



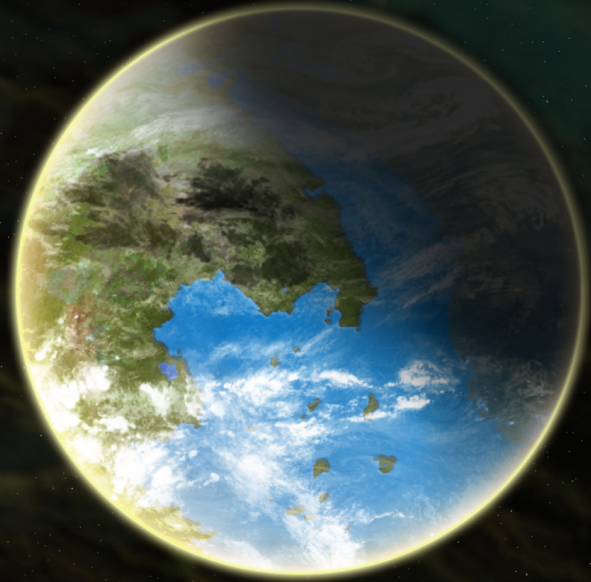
# **BATTLETECH<sup>TM</sup>**

## **TOURING THE STARS**

# ATLAS

## BENET III

**Star Type (Recharge Time):** M5V (206 hours)  
**Position in System:** 3 (of 8)  
**Time to Jump Point:** 2.45 days  
**Number of Satellites:** None  
**Surface Gravity:** 0.65  
**Atm. Pressure:** High (Tainted)  
**Equatorial Temperature:** 28 °C (Arid)  
**Surface Water:** 60%  
**Recharging Station:** None  
**HPG Class:** B  
**Highest Native Life:** Reptiles  
**Population:** 681,035,000 (3096)  
**Socio-Industrial Levels:** B-B-A-B-D  
**Landmasses (Capital City):** Sierra (Donner)



## BENET III

First surveyed in 2239, the Benet system was initially written off as unsuitable for colonization. According to legend, the system was named for an unrequited love by the survey mission captain, who took his own life after filing the official paperwork to register the name. Although originally pronounced in the French fashion, over the subsequent centuries the name shifted to have a hard consonantal ending.

Despite the assessment, the first colonists arrived nearly two decades after the system's survey. These first settlers were employees of an industrial conglomerate drawn to the planet's potential mineral wealth, rather than one or more of Terra's coherent ethnic groups. As a result, the populace was never dominated by any one culture and any traditions that grew up over the years were generally localized and small-scale in nature. Planetfall for the initial batch of settlers—all employees of various mining and manufacturing corporations and their families—saw the establishment in 2261 of a small community that would grow into the city of Morningside, later to function as the planet's first capital.

To the early colonists, it was obvious how Benet would likely have gone ignored indefinitely, were it not for its abundant mineral deposits. Sierra, the sole continental landmass, is volcanic in origin, with a string of still-active volcanoes stretching across the northern reaches. Surrounding the peaks and extending most of the way south into Sierra's interior is a wide swath of badlands that made the central regions of the continent unsuitable for large settlements, so the majority of Benet's population resided along the southern coastal regions, with smaller communities scattered along the shores of the Northern Sea. The Scitte Isles, located far off in the Eastern Sea,

were completely uninhabited, being barely able to support a meager amount of native life, let alone human enclaves. Automated harvesters crisscrossed these islands, collecting the chemically rich biological byproducts of what animal life was found there, and periodic transports brought the results back to Sierra for processing.

The primary hindrance to more widespread settlement of Sierra's interior was the dangerous and unpredictable gasses that spewed forth both from the northern range volcanoes as well as many fissures amid the badlands' rough terrain. Frequent seismic activity made it difficult to predict when and where an outgassing would occur, but the deeper into the badlands and closer to the active volcanoes one went, the greater the chances. In the foothills surrounding the volcanoes, the air was so permeated by poisonous gas that rebreathers were necessary; even people living near the southern end of the badlands tended to keep rebreathers on their persons at all times. Today, evidence of this difficult environment is apparent in the number of ghost towns—some quite large—that dotted this region, most having been abandoned during the Succession Wars as it became more and more difficult to maintain the technology necessary to safely live under threat of wandering gas clouds.

Sierra was divided into four administrative districts. Gakken County, covering the majority of the continent, was largely uninhabited, with only the narrow northern coast amenable to settlement. Beaux Pawl was the largest town in the county, but mostly served to support the research facilities and military bases sprinkled across the badlands. The town was also home to the planet's main orbital tracking station (which unfortunately made it the focus of a number of attacks throughout the Succession Wars). The station doubled as an astronomical research

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facility and produced many prestigious award winners from its staff. Traffic at the small Beaux Pawl spaceport mainly brought in necessities bound for the bases with only a trickle of outbound mineral shipments.

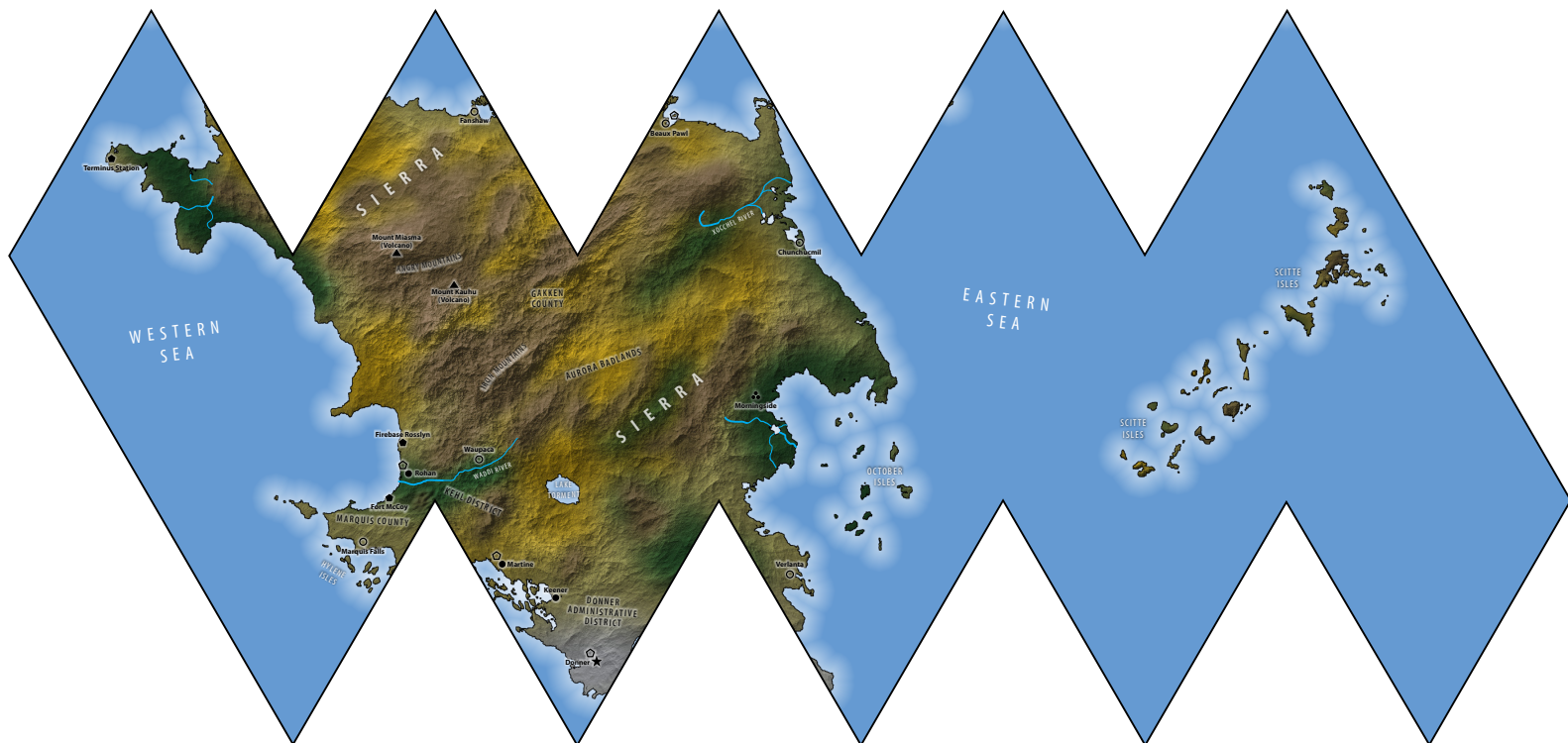
Kehl County, in the southwest, was the most heavily populated region on Benet and home to the majority of the planet's industrial facilities. Johnston Industries operated the largest of these complexes in the foothills around Martine. During the FedCom Civil War, the forests of western Kehl saw intense action between the Forty-first Avalon Hussars and the Fifth Donegal Guards. A number of military bases throughout the region not only provided protection for the valuable factories but also functioned as high-capacity supply depots for several large-scale operations conducted by various ruling powers, dating all the way back to Operation SMOTHER in the 2720s. The massive Martine and Rohan spaceports handled more traffic than the other five spaceports on Benet put together, mostly outbound shipping from Johnston and other manufacturers, as well as raw mineral exports.

Marquis County, a narrow strip of land surrounding the city of Marquis Falls, was the location of what passed for a resort area on Benet. The richest inhabitants of the planet, including all of the senior management at Johnston Industries, owned extensive estates in this county, particularly in the exclusive Hylene Isles just off the coast. Several resort towns dotted the coast and spearfishing in the crystal-blue waters was a popular activity. While Benet did not get much in the way of tourist trade, the Marquis shore was a popular destination for corporate visitors and high-ranking military staff.

The fourth district, the Donner Administrative District, became home to the planetary capital city of Donner, which lay in the heart

of the region. Donner became the capital after a severe gas eruption during the Third Succession War forced the evacuation of Morningside. The establishment of Donner as the capital also coincided with the rise of the Ducrimmon-Davions as Benet's ruling family. A purely administrative city, Donner possessed very little in the way of nightlife or cultural vibrancy to speak of. Extending for a hundred kilometers around Donner stood four of the planet's seven spaceports, three of which were devoted almost entirely to Benet's food distribution network. The lack of adequate agricultural output to sustain the planet's population necessitated a massive amount of off-world imports and extensive rail lines to facilitate food distribution across the continent, at least until the JumpShip shortages of the Succession Wars forced the world into an expensive agricultural independence.

More than anything else in its history, Benet III became known for the so-called "Death Mists" that eventually rendered the planet uninhabitable. Since the mid-3050s, the frequency and intensity of large-scale gas venting in the badlands had been on an increase. Scientists grew especially alarmed in the early 3080s, when two of the most devastating outgassings on record forced the evacuation of nearly a million inhabitants from northern Kehl County. Even with the aid of local militia and the Twelfth Vegan Rangers, the death toll from these events climbed to the tens of thousands. Despite this tragedy, many in the corporate community derided the scientists' warnings as "alarmist fear-mongering". A study commissioned by Johnston Industries in 3086 concluded that the recent outgassings fell well within Benet's historical parameters, and claimed the deaths were due to inadequate government services and poor leadership, rather than any danger from the planet itself.



# ATLAS

By early 3093, nearly the entire northern half of Kehl County had been abandoned, though government officials still maintained that the evacuations were temporary and that people would eventually be able to return to their homes and businesses. Behind the scenes, however, officials were growing increasingly worried about the situation. Records later released to the public (during lawsuits against Johnston Industries) indicate that the corporation was beginning to shift its assets to facilities on other worlds such as Addicks, while continuing to downplay the local danger to the public.

The crisis reached its critical point nearly a year later, when a week of nearly non-stop seismic activity opened up thousands of gas vents across the continent. As prevailing winds carried most of the noxious fumes southwards, the northern coast was spared the worst of the event, although several hundred people—mostly elderly or those already ill—lost their lives in and around Beaux Pawl.

For the inhabitants of Sierra's southern regions, however, the death toll was much higher. Without little to no warning, massive clouds of poisonous gas swept down from the badlands and across the towns of Kehl County. Millions found themselves helpless, without rebreathers or shelter from the gas. Everyone else on Benet hunkered down in shelters to wait out the clouds, convinced by years of denials and media manipulation that the crisis would be temporary.

In the initial days of the disaster, most of Marquis County and the Donner Administrative District were spared. Messages were sent out via HPG to nearby worlds and to both Robinson and New Avalon requesting assistance. In the meantime, local militia forces did what they could to help the trapped populace by ensuring that everyone had adequate supplies to see them through the crisis. Despite their efforts, the death toll continued to rise. A number of Succession War-era shelters that had seen little subsequent maintenance suffered catastrophic failures, condemning tens of thousands more to an agonizing, choking death. When, after the first week, DropShips arrived at the Martine and Rohan spaceports, many were shocked to learn that rescue hadn't come. Instead, Johnston Industries was relocating as much of its operations as possible to other systems. More than one firefight broke out between local militia forces and mercenary-reinforced corporate security troops escorting the DropShips. Though separated in their isolated shelters, the people of Benet began to clamor for someone to blame for their situation. Local radio channels were swamped with accusations and recriminations, most directed at Johnston executives and the politicians who had supported them.

Twelve days after the beginning of what had come to be called the "Death Mist," the first help arrived. Under orders from Jerome Sandoval, elements of the First Robinson Rangers and the Robinson DMM arrived to provide assistance and transport to evacuate the planet. The process went smoothly—though slowly—at first. Three days into the effort, a surge of seismic activity in the Aurora Badlands of northern Kehl County unleashed a new round of gas venting, causing the populace and their rescuers to seek shelter together to ride it out. Over the next two weeks, this pattern was repeated several times and every time

the body count crept higher. An almost constant stream of DropShips traveled from surface to orbit, ferrying a pitiful few evacuees to safety. Commercial JumpShips, contracted or even coerced by Jerome Sandoval, supplemented the efforts of the military, but could only help a small part of the planet's population.

In the second week of July, nearly a month after the crisis began, Duke Tancred himself arrived in system to observe the rescue efforts. Many on the ground, subjected to whisperings that Johnston executives and the Duke had conspired to keep the severity of the looming crisis hidden from the public, greeted his arrival angrily. Sandoval's own actions only made things worse. Four days after his arrival, JumpShips from the Draconis Combine arrived at Benet. Broadcasting their friendly intent, troops from the Fifth Ghost and the Seventh Sword of Light had come to assist in the evacuation effort. Whether from desperation or failure to read the mood of the people, Duke Sandoval accepted the offer of aid and Combine DropShips began landing to take in evacuees. The citizenry, driven by rumors that the Combine was stepping in to claim Benet once the existing populace evacuated, reacted badly and violence broke out. For the next three days, the Combine's aid workers found themselves trapped in their own DropShips by angry mobs and even some militia forces. To their credit, the Robinson Rangers and DMM troops stayed clear of the ruckus and continued evacuating outlying communities. Eventually, Tancred was forced to rescind his

acceptance of Combine aid and the Kuritan ships lifted off without a single refugee on board. After broadcasting words of encouragement and resolution to the remaining people on the planet, Tancred Sandoval retreated to Robinson to discuss the situation with his cousin. The talks from their meetings would eventually give rise to what became known, unofficially, as the Sandoval Civil War just a few months later.

The futile evacuation proceeded for the next four months, with Benet's atmosphere worsening each day. By the time the final refugee transport lifted off from Mount Sheppard spaceport outside Donner, millions had died, and not all from the gas clouds. Increasing tensions as the continuing evacuation efforts dragged on led to many violent outbursts that had to be controlled by the forces on the ground. A little more than ten percent of the pre-crisis population survived the Death Mists. Environmental scientists delivered even more bad news in a series of conferences dedicated to the disaster in 3096: the concentration of poisonous elements in Benet's atmosphere had reached a tipping point and it would be centuries—if ever—before the environment returned to normal. At the conclusion of the conferences, the March government on Robinson declared Benet abandoned and off-limits; ComStar officially removed the system from its maps shortly thereafter.

The first governor of the Benet III colony was Hamish McClaugherty of Robinson, whose family maintained a prominent position in the planet's administration until the end of its habitation. Jessika McClaugherty, a direct descendant of Hamish's younger brother, was the last mayor of Donner and made a point of being on the final shuttle of the evacuation.



# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## PILLAGE, PLUNDER, PILFER *"IT'S A FINDERS KEEPERS KIND OF WORLD."*

**Recommended Group Size:** 4-6 players

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, mercenary, special ops, covert ops

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Regular to Veteran (Key Skill levels 3-5)

Inspired by the chaos surrounding Benet III's evacuation, unscrupulous parties have elected to plunder the world's abandoned cities and factories. Johnston Industries' extensive facilities in Kehl County offer a tempting target for the boldest scavengers.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**A Nasty Surprise:** The folks running Johnston Industries are no idiots; they fully expected that someone might raid their abandoned factories in the hopes of finding something useful or profitable. That's why they've left a number of little "surprises" for anyone who tries. These surprises can range from simple booby traps, such as machinery rigged with explosives or other deterrents, to mercenaries contracted to stay behind as long as possible and protect the factories from pillage. Considering Johnston's extensive contacts in the government, an AFFS protective force would not be out of the question.

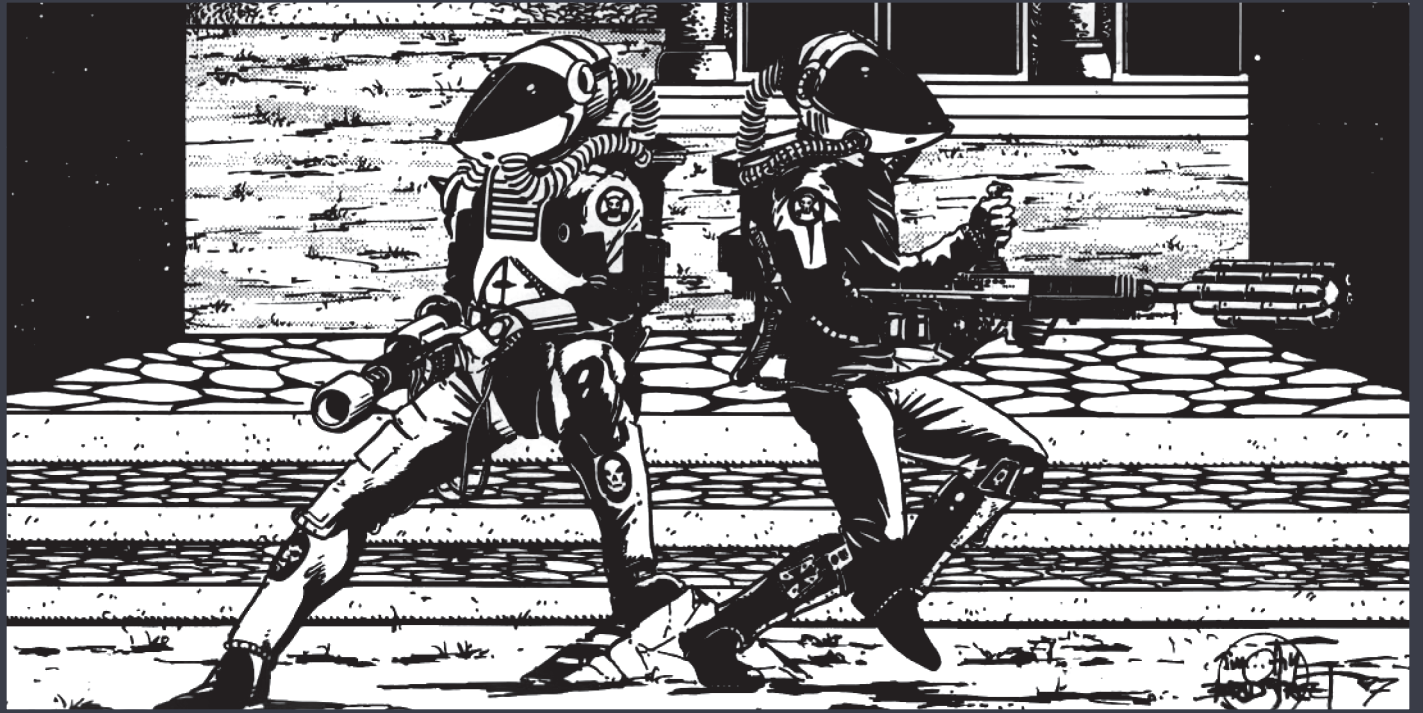
**Everybody Wants Something:** The potential riches to be gained from raiding the Johnston factories would be irresistible to many different parties, not just the one that hired the players. Before they can abscond with any treasures, the players will have to contend with other scavenging NPC groups. The potential for mayhem and accidental disaster while engaging in combat in a factory setting should keep the players on their toes.

**It'll Be Our Little Secret:** Johnston Industries is ostensibly a responsible corporation, but who knows just what secret projects they had going on in their Benet facilities? What better place to hide something they didn't want anyone to know about than a crap-hole planet like Benet III? It would be just the players' luck to stumble across some hidden project deep within the bowels of the factory, something that Johnston would do anything to ensure never came to light. Forbidden bioweapons? HPG research to circumvent ComStar's stranglehold? Technological horrors inspired by the hated and feared Manei Domini? Whatever it is, it can't be good.

**Tips:** It's up to the gamemaster to decide what is left in the abandoned Johnston factories, or even just how abandoned they really are. The chaos of the planetary evacuation can offer a great many wrinkles to this mission. Perhaps the players stumble across a group of citizens hiding out in the factory because they couldn't get to an evac shuttle in time. Do the players help them or continue with their mission? How will the players transport any loot they find away from the factory without alerting whatever authorities remain on planet? What will they do if their employer double-crosses them once they deliver the goods and tries to leave them on a world that will soon be uninhabitable?



# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS



## **ACTION SCIENCE!** *"NERDS, GUNS, POLITICS, AND POISONOUS AIR. WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?"*

**Recommended Group Size:** 4-6 players

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, mercenary

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Green to Veteran (Key Skill levels 1-5)

Increasing seismic activity on Benet over the past several years has been cause for concern among the scientific community. The players are hired to provide protection for an expedition to the Northern Range to investigate the danger to the planet, unaware that there may be a more immediate danger stalking them.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**Local Troubles:** While the badlands of Sierra are largely uninhabited, there do exist several small communities who live their lives unencumbered by social conformity. These people do not take kindly to any intrusions into their domain and have little fear of any show of force less than a full-on military operation. The meager protection provided to the expedition by the players is certainly not enough to deter attack. Though the players may have a better armed and better-trained force, the natives of the badlands have more experience with the region and a large enough reserve of combatants to balance out any advantages.

**Sin After Sin:** The purpose of the expedition may be to gain knowledge regarding the planet's troubles, but human nature doesn't take a back seat to scientific progress. Conflicts, whether based on personal or professional friction, have a habit of coming out when least desirable. As security for the expedition, the players may have to deal with the consequences of such interpersonal conflicts. How will they handle it if one of the lead scientists turns up dead in his quarters one night? Who killed him and why?

**Cross-Purposes:** Not everyone believes in the ecological danger facing Benet III. Some powerful people will stop at nothing to prevent the truth from coming out. The players may have even been approached—as a group or individually—beforehand by agents of these powerful interests with an offer to enrich their own pockets by ensuring that any unwelcome findings made by the expedition never make it back to the public. How will the players handle not knowing whom they can trust, even amongst themselves? Conversely, the expedition's sponsors may have been well aware of the political and corporate opposition to their goals and tasked the players with ferreting out anyone who would try to block the truth from coming out.

**Tips:** Isolating the players and NPCs in a hostile environment and then throwing complications into the mix can provide some interesting storytelling and roleplaying opportunities. Do not hesitate to make the atmosphere of Benet III into an adversary for the players; as they get deeper and deeper into the badlands the air quality will become increasingly poisonous and their lives will depend upon both their equipment and trust in their comrades.

# RULES ANNEX

## MAPSHEET TABLES

GAKKEN COUNTY	2D6 Result	Map
	2	Desert Hills (MSC1)
	3	Desert Sinkhole #1 (MSC1)
	4	Box Canyon (MSC2)
	5	City Ruins (MSC1)
	6	Box Canyon (MSC2)
	7	Desert Mountain #1 (MSC1)
	8	Desert Mountain #2 (MSC1)
	9	Deep Canyon #2 (MSC2)
	10	Desert Hills (MSC1)
	11	Rolling Hills #2 (MSC1)
	12	CityTech* (MSC1)

*\*Place Light and Medium buildings of varying heights in each clear non-paved hex.*

MARQUIS COUNTY	2D6 Result	Map
	2	Rolling Hills #1 (MSC1)
	3	Rolling Hills #2 (MSC1)
	4	Woodland (MSC2)
	5	City Suburbs (MSC2)
	6	River Valley (MSC1)
	7	Rolling Hills #1 (MSC1)
	8	Open Terrain #2 (MSC2)
	9	Open Terrain #1 (MSC2)
	10	BattleTech (MSC1)
	11	River Delta #1 (MSC1)
	12	Rolling Hills #2 (MSC1)

KEHL COUNTY	2D6 Result	Map
	2	Desert Hills (MSC1)
	3	Box Canyon (MSC2)
	4	BattleTech (MSC1)
	5	City Hills Residential #1 (MSC1)
	6	Open Terrain #2 (MSC2)
	7	Open Terrain #1 (MSC1)
	8	Desert Hills (MSC1)
	9	Rolling Hills #1 (MSC1)
	10	Desert Hills (MSC1)
	11	Rolling Hills #2 (MSC1)
	12	CityTech* (MSC1)

*\*Place Light and Medium buildings of varying heights in each clear non-paved hex.*

DONNER COUNTY	2D6 Result	Map
	2	Rolling Hills #1 (MSC1)
	3	CityTech* (MSC1)
	4	CityTech* (MSC1)
	5	City Street Grid Parks (MSC1)
	6	City Downtown* (MSC2)
	7	Rolling Hills #2 (MSC1)
	8	City Residential* (MSC2)
	9	Rolling Hills #2 (MSC1)
	10	Scattered Woods (MSC1)
	11	Open Terrain #2 (MSC2)
	12	CityTech* (MSC1)

*\*Place Light and Medium buildings of varying heights in each clear non-paved hex.*

# OPTIONAL RULES

The following additional special rules are intended to provide further flavor to games set on the world featured in this supplement. For the most part, these rules may be considered advanced and optional, as they primarily reflect conditions and/or features unique to this one planet or planetary system.

## DEATH MISTS

Benet III has become famous for the so-called “Death Mists” that caused the planet’s complete abandonment in the mid-3090s. The atmosphere pre-3094 should be considered Tainted (Poisonous), although the farther one gets from the volcanic peaks in the northern reaches of Gakken County, the more breathable it becomes. Down south, in Marquis County and the Donner Administrative District, the air is breathable without external support, and thus the Tainted atmosphere condition will no longer apply. Player groups operating in the badlands or deeper into Gakken can be subjected to random venting of deadly gasses. So close to the source, these gasses are considered Caustic rather than Poisonous (see p. 56, *TO*) with effects levels that vary from Tainted to Toxic, depending upon the location and time period (as determined by the gamemaster or via random roll).

Post-3094, after the runaway outgassing of Death Mists, all of Benet III’s atmosphere is considered to have a Toxic (Poisonous) atmosphere, with Caustic effects added for any scenarios set within 20 kilometers of a volcano or other gas vent.

The rules for Tainted and Toxic atmospheres are found in *Tactical Operations* (see pp. 56-57, *TO*).

## SCREE RAT

The Benetian scree rat, despite its name, is a lizard-like creature quite a bit larger than the average rat. Native to the badlands of central Sierra, this creature is well adapted to life among the region’s rocks and rough terrain. As an ambush predator, the scree rat’s scaly, rock-like skin allows it to hide among the post-glacial talus and await its prey. It is adept at scrambling at great speed across the badlands’ uneven surfaces. Scree rats hunt in packs, and have little fear of humans; many intruders into a scree rat domain have found themselves on the wrong end of a horrifying assault by half a dozen or more these creatures suddenly emerging from cracks in the ground and surrounding rocks.

The scree rat’s resistance to the poison gasses so common in its home territory has made its blood desirable as a folk remedy to treat those who have been exposed to the toxic air. It is believed, however, that not even the scree rat survived the Death Mists.

**Mass:** 30 kg

STR	BOD	DEX	RFL	INT	WIL	EDG
2	4	3	10	2	4	4

**Size Class (Modifier):** Small (–1)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** Scaly hide 2/2/1/1

**Damage (AP/BD):** 1M/2

**Move (W/R/S):** 10/20/40

**Traits:** Aggressive, Armor (+2), Camouflage (+1), Pack Hunter (6-10), Poison Resistance (+2)

**Skills:** AniMelee (+2), Climbing (+4), Running (+4)

## BENET III TERRAIN

Benet III’s Sierra supercontinent is broadly divided into four counties. The dominant terrain features of these counties are reflected by the various mapsheet tables presented here. Remember that for any scenarios set on Benet III, the planet’s volcanism and geysers create an ever-present hazard of toxic and sometimes caustic chemical taints in the local atmosphere. These effects are covered by the Death Mists rules on this page.

**Eruptions:** As an added option, scenarios set in the Gakken County region—where the planet’s geology is most unstable—may feature volcanic or chemical eruptions that take place right where the action is. To reflect these effects, the players may consider using the rules for Magma and Hazardous Chemical eruptions found in *Tactical Operations* (see pp. 36-38, and p. 49, *TO*, respectively). The rules for geysers (see p. 48, *TO*), may also prove handy. If the Hazardous Liquid Pools Table is used to randomly determine the severity of a chemical-outgassing eruption, apply a +3 modifier to the 1D6 roll, and treat any modified result of 6 or more as Deadly.

## RAPIER FISH

The largest aquatic animal on Benet III, the rapier fish inhabits the warm coastal waters off Marquis County and sport fishing for this creature was a favorite pastime of the rich and well-to-do. Covered in a bony carapace and possessing a thin, sharpened snout for offensive purposes, the rapier fish was a deadly hunter of smaller species but usually was not aggressive towards humans unless provoked. The favorite prey of the rapier fish was the colored kettlefish, which it would spear on its namesake feature and then draw into its mouth using a muscular ridge that undulated along the sides of the spike. Rapier fish rapiers were considered the best tool to use in the popular Benetian sport of spearfishing and a good quality one could fetch high prices on the open market. The status of the rapier fish following the atmospheric catastrophe is unknown.

