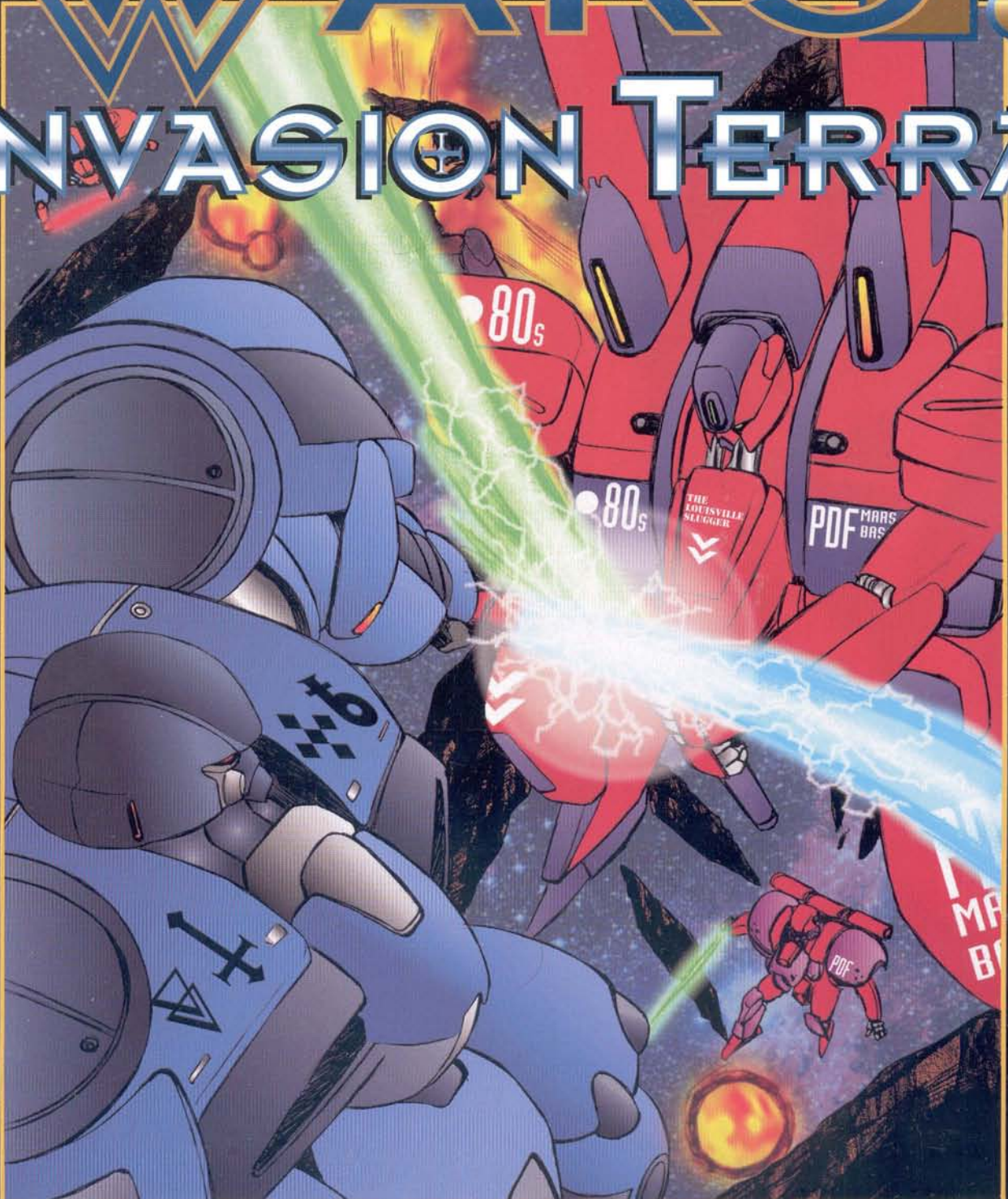


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MEKTON
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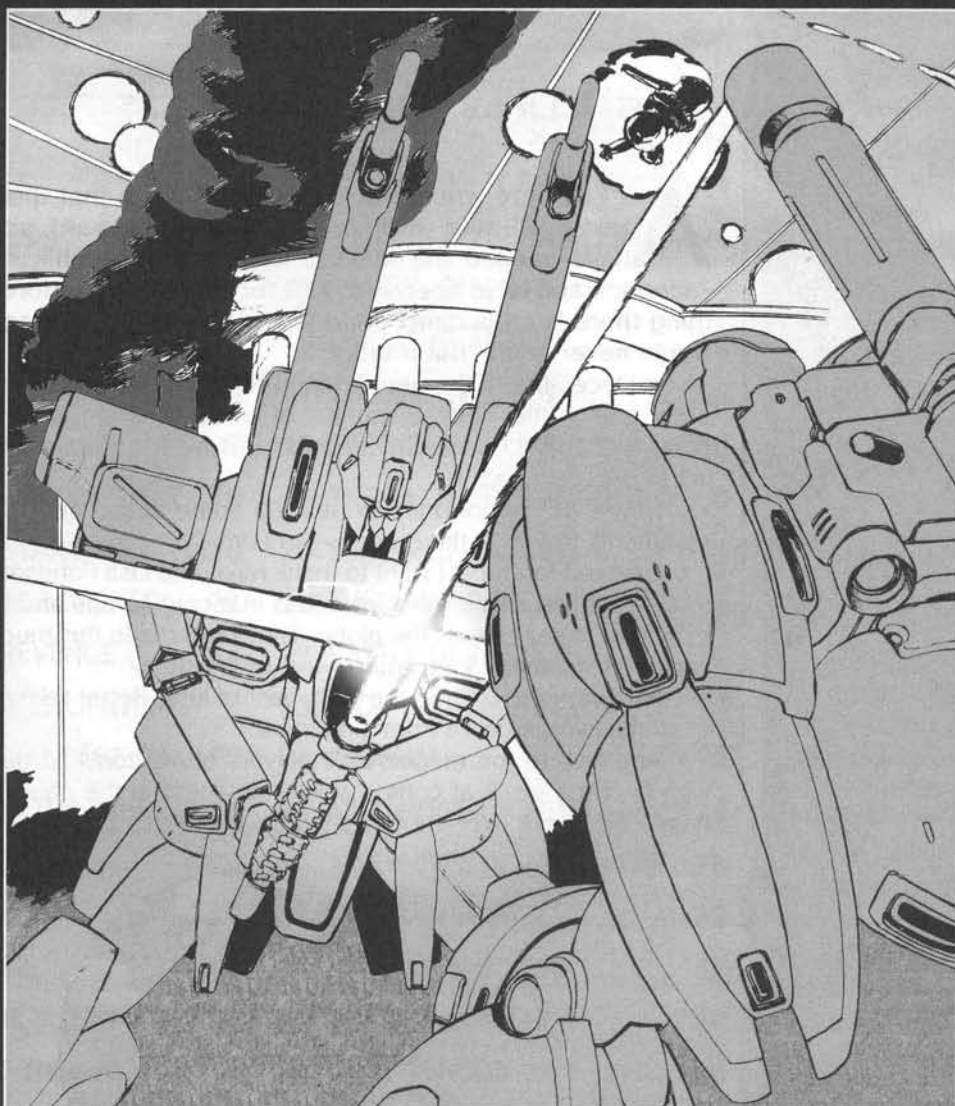
WARS: INVASION TERRA



MEKTON ZETA TACTICAL SCENARIOS

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MEKTON WARS 1: INVASION TERRA



MEKTON ZETA TACTICAL SCENARIOS



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(for this spiffy
portrait of Mike)

MEKTON WAR 1: INVASION TERRA

△ Introduction

しょうかい



THE LONG GOODBYE...

As I sit here writing these words, I realize that this is the last item of text I will ever really create on this keyboard, sitting at this desk. I have headed the Mekton line since the publication of the *Mekton Techbook* and have been with RTG for a few years before that. But to everything there is an ending – and this is my ending. In many ways I thought it would never come, but it did.

In December of this year I depart RTG to hire on as a writer for on-line computer games (the first 18 months of which take me to Singapore!) I leave on good terms, and despite my sadness I know that the line I have built up will be left in excellent hands.

I have the opportunity to take up some space and offer a few departing comments to you – the reader – so I am.

First and foremost I want to thank Mike and Lisa Pondsmith. They have taken a business that was once a few ideas in a cold garage and turned it into a company that literally spans the globe. They both made this much more than a company. It is a family. I love you guys – take care.

For everyone else on the staff, best of luck. Better take good care of my line or I'll mail you a cobra from Singapore.

And last, to the readers and players of *Mekton* and the people I've talked with over the years at cons – your enjoyment of the game has made all of the hassle and work over the years worthwhile. Keep gaming, and have fun.



Michael MacDonald
Ex-Mekton Z Line Editor

MEKTON WARS 1: INVASION TERRA

多次元機甲戦士道

△ T.O.C.

コンテンツのテーブル

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MEKTON WARS 1: INVASION TERRA

メクトンせんき1・ちきゅうのしんりゃく

In the year 2105, the human race had finally reached out to the stars. At long last, the peoples and nations of Terra came to the realization that the only way to conquer the stars was to stop fighting each other and cooperate. The overpopulated planet spread its humanity to its near space, throughout the solar system, then out in slower-than-light vessels to the neighboring stars. In 2069, Porovnel invented the first stargate system, a device capable of transferring matter from one remote location to another; the way to the stars was open. Colonies could be planted and nurtured as outlying sectors of humanity, instead of existing as separated, lonely outposts. With a stargate, you could go from one system to another in a matter of weeks (the transit time to the gate), not years of relativistic travel. And still volunteers and machines probed farther in slower-than-light ships, to discover new worlds orbiting distant stars, to find new lifeforms.

Then the probeship *Bellerophon* found some.

THE EMPIRE

Untold and forgotten eons ago, a race of humanoids in the Kaldaran Nebula developed space travel and the technology of war to a high degree. The reasons for this development were lost; whether this development molded their society or vice versa is also lost in time. The Kaldarans' empire was militaristic, efficient, streamlined for war. In order to maintain manpower, breeding had been relegated to cloning of genetically appropriate warriors, technicians, and support personnel. Officers and other executive types who had proved themselves genetically superior were allowed to breed naturally to improve and preserve the gene pool for subsequent clone batches. All production and industry was devoted to warfare and conquest. Imperial war technology had long since been fixed; the development of new technologies was unnecessary. All social activities were geared to maintaining conquest; command decisions concerned only that purpose. An exaggerated warrior ethos was developed to maintain order among the clone legions, training the warriors to believe in their ultimate superiority and usefulness to the Empire. This bolstered morale ("We are superior, and cannot be defeated."), fostered a condescending obedience to command ("Command merely decides the course; we decide the reality through combat."), and generally kept them from envying the prerogatives of their superiors in command. Clone warriors adopted a code of honor that included honor in capture of prisoners, prisoner exchanges, and loss of honor through refusal to do combat (something that was suspended in the face of obviously dishonorable guerrilla warfare; see below).

The Imperials sent migratory expeditions to other galaxies, including to the Milky Way. These expeditions preserved the purpose of the Empire—to conquer and consume, continually expanding the Empire's domains,—despite the fact that the Milky Way force lost contact with its parent organization, and was operating entirely on its own. Still, it ground "forward" from factory planetoids on the galaxy's rim, conquering all within its path down the spiral arm. At Delta Eridani, an Imperial scout force found and captured the *Bellerophon*. Marveling at finding another humanoid species, the Imperials acquired knowledge of Terra's colonies, language, and military capabilities from the probeship's small crew. They then marshalled their fleets and set out to conquer humanity.

PRELUDE TO WAR

As per normal Imperial doctrine, scouting forces probed the enemy's defenses. Scoutships and mecha conducted raids and lightning strikes on Terra's colony worlds, deliberately trying to provoke a response. When they ran into the poorly armed colonials, they easily evaded or destroyed them. Terra sent armed ships to deal with the problem, but when the ships found the Imperial vessels, they were either scanned and evaded, if they posed a serious threat to the scoutships, or destroyed. Imperial doctrine was to deny any information to the enemy—it wasn't worth the risk of having scoutships captured.

On Terra, members of the UNWO (United Nations World Order) government debated Terra's response. For the first time in 60 years, plans were made for full-scale wartime arms production. Member nations wrangled over who would manufacture what, and where the new divisions of the Planetary Defense Forces would be allocated. The Belt Coalition was authorized to open up its stardock facilities for full military manufacture (something they had been denied for some time, due to political sniping and paranoia) to begin producing ships immediately. New war machines began to pour out of Terra's factories, and a general recruiting drive was begun to swell the ranks of the PDF.

TERRAN PROBESHIP
"BELLEROPHON"

A DAY OF INFAMY

Satisfied that Terra's defenses were inadequate, the Sector Fleet moved on the homeworld. 250 ships dropped out of lightspeed hyperdrive already in formation to envelop Terra. Destroyers menaced the orbital habitats; a squadron swiftly captured the cities on Luna. All unmanned satellites were destroyed to deny their use to the Terrans. Medusa mecha and Furie fighters were dropped to destroy opposition and to clear landing sites for the dropships carrying Gorgon assault units.

PDF forces fought back when they could. Scramjet fighters clawed skyward to test the Imperial ships with nuclear weapons, only to be baffled by enemy electronic warfare and incinerated by Imperial guns. Regular fighters sparred with Furies— when they weren't caught and destroyed on the ground— only to find their airfields destroyed, if they survived at all. Ground forces were more successful; the Guardian mecha were largely destroyed, but conventional armor did well against enemy units, forcing the Imperial fleet to utterly destroy concentrations of armor from orbit. Ten hours after the attack began, the PDF's cohesion was broken and its units dispersed, leaving the Imperials confident that they had conquered Terra. The date was June 21, 2105.

IMPERIAL PLANS GO AWRY

Genetic tests had shown that Terran and Imperial physiology could be easily modified for compatibility. Sector Fleet command sent a ship back to Galactic Command with the message that Terra was an ideal spot for a new command post— already industrialized, pacified, with billions of suitable specimens for the gene pool.

The Imperials soon found out that the Terrans had other ideas. PDF troops, trained in counter-insurgency (the only sort of armed conflict practiced for the previous 75 years), organized small commando strikes on vulnerable Imperial posts within twenty-four hours of the invasion's start. Independent units of troops, tanks, light armor, and even some of the remaining Guardian mecha and aircraft, stepped up assaults and intelligence-gathering as the days passed. Although the Imperials had shut down all satellite and cellular communications, and readily traced FM radio broadcasts, PDF cells maintained their links by way of AM and shortwave radio (which the Imperials ignored) and land-line data-feeds (which the Imperials didn't know about for almost a week), coordinating their attacks for maximum effect.

The results were more deadly than the Terrans knew. Imperial commanders were acutely aware that they only had 5,000 ground mecha and 50,000 troops to pacify an entire world. Each troop lost couldn't be replaced for months; the cloning labs were 164 lightyears away. Each mecha lost was even harder to bear, particularly if the pilot was killed, too.

The Imperials struck back, sending their forces to seek and destroy the troublesome guerrillas. This activity stopped quickly, as they learned that the Terrans had a habit of turning such missions into ambushes, using old equipment stockpiled in neglected armories, new equipment, and equipment stolen from the Empire. The Imperials quickly discovered that an anti-tank missile made to cripple a Talos would maul a Gorgon or Medusa.

The next step was the seizure of world leaders as hostages. Imperial news broadcasts threatened retaliation, first against the leaders, then against the civilian populace, if the PDF did not surrender. Lack of familiarity with Terran culture hampered them here; Imperial command didn't understand that threatening a city population in India wouldn't discourage guerrillas in Europe, or that holding an English statesman hostage for the good behavior of Irish partisans was sheer folly.

Attempts to locate records on possible guerrillas also failed, due to the Imperial doctrine of denying information to the enemy— invading forces had actually been detailed to destroy databases and links. What the Imperials didn't destroy, the Terrans erased or stole.

The standard Imperial management tactic of isolating and controlling a vital resource to maintain control of the populace was more successful. The Imperial administrators soon seized control of food supplies and distribution, using them as bribes to quell urban unrest and obtain native Terran cooperation. Attempts to seize food shipments from Imperial control ended in failure, since all such shipments were booby trapped to ensure that they would not fall into the wrong hands. Reprisals for guerrilla attacks took the form of decreased rations in the appropriate areas.

As the weeks passed, the situation deteriorated. Terran attacks increased in frequency, concentrating on destroying enemy mecha and personnel whenever possible. Reprisals only served to incite guerrillas to more action. By the time a solar month had passed, the Imperial occupation forces were reduced to 70% of their original capacity.



PROJECT PHOENIX

Terran research labs, concealed from Imperial knowledge by camouflage and falsified (or deleted) records, worked feverishly to understand captured Imperial technology and adapt it to Terran equipment. Numerous variants of the Guardian mecha were tried against the invaders with varying degrees of success. The stolid Talos mechatank was always in demand, and there were never enough of them to modify substantially. The real research project, though, was for a mecha design that could be easily adapted to the invaders' fusion power supply and thruster combination, in order to have a combat unit that could be used in space as an all-purpose fighter. From the beginning, the Terrans planned to take the fight to the Empire, hoping to succor Terra and place the Empire on the defensive.

In the end, the choice came down to a reconfigured Guardian and a new model, the Rapier Model Zero, brainchild of Dr. Marcel T. Graves. Dr. Maria Logan, advocate for the Guardian, argued that it would be easier to manufacture—once the Earth was recaptured, the fabrication and assembly plants were already in existence—and pilots were already familiar with it. However, it was decided that the Rapier would be the spearhead of the PDF, as it contained a wealth of improvements scrounged from Imperial technology, and would be more suited for long-range space missions.

Covert factories, and normal manufacturers working on the sly, had been turning out arms for the PDF and various unrelated guerrillas. These factories were coopted to produce parts for the new Rapier. The new mecha, mounted on thruster-driven mechariders (themselves built on Meade-class aerodyne troop-transport hulls), were readied for the "big push", the drive to clear Terra of the invaders.

THE BATTLE FOR TERRA

Imperial commanders had, at least, been happy with their space pacification efforts. The cities on Luna and Mars, and in orbit around Terra, had made no trouble. A commandeered transit station had been renovated to serve as Imperial command headquarters. Of the outposts in the Asteroid Belt and around Jupiter there were only rumors, tales of how the belters were happy to be rid of terrestrial government interference. Imperial commanders were only too pleased to let them be for the time, until Terra was truly pacified, for they knew that their ground efforts would come to naught without the threat of orbital bombardment to deter the PDF.

This overconfidence proved to be their undoing. In reality, the belters and outposters in the outer planets were devoting their efforts to building a new stargate, and a ship construction facility hitherto unrivaled in the system. Once the stargate was completed, they reestablished communications with the cut-off colonies, calling for the scattered PDF spaceships to rally at the Ceres planetoid. With operating stargates online, the PDF fleet joined the small fleet of armed cutters (corvette-sized attack ships) the belters had built.

On August 10, 2105, the new ad-hoc Terran fleet moved out of the asteroid belt, headed insystem to challenge the Imperials. A coordinated wave of guerrilla attacks on Terra itself drew off Imperial attention, as tanks, commandos, and hovercraft attacked Imperial ground barracks, landing zones, and staging areas. The Imperials responded by backpedaling, holing up behind their defenses, and attempting to weather the attacks—the only tactic which had been found to work, since counterattacks invariably ran into ambushes—while spaceships scanned for enemy formations large enough to fire on from near orbit.

As Imperial destroyers dipped lower toward the planet, examples of Terran improvement on stolen Imperial technology streaked upward from mobile launch rails. The Charybdis class destroyer *Jaralam* was totally destroyed by the SOMs (surface-to-orbit missiles), while the destroyer *Okanba* was crippled and had to be towed out of a fatal orbit. Other destroyers were also hit and damaged by the surprise attack.

In retaliation, the fleet drew back and launched almost every transatmospheric assault mecha available, vectoring them to try to outflank the Terrans and destroy what was perceived as a desperate drive to destroy the Imperial ground forces. As it turned out, the Imperials were correct in their assessment of the Terran ground plan, but failed to perceive the space fleet coming in, masked by Luna.

The viciousness of the assault distracted the Imperials enough to allow the Terran fleet to drive on the invasion fleet from a superior gravitational position; the Terrans were first spotted when their braking maneuvers made them impossible to miss. Hastily, the Imperial ships broke from orbit and strove for combat velocity, sickly aware of the fact that the Terran ships had the advantages of speed and lesser gravity pull—so close to Terra, any

Imperial ship suffering propulsion damage would spiral in on a brief and colorful meteoric tour of Terra's atmosphere, culminating in a sudden stop at ground level. Battle was joined as Terran mass drivers filled Imperial vector plots with whizzing chunks of matter, each deadly at orbital impact velocities. The mass drivers on Luna joined in, having launched great masses of silicate junk hours before, right under the noses of occupying troops who were given to believe that they were building materials destined for orbital habitats. These arrived in time to seed close orbit space with an impromptu meteorite field. Nearly a score of Imperial ships succumbed to these preliminary attacks and drifted into the planetary envelope below.

As the fleets closed for mortal combat above, the second wave of PDF attacks began. Massed military units, hidden until the departure of the Imperial fleet, moved out to assault the Imperial bases. New Rapier mecha took to the skies; assisted by thruster-retrofitted jets, they cleared the Medusas and Furies from the air.

Conscious that the planetary battle was lost, Commander General Loskeed issued a general withdrawal order. All personnel and mecha were to attempt to make it to Imperial landing ships for evacuation. Imperial forces fought back with valor; Gorgon pilots and ground troops died defending their landing ships from the vengeful Terran attack.

For their part, the Terrans fought with a ferocity approaching bloodlust. Civilian militias fought alongside the trained soldiers, using weapons torn from the dead hands of the invaders. Despite orders to capture Imperial soldiers whenever possible, most of the fallen Imperials were killed—shot, mangled, or even torn apart. The same sort of mentality ruled in space. Terran small-weapons operators, knowing that they couldn't hurt the behemoths facing them, wasted ammunition blasting Imperial escape pods. This behavior was to have a great impact on Terran-Imperial relations in the future.

The space battle escalated to literally suicidal proportions. Three Imperial ships were crippled when rammed by Terran cutters at high speed. The Imperial flagship was hit squarely by its kamikaze attacker; at a combined speed of 1800 meters per second, the collision vaporized the cutter into a ball of plasma that tore the battleship apart.

The last Imperial effort concentrated on recovering the remaining landing ships. Once they had joined the now-weakened fleet, an emergency lightspeed engagement was ordered. It was a dangerous move so deep in a gravity well, but it was clear that the Terrans would continue their suicidal assault until the Imperials were destroyed. The fleet shifted into a dimension beyond normal space and fled. Only seventy-three ships escaped, and nineteen of them never made it out of lightspeed, having broken up in hyperspace.

The Terran fleet was in little better shape. Originally comprised of twenty-eight ships and one hundred twenty-five cutters, only seven ships and thirty-one cutters were left spaceworthy, and even they needed extensive repairs. But the enemy had been driven from the Sol system.

THE WAITING WAR

The invaders were gone! Terran celebrations were short. It was clear that the Imperials were only temporarily beaten; they'd be back, and next time they wouldn't be so easily defeated. Terra remained vulnerable, and her colonies were many times more vulnerable, to Imperial attack.

What to do? It would take time to mobilize Terran resources and construct a fleet that would have a chance against the Imperial fleet. The Battle for Terra had been won because of the Terrans' unique advantages—Luna, with its shielding bulk and mass drivers; the PDF assault from below; Terra's own mass and atmosphere waiting to swallow the unfortunate and wounded. In open space, such things couldn't be counted on, and Terran ships would have to face their Imperial opponents on an equal footing.

The answer came from Terra's ancient history of warfare: Take the war to the enemy, in a fashion that would be difficult to oppose. Independent commerce raiders, operating with a wide dispersal, could keep the Empire off guard, slashing at Imperial supply lines and drawing off Imperial forces to pursue them.

Thanks to captured Imperial technology, these new ships could be given lightspeed drives, allowing them to operate beyond the confines of Terran stargates. Construction of suitable ships was begun, based on the old Helena cruiser, the mainstay of the old PDF navy. The new ship class, christened the Argus class, featured fewer anti-ship weapons and more space for a squadron of ten mecha. The new weapons were now energy-based, reducing supply needs, and fusion plants powered the new thrusters and lightspeed drive.



The first batch of these cruisers was operational in six weeks, a new record in ship construction. Equipped with mecha and supplies, they headed rimward toward Imperial space, their missions to shoot everything Imperial that couldn't fight back and run from anything that could.

Initial actions were immensely successful— the Empire hadn't expected hit-and-run attacks in their own space, and had no preparations for them— and just in time, for the first reinforcements for the Terran war were beginning to arrive. The fleet had limped into dry-dock for repairs when the reports started coming in of outposts destroyed, shipping missing, supply lines endangered. Commander General Loskeed, recovering from the wounds he had sustained during the Battle for Terra, called in Colonel Magnar Chron, one of the Empire's best strategists, giving him *carte blanche* to select a force that would pursue and destroy the Terran raiders.

THE CHASE OF THE *GALANT*

Thus began the famous game of cat-and-mouse between Chron's fleet and the *Galant*, Terra's most successful raider. Assisted by the elite mecha units commanded by Colonel Kandrax and Captain Shann, Chron set his fast battlefleet on the task of finding, enveloping, and destroying Terran raiders one by one. He was successful at this, outmaneuvering and out thinking nearly a dozen Argus-class raiders— most of the first batch, and some of the second wave— until he met his match in Captain Henry Antares of the starcruiser *Galant*.

The *Galant* was one of the first Argus starcruisers. Built as a research cruiser with mecha repair and modification facilities, it was crewed by the cream of the Project Phoenix team. Both Drs. Graves and Logan were aboard to test the Terran mecha in field conditions, and to act as the central core of a field modification team. Since the *Galant* was supposed to operate as a sort of tender and technical support, she was more lightly armed than her sister ships.

When Chron's fleet began systematically hunting down the Argus raiders, Captain Antares and the captains of the *Courageous* and the *Chauvan* made the one retreat that would take them out of danger by heading into danger: they went even farther rimward, deeper into Imperial space, on separate courses. When Chron finished his business coreward, he brought his fleet back to deal with the trio of ships before they did any more damage.

And they did inflict plenty of damage. The *Courageous* was destroyed during an attack on one of the Imperial cloning facilities, but managed to totally annihilate that facility, reducing Imperial troop supply by one ninth. The *Chauvan*, equipped with a cloaking device that its pilots had found in a sacked Imperial research lab, preyed on Imperial shipping with such effectiveness that it even invaded the Sector Fleet and wrecked six ships before fleeing under cloak. The *Chauvan* met its end when Chron's fleet caught up with it and, using newly developed anti-cloaking technology, found and destroyed it (though not without loss— the *Chauvan* destroyed one last warship during the confrontation).

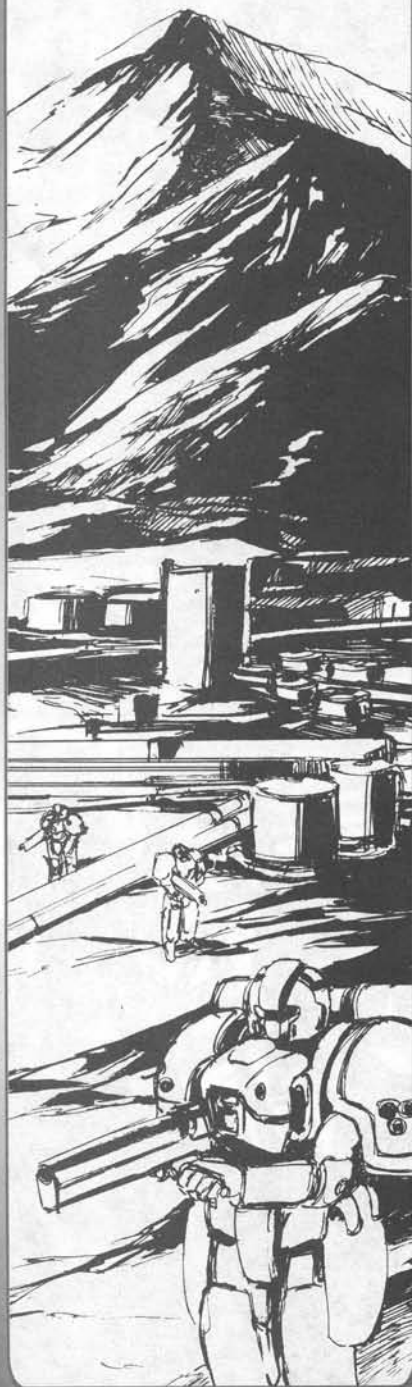
The *Galant* took a different tack, skirting the edges of Imperial presence and attacking smaller outposts and lone ships for supplies and information— particularly information. Captain Antares had realized that the Empire couldn't be defeated if it wasn't understood. More needed to be learned about its culture, technologies, modes of operation— everything! So the *Galant* moved quietly across the edges of Imperial space, raiding when necessary and spying when possible.

Eventually, Colonel Chron turned his attentions to the *Galant*, which had survived for so long because of her captain's caution and cunning. News from raided freighters warned the *Galant* and her crew of Chron's coming, and Captain Antares made a plan to lead Chron on a long, bitter chase. The *Galant's* squadron of Rapiers, the most potent upgrades in the Terran force, made a series of strikes against Imperial outposts to establish a pattern. Then Antares took his ship back to one of the first systems they had raided and hid behind a lesser moon as Chron's force went trumpeting through, following his trail! Once they were past, Antares pointed his ship into the middle of Imperial territory, hiding among the volume of Imperial traffic.

Strangely, Chron didn't follow, even when the *Galant* was discovered.

THE FLEET RETURNS

The reason for Col. Chron's sudden lack of interest was a new threat to the Empire: The new Terran fleet had appeared, with a vanguard of new Argus-class starcruisers fanning



out to wreak havoc on the Empire's already disturbed supply lines. The Imperial fleet moved out to find the Terran fleet, but was hampered by the commerce raiders sniping at its rear. In order to deal with it, Imperial ships were detached to combat these raiders and convoy Imperial supply ships, thus reducing the size of the Imperial fleet. The Terran fleet also split up to raid on a pre determined campaign of terror, avoiding the central Imperial fleet and smashing the smaller detachments of escort ships.

BATTLE OF THE SOLAR SEA

At last, the Terran ships rendezvoused at a nebula nick named the Solar Sea, waiting for the Imperial detachments pursuing them to come together for battle. The Imperials attempted to envelop the Terrans and wipe them out, but the Terrans broke through with a sudden attack on the Imperial center, led by the battleship *Retribution* and the starcruisers *Braveheart* and *Galant*. The Imperial fleet was shattered and retired in disorder. The Terrans retired in good order to their colonies, confident that the Empire had been defeated ... for now.

キャラクター

Personalities △

Lt. Donchoi Yuh

Premier Terran ace of the war, Lt. Yuh started the war as a mecha test pilot with the famous NorthAm "Skunk Works" development facility. When the war broke out, he was a logical choice to test Project Phoenix's experiments; the Rapier was practically designed around his recommendations. A natural tactician and wizard pilot, he went with his mentor, Dr. Graves, when the guts of Project Phoenix shipped out on the *Galant*. He soon established himself as the top pilot on board, consistently scoring at least one kill per mission, despite whatever odds the Imperials threw at him. He managed to destroy Col. Kandrax's Gorgan Auram on their first engagement, and let Kandrax go in order to save another pilot. Kandrax perceived this as an act of warrior ethics, and decided that Yuh was a worthy foe. This begun the rivalry which was to persist between the pair throughout the war.

Lt. Mariko Lim

A "native" of the Alpha Centauri colony, Mariko was sent to Terra to participate in a research project on paranormal activity; she had tested high on Rhine cards and other promising tests. This project was interrupted by the war; her entire research group fled from Berkeley (West Coast sub sector, NorthAm) to hide in the Rocky Mountains, where they made their way to the Skunk Works facility. At the time there were very few mecha pilots, and she tested well on the simulators, so Lt. Yuh was assigned to train her. The training led to a relationship, and when Yuh shipped out on the *Galant*, she went with him.

Mariko's psychic talents were developed during the war, thanks to the aid of Imperial teaching devices and information seized on a raid of an Imperial psionics test facility. When Dr. Graves equipped her Rapier with a psionic amplification matrix, her new found powers turned into an incredible asset for the Terran cause.

Lt. Mark Benjamin Michaels

The improbable war hero, Michaels had just joined the PDF when the war started. His test scores had been terrible at every physical activity except mecha piloting, which he took to immediately. (Historical comparisons have been drawn with Manfred von Richthofen, the infamous "Red Baron", who wanted to be a cavalry trooper but was a terrible horseman - he kept falling off the horse.) He bumbled his way through the war, fighting with PDF guerrillas and distinguishing himself in the Guardian suits modified and refitted by Dr. Logan. By the end of the war, he had 36 solo kills, the second-highest total of any Terran pilot.

Flight Commander North Frozen

Commander Frozen, leader of the *Galant's* mecha squadron, was a long-time veteran of PDF fighters when the war dumped a new problem in his lap: Now he had to learn to pilot mecha, a much different task from fighter planes. He took to the job with determination, and led his squadron to multiple victories. He himself was only a normal mecha pilot, but his knowledge of fighter tactics and battlefield strategies contributed as much to the *Galant's* survival as did the skill of his pilots. He also acted as tactical advisor to Captain Antares.





**TERRAN LIEUTENANT
DONCHOI YUH**

Captain Henry Antares

A starcruiser captain before the war, Antares' ship was one of the few that survived the Battle for Terra. He accepted command of the *Galant* and its unusual mission with relish, more than willing to harass the enemy and gather vital information at the same time. His astrogational knowledge, combined with Commander Frozen's strategic talents, made a combination that even Colonel Chron, the Empire's vaunted genius, couldn't defeat.

Dr. Marcel T. Graves

The developer of the Rapier Zero and the entire Rapier line, Dr. Graves' claim to fame was his uncanny ability to understand and integrate captured Imperial technology into Terran devices. His efforts in studying captured Gorgons and Medusas resulted in the mastery of Imperial-style cold fusion engines and thruster technology, which were immediately incorporated into the new Rapier design, a fusion of Empire and Terran tech. His insatiable curiosity drove him to make more radical discoveries throughout the war, including the invention and/or adaptation of the invisibility shield, the psionic amplifier, and the telepathic control link.

Dr. Maria Logan

Where Dr. Graves was inspiration and ingenuity, Dr. Logan was method and order. Dr. Graves would discover a way to use newtech, and Dr. Logan would lay out the plans so that his discoveries could be duplicated. Despite their differences over whose design would be used as the PDF's main mecha — the Rapier or the Guardian — they worked well together as a team. Dr. Logan's patronage was also responsible for the varied and advanced weaponry mounted on Lt. Michaels' Rapier.

Jalia Zell

Imperial warrior Jalia Zell was cloned shortly before the beginning of the war. As a second-generation clone, she was raised and programmed to be a Medusa pilot. She took part in the invasion of Terra and was shot down during the occupation. Captured by Terran soldiers and brought to the Skunk Works for evaluation and questioning, she escaped, taking Lt. Michaels as hostage. Her own patrols shot them down over the desert, and they took several days to walk back to base. By that time, they had learned a great deal about each other, including some impromptu education about intergender relationships. Jalia and Mark fell in love. She was rescued in a final raid before the Battle for Terra, and they weren't reunited until the destruction of the Scylla-class ship *Gorvaad*.

Colonel Lars Kandrax

A clone commander and one of the Empire's most decorated Gorgon leaders, Colonel Kandrax took his squadron to Terra for what he thought would be another easy campaign. He was shocked when the Terrans fought back, ignoring every part of the warriors' code that he lived by — the Terrans destroyed pilots, refused to exchange captured pilots (even though the Imperials kept captured Terran pilots for just that purpose), and fought in the most savage and dishonorable way possible, using lures, ambushes, sniping attacks, and commando tactics. Instead of the honorable battle situation he had hoped for when the Empire discovered another humanoid race, he found just another savage species, devoid of honor. Only when he found Lt. Yuh did the war offer him any pleasure; defeating Donchoi Yuh became his obsession.

Captain Gates Shann

Captain Shann was another successful commander; her Medusa squadron and Kandrax's Gorgons worked as a coordinated team. As commanders, she and Lars enjoyed certain privileges, including a promising relationship. When Jalia Zell was captured, she managed to engineer a rescue of her pilot, and was appalled at her "brainwashing." She was even more appalled at the actions during the Battle for Terra. Like Lars, she turned to destroying Terrans whenever possible. When he became obsessed with Lt. Yuh, she became equally embittered with the situation, for she thought that, like all Terrans, Yuh had no honor, and hated him for coming between her and Lars.

Lt. Annar Quint

One of the ESPer clones, Lt. Quint was bred and nurtured to utilize the new psionic matrix projectors. He accidentally bonded with Mariko Lim during a mission, and became as obsessed with capturing her to improve Imperial psionic gene stock as Kandrax was with defeating Yuh.

Colonel Magnar Chron

Colonel Chron's campaign to eradicate the Argus starcruiser raiders was brilliant and thorough, a fair description of the Empire's tactical specialist. His interstellar chess game with Captain Antares inspired him to dangerous new stratagems which would have defeated the Terran cause, had he not been so busy chasing the *Galant*.

テクノロジー

Technologies △

Weapons

At the beginning of the war, Imperial weapons technology was standardized, stagnant for thousands of years (roughly Tech Level 8).

Projectile weapons were favored for ground-based mecha such as the Gorgon, since energy weapons didn't work in all atmospheric conditions. Energy weapons stayed on the space mecha (Medusas and Furies), since they required no ammunition supply. Imperial ships employed energy weapons, missiles, and non-regenerative energy shields to protect their combat ships.

At the same time, the Terrans had barely begun space travel and were limited to projectile weapons, favoring mass drivers for all purposes (spaceships, mecha, and mechatanks), augmented by missiles and artillery, both mass-driver and rocket-driven. Lighter vehicles such as helicopters and aircraft used chemical-propellant systems, rockets, and missiles. As time passed and more Imperial systems were captured, energy weapons became available, including the important energy melee weapon.

Motive and Power Systems

Early Terran fusion power was clumsy, bulky, and inefficient, used for powering cities and major starships; most mecha and mechatanks used small nuclear plants, as did some of the smaller starships.

Likewise, Terran technology hadn't mastered the thruster (perfectly understandable, considering that thrusters needed fusion power to superheat the plasma), and Terrans were still depending on combustible fuels to drive turbines and jets for flight!

Captured Imperial technology gave the Terrans fusion power plants and compact, high-power thrusters within a month of Terra's capture, putting Terran mecha on par with their Imperial opponents.

Two Terran motive types did give the Imperials pause: water (particularly submarine) and ground-effect systems. During the Terran occupation, vehicles and mechariders utilizing these motive systems showed that they could actually outrun Imperial pursuit! This led to the development of Imperial mechariders, and the deployment of specially modified Furi fighters for submarine use.

Terran spaceships were completely dependent on nuclear rockets, using direct reaction mass heated to a crude plasma for thrust— dangerous, inefficient (but less dangerous and more efficient than combustible fuel designs), and bulky. Imperial ships, on the other hand, enjoyed even more efficient fusion thrusters and the benefits of lightspeed drives, being able to plunge from interstellar space into a distant star system, and even to move within that star system. Hoarding its fuel, a Terran ship could travel an AU in four months. An Imperial could do the same in less than 1.5 seconds at 1 light year per day (but would probably back its drives down to one AU per day, for fear of smacking into something solid while it traveled). Of course, as soon as Imperial ships were captured, Terran technologists copied these systems as swiftly as possible for inclusion in new ships.

Communications

Both Imperial and Terran technologies used frequency modulation radio, masers, and lasers for communications. Likewise, the Imperials soon found out the value of Terran telephone networks, and neutralized them (which wasn't too great a jump of logic for the Imperials; Terran optic phone networks were almost identical to Imperial optic communications networks).

The Imperials were somewhat surprised by amplitude modulation radio; they'd considered it so unreliable as to be unfit for communications use, and had, like so many other "unfit" technologies, abandoned it centuries ago. For a short time, PDF units were able to use AM radios for nearly untapped communications.



