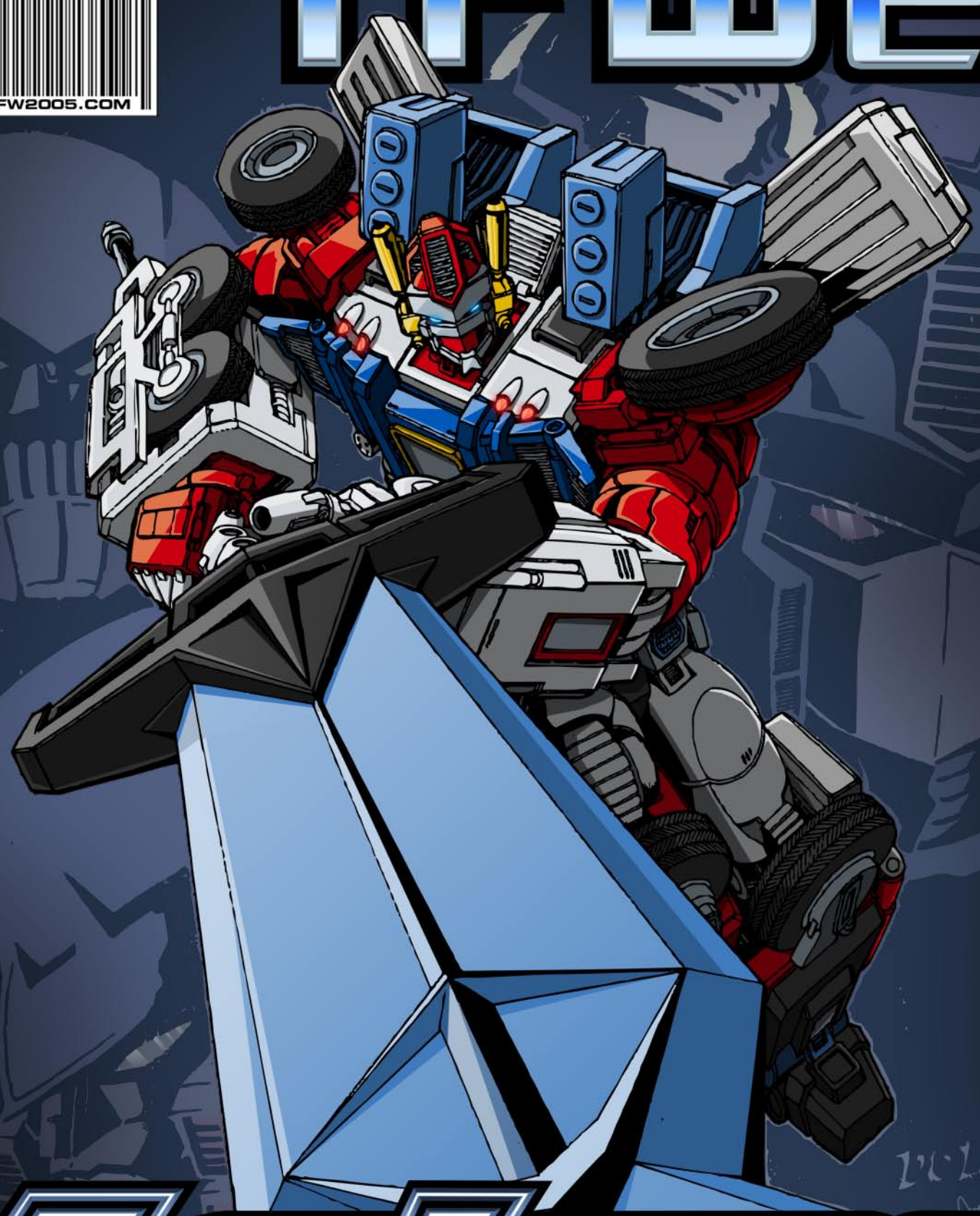


Sky-Byte • Scourge • TFCC Sideburn • RID Repaints • Galvatron

**TFWe 5**  
September 2011



# TFWe



# TRANSFORMERS

ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

**Robots In Disguise Special**

# TFWe

September 8th, 2001.

On that day, the United States had the return of the Autobots and Predacons on national television via the Fox Kids programming block. The popularly downloaded and streamed CAR ROBOTS from Japan was dubbed and produced by Saban Entertainment and brought to the United States as Transformers: Robots in Disguise. With it came a new logo (which was featured from 2001 until the Transformers Classics toyline launched pre-movie in late 2006) and the return of realistic vehicles. Oh yeah, those evil Decepticons returned as well.

While Transformers seemed destined to fall back in to toyline recession with the unsuccessful Beast Machines (Secretcode insists it was Nightscream's fault), Robots in Disguise breathed fresh-life in to the franchise and helped catapult it in to the monster global success that it is today.

With the 5th issue of TFWe, we take a look back 10 years ago and celebrate all that is TRANSFORMERS: ROBOTS IN DISGUISE, the history that helped revitalize Transformers (and was the founding series for this very website).

The cover that you see today has some history behind it as well. When IDW Publishing acquired the Transformers comic license after the collapse of Dreamwave Productions, a group of three individuals got together and hammered out a plan for a one-shot comic featuring Transformers: Robots in Disguise. They were myself (Kickback), Tony\_Bacala (TFW2005 owner), and Don Figueroa ('nuff said). The image that Don drew up was the cover you see above (minus colors and inks). We were given the "Thanks but no thanks" response - TFW2005 went on to grow to what it is today and Don went on to be one of the most popular and successful Transformers artists ever.

We thought it was appropriate to use for our special 10th anniversary celebration for Robots in Disguise.

A very special thanks to our own Joe Moore for the inks and colors. For those who want that image without all the stuff on it ... you'll find it in the special edition .PDF of Issue 05!

Enjoy this special edition of TFWe. We hope you enjoy reading this one as much as we did putting it together.

-Kickback  
TFWe Editor-in-Chief

## As The Fandom Turns...



Written by Silas Zee and Dan Sheehan, art by Silas Zee



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## Credits

Editor in Chief: Kickback

Resizes Shin's Images: Sol Fury

Writes Stuff: Kickback, Sol Fury, Secretcode, Shin Densetsu, Joe Moore

Forgets to Write Stuff: Tony\_Bacala

Draws Stuff: shibamura\_prime

Scourge: Not Nemesis Prime

Cover Artwork: Don Figueroa

Cover Inks: Joe Moore

Cover Colors: Joe Moore

Cover Layout: Joe Moore

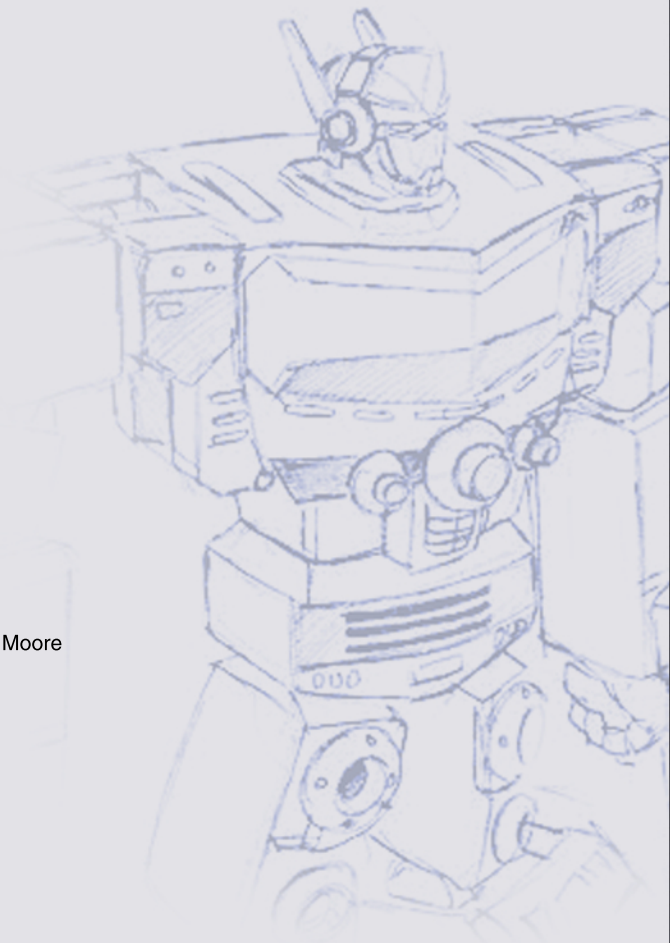
PDF Everything: Joe Moore

Underpaid: Joe Moore

Spammer in forum: TFWe

As the Fandom Turns: Deefuzz and shibamura\_prime

Nemesis Prime: Sucks



# Battle Protocol - An Introduction by TFW2005

## Owner Tony\_Bacala

*Written by Tony Bacala*



Hmm, Robots in Disguise. What is there to say about this show, toy line, that hasn't already been said? Not sure, but I'll try and say some things for those that may not know...

It's Hasbro's forgotten child, the black sheep of the "Generations". It was originally Car Robots, released one year earlier in Japan. That was back when Japan and the US weren't working in complete unison on Transformers. They did things for their own markets, and shared when possible. Japan took the Beast Wars model, developed in the US for Hasbro's market, and expanded on it. They did Beast Wars II and Neo, doing all types of crazy animal/robot toys. But coming up on 1999/2000, they wanted to return to their roots. Celebrate the 15th anniversary of Transformers proper. So they stuck with the cell drawn animation model, and merged what was current with the past. Little bit of beast, little bit of old school Autobots. Over time, they brought in old molds from the G1 and G2 eras, redecoed them and gave them new names. It was the perfect "transition" show for the time. However, it didn't do very well over in Japan. Most of the toys were being shipped over here to the US market, and the most popular character for Japanese kids was the doofy shark - Gelshark (aka Sky Byte). The show was even cut from 52 episodes - 1 a week for a year which is standard in Japan, down to 39 episodes.

Around the same time, Hasbro was going through its own issues. Beast Wars was rebooted into Beast Machines. The show took well known characters and developed story lines, changed the look and feel, changed the tone, and set things down a path many didn't agree with. On top of that, due to whatever behind the scenes reasons - the toys were way off from the show's look, further complicating things. The adult American fans were importing Car Robots and raving about them, while the US series and toys were lukewarm. From what I understand, plans were already in place to bring back Autobots vs. Decepticons - in what was eventually Armada - but Beast Machines wasn't going to fill the space they needed to get that going. So - in came Car Robots to the US market - re-titled "Robots in Disguise".

The show was a straight re-dub of the Japanese show. Done by Saban, the folks that did Digimon and Power Rangers, for Fox Kids. Overall, it was well produced. However, due to the source material, as a story it couldn't compete with what we came to expect from Beast Wars (and Machines, story wise). The Japanese story was very, well, Japanese. People complained, and even fell off from watching. That was before we saw how bad production and flow could get with the Armada/Energon/Cybertron era. I think if folks would have been able to peek into the future, they would have appreciated the show a bit more while it was on.

The toy line featured all or most of the Japanese releases - and was expanded upon with more repaints from yester-year. Lots of stuff from the early 90s were brought back and reintroduced to those that had fallen off from playing/collecting. Laser Rods, Spychangers galore. On top of that, Beast Machines toys such as the Autobot Trio (previously basic sized Vehicons), Supreme Class Air Attack Optimus Primal, and deluxe Bruticus (a 3 headed dog) were tossed in as filler.