**Mass:** 80 kg

STR	BOD	DEX	RFL	INT	WIL	EDG
3	5	5	7	2	2	5

**Size Class (Modifier):** Medium (0)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** Bony carapace 3/2/1/2

**Damage (AP/BD):** 2M/3

**Move (W/R/S):** 17/36 (Swimming)

**Traits:** Armor (+3)

**Skills:** AniMelee (+3), Swimming (+6)

# ATLAS

## BOB

(DUNKLEWÄLDERDUNKLERFLÜSSENSCHATTENWELT)

**Star Type:** M1IV (202 hours)

**Position in System:** 1 (of 4)

**Number of Moons:** 1 (Riesenschild)

**Days to Jump Point:** 2.96

**Surface Gravity:** 1.1

**Atm. Pressure:** Standard (Toxic)

**Equatorial Temp:** 15 °C (Cold-Temperate)

**Surface Water:** 72 percent

**Highest Native Life:** Birds

**Recharging Station:** None

**HPG Class:** None

**Population:** 346,000,000 (2765); ca. 956,000 (3130)

**Socio-Industrial Levels:** C-D-D-D-D (2765);

F-F-C-F-C (3130)

**Landmasses (Capital City):** Ketznerheimat,

Klüfterlande (Krimhildshausen—2765), Lamarae,

Lunarblessed (Ruprecht—3130)



## DUNKLEWÄLDERDUNKLERFLÜSSENSCHATTENWELT (LATER KNOWN AS “BOB”)

Lit only by the dim glow of an M1-class subdwarf star, Dunklewälder dunklerflüssenschattenwelt (later known as “Bob”), was never much of a paradise—at least, not by human standards. First surveyed in the late 2500s, shortly before the Draconis Combine’s entry into the Star League, the world was considered for use as a base of operations against the nearby Outworlds Alliance when the Reunification War broke out. Although the DCMS cancelled those plans, the still-unnamed system was later given a second look during the height of the Star League—this time by Frontiers Unlimited, a “colonial brokerage firm” based in the Lyran Commonwealth. In an operation backed with a number of Combine and Terran developers, FU sent an expedition to the planet to establish its claim, under the leadership of Mission Director Thaddeus Øystein.

Director Øystein and his team made landfall in February of 2689, and finished establishing their initial settlement—Krimhildshausen—by the following April. It was only then that the new colonists announced the name of their new homeworld: Dunklewälder dunklerflüssenschattenwelt. Literally translated (from the corrupted form of German that Mr. Øystein spoke) as “shadow world of dark woods and darker rivers,” Dunklewälder dunklerflüssenschattenwelt was easily the longest world name on record at the time—or since. Indeed, it would even gain an extra “n” when House Kurita incorporated the planet in its own registries as a part of the Draconis Combine’s Galedon Military District.

When challenged about the name, Øystein justified his choice for two solid reasons. The first of these was that the coined name was a perfectly accurate description for the new planet; thanks to a variety of factors, the world existed in a near-continuous state of shadow, with forests and rivers tinged nearly black in casual observation. For the second reason,

the director noted how easy it was to find on a map; where many Star League-era colonies tended to receive short, easy to remember names like Capra and Enif, the thirty-six (or, rather, thirty-seven) letter name he bestowed on Dunklewälder dunklerflüssenschattenwelt stood out on maps like a mountain among ant hills.

Nomenclature aside, Dunklewälder dunklerflüssenschattenwelt’s development was fraught with a number of issues. Although it orbited its parent star within the habitable life zone, possessed a human-friendly gravity and climate (albeit on the colder side), and was blessed with ample water supplies, the planet’s evolution had created some unique complications.

For starters, its subdwarf sun was not only noticeably dimmer and cooler than that of an equivalent main sequence star, but its ultraviolet radiation was significantly higher—a condition the settlers termed “ultraviolet excess.” Although the planet had a sufficient magnetosphere to protect against cosmic rays, its ozone layer was weak against the continuous bombardment of ultraviolet. This resulted in a biosphere that wanted for warmth, but was rich in all manner of plant-life. To adapt to these needs, the flora of the planet developed darker pigmentation to draw in as much heat from the light as possible, while the ultraviolet radiation infused them with energy to spare. Trees on the planet regularly grew to dizzying heights, extending canopies of thick, green-black leaves that virtually blotted out the sunlight along the forest floors, while equally dark algae and aquatic plant life transformed even the shallowest freshwater ponds into inscrutable expanses that could be mistaken for tar pits. Even the planet’s air was tainted by this gloom, as pollens from the abundant plant life created unnatural clouds of organic, green-gray dust on a seasonal basis.

# ATLAS

Fortunately for the first settlers, the water and air contaminants could be managed well enough with basic filtration technologies, but the danger of exposure to the ultraviolet excess all but forced them to locate most of their settlements under the shade of Dunklewälder dunkleflüssenschattenwelt's obsidian hyper-sequoias. Human encroachment thus began amid the planet's forests, which soon revealed the existence of several unique predators, including the jet-black, blood-sucking nachzehrers (a native, toothy, bat-like bird named for vampires of ancient Germanic lore), and the shambling valdvicts (a large, ambulatory plant capable of launching barbed vines to stun and ensnare prey).

These alien predators—particularly difficult to handle, thanks to their large numbers and tendency to blend in with the surroundings—were especially dangerous to the colonists' food supplies. Because human biology could not process the majority of the planet's native species, virtually all of the local agriculture and ranching grew dependent on imports. Efforts to create adequately protected havens for transplanted livestock and crops often drew more attention from native fauna, and it was only through carefully coordinated culling programs that Dunklewälder dunkleflüssenschattenwelt's developers gained enough breathing room to grow. In addition to these plant and animal hazards, many of the world's residents suffered from regular bouts of various illnesses and allergic reactions traced to other impurities found throughout the global biosphere. While Star League medicine largely kept these cases in check and lethality was rare, additional mental health issues continued to plague the first generations of settlers—a result of their extended living in a world of such perpetual darkness.

Despite the challenges, Dunklewälder dunkleflüssenschattenwelt persevered, its population growing past 300 million by the 2760s. By this time, House Kurita's leadership had seen fit to establish a permanent garrison base on the planet, ostensibly to keep an eye on the nearby worlds of the Outworlds Alliance and guard transit routes to and from other frontier worlds such as Antallos.

In 2784, after the dissolution of the Star League, General Aleksandr Kerensky and most of the surviving SLDF gathered at New Samarkand in preparation for their final exodus from the Inner Sphere. Alarmed at the sudden military build-up, House Kurita began scrambling its military forces in anticipation of a possible assault by a vengeful Kerensky. Located relatively close to the region, the DCMS garrison on Dunklewälder dunkleflüssenschattenwelt—the Twelfth Dieron Regulars—was among those redeployed.

When the Combine troops failed to return after Kerensky's departure, and news of war with Houses Steiner and Davion came just two years later, Governor Patton MacDonald decided to make several sweeping changes. Some of these common-sense efforts aimed to improve local security and infrastructure, but others focused more on keeping the people distracted in these uncertain times. In 2788—one year before the centennial celebration of the planet's initial settlement—Governor MacDonald announced a global referendum to replace the planet's cumbersome name. On 1 April 2789, amid much fanfare, the votes were tallied and a surprising new name (chosen decisively by the unlikely of grassroots campaigns ever waged in recent history) was found.

From that day forth, Dunklewälder dunkleflüssenschattenwelt became known, simply, as "Bob."



# ATLAS

Of course, what nobody imagined happening was the complete collapse of all interstellar travel to the planet once the name change took place. With the DCMS invasion of the Federated Suns well underway, the communiques reported from Bob—delivered by courier ship, as the planet's HPG had failed during the Amaris Crisis years—never found their way to all the necessary officials. The oversight, which would go unnoticed for more than half a century, led to calamity as Dunklewälder dunkler Flüßenschattenwelt vanished from the maps, and was replaced by a new world named Bob...

While all shipments earmarked for the planet's very survival still bore the old name.

Worse still, the Combine's growing need for ships to support their war effort stripped away all "non-essential traffic" in the area. Within months of the name change ceremonies, trade to the frontier world had abruptly ceased. With no working HPG station to report in, "Bob" was completely cut off from the interstellar community. Efforts by the MacDonald administration to keep the crisis quiet while they sought a means to get word out before starvation ensued failed. Soon, the cessation of traffic and news from off-world became painfully apparent, creating an economic downturn that went from bad to worse with each passing month. Agricomplexes failed, medical facilities ran out of supplies needed to keep local pathogens in check, and illness became widespread. With no native fuel sources—Bob lacked reasonably accessible native fuel sources, and thus relied heavily on imported fuel, fuel cells and fusion technology—on-world travel across the planet slowed to a crawl, further undermining the local infrastructure.

The rioting began in the fifth year of Bob's isolation. Governor MacDonald started ordering crackdowns, diverting security forces optimally raised to maintain the culling cycles. As the increasingly paranoid and desperate citizens fought back, the populations of nachzehrers and valdvicts rebounded at an alarming rate. Whole cities burned, while outlying towns fell to rampaging predators.

Between the fighting, starvation, and collapse of infrastructure, more than half of Bob's planetary population succumbed over the next ten years. When the last vestiges of the planetary government collapsed entirely in 2805, the various survivor settlements found themselves left to their own devices. By 2815, ComStar survey teams found the world's many cities burned out and abandoned, their streets filled with skeletal remains stripped bare by local predators, while the air and water tested high in a variety of native toxins. Bob—still recognized under its old name of Dunklewälder dunkler Flüßenschattenwelt in ComStar's database—was written off as another incidental casualty of the First Succession War.

*[Editor's Note: As was the case for many such worlds, however, there were many pockets of human survivors left behind and overlooked by these survey teams. Those on Bob managed to survive in small, scattered communities with varying level of success, while nature overran their abandoned cities and towns—in many cases, literally.]*

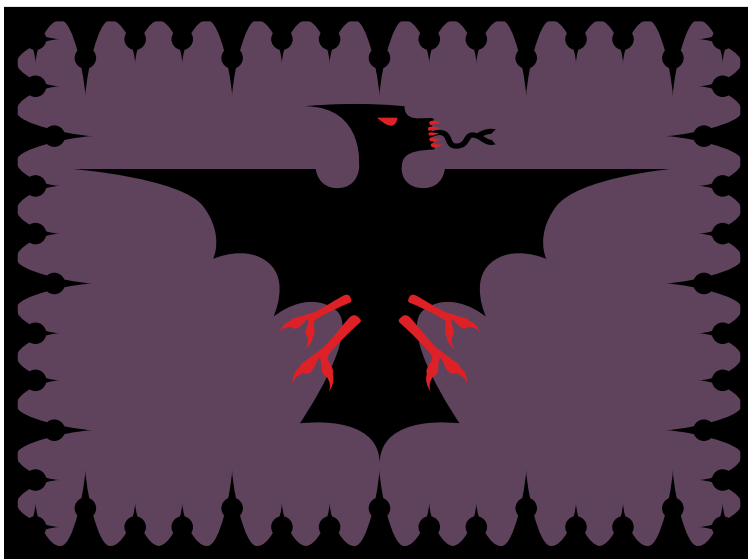
Bob is remarkable not only for the interesting species of flora and fauna that call its dark lands home, but also for the obvious signs of a great cataclysm that clearly befell the planet perhaps as recently as ten thousand years before mankind came along. At some point in the planet's past, its single moon was struck by a large, fast-moving celestial object—possibly another moon, spun off from one of two ice giant planet that occupy the system's outermost orbits.

The impact tore a chunk of Bob's own moon away, sending large hunks of lunar debris into the planet below, creating numerous craters that can still be seen in the geography today. Most of these impacts struck the vast expanse of the planet's largest continent (Ketzerheimat), while a particularly violent strike near the shores the smaller, southern continent of Klüfterlande formed a gulf the locals named Kesselmeer. Volcanism triggered by this particular impact formed a prominent spike of igneous land that rises from the center of this gulf, and was named the Himmelsspitze ("Heaven's Point"). Other evidence of the so-called "Great Lunar Fall" can be seen in the form of island chains created by impact ejecta, and there are even signs of strikes beneath the frozen wastes of the northern Lamarae continent. Indeed, only one major land mass on Bob appears to have been

spared the direct effects of the ancient cataclysm: Lunarblesst—the planet's other southern continent.

*[Editor's Note: Because the early surveys suggested that the presence of Bob's moon likely prevented a more direct hit on the planet itself, the surviving remnant was named Riesenschild ("Giant shield") by the Øystein Expedition. Today, with all the major fragments long since fallen to Bob or spun away entirely, only a fine trail of smaller debris follows Riesenschild's progress across the sky, creating an irregular and incomplete dust ring that shares the lunar orbit and makes it appear as if the planet is being perpetually circled by its very own comet.]*

It is interesting to note that most of the planet's occupied settlements stand on this landmass today, with the largest township (Ruprecht; population: about 25,000) serving as the closest thing the planet has to a capital city. These people—descendants of the few survivors of the planet's collapse centuries ago—have only a fragmentary knowledge of what followed in the wake of their ancestors' downfall. What they do seem to recall, however, paints a picture of horrors that suggest a



# ATLAS



period of barbarism, in which many of the locals turned on one another. Some even claim that tribes of cannibalistic men—called Dunkels by the locals—still linger in the forgotten woodlands of the distant lands, their existence devolved to pre-civilized times. [*Cursory surveys to these regions by reputable explorers have yet to reveal whether any “Dunkel” groups actually survive today, or whether they are spoken of only in the manner that one might use to scare children into good behavior.*]

Reduced to a technological sophistication roughly analogous to Terra’s European region during the nineteenth century, the Bobbies (as they call themselves) have developed a hardy resistance to the planet’s natural toxins that would have made their forefathers envious. While visitors to their world still must rely on filtration technologies to drink the water or breathe the air—especially in the local spring and autumn seasons—today’s Bobbies require no such aid. This might be attributable to a remarkable addition made to the people’s diet: the pulpy “flesh” of the valdvict.

Evidently, this ambulatory floral predator held within its thick hide a secret ability to process the nutrients of its animal kills in a way that could—with some effort—be consumed by humans. Although this “plant meat” is tougher and chewier than cattle jerky (and is still unpalatable and barely digestible to non-natives of this world), the people of Bob have learned to harness this new food source in a way that has enabled them to live on past their own “dark age,” and enter a new age of enlightenment.

Despite their throwback existence, it is clear that the Bobbies never forgot that humanity came from the stars, and the locals still remember childhood tales of a “Great Red Dragon” that once ruled over their world generations past. But they know nothing of the Clans, the Jihad, or the Republic of the Sphere. The Bobbies speak in a language that is mostly English, but mashes in some words of Germanic and Japanese origins, and they retained the basic principles of mechanical and electrical engineering possible for such technological conveniences as artificial lighting, recorded music, printing presses, and indoor plumbing. With a lack of even fossil fuels to work with, however, engine technology on Bob has regressed to steam and hydroelectric power sources. Local literature exists, with many samples clearly transcribed from copies of ancient Star League-era texts, as well as original tales—some of which appear to be romanticized versions of their own half-forgotten past.

Curiously enough, however, there is one word that has been forgotten completely by the people of Bob:

Dunklewälder dunklerflüssenschattenwelt.

# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## IT SEEMED LIKE SUCH A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME!

**Recommended Group Size:** 2-4 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Security, Resistance, Survivors

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Green-Veteran (Key Skill levels of 1-5)

For the people of Dunklewälder dunklerflüssenschattenwelt, April Fool's Day of 2789 was the beginning of a long and grisly end. Governor MacDonald, of course, had no way of knowing that the planet's name change to "Bob" would prove so disastrous, but when he found that his world and its people were suddenly and inexplicably shut off from the very universe, he quickly entered panic mode.

Aware that the cessation of off-world traffic and news would not go unnoticed for long, MacDonald began preparing the various security and police agencies for the inevitable unrest. Stalling for time, he told his fellow "Bobbites" (the original term the rechristened planet's inhabitants gave themselves) an endless series of lies. Local merchant JumpShips, he claimed, had been "temporarily reassigned" or "experienced technical difficulties," while the planet's HPG techs were receiving word "almost daily" from the Kurita leadership, and would be able to restore transmission services to properly report the crisis "any day now."

Meanwhile, MacDonald's administration desperately tried to reestablish some form of contact with the Draconis Combine, the Outworlds Alliance, or even the equally isolated world of Antallos. Planetary communication satellites were turned outward, beaming distress calls into deep space, and several of the planet's resident merchant DropShips were commandeered for "special errands," their skeleton crews tasked with "slow-boating" their way to the nearest star systems—missions that, tragically, would never succeed.

As the people gradually became aware of just how dire the situation was, and that their governor had hidden it for so long, the tensions fueled by years of lies and dwindling supplies reached their boiling point. In the years to come, Bob's entire civilization would plunge into chaos.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**The Natives are Restless:** Whether assuming the role of security personnel working for the MacDonald government, or citizen agitators struggling with the very real threat of imminent starvation, these will be dangerous times indeed. MacDonald's efforts will aim at restoring calm with minimal bloodshed at first, but when things turn ugly, the fighting will be devastating. Lacking heavy equipment beyond police vehicles, riot control will not happen in the form of unassailable BattleMechs; it will get up close and personal.

**Warriors of the Road:** Food will not be the only precious commodity drying up as traffic to Bob stops. Every consumable resource, from fuel sources and batteries, to engines, equipment, and ammo will begin to grow scarce. Having not anticipated such a sudden disruption of access to the local trade routes, stockpiles will be non-existent, and it will not take long before the authorities or common survivalists realize their only hope may lie in securing as many of these limited resources for themselves.

**Survival of the Fittest:** As the months and years go by, and society crumbles entirely, the desperate and increasingly hungry populace will have to consider securing alternative food sources. With few digestible options that do not come at the cost of lingering illness, and carefully tended crops and cattle herds overrun by predators or consumed by other humans, the unthinkable may be necessary to survive.

**Tips:** For *A Time of War* scenarios, this is going to get nasty. As basic filtration technologies fail, Bob's environment itself will turn on its surviving humans. Illnesses of various types—most side effects of consuming local food, drinking poorly filtered water, or even breathing the air during the planet's spring and autumn months—will grow commonplace. Gamemasters should use the Disease rules (see pp. 245-249, *AToW*) as a guide. Many of the local illnesses are recoverable, but it will take the survivors on Bob several generations to develop enough tolerance to these dangers. It will also be necessary to keep track of any and all consumables the characters use in the aftermath of society's collapse; scavenging and scrounging will be only way to survive in what will quickly become a wild wasteland.



# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## YOU'RE NOT FROM AROUND HERE, ARE YOU?

**Recommended Group Size:** 2 to 8 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Pirate, Explorer, Mercenary

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Veteran (Key Skill levels of 4-6)

The oversight that led to Bob's demise on interstellar maps took over fifty years to come to light. By then, of course, the Succession Wars were in full swing, and both technology and casual travel across the Inner Sphere were in decline. With little to recommend it before the collapse, and a death sentence passed by ComStar after all was said and done, few saw any reason to give the world another look.

Naturally, this made the system a haven for bandits and a destination for explorers. With so much left in ruin, and an environment far from hospitable, visitors never stayed long—though some may have never left, depending on where they landed, how lacking they were in defenses, and who (or what) emerged to greet them.

Welcome to Bob!

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**The Forest is Alive!?:** The dark woodlands of Bob provide shadow for many forgotten settlements, and an ideal place to hide from pursuit for those living a life on the lam. It also tends to protect visitors to the planet from the worst of the sun's ultraviolet excess. Unfortunately, they are also host to a wide array of alien predators, which includes some of the nastiest flora and fauna on the planet. The worst of these are the dreaded valdvicts and nachzehrers. Adapted to blend into their surroundings, or to lurk so high up in the towering foliage as to be effectively out of sight and mind entirely, these creatures often lie in wait, striking at their prey with little to no warning, day or night.

**Meet the Locals:** Depending on where visitors to Bob set down, they might encounter the planet's remaining human inhabitants. On the continent of Lunarbled, these humans will tend to be the relatively civilized Bobbies, who live a primitive existence similar to Terra at the turn of the twentieth century, and will be rather non-violent—though not necessarily friendly or trusting. The Bobbies see the worlds beyond theirs as people who abandoned them, and thus hold a deep belief that they have no real need for the humanity that rejected them. They will fight if threatened, using rather primitive—but nevertheless effective—weaponry. Visitors who land elsewhere—particularly on the continents of Ketzerheimat and Klüfterlande—will more than likely encounter the barbaric "Dunkel" tribes. These harsh wilderness survivors have regressed to a truly primitive existence, and their language has degraded to the point of near incoherence. Like the Bobbies, they are largely immune to the planet's tainted biosphere, but their diet is often supplemented with human flesh—as much a result of desperation as a remnant of their brutal existence. Dunkles are tight knit and completely untrusting of outsiders; they are as likely to attack as they are to flee, and are capable of laying traps to snare anyone or anything they consider a potential food source.

**The Ruins of Fliegerabwehrbataillon:** Among the more curious artifacts of Bob's fallen greatness still standing, the ruins of Fliegerabwehrbataillon are located in northern Ketzerheimat, where the planet's largest continent meets the barren, arctic expanses of Lamarae. Judging by the vast expanses of cracked ferrocrete and the nature-overrun towers, Fliegerabwehrbataillon was a large spaceport and military base that dates back to the days when a DCMS garrison called this world home. The surrounding fortifications include a number of ancient, corroded weapon emplacements, and an assortment of bunkers underground have collapsed, flooded, or are now home to unknown surprises. Curiously, a cautious inspection may reveal signs of repeated visits over the last few centuries, including a segment of glassy ferrocrete indicative of fairly recent DropShip landings on the ancient tarmac. The mysteries of who has been coming to visit this ruin—and for what purpose—are excellent fodder for explorers and lostech scavengers alike.

**Tips:** *A Time of War* gamemasters should read up on the rules for creatures (see pp. 238-244, *AToW*; and pp. 106-119, *AToWC*) to handle encounters between player characters and the local fauna. Consult the Optional Rules for Bob's Flora and Fauna for more information (see p. 12). Likewise, bear in mind that Bob's environment is generally inhospitable for human life. Although its atmosphere is considered Toxic, the fact that most effects are not immediately lethal so much as they are continuously debilitating, consult the appropriate Tainted Atmosphere rules (see p. 238, *AToW* or pp. 56-57, *TO*).

Among the human survivors, the Dunkel peoples possess very primitive, improvised weaponry no more advanced than sticks, stones, and slings, and limited personal armor. Their civilized Bobbie counterparts are better equipped, but still primitive by modern standards. More information on this is also found in the Optional Rules (See p. 12). If fighting either group on the tactical level, the locals will work as conventional infantry; there simply hasn't been much demand for armored vehicles on Bob since the world's collapse.

# OPTIONAL RULES

The following additional special rules are intended to provide further flavor to games set on the world featured in this product. For the most part, these rules may be considered advanced and optional, as they primarily reflect conditions and/or features unique to this one planet or planetary system.

## BOB'S FLORA AND FAUNA

Bobbian flora and fauna largely reflect and amplify the planet's dark, shadowy nature. Most plant life has a deep green to black coloring, which allows them to draw and retain heat better, while an abundance of ultraviolet light has given them energy to spare, resulting in some truly impressive growth. (The average height of Bobbian trees ranges from 20 to 50 meters, with the native "hyper-sequoias" reaching dizzying heights of 300 meters or more.) Because such gigantic foliage requires extensive root systems and branch spread, however, a typical Bobbian forest actually tends to have enough open land to move vehicles and BattleMechs through unhindered. The tactical gameplay effects of this may be found under Bob's Terrain (see p. 14).

Some of Bob's flora is so energized that it has taken on animalistic qualities. Bob has a number of plant forms that are carnivorous and/or mobile, with attack features that include toxic secretions, "exhaled" poisons, and prehensile limbs. Of these killer plant-animal hybrid forms, the valdvict is arguably Bob's apex predator, capable not only of remarkably fast movement and a kind of thermal "perception," but also a deadly, short-ranged vine grapple attack. Worse still, even when a Bobbian plant form is *not* actively trying to hunt and kill something, the pollen of most Bobbian flora has proven toxic to human beings. Regular seasonal releases of Bobbian pollen—which looks much like blowing ash—can cause outbreaks of various seasonal illnesses and severe allergies. Fortunately, few of these are lethal in nature, but only the natives of Bob have lived on the planet long enough to withstand these ill-effects completely.

The animal forms on Bob include insects of various sizes, fish, some amphibians, reptiles, and toothy, bird-like avians. Most of these creatures mimic the darkness of their environment, largely for camouflage purposes, but also for some degree of heat retention. Of these animal forms, the nachzehrer is the most vicious of the planet's avian predators (but not necessarily the largest). Having long developed an affinity for perching in the high limbs of Bobbian trees, this bat-like creature tends to swoop down on its prey in small flocks that can quickly overwhelm even a human adult in seconds.

## BOB'S CHILDREN

The human survivors on Bob are divided into two broad groups: the primitive and tribal Dunkels, and the much more organized and sophisticated Bobbies. Both groups have developed a tolerance to the planet's normally sickening ecosystem, and both may pose a threat to unfamiliar visitors. To reflect this, all natives of Bob who are born or live after 2850 automatically possess the Fit Trait (see p. 117, *AToW*).

Among the Dunkel, personal weaponry consists of nothing more advanced than sticks, stones, slings, and other improvised low-tech weapons—none of which use refined metals in any way. Some Dunkels have developed a kind of personal armor made from flexible bark-hide of the valdvict (BAR 2/2/1/1). Dunkels have no functional knowledge of advanced firearms or heavy equipment, and all are considered illiterate (see p. 119, *AToW*).

The civilized Bobbies have retained a level of industrial technology, but in the absence of economical fuels and full-scale production facilities, most of their equipment is hand-made by dedicated craftsmen. Bobbie weapons typically include bows (including crossbows), steel swords and knives, and basic slug throwers—most of which use simpler technology (represented by Tech Level B equipment in *AToW* Equipment Tables). Bobbies don't often make use of personal armor, but some town guardsmen have been known to wear a kind of locally-produced, valdvict leather-backed chainmail that functions much like a vintage bulletproof vest (BAR 1/3/1/2). Bobbies maintain an economy largely based on barter, but there is also a form of local print currency used as a means of credit.

## VALDVICT

The name valdvict—evidently an Anglicized corruption of "Wald Wicht" (or "Forest Wretch")—refers to one of the nastiest predators on Bob...one that is not an animal in the true sense of the word. This ambulatory plant form typically stands anywhere from three to four meters in height, with the bulk of its body resembling the stout trunk of a local hyper-sequoia sapling. Its "feet" are a knotted group of 20 to 30 small, prehensile appendages that resemble thick roots anywhere from 30 to 60 centimeters in length, which enable the creature to move by coiling and uncoiling in concert.

Wrapping around the trunk of the valdvict are a number of leafy vines that otherwise blend in with the creature's flexible brown-black bark skin. These vines descend from a cluster of thicker limbs that spread out from the top of the plant like the branches of any other tree, with an ample number of black-green leaves that gather much of the creature's energy during long dormancy cycles. "Buds" among these limbs and among the creature's root-like "toes" serve as sensory organs that detect the presence and position of nearby water and heat sources.

The valdvict normally remains stationary for long periods, preying only on small creatures that happen by while absorbing water, nutrients, and ultraviolet energy in the same manner as most plants. During this time, the creature tends to bury its root-feet into the soil, and remains largely stock-still for days, weeks, or even months at a time, gathering energy slowly. Indeed, until it attacks (or a dearth of nutrients in the immediate vicinity forces it to move in an effort to stave off its own starvation), valdvicts look and act just like most common plant forms in the universe. Only when the creature has stored enough energy for extended movement will it generally do much more than passively absorb the minerals it needs, sometimes even casually snaring small creatures lured by pheromones excreted from the base of its trunk. As a result of this habit, it is not uncommon for larger animals or people to pass a valdvict many times over a span of several days before finally triggering an attack. Because their senses are more acute at night, most valdvict strikes tend to happen after sunset.

When the valdvict does launch an attack, however, the movement is alarmingly swift. A whip-like twist of the creature's trunk is usually the only warning, giving alert prey only one or two seconds to react. At that point, the creature releases one or more of its dangling vines, each of which can extend as far as five meters in any direction to ensnare and stun its prey. The combination of the vines' impact, and the paralyzing toxins released by rows of retractable, fang-like "thorns" along their length, is typically enough to stun a creature long enough

# OPTIONAL RULES

for the valdvict to then move toward it as its vines begin to constrict, further immobilizing the victim. Once a valdvict reaches its prey, it clambers atop the fresh kill's body, and begins to dig its roots back into the surrounding soil, while gradually widening its trunk base to accommodate its meal. It is the crushing and suffocation that results from that which typically kills the valdvict's prey, even as numerous channels in the creature's base begin to absorb the proteins of the hapless animal. Digestion of a valdvict's prey can take hours, but the valdvict usually retains enough energy to move away if it senses danger nearby.

Like most pseudo-animal plant forms, the valdvict appears to have no distinct brain or complex organs to speak of, but its behavior suggests a kind of rudimentary predatory intelligence more complex than other ambulatory plants. Furthermore, much like a tree, valdvicts can survive the loss of several limbs, leaves, vines, and roots before it loses the ability to function. That most of these appendages can be grown back in time means that the most reliable way to truly kill a valdvict is to shatter its trunk (though burning and poisoning the creature can be effective means as well).

STR	BOD	DEX	RFL	INT	WIL	EDG
17	25	1	1	2	0	0

**Mass:** 320-480 kg

**Size Class (Modifier):** Large (+1)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** 4/4/3/3 (Bark Hide)

**Damage (AP/BD):** 2M/6\*

**Move (W/R/S):** 4/12/35

**Traits:** Armor (+4), Camouflage (+2 [E/I/C: 0/0/5]), Exceptional Attack/Constrict, \*Exceptional Attack/Whip (base damage on successful attack, plus Poison; Range: 2/4/5/6), Poison (Injected: AP/Strength: 25/6; Duration: 4 turns; Continuous, Subduing), Offensive Adaptation (Retractable Thorns)

**Skills:** AniMelee (+2), Perception (+2)

## NACHZEHRER

Compared to Bob's homicidal plant forms, the nachzehrer is much more easily understood. Named for vampires of ancient Germanic lore, these black-feathered avians look almost like terrestrial bats in their wing and tail shape, and indeed were initially classified as bats, thanks to their behavior and appearance, until closer inspection revealed their feathers, hollow bone structure, and the eggs that they lay in their high-altitude nests.

