

This is the Frequently Asked Questions List for www.ClassicBattleTech.com. It is maintained by Ken' (Gaye_Pryde), at kidchameleon@earthlink.net. Please send any updated information or questions concerning the FAQ to that email address, or to the site's Web Master.

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1.) What's the story with FASA and lawsuits about their 'Mech designs, anyway? (Or: What happened to the "banned" (they are /not/ banned) 'Mechs????) Note: The (more or less) "official" title here on the site for these 'Mechs is the Unseen, courtesy of Hugh Browne.

The Unseen are:

Locust, Stinger, Wasp, Valkyrie, Ostscout, Phoenix Hawk, Shadow Hawk, Griffin, Wolverine, Thunder Bolt, Ostroc, Ostsol, Rifleman, Crusader, Archer, Warhammer, Marauder, BattleMaster, Marauder II, Goliath, Scorpion, Locust IIC, Phoenix Hawk IIC, Griffin IIC, Shadow Hawk IIC, Rifleman IIC, Warhammer IIC, the "original" Longbow, and the Marauder IIC.

Additionally, it appears that the Galleon Tank and Samurai Aerospace fighter have gone the way of the Unseen as well.

Note: They are discontinued. That means the art is no longer produced by FASA/FanPro/WizKids (see below for why). They are /not/ banned!!! You can still play in tournaments with them as official 'Mechs and their record sheets are available in the Record Sheets Books (FASA/FanPro #1694-1696).

The reason for their discontinuation is a rather long story, and there is a great deal of speculation as to the exact facts of the situation. Since the lawsuit was settled, none of the participants have disclosed anything about it. For now, though, the 'Mechs above will simply not be pictured, though they and their miniatures are perfectly legal for tournament play.

The only people who really know the whole complete and true story are FASA and Harmony Gold, and neither of them are talking. Honestly, we've just accepted it. It really is a dead horse to most people.

2.) How do I start playing BattleTech, and how much will it cost me?

a.) Realize you are entering a very complicated, rich universe. There is a lot of material out there and it may take a while to become familiar with it all. Certain people may not recognize your lack of knowledge, so be patient with them and ask lots of questions. Most people will be happy to answer.

b.) If you can't find a local group, buy the BattleTech Boxed Set (current version: 4th edition) and form your own group with some friends (or enemies, whatever floats your boat). It is suggested you buy the newest version (though many of us prefer the old 3rd edition) for two reasons: many of the supplements are currently geared towards to newest version, and you don't snatch up the old versions the old-timers like... ;).

c.) Play the game for a few weeks (play at least three or four times: make sure you get the rules right). If you like it, buy the First Strike supplement. It is specifically geared towards teaching new players the finer aspects of the game.

d.) Keep playing. You don't get better by sitting on your duff.

Note: This method will teach you the basic game. You will be playing at what is called "Level 1" technology. Subsequent levels don't change that much. They simply change the technology available to you.

While this is nice, Level 1 tech allows starting players to "get their feet wet" and learn real tactics. Higher levels of tech tend to result in shorter battles, and this doesn't teach new players much.

Also realize this method will cost you, at most, \$37.00 plus tax (US dollars) before you might realize BTech is not for you. While this may seem like a lot of money, especially for a younger person, it is a lot better than many of the other games that are out there. Also, it's a hell of a lot cheaper than buying a computer CD-ROM game you don't like, and not being able to return it.

If, and only if, you really like the game and are ready to move on, I suggest the BattleTech Master Rules, which is a compilation of the rules necessary to play at levels beyond Level 1. Everything else is basically gravy.

If you really get into BattleTech, be prepared to dish out serious cash for it. Especially if you try to collect all of the out of print stuff. Luckily, all of that isn't really necessary to enjoy the game (only to nit pick it), and if you are in need of certain information, some of the people on this site have pretty much everything written about BattleTech. Ask, and you'll probably get the info.

Good Luck.

3.) What's up with MechWar? Why won't Klaus get it done?

Nobody seems to know what happened to Klaus, but MechWar is being revived...see:

<http://www.redshift.com/~harlidobib/Mechwar>

Or, for a 3D version that is being worked on:

<http://www.mechwar3d.webprovider.com/>

Or the new web link of juton0.tripod.com that has been thrown at me most recently.

