

# BEAST WARS

(Unofficial) Frequently Asked Questions 7.0  
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In hopes of relaunching the Transformers toyline into success and catching lightning in a bottle another time, Hasbro/Kenner was eager to find a direction that would boost sales and exposure of the Transformers.

Thus the **Beast Wars Transformers** toyline was released in 1995. This line was backed with a CGI animated television series, promotional tie-ins and even a video game! As with any successful line however, this one has created a steady barrage of commonly asked questions. It is these questions which this F.A.Q. hopes to address. Questions and comments about this F.A.Q. may be e-mailed to Benson Yee at: [hippocron@bwtf.com](mailto:hippocron@bwtf.com). Also feel free to visit the *Beast Wars Transformers (Unofficial) F.A.Q.* World Wide Web site at: <http://www.bwtf.com> where this information and more may be found.

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## 1. What are Beast Wars Transformers?

The following is the brief summary on the back of Beast Wars packaging:

*BioGenetic engineering has allowed the Transformers to create a perfect cybernetic fusion between ferocious animals and mechanical Transformers' technology. The result: Heroic Maximals vs. Evil Predacons! Robot Warriors disguised as wild animals in an explosive fight to the finish! The Beast Wars have begun...collect them all!*

The Beast Wars Transformers are the 1995-? line of Transformers toys. The focus of this war is now the heroic Maximals versus the evil Predacons. All the Transformers have now become a fusion of both mechanical and organic technology. They all turn into animals, reptiles, insects and vehicles of various types. The two allegiances now have different symbols than their predecessors as well. This relaunch of the Transformers line includes a great line of toys, a CGI television show and other merchandise tie ins. The "origins" of the Beast Wars differs slightly between the toy line and the television show. This will be expanded upon later in this FAQ.

## 2. The Toy Line

When the Beast Wars Transformers were first released, they surprised most people with their intricate design, complex transformations, play value and more. The sales for year one justified a second year, sales from year two justified another and more product has been made and even *more* is being designed! With an ever growing universe, Beast Wars Transformers has catapulted Transformers back into the spotlight of the toy collecting world.

### a. Beast Wars Transformers Toy List:

#### Beast Wars Transformers 1995 - 1996

Regular Size	Deluxe Size	Mega Size	Ultra Size
Armordillo (M)	Buzz Saw (P)	Inferno (P)	Megatron (P)
Iguanous (P)	Blackarachnia (P)	Polar Claw (M)	Optimus Primal (M)
Insecticon (P)	Cheetor (M)	Scorponok (P)	
Megatron (P)	Dinobot (M)		
Onyx Primal (P)*	Rhinox (M)		
Optimus Primal (M)	Tarantulas (P)		
Rattrap (M)	Tigatron (M)		
Razorbeast (M)	Waspinator (P)		
Snapper (P)	Wolfgang (M)		
Terrorsaur (P)			

#### McDonalds Beast Wars Transformers Happy Meal Toys (1996)

Beetle (P)	Manta Ray (P)	Panther (M)	Rhino (M)	<i>Under 3 Toy**</i>
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M - Maximal

P - Predacon

\*- Botcon 1996 exclusive. Two versions of Onyx Primal were released. One regular one in a box adorned with box art of the character. Another was a "dealer" V.I.P. exclusive with a stamp on the back and a black and silver box. The toy was a black and white repaint of the Optimus Primal bat toy.

\*\* - No name was given to this toy. It was a lion head that folded open to reveal a black and red robot that looked very much like Optimus Primal.

#### Beast Wars Transformers 1996-1997

Regular Size	Deluxe Size	Mega Size	Ultra Size
Airazor (M)	Bonecrusher (M)	B'Boom (M)	<i>Magnaboss (M)**</i>
Claw Jaw (M)	Cybershark (M)	Transquito (P)	Ironhide
Drill Bit (P)	Grimlock (M)		Prowl
Fractyl (P)*	Jetstorm (P)		Silverbolt
Lazorbeak (P)	K-9 (M)		
Packrat (M)*	Manterror (P)		<i>Tripredacus (P)**</i>
Powerpinch (P)	Retrax (M)		Cicadacon
Razorclaw (P)			Ramhorn
Snarl (M)			Sea Clamp
Spittor (P)			

### Japanese Beast wars Transformers Exclusives 1996-1997

Name	Description
Armordillo with Volcano Playset (M)	The same Armordillo released in the United States with a playset which was a volcano which could shoot red balls up into the air, an air cannon and a small "jail" cell for regular sized Beast Wars Transformers figures.
Combat (M) versus Megaligator (P)	Repaints of the first year bat Optimus Primal and crocodile Megatron (respectively). Optimus Primal was repainted red, white and blue and Megatron was repainted purple, silver and black. Packaged on a card with a CD-ROM which had scenes from the TV show and a "coloring" program.
Model kits/Mini toys	Several small decoy like toys and model kits packaged with candy were released in Japan. Among the characters featured in these candy sets were: <i>Optimus Primal, Megatron, Cheetor, Dinobot, Rattrap, Waspinator</i> and <i>Tarantulas</i>

M - Maximal

P - Predacon

\* Botcon 1997 exclusive figures. Both packaged in a large box in a two pack which included an exclusive comic book. *Packrat* is a repainted *Rattrap* done in a metallic blue and white. *Fractyl* is a repaint of *Terrorsaur*, bearing a metallic green, white and gold color scheme.

