

RISUSTECH

**A Game of Armored Combat
By Zamiel Al'Shaitan**

A Sourcebook for Risus: the Anything RPG by S. John Ross

Sourcebook Information

RisusTECH – A Game of Armored Combat is a wargame set in the far-flung future of the year 2000 <g> where giant robots have replaced more conventional war vehicles. The inspiration for this book comes most notably from the Classic Battletech game, of which I have always been a great fan.

I have thought long and hard about releasing this sourcebook for some time now (as you may know, it was announced 05/22/02 on my website) as it's in quite a different vein than all the other Risus material I have written, used, or even contemplated, and it mucks with much of the simple elegance of Risus, but rather than letting it drift into nothingness in some as of yet unforeseen hardware failure or careless keystroke, I present it to the Risus World.

To play this game, you will need sheets of hexpaper, as well as markers for your units. For hex maps, I highly recommend the hexpaper font from the Cumberland Fontworks – it's an invaluable tool, and at only \$3, how can you beat it? For markers, you can use dice, loose pocket change, old candy corn from under the couch cushions, whatever (hey, maybe S. John Ross will finally make a mecha font, then you could use that, too ;-)

If hand-drawing battlemaps isn't your thing, there are MANY pre-generated maps out there, search for such things as "battletech maps" or use a program such as BME (Battletech Map Editor).

Unit Generation

This is more of a wargame than a RPG (though elements could still be present, in long running campaigns) and as such, each player begins each scenario with multiple units. Depending on the "scale", a player may begin with as few as 1 unit, or as many as 12 – and if you have spectacularly large maps, maybe even more.

Each individual unit will have at least 3 cliché – 1 for the unit's structure, 1 for speed, and (normally) at least 1 weapon type, and is built from 10 dice, as standard characters. No more than 4 dice may be placed in any 1 cliché.

STRUCTURE – This will normally just be recorded as the unit name, such as "Avenger Anthropomorphic Warbot(3)" or similar, and it is the amount of damage the unit can take before it's scrap.

SPEED – This cliché determines how many hexes the unit can travel in a single round.

WEAPONS – The different weapon systems will be listed below, but in general this covers all things that splat, squish, crunch or vaporize your opponents. Weapons are designated as short, medium or long range, and a weapon of a shorter range cannot be used in longer range combat (see Conflict Types.) Some weapons are more or less suited for starting fires as well, these will be noted in the descriptions.

Weapons

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Description</i>
Light Laser	Short	The light laser is a standard short-range weapon.
Medium Laser	Medium	The medium laser is a standard medium-range weapon.
Heavy Laser	Long	The heavy laser is a standard long-range weapon.
Machinegun	Short	Another popular short range weapon, the machinegun is largely unchanged from its current-day counterpart. Machineguns cannot be used to start fires.
Flamethrower	Short	Not terribly effective against other units, the flamethrower is normally used for clearing terrain of woods. Against other units, all rolls are made at -1 die, however it is automatically successful at starting fires when used against trees.
Missile Launchers	Long	Missile launchers fire long range guided explosive munitions at their targets. Missiles are at +1 to start fires when used against trees, or an opponent in a wooded area.
Light Railgun	Medium	The railgun uses electromagnets to propel metal slugs out of the barrel at incredible speed and range. Railguns cannot be used to start fires.
Heavy Railgun	Long	This is a larger, more powerful railgun with better range, Railguns cannot be used to start fires.

Conflict Types

Conflicts are normally separated by short, medium or long range combat, whether they are between units, or units and terrain. A weapon of Medium or Long range may participate in shorter range combat, however all rolls are made at -1 die per range category.

If a unit involved in combat has no weapons appropriate to the conflict type (for example, a unit with all short range weapons engaged in long range combat) they may roll their STRUCTURE at -2 die as the opposing cliché, to attempt to avoid damage.

Hand-to-Hand Combat

All units can engage in hand-to-hand combat with units in the next hex, using 2 dice.

