

ROBOTS

(1.0) INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Third World War lasted for just over four weeks and covered most of Europe and Asia. The primary weapon was nerve gas, and the most immediate result was the destruction of the world's conventional armies.

The Fourth World War (as historians have since named it) began on the day the Third World War ended. It last just over four hours. The primary weapons were thermo-nuclear, and the immediate result was the destruction of the world's cities.

The Fifth World War (again, as historians have since named it) began on the same day that the Fourth World War began and ended. It lasted almost four years. The primary weapons were bacteriological, and the final result was the destruction of every living human being (and most of the higher forms of life) on Earth.

But in spite of three successive wars in four years, man had managed to survive himself. The orbiting fortresses had fallen during the war (with spectacular crashes), but the colonies on Mars and the Moon and the deep probes to Titan and the Asteroids had survived. Two hundred years after the end of the Fifth World War, man returned to Earth.

He was, after two centuries, a considerably different sort of man than before. To him the Earth was not home, but only a colossal junk pile to be salvaged and mined. Home was on Mars, Titan, or the Moon. Man was no longer strong enough to walk the surface of his former planet. The light gravity of space had taken its toll. So had the sterile atmospheres of the space probes and colonies. Man, as he returned from space, could not survive the germs he had left on Earth and their mutated descendants. Man's visits to Earth would be aboard gigantic mining "factory ships." The actual mining and salvage operations would be done by the industrial Robots that had served man so well on Mars and the Moon, while the crews remained safely within their ships.

But the hundred thousand or so members of the human race quickly fell to the oldest and most distasteful of man's habits — War. There were only so many good salvage sites left (where there had been high technology installations before the war, but where bombs had not fallen), and man knew no higher law than himself. For the man who had returned from space was neither communist nor democratic. He was a corporate man.

In the last days of the old human race, the military masterminds had decided that the moon had almost no military value (and anything beyond it even less). It had fallen to the corporations to reach for the planets, beckoned on by the most powerful siren of all – PROFIT. The Trans-Lunar Consortium, the Ares Corporation, 3M (Martian Mining and Manufacturing), the Phobos Company, Icarus Limited, Titan Industries, Diemos Enterprises, Ceres Roebuck and Company, Saturn Semi-Conductor Syndicate, General Missiles, Pan-Martian Consortium, lo Diodes, Europa Games, Plutonian Cryogenics, SPI (Solar Paladium Inc.), AH (Asteroid Hardware), OSG (Outer Space Gambling), ITT (Interplanetary Transportation and Telecomunications), and the Belt Mining Group were only the largest of three dozen corporations that had gone to the planets and thrived there.

And so began the Sixth World War. The industrial Robots first used the powerful mining lasers to attack each other. The men who operated the factory ships quickly began to salvage all forms of weapons from Earth and arm their mechanical servants. Beyond the unwritten law that any fighting would be conducted on Earth and not in space (brought on by the strong desire to keep their homes pure of the contamination of war — and of the Earth), there were no rules. There were only successful salvage operators — and those who had returned too fully to their native soil.

(2.0) INTRODUCTION TO THE GAME

(2.1) *ROBOTS!* is a tactical level game portraying combat between various corporations using armed Robots. The mapsheet represents an area typical of where such fighting took place. The die cut playing pieces are used to represent the Robots (and their various components). Generally, a given Robot will consist of a chassis counter (either Track, "Droid," or Hover); one to three weapons counters; and perhaps an electronic warfare, drill or suicide counter. The rules have been extensively cross-referenced to aid the players.

(2.11) Players should unfold the mapsheet and place it on a flat surface. It can be made to lie flat by backfolding the creases, by securing the corners with small pieces of tape, or by placing a sheet or glass or plexiglass over it. Players should generally familiarize themselves with the map, the die cut playing pieces, and the various charts included with the game. It is not necessary to understand these items at this time.

(2.2) THE PLAYERS

(2.21) Each Player represents one of the great corporations of space on a salvage mission to a particularly rich salvage area on Earth. Each Player will start with an equal number of "production points" (More on those later). He may use these points to create an initial force of Robots

to suit his own style of play. The object of the game is to establish control over the general salvage area (by destroying the other Player's Robots and factory ships) so that he may conduct more extensive slavage operations without interruption.

For purposes of the game, the two Players will be referred to as "Player A" and "Player B." These designations are important to the Sequence Of Play (3.0). The Players will determine which of them is "Player A" and which is "Player B" in the game starting sequence (10.1). Players may, if they wish, assume the persona of any of the great corporations. Members of a group may wish to assume "control" of a given corporation and use it repeatedly in a series of playings. A campaign game based on this concept is briefly outlined in (11.0).

(2.22) GENERAL COURSE OF PLAY

During each turn, both Players will determine what resource hexes (4.2) they control, calculate available production points (4.1), produce new Robots (4.6), move them across the map (6.0), and engage in combat (8.0) with Robots belonging to the opposing Players. The objective is to gain undisputed control of the salvage site by forcing the opposing Player to evacuate his factory ships or by destroying them. This can best be accomplished by gaining superiority in ground combat forces (combat Robots). During the course of the game, drill modules (6.2) may be used to move underground, electronic modules may be used to influence combat (8.42), and nuclear modules (8.41) may be used to directly destroy enemy factories.

(2.3) UNIT COUNTERS AND HOW TO READ THEM (2.31) HOW TO READ THE UNITS



(2.32) DEFINITION OF TERMS

Attack strength: Expressed in attack strength points. This is the basic strength of the weapons module when attacking. The attack strengths of various modules that are firing at the same target may sometimes be combined. See Combat (8.1).

Range: Expressed in hexes. The number of hexes across which a given weapons module may project its attack strength. This may be affected by Line of Sight (8.12).

Movement allowance: Expressed in movement points. The basic number of hexes that a given unit may enter during a given turn. This is expressed in terms of desert terrain hexes; other types usually cost more than one point per hex.

Module: A piece of mechanical and electronic equipment used in the construction of a Robot. Each counter in the game represents a module. Several modules are assembled (stacked) to create a Robot.

Unit: A Robot or a factory.

(2.33) COLORS

One set of counters is colored blue, and the other rust. Each Player choses one of these sets to represent his units.

