

Wow 1031

Chapter 1031: Rules Are Rules (2)

Although troublesome, it is not a dead end.

The technical officer saw that Bai E and others accepted the reality and began to solve the issue, and secretly breathed a sigh of relief.

He feared encountering a stubborn team, and as a messenger, he knew such matters were incredibly troublesome.

"Since your side already has the intention to resolve this, I will report the situation. Please submit your follow-up plan as soon as possible. Wishing you success."

After the technical officer left, the atmosphere inside the hall of the International Pavilion's Seventh District remained heavy.

Though Bai E's calm reaction temporarily steadied everyone's minds, the sense of being wronged still lingered in everyone's hearts.

Catherine was the first to curse: "Someone must be sabotaging us behind the scenes! Why bring up the technical standards now, right when we arrive!"

Elorin sighed nearby: "I will try my best to negotiate. However, Lord Bai E, you must be prepared; this is likely just the beginning. At the Galaxy Center, particularly in a competition gathering various forces, the 'rules games' outside the arena can test people more than the battles inside."

"There's no use discussing this now," Bai E shook his head, "The urgent task is to solve the problem. Money isn't the issue; technology is key. If necessary, we can try contacting the local branch of the 'Fire Hammer' group, or perhaps... that 'Money Eye' may have connections."

"Yes, my lord! I will contact the 'Fire Hammer' group's branch and that 'Money Eye' right away." Catherine suppressed her anger and prepared to act.

No matter what, solving the problem is the top priority.

"Wait." The scholar Elorin suddenly spoke up, stopping her.

His expression was more serious than before, with a trace of anger from being deceived.

He quickly operated his portable terminal, checking some internal Star Alliance announcements and amendment records that might require higher permissions.

Moments later, he raised his head pale-faced—he had just discovered some information.

"Lord Bai E, it seems Lady Catherine's intuition was correct... This indeed might be a deliberate 'rules game' targeting us."

Elorin's voice carried repressed anger, "I just urgently queried the amendment history of the Star Alliance's 'General Technical Specifications for Mobile Suit Safety and Fairness.' The so-called '17th amendment version'... its final review and forced implementation date was 15 standard days ago!"

In other words, when our ship had just entered the stable zone of the Galaxy Center, but before arriving at 'Star City,' our specific competition list and some non-core information might have already been initially received and circulated by the competition committee to relevant departments!"

He took a deep breath and continued: "More critically, the content of this amendment is not a large-scale, comprehensive technical standard upgrade. The core changes are precisely concentrated on the end-point criteria for the energy core output stability curve, the database match range for Spiritual Power Circuit compatibility certification, and temporary restrictions on unregistered new alloy materials! These changes... are too targeted. It's as if they were modified to address 'problems' that emerging teams from the Edge Star Domain, like ours, with unique technical routes that have not yet been included in the mainstream system of the Galaxy Center might have."

Elorin projected several summaries of the amendment clauses: "Look here, regarding energy core stability, the old standard allowed for a 3% short-term fluctuation under extreme output, as long as the average stability met the criteria. The new standard tightens the short-term fluctuation tolerance to 1.5% and emphasizes the smoothness of the end curve. Our mecha, in order to pursue instant bursts and respond to high-intensity combat, allows certain fluctuations in the energy core design in extreme states to exchange for higher peak output and overload potential. This completely complies under the old standard, but under the new standard..."

"Now look at Spiritual Power Circuit compatibility." He pointed to another rule, "The old standard required the circuit to have basic safety isolation and overload prevention design and could pass compatibility tests with several mainstream templates. The new standard requires a comparison with 'all registered, safety-certified Spiritual Power Circuit construction modes' within the Star Alliance

central database, and once an 'unrecognizable unique mode' is found, it triggers an alarm requiring additional, lengthy 'safety assessment.'"

"Our Spiritual Power Circuit heavily utilizes Lord Bai E's Spiritual Energy characteristic guidance, and inspiration from Bug Race and reverse-engineered archaeological technology, so its construction mode naturally differs from any template in the database."

"And the materials..." Elorin smiled bitterly, "Some of the alloys we use do indeed contain components extracted or synthesized from special Bug Race shells, alien minerals, and even high-dimensional remnants, and these components have unique performance parameters that are naturally not on the Star Alliance's massive registry, which mainly includes 'regular' resources within the Milky Way."

The hall fell silent.

If before it was mere suspicion, then the evidence Elorin found nearly put the 'intentional targeting' on public display.

The rules were just modified before they arrived, and the amendments precisely targeted fields they might be 'non-compliant' in; the timing was so coincidental... this was no accident.

"Who is it?" Rose's voice was icy, a glint of cold light in her eyes.

Having ventured into the cosmos alone, she had experienced various power struggles for quite a long time and was not unfamiliar with such means.

Morphie clenched his fists even tighter, his knuckles turning pale: "It must be someone from among the 'Sons of the Empire!' They can't stand us, resorting to such despicable methods!"

Gong Yan analyzed more calmly: "It might not be the doing of one side alone. It could be a force hostile towards us that propelled the rule amendment, or perhaps several forces reached an agreement in secret, or even... it might be some conservatives or vested interests within the Star Alliance leveraging an inherent distrust and rejection towards the name 'New Bauhinia' and our lord's sudden rise as a powerful entity to set up obstacles."

As Bai E listened to everyone's analysis and anger, his expression did not change much, and he even pursed his lips somewhat helplessly.

He walked to the tactical discussion room's holographic starmap, looking at the various major forces marked across the Galaxy Center.

"Scholar Elorin, can you find the main driving forces behind the amendment proposal or the forces that opposed less and even supported actively during the review process? There doesn't need to be concrete evidence, just some trends." Bai E asked.

Elorin pondered for a moment and shook his head: "The amendments to these technical standards are usually proposed by the Star Alliance Technical Standards Committee, driven by the technical representatives dispatched by major forces behind the scenes. It's challenging to find specific driving forces openly; this is an internal process."

"But... based on some public opinion and past experiences, those most wary of non-conventional technical routes and most emphasizing standardization and order are often the Iron Alliance and Deep Space Alliance. As for those most rejecting emerging forces possibly challenging the current order... the

Holy Silver Church Country is extremely cautious toward anything involving abnormal Spiritual Energy and untested technology. The Golden Federation and Flame Republic might not take direct action, but their silence or acquiescence is an attitude as well. The Shadow Kingdom... they are more adept at secret operations, but this kind of rule-exploiting method is not typical of their style."

He paused and added: "Moreover, don't forget your old friends in the Peak Alliance. Although their influence here is limited, it is entirely possible to relay some 'information' and 'concerns' through certain channels to their backers or affiliated parties at the Galaxy Center. From what I know, your relationship with them has always been unfriendly."

"In other words, there may not be just one 'behind-the-scenes manipulator,' but rather an invisible resistance composed of prejudice, apprehension, and intertwined conflicts of interest."

Bai E summarized, his tone calm, "They might not intend to directly eliminate us through this; that would be too obvious and likely cause controversy. More likely, they aim to consume our time, resources, and energy, disrupt our preparation rhythm, hoping we fail to secure eligible mecha in haste, or even if obtained, it's a 'castrated version' with severely diminished performance and inadequate pilot integration, naturally leading to defeat in the competition."

"Since we know their purpose, let's shatter their purpose!"

Chapter 1032: Encirclement

While Bai E and others were analyzing the situation, somewhere in the luxurious and private viewing hall of "Star City".

Several figures were overlooking the dazzling city nightscape below through one-way glass, holding crystal-clear wine glasses in their hands.

One of them was dressed in a tailored deep blue uniform, with a badge of stars and gears intertwined on the epaulettes—that was the standard military uniform of the Steel Alliance.

He gently swirled the wine glass, a slight smile of satisfaction at the corner of his mouth.

