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OPTIONAL RULES

BESM d20 is arguably the most flexible d20 games available. The following rules give GMs the chance to make it more flexible still, by offering alternate ways to deal with specific situations and actions, special rules modifications for certain types of campaign, and many other options. Here you will find two separate sets of rules for mass combat — both of them quite simple and easy to use — as well as rules for chases, rules to give your campaign its own particular flavour, and a number of alternate combat rules. Each rule is intended to be truly optional — that is, you can pick and choose any or none of these rules for your own games. Several of these options given here can also work as occasional rules. For example, the extra detail for combat provided by such things as hit locations may be too involved and time-consuming for regular combat, but could prove ideal for a one-on-one duel between two old enemies at the climax of a campaign.

CHASES

Role-playing games regularly involve action and chases are a common occurrence. The following rules provide a dynamic mechanic for handling chases in a *BESM d20* game.

During a chase, one mecha (or sometimes one character) — the “predator” — is assumed to be trying to catch the other — the “prey.”

The predator and prey may be flying, running, driving, swimming, or engaging in almost any other conceivable method of movement. For conciseness, the wording of these rules assumes that both predator and prey are in mecha, though it can apply equally to characters on foot or riding mounts of some kind. These rules work just as well for chases on horseback as they do for vehicle chases.

TERRAIN

The GM and players should have an idea of the terrain in which a chase is taking place before getting started. Terrain establishes the general conditions of a chase, as well as obstacles to be avoided.

OPEN TERRAIN

Open terrain is easy to traverse, with only slight changes in elevation and few imposing obstacles. Examples are: wide, flat plains; large, open areas with few obstructions; clear skies at high altitude; open seas; racetracks; highways.

In open terrain, the speed of the chase begins at three-quarters of the maximum speed of the fastest mecha involved (rounded down). Open terrain chases in which one mecha's maximum speed is less than three-quarters that of its opponent are usually over before they start.

A mecha's maximum speed is critical in open terrain, and the mecha with the highest speed receives a +2 speed bonus to all Drive checks. If only one mecha in the chase is considered to be in open terrain (either due to two or more types of terrain, Feats, or mixed movement types) then that mecha automatically receives the +2 speed bonus.

By its very nature, open terrain contains few large, hard obstacles. The GM should roll 1d10 each chase round which occurs in open terrain — a result of 1 indicates an obstacle of DC 12 (see Obstacles, page 144).

Even if a collision occurs in open terrain, mecha usually carry on with little or no damage. Critical failures in open terrain are particularly bad, however, as the mecha involved are typically moving as fast as possible.

CLOSE TERRAIN

Close terrain is generally narrow and filled with plenty of stuff to run into, clip, and burst through. Typical examples include narrow alleys, open areas with many obstructions, or air combat at low altitudes.

Due to the difficult conditions, the speed of a chase in close terrain begins at one-half of the fastest mecha's maximum speed (rounded down). The GM should roll 1d6 each chase round which occurs in close terrain — a result of 1 indicates an obstacle of DC 18 (see Obstacles, page 144).

TIGHT TERRAIN

This is the most dangerous of all terrain, filled with sharp drops and large, dense obstacles. Typical examples include stairways, corridors, busy highways, boulder-strewn areas, whitewater rapids, and aerial battles at treetop levels.

In tight terrain, the speed of a chase begins at one-quarter of the fastest mecha's maximum speed (rounded down). Such close quarters favour highly responsive mecha, and so if both predator and prey are in tight terrain, the mecha with the highest Manoeuvre value (or the mecha suit whose pilot has the highest Dexterity) gains an additional +1 speed modifier to all Drive checks.

Tight terrain is unstable, and mecha in these areas should be prepared for anything. The GM should roll 1d4 each chase round that occurs in tight terrain — a result of 1 indicates an obstacle of DC 24 (see Obstacles, page 144).

INITIAL LEAD

The distance between mecha during a chase is called the “lead,” and is measured in lengths. In most cases, one length equals 10 feet. The GM should adjust the size of the length depending on the conditions of the chase. For example, a chase between two aircraft might use lengths of 100 feet while a fight between two starfighters might be measured in 1,000-foot lengths.

At no time can the lead be less than zero or greater than 30. If any effect reduces the lead to less than zero, the lead becomes zero. Similarly, if any result increases the lead above 30, the lead becomes 30.

Chases can start in a number of ways, but most boil down to one of two categories: predator-initiated and prey-initiated. This determines how much of a lead the prey has at the start of the chase. When the predator begins a chase, the initial lead is equal to $2d6+3$ lengths (usually 50 to 150 feet). When a chase begins with the prey fleeing, the initial lead is $2d6+8$ lengths (usually 100 to 200 feet). If there is no clear initiator in a chase, both sides roll Initiative and the highest result is considered to have started the chase.

CHASE SPEED

Chase speed is measured in miles per hour and is determined by terrain at the start of the chase. Chase speed changes throughout the pursuit according to the manoeuvres chosen by the mecha each round.

Whenever the chase speed exceeds the maximum speed of one of the mecha at the end of a chase round, the mecha is dealt 1d6 damage. This damage is not reduced by Armour or other effects, and is in addition to all damage caused by manoeuvres, crash checks, and other effects.

CHASES: STEP BY STEP

There are six steps to chases, which are explained in broad strokes here and then in detail in the following sections. These six steps continue in cycles until the chase ends — either with the capture or escape of the prey.

STEP 1: CHOOSE MANOEUVRES

Each mecha (or group of mecha) secretly chooses a manoeuvre from the list offered. Each manoeuvre has strengths and weaknesses, and is usually geared towards a specific goal.

STEP 2: DRIVE CHECKS

The mecha operators make opposed Drive checks (or other appropriate checks for non-mecha; Ride, Tumble, Swim, or Climb, for example). The winner's manoeuvre succeeds.

STEP 3: RESOLVE MANOEUVRES AND ADJUST LEAD

The effects of the manoeuvre that succeeded are applied, and the number of lengths between the mecha is adjusted.

STEP 4: OBSTACLES

The GM rolls for obstacles.

STEP 5: OTHER ACTIONS

Assuming the chase continues, each passenger of each mecha may perform a full action or a move and a standard action. An operator may perform either a move action or a standard action in addition to operating the mecha, but receives a -4 penalty to the next mecha operation-related check or roll (such as a Drive check or attack roll) if he or she does so.

STEP 6: DAMAGE AND COLLISIONS (IF ANY)

If warranted, mecha operators make Drive checks to see if their mecha have collided with anything.

STEP 1: CHOOSE MANOEUVRES

The first step during each chase round is choosing manoeuvres. There are two types of manoeuvre: predator and prey.

Due to the abstract nature of chases, the distance covered and the specific locations of each mecha are left up to the imaginations of the GM and players. What's important is the distance between them at any given time. The initial lead is determined as part of getting started, but should be rechecked at the start of each round. Many manoeuvres may only be chosen by mecha with a certain minimum or maximum lead.

Ultimately, the goal of the predator is to decrease the lead enough that it can perform one of the finishing manoeuvres (see below) and catch the prey, while the prey is trying to do a finishing manoeuvre that allows it to escape. Chases continue until either the predator or prey successfully performs a finishing manoeuvre, someone crashes, or one of the mecha is disabled (see Step 6).



MANOEUVRE DESCRIPTIONS

The following elements go into the description of each manoeuvre. The GM may modify or disallow certain manoeuvres depending on the specific circumstances of the chase.

- Lead:** Minimum or maximum distance between predator and prey required to perform the manoeuvre.
- Speed:** Succeed or fail, both the predator's and prey's manoeuvres may modify the current chase speed. If both predator and prey choose manoeuvres that alter the chase's speed, only the highest modifier (positive or negative) applies.
- Success:** The effects of the manoeuvre, when the mecha that chose it wins that round's opposed Drive check.
- Special:** Any additional information or conditions.

PREDATOR MANOEUVRES

Each round the predator should write its manoeuvre down on a piece of paper and keep it secret. Predator manoeuvres are geared toward slowing down or catching the prey.

Box In (Finishing)

It takes skill to trap an opponent with minimal damage.

- Lead:** 5 lengths or less.
- Success:** The predator wins the chase, forcing the prey into a corner from which there is nowhere to run.

Crowd (Finishing)

Crowding is getting right up into the prey's backside and forcing it into a collision with the environment.

- Lead:** 2 lengths or less.
- Success:** The predator wins the chase by forcing the prey into an obstacle. If the predator's Drive check exceeds the prey's by at least five, the prey collides with an obstacle of the GM's choice. The prey is treated as though it failed a crash check (see Step 6). If the predator's Drive check exceeded the prey's by less than five, then the prey may still make a crash check to avoid a damaging collision, though the chase is still over as the vehicle is forced to stop to avoid the collision. The predator, regardless, stops safely.

Cut Off (Finishing)

Without warning, the predator speeds up and pulls out in front of the prey, cutting him or her off. The predator's mecha becomes a barrier to stop the prey from escaping.

- Lead:** 0 lengths.
- Speed:** Chase speed is reduced by 25 mph this round.
- Success:** The predator wins the chase. If the prey fails its Drive check, it collides with the predator; no crash check is required. Damage is applied to both mecha, as per the Step 6 directions.

Gun It

Gun It is the basic predator manoeuvre, in which the predator attempts to catch up with the prey in a straightforward manner.

- Lead:** Any distance.
- Speed:** Increase the chase speed by 10 mph this round.
- Success:** The lead is reduced by a number of lengths equal to the difference between Drive checks.

HERD

Forcing the prey to make bad choices can be as effective as chasing him down. By keeping the pressure on and cutting off the prey's options, the predator uses strategy and brute force to drive the prey into dangerous situations.

- Lead:** 10 lengths or less.
- Success:** The lead is reduced by one length and the prey is required to make a crash check, with a DC determined by the chase setting and increased by the difference between the Drive checks. The predator must also make a crash check this round (with no additional penalty).
- Special:** By beating the prey's Drive check by five or more, the predator may choose to reduce both the predator and prey's crash check DCs by five to shift the terrain by one step at the end of the round (open or tight becomes close and vice versa). Alternatively, the predator may ignore the crash check.

Jockey (Vehicle Only)

By carefully matching the prey's movements, the predator can force the relative speeds of the two mecha down to almost zero, stabilising the chase so that others in the vehicle can attack.

- Lead:** 10 lengths or less.
- Success:** The lead is reduced by one length and the driver and all passengers in the predator vehicle gain half the difference between the manoeuvre checks (rounded down) as a bonus to their attack rolls targeting the prey.

