

THE WORST OF BATTLEBOTS UPDATE

I bet you didn't see this coming! Last week I itemized all of this website's high points and in doing so I started wondering what the inverse of that countdown would look like. No, I don't mean "what if I started the list off at the top thing and worked backwards to the fifteenth most bestest thing", I mean literally what would a countdown of BattleBots Update's *low points* look like? Not everything in the history of this project is sunshine and rainbows, Lord knows. In a sense last week's article is a whitewashed history of this website that cherry picked all of the good things and excluded everything that rustled my jimmies that I didn't want to talk about. I would be doing you all a disservice by not addressing the other side of this coin because when BattleBots Update hits it certainly did hit but when it *missed*? Yeah, there were some extreme fuck-ups along the way. There are things associated with this website that I am not proud of, it just comes with the territory.



This right here was the absolute worst meme.

The criteria for something making it into the previous article was that it had to "happen on, to, or because of BattleBots Update". That same criteria applies here as well and also much like last week this is a top 15, not a top 10 or 20. I probably could've gotten away with making this a ten count but then it wouldn't have matched the other post and that pissed me off in a way I have problems articulating clearly. Think of it like me "giving 150% effort" like I explained previously except this time we're going to be recounting some uncomfortable things (and last week's post already mentioned two people dying, don't worry there's *another one* in this article).

Before we begin I feel I should state that this post will certainly have some humorous moments but because a lot of the things on this list are of a more "serious" nature this might not be as lighthearted as the other countdown. Some of the things I'm going to talk about in this article are things that I've intentionally obfuscated for years or otherwise attempted to erase from the history of BattleBots Update. I have what some of you might call "strong opinions" on many of these matters because in many cases they are personal issues to me. This is literally the *yin* to last week's *yang* and it's probably my last chance to speak my piece on each point. I'm not setting out with the intentions to offend anyone or anything like that but I fully acknowledge that I am going to let a lot of people down.

Anyways, onward...

15: THE LEGEND OF SUPER HAMMERHEAD

Two years into BattleBots Update I was riding high as one of the premiere content creators kicking around in the community. I had the support of BattleBots and its fandom and at the time the only logical next step for me was to appear on the show as a *bona fide* competitor. I have experience in building combat robots – I started back in 2000 – but never before had I worked on something at the size and scale of a 250 pound heavyweight robot. I wouldn't be the first person to advance from the insect weight classes to the big leagues though so I figured it was



Super Hammerhead, artist's illustration. (By: E-Rational, 2022)

still possible; everything I knew about building small robots technically applied to the bigger ones, I'd just have to scale it up and buy bigger versions of everything.

In the 18 years it had been (at the time) since I'd first become a fan of BattleBots I'd drawn literally probably a thousand or more designs in total, no joke. I'm talking designs drawn in my notebooks at school, rendered on a computer, written out in text form, designed in *Robot Arena 2*, all of that together I shit you not has to be at least a thousand. Whittling that catalog down to one design that I'd pursue to completion as a heavyweight wasn't easy because when you've come up with that many different designs you're going to run into at least a couple of them that are actually viable. I wound up wiping the slate clean though and settled on a shitty robot from the turn of the millennium that was so seemingly unimportant to my team that no photos of it exist: Hammerhead.



Nearly two decades of robot combat history almost entirely erased.

Power Wheels truck chassis mounted on a much stronger base that contained all of the actual components.

This was a robot that was basically just a plastic monster truck chassis sitting atop a scrap radio controlled toy frame that had a substantially stronger drive motor in it. The original Hammerhead did not have a weapon because it wasn't designed to have one in the first place; the robot was designed for my younger brother who drove it in an obstacle course event at the middle school I attended. I wanted to take this non-combat robot and blow it up to fifty times its normal weight and give it a weapon in the process. I decided that much like its smaller counterpart this new robot, named Super Hammerhead, would be a decorative

Oh yeah, there would be a weapon too. Super Hammerhead was meant to feature massive ablative foam wheels and nestled between these custom truck tires would be two spinning discs. The idea was the robot would intentionally drive over and on top of opponents and strike them with the discs in the process as a makeshift way to “crush” them like a monster truck. It was a dumb idea and something that had never been done before to my knowledge. The uniqueness of the design combined with my notoriety among competitors and the added bonus that the robot was very merchandise-friendly pretty much ensured that Super Hammerhead would be fast-tracked into World Championship III.

Before I completed my application for BattleBots though I wanted to at least have a functional prototype of the robot. We (mostly my father and I) got to work assembling an aluminum frame and also called around to the local pawn shops inquiring about power chairs. We found two of them and were going to pick them up over an upcoming weekend so we could strip out the motors and attach them to the frame we'd made. The batteries in the chairs would also prove useful for testing purposes though the plan was to replace them with more efficient lithium-polymer ones as the build progressed. Things were moving slowly but progress was being made nonetheless. And then Hurricane Harvey made landfall right on my hometown.



An unfinished robot, Wild Ride, among the debris.

Most of my home was destroyed, including the entire workshop. We never got to pick up those power chairs, and now we had bigger things to worry about. Looting was rampant in the aftermath of the storm because shitty people are everywhere. There were several spools of heavy gauge

copper wire in our workshop which were now just sitting out in the open and as we started cleaning up the debris we noticed all of them were missing, likely stolen by some fucking meth addict. Also missing was the entire aluminum frame of Super Hammerhead because it was solid aluminum and probably worth like twelve fucking dollars in scrap.

It took a very long time (literal years) for things to get back to normal thanks to a complicated legal mess regarding the zoning of the property I live on. I wound up never attempting another heavyweight build again and instead just focused on writing this blog. The Super Hammerhead project had gradually been turning into an over-engineered and expensive nightmare anyways so it's for the best that the robot was never finished and its chassis stolen by a scrapper. It's on this list though because a not-insignificant amount of people were eager to see this robot become a reality and enter the Battlebox. As recently as a couple of years ago I was asked if I was planning on bringing Super Hammerhead to BattleBots Proving Grounds so the idea of the robot is still “out there”, but I'm never going to build it.

14: A EULOGY FOR LOWTAX

A few years into this website's run I capped off the final article about World Championship V with a tribute to comedian Trevor Moore who passed away during the course of the season. He had nothing to do with BattleBots in the slightest but I was a big fan of his and I clicked with his sense of humor and because some of that certainly rubbed off on me I felt the need to write a few words about him as the season came to a close. The following year several more people who had a meaningful role in my life also died. There were three of them and I felt that posting three eulogies one right after the other at the end of the last article of the season would be a little weird so I picked one of them (Richard Riley) and omitted the other two.



Richard "Lowtax" Kyanka, c. 2003

One of the write-ups that didn't get posted was for Richard “Lowtax” Kyanka, the founder of Something Awful. Trevor had an impact on shaping my sense of humor but he didn't really come around until the mid-2000's. Prior to that I was very influenced by the writings of three online humorists: Lowtax, Maddox, and Seanbaby. You might recall in my final words about Trevor that I noted how he was a comedian who didn't turn out to be a “complete loser”. As time marched on I watched as these three internet behemoths all had their fall from grace. The only one of the three who got out

mostly unscathed is Seanbaby because he just wound up losing his edge because he's on his way to fucking 50 years old now and he got married and had kids. He grew up and moved on, something all reasonable adults will do at some point (myself included?).

