

Kousoku Sentai Turboranger - Final (abridged) Review

Prelude:

First of all, an apology so I can say what really needs to be said long ago: when I started writing my reviews of Super Sentai series, I didn't expect any of them to be...so long. The first series I did a comprehensive final review for was *J.A.K.Q. Dengekitai* on RangerBoard; that was mostly because I was doing a super-speedy 7-day watch of it and I figured I would give my views of the series before it vanished from my head. It worked well enough so I did it for the next series I was finishing up: *Dengeki Sentai Changeman*. And...it just grew...and grew. I sort of just got to the point where I was writing reviews that were less reviews and more just bizarre theories and concepts of what I saw in the series that in some cases have zero justification and are just me going on such a wild tangent that it made me want to theorize everything, particularly with the villains. The last year or so have been the worst of them from me, if you've read over the stuff I've said about *Maskman's* Prince(ss) Igam, *Dynaman's* Prince Megiddo, *Goseiger's* Brajira of the Messiah...and probably the worst offense of mine: my massive theorizations regarding Grand Witch Grandiene of *GoGoFive*, which went so metaphysical and in such weird tangents that I just feel ridiculous now in what I said. (especially since there is little really to say about any *GoGoFive* characters outside their interactions with others, both on the Sentai team and the Psyma Family). As if it was bad enough, life has just smashed me in the face badly in the last few weeks or so, particularly the week since I finished *Turboranger*. I've had my theories in my head and some ideas, but many of them just feel ridiculous and I know I'm going to go overboard in writing this, especially as I should be moving on to my next Sentai watch as I write this! Not to mention with the way the world works, especially with my job, my family and everything else, to write a review as long as the last one I did for *Goseiger* having become over a week out from the watch ending and preparing for the next Sentai, it wouldn't feel fair to live my life and ignore this but I can't know what tomorrow is going to give me.

So with that said, I'm going to do a massive cut-back on the review this time around. I've been thinking of doing some thoughts, pros and cons and such like I'm doing with my Kamen Rider reviews now on RangerBoard, which are simple and to the point without going hog wild. A couple thoughts, though: I will introduce some ideas at the start and maybe give a few other ideas at the end; plus I will still talk a bit on MotW since a friend of mine wants me to keep that up and that at least is something I don't mind going in depth with and giving favorites about.

Review in Brief:

Turboranger is a series that is rather off the radar for so many people due to a lot of the problems working against it. This is Hirohisa Soda's 8th consecutive Sentai, following up his massive successes of the previous years including the "Space Trilogy" (*Bioman*, *Changeman* and *Flashman*), *Maskman* and *Liveman*. Its also the first Sentai of the "Heisei" period, defined not due to the change in Sentai practices but as the first created and made under the Japanese emperor that has ruled since January, 1989 (and still rules as of this entry in 2015), before the major changes that many cite occurring from the following series later under Inoue, Sugimura and beyond to today. It was promoted as the "10th anniversary Sentai" being 10 years after *Battle Fever J*. But even with all the setup and promotion, it wasn't necessarily a ratings success: with people expecting something else after *Liveman*, it didn't do that well and was kicked out of its Saturday night slot 3/5th through and sent to Friday nights, where ratings plunged further...mostly due to kids (the prime ratings target) not realizing the time slot changed. (And leading to the budget cuts and "washing hands" attitude that built the infamy of Soda's swan song, *Fiveman*, prior to *Jetman* righting the course) With what came before and what came after, you wouldn't expect too much from this series, even with the point no one really seems to talk about it.

But somehow or another...and I'm being serious when I say this...this is probably the best of all of Soda's Sentai I've seen and probably one of the best Sentai I've ever seen. (And I've now seen 7 of the 9 Soda series, having not seen *Bioman*...or the infamous *Fiveman*). What makes *Turboranger* work so well for me is actually multiple reasons: firstly, this series really feels a bit of a homecoming with Soda actually writing some of the most fun and interesting stories in a long time. This season, particularly early on, reminds me much more of a late 80s version of *Goggle V* or *Dynaman*, just rediscovering the fun and weirdness that Sentai can do after dealing with much weightier matters for the last 5 years. But even with the weirdness, there is a lot of weighty and interesting matters going on that actually make this season work and remain strong through its entirety.

The concepts on the surface are what tended to be looked at, which in this case involve a team of high schoolers using vehicles and the magic of the fairies to fight the demonic evil of the Hundred Boma Tribes. The high school aspect, which I've already seen it through *Megaranger*, actually gave the series a unique freshness in taking a different sort of perspective even with it having been done in another series and with slight inklings in other Sentai with younger Rangers than the typical age range. The students of Musashino Academy are not carbon copies of what we see later at Moroboshi High; sure there are archetypes but those occur in nearly every series that goes on for this long. If there is a theme regarding these five, I can see a couple, one being the "youth" aspect and the other being the element that the five Turborangers all seem to have a bit of athleticism that goes alongside their fairy magic, thus allowing them to keep up with the powers that they do have, with all five having a specific specialty that occasionally gets some focus alongside their mission (Riki: baseball; Daichi: track; Yohei: swimming; Shunsuke: gymnastics; Haruna: majorette...yeah it's basically a baton-twirling cheerleader but at least she has a baton and not pom-poms plus there is a lot of individual athleticism to take into account); comparatively the Megarangers is more about their knowledge of technology (or in Kenta's case, being a video game master). The factor of this being a Sentai of the late 80s does allow for some of the humor to be based on the high school comedies of the time, giving me a great feel that makes me think of the better elements of Rumiko Takahashi's manga works like *Urusei Yatsura* or the early parts of *Ranma ½*.

