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The Magazine of Combat in the 31st Century



Kurita Wins a War



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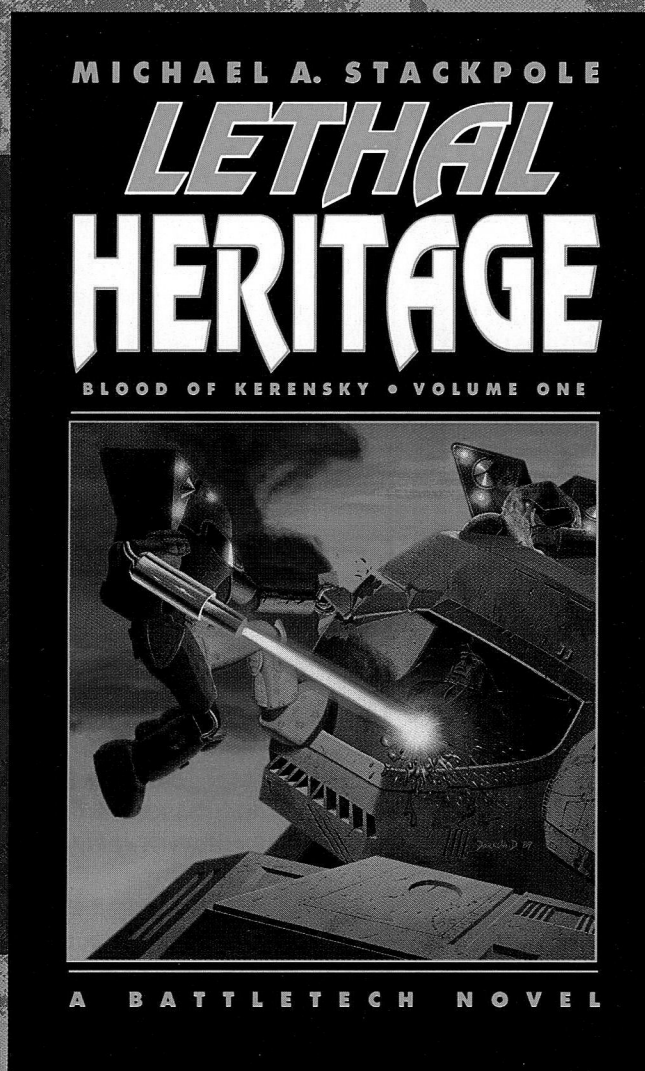
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Wins a War



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by John A Theisen
Titan
by David Broussard
BattleMech Engines: the Best for the Job
by Jeffrey Layton
A Soldier's View, Operation Deep Six, First Strike
Open Fire, Malleus BattleMech
by Stefan Paul Melin-Dempsey
External Stores
by Gary A Kallin
All other writing this issue
by Hilary Ayer

About the Cover:

"Meditation Before Battle"

BattleTechnology Photographer
Marty Bingham caught this shot just after dawn on June 15, 3040 in the Alberta Hills of New Mendham as a Kurita Mechwarrior prepared for battle.

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OPENING SHOTS

No, no news. Bob Carter remains among the missing.

It is to be hoped that he did not, as rumor has it, go to spy on Wolf's Dragoons training camp on their world of Outreach. If he did, let us hope that he is in protective custody somewhere. I personally cannot believe that so vital a man can be dead. I've believed that before, it's true. But somehow, this time is different. If he did somehow run afoul of his hero, here in this public forum we remind Col Wolf of the Ares Conventions. Next of kin are to be notified.

Our publisher, Arvid Thorkinsson, has asked me to take the position of editor. It is with reluctance that I step into Bob Carter's shoes. But he would agree that BattleTechnology must continue.

In its eleven centuries of publishing, BattleTechnology has had four editors die in combat and six by assassination, while eight more have simply disappeared. I hope that Bob will not be the ninth. But we both knew what a dangerous job this could be when we took it. People buy you drinks in bars, then they test their PPCs on your office building because they didn't like the editorial this month.

It is traditional for a new editor to make his or her background public, so that our biases may be taken into account when you read the magazine. As far as I know, my only biases are for Cobalt Coil stories and PPCs and against spiders in my bedclothes, but here goes: I'm from the world of Poulsbo on the Lyrn side of the Marik-Steiner border. It's a world of surging seas, a world of fishermen. It's a world that was isolated from the Commonwealth for more than two centuries. It has a spaceport base, Bangor, from which many Free Worlds League attacks have been launched – or repulsed.

We're independent, touchy, proud people. Poulsbo people take offense easily and go off to join merc companies. That's why I had a brother on one side and a sister on the other during the Fourth Succession War. That's why I spent the years 3011-3025 serving with Bartolo's Braggarts, piloting an Assassin-D (yes, I caught it myself!). Name the Periphery world from Star's End to the Magistracy of Canopus; we've patrolled its frontier. We got the dirty little jobs, and the jobs where somebody was going to have to look bad to the home folks. At length, the whole of Company B stood its ground on a stupid piece of rock while Company A with Captain Bartolo and the DropShip took off for the Taurian Concordat.

I wrote a story about the action which saw me Dispossessed, and sent it to BattleTechnology. They offered me a job. On the whole, people shoot at me less now I'm working for the magazine. And there are those free drinks...

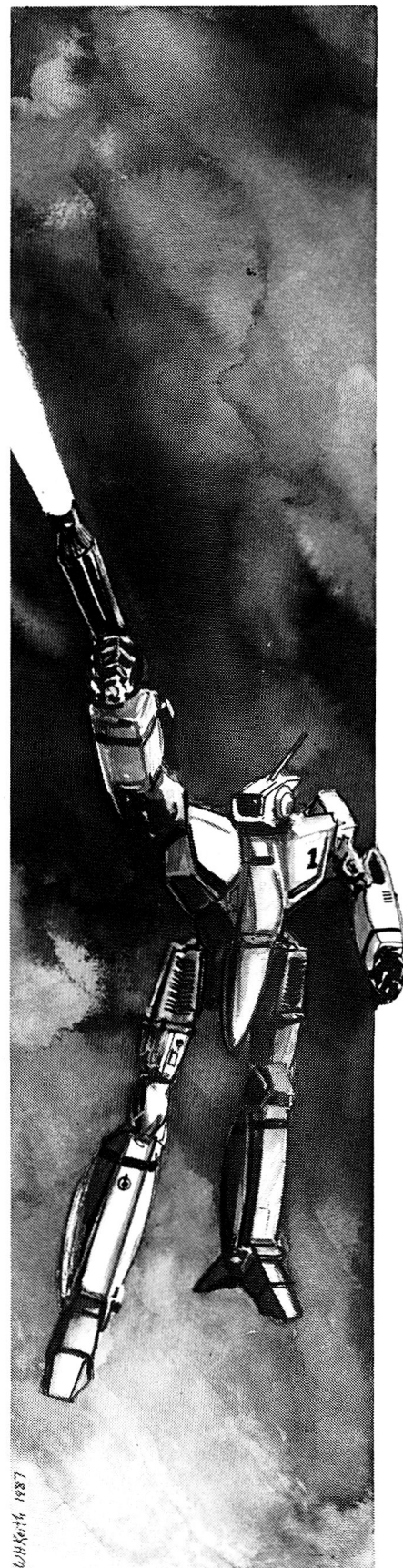
In regards to an earlier mystery, I have been given permission to quote from a classified report the following selected passage:

"...with great assurance I can attest that the Nekekami are not out to eliminate the personnel or property of BattleTechnology. The techniques used (on the attacks over the last fifteen years on our offices and our reporters) are atypical of their assassination process. After all, anyone with a modicum of dexterity can create an origami cat. One of the specific grounds for ruling them out are the origami cats you've received. The Nekekami encode messages somewhere upon their cats, usually as dots on the reverse side. Your cats had no messages. I shall expand my operating fields to find out who has actually performed these deeds. For Unity, it is agreed, they must pay..."

This issue we've got two big Mechs for you, scenarios from the recent war, a Tale of the Fourth Succession War that proves there are no bad Mechs, there are only bad warriors, another selection from the Thornhill Arms Catalog, and a new census. We hope you find it all useful, interesting, instructive...

Or whatever you hoped to find in these pages.

— Hilary Ayer, Luthien, January 15, 3040



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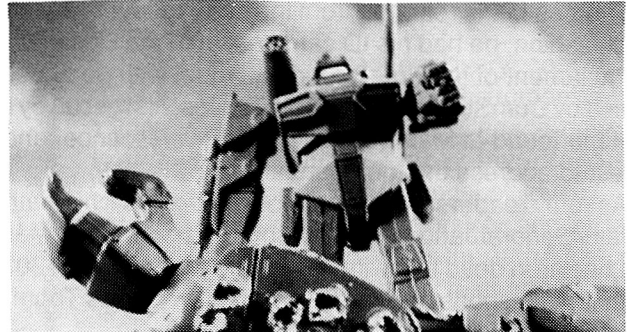
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0102, December 3027 — Combat Salvage, Camouflage, Hassid Ricol: The Red Duke, Black Luthien: the Draconis capital, DVE-5B 'Devastor'

0201, February 3028 — Tharkad, Decompression, GLD-3R 'Gladiator', BattleMech Weapons — range versus accuracy, Galaina the Pleasure Planet, Vac uum combat, more.

0202, April 3028 — Hanse Davion Interview, Cavalry Tactics & Applications, Lasers, Banshee BattleMech, Dragonslayers, Battle at Wit-tengate, Late-Breaking News, more.

0203, June 3028 — Maximilian Liao Interview, Kearny Highlanders on Mira, Liao Edge on Solaris, Urban Camouflage, more

0204, August, 3028 — WAR ISSUE, Goliaths on St Andre, Miniatures Combat, Reports From the Front, Close Assault Rules, WLF-1 Wolfhound, Viking Hydrofoil

#7, December 3028 — ALI-1A Alliance, SCR-1A Screaming Hawk, BattleMech Technician, Waves 1-4 of the Fourth Succession War

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#8, September 3029 — FLE-14 Jumping Flea, Blueprint #1, Athena Price of Cannon Fodder, 1st Cobalt Coil Story

#9, March 3030 — BTE Hovertank, Steiner Guard Griffin Variant, VTOL Combat, Wolf's Dragons, Fourth Succession War Ends

#10, December 3035 — Wildcat Aerospace Tanker, Munin LAM, Combat On Spaceships, RASALHAGHUE INDEPENDENCE! 2nd Cobalt Coil Story

#11, December 3039 — DAVION-KURITA WAR! Titanic Assault Mech, Malleus, The Useless Mech (Fourth Succession War Story), Hanse Davion Loses a war, Thomas Marik reclaims Andurien

#12, December 3045 — Striga Conventional Fighter Plane, Caught in the Mech Flush, Underwater rules, Valley of the Winds Combined Arms Operation, Periphery Unrest, First Thorkillson's Guide

The only good mechwarrior is a **live** mechwarrior — your magazine has kept my unit in the field from star system to star system. You warn of hard-to-recognize opponent BattleMechs, give us tips on who's hiring (and who no sane warrior would want to work for), keep us aware of where the battlezones are, and at the same time you keep us amused with the news and gossip across the Inner Sphere!

You don't forget the lonely "bio unit" either; as many of the popular press do. Without our Aerospace jocks, without our tanks, our VTOLs, our infantry, where would mechwarriors be? Stomping across the landscape sinking into swamps and getting strafed, that's where!

BattleTechnology is the only magazine which follows us out of the known world, beyond even the lawless Periphery...

Lance Corporal James Hawkins
Faroes Own Independent Lowlanders

BattleTechnology News Service

Thomas Marik Alive!

Atreus, Dec 15, 3036

Thomas Marik returned from the dead today! In a matter of fact fashion, he had his ID card sent in to the Speaker for the Parliament of the Free Worlds League, with documents certified by ComStar concerning his injuries, his rescue by his long-time friend Li Mann, his hidden convalescence, and a request to address the members at once.

As our readers will remember, Thomas, his father Captain-General Janos Marik, and his brother Duggan Marik, were declared dead following an explosion on June 1, 3035. The culprits responsible were never found, nor was Thomas' body.

Parliament examined Thomas's documents and agreed to hear him without delay. In a concise and unemotional speech he reminded them that they had agreed that he was the real Thomas Marik, that he had been declared his father's heir, and that he was now returning to take up his duties as Captain-General. Parliament, tired of the demanding and capricious rule of his cousin Duncan Marik, declared him as the rightful head of state by acclamation.

Duncan Marik received the news of Thomas' return while with his troops on Mosiro, their staging ground for the invasion of the Duchy of Andurien. Duncan reiterated his intent of a short, vigorous, victorious campaign to recapture the rebellious province. "Time enough to welcome Thomas home when the job is done." Duncan is now signing his orders 'General of the Armies', rather than as Captain-General. How much of a threat he will be to his new sovereign if the Andurien campaign is successful remains to be seen. Someone out there ought to be hiring soon.

Duncan Marik Killed in Action

Xanthe III, Feb 4, 3037

The fight for Andurien has not gone well. Duncan Marik threw his troops at planet after planet with increasing and desperate vigor. Results of these attacks have been inconclusive, often outright failures. Today, Duncan met the death he may secretly have been seeking, a glorious death on the battlefield, holding a desperate position against the overrun attack of the 3rd Andurien Cavalry.

Services will be held on Atreus on March 15, at St Doris' Cathedral. The Captain-General has announced his intention of placing himself at the head of his cousin's troops to avenge his death. He hopes to leave as soon as the funeral is done. This will of course depend on the passage of his controversial Addendum to Incorporation, now being debated in Parliament.

— CENSORED —

*Fire Fighting at Humphries AeroSpace Base
Xanthe III June 3037*

Addendum Passed, The Marik Goes to War!

Atreus, March 16, 3037

Championed in Parliament by Speaker for Parliament Li Weaver, Duke Christopher Halas of Oriente, and Ducal-President Stimson of the Regular Free States, Thomas Marik's wartime emergency Addendum to the Incorporation of the Free Worlds League has passed. The Addendum centralizes power in The Marik's hands in many ways. It eliminates most of the provisions of the Home Defense Act; only Oriente and their arch-rivals of the Principality of Regulus, no province may refuse to send its troops to a war sanctioned by the Captain-General. He may veto any law passed by any province or region. It also gives him considerable leeway in matters of taxation.

Captain-General Thomas set out with fresh troops early this morning for the disputed Andurien region — either the Duchy of Andurien, rebellious member of the Free Worlds League, or the Free State of Andurien. Spokeswomen for Andurien's treaty partner, the Magistracy of Canopus, refused to specify which troops they would send to aid Duchess Catherine Humphreys.

If The Marik conquers one thing is certain: the provisions of the Addendum will be stringently applied to Andurien.

BattleTechnology News Service

The Name as well as the Game!

Sian, May 12, 3036

Gold paint glittered on every conceivable surface; a massed band of 720 instruments blared a tune recognizable as *The Chancellor is our Watchword*, Romano Liao's favorite of the Capellan Confederations songs of loyalty. In a ceremony noted neither for brevity nor for taste, The Lady of Highspire became the 30th Chancellor of the Capellan Confederation, ruler of House Liao.

The new head of the Capellan state is well acquainted with the job, as she has been Acting Chancellor for six years. It was May of 3030 when her father, 29th Chancellor Maxmilian Liao was declared to have lost contact with his mind.

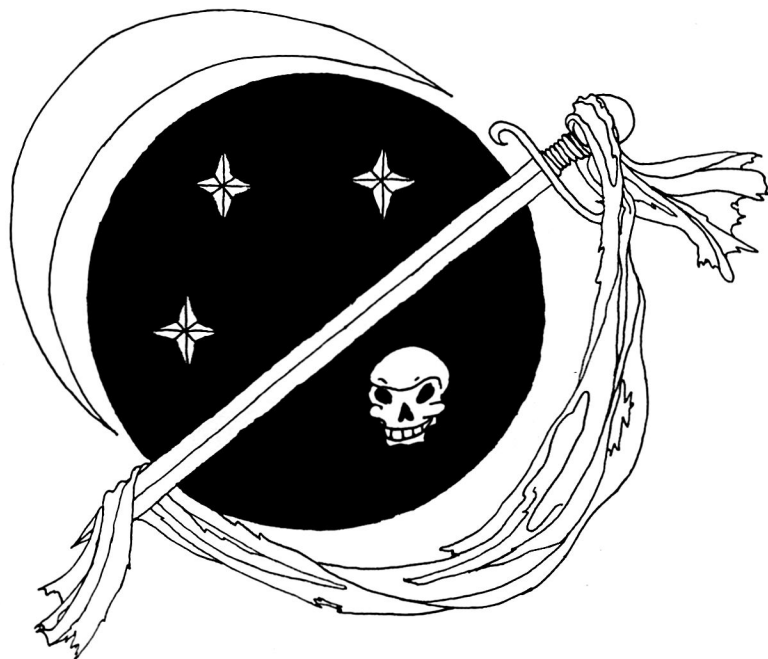
During the last several years, Madame Romano has led her state valiantly. Attempted rebellions on Larsha and Rollis were fiercely put down. She fought off a joint offensive by the Duchy of Andurien and the Magistracy of Canopus, who sought to cut off a juicy slice from the remains of House Liao to join their two states territorially. She then carried a counteroffensive back to the worlds they had taken. With the aid of McCarron's Armored Cavalry, the Capellans began by retaking Prix and Primus. At the same time, Kincaid's Rangers and the fanatical House Daidachi slaughtered the Canopians at Drozan. By 3035, all of the Capellan worlds remaining after the Fourth

Succession War were back in Liao hands.

The winning of this war seems to have returned the Capellans their self respect. Volunteer recruits are swarming the Warrior Houses; LuSann, Hiritsu, and Ijori, which had been completely wiped out at the end of that war, are reforming. Representatives of these Houses were present at the coronation. The only outside dignitaries present were the representatives of ComStar and of House Liao's only remaining ally, the Draconis Combine.

In her first speech from the throne, Chancellor Romano announced that the Earthwerks Ltd BattleMech factory would reopen in June. This Grand Base plant is the last of the destroyed Mech production plants to reopen following the Fourth Succession War. The new Chancellor dismissed the rumors that she would nationalize all such private holdings as the ravings of disloyal elements.

The first to pay homage to the new Chancellor were her children, Sun Tzu, 5 years old, and Kali, 3.



Let *Them* do the dying !

Crest of Pritchard's Pirates

Smallest Mech Unit?

Is the remains of Pritchard's Pirates the smallest remaining Mech unit in the Inner Sphere? The unit is now composed of an infantry squad, and its former Recon Lance, who missed the fighting that destroyed the rest of their comrades on Athenry. Some Recon Lance, eh? A Locust, A Panther and a Goliath. And no Pritchard.

Captain McConway Pritchard is rumored to have headed out to Galaina, popularly known as the Pleasure Planet, with the unit's paychest. He was the senior remaining officer of the Pirates following his father, Major Earnest Pritchard's death during the battle.

BattleTechnology News Service

Melissa Withdraws Hanse's Troops!

Wei, Sarna March, Palos Operations Area Federated Commonwealth, May 12, 3038

Following demonstrations on the planets of Merikar, Johnathan, Foo Chow, Footfall, and Wei, Princess Melissa Steiner Davion issued some crisp orders. Suddenly a week ago, the Davion occupation troops on these worlds and several others of the Sarna March found themselves preparing for withdrawal. The Princess Archon-Designate is head of all military operations in the Sarna March, directly in charge even over the AFFS by Prince Hanse's order.

Princess Melissa has made herself known in this area following the Fourth Succession War. Even during her four pregnancies she has made journeys of inspection to every major world at least once a year. There is no world of the former Sarna Commonality which she has not visited. For the last two year, her daughter Princess Katherine Steiner-Davion, who will be regent for the Federated Suns when her brother Prince Victor becomes Archon Prince, has accompanied her mother. Princess Melissa conferred with local as well as district governments and inspected military bases. She's put in a lot of time meeting with the various Recovery Committees which dealt with the damages done by the Fourth Succession War, and then remained in operation as disaster relief organizations. She's kissed a lot of babies, but her popularity is due to a real effort on the people's behalf.

The Princess Archon-Designate sent open messages to First Prince Hanse Davion and to Archon Katrina Steiner. Texts appear on these pages.

*First Prince Hanse Davion
Supreme Commander, AFFS*

*Husband and Prince,
You gave me these people on our wedding day.
They are being abused.*

I have unilaterally dismissed your garrisons, returning them to your direct command. I have asked Archon Katrina for the 3rd Donegal Guards to replace them. Until garrisons I can trust are in place on these worlds, Kate and I will remain here.

I ask that you do not consider our AFFS troops dismissed with prejudice. They have stood perilous duty for too long on planets where the garrison of a conqueror will naturally be hated. They have in the main done well with an arduous and unpleasant duty. They have been greatly tried, and proved to be only human. Find them other duties and they will prove of value. It is after all our fault that they were not relieved sooner.

Only a few incidents have occurred as yet. The Dragon and his son will be happy to make much of these, and to create more if at all possible. I am defusing a bomb which has not yet exploded in preference to dealing with a disaster later.

It is the duty of a ruler to share the risks he or she requires of subjects. Please do not ask that Kate or I return until we can leave order behind us.

*Melissa Steiner Davion
Commander, Sarna March
First Princess, Federated Suns*

*Katrina Steiner,
29th Archon Lyran Commonwealth,
Supreme Commander,
Lyran Commonwealth Armed Forces*

*Mother and Commander,
I urgently request the reassignment of the Third Donegal Guards as garrison troops on the planets of the Sarna March, Wei Command. These troops, from my father's principality, have personally vowed their loyalty to me. In addition, they have no contact with the locals; no animosities remain between my formerly-Liao subjects and our people of Donegal.*

So strongly do I feel about the animosities between the battlefatigued AFFS garrisons here and the people I call my own, that I have ordered the withdrawal of these garrisons whether or not you accede to my request. It is possible that Draconian agents provocateurs have been at work here, but the people have some very real grievances.

It is my belief that you will see the wisdom of keeping a sound line of defense on what could become once again a crucial border. Kate and I will remain here personally, taking what risks there may be together with our people, until the new garrison arrives.

*Respectfully,
Melissa Arthur Steiner Davion
Archon Designate*

BattleTechnology News Service

Stop Press Report Stop Press Report Stop Press Report Stop Press Report

Theodore Kurita Saves His Father's Life!

Imperial City, Luthien , Pesht Military District Jan 9,3040

Usually the arrival of the Heir to the Dragon is attended with ceremony. Not so today. No notice had been received of the Kanrei's arrival until his JumpShip arrived insystem at a "pirate" jump point neither at nadir or zenith, but closer to Luthien itself. Kanrei Theodore Kurita had made the journey from Proserpina in the Benjamin Military District in under a month! His destination had been announced as the Dieron Military District, where remnants of the Federated Commonwealth-incited rebellions still smoulder. But suddenly, he was here.

An honor guard was assembled and drilled as the Kanrei's DropShip, the *Tetsuwashi*, flashed towards the planet. Port officials rehearsed nervous speeches of welcome; the red carpet was brushed.

Ignoring protocol, the Kanrei was the first man off of his hip. He hurried to the hovercar his pilot had ordered for him, and, sirens braying, accelerated toward the Unity Palace. His aides brushed startled courtiers aside while Prince Theodore sought out his father, Coordinator Takashi Kurita for a private meeting.

Whatever the subject of this urgent meeting, it was interrupted in a manner even more urgent. A nekekami assassin dropped from the rafters to assault the Coordinator. Only the Kanrei's skill with a handgun saved his honored father's life.

A moment later a group of hastily assembled *buso-sensei* guards from the *Ryo-no-tomo* (Dragon's Friends) arrived, led by *Sho-sa* Fuhito Tetsuhara, a trusted assistant to the Kanrei. Kanrei Theodore Kurita had given them orders to secure the area if the Otomo, the Coordinator's Palace bodyguard, were unable to keep him safe. Fortunately, they were not required.

N.S. Kadagawa, Press Secretary to the Palace, issued a statement late this afternoon. In part, it reads:

"The attack was due to a misunderstanding. The nekekami are not making a target to the Coordinator. This is an isolated incident which may now be forgotten.

"*Chu-sa* li, Commander of the Otomo, has found the incident to be too much for his honor to bear, and has committed seppuku. His temporary replacement is *Sho-sa* Fuhito Tetsuhara."

Kadagawa declined to comment when asked if he thought the incident would bring a new closeness to the relationship of the estranged father and son.

Assasins Kill Love!

Luxen, Magistracy of Canopus April 18, 3039

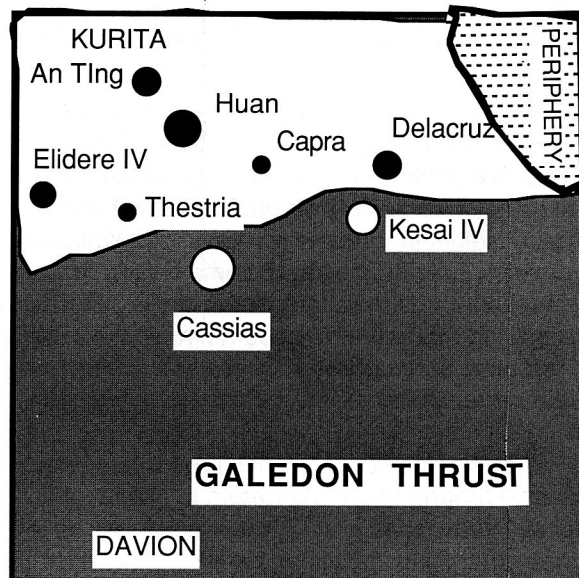
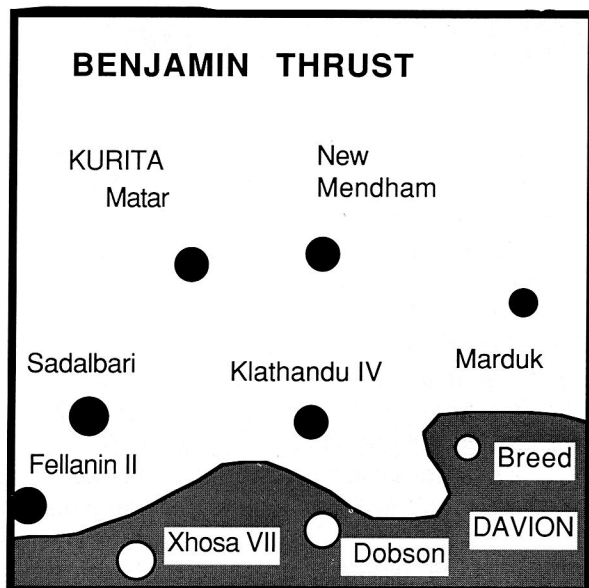
Last night an assassin crept into the bedchamber of Emma Centrella, Duchess of Luxen and the Magistrate's heir. Machine gun fire ripped the bed, killing the two forms nestled together in it.

Alerted by the sound, Duchess Emma rushed in from a side room, catching the assassin by suprise. "I couldn't stop him without killing him," she told reporters, still in a state of stunned disbelief. "He was too good. Now I'll never know who sent him. It can't be the Varna faction; not any more. Who hates me that much? Who killed my darlings?"

The only person known to have been in disagreement with the popular Duchess is her mother, Magestrix Kyalla Centrella. The two had a falling out over first the Magestrix' wish to combine into one state with the Duchy of Andurien, then over Canopus' refusal to aid Andurien against Free Worlds League reprisals. Duchess Emma personally fought as a mechwarrrior in a war she at first argued

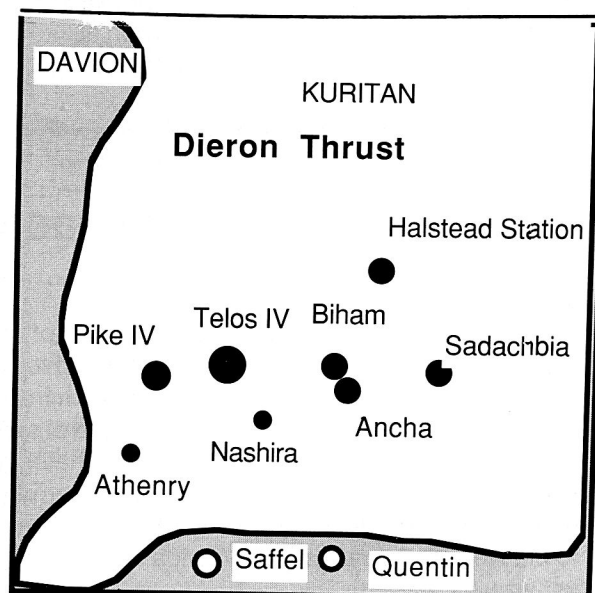
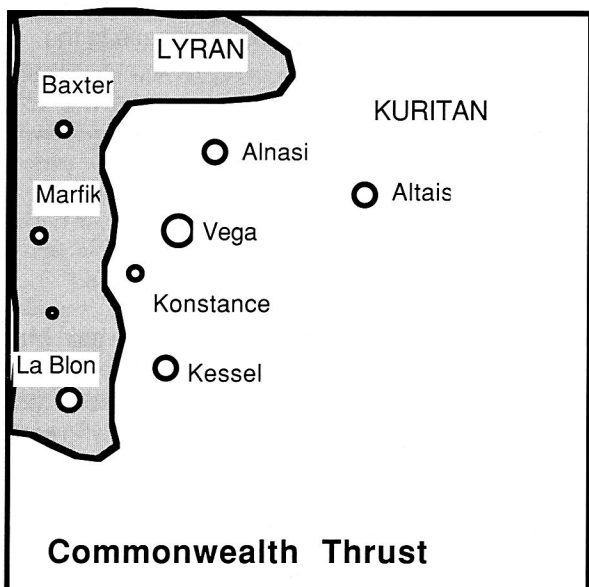
Report From the Front: The Fox Eats Crow

The Failed Invasion of the Draconis Combine



*War News Column, The Dragon Soldier
troop paper for the DCMS*

The Federated Commonwealth War Plan was sound. Three thrusts were to go from Davion space, through the Dieron, Benjamin, and Galedon sectors of the Draconis Combine, while one thrust came from Lyran space into the Vega Prefecture.