(2.34) COUNTER LISTING

The counter sheet includes two identical (except for color) sets of 54 counters. Each of these sets includes:

- 6 Tracked chassis
- 4 Droid chassis
- 4 Hover chassis
- 2 Drill modules
- 2 Drill "submerged" markers
- 9 Gun modules

- 9 Laser modules
- 9 Rocket modules
- 3 Factory counters (factory ships)
- 1 Suicide Robot counter
- 5 Electronic warfare modules

(2.4) MAPSHEET

The mapsheet portrays an area of typical terrain somewhere on the planet Earth. Superimposed on the mapsheet is a hexagonal grid, which divides the map into many small areas known as "hexes." These hexes are used to regularize the position and movement of the playing pieces. Various types of terrain (mountains, rough, lake, desert, and river) are shown on the map using various colored symbols. Additionally, there are three sets of "resource hexes" marked on the map. Only one of these sets of resource hexes will be used in any given scenario.

(2.5) PARTS INVENTORY

A complete copy of *ROBOTS* / includes a rulebook, one 16 x 20 inch mapsheet, and 108 die cut playing pieces. Not included but required for play are a six-sided die and writing materials.

(2.6) SCALE

Each hex on the mapsheet represents an area about half a mile across from side to side. Each turn represents about ten minutes of elapsed time. Each counter represents a factory ship or one of the component modules of a Robot.

(3.0) SEQUENCE OF PLAY

(3.1) WEATHER DETERMINATION PHASE: Players may use the optional weather rules (6.4) to determine the weather conditions for the entire turn.

(3.2) RESOURCE CALCULATION AND ALLOCATION PHASE (Mutual): Both Players calculate the number of resource points they have by multiplying the number of friendly resource hexes they hold (see (4.0) factories) by the number of friendly, active (non-decoy) factories.

(3.3) MUTUAL CONSTRUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT PHASE: Both Players expend points for building new Robots. The Player holding the greatest number of resource hexes overall chooses who will deploy first. If both Players hold exactly the same number, both Players roll a die, and the Player with the higher die roll number chooses who will deploy first. (In case of a tie, roll again).

Both Players now deploy new Robots. The Player selected to deploy first places one Robot in accordance with the initial deployment rules (10.21). Then his opponent does the same. They alternate in this fashion until all new Robots constructed during this turn have been deployed.

(3.4) PLAYER B's DRILL MOVEMENT PHASE (Optional): When playing with the optional Drill movement rules, Player B's Drill moves first.

(3.41) PLAYER A'S REACTION: If one of the "B" Drills surfaced at the end of its movement, Player A may fire on the surfacing Drill with any units within range. The attack strength of units firing is divided in half, round fractions down. Firing units may still move in their turn and attack in the normal combat Phase.

(3.42) PLAYER B's DRILL COMBAT PHASE: All surfaced Drill Robots owned by Player B may (but are not required to) attack Player A's units within range.

(3.5) PLAYER A'S NORMAL MOVEMENT PHASE: Player A now moves his Robots within the limitations of the rules on movement.

(3.6) PLAYER B'S NORMAL COMBAT PHASE: Player B now uses his units to attack any Player A units within range, within the limits of the rules on combat. Note that drills which fired in (3.42) may not fire again in this turn.

(3.7) PLAYER A's DRILL MOVEMENT PHASE: Player A now moves any or all of his subsurface Drill Robots in accordance with the movement rules.

(3.71) PLAYER B's REACTION PHASE: If one of the "A" Drills surfaced at the end of its movement, Player B may fire on the surfacing Drill with any units within range. The attack strength of units firing is divided in half, round fractions down. Firing units may still move in their turn and attack in the normal combat Phase.

(3.72) PLAYER A's DRILL COMBAT PHASE: All surfaced Drill Robots owned by Player A may (but are not required to) attack "B" units within range.

(3.8) PLAYER B'S NORMAL MOVEMENT PHASE: Player B now moves his Robots within the limitations of the rules on movement.

(3.9) PLAYER A's NORMAL COMBAT PHASE: Player A now uses his units to attack any "B" units within range within the rules on Combat. Note that Drills which fired in (3.72) may not fire again in this turn.

This marks the end of one turn. If Players are playing a specific number of turns (10.4), they should check to determine if they have completed these. Any record keeping should be completed before the next turn is begun.

(4.0) FACTORIES AND ROBOT CONSTRUCTION

Robots consist of two (or more) counters: a chassis (transport) counter; one or more weapons counters; and possibly another counter for electronic warfare (8.42), a sub-surface Drill module (6.2), or a Suicide Robot counter (8.41).

(4.1) RESOURCE PRODUCTION POINTS: A specified number of production points are required to produce any of the modules used in the game. Resource points are determined by the number of resource hexes held multiplied by the number of of active factories.

Example: Player A holds four resource hexes. One of his active factories has been destroyed so he has only one active factory left (the other being a decoy, see (4.8)). Four resource hexes x 1 factory = 4 resource points. Resource points may be accumulated for use in later turns. The specific factory in which these accumulated points are held must be

designated, and if that factory is destroyed or evacuated those accumulated points are lost (but may count for victory determination, see (10.4) or (11.5)).

(4.2) RESOURCE HEXES: There are three sets of resource hexes on the map, each designated by a different symbol. Before a given scenario begins (but after factories and the initially constructed Robots are deployed), a die is rolled to determine which of the three sets is used for the current scenario (the other two sets are ignored). Whenever a Player moves one of his Robots through a resource hex, that resource hex becomes "friendly" to him. (Small mining Robots not represented in the game are assumed to be mining there and shipping the recovered materials back to the factories.) If Robots from both Players are in a resource hex simultaneously, neither Player "owns" that hex until one of them has the only Robots in that hex. Hover Robots must move through a resource hex in ground mode or end their movement in a resource hex to claim it as "friendly". A Robot that does not have any functioning (i.e. undamaged) weapons modules cannot capture ("make friendly") a resource hex. A resource hex may only be friendly to (and counted for production by) one Player during any given production plase.

Example: During turn 2, Player A moves one of his Robots into hex 2012 (a resource hex). That hex is now "friendly" to him, and he may use it in calculating his production. During turn 3, the Player A Robot moves on. During turn 6, a Player B Robot enters the hex but does not stop. The hex is now friendly to Player B, and he may claim it when calculating his production. Later, on turn 8, a Player A Robot enters the hex and remains there. The hex is now friendly to A. During turn 9, however, a "B" Robot moves into the hex (the "A" Robot is still there). The hex is now "neutral," and neither Player may count it for production.

