

**EXCLUSIVE! JON FAVREAU SITS DOWN WITH...**

# ADVANCED

#72

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# IRON

**FavreauFans.net's  
Take on the  
Man in the Chair**

**IRON MAN  
FAN FILM  
EXPOSED!**

## GECKO'S TALE

**Gabriel "Gecko"  
Hardman, War Machine Artist**

**Plus:  
The Stark Market Report,  
Hube's Shellheadisms,  
original artwork, and  
much much more!**

## COMIC-CON COVERAGE

**incl. roundtable interviews with  
Robert Downey Jr.,  
Gwyneth Paltrow,  
& Terrance Howard**

GABRIEL  
HARDMAN  
2007  
(GECKO)

THE WORLD'S MOST INVINCIBLE FANZINE

# ADVANCED IRON

>Welcome to Advanced Iron #72: Be warned that this issue has been overclocked to run programs from Hollywood, Marvel Comics, and amazing Fans dedicated to the Modern Age's most Modern Hero: IRON MAN.

>/run /Advanced Iron v.72...

[/loading data...]

[/operating system...]

[/visual interface...]

o Cover Illustration by  
Gabriel "Gecko" Hardman,  
2007



[/shell...] ..... by Gabriel "Gecko" Hardman  
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> READY TO INITIALIZE... █

Hello and welcome back to **Advanced Iron**! This issue took us a little longer than anticipated to put together but boy, was it worth the wait! We've worked hard to give our faithful **A.I.** readers, a zine both worth reading and your time! In addition to our regular columns and fun content, **A.I.** went interview crazy this issue, talking to nearly every important **Iron Man** professional under the sun!

During our trip to San Diego, we were lucky enough to not only meet Iron Director Extraordinaire **Jon Favreau**, but to be granted exclusive one on one time with him as well! We discussed things such as special effects, **Iron Man's** repulsors, and **Tony Stark's** character! This was truly one of the most privileged interviews I have ever done and big thanks to **Favs** for supporting the fanbase more earnestly than any other Hollywood director that comes to mind... This exclusive, never-before-seen interview begins on page 26!

We continued our San Diego tour by participating (very actively, I might add) in the invite-only Roundtable interviews with **Iron Man** cast, **Robert Downey Jr.**, **Terrence Howard** & **Gwyneth Paltrow**! Although many of the other journalists who participated have placed the Roundtables online, **A.I.'s** involvement was definitely worthy of the zine, so we've incorporated them here as well.

Our resident Ferro Files writer, Chris Frye managed to stick his foot into another door this issue, landing time with **Gabriel "Gecko" Hardman**, artist of Marvel's **War Machine** series & professional storyboarder for Hollywood! The look and layout of Ferro Files will leave you staring at it for hours as we turned Chris and **A.I.** layout genius Filipe Muffoletto loose to breathe new life into Ferro Files! **Gecko** also contributed this issue's amazing cover, a beautiful and iconic **War Machine** image!

Of course, our regular columns are back with a great Shellheadism's discussing **Iron Man** related politics. I continue to discuss several imported **Iron Man** items, as well as the Bring On The Bad Guys first appearances from Marvel's Silver Age (they're up for grabs right now, folks, so get them while you can!) in the Stark Market Report.

Brent O'Hara contributes nicely to **A.I.** with his first column about **Iron Man's** role in console gaming. This issue he discusses an amazing group of people who have taken **Marvel Ultimate Alliance** and hacked the game so that you can have nearly any Marvel Character ever created as a playable, on screen entity! This is truly an awesome, informative article for any gamer or fan of **Iron Man**!

Heath "Metal Head" McKnight gives us some great intel on **David Guivant's** upcoming **Iron Man** fanfilm. David has been sending us snippets of his movie and let me tell you now, that his special effects and character likenesses put some Hollywood films to shame. This thing is going to be amazing when it's released! And speaking of movies, Jordan Weigler provides some great commentary on the **Invincible Iron Man Animated DVD**, managing to balance the good with the bad in a refreshingly opinionated article. Lastly in our movie news, owner of the **Favreaufans.net** website, Inez Waldron gives us some keen insight as to why **Jon Favreau**

is the right man for the director's job. When in doubt go to the pros, and Inez is a master on all things Favreau.

Michael Klein puts his research skills to the grindstone as he describes **Iron Man's** abilities using information aggregated from the comics, sourcebooks, and the Marvel RPG!

Lastly, our art section explodes with Roger Ott's Ironing Board yielding awesome **Iron Man** designs featuring **Bob Layton**-like ingenuity, an awesome Legends character study by Nelson Navarro, and another breathtaking piece by Filipe Muffoletto.



Whew! I'm out of breath after all that! But this is a very special issue and I sincerely hope that you all enjoy it. As always, thanks for reading, and long live the collecting madness!

John B. Comerford  
Editor, **Advanced Iron**

*Advanced Iron (72) / October, 2007*

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# the STARK MARKET report

By John B. Comerford

The market for all things Iron has been an interesting place the last several months as activity on both the new and secondary market has been dynamic! Several high end collectible items have shipped, filling collections everywhere with Stark-tech pieces remade in plastic, porcelain, or paper. eBay in particular has been of great interest because many high-end Iron Man items are changing hands at high prices. Furthermore, years of collecting and analyzing the market for Iron Man merchandise has taught me that a lot of these pieces are going to reach a zenith as we get closer to the movie. While the success of the May '08 film will likely determine the push for more Iron Man product, let's not forget that Stark has been prominent throughout the entire Marvel Universe as of late, and in that regard Iron Man is popping up everywhere...

## IRON MERCHANDISE HITTING THE MARKET

Word on the Marvel Legends front recently has been quiet and well... boring to say the least (does anyone care about this line now that Hasbro has butchered it by removing the eco-friendly packaging and diminished hype and fanfare)? However, we can still turn to the unique style of collectibles from other regions for an interesting Iron collection, if not here at home. Recently, a foreign company has released a "Marvel World" line of toys that are a loose combination of Kubricks and a Playschool sort of mold. These two-packs have a set featuring Iron Man and Loki that are actually very cute, and fit in an armory of 4" to 6" figures nicely. The uniqueness of these toys is undeniable, and each figure has paint apps on both sides of their heads, so the style of the faces depends on the orientations of the heads while on display. I managed to dig mine up on the 'bay but I'm sure there are any number of online retailers that can order these cool figs for you.

Also, featured recently at the San Diego comic con (which I had the pleasure of attending during my recent reporting stint in California) was the Iron Man "Sub Cast" polyresin figure limited to 2,000 pieces. This unique, stylized version of the modern armor definitely has a Japanese Chibi combined with an American Bobblehead feel to its sculpt and design, but definitely would make a very cool and somewhat large addition to your Iron Man display.





**HIGH END COLLECTIBLES MOVING!!**

Some of the high end collectibles that we reported on during last issues SMR have shipped. The Hard Hero statues (both Classic and Variant) have arrived and look great. The Stealth Variant definitely outclasses the original Classic version and features a unique mold and much better paint apps (the classic is sort of dull in person). One of the best statues that you can currently get your hands on was also featured last issue. The Marvel Milestones Classic Exclusive (pictured at left) has sold out of its very limited run of 400 pieces. While this statue is desirable, it doesn't hold a candle to the Sideshow Stealth Armor variant that has been seeing regular activity online for \$600+!! Holy SMOKES!! The funny thing is that the Sideshow Stealth Variant is very disappointing to most hard core collectors because as you, the die hard A.I. readers know, the Stealth Armor was a unique model and has never resembled the Modern Armor. Simply put, Sideshow took their original (and still awesome) statue, slapped some blue paint on it, didn't re-sculpt, and called it a Stealth Armor statue. But hey... who's going to argue when the piece is

commanding such high prices on eBay for a copy of it's limited run? Of course, as you may or may not know, the production of the Sideshow Stealth variant may have been catalyzed by the recent eBay charity auction for it's unique sister piece (pictured at right). In early August, Sideshow placed a semi-unique (unique as in only two exist, and one is in the hands of Robert Downey Jr.) version of their original statue for sale on eBay. This unit features light up areas on the armor and had a final sales price of \$18,100!!! WHOA!



This Just In! Although we had previously commented on the current Sideshow Stealth statue moving at high prices, it should be noted that the original Sideshow Comiquette has been seeing online asking prices of over \$900 and actually getting that price for it in sale (for example, see eBay item 140164111094). Note that of course this is the exclusive version with the optional Tony Stark/Iron Man head (limited to 500) as opposed to the less limited standard edition featuring only an Iron Man helmet for a noggin'.

**Windlass Clunker Armor Helmet**

As far as newer items go, the [Windlass Studios](#) Clunker Armor helmets should be seeing the light of day soon. These are high end pieces that are, only somewhat limited for the cost (the Silver is copied at 1463 pices). Other, similarly priced statues have more proportionate cost-to-copy runs (e.g., 300-800 pieces for nearly \$400).

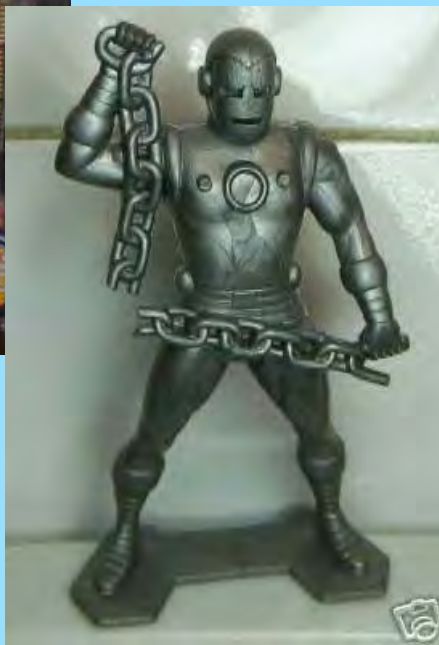
I have been assured that the production on the Windlass helmets is of the utmost quality, but I haven't seen a helmet firsthand. Again, I do believe that both the original silver and variant gold helmets are very expensive, especially for their runs. They are priced like a piece that should only have a 200 – 300 copy run, but the Silver helmet (msrp \$349.99) has a whopping 1,463 piece run and the Gold (msrp \$400.00 –ouch-) variant features a slimmer, 500 piece run. While these helmets are true to the "Turret Head" original armor (i.e., no chin), they are a little plain in appearance. It seems though that Windlass was going for that plain look from the Tales Of Suspense books rather than the upcoming movie. Apparently, the interior construction is nice with a solid leather strap to hold the helmet to your head (should you decide to wear it to the Iron Man movie premier) and the final pieces supposedly have great Quality Control off the line. Either way, it's a noble effort, but without a test copy to look at, I'd wait to pick mine up from an online discounter. I have received news though that Windlass has the rights to an Iron Man helmet from the movie, and I have every faith in my contacts at that studio that they will really improve the design to price ratio on their future Iron Man helmets. So then the question is would I ever pick up a Windlass helmet? Yes, absolutely. Would I pay the current asking price considering the sculpt and the copy run? No, because they just feel disproportionate to the cost.... Again though, my review would be more in depth if I got my hands on one. In order to illustrate what happens to some of these collectibles years down the road, I thought I'd illustrate the fate of a similar item when these types of collectibles aren't 110% in the minds of collectors.



A while back, Factory X released the first Iron Man full sized helmet featuring the Classic Armor (pictured at top right). This original piece was well received at the time, but upon receipt, collector's found themselves disappointed with the blandness of the helmet's form. You'd figure that with the new Windlass Helmets hitting the market that the older Factory X helmet would see better activity. On the contrary, the awful Factory X original from years back has taken a huge nosedive in price online and can be had at times for 35 bucks! The original asking price for this piece varied between 200 to 250 dollars, but its sub par and plain quality hasn't stood the test of time on the secondary market. In turn, this may lead to hesitation for any Iron Man pieces of this nature that aren't truly above board in quality, sculpt and appearance.



Ironically, neither the Windlass Studio nor the Factory X helmets holds a candle to the Alex Ross custom that appears on eBay from time to time as well (pictured at right). Good luck finding one of these bad boys... This scarce piece will likely sell for between 400 to 600 dollars on a regular basis and is worth every penny if you can get your grubby mitts on one (as of this writing there is one, count 'em one on eBay)!



**RANDOM MARKET MOVERS!!!**

The Ultimate Iron Man Marvel Select Figure and the original Marvel Legends Stealth Armor toy are still sure bets after years of being available. These two toys always sell and they always sell high. Even the brick 'n mortar comic stores that I've seen with these toys have high asking prices, and they seem to sell. If you need one of either of these in your collection, be prepared to pay for it. If you see one at a relatively decent price, then pick it up, even if only for investment purposes. I've seen the Ultimate Iron Man Marvel Select sell regularly for between \$40 and 75 bones, people.... A recent auction had this piece finishing at \$45.89 on 6/15/07 asking a whopping \$15 to ship (huh?) The ML Stealth Armor variant still commands 80 to sometimes over 100 dollars on the bay and about that at the LCS as well. There's no denying at this point that these are two long term good investment Iron Man pieces...

Buyer beware though, because some online retailers WILL try to smoke you on the cost.... Places like Toyglobe.com are asking \$120.95 for the Marvel Select Iron Man. They have them in stock. Go figure.

Finally, the Marx Iron Man toy that I first spotlighted in a series of articles beginning way back between Advanced Iron issues #65 and 70 has been selling as predicted. Of course the very vintage blowmold toy is still sought after in any color, but it's the Marvel Marching Society Grey version that still sells at the highest price. Recently one sold at auction for \$50.99!! That's a lot of money for the same kind of toy that we used to get out of those blowmold machines at the museum for fifty cents!

**COMICS and TOS #39**



It also seems that the Pedigree effect on comics is still in full swing. That is to say, that if a book goes on sale and it's from a well known, or established collection, people seem to be willing to pay a little more for the book. This may be because of the established faith in the seller that the item is quality, using the logic that the high end collector (or seller) wouldn't have bought it in the first place. That and the fact that CGC is involved in most high grade books nowadays certainly helps. Zoom Suit creator, John Taddeo recently sold his TOS 39 CGCd 5.5 on the 'bay for a voracious \$1701.00!! And that was for a solid 5.5 copy.... Other TOS 39 books in the 8.5 area sell for significantly more. While in San Diego I saw a CGCd 9.2 copy of TOS (the highest grade of that book I have ever seen) and the asking price was \$17,000!!!! While of course, this is the holy grail book for Iron Man collectors, a copy like that is for lottery winners or Bill Gates... either that or the obsessed. ;) One way or the other, TOS 39 is a sure bet book and will likely continue to be after the movie. Pick this book up when you find it affordably but also in a grade that you can live with. For example, don't drop 300 bucks on a G- copy if every time you look at it you can't stand the tatters on the edge and the Marvel Chipping on the spine. Buy what you are happy with and what you can afford and trade up from there.



I'm a CGC fan, but there are books that I'm happy to have ungraded and relying on my own enthusiast's eye for scrutiny. Take the Silver age Journey Into Mystery #85 for example. This is a fantastic investment book because it's a scarce Silver Age title and features the first app of Avengers villain Loki. Eventually, Marvel will finish their last several year runs of hero on hero slugfests and return to super villains, and this guy will be where it's at. While this book commands high CGC prices, there is still a population of JIM #85 out there that is ungraded and affordable in great shape. Its books like those that the CGCers are overlooking and are going to be market movers eventually as well. That and other first appearances of villains (i.e., Tales to Astonish #90) will have major legs on pricing when Marvel brings the bad guys back... now is the time on these books, don't say I didn't warn you! ;)



**AT THE LCS**

Last issue, the somewhat disappointing "Hypervelocity" was wrapping up, but this issue we've got the great Joe Casey back in full force with the Iron Man: Enter the Mandarin mini! This book features unique, stylized art (take it or leave it) and a great Joe Casey story, re-imagining (faithfully) the first confrontations between Iron Man and the Mandarin. As of this writing, the book is on issue two and is a recommended buy for both Iron fans and Avengers fans in general.

The regular Iron Man series is also heating up; with the Extremis Wars coming together nicely as the Mandarin also appears in that book as a master manipulator targeting Extremis as a method of power and control. Leave it to tag team writers, the Knaufs to give Iron Man a breath of fresh air that he hasn't had in years!!!

Thank you Iron Fans, for your support of Advanced Iron, and for reading! Long live the collecting madness!!

- Ironman John  
10/07/2007



# IRON MAN IN ACTION ...At The Console

By Brent O'Hara

**Marvel Ultimate Alliance** from Activision is great fun for fans and has developed a loyal player base. Players wanting to get even more out of the game find a haven of goodness at [MarvelMods.com](http://MarvelMods.com), a download centre for custom-gaming resources. This works out pretty well for fans of Iron Man. If you're new to the game, there are a few extras you may want to know about.

If you've ever wanted to take on the Skrulls in **Marvel Ultimate Alliance** as the *Illuminati*, well now you can, thanks to the creative community of fans at [Marvel Mods.com](http://MarvelMods.com)

Iron Man's 'classic' armor: 1 of 4 playable suits in the game. Now, if only there were more to choose from...

If you've played **Marvel Ultimate Alliance**, then you already know that it boasts a huge cast of Marvel characters to make a great gaming experience for comics fans. But it still can seem limited, if you have certain team-ups in mind.

To assemble the *Illuminati*, for example (one of the best places at Marvel to read Iron Man right now), is not possible since Namor or Black Bolt, although they make appearances in the game, are not playable characters. Well, here's where the crew at [MarvelMods](http://MarvelMods.com) gets to swoop in and play hero themselves, making many fans very happy.

## MARVEL MODS

YOUR #1 RESOURCE FOR MARVEL GAMING

MARVEL  
**ULTIMATE  
ALLIANCE**





IRON MAN SUITS  
IN THE GAME

## THE GAME

Besides the general fun of the MUA gaming experience, it's no secret that the real appeal of this game is unlocking all of the extras that it has to offer. For example, collecting hidden action figures to unlock extra characters, or completing the 20-some unique character missions to unlock the Silver Surfer are just a few of the secrets within the game. The whole game is about expansion; your team, your capabilities, your power, your playable roster, your costumes... and it's this quality that makes the re-playability of the game so high. You get to run through the game again later by changing up your team, with your new characters and powers, and pay better tribute to the next great comic moment in the game.

However, in spite of all these extras, the game STILL just scratches the surface of the Marvel Universe and you often end up wishing they had *more*. The game is often just one feature away from providing some fan-favourite team-up or classic moment. For example, the game is one character shy of making classic/current team-ups like the Defenders, the Invaders, the Illuminati or Omega Flight. If you're playing on the PC, you don't even have a full four X-Men to choose from, which struck me as a bit odd really; the PC version had only Storm, Ice Man and Wolverine in the full roster (note the past-tense, more on this in a moment). Another feature that leaves you wanting more, is the alternate character /costumes that you earn throughout the game. Don't get me wrong, it's great to earn that War Machine armor, but how do you limit a character like Iron Man to just four suits? Heck, with his history, you could make several playable characters worth of alternate costumes. But that's not the case here; additionally, you have one classic red and gold, one modern suit and the one from the Ultimate universe. This, although being great fun, makes for a very broad-strokes Iron Man in the game. And this is just Iron Man's case.

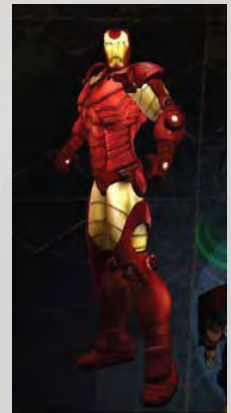
Once you get into it, the game that Activision has created inevitably acts as more of a launch pad for what you WISH you could do in the game. This is both a credit to them, for capturing the players imaginations so well, and a shame, since the licenses for some characters have since passed to other companies, leaving little hope for the follow-ups or expansions you end up wanting.

Now, it should be noted that some players of the game actually DO get more. If you have a Next-Gen gaming system then you have the additional, exclusive characters of Colossus and Moon Knight. ("Agh!" says the PC player, "I could have a full four X-Men if they were available in my game!"). Similarly, PSP players get Black Widow, Hawkeye, Ronin and Captain Marvell... ("Sheesh," adds PC player, "wouldn't those help round-out my Avengers roster?") Just knowing this serves to taunt the players of the *other* systems, as these extras are dangled in front of them. Furthermore, players more recently had their hopes teased when Activision announced a few new characters were becoming available, (partly in light of the character rights to the Hulk being freed up for use) only to then find out that, yet again it would be exclusive to only one system (X-Box 360) and unavailable for them.