"There's news, the Mecha from 'New Bauhinia' indeed didn't pass the inspection. The Technology Audit Department has formally notified them to either modify or remake."

He took a sip of the wine, "According to their unconventional technical style, the difficulty of modification is extremely high, almost equivalent to reconstruction. And to remake... with only a month, even if they can find a top workshop, what good can they produce in haste? Moreover, some key high-grade materials and core component supply channels... a word of greeting and they won't get the supplies."

Next to him, an old man clad in a plain white robe, with silver scales and eye patterns embroidered on the cuffs, spoke slowly, his voice deep and with a judging tone: "The non-traditional spiritual energy circuit, the alloy mixed with unknown substances... these are all potential instability factors, which may contaminate the pure spiritual energy environment, or even attract high-dimensional attention. The competition gathers the elite of humanity, safety is paramount. We, the Holy Silver Church Country, support all measures to ensure safety and purity."

Elsewhere, a noble responsible for diplomatic affairs in the Golden Federation was engaging in informal salon talks with several allies.

Speaking of this matter, he elegantly shrugged: "Rules are rules, dear friends. The Star Alliance's Order is built on mutually recognized standards. If any team from remote Star Domains, with a bit of brute force, can rush in with their set of 'unique' equipment untested by cosmic civilization, is that fair to our

contestants? Is it a challenge to the authority of the Star Alliance? A proper threshold is necessary. I think friends from the Flame Republic wouldn't like to encounter opponents with ambiguous equipment rules on the field either?"

And in some more secret communication channels, representatives of certain forces from the Peak Alliance were reporting with a hint of flattery and pride to their contacts at Galaxy Center: "...Yes, sir. As we forewarned before, that Bai E and his team indeed brought a technical system distinct from the mainstream. Now it seems, they are indeed stuck at the technical audit. All this, sir, is your strategic planning and foresight... Yes, yes, we understand, we'll continue to monitor their movements, especially their attempts to procure materials and technology channels..."

This is a siege.

A coordinated siege.

Even the "Seven Sons of the Empire", who have long occupied an absolute advantage, would not want an eighth power emerging in the universe to stand on equal footing with them.

Existences like the former Human Emperor, are best never to appear again... For them, maintaining the current situation in the universe is already the best scenario.

...

In the seventh district of the International Pavilion, after listening to Elorin's intelligence and analysis, Bai E did not become angry or dejected, but rather seemed to have made a certain determination.

"Thank you for your intelligence, Elorin Scholar. This confirms my suspicion." Bai E looked at everyone, "Since they are using rules to restrict us, then we will use methods within the rules to break through. Modifying the old Mecha to meet their standards is like cutting feet to fit shoes. Redesigning is rushed and may be hampered by materials and technical constraints."

He shifted his tone, a sharp glint in his eyes: "But their standards are not the only rules. We can also become the new standard setters."

Everyone was stunned.

Beyond the standard? A new generation?

Bai E did not hold back, directly stating: "Catherine, has the reception ship from Mine Star already set off, how soon can it pick up Helen?"

Catherine was slightly surprised, quickly checking: "After you gave the order, it already set off. A message came not long ago; they have found the 'beacon' you left. Are you now seeking Helen?"

"That's right."

"Hold on."

Catherine had long wanted to see what kind of magic a woman who held significant weight in Bai E's heart had.

Communication was swiftly established, and Helen's image appeared on the screen in the tactical discussion room.

She seemed to be in a busy laboratory or workshop background, a focused expression, but upon seeing Bai E, a look of inquiry appeared in her eyes.

"Bai E, the reception ship's preparation is in full swing, the first list of personnel and materials has been confirmed. Are you in trouble?"

Helen keenly detected slight changes in Bai E's expression.

"Yes, Helen. We've encountered some rule-related trouble."

Bai E concisely explained the Mecha's failed inspection, the newly revised technical standards, and the targeted conspiracy behind it.

After listening, Helen's charming face did not show much surprise but instead displayed a cold smile of "as expected".

"Bureaucratic systems and vested interests' usual tricks, regardless of the level. So, how do you need me to assist? Bring the technical team over in advance to help you modify the Mecha? But time might be..."

"No, Helen." Bai E interrupted her, his tone firm, "I don't need you to come and help us modify the old Mecha. I want you, upon arrival at Mine Star, to immediately utilize all our existing technical reserves, resources, and your research achievements during this period, to instantly launch a brand new project—design and manufacture a 'new generation universal Mecha prototype' that fully meets or even surpasses the Star Alliance's latest technical standards."

Chapter 1033: Encirclement Operation (Part 2)

"The new generation?" Helen's eyes lit up. As a top scientist, she had an instinctive excitement for words like "creation" and "novel."

"Exactly." Bai E quickly outlined his thoughts, "Our previous mechas were strong because of their unique Spiritual Energy adaptability, specialized design against the Bug Race and higher dimensions, and some black technology acquired through reverse engineering. But their underlying architecture indeed shows strong patchwork and emergency practical traces, with weaknesses in standardization, versatility, and energy curve smoothness. These are precisely what the Star Alliance standards emphasize."

"Now, we have one month. I want you to focus the Fire Hammer Guild of Dai Lian, the reverse engineering team of Zhou Wenjie, and all the top engineers and scientists on Mine Star, with you at the center, to complete the following tasks:"

"First, conduct in-depth research on the 17th edition of the Star Alliance's technical specifications, thoroughly grasp the design philosophy and safety requirements behind them. We are not making a mecha that barely meets the standards, but one that from its initial design perfectly aligns with and even surpasses these standards."

"Second, integrate all our technological advantages. Standardize, refine, and synthesize the special material science knowledge we obtained from the Bug Race shells and alien minerals, forming a new alloy formula with clear performance parameters that can be tested and certified. Additionally, the core results of the 'Mecha Modification Plan 2.0' you've been researching, based on the Biological Main Brain Theory and neural link technology, should be integrated with the Star Alliance's universal standards! Most importantly, the 'knowledge' I previously entrusted to you should also be applicable here."

That knowledge was something Bai E extracted from the "Divine Fragment," not belonging to any national force of the current Star Alliance. Even the Peak Alliance, which possesses it, has yet to bring out a tangible product.

Bai E's voice was filled with power: "What we're doing is not simply meeting the standards but using our existing technological foundation to achieve a redefinition of 'standards'! The new generation prototype we build must not only pass the most rigorous technical review but also, while maintaining our original characteristics, possess superior universality, stability, and maintainability, becoming the standardized blueprint for the future 'New Bauhinia' mecha forces! Storm Battle Armor 2.0, we've done it before; let's do it again!"

Helen listened to Bai E's vision, the light in her eyes growing brighter.

This is a massive challenge, but also an excellent opportunity!

To integrate, refine, and recreate those slightly scattered technological achievements from different sources into a complete, advanced mecha technology system that aligns with the mainstream cosmic standards!

"A month... time is very tight."

Helen quickly calculated, "But it's not impossible. You already have a clear goal and standard, as well as a profound technological accumulation, and sufficient resources. If we concentrate all our efforts, prioritize the highest level of breakthrough... I have a 70% confidence level that within 25-28 days, at least one prototype meeting your requirements can be produced, along with complete design blueprints, technical verification reports, and standardized production procedures."

"Seventy percent confidence is enough." Bai E nodded, "Helen, I am placing you in full charge of this matter. All resources on Mine Star are at your disposal. Dai Lian, Zhou Wenjie, and everyone else must cooperate with you. Additionally, I need you to, while manufacturing the prototype, prepare all the detailed, regulation-compliant technical documents, safety validation data, and material composition reports necessary for submission to the Star Alliance's Technical Review Department. We're not aiming to barely pass but to legitimately knock on the competition's door using our own technological strength!"