TERRAN LIEUTENANT
MARIKO LIM

LIEUTENANT
MARK • BENJAMIN
MICHAELSJALIA
ZELL

Neither side had ever discovered how to transmit information over interstellar distances at any speed greater than lightspeed. Terrans used radio drones through their stargates for "instant" communications (that is, with the drone transmitting as soon as it passed through the stargate). Imperial forces relied on fast couriers.

Hyperlight and Stargates

When the Empire began scouting, the Terrans were using technology so outdated that no detailed records of it could be found in Imperial data archives. The Terrans were using stargates, a branch of the lost technology of teleportation! Disturbed at technology unfamiliar to the Empire, Sector Command immediately had Technical launch an investigation of the phenomenon, with special emphasis on finding out why the Empire had lost the science.

The answers came swiftly: The Empire had *abandoned* the science millennia ago as a dead end. Imperial stargates had been produced and successfully used, but they required teleportation matrices at both ends of the transport. These installations were bulky, stationary, and indefensible, totally outclassed by hyperlight drives in every way except speed of transport.

This was perceived as an advantage for the Empire: If Terran stargates could be destroyed, their colonies could be easily isolated from the homeworld (and vice versa), while Imperial ships could cruise through space at a slower speed, but going anywhere they pleased. Thus, the first priority for the Imperial invasion was the destruction of stargates.

Imperial science failed to reckon with Terran ingenuity. Unlike the ancient Imperial experiments, Terran stargates were much smaller and easy to fabricate, a real advantage with transport distances of a few parsecs, rather than the ten-plus parsec transports of the old gates. In addition, these gates required less power, and could even be moved(!), towed by tugs. Once PDF command realized that the stargates were prime enemy targets, they were moved to hiding and new gates were constructed in secret (like Rockgate, the stargate constructed in an asteroid in the Sol system). After the Battle for Terra, there were enough captured Imperial ships for the Terrans to copy their hyperlight drives, and stargate construction waned.

The Imperial research did have one new and unexpected benefit: The compact (and often nearly insane, according to Imperial scientists) Terran teleportation circuitry raised the possibility of constructing mobile teleportation grids that needed no receiver; the grid would be transmitter and receiver. The Terrans found out about it the hard way with the introduction of the Medusa Gremlin, where the technology was first employed in battle.

Roleplaying △

ロールプレー

Mekton Wars I: Invasion Terra isn't set up as a role-playing campaign. By definition, this supplement is a series of more-or-less connected wargame scenarios. There is, however, a great deal of role-playing potential in the campaign setting! Here are some suggestions for referees desirous of running a role-playing campaign using this background.

Characters

Since this is a military campaign, the best character types are military ones. The Anime Hero and Anime Stud templates are best for the youngsters; good professions for older characters include Athlete, ERT Member, Mecha Designer, Mechajock, Pilot, Medic, Military Officer, Scientist, Soldier, Spy, and Test Pilot. Mecha skills and other combat skills are a must, as is Awareness/Notice. Don't worry about personal equipment, since that'll be provided. Psionics system is in effect, since there are known psionic characters (Mariko Lim).

Characters should be mechajocks, explorers, tech/science recovery crews, and other people who put their lives into danger on a regular basis. Unless the referee really thinks that a player can handle it without becoming bored or power-mad, characters shouldn't be allowed to play officers with command responsibilities. Of course, if you've a player in your group who likes being the responsible commander, shouldering the burdens of command and tactics, then go for it! Be warned, though: Commanders aren't usually allowed to go off adventuring. Flight Commander is about as high as you can go and still see flight time instead of flying a desk.

Adventures

Adventures can follow the scenarios of the book, being wargaming situations full of combat and the ever-present danger of meeting a mecha-sized weapon face to face. The problem is that pure wargaming gets stale; after all, you can only go out, guns blazing, so many times before it becomes same-old same-old. For variety, adventures appropriate to this sort of cam-

paign include infiltration of enemy installations (for espionage, information-gathering, rescues, sabotage, etc.) and exploration of alien worlds (first contacts, looking for resources, gathering samples, cut off from unit and trying to make it back).

Subplots

So the adventures sound a bit repetitive? Well, there are only so many main plots, after all. Subplots are the way to add variety! What's the difference between trying to rescue a downed comrade from an Imperial Gorgon patrol, or from a bunch of rabid bikers with a personal grudge? It's the same scenario either way, but the identity (and personal involvement with) the foes makes all the difference!

Tried-and-true subplots include rivalries (in love, battle, performance), hatreds and vendettas, mysterious objects and people (is she a spy? Is she really innocent? And if she's a spy, whose side is she on?), romances, and alliances (there are obligations to friendship, you know).

Is player unit morale flagging? Are the players having trouble working as a unit? Introduce a rival squadron interested in one-upmanship; show up the player characters a few times, and watch them start working as a team!

Is one player bored? Give him, and him alone, some written hints on a mystery, and watch him start paying attention.

There's nothing that makes a war as personal as a personal enemy. You know, the guy who kills your friends and family, ruins your stuff, steals your girlfriend (or worse), and generally comes to epitomize what you're fighting against. You can get him in the end, and it may be a bit of a let-down, but it feels so good at the time ... until the referee lets slip that your sensors did scan a piece of debris which might have been an escape pod

If you, the referee, really want to go all the way and try an *Operation Rimfire*-style campaign, you've some work cut out for you. First, pregenerate all the characters, using 80 points for statistics. The main characters are, of course, Donchoi Yuh (the main hero), Mariko Lim (female lead, psychic love interest), Mark Benjamin Michaels (bumbling hero; the guy the audience most readily identifies with), and the other members of the *Galant's* mecha crew. You'll need a technician-pilot, a gung-ho combat monster, at least one scientist-pilot, and an electronics-warfare specialist. Refer to *Operation Rimfire* for ideas.

The following *Galant* crew are in the following scenarios:

CHARACTER APPEARANCES

SCENARIO

SCENARIO	CHARACTERS
• Defend the Stargate	Cptn. Antares, Commander Frozen
• Pearl Harbor Revisited	Mark B. Michaels
• Guderian's Revenge	Mark B. Michaels
• Attack of the Lilliputians	Mark B. Michaels
• In Defense of the Depot	None, but several could have been
• Charge of the Light Brigade	Mark B. Michaels
• Breakout at the Lost Dutchman	None, but several could have been
• The First Rapier	Donchoi Yuh
• Furball	Donchoi Yuh and a slightly nauseated Mark B. Michaels
• A Rescue! A Rescue!	None, but several could have been
• The Battle for Terra	All, including Kandrax and Shann
• Attack on Pharkad	All
• The Enemy Below	All
• The Siege of Longos III	All
• The Battle of Deliria	All
• Swamped	Mark B. Michaels and four others
• Day of the Megatank	All, and they're needed!
• Battle in The Rings	All, including Kandrax and Shann
• A Chance Meeting	Most of the crew
• Midway	Mark B. Michaels and 4 others, including Shann and Zell
• A New Type of Weapon, Part 1	All; Jalia Zell joins the crew
• A New Type of Weapon, Part 2	Donchoi Yuh and Mariko Lim
• Duel of Honor	Donchoi Yuh and Lars Kandrax
• A Rock Named Two	None, but several could have been
• Mount Suribachi	None, but several could have been
• Battle of the Solar Sea	All

CAPTAIN HENRY ANTARES



COLONEL LARS KANDRAX



Generate the allies (Drs. Graves and Logan, Commander Frozen, Captain Antares) and adversaries (Lars Kandrax, Gates Shann, Annar Quint, Magnar Chron), and the normal crew members and Imperial pilots. And don't forget Jalia Zell, Mark B. Michaels' love interest!

For adventures, follow the scenario outline for the most part. Of course, not everyone was in every scenario, so you can either 1) leave some scenarios out, 2) put everyone in 'em anyway, or 3) play only those people who were historically in said scenarios, and make up simultaneous events for other characters.

Additional adventures can include exploration of alien worlds, other intelligence-gathering and sabotage missions (the *Galant* concentrated on gathering information more than anything else, but Captain Antares didn't pass up good opportunities to put a hole in Imperial operations), and rescues of and assaults with other Terran crews.

Subplots need to include the battlefield rivalry of Yuh and Kandrax, and the "long-distance" love affair of Michaels and Zell, but there's plenty of room for other subplots! Making Michaels the focus of a girl vs. girl feud is a natural, particularly as he's still hung up on Jalia, but is too polite (or shy?) to set the girls straight. There's also the professional feud over mecha design between Dr. Graves and Dr. Logan, with them using Donchoi and Mark as their proxies (and guinea pigs).

Using This Book △

このほんがしょう

The first things you'll need are *Mekton Zeta*, the *Mekton Zeta Plus*, paper, writing utensils, and probably a calculator, because you're going to be doing a lot of calculating!

Most of the scenarios of this book are presented with the idea of taking out mecha designs of your own construction and chewing the living daylight out of each other until only one side has any mecha left (usually). You'll be making up the mecha in question, or at least modifying the operating parameters of the stock mecha presented in the background. For those desiring a quick game with a minimum of mess, fuss, and computational hassle, there are some scenarios which use stock mecha, which don't require any messing with — you just note down the stats and go!

Scenario Format

Each scenario has background, a section on special rules or circumstances, force options for all sides, the set-up, victory conditions, any special rules, and strategy tips, handy hints on how to deal with each scenario. Unless otherwise noted, the rules from the two *Mekton* books prevail — only special rules in each scenario modify the basic rules.

Using the Maps

In each battle, a hex-map (50 Hexes tall by 42 Hexes wide) is included to show the location of terrain elements. These hexes on the maps are far too small (0.2 inches wide) for even the smallest of counters, so they should not be used to actually fight the battles. Instead, terrain features should be transferred onto a larger map or set up on the floor if you enjoy a table-top miniatures game. In the back of this book is a blank hex map (10 Hexes tall by 7 Hexes wide) made up of 1.2-inch wide Hexes. You can xerox it and assemble a battle map big enough for your *Mekton Wars* on by taping 5 copies (tall) and 6 copies (wide) together. Admittedly not perfect, but if you don't have a vinyl mat nor want to assemble terrain, it'll do the trick.

You can also copy the small maps for each player to use as reference to mark down secret movement and hidden objects.

Technology Restrictions

Because of the background, some of the gadgets and other items in *Mekton Zeta Plus* aren't available — some may become available in chronologically later scenarios, while some options may never be available. These restrictions are detailed below.

The scenarios in this book are balanced for relatively normal technology. Stupid *Mekton Tricks* would seriously unbalance play, so they're banned (unless all players agree to use them equally, which will make for some, uh, *interesting* battles). Combiners are problematic; those wishing to use Combiners are hereby

RAPIER

cautioned that their uses haven't been factored into the scenarios, so they may work, or not. Curious players are certainly free to explore the possibilities.

• **WEAPONS:** Early in the war (before Delaying Action, scenario #16), Terrans are limited to projectile weapons, missiles, and normal melee weapons. In addition, mecha shields are limited to physical shields; no reactive or beam shields are allowed until after the Delaying Action scenario. Ships may use reactive shields (please note that these are reactive, ablative shields!) after the Battle for Terra.

• **THRUSTERS, DRIVES, AND POWER PLANTS:** No Terran units may use thrusters or "cool" power plants until at least a month after the invasion (scenario #11, The First Rapier). Until then, Terran aircraft may use "thrusters" to simulate jets; these must be built with hot, internal combustion power plants. Spaceships use "thrusters", complete with fuel requirements, and may not use lightspeed drives of any sort, until after the Battle for Terra.

Mecha Types and Modification

As a military campaign, working with limited supplies of new mecha and a long supply line from factory to front, the mecha and material available in these scenarios are limited. This is what happens when the factories that produce new mecha are several light years (and several months) away.

Because of this, there are only certain classes of mecha available to work with when designing mecha for the following scenarios. These mecha are noted below. Each unit described is the base, beginning unit — the "mark I" model, so to speak. As time progresses and technological advances are made, modifications are made either in the field or back in research labs, where the modifications technology is forwarded to the field.

When modifying mecha, strip the unit in question down to its base servos. These may be increased or decreased by one step apiece, but no more. If you do any more, it becomes a new sort of mecha, sort of like modifying a Sherman tank so much that it becomes identical to a Patton tank! Aside from that limitation, everything else about the standard mecha below may be changed, within the limits of the Construction Points.

Suggestions for such field modifications include liberal use of space and weight efficiency, improved flight MA, weapons changes (including some melee weapons), verniers (particularly for the Imperials), shields (for the Terrans), mechariders (no mechariders for the Imperials until after Scenario #7), and special equipment for the leaders — ECM and ECCM, cloaking devices, etc.

STANDARD MECHA

The four most important mecha in the Invasion Terra cosmos are listed in the sidebars of the pages 16-19. Following are the other mecha that figured prominently in the conflict.

Minuteman

This PDF Roadstriker served well as an infantry support and special tactical unit. Tougher than a man, yet smaller than a mecha its duty as a close-assault unit exposed the Minuteman to some of the bloodiest fighting of the war. Cost: 34.85 CP, Weight: 4.9 tons, MV -4, MA 5 walking, 8 on wheels. (This unit is at Roadstriker scale.)

• **SERVOS:** STR Torso, STR Head, 2 STR Arms & Legs, Medium armor on all servos.

• **SYSTEMS:** Main sensors in head, backup sensors in torso. Striker wheels in feet. Pilot in torso and legs. Hot power cell.

• **WEAPONS:** 2 Torso weapon mounts. Hand-held Autocannon with 3 clips. Shoulder-held double Mini-Missile launcher •2x linked Mini-missiles on right shoulder weapons mount •5x linked Armor Missiles on left shoulder mount. Hands (2)

Guardian

This mecha was the first humanoid machine used by the human forces. It served humanity well throughout the war, seeing many variations and upgrades. Cost: 67 CP, Weight: 32.5 tons, MV -3, Land MA 5.

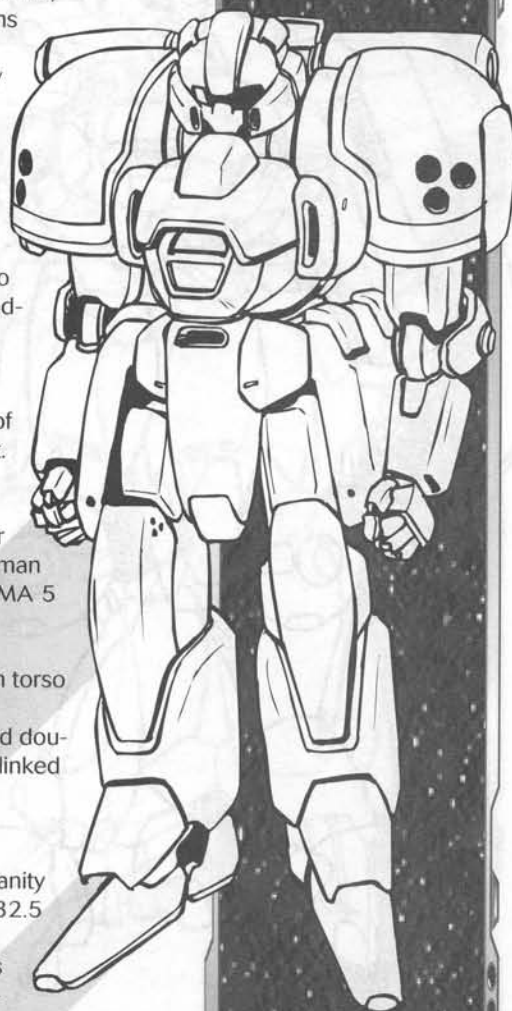
• **SERVOS:** MS Torso, MS Head, 2 STR Arms & Legs, Medium Striker Armor on all Servos

• **SYSTEMS:** Main sensors in head, backup sensors in torso. Cockpit, 2 spotlights, ejection pod, anti-theft codelock (all torso). Hot power plant.

• **WEAPONS:** Hands(2), Two-hand medium cannon with two extra clips in leg panels. Rocket Launcher in torso.

Talos Battletank

This armored giant formed the backbone of the Earth resistance after the fall of the PDF. It's toughness made it ideal for the harsh conditions involved in the resistance. Cost: 106.5 CP, Weight: 48 tons, MV -8*, Land MA 4, APT 4. *-3 of this MV may be compensated for with a successful Tactics roll; see *Mekton Zeta Plus*, page 49.



GUARDIAN

- **SERVOS:** MgH Torso, MgH Head (turret), MgH Treads, Mega-Heavy armor on all servos. (+2 SP for tank form)
- **SYSTEMS:** Main sensors in head turret, backup sensors in torso. Three-man cockpit, 2 spotlights on torso, antitheft codelock. Hot power plant.
- **WEAPONS:** Heavy Cannon with 10 shots in head—additional 40 shots in torso. 3 Heavy Missiles in torso. Roadstriker MG with 30 bursts in torso.

Rapier

The next evolutionary step from the Guardian, the Rapier was the machine that put human mecha technology on par with that of the Imperials. Cost: 170 CP, Weight: 58.85 tons, MV -5, Land MA 4, Flight MA 9.

- **SERVOS:** MW Torso, MW Pod, HS Head: Heavy Striker 2 HS Arms, 2 LH Legs, Light heavy armor on all servos.
- **SYSTEMS:** Main and backup sensors in head. Cockpit with ejection pod in torso. Liftwire, 2 spotlights, antitheft codelock, in torso. 2 Micromanipulators (1 in each arm) Normal power plant. Space environment protection.
- **WEAPONS:** 2 Hands. 2 linked Autocannons with 10 bursts apiece in torso. 2-hand Heavy Autocannon with 10 bursts and 2 reloads in hip panels. 4 Rocket Launchers (1 per arm, 1 per leg).
- **PROPULSION:** 12 spaces of thrusters in pod (5.4 MA), 4 spaces of thrusters in each leg (1.8 MA apiece). 1000 km fuel.

Gorgon

The shock trooper of the Imperial forces. A deadly and versatile fighting machine. Cost: 188.4 CPs, Weight: 75.35 tons. MV -7, Land MA 3, Flight MA 8.

- **SERVOS:** LH Torso, HS Head, 2 MW Arms, 2 MH Legs, Light Heavy armor on all servos
- **SYSTEMS:** Main and backup sensors in head. Cockpit with escape pod in torso. Liftwire, antitheft codelock, 2 spotlights, in torso. Normal power plant. Space environment protection.
- **WEAPONS:** 2 Hands, Autocannon with 10 bursts and 2 extra clips in shields, 2 Medium shields (1 per arm), 2-hand Giant Cannon, 2 linked Rocket Launchers in torso.
- **PROPULSION:** 9 spaces of thrusters in each leg (3 MA apiece), 5.5 spaces of thrusters in torso (2 MA), 1000 km of fuel.

Medusa

The machine exclusively flown by the female clone warriors of the Imperial forces. Cost: 247.64 CP, Weight: 49.5 tons. MV -3, Land MA 4, Flight MA 10.

- **SERVOS:** LH Torso, HS Head, 2 LH Arms & Legs, Light Heavy armor on all servos.
- **SYSTEMS:** Medium Striker sensors in head, backup sensors in torso. Cockpit with escape pod in torso. 2 searchlights, liftwire, antitheft codelock, in torso. Anti-sensor and anti-missile ECM -5 split between arms. +1 verniers, in torso. Normal power plant. Space and re-entry environment protection.
- **WEAPONS:** 2 Hands, 2 linked Beam Cannons on arm Weapons Mounts (1 per arm). 2 Energy Swords (1 per hand).
- **PROPULSION:** 8 spaces of thrusters per leg (4.5 MA). 2.4 spaces of thrusters in torso (1 MA). 1000 km of fuel.

Furie Mechafighter

This fast attack fighter saw most of its fighting in the initial *blitzkrieg* of the invasion of the Earth. Later most of the fighting would fall to mecha who could fulfill a more versatile role, but the swift Furie should never be discounted in a battle. Cost: 136.4 CP, Weight: 32.45 tons, MV -5, Flight MA 22.

- **SERVOS:** LH Torso 2 MW Wings, Medium-weight armor on all servos.
- **SYSTEMS:** Medium Striker sensors in torso. Cockpit with escape pod, antitheft codelock, in torso. Normal power plant. Space and re-entry environment protection.
- **WEAPONS:** Heavy Beam Cannon and Missile Pod in torso. 2 non-crosslinked Beam Sweepers (1 per wing).
- **PROPULSION:** All thrusters in torso. 1000 km of fuel.

GORGON

Harpy

A space variant of the Furie. Same as the Furie, except replace armament with 2 linked beam guns (1 per wing; Range 8, WA +1, 4K, 4 Kills), 6 Heavy Missiles in Torso. Space servos and environment protection. 99 CP, 32.45 tons, MV -5, Flight MA 22.

NEW MECHA

Should you wish to employ brand new mecha in the following scenarios, they should be single prototypes, usually assigned to heroes, commanders, or aces. There is a "shipping charge" for this, representing the difficulty of moving these new mecha to the front, supplying them, etc. Reduce the CP available for the mecha by 10%. For instance, in The Battle of the Solar Sea, Mariko's Esper Lens-equipped mecha could be an entirely new type; she normally has 300 CP to spend, so she'd have 270 CP instead.

PDF Command has decided that there's a Greek mythology theme to the war, for purposes of identification. Terran mecha may be so named (the Talos tank, after the bronze giant), or they may be named in a descriptive fashion (the Rapier, named for a weapon). Imperial mecha should distinctly be so named. These names are assigned by Terrans for identification; the Imperials merely number their mecha. For example, the Gorgon is Type MT493. Specific names are only given to special Imperial mecha, like Kandrax's Type MT493-*Xanithes*.

NAMING YOUR MECHA

USED NAMES: Assault unit Gorgon, Strike unit Medusa, Furie transatmospheric fighter, Harpy space fighter, Titan battleship, Scylla strike cruiser, Charybdis destroyer, Talos mechatank.

SUGGESTED NAMES: Cyclops, Tethys, Typhon, Hydra, Aegis, Cerberus, Charon.

Pilots

Pilot types for the scenarios come in five varieties: Green, Normal, Ace, Commander, and Hero. Each category has two set numbers of points that can be spent on statistics and skills. The first number is for statistics, and the second is for skills.

The relevant statistics are Intelligence, Reflexes, Movement Allowance, Empathy (minimum score of 4), Tech Ability, and Body Type. Relevant skills are all the Mecha Combat skills, Awareness/Notice, Basic Repair, Leadership, Tactics (for multiple-crew units like the Talos), Electronic Warfare, and Zero Gee.

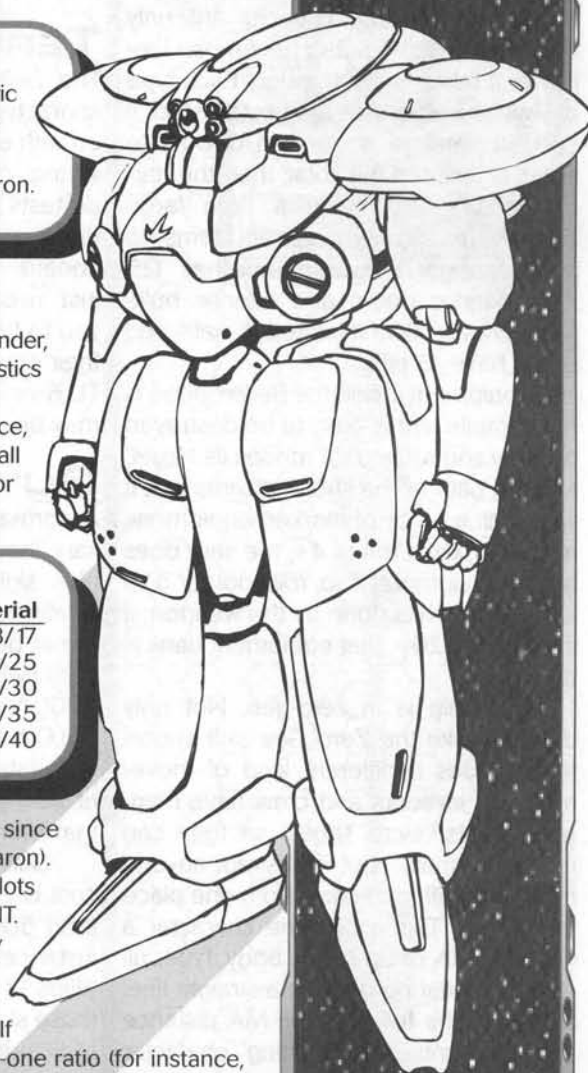
PILOT VALUES

Pilot	Terran	Imperial
Green	28/15	38/17
Normal	32/25	38/25
Ace	39/30	38/30
Commander	32/40	38/35
Hero	39/45	38/40

As you can see, Imperial pilots are usually quite good. They should be, since they're all clones of excellent physical specimens (imagine cloning the Red Baron). They're practically ready to fly once they emerge from the cloning tanks. Male pilots tend to have a Body Type of 8-9 and Reflexes of 10, sacrificing MA and INT. Female pilots tend to have Reflexes of 10 and Intelligence of 8+, lowering Body Type and MA. Gorgon pilots are male, Medusa pilots are female, and Furie pilots are mixed.

Terran pilots can run the entire range at will, since they're not clones. If desired, they can take points from one set and add to the other, using a two-for-one ratio (for instance, if you want a Normal pilot to have another two points for buying statistics, subtract four points from the pool for buying skills).

This concludes the introduction section. Following are 31 battle scenarios, chronicling the Imperial Invasion of Terra and the subsequent Terran-Imperial War. You are ready.



MEDUSA

01: THE BELLEROPHON INCIDENT

ベレロフオンのじけん

The Empire wasted no time when a destroyer found the probeship *Bellerophon*. Its engines were crippled, its lack of offensive capabilities were verified, and a boarding party was dispatched to capture as much information as possible.

THE MAP

The starship *Bellerophon* is the map. Its armor and damage capacity are only important when figuring how much firepower it takes to get through. Each type of wall or barrier has a hit total listed; if enough damage is done in one hit to equal or exceed this total, then the barrier is breached with a hole large enough to allow man-sized items to pass through. The outer hull has 125 hits, exterior doors and interior bulkheads have 100 hits, interior walls and doors have 15 hits.

Equipment inside the *Bellerophon* is quite fragile and is likely to be destroyed by stray shots. If a shot misses its target, and the path of the shot indicates that it would hit a piece of marked equipment, roll 1d10. On a roll of 4+, the shot does hit the equipment! If so, roll another d10 and add the hits done by the weapon; if the result is 20+, that equipment bank is destroyed.

The ship is in zero-gee. Not only does it make the Zero Gee skill important, it adds a different kind of movement. All invaders and crew have magnetic boots/velcro shoes, so they can move "normally." But if desired, anyone may "push off" and coast from one place to another. This allows the character a coasting MA of up to his Body Type; all coasting must be done in a straight line, and goes the full coasting MA distance per turn until the coasting character stops (must be adjacent to a wall or have some sort of maneuvering power like a maneuver rod or flight MA, and requires a Zero Gee roll, Difficulty 15. Failure means the character tumbles in the hex until he succeeds at that roll!). While

coasting, characters may take actions normally and still move (they're not actually working to move). The acts of pushing off and stopping are normal 1/2 movement actions. For example, Josie pushes off down the axial corridor. Her Body Type is 6, so she can coast at up to MA 6 (the exact amount is determined when she pushes off). That takes 1 action; she can now use another action while moving 6 hexes down the corridor. In future turns, she can use her actions normally while continuing to float.

TERRAN FORCES

The *Bellerophon* has a crew of nine characters. They are, of course, provided with equipment - space suits, maneuvering rods, tools, weapons. Despite protests from more peaceful parties, the doctrine of providing arms and armor aboard Terran ships was maintained, just in case. The Terrans have 80,000 yen to buy the nine crew members and their equipment. All equipment must be TL 6 or below, and no heavy weapons may be purchased.

BUYING PEOPLE

A normal person consists of the necessary stats of INT, REF, MA, and BODY plus skills. The base person costs 1 CP/5000 yen, has no skills, and all stats are at base 5. **EDITORIAL NOTE: THIS ASSUMES 1CP = 5000 YEN. IF 1 CP = 1000 YEN, THEN DIVIDE ALL COSTS BELOW BY 5.**

Statistics can be improved at a cost of 500 yen per additional statistic, to a maximum of 10.

Skills are bought from level 0. The cost is 250 yen per point up to level 3, then 500 yen per point thereafter. For instance, a person with Handguns 5 and Rifles 3 would spend 2500 yen for those skills (750 yen for the first 3 points of Handguns, 1000 yen for the next 2, and 750 yen for the Rifles skill).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials know that this ship is too small for mecha, even striker-class suits, so they're using personal armors, made

for boarding actions. These are basically, 1/10 scale replicas of the Gorgon without the rocket launchers, since there's not enough space in the torso. The destroyer has sent over ten of them with normal pilots in this first wave, figuring that they should be enough.

When designing the personal armors, use the basic servo sizes of the Gorgon. Armor may be Striker-scale, meaning each 1/1 SP becomes 5 hits, not 2.5 hits (it's a good idea). Weapons may be varied; since capture is more important than killing, non-lethal weapons such as shock weapons (tasers, projectile guns firing shock rounds) and entanglers are recommended.

SCALED SHOCK WEAPONS

Large-scale shock weapons do more than just sting. 1/1 scale weapons actually do their Kills of damage to the target (ouch!) as well as shock damage. 1/5 scale weapons do 1/2 their Hits as well as shock damage. Armor does protect against this.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The victory levels depend on how many members of the *Bellerophon's* crew and how much of the ship's equipment are captured intact:

MAJOR IMPERIAL VICTORY: 12+ crew/equipment banks captured.

MODERATE IMPERIAL VICTORY: 10-11 crew/banks captured.

MINOR IMPERIAL VICTORY: 8-9 crew/banks captured.

DRAW: 7 crew/banks captured.

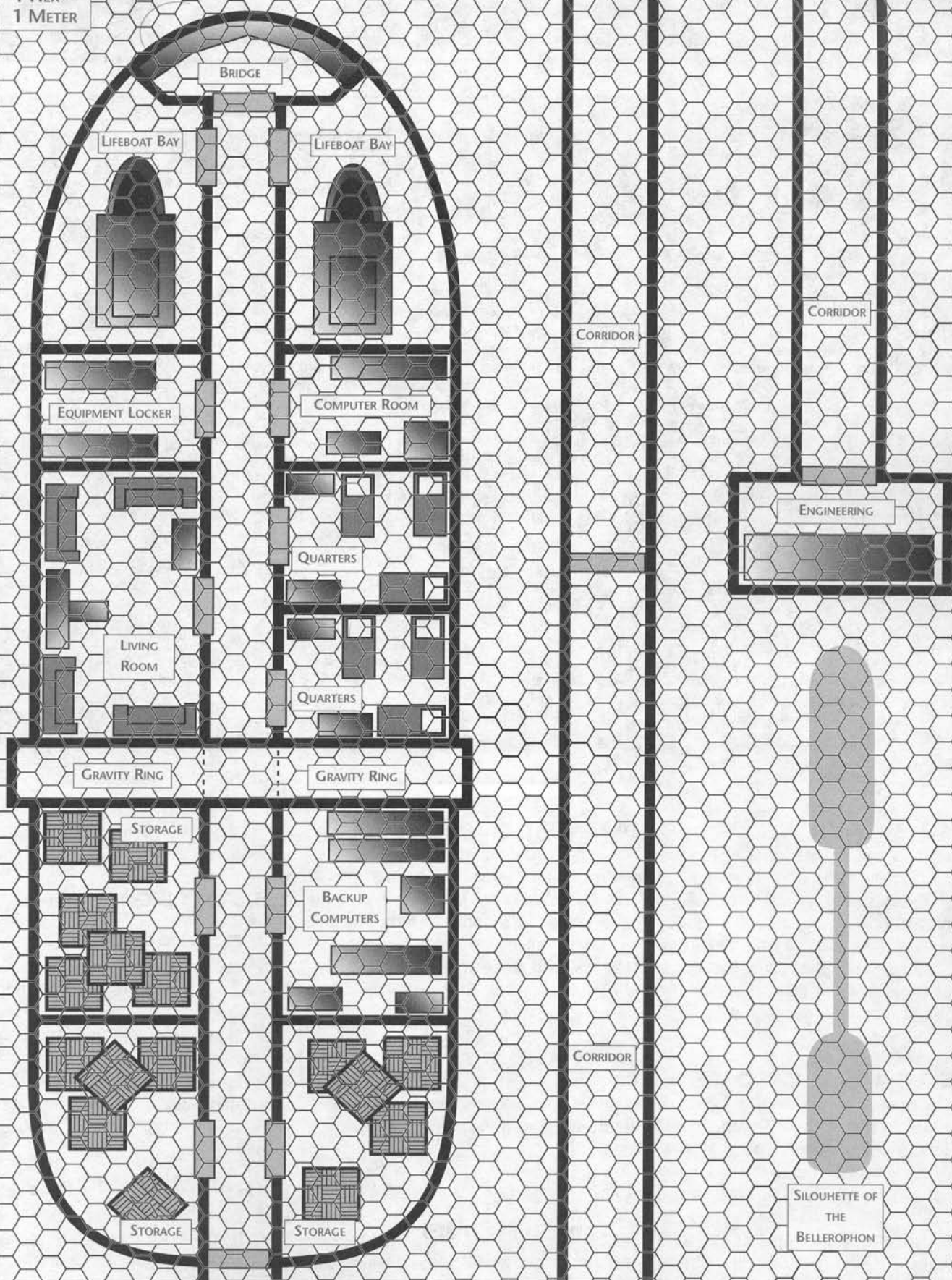
MINOR TERRAN VICTORY: 5-6 crew/banks captured.

MODERATE TERRAN VICTORY: 3-4 crew/banks captured.

MAJOR TERRAN VICTORY: 2 or fewer crew/banks captured.

The Terrans may not suicide crew members in order to deny the Imperials their victory conditions! They may, however, destroy their equipment banks.

1 HEX =
1 METER



2: DEFEND THE STARGATE

スターゲイトおまもる

From the log of the cruiser Sentinel, Captain Henry Antares commanding:

June 1, 2105. Mu Cassiopei, a star system 25 light years from the Sol system. A stunted yellow sun still dwarfing a small red one, locked in a dance around a common center. No fewer than two habitable worlds, Mu and Atlantis, circling the dancing duo. An essential resource for expanding humanity.

Due to gravitational stresses, stargates have to be operated far beyond planetary areas. In order to operate, Mu Cassiopei's stargate, nick named the Crown, orbits the primaries at 1.6 AU, beyond the orbits of the planets and before the orbits of the system's giants. It's a lonely orbit; Mu wasn't settled until 2089, and Atlantis in 2100, so there aren't too many ships in through the Crown. The Crown's gatekeepers are happy for our company.

The Sentinel has been ordered to stand watch over the Crown, to protect against the event of enemy attack. The stargate network is essential to humanity; without it, we lose communication with all of our colonies — we lose the stars themselves. According to information from previous encounters, the enemy has no need of such things. Their

ships accelerate to a speed apparently greater than light itself, a neat trick that we'd like to get our hands on, according to high command.

Because of this ability, Mu and Atlantis are beyond the Sentinel's cruising range. We've only got enough fuel for high-speed maneuvers within a patrol radius of the Crown. It would take months to approach Atlantis, the closest world, half an AU away. And there are no other ships available, so in the meantime, the worlds must depend on their small starfighter squadrons for defense.

Enemy activity is getting critical. We've lost ships to them; that would be bad enough, but what makes me more apprehensive are the incidents where they refused to fight. They've been snooping around, sighted at colony locations ever closer to the Sol system. They're gathering information. Uncomfortable questions pop up: Why? For what purpose?

I've a feeling that we're not going to like the answers.

June 19, 2105, 2013 hours. The Crown's gravimetric sensors have picked up a sizable gravity wave passing through the system. That seems to be one of the only ways to detect enemy ships coming in faster than light. The only

drawback is that by the time we detect the wave, enemy arrival is imminent. The Sentinel is at general quarters.

June 19, 2105, 2015.28 hours. An enemy ship has appeared at 584 kilometers distant, velocity 1.5 km/sec and decelerating. I do wish we had their drive technology; it looked like he just popped in from a fantastic velocity, braking on the proverbial dime.

Same date, 2018 hours. The enemy has finished decelerating, content to maintain a 100 m/sec velocity. His vector is pointed straight at the Crown, making his intentions painfully clear. We've got some information on him: roughly the same mass and volume as the Sentinel, capabilities largely unknown. Range is 395 kilometers and closing. He's putting out a lot of EW gunk, making it hard to get a fix. We're keeping station, engines fully online, waiting.

Same date, 2031 hours. The enemy has opened fire at 317 km range. Sensors report that he's deployed some sort of fighters, size and capability indeterminate. I'm holding fire; at this range we could hit him, but I want to be sure. Redying fighter deployment.

Same date, 2033 hours. We've been hit; I can't delay any longer. Launching fighters and moving to intercept.

THE MAP

The map is empty space, save for the hexes occupied by the Crown. The Crown extends in a 100 m/2 hex radius; no unit can go at Level 1 or 2 above or below the Crown without hitting it. A unit can pass through the Crown's center hex at Level 0 (it is hollow). The Crown has no armor, and can sustain 1600 Kills of damage.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get the *Sentinel*, a ship built on a Striker hull with a B-grade crew. The *Sentinel* must have 1 space allocated to starfighters. These fighters have normal pilots and are built at no more than 1000 CP for ten of them. They are limited to hot power plants, a total speed of 24 MA, and 500 km of fuel (that's 5% of the fighter's mass).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get a Charybdis-class destroyer (also built on a Striker hull) with a B-grade crew. The destroyer must have 1 space allocated to a mecha bay and gets a mix of standard Harpy, Medusa, and Furie mecha and fighters with normal pilots (the Imperial player chooses the mix).

SET-UP

The Terran ship sets up within 20 hexes of the Crown. The Imperial ship then enters at any hex along the designated map edge.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Imperials win if they destroy the Crown. The Terrans win if they prevent

the Imperials from destroying the Crown.

STRATEGY TIPS

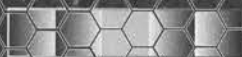
Terran Strategy

You have a choice of arming your fighters with big missiles and strafing the destroyer, or of arming your fighters with dogfighting missiles and tackling the enemy fighters while your ship dukes it out with the destroyer. No matter what, you must stop the destroyer, because it's got the firepower to destroy the Crown.

Imperial Strategy

Use your mecha as a shield, screening the destroyer's closing pass at the Crown. The stargate is the target; keep that objective in mind.

1 Hex = 50m



THE CROWN
WIDTH = 8 HEXES,
HOLLOW = 6 HEXES.

3: PEARL HARBOR REVISITED

パール・ハーバーにきたく

Mark Benjamin Michaels admired his image in the mirror, and his image admired him right back. After months of training, after weeks of drill and exercises, he was finally getting leave time. For two weeks he'd see no more uniforms than those worn by the police, postal workers, and civilians in service industries. No sergeants, no officers, no nosy, noisy fellow soldiers, just normal people! The only military uniform in town would be his.

He had to admit, it was a snazzy uniform: dark blue with brown shoulder pads and gold trim. Doubtlessly, Sharon would love it—she always did have a soft spot for men in uniform. And he would be the one wearing it, the only person in his class who'd had the guts to opt for military service instead of choosing further schooling, or going on to more specialized technical training.

It hadn't been easy. The Planetary Defense Forces were choosy about whom they let in; there had been tests,

both physical and mental, and then there had been the hazing process of Basic Training. No longer just a way of toughening up young volunteers, the drill instructors explained, now Basic Training was a way of weeding out those who didn't have the strength or the guts to make it in the PDF.

Well, Mark B. Michaels had made it. Furthermore, he'd graduated to the new elite of the PDF, the Guardian units. The new humanoid war machines, an advanced development of the old Minuteman powered armors, were the latest weapons in the PDF arsenal. Armored to withstand anything less than the 10cm mass drivers mounted on the Talos tank, armed with a 4.5cm mass driver and missile pods, the Guardian represented the future of human military technology. There were even plans to mount turbofans on the shoulders and make it airborne (something the fighter-jocks were opposing with all their might). Boy, wait until he could tell the guys

about it! And he had the pilot's insignia and pictures of himself sitting in the cockpit to prove it.

