Factions of the Citadel - The Second Age

A one-page Steampunk setting by Dan Suptic ©2012
For use with S John Ross' Risus: The Anything RPG

In Factions of the Citadel - The Second Age, each player plays as a whole team of combatants in Victorian Europe. They've each been hired by a different wealthy royal family in order to take over vital areas of a giant city-fortress. This setting is made to be played without a GM at all, and is suited for quick, tournament style play. The goal is simple - each player must eradicate all other players' teams and secure the area for themselves!

Teams are made with 10 dice, and each cliché represents a single person on that team. Clichés are picked from 9 specifically listed clichés, and no player's team may have 2 of the same cliché. The only Advanced Option used is Pumping Clichés.

To play, first everyone playing constructs their team. Then, decide if it will be a free-for-all style tournament (where everyone fights at once until only 1 team remains) or if it's an elimination style tournament (where teams fight one-on-one, with the winners pairing up to fight each subsequent round). After that, the battleground is determined with a single die roll - different battlegrounds give a +1 die bonus to different groups of clichés. Once the battleground is chosen, pick a player at random to start.

On a player's turn, each of their team members (each cliché they have) gets 1 action. The player may have their team members act in any order they choose. Any cliché can use their action to attack any other opponent's cliché. All die rolls are open, as are all players' cliché lists (and die levels for each). Attacks use the normal Risus combat rules, with the loser taking a die of damage. The only extra option in combat is the Pumping Clichés rule (and only single pumps, not double pumps). Players may not use the team up rules for their clichés. All clichés have a special ability, and some require an action to activate. These are explained in each cliché's description. Players may choose to have team members take no action as well.

Whenever a cliché drops to zero dice, that single cliché is out of the fight. When a player's whole team is reduced to zero dice in their clichés, then that player has been eliminated. If running an elimination style tournament, then the surviving player moves on to the next round after healing their team's clichés back to normal. If doing a free-for-all tournament, then the surviving players continue to fight on *without* healing their clichés. If you're the last surviving team of either style of play, then congratulations, you've won! Control of the area is yours, and your employers will reward you greatly!

Battleground table

1 - Open area, +1 die to Offensive Assemblage
2 - Closed area, +1 die to Defensive Company
3 - Unconventional area, +1 die to Support Personnel
4 - WIDE open area, +1 die to ALL clichés
5 - Simple area, no bonus to any cliché
6 -Versatile area, each team chooses a group for their +1 die bonus. Players can change the group that gets this bonus at the start of each of their turns.

Offensive Assemblage

This designation does not mean the following clichés are offensive in language or dress (although they may still possibly be); this instead refers to team members whose contribution to the effort are the most outright aggressive. The Vanguard, Cannon Trooper and Torchman make up the Offensive Assemblage.

Vanguard

Quick and agile, and usually the first to scout out an area, the Vanguard strikes hard and fast before his opponent can fully react. Armed with a light scatter gun and a sturdy cricket bat, the Vanguard relies on his speed and maneuverability to get into close combat.
Ability - No other cliché's abilities affect the Vanguard, either on his or the other player's turns. The bonus from the battlefield type still remains active.

Cannon Trooper

The Cannon Trooper is a soldier equipped with a portable, refit naval cannon and a heavy duty scatter gun for backup. His attacks are devastating, destroying man and machine in a spectacular and explosive display.
Ability - The Cannon Trooper deals an additional die of damage for each '6' rolled when winning a round of combat.

Torchman

The Torchman sets his foes ablaze with a specialized device that sprays a mixture of chemicals known as 'pyro'. Pyro reacts to contact with oxygenated air by bursting into flames. It's also rather adhesive too, and will continue to burn while clinging to the unlucky victim.
Ability - An opponent damaged by the Torchman's attack will take a die of damage at the end of their turn, every turn, until they spend their action putting out the flames.

Defensive Company

Those members of the defensive company excel at defending key points on the battleground. Once they've set up camp, a group of defenders can hold an area almost indefinitely. The Detonative Device Distributor, Battle Automaton and Machinist are members of the Defensive Company.

Detonative Device Distributor

As a demolitions man (or 'demoman') in civilian life, the Detonative Device Distributor is an expert at creating and using small-scale explosives. He can launch grenades at approaching foes with precision, and also place proximity mines to harm those who rush too hastily into battle.
Ability - The Detonative Device Distributor can protect himself or another team member with proximity mines. By using their action, they can name themselves or another team member, and a single number from 1 to 6. If that team member is attacked, and their attacker rolls that number on any of their dice, then the person attacking takes a die of damage regardless of winning or losing the round of combat. This ability stays in effect until the start of the Detonative Device Distributor's next turn.

Battle Automaton

The Battle Automaton is a large, heavy, unmanned mechanical combat vehicle. Armed with a large Gatling gun, the Battle Automaton patrols a set area, keeping the team protected.
Ability - The Battle Automaton can intercede and force any opponent choosing to attack one of its team members, to attack it instead.

Machinist

The Machinist is an engineer who can quickly construct supporting devices like turrets, ammunition dispensers and makeshift barricades. They keep a powerful, hand-made pistol on hand too for those who force past their devices.
Ability - The Machinist chooses 1 group of clichés on his team, giving them a +1 die bonus like the battleground bonus (this also stacks with the battleground bonus if it's the same group.) The Machinist can use their action to change which group on their team receives this bonus. The Machinist's bonus disappears once he is brought to zero dice in his cliché.

Support Personnel

Support Personnel have a varied mix of abilities that can help their teammates or hinder their opponents. The Caretaker, Sharpshooter and Agent Provocateur are all considered Support Personnel.

Caretaker

The Caretaker is a combination of medic and mechanic, able to keep his teammates and their equipment working well. They're also trained to take care of themselves, using their tools and surgical instruments as weapons.
Ability - The Caretaker can spend their action to heal 1 die for themselves or any one of their teammates.

Sharpshooter

Able to hit opponents before they can even get within natural sight, the Sharpshooter uses a rifle with a mounted telescopic looking-glass to cause damage at a distance. This well-trained sniper also keeps a large machete on hand just in case he needs to gets up close and personal with the enemy.
Ability - The Sharpshooter does not take damage when they're attacking on their turn - they only take damage when losing a combat round on another player's turn.

Agent Provocateur

This cliché can use camouflage to sneak across the battleground, spy on the enemy team and incite dissent. A small, concealable revolver is their only direct means of inflicting harm.
Ability - The Agent Provocateur can use his action, take a die of damage to their cliché and force an attack between 2 members of one other team. This attack happens immediately, and the Agent Provocateur chooses who's considered the attacker and who's considered the defender.