

# HORIZON WARS

SCIENCE-FICTION COMBINED-ARMS WARGAMING

## THE MAUL



As the dust settled on Mars and Venus, following the exhausted peace that consumed those worlds once Earth's media empires stopped funding hostilities, Earth began its final slide towards the strange sequence of events that would reach their apex with the Ammit Collision.

Arguably, the rise of the Maul was an early warning sign, but no one was paying any attention: everyone was far too busy watching the high-octane thrills and massive adrenaline impacts of the great sporting craze of the Twenty-Third Century!

The streets of Earth's hypercities were awash with former mercenaries, used to living it large on their mediadollars who had enjoyed unprecedented levels of celebrity worship for putting their lives on the line in the Colonial Wars. Bored combat junkies tore up the streets, swelling the already-endless ranks of the unemployable with battalions of violent professionals with obsolescent skills and a passion for using them. Exactly where the Maul began, it was hard to be sure, but the most reliable account suggests that the brief craze for Colonial Wars biopic holomovies put to questionable use hundreds of unwanted mechs and other pieces of military materiel in their extended and explicit action sequences. But, between takes, the veteran pilots stayed tuned up with informal games in which old wrecks were kicked and punched around the battlefield sets.

A handful of such events were filmed by curious fans and released into the aethyrnet where they became a sensation.

It was one such veteran who first saw the potential and organized the first Mechaball match for a paying audience – an illegal event, staged in the ruins of one of the abandoned cities of Earth's wilderness, which had slowly staged a magnificent return to form after the devastation of the Burning.

In sporting terms, that first match was a disaster of unclear rules, cheating and unnecessary violence. But in ratings terms, it was a spectacular success, raking in billions and, inevitably, attracting the attention both

struggling media companies and the renascent governments.

“Mechaball” was quickly contracted to “Maul” in casual use, and the term was embraced by the new league organizers

## THE BALL



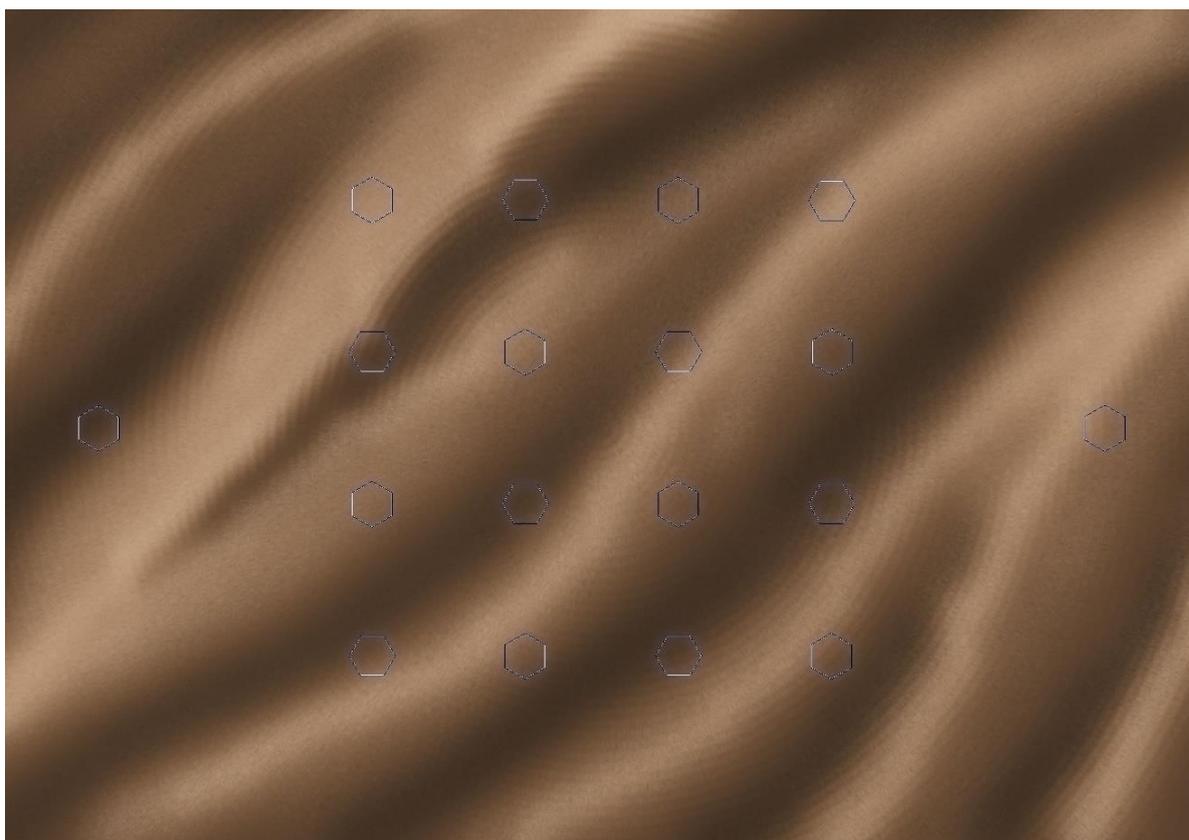
Unique to the Maul is the ball. Weighing in at around 3.5 tonnes, it is several times the height of a human and lethally dangerous to anyone not in a mech. Balls are often customized to look like a monstrous head, rolling around the field.

