Firemaiden and the Human Popsicle, the Powers of Fire and Ice

By Ted Brock

Quite often on the SJGames GURPS forums, we see people asking, "How do I model my favorite superhero in GURPS?" While there are many threads and many responses to these questions, not one sits down and lays out a set of Powers for supers beyond the meager offering presented in **Powers**. This is particularly egregious when it comes to the Elemental powers, where such abilities may be wielded by multiple characters in a setting. While **Psionic Powers** and **Thaumatology: Chinese Elemental Powers** are good resources, there are many different powers possible beyond those.

So to help rectify this, the following are two of the most common basic Powers asked for: Cryokinesis and Pyrokinesis, intended to help model the characters Iceman of the X-Men and the Human Torch of the Fantastic Four, respectively. For the sake of this article, the power modifiers are built upon both the *Super (-10%)* and *Elemental (-10%)* source modifiers from **Powers** (pp. 26-29), but other sources, such as *Mutant (-10%)* (**Supers**, p. 34) and *Psionic (-10%)* (**Powers**, p. 28) instead of *Super (-10%)* are viable as well for most of these. The two Powers can act as opposed Powers (**Powers**, p. 10) to each other.

These abilities are built using the *Skills For Everyone* sidebar on page 162 of **Powers**, including *Power Techniques*.

New Modifiers

Damage Modifiers

Hazard: Pyrokinetic Fatigue Attacks that inflict gradual heating (as opposed to rapid burning) can add a new Hazard: Heat, +20%. FP lost to this Hazard follow the rules on p. B434. (Reprinted from **Psionic Powers**, p. 19.)

Cryokinesis Power

Quite often, the abilities represented below are described as being a combination of control over temperature and control over moisture. The latter part of this statement generally means that the environment would give a bonus or penalty to the various skills, based primarily on the humidity.

As a rule of thumb, the abilities assume being used in areas of 50% humidity; your GM may use a Task Difficulty Modifier of +1 for every +5% humidity or -1 for every -5% humidity in the environment for abilities that do more than just shape ambient ice. This means that using these abilities in a desert with an average of 25% humidity will give a -5 to effective skill, while performing them in coastal regions with 80% humidity will give a +6 to effective skill, as in the humid areas there is a lot more moisture in the air to use. However, the temperature of an area also indicates how fast the ice and snow utilized by these powers disappear due to melting or sublimating. A cold, dry area like Antarctica has a lot of ice already present, so any creations may be effectively permanent; while in a humid jungle or a hot desert the snow and ice may melt in mere moments after you stop concentrating on them.

For the sake of this Power, "ice" and "snow" are considered the same item, as both are composed of solid water.

Power Talent: Cryokinesis Talent, *5 points per level*.

Power Modifier: Cryokinetic (-20%). These abilities have mundane countermeasures (-10%) in the form of heat/fire and insulation. They are also subject to abilities from the Anti-Super Power (-5%) and technological countermeasures (-5%), such as power dampeners.

Blizzard

27 points for level 1, +5 points for each additional level

Skill: Blizzard (IQ/H).

This ability allows you to create a massive blizzard centered on you, drawing on moisture from the area around you and consolidating it into snow, freezing rain, or sleet (your choice). This blizzard affects regular Vision, Infravision, Ultravision, and Ladar (as per **Powers**, p. 65, these four are considered the *same* sense for the sake of the underlying advantage). The first level creates a blizzard with a 16 yard radius that cuts visibility in that area to -5. Each additional level doubles the radius. Note that for seven levels, you are able to cover over a mile in diameter with your blizzard! (Something like that will certainly make the local evening news.)

Statistics: Obscure (Vision) 5 (Area Effect: 16 yards, +150%; Persistent, +40%; Cryokinetic, -20%) [27]. Each additional level adds another level of Area Effect (+50% per level).

Ranged *(Tech/H)*

Default: Blizzard-5; cannot exceed Blizzard.

You are able to form your blizzard out to 100 yards away from you.

