY II

Destiny II is a dichotomy in terms of planetary biospheres. There is not a landmass on the entire world larger than the main island of Japan; however that does not mean that the world is devoid of surface area. Rather, it is dotted with thousands of smaller island-continents, most of which are far more fertile than an isolated area has the right to be due to the world's constant volcanic activity.

While the food grown on those islands helps to feed the people of Destiny Arbor, the true value of Destiny II lies under its oceans. Huge deposits of natural gas, oil, and the element lazarium (the material from which a steel gunner's energy coil is fashioned) are being constantly mined by a legion of miner bots. While the citizens of Destiny Prime think it is their technology and innovation that caused Destiny Arbor to become so wealthy, such a thing could not have been possible without Destiny II's resources.

DESTINY III

Destiny III is a fat, bulbous world that just shouldn't quite work, geographically speaking. The planet's strange shape gives it extremes of weather at both poles and along the equator, but ensures that the temperate zones are quite pleasant. In fact, the term "temperate zone" is a bit of misnomer. Destiny III sees only extremes of weather. The poles are frozen, the equator almost too hot to stand, and the middle so pleasant there is a quite a tourist business for those want to experience Eden.
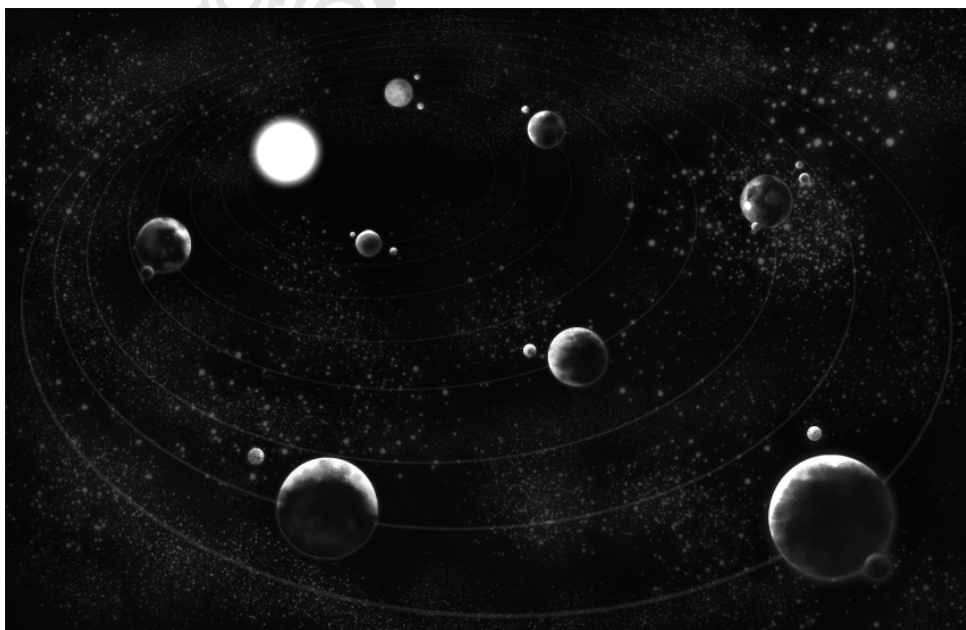
Even with the Eden belts, Destiny III's severe fluctuations make the planet less than hospitable for those looking to stay there long term. Instead, the Mannis Dynasty decided to install the ADF's primary training facilities on the world. Far away from the eyes of tourists, ADF soldiers learn how to ply the arts of war in the scathing sun, frozen glaciers, and calm fields of Destiny III.

These three planets are in direct opposition to the five worlds which have come together to form the Separatists.

ABRAX

Abrax is a beautiful, mountainous planet. Massive pagodas stand atop high, sparsely wooded mountains. Mountainside cities flourish with trade and commerce. Vast oceans provide an abundance of food and trade routes. Abrax is the industrial heart of the Separatist Guard and 80% of separatist steel gunners are manufactured in its many factories. Sadly, this means that the peaceful beauty of the planet's wooded mountains is contrasted by the bustle and industry of its cities.

Abraxians maintain a proud warrior culture, valuing honor and skill in battle. As a result, their soldiers are highly sought-after by Separatist commanders. Abraxians are equally well known for their master craftsmanship. The pinnacle of an artisan's skill is demonstrated with forging of the Abraxian honor blade. This sleek, curved blade of folded steel is said to embody the true spirit of the warrior who wields it. All Abraxian nobles are given one of these priceless swords when they come of age and they are passed down through the generations as precious heirlooms.

ELRAND

Elrand is the farthest of all worlds in Destiny Arbor. It is a cold world with temperatures that average almost ten degrees cooler than Destiny Prime. Still, the cold temperatures don't affect the people of Elrand who are known for their fiery passion and romances along with their excellent vintages of wine, beer, and cheese. They have a strong monarchy to which they pay allegiance more fiercely than the Mannis Dynasty and they are unbelievably snooty. Any good Elrandian is convinced their way is the right way, no matter how little they know about the subject.

Elrand is also the smallest of the worlds with only three continental land masses to speak of. The largest, Elrand Major, is home to the Elrand monarchy and the majority of the planet's vineyards. Elrand Minor houses a large dairy operation, while Elranda houses a small Separatist Guard steel gunner factory and the Separatist Guard's largest training academy.

GWANDANA

The Earth-like designation was only applied to Gwandana seventy years ago. Rumor has it that the Union of Colonized Worlds only granted the status to Gwandana after King Mannis agreed to back a political measure in the Union Parliament. Gwandana is a dry planet, with minimal rainfall and only sparse vegetation. What it does have is an ecology that is well adapted to living without plentiful water, a group of settlers who refuse to take no for an answer, and a ring of ice surrounding the world which is slowly being taken into orbit to hydrate the world.

The Gwandans are a proud people, tracing the culture and customs (if not their lineage) back to the ancient African tribes who were wiped out in the Corporate Wars in the mid-22nd Century. Like the Abraxians, they have a proud culture based on martial prowess. However, they regard the Abraxians as being too concerned with appearance and honor, neither of which will keep you alive when you're without water under the Destiny sun. On the other hand, Gwandans are a very spiritual people. They have thrown off the yoke of more "urban" religions and have gone back to the worship of nature and her many spirits and avatars. Every settlement above five people has a village shaman who is combination priest/councilor/judge/healer/oracle.

Many commanders will say they want Gwandans in their unit, however, those same commanders will secretly agree that the tribal people are too stubborn (and practical) to follow many orders. That is why Gwandans often find themselves either as scouts or working together under a Gwandan shaman who has joined the military.

NEW MEDINA

New Medina has been dubbed the "world of liquid," both for its extensive oceans, rivers, and streams, and for the black liquid underneath her crust. Running water is so plentiful on New Medina that it prevented New Medina from being declared Earth-compatible until the ADF Corps of Engineers dammed the smaller steams and diverted them to form several huge, miles-wide riv-

ers. Sadly, much of New Medina cannot support plant life, but fish and genetically-modified sea vegetation is plentiful.

The water has proven to be an economic boon to New Medina as it is shipped to Gwandana and to worlds outside Destiny Arbor. Still, oil is the king of New Medina's planetary economy. In fact, New Medina has larger reserves of oil and natural gas than Destiny II by many trillions of barrels, though Destiny I and II would never admit to such a thing.

New Medinan culture is a hodgepodge of several different cultures, most notably British, French, Moroccan, Iranian, Israeli, and Palestinian. At first, this mismatch simply did not work. For years, New Medina was the site of internal conflict until King Sheldon Mannis posted a significant ADF presence to secure the peace. Since then, the various political factions have lived in an uneasily together because they hated the ADF more than they hated each other.

NEVIA

From orbit, Nevia looks like a sea of green dotted here and there by small steel gray cities. When the Mannis family decided to terraform the planet, they were hoping to turn it into a forested getaway from the rigors of ruling. However, the specially modified Earth trees they seeded on the world took hold, killing all native plant life and thriving in the artificially-fertile soil. The results were trees that were larger than any Earth forest in a little less than fifty years. The planet was granted Earth compatibility, but the Mannis Dynasty gave up on it when it was determined the trees grew too fast to efficiently have enough lawn space for an estate.

To this day, Nevia remains sparsely populated. The majority of the population is loggers who come to work for six months, and rotate out. This has given most of the permanent settlements a distinctly seedy feeling as Nevia's cities tend to cater to the drinking and carnal needs lumberjacks on payday.

This is slowly changing as two new groups have settled on the planet. Over the past ten years, large numbers of Christians have been flocking to the planet, believing it to be the natural successor to the Biblical Tree of Knowledge. So far, they have kept to themselves.

The other group is the Separatist Guard. Somewhere below the tall trees, hidden away from ADF spy satellites, lies the Separatist Guard main base. The ADF would love to find it and destroy it in the hopes of bringing a swift conclusion to the war.

THE TWO SIDES

THE ARBOR DEFENSE FORCE

The Arbor Defense Force (ADF) is the military branch of Destiny Arbor's monarchy, led by Prince Arion Mannis. The primary mission of the ADF is to protect and police Destiny Arbor in the name of the King. Under Prince Arion's rule, the ADF has turned into a more powerful and aggressive military force, nearly tripling in size in the span of a few years.

It is important to remember that while Prince Arion is inarguably corrupt, the average ADF soldier is not "evil" by any means. Most ADF soldiers see the current civil conflict as a chance to unify Destiny Arbor and sustain a lasting peace. They see the Separatists as the aggressors. They whole-heartedly believe that the war is necessary for the stability of their beloved kingdom.

ADF soldiers believe in fighting with honor above all else and they look down upon the guerilla-tactics employed by the Separatist Guard. They see the Separatists as dishonorable traitors guilty of treason and insurrection.

THE SEPARATIST GUARD

The Separatist Guard is a military coalition consisting of the combined military forces of five of Destiny Arbor's baronial powers. The Separatists' main agenda is to depose the tyrannical Prince Arion and establish a democratic system of government in which each planet is governed independently. The guardsmen see themselves as noble freedom-fighters. They view ADF troops as mindless drones who are unable to think or act for themselves. Prince Arion and by association, his father, King Mannis, are hated passionately by the Separatists.

While it lacks the extensive military assets of the ADF, the Separatist Guard wisely uses its resources on espionage, sabotage, and guerilla tactics. Separatist units are often a bit more piecemeal than their ADF counterparts. This is especially true of steel gunner units,

which are highly prized by the Separatists because they control only a very small number of factories capable of producing them.

WEAPONS OF WAR: STEEL GUNNERS

The primary fighting units in the war between the Separatist Guard and the Arbor Defense Force are 15 to 20-foot tall humanoid combat robots called Steel Gunners. Originally conceived as asteroid mining robots, the original steel gunners were optimized for zero-gravity recovery operations. Steel gunners were fitted with weapons during the New Normandy Mining Wars, and the resulting surplus of robots led many governments to adopt the gunners as the mainstay of their fighting forces.

While conventional infantry and fighting vehicles remain viable, the presence of a single squadron of steel gunners is often enough to turn the tide of a battle. Over time, several steel gunner variants have been developed and their efficiency and flexibility as fighting units has improved.

Steel gunners are manned by a single pilot. In the ADF, gunner pilots generally undergo a full year of academy training before they are entrusted with such a powerful and expensive piece of weaponry. In the Separatist Guard, things are not always so easy. Many Separatist pilots are drawn from the ranks of petty officers, as the planetary militias do not often have the required resources or infrastructure for elaborate academy programs.

MILITARY RANKS

Enlisted
- Private
- Corporal
- Master Corporal
- Sergeant
- Warrant Officer
- Master Warrant Officer
- Chief Warrant Officer

Officer
- Officer Cadet
- Second Lieutenant
- Lieutenant
- Captain
- Major
- Lieutenant Colonel
- Colonel

Command Staff
- Brigadier General
- Major General
- Lieutenant General
- General

In fact, the Separatist Guard usually finds itself outnumbered and outclassed because the ADF boasts a large number of ace pilots. Gunner aces are often massive, galaxy-wide celebrities. News programs often feature battle reports from the frontlines, focusing on the exploits of a media-darling ace. Children read about gunner aces in their comic books and teenagers obsess about them and plaster their walls with gunner ace posters. The few Separatist aces generally have a lower profile (as the propaganda machine of the Separatist Guard is severely lacking when compared to its ADF counterpart).

This is Steel Gunner: Destiny Tomorrow. Which side do you choose?

STANDARD SYSTEMS

All steel gunners share the following characteristics. While many variants exist, these systems are common among steel gunners across the galaxy:

AEC (Anatomic Emulation Control) System: The AEC is the essential component that makes a steel gunner a steel gunner. This highly advanced control system is designed to allow the steel gunner to emulate the basic body movements of the pilot. This grants the pilot of a steel gunner an intuitive sense of control over the movements of the robot. The AEC interface requires the pilot to simultaneously operate two foot pedals, two control sticks, and an array of switches and toggles. The result is an extremely natural freedom of movement and ability to perform precision tasks with great accuracy. A steel gunner's hand, for instance, can be accurately manipulated by the pilot to grasp relatively small objects.

Life-support System: Because they were originally designed to be used in the vacuum of space, steel gunners feature a full life-support system. The sealed and pressurized cockpit contains an oxygen supply good for 24-36 hours. In addition, pilots have access

to a small water reservoir, and a basic temperature control device. These systems allow steel gunners to be utilized in almost any environment (in space, underwater, or planet side).

Energy Coil: The true innovation of the steel gunner's design is its self-sufficient power source. This important feature is a relatively new development, being necessitated by the greater role that steel gunners have assumed in military operations. The original, mining-optimized steel gunners ran off a much more primitive power supply. Since the introduction of the self-sufficient energy coil, a steel gunner will never be without power unless its coil is somehow damaged or defective. Without such a power source, the capabilities of a steel gunner are much more limited. Some scientists have criticized the design of the energy coil, claiming that it may have unforeseen technological implications, but this criticism has not stopped the coil from becoming a standard component of steel gunners galaxy-wide.

Sensors and Optics: Steel gunners possess advanced sensor and optics systems. Features include night and thermal vision modes as well as motion-tracking and long-range-zoom capabilities. Generally located in the steel gunner's "head," these systems form the basis for the pilot's visualization of his environment. If a gunner's sensors are destroyed, the pilot is essentially blind in his cockpit.

Orbital Boosters: All steel gunners are equipped with motivation boosters that assist in maneuverability and recoil-suppression. These boosters are vital in zero-g operations and can be used to great advantage in planet-side maneuvers. While a gunner's boosters are not powerful enough to allow flight within the atmosphere of a planet, they are often employed to allow the vehicle to skim across the surface in short bursts (a technique which pilots call "skating").
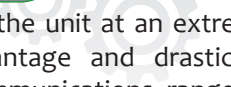
Ejection System: By pulling a lever beneath his seat, a gunner pilot can activate an ejection system that is designed to expel him from the vehicle with enough velocity to prevent injury from explosions and incoming fire. In addition, the ejection range is such that an ejected pilot can often land in close proximity to his unit's MCV for a quick recovery operation.

Emergency Chute: All gunners have two shoulder mounted parachutes which can slow their rate of descent as they are deployed from a dropship or should they fall from a tall height. These chutes are not foolproof and gunners may still be damaged from a high fall, but rarely will they be junked.

DEPLOYMENT AND TACTICS

Steel gunners are generally deployed in teams of 4 to 5. In ground-based operations, a gunner unit will be supported by a conventional mobile command vehicle (MCV) that provides the pilots with long-range reconnaissance and communications. In zero-gravity operations, this role is assumed by the unit's parent ship.

While it is possible for a unit of gunners to operate without a command

vehicle, it puts the unit at an extreme tactical disadvantage and drastically reduces its communications range. A unit's MCV will generally trail its steel gunners from a significant distance in order to stay out of harm's way in the event of enemy contact. Through the MCV, a gunner unit maintains long-range communications with its home base, with air support units, and with other gunner units in the same theatre.

Gunner units can also be supported with squads of conventional infantry and fighting vehicles such as tanks, personnel carriers, and mobile artillery platforms. These support units are often required for sensitive close-quarters engagements where collateral damage is a concern. While most infantry units would be hard-pressed to stand alone against even a single steel gunner, a number of man-portable weapon systems do exist which pose a minor threat. In close-quarters situations it is also possible for infantry units to swarm a steel gunner, disable its sensors, and breach the hatch to engage the pilot. Still, it would take a particu-larly bold and fortunate infantry unit to successfully execute such an attack.

MODELS

Steel gunners, have been around for quite a while. At first, they were little better than mining rigs with a few odd missiles or machine guns strapped to them. Today's steel gunners are sleek, powerful machines of war capable of taking the fight to the enemy on land, on sea, or in space.

Because of the sophistication of the modern steel gunner, several models exist and are available to soldiers based on their unit mission and personal fighting style. These units are mass-produced in factories all across civilized space, though Destiny Arbor is lucky enough to have several factories in which they are produced. This cookie-cutter approach allows gunner chiefs to quickly and efficiently repair the steel gunners in the field. However, it means that steel gunners are rarely ever modified without a gunner chief's express permission.

