

MiniKnights!

a very tiny superhero adventure game

by Dave Van Domelen, for Plaid Rabbit
Productions

Introduction:

MiniKnights is a micro-sized version of Modern Knights, which is coming soon from Plaid Rabbit. Most of the rules have been hidden behind a curtain, and a few have been simplified (mainly combat effects like impairment from pain), but all the characters presented here were built with the full rules. The setting is your basic superhero world (the full rules go into more detail) with more of a focus on the "Silver Age" simplicity. What does "Silver Age" mean? Well, it means many things to many people, but in this case it means that while the characters have reasonably rich backgrounds, you can actually remember most of the important parts in their careers without resorting to a computerized database. In MiniKnights, you can play one of the Duotones, a pair of superheroes operating in Columbus, Ohio. Hey, it's good enough for Origins, it's good enough for the Duotones!



Rules

Combat:

As in any fight, there's two sides...Us and Them. In this case, we call "Us" the PCs, and "Them" the NPCs. Each round of combat, the PCs can pick their actions either Before or After the NPCs make their rolls. All actions resolve at the same time, but going After represents waiting that fraction of a second to see if it looks like you're gonna get hit. Going Before gives you more offensive power, while going After gives a chance to defend, although the Duotones aren't really geared for active defense, so you'll usually just go Before the NPCs. When you act, you choose an ability, and if applicable, a level of damage. For your choice, there will be an entry like this:

Flurry of Blows: Bone (2/9/10/17)

What this means is that when you choose this attack, you'll inflict a Bone Wound if you hit. Roll 2d10 and look at the list of numbers after the attack.

If you roll under the first number, that's a mishap, and means that not only did you miss, you did something nasty to yourself, like hurt yourself.

Rolling below the second number but not below the first is a failure, and just means you miss. In this case, rolling 2-8 would be a miss. Rolling below the third number but not below the second number is a mixed result. You probably hit, but something mildly unpleasant also happened, like doing less damage or fritzing your powers. A roll of 9 exactly would be a mixed result here. Rolling below the fourth number but not below the third number is a success. You hit, congrats. A roll of 10-16 would be a success here. Rolling the fourth number or higher is called an overkill, which is usually good, but sometimes involves paying a price, like knocking yourself out in one massive blast. A roll of 17 or better would be an overkill for this attack.

Sometimes only a single number will be listed after a skill, usually a defensive one.

That means you just have to roll that number or better on 2d10 to get the thing to work.

Range is a concern in the full Modern Knights game, but since Jet and Comet are speedsters....

Wounds:

There are four types of Wound in

MiniKnights, each representing a different general level of damage.

Bone Wounds indicate enough damage to break a normal person's bones, but for superheroes are barely enough to register.

Metal Wounds are pretty much what they sound like...enough damage to harm steel. This will seriously mess up even a superhero.

Structural Wounds are enough damage to start dropping buildings. Only the toughest heroes can ignore these.

Critical Wounds are just that: critical. Most superheroes will drop when they take one of these, although Comet can grit his teeth and handle one.

When you run out of Wounds of a particular type, any other Wounds suffered of that type go to the next level up. So even small attacks can knock you out if they keep coming.

A hero that's totally out of Wounds is just about ready for the morgue. A hero that has taken any Critical Wounds can no longer fight, he can only run away if still mobile. NPCs will usually surrender or retreat once they run out of MetalWounds.

Normal people tend to die when they suffer Metal Wounds or greater.

Superheroes can choose to inflict less damage with an attack if they only want to



discourage a normal crook. The wounds just below Bone Wounds are called Flesh Wounds. Below those are Bruise Wounds.

Sample Characters - PCs

Jet (Speedster, Jessica Trent)

Wounds: 4 Bone, 1 Metal, 1 Structural, 1 Critical

Defense: Jet is immune to Heat. Any heat-based attacks do no damage to her.

Speed Points: 2

Combat Options:

Before:

Flurry of Blows: Bone (2/9/10/17)

Flurry of Blows: Metal (3/11/12/19) Jet may land multiple strikes with this ability, but subtracts 1 from the roll for the second attack, 3 for the third, 6 for the fourth, 10 for the fifth. Also, NPCs add 1 to their rolls if Jet makes 3 strikes, 3 if she makes 4, 6 if she makes 5.

Multiple Clothesline: Bone (3/11/12/19)

Multiple Clothesline: Metal (6/12/15/20) Roll 1d10/2 +1 when this attack is chosen. Jet can attack that many targets, rolling to hit each.