4.) Are there any programs that will help me design 'Mechs and vehicles and aerospace fighters, etc.?

Yes. Loads.

There are a few different 'Mech editors. They are all on websites and websites have this habit of changing, but we've found the most reliable site to be Skyhigh's site, which is currently at:

www.solaris7.com

FASA/FanPro's official Mech Editor (Heavy Metal Pro) is available from them. Check them out at www.heavymetalpro.com, but it will cost you. The full version retails in exchange for \$20. They are out to make some money on this stuff. It has gotten many good reviews and the customer service is excellent. The weapon editor lets you enter any new weapons or create some of your own. It comes with a good amount of designs and more are available on the web. It now has a full suite of accompanying programs to design infantry and vehicles.

Todd A. Anderson's BTech 4.0a

One major feature is the fact that the armor is all in rows of ten, which allows a quicker mark-off than with many other 'Mech editors. It gets Clan Targeting Computers wrong, though (counts MGs and Flamers into the TC).

Mechworks

This is also a solid program, and will apparently soon be updated. The site also has the files from all the Record Sheets Books, so they are the "official" FASA designs... Unfortunately, I think Mechworks still gets Clan TCs wrong (see above). On the other hand, it may be the only designer that can add Clan weapons to IS 'Mechs without the occasionally cumbersome process used in MEP.

The Drawing Board

The Drawing Board was originally meant to become Mechworks 2. It's changed a lot since then. It seems to be popular enough.

You can still get MEP at:

http://www.bs-interactive.com/tdb2_0_10b.zip

Once you have 2.0.10 installed you can download 2.0.11 from:

http://www.bs-interactive.com/tdb2_0_11exe.zip

This program is great. It allows much more flexibility than the other two programs (able to enter new tech, like MRMs and Swords) and actually gets the Clan TC right!!! It is also a pain in the butt to enter any 'Mech, though...

It also comes with a bunch of designs.

The newest of the 'Mech editors is Battlemech Designer ver. 9.7 at <http://www.goldstate.net/~eramey/BMDFrame.HTM>

BME is a tool to enable anyone to create map sheets for BattleTech (or any other hex-based game, for that matter) in a similar style to the FASA map sheets. Find out more and download BME from the BME Homepage:

<http://www.whitehole.demon.co.uk/BME/index.htm>

or the Geocities mirror:

<http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Metro/8727/index.htm>

Or join the BME Mailing list, at:

<http://www.onelist.com/subscribe/BMEList>

There is also a Vehicle editor

This vehicle editor does vehicles as well as you could /ever/ hope for. The only thing it doesn't have are the latest vehicle rules in the Explorer Corps SB.

Note: Vehicle construction rules are funny. Read the rules in your Master Rules before asking if there's a problem (we've had people posting complaints about features that were /totally/ within the rules...) Actually, that's a pretty good idea in general.

5.) Are there any Battlespace DropShip/JumpShip/WarShip designers?

Email Eric Ramey at eramey@goldstate.net Nothing has yet been created for AeroTech 2, the revamped version of AeroTech and Battlespace. However, Rick Raisley is working on HeavyMetal Aero, the franchise's aerospace designer.

6.) Are there any MechWarrior character designers?

Slayer has one for MechWarrior, 2nd Edition at <http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/3058/index.html>.

MechWarrior, 3rd Edition currently does not have one. Rick Raisley, creator of Heavy Metal says he's planning on making one. Keep an eye out, sometime around the 2nd Quarter of 2002.

7.) Where's Clan Wolverine?

[Ken' Note: After making the long hard trek to Seattle, they are watching the Bills household, fearful of Bryn. They expect him to be the next Kerensky or Amaris and just want to find out which. They have all gotten jobs at Starbucks to support themselves.]

DEAD DEAD DEAD! That's the general consensus. If you feel different, fine. However, the general population has pretty much decided that Clan Wolverine is /not/ coming back anytime soon. This is from people should know (like the guy who /wrote/ half of the 3057 Technical Readout) and we trust. If they're lying to us, ok, we've been snookered good. However, all indications are that Clan Wolverine will not be coming into play anytime in the next few "game years."