SG-1 GRAVE HOUND

The Grave Hound is a versatile, general-purpose Steel Gunner. It is the most widely produced Gunner on both sides of the Destiny Arbor conflict.
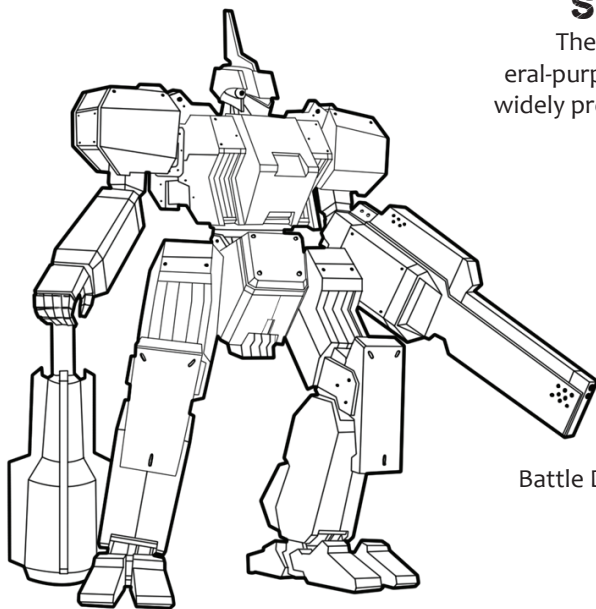
Weapons 2
Armor 2
Technology 2
Speed 2
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
Mannis Defense Systems
Mass Hammer (0, Impact)
Battle Dynamics Arming Cannon (3, Impact)

Configurations:
Supercharged
Disrupter

SG-2 HOWLING DRAGON

The Howling Dragon is a heavy assault gunner utilized for long-distance fire-support. What the Howling Dragon lacks in speed and maneuverability, it makes up for with its heavy, long-range fire power.

Weapons 3
Armor 3
Technology 1
Speed 1
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
2 x Normitz Field Gun (4, Impact)
Normitz Flak Cannon (1, Impact)

Configurations:
Berserker
Boomer
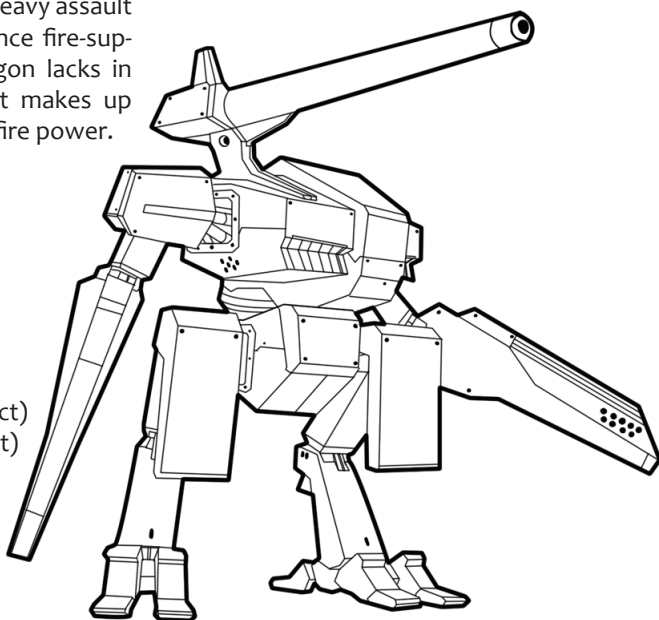
SG-3 BREAK WOLF

The Break Wolf is well-configured for close-quarters combat with its twin mass hammers. It is also well known as one of the most rugged gunner models currently in production.

Weapons 2
Armor 2
Technology 1
Speed 3
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons
2 x Mannis Defense Systems
Mass Hammer (0, Impact)

Configurations
Berserker
Defender
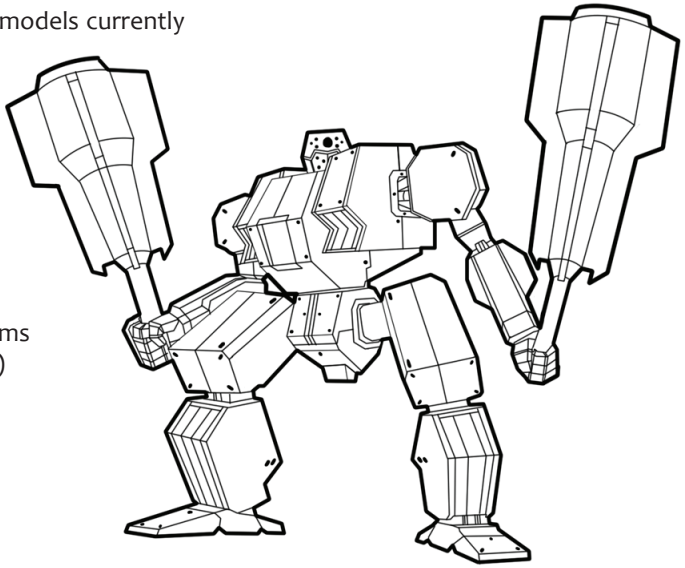
SG-4 DUST COUGAR

The Dust Cougar is a fast-assault gunner utilized for rapid attacks and flanking maneuvers. Its speed and maneuverability are unmatched by other gunner models.

Weapons 1
Armor 1
Technology 2
Speed 4
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons
Normitz Chain Cannon (2, Impact)

Configurations
Flanker
Supercharged
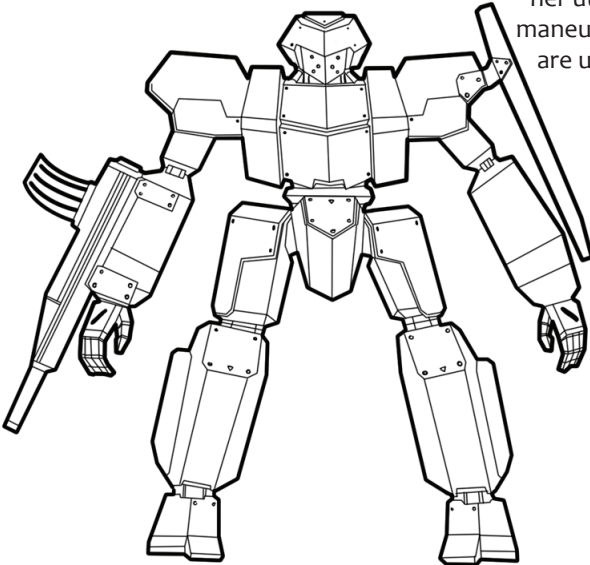
SG-5 GHOST FOX

The Ghost Fox specializes in infiltration and guerilla tactics. Though it is a relatively light and fragile gunner, its ability to surprise enemy units is quite formidable.

Weapons 1
Armor 1
Technology 3
Speed 3
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons
Battle Dynamics Arming
Cannon (3, Impact)

Configurations
Flanker
Prowler

SG-6 BATTLE CRANE

The Battle Crane is a recent addition to the steel gunner ranks. It is a command and control gunner used to coordinate battles and disrupt enemy battle plans. So far, it is proven quite adept at its role.

Weapons 1
Armor 3
Technology 3
Speed 1
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons
Battle Dynamics Missile
Pack (3, Missile)

Configurations
Scanner
Analyzer
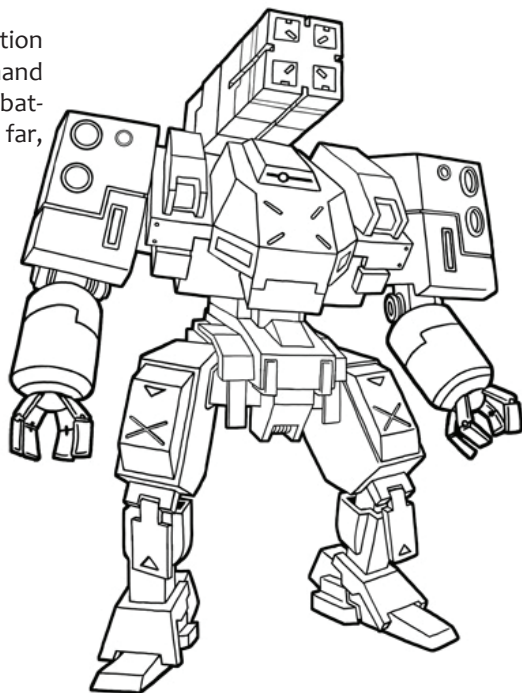
ARCHETYPES

The following archetypes represent the various citizens of the Steel Gunner world.

ACCIDENTAL HERO

I never wanted this, but I can't avoid the press.

Strength: 1
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2
Will: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 3
Personal Combat: 1
Social: 2
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 2
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits
Unsure
Egotistical

DANGEROUS BEAUTY

I fight. But I look good while I am doing it.

Strength: 1
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 1
Will: 4
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2

Personal Combat: 1
Social: 3
Field Ops: 2
Repair: 1
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits
Seductive
Vain

GEARHEAD

Gears are machines. Machines are cool.

Strength: 1
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 4
Will: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 1
Social: 1
Field Ops: 2
Repair: 3
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits
Knowledgeable
Nerdy

HOTSHOT PILOT

Young and brash, the hotshot is the king of the battlefield, at least in his own mind.

Strength: 2
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 1
Will: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 3
Personal Combat: 2
Social: 1
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 2
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits:
Cocky
Maverick

JADED VETERAN

I've seen it all. So why am I still fighting?

Strength: 1
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 3
Will: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 2
Social: 1
Field Ops: 2
Repair: 2

Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits:
Cynical
Alcoholic

MEDIA DARLING

I was born to be in front of the camera fighting, singing, whatever...

Strength: 1
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 2
Will: 4
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 2
Social: 3
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 1
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits:
Glory Hound
Dramatic

MENTOR

Calm and patient, the mentor is always ready with a wise quip or a piece of advice which is usually ignored by his younger, more arrogant teammates.

Strength: 1
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 3

Will: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 1
Social: 2
Field Ops: 2
Repair: 2
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits:
Patient
Helpful

NAIVE CADET

I won't let my unit down... will I?

Strength: 2
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 2
Will: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 1
Social: 2
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 2
Medic: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Traits:
Naïve
Scared

NOBLE

You have heard of my family, but my name is the only thing you'll remember once we meet on the battlefield.

Strength: 1
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 2
Will: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 2
Social: 3
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 1
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits:
Proud
Conceited

REFORMED CRIMINAL

They offered me freedom. Then they signed me up for the military. Joke's on me.

Strength: 3
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 1
Will: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 2

Social: 2
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 2
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits:
Haunted
Loner

SPEC OPS COMMANDO

How much of them do you want left after I kill them? Ashes? Works for me.

Strength: 3
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 1
Will: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 3
Social: 1
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 2
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits:
Ruthless
Tough Guy

SPY

Nobody will see my Gunner. Until it's too late.

Strength: 1
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 1
Will: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 2
Social: 1
Field Ops: 3
Repair: 1
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Traits:
Secretive
Intense
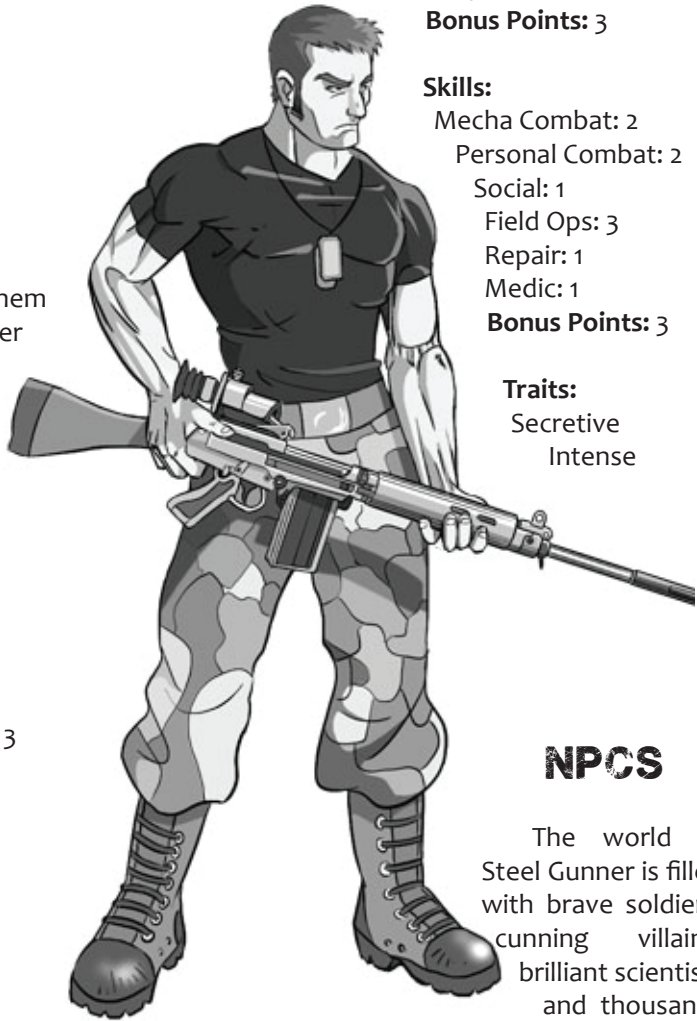
NPCS

The world of Steel Gunner is filled with brave soldiers, cunning villains, brilliant scientists and thousands of gunner pilots trying to survive in a war for what they believe. The following are just a few of the NPCs that you might run across.

NURSE DOTTE

Friend or foe, she's always perky. And why does she have a Mecha Combat of 5?

Strength: 1
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 3
Will: 2

Skills:
Mecha Combat 5
Personal Combat 3

NOBIS EVERWAY

Faction: ADF
Call Sign: Noble

Nobis is the second son of Earl Tanis Everway of Destiny Prime. The Everway family arrived very early during the colonization period on Destiny Prime and, as such, are the richest family next to the Mannises themselves. Throughout their history, the Everways have always staunchly supported the Mannis Dynasty, sending every child but the direct heir to serve in the ADF. Nobis is no exception.

However, secretly the Everway family is watching the situation with Arion and the Separatist Guard to see if perhaps a new ruler should sit atop the Destiny Throne.

Strength: 3
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 4
Will: 3

Weapons: 4
Armor: 3
Technology: 3
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Strength
Speed-> Agility

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 6
Engineering: 6
Movement: 7

Skills: (Nobis Everway is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 4

Mecha of Choice: Grave Hound
Weapons:
Mannis Defense Systems Mass Hammer (0, Impact)
Mannis Defense Systems Mass Hammer (0, Impact)
Battle Dynamics Arming Cannon (3, Impact)
Normitz Chain Cannon (2, Impact)

Configurations:
Supercharged
Disrupter

THE RAVEN

Faction: ADF
Callsign: The Raven

No one is sure of the Raven's lineage, but her bearing and arrogance leave no doubt that she is descended from noble stock. Generally disliked, but feared by her subordinates, the Raven is a deadly opponent on the battlefield who fights with a terrifying blend

of tactical genius and fury.

At the start of a campaign, she will pilot a Dust Cougar. However, if you are playing in a campaign which involves Intuitive Gunners, she will be one of the first pilots to sign up for the Esper program.

Strength: 2
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 5
Will: 4

Weapons: 2
Armor: 3
Technology: 4
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Strength
Speed-> Will

Skills: (The Raven is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 4
Personal Combat 3

Mecha of Choice: Dust Cougar
Weapons:
Normitz Chain Cannon (2, Impact)
Normitz Field Gun (4, Impact)

Configurations:
Flanker
Supercharged

DASH REINHOLD

Faction: ADF
Callsign: Superstar

As the son of legendary singer Strum Reinhold, Dash is more of a media star than a soldier. From the moment he entered the service, the press (and military PR machine) has been following his career and living and dying by his every action. His face alone has recruited more soldiers in the last year than every other media star in the previous ten years combined.

However, his fame often ensures that he stays away from the worst of the fighting until the battle is over. Then, he swoops onto the battlefield where he is holorecorded "leading his troops to another ADF victory."

Strength: 4
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2
Will: 2

Weapons: 2
Armor: 5
Technology: 3
Speed: 5

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Will
Speed-> Intelligence

Skills: (Dash Reinhold is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 5

Mecha of Choice: Break Wolf
Weapons:
2 x Mannis Defense Systems Mass Hammer (0, Impact)

Configurations:
Berserker
Defender

DONNY GROCEMAN

Faction: ADF
Callsign: Crash

Groceman is a commoner, born to a merchant who scraped together just enough money to get his son into a garrison ADF academy. A hard worker and a natural shot, Donny graduated top of his class and was promoted to command of a front line unit. Such a thing would normally be unheard of, but the war has left the ADF with a number of holes in their organizations.

The promotion was a mixed blessing as Groceman's unit is made up entirely of commoners and is often asked to take on dangerous assignments. Though command will never say so, Groceman fully understands that his unit gets the tough missions not because they survive, but so that his social betters aren't in harm's way.

