DESTINY OF THE METAL GODS

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INTRODUCTION

Destiny of the Metal Gods is a role-playing game. You, and a group of friends, can spend an evening jointly telling a story. The rules of the game exist to give structure to the story and internal logic to the events it portrays. You don't win or lose as such, although the characters you create and play might suffer great victories and terrible set-backs.

THE PREMISE

Imagine a world that, despite being mostly stuck in the Middle Ages, also has access to modern and futuristic weaponry including fifty-foot tall battle robots.

Now say that the main country in this setting is steeped in Norse myth and legend; a pseudo-Viking culture.

The gods, goddesses and monsters are not figures of worship, as such, but are war robots that fight to protect the country. Their pilots are the most respected soldiers in the army, and a single such robot is worth dozens of lesser troops.

The country- the Norse Confederation- is surrounded on nearly all sides by hostile neighbours, each with their own giant battle robots.

These enemies are: The Delian League (Ancient Greece), the Dynasty (Ancient Egypt), the Mechabharata (Mythic India) and the Wyrmish Nomads (Vaguely Celtic). There may be more, just waiting for an opportunity to join the fray.

Among the Norse there is a prophecy concerning the time of 'Ragnarok'. It is said that a great war and tribulation will destroy all of the Metal Gods, and bring down the Norse people. Many believe that Ragnarok may be upon the Confederation, as the war intensifies.

As you can probably tell, this setting is not exactly serious. It's over-the-top and absurd. Play up to that as much as possible, but remember that there can still be moving personal stories and moments of genuine drama amid the explosions.

LEGENDS THROUGH A LENS

The world presented here is one where myth and legend is replaced by rivets and giant fighting machines. The focus is on the the Confederation and its continual struggles with its neighbours, but any culture, myth or legend is fair game for inclusion somewhere on the crowded map. There are, however, some basic principles on how the legends of the real world are translated into features of this fictional adventure.

- ✵ *Gods* – Gods become unique mecha, famous and powerful.
- ✵ *Heroes* – Heroes are renowned pilots, skilled and deadly.
- ✵ *Demi-Gods* – Demi-gods are retired pilots so revered that they have had a mecha named after them. Either that, or their still-living body has become part of a unique mecha that bears their name.

✸ *Gods' Weapons* – Unique weapon systems built into a unique mecha.

✸ *Heroes' Weapons* – Unique weapons held in the hands by mecha, that the famous pilot makes sure any mecha he pilots uses.

✸ *Monsters* – Generic models of mecha, usually looking like beasts.

✸ *Types of Soldier* – Other generic models of mecha, usually humanoid.

✸ *Types of Mythical Being* – Yet more generic models of mecha, usually with similar attributes to their inspiration.

In all cases, the intent is that anything in myth and legend is fair game to be turned into something appropriately impressive or terrifying in the game.

When actual history, geography and myth are useful for making the game fun, use them. Otherwise, make up whatever seems like the most fun at the time. No details are given in this book for places or people to leave as many possibilities open for you as possible. If you need a town, make up some details that match what you want out of the town. Similarly, if you need a character with a particular job or personality, just give him a name and get going.

EQUIPMENT

To play the game, you need plenty of six-sided dice, these rules, and some pencils. The dice ideally, need to be in three colours. It can be useful to have tokens of some kind, such as beads or poker chips, to keep track of certain things without having to keep rubbing numbers out.

You all need to be able to see what dice are rolled, so a central table you can all get to is handy.

DICE OVERLOAD

This game can involve using an awful lot of dice. It's not at all uncommon for a new character to roll 15 dice all at once. In a game where the very powerful mecha are used, it can easily be higher. If you don't have such prodigious quantities of dice, there are several ways round the problem.

The first is to simply halve the number of dice rolled by everyone, if the number needed is too high.

Another way is to roll the dice in stages, writing down the results so the dice can be rolled again.

A final method is to agree to only have small battles, with only one or two player-controlled characters in each.

POSSIBILITIES

The setting has plenty of opportunity for different kinds of story and of mixtures of story types. The low-tech, mostly agrarian countryside can be used for stories in the style of 'Seven Samurai' and other samurai epics, where the mecha pilots walk amongst the peasants like gods.

The potential for massive battles between armies of mecha can lead to war stories, either the hard-hitting kind seen in world War II dramas or those seen in heroic fantasy.

The heavy military presence means that both 'Sgt. Bilko'-style slice of barracks life stories and 'Where Eagles Dare'-style commando action stories are possibilities.

The high-tech elite can let you tell stories of social injustice or revolving around the research required to stay ahead in the arms race.

There's no need to stay within one genre all the time. Find out what you would all find interesting, and make a story based around that.

CONVENTIONS

One player has a special role in the game. He is called the Game Master, or GM. The other players each take on the role of one character in the game, but the GM has responsibility for everyone else in the world and moulding the story itself. This is not to say the GM is in charge, or that the other players can't contribute to the shared fiction, but the other players need to trust the GM to be fair if he ever needs to knock back a suggestion.

In these rules, there's a peculiar convention- 'you' always refers to a player, 'him' refers to a player's character, and 'I' refers to the GM.

This is to make it crystal clear who does what. It also makes it easier for the GM to read parts of the rules to the players when introducing them to the game. Where these rules say 'I do this', that is a suggestion to the GM for how to run the game to keep it interesting, as well as a way to let the other players know what the GM might do.

CHAPTERS

The next chapter gives an outline of how to create a character for this game. The next two chapters, 'Pilots' and 'Mecha', provide details on how to make your pilot, and the mecha he controls.

The 'Scenes and Arcs' and 'Battles' chapters cover what happens during the game; action on foot and battles in the mecha.

The 'Enemies' chapter tells the GM's side of the story, with guidelines on how to make the story interesting and rules on how I can affect the course of the game.

Finally, there is the 'Metal Gods' chapter which gives some example mecha in use by the powers in the game, and a smattering of background information for the enemies of the Norse Confederation.

CHARACTER GENERATION

In this game you play a pilot in a world that's a mish-mash of legends. The eponymous 'Metal Gods' are the fighting robots themselves, less reverentially called 'mecha'. As a pilot, your character is expected to fight battles against other mecha.

By default, you and your mecha are assumed to be part of the Norse Confederation, who field mecha frequently named after Norse gods and goddesses. Your skill in battle is needed to protect the peasants and other non-fighting classes from the threat of the neighbouring countries. Like the rest of your people, you live in fear of Ragnarok- a time foretold when the mecha of the Confederation fall and its people are subjugated by their enemies.

PILOT ATTRIBUTES

There are several different types of pilot you can have your character be. Each has a slightly different emphasis- some are better pilots, others have access to better mecha. These differences are only relevant at the beginning of the game. Once the game is under way any aspect might change. These types are a starting point, nothing more.

Each character has three broad categories of ability. The first is piloting ability. This is broken up into six skills, and the skill used depends on the type of battle being fought. Your character begins with 1 point in each skill and he has a number of skill points to spend improving them. Improving a skill by 1 costs 1 point. Skills cannot be higher than 5. Skills are also used when he is outside his mecha, for ordinary tasks. This gives a somewhat unusual division of areas of expertise, but it reflects his preoccupation with all matters mecha. More detail on the skills can be found in the 'Pilots' chapter.

The second category, predictably, says how strong a mecha he pilots. If your pilot owns his own mecha, you can build him one using the rules in the 'Mecha' chapter, to a number of points given by his pilot type. If he doesn't own his own mecha then he is assigned one by the military. I will give you pre-built mecha to pilot as and when they are needed. They are usually be worth the number of points listed in his pilot type, but I might give you one slightly stronger or weaker than normal as the mission warrants.

The third category is that of character traits. Traits represent the emotional side of your pilot. They can be personal drives, things he cares about deeply, or anything else that he is likely to dedicate a significant amount of his time and attention to. Each trait is given an **importance** rating, which is at least 1. The higher this value, the more significant this trait is and the more time he spends pursuing it. Your character can have as many traits as you want. You can't have a trait with an **importance** greater than 5 when you create your character. In play, your character accumulates points of **attention** in his traits. **Attention** cannot be higher than the **importance** for a trait. How traits work, and why they are useful for your character, are described in the 'Pilots' chapter.

PILOT TYPES

Elite Pilot

You are part of the regular army, an experienced and battle-hardened fighter. You are very highly skilled, at the expense of not having much of a life outside the military. You spend most of your battles in standard military-issue mecha, but your skills mean you have a greater than usual chance of being selected to pilot an improved version, or even one of the unique Metal Gods.

Skill Points: 15
Mecha Points: 11 (military loan)
Trait Points: 10

Enlisted Pilot

You are part of the regular army, one of the rank and file. Piloting a mecha is mostly a job to you. You find what time you can to have fun, rather than dedicating yourself to improving your abilities. You make friends amongst the military easily. You are well-used to most of the standard model mecha you are likely to be told to pilot.

Skill Points: 10
Mecha Points: 11 (military loan)
Trait Points: 14

Gentry Pilot

You are rich. Stinking rich, in fact. So rich that you commissioned a vanity mecha to be built just for you, including the cost of a licence to operate it. You own it free and clear, but that also means you have make arrangements for repair and servicing yourself. The military tolerates your assistance, as an extra unit is not to be sneezed at, but you are not as skilled most other pilots and it often shows.

Skill Points: 7
Mecha Points: 12
Trait Points: 13

Mechanic Pilot

You are a skilled engineer, and you have chosen to demonstrate your ability by building your own Metal God. It's a bit ramshackle, but it gets the job done. You are expected by custom to render assistance to the military when they ask for it, but they can't actually order you around. If there is trouble in your neighbourhood the expectation is that you do what you can. It's easy for you to make repairs to your mecha, if you can find the right parts.

Skill Points: 10
Mecha Points: 12
Trait Points: 11

Mercenary Pilot

You 'found' your mecha some time ago. You consider it yours, although the paperwork is a bit suspect. You rent out your services to the highest bidder, either alone or as part of a mercenary company. This means the military has something of an odd relationship with you, alternately hiring you and chasing you away with force. Your mecha is a bit battered and unreliable, possibly using obsolete systems, but you are used to its quirks.

Skill Points: 13
Mecha Points: 10
Trait Points: 13

Militia Pilot

You are only a part-time pilot. Towns and villages without a permanent garrison often have an old or damaged mecha in storage in case of emergency. You are the otherwise ordinary citizen assigned to pilot that old thing in case of trouble. You don't own it, and keeping it in working condition is a pain, but it's worth it for a chance to get away from your usual job every now and again.

Skill Points: 10
Mecha Points: 10 (military loan)
Trait Points: 16

THE TEAM

Although I can find ways of putting all kinds of characters into the same story, and usually working together at that, it is often useful to have a unifying concept for all of the player characters. If amongst yourselves you decide that you want to be a small defensive force defending a backwater town somewhere, for instance, it's easy to come up with a number of character concepts to fit that mould. The idea for the team can relate to some of the traits you have chosen for your characters.

CHARACTER SHEET

NAME: **I**

SKILLS

AMBUSH	DUEL
ASSAULT	GUERRILLA
BATTLE	HOLD

2

TRAITS

3

IMPORTANCE

ATTENTION

4

5

6

TOTAL COST **7**

:MECHA

SYSTEMS

8

9

10

COST **II**

DICE   PILOT

ATTACK   **ABILITIES**   DEFENCE

I2

| 6 |
| 5 |
| 4 |
| 3 |

DAMAGE

I3

I.   The name of your character.
2.   Your character's skill go in the bubbles.
3.   Your character's traits, one per line. You can fit additional information in if you like.
4.   The **importance** of the traits.
5.   The **attention** of the traits. It can be useful to use dice or tokens instead of writing the value in because it changes so often.
6.   Tear the sheet in two if your character is likely to pilot different mecha rather than just one.
7.   The name of the mecha.
8.   The value of the mecha, the sum of the cost of all of its systems.

9.   The systems on the mecha. Write in additional details for the systems if you like.
I0. The costs of the systems.
II. The total Attack, Defence and Pilot dice the mecha provides. Remember that most mecha don't give Pilot dice, that is why that bit is grey.
I2. The special abilities of the mecha. Assign the special abilities to numbers starting at the top, attack abilities on the left and defence abilities on the right.
I3. The damage points the mecha has. By default, it has 5. The grey boxes should be made black if the mecha has extra damage. Mark the damage with a dice or with tokens if you prefer.

THE PILOT

SKILLS

There are six pilot skills. All pilots have a rating of at least 1 in each skill and no skill can be higher than 5.

Each skill has two uses- the most obvious use is when piloting a mecha. For more information on how a battle works, see the 'Battles' chapter. Each pilot skill is linked to one particular type of battle or role within a battle plan.

Each pilot skill is also associated with a broad category of activities your character might attempt on foot. Usually, I specify which skill to use, but you can make a case for a different skill if you can describe how that skill is an acceptable substitute. It is likely that you encounter situations where more than one skill is appropriate. when that happens, assuming I agree that both are suitable, you can choose which one to use.

Ambush

In Battle: When he springs an ambush on enemy forces, surprising them completely, or when he is ambushed by the enemy.
Other Times: Sneaking around, or doing something without being spotted.

Assault

In Battle: Attacking a heavily fortified or well-defended location, or any attempt to seize a particular strategically significant target.
Other Times: Persuading or coercing other people, by any means.

Battle

In Battle: In a standard, no-frills military engagement on a field somewhere. Mud is probably involved.
Other Times: Strenuous but purely physical activity, with an emphasis on strength. Blood is probably involved.

Duel

In Battle: A simple fight one-on-one without any distractions or a grudge match against a hated foe.
Other Times: Any situation where you are pitted against a single opponent, or in any somewhat ritualised competition- such as chess.

Guerrilla

In Battle: Irregular warfare, involving unusual tactics, or striking swiftly to cause confusion rather than win by overwhelming the enemy.
Other Times: Moving swiftly, or performing fiddly, technical tasks under pressure.

Hold

In Battle: Defending a location, or otherwise refusing to yield ground to the enemy.
Other Times: When resisting persuasion or coercion, engaging in a feat of endurance or performing delicate tasks at your leisure.

Character Skills Example

Wulf is an Enlisted Pilot (see the 'Character Generation' chapter). This gives him 10 points to spend on skills. His player wants him to be something of a charming rogue, with poor willpower. Wulf's Assault skill is maxed out by giving it another 4 points. The other points are spread fairly evenly between the other skills apart from Hold. His final skills are:

Ambush 3	*Assault 5*
Battle 2	*Duel 2*
Guerrilla 3	*Hold 1*

SKILL ROLLS

If you want your character to perform an action, assume he can do so. If I think that the task is too difficult for him to perform without there being some risk of failure, I will ask you to make a skill roll instead. If the task is easy, not very important to the story or is entertaining enough to let succeed automatically, I won't call for a roll.

To make a skill roll, roll a number of dice equal to his rating in an appropriate skill. If any two dice come up with the same number, he has succeeded. If his rating in a skill is only 1, the minimum, then he can't complete such a task– it's beyond him.

CHANCE OF SUCCESS

2 dice: 16.7%
3 dice: 44.4%
4 dice: 79.2%
5 dice: 90.7%

If I decide that the task should be more difficult than a basic roll, I can say that only pairs of dice showing a value above a certain threshold count. Setting this threshold at 1 reduces the chance of success by ⅙, and so on. The most difficult tasks imaginable, with plenty of distractions and time pressure, might merit a threshold of 5, so you have to get a pair of 6s to succeed. These more challenging rolls are be quite rare, and saved up for occasions where it's pretty obvious that something should be more difficult than normal.

Skill rolls include some types of interaction with NPCs, but not all. If you can make a compelling case to persuade an NPC with evidence to back up your claims, no roll is needed. I call for an Assault roll only if the NPC is sceptical or predisposed to dislike you.

Skill Roll Example

Wulf has been out of barracks after lights out. He needs to sneak back into his bunk without being found out. His fellow pilots will cover for him, but he needs to get past the guards at the barracks' gate.

He has an Ambush skill of 3. He rolls 3 dice, getting 1, 4 and 5. He is seen by one of the guards.

'But'

If you fail a roll, you have the option of spending a point of **attention** (see later) to get something out of the roll, even if it wasn't what your character wanted. You describe what this benefit is, and as long as I agree to it then it stands. Use this as a way to avoid hitting complete road-blocks with a bad roll on an important test, or to introduce additional detail.

If you succeed at a roll, I have the option of spending a point of **trouble** (described in more detail in the Enemies chapter) to limit the scope of the success or to add a complication to the situation. This does not cancel out the success, it just makes it less complete or introduces another potential problem that has to be dealt with at some point in the future.

'But' Example

*Wulf, having been caught by the barracks' guards, has some explaining to do. His player spends spends a point of **attention** from one of his traits, to make the guard that catches him a solider he saved on his last sortie. Wulf still gets written up, but the guard bends the truth about the time he got back so it's not so serious an offence.*

Another 'But' Example

*Wulf has just picked up a waitress working at the café near the barracks with a successful skill roll. The GM, feeling mean, spends a point of **trouble** to make the waitress be the sister of the sergeant he beat up last night. When the sergeant learns that Wulf is seeing her, there will be a reckoning.*

Player Duels

If there is disagreement between characters, or disagreement between their players as to how the team should proceed, I won't ask for a skill roll. If a compromise can't be worked out, I might ask the players to have their characters fight a duel to decide the matter. A duel is a short battle between two player character piloted mecha. The battle only continues until one character yields or the first damage is dealt. This provides a way of settling disputes in a dramatic fashion

while also avoiding any resentment from the characters or players.

In this duel, I ask the players to use the pilot skill that most closely resembles their side of the argument, rather than always using the Duel skill.

INCREASING SKILLS

It is possible to increase your character's skills. If a session ends with your character defeated somehow, usually after losing a battle, you can increase any of his skills by I point. You cannot increase any skill above 5.

TRAITS

Character traits are a very important part of the game. They are not just descriptive. Each trait represents something that is very important to the character, something that can be put at risk and possibly lost during the game. A trait can be many things: a personal goal, a relationship or even a way he wants to make the world a batter place. Traits that are a relationship (not necessarily romantic) with another player character, or a non-player character should be written so that they reflect one particular aspect of that relationship, rather than a trait that tries to sum up the relationship as a whole.