Maddox just turned out to be a scrawny and angry has-been who gets irrationally angry at being called a “cuck” (meaning he is *definitely* a cuck). His role in this is negligible. But Lowtax? Man, this guy fell hard. Lowtax was a relative nobody who couldn't hack it at a normal office job but because the internet was in its infancy in 1999 he caught a lucky break when the website he posted all of his humorous ramblings to, Something Awful, took off. He famously started charging people \$10 to register on the website's forum “to keep the spammers out” and this to proved to be an example of this bumbling moron stumbling into accidental success. Charging people to use the forum had the unintentional benefit of curating the community and weeding out the undesirable people who just shit up threads. In doing this Lowtax raked in several million dollars just in forum registrations alone. His actual net worth was likely much higher.

But nothing lasts forever and slowly as Lowtax cut a path through life he'd wind up getting involved with multiple women and had kids with some of them. Firsthand accounts from Lowtax's ex-wives point to how he would resort to domestic violence at times and how he was always strung out on Ambien and pills. On top of this it seemed that Lowtax's best friend and closest collaborator was cartoonist Dave Kelly, better known to the world as "Shmorky". It was an open secret on Something Awful that Shmorky was a "babyfur" (a furry who is attracted to child-aged characters, diaper use, and pedophilia) but bringing this up was grounds for an automatic ban



Richard "Lowtax" Kyanka, c. 2021 (One of the last known photos.)

because Shmorky was admittedly very talented and his animations generated a significant amount of money for Lowtax. As time went on more and more of Shmorky's sordid past came to light and at one point Lowtax expressed trepidation that *he'd allowed Shmorky to babysit his daughters on occasion*. If anyone knew the full extent of Shmorky's disgusting paraphilias it was Lowtax and he was such a shitty father that he allowed a pedophile with a bathroom fetish to watch his children.



Lowtax and Shmorky in "Gaming Garbage: Cry of Fear" (2013)

By the time Lowtax shot himself (because yeah that's how this story ends) he had hit rock bottom. His near decade long YouTube series *Gaming Garbage* (which he co-hosted with Shmorky) had fizzled out and he was now streaming to audiences of about a dozen people reliving his glory days playing trash like *Dontrel the Dolphin*. In what would be his final stream Lowtax spent hours alternating between watching old Something Awful cartoons and lamenting about his life while clearly under the influence of something. Two days later the divorce court would rule in favor of his ex-wives and would mandate Lowtax to pay a significant amount of child

support to them. As it turns out this was something Lowtax couldn't do because he'd spent the better part of a year squandering what was left of his entire fortune by blowing it on drugs and expensive pastries. Literally as soon as he walked out of the courthouse Lowtax got into his car and, as someone online so eloquently put it, "faxed his brains to Jesus with a bullet".

Obviously this guy is no one's hero, but 25 years ago he had a major influence on my style of writing. When BattleBots Update started back up in 2015 more than a couple readers told me that the website reminded them of "old Something Awful". That was 100% by design because that's where I learned how to write humor. (Consequently this is also why this website has aged terribly.) I felt that I should still say something about Lowtax after he died but ultimately the final words I wrote did not make it onto this website. So now, three years after the fact, here's my peace on this once legendary humorist.

Richard "Lowtax" Kyanka
[1976 – 2021]

Last season when Trevor Moore passed away I mentioned he was the only person I looked up to as a burgeoning writer on the internet who didn't turn out to be "a complete deadbeat loser". Lowtax was one of the people roped into that terminology. The founder of Something Awful, Lowtax was a very flawed man. He was troubled by inner demons and an inability to control his impulses and that made for a messy personal life. He was married twice, divorced twice, and had an affair. All three women came forward with police reports of

domestic violence. His children were taken away from him. Children whom he'd left with a coworker who was later busted for speaking to minors inappropriately online. I don't envy the positions Lowtax found himself in, but that doesn't stop me from feeling some iota of sadness for him. He used to be funny, he used to make me laugh.

Early Something Awful is in my DNA. It's in this very website. Everything I learned about managing large scale web communities I learned from watching Lowtax. Was that the best way to handle a Club Penguin forum back when I worked for Miniclip? Probably not, but it was all the experience I had and I just had to run with things and make it work. I contemplated putting a section for Lowtax at the end of this season just because I know the man's a lightning rod of controversy and kind of a monster, but he still had a hand in shaping me as a performer. As a comedian. Watching him spiral out of control was painful because like so many others out there I used to know a different Lowtax, one that would just shrug off the burdens of life by writing something funny. Somewhere along the line the wires got crossed, and he took his own life at age 45. I'll still miss him.

Also in case you were wondering who the third 2021 eulogy was for it was Norm MacDonald. I felt that I had to pick just one memorial post though so when it came to Norm versus Richard I decided to pick my friend.

13: MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

WARNING: THIS PART OF THE ARTICLE SUCKS AND WILL PROBABLY PISS YOU OFF.

Creating content not just for the internet but in general is something of a very delicate dance. As a humorist I'm putting myself out there with everything I do. Every article I write, every YouTube video I post, and every appearance I make at BattleBots is something that collectively writes the story of who I am. How I choose to act and present myself in these moments has a massive effect on how I am perceived by others. I *definitely* fucked this up all kinds of ways in the nine years I worked on this website. I absolutely shit the bed constantly and I'm impressed I didn't wind up with a thread on a lolcow forum or something like that.

Right around the time BattleBots Update resurfaced on the web there was this growing trend of acknowledging and drawing awareness to mental health. It was definitely an "online only" sort of thing but there was this massive collective movement to destigmatize things like depression and anxiety. In a sense this "movement" is still going on to this day but I've long since unhitched my trailer from it because I realized it was doing me more harm than good. I would occasionally pepper in "lol so relatable" quips about mental health to articles on this website but after things kind of reached a boiling point I looked back on the work I'd done up to that moment and questioned how behaving that way affected how people saw me.



*"Faruq reacts to my recent behavior."
(Original photo caption.)*

Specifically in 2020 I had that very noticeable breakdown where this website suddenly went offline for months among other various complications. For the sake of brevity I won't recap the entire goddamned ordeal again but in summary my crows had come home to roost and all the stupid free-wheeling shit I'd done was coming back around to bite me in the ass in ways I could not have predicted. After spending about a week in a psych hospital I worked with a close trusted friend to

restore The Update from a backup archive and put it back online. When the website came back up it did so with a new post titled “The Return of BattleBots Update”. In that post I summarized all the shit that I'd gone through over the past few months and in a sense tried to reckon with the mistakes I'd made and smooth things out for the road ahead. In actuality though all that post accomplished was me putting all of my embarrassing personal problems front and fucking center for the whole world to see. It was a grave misstep and that's why the article has since been delisted from BBU.



I painted this stupid looking dragon while "on the inside".

I realized that lamenting about my problems fixed exactly nothing. I appreciated the words of support that many people sent my way after posting my tell-all but I also caught a lot of backlash from it because the entire article was at odds with everything else on this website. If I wanted to truly move on from these issues it was going to take significant action on my part so one day I woke up and decided I was done feeling sorry for myself.

