

ARGENT FIRE



In This Issue:

Happiness on the Battlefield

Interview about Battlefield: 2750

Smuggler's Rift

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▶ **Primary Editor:**
Paul L. "The Wolf"
Emerson

▶ **Articles and Interviews:** Paul L. "The Wolf" Emerson, Lyric "Maverick" Rosatti and "The Rev"

▶ **Art and Images:**
Cover: Pawel Czarnecki, part of Barrage
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ARGENT FIRE

The Official Wolf Mercenary Units/
Classic BattleTech On-Line Periodical

Volume I, Issue 2

October - November, 2003/11.01.67

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OPENING VOLLEY

Welcome to the second issue of Argent Fire magazine. We are glad you decided to come back and give us another try. Things in Armageddon Unlimited are proceeding very well; having our first command staff meeting last night(08.23.67) since the resurrection of AU, I know there's a LOT to be done. However, I also know it will get done in proper time.

Now, the only overt issue which has been brought to my attention since Issue 1 is the fact that a lot of the formatting needs to be modified so it's easier to read, so the PDF files will go together properly and less people will have a hassle reading the text contained herein.

Now, we use Arial as our main font style, anything else being for graphics only. I have also spaced the lettering out by a full point to make it easier to read. That gives this E-Zine a full justification look, which is not bad considering the first few fonts we tried out were much worse than what we have now.

So, if you have any formatting ideas, any images to use, or anything you would like to see, please feel free to contact us at argentfire@wolvesau.net and we'll see what we can do to get you taken care of.

Now, I'm still looking for an editor for this E-Zine, to take over so I can dedicate more time to the AU Field Manual than I've been able to. Now, that dedication hasn't gone solely into this E-Zine, but rather into AU as a whole. However, the more time I can get out of this the better. So, if you want to be the primary editor, designer and producer for Argent Fire, please step forward? I would feel better if it were someone from Armageddon Unlimited, but that's not a prerequisite.

Okay, kids, in this issue we have an interview with the folks who are producing BattleField: 2750, particularly RainGod, whom some of you might know from the BattleTech community. No, I am not talking about "PainGod" Wagner, hehe.

What I would like to have, and am working on the project for right now, is an interview with the folks at War! On-Line. I understand they have entered what they call their second season. However, my interest lies in the mod they are doing for BattleTech right now. Hopefully, they'll be up to helping us out with an interview.

One other thing just came to mind. Armageddon Unlimited is an artistic community. Whether that art is expressed in writing, drawing, specifications or screenshots doesn't matter. The fact is that we want warrior poets, we want journalists and writers who are willing to take a little extra time to produce something nice, and that's where the BattleTech community needs to arrive in order for the genre to survive. To allow the most unique genre ever developed to just die like we have been allowing it to is inexcusable. Preserving nice things is always a worthy goal; my personal belief is that BattleTech is something nice to have.

That's it from the editor's desk right now, folks. I hope you'll like this second installment in what, I already feel, is an astounding E-Zine. We're here to address the issues of the community, so write into us with your concerns and answers to any concerns you might read about.

~The Wolf



THE GRAPEVINE



AU began phase two of our operational startup posture at the beginning of August. It seems things are going about the direction and speed I figured they would go. I would love to be able to get things to work a whole lot faster than they are, but that's not righteously going to happen. We haven't released issue one to the GP yet because we're waiting to make sure our join pages and database are up and running. As usual, RL is rearing its' ugly head and we're having problems. Nothing to be done about it, just standard operational details for any unit out there.

However, I thoroughly believe that we'll be ready to rock and roll on the first of the year. Once that database is completed it's all going to start rolling a whole lot faster.

In other news the regiments are forming and new personnel are coming in as well as many of our original AU On-line iteration folks; yep, the oldsters are coming back.

Some stories have begun in Doob's Bar on our HowlNet, one of which has actually been proceeding since before issue 1 began, and it's called Empire. It concerns the fall of General Kay Wolf from power in AU and how he works, along with many of

his friends, colleagues and fellow MechWarriors, to restore that power and take it away from a tyrant who had been a most trusted advisor and friend. Altruism can be a good thing, but it can also get you killed when someone else is also altruistic in their own understanding.

Empire... will be put into, will indeed fire off, our first story anthology. However, we'll need more stories. To read what is presently available for Empire... and, perhaps, to spur your own imagination to write, click here:

<http://www.wolvesau.net/HowlNet/viewtopic.php?t=6>

~The Wolf

BATTLEROMs

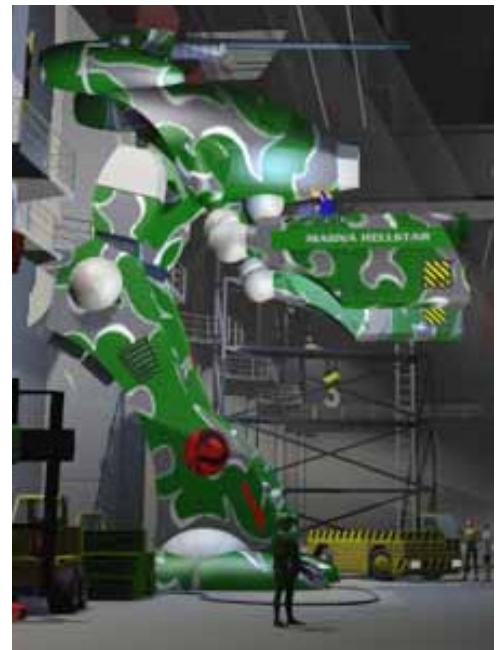
My Leg!