Short Range Combat

This involves 2 units using short range weapons, such as machineguns and light lasers. Short range combat is between opponents 1 to 3 hexes distant.

Medium Range Combat

Much like short range, this is combat between units 4-6 hexes away, using medium (or long, at a -1d penalty) range weapons.

Long Range Combat

Long range combat is between units 7-10 hexes away.

Combat Modifiers

If there are woods in the hexes between two combatants, a -1 penalty per wooded hex applies to all cliché rolls for firing. A light building also adds a -1 penalty to fire over or around. Medium buildings and above cannot be fired through.

Starting Fires and Destroying Stuff

Woods have a structure of 1, and if directly targeted with an appropriate weapon, will begin to burn readily.

Rubble(1) – Rubble has 1 structure point, and may be destroyed with any standard weapon. When a building is destroyed, it becomes rubble, then may be destroyed completely in the following attack.

Light Building(1) – Light buildings are small, non-fortified structures such as common houses.

Medium Building(2) – These are larger, more structurally-sound buildings, such as banks or other fortified structures.

Heavy Building(3) – This is a large, fortified structure designed to withstand attack, such as military bunkers or nuclear power plants.

Common Scenario

All Out Warfare

The most common scenario is the “kill everything that moves” type, where one player or team of players attempts to destroy all the units of the other player or team. These make great spur-of-the-moment time killers when you have the need to blow stuff up ;-)

City Assault

Another common game type is “Destroy the X” and of course, “X” is heavily guarded by the opposing forces. This type game is often more difficult than the previous, as the defenders have had time to “dig in”, and may be hiding in narrow streets or other ambush holes.

Caravan Guard

The last type I will describe here is the “Guard X from here to here” - where one team attempts to escort something (another “experimental” unit, a truckload of goods, a scientist, or something equally important) from one end of the map to the other. The other team will (of course) try to destroy “X” (and possibly the other units as well).

Most of these play well with bigger maps, a single 8.5”x11” sheet won't go very far with 8 (or more) units – However if you have a large hex mat (game & hobby shops carry them for around \$12) or print out a dozen or more sheets & tape them together you'll have room for epic-scale battles.

Commercial hex maps have the advantage of being washable – you can use overhead projector markers on them (“wet erase” type) and reuse them for whatever scenario you desire.

Chain of Events and Example of Play

Before play begins decide what order rounds will follow, (d6, low roller goes first works) then follow around the table.

- 1. First player moves a unit, then the next player – continue for all players. When all players have moved one unit, then the first player moves another unit. Continue until all units have moved.**
- 2. First player attacks with one unit. Second player then attacks with a unit – continue until all units have attacked. A unit reduced to “0” structure still gets it's attack in the round, damage is applied afterward.**
- 3. Any units destroyed are removed from play. Next round begins.**

Many Thanks To:

Risus: the Anything RPG by S. John Ross

Without Risus, there would be no RisusTECH ;-) Risus is undoubtably the finest (and free-ist) RPG I've ever found.

<http://risus.cumberlandgames.com>

The Cumberland Fontworks

Home of Hexpaper, an invaluable tool to every miniature-using gamer, and at only \$3, hot damn!

<http://fonts.cumberlandgames.com>

Heck, just check out all of www.cumberlandgames.com – there's Good Stuff(tm) there!

LordZamiel.is.Dreaming

LordZamiel.is.Dreaming is my home on the web, where all my Risus contributions are available in PDF and PalmDOC format. Current titles include Fantastic Fantasy Adventures in RisusLand (and accompanying Fantasy Bestiary), BUGHUNTERS the “alien-bug-thing squishing” sci-fi sourcebook, It's LINT! The “Life as LintKind” mini-sourcebook, Stoper Heroes, and Superdeformed Fortress Macross as well as this work.

<http://lordzamiel.is.dreaming.org>

And for those who were wondering, the “far-flung future of the year 2000” bit is in reference to the Conan O'Brien show's “In The Year 2000” sketch ;-)