Unlike most bird species, the nachzehrer does not have a beak, but rather a lamprey-like snout, ringed by sharp teeth that the creature uses to latch onto its prey. Four sharp-taloned feet enable the creature to maintain its grip on the high branches of the Bobbian trees this species calls home, and also helps them capture and restrain smaller victims. As dedicated blood-suckers, nachzehrer favor all manner of land animals, and appear to be just as content feeding off of native fauna as they do humans, even though it is known that human blood is nearly as indigestible to these creatures as most Bobbian fauna is for humans.

The favored tactic of nachzehrer is to hang from the branches of their trees, patiently scanning the grounds below for signs of movement while remaining motionless for hours on end. To maximize



their potential for finding prey, nachzehrer work in flight packs of six or more creatures, often spaced out to cover a wider area. When a suitable victim is sighted, the lead bird typically lets out a short, ultra-high frequency cry that lets its pack know to attack, before beginning its dive. The entire group then converges on the target, each latching onto a different body location to feed.

Because the various ambulatory plant forms on Bob offer no nutritional value to nachzehrer, these bird-bats almost never seem to attack them. Even though nachzehrer are known to be drawn to movement, the species has apparently learned to ignore the motion of the resident foliage—possibly for their own good. After all, it appears certain that creatures like the valdvict don't really care what their prey is when they strike.

STR	BOD	DEX	RFL	INT	WIL	EDG
3	4	5	5	4	6	4

**Mass:** 2-3 kg

**Size Class (Modifier):** Very Small (-2)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** 1/0/0/0 (Feathered Hide)

**Damage (AP/BD):** 2M/3

**Move (W/R/S):** 1/75

**Traits:** Aggressive, Blood Sucker, Camouflage (+1 [E/I/C: 0/0/3]), Offensive Adaptation (Fangs/Talons), Patient, Night Vision (+3), Pack Hunter (6-10)

**Skills:** AniMelee (+4), Perception (+6), Stealth (+2), Tracking (+1)

# OPTIONAL RULES

## GEFERLIXING

For those inclined to think that the only real hazards to life live on land, the geferlixing exists to remind them that even Bob's rivers are unsafe. The name is another Anglicized corruption of the species original Germanic designation—*Gefährliches Ding*—which literally translates to “dangerous thing.” Encountered early on by the first colonial expeditions to the world, the geferlixing was originally identified as a mysterious marine life form of unknown shape, size, and capabilities, because the dark river waters of the planet made visual contact impossible. It thus took nearly five years before the settlers could agree that their “Ding” was, in fact, a long-bodied, fang-mouthed eel.

The geferlixing—available in both saltwater and freshwater varieties, as well as some oceanic versions with truly titanic proportions—nominally feeds on the floating concentrations of pollen-infused seaweed and algae found along the planet's coastal and inland waters. However, these creatures are actually omnivorous, since their diet can also include smaller fish, as well as any other creatures that dare to enter their waters. Like most of Bob's native marine animals, geferlixings do not rely on visual sensory organs to guide them, but use a mix of magnetic and sonographic sensory organs for navigation. As a result, these six-finned eels (the river-dwelling versions of which can measure up to two meters in length) possess no identifiable eyes, and look mostly like a mouthful of teeth connected to a long, oily black tail.

Geferlixings appear to have no fear or sense of scale, which is what truly made them so dangerous to the human settlers. While their normal diet consisted of small morsels of floating detritus and marine life, these creatures often attack any larger land animals that step deeply enough into their watery domains. In most such cases, a geferlixing will swim swiftly toward the intruder, and either latch directly on its feet with its jaws, or simply encircle the legs in an attempt to force its prey to trip. Human survivors of geferlixing attacks have even claimed that these beasts have enough strength to snag and pull an unsuspecting leg or arm, attempting to drag their victims down much the same way terrestrial alligators do when trying to drown larger prey.

STR	BOD	DEX	RFL	INT	WIL	EDG
4	6	4	6	2	6	3

**Mass:** 31 kg

**Size Class (Modifier):** Medium (+0)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** 1/0/0/0 (Light Scale Hide)

**Damage (AP/BD):** 2M/3

**Move (W/R/S):** 12/25

**Traits:** Aggressive, Blood Rage, Camouflage (+1 [E/I/C: 0/0/3]), Good Hearing (+4), Offensive Adaptation (Fangs/Bite Grip)

**Skills:** Animal Agility (+3), AniMelee (+4), Perception (+4), Stealth (+2), Swimming (+3)

## BOB'S TERRAIN

The terrain on Bob is significantly dominated by massive woodlands, river valleys, and mountains, most of which are tinged with darkness, even when lit by the planet's weak sun. Many of Bob's larger mountain chains, small islands, and coastlines are actually the remnants of the huge craters that formed during a massive catastrophe the early colonists called The Great Lunar Fall.

## MAPSHEETS TABLE

WOODLANDS	2d6 Result	Map*
	1	Scattered Woods (MS2, MSC2)
	2	BattleTech (CBT, MS2, MSC1)
	3	Woodland (MS6, MSC2)
	4	River Delta/Drainage Basin #1 (MS4, MSC1)
	5	River Delta/Drainage Basin #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	6	Scattered Woods (MS2, MSC2)

\*See rules for additional conditions

Because of the sheer height and size of Bobbian trees, the floor of a typical woodland on Bob is actually quite open. To reflect this, for any scenario set inside a Bobbian woodland, use the Bobbian Woodlands Table presented here, and treat all heavy woods hexes on the map as impassible terrain that blocks line of sight (representing the massive trunks of a Bobbian super-tree). Light Woods hexes on the same mapsheets are treated as Heavy Woods for line of sight and cover purposes, while any Rough/Rubble hexes should be treated as Light Woods. Water features and elevation changes are unmodified under these rules. In addition to this, combat inside a Bobbian woodland is treated as though it is happening under Full Moon Night conditions (see p. 58, *TO*) during the planet's daylight hours. If the battle takes place at night, the effects become those of a Moonless Night instead (see p. 58, *TO*).

Finally, as noted under the Tips for the *You're Not From Around Here* Adventure Seed, treat the atmosphere on Bob as Tainted (see p. 56, *TO*).

## BOB'S WATERS

Bob's waters, especially in the rivers and coastal areas, are chronically darkened by a blackish muck thanks to its forests' common black pollen drifts and the various species of marine plant forms that have inherited the same tendency to assume extra-dark green-black colors as their surface analogs. Because of this, little light penetrates the waters' surface, drawing in heat and allowing little of it to escape.

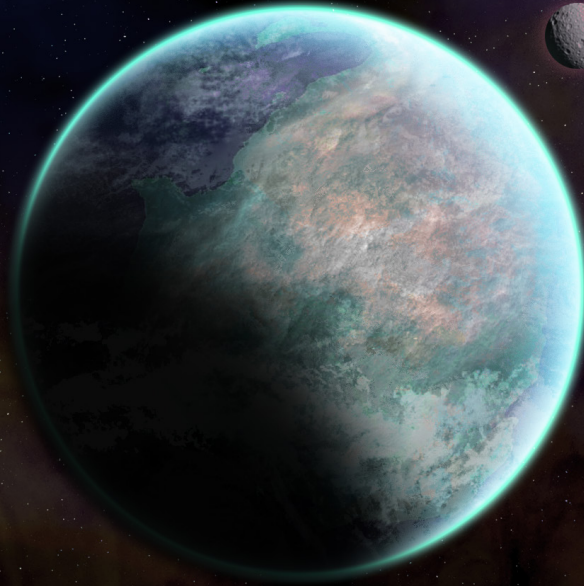
While basic filtration technology can easily make the waters safe and clean enough for drinking and indoor plumbing, moving through rivers or coastal waters can be a unique and hazardous endeavor, especially as there are a number of Bobbian marine species just waiting for unsuspecting surface fauna to intrude upon their bleak realm. The almost tropical warmth of these waters, however, has made many of the planet's inland rivers and lakes an inviting place for the more cold-blooded native species.

To reflect these characteristics, any time a character or unit enters Bobbian waters, it must make a relevant Action Check to avoid falling (a RFL Attribute check for characters, or a Piloting Skill check). To reflect the increased difficulty in seeing and gauging the underwater terrain, all such rolls for entering and moving through the black Bobbian waters must apply a -2 modifier to the dice roll's result. Units or characters that become fully submerged in Bobbian black waters will find the darkness cannot be penetrated by searchlights, and thus must apply all visual modifiers for Pitch Blackness when performing any actions while submerged (see p. 236, *AToW*; or p. 58, *TO*).

# ATLAS

## BONE-NORMAN

**Star Type (Recharge Time):** G6V (187 hours)  
**Position in System:** 2 (of 9)  
**Time to Jump Point:** 7.01 days  
**Number of Satellites:** 1 (Devil's Pinch)  
**Surface Gravity:** 0.92  
**Atm. Pressure:** Standard (Breathable)  
**Equatorial Temperature:** 24°C (Temperate)  
**Surface Water:** 65%  
**Recharging Station:** None  
**HPG Class:** B  
**Highest Native Life:** Birds  
**Population:** 6,500,000  
**Socio-Industrial Levels:** C-D-D-B-C  
**Landmasses (Capital City):** Hapsburg (Red Stone Palace), Renick



## BONE-NORMAN

A stark world on the fringes of the Inner Sphere proper, Bone-Norman's desolate, haunting geography can spook even the most experienced warrior, convincing them that enemies lurk just out of sight and that the planet itself does not want them there.

Selected as a potential breadbasket world for the Rim Worlds Republic, early settlers to Bone-Norman encountered a major obstacle to their colonization effort. The elliptical passage of Bone-Norman's single, unusually dense moon creates powerful tidal forces that, over eons, have radically impacted the planet's two main landmasses: Hapsburg and Renick.

On the large Hapsburg continent, the tides collided with the land's normal drift to force up sharp mountain peaks along the landmass' long, western "leading" edge. These mountains, the Rücken range, stretch three-quarters of the distance from pole to pole. The result is a dramatically rocky littoral zone where the difference between high tide and low tide can be hundreds of meters, overlooked by steep mountains. Ocean winds slam into the Rückens, leaving the windward side of the mountains damp and creating a fierce, frequent Foehn wind phenomenon on the backside of the range. Over time, this warm, dry, fast-moving air scraped all vegetation from the leeward side of the mountains as it rocketed past, and created badlands stretching far to the continent's interior. The winds carved a network of rock formations and caverns across these badlands, and their unnerving, eerie howl through these formations is audible even inside the sealed confines of a BattleMech cockpit. Bone-Norman's people maintain that those on the lee side of the mountains are subject to the ancient *Föhnkrankheit*, or "wind-sickness," with symptoms ranging from migraines to outright psychosis. No serious medical study has ever proven any ill effects, but

most residents of Bone-Norman's interior accept it as a reality and give those from the Rückens a wide berth.

Hapsburg's hilly badlands eventually give way to rolling plains filled with blue grass, and thick stands of forests populated by an odd native tree the locals call werewillows. The Rücken winds lose little of their velocity crossing the plains, and the werewillows evolved to work with their windswept environment. While the trees grow to just eight or nine meters in height, their long limbs stretch nearly thirty meters downwind, supported both by small amounts of lift from the howling winds and by heavy metals drawn up by the trees' roots deep in the soil and spread through every branch and leaf. This rare phenomenon wreaks havoc with most modern sensor equipment, obscuring many types of scans and causing magres imagers to display only large, blotchy masses wherever werewillows grow.

Meanwhile, on the tiny island continent of Renick, severe tides rise high enough that every five years the world's oceans sweep across the entirety of the landmass. When the moon, named Devil's Pinch by the first Rim Worlds explorers, passes near to the world at a certain point during apogee, the moon's influence wanes, and water rushes in to turn much of Renick's rich, arable land into a bayou-like landscape. Despite the periodic flooding the hardy werewillows on Renick still persevere, sinking their roots deep into the bedrock and providing a gloomy canopy over significant portions of the island, but their branches do not grow nearly as long as their Hapsburg cousins.

The first settlers on Bone-Norman eked out a meager existence, lacking the resources to weather Renick's violent tidal shifts and enduring the screeching winds of the mainland as best they could. Among other Rim Worlders, Bone-Normanites earned a reputation for

# ATLAS

surliness, attributed by off-worlders to the unending irritation of living in a wind tunnel. As part of the Reunification Treaties, the nascent Star League agreed to provide its know-how and financial backing to help invigorate dozens of worlds, including Bone-Norman. On Renick, the construction of enormous seawalls and waterworks helped calm some of the more volatile tidal areas, and sturdy-stilted habitats delved deep into the planet's bedrock to ensure colonists' safety and comfort. Star League botanists also brought special quick-growing crops, a common approach for those worlds with short farming seasons. Star League engineers could do little to calm the howling gusts of Hapsburg, but economic support jumpstarted a mining industry into the ore-rich Rücken range.

The League's efforts won much of the locals' gratitude on Bone-Norman, and it was likely for that reason that this world's residents largely welcomed Kerensky's SLDF task force when it invaded the Republic during the Amaris Civil War. The planet opened its storehouses to offer the SLDF assistance, but by then those cupboards were largely bare, having been picked clean during the reign of Regent Mohammed Selim. Unfortunately, this loyalty earned little reward for Bone-Norman's residents as the SLDF completed its Republic conquest and turned quickly toward Terra. The new government born of the Rim Republican Army held Bone-Norman in little better regard than Amaris, seeing it only as a typical, semi-productive backwater that best served the nation with continued production.

Archon Robert Steiner II targeted Bone-Norman among the last worlds for invasion during Operation ALMARIC. Depleted in both resources and spirit after a half-decade of uncertainty and conflict, the

world's remaining residents nonetheless mounted a brief but fierce resistance. Their efforts were highlighted by a strike shortly after the invading forces made landfall, during which a small band of local partisans caught a Lyran company unknowingly bivouacking in an ill-advised portion of the turbulent western flood plain on the windward side of the Rückens during a season of rising tides. Hemming in the invaders long enough for the tide to come in, the partisans exulted as the encampment drowned under a rush of water.

That lone victory only drew harsh retribution from the surviving Commonwealth forces, which cracked down on civilian access and rights as special forces operators quickly identified and hunted down those responsible. The resulting public executions at the foot of Red Stone Palace, the planetary defense hub, doused any further resistance. But those harsh acts cemented widespread hatred across Bone-Norman not only against the Commonwealth occupiers, but against General Kerensky for abandoning the former Rim Worlds holding he once promised to protect. When Kerensky's children returned centuries later, the latter animosity easily transferred to the Clans and helped fuel the world's resolve against them.

Under Commonwealth rule, Bone-Norman became a reliable—if somewhat ill-tempered—exporter of luxury foods and ores over the ensuing centuries, valuable for its relatively protected location from both enemy and pirate raids. But the distribution of the Helm Memory Core brought a new industry to this world: biomedical research. Buried within the core were notes by a late Star League-era botanist on possible biomedical discoveries and applications around Bone-Norman's vast intertidal zones. An astonishing variety of life



# ATLAS

called these zones home, traveling with the flow of the sea between the dramatic tidal shifts. Arc Royal-based BioHarvest, Inc. was the first to recover these notes, and rushed to establish a presence on the planet in 3031.

By fortunate coincidence, the Grave Walkers, a vaunted mercenary regiment long in House Steiner's employ, had set up operations on nearby Apollo, after they were held out of Operation GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG during the Fourth Succession War. The mercenaries regularly rotated units through Bone-Norman for mountain terrain and amphibious assault training. Through well-conducted political maneuvering and favor-trading, BioHarvest executives successfully secured an ongoing, long-term sub-contract which would place one of the two Grave Walkers regiments on Bone-Norman to watch over their interests. The company hoped to leap years ahead of its competitors with research on the world, but blundered by accidentally transmitting internal correspondence revealing the existence of their facilities. A handful of other biomedical research firms began negotiations to carve out their own fiefs on Bone-Norman, but their efforts were cut short by the coming of the Clans.

The presence of the Grave Walkers served another purpose, one not disclosed to the planet's leaders or its new corporate inhabitants: the field-testing of an advanced early-warning satellite surveillance system developed by the Federated Commonwealth. For this, Bone-Norman offered several distinct advantages: it was far enough away from prying eyes to deter espionage; the Grave Walkers' modern communications technology could effectively simulate that of a Federated Commonwealth line regiment; and the mercenary unit was a trusted command with several centuries' standing, whose silence was ensured. Furthermore, the unusual terrain on both of Bone-Norman's continents would help demonstrate the advantages of early warning and deployment ahead of an enemy assault.

Colonel Dennis Merwin, commanding the First Grave Walkers regiment, expected a test to commence in the first few weeks after the system went online—but the exact timeline for the drill was not shared with his subordinates, so that he could simultaneously test his troops' response time. Rather than a drill, the mercenaries received an all-too-real test when the new system functioned perfectly, and gave them significant notice of the in-system arrival of a strike force calling itself Clan Jade Falcon.

Arriving at Bone-Norman's nadir jump point, Jade Falcon Khan Elias Crichtell and saKhan Timur Malthus tasked Malthus' own Turkina Keshik with the honor of claiming a one-time Rim Worlds holding

and leading the way back into the Inner Sphere. Eager to display the obvious superiority of his Clan against the first Spheroid barbarians they faced, Malthus pushed his bid low. His aggressiveness earned both respect and concern in equal measure from Crichtell, but the senior Khan allowed his subordinate to carry out his attack. Ignoring archived records of Bone-Norman's unusual geography, the confident Malthus planned a headhunting stroke by dropping virtually on top of Red Stone Palace with his Keshik command Star and two Trinaries.

Alerted to the Clan's arrival and what seemed to be suicidally few forces burning toward the planet, Merwin committed an uncharacteristic act of hubris. Rather than simply encapsulate the invaders and demand their surrender, the veteran battle commander opted for a crushing show of force by ambushing them as they landed at Red Stone Palace. Obliterating the interlopers would serve two purposes: the Commonwealth would see that their early-warning system worked; and BioHarvest board members, increasingly uneasy with the funds spent to retain a top-tier mercenary unit on a world that never saw conflict, would see the value of keeping the Grave Walkers on their payroll.

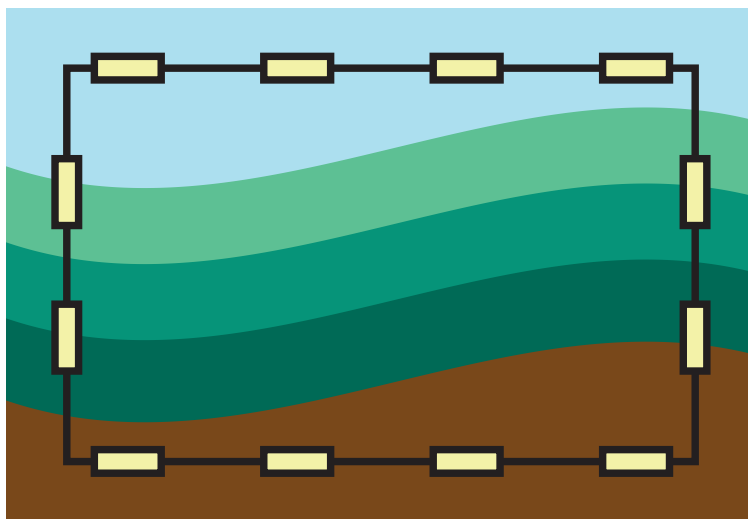
The mercenaries engaged the Falcons shortly after the Clan forces landed, using a pincer movement to cut them off from their DropShip. Though heavily damaged, the Keshik's superior technology spared them from total destruction. The Falcons broke through the Grave Walkers' lines and attempted to regroup in the wind-torn

badlands. The mercenaries reveled in their victory over the mysterious enemy, but Merwin and his senior officers held a more somber tone; reviewing battle footage in their command center, they could see the obvious power of the invading force, and the skill of their MechWarriors. Worse, the early-warning system now showed a robust contingent of reinforcements burning toward the planet.

Overwhelmed by the sudden assault, Malthus had no choice but to call in his previous bid, consisting of the Eighth Falcon Regulars. The haughty warriors of the

Keshik despised the Regulars and their Star Colonel Brikai Buhallin, whose fraternization with freeborn warriors and the lower castes was the subject of frequent Trials of Grievance. But Malthus swallowed his pride, believing that the prospect of being thwarted in his effort to seize a hated Rim Worlds planet—and one of their Clan's first targets—by a band of lucre-warriors was a worse shame.

With the sober realization that the loss of Bone-Norman was now just a matter of time, Merwin shifted strategies to attempt to equip the planet's militia and citizens as best he could, laying the groundwork for a guerilla resistance. The Walkers' deep ties to Bone-



Norman shone through in the way the mercenaries fought and died to buy time for those efforts, and barely two companies survived to board their DropShips. Merwin himself perished just before the unit departed, torn from his cockpit by Elementals while supporting distribution operations at a supply point. Sadly, the surviving Grave Walkers found no relief. As the remaining mercenaries attempted to regroup on Black Earth, they were shattered when the Jade Falcons surged onto that world just two months later. Malthus earned one of the Clan's first victories, but the incident on Bone-Norman did him no favors when he was ousted as saKhan following the disaster on Twycross later that year.

Ignited by the Grave Walkers' heroic sacrifice, Bone-Norman's residents rediscovered their cantankerous streak and staged a bold resistance effort during most of the 3050s. But the planet's distance behind the new Occupation Zone line began to tell in the lack of supplies and support from the Commonwealth. By the early 3060s, little in the way of organized opposition remained. The planet's mines were quickly reopened after the initial invasion, but Clan scientists only haltingly picked up some of the work left behind by BioHarvest, refocusing that research on emergency medicines rather than cures for diseases.

A few short years later, a Clan once again shattered the short-lived peace on Bone-Norman. Clan Ice Hellion targeted the world in its 3071 invasion of the Jade Falcon Occupation Zone, but severely underestimated the difficulties they would face. Facing the Hellion's elite Lithe Kill Keshik, comprising saKhan Conner Rood's 200th Attack Cluster, was the Falcons' Eleventh Provisional Garrison Cluster under the command of Star Colonel Idris. Desperately outgunned, and knowing defeat was inevitable, Idris nevertheless vowed to tie down Rood's forces as long as possible in the hopes of throwing a hitch into the invaders' strategic timetable. To accomplish this, Idris bid a Trial for the planet and chose the entire Hapsburg continent as his Circle of Equals. The choice allowed the Falcon defenders to counter the Hellions' preferred fast-strike tactics by choosing their own engagements and orchestrating ambushes without breaking *zellbrigen* and forfeiting the Trial.

Two frustrating weeks later, the Hellions were forced to expose Rood himself in a series of patrols, an opportunity that the saKhan knew the Falcons could not pass up. Indeed, the Eleventh met the Hellions on the Red Stone Plains, and the ensuing battle led to each side springing a carefully prepared trap. The pragmatic Rood instructed a subordinate to begin a general melee, allowing him to call in an additional Trinary that was not part of his initial bid. Star Colonel Idris in turn unleashed a formation of *Erinyes* ProtoMechs, which nearly succeeded in penetrating Rood's cockpit and severely burned him just a short time before the Hellions claimed victory.

Weeks later, the Jade Falcons returned in the form of the reconstituted Falcon Guards, who had embarked on an independent action to disrupt the Hellions' new holdings. The Guards successfully bid a Trial for the planet and defeated the Hellions' thin garrison within hours of landing, using mobile combined-arms forces to maximum effect and reclaiming Bone-Norman for the Falcons.



# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## MEDICINE MEN *"THIS LITTLE PLANT HAD BETTER BE WORTH IT..."*

**Recommended Group Size:** 4-8 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Mercenary, Black Ops

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Green-Elite (Key Skill levels of 1-8)

If someone has made a breakthrough, someone else is probably going to try to steal it. The players are that someone, sent to Bone-Norman to scoop up a newly discovered plant which may hold the key to curing a disease prevalent across the Inner Sphere—and unlocking handsome profits for the benevolent company offering the cure.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**Over the Counter:** The research facility housing the find isn't the local corner drug store—it's deep in a marshy bayou, well off any common transportation route. Finding the place deep in the swamp will be hard enough, but accessing the stilt-raised structure will be tricky.

**Bat Country:** There's a reason medicine from the plant hadn't been approved for human trials yet—the plant continually lets off spores which cause a powerful hallucinogenic reaction. The effects may be mild, for comedic play, or borderline debilitating.

**Feed Me, Seymour:** There's a better reason medicine from the plant hasn't hit shelves—the plant is rather large and rather hungry. Will subduing the carnivorous flora destroy the cure the players' employers are so eager to market?

**Just Here for the Planet:** As the players prepare to abscond with their find, an enemy force—possibly the Jade Falcons, or perhaps the Ice Hellions—lands with the intent to seize Bone-Norman. Escaping will require a low profile and some quick decisions.

**Tips:** Traveling to and from the research facility provides a great opportunity to showcase Renick's gloomy high-tide season, when much of the interior landscape turns into swampy marshes and gloomy bayous. Play up the uncertainty of what lurks beneath the unusual setting.



## MANHUNT *"DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING?"*

**Recommended Group Size:** 3-6 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Any

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Regular-Veteran (Key Skill levels of 3-6)

A notorious criminal who sought refuge on the fringe of the Inner Sphere is at large in the badlands of Bone-Norman. Wanted by several interstellar authorities for the kind of unspeakable acts that fuel holovid police procedurals for years, the players must venture into the howling winds and retrieve the monster, dead or alive.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**Watch Your Step:** The felon knows the players are coming and has left some lethal surprises to discourage their pursuit. The traps may be fully lethal, or may only injure group members, allowing the killer to draw out his fun.

**Failure to Communicate:** The winds tearing off the mountainsides make normal conversation outside very difficult, and dampen most sounds—including human screams.

**Dead or Alive:** The criminal has no intention of submitting peacefully, and as he fled, obtained enough devices and gear to ensure that his last stand will be a bloody affair for anyone pursuing him.

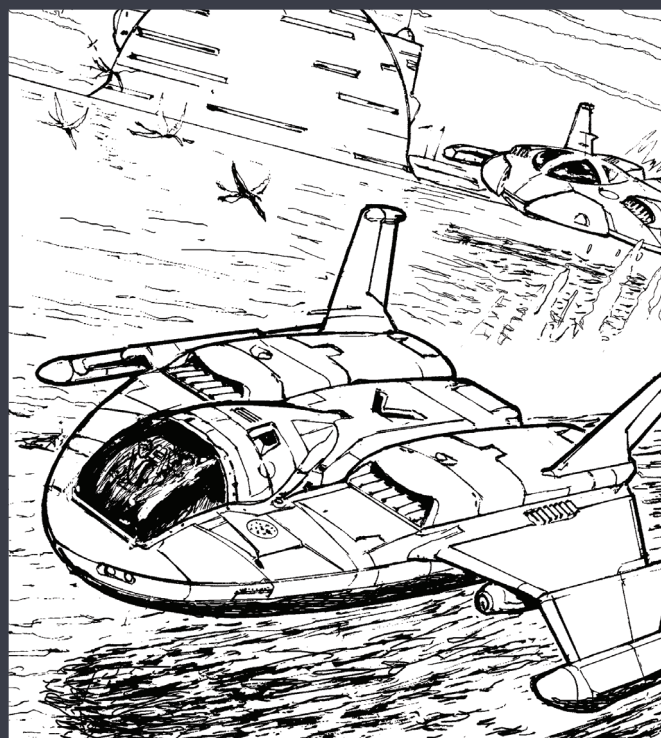
**Tips:** Bone-Norman's landscape is stark and foreboding, both in the murky werewillow forests of the interior, and the winding caverns of the badlands. The players should never know what's around the next corner as they hunt their quarry amid the eerie, shrieking winds.

# RULES ANNEX

## MAPSHEETS TABLES

HAPSBURG	2d6 Result	Map
	2	Mountain Lake (MS2, MSC1)
	3	Desert Mountain #1 (MS3, MSC1)
	4	Desert Mountain #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	5	Desert Sinkhole #1 (MS3, MSC1)
	6	Rolling Hills #1 (MS3, MSC1)
	7	Scattered Woods (MS2, MSC1)
	8	Rolling Hills #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	9	Desert Sinkhole #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	10	Desert Hills (CBT, MS2, MSC1)
	11	Heavy Forest #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	12	Woodland (MS4, MSC1)

RENICK	2d6 Result	Map
	2	BattleTech (MS3, MSC1)
	3	Rolling Hills #1 (MS3, MSC1)
	4	Archipelago #2 (MS7)
	5	River Delta/Drainage #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	6	Lake Area (MS2, MSC1)
	7	Large Lakes #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	8	Coast #1 (MS7)
	9	River Delta/Drainage #1 (MS4, MSC1)
	10	Archipelago #2 (MS7)
	11	Rolling Hills #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	12	Woodland (MS6, MSC2)



# OPTIONAL RULES

The following additional special rules are intended to provide further flavor to games set on the world featured in this supplement. For the most part, these rules may be considered advanced and optional, as they primarily reflect conditions and/or features unique to this one planet or planetary system.

## TERRAIN AND WEATHER

Bone-Norman's inhabited areas feature harsh terrain and weather that can starkly vary with the phases of the moon. The Mapsheets Tables presented here reflect the nature of Bone-Norman's dominant terrain based on which continent the scenario is set. For scenarios taking place on Hapsburg, the Hapsburg Mapsheets Table reflects the rocky and windswept expanses of the supercontinent. Scenarios set on the island continent of Renick should use the Renick Mapsheets Table instead.

**Werewillows:** To reflect the sensor-scattering effect caused by the unique high-metal content of Bone-Norman's werewillow trees, treat all woods hexes on Bone-Norman mapsheets as one level of extra density for line of sight purposes. (E.g. Light Woods hexes affect LoS as Heavy Woods; Heavy Woods hexes affect LoS as Ultra-Heavy Woods.) Werewillow trees do not change movement purposes, however. Thus, a single light woods hex of werewillows will impose a +2 to-hit modifier for attacks that enter or pass through them, but will only cost +1 MP to enter or pass through. Additionally, each hex of werewillows also produces ECM effects identical to those of a Guardian ECM Suite, applicable only to attacks or sensor checks that trace a LoS through the wooded hex.

Thanks to the bayou-like conditions of Renick, the werewillows there grow much closer together than their Hapsburg cousins. Hidden Units (see p. 259, *TW*) in an Renick werewillow hex can remain hidden until an enemy unit moves to an adjacent hex.