Sharon's dad wouldn't approve, he knew. He didn't hold with the idea of military forces other than police forces. Like many other citizens, he felt that mankind had moved past the need for war. With the colonies there was ample relief from population pressure.

Mark couldn't tell him what he'd been told; he'd been sworn to secrecy at the same time. There were ominous reports from Terra's colonies, reports of mysterious ships of alien origin raiding distant outposts, leaving only devastation. Terra's government was worried, for the reports had been coming in ever closer to the Sol system. The thought of it worried Mark, too.

But not right now. Within the hour he'd be on the train headed for New York, to see his friends, his family, and Sharon.

Then the scramble alarm went off.

THE MAP

When the Imperial invasion came off, Mark B. Michaels and his small unit of Guardians were stationed in Denver. They're trying to defend a telecommunications routing center (part of the phone service) from attack. The center is smack in the middle of downtown, so the terrain is urban. The buildings are rated in multi-story Hex Levels: Each Hex Level is 50 meters (12 stories) tall and has an effective 6 Kills of damage capacity—in other words, a two-level building is 100 meters high and can absorb 12 Kills before collapsing.

Building damage capacity is handled like Kills; if the damage done to a building in one attack equals or exceeds the damage capacity, the building collapses—otherwise, the damage capacity simply drops by the appropriate amount. However, any attack of more than 6 Kills will deliver half its damage to the building, while the other half goes *through* the building. If a unit is hiding behind a building and the damage exceeds the damage capacity, the excess goes on through to hit the once-hidden unit. Those delib-

erately aiming at buildings automatically hit them.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans have 3 standard Guardian mecha and one standard Talos tank. All of these have average crewmembers.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials have three standard Medusas and a standard Furie starfighter. All have average Imperial pilots, except that one of the Medusas has an Imperial command pilot.

SET-UP

The Terrans set up first anywhere on the map. The Imperial forces enter from any and all map edges after examining the Terran set-up.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans win a major victory if they protect the communications center from being destroyed while destroying all of the Imperial units. They win a minor vic-

tory for destroying all but one of the Imperial units, even if the remaining Imperial destroys all of the Terran units.

The Empire wins by destroying the comm center and at least 2 Terran units.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

The Guardians have faster reactions but slower pilots. Forget selecting Mecha Melee as a skill and concentrate on Mecha Fighting instead—the Guardian doesn't have any melee weapons, remember? When the Imperials attack, try to pair up two of the Guardians and the other Guardian with the Talos. Try to protect the Talos from melee attacks; it's your deadliest unit, and is vulnerable to being hacked to bits by energy swords.

Imperial Strategy

The Guardians aren't tough; a good double e-sword hit should take them apart. The Talos is a harder target; keep the Furie away from its missiles and move in with a Medusa or two to destroy it with energy swords.

1 Hex = 50M

THE COMM
CENTER

4: GUDERIAN'S REVENGE

グデリアンのふくしゅう

The eastern sky paled from midnight blue to a lighter shade, the stars fading. Animals stirred; some moved toward wakefulness while others noted the coming day and moved toward their shelters to sleep.

Men watched the coming dawn as well. Some of them gave it little note, bending to technical tasks, tending to their metal warbeasts. One pair of men devoted their attention to the sunrise and to the towers silhouetted by the solar orb. One of them raised his binoculars to scan the horizon. "No patrols so far. Are they really that complacent?"

"No patrols, Lieutenant?" the other one asked. "That means we've got a better chance of sneaking up on 'em."

The lieutenant chuckled nastily, a grating sound. "Don't count on it, Michaels. We're in the desert, remember? Tanks on the move kick up a lot of dust. They'll see us, all right. I'm just worried about the possibility of minefields, or at least remote sensors."

"Maybe we'll kick their butts right out of the port," Michaels said hopefully. His commander chuckled again.

"Don't count on it. The invaders are in there pretty tight. Intel says they're dug in and they're using the port for their own ships. They've got firepower on top of firepower. We don't have enough to deal with that, so we're just going to annoy them. With any luck, the ruckus we make will cause them to look away from the other side. Once our commandos get in there, we'll see some real fireworks."

Michaels bit his lip reflectively. "Are you sure we're gonna make it, sir? I mean, these guys have flying mecha, lightyears ahead of anything we've got, to hear tell. Laser blasters and everything. Do we have a chance against that?"

"Plenty of chance, Michaels," the officer smiled. "The enemy is vulnerable. A Talos is more than a match for one of their mecha. It's nothing but a rolling pillbox, plated over with as much armor as we can load onto it. It's got a

low silhouette and as much firepower as it can carry.

"The problem with one of those man-shaped machines is that you have to spread the armor coverage. A Guardian's armor weighs almost as much as a Talos' and doesn't give a third the protection. We've figured that the enemy mecha have about twice the armor of a Guardian, and since their materials tech doesn't seem to be that much better than ours, that means they're hauling around twice the mass for two-thirds our armor. And they've built their weapons to match their armor, not ours." He ran his fingers across his sprouting beard. "I wonder if the enemy ever used tanks. Probably they did, and just forgot 'em when they went into space. Well, we're going to give them an refresher course in just what the term 'armored fighting vehicle' means." He turned back to the rest of his command. "Mount up, people! It's time to move out!"

THE MAP

The Talos tanks are making a feint at the occupied Arizona spaceport, so the combat takes place in the middle of the desert, making the terrain a mixture of low hills and rocky gullies covered with sparse scrub. Elevation levels are marked on the map; when two elevation levels coexist in the same hex, this indicates a near-vertical slope. Humanoid mecha may climb this at 1/2 speed; mechatanks cannot go into these hexes at all. (Of course, mecha with thrusters may just fly over the hill altogether.) Rough terrain is also marked; this stuff slows normal mecha ground movement, but doesn't bother tracked mechatanks.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get three standard Talos tanks. They have normal crews and one commander character. If desired, the Terran player may make minor modifications to armaments, such as switching out ammunition for different types — the Talos' main gun will accept HE, AP, scattershot, and Blast Radius 1 ammunition — or

changing the missiles. Main gun ammo and missile changes may not add more than 10 CP to each tank, and new missiles must not take up any more than 9 spaces in total, because that's all the space the turret has allocated to missile armament.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get three Gorgon mecha, two with normal Imperial pilots and one with an Imperial commander, to respond to this attack. The commander's Gorgon may be modified up to 200 CP, and all Gorgons may swap their weaponry around any way they want, as long as they do not exceed the cost, spaces, and mass of the normal Gorgon weapon package — that is, 8 spaces in the Torso (all other weapons are hand-held), 12 tons total mass, and 31 CP.

SET-UP

The Terran player moves his Talos tanks onto the field first from any one map edge. The Imperial player moves his Gorgons in second from the opposite map edge.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

This is a simple slug fest, with each side trying to destroy each other. The tanks can't retreat, because if they do the Gorgons will pursue. The Gorgons can't fail, because letting the tanks grind into the port periphery will give them the opportunity to do a lot of damage. The last side with a unit surviving wins.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran strategy

Gang up on one Gorgon at a time until it's dead, then switch to the next target. Try to wipe out the commander first. Stay out of melee range.

Imperial Strategy

Talos tanks are tough nuts; you'll have to team up to kill just one. Try to arm your mecha with big-kill weapons (a 20-kill missile is only 2 spaces and one ton) and energy melee weapons.

ROUGH TERRAIN

1 HEX = 50M

HILL (2 HEX
LEVELS)

HILL (3 HEX
LEVELS)

HILL (5 HEX
LEVELS)

ROUGH TERRAIN

HILL (4 HEX
LEVELS)

ROUGH TERRAIN

5: ATTACK OF THE LILLIPUTIANS or UNFAIR ADVANTAGE

リリピューションのこうげき — ふこへいなわり

Ensign Mark Benjamin Michaels, formerly a PDF Guardian pilot, stared into the darkness, listening to the faint rumbling of distant thrusters.

He'd never been on a commando raid before. He'd hoped never to have to do this sort of thing when he joined the PDF — the anxious moments of sneaking through the Imperial perimeter defenses, snorting dirt and asphalt dust as he low-

crawled with a backpack full of explosives. The spike of adrenaline when the first gun went off; the sudden knowledge that they'd been found. The sight of the Imperial soldier he'd surprised, and the awful memory of freezing up — and then the impression of the alien's death-mask when the Sarge put five bullets in the spaceman's torso. No, he'd joined up to be a pilot, not a close-range killer. But he had to fight back,

and without his Guardian (a twisted piece of pierced, radioactive wreckage), this was the only way he could.

The sound of a king-sized dumpster lid being slammed shut rang through the deserted streets. It sounded again, and again, in timed sequence. The tell-tale noise of a walking Gorgon. Hardly daring to move, he cautiously slid the missile off his back, readying it.

THE MAP

Buildings are rated in single-story Hex Levels: Each story is 5 meters tall and has an effective 3 Kills of damage capacity—in other words, a two-story building is 10 meters high and can absorb 6 Kills before collapsing. Note that if anyone is inside who can't fly or jump to safety (an Athletics test of Difficulty 15; 20 if on the roof), then he's stuck! and must ride the wreck down, which does 1D10 x 5 hits to him. If the damage is 25+ hits, the victim is buried in the rubble and must pass a Mecha Pilot (or Strength Feat, if not piloting mecha) test of Difficulty 20 to dig his way out. See page 26 for handling building damage.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans have 35,000¥ to buy and equip a force of ten commandos (that's 70 CP). They must carry everything they buy (see encumbrance rules, page 24 of *Mekton Zeta*. Also see rules on bulk, below.)

BUYING PEOPLE

A normal person consists of the necessary stats of INT, REF, MA, and BODY plus skills. The base person costs 1 CP/5000 yen, has no skills, and all stats are at base 5.

Stats can be improved at a cost of 500 yen per additional point, to a maximum of 10.

Skills are bought from level 0. The cost is 250 yen per point up to level 3, then 500 yen per point thereafter. For instance, a person with Handguns 5 and Rifles 3 would spend 2500 yen for those skills (750 yen for the first 3 points of Handguns, 1000 yen for the next 2, and 750 yen for the Rifles skill).

The correct skill for using missiles, grenade launchers, recoilless rifles, etc., is Expert: Heavy Weapons.

BUYING EQUIPMENT

The commandos can buy any non-energy weapons and TL 6 or lower equipment off of the equipment lists, except for out-of-scale equipment like mines and missiles. These

must be bought using the scaling rules out of *Mekton Zeta Plus*, counting 1 CP as 5,000¥.

To reiterate the "downsizing" scaling rules for taking 1/1 scale and scaling to 1/10 (human) scale: Each 1/1 space equals 10 spaces in 1/10 scale. Each 1/1 ton equals 1000 kg in 1/10 scale. A human can handle a number of 1/10 scale spaces equal to his Body Type per arm (treat a human's Body Type score as "arm spaces" for this purpose). A human can carry up to four times that bulk (4x Body Type in 1/10 scale spaces) in special rigs — web gear, backpacks, and so on — in addition to what he carries in his hands.

To reduce the bulk (spaces) of an item costs 0.5 CP per 1/1 scale space, or 250 yen per 1/10 scale space. Reducing the mass costs 2 CP per ton, or 10 yen per kilogram.

For example, the anti-mek missile, as presented on page 41 of *Mekton Zeta*, does 8 Kills of damage, has a range of 6 mecha hexes, has a Weapon Accuracy of +2, is single-shot, and weighs 10 kg. The normal Range 7.5, +2 WA, 8K missile is 1.13 spaces (11.3 spaces in 1/10 scale), 5,650 yen, 267 kg. For a Body 5 trooper to handle it, it needs to lose .2 spaces, making it 9 spaces to someone in 1/10 scale, costing 500 yen. In order to come down to 10 kg, it needs to lose 257 kg, costing 2,570 yen. The total cost is 8,720 yen — not even 2 CP worth.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials have three standard Gorgons with normal pilots.

SET-UP

The Terrans have taken refuge in the city blocks. To give the Imperials a chance, Terran positions are known to the Imperial pilots.

The Imperials enter from the map edge of their choice after the Terrans have set up.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Terra wins if they destroy the Gorgons — one Gorgon destroyed is a minor victory, two is a

major victory, and all three is a spectacular victory. If the Terrans lose less than half their commandos, it's a complete victory.

The Empire wins if they wipe out the tiny pests while keeping the Gorgons in one piece. You must wipe out all the Terran commandos to win—one surviving Gorgon is a minor victory, two is a major victory, and three is a spectacular victory.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

Half the battle is won in your equipment. Anti-mecha stuff is a must. Anti-mecha bombs (range 0 missiles, planted in an Action) are good and cheap, as are Anti-Mek missiles. Note that weapons built on a different Scale get the to-hit modifiers of *that scale*; that is, a man using a 1x scale missile doesn't get the +6 to hit for firing at a 1x scale mecha.

Keep your troops moving. Don't hide in buildings, because they can be destroyed. Instead, use buildings for cover. If you can, deal with the Gorgons one at a time.

Imperial Strategy

Now you know how one of those cartoon cats feels when faced by smart-aleck mice.

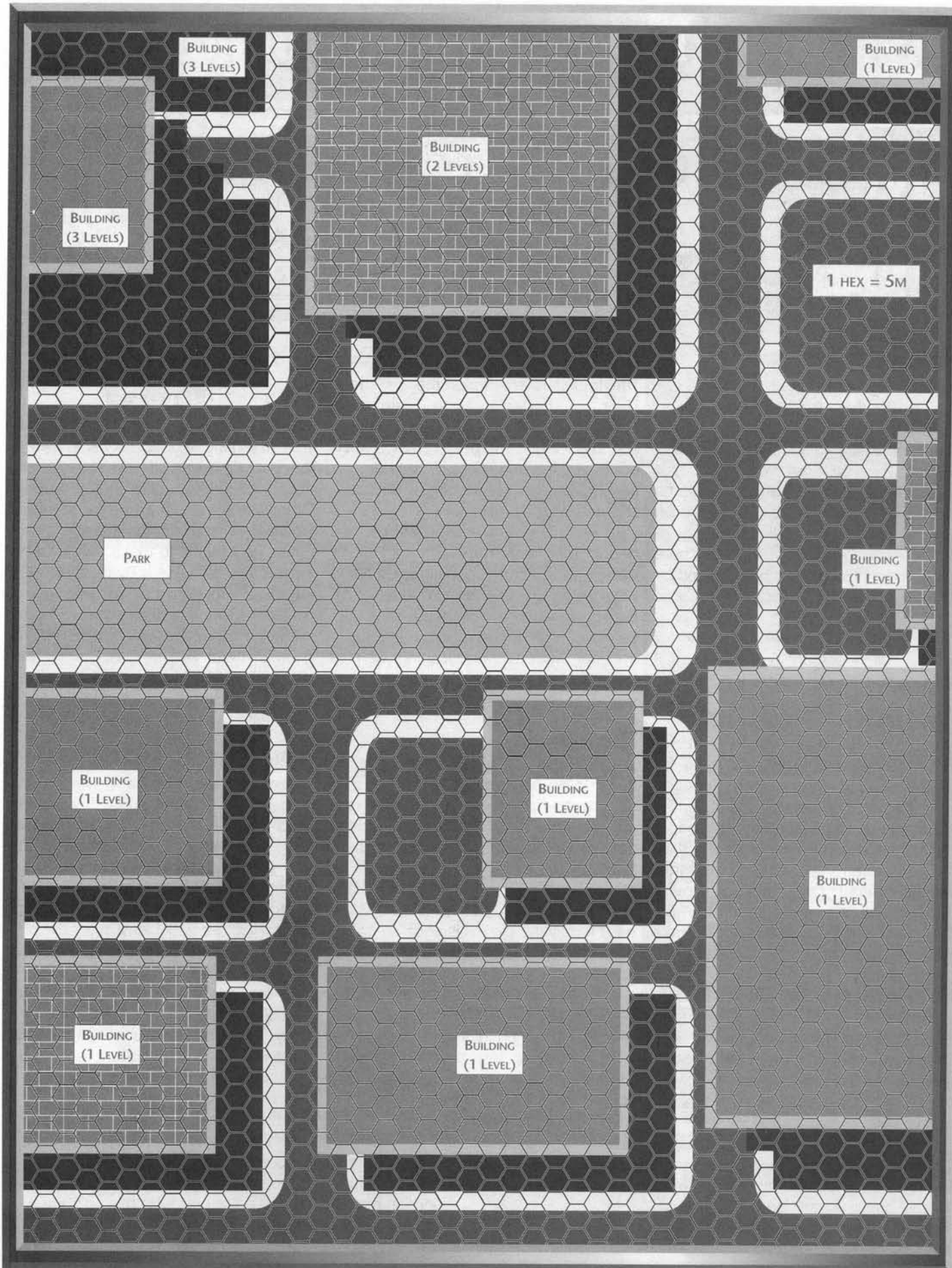
What to do? First, if any of the rats goes into a building, frag it! A single shot from an autocannon blows a building into splinters, with any luck squashing the man inside.

Other than that, stay in a group and try to blast them. If your mecha operate alone, they're begging to be lynched. And you can use the buildings for cover, too!

SCENARIO

OPTIONS

Play this one again, but switch sides—historically, the Gorgons don't have much chance. So change history: Give the Imperials some field modifications. The Gorgon has two Head Spaces left, and 5 in each arm! Give 'em +10 CP of anti-personnel weapons (not to exceed 4 tons) apiece.



BUILDING
(3 LEVELS)

BUILDING
(1 LEVEL)

BUILDING
(3 LEVELS)

BUILDING
(2 LEVELS)

1 HEX = 5M

PARK

BUILDING
(1 LEVEL)

BUILDING
(1 LEVEL)

BUILDING
(1 LEVEL)

BUILDING
(1 LEVEL)

BUILDING
(1 LEVEL)

BUILDING
(1 LEVEL)

6: IN DEFENSE OF THE DEPOT

デポをまもる

Mark crouched behind a half-destroyed building wall, waiting for the Gorgons to touch down. Despite the Minuteman suit he wore, he had a strange feeling of déjà vu. This was becoming an all-too-common situation.

But they weren't done yet. Somehow the enemy had managed to

find out about the arms depot in the old industrial cellar; Intelligence suspected betrayal by a sympathizer. They had to move the arms and supplies from it before the enemy arrived to destroy it. The lower half of a Medusa torso, sprawled across the rubble of a wrecked building, gave mute testimony to the enemy's first attempt.

The Gorgons were coming; his sensors told him that. According to command, there were supposed to be other Terran units on the way as well. When they'd arrive was a matter of speculation. He shrugged, and the massive autocannon shifted in front of him. The rest of the defenders would have to keep the Gorgons busy until help arrived.

THE MAP

The buildings in the map are 3 Kills per level, as per the rules about buildings on page 22. Rubble piles provide 1-Kill cover for infantry and roadstrikers; this cover cannot be destroyed. The depot itself is armored to SP 5 and takes a total of 25 Kills of damage to destroy, and it must be hit with the indirect fire procedure (*Mekton Zeta*, page 97). Please note that the depot's armor is not lowered by damage! Its SP is too thick for that, and always remains at SP 5. Rubble piles count as rough terrain. As usual, there's no die roll necessary to hit a normal building, since it can't duck ...

TERRAN FORCES

The Terran defenders get 200 CP for the defenders. This can be used for buying ground troops (see Scenario #5, page 26), stock Minuteman Roadstrikers, stock Guardian mecha, or stock Talos mechatanks. No more than one unit of any one type of defender can be bought! One "unit" of ground troops is ten men. Minuteman, Guardian, and Talos crews are normal pilots.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials have four standard Gorgon mecha, piloted by a commander and three normal Imperial pilots. Should it be desired, the Imperial player can swap one Gorgon for a Medusa fighter with a normal pilot.

SET-UP

The Terrans set up anywhere on the map. At least one unit must be set up within 3 hexes of the depot. The Imperials then enter from any and all map edges.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Imperials are under the gun here. Their entire mission is to destroy the depot, pumping in 25 Kills of damage and reducing it to rubble. This is their basic victory condition; if they fail to accomplish this the Terrans win a decisive and humiliating victory.

Once the Imperials destroy the depot, they can retreat. Their losses make up the victory conditions. Escaping with one mecha is a Terran minor victory. Escaping with two mecha is a tie. Escaping with three mecha is a minor Imperial victory, and escaping with all four mecha is a major-league Imperial victory and cause for celebration!

TERRAN REINFORCEMENTS

Of course, it's not that easy for the Imperials. No mere few defenders here — no, the Terrans send everything they have in the area rushing to the depot. Terran reinforcements arrive sporadically; keep track of the turns, and roll 1D10 before each turn. If the die roll is equal to or less than the number of turns so far, then the Terrans get mobile reinforcements. If the game goes to 10 turns, then the Terrans automatically get a reinforcement every turn! Roll 1D10 on the chart below to see what appears. Terran reinforcements enter randomly, too; roll 1D10 for each reinforcing unit to see what section of the map edge it has to enter on.

D10	Reinforcement Table
1-5	Minuteman Roadstriker
6-8	Guardian mecha
9-10	Talos mechatank

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

Your job here is to hold out in time for your mounting reinforcements to swamp the poor Imperials. If you have ground troops, put them in or around the depot. Otherwise set up your mecha defenders where they can cover the depot and each other. Their job is to make things so hot for the Imperials that they have to waste time trying to blow up the defenders — which the hope will give the reinforcements time to make the scene. If you can, gang up your fire on one Gorgon at a time; blow them up piecemeal. Every Gorgon destroyed is another coffin nail in the Imperial player's victory conditions.

Imperial Strategy

There are two possibilities here. The first plan involves roaring in at high speed, ignoring the petty defenders, and fragging the depot with massed autocannon fire. With all four Gorgons this operation should take three turns: one turn in, one turn of doing 8 Kills of damage per Gorgon, and one turn to retreat. At least, that's the plan. The deadly defenders lurking in ambush may have something to say about it.

Plan #2 involves heading at the defenders first, in hopes of popping them early. That way, if there are no fast reinforcements, you'll be able to mop up the defenders and blow up the depot.

There's a third plan, but it involves splitting up your forces and attacking both the defenders and the depot simultaneously. Splitting your forces in the face of the enemy is dangerous; in the face of an enemy who has puissant reinforcements entering at random locations is folly.

1 Hex = 50M

THESE BUILDINGS
ARE 2 LEVELS

THESE BUILDINGS
ARE 1 LEVEL

THESE
BUILDINGS
ARE 1
LEVEL

THESE
BUILDINGS
ARE 2
LEVELS

THE DEPOT

A DEAD
MEDUSA

7: SHOOTOUT AT DEAD MAN'S GULCH

デッド・マンズ・ガルチのはっぼう

Sir!" the sensor operator shouted. "Contact at eleven degrees, range 4500, speed 95, altitude 340! Multiple contacts; three, perhaps more!"

The commanding officer's reply was unprintable. When he finished, he started bawling orders. "All right, everybody, move it! We've been rumbled; evacuation plan Beta!" The tank crews scrambled to man their hover-tanks; technicians, medics, and other personnel hurried to gather their meager supplies and belongings into the trucks nearby.

In orbit, Sector General Loskeed

watched a repeater screen showing the positions of the Imperial units closing on the suspected Terran base. He nodded in satisfaction; the Terrans had gotten too overconfident in their ability to hide at night. From the onset of the invasion Imperial ships had held the high frontier; their armament and sensors being used to find and destroy enemy forces. The Terrans had discovered that swiftly, and had adapted in a fashion that was, he had to admit, fairly ingenious. They took to traveling at night when they couldn't travel under cover. They preferred striking when the atmosphere

obscured vision, which was often — what a turbulent atmosphere this planet had, for such a habitable world! Then some Terran came up with the idea of using decoys — unarmed ground effects vehicles, usually driven by single crew members — to draw off Imperial attention. Some nights they'd use almost a hundred of them! Each one would have to be tracked, because there was no telling which of them bore commandos.

This time, though, he was certain that they'd tracked a bona fide force of Terran armor into a corner, a position where they couldn't get out.

THE MAP

The terrain features are pretty simple. Aside from some rocky arroyos (which count as rough terrain), the cliffs are the only terrain, and they're impassable to tanks. These cliffs are Level 4 (200m tall) for those wanting to fly over them.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans don't have much here, really. They have a small force of Apollo hover-tanks with normal crews, and four hover-trucks' worth of support personnel and equipment (treat these people as green crews).

The Apollo is an all-purpose armored ground-effects vehicle that had gone through at least a dozen official variants. The specific armaments and armor arrangements in the Terran force are likely to be quite different. The only unifying features are that all Apollo APAGEVs must weigh no more than 30 tons, are built as mechatanks with a standard Mediumweight hull and a 7.5 CP ground effects system, and have a two-man crew and hot power plants. The Terrans have 400 CP to build the Hermes force.

In addition, the Terrans have four hover-trucks (Mediumweight hulls with MA 10, Light Weight armor, and the rest devoted to cargo; 7 tons, MV -2, MA 10).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials have come in with an ad hoc force of hastily scrambled mecha. They get 800 CP of mecha, to be chosen from Gorgons, Medusas, and Furies, with normal pilots. Any mix is acceptable, and any mecha or fighter may be modified to 115% of its base cost (15% of its cost over its base value).

SET-UP

The Terrans deploy the hover-trucks in a clump at the spot marked Base. They then deploy the Hermes tanks anywhere they want, except on the bluffs (which are impassable to the hovers). The Imperials then enter on the marked map edge.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Imperials are trying to wipe out the whole unit. They get 1 Victory Point for destroying any vehicle, whether it be Apollo or hover-truck. The Terrans are trying to get out of a bad situation. They receive 1 Victory Point for each vehicle exited off the Imperial board edge (this is the mouth of the gulch), and an additional Victory Point for each Imperial mecha rendered flightless so it can't follow (yes, destroyed counts as being flightless).

STRATEGY TIPS Terran Strategy

The Apollo is a light AFV, so don't give it weapons that are too heavy — missile racks and light autocannons are best. They also move pretty fast, so when you set up, you can afford to stand back some distance and let the Imperials close with you. When they get too close, zoom off, shooting at them all the time (that second crew member gives you an additional action, remember?). Use your tanks as a screen for those unarmed hover-trucks. The whole idea is to escape with a maximum of people; any Imperial mecha you destroy are icing on the cake.

Imperial Strategy

The Terrans will, as usual, outnumber you. They'll try to use this advantage to rush off the board, squirting out between your fingers like water. Station one or two mecha back near the entrance to the gorge to catch those hover-trucks; remember, a hover-truck kill is easy, and is worth just as much as a hover-tank. Fortunately, the Apollo is a much easier nut to crack than a Talos. A good autocannon shot can utterly destroy one, as can an energy sword. They are quite fast, though, so buying a +1 set of verniers for your Gorgons isn't a bad idea.

1 Hex = 50M

HILL = 2 HEXES

HILL = 1 Hex

HILL = 1 Hex

THE BASE

CLIFFS = 4 HEXES

8: CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

ライト・フブリゲードのこげき

Mark Benjamin Michaels, provisional lieutenant in what was left of the Planetary Defense Forces, breathed as softly as he could. He didn't notice the uncomfortable way he sat in his chair, bent over and tense. Neither did the other men and women clustered around the room.

They all listened intently to the speaker mounted on the wall. The AM radio broadcast was spotty and full of static, indicating that the radio wasn't very strong.

"... Baker One, Baker One, status report, over" A crackling pause. "...her, Baker (sputter) ... firm status Delta. Proceed (hiss) Tango and hull-down. We'll keep them (crackle)"

"Things aren't going well, are they?" Dr. Logan asked him, her pretty face troubled.

"No kidding, doc," one of the troopers growled. "Even tankers deserve better than that." A low answering snarl rumbled across the room.

"I'd love to show them some air power," test pilot Meyers groused. "That

fight's only 120 clicks away; we could be there inside of ten minutes."

"You'd never make it," an intelligence officer said. "A clear night like tonight, they'd have you spotted, even in a stealth plane. We can't operate tonight; base security."

That was the problem that had them all pinned down and here in one of the wardrooms, Mark thought. The fighter pilots were in their flight suits, the troopers in their armor with rifles nearby; even he and his other pilots were dressed for battle. They were all chafing for action, for a chance to go north to the rescue of the tank unit whose destruction was being told by its command radio transmissions. But on such a crystal clear night, there was nothing they could do without being seen by the enemy ships in orbit ... and they did not dare risk the base, one of the last research bases left in Terran hands.

"Hey, Jane, when's that front rolling in?" someone asked. She shrugged.

"Sometime tomorrow night, we think. It's been stalled."

"And while the clouds stack up off the coast, we lose people," a major fumed, his hands opening and closing helplessly. "Hell, I'd be willing to walk out, carrying my car, if I thought we could at least intercept those devils on the way back!"

"Nice thought, major," a sergeant chimed in. "We could pull it off with some of those sports cars ... but they couldn't hack the terrain we'd have to go through. Man, I wish we had hovercycles. They'd be light enough, and tough enough."

"But we do," Dr. Logan mused. "Mark, get your men to their Guardians! I'll be talking to command!"

Half an hour later, Mark watched the desert terrain whip by at almost 300 kph. He had to admit, Dr. Logan's plan had worked — they had carried a few of the hovertruck "skates" out, a Guardian on each end, and three of them had mounted up and were now sliding north. They were too late to save the beleaguered hovertanks, but at least they could deny the enemy a victory celebration.

THE MAP

The Guardians come upon the Gorgons in the middle of the blank desert. There are cacti, tumbleweeds, and small rocks all over the place, but there's no feature here that would even bother something standing over two meters tall ... so any blank mapsheet will do.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans are striking back with an old weapon made new — the previously outdone PDF Guardian. The Terrans get three Guardians, modified to 100 CP apiece. One has an Ace pilot, and the other two have normal pilots. All three have 30 CP to spend on mechariders with GES motive systems (maximum MA 12).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get three Gorgons, one piloted by a commander, the other two piloted by normal pilots. The command Gorgon may be modified to 225 CP; the normal Gorgons may go up to 200 CP. These modifications may be used for anything except mechariders — the

Imperials do not use mechariders until after this incident.

SET-UP

The Imperials set up in the designated set-up zone. The Terrans enter from their map edge at the beginning of the first turn.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

This is a test of the new Terran mecharider system; if successful, they'll make more of them (historically, they did). If the Terrans manage to destroy more Gorgons than they lose in Guardians, they win.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

For a change you've got some mecha instead of tanks and troops. The Guardian doesn't have much armor, and its weaponry is mediocre, but Dr. Logan has made plenty of modifications. Some suggestions include giving it a bigger cannon; a bit of space efficiency and it can have a heavy cannon. It could even be shoulder-mounted on a weapons mount. Heavier armor, perhaps a shield — there

are plenty of old Gorgon shields available — or even old Gorgon weapons could be used. Weapons mounts on the torso and arms can be used for mounting missiles and rockets; these can add tremendously to a Guardian's firepower without compromising internal space, and without leaving its servos vulnerable to Cinematic Hit #6, Ammunition Explosion.

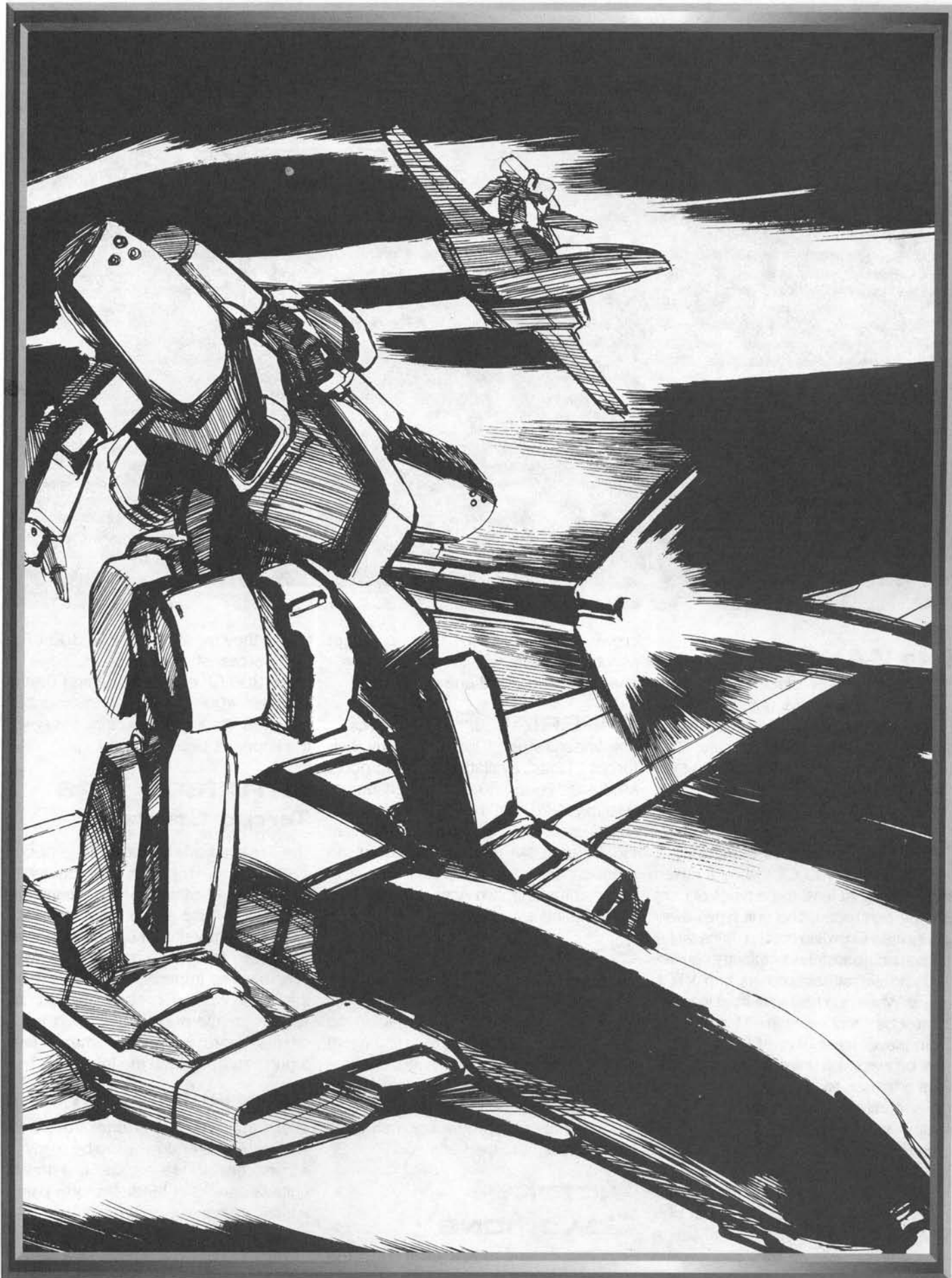
When you face the Gorgons, you'll notice that the smaller the mecharider, the lower the MV — it only takes a 10-ton mecharider to haul a 50-ton mecha, and such a mecharider has an MV of -3. +1 verniers would make this a -2, which is an incredibly enviable MV for a 50-ton unit.

Imperial Strategy

The Terrans depend on their mechariders. Take them out — this will raise Terran MVs and reduce their movement to walking.

OPTIONAL FORCES

Players desiring to play a historical scenario should use those Imperial forces left over from Scenario #6, and only use two Guardians (one piloted by an ace, and the other piloted by a normal pilot).



9: BREAKOUT OF THE LOST DUTCHMAN

ロスト・ダチマンのどっば

Imperial Commander Thodos slid open the cockpit of his Gorgon and stared down at the vista below him. A Terran might have been awed or impressed by the rugged and savage beauty of the mountain passes that Thodos surveyed. Some might have looked over the terrain with a more speculative gaze, inspired by the ancient tale of the Lost Dutchman silver mine, a mother lode of precious ore that was supposed to reside somewhere among the clefts and peaks. For his part, Thodos was disgusted. He would have been dismayed, but his programming and training wouldn't allow it.

The Terran resisters had fled to this huge patch of tortured earth the very day that the Empire had attacked. From what Imperial intelligence could gather, at least a third of the Phoenix PDF militia was gathered in these mountains, forming a persistent thorn in the side of Imperial occupation of Phoenix and the Phoenix spaceport

to the south. Hidden beneath these crags they could evade orbital observation and bide their time, only to creep out when clouds covered the sky to stage rapid assaults on the Phoenix garrison.

His massive hands worked nervously, unconsciously wringing and clenching as nightmare images of violence flickered through his mind. Night after night of patrols, frequently interrupted by Terran commando attacks, arriving too late to do anything but clean up the damage. Or, on rare occasions, flying into the middle of an ambush — more than once he'd experienced the frustration of feeling shells strike his Gorgon while he struggled to fix his sights on one of the Terran micro-armors. He'd had two Gorgons shot out from under him by missiles.

That wasn't the worst, though. He could still see her, laid out, her lovely face still intact, her lower body practically shot away by Terran guns. Administrator Divok

8124 hadn't been a warrior; from all accounts, she hadn't been actually fighting. A Terran raider had fanned his weapon through the room where she had been and had left. She'd been on the promotion schedule, due to receive her own name. She and Thodos were already gene-matched, ready for permission to breed. She was dead by the time she was found.

Occupation command had finally decided that it was time to hunt them down. A small concentration had been located, and Thodos was given command of a unit to obliterate them. They had been forced to use a drop-ship transport to move the mecha to this location; only the Furies could easily clear this terrain with any speed. But now the Terrans would pay, if only he could entice them to come out and fight like true warriors instead of skulking in their holes. He was confident that he had enough firepower to go in after them if need be, but he didn't relish the idea.

THE MAP

This scenario takes place deep in the rugged Superstition Mountains east of Phoenix. All terrain is considered to be rough. The contour lines indicate 50m levels. If two (or more) contour lines exist in a single hex, it's a near vertical slope, and impassible unless flying.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get 400 CP to buy a mixed bag of forces. At least three types of units must be purchased. The unit types available include Guardian mecha, Talos tanks, Minuteman roadstrikers, infantry, hovercraft, and aircraft (helicopters and VTOL planes). When purchasing units at least 75 CP must be spent on each unit (that is, the Terran player must have at least 150 CP spent on two small units, limiting the maximum emphasis to 250 CP). Every type of unit is purchased in singles except for Minuteman roadstrikers, which must be purchased in pairs, and infantry, which must be purchased in five-man squads.

All vehicles and mecha are standard; helicopters and aircraft must be purchased with hot internal combustion power plants. All vehicle and mecha

crews are normal pilots except Minuteman pilots, who come in pairs, with one commander and one normal pilot.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get 1000 CP to buy their forces. Units available are Gorgons, Medusas, Furies, Kraken mechabeasts (*Mekton Zeta*), and 1/10 scale hardbody suits (essentially scaled-down versions of the Gorgon). All units are standard; no modification is allowed. Pilots consist of one commander, two Aces, and as many normal pilots as needed.

SET-UP

The Terrans set up all their units in the designated set-up zone. All Terran units are assumed to be set up in hiding, so they can't be shot at until they first move or fire; after moving or firing once, a Terran unit is no longer considered to be hiding. After the Terrans have deployed, the Imperials set up no more than three hexes in from the map edges.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans win by escaping from this

trap. If they manage to move 300 CP of their forces off of the board edge, or move 200 CP off the board and destroy at least 400 CP of the surrounding Imperials, it's a Terran victory. Otherwise the Imperials claim triumph.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

The Terrans have the advantage of concentration of firepower. The burden of attack lies with them, which means they can pick out the single most vulnerable spot in the Imperial set-up and rush it with practically everything, rolling over whatever hapless Imperials happen to be in the way. Whatever else they do, the Terrans should make every effort to get off the board; this is no time to hang around and play with the Imperials.

Imperial Strategy

et up a picket line strung around the Terrans. Move in slowly, and be ready for a mass attack. Have some fast-moving units (a couple of Medusas, or a pair of Furies) in reserve to bolster whatever part of the line the Terrans rush. And beware of feints.