The source of the powers is a rather unique one being a combination of magic and technology, yet it is more the "magic" side of things that take dominance due to the storyline. The main story involves the continuation of a war that ended 20,000 years in the past, when humanity and the fairies ended up sealing the Boma away. The facet of the Boma being "sealed" and not killed is an interesting concept I may get into at the end, but it does show that there is a massive power struggle and that the fairies were only able to stop but not fully finish the threat prior, probably due to the powers in play at the time and the abilities that humanity could use then compared to now. It allows for the seals to emerge anywhere within human society, awakening them in ways you wouldn't think and giving off a very "legendary" feeling from these villains in that they may have influenced our society without us realizing it. (I'll get back to that when I talk about the Boma Beasts) The vehicle "theme" is what is outwardly used by Dr. Dazai in order to combat the Boma and to give us a common theme for the team, but strangely it really isn't that important outside external appearances. (and to make it seem like Turbo Robo, the main mecha of the season, is essentially fighting on roller skates) It is more about how the vehicle power uses the fairy magic in coordination to allow for the Turboranger to fight against the Boma threat using their abilities; and it's really well done.

In some aspects, the season is less about the traditional aspect of "good vs. evil" and more about the element of "grudges" and the hatred caused through keeping them. The Boma in

themselves aren't necessarily the most evil of villains or even the most united: as a unified network of "tribes" with similar genetics and powers, it allows for many different perspectives and concepts within the squad. While most of them more have the similar ideas of the leader, Lagorn, in this feel, some Boma show other perspectives within the conflict, with a couple having allied with Saint Beast Lokia (the griffon-like deity associated with the fairies) and even one who has given up on fighting realizing how it hasn't led to any improvements for any of the tribes! However what unites nearly all of them is the "grudge" they all have against the world in having been wronged in some facet. There generally is something that has led to many of the problems for these beings instead of them just being evil for the sake of evil, and because of this grudge, it ends up leading them generally to the side of Lagorn in destroying humanity and the fairies and to conquer the planet. While the series itself doesn't say it directly, it is this united sadness that allows for the Boma to stick together under the supreme command.

But while the grudge aspect is slightly emphasized early on, it becomes focused and strengthened with the introduction of the spoiler villain for the series: Shooting Boma Yamimaru. (While the term "Nagare Boma", which is what he is, is typically seen as "Wandering Boma" out there, it is supposed to be a play on the Japanese word "Nagareboshi" or "Shooting Star", thus why I translate as "Shooting Boma instead of "Wandering Boma") Yamimaru is a different being, being one who has human attributes and bleeds red blood instead of the green blood of the typical Boma, but has massive amounts of Boma power within himself. He is one who has hatred of both humanity and Boma, having tried and failed to become part of both during the wars 20,000 years ago and who would see both the Turboranger and Lagorn's forces fall in order to prove his superiority to both. Yamimaru holds the ultimate grudge, having become hardened in his 20,000 years and who can't be controlled by either side due to his desires and hatred. He enrolls in Musashino Academy (the same school as the Turboranger) in order to be closer to them and to draw out a possible psychological edge against his human enemy. However, spending time at the school likewise reveals how human he is, showing that he shares more with these enemies than with the Boma he tends to use the power of; even getting his teacher at the school to believe he is more human than he claims. But Yamimaru's grudge is one of the deepest, due to the scorn and hatred that he can't get rid of on his own and his consistent desire to destroy all sides in the Boma/human war.

The matters involving Yamimaru become further complicated as the Boma begin to fall apart internally. Due to Lagorn's impatience with his minions on delivering a victory against the Turboranger, three of the original four Boma generals become killed in consecutive episodes; while another Shooting Boma emerges in the series by way of student Sayoko Tsukikage, revealed to be the female known as Kirika. The arc with the fall of the three generals is rather tense, proving the power that those under Lagorn continue to possess even if they ended up having a bit of fault from not having the same focus as Yamimaru. It's also a strong arc in giving us a crisis leading to the new mecha of the space-shuttle influenced Turbo Rigger and the base mecha Turbobuilder; particularly focusing on Daichi and his trials when his mecha part, Turbo Truck, becomes heavily damaged in the initial giant battle of the arc which likewise had some Yamimaru influence. Considering the crisis of the sequence, it was rather surprising that it was a non-Red who ended up getting the main focus of development and who was the key factor regarding the battle against the Boma Generals; yeah Daichi was the second-in-command of the team but giving him the major focus due to Turbo Truck and even having him get a major team victory by killing off Princess Boma Jarmin really did give him support in his importance on the team and preventing it from being only about Riki. (Even if Riki does ultimately kill Boma Doctor Lehda and more or less has most of the main story interactions with the Shooting Boma for the remainder of the series) Further, the whole arc just ends up coming at a point where the villains tended to get some sort of new support or upgrade to their arsenal, yet with the

“upgrade” not coming in improving the remaining villains but in dumping nearly all of them and letting the side villain get an upgrade and a new partner in the process.

