

MUTANT BIKERS OF THE ATOMIC WASTELANDS

The Post-Apocalyptic Game of Big Guns, Big Bikes and Diminutive IQs



Original Game by James Boldry
Savaged by Bill 'JB' Littlefield



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INTRODUCTION

Mutant Bikers of the Atomic Wastelands (MBAW) is an original work by James Boldry originally created for use with the FUDGE rules by Steffan O'Sullivan.

This conversion is a derivative work that seeks to capture the feel of MBAW using the *Savage Worlds* rules. There is no detailed setting for this game—it is the epitome of the “beer & pretzels RPG”.

Rather than try to explain the premise behind the game, I'll let James do it for you:

“Welcome to MBAW, the post-apocalypse game of big guns, big bikes and diminutive IQs. In MBAW you play the role of Wastelands bikers (mutations are optional).

Wasteland bikers are free spirited individuals who live a nomadic existence roaming across the Atomic Wastelands. They travel on their powerful motorcycles, sometimes alone, sometimes in small groups. Bikers ride from the ruins of one town to the next, searching for fuel and spare parts so that they can ride on to the next town and search for fuel and spare parts.

Bikers value their freedom (to ride from town to town...) and their bikes above all else. They hate the gangers, who threaten their freedom and pity the 'Peds' (pedestrians—poor sods without wheels). A Wasteland biker lives in terror of losing his bike and becoming a Ped himself.

Set in a vague not-so-distant future sort of time, the world of MBAW is an anarchic, barbaric and dangerous place. The bikers share the Wastelands with the murderous gangs, the deranged remains of the US Army and a host of radioactive mutant monsters.”

That's about all you need to get an idea of the type of setting that we'll be playing in – the GM should feel free to add specific details to suit his group's particular tastes.



CREATING A CHARACTER

Characters are created according to the rules in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook—any changes are noted in the appropriate sections hereafter.

RACE

All characters are humans. Of course, without the possibility for mutations things wouldn't be as fun. Rather than bore creative GMs with a “laundry list” of possible mutations we'll just say that all mutations are treated as Edges. If a character wants to play a mutant he must take a mutation as his free Edge.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are handled as described in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook.

SKILLS

Rather than 15 skill points, MBAW characters only receive 3. All characters in MBAW receive the following skills for free:

- **Drive like a Maniac** (Driving)
- **Hit Real Hard** (Fighting)
- **Take it Like a Man** (Guts)
- **From Da Hood** (Streetwise)
- **Scrounge** (Survival)
- **Would Ya Look at That!** (Notice)

In addition, each character may choose one additional skill from the following list for free:

- **I'm Gonna Kick Your A**** (Intimidate)
- **B&E Man** (Lockpicking)
- **Fix Broken Stuff** (Repair)
- **Straight Shooter** (Shooting)
- **Move Real Quiet** (Stealth)

All free skills default to their linked ability and are raised according to the rules found in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook. Additional skills are bought and raised in the normal manner. In keeping with the feel of MBAW, any Knowledge skill not related to machinery, weapons, or blowing stuff up cost double the normal costs to learn and improve.

HINDRANCES

Hindrances are handled according to the rules given in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook.

EDGES

Just like in *Savage Worlds*. All characters receive one free Edge at character creation—characters wishing to play a mutant **must** take a mutation as

their free Edge. Here are a few examples—GMs should feel free to be creative in this area:

- **Third eye on an eyestalk:** +2 to Notice
- **Scaly skin:** +2 points of Armor
- **Sticky Limbs:** Wall walker monstrous ability
- **Claws:** May make unarmed attacks at STR+2

The following Edges really have no place in a MBAW game; however, if you feel the need to include them, than whom am I to tell you not to:

- **Arcane Background (Magic or Miracles)**
- **Noble**
- **Rich / Filthy Rich**

GEAR

Remember, this is a post-apocalyptic wasteland. Any gear that you allow should fit in with the background. Firearms and ammunition should be available in limited quantities. Things like rocket launchers and grenades are even harder to come by. I won't bore you with a list of available gear—just use the lists provided in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook and your good judgment as a guide!