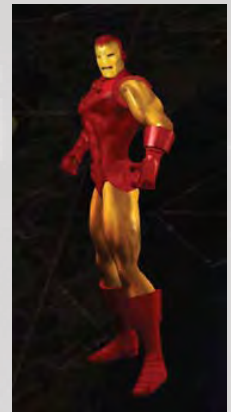
Now imagine a community of fans with the know-how to do something about all of this.

## THE MARVEL MODDERS

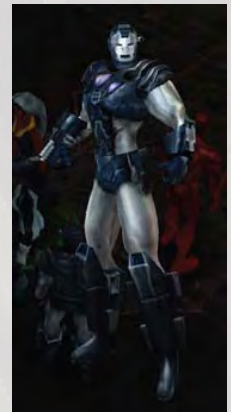
There's only one reason I ever found out that these guys existed, at [www.marvelmods.com](http://www.marvelmods.com). And that is because, as a huge fan of Iron Man, (without giving away game details) I came across a spot in the game where there is an Iron Man armor on display; an armor that was NOT one of the suits I had as a playable option. In a display case you can clearly see the Heroes Return suit and I immediately thought that there had to be a way to play the game with that armor. The search was on. I hit the gaming message boards and found out that the suit was the same as one used in Activision's X-Men Legends game series. However, users commented that the model in MUA was unusable, as it was coded into the environment as a piece of game 'furniture'. An apparent, and disappointing dead-end.



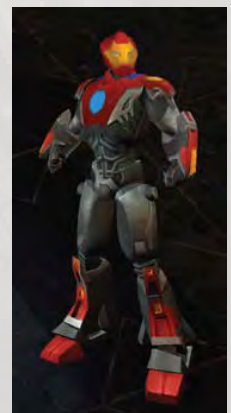
MODERN



CLASSIC



WAR MACHINE



ULTIMATE

**DOWNLOADABLE  
EXTRA SUITS (PC)**



**HEROES RETURN**  
from X-Men Legends II



**ORIGINAL GOLD**  
by thetommyboy2002



**STEALTH ARMOR**  
reskin by brohara



**CHROME SUIT**  
reskin by brohara

What I DID find was a link to this site where members of the game modding (for *modification* in case you're wondering) community were actively trying to bring *more* to the Marvel Ultimate Alliance game. For starters, they had successfully figured out how to add the two Next-Gen characters, Colossus and Moon Knight, to the PC version of the game. I followed the link, downloaded the pack of files, put them in the right spot, restarted my game and boom... I had Colossus and Moon Knight standing there amongst my other character options. Pretty darned impressive. I then had a glimmer of renewed hope that these guys could get that extra Iron Man suit working. It turns out that they had just figured out how to convert the XMen Legends character models to be playable as alternate suits (or *skins*) in MUA. When I inquired about the Heroes Return suit, their response was basically 'Iron Man suit? Hey, you're right, we forgot about that one, let me go get it for you... (insert appropriate modding sounds) ...ok, here you go'. I was blown away. I had been reading at the site for a bit, so I knew how to swap one suit for another, and so moments later, there it was. I'm playing with that fifth armor. I was a very happy Iron Man fan (thank you Noelemahc!).

These guys are treated with well-deserved reverence by the members of their community. When reading through the threads at their site, you can really appreciate what they've accomplished and what they've had to do to get there... 'considerable limitations' is an understatement. This is still very much a project in the works and they're still figuring stuff out. But from what they understand so far, they've opened up some pretty incredible doors for the PC MUA players (I say PC, since there's been more development for PC; developers have easy access to the game's files and such - although now, there's stuff emerging at the site for other platforms).

This place is a Marvel Mecca of extras. If you want to swap out sword-wielding baddies for ninjas, for a more enjoyable Daredevil/Elektra/Logan scuffle, you can do that. If you want to set it up so that War Machine battles ALONG SIDE Iron Man, you can do that. If you want all of the official Xbox 360 extra characters... well, not yet. But you CAN download a great Hulk to play. AND Magneto. AND Venom. Essentially, this place is a Marvel gamer's dream come true. And there are some ambitious implications from everything that the core team is learning; possibilities from importing your own models to skirmish modes to entirely new adventures. Everyone there is excited about the prospects of expanding the Marvel gaming fun.

**GETTING INVOLVED**

The site has many threads with instructions on how to go about adding these extras, as well as building these enhancements yourself; although be forewarned that the building process can be quite technical if you are unfamiliar with multimedia development. It happens that this is an area I'm familiar with, so I was able to finally dive in and contribute a few suits myself (see the Stealth and Chrome suits to the left). Due to the fact that people cannot yet edit the model shapes, modders are mostly limited to re-painting over existing models. However, if you can find a decent model, you can do a pretty convincing job; notice that the Stealth is actually a repaint of the classic, but it still looks great in the game and is fun to see in action.

- For the PC, some of the bigger accomplishments include:**
- Adding the Next Gen system **Colossus** and **Moon Knight** to the game
  - Adding the PSP playable **Black Widow, Hawkeye, Ronin and Captain Marvel** (with some minor limitations) These first two additions increase the playable roster from 23 to 27!
  - An edit that grants **6 playable costumes**, instead of just 4.
  - Making available ALL of the playable and non-playable characters in X-Men Legends I and II (I think these number in the hundreds) to be swapped in as skins (to change a character's appearance, like I did with the Heroes Return armor).
  - **45 Marvel Characters** (at my last count) - community-made, fully-modded with their own unique powersets. With more showing up weekly. This is not including some group downloads; When I saw that thetommyboy2002 had created an entire Avengers lineup, including a growing Giant Man, The Hulk, and an original suit, Gold Iron Man armour (!!!), I was blown away ...again.
  - Turning some non-playable characters in MUA itself, into fully playable characters, like **Namor** and the **Vision**. OR separating alternates into fully playable solo characters, like **Beta Ray Thor**.
  - An ever-growing number of community created skins to enhance their favourite characters
  - and much, much more...

## THE ULTRON AFFAIR

As a huge Marvel fan that thoroughly enjoyed this game, I had but one serious complaint. For whatever reason (head in hands), the development crew over at Activision decided to use a model of Ultron based on the Marvel Legends figure; not the released version, but rather the 'first concept' version of the figure ...one that happened to look nothing like any Ultron that ever appeared in the comics. If you're unfamiliar with this story, for ToyBiz / Marvel Legends, this move left quite a few fans scratching their heads, once the Ultron promo images were released (enough so that there are multiple articles online detailing the whole affair). This obviously rang enough bells at ToyBiz that they pulled a last minute sculpt change to try to bring the figure closer to an Ultron that fans could recognize. This was marginally successful; the bug-like robot body now had a somewhat Ultron-like head. Disaster averted. Somewhat.

Now even MORE of a head-scratcher, was how that first, not-really-Ultron sculpt found its way into the Marvel Ultimate Alliance game. The MUA fans speculate it was for variety, as Ultron may look too much like all of the other robots in the game. And some players actually like the 'rabbit' Ultron, as they call it. But for an Ultron fan, this was a huge error. I grew up on classic Perez Avengers, so I couldn't even bring myself to play the 'Vs. Ultron' mission against 'rabbit' Ultron. So it came down to it, it was the last mission left to unlock Silver Surfer; to which by this point I was thoroughly committed to in the game. The only choices were to get someone to make me an Ultron or learn how to mod myself. I did the latter ...and really enjoyed throwing the Avengers at a more classic looking Ultron, so it was worth it. Now my head is teeming with ideas to expand the Iron Man universe within the game. With any luck, time will permit me to do so. In the meantime, Ultron fans now have a choice which Ultron they'd like to face in the game. And therein lies the beauty of Marvel Mods.

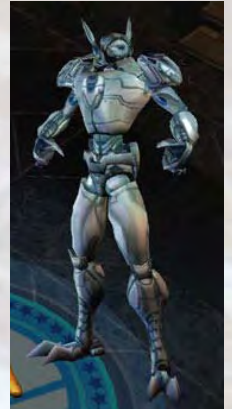
## IRON MAN IN THE GAME

If you haven't picked up the game, perhaps wondering if it's worth your while as an Iron Man fan, Marvel Ultimate Alliance does pretty well. (SPOILER WARNING: If part of your gaming fun is to discover ALL of the little details on your own, then skip this section and jump to the next page. These aren't big reveals by any stretch, but I know that I like a clean slate going in, so bear that in mind; some game details ahead).

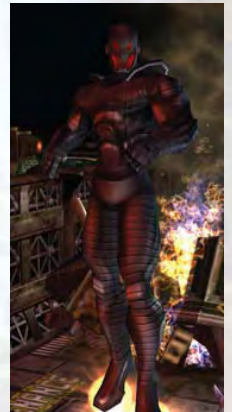
Stark Tower is featured as your team's first base, where you can chat with 'business suit' Tony Stark in the game (providing that you are not playing as Iron Man at the time), Jarvis too. Playing as Shell-head, you can interact a bit more with the classic Iron Man bad guys, like Crimson Dynamo and Mandarin. This happens in the form of some banter between the two, before a fight begins. There are also fun Stark-isms, like Tony flirting with the Black Widow or hearing over the intercom that '...a Mr. Harold Hogan is on line two for you Mr. Stark'. There are some other small, but notable Iron Man features as well, but they're worth letting players discover on their own, so I'll leave it at that. There are a couple of small goof-ups too, that Iron Man fans will surely notice. For example, recognizable powers, such as Repulsor Rays and Pulse Bolts are misnamed (to Energy Discs and Uni-Beam?? respectively). Somewhat frustrating, but hey, if you learn to Mod, you can likely just fix this too. Many such details are governed by those data files that the modders edit regularly.

As far as the four in-game suits are concerned, the 'Modern' armor is the initial suit and the one featured in any of the game's story movies. This suit is from the Grell/ early Granov time-frame. Next, you earn the 'Classic' red and gold, which is a pre-Layton version of the classic armor; paying homage to the older vibe of the Colan/Tuska eras. The 'War Machine' model is next, which doesn't look exactly like any of the comic suits, but is certainly close enough to get the idea across. (Just so you know, there are a couple of reskins of the War Machine available already at the site, which are worth checking out. I've considered just doing a faceplate edit on the in-game version, to bring it closer to it's first appearance, so that might be something to watch for.) The 'Ultimate' suit is unlocked by defeating the HUGE Ultimo in Iron Man's individual comic mission (all character 'fourth' suits are unlocked by finding and completing individual hero missions, whereas the rest are gained from experience). This fourth suit is straight out of the 'Ultimates' comics, and is of course a game requirement, considering the game's Ultimate slant (the game name says it all). This however didn't stop me from wishing it would be some other suit, as more of a fan of the classic stuff. But now that I can play the Stealth or the Heroes Return, I'm perfectly happy to have it there in the armory.

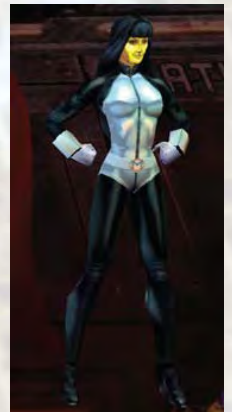
## MORE IRON MAN CHARACTERS



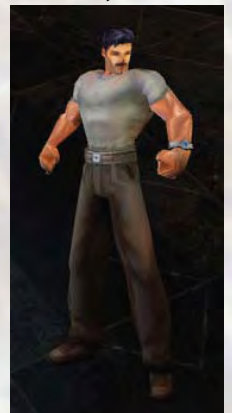
'RABBIT' ULTRON  
Marvel Ultimate Alliance



CLASSIC ULTRON  
reskin by brohara



MADAME MASK  
reskin by brohara



CASUAL TONY STARK  
from X-Men Legends II

**MOD YOUR M.U.A. AND PLAY**

Want some instant gratification after all this yammering? Ok, here's a quick primer on how to swap one character suit for another. It literally is as simple as swapping a file. First, follow the link listed below and download one of the two new Iron Man skins. It'll appear, once downloaded, as an '.igb' file. Then go to the following folder in your PC's Windows directory (C:\Program Files\Activision\Marvel - Ultimate Alliance\actors\ ) and locate the file '1504.igb'. This is the file for Iron Man's Ultimate suit of armor. Back up this file someplace safe, so that you can revert back to the Ultimate suit later on if you so choose. Rename your downloaded suit to '1504.igb' and drop it into this directory, replacing the one existing there. Start up the MUA game, and presuming that you've already unlocked Iron Man's four suits, choose to play with Iron Man's Ultimate armor. Lo and behold, you have the Stealth armor before you. Or the Chrome armor, depending on which you chose. That's it. Enjoy!

As mentioned, there's much, much more that you can do. For Iron Man fans who haven't played the game OR who have, but without any additions, I recommend checking out the site and seeing what's there. I'll also recommend reading through the discussion threads a bit, to get a sense of how things are done. The locals are friendly, but might get short with you if you are asking a question that they've already answered in that very thread. If nothing else, get the very-easy-to-install Colossus/Moon Knight upgrade and you're already starting off with a better game with more possibilities. For some of these other additions in particular, it's a no-brainer; you simply can't miss out on them. Visit the site and you'll see.

Thanks for reading. More **Iron Man in Action** to be seen next issue.

Brent

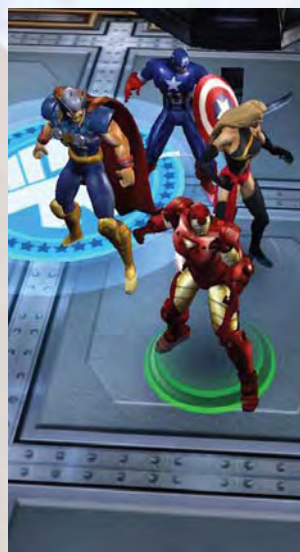
Go to <http://marvelmods.com/> and have a look around. There's more Iron Man stuff there to see.

If you want to get directly to a download area for the Iron Man reskins shown;  
[http://marvelmods.com/index.php?option=com\\_smf&Itemid=41&topic=800.0](http://marvelmods.com/index.php?option=com_smf&Itemid=41&topic=800.0)

For a complete index of the character numbers (ie. Iron Man is 15xx, as in the above example)  
[http://marvelmods.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=25&Itemid=43](http://marvelmods.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=25&Itemid=43)

For more on the Ultron affair, here's a sample article online; <http://www.actionfigureinsider.com/plastic/>

**BEHIND THE STORY - A look at the backdrop images**



**ASSEMBLED**  
 The Classic Avengers lineup includes IM, Cap, Ms. Marvel, Thor and Black Panther in the un-modded game.




**CHROME SUIT**  
 A reskin of the Heroes Return suit. Imagine an IM armor before the paint job.



**ACCENTED EFFECTS**  
 The Chrome suit reskin seems to really bring out the visual effects in Iron Man's powers; Worth seeing in action.



**STEALTH SUIT**  
 Under certain lighting conditions in the game the Stealth armor actually appears to be black in colour. 

# METAL HEAD!

By Heath McKnight

*In the previous Metal Head, I talked about Jon Favreau's "Iron Man" adaptation, opening May 2, 2008 with Robert Downey, Jr. as Tony Stark/Iron Man. This month, I want to discuss the other "Iron Man" movie, a fan-made film with incredible visual effects by independent filmmaker David Guivant. The short film comes out in October, but I had a chance to talk about the project with the director/teacher, who is based in the South Pacific, near Australia and New Zealand.*



**Metal Head (MH):** Tell me about yourself.

**David Guivant (DG):** I'm a graphic designer/Illustrator from New Caledonia, South Pacific. I am teaching arts at Kamere Junior High School and currently working on an *Invincible Iron Man* short film.

My strength lies more into production art, my wish is to work on one of these movies as production artist or design my own trading cards. I have faith that my growing abilities will eventually get me there. [\[Check out his work here\]](#)

**MH:** Talk to me about your other fan films. *Iron Man* isn't the first one, I see.

**DG:** When I saw MAD-TV in 1999 and the very talented comedians doing Lando Calrissian, Sammy Davies Jr, Mel Gibson and Alanis Morissette, I wanted to write a short screenplay for them but never submitted the story (*George Lucas: Legend of the Force*).

My cousin and I we wanted to enter a local shortfilm contest for fun, and we won the public choice award. It was a 2D frame-by-frame animated short film, nothing spectacular. [It was] shot with a web cam, lots of action, special FX and also a training ground for my future projects (*Prime of the Jedi, Captain Future, and Iron Man*).

Following the success of [short films] *Troops* and *George Lucas in Love*, I decided to shoot... *George Lucas: Legend of the Force* with friends playing Lucas and Spielberg.

The short film explored George Lucas's strong belief in the Force and his close encounter with a young Steven "JAWS" Spielberg. The short film got noticed by Lucasfilm Magazine in France and was chosen [for screening] at the Grand Rex Theatre during SW REUNION 2005, the first SW Convention to be held in Paris. The film was also screened in Australia (Melbourne) FORCE IV Convention and SINGAPORE SCIENCE CENTER during the "Art of Star Wars Exhibition." [\[Check out the film here\]](#)



MH: So let's talk about your *Iron Man* short film. Are you an Iron Man fan?

DG: Indeed, I am a huge Iron Man Fan and always wanted to see a TV show about it. Back in the 80's I saw the opening credits of Matt Houston [TV detective show] and imagined actor Lee Horsley [playing] Tony Stark, Pamela Hensley [playing] a younger Miss Arbogast, and Carl Weathers playing Rhodey.

When we heard about all these Hollywood projects not getting anywhere [*Iron Man* has been in development at no less than four studios, including Marvel/Paramount], we wanted to do our own so that we could fulfill our dream and see Iron Man in action on the screen.



*Captain Future* [my other film] is quite a big project, a space opera with many ships, robots, alien creatures and was too expensive to do for the time being.

MH: So you switched over to *Iron Man*. What're your duties?

DG: So far I am the director and producer of the *Invincible Iron Man* short film. I get to do the storyboards, special FX, etc. Storyboards were already done in 2004.

Casting started in 2005. We shot the *Iron Man* in April 2006 and completed the shoot in August 2006. Not many cast and crew onboard.

MH: Wow, over a year in post-production and visual effects work! When is it coming out?

DG: I will try and finish everything for a 19th of October release date online and we'll build our website in November.

MH: Tell me more about the project.

DG: My *Iron Man* will be more like a TV SHOW à la *Smallville*, and [the story is] very close to the "Heroes Return" [comic book] series. It'll be more down-to-earth and focus on Tony Stark, his close friends, corporate intrigue, industrial espionage, his relationship with SHIELD, the Avengers, [along with] the weapons and technology he designs, [and] the mass destruction that goes along with it.



A few Marvel characters will appear in the film, one of them is a very famous secret agent with a cigar and eyepatch. The nemesis is Gene Kahn, a very wealthy business man who's also a secret arms dealer... that supplies high tech weapons to different countries. He has an agenda far more terrifying than anyone could imagine. I would compare him to [Lex's father] Lionel Luthor from *Smallville*.

MH: What about other aspects from Tony's history? Other characters, corporations?

DG: We didn't focus on Tony's drinking problems at all. The Roxxon Company will also be involved.

MH: How did you shoot the film? What about the visual effects, etc.? Did you do any green screen work?

DG: Following the footsteps of *Sin City* and *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*, this short film was shot with a Sony camera, and will combine live action footage and 2D frame-by-frame animation using Adobe Photoshop for the Special FX. [I worked with] iMovie [consumer editing software] on a Mac Sony Vegas [professional editing software] on a PC. No green screen or blue screen.

Thanks to David for the interview! Check out the teaser ([http://www.dailymotion.com/DAVID\\_GUIVANT/video/x2frhg\\_the-invincible-iron-man-teaser](http://www.dailymotion.com/DAVID_GUIVANT/video/x2frhg_the-invincible-iron-man-teaser)) and get ready for what looks to be a great ride! I'm sure you'll be just as impressed as I am when the movie comes out. I've seen some test clips that are just incredible!





# HUBE'S SHELLHEADISMS

By Dave Huber

I enjoyed Robert Farrell's "The Worst Avenger Ever" from *Advanced Iron* #71. It was a thought-provoking, insightful and well thought-out article. You don't have to agree with Robert's premise, of course, to enjoy it. But I'd just like to mention here as a sort of preface to top my column as my major point of contention with Robert's thesis. He writes the following:

"So why don't I like Iron Man anymore? And why have I stopped buying Iron Man comics? I'll admit that part of it is personal. He reminds me too much of our current President and Vice-President [sic], men who, in my opinion, would happily sacrifice as many lives as possible to create their new world order. Of course, with President Bush and Vice-President Cheney, there is more at stake than just peace in the Middle East: there is oil and the President and Vice-President are strongly connected to that industry, just as Tony Stark was connected to the arms industry for many years."