If you want to champion their cause, you are welcome to do so. However, after too many people have made them into the Über Anti-Clan with technological capability on par with or better than the Clans. They don't get a warm reception.

Alternately, it is said that the Wolverines are holding the Aliens back. Since Aliens aren't destined to make an appearance any time soon, the Wolverines will be busy for some time.

8.) What is Munchkin?

Have you ever played against someone who would only play with 0/0 pilots and 100 ton, AC/20 carrying 'Mechs? Have you ever played golf with a really bad player who only carried clubs outlawed by the PGA? How about played Magic with no card worth less than \$20? Have you ever played Quake II over the Internet with someone who had a Gig Athalon with a GeForce2 card, while you were piddling around with a 486? Those people are munchkins. They stretch the rules of the game to such a degree that the game is almost unrecognizable, especially with regards to custom 'Mech designs. The rarely, however, actually break the rules of the game. The 'rules of the universe' is a different matter all together.

There is /nothing/ wrong with munchkinism, in its place. Just don't expect to get very far bragging about your 30 planet Periphery Pirate Kingdom and your 200 'Mech regiments here on the site, though.

Munchkinism, in its place, is fun and entertaining. There is, in fact, a group of Munchkins proud of themselves, known as the Church of Munchkin, or COM.

8b.) How do I avoid being a Munchkin?

Well, style is very important. Don't pick your 'Mechs or PCs based solely upon their numbers (just don't go taking a 3025 Hoplite just to show you aren't a munchkin). Try finding something that sets you apart and that you like. Many people get into a house. For instance, being a Steiner guy, I use lots of Steiner assault 'Mechs and toss in a few Commandos. Are Commandos all that good? Well, they're okay, but to me, they're Steiner! Or perhaps you see a 'Mech you think looks neat. Go for it!

Perhaps you want to design your own 'Mechs. This can be dangerous. Make sure you don't just plug in all the numbers and min/max. Create a story. Sure it can be a great 'Mech, but give it a purpose. There are too many people out there with 3/5/0 100tonners or 2.5 million ton WarShips. BORING!

You want to design your own unit? Yikes! This is where Munchkin excess goes over board. Sure it's nice to have the uberpowerful Merc unit that can whoop Wolfs Dragoons. But assuming that you can fit it into your universe, what fun is it? And more so, it won't fit into everyone else's' universes. If you have your band of scrappy MechWarriors, who have just managed to put together a complete company, they can fit anywhere. And they are usually a lot more fun. Honestly, we've all heard of the super unit with 5 regiments of Clan OmniMechs and a few Warships, bring us something new. And we've even heard of the SuperClan, Clan Wolverine, built up bigger than three Clans put together. We're all rather sick of it.

9.) I just got into BattleTech. What is the history behind all of this?

Hey, that's what the Classic BattleTech site is all about! Surf the site and you'll find plenty of back-story.

Alternatively, go to the Company Store at <http://www.magpage.com/~flynnmj/TCS.html>. There are links there to the entire (practically) history of the Inner Sphere and the Clans.

10.) Why does BattleTech resemble (period of history: i.e.- the Middle Ages)?

Because BattleTech is a /reasonably/ realistic system, as far as it follows human nature. And human nature has a nasty habit of repeating itself. BattleTech is /not/ directly patterned after a

specific time in history (beyond the 3025-3060's or so). It /may/ draw inspiration from some, but that's beside the point.

If you really want to test my minor in Medieval Studies, you are welcomed to post your theory, but then I will poke a bunch of holes in it, so don't get upset about it. It's just a game.

11.) Why are 'Mechs so unrealistic?

Because the game has to fit on the board, and the game designers didn't want 3000 kph 'Mechs running around. Therefore, weapons ranges had to be reduced to extremely short distances. That or you have a board that's 90 feet long. People have many ways to rationalize them, so do that if you must. But if you want EXTREME realism, BattleTech isn't the game for you. Neither is Star Trek. Especially not Star Wars.