Strength: 2
Agility: 5
Intelligence: 3
Will: 4
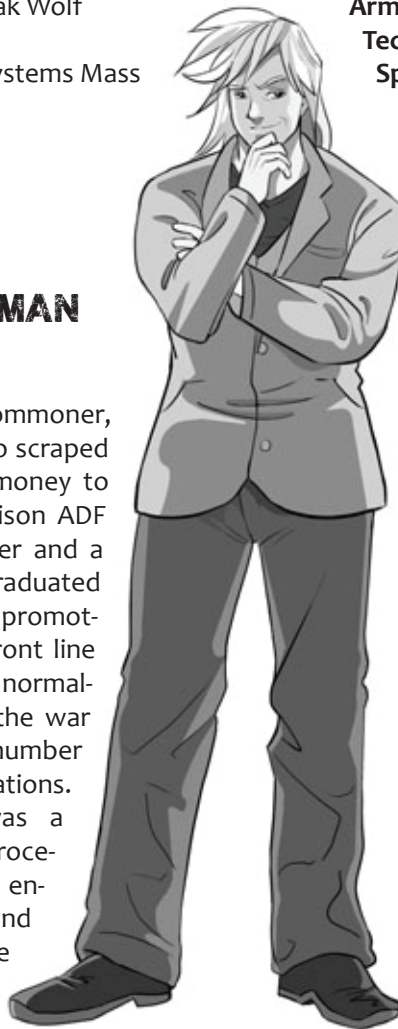
Weapons: 5

Armor: 5
Technology: 2
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Agility
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Strength
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 10
Defense: 9
Engineering: 4
Movement: 6

Skills: (Donny Groceman is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Mecha of Choice:
Howling Dragon
Weapons:
2 x Normitz Field Gun (4, Impact)
Normitz Flak Cannon (1, Impact)
Battle Dynamics Missile Pack (3, Missile)
Normitz Chain Cannon (2, Impact)

Configurations:
Boomer
Berserker

PAUL YOUNG

Faction: Separatist Guard
Callsign: Hawk

Paul never thought he'd be fighting, but when the ADF destroyed his family farm during a battle, he had no choice. Generally still unsure of himself in battle, he is naturally talented and will be a great fighter if he lives long enough.

Strength: 3
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 2
Will: 4

Weapons: 3
Armor: 3
Technology: 3
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Intelligence

Skills: (Paul Young is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Mecha of Choice: Grave Hound
Weapons:
Mannis Defense Systems Mass Hammer (0, Impact)
Normitz Chain Cannon (2, Impact)
Battle Dynamics Arming Cannon (3, Impact)

Configurations:
Supercharged
Disrupter

DESIREE RAMIREZ

Faction: Separatist Guard
Callsign: Waxer

Desiree is a natural when it comes to computers and gadgets. She's not a people person. She doesn't understand them and much prefers quantum mechanics since they are infinitely less complex than human interaction. Fortunately for her, she is completely unaware of how her beauty affects her teammates.

Strength: 2
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 4
Will: 2

Weapons: 1
Armor: 2
Technology: 4
Speed: 4

Links
Weapons-> Will
Armor-> Strength
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 3
Defense: 4
Engineering: 7
Movement: 8

Skills: (Desiree Ramirez is considered an enemy ace.)

Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 2

Mecha of Choice: Ghost Fox

Weapons:
Battle Dynamics Arming Cannon (3, Impact)

Configurations:
Prowler
Flanker

SCHNIZEL DEMORA
Faction: Separatist Guard
Callsign: Prince

The third son of the Demora family, Schnizel has something to prove: that he is as good as he thinks he is. This of course would make him far better than his two brothers, one who serves in the ADF, the other in the Separatist Guard. The only problem is that no one is as good as he thinks he is.

Strength: 2
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 4
Will: 3

Weapons: 4
Armor: 3
Technology: 2
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats:

Attack: 8
Defense: 6
Engineering: 4
Movement: 4

Skills: (Schnizel Demora is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 4

Mecha of Choice: Howling Dragon

Weapons:
2 x Normitz Field Gun (4, Impact)
Normitz Flak Cannon (1, Impact)
Battle Dynamics Missile Pack (3, Missile)

Configurations:
Boomer
Berserker

ALEX WORNALL
Faction: Separatist Guard
Callsign: Boiler

Strength: 4
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 2
Will: 3

Weapons: 2
Armor: 4
Technology: 2
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 7
Engineering: 4
Movement: 5

Skills: (Alex Wornall is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Mecha of Choice: Break Wolf

Weapons: 2
Armor: 4
Technology: 2
Speed: 3

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 7
Engineering: 4
Movement: 5

Weapons:
2 x Mannis Defense Systems Mass Hammer (0, Impact)

Configurations:
Berserker
Defender

VEHICLES OF WAR

It would be too expensive (and in some cases too impractical) for both the ADF and the Separatist Guard to field armies composed solely of steel gunners. This is why both sides field a large number of conventional vehi-

cles. Some of these vehicles are listed below. It is up to the Game Master to determine what level of mook these vehicles represent.

COMBAT MOTORCYCLE

Combat motorcycles are little more than heavy duty off road bikes with rocket pods or scaled down Normitz chain guns mounted on their chassis. They are primarily used for recon and harassment duties as they have little to no armor.

MOBILE COMMAND VEHICLE (MCV)

The MCV is the heart of both side's command and control capabilities. Essentially they are large cargo haulers refitted with heavy armor, small supercomputers, and state-of-the-art communications equipment. This is where the gunner chiefs spend their time during the heat of battle so they can direct their team and analyze battle data while staying safely away from danger. A typical MCV has a crew of five plus a driver, and a gunner who controls the MCV's only armament: a single Normitz Field Cannon.

APC

The armored personnel carrier (APC) is an infantryman's best friend. Armored well enough to protect soldiers from most non-gunner attacks and fast enough to avoid danger, the APC can get infantry into and away from the battlefield quickly and efficiently. Even better, they contain weapons, ammunition, and rations for extended campaigns in the field and newer

models even mount digging charges to let infantry create prepared positions quickly.

TANK

The tank has seen service in every armed conflict in the last several hundred years. Once the most powerful vehicle on the field, the tank still packs a wallop with its main gun which can easily damage even a steel gunner's defense systems. The problem with tanks is that they are slow and lack the steel gunner's agility and maneuverability on the battlefield.

STRIKE FIGHTER

The invention of the steel gunner has made air superiority less important than it once was. Still, the side which controls the skies does have a distinct intelligence capability. To that end, both the ADF and the Separatist Guard have several air wings of jet-powered strike fighters. Their primary role is to dogfight and defeat other strike fighters, though they can mount heavy bombs to engage ground targets. They are not suited to ground attack missions, though, and they tend to take heavy causalities around steel gunners.

HELICOPTER GUNSHIP

Take a tank and put a helicopter rotor on it and you have the helicopter gunship. Ideally suited for close air support, helicopter gunships excel at finding the enemy from the air and unleashing terrible punishment on them. They are still no match for a steel gunner in a head-to-head battle, but if they can attack in numbers, a gunship flight can easily fell a gunner.

HEAVY LIFTER

Steel gunners represent the last word in maneuverability. There is no terrain they cannot cross. However, sometimes flying through the air is much faster. Enter the heavy lifter. These bracket-shaped helicopters are little more than powerful engines and strong rotors attached to a pair of hooks. These hooks grab on to a gunner and can carry it up to a thousand miles away at a rate of a little over one hundred miles per hour.

The drawback is that they are only lightly armored and mount no weapons. Given that heavy lifters are often called on to deploy gunners into hot landing zones, this has given their crews a reputation for being more than a little insane.

SPACE VEHICLES

The battle for Destiny Arbor will not be fought just on the ground. Whoever controls space controls shipping and the flow of resources around the system. Perhaps more importantly, whoever controls the space around a planet can attack it anywhere, at any time, and on the ground of their choosing.

Because of this, both sides have large space assets which clash amongst the stars as steel gunners fight on the planets below. Joining the fight, though, are the gunners themselves who can operate for hours in space and come equipped with magnetic locks which allow them to adhere to the surface of a ship.
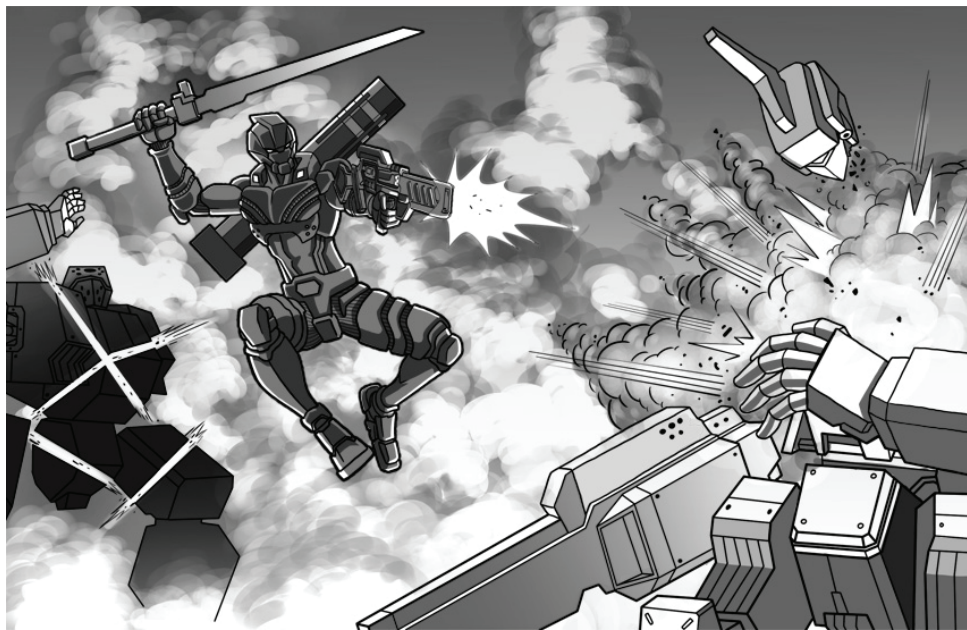
DROPSHIP

Dropships are the only space assets capable of operating in both space and in the atmosphere. Each dropship looks like a large, angular version of a terrestrial airplane. Capable of carrying four steel gunners and their pilots, they are heavily armored, but carry only the lightest assortment of weapons. This armor does mean that they can survive a "hot drop" in a battlezone and make it out alive.

Rarely, though, do dropships ever land. Instead, they fly over the battlezone, open their drop doors, and let the steel gunners drop. Ideally, each gunner will be equipped with a drop pack (like a huge jet pack) that will slow their descent. In an emergency, steel gunners are equipped with parachutes that can slow their fall, though this is usually not effective enough to prevent some amount of damage.

SPACE TRANSPORT

Space transports are the bigger brothers to dropships. Delta-shaped, these space craft lose the ability to travel into the atmosphere, but gain the ability to support a pilot, a gunner team of four pilots and a gunner chief for several months without needing to dock. Still, the conditions on the transport are cramped with barely enough room for the gunner hanger, six cabins, a workout area, and a mess.

Transports are not well armed or armored, but they are blazingly fast and can dart into and out of battle very quickly.

SPACE GUNSHIPS

Space gunships are essentially revamped transports. Their gunner hangers have been removed and replaced with enhanced targeting capabilities, missile racks, ammunition bunkers, and other tools of war. Their armor also gets an upgrade over the transport. Gunships are cheap to produce and require only a pilot and gunner, making it easy to deploy large numbers of them in battle.

BATTLE CRUISER

Battle cruisers are subcapitol ships that serve a number of roles in their respective fleets. On their own, they carry enough armament to fight fleet actions against other fleets of gunships and cruisers. They also carry a limited assortment of orbital bombardment nukes if the ground situation looks truly dire.

The standard crew complement of battle cruiser is three hundred, which includes the pilots and gunner chiefs for the ten gunner squads that a cruiser can carry, pilots for the ten drop ships and twenty strike fighters that the cruiser can dock on its outer hull, as well as personnel needed to operate the ship and medical teams. Additionally, a cruiser carries a nominal load of fifty marines for boarding operations and security.

CAPITOL SHIP

Capitol ships are the largest things that humankind has created that can actually move. Just over two miles

long, capitol ships bristle with hundreds of guns, missile racks, and orbital bombardment weaponry. These ships require a crew of thousands to operate, not to mention their complement of marines, pilots for the two hundred gunners, fifty dropships, and one hundred strike fighters they carry.

Neither side knows exactly how many capitol ships the other has, but it assumed that both sides field less than twenty of these behemoth craft.

SPACE STATIONS

Elrand, Abrax, Destiny Prime, and Destiny II have at least one military-grade space station (and many civilian stations.) These stations are home to thousands of soldiers and civilian support staff. They also offer docking and repair facilities for both sides' space assets and steel gunners and enough weaponry that it would take several capitol ships to knock them out.

Stations offer everything a soldier needs for a home away from home: bars, workout facilities, shopping malls, centers for higher learning, even brothels are tolerated by the higher ups. Both sides maintain large number of personnel in space for extended periods of time and these stations offer every amenity possible.

SPECIAL RULES

In the world of Steel Gunner, not everything is as it seems. With ADF scientists working hard to advance gunner technology by fusing man and machine and the secret of the Energy Coil yet to be discovered, Destiny Prime is home to many mysteries.

To support the storytelling, here are some optional rules which can be brought into a Steel Gunner campaign.

MARK II INTUITIVE GUNNERS

Even the best pilots in the galaxy have one limitation they cannot beat: the amount of time it takes for them to move a lever, press a button, or activate a control plus the amount of time it takes for the gunner to respond. For the most elite pilots and best tuned gunners in the world, this limitation may be less than a second, but that can be just enough time for a gunner to get junked.

This is why in 2231, the ADF began researching Mark I Intuitive Gunner technology. The goal was to create an expert artificial intelligence that would learn its pilots' habits, anticipate its pilots' needs, and begin issuing commands before the pilot could humanly begin to react. The results were not very functional. The expert systems' lack of tactical awareness and the fact the pilot spent more time overriding the computer's controls than actually fighting lessened the gunner's individual combat effectiveness by 53%. The project became the laughing stock of ADF research and development.

However, in 2235, the project was reopened. In order to hide its true nature, the team behind the project described their efforts as a revitalization of the Intuitive Gunner. However, this

was true in name only. The goal of the Mark II Intuitive Gunner was not to let the machine make decisions for the pilot, but to remove the lag time from decision to action by melding the machine and the mind as one.

By 2236, the initial results were promising. The Mk II Intuitive Gunner surpassed every expectation imaginable. Pilots could enter the cockpit of the intuitive gunner and hook themselves into the machine's user interface directly. This allowed the machine to send data into the pilot's sensory cortex and read the pilot's decisions as they are made. All a pilot has to do is think "shoot" or "move" and the intuitive gunner is already doing it.

There's only one problem. Only a few pilots have the natural psychic aptitude to pilot an intuitive gunner. Thus far, this has limited the number of Intuitive Gunners the ADF can field. However, they have a new solution known only as Project Farsight.

IG-2 INTUITIVE GUNNER

The Intuitive Gunner packs every known advanced technology system in the ADF arsenal. They are fast, tough, and can easily slice their way through a normal gunner formation.
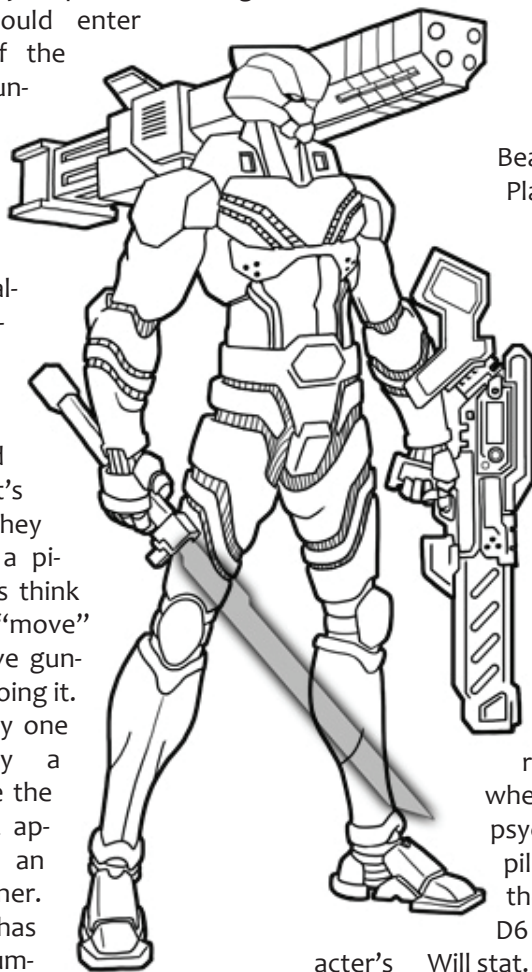
Weapons 3
Armor 4
Technology 6
Speed 3

Weapons:
Beam Sword (0/Energy)
Plasma Rifle (3/Energy)
Rocket Barrage (2/Missile)

Configurations:
Flanker
Transformer

Note: the Intuitive Gunner can only be operated by an Esper or someone with latent psychic ability.

Gamemaster's Note: If you wish to randomly determine whether a player has the psychic conditioning to pilot an Intuitive, have them roll a number of D6 equal to the character's Will stat. Any roll of 1 means they have the proper level of latent psychic ability.