But, this all happened in roughly a year. Armada was in development and was coming out on target. To fade into the Armada era, they took additional toys that were planned for RID (or fit with the repaint theme) and dumped them into "Armada Style" packaging, but featured a "Robots in Disguise" sub line on the boxes. More repaints from the past like the newly named Dreadwind and Smokejumper, the Destructicons, an urban camo deco of the Combaticons in a 5 pack, and more. So those following Car Robots and then Robots in Disguise had a bit longer to add to their shelves. However, when this was done - RID was over, and the Armada/Energon/Cybertron era had officially begun.



RID molds like the car brothers and spy changers saw some additional life in the new secondary line - Transformers Universe. RID Optimus Prime and Ultra Magnus were released 2 more times, one as far forward as the Cybertron line. However, the RID mythology was removed from these releases, they were just toy repaints meant to fill the shelves and give the newly booming Transformers market something to buy. Gladly, for the most part.

This was a show and toy line that was perfect for the time. A transition to the new millennium from styles and methods of the 90s, with ties to the Transformers brand's roots. It featured Autobots, Predacons, Decepticons and even Maximals if you count Air Attack Optimus Primal (maximal symbol, don't front). It had molds from G1, G2, Machine Wars, Beast Wars, Beast Machines, and all original ones too. It was Universe before there was Universe. It was Classics before there was Classics. And it had a unique story and show to back it up. It came out when Transformers fans were returning to the property during/after their college years, and the internet was just taking off. Again, it was perfect for its moment in history.

And then it was abandoned. And on its 10th Anniversary, it seems forgotten.

Well, not here. It will always hold a special place in my heart, and whenever possible, at TFW2005. We will push and remind folks about it whenever possible. Like now. . So carry on with this special issue of TFWWe and take a trip back to the turn of the century - for our celebration of ROBOTS IN DISGUISE starts now!



# Remembering ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

Written by Kickback

September 8th, 2001.



I was a student at a college in Colorado at the time. In my dorm room sat a number of ROBOTS IN DISGUISE toys that had been recently released - Optimus Prime, Ultra Magnus, Side Burn, Prowl, X-Brawn, Megatron ... and I woke up at the crack of dawn (on a SATURDAY in COLLEGE!) with my best friend, TFW2005.COM Veteran and former Administrator Jux, to watch the premiere of "Transformers: Robots in Disguise" on Fox Kids.

We had watched the previews countless times ("Strap in because this ride's about to ... TRANSFORMTRANSFORMTRANSFORMTRANSFORM!") and Neil Kaplan sounded a LOT like the original Optimus Prime. The original transforming sound was back. We knew that there would be evil vehicle Transformers, and we were hoping beyond hope that they would be Decepticons (I don't think at the time we knew if that's what they would end up being or not, there was a producer on the show who was posting on the TFW2005 forums back then ... fun fact, he hated the theme song and had thought what was used in toy commercials was the actual

theme ... it was not). And the theme song did suck (it was pretty bad), and the show itself was campy with humor that didn't seem to fit at times, but that first episode was fun.

Granted, the excitement of watching the show kind of fell apart only a few days later (I don't need to explain that one, do I?) and I don't know if I ever made it a point to sit down and watch every Saturday morning (if I did, I woke up, had a cigarette, watched, and went back to bed).

There was only a few big parts of the show that I can even recall with great enjoyment ... the first episode obviously, the first appearance of "The Decepticons" (with their leader SCOURGE, NOT NEMESIS PRIME), the arrival of Ultra Magnus (who CAN deal with it), and of course, the episodes with Fortress Maximus (and Cerebros!). The show wasn't perfect - in fact, at times, it was pretty bad. It's a forgettable show that is only held close to our hearts because of all the nostalgia that was thrown in (Combaticon repaints, an evil Optimus Prime, Fortress Maximus, etc.).

The best part of the series, hands down, was the TOYS!

The biggest difference between the Japanese releases of the toys and the American releases would be the number of faction symbols stamped on the American releases - the Japanese releases had faction symbols but they were, for the most part, molded in to the toy if they were on there. The American releases had them stamped all over the place on the vehicle modes.

It was very exciting to see the return of the Decepticon symbol on the Decepticon toys however (in Japan, they were "Combattrons" and featured an upside-down Generation 2 Autobot symbol in black). We were also treated to a number of repaints of older figures (Generation 2 saw a lot of love with Robots in Disguise), repaints of recent figures (Beast Machines), and even the release of molds originally intended for the failed Beast Machines line (Megatron Megabolt, Bruticus, Supreme Optimus Primal).

We even saw repaints of the "Combat Heroes" figures from Generation 2 (Optimus Prime and Megatron, repainted and re-named Scourge and Bludgeon and called "Destructions").

The new molds in the line were amazing - Optimus Prime is one of the best engineered Transformers toys of all time (even though most will argue he's a parts-former), Megatron/Galvatron's engineering is a work of art (10 modes!), and the Autobot Car Brothers (Prowl, Side Burn, X-Brawn) were masterfully articulated. Don't forget the best train-combiner we've seen with "Rail Racer" made up of Railspike, Midnight Express, and Rapid Run.

In short, Robots in Disguise featured some of the best toys ever and the repaints that were included really changed up the characters so you felt as if you were holding a new character and a new toy, not just the same toy from last year with new paint on it. Robots in Disguise is a toyline that was mostly repaints, but it was repaints done right, and the new molds included are favorites of many people to this day.

We invite you to take a look at TFW2005.COM's Robots in Disguise gallery - [click here to check it out](#) - and marvel at some of those figures (especially if you don't own any of them). 2001/2002 was a great year to be a Transformers fan as the brand became very popular once again and really helped catapult the brand in to the global success that it is today.

Thank you, Robots in Disguise, and Happy Anniversary.





# Who Owns "Robots in Disguise"?

Written by Kickback

Some of you may be wondering - why are we devoting an entire SPECIAL issue to a forgotten series? Well, aside from the fact that the Japanese equivalent, "Car Robots", is what spawned the TFW2005.COM website in the first place, it is the one series that brought most of the elder staff together to work on a website. ROBOTS IN DISGUISE (or CAR ROBOTS) created TFW2005.COM, and in all reality, the other websites that you all love and enjoy as well. Yeah, there was that whole alt.toys.transformers thing, plenty of IRC channels, and even some newsletters. But what began with Beast Wars and Beast Machines turned in to an explosion of fansites, both major and minor, thanks to the newfound love for Transformers, brought on by ROBOTS IN DISGUISE and CAR ROBOTS.

So why, you ask, has Hasbro chosen not to give any love to this ancient series? Why are there no DVD's? Why don't they do any special "anniversary" celebration for this series that also helped reignite the passion for this franchise?

The answer, my friends, is because of legal reasons. Allow me to explain.

You see, Hasbro didn't always "protect" their shows - meaning they didn't include provisions to physically and legally "own" their cartoons. It was only a matter of years ago that Hasbro purchased the Sunbow library, giving them back the full ownership to all their properties from the 1980's.

"Well Kickback," you might say. "If they bought back all the older stuff, why haven't they gotten ROBOTS IN DISGUISE back?"

I'm glad you asked that question junior! Transformers Robots in Disguise (the cartoon) was translated and produced by Saban Entertainment (of Power Rangers fame). It aired on the incredibly popular and successful "Fox Kids" programming block on your local Fox television station. However, in early 2002, the "Fox Kids" programming block continued to drop in ratings thanks to the cancellation of numerous successful shows and the increased popularity of new television shows on other networks like Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon. Now losing money at an alarming rate, Haim Saban, the President and Founder of Saban Entertainment, sold off his entire library to the Walt Disney Company. This included currently produced shows (such as Power Rangers and Digimon), as well as shows no longer airing (including Transformers Robots in Disguise).

That's right - Walt Disney owns(ed) the video rights for Robots in Disguise.

Video rights? That's a stupid sentence.

UNTRUE!

Haim Saban is a very smart businessman - he separated the "sound" for all his shows in to a separate company which he did NOT sell. For example - Disney could bring back old Power Ranger actors for their new shows, call them Power Rangers, even put them in their old suits and parade them around in their old zords. But they couldn't play the music from the old shows in their own new shows without paying royalties to Haim Saban.

Burn.

In 2010, Haim Saban founded "Saban Brands", a new company, and purchased back the rights to many of his old television shows, including Power Rangers, VR Troopers, Masked Rider, Big Bad Beetleborgs, and more from Disney. Where does that leave Transformers Robots in Disguise?

Honestly, we don't know. The bigwig lawyers and executives may know, but they haven't discussed it openly with anyone here. Does Walt Disney still have it? Did Saban Brands purchase it back? What are the legal ramifications of releasing toys that resemble and market the old television series that you don't have rights to - and is that why we don't receive any main-market homages to Robots in Disguise? Or does Hasbro just not care about that series?

Attempts to get a comic created have failed. When it's been brought up, they let people "choose" between it ... and something so immensely popular that it has no chance to win (ie: Do you want a RiD comic, or MORE ANIMATED TOYS?!?!?!). Because of over-use, many toys are incapable of being re-released without being reverse engineered. Other toys just cost too much to be re-released, or couldn't possibly pass the safety standards that have increased since Mattel attempted to kill the world with their lead based toys (please note there is no evidence Mattel purposely tried to kill children with Mater from their line of CARS characters, or little girls with their Barbie dolls, or babies with their Sesame Street toys - if a child is dumb enough to try and eat Mater, the paint is the least of their worries).

To say the least - whoever owns Robots in Disguise is probably asking a ridiculous amount of money for it because of the success of the live-action Transformers series, and because you have something that your competitor is supposed to own. Would you give up a piece of their franchise's history, or would you hold on to it just to rub it in their face that "haha, we own a cult-favorite series of yours"?

Do you want Robots in Disguise on DVD? Send E-mail to Hasbro via their website and demand it! The world deserves more Sky-Byte love ....

## UK Robots in Disguise DVD Box Sets



- Kickback

TFWe Editor-in-Chief

TFW2005.COM Administrator

Follow me on Twitter @rankal and always follow @tfw2005 for the latest in Transformers news!





# What's In a Name?

## Comparing the American and Japanese Names for Robots in Disguise

*Written by Sol Fury*

When Transformers Car Robots, as it was known in Japan, was brought to the US to become our beloved Transformers Robots in Disguise, several name changes were made. Some were made to give the characters more traditional names in place of their unknown Japanese ones, others were given names seemingly to protect trademarks (confirmed, Aaron Archer once admitted to nearly losing Megatron to Yu-gi-oh!).

To help things be simplified, **ROBOTS IN DISGUISE** names will be in **RED** while **CAR ROBOTS** names will be in **BLUE**.

But what is in a name? And which series has the better names? It's all in the eye of the beholder, but here is my view on the matter:

Series Title

**Let's start from the top. Transformers Robots in Disguise** (US) vs **Transformers Car Robots** (Japan). Car Robots, as titles go, is refreshing and to the point - after several years of "Beastformers", Car Robots is a return to, yes, Car Robots. A return to the roots of Transformers. But it feels very bland as a title. It lacks wow factor. Robots in Disguise, on the other hand, carries with it the same sense of a return to the traditional vehicle Transformers through the clever use of the original series jingle. It also has a fair chunk more wow factor, and an easily pronounceable acronym.

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**

## Factions

**Autobots VS Cybertrons**

Pretty much a tie here. I'd lean more towards Autobots on nostalgia grounds, though, since Robots in Disguise saw the return of the Autobots after years of Maximals, while in Japan, Cybertrons had persisted throughout.