Money is also a hard thing to come by. The "currency" of MBAW is water, food, oil, and gas. Most bikers just use brute force to take what they want. All characters are assumed to possess a motorcycle (trick it out however you like—the more it looks like something out of a Mad Max movie, the better!), basic clothing, enough rations to get them by for a couple of days, a knife, and some basic "adventuring" gear (torches, rope, etc...).

To determine your character's additional starting gear, roll a d6 once for each of the following tables.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Brass Knuckles |
| 2 | Bat with spikes or meat cleaver (STR+2) |
| 3 | Axe or sword (STR +3) |
| 4 | Crossbow and 20 quarrels |
| 5 | Pistol (Glock 9mm with 1 full magazine) |
| 6 | Shotgun (Sawed-off DB with 18 rounds) |

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1 | No Armor |
| 2-4 | A leather shirt: +1 Armor – torso only |
| 5 | A chain mail shirt: +2 Armor – torso only |
| 6 | A Kevlar vest: +2/+4 (vs. bullets) Armor – torso only |

This is all the gear you get, so make it last! Additional gear will have to be scrounged or otherwise obtained (bought, traded for, or stolen) during the course of the game.

GAME RULES

Just use the *Savage Worlds* rules as written!

BESTIARY

Here are some descriptions to get you going.

GANGERS

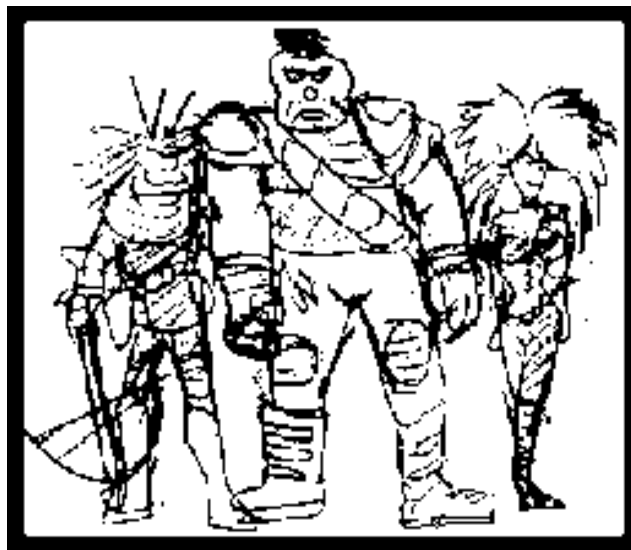
Gangs come in all shapes and forms. The one thing that defines them all is that they exist only to make life miserable for others—Peds and rival bikers alike.

For practical purposes you might want to subdivide Gangers in three categories: **Crap** (Weak Extra), **Average** (Extra) and **Top Dog** (Wild Card) gangers. The first are pretty wimpy and they exist mainly for comedic relief. Average gangers are your basic cannon fodder. Top Dog gangers are almost Wild Card material. Top Dog gangers are tough, so you might want to use one as the leader of an Average Gang. A group might also be used as the elite body guard of the leader of a major gang (known as a Big Boss).

Crap Gangers: d4 in all attributes and free skills. Armed with brass knuckles, baseball bat/meat cleaver, or axe/sword (pick one). Pace 6". Parry 4. Toughness 4.

Average Gangers: d6 in all attributes and free skills. Armed with axe/sword, pistol, or crossbow (pick one). Roll on the Armor Table to determine if any armor is worn. Pace 6". Parry 5. Toughness 5 (or more, if armor is worn).

Top Dogs: Create as a Novice Wild Card.



"PEDS"

Peds (Pedestrians) are ordinary folk who have to grow food and do stuff for a living. They tend to live in small, isolated communities. A Ped might own a bike, but if he does not embrace the lifestyle he is still a Ped. Peds are hopeless in combat.

Peds: d4 in all attributes and free skills (except Drive Like a Maniac and From Da Hood—which they don't have; Fix Broken Stuff or Move Real Quiet—which they have at d6; and any one Sissy skill at d8). Armed with baseball bats or pipes (STR damage) or small knives (at best). Pace 6". Parry 4. Toughness 4.

Peds may never *personally* possess any form of transportation (other than their own feet); however, a group of Peds may have a mechanical form of transportation that's considered "communal property" (such as a bus, minivan, or station wagon).