(4.21) RESOURCE HEX DETERMINATION CHART

Die Roll	Active Resource Hexes
1-2	*
3-4	
5-6	۲

(4.3) Each Player must keep a record of his unexpended production points (and which factory they are in). During each turn, he will add any new production received to his stockpiles, and deduct any production spent for new Robots.

(4.4) Factories cannot be placed in a resource hex. Factories may only be placed in a desert hex.

(4.5) Factories attack and defend as regular units with these qualifications: they may never move (except to evacuate, see (4.7) Evacuation), they may attack with all of their several modules, and they may only be destoyed by an explosion result on the Combat Results Table.

(4.51) All factories (including the decoy) are assumed to have the following weapons modules:

one Laser module (3-5) two Rocket moduels (2-10) three Gun modules (1-5) one EW module

These modules are permanently attached to the factory and may not be removed to be placed on Robots. These weapons are not represented by counters; they are recorded on scratch paper. Weapons modules on a factory may be damaged by fire directed at the factory, as per the regular combat rules (8.0). A factory can repair its own damage weapons and replace its own destroyed weapons. Weapons in excess of those initially installed may not be added to a factory. The factory itself can only be destroyed by an explosion result or nuclear destruct module. Propulsion hits may prevent a factory from evacuating (4.7).

(4.52) Because of the many defensive electronic systems installed in factory ships, long range rocket fire is less effective. (The computers can track the rockets coming in and deploy counter weapons.) In the case of rocket fire at a factory from a range of six hexes or more and when rocket fire (regardless of range) at a factory is indirect, the attack strength of the firing rocket modules is halved.

(4.6) CONSTRUCTION OF ROBOTS: During the mutual construction and deployment Phase, both Players have the opportunity to produce Robots. To construct a Robot, a Player would simply "buy" whatever modules he desired to include, deducting the cost of these modules (as determined from the Production Cost Chart **(4.61)**) from his available resource points. If he does not have sufficient production points to purchase a desired module, he may not purchase it. The counters representing these modules are then placed in a stack **(5.4)** and, during the appropriate portion of the turn, deployed **(10.21)**.

(4.61) PRODUCTION COST CHART

	Production
Module	Cost
Nuke	5 RPS
EW	3 RPS
Laser	4 RPS
Rocket	4 RPS
Gun	1 RPS
Drill	3 RPS
Hover	3 RPS
Droid	2 RPS
Tracks	1 RPS

Note: Robot construction is limited by the counters provided with the game.

(4.7) FACTORY SHIP EVACUATION: A player may, during his Movement Phase, chose to evacuate one or more of his factories to prevent its destruction. To accomplish this, simply announce an evacuation and remove the counter from the mapsheet. Note the victory conditions (10.3), (10.4), and (11.5) for certain considerations in doing this. If 12 or more propulsion hits have been scored on a given factory during the game, that factory may not be evacuated. This is the only effect of propulsion hits on a factory. A factory may not repair its own propulsion hits. This is because of the immense size and complexity of engines adequate to lift the massive factory into orbit.

(4.8) DECOY FACTORIES: Each Player deploys three factory ships during each scenario. One of these is not a working factory; it is a decoy. Before play begins, each Player secretly designates which of his factories is the decoy. This must be done in writing so that it can be confirmed at the end of the game. Decoy factories have all of the weapons that normal factories do and can store unused production points. The only difference is that decoy factories do not count for production purposes.

(5.0) STACKING

Stacking refers to the placing of more than one unit in a given hex. In this game, a single Robot consists of a stack of up to seven counters (5.4). A single Robot or factory is often referred to as a "unit." Placement of the counters is extremely important in *ROBOTSI* since it determines the condition of the Robot.

(5.1) Robot stacking is unlimited. Any number of friendly and enemy Robots may be in the same hex during all Phases.

(5.2) There may never be more than one factory counter in a hex. Friendly factories may not be placed (initially) within seven hexes of each other.

(5.3) Stacking has no effect on combat.

(5.4) The normal condition of a Robot unit is as follows:

Chassis module: face up

Weapons module(s): face up (above the chassis counter) Suicide module: face up (at the bottom of the stack) Drill module: face up (on the top of the stack)

(5.41) A Player may never examine his opponents stacks to determine what sort of Robot is there. However, the weapons modules must be exposed when fired.

(5.42) Face down counters are used to indicate damaged modules.

(5.43) A given Robot may only have one of each type of counter (Chassis, EW, Suicide, Drill) except for weapons. Track and Droid Chassis may have three assorted weapons; Hover Chassis may have two. Hover and Droid Chassis may not have Drills.

(5.5) Modules may only be transferred between Robots in a factory (9.2).

(6.0) MOVEMENT

Units are moved individually or in stacks through the hex-grid. Some hexes cost more movement points than others, some hexes are more costly than others to particular types of Robots.

Units move individually through the hex grid, paying a cost in movement points from their movement allowance for each hex entered. The cost of each type of hex is shown on the Terrain Effects Chart (6.3). Units move directly from hex to adjacent hex. Units may not skip hexes. Movement may be restricted by Zones of Control (5.0).

(6.1) CHASSIS (TRANSPORTERS)

(6.11) TRACKS: Caterpillar style Tracks as seen on tanks in the 20th century. Prohibited from entering mountain or lake hexes.

(6.12) HOVER UNITS: Hover Robots are capable of flight or close to the surface movement. When in surface mode, they may move two hexes maximum. They do not receive the combat bonus (+1 to the die roll when rolling an attack) nor may they be attacked on the "Defender in Air" line of the Combat Results Table. When in the air, Hover Robots move up to 17 hexes. Any movement by a Hover robot in excess of two hexes per turn is considered to be in the air.

(6.13) DROID (HUMANIOD SHELL): Resembles a human being from the waist down with Droid-like appendages, but is considerably larger (40') and weighs several tons.

(6.2) OPTIONAL TRANSPORT (THE DRILL): Drill modules may be added to Tracked Robots to allow them to move below the surface of the Earth.

(6.21) Only Tracked chassis may have Drill modules. However, a Robot equipped with a Drill Module does not have to have any other transport Module.