Ram (Finishing)

Ram is straightforward: the predator speeds up and slams into the prey, forcing it off the road. It's dirty, but often gets the job done a lot faster than Crowd.

- Lead:** 5 lengths or less.
- Success:** The predator wins the chase, colliding with the prey. Both mecha are treated as though they failed crash checks (see Step 6). They then come to a halt.

Redline

Redline is an advanced version of Gun It, during which the predator suddenly accelerates to and remains at its top speed. This causes incredible wear and tear on the mecha as its power plant literally burns up (or an animal strains itself, etc.).

- Lead:** Any distance.
- Speed:** Increase the chase speed by 20 mph.
- Success:** The lead is reduced by a number of lengths equal to twice the difference between the Drive checks. The predator is dealt 1d6 damage (a vehicle can ignore this damage if it currently has a Booster activated; see page 167).

Shortcut

Shortcuts can be helpful in catching up with prey, especially in close quarters, where the prey cannot see what the predator is doing. Unfortunately, this generally means that the predator has reduced its line of sight as well, which can result in a nasty spill.

- Lead:** Any distance.
- Speed:** The chase speed is reduced by 15 mph.
- Success:** The lead is reduced by a number of lengths equal to twice the difference between Drive checks. The predator must make a crash check during Step 6.

PREY MANOEUVRES

Each round the prey should write his or her manoeuvre down on a piece of paper and keep it secret. All prey manoeuvres are geared towards escaping the predator.

BARNSTORM (FINISHING)

"Barnstorming" is usually associated with planes, but any vehicle may attempt it. A car can storm a shopping mall, or a boat can storm the wreckage of an oil tanker.

Lead: 25 lengths or more.

Success: The prey wins the chase, barrelling through a cluttered area, throwing the predator if its trail in the chaos. The prey's vehicle is dealt 3d6 damage. Both predator and prey must make crash checks during Step 6.

BOOTLEGGGER STUNT

The prey brakes and turns hard to one side, suddenly changing direction. This can suddenly increase the prey's lead.

Lead: 10 lengths or less.

Speed: The chase speed is reduced by 15 mph.

Success: The lead is increased by twice the difference between Drive checks, in lengths. The prey must make a crash check.

HAIRPIN TURN (FINISHING)

Hairpin Turn forces the predator down an erratic path as both mecha speed around tight bends and whip around blind curves until one falls out of the race. Hairpin turns tend to be longer and far sharper than those taken with Zig-Zag, resulting in a much greater chance of crashing.

Lead: 20 lengths or more.

Speed: The chase speed is reduced by 25 mph.

Success: The prey wins the chase, taking a turn the predator cannot manage. Both the predator and prey must make crash checks during Step 6.

LURE

In many ways, the prey controls the direction of the chase, and can lead the predator into all kinds of foolish situations.

Lead: Any distance.

Success: The lead is increased by one and the predator is required to make a crash check with a DC determined by the chase setting and increased by the difference between the Drive checks. The prey is also required to make a crash check this round (base DC of the chase setting).

Special: By beating the predator's Drive check by five or more, the prey may choose to reduce both the predator and prey's crash check DCs by five to shift the terrain by one step at the end of the round (open or tight becomes close and vice versa). Furthermore, if the prey beats the predator's Drive check by 10 or more using this manoeuvre, he or she may reverse the vehicles' positions, becoming the predator until the end of the current round. The prey may attack the predator with forward-firing weapons during Step 5.

PULL AHEAD

This is the basic prey manoeuvre, attempting to get as far ahead of the pursuit as possible.

Lead: Any distance.

Speed: Increase the chase speed by 10 mph.

Success: The prey's lead is increased by a number of lengths equal to the difference between the Drive checks.

SET UP (MECHA ONLY)

Instead of running, the prey leads the predator on a merry chase, usually while exchanging fire.

Lead: 10 lengths or less.

Success: The lead is increased by one and the driver and all passengers in the prey mecha gain half the difference between the Drive checks (round down) as a bonus to all their attack rolls targeting the predator.



STUNT (FINISHING)

Stunts are incredible feats of skill, such as leaping a car across a rising toll bridge or ducking a giant robot between the blades of a huge turbine. This sort of manoeuvre is usually just short of suicidal, and only the most talented, foolhardy, or desperate try such a "perfect" escape.

Lead: 20 lengths or more.

Success: The prey wins the chase, performing a stunt the predator just can't manage. If the prey's Drive check exceeds the predators by at least five, the predator must make a crash check in Step 6.

VANISH (FINISHING)

In a display of driving virtuosity and pure velocity, the prey leaves all pursuit behind, choking on dust.

Lead: 30 lengths.

Speed: Increase the chase speed by 20 mph.

Success: The prey wins the chase.

ZIG-ZAG

Zig-Zag involves purposefully clipping neighbouring obstacles, terrain and even other mecha in an attempt to direct them into the predator's path, slowing him or her down. Unfortunately, this increases the chance that one of the prey's "clips" may become a collision.

Lead: Any distance.

Success: The lead is increased by a number of lengths equal to twice the difference between the Drive checks. The prey must make a crash check during Step 6.

STEP 2: DRIVE CHECKS

The mecha operators reveal their manoeuvres. Determine any changes to the chase speed this round as a result of manoeuvres. Each mecha operator makes an opposed Drive check (or other appropriate Skill check such as Ride or Swim; an opposed Dexterity check can be made if on foot), applying the following additional modifiers:

- The mecha's Manoeuvre rating.
- Any speed bonuses gained from the terrain.
- Modifiers from Table A-1: Chase Manoeuvres.
- Modifiers from appropriate Feats.
- Modifiers due to one or other mecha being in a damaged Condition (see Step 6).

If one mecha operator succeeds, the effects of his or her manoeuvre are applied during Step 3. If neither mecha succeeds or the opposed roll results in a tie, the effects of neither manoeuvre are applied, and the chase continues without any effect from the manoeuvre other than speed changes. If both mecha operators succeed, the effects of the manoeuvre taken by the operator with the highest check result are applied during Step 3.

CHASE MANOEUVRE MODIFIERS

Find the predator manoeuvre across the top of Table A-1 and the prey manoeuvre along the side. Cross reference to find the modifier for each mecha this round. The number before the slash is applied to the predator's Drive check, while the number after the slash is applied to the prey's Drive check.

TABLE A-1: CHASE MANOEUVRE MODIFIERS

| | Box In | Crowd | Cut Off | Gun It | Herd | Jockey | Ram | Redline | Shortcut |
|--------------|--------|-------|---------|--------|-------|--------|-------|---------|----------|
| Hairpin Turn | - | - | - | +0/-4 | - | - | - | -2/+0 | +0/-4 |
| Lure | +0/-4 | -4/+0 | +0/-4 | -2/+0 | -2/+0 | - | +0/-2 | +0/-2 | +0/-6 |
| Pull Ahead | -6/+0 | +0/-4 | -2/+0 | - | -6/+0 | -2/+0 | -2/+0 | +0/-4 | +0/-4 |
| Set Up | -2/+0 | -4/+0 | +0/-4 | +0/-4 | +0/-2 | -2/+0 | +0/-4 | - | -4/+0 |
| Stunt | - | - | - | -2/+0 | - | - | - | -4/+0 | +0/-2 |
| Vanish | - | - | - | +0/-4 | - | - | - | +0/-6 | -4/+0 |
| Zig-Zag | -2/+0 | +0/-6 | -2/+0 | -6/+0 | +0/-6 | +0/-2 | -4/+0 | -2/+0 | - |

STEP THREE: RESOLUTION

The effects of the winner's manoeuvre are applied to the chase. Remember that the lead cannot, at any time, be less than zero or over 30 lengths. If the winner chose a finishing manoeuvre, then the chase ends after the remainder of this round's steps are completed. If not, the chase will continue with a new round following Step 6, unless the chase ends because of obstacles, crash checks, or combat.

STEP FOUR: OBSTACLES

The GM may wish to throw in some obstacles to add to the action. These can range from an overturned petrol tanker and sections of heavy road construction (ground chases) to overhead power cables or a firework display (air chases) to a low bridge or coral reef (water chases) to a locked door or concealed rabbit-hole (foot chases). An obstacle typically requires either a Reflex save or Drive check against the obstacle's DC. If the check fails, the mecha operator must make a crash check during Step 6.

The prey makes his or her save or Drive check before the predator does. The base DC for avoiding an obstacle is determined by the terrain, but the GM may alter the DC by up to +/-2, depending on the size and complexity of the challenge.

Obstacles are intended as spice, not the focus of chases, and can be ignored completely by the GM. If the predator and prey get stuck in a rut, the GM should use obstacles to shake things up. If the mecha are keeping things dynamic, the GM should reserve obstacles for a more effective time. The frequency that obstacles crop up is based on the local terrain.

STEP FIVE: OTHER ACTIONS

Whether the chase has ended due to a finishing manoeuvre or not, all passengers are allowed one full action or a standard action and a move action. Any mecha operator may take one standard action or move action at the cost of a -4 penalty to his or her next Drive check. In most ways, combat during a chase follows the basic combat rules presented in Chapter 12, with a few significant differences.

ACTIONS DURING CHASES

During chases, creatures act in Initiative order as usual, but many actions are restricted or illogical.

Initiative: Initiative works normally during chases.

Attack: A passenger in a moving mecha has a -4 penalty to his or her attack rolls. The operator of a mecha has a -8 penalty to his or her attack rolls. Furthermore, the operator and all passengers take an additional -2 penalty for every full 50 mph their mecha is travelling.

Melee attacks can only be made if the prey's lead is 0 and/or the attacker is in or on the same vehicle as his or her target.

Movement: Movement actions may be taken, but a Balance check is needed in most cases. A Jump check is required to leap between two moving mecha. Finally, if a character falls from a moving vehicle, he or she suffers 1d6 damage per 10 mph of the vehicle's movement, but may make a Jump or Tumble check (DC 20, +2 for every full 25 mph the vehicle was travelling when the crash occurred) to halve the damage and convert it to stun damage.

Other: Other actions may or may not be possible, at the GM's discretion. In general, only Skills and Feats that don't require movement remain unaffected.

STEP SIX: DAMAGE AND CRASHES

The last step in every chase round is to apply damage (if any) to each mecha, and see if they have collided with the environment (or each other).

CONDITION SUMMARIES

There are four possible conditions that participants in a chase can be in.

Mecha Okay: The mecha is only lightly damaged, still having over half of its original Hit Points. There are no modifiers to the Drive check (or other appropriate Skill check such as Ride or Swim; a Dexterity check can be made if on foot).

