

CLASSIC BATTLETECH ROUND ROBIN TOURNAMENT 2026

"THE STEEL ARENA"

Handout Version: 1.3 Updated: 8-15-2026

New England Mech Con 2026 Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2026 **Location:** CPO Mess Hall, 2nd Deck, USS Massachusetts (BB-59) **Organizer:** Anthony S. | **Capacity:** 48 Pilots (Strictly Limited)

Greetings, MechWarriors.

You start in a light mech. Thirty-five tons of metal and nerve against someone who wants to tear it off you. Survive that, and you earn the right to go heavier. Fifty-five tons. Then seventy-five. Three rounds. Three fights. Three chances to prove you belong in the arena at all.

This is The Steel Arena. Inspired by the gladiatorial circuits of Solaris VII, this tournament strips away the politics and the posturing. No grand strategy. No lance support. Just you, your opponent, and a clock that does not care about your feelings. Win fast and you earn bonus points. Stall and you earn nothing.

If you claw your way to the top fifteen, you advance to the Shrinking Arena, a fifteen-pilot free-for-all where the battlefield literally closes in around you until only one 'Mech is left standing.

Bring your best machines. Bring your best game. The crowd is watching.

Questions? Join us on Discord or send an email!

We are New England BattleTech League, an association of active BattleTech players in the US Northeast area! We host discussions share photos arrange local matches and have plenty of fun with memes! Come join our discord server and share your favorite hobby with other local MechWarriors.

<https://discord.gg/kCWyKhsCNA>

nemechcon@protonmail.com

--- Additional Info On Next Page ---

THE NEW ARENA PROTOCOL: SCORING SYSTEM

To ensure fast-paced, aggressive combat and prevent stalling this year, The Steel Arena uses a Point-Based Scoring System. Every match is worth up to **4 Points**.

Action	Points Awarded	Conditions
Total Kill	3	Head/Cockpit destroyed, Engine destroyed, Center Torso destroyed, Pilot Killed
Forced Withdrawal	2	Opponent successfully leaves the map under forced withdrawal conditions
Draw / Timeout	1	Match ends without a clear winner or hits the time limit

Speed Bonus (+1 Point)

Earn an extra point if you achieve a **Total Kill** victory within **10 Turns**.

FINAL STANDINGS & ADVANCEMENT

Pilots are ranked by **Total Points Accumulated** across Rounds 1–3. Tie-breakers are applied in order:

1. Head-to-Head Record
2. Highest Single-Match Score
3. Highest Total Kills

Top 15 pilots advance to the Shrinking Arena Finale.

--- Additional Info On Next Page ---

TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE & SCHEDULE

The Steel Arena is a four-round gauntlet designed to test your pilot's adaptability across different weight classes. All matches adhere to strict time limit of 1 hour to keep the action moving.

Event Timeline (Saturday, September 19th, 2026)

- **09:00 AM:** Convention Opens
- **09:15 AM:** Round 1 Begins
- **10:15 AM:** End of Round 1 - 15-Minute Break
- **10:30 AM:** Round 2 Begins
- **11:30 PM:** End of Round 2 - Lunch Break 1 hour
- **12:30 PM:** Round 3 Begins
- **1:30 PM:** End of Round 3 - 15-Minute Break
- **1:45 PM:** Round 4 (Shrinking Arena Finale) Begins
- **5:30 PM:** Event Conclusion & Awards

The Gauntlet: Rounds 1–3

All three preliminary rounds use standard Classic BattleTech rules on 2 Grasslands map sheets (placed long-edge touching). Each match has a hard time limit of **1 hour**. A minimum 15-minute break occurs between rounds.

