Okay so there seems to be some confusion with the contest rules, which is understandable (English isn't my first language). Here is some more explanation; I **hope** this clears up some of the confusion. If you have more questions or are still confused, **don't hesitate to ask us**. I'd rather spend 30 minutes explaining one minor point than leave people confused or (worse) mislead them in the wrong direction.

1. The sore spot in the rulebook is the "*cannot work on a map you contributed towards*" rule. To put it bluntly, we don't want people to use this contest as an **excuse** to further work on **their own** MvM maps and missions, since we feel like that's a selfish double-dipping motive to participate. This is similar to the rule on how prior work is ineligible for this contest – again we don't want people to use this contest as an excuse to finish up unfinished projects. Start fresh for this event.

    With that being said, if you made a pop file for a map before but didn't make it for the mapper (e.g. you made it to learn the syntax, for fun, to try out bot template ideas, to play something new with friends), then you **are allowed** to use that map for this contest. However, if you made a pop file for a mapper and they included your pop file as part of their map release package, you **cannot** make a pop file for that map. This rule also avoids some minor advantages some people may have if the rule didn't exist, since people who made pop files for a mapper likely know the map layout and nuances inside-out, giving them an unfair advantage if they can make a pop file for their map.

    We want to encourage and challenge people to work with maps they didn't take part in creating. The challenge is to work with different layouts and map features that you may not *necessarily* have thought of putting in if you were to make an MvM map. Working with a map from a mapper who doesn't necessarily have the same mindset and ideas that you do adds a twist to the contest.

2. The contest only has one judge – **me** – which may concern some people since it may sound like a dictatorship (i.e. what I think is the only thing that matters). There are many reasons why we have set it this way. The first one – the lamest reason – is that this is my contest. Another reason is having too many judges is like having too many cooks in the kitchen – there is too much overhead and it will make the entire process a nightmare. We must wait for all the judges to find the free time to judge, write up their assessments, etc, which may make judging take way too damn long. We're not doing public voting either for similar reasons, not to mention public voting sometimes derails into a popularity contest and not so much on the actual merit of the entry.

    That said, there is a caveat to all that. Although I will be doing all the write-ups and scoring, I will be listening to the feedback made by other players in the server. This gives me multiple perspectives on how people feel about a mission which I will incorporate into my assessments, and helps to keep my judging well-rounded and unbiased. This also means that my feedback to your pop files during the gamedays **isn't** worth more than feedback from other fellow players.

    If you choose to ignore feedback from everyone else but me, you will end up shooting yourself in the foot since other people's feedback may end up affecting your score. Essentially, other players in the server can take on a mini-judge role in the overall judging. You don't need to listen to *all* our feedback – as the author it is your job to pick and choose what to heed and what to throw out, and sometimes ignoring feedback (including my feedback) can be the right move (since we're not always 100% correct in our comments, and this is *your* creation). Be open-minded but also critical with the feedback you receive, no matter who gives it. Shutting yourself from feedback or only listening to certain people's feedback will **not** help you create better quality content.

3. If you need to know the names of relay, spawn point, and tank path entities to use in the pop file, either look at the pop files that ship with the map (easy option) or decompile the map and inspect it in hammer (more time and effort). Decompiling is generally frowned upon, but so long as you don't copy stuff from the map or recompile it again, inspecting the map is perfectly fine.

   From my experience, just looking at the pop file that comes with the map is faster and easier and tells you all you need to know to make your pop file for that map. (Certain information, such as bot tags, are easier found from the pop file than on the map.)

4. Some people asked if they can use custom sounds or plugins to supplement their pop file. I can appreciate that these things can enhance your mission, but we strongly prefer that your mission works with the vanilla game. The more dependencies that are attached to your mission, the less portable it is for other people to host your mission on their servers. Having said that, to foster creativity and not shut opportunities down, I will handle these things on a case-by-case basis.

5. If you want to make class icons for your custom bot templates, you're free to submit those with your pop file. Throw all your files into a zip file and link that in the submission and testing threads. The server will take the zip file and place the files inside it in the proper locations. The map you choose does not have to have the icons you want to use packed into it for you to use it.

6. The map you pick does NOT have to be on the steam workshop. Maps from Gamebanana, TF2Maps, etc are fair game. Just make sure they don't infringe the contest rules. When you submit your mission to the contest or for testing, include a link to the map so we can upload it to the server in case we don't have it uploaded already.

7. The winners of the contest won't receive a "prize" per se, but we will do something special with their pop files. The details for this will be announced later. I understand it's somewhat shady that I refuse to say exactly what the winners will "get," but I want to keep it as a surprise. **The prizes will be announced when the winners are announced.** (Before anyone wonders: The surprise has nothing to do with our MvM servers.)

   As mentioned earlier, the winners will be 6 missions paired with 6 maps. By winning the contest, you not only make your mission win, but you also make the map you chose to make your mission for win as well. We will **not** pick more than 1 mission per map as a winner since we want to showcase 6 unique community MvM maps with 6 unique missions in the contest results.

   All participants will receive the in-game *Titanium Tank Participant Medal*, **winner or not**.

   That's all the hints you will get about winning the contest. If you want to know more, use your imagination and speculate, because we're not going to say anything more about this for now.

8. We don't want template pop files to accompany the main mission pop file. Place all your templates inside the main mission's pop file. You don't need to inline them inside the TFBot section – you can just slap them inside the Templates section of the pop file (before the first wave's code follows). This helps to keep our server files tidy, and honestly, a bot template pop file for 1 pop file (or even 2 if you make 2) seems unnecessary and perhaps overkill.