While I have been against the war in Iraq since day one, I personally consider it preposterous to claim that George Bush and/or Dick Cheney would "sacrifice as many lives as possible" to create *their* world order and/or for personal profit and gain via the oil industry. Consider that last point: The easiest thing to do in order to obtain [much] cheaper oil for the foreseeable future would be to implement a drastic 180 degree turn with regards to U.S. policy towards Israel. Yet, Bush/Cheney like their predecessors, continue to vigorously defend the Jewish state against the aggression of the [Arab] neighbors. Why is that? Wouldn't it make a lot more sense to side with all those surrounding Arab oil states and make nice, cozy business deals with them so that we could all continue to pay about a buck for gas at the pump? Maybe, just maybe, Bush/Cheney (like their predecessors) actually cares about preserving the institutions of democracy and freedom ...? (Like Tony Stark in "Civil War" maybe?) Making sure Israel survives as opposed to obtaining cheap oil? What has history shown?

I am not opposed to the Iraq War because I am a radical "Bush is evil incarnate" type. I understand his reasons for going into Iraq. I merely disagree with them and thought that what we see now – virtual chaos and civil war – would result, and our soldiers would be caught in the middle. In my view, it is not worth the lives of American soldiers to create democratic institutions where little has existed previously. George W. Bush said as much in the 2000 campaign – that the United States should not engage in "nation-building." Even given the events of September 11, 2001, why should this premise change?



ILLUSTRATION BY  
PATRICK ZIRCHER (2006)



But back to Tony Stark: *Is he* [like Robert compares to his view of] George Bush? The current crop of Marvel writers (especially Mark Millar, to the right) perhaps have seemingly transformed him so. Two things in particular made me want to throw up during the “Civil War” saga: That the pro-registration (Iron Man’s) side maintained a secret prison where some torture was utilized, and the use of known heinous villains fighting on said side. RIDICULOUS. There is NO WAY I can envision the Tony Stark I grew up reading (and that’s a *long* time, folks) permitting either of these events. But what I’d like to address (mainly) in this article is **the logic and rationale of Iron Man’s pro-registration viewpoint**. One last time, I’ll refer to Farrell who, in his #71 article, wrote

“The road to Hell is paved with good intentions’ is the old saying. Tony Stark’s intentions for the Superhero Registration Act may be noble, but sometimes we have to look at the results of our intentions and ask ourselves if it is really worth it. For Stark, perhaps the death and destruction caused by the Civil War is worth his goals. For me it was not ... I don’t understand how the registration of heroes would prevent something like that ... Will a piece of paper or an ID card stop [a villain] from killing? I doubt it.”

This sounds amazingly like an argument against **gun control**, does it not? Yet, consider the irony: Liberals are usually the ones *favoring* gun control (conservatives usually against it), yet here the roles are reversed. This is, after all, the best analogy to the whole concept of super-powered beings being required to register with the [federal] authorities.

The 1968 Supreme Court case [Haynes v. United States](#) seems to affirm Congress’ right to require citizens to register firearms. Actually, **the topic of firearms registration hasn’t had a serious challenge in the high court**, much like the very right to own a firearm itself (based on the Second Amendment to the Constitution). The unique problem with *Haynes*, however, is that any mandated gun registration *cannot effectively be used against convicted felons* (because it violates the Fifth Amendment’s right against self-incrimination – yes, it sounds confusing, but read a layman’s version of the decision [here](#)).

Many gun registration opponents focus on the fact that requiring registration of firearms would make felons out of “regular folk” merely for neglecting to register their weapons. (What the heck would that make *Tony Stark*, then, eh?) That’s a debatable point (whether it should be a felon or a misdemeanor, say) but I doubt it can be legitimately argued that it is a “serious” infringement of rights to be required to so register a deadly weapon. After all, people have to register their automobiles, have insurance in order to drive, and even possess a valid driver’s license.

Lawyer/blogger [Xrlq](#) whom I’ve gotten to know quite well in my blogging days parlays gun registration into registration of super-powered individuals (my emphasis):

Nothing in the decision implied there was anything wrong with requiring non-felons to register their guns, **so presumably the same would apply to super-humans, as long as you are not dealing with a subset of super-humans who are prohibited by law from being super-human.**



MARK MILLAR

And since, technically, nothing *can* prevent that certain subset of super-humans – **mutants** – from *being* super-human; they'd have to be permitted to exist, of course. However, they'd still be required to register their powers with the government. I didn't follow "Civil War" to the letter, but weren't super-humans who refused to *work* for the feds permitted to live their lives in peace – as long as they still registered *with* the feds? And since average Americans are *not permitted* to possess ANY type of military weapon they desire (like a bazooka, tank or grenade launcher) – even though some gun rights advocates claim the 68-year old [Supreme Court Miller case](#) gives them that right – does it then make logical sense to allow super-powered beings who may be imbued with magnitudes more destructive power than an **M-1 Abrams tank** to roam around at will ... *using* that power?

I wrote a post for the [mostly political] blog [Colossus of Rhodexy](#) back in July which may illustrate the overall issue adequately ...

I recently picked up a couple "Essential" editions (Marvel's way of cheaply reprinting classic issues *en masse* in one collection) of 1980s *X-Men* issues. Included in the #4 collection was a graphic novel from 1982 titled "**God Loves, Man Kills.**" Graphic novels were printed to allow creators to be ... well, a little more *graphic* than normal comics. The opening sequence of this issue witnesses two young mutant children being murdered in cold blood merely ... because they are mutants.

As I delved into the story, it became evident that this issue was the clear inspiration for the second "X-Men" movie, "[X-2: X-Men United.](#)" The main bad guy is a powerful charismatic preacher named **William Stryker** who leads a visceral anti-mutant crusade across America. In "X-2," Stryker is a powerful government agent who leads a clandestine force against mutantkind. Check out the other similarities:

- In the novel, Stryker is shown to have fathered a mutant child, which he summarily kills. In "X-2," Stryker has a mutant son, but his mental powers have been "put to use" by the government.
- **Professor Xavier** is captured by Stryker's agents in the novel and subjected to hallucinogenic torture. Ditto the movie, but the illusions originate from Stryker's son's mental powers, and Xavier isn't so much tortured as he's picked for vital information.
- **Magneto**, the X-Men's deadliest enemy, joins forces with the mutant team against Stryker. This also occurred in the film (hence the "United" in the title) but included other "evil" mutants besides just Magneto.

Reverend Stryker, in the novel's climax, is eventually shot and killed by a regular cop -- because the rev had his *own* pistol pointed at **Kitty Pryde** (the girl who can walk through walls and who saw her most screen time in the third film, "[X-3: The Last Stand](#)") and was about to fire. What follows is the typical **Chris Claremont** (longtime *X-Men* writer) philosophizing about what "course" mutants should take to protect themselves, with Professor X advocating peaceful co-existence and Magneto pushing for dominance and control.



"GOD LOVES, MAN KILLS"  
GRAPHIC NOVEL (1982)

A few days after reading the story I was intrigued by the inclusion at the end of this Essential collection of Chris Claremont's remembrances while writing "God Loves ...". To me, it shows that Claremont is your typical liberal -- liberals which now (still?) clearly dominate Marvel today. He writes:

So here we are in the early 1980s, Ronald Reagan is president and a wave of creative Conservatism is sweeping the nation, pitched as a backlash from the Heartland to the unpatriotic and hedonistic attitudes and mores of the 60s and 70s. According to them, the country was returning to bedrock, traditional values and beliefs, both political and moral. Leading that charge ... were a coterie of TV evangelists, trumpeting their born-again, fundamentalist vision of the Bible across the national airwaves.

For me, this story grew out of a time where voices of casual intolerance were very much abroad in the land, where espousing views that stood apart from what was considered the "mainstream" could have serious and lasting consequences.

Pardon me, but *WHAAAAAAT??* I know, I know, I shouldn't be surprised, really. Claremont is all too typical of many liberals who feel the Reagan era was Hades incarnate on Earth. But still, consider that line: "... *where espousing views that stood apart from what was considered the 'mainstream' could have serious and lasting consequences.*" For example, cretins like Jerry Falwell frequently denounced gays and the "gay" lifestyle. According to Claremont, if one "espoused views" contrary to Falwell's -- like gays should have all the same basic civil rights as every other American -- there could be "serious and lasting consequences"! Like *what*, for instance? That you could be in danger of receiving William Stryker-like treatment at the end of a gun barrel? Please. I don't think Claremont actually believes that, but I'd really like to know *what* he means. I personally recall the 1980s cultural debate being *quite* vigorous, and the only "serious and lasting consequences" anyone "suffered" was mere verbal criticism. Claremont was obviously just engaging in unnecessary hyperbole because, unfortunately for him and other 60s lefties, the "pendulum had swung the other way" in the 80s. As if one needs more proof, Claremont makes the eye-rolling statement that, during the 80s,

Other faiths, other branches of the same faith, sounded as if they were being dismissed, which carried disturbing echoes of the growing fundamentalist movement that was sweeping the Islamic world.

If there was ever one comparison that should cause one to guffaw, it's the above. And to be fair to Claremont, he clarifies that it "seemed" that way to him and that "to his ears" it sounded that way. But many others are fervent in this belief -- that there's *no difference* between fundamentalist Christians here in the US and fundamentalist Muslims in the mid-east. Personally, I abhor fundamentalism of *any* stripe, but to posit this "no difference" claim is just daffy. If you really need for me to spell it out for you, you might consider asking your doctor for a prescription to reality pills.

The X-Men -- and mutants in general -- have long been Marvel's metaphor for the dispossessed, disenfranchised, and oppressed. Until recently (with the massive "Civil War" epic), one item had been frequently and conveniently brushed aside in the mutant debate: That these "oppressed" citizens often had abilities to cause incredible -- and widespread -- destruction. Clearly, guys like William Stryker go to extremes in addressing the situation. But it always seemed to me that there was lacking that "moderate" voice -- that common sense viewpoint that bridged concern for civil liberties with that of the general security of the American public. Consider the first "[X-Men](#)" film: In one of the flick's first sequences, we see [X-Man] Jean Grey arguing with Senator Robert Kelly about possible registration of mutants. Kelly makes an analogy to possessing and registering firearms, whereupon Grey retorts that we



ILLUSTRATION BY  
ADI GRANOV (2005)

don't require registration for people to *live*. She's right, of course, but *would* we so require such if super-powered mutants *actually existed*? It is easy for you to sit behind your computer, act all morally superior and say "No way, man! That is a clear violation of civil rights and inherently immoral." But, of course, if a dude like Magneto (and his allies) were out there randomly causing widespread havoc because of his *own* hatred of *homo sapiens*, you'd probably have second thoughts!

There is an inherent difficulty here in using super-heroes to make a larger cultural and political point. Since super-humans do NOT exist (whether born-that-way mutants or those "merely" transformed/created), can we *really* have a "real-world" debate about the limits of civil liberties? I think *The Comics Reporter's* **Tom Spurgeon** [gets it right](#):

When I was a kid I liked it when Captain America saw a high government official commit suicide. I thought that was way deep, man. But I never go there when thinking about Watergate. While ["Civil War" author] Mark Millar's Captain America and I may both worry about civil rights and the dispensation of power in the United States, the moment this leads Cap to take out a battalion of Secret Agents to buttress his point he's kind of lost to me as a potential partner-in-ideology.

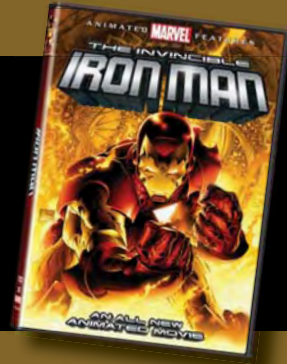
Now, maybe Mark Millar will be the first writer to use the specific metaphor he has at his disposal to say something insightful and constructive about those issues, but I suspect that as in the past the real world comparisons exist primarily to flatter the entertainment value of the superhero comic, not so much to say anything that isn't, well, kind of dumbassed. **The same way that the *X-Men* or similar series can only go so far when speaking to identity and outsider issues before people begin to realize shooting raybeams from your eyes really is different enough from sexual or racial identity to kind of limit any insight to be gained. I can't imagine a point of view emerging from Civil War that isn't constrained or made foolish by these characters' very specific fantasy identities.**

Indeed. If you can't see a difference between, say, having misgivings about your neighbor merely because he is black, and your neighbor because he sometimes inadvertently projects beams of concussive force from his nostrils which, at their weakest, hit like a Mack truck moving at 60 mph, then you have problems! This, too, is then why we shouldn't read all that much into Millar's use of Tony Stark/Iron Man's assent to using murderous super-villains against his former comrades and friends, not to mention locking up these same friends in a nether-region slammer. We should just chalk it up to a cheap "gimmick" which allows Millar to infuse his own politics into a yarn despite a long-standing Marvel icon's history of moral self-introspection that always, eventually, leads to doing the right – and moral – thing.

Lastly, I wonder what liberal Chris Claremont thinks about [the previously mentioned] **gun control**. If he believes that there should be severe restrictions on firearms (or that they should be banned outright), yet feels that super-powered mutants (or humans) should have the right to roam freely with no restrictions whatsoever, then he is a hypocrite of the highest order.



# THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN



## DVD REVIEW

By Jordan Weigler

The *Iron Man* animated movie came with quite a bit of anticipation amongst the fans of the Golden Avenger, but sadly it left many disappointed. The reception tended to be rather harsh after the initial disappointment had dissipated, though but I don't think the movie it totally deserving of such ire.



First, let me say this: **SPOILER WARNING!** If you haven't seen it, go to the last paragraph of the review and don't read the rest of this.

### The Movie

I think the thing that caught most people off guard was how stand alone it was from the mainstream continuity of Marvel. I think we all expected a stand alone, non-canon piece but not to the level of divergence of which the movie was.

I think the first and foremost divergence that led to many gripes was that Howard Stark, Tony's father was still alive (though his mother had died). And not only was Howard alive, but completely out of character. In the mainstream continuity, Howard was a no-nonsense businessman that was highly aggressive and wouldn't back down from anyone. What he said went and he did what he needed to. In the movie, he was a complete pushover, doing whatever the executive board told him to do. He was the puppet, not the puppeteer.

His being alive also had a significant impact on Tony's character. With the death of his parents, Tony was forced to grow up overnight and run the company himself. No more of his thrill seeking, care-free days; it was down to business. In the movie he was still self absorbed in his past times (and yes women were still one of them), and was more interested in inventing things to make the company profit rather than running it. So it was a total offshoot of what we were used to, but at least there was still the strained father-son relationship. Regardless, it caught everyone off guard.

Another difference was that Pepper Potts was English instead of American. Her personality seemed all wrong, being more strict and uptight; it reminds me of the *Super Nanny* reality show. She also had more of a Mrs. Arbogast feel than a Pepper Potts feel, that caring and friendly demeanor she is known for replaced with a more hard line motherly stance. Also, after her arrest she was never seen again.

Rhodey though was dead on, and I don't think there are any complaints about him. I continue to love his character and maintain he is by far the best supporting character in Iron Man's history.

I think the biggest "huh?" factor in the movie came with Wong Chu actually being a good guy after all was said done. Even though he was still the heartless and casual about killing, he was doing it for a greater good, and not just to be a despot who wanted more power. Granted, he was still a murdering S.O.B. but still.

The ending I think everyone can agree was a huge disappointment. The Mandarin never evolved into a corporeal form and Tony just stood there trying to convince Li Mei to not fulfill her destiny of becoming a vessel for the Mandarin. Technically, not a single punch was thrown between Iron Man and the Mandarin, who was an ancient Chinese leader being resurrected this time around, yet another curveball thrown at the viewers. And what was with just 5 rings? Hell, not even five rings, four and a bracelet. I much preferred the normal, comic book Mandarin over the movie version. Superior in every way.



Speaking of Li Mei, I'm not sure if the writers were purposefully trying to annoy us with her or not, but they succeeded. She was so caught up in her own destiny that she continually whined about it and just killed her character. She was so focused on how she couldn't change her destiny and how much she didn't want to fulfill it all she did was keep withdrawn and depressed for most of her scenes. It was annoying to start and got old very quickly.

One last gripe: the Elementals died way too easily.

However, not all of the movie was bad, so forgive me if I gave that impression.

The animation was rather good. While it was not top notch, it was well received and had a very fluid feel to it. The incorporation of the CGI models for the armors and Elementals were easily spotted, but I do not think they really detracted from the animation, though some do. It was an interesting choice to do that, as in most cases where CGI models are used in concurrence with drawn animation is mecha such the Zoid's anime series. Regardless, I found the animation to be clear, concise and well colored. They were also smart and did not do heavy details, which can turn off some people.



Another thing to like was the fight scenes sans the final battle. In his battle with the Elementals and the dragon (no actual mention of it being Fin Fang Foom, but that's who we all think of regardless) the writers were right on in that Stark used his intellect to defeat his enemies and not his raw power. He used everything that was around him to his aid, and his combat skills were very similar to what anyone without training would have done. His defeat of Fing Fang Foom I was rather impressed by. Kudos to the writers for that.

Another good thing was the armors themselves. They stayed rather true to the comic and all had a similar feel to them. We were even given brief glimpses of other fan favorite armors such as the War Machine and Hulk Buster, though neither had any impact on the movie and were not seen after. But it was a nice touch that the writers acknowledged the fans like of these two specialty armors.

I also felt that Tony was rather well done. As mentioned before he was different due to his father still being alive. I do think however, that this is what he would have been like had his parents not been killed. He was still youthful and very non-chalant but still had copious amounts of swagger, and a business savvy underneath it all.

All in all I liked the movie, but I fully agree that it was disappointing and understand why people didn't like it. It was too off beat from the mainstream continuity of Marvel to be fully effective as it seemed Iron Man fans were too often saying "what the?" as the story progressed. The Mandarin was supposed to be the main bad guy but took such a back seat you can barely say he was in the movie. Yes it revolved around him, but his brief appearance at the end, as an apparition no less, didn't even come close to satisfying fans.

All things considered I give it two and a half out of five stars because it was just too far off from what fans were used to with Iron Man's history to be fully effective. Good animation and characterization of characters in general were good, but there were too many offshoots to detract from the movie itself.



**DVD Extras**

The extras of the movie consisted of the normal trailers and behind the scenes stuff, but also included a first look at the Dr. Strange animated movie and an armor gallery. The armor gallery was cool and mostly accurate, showing the armors up to the Hulk Buster (which is kind of odd because the Extremis armor was already out by this point). The "making of" was a decent piece (though personally I'm never thrilled with these, but I digress). The emphasis really seemed to be on getting the character of Tony right, and I have to admit they did do a good job of it (yet somehow can't get it right for the comics...). I'd say these are worth a look if you glanced past them originally.

**Summation**

If you watch this movie for the first time, keep this in mind: do NOT expect a mainstream Marvel continuity storyline, this isn't it. With that information, keep an open mind. All in all the movie was not great and could have been better, but it was entertaining. Many of us, myself included, I believe had high hopes for it and were disappointed by the various things I pointed out.



Mr. Stark, at your request, this file has been labeled "Exclusive Property of Stark Enterprises, Executive Eyes Only." As usual, I'm sure you've got juicy stuff going on that none of us knows about...

-Ms. Abrogast

# FERRO FILES

GABRIEL "GECKO" HARDMAN

By Chris Frye

First, tell us a little about Gabriel Hardman: biographical stuff, interests outside of comics, etc. Whatever you feel like sharing.

I grew up in Northern California and Florida where I attended a high school geared toward Visual and Performing arts. When I graduated from High School I moved up to New York City where I attended The School of Visual Arts for one semester until my scholarship money ran out. I got a job for about nine months as a security guard at the Guggenheim Museum until I got my first comics work.

Outside of comics I'm a huge movie fan, old and new. My interest in filmmaking has always gone hand in hand with my love of sequential storytelling. It's all about telling stories with pictures.

If I remember correctly, you started your professional career at a pretty young age. What was your artistic education when you started? How did you get into the comics field?

When I was fifteen I started sending sample pages of sequential art to DC and Marvel. For the next couple of years I sent many samples. I really pestered them. That's how my stuff eventually came to Dick Giordano's attention.

When none of the editors at DC were giving me any work, I took the pages I had drawn for Dick's program to the New York Comic Convention. While I was showing them to another pro, Len Kaminski happened by and took a look at my portfolio. He was very cool, liked the stuff and told me to give Nel Yomtov, his editor at Marvel a call on Monday because the penciler on the first issue of WAR MACHINE just quit. They were scrambling to find a replacement. I met Nel, did a War Machine Pin-up for them on spec and then they gave me the job. It was a huge break and I really owe it to Len and Nel for taking a chance on me. I was eighteen when all this went down.