ESPER TRAINING

The ADF high command is salivating over the chance to deploy large numbers of Intuitive Gunners into battle, but they just don't have the pilots who are naturally psychically sensitive enough to pilot one. Thus, the creation of Project Farsight, a program which invites candidates who receive an 80 or greater on the Josef-Sanz Psychic Awareness Battery to join an elite unit.

Those that accept the invitation are taken to a weekend "resort." There, they are fed memories of sandy beaches, too many drinks, and fun in the sun. In reality, they are held unconscious and subjected to repeated chemical treatments and psychological reconditioning which gives them the required 99 score on the Josef-Sanz and allows them to interface with an Intuitive.

Those who do not pass the conditioning die. The success rate is currently 60%, though ADF researchers believe this can be raised in the near future.

In game terms, for those who wish to follow the established canon of the setting, becoming an Esper is available to any ADF soldier should the Game Master allow it. (It can also be available to Separatist Guard soldiers with a bit of backstory or through a covert mission where the Separatists steal the technology.) Those wishing to break with the story points can determine when and how Espers become available.

It is up to the Game Master to determine how much game time the Esper conversion process takes. Some suggestions include having the process take place "off camera" in between episodes, it can be great inspiration for a Social scene, or it can even be the cause of the fight in an episode.

After the Esper conversion, the pilot may operate an Intuitive Gunner. Also, they must replace one of their Traits with a Trait that stemmed from their Esper conversion. Also, they replace one of their mecha and personal weapons with the **weapon:**

Psychic Howl (Psychic/3)

REVENANTS

At some point in either story line, ADF scientists or Gwandanan mystics will find the secret of the energy coil. The energy coil is basically a multi-dimension entanglement device that siphons energy from the realm of the dead. Quite by accident, it will become

apparent that the energy coil's field can actually capture the essence of dying pilots and trap it.

If done properly, this can give soldiers a form of immortality. A dying soldier can be trapped in the energy coil and with a few small modifications, that soldier can take over any vehicle in which the energy coil is installed. The soldier no longer needs to eat or sleep and will live as long as their energy coil is not destroyed.

Once discovered and with a nod to the miracle of this form of rebirth, the energy coil is renamed the Lazarus Coil. Within weeks of its discovery, engineers from both sides build a series of fail safes to do their best to capture a dying soldier's essence so that soldiers are given a chance at immortality. Pilots who are captured this way are known as Revenants and become a necessary, though creepy, part of both armies.

The Revenants will retain most of the memories of their former selves, though they are more distant and less passionate about existence than they were. They also give off strange radiation that garbles their communications. Videos of the Revenants always turn out grainy and filled with static and their voices always warble like a mal-functioning microphone, again with the ever-present static.

Any player or NPC can be a Revenant. However, Revenants cannot leave their mecha.

REAPERS

Reapers exist in the land of the dead which fuels the Lazarus Coils. In their natural realm, they sustain themselves by feeding off the energy produced by the essence in their realm. It is a steady diet, if not overwhelmingly exciting.
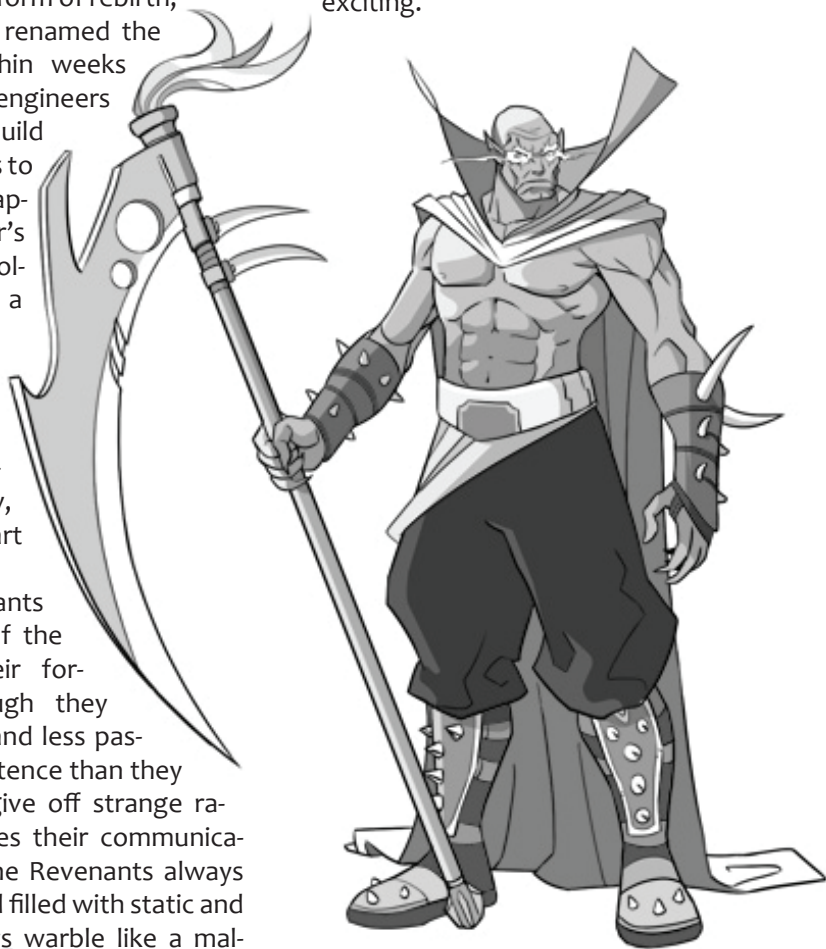
Unbeknownst to the scientists who perfect the Lazarus Coil, the process of binding an essence to a Lazarus Coil has a number of unintended side effects. One of which is ripping a small hole into the fabric between the two worlds. The more Revenants that get created, the more plentiful these holes become.

Eventually, the veil separating the two realms grows large enough that the Reapers slip through into our realm. Since they are able to feed off anything living, they see our realm as a buffet of new tastes and new sensations. They are eager to eat everything.

REAPER

Attack 8
Defense 8
Engineering 8
Movement 8

Weapons:
Reaper Scythe (0/Impact)
Immolation (1/Energy)
Psychic Scream (2/Psychic)
Farstrike (3/Missile)

Configurations:
Assassin
Ripper

GUNNER CHIEFS

Every gunner team reports to a gunner chief. Part leader, part repair technician, part officer you love to hate (or hate to love in some cases), the gunner chief is responsible for ensuring the team's gunners go into battle fully armed and combat ready and the chief is responsible for directing combat from the MCV.

Because gunner chiefs are not mecha pilots (or no longer mecha pilots), they tend to be NPCs rather than play characters. Here are several Gunner Chiefs you can use in any campaign.

TEMBO MONTREAL

Tembo hails from Gwandana. Before joining the Separatist Guard, he was in training to become a tribal shaman. Tembo brings his intuitive mysticism to bear in his role as a gunner chief. He has an uncanny foresight and a deep connection with the spirit-world. He believes that Separatist pilots are being watched over by the spirits of their ancestors.

ALESSA GREEN

Most pilots in the Separatist Guard would love to have Alessa Green as their hangar chief because Alessa is a very beautiful woman and a very talented tactician. She is also relatively new as a hangar chief but she makes up for her lack of experience with a strong empathy and ability to comfort pilots in the heat of battle. However, Alessa's past is shrouded in mystery.

ALEX WENDO

Alex Wendo blazed his way through the technical training programs and quickly became one of the most skilled gunner chiefs in the ADF. Alex attributes his technical skill to his deep-rooted passion for Steel Gunners. Alex has a peculiar fondness for one Gunner in

particular. He calls her "Sarah," in memory of his now-deceased fiancée. To be honest, it's a bit creepy how much love and effort he puts into keeping "Sarah" running.

SUKI YAMURA

Suki Yamura was one of the greatest Gunner pilots ever to fight for the Separatist Guard. When a combat injury to her leg left her unable to continue her career as a pilot, she became a hangar chief. Suki is well known for her no-nonsense attitude, stubbornness, and superior tactical knowledge.

GORDON NEMITZ

Gordon Nemitz is the most experienced hangar chief in the ADF. Gordon has served diligent for the past forty-one years and has had exemplary marks the entire time. Still, Gordon's past is rife with tragedy. At the onset of the war, his entire family was killed in a Separatist Guard surprise attack. He has dedicated his life to avenging his family and bringing an end to ADF tyranny.

STORY STAGES

Story Stages are major arcs within a campaign. They are presented to players and GMs so that everyone is on the same page about where the game starts and what might happen during a Steel Gunner campaign. These stages, divided into ADF and Separatist Guard, are just a suggestion and the GM should feel free to tell whatever story she would like.

Each stage lists three things: Initial Conditions, Types of Action, and Story Milestones.

Initial Conditions describe the status of the setting at the start of the stage. You should notice that the stages build on each other so that the types of action and milestones from one stage should lead naturally to the next. There are no rules that say a story has to go through each stage, or any of them, they are provided as a broad outline of how a game could go.

Types of Action list the different battles that players should expect. GMs can use the Types of Action list to give them some ideas of the types of battles they can setup.

Lastly, the Story Milestones give GMs some ideas of different things which might happen at each stage.

SEPARATIST GUARD STAGE ONE: CONTACT

Initial Conditions: The war has only been on for two years. This is just long enough for there to be bad blood between both sides, but few soldiers are truly tired of fighting yet. It is still new and exciting. Holoshows about the war draw big ratings on both sides. Who attacked first is still hotly debated, with each side pointing at the other as the agent provocateur.

So far, the ADF has had the upper hand in the war. Currently, all eight planets have some sort of ADF presence, which may be as small as a forward staging base from which the ADF can land supplies and carry on their land war. The Separatist Guard is short on experienced pilots and most of their

gunners have seen better days.

Types of Action: Patrols on the ground, patrols in space, reconnaissance missions, missions to support local guerillas

Story Milestones: The team will start out assigned to a forward firebase, which is just large enough to house two gunner teams (roughly eight mecha total.) (Note: to anyone who downloaded the Mecha Quickstart, you can have your players run into the Intuitive Gunner in space prior to them be assigned to the forward firebase.) The firebase is near a town, which has a well-stocked bar and a large bartender who packs a mean right hook.

Life on base is anything but boring. There are constant patrols in and out of the base. Pilots may draw "ready duty" and be assigned to sit in their activated gunners for hours at a time. The Colonel in charge of the base is just asking for a prank or ten.

Eventually, though, the ADF will attack the base. During this battle, one or more Separatist Guard gunners piloted by NPCs will be junked. Life goes on from that point until the air raid siren goes off again. It seems one of the junked mecha is operating itself. When the mecha is brought down they find that there is nobody piloting it.

This leads to the discovery of the Revenants and the effects of the Lazarus Coil.

SEPARATIST GUARD STAGE TWO: TRAGEDY

Initial Conditions: Some time will have passed since the first Stage. The war has settled down into a grind. The ADF continues to score victories, but their momentum is slowing as the Separatist Guard begins to organize into an effective fighting force. Shortly before this Stage, both armies will begin to field significant numbers of Revenant pilots.

Types of Action: Patrols on the ground, patrols in space, reconnaissance missions, missions to support local guerillas, space battles, training exercises with new Revenant pilots

Story Milestones: On a random day, all of the pilots' leave requests are cancelled and they are ordered to report to the Colonel in the briefing room immediately. When the team assembles, they find the Colonel is very agitated. The ADF are attacking Casaleo, Abrax's capital city, with several brigades (each comprised of several thousand gunners.) They have dug in around the city and are shelling it.

The Separatist high command had decided to mobilize just about every asset they have to counter the threat. That includes the players' gunner team. If they are on Abrax, they will be lifted by Heavy Lifter to a staging area outside the city. If they are not, they will be taken by transport and dropped to the staging area.

They arrive just before the offensive is scheduled to start. The Separatists move towards the city and as soon as they get close enough to attack, the ADF withdraws. Eventually, a large number of Separatist troops close on

Casaleo.

Then it happens. In the blink of an eye, the entire city of Casaleo and its ten million inhabitants are destroyed along with the Separatist Guard near them. The destruction is total. This is the work of the Destiny Siege, a large supercannon that can wreak terrible havoc.

How the team handles the attack is up to them. They may fight their way past the ADF counter attack or they can be captured on purpose or they can find another option.

This battle is a good time for the team to face their first Intuitive Gunners.

SEPARATIST GUARD STAGE THREE: DESTINY

Initial Conditions: The battle for Casaleo is over. Depending on how the players do, it was either a total route or they were able to salvage the situation. Either way, the ADF has revealed the existence of the Destiny Siege and has given the Separatist Guard one week to surrender or they will eradicate the capital world of every Separatist planet in Destiny Arbor.

Meanwhile, the Revenants are starting to act weird. Like they are afraid of something or they are in terrible pain.

Types of Action: Patrols, recon missions to find the Destiny Siege, black ops to locate the Destiny Siege, black ops to kidnap scientists who might have worked on it, counter attacks against the ADF, hunting down groups of Separatist deserters.

Story Milestones: Eventually, the week ends. The players receive word that the Destiny Siege on Elrand has been discovered and the team is given one final chance to knock it out. They are taken to

the weapon of mass destruction and a giant battle ensues.

If the team wins, the campaign can end then or they can be just a little too late to stop it. If the team loses, the Destiny Siege can fire destroying Destinia, the capital city of Elrand.

As Destinia burns, all of the death and destruction causes a great rift in the dimensional curtain. This lets the Reapers spill forth. The team can attack the Reapers and if they are defeated, their deaths will seal the dimensional curtain.

If the players want to continue, the Reaper attack is so bad that it decimates the ADF (who have a proportionally higher use of Lazarus Coils.) This decimation has left Destiny Prime open to attack.

ADF STAGE ONE: CONTACT

Initial Conditions: The war has only been on for two years. This is just long enough for there to be bad blood between both sides, but few soldiers are truly tired of fighting yet. It is still new and exciting. Holoshows about the war draw big ratings on both sides. Who attacked first is still hotly debated, with each side pointing at the other as the agent provocateur.

So far, the ADF has had the upper hand in the war. Currently, all eight planets have some sort of ADF presence, which may be as small as a forward staging base from which the ADF can land supplies and carry on their land war. The Separatist Guard is short on experienced pilots and most of their gunners have seen better days.

Types of Action: Patrols on the ground, patrols in space, reconnaissance missions, missions to eliminate local guerillas

Story Milestones: The Separatist Guard launches a major offensive against an ADF base, much like the Separatist forward firebase. Desperately outnumbered, the ADF holds on for dear life until a strange new gunner appears. This new gunner is capable of human **movement:** jump kicks, cartwheels, dodging attacks. Singlehandedly, this gunner turns the tide allowing the players to counterattack.

Afterwards, the players learn about Intuitive Gunners and Espers. Espers lead to the discovery of the true functioning of the Lazarus Coil.

Any players may become Intuitive Pilots at this point.

ADF STAGE TWO: REUNION

Initial Conditions: The war has settled down. The ADF is still winning, but the Separatist Guard is getting much more effective. Then the team's gunner chief tells them about the Destiny Siege. Stage Two takes place after it has been fired on Abrax and the ADF decisively wins that battle. The Separatist Guard is given a week to surrender.

Types of Action: Patrols, cleaning up the resistance after Abrax, squashing anti-Destiny Siege protests, accepting the surrender of Separatist Guard units, destroying surrendering Separatist units

Story Milestones: Right before the deadline is up, the team is moved to a huge staging area outside of Elrand. One minute after the deadline for surrender passes, the ADF fires the Destiny Siege. Destinia is immolated in a bath of pure destructive fury.

And the Reapers pour forth.

ADF STAGE THREE: DESTINY

Initial Conditions: The ADF did not fare too well in the wake of the Reaper attack. For reasons not fully understood, Reapers showed up on every world in Destiny Arbor and on several space stations. The attacks seemed to have affected the ADF, and in particular the Intuitive Gunner corps, worse than the Separatist Guard.

A call is put out for anyone who is able to undergo Esper "training" with the promise they will be given a brand new Intuitive Gunner. Meanwhile, the Separatist Guard is marshaling for a grand attack on Destiny Prime.

Types of Action: Patrols, space battles, investigating reports of rouge Reapers, strikes on Separatist Guard bases or units, Intuitive Gunner training

Story Milestones: The team is reassigned to a new commanding officer, a general who is heading up what could be the last effective ADF fighting force: Task Force Steel Lance. Made up of fewer troops than were present at the battle of Abrax, Task Force Steel Lance has one mission: find the Separatist headquarters on Nevia and end this war once and forever.

The team is transported to Nevia and given intelligence on where the base should be. The fight is on.