"Understood." Helen's expression became extremely serious and focused, "Leave it to me. In a month, you'll see our new child. But..."

She paused, "The prototype can be manufactured here, but for production and transportation to you..."

"I'll handle that," Bai E had already planned, "Gong Yan."

"Here, sir!" Gong Yan responded immediately.

"You are to immediately start, through 'Money Eye' or other reliable channels, to secretly rent a workshop capable of small to medium-sized mecha manufacturing, with Star Alliance-approved qualifications, in 'Star City' or nearby Star Domain. It doesn't need to have strong technology, but it needs 'qualification' and 'facility.' Also, prepare to receive core components and key technical teams

transported secretly from Mine Star. We are to complete the final assembly and declaration within the allowed rules. Remember, all actions must be secretive to avoid our opponents detecting our true intentions prematurely."

"Yes, sir!" Gong Yan accepted the mission, eyes gleaming with the light of executing secret tasks.

"Catherine, Kuang Xin, Rose." Bai E looked at his soldiers, "During this month, your training cannot stop. Not only undergo routine physical, tactical, and Spiritual Energy training but also begin to learn the Star Alliance's technical specifications in advance, to understand the design philosophy of the new generation mecha. When the new mecha arrives, you must adapt to it and establish rapport with it in the shortest time possible. This is also a battle."

"Understood!" The three responded in unison, full of fighting spirit.

"Elorin Scholar." Bai E finally looked at this key aiding scholar of the Star Alliance, "We still need your assistance to maintain communication with the event committee, securing reasonable preparation time within the rules framework, and keeping an eye on any potential new developments."

"No duty is too difficult." Elorin said solemnly.

He increasingly felt that following Bai E and his "New Bauhinia" might witness something truly capable of breaking conventions and bringing about change.

After arranging everything, Bai E once again looked out at the stars outside the window.

Multiple hunting nets have been cast, but at the same time, another path has been opened up—

Not compromise and cater, but integrate and surpass.

The month passed by in a flash.

Time flew by in intensive and orderly training, intelligence gathering, and covert technical preparation.

Every day countless eyes... whether Iron Alliance, Holy Silver Church Country, or those forces exerting influence through secret channels, closely monitored every move of the "New Bauhinia" base.

The informants they planted, the information obtained through commercial networks, and even some "friendly" teams' sideways probing all returned information that left them a bit puzzled and vaguely uneasy.

No frenzied scrambling, no despair or furious rebellion due to unqualified mechas.

The Seventh District of the International Pavilion was surprisingly calm.

Bai E and his team, as usual, engaged in high-intensity physical, tactical, and Spiritual Energy training, showed up in the public training area to familiarize with the environment and observe opponents, maintaining normal diplomatic interactions with some neutral or friendly teams.

Even their representative, Gong Yan, sent out to find workshops and materials, seemed cleverly disguised or distracted, failing to reveal a clear core intent.

This unusual calmness made their sense of "evil plot success" gradually cool down, but instead, a hint of suspicion arose.

Could it be that "New Bauhinia" has completely given up, resigned, and no longer plans to continue competing?

Or... have they found some loophole around the rules?

Amid such suspicion and waiting, the date for the first phase "qualification screening competition" of the Star Alliance finals was drawing increasingly near.

According to the process, all participating teams must submit the final version and approved certification documents of the mecha they will compete with to the technical review department at least three days before the start of the competition...

Chapter 1034: First Encounter in Battle!

The day before the submission deadline, an internal meeting regarding the implementation of technical standards for this year's tournament was held at the administrative center in "Star City," convened by the Technical Standards Department, Security Committee, and some senior tournament officials of the Star Alliance.

The meeting was originally a routine affair to review the preparations before the tournament started, confirm some technical details, and handle a few cases of teams still undergoing final audits.

Representatives who participated in the "rule revision" sat in relaxed, awaiting the "good news" of "New Bauhinia" being forced to withdraw or only able to use severely limited backup mecha due to their inability to submit compliant mecha by the stipulated time.

However, halfway through the meeting, the technical official responsible for the final summary of the audit results stood up, with a hint of undisguised surprise and... excitement?

He operated the holographic projection in front of him, bringing up a technical application document thick with hundreds of pages that had just completed its final review.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I need to insert a report temporarily."

The technical officer's voice echoed in the conference room, "Regarding the mecha audit application of the participating team 'New Bauhinia Republic.' They submitted a wholly new, complete technical application document at the last minute before the deadline, accompanied by the preliminary report of physical testing. After a preliminary review by an expert group urgently formed by our technical audit department... the results... are somewhat unexpected."

Eyes in the conference room instantly focused on him. The representatives behind the scenes also straightened up slightly.

"What they submitted was not a modification scheme to the non-compliant mecha but a completely new mecha design scheme named 'Dawn's Edge' series, along with detailed technical data of the first prototype, 'Breaker of Dawn.'

The technical officer quickly introduced, "According to the application, this series of mecha was independently designed recently by 'New Bauhinia's' affiliated 'Institute of Frontier Technology Research,' aiming to create a 'next-generation general-purpose mecha platform that complies with and moderately surpasses current Star Alliance universal technology standards while ensuring high Spiritual Energy adaptability and combat reliability.'

He displayed several core data charts: "First, regarding energy core stability. 'Dawn's Edge' adopts a newly designed 'Double Helix Steady-State Fusion Core,' whose output curve not only fully meets the requirement of the 17th version of the standard for a terminal fluctuation below 1.5%, but even under extreme overload testing, it consistently maintains a fluctuation rate below 0.8%, with the curve smoothness commendable. Its design philosophy abandons the mere pursuit of peak power, emphasizing linearity, controllability, and stability under extreme conditions. This... highly aligns with the direction we hope to guide through standard revisions, even doing better."

"Secondly, Spiritual Power Circuit compatibility." The technical officer switched screens, "They submitted a complete circuit framework blueprint and safety demonstration. The primary circuit adopts a modular, pluggable 'Spiritual Co-Processor Array' design. The core fundamental circuit strictly follows several most stable and secure universal templates in the Star Alliance database. The sections achieving 'high Spiritual Energy adaptability' and 'special capability support' are handled by independent co-processor modules designed with stringent safety isolation and redundancy. Every module's function, interface protocol, safety isolation measure is detailed, and... they opened the compatibility test data of these modules with mainstream Spiritual Power Amplifiers and stabilizers' interfaces, showing they can seamlessly connect with standard external devices produced by at least seven different factions. This is no longer an 'unidentifiable unique pattern,' but a highly standardized, expandable advanced design philosophy."

"Thirdly, regarding materials." The technical officer continued, "They submitted three new alloy formulae, respectively used for armor, skeleton, and transmission structure. Every component has clear

source explanations, performance parameters are clear, and they passed a full set of safety tests, including toxicity, radiation, and Spiritual Energy pollution, all superior to standard requirements. Especially the main armor alloy 'Star Dust Jade,' whose comprehensive protective performance improves approximately 18% over the current Star Alliance commonly used 'standard ship armor steel' at the same weight, yet with Spiritual Energy conduction efficiency not diminished at all..."

As each piece of data was displayed, the atmosphere in the conference room began to become subtle.

Representatives who originally came with a mindset of watching the show gradually lost their relaxed expressions, replaced by astonishment, disbelief, and a trace of being slapped.

This is far beyond barely meeting standards?

This is clearly... within the current standard framework, producing a superior performance, more advanced design, wholly compliant, and even offering a reference model for future standard upgrades—an excellent work indeed!