\*\*These were characters released in 3 packs. Each member of the team could combine to form the larger giant. The individual members of the teams were *not* sold separately.

### Beast Wars Transformers 1997-1998

With continued success and wonderful sales, the line forges on this year with fantastic new types of **Beast Wars** toys: **Fuzors** and **Transmetals**. **Fuzors** are Beast Warriors with a beast mode consisting of the DNA of two creatures "fused" into one (hence the name). **Transmetals** are characters who have been hit by a "quantum energy wave" that mutated their bodies giving them metallic beast modes and organically enhanced robot modes. Along with a strong presence in the American and European market, the Japanese market has released **Beast Wars 2**, a line of toys consisting largely of repaints, but also including a couple new molds as well.

Regular Size	Deluxe Size	Mega Size	Ultra Size
Air Hammer (M) <i>F</i>	Airazor (M) <i>TM</i>	Optimus Primal (M) <i>TM</i>	Depth Charge (M) <i>TM</i>
Airazor (M) *	Cheetor (M) <i>TM</i>	Megatron (P) <i>TM</i>	Rampage (P) <i>TM</i>
Bantor (M) <i>F</i>	Injector (P) <i>F</i>	Scavenger (P) <i>TM</i>	
Buzz Claw (P) <i>F</i>	Rattrap (M) <i>TM</i>		
Noctorro (M) <i>F</i>	Rhinox (M) <i>TM</i>		
Quickstrike (P) <i>F</i>	Silverbolt (M) <i>F</i>		
Razorclaw (P) *	Tarantulas (P) <i>F</i>		
Terragator (P) <i>F</i>	Terrorsaur (P) <i>TM</i>		

### Other

Name	Description
<i>Iguanus</i> Easter present	The first year <b>Beast Wars Transformers</b> toy <i>Iguanus</i> was re-released and packaged with an Easter Candle in Greece. This item reportedly sold extremely well.
Optimal Optimus (M) <i>TM</i>	Optimal Optimus is Kenner's entrance into a higher

	price point for <b>Beast Wars Transformers</b> toys. Larger than an Ultra <b>Beast Wars</b> toy with four transforms, Optimal Optimus promises to be a great toy. Its forms are: robot, gorilla, armored car and jet fighter. It also features include light up eyes and blast off armor!
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### Beast Wars Transformers McDonalds Toys 1998

Blackarachnia (P) <i>TM</i>	Dinobot (M) <i>TM</i>	Scorponok (P) <i>TM</i>
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### Beast Wars II (a.k.a. *Beast Wars the Second*) & Japanese Exclusives 1998

Name	Description
Apache (C)	A re-release of the American <b>Beast Wars Transformers B'Boom</b> .
Autocrasher (D)	A repaint and re-release of the American Generation 2 Autoroller <i>Roadblock</i> .
Autojetter (D)	A repaint of a never before released Autoroller jet.
Autolauncher (D)	A repaint of a never before released Autoroller armored ground vehicle.
Autostinger (D)	A repaint and re-release of the American Generation 2 Autoroller <i>Dirtbag</i> .
Big Mos (C)	A repaint and re-release of <i>Transquito</i> .
Bighorn (C)	A slightly repainted version of the American <b>Beast Wars Transformers Bonecrusher</b> .
Dirge (D)	A repaint and re-release of the American <b>Machine Wars Transformers Skywarp/Thundercracker</b> toy.
Dirgegun (D)	A retooling and repainting of the original <i>Waspinator</i> toy. This character was the new form of <i>Dirge</i> .
Drill Nuts (C)	A re-release (and possible repaint) of <i>Drill Bit</i> .
Diver (C) with Niagara base	A repainted American release <i>Spittor</i> in green and white. The Niagara base is a small base with cannons and one can run water through it like a mini fountain.
Galvatron (D)	A new mold. Galvatron transforms into a drill tank, robot and mechanical dragon. This toy was repainted in gold for a special promotion.
Gigastorm (D)	A repaint and slight retooling of the Generation One <i>Trypticon</i> toy. The only part from the original set included was the small car that attaches to his chest. All radar dishes, buildings, central cannon etc. were not included with this release. Still motorized however.
God Neptune (D)	A repaint and re-release of five of the original Generation One <b>Seacons</b> toys. The original Decepticon <i>Nautilator</i> was excluded from this set, as were individual weapons for each of the team members (except for the leader's sword). The five toys were packaged as a gift pack.
Hellscream (D)	A remolded and repainted <i>Cybershark</i> . This was the same character as <i>Starscream</i> in a new form.
LioConvoy (C)	A new mold. LioConvoy transforms from a white lion, attack lion and robot. This toy was repainted