TRAIT ADVICE

If you intend to take a trait that relates to another player's character, it's only polite to talk it over with them first to avoid trampling on any ideas they have.

If you find it difficult to come up traits, try to think of things that might tempt your character to act against his best interests, or the interests of his allies, for any reason. Traits don't have to be noble, they just have to be important to him.

Traits Example

Wulf has a total of 14 points to spend on traits. His players decides on:

Likes a Pretty Face (4)
Won't Abandon Anyone (4)
Spoiling to Fight the Delian League (3)
Admires Bjornson's Courage (2)
Likes a Drink (1)

You have a fixed total of **importance** to spend, depending on your character's pilot type. Each trait has between 1 and 5 points of importance. It's best to have traits with a range of importance values, with no more than one or two at the 4-5 points level. The higher the importance, the more frequently that trait features in the game.

ATTENTION

During the course of the game, your character can accumulate points of **attention** in his traits. These points are acquired by making that trait an important part of a scene he is in. The point is awarded at the end of the scene, rather than when the trait is incorporated. Starting a scene purely for an opportunity to demonstrate the trait does the trick, as does finding a way of building the trait into any scene in an entertaining way. A trait can never have more **attention** points than it has **importance**. You can never earn more than a single point of attention in a scene. There's is nothing stopping you from including more than one trait, then deciding at the end of the scene which trait to give a point of attention to.

You can spend a point of **attention** after failing a skill roll to get a consolation prize, as described earlier. You can spend that point from any of your traits. It's better if the trait is somehow appropriate to the roll or how you alter the failure, even tangentially, but it does not have to be. If you spend a point in this way, you cannot earn a point of attention in any trait in this scene.

Attention Example

*Wulf is in a scene where he gets a little tipsy and chats up a waitress. Both of his traits 'Likes a Pretty Face' and 'Likes a Drink' are candidates to get more attention. However, he already has a point of **attention** in the latter, and can't increase it further. So, his **attention** in 'Likes a Pretty Face' goes up by one.*

RAISING THE STAKES

Your character can put traits at risk by **raising the stakes** during a battle. The specifics are covered in the Battles chapter, but the important thing is that traits can help your character during battles, but they might be lost in the process. Losing a trait means more than simply removing it from the character sheet- it implies that something has happened to destroy it, and in a fashion which makes it very unlikely that it can ever come back.

If the trait was an aspect of a relationship with another person, then that relationship has changed irrevocably. Your character's secret crush has found out about his affection, or he has lost the trust

of his sister- something that is all but impossible to restore.

Losing a trait that is a personal goal is easily understood- the chance has slipped away. If the goal is on a grand scale, then it is lost but probably only to him. Losing the 'striving for world peace' trait does not mean that the world is locked in war forever- just that the strife intensifies for a while. The loss of a more nebulous trait, such as 'tries to bring out the good in everyone', probably means that the character loses his faith in that goal, and the world around him seems just a little bit meaner than it used to.

THINKING AHEAD

You can have a lot of fun by planting events early on that let you use traits later. Sure, you can come up with a plausible reason why a trait is relevant off the cuff most of the time, but it's far more satisfying to 'lay pipe' and reincorporate something from earlier in the session when the times comes to raise the stakes.

You should expect to lose traits from time to time during the game, so try to make them fun to risk and interesting to lose.

Raising the Stakes Example

Wulf is suffering heavily in a fight against some mercenaries raiding the town he's stationed at. He needs just a little bit more effort to fight them off.

He thinks of the waitress, and how she'll be hurt if he fails in his duty. He raises the stakes using his 'Likes a Pretty Face' trait.

If he still loses the battle, then the waitress will probably be a casualty. The tragedy cuts Wulf deeply, putting him off his previous womanising ways.

CHANGING TRAITS

A character's traits can change over the course of the game, in a number of ways.

Increasing Importance

If, at the conclusion of a story arc, your character has **attention** in a trait equal to its **importance**, you can increase its **importance**. All points of **attention** are lost, but its **importance** increases by 1. Your character has spent time in pursuit of this trait, without risking it needlessly. It has become more important to him.

If a trait reaches an **importance** of 6, it has become as important to him as his own life. If it reaches 7 or 8, it is even more important than that. This does not mean that you are compelled to have him risk his life instead of the trait in a future battle. His courage could fail him at the critical moment or he could reason that it's worth going for broke even if failure would be a terrible thing.

If a trait with an **importance** of 8 also has an **attention** of 8 at the end of a story arc, you cannot improve it further. You can, however, ask me to make it the next story arc. This would be an attempt to achieve the trait's goal, make a relationship trait lasting and part of the story or make some change to the world itself. It's a big deal, in any case. More detail on making traits the subject of a story arc is given in the 'Scenes and Arcs' chapter.

Completing Traits

If a trait with an **importance** of 8 is made the subject of a plot arc, and the session ends in victory, then the trait is considered complete. The goal has been achieved, as fully as was likely, or the relationship with another character has moved past the old problems and obstructions and onto a new level. This is an incredibly important personal victory for the character.

Whatever the outcome, the trait is removed from your character, with no replacement. This might be a good time to consider retiring him and creating a new one to play.

Completing a Trait Example

*Some time in the future, Wulf has his 'Won't Abandon Anyone' trait reach an **importance** of 8. He manages to get the **attention** in it up to 8 at the end of a story arc.*

The next story arc revolves around Wulf and his allies rescuing a Confederation general from the clutches of Delian League, against orders and at great personal risk.

*If the mission is successful, Wulf's trait becomes a permanent part of his personality, solid and unshakeable. Because of this, it's no longer interesting to keep accumulating **attention** in it. The trait is removed, but the characterisation remains.*

If the mission is a failure, Wulf's trait has been his downfall. After realising the folly of his previous values, he no longer has that trait.

Destroying Traits

If a trait is risked when **raising the stakes** and then lost, it is removed from your character. You may, at that point, suggest a new trait to add to your character, perhaps reflecting a new preoccupation or goal for him. This new trait has an **importance** at most 3 points less than the **importance** of the trait that was lost. If the lost trait had an **importance** of 1, 2 or 3, no replacement is possible.

Destroying a Trait Example

After risking his 'Likes a Pretty Face' trait, Wulf is defeated. The trait is destroyed.

His player suggests that 'Overprotective of Women' is an interesting replacement trait, given the circumstances that led to the old trait's destruction.

*Because the old trait had an **importance** of 4, this new trait can only have an **importance** of 1.*

Resolving Traits

Sometimes, a trait may no longer be interesting or relevant, but not destroyed. If you want to get rid of such a trait, and I allow it, you can remove that trait and add a new trait that must have a strictly lower **importance** than the one removed. This can happen if the campaign moves in a direction that prevents a trait from being used much, or the events of the plot change the trait in a way outside the formalised rules in this chapter.

If, on the other hand, you want to keep the gist of a trait and merely change the emphasis slightly, or rename it to something more suitable, you can do so without having to suffer a drop in **importance**.

These two things are called 'resolving' a trait, because they resolve an inconsistency between the character's trait and the story of the game so far.

Resolving a Trait Example

After a while, Wulf's trait 'Spoiling to Fight the Delian League' reaches an **importance** *of 5. His player says that the name of the trait isn't really appropriate any more, given that Wulf has fought the League several times.*

The GM agrees. The name of the trait is changed to 'Will Bring Down the Delian League'.

THE MECHA

Each mecha is the sum of its parts. The dice you roll during battles depend on the systems installed on the mecha. Each system has a special ability- some are more useful in combat and others are more useful outside it. There's no need to specify ordinary, boring systems that you would expect any mecha to have- such as room for a single passenger and the ability to move. A mecha can still attack and defend itself even without any combat systems, using Pilot dice, but it is not very effective. Usually, a mecha has at least one weapon and at least one defensive system.

SYSTEM DETAILS

The way these systems are created is simple. Attack and defence systems usually have a cost one point greater than the number of dice they provide. If the special ability is particularly powerful, the cost might be two points higher than the number of dice. Miscellaneous systems are costed individually.

If all you are interested in is a large number of dice, the most efficient thing to do is have one attack system and one defence system. However, you then only have one attack special ability and one defence special ability. It can be more fun, and more effective, to have more systems on your mecha and thus more special abilities.

It's entirely possible to 'reskin' any of these systems with different names. However, it helps create a coherent world if similar sorts of weapon have similar abilities. So, if a small laser had one particular ability, a large laser should have the same ability but with more Attack dice.

SYSTEM MOUNTS

There are two ways a system can be fitted to a mecha.

* *Fixed*: The system is built into the mecha. It can't be removed without time in a repair facility (except of course if the mecha is literally ripped apart in battle).

* *Carried*: The system is built as a mecha-sized hand weapon. A mecha can only use one such weapon at a time, possibly in conjunction with another carried system. The advantage of a carried system is that the pilot can drop one weapon in favour of another during a battle. The disadvantage is that he can be disarmed. If he is disarmed, you lose any dice for that weapon in future sequences, unless he recovers it before the sequence ends. Dice already in the pool stay there. You may not use an associated special ability of a weapon the mecha is no longer carrying.

If he swaps out one carried weapon for another, this is only a permanent change if the two weapons have the same cost. You can upgrade to a better carried weapon by improving the mecha during play, as described later on in this chapter.

WEAPON RANGES

Weapon ranges are expressed as Mêlée, Short or Long. Most of the time, the range of a weapon is not a factor in battles. The difference is mostly one of description.

Sometimes I say that the battle is being fought in a way such that weapons with one of those ranges cannot be used. The battle may start with that restriction, but a pilot can overcome the range difficulty by spending dice on actions in an appropriate way. I decide how many actions are needed to adjust the range. You don't roll dice for weapons that are at the wrong range, and you can't use the special ability associated with them. You can still defend as normal. Once you get into the ideal range, you have to wait for the next sequence before you can roll all your dice again.

Other times I might allow you to spend actions on putting an enemy's weapon out of range- for example closing into mêlée range against a weapon with long range and denying the enemy opportunity to use it.

In all cases, this is something I do sparingly, to make the battle interesting.

SYSTEM LISTS

The systems are listed by type, then by cost. Some special abilities are shared by more than one system. The cost of a system is the number in brackets. Each system is also given a brief description of what it looks like and how it operates. Remember that most special abilities are only applicable when an attack or defence uses the associated number.

The descriptions of the special abilities might not be meaningful yet. You can skip ahead to the 'Battles' chapter to see how combat works if the details matter to you.

UNIQUE SYSTEMS

Truly exceptional systems, like Mjollnir, might have two special abilities assigned to them. Such weapons are more expensive, and very rare. Sometimes these special abilities will be rolled into a single, very powerful ability and assigned to a single number. Other times these abilities will be spread out, as though the system was in fact two different systems.

ATTACK SYSTEMS

(2) Electrowhip

1 Attack dice, Carried, Mêlée
Something of an oddity, the electrowhip sends a large jolt of current into the target, threatening to overwhelm systems with poor electrical shielding. Even if the attack fails, the jolt can disrupt the pilot's control of his mecha. The blue sparks and audible crackling make this weapon very recognisable.

SHOCKING: After this attack, re-roll any of the target's remaining dice.
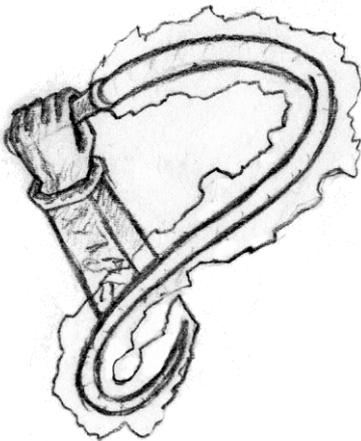
(2) Laser Pistol

1 Attack dice, Carried, Short Range
A laser pistol is a simple, reliable weapon carried by many mecha. It fires in pulses, and many armies use a distinctive colour of beam to aid friend or foe recognition.

LIGHT: You may make a free manoeuvre when you fire this weapon, splitting a Pilot dice into two Attack dice with a total 1 higher than the Pilot dice, or combining multiple Pilot dice into a single Attack dice with a value 1 higher than their total.

Light Example

*You make an attack with a 6 on an Attack dice. Your target **reverses** the attack.*

You take a Pilot dice you have showing 3, and discard it to get an Attack dice showing 4.

You could have turned it into 2 Attack dice showing 2, or 2 Attack dice showing 1 and 3.

Another Light Example

*You make an attack with a Pilot dice showing 6. Your target **defends** the attack.*

You take 2 Pilot dice you have showing 2 and 4, and turn them into an Attack dice showing 6.

(2) Magma Pistol

1 Attack dice, Carried, Short Range
This short-barrelled weapon fires a stream of molten slag, hot enough to burn through most armour but cool enough that it hardens on the target rather than run off. It not only damages mecha but also can limit their mobility by locking up key joints. The dark orange pellets it fires can also set buildings on fire.

MAGMA: After this attack, re-roll any of your remaining Attack dice.
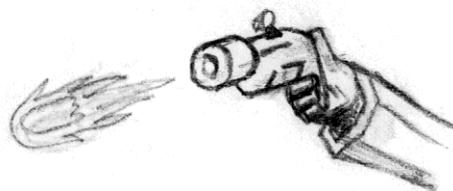
(2) Mecha Knife

1 Attack dice, Carried, Mêlée
This short blade is wickedly sharp, with an internal mechanism to make it vibrate at a high frequency. This combination lets the knife cut through most armour, given a forceful enough blow.

SKILFUL: A dice showing this number can always be made part of a stunt attack. Change this dice to match the rest of the set when making the attack.

Skilful Example

You have Attack dice showing 2, 5 and 6. Skilful is assigned to 6. You can use that 6 with the 5 to make a stunt attack, changing it into a 5 in the process. If 5 had a special ability assigned to it, you could use that ability with the stunt attack.
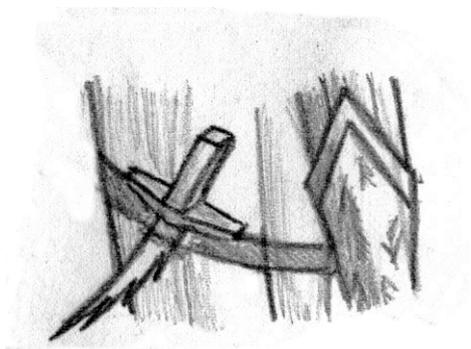
(2) Micro Rocket Launcher

1 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range
This system fires a swarm of tiny, self-guided missiles. They strike any and all targets around you. Individually, they don't do much damage, but the sheer number of them can be devastating.

SPLASH: This attack attacks a number of enemies simultaneously. The precise number is at my discretion. All targets must deal with the attack. Only the primary target, that you choose, can **reverse**. Others may only **defend** or **intercept**. An **interception** protects both themselves and the primary target.

Splash Example

You attack with a 6, causing SPLASH. The GM says that three enemy targets are within range.

Your primary target has no dice left to defend with.

*The second target spends a 3 and a 4, but can still only **defend**.*

*The third target spends a 3 and a 5, enough to **intercept**. He can defend the primary target as well as himself with those dice.*

None of your targets takes any damage. Better luck next time.

(2) Shuriken

1 Attack dice, Carried, Short Range
Although small for a mecha, these steel throwing weapons are large enough to cut a tank in half. Their edge is led by super-heated plasma, letting them cut into even the hardest metals.

PLASMA: This attack cannot be **defended** or **intercepted**. It can be **reversed**.

Plasma Example

You attack with 6.

*The target has a 6 and a 5. The 6 can't be used to **defend**, so he has to either spend both on **reversing** or **take** the attack.*

(2) Twin Pistols

1 Attack dice, Carried, Short Range
A matched pair of kinetic pistols is a versatile choice. Although lacking in power, they are quick to draw and fire.

SUPPRESSION: This attack cannot be **reversed**, only **defended** against. If another mecha **intercepts** this attack, you still keep the initiative.

Suppression Example

You attack with 6.

*The target spends his last two dice, a 4 and a 3, to **defend**, even though the total is 7.*

You attack again with another 6.

*Your target's ally spends two 4s to **intercept**, but you still take the next action.*

(3) Claws

2 Attack dice, Fixed, Mêlée
Instead of hands, a mecha can be equipped with powerful ripping claws. Such fittings are clumsy, and ill-fitting of a noble warrior. The techniques for fighting with them are very different to most mêlée weapons, and hence many pilots struggle to defend against them. Other built-in mêlée weapons behave in the same way.

MAGMA: After this attack, re-roll any of your remaining Attack dice.
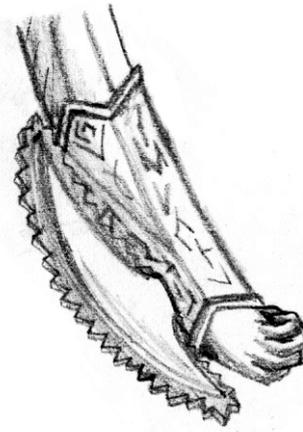
(3) Conversion Beam

2 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range
This highly advanced, experimental weapon fires a beam that turns what it hits directly into energy. The rate of conversion is very low, but the energy released is still devastating. The beam is a piercing blue-white line.

OVERWHELMING: After this attack, roll an Attack dice. If its value is lower than the value of the attack you just made, add it to your pool.

Overwhelming Example

You attack using a Pilot dice showing 6. After the attack, you roll an Attack dice.

If it comes up as anything less than 6, you can add it to your pool of dice to spend.

If it comes up a 6, then nothing happens.
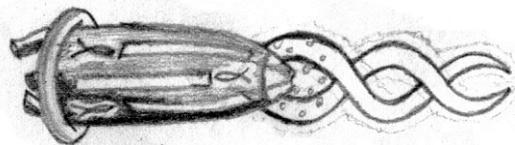
(3) Drone Hive

2 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range

A collection of remote-controlled aerial drones, each mounted with a small weapon. Their autonomy can be used to mount surprise attacks or suddenly turn the tide of a battle. They draw power from the mecha itself, and cannot stray too far from it without losing power and becoming easy targets.

SURPRISE: Any time other than while an attack is being resolved, you may seize the initiative and immediately make an attack using a single Pilot dice showing this number.