**Weather:** Hapsburg is constantly punished by howling winds, especially near the extensive Rücken mountain range, so scenarios taking place there may make use of Wind effects (see p. 61, *TO*). To determine the strength of these effects, the gamemaster should roll 1D6 prior to the start of the scenario, and consult the Hapsburg Weather column of the Bone-Norman Weather Table.

For scenarios set on the Renick island continent, where flooding is a more pertinent issue, the same pre-scenario roll determines the extent of flooding that takes place. In cases of Light Flooding, all non-water map hexes adjacent to water of any depth must be treated as Mud (see p. 50, *TO*). Moderate Flooding transforms the underlying terrain of all land hexes into Swamp terrain (see p. 51, *TO*). Under Heavy Flooding, the map is so inundated with water that all Level 0 terrain is treated as though it were immersed in Depth 1 water, while all water features and other terrain hexes with a Depth of 1 or more are increased by 1 level of water Depth. Only terrain features of Level 1 and higher are treated as being above the water in Heavy Flooding conditions.

## BONE-NORMAN WEATHER EFFECTS

D6 Result	Hapsburg Weather	Renick Flooding
1	No Wind	No Flooding
2	No Wind	No Flooding
3	Light Gale	Light Flooding
4	Moderate Gale	Light Flooding
5	Strong Gale	Moderate Flooding
6	Storm	Heavy Flooding

## NUDIBS

Related to the sea swallow of Terra, these soft-bodied mollusks live in the vast tidal pools along the continental coastline created by the tides of Bone-Norman. Nudibs cling to the surface of the pools by sucking air into a gas sac, and expel the air to drop down onto their prey. As long as a man's forearm, the Bone-Norman nudib has developed a potent poisonous sting which can prove dangerous to humans—moreso because nudibs are often found in colonies across large pools. Swept into the pools by the rising tide, many of the mollusks are often left behind when the tide retreats and the pools begin drying out.

**Mass:** 2-4 kg

<b>STR</b>	<b>BOD</b>	<b>DEX</b>	<b>RFL</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>WIL</b>	<b>EDG</b>
2	1	1	1	2	1	1

**Size Class (Modifier):** Small (-1)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** Normal 0/0/0/0

**Damage (AP/BD):** 1M/1

**Move (W/R/S):** 0.5/—/—

**Traits:** Poisonous (Sting: [Contact; AP/Strength, 1S/1D, Duration: 1 turn]), Skittish

**Skills:** AniMelee (+0), Swimming (+1)

## CAIMONSTOS

Legends of enormous reptiles lurking deep in swamplands date back to the bayous of old Terra, but on Bone-Norman, they are very much a reality. Drawing their name from a crude portmanteau of "monstrous Caiman," the caimonstos make their home in the flooded interior of Renick during the wet season. Growing to nearly ten meters in length, the flat-nosed reptiles grow quickly and are notoriously aggressive thanks to a rather short lifespan. As the retreating tide inexorably shrinks their swampy habitat, caimonstos turn on each other in an orgy of violence, until only a few of the largest, meanest specimens remain in the small bayous which remain wet year-round, burying themselves in the mud to await the next high tide, and their next meal.

**Mass:** 1,800-2,200 kg (adult)

<b>STR</b>	<b>BOD</b>	<b>DEX</b>	<b>RFL</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>WIL</b>	<b>EDG</b>
38	35	3	6	3	5	2

**Size Class (Modifier):** Very Large (+3)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** Scaly hide 2/2/1/1

**Damage (AP/BD):** 1M/4

**Move (W/R/S):** 5/10/15 (land)

**Traits:** Aggressive, Armor (+2), Cold-Blooded, Patient

**Skills:** AniMelee (+4), Perception (+2), Stealth (+3), Swimming (+2)

# ATLAS

## BROWNSVILLE

**Star Type (Recharge Time):** K3V (194 hours)

**Position in System:** 2 (of 5)

**Time to Jump Point:** 4.62 days

**Number of Satellites:** Rings, and several shepherd moonlets

**Surface Gravity:** 0.90

**Atm. Pressure:** Standard (Breathable, before 2811); Tainted, after 2811)

**Equatorial Temperature:** 22°C (Arid, before 2811); 50°C (Arid, 3150)

**Surface Water:** 75%

**Recharging Station:** Zenith, Nadir (before 2850); None (after 2850)

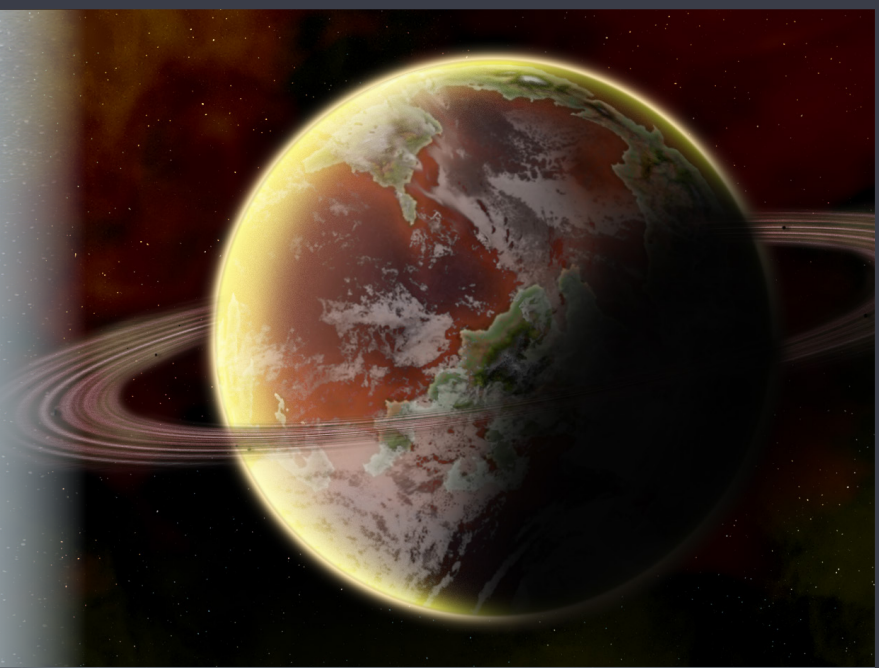
**HPG Class:** A (before 2850); B (after 2850); None (3150)

**Highest Native Life:** None

**Population:** 573,000,000 (2780); 25,000,000 (2850); None (after 2860)

**Socio-Industrial Levels:** A-A-A-A-A (2780); C-D-A-C-D (2850); N/A (3150)

**Landmasses (Capital City):** Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, Texas (Dallas)



## BROWNSVILLE

Brownsville is a tragedy of the Star League Civil War and early Succession Wars, and its death eventually helped seal the fate of many of other worlds.

The planet was settled by the newborn Terran Hegemony, under a policy aimed at breaking up Terra's entrenched ethnic and nationalist groups who remained loyal to the obsolete member-states of the pre-colonial era. Brownsville, like New Dallas, was presented as a reward for such groups, to encourage their loyalty to the Hegemony. Though it was close to Terra, and possessed bountiful water supplies, this world was ignored prior to 2315 because it was not quite habitable. In 2315, it became the subject of an intensive, Hegemony-backed terraforming campaign. Thanks to its abundant water and a nitrogenous atmosphere, Brownsville proved much easier to transform than Terra's sister-planets Mars and Venus (Terra IV and II), and it took only a few decades to fill the atmosphere with oxygen and create stable, flourishing ecosystems.

The first settlers, drawn from North America, found their paradise in the continental interiors, where young forests and verdant grasslands thrived in temperate climates with rains of good, clean water. Lakes were filled with game fish and the artificial soil created through techniques developed for Venus was perfect for the engineered crops the colonists brought with them. The dense, striated rings circling the planet produced spectacular skies. Settlement was fast, as the armies of terraforming workers were joined by their families and millions of North Americans throughout the 2350s. Most of these settlers preferred the temperate continents of Indiana and Iowa to the steamy equatorial lands of California or the arid, fjord-pierced continent of Texas. They brought with them a conventional Hegemony planetary

constitution, creating a republic with long terms for its aloof elected officials and a very professional bureaucracy.

Despite the vast oceans their new homeland had to offer, the majority of Brownsville's new settlers clustered inland, well away from the planet's many coastlines. The reason for this, put simply, was that the beaches and coasts were astonishingly ugly. After establishing a breathable atmosphere and a thriving ecosystem, the Hegemony officially ended its terraforming process early, because there were more worlds to rehabilitate and resources were finite. However, Brownsville's pre-terraforming environment had been anoxic, so its oceans were filled with vast amounts of dissolved metals. Those oceans—once an incredible, emerald green thanks to an abundance of nickel compounds—had turned to an ugly, red-brown as the new atmosphere began oxidizing iron, and the beaches where land and ocean met tended to become unsightly slicks of blood-colored mud.

Although the rusty waters were not particularly toxic, Brownsville's metal-rich oceans posed another problem in the long term. Without constant atmospheric processing, the seas would act as gigantic "air sinks," their metals scrubbing oxygen levels in the atmosphere below habitable levels. During the heyday of the Terran Hegemony, this was seen as a minor matter, and the colonists eventually settled on a bare minimum of atmospheric processing because there was no rush to oxidize more than they needed when simpler filtration technologies could meet their demands.

Brownsville was an unexciting member of the Terran Hegemony for its first centuries of life. During the Age of War, it was raided once each by the Federated Suns and Capellan Confederation, but suffered very little damage from either attack. In fact, fewer Brownsvillians

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were killed as a result of the Age of War conflicts than died during the twenty-fifth century civil unrest locally known as the "Hooligan Years" (when young residents favoring hockey or baseball took to the streets to battle fans of the opposing sport).

Financially, Brownsville was wealthier than most worlds in human space, but hardly stood out from its counterparts in the Hegemony. It contributed no unusual foods, technologies, or arts to the great tapestry woven by the Star League. Few people, even the locals, were aware that Brownsville had become an important center for the manufacture of atmospheric processors and the Star League's inexpensive water filters. To the locals, these exports were merely an extension of the terraforming infrastructure that kept Brownsville alive, and held negligible importance to the planetary economy.

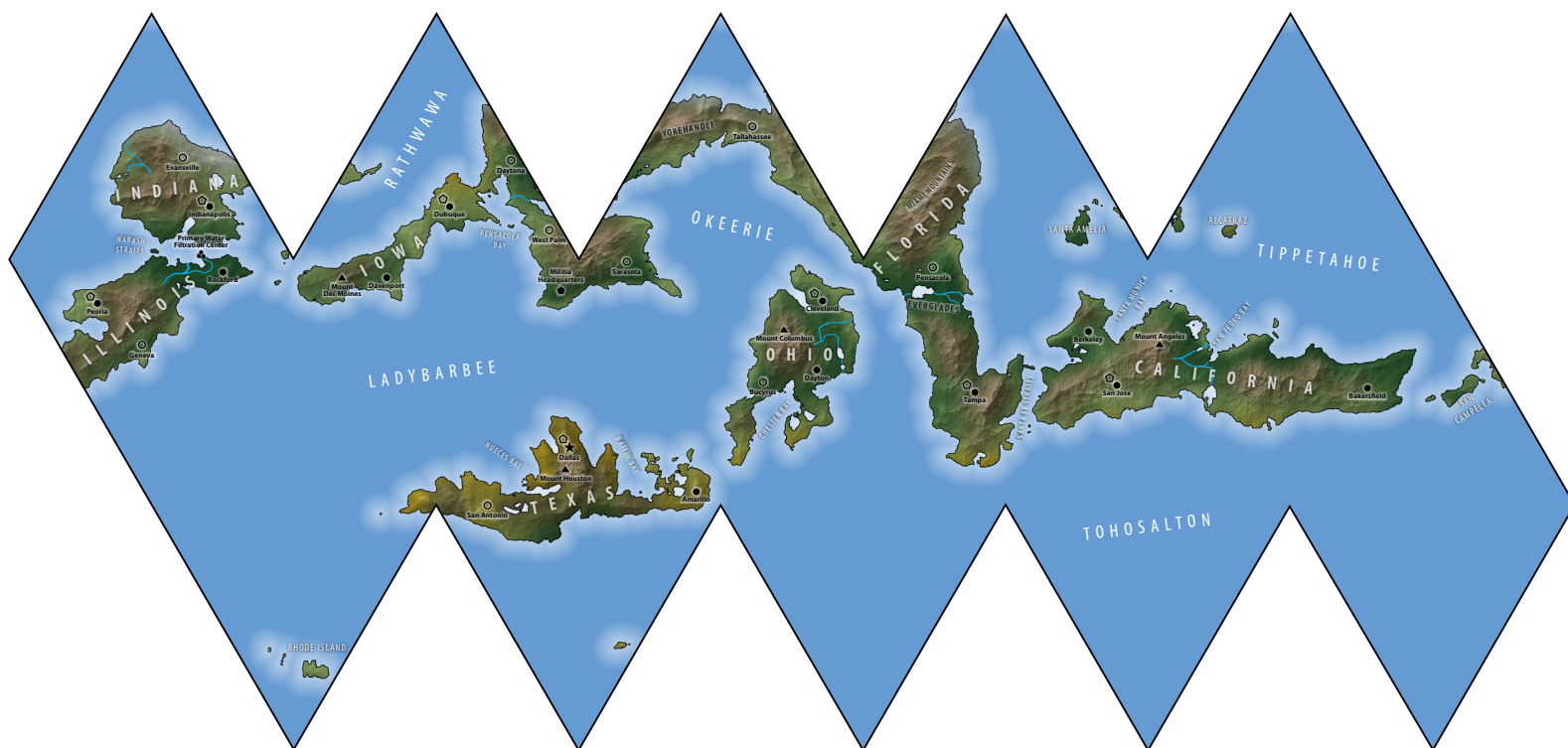
If Brownsville had a reputation abroad for anything during the Star League era, it was notoriously poor sportsmanship. The planetary hockey and baseball teams were banned from Hegemony and Star League sports leagues for a total of twenty-two years between 2371 and 2765, with reasons including the widespread abuse of illegal performance-enhancing medicines, illegal cybernetics, throwing games for gambling, and excessive violence. (On at least two occasions, in fact, Brownsville-based sport franchises were found guilty of hiring hitmen to cripple key opposing players.) Ironically, despite that reputation, Brownsville's own violent crime rate was below the Hegemony's average.

The economic recession of the mid-twenty eighth century hit Brownsville relatively hard. Its banks were intertwined with with Star League-wide industries such as tourism, when Richard Cameron

reached his majority and plunged the League into political and economic chaos. Brownsville's leadership and business community thus proved quite receptive to Stefan Amaris' "suggestion" of a change in dynasties.

With guidance from Rim Worlds Republic troops, themselves mostly of Hegemony descent, Brownsville's militia worked swiftly to subdue the few SLDF troops on planet during Amaris' takeover. Compared to bloodbaths elsewhere, Brownsville's role in the Amaris Coup was largely a simple matter of changing locks and passwords. When the Usurper made his move, many of the local SLDF troops had been enjoying an "Armed Forces Day" at the expense of the planetary baseball league. Sozzled on beer and fried butter bites, most of these soldiers had no idea what was going on across the Hegemony until well after they found their chartered buses and limousines diverted to prison camps. In the first month of the Coup, only thirty Star League troops were killed on Brownsville, mostly while trying to break out of the prisons.

A successful planet-wide media campaign rolled out, arguing in favor of Amaris as Emperor. Brownsville embraced Amaris as Director-General, but within a year, the euphoria of incompetent Richard Cameron's deposal and Amaris' ascension gave way to unease and worry. By 2767, the Houses had still not recognized the Hegemony's "justly elected" Director-General as Emperor. Worse, Brownsvillians learned that Aleksandr Kerensky was in open rebellion against Amaris' "lawful superiors." Reports even claimed that some of the stern tactics Amaris favored against the Houses, such as financial sanctions, only appeared to hurt the Hegemony's economy and irritate the fence-sitting Houses.



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With war on the horizon, Brownsville began to militarize. Amaris offered contracts to replace House suppliers who were now supporting Kerensky, and these were excellent means of stimulating the local economy. When the SLDF finally left its ironic Rim Worlds bastion to assault the Hegemony, Brownsville's militia found itself on the frontlines among the Patriot regiments throughout the Hegemony. The planet's military factories were hardly the largest in the years-long conflict, but they contributed their share.

Brownsville remained largely unimportant to either side throughout much of the Star League Civil War. The SLDF largely ignored it until 2775, at which point Amaris' forces made a nuclear scorched Earth retreat without contesting Brownsville. Because the nuclear charges were set by Brownsville volunteers among Amaris' forces, the targeted complexes were evacuated before the detonations. Amaris decreed that the SLDF would find nothing of use on Brownsville, and he was not wrong. The SLDF did use Brownsville as a staging point for its attack on New Home, but they found scant weapons to support their crusade.

In the aftermath of the war, Kerensky's army had few resources to spare for Brownsville's recovery, and there were other war-ravaged worlds in desperate need of aid. Left to its own devices, and with only a trickle of aid from the Houses, the planetary economy and infrastructure struggled along for two years. The planetary government, grown autocratic under Amaris' rule to suppress simmering discontent, proved adequate to the task, however. This same government—which had suspended local elections to prolong the rule of its pro-Amaris leadership—was free to make hardnosed decisions to triage its postwar population. These efforts included concentrating resources on saving the largest, most easily aided groups, while abandoning other districts.

Though much has been made of the pollution and fallout from Amaris' scorched earth retreat, popular histories have overstated these effects. The fallout from the surface detonations was only a threat for a few weeks because the modern, all-fusion weapons used were themselves "clean", and the neutron-activated elements in the ground had short half-lives. More damaging was the contamination to the thousands of square kilometers of productive river deltas downstream from Brownsville's wrecked industrial facilities, where industrial chemicals released by the explosions rendered vast tracts of agricultural land useless. Despite these effects, there were millions of square kilometers of undamaged agricultural land elsewhere. In fact, the largest problem for Brownsville was that its industrial complexes were sensibly co-located with transportation hubs. When the complexes were destroyed, every industry on Brownsville

simultaneously lost access to key suppliers (at the very least), and large-scale transport came to a halt.

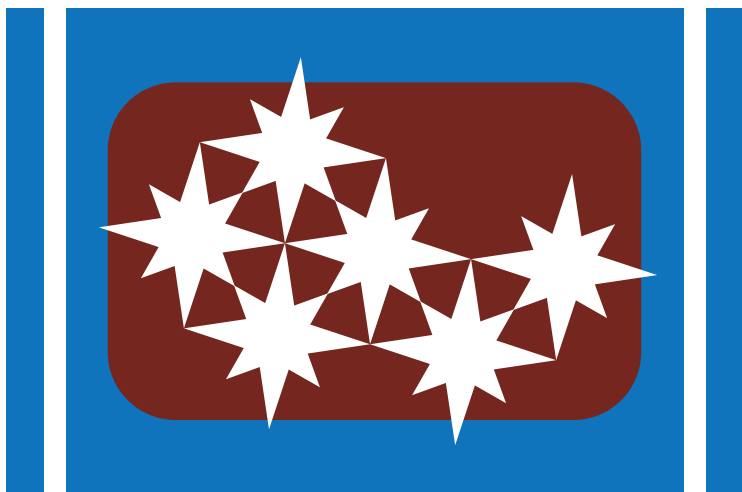
The most immediate problem was food distribution. The Indiana continent's undamaged farms produced bumper crops while their giant agribots worked (spare parts were a medium-term issue), but the food could not reach other continents because ports and rail junctions were now cooling radioactive craters. At the cost of the lives of thousands of political dissidents, Brownsville's government quickly established temporary ports on the coasts. While the government efforts verged on brutality, there was also heroism: hundreds of volunteers laid temporary railways and installed new cargo handling equipment in blast zones before the radioactivity had faded. With food supplies stabilized by 2776, Brownsville's leadership turned to the longer-term issues of rebuilding industry to keep its population fed and housed,

and eventually to maintain a technological civilization. Perhaps because these emergency conditions proved so effective, Brownsville was one of the few Hegemony worlds not to lynch its pro-Amaris officials or throw them from office, despite growing interstellar outcry and the urgings from the small SLDF garrison. In all probability, this likely contained the world's death toll in the wake of the Civil War to just several hundred thousand, where others suffered the loss of millions.

Caught up in its own troubles, Brownsville was blindsided by the SLDF Exodus. While its government blamed the crumbling state of the Terran Hegemony on "the coward Kerensky's flight," its scant reserves were tapped to procure military hardware. By equipping its out-sized militia, raised for the ongoing suppression of localized revolts, with SLDF equipment, the planetary leadership created an effective defense force against interstellar predations. Brownsville's leadership dismissed overtures from Confederation and Free Worlds diplomats in 2785, instead seeking to ally with its Hegemony neighbors. But these Terran neighbors rebuffed Brownsville in turn, considering its people and government tainted by their enthusiastic support for Amaris, and the retention of their Amaris-era leadership.

Brownsville thus stood alone when the first Capellan "peacekeepers" arrived in 2786 in support of a minor rebel group. The Confederation claimed that the rebels represented "the legitimate interests of the oppressed Brownsvillians," and hoped to intercede "to effect a peaceful transition of regimes." The inexperienced CCAF troops were unprepared for the hardened veterans of Brownsville's militia. After brief clashes—and the delivery of the heads of their allied rebel leaders in boxes of salt—the Capellans retreated.

When the Capellans returned in 2789, they not only brought considerably more force, but also considerably more diplomatic skill.



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This time, they offered Brownsville protection against the “rampant imperialism” of the Federated Suns and Free Worlds League if it joined the Confederation under generous terms. To make their point about the planet’s vulnerability to the Houses, Capellan *Soyal*-class cruisers destroyed several of the shepherd moonlets in Brownsville’s rings with their mass drivers—not coincidentally the moonlets which contained Star League-era naval weapon batteries. The planetary government signed the unification treaty and even kept the original terms; in 2789, the Confederation could afford to be generous.

For close to twenty years after its capitulation to House Liao, Brownsville managed to escape the violence and brutality of the First Succession War. The Federated Suns and Free Worlds League both probed the planet’s defenses, but found an impoverished world hardly worth conquering. This gave the people of Brownsville time to rebuild, and the government kept its public distracted from politics with a series of successful four-year reconstruction plans.

To meet domestic needs and pressing demands from the Confederation, Brownsville’s industries even managed to resume the production of advanced water filtration systems. Unfortunately, as the First Succession War neared its end, water filter factories had become strategic targets in the “total war” mindset that dominated the House Lords. It was for this reason that the Free Worlds ultimately decided to invade the planet in 2811. Although the Confederation was heavily engaged against the Federated Suns at the time, Brownsville’s planetary militia managed to beat back the Marik attackers. As was the tactic of the time, the defeated FWLM retreated behind a barrage of nuclear weapons meant to cripple the planetary infrastructure, and destroy the objectives they sought for themselves.

Unlike Amaris’ scorched earth action, the League forces wantonly targeted population centers with no chance for evacuation. Over one hundred million people died outright, including the ruling junta, which left Brownsville paralyzed. Because of this, another 150 million people perished by 2813 from fallout, famine, disease, and exposure. Millions more lives would be lost over the next ten years before the nuclear winter passed.

Reeling from multiple setbacks, the Confederation could scarcely offer Brownsville sufficient aid to stem its losses. Birthrates plummeted as planetary conditions worsened, leading to a continuous drop in population through the 2850s. The destruction of now-irreplaceable atmospheric processors in the League bombardment was the real deathblow: by 2850, the global oxygen levels had fallen almost too low to support animal life. Humans could survive with respirators, but the ecosystem itself had been profoundly compromised by then. Carbon dioxide and methane levels climbed, creating warming that further disrupted the already destabilized weather systems. Though many Brownsvillians did attempt to flee their doomed world, JumpShips had become desperately scarce by the middle of the twenty-ninth century.

ComStar formally abandoned Brownsville in 2862, making a dramatic show of evacuating the several thousand refugees living near its dismantled HPG compound. The world was stricken from interstellar navigation maps and declared “dead”, but some contemporary estimates placed a few million survivors on-world at the time, scattered in small enclaves around the planet. Today, Brownsville has once again reverted to its lifeless, pre-colonial state. Its atmosphere has returned to its fully anoxic composition, and surface temperatures now average fifty degrees Celsius.

# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## I'M NOT DEAD YET

**Recommended Group Size:** 2-4 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Dissidents, Security/Spy

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Green-Veteran (Key Skill levels of 1-6)

In 2785, the Houses began courting the valuable Hegemony worlds in what would become an ever more blatant and desperate effort to gobble up the remains of House Cameron's legacy. In some cases, diplomacy and historical ties proved sufficient; worlds that had been jointly administered by Terran and House regimes alike often accepted House suzerainty without a fight. But some worlds—including Brownsville—were not ready to accept the Hegemony's failure. Brownsville was unique, however, in that its pro-Amaris leadership made it a pariah to the interstellar community, rebuffed by even its neighbors.

Brownsville thus stood alone against the Capellan Confederation's first, ham-handed attempt to seize the isolated world. House Liao reckoned the key was Brownsville's anti-government rebels, who were protesting decades of their own leader's autocratic repression of the people. By defeating key loyalist military forces, the Confederation hoped to spark a general uprising and install handpicked, pro-Capellan leaders into the planetary government.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

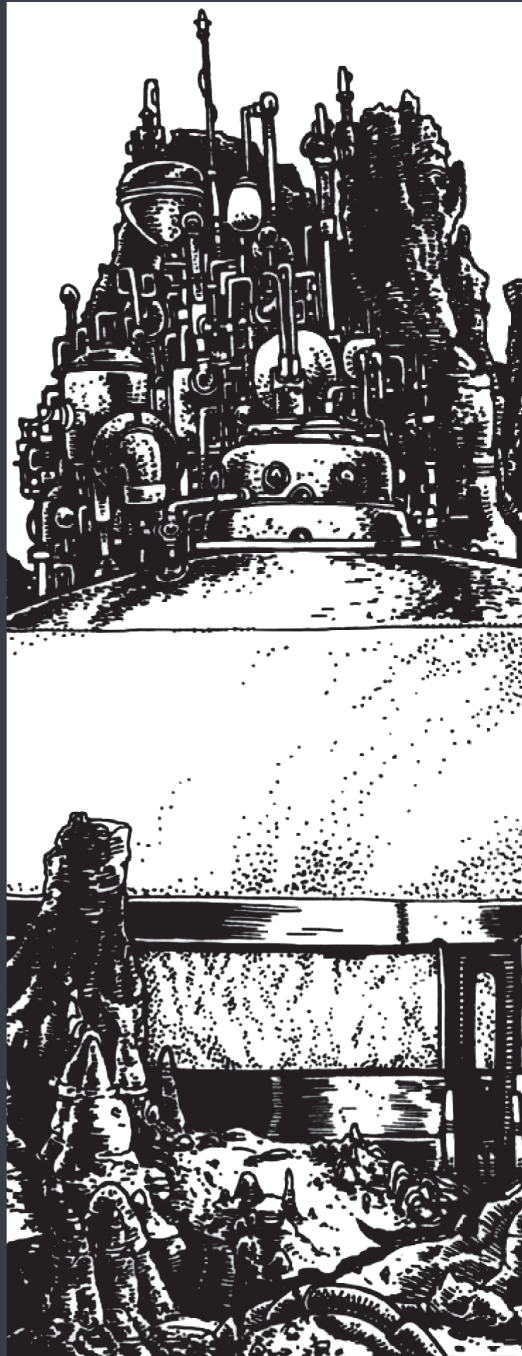
**You Want Us to Do What?:** Maskirovka agents attempting to build a unified rebel front had the first inkling of trouble. Most of Brownsville's "rebel groups" spoke vigorously against the government on planetary computer networks, but rarely protested in person because that led to bad encounters with riot police and prison camps. As Liao's agents painfully learned, the groups that were taking action in the streets were often undercover security stings aimed at culling such dangerous would-be rebels. Meanwhile, other power groups—the business community and security services—were happy with the status quo.

**First Kerenskyites, Now You Punks:** The Brownsville militia was filled with veterans of the long Civil War, and after 2784, the planetary government wasn't picky about which side they fought for. They were also well-equipped with Civil War surplus that Brownsville was buying rapidly; other Hegemony worlds might not treat with Brownsville, but they would trade for its hard currency. The Capellan regiments that hoped to quickly destroy the planetary militia (and clear the way for a carefully stage-managed rebellion) faced troops that were much more skilled, had a significant technological advantage, and were more numerous.

**Tips:** This is an easy opportunity to play "the bad guys" in a secret rebellion under *A Time of War* rules, since both sides in this conflict are "morally challenged." *A Total Warfare* or *Alpha Strike* battle between the CCAF and Brownsville militia, meanwhile, is an opportunity to try out the late Star League Civil War equipment found in the *Liberation of Terra* publications. The CCAF position is untenable, but it can be the start of a "fighting retreat" campaign.



# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS



## YOU CAN'T FIGHT IF YOU'RE THIRSTY

**Recommended Group Size:** 2-8 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Regular-Veteran (Key Skill levels of 2-6)

Despite being located at ground zero of the bloodiest war in human history, Brownsville escaped damage for most of the First Succession War. Its militia brushed aside three of the four attacks that followed the Star League Civil War with little damage to the planet. Even the Capellan conquest in 2789 had largely been negotiated: after the Confederation destroyed key battle stations, the planetary government acceded before losing most of its militia or suffering more damage to its cities, industry, and population.

Of course, Brownsville had little to recommend it; Amaris had destroyed the valuable, advanced Hegemony industries in 2775. The probes by the FWLM and AFFS early in the First War were desultory because Brownsville was not nearly as valuable as its hotly contested neighbors. But by 2811, Brownsville had spent decades rebuilding in relative peace. Its new industrial base was not the pinnacle of Star League technology anymore, but it was comparable to the best of the Inner Sphere, and had even resumed producing the Star League's miraculous water filters. This proved ironically unfortunate.

The First Succession War had started as a conventional land grab but escalated quickly when the Houses invoked strategies aimed purely at destroying their foes' ability to wage interstellar war. This entailed attacking everything from BattleMech factories and shipyards to JumpShips of every type. It also meant targeting vulnerabilities like terraforming systems, which would cripple many worlds in a hostile House.