Heat Blast: Bone (1/8/9/16)

Heat Blast: Metal (2/10/11/18)

Heat Blast: Structural (5/11/14/19)

Dodge: (10) NPCs get -4 to their rolls to attack Jet this turn.

After:

Flurry of Blows: Bone (3/11/12/19)

Multiple Clothesline: Bone (6/12/15/20)

Heat Blast: Bone (2/10/11/18)

Heat Blast: Metal (5/11/14/19)

Noncombat Abilities:

Jet can run at supersonic speeds, and also moves with inhuman reflexes, letting her "second-guess" herself in a fight. She's immune to the heat she generates from friction at high speeds, but can channel it into many uses. Her sleek black costume helps her move stealthily at night, she's the detective of the pair.

Speed Points: Jet can spend her Speed Points at any time to reroll the dice. She can keep rerolling until the result is of a higher type than the original roll (mishap needs to be at least a failure, failure at least mixed, etc).

Comet (Strong flying guy, Carl Obetz)

Wounds: 7 Bone, 5 Metal, 2 Structural, 1 Critical

Defenses: Comet is very hard to hurt. Any attack that doesn't target the mind or spirit will be reduced to one lower Wound type.

Speed Points: 0

Combat Options:

Before:

Right Cross: Bone (0/7/8/15)

Roundhouse Punch: Metal (1/9/10/17)

Flying Ram: Structural (3/9/12/17)

Comet Flare: Bone (2/9/10/17) all NPCs are hit by this burst of intense light, which also causes property damage.

Super Comet Flare: Metal (3/11/12/19) all NPCs are hit, just like with Comet Flare

Dazzling Glare: (14) All NPCs suffer -4 to their rolls this turn.

After:

Right Cross: Bone (1/9/10/17)

Roundhouse Punch: Metal (3/9/12/17)

Comet Flare: Bone (3/11/12/19)

Dazzling Glare: (14) All NPCs suffer -4 to their rolls next turn.

Noncombat Abilities:

Comet can fly at supersonic speeds carrying several people, with a fairly good ability to maneuver. He also glows white when in flight, leaving a glowing tail behind him which can be made to light up the night sky.

Comet and Jet were private detectives, mostly working the mundane cases in a not-so-mundane world. Carl did most of the research and bookkeeping, while Jessica did the legwork and stakeouts. One day, a mundane case suddenly became anything but, and while they have yet to fully figure out how it happened, they survived the wildly improbable events of that day and gained incredible powers.

Now they are the Duotones, for the contrasting costumes they wear (Comet's is mainly white with black accents, Jet's is black with white urban camouflage accents). They still do detective work to bring home the bacon, but they also use their powers to do good on the side when they see a chance.

Jessica Trent is a slim black woman who could be stunningly beautiful if she put her mind to it and wasn't such a slob off the job. Carl Obetz is something of a neat freak, and at times looks like a very large English schoolmaster fussing about. Fortunately, he prefers to keep the books, because if Jessica did, they'd probably go bankrupt in weeks.

Sample Characters - NPCs

Complex villains with subtle powers and complicated motives are a little beyond the scope of this minigame. This section will allow you to create minor villains to fight.

Each NPC will need three things: Name, Wounds, Attacks, and Defenses.

Wounds: These can just be assigned arbitrarily, depending on how tough you want the

opposition to be. If you want random baddies, though, roll 1d10 for Bone, 1d10-1 for Metal, 1d10/2 -1 for Structural and Critical, for wound ranges (1-10/0-9/0-4/0-4).

Attacks: Each attack will have an Effect Type and a strength. For this game, all that really matters is whether the attack can be blocked by the defenses of Jet or Comet. When the NPC attacks, roll 2d10 and consult the chart below. Numbers below those on the chart are misses.



Attack Strength Chart

Weak	Bone (13-17) or Metal (18-20)
Medium	Bone (10-14), Metal (15-17) or Structural (18-20)
Strong	Bone (7-8), Metal (9-14) or Structural (15-20)

Defenses: Choose an Effect Type that the NPC is immune to. Jet uses Blunt (fists) and Heat attacks, Comet uses Blunt and Light (Comet Flares) attacks. Bullets and knives are all considered Sharp attacks, and NPCs immune to Sharp attacks will pretty much ignore attacks from the police.

If you want to get fancy, you can give NPCs armor like Comet's, which doesn't make them totally immune to attacks, but makes them suffer less from them.

Note: if you make a villain immune to Blunt attacks, it will be fairly hard for the heroes to fight him in populated areas. Such a villain will probably be able to take on the pair solo.