Mecha Crippled: A mecha which has been reduced to less than half of its original Hit Points is crippled. Its Manoeuvre (or Dexterity modifier) is reduced by 5. The character must make an immediate crash check, with the DC increased by +5.

Mecha Disabled: A mecha or creature that has been reduced to zero Hit Points either stalls and comes to a halt, or topples over (if a walking rather than wheeled mecha). The driver must make an immediate crash check, with the DC increased by +10.

Mecha Destroyed: A mecha which has been reduced to a negative number equal to its maximum Hit Points has been completely destroyed. It rolls, skids, plummets, or stumbles to a halt, then falls to pieces, completely useless for any purpose (although it may now count as one or more Obstacles at the GM's discretion). Occupants of the mecha when it is destroyed are damaged as though they had jumped out of the vehicle (see page 122) at the speed it was moving before it crashed; a successful Jump or Tumble check in this case means they jump free. Bear in mind that a Volatile mecha (see page 176) will explode shortly after being destroyed.

CRASH CHECKS

Crash checks should be made in three instances:

- when the mecha operator fails a Drive check to avoid an obstacle.
- when a successful manoeuvre calls for one.
- when the mecha is dealt 30 or more damage in one attack, after taking into account its armour.

A crash check is a Drive check (or other appropriate Skill check such as Ride or Swim), but a mecha operator makes only one such check each round. The base DC for a crash check is based on the terrain for the chase. If a mecha operator is required to make multiple crash checks in a round, he or she instead makes a single check, adding 5 to the DC for each additional crash check called for during the round.

TABLE A-2: CRASH CHECKS

| Circumstance | DC |
|---|----|
| Open Terrain | 10 |
| Close Terrain | 15 |
| Tight Terrain | 20 |
| Every full 25 mph of speed | +2 |
| Each check required in a round beyond the first | +5 |

Whenever a mecha operator fails a crash check, his or her mecha collides with the environment (or the other mecha, if the successful manoeuvre calls for it). Damage to each vehicle (and occupant) equals 1d6 for every 10 mph of vehicle speed, +1 point for every point by which the mecha operator failed his or her crash check (crashes at high speeds are often instantly fatal).

Each occupant of the mecha can make a Jump or Tumble check (DC equal to the DC of the failed crash check) to jump free of the mecha, reducing the damage by half and converting it to stun damage.

CONVERSIONS FOR HIGHER OR LOWER SPEEDS

The chase rules reflect a typical mecha or modern vehicle game, where chases typically occur at around 80 to 120 mph. For a chase involving solely characters on foot, who do not have the Speed Attribute, when a manoeuvre calls for speed to change, divide all mile-per-hour

figures by 5. For faster-moving mecha chases, up to and including spacecraft, increase all mph figures by a factor of 2 or more. The suggested amounts are x2 for chases taking place at around 200-400 mph, x5 for chases taking place at between 400 and 1,000 mph, and x10 for chases taking place at over 1,000 mph.

Dramatic space flight should convert mph figures to percentage of light speed for chases, so a manoeuvre that would usually increase speed by 10 mph increases it by 10% of the speed of light (or 0.1 C) instead. Realistic or solar sail space flight games rarely use the chase rules, since the acceleration of the vehicles will likely be far too low in comparison to the distances between predator and prey — whichever vehicle starts to accelerate before the other will almost always win any "chase." FTL games may convert the chase rules as appropriate to the typical speeds available.

DAMAGE SAVES

For some campaigns, you may wish to get rid of Hit Points entirely, replacing them with the Damage Save mechanic. This tends to make players more cautious about combat, since they know that one attack might be enough to take them out of the fight, even at high Levels.

Adding a Damage Save to your BESM d20 games does require a little conversion of some Attributes and other game statistics, but almost all Attributes remain viable, one way or another.

DAMAGE BONUS

When your character hits with an attack, he or she potentially deals damage. Each attack has a Damage Bonus.

For melee attacks, the Damage Bonus is equal to the character's Strength bonus. Ranged attacks use the attacker's Strength bonus if the weapon is Muscle-Powered; non-Muscle-Powered ranged attacks do not usually have a Damage Bonus, but some heavier weapons do, according to Table A-3.

Convert Special Attack damage as follows: the first 1d8 damage confers no Damage Bonus (in effect, it merely allows the attack to potentially deal damage at all); each additional +1d8 damage beyond the first is converted to a +4 Damage Bonus instead.

Any applicable modifier from Massive Damage is also applied as a Damage Bonus.

Certain attacks do stun damage only, as usual. The most common stun attack is the unarmed attack most characters will have, but some special attacks are also stun damage only.

TABLE A-3: HEAVY WEAPON DAMAGE BONUSES

| | |
|------------------|---|
| +4 Damage Bonus | Heavy Assault Rifle, Sniper Rifle, Shotgun, Heavy Shotgun, Heavy Mini-Gun, or Machine Gun |
| +8 Damage Bonus | Concussion Grenade, Tear Gas Grenade |
| +12 Damage Bonus | 66mm LAW |
| +20 Damage Bonus | Ordnance (Any) |

DAMAGE SAVES

A target hit with a damaging attack must make a Damage Saving Throw (or Damage Save). A character's Damage Save bonus is calculated as follows:

Damage Save Bonus = Constitution Bonus + Armour Value + Damn Healthy! Ranks

The DC of a Damage Save is equal to (15 + attack's Damage Bonus).

The target rolls his or her Damage Save against the Damage Save DC. The result of the Damage Save determines what sort of damage the target takes. If the Damage Save succeeds, the target suffers no damage. If it fails, the target suffers a hit. If it fails by more than 5, the target is also stunned. If it fails by more than 10, the target is unconscious (for a stun attack) or disabled (for a lethal attack).

TABLE A-4: DAMAGE SAVE RESULTS

| Saving Throw... | Stun Attack | Lethal Attack |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Succeeds | No Effect | No Effect |
| Fails | Bruised (Hit) | Injured (Hit) |
| Fails by more than 5 | Stunned | Stunned |
| Fails by more than 10 | Unconscious | Disabled |

IMPOSSIBLE DAMAGE SAVES

When a character could not possibly succeed at a Damage Save, even by rolling a 20, the Damage Save is still made to determine the severity of the damage. A natural roll of 20 on the Damage Save, however, means the character only takes a hit (Bruised or Injured), regardless of the DC.

PULLING YOUR PUNCH

An attacker can select a maximum effect for a particular attack before the Damage Save is made. Even if the save result indicates a more severe effect, only the maximum effect selected by the attacker is applied. An attacker using a Special Attack with the Maximum Force defect linked to it may not select a maximum effect.

DAMAGING MOOKS

Any character who is much weaker than the attacker (at least five Levels lower than the attacker's Level) is a mook and does not suffer a hit, stun, or disabled result. Any time a mook fails a Damage Save, he or she is automatically Unconscious (for a stun attack) or dead (for a lethal attack), unless the attacker used the Pulling Your Punch rule (above).

Furthermore, mooks do not benefit from the Impossible Damage Saves rule, above.

CRITICAL HITS

Any critical hit does not double damage as usual but instead grants a +5 Damage Bonus.

SNEAK ATTACKS

Sneak Attacks are still used with Damage Saves, but instead of increasing the damage dealt, a Sneak Attack increases the DC of the Damage Save by +3 for every Sneak Attack Feat the attacker has.

DAMAGE AND INJURY

Combat usually results in some damage or injury to one or both parties. A character who fails a Damage Save has been injured.

DAMAGE CONDITIONS

One or more of the following Damage Conditions can apply to a damaged character.

Bruised (Stun Hit): A stun hit means the character has been damaged and bruised. Every stun hit a character has imposes a cumulative -1 modifier on the character's Damage Saves against further stun damage. So the more stun hits your character has, the more difficult it becomes to resist stun damage and the more likely the character is to be seriously affected by it (stunned or knocked out). Stun hits do not affect Damage Saves against lethal damage.

Injured (Lethal Hit): A lethal hit means the character has suffered some minor injury. Every lethal hit imposes a cumulative -1 modifier to the character's Damage Saves against all forms of damage — both stun and lethal — since it represents a more serious weakening of the character's resistance. This penalty is cumulative with the penalty for stun hits with regard to stun damage. Thus a character with 3 stun hits and 4 lethal hits has a -7 penalty to Damage Saves against stun damage and a -4 penalty to Damage Saves against lethal damage.

Stunned: A stunned result on the Damage Save causes the target to take 1 hit and become stunned for one round. The character cannot take any actions (including free actions), loses any bonus to Armour Class from Dexterity or Defence Combat Mastery, and may not make Defence Rolls. Attackers gain a +2 bonus to hit stunned characters.

Unconscious: An unconscious character suffers 1 hit and is knocked out and helpless. Further stun attacks against the character are treated as lethal attacks.

Disabled: A disabled character is conscious and able to act, but terribly injured. He or she may take only a standard or a move action each round. If that action involves any strenuous activity (including running, combat, or the use of special Attributes such as magic), his or her condition changes to Dying after the action is complete.

Dying: The character is unconscious and near death. The player must make a Fortitude save with a DC of 10. If the save fails, the character dies. If the save succeeds, the character remains unconscious and dying. A dying character must make a Fortitude save every hour (DC 10 +1 per hour of unconsciousness). A failed save means the character dies. A successful save keeps the character alive, unconscious, and dying for another hour. If the save succeeds by 10 or more, or the roll is a natural 20, the character stabilises and becomes unconscious and disabled. A character with the Medical Skill may attempt to stabilise a dying character with a DC 15 Skill check.

RECOVERY

A character can potentially recover from any injury, given sufficient time and/or medical attention. All recovery rates are doubled if the injured party is cared for by a character with Medical Skill.

Hits: Stun hits recover at a rate of (1 + Ranks of Damn Healthy!) for every hour that passes, even if the character is performing other activity at the time. Lethal hits recover at (1 + Ranks of Damn Healthy!) for every full 24 hours spent doing nothing but resting. A character who is Disabled or Dying does not recover from stun or lethal hits until he or she is no longer Disabled or Dying.

Unconsciousness: After one minute (ten rounds) of unconsciousness, a character may make a Constitution check (DC 10) to rouse him or herself. If the save fails, he or she may make another Constitution check to regain consciousness each minute, with a cumulative +1 bonus per attempt.

Disabled: Disabled characters take some time to recover. After one day, the character may make a Constitution check (DC 20) to change his or her condition to Injured. If failed, each additional day that passes allows the character to make another Constitution check to change his or her condition to Injured, with a cumulative +1 bonus per attempt.