1 HEX = 50M

HILL, 3
HEXES

TREES

TREES

HILL, 4
HEXES

TREES

TREES

TERRAN SET-
UP AREA

HILL, 4
HEXES

HILL, 4
HEXES

HILL, 3
HEXES

TREES

10: WOLFPACK

おうかみのだんたい



In its course of conquest, the Empire had conquered many water-worlds. It had even fought surface dwellers who took the battle under the waves. This knowledge was exhumed and readied again when it became obvious that the Terrans left no part of their world out of their wars.

THE MAP

This is another blank map. The ocean floor is some six kilometers below the level of this conflict, and there's no closer supply of terrain. Please note that every combatant here is "flying", and that a Level 0 will have to be established for determining relative heights.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans have a major sub, one of the PDF's subcarriers. Build it with 20,000 CPs in 100x scale. It must be capable of carrying at least thirty 1/1 scale mechafighters and twenty 1/5 scale mecha; carrying these is its main mission. The crew quality is variable, as per the starship rules.

The Terrans also get 400 CP to build ten 1/5 scale substrikers; these are road-striker-sized, one-man minisubs. These substrikers have normal pilots.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get 1500 CP to buy their attack force. These must be modified Furies and Medusas; no other Imperial mecha will do for such modifications. They may not be altered beyond 15% of their base costs, before the Underwater modification is applied — that is, a Medusa could be made worth 257.3 CP before applying the 5% multiplier for Underwater modification. The Imperials get one commander and as many normal pilots as they need.

SET-UP

The Terrans set up their subcarrier (which should be at least two hexes long!) in the middle of the map. The substrikers may set up anywhere within 10 hexes of the subcarrier. Then the Imperial mecha enter from any or all map edges.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Like any objective scenario, the Imperial idea is to destroy the subcarrier; they win if they accomplish this. The Terrans win if they manage to keep this from happening.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

If you can afford it, a CIDS on the carrier can help a lot. Or you can buy a few 1x scale weapons, which work the same way. When arming your substrikers, don't forget that a 20-Kill missile comes out to 10 spaces in 1/5 scale; sure, it weighs 1/2 ton, but for that much firepower, who cares?

Imperial Strategy

Arming mecha with out-of-scale missiles goes double for the Imperials. They've got to blow up a monster that's going to have at least 1000 Kills of damage capacity. Achieving this with 6K beam swords can take a while. A 10x scale 100-Kill missile, WA -2, Range 17.5, is 4.5 CP/spaces, 7 Kills, 3.3 tons. And since you're shooting at a 100x scale target, you've got a +3 to hit with a 10x weapon.



11: THE FIRST RAPIER

さいしょのレイピア

A small group of people clustered together on the gantry, watching the man with the camera. "Back a little bit, folks. Jesus, stop that!" A tall man on the back row had been making "rabbit ears" behind the head of the man in front of him. "This is for posterity, people, so get serious for a minute, will ya? Mark, move back a step, and just to your right. Perfect! Hold it." Several things happened simultaneously: Jesus made rabbit ears behind Donald's head again, a remote drone ran under Mark's foot and tripped him, Mariko whirled to try to keep Mark from falling over, and the camera flash blinded everybody.

A split second later Mariko had Mark's arm, but they were both going to fall off the gantry until a gigantic finger moved up from beneath the gantry to stop their fall. Chuckles issued from the speakers behind the crew. "Go ahead and keep that picture for posterity, Max," the giant behind them said. "It's fairly representative of this bunch."

"Indubitably," Dr. Logan sighed, helping Mark and Mariko back to their feet. Dr. Graves peered over the gantry, watching as Lt. Yuh moved the servo arm back into place.

"Looking good, Don," he said. "That's fast work, and with the full servo across the body."

"Da, good backhand," Alex agreed, moving to the gantry controls. "Maybe we can let Don get on with his job?" Dr. Graves nodded; Alex moved the gantry back.

The red and white Rapier Zero stood in its support brackets, autocannon raised. Light flashed off its polished surfaces from the photoflashes of cameras recording the historic event: the first Terran warcraft made with the new alien technology.

Inside the cockpit Lt. Donchoi Yuh moved the controls to make the Rapier step forward. With ponderous grace it moved out onto the hangar floor. Cheers rose from the assembled throng and he bowed slightly.

He moved over to the gantry; from the sensors in the Rapier's head, the support crew were at eye level. "All systems go, doctor," Dr. Graves beamed at his brainchild. Dr. Logan was thoughtfully reserved; Don had to smile when he noticed that she was holding Mark's arm to keep him from falling again. With Mark B, that was a near-certainty. For his part, Mark was waving as enthusiastically as the rest of them.

"Go get 'em, Don!"

"Don't fire until you see the red of their eyes!"

Tears in her eyes, Mariko blew him a kiss. He deftly caught it in a hand bigger than she was, saluted with the cannon, and strode out of the hangar. His mission was to field-test the Rapier Zero under combat conditions. That meant looking for trouble. He set his course for the distant hills; from there he could take to the air and head for L.A.

He was certain that he'd find trouble there.

THE MAP

This clash took place in the wooded hills beyond the Los Angeles Metroplex. Elevation changes are noted on the map, but there are so many trees that the only difference elevation makes is to flying mecha. The trees are fairly old — over 75 years old — and are tall enough to obscure and hinder mecha. Movement through the trees is at 1/3 speed (each hex counts as 3 hexes), and line of sight is impossible if not directly adjacent. Additionally, the trees absorb a lot of damage; if they are hit, no damage passes through to units behind them. Mecha in the trees are considered to have legs and lower torso (location #3) behind tree cover.

Mecha can hide in the trees by merely stating that they are doing so, squatting beneath the treetops. This makes the mecha impossible to see (unless in an adjacent hex), and impossible to hit unless adjacent or unless using indirect fire.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get Lt. Donchoi Yuh (currently considered an Ace pilot) and his Rapier Zero (the standard Rapier).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get two Gorgon assault mecha, modified to 200 CP apiece, with normal pilots.

SET-UP

Lt. Yuh enters on the east map edge first, then the Gorgons enter on the west map edge.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

This is a test of the Rapier, so Yuh is playing it cautiously. If he knocks out one Gorgon and escapes with the Rapier still flying, it's a minor victory for the Terrans. If he knocks out both and escapes, still flying, it's a major victory for the Terrans. If he merely escapes, it's a draw. Should the Gorgons disable his flight systems, it's a minor Imperial victory (the Imperials will catch up and Yuh will have to destroy the Rapier). If

the Imperials manage to destroy the Rapier, it's a major Imperial victory.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

You can't change the Rapier — it is a prototype, after all — so you can play with Lt. Yuh's stats instead. Naturally, you want to pump his Reflexes to 10. He's not very big, and he doesn't need to be a genius, so you can conceivably use some of his stat points to pump up his skill points. A high Mecha Piloting skill is essential; he needs a good Maneuver Pool. Since the Rapier has no melee weapons, you can forget spending points on Mecha Melee.

Imperial Strategy

Sure, the Rapier's faster, and it's got a better pilot, and if you get in the way of one of its missile barrages you're toast. But you can modify the Gorgons for a little surprise — you can afford +1 verniers, or some dynamite melee weapons (like a two-handed beam sword!), or even some more thrusters (with space efficiency, 4 MA; in the arms, 5 MA).

1 Hex = 50m

CLEARING

HILL, 2 HEXES

CLEARING

CLEARING

CLEARING

12: FURBALL

けがわのボール

Oh, my." Those meek words were the only ones that came to mind as Mark looked down at the Earth below. He wrenched his eyes to his control panel, concentrating on the artificial horizon as he tried to fight off the vertigo. He'd joined the Planetary Defense Force to be a mecha jockey, not a fighter pilot. Flying always left him woozy.

"You okay, Mark?" Donchoi was cheerful and chipper. "Beautiful day, isn't it? And what a view!" He tucked his Rapier's arms back and tipped over to plunge toward the planet below, like a massively oversized skydiver. "Wow! This sure is different from a fighter! Slower, but it's neat to be able to viff in any direction! Now I really see what those Imperials had going with mecha!"

Mark swallowed the bile threatening to choke him and flew his Rapier after Don, in a much safer and sedate fashion. While he himself wasn't a flier, Don had started as a test pilot, one of

the truly crazy people who blithely hopped into dangerous, untested, and possibly fatally flawed machines with every intention of seeing if they could make those machines kill them. He'd been the main pilot of the Rapier program, and the machine had been practically designed with Lt. Donchoi Yuh in mind. Mark on the other hand was more comfortable with the lighter and clunkier Guardian. But the Rapier was designed to be the new strike arm of the Planetary Defense Force, and eventually the Terran Space Navy, so he had to get used to it.

He did question the wisdom of this little sortie. The Powers That Be had decided it was time to test the Rapier in every way. It had done well in single combat against the enemy Gorgons, but there was doubt that it could act well as an air superiority fighter as well — the Aerospace Force jocks were skeptical, to say the least. So the two best pilots had been singled out to go flying during full daylight, in full sight of every

Imperial ground-based and orbital sensor, way out in the middle of nowhere at 25,000 feet, with the express mission of drawing out some of the enemy's superb air-to-air Furie fighters. Well, it sounded all right in theory, but there was one little problem: One of Terra's two top aces wasn't very comfortable looking down at the ground so far below and being very aware that a thruster failure would result in one exceedingly rough landing

"Bogey at seven-thirty!" Donchoi called over. "Multiple contact at sixty-eight hundred, speed twelve hundred, angels fifteen and climbing!" Mark could see them on his sensor screen: three of them, Furies without a doubt, approaching at high velocity, and already slowing to combat speed. He checked his status and armed all missile pods.

"We're going in hot with guns, Mark," Donchoi barked, his Rapier surging to meet the enemy. "Let's get some!"

THE MAP

Well, there's not much to this map. After all, at 25,000', there's not much terrain. A "zero level" should be designated, and all rules for flying are in effect.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get two Rapier Zero-Point-Ones. These are Rapiers that have been modified for air-to-air combat. They may not cost more than 170 CP apiece, but may be modified to exchange rocket launchers for verniers and thrusters, and to make their missile weapons into more effective air-to-air weapons. They are piloted by an two Aces (Lts. Yuh and Michaels).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get three Furie fighters piloted by normal pilots. These

mechafighters may be modified to no more than 160 CP apiece and may have no more than 50 CP of modifications (that is to say, you can't make more than 50 CP of changes to the standard Furie fighter).

SET-UP

Each side dices off for initiative to see who moves (and therefore enters) first. The Terrans enter from the north map edge at any level from -5 to +5, and the Imperials enter from the south edge at any level from -5 to +5.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

This scenario tests the mettle of the Rapier in air-to-air combat. The Terrans win if they destroy at least two Furies and lose no more than one Rapier.

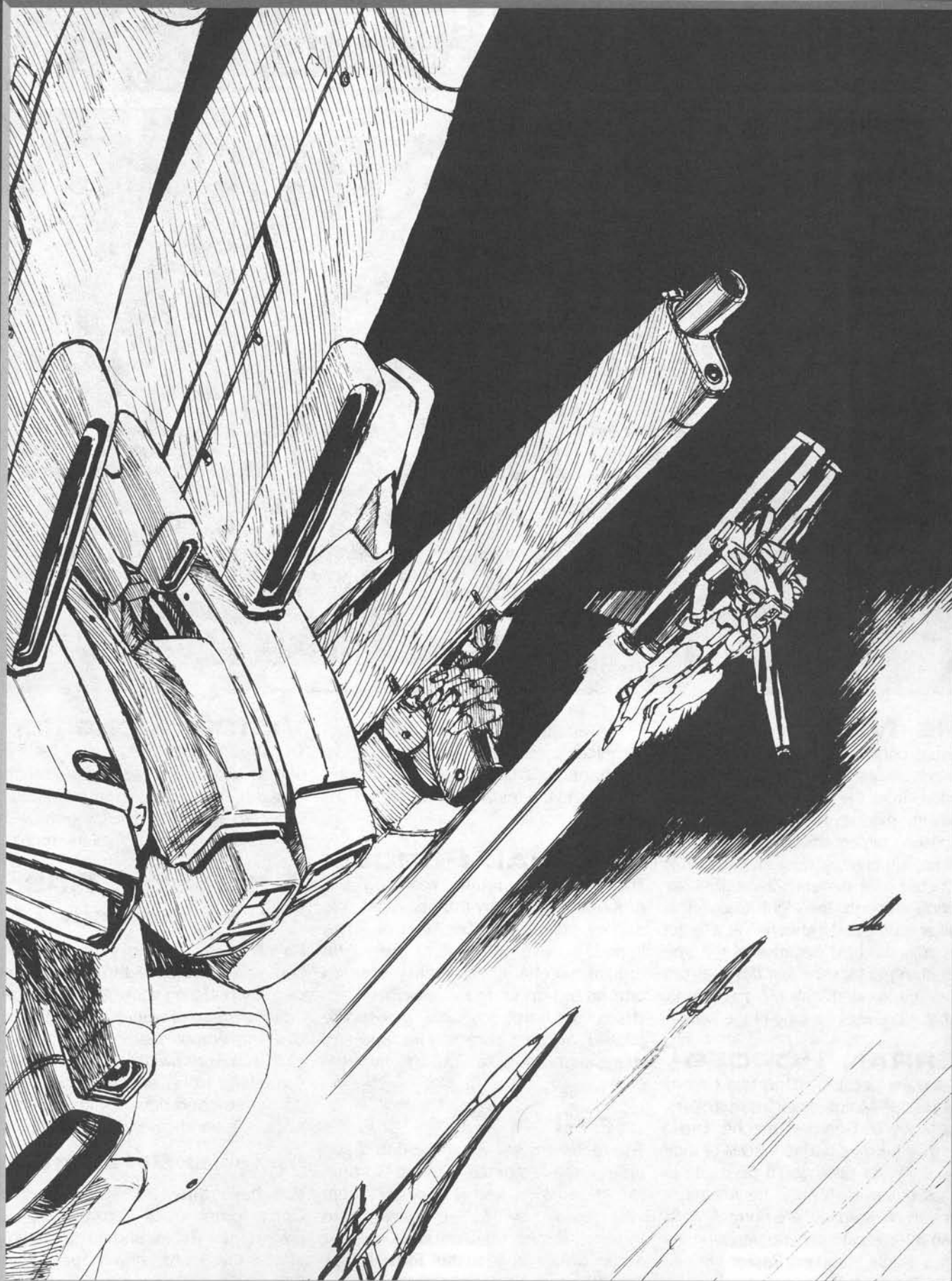
STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

Grabbing missiles that have a plus to Weapon Accuracy is a good idea. Verniers and extra thrusters are an excellent idea. Team up on the Furies, blowing them out of the air one at a time.

Imperial Strategy

Some heavier guns that can fire more often are a good idea here. Don't hang about to get in close with the Rapiers; remember, they can clobber you with Mecha Fighting, and you can't hit back! Give your pilots a minimum of Pilot 7 so you can get three actions per turn — use a half-move to move in, fire, and use another half-move to get far, far away from the Rapiers. Speed is your asset; maneuverability is theirs.



13: A RESCUE! A RESCUE!

レスキューだ! レスキューだよ!

C'mon, you guys, work faster." Tech sergeant Matt Bussard thumbed up the power level on his torch, working at shearing through the support he'd been delicately cutting. Even then, it took main strength to extract the part he was trying to salvage.

"Frackin' aliens build too well," Elam grouched from where he struggled with part of the machine's sensor array.

"No kidding," Marshal chimed in. "Sarge, these people are unreal! There's not a single component here that isn't welded, glued, extruded, incorporated, or plain nailed down! How the heck were they supposed to repair any of it? Oof!" Matt saw her booted feet fly through the air as she lost the tug of war with the part she was working on.

"My guess is that they weren't going to." Slidell was their unit authority on alien tech; somehow he had a

knack for it, intuitively recognizing functions and formats. He hefted himself out of the cockpit cavity, hampered by his shortness in a cockpit built for tall men. "This is a prototype; anything they needed to change would be cut out and replaced. As you say, they certainly haven't made it any easier to remove any components." He grinned widely as he tucked a irregular chunk of circuitry into his pack. "I think I got the code-block intact, though."

"Good." Matt smirked as he stood back to survey their work. When the word came through that one of the jocks had downed a new and heretofore unseen Gorgon variant, the call had gone out for his unit. "Bussard's Buzzards" was the fastest, best gang of vultures in the whole dang PDF (in his opinion). After all, what other tech gang could strip a Talos bare in under thirty minutes? So, as usual, they got the job of finding out just what there was in this one that was "new and

improved." A quick stealth-ride in and within an hour they were busy trying to tear the beast apart. When the radio call came, he'd been expecting it. The sound quality of the AM radios sucked, but he could still make out the message. "We've got company, Buzzards. Bug out now."

He looked around to the rest of his crew. Kevin shook his head as he forced a prybar into position. Marshall shot him a dirty look as she helped Kevin. Slidell just muttered, "There's a lot more here, Sarge." Elam just grunted as he worked a probe into the guts of what they estimated was a focused EMF generator. That made it unanimous.

"What's the ETA?" Matt shot back to the distant VTOL.

"Two, three minutes. Get out now!"

"Give us three minutes more. Just three more!"

He turned back to his crew. "You've got two, people. Move it!"

THE MAP

As usual, conflict seems to take place in the worst places. This time the terrain is all wooded. Treat the entire map as rough terrain for mecha. The clumps of trees are foliage concentrations that block line of sight; otherwise, ranged combat is conducted at a general -2 modifier for shooting through the light trees. This modifier is dropped if shooting at a target in an adjacent hex! Because of the tree cover, flying units can't fire down at targets on the ground from beyond normal combat range (i.e., no long-range firing!).

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get 150 CP to use on any mixture of Minuteman roadstriders, Talos tanks, or Guardian mecha. These units may be modified to +20% of their original cost (a Talos could be made to cost as much as 127 CP, for instance). All Terran crews/pilots are normal pilots. For an interesting scenario variation, try using a single standard Rapier with an Ace as the entire Terran rescue force.

In addition, there are five Terran technicians (REF 5, MA 5, Rifles/Heavy Weapons 3, Dodge/Evade 2, armed with assault rifles and wearing SP 10 armor).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials, finally realizing the problems caused by the heavy foliage, deploy some lighter forces. The Imperials have 200 CP to spend on regular mecha (that would come to one jazzed-up Gorgon ...) or on roadstriders or hardbody suits! These are piloted by one commander and the requisite number of normal Imperial pilots.

SET-UP

The techs are set up in the noted set-up hex, the site of the crashed Gorgon-D; please note that this does give them very hard cover! The Terran and Imperial forces then enter from their noted board edges: the Terrans first, then the Imperials.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans win if they get at least one of their techs off of their map edge (presumably carrying the most valuable parts salvaged from the Gorgon-D). The Imperials win if they kill all the techs!

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

Rough terrain halves your movement, and you don't have thrusters, remember? Try outfitting some Minutemen with treads instead of wheels — treads ignore that movement restriction! The techs can't run very swiftly, either, so there's something to be said for picking them up (a stripped-down Talos makes a good APC) and carrying them off.

Imperial Strategy

You have thrusters, so you can fly. Don't forget that! Use that to your advantage. Fly in and drop down to attack the techs, and hope you get there before the Terrans.

1 Hex = 50M

TERRAN SIDE

CLUMPS OF
TREES

THE TECHS

HILL, 2 HEXES

IMPERIAL SIDE

14: THE BATTLE FOR TERRA

ちきゅうのせんとく

Tactical reports," The Captain grunted, and the main screen flickered from the forward view to a tactical overlay. Graphic representations of Terra and Luna dominated the display. The positions of orbital habitats shone in green; those of waystations, workshacks, and other sparsely inhabited objects glinted blue. A gorget of bright red, a thin necklace circling the planet and swelling to a crescent over the Eurozone, showed the location of the enemy fleet. A relative sprinkling of yellow moved slowly around Luna like a cluster of fireflies: the Terran fleet.

That slowness was only an illusion. In actuality, the Terran fleet was moving at a fantastic pace, hurtling around Luna at 25 kilometers per second. Soon it would be time to begin deceleration.

"Fleet tactical," Captain Antares ordered quietly. The tactical officer put the projection up on the screen. The main ships of the fleet, both the older cruisers and the new cruisers built in the Belt, moved in an elongated globe, surrounded by a swarm of smaller cutters also built in the Belt. At the moment the fleet cruised in travel formation, moving in as tight a space as safety would allow, in order to present the minimum sensor target. When it came time to decelerate, they would spread out into battle array.

Antares glanced at a side screen that showed the view of their closest escort, one of the smaller ships. Built in the Belt, crewed by asteroid miners, prospectors, and Martian colonists, he hoped that the boat and its sister ships would be up to the task at hand. They were small ships, massing in at under a thousand metric tons and manned by a mere handful of crewmembers apiece. Their weapons were a mixture of small massdrivers and missile pods—nothing like the Sentinel's main battery rail cannon, but maybe enough to put an appreciable dent in an enemy.

Not for the last time he found himself wishing that the Sentinel's hangar was occupied. Some fighters would be worth their weight in platinum in the upcoming battle, but there had been too few to spare, and they'd been left as defensive squadrons back in the colonies.

"All units, all units. Clearing lunar concealment in 937 seconds. Deceleration begins in 1594 seconds." The computer announcement was sounding all over the fleet. What it meant was that in about half an hour, the exhaust plumes of the fleet's deceleration would make it practically impossible for the enemy to miss them.

By then, the hope was that the enemy would be too busy attempting to

avoid a few billion tons of gravel to do much to the approaching Terran fleet. The mass-drivers on Luna had been surreptitiously chucking loads of lunar ore into the wrong orbit paths, tracks that would bring them into collision course with the enemy's orbital paths. After that the gravel would harmlessly enter the planetary atmosphere, burning up in a brilliant display. Of course, if the enemy ships didn't get out of the way, there'd be more substantial pyrotechnics displays in Terra's atmosphere.

Of course, in less than three hours the fleet would be in striking distance. The gravel would be clear from the skies by then — no sense in being shot down by your own weapons! — and the enemy would have a chance to form battle array themselves. Then it would come down to ship versus ship, the relentless and pitiless business of blasting each other to bits. A lot of people were going to die, on both sides. A lot of inexperienced asteroid miners and colonists were going to fall victim to their most common and dreaded form of death, vacuum asphyxiation — that is, if their ships weren't utterly vaporized by the force of the weaponry to be employed.

But if they didn't try, then Terra and the race of *Homo sapiens* Terra was doomed to assimilation into the Empire.

THE MAP

This is a truly titanic battle involving tremendous numbers of mecha and starships. Therefore, it uses a special mass-combat system (called "Mekton Fleet Battles") which is explained on the following pages. The map represents the close orbit of Terra. The scale is 2500m per hex, and the time scale is actually closer to six normal *Mekton* turns per turn.

This entire battle is fought in orbit, with the combatants rushing wildly around the planet. All ships are considered to be maintaining an orbit at 250-500 km. However, since the whole fleet is moving in roughly the same direction at roughly the same speed, the only movement that is important is tactical maneuvering (using MA), so the details of orbital velocity can be safely ignored.

The only important features of the map are the space and Terra map edges. The only way the Imperials can safely escape to use their FTL drives is off the space map edge. Any ship moving off the Terra map edge is

headed directly for the planet and will crash. Any ship that moves off one of the other (neutral) map edges is out of the battle, and counts as using FTL drive from the map if Imperial.

There is no such thing as a "stacking limit" here. This is open space, so any number of units may occupy a hex. For purposes of this scenario, disregard altitude level rules and simply assume everyone is at the same level.

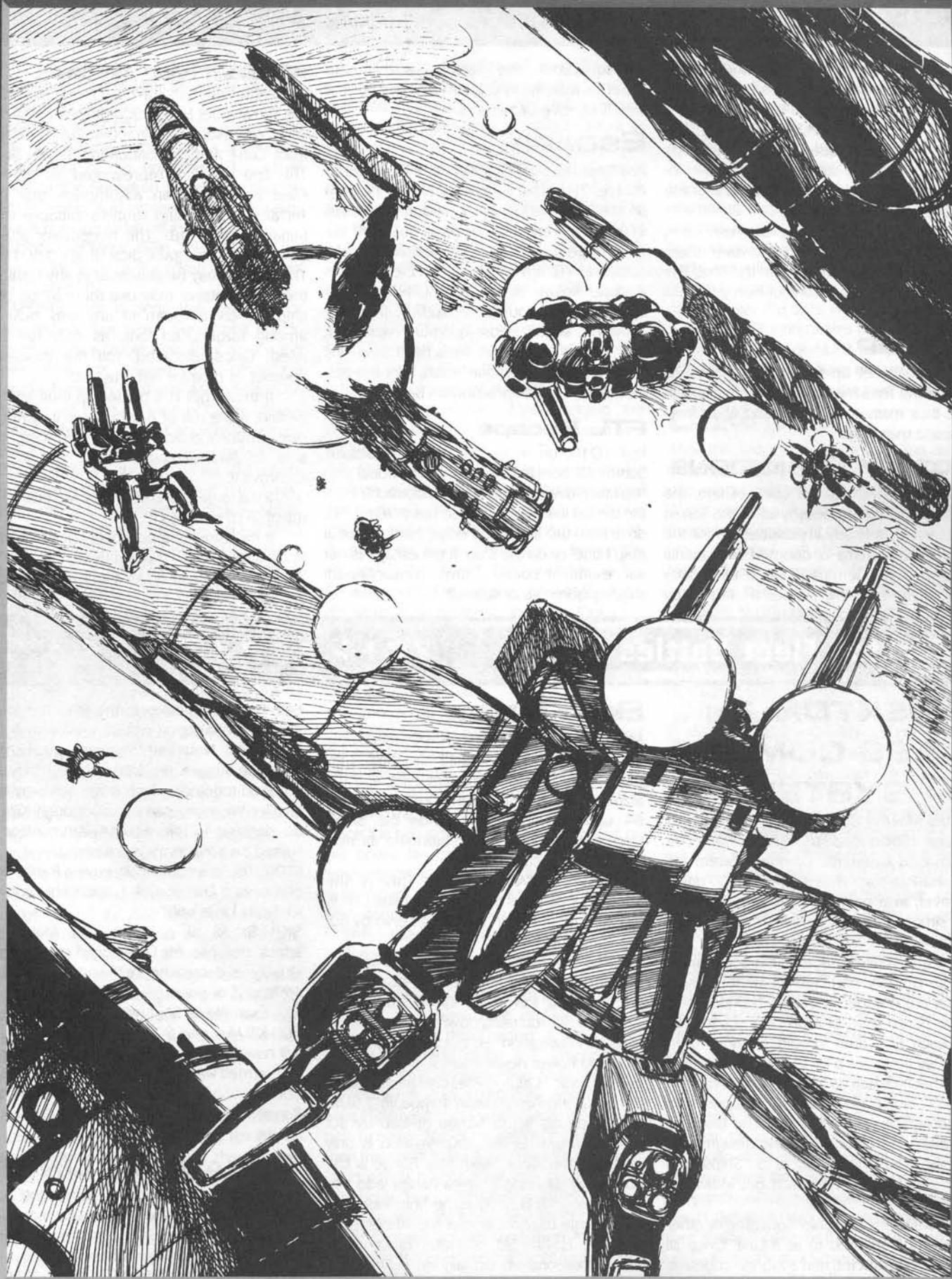
TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get 275 spaces to build twenty-eight ships (maximum hull size Heavy Striker) using the starship construction system from *Mekton Zeta*. Don't worry about point costs for the starships; just build according to the spaces. One important modification to the existing system: Engines (page 78) take up spaces equal to their multiplier times the hull size. For instance, MA 20 engines would take up 50% of the hull spaces! There are six B-grade crews, ten C-grade crews, and twelve D-grade crews for the ships.

The Terrans get another 700,000 CP to construct 125 cutters (10x corvettes). The cutters must have C or D-grade crews (at 0.2 and 0.0 multipliers, respectively).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get 150 spaces for big ships — one of up to 20 spaces (SH, the flagship) and any number of MW-MH, using up the other spaces. Then they get another 240 spaces for ships in the S-HS range (cruisers). Finally, they get 1000 spaces for ships in the SL-S range (destroyers). Each ship must have a mecha bay (to haul fighters, mecha, and small craft). Like the Terrans above, engines take up spaces equal to their multiplier times the hull size. Because of their supply requirements, each crew and mecha bay selected must have a correctly scaled amount of cargo space somewhere in the fleet. For example, if taking 5 Crew of MW and 10 HS Mecha Bays, there needs to be at least 9000 tons of



cargo for that amount of crew and 12,500 tons to keep those mecha bays running. This cargo can be in other ships (tenders, tankers, supply vessels). Combat ship crews vary: The flagship has an A-grade crew, the big ships have two A-grade and the remainder B-grade; the rest have an equal mix of B-grade and C-grade.

Most of the Imperial fighters have been decoyed to the ground fight; however, there are a few Harpy fighters left with the fleet. The Imperials get ten squadrons of Harpy fighters with C-Grade crews.

SET-UP

The Imperials set up their forces within 20 hexes of the Terra map edge. The Terrans then make their mass-driver attack and enter from the space map edge.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Should, by some strange quirk of fate, the Imperials manage to destroy all of the Terran fleet, then it's a nearly impossible win for the Imperials, and Terra is doomed to Imperial rulership. If the Terrans manage to destroy over 50% of the Imperial fleet (by

unit/squadron), the Terrans win. If the Imperials manage to escape with over 50% of their fleet, it's a draw.

ESCAPE

Any Imperial ship may use its FTL drives to escape. This may be done by exiting the map on the space edge, by activating the drives while still on the map, or once going off the Terra edge or either of the neutral edges. If activating FTL drive while still on the map, this is done before all movement; remove the counter for the squadron/ship from the map.

Note which ships/squadrons went FTL and where (space or Terra/neutral/on the map), and their condition. Then, after the battle, roll for each ship/squadron below:

FTL Escape

Roll 1D10; on a 5+, escape is successful. Subtract 3 from the die roll if an individual ship has taken over 50% of its DC. Subtract 3 from the die roll if a ship/squadron has entered FTL drive from the Terra map edge, from a neutral map edge, or on the map. If the escape is not successful, count the unsuccessful ship/squadron as destroyed.

Massdriver Attack

Once the Imperials have set their forces up, the Terrans get to attack with their mass-drivers, representing the combined barrage from Luna and the oncoming Terran fleet. This first attack is represented, in *Mekton Fleet Battles*, as an assumption that the Terrans win the first round's Initiative (see Initiative, page 48). The massdriver attack consists of ten attack dice (that's 10D10s). These dice may be allocated in any fashion; the Terran player may use them all on one ship, or divide them in any way desired among targets, so long as only ten are used! Once allocated, roll the indicated number of dice for each target.

If the target is a battleship (hull MW or better), a die roll of 8-9 cripples it, giving it one random critical hit and reducing the ship to half damage. A die roll of 10 destroys it.

If the target is a cruiser (hull MS-HS), a die roll of 9-10 destroys it.

If the target is a destroyer squadron (hull SL-S), a die roll of 10 destroys it.

Once the massdriver attack is concluded, the battle begins.

Mekton Fleet Battles △

メクトンカンタイのせんとく

MEKTON Z's MASS-COMBAT SYSTEM

In the *Mekton Zeta Tactical Display*, you were introduced to *Mekton Z: The Movie*, a cinematic combat system for fast-and-loose scuffles with up to 20 units. However, in a battle with over 400 units, you simply can't use *The Movie*. That's where *Mekton Fleet Battles* steps in.

In this system, huge, x100-Scale Ships are the primary participants, while smaller mecha are grouped together in Squadrons. Counters are used to represent Squadrons, and each Squadron should be numbered (because there are a lot of Squadrons here). Light mecha (such as Mektons, Fighters and other x1-Scale designs) are grouped into Squadrons of 10; medium mecha (such as Corvettes and other x10-Scale designs) are grouped into squadrons of 3. Ships and other x100-Scale units each get individual counters.

In MFB, any one Ship, Squadron or other participant is referred to as a Unit. Once all Units are constructed and assigned counters, make a statistics record for each Unit.

SHIP UNITS

MOVEMENT ALLOWANCE (MA): This is how many Hexes (2.5km each) the Ship may move in an Round (1 minute). First, find the Ship's "Speedline" as per the sidebar on page 64 of *Mekton Z*. Then divide the Ship's Speedline by 150kph to determine its new MA. Round fractions down.

DAMAGE CAPACITY (DC): This is the amount of damage the Ship can take. Divide the number of Kills in the Torso Servo by 50, rounding down.

SP (STOPPING POWER): This is the amount of damage the Ship's Armor can stop. Divide the Stopping Power of the Torso Servo's Armor by 50, rounding down (minimum of 1). Staged Penetration is not used in MFB; Stopping Power never ablates.

WEAPONS: Each Weapon has Range, Damage, and Ammunition. Range (in 2.5km-Hexes) equals actual Range divided by 50, rounded down (a Range-0 Weapon is only usable in the same Hex); Max Range is calculated by squaring this new Range (add 1 to the result if it's 0 or 1; some Ship Weapons will be able to shoot across the whole map). Damage is Kills/50, rounded down (thus, some Weapons will actually do 0 Damage). Missile Weapons calculate Damage based on

half the total Missiles in the launcher (thus, any Missile Weapon can be used only twice in a battle). Note that Weapons which share common ranges (in 2.5km-Hexes) may be grouped together (which is the only way that smaller Weapons can amass enough Kills to do damage in this system). Ammunition is limited on a Weapon-type basis.

CIDS: These automatically have a Range of 0 and have a Damage of 1, applicable against x1-Scale Units only.

SKILLS: All of a Ship's rolls (detection, attack, defense, etc.) are based on the Crew Quality as determined either on page 78 of *Mekton Z* or page 85 of *Z Plus*.

Example: A Ship with an MA of 12, and 800-Kill Hull and 80SP of Armor will have a will have an MA of 2, a DC of 16 and an SP of 1. Armed with two Beam guns (Range 500, 200K, ∞ Shots), its Weapons will have be Range 10 (Max 121), Damage 8 (200/50, x2), Ammo ∞.

SQUADRON UNITS

A Squadron's Stats are derived from the Stats of its member-mecha. It is a recommended that all mecha in a Squadron be identical (things get complicated otherwise).

MOVEMENT ALLOWANCE (MA): This is done the same as for Ships, except that the



MA is calculated from the slowest mecha's Speedline (if mecha with different MAs are in the same Squadron).

DAMAGE CAPACITY (DC): This is done the same as for Ships, except that a Squadron's DC is equal to the combined DCs of all mecha in the Squadron. When a squadron takes damage, it loses members as it takes enough damage to kill off its mecha.

STOPPING POWER (SP): This is done the same as for Ships; a Squadron's SP is equal to one unit's SP.

WEAPONS: This is done the same as for Ships, except that when Squadrons attack, they attack as a single Unit; they all use the same Weapons, doing the Weapon's Damage for each of them. Most Squadron Weapons will have a Range of 0 and usually a Max Range of 1 or so. Can you say close-combat?

SKILLS: All of a Squadron's rolls (detection, attack, defense, etc.) are based on a Crew Quality rating similar to that used by Ships. When purchasing mecha for MFB Squadrons, include the Cost Multipliers for Crew Quality as listed either on page 78 of *Mekton Z* or page 85 of *Z Plus*. Don't forget to factor MV into the final Crew Quality rating. Note: If a Squadron includes one or more Player-Character(s), the Squadron may use the Stat+Skill values of the PC(s) instead of paying for Crew Quality. When a Squadron which includes PCs takes damage, the mecha piloted by the PC(s) are the last to be destroyed.

Example: 10 B-Grade fighters with MA 24, DC 1 and SP 1 with Beam guns (Range 0, Damage 1, Ammo ∞) and cruise Missiles (Range 1, Damage 1, Ammo 2) makes a Squadron with MA 10, DC 10 and SP 1. When the Squadron attacks, it rolls once to hit (14+1D10); if successful, the target takes damage equal to one mecha's Weapon Damage times the number of mecha in the Squadron (in this case, a successful hit at Range 1 will cause 10 Damage points, while a successful hit at Range 0 will cause 20 Damage points). Similarly, each Damage point that the Squadron takes (after Armor Value) will destroy 1 fighter.

MOVEMENT

In Mekton Fleet Battles, a Round represents 1 minute of combat time. During a Round, all Units in each side move first, then attack. MFB uses Mekton Z's normal movement system, but with oversized 2.5-kilometer Hexes instead of 50-meter Hexes. It takes 1 MA to travel one Hex straight forward, and each Hex of forward movement includes one free Hex-side turn.

After the first Round (see Initiative, below) Units move in alternating sequence; one side moves one Unit, then the other side moves one Unit, and so on, until all Units have moved.

If a Unit moves into a Hex already occupied by another Unit, the non-moving Unit may declare the moving Unit's movement to be Halted (this represents the non-moving Unit adjusting to endanger the moving Unit's vector). If desired, the non-moving Unit may also allow the moving Unit to pass through its Hex without hindrance.

If a Unit stops in a Hex already occupied by a Unit which has not yet moved, the moving Unit may declare that the unmoved Unit is Halted, and may not move that Round (this represents the moving Unit clogging the other Unit's vectors). This is usually used as a prelude to attack.

For example: A fighter Squadron moves through a Hex containing a battleship that hasn't moved yet. The fighters want to move through, but since they have entered the battleship's Hex, the battleship may declare the fighters' to be Halted. This would leave the fighters stopped in that Hex. Should the fighters stop or be Halted in the Hex, they may declare that the battleship is also Halted and cannot move for the rest of the Round. If they do so, then the battleship will probably attack them later this Round.

In order to tell which Units have not yet moved and are still eligible to move, turn over the counter of any Unit which has moved or has been Stopped. No combat occurs until all Units on both sides have moved.

INITIATIVE

Once the two sides have been positioned on the board (as determined by the referee), they engage each other and Initiative must be determined. Initiative in MFB is two-stage: First-stage Initiative covers only the first Round, while all subsequent Rounds use second-stage Initiative.

The first Round's Initiative is based on the capabilities of each side's Leader (be he a General, Admiral, King or Demon Lord, MFB calls him the Leader). Each Leader finds the average of his INT +Tactics Skill and his COOL +Leadership Skill and then adds the result to 1D10. The higher result wins Initiative for the first Round; the winner gets to move ALL of his side's Units first, and then the other side gets to move any of their Units which have not already been Halted. Combat is then conducted in the same way: the side with Initiative gets to attack and apply damage results, and then the other side gets to counterattack and apply damage results. The side which wins this first-

stage Initiative may elect to wait for the other side to go first, and then take their own turn afterwards.

Whoever wins the first Round's Initiative gets to "set up" the battlefield. After the first Round, however, second-Stage initiative takes effect: Both sides' Units are moved in alternating sequence and combat becomes simultaneous. To determine which side gets first movement in each subsequent Rounds, each side rolls 1D10; the side with the higher result goes first. As per the Movement rules above, the side with Initiative in each subsequent Round moves one Unit, then the other side moves one Unit, and so on, until all ships and squadrons have moved. The 1D10 roll is then repeated for the next Round.

COMBAT

After the first round, combat is run as one mass melee, with all attacks and defenses occurring simultaneously. Each Unit uses its Weapons with a single attack roll; if it hits, all weapons hit. However, the effects of damage are not applied until after all attacks (by both sides) have been made.

Note that a Unit may direct different Weapons at different targets within the same Round, making an attack roll for each different target, so be sure to decide which Weapons will attack which target before the dice-rolling begins.

The rolls used in combat are the same as in *Mekton Z*: **Crew Quality +1D10 vs Crew Quality +1D10** (and modifiers, 'natch). If the attacker beats the defender's roll, then the declared Weapons hit the target Unit, inflicting damage. For Weapons with a BV, each point rolled higher than the target Unit's roll adds 1x weapon damage, up to the BV (as per the normal *Mekton Z* rules).

CIDS attacks any enemy Unit of x1-Scale. This is a separate and automatic attack, made against each and every enemy Unit of x1-Scale in the same Hex. Please note that CIDS attacks ignore Scaling to-hit modifiers, and they're assumed to have an infinite BV for the purposes of shooting at x1-Scale Units! CIDS cannot attack anything but x1-Scale Units in the same Hex.