The ball counts as a P1 vehicle element except that it doesn't receive action tokens and only acts as a result of being pushed or hit by another element. It is immune to all damage and cannot be destroyed.

A moving ball that contacts another element other than the active element counts as charging.

## THE FIELD

The Maulfield has a design as shown below. It is A2 sized, and instructions for making your own field are at the end of these rules. Alternatively, you can buy one from Precinct Omega. Don't worry: if you'd rather have a looser kind of game, see the **Amateur Maul** rules below.



Crucially, the Maulfield has goal pits at each end and 16 deployment points in a square at the centre of the field. Each team controls one goal pit and if the ball comes into contact with any part of a pit, a goal is scored against whichever team controlled that pit.

## NEW ACTIONS

Being a sport, the Maul offers elements a range of new actions they can use in play. Some are only available to elements with special upgrades and are described in the Maul Upgrades section at the end of these rules, but the following are available to all mechs:

*Put the boot in!* The mech kicks, punches or otherwise throws the ball. Nominate a point in the forward arc of the mech within 12" and roll a d12. The ball will move a number of inches towards the target point equal to the d12 result plus the mech's P, stopping at the end of that distance, if it reaches the target point or contacts another mech.

*Body check!* The mech slams into an opponent – not with full force but with the intent of stopping them, with emphasis. A body check is performed instead of a *charge* or *counter-charge* and can also be performed as a reaction. Resolve the body check like a charge but, instead of damage, the losing mech is *checked* and must perform a *recover* action before performing any other action.

The following action is available to all elements:

*Drive on!* The element pushes the ball, under control, in the direction it needs to go. An element in contact with the ball may perform a *cautious* move and, at the end of the move, place the ball anywhere in contact with the active element.

### Interception!

Note that, because the body check can be performed as a reaction, it may also be performed against the ball just like a counter-charge.



## THE TEAMS

Each team has four mechs: one P3, two P2s and one P1. One must be nominated as the *team captain* who gains the *chain of command* rule. The mechs have the same stat points and restrictions as described in the *Horizon Wars* core rulebook but may only use the Maul Upgrades section at the end of these rules.

## DEPLOYMENT

The players roll off and whichever rolled higher starts by placing a mech on one of the centre grid hexes until all the mechs are placed. The player who rolled higher then places the ball on one of the remaining hexes.

When a goal is scored, the player who didn't score places the ball on any unoccupied centre hex.

## FIRST TURN

The player who won the roll-off decides which player will have the first activation once all elements have been placed.

## GAME LENGTH & VICTORY

A Maul battle is six turns long and the notional winner is the side that has scored the most goals by the end of turn six.

# AMATEUR MAUL



The amateur game is based upon the same essential rules and principles of the pro-game, but in a far less structured environment. In fact, in the recovering natural landscape of the post-Burning Earth, humanity is concentrated in thousands of city-states: vast urban mountains designed to be self-sustaining, self-reliant conurbations. Those allowed to leave these to explore the wilderness beyond the cities' limits are carefully restricted – mostly to scientific researchers. But there simply isn't space to play amateur Maul matches inside the city limits, for the most part. As a consequence, the majority of amateur matches are illegal, and amateurs cannot be picky when it comes to playing fields.