So War Machine was your first professional work in comics?

WAR MACHINE #1 was my first published professional comics work. For a month or so prior to landing the WM gig I was picked by Dick Giordano to be part of a New Talent program that he was doing just before he retired from DC Editorial. I would draw pages from a script he provide then bring them in once a week for Dick to critique. Then he and the late Neil Pozner would show the sample pages around to the other editors to help get me work. Unfortunately that work never materialized.

Who were your favorite illustrators when you were growing up?

Growing up it was George Perez and John Byrne as well as many others.

Who most influenced your style when you started your professional career?

When I started as a pro it was more Neal Adams but I also was in to non-comics illustrators like N.C. Wyeth and Howard Pyle.

Who do you count as current artistic influences?

My current favorites are Alex Toth, Bernie Wrightson, Gene Colan, many more. I'm a big fan of Bruno Premiani who drew the 1960's Doom Patrol series. Older comic strip artists like Noel Sickles

and Milton Caniff also hugely influence me.

Particularly their inking. There are several non American artist like Jordi Bernet and Jorge Zaffino that rank up there too.



COVER TO WAR MACHINE #2

Your tenure on War Machine was pretty short, any particular reason?

The editor, Nel Yomtov and I didn't get along very well. Most of this was my fault because I was young and pretty unprofessional. A lot of the friction was over the inker (Pam Eklund). I was really unhappy with the work she was doing over my pencils. I felt the work I was putting into the pencils wasn't making it onto the printed page. It wasn't really her fault; we just weren't a good match, style-wise.

How would you describe your rendition of the War Machine armor?

The War Machine armor, as I drew it, was a combination of Kevin Hopgood's original design combined with elements that I liked from Dave Ross's interpretation in WEST COAST AVENGERS.

Anything else you care to share about your time on War Machine?

It was just very exciting to be able to take the pages up to Marvel every week. It was also cool to go back to that same New York Con the following winter to promote the book.

Many fans consider your interpretation of War Machine as definitive, at least in the War Machine title. Any reaction or thoughts?

It's great to hear. I wasn't aware anyone remembered the stuff.

What followed War Machine?

I did a couple other things for DC and Marvel – a Killer Crock story for BATMAN CHRONICLES and a Venom story. The majority of the other comics work I did was for Malibu. Codename: Firearm, Necromantra and a Prototype (their version of Iron Man) mini-series.

Of your body of comics work, what was your favorite comic to illustrate?

It's hard for me to judge. I did all my early comics work from ages eighteen to twenty-two. Nobody in happy with the things they did when they were just starting out.

I'm very happy with my current, creator owned work. You can see some examples of it at:

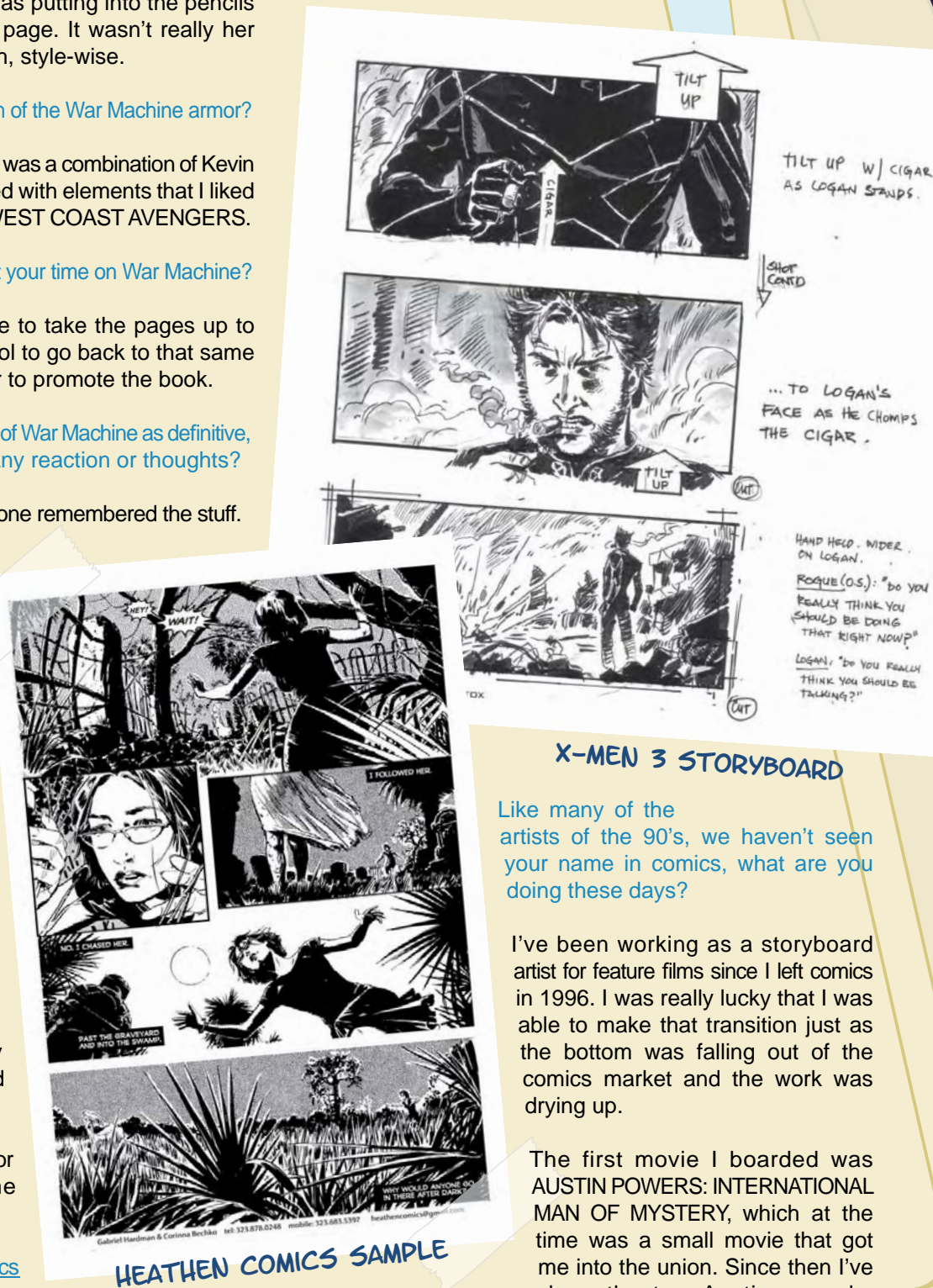
[www.comicspace.com/heathencomics](http://www.comicspace.com/heathencomics)

Any particular issue stand out as a favorite?

I enjoyed drawing the issue of WM that guest starred Hawkeye.

What was the last thing you did in comics?

It was an issue of RUNE for Malibu comics in 1996. Actually, some of my strongest stuff was done for Malibu but very few people saw it. I really enjoyed working with the editors there, Roland Mann and Hank Kanalz. Good guys.



X-MEN 3 STORYBOARD

Like many of the artists of the 90's, we haven't seen your name in comics, what are you doing these days?

I've been working as a storyboard artist for feature films since I left comics in 1996. I was really lucky that I was able to make that transition just as the bottom was falling out of the comics market and the work was drying up.

The first movie I boarded was AUSTIN POWERS: INTERNATIONAL MAN OF MYSTERY, which at the time was a small movie that got me into the union. Since then I've done the two Austin sequels,

JURASSIC PARK 3, REIGN OF FIRE, X-MEN 2 & 3, MEN IN BLACK 2, LEMONY SNICKET, SUPERMAN RETURNS and SPIDER-MAN 3 among others. I just finished working with Ben Stiller on an action/comedy he's directing called TROPIC THUNDER.



I also wrote and directed the short, WRONG WAY UP that premiered at the Seattle International Film Festival and was featured in twenty other festivals.

I actually was offered work on the IRON MAN movie doing storyboards and supervising pre-visualization (cg animatics) but unfortunately it just didn't work out scheduling-wise. I was still on Spidey 3 and Sam Raimi doesn't let you leave his show until the very end- sometimes even later. I do know a few people who worked on the movie.

*Talk about coming full-circle career-wise. That certainly would have been serendipitous. From your unique perspective, any thoughts on the development of the IRON MAN movie?*

I think the movie designs I've seen look pretty good. The expression on the helmet looks a little blank but I'm sure they will augment it with subtle cg tweaks to convey a little more emotion.

*If you had the opportunity to dive into the work for hire pool again, would you work in comics again?*

I'd love to. I'm actively trying to get my creator owned work published. I'd also be happy to do freelance work if it's a cool project and I have the time.

*What titles would you like to work on?*

As a freelancer, characters I'd love to draw are Green Arrow, The Question or The Doom Patrol. I'd also love to draw an arc of QUEEN AND COUNTRY.

*Would you consider working on Iron Man?*

I'd be happy to if it was a good story.

*Do you have any advice for artists trying to break into pencilling?*

Do good work and be tenacious.

*Do you still follow comics?*

I've continued to follow comics. I go to either Meltdown or Golden Apple here in Los Angeles most every week though I've been more serious about comics in the last couple years than I have in a while.

*What do you collect?*

I'm not a big collector per say, I'd rather put a trade or an omnibus on the shelf than keep individual issues in a box (notice how I didn't use the horrible term, "floppies").

*Favorite read right now?*

My favorite read right now is either Greg Rucka's QUEEN AND COUNTRY or Ed Brubaker & Michael Lark's run on DAREDEVIL. I mostly enjoyed 52 and was let down by CIVIL WAR though it was a nicely crafted book.

*First comic read or owned?*

The first comic I read and owned was NEW TEEN TITANS #39. It's the one where Robin and Kid Flash quit the team. George Perez inks his own work. Great stuff!

*As we wrap up, let's do a little Iron Man and War Machine word association, and remember, we'll keep it brief. Three words, in your opinion, that describe Iron Man:*

Um...three words? I got nothing.

*Three words that describe Tony Stark:*

I'm breaking the three-word rule.

For all his wealth, brilliance and success, Tony Stark is a character that's grounded because of his personal failings. Stark is also more relatable now because like all of us, he's dependant on technology.

If the book is well written, describing Tony Stark should also describe Iron Man. The man makes the suit.

*Three words, in your opinion, that describe War Machine:*

A cool armor. Look at that – three words!

*Three words that describe Jim Rhodes:*

He's always been a likeable character. I don't know if he has the dimension to be a lead character. I honestly haven't read much of the character since I drew the book. I picked up the first couple issues of the Chuck Austen book and was not impressed.

*Last, but not least, where did the signature "Gecko" come from?!*

It's a high school nickname with no coherent story behind it. But when I started sending my sample pages off to DC & Marvel, I figured the name "Gecko" would make me stand out from the crowd. Keep in mind I was fifteen at the time. Then after I started getting work, I was afraid to change it just because of the confusion it would cause. All my movie work and current comics are credited to my real name, Gabriel Hardman.

*Gabe, we appreciate you taking the time out of your busy schedule to talk with us.*

*I want to personally thank you for your time, as well as your contributions to the Iron Man mythos by way of War Machine.*

*Thanks from AI, the readers and fans.*

Thanks, Chris! And thanks to everybody else for the interest.



ALL ILLUSTRATIONS BY GABRIEL HARDMAN



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH *IRON MAN* MOVIE DIRECTOR

# JON FAVREAU

By: John B. Comerford

It is our absolute pleasure to bring you, the best Iron Fans around one of the coolest face to face interviews that Advanced Iron has ever done! Previously, I had been communicating with *Iron Man* movie director Jon Favreau on brief bits of movie info through his *Iron Man* MySpace group. Imagine my delight when I was asked how Advanced Iron was covering the San Diego event by Fav's himself! Conversation ensued regarding my own travels out to San Diego not only to see the exclusive *Iron Man* footage at the convention, but also because Fav's had intended to give us actual face time to speak with him about the 2008's anticipated *Iron Man* movie.

Knowing I'd be a madman to not get out there, a madman's rush ensued anyway and soon thereafter I was on my way from Chicago to San Diego. After spending a fortune on a last minute plane ticket, I met up with Advanced Iron Publisher Vic Holtzman, who accompanied me for all of the Iron Madness in California. Shortly into my trip we were greeted at the Marvel booth by Fav's and spent some time in Marvel's VIP area where Robert Downey Jr. was having a good time playing the upcoming SEGA Iron Man video game.....

**Advanced Iron (AI):** How do you like the comic con so far?

**Jon Favreau (JF):** It's great! I mean this is the first time I've been here where everyone is really excited and anticipating something I'm doin'... so that's a big change of pace from the last two years that I was here.

**AI:** Well, I'd imagine that you had some anticipation for *Zathura*, which I thought was a fantastic movie.

**JF:** Thank you! But yeah, there wasn't... there wasn't any anticipation about it before it came out. The people who saw it liked it, the critics liked it, but it didn't make any money and it just didn't break through. What's nice about being close to a year out [with *Iron Man*] here, we are able to – because we have footage, because we shot a lot of it practically so we could get the footage ready; we're the only movie that's coming out that far out that actually could cut something together because we're not waiting for CGI at the last minute. There's a lot of CGI in it and we scrambled to get a couple shots... but we could tell a whole story just with the Stan Winston suit.

**AI:** You know, one of the things you do really well – and I noticed this on *Zathura* too – is how you are combining the CGI with the authentic special effects really, really well...

**JF:** Yeah that's a big thing for me because I hate just pure CGI although it's getting a lot better. It'll change in the next 5 to 10 years it's just going to be irrelevant, but for right now where the technology is you have to treat it like a magic trick. You show something real, then you switch it up with something fake, you show something else real. So there are certain scenes where the guys are totally practical and then you cut to a shot where he's completely CG, and then you cut to a shot where the upper half of the body is practical....

**AI:** Yeah, exactly..

**JF:** So that's the trick. That's taking the best of the old school and combining it with the best of what's new. And the houses know that, they get it, they like it. And the practical stuff keeps the CG honest and the CG keeps the practical honest. It's a very good balance that we struck. And John Nelson really gets that and understands that, he's our supervisor... he was in here a little while ago. He's doing Oscar Winning stuff, he was nominated for *I Robot*, I think he won for *Gladiator*! So he's been at it for a while and he's worked with all the ILM people before. It's just a fantastic arrangement we've got here.

**AI:** When you did the robot in *Zathura*, if I remember correctly, the body of the robot was real....

**JF:** That's right!

**AI:** ....and then the arms and the legs were CG'd.

**JF:** That's exactly right...

**AI:** Are you doing that on *Iron Man* for any of the shots? Like half armor.....

**JF:** Yeah! What we found in *Zathura* was that I was really worried about how the feet connected to the ground. Those things always felt a little floaty and weightless. And so I figured by having the feet practical and the body practical you get the center of gravity right and the movement right. But then we did a lot of replacement shots there where we thought we would need practical. As long as you have some great reference that you are cutting back and forth too, that's what really keeps it honest. And so using the Winston suit for sort of close-up work or far off work, or work through smoke and quick cuts, that stuff is really effective. And then the CG, I'm a little more trusting in it because I'm working with a house and supervisor that knows it and the technologies changed. With *Pirates* they were going to combine practical and digital but they just ended up going digital. I think it's there for certain things, for *Iron Man*, you couldn't pick a better hero to do in CG because the metallic surfaces. You can see in the video game even, it really looks great! What's hard to do is the organic stuff... like with Hulk, it's very challenging, but for *Iron Man* the technology is there for metallic surfaces.



FAVREAU BRINGS THE ARMOR TO LIFE: REAL LIFE,  
WITH THE WINSTON BUILT IRON MAN MARK I ARMOR!!

**AI:** That seems to never change, I've heard that for years. You know, you watch all of these specials on the DVD's and they say that and I don't know if that's ever going to change.

**JF:** Well fur used to be a big problem and now they sort of got that down, and now they are scanning the way muscles move. Houses like Rhythm and Hughes are working with Hulk and they sort of have been ground breaking in that area. So that's always going to be hardest. That's why I'm curious to see this *Beowulf* footage, because they are saying that there's nobody in the movie. It's all CG and motion capture, you know... there's going to be a moment where it's all going to shift where you're not gonna notice it. And it might be now or it might be a little ways off but it's coming. For right now though I like mixing practical foreground with CG backgrounds and CG foregrounds and practical backgrounds.

**AI:** Yeah, a good amalgamation between the two looks great.

**JF:** Right, Peter Jackson is the master of that, with *Kong*.

**AI:** Right, with WETA....

**JF:** With WETA yeah, they would mix really large miniatures with CG backgrounds, with CG actors, with practical actors so you never know in the frame what's fake and what's real.

**AI:** Regarding the CG vs. practical, I think a lot of people were shocked when you said you were going to go with practical armor.

**JF:** I think people who didn't know my background – with *Elf*, I went out of my way and did a lot of stop motion, a lot of in camera forced perspective, and then I played a little CG in the end with the sleigh chase. Then in *Zathura* we used a lot of miniatures, we used a lot of practical Winston stuff...

**AI:** Old school still looks fantastic on the screen....

**JF:** Yeah and for me, no matter how much time passes you are going to be able to watch *Elf* in 20 years and the beginning of the movie with the Kyoto brothers stop motion stuff and the forced perspective is going to look just as good as it does now. The CG stuff at the end is going to look terrible because we will have grown past it, because there is no charm to dated CG, but there's tremendous charm...

**AI:** To the practical stuff...

**JF:** to the practical stuff! Even if you see the flaws, you know in *Dragon Slayer* by Tippett...

**AI:** Fantastic movie. I love that movie...

**JF:** That's the last go-motion movie, and I looked into that for some *Zathura* stuff, but Tippett doesn't do that anymore, he does CG now. But the state of the art stop motion stuff still holds up wonderfully. It's just so labor intensive and expensive and inflexible in post production.

**AI:** Kind of coming back to the armor itself, you talked about the finish and pointed at the game, which is running behind us here. One thing I was curious about, and of course this is sort of a fan question, but the armor is sometimes depicted as obviously having a metallic sheen to it, but then other times it has this chrome-polished look.

**JF:** Yeah!

**AI:** Why didn't you guys go with that ultra-chrome polished look as opposed to that shiny metallic appearance?

**JF:** I took a lot of cues from *Granov*.

**“Stark is a hot rod guy, and a hand fabricator. He’s a guy who’s working on his old ‘32 Ford when the movie opens, so you know he’s a gear head.”**

**AI:** The miniatures there were fantastic... that house that you guys blew up? That house was awesome!

**JF:** I love that house, yeah that house was awesome... so that's always a bit of a love of mine. Because I'm a movie geek and I love being on a miniature set and stop motion and those are my two favorite things!

**AI:** And he doesn't do that....

**JF:** He doesn't. And my first pitch was because Stark is a hot rod guy, and a hand fabricator. He's a guy who's working on his old '32 Ford when the movie opens, so you know he's a gear head. You can really believe that when he's in captivity he's not just a guy who's a scientist who can design something, but he can hands on fabricate something almost like American chopper.

**AI:** He can get his hands dirty...

**JF:** We give him all of this fabrication gear and CNC machines and also old English wheels so that you get that he and his Dad used to work on old hotrods together. His Dad, Howard Stark probably was around from the Howard Hughes era and was probably at the forefront of aircraft design and designing stuff for World War II. And so that whole generation was also the hotrod generation who were breaking the land speed records out in Bonneville, on the Salt Flats and the dry lakes. We shot at Edwards that used to be Lake Muroc in the '30s where all the hot rodders would chop their cars up and go out as fast as they could. And that was all informed by the people coming back from WWII who had all this knowledge and fabrication skills from working on aircraft. So that aircraft community became the hotrod community and so I wanted to make it a real California story of a guy who comes from that tradition. And I would believe that if that guy got locked in a cave with the right stuff, could build something. And we designed a suit that looks like Granov's depiction of the Mark One, but also something that felt like it could have been made practically because it always felt a little convenient that he could build that suit with the stuff that he had.



*IRON MAN'S TRADEMARK CHEST PIECE, THE "UNIBEAM" WAS ON DISPLAY, CIRCUITS AND ALL... ALONG WITH SOME TRULY SOPHISTICATED KICKS!*

**AI:** You've received a lot of compliments on that armor... and what you are saying about building it practically has been noted even on the message boards. One of our members, Frank (Tetragrammaton), first commented when seeing the armor that it was a "What a beautiful mess!"