A few months ago someone I loosely keep up with online posted an opinion piece that essentially said “being depressed is a choice”. He then went on to itemize out how wallowing in despair and kicking rocks around is a conscious decision because doing that is far easier than making real personal changes. I found myself agreeing with the post because years prior I'd come to the same realizations myself. A long time ago I was diagnosed with “major depressive disorder” and “generalized anxiety disorder”. Another specialist I saw specifically to discuss some more intimate problems with tossed out the “post-traumatic stress disorder” label. They were all too eager to bring these things up and then write me a prescription for a bunch of stupid ass pills that I swear to god did not do a single fucking thing.

Contemporary treatment for psychological disorders in the developed world is a total scam. I was a good little human cattle and I took my happy pills and the side effects were substantially worse than just being sad at random sometimes. Eventually I just stopped keeping my doctor's appointments and I threw out all of my antidepressants. I put up with the withdrawal effects that lasted for nearly three fucking months until the last vestiges of the Effexor and all that other worthless shit worked its way out of my system. Then I stopped eating garbage, started taking better care of myself, and went out and changed careers into a full time job. The difference was night and day. I haven't dealt with a bout of depression or anxiety for at least two or three years now. I dealt with my mental illness in literally the most holistic way possible which was “getting a fucking life and stop wallowing in shit”. The problem with this course of action is it's *extremely hard* and most people just don't care enough about themselves to take the initiative and make a change.

Don't be lured into complacency by all the crap you see on social media glamorizing mental illness and portraying it as some edgy countercultural identity. There is no pride in embracing depression and using it as a crutch or an excuse for all the problems in your life. Trust me, I did that for a while and it was a waste of time. Every day you wake up is a day where you can start making better choices no matter the hand you've been dealt. I will never be a millionaire. Hell, I'll probably never own a fucking house or even buy a vehicle that isn't used. But at least I have agency over my emotions and how I choose to handle my own life. You can do this too.

12: ALL OF THE FURRY JOKES

Just as BattleBots Update came back into the spotlight in 2015 I was winding down a sort of residency within the furry fandom. Literally the entire time I spent there was a massive misstep and

I genuinely regret every single fucking thing about that era of my life. There's not a single thing that happened between the years 2007-2016(ish) that's worth a shit to me. Yeah I was a noteworthy person and people paid attention to me but I sold my soul to the fucking devil and the things I experienced ruined me for life. BattleBots Update was the first real saving grace that came my way because it was an opportunity to shed my old identity and return to being a humorist in a field I was familiar with.

A lot of the earlier articles on this website had punchlines grounded in things from the furry fandom because I'd literally just wasted almost an entire decade of my life associating with these people. It was fresh in my mind. Also, it is extremely easy to write jokes where furies are the punchline. I'd reference specific people or places in many of the quips I'd write and after a couple of seasons I think I got it out of my system and I was ready to move on. I kind of also just assumed nobody from the BattleBots community even understood the references I was making in the first place because it's not like everyone who loves Tombstone also knows about the furry artist whose sole claim to fame is drawing ridiculously-sized cocks on normal-sized characters.

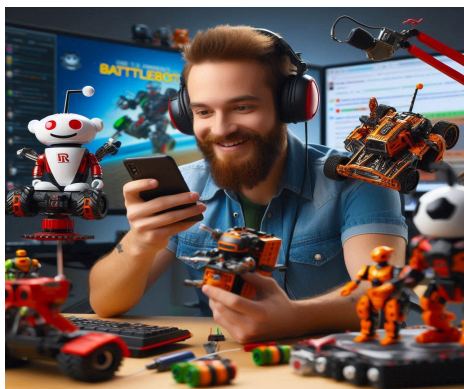


I guess this sign is finally getting some real mileage. It only took over half a fucking decade.

In hindsight I realized that these jokes and references weren't just unfunny but were actively cringeworthy and embarrassing. In a lot of these jokes I was just venting sexual frustration and as I reflected back on my older work here I hated a lot of what I saw. I'm talking things like giving Overhaul the 2015 Giant Washer Award for shit like “Best Robot From A School Attended By A Guy I Like But Can't Date Because He's Already Seeing Someone”. Jesus fucking Christ that's just *shameful*. I cannot even remember the frame of mind I was in where I justified that as being something “funny” and worth posting to the internet. I still know exactly who that award is referencing and despite moving on from all of this I doubled back and searched him up and in present day he's fallen off the deep end and is a complete a total fucking sexually confused nutjob. Not dating this guy is not just dodging a bullet it's dodging an entire goddamned tank round. 10 years will do an absolute number on someone.

Out of a matter of personal principle I tend not to revise things from the past but a few years ago I went back and ripped out all of the furry jokes from this website and either wrote new material in their place or omitted the punchlines and stitched the remaining text back together in a coherent way. Absolutely nothing of value was lost.

11: BEING THE ODD ONE OUT



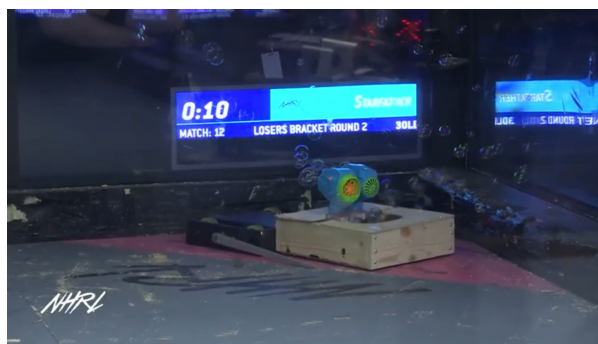
Once again Microsoft Copilot to the rescue giving us, uh, Soyfaced Seth Rogan posting on Reddit.

Like any popular television show or what-have-you *BattleBots* developed its own fandom. The entire existence of this website is nothing more than a vehicle to serve content to said fandom, however when it comes to interacting with this community I feel as though I've always struck out. For all the popularity this website garnered and the memes it spawned I – the mastermind behind it all – just never once “fit in” with the crowd. It doesn't matter what slice of the fandom we're talking about here (/r/BattleBots on Reddit, Out of the Arena on Discord, the official BattleBots group on Facebook, etc.) I never felt a sense of belonging to any of them. I wound up posting the most on Reddit over the years but I never really liked being there. That's

not because I didn't like the *people* there, I just personally don't like Reddit as a whole and the biggest section of the community being there was something I saw as a “necessary evil”. The less said about all the various groups on Discord and social media the better because I think over the past decade I've posted maybe two dozen messages total to all of those places combined.

I believe part of the problem here is fandoms on the internet actually fucking suck big time because no matter how much in earnest they begin they always seem to gravitate toward deterioration as more and more people who have no business hanging around invite themselves in and think they can start calling the shots now. This happens with literally everything online, BattleBots is not some weird exception that I'm lamenting over or anything like that. Pretty much every community I've ever belonged to online eventually devolves and gets to the point where participating in it isn't fun anymore. I'm not the only one who feels this way either because nearly everyone I actually did manage to make friends with back in the early days of the *BattleBots* revival fandom have hung up their hat and moved on to greener pastures. I'm just the only one stupid enough to actually bring the topic itself up.

