

Chapter Six: Minifig Heroes

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The Immortal War, culminating in Warhead's Zombie (Zulu) Dawn, was the first truly epic BrikWars Forum campaign, and its Heroes became the standards against which all following were judged.

Manly Santa, Lord Warhead, and the forces of Zombie Abraham Lincoln battled all comers in a space-age zombie apocalypse including the Almighty Benny, a meddling janitor, and BrikThulhu himself, and all went on to reappear in the battles of players around the world for years afterward.

*Characters by Warhead
from "Zombie (Zulu) Dawn"*

6.1: The Hero



(Download the Hero card)

Some minifigs are simply better than others; you recognize them as soon as you open the box. It has nothing to do with talent, training, or genetics; the defining feature that separates the **Hero** from lesser minifigs is the cool outfit. With the most blingy armors and flamboyant draperies, looking cool makes them fight better, live longer, and succeed where others fail.

A Hero's standard attributes are significantly higher than those of a regular minifig. Heroes have a Skill of 1d10, are able to Move seven inches per turn, and have an Armor rating of 2d6. With a cost of 11CP, they're also a lot more expensive to field.



Looking fancy outweighs all other considerations, even if you have to wear your slain enemies as a hat.

Photo: Sir Sporktimus
from "The Ebony Millinery + Helmeted Division"
Elements shown: LEGO

6.2: The Ego

The difference between a warrior who's merely phenomenally skilled and a true Hero is a matter of **Ego**. No matter how high a regular minifig's stat numbers may be, he recognizes the fact that he'll eventually have to die, and that there are some rules that can't be broken.

A Hero, by contrast, recognizes no such things. Mortality, logic, and the laws of physics are beneath his notice. A Hero is above the concerns of lesser minifigs.

Crankiness

Above all else, Heroes are the rock stars and prima donnas of the battlefield, and each one insists on being more important than any other unit.

He welcomes Heroes on enemy teams, because lesser foes are a waste of his abilities. He accepts Heroes on allied teams, because they give him rivals to compete with, and in any case he expects to



Six-sided dice may be good enough for regular minifigs, but Heroes demand a higher standard. Preferably forged from solid gold.

Element shown: d10

Specialties

A Hero is defined by his **Heroic Ego**, which is an example of a **Specialty**. Specialties are special abilities, features, or skills that change the rules for a particular minifig or other unit.

In most cases, a Specialty is used to grant abilities not available to units under the regular rules, but it might also be a handicap or a simple stat tweak. The effects and rules for

get to stab them in their Heroic backs as soon as his Human's politics inevitably shift.

Placing additional Heroes on his own team, on the other hand, is a major insult that no Hero can overlook. There can only be one star of the show, and he doesn't like getting upstaged. If a single player fields multiple Heroes, then their clashing Egos make each of them **Cranky**, and the more Heroes there are, the Crankier they get.

For every other conscious unit on his team with an Ego, a Hero receives a -1 **Cranky Penalty**, to a maximum Crankiness of -5. Any time the Hero rolls one or more dice, whether for Skill, Armor, Damage, Heroic Feats, or RedShirts, the Cranky penalty is subtracted from *each die* (total rolls can never be reduced below zero, however). The penalty is not subtracted from dice rolled *against* the Hero; he still receives full Damage from enemy attacks, for instance.

Penalties for Crankiness only remain in effect while the other Heroes on the team are conscious. If the other Heroes are knocked out or killed, the penalty is lightened accordingly. (If the Hero arranged to neutralize the co-headliners himself, all the better.) The penalty is reinstated if one of the dead or unconscious Heroes is revived.

The one advantage of a Cranky Hero is that he costs less. For every point of Crankiness a Hero has at the beginning of the battle, he costs one less Construction Point, up to a maximum discount of 50% off.

RedShirts

"We can't all be heroes, because someone has to sit on the curb and clap as they go by."

- Will Rogers

A Hero is more important than any regular minifig. As a result, it's only right that lesser troops sacrifice themselves to keep him from harm. Whether out of love, duty, fear, or the Hero grabbing them by the heads and using them as meat shields, a Hero can rely on nearby allies to leap into harm's way to protect him from damage. These self-sacrificing troops are called **RedShirts**. It's thought that they earn the title by so often turning themselves into red splatter decorations for the Heroes' chests.