	at least twice as special releases. One repaint <i>Flash Convoy</i> was released with the <i>Beast Wars 2</i> movie and utilized glitter embedded in the plastic to make the toy look more glittery. Another repaint was the same toy done in a black and silver color scheme.
Magnaboss (C)	A repaint and re-release of the US/Canadian <i>Magnaboss</i> toy. It was packaged as a team and separately.
Mantis (C)	A repaint and re-release of <i>Manterror</i> .
Max B (D)	A retooled and repainted <i>K-9</i> . This character was the new incarnation of the first run <i>Beast Wars 2</i> character <i>BB</i> .
Megastorm (D)	A slight redeco and re-release of the Generation 2 large <i>Megatron</i> tank.
Moon (C)	A rabbit that transforms into a robot. This was based on a character from the <i>Beast Wars 2</i> show who watches the <i>Beast Wars</i> from the orbiting moon of the <i>Beast Wars 2</i> world <i>Gaea</i> .
Powerhug (C)	A repaint and re-release of <i>Retrax</i>
Scissor Boy (C)	A re-release and possible repaint of <i>Powerpinch</i> .
Scuba (C)	A re-release and rename of the American <b>Beast Wars Transformers</b> <i>Claw Jaw</i> .
Starscream & BB (D)	A repaint and re-release of the American Generation 2 <i>Dreadwing</i> and <i>Smokescreen</i> jets respectively. This set is painted yellow, black, silver and purple.
Taktotank with Ikard (C)	A giant octopus which could transform into a battle emplacement. Came with a hovercycle that transformed into a motorcycle and <b>Ikard</b> , a repaint of the <i>Beast Wars</i> toy <i>Claw Jaw</i> .
Tasmanian Kid (C)	A re-release of the American <b>Beast Wars Transformers</b> <i>Snarl</i> .
Thrust (D)	A repaint and re-release of the American <b>Machine Wars Transformers</b> <i>Megaplex/Megatron</i> .
Thrustol (D)	A retooling and repaint of the original <i>Dinobot</i> toy. This was meant to be the next incarnation of the <i>Beast Wars 2</i> <i>Thrust</i> character.
Tonbot (C)	A re-release and repaint of <i>Jetstorm</i> .
Tripredacus (C)	A repaint and re-release of the <i>Tripredacus</i> toy from the US/Canada. This toy was packaged separately and in a three pack.
<b>Keychains</b>	Six <b>Beast Wars</b> keychains were released in Japan. Each a repaint and remold of previously released Takara toys. There were 3 main forms, a bird, robot and lion. Each transformed into a ball. Each "side" had one of each form.

C - Cybertron  
D - Destron  
M - Maximal  
P - Predacon

F - Fuzor  
TM - Transmetal

- - Repaints of the previous year's releases. *Airazor* is now a silver, dull yellow and gold paint color. *Razorclaw* was repainted in aqua blue, bright orange and silver. Each was packaged with the **Beast Wars Transformers** season 2 episodes "*Aftermath*" and "*Coming of the Fuzors I*"

### Beast Wars Transformers 1999-2000

The Beast Wars heat up as the Maximals and Predacons enter a new phase in evolution: Transmetal 2 technology has now enhanced Maximals and Predacons alike, making them more ferocious than ever! With new characters joining the battle, the Beast Wars rage on into 1999!

Basic Size	Deluxe Size	Mega Size	Ultra Size
Optimus Minor (M) TM2	Cheetor (M) TM2	Blackarachnia (P) TM2	
Scarem (P) TM2	Dinobot (P) TM2		
Sonar (M) TM2	Ramulus (M) TM2		

M - Maximal  
P - Predacon  
TM2 - Transmetals 2

#### b. What are Botcon exclusives?

**Botcon** is an annual Transformers convention. Since the first Botcon in 1994, each convention has featured an exclusive toy or item not available anywhere else. Thus far, two Botcons have featured **Beast Wars Transformers** exclusives.

*Botcon 1996* - featured a black and white repaint of the *Optimus Primal* bat toy. Named *Onyx Primal*, there were two versions of this toy. One was for dealers and "V.I.P.'s" while the other was for regular attendees.

*Botcon 1997* - featured two exclusive toys. *Packrat* is a metallic blue and white repaint of the original *Rattrap* toy. *Fractyl* was a metallic green, gold and white repaint of the original *Terrorsaur* toy. Both were packaged together in a box that combined elements of the original 1984 **Transformers** boxes and **Beast Wars Transformers** packaging. Also included in the set was a Botcon 1997 exclusive comic book written by Simon Furman and drawn by Andrew Wildman. The story featured both *Fractyl* and *Packrat*.

*Botcon 1998* - Like 1997, featured two exclusive toys. *Antagony* is a black and lavender repaint of the *Inferno* toy. *Vice Grip* is a blue and grey repaint of the Predacon *Powerpinch*. *Antagony* was packaged in a special window/flap box with awesome artwork, pictures of past Botcon exclusives and a great CGI background. *Vice Grip* was packaged separately in a plastic baggie with tech specs. Both characters are Predacons.

#### c. Beast Wars around the world.

Although **Beast Wars Transformers** began as an American domestic toy line, its success quickly spread to every country that Hasbro distributes to including Japan, Greece, the UK, Australia and Singapore. Different countries have chosen to take different takes on the line. Some have renamed characters and the toyline itself (calling it "Biocombat" Transformers).

Japan has brought the most extensive change to the **Beast Wars Transformers** line. The success of the line the first year was enough for Takara (the company that owns **Transformers**) to create a spin off line and series of their own in 1998. Using mostly second year **Beast Wars Transformers** toys, Generation One and Two repaints and a couple new molds, they created **Beast Wars 2**. A cel based animated series with an accompanying toy line. This series is intended as a "filler series" while the Canadian produced CGI **Beast Wars Transformers** show produces enough episodes to show as a full season in Japan. It focuses on a group of Cybertrons fighting against invading Destrons on the planet Gaea. The Cybertrons are led by LioConvoy and the Destrons are led by Galvatron.

#### d. Tracking down older Beast Wars Transformers Toys

Several on-line resources for locating current and older **Beast Wars Transformers** toys are out there. This is by no means a complete listing, but it is one that will help get you a good start.