Said partner, Kirika, is herself a key factor in the story but in the exact reverse of Yamimaru in how her storyline plays out. Yamimaru is introduced as a Boma first with his human attributes slowly brought out with the story concept of “can a Boma truly be ‘human’”. Kirika, though, is introduced in story as Sayoko Tsukikage, a “human” girl who suddenly discovers on her birthday that she was never really human and that her true allegiance is with the Boma. If Yamimaru’s main story until the end is about “can a Boma truly be human”, then Kirika’s is the exact opposite: “can a ‘human’ truly become a Boma”? Having created an identity and memories not just for herself but for others as a human, it is hard for the Turboranger to acknowledge and understand that she was a Boma all the time, and thus not only have to try and cope with this idea but believing, at least at first, that the draw of being “human” would be enough for Kirika to be saved. Unfortunately, the depiction of Kirika is more or less like the convert to a new religion: due to embracing her new self while abandoning everything to do with her old self, she acts as if she has to catch up for lost time that she never had in practicing the ideas of the Boma Tribes and not embracing her “Boma-ness” sooner while judging everything in her mind not in the perspective of what she had been through at the time but in her new perspective being a Boma as opposed to the true Boma/human hybrid she was. Kirika’s partnership with Yamimaru allows for the two to only identify with each other instead of with the world around them, becoming like “Bonnie and Clyde” in embracing their care of each other while emitting their hatred of both humans and Boma regardless of being both at the same time. Being the targets both of Lagorn and the Turboranger, they have to fight alone regardless of their true nature; but Kirika in particular was willing to go the extra length to shed the “human” side if only to become more Boma than she could possibly be, most infamously during the Armor Boma incident where she tried to keep wearing a powerful Boma armor that would have made her more powerful, but was in too much pain due to the lengths her human body had to go through just to tame it and the scorn she felt from Yamimaru who thought she may have been going too far while she claims she was willing to share the power with him ultimately.

Making matters all the more interesting is the tenuous relations between the Shooting Boma and Lagorn, especially once the two sides are the only real villains left. When Lagorn sees the Shooting Boma as his only Boma allies of strength remaining, he has no choice but to ally with them (lest he be just stuck with Zulten) while Yamimaru and Kirika were hesitant at first to fight alongside a villain who had been known to persecute them in the past. But while they are allied due to their state as Boma, the tension between the two sides remains: Lagorn and the natural Boma followers continue to mistrust the Shooting Boma due to their human nature, while the Shooting Boma continued to receive scorn and believe that the only way for them to get their way is simply to eliminate Lagorn from the equation. In a shocking move, they actually do just that, forcing the Boma leader to fight the Turboranger...and actually leading to the heroes defeating the emperor! But once Yamimaru and Kirika become the leaders of the tribes, the concept of the “spoiler” ultimately switches around: instead of them spoiling Lagorn or his followers’ plans, Lagorn (secretly reforming himself) spoils their plots one moment after another as he continues to push forwards with his own plans until he is finally reborn in a more humanoid form! And the first thing that the emperor does once he does return as “Neo-Lagorn”: simply seal away the Shooting Boma’s powers (alongside the Turborangers) and retake his empire as he moved towards his ultimate goals of unsealing all known Boma.

But even with Lagorn in the main driver’s seat of a major focus of the plot once again for the Turboranger’s last battles, the Shooting Boma remain key as their final developments help them figure who they are and where they truly belong. This mostly comes through the discovery of

Kirika's Boma father Masked Devil Boma, who reveals the true nature of the Shooting Boma not as "more powerful Boma" with human and Boma abilities...but as Boma with real human forms who can live in peace with the humans; this is their "evolution" to bring about real peace instead of festering in the grudges between the tribes and humanity or the fairies. For Kirika, this is a hard pill to swallow considering she spent most of the season's second half believing herself to be more Boma than human even with spending 18 years as more human than Boma; but it's even harder for Yamimaru who has been stuck with this grudge and feeling of not belonging not for nearly 20 years...but for 20,000 years! Even as Kirika finally sides with the Turboranger (and thus her humanity) in realizing her destiny, Yamimaru has to work it out and even fight with Red Turbo one last time in order to realize if or whether he belongs anywhere in this world; a world where he is only hated for who he is being on the line between Boma and human, between the two worlds he hates and that he has stood alone in for all this time. It takes the final battle with Neo-Lagorn and the near destruction of Boma Castle before he finally embraces the idea that perhaps he can live as a human, particularly with the factor of Kirika still being with him and the factor that they will have each other no matter what they became. Even with slight arrogance of superiority due to still having his Boma genetics, Yamimaru finally decides to go down the path of peace as a human and embrace the Shooting Boma's true purpose as the real Boma are finally stopped.

What make *Turboranger* strong in regards to its story are its characters and the world presented in it. Even with the factor of the Rangers using vehicle-inspired weapons and mechanics, this is a fantasy series with very human aspects and interactions between its characters. While some would probably think that the usage of "fairies" as the source of Sentai power is a little strange, it really isn't that big a deal and is just a nice, simple way to bring the element of the supernatural into the world of the five Rangers, especially with a shared origin regarding the tree by which their powers were obtained in (and that Seelon probably was living in all this time prior to the season) In a period prior to CGI, making one of their mentors a fairy is a rather simple but effective manner for creating a concept that feels fantastic but still within some sense of reality due to the usage of a human actor; while the system of how the Turboranger's powers work is rather neat with the power being internal and the suits and weapons more or less using what's inside of them instead of the power being the suit. (thus with this being the season that also "drains" the suits into the "white forms" when said power is sealed off) Many of the effects of the season outside the human actors are impressive, with the serious attempt to create something that feels more "fantastic" than the more sci-fi driven seasons, particularly with the usage in earlier episodes of Saint Beast Lakia and later the Boma creature Dragras, completely inspired by the fantasy movies of the 80s, most notably the Henson films *The Dark Crystal* (which incidentally was the highest grossing foreign film in Japanese history until James Cameron's *Avatar*) and *Labyrinth*.