Any time a Hero takes damage from an external source (i.e., not from something internal like poison, coronary disease, or ingesting a live grenade), he may try to inspire a nearby unit to RedShirt. This does not take an Action. The Hero can inspire any number of RedShirts in a single turn, but only one for each specific incoming source of Damage. If successful, the RedShirting unit will leap in to take the damage instead, knocking the Hero out of harm's way if necessary (if the Hero is about to be hit by a speeding locomotive, for instance, he'll need to be away from the tracks when the train rolls in). The inspired unit must be on the Hero's team, it must be capable of leaping (e.g., minifigs, robots, or animals, rather than tanks or jet fighters), and it must have a lower **CP** cost than the Hero (not counting equipment, but counting Crankiness discounts, if any).

When a Hero learns that he's about to take Damage, he has one chance to inspire a nearby

any Specialty are listed on a unit's Stat Card for easy reference.

A Specialty's CP cost is listed along with its description text. This added cost is already included in the total Cost of the card on which the Specialty appears. If you wanted to add the Heroic Ego Specialty to a different unit, it would increase that unit's cost by +3CP.



Attacked by an evil clone at a publicity appearance, Blue Space Hero is saved by the intervention of a leaping red-shirted passerby. From photos taken at the scene, it's unclear whether the man's leap was intentional, or if the Hero picked him up and threw him in the way. Either way, the RedShirt becomes the posthumous envy of Blue Space Hero fanboys across the galaxy.

Elements shown: LEGO, Mega Bloks

RedShirt to take the fall instead. Before the Damage is rolled, the Hero rolls his Skill (plus any Bonus Dice on a Critical Success). If an eligible RedShirt is within this many inches of the Hero, the inspiration succeeds. The sacrificial unit will leap in and take the damage intended for the Hero. If the roll is too low or is a Critical Failure, the Hero fails to inspire the unit to RedShirt, and is forced to take the damage himself.

If the Hero is in a Squad, another Squad member can be automatically inspired to RedShirt on his behalf, without having to make the inspiration roll (*Chapter 11: Armies*).

If the incoming Damage is too great to be blocked by a single RedShirt, the Hero is knocked away the minimum distance required to avoid being hit (even if the distance required is truly ridiculous, like getting RedShirtd out of a nuclear explosion or a supernova). This results in the Disruption of the Hero unless he has Overskill on the RedShirt roll.

RedShirting should not be abused to try and accelerate units' movement across the battlefield. This will make a Hero's allies want to kick him in the nuts rather than sacrifice themselves for him. A player attacking his own Hero to take advantage of RedShirting movement should be ejected from the game. The remaining players should confiscate his bricks and then take turns RedShirting him out of the house and into traffic.

RedShirts move unusually quickly and have no problem intercepting gunshots, explosions, or even laser blasts. They're unconcerned with whatever damage this might do to the laws of physics or to the Humans' suspension of disbelief.

Heroic Deaths

"This thing of being a hero, about the main thing to it is to know when to die."

- Will Rogers

If a Hero dies in battle even despite the best efforts of his RedShirts, then he is dead - at least for the rest of the battle. But thanks to Everyone's The Boss Of Their Own Toys (*1.4: The Spirit of the Game*), Heroes have a way of always popping back up in one form or another, no matter how many times you think you've killed them. By the time the next battle begins, the plot will have inevitably twisted in their favor: the Hero was only captured in preparation for a daring escape, or left for dead in anticipation of a daring recovery. No matter how gruesome the death, they are somehow revived by magic, or science, or the will of the gods, or even as part of an enemy plot, and almost always with new improvements tacked on as a result.

If a Hero's death was so dramatically Heroic that it could never be taken back or plausibly denied, then the Hero may discover himself well and truly dead - and then proceed to slaughter his way out of Hell and back into the land of the living. His Ego will allow nothing less.

There is no number of deaths or defeats that can prevent the best characters from finding a way to return. Unless they're boring, in which case no force can save them.



Emperor Piltogg preserves the bodies of defeated enemy Heroes for experimentation in the Akkadian Resurrection Chambers - but one has gone missing.