Advantage - tied

**Decepticons VS Combatoons**

**Decepticons, hands down. Combatoons** is cool, a throwback to the Japanese name for the Combaticons. But to finally see the Decepticons return as a serious threat after they were last seen in Transformers Generation 2 - in an episode named "The Decepticons" no less - was too awesome to express in words. A much younger me jumped for joy years ago on hearing the news. Reminiscing puts a smile on my face.

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**

**Predacons VS Destrongers**

Predacons is a good and perfectly fitting name for the animal based group of villains, especially after Beast Wars. But I have to give it to Car Robots this time - Destrongers is a fantastic faction name. These guys are way more powerful, tougher than the Destrons - they're stronger Destrons, Destrongers! You'll either love or hate that pun. Personally, I love it. On an aside, this is possibly referenced in the toy line, with the use of the name "Destruction" for two of the exclusives.

Advantage: **Car Robots**

## Autobots / Cybertrons



**Optimus Prime VS Fire Convoy**

**Kind of a tie here. These are both** the generic "leader names" for Transformers series, and while Fire Convoy is a good fit for a fire engine version of Convoy, there is just something magical about that first truck Optimus Prime - even if he's a firetruck - after a few years of a monkey named Optimus Primal.

Advantage: **tied**

**Ultra Magnus VS God Magnus**

This is where it gets interesting for me. Ultra Magnus is a cool name to begin with, and seeing it brought back for Robots in Disguise on a character so obviously meant to be a

re-imagined Ultra Magnus was a blast. On the other hand, God Magnus is a crazy cool name too. It sort of says "I'm better than that other guy named Ultra Magnus, I'm better than all of you!" which fits some of the arrogance of the character.

Advantage: **Car Robots**, by a slim margin.

**Omega Prime VS God Fire Convoy**

For this one, I swing the other way. God Fire Convoy feels less like a Transformer name, and more like a Brave robot or something from Sentai. Omega Prime on the other hand is a truly fitting name for the "ultimate energy combiner", he is the ultimate evolution of this Optimus Prime and the Omega title fits the bill.

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**



**Fortress Maximus VS Brave Maximus**

**Onto the big guy himself. Fortress / Brave Maximus** is a key part of the series though was largely a plot device more than he was a character. Given this series was my first exposure to Fortress Maximus, and he lives up to the name very well, I'm accustomed to thinking of him as Fortress Maximus. He's big and invincible, in his fight sequences, very little slows him down, and he shrugs off the worst that the cast can throw at him. He doesn't really do anything that can be considered courageous, so the Brave part of the name seems a strange fit. For that reason I much prefer to think of him as Fortress Maximus. The fact that Kiss Players position would later retool him into being Fortress Maximus also helps that view.

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**



**Side Burn VS Speedbreaker**

**Prowl VS Mach Alert**

**X-Brawn VS Wildride**

The three Car Brothers are a mixed bag to me names wise. I never liked the name "X-Brawn", it felt too clunky with the X at the beginning and the character's personality was far more of an Ironhide than a Brawn. Side Burn is another name I felt was a little weird, while Speedbreaker is far more fitting for the character and sounds altogether cooler. That being said, I'm pretty indifferent about "Mach Alert" as a name - it has wow factor, but the character's personality as a straight-laced law-abiding Autobot is very fitting as far as Prowls go. Mach Alert recalls Red Alert as a name, but Mach Alert's personality is nothing like Red Alert. Wildride I'm pretty indifferent on as a name but it makes sense in context, and it's not as bad as X-Brawn.

Advantage: **Car Robots**, 2 to 1.



**Railspike VS J-5**

**Rapid Run VS J-7**

**Midnight Express VS J-4**

**Rail Racer VS JRX**

The first of the two combiner teams on the Autobot side, Team Shinkansen aka Team Bullet Train (it's a straight translation) are some of the cooler characters in the series. The Japanese names,

J-5, J-7 and J-4 are all named for types of bullet trains, which is kind of a nice idea but really does not work. It's more of a Machine Robo thing, J-4 Robo etc. Robots in Disguise gave these guys the dignity of giving them real names that still kept the overall theme going - Midnight Express is sounds like an over-night train service, while Rapid Run sounds fitting for rush hour commuter runs. The combined form names, Rail Racer vs JRX though makes me go the other way. I personally do not care for Rail Racer as a combiner name, though it is as good as any. JRX has a certain charm to it, or maybe it's the anime fan in me loving the idea of making a combiner sound more awesome for having an X slapped on the end of the name.

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**, for giving them names!



**Wedge VS Build Boy**

**Hightower VS Build Cyclone**

**Grimlock VS Build Hurricane**

**Heavy Load VS Build Typhoon**

**Landfill VS Build King**

These Constructibots are the other combiner team, and again I lean toward preferring the US names because they actually feel more toward preferring the US names because they actually feel more like Transformers names. Build - other word is far more of a Brave naming scheme than a Transformers one. Granted it does lend Build King proper names for his three modes - each mode is named for the robot who makes up the arms. But overall, the US names work for me far more as Transformer names. Wedge sounds far better as a little robot with something to prove than Build Boy. Hightower is a great name for a crane while Build Cyclone has nothing to do with cranes, Heavy Load (who has the best head sculpt in the line IMO) works very well as a dump truck. Grimlock.. oh, that one I don't see. It was probably a name dropped in there to save a trademark. But it's got about as much to do with excavating as Hurricanes do. The combined form names are a tie for me - Landfill does not work for me for the big guy any more than Build King does. To my ears, both are ill-fitting names.

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**, again for giving them proper Transformer names.



**Hot Shot VS Artfire**

**Crosswise VS X-Car**

**Ironhide VS Ox**

**Mirage VS Counter Arrow**

**R.E.V. VS Eagle Killer**

**W.A.R.S. VS Wars**

The Spychangers are another group where I feel that The US names trump the Japanese ones. The Japanese ones are okay names, and I prefer Artfire, his Japanese name, although that opinion is based on wanting the guy to be a separate character from the yellow car in Armada who was also named Hot Shot and made that name his own. Crosswise is a good name, one that respects the Japanese name of X-Car, but makes it sound a bit more like a Transformer, a bit less generic. Ironhide, prefer it to Ox although both fit, but feel with his personality on the show he should have been the one named Brawn. Mirage is a great name for the F1 racer, not only does it fit the alternate mode, but it also fits the personality and especially the one episode that focuses on him betraying the Autobots is a classic Mirage story. The last two are the two I'm less keen on. R.E.V. and W.A.R.S. are their names. Why the acronyms guys? Granted, R.E.V. as a name is a play on revving an engine, a good Automotive name, and it's a bit cooler than his Japanese name Eagle Killer which sounds a lot like some kind of Decepticon name. W.A.R.S. and Wars are the same name, neither one really sounds like an Autobot name, yet as the big tough man of the group, W.A.R.S. fits. But seriously, why the acronym names?

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**



**Tow-Line VS Wreckerhook**

**Skidz VS Indy Heat**

These two, I'm divided on. Tow-Line I prefer the US name for, because Wreckerhook has villain connotations to it (also, Wreckers connotations. But mostly, villains). Tow-Line, given his penchant for towing anything and everything in sight, seems to make perfect sense for the character. Skidz on the other hand I hate that name for, and Indy Heat conjures up more of an image of an Indy racer, which is more in line with his personality as the one obsessed with speed and racing. I just like that name a whole lot more, it feels like a better fit.

Advantage: **tied**.



# What's In a Name?

## Decepticons / Destrongers



Megatron VS Gigatron  
Galvatron VS Devil Gigatron

We know that Megatron was a name used to keep a trademark. Were it not for Megatron in RiD Aaron Archer admits that we'd have seen this incredibly fitting villain name go to Yu-gi-oh. That being said, Gigatron is an awesome name that goes beyond Megatron, which fits the whole idea in the Japanese version that this is supposed to be a villain bigger than Megatron. I personally love the name it must be said, and given the design is not a very "Megatron" design I find myself calling him that a lot. Same story for the upgrade - what an awesome name is Devil Gigatron?

Advantage: **Car Robots**



character very well. Scourge all the way.

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**



Mega-Octane VS Doratier  
Armohide VS Dangar  
Movor VS Shuttler  
Ro-Tor VS Hepter  
Rollbar VS Greejeeper  
Ruination VS Baldigus

I'll be honest, for the individual team members neither set of names excites me much. There's not much wow factor in either group of names. That's okay, because the main draw of these five are their combined forms. Ruination, aka Baldigus in Car Robots. And there's one clear winner there, and it's Ruination. Not only does Baldigus sound like some nasty way to lose hair, it's actually a corruption of Bruticus. Ruination is a perfect name for a Decepticon gestalt. He is that which he shall bring down upon you. He is Ruination in name and in his actions. Ruination will ruin you.

And on top of that, it is an awesome name to boot. "Ruination awakes!"

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**



Sky-Byte VS Gels shark  
Slapper VS Gusher  
Dark Scream VS Gildo  
Gas Skunk VS Gaskunk

While I love some of the individual names for Robots in Disguise - Sky-Byte is a great name for a great character - I personally do not care for Slapper. Dark Scream sounds awesome, though Gas Skunk... well, he's Gaskunk in Japan so he's eternally cursed with that name. The Japanese names though have a certain alliterative appeal

- all "G"s. I kind of like that. Gildo is a cool name, Gels shark is alright, Gaskunk is still Gas Skunk, and I prefer Gusher over Slapper.

Advantage: **Robots in Disguise**, thanks to Sky-Byte. Who's the sharpest shark in town?

## The Winner Is:

With a 10-4 advantage, Robots in Disguise is the series with the names that I prefer. While Car Robots has a view cool names like Gigatron, Robots in Disguise gave us names that fit in better with the long tradition of Transformers, names that fit very well, names that - in my own opinion - were simple and effective. Car Robots falls down on using strange names, names that don't seem to fit, and stuff that would sound more at home in any generic robot anime series - but Transformers is not any generic robot anime series. It's more than that. It's more than meets the eyes.

Also, Robots in Disguise gave a proper name to a character who went far beyond being simply an evil close of the main character, recognized him as a proper character in his own right. If nothing else, it deserves commendation for recognizing Scourge as far more than merely an evil Optimus Prime.

## Spot The Differences



1. Optimus Prime's Windshield is Red
2. Prowl's Autobot Symbol is Missing
3. Street Sign Symbols Missing
4. Optimus Prime Vehicle is Yellow
5. Building Behind Optimus is Missing
6. Super Side Burn Vehicle Mode



# Repaint In Demand - SCOURGE

Written by Shin Densetsu



Robots In Disguise (RID) reignited the love for Transformers for many fans, and brought in a good mix of new molds with repaints of older fan-favorites. For fans that missed out on the tail end of Transformers Generation 2, there were treats to be had. Some of the very best figures from that era would make a stellar return in RID, and one of them was arguably the very best version of Optimus Prime made (and without question, THE best Optimus Prime figure made in the 90's).

Scourge was a scourge in the RID / Car Robots cartoon (known as Black Convoy in Car Robots), and fans wanted him. As Decepticon leader in the cartoon, he was bad ass, and was a very clever repaint of G2 Laser Optimus Prime, the last incarnation of Optimus at the end of G2. For those who shunned G2 and Beast Wars, Scourge was a breath of fresh air, a fully articulated, vehicular Decepticon bad ass without a hint of techno-organics. For those that already had G2 Laser Prime, RID Scourge was a repaint still worth getting, in arguably better colors.