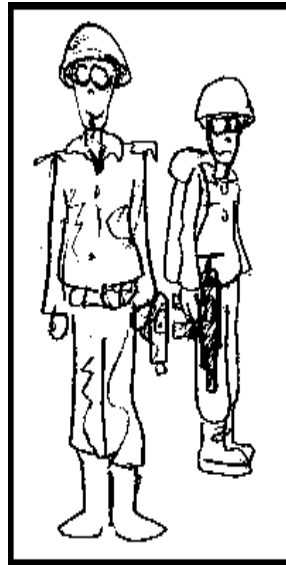
GHOULS

Ghouls eat people. Ghouls kill people. However they can't eat the people they kill. What Ghouls have learned to do is to lure people to dangerous places and hope for the best. Ghouls can be pretty clever and a few of them can pass as humans (in the dark, downwind...).

Ghoul: Agility, Strength, and Vigor: d8; Smarts and Spirit: d6; Hit Real Hard, Take it Like a Man, and I'm Gonna Kick Your A** at d8; Would Ya Look at That at d6. Pace 6". Parry 6. Toughness 8. Special Abilities: Claws (STR+2) and Bite (STR) as a single attack with no MAP; +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from Shaken; Characters wounded by a Ghoul must make a Vigor roll for each wound—failure indicates that the wound is infected and will take twice as long to heal (10 days for natural healing or requiring a raise when using Healing).



ARMY MEN



When the bomb went off, the military made sure they were safe and sound in their underground bunkers. However, generations of living underground has turned them into pale, sickly, deranged creatures with a taste for human flesh and an obsessive desire to rid the USA of all communist mutants. Army soldiers can count on good weapons like SMGs and flamers. They might also have AFVs and robots at their disposal. Army men do not like sunlight.

Army Men: Use the stats for Zombies as given in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook. Additionally, they suffer a -2 penalty to all actions when operating in the daylight. Arm them with one of the following (all start with Very High ammo levels): pistol, submachine gun, M16, SAW, or M60.

MOLDMEN



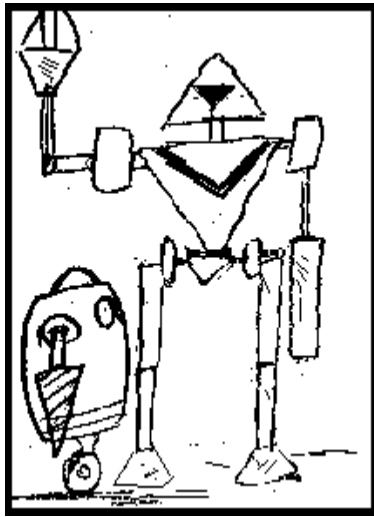
Moldmen live in sewers, abandoned basements and other such dark, underground places. They are not evil, but are fiercely territorial and will not tolerate any intrusion. Moldmen do not seem to be great fighters; however they do emit a stench that requires a successful Take It like a Man result

to resist. Otherwise the character is at -2 on all actions for the duration of the encounter. Moldmen take half damage from all weapons except those that are flame-based.

Moldmen: d4 in all attributes; Hit Real Hard and Take it Like a Man at d4; Scrounge and Would Ya Look at That at d6; Move Real Quiet at d8. Pace 5". Parry 4. Toughness 4. Moldmen usually avoid direct confrontation, preferring to ambush or trap intruders instead. They are usually armed with primitive knives and spears. Anyone killed by the Moldmen will be transformed into one if his body is not recovered.

KILLER ROBOTS

The US Army Sterilizer Unit (as the "killer robot" is known to the Army Men) is a fearsome opponent. It has a mounted chain-gun on one arm and a heavy claw on the other. The mounted gun can be converted into a portable weapon with a successful Fix Broken Stuff roll and 3-4 hours of hard work (let's face it, you know your players will want to try).



Killer Robots: All attributes (except Spirit, which they don't possess) at d8; Hit Real Hard and Straight Shooter at d8; Chain Gun (Treat as a M2 Browning MG with Very High ammo—laser sighted for +2 on Straight Shooter rolls); Heavy Claw (STR+5). Pace 6". Parry 6. Toughness 6. Special Abilities: Armor +2 (all around), Fearless, Construct.