FATE POINTS

For certain types of campaign, the GM may allow characters to have Fate Points. These are best suited to highly heroic, almost super-heroic games, where all the characters are larger than life and capable of occasionally achieving truly incredible things, even above and beyond their "usual" magical or extraordinary powers.

Fate Points are a narrative device enabling the players to have a minor input on the game, other than describing their own actions and throwing the dice. With Fate Points, you, the player, can alter the game world in some minor way so as to benefit your character.

In some respects, Fate Points cover similar ground to the Divine Relationship Attribute, though there are several major differences. The GM may wish to disallow Divine Relationship in a game which also uses Fate Points, or restrict Divine Relationship to a maximum number of ranks. This is not essential, but some GMs may prefer it.

At character creation, you have 3 Fate Points (FPs).

These Fate Points are extremely precious, since they can save your character's life. This is done by causing him or her to be "left for dead" rather than killed outright.

They have four other uses as well — but saving the character's life is definitely the most crucial one, so it is recommended that you always keep one or two FPs reserved for that purpose. Of course, the angle might be perfect for a Mighty Blow (see below) instead, even if that leaves you desperately short of FPs.

USING FATE POINTS

There are five standard uses for Fate Points: Left For Dead, Mighty Blow, Pushing It, Raw Power, and Destiny. Your GM may allow other uses — check with him or her before play. As with all other aspects of the game, the GM is always the final arbiter of whether or not a particular use of FPs is permitted, although the Left For Dead use should almost always be allowed if the character has an FP to spend on it.

LEFT FOR DEAD

When a character is reduced to the negative total of his or her Hit Points, by any means, he or she may spend 1 FP to avoid being killed outright. The character is instead “left for dead.”

A character who is left for dead appears dead to a casual examination, though he or she still has a chance of recovering, particularly if quickly attended by a character with the Medical Skill or any kind of healing spell or potion. If at least 1 point of damage is healed within one hour of being left for dead, he or she is considered to be stable and at -1 Hit Points. If the character is not healed, he or she must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) after one hour. If successful, he or she stabilises and is at -1 Hit Points. If the save fails, he or she is finally and irrevocably dead — whether or not the character has any FPs left.

MIGHTY BLOW

Rather than rolling the damage dice on any successful hit or damaging attack, you can elect to declare a Mighty Blow, at the cost of 1 FP. A Mighty Blow always deals the maximum possible damage. This includes any bonus damage, such as that rolled for sneak attacks. Any melee weapon acquired through purchases or gaming always shatters irreparably when used to deliver a Mighty Blow. A melee weapon gained through ranks in Personal Gear has a 50% chance of snapping in two, but if it does, it will usually be possible to use the broken blade as an improvised weapon — it will not be completely destroyed. A melee weapon which is an Item of Power will never break, even on a Mighty Blow.

PUSHING IT

At a cost of 1 Fate Point, you may double your ranks in any one Attribute, for a duration of one round only. The Attribute chosen must be one which could reasonably be increased through sheer effort of will and determination. Almost all Attributes are fine for this, but those that rely on external objects, such as Own A Big Mecha, Item of Power, or most types of Armour, will usually be vetoed by the GM.

RAW POWER

Sometimes you just need power. By spending 1 Fate Point, you can regain 1d6 Energy Points, plus one Energy Point per character Level.

DESTINY

You can at any time spend one or more Fate Points, with the agreement of the GM, to alter the world in some minor way. Essentially, this allows you the player to have some input into the story, over and above the actions of your character. This change must be one that is plausible, minor, and not overwhelmingly beneficial to the player characters. It may assist them to accomplish their goals, but they must still achieve those goals by their own efforts, not simply by spending Fate Points!

For example, a character captured and imprisoned by an arch-enemy might spend a Fate Point to have a chance at escape — a comrade or sympathiser smuggling in a dagger, or a drunken guard falling asleep nearby, or the discovery of a loose chunk of granite with which to smash open chains. It does not allow for escape to be handed to him or her on a plate by a sorcerer magically putting all the guards to sleep and bursting the door open.

Another option for this use of a fate point is to alter your own character in some minor way, by revealing a new facet to his or her past. This might include knowing a language that he or she did not know before, which is useful in his current situation — or having a contact in the area based on previous dealings in the region.

One good use of Destiny is when the players are at a dead end in an adventure — perhaps they have missed some crucial clue, or failed to puzzle out where to go next. A single FP in this case is usually enough for the GM to offer some kind of in-game hint. Preferably, this will not be so blatant as to have a friendly non-player character tell them the answer outright. Other methods of giving out background information should be used, perhaps taking a hint from comics or movies. For example, a dream or vision could reveal the past history of creatures and places crucial to the plot; or an ancient scroll could be uncovered that, with a Decipher Script check and a bit of logic, could provide a hint as to where to look next.

The GM will be more likely to accept proposed uses of Destiny which could plausibly relate to a character's own future destiny, as reflected by his or her declared goals.

FATE POINTS AND DAMAGE SAVES

Fate Points can make a useful addition to games that use Damage Saves. If the GM agrees, 1 FP can be used to reduce the severity of a Damage Save result by one level: for example, a Disabled result would become Stunned. This can provide something of a middle ground between Damage Save and Hit Point systems, in that the characters are no longer in danger of being felled by a single blow, at least until they run out of Fate Points.

In a Damage Saves game, a Mighty Blow does not deal maximum possible damage but simply adds a +5 Damage Bonus.

GAINING MORE FATE POINTS

When you spend a Fate Point, it is gone forever. It does not recover with time, and nor do you automatically gain new FPs as you become higher Level.

Each time your character accomplishes a major goal, either personally or as part of an adventuring party, he or she gains from 1 to 2 FPs, always at the discretion of the GM. Usually this will occur only at the successful conclusion of an adventure. An entirely unsuccessful adventure will tend to mean you do not gain any FPs as a result.

There is no relation between Fate Points and Character Points. You may not spend the FPs to gain extra CPs, or vice versa.

SCHOOL CAMPAIGNS

A classic anime concept is that all the lead characters are schoolchildren. Something similar can be done with a more traditional fantasy campaign — perhaps all the characters are farm kids, or orphans taken in by a temple, or brothers and sisters out together to seek their fortunes. In an all-children campaign, it is suggested that the following rules be used to allow characters to be the type of children or high-school students who, though vulnerable in some respects, are still capable of taking on and defeating dangerous and fantastic opponents. Note that these rules are likely to unbalance a game that includes both children and adult characters, and so should not be used in such a case.

Child characters are generated exactly as for adults, except as follows:

- Subtract 2 from the character's Strength.
- Children are always one Size Category smaller than the standard for their race. In a school campaign, however, there are no ability modifiers for being smaller than usual, and so there is no CP bonus for the character's small size. The bonuses to attacks and Armour Class apply as usual.
- Character classes are limited to Magical Girl, Pet Monster Trainer, Sentai Member, Shapechanger, and Student, unless the Games Master grants special permission for another character class to be selected.
- All children gain an Origin bonus chosen from the following list, just to give them a little extra help in the harsh world of adults.

FARM KID

You grew up on a farm, and have all the benefits of an upbringing dedicated to hard work in the great outdoors. Years of eating good farm cooking and rescuing lost sheep from crevasses by main force have given you steely thews and rosy cheeks.

Bonus: Damn Healthy! Rank 1.

MYSTERY KID

You are orphaned or adopted, but with no idea of your true heritage other than hints that you are marked out for some kind of special destiny later in life. Perhaps you are the product of a weird alien experiment and your true parents will some day return to claim you, or you may be the last surviving full-blooded descendant of an ancient demon-slaying lineage. Your destiny affords you a certain degree of protection from the bumps and setbacks of everyday life.

Bonus: Divine Relationship Rank 2.

POPULAR KID

Even in pre-school, you were the bossy one: maybe it was funny at the time, but you had just enough natural charm to pull it off. These days the other kids are at your beck and call, except for those whom you choose to exclude from your elevated social circle. You wield your popularity like a sword. You can easily make your friends feel almost as cool as you, or your enemies feel like the pariahs they so clearly are.

Bonus: Flunkies (Non-combatant) Rank 2.

RICH KID

Although you personally may not have a great deal of cash, your parents sure do. Over the years they have given you whatever you asked for — whether a shiny new leather jacket and bass guitar, a high-tech computer, or top-of-the-line sports equipment.

Bonus: Personal Gear Rank 1.

STREET KID

Your family never had a lot of money or status, and you learned the harsh lessons of the city streets. Perhaps the most valuable lesson was that the best form of defence is attack, a theory you have taken to heart in your day-to-day life.

Bonus: Brawl Feat.

HIT LOCATIONS

For those who want an extra bit of flavour or realism to their game, the following system allows for attacks to hit a particular part of the body. Since none of the standard weapons in *BESM d20* use a d12 for damage, a d12 is used for determining hit location, allowing it to be rolled simultaneously with the attack and damage rolls to save time if desired.

Depending on the part of the body hit, there may be additional effects.

TABLE A-5: HIT LOCATIONS

| 1d12 Roll | Location Struck |
|-----------|-----------------|
| 1-2 | Left Leg |
| 3-4 | Right Leg |
| 5-6 | Left Arm |
| 7-8 | Right Arm |
| 9-11 | Torso |
| 12 | Head |

Leg: -1 Damage (minimum 1 point). The target must make a Fortitude save (DC 5 + half damage dealt) or fall prone.

Arm: -1 Damage (minimum 1 point). The target must make a Fortitude save (DC 5 + half damage dealt) or drop whatever he or she is holding in that hand. An item specifically listed as being strapped to the arm or wrist (such as many shields) will not be dropped.

Torso: Resolve the attack as normal.

Head: The target must make a Fortitude save (DC 5 + half damage dealt) or be Incapacitated for one round. After one round, he or she may act normally again.

An attacker may choose to make a Called Shot (see page 116) against a specific hit location. This is made at a -4 penalty for a Called Shot against the torso, -6 penalty for a Called Shot against any limb, or -8 penalty for a Called Shot against the head.

NARRATIVE BATTLES

For battles in which the characters are involved merely as part of a unit or even as an independent group thrust accidentally into the midst of combat, the Big Combats, Small Counters system (page 153) is probably inappropriate. It is preferable to simply calculate the likely outcome of the battle and determine what occurs to the characters caught up within it, rather than worry about the fate of individual counters and units.

As for any other adventure, the GM will need to create certain statistics in advance of running a narrative battle. Typical members and leaders for each troop type of the opposing army must be fully detailed, as must both sides' generals. Furthermore, the Army Strength (AS) and Army Quality (AQ) of each side must be calculated. AS and AQ will alter (usually by being reduced) as the battle rages, but these changes are easy to keep track of.