Surprise Example

*Just after an attack made by an ally, that the target **reversed**, you declare your intention to use surprise.*

You attack any target you want with the 6 you have on a Pilot dice.

(3) Flamethrower

2 Attack dice, Fixed, Mêlée

The flamethrower works not by melting the target but by overheating the delicate mechanisms in it. The stream of fire can be spread liberally around, engulfing a number of enemies at once. It can also cause visibility problems and plenty of collateral damage.

SPLASH: This attack attacks a number of enemies simultaneously. The precise number is at my discretion. All targets must deal with the attack. Only the primary target, that you choose, can **reverse**. Others may only **defend** or **intercept**. An **interception** protects both themselves and the primary target.
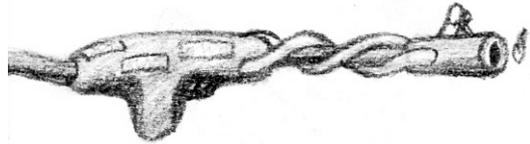
(3) Light Laser

2 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range

A pulsed laser can be very destructive, but its chief advantage is the absence of any recoil. This enables the pilot to be much more inventive in combat. The colour of the beam is variable.

LIGHT: You may make a free manoeuvre when you fire this weapon, splitting a Pilot dice into multiple Attack dice with a total 1 higher than the Pilot dice, or combining multiple Pilot dice into a single Attack dice with a value 1 higher than their total.
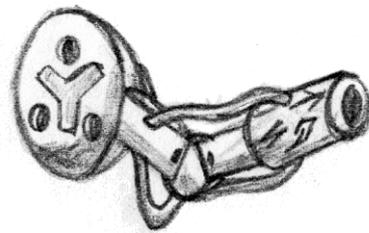
(3) Mecha Axe

2 Attack dice, Carried, Mêlée

Unlike most mecha mêlée weapons, the axe relies more on its weight than on its edge. It can deliver a decisive tactical advantage against unskilled enemy pilots. Some version have a small motor on the back of the axe blade to give it extra speed.

KNOCKDOWN: Impose some kind of disadvantage on the target if it **takes** the attack, such as knocking it down. Recovering from the disadvantage requires the target to take an action, and it make not attack until it has done so.

Knockdown Example

*You attack with a 6. The target **defends**. Nothing happens.*

Another Knockdown Example

*You attack with a 6. The target **takes** the attack. You choose to knock away a carried weapon the target has, disarming it.*

(3) Mecha Rifle

2 Attack dice, Carried, Long Range

This mecha-sized rifle is used to place shots carefully. It's a staple piece of equipment. It doesn't have a high enough calibre to fire explosive rounds and still get penetration, but slugs of high velocity lead can be dangerous enough on their own.

ACCURATE: This attack has a value one higher than normal.

(3) Mecha Spear

2 Attack dice, Carried, Mêlée

A spear sized for a mecha is a long metal shaft with a diamond drill bit as the head. With the full weight of a mecha behind it, the bit can force its way through armour and damage delicate machinery. It's reach can also be used to keep targets at a distance.

OVERWHELMING: After this attack, roll an Attack dice. If its value is lower than the value of the attack you just made, add it to your pool.

(3) Mecha Sword

2 Attack dice, Carried, Mêlée
This large, deadly weapon has serrated blades on a chain along the cutting edge, turning it into a hybrid of a sword and a chainsaw. Assuming that the teeth bite, it can cut through armour easily.

SKILFUL: A dice showing this number can always be made part of a stunt attack. Change this dice to match the rest of the set when making the attack.

(3) Plasma Rifle

2 Attack dice, Carried, Short Range
The plasma rifle hasn't yet replaced kinetic weaponry, but it is particularly effective at concentrating fire on a single target. The yellowish balls of super-heated gas it fires can carry an impressive range, and are hot enough to melt metal on contact.

PLASMA: This attack cannot be **defended** or **intercepted**. It can be **reversed**.
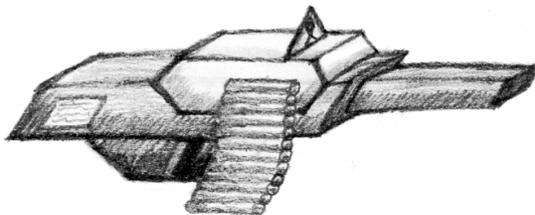
(4) Assault Laser

3 Attack dice, Fixed, Long Range
An assault laser is not designed for use against nimble or small targets- it is designed to crack open bunkers and melt through even the toughest armour. Unlike other laser weapons, which pulse a hundred or so times over a fraction of a second, an assault laser fires a continuous stream of pulses.

OVERWHELMING: After this attack, roll an Attack dice. If its value is lower than the value of the attack you just made, add it to your pool.
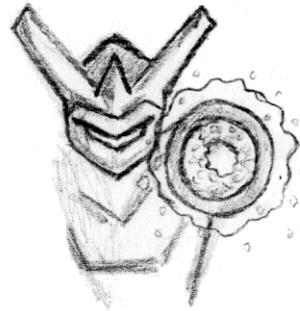
(4) Chaingun

3 Attack dice, Carried, Short Range
This belt-fed weapon sacrifices precision for sheer volume of bullets. It is very effective at keeping enemies pinned down. Just make sure you never stand where the casings are likely to fall.

SUPPRESSION: This attack cannot be **reversed**, only **defended** against. If another mecha **intercepts** this attack, you still keep the initiative.

(4) Electroblaster

3 Attack dice, Carried, Short Range
The electroblaster fires a two streams of ions of opposite charges. When they strike the target, a large current flows between the two, causing electrical problems and damaging components.

SHOCKING: After this attack, re-roll any of the target's remaining dice.
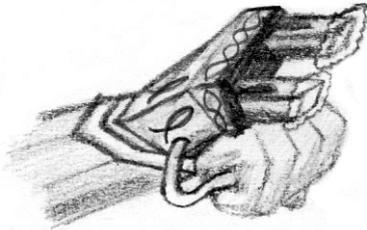
(4) Magma Gun

3 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range
The fixed mounting for a molten-rock weapon is sometimes prone to crusting around the aperture, hits hard and can immobilise an unprepared target in seconds. It fires short bursts of orange slugs to maximise coverage.

MAGMA: After this attack, re-roll any of your remaining Attack dice.
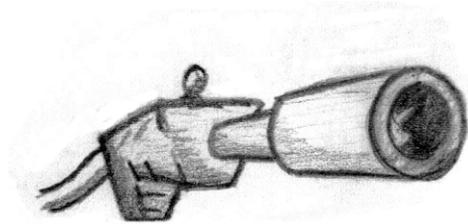
(4) Gravity Cannon

3 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range
Gravity waves can be controlled to create a vortex capable of knocking mecha into the air or blasting them backwards. The wave ionises the air in its path, leaving a brilliant purple glow.

KNOCKDOWN: Impose some kind of disadvantage on the target if it **takes** the attack, such as knocking it down. Recovering from the disadvantage requires the target to take an action, and it make not attack until it has done so.

(4) Mecha Cannon

3 Attack dice, Carried, Short Range
This large-calibre kinetic weapon fires explosive shells, which can cause serious damage if they breach the armour of the target. The recoil is considerable, which is why it has such a slow rate of fire.

HEAVY: If this attack is **taken**, the target receives 2 points of damage instead of 1.
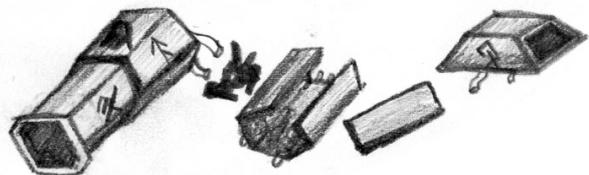
(4) Mecha Claymore

3 Attack dice, Carried, Mêlée

The largest of the mecha mêlée weapons, the claymore is nearly as tall as the mecha itself. Each edge of the blade has two chainsaw elements, running in opposite directions, to avoid too much kick when the weapon bites.

SKILFUL: A dice showing this number can always be made part of a stunt attack. Change this dice to match the rest of the set when making the attack.
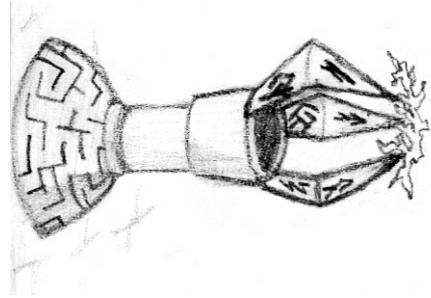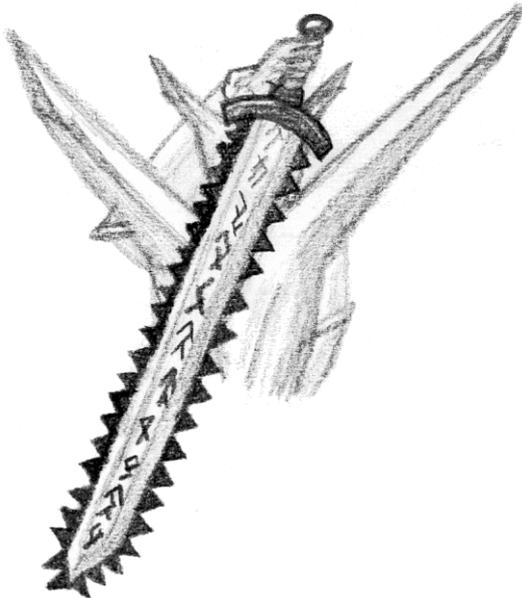
(4) Plasma Charge

3 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range

A plasma weapon can be made with a much heavier payload but a weaker containment field. This results in a weapon that fires a large ball of plasma close to the target which then explodes, potentially knocking it over. The diffuse plasma is not dense enough to be as damaging as an ordinary plasma weapon.

KNOCKDOWN: Impose some kind of disadvantage on the target if it **takes** the attack, such as knocking it down. Recovering from the disadvantage requires the target to take an action, and it make not attack until it has done so.

(4) Plasma Cannon

3 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range

A plasma cannon is large weapon that fires a sizeable ball of super-hot, dense, yellow gas. The temperature and kinetic impact are both extremely damaging and the plasma can degrade armour significantly.

PLASMA: This attack cannot be **defended** or **intercepted**. It can be **reversed**.
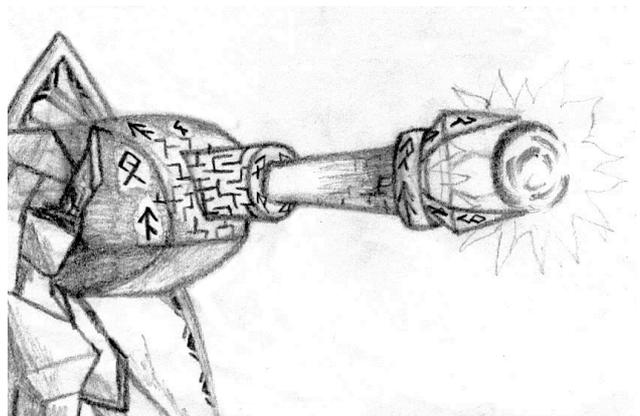
(4) Rocket Launcher

3 Attack dice, Fixed, Long Range
Guided missiles are very useful for attacking targets behind cover. Most rockets have a simple explosive payload. Other types of rocket have similar characteristics.

ACCURATE: This attack has a value one higher than normal.
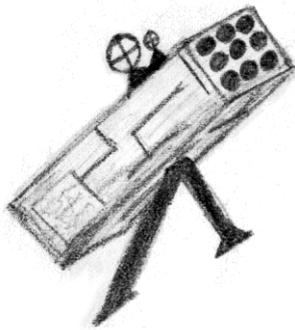
(5) Artillery Cannon

4 Attack dice, Fixed, Long Range
Say it with a long range armour-piercing explosive shell. Merely being anywhere near where the shell hits can be very bad news.

HEAVY: If this attack is taken, the target receives 2 points of damage instead of 1.

(5) Advanced Drone Hive

4 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range
With enough effort given to co-ordinating their strikes, the number of drones in a drone hive can be doubled. This is a much more powerful weapon that makes it very difficult for an enemy to get a moment to himself to launch an attack.

SURPRISE: Any time other than while an attack is being resolved, you may seize the initiative and immediately make an attack using a single Pilot dice showing this number.

(5) Energy Sword

4 Attack dice, Carried, Mêlée

An energy sword uses a series of conversion generators along the blade to slice through armour with ease. It is easy to distinguish from other mecha swords by the blue-white glow along the leading edge.

HEAVY: If this attack is **taken**, the target receives 2 points of damage instead of 1.

(5) Heavy Conversion Beam

4 Attack dice, Fixed, Long Range

This massive device fires a conversion beam with a much higher rate of conversion. There are significant heating issues with the equipment, but it is very powerful indeed. The white beam it fires can damage the eyes of people on foot looking at it.

OVERWHELMING: After this attack, roll an Attack dice. If its value is lower than the value of the attack you just made, add it to your pool.
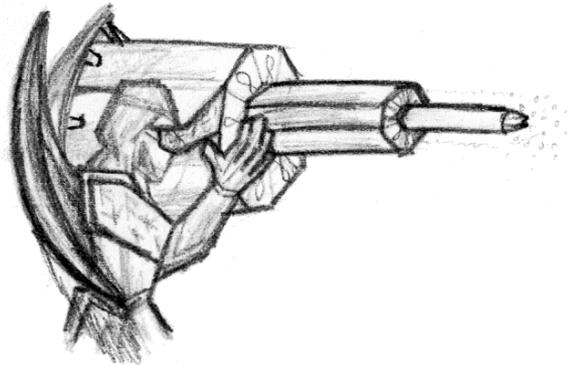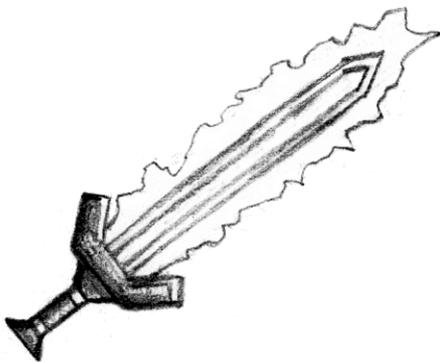
(5) Heavy Flamethrower

4 Attack dice, Fixed, Mêlée

A much more comprehensive fire-maker with multiple nozzles and a viscous fuel that only partially combusts in the air, leaving a burning residue on the targets.

SPLASH: This attack attacks a number of enemies simultaneously. The precise number is at my discretion. All targets must deal with the attack. Only the primary target, that you choose, can **reverse**. Others may only **defend** or **intercept**. An **interception** protects both themselves and the primary target.
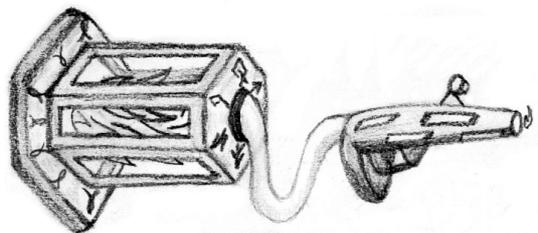
(5) Heavy Laser

3 Attack dice, Fixed, Long Range

A more powerful and longer-ranged version of its little brother, packing quite wallop in such a small device. Available in a selection of colours.

LIGHT: You may make a free manoeuvre when you fire this weapon, splitting a Pilot dice into two Attack dice with a total 1 higher than the Pilot dice, or combining multiple Pilot dice into a single Attack dice with a value 1 higher than their total.

(5) Mecha Long Iron

4 Attack dice, Carried, Long Range

A sniper rifle sized for a mecha. It has tremendous recoil and makes a very distinctive noise when fired. Its long reload time can also be a problem.

ACCURATE: This attack has a value one higher than normal.

(6) Flux Cannon

5 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range

This weapon creates a massive magnetic flux in the air. Although its range is limited, the vivid green tendrils can short out equipment very easily. Any unshielded electrical equipment near where it is fired is generally ruined.

SHOCKING: After this attack, re-roll any of the target's remaining dice.
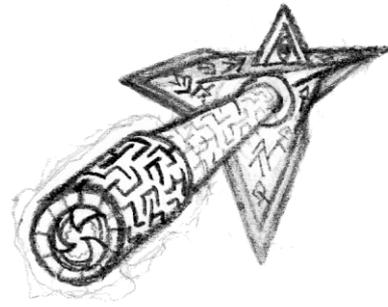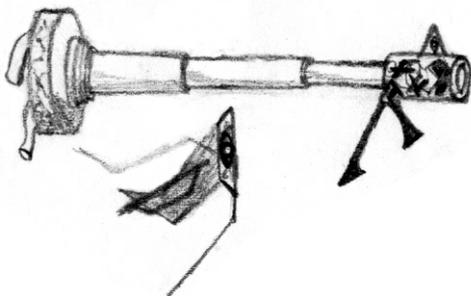
(6) Gravity Megacannon

5 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range

The mightiest of the gravity wave weapons, the megacannon hits like a sledgehammer. The broad purple beam this weapon fires can be seen from a large distance away. The sheer power of the beam means massive damage, if not the kick of its smaller cousin.

HEAVY: If this attack is **taken**, the target receives 2 points of damage instead of 1.

(6) Heavy Rocket Launcher

5 Attack dice, Fixed, Long Range
The largest guided missiles separate into multiple warheads just before impact, making them better able to overwhelm a target's defences. The launching equipment and ammunition store needed for them is bulky.