The battle between the Turborangers and the Boma is similar in the "clash of civilizations" that other Sentai had done prior and will do beyond this, but done in a way where it brings up other concepts, such as tribal alignments, living between two worlds (or perhaps more), and the dealings with grudges and how to get beyond them so they don't just fester and prevent one from living a better life than what they're dealt. Most notably there is a major influence from this season on Soda's earlier season *Kagaku Sentai Dynaman*, which was one of the first series in Sentai to experiment with storytelling while likewise being about a civilization clashing with humanity. While an important Sentai in that respect, one of my biggest complaints about *Dynaman* when watching it was that the entirety of the conflict of the Jashinka Empire is all internal, with the consistent back-stabbing of the main villains such as Emperor Aton, General Zenobia and Prince Megiddo. The Jashinka remained evil regardless of who lead it or drove its path and, even to the end, Megiddo (once he's finally emperor himself) continues his war with

humans without end until the heroes finally stop him. There seemed to be a limited connection with humanity between the Jashinka and humans, with the Tailed People tending to stick to themselves and see themselves as superior to the dominant lifeforms of the planet, which is their entire battle in trying to overthrow the current dominant lifeform who only rule out of mere numbers. Only one episode touched on the possibility that the Tailed People and humans can interact in other ways and live in peace in the end, but it was more or less about a Tail Soldier family who run off leaving the Dynaman on good terms but escaping from the main thread of the Jashinka which continue on its same dark path to the end.

On the other hand, the Hundred Boma Tribes are treated in a way where many of the Boma may be on the same side or have the same beliefs as the leadership, but it is more just a tenuous unity than a completely united front like most villain groups. For the most part, many of the Boma are on the side of Lagorn, working with him or with the generals when they are unsealed from their positions they ended up in at the end of the conflict with the fairies. But some of the Boma have their own philosophies or find their own way that end up in conflict with the general consensus of the tribes, whether for the positive or negative. Some Boma end up on the path of Lokia, actually gaining respect from the fairy guardian and more or less becoming more allies to the fairies and humanity than to Lagorn and his forces. Others are not on Lagorn's side at all, with one in particular in open defiance believing itself to be as powerful if not more powerful than the Boma leader and thus having no right of being directed by the leader of the tribes. And of course there is also the matter of the Shooting Boma, who see themselves as more powerful than the Boma as much as they seem themselves greater than humanity, and whose estrangement by both makes them fight against all sides equally in order to prove their own power to the world. Being cross-breeds of humans and Boma, they have the wily of humanity and the ability to blend in if they could just realize it; while with the Boma power that can allow them to fight without needing a grotesque appearance typical to that of the Boma born from merely grudges. The power they have as Boma makes humans scared; while their human appearance makes them an enemy to natural Boma; thus building on why they want to take down both and giving the edge to Yamimaru (and later Kirika) throughout the season. The only thing that all the Boma share with one another is the power and the grudge that gives them the power to continue to fight head-on, even if they all use it for different reasons.

And of course while a season with a traumatic battle for the Turboranger, the season is also a season that embraces the whole idea of the heroes being mere high schoolers; the first time in the franchise this had happened. While there had been Sentai heroes in the equivalent of high school up to this point, this one sets the main characters at a school that is associated with the key factors of the season due to its prime location, being near Seelon's resting place and the crucial points within the battle between the fairies and the Boma during the war. And by having such young heroes as the main characters, it just allows for them to just have a lot of fun with the concept, letting them be kids just as much as they are fighting against the Boma threat. While we don't really see them doing things after school aside from fighting the Boma compared to a later high school team, we do see them hanging out around school, causing mischief in and around classes, take part in their respective clubs and just actually have a life being high schoolers alongside their duties to take care of. Likewise, the aspect that the season does take place in high school further allows interactions in particular with the Shooting Boma that aren't typically seen: remember that Yamimaru enrolls into Musashino Academy when he first shows up in the story, while Kirika knew the five as a friend and classmate without knowing of her Boma legacy before the start of her story. It would have been neat maybe to have Sayoko Tsukikage actually as a student and feel like part of "the gang" prior to the Kirika revelation so the drama would feel more natural when she goes from "ordinary classmate" to "mortal enemy", but since the Shooting Boma taking over the story more or less didn't happen until the success

of Yamimaru, it was probably the best they could do with the changing direction. (Then again it probably would have also meant preventing them from meeting her fake parents sooner since they knew all along unless they held greater restraint prior to Sayoko's "18th birthday") By having them as students at their same school as the heroes, it really does increase the tension and allows for a unique closeness between heroes and villains you don't usually see.

Ultimately while it probably is tough to vouch for how truly successful Turboranger was in its time and while time just sort of covered dust over the season, ultimately I think its story, concepts and message allowed for it to be sealed away into a forgotten classic of Super Sentai waiting to be unsealed to its full potential. The combination of the fun and the dramatic aspects and the improvement of the concepts that Soda started toying with prior allows for the season to shine as one of the best series of the franchise.

Pros

***Daichi Yamagata/Black Turbo:** Easily probably the best of the Rangers this season, the second-in-command of the team who is more notable for his serious moments that lead to awesomeness (such as the "five minutes of transformation" episode), but still has his moments of goofiness such as the Sumo Boma incident. Probably one of his most notable moments involved being the central focus on the Ranger side during the "fall of the Boma generals" arc, particularly when it is his Turbo Truck that takes the brunt of damage and he has to try to keep it together during continuous onslaughts from non-stop Boma attacks. Considering how often Reds tend to be focused upon (and Riki has his own concerns for the season), I really liked how Daichi is used as the main focus for this arc and probably the character with the most focus outside the Red.

***Shunsuke Hino/Yellow Turbo:** While I admit I wasn't a fan of him at first, Shunsuke won me over as the "sincere one" of the "comedy duo" of himself and Yohei. While he has his crazy moments, Shunsuke's character just has a lot of heart to him due to his caring personality and the bits of tragedy and connections he does hold, such as losing his brother at a young age and the hopeful memory of the girl on the beach that was unknowingly Kirika. Likewise, he has a sense of taking lemons and turning them into lemonade in combat, such as the amazing "white suit" fight with Hell Painting Boma. His concerned personality and being there for those that need him just ended up making him a strong, interesting character.