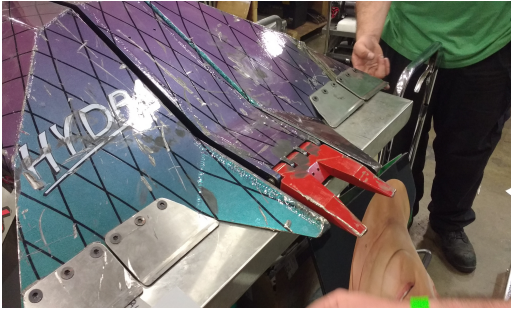
You can actually go into places like the aforementioned Out of the Arena Discord channel, search for “BattleBots Update”, and watch in real time as the community's opinion of me gradually sours over the course of the past nine years. Remember, I've barely ever interacted with this community. It's not like I actively harassed or pissed people off, this is purely people making judgments on me based upon the content of this website. Pay close attention to who the naysayers are in general (not just in regards to this website). A pattern will develop. I am fully aware that drawing attention to this “pattern” is problematic behavior. I just don't actually care. I make jokes about all sides and/or parties and I also feel as though I do a reasonably decent job keeping my personal politics out of the things I do. I also never involve myself in matters pertaining to politically touchy topics. Because of this I believe it's difficult for people to get a good “read” on me to see if I line up with their own ideals which is a fucking dumb ass way of judging every single stranger you come across but society is so far gone we're at the point where behaving this way is considered acceptable.



I genuinely have no photos for this section. Here's some "lol so random" bullshit from NHRL, the 34th best robot combat show.

But don't worry it's not just the dang dirty puritans that put me off of ever interacting with the wider BattleBots community because all of the open degenerates warded me off too. Obviously these people don't congregate in the same places where the “purity test” people do because chances are none of them would pass it either; these are in other slices of the fandom. Since I namedropped Out of the Arena (which for the record I don't actually have a problem with, it's just not my kind of place *and I'm clearly not welcome there anyways*) I suppose I could also provide an example here: Floorposting, a shitposting page on Facebook.

For a long time now it's been common knowledge that the Bad Dragon company (I know I've been *suspiciously quiet* about these guys in this post) attempted to sponsor Hydra. Actually this goes all the way back to Warrior Dragon because the idea was the robot's drone would be named “Bad Dragon” instead of just “Dragon”, people just didn't notice it until Hydra showed up and BattleBots intervened to prevent the sponsorship from happening which in my opinion was the correct move. Bad Dragon never actually went away though and they've been trying to subversively sponsor teams and influence people this entire fucking time. I've been trying to warn people about this but nobody fucking cares. This is literally my Cassandra complex.



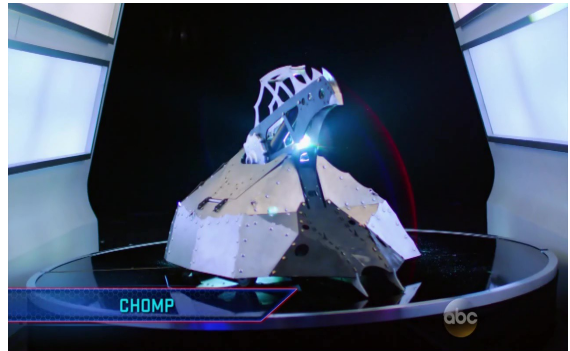
Fuck you Hydra this is ALL YOUR FAULT.

heavily focused STEM hobby. People can't just build robots and be happy, they have to cum while they do so too.

I'm just a normal ass person (mostly) who wants to watch robots fight and tell stupid jokes that have no right being as popular as they are. There's nowhere I fit in because I'm unwilling to play by the arbitrary rules of communities full of people I don't mesh with. I've felt this way for pretty much the entire time I've worked on BattleBots Update. It was a lonely and miserable existence. I wish I reached out to more people on an individual level and made more connections when those people were still around.

10: SPIRITED PERFORMANCE

The coverage of the first couple seasons of the *BattleBots* reboot on this website were much more fangs-out than the articles about World Championship VII, for example. I was a lot more unabashed and vocal about things back then because nobody knew who the hell I was and I had no idea this blog would turn out to be a massive hit that would eventually lead to me meeting pretty much everyone I've ever mocked in the nearly 200 articles that have been posted here. Take Chomp for example, back in 2015 this robot was a massive piece of shit. It looked like a shittier version of Sargent Bash who was objectively the worst fucking house robot in Robot Wars. Fact. Chomp's first ever battle consisted of it backing up into the arena screw hazards where it promptly got stuck and died. It did fucking nothing. And then... the robot gets one of the "wildcard" things to advance into the tournament anyways? Why?



Pictured above: Exhibit "A"



To this day I don't know what made Zoe this happy.

Obviously to me the reasoning was "this is a show on ABC and they are pushing a certain agenda and this is already ruining the fucking show before it even has a chance to find its footing" so yeah I tore Chomp a new asshole on this website. When pressed for a way to describe Chomp's inaugural battle where it ran into the hazards and fucking croaked the hosts invented the phrase "spirited performance" and I just ran with it. This blog is part of the reason why even to this day referring to something in robot combat as a spirited performance is seen as a cheeky way of saying it fucking blows. Everyone else who isn't in the know just thinks you're trying to be endearing but if

you saw Chomp's fight and remember its description you'd pick up on the coded message.

Because of the things I said about Chomp on this website I have no doubt its builder Zoe Stephenson received hateful messages from shitty misguided people who thought it was an epic win to own her by saying misogynistic things. I eventually woke up to this fact and as BattleBots Update continued into World Championship II I was still being an internet edgelord but I was also starting to give credit where due when the robots and their teams would do something impressive. This was the year Chomp returned as a totally new robot that looked like a big ass suitcase and had that LIDAR-powered hammer that could swing 360 degrees around the entire machine. It was dumb as hell but when it came time for Chomp 2.0 to show what it was made of it did the one thing literally no other fucking robot has been able to do in the entire history of BattleBots: *it beat fucking Bite Force*. Look it up. Bite Force is undefeated except for one fight. Chomp.

The new tech Chomp was packing allowed it to expertly snipe the chain that powered Bite Force's weaponry. Bite Force started shoving Chomp around but this tournament happened smack in the middle of the goddamned dark ages where the judges were told to score aggression as "aggression with a primary weapon". By the definition of the rules at the time Chomp had the upper hand and it won the fight. A shit storm erupted and I was close to the center of it because I was the guy who made "spirited performance" an inside joke a year prior. When everyone turned to me to see what I had to say about the matter my thoughts were simple. "Nice shot."



HUGE hit there...?

I praised Chomp because it was deserving of praise in that moment. Sure, the robot went on to pretty much not win any other fights after that and its weapon caused it to flop around like a fish out of water but in that one fight Chomp stared down the reigning champion and fucking murdered it. I got the impression Zoe didn't think too highly of me after the 2015 season but after this turning point her opinions changed. We eventually traded friend requests on Facebook. In the event report I wrote up for the 2018 season I mentioned how out of everyone who was present at taping Zoe was the first person to flag me down. She gave me a big hug and very excitedly told me if I wanted to see what was left of Chomp's hammer after its run-in with Huge that the twisted heap of scrap was sitting out in the parking lot behind her truck.