The narrative battle system is intended for use predominantly in campaigns where hand-to-hand combat is more decisive than ranged combat. This can include the typical fantasy setting, where the longbow may cause many casualties but where the final result of the fight is almost always blade against blade; but it can also include many other anime campaign types, including futuristic settings that postulate super-powerful high-tech melee weapons, effective countermeasures against ranged weapons, or both.

The philosophy behind narrative battles is that there is no real need to know that Unit A just charged Unit X in the right wing of the battle if the characters are all in the left wing. What matters is the way the battle is going overall, and what the characters encounter directly opposing them on the enemy side. Simplifying the game mechanics of the battle in this way allows the GM to concentrate on description and action.

ARMY STRENGTH

Add up the simple numerical strength of each army. Cavalry and piloted mecha count double, so an army composed of 1200 infantry (AS 1200) and 400 cavalry (AS 800) has an Army Strength of 2,000.

ARMY QUALITY

Take the average Level or Hit Dice of the troops making up the army, multiply by 2, and round the result up or down to the nearest whole number. This is the Army Quality. When two armies meet in battle, each adds its AQ as a bonus to all Battle Checks.

Any mecha who make up part of the army are added to their pilot's Hit Dice or Level as follows: +1 per rank of Own A Big Mecha. Thus an elite unit of mecha, with 5th Level Mecha Pilots each with Own A Big Mecha Rank 2, count as 7th Level characters for purposes of determining Army Quality.

Mounts also add one-half their Hit Dice to their rider's Levels for purposes of determining Army Quality, but only if the mounts are heavy war-horses or other creatures specifically bred and trained for battle. A group of cavalry mounted on ordinary light horses does not add one-half the HD of its mounts for purposes of determining AQ, but still counts double for Army Strength.

Example: *An army is comprised of 2,000 1st Level Samurai as infantry (AS 2,000), 500 2nd Level Samurai as cavalry mounted on 4 HD war-horses (AS 1,000), 1,000 nomad raiders treated as 1st Level Adventurers on light horses (AS 2,000), and 100 5th Level Mecha Pilots with Own A Big Mecha Rank 2 (AS 200).*

The army would have an Army Strength of 5200.

It would have 2,000 + {1,000 + 1,000 for battle-capable mounts} + {1,000 + zero for non-battle-capable mounts} + {500 + 200 for rank 2 OBM} = 5700 total Hit Dice; 5700/ 3600 troops = 1.58 average Hit Dice; 1.58 x 2 = 3.16, rounded down to an Army Quality of 3.

OUTNUMBER BONUS

If one side has a higher Army Strength than the other, the general of the side with the higher Army Strength gains an Outnumber Bonus to all Battle Checks (see below). The Outnumber Bonus is dependent on how much larger his or her army is than that of the opponent.

TABLE A-6: OUTNUMBER BONUS

| Situation | Outnumber Bonus |
|--|-----------------|
| AS higher than opponent's, but not twice as high | +1 |
| AS between two and three times higher than opponent's | +2 |
| AS between three and four times higher than opponent's | +3 |
| AS between four and five times higher than opponent's | +4 |
| AS greater than five times higher than opponent's | +5 |

BATTLE CHECKS

The general in overall command of the battle makes a Battle Check for every hour of the battle. Note that this assumes a half-hour's worth of manoeuvring, skirmishing, and a certain degree of outright mayhem, but does not assume that every single soldier is directly involved in melee throughout the half-hour. Many battles may take all day long, particularly if both are large and the generals are closely matched in ability.

A Battle Check is made as a Knowledge (Military Science) check, but with the following bonuses:

TABLE A-7: BATTLE CHECK MODIFIERS

- +1 per Rank in Aura of Command
- + Army Quality
- + Outnumber Bonus
- +2 synergy bonus if the general also has five or more ranks of Knowledge (Area) for the area in which the battle takes place
- + Player Success Bonus (if any; see Encounters, page 149)
- + circumstance modifiers

TABLE A-8: BATTLE CHECK RESULTS

| Opposed Battle Check | Result for Winner | Result for Loser |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Tied | Lose 1d4 x 100 from Army Strength | Lose 1d4 x 100 from Army Strength |
| Won by 1 to 4 | Lose 4d6 x 10 from Army Strength, +1 circumstance modifier to next Battle Check | Lose 1d6 x 100 from Army Strength, -1 from Army Quality |
| Won by 5 to 9 | Lose 3d6 x 10 from Army Strength, +2 circumstance modifier to next Battle Check | Lose 2d6 x 100 from Army Strength, -1 from Army Quality |
| Won by 10 to 14 | Lose 2d6 x 10 from Army Strength, +3 circumstance modifier to next Battle Check | Lose 3d6 x 100 from Army Strength, -2 from Army Quality |
| Won by 15 to 19 | Lose 1d6 x 10 from Army Strength, +4 circumstance modifier to next Battle Check | Lose 5d6 x 100 from Army Strength, -2 from Army Quality |
| Won by 20 or higher | No losses, +5 circumstance modifier to next Battle Check | Lose 8d6 x 100 from Army Strength, -3 from Army Quality |

Note: This system is intended predominantly to run battles with around Army Strengths of 1,000 to 10,000, but it can be easily adapted for more major or minor combats. The GM should modify the Battle Check Results for larger or smaller battle as follows. For battles with fewer than 1,000 participants, divide all the Army Strength losses by 10. For battles with between 10,000 and 100,000 participants, multiply all Army Strength losses by 10. For battles with over 100,000 participants, multiply all Army Strength losses by 100. Losses to Army Quality are always unaffected by the size of the battle. If desired, the GM may increase or decrease the time period for each turn, from its base of 30 minutes to as much as one hour or as little as 10 minutes, since small-scale battles are likely to be over more quickly.

An army whose AQ is reduced to 0 or below flees the battlefield immediately as best it can. It can be seen that in most cases a losing army will flee long before it sustains very heavy casualties, unless it starts out as an elite army or is very unlucky very quickly. An army defeated in this way cannot usually be quickly re-formed, however — a king or general will need to recruit it again from scratch, since most of the troops will have fled for home or run to the hills.

A high-quality army can often defeat a far larger army of lower quality, simply by determinedly "soldiering on" when their opponents are ready to break and flee. Even the best troops will lose courage and flee eventually if the battle is going disastrously for them, however, and even before they flee they will be far more fatigued and downhearted than the winners.

ENCOUNTERS AND ACTIONS DURING NARRATIVE BATTLES

Assuming that characters are attached to a unit on the battlefield, they roll on the Encounter Table once during every half-hour of battle. The result gives the number and type of foes they must face, and the duration of that particular combat within the battle. A combat may end earlier, if the characters are able to defeat or rout their foes.

Just as no battle has every unit in constant conflict, so the characters' unit will not always fight during every half-hour period — there will be times when they are kept in reserve, or are able to withdraw and get healed up, as well as times when they spend a full half-hour manoeuvring into position. Note that battles are dangerous situations even when one is not in the thick of it; it is likely that there will be minor skirmishes, injured enemies to slay, and periods of relatively ineffective, long-range missile fire during the battle. The GM is at liberty to throw in such additional, minor "encounters" at will for the purpose of enhancing the atmosphere of the game.

USING THE ENCOUNTER TABLE

Table A-9: Encounter Table is used as follows. Roll 1d20, and add the difference between the two generals' Battle Checks (if the characters' general won the check this round), or subtract the difference (if the opposing general won the check this round); also subtract the characters' average class Level, rounded down.

TABLE A-q: ENCOUNTER TABLE

| Modified d20 Roll | Opponents | Combat Duration | Player Success Bonus | Experience Points Gained | Notes |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|
| -31 or below | 1d3 Leaders + 2d6 Special | Until all enemies defeated | +4 if all opponents defeated | Standard | Characters are separated by the crush of battle; if desired, a character may take a full-round action to do nothing other than shove through the fighting throng to another specific character. Enemies will not rout. Roll 1d6; on a roll of 1-3, roll again on the Encounter Table with the same modifiers as before, and apply both results as separate fights during this half-hour. |
| -30 | None | - | - | 150 xp | Characters subjected to heavy missile fire; each must make a Reflex save (DC 25) or be dealt 6d8 damage. A successful Reflex save halves the damage. Armour protects as usual. Roll 1d6; on a roll of 1-2, roll again on the Encounter Table with the same modifiers as before, and apply both results as separate fights during this half- hour. |
| -21 to -29 | 1 Leader + 1d10 Special | Until all enemies defeated | +3 if all opponents defeated | Standard | Enemies rout only if their casualties reach 75%. Roll 1d6; on a roll of 1, roll again on the Encounter Table with the same modifiers as before, and apply both results as separate fights during this half-hour. |
| -20 | None | - | - | 100 xp | Characters subjected to missile fire; each must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or be dealt 4d8 damage. A successful Reflex save halves the damage. Armour protects as usual. |
| -11 to -19 | 1 Leader + 1d10 Standard | 2d6+6 rounds | +2 if all opponents defeated or routed | Standard | Enemies rout if their casualties reach 60% |
| -10 | None | - | - | 50 xp | Characters subjected to light missile fire; each must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or be dealt 2d8 damage. A successful Reflex save halves the damage. Armour protects as usual. |
| -1 to -9 | 1d2-1 Leaders + 1d6 Standard | 3d6 rounds | +1 if all opponents defeated or routed | Standard | Enemies rout if their casualties reach 45% |
| 0 | None | - | - | 25 xp | Manoeuvre and counter-manoeuve; characters achieve nothing and risk nothing. |
| 1 to 9 | 1d4 Standard | 2d6 rounds | - | Standard | Enemies rout if their casualties reach 30% |
| 10 | None | - | - | 25 xp | Lull in the fighting; characters have 30 minutes to reload, change weapons, adjust armour, etc. |
| 11 to 19 | 1d2 Standard +1d2 Poor | 2d4 rounds | - | Standard | Enemies rout if their casualties reach 15% |
| 20 | None | - | - | 25 xp | Characters attended by healers; each has one character with Medical Skill make a check to administer medical attention. |
| 21 to 29 | 1d2-1 Standard +1d2 Poor | 1d6 rounds | - | Standard | Enemies rout as soon as they sustain a casualty. |
| 30 | None | - | - | 25 xp | Booty: The GM should create a non-magical treasure according to the situation, the characters' Level, and the style of the campaign. Often this will not be the usual gold or gems, but loot from the supply train. |
| 31+ | 1d2 Poor | 1d4 rounds | - | Standard | Enemies rout as soon as one of them is injured. You gain booty, as for entry 30 (above) if you kill or rout them. |

Furthermore, if desired, the characters can agree to be glory-hunters; they may subtract a further -1 to -10 from the d20 roll. This represents them leading a charge or counter-attack, or simply heading straight for the biggest, meanest-looking enemies they can find.