This strategy left the Free Worlds League in need of water filters after the Capellans and Lyrans destroyed the League's factories, and in 2811, Brownsville had a functional filter factory. If the League couldn't secure that factory, they would destroy it.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**Maskirovka as a Strategy:** It's not just an intelligence agency. The Confederation was supposedly removing Brownsville's sizable militia for years to shore up its faltering operations in the Chesterton region, but this has been mostly a shuffling of forces on paper. In fact, it was new recruits from Brownsville being assigned to old militia regiments and sent to support the CCAF. The veterans from the old militia regiments were consolidated into fewer, larger formations that the Free Worlds' incompetent intelligence service, SAFE, mistook for simply fewer defenders. There's an opportunity for an *A Time of War* campaign to reveal or protect this deception, and a reason to field uneven forces in *Total Warfare* and *Alpha Strike* scenarios.

**Nuke it from Orbit:** Intelligence oversights may cut both ways. By 2811, it was almost standard practice for invasion forces to include "boomers": DropShips fitted with capital missile launchers and large magazines that could douse a planet in nuclear weapons. It was likewise standard practice to hunt boomers. Historically, Capellans didn't identify, let alone intercept, the converted freighter that the Free Worlds used to bombard Brownsville. But can the PCs be more on their toes than the rest of the Maskirovka or Brownsville aerospace defense?

**Tips:** Hunting for nuclear weapons may involve *A Time of War* scenarios ranging from infiltration of FWLM field camps on Brownsville, to zero-gravity boarding and inspection operations of suspicious DropShips. It could also include *Total Warfare* aerospace interceptions.

# OPTIONAL RULES

The following additional special rules are intended to provide further flavor to games set on the world featured in this supplement. For the most part, these rules may be considered advanced and optional, as they primarily reflect conditions and/or features unique to this one planet or planetary system.

## IRONFIN TUNA

One of many slightly engineered species in Brownsville's oceans, the "ironfin tuna" gets its name from the red iron oxide deposited in its scales, which is one of its several mechanisms for coping with the high metal content of the water. In conjunction with the proteins of its scales, the ironfin tuna had a lacquered appearance with colors ranging from ochre to crimson. Because of this filtration, the fish was mostly safe to eat. Fishers needed to be careful to remove scales, kidneys, and gills, which is where metals concentrated. The ironfin was an important commercial fish and popular sport fish during the Star League era. Mature ironfins could reach 500 kilograms.

**Mass:** 300-500 kg (adult)

STR	BOD	DEX	RFL	INT	WIL	EDG
12	12	2	5	5	5	2

**Size Class (Modifier):** Large (+1)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** Scaly hide 1/0/0/0

**Damage (AP/BD):** 1M/1

**Move (W/R/S):** 50/105 (Swimming)

**Traits:** Thick-Skinned

**Skills:** AniMelee (+2), Perception (+4), Tracking (+2)

## BROWNSVILLE TERRAIN

Brownsville has a diverse range of terrain like any planet. Its ugly oceans are simply ugly, neither truly toxic nor made up of 'Mech-dissolving acids. Its Indiana continent is unusually flat and covered with fertile soils that have made it an ideal center for agriculture, but the other landmasses possess every shade of geography and ecosystem found on Terra.

The random terrain tables found on p. 263 of *Total Warfare* will cover most of the planet's varied landscape, but for scenarios set on the Indiana continent, players may use the Indiana Mapsheet Table provided here.

## MAPSHEETS TABLES

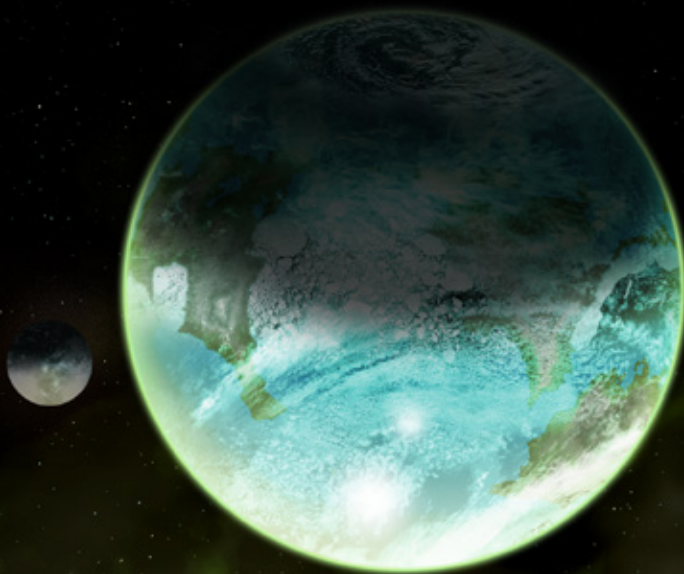
INDIANA	2d6 Result	Map
	2	Heavy Forest #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	3	Scattered Woods (MS2, MSC1)
	4	Lake Area (MS2, MSC1)
	5	River Delta/Drainage Basin #1 (MS4, MSC1)*
	6	Open Terrain #1 (MSC5, MSC1)
	7	Open Terrain #2 (BT, MS5, MSC1)*
	8	Open Terrain #1 (MSC5, MSC1)*
	9	Large Lakes #1 (MS4, MSC1)
	10	River Delta/Drainage Basin #1 (MS4, MSC1)
	11	Woodland (MS6, MSC2)
	12	Rolling Hills #2 (MS3, MSC1)

\*Treat open terrain hexes as Planted Fields (see p. 38, T0).

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## INGLESMOND

**Star Type:** G7V (188 hours)  
**Position in System:** 2 (of 7)  
**Time to Jump Point:** 6.57 days  
**Number of Moons:** 1 (Martim Vaz)  
**Surface Gravity:** 0.92  
**Atm. Pressure:** Standard (Breathable)  
**Average Temp:** 22 °C (see text)  
**Surface Water:** 70 percent  
**Recharging Station:** Zenith, Nadir (2787);  
None (3150)  
**HPG Class:** A (2787); None (3150)  
**Highest Native Life:** None  
**Population:** 4,270,000,000 (2787); 12,000 (3150)  
**Socio-Industrial Levels:** A-A-A-A-A (2787);  
F-F-B-F-C (3150)  
**Landmasses (Capital City):** Para, Ceara  
(Doosamontana [3150]), Amazonas, Catarina  
(Novas Brasilia [2787]), Ionus, Sergipe



Located close to Terra, Inglesmond was discovered in the first waves of interstellar exploration but ignored for centuries. It had plenty of water, but also an inhospitably reducing atmosphere of nitrogen, methane, and carbon dioxide. The Terran Alliance began terraforming the planet in the late twenty-third century, when Projects Aphrodite and Lowell wound down. Inglesmond wasn't a particular priority for the Alliance and had no colonies lined up for it, but the planetary engineering corporations had enormous lobbying clout with the government and even more highly-paid personnel to keep employed. Eventually, a British group expressed interest in settling this world and planned a colonial expedition to take place around 2350 when the terraformers estimated their work would be sufficiently complete.

The Terran Hegemony happened first. In 2349, Michael Cameron selected Inglesmond (then-named "New Britain") as a trial world for a program aimed at defusing regional patriotism on Terra itself. New Britain was gifted as a "custom-made paradise" to Brazilian settlers, as part of a propaganda effort meant to convince them that the Hegemony was of great benefit to Brazil. The overarching goal was to secure the loyalty of those who continued to espouse devout patriotism to their increasingly defunct Terran nation-states, and gradually wean them from such impulses via settlements on far-flung worlds. Polling showed the project was quite successful at securing the Brazilians' favor, so Cameron would continue these efforts with other worlds such as Brownsville, Lone Star, and New Dallas. Meanwhile, the Lusophone Brazilian settlers had developed the slang name, "English World" for New Britain, a name that was erroneously immortalized as "Inglesmond" by English-speaking Hegemony bureaucrats.

Inglesmond is an unusual world, though far from the oddest discovered by humanity. It has a circular orbit of 0.83 AU around its bright primary, creating a local year only 290 Terran days long. This produces somewhat short seasons, which are particularly extreme due to the planet's axial tilt of nearly seventy degrees. Its large moon, which follows an equatorial orbit, is apparently the product of a massive impact that occurred in Inglesmond's youth and is the obvious cause of this extreme tilt, and also its stability against the interference of the system's other gravitational sources.

This has made it possible for Inglesmond to retain a stable—if bizarre—climate. The poles spend a quarter of the year each aimed almost directly at the sun, giving a large area of the planet continuous illumination for the summer, when they become quite hot. Summer averages around forty degrees Celsius in the polar zones, and some polar island interiors exceed eighty degrees. During the winter, each pole falls mostly into darkness, where the region chills to freezing. Polar sea ice development is limited in winter, however, due to the enormous thermal mass of the oceans. But it is the equator where the climate is oddest. Spending over half the year barely illuminated and at high obliquity to the sun, while the other half of the year falls directly under the sun and provides a normal twenty-one-hour day/night cycle, the equator thus experiences continually cool or cold temperatures. For this reason, Inglesmond's single permanent ice "cap" is actually an ice "belt" that stretches around its equator.

Moderating the polar temperature extremes is their extensive water coverage. Both poles only possess scattered islands, while three of Inglesmond's five continents (Ceara, Amazonas, and Catarina—ranked largest to smallest) are in the middle latitudes of the northern and

# ATLAS

southern hemispheres. The largest continent, Para, and smallest continent, Sergipe, form a belt of land around the equator that serves to anchor the planetary ice belt. There are two large oceanic passages across the equator, both of which stay ice-free year round due largely to warm water currents coming off the poles. The ice-free northern and southern edges of Para and Sergipe are prone to severe flooding during spring and fall, when the equator is most brightly lit. Today's remnant human population lives entirely on Ceara in the northern hemisphere, at about sixty degrees latitude, where seasonal temperature swings are tolerable and there is some nighttime or dusk during the summer.

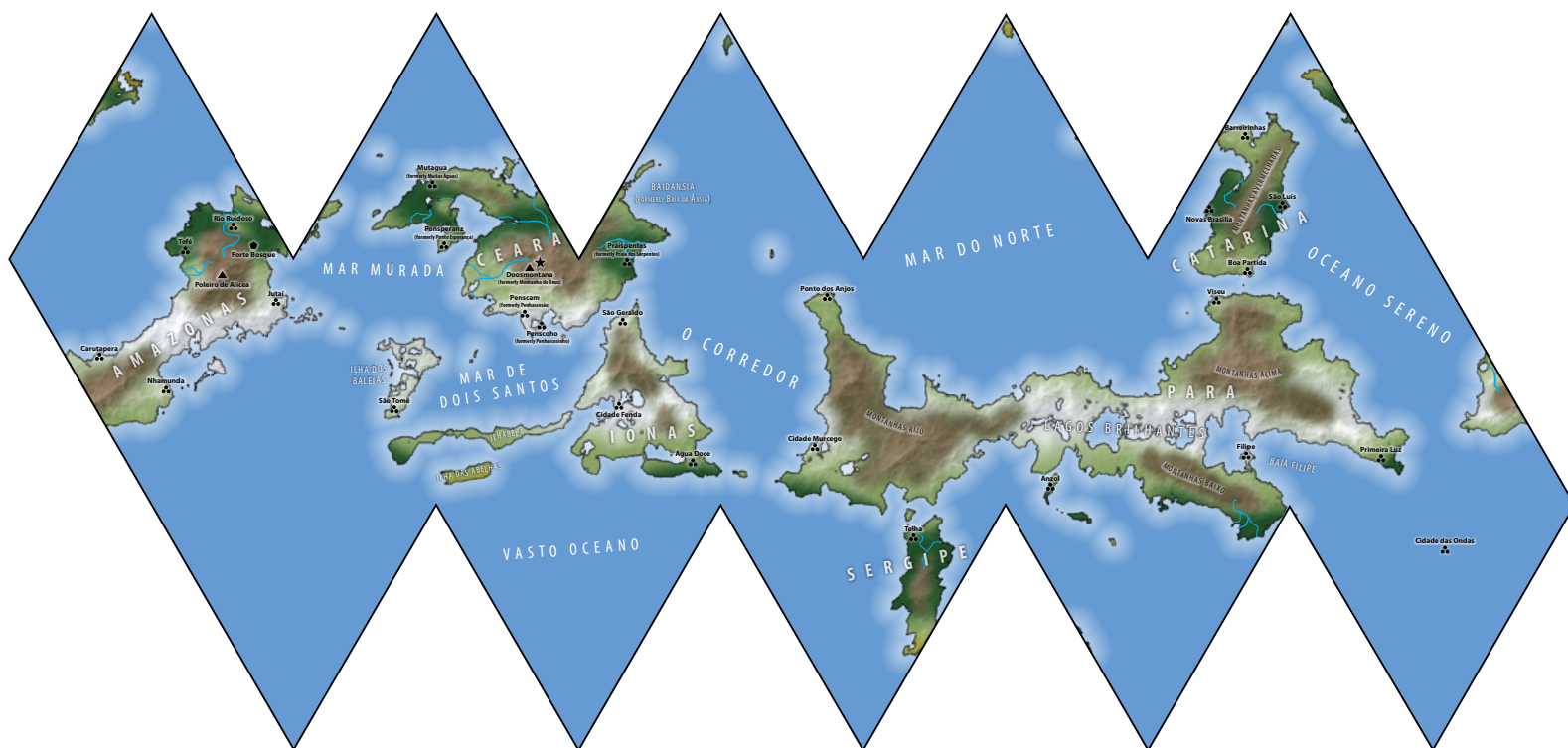
The middle latitude continents have thriving, terrestrial-derived ecosystems that do well in the moderate climate of those regions. Many of the imported flora and fauna were slightly genetically "tweaked" to adapt to long days and nights, especially the plant life. Today, as it was in the Star League's heyday, Inglesmond's middle latitude lands run the gamut of terrestrial biomes, from rainforests to deserts and swamps. The deep ocean ecosystems are also in good shape and prospering, and the world has one of the largest known populations of cetacean species in the Inner Sphere—even larger than Terra's. Coral reefs and coastal ecosystems are still young despite vigorous seeding efforts from the planet's populated days, but—as with the rest of the world—these reefs have been doing well without human interference.

Despite an unusual environment, Inglesmond thrived. It was settled by colonists from wealthy Brazil; surrounded by the most developed, industrialized, and wealthiest colonies in human space; and by 2349 there was a large body of experience in managing its colonial development, which helped drive its economic growth. Inglesmond

settled down to be a quiet, loyal, and industrious member of the Hegemony for over four centuries.

If Inglesmond could be said to have an economic niche, it was one focused on civilian production. Like most worlds, its economy was dominated by domestic planetary activities, but also enjoyed a healthy trade balance exporting high-value goods that made best use of JumpShips' and DropShips' small cargo capacities: from medicines, electronics, and jewelry (as this world was rich in heavy metals), to exotic materials like high-boron alloys. Inglesmond manufactured few noteworthy military products, but its large civilian shipyards churned out common merchant JumpShips and DropShip classes. The world was advanced, wealthy, mineral-rich, and even had bountiful farms.

The world's large population concentrated on the temperate middle latitude continents, which were (and are) thick with forests and grasslands. Aesthetically, few of its cities were particularly distinctive; they were built at the height of the Hegemony and drew upon architectural influences from across the Inner Sphere. There was, however, a minority who favored the mobile aquatic cities that could migrate between hemispheres to avoid the planet's seasonal extremes, and the planet hosted several waterborne arcologies, including at least one *Atlantis* class floating city—perhaps the largest oceanic habitat structure ever built in the Hegemony. Apart from these sailing arcologies, Inglesmond's transportation was typical: fusion-powered aircraft for long-ranged travel, high-speed trains, automated highways, and light rail in dense urban areas, while the abundant waters lent themselves to bulk freight shipping.



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Inglesmond's planetary government followed the Hegemony norm, but by the twenty-eighth century, local nobles dominated the planetary legislature's upper house, creating an atypically conservative and elitist theme in local politics. Thanks to immigration, the primary language of the local population was Star League Standard English. Descendants of the original Brazilian settlers remained a distinct part of the planet's society, but by the 2700s, they were merely one part of a much larger whole. Their Portuguese language survived as a secondary tongue and for this reason Inglesmond became a significant source of Portuguese literature and media during the Star League era. The Brazilian cultural love of football also survived here and some the Hegemony's dominant football teams and players hailed from this world, winning Hegemony (and Star League) championships an average of once per decade.

While the cities were "Hegemony Generic," many of Inglesmond's government buildings and, eventually, homes of the wealthy and famous developed a "neo-baroque" interior decoration style. This evolved into the gaudier, wide-spread "Cameron Baroque" or "Star League Baroque" during the twenty-eighth century, but the "original" neo-baroque is still used as a mark of class by those who want to show some reserve and refinement in their wealth.

During the Star League Civil War, Inglesmond was ambivalent. Like most of the Hegemony, its few voters favored Stefan Amaris, being disgusted with Richard Cameron's incompetence and the manner in which his policies were endangering the Hegemony as metropole of the Star League. However, Inglesmond evinced a mercenary attitude toward Amaris: when the SLDF and Houses refused to recognize the new Emperor, their support began to wane. After seeing some of Amaris' brutality toward less cooperative worlds, the people of Inglesmond generally kept their collective head down and cooperated with the Terran government until the SLDF arrived in 2773. The SLDF found the world still under a nominal Amaris government, but garrisoned by mercenaries and soldiers from the Draconis Combine. The SLDF drove those forces off Inglesmond with no casualties, but before Kerensky's troops could deal with the pro-Amaris government, most of politicians in high offices resigned abruptly to well-paid retirements. This was a contingency plan by the planetary government in case the SLDF won; it was suspected the newly retired politicians might return to office in a stage-managed counterrevolution if Amaris eventually defeated the SLDF.

While some have derided Inglesmond as "spineless" during the Civil War, that was because its people considered themselves loyal to the Hegemony itself, rather than its contending leaders. As an example of its loyalty, by 2776 it was entirely willing to stress its economy

both to both a militia to deter further Combine adventurism and also to feed the SLDF. Inglesmond dutifully took up contracts for its new masters and its taxes shifted to Kerensky's puppet "Hegemony-in-Exile" government quickly after their liberation. Supporting the SLDF meant a significant militarization of the planet, which this industrialized world accomplished quickly. Its surviving militia units were tasked with deterring Kuritan aggression as the Combine occupied nearby worlds like Telos IV, Imbros III, and Styx as soon as Amaris and Kerensky left.

When the Civil War ended and the High Council was dissolved, Inglesmond—largely untouched despite years of conflict around it—looked to its own needs at first, waiting for the Terran Hegemony to reorganize its war-battered member worlds. By 2782, however, the planetary leadership recognized that the Hegemony was in a moribund state and began attempting to re-organize the nation on its own, as did a number of well-off Hegemony worlds. Unfortunately, the "unofficial" nature of these efforts was poorly received.

Empire-building was rampant amongst novice Hegemony administrators, nobles, and planetary governments to the point that pragmatic efforts to restore the Terran realm found no traction. With the departure of the SLDF, Inglesmond accepted that a graceful recovery was out of the question, and shifted to wartime mobilization. With a few like-minded worlds in the Hegemony's Lone Star District, it would simply have to defend itself and its fellow worlds against the circling House vultures until Terra was on its feet again.

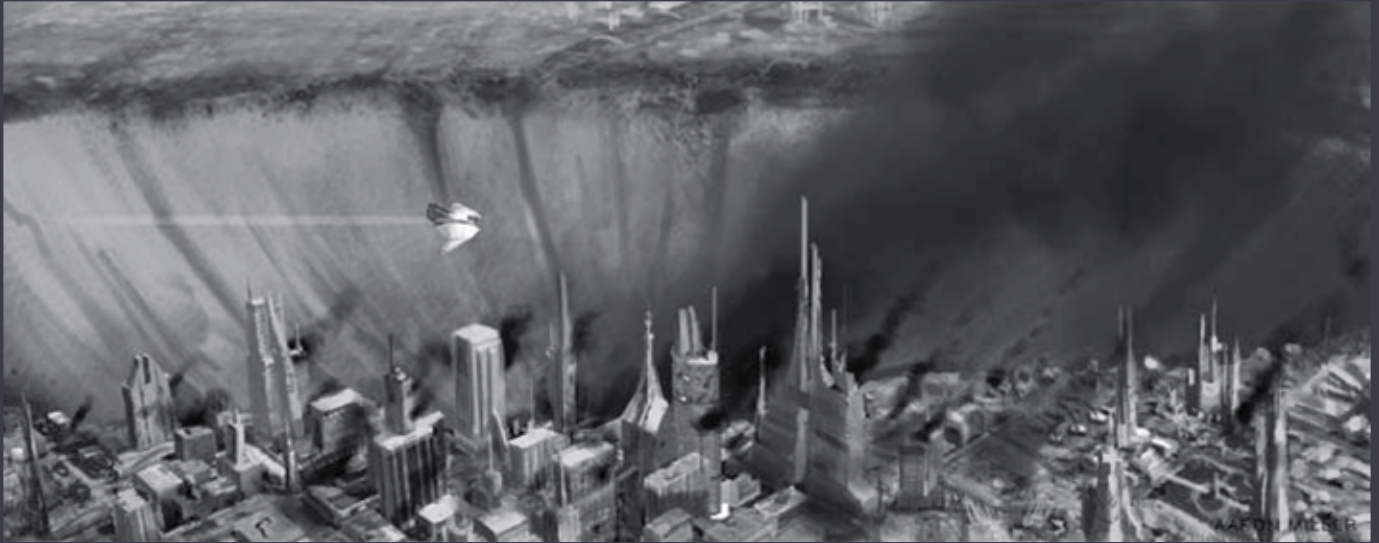
The First Succession War still came as a shock to the people of Inglesmond. Most had anticipated the defection of a few Hegemony planets to the nearest Houses, but the accelerating, naked land grab that heralded the war was unanticipated. When House Kurita's forces inevitably entered the region in the early months of 2786, Inglesmond's defenders, a mix of SLDF veterans and cutting-edge war machines, bled the Combine invaders badly on nearby Deneb, Algedi, Kervil, and Styx.

Two things turned the tide against Inglesmond, however. First, the Combine managed a devastating raid against the planet's LTV Aerospace shipyards in 2787, destroying millions of tons of partially built WarShips and a pair of WarShips borrowed from nearby Dieron. Second, the Combine (and all the Houses) willingly used far more weapons of mass destruction than even the "brutal" Amaris did during Star League Civil War.

When driven back to Inglesmond, the defenders openly courted Houses Steiner and Davion with offers of allegiance in exchange for surcease from the Kuritans. Though constrained by their own strategic concerns, the Lyran and the Suns managed to send a



# ATLAS



regiment of mixed troops each as “exploratory forces”, but their arrival only turned the Siege of Inglesmond into a four-way debacle. In the course of the fighting, all three of the House combatants resorted to nuclear scorched earth tactics, desperate to deny such a wealthy and industrialized Hegemony world to the others.

The Combine finally claimed nominal suzerainty over Inglesmond by 2789, but abandoned the nuclear winter-shrouded wasteland in 2799 when no useful salvage could be found amid the radioactive craters of its industrial complexes. After a perfunctory search for survivors in 2801, ComStar struck this world off its maps.

Unlike many terraformed worlds that died during the Succession Wars, the planetary engineering on Inglesmond was thorough. The planet proved easier to work with than Mars or Venus because it receives illumination similar to Terra. There was also little in the way of native life to overcome beyond some microbes, the atmosphere had a good partial pressure of nitrogen, and liquid water was bountiful. Effort was put toward sequestering the major oxygen sinks, like iron in the oceans, so continuous artificial atmospheric processing was not required after the late twenty-fourth century. Amazingly, Inglesmond's ecosystem, climate, and ozone layer have all bounced back to their antebellum norms despite the deployment of an estimated eleven gigatons of nuclear weaponry during the early years of the First Succession War. It has helped greatly, of course, that the planet has been free of humans for three centuries. The ecosystem is thus doing well, and is maintaining oxygen levels while natural greenhouse effects remain at stable levels. This native environment could last almost indefinitely without maintenance

Salvagers returned to Inglesmond several times throughout the First, Second, and Third Succession Wars. The callous lostech scavengers often hunted down survivors who approached their ships because the native presence endangered the legal claims for salvage. Lyrann intelligence forces later found a DCMS recovery operation in 2803 had deployed nuclear weapons against four large survivor communities rather than deal with the complications they posed. ComStar recertified Inglesmond as uninhabited in a publicly announced visit in 2822, and again after a secret expedition in 2912. Because of these surveys' mixed results, Inglesmond is sometimes shown as inhabited on 2822 maps and sometimes not.

Today, the planet is occupied by several dozen feuding hunter-gatherer tribes that often arm themselves with metal implements salvaged from ruins. The most powerful tribe, an inbred group of several clans, rules from a decrepit Castle Brian that still manages to produce some geothermal electricity and distilled water. This Castle Brian is located within a massive granite mountain, earning the name “Doosamontana” from its inhabitants – probably a corruption of Star League-era Portuguese for “God Mountain.” The modern inhabitants were discovered by Coalition scouts during the Jihad, when evaluating the world as a secret staging base for the attack on Terra, but the First Succession War bioweapons still lingered in the environment in mutated forms and the Coalition had no time to develop adequate countermeasures. The Republic of the Sphere treats Inglesmond as a “planetary nature preserve” rather than an inhabited system, and allows remote study of the natives by a multi-national team of researchers.

# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## SHOOTING STARS

**Recommended Group Size:** 2-6 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Covert Ops

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Green-Elite (Key Skill levels of 2-8)

After several humiliating setbacks in the Hegemony's Lone Star district between 2786 and 2787—some at the hands of Inglesmond's militia—the Draconis Combine re-evaluated the strategic capabilities of this overlooked world. Between its wealth, heavy industry, and political stability, the Kuritans quickly determined that Inglesmond could raise several brigades of truly formidable militia in just a few years, and potentially support them with WarShips emerging from their own still-upgrading shipyards. As the DCMS faced the imminent pressure of two giant foes in the Lyran Commonwealth and Federated Suns, ignoring this world for much longer put the very real chance of a resurgent Terran Hegemony (or at least a portion of it) at the Dragon's back.

By late 2787, Inglesmond had yet to fully mobilize and remained dependent on a few key facilities. With the fall of Dieron in December of 2786, the planet was struggling to complete the first batch of WarShip hulls its upgraded LTV Aerospace yards were building, but it was still making progress. Meanwhile, the Combine found itself entrenched in an all-out war against the Davions while holding the Steiners at bay. Even with its resources strained, the Dragon could no longer afford to ignore this secondary threat. Best to strike soon.

Because the Combine's navy was mostly tied up fighting the Houses, the plan to break Inglesmond's naval yards and naval defenses rested on a diversionary attack at Lone Star (which had been largely overlooked to this point), and then sending a small group of converted DropShips into the system via the Inglesmond-Martim Vaz L1 pirate point. Some of the DropShips would engage the battle station there with nuclear-tipped Barracudas, drawing the defenders' attention, while other DropShips and dispersed fighters carrying Alamos would race toward the shipyards orbiting Martim Vaz. No one was expected to return, so it was acceptable for the fighters to make a one-way, non-stop burn toward the shipyard; they had fuel for that.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**Why Aren't Those Shooting?:** The heavy use of nuclear weapons at the pirate point startled Inglesmond's defenders, who had only seen them used tactically on other Lone Star district worlds, and thus drew the available aerospace defenders to deal with those berserk "pocket WarShips." The militia was, however, aware some invading forces were headed for the moon, but their leadership ordered all attention be given to the nuclear threat. It was a close decision.

**Counterfactual Speculative Histories:** The 2787 destruction of Inglesmond's shipyard and its subsequent nuclear bombardment the following year have long been popular topics for the Inner Sphere's "speculative wargamers" and "counterfactual historians" because the battle itself could easily have turned out differently. And if it did, the course of the Succession Wars might have gone differently, as within another few years Inglesmond would have been unassailable, at least in the sense that the Houses could not spare enough troops from their titanic conflicts to deal with a Hegemony rump state that had a small fleet and some of the Hegemony's industry.

**Tips:** This is an opportunity to use or avoid nuclear weapons in a naval conflict; the fighters headed for the shipyards are unlikely to use their few Alamos against defenders, while the DropShips at the pirate point will use their Santa Anas profligately against WarShips that might survive them. Rules for nuclear weapons are found in *Jihad Hotspots: 3070* (see p. 130, *JHS3070*). Rules for L1 pirate points are found in *Strategic Operations* (see pp. 87-89, and pp. 134-135, *SO*), and offer the opportunity for the battle to hinge on a misjump.

## RUMBLE IN THE RUBBLE

**Recommended Group Size:** 2 to 8 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Salvage Experts

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Green-Regular (Key Skill levels of 1-4)

By 2803, about a million survivors from the 2788-2789 nuclear scouring had congregated on the continent of Amazonas. They had been overlooked by ComStar in its 2801 rescue operation because of the survivors' strict radio silence procedures, and because they were not on the continents of Ceara or Catarina, where most of the pre-war population had lived and died. Amazonas had mostly been a nature reserve with few nuclear targets like factories, cities, radio emitters, and campfires that caught the eye of House gunners. Its ecosystems had bounced back from the nuclear winter, and the invaders had favored modern, pure-fusion weapons that produced little fallout. Strict quarantine procedures for newly arrived refugees kept bioweapons from getting loose on Amazonas.

Left alone for eleven years, Inglesmond's Amazonas survivors had re-established agriculture, a functioning telecommunications network (by fiberoptic lines), and were building towns with decent materials and infrastructure. The survivors were apparently quite industrious.

In 2803, orbital surveys by Draconis Combine salvage teams (investigating a world ComStar declared dead in 2801) noted the survivor communities, who thought they had missed some undamaged towns. Plus they would get the honor of informing the Combine that the world was still inhabited and useful. When they found survivors, the salvagers assumed that anyone on the battered planet would welcome any aid from the stars.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**How Many BattleMechs?:** As it turned out, part of the reason that the survivors had settled Amazonas where they did was an Inglesmond militia base had escaped destruction. The wilderness training facility had not only included functioning power plants, machine shops, clinic, and food stores, but also an intact militia 'Mech battalion. Not all of that battalion was functioning in 2802 for lack of parts, but the operable 'Mechs were late SLDF models.

**It's the Only Way To Be Sure:** After the first militia attacks destroyed the salvagers' small BattleMech guard detail and their WorkMechs, the Kuritan response had been to retreat to orbit and improvise aerial freefall casings and altimeter fuses for the fusion demolition charges normally used to excavate Castles Brian. However, the civilian smallcraft pressed into the role of bombers took obvious and suspicious routes toward the four cities. A more alert militia might have halted this attack.