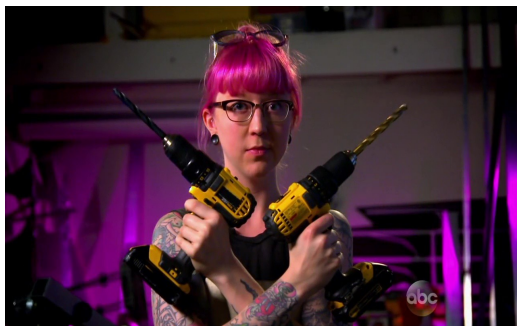
That moment has always stood out to me as one of the most sincere and genuine things that's ever happened at a BattleBots show. Zoe eventually retired from the sport as she got hitched and had a kid but I wish her the best. She's basically vanished from social media but I hope wherever she is she's doing well.

I'm sorry about the "spirited performance" thing.

9: ANGRY EMOTE REACT

Zoe isn't the only builder who felt slighted by this website in its early days. Lisa Winter has been part of BattleBots since the Comedy Central days and you probably recognize her as one of the three judges from the current seasons (she's the one who has pink hair, hope that helps). Back in the 2000's she competed with Tentomushi which was a lightweight robot made from one of those big plastic ladybug sandboxes. The idea behind Tentomushi was that the robot would smother its opponents with the sandbox lid and then drag the captured robot to the arena hazards. The main

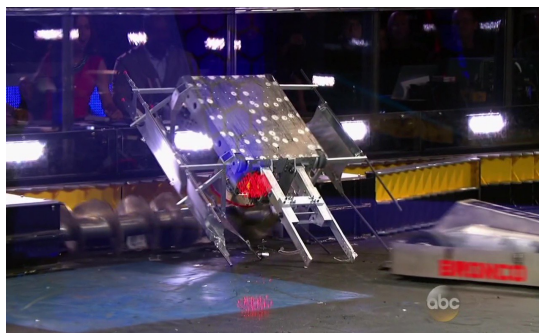
problem with Tentomushi is that it didn't have a true “dustpan” design, Tentomushi could drop the dome around someone but there wasn't a wedge or set of forks to also slide under the opponent to render them immobile. This design flaw was most egregiously exploited in Tentomushi's battle with Evil Fish Tank where Tentomushi would successfully entrap its opponent but literally nothing was stopping Evil Fish Tank from overpowering the drive system of Lisa's robot and shoving it all over the place.



Before she became a judge Lisa competed in 2015 with a monstrosity called Plan X. This whole robot reeked of a lack of effort and was in general just a hunk of crap that inexplicably had a light up brain. Reason Bradley from the Bronco team famously dismissed Plan X as a potential threat by mocking the robot's “dragon wings”. At the core of Plan X was essentially the heavyweight version of one of those lame ass kit bots you see plaguing the insect classes to this day. Lisa bought one of the kits and tacked a bunch

Either I was too much of an asshole or she can't take a joke. I don't know. of gaudy ablative armor onto it as well as a blade that did not spin the right fucking direction (I will die on this hill). Plan X mustered a win against Wrecks not because it's a good design but because compared to fucking Wrecks it's suddenly not the worst robot in the room anymore. Bronco then immediately dispatched of Plan X in a matter of seconds.

After Plan X was humiliated Lisa went back to her roots and returned to BattleBots with a heavyweight version of her iconic design, Mega Tendo. It was basically the same overall robot just 200 pounds heavier (also where the fuck did Lisa even source more of those sandboxes they were discontinued years prior). Mega Tendo also had a weapon this time around. It wasn't anything to write home about but the compact spinning disc packed a real punch. Mega Tendo faced off against Stinger in a battle that went the distance. It was close but the judges gave the win to Mega Tendo which sparked a very, uh, *heated discussion* online. I will admit I fanned the flames on this blog because I do think Stinger kind of got cheated out of a win there. The discussion was settled when Yeti blasted Mega Tendo in its next fight shattering one of the ladybug's wheels and splitting the aluminum frame clean open across the back.



If the name of the robot is to be believed this was Lisa's twenty-fourth plan for a design.

When the official BattleBots page on Facebook posted a link to the new BattleBots Update article there was a single angry emote reaction to the post in the sea of likes, hearts, and the laughing face. That one react came from Lisa who was clearly not okay with BattleBots promoting content that had a track record of being excessively critical of her designs. Yes, I noticed that one seemingly insignificant thing and I never forgot it. I'd like to be able to make amends with Lisa but she's pretty well insulated herself from the BattleBots community, probably for the best all things considered.

8: THE DR. CLAW DILDO TABLE

Axis. That was it's actual name, which is now a thing that people actually know. Back in 2015 however there was little information about this mechanical sculpture online so the dumb shit I said about it basically became the gospel whether I wanted it to or not. If you don't know what I'm talking about Axis is the weird five-fingered claw thing that held the platform that presented the famed BattleBots Giant Nut trophy. It was very prominently featured in the 2015 and 2016 seasons

and was designed by Mark Setrakian who is better known in the BattleBots sphere as the designer and builder of Mechadon. Axis was his very intricate (and expensive, it's a rental) contribution to the first couple seasons of the television series reboot.



Axis as it appeared in the first reboot season in 2015.

Of course, when I saw Axis the first thing I blurted out was calling it “Dr. Claw's dildo table”. I feel like I shouldn't have to explain this but Dr. Claw is a character from the *Inspector Gadget* cartoon, that's who I was referencing with the name. The nickname was stupid as hell and pretty much deconstructed the entire sculpture into a dumb joke. Due to the high amount of traffic BattleBots Update received in its early years the stuff I wrote here apparently had an influence on search engine algorithms and at one point searching Google for “battlebots claw table” famously brought up The Update as the very first result. specifically the line where I originally referred to it as the dildo table.

At the time this amused me to no end but nowadays I don't really look back at this failure of “the algorithm” so fondly. When BattleBots Update acts as a self-contained repository of lame jokes that's one thing but when it bled out into the wider internet and started poisoning legitimate search results that's something else entirely. At the time when BattleBots Update was the top result for the mobile sculpture I don't think there was a legitimate answer to the search query until I scrolled down a couple more entries. Maybe if this website was the *second* result and the first one actually told you “it's called Axis and it was built by the same guy who made a giant fucking mechanical spider and also the animatronic gorilla from *Mighty Joe Young*” I'd be more okay with things.



Axis backstage at World Championship VII, seven years later.

Mark Setrakian and I met at a later BattleBots event and he was aware of the dildo table joke. He didn't seem too bothered by it though and we got along just fine. We sat in the same area of the stands for a few taping sessions and chatted back and forth between matches. When Quantum bit down onto Blacksmith and the two robots became inseparable Mark was very pleased at the “quantum entanglement” quip I came up with on the spot. Also he was there with his wife or partner (not sure) and she was the former CEO of Machinima, a.k.a. the first content distribution network for gaming content on YouTube. When Mark introduced me to her I told her that at one point her company represented me on YouTube over a decade prior. She laughed and nervously apologized for that because near the end of its lifespan Machinima was notorious for fucking over creators left and right with absolute dogshit contracts. Mine was okay though? So, you know, whatever I guess.

7: EVERYTHING I KNOW ABOUT SAFETY I LEARNED FROM ROBOGAMES

The only actual article posted to this website in 2024 (so far) was a chronological telling of events documenting the absolutely appalling lack of safety protocols at California's Robogames 2023 and 2024 robot combat events. The article is still live on BattleBots Update (for now) in case you want to read it but essentially it's just a blow-by-blow of the shit hitting a progressively larger fan starting first with debris breaching the arena and working up to someone in the stands actually get hit with something ejected from the box.