**JF:** Yeah!

**AI:** And that's exactly what it's supposed to be...

**JF:** That's what we wanted it to be. And if you look at it closely you'll see that it's all pieces and panels from missiles and there's stenciling from other Stark weapons. So we wanted to give it that flavor that that suit could also be used practically, because the movement isn't as fluid. Once you get to this - the Mark III, that's when you start to do a lot of CG hand offs and CG paintings to help along the Stan Winston design to get that freedom of movement. Because, you need a more dynamic fighting style than you could do in the practical suit, so it's more of a mix later on in the movie.

**AI:** One of Iron Man's weapons, the repulsor rays, were drawn a while back by an artist named Mark Bright. He would draw them with a kind of swirling effect, and believe it or not, this is sort of a point of conversation amidst Iron Man fans...

**JF:** And it still is for us, too!

**AI:** Ok, so how are you guys going to show the repulsor rays? Is it going to be a beam? How did you go about this?

**JF:** Well here's the problem... and I actually learned a lot from working with the video game people because they were asking me the same types of questions that you're asking me! And my first thing was, 'well it's kind of like a beam' because I think about what it looks like in the books. But there's sort of two ways to go. One is, for lack of a better term, the phaser and the other is the photon torpedo, right?

**AI:** Sure!

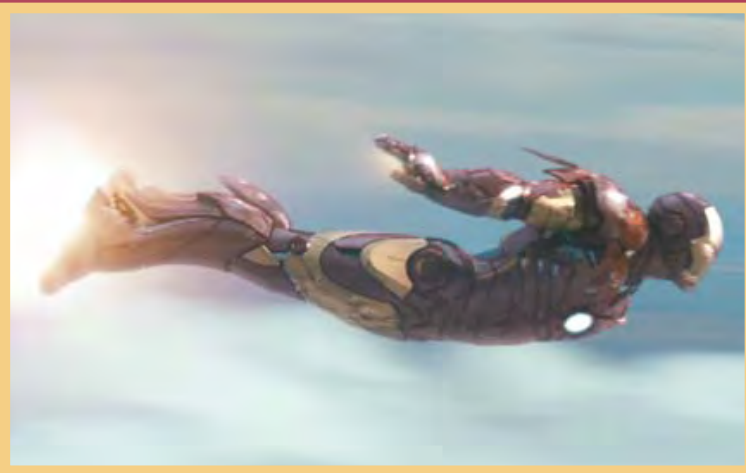
**JF:** So the phaser being a beam, and the photon torpedo being a light emanating burst. So the problem is that in a comic book panel a beam looks great, and that's what you think of as a repulsor. When you do it in the video game though, it just looks like a long laser pointer and it's not that interesting.

**AI:** And it won't stay still, so it just looks like a wand moving around.

**JF:** So during the practical element what we would shoot it with was interactive light and a "kick". So I think that it will be some sort of a burst.

**AI:** What can you tell us about the much talked about aerial fight scene with the jets in the movie?

**JF:** We watched the movie *Stealth* where there were a lot of things that took you out of the reality. I didn't feel like I was watching real planes in *Stealth* as much as I did in *Top Gun*. So part of that was that you had a dynamic filming style, and since there was a lot of CG they used a virtual camera. In other words, they put a camera in a place that was moving in a way that it would never be able to move if you were really shooting it. And that's one tip to your sub-conscious that you're seeing something that's not real. So we limited the camera angles to shooting plates off of real planes. And we would shoot it using real planes that we might replace, but the camera was always shaky and weird and the shot wasn't perfect. They emulate that in *Battlestar Galactica* where the camera will be out of focus, you'll miss the zoom and you won't frame it perfectly. The temptation in CG is that you make everything perfect.



**AI:** Everything is crystal clear, and then it eliminating the depth is really what you are doing....

**JF:** Depth, framing, there are a lot things. Camera movement, what type of lenses you are limited to while shooting from another plane from a certain distance. All of those little things the layman doesn't understand or care about, but when they see a movie that doesn't do that; it might be very dynamic, but it doesn't feel real. And you become emotionally disengaged from a movie. The hardest thing is to keep someone emotionally engaged. So everything, whether it's the repulsor beam, or the way we shoot him flying, we try to do this.

**AI:** So the armor itself in action or flight is also as authentic as you could make it?

**JF:** The way he flies and the way his control surfaces move, the aerodynamics of it are all considered. I loved the way the snow speeders looked in *Empire*...

**AI:** Right, the models tilt and are articulated....

**JF:** They're articulated and we created a lot of articulating aspects of the armor. You can see in the very last frames of the reel you'll see that there is some of that going on. So it's not just Superman flying magically, it's something that's obeying the laws of physics. And we looked at a lot of sky diving videos for reference for framing and the way people move through the air and the aerodynamics of the human form.

**AI:** And that is the realism that you've been talking about before, then.

**JF:** Well, you could have gone crazy with the suit and make it as crazy as the *Transformers* as far as what the technology is. But as long as it operates and moves in a real way when people see it, their brain will kick back that they are seeing something real. And if you can do that you get excitement, but you also get an emotional connection with the character that I think is one of the touchstones of a Marvel Hero. They feel vulnerable and flawed, and you feel like they could die. They aren't this invulnerable Superman flying around in the world.

**“The way he flies and the way his control surfaces move, the aerodynamics of it are all considered.”**

**AI:** So you are grounded more towards reality than the fantasy?

**JF:** In the physics of it, and also in this world there are no magic powers.

**AI:** Which brings us to the Mandarin, obviously!

**JF:** That was a very tricky thing with how we used the Mandarin in this. In the very first movie, if we had the Mandarin shooting freeze rays out of magical rings, then you couldn't both satisfy the comic book fans who are expecting that or you couldn't make it real for people who didn't know Iron Man, it was a very hard thing. We keep the Mandarin connection pretty oblique in the first film. It's like in *Star Wars* how the Emperor is the bad guy, but he also is very powerful and frail and shoots lightning bolts out of his finger tips. But you don't get there until later. You want a Darth Vader kind of villain where it can be more dynamic and you want to work your way up to that. It's the same thing with *Lord of the Rings*... you want to get to Sauron eventually. And in the hopes that we'll make more than one, we are laying the ground work for the Mandarin, but the great big knock down, drag out fight won't be with the Mandarin.

**AI:** But he is in the film and you are laying a foundation....

**JF:** You'll see him....

**AI:** And he's sort of behind the scenes then...

**JF:** Yeah, people who don't know Iron Man won't even know what we are talking about. But for the fans you're going to begin to see reference and we've definitely put the thought into how this whole world works. But the first story is stand alone, and if we never get to make another one, it'll be fine and people will get to enjoy the story. But if we get to do more, then we won't have to completely start from scratch and we won't have to justify the story.

**AI:** Regarding the characters, a really interesting thing is that obviously Tony Stark is a genius and Robert has to portray that. How do you emulate a genius? How did you guys go about that and get that rolling?

**JF:** A lot of genius is the confidence that comes with it. We also researched it heavily and Robert was meeting up with the guy that was designing the Tesla electric car and is designing the space craft that is replacing the space shuttle. So here's a dude who is like Tony Stark! And he came to the set and Robert spent time going through the guys workshop and befriending him. People who are like that are usually somebody who has a very childlike curiosity and a sense of confidence. They are very obsessive usually...and so a lot of time is spent with Stark in the workshop obsessing over the suit.

**AI:** And it's not like they are neurotic, you're saying, but it's that they are more obsessed with their ideas and bringing those ideas to the forefront.

**JF:** And although with Tony Stark, we think of him liking booze, broads and money, really I think the key is the fact that he has access to everything he could ever want as far as material things. But his true joy and his true bliss comes from these inventions so he's almost like an Ann Rand character where, the girls are fine, but he's all about the suit and this new technology he's discovering and inventing. And I think that makes him more likeable as well because when you have somebody who's sort of on a quest for excellence, he's much more of that than a hedonist. I think he enjoys it but he's not like a Bruce Wayne who uses that for his cover story for his Batman persona...

**AI:** [sarcastically] Ah... the Batman-isms...

**JF:** [laughs] So this is the type of thing that is the big question. Superman is the character, Clark Kent is the cover, Batman is the character, Bruce Wayne is the cover. Tony Stark is the character, Iron Man is the cover, and as he becomes more and more of Iron Man as the story goes on, that's where you get into "Demon In A Bottle," that's where you get the conflict internally. But I think first and foremost its Tony Stark and this is an alter ego that he uses to do those things that he can't do as a public figure and allows him to go beyond what he can be in reality.

**“[Stark] starts up as a guy whose life is very big and broad, but his insight into the world is pretty narrow.”**



**AI:** Exactly, like he's trying to force the ideas out....

**JF:** A genius to me, is someone who was more like... *Close Encounters*...

**AI:** Oh! Richard Dryfus with the mashed potatoes!

**JF:** [laughs] We talked about Richard Dryfus from *Close Encounters* more than we talked about Stephen Hawkings, you know what I mean? That's what they're like, they get an idea in their head and close off the world and although they are confident, they aren't social. So, Tony Stark isn't the guy who's living for what party is going on.

**AI:** I'm glad you see it that way because with the current comics, movies are now going to the comic books and making them more real. And I really like that you say that because like in the Avengers, he's sitting there in this room with these people he's known as teammates, but he's got his mask on talking to Avengers like they don't know who he is making Iron Man the character more than Stark....

**JF:** But everybody knows it's him, I mean he's got the worst cover story in comic book history. [laughter] And he's also a public figure and he's not a guy who has to still exist in high school like Peter Parker. He's a dude who is a public figure and whether you know he's Iron Man or not is almost irrelevant.

**AI:** How do you play that up in the movie then? Because you say that everyone knows, so in the movie is it sort of a running joke there?

**JF:** No, no, no. In the movie, he's becoming Iron Man. He goes through several iterations of the suit, and I think by the end of the movie he sort of knows who he is and there's sort of a bit of call to action. Then you have a wonderful Joseph Campbell type of mythology where he is trapped in a cave and he must change and he learns something about who he is, how he has to change as a person. And that's sort of outwardly represented by the armor and who he is as a hero. Because he starts up as a guy whose life is very big and broad, but his insight into the world is pretty narrow. He lives in a gilded cage, he builds weapons and things that have a tremendous impact on the world, but from his boardroom and from his office you don't really understand that. And so getting a dose of reality and being captured and taken hostage it forces a transformation of character and forces him to question certain things that he took for granted.

**AI:** As far as the property goes, it's my understanding that Marvel used to license the movies out to different studios. But now that Marvel has control of that, *Iron Man* is the first movie that's under Marvel Studios. How is it to work with them? I'd imagine that they are very careful about what they do....

**JF:** It's great. I mean because there's not a lot of people that you are dealing with. It's not like there are layers and layers of studio politics that end with a single person that has the ultimate say over what you and your money. It's not someone who is governing over a slate of ten films for that year...

**AI:** Where your movie becomes just another number on the slate.

**JF:** Right. So they aren't looking at a piece of footage and say "aahhh... he's not likeable enough" or "ahhh... why is he doing that, you should cut that scene out!" You know, where they hand down these mandates, probably because they feel a sense of responsibility to the studio which is understandable. But with Marvel, they are doing this and they are doing *Hulk*. And that's all they have that year while they develop other properties like Ant-Man, Captain America and Thor. But, this was a movie where Marvel was there and Kevin Feige was a producer and also the Marvel head of production and he was on the set almost every day. You also had Avi who was the producer independently, but for the most part creatively, the people who I had to deal with there and actually part of the development process. They have a very affectionate vision for how this character should be treated and they knew more about him than I did! So anytime I had a question about Iron Man, they would show up with color copies of a stack of appearances with every look that character ever had. They were like technical advisors for Marvel as well as being the bosses from a studio! It made for a very collaborative process that Robert and Terrence also embraced. We were able to do something different, but stay true to what the books are. It was always either a slight twist or staying true, but we never made the leap to organic web shooters. It was always a version of bringing the essence of Iron Man to the screen.

**AI:** Thank you so much for your time, Jon, it's been so great talking to you.

**JF:** Great, and I'm glad we made the time! I really appreciate what you guys are doing with Advanced Iron. People are always talking about getting the word out on a grassroots level. A lot of times studios will create an official website and have some giveaways and figure that's how you do it. But we are very lucky here that the infrastructure of the fan base is already there and I just wanted to sort of bring you guys into it as much as I could because I appreciate you guys doing what you are doing! So, we'll stay in contact so maybe we can do something with the press when the movie comes out...

**AI:** That'd be great, thank you so much.

*Special thanks go to: Vic Holtreman for his assistance through Screen Rant ([www.screenrant.com](http://www.screenrant.com)) and that sites credentials, Chris Frye for the logistical support he provided me while traveling, Heath McKnight for his Hollywood insight and late night phone calls, Roger Ott for his pep talk before the trip. Advanced Iron and the fans also thank Matt and Ina from Jon's team, and Jon Favreau for taking time to talk with us.*



(L TO R) VIC HOLTREMAN, JON FAVREAU, AND JOHN B. COMERFORD

ILLUSTRATION BY FILIPE MUFFOLETTO  
PHOTOS BY JOHN B. COMERFORD AND JOHN LU





# ROUNDTABLE

INTERVIEWS WITH THE CAST OF THE *IRON MAN* MOVIE,

Interviews and Photographs By John B. Comerford

During our jaunt through San Diego, Vic Holtreman and I were lucky enough to participate in the media roundtable interviews with the stars of the upcoming *Iron Man* movie. We were star struck as we met and spoke with the snarky **Robert Downey Jr.**, the graceful **Gwyneth Paltrow**, and the very entertaining **Terrence Howard**! It was great to shake hands with the man who will be wearing the armor, or to tease the future War Machine for breaking his best friend's tech, and to be amazed at the poise of the future Pepper Potts as she spoke with us. It was truly a fun occasion for Advanced Iron to meet such great icons of the entertainment community and it's our pleasure to bring you the Roundtable Interviews from San Diego, California!

## ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

**Reporter:** What would you say that Robert Downey and Tony Stark have in common, other than being in the same movie next summer?

**Robert Downey Jr. (RD):** Well... we love each other! [devilishly] Tony Stark's been very, very good to me...

**Reporter:** What drew you to him? How do you think he speaks to us today, because the character was initially designed to be controversial politically and socially?

**RD:** Yeah! How great was that when Stan Lee was here, and what he wouldn't say was that he created Iron Man on a dare. A dare that you could take a military industrial, complex, billionaire, womanizer in a time when all that stuff was really not cool... he was the man. And you take the man, and give him such a metaphoric wound, that he doesn't really turn it around. In fact he goes half crazy by it, and by that flip comes out of one denial and into another. That denial being that he can't effect direct change and it's messy and it doesn't go well, so he puts himself in danger. But it's not that thing where we could do that up, up and away and now I fight the good fight because I've seen the light. Any time I saw a piece of dialogue that looked like that I'd be like "HEY! Just get that piece of #\$%@ away from me!" And Jon would be like... Jon's on a diet and I quit smoking and he'd be like "would you get this guy some Nicorette gum, we gotta shoot a movie today!" And I'd be like "I refuse!" And Jon would be like, "alright refuse... whaddya wanna do instead?"

**Advanced Iron (AI):** You are a very, very witty guy, and you appear to be pretty smart, so it doesn't seem like it's much of a stretch for you to be playing a genius [winks]...

**RD:** Okay! [laughter all around] Ask Ms. Downey... she'll put the air in check here... [laughter]



**AI:** [laughs] But no really, you're really on top of your game and it's really impressive, and Tony Stark is-that-way, how did you bring that element?

**RD:** He's also someone who inherited a massive responsibility and he actually is a very industrious person. I'm somebody who makes faces for cash and chicken and have shot myself in the foot for years... [laughter] There's something about that that always felt like that intangible thing to me. I mean my Dad was into underground filmmaking and stuff like that with his artistry, but you know that Vander Belt thing, that Hughes thing. That American, iconic thing, and it'd probably be pretty hard to not feel like you aren't a phony no matter what you did. I'm strung out on the military channel and they're like "you know... Them World War II guys, those are the last real American heroes" and I'm like "just slice my nuts off right here because I wasn't in a P51 Mustang outrunning Messerschmitts!" But there's some truth to it in that across generations it seems like we've become a little more dissipated and less than real dudes... If nothing else I guess I can relate to someone who sees things a different way and often times having any sort of spiritual awakening, even if it's just an out and out trauma, or in his case being abducted and forced to do something against his own will and forced to innovate. I mean that's the great thing... God bless other heroes who are bit by the radioactive spider, or are tripped out on bats, but this is more like something happened that was his own doing. This is his naiveté. This is his own inability to come out of denial and see what effect he was having on life. This is a karma superhero more than anything else.

**AI:** Do you think the movie is more about Tony Stark, or is it about Iron Man? How did you guys work that?

**RD:** Well Tony Stark is Iron Man, but he doesn't know it until he becomes it. And even when he becomes it, he's still very much Tony Stark. It's not like all of the sudden I start being nice to Pepper Potts! [laughter]

**Reporter:** How do you create your image? Do you want to be "cool" on the screen? What kind of image do you want to show?

**RD:** Well I talked to Matt Damon a little bit because I'm shooting in Kuwait and he was just leaving this month long vacation there. He was talking about the director of the *Bourne*...

**Entire Group:** *Ultimatum!* [laughter]

**RD:** *Ultimatum!* So the director would always say, "Don't smile, more butch, right down the line!" And that's a good note [laughs], but I couldn't really stick to it.

**AI:** How often did you wear the armor? Did you actually physically wear it while filming?

**RD:** Oh yeah! There were three guys, me, Oakley, Layman and Mike Justice, and then another guy at the end when we were all to banged up to do it...

**AI:** Was that you doing the sit ups in the armor in that bootleg video of filming from IESB? The guy was in the armor trying to stand up in the video... who was that in the armor?

**RD:** It could've been... but I was more of a squats guy! [laughter all around]

**AI:** It was during the scenes you were shooting were you were fighting the Iron Monger and he's throwing the car...

**RD:** Yeah! That was all three of us depending on what night you were talking about! One of the guys was in the suit... I think it was Justice... and he starts falling over. And I had been in the Mark I suit and its SOO heavy... and they say to him "can you just lean over now?" And I'm holding myself up by a finger and I'm up on my toes when I'm in this big suit! So he comes by and someone had thrown a feed bag or a gun powder bag or whatever it was, but he turned around and hit it. And the discipline that this guy had... what's your instinct when you're falling over and in something heavy and you put out your hands, right? He would have broken both his arms. So he just tucked in both his arms and he took it... right on the face! And I was like "WOW!" I went over and I was like "dude you okay" and he goes [grunting] "this is gonna be an Advil Thursday!" [laughter all around] He got up and he goes, "I'm glad that happened to me first instead of you, because if it does happen to you, then tuck your arms!"

**AI:** Were you blind in the suit? Because in the images we've seen it looks pretty big...

**RD:** Yeah... there'd be times where they'd say "we're all cool now, just put the helmet on!" And then I'd been looking where all my blocking is, and I do that, but then I do a repulsor here or over there, and you turn around and you realize they're like "Okay! Now turn out the lights! Now here we go! And action!" And I'd be blind, or the helmet would close and the line of vision would be there like a knights helmet, but it rode back a little bit so all of a sudden it's up there. [gestures above head with hand]

**AI:** Did they custom fit the suits to you?

**RD:** [sarcastically, deadpan] They custom tailored the suits to the most in shape, and tallest of the stuntmen. [laughter all around]

**Reporter:** Did you hurt yourself at all, during filming?

**RD:** Nothing to speak of. Nothing I would talk about... I was training, but that's the thing, you train so that you can't really tell how injured you are. You know what I mean? That's how guys go on to their next football game, I guess.

**Reporter:** How many weeks of training did you put into the movie?

**RD:** Well I was training for a year for no particular reason in martial arts and weight training and then there was another six months of training. Dude, it took me 18 months just to look like I did not work out at all!

**Reporter:** Did you like the character?

**RD:** Oh yeah! I would like to do a whole bunch more of them!!

**AI:** Robert thanks for talking to us!

**RD:** Thank YOU, are you kiddin'?!



**Reporter:** Who would win in a fight between you and Terrence if you were both in a comic book movie where you were both superheroes who do battle?

**RD:** [ominously] You'll see...

# GWYNETH PALTROW

**AI:** So graceful! [commenting on Gwyneth's recent leg injury around the time of the interview as she walks to our table]

**Gwyneth Paltrow (GP):** Thank you! [laughs] I don't think my surgeon will appreciate me in these heels, but that's okay...