ACCURATE: This attack has a value one higher than normal.
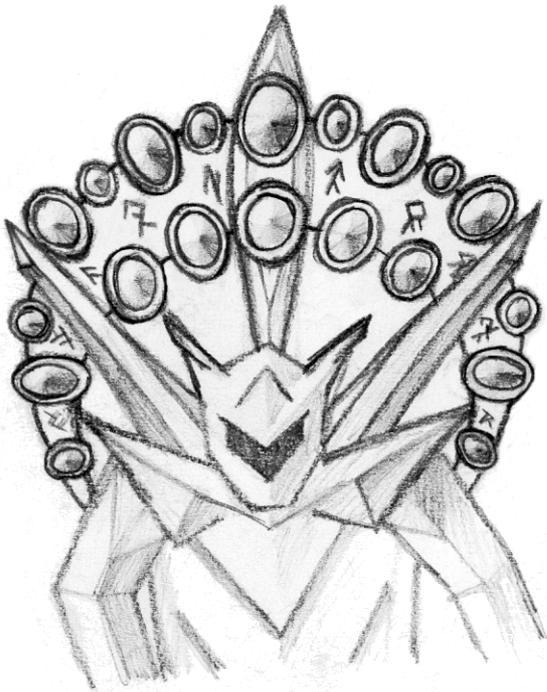
(6) Magma Cannon

5 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range
The largest molten-rock weapon fires a continuous stream of high-temperature slag, which can coat a target with a hot, hardening material. The dark orange beam is the distinctive element of this weapon.

MAGMA: After this attack, re-roll any of your remaining Attack dice.
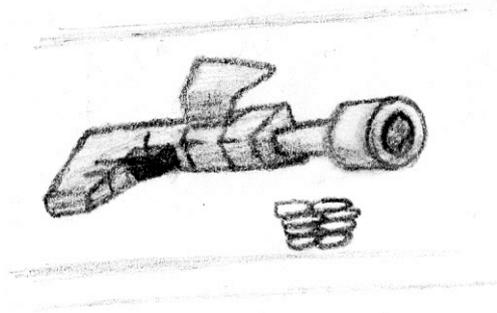
(6) Minigun

5 Attack dice, Fixed, Short Range
This gas-cooled rapid-firing behemoth is unmatched in terms of raw stopping power.

SUPPRESSION: This attack cannot be **reversed**, only **defended** against. If another mecha **intercepts** this attack, you still keep the initiative.
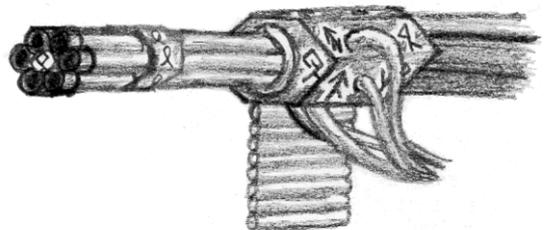
DEFENCE SYSTEMS

All defence system are fixed, unless otherwise specified.

(2) Armour

I Defence dice
The most basic form of additional protection is is to slap on layers of steel and ceramic armour. The extra weight pays for itself.

ABLATIVE: This mecha has 2 extra damage points. This ability is not associated with a number.

(2) Heat Sink

I Defence dice
Many mecha weapons rely on overheating the target for some of their effectiveness. A system that can store a large quantity of heat harmlessly is very useful. It can also help by shouldering the burden of cooling weapons, leaving space for more structural strength.

ACCURATE: This defence dice has a value one higher than normal.

(2) Mecha Shield

I Defence dice, Carried
A hand-held metal shield is useful defensively mostly because of the way it can be turned to face an attack from any direction. That makes it a good choice as a light-weight, cheap way of getting a little extra defence.

LIGHT: You may make a free manoeuvre after you **defend** or **reverse**. Split a Pilot dice into two Defence dice with a total I higher than the Pilot dice, or combining multiple Pilot dice into a single Defence dice with a value I higher than their total.

Light Example

*You **defend** with a 6.*

You turn a Pilot dice showing 4 into Defence dice showing 2 and 3.

You could have turned Pilot dice showing 4 and I into a Defence dice showing 6.

(2) Smokescreen

I Defence dice
A smokescreen obscures the outline of your mecha and makes it far more difficult for an enemy to target you effectively. It's far from a perfect form of cover, but it slows down target acquisition enough to buy you some time.

OPPORTUNITY: If you **reverse** an attack, you may re-roll one of your remaining Attack dice.

(3) Defensive Drones

2 Defence dice
Autonomous drones can be used to shield your mecha from attacks, warn you of enemies and even shoot down ordnance fired at you. Although expensive to maintain, they can be very useful indeed, particularly when used at distance to defend an ally.

INTERCEPTOR: You only need to meet the total of an attack in order to **intercept** it. This ability is not associated with a number.

Interceptor Example

*Your ally is attacked with a stunt using two 3s. You spend a Pilot dice 3 and a Defence dice 3 to **intercept** the attack.*

(3) ECM

2 Defence dice

Electronic counter-measures do not merely scramble the guidance systems of guided missiles. They can also feed false data to other targeting systems and otherwise make you difficult to hit.

STEADFAST: You may **defend, reverse** or **intercept** a stunt attack using only this dice.

Steadfast Example

You are attacked with a stunt using the dice 5, 5 and 5.

*You can **reverse** the attack using a single 6.*

(3) Flashbang

2 Defence dice

A flashbang is a particular small explosive that emits bright light, loud noise and white radio noise. It disorientates mecha and person alike. Allied mecha receive a split-second warning of its activation on a coded channel, to avoid embarrassment.

OPPORTUNITY: If you **reverse** an attack, you may re-roll one of your remaining Attack dice.

(3) Jumping Legs

2 Defence dice

Some mecha have particularly powerful leg motors, allowing a pilot to jump the mecha to safety when attacked. Mecha without legs as such can also have similar systems that serve the same purpose.

LIGHT: You may make a free manoeuvre after you **defend** or **reverse**. Split a Pilot dice into two Defence dice with a total 1 higher than the Pilot dice, or combining multiple Pilot dice into a single Defence dice with a value 1 higher than their total.

(4) CIWS

3 Defence dice

The Close-In Weapon System is a battery of small kinetic weapons that destroys any incoming shot before it hits the mecha. Even energy weapons can have their beam dissipated by a carefully-timed barrage of explosive rounds.

ACCURATE: This defence dice has a value one higher than normal.

(4) Gravity Shield

3 Defence dice, Carried

Gravity generators can be used to bend enemy fire away from a mecha, or even stop it entirely. At long range it can even obscure the position of the mecha carrying it.

FIELD: After you **defend** or **reverse**, roll a Defence dice. If its value is lower than the value of the dice you just spent, add it to your pool.

Field Example

*You are attacked by a 5. You spend a 6 to **reverse**.*

If the Defence dice you roll is anything less than 6, you can add it to your pool of dice to spend.

Otherwise, nothing happens.

(4) Heavy Armour

3 Defence dice

The next step from normal armour is a double-helping. Twice the thickness means the mecha can take much more punishment. Heavy armour can sometimes limit the mobility of the

mecha, but the largest opportunity cost is the price.

ABLATIVE: This mecha has 2 extra damage points. This ability is not associated with a number.

(4) Repulsion Shield

3 Defence dice
A modification to the basic gravity shield is one built into the mecha that specifically directs energy back towards your attacker. Although the overall damage reduction is less, turning an enemy's weapons against him is a very effective tactic.

COUNTER: Turn any **defence** you make with this dice into a **reversal**. If you attack afterwards, add 1 to the dice you use to attack with.

Counter Example

*You are attacked with 6. You **reverse** with a 6.*

Now you have the initiative, you attack with a 4, but it counts as a 5.

(5) Advanced Defensive Drones

4 Defence dice
More drones, better defence. That's how it works.

INTERCEPTOR: You only need to meet the total of an attack in order to **intercept** it. This ability is not associated with a number.

(5) Gravity Shunt

4 Defence dice
A gravity shunt is a relatively new development. If the pilot is under attack, he can activate a device that uses gravity waves to knock his mecha to one side, much more quickly than jumping or rolling. The mecha doesn't always land well afterwards.

LIGHT: You may make a free manoeuvre after you **defend** or **reverse**. Split a Pilot dice into two Defence dice with a total 1 higher than the Pilot dice, or combining multiple Pilot dice into a single Defence dice with a value 1 higher than their total.

(5) Plasma Cloud Ejector

4 Defence dice
A cloud of high-temperature plasma can be used to dissipate a beam weapon or prematurely detonate explosive weapons. It's expensive to run, but very pretty to watch.

OPPORTUNITY: If you **reverse** an attack, you may re-roll one of your remaining Attack dice.

(5) Reactive Armour

4 Defence dice

Reactive armour is designed to move mass around within itself, presenting a denser, harder surface wherever an attack lands.

STEADFAST: You may **defend**, **reverse** or intercept a stunt attack using only this dice.

(6) Advanced Gravity Shield

5 Defence dice

The most powerful defensive shield uses a standing gravity wave, an 'always on' approach, and compensates for the internal forces the system places on the mecha.

FIELD: After you **defend** or **reverse**, roll a Defence dice. If its value is lower than the value of the dice you just spent, add it to your pool.

(6) Conversion Shield

5 Defence dice

A conversion shield turns part of any matter into energy, disrupting most particle beam weapons and destroying kinetic attacks.

COUNTER: Turn any **defence** you make with this dice into a **reversal**. If you attack afterwards, add 1 to the dice you use to attack with.

(6) Heat Dissipator

5 Defence dice

This heat management system not only draws heat into itself, but has distinctive radiator panels that shed heat as quickly as they can. This makes the mecha much more tolerant to any heat-based attacks. It almost completely obliviates the need for individual cooling systems for weapons, leaving more room for protective measures.

ACCURATE: This defence dice has a value one higher than normal.

(6) Orichalcum Armour

5 Defence dice

The toughest, heaviest armour is made form the rare metal orichalcum. It's a brilliant gold colour. It is not much heavier than steel, but far tougher and with a much higher melting point. It is also a poor conductor of heat and electricity.

ABLATIVE: This mecha has 2 extra damage points. This ability is not associated with a number.

MISCELLANEOUS SYSTEMS

Miscellaneous systems are not associated with any number- rather they offer other advantages in or out of combat.

(I) Agile Legs

Fixed

Some mecha are equipped with legs optimised for fast travel. Mecha following a non-anthropomorphic design can have equivalents. Although the system is not often useful during battles, fast mecha can flee more readily.

FAST: This mecha is faster than most.

(I) Air Tanks

Fixed

Most mecha are not exactly water-proof. Protecting all of the joints against full immersion is costly. Mecha with this system, however, are not only capable of submerging fully without any problem, but also have auxiliary movement systems that allow them to move through deep water rather than just walk along the bottom.

SWIM: This mecha is capable of operating in or on water as well as it can on land.

(I) Camouflage

Fixed

This mecha is equipped with a system that lets it blend into the background. It won't hold up to thorough searching, but if an enemy is not expecting your presence it can be very useful.

CAMOUFLAGE: This mecha can hide more effectively, increasing the chances that a battle starts with an ambush.

(I) Comm Unit

Carried

Mecha come quipped with basic communications equipment, but it has limited range and can be overheard. A more advanced unit can be carried by a mecha like a personal radio.

COMMS: At any point, you may spend a Pilot dice to let an ally re-roll any of their remaining dice.

(I) Communications Gear

Fixed

In addition to the carried version, some mecha have better communications gear built into them.

COMMS: At any point, you may spend a Pilot dice to let an ally re-roll any of their remaining dice.

(I) Lucky Charm

Fixed

Pilots are often superstitious. Who can say if their little rituals make any difference?

PILOT RE-ROLL: At the start of a battle, you may re-roll one of your Pilot dice.

(I) Wings

Fixed

The commonest form of flight for mecha is using a set of wings. The surface of the wings is used for manoeuvring but most of the thrust comes via a set of steam jets on the feet and wings of the mecha.

FLIGHT: This mecha is capable of flight.
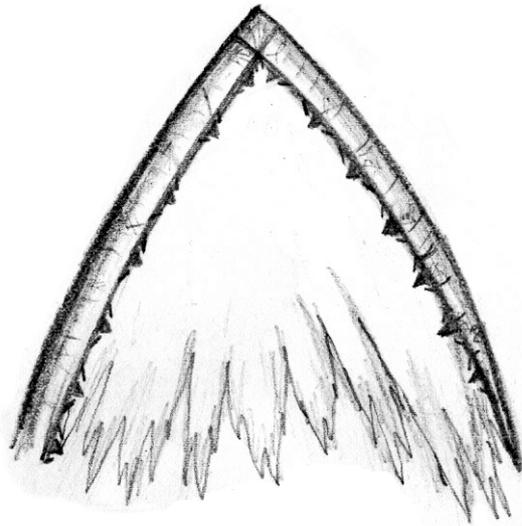
(2) Motion Sensor

Carried

This simple device allows a mecha to find enemies that are well-hidden or otherwise out of sight.

RE-ROLL: At the start of each sequence, you may re-roll any one of your dice.

(2) Targeting Computer

Fixed

A targeting analogue computer offers hints to the pilot on how to lead moving targets and how to adjust for range properly.

ATTACK RE-ROLL: At the start of each sequence, you may re-roll two of your Attack dice.

(2) Threat Scanner

Fixed

A threat scanner alerts the pilot to any enemies that have weapons trained on his mecha.

DEFENCE RE-ROLL: At the start of each sequence, you may re-roll two of your Defence dice.

(2) Training Pod

1 Pilot dice, Fixed

A training pod allows someone outside the mecha to take control of some of its systems, and is usually put on mecha controlled by new pilots until they are considered competent enough to fly solo.

(2) Turbines

Fixed

Steam turbines can be used to let a mecha fly at greater speed, at the cost of some manoeuvrability. These are generally only used by rapid response forces, due to the cost.

FLIGHT: This mecha is capable of flight.

FAST: This mecha is faster than most.

(3) Co-Pilot

2 Pilot dice, Fixed

An extra seat means an extra warm body to help the pilot. Co-ordination can be an issue, but practised teams can have a definite edge.

CUSTOM SYSTEMS

Want to make something up that's not here? If I allow it, anything is fair game. Just try to come up with something that fits alongside the existing systems without being significantly more or less powerful or useful.

ASSEMBLING A MECHA

If your character is assigned an off-the-shelf mecha, you don't have to trouble yourself with designing it. Just familiarise yourself with the abilities it has and go to town.

If your character has his own mecha to pilot, then you can construct it yourself or ask me to assemble it for you. Apart from the limitation on the number of points available to spend, you are also limited on how you assign attack and defence special abilities to numbers: you must start with 6 and work down in each category. So if the mecha you are building only has one attack special ability, it must be assigned to the number 6. If it has two, they have to be assigned to 5 and 6, but whichever way round you choose.

One of the things your character can do when having his mecha adjusted in a workshop is swapping the abilities around on the available numbers, so that part of the mecha's specification is not cast in stone. Sometimes, changing the numbers confers an advantage against particular opponents.

Examples of mecha can be found in the 'Garage' chapter, including ones suitable for character types that use mecha loaned to them by the military.
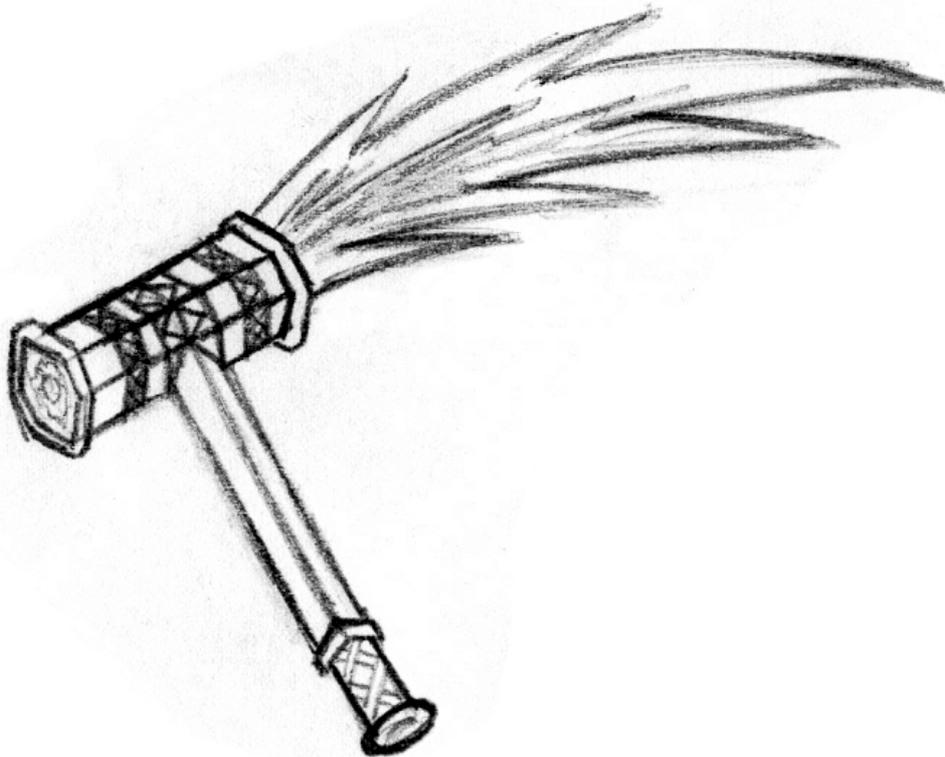
IMPROVING MECHA

Mecha can be improved in play. There are two basic ways that your character can improve his mecha– gradual improvement and grand theft.

GRAND THEFT

Stealing a mecha you've been assigned by the military (which includes absconding with it after a mission) generates **trouble** equal to the cost of the mecha.

Stealing an entire mecha, or a mecha system, generates **trouble** equal to twice the cost of the mecha or system.

Stealing a mecha but leaving your old one behind generates **trouble** equal to twice the difference in costs between the mecha.

If your character owns his mecha, he can arrange for modifications to be made at his own expense. If these modifications don't change the number of points the mecha is worth, all that is required is a Workshop scene to cover arranging for the modifications to be made.

If your character won his last battle, he can arrange to have his mecha modified in a way that makes it cost one more point. This could involve increasing the strength of one system above the usual or replacing one system with another, slightly better one. It also requires a workshop scene. Only one such improvement can be made to a mecha per story arc.

Grand theft involves stealing a mecha, a mecha-sized carried weapon or a piece of equipment salvaged from a downed enemy mecha. It requires a certain amount of planning to pull off such a heist– it's not possible to simply jump into the pilot's seat and drive away. It will probably take a successful skill roll or two into the bargain. Stealing hardware in this fashion gives me **trouble**, which I can then use to punish your character for his crimes. In story terms, the previous owner of the mecha tries very, very hard to get it back. Installing a stolen piece of equipment in a mecha requires a workshop scene– changing the security measures on a captured mecha so it functions as yours also takes a workshop scene.