Chunks of robots literally left the fucking arena and people were just like "yeah okay whatever".

When this all happened back in April it was immediately a hot button issue within the community. I wound up being a full month late to the party to toss my hat in the ring which I feel probably hurt me in the long run. My excuse is that I have too much on my plate these days to be able to do things like take entire days to hammer out articles for this website when topics are still relevant. (Case in point both this article and the one before it were written over the course of three weeks, mostly on weekends.) Still, as a once notable figure in the robot combat community I felt as though my thoughts on the matter warranted being shared. Reception toward the post was middling with

only a couple of opinions falling to either extreme. The impression I mostly got from readers was “why are we bringing this up again” which kind of pissed me off because intentionally ignoring the subject and kicking it under the rug is *exactly* how Robogames 2024 was allowed to happen where more blatant safety incidents occurred.

I didn't set out to change the state of robot combat with the article I wrote but I was hoping that compiling and vetting all of the known facts and presenting them in a chronological manner complete with actual photographic evidence of the incidents (where applicable) would give people a jumping off point to determine if Robogames is something that should survive into 2025. Instead I just got mostly a big “whatever” in response so to that I'll just throw one right back at you. I don't care if there's a Robogames in 2025 and if someone winds up getting gravely injured or something I won't even be around to rub it in your face that I and a bunch of other people “told you so” because I'm checking out of the conversation. This whole ordeal made it apparent to me that there exists a section of the community that went previously undetected consisting of people who don't give a single shit about event safety and who only want to see “muh robots” fight. Genuinely awful.

6: “WOMEN IN TECH”

Technically I've already loosely danced around this topic in the entries for Zoe Stephenson and Lisa Winter in this list but this entry is more or less for the entire subject itself because those two women were only two pieces of a larger picture. ABC is owned by Disney and for quite a while now Disney has had this strange affinity for shoehorning progressive-leaning values into the shows they create. This has turned out to have disastrous effects on the company financially but back in 2015 when this trend was first picking up speed no one really knew where things would eventually lead. ABC heavily promoted the notion of “women in tech” for the two seasons of *BattleBots* that ran on their station.



Andrea "Three 2nd Place Finishes Can You Believe This Shit I Mean For Real?" Gellatly, 2016

Every single female competitor who participated in those two events was highlighted and profiled by the show. It got to the point where by the time the producers got to Andrea Gellatly (néé Suarez) I straight up titled the section for it in the episode's article “Women In Tech, We Fucking Get It”. It was incredibly heavy handed and then when the producers of the show did things like give a wildcard advancement to Chomp for its “spirited performance” the discussions that popped up online about it were not pretty. Keep in mind this was 2015 so phenomenally retarded shit like

GAMERGATE was still actively in the process of unfolding. That entire online movement, which originally started out as a way to hold game journalists accountable for doing under the table things, metastasized into a shit stain on gaming culture that is best remembered as being anti-women. (That's the most generous way I can summarize the movement without needlessly going down a rabbit hole that I can guarantee none of you care about.)



Everything that was said about Alison's fashion disaster here was 100% justified, though.

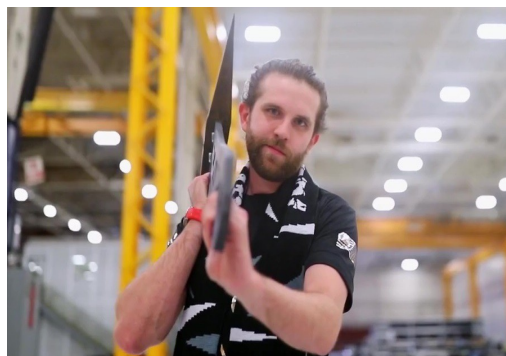
You can imagine the vitriolic things that wound up being said about Zoe, Andrea, Lisa, and the other women who were involved with BattleBots at the time. At least Andrea had the fortune of being on a team whose robot wasn't hot garbage so she kind of got a pass but everyone else got it undeservedly rough. I did not help matters at all because at one point I referred to pit-side reporter Alison Haislip as "Tits Microphone" because she always asked the dumbest questions and I was tired of seeing her on the show.

BattleBots kind of unintentionally quelled the negativity in 2016 when one of the photos used to promote World

Championship II were the young girls from the Overdrive, Bad Kitty, and Ringmaster teams all posing together with their robots inside the arena. The producers posted the image with some guff about how these were the future women engineers of the world or something like that. None of the robots featured in the post were remotely good but even the shittiest of Redditors found it hard to rain on a photo of a bunch of literal children. After that season the show went on a year long break as it moved to Discovery Channel and when it returned I assume the pressure from the network to "be more inclusive" or whatever got dropped because Discovery Channel didn't have a bunch of rich investors with their heads up their asses. (Citation needed.)

5: THE ACEUPLINK FILES

This one predates the *BattleBots* reboot by a margin of over ten years but it involves something that I intentionally brought with me to the show so I guess it counts. 99% of everyone involved with the *BattleBots* reboot are people whom I have zero personal history with. One person is the exception to that rule and it's Adam Wrigley, designer and builder of Shatter. Two decades ago Adam and I maintained a presence within the same online community, AceUplink. AceUplink began its life at the turn of the millennium as a fansite for *Roller Coaster Tycoon* but when the original *Robot Arena* was released in 2001 the webmaster found a new favorite game and the website was renamed to RoboUplink. AceUplink would eventually see a massive surge in users when *Robot Arena 2* was released in 2003 and became an unlikely hit.



Out of respect for Adam I will refrain from posting an image of him from 2003 here.

I joined AceUplink in March 2003 and by October of that year I had been permabanned after a brief stint on the website's staff. The whole story is messy and complicated and autistic as all hell but the short of it is Adam was an administrator on AceUplink and I really gave this guy one hell of a hard time because I was a stupid piece of shit when I was a teenager. I never forgot his name because as time went on I began to realize how shitty of a person I was to these people whom I'd never even met and I regretted the things I did that they had to clean up. Adam turned out to be the only person involved with AceUplink who "made it" as a roboteer and found his way into BattleBots.

Both Adam and I were in attendance at World Championship IV in 2019. Adam was there with Shatter and I was there because I guess I had nothing else better to do for those two weeks. I knew ahead of time that Shatter and by proxy Adam would be at BattleBots that year because BattleBots posted announcements and photos of all the accepted teams. Shatter competed elsewhere for a while under the names Blue and Mega Melvin so I knew who the robot belonged to. I saw an opportunity to at least make amends in person with just one of the many people I treated poorly 16-ish years prior. Despite all of this being over some internet bullshit I was genuinely nervous to meet Adam and let him put a face to the name that caused him so much grief.



I won't, however, extend that same courtesy to myself.

When I got to his team's table though... nobody was there. After all that this motherfucker is probably out at the food trucks buying an overpriced toasted cheese from some college dropout who's never going to be able to pay off his student loans for culinary school. I missed him but I scrawled a note and left it on the pit table that something along the lines of "Greetings from 2003, (my AceUplink username)". Then I took a couple of stickers and left. Adam saw the letter and apparently it kind of spooked him because you have to remember this guy hadn't seen or heard from me in nearly two decades and now here I am at BattleBots leaving him a cryptic note out of the blue. He knew it couldn't have been a prank from one of his teammates because none of them even know who I am.