So it's not at all a surprise to say that RID Scourge was definitely in demand by the time of arrival at Toys R Us stores. I vividly remember not regretting paying \$30+ for this repaint of a toy that I already had (Laser Optimus). Laser Optimus brings back many good memories from 1995, but RID Scourge makes Laser Optimus look cheap. Gone were the gaudy paper stickers on the sides of the trailer, in was shiny chrome, teal highlights, and red light piping.

I should probably point out that there was also another RID Scourge toy, a deluxe figure available at KB Toys for \$12.99. This was a repaint of the 1st fully articulated Optimus Prime figure, Combat Hero Prime. Combat Hero Prime was later overshadowed by Laser Optimus Prime, and the same thing happened with deluxe KB Toys Scourge. As cool as he was, everyone wanted the Toys R Us version more.

I've had RID Scourge in my possession for close to a decade now, and the chrome hasn't chipped on the trailer much, if at all, but some has scratched off on the grill of the truck. Most of the other paint apps, like the printed Decepticon symbol (which looks good with white borders), are still intact. In fact, I'm surprised this figure hasn't suffered more paint scratches, considering that I did handle it quite often.

## Robot Mode

In robot mode, Scourge is about the size of a voyager Transformer (from a few years ago). As many of you have witnessed, voyager figures have been made in smaller sizes recently, especially when compared to 2007 figures. Scourge has full articulation, utilizing universal rotation joints in lieu of ball joints. Some of the primary joints feature detents which keep the limbs locked into whichever position you desire. When compared to modern Transformers, the main points of articulation missing are thigh swivels, swivel wrists and more range of motion for the ankles. Bear in mind however, not all modern Transformers feature the aforementioned joints.

Scourge's shoulder joints are limited in that you cannot bring the shoulder forward more than 90 degrees. I think this has something to do with the electronics / wiring made for Laser Rod Prime. While this was absent from Scourge, the joints themselves were not changed, hence the still limited shoulder range of motion. However, this is not terribly bad, Scourge can have his arms aimed straight forward. It isn't like some of the Star Wars Transformers where the arm can only move forward halfway at an angle.

Surprisingly enough, Scourge even has a waist joint. Even for a mold that pre-dates the fully articulated Beast Wars line, Scourge had enough articulation to keep fans happy, and didn't seem out of place within the RID line. Scourge is a very fun figure to pose, and fairly easy to balance.

The light piping works very well, and looks very sinister. The translucent red plastic works to great effect here. I prefer it over the pink that the Takara and Sonokong releases had. Sure, pink is animation accurate, but red looks menacing. This is one of the cases where Hasbro arguably outdid their Asian partners.

Scourge is armed with a sword and double barrel blaster. As mentioned before the electronics were gutted, but honestly, this never bothered me.



## Trailer Battle Station

Scourge's trailer packed a fun gimmick into a base that had even more gimmicks. After swinging the front cap down, you can press a button at the bottom of the trailer. Pressing this button jumps the trailer up, so that it automatically turns into a base. This spring activated gimmick is proof that sometimes simpler gimmicks are more fun (especially when compared to Armada Optimus Prime a year later, which had a more complicated / tedious mechanism for trailer to base transformation).

Once opened, the battle station features 2 air launched rockets. Also included is a ripple fire missile launcher and disc launcher (the only weapon able to be used in both base and trailer mode). The sides hold the spare rocket and missiles. The ripple fire launcher can also be detached so that Scourge could wield it.

At the top of the battle station, Scourge's gun can be stored (I lost the detachable part that connects to the gun, but you can also use the bottom peg to attach the gun) on the top.

If you had the Combaticons, they were small enough to somewhat look in scale with the battle station, manning the weapons stations. Scout figures would look at home with this battle station as well.

Overall this is a trailer I never got tired of. I loved how it transformed. Simple, yet fun. It came off as much more aggressive than G1 Prime's trailer, as that one came off as more of a repair bay and defense port, whereas this trailer is meant for combat. For Scourge, this is "just right".



As a final parting thought, here is a picture of RID Scourge with RTS Generation 2 Optimus Prime, the toy we all want repainted as Scourge - and named Scourge!



# Speedbreaker - TFCC Side Burn Review

*Written by Sol Fury*



While we were writing this issue this little guy turned up on my doorstep - I guess he must have seen the great finish on my little red car and couldn't stay away!

Side Burn is the Transformers Collectors Club 2011 membership renewal premium figure. He was sent out free to those who renewed their membership by March 2011, and all in all is a fantastic little figure and perfectly timed for the anniversary of Robots in Disguise.

Let's start with a couple of minor complaints and then on to the good stuff - the shipping. Fun Publications shipped Side Burn in a snug white mailer box, but without bubble wrap or other packing material, and while the box was sturdy enough, sometimes the fit was too snug and the tips of the spoilers got bent. I accept we can't ask too much for a freebie, but as a limited edition toy, a little bubble wrap would go a long way.

The other complaint is more to do with the fact this is the... seventh (?) outing of this mold now, and while it's better than the Battle in Space Rodimus for quality, some of the aspects of the figure are showing their age a bit. I've heard reports of loose arms and tight heads, and the right arm on mine feels a bit weak. Not loose exactly, but weak. Certainly not as bad as, say, the Battle in Space version has been reported to be.

Complaints aside, let's focus on why this toy is an awesome little exclusive. First of all, the deco. Fun Publications have done a fantastic job of taking a toy that was designed with Rodimus in mind and turning it into a new character. The head deserves a special mention - the asymmetrical paint applications nicely recall the original head, with yellow around the left eye for the monocle, and yellow above the right eye to recall the detail on the original toy in that location. A new head would have been nice - especially with the facial expression being completely unlike a daredevil like Side Burn - but as we do not live in a perfect world, this is the next best thing.

The main deco is a mix of blue and white, like the original Side Burn. A challenge with this toy is that the arms are also the sides of the car, so completely white arms are out of the question. Fun Publications got around this by painting the upper surface of the arms - and the arms as far as the shoulders - in white, so when in car mode, the white is hidden underneath the car. Simple, but very effective - the blue on the side of the arms looks natural, and the look of the character is maintained. A nice touch on the arms is the Autobot symbol on the left arm, matching the location of the symbol on the original Side Burn.

The robot mode chest / hood of the car in vehicle mode is adorned by Side Burn's signature blue flames, and they look as awesome on this toy now as they did back in 2000-01. The flames are very dynamic and very different to those on Rodimus - and are a perfect match for the overall look and style of the flames on the original Side Burn. Special mention to the way that the upper parts of the flames are designed as if they are flowing out of the engine - it's a detail that visually pulls the whole chest deco together and is a really nice touch. Speaking of the engine, it's one more reason why this toy works as Side Burn - the engine recalls the original Side Burn's chest and the engine in the middle of it.

Lastly, the weapon. I'm giving this a special mention because of the original Side Burn's signature gun, his "exhaust bowgun". Here Side Burn has traded up for a straight out "turbo exhaust flamethrower". It's ironic that while this seemed out of place for me on Rodimus - to me Rodimus' signature weapons were his twin pistols - Side Burn just feels right with it. It's a nice connection with the original weapon.

Overall - Side Burn is the single best freebie figure from the Transformers Collectors Club to date. I enjoyed the five members of the Nexus Prime combiner and Dion, but Side Burn has a number of nice touches that puts him in a whole other league - and being based on a character who sadly won't get a toy of his own any time soon is also a big help. Strongly recommended, and utterly essential if you are a fan of Robots in Disguise.



*Collectors Club Side Burn and Robots in Disguise Side Burn*



# GIMMICKRY

Written by Secretcode

Well. Here we are yet again, dear readers. Another month, another entry into the Gimmickry monthly article. You may be wondering, "Secret, how are you going to keep this series going? There are only so many gimmicks out there?"

To a point, you'd be right. When it comes to huge, line-spanning gimmicks there's only a dozen or so. But there's something I'd like to bring up to you: Gimmicks can always be toy specific. Case in point? For an issue such as this, it's time to introduce a special variation of Gimmickry for such toys as the one I'm about to follow. Welcome to the first Gimmickry Review. And what's this special first entry over?

I will fully admit that a review of the Robots in Disguise Galvatron toy is going to be a BIT of a beast (and several other beasts. And a car. And a jet. And a weird hovercraft thing. And a hand) to get through, and I figured there's nowhere better to start than with how it was packaged: The robot mode. Another thing is that for the sake of space and time, I will not be covering articulation, and sculpting on the toy. Or the transformation steps. I don't want to be here all night, and it won't be an interesting read to keep seeing "SWITCH LEGS FROM HERE TO HERE, FOLD DOWN WINGS" over and over again.

## ROBOT MODE

The robot mode is an extremely intimidating, yet regal design. The very clean and stark white (of my toy, at least. My condolences to any of you with a yellowed one) plastic color of the toy really works well with the black plastic for the base limbs as well as the various paint applications placed along his body, especially the metallic silver and gold ornamentation surrounding the spark crystal embedded in his chest. One of my favorite parts of the overall design on this toy (and I THINK the standard colors of this mold) are the various usages of translucent plastics on the toy, namely on the giant (and very articulated) wings on the back of the robot mode. I'm not quite sure what it is about the wings that makes me absolutely love them, to be honest, as they have a lot about them that I find aesthetically pleasing to my personal tastes.

Coupled with my preexisting fascination with clear plastics and light-piping, the sculpt jobs on the wings themselves weave an intricate pattern reminiscent of scales or quite possibly a grid full of energy (an idea I'm fully happy to go with, considering the vampiric nature and design of the Gigatron/RiD Megatron character) that gives the wings a very unique feel and appearance. Other transparent bits on the toy include all of the candy red on the various bits of the toy, namely the legs, that have been carried over from the Megatron color scheme. Those I have a BIT of an issue with, to be honest, but again for completely personal taste reasons, as they stand out a bit TOO much with the rest of the colors that are slathered across Galvatron. The final detail that pops out on the toy are the various metallic paints on the toy, namely the chest detail and various other gold chrome bits, as well as the odd usage of chromed paints for the eye detailing instead of lightpiping. It's unique, I'll give it that, but I still greatly prefer if they did lightpiping instead. Overall the toy is pretty fun and poseable in this mode, and the defining mode for me. But that's not the highlight of this toy, as we all know the gimmick that makes the RiD Megatron/Galvatron mold memorable: Modes, modes modes!

## BAT/GARGOYLE MODE

We go from my favorite mode, to my least favorite mode by a looooooong looooooong mile. This mode is the one that I feel is completely useless in terms of poseability and overall looks. More or less all the articulation that is actually on the toy in this mode, aside from the wings, are completely hindered and made pointless just by the overall changes that had to take place to make the mode possible. The legs can't move, otherwise the toy will topple over due to the massive weight being placed upon the feet (with no heels, by the way.) The head can't turn anymore due to the fold up nose, which is only used for this mode and ultimately hinders more than it adds. The saving grace, which you'll soon see is my saving grace for most of these modes, are the highly articulate wings that add plenty of display/posing options to the mode. It's just a shame that the wings more or less carry all of the fun for this mode. So much potential, wasted.

## CAR/TRANSPORT MODE

I have a weird history with this mode, mainly due to a transformation that still makes me think that I did something wrong, leading me to hunt down for in-depth galleries and instruction sheet archives every time I attempt transforming it mainly due to the legs and the lack of most of the parts locking into anything. The new detailing on this mode adds to the aesthetic and possible functionality this mode would have, with the red translucent plastic returning for the very alien cockpit design, and the sword/staff weapon from robot mode return and become a tank turret for the alt mode, complete with firing missiles. Otherwise from those details, this mode more or less does everything one would expect of a car mode from a Transformer toy with fully working (and slanted) wheels.