Special Research School
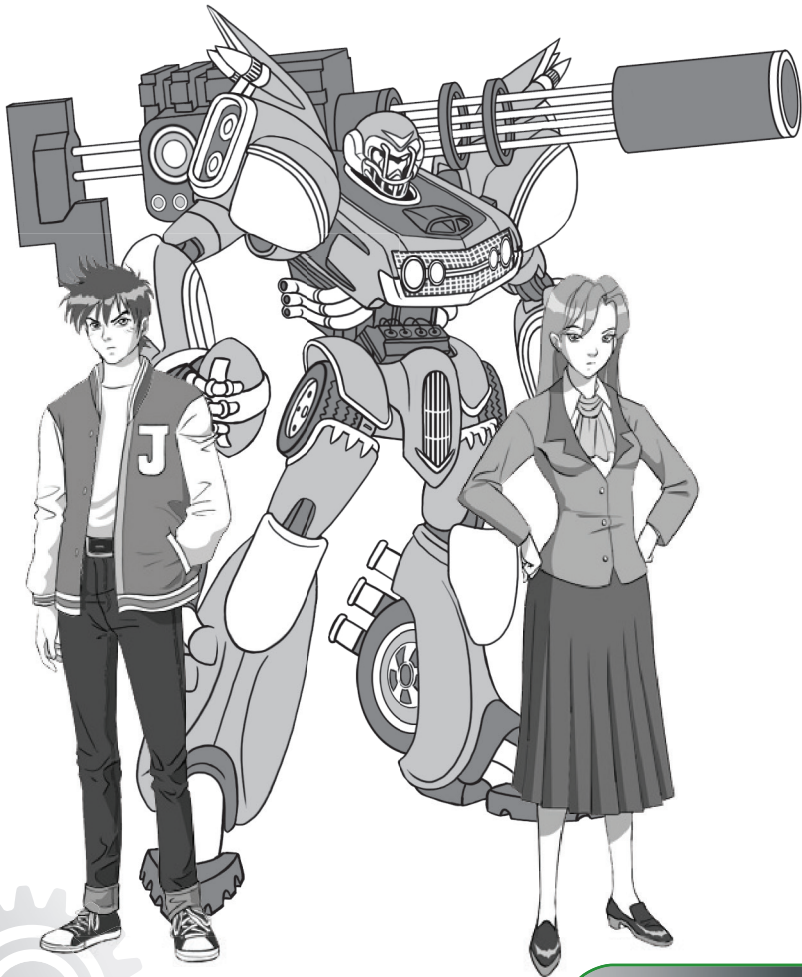
Dear Most Fortunate Student,

This electronic communication has been happily sent to you by the administration of the Special Research School Combined System to inform you and your parents that you have been joyfully admitted to Special Research School West Campus! We proudly hope that you will be matriculating there this fall. Your parents have been thoughtfully copied on this electronic mail so that they may receive this beneficial news and gladly remit their first tuition payment due in ten days.

The Special Research Schools only accept the best and the brightest students who excel in the particular fields of study and athletics. Classes will be strenuous, but we have a number of special clubs in which you can participate to add fun diversions to your school day.

If you are planning on playing mecha football, gratefully find the attached weapons governor permission form. Fill it out in triplicate and quickly fax two copies to the Special Research School West Campus Athletics Director and one to the New Edo authorities.

Also, please studiously find a copy of all required materials you will need for your first day.

Dormitories open one week before classes start and all incoming freshmen are sternly required to arrive on the day the dormitories open for a week long orientation to the Special Research School Combined System. Come ready to learn and have fun. The first night, there will be a co-ed sock hop. Much Fun will be had!

Sincerely,
Administrator Hoshi Yoriburro
Special Research School Combined System

Congratulations, you made it into one of the best schools in all of Japan: the Special Research Schools! Students from all over the world apply to the Special Research Schools, but only a few thousand actually make it.

With Glorious Nippon the clear leader in technology ever since it began mass producing the first mechanized humanform vehicles (called mecha for short) in 1876, many wonder why Japan has poured so much money into an education system which in turn only widens the technology gap. However, those who are proponents of the system argue that only through increasing technology will the world find peace.

It is better, they say, to lead through technology than popular culture. Sure, the world dances at sock hops and beach parties to rock and roll music and cruising in mecha, which the Americans call "Hot Bots", but Japan continues to be the focal point for new technology.

Now, the choice is yours. Will you help build the next generation of Hot Bot? Will you devise some chemical formula that helps create new healing techniques? Will you excel on the mecha football field? Or will you cut class like so many rebels before you?

Let the adventure begin.

Welcome to Your First Day Class of 1966!

An address for Student Council President Tawny Takanata:

You are about to embark on the ad- venture of your lives: high school!

In just four short years when you graduate, you will look back at this orientation as the start of something great. It will be the moment you stopped being kids and started being high school students.

Before we get into everything you can do at the school, I want to go over a few rules. Now, school records indicate everyone in the freshman class has passed their exam and received your mecha learner's permit. Good!

Those of you who brought your mecha, no I won't call them Hot Bots, should keep them parked in the mecha hanger. You are only permitted to take your mecha out of the hanger when a parent or other authorized individual is with you. Coach Grunhard offers mecha driving lessons on weekends for anyone who just has to get out there and drive.

Second, school uniforms are to be worn at all times during the weekday and at any formal events. I know poodle skirts and letter jackets are all the rage with the young people today, but this is a Special Research School and you are expected to dress better than that!

Third, no leaving school grounds without a written permit. Anyone caught sneaking on or off school grounds without permission will end up seeing Mr. Belden, our new American Vice Principle. Disciplinary actions will follow. The good news is that Hyper Drive-in, Yakitori Restaurant, and Kelly's Diner are all considered to be on school grounds.

Fourth, the freshman class will

have one member elected to the Student Council. Elections will take place at the end of the week, so feel free to start campaigning now. Time is already running out.

Now, let's talk about the school and the activities in which you can participate. After that, we'll break for lunch. Chef Akebono prepared some special tempura for everyone in the cafeteria.

We'll meet back here for a special film on student life and manners and then everyone is free to go to the sock hop!

School Layout

As you can see from this diagram, SRS West is shaped like an oval. What may not be clear is that the oval is nearly half a mile long at its longest point and almost a quarter mile wide at its widest. The building is ten stories high and is composed of the cool looking blue glass you see everywhere.

The school is divided into four quadrants, each of which serves a unique function. Quadrant 1 is the dormitories where you have already checked in your belongings and hopefully met your roommate. Quadrant 2 is reserved for classrooms and lecture areas. Quadrant 3 houses the school library and labs facilities and Quadrant 4 is for school administration. If you are ever above the first floor of Quadrant 4, you will be subject to disciplinary action.

You've been warned.

To the north of Quadrant 1 you will find the football fields where our mighty team, the Fighting Rockets, take the field to play mecha football. I am sure you all know that we have something of a tradition of mecha football here. We've been to the Prefecture Championships five times in the past seven years!

To the south of Quadrant 4 are the mecha hangers. Yes, someone is always watching your mecha. You've been warned.

The best part about the school is probably the courtyard. In the middle of the oval, there is a huge common area where students like to congregate during lunch or after class to relax, talk and maybe play some sports that don't involve mecha. However, there is a strict no fighting policy. Anyone caught fighting in the courtyard is looking at some pretty heft punishments.

Again, you've been warned.

Plenty of Activities

SRS West is more than just a great educational opportunity; it's a place to enrich your total person. We offer a number of different activities which will help you train yourselves as young leaders, not just enrich your mind with new information.

A few of these activities include:

School Dances

While dancing is not a critical skill for tomorrow's generation of leaders, we firmly believe that being a good, well rounded individual capable of interacting like adults in social circles

certainly is. This is why the school hosts seven dances throughout the year:
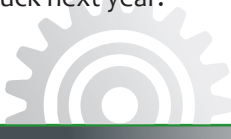
- Freshman Sock Hop
- Homecoming
- Winter Formal
- Spring "Girls Ask Guys" Mixer
- Junior Prom
- Senior Prom
- Graduation Dance

The Student Council Events Committee is responsible for organizing and picking a theme for these dances. However, they need volunteers all of the time. If any of you freshmen are particularly civic minded and see a future in Student Council for yourselves, volunteering for one these dances is a great way to get started.

Mecha Football

Not many freshmen play on the varsity mecha football team, but a few get the chance every year. Do you think you have what it takes to play? If so, make sure you have signed your weapons governor forms because without that, you can't play!

Anyone who wishes to try out for the mecha football team is more than welcome. We have two teams, the varsity team and the junior varsity team. In order to try out, all you have to do is play a two-on-two game against two varsity team members. If you score a point, you can play JV ball. If you win the game by scoring two points, you're on the team. If you lose, well, better luck next year!

Clubs

We have a number of great clubs here featuring all of your favorite activities. Other than the Student Council, we have Kendo Club, Karate Club, Photography Club, Student Newspaper Club, Lacrosse Club, Art Club, Yearbook Club, Cheerleading, Fashion Club, Future Business Leaders of the World, Future Farmers of the World, Emo Club, Future Teachers of the World, Chemistry Club, Role Playing Club, Math Club, Science Club, Mecha Engineer Club, Pep Club, Glee Club, Dance Squad, Debate Club, Diving Club, Equestrian Club, Creative Writing Club, Auto Club, Computer Club, Movie Club, Poetry Club, Yoga Club, Environmental Club, Weightlifting Club, Cross Country, Track Club, Future Politicians Club, JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Club), Home Ec Club, Audio/Visual Club, Solar Powered Mecha Team, and Band.

I think that's all of them.

All clubs are headed by a senior, but anyone can join and help out.

School Cafeteria

The cafeteria opens at five thirty in the morning and serves breakfast until nine. Lunch begins at eleven and lasts until one o'clock. Dinner begins at five and continues until seven. If you miss dinner, vending machines are located in Quadrant 1.

Please do not order pizza. The school cafeteria is perhaps not what it used to be since Chef Akebono took over, but he's trying his best. He just

needs a little more practice. It may not look it but the food is very nutritional.

Don't Cut Class!

Whatever you do, attend class. Yes, on the outside world there are Hot Bot races and fixit shops and drive-ins that serve milkshakes, but you are here to learn. We have all of the educationally entertaining activities that you need. Please do not leave the school grounds.

On the outside, people actually play a "street" version of mecha football without weapons governors. It is unwholesome and dangerous.

There are plenty of street gangs who would love nothing better than to warp your minds and have you join them. If I see a single Dragon or Snake emblem on your clothes, I'll turn you into Vice President Belden myself!

With that being said, I think it's time for lunch. Please form two orderly lines and walk to the cafeteria.

Oh, and look out for black bits. Chef likes to burn his tempura.

Life Outside School

Outside the SRS school, the city of New Edo awaits any student willing to risk getting caught sneaking off school grounds. The types of adventures the students can have are limited to what might be available in 1960s Asian megacity. In other words, if the players want to find it, they probably can.

As for those whom they might run into, there is all sorts of trouble to be had. The "People of Special Research School" will give you a pretty good idea of who you can and shouldn't run into.

Rival Schools

SRS West is not the only Special Research School in New Edo and it's definitely not the only school in New Edo. The following is a list of some of the more notable schools in the area. It's possible for students from non-Special Research Schools to transfer into a Special Research School and occasionally a Special Research School student transfers out to a public or private school. This, however, is rare.

Other Special Research Schools:

Special Research School East – SRS East is located on the easternmost edge of New Edo, right along the coastline. Students are treated to lovely views of the ocean as they go to school. It's a fact they love to rub in other SRS students' faces.

SRS East students have a reputation for their snobbery, which is surpassed only by their reputation for excellence. They have won the mecha football championship five of the last seven years, the State debate championship for the last three, the Math Olympiad the last ten years, and their Audio/Visual Club has better projectors than anyone else.

They are SRS West's main rival.

- **Special Research School North:** SRS North is the largest of the SRS schools and is well funded by a number of corporate interests who sponsor research. While SRS East excels in most areas, SRS North consistently produces the largest number of graduates who go to big engineering contests including the Solar Powered Mecha races.
- **Special Research School South:** SRS South has only been open for three years and is still the smallest of the schools. Rumor has it that it was charted as an athlete's school. The fact that the SRS South mecha football team went to the State championships its first two years of existence give some credibility to these rumors.

Other high schools

St. Thomas A'Mecha – St. Thomas A'Mecha is the largest girls-only Catholic school in all New Edo. The girls who attend St. Thomas A'Mecha are chosen for the excellent academics, though in truth, the school has a high number of students in its JROTC program. It is located about three kilometers from SRS West.

- **New Edo University High:** New Edo University (NEU) is one of the premier universities for advancing the science of mecha creation. In order to rival the SRS schools, they started their own high school, New Edo University High (NEUH). About ninety percent of the graduating class of NEUH attends NEU and go on to be mecha engineers.
- **New Edo High:** New Edo High is the largest public school in all of New Edo. Many of the students who go to an SRS school would go to New Edo High, which has left the administration jealous of the SRS schools. New Edo High often schedules competitions with as many SRS schools as possible, though they tend to lose because Special Research Schools draw in superior students.
- **Bronks Science:** Bronks Science is located in the northern district of New Edo, near SRS North. It's a rougher school that still draws a fairly intelligence class of student. However, Bronks Science students have a reputation as fierce Hot Bot racers and put on illegal Hot Bot street races every weekend.
- **Modesto High:** Modesto High is located in the eastern part of the school, near New Edo Bay. It is a public school that consistently fields the worst football team in the city. It is near SRS East.
- **Modesto High South:** When Modesto High got too large, they opened a South branch near SRS South. Modesto South has carried on the Modesto tradition of being bad at sports, but it fields some of the best academic teams in the city.

Hot Bot Models

In Special Research School, the kids call their mecha Hot Bots and anyone who's considered or wants to be considered cool has modified their mecha with large fins, big headlights, fuzzy dice, and all the trappings of 1960s era hot rods. Anyone who has a factory standard mecha model is a nerd and is likely to be beaten up and given a swirl.

When building their mecha, players should feel free to describe the modifications they have done to their mecha to make them even hotter.

Model: Lineman

Weapons: 1
Armor: 3
Technology: 3
Speed: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
Cut Block (0/Impact)

Configurations:
Pick any two

Model: Quarterback

Weapons: 1
Armor: 2
Technology: 2
Speed: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
Football Launcher (2/Impact)

Configurations:
Pick any two

Model: Athlete

Weapons: 2
Armor: 2
Technology: 1
Speed: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
Pole Vault (0/Energy)
Discus (3/Impact)

Configurations:
Pick any two
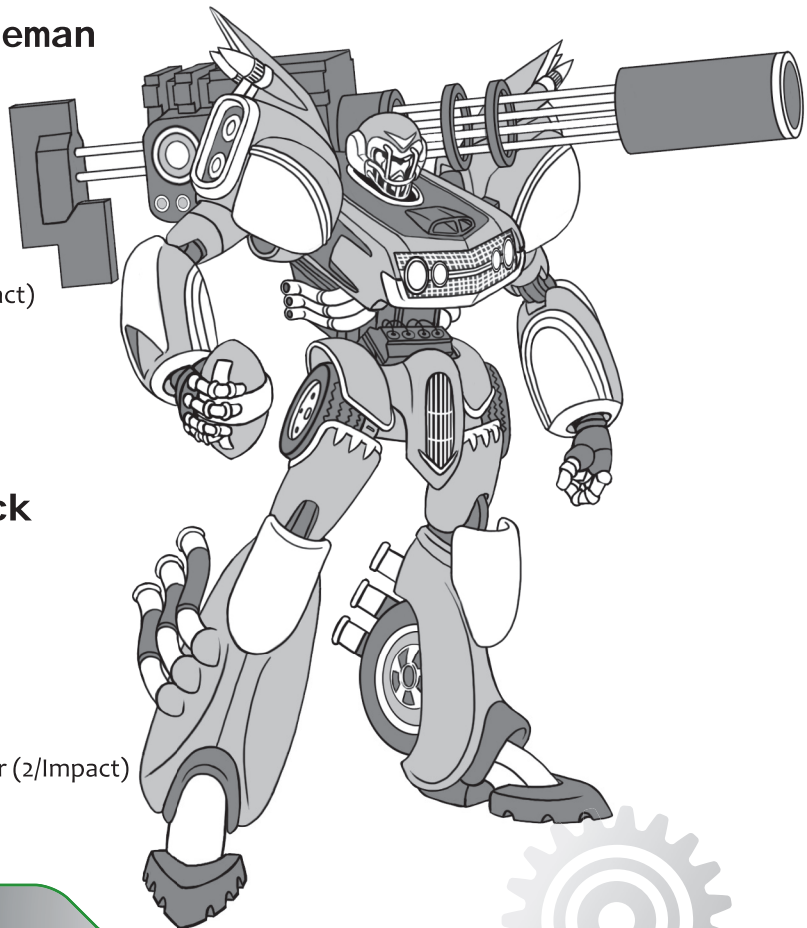
Model: Hooligan

Weapons: 3
Armor: 2
Technology: 1
Speed: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
Lighter (1/Energy)
Switchblade (2/Energy)
Slingshot (3/Missile)

Configurations:
Pick any two

Model: Mastermind

Weapons: 2
Armor: 2
Technology: 3
Speed: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
Slingshot (3/Impact)
Light Sword (0/Energy)

Configurations:
Pick any two

Model: Cheerleader

Weapons: 3
Armor: 1
Technology: 1
Speed: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
Atomic Pompons (0/Energy)
Flying Cartwheel (3/Impact)
Sonic Scream (1/Wave)

Configurations:
Pick any two

Model: Classmate

Weapons: 2
Armor: 2
Technology: 2
Speed: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Weapons:
Ballistic Spitball (1/Impact)
Power Slingshot (3/Missile)

Configurations:
Pick any two
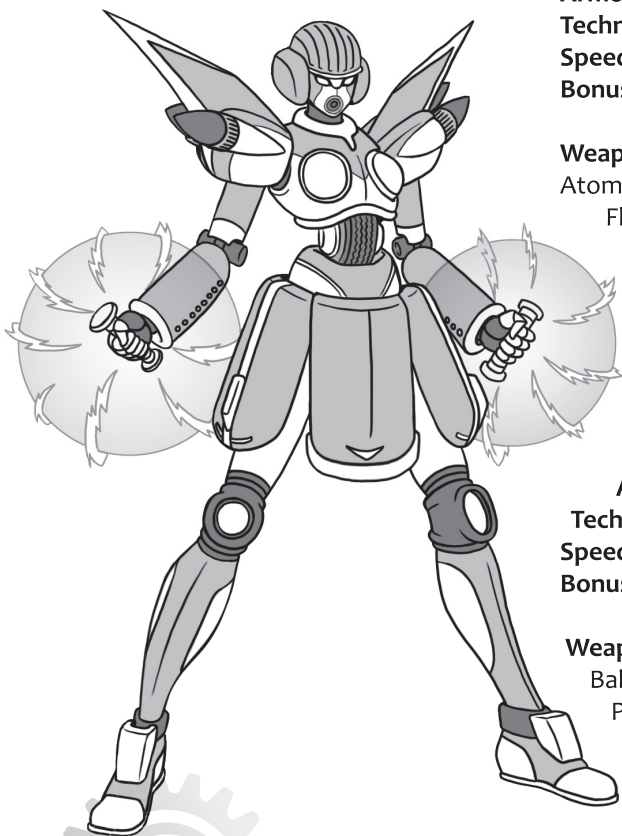
Character Archetypes

The following list the Archetypes available in Special Research School. When selecting an Archetype, players should select 1 Trait from each Trait Group for a total of 2 Traits.