"Moreover..." The technical officer's voice carried the enthusiasm of discovering treasure in a professional field, "They also proposed some... quite forward-looking design concepts in their application documents. For example, incorporating certain ideas about biological neural link-assisted control from 'Mecha Modification Plan 2.0' with the traditional force feedback control system to form a 'Hybrid Enhanced Control Mode,' significantly enhancing the mech pilot's control precision and reaction speed under safety assured conditions, particularly beneficial for high mobility and precise operations. Additionally, they optimized the internal ecological maintenance system and pilot emergency life support system of the mecha, with design metrics... even exceeding some standards we set for deep-space exploration mecha."

Chapter 1035: First Battle! (Part 2)

He concluded: "The preliminary opinion of the Technical Audit Committee's expert group is that the prototype 'Breaker of Dawn' of the 'Dawn's Edge' series not only fully complies with the requirements of the 17th edition of the Star Alliance's 'Universal Technical Specifications for Mobile Warrior Tournament Safety and Fairness,' but also demonstrates a level of excellence beyond current standards in aspects like energy stability, spiritual ability system safety design, material science applications, and certain humanized designs. The design documents are complete and standardized, with comprehensive safety demonstrations, showing the potential to become the reference blueprint for next-generation universal mecha technology in the Star Alliance."

The conference room was silent.

A pin could be heard falling.

It was a few seconds before someone hesitantly spoke: "Beyond current standards? Reference blueprint? You mean... their mecha is better than most of the standard mecha used by our 'Sons of the Empire' teams?"

The technical official carefully countered: "From a purely technical specification and design philosophy perspective, the 'Dawn's Edge' series indeed reaches a very high level in standardization, safety, maintainability, and the balance of certain performance indicators, even offering excellent solutions to fields we have long wanted to improve but have progressed slowly. Of course, actual battle performance, compatibility with specific tactical systems, and costs all need comprehensive consideration. But undoubtedly, this is a fully compliant and technically high-level design."

At this point, a technical representative from the Foundry World Collective touched his chin, his eyes gleaming: "An open-style spiritual energy coprocessor module design? Standardized interfaces? If we can get detailed specifications... this perhaps could drive the interconnection and standardization process of spiritual energy equipment across different factions, reducing logistical complexities... quite interesting."

Another representative from the Deep Space Alliance also mused: "The stability of the energy core is indeed excellent, valuable for long-term deep-space missions and reliable operations in complex environments. Their material synthesis process... might have exchange value."

The development of events had completely exceeded some conspirators' expectations.

They had originally intended to use the rules to keep 'New Bauhinia' out or at least make them embarrassed.

Unexpectedly, the opponent not only wasn't defeated but instead presented such a beautiful technical proposal within the rules, which might even influence the direction of future rules!

This wasn't simply a "passing the test"; it was a silent, yet powerful, technical counterattack and declaration right before all the tournament committee members!

A representative of the Steel Alliance had a somewhat stiff expression, calming himself: "Beautiful technical data is one thing; actual battle performance is another. The competition is not about paper data. Moreover, with time being so tight, they only manufactured one prototype, whose reliability and compatibility with the mech pilot are questionable. We cannot relax our audit standards simply because of pretty blueprints."

The elder from the Holy Silver Church Country also gloomily supported: "The safety of the spiritual energy system requires longer practice tests. Modular design is flexible but might also introduce new instability factors. I suggest that this prototype undergo longer, more intense practical testing to ensure absolute safety."

They can use rules to limit New Bauhinia, but they themselves can never represent the entire "rules."

Faced with their disputes, the technical official shook his head, with official business tone: "According to the rules, we only audit whether the submitted technical documents and safety data meet established standards. The 'Dawn's Edge' application documents are complete, data meets or exceeds standards, and initial physical checks have not found issues. We have no reason to deny its qualification nor the authority to demand extra tests beyond normal procedures, unless a clear safety hazard is identified. As for actual battle performance and reliability, that is exactly what the tournament is meant to test."

The host of the meeting, a senior Star Alliance official with high prestige, looked at both sides of the dispute, then carefully reviewed 'Dawn's Edge' partial core data on the screen in front of him, finally spoke slowly.

"The professional opinion of the Technical Audit Department is clear. The mecha submitted by 'New Bauhinia' complies with all regulations, and its technical level is commendable. Rules are rules, and we cannot treat it differently due to certain... preconceived notions. Approve the qualification of the prototype 'Breaker of Dawn' and its subsequent series mecha to participate. As for whether its technology has promotion value..."

He paused, his gaze sweeping across the venue, "It can be separately evaluated by the Technical Standards Committee after the tournament ends. For now, ensuring the tournament proceeds smoothly is the primary goal."

Decision made!

The expression of the behind-the-scenes planners suddenly turned vivid.

The rule trap they meticulously planned not only failed to confine the opponent but instead became a stage for the opponent to showcase technical prowess!

The opponent not only obtained the entry ticket smoothly but also gained professional recognition and potential technical influence at the high-level meeting of the Star Alliance technical circle!

This deals a much bigger blow than simply passing the audit!

The news spread quickly, as if with wings, among the high-level circles of 'Star City' and teams with sensitive information.

'New Bauhinia' unexpectedly solved the mecha qualification issue in a way that confounded everyone, and its new technology has drawn the attention of the Star Alliance technical department!

This team from the Edge Star Domain, with a sensitive name, once again barged into everyone's view in a powerful and uncivilized manner.

When Bai E received the formal approval notice from Elorin scholars at the base, he merely nodded calmly, as if everything was under control.

"Helen did it." He said to Catherine, Kuang Xin, Rose, and others around him, "Next, it's our turn. The new mecha will arrive soon, prepare for reception and final adaptation training. Those behind us won't let us be embarrassed off the field, and we must not disappoint their expectations on the field."

In Kuang Xin and others' eyes, a fierce battle intensity ignited.

A month of repressed frustration and waiting gradually transformed into the strongest motivation.

They are the edge of dawn, and the most direct display representing New Bauhinia facing the universe.

As time passed, the drums of the first stage "qualification challenge" of the Star Alliance Grand Finals finally sounded solemnly in sync between 'Star City' and 'Glory Arena World.'

Eyes from countless angles of the universe focused here, including scrutiny, curiosity, and examination.

After the "rule trap" turmoil, the somewhat sensitive-named New Bauhinia, originating from the Edge Star Domain, has attracted far more attention than its paper strength through technical retaliation.

Now it's time to show its true strength.

The first battle is crucial.

It's not only the first step towards scoring and advancing but also the first public declaration of New Bauhinia's strength and style to the entire universe.

And representing New Bauhinia in the first match is Kuang Xin—

The old subordinate whom Bai E trusted and relied on from the start.

On the eve of the battle, Kuang Xin was standing in the seventh district hangar, facing the prototype 'Breaker of Dawn' that has just completed final adjustments, which complies with all Star Alliance standards and embodies the unique technical imprint of New Bauhinia.

His gaze had no tension, only eager anticipation and nearly burning battle spirit.

A month's wait and grind had long made him crave a hearty battle to respond to those who tried to bind them with rules.

Most importantly... the boss is watching, and Yanzi is watching too.

"Go ahead." Bai E's voice calmly sounded behind him, "I believe in you."

Without any extra words of grandeur, Kuang Xin turned around and strode toward the mecha cockpit.

The cockpit door closed slowly, the engine roared deeply and steadily.

'Breaker of Dawn' slid into the launch channel, pushed by hydraulic devices, heading towards the 'Glory Arena World' for the upcoming first personal duel...

Chapter 1036: Victory!

"Glory Arena World" Arena No. 14, codename "Broken Star Canyon."

This is a complex environment formed by ancient geological activities and the accumulation of interstellar dust, with jagged rocks and gravity approximately equal to 1.2 times the regular Blue Star environment.

Fine magnetic dust permeates the air, causing slight interference to unshielded electronic equipment.

A massive circular grandstand floats above the canyon, with spectators and observers from different Star Domains and factions, filling most of the seats.