(6.22) When moving sub-surface, special sections of the Sequence of Play must be used.

(6.23) Drill modules have a movement allowance of five. All terrain types cost one point per hex for sub-surface movement. When a Drill Robot is moving below the surface, a counter marked "submerged" is placed on the Robot.

(6.24) Drill Robots may not be attacked while sub-surface except by another Drill Robot that is sub-surface in the same hex. Drill Robots which are sub-surface do not have Zones of Control on the surface. They have sub-surface Zones of Control in the hex they occupy. Only sub-merged Robots entering this Zone of Control must stop and move no further during the current movement phase. Nuclear weapons CAN destroy a submerged drill robot (8.41).

(6.25) While a Drill Robot may "tunnel" under a lake or mountain hex, it may not surface in lake or mountain hexes. In a lake hex, it would be destroyed by flooding. If it surfaced in a mountain hex, it would cause massive disturbances of the Earth's surface that would destroy the Drill Robot.

(6.26) Only Robots with Drill modules may move by sub-surface movement. The "tunnels" created collapse behind the Drill Robot and may not be used by other Robots.

Terrain	Movement cost													
Туре	Track	Droid	Hover (air)	Hover (ground)										
Mountain	NA	2	2	NA										
Rough	3	1	1	All										
Desert	1	1	1	1										
Lake	NA	2	1	1										
River	+1	+1	+1	+1										

(6.3) TERRAIN EFFECTS CHART

NA — This chassis type is not allowed to enter this terrain type.
 All — For this chassis type to enter this terrain type, its entire movement allowance must be expended.

Description of Terrain

Mountain — Blue/Black	Desert – White (clear)	River - Blue
Rough – Rust	Lake — Blue	

(6.4) WEATHER (Optional)

Due to the great amounts of energy released, during the wars, and the resulting radiation, Earth's atmosphere became very unstable. Weather conditions changed suddenly, without any warning, and the ensuing weather was usually bad. Players may, at their option, use the following weather rules to simulate this. Player A rolls one die in the optional weather phase of each turn. He then refers to the weather table below to determine that turn's weather. The resulting weather conditions last for the entire turn.

0 – Mud 4 – Normal 1 – Mud 5 – Normal

 $\begin{array}{ccc}
1 - Mult & 5 - Normal \\
2 - Normal & 6 - Dust
\end{array}$

3 – Normal 7 – Dust

If dust was rolled on the immediately previous turn, add one to the die roll. If mud was rolled on the immediately previous turn, subtract one from the die roll.

NOTE: Weather on the Earth was severely disrupted by the massive use of nuclear weapons. Drastic changes within periods of only a few minutes were not only possible but commonplace.

Normal: No effect.

Mud: The cost in movement points to enter all hexes is doubled for all Robots except Hover. (Hover Robots in ground mode actually fly at "nape of the earth," skimming just over the mud.)

Dust: Movement point costs are unchanged. Gun and laser may only attack adjacent hexes. Rocket modules may attack at up to ½ range at ½ normal attack strength, full strength when adjacent. Units equipped with EW are unaffected. There is not dust over lake hexes. Units adjacent to a lake can fire at other units adjacent to the same lake using the normal rules (if the Line of Sight is entirely over lake hexes).

(7.0) ZONES OF CONTROL

All Robots and factories have Zones of Control (see (7.2) for exceptions). Each unit's Zone of Control (ZOC) extends into the six hexes surrounding the unit.

(7.1) EFFECTS OF ZONE OF CONTROL: Any Robot which begins its movement Phase in an enemy Zone of Control may not move during that Movement Phase except to enter the hex occupied by the enemy unit which is exerting the Zone of Control. Units which enter an enemy Zone of Control must immediately cease movement for the remainder of that movement Phase.

(7.2) Robots which have no working (undamaged) weapons modules do not have Zones of Control. Submerged Drill Robots do not have surface Zones of Control (6.24).

(8.0) COMBAT

Each weapon has special abilities and restrictions which are described in the specific weapons section. Some rules apply to all weapons.

(8.1) COMBAT PROCEDURE: Units attack individually. (Exception: See Electronic Warfare (8.42).) Units also defend individually.

EXAMPLE: A Robot equipped with two Laser modules and a Gun Module attacks a stack of two Robots. One Laser and the Gun are designated to fire at the top unit. The attack strengths of the two weapons modules are added (3 + 1 = 4), and the total (compared with the terrain the target unit occupies) is used to determine what column on the Combat Results Table (8.3) is used. Then a single die is rolled, and the result is cross-indexed with the previously determined column to yield a combat result. The second Laser then attacks the second enemy unit in the stack.

(8.11) Combat factors of individual modules are unitary (exception: Rockets) and may not be divided to attack more than one target. A given Robot may fire each of its weapons modules at a different target. Each target is resolved as a separate attack and all (except combined attacks: see EW rules) attacks by a given Robot must be resolved before moving on to the next unit. For Laser and Gun modules to fire, they must have a clear Line of Sight (8.12) to the target. Rocket modules do not have to have a clear Line of Sight. They may fire "indirect" over intervening terrain.

(8.12) LINE OF SIGHT: For units in non-mountain hexes, mountains block Line of Sight. Units on non-mountain hexes may fire into mountain hexes, but not through them. Units which are on mountain hexes may fire over other mountain hexes at units on mountain hexes and may fire at units on non-mountain hexes. However, units which are on mountain hexes may not fire over a mountain hex at a unit which is not on a mountain hex. Hover units in air mode are considered to be at the same "elevation" as units on the mountain hexes.

Line of Sight is determined by laying a straight edge between the center of the firing hex and the center of the defender's hex. If the line intersects a mountain hex anywhere along its length (even along the edge of a mountain hex), the Line of Sight is blocked, and the unit may not fire (unless both the firing and target units are on mountain hexes).

(8.2) WEAPONS

(8.21) GUN: Direct Fire Weapon, use general combat rules.

(8.22) ROCKET: Rockets may split their attack factors. They may fire at two targets in the same turn by firing one attack strength point at each. Rockets do not have to have a clear Line of Sight (8.12). Rockets have special restrictions (4.52) when firing at factories.

(8.23) LASER: Direct Fire Weapon, use general combat rules.