Round	Theme	Unit Tonnage Limit	Force Composition
Round 1	Opening Engagement	Max 35 Tons	Light 'Mechs Only
Round 2	Breakthrough	Max 55 Tons	Medium 'Mechs Only
Round 3	Assault	Max 75 Tons	Heavy 'Mechs Only

Match Procedure (Rounds 1-3):

1. **Pairing:** Players are matched against a new opponent each round via a Round Robin system.
2. **Deployment:** Players choose opposing map edges.
3. **Forced Withdrawal:** Mandatory per *Total Warfare* (p. 258). If a unit takes critical damage (Engine, Ammo, Cockpit, or CT), it must withdraw immediately. Minimum 1 hex movement toward home edge per turn (a fighting retreat).
4. **Time Limit:** If the timer expires before a decisive victory, the match ends in a Draw (1 Point each).

The Final Showdown: Round 4 (The Shrinking Arena)

The top 15 pilots advance to this chaotic Free-For-All. The battlefield dynamically shrinks to force close-quarters combat until only one 'Mech remains standing.

- **Map:** BattleMat BFM Grasslands (72" x 48").

- **Participants:** Top 15 scorers (Tie-breakers resolved via random card draw necessary).
 - **Unit Limit:** Max **100 Tons**. Any stock 'Mech legal in IlClan era is permitted (Light, Medium, Heavy, Assault).
 - **Movement Turn Timer:** Maximum **2 minutes per turn** per player.
 - **Weapons Fire Phase:** Players first declare all targets and then resolve weapons fire simultaneously; targets cannot be changed once selected.
 - **Shrinking Field:** Starting at the end of Turn 2, the arena boundary shrinks every round:
 - Long edge reduces by **3 hexes**.
 - Short edge reduces by **2 hexes**.
 - Units outside the boundary at the end of a turn are considered destroyed.
 - **Special Rules:**
 - No Forced Withdrawal applies.
 - Initiative determined by card draw.
-

--- Additional Info On Next Page ---

FORCE SELECTION & LEGAL TECH

To maintain a level playing field and preserve the gritty, tactical feel of arena combat, all participants must adhere to these strict force construction rules. The narrative-driven focus here is on piloting skill and tactical adaptation, not on finding an overpowered "cheese" list or min-maxed loadouts. There are clear 'Best' choices, but bring something fun and let the dice decide! All lists must be submitted for approval at least 2 weeks prior to the tournament. We'll flag any issues early so you don't show up with an illegal build.

General Rules

- **Era Limit:** All units must be from the **II Clan Era**
- **Stock Designs Only:** You must use stock unit designs found in official rulebooks.
 - **NO** custom builds.
 - **NO** advanced or experimental tech
 - **NO** "Hero" Character/Rare mechs
- **Skill Level:** All pilots are assumed to be **Elite (3 Gunnery / 4 Piloting)**.
- **Battle Value:** BV calculations are **ignored**. Tonnage limits are the only constraint in this narrative-driven event.
- **Units Provided:** Organizers will not provide unit tokens, record sheets, or dice.

Disallowed Equipment & Sources

- **Primary Rulebook:** All rulings default to **Classic BattleTech: Total Warfare**.
- **Excluded Books:** The *BattleMech Manual* as well as *Tactical Operations* are **NOT** allowed for rules interpretation or unit selection in this tournament due to inclusion of advanced/experimental tech that causes confusion.
- **Disallowed Items:** Anything not explicitly listed in the *Total Warfare* rulebook.
- **Alternate Ammo is not allowed** (No Precision, Inferno ect.).

Pre-Vetting Requirement (CRITICAL)

To prevent delays during the event, all force selection lists must be submitted for approval at least 2 weeks before the convention. Units not vetted prior to the event may be deemed illegal on-site, forcing you to choose a different unit on the fly or sit out the tournament.

- **Deadline:** September 5th, 2026
- **Submission Method:** Send your list via Discord DM to the organizers or email to nemechcon@protonmail.com.
- **Format:** Clearly state your name and the specific 'Mech variant you intend to bring for each round.

How to Build Your List (MasterUnitList Guide)

We highly recommend using www.masterunitlist.info to verify your choices. Use the following filters to find legal units:

1. Go to the **"Units"** section.
2. Set **Basic Filters**:

- **Tonnage:** Select the specific limit for the round (35, 55, or 75 tons).
 - **Rules:** Select "Introductory" + "Standard".
 - **Types:** Select "BattleMech".
 - **Availability Era:** Select "IIIClan" (or check the specific year range if required).
3. **Review:** Check the unit's equipment list. If it contains anything marked "Advanced," "Experimental," or "Optional" that isn't in *Total Warfare*, it is likely illegal.