*Newsgroups:*

alt.toys.transformers.marketplace  
rec.toys.transformers.moderated.marketplace

*Web Pages:*

**Digital Toys** - <http://members.aol.com/banthatrad/web/DigitalToys.html>

**New Generation Toys** - <http://www.ngtoys.com>

**Rugby's Starbase** - <http://members.aol.com/rgbystrbse/index.htm>

**Tempting Toys & Collectables** - <http://members.xoom.com/toydojo/>

**Yellow Monster Collectables** - <http://www.mindspring.com/~dmalderman/ymc.html>

e. Replacing lost pieces

Kenner/Hasbro is willing to replace lost parts for a small fee. The New York City number is (212) 966-7646. Unfortunately I do not have another number for Hasbro. My best suggestion is to call your local information service and ask for either Hasbro or Kenner's number. I'm sure they will be happy to assist you. I cannot guarantee they will replace *every* part that you lose, but it's worth a try. I would also suggest trying out the above mentioned retail sources for **Transformers** parts.

### 3. The Television Show

a. What is the Beast Wars Transformers Television show about?

**Beast Wars Transformers** is a CGI animated series produced by **Mainframe Entertainment**, the same Canadian company that produced the revolutionary show **Reboot** and is currently developing the **War Planets** series. The show is set on ancient Earth, where the descendents of the Autobots and Decepticons, the Maximals and the Predacons fight it out in true **Transformers** style with the fate of the future and the universe itself at stake. The series combines incredible computer animation, intense storylines and wonderful acting to form a series that is the number one show in its market.

b. What ties (if any) does this series have to the original Transformers series?

The Maximals and Predacons are the descendents of the Autobots and Decepticons respectively. The time frame the Maximals and Predacons hail from is approximately 300 years after the time of the original series. The "back history" of the **Beast Wars Transformers** draws from both the original comic book series and cartoon series, both of which the story editors of **Beast Wars Transformers** *Bob Forward* and *Larry DiTillio* educated themselves before and during the writing of this show.

Although their descendents fought for centuries in a bitter war, the Predacons and Maximals have lived in peace every since the Autobots defeated the Decepticons in the last Great War. However, some Predacons such as Megatron and his troops are rogues who seek to put the Predacons back on the path he believes they were meant for - conquest.

This generation of Transformers still lives on Cybertron, the homeworld of the original Transformers. Although they are still robots in disguise, this generation of Cybertrons are generally smaller in size than their predecessors. This was done to both conserve energy and resources.

Unlike their progenitors, this generation of Transformers originate from two main facilities. These facilities are known as *The Matrix* and *The Pit (a.k.a. The Inferno)*. The Maximals and Predacons are born from the *Matrix* and *Pit* respectively. They begin as "protoforms", liquid metal forms which do not have a cohesive shape until they are programmed properly. What was once known as the "life force" or "essence" of a Transformer is now referred to as a "Spark". The source of "Sparks" are known only to a few Transformers.

As to what happened to the Autobots and Decepticons, it has basically been stated that they retired. Only one Decepticon remained on active duty (that has been revealed thus far). That character was *Ravage*, who

is featured in the episodes *"The Agenda"*. The other Decepticon still "active" is the ghost/Spark of *Starscream* who once visited the Beast Warriors to wreak havoc.

c. Season One and Two episode lists & brief synopsis

**Season One**

<b>Episode Title</b>	<b>Brief Synopsis</b>
Beast Wars Pt. 1 & 2	A small crew of Maximals on the ship Axalon, chase the rogue Predacons through time to ancient Earth. Each side must take on alternate forms based on the local life forms to survive violent energon surges. A Predacon named Dinbot joins the Maximals, betraying his Predacon comrades and leader Megatron.
The Web	As the Maximal Cheetor tests out a new communications device, he is captured by the malicious Tarantulas. It's up to Rattrap to rescue him from certain doom!
Equal Measures	Cheetor winds up in the Predacon base, along with a powerful Maximal built bomb!
Chain of Command	While looking over a Stonehenge like alien structure, Optimus Primal vanishes and the Predacons try to take the alien device. It's up to the Maximals to stop them in time! In the end, Optimus Primal returns, but not before the alien device leaves more questions than it has answered.
Power Surge	Terrorsaur mutates due to energon overload and attempts to take over leadership of the Predacons.
Fallen Comrades	The Maximals and Predacons race to reach a fallen Stasis Pod with a protoform Transformer in it. The protoform turns out to be Tigatron, the latest Maximal warrior.
Double Jeopardy	Another Stasis Pod falls, this time the Predacons get it and a new warrior: Blackarachnia. Meanwhile, it appears Rattrap has defected to the Predacons.
A Better Mousetrap	Sentinel, the Axalon's new defense system, is activated but not all the bugs are worked out.
Gorilla Warfare	Optimus Primal is infected with a virus that causes him to lose control of himself and go "ballistic".
The Probe	The Maximals on Cybertron send probes out into space to find the lost Axalon. Will it find the lost ship? It's up to Optimus Primal and his Maximals to be sure it does!
Victory	It appears the Maximals have won the Beast Wars, but there is more than meets the eye at work...
Dark Designs	The Predacons use a new machine to convert Rhinox to a Predacon, but the results do not work quite the way they expected.
Double Dinobot	Megatron creates a clone of Dinobot in beast mode to do his bidding and defeat the Maximals.
The Spark	A new Stasis Pod falls and Rhinox and Cheetor desperately try to save the protoform inside before its Spark is extinguished. The result is a new warrior: Airazor!