(8.3) COMBAT RESULTS TABLE (see inside back cover)

(8.4) OPTIONAL WEAPONS

(8.41) NUCLEAR DESTRUCT MODULE: There may only be two on the mapsheet at any time (one per side); one must be destroyed before the owning Player may construct another one. The Nuclear Destruct Module (NDM) is simply a huge nuclear boms which is carried to target by its transport robot and detonated. The terms "Nuclear Destruct Module," "NDM," "Suicide Module," and "Suicide Robot" will be used interchangeably. It is detonated by the owning Player at the end of any enemy Combat Phase.

The NDM does not use the normal combat tables. Instead, it uses the following table to attack all units within the radius described (including friendly units inadvertently left in the blast radius).

Hex distance from detonation:

(0-1) — All units eliminated; factory destroyed on a die roll of 1-4; submerged units destroyed.

(2-3) - All units attacked on the 3 column of the Combat Results Table; factory destroyed on a roll of 1-2; submerged units destroyed on a roll of 1-2.

(4-7) — All units attacked on the 1 column on Combat Results Table; factory destroyed on a roll of 1; submerged units unaffected.

One hit on a NDM Module does no damage to it. A second hit destroys the Module, but it does not detonate. (There are too many safety interlocks.)

(8.42) ELECTRONIC WARFARE: Electronic Warfare can do three things: it allows Robots to cooperate when attacking; it adds one to the die roll when attacking; or it can be used to "take over" an opposing robot.

(8.421) COOPERATION IN ATTACKING: Normally, all Robots attack independently from each other (i.e. their attack factors are not totaled before entered on the Combat Results Table). However, when a Robot Is equipped with an electronics Module, it may combine its attack factors with any one other Robot. The second Robot must be in the same hex or adjacent to the first Robot.

(8.422) SHIFTING THE ATTACK DIE ROLL: Any attack involving a Robot equipped with an electronics Module is resolved by adding one to the die roll. Exception: Submerged drills may never use EW.

Example: A particular Robot is attacking. The die is rolled, and the result is '3'. Because of the EW Module, this is increased to '4'.

Any other Robot that is cooperating in the attack (due to the use of electronics) is included in a single total, and one is added to the die roll.

If the weapons of a given Robot are being fired at two (or more) different targets, the electronics Module can only be used to improve one of the attacks.

(8.423) EW CAPTURE (Optional): EW weapons are not used to destroy enemy Robots but to put opposing Robots under the control of the Player. Procedure: total the number of EW modules attacking, and cross index that with the number of hexes away from where the target is.

Number EW No. of hexes distance between the most distant attackers EW Attacker and Defender 21+ 1-3 3-9 9-21 5 1 4 3 4 6 2 6 3 2 3 4 4 1 2 2 5 2 4

Explanation of results: Number shown or higher must be rolled to capture enemy robot.

Effects of Capture: The robot immediately becomes one of the attacking Player's Robots. It may move and attack in the owning Player's next turn.

Note: Factories cannot be captured by EW.

5+

1

1

(8.5) HOVER UNITS

Because of their unique properties, Robots built on Hover chassis have special considerations in combat.

(8.51) Whenever an attack is made by a Hover robot in airborne mode, one is added to the die roll.

(8.52) Whenever a Hover robot is in the air, it is attacked on the special "air" line on the Combat Results Table. (A glance at the table will quickly demonstrate the implications of this rule.)

(8.6) DIE ROLL ADDITIONS

One may be added to the die roll for Hover Robots (8.51) and for EW modules (8.422). These effects are cumulative.

Example: If a Hover robot were equipped with an EW Module, two would be added to the die roll when it attacked.

(9.0) SALVAGE AND REPAIR

Damaged modules may be repaired, and wrecked Robots may be salvaged during the course of the game by the following rules.

(9.1) A damaged Module (one that has received one hit) may be repaired (restored to normal function) for half the original cost of the Module. This can only be done in a friendly factory hex and only during the production Phase. Note that this will require players to keep track of ' ½' points.

(9.11) Players can "scrap" any damaged module during the production phase in order to release more counters for new construction. This is expensive, but may save time.

(9.2) Modules may be transferred between one Robot and another at a cost of one production point per Module. This can only be done in a friendly factory and only during the production Phase.

(9.3) If the transport chassis of a given Robot is destroyed, the other modules of that Robot remain in the hex. They may fire but cannot move. They may be recovered by the following procedure.

The owning Player must construct a Robot consisting of only a transport chassis. This Robot is known as a "recovery Robot." This may be done by removing modules from an existing Robot or by building a new, "empty" one. A player might also use a chassis which has had all of its original weapons destroyed. In any event, the recovery robot must begin its recovery mission at a friendly factory. The empty chassis must then be moved to the hex occupied by the "abandoned" modules. It may load one such Module each turn (during the production Phase). After loading (it need not load all available modules but cannot load more than its normal limit), the recovery Robot may move to another such stack of modules, or return to the factory. When being transported, recovered modules may not be used (weapons cannot fire, EW cannot function) but may be damaged by fire directed at the recovery Robot. Upon return to the factory, the modules may be installed on any available chassis (including the erstwhile recovery Robot) for the cost of transferring modules (see (9.2)). Damaged

(10.0) PLAYING THE GAME

Each playing of the game is referred to as a "scenario."

Before the game begins, the factory ships and 40 initial points of Robot construction are deployed. Players should have a sheet of paper to note unused production points, possession of resource hexes, and the identity of a decoy factory.

ORDER OF SET-UP:

- 1. Factories deployed (10.1)
- 2. Player order determined (10.11)
- 3. Player "A" factories re-deployed (10.12)
- 4. Robots constructed and deployed (10.2)
- Resource hexes rolled for (4.21)

(10.1) DEPLOYMENT OF FACTORIES: Each Player secretly writes on a sheet of paper the initial set-up hexes of all three of his factories. Factories may only be set-up (landed) in desert terrain hexes. Factories may never be landed in resource hexes. The decoy factory must be designated specifically. The three factories are then deployed. They are immobile, except for evacuation (4.7).

(10.11) PLAYER ORDER DETERMINATION: Each Player rolls a single die. The Player with the higher result is Player "A" and the other Player is Player "B". In the event the die rolls are equal, roll again.