## JET MODE

Despite being a really phallic jet, I really like how this mode turns out due to really small details and ideas that come to fruition in this mode. Between the forward-swept wings, another translucent red cockpit, and the tailfins made of the dragon chinspikes, I find this mode to be one of the more aesthetically pleasing and one of the more functional. Also, the toy rolls thanks to the wheels on his robot arms and the fold-out landing gear in the chest that- unlike the fold-out nose for bat mode- hinders nothing in this or any of the toy's other modes.



## TWIN-HEADED DRAGON MODE

Finally, we get to one of the modes that I feel are the defining modes for the RiD Megatron/Galvatron mold: The twin-headed dragon. I love this mode. Love love love LOVE this mode.

See that thing? This is one of the reasons I wanted to hunt down this toy, YEARS after RiD had ended. Highly articulated and highly emotive dragon heads with really fearsome and intimidating sculptwork done on them, coupled with the fierce and striking wings and the inexplicable missile launchers on his back, you have a really well designed and one of the best modes to not just come out of this mold but out of RiD overall.

The toy isn't without it's own faults in this mode, however. It's a mode based out of a multichanger, after all. The biggest gripe with this mode, by a mile, are the feet. The legs themselves are great, as they allow multiple configurations for whatever your preference is for dragon legs be it either the classic leg positioning or the "chicken-walk" style. And that's great. But my main issue is the fact that there's no heel support for this and any other mode that uses this configuration for feet and honestly I feel that it is a somewhat necessary part of a transformer that for some reason was left out, possibly for budgetary and engineering reasons on an already complex toy.

## HYDROPLANE/BOAT MODE

No overdone and predictable Lonely Island jokes here, folks. Just an incredibly strange alternate mode that I can only possibly describe as "Water Transport Thing". This is one of the modes for this toy that honestly make me feel they presented the number 10 as a far-off goal and started manipulating the toy into different shapes until it resembled something in a very loose and somewhat recognizable shape and form. And honestly, that's all I really can say about it. There's nothing inspiring and amazing about this mode and honestly, until I used a magical thing called the TFW2005 Resources Section, I forgot this mode even existed. Moving on.

## ELEPHANT MODE

...so we moved on from something that looks like it was jumbled together to something that feels like a really good and creative fan mode that I can only describe in one word: WAT. The mode, officially referred to as the Iron Mammoth, feels like a crazy coincidence of part manipulation that turns into something completely unexpected and crazy that I can't help but to like it for three really obvious reasons: Giant ear wings, sword tusks and the eyes/nostrials that are formed out of the various cockpits. It's a very "out-there" and seldom-used mode among not only multi-changers, but Transformers as a whole. I can't help but give a lot of credit to whoever at Takara thought this one up.

## FLYING DRAGON MODE

Known to some as the altmode of choice for the character after his power boost into Galvatron, the flying dragon mode feels like a step back from the amazing twin-headed dragon form that provided the same function for the character while he was Megatron. And while it is, no doubt, a step back in terms of playability (The legs cannot move much in this mode, and the wings are more or less stuck in a certain way to remain affixed in the specific position needed for this mode. They still have movement, just not as free-ranged as usual) it is still a really sharp design, and I feel that it is a more simplified and regal design similar to how the white color scheme had that effect on the toy's overall appearance.





# GIMMICKRY

## GRIFFIN MODE

And nothing says "Regal" quite like this form. Before you say anything, think: "Is this a mode Secretcode would like?", and you will not go far wrong. Second only to the twin-headed dragon mode, the Griffin form is one that I feel is one of the core experiences of this toy. While it shares the head and neck design and placement from the previous mode, and I don't mind as the best achievements are worth repeating, the differing angle of the head and the placement of the wings really help shape this mode as a memorable experience, despite the usage of the heel-less claw legs. The mode is also the most poseable (outside of the robot mode) and can pull off a variety of useful poses.

Also this mode doubles as a pretty convincing Beast Wars/Beast Machines Sky Lynx. Sky Lynx would have made Beast Machines a whole lot better. Especially if he replaced Nightscream. (HAPPY NOW, BELGRATH?!)

## CLAW MODE

The final mode to cover is one that is TRULY unique to the RiD villain, and honestly we should give a big hand (GET IT?! IT'S A JOKE ABOUT THE MODE I'M CURRENTLY TALKING ABOUT. I'M SO WITTY.) to the Takara folks who thought this one up as well. The hand/claw mode is well articulated except for the thumb, utilizing the various joints and such used not only for the articulation through the various modes but also the various positions for the limbs via transformation. The only issue I personally have with this mode (and I feel really bad for saying this considering how much I've gushed about them so far in this review) are the wings, as they more or less have no exact place to go. Sure, you could approximate them into a position that works for a flying hand. But I don't go that route. Some modes... they have to be displayed, even if everything is working against you and there's no real way to do so. But then life gives you wings, a hastily ripped-in-half piece of a water bottle, and a weird/manic guy with curly hair rambling near the end of an article on an e-magazine to pad out some space, and then magic happens.



## FINAL THOUGHTS

Oh hey look, it IS possible to pose articulated hands in poses other than "Flipping the bird" or "Rockin' Da Horns". You've lied to me, internet. I thought I could trust you.

Despite the weird coincidences that took place for me to personally acquire this toy (And several other Transformers. And a Bugman. And one of my toy grails. Those are for another place and time.) and the long and overdrawn hassle it was to actually DO this review, I really like Galvatron. Even though I find most of the modes on this toy to be ultimately useless and tacked on I still can't help but praise the toy, as for the last ten years this toy still has the most alternate modes of all time in this brand so far. And that is an impressive feat on it's own. I love the toy. I love the mold. If you do not yet have this mold, A) WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU, and B) Go hunt one down. This is easily one of the most varying and vast experiences a toy collector could possibly have with a single toy, and I honestly believe it is worth hunting down.

**ATTENTION TFWe READERS:** A Gimmickry special is coming soon, and Secretcode needs your help! Do you have a personal experience with a toy's various gimmicks that went absolutely wrong? Woes with lights and sounds? Horrific experiences with Automorph? The Horror Stories have to be truthful, and they have to be from the Transformers toyline and cannot involve QC issues. I'm talking gimmicks here. Otherwise the article would be called Quality Controlry.

How can you send these stories? Simple: Send them to Secretcode via PM on the boards, or by posting on my profile wall. Do NOT send the PMs to the TFWe account, or post the stories in the TFWe thread. Those entries will be ignored and excluded from the article. All entries have to be turned in by October 4th, 2011.



## Robots In Disguise Resources



Ruination (Arctic Camo)



Scavenger



Scourge



Scourge (Destruction)



# Robots In Disguise - Making Repaints...Awesome?!

*Written by Joe Moore*



Repaints. If there's ever a word that draws the ire of Transformers fans, this is it. For companies, repaints are a way to recoup the cost of making new molds, inexpensively extend a toy line or to spend a little extra on a the visuals of a toy without spending the thousands upon thousands it costs to create a new mold. Repaints themselves have been around since before the Transformers were ever thought of. Lines like Diaclone had multiple versions of some of their molds. That line of thinking was brought over in the G1 days as well. Many of today's fans most beloved characters started off as nothing more than repaints. The Seekers, cassettes, Autobot cars, etc. all came from repainting other versions of those figures. Unlike many of the modern repaints, these toys were given unique names, characterizations and developed in cartoons, comics and more.

During the Beast era, repaints were common, but the following for those lines were mostly younger kids, who didn't really care enough to worry about such things. But when Robots In Disguise (Car Robots in Japan) hit, repaints took on a life of their own. While the Autobots were mostly comprised of new molds (save for the Spychangers), the Predacons and Decepticons were all repaints (except Megatron). But, for some reason, those repaints struck a major chord with the newly returning fans as well as the newcomers. Fans who previously dismissed the Beast Era toys were now looking at these figures with excitement. Toys like the Predacon trio (Gas Skunk, Slapper and Dark Scream) were actually selling well, and fans came to appreciate what Beast Era fans had known for some time...These Beast toys are awesome.

It wasn't just the Beast Era figures either. Fan favorite toys like G2 Laser Prime and the Generation 1 Combaticons saw new life as Scourge and Ruination (many, many versions of Ruination). Like G1 before it, these toys had the benefit of being featured thoroughly in the show, and weren't simply alternate paint schemes of the existing characters. Though that began to creep in with the repaints of Megatron as Galvatron, as well as the car brothers as "super" versions of themselves. But, initially, these types of repaints were fairly limited.

But those limitations didn't last long. Robots In Disguise became a much bigger success than Hasbro had ever anticipated. Retailers were asking for more toys, but, for the most part, the show characters were all done. So what could they do? Repaints! And when RID became nothing but new repaints, we as a fan base, were all in. Hasbro was getting creative in character choices. We were getting fantastic reintroductions to some very under-appreciated figures. Figures like RID Bludgeon, Cryotek, Jhiexus and Storm Jet all were welcomed, mostly, with open arms. Not only that, we started seeing repaints of other toys as existing RID characters. We got toys like G2 Hero Optimus Prime as a new Scourge. Spychangers were also being repainted like crazy. All the while, fans were eating it up as "Robots In Disguise" itself began to Transform beyond the initial show and into a whole new universe and fans were willing to accept this as the reinvention that had been hoping for. Hasbro was smart enough to tie these characters into the general story of RID, something many fans and collectors consider an important part of their purchasing habits. Because of the success of the line, a lot of that being owed to high sales of (cheaper to produce) repaints, we also got some figures that were outright cancelled before (Air Attack Optimus Primal and Megabolt Megatron).

Sadly, though, Hasbro soon found out its repaint success wasn't all about rehashing old figures. Hasbro was launching an entirely new toy line and show; Transformers Armada. Robots In Disguise was slowly phased out. However, Hasbro had hoped to continue its success by replacing RID with a line comprised of nothing but repaints. That line was Transformers Universe. Fans never really bought into the line due to a combination of bizarre character choices, odd and overly neon paint schemes and a lack of a cohesive "universe" to bring them all together. Universe eventually became a dumping ground for cheap repackaging, poor quality repaints and low cost store exclusives that quickly went to clearance. Without the RID world to keep all of these things interconnected, people simply stopped caring. These days, nearly every single toy is repainted and repainted and repainted. So much so that the one time "fan" justification, old toys being thought of in a new way, simply was lost. Repaints have simply become an obstruction in the eyes of fans. Shelf hogs keeping new toys from being put out by retailers. And, with the overwhelming success of the movies, as well as the accompanying toy line, repaints no longer have to be as thoughtful or carefully handled as they once were. They just need to be there.

But, for a brief time, Hasbro had struck repaint gold. Fans, if only for a brief time, had not only accepted repaints, but anticipated and desired them. These toys were contained under a single heading, all the toys were connected to a well liked central story and the repaints were done with some flare. It's one of the reasons we think back fondly on Robots In Disguise. And one of the reasons that repaints were awesome, if only for a moment.



# The Case For Sky-Byte

Written by Sol Fury



***Who's the baddest shark around?  
Who's the smartest shark in town?  
Sky-Byte, that's me!***

Yes friends, this is the article dedicated to singing the praises of the greatest comic relief villain to ever grace our screens in a Transformers series. Sky-Byte! First introduced to fans in the intro credits as a giant shark biting down on a red and white object, we would not have to wait long to be introduced to the smartest shark in town.