In each case, the number of opponents indicated is that faced by each individual character; however, it is assumed that they are able to remain together and support each other, unless otherwise indicated.

Note that the Encounter Table does not necessarily ensure the characters will be fighting a "fair" or "balanced" number of foes (though the GM should take their relative power into account when determining the composition of the enemy forces and especially leaders). If the battle is going badly, they may find themselves seriously outnumbered and even outmatched. Opponents will rarely fight to the death, however. Even if all the characters are defeated, they will at worst be captured by their foes, or at best be left for dead on the battlefield and wake up to find the enemy army victorious.

TROOP TYPES

The following different troop types can be encountered as opponents during narrative battles.

Poor: These troops are always those of the lowest quality in the enemy army — perhaps peasant levies, or nominally non-combatant personnel such as a war machine's crew. They will be little more than an annoyance to an experienced adventurer, never being higher than 1st Level and rarely having any useful combat Attributes.

Standard: Standard troops are generic grunts or mooks, ordinary infantry soldiers. These will almost always be of the troop type that makes up the majority of the army, though at the GM's discretion another troop type of similar power may be substituted.

Special: Special troops are chosen by the GM or determined randomly from among the better quality regular troops in the army; this could include heavy cavalry, mecha, or powerful non-humans such as demon soldiers. Usually the characters will all face the same type of special troops, representing their unit being locked in combat with a special unit.

Leader: Leaders are members of whichever unit they are found with, but represent its commanders and assistant commanders, rather than regular troops.

PLAYER SUCCESS BONUS

This bonus is added to the general's next Battle Check. Note that it is easier for the characters to assist their general if they are willing to become total glory-hunters, throwing themselves into the deadliest part of the fray. It will also be seen that the characters have more of a chance to make a difference to the battle as a whole if they are subjected to an attack by large numbers of enemies, since this gives them a chance to show their true heroic qualities by vanquishing all comers.

EPIC LEVEL CHARACTERS

Some GMs may allow characters to progress above 20th Level in their games. Other games will not suit this style of play, and for many players achieving 20th Level is a good indication that it is time to retire a character anyway. For those who wish to forge on to 21st Level and beyond, the following rules may be used.

Epic characters — those whose character Level is 21st or higher — are handled slightly differently from non-epic characters. While epic characters continue to receive many of the benefits of gaining Levels, some benefits are replaced by alternative gains. A class can be advanced beyond 20th Level. Once using epic rules, the character may eventually advance to any Level: 30th, 40th, 100th, or even higher still.

EPIC SAVE BONUS

A character's base save bonus does not increase after character Level reaches 20th. The character does, however, receive a cumulative +1 epic bonus on all saving throws at every even-numbered Level beyond 20th, as shown on Table A-10: Epic Save and Epic Attack Bonuses. Any time a Feat or other rule refers to your base save bonus, use the sum of your base save bonus and epic save bonus.

EPIC ATTACK BONUS

Similarly, the character's base attack bonus does not increase after character Level reaches 20th. The character does receive a cumulative +1 epic bonus on all attacks at every odd-numbered Level beyond 20th, as shown on Table A-10: Epic Save and Epic Attack Bonuses. Any time a Feat or other rule refers to your base attack bonus, use the sum of your base attack bonus and epic attack bonus.

OTHER BONOSES

Skills, bonus Feats, and ability scores continue to increase just as they did for non-epic characters. Thus characters gain a bonus Feat at 21st Level, 24th Level, 27th Level and so on, and a +1 to an ability score at 24th Level, 28th Level, 32nd Level and so on.

TABLE A-10: EPIC SAVE AND EPIC ATTACK BONOSES

| Character Level | Epic Save Bonus | Epic Attack Bonus |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 21st | +0 | +1 |
| 22nd | +1 | +1 |
| 23rd | +1 | +2 |
| 24th | +2 | +2 |
| 25th | +2 | +3 |
| 26th | +3 | +3 |
| 27th | +3 | +4 |
| 28th | +4 | +4 |
| 29th | +4 | +5 |
| 30th | +5 | +5 |

CLASS FEATURES

Most class features stop accumulating after 20th Level. The following guidelines describe how the epic class progressions.

- A character's base save bonuses and base attack bonus don't increase after 20th Level. Use Table A-10: Epic Save and Epic Attack Bonuses to determine the character's epic bonus on saving throws and attacks. This applies even if the character multiclasses into a new class at Epic Level.
- Characters continue to gain Hit Dice and Skill Points as normal beyond 20th Level.
- Other class features do not increase, though most can be increased by spending Character Points.

TABLE A-11: EPIC CHARACTER POINT BONOSES

| Character Class | CPs/Level |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Adventurer | +5 Character Points |
| Dynamic Sorcerer | +5 Character Points |
| Giant Robot | +4 Character Points |
| Gun Bunny | +4 Character Points |
| Hot Rod | +4 Character Points |
| Magical Girl | +4/+5 Character Points* |
| Martial Artist | +4 Character Points |
| Mecha Pilot | +4 Character Points |
| Ninja | +4 Character Points |
| Pet Monster Trainer | +5 Character Points |
| Samurai | +3/+4 Character Points* |
| Sentai Member | +4/+5 Character Points* |
| Shapechanger | +4/+5 Character Points* |
| Student | +4 Character Points |
| Tech Genius | +4 Character Points |
| Barbarian | +3 Character Points |
| Bard | +4/+5 Character Points* |
| Cleric | +4/+5 Character Points* |
| Druid | +4 Character Points |
| Fighter | +4 Character Points |
| Monk | +4 Character Points |
| Paladin | +4 Character Points |
| Ranger | +3/+4 Character Points* |
| Rogue | +3/+4 Character Points* |
| Sorcerer | +5/+6 Character Points* |
| Wizard | +5 Character Points** |

* Character classes with two numbers listed for Character Points per Level gain the lower number at each odd-numbered class Level, and the higher number at each even-numbered class Level.

** Note that the Wizard's Class Skill Bonus each Level is still 0.5 (see page 32) which is why the Wizard gains only +5 CPs per Level rather than +5/+6.

CHARACTER POINTS

Instead of gaining new class features, all characters gain bonus Character Points at each Level beyond 20th, with virtually no restrictions on how these CPs are spent. Epic characters are not too far from being demigods. It is not unusual for a single epic character to be capable of achieving as much as, or more than, an entire lower-Level party.

The additional CPs gained are calculated as follows. It is assumed that each character gains a base 10 CPs per Level, reduced by the attack bonuses, save bonuses, Hit Dice and Skill Points as usual. Note that the Epic Save Bonus or Epic Attack Bonus gained each Level is always regarded as 3 CPs' worth of Points (although a +1 save bonus is usually only worth 1 CP, the Epic Save Bonus applies to all three saving throws and so is worth 3 CP).

The Table A-11: Epic Character Point Bonuses (page 151) gives the bonus CPs gained each Level by character class, after these have been reduced by the attack bonuses, save bonuses, Hit Dice and Skill Points gained each Level.

EPIC CHARACTERS ATTACKING MULTIPLE WEAKER OPPONENTS

Any epic-level character can make a regular attack that automatically kills one low-HD opponent per epic Level he or she has, without needing to make a roll. For this purpose, a low-HD opponent is any creature at least 20 HD or Levels below the level of his or her attacker. For example a 25th Level epic samurai treats all characters of 5th Level or below, and all creatures of 5 HD or below, as low-HD opponents.

The attack used could be magic, melee, sneakiness, psychic power or whatever means suits the character. No Energy Points or other resources need be expended to make this attack — the opponents are very nearly beneath the character's notice, and are swept aside without a second thought. This can be especially useful when in a mass battle, whichever battle system is used to resolve the combat.

Furthermore, the epic character may move at up to 2 x Base Speed while making these attacks, without penalty. Any low-HD creatures that would, at any time during the round, be close enough for the epic character to attack in melee, may be targeted. In effect, an epic character only attacking low-HD targets may virtually ignore their soon-to-be-ended existence. This only applies so long as all the attacks made are against low-HD opponents — a character wishing to use one or more of his or her attacks to strike more experienced targets must abide by the usual rules concerning the use of standard, move and full actions.

For example: Hoshiko, a 25th Level samurai, could kill up to five mooks on each of her four attacks each round, for a total of 20 foes slain per round!

MAKING BESM d20 CLASSLESS

Players and GMs may wish to remove classes from their *BESM d20* games which the game can easily handle.

CHARACTER CREATION

GMs should provide players with a number of Character Points (minimum of 40 for player characters) with which to make characters. Each 10 Points above 40 equals one additional ECL (Effective Character Level). For example, if the GM provides players 90 Character Points with which to make characters, the characters are ECL 5.

Players may spend Points to acquire or increase Attributes, modify ability scores, or acquire new Feats. Some notes:

Ability Scores: If a player may improve his or her character's ability score(s) by 1 per 0.5 Point.



Skills: All non-combat Skills are class Skills. All combat Skills are cross class Skills. If a player wishes to improve his or her character's Skills, he or she gains a number of Skill Points depending on the character Points invested:

- 2+Int modifier for 0.5 Point
- 4+Int modifier for 1 Point
- 6+Int modifier for 1.5 Points
- 8+Int modifier for 2 Points

Hit Points: If a player wishes to improve his or her character's Hit Points, he or she gains a hit die, the size of which depends on the Character Points invested:

- d4 for 1 Points
- d6 for 1.5 Points
- d8 for 2 Points
- d10 for 2.5 Points
- d12 for 3 Points

Saving Throws: If a player wishes to improve his or her character's saving throws, each +1 costs 1 Character Point.

Base Attack Bonus: If a player wishes to improve his or her character's base attack bonus, he or she should take the Attack Combat Mastery Attribute.

Attributes and Feats: If a player wishes to improve or gain a new Attribute or Feat, it costs the same number of Character Points as it does during character creation.

Unspent Points: Points (or partial Points) may be saved and spent at a later point.

CHARACTER IMPROVEMENT

At the end of each game sessions, GMs should award players 1 Character Point to be used for improvement. GMs may wish to reward an additional Point for exceptional role-playing, at their discretion. For each 10 Character Points gained through adventuring (not spent — gained), the character's ECL increases by 1.

Players may spend Character Points, between game sessions, for character improvement.