SCENES AND ARCS

Role-playing games are generally played over one or more sessions, either as a one-off adventure or as a short campaign with a definite end. *Destiny of the Metal Gods* explicitly defines 'Progress' through the current story arc, so this in turn means that the idea of a 'story arc' needs to be properly defined.

A session is a term for one time when we get together to play. How long we spend is a matter of taste, but anything from two to five hours is not uncommon in role-playing.

A story arc is a mission, task or problem laid out before you, the players. Often, I define it for you- particularly if your characters are heavily involved with the military. If your characters are more independently-minded, you get the opportunity to decide what the gist of the story arc is between you. Every story arc needs to have an identifiable end, but not a certain conclusion. There's no set length for a story arc, but it's convenient to fit an arc into one, possibly two play sessions depending on their length.

A campaign is a series of story arcs for the same characters. We might choose to play the story arcs one after the other, or play occasionally.

A Scene is one event or short series of events where your characters interact with each other and the world around them. Usually in role-playing the beginning and end of a Scene is handled informally, but in this game we need to keep track of accumulating **progress** in the story arc and **attention** in traits. All this requires is that I make it clear when a Scene has ended and when we've moved onto the next.

STORY ARCS

A story arc has a particular goal or event such as a battle, a competition or some other climax. Because this is a game about giant battle robots, any climax should revolve around them. An assigned mission from the army is a very simple arc that requires little explanation.

The arc is not a string of pre-determined events that I run your characters through. What form the climax is going to take is known, and most of the arc itself is spent showing how your characters prepare for it.

This preparation is marked by progress. Every time your characters spend a significant amount of time preparing, or succeed at a difficult task leading up to the climax, the group is awarded one point of **progress**. The easiest way to think of it is as a character trait shared by the group as a whole. You spend time working on the plot, you receive **progress**.

I set at the maximum amount of progress you can make at the start of the arc, and that number is public knowledge. If you reach it, you are prepared as it's possible to be for the climax.

There is no fixed maximum progress for a story arc- it varies from story to story. There are many things that affect what the maximum progress is for a story arc, including how long we want the arc to last, how I expect you to divide your

characters' time between personal and group goals, how tough I want the final battle to be and how long Scenes generally last when we play.

As a rule of thumb, I might assume that a quarter of Scenes result in **progress**. For a three hour story arc, I might set the maximum progress around 10 to 15.

WHY PROGRESS?

The point of the progress track is for you to be able to tell, in simple terms, approximately how far through the story you are. It helps with pacing and guarantees that there is always inspiration available for what to do next. What you should never, ever do, however, is 'play to the track' and only consider what's optimal in order to make progress. Doing that will suck all the fun out of things.

It does not matter if maximum progress is reached early. All that means is that your characters have some extra time to spend on their own issues before the mission kicks off. Similarly, it is not a terrible thing if the climax begins before they are fully ready. If you hit maximum progress in one arc, I will probably make the next one longer. If you fail to reach it, I will make it shorter.

SCENES

Most of the time, you get to decide what the next Scene for your character is- where it takes place and what he is doing. I make sure that all the characters get their fair share of the spotlight. There is nothing to stop your characters acting as a group and all participating in a particular Scene. Once a Scene is concluded, I decide which of the following templates the Scene fit best. That, in turn, determines what your characters get out of the Scene.

Workshop Scene

A workshop Scene is all about maintaining and outfitting a mecha. It can take place in a physical workshop, or it can follow one character as he bargains for help in repairing his machine. A character can accumulate a point of **attention** for a trait during a workshop Scene, but no **progress** can ever be earned.

REPAIRS

Workshop Scenes cannot provide progress. The penalty for suffering a lot of damage in one story arc is having to spend a lot of time performing repairs in the next.

If a workshop Scene is used to make repairs, then the mecha recovers up to two points of damage. To repair it further, another workshop Scene is necessary. Mecha loaned out to characters by the military are a special case; a single workshop Scene removes all damage. In that case, the scene is probably the character explaining to a superior exactly how it got so beaten up.

A workshop Scene can also be used to make alterations to the mecha- adding new systems or re-organising the special ability allocation. More details on making those changes are provided in the 'Mecha' chapter.

Workshop Scene Example

Wulf's Hird-class mecha suffered serious damage in his last battle- 6 points in total.

Ordinarily, he could just drop it off at the barrack mecha pool, but as he is assigned somewhere else temporarily, the GM says he has to make arrangements for its repair himself.

He finds a workshop in the area willing to carry out the work, and has enough money on hand to pay the mechanic. His negotiation with the mechanic is a Scene, and at the end he can remove 2 points of damage from his Hird.

The mechanic tells him that not all the parts needed are on hand, so Wulf has to go and find them before more repairs can be made.

It will take him another two Scenes to scratch together the bits he needs to repair the mecha fully.

Progress Scene

A progress Scene is one where the characters are attempting to make progress on the story arc. They have to be doing something relevant to the current story arc. Characters can accumulate **attention** in traits as normal. At the end of the Scene, I decide whether any significant progress has been made. If so, I add a token to the pile of **progress**. Often making progress is contingent on passing a skill roll or two during the scene. If the roll is failed, there is no additional penalty other than the loss of an opportunity to make progress.

Progress Scene Example

Wulf has been given temporary charge of his unit. It's his responsibility to make plan an operation to destroy a bridge over a gorge in enemy territory.

*Wulf's player initiates a Scene where he persuades a local farmer to take him and his team to see the bridge by tractor, to avoid arousing suspicion. This earns **progress** for the story arc.*

*A future Scene might involve his team examining the bridge, looking for the best way to bring it down with their mecha. If they learn something useful, they get another point of **progress**.*

What does **progress** look like?

* Finding out information about the task assigned to you.
* Finding out information about the abilities and weaknesses forces arranged against you.
* Finding out information about the terrain where the climax will take place.
* Practising a tricky manoeuvre or attack that you anticipate will come in handy in the climax.
* Trying to discover elements of the enemy's battle plan.
* Formulating a battle plan yourself.
* Optimising your mecha for this operation.
* Laying traps.
* Seeking allies.
* Trying to dissuade potential allies of the enemy.
* Making sure your allies can be relied upon.
* Gaining the enemy's trust so you can betray him later.

Character Scene

If a Scene is one where not much is done pursuing the main story arc, but one or more characters spend time working towards their own goals or demonstrating their traits in other ways, it is a character Scene. **Attention** can be gathered as normal, but I take one **trouble** at the end of the scene.

Character Scene Example

*Wulf is bored with life on the barracks, and sneaks out in the night to go drinking. He gets heroically trollied, earning him some **attention** in his 'Likes a Drink' trait.*

*However, nothing in this Scene helped advance the story arc, so the GM takes a point of **trouble** for the character Scene.*

Colour Scene

If not much happens in a scene other than some banter, it's a colour scene. No **progress**, **attention** or **trouble** are accrued.

Colour Scene Example

After a horrible defeat, and watching the town get trampled over by Delian League mecha, Wulf learns that the waitress he was sweet on was one of the casualties.

On his way back to base, he's challenged by her brother the sergeant. Wulf says nothing. The brother punches him in the gut. Wulf doesn't even flinch.

Weary and filled with self-loathing, he slinks back towards his billet.

It was an interesting Scene, compounding the loss of his trait, but the GM decides it's a colour Scene. No points of anything are earned.

THE CLIMAX

The end of the story arc is the climax. Generally, it is a battle. Battles get their own chapter. Before the battle begins, however, I have decided who and what you are facing. Sometimes the climax is something other than a battle- say a mecha race- but it is always something that involves piloting the mecha. I also need to make sure that I start the climax soon enough that we don't run out of time before the session ends!

If the story arc is a one-off game, then all of your characters participate in the climactic battle. If the arc is one in a series of stories, then I might vary who is involved. Those not directly participating might be fighting elsewhere, off-camera, or be cheering the fighters on from the sidelines.

The climax is the make or break moment for the story arc. If, as a group, you prevail then the mission is a success. Otherwise, the mission is a failure. The outcome of the story arc has an affect on what future story arcs will be.

CHARACTER TRAIT ARCS

Character trait arcs are a special kind of story arc. In these arcs, one character's trait becomes the plot for the arc. All of the characters are working towards that goal. During such an arc, the associated trait cannot gain or lose **attention**, neither can it be used to **raise the stakes**.

I make an arc a character trait arc when I want that trait to take centre stage for a while, because it's been interesting so far. Traits with only a low **importance** are a poor choice, so I will avoid them.

One special kind of character trait arc you can ask for is one to resolve that trait for good. The trait must have full **attention** and an **importance** of 8. The outcome of the arc is the outcome for the trait, for good or ill.

Trait Arc Example

Wulf discovers he's been assigned to the same unit as Pilot Bjornson, someone from his village that Wulf has always admired. He has the trait 'Admires Bjornson's Courage', and the GM tells his player that the story arc will revolve around that trait.

Although there's the potential for nearly every Scene to involve the trait in some way, its **attention** *cannot be changed until the story arc is complete.*

Whatever the climax is, it involves that relationship. The **progress** *Scenes leading up to it probably also feature Bjornson heavily. Depending on the events of the story arc, Wulf might feel differently about Bjornson afterwards.*

BATTLES

Fights between mecha are a big deal. When a story arc comes to a conclusion, it's generally in the form of such a battle.

Even the smallest mecha is a mighty engine of war, capable of carving its way through humbler forces with ease. When two fight meet, it's all about the particular strengths and weaknesses of the mecha, and the skills of the pilots. As far as the game is concerned, a battle between mecha should consume a lot of screen time, and be as pyrotechnic as possible. What little realism there is in the game should be put to one side- this is all about awesome moves and improbable manoeuvres.

The action in a battle plays out more like a scene from a film than like a game. There's no set order in which people make attacks. One mecha gets to make a string of attacks until another one seizes the initiative from it. This is not to say that the other mecha in the battle are idle – rather it indicates that, for the moment, nothing particularly interesting is happening on that part of the battlefield. You don't roll the dice for each action you attempt to make- instead you roll a handful of dice at the start of the sequence, and spend them to attack and defend over the course of it. Once everyone has run out of dice, a new sequence begins.

An important implication of this is that most battles look pretty even until one side runs out of dice, at which point someone gets a thorough beat-down. However, if that mecha can hold on until the next sequence, it might get a second wind and come back from behind.

RIVETS AND LEVERS

The rules for battles are a modification of the rules for combat in the wuxia game *Rivers and Lakes*. This take on mecha combat need not be limited to the *Destiny of the Metal Gods* setting. Call it Rivets and Levers, then. Why not?

THE CLASH OF STEEL ON STEEL

As a battle begins, I will make it clear what is at stake. This is only very rarely be a matter of life and death for your character- defeat in a battle usually means that he slinks away in his damaged mecha. He might get captured by the enemy, setting up a future story-line, but he is seldom fighting for his life. This is not a soft option, however. Civilian lives might be at stake, or perhaps his reputation or position in the military. If it's not something he's prepared to fight tooth and nail for, a battle is unnecessary- a simple skill roll suffices.

Battle Start Example

Wulf and his friends have been sent to intercept a group of Dynasty scout mecha some distance from the barracks. After three days of searching, they find the enemy in a valley bottom, trying to hide their machines using branches cut from trees.

The GM says that their mission-tracking down the Dynasty unit is at stake. If the battle is lost, then they also spend a long time getting home on account of their damaged mecha.

BEGINNING A SEQUENCE

The mecha come with a compliment of dice, some called Attack dice and some called Defence dice. Occasionally, it provides Pilot dice. All of these dice are the usual six-sided kind, but you need three different colours, one for each type of dice. It's helpful if all the players use the same colour convention.

You also get to add dice for your character's skill as a pilot. I tell you which of these skills you get to add to your pool. As you might expect, the dice you add for pilot skill are Pilot dice. Pilot dice are the most useful kind of dice, because you can use them to attack and defend with. The other two kinds can only be used for one or the other.

Once you know what dice are in your pool, roll them all together and corral them in front of you where everybody can see them. I decide which of the mecha gets to act first- the one who has 'initiative'.

Beginning a Sequence Example

Wulf is piloting a Hird-class Metal God. That gives him 5 Attack dice and 3 Defence dice. The GM says that the Assault skill is the most appropriate one to use. This adds 5 Pilot dice.

Wulf's player rolls the dice, and ends up with the following:

Attack: 1, 3, 3, 4, 6.

Defence: 3, 4, 5.

Pilot: 1, 1, 3, 4, 6.

The GM says that Wulf spotted the enemy first, he begins with initiative.

MAKING AN ATTACK

If your character is acting first, you choose to have him make an attack or perform another action.

To **attack**, select one of your Attack or Pilot dice. The higher the number on the dice, the more difficult it is for the target to defend against it. This dice is discarded after the attack, whatever the outcome.

To perform some other **action**, you must spend a Pilot dice. You can do anything that is not an attack- move, activate some special system on the mecha, grab something from the ground or whatever else seems appropriate. The number on the dice is not usually important. Manoeuvring for tactical advantage is one particular action he can perform that is

covered in more detail later. Sometimes you can spend more than one Pilot dice on an action. If I decide that the action is quite difficult, I might require you to spend a Pilot dice at least as high as a certain number.

If you would prefer not to spend any of your dice at the moment, you can **pass**. I choose which of the other mecha gets the initiative next.

STAND-OFFS

If all the mecha in a battle choose to pass one after the other, the battle has effectively turned into a stand-off. This is a good opportunity to try talking instead of fighting. You never know, it might work this time.

Attack Example

With the rolls before, Wulf chooses the Attack dice showing 4 and makes an attack against a target he chooses. The dice is put back in the pot, out of the way.

Action Example

Later on in the battle, one of the Dynasty mecha drops a weapon. Wulf wants to grab it, to keep it out of enemy reach and to take back to base for the tech boys to look at.

This is an easy action. He spends one of his Pilot dice showing 1. The dice is put back in the pot. Wulf has the next action.

Pass Example

Wulf has run out of Attack and Pilot dice, and he has initiative. As there is nothing he can do, he passes.

DEFENDING YOURSELF

If an attack is made against you, you have three options.

First, you can choose to **take it on the chin**. In this case, your character's mecha takes a point of damage and the initiative remains with the mecha that made the attack. The number on the dice used in the attack does not normally affect the damage.

Secondly, you can **defend**. To do this, you must spend Defence or Pilot dice with a total equal to the number on the single dice used to make the attack. No damage is taken, but the initiative remains with the attacker.

Thirdly, you can **reverse** the attack. To do this, you must spend Defence or Pilot dice with a total greater than the number on the single dice used to make the attack. No damage is taken, and you seize the initiative from the attacking mecha. You get the next opportunity to make an attack.

Take the Blow Example

Wulf is attacked by an enemy using a 6. Wulf doesn't have a Defence dice showing 5, and he wants to keep his Pilot dice with 6.

He chooses to take the attack, marking off one point of damage. His attacker takes the next turn.

Defend Example

Wulf is attacked by that same enemy, this time using a 5. Wulf can handle that, so he uses his Defence dice with 5 to protect himself.

He takes no damage, but his attacker still takes the next turn.

Another Defend Example

Wulf has just attacked his enemy with a 4. The enemy uses a Pilot dice showing 1 and a Defence dice showing 3 together to defend against the attack.

Wulf still has initiative.

Reverse Example

The third attack Wulf is subjected to is with a 3. Wulf uses his Defence dice with 4 to reverse the attack.

He takes no damage, and now he has the initiative and can take the next turn.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

The systems on your mecha also provide it with special abilities. Most special abilities with be associated with one particular number. The ability triggers when a dice showing that number is used to make an attack or defensive spend, depending on the type of ability.

Attack special abilities can be used whenever you make an attack using a dice showing that number. Attack abilities usually make it harder for your target to avoid the attack, or provide some additional benefit for you should the attack succeed.

Defence special abilities can be used whenever you use a single dice to defend or reverse (but not if you use more than one dice to do so). Defence abilities might mean you can defend with dice that would not normally be strong enough to do so, or provide some extra benefit for you when you **defend** or **reverse**. Some defence abilities are 'always on' and provide an enduring benefit without being attached to a number.

Miscellaneous special abilities are not associated with a particular number. Those that need a dice spent on then can be activated with any Pilot dice as an action. Miscellaneous abilities may enable you to adjust your remaining dice in some way, or perform actions in combat that would not normally be feasible. Some allow you to re-roll some of your dice at the start of each sequence or at the start of a battle.

TIME

One question you may have is - how long does a sequence or action take? The answer is that there is no set time for any of them, battles are based on dramatic events rather than a clock. I can decide how much time in the game world any battle takes to play out, based on what's interesting and convenient. Similarly, I may decide that moving a certain distance takes one amount of time in one battles (measured in actions, say), but a different amount of time in a different battle. All such considerations are situational.

Special Ability Example

Wulf's Hird is equipped with a Mecha Rifle, which has the ACCURATE special ability assigned to the number 6. This ability means that when he spends an Attack or Pilot dice with 6 to attack, his target needs a total of 7 to defend and 8 to reverse.

Another Special Ability Example

An enemy has a Smokescreen system, which has the OPPORTUNITY special ability.

After Wulf attacks with a 4, the enemy spends a 6 in a Pilot dice to reverse the attack. The special ability means that the enemy can take on of his remaining Attack dice and re-roll it to try and get a better number.

SPENDING DICE AT OTHER TIMES

If an ally of yours is under attack, you can choose to **intercept** the attack using your Defence and/or Pilot dice. You must spend dice with a total at least two points higher than the number on the attack dice. The intended target takes no damage and you seize initiative from the attacker. This is very, very helpful if an ally of yours is left with no Defence or Pilot dice.

Some miscellaneous special abilities may allow you to spend dice when you are not attacking or under attack.

Interception Example

One of Wulf's allies comes under attack with a 1. The ally only has Pilot dice available to defend with, so Wulf decides to spend his 3 on a defence dice to intercept the attack.

Wulf takes the next turn.

Surprise Example

Another one of the enemies has a Drone Hive weapon, which has the SURPRISE special ability.