Countless eyes focus on the relatively flat "ring" at the canyon's center—

A gigantic, relatively flat rock platform with a diameter of about five hundred meters.

The debut of the New Bauhinia team, already a topic due to previous "rule controversies" and "technical counteractions," now garners even more attention.

Especially when the names of the New Bauhinia's player and mecha model appear on the giant screen, it sparks a buzz of whispers.

"Player: Kuang Xin. Mecha: New Bauhinia · Dawn's Edge Prototype 'Breaker of Dawn.'

"Opponent: Player 'Rock Shield' from the Deep Space Mining Alliance. Mecha: 'Defender III Model' Heavy Assault Mecha."

Looking at the information of the two contenders on the field, spectators outside quietly discuss...

The Deep Space Mining Alliance is not one of the seven "Sons of the Empire," but it's also a formidable industrial and military consortium within the Galaxy Center Star Domain, especially skilled in combat under harsh space and planetary conditions.

The "Defender III Model" is their hallmark heavy-duty mecha, renowned for its thick armor, powerful thrust, and heavy weaponry modified from large demolition/mining tools, representing a classic strength-suppressing type mecha.

"So it's Deep Space Alliance's 'Rock Shield'? This guy is quite famous in the mercenary circle, with plenty of combat experience, especially adept at fighting in complex terrains like this. And New Bauhinia sent this 'Kuang Xin'... Never heard of him. Using a prototype? Isn't that a bit presumptuous?"

"Not necessarily, remember the stir they caused during the technical review. For this 'Breaker of Dawn' to be recognized by the Star Alliance, it must have some extraordinary features. It's just a matter of whether the mech pilot can utilize them."

"Rock Shield isn't easy to deal with; his 'Defender' has rough skin and immense strength, thriving in anomalous gravity environments like this. New Bauhinia's player doesn't seem to have heavy mecha piloting experience..."

In the midst of the chatter, both mechas slowly drive onto the ring from their respective entry passages.

The "Defender III Model," like a moving steel fortress, with its dark gray thick armor embedded with various enemy emblems, representing the defeated foes.

The mecha's left arm is a gigantic hydraulic impact drill, while the right arm is an extendable alloy giant claw, with a heavy thruster array on its back signifying its noteworthy mobility.

The mecha's heavy footsteps cause the rock platform to tremble slightly.

In contrast, the "Breaker of Dawn" appears much "lighter."

The blue-and-white paint job is sleek and technologically advanced, with body lines that are more streamlined and aerodynamic than traditional mechas, and its armor doesn't seem as thick as the opponent's but emits a unique metallic sheen under the lights.

It doesn't carry excessively large external weapons, with its arms equipped with standardized high-frequency cutting blades and an unfoldable energy shield generator, exuding a sense of agility and nimbleness.

Inside the cockpit, Kuang Xin takes a deep breath, feeling every subtle feedback of the "Breaker of Dawn" through neural linkage.

This mecha is different from all the mechas he had operated before, with more delicate control and faster response. Dr. Helen's designed "Hybrid Enhanced Handling Mode" makes him feel one with the mecha.

He can sense the canyon's abnormal gravity impacting the mecha, and the magnetic dust in the air causing slight interference to the sensors, but the mecha's stabilization system and filtering module work efficiently to minimize these negative effects.

"Everyone at Galaxy Center, Yanzi, Dai Lian, Wen Jie... and everyone on Mine Star, are watching." Kuang Xin licks his somewhat dry lips, with a fiery blaze igniting in his eyes, "First battle, watch how I perform!"

"The match begins!" The electronic synthesized voice echoes through the arena.

Almost at the sound's cue, "Rock Shield" takes initiative!

The heavy "Defender" erupts with fierce blue flames from the thruster on its back. Its massive body doesn't seem cumbersome; instead, leveraging the slightly enhanced gravity and the thruster's surge, it charges at "Breaker of Dawn" like a fired cannonball at mazing speed!

The impact drill on the left arm spins at high speed, emitting a piercing whirr, aiming straight at "Breaker of Dawn's" chest armor core!

A quintessential deep-space miner style—using environment and mecha advantage, launching a thunderous assault from the outset, aiming to establish dominance or disrupt the opponent's rhythm instantly!

Gasps of astonishment echo across the stands.

"Rock Shield's" explosiveness exceeds expectations!

However, faced with this overwhelming charge, Kuang Xin doesn't choose to withstand forcefully or dodge hastily.

Under "Breaker of Dawn's" exceptional sensors and his own battlefield acumen honed through trials, he precisely analyzes the opponent's charge trajectory and the impact drill's attack range.

Just before the "Defender" is about to collide, "Breaker of Dawn" moves.

Instead of moving backward or to the side significantly, it instantaneously ups the thruster's power to an exquisite level, combined with leg joint fine-tuning, allowing the entire mecha with an almost dance-like graceful posture to slide forward a little and slightly shift the body.

Chapter 1037: Victory!

"Hoo!" The heavy impact drill swept past "Breaker of Dawn's" shoulder armor with a shrill whistling, only causing a ripple in the energy shield.

At the same time "Breaker of Dawn" avoided a fatal strike, the high-frequency cutting blade on its right arm had already, using the momentum from a sidestep, slashed out a cold streak of light, accurately slicing at the slightly exposed right waist joint of "Defender" due to its charge!

"Screech—!" The teeth-grating sound of high-frequency cutting arose, with sparks flying everywhere.

The thick armor of "Defender" was cut open with a shallow but clear incision, the internal piping vaguely visible.

"What?!"

"Stone Shield" was shocked in the cockpit.

The opponent's timing and angle of evasion were too cunning!

Not only did they avoid his full-force attack, but they even took advantage to counterattack?

This kind of centimeter-level control and prediction requires a deep understanding of the mecha's performance and one's own movement habits!

The audience was also in an uproar.

"Beautiful! That evasion and counterattack!"

"Is 'Breaker of Dawn' maneuverable that strong? Instant direction change and micro-control are first-class!"

"It's not just the mecha's performance, the real key is the pilot's reaction and judgment! He completely foresaw 'Stone Shield's' attack!"

The observer from the Deep Space Mining Alliance had a slightly dark expression.

They initially hoped that "Stone Shield" would use environmental and mecha advantages to make an initial show of strength, but unexpectedly, they suffered a minor setback instead.

This Kuang Xin, is not simple.

With his strike missed and damaged, "Stone Shield" quickly adjusted.

He no longer charged blindly, but steadied his form, using "Defender's" thick armor and immense strength, began to steadily and firmly, wielding the impact drill and giant claw, forcing "Breaker of Dawn" into close combat.

At the same time, he intentionally led the battle to an area where the rock platform had more rubble and gravity disturbance was more apparent, attempting to use the environment to further restrict "Breaker of Dawn's" mobility.

However, Kuang Xin is most skilled at fighting in complex environments.

With the "well-trained" trait and "Breaker of Dawn's" excellent environmental adaptation system, he seemed like a fish in water.

"Breaker of Dawn" weaved and leapt between jagged rocks, sometimes using them as cover to dodge heavy blows, sometimes launching attacks from unbelievable angles.

The high-frequency cutting blade was like a serpent's tongue, each swing aimed at "Defender's" joints, sensors, or weak armor points.

"Stone Shield" was increasingly alarmed the more he fought.

The opponent's mecha seemed to have a strong resistance to gravity anomalies and magnetic dust interference, its movements always smooth and stable.

And the opponent's combat style was even stranger, unlike traditional Spiritual Ability User pilots relying on bursts of spiritual energy, nor like strength-type pilots seeking crushing frontal assaults, more like... a "combat beast" who has turned mecha control into instinct, extremely adept at using the environment and exploiting any slight flaw in the opponent!