The House troops were bypassing border worlds to lightening-strike and capture deeper worlds of strategic importance. Border planets were to be tied up with a combination of Federated Commonwealth-financed rebellions and mercenaries relocated from all over the combined realm.

Kurita's classic battle doctrine does not call for a defensive posture until the troops concerned are savagely outnumbered. Yet on world after world, Theodore Kurita's new army groups fell back, retreated offworld, even surrendered. Deeper and deeper into the Combine struck the AFFC. By early July of 3039, Federat troops were winning on Halstead Station, Telos IV, An Ting, Huan, Matar and New Mendham. Important planets closer to the borders had already fallen.

On July 12, orders went out for the second wave to commence. The Benjamin and Galedon thrusts were to link up and isolate the Galtor Thumb, while the Lyran and Dieron thrusts would come together to cut off the Dieron District.

But Theodore Kurita, our *Kanrei*, had plans of his own!

For nine years he had kept the true strength of the Dragon secret. For nine years we had retreated from conflict, smiled, and talked of the blessings of peace. We had almost exactly twice the number of BattleMechs that Hanse Davion and his Minister of Information Quintus Allard thought we did.

On July 12, our counterstroke began. A DEST raid killed or incapacitated the able members of the Lyran High Command. Steiner was

Why didn't Hanse Invade Sooner?

In 3030, although House Kurita was still the strongest of the five traditional Successor Houses, it had been weakened by the Fourth Succession War. Coordinator Takashi Kurita had just begun to recover from his stroke at The Wedding; *Kanrei* Theodore Kurita was only starting to reorganize the tradition-manacled armed forces. Several planetary systems on both borders had been torn from the Draconis Combine, forcing political reorganization in several districts.

The Federated Suns were rich in manpower, but they were damaged greatly by the war. The ComStar Interdict had ruined the economy. It had to be painfully rebuilt.

Their ally the Lyran Commonwealth was barely touched by the Fourth Succession War. It was rich in technology; in Mechs, in vehicles, in sheer scientific know-how.

It seemed only logical to First Prince Hanse Davion to combine the Federated Commonwealth's assets to strike at the Draconis Combine as soon as possible. Archon Katrina Steiner aided him in rebuilding; by 3034 the Federated Suns was as strong as it had been prewar, while House Kurita still was reorganizing its army. Three factors caused a critical delay.

Factor # 1: dissention in the Ryde and Tamar Operations Areas. The 'Hanse-off' independence movement may have been started by Draconian agents, but it was enthusiastically supported by many groups on the Lyran-Kuritan border. These regions have a history of independent thinking, not to say anarchy. Duke Ryan Steiner calmed the Ryde OA just before Davion troops were to be brought in to pacify it. This made Duke Ryan look good, and Prince Hanse look — less than tactful. At much the same time, Duke Ryan married the daughter of the Duke of Tamar, unifying an interest block that now runs through House Steiner territory from Terra itself to the Greater Valkyrate across the Periphery border.

Factor #2: the creation of the Free Republic of Rasalhague in 3034. This reduced by 2/3 the border along which a Lyran thrust into the Draconis Combine could be mounted. The Kurita border could now only be attacked through the Ryde Operations Area, unless Prince Hanse wanted to take the expensive course of bringing a new enemy into the war. The Free Republic of Rasalhague, as many do not realize, is now larger than House Liao. Moreover, Rasalhague's forces are particularly adept at Prince Hanse's speciality, the flexible small-unit actions which won him the Fourth Succession War. As the Free Republic received training from both the Lyrans and the Kuritans (and each taught them to counter the other's favorite tactics), they will make a formidable enemy.

Factor # 3: Archon Katrina did not want a war. She had participated in the Fourth Succession War, believing that a final decisive strike could be made that would put the balance of power into Federated Commonwealth hands, ensuring peace throughout the Inner Sphere. It hadn't worked that way. Archon Katrina did not oppose her daughter and her son-in-law in rebuilding economically, nor in restructuring the Lyran and Davion Armed Forces into one single force. But without the active support of the Lyran leader, a new invasion could not be carried.

So the invasion was postponed year to year until, late in 3038, Archon Katrina sent a private message to Prince Hanse, informing him that he might proceed with plans for the invasion. She further informed him that she intended to resign in her daughter Melissa's favor early in the new year; she would allow him to set the timing.

At once the First Prince set his plans in motion...

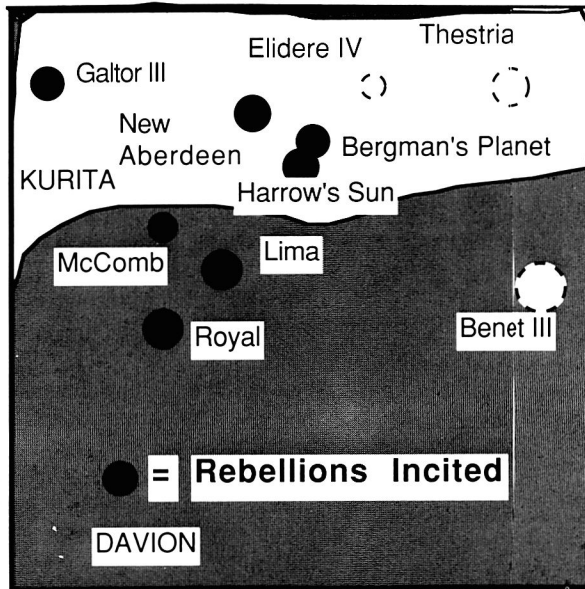
Fool Me Once...

In 3026, Hanse Davion maneuvered the bulk of his troops to his Liao and Draconian borders in a massive exercise known as 'Operation Galahad'. Liao, Kurita and Marik all stood to arms, expecting invasion from the Federated Suns and the Lyran Commonwealth. Nothing happened. When in 3028, Operation Galahad was repeated in conjunction with The Wedding, the three Houses did not prepare—and the surprise strikes which followed began the Fourth Succession War.

Late in 3039, Lyran and Davion troops completed a series of transfers which grouped the forces for maximum efficiency. Most of the Federated Commonwealth forces were now reorganized along the once-unorthodox lines of the Davion Regimental Combat Teams. 'By coincidence', these maneuvers ended with the bulk of these forces along the Kurita borders.

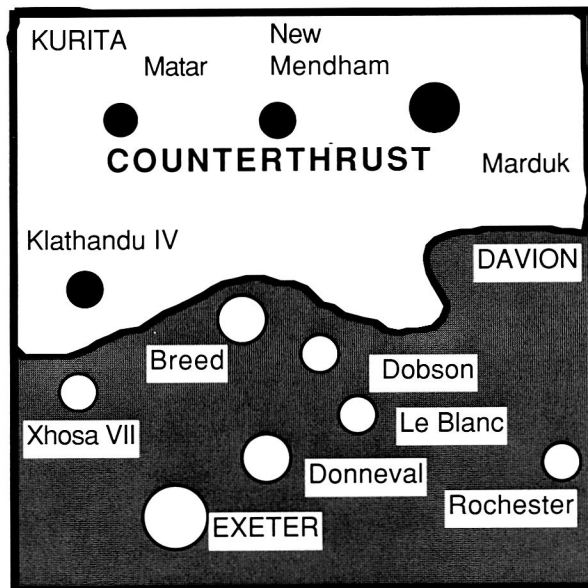
There's an old Terran saying: *Fool me once, shame on you! Fool me twice, shame on me!* Kanrei Theodore Kurita is opposed to bringing shame to his house. Whether as a result of House Kurita's improved relationship with ComStar or of its half-year advantage in studying the secrets of the Grey Death Legion's memory core, the fact is that House Kurita had twice the number of Mechs which the Federated Commonwealth intelligence had predicted. Many of those Mechs seemed to be Star League technology level, some shining as if new.

The Kanrei allowed the Federated Commonwealth its four thrusts into Draconis Combine territory. Then, when the FedComs and their supply lines were well spread out along those thrusts, he counterstruck...



did not stretch our supply lines beyond reason. We took back our planets and allowed them to slink away.

We had moved fast and hit hard. We had thrown all we had, as warriors do, into the chance of war. If the Fox had hit us then, the course of the war might have changed again. But he did not.



was effectively out of the war from that time on.

Straight across Combine Space and into the Draconis March of the Federated Suns went our troops. We had BattleMechs from Star League days, and adaptations built into our conventional Mechs whose capabilities startled even our civilians, let alone the Federat Troops.

By September it was clear that the invaders could not win. By November we were blockading Exeter, and threatening to strike the rabid Sandovals at the Area Capital of Robinson.

Our *Kanrei* is wise. We

ComStar is preparing a Peace Pact again. And we will sign it. The Dragon has shown how dangerous a foe it can be. Long Live the Dragon!

Facing Page: These papers illuminate the character of a stateswoman who has just graduated from news into history. We regret the passing of Archon Emerita Katrina Steiner, and we welcome the chance to show her pressures and her personality in brief. We thank Court Historian Thelos Auburn, and recommend to our readers his upcoming book Katrina the Peacemaker.

The Federated Commonwealth was scraping the bottom of the barrel for mercenaries to attack the Draconis border on all points, including the Galedon Sector, where Wolf's Dragoons fought so long and so hard ten years ago. Yet where was Wolf? The Dragoons are under contract to the Federated Suns. The Federated Commonwealth was fighting their bitter enemy, House Kurita. Wolf's Dragoons were not there? We ask again, where was Wolf?

The RobinsonClarion, December 12, 3039

October 15, 3038
Archon Katrina Steiner
The Palace, Tharkad

Once again, Prince Hanse Davion has used deceit to cloak his territorial ambitions. Under the pretense of restoring order after the Skye crisis, he so interwove his troops with your LCAF forces, that it must have been difficult for you to know where your loyal troops were to be found. He has been shuffling troops around as he did before Operation Galahad, trying to confuse attempts to estimate his strength.

He is not succeeding.

The Draconis Combine is strong enough to defeat his cunning. The Draconis Combine is prepared to fight its enemies, on all fronts necessary. This time we will win. Our enemies will lose and will be severely damaged in that loss.

You need not be one of our enemies.

Do not press this war of aggression which he is sure to begin. We will attack no worlds of the Lyrans Commonwealth; we will commit no violence against the soil of your worlds of the Tamar Pact or the Isle of Skye.

Consider this letter a warning. If you support the Federated Suns in warring against us, you will upset the balance of power in the Inner Sphere in a way which will pass beyond the bounds of civilized warfare. If you so contravene the conventions of war, do not expect me to be limited by them in dealing with you.

House Steiner has taught the Dragon several lessons in the nature of war. I do not think you wish to find just how good a pupil I have been.

Perhaps your son-in-law will yet come to his senses, and the peace you so often — and so publicly — have longed for will continue to bless the Inner Sphere.

— for the Dragon

Gunji no Kanrei Theodore Kurita
signed with his personal seal

found among Katrina Steiner's private papers

**Archon Elizabeth Hospital,
Tharkad, January 4, 3040**

**Archon Emerita Katrina
Steiner died last night. She
passed away in her sleep so
quietly that the time of her death
cannot be precisely determined..**

The Archon Emerita called me last evening, January 2. "I had the strangest dream," she told me. "I dreamed that I stood on a high cliff overlooking a harbor. I was about to take a long voyage by sea. I was looking at this coast for the last time. I felt as I did when I had to go into exile; confused, saddened, even a little exhilarated.

"I had companions waiting for me. In my dream, Morgan Kell, my husband Arthur, a woman called Jeana who was once my friend...I think Patrick was there too...were waiting on board for me. But I still wanted one more walk along the shore, wanted it fiercely. They were impatient and were urging me to hurry.

"I bent down and plucked a thistle. Its spines dug into my hand; the soft down at the top blew away in the breeze even as I tried to shelter it with my hand. *It's something like being a ruler!* I laughed to myself as I tucked it away for safekeeping. *Now I'll always have the Commonwealth in my blood!*

"The thought made me happy beyond words. I danced like a girl again, on the deck, on the beginning of this strange voyage."

— from *Katrina the Peacemaker*, Thelos Auburn's work in progress

"It has long been my belief that if a ruler's health does not permit her to give her best efforts, she owes it to her people to resign if there exists a reasonable successor. Indeed, I challenged my cousin for the Archon's throne with that reasoning. You supported me in this claim; now support me again. I do not leave you with the chaos of civil war; I have left you an able and legal chain of successors, in the persons of my daughter and her son after her. You have watched each of them grow up in the court at Tharkad. You know their abilities. Since Melissa's actions last May in support of her peoples of the Sarna March, I know in my heart that she is worthy to be a ruler.

I have always claimed that I would rather wear out than rust out from inaction. My health has now become so uncertain that I cannot trust it to allow me to perform my duties.

I am too old and too ill to give you my zestful and energetic labors. I love you too well to allow you to be governed by any but the best. Let me live quietly for the year or two remaining to me, and let me delight in my grandchildren and my memories.

And when I go to my grave, carve on it 'She was proud to be known as a Lyrans!'"

— Abdication Speech of Katrina Steiner
March 15, 3039

July 12, 3039

Archon Emerita Katrina Steiner

"I will fight no more forever."

These were your words at the end of the Fourth Succession War, less than a decade ago.

"Let us show the Inner Sphere that it is possible for three such near neighbors to live in harmony together." Those were your words at the conclusion of the Ronin Rebellion, only four years ago, when together we secured the independence of the Free Republic of Rasalhague.

I was responsible for the death of your cousin, Duke Frederick Steiner. The attack which has taken place today on Vega may have placed your sister, Field Marshal Nondi Steiner, in jeopardy. I regret the necessity to shed the blood of any more of your kin. You were warned. You have allowed yourself to be forced to wage a war which must be distasteful to you. Speak out against it now.

— Signed with the Kanrei's personal seal

found among

Katrina Steiner's private papers



Hiring Hall:

Mazur's Magpies

Unit History

3010: Admiral Craig Mazur, adamantly believing that AeroSpace superiority was vital to the success of any major military action, convinced Janos Marik to allow him to form a special AeroSpace unit which could virtually guarantee that superiority. Admiral Mazur spent over a year personally choosing the pilots for the unit from among the elite of House Marik and equipping them with the very best AeroSpace vehicles available; including such rare DropShips as a Vengeance fighter carrier, an Achilles, and two Avengers. The unit was named the Magpies.

3011-3013: Despite their status as one of the most powerful AeroSpace units ever created, the Magpies spent their time in uneventful garrison duty. Considered too valuable to be used in anything but a major operation, the Magpies had no opportunities to fight in the raids and border skirmishes that were characteristic between Succession Wars, much to the frustration of Admiral Mazur.

3014: Admiral Mazur, disgusted that House Marik would turn against itself, defected to the Free Worlds League's greatest rival, the Lyran Commonwealth. He had intended to take only his family with him to the Commonwealth, however the loyalty of the unit he had created was such that more than eighty percent of the Magpies followed the Admiral into exile. House Steiner signed on the now-mercenary unit and assigned it to garrison the world of Tamar. This posting delighted merchants, for the heavy AeroSpace presence resulted in a dramatic reduction of Kurita raids into the system.

3016: The Magpies were sent to relieve the beleaguered defenders on Laurent. They arrived in time only to harass Combine troops as they boosted offworld. The Magpies still managed to inflict significant losses.

The Magpies newest member, Admiral Mazur's daughter Debbie, distinguished herself in the engagement by destroying five fighters. Not only a gifted pilot, but a natural leader with a flair for innovative tactics, Debbie began a meteoric rise through the Magpie ranks.

3024: The Magpies supported Commonwealth forces attempting to

retake Sevren. They quickly established AeroSpace dominance and maintained it throughout the offensive, inflicting heavy losses among Kurita AeroSpace units. During the invasion, Debbie Mazur became the Magpies' top pilot by setting a career record of fifty-three confirmed kills.

3025-27: Admiral Mazur retired in favor of his daughter. Debbie immediately began to build up the unit. The number of AeroSpace fighters was doubled; conventional aircraft and VTOLs were added, greatly increasing the power and flexibility of this already potent unit.

3028: With the outbreak of the Fourth Succession War, the Magpies were assigned to support the Eighth Donegal Guards. In the invasion of Moritz, the Magpies went up against the understrength AeroWing of the Fifth Sun Zhang Academy Cadre. The Cadre never stood a chance, suffering losses in excess of ninety-five percent. Magpie losses were minimal.

3029: In the offensive against Stanzach, the Magpies faced determined opposition from the AeroWings of the Thirteenth Rasalhague Regulars and the Ninth Pesht Regulars. It cost the Magpies dearly, but by the time the Combine retreated from Stanzach, the Draconian AeroWings were all but destroyed.

3030: After the signing of the ComStar Peace Pact, the Magpies returned to Tamar. They have been a loyal garrison ever since.

Recent History:

The Magpies are still technically mercenary, they have over the years become almost a House unit of the Lyran Commonwealth. It is highly unlikely that the Magpies will ever leave the service of House Steiner. The majority of the unit is made up of Lyrans or the children of original members who have grown up in the Commonwealth. Although some elements of the Magpies served to pacify the Tamar Pact during the Skye Crisis of 3034, their loyalties might be torn if the Tamar Pact ever did revolt. It has been their home for so long now. It is reported that elements also served with the Lyran troops training Rasalhague's new military, and that other elements were detached to back up the 3039 invasion of the Draconis Combine through the Ryde Theater. These reports are unconfirmed, although the Magpies are said to be hiring.

Rating: V / I / L



Mercenary Requirements:

The Magpies hire only mercenary pilots with experience; under no circumstance will green troops be employed. The Magpies are especially strict in their requirements for AeroSpace pilots, employing only those of veteran or elite status.

Those applying to the unit need not have their own vehicles. The Magpies will repair the equipment of those coming to the unit with damaged vehicles.

The Magpies desire that the individual they hire have a strong sense of commitment, and are willing to stay with the unit through the long haul; hence the two year minimum contract. Mercenaries whose contracts have expired are often encouraged to become regulars.

Guarantees:

Advance/completion: upon joining the Magpies, the mercenary unit/warrior will be provided with a ten percent advance on the pay due for the agreed-upon term of service. The balance will be paid out over the contractual period.

Command Rights:

The mercenary trooper will be fully integrated into the unit. Full merc units are almost never hired; only those of exceptional quality are ever even considered. The rare full units that are employed are placed under the Command House System, with the unit commander directly answerable to an officer appointed by Colonel Debbie Mazur.

Transport:

All transport will be provided by the Magpies. Units with their own transportation may be given preferential terms of employment.

Code: V / I / L

Assessment:

The Magpies are a prestigious unit that pays well, especially to AeroSpace pilots. As the unit has their pick from amount the best House Steiner has to offer, and as they have an excellent training system for their own pilots, the Magpies rarely have a need to hire mercenaries to fill their ranks. On the few occasions where openings do exist, the high skill requirements eliminate many from consideration. Due to the elite nature of the unit, those in service to the Magpies can expect to be sent on high risk missions. It is recommended that only merc pilots of exceptional skill seek employment with the Magpies.

Ticket Details:

The duties of mercenary troops joining the Magpies will depend on the type of duty that the Lyran Commonwealth chooses for the unit. It is possible to make general statements concerning potential service, based on the unit's history.

Missions:

- Retainer
- Combat Campaign (Offensive)
- Invasion (Planetary Assault, Relief Duty)
- Static Defense (Garrison Duty)

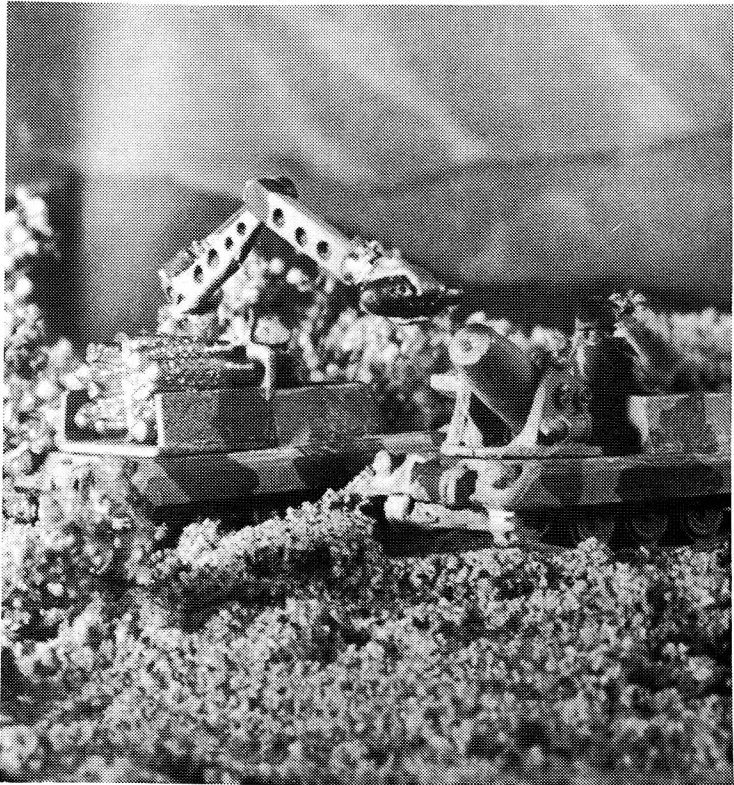
Length of Service:

24 months minimum, usually with an option of becoming permanent.

Remuneration:

Aircraft , VTOL	AeroSpace	Technicians
Pilots	Pilots	Engineers
(per pilot, per week)	(per pilot, per week)	(per person, per week)
Elite: Cb 2,500	Cb 3,500	Cb 2,500
Veteran: Cb 2,00	Cb 2,500	Cb 1,750
Regular: Cb 1,500	not hired	Cb 1,500

Recovery Operation, Stanzach 3029



The Useless Mech

Tai-i Rexel Euchart is a celebrated veteran of the Draconis Combine Mustered Soldiery whose military career took a triumphant upswing during the course of the Fourth Succession War. He played a major role in the defense of Vega in 3028. In response to BattleTechnology Magazine's intriguing request for historically significant personal accounts of the Fourth Succession War by mechwarrriors from all major military organizations of the Inner Sphere, Tai-i Euchart has consented to relate the details of the Combine's unparalleled victory over the marauding forces of the Lyran Commonwealth. It is with great pride that we of the Bureau of Administration present Tai-i Euchart's story, and express our appreciation for the many hours of tedious interviews which are above and beyond the duty of our illustrious veterans.

Sho-sa PP Arkatz
Draconis Combine Bureau of Administration

From the moment I first saw it, I believed that it was the most ridiculous BattleMech ever conceived during the era of the lost Star League. Five small lasers were all that stood between its bulky frame and total devastation on the field of battle. Though its armor and its top speed were remarkable compared to most Mech designs, its near-total inability to deal effective blows in combat marked it as the machine of either a coward or a fool. It was no wonder that the Charger had languished in an abandoned Draconis Combine warehouse for three and a half centuries.

However, if there was one great motivator that bound the beleaguered Legion of Vega regiments together into an unswerving brotherhood (aside from the delivery of bonus combat pay), it was our desperation for serviceable Mechs. Below even the lowliest mercenary unit on the list of priorities, our Legion and its requests for spare parts had been ignored every year since the unit's inception in 3011. A few scraps of armor and ammunition had been pried from the fingers of the District Quartermaster; otherwise, war salvage had been the only salvation of the Vegan Mechs.

Stumbling upon a decommissioned BattleMech listed in a crumbling manifest was, to say the least, astonishing. I'd lost my Dragon in the initial October 3028 defense of Vega. With replacement Mechs impossible to come by, I was temporarily attached to a company of heavy hover tanks. While the entirety of Theodore Kurita's Mech forces were conducting a counter-offensive against the Lyrans from October to December of '28, those forces which could be spared were left to defend the gains already made by the 2nd and 14th Legions of Vega counterattack. Thus my unit was given the inglorious task of guarding the port city of Cochus where *Gunji no Kanrei* Kurita's counter-offensive had begun. With unlimited access to the remains of a Commonwealth supply depot, and with little chance of Steiner forces piercing Kurita's front lines, I took it upon myself to inventory that which had not already been appropriated for the war effort.

Though the hastily erected Lyran storehouses of Cochus had been stripped of all usable equipment by the initial raiding forces, and subsequently by Combine reoccupation forces, there were a number of civilian storage facilities which could contain supplies essential to the repulse of the Lyran Guards. Fortunately, citizens relieved to find themselves rescued from the marauding Lyran troops were more than willing to sacrifice all that they had for then-Colonel Kurita (Vegan citizens preferred the English usage; under that title, *Tai-sa* Theodore Kurita became a popular hero there), and many assisted my troops in their search of these complexes. The Lyrans, distrustful of any contact with my fellow citizens, had foolishly chosen to overlook these civilian warehouses in favor of complete reliance on their own copious supply lines.

One day in November, while rummaging through the crumbling records of a bombed-out munitions factory on the outskirts of Cochus, I discovered a reference to a Star League Defense Forces regiment which had been stationed on Vega in 2680. The record mentioned the SLDF unit receiving a shipment of heavy and assault BattleMechs from the Terran Hegemony which were to replace those units lost to the personal dueling which was rampant in the Combine at that time. While reviewing these records with an eye toward unclaimed war salvage, I saw what I had been looking for.

From what I could make out, a Major Han Okura, native to the Combine, had been offered command of one of these replacement Mechs. Unfortunately, his lateness in rejoining the unit after a tour of the Eltanin system denied him first choice from among the arriving Mechs. In fact, he was left with no option regarding a replacement Mech. Faced with the prospect of commanding his troops from the cockpit of a Charger, a Mech deemed to have no tactical value in the Combine military and therefore seen as a disgrace while serving among fellow Draconians, Okura chose instead to serve with a tank legion until his unit could procure a real Mech for him. Following his example, no other Combine-bred mechwarrrior would take command of the Charger, for fear of putting his honor in jeopardy. The company was unable to trade the machine to another SLDF unit within reasonable distance. It was donated to a local militia; due to the low incidence of bandit attack in the heart of the Dieron sector, it was put into storage. With the coming of Stefan the Usurper, almost a century later, the Charger had been lost in the SLDF records and officially forgotten.

Following the description of the Charger's last known whereabouts, I came upon the site of a month-old battle field. Thought the shifting desert surface had been pounded flat by the passage of an entire Mech battalion, I was determined to search for the foundation of the lost warehouse which was supposed to contain the wayward Mech. Borrowing a Panther and its pilot from a lance sent to Cochus for repairs, *Gunjin* Kai Katake noted a disturbingly large signal on the Magnetic Anomaly Detector lying just a few meters below the barren surface. Quickly powering the light Mech's PPC, Katake blasted it at the surface of the desert a few safe meters from the source of the anomaly until an entrance was cut into the roof of the buried storehouse. Widening the smoldering gap with the Mech's powerful free hand, Katake lowered his Panther to the floor of the complex, with myself as passenger. What I saw, I assume that the reader already knows.

The Charger was cocooned in a ceramic scaffolding which resisted all attempts at easy release. On the verge of ordering Katake's Panther to tear it apart with its bare hands, I discovered a deactivated control panel at the base of the superstructure. Linking a power feed from the idling machine, whose waste heat was quickly making the partially collapsed warehouse unbearably warm, I reactivated the panel and caused the supports to fall away with a resounding crash. Freed from its centuries of undisturbed slumber, the ancient BattleMech seemed to anticipate the use I had planned for it in defiance of Major Okura's vanities. Clambering quickly up a ladder bolted to a nearby wall, I broached the sand-encrusted Mech's cockpit.

Inside the Charger's spacious head, all was as if the machine had rolled off the assembly line only the preceding

day. I suffered a passing bout of laughter as I read the tag attached to the Mech's command chair:

***Congratulations, Mechwarrior!
You are now
the pilot of the most formidable
reconnaissance BattleMech yet
produced for the Star League Defense
Forces, the CGR-1A1 Charger. Should
you have any questions regarding the
care and maintenance of your
BattleMech, please feel free to drop the
manufacturer, Wells Technologies, a
message at any hyperpulse generator
station. Along with your request,
please include your BattleMech's
serial number and date of
procurement.***

Happy Hunting!