Ramming attacks are special suicide charges. The attacking Unit must move into the same Hex as the target. Normal firing combat takes place before the Ram (the defender does get a chance to frag the attacker), then the Ram attack is made. This is a separate attack (and separate die roll), using the -3 Ramming modifier and Scaling modifiers. Entire Squadrons Ram at the same time, so if you Ram with a Squadron, you Ram with all remaining mecha in that squadron. Should

a Ram hit, it does Damage equal to the DC of the ramming Unit times 1/2 the Rammer's MA (equal to original DC if an individual Ship; if a Squadron, equal to DC of one member-mecha times number of remaining mecha in the Squadron). This damage bypasses the target's SP! The Ramming Unit is always destroyed. Should a Ram attack miss, nothing additional happens to the Units involved.

To-Hit Modifiers:

RANGE: -4 if not firing at a target outside of Range but within Maximum Range.

RAMMING: -3.

DAMAGED: -2 if an individual Ship has sustained over half its DC. Important note! An individual Ship in this condition also has a -2 to its defense rolls!

SCALING: Refer to the table below:

FIRER	Target		
	X1	X10	X100
x1	+0	+3	+6
x10	-3	+0	+3
x100	-6	-3	+0

Defense Modifiers:

DAMAGED: -2 if an individual Ship has sustained over half its DC.

To inflict damage, subtract the target's SP from the combined Weapons Damage that hit it (in combat this big, armor is frequently overwhelmed by sheer volumes of firepower), and subtract that Damage from the target's DC.

Should the to-hit roll beat the defense roll by 5, there is a 50% chance a critical hit is scored on an individual Ship (roll on the Critical Hit Chart below). If the to-hit roll beat the defense roll by 10+, the firer has the choice of inflicting an automatic critical hit on individual ships or of bypassing the Unit's SP to do damage directly.

Critical Hit Table:

D10 EFFECT

- 1-4 **Weapons:** use no weapons next turn.
- 6-8 **Weapons:** lose one random weapon.
- 5 **Thrusters:** Move full MA forward next turn (no turning!). Moves through occupied hexes may not be stopped; move occurs before other ships voluntarily move.
- 9 **Thrusters:** immobile next turn; any damage taken automatically bypasses armor ("sitting duck").
- 10 **Explosion:** by a quirk of fate, the shot hits the powerplant or something else explosive. The target Unit is destroyed.

Examples:

A x100 Ship Example: A basic Terran cruiser with a Striker Hull, Superheavy Armor, MA 14, a B-Grade Crew, CIDS, Superheavy Battery and Medium Battery F translates to a Unit with an MA of 3, DC 12, SP 2 and Weapons with Range 3-9, Damage 10, Ammo ∞ (main battery) and Range 1-2, Damage 2, Ammo ∞ (secondary battery). When within 1 Hex of a target, both batteries may be fired in tandem, doing 12 damage if they hit.

A x10 Squadron Example: A Squadron of three Imperial destroyers with Heavy Striker Torso, Heavy Striker armor, MA 18, a C-Grade Crew, and 60K, Range 86, 20-shot Missile bays translates to a Squadron with MA 5, DC 6, SP 1 and Weapons with Range 1-2, Damage 60, Ammo 2 (the Squadron fires and maneuvers as a unit, doing big damage... but only twice). Whenever the Squadron sustains 2 points of Damage (after the 5 SP), it loses one of its number, reducing its Weapons damage to 48.

A x1 Squadron Example: Ten Harpy fighters with MA 22, Heavy Striker Torso, Striker Armor, a C-Grade Crew and dual Beam guns which do 8 Kills at Range 8 (∞ Shots) translate to a Squadron with MA 9, DC 2, SP 1 and Weapons with Range 0-1, Damage 3, Ammo ∞.

AN EXAMPLE OF MFB COMBAT

A Terran cruiser is approaching Saturn, when it is suddenly ambushed by the Imperial destroyers and Harpies lurking in the rings. The cruiser is 50km from the rings (20 Hexes). This being the first Round, each side's Leader rolls for Initiative. The Imperials win Initiative and decide to take their Turn first. The destroyers and the Harpies come screaming out of the rings to attack the Terran cruiser; the Harpy squadron moves 9 hexes towards the cruiser (Range 11) and the destroyers move up by 5 (Range 15). The Terrans move the cruiser around, but its movement is limited, so it can't get much closer. However, it closes the distance by 3, putting the Harpies within the Maximum Range of its main battery. The Imperial Squadrons do not have such long Range, so they cannot fire. The cruiser could fire at the Harpies, but the penalty would be -10, so it doesn't.

On the second Round, each side rolls 1D10 and the cruiser wins Initiative. The cruiser closes the distance by another 3 Hexes, putting it 9 Hexes from the destroyers and 5 Hexes from the Harpies. The Harpies go next, moving 5 Hexes into the cruiser's Hex and Halting it; the cruiser counter-Halts the

Harpies. The destroyers close to a distance of 4 Hexes from the cruiser. Firing now commences, with the Harpies blasting away at the cruiser and the cruiser firing its main battery at the destroyers and its CIDS at the Harpies. The Harpies are at +6, rolling 12+6+1D10 and hit the cruiser. The cruiser's CIDS rolls 14+0+1D10, beating the Harpies by 2, while its main guns roll 14-7+1D10 and miss the destroyers. The cruiser's SP stops 1 point of damage, so its DC drops by only 2 from the Harpies' attack. The cruiser's CIDS beat the Harpies by 2, so the Harpies lose 1 from their DC; five of the ten Harpies are destroyed, and their Damage is reduced to 1.

On the third Round, the Imperials win Initiative. The Harpies would love to get out of the cruiser's Hex, but they're Halted, so they can't! Next, the cruiser stays put, since it too is Halted. Finally, the destroyers lumber to a Range of 2 Hexes from the cruiser. Combat happens next: the five remaining Harpies desperately swarm the cruiser (although their Damage is now unable to overcome the cruiser's SP), the cruiser again fires its main battery at the destroyers (they're now in Range) and its CIDS at the Harpies, while the destroyers fire their Missiles at the cruiser. The Harpies are at +6, rolling 12+6+1D10 and beating the cruiser by 6; a possible Critical Hit! The cruiser's CIDS rolls 14+0+1D10, beating the Harpies by 1, while its main guns roll 14-3+1D10 and hits the destroyers. The Harpies roll 1D10 and get the Critical; Weapon Damage destroys the main battery! The Cruiser's CIDS hit the Harpies, but does not overcome their SP, so the fighters live on. The cruiser's main guns hit the Destroyers and wipe them out, but not before the destroyers' own Missiles hit the cruiser for 60 points of Damage! When the smoke clears, five battered Harpies are all that remain in Saturn's orbit.

A Final Note: Playing REALLY REALLY BIG Fleet Battles

The baseline for MFB is single Starship Units, with Corvettes grouped into Squadrons of 5 and Mektons into Squadrons of 10. However, there's no reason why you can't group Starships into Squadrons of 10, Corvettes into Squadrons of 50, and Mektons into Squadrons of 100! As long as you adjust all the pertinent numbers accordingly (see "SFX," on page 97 of *Z Plus*), you can use Mekton Fleet Battles to enact cosmic battles between million-ship fleets. Just be sure that all the values for Damage Capacity, SP and Weapon Damage values all match.

1 Hex = 2500M

EARTH ORBIT
DIRECTION

SPACE
DIRECTION

15: ATTACK ON PHARKAD

ファークアドにこうげきする

Mark gritted his teeth as he hurtled between buildings; the gap was barely large enough to allow his Rapier passage. The smaller Minuteman II armor skated along through the alley without any trouble.

"This is insanity," he thought. When the captain of the starcruiser *Courageous* had proposed this combined strike to Captain Antares, everyone had been in favor. After all, the last time that the *Courageous* and its mecha had been here, there had been almost no opposition. The *Courageous* pilots had spoken of how easy it was, blowing up factories and mowing down robots, and of how much dam-

age they'd done. Intelligence reports had indicated that they'd done damage all right, but not to the right places — like the powerplant assembly works, or the subassembly factories that made force field components. This time, the officers assured them, they'd do it right, and put a major dent in the Imperial war effort.

The claxon of the collision alert was now a constant rhythm in the background. For the fiftieth time he vowed to shut it off. Before he could even reach for the button, he was hauling back on the control levers, trying to pull the Rapier through another 90-degree turn. Behind him a massive shell slammed

into the side of a building, showering the area with chunks of the pseudo-plastic the Imperials used for construction. He continued to rocket through the industrial maze, wishing he could dare pop up above the buildings and fly straight. He knew he couldn't; anyone showing himself that way made a big, fat target of himself.

"Come on, big boy, shake it!" a Minuteman pilot harangued him. "Get around the next corner, quick!" He zoomed around it, scraping fragments off the wall. One of the Minutemen ducked; the other knelt, aiming a properly massive missile at his pursuers.

"Fire in the hole!"

THE MAP

The terrain here on Pharkad is rather monotonous. It's nothing but industrial works as far as the eye can see; the whole world is covered with them. These structures are quite solid, because Imperial robots built them to last. Each hex of each building will sustain 10 Kills of damage before collapsing into rubble. Each building is 20 meters tall, meaning that any mecha walking is going to be completely concealed by the buildings.

Needless to say, in this terrain makes turning in low-level flight something very important. It also makes Knockback deadly; remember, slamming into a building counts as a ram against a mecha of equal size.

Oh, yeah. The Imperials have to be careful here, too. If a shell or blast goes astray (that is, it misses the target) and its line of fire might have it hit a building hex, roll 1D10; 1-5, the blast hits the first applicable building hex, 6-10 it misses and goes high. Use common sense here; shooting a flying target above you means the shot can't possibly hit one of the nearby buildings. Likewise, two mecha flying at the same level can't hit the buildings. One mecha shooting at another from a superior altitude almost certainly will (if it "misses" the building, then it hit the street or something else that's not as valuable).

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get 600 CP to build a force of Rapiers and Minuteman II roadstrikers. The Rapiers are built on a maximum of 225 CP, and the Minutemen are built on a maximum of 70 CP. The pilots are all normal except for two ace pilots, one of whom must pilot a Rapier (Lt. Michaels).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials are expecting mostly defensive activities here, and really don't have much in the way of military forces. They do have soldiery, some Heracles armored suits, and some few Gorgons. To wit, the Imperials have 400 CP to construct a force made up of Gorgons (original, unmodified Gorgons), Heracles roadstrikers (based off the Gorgon design in 1/5 scale, modified to a maximum cost of 70 CP), and ground troops (bought at 1000 yen per CP; see the rules on buying ground troops on page 18). Their mecha are piloted by normal pilots and one commander.

SET-UP

The Imperials set up their infantry first, if they have any. These men are set up in units no larger than five men, spaced at least 10 hexes apart — they're actually technicians and other "civilians" called to arms. Then the Terrans enter, from any (or all) map edges. Finally, on the second turn, the Imperial mecha defenders enter.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans are out for pure destruction; they've got a chance to dent Imperial supplies at the source. They receive 1 Victory Point for each building hex that they destroy. 20+ VP is a Terran major victory, 11-19 VP is a Terran minor victory, 5-10 VP is an Imperial minor victory, 4 or fewer VP is an Imperial major victory.

STRATEGY TIPS

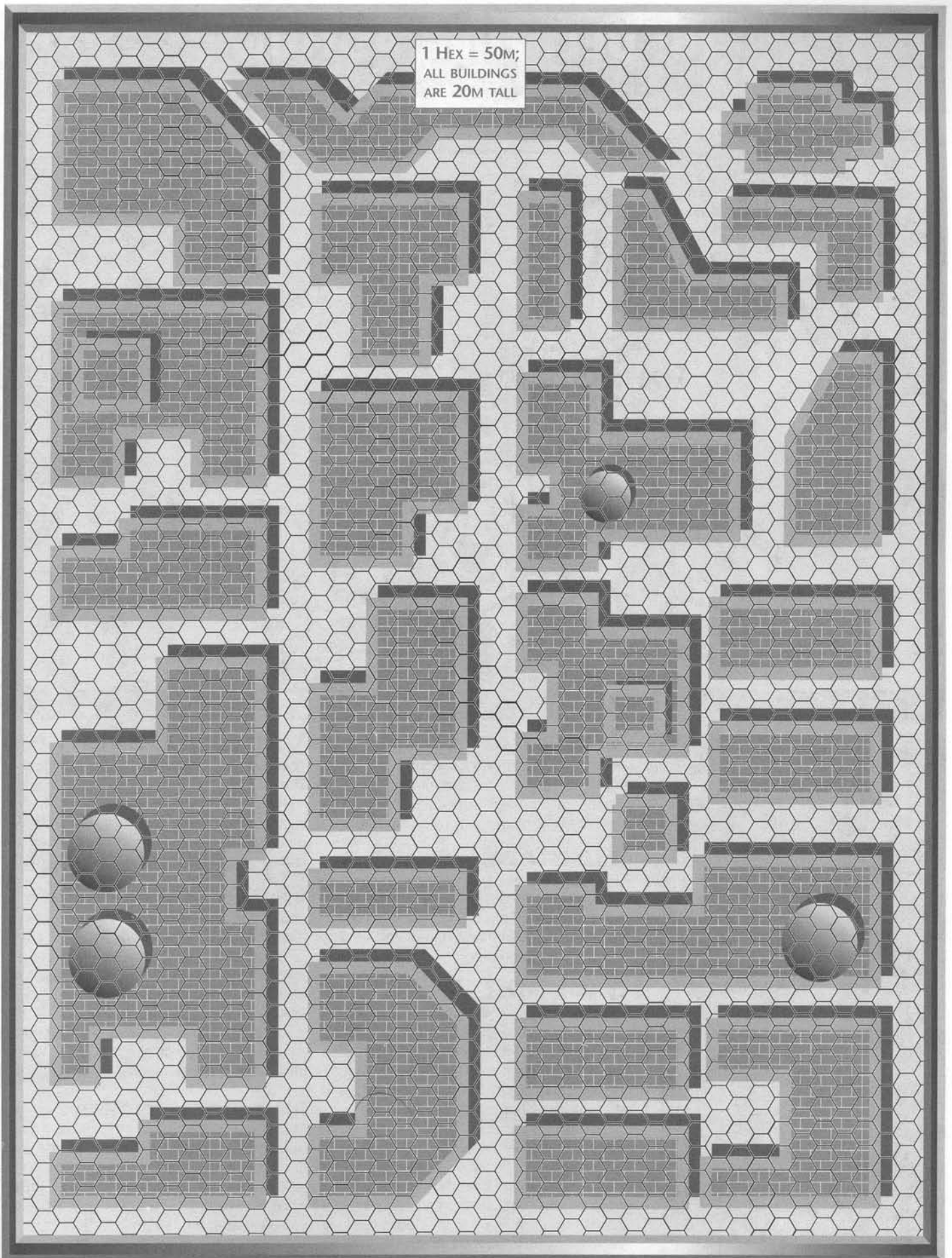
Terran Strategy

You're here to skrag buildings, not to mix it up with Imperial mecha. Avoid them if possible; use your big boys to blow down buildings while the little guys hold off the Imperials (and deal with those pesky foot troops). It would do you well to equip almost every unit with something capable of repeatedly doing 10 Kills of damage, in order to blow up buildings.

Imperial Strategy

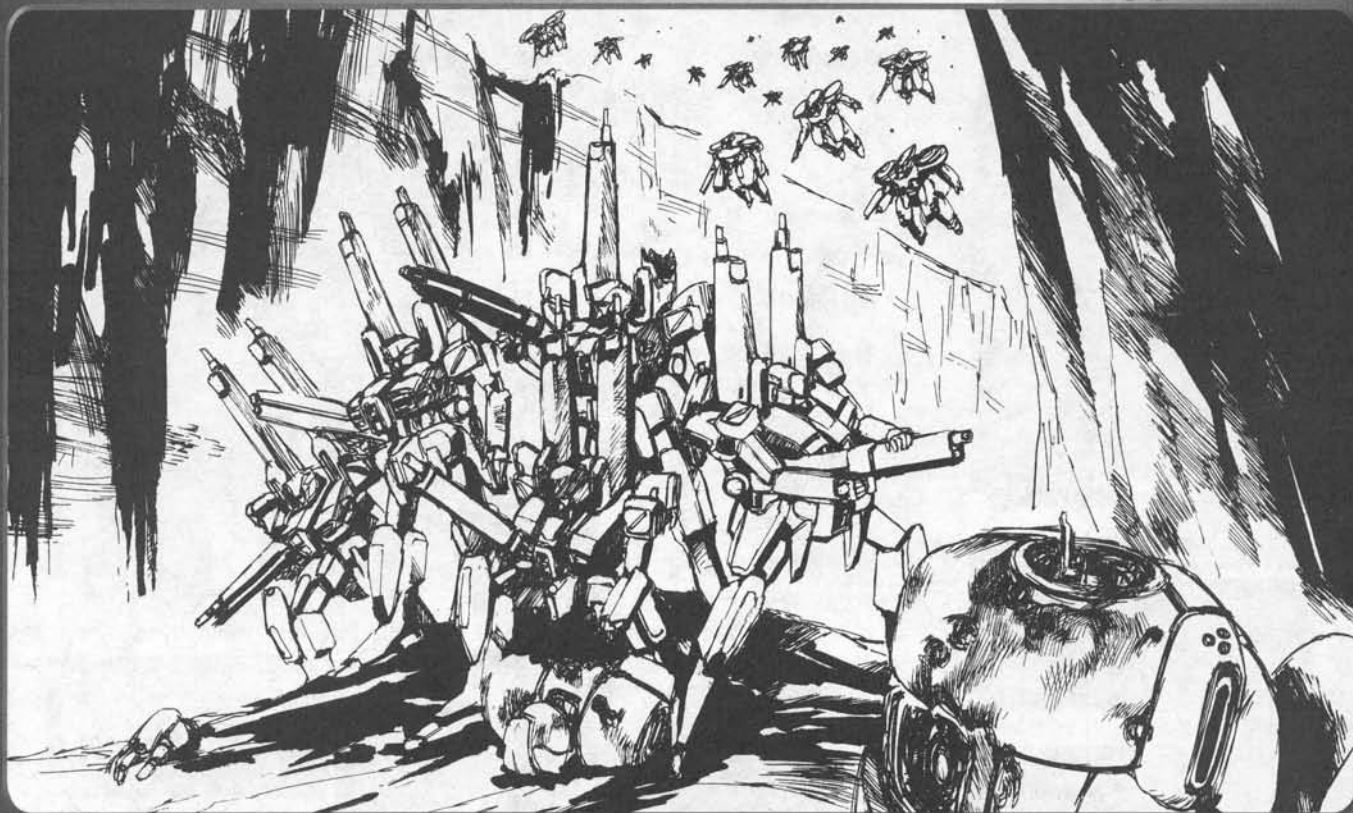
At last, you've got a chance to show the Terrans what infantry can do, even if they're only technicians. (However, even Imperial technicians are cloned from stock that can fight like demons.) Set your techs in strongholds, where they can try to get interlocking fields of fire. Then use your mecha to drive the Terrans into these fire zones.

1 Hex = 50M;
ALL BUILDINGS
ARE 20M TALL



16: DELAYING ACTION

てまどらせるおこころみる



The terrestrial Medal of Valor, for commemorating sacrifice above and beyond the call of duty."

Circumstances: In action on planet Tau 1 Eridani IV, the starcruiser Fearless engaged in the rescue of personnel from the wrecked starcruiser Unshakeable. During this action, enemy forces laying siege to the downed cruiser were beaten back, allowing evacuation of Terran personnel. The enemy rallied and attacked in overwhelming force; the flight crews of the Fearless volunteered to remain behind and delay the enemy, in order to allow the recovery boat to lift off and return to the Fearless. They succeeded, destroying fourteen enemy mecha, but gave their lives in the process."

Recipients: Flight Commander P. Eddington, Lt. T. Plutonium, Lt. J. Brightwell, Lt. M. Renshaw, and Lt. R. Vaughn... All posthumous."

THE MAP

Massive boulders that dot the battlefield. These boulders are huge—big enough for mecha to use as cover. They're capable of sustaining much more damage than any 1x scale attack.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans have five Rapiers holding off the Empire. They have one commander and four normal pilots. The Rapiers can be modified: the command Rapier to 250 CP, and the normal Rapiers to 225 CP.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get twenty-four (!) standard Gorgons piloted by one commander, two aces, and twenty-one normal pilots. These mecha can be modified, but may not cost more than the standard 180 CP. They can only enter a few at a time, though. See the set-up, below.

SET-UP

Terrans set up in the left side of the map. Then the Imperials enter from the right edge. The Imperials may only bring on six mecha every three turns—that is, up to six mecha enter on the first turn, up to six more on turn 4, up to six more on turn 7, and the final six on turn 10.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans are fighting a suicidal battle. The fate of the *Fearless* depends on it. If any Terran mecha survive for more than 14 turns, the Terrans win. If they are destroyed before turn 15, the Imperials win.

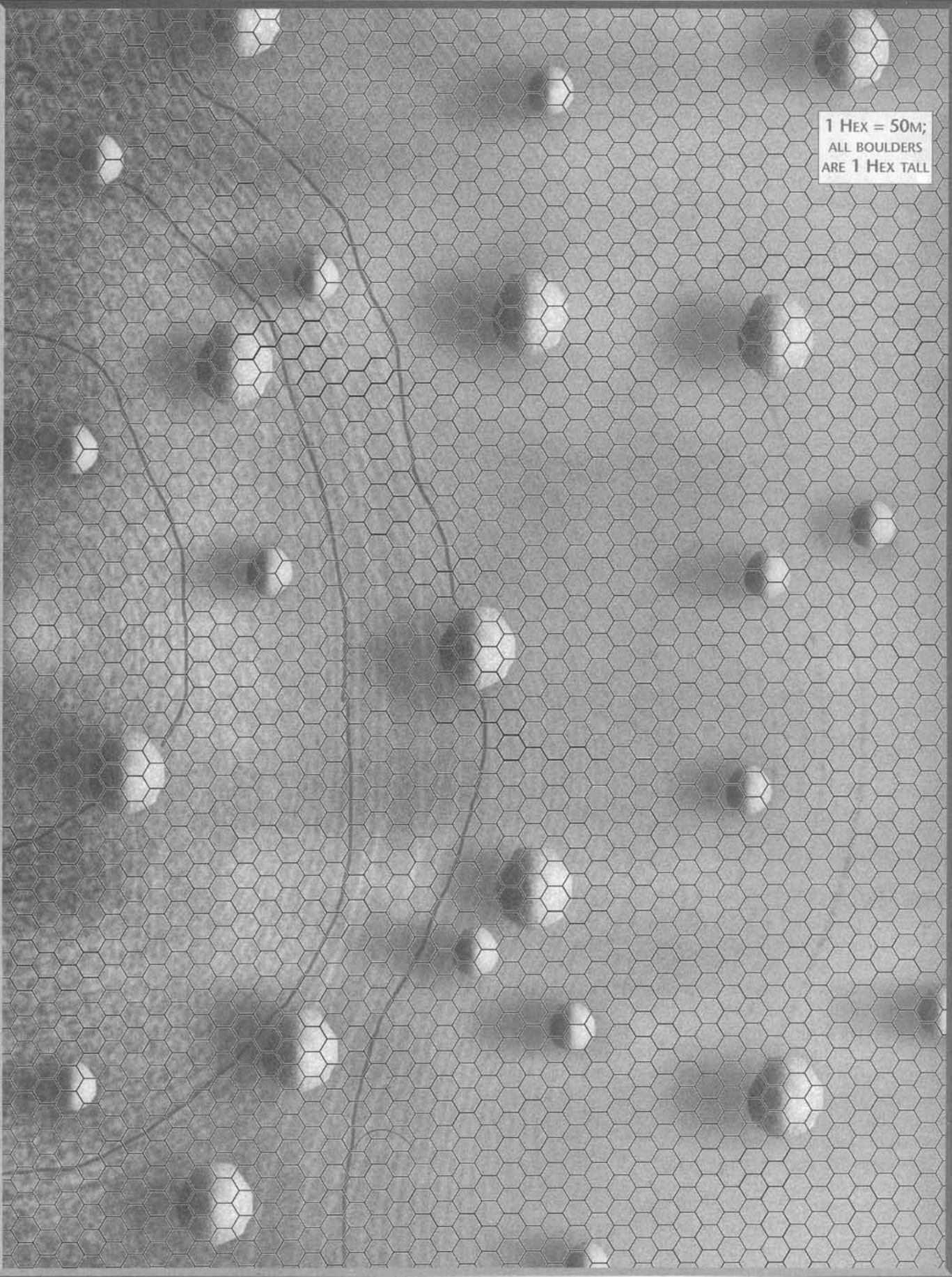
STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

You're going to be fighting a long, drawn-out battle, so don't take weapons with small ammo supplies. Beam Weapons and EMWs are choice, Shields are essential; Beamshields are excellent, because they don't ablate. Time is the Empire's friend in the early going; don't let the Imperials congregate in the first six turns of the game, for if you do, they'll come at you on turn 7 with eighteen mecha!

Imperial Strategy

Modify your weapons; use melee weapons and make your shields bigger (say, increase their DA to -0) and lighter in weight (6 SP). Try to send a few mecha to spar with the Terrans while you wait for more to show up. Whatever you do, get moving by turn 7! If you have ten or so mecha left by then, you should be able to gang-rush the Terrans and overwhelm them.



1 Hex = 50m;
ALL BOULDERS
ARE 1 Hex TALL

17: THE ENEMY BELOW

ちかのてき

Sure is a pretty world," Max commented. The world in question revolved swiftly below the Galant, its tan surface dotted with green and mottled with green-blue oceans and lakes. No mountains rose to meet the huge storms blowing across its continents; the planet gave the impression of a decorated billiard ball.

"Whatever would the enemy want down there?" Dr. Graves asked. He waved a hand at the storms. "The wind speed in those is clocked at over 200 kph! And elsewhere the normal wind speed is at least 100 kph. No wonder the place doesn't have any mountains."

"Hot, too. Its high albedo is counter balanced by a high greenhouse effect." Dr. Logan examined the sensor probe's readout. "Here is what the Empire wants. The surface is covered with a mineral-rich sand. An interesting configuration. All they have to do is scoop it up and put it in a refinery."

"That explains the enemy base," Captain Antares said. "Now all we have to do is get our mecha down there to destroy it. In those winds" He chewed his pipe stem thoughtfully.

"We make a remote landing in the lander," Commander Frozen announced. "The ship would never survive the winds. And that way the enemy's guns can't abort the landing."

"There's no way the Rapiers are going to fly in that tornado!" Dr. Graves protested.

"No, they'll have to walk," Dr. Logan smiled smugly. "That's why we gave them legs, Marcel." He scowled at the mention of his given name, and her smile got a bit more smug, because she knew he hated it.

Commander Frozen turned to Lt. Yuh, the flight leader. "Feel up to it, Don?"

"Yessir!" Yuh saluted. "It'll feel good to have some standard gravity under our feet."

IMPERIAL EVALUATION OF PLANET 9864-1 (TERRAN MONICKER "SKORPONOS"): Planet is a natural mineral preserve, an open mine, rich in usable materials. Unfortunately, it is occupied by a persistent intelligent arthropoid lifeform. This lifeform uses biological engineering to fashion lifeforms for specific uses as tools, warriors, and food sources. There is no one somatype

for the lifeform, as even the intelligent lifeforms use genetic engineering to change their configuration according to whatever the hive needs. These lifeforms are extremely inimical to outside lifeforms, and caused considerable damage to Imperial mining forces until countermeasures could be devised and implemented. Even so, Imperial forces are confined to one fortress refinery; venturing beyond its defenses is not safe, and even then the native arthropods continue to test these defenses. Their flair for new development is shocking, as is the speed with which they deploy said developments. It is possible that they could pose a serious threat to the Empire if they ever achieve interstellar capabilities and interhive cooperation. Recommend sterilization of this world as soon as possible...

THE MAP

The world of Skorponos is not a friendly place. Its surface is largely heavy sands dotted with frequent oases of thick jungle. The sands and the jungles crawl, literally, with arthropods of all sizes, from the size of a pinpoint to monstrosities the size of a lawn chair. To make things worse, the wind roars like a pocket hurricane at all times, making things hazardous for anything in the air. Not surprisingly, the arthropods of Skorponos aren't fliers.

The sands are normal, clear terrain. The jungles are thick — each hex takes 3 MA to grind through, and counts as 10 SP of "armor" (this is not reduced by damage) for anything hiding in or behind it. If a unit is firing out of a jungle hex it must expose

at least the servo bearing the weapon and the servo bearing its sensors. All other locations are considered covered by the jungle. The winds are nasty and fast, so anything flying spends 2 MA for each hex moved, and any flier that suffers the "knocked down" effect on the Knockback Table must succeed at a Difficulty 20 Mecha Piloting roll or be blown to the sands below (treat as having fallen from the former altitude of the flier).

TERRAN FORCES

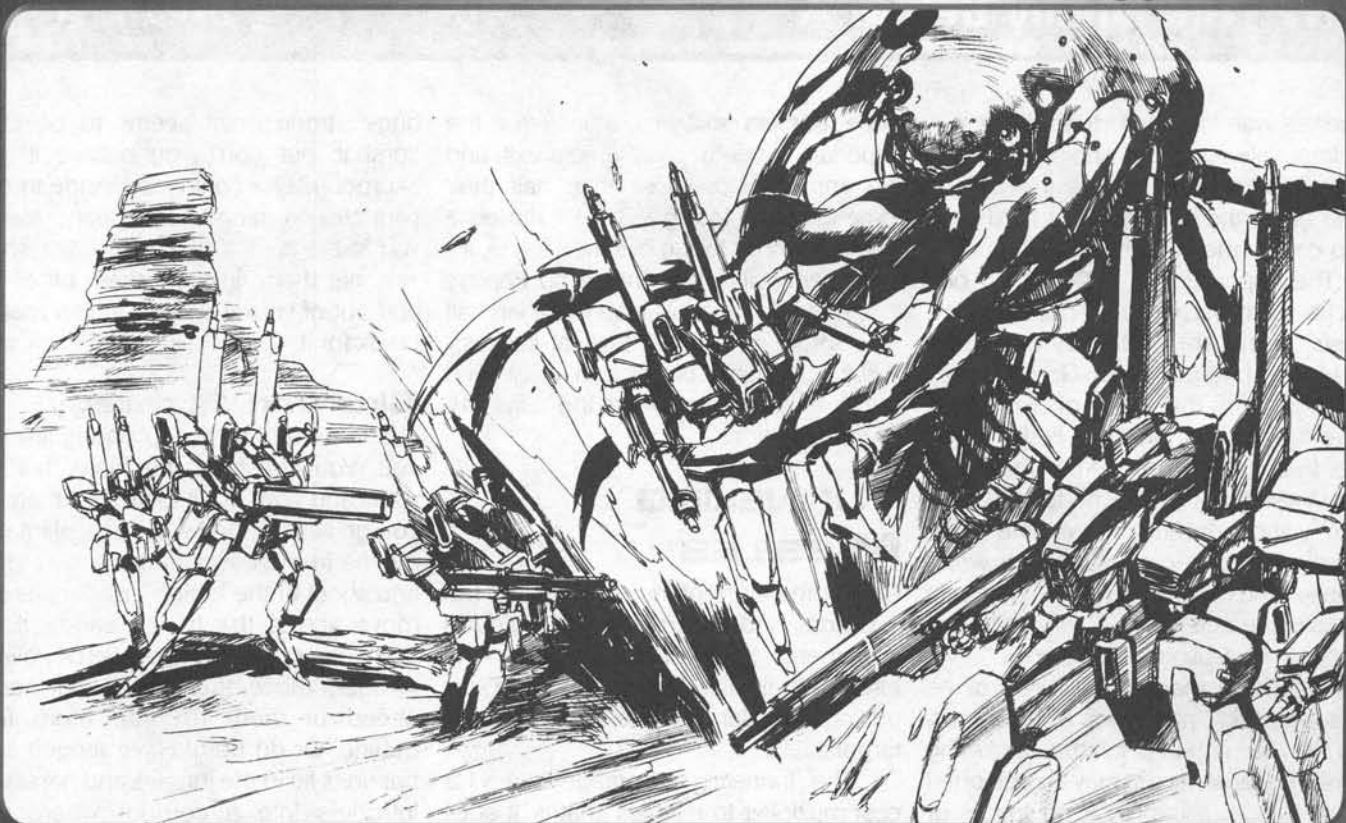
The Terrans have 5 Rapiers, piloted by one commander (Lt. Donchoi Yuh), two aces (Mariko Lim and Mark B. Michaels), and two normal pilots. Yuh's Rapier may be modified to 250 CP, Mariko's and

Mark's Rapiers may be modified to 225 CP, and the other pair may be modified to 200 CP.

ALIEN FORCES

The natives here evolved a swift response to the Imperial invasion. They mimicked the idea of large form, equipped their new combat forms with bioweapons, and struck back at the Empire.

The aliens get 2000 Construction Points. They have so much because of the restrictions on these mecha, which are as follows: The mecha must be constructed with the Techno-Organic, Internal Automation, and Thought Control modifiers. Furthermore, they must be built with Tunneling as a movement system.



Biomecha can use all sorts of weaponry — physical melee weapons are, of course, a natural. Energy weapons can be rationalized as issuing from chitinous lenses, powered by internal capacitors; energy melee weapons are acids or bio-energy fields. Projectile weapons shoot chitinous shells expelled by muscle power, natural electromagnetic guns, or gas pressure — incendiary shells are perfect here, representing shells filled with acids and other reactants. Because of their tunneling movement, and the fact that these mecha are living creatures, they don't normally use hand-held weapons, but there's no reason that they can't — a hand-held weapon could be (and probably is) an entirely different creature or symbiotic combination of creatures.

Skorpon biomecha usually have at least six limbs. Of course, they can have fewer (as few as two!) or even more.

The Skorpon "mecha" can also jump quite amazingly. They can't fly, but they can buy "jump jets" (thrusters at MA 7 or less) which require no fuel — they're muscles that hurtle the mecha into the air. Because they evolved for the world's environment, the jumping Skorpons don't suffer the movement modifiers applying to other fliers.

TUNNELING

The sands of Skorponos are full of minerals and trace elements; that was the reason that the Empire came here. These minerals also disrupt sensors. The Terrans don't know this, and they don't know that the Skorpons can be detected (sort of) by seismic sensors. Because of this, the Skorpons move underground with complete secrecy.

The Skorpon player requires a photocopy of the map (it's OK, we said so). When a Skorpon mecha is tunneling, the figure/counter is removed from the normal playing field and its motion is plotted by the Skorpon player on the underground map (small counters can be used, or the player can write down the location). When the mecha surfaces, the counter/figure is replaced on the playing field in the new hex.

As you can see, the Skorpons are masters of ambush and surprise attack. Without seismic detectors, a foe is at a disadvantage.

SET-UP

The Skorpons "set up" underground anywhere they want to on the battlefield. The Terrans then enter on the designated edge, headed for the other side of the

map. Once the Terrans enter, they get the first move. Then the "bug hunt" begins ... only this time, the bugs are the hunters.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans want to get the dickens out of here. This world is the nastiest place they've ever been in. For the Skorpons, they only want to destroy the invaders; they make no distinction between the Empire and anyone else. If it's not a Skorpon, destroy it.

Victory levels depend on how many Rapiers exit the map: 5 Rapiers = Major Terran victory. 4 Rapiers = Minor Terran victory. 3 Rapiers = Draw. 2 Rapiers = Minor Skorpon victory. 1 Rapier = Major Skorpon victory. 0 Rapiers = The bugs swept the board, and the Terran player needs to rethink his tactics.

OPTIONAL IMPERIAL FORCE

The Imperials could send out a force to deal with the pesky Terrans. In the normal scenario, their commander is content to wait for them to walk through the bug-infested living minefield while the

Imperials wait in their fortress. However, the Imperials could get nervous and dispatch a force to make sure the Terrans never get to the fortress. Get a third player to control the Imperials.

The Imperials get 1000 CP to buy mecha so they can come out and play. These mecha are piloted by one commander and normal pilots. Gorgon types are suggested; the winds of Skorponos make fighter craft like the Furie a bad idea. If desired, the Imperials may construct new types of mecha for this scenario without having to pay the 10% "shipping fee"; they've been on this world a while, and they're trying to construct new combat units that will be capable of conclusively dealing with the bugs.

In addition, the Imperials know of the sensor-blocking properties of the sands, and they're prepared for the burrowing terrors. Imperial mecha may be equipped with seismic sensors (1 CP, no spaces or kills). These sensors can only work if the mecha using them is touching the ground; what they do is detect subterranean units in a radius of (2x detection range in km) hexes. For instance, a mecha with a sensor suite with a detection range of 7km would be able to give the positions of all subterranean units within 14 hexes of the detecting unit.

These positions are only rough estimates, however. When buried units are "detected" seismically, the Skorpon player gives a hex location for each detected unit. The unit does not have to be in that hex, though; draw a one-hex radius around the detection hex. The actual Skorpon must be in one of those seven hexes; only the Skorpon player knows for certain.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Skorpon lifeforms (including these biomecha) naturally use seismic sensors, so all the Skorpons have said sensors, just in case the Imperial player decides to deploy some tunnelers of his own!

The Imperials enter from the Terran exit map edge; they come on after the Terrans.

Imperial victory conditions depend on two factors: how many Rapiers exit the board, and how many Imperial mecha survive to exit as well! If at least

three Rapiers exit, it's a loss for the Imperials. If one or two Rapiers exit, and the Imperials lose less than half their force (by CP — losing a 501+ CP mecha would count as losing half their force), it's an Imperial victory. If one or no Rapiers exit, and the Imperials lose less than half their force, it's a great tactical success, and the Imperial player can gloat (and breathe a sigh of relief that the bugs didn't mangle him).

TUNNELING MISSILES

Given the nature of the enemy, both the Skorpons and the Imperials developed armaments to combat their foes. The effects of this new technology were surprisingly similar, despite their different targets.

The Tunneling advantage is a x1.3 cost multiplier to missiles (that is, it adds 30% to the missile's cost). What it gives the missile is the ability to fly through the air, as normal, then strike the ground and burrow underneath to attack a subterranean target (with the imprecise location of subterranean units, Tunneling Missiles work well with the Blast Radius advantage). It can also be shot while underground (doing so does not reveal the location of the firing unit), whereupon it tunnels through the ground, bursting from below to strike its target at the last moment.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

Your objective is to get the (censored) out of here! Your mecha are on the way to raid an Imperial base, not to stick around and dance with the bugs. Suggested modifications to your Rapiers include wheels (!), since these will add to your ground speed. You can also try mechariders, although these are vulnerable to being singled out and smashed by the bugs. If you don't have shields by now, then by all means get them, and make sure they're big ones. Energy shields are especially good (if expensive). There is a temptation to forgo a lot of the Rapier's ranged weaponry, given that the

bugs' strong point seems to be close combat, but don't you believe it! The Skorpon player could just decide to concentrate on ranged weaponry, leaving you in the cold. Knock 'em down, shock 'em, net them; just get them off of you and out of your way, so you can make a break for it.

Skorpon Strategy

The burden of tactical planning lies with you. You construct the force that you want and plan your tactics to match. If you go with ranged weapons, plant your mecha in the cover of the oasis jungles and shoot at the foolish invaders as they move across the barren sands. If you use close combat tactics, watch how the invaders move, then move your mecha ahead of them to grab them from behind. Or do both! Have ranged-combat units lie in the jungles and harass the intruders into a corridor where your close combat units lie. If the Imperials show up, don't ignore them. They have the technology to find and destroy your units, and their victory conditions rely on getting out with most of their forces. Detail a few of your units to go chew them up; if the Terrans are lagging and you've got enough time, send the lion's share of your mecha after the Imperials, fast! This is known as "doing unto others before they can do unto you."