The Trigger (Parts One & Two)	Tigatron finds a flying island with an alien device of great power, and the Predacons want control of it!
Spider's Game	A new pod crashes with the newest Predacon warrior, Inferno!
Call of the Wild	The beast within the Maximals begin to take over their personalities.
Dark Voyage	Heavily damaged by a Predacon attack, several Maximals must find their way back to base - blind.
Possession	The ghost/Spark of the ancient Decepticon warrior Starscream possesses Waspinator and wreaks havoc.
The Low Road	Rhinox is infected with the Transformer equivalent of a cold by the Predacons. It's up to the Maximals to get the cure before it's too late!
Law of the Jungle	After losing his tiger friend Snowstalker, Tigatron leaves the Maximals. Will he return?
Before the Storm	Using an alien Golden Disk and a human Golden Disk, Megatrons plans begin to unfold as it is revealed the mysterious aliens are headed towards Earth.
Other Visits (Parts One & Two)	The aliens arrive and convert the second moon of Earth into a large scale weapon to eradicate all life on the planet because the Transformers have contaminated their great experiment. Optimus Primal flies up in a Stasis Pod to destroy the device using a Transwarp explosion, but is caught in the blast himself as Megatron locks him in. Have the Maximals lost the Beast Wars?

## Season 2

Episode Title	Brief Synopsis
Aftermath	A quantum surge, the result of the alien moon's destruction rocks the Earth, transforming <i>Megatron</i> , <i>Rattrap</i> , <i>Tarantulas</i> and <i>Cheetor</i> into Transmetals. The Beast Wars rage on as Megatron attempts his final push to destroy the Axalon and the Maximals.
Coming of the Fuzors (Part One & Two)	Two damaged Stasis Pods produce two new warriors, the noble <i>Silverbolt</i> and the powerful <i>Quickstrike</i> . Megatron recruits both and the Maximals seem to be losing the war, until <i>Optimus Primal</i> returns as a Transmetal and evens the odds. <i>Silverbolt</i> joins the Maximals and the war continues.
Tangled Web	Still under Tarantulas' control by their psychic link, Blackarachnia fights for her freedom.
Maximal no more	Dinobot rejoins the Predacons, but will he stay with them this time?
Other Visits (Part One & Two)	The aliens send a new device to Earth which Megatron takes control of, intent on returning to Cybertron. Meanwhile, both Airazor and Tigatron are transported into space to parts unknown.
Bad Spark	A large Stasis Pod, containing the protoform and Spark of a failed Maximal experiment arises and the warrior Rampage is born! But who's side is he on? Meanwhile, Blackarachnia and Silverbolt begin to develop a relationship beyond being enemies.
Code of Hero	Using the Golden Disk to tell the future, Megatron

	attempts to destroy the human race by killing its ancestors. Dinobot single handedly stops them at the cost of his life.
Transmutate	A new Stasis Pod is uncovered after an earthquake, however its contents are unique and dangerous.
The Agenda (Parts One, Two & Three)	The Transwarp explosion created in "Other Voices" reaches a Predacon space station. In response, the Predacons dispatch their best agent, the Decepticon Ravage to Earth to investigate. When Ravage arrives, a new discovery on Earth may lead to the end of the Maximals and Predacons forever!

### Season 3

"Optimal Situation"	It's a fight for the future as the Maximals struggle to save Optimus Prime and make sure they don't blink out of existence! Optimus Primal takes on a new form as "Optimal Optimus" and he's feeling Prime!
"Deep Metal"	The Maximal Depth Charge chases down the Predacon Rampage for a past crime. The two fight to the finish as Depth Charge seeks justice!
"Changing of the Guard"	The Maximals and Predacons struggle to gain control over the security system Sentinel. Ultimately, it may not be good that wins this day...
"Cutting Edge"	Megatron creates velociraptor clones enhanced with Cybertron "Transmetals II" technology to hunt down the human ancestors. It's up to the Maximals to stop them!

d. Why didn't the bat Optimus Primal and crocodile Megatron appear in the show?

In the first year's line of **Beast Wars Transformers**, both commanders (Optimus Primal and Megatron) were released in two forms. Optimus Primal was released as a robot/bat and robot/gorilla while Megatron was released as a crocodile/robot and tyrannosaurus rex/robot. The original intent of the **Beast Wars Transformers** writers Bob Forward and Larry DiTillio was to have the characters in the show be able to transform into all four forms. However, animation constraints made them choose only two forms for each leader, thus the larger "gorilla" and "t-rex" forms were chosen.

- Will there be a Season Four?

#### 4. Comic Books

**Beast Wars Transformers** does not currently have a regular running comic book. However, two comic books have been previously published about **Beast Wars Transformers**.

a. The two pack exclusive Comic Book

The original versions of Optimus Primal and Megatron (a bat and crocodile respectively) were packaged with an exclusive comic book, depicting an adventure of the Maximals and Predacons. The art was adequate and there really wasn't a story. However, it did help introduce audiences to the concept of a new breed of Transformers using organic enhancements to boost their battle strength and prowess.

b. The Botcon 1997 Exclusive Comic Book "Critical Mass"

Included with the Botcon 1997 "Fractyl & Packrat" two pack was a comic book depicting an adventure of the two characters. It was written by Transformers comic book veteran Simon Furman and drawn by Transformers comic book veteran artist Andrew Wildman. Both did a fantastic job setting both Fractyl and Packrat right into the universe of the **Beast Wars Transformers** television show from season one. Copies of this may still be available at: [www.botcon.com](http://www.botcon.com).