Hailing Katake on my remote communicator, I told him to hook his Panther's power feeds to the Charger's torso while I slipped into the spare cooling vest which I had brought with me. When all was in readiness, I 'jump-started' the Charger off of the Panther's hot fusion engine. Though the machine was slow to power, its initial store of reaction mass having bled away in the arid climate over the centuries, in an hour it was up and running better than any Mech I had piloted in the course of my career.

As the Mech was still untested after the centuries since its manufacture, there were no security codes needing to be broken. After donning and adjusting the ultra-sophisticated Star League neurohelmet, a design not seen since the departure of General Kerensky, I began the procedure for 'personalizing' my BattleMech:

"Enter Pilot designation, Mechwarrior."

"*Tai-i* Rexel Euchar, Second Legion of Vega."

"Voice print recorded. There are no record of a 'Second Legion of Vega' in any SLDF data banks, do you wish to

reenter?"

"Iye."

"*Arigato*, Euchart-san. Please enter activation codeword."

In twenty minutes, I was piloting the Mech which I had named *Hachiman*, in honor of a medieval Japanese god of war. As I passed through the streets of Cochus, to the amazement of its citizens, I reflected that if it weren't for the presence of *Gunjin* Katake's well-known Mech, the pristine condition of my desert-camouflaged Charger would have labelled me as a Lyran pilot, inviting attack from the units defending the port city. With the escort of Katake's hastily arriving lancemates, I piloted *Hachiman* into the Mech repair bay where the rat insignia of the Legion of Vega and the Kurita Dragon were quickly stencilled on *Hachiman*'s broad shoulders.

* * *

Early in December, Katake's lance was reactivated and ordered to join up with the 2nd Legion of Vega, who were forcing elements of the 3rd Lyran Guard to retreat north toward the Great Desert of Tears. Though I had had only two days to practice maneuvers in *Hachiman*, I volunteered for duty. I was informed that Colonel Kurita was pleased by my resourcefulness in discovering a fully operations BattleMech beneath the desert wasters, but that he questioned the usefulness of the heavy scout in the situation that was rapidly developing. With the Combine regiments forcing the divided Lyran attackers in opposite direction, north and south, the Legion needed stand-up fighters to keep the Lyran Guard from staging a successful counter-attack. But, as the fortunes of war always favor the loyal soldier, I was given the chance to prove the Charger's worth in combat.

Pushing north through the arid plains, I accompanied Katake's lance, which included the Panther, two Phoenix Hawks, and a Locust. During the two-hour march to the front line, I saw much evidence of the destruction brought by the Lyran invaders. While the charred carcasses of fallen Mechs had been removed and stripped for spare parts as quickly as possible, the smoldering remains of Lyran and Draconian tanks blemished the red desert sand. Shell craters pockmarked the once pristine Vegan wilderness. Though this barren world had been my home for only a few years, my heart was heavy at seeing it despoiled.

The 3rd Lyran Guard stoop watch on a ridge within an hour's march of the great northern desert. The once mighty regimental combat team had been separated from the majority of its Mech forces and driven far from any hope of reuniting for a combined counterattack. The 1st and 3rd Battalions clung desperately to the tactical advantage afforded them by Sander's Ridge, named for the view it

provided of the Five Pyramids of Vega, a monument to extravagance built by an eccentric businessman. Three battalions of Lyran armor and infantry were all that had survived the long march through the Lyran desert.

The 2nd Legion camped outside of long range missile fire, preparing the final assault which would drive the Lyrans from the ridge and cast them into the desert, where the shifting sands and fierce autumn winds would destroy all trace of the Commonwealth's passage. Preventing the Lyrans from rejoining their comrades in the south were three Mech battalions and three regiments of tanks and infantry. Commanding the defenders-turned-pursuit forces was *Tai-sho* Michael Heise. He was superior in rank to Colonel Kurita, but he bowed both to his subordinate's tactical skill and to his ability to raise the Legion's fighting spirit to devastating fury. Colonel Kurita himself was leading the 14th Legion many kilometers south, where the majority of the Lyran Mech forces struggled on.

At the sight of *Hachiman* loping along the desert ravines, many a Combine mechwarrior went scrambling for his Mech in anticipation of a Lyran ambush. Heavy Mechs were a rare sight in the Legion, while Lyran Zeus assault Mechs had sowed havoc with our predominantly light and medium forces. With the exception of *Tai-sho* Heise's Stalker, the 2nd Legion could boast no assault Mechs until I arrived and announced my great fortune to my fellow mechwarriors. Without any argument on the General's part, I assumed command of the 1st Company, 2nd Battalion. It was the same company which I had had to turn over to my lieutenant when my Dragon fell before the combined fire from a lance of heavy Lyran Mechs.

The 1st was a combined company of heavy and medium Mechs designed to take a patch of ground and hold it. Our assignment was to prevent any Lyran force from escaping east, where Cochus lay defended only by my former unit of hover tanks. If all went well, the Lyrans would attempt no breakout; they would be caught between the treble hammer blows of the 2nd Legion's battalions.

On the morning of December 7th, with the crimson fire of Vega's AO-type star lancing over the dunes to the east, the word came over the comm-line. *Tora, Tora, Tora*. Relishing the historical significance of those long-remembered words, I prepared my Mech for battle.

Three battalions of Mechs, followed closely by motorized infantry and the Legion's close support vehicles, burst from the trenches which they had dug during the night to conceal their formations. Flights of long range missiles soared skyward from the top of Sander's Ridge to fall impotently about the heels of the charging Kuritans. Answering fire lit scarlet hellfire across the ridgeline, scattering infantry and causing Mechs to fall to their knees to avoid the deadly hail. Though the crouching Lyran Mechs were able to snipe away

at the courageous warriors of the Dragon without danger of sustaining serious damage in return, the speed with which *Tai-sho* Heise's avatars closed the gap between the opposing lines brought them panicking to their feet. Soon hand to hand combat began on the heights as the tide of a gargantuan game of king of the mountain turned against the outnumbered Lyrans. It was then that the Lyrans chose to make a break toward the east.

The first company to reach our position had been assigned to guard against attack from the city's direction. The Mech weights of the attackers roughly matched our own. I had hoped for an evenly matched battle; I knew I must engage before the rapidly retreating Lyrans could join forces and come at us in strength. With little time to lose, I ordered my Mech company to stride forward boldly before the similarly advancing Lyrans Mechs. The companies of infantry and armor under my command were ordered to hold back until called in to dispatch any wounded Mechs.

Leading the Lyrans was a Zeus with marking like the machine which had blasted the Dragon from under me, leaving me in disgrace. My enemy had not even had the decency to dispatch me outright, but had left me to attack my troops who were struggling to come to my aid. Now I saw my chance to redeem my honor as my nemesis advanced before his troops.

The assault Mechs carried a torso-mounted Thunderbolt A5M Large Laser as its primary weapons system, though the arm-mounted LRM launcher and Defiance Mark V Autocannon rounded out its long range capabilities. Two Medium Lasers, one firing into the rear arc, also gave it a devastating punch at close range, where I'd have to go if I were to put a stop to my all-unknowing rival.

As the Lyrans Mechs advanced sluggishly across the rapidly warming planet surface, I ordered my forces to open fire. *Chu-i* Jinshi's WarHammers singled out the approaching Zeus and fired a double blast of super-accelerated particles from his PPCs, causing gouts of molten ceramic and metal armor to erupt from the assault Mech's broad-shouldered torso. The stricken Lyrans answered quickly with a flight of LRMs, combined with high-velocity autocannon shells directed at my rapidly accelerating Charger. Explosions stitched along my thickly armored right leg as the autocannon struck home, but the speed with which my 80-ton machine maneuvered must have surprised the enemy commander, for the entire spread of fifteen missiles careened into the sand where I had been standing a moment before.

Though I was unable to return the long range fire I had received, I found that my Mech was drawing the fire that would normally have been directed at the more powerful fighters in my company. While a pair of Kuritan Shadow Hawks mounting PPCs and extra heat sinks poured PPC and LRM fire into a Commonwealth Rifleman, the fool single-

mindedly tracked *Hachiman* with large lasers and autocannon, which only further gouged up the desert terrain behind my running Mech. A Steiner Griffin which mounted large and medium lasers instead of the Fusigon PPC withered under the LRM fire of a Trebuchet pilot who had used my armor as a shield against a Lyrans Marauder. In the space of a few moments, I had taken light and medium damage to most portions of my armor, but had outdistanced the majority of the destruction intended to reduce my Mech to scrap.

I switched the visual scanner to I/R and saw exactly what I'd anticipated. Almost without exception, the Mechs of the Lyrans forces and my own company were rapidly overheating. As the Vegan surface temperature climbed into the critical zone, the amount of heat that the Mechs were able to sink dropped to dangerously low levels. Soon pilots on both sides were staggering their fire or withholding it altogether as their overburdened machines struggled against excess heat and the shifting surface to maneuver out of harm's way. Since I hadn't yet come close enough to use my forward-firing small lasers on the enemy Mechs, my heat levels still showed green, making mine the coolest Mech on the field of battle.

A heat-efficient Lyrans Wolverine moved in to take advantage of Jinshi's WarHammer, which was reduced to defending itself with medium lasers and SRMs because of its excess heat; I launched *Hachiman* into a lumbering run. As the enemy Mech dropped deftly on jets of super-heated mercury behind the 'Hammer's field of fire and took aim on Jinshi's exposed back, I lowered my head and charge into the Wolverine's shoulder.

The impact sent armor flying from both Mechs, but my superior mass and velocity caused the Lyrans' left arm to collapse into the socket, continuing to penetrate until the SRM housing on the left shoulder tore loose and hung down across the Mech's back like a slung rifle. The Wolverine flew through the air and crashed into a Phoenix Hawk which had leapt to its rescue, causing both to collapse into the sand. As the Mechs struggled to stand, I bathed the Wolverine in small laser fire while Jinshi blaster armor and myomer muscle from the 'Hawk's legs. A savage kick to the head silenced the Wolverine with the suddenness of a burst balloon.

Turning from the decapitated Mech and the fatally crippled Phoenix Hawk, I witnessed the Zeus putting the finishing touches to a mortally injured Dragon. As the Zeus lumbered quickly away, the dome of the Kuritan Mech's cockpit exploded away, followed by the gout of flame created as Genny Dricol's command chair launched her into the azure sky. A moment later, the brilliant light of a collapsing fusion reactor speared through the wounds which gaped in the Mech's torso, followed quickly by an earth-shattering explosion which sent several large chunks of the Mech's torso hurtling in every direction.



On infra-red, the Zeus was lit up like a minor star after its all-out duel with the Dragon. The heat which poured from its overburdened sinks served only to double the temperature of the air enveloping it. Without cool air to feed the intake valves, the Mech had to rely solely on the liquid coolants flowing through its system, which evaporated with prolonged use. In more favorable situations, the Mech would have shuffled to a rear area where a coolant truck would replace these essential fluids to cool the Mech rapidly. I could imagine the hell that my nemesis was going through, being roasted alive in an overheating Mech.

Straining for every meter, it moved forward. I was not surprised when the Zeus failed to turn at my approach. Instead the Lyran Mech fired its rear medium laser, scoring a hit through my weakened torso armor, damaging the internal structure. I closed to close-assault range and triggered a salvo of all five small lasers into the Zeus' back. Though they are thought of as ineffective against anything larger than light vehicles, the combined power of many small lasers at close range is capable of melting armor with the best of Mech weaponry. Though the Zeus' internal structure suffered only light damage, it was clear that one more salvo would hamper the Mech to the point of an easy kill. My kick to the left leg sent the Zeus reeling to retain its balance.

I saw the Zeus right itself as if calling upon some miraculous inner strength, turning to menace my exposed torso armor with its large laser. Though I believed that one more laser burst would put the enemy Mech's heat levels into the critical zone, quite possibly triggering an ammunition explosion, I turned quickly to run around the sluggish Zeus, hoping to assault his exposed rear torso once again. His laser caught my left arm, destroying the remaining armor and scoring on the myomer cords. The force spun my Charger about to face the autocannon which was elevating rapidly to pump shrieking fragments of shrapnel

into my cockpit.

I remember the rest as if in a dream. I dropped to one knee, causing the shells meant to shatter *Hachiman's* head to spew harmlessly out overhead before I triggered my three torso-mounted lasers point-blank. Scoring repeatedly on the torso armor that had already fallen victim to Jinshi's PPC fire, I burned away the few remaining scraps of armor, baring the internal structure and destroying the shielding around the Zeus' fusion engine. With over half of its heat sinks suddenly rendered inoperable by the uncurtained heat of the fusion engine, the Zeus shut down and stood vacillating before my eyes. Thought I relished the victory, I knew that I had to get distance between me and my foe. As I reached a point some one hundred and fifty meters from the Zeus, I saw the explosion which ended my enemy's existence.

The ammunition in the right torso flared into brilliance, spewing gouts of molten armor into the air. Then the autocannon magazine in the left arm detonated, launching the gyrating limb on a trajectory of its own. What remained after the white-hot fusion reactor sank into the bubbling ground at the feet of the gutted Mech didn't remain standing long. I don't remember seeing the pilot eject; it may have been that the intense heat or the ammunition explosions killed him long before the Mech destroyed itself.

The horror of my opponent's demise caused me to stand dumbfounded while the inferno raged before me, leaving *Hachiman* a perfect target for any Lyran mechwarrrior who came to avenge his fallen commander. The Combine tank and infantry units arrived in response to the Zeus's demise to reinforce the 1st company's hard-won position, which sent the remaining half-dozen Lyran Mechs running back to the ridge with my cohort's fire at their backs.

No additional Mechs on either side would fall that day. Or the next, for the Lyran commander summoned his DropShips to carry the defeated invaders far from Vega. As the last Lyran transports cut a fiery swath across the darkening Autumn sky, my company began the glorious march back to the port city and a well-deserved rest. At the celebrations held later that evening in Cochus I was approached by the personal aide of Theodore Kurita himself and led to a private conference with my victorious leader. I will attempt to recount my leader's words to me as accurately as I can remember.

"Your actions in the desert have brought honor to the Legion, *Tai-i*. If not for your expert use of the men and machines at your disposal, the Lyrans might yet pose a threat to the tranquility we now enjoy. Though my father, the Dragon, counts only the destruction of Wolf's Dragoons as the Combine's greatest imperative, our victory today brings renewed hope to our comrades struggling to drive Steiner from the Rasalhague and Dieron Districts. I am most interested in the innovative tactics with which a BattleMech

design previously considered useless was raised to the status of a true combat Mech. However, I doubt that even the tales of your victory will impress our military advisors enough to redeem the Charger in their eyes."

The neatly uniformed aide returned his leader's expressive grin before turning to order sake brought to our small gathering.

"As you are well aware," Colonel Kurita continued, "our victories over the past three months have allowed us to accumulate a surplus of replacement parts and replacement Mechs for the first time in the Legion's spotted history. My senior Techs inform me that a Zeus assault Mech could be at your disposal in a few days, should you care to place your Charger in the care of one of our recon lances."

Taken aback by the generosity of my lord's offer, I considered carefully before making my reply.

"You honor me, Colonel, though I did only what any other warrior in your service would have done. A week ago I would most certainly have leapt at the chance you offer me. However...meaning no disrespect to your most generous offer, I believe that the experience of piloting a Charger in combat against Mechs with many times my firepower and emerging victorious has changed me irrevocably. I believe that the ultimate test of a warrior's honor is the defeat of a superior foe using one's own courage, cunning and skill. I believe that it is the inferior warrior who relies on superior Mechs to win battles for him. I respectfully request to accompany my Charger to its new assignment."

I waited, aghast at my own presumption. Colonel Kurita, a broad smile wreathing his youthful face, gave me a slight bow.

"Would that more warriors shared your devotion to *bushido*; no Successor State would dare wage war on Draconian soil! But I am not so foolish as to separate a winning team from its victorious leader. *Hachiman* will remain with the 1st Company and be the shield which defends its fellows as they battle for the greater glory of the Dragon. Let us toast this with sake."

When the warm rice wine had been poured, and cups elevated, Colonel Kurita, myself, and all those present gave thanks for the Dragon's continuing might, the wisdom behind the enemy's withdrawal, and most especially to the long-dead crafters of the 'Useless Mech'.

Tai-I Euchart retired in 3036, after a distinguished career with his unit. He now lives on Vega, the planet he helped to liberate. His paintings of desert scenes are enjoying a surprising success; owners of his works include members of the court at Luthien.

Thornhill Arms

Saracen Riot Gun

For effective close fighting, you need something fast and effective. But you may not need the penetrative power of standard military weapons. Shotguns are best for this sort of thing, but a standard shotgun is too long with too slow a fire rate for mop-up jobs. So Thornhill Arms has developed the Saracen Riot Gun, engineered for those close, dirty fights! As with all Thornhill weapons, the Saracen is comprised of our special backed plastic and injection-molded metal/ceramic composites to assure maximum strength and lightness. The folding stock allows for easy carrying but locks into position for full firing stability with the flick of a wrist. Variable choke allows you to set the pellet spread to suit your needs. The extended box clip holds 16 rounds of 12-gauge ammo, and makes reloading a snap! Web carrying strap with 3-clip pouch included at no extra cost! The Saracen is available in flat black, steel blue, and assorted camouflage patterns.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Saracen Riot Gun	85 Cbs	2.5 kg
16-round reloads	1 Cb	0.1 kg each

For simulations, treat as a standard shotgun for range and damage, but the Saracen fires a burst of four shots per round.

Icewind BattleMech Cooling System

The battle's been going on for too long; your Mech cockpit feels like a sauna and smells like an old sweat sock, but if you let up for a moment, all is lost!

Some jerk in a Firestarter just tried to toast your cookies but a few manual over-rides keep the power flowing from your fusion engine. You swing your Mech's torso around to nail the —, but your lasers won't lock! The heat's made the targeting system unworkable. Cursing, you watch the Firestarter leap away from your glowing Mech!

In the heat of battle, heat can be your worst enemy. (How many warriors do you know who have survived an ammo explosion?) Short of running for a cooling truck or finding water, what can you do? Have you tried Icewind? Each Icewind contains over 2,000 cubic meters of compressed Carbon Dioxide packed into an armored plastic shell. The shell is fitted with a burst valve designed to melt in 0.25 seconds when subjected to a specific heat. When the ambient temperature hits the right level, the valve lets go, releasing the gas. The gas expansion results in a dramatic drop in temperature! And the waste gas simply exhausts out the engine vents. An additional benefit is that the CO2 displaces oxygen, smothering fires. Icewinds quickly mount in the engine compartments of all Mechs, aerospace fighters, and most armored vehicles, providing quick, one-use cooling. Don't get hot under the helmet, cool off with Icewind!

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Icewind Unit	500 Cbs	250 kg

(Specify temperature setting for unit when purchased. 10% discount on orders of over twenty units. Test data and projection curves available on request.)

For simulations, each Icewind replaces .5 ton of equipment (any sort) and produces a 4-point heat dispersement when triggered. Each is set at a fixed point on the heat scale when installed. Example of use: You have two Icewinds set at 15 and a current heat rating of 9. You generate 10 points of heat. When you adjust your heat scale, it will show 11 (9 initial + 10 generated - 8 for the two Icewinds = 11) *before* operational heat sinks take effect. Icewinds take effect before heat effects such as reactor shut-downs or ammo explosions. But as Icewinds are set to specific points on the scale, an Icewind will not help you if you haven't reached that heat point.

SipQuick® Personal Filter

Your unit stops for the night at the edge of some god-forsaken bog. Time for rations, a long stretch and something to drink! But the only water is swamp water, gray and swarming with who-knows-what sort of local micro-fauna; just waiting to rip through your intestines. Do you rig a fire and risk alerting the enemy to your position, drink the bacteria soup, or go thirsty? Answer none of the above, and use your SipQuick® personal filter! The SipQuick® is only 200 centimeters long, but packs a lot in such a short distance! Just put the intake in your drinking sources, and draw in through the mouthpiece. First the water passes through a 50-micron spun teflon fiber filter to remove particulate matter. Next it moves through an activated carbon filter that removes over 99.96% of all toxins (organic or inorganic!). Finally the water moves through an ultraviolet flash chamber. And you get a clean drink! 4-hour lithium batteries power the flash chamber, and the carbon and teflon filters are easily replaced when clogged. Don't let your next local drink include the local wildlife, use SipQuick!

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Weight</i>
SipQuick Filter	5 Cbs	15 g
Replacement Batteries	1 Cb/set of 3	2 g/set of 3
25 Filter Sets	1 Cb	2 g

Viper Modification Kit I

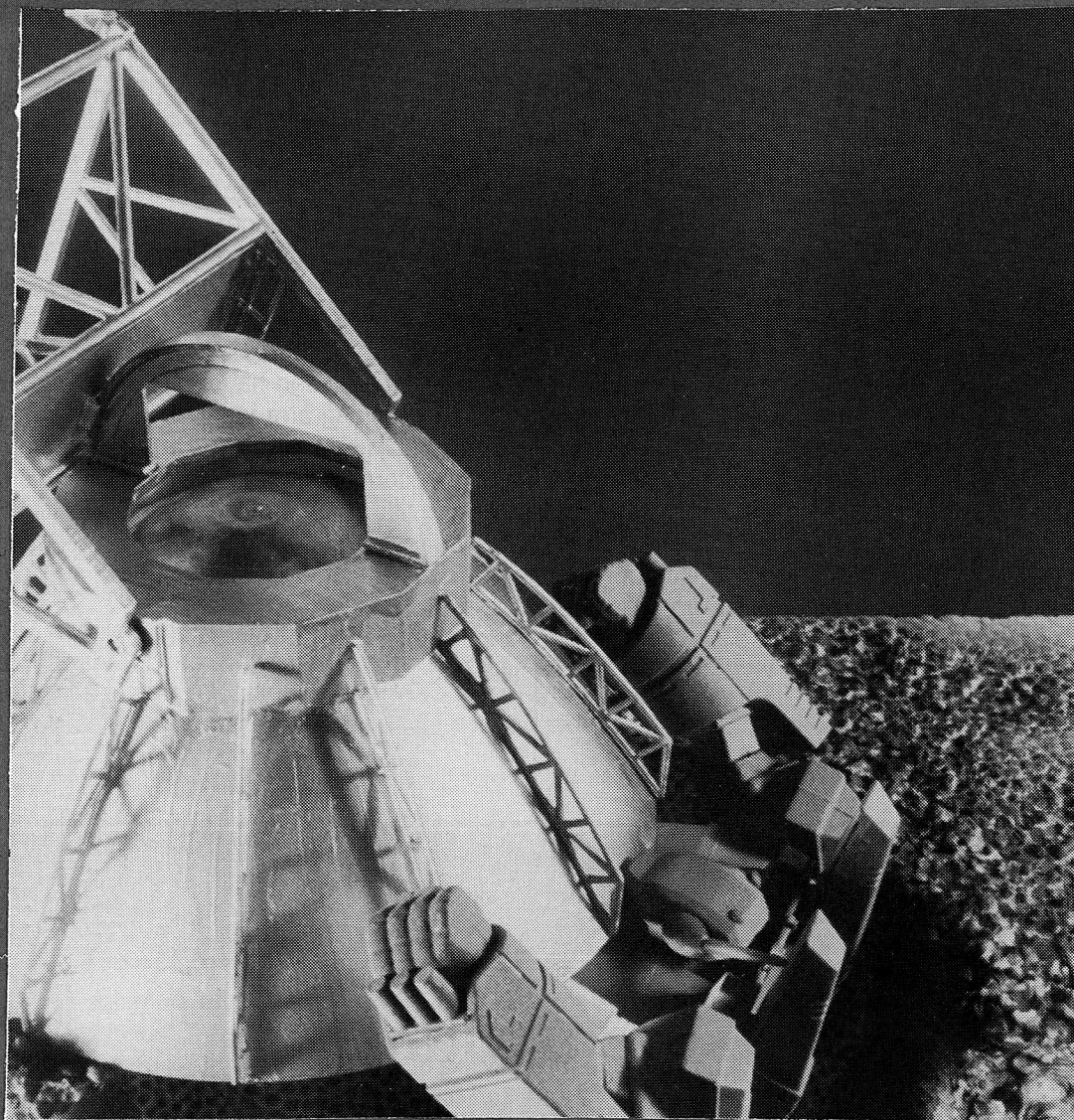
In the years since its introduction, the Thornhill Viper has fast taken a prominent place in the competitive market of personal side arms. Considering its power, reliability, and durability, its wide acceptance is understandable. But Thornhill Arms, the leaders in personal defense Technology, take something great and then improve it! The Viper Modification Kit I turns your side arm into a fully automatic machine pistol! A Viper on full auto-fire combines the best features of an assault rifle with a pistol. Still as unobtrusives as a side arm, your pistol can have the fire rate, spread, and hitting power of a long-arm weapon! Come into your authorized Thornhill distributor and try a fully automatic Viper today! Each kit comes complete with instructions for the modification and additional weapon maintenance. All modified Vipers can be fired either single shot or on full auto with the flick of a selector switch.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Viper Mod Kit I	8 C-bills	no change to gun
weight		

IDs Sought!!

These Mechwarriors, battlefield salvagers, and Techs have sent in Mech and vehicle designs. As part of our evaluation process, the designs themselves were separated from their cover letters and sent to our technical staff for comment. Contrary to procedure, the designer's names were not on the designs. If you wish to see your design in print, please contact us again identifying your name, the vehicle you designed, your correct address and social security number. Thank You.

BSD-7K Bushido
EXC 1A Excalibur
TRA-3B Tracker
LBR-75 BS Liberator
WAH-7AH Warhawk



A Soldier's View

by Mechwarrior Justin Karlton

From the upcoming book *Battle Diaries of the '39 War, a Study in Futility*: Fraser College, Ryde University, 3040.

There I stood on the tarmac of the Northwind spaceport at false dawn, with the morning fog rolling about me. The Union-class DropShip that the Major and I came in had landed just minutes ago. Major Jamieson of the 22nd Avalon Hussars had been met by a jeep which was close to overflowing with security police and had driven away. They would be back for me soon enough, so I took the time to reflect on the reasons why I was here and to supervise the unloading of my Crusader-L. Two weeks ago, on Quentin, my captain asked me to go to a top-level security meeting on Northwind in his place because his wife was soon to have a child, and he didn't want to leave her. I agreed to go. Now here I was. Sgt Justin Karlton, winner of the Draconis March Pentathlon of 3037, one of the top twenty swordsmen in the RCT — a lot of good that would do me in a meeting with some of the most important military figures in the Draconis March. To say the least, I felt a bit overwhelmed.

A few minutes later a jeep pulled up with only two figures in it. It was hard to tell, but I didn't recognize anyone important. I waited for them to come to me. A figure stepped out and came towards me; quickly I realized that this was Field Marshal Bisla. I came to attention and gave her my best salute.

"At ease, Sergeant," she said. I slowly relaxed as I took her in. At the age of forty-eight, she was in charge of the entire Addicks PDZ; she looked quite competent for the job.

"Why are you here, Sergeant? I had been expecting Captain Smythe of the First Battalion." "Yes, Ma'am. His wife is very close to labor. It's in the letter; he chose to send me because he wanted someone who would think of the problems from the point of view of the combat soldier. Ma'am."

"Yes," she said thoughtfully. "I read your file. You actually own two Mechs, a Crusader and an Awesome. Do you have a preference between them?"

"No, ma'am; I will pilot either one. At this point the Awesome I inherited is in the family vault on Quentin. The Crusader fit in better with the other Mechs in the lance and.."

"Uh, ma'am," interrupted the driver, "You asked to be reminded at 0830 hours. The meeting is half an hour from now!"

The trip to the meeting took half an hour. It was pure silence in the jeep the entire time. I kept wanting to ask things like why did she come out to meet me? What was going on? And of course, why was I — or any representative of the 22nd — here?

As soon as we entered the room, it was obvious that something major was going on. The Field Marshal quickly called the meeting to order and began to speak. It was a bombshell.

"In two months, the Federated Commonwealth will be making four thrusts into the Draconis Combine. Those of you

who are in this room represent the units who will be taking part in one of those thrusts. Our First Wave will attack Athenry, Pike IV, Telos IV, Nashira, Biham, Halstead Station, Ancha, and Sadachiba. The war will begin on April ninth. Now for unit assignments: The 22nd Avalon Hussars regimental combat team will make the Initial Landing Zone on Nashira and hold it until June fifth, when they will be relieved by the 2nd Kearny Highlanders. The 22nd will then proceed to Telos IV and bring that into the fold as well. The 5th Lyran Guards will lead the attack on Biham..." In a state near shock I realized that he was talking, not just about a raid, but that full-scale war was beginning again.

* * *

2 months later

The drop onto Nashira went like clockwork. We landed in the swamps just north of the spaceport. Captain Smythe led us out of the swamp under the cover of darkness. Our first two objectives were to take out the artillery batteries and the aerospace facilities. I had been temporarily placed in command of a lance made up from the various Mech companies which took part in the assault on the aerospace launch site. Along with my Crusade-L were two Phoenix Hawks and a modified Rifleman. I placed the Rifleman in a concealed position at the end of the runway to fire upon any fighters that managed to take off before we could destroy them. The Phoenix Hawks' targets were those fighters which had not taken off: combining physical attacks with attacks from various weapons to wreck havoc on those slow burners. I took on the task of destroying the communications link atop the command tower.