RADIOACTIVE MONSTERS

The radioactivity from the Atomic Wastelands had drastic effects on the local fauna and flora: it pretty much killed it off. But those that survived got smarter, bigger or simply meaner. These are the monsters that populate the world of MBAW. You can have any kind of monster in MBAW. Giant ants having picnics, Japanese-style city-stompers; anything goes. You might also consider special invulnerabilities. I leave the creation of these creatures to the imaginations of individual GMs!

TIPS FOR RUNNING MBAW

MBAW was designed very much as a beer and pretzel game. It is meant to be a fun way to blow off some steam, create some wacky characters and watch them go in a spectacular in a ball of flames.

The game works best if adventures have an episodic structure. MBAW is not intended as campaign material. The setting is not real or consistent enough to sustain the close scrutiny of a campaign and the nomadic lifestyle premise is a tad too shallow. To run A MBAW campaign, you need something more. We ran a short MBAW campaign by making all the characters musicians in a band and replacing the bikes with musical instruments. This gave the players something more

substantial to build their character on rather than just sheer wanderlust. But by and large, running MBAW should come across more like a collection of loosely connected short stories than a novel.

The following tips describe ways to capture the intended tone of the game. Clearly, the GM can do whatever they wish with MBAW, including not run it at all.

Pace

It is pretty obvious that a game based on bikers will benefit from a break neck pace. From character creation to character cremation, you'll want things to move fast. Try to give the game that 'wind rushing through your hair' feeling. You know that you are doing things right when the players start making 'vroom, vroom' noises.

Color

Ultimately, color is what the game is all about. Your challenge as GM of MBAW is to inject as many quirky, deranged and bizarre details in the setting and NPCs as you can. Even in the context of a random encounter, try to add that extra bit of detail. Maybe everyone in this particular gang wears an old, tattered tuxedo or perhaps they only use cooking implements as weapons. In the end it doesn't matter if this distinguishing feature isn't particularly funny or original. Every little bit adds to the general chaos. The main exception to this rule is the Peds, who should always remain in the background.

The Terrible Truth

There is one secret that the players must never discover about MBAW. And that is, at the end of the day, the Peds are the only people who really matter. They are the ones with real lives and who doing important things like raising families and slowly rebuilding the world. When you think about it, bikers and gangers are pretty irrelevant in the scheme of things. This is why the players must never be given the chance to think about it. Should your players ever start thinking about these issues, talk about settling down and start making plans for their old age, you've clearly made the world too real. It'll be difficult to recapture the wild and reckless spirit the game was designed for. Introspection and MBAW just don't mix.

Keeping up a fast pace is one way of keeping the players mind off from the Terrible Truth. The other thing you can do is to break up any sense of continuity.

While most games improve as the setting becomes more developed and detailed, in MBAW continuity is dangerous. Any sense of continuity gives the players a logical framework with which to

start making sense of the world. That's bad. Not only does it bring the player one step closer to the Terrible Truth; it also limits the GMs creative options. The last thing you need is a smartass player asking such embarrassing questions as "What's a dinosaur doing here anyway?"

A few simple steps can help reduce the sense of continuity such as:

- Don't give players maps. Don't even think in terms of maps.
- Don't make Ped settlements too interesting. Sometimes just giving the settlement a name is too much. Hell, don't even give Peds names if you can avoid it.
- Use those cinematic fades or sharp cuts between scenes.
- Don't attempt to account for the time between adventures. If you decide to run one episode in the ruins of Washington DC and the next somewhere with a generic Mexican feel, don't bother to tell the players how the characters got there, how long it took or even why they went there in the first place. In theory the adventures might not even be in chronological order, though that gets very confusing.

- Remember the only things they can take with them between sessions are their EP and a few more interesting bits of junk. Make sure characters re-roll for all their weapons. Injuries, broken or stolen bikes and spent Fudge points are all restored at the start of the next session.

As always there are exceptions. Recurring NPCs are okay. And recurring jokes are almost a must.

END NOTES

I hope you enjoyed this Savaged version of MBAW. If not, don't worry—I plan on producing more supplements in the near future, so you're bound to find something useful eventually!

If you come up with any cool additions or suggestions for MBAW (or have questions regarding the existing rules), drop me a line at jblittlefield@yahoo.com and I'll be sure to address your concerns in the next revision.

Until next time...Keep it Savage!

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