***Great Boma Emperor Lagorn:** Lagorn to me is "a tyrannical dictator villain done right", one who not only appears powerful to his enemies and his allies but actually is powerful, let alone has the means to pick himself up from defeat and come back in a way that benefits the situation. While many of the early episodes merely makes him appear to be yet another of a long line of "villains who sit there until the end and just appears powerful" (see Aton, Bazoo, Lar Deus, Zeba...you get the point), the sudden abandonment of his main generals and taking in Yamimaru and Kirika, who wanted him dead all along but still allied with him, halfway through the season was something that actually showed that he cared about results and was willing to sacrifice pieces to get it. Further, his sudden battle with the Turboranger due to the Shooting Boma's schemes appeared to shockingly eliminate him, only to set him up to storm back and retake the empire as Neo-Lagorn (even if he really wasn't as powerful as his original form though way more mobile) just before the revelations that saved the human-like villains. In many ways, the closest villain I can compare Lagorn with is probably Shinkenger's Doukoku, though at least he doesn't have some stupid means to hold him back like the Gedoshu's leader.

***Princess Boma Jarmin:** Jarmin is probably the only member of the original generals who had the least amount of baggage and who felt the most active in doing her job and doing it well

during the series' first half. She wasn't afraid of getting her hands dirty and in assisting her Boma Beasts (or riding around on Zulten) and really didn't have anything such as strange story elements or abandoned plot points preventing her from living up to her potential. Not to mention her end against Daichi is probably one of the best battles of the season.

***Yamimaru (*Hikaru Nagareboshi*):** Yamimaru is obviously the game-changer and the one who literally took over the story from the Boma side from his first appearance (even if you could say he showed up too early as a wild-card villain and probably took away from possible developments of the original generals). With his lineage as both Boma and human, he became the ultimate personification of the series' main concepts about grudges and what it takes to overcome them in how it makes one embrace their humanity.

***Kirika (*Sayoko Tsukikage*):** While Kirika came into the series in the second half, her story is likewise complete and taken from the opposite perspective of the Shooting Boma experience, being one who spent so much time as human that she was desperate to play catch-up with her Boma side and to prove she can be more Boma than what her humanity allows her to be, while only coming to grips that she has to be both due to the Turboranger and the sacrifices of her real father.

***Fairy Seelon:** While some would probably complain that Seelon didn't do as much as she could, I did like having her around this season and at least giving us the basis and the mythology for the first power source that is more fantastic in its nature than science-fiction or some fashion of physical management. I did sort of like her partnership occasionally with Haruna and that she was willing to sacrifice herself if needed to complete the Boma mission that her tribe started long ago, thus making her endearing as much as she is cute.

***Misa Yamaguchi:** Considering that Megaranger only barely had a teacher involved in its story (Mr. Ooiwa was fun though, not complaining about him just talking about the concept in general), Ms. Yamaguchi is an excellent, fun side character who really works well alongside her students and played off them in trying to figure out what was going on while likewise having quite a bit of involvement, even in some ways being key in helping progress Yamimaru's storyline in the episode she tries to help him out (which I liked in how she was brought in with the final episode in saving him). It does seem strange that she only finds out her students are the Turboranger at the end even though getting some inklings from the beginning, but it probably didn't matter by the final battle with Neo-Lagorn so she was allowed in on the secret finally. (that or her sister told her and she kept it to herself until the final battle)

***Turbobuilder:** Among the team mecha, the best one is probably the big revelation mecha-wise in this season: the actual base being a giant robot that can attack and fight against its opponents! While it is sort of strange that Dr. Dazai has the team's battles pretty much headquartered from his apartment during the season's first half (at least Seelon has her dollhouse separate within there), it's easily made up with the introduction of this, with both storage facility for the mecha and a massive robotic form that can withstand even the power of Lagorn himself! (with the help of all the mecha obviously) And nothing says power like being blasted by a massive laser "T" to the body.

Cons

***Yohei Hama/*Blue Turbo*:** Yohei was probably the weakest of the Turborangers, though it really isn't his fault. I did like he was very much the "friendly one" of the comedy duo to balance out Shunsuke's compassion; but the people he made friends with tended to lead to some of the season's weaker or weirder moments. His friendliness did lead to quite a few good episodes,

like the one with Jarmin's flying house, "kid Yamaguchi" and with Bell Chime Boma/Rin, but at the same time he also knew a lot of creeps that lead to some awkward periods for himself or the series, such as the "face-stealing" episode, the one with the second Blue Turbo and even the episode prior to the end with the magic boy, which was only saved by Lagorn firing a warning shot that leads to the endgame. It isn't his fault but the weakest of episodes leads to Yohei just ending the weakest Ranger.

***Boma Doctor Lehda:** Considering how many interesting villains Masashi Ishibashi have portrayed, Lehda just feels like the weakest of his roles, more or less feeling like an attempt to play another General Kar but just cut off due to the restructuring of the Boma halfway. He does play the role with gusto, but it really does feel a bit of a rerun and didn't bring anything new; maybe if he stuck around things would have changed, but with the Shooting Boma becoming the main focus, he just stood in the way of where the story ultimately was going.

***Dr. Dazai:** Dazai is a weird scientist character, feeling like he was trying to be a quirkier Dr. Yumeno but without his tragedy and with a pair of goofy goggles and vehicle fetish driving him. He is important due to allowing for the weapons empowered by the fairy power that the Turboranger needs, but really he's just there to build and maintain the machinery and really doesn't do very much on his own, not even when he's briefly abducted by Yamimaru only for the battle with Lehda's last Boma Beast to throw that off. Not really one of the better mentors this franchise has had I admit.