## 5. The Beast Wars Transformers Games

### a. The **Beast Wars Transformers** video game

1997 saw the launching of *Hasbro Interactive*, a division of Hasbro dedicated to producing multi-media games and activities. One of these was a video game based on the **Beast Wars Transformers** television show. There are two versions of the game. The first release was for the Sony Playstation gaming system. The later release (supposedly in June of 1998) will be for the Windows 95 PC gaming market.

The game allows the player to either control the Predacons or Maximals. From board to board the player takes on roles of various characters including *Rattrap*, *Optimus Primal*, *Inferno*, *Megatron*, *Cheetor* and more! Providing very long and complex levels, this game is a fun romp through the more dangerous side of ancient Earth in the times of the Beast Wars!

### b. The **Beast Wars Transformers** card game

Released in 1997, the **Beast Wars Transformers Mutating Card Game** was one of many **Beast Wars Transformers** products outside the main toy line. The game allowed each player to play either Maximals or Predacons. The cards are played on a plastic and cardboard "mountain" mock up (really a flat platform with rock like sides). There were character cards which gave each character particular strengths. Other cards boosted power levels of characters and transformed characters into alternate modes. The goal of each side was to eliminate the other from the "mountain" and rule ancient Earth!

This game was generally note carried by Toys R Us, but seems to have cropped up in other stores such as Wal Mart, K-Mart and Target.

## 6. In Defense of Beast Wars Transformers

Beast Wars is something relatively new. Despite the similarities to it's predecessors, Beast Wars is essentially a relaunch of the Transformers line, using some new (and other not so new) ideas. It is sometimes difficult for people to accept things that are new. Often they fear it, loathe it or even attempt to put down others who like it. Beast Wars is no exception. This essay was written by yours truly to help people understand the positive points of Beast Wars by addressing many negative points brought up by other fans. I hope you find it an enjoyable read.

*Note: Some of these statements are my own personal opinion, I do not expect anyone to take all these views as their own.*

### General Complaints

The first criticism of the Beast Wars are their names. The change of the Autobots to Decepticons is now in fact known to NOT be a change at all. The Maximals and Predacons are the descendents of the Autobots and Decepticons and exist side by side on Cybertron with the Autobots and Decepticons. This has been established in both the universe of the toys and the television show.

Character names are relatively weak as well, with names such as Dinobot and Insecticon. However, some nice names have been thought up including Razorbeast, Tarantulas and Blackarachnia. Although the balance may be a bit uneven (towards the weak name side), I hope this will improve in the future. Others names such as Iguanus and Megatron are borrowed from names invented long ago. Considering the age group BW's are targeted at (5-10 years old, according to Larry DiTillio), such simple names are not too surprising. This is not to say that younger children could not pronounce cooler names or understand them, but the corporate mentality seems to skip over that little factoid. Also, take note that Hasbro/Kenner

invented the new faction names and character names, not Mainframe entertainment (the creators of Reboot).

## The Toys

Other than the name criticism, many do not like the toys period. Some complain about simple transformations in the little ones and doofy looking modes (of course, most of the criticisms come from people who have yet to play with one of the toys but I digress). Here are the strong points of the toys as I see them:

- 1. Excellent packaging** - The initial line had an impressive 'scaly' coloring pattern with the large reptilian EYE staring straight at you once the toy is taken off the card. Great detail has been paid attention to with the artwork on the boxes. The use of 'rocky' molded bubbles in the initial release of Beast Wars shows real attention to detail as well. The new packaging is less detailed but the artwork on the characters seems to be improving.
- 2. Average of 9 point articulation** - Unlike most figures today, the Beast Wars have incredible articulation. The lines I am using as comparisons include G.I. Joe Extreme, Spawn, Star Wars, Batman (all three series), Superman Man of Steel and Gargoyles. This is not to say that I don't like these toy lines but posability is the issue here. The 9 points (if you wonder) include, head rotation, shoulder and elbow rotation, upper leg and knee joint mobility (remember, there are two arms and two legs). This is cool for nice transformations and cool posability. Another strong point here is that the Beast Wars toys are made with ball joints or double swivel joints (as opposed to virtually no joints) which allow for greater posability and play.
- 3. Excellent transformations** - The mini Beast Wars transform quickly but that is not much of a bad thing if you think that there's only so much time one wants to spend transforming the toys in the middle of a 'battle' and it's great for kids! Also, the simple transformations of the small Beast Wars is balanced out by the complex transformations in the deluxe toys (although it should be noted most of the 1997 smaller BW toys have multi-step transformations as opposed to the "quick spring" transformation). The deluxe toys on average have multi step transforms which average to about 5-7 steps. Other nice features include the fact that all weapons are part of both transform modes. For instance, Waspinator's missiles fit under his wings, Tarantulas' missiles form the lower part of four of his spider legs, Dinobot's tail becomes his spinning blade and sword and Rhinox's tail becomes a sword and four other pieces become a spinning ball and chain.
- 4. Good molding** - The creature modes all have realistic molding. Examples can be seen in the 'fluffy' Beast Wars such as the bat Optimus Primal and Rattrap. The 'fluffy' Beast Wars have a fur like pattern molded into them. The more reptilian BW's have scaly patterns such as Iguanus. Details also include wires and tubes (look at Razorbeast in robot mode) and good detailing (look at most of the heads of the robot modes). For another great example, look at Cheetor's 'bladder' gun with the 'intestines' of the cheetah mode molded in.
- 5. Good quality plastic** - This sounds almost like a contradiction in terms. How can plastic be good? Aren't Transformers supposed to be all metal with rubber tires? The answer is no. If one were to count every Transformer ever made, one would find more plastic than die cast metal. The quality of the plastic used to make Beast Wars toys is quite strong. The ball joints allow for easy repair of parts that pop off as well.