Example: Thugs With Big Guns

Name: Thugs

Wounds: 2 Bone, 1 Metal (they're not that tough)

Attack: Big Gun - Weak, Sharp attack (the guns are big compared to normal people)

Defenses: None (these guys drop pretty fast)

Notes: Will retreat once injured.

Scenarios

"Bank Robbery"

For Referee and 1-2 Players

The stereotypical superhero scenario, good for just getting used to the rules. A supervillain and his thugs have made a daring daylight bank robbery, and the Duotones respond with characteristic quickness. Note: if only one player, either have the player run both characters, or the thugs scatter as soon as the lone hero arrives. The opposition consists of 4 Thugs With Big

Guns and the novice supervillain Brickface, who is strong and tough but not all the smart or creative.

Name: Brickface

Wounds: 8 Bone, 5 Metal, 3 Structural, 2 Critical

Attacks: Brick fists - Medium, Blunt

Defenses: Sharp (he's bulletproof, but not boot-to-the-head-proof).

Notes: Can throw convenient objects at Comet instead of using his fists if

Comet stays in the air. Same damage.

"Origins-al Sin"

A Solo Scenario

The Duotones, ever mindful of the need to generate positive PR, have come to the Origins Game Fair and Mid-Ohio MIniCon as invited guests, and are signing autographs for fans. Unfortunately, one "fan" has other ideas for the pair, and thanks to a mystic medallion he found at a junk store, he manages to take control of Comet's mind.

At the moment, Comet has been ordered to kill Jet, and he could probably pull it off, despite not quite being himself. Jet knows someone is controlling Comet's mind, but isn't sure who is doing it. Every turn, Comet attacks like an NPC (between the Before and After actions), using his flying ram attack. Because he's not quite himself, he gets -2 to all dice rolls. Remember, Dodging will give him an extra -4, and a good chance of a mishap.

If Jet does nothing on her turn but search for the weaselly mind-controller, she will find him on a roll of 14 or better. If she combines searching with dodging, she needs a 16 or better. More complicated actions, like trying to lure Comet out of the Convention Center, prevent searching for that turn. This is a fairly freeform scenario, if Jet's player wants to suggest something, the Referee should decide how hard it is and let the player roll the dice for success. Once found, the mind-controller is a real wimp, and will collapse from one punch, freeing Comet.

"No Fair At The State Fair"

For Referee and 1-2 Players

The Ohio State Fair, another major summer event for Columbus, is held at fairgrounds a few miles north of the Convention Center, just east of the Ohio State campus. The fairgrounds are also the site of construction for a new soccer stadium for the Columbus Crew, the local Major League Soccer franchise. So there's lots of heavy construction equipment and dangerous midway rides around. See where this is going?

The weaselly guy from Origins has gotten out on bail, and decided to get a little revenge. He's found a spell that will animate the machinery at the fairgrounds and send it on a rampage. And this time, he doesn't have to stay conscious for the spell to keep working!

Each turn that the Duotones are rescuing people from various disasters, a Weak attack will be launched at them by various machines. A fire will probably break out on the midway as various ovens go berserk. There's a number of things the characters can do:

Save Trapped Ride Patrons - Being stuck on a carnival ride that has developed a bad attitude is no fun (well, not after a while, anyway). Flight will be required to rescue some people, and rides may have to be physically disabled (a Metal wound should do the trick for smaller rides, Structural for larger) before anyone can be rescued. The ferris wheel is a particular menace.

Fires - Jet is immune to flame, and someone will have to cut off the gas supply to the ovens before firefighters can safely move in. Three successful Metal wounds will accomplish this.

Construction Equipment - Three vehicles will make their way to populated parts of the park. Each can launch a Medium attack on its opponent, and can be disabled by 3 Metal Wounds or 1 Structural Wound. If a player decides to take on the vehicles, the default Weak attack is not made, since there's a specific danger.

After d10 + 10 turns of various rescue efforts, one of the characters will put two and two together and realize who's probably behind this. Weaselly Guy is indeed nearby, watching the carnage, and will be easily found.

Since simply knocking him out won't work this time, the players will have to convince him to halt the spell. Torture is somewhat unheroic, by the way. The Referee should decide in advance what Weaselly Guy wants in exchange for stopping the spell...as a default, though, he'd probably settle for the players letting themselves be beaten unconscious.

Contact Information

Plaid Rabbit Productions, publishers of RoboMACs and other Toolkit System games, can be contacted both online at minimacs@electricmulch.com or on the web at <http://www.electricmulch.com>

The writer of the game can be reached at dvandom@eyrie.org, or through Plaid Rabbit.