(10.12) PLAYER "A's" FACTORY REDEPLOYMENT: Player "A" may re-deploy any factory that is within five hexes and in direct Line of Sight of, or in the same hex as, a factory belonging to the other Player. The factory may be moved up to five hexes in any direction or combination of directions to a new hex. This hex must be selected strictly along the lines of the following priorities.

- 1. It is not in a direct Line of Sight of an enemy factory.
- 2. It is more than five hexes from an enemy factory.
- 3. It is more than seven hexes from all friendly factories.

The new landing hex must, if at all possible, fulfill condition # 1. If more than one hex fulfills condition # 1, one of these must be selected which fulfills condition # 2. If more than one hex fulfills conditions # 1 and # 2, one of these must be selected which fulfills condition # 3. Any one of the three conditions which cannot be fulfilled is ignored. NOTE: Player "B" attacks first.

NOTE: the new factory deployment hex MUST be a desert hex and MUST NOT be a resource hex.

This redeployment option will prevent a player losing a factory before he has a chance to fire.

(10.2) DEPLOYMENT OF INITIAL ROBOT FORCE: After deploying the factories, both Players construct their initial Robot force. This is done simultaneously and in secret in a manner similar to the deployment of factories process. Both Players have an initial pool of 40 resource points. They may be allocated to build any type or combination allowed.

Example: Player "A" decides to build a balanced force of combat Robots. He selects six "Track" vehicles and arms each with a "Gun" and a "Rocket" module. Each costs 6 points (1 for the Tracks, 1 for the Gun, and 4 for the Rocket). As an afterthought, he exchanges modules between two Robots, making one a double Gun and the other a double Rocket Robot. He in-

tends to have these work as a team with the double Rocket Robot covering the shorter ranged double Gun Robot from a suitable ridge. This is a tactic he has experimented with in past games. He briefly considers using his 4 remaining points to field an additional Robot consisting of only a Hover module but elects to leave his initial force as it is. There will be time to build more Robots later when the first production starts coming in.

Player "B" has a different plan. Wishing to spread out and gain control of as many resource hexes as possible (for short term production and a quick war fighting protential), he builds 6 small Robots consisting of only a Track and a Gun module. These cost 12 points (2 each, 1 for the Tracks and 1 for the Gun). Next, he constructs 2 Robots consisting of a "Droid" chassis and a Laser module. With his remaining 16 points, he constructs a very special Robot. Using a "Hover" chassis (3 points), he adds 2 Rocket modules (4 points each) and an EW module, providing his scouts with a fast and effective escort. He has 2 points unused and considers using them to "double" one of the Gun Robots or to change its Gun for a Rocket. In the end, however, he elects to retain these points for later use.

(10.21) Initial Robots may be placed on any of the factories (including the decoy) and may then move five movement points (this is not considered part of a Movement Phase). This special movement is known as the "initial deployment." Initial deployment may not enter enemy Zones of Control or be underground movement. At the start of the game, initial deployment is performed in an alternating manner. First Player A deploys one Robot and then Player B deploys one. This continues until both Players have deployed all of their initial forces.

(10.22) During the game, all incoming Robots (those constructed during the process of the game) are deployed as in (10.21) regardless of the factory they were built in.

(10.3) VICTORY CONDITIONS: The game continues until one Player has no factory ships remaining on the mapsheet. The Player with one or more factory ships remaining wins the scenario. In the event that both Players lose their last factory ships during the same Phase, the game is a tie. Decoy factories are not considered to be factories for purpose of the Victory Conditions. If neither Player has achieved victory in 20 turns, the game is a draw.

NOTE: Everyone has to evacuate before the background radiation levels cause too much radiation poisoning. If the enemy can be eliminated in twenty turns or less, the factory ship can switch its electromagnetic fields to an alternative mode. In this alternative mode, the ship can remain on the surface for several hours. However, it is virtually defenseless against ground attack.

(10.4) ALTERNATIVE VICTORY CONDITIONS: Players may, if they prefer, play for a specified number of turns (20 is suggested) after which victory is determined by a point system.

Players first "cash in" their Robots (convert them back into resource points). After deducting 40 (the intial allotment) from this result, Players add points for the following:

Each enemy factory ship which was evacuated	20 pts.
Each enemy factory ship destroyed	. 50 pts.
Each unused production point stored in a factory*	1 pt.

(*including factories which evacutated. This counts your own unused production in your own factories.)

Decoys do not count as destroyed factories or factories evacuated for purposes of these victory conditions.

The Player with the higher victory point total wins the scenario.

Players should select the victory system they will use before starting a scenario since the strategy and tactics most effective in either are considerably different.

(11.0) CAMPAIGN GAME

Players wishing to undertake a Campaign game may develop such a campaign within the following guidelines.

(11.1) The objective of the campaign is for each Player to obtain the greatest stockpiles of recovered (salvaged) material from Earth. Casualties (among the Robots) have no effect.

(11.2) Each Player of the group intending to undertake the campaign should assume the identity of one of the great corporations of space. Some of these are listed in the introduction.

(11.3) A series of scenarios is played (exactly how many depends on how many are playing). Two Players participate in each scenario. The schedule of scenarios should allow each Player to compete against every other Player one time (or perhaps twice).

(11.4) All Robots built during any given scenario and still on the board at the end of it are assumed to have been removed with the departing factory ships or to have been deactivated and abandoned. No victory points are awarded for Robots.

(11.5) Each Player scores victory points as follows:

Each undestroyed factory on the mapsheet at the end of the scenario = 100 points.

Each unused production point in a factory that was evacuated = 1/4 point*

Each Non-Decoy factory ship lost (destroyed) during a scenario = -25 points

*A maximum of 25 points per scenario may be scored for production points on evacuated factories.

Decoy factories do not count as factories for these Victory Conditions. The Player with the most victory points at the end of the Campaign is the winner.

(12.0) VARIANTS, ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS, AND OPTIONAL RULES

After becoming familiar with the game, Players may wish to add some or all of the following rules to increase their enjoyment or simply to produce variety.

(12.1) TERRAIN OPTIONS

(12.11) All lakes have become swamps. Swamps can be crossed by Tracks or Hovers, but not by Droids.

(12.12) Some rivers (at the option of the Players) are swollen and cannot be crossed by Tracked Robots. Players might, alternatively, designate that these rivers could be crossed by tracked units (presumeably moving under water) at a cost of +2 and/or that the rivers cannot be crossed by Droids (because the water is too swift).