Neutral

***Riki Honoo/Red Turbo:** Riki isn't such a bad Red Ranger if you think it over, but he isn't without his faults sad to say. On one hand, I do like that his youthful vigor and determination leads him to be a strong leader that allows for him to handle what he has to (particularly in regards to the storyline with Yamimaru) while still being somewhat of a doofus on matters of schooling and not really being perfect, being perhaps an important step in getting away from the more traditional "perfect" Reds that had become mostly the norm by this point. On the other hand, I do think Riki does end up with a bit too much within the story due to his position of being Red Turbo: the final battle with Lehda was more or less to not make him fall behind considering Daichi defeated Jarmin by himself, while taking the whole Shooting Boma scenario on himself was a bit too much making him the only character that mattered in saving both Yamimaru and Kirika. (I was fine with the Yamimaru rivalry and some aspects of the Kirika storyline, but having him do everything in the end did feel a tad much even though it was probably due to Riki being exposed to it more than the other four, both in being Yamimaru's rival and in not preventing Kirika from following her destiny initially). He was still a fine Red for the situation, regardless, so it does even things out.

***Haruna Morikawa/Pink Turbo:** As the only female Ranger this season, I did think Haruna did a good job and had a lot of interesting episodes with her in focus, particularly early on such as the Boma Zombies, the fortune telling incident (I liked her investigation team-up with Seelon early on, not so much the random "wedding dress shichi-henge" in the second half of that episode) and the puppy episode. However she sort of fell in the trap of being "the girl" and thus ended up with some rather bizarre moments either working with another Ranger (being Yohei's savior by becoming a bad girl for an episode) or just the reference point being "the girl" (the episode with Misa's sister, where she was only attacked because she happened to be the female Ranger more or less). I think the best example for her would be the episode of Lagorn's revival: it's a negative Haruna episode since she basically blindly leads everyone into a scheme that allows for Lagorn to finish his resurrection, but at least she does make up for it with a great solo battle and mech fight. I'm not sure that Haruna had enough time or focus to be anything

other than “the girl of the team” compared to some other female Rangers, particularly of the teams with just one female.

***Dark Boma Zimba:** Zimba I believe is a character that probably suffered the most from having the Boma Generals abandoned, mostly because he did at least have a storyline set up from early on that made him a more interesting character, being a dark, serious soldier who is basically the reincarnation of a wronged warrior who died for unrequited love that led to his downfall. He was the primary rival for Riki before Yamimaru came along and tended to show the most serious nature in dealing with the Turboranger. However with Yamimaru pretty much taking over the story, he ends up just another general whose final episode only makes him sabotaged by Yamimaru's intervention, though still powerful considering his final battle had him be only stopped due to the first activation of base mecha Turbobuilder. If any character is affected by a possible aborted story arc this season that should have had more than they did, Zimba is probably the prime example; I wouldn't take away the Shooting Boma but I do wonder what his story would have entailed considering how it started.

***Rage Flying Boma Zulten:** In a weird way, Zulten is probably the only consistent within the entire Boma army (outside the Wulars); he for the most part is a complete weirdo but he was entertaining even with some of his moments of annoyance that made you wonder what he was still doing around for. (heck even his end really didn't matter since he just did a failed suicide attack on Turbobuilder using one of the Boma's jet vehicles in hopes he can destroy that massive thing to open the Great Seal beneath the base) Zulten did end up releasing some of the weirder and more interesting of the Boma Beasts and even did ally with the Turboranger briefly due to Yamimaru performing a grudge attack on him (though that involved using his farts to attack people...plus he had that weird car mode which makes no sense for a group of demons but probably worked due to giving the Boma something with wheels to fight a vehicle team. Zulten probably wasn't too bad compared to others, but he's only a neutral to me since he really didn't mean anything other than giving the Boma a consistent face with all of the changes in their structure from start to finish.

***Turbo Robo:** I'm rather torn about Turbo Robo since it is a cool mecha, with great agility and two actual finishers in both the Kousokuken and the Turbo Cannons that it alternates between. However the mecha is extremely boxy in its appearance, closer in design to the second mecha of the mid-late 80s (Tackle Boy, Galaxy Robo, Live Boxer) than to the classic mecha...plus it basically fights on roller skates due to how the cars are used. The components do have their charm though: Turbo GT as a flying car is cool and I find it hilarious that Haruna has a killer, missile-firing mini-van.

***Turbo Rugger:** Like Turbo Robo, I don't have too much to say about this mecha, which for some reason is based on the space shuttle instead of cars and has this weird affinity to rugby/football (I'd blame having a rugby player last season); but the factor of the “kicking off” at the start of a fight with an actual giant football/rugby ball plus a neat kick finisher and the cool combo with Turbo Robo does give it some value

Random Thoughts of the Season:

*One thing that I sort of noticed about this season is that there seems to be this Buddhist concept of “death” within this season, particularly with the relation between the fairies and the Boma. Both sides appear to essentially be “immortal”, in that they potentially can live forever and in many cases have (since we know Seelon and the main Boma forces, including the Shooting Boma, all survived and the Boma had to be sealed, not killed, for the last war to be stopped) However, the fairies seem to have this greater understanding and appreciation for

mortality and are willing to sacrifice their lives for sealing or destroying the Boma opponents, likewise are able to sacrifice themselves to enter "rest", such as Lakia does at the start and Seelon ultimately does at the end once the forces are defeated. On the other hand, the Boma can be "killed" but have this ability to keep coming back: we saw it with Lagorn and I have this hunch that the Great Seal is basically one giant crypt of Boma that they go to after they die waiting to burst open and start it all over again. The fairies appear to personify "enlightenment" and thus use their powers for helping others as "bodhisattva", while the Boma appear to enter this never-ending existence where they never really die due to their grudges existing forever; outside the few who appear to actually get beyond said grudge and are able to move on (such as the "good Boma" like Ruffian Boma, Sumo Boma or Kirika's father/Masked Devil Boma) Also I find it weird but interesting that we have an "East vs West" aspect of the creatures at war even with the purely Eastern concepts in play here, with the concept of "fairies" being more alongside the Western belief of them (probably used both due to their supernatural aspects and so it isn't purely seen as overtly Buddhist), while the Boma are purely Eastern demons or demonoids. It's sort of a play on religion without it being religion, like *Goseiger's* take on Christian concepts such as "trinity".