Example Choice: At 35 tons, you might see a *Fire Moth D* (BV ~280) with 2 tons of armor vs. an *Adder* (BV ~290) with 6 tons. While both are legal, the Adder offers significantly better survivability in a grudge match. Choose wisely!

Note: MasterUnitList is not perfect, some units listed on mul as 'standard' can have advanced or experimental tech not allowed in the tournament. Check all mech equipment manually before submitting lists to organizers!

Painting & Proxies

- **Painting:** There are **no painting requirements**. You may play with unpainted models, grey plastic, or even proxies.
- **Proxies:** Proxy units (token, paper, or non-BattleTech miniatures representing a legal Mech) are **permitted** just mark the 'Front' direction of the proxy.
- **Encouragement:** We strongly encourage you to bring your best "parade colors" painted models for the post-tournament photo op!

--- Additional Info On Next Page ---

SPECIAL TOURNAMENT RULES & EDGE SYSTEM

To simulate the high-stress environment of Solaris VII and add a layer of tactical risk management, this tournament utilizes the **Edge** system. Additionally, standard *Total Warfare* rules apply with specific modifications to keep the pace moving.

The Edge System

Each pilot receives **2 Edge Points** per match. These represent split-second intuition, adrenaline-fueled reflexes, or a lucky break in the chaos of battle.

- **Usage:** You may spend 1 Edge Point to force or allow a re-roll of any single 2d6 dice result.
- **Constraint:** If you choose to re-roll, **both** dice must be re-rolled. You cannot re-roll a single die.
- **Limit:** You may not spend more than 1 Edge Point on a single roll.(New Rule)

Forced Withdrawal Rules (Rounds 1–3)

For the preliminary gauntlet, **Forced Withdrawal is mandatory** to prevent deadlocks and ensure matches conclude within the time limit.

- **Crippling Damage:** Per *Total Warfare* (p. 258)., A unit must attempt to withdraw from the field towards that unit's deployment edge if it suffers crippling damage. Crippling Damage for mechs is:
 - Side torso location destroyed
 - Two engine critical hits
 - One Gyro, one engine critical hit combo
 - loss of the use of mech sensors
 - Internal structure damage in three or more limbs
 - Internal structure damage in two or more torso locations
 - Four pilot hits
 - Loss of all of a mech's weapons through damage or ammo depletion.
 - No weapons left with 5+ range and minimum 5 damage.
- **Execution:** Per *Total Warfare* (p. 258). The unit must move at least 1 hex per turn toward its player's home edge until it leaves the map.
- **Scoring:** If a unit successfully withdraws, the match ends. The opponent earns **2 Points** (Forced Withdrawal).

Special Rules for Round 1

- Arena atmospheric conditions are being manipulated! All weapon systems with greater than 5 hex range suffer a +1 to hit penalty when fired.

Special Rules for Round 2

- Cooling this round is less efficient! Each turn during the heat management phase, an additional +2 heat is added to all units.

Special Rules for Round 3

- Arena ECM towers are scrambling mech systems! Targeting Computers, Pulse Lasers, provide no negative to-hit modifier this round.

Special Rules for Round 4: The Shrinking Arena

The finale changes the rules of engagement to create a desperate, last-stand atmosphere.

- **Forced Withdrawal: OFF.** Units that take critical hits must fight until destroyed or they withdraw voluntarily. There is no automatic removal from the board due to critical damage.
- **Map Boundaries:** As the arena shrinks, any unit outside the marked boundary at the end of a turn is **instantly destroyed**. No points are awarded for destroying units this way; they simply cease to exist.
- **Teamwork:** Optional. Coordinate if you wish, there are no rules for or against teamwork. However keep in mind each kill goes to the pilot who made the final blow.
- **Multiple Attackers 1 Target:** If there are multiple attackers against 1 target during the simultaneous weapons fire phase, the attack order is determined by card initiative of the attackers that round.

