Meka Tac – Giant Stompy Robot Edition

Mapless Miniature Mayhem

Using hex maps for your games is easy: everything is (usually) marked out, terrain is already there, and it's simple enough to set up and break down. But what if hex maps are unavailable or undesirable? Meka Tac – GRSE can be played without hex maps!

1) What's a Hex?
The first thing that must be determined is the average size of a larger mech miniature in your games. The current Heavy Gear miniatures from Dream Pod 9 are about an inch tall, gashapon/capsule toys tend to range around 3 inches or so, and darn near everything else on the market is about 2 inches high. Whatever the average height of a larger mech is now becomes your "hex".

In my case, most of the members of the mecha collection are about 2 inches tall, so 2 inches becomes the basis of all distances in the game when playing without a hex map; an elevation is now 2 inches high, forests are 2 inches tall, etc. Multiplying the mech's Movement Points by 2 reconciles the rules with 2 inch "hexes" for movement. Use the Movement Cost chart from the original rules, but it now costs 1 Move Point to move the mech 1 inch forward or change its facing 60°. Yes, turning is now cheaper when using inches, which is good because actual terrain is less forgiving.

2) Movement and Terrain
Terrain is a bit less ambiguous than on a hex map. It literally occupies whatever part of the playing area it is sitting on and whatever effect it has on movement takes place the moment the mech's base touches it. The hex of urban terrain is now replaced with individual buildings and other things that need to be maneuvered around or over.

3) Line of Sight
Draw a line from the center of the attacker mech's base to the center of the target mech's base. That's your Line of Sight. Alternatively, you can draw the line form one mech's "head" to the other mech's "head". Just pick one way of doing it and use it for the entire game. Both a length of string and a broken rubber band work quite well in this capacity.

4) Range
All attack ranges are measured from nearest base edge of attacker to the nearest base edge of the target. Like movement, weapon ranges are converted from hexes to inches. In this case, at ranges would be multiplied by two as we're using 2" hexes.

5) Cover
As the universe is not fair, the moment your mech figure touches a woods or other rough terrain, it must pay the movement penalty, but does not receive the cover benefits until the base of the mech is half way in. But, a fraction of a "hex" gives a full hex of cover. Using 2-inch "hexes", each 2 inches of woods grants a "hex" of cover: up to 2 inches gets 1 hex, greater than 2 inches but not exceeding 4 inches gets 2 hexes of cover, etc.

If the mech is not standing in terrain that grants cover, but partially behind something that gives cover from an attack (hills, buildings, other mechs, etc) the percentage of cover is based on what the attacker actually sees. Yes, this is subjective, but be consistent. If a hill blocks only 25% of a mech, then it gets 25% cover.

If the target is not in a forest, but the Line of Sight of the attack goes through the forest, then the forest grants cover for the distance the attack travels though it. If there is too much forest to shoot through (more than 6 inches of light woods with 2-inch “hexes”) the attack cannot be made.

If the Line of Sight of the attack goes through the forest that only partially obscures the target, then the forest grants cover for the distance the attack travels though it. If there is too much forest to shoot through (more than 6 inches of light woods with 2-inch “hexes”) the attack can still take place as long as any amount of the target past the forest can be seen by the attacker. You have the option of taking the better odds. If the woods are too thick, then the attack to-hit roll can be calculated on what percentage of the target is not obscured by the woods.

6) Blast Radius

Bombs, reactor explosions and HE weapons affect everything within a certain radius. On a hex map it’s centered on the target’s hex and every hex touching it. Without a map, it does even more damage. Using a 2” hex, its blast radius would be 3” from the center of the mech miniature (3 hexes across at 2” per hex, then divided by 2) in all directions. Yes, it creates a 6” diameter sphere of destruction! Any miniature within that sphere, or even touching it, takes the damage.

End.