**Reporter:** You don't like risking your life?

**GP:** [joking] I am risking my life... for you, are you appreciating it? [laughter]

**Reporters:** Of course!!

**Reporter:** So how does it feel to be in a superhero movie?

**GP:** Oh, it so great! I never expected to have so much fun and I absolutely loved doing it and I loved my character and working with Robert and Terrence and Jeff Bridges! It was just a great way to come back to work after a few years off.

**Reporter:** When you read the script, which scenes made you say "I want to do this project!"

**GP:** It was even before I read the script! I love Jon Favreau's films; I always wanted to work with Robert Downey Jr., always, always!! I've always loved him... I used to watch him in movies when I was a teenager. He's so brilliant and the combination of Jon, Robert Downey, and Jeff Bridges? I mean... he's the Big Lebowski!! [laughter] I must have watched *Jagged Edge* eight hundred times on beta max growing up! So I've always loved him, and reading the script it was actually really good and so I felt really lucky to be asked to do it.

**AI:** How do you think this stacks up to other sci-fi movies you've done like *Sky Captain*?

**GP:** I think that was my only other one, wasn't it?

**AI:** Yup! Lots of green screen in that one...

**GP:** Well it's a very different experience. That movie was like doing an off Broadway play, because it was all in a blue room and we didn't know what we were doing. I had never done anything like that and it was this experimental thing. That was also interesting to do and I really liked doing it and I'm really glad I did it. But to do a movie like this, where it's Iron Man, and it has this amazing life that precedes the movie and it has a whole group of people that have this fervent passion about it...

**AI:** Pepper is a very strong character...

**GP:** Yeah, she is!

**AI:** Did you get to do a lot of that in the movie? She wasn't just this "damsel in distress." [makes quotations marks with fingers]

**GP:** No, no! She's very strong, she's kind of the moral center of the movie and she's amazing. She's a great character and I love her... I loved playing her.



**Reporter:** Do you relate to her at all? Are you like her?

**GP:** To Pepper? Yeah, I am! I'm very organized, like Pepper! [laughs] But you always bring parts of yourselves into a character. You find parallel things that you have, but I don't have a complicated relationship with a superhero.

**AI:** Do you have a budding relationship at all with the other classic character, Happy Hogan who Pepper is associated with in the books?

**GP:** Am I allowed to talk about this? Where's Kevin Feige? Kevin?

**Reporter:** He said "yeah," we asked him... [laughter]

**AI:** It's a fan driven question, so that one's okay... [winks - laughter]

**GP:** You know, there's sort of room for it, we don't know. Happy Hogan... am I allowed to say that?

**AI:** You know who he is, so that's okay!! But there is a Happy Hogan in the movie...

**GP:** He's in it... you know who he is in it, right? I mean they freak-you-out and are like "don't say this or that."

**AI:** Well then don't say any names then, so we won't get you in trouble!

**Reporter:** What did they say not to say? [laughter]

**GP:** Yeah! Who's playing... [pauses - laughter]

**AI:** We don't want to beat you up about this! [laughs]

**GP:** No, it's okay! Happy Hogan is in the movie... he's in the movie, and I hope Kevin is not going to kill me...

**AI:** He can kill me, it's my fault!

**GP:** [laughs] Okay, fine!! Yes! He's in the movie and they have just a professional relationship in the movie. He doesn't have a big part; it's more of a cameo in the movie.

**Reporter:** Do you have an action sequence in the movie? Did you have to train for the movie?

**GP:** I had to train. I didn't have too much other than an action sequence in the end, but they wanted me in tip-top shape.

**AI:** [joking] Lo and behold, you then break your ankle!

**GP:** [laughs] I know... I did a lot of working out. I did like a twice a day, nightmare, super hard cardio... And then I had this amazing trainer, she's incredible and she just kicked my booty basically.

**Reporter:** *Iron Man* is for the boys, but would you also recommend it for the girls?

**GP:** Oh definitely! This is not like a movie only for guys... there's a lot in it! You know, I think all of the relationship stuff, not just between me and Robert, but between Robert and Jeff Bridges and between Terrence and Robert... it's all really good stuff. So I think that woman will be happy to accompany their guys.

**AI:** I'm not surprised to hear that because Favreau's always seemed to be very character driven...

**GP:** Yeah, exactly. And that's exciting you know? To be in a movie of this scale and scope, but to have those relationships at the heart of it.

**AI:** Jon is a really funny guy... did he bring that to the movie? Were you guys having fun and laughing while making the movie?

**GP:** Yeah! Oh I had a great time! There's a lot of good humor... Jon is very, very dry. But a lot of my relationship with Robert there's a very playful, funny side to the relationship.

**Reporter:** Beyond the visual treat and the popcorn side of the movie, what is this movie about for you? Is this a superhero movie... a metaphor for life and our society?

**GP:** Well, I think the reason that superhero movies appeal so much is because it appeals to the side of us that we all know that we have untapped potential. We all have dreams of what we could be and what we're capable of. We all have sides to ourselves that are difficult to understand or are difficult to metabolize, you know? And all superheroes seem to have a dark side as well so I think that it's an amazing metaphor for the struggle to be human and it's just a kind of blown up version of that. I think that's why it resonates so much!



**Reporter:** Now that you are a mother, do you imagine your kids playing with your action figure? [laughter all around]

**GP:** That might be a little weird. But you never know, you never know.

**Reporter:** Did you like the red hair?

**GP:** I did like the red hair very much, yeah! It worked, it was good!

**Reporter:** One final thing... when *Iron Man* becomes the biggest movie of next year and they immediately green light more movies, do you plan on going back?

**GP:** Definitely! I had such a great time. I felt so lucky to be a part of it, and I hope that they make tons of them!

**AI:** You're Pepper Potts now! We don't want anyone else!

**GP:** [laughs] Thanks!

**AI:** Thank you, it was so great talking to you!

**GP:** Thank you, you too!

# TERRANCE HOWARD

**Reporter:** What do you see in these superhero movies? Are they a response to a lack of leadership that we have today?

**Terrence Howard (TH):** Well you gotta remember when Stan Lee first introduced the Iron Man characters in the 70's [EDITOR'S NOTE: ACTUALLY THE 60'S, BUT HOWARD'S POINT IS ACCURATE... -IMJ], it was a time when the world was in social upheaval because of lack of accountability with the government. The lack of moral judgment with how smaller countries are minorities so to speak, were being treated. And here you took a man who decided to stand up and make a difference. Someone who could benefit or profit from it and said "no, I don't want to profit at the cost of losing my humanity." So, yeah! I think these are the only ways that you can really make statements against the government that might be lasting and might have an impact. The children will watch it and know that certain things are not acceptable. Certain times, somebody has to stand up. It's like that song by Kenny Rogers, "The Coward of the County" you know, sometimes you have to fight when you're a man. And that's what I love about Iron Man because he decides to stand up and fight.

**Reporter:** Do you think this is a movie that will do okay for the kids?

**TH:** Oh, it's gonna do great! Even with the action! Because this is really the only superhero that any child can become. With the X-Men, you had to be born with that mutant gene. With the Avengers, you had to have flown through that cosmic cloud [EDITORS NOTE: OF COURSE TERRANCE MEANT THE FF, BUT AGAIN, HIS POINT IS CLEAR... -AHEM- -IMJ]. You know, how many people are going to do that? But anyone at this table that has the ingenuity or the imagination to sit up and say "I'm going to run some electrodes through a suit, I'm going to create a repulsor ray," which is just taking an electromagnetic field and reversing it, and catching it at a stage where it becomes light, where right before the light blends in with it. Light travels in an electro magnetic field, it's the road that it paves, and this is someone that any child that wants to become a scientist can create the suit!

**AI:** They gave you a really great character in that the character that you are playing [NOTE: As soon as I started saying this, Terrence knocked over one of the reporter's recorders and comedy ensued]... aside from being the one that breaks tape recorders! [laughter all around]

**TH:** [laughing] YOU tapped on the table! YOU shook it up!

[laughter all around -Terrence speaks directly into the microphone stating: "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry!"- laughter all around]

**AI:** [laughing]... the character you are playing is really kind of a leading man unto himself! I mean, you are playing a character that could carry his own movie, that had to be great!

**TH:** Yes! And then I only had to work a couple days on this movie, because most of this is about Tony Stark. But the implications of me being able to go and put on the suit and war with Tony Stark himself, and go crazy, and then have my own suit made, and then to run and fight with the Avengers, oh man!

**AI:** How much of that is set up in this movie? How much of that is established?

**TH:** Everything is pending on how this movie is received. And judging from being here at comic con, I think that this movie is going to do well. But we've got a hurdle to get over. *Transformers* was the bomb! *300* was the bomb! It's a new age for sci-fi and special effects and we've got to match that... and fortunately we get to come out a year later and we haven't even gone to do any of those special effects yet. I think we are going to do well. I think we are going to do really well.

**Reporter:** Do the special effects get in your way?

**TH:** No, no! It's all special effects in the mind... we're wishing, we're pretending to feel something that we actually start to feel, but don't get to see. But now as the audience, we have help! I don't have to pretend that I'm looking over here and hope that the audience catches the emotional stage that I'm watching lilacs fly across the sky, or hummingbirds. We can actually turn to it and the audience can feel with me

**AI:** It carries the story...

**TH:** Yes! So you actually do less when you have special effects, than when you don't have them. You do less when you have CGI than when you don't have them because you have the imagination of the CGI experts, of the director, of ILM to fill it in!

**Reporter:** Did you feel like a kid?

**TH:** Oh please! A kid that could drive! They put me in that F16 and I got to fly, dude! I got to fly and I had a wingman like right here! You know? I got to go up a ton of times... I got throw up 8, 9 times! [laughter all around]

**AI:** I've heard that they really make the airforce look like rockstars in this movie. I've heard that they were really portrayed very well.

**TH:** I have never been a fan of the armed forces... I was always a fan of an archaic society... and barbarism! I just like the idea of everybody standing on their own. But then the cadence that these people live by... the honor, it means something. The commitment, it means something! I mean, you know, my life could have been different because it let me know what was my backbone! My backbone was service and so what James Rhodes attacks is that battle between following the rules and sometimes knowing when to break them.

**Reporter:** You were joking around on stage about working on a film that now had a budget. Were there any mind blowing moments for you coming from something like *Hustle 'N Flow* to *Iron Man*, like a mega-difference or huge?

**TH:** When we had the entire airforce base, we didn't have to put a couple of cops in a uniform or a couple of actors in a uniform, and to shoot in a B1, to actually use F22's in the shooting, that was a hit! It was a hit! They could spend ten million dollars in a day! In one day!

**Reporter:** It's like the cost of one of your independent movies!

**TH:** *Crash* and *Hustle 'N Flow* together cost nine million dollars to make. And we spent that in one day on some of the shots.

**AI:** Did you have to do any green screen acting or anything like that?

**TH:** Unfortunately... yes.

**AI:** Is it really hard to do?

**TH:** No! It's easy! It's easy because now it's just you! You know? It's like Bethoven said, when you create music and play music and someone's listening to it, you've drawn the audience into your heart. So as an actor there with a green screen, I've got an entire orchestra of light and possibilities that I can draw an audience in.

**Reporter:** I read somewhere to that you mentioned going up in the sky, and experienced that. But I also recall that you got to shoot some pretty big guns?

**TH:** Yes, M50's where the bullets are this big [EDITOR'S NOTE: BIG BULLETS! -IMJ]. I mean so where I shot that door it would just fall off and they let me use live rounds. When you are in the middle of the desert shooting something 300 yards away, and watching it go to pieces. A bus! Being able to split a bus all the way down from 300 yards away! Dude, I was hit... oooooohh!

**AI:** What's your relationship, your character's relationship to Stark when the movie starts? Are you already friends?

**TH:** Yeah, well I'm a liason to Stark Industries for the acquisitions department of the United States Airforce. So the person I deal with directly is Tony Stark. That's who I deal with every day. You know, I say this is a viable weapon, this is something that you might be able to use, this is something that the Marines might be more willing to buy. And so we have such a friendship from being at MIT together, we worked that something we've worked into the backstory. So I've known him for twenty years, we are friendly enough to say "You know, you're in some #\$\$%@ right now." I can be real with him!

**AI:** Thank you!

**TH:** Thanks guys!

# GIVING IRON MAN DIRECTION

By Inez Waldron

Why was Jon Favreau the right man to sit in the director's chair for *Iron Man*? When I was asked this I knew immediately. But then, I have been a Jon Favreau fan for years. I knew nothing about the Iron Man story when Jon signed on, yet I was excited for him. Not everyone gets the chance to direct a film that could be so huge. This is a Marvel project after all. Not just any Marvel project, but their first project completely in control of their own product. I knew this was big.

While Jon has been in many films as an actor, *Iron Man* is only his fourth foray behind the camera for a feature film. Some people wondered how he could even land such a huge gig. I can only venture this - vision, baby, vision. While many Iron Man comic fans young and old expressed their dismay at such an "inexperienced" director being at the helm of their beloved Iron Man, some of them bellowing their shock and disdain from the rooftops of the internet, I sat back sure as anything Marvel had chosen wisely.

How is he qualified though? That is what everyone questioned. Those people that sought out his older works and watched, trying to make sense of this choice, hopefully figured it out. While Jon is perfectly capable as an actor, excellent even, it was his writing that made a fan of me. It started with the rental of *Swingers* in 1997. After much laughing, rewinding and laughing some more, I discovered the genius of Jon's writing style. That genius writer, the one that showed himself through his words, is the one that I believe will make this movie something special. Of course Jon also brings his experience in front of the camera with him. Surely the fact that he knew what he was doing there and knows how actors think helps when he is behind the camera. Being able to relate to your actors on the same plane of thought must be beneficial, but also having the ability as a writer to relate your own stories so well is quite a bonus when telling someone else's.

While Jon did not write the *Iron Man* screenplay, I believe his writing experience helps him to keep the story in-line with what Marvel wants while also allowing him room for adjustments. As a writer it takes a great amount of vision, being able to see where the story should go. And with a history of smartly written dialogue under his belt we can feel confident that Jon will

never let Lucas-like, embarrassing dialogue make it to screen. And don't let the credits fool you, Jon has had his hand in quite a few more screenplays than he has credit for.

Because of the setup of rules of the Writer's Guild of America - just because you wrote some or most of a screenplay doesn't mean you get credit on a film. Jon has actually made a living through touching up screenplays over the years, though the credits tend to favor the original writer even if little is left of their work in the final draft.



Having experience in several facets of filmmaking - as actor, writer and director, can only help when bringing the final product together. Some actors try their hand at directing and fail miserably because they don't have that necessary ingredient to pull it all together - vision.

That is the thing that sets the great ones apart from the rest, and that is something I believe Jon does have. Using the knowledge gained from those different perspectives has added a polish and depth to Jon's directorial efforts but it is his vision as a writer, knowing where the story should go, that has made all of them positive endeavors.

Jon has already had success directing, with the hugely popular Will Ferrell holiday comedy, *Elf*. Though to the public that was a Will Ferrell movie and most probably could not name the director. *Iron Man* is the movie that will show the rest of the world what Jon is capable of and should put him on that list of director's names that the public actually knows. This is the moment for his career to really take off, earning the respect and admiration of the masses as we, Jon's longtime fans, have respected and admired him for many years. The great buzz *Iron Man* received on the internet at sites like our very own Advanced Iron, Ain't It Cool News and in magazines like Entertainment Weekly after the teaser was shown at San Diego Comic-Con makes me feel I might very well be right.

WE ASKED INEZ FROM FAVREAUFANS.NET TO LEND HER FAVREAU FAN-INSIGHT TO OUR READERS REGARDING FAV'S PLACE IN IRON MAN HISTORY. CHECK OUT THAT GROUP'S GREAT WEBSITE, AND THANKS TO INEZ FOR HER INSIGHT BOTH HERE, AT [HER WEBSITE](#) AND ON THE [IRON MAN MYSPACE GROUP!](#) -IMJ



# IRON ABILITY COMPARISON

## COMICS V. RPG

By Michael D. Klein

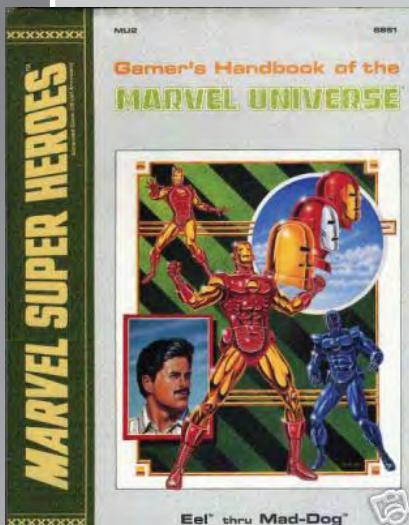
What can Iron Man do? It's a question that has been debated in forums, written about in handbooks and websites, but is never really resolved. There are some well accepted sources of information including the Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe (OHOTMU) and Advanced Iron's own website (A.I. ARMORY), and these sources are generally accepted as reliable. I recently was reintroduced to a source of information about the Marvel Universe I had almost forgotten about – the Marvel Superheroes Role-Playing Game (MSHRPG). This game was produced by TSR under license back in the 80's, and was a lot of fun to play. Anyone I've ever known who's played it will tell you that although the game itself was fun, they had as much or more fun simply reading the character biographies. As a game the bios came complete with stats for all character abilities and powers along with their history. This made reading the various entries a lot like reading the Official Handbook and I discovered many characters I had never heard of before. The comics Iron Man has appeared in and the things he has done there are the ultimate judge of what the character can do, but after I got an e-mail from Ironman John Comerford asking me to do an article for Advanced Iron, I decided to do a comparison between the stats in the MSHRPG and our "accepted" sources. I've personally found them to be a fun read and I think they can add something to long discussion of what our favorite hero can really do.

Before we get to the fun stuff let's take a moment to look at what we are getting into with the MSHRPG statistics. Marvel Superheroes uses a series of descriptive ranks to describe how powerful a character's different abilities are. While this is great for the game, it doesn't help us much here. For one thing, the OHOTMU and A.I. Armory don't get as specific with their information – i.e. they might mention that the armor has a fire extinguisher, but won't try to quantify how big a fire it can put out. The MSHRPG on the other hand has to mention such things, because a player may want to use Iron Man to put out a fire during a game session and will need to know if that's possible. Another problem with the MSHRPG stats is their sheer volume. For this article, I've looked at five variations of the Classic Golden Avenger, three of the Silver Centurion, and two of the Neo-Classic. These were dispersed amongst a handful of sourcebooks I used for research, namely Weapons Locker, Avengers Assembled, Avengers Coast-to-Coast, MSHRPG Advanced Set Judges Book, and the Gamers' Handbook of the Marvel Universe. The two Avengers titles might seem repetitive, but the game had two different sets (Basic and Advanced), and each set had an Avengers book. It wouldn't be a problem to have all this source material if it all matched, but it doesn't. As a matter of fact, some of these titles are down right bad or don't make sense.

The worst offender is also the most disappointing because of its pedigree and potential – the Gamers' Handbook of the

Marvel Universe. Based on the actual OHOTMU, it was a loose-leaf binder system that was updated yearly until the end of the game's run. Of the rest, two offer short entries with less features for Iron Man's armor (Avengers Assembled and the Advanced Judges Book) and one (Avengers Coast-to-Coast) gives a medium length entry that corrects many of the errors the Gamers' Handbook made in the Advanced Set rules. The last book, despite being written as a source for the "Basic" system, is by far the best of the bunch and the main source of information in this article. Weapons Locker was a sourcebook for battlesuits and weapons in the MSHRPG and features entries for several armors including the Crimson Dynamo, Titanium Man, Sunturion, and even the dreaded Man-Elephant. The entries for Iron Man are the longest I've ever seen for the game, and cover most of the conceivable features of the armors. All you I.M. fans who loved the Iron Manual will get a kick out of this book, and the good news is that you can download a copy off the internet for free in PDF. I used [www.marvelrpg.net](http://www.marvelrpg.net) to get the copy I have, so check it out.

Without any further ado, let's get to the good stuff! I've chosen three standard-use armors from the period the game was produced, mentioned above, and have broken the comparisons down into categories – Armor Construction, Mobility, Weapons, Ability Amplifications, and Gadgets. Enjoy!





# ARMOR I: CLASSIC GOLDEN AVENGER

(Classified as Mark V by all three sources)

## ARMOR CONSTRUCTION

### OHOTMU

**Surface/primary layer:** High carbon, steel, iron alloy, including trace technetium-niobium arranged in a finely tessellated mail.

**Secondary layer:** Comprised of various thermoelectric power generators magnetic beam generators, temperature insulators and regulators

**Tertiary layer:** Consists of 2 independent, 'crimped' armature electric motors that are aligned at right angles to each other which can simulate human musculature movement.

