

Interview with Val From Veto

MRBC Posts

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VETO was founded with the sole purpose of tournament play by veterans of the competitive scene. In our first and only season we comfortably won in the top Asia-Pacific division but have since closed.

Hi, please introduce yourself for those who many not know who you are?

Hi I'm ---Val---. I'm currently a stay at home father, who is still able find time to relax via gaming... for the moment. I've been playing MWO since open beta. I currently co-captain VETO, a Div A AP-region team with the Odins Steed.

What was your first exposure to the competitive gaming scene?

My competitive history is as follows; My first exposure to comp was with ISENGRIM. I am reasonably sure it was 4v4 Midway, with the likes of Kamikaze Viking and Mushroem. After that I competed with ISEN in MRBC for multiple seasons. I then moved units to get more heavily involved in the AP region, and played with JGx in multiple comps of Midway and MRBC, while still also competing in MRBC with ISEN in the NA region. WC came along, and things took an odd turn with JGx being DQ'ed, so I disappeared from MWO for a period of time. When I returned, I played with ISENGRIM again in MRBC, then RHOD, and then into Star League. Odin presented me with the opportunity for VETO around the time star League was about to start, and here I am.

Introduce your team briefly?

VETO is currently comprised of 11 members (10 active). Odin and I initially took some time, and tried to gather the best players we could find in the AP region. The goal was to be able to hit the ground running at the highest level possible. The team itself is comprised of members from different units, who come together to play in the competitive scene. Wearing unit tags is not a requirement, though a lot have adopted them regardless. We also just won MRBC season 9, by a reasonably good margin (While S9 is still ongoing for most, AP Div A only had a 6 week season with a smaller group of 4 teams).

What were your teams goals this season?

Our unit was created with 1 goal for this MRBC season in mind. To be able to enter Division A, and win it.

What has been the most challenging part this season?

There were 2 main issues, the first and most difficult was roster numbers. Fuck me, small team numbers made scheduling everything quite difficult. It was almost over before we started early in the season. Thank you to all the teams who were understanding, and worked with us to reschedule games that suited us both.

The second issue was trying to find scrim partners. There is only a small number of teams in the AP region, and most NA teams don't like to practice / scrim on weekends. What compounded this issue was being on a different map rotation than everyone else. Because div A AP region only had 4 teams, this meant we repeated the first 3 maps, so from week 4 onwards every team competing in MRBC was playing different maps to us.

What about the most rewarding?

To crush your enemies, see them driven before you, and to hear the lamentations of their women!

How do you prepare to win your drops each week?

It usually starts with some loose discussion between Odin and I. We both have our own methods for creating plans and drop decks, and both have considerable experience doing so. After a couple of days, we both have separate ideas formed. Then we come together, run through anything we learnt, possible scenarios we will face, and then decide on how to tackle them. Whether that is using 1 persons strategy and drop decks, or an amalgamation of both in varying degrees, depends heavily on what is resolved through our discussion. We then try and scrim our plan at least once before the game.

How does your team take a loss, what do you take out of it?

A lot better than we take winning, lol. (Inside joke for the unit).

After our matches, regardless of win or loss, we at least discuss it discord, so everyone understands the good, bad and ugly.

For more complicated match losses, we all get together in Team Speak a day or 2 after it, and run through any recorded videos of the games, and break everything down step by step.

What strengths do you feel the players bring to team cohesion as a whole? Any particular personality traits or quirks that have caught your eye?

The first that comes to mind would be being able to decisively follow calls the instant they are made. Another is knowing what information that they see to relay over comms to keep everyone informed while keeping it concise and non cluttered.

Going forward towards future tournaments, and eventually the WC, what plans do you have to help your players continue to grow and remain sharp?

You say "eventually the WC", but reality is, the WC is just around the corner (With still no information on it... le sigh). At this stage most of our members are all just evaluating the new Skill Tree in their own individual ways, and we will come together in the next competition and figure out what is best from all of that.

How is it that you present criticism in a way that is accepted and not seen as inflammatory or offensive?

may not be the best person to ask. I try to explain myself in a very factual and logical method. I also try to use mech chassis names, and not pilot names, so people do not feel singled out. But I do call it as I see it, and if people disagree or argue, I will be blunt (as I expect them to be with me). I trust that the people we have chosen to play with are all adults, and can separate emotion from logic. Even if it takes a day or two to calm down, re evaluate, and come to logical conclusions in their own time.

How are you finding the skill tree, has it changed the way you're playing or the mechs you bring?

I think the Skill Tree and engine de-sync are the right ideas (especially engine de-sync). However, I believe a lot of the values on individual mechs with the de-sync still require tuning. As for the ST, I disagree with a lot of its execution. Survival and auxiliary trees seem incredibly powerful, and definitely changes my decisions about mechs, load outs, and strategies. Also having percentage based values for trees such as mobility, make it a generally useless tree for the majority of mechs. If your mech has high baseline agility, you don't need to invest in it at all or very little. Conversely, if your mech has low agility to begin with, I have found that you can invest into the whole tree for very little reward, so those points are generally better spent elsewhere.

As a competitive player, what are some changes you would like to see made to competitions to improve competitive play?

Without going into specifics for different leagues, anything that fosters improved competition should

be a priority. Some examples are:

- o Not allowing any hero or loyalty mechs, to keep things on a level playing field for all.
- o Allowing people to play as much as they are able to, such as being allowed to enter into multiple regions as a player, if there is no cross region finals.
- o Stronger encouragement and promotion of competitive game recordings and streams, to allow newer teams to watch and learn from established ones.

What tips do you have for aspiring competitive players?

Set up Shadowplay (or its AMD equivalent) and record your own play. Watch it, especially games where you do extremely well or extremely poorly. Go to players you know, who you believe are better than you. Ask them to review your videos also. Watch through them multiple times yourself, and never blame the situation that occurs on others or random circumstance. Ask yourself "What could I have done to avoid that happening?". Watch all the most recent Division A and B game recordings from every region you can get your hands on. Observe and learn what does and does not work from those matches, both on a strategy level, so you know how to position your mech, and on a player level, so you learn how to build your mechs.

Finally, do you feel that you and this roster can win MWO WC 17 ?

We are an extremely new team, that has a lot of raw talent, but lacks a lot of time playing together. Much will depend on how the next few months play out, both with us as a team, and how the game develops with major updates such as the civil war and new tech update.!

EDITOR NOTE; This interview was done a month ago, due to personal reasons it was not able to be posted till now.