As I jumped up, I got a clear picture of the progress of the other battles. The Medium Armored Regiment was keeping the planetary militia busy outside the city. The infantry regiments were landing just outside the city, ready to take it street by street. Battalion A of our Mech regiment was easily taking out the artillery groups to gain control of the spaceport. I made my landing on top of the control tower with a flourish, only to hear an ominous creaking below me. With a crash, the roof fell in, broken under the weight of my Mech. I made a lucky grab at the edge of the communications dish mounted on the roof-tree; the dish flipped over, giving me an even better handhold. I dangled there for a moment then let go with my left hand, using it to clear the top floor of whatever human life remained. I retriggered my jets, burning my way down to the ground floor, then bashed my way out of the tower.

In twenty minutes the spaceport was ours. The rest of the DropShips came down, and we went after the planet's home forces. It was a tense, week-long hide and seek game before we mopped them up.

For the next three weeks we had to deal with a sort of underground movement which kept up the harassment of our forces. An example of this: I was walking from the

commissary to our temporary barracks when a young boy of five or six came up to me. He whimpered that his sister was hurt in the rubble of their apartment building. I told him not to worry, and asked an infantry squad just coming off patrol to help me to get her out. We drove to the place; six of us dug while two watched for snipers. After twenty minutes we found the girl. As our medic was treating her, I turned to speak to the boy and saw our guards crumpling to the ground; they'd been attacked by six of the locals. As the insurgents circled for the attack I noticed that they had no guns. I drew my sword to meet their attack, and signaled to the rest of the squad to do the same. In almost no time the untrained attackers were unconscious or dying; the children were nowhere to be seen.

A private asked with smothered hostility, "Sir, why did you restrict us to hand weapons? And why did you let the kids get away?" I resisted the impulse to snap. "I restricted you for two reasons. They had only hand weapons; we could see they didn't know much about fighting, so I knew it would be easy for us to take them. And, Private, you don't get many answers from a corpse! To answer your second question: I wanted those children to get away to report that we tried to take prisoners, not just to gun down these hostiles. Because we took them so easily, it won't be read as weakness, but as mercy. It may make it easier for those who come after us who'll have to pacify this planet in their dealings with the locals." I didn't want to tell him how sick I felt, making war on kids.

When dawn rose on the fourth day of June, it came with sounds of DropShips. I assumed that the snakes were striking back, and that we were going to get it now. It turned out that the Highlanders had arrived a day early, to all of our relief. During the next week, the 22nd prepared for our next battle on Telos IV. To aid the incoming garrison we kept our patrols up to the end. We wanted the locals to know that Davion was here to stay.

* * *

The flight to Telos IV was almost perfect till we came in at nadir point. For twenty-two hours we shuttled off to the planet; then the aerospace fighters began their attack on our convoy. It is one of the most terrifying times that a MechWarrior experiences, a feeling of supreme helplessness, of having no way to fight back. For the next twenty-six hours there was continual sniping at our ships. We didn't lose many DropShips, but the fighters were able to disperse us enough so that we couldn't reach our primary targets. The Leopard-class DropShip I and my lancemates were on ended up nose first in a swamp on the other side of the world, three weeks of slogging travel from where we were supposed to be.

My lance by now consisted of: myself in the Crusader-L, Jessica Ross and Skye Troy, who both pilot Catapults, and Nicholas Burke in his Battlemaster. It was commanded by Lieutenant Devins in his Battlemaster, who would apprise HQ of the situation as it developed. We began our travels, not in an optimistic mood. As it turned out, with the exception of the 15th Dieron Regulars Fighter Wing (which we had run into as they had been on maneuvers in this system), the planetary militia had immediately dispersed into the countryside to begin operating as guerillas.

By July First, we'd almost gotten to our command camp without seeing any activity not natural to the flora and fauna of Telos IV. Two hours, *two hours*, outside the camp we came across a unit of light armor waiting in ambush. We were spread out; I was on point. I took in the situation with a glance: ambushers, our approaching convoy which was their target; it was up to us to act quickly. I spoke on the tight band, "Jess, Skye! Two Hunters, one Striker tank, 10 o'clock." Jess spoke up, "We've got just a short time to set up, but this looks like a good time to see how well these Swarm SRMs work!" Skye was enthusiastic, "If they really do use hundreds of submunitions to devastate an area quickly, they'll blanket-fire and cut down on missile wastage! We don't have that many, so we'll be able to make them count!"

We made our way quietly and slowly into place behind the ambushers (how I grudged that slowness with our troops in constant danger of attack!) We got there without alerting them and opened fire, catching the ambushing Snakes with our own ambush! Jess fired upon one of the Hunters while Skye let loose on the other. I'd decided that the Striker was mine. All of Jess's missiles hit, and all but one of Skye's. Mine missed the Striker, but went right on, seeking out the Hunters on either side of the tank and completing their destruction. We spooked the Striker into running out, right in front of the convoy. With fire from our lance and the convoy, the tank was history in minutes.

At last we were home. When we reported for duty, we were told that those three tanks were the last effective of the planetary militia. The government of Telos IV handed the world over to our forces with almost no fight whatsoever. We broke the RCT in half so that we could be ready for the orders to begin the second wave. The rest of the regiment was to stay on as a garrison force. We patrolled for a week or so, waiting for the orders to come.

* * *

July 29, 3039. I won't forget that date in a hurry. I was on a long solo patrol sixty kilometers outside the spaceport when the word came through. *The Steiner High Command was assaulted by DEST commandoes!* Almost the whole High Command was dead or severely injured; the replacements were more conservative in policy. The Steiner forces had

stopped their advance. *Great, here we are in the middle of the Benjamin Military District and the bloody Steiners have gotten cold feet!*

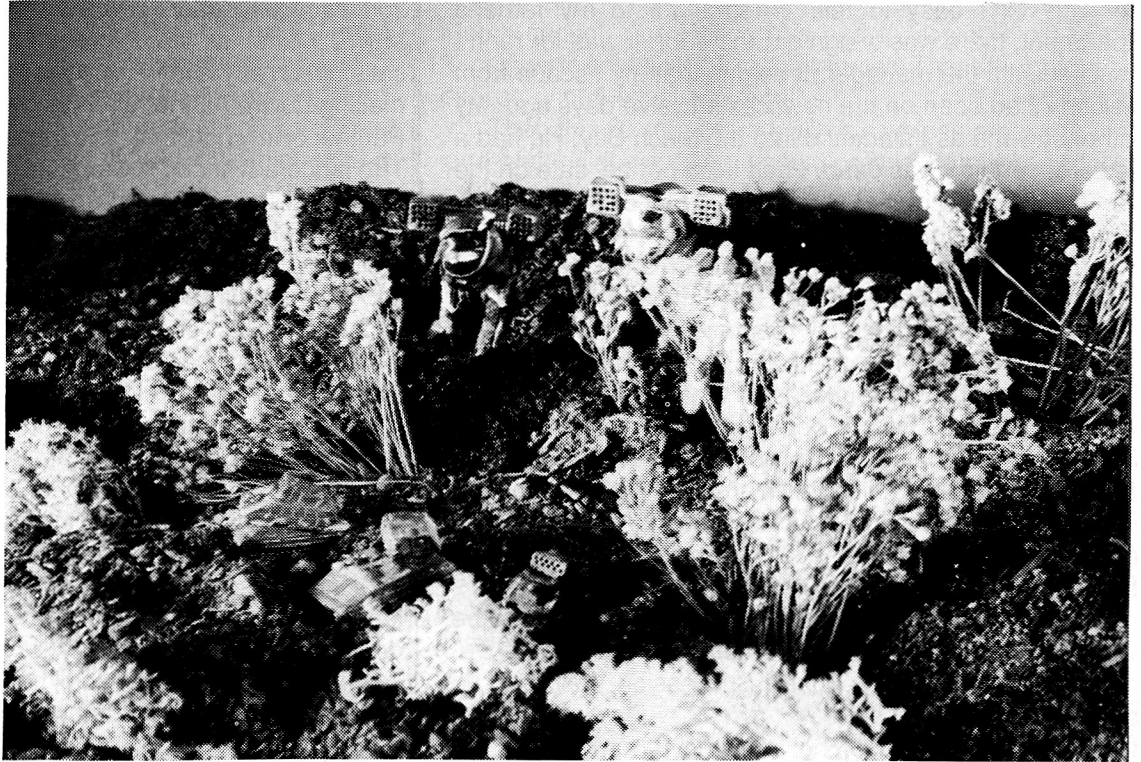
I went over the top of this little hill and got the worst shock of my life.

Below me was a battalion of combined arms. Types of vehicles I had never seen before, anywhere! A cold feeling entered my soul as I looked upon these devices. Fear washed over me as I looked at them. *These vehicles cannot exist!* I had to get the information back to base at all costs. But how could I describe these...things?

Carefully, I scanned their numbers, attempting to figure out what we were going to have to deal with here. Then I recognized one of the Mechs, which my father had told me about as part of a history lesson. It was what he'd called the Exterminator, with specialized heat sinks and an antimissile system. It was a Mech which hadn't been seen since Kerensky's time! Those Kuritans had to have found a Lostech cache of incredible size! I knew that hell had broken loose.

I swallowed twice before I called it in. But my report was not the only one! Reports were coming in from everywhere; we'd lost a battalion already. Orders were to pull back to base camp. Then a huge monster of a Mech came at me, already firing its weapons. The thing was obviously an assault Mech of some sort, which was armed with two particle projection cannons and some sort of laser.

I began a retreat back to base, followed by this huge horde of nightmares, with the one big Mech chasing me every step of the way. I was within five kilometers of base when I saw the first DropShips taking off. A retreat off planet! I didn't waste any time, with the size of the attacking force behind me, and the means of retreat leaving the planet before my sensors. Listening to the communications, it was clear that we were down at least **FOUR HUNDRED AND NINE** of our forces. I was the last friendly in sight as I neared base camp; the last of the DropShips began to take off. I was three



hundred meters away. I ran even faster. The DropShip must have had me spotted; it hovered thirty meters off the ground. I noticed the open Mech door and I jumped for it!

Just as I saw I was making a clean approach to the door, I felt piercing blasts shatter through my rear armor, penetrating my engine shielding. I veered this way and that; my gyroscope had been destroyed! I was in the DropShip! In fact, I was slamming into the walls of the Mech Bay. I had lost control of my Crusader-L; nothing was left of it but scrap to repair other people's Mechs. And I did massive damage to the walls of the Mech Bay. I was in the infirmary when my unit was told that it had to repair the Mech Bay during our long voyage of retreat.

* * *

The Commander decided to send us back to Quentin to resupply and reequip. It took us three weeks to get back. You might think it was impossible to dodge the Captain of a DropShip for that long. Not quite; somehow I was able to. I wasn't eager to hear him on the subject of the damage to his Mech Bay. We came into the nadir point in the Quentin system and announced our presence to our security forces so we wouldn't be shot down on sight. We landed on August 29. Our commanders gave us seventy-two hours of home leave. So I went home.

This isn't easy to tell. When I got to my father's apartment, there was a sign on the door. It was for rent. I checked with the manager. It seems that my escape from Telos IV had been on the newscasts twelve days ago. My father saw me as I slammed into the Mech Bay. He had a seizure, certain I was dead. I had lived but he, safe on the home front, was dead. This war of Prince Hanse's was ruining everything! We were losing everywhere. It had cost me my father and my Mech. That Draconian in the mystery Mech was going to pay! He had killed my father, destroyed my Crusader, and ruined my reputation with my unit!

I took the old skimmer out to my family vault. It had been hidden during the First Succession War; only my father and I knew its location. I had not been there in nine years. I turned first to the small chamber at the heart of the vault. There was our family's greatest heirloom, in an airtight case. I took it in my hand. A simple broadsword, dating back to fifteenth century Terra, so old no-one remembers how it entered our family, nor which of my ancestors was the first to use it.

Carrying the sword, I went to the main vault. There he was, Demonicus. The family Awesome. I had piloted Demonicus throughout the Fourth Succession War. And he was going to master the battlefield again. Together we would teach that snake a lesson he would never forget!

I turned on the reactor. I cleared all the weapons systems, checked down all the boards and got green lights. Last of all I loaded in my gear. On impulse I made a rack for the sword in Demonicus' cockpit. All the family weapons could take part in my revenge. Certainly I would never return here. Leaving the vault door open I began the long walk back to town.

As I was moving along I tuned the Awesome to our current lance frequency; I heard Skye and Jessica wondering if I'd got it in the raid. I called in and asked them what they were talking about. Apparently the Ryuken units which hit us on Telos IV had followed us, opening their offensive on our planet just yesterday. There were eight Ryuken units, including the one which I'd been chased by. INCLUDING THE MECH WHICH DESTROYED SO MUCH I HELD DEAR! A plan came into my mind. I told Jess and Skye about an island sixty kilometers away where we could collect the remnants of our unit and entrap and destroy a few of the Ryuken in return for what they'd done to us. And so we began "Operation Deep Six".

We met at the beach just across from the island. It was just two hundred meters away. They told me that they'd been in contact with the Union-class DropShip which had already landed on the island. The ladies went across and concealed themselves. And I placed myself in the shallows waiting for that snake and his buddies to come, so I could make them pay.

Suddenly, undramatically, they appeared over the hori-

zon, two Hunchbacks, two Panthers, and the new nightmare Mech. I shot at that murdering snake and watched with satisfaction as his left arm, then his center torso armor began melting down. All the hits I took were minor except one; the Panther on my right took off almost a ton of my right arm armor. The lance advanced towards me and we all five fired again. They all missed. It was great! All three of my PPC shots hit that monster Mech. Two of them hit on the Combine symbol, melting it right off of him, and one hit his left leg. I stepped back into the water while the Panthers jumped in after me. For a few seconds we lost each other in the underwater murk; then it cleared, and we had contact. One of the Panthers was a little close; I trashed him with triple PPC shots into his torso. The Panther just vaporized. The Thuglike Mech struck me with a dual PPC shot and laser in the center torso, while the other Panther hit my right leg with its own PPC. We fired at each other again; my center torso took all three PPC shots. My gyro and my engine were destroyed! But I was able to get a PPC shot into the second Panther's head, and a shot into the right leg of that monster Mech who had now so completely destroyed my life.

My Mech was filling, and I had to eject or die underwater. I made sure I had the broadsword before I pushed the eject button.

Somehow I made it to the surface; ridding myself of everything but my broadsword. Carrying the broadsword I swam to shore. As I pulled myself out of the water, I heard the steps of a Mech behind me. I whirled around. There was my nemesis. I shouted in words my ancestors might have used, "I will take my vengeance on you!"

The roar of jump jets was loud in my ears as Jess and Skye rocketed out of cover to destroy this menace. They let loose all of their missiles from the Catapults' pods, destroying the head of my enemy. When the smoke cleared, I saw that the pilot had ejected just before the missiles struck. He was touching down thirty meters away. I knew that I would get my chance for revenge now.

I looked at the Kuritan as he got himself out of his harness. He was not very distinguished. He looked like hundreds of pictures I'd seen of citizens of the Draconis sphere of influence. He stripped off his cooling vest and neurohelmet as I approached, then drew a katana. He was ready to continue our battle. I readied my broadsword. Speaking very slowly, so he'd be sure to understand, I recited my accusations, "Whoever you are, Kuritan, you have dealt me three mortal blows. You cut my Mech apart on Telos IV. You killed my father with that same blow. You destroyed my family's Mech underwater. There is nothing left of my life. Now I am going to take yours."

"If you admit you are the walking dead, you do not deserve life," was his simple answer.

He struck first, cutting through my parry, drawing blood from my arm. He was able to parry my own blade. I changed

to a two-handed grip. Careless of defense, I aimed a massive strike into his side, dealing him a mortal wound. This — I must call him a samurai — changed his hold on his sword and used it as if it were a pick, thrusting it into my chest. I felt it puncture my lung. We withdrew our blades, then attacked as one, a final time. He swung his katana with a full blow which buried it in my hip and stuck there. I struck him at the base of his neck; my sword shattered as it hit his collarbone.

The world was very quiet. We both released our swords. He looked at me without anger, even with pride. "We died well," was all he said. And then he fell.

I looked at the sword which had been in my family for sixteen hundred years, now broken at last in battle. Like my family, it could fight no longer. I slowly sank to the ground. Blood was congealing on my sword. My own blood was seeping into the sand. My head was spinning. I began babbling to my sword. "You've been part of my family for so long. How much you must remember. What you've seen, what you've heard. If only you could talk to me. I would ask you...the answer to one question. What have we fought for?" As I lay there my mind soared; perhaps only in my imagination I heard the sword answering. *Child, for the decades and centuries that I have been used by your family, we have always served the same lord. You must realize that your vanquished foe serves that same lord also. You may try to serve the lord of life, but when you pick me up you change your allegiance. You can serve only death. That is the truth of the sword. And the truth of man is like it: life is a short eventful time, but death is forever.*

A warm dark curtain fell over me. My limbs became weightless. I drifted toward nirvana...

* * *

I awoke to a bright light and a hazy shape, which slowly became clearer, formed into Skye Troy's face. It was tired, older somehow. I knew now that I had not died. I whispered, "Where am I?" "You're in a field hospital on Helen." "How long have I been unconscious, Skye?" "They've kept you under a lot. You've been out for almost two months since your fight with the pilot of that Thug." My face must have shown my confusion, for she went on, "The Thug is a Star-League era Mech which has an advanced internal structure, and a specialized ammunition storage bay which won't let the ammo blow up. Oh yes, it's faster than anything we know in its weight class." She was quiet for a moment, clearly wondering whether to go on. "The war has gone downhill since you were knocked out. Ardan Sortek was pushed off An Ting, losing all our gains since the beginning of the war. From then on, Kuritan forces seemed to be striking everywhere at once. During the month of October, Theodore Kurita led a series of lightning-fast assaults all the way up to Exeter. He was within

striking range of the Old Duke on Robinson, the Draconis March capitol. The Prince has had to deploy most of his forces just to contain the Draconis forces. That's the quick and dirty story of the last two months."

Then the doctor entered with his welcome-back-to-the-land-of-the-living speech. I could go back to my unit soon. I could combine convalescence with retraining. Retraining on what?

"No," Skye reassured me, "You aren't Dispossessed. You've got to get used to the Hunchback we captured, that's all. Maybe you hoped for the Thug? Well, the NAIS got there first. Talk to them in a decade or so." A Hunchback is a lighter Mech than I'm used to, but a Mech is a Mech. I was impatient for my release. All this dreaming and talking swords. If the war was going so badly, at least there would be a job I could do.

I named my new Mech "Broken Blade" and practiced until I was proficient with it. Then our orders came through; what amounted to a water raid on Fomalhaut. This should be easy enough to deal with. They only ordered Company C, First Battalion, of the 22nd Avalon, the RCT. It's such a simple mission...

Northwind, December 6, 3039
Casualty Report, Fomalhaut
...Company C, First Battalion, 22nd Avalon Hussars
Command Lance
Captain David Smythe = killed in action
Mechwarrior Basil Gannon = killed in action
Mechwarrior April Clavell = killed in action
Mechwarrior Eli Falcon = killed in action
Heavy Lance
Lt Horace Devins = killed in action
Sgt Justin Karlton = killed in action
Mechwarrior Skye Troy = killed in action
Mechwarrior Jessica Ross = wounded, survived
Recon Lance
Lt Erik Cabot = survived
Mechwarrior Collette Zahn = killed in action
Mechwarrior Fidel Tobin = killed in action
Mechwarrior Alix Stephenson = wounded, survived
...end of report

Technical Readout

MLS-1A Malleus

Overview

The Malleus dates back to 2650. It was designed by a team from Corean Industries led by the gifted Marcus Kearny. It was meant to provide an impressive concentration of medium and long range firepower for a mid sized Mech. It lives up to its promise. There are only two problems with the Malleus in its performance on the field of combat. The first is the same problem as the Trebuchet. Its ammo supply is rather low; it can last a relatively short time in combat, about two minutes of constant fire. Therefore the Malleus is only suitable for short operations or for defensive operations near a supply base, where it may quickly be reloaded. The second problem is a related one. In gaining its medium to long range combat capacity as a combination with its jump capability, there had to be a sacrifice of short range firepower. This cuts back on the Malleus' ability to provide short range cover fire for other Mechs. Its firepower is still sufficient to make any light Mech use caution in moving against the Malleus.

Battle History

In the year 2843 the Draconis Combine sent a force out to the Periphery to deal with water raiders. The battalion which they sent out included six Malleuses. Their efforts in the series of punitive raids were testament to the survivability of this Mech in combat. After two years of raiding, the battalion came back with half of its forces destroyed; four of the six Malleuses remained, even though they had constantly been assigned to the first attacking wave to leave the DropShips.

The Malleus' defensive ability was clearly demonstrated on the world of Shiba in the Capellan Confederation in 2998. The Free Worlds League attacked Shiba, which was lightly garrisoned by four Malleuses, eight lighter Mechs, and a company of light armor units. The Free Worlds League had sent in a full heavy Mech battalion, sure of an easy victory. The planetary forces used varying battleplans, each of which took advantage of the Malleus' versatile talents. They held off the enemy for six long weeks, until the Free Worlds League commander, at the end of his supplies, had to break off the attack.

MLS-1A Malleus

Mass: 50 tons
Chassis: Corean Model J1
Power Plant: 250 Magna
Cruising Speed: 54.0 Kph
Maximum Speed: 86.4 Kph
Jump Jets: Butterfly 500
Jump Distance: 150 meters
Armor: StarShield
Armament:
 1 Longbow LRM-10 Launcher
 2 SureShot LRM-5 Launchers
 3 Magna MkII Medium Lasers
Manufacturer: Corean Enterprises
Communications System: TransBand J9
Targeting/Tracking System: Corean B Tech

Simulator Stats:

Type: MLS-1A Malleus
Tons:
Tonnage: 50 tons 50
Engine Rating: Magna 250 12.5
 Walking MPs: 5
 Running MPs: 8
 Jumping MPs: 5
Internal Structure: 5.0
Heat Sinks: 12 2.0
Gyroscope: 3.0
Cockpit: 3.0
Armor Factor: 128 8.0
 Head: 3 9
 C Torso: 16 27/4
 Rt/Lt Torso: 12 22/2
 Rt/Lt Arms: 8 8
 Rt/Lt Legs: 12 12
Weapons & Ammo:
 LRM 10 RT 2 5.0
 Ammo (LRM) 12 RT 1 1.0
 LRM 5 LA 1 2.0
 LRM 5 RA 1 2.0
 Ammo LRM 24 CT 1 1.0
 Medium Laser H 1 1.0
 Medium Laser LT 1 1.0
 Medium Laser LT 1 1.0
 Jump Jets CT 1 0.5
 Jump Jets RL 2 1.0
 Jump Jets LL 2 1.0

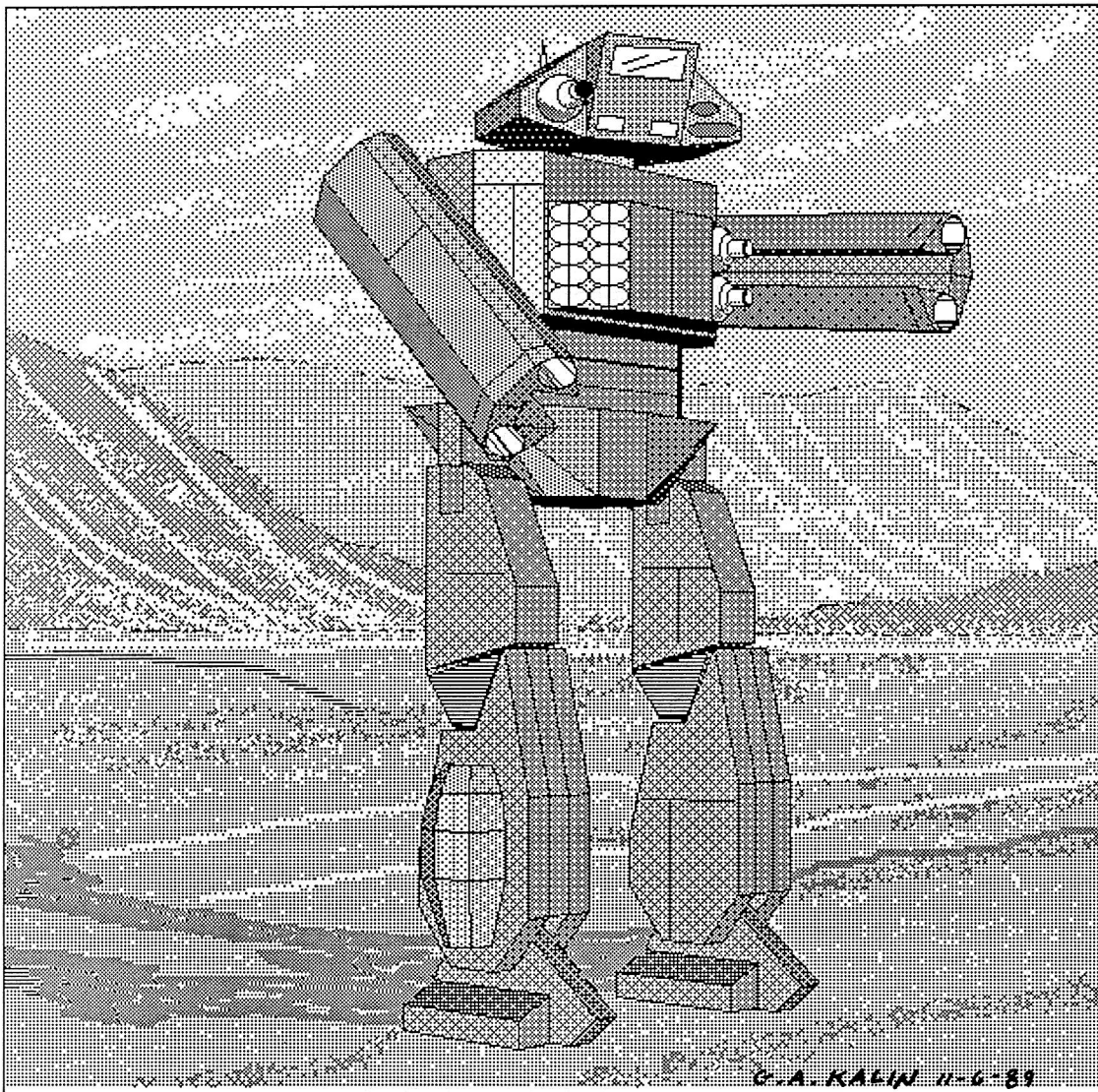
Variants:

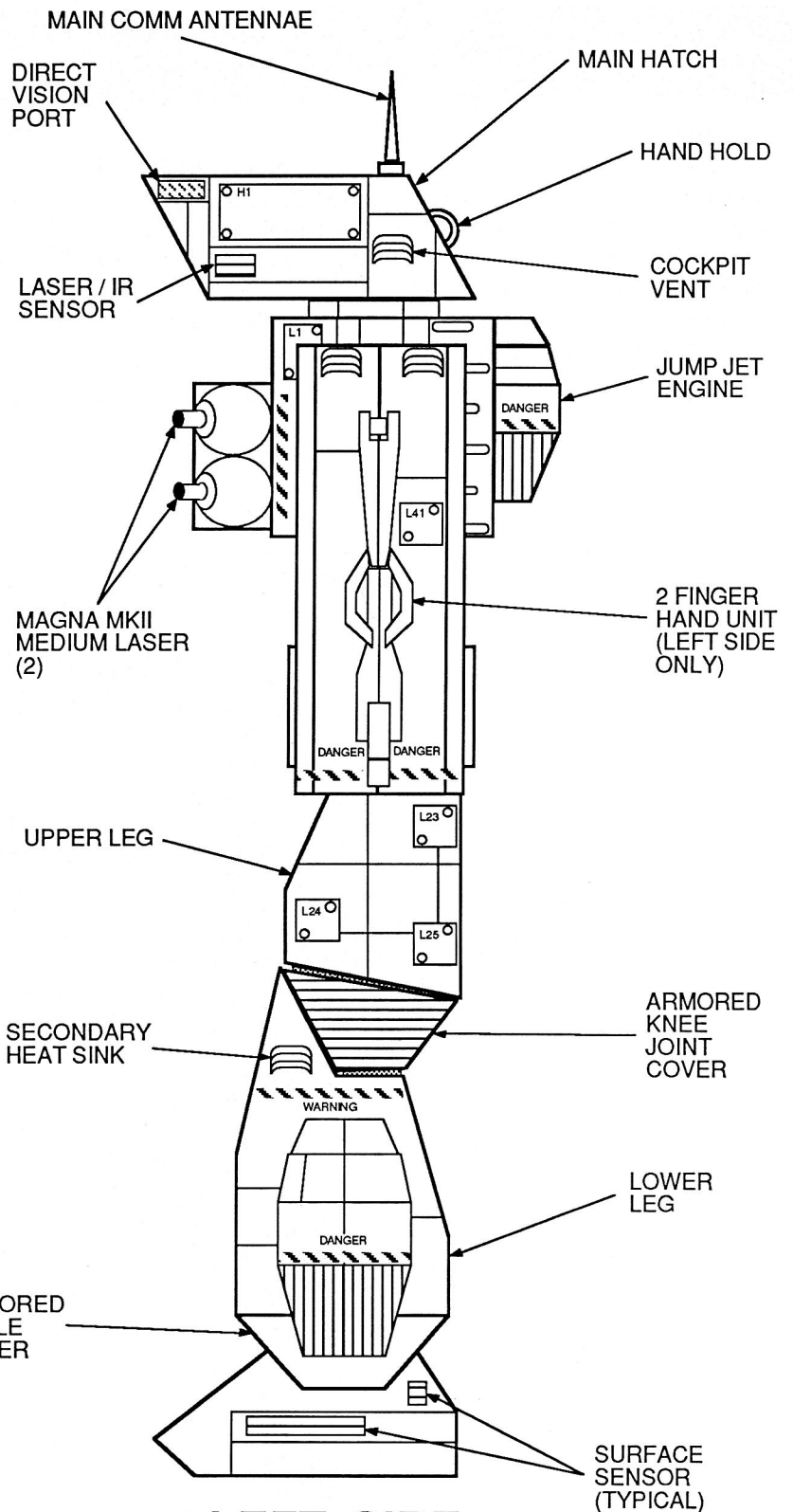
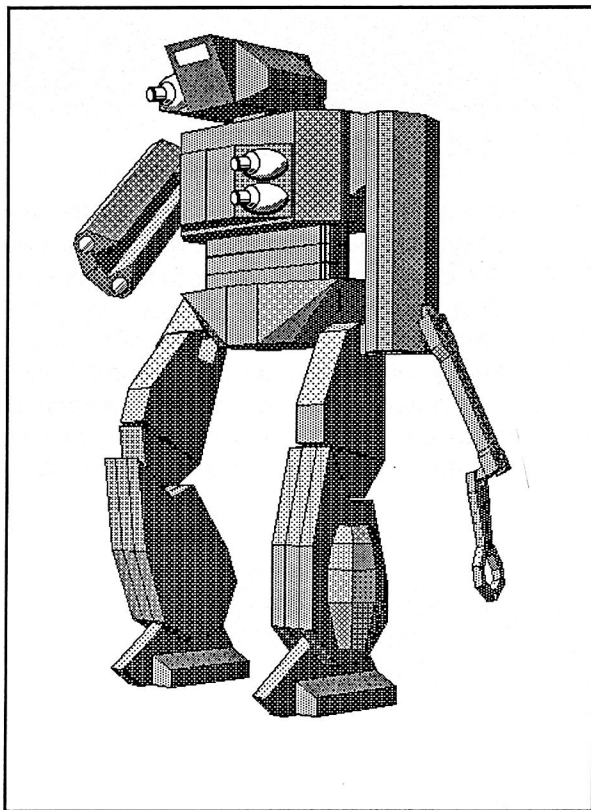
One popular variant replaces the wrist-mounted LRM 5 packs with SRM 4 packs, improving the Malleus' short range capabilities. Another common change is to replace the head-mounted medium laser with a machine gun and its ammo, or with a small laser and an extra half ton of armor. Several other variants are known to exist, because of the relative ease of weapon removal and replacement in the Malleus.