11b.) Why aren't there real 'Mechs?

They don't exist outside of very specific laboratories because, right now, they just aren't practical. Frankly, I love mecha, but in the real world, all they're good for is extremely (like volcanoes) hazardous terrain. As a combat vehicle, the disadvantages outweigh any real advantages. Of course, who knows what the future may bring. Go get a Patent for Myomer or a KF drive.

12.) What are the various factions in BTech like?

Clans: Anything from the Spartans to the Great Mongol Hordes, depending on your POV.

Cameron: Scottish American (but they've gone the way of the dodo)

Davions: English/French

Kurita: Imperial Japanese

Liao: Imperial Chinese

Marik: Balkan/Slavic/Eastern European with shades of various (ineffective) political systems.

Steiner: Germanic, with Swiss banking abilities

Centrella: Spanish/Caribbean with few social taboos.

Calderon: Paranoid Canadian

Free Rasalehague Republic: A Scandinavian President. He actually has a term limit.

Note: Each of the Houses has various cultures within their realms. For instance, there is a great deal of Scottish influence in parts of the Lyran Alliance. The Capellan confederation is a communist state, but the Liao's exhibit more of a monarchical standing. The listings above are for the ruling Houses only and not everyone completely agrees with it.

13.) Is Marcos Shakes of Rhonda's Irregulars the "real" Thomas Marik?

To quote Blaine Pardoe--the guy who wrote Rhonda's Irregulars:

"NO, the guy in Snord's Irregulars is NOT Thomas Marik!"

14.) Are the House Source Books going to be reprinted/ put on CD?

Nope. Sorry, but FASA/FanPro:

A. Doesn't think it's cost effective

2. Doesn't want to correct all the errors and get the "history" correct

III. Why would they want to spend time on old material when they can make new stuff? There currently is a project to put them into PDF files on the web and they apparently have FASA/FanPro's blessing.

See the web site for more details.

14a.) How can I get existing copies of the House Source Books?

Spend about \$300+ on at the Gamer's Union or E-bay to buy them from collectors parting with theirs. Or you could find one at a used bookstore, if you're REAAAAL lucky. Sorry these things are driven by the immense demand and the extremely small supply.

15.) What is the RAC/Rotary Autocannon?

Most likely you've run across this in The Drawing Board, but it is from Mechforce UK. No, it isn't level 2, so you can use it with your buddies but it will upset people if you try to use it at a con. Well unless it's one of those level 3 contests, and even then you should make sure it's okay. FASA/FanPro has introduced the RAC-2 and RAC-5 in the Federated Suns Field Manual; they are now level 2 equipment. I don't think we'll see the RAC-10 or -20 anytime soon, however.

16.) Where can I read BTech fanfic?

<http://www.evilnet.net/~fanfic/>

17.) Is there going to be a BattleTech movie?

I hope so, but right now it is a long way off and isn't an active item with FASA. FASA's closest brush with a movie came with ShadowRun and "The Matrix" and even then they couldn't get things to match up well. And yes, people have proposed movie casts; so don't expect a warm reception for such a thread.

18.) What is Guasszilla?

Long long ago, in a galaxy far, far away

(Okay, it was FASA HQ)

Jedi Camille had come to face Darth Nystul in a Trial of Grievance

With Jedi Camille came her companions.

Chas Solo (he's this guy, you know)

Mr. Jedi Camille (AKA Mike Klein)

Hughbacca (Hugh Browne)

During this time, Darth Nystul revealed unto Jedi Camille and her companions a new design of mecha. One guaranteed to utterly destroy the Rebels.

Or at least make them laugh out loud...

This design was Gausszilla.

Conceived by Darth Nystul, but doomed to never see true production (He swore it would NEVER be published by FASA).

Unfortunately, the story of Jedi Camille does not end happily.

She knew defeat that day. And the Evil Empire conquered.

[Ken' note: Special thanks to Chas for this bit]

19.) What is the shortest distance for a jump?

The first thing to determine the path of a jump is to determine the path. Ignoring what terrain and pretty pictures are on the map, find the shortest number of hexes to that point. If there are multiple paths, lucky you, but they must all cover the same number of hexes.