Map Setup & CPO Mess Hall Logistics

To maximize space in the historic CPO Mess Hall, specific setup protocols apply.

- **Preliminary Rounds (1–3):**
 - Maps are Grasslands and will be set up on the tables by organizers.
 - Two maps are placed long-edge touching
 - Players roll dice to determine deployment order.
- **The Finale (Round 4):**
 - A custom **BattleMat BFM Grasslands (72"x48")** is provided.
 - Deployment tokens are distributed by the Game Master to assign players deployment zones. Each token will have a number that matches a token on the field.
 - Initiative is determined by card draw.
 - **Turn Timer:** Strict adherence to the **2-minute per player movement turn** limit is required to fit all 15 players into the schedule. Weapons phase and all remaining phases are performed simultaneously until completion. Initiative card draw order for that round is used where the order of resolution for actions in a phase is in question.

Rule Disputes

- **Arbitration:** In the event of a rule dispute, the Table Organizers make the final call.
- **Authority:** Decisions are based strictly on *Classic BattleTech: Total Warfare*. If a rule is not found there, the ruling is made instantly to keep the game moving.
"An imperfect ruling delivered now is better than a perfect one an hour late."
- **Appeals:** No appeals are allowed during active gameplay. Post-match disputes regarding scoring will be reviewed by the Organizers only after the round concludes during the breaks.

PRIZES & AWARDS

All participants fight for glory and bragging rights, but there are also tangible rewards for those who rise above the rest of the arena. Medals and trophies will be awarded at the conclusion of Round 4.

Tournament Champion Placements

The top three finishers based on total points accumulated across all four rounds will receive exclusive commemorative prizes.

Placement	Prize Description
1st Place	New England Mech Con 2026 Trophy + Exclusive Prize Package
2nd Place	New England Mech Con 2026 Trophy + Prize Package
3rd Place	New England Mech Con 2026 Trophy + Prize Package

Note: All trophies are custom 3D-printed designs created specifically for this event.

Tie-Breaker Protocol

If two or more pilots tie for final placement positions, the following methods will determine the winner in order of priority:

1. Head-to-head record against tied opponents
2. Highest single-match score achieved during the gauntlet
3. Most Total Kill victories earned
4. Random card draw (if all above metrics are identical)

Additional Recognition Opportunities

Throughout New England Mech Con, several other events offer their own competitive awards. While the Steel Arena is the primary gauntlet, consider exploring these parallel competitions:

- **Painting Contest:** Multiple categories for single, group, and
- **Narrative Events:** MVP awards for players who demonstrate exceptional storytelling or tactical flair during mega-battles.
- **Cosplay Show:** Categories for costume accuracy, performance, and overall impact.

Award Ceremony

Winners will be announced at the end of the day in the CPO Mess Hall. We encourage all attendees to gather for a final photo with your fellow gladiators before departing the USS Massachusetts.

Eligibility

To be eligible for prizes, participants must:

- Complete all required registration steps
- Participate in all four scheduled rounds
- Adhere to all tournament rules and code of conduct guidelines throughout the event

--- Additional Info On Next Page ---

Additional Links

We recommend for all force building to use the master unit list website. The search tools there provide an easy way to search legal units for the event.

<http://www.masterunitlist.info>

If you are looking for more information about the convention the main website is:

<https://www.newenglandmechcon.org>

If you are interested in buying tickets to the convention, the ticket website is:

<http://www.droppointevents.com>

Legal Acknowledgments

BattleTech and all associated trademarks, logos, and intellectual property are the property of Catalyst Game Labs and/or The Topps Company, Inc. DropPoint LLC and the New England BattleTech League are unofficial, community-driven initiatives and are not affiliated with, endorsed by, or sponsored by Catalyst Game Labs, Topps, or any of their affiliates. This project is created by fans, for fans, with love for the BattleTech universe.