Sky-Byte is a character with a difference. He's not meant to be an ultra-evil super-villain like Megatron or Scourge, but in his own way, he represents the charm and innocence of Robots in Disguise. He's a light-hearted comic relief villain in most of his appearances, something that many Transformers series seem to miss out on in their quest to be more serious. His humorous, non-serious depiction makes him the very embodiment of the charm of Robots in Disguise. I would go as far as to say that while Scourge as a character took the idea of an evil clone Optimus Prime and deconstructed it to the point that he was his own character and no longer an evil clone, Sky-Byte is far more representative of Robots in Disguise as a series.

Sky-Byte has a fair number of endearing qualities beyond simply being an embodiment of what Robots in Disguise is. He's not merely a representative of this series we all enjoy, he's a good character with it. He's a Predacon who likes the arts, particularly his haiku, which he recites frequently when he leaves a battle. He never retreats unless it's with class if he can help it. He's always trying to find ways to one-up his Decepticon rival Scourge, or humiliate him. Anything to make him look better in the eyes of Megatron. This leads to some hilarious scenes, such as Sky-Byte cosplaying as Rail Racer (badly), or being made to act like a seal by the Autobots, complete with a ball on his nose. Also, he turns into a shark, which plows through concrete with just the dorsal fin showing or flies through the air. **HOW COOL IS THAT?**

Plus, he has his own theme song:

*Who's the baddest shark around?  
Who's the smartest shark in town?  
Sky-Byte, that's me!  
Who'll drive Scourge into the ground  
And never let old Megatron down—  
Sky-Byte, that's me!  
Who gets too hungry for seafood at eight?  
Who swims the ocean, and always looks great?  
Cha-cha, cha-cha cha,  
Who always bothers with robots he hates,  
Sky-Byte, yes Sky-Byte, that's—me!*



Overall, if you're looking for the best character to have come out of Robots in Disguise in terms of their impact on the franchise, then yes, Scourge got the whole Black Prime thing going. But as a representative of the true nature of Robots in Disguise - the light-hearted aspects, the fun side of the show that doesn't take itself too seriously - then you'll find Sky-Byte comes out on top.



# RID Case Assortments

Ever curious as to how a toyline is released? Or what the case assortments were for those older lines that you were either not aware of, or wasn't old enough to care? Thanks to [RIDFOREVER.INFO](http://RIDFOREVER.INFO) and **Jon Hartman**, we have a breakdown of the case assortment of all toys released under the label of **TRANSFORMERS: ROBOTS IN DISGUISE**...Enjoy!

## 2001

### **Basic Assortment 1 (#80555.0000) - Figures in Case: 12 - July 2001 - August 2001**

80572 4 \*Ironhide/Mirage (package 1)  
80573 4 \*Hot Shot/R.E.V. (package 1)  
80574 4 \*W.A.R.S./Crosswise (package 1)

### **Basic Assortment 2a (#80555.0002) - Figures in Case: 12 - September 2001 - October 2001**

80572 2 Ironhide/Mirage (package 2)  
80573 2 Hot Shot/R.E.V. (package 2)  
80574 2 W.A.R.S./Crosswise (package 2)  
80631 3 \*Prowl 2/Side Swipe  
80632 3 \*Side Burn/Daytonus

### **Basic Assortment 2b (#80555.????) - Figures in Case: 12 - September 2001 - October 2001**

80573 2 Hot Shot/R.E.V. (package 2)  
80574 2 W.A.R.S./Crosswise (package 2)  
80631 4 Prowl 2/Side Swipe  
80632 4 Side Burn/Daytonus

### **Basic Assortment 3 (#80555.????) - Figures in Case: 12 - October 2001 - December 2001**

80573 1 Hot Shot/R.E.V. (package 2 or 3)  
80574 1 W.A.R.S./Crosswise (package 2 or 3)  
80631 1 Prowl 2/Side Swipe  
80632 1 Side Burn/Daytonus  
80633 2 \*Rollbar (package 1 or 2)  
80634 2 \*Armorhide (package 1 or 2)  
80636 2 \*Movor (package 1 or 2)  
80637 2 \*Ro-tor (package 1 or 2)

### **Super Assortment (#80565.0000) - Figures in Case: 4 - July 2001 - December 2001**

80577 2 \*Optimus Prime (package 1 or 2)  
80578 2 \*Ultra Magnus

### **Deluxe Assortment 1 (#80575.0000) - Figures in Case: 8 - July 2001 - September 2001**

80579 3 \*Side Burn  
80592 3 \*Prowl  
80593 2 \*X-Brawn

### **Deluxe Assortment 2 (#80575.0007) - Figures in Case: 8 - September 2001**

80579 1 Side Burn  
80581 2 \*Skid-Z/Windsheer  
80582 2 \*Tow-Line/Skyfire  
80592 1 Prowl  
80593 1 X-Brawn  
80597 1 \*Bruticus

### **Deluxe Assortment 3 (#80575.000A) - Figures in Case: 8 - October 2001**

80579 1 Side Burn  
80581 1 Skid-Z/Windsheer  
80582 1 Tow-Line/Skyfire  
80583 1 \*Grimlock  
80584 1 \*Heavyload  
80592 1 Prowl  
80642 1 \*Wedge  
80643 1 \*Hightower

### **Deluxe Assortment 4 (#80575.000B) - Figures in Case: 8 - November 2001 - December 2001**

80579 1 Side Burn  
80583 1 Grimlock  
80584 1 Heavyload  
80592 1 Prowl  
80593 1 X-Brawn  
80641 1 \*Mega-Octane  
80642 1 Wedge  
80643 1 Hightower

### **Mega Assortment 1a (#80595.0000) - Figures in Case: 6 - July 2001 - August 2001**

80586 3 \*Sky-Byte  
80596 3 \*Dark Scream/Gas Skunk/Slapper

### **Mega Assortment 1b (#80595.0001) - Figures in Case: 6 - August 2001 - October 2001**

80586 4 Sky-Byte  
80596 2 Dark Scream/Gas Skunk/Slapper

### **Mega Assortment 2a (#80595.0002) - Figures in Case: 6 - October 2001 - December 2001**

80586 2 Sky-Byte  
80596 1 Dark Scream/Gas Skunk/Slapper  
80648 1 \*Railspike  
80649 1 \*Rapid Run  
80651 1 \*Midnight Express

### **Others**

80589 4 \*Megatron (Ultra) (package 1) - July 2001 - December 2001

## 2002

### **Basic Assortment 4 (#80555.0004) - Figures in Case: 12 - January 2002 - March 2002**

80633 1 Rollbar (package 2)  
80634 1 Armorhide (package 2)  
80636 1 Movor (package 2)  
80637 1 Ro-tor (package 2)  
80638 2 \*X-Brawn/Scourge  
80639 3 \*Optimus Prime  
80652 3 \*Ultra Magnus

### **Basic Assortment 5 (#80555.0007) - Figures in Case: 12 - April 2002 - June 2002**

80633 1 Rollbar (package 2)  
80634 1 Armorhide (package 2)  
80636 1 Movor (package 2)

## 2002 Continued

80637 1 Ro-tor (package 2)  
80638 2 X-Brawn/Scourge  
80639 2 Optimus Prime  
80652 2 Ultra Magnus  
80667 2 \*Obsidian

### **Super Assortment (#80565.0000) - Figures in Case: 4 - Continued**

80577 2 Optimus Prime (package 2)  
80578 2 Ultra Magnus (package 2)

### **Deluxe Assortment 5 (#80575.000D) - Figures in Case: 8 - January 2002 - March 2002**

80583 1 Grimlock  
80584 1 Heavyload  
80641 1 Mega-Octane  
80642 1 Wedge  
80643 1 Hightower  
80644 1 \*Prowl (recolor)  
80646 1 \*X-Brawn (recolor)  
80647 1 \*Side Burn (recolor)

### **Deluxe Assortment 6 (#80575.000E) - Figures in Case: 8 - April 2002 - June 2002**

80583 1 Grimlock  
80584 1 Heavyload  
80642 1 Wedge  
80643 1 Hightower  
80644 1 Prowl (recolor)  
80646 1 X-Brawn (recolor)  
80647 1 Side Burn (recolor)  
80665 1 \*Storm Jet

### **Mega Assortment 2b (#80595.0003) - Figures in Case: 6 - October 2001 - December 2001**

80586 2 Sky-Byte (package 2)  
80596 1 Dark Scream/Gas Skunk/Slapper (package 2)  
80648 1 Railspike (metallic windows)  
80649 1 Rapid Run (blue windows)  
80651 1 Midnight Express (metallic windows)

### **Mega Assortment 3 (#80595.0005) - Figures in Case: 6 - April 2002 - June 2002**

80659 6 \*Nightcruz/Mirage GT/Scavenger

### **Ultra Assortment (#80655.0000) - Figures in Case: 4 - December 2001 - June 2002**

80656 2 \*Galvatron  
80657 2 Megatron (package 2)

### **Spy Changers Assortment 1, K-B Exclusive (#26548.0000) - Figures in Case: 12 - August 2002 - September 2002**

26549 2 \*Crosswise, version 1  
26550 2 \*W.A.R.S., version 1  
26551 2 \*Mirage, version 1  
26552 2 \*Ironhide, version 1  
26553 2 \*Hot Shot, version 1  
26554 2 \*R.E.V., version 1

### **Others**

26555 3 \*Air Attack Optimus Primal (Toys R Us exclusive) - June 2002 - July 2002  
26556 4 \*Scourge (Toys R Us exclusive) - May 2002 - June 2002  
26559 6 \*Sideways vs. Axer (Wal-Mart exclusive) - April 2002  
26560 8 \*Megatron Megabolt (K-B exclusive) - May 2002 - June 2002  
29406 4 \*Cryotek (Target exclusive) - January 2002 - February 2002

## 2003

### **Deluxe, KB Exclusive (#25900.????) - Figures in Case: 8 - October 2003**

25901 4 \*Jhiaxus  
25902 4 \*Megabolt

### **Spy Changers Assortment 1, Target Exclusive (#26548.0900) - Figures in Case: 12 - February 2003 - May 2003**

26549 2 Crosswise, version 1  
26550 2 W.A.R.S., version 1  
26551 2 Mirage, version 1  
26552 2 Ironhide, version 1  
26553 2 Hot Shot, version 1  
26554 2 R.E.V., version 1

### **Spy Changers Assortment 2 (#26548.0902) - Figures in Case: 12 - June 2003**

26549 2 Crosswise, version 2  
26550 2 W.A.R.S., version 2  
26551 2 Mirage, version 2  
26552 2 Ironhide, version 2  
26553 2 Hot Shot, version 2  
26554 2 R.E.V., version 2

### **Destructicons, KB Exclusive (#26564.0900) - Figures in Case: 8 - May 2003**

26565 4 \*Bludgeon  
26566 4 \*Scourge

### **Spy Changers Tiny Tins Assortment (#47688.0900) - Figures in Case: 24 - July 2003 - Present**

47689 3 R.E.V.  
47690 3 Hot Shot  
47691 3 Crosswise  
47692 3 Mirage  
47693 3 Ironhide  
47694 3 W.A.R.S.  
47695 3 Side Swipe  
47696 3 Prowl 2