BIG COMBATS, SMALL COUNTERS

The Big Combats, Small Counters (BCSC) system is designed to provide a quick and reasonably simple system for resolving mass combats. BCSC is best used when at least one of the characters is a high-ranking general on one side. This enables the other characters to command units under him or her, or to form a powerful strike force on the battlefield, while the GM controls the opposition.

UNITS

A unit is a group of individuals banded together to a common purpose on the battlefield. For the purposes of this system, every person within the unit has the same function, the same weapons, the same abilities, and the same Attributes.

A unit consists of one or more counters. Usually, each counter represents 10 individuals, though the GM may call for all counters to represent 20, 50, or even 100 individuals for a large-scale battle. Most units will contain between 5 and 20 counters.

Units receive orders, move, fight, and react much as though they were individuals.

THE UNIT ROSTER

Unit Rosters are made up in advance by the GM. The Unit Roster is used as a matter of convenience throughout these rules, from launching a devastating charge at an enemy to recording casualties when being shot through with ballista bolts. There are many circumstances in a game

where the GM will prefer to use standard rules to resolve combat and Skill checks — the Unit Roster is used when large numbers of unit members need to perform one task at the same time.

A sample Unit Roster Sheet, detailing the warriors of Nishihama, is shown below:

WARRIORS OF NISHIHAMA UNIT

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Race: | Human |
| Class: | Samura |
| Level: | 1 |
| Character Points: | 40 |
| Unit Size: | 8 |
| Creatures Per Counter: | 10 |
| Unit Type: | Infantry |
| Counter Hit Points: | 11 (+10% Constitution 12) |
| Initiative: | +4 (+4 Improved Initiative) |
| Attacks: | Long sword +1 |
| Damage: | Long sword 1d8+3 |
| AC: | 0 (Dex) |
| Armour: | 5 (Partial Metal Armour) |
| Ability Scores: | Str 16, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 14 |
| Saves: | Fort: +3; Ref: +0; Will: +0 |
| Feats: | Improved Initiative, Armour Proficiency (Light), Armour Proficiency (Medium). |
| Attributes: | Personal Gear Rank 1 (Long sword, partial metal armour, longbow, short sword, small art object or similar item of value) |

RACE, CLASS, LEVEL AND CHARACTER POINTS

Unit race and class are determined by simple majority. If a unit has 3 elven samurai and 27 human fighters, then the unit will be noted as being human fighters. The level of a unit is the average Level of its members, rounded down.

UNIT SIZE

This records the number of counters that go to make up the unit. A single unit may not contain more than 30 counters, though an army may contain as many units as you wish.

UNIT TYPE

This is a reflection of how a unit operates upon the battlefield and what its especial competencies are. Types of unit may be found on page 155.

CREATURES PER COUNTER

This simply indicates how many creatures each counter represents. This value is most commonly 10, but GMs can adjust this value if desired.

COUNTER HIT POINTS

Counter Hit Points are used to measure the damage a unit may sustain in combat before being defeated or even wiped out. Whenever a unit receives damage in excess of its counter Hit Points, one or more counters are removed and the overall size of the unit drops accordingly. Excess damage is recorded on the unit roster. For example, if a unit with 8 counters and 10 counter Hit Points received 20 points of damage, it would lose two counters; if it received 14 points of damage, it would lose only one counter but the 4 surplus points would be recorded on the unit roster, so it would only need to sustain 6 points of damage on the next round to lose a further counter.

Counter Hit Points are determined simply by working out the average Hit Dice of every unit member and multiplying this by the number of creatures per counter, modified as follows:

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Majority of unit has Constitution modifier | +/-10% per Con modifier |
| Majority of unit has 3 hp or less | -25% |

INITIATIVE

This is the Initiative modifier (calculated in the usual manner, using Dexterity modifiers, etc.) of the majority of the unit.

Attacks, Damage, Armour Class, and Armour

These are determined by simple majority — the weapons and armour the majority of the unit are armed with are assumed to be carried by all for the purposes of the Unit Roster and unit combat. The majority

of the unit are also used to determine base attack bonus, Strength modifier to damage, and Dexterity modifier to Armour Class.

FEATS, ATTRIBUTES AND CLASS FEATURES

Any unit that has a majority of members with one or more identical Feats, Attributes, or class features will have them listed on its Unit Roster. The following Feats have no effect upon mass combat and so are never listed, however, no matter how many unit members possess them. Members of the unit may still use such Feats individually when not using the BCSC. Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Disarm, Improved Sunder, Improved Trip, Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack.

ABILITY SCORES & SAVES

Once again, the ability scores and saves of the majority of the unit are noted down on the Unit Roster.

RESOLVING UNIT COMBAT

Unless otherwise stated below, all combat rules detailed in Chapter 12: Combat apply equally to units. Unit combat occurs whenever two units meet in battle and engage in combat. A full summary of unit combat is presented here.

ROUNDS

Unit combat is broken up into 6 second rounds as usual.

INITIATIVE

Before the first round of unit combat begins, each unit involved makes an Initiative check. An Initiative check is a Dexterity check (1d20 + unit's Dexterity modifier). If the unit's leader has the Aura of Command Attribute, a +1 bonus per Rank of Aura of Command is applied to the unit's Initiative check.

ATTACK OPTIONS

When attacking, a unit has three basic options:

Charge: A unit not currently engaged in melee combat may charge any enemy with this option.

Attack: A unit may make either melee or ranged attacks. Units that can strike more than once each round may do so with this attack option.

Withdraw: If involved in melee combat, a unit may attempt to withdraw.

UNIT CHARGE OPTION

Any unit not currently engaged in melee combat may charge an enemy unit. In doing so, the unit gains a +2 charge bonus to its attack roll. The unit will also suffer a -2 penalty to its Armour Class for one round, however. The charge option is the only way in which a unit may initiate melee combat with another.

UNIT ATTACK OPTION

Units may make a melee attack on every round in which one of their faces is in contact with the enemy. If the unit is using a weapon that allows it a long reach, then "in contact" means within weapon range. They may make a ranged attack on any round in which an enemy of which the unit is aware is within range of their weapons.

When resolving ranged attacks, only those counters who have direct line of sight to the enemy may attack. The GM may allow certain weapons to attack by indirect fire, including bows (but not crossbows) and mortars. Counters armed with indirect fire weapons may attack even if they do not have direct line of sight to the enemy.

The usual rules for attacking and defending apply, including Size Modifiers for attacking creatures of sizes other than Medium. There is no specific Size Modifier for the size of the unit, though this can be significant in Outmatching (see page 154).

UNIT WITHDRAW OPTION

A unit may choose to withdraw if the fight runs against them, either to regroup before launching another attack or to attempt to break off from combat altogether. The unit must declare it is withdrawing as a

full action, which may not be combined with any attacks or movement. The following round it must move away, or it is not considered to have successfully withdrawn and is still in combat.

INDIVIDUAL UNIT MEMBERS

Any unit member not actively engaged in unit combat may act as normal, following all the usual combat rules. This includes making attacks of their own, casting spells, or any other action permissible.

DAMAGE

Units are dealt damage in terms of Counter Hit Points, which are effectively the number of Hit Dice of each entire counter in the unit. A counter reduced to 0 Counter Hit Points is considered vanquished, though not all of its members are necessarily slain; a unit reduced to zero counters is similarly vanquished.

To calculate damage, roll the unit's base damage a number of times equal to the number of counters that were involved in the attack and apply it to all the defending counters. For example, if there were 8 counters attacking at a base damage of 1d6+1, you would roll 8d6+8 to find the damage. It will be immediately apparent that a large force attacking a small one from all sides will quickly cut the smaller force to ribbons.

At the GM's discretion, not all of the members of the unit may have been slain, with most simply having fled the field — typically 50% to 80% will have escaped, unless the enemy employs light cavalry to hunt them down as they flee. Survivors of a vanquished unit will not be available under any circumstances until after the end of the battle.

Following an attack in which counters are lost, the attacker decides which of the defender's counters to remove. He may only remove those counters that were in range of the attack. If more damage has been inflicted than there were counters in range to receive it, the additional damage is wasted. On the defender's turn, counters may be moved into position to reform the face of the unit.

Counters that are removed are placed into the dead pile, or if you are not using physical counters or miniatures, keep tally of in the dead column.

OUTMATCHING

When one unit heavily outmatches another, either in terms of numbers or ability, they inflict an incredible amount of damage upon their enemies whilst suffering very little in return. The table below is used to grant attack and morale modifiers to units who heavily outmatch their enemies, or are outmatched in return.

To calculate the outmatching modifier for a given combat, look at how many counters from each side are within melee combat range of the other side. Assume that any counter that can attack does attack. Next, compare the number of attackers to the number of defenders and adjust the attack rolls accordingly. For example, if ten attackers are facing ten defenders, there will be no modifier, but if one side has surged over another so that there are three times as many attackers able to reach the enemy as there are enemy units, apply the suitable modifiers.

The morale modifier is handled differently. To calculate morale, compare the sizes of each army involved in the battle (i.e. the size of every single unit on the field).

TABLE A-12: OUTMATCHING

| Outmatching Group Size is... | Attack Roll Modifier | Morale Modifier |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Ten or more times enemy's | +5 | +5 |
| Five times enemy's | +3 | +3 |
| Three times enemy's | +2 | +2 |
| Twice enemy's | +1 | +1 |
| 50% of enemy's | -1 | -1 |
| 33% of enemy's | -2 | -2 |
| 20% of enemy's | -3 | -3 |
| 10% or less of enemy's | -5 | -5 |

SAVING THROWS

You may need to use saving throws in the mass combat system for various different purposes, most commonly the avoidance of magical attacks. Saving throws work as follows: subtract the appropriate saving throw bonus from the DC of the saving throw, subtract one from the result, and multiply the total by five. The result is the percentage of the counters in the area of effect that failed their saving throws. No less than 5% and no more than 95% can fail, whatever the result of the calculation.

Example: A unit of 10 counters, each counter comprising 10 dwarf warriors, is affected by a fireball spell cast by Issa, a 7th Level Dynamic Sorcerer (Cha 19). The DC is 10 + 3 (fireball spell level) + 4 (ability bonus) = 17. The unit's Reflex save bonus is +2. $17 - 2 - 1 = 14$; $14 \times 5 = 70\%$, so 7 of the 10 counters fail their saves and are dealt 7d6 damage; the remaining 3 counters are dealt half damage.

Issa rolls 25 points of damage. This deals a total of 175 damage (25×7) for the counters who did not save and 36 points (half of 25 rounded down and multiplied by 3) for those who did, for a grand total of 211 counter Hit Points. The dwarf counters each have 33 counter Hit Points, so Issa's fireball incinerates 6 out of the 10 counters completely. The remaining 13 damage (211 minus 6×33) is dealt to one of the surviving counters.