**Tips:** This scenario is an opportunity to host battles in a post-apocalyptic wasteland, albeit one free of the usual cinematic fallout and biohazard threats. Inglesmond is rebuilding a civilization, but the barbarian hordes threaten all that work.

# OPTIONAL RULES

The following additional special rules are intended to provide further flavor to games set on the world featured in this product. For the most part, these rules may be considered advanced and optional, as they primarily reflect conditions and/or features unique to this one planet or planetary system.

## CIBOLAN WHALE

This oceanic behemoth is an immigrant from El Dorado and apparently was named in reference to another “lost city.” By 2694, Inglesmond’s oceans had been filled with many of Terra’s cetacean species, some recovered from extinction by fossil DNA extraction, and it was a source of pride to the population that they were helping to undo the damage of pre-*homo stellaris* humans on the home world. However, not everyone on Inglesmond was sensitive to the nuances of this honor and some, such as the Baron Brance von Liddleschitte, thought the goal was simply to have as many whale-like entities as possible. He was quite stubborn and sufficiently connected to force the Terran Hegemony, Inglesmond, and Federated Suns governments to authorize the import. Finding public scorn rather than accolades for his charitable work, Baron Liddleschitte abandoned plans for further imports and retired to the Grand Canal of Mars, which had a much more understanding demographic than the “unwashed plebeians” of Inglesmond.

Ironically, the ungrateful people of Inglesmond almost immediately came to love the imported Cibola whales. Until puberty (when they begin a growth spurt that takes them from ten to over fifty tons), the xeno-mammals were able to move on land in the manner of terrestrial pinnipeds and often play in ways that humans find adorably clumsy. Their faces are relatively mobile and convey emotions by expression; their long-jawed “dog grin” is easily understood by humans. The Cibola whales are bright and friendly animals; although they are predators, they avoid attacking humans and many of the terrestrial cetacean “immigrants” on Inglesmond, which they have been known to play with and even assist in a manner similar to the Terran dolphin. The famous Rafael Case in 2697, when an imported Cibola whale towed a disabled sailboat (occupied by the Rafael family) several hundred kilometers to an inhabited island, started Inglesmond’s appreciation for the giants. Sometime in the thirty-first century, the Inglesmond population of the whales exceeded the population on their home world.

Cibolan whales are bright animals, but their curiosity, expressiveness, and playfulness have led to incorrect exaggerations of that intelligence. While communicating to some degree among their kind (the Cibolan whale “song” is unmusical barks, grunts, and rumbles) and apparently possessing fantastic long-term memories, they do not quite seem to equal terrestrial gray parrots or bottlenose dolphins. They do recognize individuals of other species even after decades of separation, and pods of Cibolan whales are able to communicate among each other to spread warnings of threats (whalers, predators, weather). Their infrasonic rumbles are relayed across oceans in mere days if sufficient numbers of pods are present.

The whales are opportunistic, pack-hunting predators that are equally happy consuming fish, squid, and krill, so long as they acquire the enormous amounts of calories needed. Their cooperative hunting behaviors include “bubble herding” schools of fish. Cibolan whales, like their terrestrial counterparts, primarily depend upon sonar, though their vision is decent. They dive and remain submerged as long as Terran cachalots to hunt seafloor pray, but their nitrogen-affixing bone marrow spares them decompression sickness experienced by terrestrial deep-diving mammals.

They organize into pods of five to ten whales. When not hunting (which takes up about fifty percent of their waking time), Cibolan whales will rest on the surface in close formation to conserve calories, often “gossiping” (as El Doradan xenobiologists refer to the continuous barking and grunting in a resting pod).

An unusual attribute of the Cibolan whales is their apparent immortality. They reach adulthood within twenty years, when they are merely some twenty meters long and forty tons, but continuously grow slowly thereafter. They are highly resistant to disease and cancer, and severe injuries up to and including amputations will regenerate over weeks and months. This means Cibolans generally only die due to mishap or predation. The eldest known Cibolan is on El Dorado and is 920 years old based on growth rings in its lost teeth, which means it was an adult before humans arrived on that old colony. Such a methuselah is about forty meters long and 300 tons.

STR	BOD	DEX	RFL	INT	WIL	EDG
40	700	3	4	6	4	6

**Mass:** 100,000 kg (adult)

**Size Class (Modifier):** Monstrous (+6)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** 6/5/5/5 (Thick Hide)

**Damage (AP/BD):** 6M/160

**Move (W/R/S):** 30/40 (Swimming)

**Traits:** Fast Learner, Hardy, Fit

**Skills:** AniMelee (+3), Perception (+6), Tracking (+4)

**Note:** Juvenile Cibolan whales weigh only 10,000 kg, and may move on land at their swimming “Cruise” rate. Juvenile whales reduce the STR and BOD of adults by a factor of 10, reduce their size to Monstrous (+5), reduce all BAR values by 2 points, and possess a damage AP/BD of 4M/16.

## INGLESMOND TERRAIN

Inglesmond has a wide range of terrain like any inhabited planet. The random map tables found on p. 263 of *Total Warfare* is a reasonable representation of most of the world’s terrain. For scenarios set in and around the survivor community located in Amazonas, the Wooded Terrain Table is recommended.

# ATLAS

## LONE STAR

**Star Type (Recharge Time):** M1V (202 hours)

**Position in System:** 5 (of 12)

**Time to Jump Point:** 2.96 days

**Number of Satellites:** 1 (Vespa) (2450–2825);  
None (after 2825)

**Surface Gravity:** 0.8

**Atm. Pressure:** Standard (Breathable)

**Equatorial Temperature:** 22°C (Arid, before 2800);  
–5°C (Arid, after 2822);

**Surface Water:** 40%

**Recharging Station:** Zenith, Nadir (before 2780);  
None (after 2780)

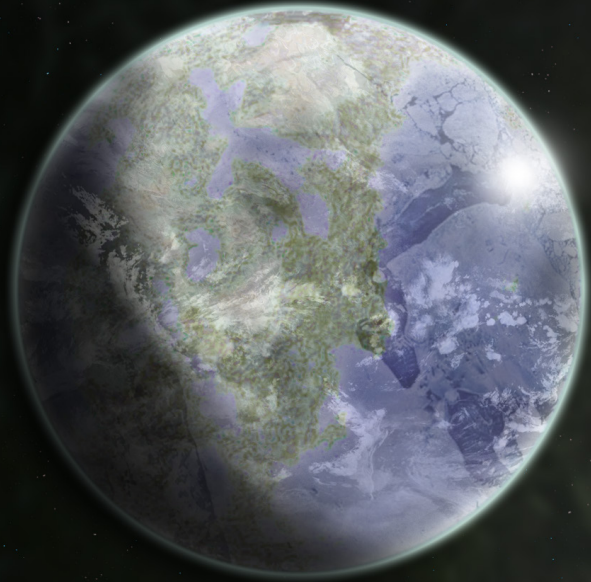
**HPG Class:** A (before 2780); None (after 2780)

**Highest Native Life:** None

**Population:** 573,000,000 (2780); 25,000,000 (2822);  
None (3150)

**Socio-Industrial Levels:** A-A-A-A-A (2780);  
C-D-C-D-D (2822); N/A (3150)

**Landmasses (Capital City):** The Belt (Volgadon)



## LONE STAR

Owing to its 120-year terraforming process, Lone Star was one of the last worlds settled within the Terran Hegemony. As a terraforming subject, Lone Star was especially challenging. Located well beyond its primary's conventional life zone, the planet was desperately cold, much like Mars in the Terran home system. Its atmosphere was thin and nitrogenous, with its modest water reserves entirely locked up in sheets of polar ice. Yet, despite the difficulties in establishing and maintaining a habitable climate, Lone Star was finally declared open for settlement in 2533. Part of the planetary terraforming effort even required moving a local asteroid (Vespa) into orbit to host a skyhook and mines.

The success of Lone Star's transformation was a matter of national pride. It also resolved some political issues in creating a new provincial capital world without the "baggage" of the much-older colony systems around it. By 2600, its population was in the hundreds of millions; its local industry was burgeoning, thanks to tax breaks and cheaper land than most of the Hegemony; and its agricultural sector was exporting a wide range of luxury foods.

Lone Star's land is concentrated in an unusual belt of continents that follow the prime meridian around the poles. These five linked landmasses all had formal names in the system's early settlement days, but the residents obstinately came to refer to the unbroken expanses as simply "The Belt." In its terraformed heydays, most of the world's free water came to be concentrated in two roughly circular, highly saline oceans (known to the locals as "Big Pond" and "Other Pond"), respectively situated almost antipodal to each other in the eastern and western hemispheres. The abundance of polar land, and Lone Star's low axial tilt, produced large ice caps

that came to serve as its settlers' principal source of fresh water. The large continental interiors, meanwhile, were hyper-arid, with terrain varieties spanning the gamut of deserts found all across the Inner Sphere: hot ergs, chilled rocky plains, saline wastes, dry mountains, and more. Today, of course, these continents and oceans are mostly covered in ice.

Before its fall, Lone Star had some regions with very pleasant climates and its populations largely concentrated in those areas. In 2765, the planet's 573 million residents lived in nine major metropolitan regions. Eight of these dense metropolises (collectively called "The Pond Cities") were located along the northern and southern temperate-zone coasts of the Ponds, with four cities per ocean. Those regions boasted temperatures moderated by the oceans and fed by abundant freshwater, either collected from ocean-driven precipitation or supplied by the polar meltwater rivers.

The preplanned Pond Cities were compact for their populations, an arrangement driven by land-price analyses by Lone Star's development corporations: dense urban areas saw faster price growth than typical colonial sprawls across low-cost rural lands. To maximize their economic and political power, the first planetary government used its zoning powers to bottle up its settlers and their descendants in the Pond Cities. By 2765, each of these cities claimed over fifty million residents in its soaring skyscrapers and arcologies. Yet, despite some off-world depictions, individual accommodations were spacious. Multi-tiered transit systems of buses, trains (both underground and elevated), and VTOLs provided reasonably swift movement for the huge populations. There were no suburban sprawls around the cities; they transitioned immediately to nature preserves and farm fields.

# ATLAS

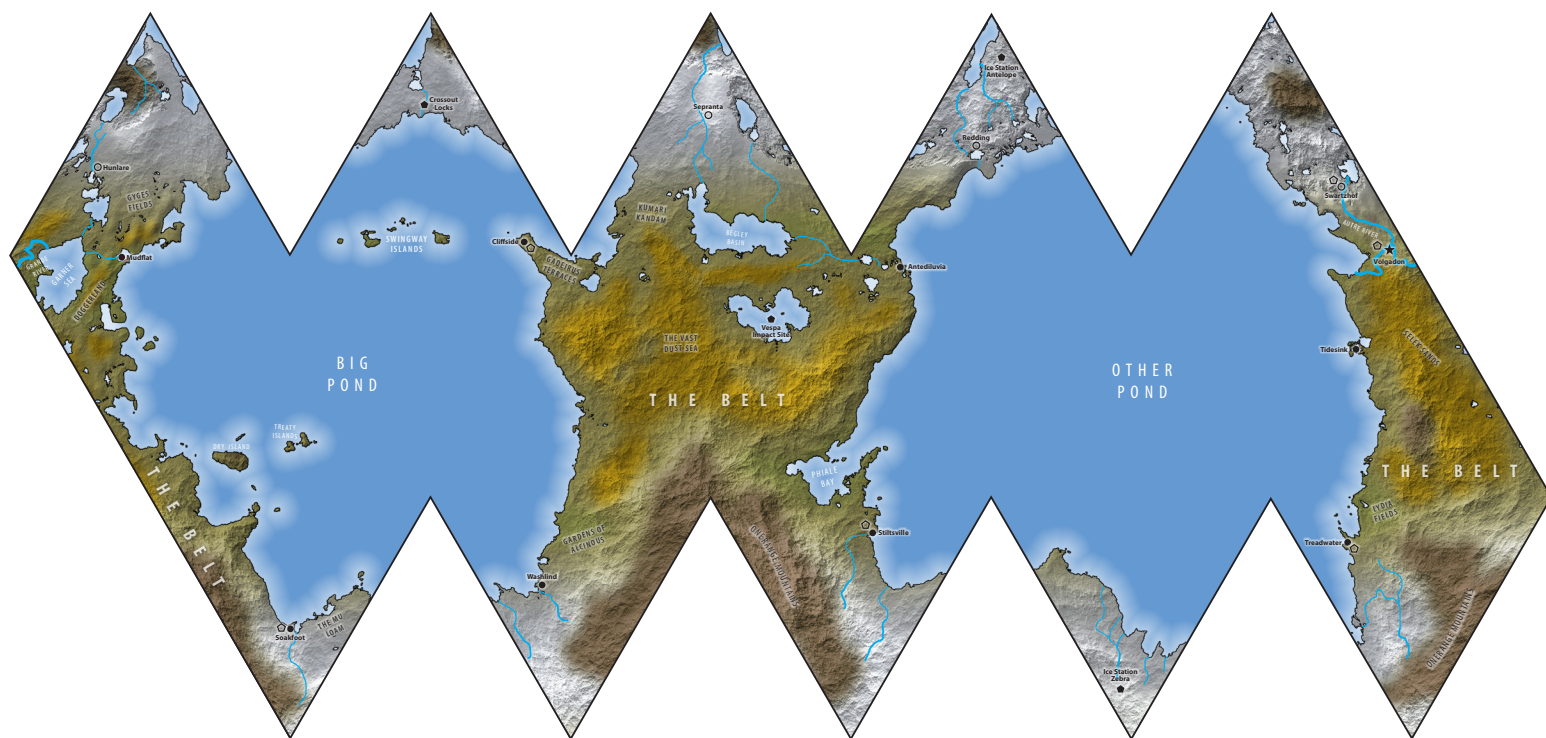
All eight Pond Cities were also unusual in layout thanks to the enormous tides generated by Lone Star's sun. These swells could often rise more than twenty times as high as those of Terra's lunar tides; although the pull of the system's fourth planet had prevented tidal locking, Lone Star had a rotational cycle fifty-six hours long, and thus possessed slow tides. For coastal cities, this prompted several adaptations. Four of the Pond Cities sat on natural and manmade highlands along the coasts. Among them, the city Cliffside on Big Pond frequently won architectural awards for the dramatic arcologies it built along its granite cliffs. By comparison, three other cities favored columns and pilings that enabled them to rise above their estuaries and tidal flats. The cunningly named Stiltsville on Other Pond made a point of incorporating its massive pilings into its architecture, rather than trying to hide them as simple foundations—a feat that inspired the brutalist "Big Iron" architectural style that became popular in the mid-twenty-seventh century. Finally, the Pond City of Mudflat took a more confrontational approach, pitting the Hegemony's engineering against nature by expanding into the tidal zones with sealed buildings, dykes, and "amphibious infrastructure" designed to either survive or prevent daily submersion. It was normal for dykes to be made of ferroglass, so residents could stroll beside transparent walls of high tide water, while the sealed lower floors of buildings would continue normal business as fish swam outside their windows. Lone Star's dramatic tides even served its electrical needs, providing a lower-cost alternative to fusion power.

Inland from the surging seas, the Pond Cities grew crops in abundance, supporting herds of free-ranging farm animals that

give "Loners" (as the planet's inhabitants referred to themselves) a meat- and dairy-rich diet unknown on less fortunate worlds. With no native ecosystem to protect and rich soil produced as a byproduct of terraforming, Lone Star's agricultural sector cultivated a complicated mix of plants and animals originally imported from many worlds across the Hegemony.

Lone Star's ninth metropolis was its capital city, Volgaddon, situated at a narrow point in The Belt within the planet's northeastern quadrant. Volgaddon straddled a low continental divide between the two major polar rivers (Grande and Autre) that drained to Big Pond and Other Pond, respectively. The city was built around a large, elaborate canal-and-lock system that linked Grande and Autre, effectively tethering the two oceans together. Despite having much less water coverage than Terra, Lone Star was highly dependent on inexpensive water transport because of its cities' concentration around the Ponds. Volgaddon's canals thus provided a final, critical link to global trade. Predictably, the savage fighting between Stefan Amaris and SLDF forces destroyed these canals, which would not be repaired until 2783.

Volgaddon was an oasis on The Belt, but grew little food for itself. About once every eight weeks, Lone Star's sixty-day year and axial tilt warmed the north pole, which caused cold, humid winds to roll off the northern icecap and across the deserts, delivering fierce, days-long dust storms to the region. Lone Star's slow rotation did little to deflect the southern march of these storms. This plant-suffocating, ultra-fine halide dust made it impossible for local farmers to compete effectively with their Pond City counterparts, who did not need greenhouses and dust canopies. Thus, the capital's economy was dominated by its public



# ATLAS

sector, electricity production (cascades of dams on the two watersheds produced abundant power), and tourism on the manmade, tide-free lakes behind the dams.

While Lone Star's population lived primarily in the urban zones, there were other cities and towns scattered elsewhere. These much-smaller cities included the likes of mining cities, such as Swartzhof (which was destroyed during the SLDF's liberation effort).

One of the advantages that made Lone Star an agricultural exporter and regional capital for the Hegemony was its short transit time. DropShips could reach the planet, exchange cargos, and return to the jump point all within the span of a conventional JumpShip's recharge period. Because the local sun was relatively dim, clusters of recharge stations were constructed just inside the proximity limits of the zenith and nadir points and—prior to the Amaris Coup—were home to Star League Navy's Second Star Squadron. These facilities, further protected by the system's SDS network, became primary targets for the SLDF during its liberation campaign. Lone Star was never able to afford to replace the stations before its final environmental collapse.

The short transit distance and least-inflated land prices of the Hegemony also made Lone Star a favored site for export-oriented manufacturing. By the Star League Civil War, Loners were making a wide range of "background" components (from computer parts to myomers) used in many other industries across the Star League. The planet's business community was particularly adept at securing contracts for the Territorial States of the Periphery. Lobbying the small, oft-overlooked Star League offices that managed Periphery affairs could get new restrictions placed on the Canopian, Concordat, or Outworlds production of certain high-tech goods deemed "disruptive or insightful of secessionism." With an inside track on such upcoming restrictions, Lone Star's manufacturers would position themselves to become the primary suppliers for those goods. A wide range of vital technologies from fusion reactors and JumpShip drive controllers to computers, medical scanners, and so forth, were built on Lone Star for Periphery export. While this practice was not limited to Lone Star, this world did excel at it; the Periphery realms did not appreciate being so "economically enslaved" to slipshod factories six months and more away from their borders, but had little option.

While Lone Star's civilian population started with a weak majority in favor of Stefan Amaris' reign, the new, Director-General of the Hegemony enjoyed only the most fragile grip on this opinion. The use of terrorist bombings and chemical attacks to eliminate SLDF forces and loyalist militia regiments left Loners wary of the new regime, and some even formed resistance cells. When Kerensky finally liberated the planet in a campaign that ran from 2772 to 2774, each of the Pond Cities

had suffered at least one WMD attacks. With most of its agricultural zones suffering damage from biological weaponry, and roughly three-quarters of its herd animals killed off, Lone Star's agricultural output was as devastated as its cities' once-vast manufacturing districts. Worse yet, the quick battle to seize Vespa wrecked the station-keeping drives it used to maintain the asteroid-moon's orbit against the tidal influences of the sun and Lone Star IV.

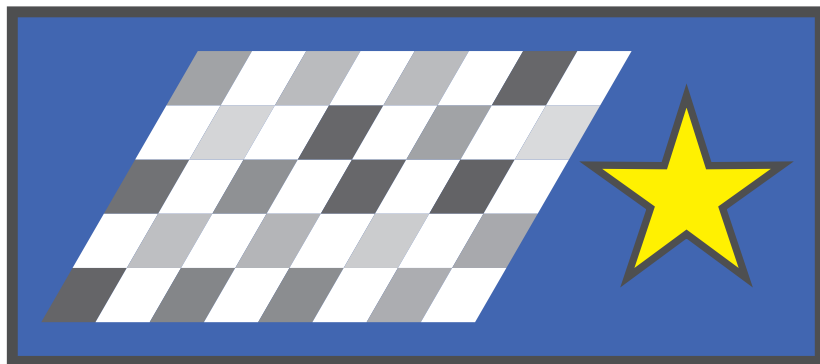
In the thirteen years since its liberation and the onset of the First Succession War, Lone Star made little progress toward recovery. Not only had it suffered severe damage to its industry and cities, its

planetary government was a wreck, and tens of millions of wartime refugees struggled to survive without even the most basic support. Like many Hegemony worlds, Lone Star's people violently threw from office anyone who had served in government during Amaris' rule, and the SLDF proved unable to spare any personnel to manage the world's day-to-day affairs.

Private businesses and House troops were able to re-establish some basic services and security in the absence of government interference, but with the lack of regulation, even these efforts were hindered by corruption and price-gouging.

The post-Amaris government of the Terran Hegemony only made matters worse for Lone Star. In attempting to coordinate the recovery of its war-torn worlds, the crumbling interstellar bureaucracy often managed only to completely deprive vital resources to some planets in vain, misdirected efforts to meet the needs of others. Like many, the people of Lone Star were agast when General Kerensky launched his Exodus. However, it followed the lead of nearby Inglesmond in eschewing Hegemony-wide needs over those of its regional community. The Lone Star Province would rebuild itself—hopefully deterring the adventurous Houses at the same time—and then aid its fellow Hegemony remnants. This plan might have worked had the First Succession War been longer in coming, and far less devastating in scope.

After several initial defeats at the hands of Hegemony militias in the Lone Star Province, the Houses took different approaches in their efforts to annex the area. For the Lyran Commonwealth, this meant stepping up its diplomacy with worlds suffering from Combine raiders. For the Draconis Combine, it meant "taking off the kid gloves" by destroying the shipyards at nearby Inglesmond. Lone Star itself did not escape the Dragon, either. Kuritan agents released bioweapons on the planet's polar ice caps, which specifically targeted the specially engineered flora and algae that made it possible for terrestrial life to survive and thrive on the planet. These toxins in turn spread toward the interior reaches via the bimonthly dust storms. Without directly killing a single Loner in battle, the so-called "Dragon Plague" thus undermined the world's



# ATLAS

artificial ecosystem. The plague took a couple of terrestrial years to run its course, during which time Lone Star's populace concentrated all possible efforts on preserving the plants that helped maintain Lone Star's environment. So engaged by this effort, the planetary government could only surrender when DCMS forces finally threatened a full invasion in 2789. As a "reward" for this bloodless capitulation, the Combine provided several atmospheric processors to the Loners, most of which were destined for the surviving Pond Cities.

House Kurita found little of value in Lone Star beyond the glory of conquering another Hegemony world. Having been ravaged so badly in the Civil War, the local industries could produce little of strategic value for the Combine's war machine and so the planet received little protection from the military that only recently threatened to force itself upon it. Because of this, Lone Star suffered a devastating blow when Lyran raiders destroyed the still-incomplete atmospheric processors in 2803. The terraformed environment began an irrevocable slide back into its frigid, pre-human state as the artificially-maintained greenhouse effect collapsed, and the population dwindled as a two-decade exodus followed. Within a few years, virtually all local agriculture (using plague-resistant crops) ground to a halt, and the

millions who had yet to evacuate began starving to death. By 2822, Lone Star's population was less than four percent of its pre-Amaris levels. ComStar, which had never managed to re-establish HPG services on the destitute world, wrote the world off its maps in 2824.

As if death by starvation were not enough, one last tragedy remained to befall Lone Star: Vespa was going to hit the planet. Without the giant station-keeping drives that kept the tiny moon in a stable orbit, its orbit became increasingly eccentric. In 2825, the fifteen-kilometer asteroid struck the surface with an impact greater than the "dino-killing" Chicxulub impact on ancient Terra. Although none of the planet's major population centers was directly hit by Vespa's fall, the aftermath effectively destroyed what little of the global environment that could have been salvaged.

Today, unlike some other cases of failed terraforming, Lone Star retains a breathable atmosphere. Minerals in the crust are only slowly binding atmospheric oxygen at a rate of about one percent per millennium. However, it is a desperately cold world where the only surviving life are microbes at seafloor volcanic vents. Combine salvagers looted anything of value in the Second Succession War. Since then, only climatologists visit, and then infrequently.



# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## WHAT A PLEASANT BREEZE

**Recommended Group Size:** 2-4 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Green-Elite (Key Skill levels of 2-8)

North of the capital city, on the banks of the Autre River, is Swartzhof, a city of 75,000 that has grown up in a district with a complicated geological history. In the district, ancient plumes of mantle-type rocks have intrusions of later, completely different volcanic deposits. The volcanism is a billion years dead, but it left behind a mineral cornucopia. Mining operations based in Swartzhof yield chromium, nickel, manganese, copper, gold, platinum, and related metals. Because free oxygen is new to the world, the deposits are not heavily weathered and easy to process into metals. (Some of the original settlers wanted to name the city "New South Africa," but the majority preferred to name it after an internationally famous pornography and action holovid star, Amelia Swartzhof, who was born in the district.)

Excellent transportation systems supported Swartzhof's enormous mining operations, including a large seaport on the river. With navigational improvements, Autre was an aquatic highway that could deliver 100,000-ton freighters to the capital of Volgadon and its lock system, which led to either ocean. There was also a large spaceport at Swartzhof, through which the city imported titanic mining machines and exported its mineral wealth. As a bonus, the local weather was often pleasant: cool, sunny, very dry, and often with a northerly breeze.

Despite the city's status as a mining and industrial hub, Swartzhof was strategically unimportant to planetary defense. Combined with the virtual absence of other population centers for two hundred kilometers in every direction, an invader could conceivably seize the area for nearly a year before the factories of the Pond Cities began to notice any shortfall of metals.

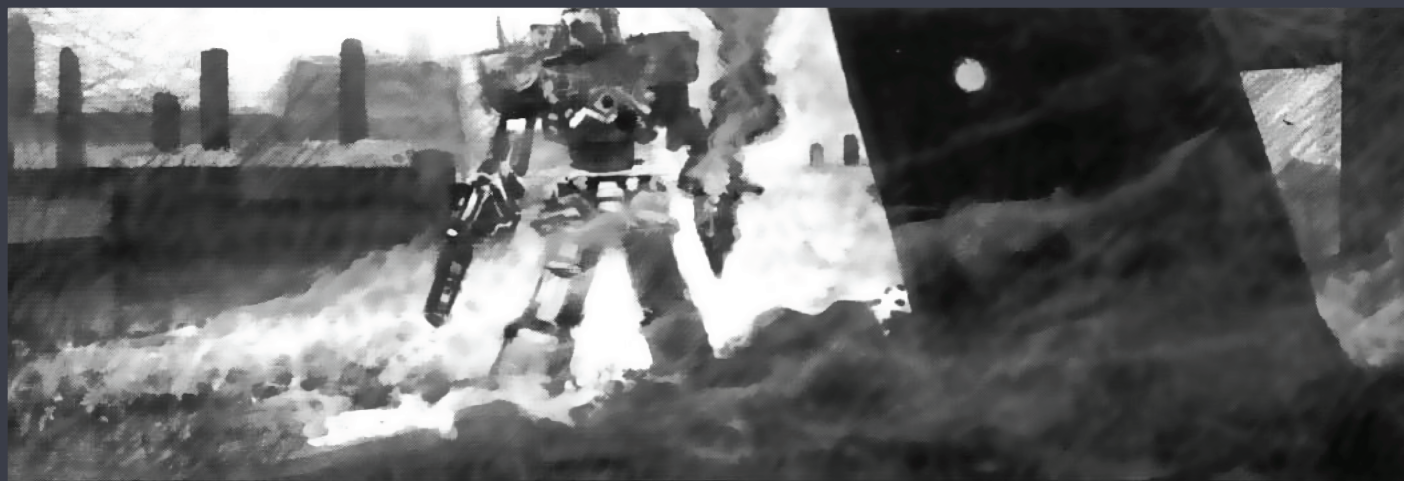
In 2772, the SLDF thought all of these conditions made Swartzhof a perfect beachhead for the world's liberation. But for the Amaris Empire's garrison troops, Swartzhof's isolation meant they could attack the assault force without restraint.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

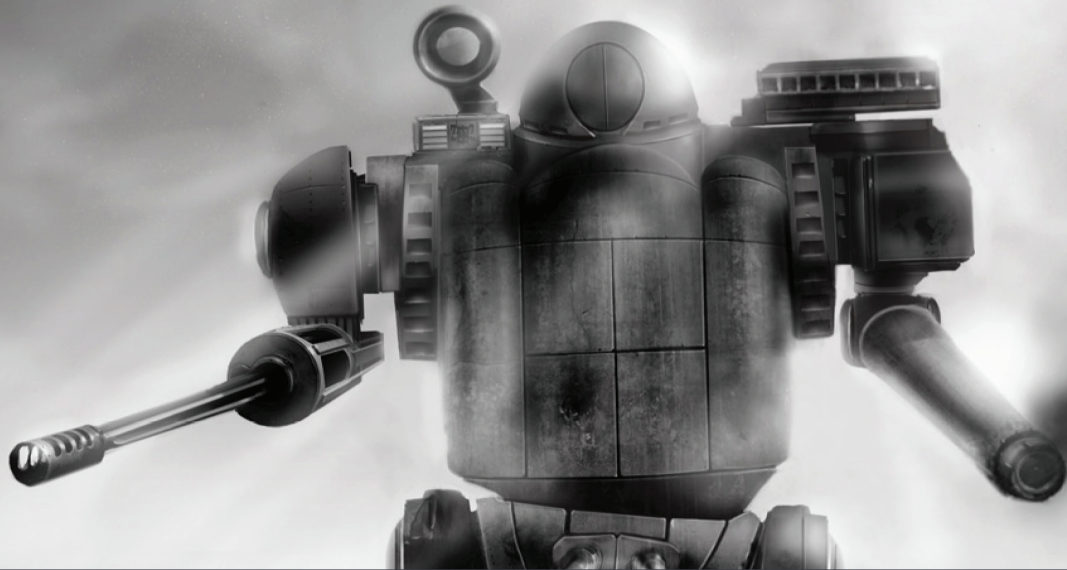
**Look What I Can Do:** In all the excitement at Swartzhof, the planet thought it would be a good idea to show its new visitors one of its famous dust storms. Only this one proved to be a once-in-a-century storm that would last for days. BattleMechs, aerospace fighters, and characters on the streets alike will have trouble seeing more than thirty meters. Historically, this drove Amaris' forces to blanket the city with bombs in hopes of catching some of the invisible SLDF invaders, but it is an opportunity for both sides to exploit.