*I sort of wish there was more explanation regarding how the Boma are truly created, particularly in response to the Boma generals. (who could have used the development since the Shooting Boma had everything mined accordingly through the season) We have Zimba's story about being born basically from the grudge of the fallen warrior scorned by love, but we never find out anything about where Lehda or Jarmin come from and why they appear to have more humanoid appearances without being Shooting Boma. (well more Lehda, Jarmin does have her serpentine face that likewise her partner Kuroko Boma has but you could say she is sort of on the same level due to being higher up on the totem pole) I sort of wonder if the "Boma deity" (Lagorn or the massive floating demon statue used as the castle) allowed in actual humans who had become loyal worshipers and become corrupted to the point that they too became more or less Boma...but without certain spiritual factors such as means of growth or the pure "immortality" (not eternal youth since they do have that but the whole "they die and can come back ultimately" factor) since we know neither Jarmin or Lehda had that ability (Zimba did but we can say he was purely spiritual and created from the warrior's grudge and is not the warrior reborn or anything) and they weren't Shooting Boma hybrids.

*The concepts of the Boma residing within the massive demon statue that makes Boma Castle does further play an interesting aspect regarding the spirituality within the Boma and possibly where their powers really came from. Of note is how it seems to be almost symbiotic with Lagorn, with the Boma ruler trapped in there at the end of the war and with him never really leaving, even becoming reborn within there at a fast pace after his first death into the Neo-Lagorn form. It does make me wonder if the real "enemy" is less Lagorn and more the spiritual aspect that makes up the Boma religion as personified by Boma Castle, with the possibility that the demon statue castle is its deity and that as long as it exists, it becomes a focal point that can harness the energy of the Boma and use it for this eternal cycle of reincarnation based on their eternal grudges. I am not fully sure but I do find it interesting that the Boma threat and the threat of the Great Seal instantly ended the moment Boma Castle was destroyed; without it, the spiritual flow of power that existed probably was destroyed and all those associated with the power/religion went with it.

*I know some are probably thinking that I should perhaps give a few words on Ken'ichi Yamada, the second Blue Turbo that Inoue introduced for the one episode; I did like the idea that others within Musashino Academy visited the fairy tree and thus gained its power and somehow the character sort of felt like a prototype of Billy from Power Rangers of all things, but I just wasn't

really a fan of that episode. I did have one idea if this was post-Zyuranger of Ken'ichi possibly being a 6th Ranger, maybe being "White Turbo" (OK, white is "powerless" this season so forget that...so maybe "Shuttle Turbo"? "Space Turbo"? "NASA Turbo?" MegaSil...oops, already taken) and working with Dazai to create Turbo Rugger for himself instead of as a generic second mech of the era...but we're still three years away from Burai so it probably is just a "what-if". (though we did get a couple other future Rangers this season: I sort of made a bit of mention about Mika Yamaguchi, who will return as FiveYellow; plus the flute girl from ep. 9 will be Blue Swallow...oh and the boy from the Boma Zombie episode...became Kamen Rider Glaive years later...I am not joking on that.)

*I still think it would have been neat if somehow Kirika was introduced from the beginning as just Sayoko Tsukikage, another student within the Turboranger's homeroom, and that we would have no idea of her connection to the Shooting Boma until Yamimaru's dream; thus allowing for the proper developing prior to the shocking plot twist. Obviously that would have meant Kirika would have been plotted out from the beginning when not even Yamimaru was in the story until 14 (and even then I can't say if his addition came about by nature of the story or due to concerns about the generals at that point) but really they just sort of lucked into it and it's just something I feel could have led to a more natural evolution to allow for the changing direction from the initial Boma phase to the "Shooting Boma era".

*Speaking of Musashino Academy, I do like how this season actually does feel more like a high school series than Megaranger in some ways; I can't really say how or why that is but the feel of this season does feel more natural in its usage of high school...then again this season doesn't have the Pink singing on a bus or anything.

*One more silly thought: is it just me or are the "eyeballs" that are seen as part of the Boma somewhat similar to the obsession to the eyeballs that tend to be associated with the Gorma? Could there be some sort of unknown connection of Boma (or Shooting Boma) migrating from Japan to China after the war and ultimately giving rise to the Gorma...and considering their parallel nature, likewise the Dai!? (the Dai/Gorma War was 14,000 years after the Boma/Human war...so they would have had time...)

Boma Beasts

As MotW go for the franchise, the Boma Beasts are rather peculiar in how they're utilized, both in their methods and what exactly they stand for. As I mentioned prior, all of the Boma were previously sealed prior to this season at the end of the war 20,000 years ago, this being the culmination of the combined might of humanity and the power of the fairies. The factor of the sealing of the villains this time is rather unique as I mentioned before: the factor that none of the Boma died, merely were sealed away, does suggest the idea of the possible immortality that all Boma appear to have within themselves. Those who fought all of the Boma, including the Boma Beasts, knew 20,000 years ago that trying to "defeat" the enemy by merely killing them was not going to work; they would just keep returning over and over. The only way to deal with the Boma, any Boma, is to seal them; that way, they can't just return and keep threatening humanity over and over again. Of course the means to seal the Boma and Boma Beasts tended to be means by which a high cost was required in order to take them down and make sure they couldn't just get back up. Obviously humanity needed the power of the fairies to fight the Boma, but generally the only means for the sealing tended to be the sacrifice of the fairies themselves (thus leading to their dwindling numbers alongside environmental pressures prior to Seelon being the last one) outside the usage of their patron saint Lokia to grant his power to bringing them down.