NOW look at the terrain. Is there any obstacle in your way? Like the Empire State Building? If so, you're out of luck for getting to that hex from where you are, unless there are multiple paths of the same length.

What if you have jump movement to spare and want to take a longer path to that hex? Sorry, you're SOL. These are BattleMechs, not Apache Helicopters.

[Ken' note: a famous, yet anonymous author wrote this response. You know who you are. Thanks.]

20.) What are FASA's plans for LAMs?

This is pretty simple, from the (Hell's) Horse's mouth:

At the current time, FASA has no plans to ever involve them in the universe again.

Randall Bills
FASA Development

21.) I want to make my own PPCs, where can I find the recipes?

Well, first, make sure you are of legal age in your region. Then give your car keys to someone who isn't drinking. Finally, go to www.fortunecity.de/tatooine/borgs/274/history/is/drinks.html and start mixing. Kudos to Camille Klein, who invented the Large Laser, ER Large Laser, Inferno SRM and the Fusionaire but was not credited.

22.) Is BattleTech dead?

Far from it! FASA sold the rights to WizKids Inc., run by FASA founder Jordan Weisman. WizKids will be continuing the BattleTech universe after a 60 or 70-year leap. FanPro, a German game company, has been licensed to continue producing the game materials for the current BattleTech game. WizKids will also be producing a new form of BattleTech based upon the Combat Dial System used in their Mage Knight game. The game is currently in the early development stages and should be released at GenCon 2002.

23.) Is MASC affected by heat?

Yes, despite the unclear rules description, Randall Bills assures me that MASC is affected by heat and damage just as running speed is. Recalculate MASC speed using the current walking speed of the 'Mech.

24.) How do you pronounce the House names?

Well, Steiner is German, which follows very strict rules, and is pronounced Sti-ner Davion, with some French in it's past is pronounced Day-vee-uhn, but could alternately be pronounced Dah-vee-uhn.

Liao? Hey, ask 10 people, get 9 answers and an "I don't know".

Kurita is relatively easy to pronounce Japanese as Kur-it-a.

Marik is of confusing origin but should be pronounced Mare-ick.

25.) Arm questions.

"If a 'Mech has an enemy to its rear, and it torso twists to the right could it hit the 'Mech with its right arm using the right arm arc?(I am assuming the same would work for the left)"

The answer is yes.

"Second can a 'Mech make full use of its side arcs with its arms if it is missing the lower arm, actuator? (For example the Stalker) "

Yes it can. A 'Mech missing any actuators through design suffer no penalties when in ranged combat. Only in physical combat does the missing actuators' penalties apply.

26.) Will the first four Field Manuals ever have the Training sections updated as errata from MW2 info to MW3?

Yes, they will. That information will not only be posted on the website, but it will also be included in the MechWarrior Companion, which is currently being worked on.

27.) Do actuators destroyed after a hip effect movement?

Once a Mech has a Hip Critical Hit, subsequent Critical Hits to any of the other actuators (or foot) in that leg have no effect. Hopefully that answered your question. If not, feel free to ask for further clarification.

28.) What will happen to CBT when CBT and MW: DA join their timelines???

To be perfectly honest, that is simply unknown at this time. However, since we have year's worth of products just around the year 3067, I don't think we need to be worrying about that just yet.

29.) Is there a chance of seeing new Random Assignment tables of Mechs or even Vehicles?

First, yes it is planned to include updated Random Mech Assignment Tables for all factions in a future product. As for the 2D10 as opposed to 2D6, it really comes down to space. However, there is a possibility of putting up expanded Random Assignment Tables onto the CBT website.

30.) When figuring the to hit number for a cannon do you get the -4 modifier for firing at a hex?

Artillery Cannons fire as a standard, non-artillery weapon during the Weapon Attack phase, but always target the hex. Therefore, they do receive the -4 modifier. As for the LRM Indirect Fire rule, it states under Artillery Cannons in Maximum Tech, "All three artillery cannons can fire indirectly in the same manner as LRM Indirect Fire." That means they have the option to fire that way, not that they fire that way continually.