**Special features:** Each layer possesses integrated communication, power handling and control circuitry -with regions which contain certain large area specializations, such as the simulation of a specific muscle.

**Note:** Suits' microscopic scale chain mail is made rigid by numerous, computer controlled magnetic beam generators. These generators can sense and amplify the suit wearer's motions and strength. Discrete networks of them are arranged, in conjunction with the full-body system of DC motors, to mimic the function of human musculature.

### Life support:

**Range:** High altitude to deep water: 70,000 feet above to 1,000 feet below sea level.

**Air supply duration:** 1.7 hours

**Pressure:** Normal atmosphere (14.7 psi) provided internally over a wide external range.

**Temperature:** 73° F. internal, over -185° Fahrenheit to 2,500° F external. 85°-140° internal, over 2,500°-15,000° F external.

Environment design program:

**Type:** Full spectrum chemical, biological, nuclear environment

**Range:** 2 months on filtered external air

**Exposure:** Low level radiation over 2 month period, suit can tolerate short periods of high radiation. by stepping up magnetic beam generator's activity.

In our first comparison the MSHRPG is similar to our two trusted sources. The OHOTMU is more detailed and gives the suit more environmental capability especially in the area of temperature extremes. The other big difference you will notice is that the MSHRPG description has "ranks" in it used during game play to denote how powerful/intense something is compared to something else. These ranks will appear through out the article and for reference are (in ascending order of magnitude): feeble, poor, typical, good, excellent, remarkable, incredible, amazing, monstrous, unearthly, shift x, shift y, shift z, class 1000, class 5000, and beyond. I have placed a reference for ranks in parenthesis as a guide to what they mean if applicable.



### A.I. Armory

Semi-rigid interior/3-D knitted metallic exterior made from actual, ordinary iron provided protection from physical attacks as well as heat, cold, some energy forms, and acid. A new 3-D knitting pattern on a sub molecular construction level gives the armor itself more strength, while allowing for the most comfortable suit interior to date including maintaining its ability to collapse for storage into a briefcase. It used a magnetic field to bring the armor into its rigid state.

### MSHRPG

Electric-powered, iron-alloy, molecular-scale chain mail maintained by an enclosed magnetic field. Made of Remarkable material (Re-enforced concrete, steel) bolstered by the magnetic field to Amazing material (Osmium steel, Granite) when in operation. It provides Amazing protection from physical and energy attacks (heavy artillery, Light Anti-Tank Weapon), Unearthly resistance to radiation and electricity (there are no natural forces on Earth that produce levels of either at this rank; atomic bombs produce only Monstrous radiation), and Remarkable protection from heat, cold, and acid (-30 degrees to 150 degrees; all but the most concentrated of corrosives).

**MOBILITY**

**OHOTMU**

**Type:** Each boot contains two miniature, magnetically powered turbines which compress ambient air into incandescence to generate thrust.

**Range:** Practically unlimited at moderate speeds.

**Maximum speed:** Mach 1.2 (960 mph).

**Lift capacity:** 2,700 lbs.

**Range:** About 1,800 miles (100% load), 3,500 miles (50% load)

**Note:** Unloaded, the suit can attain an altitude of 70,000 feet. At maximum load the average altitude is 8,000 feet.

**Fuel:** Ambient air.

**Navigation:** Suit is equipped with internal guidance, laser gyroscopic movement sensor and LORAN C as mutual / redundant navigation and ground positioning aids.

**Special features:** Each boot is equipped with small cryogenic storage tanks containing liquid air which are able to fuel the miniturbines in non-atmospheric environments.

**A.I. Armory**

**Boot Jets (Mark 4).** Incorporates a high-speed gyro-stabilized turbine in each boot.

**Roller Skates:** Collapsed into the boots of the armor.

**MSHRPG**

**Flight:** High-speed gyro-stabilized turbines located in the boots. Normal flight at Monstrous speeds (roughly Mach 1), and Boot-jets maybe used as weapons that cause Incredible (roughly as good as a cutting torch or laser).

**Roller Skates:** Roller Skates are installed within the boots of the armor. The wearer can reach maximum speed of 105 mph using the skates on a smooth surface.

The OHOTMU once again gives more detail and an increased level of ability (Mach 1.2); it also does not mention the Roller Skates (I wonder why?). The Armory doesn't list any details, but does contain the same mobility features (including the Skates) as the MSHRPG. The game does go one step farther with the Skates as it lists a maximum land speed.

**ABILITY MODIFICATIONS**

**OHOTMU**

The armor enables its wearer to lift (press) approximately 50 tons under standard operating conditions.

**Limits:** When directly tapping a sufficiently potent power source, the armor can be boosted to Class 100 strength (able to lift in excess of 100 tons) for several seconds at the risk of having a total systems seize-up.

**A.I. Armory:** n/a

**MSHRPG**

The armor grants its wearer the following enhancements: Raises Fighting by 2 ranks (maximum of Excellent), raises Agility by 2 ranks (maximum of Excellent), raises Strength by 5 ranks (maximum of Incredible), and raises Endurance by 6 ranks (maximum of Monstrous).

**Override:** The armor is equipped with internal safety mechanisms to prevent overloading of designed systems. These interfaces may be consciously bypassed to increase abilities. Strength or Repulsor damage may be raised to Unearthly (100+ tons strength or Repulsor damage equal to nuclear blast force 400 yards from ground zero) in this fashion. Any other single ability may be raised by a single rank through override. Each round (one comic panel) override is maintained there is a chance the armor is immobilized and must be repaired.

This is the section that requires the most explanation. The OHOTMU gives the best resource for Iron Man's strength level in the Mark V. Outside of that, and acknowledging that his durability is superhuman, most of Tony's abilities in the armor are normal for a man his age and physical shape (with the exception of his intelligence which is genius). The MSHRPG description is probably confusing to you unless you've seen or played the game. Battlesuits in MSHRPG raise the base character's (Tony Stark in this case) normal physical scores by a certain amount of ranks up to a maximum score. So if someone weaker than Tony puts on the armor they will not be as strong as he is as Iron Man. Speaking of Tony, the maximums for the armor match his scores in the game, so there is no unused potential when he's in the suit. Now to define what exactly those scores mean – Excellent Fighting is the equivalent of a trained professional combatant like members of the armed forces, Excellent Agility is the equivalent of professional athlete particularly an Olympic gymnast, Incredible Strength is the ability to lift 10 tons with difficulty, and Monstrous Endurance means being able to survive in a vacuum and rarely tires. Endurance is also a measure of durability and Monstrous put Iron Man on par with the Thing. The first thing you might notice is that Iron Man is listed as only being able to lift 10 tons! With difficulty! I stated at the beginning of the article that I thought the MSHRPG was a good source of information, but in this area it's just plain wrong. Iron Man's strength score should have been Amazing (50 tons with difficulty).

**WEAPONS**

**OHOTMU**

**Major:** Repulsor rays

**Description:** Particle beam emission units; microscopic matter projected at the speed of light. Speed can be reduced cybernetically by dampers at point of origin to lessen power level and control destructive force.

**Range:** 40 feet

**Limits:** The suit palm blasters are able to fire for very short periods of time. The duty cycle allows for a 25% cooling period.

**Secondary:** Suit skin

**Description:** The outer surface of the armor is equipped with devices which are able to convert thermal energy into usable electricity. Above a certain temperature the suit employs an electronic cooling network to protect the suit operator

**Limits:** About 15,000° Fahrenheit

**Note:** The suit can optimally function over a range of -185° F to 15,000°

**A.I. Armory**

**Unibeam (Mark 3):** variable intensity light source. Can be focused for use as a spotlight or fine-focused for use as a laser.

**Sonic Emitter:** generates and broadcasts high frequency sound waves.

**Palm Repulsors (Mark 3):** laser-guided particle beam emission units mounted in the palm of each hand.

**MSHRPG**

**Repulsors:** Medium-density plasma projectors located in each gauntlet. Outlet located in palm of gauntlet. Range of 10 areas (approx. 440 yards!), maybe fired at separate targets, and inflict up to Amazing (heavy artillery) damage. May inflict less damage at the discretion of the user.

**Uni-Beam:** Chest-mounted high-intensity lamp. Illuminates up to 3 areas (132 yards) away and is of Remarkable intensity (hard to judge how bright this is, although it is stated as being capable of blinding another character). The beam maybe narrowed to produce a laser. This laser has a range of 3 areas (132 yards) and inflicts Incredible damage (similar to the Boot-jets) which cannot be varied. Illumination from the Uni-Beam extends into the ultraviolet and infrared bands of the spectrum.

**Sonic Attack:** Mechanisms within the helmet may project an omni-directional high-frequency sound wave with a range of 3 areas (132 yard radius centered on armor). Sonic Attack may inflict up to Amazing damage (deafening with internal damage to organs) to all within those areas. In addition those in affected areas must make an Endurance roll or be stunned for 1-10 rounds (each round equal to one comic book panel).

The OHOTMU which is normally a source of great detail is rather short here. It doesn't even mention the Uni-Beam which I consider to be a staple Iron Man weapon. The difference between the Armory and MSHRPG's description is the rankings applied by the game. I should also be noted that the MSHRPG's range for the Repulsors is many times that of the OHOTMU. Which is more accurate? It's debatable, I find the Handbook's range somewhat sort (40 ft.?) and the game's range somewhat long (it's four and a half football fields!).

**GADGETS**

OHOTMU: n/a

**A.I. Armory**

Oxygen Supply, Force Field, Storage Pods, Voice Distorter, Subterranean Equipment, Freon Emitters, Fire Extinguisher, Magnetic Control.

**MSHRPG**

Air Supply, Fire Extinguisher, Energy Absorption, Energy Pods, Tractor Beam, Nightvision Lens, Sensors, Freon Tablets, Multi-Band Radio, Sonic Distorter, ECM, Reverse Magnetism, Eye Protection, Image Projection (12 Iron Man images), Digging Ability, and Storage Briefcase.

Each of the entries for the MSHRPG does have a definition and a power rank, but I thought listing each in this article would make it far too long. What is interesting is that none of them seem out of place or incorrect, even though it does list some that is not in the A.I. Armory list.

# ARMOR 2: SILVER CENTURION

(Classified as Mark VII by Advanced Iron, as the Mark VI by OHOTMU/MSHRPG)

## ARMOR CONSTRUCTION

### OHOTMU

**Surface/primary layer:** Molecularly aligned crystallized iron over a base of titanium nitride. Metalized paint is precise thickness to destructively interfere with RADAR band microwaves.

**Secondary layer:** Comprised of various thermoelectric power generators, magnetic beam generators, temperature insulators and regulators

**Tertiary layer:** Consists of 2 independent, 'crimped' armature electric motors that are aligned at right angles to each other which can simulate human musculature movement.

**Special features:** Each layer possesses integrated communication, power handling and control circuitry-with regions which contain certain large area specializations, such as the simulation of a specific muscle.

**Note:** Suit's microscopic scale chain mail is made rigid by numerous, computer controlled magnetic beam generators. These generators can sense and amplify the suit wearer's motions and strength. Discrete networks of them are arranged, in conjunction with the full-body system of DC motors, to mimic the function of human musculature.

### Life support:

**Range:** High altitude to deep water: 130,000 feet above to 1,800 feet below sea level.

**Air supply duration:** 1.2 hours

**Pressure:** Normal atmosphere (14.7 pounds per square inch) maintained internally over a wide range of external pressures.

**Temperature:** 73° F. internal, over -185° Fahrenheit to 2,500° F external. 85°-140° internal, over 2,500°-15,000° F. external.

### Environment design program:

**Type:** Full spectrum chemical, biological, nuclear environment

**Range:** 2 months on filtered external air.

**Exposure:** Low level radiation over 2 month period, suit can tolerate short periods of high radiation by stepping up magnetic beam generator's activity.

### A.I. Armory

Rigid interior/3-D knitted metallic exterior provided protection from physical attacks as well as acid, heat, cold, most forms of energy, radiation, and electricity. A 3-D knitting pattern on a sub molecular construction level gives the armor itself more strength, while allowing for the most comfortable suit interior.



### MSHRPG

Electric-powered, iron-alloy, molecular-scale chain mail maintained by an enclosed magnetic field. Made of Remarkable material (Re-enforced concrete, steel) bolstered by the magnetic field to Amazing material (Osmium steel, Granite) when in operation. It provides Amazing protection from physical and energy attacks (heavy artillery, Light Anti-Tank Weapon), Unearthly resistance to radiation and electricity (there are no natural forces on Earth that produce levels of either at this rank; atomic bombs produce only Monstrous radiation), and Remarkable protection from heat and cold (-30 degrees to 150 degrees). The armor's resistance to acid increases in this model to Incredible making it immune to even concentrated corrosives.

These descriptions are pretty similar to the previous Mark V descriptions. It's interesting to note that the MSHRPG gives the Silver Centurion better resistance to acid.

MOBILITY

**OHOTMU**

**Type:** Electric powered turbines in boots and jet pack

**Maximum speed:** Mach 1.2 (960 mph).

**Lift capacity:** Normal flight configuration 3,200 lbs. High thrust: 5,300 lbs.

**Range:** N.F.C.: About 2,000 miles (100% load), 3,900 miles, 50% load. H.T: About 800 miles (100% load), 1,000 miles (50% load), about 7,500 miles (unloaded, ballistic flight).

**Fuel:** Solar energy converted to electricity to power exceptionally efficient turbines.

**A.I. Armory**

**Boot Jets (Mark 4):** Incorporates high-speed duo-source turbines in the boots.

**Booster Pack:** A separate twin engine rocket system. It enables the armor to attain speeds up to 750mph in the air and 180mph in the water.

**MSHRPG**

**Flight:** The armor generates an anti-gravity field. Stark uses thrusters in the boots and backpack for steering. The armor can exceed Mach 1 speeds, and is considered to move at Shift X speed, a maximum of 50 areas (2200 yards) per round flying in clear areas. The boot thrusters may be used as weapons, inflicting Remarkable damage at a range of 1 area (44 yards).

**Booster Pack:** A separate twin engine rocket system. Shift X air speed (750 mph) and water speed (180 mph).

The OHOTMU gives no boost to the new armors flight at all, instead it repeats the previous model's information in terms of speed. It does make changes to the other information, but it seems disappointing that with the big boost pack Tony can only go as fast as he could before. The A.I. Armory's description of the Booster Pack seems familiar doesn't it? It seems I'm not the only one reading the *Marvel Superheroes Role-Playing Game*. I have to admit that in this section I've gone to other sources besides *Weapons Locker*, namely the *Advanced Set Judges Book* (for the Flight stats) and the *Gamers' Handbook of the Marvel Universe* (Booster Pack), due to *Weapons Locker's* lack of info on this armor. It's clear reading *Weapons Locker* that the authors had only ever seen the Silver Centurion in issue #200, as the only features they gives for it (other than the ones carried over from the Golden Avenger) are the ones seen in that issue. This means they carried over the Flight data from the previous model. The Booster Pack is just all wrong however as it doesn't add any speed to the suit at all. The only set of stats that even lists it in MSHRPG is in the *Gamers' Handbook*, and is one reason why I don't trust it as a source.

ABILITY MODIFICATIONS

**OHOTMU**

The armor enables its wearer to lift (press) approximately 70 tons under standard operating conditions.

**Limits:** When directly tapping a sufficiently potent power source, the armor can be boosted to Class 100 strength (able to lift in excess of 100 tons) for several seconds at the risk of having a total systems seize-up.

**A.I. Armory:** n/a

First, one of the things I love most about the OHOTMU is that the strength score just keeps moving up! Not that it's all about strength, but come on, Iron Man deserves to be one of Marvel's heavy-hitters. Which is why it's so disappointing that I.M.'s ranking in the MSHRPG is exactly the same as it was for the Mark V. The Suit is improved in every way, but still Iron Man is struggling to lift 10 tons. His strength ranking should have been Amazing (50 tons with difficulty) or possibly Monstrous (80 tons with difficulty) even though it'd be rounding up.

**MSHRPG**

The armor grants its wearer the following enhancements: Raises Fighting by 2 ranks (maximum of Excellent), raises Agility by 3 ranks (maximum of Remarkable), raises Strength by 5 ranks (maximum of Incredible), and raises Endurance by 6 ranks (maximum of Monstrous).

**Override:** The armor is equipped with internal safety mechanisms to prevent overloading of designed systems. These interfaces may be consciously bypassed to increase abilities. Strength or Repulsor damage may be raised to Unearthly (100+ tons strength or Repulsor damage equal to nuclear blast force 400 yards from ground zero) in this fashion. Any other single ability may be raised by a single rank through override. Each round (one comic panel) override is maintained there is a chance the armor is immobilized and must be repaired.

## WEAPONS

**OHOTMU**

**Major:** Repulsor rays

**Description:** Particle beam emission units; microscopic matter projected at the speed of light. Speed can be reduced cybernetically by dampers at point of origin to lessen power level and control destructive force.

**Range:** 40 feet

**Limits:** The suit palm blasters are able to fire for very short periods of time. The duty cycle allows for a 25% cooling period.

**Secondary:** Uni-beam

**Description:** The uni-beam is the blanket term for all of the armor's various light beams (visible, infrared, ultraviolet, and laser).

**Range:** About 25 to 100 feet

**A.I. Armory**

**Unibeam (Mark 3):** Multi-band light and force beam emitter.

Can be adjusted for a variety of effects such as search light, heat beams, tractor beam, lasers, image inducers, and ultraviolet light.

**Sonic Emitter:** Generates and broadcasts high frequency sound waves.

**Palm Repulsors (Mark 3):** Laser-guided particle beam emission units mounted in the palm of each hand.

**Pulse Bolts:** High energy plasma discharge "torpedoes" that build in intensity as they travel through the atmosphere, picking up static and ambient energy. However, they are slow-moving projectiles, easily dodged. Heat Beam. Disruptor Field.

**MSHRPG**

**Repulsors:** Medium-density plasma projectors located in each gauntlet. Outlet located in palm of gauntlet. Range of 10 areas (approx. 440 yards!), maybe fired at separate targets, and inflict up to Amazing (heavy artillery) damage. May inflict less damage at the discretion of the user.

**Uni-Beam:** Chest-mounted high-intensity lamp. Illuminates up to 3 areas (132 yards) away and is of Remarkable intensity (hard to judge how bright this is, although it is stated as being capable of blinding another character). The beam maybe narrowed to produce a laser. This laser has a range of 3 areas (132 yards) and inflicts Incredible damage (similar to the Boot-jets) which cannot be varied. Illumination from the Uni-Beam extends into the ultraviolet and infrared bands of the spectrum.

**Pulse-Bolts:** High-density pulsed plasma projectors located in the wrist of each gauntlet. Range of 10 areas (approx. 440 yards), and inflicts Monstrous damage (cruise missile). May not inflict less than Monstrous damage, and may disintegrate material of Remarkable (re-enforced concrete) or less material.

**Thermal Beam:** Also a component of the chest-plate assembly, the thermal beam is a high-intensity heat beam. Inflicts Incredible (laser) damage up to 3 areas (132 yards) away, and will melt metals of less than Incredible material strength.

**Disruptor Field:** Generated from gauntlets, may be directed up to 2 areas (88 yards) away. Overloads electronic equipment and guidance systems with Remarkable intensity.

The big news here is the Pulse-Bolts and Disruptor Field, both items seen for the first time in issue #200 as part of the "new" Iron Man. The MSHRPG version of Pulse-Bolts doesn't capture the most unique feature about them, namely that they get more powerful as they travel through the air. That would change in the next version of the Iron Man armor (see below) when the Pulse-Bolts started out doing Good damage and grew to Unearthly the farther they went. It's hard to say in concrete terms what it means when the Disruptor Field can overload equipment with Remarkable intensity, other than most electronics would run at a Typical intensity which is several ranks lower. Also of interest is the fact that the Sonic Attack has been removed from the MSHRPG list.

## GADGETS

**OHOTMU:** n/a

**A.I. Armory**

Sonic Distorter, Life Support Equipment, Force Field, Voice Distorter, Subterranean Equipment, Absorption Field Grid, Hologram Emitter, Chameleon Field, ECM Equipment, Sensors.

**MSHRPG**

Force Field, Energy Absorption, Air Supply, Energy Storage, Detection Equipment, Multi-Band Radio, Sonic Distorter, ECM, Protected Senses.