Notable Mechs and MechWarriors:

Alice Kearny

This MechWarrior is noted because she pilots the very first Malleus that came off the construction line. It was given to her ancestor Marcus Kearny, as payment for designing the Malleus, and it has stayed in the family ever since. It is rumored that Alice can trace her ancestry back all the way to the sixteenth century when an inquisitor named Kearny became famous for writing a book known as *The Hammer Against Witches (Malleus Maleficarum)*. Hence, the name of the Mech. As a matter of fact, the Mech is named 'Witch Hunter'.





LEFT SIDE
(RIGHT SIDE TYPICAL)



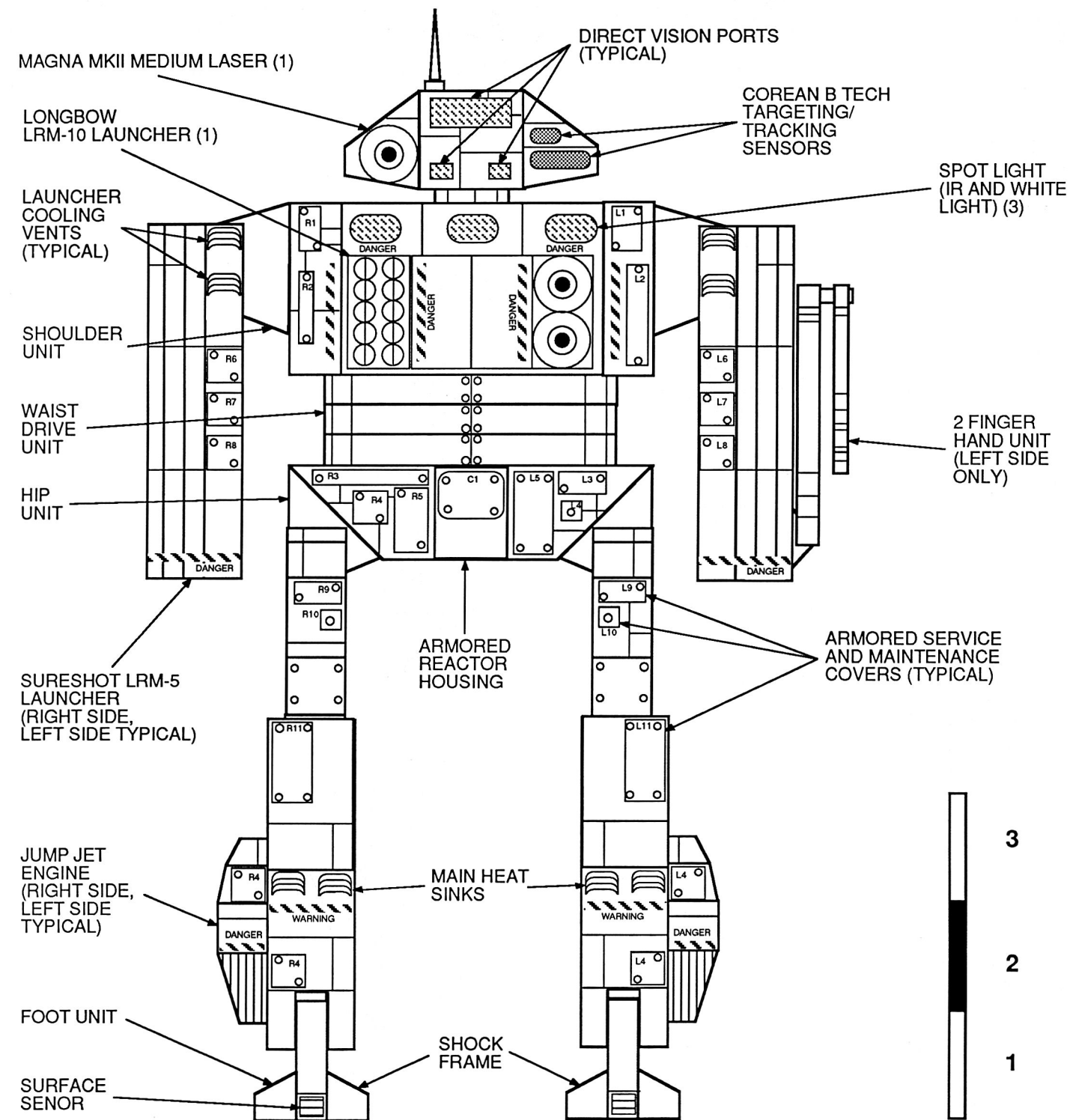
LOGO FOR MECHWARRIOR
ALICE KEARNY

BattleTechnology

The Magazine of Combat in the 31st Century

Illustrated by Gary A. Kalin

MLS-1A MALLEUS 50 TON BATTLEMECH



**LOOKING AFT
(FRONT VIEW)**

PYLON MOUNTED STORES FOR CONVENTIONAL, AEROSPACE, AND VSTOL AIRCRAFT AND VTOL VEHICLES

NOTE: This article on external stores constitutes a rules variant, particularly in the area of single shot missiles. Use and enjoy these rules, but be aware that they are variants, not part of the official rules of the BattleTech and AeroTech simulator games.

External stores are fuel and weapons carried on racks mounted in pylons under aircraft and vehicles. The type and quantity of stores carried is dictated by the type of mission to be performed. All aircraft and vehicles can carry external stores (see the **BattleTech Manual** or **AeroTech** section on **Ground Targets, Strafing, Dive Bombing**, and for the rules of using external stores). Weapons mounted on pylons are restricted to only fire out of the forward firing arc of aircraft and vehicles (see the **BattleTech Manual** or **AeroTech** section on **Firing Arcs**).

Enemy fire targeted at an aircraft, aerospace craft, or VTOL's may hit external stores being carried (see the **BattleTech Manual** or **AeroTech** for the aircraft **Hit Location Table**, for VTOL's consult the **VTOL Hit Location Table**). The pilot controlling the damaged unit chooses what weapon or store is destroyed.

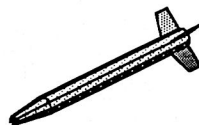
Damage to aircraft and aerospace craft: hits scored against **bombs** also include any external stores carried.

Damage to VTOL's: hits scored against the **main weapon** also include any external stores carried.

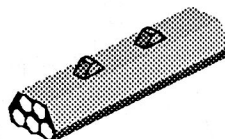
Thrust loss

0.5 thrust points lost per ton of external stores carried. Round down.

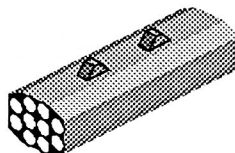
For a variety of reasons a pilot may wish to drop some of a aircraft or vehicles external stores to increase its thrust performance. All or some of the stores carried on pylons can be dropped at the end of a game turn to regain lost thrust points. When dropped to regain lost thrust points (at no target), freefall bombs and missiles will scatter and explode on impact; all other stores will cause little damage when dropped.



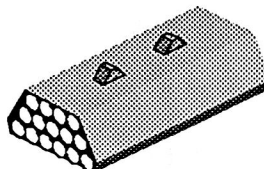
TYPICAL SHORT OR LONG RANGE MISSILE
(FINS EXTENDED FOR FLIGHT)



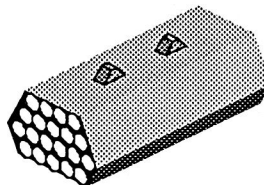
5 MISSILE POD
(SRM & LRM)



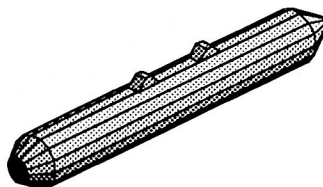
10 MISSILE POD
(SRM & LRM)



15 MISSILE POD
(SRM & LRM)

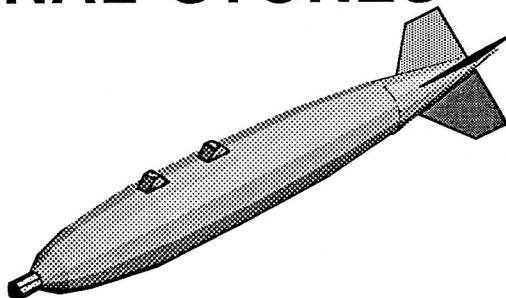


20 MISSILE POD
(SRM & LRM)

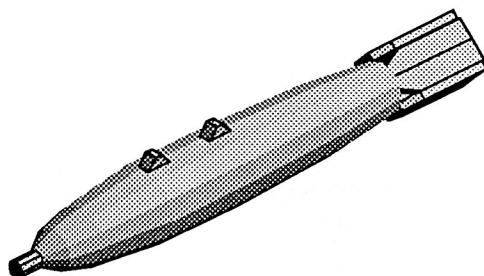


MACHINE GUN POD

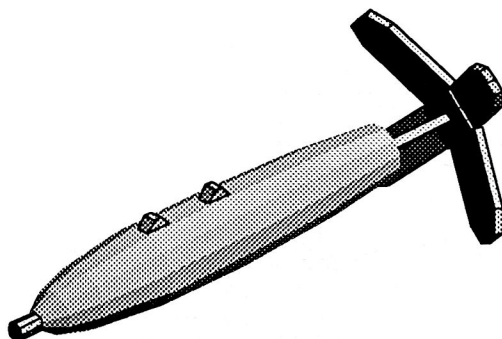
EXTERNAL STORES



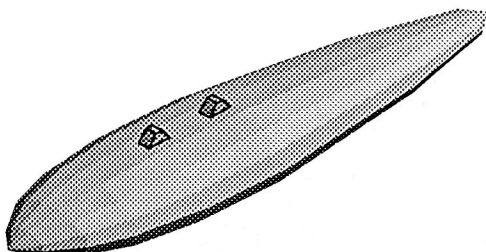
TYPICAL FREEFALL BOMB WITH
STANDARD FINS
(MK 1, 2, 3, 4)



FREEFALL BOMB WITH FOLDED
RETARDING FINS



FREEFALL BOMB WITH RETARDING
FINS EXTENDED



0.5 TON FUEL DROP TANK

Illustrated by Gary A. Kalin

MISSILE POD

The missile pod is a pre-loaded launcher for standard short and long range missiles. There is no internal ammunition stored on the aircraft or vehicle. Once the missiles have been fired, the pod must be reloaded by ground crews. The missile pod comes in four sizes; 5, 10, 15, and 20 missiles per pod. The missiles may be fired singularly, in groups, or all at a time. An empty (completely fired) missile pod weighs only one tenth of a loaded pod. The loaded pod weighs as much as the equivalent weapon. The aircraft or vehicle regains lost thrust points when all missiles in a pod have been fired. SRM and LRM may not be mixed in the same pod.

FREEFALL BOMBS

Freefall bombs are powerful explosive weapons used against surface targets. Their size commonly range from the MK 1 (load/damage rating of 5) to the MK 4 (load/damage rating of 25). Larger sizes have been produced in limited numbers.

CAUTION: VTOL's are restricted from using freefall bombs. The low altitude and speeds that VTOL's fly at would cause them to be within the blast radius of the freefall bomb explosion.

MACHINE GUN POD

The machine gun pod is a single self-contained standard machine gun with ammunition for 100 shots. The machine gun pod weighs 1 ton loaded (a load rating of 25 which causes a thrust loss of 0.5 point) and 1/2 ton when all ammunition has been expended (reducing its load rating to 15).

EXTERNAL FUEL (DROP) TANKS

External fuel tanks or drop tanks contain a 1/2 ton of fuel for aircraft and aerospace craft. A 1/2 ton of fuel provides 15 thrust points for conventional aircraft and 8 thrust points for aerospace craft. Drop tanks have a load rating of 15 which reduces the thrust points by 0.3.

Aircraft and vehicles use the fuel in the drop tanks first. When the drop tank is empty, the aircraft or vehicle will regain its lost thrust points.

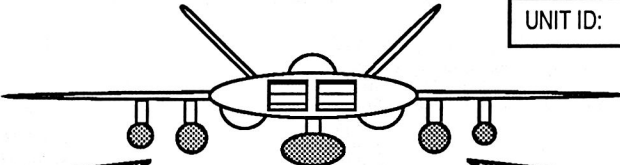
INFERNO BOMBS

The inferno bomb is an extreme and dangerous weapon to all parties of a conflict. At the time of this writing, the inferno bomb has been outlawed from widespread use.

EXTERNAL STORES

LOAD CHART

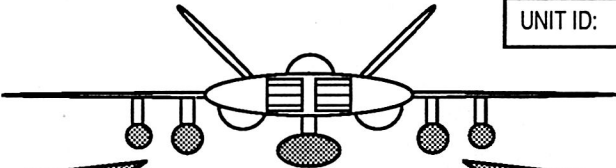
UNIT TYPE:
UNIT ID:



LEFT SIDE PYLONS		CENTER PYLONS		RIGHT SIDE PYLONS	
STORE	LOAD	STORE	LOAD	STORE	LOAD
LOAD SUBTOTAL:		LOAD SUBTOTAL:		LOAD SUBTOTAL:	

UNLOADED MOVEMENT / THRUST POINTS:	MOVEMENT / THRUST POINTS REGAINED FROM EXPENDED STORES
TOTAL STORES LOAD POINTS:	
LOAD POINTS MINUS MOVEMENT / THRUST POINTS:	

UNIT TYPE:
UNIT ID:

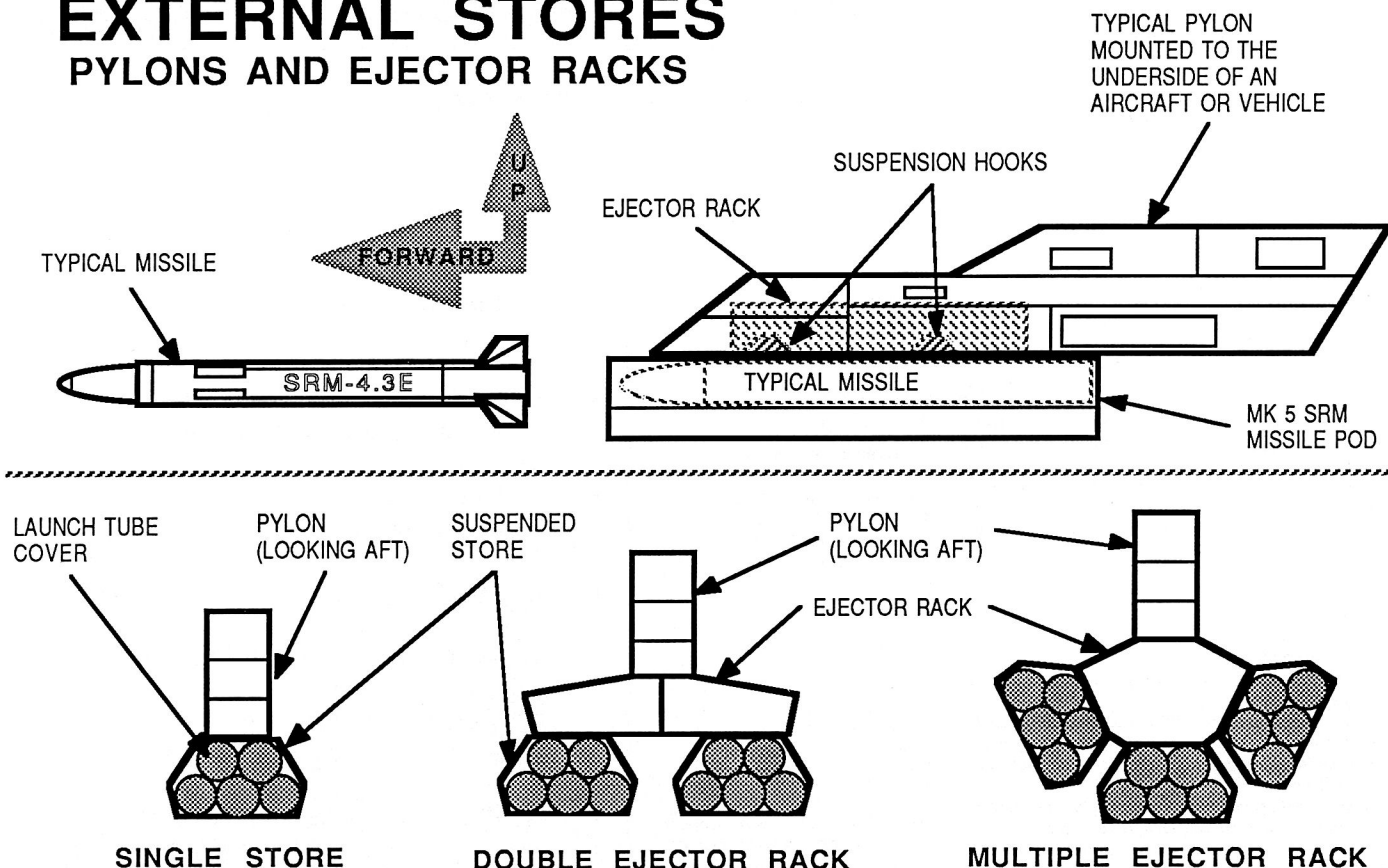


LEFT SIDE PYLONS		CENTER PYLONS		RIGHT SIDE PYLONS	
STORE	LOAD	STORE	LOAD	STORE	LOAD
LOAD SUBTOTAL:		LOAD SUBTOTAL:		LOAD SUBTOTAL:	

UNLOADED MOVEMENT / THRUST POINTS:	MOVEMENT / THRUST POINTS REGAINED FROM EXPENDED STORES
TOTAL STORES LOAD POINTS:	
LOAD POINTS MINUS MOVEMENT / THRUST POINTS:	

EXTERNAL STORES

PYLONS AND EJECTOR RACKS



EXTERNAL STORES CHARTS

THRUST / MOVEMENT LOSS TABLE

RATING	THRUST POINTS LOST	MOVEMENT POINTS LOST
5	0.1	1
10	0.2	2
15	0.3	3
20	0.4	4
25	0.5	5
30	0.6	6
40	0.8	8
50	1.0	10
60	1.2	12
70	1.4	14
80	1.6	16
90	1.8	18
100	2.0	20

MISCELLANEOUS LOAD TABLE

STORE TYPE	LOAD RATING
MACHINE GUN POD AND AMMO	25
1/2 TON FUEL DROP TANK	15

MISSILE POD LOAD TABLE

MISSILE POD TYPE	LOAD RATING
MK 5 (5 SHOT) SRM / LRM POD	5
MK10 (10 SHOT) SRM /LRM POD	5
MK 15 (15 SHOT) SRM / LRM POD	5
MK 20 (20 SHOT) SRM / LRM POD	10

FREEFALL BOMB LOAD TABLE

BOMB TYPE	LOAD RATING
MK 1 - DAMAGE RATING - 5	5
MK2 - DAMAGE RATING - 10	10
MK 3 - DAMAGE RATING - 15	15
MK 4 - DAMAGE RATING - 25	25

CAUTION: VTOL'S MAY NOT CARRY FREEFALL BOMBS.

COMSTAR CENSUS

military
background?
Regular
Mercenary
Unit?

Hanse Davion is
(check one)
A. Savior of the
Inner Sphere
B. Wargmonger
C. Hiding behind his
wife
D. Alive and well
in Liao Space

do you study the
words of the
blessed Blake?
Daily?
Weekly?

only monthly?

To be certain that we are serving the needs of all of our readers, ComStar has asked us to undertake a census of our readers as often as possible. You may submit this census anonymously, however one entrant from each issue will be chosen at random to receive a three issue subscription or extension with BattleTechnology's compliments; this entrant will be chosen from those census answers which include a return address.

- 1) Issue Number (enter "11").
- 2) Are you a subscriber? (1 for yes, 0 for no).
- 3) Male or Female (M or F)
- 4) How old are you?
- 5) How many people will read this copy of BattleTechnology, including you?
- 6) Are you a MechForce member? (If not, and if you want to be, contact the FASA Corporation, Box 6930, Chicago, IL 60680. BattleTechnology and the MechForce are independent of each other.)
- 7) How many years have you played BattleTech? (Including MechWarrior, BattleForce, CityTech, AeroTech, etc.)
- 8) How many hours a month do you spend playing BattleTech?
- 9) How many BattleTech books and modules do you own?
- 10) How many BattleTech miniatures do you own?
- 11) How many others play BattleTech with you?
In order of 5=most, 4= second most, 3=third most, 2= 4th most, 1=least, and 0=I've never played it; rate which you play.
- 12) BattleTech
- 13) BattleForce
- 14) CityTech
- 15) AeroTech
- 16) MechWarrior
- 17) BattleTroops
- On a scale of 0=I hate it to 5=Wonderful, rate the contents of this issue.
- 18) The Useless Mech
- 19) A Soldier's View
- 20) Special Tech Readout: Belfries
- 21) Hiring Hall
- 22) External Stores Article & Sheets
- 23) The Fox Eats Crow
- 24) BattleTechnology News Service
- 25) Tech Readout: Titan
- 26) Repair Bay
- 27) Tech Readout: Malleus
- 28) Blueprint: Malleus
- 29) Scenario: First Strike
- 30) Scenario: Legion of Vega
- 31) Scenario: Deep Six
- 32) MechWarrior Scenario: Open Fire!
- 33) Thornhill Arms
- 34) More Than Warriors: The Dragons They do it for Honor
- 35) The Cover
- 36) Interior Photographs
- 37) Interior Artwork
- 38) This census itself
- On a scale of 0=I hate it to 5=Wonderful, how do you rate the departments of BattleTechnology? (Not all departments are present in every issue.)
- 39) WorldBook
- 40) Hiring Hall
- 41) MechTacs

- 42) Simulator: Scenarios
- 43) Simulator: Tech Readouts
- 44) Simulator: Rules Variants
- 45) More Than Warriors
- 46) Letters to the Editor
- 47) Technical Fact Articles like The Price of Cannon Fodder, Mech Engines compared, etc.
- 48) Action Accounts like The Useless Mech.
- 49) Stories and Tales in the 31st Century like the Cobalt Coil Stories.
- 50) Background material such as Black Luthien, Pleasure Planet, or Solaris the Game World.
- 51) Personal arms data
- 52) Combat arms data
On a Scale of 1-5 where 1=a lot fewer, 2=somewhat less, 3=about the same, 4=more, and 5=a lot more, would you like to see more or less of the following:
- 53) Single Combat Scenarios
- 54) Lance-to-Lance Scenarios
- 55) BattleTroops Scenarios
- 56) AeroTech Scenarios
- 57) CityTech Scenarios
- 58) MechWarrior Scenarios
- 59) Coverage of House Davion
- 60) Coverage of House Kurita
- 61) Coverage of House Steiner
- 62) Coverage of House Liao
- 63) Coverage of House Marik
- 64) Coverage of Periphery and its kingdoms
- 65) Coverage of the Small Inner Sphere States like Rasalhague, St Ives, Andurien Which one (s)
- 66) Coverage of a specific region within a House (like Tamar Pact, Sarna March...) which one?
- 67) Longer fact articles
- 68) Longer Rules Variant pieces
More about you
- 69) Do you consider yourself to be affiliated with a specific House?
1=no, 2=Davion, 3= Kurita, 4= Steiner, 5= Liao, 6= Marik, 7=Mercenary (primary allegiance is to your unit), 8 = Periphery kingdom or regional alliance. If you answered 7 or 8, please specify which one.
1=yes, 0=no
- 70) Do you play other board games?
- 71) Do you play other role-playing games?
- 72) Do you play other science fiction games?
- 73) Do you read science fiction?
- 74) Do you read fantasy?
- 75) Do you read science fact?
- 76) Do you read comics?
- 77) Do you collect art: (write '1') fantasy, (write '2') science fiction, (write '3') comic (write '4') other (write '5') no.
- Would you like to see the following in BattleTechnology?
(The usual scale of 0=no way to 5= do it immediately)
- 78) 'Mech armor diagram/hit sheets to copy on the 'Mechs we print?
- 79) A blueprint in every issue?
- 80) Tech readouts on non-battlemech vehicles?

Incoming

In the next,
action-packed issue
of BattleTechnology...

- Caught in the Mech Flush:
— Hilarious underground classic
- Underwater Combat: Variant Rules
—the Mechs, the Men, the Weapons
- House Marik
— Stability at Last?
- The State of the Periphery Report
- More on BattleMech Engines
- Valley of the Winds
— a Combined Arms Scenario
- Plus other feature articles; regular columns; battle simulations; news from the Periphery and the Inner Sphere...

and much, much more
Don't miss it!!

- 81) Photographic illustration in general
- 82) Artist's illustrations in general
- 83) Convention Calendar
- 84) Book Review column
- 85) Game Review column
- 86) 20th Century Letters to the Editor
- 87) Do you like the entire magazine being in 31st Century terms? Scale of 1-5.
- 88) If we have room for only one, would you rather see Mech sheets or illustrations on new 'Mechs and vehicles. 1= Armor diagrams, 2= illustrations, 3 = a mix.
- Possible goodies we could print, would take serialization over more than one issue: (please rate 1-5).
- 89) Expert BattleForce Variant Rules.
- 90) Succession Wars additions, updated through the Fourth Succession War. (a Variant).
- 91) A variant pathway between BattleTech and BattleForce.
- 92-100) Not used this time.

Is there anything you would like us to add that we don't currently include?

Is there anything you would like us to drop?

Open Fire!

Mc Comb May 19, 3039

Players' Briefing:

As you know, the team has been hired to foment a rebellion here on Mc Comb to aid the Federats in taking this world. Unfortunately for them, the Military Governor has this world under almost complete control; our sources say that the local populace is terrified of him. There will be no popular support until he is out of the picture. We have tried to get him more than once, but he has the devil's own luck in surviving our attempts.