Photo: Stubby
from "Path to the Grail"
Elements shown: LEGO, BrickForge

The Saga of Leonidus

"So the Warrior said:

Very well, since ye are a prince in this land, and because you did fight well,

*I shall spare your life for a little while yet.
But thou has caused me to be cast out of the halls of mine fathers.
And thou has stolen from me that which I toiled for all the days of my life.
Therefore, tell me dark one; how is it that I may regain entrance to those halls?*

And the daemon prince spake thus:

*You can never enter that hall.
Unless thou should change thy name and go out once again unto the mortal wheel.
And thou must earn again the right to enter the halls of your fathers.*

*And this angered the Fearsome one.
And the daemon prince trembled at the sight of his countenance.
And he begged once more for his life.
So the Fallen one took hold of the daemon prince,
And he bound him into His armor, that he should still live.
And he took for His own the Hellblade as spoil.
And he did then depart from those burning hells to walk again the mortal realm."*

- Excerpt from Tuefish's LEONIDUS Saga

(BrikWiki entry: [The LEONIDUS Saga](#))



Leonidus, commander and final survivor of the Vol detachment to Praetoria, falls to the combined attacks of Blood Daemons.

Photo: Warhead
from "ZOMBIE (Zulu) DAWN - Turn 11"
Elements shown: LEGO



Denied entrance to Volhalla, Leonidus slays his captors in Hell and returns to the mortal world as Legionidus.

Photo: Tuefish
from "A Vol Saga"
Elements shown: LEGO (painted)

6.3: Heroic Feats

A Hero's amazing abilities stem from both stunning bravado and pig-headed ignorance, but his greatest powers are drawn from a tradition handed down through endless generations of action movies.

Action-Hero Clichés

To realize their full potential, all Heroes must take on an **Action-Hero Cliché**, drawn from movies, video games, comic books, or Saturday morning cartoons. It is mandatory that Heroes develop a ridiculous accent in support of their role. In a pinch, an Austrian accent almost always works; if a role hasn't been played by Arnold Schwarzenegger,



Major Natalya launches herself over the chaos of the battlefield, guns blazing

Photo: Warhead
from "Zombie (Zulu) Dawn Turn 9"
Elements shown: LEGO

it probably doesn't count as a real Action Cliché in the first place.

If you're too young to remember Saturday morning cartoons, ask your parents. They won't be able to explain them either, but you can enjoy watching the looks on their faces as they feel another part of their childhoods die.

Example Action-Hero Clichés		
Action-Hero Cliché	Action-Hero Accent	Example Action-Heroic Feats
Super Soldier	Austrian / Stallonian	Dual-wielding heavy machineguns, performing surgery on self, punching through walls
Barbarian	Austrian / Swedish	Dual-wielding heavy axes, lifting massive objects, communing with animals
Secret Agent	Austrian / British	Hacking security systems, seducing women/men, sniping, escaping deathtraps
Kung-Fu Master	Austrian / Chinese	Dodging bullets, running up walls, speaking in riddles
Pulp Archaeologist	Austrian / All-American	Dodging booby traps, fistfighting Nazis, bullwhip expertise
Gunslinger	Austrian / Texan	Trick shooting, trick horsemanship, trick gambling, trick dueling
Warrior Princess	Austrian / New Zealander	Chakram tricks, impossible acrobatics, nerve pinches, lesbian subtexts



Which action personality best fits this hard-hitting space marine Hero? Characters from Futurama are proposed, and a nomination for a pre-"Forever" Duke Nukem is met with popular acclaim.

But love for Samuel L. Jackson wins out in the end, with the suggestion of "Mace Windu, as played by Jules Winnfield." Attitude firmly in place, Commander "Bad" Moe Faux is born.

Elements shown: LEGO, Mega Bloks, Little Armory

For Heroes based on specific characters, picking the Action Cliché is easiest of all: a Robin Hood minifig would perform Robin Hood Feats; a Hercules minifig would have Herculean Feats, and a Davy Crockett minifig would get King of the Wild Frontier Feats.

Action-Hero Feats

"A hero is someone who rebels or seems to rebel against the facts of existence and seems to conquer them. Obviously that can only work at moments. It can't be a lasting thing. That's not saying that people shouldn't keep trying to rebel against the facts of existence."

- Jim Morrison

For an action-movie hero in the thick of battle, accomplishing the impossible is more than just an everyday event - it's an every-couple-of-seconds event. Any such stupendous or wildly improbable act, pushing fictional license to its limits for the sake of spectacle, is a **Heroic Feat**.