Imperial Strategy

For once you have it easy. All you have to do is sit back and watch the fun. After all, the poor Terrans are the fools trying to bull their way through the killer fleas, right? Wrong. The bugs know you, and don't like you — after all, the Empire started all of this, didn't it? They also know that your mecha have ways to find and shoot Skorpon units, so they're going to be gunning for you, since you're an equal threat. Still, standing back and blasting everything that comes near isn't a bad strategy — a bit crude, perhaps, but effective. Don't forget those tunneling missiles, and don't neglect the normal ranged weapons, either. As with the Terrans, big shields (particularly energy shields) can be life savers.

1 Hex = 50M

JUNGLE

18: THE SIEGE OF LONGOS III

ロングス3のほうい

Mark B. Michaels worked to fit a new magazine to his Rapier's cannon. On his sensor readout he could see the positions of the other Rapiers, as well as the positions of Major Gannon's Minutemen: little green blips with ID numbers. There were a number of red blips, too — the remnants of the Gorgon garrison that they'd ambushed.

It was all part of the plan.

Donchoi had led a small force out to ambush the outer garrison to the spaceport complex, with the intention of destroying them and decoying out the main garrison to come and chase them. Of course, it had gone sour immediately — the Gorgons hadn't gone down like they were supposed to, and now a few were holed up in some improvised defenses. What was worse was the certainty that the rest of the garrison was on the way to res-

cue them; it was only a matter of time before Kandrax and his bully boys showed.

"Ready to move out," Major Gannon's voice resounded.

"Affirmative," Donchoi agreed. "All right, let's do it!" Mark moved his controls and his Rapier sprinted out, headed for the Gorgons. Around him, other suits and mecha moved as well; tracers and missile trails reached out from the Gorgons' position.

THE MAP

This scenario's map is fairly straightforward. The clumps of light woods block line of sight and count as rough terrain when moving in them. The few fortifications that the Gorgons of the first force have been able to throw up consist of massive earth and rock berms; these are large enough to protect the legs of a crouching mecha, or protect the legs and lower torso of a prone mecha. For game effects, each berm counts as 10 SP of armor that doesn't ablate from attacks. A mecha crouching behind it receives that armor protection to attacks hitting its legs. A mecha prone behind it receives that protection to attacks hitting its legs, and has a 50% chance of receiving that protection to attacks hitting its torso.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans have 2500 CP to build a force of Rapiers and, if desired, Minutemen roadstrikers. There must be at least five Rapiers, one piloted by a hero (Donchoi Yuh), two piloted by aces (Mariko and Mark B. Michaels), and the rest piloted by normal pilots. If Minuteman roadstrikers are used, one is piloted by a commander and the others by normal pilots. Donchoi Yuh's Rapier is modifiable to 300 CP, Mariko and Mark's Rapiers to 275 CP, and the other Rapiers to 250 CP. The commander's Minuteman is modifiable to 80 CP, and the other Minutemen modifiable to 50 CP.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials have two forces. Force #1 consists of 1000 CP of old Gorgons, piloted by one commander and as many normal pilots as needed. These Gorgons are modifiable; the commander's may be modified to 250 CP and the others to 200 CP.

Force #2 consists of 2000 CP of new Gorgons: Commander Kandrax's elite squadron! There's one hero (Kandrax), two aces (Lt. Quint and another ace), and as many normal pilots as needed. Kandrax's Gorgon may be modified to 300 CP, the aces' Gorgons may be modified to 275 CP, and the other Gorgons may be modified to 225 CP.

SET-UP

Imperial force #1 sets up first in the area noted for its deployment. Then the Terrans set up at least 10 hexes away from the Imperial force set-up zone.

Imperial force #2 enters the battlefield from any and all board edges. No more than half of force #2 (by CP) may enter from any one board edge. When force #2 enters is determined by die rolls; at the beginning of turn #2, roll 1d10. On a roll of 3 or less, force #2 is allowed to enter. If force #2 doesn't show up on turn #2, continue rolling 1d10 at the beginning of each turn thereafter, subtracting 1 from the die roll for each turn past turn #2, until force #2 shows up. (The number needed is 1+the number of the turn. On turn #2, the roll needed is a 3; on turn #5, the number needed is a 6; etc.)

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans win by overrunning Imperial force #1. This means that they must destroy or chase away at least 75% of Imperial force #1 (by CP), while suffering less than 50% casualties (by CP) to win. The Imperials win by preserving at least 40% of Imperial force #1 and destroying at least 50% of the Terran force. Any other outcome is a draw (and a bloody one at that).

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

The burden of attack is upon you. You don't stand much of a chance against the combined forces of the Imperials, so don't stand around waiting for the relief force to show up! Go in and attack first; try to swamp those inferior Gorgons with your upgraded Rapiers, then turn to meet the charge of Kandrax's squadron.

Imperial Strategy

Dig in with the Gorgons of force #1. If you can, make sure that you've always got a wall between you and the Terrans. Your job is to hold out long enough for the cavalry to arrive. Of course, if the Terrans allow a hole in their lines large enough to escape through, move toward it as soon as your relief force shows up. Catching some hapless Terrans between the hammer of your relief force and the anvil of force #1 is too much to hope for, but it might happen

1 Hex = 50M

GORGON "FORT"

IMPERIAL DEPLOYMENT ZONE

LIGHT WOODS

19: THE BATTLE OF DELIRIA

テリリアのせんとく

Mark looked up into the sky. Instead of the unbroken expanse of blue he had grown up with, he saw a vast vista of orange and red bands, with a brownish murk at the edges of the beautiful globe as borders. What he was seeing was the primary planet, a Jovian gas giant. He remembered the briefing on the system: There were nineteen moons, ranging in size from a rock to a couple of massive planets. This moon, Deliria, was one of the two largest — a nasty-looking world, stained with the ocher of sulfur emissions, its atmosphere smog brown and its seas a dull yellow-green. The continents were mottled with green-brown jungles and broken by gigantic, fuming volcanic peaks. In all, it was one of the least hospitable worlds he'd seen on this junket through the galaxy, as habitable worlds went.

The atmosphere was breathable — if you filtered out all the chemicals and the heavy sulfur — and there was enough atmospheric pressure for a man to work without a pressure suit. That was why they were here. The *Galant* had chased the Imperial destroyer to this system; damaged, the Imperials had sought out this world and landed, hoping to escape detection. Hidden by the massive radiation fields of the system, they could repair the damage the *Galant* had done; repairs that could be done more swiftly out of pressure suits.

That, Captain Antares had surmised, had been their plan. Unfortunately for the Imperials, Antares had figured out where they were. The thick atmosphere had prevented orbital bombardment — at that range, the *Galant* would be in the soup, and one solid hit from the destroyer's batteries would doom the starcruiser. So the dropship had landed the squadron to approach from the ground and finish it off.

That was the beginning of the nightmare. This world was mad, Mark realized. Torn by tidal stresses, battered by radiation, it was a hellhole, made worse by the fact that it was

marginally livable. It wouldn't kill you off immediately; no, the end would be slow and agonizing. It would take a man a half-hour to finally choke to death.

That was, if the plants didn't get you — plants that spat fire, lashed out with tentacles, exploded, or sprayed spores that would etch metal with their acidic content. Or plants that had toothed maws on stems, that would bend and strike. One of these had chewed on David's Rapier; the teeth marks made a jagged pattern on the bottom of his shield.

Most of the time, though, the plants were busy trying to fight off or eat the wildlife, which was trying to fight off or eat the plants, and each other. And the wildlife was well equipped for the fight — spiked, scaled, fanged, clawed, with sensors protected by ridges of bone and cartilage, and vitals beneath layers of thick skin, muscle, and gristle. Most of them would make short work of an unprotected man, even though terrestrial flesh would poison them (and vice versa). Fortunately, most of them were too small to bother the Rapiers. Some of them were even larger than the Rapiers; these were the ones that they tried to avoid. But the monsters had no compunction about charging the Rapiers, even though outnumbered ten to one. The first one they encountered had come rampaging out of the jungle and bowled over Max's Rapier, ripping at the head module, before the others had managed to kill it.

The old proverb about fools fighting in a burning house came to mind. If they stayed here for very long, this planet would be the death of them all. Even the dropship crew had been kept busy watching the sensors for earthquakes and inquisitive fauna. No doubt the Imperial destroyer was attracting attention as well.

"Sensor contact, range twenty-two hundred," Jodrell's voice woke them all up.

"Looks like the Imperials are coming out to play," Donchoi said. "All right, everyone, battle stations."

THE MAP

The map looks like a standard light jungle map. It isn't. This is Deliria, a world of constant change. The elevation levels work normally; the rock pits, craters, and mud streams all count as rough terrain. Of course, there is the problem of the massive gravity field here. At 1.8 standard gravities, thrusters and other movement types don't work quite as well. Divide all MA except tracked movement by 1.8, rounding off, to determine the MA used here. For instance, the normal Rapier thrusters allow it to fly at 9 MA. Here, that comes down to 5 MA, which reduces it to jump-jetting. Its normal 4 MA ground movement becomes 2 MA.

The rest of the terrain is detailed below.

A Dangerous Place to Be

Deliria is described as tectonically unstable, at best. A more accurate description would be tectonically tortured or, perhaps, insane. The multiple moons and the massive primary of the planetary system exert tidal stresses that flex the moon of Deliria like putty. Volcanism reaches new highs of activity here; fumeroles, mud pits, and volcanoes can form in moments, without much warning.

In order to simulate this earth movement gone mad, roll 1D10 each turn. On a roll of 1-2, roll again on the following table:

1D10	EFFECT
1-3	Groundfall
4-7	Tremor
8-9	Minor Eruption
10	Major Eruption

Groundfall

One of the mecha stumbling about on the board has walked over a lava tunnel or other weak point in the ground. Determine the victim at random. That mecha then falls into the ground for



one level of fall, and is trapped there unless the pilot can climb out (Mecha Piloting roll of Difficulty 20; may try once per turn) or fly out (even 1 MA of jump jets will allow this). Mark the spot for future reference; there's a whopping great hole there now and anyone who walks across it in the future is going to fall in unless he makes a Mecha Piloting roll of Difficulty 15.

Tremor

A minor earthquake shakes the entire battlefield. Roll 1D10 and add 10 for the intensity — this is the Difficulty for the Mecha Piloting roll to remain upright. The act of remaining upright takes one action, and any firing done by ground-bound units during the quake is at $-(\text{intensity}/5, \text{rounded up})$ because of all the shaking. For example, an intensity 15 quake gives a -3 to all firing while it's going on. Those units equipped with thrusters may take to the air, using two movement actions (and moving their total flying MA, if desired) while the quake is going on. Units in the air do

not suffer to-hit penalties for the quake effects. Roll 1D10 on the next turn; if you roll a 1, the quake continues! It continues as long as you roll a 1 on 1D10 every turn. If a tremor is already happening, another tremor cannot occur.

Minor Eruption

A fumerole or mud pit erupts somewhere on the board. Roll 2D10 twice; the first number is the number of hexes down (counting the northernmost hex row as 1), while the second number is the number of hexes across (counting the westernmost hex as 1). This is the location of the eruption. Any unit in that hex suffers a 5-Kill blast and must make a Mecha Piloting roll of Difficulty 15 to stay on its feet. This blast extends upward one level, so the damage and possible knock-down affects mecha flying at that level as well. Any unit within a 1-hex radius, on the ground or at altitude level 1, receives a 3-Kill blast from flying debris. In addition, the hex of the eruption and the six hexes around it block LOS, just like smoke/screen mis-

siles. Mark the spot for future reference, because it continues erupting during the rest of the game.

Major Eruption

A small volcano is born. Like the minor eruption, roll 2D10 twice for the cone's location. Any unit in that hex, or flying overhead at up to level 2, suffers a 20-Kill blast, and the mecha is automatically knocked down. In addition, the pilot must make a Mecha Piloting roll of Difficulty 20 or his mecha is covered in lava and is out of the game! Shields with a DA of 0 may be used to parry this; the shield is quite lost, but the mecha survives if the pilot successfully parries (difficulty 20), jettisoning the shield afterwards. Units in a 2-hex radius, at up to altitude level 2, take 10 Kills of explosive blast damage from lava bombs. Mark this hex! This volcano is here to stay! It does this damage every turn. Like the lesser eruption, the hex of the eruption and all hexes for a 3-hex radius around it block LOS, just like smoke/screen missiles.

In addition, roll 1d6 for the direction of the volcano's lava flow (use the deviation diagram on page 97 of *Mekton Zeta*). The lava flows at MA 6 in that direction each turn. The flow is 1 hex wide, and will only change direction if it hits a terrain elevation, another eruption cone, or some such obstacle (use common sense). Any unit caught by the flow suffers 2D10 Kills of damage, with accompanying knockback effects. If a unit actually falls into the lava flow or the eruption hex itself, it is destroyed.

PLANET DELIRIA: EVOLUTION RUN AMOK

As if the geological conditions weren't bad enough, there are the flora and fauna of Deliria. These have had to evolve into lifeforms tough enough to survive the ecological madness that is Deliria.

A lot of the lifeforms are too small to bother mecha. Some of them, however, are quite happy to attack mecha. When one of these is found, roll 2D10 for the number of Kills the creature/plant can stand. Roll another 2D10 for the lifeform's melee (or ranged) skill. Creatures have an MA equal to (1D10/2, round up)+1. Plants don't move. When the lifeform attacks, it does half its Kills in damage (round down). All creature attacks are melee attacks. Roll 1D10 for plant attacks: 1-5, melee; 6-8, ranged with Blast Radius 1 (treat these attacks as projectile weapons for appropriate range); 9-10, ranged with Incendiary Blast Radius 1. Creatures and plants have no morale; they won't run. Deliria's ecology has weeded out any large lifeforms other than berserkers; these things will fight until dead.

The jungle hexes just might contain some of these plants and creatures. Roll 1D10 when entering or passing adjacent to a jungle hex; on a roll of 1, there's a mecha-eating plant there! On a roll of 2, there's a creature there that doesn't like intruders.

In addition, creatures might wander onto the board during the fight. Roll 1D10 per turn; on a roll of 1, a creature wanders onto the board from a random board edge. Once the board edge is determined, the creature goes for the mecha — *or other creature* — closest to that board edge.

DELIRIA'S RANDOM EVENT CHART

PER TURN:

- **TECTONIC DISTURBANCE:** Roll 1D10. On a roll of 1, roll 1D10 again: 1-3: Groundfall; 4-7, Tremor; 8-9, Minor Eruption; 10, Major Eruption. If a tremor happened last turn, then roll 1D10 again; on a 1, the tremor continues.
- **CREATURE FEATURES:** Roll 1D10. On a roll of 1, a random creature shows up.
- **WHEN ENTERING JUNGLES:** Roll 1D10. On a 1, encounter a plant, on a 2, encounter a creature.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get the entire complement of the *Galant's* fighter squadron: ten Rapiers, with one hero (Lt. Yuh), two aces (Mariko and Michaels), and seven normal pilots. Lt. Yuh's Rapier can be modified to 300 CP, Mariko and Michaels may modify their Rapiers to 275 CP, and the other Rapiers may be modified to 225 CP.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials are fighting for their lives and for the life of their ship. They get a hero in a 275 CP unit, one ace in a 250 CP unit, and eight normal pilots in 200 CP units. Mecha may be Gorgons, Medusas, and/or Furies.

SET-UP

The Imperials enter first from the northern map edge. Then the Terrans enter from the southern map edge.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Imperials can't allow the Terrans through, and the Terrans can't leave the Imperials behind to catch them between the hammer of Imperial mecha and the anvil of the destroyer's batteries. Therefore, the Terrans have to destroy the Imperials and slip through to the destroyer. Victory is based on 1) all the Imperials destroyed or neutralized, and 2) how many Terran mecha survive. If 5+ Terran mecha survive, it's a Terran major victory. If 4 Terran mecha survive, it's a Terran minor victory. If 2-3 Terran mecha survive, it's a draw. If 1 or fewer Terran mecha survive, it's an Imperial minor victory. If any Imperial mecha survive and can still move and fight, it's an Imperial major victory.

STRATEGY TIPS Terran Strategy

The Terrans have more points than the Imperials, and they're going to need them, because the victory conditions depend on destroying the Imperials. Quick-kill weapons are best, because the longer you hang about on the battlefield, the more likely the battlefield is to bite back.

Imperial Strategy

Waiting out the Terrans is the idea. Pull back, shoot and run, chip away at them. Try to maneuver them near the jungles, where the critters lurk. And remember, the Terrans can't win until all your mecha are destroyed or out of commission.

"Looks like the Imperials are coming out to play," Donchoi said. "All right, everyone, battle stations."

1 Hex = 50M

MUD STREAM

CRATERS

ROCK PIT

HILL
3 HEXES
TALL

JUNGLE

ROCK PIT

ROCK PIT

20: SWAMPED

ぬまのわなにかける

PDF Lieutenant Mark B. Michaels glared sourly at the landscape about him. This jazz about seeking new planets, new lifeforms, and new civilizations wasn't all it had been promised to be. Of course, there was a little matter of a war on to get in the way of sight-seeing and making contact with marvelous alien races full of gorgeous space princesses and generally having a good time. After all, taking a moment off to have a good time in Imperial space was a good way to get blown up.

Still, even during a war, weren't there supposed to be vistas of exotic alien landscapes of such stunning beauty that they'd haunt a man's dreams forever? Sure, once he'd thought that about spacescapes, but after a while they all started looking the same—when you'd seen one nebula, you'd seen them all (although the astronomers didn't seem to think so).

Where were the plains of ice and diamonds shining in distant sunlight?

Where were the mountain ranges of obsidian? Where were the cerulean lakes, filled with crystal clear water as cold as ice and as intoxicating as wine? When he got back to Terra, he resolved to have a word with all those artists making a living making up spacescapes, in order to let them in on the simple truth: In all his travels so far, he'd seen no landscape as beautiful as the sun coming up over the Arizona mesas.

This landscape sure didn't qualify as anything special. It looked like a primordial version of the Florida swamps, minus the alligators. Not nearly as pretty, either—the colors were a mix of dull green, dull red, and dull brown, all made even more dull by their dull contrast.

Treacherous, too. The dull brown water concealed deep pits in the terrain. When Marsha fell into one, they'd thought that something had gotten her! She crawled out a few seconds later, mud oozing from her brown-and-olive-drab-

camouflaged Rapier. Fear of falling in caused them to move more slowly, probing the muck ahead in an attempt to avoid falling into another one.

Would that they could fly over it all! It'd still be drab, but at least that way they wouldn't have to be slogging through it. But they couldn't; the enemy supply base would spot them coming and would have its defenses operating, and they'd have no chance of destroying it. This way, they could sneak in "under the radar."

He looked closely at the darkness surrounding him and cast his thoughts back to the sun coming up over those Arizona mesas again, and smiled. Ironically, he'd already met a gorgeous alien princess, and hadn't even had to leave Terra to do it! But she was gone....

An explosion of water practically at his feet shook him from his reverie. Assisted by its thrusters, a green-gray mecha erupted from the water, power-sword flaring.

THE MAP

The map represents a deep swamp, a soggy patch of muck laden with sinkholes and overgrown with trees and vines. It's not as bad as Deliria, but it's still no walk in the park, as Mark says. All ground movement is treated as being in restrictive terrain, and there is a very real danger of falling into a hole deeper than one's mecha! Each time a mecha moves into a new ground hex, either landing or walking, roll 1d10. On a 1, the mecha disappears into a sinkhole and sinks out of sight! It takes it a full turn's movement to crawl out of it. Until then, the mecha cannot be seen, shoot at anything, or be shot at.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans have a small squad of Rapiers, four of them to be exact. They are led by an ace (Lt. Michaels), and the rest are normal pilots. Lt. Michaels' Rapier can be modified to 275 CP, and the others to 250 CP.

IMPERIAL FORCES

Imperial forces consist of a larger squadron of Swamp Gorgons. The

Swamp Gorgons are built along normal Gorgon lines, but their servos (and thus base weight) must be no larger than Heavy Striker in size. The Imperials have normal pilots, and the Swamp Gorgons may be built to 200 CP apiece.

SET-UP

The Terran mecha are placed in the swamp anywhere in the designated set-up zone. Once that is done, play begins in the usual Mecha Initiative fashion, with the Imperial Mecha beginning their moves by popping out of the ooze. Each Swamp Gorgon may begin the game in any hex except those currently occupied by other units.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

This is a kill-or-be-killed situation. Michaels and his people know that their mission is already blown; surely the Swamp Gorgons have already communicated with their base, and the hunt for the Terrans is on. The Terrans must retreat, but they've got to stop the Swamp Gorgons here, or this lot will dog them all the way back to the Galant.

Therefore, the Terrans win if they destroy all of the Swamp Gorgons, and the Imperials win if they destroy all of the Rapiers.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

As stated above this is a pure killing zone. You have to frag the Gorgons or have them following you back to the Galant. Standard weapons are good enough—indeed, the Terrans were armed for a normal mission and it's cheating to arm the Rapiers with pure close combat weapons—but make certain to include those necessary close combat weapons as well as the standard weapons.

Imperial Strategy

On the other hand, the Imperials knew the turf, and are free to arm their swamp Gorgons with lots of close combat weapons. Those are good, as are some more thrusters, so that the Terrans don't just maneuver away and blast you from range. Of course, you can always include some ranged firepower also, just in case.

1 Hex = 50M

ISLAND

ISLAND

WATER CHANNEL

ISLAND

WATER CHANNEL

ISLAND

21: THE DAY OF THE MEGATANK

だいタンクのひ

There's a base there, all right." Max bent over his probe control board, deftly maneuvering the remote drone between the rugged peaks of the barren planetoid. "Energy leakage, atmosphere traces, spectrographic signs — they're here."

"What are those?" Commander Frozen pointed to strange marks on the gray dust as the drone neared the base. Max shrugged.

"No telling, Commander." No one noticed Mark's thoughtful expression; everybody was too busy watching over Max's shoulder. "Uh oh, they've seen the drone." The energy output gauge jumped to near maximum. "Their shields are up. Too strong for the Galant's guns."

"Just once," Trager grouched, "I'd

like to run into a base weak enough for us to blow up from orbit."

"When the fleet's built up, you can transfer to a battleship, and get a job firing the main battery," Lt. Yuh chided him.

"No other defenses, so far," Max mused. "Maybe we can just walk in?" General derision greeted that statement; the Empire didn't work that way.

Something nagged at Mark's mind. There was something awfully familiar about those marks on the surface; he couldn't shake the feeling that he'd seen them before. Uninterrupted dual lines, with serrated markings ... some sort of track. Like Talos tread tracks, but too big, 'way too big "Uh, guys?" No one heard except Mariko.

"What is it, Mark?" she asked.

"Those marks. I think they're tread tracks." She furrowed her brow in confusion. "Like on a tank," he clarified.

"Something's coming out," Max announced. A hatch retracted, exposing a gaping gate. A ponderous shape moved in the shadows within. They watched as a monstrous caterpillar tread clawed for purchase, dragging something that looked like nothing so much as a mobile fortress out onto the surface. A flash of light, and the probe's transmission ceased.

They just looked at each other, eyes wide. Mark winced — his mind's eye full of scenes of Talos tanks firing and Gorgons disintegrating.

THE MAP

This is the surface of a planetoid. The surface gravity is negligible; it's assumed that the mecha and the megatank have enough traction to move normally. The megatank has traction to spare; it doesn't need the Zero Gee skill, but everybody else does! Anything in the "air" is considered to be in zero gee, too — particularly for knockback.

The crater lips and boulders count as obstacles that take a lot of killing. Mere mecha weapons aren't going to mar them much. They are big enough to hide behind.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get the entire complement of the *Galant's* fighter squadron: ten Rapiers, with one hero (Lt. Yuh), two aces (Mariko and Michaels), and seven normal pilots. Lt. Yuh's Rapier can be modified to 300 CP, Mariko and Michaels may modify their Rapiers to 275 CP, and the other Rapiers may be modified to 225 CP. Maybe all the artillery will be enough.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Empire learned a bloody lesson from the Terran Talos tanks. It did, per-

haps, learn it too well. The new Imperial superweapon under development is a colossal tank, a behemoth behind titanic armor, sporting energy weapons and shielding. Its designers intend to develop a tank that can be dropped on a planet and wage its own campaign, without needing supplies. It's even programmed to execute its own repairs!

The Imperials get 5,000 CP to construct ONE unit. A tank. A *big* tank. A tank at 10x scale. It must have treads and internal automation. Furthermore, it cannot spend more than 10% of its CP on weapons and ammunition for weapons that require ammunition (missiles and projectile weapons); it's supposed to be armed with energy weapons that work off its powerplant as part of its range.

SET-UP

The Imperial research base here is small and relatively undefended. They viewed the Terran attack as most timely; a few days earlier and the base would have been overrun. At this time, the attack makes an excellent test for their new creation.

The megatank sets up anywhere on the board. The Terrans then enter on any map edge.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

It's tank vs. Rapiers. The Rapiers must destroy the tank to win. If they don't, the tank wins.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

The Terrans know what they're going up against, and they can prepare. Take 10x scale weapons: one-shot missiles, etc. Lower your MV as much as possible, because the tank will be very skilled. Hope for good armor-penetrating shots.

Imperial Strategy

You're swatting flies. Buy some 1x scale weapons, because this negates the -3 penalty for shooting at them. Don't forget automatic EMWs for point defense. They don't have to be very big, at 10x scale! Get really heavy armor, and think about reactive shields. Splurge; for once, you've got the points to go ape on weapons and stuff, 'cause even a 1-Kill weapon scales up to 10 Kills here!

1 HEX = 50M

CRATER

HILL, 4 HEXES

CRATER

HILL, 3 HEXES

CRATER

ENTRANCE TO
IMPERIAL BASE

CRATER

22: BATTLE OF THE RINGS

あのせんとう

Donchoi Yuh's *Rapier* slipped through white space, like a white and red ghost floating through a sea of misty milk. The constant patter of dust and pebbles ricocheting off his *Rapier's* armor reminded him of the sound of a minor hailstorm on Terra. Like such a hailstorm, this gentle rattling could turn deadly at increased speed. "Stay with me, people," he radioed to the others. "Visibility's down to nothing in this murk."

His radio hissed, popped, and crackled with the omnipresent radiation. He barely made out Mariko's reply. "But, Don, it's so beautiful!"

He had to admit that she was right. The rings of the unnamed gas giant were gorgeous when seen from the outside, varicolored bands of neon glowing of their own accord. Preliminary sensor reports confirmed that the rings and their planet were "hot", glowing with sensor-jamming radiation. A perfect hiding place for the hunted starcruiser *Galant*. They could simply wait there until the Imperial fleet had passed them by.

Of course, it couldn't be that simple. A drone tethered on the edge of the ring saw the Imperial mecha approaching, closing in to

search the rings. Damn that Chron and his thoroughness! So the *Galant's* mecha had to scramble into the rings to ambush the Imperials; if they smashed the mecha, the Imperials would be blind while the *Galant* moved around the planet to run, its departure masked by the giant's bulk.

Which was why Yuh and his crew were struggling through this mess, risking collision with larger boulders and generally sandblasting the paint off their mecha (with radioactive sand), trying to find and silence those Imperial bloodhounds before they found the *Galant*.

THE MAP

The map is a giant planetary ring charged with radiant energy. It's quite dense, and, since it glows, quite lovely. It's also quite deadly, posing dual collision and radiation hazards. The density means that any mecha flying through it have their flying MA halved (round down), since they've got to fly carefully to avoid the debris. In addition, the ring materials are so dense that they impede ranged combat — all shots must be aimed, or they'll simply hit debris, and all ranged combat is at -3 to hit (they're firing on bad sensor reports). Blast radius warheads and ammunition do double damage (i.e., a 5-Kill warhead does 10 Kills) because of all the natural "shrapnel" kicked up by the blast wave. Powerplant explosions are also doubled. Finally, the rings' radiation makes sensors nearly useless (see "Scanning" below).

The map "moves" — that is, if mecha fly off one edge, simply extend the map to follow them. This combat is to the death, and merely fleeing off the basic map won't help.

Both sides will have to note their mecha's moves secretly; a numbered mapsheet is essential for this.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get five mecha, piloted by one commander (Lt. Yuh) in a 300 CP

Rapier, two aces (Michaels and Lim) in 275 CP *Rapiers*, and two normal pilots in 250 CP *Rapiers*.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get nine mecha based on Medusas, Gorgons, or Harpies (any combination of the three types is permitted). They have one commander (250 CP) and eight normal pilots (1500 CP total, no individual mecha costing more than 250 CP).

SET-UP

The Terrans set up secretly on the map. Then the Imperials enter from whichever map-edge they desire, noting this map-edge in secret.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The *Galant* is hiding deeper in these rings; if the Imperials discover it, the Terrans are in trouble. The Terrans must destroy all Imperial mecha to win, pursuing them to the death, for if one escapes, it'll fly back to the fleet and warn them that there are Terrans in the ring system. If the Imperials turn the tables and destroy all the Terrans while one of their mecha survives, they win. If both sides are destroyed, it's a draw.

SCANNING

The rings are so thick that normal sensors

are next to useless. All units move secretly until scanned and located.

To scan, a unit announces that it is scanning. This takes one action and may be done before or after moving, or between moves. This allows it to detect any unit (friend or foe) within a number of hexes equal to 1/2 (rounded up) the km of the unit's Sensor Range. ASP sensors add 1 to the scanning radius; no other advanced sensors help at all. However, the scanning unit must announce its hex location when it conducts its scanning action — the concentrated scan is easy to detect! It is an axiom (and the truth) that detectors can pick up active scans at many times the detection range of the active scanner.

Weapons fire and melee use also reveal the location of the user(s) each time weapons are used.

STRATEGY TIPS

Both sides can benefit from the same strategy. One method is to designate one mecha as a scanner, and have the others within a full move of it. Have the scanner probe for enemies, while the others follow to dry-gulch any that are found. Alternatively, you could have one scanner broadcasting his location and secretly slip in behind the enemy, to attack when they attack the scanner.



23: A CHANCE MEETING

てあたりしだいのであい

A small asteroid at a crucial warp-point is home to a sensor outpost monitoring traffic. Its logs hold crucial information on Imperial hyperlight traffic patterns. The Imperials arrived at the conclusion that if the Terran flotillas wandering through the region discovered the outpost, the information could cripple Imperial shipping and supply efforts. So a small force was sent to dismantle the outpost and bring back its records. The Terrans had the same idea.

THE MAP

This battlefield is on a moon, one with particularly low gravity. The elevation levels are marked in 50m increments; normally, two elevation levels in one hex is too steep to climb, but read on!

The light gravity (something on the order of 1/10 Gee) turns any walking machine into a jumping machine. Walking movement cost is 1/2 per hex — that is, each point of MA moves a walker 2 hexes! If desired, mecha (legged and anthropomorphic) may climb sheer slopes at a cost of 1 hex of movement per level climbed (that is, a 150m slope — 3 levels — would cost 3 MA to climb). Furthermore, if desired, a walking mecha may use its movement to jump! A walking mecha may use a half-move to jump up to twice its full MA. The mecha cannot turn at all during this jump (if you want to turn while flying, then use your thrusters and fly already!). During the jump, the mecha is at an altitude of (jump distance/4) levels, for those who want to skim over the crags for dramatic effect. Just don't make the jump distance too short, or you'll have to use the ramming rules (the ground counts as a mecha of equal size for its "ram" value).

The base in the middle of the battlefield is an Imperial outpost, the one containing the sensors and their valuable data. The base will sustain 1 Kill of damage — it's an automated sensor outpost, not a bunker! — before being totally ruined. It is tall enough to block line of sight. If the outpost is destroyed, the mission is a bust for both sides, so don't blow it up!

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get 500 CP, one commander, and as many normal pilots and crews as required for their units. They may purchase Rapiers (modified up to 250 CP for the commander and 225 CP for the normal pilots), Minutemen (modified up to 100 CP for the commander and 75 CP for the normal pilots), or hardbody (1/10x scale) suits and a troop carrier (limit 50 CP for the commander's suit, 35 CP for the normal pilots' suits, and 100 CP for the troop carrier).

If the force uses more than five units, the commander must buy the Leadership skill, to be used for morale (see below).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get 500 CP, one commander, and as many normal pilots and crews as required for their units. They may purchase Gorgons (modified up to 250 CP for the commander and 225 CP for the normal pilots), roadstrikers (limit 100 CP for the commander and 75 CP for the normal pilots), or hardbody (1/10x scale) suits and a troop carrier (limit 50 CP for the commander's suit, 35 CP for the normal pilots' suits, and 100 CP for the troop carrier).

If the force uses more than five units, the commander must buy the Leadership skill, to be used for morale (see below).

SET-UP

Both sides set up within 2 hexes of their respective board edges, then roll for initiative to determine who moves first.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The winner is the side which seizes and holds the outpost and its sensor records.

SPECIAL RULES: UNIT MORALE

If a force is using more than five units, then the unit risks breaking and leaving the battlefield once it suffers casualties. Each time the unit loses 10% of its force, have the commander make a Leadership roll to keep the force on the field. If the roll is

failed, the force turns and moves toward its board edge at full speed. Fleeing units may dodge, parry, and use anti-missile weapons and electronic warfare, but may not attack for any reason! Any unit which exits the battlefield is out of the battle. The commander may attempt to rally the troops at the beginning of every turn by making another Leadership roll (at the current level of difficulty dictated by casualties). Success means that all fleeing units turn and return to fighting, behaving normally. If a side loses its commander, then the pilot with the highest Empathy (or Leadership skill, if he has it) takes over leadership duties.

LEADERSHIP ROLLS

CASUALTIES	DIFFICULTY
10%	10
20%	15
30%	20
40%	25
50%	30
Each extra 10% suffered	30

If desired, this rule can be added for other scenarios. It represents the fact that most battles don't go to the last man; troops tend to break and save their own skins first.

STRATEGY TIPS

There's something to be said for choosing a force of smaller mecha/troops, since it allows one to overwhelm one's enemies by numbers. The morale rules make it much more likely for large mecha to continue fighting when soldiers have run (fighter pilots always have an "immortality" complex; they seriously believe that they can't die!).

Design your force around a strategy. Want long-range weapons? Then choose a unit or two to carry some melee stuff in case the enemy slips in close. If you're designing around melee, then carry some smoke missiles to keep the enemy from blowing you up before you get into range. With the goofy gravity situation, high MAs aren't that important here.

1 HEX = 50M

THE SURFACE

THE BUNKER

24: MIDWAY

ミッドエイ

A single black shape slipped through the airless void of space, unseen except when it occluded a bright star, and then it could only be seen as a dark, featureless cylinder. As it drifted, invisible energies played around it, only to be absorbed or deflected. Senses aboard the cylinder marked the source of the energies, and eyes watched as that source occluded stars, growing into a light-studded mountain hanging in space.

Lieutenant Mark B. Michaels, commander of Attack Team Michaels, took in the sensor reports gathered by the pod. As expected, the Imperial starship was there, all right. Its relative vector was almost zero, as it would be after coming out of lightspeed drive. The Chief Engineer would be pleased to hear that his prediction was on target; it looked like the starship hadn't been able to repair the damage from the previous engagement. It was dead in space, all crews devoted to making it spaceworthy.

He swallowed, looking at the target. He'd gambled beneath that behemoth's guns once before, and only luck had kept him from paying for it with his life. This time, though, there wouldn't be all those fighters. Donchoi and his gang were out trying to draw off Kandrax and his goon squad, which would leave the fighters with the main fleet. With any luck, the crippled ship wouldn't have much of an escort.

The pod's telemetry sensors read that they were now in attack range. He hit the alert button, and his communications screen lit up with three helmeted faces. "Heads up, guys, it's check-out time," he said.

"Roger." "Gotcha, Looie." "Yes, sir." His squad bent to their pre-action checks, as he was doing. Sergeant Crowe couldn't resist the urge to chat as he worked.

"Hey, Mark, this should be a milk run. That ship looks like it's down for the count! All we gotta do is fly in and deliver our packages, and it's home in time for chow."

"Maybe. Or maybe they're just lying doggo, waiting at their guns for us to show up for target practice."

"Could be. If you want to sit still and let 'em shoot at you, be my guest, 'cause I'm not going to! Of course, we've all seen your fancy footwork where those guns are concerned, so I'm not worried about you. With luck, we'll only have to deal with a couple of fighters or so; from then on out it's smooth sailing. Heck, if we're lucky, there'll only be a Medusa or two on board." Crowe paused as he saw Mark's expression. "Uh, sorry, man."

"It's okay, Tom. After that battle, I'm not even sure she's still alive. And if she is, she's probably light years away." He forced a chuckle. "My luck to finally find the perfect girl, and she has to be an enemy pilot. But maybe there's hope for me after all; it's been so long, I'm beginning to forget what she looks like."

"Sure, Mark." Tom knew he was lying, too. Mark could see her as clearly as if she was standing in beside of him, her green hair flowing in the desert breeze, the red-orange of the setting sun making her amber eyes glow, her normally tense expression softened by a faint smile. It had been the first time he ever saw her smile. That was when he stopped thinking of her as an enemy, and started thinking of her as a woman. From that moment on, he didn't really mind that she had kidnapped him and his Guardian-Alpha at gunpoint, had gotten them both shot down by Furie fighters, and was now kibitzing about his apparent incompetence, both at keeping them alive in the desert and at his inability to navigate their way to the captured Arizona starport. He had not, of course, no intention of getting her back to his people and of placing himself in captivity. However, he modified his plans so that it would take them a few days longer to reach a Terran unit

He shook off his reverie. All his pilots had checked in; his battle board was lit and green. He poised his thumb over the firing switch. "Pod eject in five, four, three, two, now!" The shielded sides of the drop pod separated and fell away, propelled by the charges. "Let's go get 'em. Attack plan Baker."

"Waaahoooo!" Crowe yelled as the four suits moved into formation, thrusters flaring. "Right on target! There she blows." His Rapier pointed a blunt finger at the black gargantua looming in the distance.

"And here comes company." Ensign Jodrell transmitted her advanced sensor plot to them all; four dots were leaving the floating ship. The ship expanded as she focused her visual augmentation system on the approaching defenders. Four bright red and orange mecha remained centered on their screens. "Running target analysis. Confirm three Medusas, Delta class, and one Medusa, Mu class. Furthermore, the Mu class is bearing colors identifying its pilot as Captain Shann."

Michaels sucked in his breath; on an ancillary monitor, his pulse rate danced. "Jodrell, examine the other units. Can you identify?"

A pause. "Lieutenant, one of the enemy units is transmitting a segment of PDF code, to wit, the letters 'JZ'?"