Archetype: Jock

Strength: 2
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 1
Will: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 3
Personal Combat: 1
Social: 1
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 2
Medic: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Trait Group 1: Dedicated, Confident, Renowned
Trait Group 2: Fake, Whipped, Drunk

Archetype: Geek

Strength: 2
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 3
Will: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 1
Social: 1
Field Ops: 2
Repair: 3
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Trait Group 1: Inventive, Clever, Curious
Trait Group 2: Obnoxious, Lazy, Quirky

Archetype: Teacher©s Pet

Strength: 2
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 2
Will: 2
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 1
Social: 3
Field Ops: 1
Repair: 2
Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Trait Group 1: Helpful, Dedicated, Creative
Trait Group 2: Know-It-All, Brown Noser, Tattletale

Archetype: Rebel

Strength: 2
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 2
Will: 3
Bonus Points: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat: 2
Personal Combat: 1
Social: 1
Field Ops: 3
Repair: 2

Medic: 1
Bonus Points: 3

Trait Group 1: Quiet, Stand Offish, No Cause
Trait Group 2: Sad, Angry, Wanting

The People of Special Research School

Here are some of the people the pilots are likely to run into during their adventures. The write ups provided are suggestions and you are free to change them as you like.

Football Opponents

Player 1

This is a generic offensive football opponent for use in mecha football games.

Strength: 4
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 1
Will: 3

Weapons: 4
Armor: 3
Technology: 2
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility

Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 6
Engineering: 5
Movement: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons Systems:
Football Launcher (2/Impact)
Helmet Crunch (0/Impact)
Flying Tackle (4/Impact)
Deep Bomb (3/Missile)

Configurations:
Boomer
Berserker

Player 2

This is a generic defensive football opponent for use in mecha football games.

Strength: 4
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2
Will: 1

Weapons: 2
Armor: 4
Technology: 1
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Will
Armor-> Strength
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Agility

Linked Stats:
Attack: 3
Defense: 8
Engineering: 3
Movement: 8

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons Systems:
Helmet Crunch (0/Impact)
Body Slam (1/Impact)

Configurations:
Heavy Metal
Jammer

Player 3

This is a generic fast football opponent for use in mecha football games.

Strength: 2
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 3
Will: 3

Weapons: 2
Armor: 1
Technology: 4
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Strength
Technology-> Will
Speed-> Agility

Linked Stats:
Attack: 5

Defense: 3
Engineering: 7
Movement: 8

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons Systems:
Helmet Crunch (0/Impact)
Hit and Run (3/Impact)

Configurations:
Flanker
Disrupter

Player 4

This is a generic quick football opponent for use in mecha football games.

Strength: 3
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2
Will: 2

Weapons: 2
Armor: 3
Technology: 4
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speeed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 5
Defense: 5
Engineering: 8
Movement: 4

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons Systems:
Helmet Crunch (0/Impact)
Flash Strike (3/Energy)

Configurations:
Striker
Disrupter

Player 5

This is a generic well rounded football opponent for use in mecha football games.

Strength: 3
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 2
Will: 3

Weapons: 3
Armor: 3
Technology: 2
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Agility
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 6
Engineering: 4
Movement: 6

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons Systems:
Helmet Crunch (0/Impact)
Cut Block (1/Impact)
Laser Guided Toss (3/Energy)

Configurations:
Striker
Disrupter

School Staff

Principle Saganaki

Principle Saganaki is a tall, thick man who loves mecha football and hates running a school. Rumors have it that he would have loved to have been the Principle over at SRS South, but did not get the job. The Principle is rarely seen except at dances and leaves most of the work of running the school to Vice Principle Belden.

Strength: 2
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 4
Will: 4

Weapons: 2
Armor: 4
Technology: 4
Speed: 1

Links:
Weapons-> Will
Armor-> Strength
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Agility

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 6

Engineering: 8
Movement: 3

Skills: (Saganaki is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons Systems:
Fountain Pen (1/Wave)
Pink Slip Dispenser (2/Impact)

Configurations:
Striker
Disrupter

Vice Principle Belden

Vice Principle Belden was sent over to Japan from America to learn about the Special Research Schools from the Japanese. He is a well-regarded educator for the United States and is generally popular in teaching circles. However, he's not very nice. Just ask his first three wives. If a student acts out one, Belden will stop at nothing to make that student's life miserable.

Strength: 1
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2
Will: 5

Weapons: 4
Armor: 2
Technology: 3

Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Agility
Armor-> Intelligence
Technology-> Strength
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 4
Engineering: 3
Movement: 9

Skills: (Belden is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 4
Personal Combat 4

Weapons Systems:
Vice Principals Rage (0/Wave)
Confiscated Slingshot (1/Impact)
Student Seeking Missiles (3/Missile)
Anti-Truant Beam (4/Energy)

Configurations:
Sniper
Hot Shot

Coach Grunhard

Grunhard is an ex-professional mecha football player who retired ten years ago and began coaching at SRS West. He's everything a football coach/PE teacher should be: load, gruff, and the type who wears sweats and tennis shoes to everything he possibly can. He's

also a nice guy and will do whatever he can to help out his players and students. At least when he's not yelling at them for slacking, that is.

Strength: 5
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 1
Will: 4

Weapons: 1
Armor: 5
Technology: 3
Speed: 1

Links:
Weapons-> Will
Armor-> Strength
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 5
Defense: 10
Engineering: 7
Movement: 2

Skills: (Grunhard is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 2

Weapons Systems:
Coach's Whistle (1/Wave)

Configurations:
Supercharged
Flanker

School Nurse Dotte

Nurse Dotte is the lovable school nurse that raises heart rates around the schools. She's loveable and surprisingly competent around her job despite her incessant perkiness. Nosebleeds occur frequently around her.

Strength: 1
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 3
Will: 2

Weapons: 1
Armor: 7
Technology: 4
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 2
Defense: 9
Engineering: 6
Movement: 7

Skills: (Nurse Dotte is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 5
Personal Combat 3

Weapons Systems:
Tongue Depressor (1/Impact)

Configurations:
Supercharged
Engineer

Janitor Boro

No one knows much about Janitor Boro's past, though the scars that he normally manages to conceal under his long shirts tell of an interesting past. Nowadays, he keeps mainly to himself, pushing a broom and listening to his portable music player. If approached by a student, he will try to blow them off, but eventually he will warm up to a few students. He's a great source of gossip around the school.

Strength: 5
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 3
Will: 2

Weapons: 5
Armor: 3
Technology: 3
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Intelligence
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 10
Defense: 6
Engineering: 7
Movement: 4

Skills: (Janitor Boro is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 5

Weapons Systems:
Mighty Broom (1/Impact)

Mudslide (3/Wave)
Penknife (0/Melee)
Flammable Cleaning Solution Spray (2/Wave)
Fiery Wastebasket (2/Energy)

Configurations:
Boomer
Assassin

Chef Akebono

Chef Akebono used to be the head cook at Kelly's before taking the job at SRS West. As soon as he left, Kelly's business picked up dramatically. Akebono is a nice man with a booming laughter who always gives the students extra helpings of tuna surprise, of which he seems to have a never ending supply.

Strength: 5
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 1
Will: 5

Weapons: 3
Armor: 6
Technology: 1
Speed: 1

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Agility

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 11
Engineering: 2
Movement: 2

Skills: (Chef Akebono is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 5

Weapons:
Sushi Knife (0/Impact)
Chinese Cleaver (0/Impact)
Tempura Fryer (1/Energy)

Configurations:
Berserker
Sniper

Mister Head,
the Science Teacher

Mister Head's real name is Mister Tondu, but everyone calls him Mister Head because of his crazy hair. Mister Head has a deep passion for science and loves doing experiments, even if most of them end blow up in his face. He has covered more than one class is strange sludge, oftentimes on accident. He is married to Mrs. Tondu, the Math Teacher.

Strength: 2
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 5
Will: 2

Weapons: 3
Armor: 2
Technology: 5
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Will
Armor-> Strength
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Agility

Linked Stats:
Attack: 5
Defense: 4
Engineering: 10
Movement: 4

Skills: (Mister Head is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Potato-Powered Lamp Bomb (1/.
Energy)
Tuning Bar (0/Wave)
Napalm (3/Energy)

Configurations:
Prowler
Counterfire

Mrs. Pennypincher,
the Home Ec Teacher

Mrs. Pennypincher is the only British member of the school's facility. She is the home ec teacher, but also tries to instill in her student a good ol' fashioned sense of British propriety. She is also the cheerleading sponsor and designs all of their very proper, not very inspiring routines.

Strength: 2
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 4
Will: 6

Weapons: 3
Armor: 3
Technology: 2
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats:
Attack: 7
Defense: 9
Engineering: 4
Movement: 5

Skills: (Mrs. Pennypincher is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Needler (2/Impact)
Scissors (1/Impact)
Yardstick (1/Energy)

Configurations:
Ripper
Bulwark

Mrs. Tondu, the Math Teacher

Mrs. Tondu used to work at NEU before accepting a teaching position at SRS West. She is deeply concerned about how mecha are changing the course of humanity and will start a local NO MECHA chapter in the school as soon as the movement grows popular. She is married to Mr. Head.

Strength: 4
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 5
Will: 4

Weapons: 2
Armor: 4
Technology: 2
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Intelligence
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 9
Engineering: 4
Movement: 7

Skills: (Mrs. Tondu is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 2
Personal Combat 4

Weapons:
Huge Compass (2/Impact)
Buried Under Homework (3/Wave)

Configurations:
Scanner
Analyzer

Typical Teacher

These stats will work anytime you need a teacher in a combat that is not named above.

Strength: 2
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 3
Will: 3

Weapons: 2
Armor: 3
Technology: 3
Speed: 3

Links
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats:
Attack: 5
Defense: 6
Engineering: 6
Movement: 5

Skills:
Mecha Combat 2
Personal Combat 2

Weapons:
Confiscated Yo-Yo (1/Impact)
Teacher's Edition (0/Impact)
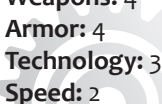
Configurations:
Berserker
Supercharged

Principal Biller from SRS East

Principal Biller is a tall, gaunt man who looks like he hasn't slept in ten years. His mouth is perpetually caught in a sneer unless he is talking about SRS East's victory in any number of different events. All in all, he is a pretty mean guy, though he is an ex-soldier and a nightmare in a mecha.

Strength: 1
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 4
Will: 6

Weapons: 4
Armor: 4
Technology: 3
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Will
Armor-> Intelligence
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats:
Attack: 10
Defense: 8
Engineering: 4
Movement: 3

Skills: (Principle Biller is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 4
Personal Combat 4

Weapons:
Spitwad Launcher (3/Missile)
Yellow Slip Launcher (3/Missile)
Yardstick Barrage (1/Impact)
Chalk Launcher (0/Impact)

Configurations:
Assassin
Ripper

Hall Monitor Bots

Hall monitor bots are the names of the robots piloted by volunteer Hall Monitors. These students report directly to Vice Principal Belden about any suspicious activity they notice. There is only one problem. According to Special Research School regulations, the Vice Principal can only discipline students that the Hall Monitors catch on video and as of yet, there is no way to transmit video back to the Vice Principals office.

This means that over the past few school terms, truants sneaking back

into campus have been known to smash up Hall Monitor Bots, thereby destroying the video evidence of their truancy.

Strength: 4
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 3
Will: 2

Weapons: 3
Armor: 4
Technology: 4
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Agility
Armor-> Strength
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 8
Engineering: 7
Movement: 5

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Hall Monitor Flashlight (2/Energy)
Hall Monitor Sash Slash (1/Impact)
Hall Monitor Call (3/Wave)

Configurations:
Bulwark
Hot Shot
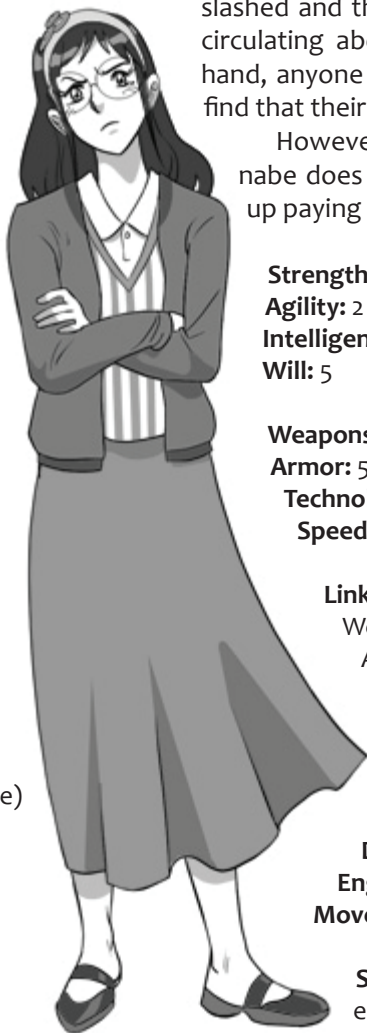
Students

Victory Watanabe
Student Council President

Victory is everything a Student Council president should be: organized to a fault, tyrannical and not above abusing her position for personal gain. Anyone who crosses her will find that their clubs have had their budgets slashed and that ugly, ugly rumors are circulating about them. On the other hand, anyone she considers useful will find that their clubs have more money.

However, anytime Victory Watanabe does a favor for you, you end up paying her back ten times more.

Strength: 1
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 5
Will: 5

Weapons: 1
Armor: 5
Technology: 3
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 10
Engineering: 5
Movement: 4

Skills: (Victory is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3

Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
President's Scepter (0/Impact)

Configurations:
Supercharged
Flanker

Weapons:
Atomic Pompons (0/Energy)
Flying Cartwheel (3/Impact)
Sonic Scream (1/Wave)

Configurations:
Transformer
Stonewall

Kallen Saito
Head Cheerleader

Kallen is one of the prettiest girls in the entire school, if not the prettiest. She's also one of the most ice cold and is universally mean to everyone she encounters, especially other cheerleaders.

Strength: 3
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2
Will: 6

Weapons: 3
Armor: 5
Technology: 2
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Agility
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Strength
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 7
Defense: 11
Engineering: 5
Movement: 5

Skills: (Kallen is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 2
Personal Combat 4

Roman Hondo
Upperclassman Jock

Roman is one of the stars of the football team. He has excellent speed and should end up playing college ball somewhere. There is already talk he'll play professionally. He's also incredibly arrogant and doesn't treat his girlfriend, Raquel, very well at all.

Strength: 4
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2
Will: 4

Weapons: 4
Armor: 4
Technology: 2
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 8
Engineering: 4
Movement: 6

Skills: (Roman is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 4

Weapons:
Cut Block (0/Impact)
Football Launcher (2/Impact)
Pole Vault (0/Energy)
Discus (3/Impact)

Configurations:
Slayer
Assassin

Trisha Kozaki
School Newspaper Reporter
Kozaki pictures herself being an investigative reporter one day. She loves finding scoops and then blabbing about them on the school newspaper. She is always nosing into things which are not her business.

Strength: 2
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 4
Will: 4

Weapons: 1
Armor: 2
Technology: 3
Speed: 6

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 3
Defense: 3
Engineering: 7
Movement: 10

Skills: (Trisha is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 4
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Magnifying Glass of Truth (0/Energy)

Configurations:
Scanner
Prowler

Catholic Schoolgirl 1
This is a generic template you can use for any of the girls from St. Thomas A'Mecha.

