

The Year is 2177. A hundred years ago, the United Earth Government established a stable transgalactic gate outside the orbit of Pluto. Mankind finally burst the chains that had bound it to a single remote yellow sun, and humanity exploded throughout the stars, enveloping other races and civilizations in a meteoric expansion.

As with any far-reaching stellar empire, humanity has problems maintaining control in its far-flung planets and stations. Pirates – rebel humans seeking independence from the “oppressive” government – have declared open war on the human empire. They’re sabotaging starships, colonies, and other facilities with impunity.

Another dangerous threat is the Aggendi, a reptilian race that has developed bio-mechanical war machines, very similar to the humans’ Mektons (giant humanoid robots). The Aggendi are using these machines to invade human space and destroy any installation that they encounter. They seem to have no desire for self preservation and always fight to the death.

To protect vital space holdings, the Earth Government has created a space-wide militia, the Terran Defense League (TDL) to combat the pirate menace. Armed with Mektons, the TDL has managed to nearly stop all organized pirate activity. But recently the pirates have been stealing and building their

own Mektons, a situation that has the Earth’s officials very worried.

Scenarios

TDL: As a member of TDL, you have been assigned to protect the recently constructed Sunfire One colony in the Beta Crucis system, the vital link between the Rim Systems and the Core. Processing facilities for most of the heavy hydrogen fuels needed by the Earth Sector Fleets are located there. Both the pirates and the Aggendi have tried several times to seize this vital resource, only to be fought off in savage battles that have cost the TDL dearly.

Pirate: As a member of the Pirate Fleet, you know you must have access to the supplies of hydrogen fuels the Earth Government has stockpiled in the Beta Crucis system. And you are prepared to face any danger, even the TDL’s advanced Mektons, if that’s what it takes to get those vital stockpiles.

The battle is about to be joined. Who will be the victor? Who will finally rule the world of Mekton?

The System

Mekton has been developed with the Activision module, ported to Silicon Graphics computer systems, and licensed to third parties, a venture that will encourage demonstration of a 3D interactive Mekton game.

The game is networked so that players can interact with each other either as friends or adversaries. In each frame, a packet is sent out updating the position and state of the Mekton. The packet also contains velocities and a time stamp so that a time-accurate position can be generated for systems not running at the same frame rate. Because permanent changes can be made to the environment, there is also a query process, in which a system joining the game can query systems that are already playing about environmental changes.

Mekton has been designed to work well with the default set of I/O devices included with SGI computers: keyboard, mouse, and microphone for input, and screen and audio for output. It also works with a variety of third-party devices such as joysticks and HMDs.

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