9. Bot templates are exempted from the "no using old work, no collaborations" rule since there are only so many unique robots you can make, and besides people would clone their old bot template, add one useless attribute to it (or change the bot's name) and call it a new template. Hence, we're not going to impose the limitation rule on bot templates – feel free to use your old bot templates.

10. You **are allowed** to use bot templates that came with the map (if the map has a bot templates pop file that its own missions uses, like **robot_powerplant.pop**) without needing permission from the author. We will treat this situation in the same manner that Valve bot templates in the VPK files are also allowed to be used for free. However, you **cannot** copy and paste these bot templates into your pop file (unless the creator gave you permission to do so) – you must reference them by their template name and use **#base** at the top to import those bot templates into your pop file.

11. The map completeness rule is there mostly for sanity reasons. In general, if the map *looks* like it's done (even if the mapper says it's far from finished), it's probably good for the contest. If the map clearly looks rough, unfinished, and/or is broken, then it's most likely ineligible for the contest. If you want to really make sure that you didn't pick an ineligible map, feel free to show us the map.

    Chances are, if you loosely follow the eligible map guidelines we gave you and your intuition (gut instinct) thinks the map is eligible for the contest, it probably is fine to use that map. We want to be inclusive of many community MvM maps, but at the same time, nobody wants to play on unfinished, broken, and/or eyesore maps. Ask: "**Would players enjoy playing on this map?**"

12. The "1 of each class" rule does not mean 9P highlander MvM. 1 of each class means that on a team of 6 players, you do not have any dupes of any class (there is at most 1 of each class that was chosen: 6 unique classes in a team of 6 players). This means that judging will not run with teams consisting of 3 soldiers, 2 heavies, etc. If your mission is only sane enough because the team **must** have 2 heavies to beat a wave, then that infringes the contest rules, **which in turn means you may not receive the participation medal**.

    These "must have 2 of _____" cases are pretty rare, but nonetheless, bring your mission to testing so we can easily point out these problems to you before the deadline. *Also remember: You do have one resubmission opportunity, so if you do end up submitting something that does break the rules, you get one last chance to fix those problems and resubmit to earn the medal.*

13. The contest testing gamedays are at **2 PM** and **10 PM ET** respectively, but they have a 30 min buffer to their start times (i.e. the afternoon one can start anywhere from 1:30 to 2:30 and the night one 9:30 to 10:30). After the first few gamedays, we will not announce these tests to the steam group – we will just run them at those times. If you wish to join these gamedays, check the server at around those times to see if people are on it. You can also join our steam group chat at those times so that people can easily invite you to these games if there are server slots open.

    Because these missions are all advanced mode difficulty, you must fully understand the *basic* principles of MvM to join these gamedays, or else you may be asked to leave. You don't need to know *everything* about MvM, but you should know basic concepts like the scout's job is to collect money, the heavy's minigun is terrible against tanks, avoid using certain weapons, etc.

The testing data becomes tainted and less helpful if non-advanced players play the waves. This is true on both ends of the skill spectrum – beginners/intermediate players will give the impression the mission is too hard, and expert players will give the impression the mission is too easy (the wave completion times can also fluctuate drastically based on team competence). Because of all this (and more), we can only allow advanced level players to participate in the gamedays. Expert level players are allowed, but you may be requested to "gimp" your loadout or upgrades a little.

14. To determine the duration of the mission, we only sum up the duration of the waves players have completed successfully. We don't count failed waves in the length since some teams can beat a mission without ever losing. We don't count setup time since teams vary in how much down time they need for setup. The target mission duration for this contest is **30 minutes** – players should be entertained with 30 minutes of combat in your mission.

    Some advanced teams can beat your mission in 27 minutes, others may take 35 minutes (due to minor skill and loadout differences among teams), so we allow a 5 minute leeway on both ends of the duration limit to accommodate for that. If your mission really misses the mark on the duration when an appropriately skilled team beats it, you will need to lengthen or shorten it accordingly.

15. Some people may wonder why, unlike in every other community contest, we post our feedback from the judging and we give all the participants a short grace period to incorporate our feedback into their submissions and resubmit for rescoring. Most contests do not let you modify your submission (let alone see judges' official feedback before modifying it) after you submit it, but we're deviating from that process on purpose.

    The first reason why we are doing this is we want people to be able to reflect on our feedback and use it to improve their pop files. We want people to make something they are proud of making and submit their best quality effort to the contest. The contest is **not** an assessment on who is the best at making missions, but rather an event to create enjoyable and challenging MvM waves.

    The second reason is to even out any differences in advantages people may have received from the gameday testing. People who used the gamedays inherently have a slight advantage over those that don't since those people receive feedback during the development stage. Not everyone is able to make it to the gamedays (schedule differences, time zone differences, etc) so the resubmission attempts to somewhat even out that playing field.

16. For the purposes of judging, reskins of community MvM maps (e.g. Halloween reskins of maps) are counted as **different** maps.

If you still have questions or concerns, or something seems to be swept under the rug, feel free to ask us and we'll answer them. We're believers of open communication; we have nothing to hide from you guys (except for what we will do with the winners), so if there's something you want to know, just ask us!

Good luck to all participants!

- **Hydrogen**
Owner of Potato's MvM Servers