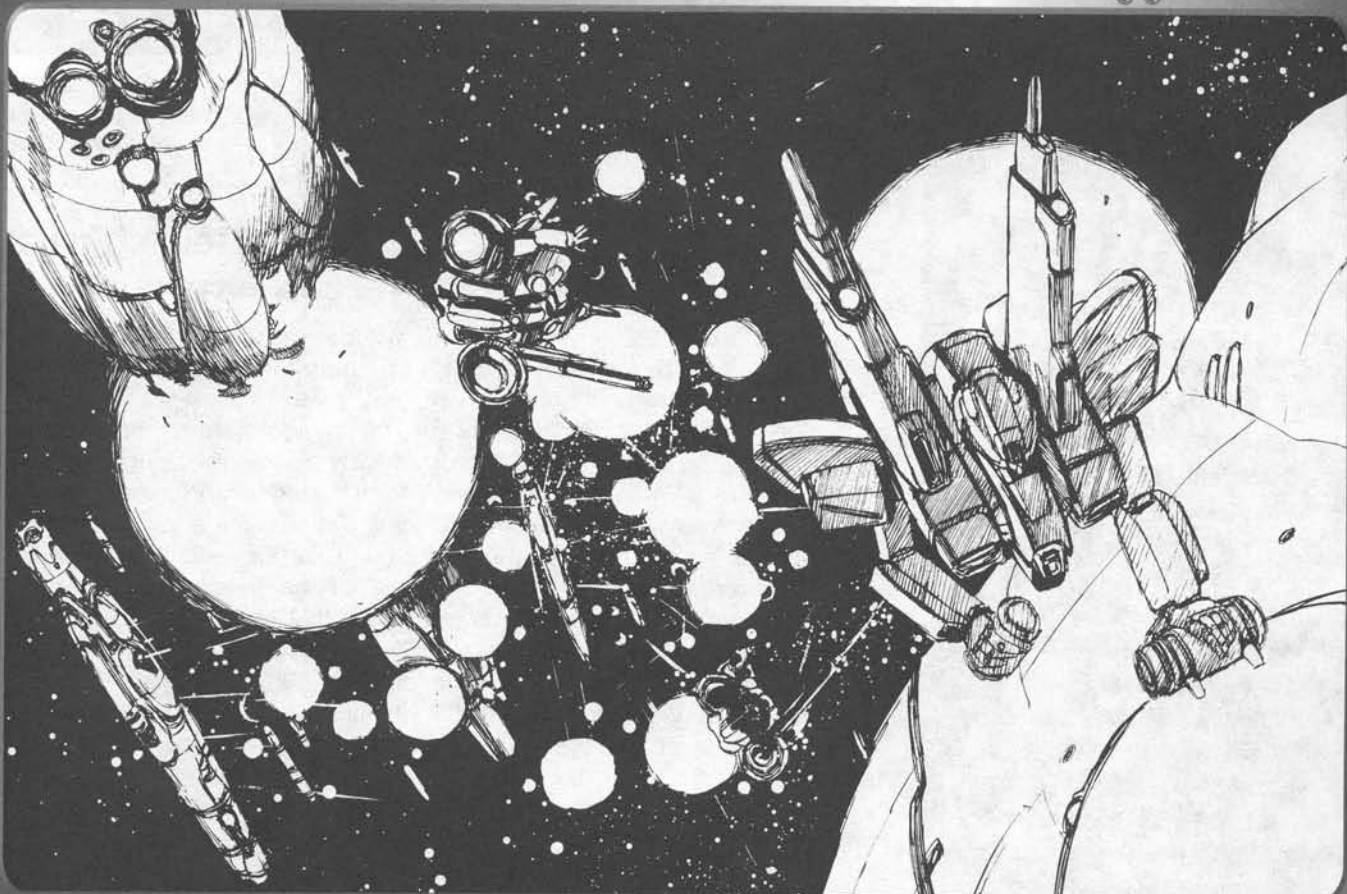
Michaels felt sick to his stomach. He glanced at his scanner readouts; they didn't have long until contact. Still, there was time He punched in the code frequency, and his main screen lit up with a view of another cockpit. The pilot wore a scarlet and orange spacesuit, and her face could barely be seen through the tinted face shield. Her head snapped up to look at him; she'd just seen his transmission, he realized. She raised her face shield to reveal the visage he'd been dreaming of for months. "Jalia."

Her reply was hardly what he'd expected. "Mark, you must leave."

"What?"

She snarled, her perfect teeth bared. "Get out of here!" He must have looked as stunned as he felt, because she explained. "I do not want to hurt you, my love, but if you attack, I am duty-bound to fight. And my battle sisters are not restrained by the same sort of emotions that I feel. They would delight in destroying you."

"Then leave them!" he said, watching as his heads-up display began setting the targeting on the approaching mecha. "Join us, Jalia."



You don't belong with them anymore."

Her stern expression melted into confusion. "I don't know anymore, Mark. I love you, I want to be with you, but I serve the Empire. The Empire created me, trained me; I don't know anything else." Her voice trailed off to a whimper, and he saw tears trickling from her wide eyes. It was the second time he'd ever seen her cry.

"Jalia, you don't have to stay with them. Come with me! Everyone on the Galant knows about us; some of them were your friends back on Terra. You'd be one of us, not just a faceless clone in the service of the Empire. And we'd be together." He was having a hard time speaking himself; the lump in his throat threatened to choke off his voice.

Her eyes darted from side to side, the instinctive reaction of a trapped animal. "I, I don't know what to do," she sniffled.

The first energy bolts flared past his Rapier, strobe-lighting his cockpit. Better make up your mind real quick, he thought.

THE MAP

The only feature of this scenario's map is the *Gorvaad*, an Imperial Scylla-class starship, hulking in the near distance. Since the Rapier attack force caught this one damaged, it can't use its engines and cannot move. At this time, the only weapons the starship can use are those of its CIDS. Important note: The *Gorvaad* is at Zero Elevation. All elevation levels are marked from its level, either up or down, as per rules in *Mekton Zeta*, page 94.

TERRAN FORCES

Attack Team Michaels consists of four Rapiers, crewed by three normal pilots and an ace (Michaels). The Rapiers may be modified up to 200 CP. Michaels' Rapier-Nue may be modified up to 250 CP.

IMPERIAL FORCES

Kandrax has his Gorgons off chasing Yuh and company, a bit of rankling rank-pulling that left Captain Shann's

Medusas and a couple of Harpy squadrons to defend the task force. When the *Gorvaad's* engines broke down, she detailed the Harpies to protect the rest of the force, and stationed her own Medusas to shepherd the *Gorvaad*.

The Imperials get four Medusas and the *Gorvaad's* crew at the ship's CIDS. Three of the Medusas are piloted by normal Imperial pilots and may be modified up to 250 CP; the other Medusa is Captain Shann's — she's a commander pilot, and her Medusa may be modified up to 275 CP. The *Gorvaad's* crew is Grade B and has a normal CIDS (range 9, 5K damage, BV infinite).

SET-UP

The Terran stealth pod shielded Attack Team Michaels from Imperial sensors until they were within minimum scanner range. The Terran force enters from the designated map edge. Once the Terrans have moved, the Imperials launch from the *Gorvaad*; each

LOVE ANIME STYLE

The "Love Conquers All" rule may sound a little melodramatic, but this sort of thing is ALWAYS cropping up in anime.

The truth is, most anime stories are about people, not about mecha. All the giant robots and spaceships are there to sell toys or models, and wind up spending a lot more time in the background than you might expect.

Meanwhile, the main characters of an anime get the spotlight. This goes double for romantically entangled characters. When love enters the picture, everything else becomes secondary. Lies, sabotage, Defection, kidnapping, impersonation and murder are common earmarks of a good anime relationship.

Pretty Shakespearean, huh?

Medusa has to start from the hex just in front of the *Gorvaad's* nose.

SPECIAL RULES: LOVE CONQUERS ALL

One of the two normal Medusa pilots is actually Jalia Zell, Michaels' alien paramour. She's impaled on the horns of a dilemma. She's in love with Mark, but every shred of training and education she's ever had argues that service to the Empire is her fate, her duty, the reason she was created!

Because of this, Jalia doesn't act normally during the battle. She will never attack Michaels' Rapier, and she will attempt to protect him during the battle, firing on any mecha which inflicts internal damage on Michaels' Rapier. Furthermore, each turn, both the Imperial and Terran players roll 1D10. The side that rolls highest completely controls Jalia and her Medusa for that turn. This means that, at any given moment, she is as likely to fight for the Terrans as she is for the Empire!

The Imperial player selects Jalia's Medusa at random, once all the Medusas are designed and their pilot statistics and skills assigned. The Terran player knows which one is Jalia's; she can't resist screening in to beg Michaels to abandon the fight.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans win by destroying the *Gorvaad*. Each Terran Rapier is carrying a nuclear bomb. If one of them lands on the *Gorvaad* (that is, comes to zero speed on the starship's hull) and spends one whole turn there, it sets its nuclear bomb, which explodes three turns later, vaporizing the *Gorvaad*. They're only 50 Kill mini-nukes, so they don't have much area-effect (still, anyone who's too close suffers nuclear weapon effects as per page 117 of *Mekton Zeta Plus*). Please note that fire discipline expressly forbids wasting the bombs by, say, dropping one in the path of an oncoming enemy.

The Imperials win by destroying or driving off the Terrans, before they can plant a bomb on the *Gorvaad*.

STRATEGY TIPS Terran Strategy

Keep in mind that the idea is to get a unit atop the *Gorvaad* for a turn to set that nuke. That's what the whole mission is about; the mecha combat is merely a way of getting close enough to pull it off. Unfortunately, the Rapiers and Medusas are evenly matched ... until Jalia throws over and starts fighting for the Terrans (ain't love grand?). When that happens, take advantage of it quickly. Double-team a Medusa and take it out. Once you have got the advantage of numbers, continue to double-team Medusas until only Jalia is left, then leave Mark's command Rapier-Nue with her (remember, she won't attack it!) for a hormone-ridden teleconference, and send what Rapiers are left to destroy the *Gorvaad*.

The Medusas pack a lot of ECM. As a suggestion, at least one Rapier would do well armed with ECCM equipment.

Imperial Strategy

Captain Shann has been suspicious of Jalia for some time, and she knows that her pilot may not be stable. In addition, she knows that her mission is to protect the *Gorvaad*. There are two strategies available. The first is to go out and tackle the Rapiers before they get close, getting in their faces and slashing with EMWs. This has the advantage of slowing them down to engage and possibly putting in some hurt before the *Gorvaad's* CIDS takes over. The second strategy is to hover around the *Gorvaad*, letting the ship's CIDS do the bulk of the fighting and using the Medusas to snipe, gnawing at the edges of the Rapier force. This has the advantage of making the *Gorvaad* do most of the work, and of keeping Jalia out of trouble. However, it does let the Rapiers get in close, and when Jalia's emotions overcome her training, things can get hairy.

1 Hex = 50M



THE
GORVAAD

25: A NEW TYPE OF WEAPON, PART I

あたらしいかつじのへいき・1

The seismic shock from the explosion made the Rapier sway where it stood. Mariko almost fell as the gantry moved in the other direction, stranding her in mid-stretch as she tried to crawl out of the Rapier's cramped cockpit to the gantry. Donchoi clutched her hand, saving her from a plummet to the floor. "It feels like Mark and company are doing a good job with their diversion," he called over the noise. "Still, we probably don't have that much time to waste."

"I know," she snapped back. Well, it wasn't him trying to hurdle the gap, now was it? She climbed

across before the earth could move again, and ran over to the open cockpit of the enemy machine.

Climbing in, she noticed that the controls were as familiar as all the other Imperial mecha - naturally. It wouldn't do to have to train the pilot in all-new protocols. There was one difference: the helmet wired into the chair. She shucked her own combat helmet and slipped the mounted one over her head as she started up the powerplant.

The feeling was weird, like a massive itch in her head. It cleared

swiftly as she thought the security code they'd captured. Suddenly, she could feel Don's elation and anxiety, and sense the distant stress from the other Terran pilots. Things were going well; she caught a fragment of satisfaction wafting in from Mark. It was powerful, more unreal power than she'd ever felt. Jalia's information had been right. This new development in military technology had implications even she didn't like to think about; it took an act of will to resist running amok with her new power. Impishly, she winged a thought to Donchoi: "Let's go, dear."

THE MAP

The map represents a standard temperate forest area. The trees are rough terrain, and they block line of sight.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get Donchoi Yuh, a Hero, in his 300 CP Rapier and Mariko Lim, an ace, in a mecha of indeterminate point cost (at least 275 CP) and quality, designed by the Imperial player! Mariko has a Psi 10 and 50 Psi points (these are free; no need to spend stat points on them), and must take at least 5 points of psychic skills/powers from her skill points.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials have three Gorgons on guard duty. They are piloted by a commander, who has 225 CP to modify his Gorgon, and two normal pilots, whose Gorgons may be modified up to 200 CP apiece.

THE IMPERIALS' EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHO-MEK

This horrendous Mekton is made up by the Imperial player, and it's been

captured (and is being used) by the Terrans! The mecha must cost a minimum of 275 CP and a maximum of 300 CP. Restrictions on construction are as follows: It may not have a hot power plant. It must be 1x scale. It must have an Esper Lens, with a Rank of at least 5, and an infinite Portfolio. It must also be capable of doing battle, like any other Imperial design, i.e., have weapons, armor, sensors, humanoid form, and be able to fly (Thruster MA 8 minimum). Anything else is up to the Imperial player!

SET-UP

The Imperials set up anywhere on the southern half of the map. The Terrans enter via the northern map edge.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans win if they (i.e., Donchoi and Mariko) manage to get off the southern edge of the map with the experimental mecha. The Imperials win if they prevent it from getting off the southern edge of the map.

STRATEGY TIPS

This scenario is an object lesson in just

how nasty an ESPer Lens can be. A psionically teleporting mecha, or one with a Level 6 Emotion Scan, can ruin an opposing force. Or just get into hand-to-hand combat and use Level 4 Telekinesis! ("Aha, I have you now, Terran worm! Eh? What's this? My mecha is floating!?! Hey! Put me down!!!!")

Terran Strategy

The best psi skills to have are Emotion Scan, Energy Manipulation, Suggestion (it doesn't work through an Esper Lens, but it sure works if you get close), and Teleportation. Study the levels' effects carefully before choosing psionic powers. Also, beef up Donchoi's Rapier with lots of defenses; he's going to be getting in harm's way to get Mariko off the southern edge of the map.

Imperial Strategy

Nothing says you can't give this experimental mecha a nasty backlash; design in the maximum feedback! Use mechariders for your Gorgons to give them a ghost of a chance; remember, a mecha uses the mechariders' MV. And don't be sad that you're probably going to lose this scenario, because next time the tables are turned

1 Hex = 50M
(ENTIRE MAP AREA IS
COVERED BY TREES)

HILL, 2 HEXES

HILL, 2 HEXES

26: A NEW TYPE OF WEAPON, PART II

あたらしいかつじのへいき・2

Donchoi motioned with his Rapier's hand, indicating a thicket. "We might as well stop there, Mari."

"Yes." She moved the new mecha into the young growth. "They're coming, Don. I can feel them."

"Yes, Mari. I can scan them." Both of them could see the results on their scanners: a small cloud of blips closing in, and more farther out. The enemy had marshaled an entire small army to chase them.

Donchoi and Mariko had been forced to slip away from the main force from the Galant; over a score of mecha pursued them. The new suit was too slow to outrun the Gorgons, and there were too many of them to outmaneuver. That left only two options: surrender, or a last stand. Surrender was right out; the Imperials were going to have to work for their victory.

Mariko popped the canopy on her mecha's cockpit. She looked

over the dimly lit vista they had just trod. Monster trees lifted their branches into the air, their leaves making a nearly solid canopy many meters over the heads of their tall mecha. "This is a pretty place, Don. I wish we could enjoy it in peace." Her voice was calm and measured; he knew that she, like him, had resigned herself to their fate.

"Maybe we will someday. But right now, you'd better button up, 'cause here they come."

THE MAP

Donchoi and Mariko fled to the nastiest mecha territory they could find, the deep forest. The forest is so thick and so tall that mecha on the ground can't be seen from the air; they may still be fired upon by using sensors, but at a -4 to hit. Mecha on the ground have the same problem seeing mecha in the air. Beneath the canopy, the trees are tall and proud, their canopies stretching 20+ meters into the air. Still, there are plenty of tree trunks, so all movement on the ground is treated as being in rough terrain. Only those areas marked have forestation thick enough at combat level to block line of sight. Mecha on the ground must walk; they cannot use GES or thrusters and remain on the ground.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get whatever force survives the last scenario! Furthermore, all damage sustained in the last scenario is still with them, and all ammunition expended is still gone. In the event that the Terrans didn't survive Part 1, give them Donchoi's Rapier and Mariko's experimental mecha. Donchoi has used 10-100% of his missiles (roll 1D10 x 10%) and 10-60% of ammunition for his other weapons (roll 1D6 x 10% for each weapon, as applicable). Mariko has used 1D6 x 5 Psi points, and has used 10-60% of her ammunition (roll separately for each weapon). Furthermore, each mecha has sustained damage. Roll 3D10 and subtract Donchoi's Piloting +Reflexes +MV; this is the number of 7-Kill hits his Rapier has taken (allocated randomly). Roll 4D10 and subtract Mariko's Piloting+Reflexes+MV;

this is the number of 7-Kill hits her mecha has taken (allocated randomly).

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials have 6 Gorgons, led by Lars Kandrax (hero; 275 CP for his mecha) and an ace (250 CP for his mecha). The other four are normal Imperial pilots, and have 225 CP apiece for their Gorgons.

SET-UP

Terrans set up in the map's middle. The Imperials enter from any and all sides, either on the ground and/or in the air.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans are trying to destroy the Imperials so they can escape. The Imperials are trying to take the Terrans alive, and the experimental suit intact!

MAJOR TERRAN VICTORY: Both Terran mecha survive and all Imperial mecha are destroyed or immobilized.

MINOR TERRAN VICTORY: At least 4 Imperial mecha destroyed or immobilized.

TIE: Three Imperial mecha are destroyed or immobilized.

MINOR IMPERIAL VICTORY: One or two Imperial mecha destroyed or immobilized.

MAJOR IMPERIAL VICTORY: No Imperial mecha destroyed or immobilized!

Damage done to Mariko's experimental suit modifies the victory conditions. If the suit is destroyed, move the victory conditions up one; that is, make it more favorable to the Terrans. If Mariko or Donchoi is killed, move the victory conditions up one, as above (if both are killed, move up two levels! Lars wants them alive!!).

And this is Lars Kandrax in charge, here. Move victory conditions down one

level (more favorable to the Imperials) if he personally administers the final blows/shots to Donchoi (this means if Lars shoots the shot/strikes the blow/etc. that immobilizes or destroys Donchoi's Rapier).

For instance, say that three Gorgons are destroyed or immobilized. Normally this would be a tie. However, if Lars managed to administer the *coup de grace* on Donchoi's Rapier, the battle would become a minor Imperial victory. If, in addition, Mariko's mecha was destroyed, one step up on the table would make it a tie again; if she was killed in the process, it becomes a Terran minor victory ... Pyhrric, but a victory because it robs Lars of some of his glory.

STRATEGY TIPS

The Imperials were promised a no-lose scenario; here it is. Donchoi and Mariko are almost certain to be captured. The question is merely one of finesse—will Lars succeed in capturing them and have something left of the special Mek?

Terran Strategy

This is a "take as many of them with you as possible" scenario. Attempt to engage the enemy in singles, or doubles if you can't catch lone Gorgons.

Imperial Strategy

"Bring 'em back alive." Use Tangler rounds and entangling melee attacks—shock rounds and electro-charged melee attacks are good too. A tangling-shocker attack is nice, but is often so expensive that it ends up doing neither correctly. A better tactic would be paired Meks, one with entangling stuff, the other with shock rounds.

1 Hex = 50M
(ENTIRE MAP AREA IS COVERED BY TREES)

THICK FOREST

THICK FOREST

THICK FOREST

THICK FOREST

THICK FOREST

THICK FOREST

27: A DUEL OF HONOR

めいせいのかっとう

Lt. Mariko Lim bounced tentatively on the bed. It wasn't soft, but it was well sprung. She lay back, trying to relax and savor the feel of a bed in full gravity (actually, a fraction greater than full gravity, but she wasn't complaining). She heard an exclamation from another room and sat up again.

Lt. Donchoi Yuh wandered in with a sandwich in his hands. "Wow!" he mumbled around his snack. "It's not the Hilton, Mari, but this is pretty nice. And a full fridge!"

She nodded. "It's one of the most luxurious cells I've ever seen, Don."

"It's a step up," he pointed out. "And we're not wearing shock collars any more." He sat on the bed next to her. "I wish we had this artificial gravity on our ships. The eggheads are working on it, at last report."

"Mm-hm." She sat in thought while he ate. "Don, what's going to happen to us?"

"I don't know. The way these Imperials think, I'd guess we're some sort of POW. Lars seems a decent sort."

"Yes, Colonel Kandrax is an honorable man." She spoke with eerie assurance. "I don't like Captain Shann, or Colonel Chron. He dislikes us, and she hates us. We had best be on our guard against them." She smiled wanly. "It's funny, Don. Shann's emotion towards you is jealousy! As intense as I've ever felt. She could not hate you more if you were a woman, vying for Kandrax's attentions."

"Hilarious," he grimaced. "She's plain dangerous, Mari. Thanks for the warning." He gave her a hug. "Maybe we can convince her that Lars isn't my type. Anyway, I've already got a girlfriend." He nuzzled her ear.

"Don, stop that!" she tried to be forceful. "This isn't the time or place"

"We're in a bedroom, and we've nothing better to do with our time — seems like the perfect time and place," he persisted. The sound of the main door opening interrupted him. She smirked smugly at him as the guards marched in.

The conference room was startlingly reminiscent of a human one, except the emblems were Imperial. The two guards stood at the door; Kandrax, Shann, and Chron were already seated at the table.

"You have been captured by the forces of the Empire," Chron announced. "According to our regulations, as premier warriors of the enemy, you should be held as exchange for our warriors taken in battle. By custom, your fate is the responsibility of the warrior who captures you." Both Don and Mariko looked to Lars Kandrax, who bowed slightly.

"I have decided your fate," Kandrax announced. "Or, rather, the manner of decision. Tell me, Donchoi, what is a great warrior without a chance to prove his greatness? If one side is unmatched, is there a struggle? Or is it mere slaughter?"

"What is the use of struggle if you deny victory?" Chron directed his question at Kandrax. "He who wins and then concedes is a fool!"

"Yes, Lars," Shann spoke up. "Victory through circumstance is still honorable. Do not toy with luck, lest it desert you." The Terrans were surprised by her pleading tone; this was a different Shann than the implacable warrior they had seen in battle.

"No!" Kandrax leapt to his feet. "I will not be cheated by the vagaries of fortune! Any weakling can be victorious that way, and I will not be considered weak!" He turned to Donchoi. "My Terran equal, I offer you a challenge! Long have I dreamed of meeting you on the field of honor. Say that you will battle me, and myself alone; if you are victorious, then I shall guarantee you both safe passage to your forces."

"And if I lose?" Donchoi asked.

Kandrax shrugged. "Then you and your partner remain captives, as Chron has described. But I shall have proved myself the superior."

"He is your prisoner now," Shann mentioned. "You could order the combat, without damaging the Empire by freeing them"

Kandrax rounded on her with righteous fury. "Silence! That is not warrior's thinking; that is the thought of a scheming brocht! I have made my decision, as is my right. You have no power in this matter. What think you of my offer, Terran?" Shann flinched, flushing.

Donchoi felt Mariko's mental communication, that Shann had gone too far and incurred Kandrax's wrath and scorn, and that it would be best to cut the interview short. "I accept."

THE MAP

There's nothing on the map, right? It's in open space ... except there are the signal beacons, marking the boundaries of the invisible globe that makes up the battlefield. The outer ring of beacons marks the limits of the globe at level 0. Each concentric ring of Hexes marks the limits of the globe at other levels; if a mecha is beyond one of these rings, at a level (positive or negative!) equal to the given ring, it's out of the globe. Likewise, if a mecha is within a ring but beyond the given level (positive or negative), then it's out of the globe.

The beacons themselves can't be hit or destroyed; there are too many of them, and they're too small to have any physical effect on combat.

Remember, it's a zero-gee environment! Knockback is enhanced (Mekton Zeta, page 94).

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans have Lt. Donchoi Yuh, hero, with his 300-point modified Rapier.

IMPERIAL FORCES

And in the Imperial corner, Col. Lars Kandrax, with his 300-point modified Gorgon Xanithes-type!

SET-UP

Both Mek's starting positions are marked.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The victory is clear-cut. Whoever destroys the other, OR knocks the other out of the ring, is the winner. Should both leave the globe simultaneously, then both mecha are returned to their starting positions, and the fight starts anew!

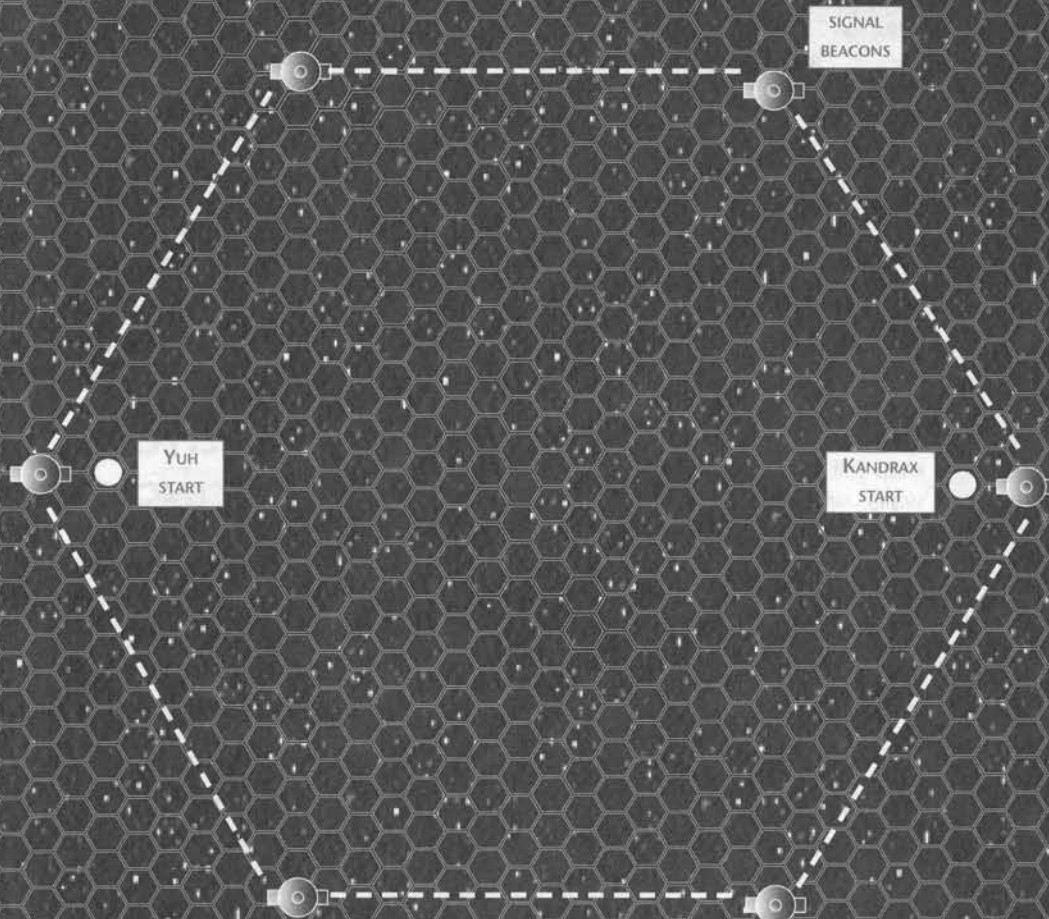
STRATEGY TIPS

This is a tough one. These machines are probably going to be too tough to take out in one shot, or even one turn, so no matter which side you take, you'll be trying, probably, to KO your opponent on a technical — after all, it's a lot easier to toss someone out of the ring than it is to blow him up. Enhanced knockback projectile ammunition is a good possibility. Ramming and mecha martial arts also work well!

Watch it, though. The gambit is to knock your opponent out of bounds without following him yourself! It's tricky.

1 Hex = 50m

NOTE: BEACONS MARK PERIMETER AT LEVEL 0; FOR EACH LEVEL ABOVE OR BELOW ZERO, A MEK MUST BE AN EQUAL AMOUNT IN FROM THE BEACONS; E.G., IF YOUR MEK IS 4 HEXES ABOVE 0, IT MUST ALSO BE 4 HEXES WITHIN THE BEACONS.



28: A ROCK NAMED IWO

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Intelligence reports pointed the fleet toward a single star system, a forward Imperial command post. Here, 100 lightyears from Terra, the Imperials coordinated their production schedules, supply efforts, cloning agenda, and other logistics routines. In addition, the command post served as the center of management for their captured worlds, as a rest and medical center for their warriors, and as the forward headquarters for their war on the Terrans. It was the forward command center for the entire Imperial campaign.

Terran strategists were well aware of the importance of such a base. Its destruction would do much to hamper the Imperial war effort; its capture would certainly provide reams of valuable data on the Imperials, including fleet patrol plots, cargo convoy courses, and the location of

every Imperial garrison, secret base, and outpost within its operational radius (thirty lightyears). Ergo, seizure, or at least destruction, of this base was essential.

In order to fool the enemy, the main fleet was ordered rimward, continuing its mission of seeking out and destroying Imperial outposts. A squadron of Argus-class starcruisers, ten strong, was detached from the fleet and sent to find the command post, their orders to seize it if they could and destroy it if they couldn't.

The command post was easy to find. As soon as the squadron exited light-speed, they detected heavy radio traffic. At the center of the noise they found the command post, a planetoid lightly defended by several squadrons of fighters and a destroyer that had been docked there. Once these were dealt with, the captains examined their prey.

It was unimpressive, an irregular oblong of rock some 16 km in length and 4 km thick at the widest point. Its size made destruction via bombardment impossible; the starcruisers didn't pack that sort of armament. Mecha were sent down to investigate.

They found a trap. True, the rock was a command post as described, but it was also a fortress, bored through with tunnels, mecha bays, and barracks, its surface pocked with defensive emplacements and weapons large enough to repel the entire fleet! The starcruisers drew back as their squadrons got in close to tackle the defenders hand to hand, blasting the defenses at point-blank range.

And even when they penetrated into the tunnels, the Terrans had to fight their way through to their objectives...

THE MAP

The interior features of the map fall into two categories: the rocky walls, which are, for all purposes, impenetrable, and the doors, which can sustain 50 Hits of damage before being blown up. It takes one action for an Imperial to open or close a door; the Terrans must blow open closed doors, since they don't have the security codes.

One effect of such enclosed quarters is the intensification of explosions. Add 5 Hits to the blast effect of all blast radius and explosive shells — this means projectile HE rounds and regular missile warheads! If a round/warhead doesn't have a blast radius, then it gains a 5-Hit, 1-hex blast radius — this represents the blast and shrapnel bouncing in the room. The target of the blast isn't affected by this little rule, but everyone within one meter of it is!

If a shot misses its target, note its line of fire (LOF). If that LOF intercepts a door or the control center, roll 1D10 — on 5-10, the shot hits the door/control center for appropriate damage.

Please note that this map is in 5-meter hexes!

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans have 200 CP to construct at

least four roadstrikers. These have normal pilots.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials are fighting back with what troops they can muster — mostly the technicians and officers, and a couple of suits. They get 125 CP to buy no more than two roadstriker-class suits with normal pilots and at least ten foot troops (use the rules for buying normal people, page 18). None of the foot troops may use portable missiles; instead, all weapons must be energy, projectile, or EMW/melee weapons.

SET-UP

The Terrans secretly designate the door or doors where they're going to enter, and which striker is entering which door. They are assumed to have sufficient demolition charges for each striker to enter at a separate door if desired.

Then the Imperials set up one roadstriker and at least six foot troops in the control center. The other troops and roadstriker may be set up anywhere in the complex.

After the Imperials have set up, the Terrans place their roadstrikers, blow the doors, and battle is joined!

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans win if they reach the command center and do at least 100 Hits of damage to the room. The Imperials win if they prevent this from happening.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

There are advantages to splitting up and going for the control center separately — one of the strikers might get through, and the enemy has to split his forces. On the other hand, the Imperials might decide to backpedal to the control center and hole up there, ambushing anyone they see, in which case you'll need a lot of massed firepower. Arm each Minuteman with a 100-Hit "hand grenade" (4 spaces, 50 kg, 0.08 CP) made especially for trashing the control room.

Imperial Strategy

You have troops, so give them armor and some big anti-striker energy weapons, or armor-piercing projectile rifles. You could even give them some big EMWs! Use your strikers for hit and run; you've only got two of them, so don't waste them in slugfests.

1 Hex = 50M

ENTRANCE

CONTROL
ROOM

ENTRANCE

ENTRANCE

29: MOUNT SURIBACHI

すりばちやま

A fast courier was dispatched to the fleet with the information on the abortive assault. Iwo was a crucial target, and one that ten starcruisers didn't have the muscle to take. They needed the fleet.

The fleet assault on Iwo ran into a major obstacle almost immediately. The main Imperial fortress on the planetoid was a monstrous nickel-iron pimple at one end, a natural mountain that gave the planetoid its extended length and strange shape. The Imperials had hollowed most of it out, leaving a vast fortress filled with tunnels, storage areas, mecha hangars, and weapons bays. Lots of weapon bays, with capital ship weaponry that dominated the near space approach to the planetoid. No ship larger than a landing craft could draw near to the rock without coming under deadly fire from the mega-batteries in the mountain.

At first the fleet attempted to retaliate in kind, reasoning that while starships could evade, a mountain couldn't. It was then that

the Terrans discovered an enormous force field, shielding the mountain from return fire; massed Terran ship batteries merely bounced off of it, while the fleet lost two cruisers and a light carrier to return fire.

Failing to bombard it, the decision was made to send ground forces to take the mountain and destroy the force field generators. This proved to be harder than expected, for the Imperials had bolstered the mountain (code-named Suribachi) with bunkers, minefields, pillboxes, and hidden mecha silos. The first day's fighting achieved little except Terran casualties.

One piece of information gained during the fighting heartened the Terran High Command: A single crucial force field generator was located in a relatively poorly defended notch. Unfortunately, it was sited between several mecha silos, and any attempt to destroy it would be thwarted by an avalanche of enemy mecha. A plan was made to assault neighboring areas and draw off the enemy forces while a

small force made its way to the generator and destroyed it. Once the shield was gone, the fleet could easily obliterate the mountain with its combined firepower. The loss of enemy information and facilities would be heavy, but the losses from taking the mountain the hard way would be intolerable.

So it was that the attack was launched. Squadrons of Rapiers and other mecha descended on the mountain, aimed at sectors near the critical force field generator. As planned, the enemy responded by sending vast amounts of mecha to repulse what they surely saw as an all-out attack. While the battle raged, a small unit of mecha approached the generator's sector aboard a cloaked mecharider carrier. Grounding in a culvert out of view of enemy guns, the carrier released its cargo of assault mecha and roadstrikers. This small commando unit closed on the generator and its defenses, knowing that their success would be the only way to justify the losses other units were taking for them.

THE MAP

The terrain on this planetoid is pretty severe — crags, boulders, and cliffs. Terrain levels are noted on the map, as are any rocks big enough to hide behind.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans have 1000 CP to construct at least three mecha and/or roadstrikers. They have one commander, one ace, and as many regular pilots as they need. The Terrans do not have to use the Rapiers as the base mecha design, as this is the fleet, this is an assault mission, and the Rapiers weren't designed for this sort of thing.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials receive 600 CP to construct a force of fixed installations and mecha. No more than 300 CP may be spent on mecha, and no more than 50 CP may be spent on mines. Any mecha must be based on the Gorgon and have normal pilots. Fixed installations have crews with REF 10 and all combat skills 5; these crews wear SP 20-hit space armor.

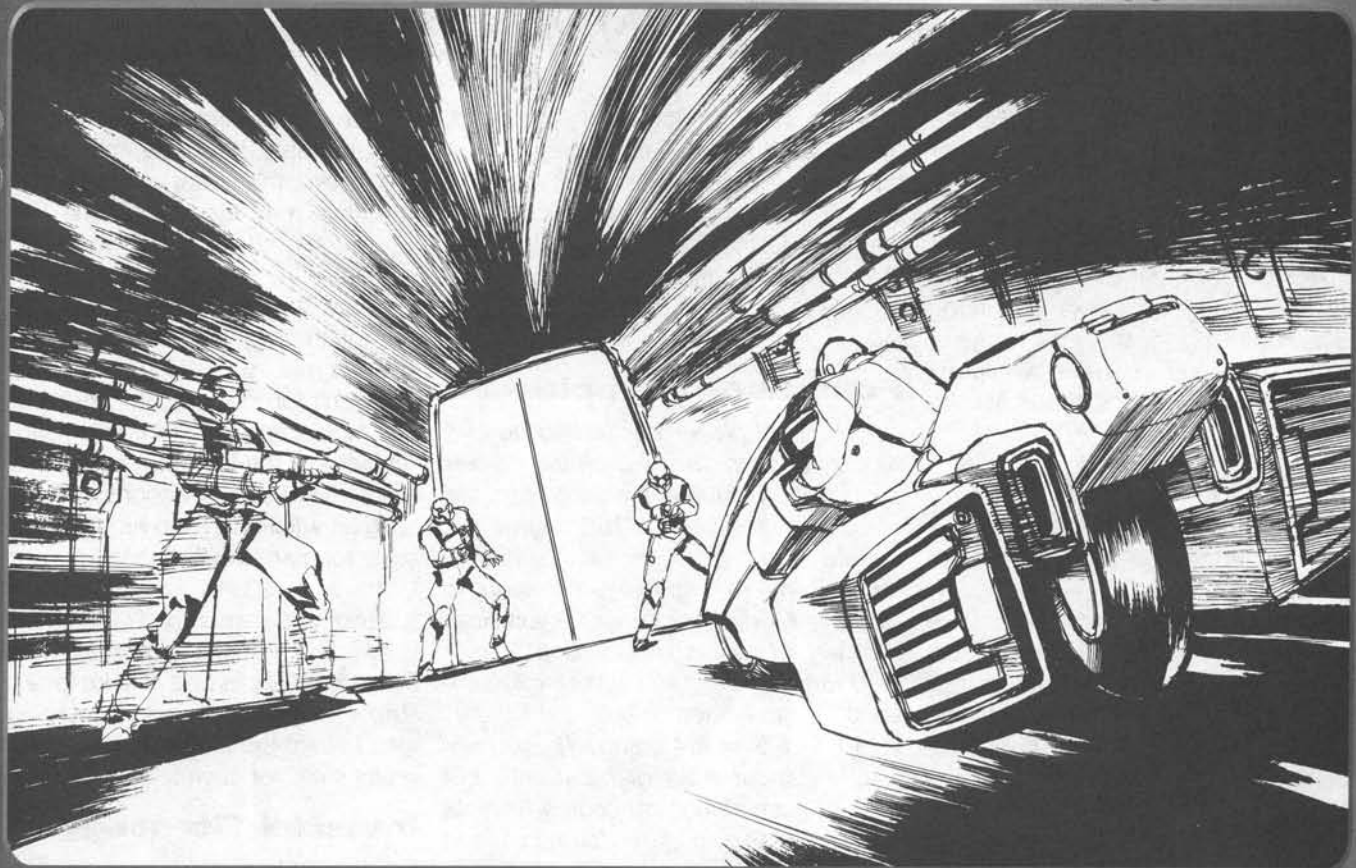
The force field generator can sustain 5 Kills of damage. The Imperial player may use some of his CP to armor (and possibly shield) it.

SET-UP

The Terrans secretly note which mecha will be entering on which board edge. After this is noted, the Imperials set up their forces on the map within the designated zone. Once Imperial forces are set up, the Terrans move and the game begins.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The victory conditions are simple: The Terrans win if they destroy the force field projector. The Imperials win if they prevent the Terrans from destroying the force field projector.



NEW RULES: FORTIFICATIONS

Fortifications are fixed defenses, usually armored buildings equipped with weaponry. They are bought as torso servos, and may have head and pod servos added. They can be in any scale; a security officer's booth is 1/10 scale, while the historic El Fraile fortress is 100x scale.

Fort spaces are used for weapons and gear, just like a mekton. No motive gear is allowed; everything else is okay. Normally, they just have weapons. Once you have got the fort built, add up the tonnage and calculate the Maneuver Value as usual. This represents restricted weapon arcs, the bulk of the fort getting in the way of operation, etc. You can use weight reduction and verniers (no, they're not really attitude jets. Think modified design, sloping, landscaping, improved servos and weapon tech, etc.) to reduce this.

There are a few details that are a bit different about forts:

Sensors

Forts need sensors like any other unit. They do not have any penalties for not having sensors mounted in head servos.

Crews

Weapons crews require cockpit spaces; these can be allocated normally, with a few crew (or even one crewmember) operating all functions, in which case the normal multiple crew rules are used. Alternatively, each weapon or function may be assigned a crewmember — this means each weapon/function requires a separate "cockpit" space, but means that the weapons/functions work independently, each crewmember gets his full actions (two plus additional actions; penalties for that crewmember's additional actions apply only to that crewmember, and not the others), and there is no additional MV penalty, unlike the normal multiple crew rules. This means assigning crew to each weapon and function gets you more actions, but takes more spaces for said crew.

Armor

Forts can have much more armor than mobile units. A fort is allowed as much armor as it wants (a Medium Striker Fort Torso could mount Superheavy Armor). This armor can be modified as per normal rules.