Freeze

9/18/27/30/33/36 points for levels 1-6

This is the basic ranged attack of a cryokinetic super. It does 1d fatigue freezing damage, and has a base Acc 3, 1/2D Range 10 yards, Max Range 20 yards, RoF 1, Shots -. This is commonly enough to put out small fires at close range. Additional levels start with an increase in damage, up to 3d fatigue freezing damage, enough to exhaust a typical person with a single shot, then increase the range of the attack.

Statistics: Fatigue Attack 1d (Damage Modifier: Freezing Hazard, +20%; Increased 1/2D Range ×5, +10%; Reduced Range ×1/5, -20%; Cryokinetic, -20%) [9]. Levels 2 and 3 add another die of damage, [18] and [27] respectively. Level 4 reduces the level of Reduced Range to ×1/2 [30], level 5 removes Reduced Range completely [33], and level 6 adds Increased Range ×2 [36], for a maximum Range of 100/200.

Hailstorm

9 points for per level

You can pelt people with balls of iceor hail which erupt from your hands.

Statistics: Crushing Attack 1d (Increased 1/2D Range ×5, +10%; Rapid Fire, RoF 10, +100%; Rapid Fire: Selective Fire, +10%; Reduced Range ×1/5, -20%; Cryokinesis, -20%) [9]. Each additional level adds another die of damage.

Harmless Snow *(Tech/H)*

Default: Innate Attack (Projectile)-3; cannot exceed Innate Attack.

You are able to temporarily reduce the strength of your snowballs down to utter harmlessness, doing at most 1 point of damage. Great for getting someone's attention without hurting them!

Ice Block

34 points for level 1; +3 point each additional level

You can encase a person in a block of ice! This is freezing cold ice, of course, so the target begins to freeze while encased in the block. Conscientious elemental supers will ensure the target's mouth and/or nose remains free so the target can breath and does not remain in the block too long.

Statistics: Binding 10 (Engulfing, +60%; Selectivity (Engulfing), +10%; Cryokinetic, -20%) [30] plus Fatigue Attack 1 pt (Follow-Up (Binding), +0%; Damage Modifier: Freezing Hazard, +20%; Persistent; Resistable: HT, -30%) [4]. Each additional level adds another level of Binding [+3/level].

Ice Body

102/105/113/120 points for levels 1-4

You are able to form your body into pure ice; in essense, this means you take on the Body of Ice meta-trait (p. B262).

Statistics: Alternate Form (Body of Ice) (Cryokinetic, -20%) [102]. Level 2 adds Active Change [105], level 3 adds Non-Reciprocal Damage [113], and level 4 adds Once On, Stays On [120].

Ice Dagger

This ability lets you fire daggers or icicles from your hands (or mouth, or wings, or wherever)

Statistics: Impaling Attack 1d (Increased 1/2D Range ×5, +10%; Reduced Range ×1/5, -20%; Cryokinetic, -20%) [6]. Level 2 adds Variable and a second die of damage [12]. Levels 3 through 6 add additional dice of damage, up to 6d [36]. Level 7 reduces the level of Reduced Range to ×1/2 [41]; level 8 removed Reduced Range altogether [46]; and level 9 adds Increased Range ×2 [51].

Multi-Shot *(Tech/H)*

Default: Innate Attack (Projectile)-7; cannot exceed Innate Attack.

You are able to fire multiple ice daggers at once, up to six at a time. This in essense gives you a Rate of Fire 6.

Ice Double

49 points per double

Prerequisites: Ice Shaping, and *either* Ice Sheath *or* Ice Body.

Skill: Ice Double (IQ/H).

You are able to form and control a duplicate of yourself. This is a construct made of ice, and is often mistaken for the true you by those who can't tell the difference. If the double is destroyed, there is no backlash to you.

Statistics: Duplication (Construct, +60%; Cryokinetic, -20% [49/level].

Ice Generation

4 points per level

Skill: Ice Generation (IQ/H).

The basic ability of the Cryokinesis Power, this lets you create ice and snow at will. Unless you are just creating piles of snow or a large block of ice for later use, however, you'll need to buy Ice Shaping to form it into the shape you wish.

Statistics: Create Ice (Cryokinetic, -20%) [4/level].

Ranged *(Tech/H)*

As for Blizzard (above).