If the creatures in the unit have armour that is effective against the damage dealt by the spell, deduct this from the initial damage (25 in this case), not the total.

MAGICAL ATTACKS

Spellcasters on the field are always treated as individuals, never as units. You cannot have a team of ten sorcerers hurling ten fireballs at once.

A spell that successfully kills or incapacitates a single creature within a counter will reduce the Counter Hit Points by the number of HD the creature had.

OTHER MAGIC IN THE BCSC

Spells that cause effects other than damage (such as bless or bane) will only provide their bonus or penalty to a unit if the majority of its members can be affected. If only a minority are affected by the spell, it provides no benefit or penalty in unit combat.

Spells that produce effects other than damage can place a single unit member or a group of counters in the unit into a given condition. These conditions are applied on the battlefield as follows:

Any spell that causes mass death, such as cloudkill or power word: kill, sends affected creatures to the dead pile.

Any spell that renders the victims unable to defend themselves, such as sleep or stinking cloud, will kill the counters: though the individuals who make up the counters may still be alive, they do not represent any kind of threat for the remainder of the battle. At the GM's discretion, for added realism crippled counters may be left on the battlefield, but turned upside down or otherwise marked; a unit may take a standard action to perform a coup de grace on any incapacitated counters within reach, adding them to the dead pile.

Any spell that interferes with the victims' ability to fight but does not leave them defenceless, such as entangle, confusion or power word: blind, causes the affected counters to become incapacitated for the duration of the spell. The GM should adjudicate these effects but a circumstance bonus of +2 to any attacks made against the incapacitated counters is a good rule of thumb.

Fear effects, as well as causing the affected counters to flee, prompt an immediate morale check from any members of the same unit.

TURNING UNDEAD

Clerics or other classes who can turn undead may do so normally. Calculate the total number of Hit Dice affected and deduct this total directly from the undead's Counter Hit Points.

MORALE

Very few units fight to the death. As the enemy swarms over barricades and defences, long-time comrades start to fall and swarms of arrows rain down, many warriors choose to throw down their weapons rather than risk a cruel death.

Morale checks are made in unit combat in circumstances outlined in Table A-13: Morale Checks.

TABLE A-13: MORALE CHECKS

| Morale Circumstance | Morale Check DC |
|---|-----------------|
| Unit Size reduced to half of original score | 15 |
| Unit Size reduced to one quarter of original score | 20 |
| Unit Size reduced to one third of current score in a single round | 10 |
| Unit suffers more damage in a round than enemy in melee combat | 15 |
| Unit is hit by enemy of three times or greater Unit Size | 15 |

| Morale | Modifier |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Unit Leader | + Leader's Charisma modifier |
| Morale modifier* | +/- Morale modifier |
| Unit Leader with Aura of Command | + Aura of Command Ranks |
| Player Character actions | See page 156 |
| Elite unit** | +2 |
| Mercenary unit | -1 |
| Enslaved unit *** | -4 |

* Morale modifiers may come from any source, not just those listed on the outmarching table above. For example, the bless spell grants a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls — however, in unit combat, it will also grant a bonus to Morale checks.

** To be classed as elite, a unit must fulfil the following criteria: average member has Base Attack Bonus of +4 or higher; unit must have been together for at least one year; all members of the unit must be professional full-time soldiers; unit must have some in-character rationale for its elite status — perhaps it is the King's personal bodyguard, or a heavy cavalry unit whose members are drawn entirely from a particularly military social class (e.g. knights or samurai).

*** Includes any unit whose members have been forced into combat against their will.

If a Morale check is failed, the unit automatically makes a withdraw action in its next round. Thereafter it attempts to leave the battlefield at maximum speed. A unit must pass a Morale check at DC 20 in order to rally and make another attack option in the following round. Characters are under no obligation to flee but from this point, they will be fighting on their own!

UNIT TYPES

There are four different unit types used in the BCSC to reflect differing capabilities and special skills upon the battlefield. The proper use of such units can ensure victory for a general, even in the face of overwhelming opposition.

INFANTRY

Infantry units form the core of most forces and comprise any units that do not meet the requirements to be archers, cavalry, or skirmishers. Such units receive no special bonuses or penalties within the BCSC.

ARCHERS

Any unit armed with a ranged weapon which does not have the Short Range defect, and not wearing heavy armour, is designated as an archer unit. Archer units are able to keep their distance from the main line of battle and rain missiles upon their enemies from a distance.

CAVALRY

Any unit riding any kind of mount into battle is designated as cavalry. Cavalry units are fast moving forces in the battlefield, able to attack enemy units almost at will. To calculate the counter Hit Points of cavalry units, compare the Hit Dice of the mount and the rider and add half of the lower rating to the higher. For example, a 2nd Level warrior mounted on a heavy warhorse would add half of the warrior's Hit Dice to

those of the horse, as the horse has 4 Hit Dice. The counter Hit Points would therefore be a base of 4 for the horse's Hit Dice plus 30% for its Constitution modifier (i.e. +1.2) plus 2 points for the warrior's Hit Dice, then multiplied by 10 for the number of units in the counter, for a total of 72 counter Hit Points.

Mecha suits costing 400 Mecha Points (OBM rank 1) or less and operating in units can usually be treated as Cavalry and count as a 1 HD/100 Mecha Points "mount." More powerful mecha do not usually form units and are dealt with individually (see Player Characters, page 156).

SKIRMISHERS

Any unit wearing no or light armour may be designated as a skirmish unit, taking to the field in a small dispersed formation that allows them to operate with great flexibility. Skirmish units must remain in skirmish formation at all times. A skirmish unit gains a +2 competence bonus on all Initiative checks. No skirmish unit may have more than 4 counters at any one time. Cavalry units with light horses or warhorses wearing no barding may also be designated as skirmish units and gain these bonuses and penalties. Such units are known as skirmishing cavalry.

WAR MACHINES AND MECHA

War machines of all kinds, from catapults and trebuchets all the way up to sorcerous power armour and gigantic golems, are built with the mecha rules as usual.

Usually each mecha should be treated as a separate entity on the battlefield, rather than being formed into units. This is a better reflection of the size and typical military function of mecha, which are more likely to fight individually than as units.

It may be appropriate for certain mecha types to be treated as units, however, particularly if they are golems or other automata, or mecha suits that enhance the power of individual warriors rather than stomping about the battlefield taking on armies single-handed. Mecha units are treated as cavalry, though particularly slow-moving mecha (less than 30 mph speed) should be treated as infantry.

SIEGE ENGINES

Most mundane, medieval-style war machines cost 200 Mecha Points or less, and so can be bought with Personal Gear (two major items of Personal Gear). A ballista is given here as an example; generating similar statistics for catapults, trebuchets and cannon is simple enough if desired.

BALLISTA ATTRIBUTES

Size: Large
Hit Points: 25 [30]
Operator: 1 [10]
Armour: 5 [25]
Defence: 9 (1d20) [0]
Land Speed: 2 mph [5]
Handling: -1/-1
Defects: Flammable [-5], Service Crew (two horses or four humans, required for any use of land speed) [-6], Open [-10], Road Vehicle [-1]

BOLT

Damage: 4d6
Range Increment: 120 feet
Notes: Armour Penetrating, Crew Served, Slow Firing [14]
Crew: 2 (one operator, one loader)

Cost: 62 Mecha Points (1 major item of Personal Gear)

PLAYER CHARACTERS

The characters should always be at the centre of the action, in BCSC as much as in a regular game. Anything they can do in a standard combat round could also be done in a BCSC round.

UNIT COMBAT

Characters — and major NPCs — are never counted as part of the unit when calculating the Unit Roster. They always act independently, even if mere foot soldiers. Combat for characters in melee combat is handled in exactly the same way as presented in Chapter 12. They are, however, permitted to attack enemy units.

If two units are in combat with one another, characters may choose to aid one side. To do so, they engage in combat with one or more members of the enemy unit, using the normal combat rules given in Chapter 12. Everyone involved in the combat acts in Initiative order, so the characters may have the chance to act before anyone else. If they manage to slay or subdue any of their enemies, however, then the Hit Dice of the creatures they overcome are immediately deducted from the Unit Hit Point score.

For example: whilst leading his heroic unit to attack the mercenary unit Blood Hammers in a desperate charge, Baiko the Samurai, rolling the highest Initiative of the combat, attacks a big mercenary as the rest of his men engage the rest of the enemy. The Unit Hit Points of the Blood Hammers (who are predominantly 4th Level samurai themselves) is 87. Baiko dispatches his foe in one round of combat. Thus, the mercenaries lose 4 Unit Hit Points immediately, bringing them down to a total of 83. The units now fight, in remaining Initiative order.

UNIT MORALE

Player characters are immune to the effects of unit morale, as detailed on page 155, though units are likely to take a dim view of characters who continue to fight as they try to surrender. However, many of a character's actions in combat will have a direct influence on how his or her unit fights. The table below lists some of the more common actions a character may attempt to boost the morale of his or her unit. The GM is welcome to add others as the need arises; a character should always be awarded for bravery and will certainly earn the respect of the unit. The morale bonus earned applies to the unit's attack and damage rolls for the rest of the combat, as well as to morale rolls made on the Table A-13.

TABLE A-14: MORALE MODIFIERS

| Character Action | Morale Bonus to Unit |
|--|----------------------|
| Slaying enemy unit leader | +2 |
| Slaying enemy officer/sergeant | +1 |
| Destroying enemy war machine | +1 |
| Fleeing battle | -4 |
| Slaying 10% or more of enemy unit in one round | +1 |

GAINING EXPERIENCE

Experience point awards can be difficult to calculate in mass battles, so for simplicity the following system is used.

Characters gain experience as normal for the creatures they themselves defeat. For example, if they personally lead a unit and end up slaying the enemy leader and six of his unit, they receive an experience award as normal based on the leader and six men, even if their own unit butchered everyone else in the unit.

Story awards are given at the GM's discretion to characters who lead entire units or armies and are victorious.

Note that defeating a unit does not necessarily mean slaying every last warrior. Capturing a unit without a single weapon being used will earn a story award, as will outsmarting or sneaking round an enemy. The GM should be flexible in granting experience points and reward characters for all their achievements.

UNIT EXPERIENCE

In a long-running military campaign, the GM should consider allowing units to gradually advance, perhaps at the rate of around one Level per five to ten battles, so long as the majority of each unit is brought through every battle alive.