In For a Benny, Part 2

*A Heroic Feat is a limited form of a What I Say Goes Roll (1.4: The Spirit of the Game), and offers a similar opportunity to go **In For a Benny**.*

The opponent rolling against the Feat can choose to take an Almighty Benny rather than opposing it, but only if none of the other opponents want to oppose the Feat either.

Heroes are limited to the Feats appropriate to their Cliché - a ProWrestler Hero can't modulate phasers to energy-shield bypass frequencies off the top of his head the way a ScienceOfficer Hero might, but he can try picking up a motorcycle and swinging it like a baseball bat through a group of opponents.

To attempt a Heroic Feat, the player describes the Feat their Hero is about to attempt, and rolls 1d6. If one of his or her opponents would like the Feat to fail (and they probably will), they also roll 1d6. (If more than one opponent would like to oppose the roll, the player chooses the one most negatively affected by the Feat.) If the Hero's roll ties or exceeds the opponent's roll, the Feat succeeds; otherwise the Hero's efforts end in failure.

If both players roll a one in the Heroic Feat Roll, it's a special case - the Hero has failed to accomplish his Feat, but his opponent has failed to oppose him. Rather than try to unravel this Heroic Paradox, the Heroic Feat is cancelled - the Hero suffers from a moment of uncharacteristic sanity and realizes that whatever he was about to attempt could never work. The Heroic Feat is spent for the turn, but play continues as if the Hero had never attempted it in the first place.

A Hero may attempt one Heroic Feat on every turn. If he doesn't use his Feat during his own turn, he may use it as a Response Action during an opponent's turn at no penalty. Feats can't be "saved up" over time - regardless of whether a Hero uses his Feat or not, he will always have a single Heroic Feat available at the beginning of his next turn.

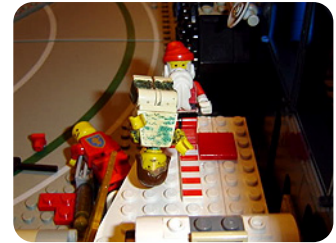
The Consequences of Failure

"... if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

- Theodore Roosevelt

Because the range of possibilities for each type of action hero is so wide, it's up to the players to agree on whether a specific Feat is appropriate to a given Cliché, what the effects of success will be, and what will be the consequences of failure.

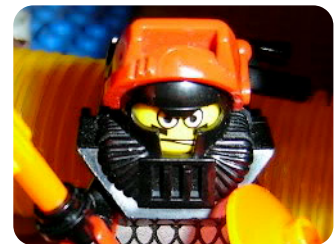
The effects of failed Feats will depend on the seriousness of the battle and the attitudes of the players. A good general guideline is that the more stupendous the Feat attempted, the more dire the effects if it fails. A Hero failing an attempt to eat a dozen doughnuts in a single turn might suffer the effects of upset stomach. Choking to death might be a more realistic result, but it'd seem severe compared to the relatively uninspiring Feat. A Hero failing to lift an automobile over his head, on the other hand, would be subject to much stronger consequences on failure: he might get it into the air but then drop it on himself, or he might strain so hard to lift it that he rips his own arms off. It's often best to start by imagining what would happen to Homer Simpson, Wile E. Coyote, or the Three Stooges if they were to make similar attempts.



Looking across the battlefield, Manly Santa sees that VOL troops are causing trouble for his allies, the Manly Men. Using a Santa Feat, he reaches into his sack and pulls out... a corpse!



It's the recently-deceased mother of of VOL Commander Leonidus! Positioning the corpse, Manly Santa executes a brilliant strategem.



It works! For the next turn, Leonidus and his troops are successfully distracted from fighting.

Photo: Warhead
from "Zombie (Zulu) Dawn Turn 5"
Elements shown: LEGO, painted elements

Inaction Heroes

Heroic Clichés are based on Action Heroes, not Word Heroes. Heroic Feats must always be based on actions rather than words. If a Hero wants to inspire his allies, he does it by leading a Charge, not by delivering pretty soliloquies about the nobility of Charges while sipping tea in the safety of the rear guard.

If players decide that a Hero's Heroic Speech is Heroic enough to ignore this rule, then they can decide to allow it, despite the unbelievable lameness of Speech Feats. But if the speech fails to inspire, then it means the Hero is no longer inspiring, and an uninspiring minfig loses

his Hero status automatically and permanently. "Word Heroes" are justly de-Feated and deserve the agony of that loss.

