



SCI FI WEEKLY

THE WEB'S #1 SOURCE FOR NEWS, REVIEWS AND INTERVIEWS

ISSUE #529 WEEK OF JUNE 11, 2007

SEARCH SCI FI WEEKLY

Search

NEWS

SCREEN

BOOKS

GAMES

CLASSICS

ANIME

COOL STUFF

SOUND SPACE

SITE OF THE WEEK

LETTERS

INTERVIEWS

COLUMNS

COVER GALLERY

RECENT REVIEWS

- ▶ Surf's Up
- ▶ Kyle XY Season-Two Premiere
- ▶ Stan Lee Presents The Condor DVD
- ▶ Rise: Blood Hunter
- ▶ Paprika
- ▶ Day Watch
- ▶ Hex Season-Two Premiere
- ▶ Angel-A
- ▶ Storm Hawks
- ▶ King Kong

REVIEWS: SCREEN

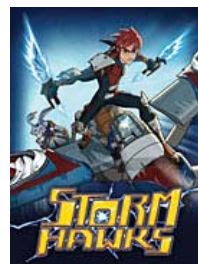
May 31, 2007

Storm Hawks

The sky's never the limit for five mismatched teens who battle the evil forces of Cyclonian to protect their world



- ▶ Storm Hawks
- ▶ "Gale Force Winds"
- ▶ Starring the voices of Samuel Vincent, Chiara Zanni and Matt Hill
- ▶ Created by Asaph Fipke for Nerd Corporation
- ▶ Written by Steve Ball
- ▶ Series directors are Asaph Fipke and Steve Ball
- ▶ The Cartoon Network
- ▶ Premieres Monday, June 4, at 7 p.m. ET/PT



By Kathie Huddleston

ON A PLANET CALLED ATMOS, a determined troupe of teens take to the sky on transforming flying motorcycles to combat the evil forces of the Cyclonian kingdom. The Sky Knights have been fighting for freedom for a long time, and none are more legendary than the Storm Hawks.

The newly assembled Storm Hawks are a group of fearless teens who are "too young to have fear (or a pilot's license)." The squadron is led by 14-year-old Aerrow (voiced by Vincent), an optimistic and determined Sky Knight who is one of the most gifted pilots in the Atmos. He is joined by his furry co-pilot and sidekick, Radarr, first officer Piper (voiced by Zanni), wingman Finn (voiced by Hill), mechanic Junko (voiced by Colin Murdock) and Condor pilot Stork (voiced by Scott McNeil).

The artwork definitely has influences in anime, but its style ends up being distinct.

In "Gale Force Winds," an old Sky Knight and leader of the Terra Gale resistance mounts a battle to protect his land with only his granddaughter, Dove, at his side. When a Cyclonian squadron led by the Dark Ace attacks, Dove is kidnapped.

Meanwhile, Aerrow is taking a run at Widow's Canyon over Radarr's protests. Aerrow navigates his flying motorcycle through the treacherous canyon as Radarr pulls in the vehicle's wings at the last moment, and they survive the dangerous stunt. Once they get back to their base on the Condor airship, Piper informs the squad that they have a mission to monitor the new Cyclonian supply lines in Tropica.

Finn and Junko are thrilled at the thought of getting in a little beach time, but no sooner do they hit the wasteland of Terra Gale on the way than they find themselves under attack by a Cyclonian squadron. They fight off the bad guys and run into Dove's grandfather, who tells them of the girl's kidnapping.

Aerrow and Piper come up with a "dangerous, reckless and pretty much impossible" plan to rescue Dove. However, when they sneak inside the fortress in which Dove's being held, they discover the girl isn't the only one who needs rescuing.

Nothing new, but everything cool

The Cartoon Network's new animated series *Storm Hawks* offers a distinctive visual style with comfortable characters and a well-realized



RISE OF THE CHEVY AUTOBOTS

PLAY NOW

TRANSFORMERS

 IN THEATERS

 7.14.07

 Get 30 free days of XM Radio Online



CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE TO SCI FI MAGAZINE AND GET A FREE ISSUE!

universe. While the new series takes bits from other well-known worlds, such as *Star Wars* and *Mad Max*, it manages to create its own unique vision nonetheless.



The premiere episode, "Gale Force Winds," gives each character a moment, providing a bit of insight into the individual Storm Hawks and their world. Still, it's at the expense of providing depth for the story at hand. It's understandable that writer Steve Ball is trying to go broad to give the many characters something to do, explain the world and tell a story in 22 minutes. The tone stays light and no one seems to actually get killed, making the story appropriate for the younger set. Hopefully, future episodes won't be so crammed with material, which will help the storytelling considerably.

The characters are, of course, standard when it comes to teenage heroes. Aerrow is Luke Skywalker in cartoon form, and the Radarr is R2-D2. Piper is the spunky girl hero and Finn is the cad, while Junko is the gentle giant. Only Stork comes off as a unique character. Still, that doesn't really matter. These characters are created so kids can identify with them, and they will.

Storm Hawks is a visual feast of action, with beautiful backgrounds set against the colorful machines and characters. The artwork definitely has influences in anime, but its style ends up being distinct. *Storm Hawks* is a place kids will definitely want to visit this summer.

As for the universe in which *Storm Hawks* takes place, it's just a lovely backdrop for the action. This show's strength lies in its aerial dogfights and the clever machines the writers and artists have come up with. The machines are not magical ones that morph at the press of a button; rather, the characters have to pull or push or fight with a switch or a lever to cause the machine to change. It adds a level of realism to the universe that's appealing.

It all comes together nicely to create an exciting action/adventure that's just right for kids. Even parents won't mind spending a bit of time in the land of Atmos, where the good guys win even if they are teenagers, and the bad guys fly nifty motorcycle airplane machines. It's not a new story, but it is a cool one. —Kathie

SIGN UP FOR THE SCI FI WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

[CONTACT US](#) [SEARCH](#) [SUBMISSIONS](#) [STAFF](#) [RSS](#)

© 2007, SCI FI. All rights reserved.