(12.13) Any hex side separating a mountain hex from a desert terrain hex is considered to be a cliff hex side and cannot be crossed by Droid units.

(12.14) Players might designate some rivers to be a full hex wide. This could be done by saying that all hexes adjacent to and to the right (for example) of a given river are Lake hexes.

(12.15) Enterprising Players might create their own maps, providing alternative salvage sites. This option might be particularly useful in Campaign Games. (12.23).

(12.16) Tracked units may cross lake hexes (by driving across the bottom). The cost is 3 movement points per hex. Tracked Robots cannot end their Movement Phase in a lake hex.

(12.17) Players might declare that some lakes are too deep for Droid Robots to wade.

(12.2) SCENARIO VARIATIONS

(12.21) One Player starts the game with it assumed that he has just won a scenario. He brings with two factories on the mapsheet (one of which is a decoy) and 100 points of Robot construction. All resource hexes are assumed to be friendly to him. The other Player drops three factories (one a decoy) and 50 points of production. The game is played normally from this point, except that the Player already on the ground is Player "A".

If using the Alternative Victory Conditions, Players should subtract their actual initial production points (50 to 100) instead of the 40 points specified in (10.4).

(12.22) Both Players have a different set of production hexes. Each Player rolls a die to determine which set is his. Resource hexes are still "friendly" or "unfriendly," but a Player can only draw production from resources hexes of his specific set. With appropriate moderating, this could even be done secretly.

(12.23) During a Campaign Game, the Players should make several additional maps (12.5) (about one third as many as the players in the campaign) showing different terrain. Each Player should also have his own, distinctive, set of counters (12.35). Each player then (for each "round" of the Campaign) secretly selects which map he will land on. Obviously some players will have a stiff fight against several opponents, and others will land in unopposed areas.

(12.24) Players can increase the available amount of production points by not using the decoys. In this variant all three factories are operational for production and victory point purposes.

(12.3) WEAPONS OPTIONS

(12.31) RAPID FIRE WEAPONS: These weapons cost twice as much as regular modules but can fire twice per turn. Rapid Fire modules are still destroyed by two hits (and damaged by one) like a regular module.

(12.32) DIRECT FIRE ROCKETS: These rockets cost three production points instead of four, but cannot use indirect fire.

(12.33) INDIRECT FIRE GUNS: These cost two production points instead of one but can fire indirect.

NOTE: When using the above optional weapons, Players will have to devise some method of designating which modules are of these types and which are of the regular type or voluntarily restrict themselves to constructing either all new type or all regular type within each class.

(12.34) Each Player may only build one NDM per GAME.

(12.35) Enterprising Players might create new counters, allowing more Robots, or perhaps more players, to participate in each scenario.

(12.4) GAME BALANCE

To balance the game between Players of differing skill or experience levels, various minor adjustments can be made.

(12.41) Limit one Player to two weapons modules per Robot.

(12.42) Allow one Player to place four weapons modules on Tracked units.

(12.43) Artificially increase or decrease the range of one Player's weapons.

(12.44) Give one Player additional initial production points.

(12.45) Allow one Player to reduce the cost of one module on chart (4.61) by one point (for that Player's use only).

(13.0) DESIGNER'S NOTES

The beginnings of *ROBOTS!* lie in another science-fiction game Bill Ferguson and I designed in 1977. This first game has never reached print, but our efforts to market it attracted the attention of Task Force.

Some of the background material from the first game had given us the inspiration for *ROBOTSI*, and when Task Force asked us what we had available, we sent it in for consideration.

The major premise of the game is the "build your own" philosophy of the Modularized Robots. This aspect of the game was what initially excited Task Force and has made *ROBOTS*/ an exciting game. No other ground tactical science-fiction game in general circulation has gone so far in allowing Players to construct their units literally from the ground up. It is this capacity to mix weapons and prime movers that makes *ROBOTS*/ the most original game in this area in years.

The choice of weapons and chassis was influenced by the types made popular in sciencefiction. Lasers have appeared in virtually every science-fiction story since they were invented, and laser weapons are under development by the major powers today. Cannon systems were included because they are cheap and dependable. No weapon is ever obsolete even after a better one is invented. Consider that the "handgonne" of the 15th century has evolved into the M-16 of the 20th. The M-16 is certainly better and more effective, but within its range and accuracy limits the handgonne will do the same job. Missiles have been used in warfare for almost a millenia and probably will be used for at least one more. Whether they are the guided type that can be flown through a window to explode inside or simply free-flight missiles that cannot be guided (or jammed), the effect (in game terms) is the same.

Two exceptional weapons are the nuclear module and electronic warfare. The primary purpose (in game terms) is to provide a "turn around" capability for a Player who has gotten behind. No Player, regardless of his position, can feel safe while a nuclear weapon is still unaccounted for.

The prime movers are in the same categary. All exist in the present (a prototype of the droid was built in Bell's New Jersey laboratory in 1965), and all are popularized by Science Fiction. Wheeled vehicles have been left out because there seemed little need for a fourth type, and over the trackless wastes of post-holocaust Earth they would not be able to exploit their sole superiority — speed.

One module does not currently exist - the Drill. The Drill is an outgrowth of the verticle envelopment idea. This involves going over (or in the case under) something you cannot go around. The Drill vastly increases the tatical options available to Players.

The factory redeployment rules are intended to prevent one Player from starting the game at a severe disadvantage. There is an element of realism there, however. Any factory ship pilot who saw an enemy ship landing below him would divert his ship to another location.

The terrain for this game has been carefully constructed. The valleys are sized by the range of the direct fire weapons. The resource hexes have been carefully placed to insure that there is no ultimate landing site and to create some areas that may be highly valuable if the die rolls the right way. Risks are there to be taken.

This brings us to the element which ties the system together. Originally, the robots were mindless machines fighting a war long after their human masters had died. The deployment was more or less conventional with a front line and each Player starting with half of the board. This was not particularly flexible and caused play to become stereotyped. The developer suggested the current background — a return from the colonies. This created so many interesting options (landing, evacuating, and the victory conditions) that it was immediately and enthusiastically accepted.

Despite any changes and developments, *ROBOTSI* is what it set out to be: a Player's game. It is fast to learn and fast to play, with a maximum amount of movement and Player options and a minimum amount of paperwork.