Ice Shaping

12 points per level

Skill: Ice Shaping (IQ/H). Alternatively, Artist (Ice Sculpting) (IQ/H) may be used if going for a more *artistic* flair rather than a *practical* application.

You are able to shape ice, including snow, at a touch. A snowdrift is considered a single item. Most cryokinetics have between 5 and 10 levels, enabling the shaping of between 250 and 1,000 pounds at a time.

Statistics: Control Ice (Cryokinetic, -20%) [12/level].

Collective *(Tech/H)*

Default: Ice Shaping-5; cannot exceed Ice Shaping

You are able to temporarily control more than just the one piece of ice at a time.

Ranged *(Tech/H)*

As for Blizzard (above).

Ice Sheath

10 points for level 1, +3 points each additional level.

You are able to encase yourself in a coating of ice. In addition to providing a modicum of resistance to injury, it also makes it harder for those who wish to grapple you to do so.

Statistics: Damage Resistance 1 (Semi-Ablative, -20%; Cryokinetic, -20%) [3] + Slippery 4 (Cryokinetic, -20%) [7]. Additional levels add to the DR.

Ice Slide

12/22 points for levels 1-2; +8 points each additional level

Skill: Sliding (HT/A). This skill is considered the equivalent of Hiking, Running, Swimming, or Flight for movement purposes; no skill is necessary for the creation of the slide itself.

You create a slide of ice which from time to time anchors itself to any nearby stable surface. You travel near the beginning of the slide, and add to the slide as it travels. Those traveling with you need to hold onto you if you create an incline or a loop; you yourself are mostly immune to gravity while creating your ice slide.

Statistics: Flight (Nuissance Effect: Obvious, -5%; Requires Surface, -20%; Slow (Basic Speed), -25%; Cryokinetic, -20%) [12]. The second level of this ability removes Slow [22]. Each additional level adds half a level of Enhanced Move (Ice Slide) (Cryokinetic, -20%) [8/level].

Cryokinetic Perks

Endure Cold: This levelled Perk is essentially the Temperature Tolerance (Cold) Advantage.

Ice Cubes: You are able to create ice cubes in the palm of your hand or chill a drink you are holding as if it had been in the freezer for fifteen minutes. Great for camping or party favors.

Pyrokinesis Power

Fire is an ancient phenomenon. It grants light and warmth when controlled, or devours all in its path when left uncontrolled. Fire normally requires two things -- Fuel and Oxygen -- however, in the comics and movies the fire generated by supers rarely requires fuel. Because of this, the Pyrokinetic Power Modifier creates fire that requires oxygen, but only select abilities actually require fuel. It is subject to mundane countermeasures, such as water or cold.

Power Talent: Pyrokinesis Talent, *5 points per level*.

Power Modifier: Pyrokinetic (-20%). These abilities have mundane countermeasures (-10%) in the form of water (which can douse the fire), cold, and insulation. They are also subject to abilities from the Anti-Super Power (-5%) and technological countermeasures (-5%), such as power dampeners. Totally passive abilities lack the mundane countermeasures; this is listed as Passive Pyrokinetic (-10%).

Body of Flame

75/80/87/95 points for levels 1-4

Skill: Flame Body (IQ/H).

You are able to become a fire elemental in almost all respects. You maintain your humanoid form, but that's mainly because your subconscious is used to that form. Most attacks go right through you, as your flame body is now diffuse. This grants you the Body of Fire meta-trait (p. B262), with the exception of the No Manipulators (pp. B145-146) disadvantage. The changes back and forth take only a second.

Statistics: Alternate Form (Body of Fire) (Reduced Time 4, +80%; Pyrokinetic, -20%) [75]. Level 2 adds Reciprocal Rest [80], level 3 adds Non-Reciprocal Damage [87], and level 4 adds Once On, Stays On [95].

Fireball

You focus your fire into a small self-contained ball which you launch at the target. The containment fails upon impact releasing the contained flames. The act of physically moving the arm to toss the fire is largely irrelevant, but you may do so anyway out of habit.

Statistics: Burning Attack (Increased 1/2D Range ×5, +10%; Reduced Range ×1/5, -20%; Pyrokinesis, -20%) [4/level].