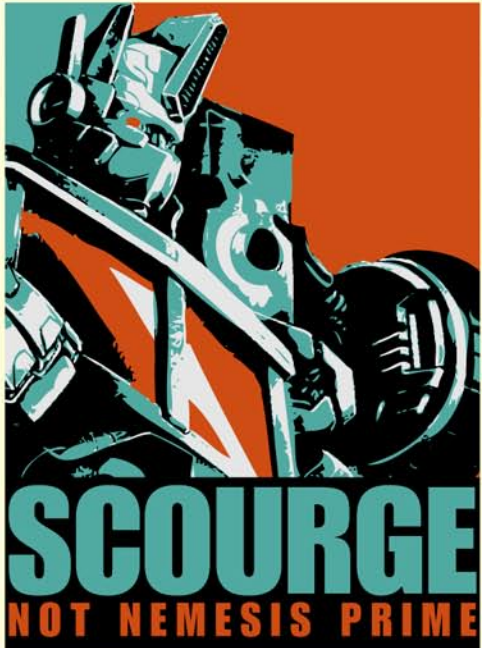
### **Others**

26557 4 \*Ruination (Wal-Mart exclusive) - January 2003  
26558 6 \*Landfill (Wal-Mart exclusive) - November 2003  
26562 4 \*Dreadwind and Smokejumper (Target exclusive) - April 2003 - May 2003



## Scourge, NOT Nemesis Prime

*Written by Kickback and Tony\_Bacala*



There are some in the Transformers collector community who try and lay fault at the horrendously successful "Erector in the Hall of Fame" campaign on [TFW2005.COM](http://TFW2005.COM). While we admit to enjoying the end result of the campaign that seemed to gain momentum from our message forum (you have to admit, the "Hall of Fame" video during BotCon 2011 was absolutely hilarious), we are unable to take credit for the campaign's creation or the direction that it took - to that end we nod our heads to our European members who first formed the campaign during Auto Assembly 2010.

TFW2005.COM however is launching an official campaign that site owner Tony\_Bacala and our senior staff are all behind - the SCOURGE, NOT NEMESIS PRIME campaign!

Our goal is very simplistic - after the **ROBOTS IN DISGUISE** series, every single "black" repaint of an **Optimus Prime** toy released in the United States has been named "**Nemesis Prime**" ... to that end, the colors have also changed. The black and teal have remained (for the most part), but the "off-white" or "yellowed-white" was also very prominent in some releases (**Armada Nemesis Prime**, **Universe Nemesis Prime**). What we want is simple - release the "Reveal the Shield" deluxe **G2 Optimus Prime** figure in **Scourge** colors ... and call him "**Scourge**".

The "ROBOTS IN DISGUISE" series is the forgotten child in Transformers history (probably for legal reasons for all we know). IDW Publishing had no interest in a one-shot comic, Hasbro has released a total of 1 homage for the line (the Cybertron "Scourge" toy was repainted and released as "Bruticus", colored after the ROBOTS IN DISGUISE of the same name) ... and it was a homage to a totally obscure, not-in-the-show character. The Transformers Club has done better, releasing a "Sky Byte" repaint of the Transformers Energon "Sharkticon" mold, and more recently having their free figure for members being a repaint of the Classics Rodimus figure with "Side Burn" (check out Sol Fury's review earlier this issue!).

A repainted RTS G2 Optimus Prime as "Scourge", named as such (that's the important part here), would be a proper homage and a fitting nod to the fan community who have stood by this forgotten part of the franchise. This month is the 10th Anniversary of Transformers: Robots in Disguise ... TFW2005.COM gave a shout-out to Robots in Disguise on our frontpage, and dedicated this month's TFWe to the forgotten series ... and we feel Hasbro can step up their game with a nice, proper homage to one of the most popular characters from that series.

What can you do to help get the message to Hasbro?

TFW2005.COM does not support or endorse the thought of overloading servers with E-mails or commentary. Instead we believe that the best way to show our support is through our message board here. Hasbro reads TFW2005.COM. Below are a number of images that you can put in your signature or use as your avatar to show your support for SCOURGE, NOT Nemesis Prime!



We have also started a poll in our "Transformers Toy Discussion" forum with a simple yes or no question - would you buy a proper homage to Scourge with a RTS G2 Optimus Prime repaint named Scourge? Please take a moment to vote and show your support.

**CLICK HERE TO VOTE!!!!!!!!!!**

The fan community proved with the 2011 Hall of Fame ballot that a message can be sent to Hasbro through the power of the fan community websites. We want to continue that tradition and get a proper homage that ROBOTS IN DISGUISE deserves ... the perfect updated toy repainted and named after one of the most popular characters from the series.

Scourge. (And NOT Nemesis Prime!)





# AUTO ASSEMBLY - Sol Fury Goes Home

Written by Sol Fury



The Toy Fu Table, where all the profits were donated to charity. They raised \$2000 for charity over the weekend

I'd been back in the UK for less than two weeks after the epic weekend that was TFcon 2011 before I was off again for the third of my three summer Transformers conventions. First, Botcon, then, TFcon, and now, Auto Assembly!

Undeterred by the reports of rioting and trouble in the area, I headed to a cleaner than usual looking Birmingham and over the course of Friday afternoon met with the rest of the UK fans. Sadly Chris McFeely was not able to attend this year due to personal reasons - on behalf of the staff of TFW and TFWe, I'd like to pass along my (belated) condolences to Chris.

Traditionally, Friday is the calm before the storm for Auto Assembly - this year though there was one special panel, Target 2006. Nick Roche chaired a Q&A on this legendary Marvel UK Transformers epic with Simon Furman and Geoff Senior. This was followed by a screening of Transformers the Movie, in celebration of its 25th birthday. Of course put that many Transformers fans in a room together and inevitably we all started doing the lines, with much hilarity when half the room was doing the famous Optimus / Megatron dialog. Special shout out to Gregg Berger, who was in the room and joining in with Grimlock's lines!

Saturday saw the kick-off of Auto Assembly 2011 proper, with the dealer room open for business. I scored a few early doors deals including a Shockwave, and Exgraver. Sadly I could not get a Thundershred - some lowlife thief made off with a case of six of them, along with various other items from the dealer room. That put a bit of a damper on proceedings. Picking things up though was the TFW meetup in the afternoon, after which a huge group of us descended on a Mexican restaurant. After dinner it was time to head back and catch the end of the cosplay contest (which was won by an excellent Blackarachnia costumer, a lot of time and effort clearly went into that costume). Following this was a series of videos from Transformers celebrities including Dan Gilvezan, Paul Eiding, Tania Gunadi, Scott McNeil and others, wishing everyone well (and with the tagline - one of these will attend Auto Assembly 2012!). To cap off the excellent series of well wishes, there were two videos from two confirmed guests for 2012 - Michael Bell and Townsend Coleman. SPOOOOOON!

Then came the event of the evening - the script reading! There was some epic hilarity in the Simon Furman penned script, which put Nick Roche's excellent impression of Beast Wars Megatron against David Kaye's actual as seen on TV Beast Wars Megatron - and then went one step beyond when Gregg Berger and David Kaye were both voicing their respective Grimlocks. Auto Assembly usually uploads their script readings to Youtube - when this gets uploaded be sure to check it out, it's awesome.

The script reading was followed up with a special guest panel - live via Skype, Mark Ryan did a special panel! Could this be the future of convention panels where guests are unable to attend in person but still want to be involved? A disco / karaoke night followed as well as shenanigans - the good kind - and then Saturday wound down to a close.

Sunday - and feeling worse for wear in spite of not drinking anything heavy - we kicked off the final day of the convention. A quick cruise of the dealer room for final deals yielded a few items, like a loose Henkei Dinobot, that I'd been considering if the price was right. The Auto Assembly dealer room generally has great prices so I ended up picking up a fair number of late day deals. Special mention goes to the charity auction on the final day with Gregg Berger handling the auctioneering of a rubber duckie, signed by David Kaye "and it's bigger than Nick Roche's".



This awesome Blackarachnia cosplay took first place in the costume contest



Each of the guest panels and other events had their own logos - this one of Grimlock for the auction was particularly cool

Two things I've not touched on which I ought to mention are panels and displays. This year, as with previous years, the Mapes brothers laid on a display of all kinds of awesome Transformers items. On show this year were various Japan-only Beast Wars items, from Beast Wars Second, Neo, Metals and other series that never saw a US release. Panel wise there was plenty to take in, with panels by David Wise talking about the classic episode War Dawn and why he created Orion Pax (mentioned here, from the man himself, is that Ariel and Dion were never intended to become anyone else. So there you have it, Dion is Dion). Other panels included voice action panels (with David Kaye alluding to some work on Transformers Prime) and comic panels, but also a panel by Jagex talking about their upcoming browser based Transformers MMO.

Sadly as is the way of conventions, it was all over too quickly, and we soon had to go our own ways until the next time. A special shout out to Gregg Berger, who made a point of stopping by the bar on Sunday night to go around and say goodbye to everyone. Top man!

I have to admit, I am suffering a little bit of withdrawal after three great conventions this summer - but on the plus side, I've got a whole hard drive full of photos, lots of memories - and the best friends all round the world a guy could ask for. Until next time guys and gals!



Just a small part of the Beast Wars display put on by the Mapes brothers



# Wrap Up

On behalf of the entire TFWe team and all our contributors, I thank you for taking the time to read our special Transformers: Robots in Disguise 10 year anniversary celebration issue of TFWe. The series holds a special place in the hearts of many of the veteran staff here at TFW2005.COM and TFWe, and we hope that our coverage generates a little more interest with our newer fans to a series that featured one of the most popular villains (both Scourge AND Sky-Byte) as well as the first Ultra Magnus that played the role of an antagonist more than a hero (this one COULD deal with it now). And while at times the show was hard to follow, I don't think anyone could be upset with the ending, especially for Sky-Byte.

I remember one big sticking point that still gets fans to sour-face ... and that was the attempt at releasing Fortress Maximus in the United States again. He was released (as Brave Maximus in Japan) and he could be imported ... but safety regulations put in place since his original release caused him to fail the fabled "drop-test", meaning if he fell from a realistic height, he could cause severe injury (or rather, could splinter in to sharp pieces that you could use to stab your Decepticon siblings).

Our next installment of **As the Fandom Turns** plays on that a bit. Enjoy.

## As The Fandom Turns...



Written by Silas Zee and Dan Sheehan, art by Silas Zee

### MISC.

This was a really fun issue to work on. But we're not done with our ROBOTS IN DISGUISE celebration! Our .PDF release of this issue will feature some exclusive content...including a Reveal the Shield G2 Optimus Prime review by our own Shin Densetsu, as well as a number of fan submitted ROBOTS IN DISGUISE fan art and customs, put together by our own Joe Moore! You're also going to get that beautiful piece of ROBOTS IN DISGUISE artwork by Don Figueroa and inked and colored by Joe Moore without all of our graphics all over it. And even more! So stay tuned for the .PDF release!

### Next Issue

It's that time of the year again where all the things that go bump in the night come out in their annual attempt to scare us ... and TFWe is getting in to Halloween with style! Check out my twitter (@rankal) for hints and teaser images of what we're coming up with for next month's issue! Also, as we progress more and more in to being strictly .PDF, you'll see more and more content ONLY in our .PDF issues, leading up to a full .PDF-only release! When will that come? In time, obviously, but rest assured, we are working on it!

See you in thirty!(ish)

### - Kickback

TFWe Editor-in-Chief

TFW2005.COM Administrator

Follow me on Twitter @rankal and always follow @tfw2005 for the latest in Transformers news!