Eventually Adam and I crossed paths and burying the hatchet was actually painless. It was like a weight off of my shoulders. He was surprisingly chill and forgiving about things that had bothered me since fucking W was in office. I can't speak for the other half dozen or so people who used to be on AceUplink's staff but being able to make things right with at least one of them actually felt good.

4: IT'S FRENCH FOR "SLAUGHTERHOUSE"

Abattoir was a super heavyweight designed and built by Ray Scully. It is known for never having won a single fight in its entire career spanning all five seasons of the Comedy Central series and the 1999 Pay-Per-View event. The robot's appearance changed wildly over the few years it existed but no matter which build we're talking about it was always a large flat box with an overhead spinning blade. Also just to address this because it confuses the hell out of me all records of this robot indicate that its name is spelled "abattoir" with two B's but as far as I can tell the correct spelling of the French word is "abattoir" with two T's instead. I think someone, probably Ray, fucked up and spelled the name wrong and everyone else just ran with it because this isn't Canada and nobody gives a fuck about French here.

I've been clowning on this robot since before BattleBots Update rebooted alongside the show. In 2014 I wrote an article about the top ten worst BattleBots of all time and Abattoir topped out the list in a culmination that involved an era-appropriate MLG montage video that took all forty fucking seconds of footage that's known to exist of this cursed machine and strung it out into something three times as long. Abattoir is objectively crap and my fixation on it was among the first things from BattleBots Update to go viral within the community. This was aided by the failure known as Clockwork L'Orange, a new robot by Ray that was supposed to participate in World Championship II but in true Team Wetware fashion the robot



THE ABSOLUTE STATE OF THIS THING LMAO

arrived “about 25% complete” and never made it into a state where it could actually fight. I was ready to shitpost in real life because I had made a sign specifically to cheer on Ray's new robot; the sign read “ABATTOIR” which had been crossed out and scrawled under it was “CLOCKWORK L'ORANGE”. The following year I filmed a video parodying Evan Wooley's series of BattleBots-themed mixed drinks and cocktails that consisted of me being in the production green room where I introduced today's drink as “The Abattoir” and I demonstrated that in order to make it you take a bottle of Perrier water and throw it straight in the trash.



Clockwork L'Orange, the final boss of vaporbots.

Ray seemed confused that there was such a strange interest in his old unsuccessful super heavyweight and eventually he found out I was the reason for that. The joke fandom surrounding Abattoir had reached the point where over on the /r/BattleBots Reddit community among the list of 2016 competitors that you could choose to appear beside your name as an icon the 1999 version of Abattoir took the place of Clockwork L'Orange because as it turned out that robot didn't fucking exist. I sent Ray a friend request on Facebook but he denied it and blocked me. This action led to the minor recurring joke on this website “Ray Scully won't be my friend because I made fun of Abattoir”.

Years later during the live stream of Robogames 2023 we learned Ray was there with his middleweight robot Cornholio which in true Ray Scully fashion was a mess of scrap parts contained within the outer shell that formerly belonged to a retired robot called Rotato. Once people found out this was Ray's robot they started posting dumb shit in the chat, namely the phrase “SPAM THIS HORN TO SUPPORT THAT CORN” which was peppered with emojis of bullhorns and corn. Again Ray caught wind of this and it confused him greatly. Then I'm sure he eventually found out where the jokes were coming from and cursed my name under his breath.

Abattoir is funny and all but I feel like I took the joke a little too far. I mean, how would you feel if someone dug up one of your failures from a decade and a half ago long after it had been forgotten and then turned it into a fucking meme? “Abattoir sucks” became such a staple of the BattleBots community for a while that I genuinely feel like Ray's never going to live that down and that's partially my fault because the whole reason people even know his robot exists is because I made fun of it.

3: BATTLEBOTS UPDATE ON “TALE OF THE TAPE”

The 2015 season of *BattleBots* consisted of only six episodes because nobody actually knew if this whole reboot thing was going to work out in the first place. Despite ABC doing fuck all to promote the show outside of a stupid Pizza Hut commercial the revival was a success and the second season was made up of ten episodes, a 66% increase. We were only two seasons deep but the community around the show was rapidly growing and web series, podcasts, and other projects made by fans were cropping up all over the place. One of the more curious productions that appeared around this time was the web show *Tale of the Tape* hosted by Will Bales and Mike Gellatly (both teams were from Florida and often collaborated with each other).



Mike Gellatly and Will Bales on "Tale of the Tape: After Show", 2016

Tale of the Tape was a weekly live show that had the blessing of the official BattleBots company because Will and Mike were given permission to register the account “BattleBots” on Twitch and stream their show under the company's name. Additionally once the live broadcast of the show concluded the recording of the stream was uploaded to BattleBots' official YouTube channel. The show featured interviews with other teams and competitors as well as a recap of the most recent episode of the show. *Tale of the Tape* enjoyed moderate viewership and was in production for four “seasons” ending after the conclusion of World Championship V in 2021.



I complimented Shaman in my brief feature on the show, mostly for this moment right here.

When the show was first starting out though Will and Mike were looking for people who would benefit the show by appearing as a guest. You've already read the title of this section of the post so I'm sure by now you've pieced together that I was a guest on this show. Indeed I was. Once. Will really wanted me to be on the show but I wasn't sure what I was going to talk about because this was an all ages broadcast so it's not like I could just be piped in via telephone and start my routine with “let me tell you some fucking horse shit about Blacksmith”. Will said not to worry about it and that we'd figure it all out. I accepted that but I was still anxious. Well, my portion came up in the episode (I cannot remember which one it

is but I'm certain one of you will go digging through every video to find it so you can laugh at it) and I vaguely remember rambling about how Ginsu was my favorite robot and covering the concept of mini bots in absolutely no detail whatsoever.

It was very awkward. Will and Mike were in good spirits though which was a relief. Then I pointed out the green rake hanging out in the background behind Will. Obviously I knew why the rake was there but the episode it appeared in hadn't aired yet. All I said was something akin to “shoutouts to that rake back there” but I guess Will interpreted that as a potential spoiler and he immediately got all shifty-eyed and tried to cover things up. I wasn't trying to cause any problems or anything like that and I'd assume to a layperson I was just pointing out something funny in the background which would turn out to have a payoff later. Then again I did post a 2016 event report that concluded with a photo of me holding a rake that forebodingly said “SOON”. Maybe I was telegraphing a little too much in the end.

I never made another appearance on *Tale of the Tape* as I was too self-conscious to be on the show again after what happened.

2: THE ENTIRETY OF THE UK ROBOT WARS REBOOT

I don't think I've actually put this piece of information anywhere on this website where it would be readily available but the name “BattleBots Update” was taken from a segment that began in the third season of the Comedy Central run of the show. That reference dates all the way back to 2008 when I was fruitlessly trying to start this project as part of the dying RFSHQ website. I never changed the name mostly because the thought never occurred to me that perhaps someday I'd write something about a show other than *BattleBots*. That would come to pass when in 2016 the folks at the BBC took note of the successful revival of *BattleBots* and decided to funnel some money into a revival of the UK's



This is literally the only thing I remember from the Robot Wars reboot.

flagship robot combat show *Robot Wars*.

“Cool,” I thought. “More robot combat shows to write about for my blog whose domain name stupidly implies that I only focus on one specific show and nothing else.”