Explosive Fireball *(Tech/H)*

Default: Innate Attack (Projectile)-5; cannot exceed Innate Attack.

You are able to make your fireball explode on impact, causing damage to those around your target.

Guided Shot *(Tech/H)*

Default: Innate Attack (Projectile)-5; cannot exceed Innate Attack.

You are able to guide your fireball explode to your target. This enables your fireball to change direction to follow its target.

Multi-Shot *(Tech/H)*

Default: Innate Attack (Projectile)-7; cannot exceed Innate Attack.

You are able to fire multiple fireballs at once, up to six at a time, giving you a Rate of Fire 6.

Fire Resistance

59 points

You cannot be burned by normal fires, and even other pyrokinetics have a hard time injuring you with their fire. In addition, you are immune to the ill effects of smoke inhalation.

Statistics: Damage Resistance 20 (Limited: Fire/Heat; Tough Skin, -40%; Passive Pyrokinetic, -10%) [50], plus Immunity to Smoke Inhalation (Passive Pyrokinetic, -10%) [9].

Firestorm

points

Skill: Firestorm (IQ/H).

You are able to whip up a swirling mass of air around you and set it aflame.

Statistics: Burning Attack (Area Effect).

Ranged *(Tech/H)*

Default: Firestorm-5; cannot exceed Firestorm.

You are able to form your firestorm out to 100 yards away from you.

Selective Area *(Tech/H)*

Default: Firestorm-1; cannot exceed Firestorm.

You are able to make it so that key spots inside your firestorm are not affected.

Flame Jet

points

You are able to shoot a continuous jet of fire from your hands (or eyes, or feet, or wings), much like a flamethrower.

Statistics: Burning Attack

Flame Sheath

points

This ability allows you to wrap yourself in a sheath of flame, protecting you from damage. As an added benefit, your flame sheath damages those who would try and grapple you.

Statistics: Burning Attack (Aura) + Damage Resistance

Selective Protection *(Tech/H)*

Default: ; cannot exceed .

Instead of wrapping your entire body in flame, you can make it so that various body parts (in particular, your arms) are not encased in flame with the rest of your body. This is especially useful if you have to catch or carry someone while flying with Rocket Flight (below).

Heat Ray

points

Statistics: Fatigue Attack (Damage Modifier: Heat Hazard, +20%)

Pyroshaping

points

Skill: Pyroshaping (IQ/H). Alternatively, Artist (Fire Shaping) (IQ/H) may be used if going for a more *artistic* flair rather than a *practical* application.

Statistics: Control Fire

Rocket Flight

points

Statistics: Flight + Enhanced Move

Wall of Fire

points

Skill: (IQ/H)

Statistics: Burning Attack

Pyrokinetic Perks

Endure Heat: This levelled Perk is essentially the Temperature Tolerance (Heat) Advantage.

Ignition: You are able to start fires with a touch. The classic "flame from the thumb to light a cigarette" is indicative of this Perk.

Illumination: You can glow with a light similar to a torch.

Firemaiden

Selena Martinez was born in Ojinaga, Mexico, but was smuggled across the border by her parents to Presidio, Texas, as an infant. While there, she and her family were housed in an attic over a fireworks factory. One night, the place burned down, with Selena as the only survivor; paramedics and firefighters on scene were shocked to discover that she didn't suffer from burns or smoke inhalation. As she lacked identification and no one on either side of the border was able to say who she really was, she was placed into foster care and records created to indicate she was born in Texas, as the Texas Protective Services Department was hesitant to subject an infant to

Mexican welfare. The IST program, however, had been given reports of her survival and kept a close watch on her for the future manifestation of powers.

This happened when Selena was fourteen

The Human Popsicle

About the author

Ted Brock got his gaming start as an online Rifts GM (originally skipping playing altogether), and migrated into GURPS in the late 1990s, just a few years before 4e's release. He is a native Pennsylvanian who has lived in a number of states over the last 25 years, and currently resides in Austin, Texas. He would like to thank the members of the Pyramid Write Club, but the first rule of Write Club is, "Don't talk about Write Club."