**Unexpected Guests:** For most of the three days the 2772 dust storm raged at Swartzhof, both sides were prone to blundering into each other. Civilian sympathizers on both sides took to using the local communication network to report troop movements for their favored side, while opposing scouts often called in BattleMech, aerospace, or orbital fire support.

**Tips:** For *A Time of War* scenarios, this is an excellent opportunity to use respirators and look into the rules on illnesses and poisons (see pp. 245-249, *AToW*) to represent the "brown lung" effect of breathing in Lone Star's halide dust. *Total Warfare* and *Alpha Strike* combat scenarios should refer to the rules for Lone Star's dust storms on p. 12.



# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS



## WHO WANTS TO TELL THE COORDINATOR?

**Recommended Group Size:** 2-8 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Scientists

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Regular-Veteran (Key Skill levels of 2-6)

After diplomacy failed, the Houses began resorting to strong-arm tactics to annex worlds from the incapacitated Hegemony. This, among many other actions, eventually avalanched into the First Succession War. While common historical treatises on the First War focus on the titanic battles between the five House armies that ravaged the worlds of the former Hegemony, the truth was that there was a sixth combatant in the First Succession War: the Terran Hegemony itself.

The Hegemony never truly recovered from the Star League Civil War, in part because of widespread policies that banned anyone who served in government under Amaris' reign from serving in government post-Amaris. This prevented almost everyone with useful bureaucratic experience—from local governors to meter maids—from effectively doing their jobs. Their replacements were war-scarred, ideological novices who faced the nigh-impossible job of rebuilding a shattered realm while surrounded by enemies on all sides. These leaders did such a poor job that, in many cases, Hegemony worlds eventually came to welcome an allegiance with a neighboring House, or joined such realms after brief negotiations. Some planets, though, could not countenance a partnership with the avaricious Successor States, and so continued to try rebuilding themselves and their fallen Hegemony until they were forced to surrender at gunpoint.

Lone Star was one of the Hegemony loyalists. It attempted to form a coherent interstellar alliance with other Lone Star district worlds, though its poverty, shattered industry, and bumbling planetary government meant it could contribute little to the regional community. Nevertheless, when the Combine did arrive, its militia fought, and even managed to repulse the first raid.

If there was a little more time to expand the militia, or a little more success getting the world back on its feet, or planetary security had caught the Combine saboteurs dispersing bioagents on the ice caps, then history might have played out very differently.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**Did They Loot a Mackie Museum?:** As one of the poorer Hegemony worlds after the Civil War, Lone Star had to make do with older, second-hand salvage and export-grade equipment. On the other hand, a couple of companies of militia MCK-9H *Mackies* can ruin the day of DCMS troops sitting in their landing zones. Historically, one of the DCMS officers in the understrength invasion drew the unfortunate “honor” of informing Minoru Kurita of their failure against museum hardware (and was never seen alive again).

**Ice Station Zebra:** The PCs are DCMS, Hegemony, or planetary personnel who have annoyed someone enough to be sent to Lone Star's ice caps. DCMS forces will need to deploy dozens of multi-ton bioagent dispersal modules to catch the polar winds without the locals getting wise and stopping them. Hegemony and/or local forces would want to stop any activities being performed by invaders to their world. Local scientists studying the life cycle of polar bacteria, meanwhile, might just wonder what DCMS personnel are doing on their planet.

**Tips:** These scenarios can give a gamemaster a chance to exercise the *A Time of War* hostile environment rules (see p. 237, *AToW*), or pit Hegemony upgrades of elderly Age of War designs against Star League-era DCMS equipment.

# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## SATAN'S MALLET

**Recommended Group Size:** 2-8 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Technicians

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Regular-Veteran (Key Skill levels of 2-6)

Lone Star was a moonless world when humanity reached it, but the terraforming process—borrowing directly from Terra IV's Project Lowell—required a skyhook to gently deliver vast amounts of volatiles. Faster cometary deliveries of light elements would, ironically, slow the terraforming because their impacts would ravage the transforming environment for decades. Unlike the Phobos Skyhook, the resulting Vespa Skyhook was not in a truly stable orbit because of the influences of nearby planets and Lone Star's sun. And unlike the expansive Terran system, Lone Star's was very compact: no less than six planets orbited within 0.5AU of the sun, and there were twelve planets overall. These influences had prevented Lone Star's tidal lock to the nearby star, but also made moons (at least at Vespa's altitude) untenable. The Hegemony had addressed this with WarShip-scale fusion engines that supplied the micro-gravity thrust required for Vespa's orbital stability but the SLDF's liberation of the system from Amaris forces wrecked that stationkeeping drive. Within fifty years, Vespa's orbit had been pumped into a highly eccentric orbit that was grazing Lone Star's atmosphere.

2825 was the last chance to loot the frozen, dying planet, and both the Lyran Commonwealth and Draconis Combine knew it. Lone Star had been looted by many salvage operations during the First Succession War, all of which focused on industry, militia and SLDF stockpiles, and technically savvy survivors. What was left by 2825 interested only opportunists, mercenaries, and looters: the artistic and financial wealth of a Hegemony world, which had been uninteresting to the government salvagers before them.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**It's A Small World After All:** The well-known, well-mapped Hegemony planet meant that several groups of looters who showed up at the last minute might target the same Hegemony District Bank and Platinum Reserves, or the same Lone Star Museums of Expensive Antiquities and Overvalued Art. Hopefully, the characters brought enough guns to stake their claims.

**Spare Some Rations?:** ComStar said the world was dead and abandoned, so the characters felt no compunctions about visiting with cargo freighters meant to depart burdened with nothing but gold, gems, and artwork. Finding that survivor community near their salvage site could present a moral quandary.

**Don't Forget Your Mittens:** Even before Vespa's "asteroid winter," the collapsing greenhouse effect on Lone Star meant the planet was chilling fast. By 2825, temperatures in interesting salvage sites might be easily cold enough to strain characters' gear (or give their BattleMechs a much needed assist in cooling) at  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  and below.

**Say Chicxulub Three Times Fast:** Pinning down the final impact of Vespa is difficult for many reasons, including the difficulty of modeling asteroid aerodynamics in the upper atmospheres of planets. Another issue is that after crossing Lone Star's Roche limit, Vespa has shed its regolith hide into an ever-evolving ring arc that is producing an erratic rain of debris and making it hard to track its several large metallic core fragments. Players should consider *Tactical Operations'* meteor shower rules (p. 56), earthquakes (p. 55), assorted wind conditions (p. 61) or, if a core fragment lands within 100 kilometers of their forces, the afterlife.

**Tips:** These scenarios can give a gamemaster a chance to exercise the *A Time of War* hostile environment rules (see p. 237, *AToW*) or *Tactical Operations'* terrain and weather conditions. And more than just rules, it's a chance to run characters through a desolate, frozen wasteland of once-wealthy cities under the clock of a continent-shaking doom.

# RULES ANNEX

## MAPSHEETS TABLES

VOLGADON*	D6 Result	Map
	1	Lake Area (BT, MS2, MSC1)
	2	River Valley (MS2, MSC1, HPLR)
	3	City (Suburbs) (MS6, MSC2)**
	4	Scattered Woods (MS2, MSC1)
	5	Wide River (BT, MS6, MSC2)
	6	BattleForce (MS6)

\*Volgadon is vulnerable to the Lone Star dust storms described on p. 12.

\*\*Place Light and Medium buildings of varying heights in each clear non-paved hex.

SWARTZHOF*	D6 Result	Map
	1	Wide River (BT, MS6, MSC2)
	2	City Street Grid/Park #1 (MS4)**
	3	Large Lakes #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	4	Desert Mountain #1 (MS3, MSC1)
	5	Open Terrain #1 (MS5, MSC1)
	6	Wide River (BT, MS6, MSC2)

\*Swartzhof is vulnerable to the Lone Star dust storms described on p. 12.

\*\*Place Light and Medium buildings of varying heights in each clear non-paved hex.

POND CITY*	2D6 Result	Map
	2	CityTech Map (MS2, MSC1, HPCR)
	3	City (Skyscraper) (MS6, MSC2)
	4	Coast #1 (MS7)**
	5	Coast #2 (MS7)**
	6	CityTech Map (MS2, MSC1)**
	7	Large Mountain #2 (MS5, MSC1)***
	8	River Delta/Drainage Basin #1 (MS4, MSC1)**
	9	River Delta/Drainage Basin #1 (MS4, MSC1)**
	10	City (Skyscraper) (MS6, MSC2, HPCR)
	11	City (Downtown) (MS6, MSC2)
	12	City Street Grid/Park #2 (MS4, MSC1)

\*Place Light, Medium, and Heavy buildings of varying heights in appropriate paved hexes.

\*\*Treat all depth 0 water as Mud (see p. 50, T0) and all clear terrain as Swamp (see p. 51, T0)

\*\*\*Treat all elevation changes as sheer cliffs (see p. 39, T0) unless the hex has pavement.



## OPTIONAL RULES

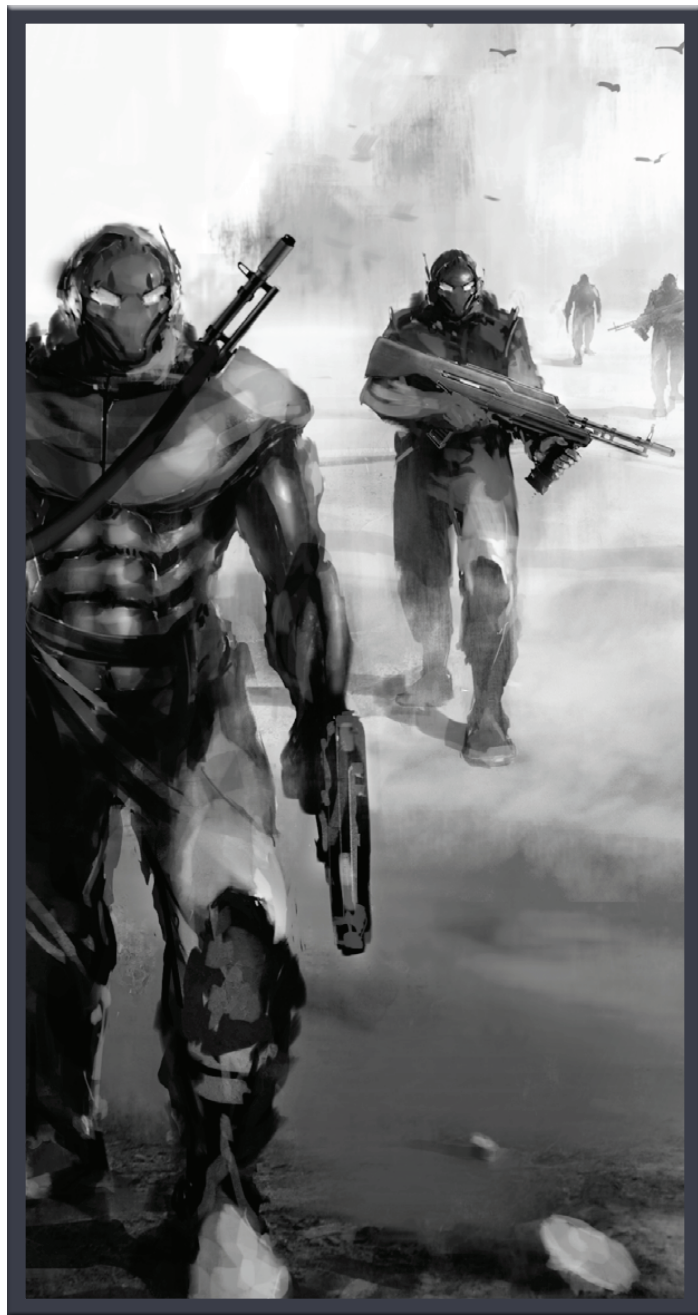
The following additional special rules are intended to provide further flavor to games set on the world featured in this supplement. For the most part, these rules may be considered advanced and optional, as they primarily reflect conditions and/or features unique to this one planet or planetary system.

### LONE STAR DUST STORMS

A likely target for any invaders of Lone Star is the capital city Volgaddon. However, about every two months (i.e., once per local year, during the summer), winds blowing down from the northern pole generate continent-blanketing storms of fine saline-rich dust. (This also happens a month later from the south pole, but only a few hermits and mining facilities lie in the path of Lone Star's southern dust storms.)

**Long-Term Effects:** In the long term, these dust storms can clog engines, cause respiratory ailments, and short out inadequately sealed electronics. Gamemasters may resolve these long-term effects by requiring any personnel and equipment exposed to dust (without suitable safeguards such as filter masks and environmental shielding) to make a 2D6 roll once for every full hour of exposure. On a result of 2, unprotected personnel will experience severe respiratory irritation the locals call "brown lung", while exposed electronics and engine components will become clogged or caked to the point of malfunction by dust particles. Equipment so effective will become non-functional until repaired by a successful Technician Skill check, with a -1 modifier to the dice roll. Personnel affected by "brown lung" will suffer a -1 Attribute modifier to BOD and STR scores, and a -1 dice roll modifier to all Skill checks for each time they suffer a "brown lung" roll effect. These "brown lung" modifiers stack, to a maximum of -3 per Attribute and Skill roll modifier, until treated with a successful MedTech Skill roll (with a dice roll modifier equal to the level of "brown lung" the character currently suffers) and a day or more of bed rest. If a character suffering from the maximum level of "brown lung" receives an additional "brown lung" effect result before being properly treated, the character goes into severe respiratory distress and becomes incapacitated. MedTech Skill checks needed to treat and stabilize a character in this condition will suffer a -4 dice roll modifier; if *this* roll fails, the afflicted character will go into acute respiratory failure and die within seconds.

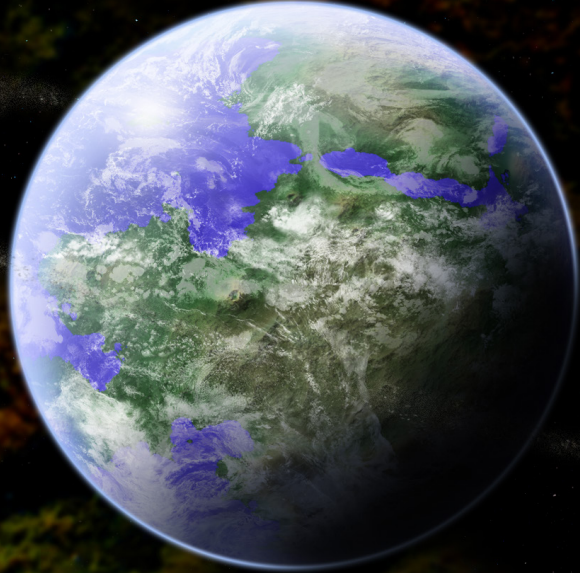
**Short-Term Effects:** In the short term, a Lone Star dust storm will turn a battlefield into a short-ranged brawl, if opponents can find each other at all. If wind speeds are low (moderate gale or less), the effects of a Lone Star dust storm mimic those of Light Smoke (see p. 47, *TO*) that will blanket all outdoor and/or exposed areas, and will be found up to 100 levels above the underlying terrain. In heavy gale or stronger wind conditions, heavier sand particles will compound these effects, adding the Blowing Sand condition (see p. 62, *TO*) as well.



# ATLAS

## MANASSAS

**Star Type (Recharge Time):** F3V (174 hours)  
**Position in System:** 3 (of 11)  
**Time to Jump Point:** 17.36 days  
**Number of Satellites:** 1 Fragmented (The Pearls)  
**Surface Gravity:** 0.98  
**Atm. Pressure:** Standard (Tainted)  
**Equatorial Temperature:** 25°C (Tropical)  
**Surface Water:** 63%  
**Recharging Station:** None  
**HPG Class:** B  
**Highest Native Life:** Reptiles  
**Population:** 648,000,000 (2765); 98,000,000 (3150)  
**Socio-Industrial Levels:** D-D-B-C-D  
**Landmasses (Capital City):** Stonewall (Bull Run)



## MANASSAS

Named in 2215 by the first people to colonize the world (who hailed from Terra's North America continent), early Manassas' cultural dynamic changed several times over the next three decades as additional waves of colonists arrived from the Terran states of Portugal, Germany, and Laos. These early settlers found a world with an apparently abundant aquatic ecosystem, but a terrestrial biome that was still recovering from a devastating series of cosmic impacts. A millennium before, a huge asteroid hit Manassas' closely-orbiting moon with a glancing blow that shattered much of its surface, and bombarded the world's single supercontinent and surrounding seas with debris. The impacts, combined with the already harsh climate of the interior lands, drove ninety-five percent of Manassas' surface life to extinction, and wiped out half of its aquatic fauna. This mass extinction wiped out all of the larger beasts that lived in the planet's once-rich ecosystem, leaving only the smaller and more adaptive creatures behind.

The remnants of Manassas' small moon have begun to recombine, though the process will take many thousands of years to complete. In the meantime, though beautiful, the lunar fragments (collectively dubbed "the Pearls") are a hazard to shipping and orbital craft above the equatorial belt. Furthermore, once every 213 years, the "Storm of Pearls"—a flurry of stellar debris heralded by the remains of the moon-damaging comet—returns to scour the planet's low orbital zones of anything that cannot move or weather the storm.

Manassas' single super-continent is called Stonewall, referencing both a mid-nineteenth century Terran general, as well as the impressively large mountain chain that cuts the south-east third of the continent off from its remainder. This southeast area, known as the Four Provinces, is where the majority of the population now lives, with

each province roughly analogous to the four early colonial settlement zones. The capital city of Bull Run lies on the tip of the Virginia Peninsula in the very south, with the other major cities of Porto, Neu Hamburg and Tha Heua, arranged along the coast north-west of the capital.

Including those of the Four Provinces area, some ninety-five percent of Manassans live in the Green Belt, the coastal regions where the oceans counter the hostile climate that has rendered much of the continental interior barren. It is within these regions that the terrestrial ecology has reestablished itself. Prior to the twenty-eighth century, the Green Belt was a narrow band along the shorelines, never wider than 100 kilometers, and usually much narrower. During the peak of the Star League, terraforming efforts managed to extend these bands up to a thousand kilometers inland, but over the last three hundred years, the Belt has receded to an average width of five hundred kilometers. Lying well within the present-day Belt, the Four Provinces remain solidly connected by a thriving ecology, primarily populated by introduced Terran flora and fauna that have adjusted to the planet's twenty-six hour day, and equally long "semi-night." The long Manassan night is kept aglow by the constant parade of the Pearls, whose close proximity to Manassas provides enough light for crops to continue growing, albeit slowly.

The first colonists on Manassas struggled to gain an initial foothold. Early reports of the world's aquatic biota espoused by xenobiologist Marvin Miller proved unfounded. The claims of "Miller's Monsters," famed sea creatures of immense size noted in Dr. Miller's early scouting reports, proved to be misleading. Miller's now mythic treatise on the potential benefits of Manassas' aquatic resources and its extraordinary, enormous (and exceptionally exaggerated) size

ATLAS

Manassas remained a backwater on the Golden Five's backdoor, an open secret no one wished to deal with or devote the resources to fixing. This attitude was especially vexing for Manassans, whose people loyally served in the armies of the Davion princes on all fronts and during the Civil War. A Manassan regiment or fighter wing made up part of the Davion Guards since the early twenty-fifth century. The Manassan Planetary Congress did not make matters easy on itself, as the four major ethnic groups had very different views on how their world should develop. Those of German extraction looked to resuscitate the dream of aquaculture, despite its limitations; the ethnic Portuguese wished to develop large-scale mining operations for resource extraction; and the Laotians and American descendants held divergent views on arid land agriculture. Tensions never boiled over into violence, but the ethnic diversity that gave Manassas its extraordinary cultural tapestry also contributed to its inability to provide a consistent narrative and focus that could have helped its people attract strong and consistent resources throughout its developmental years.

In 2735, the Federated Suns' best planetary biologists, xenobiologists, and other scientists descended on Manassas to set up both the ORP and its test case project: Project EUROPA—the revival of the terrestrial ecology of Manassas. Though discussion varies as to why EUROPA's success was so rapid (early propaganda claimed Davion ingenuity, whilst revisionist studies state that a natural recovery of the ecosystem was already underway), the fact remained that within

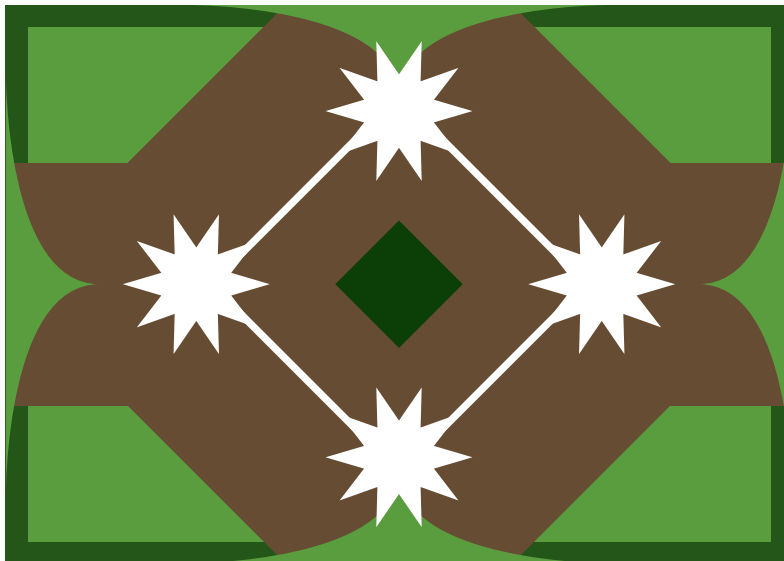


# ATLAS

fifteen years, the Manassan Green Belt had expanded by an order of magnitude and did so again by 2775. The population began to thrive, and townships grew around the many ORP base stations, bio-ranches, and research hubs. Unfortunately, just as Manassas bloomed and the world emerged as a net exporter of food products, the rising tensions of the late Star League, the fall of House Cameron, and the Star League Civil War forced the ORP's closure as the Davion military consumed all available funding. The bounty of Manassas' golden age lasted barely ten years; crops were left to wither in the fields, or rotted in warehouses. Shipping was increasingly diverted to support first the SLDF and later the AFFS, until finally the brutality of the First Succession War gutted the merchant lines that served Manassas.

The First Succession War ended all hope for Manassas' continued growth and prosperity. As the DCMS advanced towards New Avalon, small raids and strategic strikes became the norm. A major raid in early 2796 nearly destroyed the world when the DCMS forces singled out the Davion research labs there for destruction. Bombarding the world with orbital fire, and the use of strategic chemical and biological weapons, the Kurita raiders poisoned and corrupted Manassas' delicate but strengthening terrestrial ecosystem. Amazingly, although the damage did result in the overall shrinkage of the Green Belts, the Manassan ecology largely shrugged off the worst effects of that assault, a testament to the work of the Manassan and Davion scientists. But the immediate damage to the bio-ranches and the major population centers of the Four Provinces was far more calamitous. By 2800, there were only 11,000,000 Manassans left alive and large swathes of the planet—particularly those close to former ORP facilities—were declared "Dead Zones", off-limits areas where no Manassan dared tread.

For fifty years, Manassas struggled to recover and survive, even as emigration further weakened its population. Where many



worlds eventually failed and fell off the maps by the early Third Succession War, Manassas found a way to prosper from its fall from grace. As technology continued to decline, worlds where remnants of the Star League's technology remained became hunting grounds for technological scavengers. For Manassas, this scavenging came from an unusual source: the Noble Houses of the Golden Five. Several attempts were made to recover technology from within the Dead Zones, but the Manassas Run of 2874 gave these efforts some interstellar notoriety. The

first Manassas Run involved a competition between three Golden Five noble champions to see who could recover the most valuable technological artifact in the shortest possible time from the Dead Zones. Though the Run was little more than an effort by bored nobles to entertain themselves, it captured the local imagination. In 2787, Manassas sent invitations to eleven of the Golden Five's noble houses, inviting them to participate in a new Run. Every four years after that, an ever-increasing field of champions struck out for glory, forging ever deeper into the world's interior in search of technology and fame. Though little of real value was ever recovered during the many Runs, the tourist market and exclusive Noble Clubs (havens for all kinds of vice and entertainment) revived the Manassan economy.

Many of the worst sorts of social miscreants followed on the heels of the Manassas Run and its noble founders. Yet where many worlds would have sought to curb these less savory elements of society, the Manassans embraced them, opening up their world to industries of vice and pleasure. The actual (and sometime feigned) lawlessness of parts of the world, the deadly competition of the Run (where anything goes and no rules exist except to survive and return with a valid lostech prize), and the heady, almost Canopian, pleasure industry, created a venue that became a microcosm of the Third Succession War. Private gangs and knights, fighting





and competing for noble favor, and rare technological spoils, are cast amid a frontier world of devastated glories—a world where hidden treasures and the actions of a few can shape the lives of the many.

Since the technological revival of the mid-thirty-first century, the Manassas Congress was very careful to ensure that technological advancement did not detract from the aesthetics of the world. Though recovered science has helped to restore some sections of the Green Belt in and around the Four Provinces, the planetary government is very careful to ensure that the Dead Zones remain a persistent feature. The preservation of these ruins of the Federated Suns' technological height, and the many interesting techno-archaeological resources contained therein, eventually led to establishment of an Interstellar Expeditions headquarters base on Manassas. The opportunities to expose IE staff to rough living, authentic dig sites, technological research and hazardous environment training—all within a jump of some of the most advanced research institutions in known space—made Manassas and its capital fertile grounds to cultivate IE's next generation of explorers.

Despite the natural fit for Interstellar Expeditions, the seventy-ninth Manassas Run, held in 3099, caused a number of local problems. When the champions for one of El Dorado's First Families raided an IE dig that had actually found an intact research database, the 3099 Run turned especially deadly. Several late-arriving nobles sent what were little more than hired pirates into the Run to lay claim to the prize. Within days, IE mobilized its own on-world forces and a grand chase towards the Four Provinces began. Three weeks in, having learned of the find via MIIO agents on world, a company of agents from the NAIS landed and ignited a pitched four-way battle between IE, the El Doradans, other noble champions, and the NAIS. The result was a bloodbath, the suspension of the Run and the landing of the entire First NAIS Cadet Cadre four weeks later to clean up. Since the "Bloody Run" of 3099, new rules have been set in place to protect IE operations, and to allow for NAIS oversight of finds. However, despite these changes, the Run remains a dangerous and often fatal endeavor. Nevertheless, successful Runners and those crowned "Run Champion" can often retire on their winnings and grants from grateful noble sponsors.

# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## DIG AND RUN *"WHAT A WONDERFUL PLACE FOR A DIG, OLD BOY!"*

**Recommended Group Size:** 2-4 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Mercenary

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Veteran (Key Skill levels of 4-6)

Manassas is a rough place and Interstellar Expeditions takes no chances when sending dig teams into its Dead Zones. Small BattleMech or armored units are the norm for escort and IE pays well, as they need as many staff to graduate (and live) as possible. "Zoners"—those who survive dangerously close to the Dead Zones and away from the Green Belt—are a constant, if low-level, problem. The real risk comes from the Runners, especially when they think you might be onto something valuable.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**Sir, I Think You Should See This?:** Well, the boffins found something, and—before anyone could stop them—they announced their find "in the clear" to IE's HQ in Bull Run. Because of this, it would appear that certain less-than-savory elements among the current Manassas Run are now beating a path to the dig...and the same fools who called up the devil now need *you* to protect them.

**Just Keep Runnin':** Well, it would seem this year's crop of Runners is better than the last, as they blew through the camp and snagged a vital data core. You have clear orders from IE HQ: retrieve that core or don't come back.

**Here Comes the Cavalry:** Well, you caught up to the Runners, and apparently a few who were not invited to the current party have decided to crash it anyway. Just as you felt you had them in a position to strike, the NAIS has arrived to save the day. Unfortunately, it's not *your* day they want to save, so it looks like you now have to wade through some Davion regulars to get your prize...

**Tips:** This adventure seed gives a gamemaster the opportunity to introduce PCs to a large organization like IE, which can lead to further campaigns in the future, while also allowing the PC group to overcome steadily mounting challenges with multiple points of success (or failure). The PCs could, at any time, choose to work with or against any of the varied groups hunting for the current prize, or go rogue and join in the Run for personal glory. Or perhaps they could even enter the official Manassas Run for IE and hope they live to see the Green Belt again. Depending on their success (and whoever they had to fight with to win it), the players could easily end up with new friends (and enemies) from among IE, various Run-sponsoring nobles, career Runners, or even the NAIS.

## JOIN OR DIE! *"THE RUN'S NOT THAT BAD."*

**Recommended Group Size:** 2-4 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Mercenary

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Veteran (Key Skill levels of 4-6)

You're not crooked or blacklisted, but you're not the pin-ups of noble mercenary service either. Also, how were you to know that the fellow you cleaned out at the poker table was a recently ennobled fool who has more clout than sense? It's not his money he wants back either; it's his pride and his family controls most of the shipping on and off the world. So, the deal is: if you don't win the Run for him, you might never get off Manassas.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**You're On Your Own:** Just to make things interesting, your "sponsor" has made sure you will get no help; you are on your own. It seems like he wants you to fail...

**We're Being Hunted:** As you move deeper into the Dead Zones, it seems someone is dogging your trail. Dealing with Zoners and stray Runners is bad enough, but whoever is tracking you is *not* playing around; they want your scalp.

**It's Whom You Know:** Somehow, you did it! You got the prize, beat the odds, and even though the little prick has his precious honor back, he still refuses to get you off world. Looks like you need to take matters into your own hands.

**Tips:** This campaign is for PC groups who want a challenge and for GMs who can run a campaign that is very difficult—but still achievable—for resourceful players who can think outside the box. The odds are certainly stacked against the hard-luck PCs, and players will need to be just as devious as the gamemaster's NPCs in meeting and overcoming the obstacles in their path. The rewards can be redemption and fame, whilst failure will see the PCs bodies dumped in a Dead Zone and quickly forgotten.

# OPTIONAL RULES

The following additional special rules are intended to provide further flavor to games set on the world featured in this supplement. For the most part, these rules may be considered advanced and optional, as they primarily reflect conditions and/or features unique to this one planet or planetary system.

## MANASSAS FLORA AND FAUNA OVERVIEW

Until a little over 1,000 years ago, Manassas possessed a well-developed ecology that was progressing through its first true flowering of more advanced genera across and around its single super-continent. That all ended with the near-destruction of the Manassan moon and the bombardment that followed. Little of the planet's native large fauna remains; modified descendants of imported Terran species now dominate the majority of the local biosphere, alongside the still-evolving survivors of smaller native creatures.