# TRANSFORMERS

ROBOTS IN DISGUISE



# TFW

The Art of Robots In Disguise



**TRANSFORMERS**  
weewood productions 2002



**SUPER FIRE CONVOY**

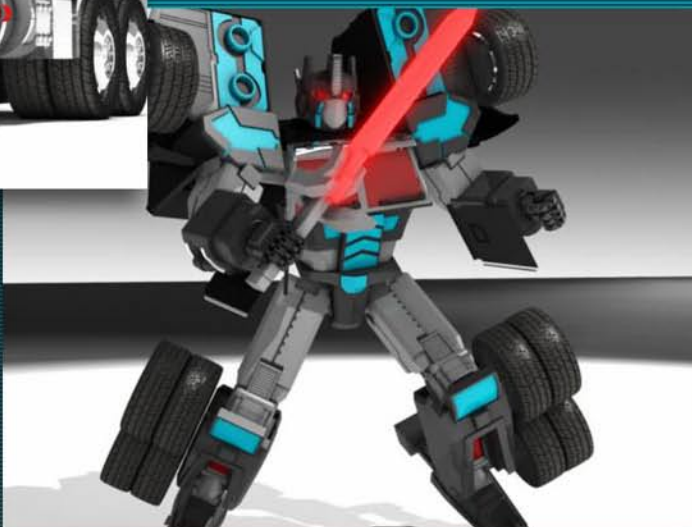
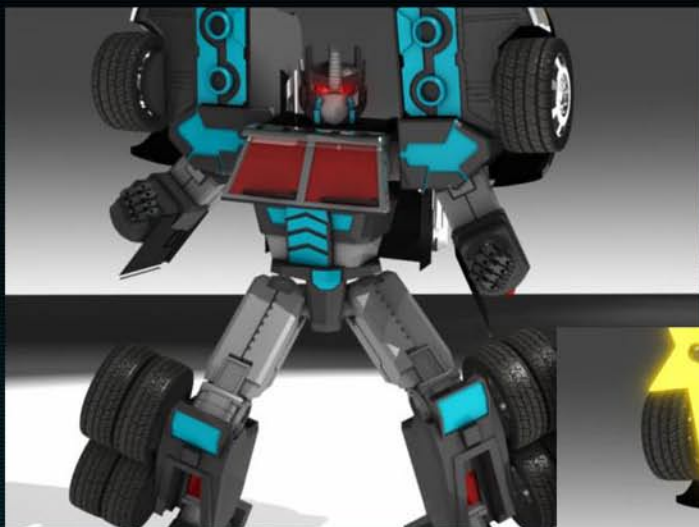
**BY WEEWOOD**





**SKY-BYTE**  
BY SPLIT LIP





**CLASSICS SCOURGE**  
BY GRIMMLOCK





**CLASSICS SCOURGE**  
BY PAYTON34

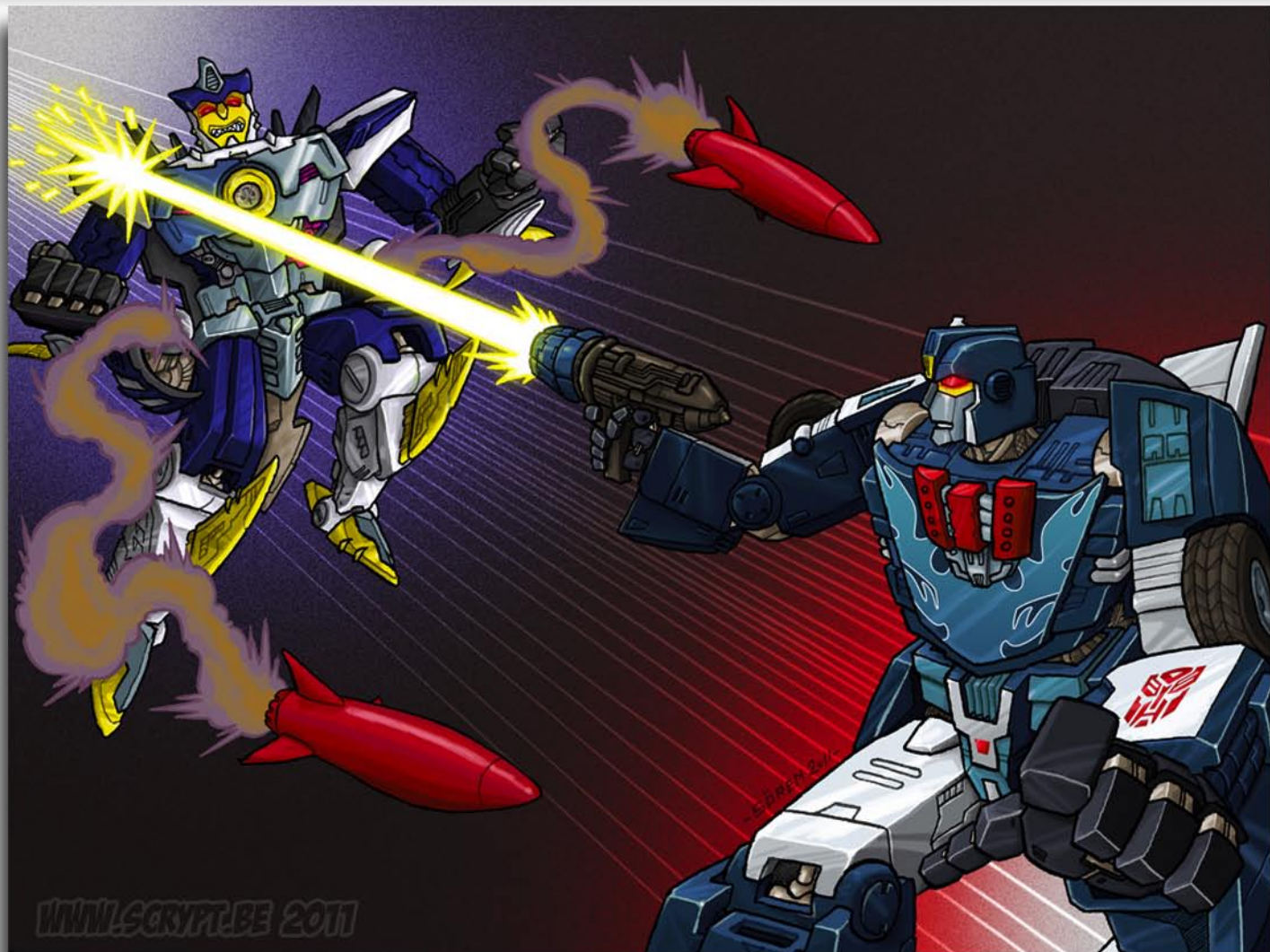




**WEDGE OR BONECRUSHER**

BY DESTRON23





# SKY-BYTE VS SIDE BURN

BY SHOCKBLASTWAVE





**OMEGA PRIME**

**BY DON FIGUEROA AND JOE MOORE**





Jicco  
**SCOURGE**  
DARK OF THE MOON



Jicco  
**SCOURGE**  
DARK OF THE MOON



Jicco  
**SCOURGE**  
DARK OF THE MOON

**MOVIE-STYLE SCOURGE**

BY DON JICCO

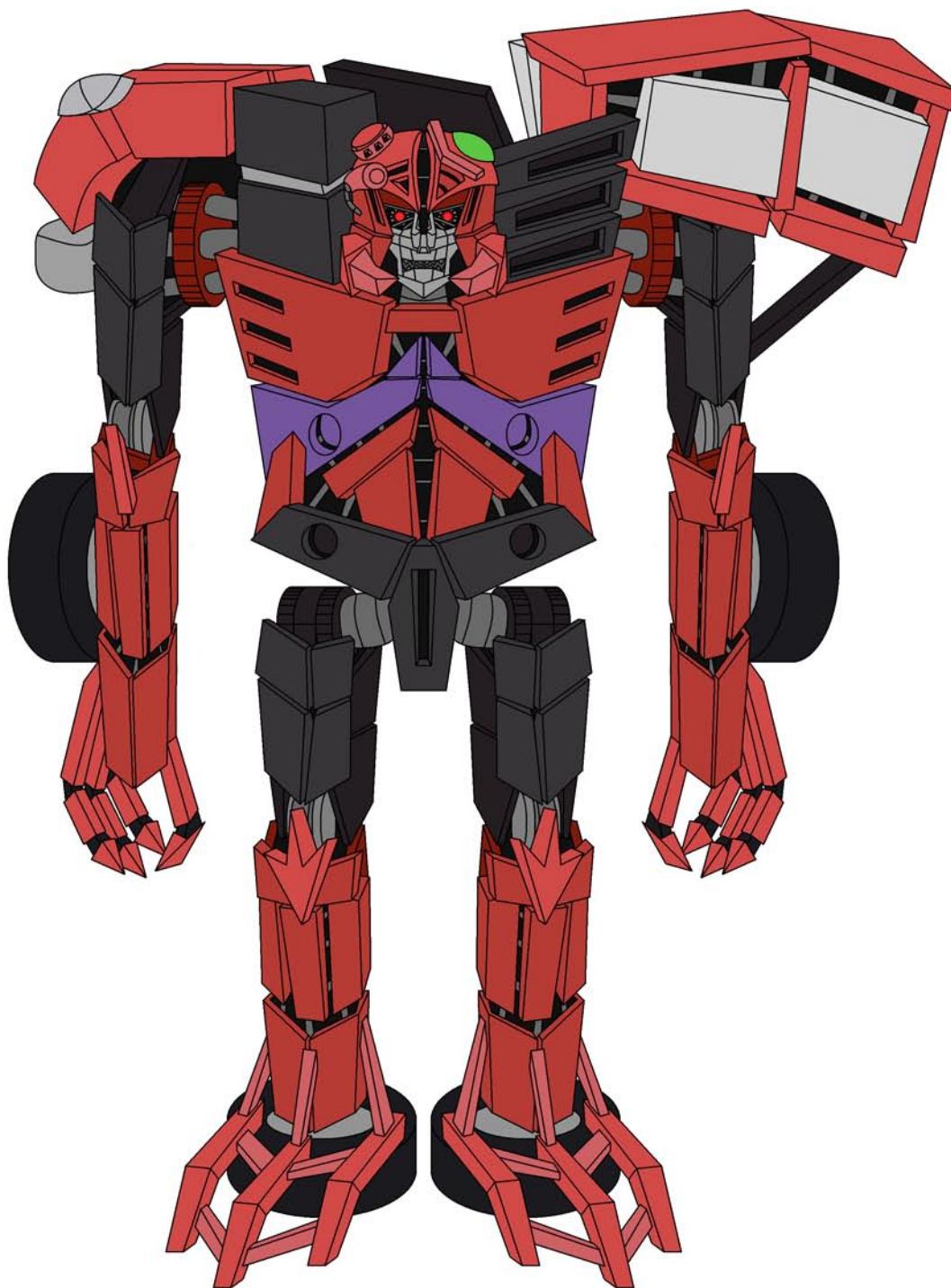




# ROBOTS IN DISGUISE BATTLE

BY DAISORAJIN





**MOVIE-STYLE SLAPPER**  
BY THACONQUEROR





**OPTIMUS PRIME**

**BY ZENITH**





**ARMORHIDE**  
BY RUMBLEG1





# CAR BROTHERS

BY SUPERQUAD7





**CLASSICS SCOURGE**

**BY JARROD**





**KELLY AND SIDE BURN**  
BY SHIBAMURA\_PRIME





**SUPER FIRE CONVOY**

**BY WEEWOO**