Every attack of his seemed to be within the opponent's expectation, and each seemingly risky advance from the opponent always found a gap in his defense.

"This can't go on!" gnashing his teeth, "Stone Shield" decided to use his killer move.

He piloted "Defender" to suddenly retreat with full force, while the enormous right claw pierced the ground, grabbing a multi-ton boulder, and hurled it fiercely at "Breaker of Dawn"!

At the same time, the left arm's impact drill was charged to the extreme, hidden behind the boulder, preparing to launch a deadly second strike!

This boulder-throwing probing followed by a deadly strike was a unique skill "Stone Shield" honed through countless mining conflicts and mercenary missions, having defeated many opponents who underestimated him.

The boulder came howling, blocking a large evasion space.

"Breaker of Dawn" seemed to have nowhere to escape.

In the stands, many spectators held their breath.

Supporters of the New Bauhinia had their hearts in their throats.

However, in the cockpit, Kuang Xin's eyes were exceptionally bright, even flashing with a hint of... excitement!

He was very familiar with such a situation! In the arena, facing multiple opponents' siege and a desperate situation, was when he was most exhilarated!

"Breaker of Dawn" did not retreat, nor did it attempt to completely avoid the boulder.

It concentrated its energy shield at the front and, with the thrusters fully activated, charged straight toward the boulder!

At the moment of imminent collision, the mecha performed an almost impossible sideways roll, using the air current from the boulder's throw and its precise control, narrowly allowing the boulder to scrape the edge of the shield, the shield flickering violently but not breaking!

And "Breaker of Dawn" also took advantage of this roll and the reverse thrust from the thrusters, not only evading the boulder but instantly changing its trajectory, disappearing from the predicted strike path of "Defender"!

"What?!"

"Stone Shield's" strike with the drill hit nothing but air, the immense inertia causing a momentary pause in his actions.

The next moment, "Breaker of Dawn" appeared like a specter at the side and rear of "Defender"

—exactly at the previously cut waist joint!

This time, Kuang Xin showed no restraint, and "Breaker of Dawn's" high-frequency blades slashed out in a cross, infused with spiritual energy, the edges glowing faintly, with a force like thunder, slicing heavily at that incision!

"Crack! Sizzle—!"

A chilling sound of metal being torn apart rang out.

The thick armor at "Defender's" waist was completely ripped open, the internal power conduits and structural framework exposed, with electric sparks frantically leaping.

The massive mecha instantly lost most of its power, its movements stiffened, crashing down on one knee.

"Breaker of Dawn" lightly leaped backward, creating distance, its arms' blade edges hanging low, locking onto the opponent.

According to the rules, the match ends when one mecha loses primary mobility or the pilot concedes.

Inside "Defender's" cockpit, "Stone Shield" looked at the full screen of warnings and the out-of-control system, his face ashen.

He tried pushing the control stick, but the mecha only let out a weak moan.

After a few seconds of silence, he heavily pressed the surrender button.

"Match over! Winner: New Bauhinia Republic, Kuang Xin!"

The electronic voice announced the result, and the stands were silent for a moment, then erupted in applause and chatter.

"Won! New Bauhinia won!"

"A beautiful victory! Breaking force with skill, utilizing mecha performance and tactics to the fullest!"

"That Kuang Xin... his battle instinct is terrifying! He seems to always see through his opponent's intentions!"

"Deep Space Alliance's 'Stone Shield' didn't lose unjustly; he was completely countered by his opponent. New Bauhinia's 'Breaker of Dawn' and this pilot are definitely formidable foes!"

In the observation seats, rapid analysis was underway.

The technical representative from the Steel Alliance had a serious expression: "'Dawn's Edge' mecha's maneuverability, environmental adaptability, and structural strength are all higher than we estimated. That pilot... his combat style is extremely practical and sharp, not like a warrior that a small frontier country could train."

The representative from the Holy Silver Church Country was more concerned about another point: "His use of spiritual energy is very discreet, but it was evident in the final strike, it seems to be well integrated with the mecha's weapons, worth noting."

The observer from the Golden Federation was intrigued: "A very interesting combat style. Not reliant on flashy techniques or absolute power, but rather maximizing basic control, environmental use, and timing. This Kuang Xin, is a practical fighter. Their mecha technology, indeed has its unique points."

The representative from the Flame Republic grinned: "The style isn't bold enough! But... a win is a win. Next time, be careful not to let him find any flaws."

The observer from the Shadow Kingdom said nothing, only silently recording data related to Kuang Xin and the "Breaker of Dawn."

The person in charge of the Deep Space Mining Alliance had an unpleasant look.

To fail on the first match, and be defeated by a prototype mecha and an obscure pilot no less, was a humiliation.

"Stone Shield" was already one of the most experienced and suitable contenders for this terrain among their participating lineup.

"Investigate! Analyze all battle data from this match meticulously! Kuang Xin and 'Dawn's Edge' must be prioritized as research targets! Next encounter, never to have a repeat!"

New Bauhinia's first match concluded with a clean and decisive victory by Kuang Xin.

This not only earned the team their precious first point but also declared to audiences and opponents across the universe: New Bauhinia did not come by luck.

With Kuang Xin's initial victory securing New Bauhinia their crucial first point, interest in the team from the Edge Star Domain surged among spectators and observers.

As the matchup information for the second solo match appeared on the giant screen, it triggered no small stir.

The second combatant, Rose.

Chapter 1038: Crushing Victory!

"Second match, contestant from the New Bauhinia Republic: Rose. Mecha: New Bauhinia 'Dawn's Edge' mass production model 'Gale'."

"Opponent: contestant 'Anvil' from 'God's Chosen of Machines', Mecha: 'Prototype VII 'City Breaker'."

"God's Chosen of Machines" is a team supported by the Foundry World Collective, one of the Seven Sons of the Empire, known for their mecha technology characterized by experimental design and powerful firepower, representing a typical tech-violent style.

"Anvil" himself is famous for his expertise in using a variety of exaggerated experimental weapons and his ability to temporarily adjust the mecha's status during combat based on his outstanding engineering knowledge.

His mecha "City Breaker" is massive, equipped with a multi-barreled rotary cannon, shoulder missile pods, and a large-caliber thermal main cannon. The firepower configuration can be described as luxurious, and the armor has undergone special reinforcement.

"Is that 'Anvil' from God's Chosen of Machines? That guy's mecha is like a mobile armory! And Rose... is she a female mech pilot? Piloting a mass-produced mecha? Isn't New Bauhinia getting a bit overconfident?"

"Not necessarily, just look at Kuang Xin's performance in the previous round. This team seems to defy common sense."

"But Anvil's mecha has such overwhelming firepower that, under comprehensive strikes, it would be difficult to entirely evade no matter how agile, right? Moreover, 'Gale' is a mass-produced model, its performance likely inferior to the prototype 'Breaker of Dawn'..."

Amid these discussions, both mechas enter the arena.

This match arena is No. 7, codenamed 'Lava Plain'—

An area relatively open in terrain but filled with cracks across the ground, occasionally spewing scorching lava, posing a significant challenge to mechas' cooling and heat resistance capabilities.

"City Breaker" resembles a moving iron fortress, covered in ferocious cannon barrels and launch ports, leaving deep imprints on the ground with its heavy footsteps.

Meanwhile, the "Gale" piloted by Rose features an eye-catching red and white paint, with sharper lines than "Breaker of Dawn". It is similarly equipped with a high-frequency cutting blade and energy shield, though seemingly lacking extra heavy weaponry.

Inside the cockpit, Rose takes a deep breath, feeling the stable feedback from "Gale".

Her face lacks the outward excitement of Kuang Xin, but bears a calm focus like water and a burning battle intent in her eyes, as fierce as her name implies.