Firing Arcs

Normally, fort weapons have a front arc (right front, left front, and facing). Weapons can be given one flank arc as well; this is a x1.3 multiplier. Giving a weapon a 360-degree firing arc is a x1.7 multiplier. Please note that weapons mounted in a head servo may have a 360-degree firing arc for free, but all weapons mounted in that head servo must fire in the same direction at once.

Fort weapons may be mounted in any direction; unless a weapon has a 360-degree firing arc, the side of the fort that a weapon counts as its "front facing" must be designated! Please note that unless a weapon can actually shoot at an attacker, fire from that attacker can't hit or damage that

weapon (no, you can't fire through the fort to hit the weapon on the other side!).

Melee Weapons

Sure, forts can mount melee weapons! They have weapons crews and firing arcs as above; they just have a range of 1 (melee range; fort melee weapons can't be "thrown", since there are no arm servos).

Difficulty Modifier

Forts can't dodge. When fired at, a fort has a no dodge roll; this means that any attack roll higher than 10 (Easy) hits the fort. Forts can be designed so they're actually harder to hit — built lower to the ground, sloped armor, etc. If the fort is to have a Difficulty to hit, this is how to do it. Difficulty 15 = $\times 1.5$, Difficulty 20 = $\times 2.0$, Difficulty 25 = $\times 3.0$. An attacker's attack roll must beat the fort's Difficulty to hit it.

Hidden Forts

A fort may be hidden. This is clever camouflage rather than cloaking (although a fort could buy cloaking as an option); once the fort fires or is discovered, it is no longer hidden.

Awareness rolls are needed to find a hidden fort. The Difficulty of the Awareness roll depends on how well hidden the fort is: Difficulty 15 = $\times 1.5$, Difficulty 20 = $\times 2.0$, Difficulty 25 = $\times 3.0$. ASP Recon Sensors reduce the Difficulty by 5.

Knockback

A fort reduces all knockback results by 4 points, in addition to any reductions for its "weight", and the highest result allowed is 8. If the fort "loses" an action, all gunners and crew in the fort lose the action, as they've been knocked about by the titanic shock.

Tangler Rounds

Well-placed goo bombs can really goof up a fortification. With a sufficiently large goo bomb, an entire pillbox can be epoxied over and thus made into a piece of rather expensive scenery. Tangler rounds don't "grapple" the fort

(what a silly mental image); instead, they impede its operation. Every Kill of tangler round counts as an MV modifier to the fort servo that it hits. For example, a Rapier hits a torso-servo fort with three 4-Kill tangler rounds; from now on, that fort has its MV raised by 12, giving its crew an additional -12 to hit.

Fortress Example

The Imperial player decides to build a hidden bunker. Using a Heavy Striker torso with a single crewmember, he gives it SP 10 armor, a 360-degree arc missile launcher (20 4-Kill missiles, range 7, WA 0), Lightweight sensors, a Difficulty Modifier of 15, and Awareness Difficulty 15 hiding. This costs 10 (torso) + 10 (armor) + 13.6 (missiles) + 1 (sensors) + 4 (space efficiency) = 41, $\times (1+1.5+1.5) = 164$ points, 13 tons, MV -1. He's spent a lot of his points, but has a nasty little concealed missile bunker, just waiting to "surface" and blow holes in the backs of Terran mecha that bypassed it on the way to their target.

MINEFIELDS

The Imperials can lay minefields. A Minefield is an area "seeded" with mines (Missiles with a range of 0 and blast radius warheads). Mines can be fused to go off when any mecha steps into the hex where the Mine is located ($\times 1.0$ multiplier), or command-detonated (the controlling player detonates the Mines when and where he desires; same as the "Fuse" advantage, a $\times 1.1$ multiplier). Mines are secretly noted by hex before the battle begins.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

The Imperials have you cold. They have all the advantages of prepared positions, with heavy armor, heavy weapons, and lots of crew firing those heavy weapons lots of times each turn! What's worse is the fact that you can't stay and play with the forts for very long; your mission is to take out that force field generator, not hang about getting shot up by fortress guns.

Smoke missiles are the single best idea available. What the Imperials can't see, they can't shoot — this is why the Imperials may include mecha in their force as well as their forts. If the Imperial player neglects to notice that forts can't move, and smoke missiles can foil their ranged weapons, oh, well, it was a milk run, wasn't it?

Don't forget, you can take roadstriders! Not only are they cheaper, they're smaller — if the Imperials fail to take any roadstriker-scale weapons, then they have an additional -3 to hit you. If no 1/5 scale forts are bought, then you normally have a +3 to hit the forts, too! Roadstriders can carry 1/1 scale, range 0 missile warheads as bombs (a 20-Kill bomb is 4 spaces and 500 kg for a roadstriker — this comes out to counting five tons toward the striker's mass, but that's pretty small for such a big bang, eh?).

Imperial Strategy

Build small forts; the crewmembers are free, and lots of small forts can pump out a lot of firepower and take a lot of punishment. Situate your forts so they can protect each other, as well as shoot anything that gets near the force field generator. Oh, it doesn't pay to shoot burst area weapons near said generator; the Terran player would just love for you to blow up what you're supposed to be defending, ensuring his victory.

Don't forget to take mecha. Mecha can move, something the forts can't do. If you have no mobile units, then the Terrans will waltz through, firing smoke rockets and glue rounds, nullify all your forts and pillboxes, and destroy your force field generator at their leisure. Use your mecha as a mobile reserve to reinforce your forts; if you can, use your forts to shell the Terrans while your mecha tears into them!

Mines can make a mess of the Terrans' plans. You're limited to the amount you can use, so use them wisely. Situate mines in areas where the forts can't shoot — "Oh, my, I left that approach route open (snicker, snicker)." Place mines close to the force field generator to strike back at the Terrans one more time.

1 HEX = 50M

(ALL BOULDERS ARE LARGE
ENOUGH TO USE AS COVER)

FORCE FIELD
GENERATOR

IMPERIAL SET-UP AREA

30: MEAT GRINDER

にくのひく



The Terran drive to take two hit a snag in a little valley. A web of pillboxes and bunkers commanded the approach to one of the planetoid's bigger space weapons. Two Mek assaults were repelled by heavy fire. Since the pillboxes seemed deficient in small weapons the decision was made to send in Minutemen to do the job.

THE MAP

Meat Grinder is in a smooth bowl of a valley. The only terrain is represented by contour lines.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terrans get one Hero and nine normal pilots to man 600 CP of roadstriders. The hero's roadstriker may cost up to 100 CP; the other roadstriders are limited to a maximum of 75 CP.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperials get 1000 CP to construct a number of fortresses, using the rules from the Mount Suribachi scenario. These forts are crewed by regular

Imperial soldiers (REF 10, relevant skills at 5). The Imperials may spend no more than 100 CP total on 1/5x scale and anti-personnel weapons, and must spend at least 250 CP on 1x scale weapons. The Imperials are not allowed to use minefields.

SET-UP

The Imperials set up their fortresses on the map. Then the Terrans enter from any and all map edges.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Terrans are trying to clean out this rats' nest. If they knock out every Imperial fort while sustaining 50% or fewer casualties (each roadstriker counts as a separate casualty; count them by quantity, not point total), it's a major victory for the Terrans. If the Terrans destroy 75% (by point total) of the Imperial forts while sustaining 50% or fewer casualties, it's a Terran minor victory. If the Imperials lose fewer than 50% of their forts (by point total), it's an Imperial minor victory. If the Imperials lose 25% or

less of their forts (by point total), it's an Imperial major victory.

STRATEGY TIPS

Terran Strategy

You have to walk up to pillboxes and destroy them. Yuck. Looking down the business end of a gun is not a recipe for survival. Smoke missiles are going to be your saving grace; that and satchel charges (see the suggestions in the Mount Suribachi scenario) will win you the mission.

Imperial Strategy

Since you're limited to immobile forts here, there's not much you can do strategy-wise. The best option is to set your pillboxes so that they can cover each other, particularly with anti-personnel fire. A large number of cheap pillboxes works better than a few ornate (and high point value) forts. That way, the Terrans have to do a lot more work to get their victory conditions. Since they're likely to have a lot of smoke bombs, automated energy melee weapons are a good idea for fragging the Terran attackers.

1 Hex = 50M

LEVEL 4

LEVEL 3

LEVEL 2

LEVEL 1

THE SURFACE

31: THE BATTLE OF THE SOLAR SEA

たいようのうみのせんとう

Attention, all combat crews, man your Mektons." Flight Commander Frozen's amplified voice rang across the Galant's mecha bay. Tech crews finished topping off fuel tanks and ammo bins; pilots scrambled into their cockpits, and the bay was loud with whining turbines and shouted orders.

Mark and Jalia stood hand in gloved hand on the gantry. "Don't worry, my love," she called over the noise, "we shall be victorious. This day, the Empire shall fall." He smiled at her incurable optimism.

"You take care of yourself. Your old comrades don't like you much, now," he told her. She drew his lips to hers.

"This is Admiral Khazaks," a new voice thundered over the intercom. "We're closing on the enemy flagship. The rest of the fleet's depending on us to destroy it; we must not fail! For Terra!"

"Hey, you two!" Donchoi shouted from his Rapier. "Save it for later! Mount up!" The lovers broke, grinning sheepishly, and ran for their own mecha.

The enemy awaited.

THE MAP

This one's pretty simple, since it's a bare space map. It's just a BIG one. Starships fight at some pretty extreme ranges, so smaller hexes are recommended (unless you have a large area to play in). 1/2" hexes are good; use counters for the units, since they'll be fighting over a large area, and there'll be lots of units cluttering up the area.

To be quite clear: There are no terrain features on this map. It's just open space.

TERRAN FORCES

The Terran fleet gets Task Force *Galant* (named in honor of the *Galant*), consisting of the *Adamant*-class battleship *Retribution*, the *Argus*-class carriers *Galant* and *Braveheart*, and the mecha squadrons of the *Galant* and *Braveheart* (20 mecha).

The *Retribution* is based around a Medium Heavy hull, with no mecha, laden with weapons and armor. It's nothing but a gun platform, with a B-grade crew.

The *Braveheart* has a Striker hull, with 1 space (carrying 10 mecha). The *Braveheart* has a C-grade crew.

The Terran mecha are upgraded Rapiers. Six of the *Galant* mecha are crewed by ace pilots and can be modified to 250 CP apiece. One of the *Galant* Rapiers is piloted by an Imperial ace (Jalia Zell) and can be modified to 275 CP. Three of the *Galant* Rapiers are piloted by heroes (Donchoi, Mariko, and Mark), two of them modifiable to 300 CP, and one to 350 CP (Donchoi's Cosmo Defender Rapier). The *Braveheart*'s Rapiers are piloted by eight normal and two commander pilots. The normal Rapiers can be modified to 200 CP, and the commanders' Rapiers up to 250 CP.

IMPERIAL FORCES

The Imperial force is the complement of the Titan-class battlecarrier *Zarastro*, consisting of the *Zarastro*, its four escort corvettes, and twenty of its mecha.

The *Zarastro* is based on an Armored Heavy hull carrying one mecha bay (with capacity for eighty mecha) and as many weapons as can be crammed into the hull.

The corvettes are based on Superlight hulls.

Ten of the mecha are Medusas, six with normal pilots and 250 CP, three with ace pilots and 275 CP, and one with a hero pilot (Captain Shann) and 350 CP.

The other ten mecha are Gorgons; six of them have normal pilots and 250 CP, two of them have ace pilots and 275 CP, and two of them have hero pilots and 325 CP (Annar Quint) and 350 CP (Kandrax's Gorgon Xanithes).

SET-UP

The Terrans set up within 3 hexes of on one side of the map, and the Imperials within 3 hexes of the other side of the map.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

This is the big one, the climactic battle which either establishes Terra as a galactic power, or relegates it to assimilation at the hands of the Empire. No quarter is

asked or given. The winner is the one who has a capital ship (a battleship or carrier) remaining mobile at the end of the knock-down, drag-out battle.

CONSTRUCTION

Mekton Zeta

Use normal starship construction rules.

MTS

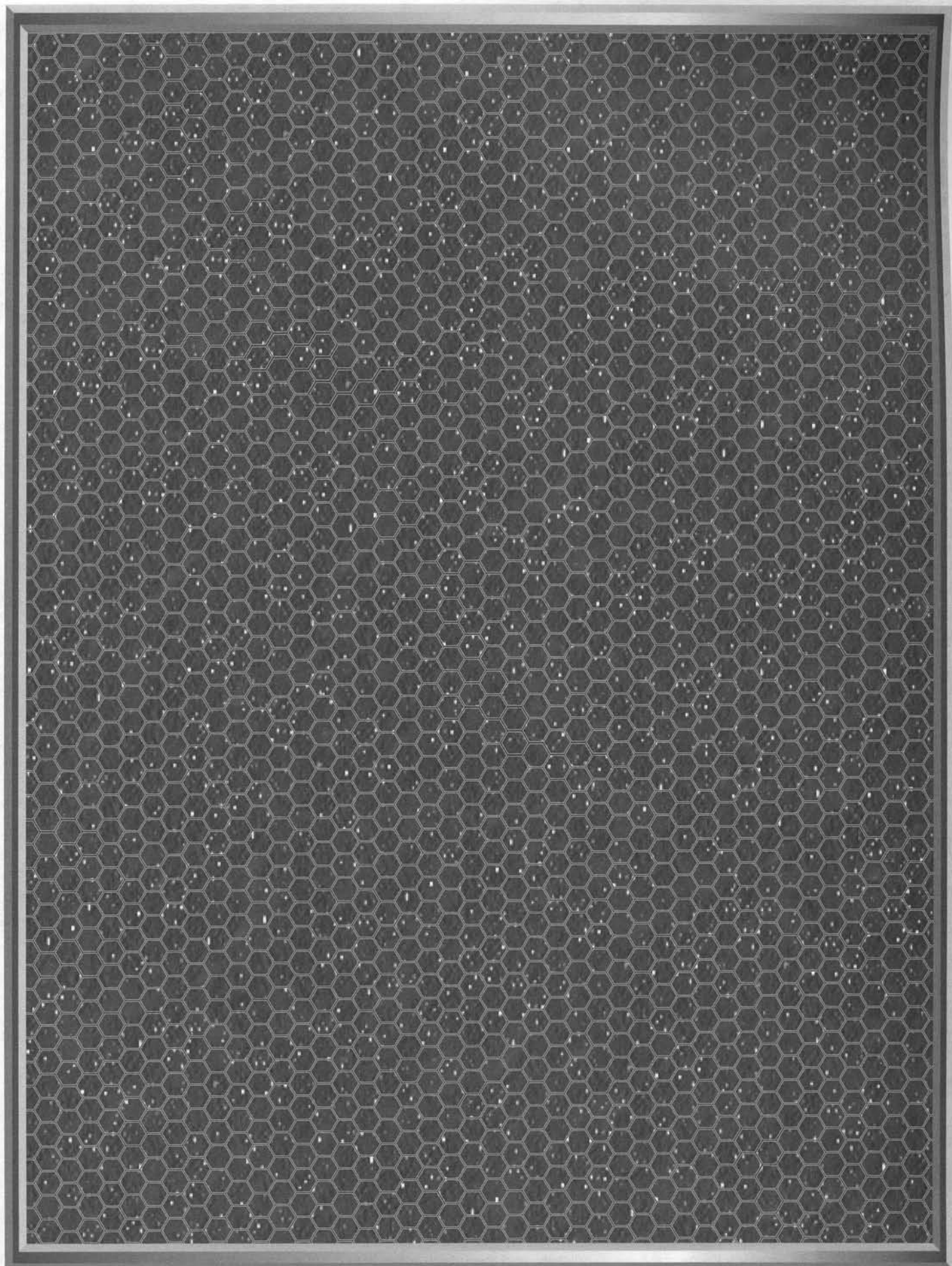
This scenario is meant to use the less complex ship-building rules of *Mekton Zeta*. In the event that players prefer to use *Mekton Zeta Plus*, the ships are limited to the one hull servo of the type specified, they cannot use scaled armor (the 100x ships have 10x armor, the corvettes have 1x armor), the ships must be able to carry the specified amount of mecha, and the following items are not available for the ships' construction: energy pools, non-reactive shields, command armor, cloaking, esper lenses, thought control, techno-organics, turbocharger systems, teleportation, transformers, and combiners. These options are all available for mecha, just not for the ships!

OPTIONAL RULE: PSYCHICS

There were actually psychics with Esperlens-equipped mecha taking place in this battle. Mariko Lim (one of the *Galant*'s heroes) and Annar Quint (one of the Imperial heroes) were both experienced Psychics. To make them, allocate some of their statistics points (as desired) to the PSI stat, and buy up their psychic skills with some of their skill points. Then give their mecha (a Rapier for Mariko, a Gorgon for Quint) Esper lenses.

MEKTON Z: THE MOVIE

Needless to say, with two battleships, two cruisers, four corvettes, and forty (!) mecha buzzing around, this scenario is written for use with the cinematic combat system (included in the *Mekton Tactical Display*). You can also use *Mekton Fleet Battles*, and it can be fought with the normal *Mekton Zeta* rules (gasp), but be warned, it'll take a while.



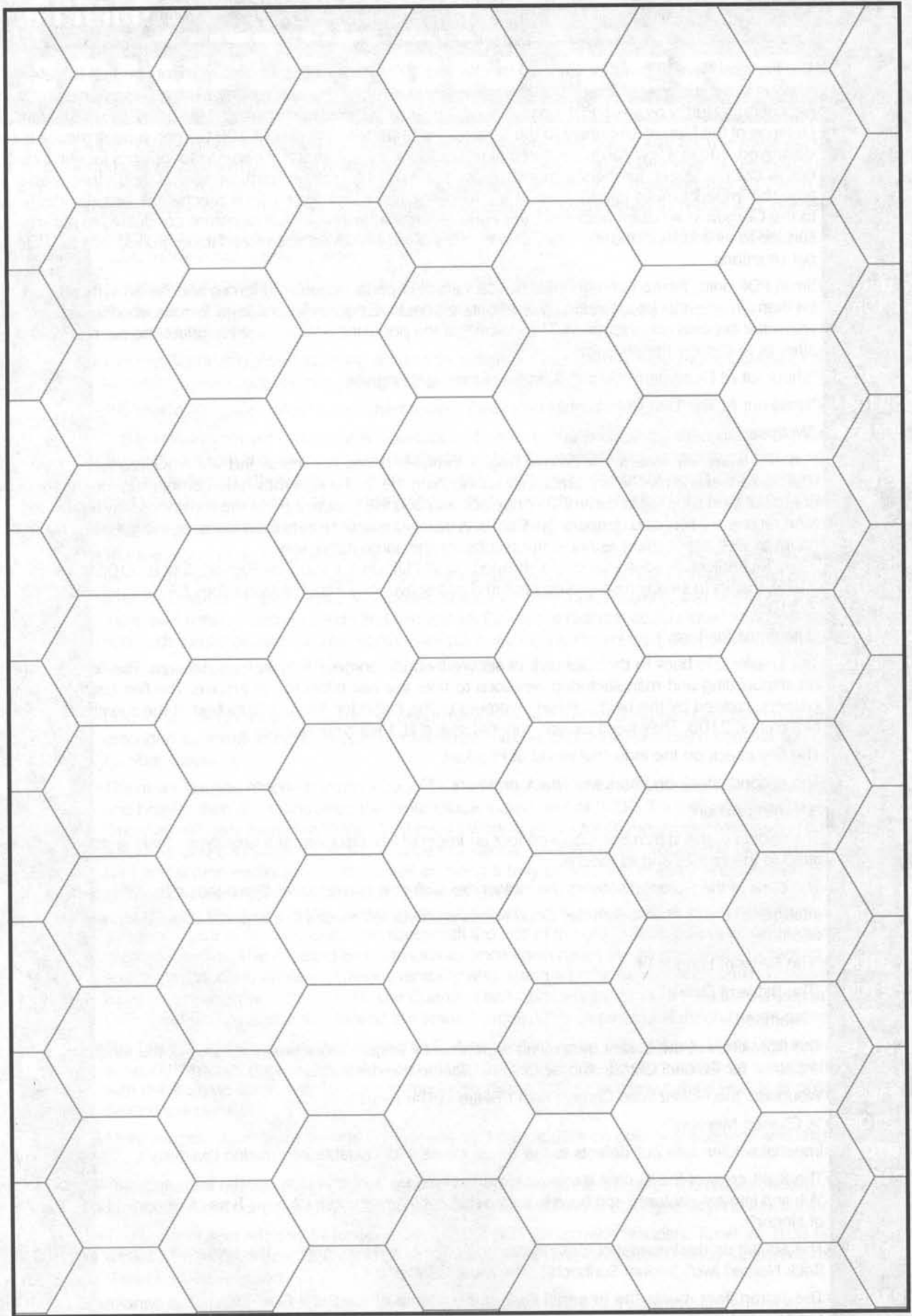
TIMELINE FOR MEKTON WARS 1: INVASION TERRA

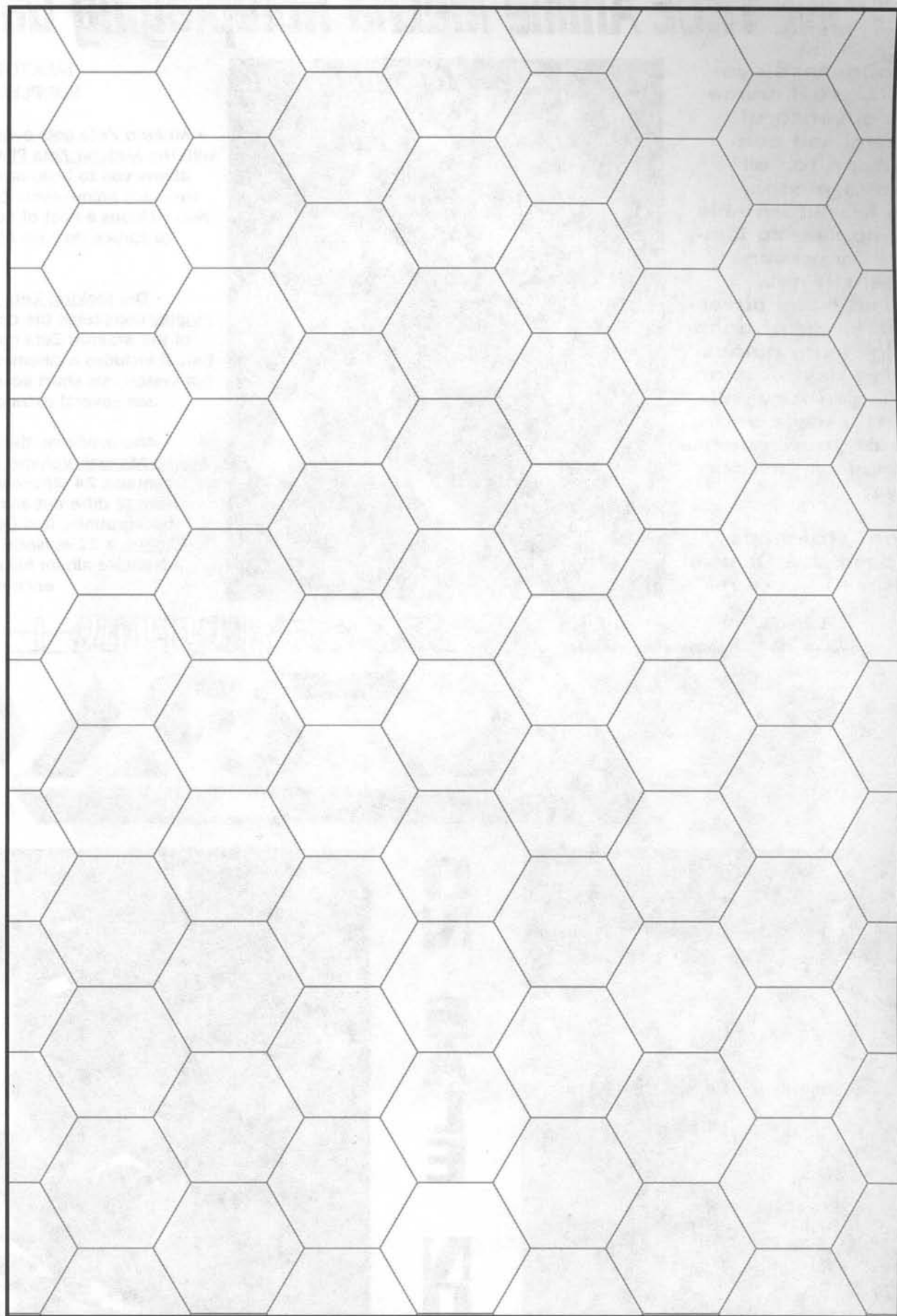
NOTE: All dates are given in the Terran "A.D." nomenclature. Imperial dates are, for the most part, derived from the moment of their arrival in the Milky Way galaxy and are based on a day-cycle 18 terrestrial hours long, in multiples of 100. For example, the day of the invasion would be expressed as 98/37/2, meaning the 23,798th Imperial day since the Empire's arrival in the Milky Way – now you see why the dates below are expressed in Terran A.D. nomenclature.)

- Feb. 13, 2056 ■ Nearly ninety years after the first Terran sets foot on soil other than Terra's, the first Terran sets foot on a habitable world in the Alpha Centauri system.
- Oct. 16, 2059 ■ The Imperial Expeditionary Force arrives in the Milky Way galaxy.
- July 25, 2069 ■ The first experimental stargate is activated, sending an automated probe from distant Terra-Luna orbit to another stargate in the Asteroid Belt.
- Aug. 18, 2069 ■ The first Terran probeship carrying a portable stargate is launched toward Alpha Centauri. Other probeships are launched toward other colony worlds in the coming months.
- Mar 21, 2072 ■ The probeship *Bellerophon* is launched toward Delta Eridani.
- April 17, 2104 ■ The Imperial destroyer *Grivaatzal* encounters and captures the probeship *Bellerophon* "The Bellerophon Incident". The captured ship and crew are immediately dispatched to Imperial Command Headquarters, nearly 100 light years distant. For its part, UNWO Space Command wonders why the *Bellerophon* hasn't constructed its stargate and made contact with Terra or some of the nearby colonies. Allowances are made for possible problems or delays.
- June 15, 2104 ■ UNWO Space Command posts the *Bellerophon* as officially missing.
- Nov. 2, 2104 ■ The first report of an unidentified ship comes in from the Terran cruiser *Calcutta*, operating in the Barnard's Star system. Responding to a distress call from the Belt freighter *Mission Missy*, the *Calcutta* arrived on the scene in enough time to confirm that the freighter was under attack by a fairly logical-looking ship of roughly the *Calcutta*'s displacement, with unknown configuration and capabilities. Before the *Calcutta* could close to engagement range, the bogey succeeded in detonating the freighter's power plant and rapidly disengaged, disappearing from the *Calcutta*'s scopes.
- Nov., 2104 ■ More reports of unidentified ships trickle in from Terran colonies.
- April, 2105
- Nov. 25, 2104 ■ UNWO Space Command manages to negotiate a deal with the Asteroid Belt Consortium, granting enhanced and extended exploitation rights in colony asteroid systems in exchange for a crash construction program to produce combat spaceships.
- Dec. 7, 2104 ■ The new Guardian mecha is introduced to the Planetary Defense Forces, the first war mecha taller than four meters and heavier than eight tons since the Switchblade experiment of 2030. The official press release indicates that the Guardian will have many functions. On Terra, it'll work in tandem with the smaller Minuteman suits, providing heavy firepower and overwatch capability in urban situations. On the colony worlds, the Guardian will serve as a cargo lifter and armed exploration unit, as well as being a truly all-weather, all-terran combat unit, supplementing Talos MBTs and replacing them in terrain hostile to the tanks.

In actuality the Guardian is a response to reports on the unidentified aliens. About one third of the reports show evidence of humanoid-shaped spacecraft the size of the old Switchblade operating in close proximity to the alien spaceships. The Asteroid Belt Consortium once again raises the possibility of supplanting space fighters with space mecha, citing enhanced maneuverability and noting that the aliens will command close-in superiority if they have mecha and the Terrans don't. The Guardian isn't quite what they wanted, but it's a step in the right direction. Dr. Marcel Graves is selected to lead the team designing the Terran space mecha, code named Rapier.
- May 15, 2105 ■ The first Terran stargate, located at Epsilon Eridani, is attacked by the unknown aliens. The stargate crew manages to send through a drone containing a log of the situation before all communications are severed and connection with the stargate is cut. Warships are immediately dispatched to as many colony worlds as possible with orders to defend the stargates.
- Late May thru June, 2105 ■ More stargate attacks are reported, as well as sporadic attacks on colony spaceports and shipping.
- June 5, 2105 ■ The stargate at Mu Cassiopei is attacked by the aliens "Defend the Stargate". The cruiser *Sentinel* manages to destroy the attacker, but not before the stargate (known as the "Crown") is damaged beyond functioning capacity.
- June 21, 2105 ■ The Imperial fleet appears in Terran orbit at 1042 GST (Greenwich Standard Time). At 1103 GST the fleet begins orbital bombardment of military and civilian communications targets, then shifts to supporting mecha invasion units "Pearl Harbor Revisited".
- June 22, 2105 ■ The invasion of Terra is a success. The PDF has ceased to exist as a cohesive armed force, the populace quails in its arcology homes or flees mindlessly, and the orbital habitats and lunar colonies have surrendered.

- June 23, 2105** ■ The Imperial have to divert nearly 500 mecha and 70% of their orbital bombardment strength to defeat a series of regiment-sized attacks on their positions in China. At the same time, scattered strikes are made against targets of opportunity by small PDF units around the globe "Guderian's Revenge", "Attack of the Lilliputians", and "In Defense of the Depot". Unknown to the Terrans, the Imperials lose almost 200 Gorgon assault mecha (damaged, destroyed, and in a few cases, captured almost intact!), as well as suffer damage to logistics facilities, cargo shuttles (a favorite target: lumbering monstrosities the size of a football field), personnel, and other mecha. At this time the Imperial make careful note of the following facts: The Terran Talos mechatank was decidedly superior to the Gorgon in an open battlefield, the Furie mechafighter had a heat signature conducive to attracting Terran surface-to-air-missiles, and the Gorgon was at a serious disadvantage when facing ground troops in close combat situations.
- June 23 thru July 5, 2105** ■ Small PDF units, formed into guerrilla bands, harass Imperial occupation forces and Terran sympathizers working for them. These attacks are aided by intelligence from PDF personnel and loyal Terrans working as "sympathizers" within the Imperial administration. The majority of the populace pacified, the Imperial send out retaliation forces to attempt to destroy the guerrillas.
- June 27, 2105** ■ "Shootout At Deadman's Gulch", "Charge of the Light Brigade."
- June 30, 2105** ■ "Breakout At The Lost Dutchman."
- July 2, 2015** ■ "Wolfpack."
- July 4 thru Aug. 5, 2105** ■ Suffering from field losses, the Empire begins fortifying bases in earnest and withdraw into them to protect their vital personnel and machinery, practically abandoning the field unless they have combat superiority. They use their control of food supplies to control the populace and bias the people against the resistance (any time a raid is made, food rations are reduced temporarily). Combats usually take place over food trains, as the guerrillas figure that they might as well attack them as not — the results are the same either way.
- Technological advances begin showing up in PDF units ("The First Rapier", July 8, 2105; "Furball", July 22, 2105), thanks to steady research on captured and scavenged Imperial technology ("A Rescue! A Rescue!" August 2, 2105).
- Aug. 10, 2105** ■ "The Battle for Terra."
- Late Aug., 2105 thru Feb., 2106** ■ The Empire falls back to their network of secured worlds, some 100 lightyears rimward. The Terrans concentrate on shipbuilding and manufacturing weapons to take the war effort to the Empire. The first batch of raiding star-cruisers, crewed by the best surviving warriors of the Battle for Terra, is launched in the months of October and November, 2105. They head toward Imperial space at 1 lightyear per day.
- Feb. 5, 2106** ■ The first attack on the industrial world of Pharkad.
- Mar 15, 2106** ■ The second attack on Pharkad ("Attack on Pharkad").
- Mar 16, 2106** ■ "Delaying Action."
- April 1, 2106** ■ The raiders of the starcruiser *Chauvan* loot an Imperial lab, discovering a prototype cloaking device which will be fitted to the cruiser and its mecha.
- April 29, 2106** ■ The crew of the *Galant* discovers the indigenous lifeforms of the planet Skorponos ("The Enemy Below").
- May 14, 2106** ■ Intelligence crews from the cruiser *Courageous* discover references to a Imperial asteroid fortress vital to their war effort.
- June 20, 2106** ■ "The Siege of Longos III."
- June 26, 2106** ■ "The Battle of Deliria."
- Aug. 13, 2106** ■ "Swamped."
- Aug. 21, 2106** ■ The flight crew of the *Galant* destroy an experimental Empire terror weapon ("Day of the Megatank"). This is the last straw for Colonel Chron, who devotes his fleet to the destruction of the *Galant*.
- Sept. 6, 2106** ■ Wounded, the *Galant* flees Chron's fleet ("Battle In The Rings").
- Sept. 13, 2106** ■ "A Chance Meeting."
- Oct. 22, 2106** ■ Imperial soldier Jalia Zell defects to the Terran cause with valuable information ("Midway").
- Oct. 29, 2106** ■ The flight crew of the *Galant* steals an experimental psychic enhancer mecha from an Imperial lab. Lieutenants Yuh and Lim are captured and have to fight a duel for their freedom ("A New Type of Weapon", Parts 1 and 2, "Duel of Honor").
- Nov. 25, 2106** ■ The assault on the Imperial command center, code-named Iwo, begins. The battle will rage for almost a week ("A Rock Named Iwo", "Mount Suribachi", "The Meat Grinder").
- Dec. 6, 2106** ■ The Terran fleet meets the Imperial fleet in the "Battle of the Solar Sea." This is the conclusion of the historic Terran-Imperial War.

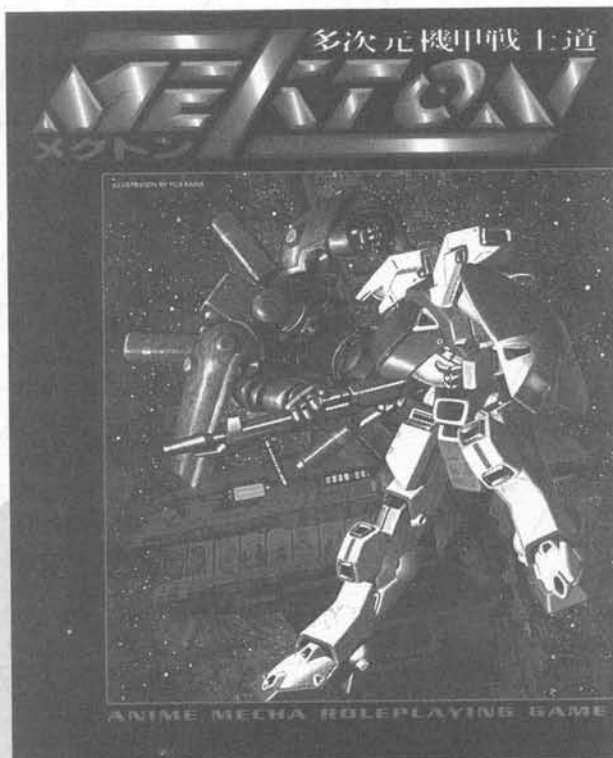




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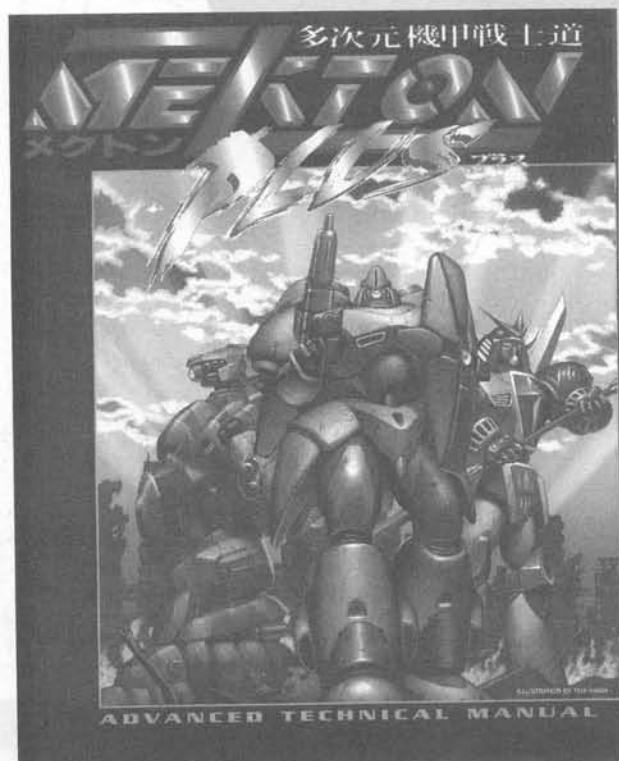


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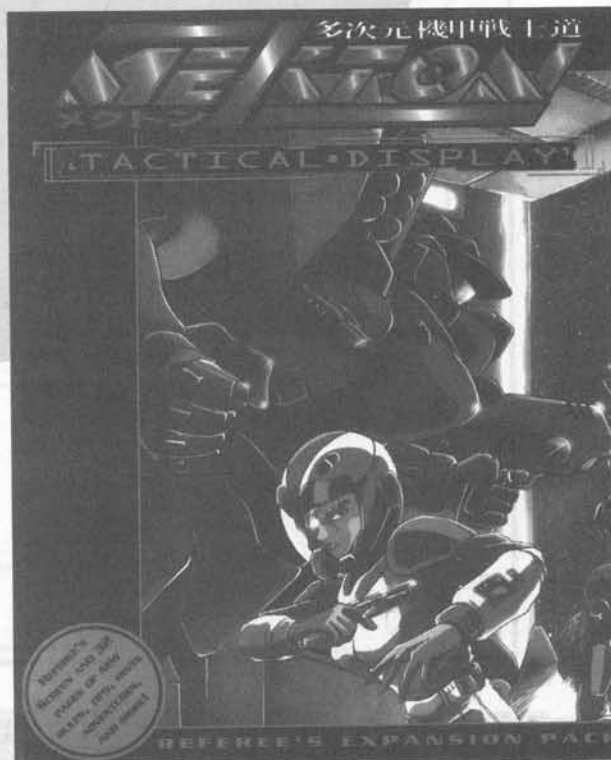
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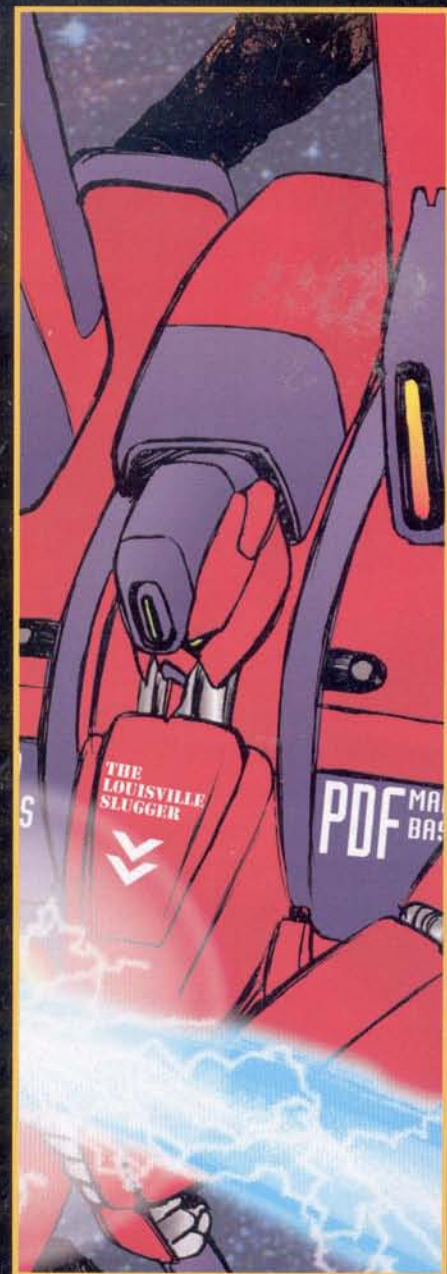


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