Strength: 2
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 4
Will: 2

Weapons: 4
Armor: 3
Technology: 2
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Strength
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 6
Engineering: 4
Movement: 4

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Penny Cannon (2/Impact)
Blaze Assault (2/Energy)
Crazy Hammer (0/Impact)
Angry Strike (0/Energy)

Configurations:
Boomer
Defender

Catholic Schoolgirl 2

This is another generic template you can use for any of the girls from St. Thomas A'Mecha.

Strength: 2
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 3
Will: 2

Weapons 2:
Armor: 2
Technology: 3
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Agility

Linked Stats:
Attack: 4
Defense: 4
Engineering: 7
Movement: 8

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Penny Cannon (2/Impact)
Angry Strike (0/Energy)

Configurations:
Jammer
Prowler

Student 1

This is a generic template you can use for any student from any of the schools.

Strength: 2
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2
Will: 3

Weapons: 4
Armor: 3
Technology: 2
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Will
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 7
Engineering: 5
Movement: 4

Skills:
Mecha Combat 2
Personal Combat 2

Weapons:
Ballistic Spitball (1/Impact)
Power Slingshot (3/Missile)

Lighter (1/Energy)
Cherry Bomb (0/Missile)

Configurations:
Sniper
Jackhammer

Student 2

This is a generic template you can use for any student from any of the schools.

Strength: 3
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 4
Will: 2

Weapons: 3
Armor: 4
Technology: 2
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Intelligence
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 8
Engineering: 4
Movement: 4

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Ballistic Spitball (1/Impact)
Power Slingshot (3/Missile)
Cherry Bomb (0/Missile)

Configurations:
Heavy Metal
Hot Shot

Student 3

This is a generic template you can use for any student from any of the schools.

Strength: 3
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 2
Will: 4

Weapons: 3
Armor: 2
Technology: 2
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Intelligence
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 4
Engineering: 4
Movement: 8

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Ballistic Spitball (1/Impact)
Power Slingshot (3/Missile)
Cherry Bomb (0/Missile)

Configurations:
Stonewall
Ripper

Club President

This is a generic template you can use for the upperclassmen club presidents.

Strength: 3
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 4
Will: 4

Weapons: 3
Armor: 3
Technology: 3
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 7
Engineering: 6
Movement: 7

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 2

Weapons:
Baton of Office (1/Impact)
Sign In Book (0/Impact)
Treasury Box (3/Impact)

Configurations:
Transformer
Boomer

Jock's Girlfriend

Use this template for any of the girlfriends of the various jocks the players may befriend or run afoul of. Whether they are a happy couple depends on the GM.

Strength: 3
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2
Will: 2

Weapons: 2
Armor: 4
Technology: 4
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Intelligence
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 5
Defense: 6
Engineering: 8
Movement: 6

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Fashionable Hair Pins (1/Impact)
Sonic Snipe (3/Wave)
Atomic Fury (2 Energy)

Configurations:
Prowler
Flanker

Hot Bot Racer

Use this template for any Hot Bot Racers.

Strength: 1
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 4
Will: 4

Weapons: 2
Armor: 1
Technology: 4
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Will
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 3
Defense: 3
Engineering: 8
Movement: 8

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 4

Weapons:
Leg Spikes (0/Impact)
Spike Launcher (2/Impact)

Configurations:
Disrupter
Booster

Dragon Member

The Dragons are a street gang dedicated to being rebels and doing their own thing. Their members are growing from amongst the youth of New Edo. So far, they have contented themselves to minor acts of vandalism. Their biggest rivals are the Snakes.

Strength: 4
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 1
Will: 2
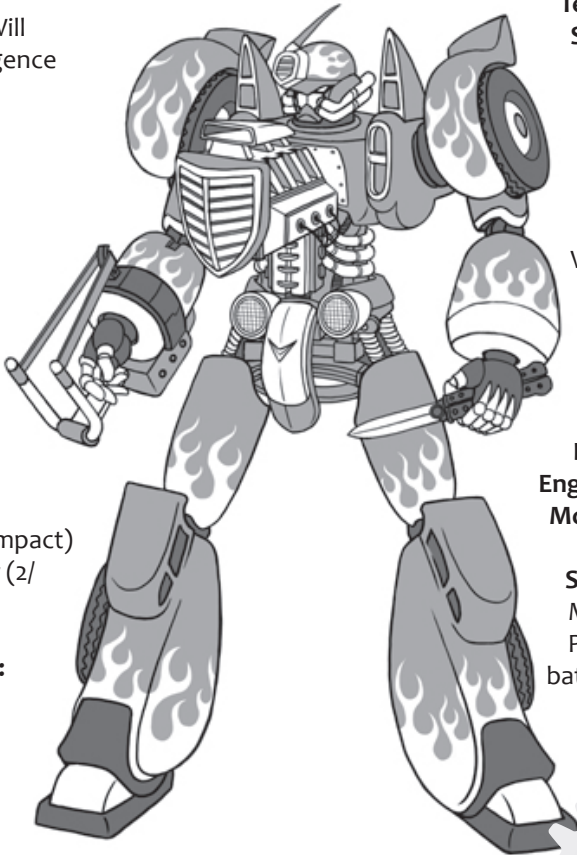
Weapons: 4
Armor: 4
Technology: 1
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Will
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 8
Engineering: 3
Movement: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat 2
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Lighter (1/Energy)
Switchblade (2/Energy)

Slingshot (3/Missile)
Saturday Night Special (3/Impact)

Configurations:
Hot Shot
Slayer

Snake Member

The Snakes are the other major gang in New Edo. They are growing about as fast as the Dragons and are also dedicated to being rebels and doing their own thing. So far, this has meant a lot of talk and a few random acts of vandalism. However, they are the more aggressive of the two gangs and are eyeing Dragon turf.

Strength: 4
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 2
Will: 2

Weapons: 4
Armor: 4
Technology: 2
Speed: 1

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Intelligence
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 7
Engineering: 4
Movement: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 2

Weapons:
Lighter (1/Energy)
Switchblade (2/Energy)
Slingshot (3/Missile)
Fire Katana (0/Energy)

Configurations:
Ripper
Prowler

Citizens of New Edo

Garage Owner

The garage is a haven for many rebels who cut school to come work on their Hot Bots. The garage owner may be a grease monkey who has the characters work on Hot Bots for him in exchange for parts and hanger space, he may be a war vet with stories to tell the characters, or he might be a petty crimelord looking to attract new members to his organization from the ranks of the students who come to his shop.

Strength: 3
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 5
Will: 5

Weapons: 3
Armor: 4
Technology: 3
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Intelligence
Technology-> Will

Speed-> Agility
Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 9
Engineering: 8
Movement: 6

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Drill (0/Energy)
Wrench (1/Impact)
Tire Assault (2/Impact)

Configurations:
Sniper
Flanker

Cindy, the Waitress

Cindy is the cute mechahop who always seems to be working at Hyper Drive-In, the mecha drive-in places that have sprung up across Japan. Mecha are able to park in one of the stalls, their pilots can get out and sit on their rides' shoulders, and have Cindy or one of her smiling coworkers roller skate up with their burgers, fries, and milkshakes.

In recent years, Cindy and her fellow mechahops have gotten much busier as the Hyper Drive-Ins have become favorite local hangouts.

Strength: 2
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 3
Will: 4

Weapons: 2
Armor: 5

Technology: 3
Speed: 2

Links:
Weapons-> Agility
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Strength
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 9
Engineering: 5
Movement: 5

Skills: (Cindy is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Fry Assault (2/Energy)
Roller Smash (0/Impact)

Configurations:
Ripper
Stonewall

Kelly

Kelly is the always smiling owner of Kelly's right next to the Hyper Drive-In. She was a student at SRS West the first year it opened. She graduated, went to college, and eventually came back and opened her diner. She was worried about her restaurant for a while until Chef Akebono went to work in the cafeteria. Ever since, it's been hard to get a table.

Kelly knows many of the faculty at the school because the majority of them come to eat at her restaurant. She is a nice lady, but she keeps an energy shotgun behind the counter if trouble

ever comes her way. She is said to have a soft spot for the students and has passed on more than one rumor that the Vice Principle was on the lookout. However, she has become more tight-lipped recently as the rumor has her romantically linked to Vice Principle Belden.

Strength: 2
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 4
Will: 4

Weapons: 3
Armor: 3
Technology: 4
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats:
Attack: 7
Defense: 7
Engineering: 6
Movement: 6

Skills: (Kelly is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Akebono's Old Cleaver (0/Impact)
Belden's Pen (2/Impact)
Energy Gun (1/Energy)

Configurations:
Flanker
Jammer

Mr. Yakitori

Mr. Yakitori is an older gentleman who owns Yakitori on the outskirts of campus. He is going blind, but refuses to hire anyone to help him cook his food, due to the fact he doesn't think anyone can do it as well as him. He is a proud man who will give the students a piece of his mind if he finds out they are misbehaving.

Strength: 2
Agility: 5
Intelligence: 5
Will: 3

Weapons: 1
Armor: 5
Technology: 3
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Agility
Armor-> Intelligence
Technology-> Will
Speed-> Strength

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 10
Engineering: 6
Movement: 5

Skills: (Mr. Yakitori is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Brilliant Katana (0/Wave)

Configurations:
Supercharged
Scanner

The Phantom

The Phantom is a legend in illegal New Edo Hot Bot racing. No one knows his true identity, but when they see his brightly painted yellow Hot Bot, they know they are in for a heck of a race. Recently, the rumors have it that the Phantom is looking to retire, but first he needs to train his replacement, who will he choose?

Strength: 1
Agility: 5
Intelligence: 3
Will: 5

Weapons: 3
Armor: 3
Technology: 5
Speed: 5

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Strength
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 6
Defense: 4
Engineering: 10
Movement: 10

Skills: (The Phantom is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Leg Spikes (0/Impact)
Spike Launcher (2/Impact)
Energy Dazzler (3/Energy)

Configurations:
Flanker
Disruptor

College Kid 1

Sometimes college kids come back to hang out with or terrorize high school students. Use this template to represent these kids.

Strength: 2
Agility: 3
Intelligence: 3
Will: 3

Weapons: 2
Armor: 3
Technology: 3
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Agility
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Strength
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 5
Defense: 6
Engineering: 5
Movement: 6

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Blasting Bubblegum (1/Wave)

Heavy Backpack (0/Impact)

Configurations:
Hot Shot
Jackhammer

College Kid 2
Sometimes college kids come back to hang out with or terrorize high school students. Use this template to represent these kids.

Strength: 4
Agility: 2
Intelligence: 1
Will: 4

Weapons: 4
Armor: 3
Technology: 3
Speed: 1

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Intelligence
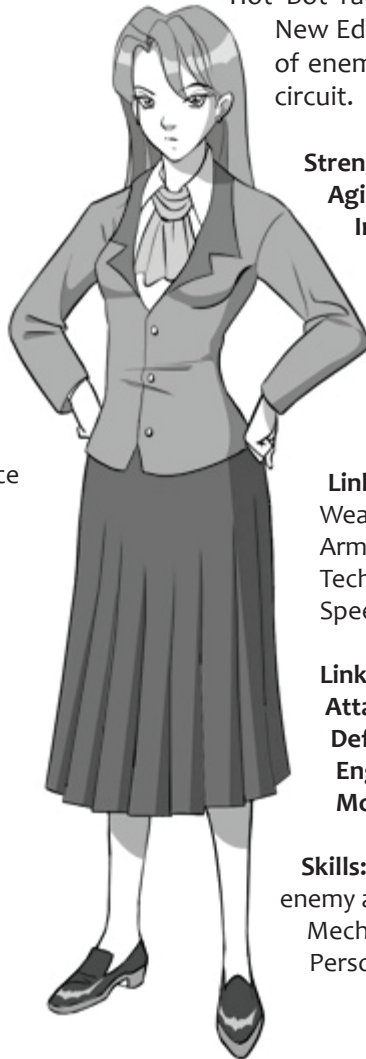Speed-> Agility

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 7
Engineering: 4
Movement: 3

Skills:
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Bully Punch (0/Impact)
Lighter (1/Energy)
Molotov Cocktail (2/Energy)
Loud Music (3/Wave)

Configurations:
Transformer
Slayer

Sheriff Gendo Torinaga
Sheriff Torinaga is not a man to be taken lightly. As sheriff, he does not like crime. A former marine, he remains in top physical shape. Recently, he has begun a program of eliminating illegal Hot Bot racing from the streets of New Edo. He has made a number of enemies in the Hot Bot racing circuit.

Strength: 2
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 4
Will: 4

Weapons: 4
Armor: 4
Technology: 2
Speed: 3

Links:
Weapons-> Intelligence
Armor-> Agility
Technology-> Strength
Speed-> Will

Linked Stats:
Attack: 8
Defense: 8
Engineering: 4
Movement: 7

Skills: (Gendo is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 5

Weapons:
Pistol (2/Impact)
Shotgun (1/Impact)
Rifle (3/Energy)
Zip Tie (0/Energy)

Configurations:
Defender
Engineer

Howling Dragon Jack

Howling Dragon Jack is the local radio disc jockey. He is on every night from eight to midnight and plays all the greatest hits from America. He takes requests every night from girls and guys out to their sweethearts and has been known to administer love advice on the air. No matter where you go in SRS West, Kelly's, Yakitori, or Hyper Drive-In, you are sure to hear his program when it is on.

Strength: 1
Agility: 1
Intelligence: 5
Will: 4

Weapons: 1
Armor: 4
Technology: 3
Speed: 4

Links:
Weapons-> Strength
Armor-> Will
Technology-> Agility
Speed-> Intelligence

Linked Stats:
Attack: 2
Defense: 8

Engineering: 4
Movement: 9

Skills: (Howling Dragon Jack is considered an enemy ace.)
Mecha Combat 3
Personal Combat 3

Weapons:
Howl (2/Sonic)

Configurations:
Supercharged
Analyzer

Special Rules

Available Damage Types

Special Research School uses only the four standard damage types: Impact, Missile, Energy, and Wave.

Available Configurations

All Configurations are available in the SRS setting. There are no SRS-specific Configurations.

Mecha Football

An import from the America, mecha football has become wildly popular across the world. Now, every country fields at least one national team. It's also an extremely popular sport to play in high school.

The game uses a modified set of the normal combat rules and as long as the game is played in sanctioned high school arenas, it's not deadly. Instead,

mecha are equipped with special weapon governors that prevent the mecha's weapons from doing deadly damage (in other words, in mecha football there is no Lethal Damage Phase). However, there is an illegal street version which is no holds barred and has, in some areas, resulted in death and permanent injury to its players.

The rules for mecha football use the standard combat rules with a few notable exceptions.

1. Two Sectors Are Marked As End zones. The outermost sectors of two Quadrants (either 1 and 3 or 2 and 4) are called end zones. One side starts in each end zone and this is considered that side's end zone. They must defend it.

2. A Ball Replaces the Tactical Waypoint. Mecha football is played without a Tactical Waypoint. Instead, there is a ball that starts in the middle of the Bullseye Battlemap. Since it replaces the Waypoint, players can spend Tactical Points to move ball at the start of the game or after a point has been scored.

3. Mecha can pickup, carry, and throw the ball. If a mecha enters the same Sector as the ball, it can spend 1 Movement Point to pick up the ball.

   Once it has picked up the ball, it can continue moving and bring the ball with it. It is considered to be carrying the ball.

   Lastly, one mecha can throw the ball to another by making an Attack roll. For every Success rolled, the ball can move 1 Movement Point. If the Attack roll does not produce enough Successes to pass the ball from one mecha to the other, the ball is still thrown and still travels that as many Movement Points as were rolled.

4. Scoring in Mecha football. If a mecha starts its turn in the other side's end zone and is in possession of the ball, it scores a point. Most games of mecha football are played to 2.

5. Special Attack Rules. A Successful Attack rolls causes two things to happen. The first is the attacked mecha loses a half action. If the mecha is attacked twice in a turn, it loses both its actions. If it is attacked three times, it loses both its actions this turn and one half action the next and so on. Note: if an Attacker uses Disruptor, this takes away the Defender's move action. Therefore, the Defender cannot choose to lose its move action and must sacrifice its attack action instead.

   Secondly, if the mecha is carrying the ball, it drops it. The Attacking player then moves the ball D3 (D6/2 round up) Movement Points in whichever direction the Attacking player would like.

6. After a point is scored. After a team scores, both sides go back to their respective end zones. The ball is placed where

it started the game last time. (Normally this is the middle of the battlemap, but if someone spent Tactical points, they can move the ball back to where they moved it before.)

Either side can spend additional Tactical Points if they would like.

Also, every mecha on the side that lost the point goes first. This means that on the first turn, they act before the other team. This is not a surprise round because the other side will go, but the losing team gets a chance to avenge the point scored against it. On the second turn after a point is scored, initiative returns to normal.

Lastly, it should be noted that in mecha football there are positions (quarterback, linemen, full backs, receivers, etc.) However, these positions are just for story purposes.