Mechs are still an essential part of the game, but not everyone can afford a mech, so players can find themselves in any sort of vehicle or even running around the pitch as mere infantry (an option usually reserved for only the most fanatical participants). Even the mechs are invariably military cast-offs.

The combination of a reliance on military hardware and the lack of legal oversight means that shooting opponents is a preferred tactic. Shooting the ball is frowned upon.

# PLAYING IN THE AMATEUR LEAGUES

As far less structured affairs, amateur matches permit a good deal more variety.

## The Teams

By default, the FC of a team is 8, but players can agree to larger or smaller games at their discretion.

Each team must have a minimum of two mechs that can be of any Presence (even supermechs are permitted). One must be nominated as the *team captain* who gains the *chain of command* rule. The mechs have the same stat points and restrictions as described in the *Horizon Wars* core rulebook and have access to the relevant upgrade tables. They may use the Maul Upgrades table found at the end of these rules, but must use the *amateur* cost listed.

## The Maulfield

The amateur game is played on a field of any size and shape, but a 4'x4' is typical. The players should set up the terrain on the table first, then roll off. Whichever player rolls higher picks one side of the table on which to place his or her scoring pit. The pit is a 40mm circle that must be placed with its centre 8" from the table edge and at least 12" from either side. The scoring pit must be in open terrain.

## The Ball

The ball begins in the exact centre of the field which must be open terrain at ground level. After a goal is scored, the ball is placed by the player who didn't score on any ground-level open terrain within 6" of the centre of the field.

## Deployment

Starting with the player who won the roll-off, each player places his or her elements, one by one, on the pitch. Elements may be placed anywhere on the field at least 6" from either scoring pit and at least 12" from the ball.

# THE LEAGUES

There are both amateur and professional Maul Leagues and, professional or amateur, there are vast sums of money to be made from them by sponsors, organizers, betting syndicates and, occasionally, even players.

League games are bloody grudge matches that make the difference between glory and failure. Success is about more than just goals, because the sponsors put money behind not just goals but behind the team that delivers goals *and* carnage amongst their opponents.

## LEAGUE POSITION

After each match, victory is worth 3 league points; a draw is worth 1 and a loss is worth 0. Divide the number of league points by the number of matches played and place the teams in order of this result to obtain the league position. If any teams are tied, they are ordered by the number of goals scored. If this result is tied, the teams are neck and neck. Any teams that are neck and neck at the end of a season must have a play-off to establish who holds the higher place in the league at the end of the season.

## SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship is paid in mediadollars (md).

- ⚙ **Victory**      Winning the match is worth 10md.
- ⚙ **Goals**        A goal is worth 5md.
- ⚙ **Damage**      Every point of damage inflicted on an opponent is worth 1md.
- ⚙ **Destruction**    Every opponent destroyed is worth 3md.

A team that finishes a match with less than 8 points is out of the league, regardless of the final score. They cannot afford to continue playing!

Before any match, a team can trade in 10 md for 1 point which can be spent on upgrades.

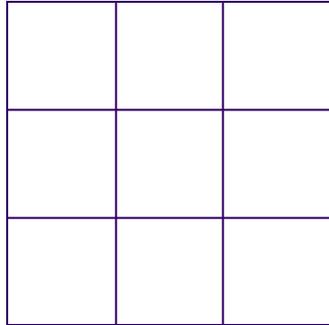
## SPONSORSHIP

The mechs and vehicles in this document are from **Strato Minis Studios**. The ball is a ballmonsters miniatures from **Precinct Omega**.

# THE MAULFIELD

To make your own maulfield, start with a piece of A2 paper, card or similar product. The dimensions of an A2 sheet are 42.0 x 59.4cm or 16.53" x 23.39".