After Wulf has intercepted, this enemy can use that ability to spend a Pilot dice showing 6, attacking Wulf with that same dice and seizing the initiative.

THAT WILL BUFF OUT

All mecha can withstand quite a beating, but after a while it is no longer effective in combat. A standard mecha has 5 damage points. Each time it **takes** an attack, one of these points is lost. Once they have all gone, it can no longer continue fighting. Its pilot can flee the battle, unless I decide that it is more appropriate that he is forced to surrender.

Points of damage on a mecha require workshop Scenes to remove. Even having taken full damage a mecha is still mobile, but its pilot needs to spend time organising and paying for repairs before it is back in fighting trim.

STUNTS

Stunts are a special kind of attack. They are much, much harder to defend against. To perform a stunt, you need at least two dice to attack with showing the same number. You spend them all at once, in a single attack. If this attack succeeds, it does no more damage than a regular attack would have done. I may say that a successful stunt attack also inconveniences your target- knocking them over or disarming them, perhaps. You can also use a stunt to use part of the scenery against an enemy- by collapsing a building on them for example.

If someone is making a stunt attack against you, you can only **defend** or reverse by having a set of two or more matching dice. If their total is the same as the total of the attacking stunt, you defend. If their total is higher, you reverse. Unlike ordinary attacks, you cannot mix and match dice with different numbers to defend with. Similarly, if you wish to **intercept** an attack, you also need a

matching set of dice to do so. You do not need more dice in your set to **defend** against a stunt, only a suitable total and a matched set of at least two dice.

Stunts are, in general, less efficient than normal attacks as you spend more dice to inflict the same amount of damage. However, if your enemy is near defeat already, stunts are a useful way of overcoming otherwise strong defences. Plus, of course, they make you look cool.

Special abilities can trigger on a stunt attack, for the attack or the defence, as long as there is a sensible interpretation of the outcome.

Stunt Example

Wulf makes a stunt attack with two Attack dice showing 3s. His player describes how Wulf's mecha does a somersault over a stone wall, landing behind an enemy and opening fire with a Rocket Launcher.

The targets has 2, 2, 4, 5 and 6 on dice he can defend with. He can't use any single dice to defend, because of the stunt. His pair of 2s don't add up to enough to defend against that attack.

He has no choice but to take the damage, but it is still only a single point.

Another Stunt Example

Wulf is attacked in a later sequence by an enemy who performs a stunt. The enemy uses the branches of a tree to confuse Wulf, and attacks with a pair of 4s.

Looking at his Defence and Pilot dice, Wulf has 1, 3, 3, 3 and 5 to defend with. He can spend all of the 3s to defend himself. It's a matched set, and the total is higher than the stunt attack.

Because the total defence is 9, and the total attack was 8, this means that Wulf reverses the stunt attack.

His player describes how he holds up his arms to shield himself from the branches, then picks the perfect time to jump away just before the enemy finally attacks.

ENDING A SEQUENCE

When all the combatants have spent their dice, the sequence ends. Sometimes, I say at that point that the battle is effectively over because one side is so depleted that the result is a foregone conclusion. If the battle continues, a new sequence begins. As battles tend to roam all over the place, I might ask you to use a different pilot skill this time.

SKILL DIFFERENCES

The differences in pilots' skills are one way that I can let different players enjoy moments in the limelight. If I choose one that puts you at a disadvantage and it doesn't seem to make sense, it's because I'm trying to be fair in giving everyone a turn at 'being the hero'. Don't get upset if you can't always find a way to bring your best skill to bear.

WINNING AND LOSING

Most of the time, you need to defeat all of the enemy mecha to win the battle. Other times, there will be a technical victory you can achieve, even when faced with a superior enemy. I will make it clear to you what the goal for the battle is.

Some alternative goals are:

* ✳ Disabling one particular enemy unit.
* ✳ Destroying an enemy factory.
* ✳ Recovering an important artefact from the field of battle.
* ✳ Surviving for a sequence to delay a strong enemy force.
* ✳ Rescuing non-combatants from the field of battle.
* ✳ Winning a race.
* ✳ Defeating an army of non-mecha units.
* ✳ Defending a particular location.

Sometimes there is a way for you to lose the battle on a similar technicality. I will make it very clear when that is a possibility.

Sometimes there is a difference between victory for your character and victory for your character's side. As a general rule, he is defeated when his mecha is disabled or he flees the field, even if his allies go on to win the battle afterwards.

RAISING THE STAKES

If the battle is not going your way, you can try to turn things around by **raising the stakes**. Pick one of your character's traits. If you can describe a way that the trait is somehow tied to the result of the battle, and is put at risk because of it, you can turn all of the **attention** points currently invested in it into Pilot dice. Roll these new dice and add them to the set in front of you. You can do this at any time, even immediately after an attack has been made against you.

There is a price for this. I receive **trouble** points equal to the **importance** of that trait. If the **attention** was more than a point or two less than the **importance**, using the trait to **raise the stakes** probably hurts you more than it helps you. If your character 'loses' the battle- even if his side won overall- the trait put at risk is destroyed. Kaput. Gone. I specify exactly what that means, but it won't be something your character likes.

Of course, there's always the biggest stake of all- his own life. You get 6 new Pilot dice, and I get 6 trouble. If the battle ends in defeat for your character, he dies. It's as simple as that. As befits a true hero, you get an opportunity to narrate his final moments, his sacrifice, and the reactions of the loved ones he leaves behind. This risk is not something to be taken lightly.

You can only ever **raise the stakes** once per battle.

Raising the Stakes Example

Wulf is on the back foot. He only has a 2 and 4 left as Attack dice, his mecha only has 1 damage point left and the enemy still has Attack dice remaining.

Wulf raises the stakes with his 'Likes a Pretty Face' trait. It has an attention score of 3 and an importance of 4. He rolls 3 Pilot dice, getting 1, 4 and 6. The GM gets 4 trouble points.

If Wulf still can't win, he loses that trait.

ASSISTANCE

If your character is not piloting a mecha in the battle, he can provide encouragement to an ally. To do this, raise the stakes using one of your character's traits. As usual, you have to come up with a plausible reason why it would be at risk. Your ally receives Pilot dice equal to your character's **attention** in that trait. I take the trait's **importance** in **trouble**, as usual.

RISK TRAITS

Don't be too cagey with your character's traits. Just because something is important to him, that does not mean that you as a player should be too reluctant to put it at risk. It's fun for your character to suffer set-backs, and it's dramatic gold for things to go wrong every now and again.

TACTICAL MANOEUVRING

No battle takes place on a featureless flat expanse. Using the terrain to your advantage is entertaining, and thus effective. One possible action is to manoeuvre for tactical advantage. You describe any plausible way your character to gain an advantage over his enemies by using the terrain, and if I agree then you receive some benefit. I can decide on any particular benefit I want, but the most usual way to get advantage is to turn one or more Pilot dice into Attack or Defence dice. You can turn a single Pilot dice into a number of Attack and Defence dice with the same total as the Pilot dice you used, or you can turn a number of Pilot dice into a single Attack or Defence dice equal to the sum of the Pilot dice you used. Bear in mind that the Pilot dice used to make the manoeuvre is discarded first, it's remaining Pilot dice that are changed into other dice.

Adjusting your dice in this way can give you dice you can use with a special ability, create matched sets you can use for stunts, or get more dice so you can try to overwhelm an opponent by the sheer number of attacks. Sometimes, if your use of terrain is particularly clever or interesting, I can let you have a higher total on the dice you receive. As a rule of thumb, each way of exploiting the terrain is only rewarded in this way once per battle. To be rewarded again, you have to come up with something no-one else has done yet. If, over the course of a number of battles, the same tactics keep cropping up, I might stop rewarding them. The goal is to be interesting, after all.

Tactical Manoeuvring Example

Wulf has Pilot dice showing 1 and 6, but no Attack dice.

He spends the 1 to perform a tactical manoeuvre, taking advantage of the tree tops to get a height advantage over his enemies.

He turns the 6 into Attack dice showing 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, and 1. Assuming he can keep the initiative, he can do a lot of damage to his enemies.

COMPLETE BATTLE EXAMPLE

This section includes a complete battle, with one player mecha fighting another mecha. First, a description of the rules, dice rolls and decisions is given. The second part is the description of the fight, without the details getting in the way.

Looking at the first in details should help you get a feel for how combat works. The second demonstrates how the dice and actions translate into the fiction.

By the Rules

Wulf is fighting against a single enemy mecha, along the valley bottom. The GM says that his Assault skill (at 5) is the most appropriate one to use. The Hird he is piloting grants 5 Attack and 3 Defence dice. He rolls:

Attack: 1, 3, 3, 4, 6.

Defence: 3, 4, 6.

Pilot: 1, 1, 3, 4, 6.

For brevity, this can be written as 13346/346/11346.

His enemy, in a Scarab Warrior mecha, gets a roll of 2336/236/2456.

The designs of both mecha are in the 'Garage' chapter.

Wulf takes the first action.

He makes an attack using an Attack dice showing 6, which becomes a 7 due to the ACCURATE special ability. The enemy spends the 2 and the 6 Defence dice he has to reverse the attack. Because he used two dice, he can't use his LIGHT special ability with the 6.

The Scarab Warrior spends an Attack dice with 2 on an attack. Wulf spends a Defence dice with 3, reversing.

Wulf spends the two Pilot dice showing 1 on a stunt attack. The Scarab Warrior has no pair amongst his Defence and Pilot dice, and has to take a point of damage.

Wulf spends an Attack dice showing 1, his enemy reverses with a Pilot dice showing 2.

The Scarab Warrior attack with an Attack dice showing 6. Wulf chooses to take the point of damage. The Scarab Warrior can use the LIGHT special ability to turn a Pilot dice showing 5 into Attack dice showing 5 and 1.

Now, Wulf has the dice 334/46/346. The Scarab Warrior has the dice 135/3/46.

The Scarab Warrior attacks with an Attack dice showing 5, because of ACCURATE this becomes a 6. Wulf chooses to take this point of damage too.

The Scarab Warrior makes a stunt attack with the two Attack Dice showing 3. Wulf spends a Defence dice showing 4 and a Pilot dice showing 4 to reverse the stunt.

Wulf spends an Attack 4, and a Pilot 4 is used to defend.

Wulf spends a Pilot 6, which becomes a 7 thanks to ACCURATE. The Scarab Warrior takes the damage.

Wulf spends two Attack dice showing 3 to make a stunt attack. The Scarab Warrior can't defend and takes the damage.

Wulf has the dice -/6/3, having suffered 2 damage. The Scarab Warrior has the dice 1/3/6 and has suffered 3 damage.

*At this point, the GM spends 6 points of **trouble**, rolling 3 new Pilot dice to give to the Scarab Warrior. He rolls 3, 6 and 6. The Scarab Warrior's dice are now 1/3/3666.*

*Wulf spends his last Pilot dice, a 3, on an attack. His enemy spends his last **Defence** dice, also a 3.*

Having only a Defence dice left, Wulf has to pass.

*The Scarab Warrior spends a Pilot 6. Wulf **takes** the damage. The LIGHT special ability is used to split one of 6s into an Attack 2 and Attack 5.*

*The Scarab Warrior spends an Attack 5, which ACCURATE makes a 6. Wulf spends his last Defence dice, a 6, on **defending**.*

Now, Wulf has taken 3 damage and has no dice left. The Scarab Warrior has taken 3 damage and has the dice 12/-/36 left.

*The Scarab Warrior spends a 6 on an Attack. Wulf raises the stakes with his 'Likes a Pretty Face' trait, getting himself 4 pilot dice but giving away 4 **trouble**. The roll is a measly 1, 1, 1 and 5. Wulf ends up **taking** the damage anyway. The Scarab Warrior splits the Pilot 3 into an Attack 3 and an Attack 1.*

*Scarab Warrior attacks with 2, Wulf **reverses** with his Pilot 5.*

*Wulf attacks with a Pilot 1. The GM spends 2 **trouble** to roll 1 more Pilot dice for the Scarab Warrior, getting a 4. He uses this to **reverse**.*

*Scarab Warrior attacks with 2, Wulf **takes** the damage.*

*Scarab Warrior makes a stunt attack with 1 and 1, Wulf **defends** with 1 and 1.*

They have both now run out of dice. Wulf's mecha has taken 5 damage to the Scarab Warrior's 3, but the Hird's ABLATIVE ability means he still has two points of damage left.

In the next sequence, the GM tells Wulf's player to use the Duel skill. Wulf's rolls is 13366/255/25. The Scarab Warrior's roll is 2344/224/1134.

*The Scarab Warrior makes a stunt attack with the Attack dice showing 4s. Wulf **reverses** with his Defence dice showing 5s.*

*Wulf attacks with his Attack dice showing 6s. The ACCURATE ability makes the attack reach a total of 14. The Scarab Warrior can't get a big enough matched set to defend with and **takes** a point of damage.*

*Wulf then uses the SKILFUL ability and his Pilot 5 dice to make a stunt with his two Attack dice on 3. This becomes a set 333. Again, the Scarab Warrior cannot defend, and he **takes** his fifth and final point of damage.*

Wulf has won the battle, having taken 5 out of 7 points of damage.

In the Fiction

Wulf slides his Hird down the valley slope, and launches a volley of rockets at his enemy. The Scarab Warrior mecha struggles to leap away from the blast, and squeezes off a couple of rapid shots at the Hird from its rifle. Wulf is ready, and rolls nonchalantly out of the way. He grabs a handful of soil and rock from the ground and flings it at the Scarab Warrior, using the distraction to hammer a metal fist into his enemy's torso. His follow-up kick is easily parried by the Dynasty mecha, and the blast from its light laser catches the

Hird in the side, ripping open the armour and exposing some of the workings. Wulf's enemy manages to gain the higher ground.

(First dice recap)

From his vantage point, the pilot of the Scarab Warrior places a perfect rifle shot into the Hird's back. He then jumps towards Wulf, hoping to body-slam the Confederation mecha into the ground. Wulf uproots a tree and uses it to push his attacker over his head and into a sprawling heap. Wulf brings the sword down, but the Scarab Warrior rolls out of the way. As it is picking itself up, Wulf scores a hit with a quick volley of rockets. In the confusion, Wulf runs up to the Scarab Warrior, sweeps its feet out from under it and thrust the sword through its shoulder, almost pinning it to the ground.

(Second dice recap)

Thinking he has his enemy on the back foot, Wulf presses closer. He then sees the stencil on the side of the machine, one he remembers as being on the merchant's sign back in town. He realises that the merchant has betrayed him- the Scarab Warrior gains a second wind. Wulf's next attack is easily blocked. As he struggles to keep his mecha on its feet, the Scarab Warrior hits him first with a blast from its laser and then with a burst from its rifle. The Hird is hit by the first, but Wulf manages to jump out of the way of the second.

(Third dice recap)

As the Scarab Warrior moves in for the kill, Wulf recalls that the merchant had mentioned something about the waitress he had been courting. The knowledge that she is in danger galvanises him into action. He rides out the next attack, despite the warning lights in the cockpit. The next attack, a kick, Wulf bats aside with an arm. He attempts to head-butt the Scarab Warrior, to no avail. In response, Wulf feels his mecha jolt as a rifle slug goes straight into the chest panel. The enemy grabs the Hird by the shoulders and attempts to throw it into a tree, but Wulf reads the attack correctly and trips them both over, rolling around on the ground.

(New sequence)

When they get up, the dust swirls around them. This showdown is in its final stages. The Scarab Warrior shifts position, moving its shadow off the Hird's face in an attempt to blind Wulf. Wulf has the Hird leap up over the Scarab Warrior's head, and fire a volley rockets down that shatters the shoulder plates and leaves the mecha reeling. Before its pilot can recover, the Hird pirouettes and decapitates it with a single sweep of its sword.

The battle is over, and Wulf has won.

ENEMIES

For this chapter, the convention that 'I' means the GM is being dropped, because most of what is here is instructions and advice for the GM– for you. It is not a problem for other players to read this section, as nothing secret is given away. It might actually be useful for the players to browse it to see how the GM's side of things works.

JOB ONE

Everyone has a responsibility to make the game fun, but the GM, ultimately, has authority. You should use that authority to keep the game as entertaining as possible. Sometimes you may have to reign in a player gently to make sure someone else isn't blocked out. Sometimes you can deliberately give a moment or two of spotlight to a character that hasn't has much opportunity to shine. It's all about being generous and keeping people happy, like a good party host.

OPPOSITION

There are many possible characters and organisations that can be obstacles for the player characters. Not all of them need be enemies, as such. Superior officers, rivals and obstreperous locals can all oppose them without being foes. When creating a story arc, it's important to think a little about what the opposition is, what agendas they have and how they present problems to the player characters. Putting in the effort to make the enemies memorable makes the conflicts more meaningful.

Person

Some opponents don't have mecha, but can still be obstacles. Unless the player characters are thoroughly amoral, they can't just use force to get their way with peasants, merchants and other groundlings. Even if they are prepared to play the bully, doing so causes no end of trouble later. People who get in the way of the player characters might just want something from them in return rather than wanting to stop them cold. Wherever possible, try to find a way of making people the player characters deal with relate to their traits. Not only does it provide opportunities for them to gather attention, it also keeps the story interesting. An outright foe without his own mecha can work from behind the scenes, perhaps even leaving the characters unaware of his identity.

Mecha

Some mecha are off-the-shelf enemy machines, faceless and undistinguished. They are good to bulk out an enemy force, or give the impression of a large and organised army. Unique enemy mecha are more individual and can be used in more than one battle, always escaping after defeat to come back again. In these cases, the mecha is more important than the pilot. Make the mecha interesting, as there is more potential during a battle for demonstrating interesting qualities in a mecha than for demonstrating interesting qualities in its pilot.

Both

Sometimes there is an opportunity for an enemy to be a person with a mecha to pilot. Opponents of this kind should be made very relevant to the story arc, and to future story arcs, because they feature prominently all through the game. If the pilot is encountered on foot by the player characters, it can be difficult to prevent them from simply using their mecha to kill him right away. The enemy needs to be someone they can't kill just now, or someone they don't yet want to kill. They may even become an erstwhile ally in the future.