In addition to not being Word Heroes, Action Heroes are also not Inaction Heroes. They *ESPECIALLY* can't use Feats to inspire others to withdraw from combat safely, negotiate more diplomatically, or surrender more sweetly. They exist to increase action, not diminish it.

6.4: Heroic Weapons



The appearance of the divine janitor Stubby, wielding the legendary Banhammer and the Broom of Doom, drastically changed the course of battle for these Proto-Spacemen.

*Photo: Warhead
from "Zombie (Zulu) Dawn Turn 9"
Elements shown: LEGO*

Heroic Heroism

Using the better of two d6es instead of just one for a Heroic Feat may seem like an unstoppable advantage, but in fact it adds less than 1/6 to the success rate. The chances of success with a single die are 7/12; the chances with two are a little less than 3/4.



Before becoming the leader of the Metal Warriors, BFenix first had to satisfy the Gods of Metal and claim the forgotten blood sword RAGE in the Steelliums of Hellius.

Character by BFenix

Long after Heroes have decomposed into component plastic parts, their legendary accessories live on, inspiring new generations to avaricious conflict. Many such Artifakts are powerful enough to give regular minifigs Heroic abilities all by themselves. Magical swords, enchanted armors, deific grails, zero-point blaster cannons, and unusually well-stocked gift bags have all inspired campaigns of slaughter from covetous Hero wannabes.

Heroic Weapons are the most common type of Heroic Artifakt, but legends are also told of Heroic Vehicles, Heroic Armor, Heroic Fortifications, and even Heroic Furniture. Any object can be made Heroic for an added cost of +3CP. These objects retain all the regular uses of an object of their type, but also grant one Heroic Feat per turn to whomever possesses or operates them. Whoever takes possession of a Heroic Artifakt can use it in a Heroic Feat as part of any Action taken with the Artifakt, making it dangerous to leave Artifakts lying around on the battlefield or in the hands of easily-defeated amateurs.

A Heroic Artifakt is limited to Feats that satisfy its Heroic Cliché, similar to that of a regular Hero, but Artifakt Clichés tend to be simple tautologies. Excalibur's Cliché, for example, is that it's Excalibur.

Heroic Artifakts suffer no penalties from Crankiness themselves, since anyone can use them, but they may inspire Crankiness in minifig Heroes on the same team if they don't have Heroic Artifakts of their own.

A Heroic minifig using a Heroic Artifakt is still limited to one Feat per turn, but with the following advantage: If the Feat satisfies both his own Heroic Cliché and that of the Artifakt's, then he can roll two d6es instead of one when rolling for his Feat, succeeding if *either* of the two d6es matches or exceeds his opponent's opposing roll.

The Orange Transparent Chainsaw

Orange Transparent ABS is the most powerful substance known to minifigs. The only source of this material is the frigid planet of Iceworld, where ancient crusades against Robotic Ice Daemons dropped the temperatures to far below absolute zero.

Under these impossible and supernaturally cold conditions, even laser beams froze, rendering all of the crusaders' weapons useless, save one: the planet-destroying Orange Laser. Thanks to its massive scale, a central core of destructive energy was able to punch through the cold, even as the outer layers of the beam froze solid and peeled away.

Bazillions of years later, the frozen shards of petrified laser remain preserved under continents of shifting ice, retaining all of their ancient world-destroying power for anyone with the secret knowledge and will to forge them into weapons.

The world-destroying fleets are lost and long forgotten, but the crusaders' descendants remain on the planet surface, locked in never-ending battles to prevent a Robotic Ice Demon resurgence and to protect the secrets of Orange Transparent Leg-Ore from falling into the wrong hands. In this quest, the Orange Transparent Chainsaw is their deadliest and most legendary weapon.



In the Iceworlders' darkest hours, the Iceworlder Warchief enters the Ice Caves of Creation, unlocks the OT Stasis Chamber, and brings forth the Original OTC, forged by the Gods themselves in ancient times to aid the Iceworlders in their desperate struggle against the Robotic Ice Demons.

Photo: Warhead
from "KRYSTO ICEWORD and IVHORSEMAN'S
WARBAND"
Elements shown: LEGO

(BrikWiki entry: [Orange Transparent Chainsaw](#))