Since our last attempt he has gone into hiding. Our Elint (Electronic Intelligence) has given us an 80% reliability factor that he and his family are hiding out at the Zhang Sho Company Barracks, twenty kilometers outside of the capitol city. The plan is simple: your squad is to penetrate the Barracks by night and eliminate the Governor and his family without attracting the attention of the forty-man garrison.

The information we have on the site is as follows: Zhang Sho Company is a jump infantry company which keeps two platoons at the camp with one platoon on a seven to fourteen day operation at any one time. The outpost itself is protected by a three-meter high wired fence which has heat sensors placed about every twenty meters along the perimeter. The perimeter is also watched by eight guards. The building itself is twelve meters tall, and has two entrances, each of which has a guard. There is a VTOL pad on the roof.

There will be a diversion going on to draw away any local forces which may be near by. There'll be no backup available to the garrison, which should make your job easier. If there are no questions, let's get to work.

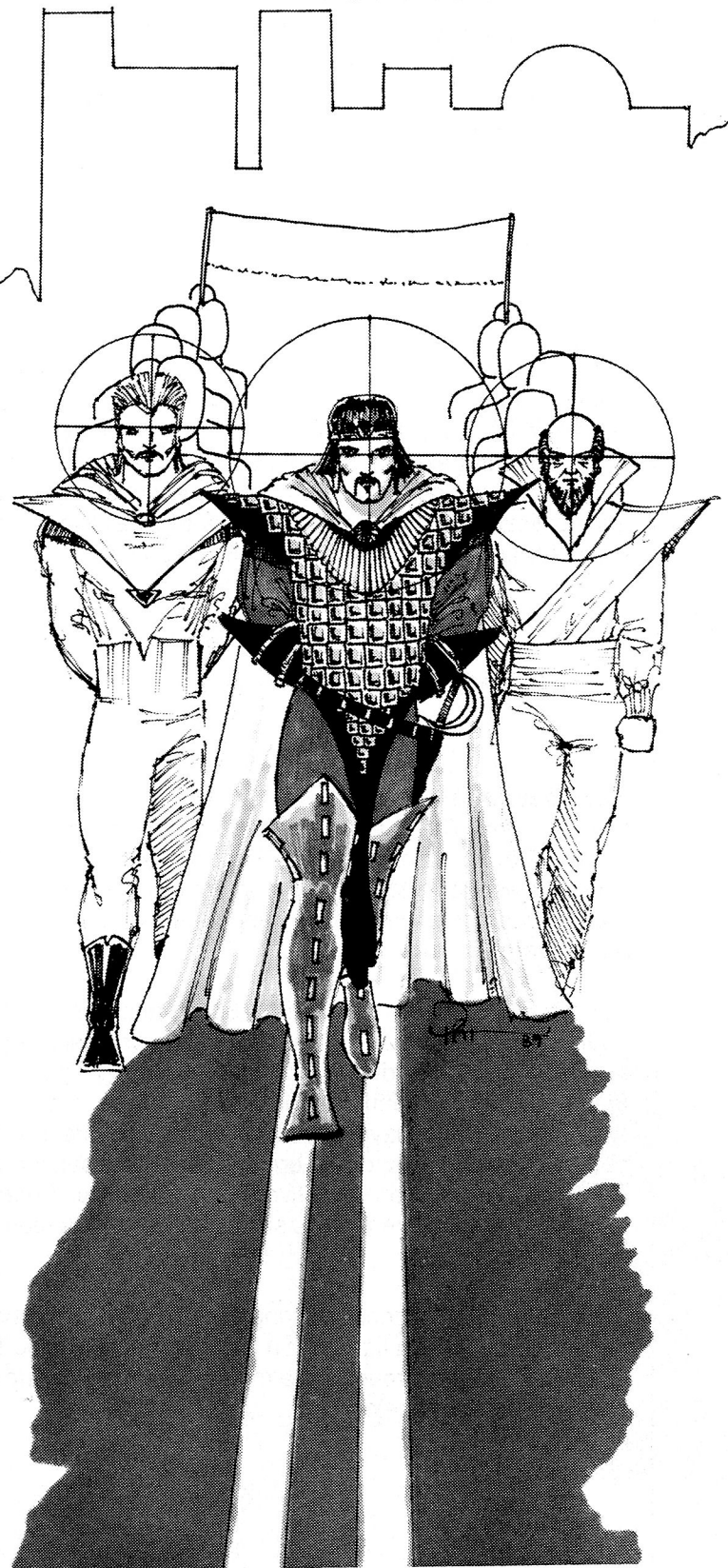
WARNING!

IF YOU ARE NOT THE GAMEMASTER,

DO NOT READ FURTHER!

UNDER PENALTY OF HAVING THE SCENARIO

AND YOUR PLEASURE SPOILED !



We have tried to get him more than once...

Gamemaster Information:

This scenario deals with the opening moves of the War of 3039, and is suited for two to four players, each running a single character. Scouts and soldiers are best for this particular action, with a tech along to deal with any difficult portions like circumventing the sensors.

The team should be equipped as follows: each should have a dagger, light environment suit, personal communicator, med kit, and a laser pistol. Suggested for the group to carry: one level three lock pick set, a pair of rangefinders, and a starlight scope. At gamemaster discretion, here are two new weapons which may be included if desired.

Solstar Air Pistol

This is best used in places where you want a quiet shot, to knock out or kill personnel in such a way that the rest of the area is not alerted to attack. Its disadvantage is that it is only useful at ranges of less than ten meters. It fires a chemical dart which injects various toxic substances when it hits its target. Once the injection is done, the dart dissolves; without a minute examination it cannot be detected that the opponent has actually been shot. The Solstar's darts can penetrate through a light environment suit.

Solstar Air Pistol

Type: Air Gun

Cost: 80 C-bills

Number of Shots: 6

Reload Cost: 20 C-bills plus toxin costs

Skill Class: Pistol

Damage: See below

Range in Hexes

MechWarrior	BattleTroops
-------------	--------------

Short	1-2	2-7
-------	-----	-----

Medium	3-4	
--------	-----	--

Long:	5	8-10
-------	---	------

Time to reload: 1 Turn

Game Use: Damage is dependent upon toxin used; the dart itself does only 1 pt of damage. Sample Toxin Costs: Knock-out = 10 C-bills, Cyanide = 130 C-bills, Nicotin = 75 C-bills. For toxin strikes, affected character should roll versus his BODY to stay conscious/alive.

Ice Grenade:

This grenade creates a cloud of cold vapor to mask the infrared signature of humans. While it is a useful weapon for guerrilla operations, it does no damage whatsoever. It requires no DEX roll if set off while handheld; if it is thrown, roll as a standard grenade throw. Affects a circular area 4 meters in diameter. They come in standard grenade sizes,

but cost three times the normal grenade price.

Game Use: The cold vapors are not noticeable to the human eye. I/R signatures are effectively masked. The sensor operator covering the area gets a roll against his LEARN at -2 to notice that the area is colder than the rest of his sensors. (Remember, he is scanning for heat.) The vapors last for 2-7 rounds (1D6+1). The length is rolled by the gamemaster; the players should not know how long the screen will last.

Conclusion: If the party succeeds in this mission, the Federated Commonwealth is able to capture Mc Comb two weeks ahead of schedule. The party receives hazard pay equivalent to an elite scout's for successful completion of goals. Give out experience points by the standard method. The seven year old daughter gives your players an ethical and political dilemma. If they find a creative way to solve this without killing her, give extra experience points.

Site Description:

General Area: The base has been placed in an area of light woods. Around the external perimeter, the woods have been cleared away for a total of 300 meters to create a free fire zone. (If gamemaster wishes, random encounters may be added here.)

Perimeter: The fence is 40 m by 50 m, and is barbed. In addition to this, there are pylons atop the fence, one every 10 m. The players may deduce that the pylons signify that the fence is electrified, and may be set either to stun or to kill. (gamemaster note: have players who touch it make a BODY saving roll at -2 or be knocked unconscious). The sensors are both heat and motion sensitive. (See *Technical Readout 3026* for uses.) The rest of the site description is as found in the briefing.

The Barracks: The doors are fingerprint coded to the base personnel. PCs must figure out a way in or pick the lock. The floors are wooden throughout, although walls, ceiling, etc are hardened ferroconcrete.

map of site on facing page

Non-Player Character Statistics:

Governor

BODY: 6 Skills: Leadership 4, Diplomacy 4,
DEX: 8 Interrogation 3, Brawling 5, Bow/Blade 5,
LRN: 8 Drive 4, Computer 2
CHA: 9

He will reach for his Katana on being awakened.

Governor's Wife:

BODY: 4 Skills: Diplomacy 3, Pistol 1
DEX: 7 Land Management 4
LRN: 6
CHA: 8

She keeps a pistol near the bed; can reach it in two turns.

Base Commander

BODY: 8 Skills: Leadership 3, Pistol 2
DEX: 8 Brawling 4, Rifle 3
LRN: 9 Rogue 2, Diplomacy 1
CHA: 8 Bow/Blade 1

He has both pistol and sword at hand.

Guard Stats: Gamemaster may choose to vary these.

BODY: 8 Skills: Brawling 2, Rifle 3
DEX: 8 Medical/First Aid 1, Rogue 2
LRN: 9
CHA: 5

Each soldier has an SMG, 3 clips of ammo, a personal communicator, a light environment suit, a dagger, and a first aid kit. The sleeping men are not wearing their light environmental suits; if awakened before the PC's enter the Barracks, they will take two turns to put on their gear.

Governor's Son:

BODY: 7 No relevant skills
DEX: 6
LRN: 6
CHA: 5

Governor's Daughter

BODY: 4 No relevant skills
DEX: 5
LRN: 6
CHA: 6

Map of site

Key to map:

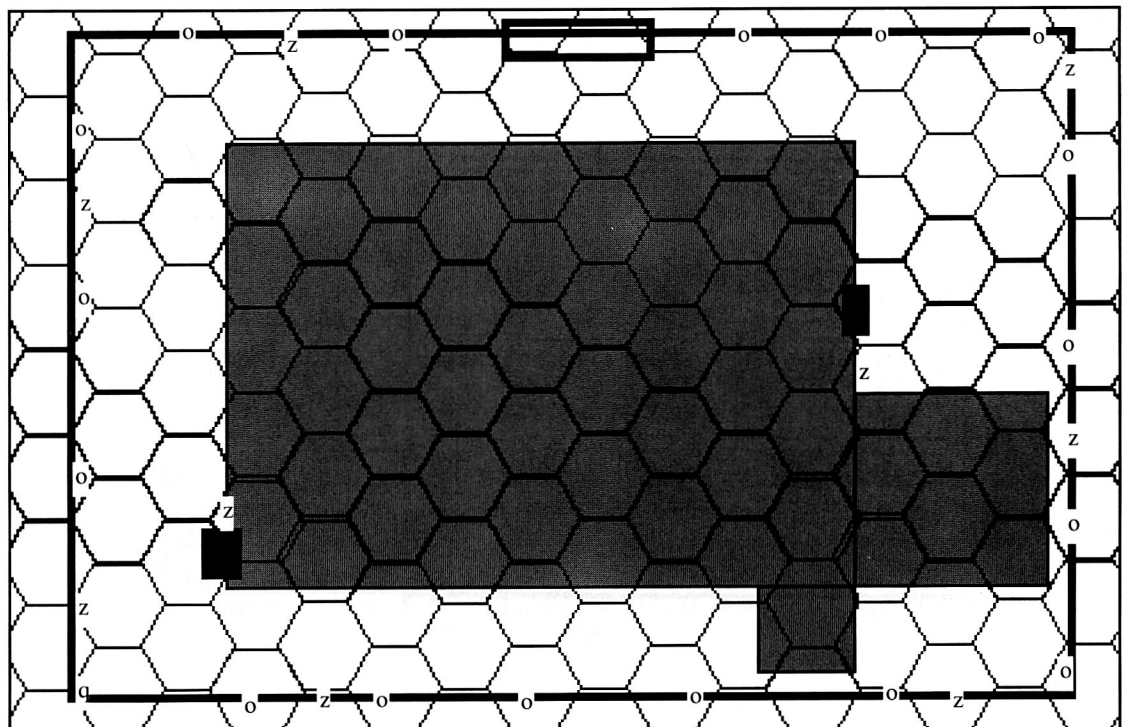
each hex = 4 meters

o = I/R sensor

z = Motion sensor

= electronically locked door

— = gate



Level One

Room 1 is the monitor room for the base. There is always one person on duty here watching the monitors for the heat/motion sensors on the perimeter and the cameras observing the hallways on level 2. For the operator to note a particular action (the perimeter being breached, movement on the second floor), he must make an LEARN saving roll at -2. (Yes, this is cumulative with the ice grenade -2; if the device is used he rolls at -4).

Room 2 is a kitchen. There is an industrial dishwasher, a lot of counter space, a huge freezer (large enough to fit four normal sized human beings), a large grill and 8-burner stovetop, and the rest of the paraphernalia that belongs in a kitchen.

Room 3 is the barracks. There are 22 double bunkbeds here. A table which could seat 20 men is on one side of the room. There is an elevator in the corner which will go to the second floor. Needless to say, there are also 33 sleeping soldiers here. Characters must make stealth rolls at this point to insure that they do not awaken the guards. (gamemaster may wish to place a modifier on this.) The elevator has been sound-proofed; there is no chance that it will awaken the guards. Make an LRN roll at +4 to recognize this soundproofing.

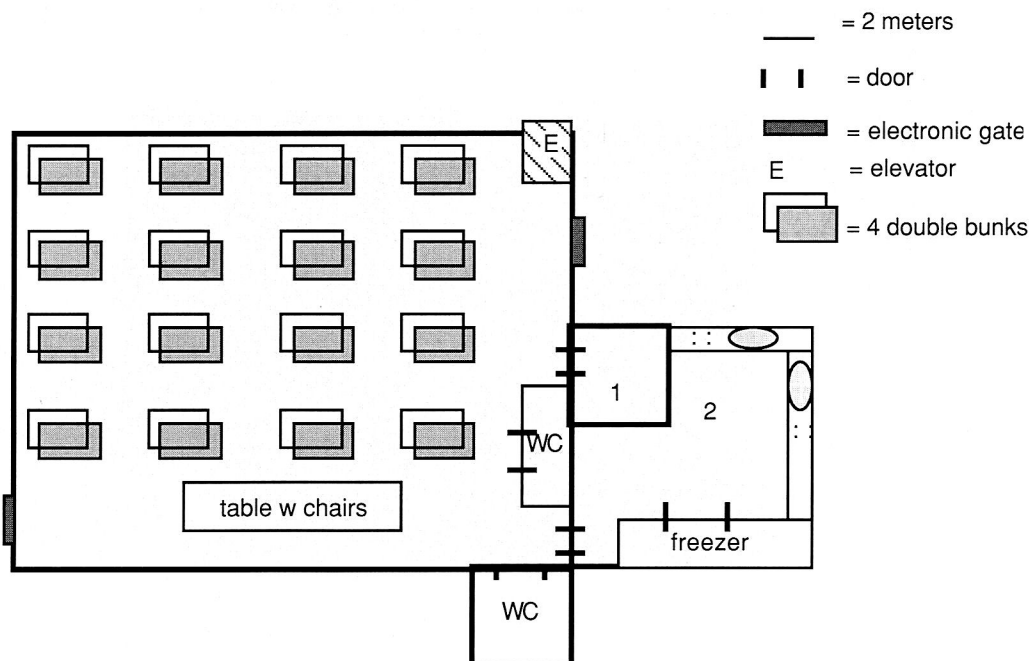
Level Two

Hallways: At the end of each hallway is a camera. These are monitored for suspicious movement in the hallways. If the players have left the monitor room untouched, roll each turn they are in the hallways at -2 to see if the party is noticed

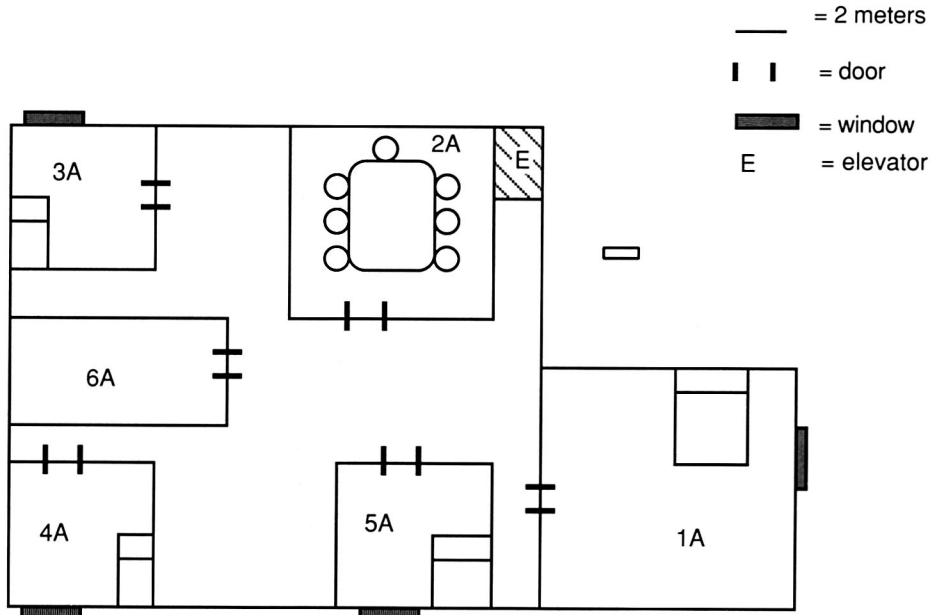
Room 1A is the governor's bedroom. There is a king-sized bed, two closets, a desk, and a small window. The room is tastefully decorated with wall hangings of an oriental design; the carpet has the Kurita Dragon in the center of the room. Beside the bed is a sword stand on which is a katana. If the party has not alerted anybody up to this point, the governor and his wife will be found asleep in their bed. When anybody actually enters the room, both of them will awaken. The floor under the carpet is a "nightingale" floor, designed to creak loudly to warn against intruders. If a player suspects this, has some Kurita background, and makes a stealth roll at -4, gamemaster may allow him to approach the bed undetected. If he is not specifically trying to avoid such a floor, do not allow the roll

continued next page

LEVEL ONE



LEVEL TWO



Room 2A is the office from which the governor has been administrating this world. There are several chairs around a large table. Along the walls are books (if examined, they fall primarily into three categories: Military theory & practice, philosophy, and political science). Some of the books are valuable, dating back to the Star League, and even earlier. There are scroll cases as well, containing some of the governor's most prized ancient treasures. The only one the players have a chance of recognizing is Musashi's *Book of Five Rings*. It will take 20 minutes of examining and an LRN roll at -3 to do so. This is a mid-twenty second century copy by the master Odo Nakamura, worth easily 15000 C-bills to a collector.

Room 3A is the room of the governor's oldest son. He is sixteen. He will not awaken unless somebody shakes him or makes a noise in his room. There is a single bed, a desk and a closet. The room is decorated with many pictures of aerospace fighters, some carefully painted, some photographs, some cut out of magazines, etc. (If one of the PCs makes an LRN saving roll at -4, he will notice a *recent* photograph of a Star League style aerospace fighter. Gamemaster: *if* a

player notices this *and if* he remembers to report it in debriefing, he has just given the Federated Commonwealth which may change the course of the war. Reflect this with experience points.)

Room 4A is the room of the governor's daughter, seven years old. The room has a child-sized bed, a desk, a small easel and a closet. There is an unfinished picture of a monastery on the easel which shows a great deal of talent. On the desk are several examples of origami. Examining PC's will notice origami of Mechs, including a Grand Dragon, and a Mech of unfamiliar design.

Room 5A is the Company Commander's room. If the alert has not been given, he will be found. He is awake, praying aloud before a portable altar. If the PCs listen before they enter, they will hear that he is praying that he'll be able to repel the invaders. He sounds desperate. The room is sparsely furnished; futon bed, desk and closet. There is no ornamentation of any sort.

Room 6A is set up as a chapel. It is unoccupied.

Technical Readout

Behemoth / Leviathan Belfries

Overview:

During the early months of the Second Succession War, forces from the Draconis Combine penetrated deep into the Federated Suns, eventually threatening the capital of New Avalon itself. As units of House Davion were pushed back, desperate calls were sent to Davion BattleMech and tank manufacturers. A new type of wheeled ground vehicle was needed, capable of offering stiff resistance in urban areas against advancing combined BattleMech-infantry teams. Davion High Command established several design criteria, and two rivalling firms hurriedly developed prototypes in a competitive bid. After a hasty evaluation, testing was curtailed and both vehicles entered immediate production.

Different from any wheeled vehicle built before, the Behemoth and the Leviathan received a new designation: mobile Anti-Infantry Urban Assault Vehicle, officially abbreviated to 'MAUVE', but known more informally as 'the belfry'. This term, unique in recent history, was rediscovered from medieval Terran Europe, where large mobile siege towers called belfries were used for attacking fixed fortifications. This newer type of belfry was considerably more powerful; individual vehicles were capable of engaging and often defeating entire lances of light Mechs, or entire companies of conventional infantry.

Expensive to build as to maintain, the Leviathan and Behemoth never entered large-scale production. In fact, only some 440 Leviathans and 360 Behemoths were built during the entire production period from 2795 through 2805. By that time, the Second Succession War's battlefield conditions had changed; the construction of additional belfries was no longer a Davion priority. Neither model ever returned to production, though an estimated 125 Leviathans or Behemoths still remain on active service with Davion House Units stationed in crucial urban areas.

It is true that Leviathans and Behemoths are no longer commonly seen. Rumor has it that Coordinator Takashi Kurita has offered a sizable contract bonus to any mercenary unit that can capture and return a functional Leviathan or Behemoth to the Draconis Combine. To date, it is worth noting, no one has been able to collect. Another rumor describes the presence of a single Behemoth in the service of

the Circinus Federation, though it has been impossible to confirm this, or to determine how the vehicle might have gotten there.

Capabilities:

For two vehicles built under identical specification requirements, the Leviathan and Behemoth are remarkably different. Both vehicles have a crew of six (the Leviathan has a commander/observer, driver/radio operator, turret gunner, two loaders, and a hull gunner; the Behemoth has a commander/observer, a driver/radio operator, a turret gunner, a loader, and two hull gunners), but the similarities end there. Their appearance is surprisingly dissimilar (due in part to weapons placement), and the only major item of equipment used on both vehicles is the SperryBrowning machine gun, commonly found both on BattleMechs and on other ground vehicles.

At the time of their construction, both manufacturers already had long histories in BattleMech development as spirited rivals within the Federated Suns. Corean Enterprises had built the Valkyrie, Centurion, and Trebuchet, while the Enforcer and Dervish were designs of Achernar BattleMechs. These respective track records enabled both companies to borrow components that had been battle-tested before. As a result, numerous BattleMech systems were installed into the new ground vehicles. For this reason, even though there was little time for a thorough evaluation, the Leviathan and the Behemoth could be pressed into quick service. To everyone's pleasant surprise, almost everything worked.

The Leviathan is somewhat similar in appearance (though it is better armed) to a wheeled version of the sleek-looking Demolisher heavy tank. The Leviathan has a smaller turret. In fact, the turret design is too small for the two Luxor DDX-5 Autocannon mounted in it, and the dangerously cramped, overheated surroundings make combat duty miserable for the turret gunner. It is not uncommon for a semi-conscious gunner to be covered with scrapes and bruises, and even to have a dislocation or two when he is hauled out of his belfry after a skirmish. *In the BattleTech Simulator*

Game, whenever either AC/20 is fired, on a 2D6 roll of 11 or 12, the turret gunner takes 1 point of damage.

The Leenex engine has also been a sore spot on the Leviathan, and the drive mechanism simply wears out sooner than design specifications warrant. Though capable of moving the massive vehicle at slow speeds, it requires fifty percent more repair and maintenance time than its rival. Moreover, the engine is mounted in an awkward location, making such work that much more difficult.

Fortunately, there have been very few problems with any weapon system, and the massive StarGuard armor is among the best found anywhere in the Inner Sphere. (The armor requires extra preventative maintenance time; no plus without a minus!) At one time, all Leviathan-mounted Angst Light Lasers were specially equipped with an experimental advanced targeting sight - *1 bonus modifier To Hit*, but most were scavenged or destroyed over the centuries; only a handful remain. An ample supply of ammunition and missile reloads guarantees that the Leviathan will remain in the fight as long as its crew wants. The Corean TransBand-J9 communications and the B-Tech Targeting and Tracking systems have worked virtually without flaw.

In contrast, the high-profiled, ungainly Behemoth resemble a cross between a Terran porcupine and an armadillo. Thirteen different weapon systems comprising five types make up the Behemoth's bristling offensive payload, ranging in size from six hull-mounted SperryBrowning machine guns to the turret-mounted Federated AC-Plus Autocannon. It is exactly this versatility in weapon selection, in conjunction with the Federated Hunter Mk II tracking Computer, that lie at the root of the Behemoth's tactical strengths and weaknesses.

The Hunter Mk II, also used on the Dervish, was never designed to handle simultaneously all tracking and data processing requirements for a vehicle with 13 weapons. For this reason, the system is prone to overloading, which will cause the computer (and weapons) to shut down until the flow of data has been reduced to manageable proportions. On rare occasions, this has proven disastrous, but little can be done to repair the system permanently.

LVN-1X Leviathan Belfry

Mass:	80.0 tons
Chassis:	Corean Model XLVT-2
Movement Type:	Wheeled
Power Plant:	Leenex 60
Cruising Speed:	16.2 kph
Flank Speed:	28.4 kph
Armor:	StarGuard IV
Armament:	2 Luxor DDX-5 Heavy Autocannon 1 Thunderstroke SRM-6 Missile System 2 Angst L-type Light Lasers 4 SperryBrowning Machine Guns
Manufacturer:	Corean Enterprises
Communications System:	Corean TransBand-J 9
Targeting and Tracking System:	Corean B-Tech

Type:	LVN-1X Leviathan	Tons:
Movement Type:	Wheeled	
Tonnage:	80 Tons	80.0
Cruise Speed:	1	
Flank Speed:	1	
Engine:	Rating 60 Type: Fusion	2.25
Control:		4.0
Lift Equipment:		0.0
Power Amplifier:		0.0
Heat Sinks:	12	2.0
Internal Structure:		8.0
Turret:		2.75
Armor:	304	19.0
	<i>Location</i>	<i>Points</i>
	Front	80
	Lt/Rt Side	60 / 60
	Back	44
	Turret	60

Weapons and Ammo:	<i>Type</i>	<i>Facing</i>	
	AC/20	Turret	14.0
	AC/20	Turret	14.0
	Ammo (AC) 20	Body	4.0
	SRM 6	Front	3.0
	Ammo (SRM) 45	Front	3.0
	Machine Gun	Front	0.5
	Machine Gun	Lt Side	0.5
	Machine Gun	Rt Side	0.5
	Ammo (MG) 200	Body	1.0
	Small Laser	Rear	0.5
	Small Laser	Rear	0.5

Fortunately, the Behemoth rarely has to fire large salvos at one time. At least the Achernar Electronics HID-30 communications system operates perfectly.

During any combat round in which eight or more weapons are to be fired, the exact number of weapons must be declared before any To-Hit rolls are made. Roll 2 D6. If this roll is greater than or equal to the number of weapons to be fired, all weapons may be fired. If the roll is less than the number of weapons, no weapons may be fired in that round, but the crew may try again in the next round.

Between battles, a technician can insert one or more override circuits into the tracking computer. For every override, the crew can fire eight or more weapons at one time without making a special roll, as described above. The override circuit is then burnt and must be replaced. It takes 24 hours divided by the Tech's skill level to insert a single override circuit.

Though one might think it is slightly undersized, the Hermes 140 engine has been a reliable workhorse, meeting every power requirement and fulfilling every expectation made of it. With a flank speed of over 35 kph, the Behemoth can pursue almost any kind of infantry without falling behind. Because of a minor design flaw, the Dorwinion Special NBM/80 chassis makes the Behemoth somewhat top-heavy. However, due to its relatively slow speed, there has never been any report of a Behemoth rolling over as a result of its high-centered weight distribution. (It was never meant to be a hill-climber anyway).

The StarShield armor has also met the test of combat without trouble. The earliest Behemoths were equipped with a poorer grade of armor which had an unpleasant tendency to flake off in chunks; it was immediately replaced. All known Behemoths were refitted long ago. The Behemoth also has excellent side-and-rear fire capabilities, due in great part to two Federated 6-shot SRM systems, plus lasers and machine guns. This is especially useful when defending against swarming infantry attacks. Indeed, all weapon systems carried aboard the Behemoth are reasonable trouble-free; this is just as well, because repairing them takes three times as long as normal, due to the extra time required in removing and re-installing the systems.

Battle History:

These vehicles excel at urban anti-infantry defense, with or without friendly air or ground support. Though they were occasionally forced to engage medium and even a few heavy BattleMechs, their most common opponent consisted of light Mechs and mechanized and/or foot infantry. Capable of enormous firepower at short ranges, one Leviathan could theoretically demolish up to four entire three-platoon infantry companies at 30 meters in the space of one minute, while suffering only moderate damage to the unit's external armor.

The Behemoth, a somewhat faster but less powerfully-armed vehicle, was nearly as effective.