Story Stages

Story Stages are major arcs within a campaign. They are presented to players and GMs so that everyone is on the same page about where the game starts and what might happen during a Special Research School campaign. These stages are just a suggestion and the GM should feel free to tell whatever story she would like.

Each stage lists three things: Initial Conditions, Types of Action, and Story Milestones.

Initial Conditions describe the status of the setting at the start of the stage. You should notice that the stages build on each other so that the types of action and milestones from one stage should lead naturally to the next. There are no rules that say a story has to go through each stage, or any of them, they are provided as a broad outline of how a game could go.

Types of Action list the different battles that players should expect. GMs can use the Types of Action list to give them some ideas of the types of battles they can setup.

Lastly, the Story Milestones give GMs some ideas of different things which might happen at each stage.

Stage One: Freshman Year

Initial Conditions: Most games of Special Research School are going to start with the characters entering their freshmen year. GMs should feel free to make the lives of the freshmen as miserable as real freshmen's lives are. They are the bottom of the food chain. Even freshmen girls won't want to date them. The seniors won't want them on the football team. Nerds should be shoved into lockers. Club leadership won't allow freshmen to do anything cool, etc.

Still, this is the year when the characters should really find themselves. They should join clubs, try out for football, or start cutting class.

Types of Action: Football tryouts, Football games, Getting into fights with bullies, Going to Illegal Hot Bot races and fighting with students from other schools, Fighting Hall Monitor Bots to sneak back on to campus

Story Milestones: The school year naturally breaks itself up into semesters, though these might not necessarily be meaningful to the group. In fact, it's somewhat difficult to provide a list of story milestones in Special Research School because this SRS was designed to be fairly wide open. Everyone is going to find something different in this SRS. As the GM, you're going to get to strike a balance between everyone's agendas.

One possible way to divide the year is to break it up by dances with Home Coming, Winter Formal, Spring Mixer, and Prom/Graduation Dance being the major time milestones. Dances are great ways to bring all the characters together since everyone has some agenda at a dance, whether it's to get a girl, play a prank on the jock, spike the punch, or pull the fire alarm.

Another tactic is to set up one or more bullies that the players want to take down. Over the course of three or four Episodes, the players can gradually chop the bully down to size and right as the bully has been defeated, school is over. There is a wizard of some renown whose stories are told similarly.

Typical bullies might include: Senior Football Players, a Mean Head Cheer-leader, Tyrannical Club President, or the Class Rebel. If you want to bring the pain a little bit more, have the bully be a junior or even a sophomore so the players know they will have to deal with this bully for several more years.

Also, towards the end of the year, there will be Student Council elections for the next year. This is a chance for politically minded or chaos loving students to wreak havoc by running.

Stage Two: Sophomore Year

Initial Conditions: The characters are back from summer and looking forward (maybe) to another year at SRS West. From the beginning of the sophomore year, the characters are treated much better than they ever were as freshmen. This may have more to do the new crop of incoming freshmen than characters being popular, but life isn't so bad for them anymore.

Anyone who did not make the football team is welcome to try out again. Anyone on the JV team can try out for varsity
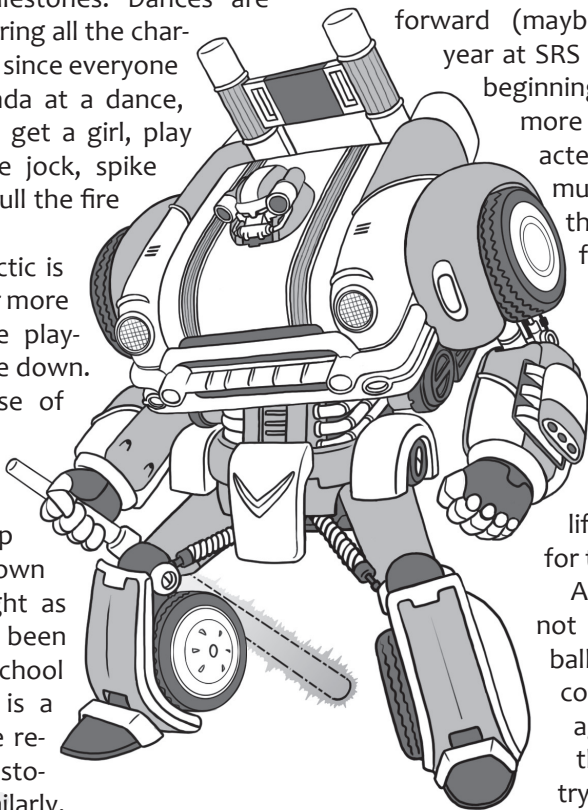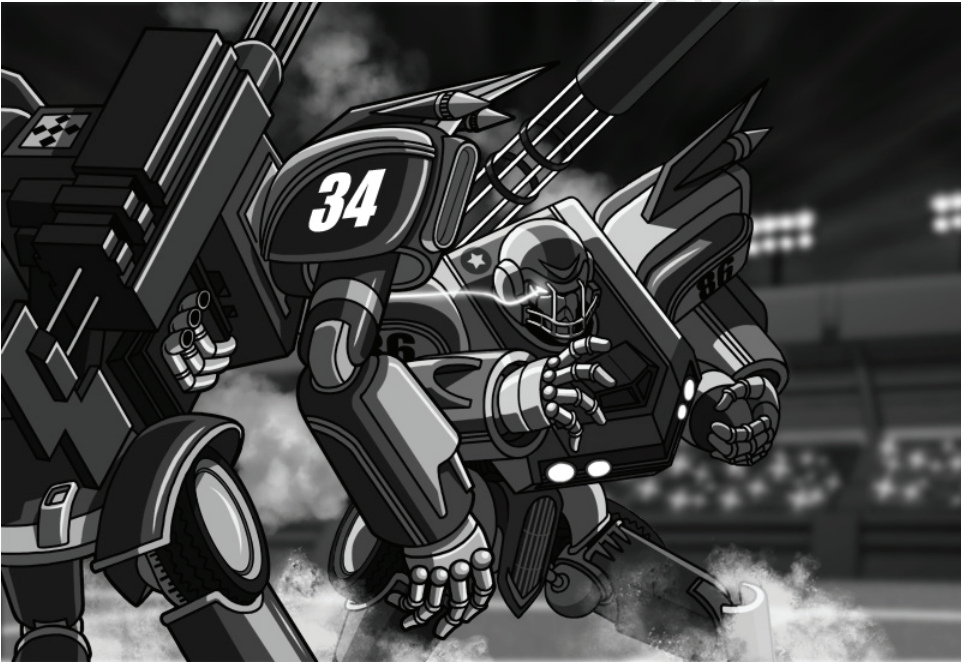
by playing a two-on-two match. If they win by scoring 2 points, they are on the varsity squad. If not, they are stuck on the JV squad. Anyone who played varsity stays on the varsity squad.

As the GM, feel free to pick up any storylines from the freshmen year, but don't let the players have business as usual!

Types of Action: Football tryouts, football games, fights against bullies and thugs, Fights with Hall Monitor Bots trying to sneak on and off campus, fights against SRS East, Fights with other students at Hot Bot races, fighting with gang members

Story Milestones: Sophomore year should be a continuation of the stories from freshman year. Whatever was not resolved then can continue. Characters should still be looking for love, accep-

tance, and club officer spots. However, four things can happen this year which shake things up.

The first is the arrival of Nick Nova, the new freshman quarterback on the football team. He was recruited to SRS West (which Special Research Schools are not technically supposed to do) so that he could come and win a Championship. Nova is going to radically upset the balance of popularity at SRS West for a number of reasons. One, many upperclassmen football players resent him even as he leads them to a Prefecture Championship. Two, all the girls in the place swoon over him. Three, SRS East is upset he went to SRS West over SRS East and will start to vandalize SRS West.

The second is the death of Alex Yun, a Senior with a flair for Hot Bot racing. He was challenged by one of the students from Bronks Science and lost

control of his car on Dead Man's Curve.

In response to this, Yorinaga Yu, starts NO MECHA, the National Organization of Morality, Ethics, Culture, Honesty and Achievement also known as The Soldiers of Honesty. NO MECHA feels that mecha are an abomination hurting the Japanese people and a detriment to the world. Some students will take up the cause and begin protesting Hot Bot racing and mecha football. The player characters can decide if they are going to join or not.

Third, the girls from St. Thomas A'Mecha show up for the Winter Formal and are told to ask guys from the school to the Spring Mixer. This should make male characters happy given their Catholic schoolgirl charm and make the female characters angry. Nick Nova is asked by one of the girls from St. Thomas A'Mecha and will accept her invitation.

Lastly, several freshmen come to school wearing the gang emblems of the Snakes and Dragons, two mecha gangs known to be recruiting high school students. Rebel characters may want to join these gangs while more civic-minded characters will see this as a severe problem and may try to promote anti-gang activity.

Again, at the end of the year, there will be more Student Council elections. No sophomore has ever been voted Student Council president.

Stage Three: Junior Year

Initial Conditions: After another hot New Edo summer, the students come back to find horrible news. Nick

Nova has transferred to SRS East. Allegations and accusations fly, tears are cried, and the characters will have to decide how to react. The recruitment of Nova left the team pretty bare in the quarterback department which will open the way for any characters who have aspirations of football glory.

Also, during the summer the Snakes and Dragons have continued to recruit, as has NO MECHA. Any of these events can lead to more story lines.

In terms of football tryouts, the same rules apply this year as last. Anyone can go out for the team, but to make varsity you have to win the tryout match. Anyone already on varsity remains on the varsity squad.

Types of Action: Football tryouts, football games, fights against bullies and thugs, Fights with Hall Monitor Bots trying to sneak on and off campus, fights against SRS East, Fights with other students at Hot Bot races, fighting with gang members

Story Milestones: It is up to the players whether this year's action will involve any action against SRS East. Most of the school (and its administration) is pretty upset by the defection of Nova and even the Hall Monitor Bots will turn the other way if anyone decides to raid the other school.

However if the players are not interested in this storyline, they are free to concentrate on developing their own stories. During their Junior year, characters will be eligible for officer positions inside the various clubs. Also, this will be the worst year for SRS West football in years, which gives any players who

like to fight plenty of changes to defend the school's honor.

The gang problem is also something the characters can tackle. The rebel characters may be drawn to the gangs (who content themselves with misdemeanors and violence since these are 1960s gangs) while the do-gooder types characters and the investigative journalists might want to find out more about them.

Towards the end of the year, there will be a Student Council election which the players stand a fair chance of winning if they run.

Stage Four: Senior Year

Initial Conditions: After one last summer, the characters come back to give it a final hurrah. As seniors, they will they are on top of the food chain. Club officer spots will be theirs if they want it, there are suddenly freshmen who are afraid of them, freshmen girls and guys will want to date them, life will be great.

Anyone who wants to go out for football will make it on the varsity team as long as they can score a single point in the tryouts. Coach Grunhard always tries to get seniors on the team.

One important thing to note is that even though Nick Nova did lead the SRS East Missiles to a landslide victory over the New Edo Turtles, the facility has lost much of its bitterness against him. Whereas before, raids on SRS East were generally accepted, that decision cost Principal Saganaki his job. This year

Principal Belden will not put up with such insubordination. He will come out in his Principle Mecha and personally try to stop students from sneaking out.

Also, the NO MECHA faction has really started to become popular. The characters may need to be careful lest they find themselves fighting outside of a mecha against them.

Types of Action: Football tryouts, football games, fights against bullies and thugs, Fights with Hall Monitor Bots trying to sneak on and off campus, fights against SRS East, Fights with other students at Hot Bot races, fighting with gang members, out of mecha fights with NO MECHA members

Story Milestones: Use this year to bring all of the character's stories to a close. If you need random events, look to violence from NO MECHA members and other schools to give the players a rival to focus their dislikes on.

Also, any of the characters who have aspirations to move on will have college entrance exams to worry about as well as athletic scouts coming to watch them play mecha football. This is a tumultuous time. Just because the players are seniors doesn't mean that life is easy for them.

The final year should last as long as there are stories left to resolve. After that, it's time for Special Research School: The College Years, but that's another SRS.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

First and foremost, Mecha was designed to emulate one specific subgenre of this thing we call mecha: mecha anime. The ideas herein do not make any claims of originality; rather they are a compilation of tropes taken from a lot of hours spent in front of a television watching giant robots battle it out anime-style.

Still, there is a lot of leeway within that subgenre. Mecha can support noir games, funny games, gritty tactical games, anime genres where the scientific crosses with the fantastic, and many, many more. Still, in case anyone was wondering, I was heavily influenced by the following series: Super Dimension Fortress: Macross (Robotech), Southern Cross, Code Geass, 08th MS Team, Macross Plus, Gundam Wing, Big O, Neon Genesis Evangelion, Project A-ko, and to a lesser extent VOTOMS and Full Metal Panic.

However, the inspiration for this game, specially the settings, goes far beyond these anime shows. To get in the mood for Godblind, I channeled a lot of the movie Dark City. Special Research School takes a lot of material directly from American Graffiti. Pretty much any good story can be excellent source material for any of the games.

WHY MECHA IS THE WAY IT IS

I wanted to include a brief section here to get you into the mindset I was in throughout the Mecha development process. Much of this material, or material similar to it, has gone up on my blog, but I wanted to reiterate some of the high points here.

Designing Mecha was very much a subtractive process. The original draft of the game that we started play testing is pretty much nothing like what you hold in your hand. I think that's a good thing. The original game I wrote did little to resemble the source material, which became the overriding goal of designing this game.

The original game was very realistic and far crunchier than Mecha. It took a lot of pounding in my head that if I really wanted a game about mecha anime, then I needed to cut out anything that wasn't specifically part of the genre, or at least part of what I liked about the genre.

So, we cut things. A lot of rules hit the cutting room floor, leaving you with what you see here.
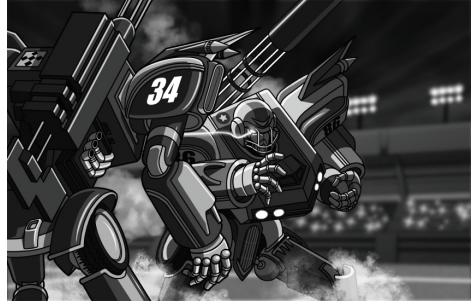
Of course, the process of tailoring the game to the genre meant that a lot of hard decisions had to be made. There is a part of me that thinks only having six skills is strange and that there is no money or equipment is very, very odd. However, I had to be true to the source material. In mecha anime, the characters excel at everything. They may never have sat in a cockpit, but suddenly they are aces. They may never have fired a gun, but they are deadly in a firefight. Also, characters always have a gun when they need it and never seem to worry about how to eat or pay for a date. Hence, the game is the way it is.

Of course, now the game is yours and I hope you make it your own. There are a lot of stories yet to be told with giant robots. What are you waiting for? Get out and fight!

MECHA ROLE PLAYING GAME CHEAT SHEET

The Basic Roll:

Roll a number of dice equal to the applicable Stat. Your Target Number is the applicable skill. Anything equal to or under the Target Number is a success. 1s Explode.

If you roll 5 Successes, that is a Great Success. You get 1 Overdrive.

If you roll 8 Successes, you get a Cutscene and 1 Overdrive.

Social Scenes (page 40): Interact with other characters, persuade your fellow players to take an action, impress an NPC, do some role playing. At the end of the Scene, make a roll using your Social skill using a Stat that you and the GM determine.

Field Ops Scenes (page 41): Do recon, set a trap, build a gadget. At the end of the Scene, make a roll using your Field Ops skill against a Stat that you and the GM determine.

Repair Scene (page 41): Fix a damaged mecha. Make a roll with your Repair skill normally against your Intelligence Stat.

Heal Scene (page 42): Heal a injured pilot. Make a roll with your Medic skill normally against your Intelligence Stat.

On your turn you can perform one Move Action and one Attack Action.

MOVE ACTIONS

1. Move (page 51): Make a Mecha Combat roll against the Movement Link Stat. You gain 1 Movement Point for each Success you roll.

2. Strafe (page 52): Make a Mecha Combat roll against the Movement Link Stat. You gain a pool of additional Defense dice for each success.

COMBAT ACTIONS

Fire a weapon (page 51): You fire one weapon per turn. Make a Mecha Combat roll against your Attack Link Stat. Each weapon has a number next to it -- its optimum range. For each Movement Point outside your optimum range, you roll 1 less Attack Dice.

Defending (page 53): When Defending, roll your Mecha Combat skill against your Defense Link Stat.

Initiative (page 51): Make a Mecha Combat roll against your Engineering Stat. Ties go to the Mecha with the highest Engineering.

PILOT

ARCHETYPE

MECHA

MODEL

NOTES

DAMAGE

MECHA

PILOT

INITIATIVE

1-4 = SUCCESS
5-7 = GREAT SUCCESS
8+ = CUTSCENE

STR

WIL

INT

AGL

ARM

SPD

TEC

WPN

DEF

MOV

ENG

ATK

FIELD-OPS
MECHA COMBAT
MEDIC
PERSONAL COMBAT
REPAIR
SOCIAL

ADVANCEMENT POINTS

TRAITS

EQUIPMENT

GOAL

CONFIGURATIONS

WEAPONS

PROTOCOL