I treated the reboot of *Robot Wars* with all the same grace I gave *BattleBots* which is a polite way of saying I shit all over the bad robots from that show and exaggerated all the things the better robots did. Almost immediately I noticed a major difference with the Robot Wars fandom. By and large they hated BattleBots Update because how dare I make fun of, hang on let me check, *fucking Gabriel*. That's the robot who beat Huge to the “giant plastic wheels” design except rather than equip their robot with an actual weapon the team stuck a stupid ass sword on there and called it a day. The team captain of Gabriel took everything I said on this website 100% personally and was extremely upset with me. Several other builders who had no idea that this blog even existed also didn't immediately get the act here. It took the likes of John Reid, builder of Killerhurtz and Beta, who was already familiar with BattleBots Update to say to everyone “it's just a joke you guys he does this on purpose”.



I've lowkey always thought Sexy Matilda looked a little man-ish here.

Not everyone from the Robot Wars community was against Battlebots Update though as it's where Craig Danby made his first appearance and he and I later became friends. Gary Cairns (who designed PP3D and is fondly remembered for “*she's up ta speed now boys*”) caught on pretty quickly and enjoyed the humor and we also can't forget the guys behind both Wurm and Overdozer who turned out to be massive closeted furies and since I hadn't yet redacted all of the furry jokes from this website they became overnight fans of this place. In general though BattleBots Update was not as warmly received by our friends across the pond as it was domestically. For example whoever was in charge of the social media pages for Robot Wars absolutely did not link to this website or anything on it ever.

One of the things that's inexplicably a recurring gag on *Robot Wars* was how commentator Jonathan Pearce would occasionally say lewd things about Matilda the house robot. He did this during the original run and he continued it into the reboot and I know I'm not the only person to notice this because people would joke about it all the time. I decided to lean into this joke by capping off my first season of coverage of the show with an art commission I bought of “sexy Matilda”. It was an anthropomorphic triceratops in a loose fitting “ROBOT WARS” tee holding a massive chainsaw. The artwork wasn't pornographic but it was definitely suggestive. When I posted it for the world to see everyone in Europe seemed to hate it. A few people thought it was funny because they can take a goddamned joke but pretty much everyone else did the whole “why did you do this” routine and said I was taking Jonathan's jokes too far.

I took their feedback to heart and did what any reasonable person would do. Years later, long after the *Robot Wars* reboot had fizzled out and ended, I commissioned more art of sexy Matilda and posted it online just to spite the people who hated the first time I did it. At the end of the day though the lesson I learned from this is British autism is *very fucking different* from American autism.

1: THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

And so here we are. If you know anything about me at all then I'm sure you probably already knew what the #1 entry on this countdown was going to be before you even started reading the post. It's time to talk about the elephant in the room. I mean, the *dragon* in the room.

I actually had an entire thing written up that explains every aspect of my relation and proximity to the Bad Dragon company and its people. I was heavily leaning into posting it here just so that the absolute full story would be told and out there but as I worked on this post and fleshed out the other 14 spots my thoughts on this entry changed from “leave no stone unturned” to “let dead dragons lie”. I kind of just don't care anymore, if that makes any sense? My closeness to this powder keg caused me so much distress that I was hospitalized for a week because of it when I was at my worst. I made an absolute embarrassment of myself regarding how I chose to act when speaking about these people, and for what? Who fucking cares? Bad Dragon still maintains an underground presence among the teams and competitors. The decline of BattleBots Update began right around the time I started noticing things weren't quite right with the company I kept. I cut and ran from my past and the entropy that had been eating away at the BattleBots community turned in my direction.



No matter what I achieve this will always be the legacy of this fucking website.

I know Varka (the Bad Dragon guy) because once upon a time my stupid ass met him at a furry convention that I was a special guest at and we exchanged information. Apparently he's a fan of robot combat so when BattleBots Update skyrocketed in popularity in 2015 the BattleBots company weren't the only people who took note of me. BattleBots invited me out to the taping of World Championship II and I accepted that offer by way of traveling with the Bad Dragon people who had also reached out to me because they were interested in attending the show too. I realize now that I was basically being used as a vehicle for the people from that company to schmooze with all of the teams and get their foot in the door when it came to potential sponsorships and all that crap. The Hydra/Bad Dragon controversy? *Yeah that's probably my fucking fault.*



Not long after this photo was taken this dragon burned to death. Ominous.

The more time I spent around the people from Bad Dragon the more I started to feel something wasn't quite right. It just took me a long time to make the move to distance myself because I wasn't sure how to actually do it. When I finally did do it the paranoia that immediately began to plague me fucked me up real bad. I keep up with gossip blogs and things of the sort because I'm a dumbass who likes reading things that I know will probably upset me and over on the Kiwi Farms someone in their thread about BattleBots was talking about me and why I was chumming around with Bad Dragon. I forget their exact words but it was something like “I think Draco really wanted to go to BattleBots and he made a deal with the devil to make it happen”. That is exactly what happened. In 2016 I was between jobs and didn't have the money to take BattleBots up on their offer to attend the show on the house so I tagged along with some other people I never should've associated with and that proved to be the biggest mistake in this website's history. Simple as.

In case you're curious about where I currently stand on the matter I don't really hold any ill will toward anyone I traveled to BattleBots with over the years. We are just incongruent with each other on a deep-seated moral level. Varka is a

person whose life is driven by pure hedonism and he's always chasing that next high. He founded a company whose sole purpose is selling orgasms to perverts. That kind of stuff is just totally incompatible with my own personal values and things were bound to boil over eventually no matter how you look at it. I'm not trying to make it sound like I'm some angel of purity or something because I'm most certainly not, but I am saying that we were just too radically different and the things I witnessed and was exposed to firsthand scared the absolute shit out of me and the only logical path was to cut ties and move on. I think it's best we leave things at that.

CLOSING

It's weird seeing all of my regrets laid out before me like this. It's even weirder that they're fucking ranked in order from least objectionable to “holy shit what's wrong with you”. I've been involved with a good number of projects over the years but this is the first time I've ever drawn up a list of every single time I fucked up and then expanded on the how's and why's behind each one. It's almost cathartic in a way. Like I said though if I was going to toot my own horn and post a self-congratulatory “best of” list then I felt something like this was necessary especially for something as major as BattleBots Update. A wise man who spent his days painting happy little trees once said you needed to have a little darkness in order to appreciate the light.

If you've made it this far then you're truly someone special. It's one thing to post a glamorous countdown of all the high points but that's just rose tinted glasses BS. Not everything is 100% perfect so the fact that you're invested enough in this old dinosaur of a project to also care about all the low points that we all tried to forget about speaks volumes. I've never really done something like this before because “worst of” lists are just something you *don't do* in “show business”. Who wants to hear about all the things you screwed up on? But BattleBots Update is easily the most successful project I've ever been involved with and for some strange reason it was important to me to make this post too. It's a very intimate look at things that I just never talk about and in some cases things I've never talked about in the history of this blog. What started as a clear gimmick to contrast last week's greatest hits became something that I hope leaves you with some insight into what it's like to be in a position like mine where thousands of people turn to you for entertainment on a regular basis.



Here, laugh at Joe Johnson again or something I don't know.

We've reached the end of this post and much like last time I don't have anything to actually promote. Again, thank you for your company. It is appreciated.

- Draco