The tactical method of deploying Belfries was in some ways as unusual as the design. As enemy forces advanced toward urban areas, friendly BattleMechs and other forces would fight wherever needed. In contrast, the Leviathans and Behemoths would be held in reserve behind the threatened cities. When infantry were confirmed to be on their way, the Belfries would slowly move into position as a last line of defense. Slower than anything except foot infantry, the Belfries nevertheless made a good account of themselves as they merely parked at their pre-designated checkpoints and slugged it out with anything that moved. Counting on sheer thick-skinned endurance, the Belfries usually won out by forcing the enemy infantry to retreat and regroup. This respite generally permitted defenders to bring in other reinforcements, often BattleMechs or more conventional armored platoons.

The Belfries' ability to produce a voluminous hail of projectile, missile, and beam fire also made them popular as a semi-mobile anti-aircraft battery. An entire lance of these vehicles would often be stationed around crucial headquarters and BattleMech repair facilities, just in case the opposition attempted a low-altitude attack. A Leviathan lance has driven off a flight of Kurita Aerospace Fighters on more than one occasion in just this way.

Due to their prohibitively slow speed, however, the Leviathan and Behemoth were unable to participate in most offensive operations. By the time they reached their objective, the defenders would have retreated or out-maneuvered the sluggish vehicles. In one instance, the defenders had returned to their DropShip and had actually left the planet before the belfries finally got into attack position! The Belfries were also vulnerable to long-range missile fire from a variety of sources. In such a situation, the vehicles would withdraw at maximum speed (!), allowing more agile units to soften up the opposition, before turning around and proceeding onward.

Variants:

There is a kind of superstition among engineers regarding these vehicles that is unusual even among BattleMechs. Some believe it is linked to the archaic class names, while others are simply in awe of such large ground vehicles. In any event, due to their scarcity and great value, exceedingly few technicians want to have anything more to do with these belfries than they absolutely have to, in fear that unnecessary tinkering may somehow damage the vehicle. In addition, they were among the most effective vehicles of their time and little has changed in that regard. Thus, no variants are known to exist for either the Behemoth or the Leviathan.

Notable Vehicles and Pilots:

Lieutenant Bozo 'Bruiser' Cuinard

During the First Succession War, Lt Cuinard commanded a newly-formed Leviathan anti-aircraft lance in a regiment of the Syrtis Fusiliers. A good-natured bear of a man, 'Bruiser' got his nickname from starting out as a Leviathan turret gunner. Responsible for protecting the Fusiliers regimental headquarters on Robinson, Cuinard's combat force was the only one at hand when a lance of Kurita Slayer fighters came in on a strafing run. The Slayers, unfamiliar with the Leviathan, pressed their attack. Ordering his units to hold fire until the fighters made final approach, Cuinard then cut loose with all units. Two Slayers were shot down immediately and a third was crippled. Cuinard's own Leviathan, the Pentacle of Avalon, suffered a direct hit from a 60-point bomb, but no crew fatalities were suffered; the headquarters were not touched. Cuinard received a decoration and a field promotion for his conduct under fire.

Sergeant Loki VanDerDroch

Loki, on temporary assignment to the Davion Household Guard, currently commands a Behemoth garrisoned at the Royal Court on New Avalon. His vehicle, the *Elefant Eins*, has not seen combat for nearly a century. His Behemoth did not manage to arrive at the scene of the NAIS raid in 3029 until combat was long over. He himself has been out of action for about two years and is now almost over-anxious to return to combat. Previously a seasoned Vedette commander with 14 vehicle kills to his credit, he expects to be rotated with the Behemoth to a garrison/pacification unit on the Kurita frontier. He is very excited to see how well his new command will fare against a Kurita light BattleMech. Loki recently supervised the repainting of the *Elefant* to a dull grey, in anticipation of painting some kill marks on its turret. (This was written in August 3039; House Davion's plans may have changed since then, for Loki as in many other ways!)

BMH-1T Behemoth Belfry

Mass:	80.0 tons
Chassis:	Dorwinion Special NBM / 80
Movement Type:	Wheeled
Power Plant:	Hermes 140
Cruising Speed:	26.3 kph
Flank Speed:	37.3 kph
Armor:	StarShield
Armament:	1 Federated AC-Plus Autocannon 2 Federated 6-Shot SRM Missile Systems 3 Chiscomp 32 Small Lasers 6 SperryBrowning Machine Guns 1 Zippo Mark IX Flamer
Manufacturer:	Achernar BattleMechs, Ground Vehicle Division
Communications System:	Achernar Electronics HID-30
Targeting and Tracking System:	Federated Hunter Mk II

Type:	BMH-1T Behemoth	Tons:
Movement Type:	Wheeled	
Tonnage	80 Tons	80.0
Cruise Speed:	2	
Flank Speed:	3	
Engine:	Rating 140	7.5
	Type Fusion	
Control:		4.0
Lift Equipment:		0.0
Power Amplifier:		0.0
Heat Sinks:	13	3.0
Internal Structure:		8.0
Turret:		2.0
Armor:	300	19.0

Location Points

Front	80
Lt/Rt Side	60 / 60
Back	40
Turret	60

Weapons and Ammo:

Type	Facing	Tons
AC/20	Turret	14.0
Ammo (AC) 30	Turret	6.0
SRM 6	Lt Side	3.0
Ammo (SRM)30	Lt Side	2.0
SRM 6	Rt Side	3.0
Ammo (SRM) 30	Rt Side	2.0
Machine Gun	Front	0.5
Machine Gun	Front	0.5
Machine Gun	Rt Side	0.5
Machine Gun	Rt Side	0.5
Machine Gun	Lt Side	0.5
Machine Gun	Lt Side	0.5
Ammo (MG) 200	Body	1.0
Small Laser	Lt Side	0.5
Small Laser	Rear	0.5
Flamer	Rear	0.5

BattleTech Simulator:

Low Gravity Combat

Optional Rules Variant 305-A BattleMech Combat on Low-Gravity Worlds

NOTE: See also *BattleMech Combat in Vacuum*, in BattleTechnology # 0103. That article discusses vacuum as an insulator, gravity questions, cockpit depressurization rules, and other things which relate directly to conditions on a smaller world. We have included a few of the rules and topics mentioned in this article, and in the Ranged Combat article in the same issue as a jumping-off point for further rules variants. Thank you to William H Keith, Jr, our first editor, who wrote those rules. You may wish also to see the discussion of recoil in freefall in *Away Borders*, by Harrison Coulter, BattleTechnology #10.

As always, rules variants are not laws. They are for fun, for expanding the simulator game to approximate special conditions. If you differ with a rule or decision here, write in and tell us about it. Include your version. You might just be right, in which case, we'll print it. Be aware that some complex factors have been averaged together for ease of play.

Smaller worlds have lesser gravities. You weigh less. Your Mech weighs less. Your bullets and your missiles weigh less. Your mass, though, is the same. Your inertia (your difficulty in changing from rest to motion, turning, or stopping) is the same. Remember: you can move farther or faster, but it's just as hard to slow down.

* The weight (not mass) of a Mech, man, vehicle, piece of equipment, or object used as a club can be found by multiplying the world's surface gravity by the object's weight. A 75 ton Marauder on a world with a surface gravity of .10 weighs 7.5 tons.

* BattleMechs may run faster than normal on lower gravity worlds. For every full .2 Gs under 1 Gravity, a Mech may run one additional hex. A Hunchback on a world with .12 surface gravity may run 10 hexes instead of its usual 6. For clarity, we'll be referring to an Extended Run, the difference between your normal running movement and the expanded movement in low-G. The Extended Run of the Hunchback is 4, the difference between its regular run and its possible low-G movement. For ground vehicles and for infantry, the same; add one factor to the movement rate for each .2 G below 1.

* Piloting Skill Rolls are required for each use of the

extended run. A Piloting Skill Roll is also required for each time a Mech attempts to stop without slowing to a walk for one turn first. If he attempts to change facing while running, an additional Piloting Skill Roll is needed. There is a Skill Roll Modifier of +1 added for each two hexes of Extended Run Range. (In this case, you must round up). This is cumulative with the usual Skill Roll Modifiers for running.

*A jump-capable Mech may also jump farther. Call this the Extended Jump Range. (A LAM moves farther too.) For every full .1 Gs under 1 G, you may add one hex more to your Extended Jump. A Phoenix Hawk, with its normal Jump MP of 6 could add an Extended Jump of 8 more hexes, for a total of 14 hexes. No Piloting Skill Roll is needed for the *first* turn in which this is done. If the world's gravity is between .25 G and .6 G, and the margin by which you fail the roll is greater than 5, you will perform a leap as described in **Escape Velocity**. If the world's gravity is .2 G or under, see **Extended Range Failure Chart** for further movement.

Escape Velocity

On very small worlds like moons, planetoids, or asteroids, vehicles and people must face the problem of escape velocity. Simply put: if you go too far too fast, you have a chance of running or jumping off of the planet entirely! On worlds with a surface gravity of .2 G or less, a Mech or vehicle must make an additional Piloting Skill Roll, and a person must make a Dex Skill Roll, for each two turns in a row run or jumped using Extended Range. If the roll is failed by 4 or less on a .2 gravity world, the Mech will spend a turn in mid-air, having leapt up like an inadvertent ballet dancer. It must then make another Piloting Skill Roll to avoid taking fall damage (at the reduced weight mentioned before). While in the air (or suspended above the ground, in the case of a world with no atmosphere), the pilot's attention is assumed to be on his piloting. He may not fire. In the case of a vehicle with a trained gunner, or of a Mech with two men like a Battlemaster, the non-pilot may fire. It is at a Skill Roll Modifier of 4, as the vehicle will be wobbling crazily, so it isn't recommended. Still, it may be done.

If the Skill Roll is failed, you have achieved escape velocity. Congratulations, especially if you are not jump-capable. Jump-capable Mechs and LAMs *which have taken no jump jet or conversion equipment damage*, make two Piloting Skill Rolls and take two turns to return to the ground, during which you may not fire. If you have taken such damage, or if you manage to have a heat shutdown during this time, continue as follows, but a LAM has six turns before it's out of the game; a jump-capable Mech has four instead of three. These pilots are more likely to be trained in low-G maneuvers.

Combining and averaging a number of factors for

Uncorrected:

If you rolled this outcome, you will move parallel to the ground in the direction in which you were last headed. If this is uncorrected, you will disappear over the horizon. If planetary radius is over 3 kilometers, this is effectively the end of the game for you.

Extended Range Failure Chart

(round down to the nearest .05 G)

Gravity	Missed by	Effect	Missed By	Effect	Missed By	Effect
.2	2-5	leap	6-8	OV	9+	EV
.15	2-4	leap	5-7	OV	8+	EV
.1	2-3	leap	4-6	OV	7+	EV
.5	2	leap	3-5	OV	6+	EV
below	2	leap	3-4	OV	5+	EV

OV= See Orbital Velocity Rules EV= See Escape Velocity Rules

simplicity of play, the rule is: if a planet has an atmosphere, you now have three turns until you pass beyond it. Infantry have 6 turns. During the last one of these turns, the atmosphere is thinned to half. If you have an ICE engine, or if you're piloting a hovercraft, when you past the atmosphere, you've just lost all power. (If the planet has no atmosphere, of course, you had none to begin with.) For that last turn, you have half power. After that, cockpit hits or any breach of an environment suit can mean instant destruction.

You have that same number of turns until you escape the planet's gravitational pull.

On each of those turns a Mech may make a Piloting Skill Roll, (infantry a Dex Skill Roll), both at a Skill Modifier of 2. If a MechWarrior has space training (Gamemaster discretion), this modifier does not apply to him. A vehicle is at a disadvantage here; it has less variety of movement possible. It has a Skill Modifier of 4. (Skill Modifier: subtract from BattleTech, add to MechWarrior).

If the Skill Roll is made, your troubles are still not over. Make another Skill Roll, this time with a favorable modifier of 4 (ADD to BattleTech, SUBTRACT from MechWarrior). If you miss, see the rule on Orbital Velocity. If you make it, see Returning to Ground (LAMS, jump-capable Mechs, and flight-capable vehicles may then maneuver normally).

If the stipulated number of Skill Rolls are all missed, you escape the planet's gravity and continue into space. It will take a long time for you to slow down; there is no atmospheric friction to slow you now. You're out of the game. Gamemaster: if you have a campaign going, you must decide factors like direction of movement and length of time to rescue.

* Orbital Velocity

A moon does not move away from a planet because its outward movement is balanced by the planet's gravitational pull. You too have the chance to become the satellite of an uninspiring piece of rock.

Distance to the horizon

$d = \text{square root of } (r+h) \text{ squared} - r \text{ squared.}$

where d = distance to horizon, r = radius of the planet, and h = height of Mech or observer.

If somebody shoots at you during this involuntary retreat, line of sight is important.

For simulator purposes, you are out of the game once you have passed a certain limiting distance. Measure the longer dimension of the board you are playing on. Triple it. Keep track on a piece of scratch paper how far you have moved each turn. When you have gone that triple distance, you are beyond return.

UNLESS the planetary radius is under 3 kilometers. In that case, you will return, at a velocity double that of your extended range, on the opposite side of the board in a random location, in 5-15 (2 d6 plus 3) turns. Sometimes this is relevant, so keep track. You'll still have to make a two Piloting Skill Rolls, one to slow down, and one to regain control, when you arrive again. Infantry, it's going to take you 10-20 turns (2 d6 plus 8).

To Correct: Make your relevant Skill Roll with a Skill Modifier of 2. Wait one turn. Then make another Skill Roll to land without damage. If you miss, remember that your damage is at the low-G weight. You may continue to attempt correction until you have passed that limiting distance.

* Returning to Ground

It takes as long to return to the ground as it did to leave it. You may choose to accelerate toward the ground, if you have jump jets, etc. If you fail your Skill Roll to land and you have not accelerated, you take damage for your low-G weight. If you have accelerated into your Extended Range, you will take damage at your normal weight. (If you have weapons which cause recoil, you may use that recoil to accelerate by firing the weapons. You have a Skill Modifier of 4 on your Gunnery Skill to do this accurately. The exact amount which this affects your movement must be discussed

Extended Range Weapon Miss Chart

(round down to the nearest .05 G)

Gravity	Missed by	Effect	Missed By	Effect	Missed By	Effect
.2	2-6	none	7-9	OV	10+	EV
.15	2-5	none	6-8	OV	9+	EV
.1	2-4	none	5-8	OV	9+	EV
.5	2-3	none	4-7	OV	8+	EV
below	2	none	3-8	OV	9+	EV

OV= Orbital Velocity EV= Escape Velocity, calculate only to see if a floating Mech or vehicle is hit for half damage. Infantry are so extremely unlikely to be hit in these conditions that it is not considered here. For an SRM miss, there is only a slight possibility (use table only on a planet with surface gravity below .05).

later. So, yes you could if you were really there, but the rules are not yet written as to how to do it, so you can't yet. See - contributing suggested rules, above.)

Now it gets fun, folks. If something as large as a Mech can achieve orbit, what do you think happens to shells and missiles? How do weapons work in this environment?

Several factors apply. Gravity first. Lasers and flamers and PPCs are not attracted by gravity. They go in a straight line. They are simply affected by the line of sight rule to the horizon. You can fire as far as you can see, with lessened effectiveness. Machine guns, autocannon, and missile fire are also given an extended range by the weakened gravity. The Extended Range Table from BattleTechnology 0103, itself a variant rule, is reprinted below. The changes are not in the table itself, but in the fact that with anything but lasers and flamers, the basic to-hit number is 11, not 12.

Misses are the problem — for autocannon and missile fire. If on a small planetoid, an orbiting Mech can come around the planet and eventually come upon another Mech's back, so can his missiles. Machine gun bullets will not achieve orbit on anything much bigger than a weather balloon. We have decided, rather than giving you a formula with seventeen or so variables, to condense it all into the following table.

If your missile etc achieves orbital velocity, it will continue around the planet in 5-15 turns, and eventually reenter on the opposite side of the board at a random location. Gamemaster, when it reenters, plot its path secretly. Have everyone write down his intended movement. If anyone is passing through the item's path, roll as if it had been fired at him with a gunnery skill of 4, short range. If it hits, do normal damage.

Weapon Type	Long Range in hexes	Extended Range in hexes	Maximum Range in hexes
Small Laser	3	15	Horizon/Line of Sight
Medium Laser	9	45	Horizon/Line of Sight
Large Laser	15	75	Horizon/Line of Sight
Particle Cannon	8	90	Horizon/Line of Sight
Long Range Missiles	21	105	105
Short Range Missiles	9	45	45
Autocannon/2	24	120	180
Autocannon/5	18	90	135
Autocannon/10	15	75	113
Autocannon/20	9	45	68
Machine Gun	3	30	45
Flamer	3	3	3

Hitting at Extreme Range

The To-Hit target for low-G extreme range is 11, reflecting the fact that most gunners have had some space/low-G training. The LOWER number of Extended or Maximum Range applies for flamers, lasers, and PPCs.

Repair Bay

BattleMech Engines, the Best for the Job

A great many mechwarriors work with their Techs to modify their Mechs. The warrior's input, however, is often limited to suggestions concerning the replacement of weapons and armor. This is largely due to the popular misconception that replacement of a Mech's fusion engine always involves a tremendous change in tonnage available.

Certainly, this is true for the largest Mechs — an Atlas pilot wishing to add 10.8 kph to her cruising speed would have to drop 34.5 tons of armor, weapons, and heat sinks — but not always true for light or medium vehicles. For example, many pilots of the WTH-1 Whitworth complain about their machine's lack of speed. If they knew that 21.5 kph could be added to their maximum speed for a 'cost' of only 2.5 tons, perhaps more of these mechwarriors would be pushing for modification of their Mechs!

Once a Mech's tonnage and cruising speed are known, a number of tonnage requirements are set: Cockpit, internal structure, engine and gyro. Table # 1 has taken these factors into account (ie, subtracted them from the Mech's total tonnage available); it indicates tonnage remaining for use for weapons, armor, jump jets, and additional heat sinks.

For a more practical expression of combat capability, movement has been expressed in terms of thirty-meter units covered per ten seconds, rather than in terms of kilometers per hour.

For those warriors interested in Mech design, Table #2 illustrates which Mech tonnages are most suited (have the greatest amount of tonnage remaining for offensive and defensive outfitting after required components are installed) for each cruising speed category.

Every mechwarrior knows that the surprise of possessing a Mech of standard design carrying unconventional armament can give her a crucial advantage in battle. Engine replacement is an excellent means to this end, yielding changes varying from slight to radical.

		Table #1													
Mech Weight		10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75
Movement		Tonnage Remaining													
1/2	4.5	9	13.5	18	22	26.5	31	35.5	39.5	44	48.5	52.5	57	61.5	
2/3	4.5	8.5	13	17	21.5	25.5	29.5	33.5	38	41	45	49	53	57	
3/5	4	8.5	12.5	16.5	20	23	27	31	34.5	38.5	42	45.5	48	51.5	
4/6	4	8	11.5	15.5	18	21.5	25	28.5	31.5	33.5	36.5	39	41	42.5	
5/8	3.5	7.5	11	13.5	16.5	19.5	22.5	24.5	26.5	28	29	28	26.5	22	
6/9	3.5	6.5	9	12	15	16.5	18.5	20	20	18	14	5.5			
7/11	3	5	8	10.5	12	13.5	14	12	8.5						
8/12	2.5	4.5	7	9	9.5	9.5	6.5	0							
9/14	2	4	6	6.5	6.5	3									
10/15	2	3	4.5	4	2										
11/17	0.5	2.5	2	1											
12/18	0	1.5	0.5												
13/20	0	0.5	0												

		Table # 1 Continued				
Mech Weight		80	85	90	95	100
Movement		Tonnage Remaining				
1/2	65.5	70	74	78.5	83	
2/3	61	65.5	69	73	76.5	
3/5	54.5	57.5	60.5	63	65	
4/6	42.5	42.5	41	37.5	30.5	
5/8	12.5					

		Table #2						
		Optimum Mech Weight by Movement						
Movement		1/2	2/3	3/5	4/6	5/8	6/9	7/11
Tonnage		100	100	100	85	60	50	40
Movement		8/12	9/14	10/15	11/17	12/18	13/20	
Tonnage		35	30	20	15	15	15	

Background Information

Legion of Vega, Background

The Lyrans were ready to crumble. When the 2nd Legion of Vega stormed the ridge where the Lyrans had gone to ground they would be hurled into the Great Desert of Tears. The Commonwealth's invasion of Vega had gone bad for them ever since the arrival of Theodore Kurita on world. One more great push and Steiner would have to pull her troops out for certain.

Your company of heavy and medium Mechs guard the only escape route for the besieged Lyrans. Though you are supported by two full battalions of infantry and tanks, you know that to send them against Lyrans in full retreat would needlessly waste lives and equipment, especially if a show of force on your company's part would be enough to dash Steiner's hopes of escape. As the sun rises over the desert, and the ground temperature begins to rise, the rout of the Lyrans gets underway. Soon, your battle begins.

Legion of Vega, 3028

Game Set-up

Lay out the BattleTech mapsheets in any connected pattern, since the battle will take place on a featureless desert plain. You may want to use the backs of the mapsheets to avoid confusion with the depicted terrain features.

Defender

The defender is the 1st Company, 2nd Battalion of the 2nd Legion of Vega. These Mechs must be set up on the side of the map designated as east before the attacker's position is revealed. The area behind the company's defensive line is assumed to be defended by the 21st Infantry Battalion and the 123rd Light Armor Battalion. Attackers cannot cross this line singly, and it would put them in range of too many tanks and small-arms to survive. Defenders retreating across this line are considered to have escaped. They will sit out the rest of the game.

Command Lance

Captain Rexel Euchart: Veteran, *Charger* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 1
Lt Jake Jinshi: Veteran, *Warhammer* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2
Greg Patrick: Regular, *Phoenix Hawk-K* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 3
Kriss MacMurdough: Regular, *Cicada* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 3

Fire Lance

Lt Abel Simpson: Regular, *Crusader* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 3
Alice Katai: Green, *Trebuchet* Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3
Genny Dricol: Regular, *Dragon* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2
Randall Masters: Regular, *Wolverine* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2

Recon Lance

Lt Piros Andrakos: Veteran, *Shadow Hawk-K* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 1
Min Matusutashi: Regular, *Shadow Hawk-K* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 3
Wen Xouang: Green, *Panther* Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 4
Baxter Craddock: Regular, *Cicada* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2

Attacker

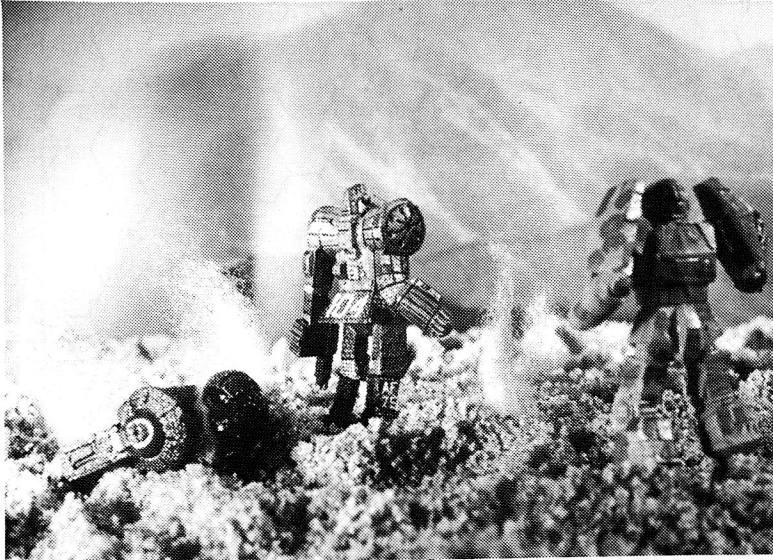
The attacker is Company C, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Lyran Guard. These units must set up on the west side of the map after the defender has been positioned.

Command Lance

Hauptmann Alexander Gustov: Elite, *Zeus* Piloting: 1, Gunnery: 1
Lt Max Radford: Veteran, *Wolverine* Piloting: 1, Gunnery: 2
Janet Aston: Regular, *Hatchetman* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 3
Laramie Cross: Regular, *Phoenix Hawk* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 2

Fire Lance

Lt Melissa Powell: Veteran, *Rifleman* Piloting: 1, Gunnery: 2
Robert Brown: Veteran, *Marauder* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 1
Vivien Metzger: Regular, *Griffin-S* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 2
Xavier Gordo: Regular, *Hunchback* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2



Recon Lance

Lt David Lowe: Veteran, *Phoenix Hawk* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2
Frederick Raptor: Regular, *Assassin* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 3
Zelda Mbutu: Regular, *Commando* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 2
Ross Napoli: Green, *Commando* Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3

Special Rules:

The temperature on the planet's surface causes heat sinks to function at 67% of normal capacity. For example, a Warhammer with 18 functional heat sinks can dissipate 12 point of heat per turn.

Though both sides have considerable reserves of Mechs and conventional forces within striking distance, it has been decided by mutual consensus that this battle will be decided by the actions of these two companies. No reinforcements will appear on the map at any point in the game.

Victory Conditions

The attacker wins by destroying all enemy Mechs or destroying 8 out of 12 of them by the twelfth round of combat. At this point, the rest of the Lyran forces who are retreating in this direction must either be able to past of the east unmolested, or must turn north for immediate planetary evacuation. If a sufficient number of enemy Mechs has not been destroyed, then C Company must retreat so they may reach the DropShips in time to escape.

The defender wins by destroying all enemy Mechs or preventing the enemy's goals from being achieved. If defending Mechs outnumber attackers by a factor of 2 to 1 at any time, the defender may safely "call in the infantry and tank battalions", forcing the attacker to retreat automatically.

Lyran Guard, Background

You've failed in your attempt to capture the Combine world of Vega. Though in the early days of October, 3028, the Third Lyran Guard's capture of this vital center of Draconian power seemed but a matter of time, the unexpected arrival of the Coordinator's son has soured your victory and forced you to retreat. While the majority of the regimental combat team's Mechs battle on far to the south, the 2nd Legion of Vega prevents your forces from rejoining them and so putting an end to the counteroffensive.

Now the Kuritans await the signal to rise up and hurl your forces into the continent-spanning desert at your backs, ending your last chance at salvaging the mission. If you cannot escape the Legion's trap, you will have to retreat. To the east lies the port city of Cochus, where it might be possible to hold out until reinforcements could arrive. Though only a company of Kuritan Mechs and two battalions of infantry and tanks guard that pass, you cannot risk taking that route until it has been thoroughly scouted.

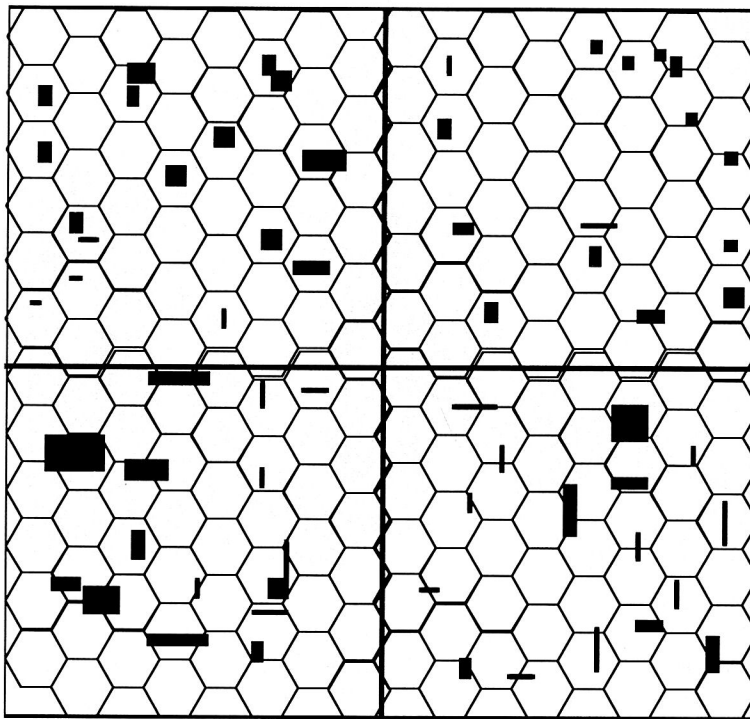
The unit closest to the situation is a company of medium and heavy Mechs commanded by Hauptman Alexander Gustov. As the sun blossoms on the horizon, the Kuritan Mechs burst from hiding and charge the ridge where the Lyran Guard has made its stand. Dreading the coming battle, and the inevitable retreat, you order Gustov to clear that escape route, hoping for the best.

First Strike

Background:

Field Marshal Ardan Sortek led the Galedon Thrust of the Federated Commonwealth's new attack into the Draconis Combine with the intention of winning back worlds lost during the Fourth Succession War. This was one arm of four coordinated thrusts. The beginning attacks were simple; only light resistance was encountered by the AFFC. At this point in time, the Draconis Combine seemed to be barely holding on to a defensive position; the DCMS seemed seriously weakened. The planet Delacruz was one of the rare exceptions, and it was because of the tenacity of their planetary militia. The Eighth Sword of Light, who would normally have been garrisoning the planet, had left only a training battalion, which was quickly mopped up by the Davion assault force.