One particularly entertaining reveal is to defeat an infamous enemy mecha only to discover the pilot was someone unexpected, someone the characters knew all along.

CHALLENGES

It's a mistake to keep asking the players to roll dice for every little thing. Even if it is a task which would merit a skill roll most of the time, if it's not immediately important to the scene let the character succeed and move on. Every roll should be important. If the circumstances mean that the character can make multiple attempts one after the other, it's better to use a skill roll purely to see how long it takes him- a 'failure' might only mean that it takes him a long time to succeed.

Of course, player can spend their characters' **attention** to modify a failure, and letting them do so to turn failure into 'success, sort of' is often the easiest way of making sure the game doesn't hit a road-block. Similarly, you can use **trouble** to put a speed-bump in front of them if everything is going their way.

You should never let a skill roll happen if failure stops the story cold. Always have a back-up plan, or a way of pushing it forwards anyway. Skill rolls say how successful the characters are as the story arc progresses, not whether they progress at all. Let the story continue even if an attempt to add a progress token fails.

TROUBLE

Trouble, as a commodity, is what you can use to make the characters' lives more difficult. You have a pool of **trouble**, earned by all of the players, that you can spend in some situations to complicate the story. This is not a competition- it's not a good idea to plan to use trouble as efficiently as possible in order to snuff out their chances of victory. It's meant to be a conspicuous reminder of exactly how difficult they've made their lives by their

WHY TROUBLE?

In most role-playing games, when a character does something likely to have unfortunate repercussions, the GM has a completely free hand to determine what those repercussions are. This can be as much a curse as a blessing. If the payback is too heavy, it can seem like the GM is vindictive. If the consequences are too slight, the prospect of future trouble is not a deterrent to risky actions. It's rarely a big issue, but if a player and the GM have wildly different ideas as to how badly things should go wrong in future, it can cause friction. Quantifying trouble makes it clear exactly how much payback there is going to be.

earlier actions. By giving it a number, the players have a concrete indication of how bad things could get.

Trouble does not replace the GM's role of coming up with complications and problems. It supplements it, providing a visible way of moderating exactly how and when trouble can strike. In essence, the players volunteer for their characters to go through the wringer by letting the GM gather trouble.

Increasing Trouble

Trouble is increased whenever a character does something that puts the mission in jeopardy, makes an enemy, or invites problems by pursuing a personal agenda. It is not a punishment for the players or for the characters- it's a cost for certain actions. **Trouble** makes things interesting, so encourage the players to not be too reluctant to give you any. Keep a pile of **trouble** tokens in front of you, or use dice to track it.

When a story arc begins, take the maximum progress of the story arc as **trouble**, plus 2 for each player. This is the pool you have to work with right from the start. The longer and more complicated the story arc, the more **trouble** there is likely to be.

Each time there is a character Scene (as described in the Scenes and Arcs chapter), add 1 **trouble**. Time spent AWOL, risking fall-out from personal agendas or otherwise not on the mission can come back to haunt the player characters. If a character shoulders some kind of obligation to another character or group, add 1 **trouble**. Owing someone a favour or making a rash promise can lead to problems later.

If a character steals a mecha, or equipment for a mecha, then a large amount of **trouble** can be generated. Absconding with a mecha loaned to him earns **trouble** equal to the cost of a mecha. Stealing a mecha earns **trouble** equal to twice its cost. Swapping out a mecha of a part for something better earns **trouble** equal to twice the difference. The same goes for 'trading up' a mecha for a better one.

When the climax to the story begins- talked about in more detail later- earn the difference between the maximum progress and the current progress for the story. The better prepared the characters are, the easier time they'll have.

During the climax (or indeed during any battle involving mecha), when a character **raises the stakes** with a trait the **trouble** increases by the **importance** of the trait. If a character risks his life, that's worth 6 **trouble**.

If there's something that you feel should earn some trouble that isn't covered here, feel free to add a point for it- just don't be too so free with trouble that the players are reluctant to do anything interesting.

Spending Trouble

You can spend **trouble** in certain, specific circumstances for particular effects. This does not mean that everything you do or decide has to be paid for with **trouble**, just that there are certain specific ways that **trouble** can be used to challenge the player characters. There is no need to spend all of the trouble you have, or make a determined effort to bring down the party using it- it's there to moderate how you can surprise the players.

After a character has succeeded at a skill roll, you can spend 1 **trouble** to add a drawback to the success, as described in the 'Pilots' chapter.

At the start of a battle involving mecha, you can spend 3 points of **trouble** to increase an enemy pilot's skill by 1 for the entire battle. By default, all pilots you control are assumed to have a skill of 2. You cannot increase a pilot's skill above 5. At the same time, you can increase the number of 'cheap units' in the battle on the enemy's side by 1 by spending 2 **trouble**.

During a battle, you can spend 2 **trouble** to roll a Pilot dice and add it to the pool of a mecha you control. This doesn't increase how many dice are rolled during any subsequent sequences.

Story End

If the story arc ends in victory for the players, you keep all the **trouble** you have for the next story arc. The **trouble** you get at the start of that arc is added to the amount you carried forwards. If the story arc ended in defeat for the players, you lose any excess **trouble**. You should avoid finding ways of spending it make their defeat worse to avoid wasting any. Once the damage is done, let the battle end.

Similarly, if it's clear that the characters are going to win in the end, don't hoard the **trouble** for the next arc. Spend enough to give them something to get their teeth into before letting them enjoy their victory. You don't want to end up with a cycle of easy victory leading to crushing defeat and back again.

TROUBLE SUMMARY

At the start of a session:
❋ Gain 2 per player
❋ Gain 1 per maximum progress of the story arc

During play:
❋ Gain 1 for a character scene
❋ Gain 1 if a character takes on an obligation
❋ Gain the cost of a loaned mecha if it is stolen
❋ Gain twice the cost of a mecha if it is stolen
❋ Gain or Spend for anything that seems appropriate
❋ Spend 1 to add a caveat to a successful skill roll

When beginning a battle:
❋ Gain 1 per incomplete progress if this is the climax
❋ Spend 3 to give an enemy pilot an extra Pilot dice for this battle
❋ Spend 2 to add an infantry unit to the battle

During a battle:
❋ Gain the importance of a trait if it is used to raise the stakes
❋ Gain 6 if a character risks death
❋ Spend 2 to roll a Pilot dice and add it to an enemy's pool

At the end of a battle:
❋ Spend twice the cost of a mecha to steal it from a character
❋ Lose all trouble if the characters were defeated in the climax to a story arc

If you have a significant amount of **trouble** remaining at the end of a session, and a character has suffered defeat- remember that a character can suffer an individual defeat even if the group succeeds- you can spend **trouble** to steal their mecha from them. You to spend **trouble** equal to twice the cost of the mecha, using the same principles as when characters steal mecha themselves. Don't do this as a matter of course. It's a harsh step to take, particularly if they don't have another mecha to use. It can be fair play if that character has been stealing mecha components, or to make recovering the mecha the thrust of the next story arc.

CREATING A STORY ARC

In the 'Scenes and Arcs' chapter, the story arc is introduced as based around a particular goal or intended climax, but there is slightly more to it than that. For any story, you need to come up with elaborations on the main plot that crop up during play. For example, in an arc about ambushing an enemy supply convoy, you might have two specific events in mind: The first the discovery that the information you got at the start about the convoy's route was incorrect, the second that one of the villagers you had in your confidences is really a spy for the enemy.

What the progress rules allow you to do is pace the story by having those events triggered by specific progress totals. So if the maximum progress is 8, you can have the first event happen just after the Scene that provides the third progress token, and the second happen just after the sixth is earned. The climax is probably only reached after having dealt with both of those plot points. If maximum progress is

never reached, then the players have found enough interesting things to do without you needing to use everything you had prepared. For the GM, tracking progress for the story arc is a pacing tool.

The players can make suggestions for you to use for the story arc, and it's often a good thing to adjust your list of events on the fly in response to what has happened so far. When deciding on the main thrust of a story arc, it's better to think too big than think too small. Playing small cogs in a large machine can be rewarding, but the over-the-top nature of the setting demands appropriately over-the-top, world-shaking events in the story.

THE CLIMAX

The climax of a story arc should feel dramatic. It should tie together the significant plot threads of the story arc. The previous events of the arc have set up the reason for the conflict, and given the players and their characters an opportunity to develop an investment in its success. The outcome should be important to the players, beyond its direct effect on their characters. It's not always possible to hit the dramatic sweet spot, but that's what you should aim for.

An important element is to decide how powerful the opposition is- covered shortly. The ideal climax is one that feels like it was an intense struggle, but was actually set to favour the player characters significantly.

What makes a battle stand out as interesting, however, is what you pick for the scenery and how you find ways of making it important to the fight. Trees for cover or impromptu weapons, a river that stops the mêlée attackers from reaching

the ranged weapon defenders, tall buildings that can take collateral damage, with loss of civilian life or a cliff that splits the action in two and takes a Pilot dice action to get from the top to the bottom- all of these are ways to make the battle interesting.

Lesser Climaxes

For a one-off story arc, you probably want all of the players to have their piece of the action. On the other hand, having only some of the player characters directly involved allows you to have a shorter, less chaotic climax. In a campaign, you can see to it that opportunity to be in the climax is shared fairly or have the players decide which of their characters are best suited to the anticipated fight. Some players might even want to sit out the climax more than average, if they enjoy the others parts of the game more.

If you want to have a reduced number of player characters in the climax, it can also be sensible to have other battles before it, so at least every character can take part in one fight. In fact, having a series of smaller battles before the important fight can help set up plot points and give the characters a chance to put more of their traits at risk. Adding smaller battles to the list of events of the story arc helps with the pacing, and prevents all of the action being stuck at the end of the arc.

BUILDING ENEMIES

To make a roughly equal fight, ensure that the value of the mecha on both sides are roughly equal. Some set ups are more effective than others, but the number of dice is the biggest factor. You can afford to be generous towards mecha that have miscellaneous systems with no combat

potential. You don't have to make every battle perfectly balanced, it's more interesting if there's some uncertainty for the players as to how strong the opposition is going to be. Forcing a perfectly even playing field time and time again is dull.

The simplest method is to pick a number of standard mecha from the 'Garage' chapter for the enemies, and make up the difference in points on each side using Infantry Units, described below.

To create the enemies in more detail, build them new and interesting mecha. Unique Metal Gods don't have to be as powerful as some of the examples in the Garage chapter- they can be custom-built jobs equivalent to those ones Gentry Pilots get as standard. You can make them just a bit more powerful to create the impression of a difficult foe, match the player characters mecha for mecha, or have one powerful mecha twice as good as normal and fill out the rest of the side however you want. You can things interesting by varying how you make up the enemy forces. An interesting diversion is to have the player characters outnumbered by weaker mecha.

Above all, make enemies that are interesting to fight, and make sure there is plenty of variety. Enemy mecha pilots have a skill of 2 by default, but this can be increased using **trouble**. They don't have different levels of skill in different areas like player characters.

INFANTRY UNITS

Although the Metal Gods are the strongest forces on the battlefield, more traditional soldiers have a part to play. If there are regular units on both sides of the battle, it's simplest to just assume that they keep

each other busy. On the other hand, a modest number of lesser enemy units can help balance a battle. Although they are called infantry units, they are usually a mixture of foot soldiers, armoured personnel carriers, tanks and other armed vehicles.

Introduce infantry units at the start of a battle. Each unit has a cost of I, on the same scale a mecha. So if the player characters have mecha worth 33 together, you can balance the battle by having two enemy mecha costing 13 each and 7 infantry units. Rather than specifying exactly 7 units, of whatever kind, say that the infantry force is 'about 7 dice worth'– the infantry units can make up to 7 attacks per sequence. They are best used to keep a battle challenging without having to roll lots and lots of dice for enemy mecha, and forcing to keep track of more damage counts and special abilities.

Do not roll dice for infantry units at the start of a sequence. Instead use dice or tokens to track how many attack they left to make in the sequence. When the infantry units attack, reduce this number by one and roll a dice. The number the dice rolls is the strength of the attack they make. Resolve the attack as normal. When infantry comes under attack, it automatically loses one potential attack this sequence. Roll a dice- if the result isn't enough to stop the attack, it loses another remaining attack. Once there are no attacks left for the infantry units, there is no point in attacking them. They return to full strength next sequence.

Infantry units cannot defend against stunts- they always lose two attacks if a stunt attack is made against them. Many weapon special abilities are ineffective against infantry units- in particular HEAVY, SHOCKING and KNOCKDOWN.

Infantry units can never be destroyed, as such- they always come back the next sequence. However, if all of the enemy mecha are all disabled then the infantry units flee. If the player characters only have infantry units to face in a battle, then fight a set number of sequences or track how many infantry units are 'killed', ending when a certain number have been disposed of.

INFANTRY TACTICS

A generally effective strategy is to attack infantry units first each sequence as it depletes enemy attack strength faster than attacking a mecha or letting the infantry make attacks. However, taking out infantry units doesn't help the players win the battle, so if they don't have enough dice left to attack the enemy mecha they might get bogged down in a stalemate.

Because infantry units are so much weaker on defence, they are not as effective as a mecha with the same cost. However, because they are guaranteed to keep fighting for all of the battle, that compensates slightly.

MODERATING ADVANCEMENT

In long-running games, it can be difficult to prevent the players from becoming so powerful, and so practised at using their mecha, that it's impossible to challenge them without inventing more and more improbably powerful adversaries. Every time they win a story arc there's potential to improve their mecha, every time they lose a story arc they can improve a skill.

Whatever happens, they get stronger. Of course, it's entirely in keeping with the style of the game to invent these incredible foes, but there are two ways you can slow their progress is you want to keep the campaign long-running without power inflation.

The first is to steal their mecha. This is the preferred way if part of the reason for their strength is that they have been stealing components or complete mecha rather aggressively. Permanently reducing the power of their mecha after they have spent a long time building them up is possibly too harsh.

The second is to encourage them to retire the characters. Let them have a story arc linked to an important trait, complete it one way or another. Losing an important trait makes that character weaker, and it's a natural opportunity to let the character bow out of the action in favour of a new one.

BUILDING ON THE RULES

All of the rules- for pilots, their mecha and the battles they fight- are there to be expanded upon when you want to. There's quite a lot to get your teeth into for the basics, and more aspects you can use occasionally (such as weapon ranges and climaxes that aren't battles). Once you and your players are comfortable with that detail, you shouldn't shy away from inventing new things to mix in with the rules as written. If you have an excellent idea for rules when a battle takes place in thick fog, use them when you get a chance to do so. Avoid making too many of them a permanent part of the rules, though- too many complications on top of one another could make things time-consuming and frustrating.

A different way to branch out is to consider inventing new special abilities and weapons that use them. As a rule of thumb, the special ability should be worth approximately one dice, unless you give the weapon an inflated cost for the number of dice it provides.

CHANGING THE WORLD

It's easy to move away from the setting as written towards whatever you want. As long as the setting you move is one where the battles between mecha are cinematic rather than overly technical, the rules should support it. You might have to adjust some of the mecha system names, alter the mecha points allowance or otherwise tweak the details, but the only limit is your imagination.

GARAGE

There is no point producing a huge list of all the different mecha, unique or not, that the Norse Confederation and its enemies field. It is much more interesting if I make up designs to fit the story, and find new and interesting ways of making mecha stand out from the crowd.

It is useful, none-the-less, to have some stock designs that you can use when your character is loaned a mecha by the military, or as inspiration for how the mecha of the powers differ from one another in style and weaponry.

This chapter also includes a very brief descriptions of the enemy powers and their ambitions.

NORSE CONFEDERATION

There are more mecha listed for the Confederation because you are part of it. You need a list of the mecha it uses and your character is most knowledgeable about its resources.

The unique mecha in the Confederation cost anything from 20 – 30 points. Only the mightiest of the mightiest, Thor, Odin and their kin, are at the top of the range.

TOTAL COST	Hird	:MECHA
11		SYSTEMS
3		Mecha Sword
4		Rocket Launcher
4		Heavy Armour
COST		

The Hird is the latest iteration of the Confederation's main mecha model. The standard equipment is a Mecha Sword, listed here, but depending on the mission and anticipated role of the unit practically any other carried weapon can replace it. Older versions, with slightly inferior systems, are sometimes sent to isolated towns for use by the militia.

5	DICE		3
ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Accurate		6	
Skillful		S	

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

TOTAL COST	Berserker	:MECHA
11		SYSTEMS
3		Mecha Axe
5		Heavy Flamethrower
3		Jumping Legs
COST		

The Berserker is the preferred shock mecha of the Confederation. It trades off defence and durability for damage-dealing potential. Although it can carry weapons other than Axes, this is quite rare. Favoured pilots may be given an Energy Sword or Mecha Claymore instead.

6	DICE		2
ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Splash		6	Light
Knockdown		S	

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐

Ulfhednar :MECHA

TOTAL COST 11

SYSTEMS

COST	
3	Mecha Spear
6	Orichalcum Armour
2	Threat Scanner

These machines are given to trusted warriors. They have a strong defensive emphasis, so they are generally used to help defend mecha with better hitting power or unique Metal Gods. The Mecha Spear is something of a badge of rank, and Ulfhednar pilots are reluctant to trade it in for something else.

ATTACK 2 | **DICE** | **DEFENCE** 5

ABILITIES

	6	
Overwhelming		

(2 re-rolls)

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Svartalfar :MECHA

TOTAL COST 11

SYSTEMS

COST	
2	Micro Rocket Launcher
2	Shuriken
3	Jumping Legs
3	ECM
1	Camouflage

Svartalfar mecha are given to commando units, normally for use on missions behind enemy lines. They are used for tactical operations rather than battlefield engagements, and come with specialised equipment for sabotaging bridges and compromising defences. In order to avoid detection by the enemy, they are significantly smaller than most other Confederation mecha.

ATTACK 2 | **DICE** | **DEFENCE** 4

ABILITIES

Splash	6	Light
Plasma	5	Steadfast

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐

Dis :MECHA

TOTAL COST 10

SYSTEMS

COST	
2	Mecha Knife
3	Drone Hive
3	Flashbang
2	Training Pod

The Dis model is bulky, inelegant and cheap to produce. It is the preferred mecha to issue to local militia, where one is available. It is intended for inexperienced pilots and requires the minimum of skill to pilot effectively.