She flexes her fingers, finding great reassurance in the subtle resonance brought by the neural link with the mecha.

The Absolute Nullifier's constitution allows her to ignore any mental interference, while the battle instincts honed through countless life-and-death combats are her most trusted weapon.

"The match begins!"

As the electronic sound falls, "Anvil" immediately showcases his signature combat style—merciless fire coverage!

Shoulder missile pods launch first, numerous tracking missiles roar out trailing exhaust flames, while the multi-barreled cannon begins to rotate frantically, spraying a dense metal storm, blocking much of "Gale's" movement space.

He intends to use the most direct firepower advantage to suppress or even directly destroy the opponent!

A chorus of gasps rises from the stands.

This gesture of all-out firing at the start is full of visual impact.

However, facing this overwhelming barrage of bullets and missiles, Rose's gaze remains unwavering.

"Gale," under her control, suddenly bursts out with astonishing starting speed!

Not retreating, not making wide evasive maneuvers, instead... rushing forward through the rain of metal using an unpredictably zigzagged trajectory!

Her actions contain no excess, each change of direction precisely navigates the gaps in the fire grid, the mecha weaving through the metal storm like a ghost.

The tracking missiles are guided by her to collide with the spraying lava columns, exploding into fireworks; most machine gun bullets miss, and those hitting "Gale's" energy shield merely ripple, causing little effective damage.

"How is this possible?!"

"Anvil" gasps inside the cockpit, eyes wide.

The opponent's speed and agility far exceed expectations; more crucial is that premonition-like prediction of the firepower trajectories and coverage areas, almost as if a Prophet!

This requires combat instinct with an extreme understanding of mecha performance, opponent's weapon characteristics, and battlefield environment!

In mere seconds, "Gale" has broken through the fire grid, approaching "City Breaker" to less than fifty meters!

"Anvil" feels a chill in his heart, swiftly activating the thermal main cannon, the wide barrel begins charging, gathering intense light.

He intends to use this strike to decide victory!

Yet, just before the main cannon reaches the critical point of charge, "Gale" moves.

It doesn't charge in a straight line, instead making a near-right-angle slight change of direction during high-speed movement, while the body slightly sinks.

This seemingly simple action perfectly avoids "Anvil's" predicted aiming point.

The next moment, "Gale's" thruster power surges to the limit, the mecha like a red lightning bolt suddenly advancing to the right leg joint side of "City Breaker"!

This position happens to be a dead angle in "City Breaker's" fire coverage, also where its massive body turns relatively slowly.

A glint of cold flashes in Rose's eyes, her right-hand high-frequency cutting blade with a sharp wail cutting through the air, strikes fiercely at the hydraulic transmission structure connection of "City Breaker's" right knee joint!

This strike gathers all her strength, speed, and exploitation of the mecha's limit performance!

"Slash—crack!"

The teeth-gritting sound of metal cutting and the sound of structural breaking resound simultaneously!

The high-frequency oscillating cutting blade, like a hot knife through butter, tears apart "City Breaker's" heavy leg armor effortlessly, accurately severing the crucial transmission shaft and hydraulic line!

Chapter 1039: Overwhelming Victory! (2)

"Warning! Right leg propulsion failed! Balance system damaged!"

The alarms in the cabin of the "City Breaker" flashed wildly. The gigantic "City Breaker" instantly lost its balance, its massive body uncontrollably tilting to the right, kneeling down!

But Rose's attack didn't stop.

"Gale" effortlessly leaped up with the aid of its reaction force, performing a nimble spin in mid-air. Its left arm energy shield generator instantly transformed, ejecting a short, high-frequency vibrating blade at the front!

As the body descended, the blade pierced forward like a snake striking, precisely penetrating the main energy transmission pipe interface exposed in the gap of the armor on "City Breaker's" back due to its kneeling!

"Thud!" The blade went deep, and blue-white sparks of leaking energy burst out wildly!

The massive body of "City Breaker" convulsed fiercely, the charging glow of its main cannon instantly went out, all its weapon systems simultaneously dimmed, leaving only emergency lights flashing.

It was like a steel statue emptied of energy in an instant, rigidly kneeling there, unable to move.

Crumble!

Instant kill!

From the start of the match to the disabling kneel of "City Breaker", the entire process took less than fifteen seconds.

The arena inside and out was dead silent.

Everyone was stunned by this clean, almost crushing victory.

No dazzling energy clashes, no complex tactical maneuvers, only the most extreme speed, most precise entry, most deadly strike!

Rose demonstrated to everyone what top-tier close combat mecha control artistry and combat wisdom are with a textbook "weakness strike" combined with "mobile raid" battle!

The seemingly impenetrable fire coverage of the "God's Chosen Mecha" was like illusory in her presence.

The massive "City Breaker" was fragile in her hands like a bulky target.

Several seconds passed before the electronic voice seemed to react, sounding with some delay:

"Match over! Winner: New Bauhinia Republic, Rose!"

The stands erupted in far more intense cheers and discussions than the previous match!

"My God! It's over?!"

"So fast! So strong! Completely crushed!"

"That Rose... her timing and maneuver choice are pure artistry!"

"The 'City Breaker' in her presence looks like a joke! No matter how fierce the firepower, what's the use if you can't hit?"

"Where on earth did New Bauhinia find these monster pilots?! One Kuang Xin is already crazy enough, this Rose is even stronger!"

"The name Rose... I've heard it elsewhere."

In the observer seats, analysts appeared more serious than the last match.

The outcome of one battle is insignificant, but what matters is Rose's opponent... one backed by the team from the Forged World Consortium of the Empire's Seven Sons.

Anyone among them would be a formidable presence in the Edge Stellar District.

Yet facing Rose, they seemed like recruits fresh to the battlefield.

Too exaggerated...

The Steel Alliance representative's eyes were shocked: "Precise, deadly, efficient. Rose's combat style perfectly embodies the essence of close-range mecha raids. Her utilization of mecha performance and reading of the battlefield situation has reached a master level. This cannot be cultivated through short-term training; she must have experienced countless brutal battles."

The Holy Silver Church Country representative frowned: "Absolute spiritual user... no wonder the spiritual energy detection responds weakly to her. Such a pure warrior combining flesh and machine is more challenging to deal with than a spiritual ability user on certain levels. It's necessary to reassess the composition of New Bauhinia's warriors."

The Golden Federation observer's eyes flickered with a mix of admiration and apprehension: "A superb show. Using the most basic mass-produced mecha, she achieved a perfect counter to the experimental heavy firepower. New Bauhinia... has more depth than we imagined."

The person in charge of "God's Chosen Mecha" was even more grim-faced, fists clenched.

Their prideful firepower advantage and experimental technology seemed so ineffectual in the face of pure combat artistry.

This failure was harder to accept than a mere discrepancy in combat power.

Rose, driving the "Gale," calmly exited the arena, returning to the passage.

She seemed indifferent to the external shock and discussion.

To her, it was just another battle she must win.

Her goal has never been merely the victory before her.

New Bauhinia's second battle concluded with Rose's swift, crushing victory like thunder.

With two wins in two battles, the name "New Bauhinia Republic" had already surged to the top of the leaderboard.

Even with other countries having two wins as well, no one won faster than her!

And the code name "Rose," along with this performance that shocked the entire scene, was indelibly engraved into the minds of all participants and observers.

This valiant female warrior from the Edge Star Domain, piloting a mass-produced mecha, announced with her undeniable skills:

New Bauhinia is not merely home to an excellent mecha but has many top pilots who can harness its power and exert combat strength beyond limits!

...

With Kuang Xin and Rose's two impressive victories, New Bauhinia's team has become the focus of the first stage qualifiers.

Everyone realized that this team from the Edge Star Domain, bearing a sensitive name, has not come by luck.