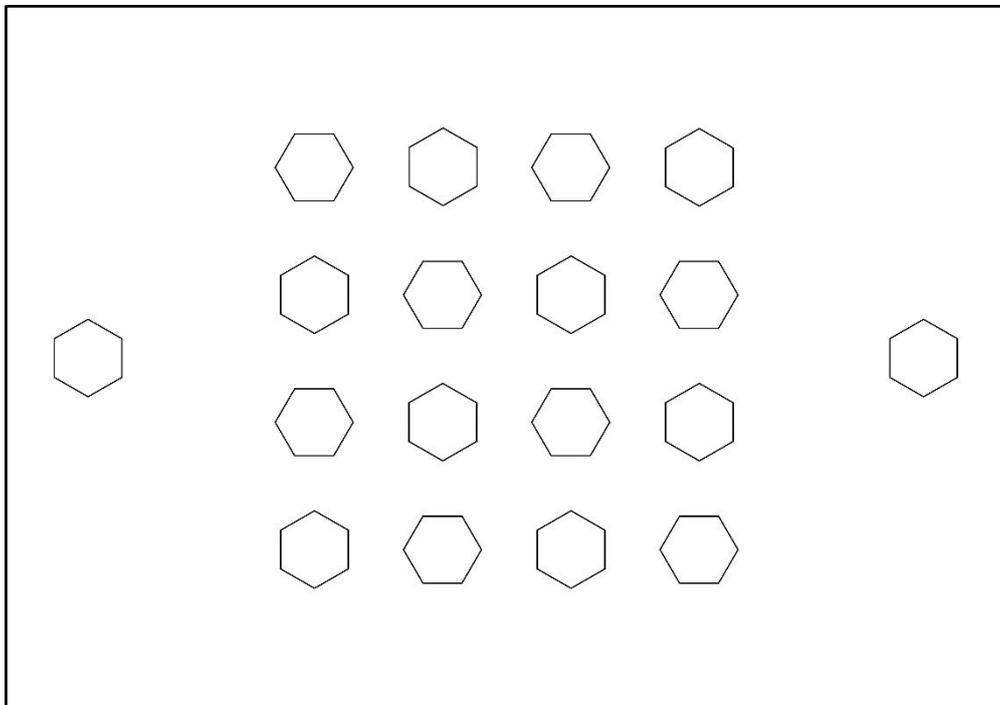
Onto this sheet, centred as precisely as possible, draw a square 3x3 grid with sides 9" long, like this:



Then, using a coin or miniatures base as a template, and starting at the bottom, left-hand corner, draw a hexagon centred on each corner. The hexagons should be aligned with the grid, with each hexagon rotated 30° from its neighbour. That probably sounds really confusing, so just look at the picture below and it should be clear.

Finally, 3" from each short side of the sheet and as centred as possible, draw two more hexes, each aligned with a face pointing towards the centre of the mat.

The result should look like this:



*NB: The hexagons here are twice the size they should be to make them appear clearer*

# MAUL UPGRADES

Upgrade	Pro Cost	Amateur Cost	Effect
<b>Thrower</b> The mech is equipped to scoop and hurl the ball with force.	1	2	If the mech is in contact with the ball, it may perform a <i>throw</i> action. This is performed exactly like the <i>put the boot in</i> action except that it ignores all obstacles between the mech and the end point of the action. This upgrade may be taken more than once. For each time it is taken (including the first) add +1 to the d12 roll.
<b>Catcher</b> The mech is equipped to catch the ball and carry it.	1	2	If the mech is the target of a <i>put the boot in</i> or <i>throw</i> action and the ball reaches it, then it may immediately make an F test targeting the active mech. This is not an action and doesn't cost an action token or provoke reactions. If the test is passed, the mech is immediately carrying the ball as if it had performed a <i>hands on</i> action.
<b>Runner</b> The mech has powerful limbs and hand analogues that allow it to pick up and carry the ball.	1	2	If the mech is in contact with the ball, it may perform a <i>hands on</i> action. This is an automatic action and requires no test. The ball moves with the mech and no other mech can count as being in contact with the ball. The mech may drop the ball as an action, placing the ball anywhere in contact with its base. If the mech is damaged or <i>checked</i> it drops the ball and the opponent places the ball.
<b>Blitzer</b> This mech is designed for messing up the opposition and not much else.	1	1	If the mech charges or counter-charges an opposing element it doubles any bonus for movement. In addition, after making the charge roll, the blitzer may re-roll any of its dice once. The second roll must be accepted.