(14.0) PLAYER'S NOTES

The major strategic decision of the game for both Players is the choice of landing hexes for their factories. It is wisest to place them in valleys which have more than one type of resource hex. For example, hex 0606 is a good choice because two types of resource hexes are within striking distance. Hex 3017 is also an excellent choice because resource hexes from all three sets are within two turn's movement.

Deployment patterns are also worth mention. One strategy is to deploy the three factories seven hexes apart in a straight line diagonally across the map. This provides a rapid expansion ability. An alternative strategy is to place the three factories in the central valley in a sort of "iron triangle". This provides some increase in security. It should also be noted that dropping one factory directly beside a resource hex may not be as smart as dropping two factories, one just to each side. While the first strategy will control the hex, the second will firmly control the entire area.

The next important decision concerns first turn production. This will set the pattern for the first few turns. Quantity, as opposed to quality, provides significant advantages since more resource hexes can be reached. A "high-low" mix of many small and one or two powerful robots has advantages in some respects.

Note that the Player who moves second shoots first. While the first Player can thus sieze many resource hexes unopposed, his robots can be blasted by the second Player before they get a shot.

By the third or fourth turn, enough resource points should be available to produce more sophisticated robots. By all means, do so. Some combinations stand out as optimum unions of firepower and mobility and should take precedence in the construction of the mid-game arsenal. The best combination is the rocket-hover-EW unit. This is, however, very expensive. Such a robot forms an excellent partner for hordes of cheap "main line" robots. Its 10 hex reach provides some protection and support, and it is an excellent machine to grab undefended resource hexes in the enemy rear.

No matter how much sophisticated firepower a Player possesses, he will find that a headto-head slugging match with his Robots against a factory is not an undertaking with any guarantee of success. You need at least five concentrated factors to have any chance of an explosion.

Destroying an opponent's real factories in a goal that should be kept in sight. Destroying one will truly cripply him, and unless he destroys one of yours quickly the victory will be a foregone conclusion. For this quick strike, a nuclear module is the optimal choice. If it can get through, it will probably eliminate the factory. It must be screened by several escorting robots so that defending fire from the target factory cannot be concentrated on the one with the bomb. It is also suggested that the bomb-carrying robot have many other modules to absorb hits.

Sometime during the game, Players should build Drill robots. Almost invulnerable to ground attack, their special movement abilities allow them to outflank the enemy from below. (The ultimate in "verticle envelopment.") The very thought of a Drill robot carrying a nuclear module is enough to give any factory a nervous breakdown. Generally, submerged enemy Drills should be "shepherded" by surface units. If they make dangerous advances toward factories a friendly Drill should be dispatched to intercept.

Players should keep a spare tracked chassis available to act as a recovery robot. The savings in resource points (from recovered modules) may well spell the difference between victory and defeat.

During the final phases of the game, it will be important to hang onto resource hexes (when playing for points). Leave a cheap robot occupying the hex and support it with interlocking fields of fire. Several small robots may be lost in this manner, but any attack on them will be expensive. During the final stages of the game, Hover Robots will be useful to raid any inadequately defended resource hexes. Players should not rule out last minute attacks on factories!

As a final word: Robots are expendable. Factories and Resource hexes are not.

(15.0) CREDITS

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(8.3) COMBAT F	RESULT	IS TAI	BLE					
Target in:	Num	ber of	attac	k stren	gth po	ints fir	ing:	
Mountains	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Rough, Swamp*		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Desert			1	2	3	4	5	6
Lake, Air				1	2	3	4	5
Die Roll								
1	_		-	_		w	w	w
2	_	_	_	-	_	w	W	w
3	_		w	w	w	w	ww	PW
4	_	w	w	w	w	ww	PW	PP
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6	P	Р	Ρ	ww	PW	PP	EX	EX
7	w	Р	PW	PW	PP	EX	EX	EΧ
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Note that Hover Robots (8.51) and EW modules (8.422) add one to the die roll. EXPLANATION OF COMBAT RESULTS

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*Swamp hexes are an optional terrain type described in rule (12.11)

EFFECTS OF HITS

Weapon Hits: Weapons are damaged by the first hit and destroyed by the second. When weapons hits are scored against a given Robot, the owning Player may score such hits against any weapons modules on the Robot chassis. A previously undamaged weapons Module would be turned upside down (to show that it was damaged). A damaged weapons Module (one that is upside down) is removed from play (destroyed if it takes a second weapons hit). Damaged modules may be repaired by factory ships. Damaged weapons may not fire. Weapon hits may be scored against Electronic Warfare or Nuclear Destruct Modules.

Propulsion Hits: Propulsion modules (like weapons modules) are damaged by the first hit scored on them and destroyed by the second. To show a propulsion module is damaged, turn the counter upside down. When destroyed, remove the counter from the stack. (In this case, the weapons modules remain in that hex and can fire, but not move. They may be recovered by recovery Robots (9.3) and salvaged later.) Propulsion hits may be scored against Drill or EW Modules.

Effect of Damage to Propulsion Modules: Movement rate reduced to one half of original (round franctions down). Drill Robots may not move. Submerged Drill Robots immediately surface. If the Propulsion Module is destroyed, see (9.3).

THE SIXTH WORLD WAR!

The Third World War destroyed the armies; the Fourth World War destroyed the cities; and the Fifth World War destroyed all life on Earth. The space colonies survived, however, and two hundred years later man returned to Earth. But not to stay — only to plunder the riches of his former world. Robots were used to salvage the ancient technological sites. One day the Robots of two salvage corporations met at a particulary valuable site, and fired on each other with their mining lasers. The Sixth World War had begun.



ROBOTS! is a science-fiction game of fast action and sudden destruction. Players construct their own Robots by combining weapons (Gun, Missile, or Laser) with chassis modules (Track, Hover, or Droid). Newly constructed Robots move out from the factory salvage ships to capture resource areas, then mine the resources to produce new Robots, which then capture more salvage areas.

ROBOTS! is an exciting game for two or more players.



ROBOTS!

- Multiple Scenarios and a Campaign Game
- Complexity Level: Fairly easy
- Playing Time: One to two hours
- Designers: Mike Joslyn and

William F. Ferguson III



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TRACK			DROID	HOVER 17	HOVER 17	DRILL	SUB- MERGED
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