The Silver Centurion never really received as good or detailed an entry as the Mark V did. TSR's *Weapons Locker* came out just after the Mark VII debuted and it's entry reflects that fact as all the features listed were used in *Iron Man Vol. 1 #200*. The other two entries I have for it are both shorter on features and details; although the stats listed in the *Advanced Set Judges Book* are the best adaptation for the advanced rules (*Weapons Locker* was a Basic Set book). The *Gamers' Handbook* is both the shortest entry and the worst for details, and once again what could have been an amazing addition to the game comes up short. That being said, the list of features matches A.I.'s Armory list pretty well even if some of the features were renamed.

# ARMOR 3: NEO-CLASSIC

(Classified as Mark VIII by Advanced Iron/MSHRPG, as the Mark VII by OHOTMU)

## ARMOR COMPOSITION

### OHOTMU

**Surface/primary layer:** Molecularly aligned crystallized iron over a base of titanium nitride. Metalized paint is precise thickness to destructively interfere with RADAR band microwaves.

**Secondary layer:** Comprised of various thermoelectric power generators, magnetic beam generators, temperature insulators and regulators

**Tertiary layer:** Consists of 2 independent, 'crimped' armature electric motors that are aligned at right angles to each other which can simulate human musculature movement.

**Special features:** Each layer possesses integrated communication, power handling and control circuitry-with regions which contain certain large area specializations, such as the simulation of a specific muscle.

**Note:** Suit's microscopic scale chain mail is made rigid by numerous, computer controlled magnetic beam generators. These generators can sense and amplify the suit wearer's motions and strength. Discrete networks of them are arranged, in conjunction with the full-body system of DC motors, to mimic the function of human musculature.

### Life support:

**Range:** High altitude to deep water: 130,000 feet above to 1,800 feet below sea level.

**Air supply duration:** 1.2 hours

**Pressure:** Normal atmosphere (14.7 pounds per square inch) maintained internally over a wide range of external pressures.

**Temperature:** 73° F. internal, over -185° Fahrenheit to 2,500° F external. 85°-140° internal, from 2,500°-15,000° F. external.

### Environment design program:

**Type:** Full spectrum chemical, biological, nuclear environment

**Range:** 2 months on filtered external air.

**Exposure:** Low level radiation over 2 month period, suit can tolerate short periods of high radiation by stepping up magnetic beam generator's activity.

### A.I. Armory

Rigid interior/3-D knitted metallic exterior provided protection from physical attacks as well as acid, heat, cold, most forms of energy, radiation, and electricity. A 3-D knitting pattern on a sub molecular construction level gives the armor itself more strength, while allowing for the most comfortable suit interior.



### MSHRPG

When the armor is activated (which is usually the case, unless its electrical systems are down) its Remarkable material strength is enhanced to Amazing. It offers Remarkable protection against acid, heat, or cold attacks; Monstrous protection from most energy attacks and Unearthly protection against radiation and electricity.

There's not much new here, as all three sources retrace ground we've covered previously in the other two armors. There are some small changes in the armor's ability to withstand energy attacks as the ranking has improved from Amazing to Monstrous, allowing Iron Man to withstand all but the mightiest energy blasts. On the downside, his ability to withstand corrosives has slid back a rank from Incredible to Remarkable which makes no sense. As you will see however, there is not much in this armor's MSHRPG entries that does make sense including its "Mark" number (considering the previous model was Mark VI).

**MOBILITY**

**OHOTMU**

**Type:** Electric powered turbines in boots and jet pack  
**Maximum speed:** Mach 1.2 (960 mph).  
**Lift capacity:** Normal flight configuration 3,200 lbs. High thrust: 5,300 lbs.  
**Range:** N.FC.: About 2,000 miles (100% load), 3,900 miles, 50% load. H.T: About 800 miles (100% load), 1,000 miles (50% load), about 7,500 miles (unloaded, ballistic flight).  
**Fuel:** Solar energy converted to electricity to power exceptionally efficient turbines.

**A.I. Armory**

**Boot-Jets (Mark 4):** Uses high-speed triple-source turbines located in the boots.

**MSHRPG**

Iron Man's boot-jets allow him to fly at Excellent airspeed (150 mph) and still maneuver. If Iron Man wishes to do so, he can move at Monstrous airspeed (450 mph), but can perform only the simplest actions while doing so. (He could use his armor's radio, for example, but not fire his Repulsors or perform a charging attack.) The boot-jets operate in vacuum for only 10-100 minutes, but during that time, Iron Man can travel at Shift X (750 mph, and the speed of the previous armor model) speeds. If Iron Man uses his thrusters as weapons, they do Incredible damage and have a 2-area range (88 yards, and twice as far as the two previous armors).

Now, the head scratching begins. First, according to the OHOTMU, Iron Man hasn't gotten any faster as the armors have progressed which is a little confusing. Second, who wrote the MSHRPG flight stats? An 8 year-old? The Silver Centurion was capable of 750 mph, but the Neo-Classic can only muster 450 mph? Also why is Iron Man suddenly having maneuvering problems? The previous armors functioned just fine at Mach 1 plus, but the new armor can't fly and chew bubble gum at the same time. Out of curiosity, why does flying too fast prevent you from charging someone? Wouldn't you want to hit them fast? Last but not least, I'm baffled by why the boot-jets can now be used as a weapon from up to 88 yards away! Previous armors mentioned that the person being attacked by the boot-jets had to be in the same area as Iron Man, as I'm pretty sure the boot-jets were not meant to be used as a ranged weapon.

**ABILITY MODIFICATIONS**

**OHOTMU**

The armor enables its wearer to lift (press) approximately 80 tons under standard operating conditions.  
**Limits:** When directly tapping a sufficiently potent power source, the armor can be boosted to Class 100 strength (able to lift in excess of 100 tons) for several seconds at the risk of having a total systems seize-up.

**A.I. Armory:** n/a

**MSHRPG**

Raises wearers abilities by the following amounts: Fighting by 2 ranks (maximum Remarkable), Agility by 3 ranks (maximum Remarkable), Strength by 5 ranks (maximum Amazing), and Endurance by 6 ranks (maximum Monstrous).

A few things jump out at you right away. First, the OHOTMU once again raises Iron Man's strength (yes!!!) to 80 tons, which only makes the MSHRPG finally raising I.M.'s strength even more depressing. They only budge him up to Amazing (50 tons with difficulty) instead of Monstrous (80 tons with difficulty). On the other hand, Tony's fighting ability has improved by one rank to Remarkable putting him on par with a combat specialist in the armed forces.



WEAPONS

**OHOTMU**

**Major:** Repulsor rays

**Description:** Particle beam emission units; microscopic matter projected at the speed of light. Speed can be reduced cybernetically by dampers at point of origin to lessen power level and control destructive force.

**Range:** 100 yards

**Limits:** The suit palm blasters are able to fire for very short periods of time. The duty cycle allows for a 25% cooling period.

**Secondary:** Uni-beam

**Description:** The uni-beam is the blanket term for all of the armor's various light beams (visible, infrared, ultraviolet, and laser).

**Range:** 50 yards (approx.)

**Tertiary:** Pulse Bolts

**Description:** Plasma discharges that build in intensity as they travel through atmosphere, picking up static charges.

**Range:** 200 yards (after traveling maximum range, pulse bolts dissipate, unable to hold cohesiveness due to static overload)

**Defensive:**

**Secondary:** Electromagnetic pulse (E.M.P.)

**Description:** Energy-dampening field generated by armor. For a six-minute period, the E.M.P. disrupts all energy sources within a 50-yard radius of the armor (a smaller solar backup, shielded from the E.M.P., allows armor's life-support to continue during this time at minimal function)

**Tertiary:** Stark R.F.S. Mark VII Targeting Computer

**Description:** Although this computerized system is used in offensive tactics (i.e. repulsors, pulse bolts), it also possesses the defensive capacity to lock-in and track incoming targets (up to 60 at one time). All information is relayed to L.E.D. read-out in helmet visor.

Iron Man's Plasma Bolts are changed in this version to be more like the comics in that they gather more power as they fly which is good. I question whether they would start out so weak though, but then I guess the game designers picked what would be easiest math wise. There's a discrepancy in range between the OHOTMU and MSHRPG (200 yards vs. 440 yards), but is otherwise pretty close. Repulsors get some attention in the OHOTMU with their range increasing to 100 yards, which still leaves some space between them and their MSHRPG counterparts who still achieve 440 yards. Now, we come to the big gun – the EMP generator. In the OHOTMU, it has a range on 50 yards, but in the MSHRPG its range is 1-mile which is also its range in A.I.'s Armory. 50 yards makes more sense from a collateral damage standpoint, and in a second printing of the Neo-Classic's stats the MSHRPG changed the range to 50 yards. Heat Beam and Uni-Beam remain the same from previous versions of the armor.

**A.I. Armory**

**Unibeam (Mark 3):** Multi-band light and force beam emitter. Can be adjusted for a variety of effects such as search light, heat beams, tractor beam, lasers, image inducers, ultraviolet light, and electromagnetic pulse.

**Sonic Emitter:** Generates and broadcasts high frequency sound waves.

**Palm Repulsors (Mark 3):** Laser-guided particle beam emission units mounted in the palm of each hand.

**Pulse Bolts:** High energy plasma discharge "torpedoes" that build in intensity as they travel through the atmosphere, picking up static and ambient energy. However, they are slow-moving projectiles, easily dodged.

**Heat Beam:** The armor can generate a narrow beam of intense heat. It can also be internalized to heat the surface of the armor until it is too hot to touch.

**Electromagnetic Pulse:** The armor can generate a pulse of electromagnetic energy that shuts down all electrical systems within a one mile radius. However, it also shuts down the armor until it can reboot (currently this takes about six minutes).

**MSHRPG**

**Plasma Bolt Generators:** Iron Man's armor can generate "torpedoes" of high-energy plasma. These have a range of 10 areas (440 yards), and do 10 points of damage per area they travel. For example, they would do only Good damage (handgun) to a target in an adjacent area, but Unearthly damage (cruise missile) to a target 10 areas away. However, the plasma travels more slowly than Iron Man's beam weapons.

**Repulsors:** The current Iron Man armor has Repulsors which do Amazing damage and have a 10-area range (440 yards).

**Uni-Beam:** The chest beam on the armor can be used as a Remarkable intensity floodlight with a range of 3 areas (132 yards), or as an Amazing intensity laser, also with a 3-area range.

**Heat Beam:** The armor can generate a narrow beam of heat, doing Incredible damage (a typical laser) at a range of 3 areas (132 yards). The beam can be internalized as well. Iron Man is protected against this effect, but no character can lay hands on the exterior of the armor without suffering damage.

**Electro-magnetic Pulse:** Iron Man's newest major armor module is an EMP generator. This device shuts down all electrical devices in a one-mile radius, including most of Iron Man's own systems (life support and sensors remain on-line) for six minutes.

## GADGETS

OHOTMU: n/a

## A.I. Armory

Sonic Distorter, Life Support Equipment, Force Field, Magnetic Control, Subterranean Equipment, Absorption Field Grid, Hologram Emitter, Chameleon Field, ECM Equipment, Protected Senses, Tractor and Repulsor Beam, Language Translator, Anti-Theft Device, Communications Probe, Sensors.

## MSHRPG

Force Field, Magnetism, Absorption, Life Support, Protected Senses, Sensors, ECM, Anti-theft Device, Tractor Beam.

While the A.I. Armory and MSHRPG agree on a great deal of the features of the suit, it's a little disappointing to see such a small list from the MSHRPG. Especially since previous armors had such long and detailed ones, but this armor came out towards the end of the game's life span and the entries were getting small and poorly written.

## Summary

So where does the *Marvel-Superheroes Role-Playing Game* fall as far as being a quality source of Iron Man information? That depends on which armor and which entries you are talking about. In general, the Mark V information out there is pretty consistent through the 5 versions I've read. The Biggest differences are in detail and number of features. It should be noted that most of the Basic set stats were written with much more consistency by long-time TSR staffers like Jeff Grubb and Bruce Nesmith. Overall the stats for the Mark V aren't bad, but I would recommend following the Official Handbooks listing for strength. The Silver Centurion is a mixed bag; it suffers from Mark V's strength issue (use the OHOTMU) and never got a really good detailed entry. Jerry Epperson and Jeff Grubb tried in *Weapons Locker*, but they had limited information when that book came out. The entry in the *Advanced Set Judges Book* has solid stats (outside of strength), but is fairly short. Overall the stats for the Silver Centurion are okay, but if you want the full story on this one you'll need to look elsewhere. Lastly, we come to the Neo-Classic the saddest of the bunch. This one only appeared in the *Gamers' Handbook of the Marvel Universe* in the *1989 Character Updates* and *1990 Character Updates* and neither is very good. I've mentioned some of the problems above with certain abilities going backwards instead of moving forward. I don't think Tony Stark ever moves backwards in technology. For the most part you can skip the MSHRPG if you are looking for good information on this one, you'd be better off with the *Iron Manual* or other source.

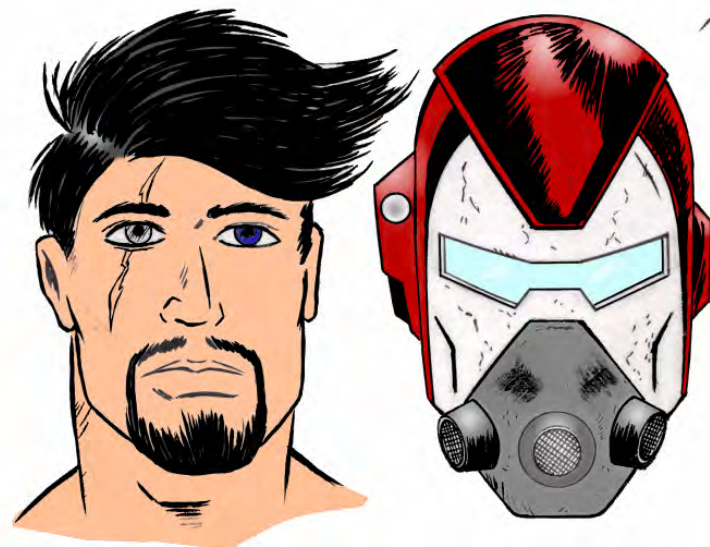
So there you have it, it might not be the ultimate explanation for everything Iron Man can do nor is it always right (where did those strength scores come from?), but I think it adds a little something to the growing pile of Iron Man information. I do encourage you to check out *the Marvel Superheroes Role-Playing Game* even if you don't Role-Play and especially the sourcebook *Weapons Locker*. It contains a good listing of many Battlesuits featured in the Marvel Universe plus other specialized weapons. After all, you have to admit to yourself that you've always wanted to know what makes the Porcupine's armor tick. Remember if you do download a copy to get the *Basic* and *Advanced Rule Books* so you can make sense of the rankings. Excelsior!



# ROGER OTT'S IRONING BOARD

By Roger A. Ott II

My contributions for this issue of AI all started because of a video game that won't even be out for at least a year. Around the middle of June, my son's newest Game Informer showed up in the mail, and after he reads it I usually give it a once over to see if there's anything of interest to me. As soon as I saw the cover image, I was wowed. Fallout 3. Post-apocalyptic RPG. Guys in armor. Now, I'd heard of the franchise, and since it's right up the alley of the type of game I like to play, I was already interested. But as soon as I saw that cover, my mind started wandering into other territory. "Wonder what kind of armor Iron Man would wear in a post-apocalyptic world?" So, that night, as I sat down at the drawing board with that magazine and sketched out the first of the following drawings, the whole scenario began to form in my head.



Tony Stark. Billionaire. Industrialist. Futurist. Survivor. In the wake of global devastation, trapped half a mile beneath the Earth's surface without the resources of his multi-billion dollar corporation, Tony Stark's genius is all that can save him. Garbed in a heavily shielded suit of electrically-charged steel-mesh armor, he becomes mankind's last hope as he desperately searches for other survivors and wards off the radiation-mutated creatures that now inhabit the surface world. He is Iron Man.

ROG '07



This armor is quite a step back, technology-wise. Without the design and manufacturing equipment usually available to him from Stark Industries, Tony Stark has to go back to putting things together with his hands. In some regards he prefers it this way, but he knows he's on a desperate timetable to stave off radiation contamination and whatever else that might have survived out there. Specifications are as follows:

The armor's primary power sources are large and inefficient DC electric lithium-ion batteries. Solar energy isn't a viable option, as the fallout created a nuclear winter that prevents the majority of solar energy from reaching Earth. These batteries provide significantly less usable power than Stark's innovative Beta-voltaic Thermo-electric generator (Beta Particle Generator) but still give the suit sufficient power to allow Iron Man a high magnitude of musculature enhancement, the upper limits of which are unknown. The batteries need to be charged after several hours of use, and sometimes less due to heavy energy expenditures. In this case, spare batteries are packed into the large shoulder carapace and can be swapped out on the fly.



Due to lack of state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities, the armor is incapable of utilizing a cybernetic neural interface. Stark has therefore had to regress back to using tongue switches on the interior of the helmet, as well as manual switches on the right and left arms.

To survive in this toxic environment, a radiation shielding system was incorporated that utilizes dense osmium (22.7 g/mL) which can absorb gamma radiation and prevent any of it from permeating through the armor, and also low density plexiglass which prevents Beta-particles from transferring too much Bremsstrahlung X-rays.

The atmosphere filtration system was designed so that Stark can breathe the outside air by using ionic tractor and repulsion devices whenever the radiation levels are low enough to be a negligible threat. To monitor radiation levels, the armor is ornamented with several rivet-like devices surrounding the central armored chest carapace. These devices contain tiny Geiger counters filled with noble gases like Xenon that will become excited whenever radiation is present. When large amounts of radiation and/or beta-particles are detected, the armor automatically closes the filtration system, covers the openings with osmium and tungsten mesh to assist in filtering out radioactive fallout, and switches to an internal air supply with a duration of 6 hours.



The lack of kerosene enriched jet-fuel required Stark to revert back to using pressurized gas jets. The gas is provided by utilizing a series of miniaturized axial-flow compression turbines located in each boot. Air is extracted and cleansed of radiation with a series of semi-permeable osmium mesh layers, then compressed and stored in large tanks around the ankles. These jets provide sufficient thrust to allow Iron Man to fly at speeds of 175 miles per hour for distances of up to roughly 2 miles before the inefficient compressors require Iron Man to land and absorb more gas.

Repulsor rays have reverted to utilizing electrons due to the high amount of energy required to isolate and project excited muons at relativistic velocities. While the electron particle beams use less power, it is at the cost of having only 1/10 the concussive force of more advanced repulsors. The uni-beam is capable of firing a 500-megawatt free electron laser, and also acting as a simple flashlight.

Other standard equipment includes a grappling hook, parachute, acetylene torch, a small chainsaw, a GPS device, and a first-aid kit, all of which are stored in a backpack underneath the shoulder carapace.

I really wanted something that was obviously not as technologically-proficient as more recent armors, yet still looked like it could take a beating. I made a note while drawing the initial helmet shot that I wanted the armor to be a deep red, but not have any gold. I originally wanted to go with a dark, moody gray, but then when I started to work on the coloring, opted to go with the white/silver look, harkening back to the Silver Centurion suit. In order to make the armor look less pristine and more battle-worn, I decided to use the french curve sparingly and do more of the inking freehand. I think this approach worked out well.

A huge tip of the helmet goes out to **Adam (a.k.a. IronKaiser84g)** for his immense contributions to the tech specs for this armor. Without his help, I had a small paragraph worth of stuff, none of which sounded very exciting. His knowledge of technologies and physics both real and imagined on the [AI message board](#) impressed me enough to ask for his assistance, and he didn't let me down. Thanks, man!





# IRON MAN



## TONY STARK

During an East Asian conflict, Stark Enterprises developed mini-transistors that Tony thought would help the war effort. While checking on his plant, which had been plagued by sabotage, Tony was injured by exploding shrapnel and captured by warlord Wong Chu. Chu forced Tony and another captive, famed physicist Ho Yinsen, to create weapons for him. All the time the shrapnel was slowly working on Tony's heart, killing him. Tony and Yinsen created an iron suit that would keep Tony alive and allow them to escape. During the escape Yinsen was killed, sacrificing himself to allow Tony time to change for the first time to Iron Man. Iron Man made short work of Chu and his men.

On his way home Tony met Helicopter pilot James Rhodes—the future armored partner of Tony Stark called War Machine—and returned to America. After he arrived, Tony worked to improve the Iron Man armor and made Iron Man Tony Stark's personal bodyguard to disguise his identity. In his early years Tony Stark became the corporate sponsor of the superhero group the Avengers and as Iron Man help found the group with Thor, Ant-Man, the Wasp, and the Hulk.