The city of Sena was bombarded for almost a week with Long Tom artillery before units were sent in to eliminate remaining opposition.



Game Setup:

The scenario is based in the city of Sena. Place four map boards in the form of a square. Place fifteen buildings of various types on each board. Then place forty rubble markers placed randomly throughout the city. (This is to represent the effects of the shelling which the city has endured).

Defender Setup:

The Defenders are the Delacruz Planetary Militia, and a recon lance from the 8th Sword of Light.

Planetary Militia:

- 1 Platoon of Infantry, armed with machine guns
- Pegasus Scout Tank #1
- Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 2
- Pegasus Scout Tank #2
- Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2

8th Sword of Light Recon Lance:

- Cadet Lt Chai Wah, *Panther*
- Piloting: 5, Gunnery: 4
- Cleon Brockman, *Stinger*
- Piloting: 6, Gunnery: 5
- Edward Winslow, *Stinger*
- Piloting: 5, Gunnery: 5

Merideth Page, *Wasp*

Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 6

Defenders may use hidden infantry rules. All limited intelligence rules should be used in this scenario.

Attackers:

The attackers are a medium lance from the Kingston Caballeros, who have the task of capturing Delacruz.

Lt Carl Michaelson, *Dervish-S**

Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 2

Lydia Chambers, *Assassin*

Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 4

Brian Delgado, *Hatchetman*

Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 5

Albert Cooper, *Assassin*

Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3

Special Rules:

See the rules on limited intelligence in CityTech, or in the BattleTech Manual.

Victory Conditions:

For every squad or other unit the attackers destroy, they receive 2 points. Subtract 5 points for every unit of the attackers which are destroyed.

Victory Scale:

16 to 20 Points = Decisive Victory for Attacker

10 to 15 Points = Marginal Victory for Attacker

5 to 9 Points = Draw

4 to -4 Points = Defender Victory

* In 3027, Defiance Motors, a division of Defiance Industries, opened the new factory it had been building and rebuilding since 2995. The R&D divisions on Hesperus II and Furillo had been competing in designing a new Dervish variant. Hesperus II won, with a design that changed as little as possible of the 'workhorse of the battlefield' other than to finally give it some rear defense. With a new in-house source of fusion engines, the variant proved economically possible for the first time.

With the rebuilding after the Fourth Succession War, the Factory began full scale production, twenty DV-7S s a year. Even after two transport loads were lost somewhere in the Tamar Pact/Rasalhague/Greater Valkyrate intersection, some 80 of these Mechs are known to exist in the Inner Sphere, most of them in the Federated Commonwealth. (Twenty-five were lost in the Vega Prefecture of House Kurita during the late hostilities; it must be presumed that some were salvaged.)

The changes in weapon positions (one medium laser and one SRM-2 placed on the CT rear, the other medium laser replaced by two small lasers) allow the Mech to take better advantage of the 360 degree challenge which today's battlefields offer a pilot. The design parameters which kept the silhouette of the standard Dervish, even including medium laser mounts on the arms camouflaging the small lasers actually present, often allow the variant a chance to get in a surprise counterattack on a foe who is not expecting any armament on the lightly-armored rear of a Dervish.

(Mech Stats in column to right)

DV-7S Dervish Variant

Mass: 55 Tons
 Chassis: Defiance 55D
 Power Plant: DefFire 275
 Cruising Speed: 54.0 kph
 Maximum Speed: 86.4 kph
 Jump Jets: Swingline X-1000
 Jump Capacity: 150 meters
 Armor: HardDef 105
 Armament: 2 10-shot LRM Missile Systems
 2 2-Shot SRM Missile Systems
 1 Medium Laser
 2 Small Lasers
 Manufacturer: Defiance BattleMechs
 Communication System: Coventry Communications
 Targeting/Tracking System: Banzai Ltd

Type:	DV-7S Dervish Variant	Tons
Tonnage:	55 tons	55
Internal Structure:		5.5
Engine:	275 DefFire	15.5
Walking MPs:	5	
Running MPs:	8	
Jumping MPs:	5	
Heat Sinks :	10	0
Gyro:		3
Cockpit:		3
Armor Factor:	120	7.5
Location: Int Structure:		Armor Value
Head	3	8
Center Torso:	18	20/4
Rt/Lt Torso:	13	15/4
Rt/Lt Arm:	9	10
Rt/Lt Leg:	13	15
Weapons and Ammo:		
Type	Location	Critical Tons
LRM 10	RT	2 5
LRM Ammo 12	RT	1 1
LRM 10	LT	2 5
LRM Ammo 12	LT	1 1
SRM 2	RA	1 1
SRM Ammo 50	RA	1 1
SRM 2	CT (rear)	1 1
SRM Ammo 50	CT	1 1
Medium Laser	CT (rear)	1 1
Small Laser	LA	1 0.5
Small Laser	RA	1 0.5
Jump Jets	RL	2 1
Jump Jets	LL	2 1
Jump Jets	CT	1 0.5

Quentin

Operation Deep Six

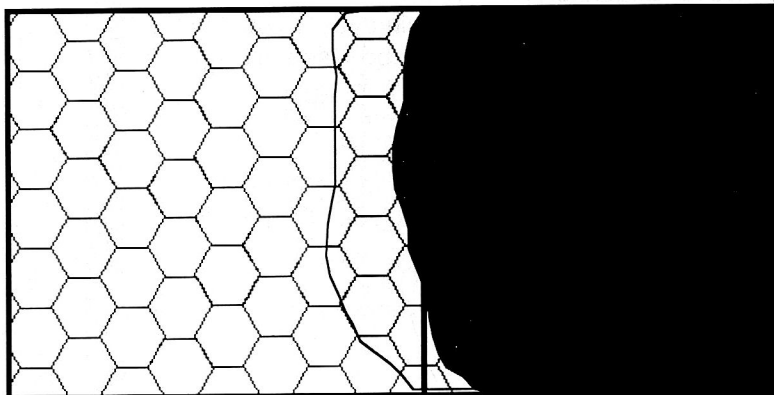
from *Claws of the Dragon, an Infantryman's View 3029-3039*

Kenji Nakamura, Dieron District College Press, to be released, September 3040

Having carried the war at last to the attacker's planets, we succeeded beyond expectations...We had totaled most of the defending forces mustered by the Fox on Quentin, but we ran into an unexpected resistance...

There I was in my Swiftwind, binoculars in hand, scouting out the Federats position. I was hidden behind a shoreline hillock. Reports had indicated a DropShip somewhere in the area. Whoever that foolish Fed in the Awesome was, he had given away the DropShip's position, standing in the shallows there. He had no visible support; with the numbers we had already disposed of, he could have very little hidden support. He must therefore be close enough to the DropShip to make a run for it. I thanked the Dragon for this insight, and reported his position to a nearby patrol.

And so I watched as the patrol gathered around me. The *Chu-i* in command had gotten out of his Thug to speak to me without betraying his position by radio



one hex = two hexes on a standard BattleTech Map

Background: In August, Kurita forces began to strike back against the Federated Commonwealth's offensive. They pushed many Commonwealth units off of Draconis Worlds. They dislodged the great Ardan Sortek off of An Ting; the DEST attack on Vega virtually paralysed the Steiner offensive. It was a complete surprise when the Draconis Combine then launched a full counterattack against Davion border worlds.

This particular battle deals with the Ryuken assault on Quentin, and the removal of the remnants of the 22nd Avalon Hussars RCT. (See the story *A Soldier's View*.)

Game Set-up: Place three boards side by side running east to west. The 12 most eastern hex rows are considered rough terrain (the beach). The next five hexes are level 0 water. On the middle board, the 2 eastern hex rows are level 1 water; the next 14 rows are level 2 water. The last hex row on the middle board is level one water. The western board is an island with terrain as pictured on a standard BattleTech board.

Attacker Set-up: The Ryuken units may set up anywhere on the eastern board, excluding the level 0 water.

Attackers: Ryuken Unit

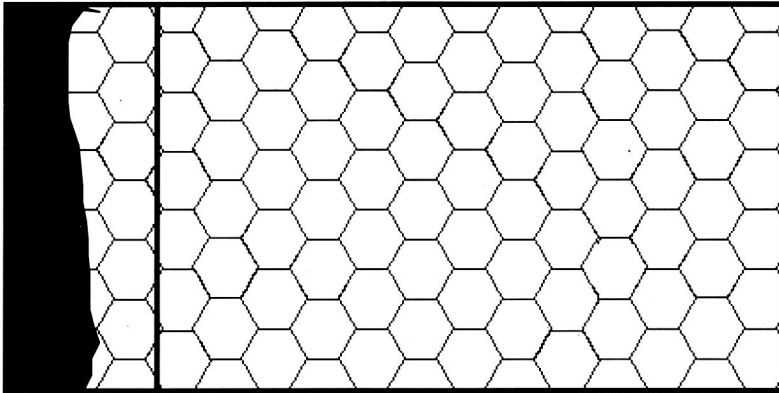
Thug, Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 3

Panther, Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3

Panther, Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 5

Hunchback, Piloting: 5, Gunnery: 4

Hunchback, Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 4



one hex = two hexes on a standard BattleTech Map

Defender Set-up: The defenders have three BattleMechs at their disposal. The two Catapults are on the island portion (the western map board). The Awesome is located anywhere in the level 0 water or the level 1 water of the eastern board as its starting point.

Defenders: Last Mechs remaining of the 22nd Avalon Hussars RCT

Sgt Justin Karlton Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 3

Awesome, missing 6 pts armor on Left Torso, Small laser out of commission

Jessica Ross Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3

Catapult, 1/2 ammunition expended

Skye Troy Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 4

Catapult, +2 to hit because sensors now faulty, 1/2 ammunition expended

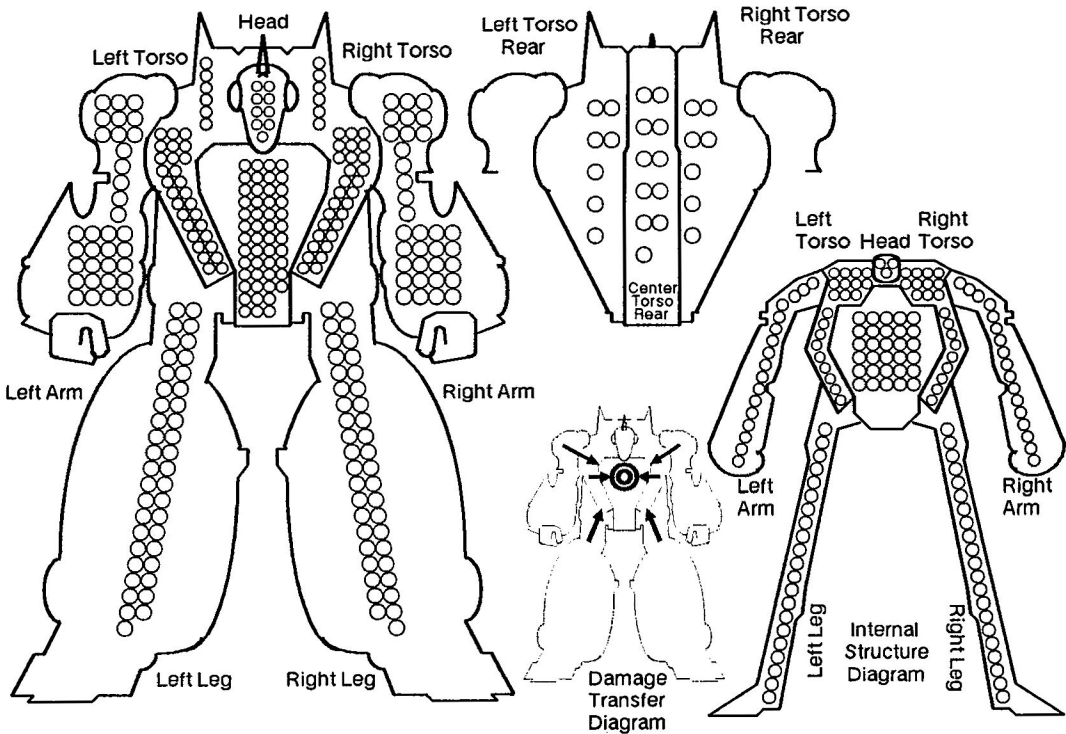
Attacker Goal: The Ryuken wish to finish off the last of the 22nd Avalon RCT and pass them to capture their DropShip.

Defender Goal: The 22nd Avalon RCT must eliminate three of the opposing Mechs in order to get their last three Mechs off the western edge of the board. It is assumed that if they get off the board, they will rendezvous with their DropShip and escape to the planet Helen. They may not leave the board until they have eliminated those three Mechs.

transmission. He asked if any other units had been spotted in the area. No, I replied. I looked over his patrol's Mechs and kept my thoughts to myself. The two Panthers and the Thug were appropriate to the situation. The two Hunchbacks would be virtually useless in the underwater environment they were about to enter. The *Chu-i* had no other questions. He ordered his men into battle, and I watched as they chased that Federat into the water.

My radio reported a sighting three clicks west, and I hurried to investigate. There was nothing there. The *Awesome* must have been the last effective Federat Mech. I wonder which of our Mechs finally took him, for I never heard the results of that action. Quentin was ours. Long live the Dragon!

BATTLETECHNOLOGY



MECH DATA

Type: TIA-Titan
Tonnage: 100
Movement Points:
Walking: 3
Running: 5
Jumping: 0

WEAPONS INVENTORY

#	Type	Hi	M	S	Loc
1	PPC	10	3	6	LT
1	PPC	10	3	6	RT
3	Medium Laser	3	3		LA
3	Medium Laser	3	3		RA
2	S.R.M. 4	3	3		LT
2	S.R.M. 4	3	3		RT
1	S.R.M. 6	4	3		CT

AMMO:

SRM4 ammo: LT 25

SRM4 ammo: RT 25

SRM6 ammo: LT 15

TOTAL HEAT SINKS



WARRIOR DATA

Name: _____
Gunnery Skill: _____
Piloting Skill: _____
Hits Taken: (Consciousness Number)
1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th
(3) (5) (7) (10) (11)(Dead)

HEAT SCALE

30	SHUTDOWN
29	
28	Ammo Explosion-avoid on 8
27	
26	Shutdown-avoid on 10+
25	-5 Movement Points
24	+4 Modifier to Fire
23	Ammo Explosion-avoid on 6+
22	Shutdown-avoid on 8+
21	
20	-4 Movement Points
19	Ammo Explosion-avoid on 4+
18	Shutdown-avoid on 6+
17	+3 Modifier to Fire
16	
15	-3 Movement Points
14	Shutdown-avoid on 4+
13	+2 Modifier to Fire
12	
11	
10	-2 Movement Points
09	
08	+1 Modifier to Fire
07	
06	
05	-1 Movement Point
04	
03	
02	
01	
00	

Left Arm

- Shoulder
 - Upper Arm Actuator
 - Lower Arm Actuator
 - Hand Actuator
 - Medium Laser
 - Medium Laser
- Medium Laser
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist

Left Torso

- PPC
 - PPC
 - PPC
 - S.R.M. 4
 - S.R.M. 4
 - S.R.M. 4 Ammo
- S.R.M. 6 Ammo
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist

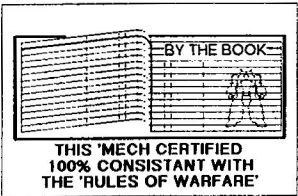
Left Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Heat Sink
- Heat Sink

CRITICAL HIT TABLE

Head

- Life Support
- Sensors
- Cockpit
- Heat Sink
- Sensors
- Life Support



Center Torso

- Engine
 - Engine
 - Engine
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
- Gyro
 - Engine
 - Engine
 - Engine
 - S.R.M. 6
 - S.R.M. 6

Engine Hits ○○○
Gyro Hits ○○
Sensor Hits ○○

Right Arm

- Shoulder
 - Upper Arm Actuator
 - Lower Arm Actuator
 - Hand Actuator
 - Medium Laser
 - Medium Laser
- Medium Laser
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist

Right Torso

- PPC
 - PPC
 - PPC
 - S.R.M. 4
 - S.R.M. 4
 - S.R.M. 4 Ammo
- Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Roll Assist
 - Roll Assist

Right Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Heat Sink
- Heat Sink

Technical Readout

TI-1A Titan

Overview:

The Titan 'Mech was found in the Star League depot on Galtor III. Because it was a new 'Mech design it was hushed up and sent to New Avalon where scientists spent four years testing and studying the design.

Apparently in the final months before the Star League collapsed, General Kerensky became dissatisfied with the Atlas. Once it was out of ammo, the Atlas had no more weaponry than a light 'Mech. To remedy this problem, Kerensky told his engineers to make an Assault 'Mech with long and short range energy weapons. Several teams of engineers competed to design this 'Mech, which had been given the working name of 'Titan'. One team's answer was this, the TIA-1B Titan. Other Mechs by this name are known to exist, though manufacturers and serial numbers vary.

Their program had another month to go before the Titan would be fully operational, when the water used for drinking and cooling on the planetary construction site was poisoned, rumor has it by agents of House Kurita. The seven hundred deaths resulting killed all but one of the engineering team.

That last engineer, not wanting to see his dream go unfinished, downloaded all the information into a memory core and stored it in the Titan prototype. The several construction facilities now being considered by the NAIS each say that the information is complete enough to build 25-50 Titans per year. So far, 25-30 are known to exist.

Capabilities:

With a cruising speed of 32 kph and a flank speed of 54 kph the Titan is one of the slowest 'Mechs on the battlefield. Although General Kerensky wanted an all-energy Assault 'Mech, the engineers went one step further.

First, they put 19 tons of armor on the Titan. This would ensure it could withstand even the heaviest of fire. Next they gave the 'Mech 22 heat sinks. While this permits a constant rate of fire, the pilot cannot fire all the 'Mech's weapons at once, or it will immediately shut down.

Second, they gave the Titan two PPCs, which gave it a greater potential damage curve than the Atlas, without requiring ammunition.

Third, the engineers gave it three medium lasers in each arm. These were intended to be fired at medium ranges along with the SRMs. The arm mountings ensure the lasers a broad

field of fire.

Finally, for the coup de grace, they installed two SRM four-packs on the right and left torso, and an SRM six-pack in the center torso. This arrangement permitted firing all the SRM systems while engaging in hand to hand combat.

When General Kerensky was shown the designs, he was skeptical about the SRMs. The engineers were quick to point out that if the Titan did run out of ammunition, it still had two PPC's and six medium lasers. This armament outclassed even that of the famous Battlemaster. They also pointed out that the Titan's potential damage curve raises as the 'Mech gets closer to its target. This encourages the pilot to get into hand to hand combat as soon as possible.

Battle History:

Although the Titan is a newcomer to the battlefield, it has already made a name for itself.

On the Galtor raid, Major LeBrun of the 4th Crucis Lancers was given the important task of taking the Titan and three quick 'Mechs from his own company to make a run for the waiting DropShip. The only problem was that he had to go through one hundred plus kilometers of hills and swamp.

Major Le Brun chose a Phoenix Hawk, an Ostscout, and a modified Jenner without the SRM launcher, but with three more tons of armor.

During the journey to the DropShip, he stumbled upon a heavy company of the 8th Sword of Light who were trying to circle around and ambush his own battalion. Outnumbered, but with surprise and mobility on his side, he attacked.

Major LeBrun took the Titan in close for hand to hand combat where he killed an Awesome, a Marauder, and a pair of Riflemen. The Phoenix Hawk and the Jenner go two kills each. All four Lancers 'Mechs retired fully operational.

Of the Sword of Light 'Mechs, only two Catapults and a Thunderbolt survived. Major LeBrun was promoted to the rank of Colonel for his actions on Galtor III. He has been assigned to the Titan project now going on on New Avalon.

Variants:

There seem to be three variants of the Titan which are currently being studied. The first and probably the best moves one medium laser from each arm and relocates them to the right and left torso. This increases the firepower even more when the Titan engages in hand to hand combat. This variant known as the Titan II will probably be the one most used in the Federated Suns.

Another variant adds Rawlings 550 jump jets at the expense of the two SRM four-packs and two heat sinks. While it reduces firepower, it does add greater mobility.

The last variant downgrades the SRM six-pack to an SRM four-pack, splits the ammo for the SRM four-pack to 12 instead of 25 reloads, and adds an SRM two-pack inferno

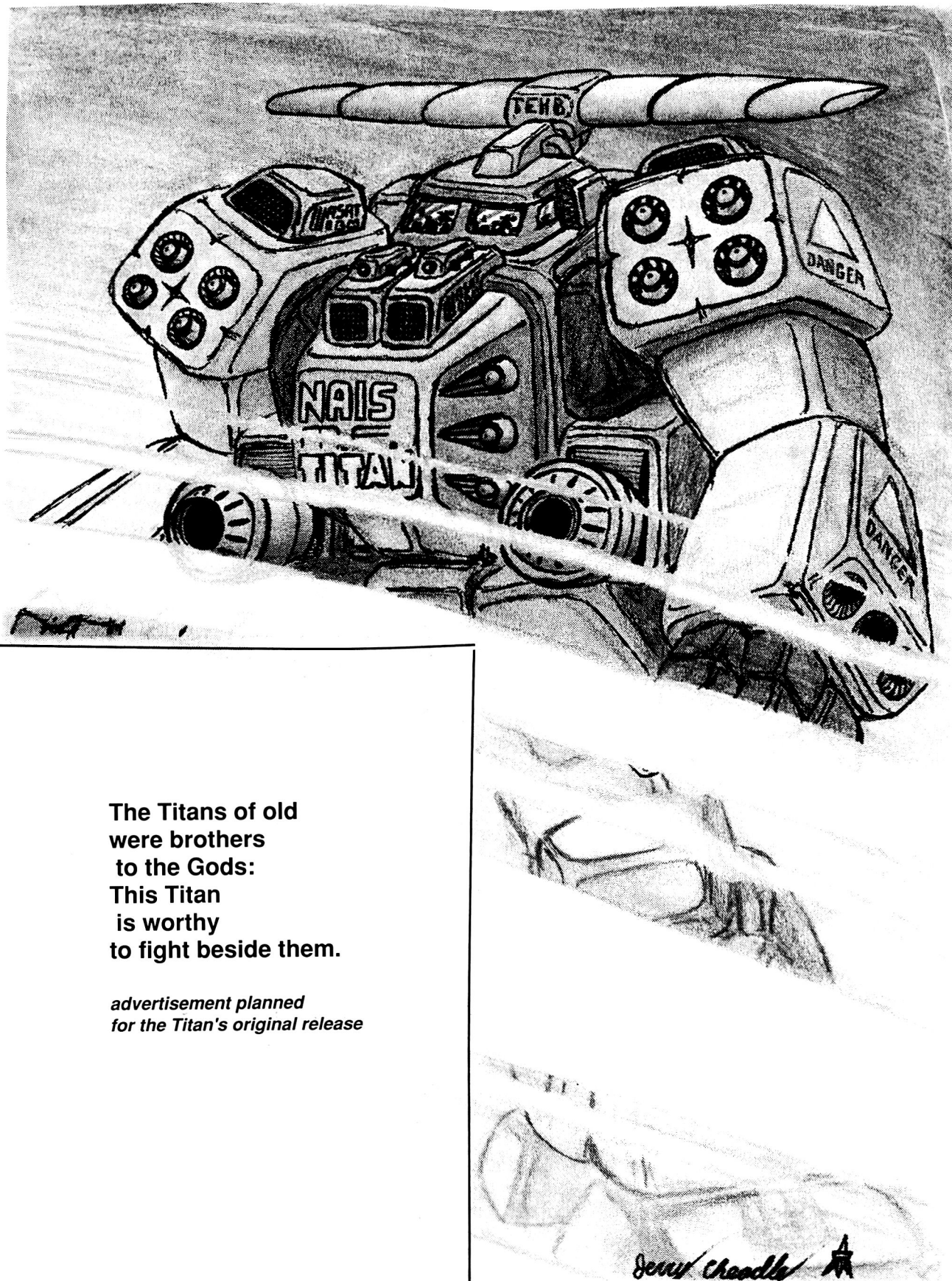
plus five tons of ammo. Opponents of this variant refer to it as a suicide special.

Notable Mechwarriors:

Colonel David LeBrun

Because of his actions on Galtor III he received the first Titan II made by the NAIS team. A mechwarrior of over fifteen years standing, he has 46 confirmed kills and scores of assists. Rumor has it that his training time with the Titan II is completed, and that he will be back with his regiment in another month. Judging by the way he handled the 8th Sword of Light, he will be a force to be reckoned with.

TIT-1A Titan BattleMech		Simulator Stats:		
Tonnage:	100 tons	Type:	TIA-Titan	Tons:
Chassis:	Unknown			
Power Plant	300 Vlar	Tonnage:	100 tons	100
Cruising Speed:	32.4 kph	Internal Structure:		10.0
Maximum Speed:	54.8 kph	Engine:	300 Vlar	19.0
Jump Jets:	None	Walking MPs:	3	
Jump Capacity:	None	Running MPs:	5	
Armor:	Type 23	Heat Sinks:	22	12.0
Armament:	2 PPCs	Gyro		3.0
	6 Medium Lasers	Cockpit:		3.0
	4 SRM 4s	Armor:	304	19.0
	1 SRM 6	Armor Factor:		
Manufacturer:	NAIS Mech Fabrication	Head:	3 9	
Communications System:	Tek BattleCom	Center Torso:	31 50/11	
Targeting /		Rt/Lt Torso:	21 35/7	
Tracking System:	Wasat IBM	Rt/Lt Arm:	17 34	
		Rt/Lt Leg:	21 41	
		Weapons:		
		Type:	Location	Crit Tons
		PPC	RT	3 7.0
		PPC	LT	3 7.0
		3 Medium Lasers	RA	3 3.0
		3 Medium Lasers	LA	3 3.0
		2 SRM-4s	RT	2 4.0
		Ammo, SRM-4s 25	RT	1 1.0
		2 SRM-4s	LT	2 4.0
		Ammo, SRM-4s 25	LT	1 1.0
		SRM-6	CT	2 3.0
		Ammo, SRM-4s 15	LT	1 1.0



The Titans of old
were brothers
to the Gods:
This Titan
is worthy
to fight beside them.

*advertisement planned
for the Titan's original release*

The Dragons They Do It For Honor

to the Tune of "Good Grief, How the Money Rolls In", also known as "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean"

The Dragons, they do it for honor.
They do it with poetic names.
They send out their high blood to kill us.
They dress up their slaughter with games.

Chorus

I won't, I won't, I won't give grand reasons
Like these, like these.
I will, I will, I'll just risk my neck for Cbs.

The Lyrans are Techs and they show it.
They're thorough and thoughtful and slow.
They don't go and do it themselves, but
they give us the money to go.

I won't, I won't, I won't do it the Steiner way,
Their way.
I will, I will, I'll do what I do best for pay.

Capellans, they "Max" out their efforts.
They'd better, or he's gonna yell.
He bounces men's heads for a pastime.
Yes, working for Maxie is (*long pause*) swell.

I won't, I won't, I won't go out fighting
For fear, for fear.
I will, I will, I'll fight for my bread and my beer.

The Mariks they never give reasons
when going to war they agree.
Agreement's a problem for Marik,
and therefore they hire you and me.

I won't, I won't, I won't trust their word
Written down, and down.
I will, I will, I will rush their paychecks to town.

The Davions do it for glory;
A glory just nobles can earn.
For office and fame go to nobles
and commoners don't get a turn.

Chorus

I won't, I won't, I won't let old Foxy
Fool me, fool me.
I will, I will, I'll serve him for pay, not for free.

The Taurian reasons for fighting
Are much too much subtle for me
They go back for three generations
And most of them kill us for free.

I won't, I won't, won't go out past the Inner Sphere
Stars, bright stars
I will, I will, stay here where I know all the bars.

Rasalhague hates all mechwarriors
who don't speak their dumb Swedanese.
They want us to sell lives for peanuts
I don't think I'll hurry to please.

They hire, they fire, they think that a soldier's
A slave, a slave.
They won't, they won't, they won't even honor your grave.

Oh, land grants are fine for the homeless.
And barter can lose when you trade.
House money's as good as the House is.
By C-bills is happiness made.

I won't, I won't, I won't give false names
to my greed, my greed.
I will, I will, admit that I fight for my need.

There are several hundred verses to this song, many not printable in a family magazine. Each time the song is sung, each of the Houses must be mentioned, usually with special emphasis on the current employer. The song is in the ancient tradition of "soldiers' gripe" songs, the first recorded instance of which takes place at the walls of a Terran city called Troy. As a soldiers' magazine, *BattleTechnology* here acknowledges a major folk-cultural art form.

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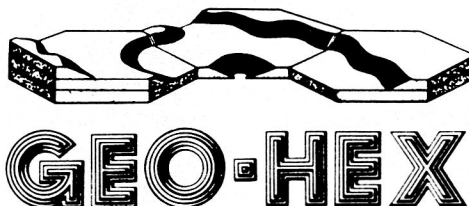
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