These are (to me), the primary strong points of the Beast Wars toys. As for their success, many 'classic' TF fans are saying "This concept won't sell, it's not cars and planes." However, the truth of the matter is that cars and planes weren't selling anymore, the first couple years of Generation 2 proved it. Rather, it is the animals and creatures that are selling. Beast Wars is proof of this. So far, Beast Wars are selling well (and that's reports from many different places and stores in the US including Target, WalMarts, Toys R Us and Kay Bee). For those who are eager to return to the days of vehicle modes and mechanical looking Transformers, Hasbro/Kenner has produced the *Transmetals* which incorporate beast, robot and vehicle modes.

To be fair, it should be said that there are areas where Beast Wars is not selling very well. However, when balanced with the areas I've personally heard of that are doing well, the line seems to be selling overall. The latest information from Kenner representatives at BotCon 1996 indicate that Beast Wars is the third best selling toy line for boys. The other two are Star Wars and Power Rangers.

### **Beast Fiction**

The next criticism stems from the show and the fiction behind it. The basic story is as follows. After a fierce battle in space, a crew of Maximals and Predacons crash on an unknown world. The world has vast supplies of energon, so much in fact that it can damage the Transformers irreparably if they are exposed too long. To protect themselves, the Maximals and Predacons take on the forms of local life forms and their organic aspects as well. Thus, the Beast Warriors are formed.

First and foremost, many people are bothered by organics and TF's. To this, I say that organics and TF's are not new. Headmasters, Powermasters, Targetmasters and Pretenders were all examples of Transformers lines with organics as some part of the Transformer makeup. Also, I am impressed that the writers of Beast Wars came up with a plausible way to explain why Transformers have included organics into their makeup rather than having it done just for the sheer heck of it. It is not, as some have said, to rid themselves of their Cybertronian heritage, it is in fact to preserve their Cybertronian heritage, the robots in disguise underneath their beast forms.

Second, many TF fans make it a point to criticize the names Maximal and Predacon, while saying that we don't need another version of Megatron and Optimus. I do not agree with this entirely. But let me explain, the Maximals and Predacons, first, are the descendents of the Autobots and Decepticons, not Autobots and Decepticons just changing their names for no reason. As for Megatron and Optimus, they are NOT the same characters as the originals. They are new leaders who have taken on old names (or name since Optimus Primal is NOT the same as Optimus Prime).

In terms of animation, I find the show stunning. Some criticize it because of minor animation flaws, the lack of shadows etc. The lack of shadows issue has been addressed by Mainframe animators and they hope to correct it early on in the run of the series. It should be kept in mind that Mainframe really rushed the pilot episodes to be seen as the preview. That caused the animators to take some 'short cuts' that they may not have to once the series runs its regular course.

Another complaint has come from comparisons between the other show Mainframe Entertainment creates, "Reboot" and Beast Wars. Some have said that Reboot has more details to it than Beast Wars. I would agree on some levels but not on others. There are some scenes (such as the intense battle scenes of a few weeks ago where Megabyte and everyone else teamed up). However, what must be kept in mind is that details such as the city, circuit boards and electronic vortexes are not things that are called on by Beast Wars. Beast Wars has its detail more oriented towards animal skin patterns, rocks and robot modes which I believe it does excellently. Megabyte has some nice 'metallic' detailing in "Reboot" which some of the Beast Wars characters, including Megatron seem to share and pay close attention to facial expressions and 'scaly' and 'fur like' patterns on the Beast modes.

In terms of the animation, I don't know a whole lot about the CGI work, but I do know what I like and the Beast Wars look fabulous in both modes and the battle scenes are well done. The scenery is nice as well, even if it's not 100% realistic some of the time.

I also believe that the show has given us some strong characters to begin with. Examples include:

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Dinobot | Powerful and honorable warrior who sticks to his beliefs.   |
| Rattrap | Smart mouthed member of the Maximals who is a bit defiant, but loyal to those he considers his friends. |
| Rhinox  | Strong, level headed, loyal warrior and technical whiz.   |

Megatron	Power hungry and arrogant leader, bent on galactic conquest.
Optimus Primal	Young leader with great potential, but conflicts with his troops.
Tarantulas	Crazy but skillful and intelligent.
Scorponok	Loyal to Megatron and a strong warrior.
Cheetor	Young and impetuous, sort of like Hot Rod from the old days.
Tigatron	A seemingly "grizzled veteran" with a more "earthy" or "philosophical" disposition than his comrades.

It may not be the perfect start, but it's a nice one.

Although it may never be stated blatantly on the show, the writers of Beast Wars have said that the show takes place approximately 300 years after the original continuity that we've known for years. However, many people state that since Transformers are life forms that live for literally millions of years, 300 years would only be a proverbial 'drop in the bucket' in a Transformer's vast lifetime. Many feel that 300 years is not enough time for the dramatic changes in Beast Wars to occur (Maximals and Predacons descending from Autobots and Decepticons etc.). While I can certainly sympathize with this statement, it does not hold up to close scrutiny.