Their pilots each possess formidable strength and unique combat styles.

And when the matchups for the third and fourth solo matches were announced, the attention reached its peak.

"Third match, New Bauhinia Republic contestant: Catherine; Mecha: New Bauhinia Dawn's Edge mass-produced model 'Star-Snipe'."

"Opponent: Contestant 'Night Owl' from the 'Shadow Kingdom'; Mecha: 'Shadow Stalker VII model'."

Shadow Kingdom, one of the Empire's Seven Sons, renowned for stealth operations, infiltration reconnaissance, and precision assassinations.

Their mech pilots are often ghost-like entities, with combat styles elusive and hard to predict, adept at utilizing the environment, creating illusions, and delivering lethal blows.

"Night Owl" is one of the prominent ones, with its "Shadow Stalker" mecha having top-level stealth systems, short-range teleportation, and high burst close-combat weapons.

The match venue is the third arena, "Mist Ruins"—

A shattered city shrouded by ancient war relics and persistent gray fog.

Visibility is extremely low, terrain is complex, filled with collapsed structures and dangerous dark channels, a preferred hunting ground for Shadow Kingdom mech pilots.

In the stands, many believed the match was severely unfavorable to New Bauhinia's Catherine.

She is a renowned legendary mech pilot but excels more in mid-to-long-range fire suppression and precision sniping, known in Stellar District competitions as "Bauhinia's Sniper Queen."

Such close-quarters, complex, and obstructed visibility environments are unfavorable for her long-range advantages against the elusive Shadow Killer.

However, when the match started, Catherine showed everyone what it means to "integrate the art of ranged combat into close engagement."

"Star-Snipe" was not equipped with the traditional gigantic sniper cannon, but rather a specially modified medium-sized electromagnetic rifle with switchable firing modes and a composite shield integrating a detection array.

After entering the ruins, she did not try to find high ground for traditional sniping. Instead, she actively lowered her altitude, moving cautiously like an experienced scout amidst the ruins.

"Night Owl's" mecha seemed to blend completely into the fog and shadows, almost disappearing from radar and conventional sensors.

He patiently waited, seeking a chance for a lethal strike.

Catherine showed equal patience; her "Star-Snipe's" marching route seemed random yet cleverly placed herself in relatively open positions backed by sturdy cover, while continuously scanning the environment for the slightest energy fluctuations and sonar feedback using the shield's detection array.

Finally, as "Star-Snipe" passed a partially collapsed archway, the showdown began without warning!

Chapter 1040: Complete Victory!

He appeared like a true ghost from the shadow of a seemingly intact wall behind Catherine, wielding two high-frequency oscillating short blades, stabbing straight at the power core and the rear neck sensors of "Sniper Star"!

The timing, angle, and speed were perfect!

However, it was as if Catherine had eyes on her back.

"Sniper Star" didn't attempt to turn around or block the almost inevitable backstab, but instead, at the moment the opponent launched the surprise attack, the leg thrusters suddenly thrust downward, making the mecha squat abruptly as if struck by a heavy hammer!

At the same time, the composite shield on the left arm slashed upward at an incredible angle!

"Clang!" A loud noise, the edge of the shield accurately knocked away the short blade aiming at the back neck, while the other short blade targeting the power core only grazed the shoulder armor, sparking a stream of sparks due to "Sniper Star"'s sudden squat.

"Night Owl" missed its strike, not lingering to battle, and intended to blend into the shadows and teleport away.

This is a typical tactic of a Shadow Mechanic, missing a strike, fleeing a thousand miles away, waiting for the next opportunity.

But Catherine didn't give him this chance!

While blocking the attack with the shield and crouching, "Sniper Star"'s right hand electromagnetic rifle had already lifted at a speed almost defying physical laws to aim.

She wasn't aiming at the blurred figure of "Night Owl" that might teleport away, but at a specific point on the ground where he appeared!

No charging, no delay, the muzzle flashed blue!

"Bang!"

A specially-made armor-piercing round with reduced power, but undiminished speed and penetration, hit that point at speeds hard for the eye to catch—

A seemingly ordinary concrete block, but whose internal structure had become brittle over the long ages!

"Boom!"

The precisely hit concrete block exploded instantaneously, the shockwave and splintering stones not intended to cause harm, but to—disrupt!

"Night Owl"'s teleportation action was interrupted, his shape revealed with a momentarily falter!

It was in this instant!

Catherine's "Sniper Star" leaped like a hunting leopard long prepared, the electromagnetic rifle instantly switching to melee mode, with a blade flickering high-frequency energy ejecting from the stock area, combining a shield assault into a fluid, fierce melee thrust combo to forcibly invade "Night Owl"'s defensive circle!

"Clink clank!" The sound of metal clashing rang out like a torrential rain.

"Night Owl" was shocked and furious, adept at lurking and decisive kills; direct confrontation was not his strong suit, especially when the rhythm was disrupted by such terrifyingly precise environment manipulation.

He tried to pull away, once again to conceal himself, but Catherine's "Sniper Star" clung persistently at an aggressively middle-close range.

The electromagnetic rifle and shield cooperated seamlessly, offense and defense in one, each attack targeted the weak points of his mecha's joints and energy lines, forcing him to continuously parry and retreat, unable to break free.

More alarming for "Night Owl" was that the opponent seemed utterly familiar with his mecha's weaknesses, each attack leaving him feeling constrained.

This wasn't merely a difference in combat skill, but a crushing of intelligence and analysis!

Finally, after yet another attempt to teleport was predicted by Catherine and destroyed by a precise point shot hitting a key component of the teleportation generator, "Night Owl" lost his mobility advantage.

"Sniper Star" seized the opportunity, slamming its shield to break open his defense, the high-frequency blade stabbing like a snake's venomous bite, penetrating the bundle area of the main control circuits beneath the "Shadow Stalker"'s chest armor!

Sparks burst and flickered, "Night Owl"'s mecha seized up stiffly in place.

"Match over! Winner: New Bauhinia Republic, Catherine!"

The audience watched in astonishment.

A scene that was initially deemed extremely unfavorable for Catherine, an "assassin hunting sniper" showdown, had been forcefully turned into "hunter counter-killing ghost".

She perfectly combined the precise predictions and environmental analysis of a remote mech pilot with the decisive advance and entangled combat skills no less than a close combat pilot, controlling the battle rhythm from start to finish, ultimately achieving an undisputed victory.

Observers from the Shadow Kingdom had faces as dark as storm clouds.

Catherine's performance not only meant they lost a powerful scoring point but also exposed possible weaknesses in their mech's systems that had been precisely exploited by the opponent.

This Catherine must be prioritized as the highest tactical research subject!

However, the match cares not for anyone's will, merely proceeding with one happening right after another continuously.

"Fourth round, New Bauhinia Republic contestant: Gu Lan. Mecha: New Bauhinia · Dawn's Edge custom 'Patrol Wind'."

"Opponent: contestant 'Frenzy Flame' from the 'Flame Republic', mecha: 'Blast Flame Charger IV type'."

Flame Republic, one of the Seven Sons of the Empire, has a style diametrically opposed to the Shadow Kingdom.

Their mech pilots advocate frontal assault and passionate combat, their mechas are often heavily armored with powerful heavy weaponry, excelling at breakthrough and close-range explosive output.

"Frenzy Flame," true to his name, is a renowned striker in the Flame team, his "Blast Flame Charger" heavily armored, arms equipped with jet gauntlets and thermal axes, and a launcher capable of throwing fiery bombs from the back, making the charge unstoppable.

The competition venue is Field No. 9, the "Broken Plains"—

A relatively open field filled with varying depth ravines and scattered massive rocks, neither as extreme as the Lava Plain nor as complex as the Jungle Ruins, considered a fair venue for combat-oriented mech pilots.