ATTACK 3 | **DICE** | **PILOT** 1 | 2

ABILITIES

Surprise	6	Opportunity
Skillful	5	

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐

Valkyrie :MECHA

TOTAL COST 12

SYSTEMS

COST	
6	Heavy Rocket Launcher
5	Gravity Shunt
1	Wings

The Valkyrie is a new model of versatile mecha unit. It is designed to form rapid reaction squads and move across country swiftly and directly. The rocket launchers are mounted on the wings themselves, so the smoke and flame from their launch doesn't obscure the pilot's view. The Valkyrie comes with experimental gravity systems as its main defence. It lacks the ability to easily swap out one weapon for another.

ATTACK 5 | **DICE** | **DEFENCE** 4

ABILITIES

Accurate	6	Light

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐

Eostre :MECHA

TOTAL COST

20

COST	SYSTEMS
5	Heavy Laser
5	Heavy Laser
3	Flashbang
6	Heat Dissipator
1	Wings

This unique Metal God was an early attempt by the Confederation at a new generation of mecha. Unfortunately, despite the time and expense invested in it, it has never worked exactly as intended. It suffers from chronic over-heating issues, despite the best efforts of the engineers, and there is an almost unacceptable amount of vibration for the pilot. Would it not involve such a large loss of face, it would almost certainly be mothballed.

8	DICE		**7**

ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Light		6	Opportunity
Light		S	Accurate

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐

Heimdallr :MECHA

TOTAL COST

20

COST	SYSTEMS
3	Mecha Spear
4	Magma Gun
2	Mecha Shield
6	Orichalcum Armour
5	Gjallarhorn

Gjallarhorn: Misc. system. Comms unit and motion sensor. Can hack into the systems of an enemy mech. To do this, spend a Pilot dice as an action. You can then re-roll 2 remaining dice belonging to an enemy within short range.

This mecha is on permanent duty guarding an important bottleneck into the Confederation. Although rather old, it is still very effective. It houses a very effective array of sensors and communications devices, essential for summoning help should the Bifrost Bridge come under attack. Due to its defensive emphasis, favoured pilots who haven't proven themselves worthy of a permanent attachment to one of the unique Metal Gods are often given an opportunity to try it out.

5	DICE		**6**

ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Overwhelming		6	Light
Magma		S	

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Loki :MECHA

TOTAL COST

20

COST	SYSTEMS
2	Twin Pistols
5	Advanced Drone Hive
2	Smokescreen
6	Orichalcum Armour
5	Loki's Cloak

Loki's Cloak: Misc. system. As an action, spend a Pilot dice to make Loki fade from view. It cannot be attacked without some clever thinking or a Motion Scanner until after it attacks again.

This famous mecha has been instrumental in several major victories for the Confederation. Although it lacks some of the very powerful equipment of others of its kind, its unique attributes make it extremely difficult for the enemy to track down. Its armour includes a large cloak of metal panels, which can change colour to hide it. The rugged profile of the mecha makes it easy to mistake for a rocky outcropping.

5	DICE		**6**

ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Surprise		6	Opportunity
Suppression		S	

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Freyja :MECHA

TOTAL COST

25

COST	SYSTEMS
4	Assault Laser
4	Assault Laser
4	Mecha Cannon
5	Advanced Defensive Drones
7	Brisingamen
1	Agile Legs

Brisingamen: Defence system. 5 dice, +4 damage points.

The Freyja is the most recent mecha built by the Confederation. There is currently a competition among the armed forces to find the pilot most worthy of it. It has a powerful series of gravity generators attached to a wide hoop that rotates around the mecha's centre of gravity. Its weaponry consists of lasers mounted on the forearms, and it usually carries a Mecha Cannon for additional heavy hitting power. The defensive drones are in the shape of falcons.

9	DICE		**9**

ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Overwhelming		6	Interceptor
Overwhelming		S	
Heavy		4	

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Shadi :MECHA SYSTEMS

COTAL COST		
25		
11	Skadi's Bow: Attack system. 9 dice, fixed, long range. Accurate and Suppression on a single number.	Shadi's Bow
3		Jumping Legs
6		Orichalcum Armour
1		Comms Gear
2		Targeting Computer
2		Targeting Computer

COST

The Skadi was once the pride of the Confederation. Although now old and past its prime, its utility as a long-range destroyer has not diminished much. Most of the mecha is taken up by its primary weapon system. Positioned along the back of the mecha and rising above its shoulders are the two barrels of the weapon. The first, on the left shoulder, fires a ball of plasma. The second is a specially-adjusted conversion beam that hits the plasma ball when it nears the target, to devastating effect.

9	DICE		7
ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Accurate & Supp.	6		Light
(4 re-rolls)			

DAMAGE ▢▢▢▢▢▢▢

Thor :MECHA SYSTEMS

COTAL COST		
30		
15	Mjollnir: Attack system. 12 dice, carried, mêlée. Super-Heavy and shocking. Super-Heavy does 3 damage on a hit.	Mjollnir
2		Armour
3		Jumping Legs
4		Heavy Armour
6		Orichalcum Armour

Long the mainstay of any invading force, Thor was built to the toughest specifications of the time. Mjollnir was a weapon built from an ancient device brought back from a foreign campaign, and hence no copies could ever be created. Recently, the armour of the mecha has been completely replaced with a newer, better equivalent.

12	DICE		11
ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Super-Heavy	6		Light
Shocking	5		

DAMAGE ▢▢▢▢▢▢▢▢▢▢▢▢

DELIAN LEAGUE

Technically a collection of independent city-states, the Delian League has recently become more of a unified force in the face of aggression from the Confederation in the North and the Dynasty in the South. It takes great pride in its Metal Gods. Most of them are works of art, sculpted impressions of the perfect human body. Each major city state has a particular unique Metal God, a titan, built much larger than most.

Titans typically weigh in at 20 points, and the most powerful Metal Gods available to the League reach 25 points. There is only one, the Zeus, worth 30 points.

THE DYNASTY

Far to the south, where the climate is unbearably hot, an ancient, rich and cruel empire is struggling to keep control of its lands. Some of its advanced armies have clashed with the Confederation recently, and there are signs that it has plans to seize territory to the West of its historical enemy, the Delian League, bringing it into direct contact with the Norse Confederation.

The Dynasty has yet to build a mecha worth more than 25 points.

TOTAL COST	Hoplite	:MECHA
11		SYSTEMS
3		Mecha Spear
2		Mecha Shield
2		Smokescreen
4		Repulsion Shield
COST		

The Hoplite is the commonest mecha used by the Delian league. They typically fight in ranks, using their powerful defensive systems to protect themselves until they close to a range where their spears are effective. They also use other carried weapons if there is a tactical advantage in doing so.

2	DICE		5
ATTACK		ABILITIES	DEFENCE
Overwhelming	6		Counter
	5		Opportunity
	4		Light

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐

TOTAL COST	Theia	:MECHA
20		SYSTEMS
4		Electroblaster
4		Gravity Cannon
4		CIWS
4		Repulsion Shield
1	Titan: Misc. system. +5 damage points.	Communications Gear
3		Titan
COST		

The guardian titan of Theiapolis has fought many times on the forefront of the war with the Norse Confederation, as the city is an important strategic location that the Norse must take if they are to make progress further into League territory.

6	DICE		6
ATTACK		ABILITIES	DEFENCE
Knockdown	6		Counter
Shocking	5		Accurate

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Hermes :MECHA

TOTAL COST 25

SYSTEMS

COST	
4	Gravity Cannon
5	Mecha Long Iron
4	Heavy Armour
4	Gravity Shield
6	Conversion Shield
2	Turbines

The Metal God of messengers has been put to use harrying the numerically superior Confederation troops along the shared border. Unfortunately for the League, three pilots have been killed in action while in charge of it, and there are few prepared to risk becoming a fourth, even for the prestige that would accompany the position.

ATTACK 7   DICE   11

ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Accurate	6		Field
Knockdown	S		Counter

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Scarab Warrior :MECHA

TOTAL COST 11

SYSTEMS

COST	
3	Light Laser
3	Mecha Rifle
2	Heat Sink
3	Jumping Legs

The basic, faceless mecha of the Dynasty is produced by the hundred, with little variation. In a recent concession to battlefield efficiency, other carried weapons have begun to replace the Mecha Rifle.

ATTACK 4   DICE   3 **DEFENCE**

ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Light	6		Light
Accurate	S		Accurate

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐

Ammit :MECHA

TOTAL COST 20

SYSTEMS

COST	
3	Claws
6	Magma Cannon
3	ECM
6	Heat Dissipator
1	Air Tanks
1	Lucky Charm

The Ammit was stolen by a deserting pilot five years ago. No-one is quite sure whether the current pilot is the same deserter, or someone who has stolen the Metal God in turn. The distinctive crocodile snout is a familiar sight at battlefield around the Confederation, as the Ammit's current pilot acts as a mercenary and sells her skills to the highest bidder.

ATTACK 7   DICE   (1 Pilot re-roll)   7

ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Magma	6		Accurate
Magma	S		Steadfast

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐

Anubis :MECHA

TOTAL COST 25

SYSTEMS

COST	
4	Mecha Claymore
9	Nine Bows
2	Armour
4	Gravity Shield
6	Heat Dissipator

> Nine Bows: Attack system. 7 Attack dice, fixed, short range. Splash and Suppression in one slot.

Every time the Anubis Metal God's pilot retires, twenty of the best pilots from The Dynasty are gathered for a battle to the death for the privilege of replacing him. He loses his name, his identity, and his face is destroyed with acid to remove any trace of who he once was. He is expected to give himself over fully to his job. Its main weapon, Nine Bows, is a large array of lasers that fire at all targets in the vicinity.

ATTACK 10   DICE   9

ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Splash & Suppress.	6		Field
Skillful	S		Accurate

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

THE MECHABHARATA

To the East of the Confederation, beyond the miles of savage forest populated by fiercely independent locals, there is an ancient and diverse nation. Rumour has it that it is larger than the Confederation, League and Dynasty combined. It is rich, arrogant and full of ambition to claim territory in the prosperous factory districts of its enemies.

The Mechabharata has a huge range of unique Metal Gods, and frequently breaks them down to reassemble them into newer versions. They range in cost from 20 – 25.

TOTAL COST Akshauhini   :MECHA

11

SYSTEMS

COST	
2	Twin Pistols
3	Mecha Sword
3	ECM
3	Flashbang

COST

The Akshauhini is named because, supposedly, it is as strong as an army of 218,700 men. Despite the hyperbole, it is an effective battlefield mecha, with a diverse range of abilities.

3	DICE	4
ATTACK	ABILITIES	DEFENCE
Skillful	6	Opportunity
Suppression	5	Steadfast

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐

TOTAL COST Indra   :MECHA

20

SYSTEMS

COST		
2	Indradhanush: Attack system. 3 Attack dice, carried, long range. Shocking and Light in one slot.	Magma Pistol
3		Mecha Axe
5	The Indra is a traditional ceremonial mecha, long associated with successful wars and fruitful campaigns. It has recently been sent to the Mechabharata's western front to bring good fortune to the conflict. Like most unique Metal Gods of its nation, it has more than one pair of arms and is a very tricky thing to operate without special training. It's signature weapon, Indradhanush, is a powerful rifle that fires disruptive shells at the target.	Indradhanush
2		Armour
2		Heat Sink
2		Smokescreen
3		Jumping Legs
1		Agile Legs

COST

6	DICE	5
ATTACK	ABILITIES	DEFENCE
Shocking & Light	6	Accurate
Magma	5	Opportunity
Suppression	4	Light

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

TOTAL COST	Durga	:MECHA
(25)		SYSTEMS
(2)		Twin Pistols
(2)		Electrowhip
(2)		Laser Pistol
(2)		Magma Pistol
(2)		Mecha Knife
(3)		Mecha Sword
(2)		Armour
(2)		Heat Sink
(2)		Mecha Shield
(2)		Smokescreen
(3)		Jumping Legs
(1)		Agile Legs

COST

The Durga is a brand-new mecha, built specifically for the campaign in the west. It has an incredible five pairs of arms, bristling with weapons. So far, only one pilot in the whole of the Mechabharata has proven herself capable of controlling it effectively.

10	DICE		9
ATTACK	**ABILITIES**		**DEFENCE**
Magma	6		Opportunity
Skillful	5		Accurate
Skillful	4		Light
Light	3		Light
Shocking	2		
Suppression	1		

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

WYRMISH NOMADS

Across the sea to the West of Confederation lands, there's a largely untamed island home to a number of clans of nomads. Their origin is a mystery, but in years past the Norse would raid their settlements using longboats. Once Metal Gods became the pre-eminent tools of war, the practice subsided. For the last decade and a half, however, the tables have been turned. Raiding parties cross the sea into Norse lands on powerful flying mecha, and until recently the Confederation lacked a force capable of crossing to their lands in revenge.

There are only two known models of mecha used by the nomads.

TOTAL COST — Wyrm — **:MECHA**

16

SYSTEMS

Cost	System
3	Claws
5	Heavy Flamethrower
4	Heavy Armour
1	Wings
3	Co-Pilot

COST

The standard model of Wyrm is a familiar, if terrifying, sight on the Western fringes of the Confederation. They hit hard and fast, causing great damage and loss of life, before retreating where they cannot be reached. It is one of the few types of mecha to follow a decidedly non-human pattern, and is flown by a pair of pilots.

6	**DICE**	PILOT	2	3

ATTACK — **ABILITIES** — DEFENCE

Ability	Value
Magma	6
Splash	5

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

TOTAL COST — Great Wyrm — **:MECHA**

30

SYSTEMS

Cost	Description	System
3		Claws
3		Claws
7	Dragonsbreath: Attack system. 5 Attack dice, fixed, short range. Splash and Heavy in one slot.	Dragonsbreath
7	Dragonscale: Defence system. 5 Defence dice. +2 damage points. Any attack with a dice showing 1 is automatically defended without spending a dice.	Dragonscale
1		Wings
3		Co-Pilot
3	It is assumed, and fervently hoped, that the Nomads have but one of these Metal Gods. The equal of even the mightiest machine the Confederation can field, this behemoth requires four pilots and can cause carnage all by itself.	Co-Pilot
3		Co-Pilot

COST

9	**DICE**	PILOT	6	5

ATTACK — **ABILITIES** — DEFENCE

Ability	Value
Splash & Heavy	6
Magma	5
Magma	4

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

ATLANTEANS

Some very strange mecha have been appearing out of the sea to the west. No-one knows where they come from, or who created them. Some say they herald a new, dangerous faction in the ongoing war.

Details are known about only one design of mecha.

TOTAL COST	Platonic Soldier	:MECHA
15		SYSTEMS
3		Conversion Beam
5		Heavy Conversion Beam
6		Conversion Shield
1		Air Tanks

COST

6	DICE		5
ATTACK	ABILITIES		DEFENCE
Overwhelming	6		Counter
Overwhelming	5		

DAMAGE ☐☐☐☐☐

ABILITY REFERENCE

ATTACK ABILITIES

ACCURATE: This attack has a value one higher than normal.

HEAVY: If this attack is taken, the target receives 2 points of damage instead of 1.

KNOCKDOWN: Impose some kind of disadvantage on the target if it takes the attack, such as knocking it down. Recovering from the disadvantage requires the target to take an action, and it make not attack until it has done so.

LIGHT: You may make a free manoeuvre when you fire this weapon, splitting a Pilot dice into two Attack dice with a total 1 higher than the Pilot dice, or combining multiple Pilot dice into a single Attack dice with a value 1 higher than their total.

MAGMA: After this attack, re-roll any of your remaining Attack dice.

OVERWHELMING: After this attack, roll an Attack dice. If its value is lower than the value of the attack you just made, add it to your pool.

PLASMA: This attack cannot be defended or intercepted. It can be reversed.

SHOCKING: After this attack, re-roll any of the target's remaining dice.

SKILFUL: A dice showing this number can always be made part of a stunt attack. Change this dice to match the rest of the set when making the attack.

SPLASH: This attack attacks a number of enemies simultaneously. The precise number is at my discretion. All targets must deal with the attack. Only the primary target, that you choose, can reverse. Others may only defend or intercept. An interception protects both themselves and the primary target.

SUPPRESSION: This attack cannot be reversed, only defended against. If another mecha intercepts this attack, you still keep the initiative.

SURPRISE: Any time other than while an attack is being resolved, you may seize the initiative and immediately make an attack using a single Pilot dice showing this number.

DEFENCE ABILITIES

ABLATIVE: This mecha has 2 extra damage points. This ability is not associated with a number.

ACCURATE: This defence dice has a value one higher than normal.

COUNTER: Turn any defence you make with this dice into a reversal. If you attack afterwards, add 1 to the dice you use to attack with.

FIELD: After you defend or reverse, roll a Defence dice. If its value is lower than the value of the dice you just spent, add it to your pool.

INTERCEPTOR: You only need to meet the total of an attack in order to intercept it. This ability is not associated with a number.

LIGHT: You may make a free manoeuvre after you defend or reverse. Split a Pilot dice into two Defence dice with a total 1 higher than the Pilot dice, or combining multiple Pilot dice into a single Defence dice with a value 1 higher than their total.

OPPORTUNITY: If you reverse an attack, you may re-roll one of your remaining Attack dice.

STEADFAST: You may defend, reverse or intercept a stunt attack using only this dice.

MISCELLANEOUS ABILITIES

ATTACK RE-ROLL: At the start of each sequence, you may re-roll two of your Attack dice.

CAMOUFLAGE: This mecha can hide more effectively, increasing the chances that a battle starts with an ambush.

COMMS: At any point, you may spend a Pilot dice to let an ally re-roll any of their remaining dice.

DEFENCE RE-ROLL: At the start of each sequence, you may re-roll two of your Defence dice.

FAST: This mecha is faster than most.

FLIGHT: This mecha is capable of flight.

PILOT RE-ROLL: At the start of a battle, you may re-roll one of your Pilot dice.

RE-ROLL: At the start of each sequence, you may re-roll any one of your dice.

SWIM: This mecha is capable of operating in or on water as well as it can on land.