To prove my point, I will draw upon the best source of information, the past. Look at the time gap between Transformers the Original series to Transformers The Movie. The span was roughly 20 years (1985-2005). In that time:

- Cybertron was completely taken over by the Decepticons.
- The Decepticons seem to have been driven off Earth completely.
- The Autobots established two moon bases to serve as their base of operations.
- Several new characters (Kup, Arcee, Ultra Magnus, Hot Rod, Blurr, Wreck Gar etc.) were introduced & encountered.
- The Autobots built a large transforming fortress on Earth.

Now, let's take it one step further. Take the short span of time between 2005 (the movie) and the 2006 series (or 2010 if you're following the Japanese series). In that time:

- Optimus Prime died (along with many of the 'original' characters).
- Hot Rod became Rodimus Prime, taking on the mantle of leadership.
- The Decepticons were driven off Cybertron.
- Two moons of Cybertron were destroyed (no small task). Unicron was destroyed (or disabled if you prefer).
- Many new characters (and sub-groups) were introduced or created (Technobots, Autobot triple changers, Predacons, Sky Lynx etc.)
- The Decepticons lost their leader and gained a 'new' one, Galvatron.
- Several original troops were lost but changed into new forms (Scourge, Cyclonus & the Sweeps).

Just using the American continuity alone, I could provide more changes in the Transformers universe beyond those listed above with the "Rebirth" three part mini series. The point is, within a twenty year period, the Transformers universe changed dramatically. Now imagine a period of three centuries with a lot of dramatic events such as those described above happening. Suddenly, time is a relative term isn't it? The Transformers don't need millions of years for dramatic changes to occur, they simply need those events to occur.

### **What about the "Toy Fiction"?**

Included with the Optimus Primal (bat) and Megatron (Crocodile) two pack of Beast Wars toys is a mini comic book, depicting an adventure of the Beast Warriors. This mini comic and the tech specs of the Beast

Wars Transformers offers fans a look into the "alternate" world of the Beast Wars line. In this world, Optimus Primal is indeed an Optimus Prime who has changed his name into Optimus Primal (for no apparent reason) and Megatron is the same Megatron of long ago.

Understandably so, the "world" of the toys is a bit more sketchy than that of the show. However, it appears that the Transformers war has been taken to new more "natural" ground. Because of this, adaptation into more expedient modes (namely animals in this case) is not surprising. It is not hard to see why a Transformer would prefer say, an ape mode that can swing from tree to tree instead of a car mode which would have to dodge from tree to tree for instance.

Also, following suit with the television show, the tech spec of the **Beast Wars Transformers Grimlock** acknowledges the existence of the Autobots and Decepticons in the past, hinting that like in the TV show, the Maximals and Predacons are descendents of the original Cybertrons.

Answers as to just "why" the fight was taken to new ground (when it's made clear in T-Rex's Megatron's tech specs that a fairly advanced technological society exists on Earth) is unknown and probably best left to the realm of fan speculation.

### **Marketing Beast Wars**

Some say that Beast Wars has not been marketed well thus far, leading to lagging sales. This is not entirely true. Just for the sake of listing them, here are the ways in which Beast Wars have been marketed:

- Television Commercials
- Television Show (and preview)
- McDonald's Happy Meal Offers
- Appearance in many toy magazines

Now this may not seem like a lot, but it's not a bad start. The commercials air fairly regularly depending on where you are. Some have said it's on every week day while others say only weekends. However, the point is the commercials are airing and help to promote the toys. The show, no matter how spectacular or dull it may be ultimately will help sell the toys. Showing the preview early on was a good idea, it's enough to wet some TF fan appetites.

The appearance of Beast Wars in recent magazines including Tomart's and Action Figure News and Review aren't direct Hasbro/Kenner initiatives, however, they are a side benefit from the TF's having so much exposure at this year's past toy fair. The showing of the Beast Wars toys in a recent "Previews" magazine also shows a good sign that the TF's are becoming a line that is good for stores to carry once again.

Finally, the McDonald's Happy Meal offers are one of the best ways to advertise the Beast Wars to kids. Little kids generally wind up in a McDonalds or near one eventually (especially Sunday mornings around my area). This was a big piece of exposure that was not just confined to one or two states but was wide spread enough to garner a lot of interest.

So far it seems the Beast Wars are being promoted fairly well. We aren't being beaten over the head with them, but we aren't missing out on them either. I hope to see more promotions in the future.

### **Conclusion**

Beast Wars seems to be coming on strong. It's a great relaunch of the Transformers line. Was Generation One great? Yes, absolutely, I grew up with it. Did Generation Two have some cool toys? Yes, definitely, Dreadwing and Laser Optimus Prime are two of my favorites. However, Hasbro/Kenner is a business and it must make money, that means catering to the tastes of its target group which are the younger kids. A lot of thought and caring has gone into Beast Wars and I personally am pleased with what we have so far. Seems to me like the TF's are rising again, and I'm going to sit back and enjoy every moment of it!

As a side note, it should be mentioned that the "Machine Wars" toy line (which will reintroduce the familiar Autobots and Decepticons) may not have been possible without the success of Beast Wars. Beast Wars has helped to show that the Transformers line has a longevity that cannot be denied. It is a longevity I hope to see go into the foreseeable future.

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