Weirdly while the elements of sealing the Boma Beasts tended to be more associated with the fairy/human side, the Boma themselves likewise seemed to realize that this was the only way to reduce their numbers, particularly in regards to how many perspectives the Hundred Boma Tribes exhibited in the first place. Due to several Boma not following along with the general concepts of Lagorn and the tribes, many of them were sealed by the Boma themselves, either by Lagorn (who was forced to remove an extremely powerful one on his own or else face a threat to his reign) or by an extremely powerful and knowledgeable Boma Beast such as Sealing Boma. It is interesting to realize that even the Boma themselves knew that the only way to remove themselves was through sealing, thus preventing a dissident Boma Beast who isn't on their side from returning in the same manner that the humans and fairies sealed regular Boma Beasts to stop their action and possibilities of revival.

One of the most peculiar aspects about the Boma Beasts is that many of them appear to give off concepts and legends that would suggest ideas that existed much more recent than the Boma/Human War 20,000 years in the past. The general idea is that these Boma may have been prototypes for various myths and legends of the youkai or spirits that resided in Japan that were ultimately passed down until modern time. However in a couple weird cases, we have objects and items where a Boma Beast was sealed which you really wouldn't think existed all that time ago and yet it was there remaining within there for all to know and see. Probably one of the most obvious and peculiar to me was Oni Boma, a Boma Beast that was specifically hidden in a samurai doll after being "sealed" in the past by the legendary hero Kintaro. I don't mind the possibility of a Boma Beast being an inspiration to a legend of the Oni (well we did have a Precious associated with them at one point but that's another story), but the specifics that it was sealed in a samurai doll just really shows how bizarre and specific these sealings tended to get. How the heck would a Boy's Day doll of a samurai literally exist 20,000 years ago? Was the material by which Oni Boma was actually sealed used to literally create a doll? Could Oni Boma's spirit have transmigrated from where it was sealed to a samurai Boy's Day doll as a sense of irony? It's probably one of the weirder concepts that shows that while the sealing idea wasn't such a bad one, it isn't without its problems. I do sort of wish that the main idea of where these Boma Beasts were sealed remained later on in the series, but for the most part is isn't as important after the Shooting Boma take over the story; my guess is that it sort of was a concept less dropped and more not needed after a point since Boma Beasts were emerging regardless; or perhaps the increase in Boma energy throughout Japan made the seals all the easier to break towards the end, particularly once we get to the Shooting Boma duo and Neo-Lagorn near the end. (outside those that truly had to be sealed due to how dangerous they were already such as Sealing Boma)

As for the importance of the factor of sealing, I sort of suspected with the final episodes that the reason why Boma are "sealed" and not "killed" is simply because of the transmigration of spirits to a specific point by which they just lay waiting in one point. That "point" was the Great Seal: a massive point where the 108 Boma Beast Pack lay waiting to lay siege on Earth upon its opening. My suspicion is that the Pack isn't merely just new Boma Beasts of the tribes that we hadn't seen but all of the spirits of the Boma Beasts that were killed; thus this is the point and none of them really died even when the Turboranger defeated them. It is because of the danger that the fairies imbowed a massive amount of their power on that point; which in turn lead to Dr. Dazai to build Turbobuilder on top of it probably thinking of the protective qualities of the fairy energy without realizing what was right beneath his feet. It is because of this endless rebirth cycle and its association with the crypt beneath Turbobuilder under the Great Seal that makes me believe that the only way for the Boma war to end was the destruction not merely of Lagorn but Boma Castle, the spiritual "source" of the Boma power/religion. Without that transmission

site eternally emitting the dark power, all Boma Beasts who had not found true peace (not Shooting Boma or those who have appeared to reach true enlightenment like Ruffian Boma) died the instant the castle was destroyed.

Five Best MotW:

***Licking Boma (6):** It's not that often that you get an environmental episode that actually makes you question whether what the villain is doing was right; this one was actually strong due to that, with a Boma Beast basically cleaning up a polluted lake...but doing so to create slimy Boma Zombies. Obviously zombies of any kind are bad, but at least it gave off the question of "should one take shortcuts for protecting the planet".

***Mansion Boma (8):** This was a really crazy but fun one, creating calamities by haunting a house and later an entire neighborhood with its curse...plus just the image of Jarmin flying around in it in giant form is just hilarious and adorable.

***Fossil Boma (18):** Any Boma Beast potentially as powerful if not more powerful than the main villain makes you take notice; the factor of it working simultaneously on the small and big stages reminds me a bit of the Egos Monsters/"Little Brother Monsters" and its abilities just lead to an intense Daichi battle.

***Sumo Boma (21):** Easily the best and funniest of the "redemptive" Boma Beasts, whose entire life was based on honorable sumo and forced one of the most spectacular giant fights of the season with it and Turbo Robo facing off sumo-style!

***Hell Painting Boma (38):** While slightly gimmicky (and more or less released due to Shunsuke's carelessness), its power through its absorption of colors and working alongside its painting was a lot of fun, as well as Yellow Turbo's redemptive match with Riki by defeating it while in their "powerless" suit mode.

Worst MotW: Noppera Boma (37): Easily and without question the worst MotW of the season, basically "switching the faces" of Yohei and a loser student just to get across the lesson of "man isn't just face"...when it's just the actors switched and the mighty power of pimple cream ends up taking it down. Other problem ones for me include Armor Boma (which really is just a suit of armor disguised as a meteor) and Dragra Boma (why would you hide a Boma Beast inside one of the most powerful creatures allied with you?)