As Inner Sphere worlds go, the Manassan biome has no large predators or hostile creatures that can seriously threaten humans. However, many introduced Terran species have gone feral over the centuries, with many near the major cities heavily impacting the local ecology. Players wandering the planet's wilderness may thus find themselves occasionally menaced by the likes of feral creatures common to Terra: bears, boars, coyotes, wolves, and deer. Nevertheless, if not for the Dead Zones left over from the Succession Wars (and, of course, humanity itself), Manassas may well be one of the safest living worlds in the Inner Sphere.

## MANASSAN MOSS SKINK

The largest living native terrestrial animal on Manassas is a reptilian analogue called the moss skink, which has developed a unique method for dealing with the long Manassan nights. Unable to keep its body heat up to survivable temperatures over the twenty-six-hour night, the fifteen-centimeter moss skink has developed a symbiotic relationship with a local moss. The moss and the skink feed voraciously during the day, the skink on algae beds and the moss on sunlight. The skink's large range allows the moss to spread its spores far and wide near the algae beds for young skinks to pick up, whilst at night, the moss generates heat by breaking down compounds contained in the algae.

The moss skink is generally harmless to humans and other animals. The major problem with this species is that, without effective predation for over a millennium, they are extremely populous and invasive, and have an irritating habit of crawling into every nook, cranny, piece of machinery, and moving part they can find—often causing unprotected equipment to break, jam, or short out. In those regions without suitable manmade population control efforts, moss skinks often reach “plague-like proportions.”

**Mass:** 0.095 kg

<b>STR</b>	<b>BOD</b>	<b>DEX</b>	<b>RFL</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>WIL</b>	<b>EDG</b>
3	1	5	6	2	2	1

**Size Class (Modifier):** Tiny (−4)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** Mossy hide 1/0/0/0

**Damage (AP/BD):** 0M/1

**Move (W/R/S):** 1/2/3 (amphibious)

**Traits:** Cold-Blooded, Compulsion (Hard-to-reach hiding spots), Susceptible, Thick-Skinned (Mossy hide)

**Skills:** Animal Agility (+2), AniMelee (+0), Climbing (+2), Perception (+2), Stealth (+3), Swimming (+4)

## MANASSAS TERRAIN

The populated areas on Manassas are highly developed and biologically active, but as one travels inward on the mega-continent of Stonewall, the land becomes more desolate and barren. The Manassas Mapsheets Table reflects this by using a modified 2D6 roll result to determine which mapsheets describe the area, based on how close to shore the players are operating.

To properly use the Manassas Mapsheets Table, determine in advance how close to shore the scenario is taking place, as well as the year in which the scenario is taking place. Then roll 2D6 for each mapsheet needed, applying the following roll modifiers as appropriate:

- −2 per 15 full kilometers inland (for scenarios set before 2730)
- −1 per 15 full kilometers inland (for scenarios set between 2730 and 2950)
- −1 per 45 full kilometers inland (scenarios set between 2950 and 3100)
- −1 per 30 full kilometers inland (scenarios set after 3100)
- +2 for scenarios taking place within 5 to 10 kilometers of the shore
- +4 for scenarios taking place on the shoreline

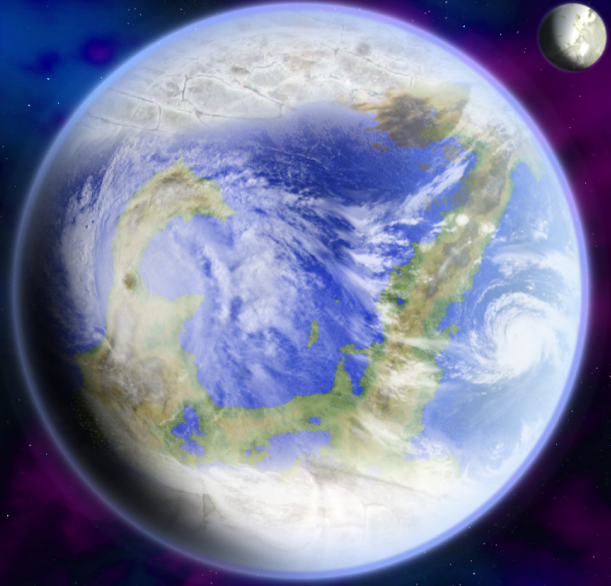
## MAPSHEET TABLE

MANASSAS	Result	Map
	1 or less	Roll on Badlands Terrain Table (see p. 263, TW)
	2	Open Terrain #1 (MS5, MSC2)
	3	Desert Sinkhole #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	4	Open Terrain #1 (MS5, MSC2)
	5	Desert Sinkhole #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	6	DropPort #1 (MS7, MSC2)
	7	Rolling Hills #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	8	Military Base #1 (MS7, MSC2)
	9	Military Base #2 (MS7, MSC2)
	10	Rolling Hills #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	11	Rolling Hills #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	12	Woodland (MS6, MSC2)
	13-15	Roll on Wetlands Terrain Table (see p. 263, TW)
	16 or more	Roll on Coastal Terrain Table (see p. 263, TW)

# ATLAS

## PROMISED LAND

**Star Type:** G8V (189 hours)  
**Position in System:** 2 (of 10)  
**Number of Moons:** 1 (Mana)  
**Days to Jump Point:** 6.19  
**Surface Gravity:** 1.7  
**Atm. Pressure:** Standard (Breathable)  
**Equatorial Temp:** 19 °C (Desert)  
**Surface Water:** 50 percent  
**Highest Native Life:** Mammal  
**Recharging Station:** Zenith, Nadir  
**HPG Class:** A  
**Population:** 123,000,000  
**Socio-Industrial Levels:** B-B-A-B-B  
**Landmasses (Capital City):** Avalon, Camelot, Eden, El Dorado, Elysium, Hyberborea, Jannah, Mahoroba, Shambhala, Shangri La, Utopia, Valhalla, Xanadu, and Zion (Chaffinsopolis)



## ATLAS: PROMISED LAND

Shortly after reaching the stars, humanity discovered that Terra set a high standard of habitability. For land speculators this was a challenge to be overcome, and selling colonial land started by carefully naming the planet. There were hundreds and soon thousands of colony worlds. A would-be emigrant might dismiss a silly or unappealing name when researching a new home. With a borderline world to populate in 2273, the Chaffins Colonial Development Corporation selected the name "Promised Land," and began an emigrant recruiting campaign on Terra.

The Chaffins CDC spoke the truth as it extolled the virtues of Promised Land. It was a big world, with more water than Terra, more than found on any other settled world. Temperatures were moderate and the air was breathable, sweet and clean. The soil was rich and terrestrial crops thrived. Land was cheap and plentiful. None of the native life was a threat. The moon was named Mana for its bounty of metals.

But the Chaffins CDC did not speak the whole truth. Promised Land had moderate temperatures, clean air, and good soil, but only in some areas of the planet, proportionally less than Terra. The bountiful water was also mostly saline, like Terra, and the record-setting land area included vast continental interiors isolated from any hint of water, though their hyper-aridity had many rivals in the Inner Sphere. The low tilt produced large ice caps and narrow temperate zones.

Size was an issue: Promised Land was the largest habitable planet yet found by humanity (a title it retains to this day). The planet's diameter was nearly twice that of Terra (24,007 kilometers), which was near the limit a rocky world could achieve before core compression limited further growth. Promised Land did have 2.5 times the water area and five times the land area of Terra, but this bounty came with

the highest gravity (1.7Gs) of any settled planet. It was near the limit (or perhaps beyond) that healthy humans could endure for long periods and was challenging for twenty-third century DropShuttles. This and its fast spin (producing eighteen-hour days) produced numerous Hadley cells and a powerful Coriolis Effect, which sometimes produced dense, powerful cyclones over the oceans and incredible wind storms on the low, flat continents.

True, native life was no threat, if one had appropriate vaccines, anti-allergy medications, training, firearms, and body armor. The higher orders of animals showed disturbingly high intelligence (on par with terrestrial primates, but with differences), though most avoid human communities after a few encounters. An entire class of animals is sometimes dubbed by popular media as "post-mammals" for having physiological traits derived from and improved in comparison to mammals. (Xenobiologists, of course, lament the use of terrestrial classifications for extraterrestrial life.) The entire ecosystem had entered its multi-cellular state over a billion years before Terra. This extra evolutionary period meant everything from microbes to animals were tougher and more adaptable than terrestrial life, though not particularly vicious. Terra's most tenacious invasive species like cockroaches and rats, which had sundered native ecosystems on hundreds of planets, only survive in zoos on Promised Land. Cargo and passengers departing Promised Land have always been subject to vigorous biological screening.

This caution did lead to fictional exaggerations about Promised Land's ecosystems, even depicting it as a "death world." In fact, camping, hiking, and other outdoor activities were popular with residents and no more dangerous than most worlds. However, the precautions wilderness visitors required were unusual. Examples included toy

ATLAS

The planet also had some aesthetic challenges for early settlers, though their descendants find beauty in the world. Any waves on water were short, flat, and fast moving, which seem frantic rather than relaxing. Air thinned out rapidly with altitude, so clouds seem oppressively close overhead. While Promised Land had some impressively tall volcanoes, its high gravity flattened mountain

This battery of threats had been wearing on the population for some decades, eroding the population with emigration and death. The final insult was the rapid destruction of the ozone layer by volcanic gases. The already-ailing settlement's terrestrial crops collapsed, while native life shrugged off the geologically common occurrence. Shortly on the heels of triumph over a Lyran invasion in 2395, the Free Worlds garrison and remaining colonists evacuated 2405 and Promised Land was marked off the maps for nearly two centuries.



# ATLAS

That invasion, allegedly launched to acquire Promised Land's widely ridiculed champagne for Archon Robert Marsden, was actually a demonstration of Lyrans all-environment military equipment. In an era where many militaries still struggled with the wide range of environments found in human space this would have been impressive. The LCAF sensibly aimed to start by decapitating the garrison, but the militia headquarters was in a deep rift valley. High gravity, 2.7 bars of oxygen-rich atmosphere, and temperatures averaging ninety degrees Celsius proved the Lyrans wrong about their equipment. Over half the force was lost to DropShuttle crashes caused by the dense valley air. Many armored vehicles were lost to engine fires and the elite jump infantry could not jump in the high gravity. The surprised defenders mopped up the incapacitated invaders.

The Star League Accords brought a reduction in border tensions, so in 2574 a group of Free Worlds and Lyrans historians visited the world to study the 2395 battlefield. The expedition's landing site (well outside the pressure and temperature extremes of the rift valley, naturally) found itself beset by starving, ill humans. The 2405 evacuation had apparently abandoned thousands of rural settlers who managed to survive in small, feuding communities. The Landers prompted a major relief effort by the new Star League, which wanted to demonstrate its peaceful and humanitarian nature, especially to the Periphery. The League did work wonders on Promised Land, bringing peace and creating genetic therapies for humans that would make residents more tolerant of the high gravity and native life. It also helped domesticate the plants and animals Landers had been surviving upon. New colonists even began settling the unusual world.

(The public relations opportunity was squandered on the Periphery as the Star League made overly-direct comparisons between the wretched Landers and the Periphery.)

A drawback to the genetic engineering is that only the Free Worlds League's revulsion for bionics exceeded their revulsion for the Landers. The arrival of the Clans further amplified that bigotry. The bigotry is amusing outside the Free Worlds League because the changes to Promised Landers are rarely recognizable even with advanced medical scanners. The strong heart and high blood pressure do not exceed human extremes, nor do the toughened ligaments and

tendons. They have fewer circulatory, joint, and back problems than the human norm, and are tolerant of Promised Land allergens and infections. Promised Landers tend to be short, averaging 1.6 meters, and are athletic like gymnasts or equestrian jockeys. Free World depictions of them as goblin-like, hunchbacked boogiemen have no basis in reality.

There have been advantages to the ecosystem and high gravity: Promised Land was rarely attacked during the Succession Wars and later eras. The Lyrans destroyed Promised Land's fusion engine factories and orbital shipyards. After the vicious fighting in the Bolan Thumb faded, Promised Land served as an entrepôt for Lyrans merchants and thus was not attacked by the LCAF. Instead, SAFE and LIC struggled amongst their interstellar merchants in the system's space stations. Until the thirty-second century, the only major conflict on Promised Land was a failed pro-Lyrans coup in 3056 that saw part of the world's militia destroyed by the Third Brigade of the Fusiliers of Oriente. Promised Land's union with the Duchy of Tamarind-Abbey (3078) was quickly regarded as a mistake, something done out of historical inertia. Promised Land began looking to the Lyrans Commonwealth when the Duchy tightened restrictions on Promised Land's exports (allegedly because of biological contamination risks) and then the Duchy's public began airing miscegenation bills. Its 3101 entry to the Commonwealth happened with minimal collateral damage when the Tamarind-Abbey garrison was destroyed in a short, sharp battle - the planetary government had helped Lyrans invaders sneak into position outside the garrison's base. The current Lyrans garrison concentrates on space stations for a reason: unlike other Lyrans/Free Worlds border trade systems, trade does not flow through

planetary warehouses but rather large recharge stations. As far as the Commonwealth is concerned, the most important part of the star system is just inside the proximity limit of the zenith and nadir points. The Landers have long supported a large space infrastructure. Space stations always served as biological screening points and (at the Promised Land-Mana L4 and L5 points) low gravity resorts and residences. Prefabricated space stations are a major Lander export, delivered for final assembly by DropShips. The recharge and cargo stations at the jump points are some of the largest outside the Terran asteroid belt and have thriving trade bazaars.



# ATLAS

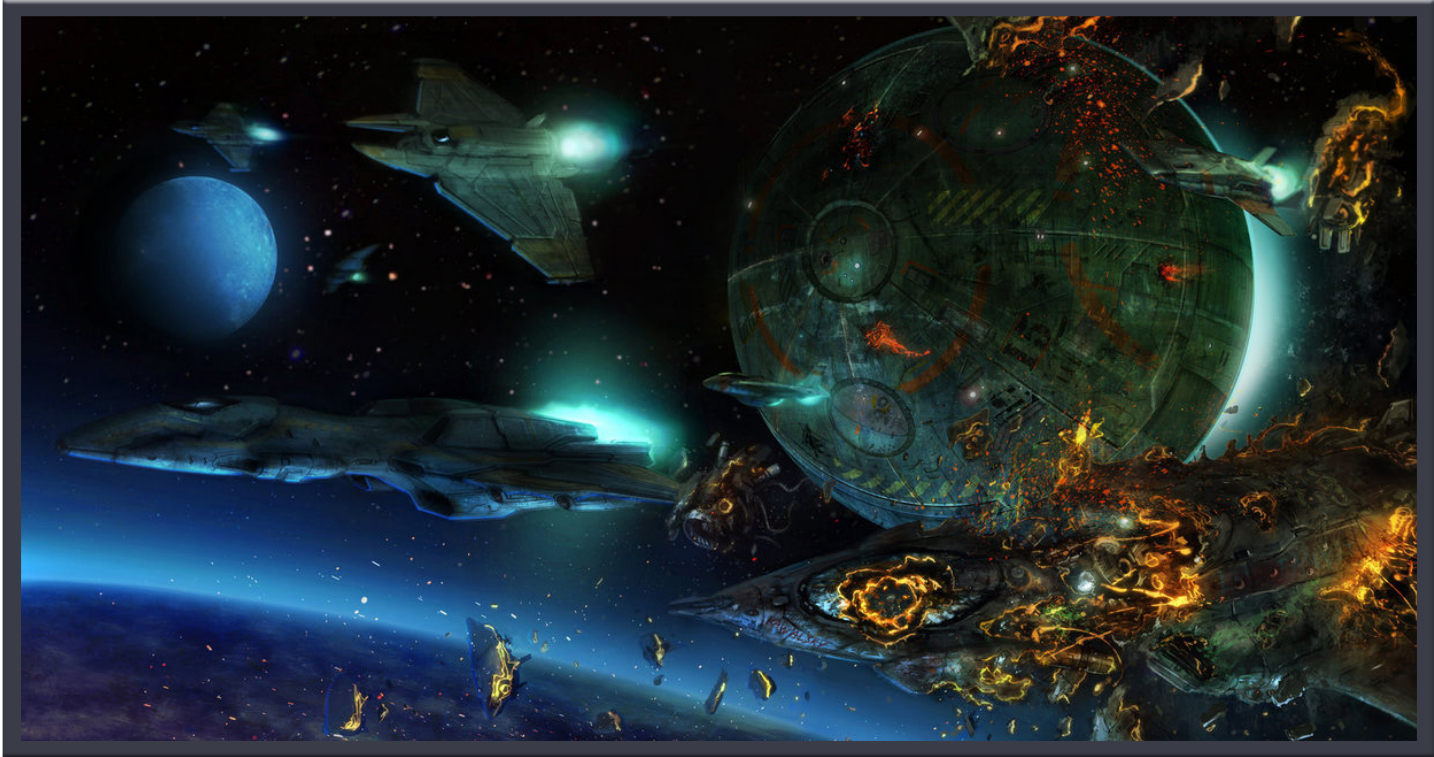
Governance of the world is an unusual representative democracy. The basic government is a conventional three-branch system of a presidency, senate, and judiciary. Citizenship is acquired by buying into the planetary government, or by being born on the planet. Citizenship shares may only be purchased if citizenships to other political entities are abandoned, and may only be owned by a person, not legal entities like corporations. Two shares are created for each person born in Promised Land, with one given to the child and one put on the market. Shares are deleted when the "share founder" dies, so they are not normally inheritable. A citizen may sell all their shares, reducing their status to a ward of the state similar to a resident alien. On the current market, a share costs about 15,000 C-bills. In an exception to the share inheritance rules, some noble titles hold thousands of votes beyond their share founders' deaths. Because the government rarely uses referenda and some taxes are based on numbers of shares held, having large numbers of shares offers little authority except social prestige.

Today, settlements are concentrated on the four of the fourteen continents (Camelot, Mahoroba, Utopia, and Xanadu) in the temperate zones where the climate was genuinely pleasant and fresh water was

abundant. Two communities are situated on ancient, dead volcanic provinces where deep mantle plumes have put mineral riches within easy reach of human mining equipment.

Other than an unusual environment, Promised Land is a typical, well-off Inner Sphere planet. It has a diverse industrial base to suit the needs of its population, a productive agricultural sector, and a high standard of living. The population is concentrated in a few dozen large metropolises, which leaves the unique ecosystem and endless landscape mostly undeveloped. Despite the threats sometimes posed by the ecosystem, citizens have consistently backed conservation laws, which favors the compact cities. Contrary to expectations, those cities are not squat. Kilometer-tall skyscrapers are common since modern materials are more than sufficient to defeat Promised Land's gravity. It is actually a point of pride for locals to build tall structures.

Gravity and the planet's scale has always thwarted easy long-distance travel. Jet aircraft (conventional or fusion) and airships are at a loss, so air travel is either by expensive small craft and DropShip flights, or by much slower fusion-powered propeller-driven aircraft.. Ocean transport is popular for cargo due to its low cost and the vast oceans, while electrified railways are utilized for overland transport.



# A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS

## IS IT JUST ME, OR DO YOU FEEL WARM?

**Recommended Group Size:** 2 to 4 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military, Security

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Regular-Elite (Key Skill levels of 2-8)

The Landers always made use of space stations at their standard jump points, primarily to screen planetary exports of biological threats. These recharge stations were perfect to serve as screening points for international trade during the Succession Wars, and allowed Promised Land to lobby into the position of one of the Free World's border crossings despite pervasive League bigotry. The Landers had another reason to open their space stations to Lyrans visitors: the stations at the Promised Land-Mana L4 and L5 points were residential, maternity, and vacation platforms. By allowing Lyrans to frequent the stations with few restrictions, the Landers let their enemies know the stations were not worth attacking. This strategy worked throughout the Succession Wars; the Lyrans only destroyed shipyards and used carefully targeted nuclear weapons on planetary industrial targets.

When the Free Worlds League reconquered Promised Land in 3144, it found pervasive hatred from Landers who had sought Commonwealth suzerainty in 3056 and 3101. In the face of textbook nonviolent civil disobedience, the few regiments of Marik troops abandoned the high gravity planet and concentrated on the many recharge stations at the zenith and nadir points, which were the important parts of the system in the League's eyes. If the planet ever violently revolted against the League bureaucrats and security personnel toiling on Promised Land, the troops could arrive in mere days to crush the revolt as easily as they had crushed the militia.

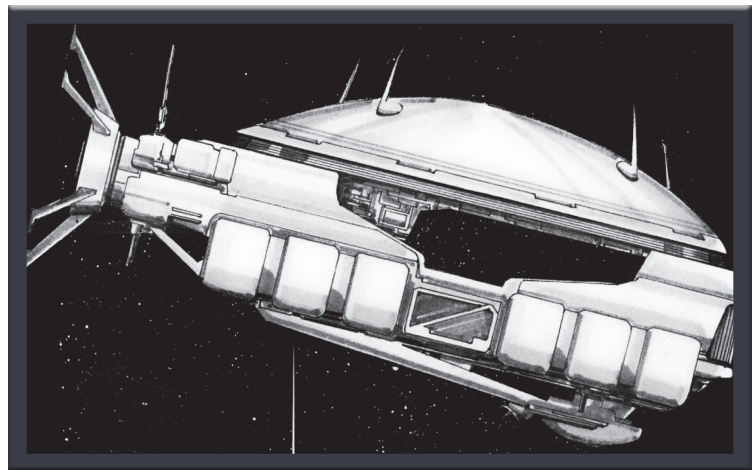
The Landers have exhibited a laudable unity in ignoring and avoiding League personnel to the point the Free Worlds had no effective authority on the planet. However, a population of over 100 million humans is never fully unified in any situation. Hotheads have not given up their dream of seeing the FWLM driven out of the system, and they've recognized that the League's combatants are concentrated in recharge stations that depend on station-keeping fusion engines to avoid plummeting into the sun.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**Tickets, Please:** Player characters interested in reprogramming station-keeping drives for a very gentle, unnoticeable burn toward a star (either to stop it or make it happen) must, of course, be wary of local personnel who want proof the characters belong on the station. Even solidly anti-League personnel who might help do not want to be labeled as terrorists.

**Women and Children First:** It is unlikely the stations will make much progress toward the star before someone aboard notices. The fall will take weeks at the peak (and noticeable) acceleration of the station, and less noticeable acceleration will take months. But to trap the FWLM troops, one needs an excuse to remove the transports: like evacuating civilians.

**Tips:** For *A Time of War* scenarios, brush up on the *Strategic Operations* descriptions (see pp. 122 and 244, *SO*) and rules of space stations. Familiarity with zero-G combat (see pp. 159 and 237, *AToW*) will also be important. After all, space stations are not single, large gravdecks.



## RUDE AWAKENING

**Recommended Group Size:** 2 to 8 player characters

**Recommended Group Type:** Military

**Recommended Skill Levels:** Veteran (Key Skill levels of 4-6)

After decades of racial abuse by its supposed ally, the Duchy of Tamarind Abbey, Promised Land discreetly contacted the Lyrans Commonwealth. While the Commonwealth had many faults, bigotry about minor genetic therapies was not among them. Also, it offered better tax brackets.

The planetary government was confident it could deport the civilian personnel who represented the Duchy on the planet. The problem was the Seventh Tamarind Regulars, who significantly outgunned the infantry-heavy planetary militia. However, the government had no problem working with several local transportation companies to conceal the movement of the Third Lyrans Regulars and some Lyrans mercenaries to the major seaport just outside the main Tamarind garrison base.

But the garrison was on the edge of a major city and too close to civilian residences to consider orbital bombardment or artillery. The Lyrans accepted that limitation, and that they would have to wade their heavy and assault forces into close combat with (hopefully) unprepared defenders.

**Complications:** A few obstacles for players to tackle.

**Meter Maids:** Because there were some mixed loyalties among Landers, the government did not alert all of its personnel to the Lyrans infiltration. It would only take one diligent Parking Authority Enforcer (PAEr, local pronunciations of the acronym include "payer" and "spawn of Satan") filing an emergency request for extra tickets after finding a Lyrans *Atlas II* idling in a subcompact spot to prematurely alert the Tamarind garrison.

**Ever Vigilant:** The Duchy troops have sensibly warded their facility with an array of electronic monitoring systems. The handful of personnel awake monitoring those systems might buy enough time to get critical companies of troops into their 'Mechs and tanks before the Lyrans could put screens of anti-personnel units between the hangars and barracks. The Lyrans are quite interested in disabling such systems – the player characters could easily be Lyrans, Marik, or planetary personnel trying to prevent that or make it happen.

**Tips:** The scenario presents some excellent opportunities to use sneak suits. Also, it is an exercise in *Tactical Operations*' high gravity rules (see p. 55, *TO*).

## OPTIONAL RULES

The following additional special rules are intended to provide further flavor to games set on the world featured in this product. For the most part, these rules may be considered advanced and optional, as they primarily reflect conditions and/or features unique to this one planet or planetary system.

### PROMISED LAND FLORA AND FAUNA

Promised Land has one of the few cases of an ecosystem older and significantly more advanced than Terra's. It is not particularly lethal, but the differences are noteworthy, at least for xenobiologists.

The so-called Lander "post-mammals" receive the most attention, perhaps because of the widely exported "cuddle bear" pet. Post-mammals are evolutionary descendants of Promised Land's mammals (which are still quite extant). They have 5-chambered hearts, including a smaller ventricle specifically for the brain, and the major veins of the limbs have peristaltic muscular actions to boost blood flow back to the heart. (Certain carnivorous post-mammals have fully developed this feature into two-chambered hearts in each limb.) Their lungs are uni-directional circulatory lungs rather than bellows-type lungs of terrestrial mammals, with the air entering and exiting through separate tracheal ports, fully utilizing the lungs' volume. Rather than a single diaphragm, sheets of muscle contract different lobes of the lungs in sequence (keeping chest volume constant while minimizing dead space in the lungs.) This also aids post-mammals in clearing their lungs of foreign matter. The combination of efficient lungs and circulatory systems makes post-mammal carnivores capable of feats of great endurance, though this demands a lot of food.

While human-level sentience does not exist in any Lander animal, terrestrial crows, raccoons, dolphins, and chimpanzees would find their intelligence the norm, not exceptions. Animal traits like Animal Cognition, Tool User, and Fast Learner are appropriate (see pp. 106-112, *AToWC*). Some post-mammals exhibit additional specialized brain centers compared to terrestrial animals. Carnivores and some omnivores have exhibited a spatial memory center that appears to remember 15 to 20 objects, their positions, and their velocity vectors separate of their working memory, which gives them an excellent situational awareness during hunts and fights, like the animal trait Combat Sense (see p. 113, *AToWC*). Like terrestrial mammals, their brain is bifurcated. However, post-mammals are distinguished by a "super-prefrontal cortex" that seems to support superior cross-hemisphere coordination while allowing multi-tasking by allowing each hemisphere to work on different problems simultaneously.

Many Lander vertebrates show a third type of immune system, "fortification immunity," in addition to the "innate" and "adaptive" immune systems of terrestrial chordates, making the animal trait Hardy common (see p. 111, *AToWC*). This immune system rapidly adjusts cell membranes of animals in response to pathogens, and also attempts to "counterattack" parasites like biological weapons. This may produce allergic reactions in humans exposed to Lander animals, per the diseases rules in *A Time of War* (see p. 245, *AToW*).

Animal behaviors are sophisticated. Lander "termites" build blade-shaped mounds over decades that are actively heated and cooled, and arranged to exploit or retard solar heating. They farm fungi and catalytically trigger methane flames in winter to maintain constant mound temperatures. Many post-mammals exhibit pseudo-languages able to convey numeracy, name threats, provide locations, and

identify individuals, per the animal skill Animal Communication (see p. 114, *AToWC*). Despite being from a completely different world, post-mammals and some mammals are usually able to understand human gestures as well as dogs, a feat rare on Terra. Cooperative problem solving and deceit are common among such animals, indicating that many are able to model the minds of other animals. Several species have death rituals akin to Terran elephants.

Three-tier social interactions (personal; group; and inter-group) are also common on Promised Land, but only otherwise seen among humans and dolphins. Non-instinctive interspecies cooperation is also noted. For example, small tree-dwelling foragers may serve as scouts for large, ground-dwelling gardening herbivores, who protect the foragers from their predators. Predators may arrange to be "shepherds" for a prey herd: providing protection against other predators, even culling rivals to the herd's alpha, in exchange for regular food. But these relations are cultural, not instinctive: different regions may have different interactions between species that vary year by year.

### CUDDLE BEARS

Cuddle bears are post-mammals and one of the few animal exports of Promised Land. They have been described as "miniature pandas" or "zebra-furred koala bears." Most consider them adorable animals who seem happy to do nothing more than cuddle with their owners all day, and appear very attentive. They will perform simple, insipidly cute tricks on command, which they pick up easily (and they toilet train). Unlike many bright animals, they seem to require little stimulus and sleep most of the day.

However, studies of brain activity show their pleasure centers rarely light up when interacting with humans, despite making similar cooing noises and expressions as when they are with their packs. The interpretation is that they are very mercenary. This is supported by their selfish behavior out of humans' sight (as captured by hidden cameras). When underfed, they steal food from *neighbors* (apparently to avoid alerting their owner and being punished). They readily circumvent physical security with their climbing ability and dexterous paws, and learn human schedules to plan their mischief. Abused cuddle bears are dangerous and will arrange premeditated traps, like trip hazards at the tops of stairs or broken glass in bedding. Some abusive owners have documented cuddle bears causing emotional duress and strife among humans, such as by planting stolen toys on a sibling or a neighbor's underwear with a spouse.

STR	BOD	DEX	RFL	INT	WIL	EDG
3	4	6	4	8	7	4

**Mass:** 15-20 kg

**Size Class (Modifier):** Small (-1)

**BAR (M/B/E/X):** 1/0/0/0 (Furred Hide)

**Damage (AP/BD):** 1M/1

**Move (W/R/S):** 4/12/35

**Traits:** Animal Cognition, Hardy, Patient, Tool User

**Skills:** Animal Language (+4), AniMelee (+3), Perception (+8), Tracking (+4)

### PROMISED LAND TERRAIN

The terrain on Promised Land is just as diverse as any found on Terra, and so p. 263 of *Total Warfare* is a reasonable representation of most of the world's terrain.