By The Rev

It's something all pilots hate to have and everyone has probably had it at one time. No, it's not Herpes ('cause those stay with you for life), it's a legged mech. I know some warriors out there may say "Well hey, I am honorable and don't leg." And if that's what they want to do, that is fine with them. But me, I will tear that puppy off faster then you can say "Oh crap, he tore off my leg!"

Now why do some people not like legging? It's quite simple really, your legs are there to be able to help you move. Damaging one will restrict most of your movement. Also, it means you are just one very short step from being dead.

Now if your life is in danger by some strong man as you're walking home, are you going to just duke it out with him? Heck no, you aren't! You're probably going to kick him in the nuts (excuse my language) and run. So, why should it be any different in a game?



If you are in a light 'mech it's a fact that you don't have very sufficient firepower to stand there and duke it out with a heavy. You are the MechWarrior that is looking for the target of opportunity. When your buds are out there dying you want to help them. You notice your friend in a Madcat trading punches with a Vulture, so you take off as fast as you can to help. You see the Vulture was nailed in the Center Torso and the left leg. The center torso is only slightly damaged, though. It doesn't take a genius to decide what to do next. You take your light 'mech into a 'circle of death' and you keep nicking away armor plating on that leg till he is down. Because you decided to shoot there you probably not only saved your life, but you saved your friends as well.

But being legged makes any MechWarrior fume with anger, which in its own right could be a tactic that would make the MechWarrior fight on an unstable emotion of rage instead of using his brain. But let's say you yourself are legged. You can't get anywhere fast enough and some terrain is out of the question for maneuvering on. I myself would stay back and give cover/support fire where it's needed.

But let's say one of your lance mates needs you, so you push your 'mech into overdrive. You hear the unsettling crunch of metal on metal as you're busted up leg tries to work. As you limp to the battlefield oil and coolant are squirting from the wound in your leg like an injured infantryman.

As you reach the battle you notice your friend is almost crippled. You then twist your body so that your leg is facing away from the action, but then you torso twist so you can add your fire. It's always bad when you have to fight like that, but its better then sitting back as you watch your buddy die.

Like I said, some people just will not leg because they find it dishonorable. But if they like sitting back watching their friend die in combat then that is their cup of tea, but not mine. I will get down, dirty and low to get the job done if I have to. But just remember MechWarriors: keep plenty of armor in that leg and you'll be fine.

Happiness on the Battlefield

By The Rev

It's called a face plant, the lip skid, the cockpit crunch. It's a glorious thing that very few pilots get to witness, especially against 'mechs their own size or when they are pitted against a better pilot. Even the great Jeremiah Wolf probably had a tingle go over his body as he saw a multi-ton 'mech nail the dirt in a crash that would thud for miles. The 'mech itself would grind several yards into the ground with armor ripping itself off and weapons being so mangled they won't be good for anything but the trash heap.

The light 'mechs are the easiest to go down. When a person can actually hit one, all of that light 'mechs pilots hopes and dreams are gone. If the initial hit of lasers, missiles or ballistics doesn't kill them, then the fact that the light 'mechs legs will rip from its body and its head will go soaring several yards farther will definitely kill it.

Now you may be thinking, 'sure, I have seen light mechs become twisted piles of metal quite a few times.' But, don't you love it when the bigger ones go down? For instance, there is the Daishi, the biggest, meanest, bad-boy the Clans have come up with. When this 'mech comes on the field all 'mechs cower before it. No 'mech can match its firepower.

Unfortunately for that Daishi, he is now the biggest target all the other pilots have. For those of you sitting there reading this I am sure you can imagine getting that bleep on radar and looking and seeing this big mech; you swing your reticule right over its heart. Along with you are three other pilots doing exactly the same thing; almost in unison you all squeeze the trigger. The amount of firepower just pumped into that great death machine is astounding. The pilot inside the cockpit loses complete control, his joystick comes out of his hand as he almost blacks out. The 100-ton 'mech loses its footing and starts to fall.

At this point all MechWarriors on the battlefield just sort of pause and look. With smoke pouring from its wounds, the Daishi is, yard-by-yard, moving faster and faster to the cold hard ground below. And BAM!!!, metal meets dirt in one of the loudest noises you will ever hear.

But, then all hell breaks loose. The communications on both sides light up. One side is scrambling to guard their comrade and the other is moving to pump more ammunition into the 'mech so it stays down. From then on only the fates will decide what happens next.

But doesn't it just feel good when you see that 'mech you're fighting go down? It means several things: one, it means they lost. This, in turn, means you win. And, because you won it means you will live to fight another day. So, let that smile cross your face, MechWarriors, because if you can bring that opponent down you deserve that happiness.

The views expressed by members of the community, regardless of the unit they come from, are not necessarily those of the other writers, editors or correspondents dedicated to the work of this E-Zine. However, if there's something funny to laugh at, we will. Good work, Rev.

~The Wolf

BIO-FEEDBACK

We actually have our very first letter from a concerned BattleTech community citizen about making sure we get our facts straight. Mr. Ascani, thank you, I stand corrected.

~The Wolf

There was an error in your review of ISW about MPBT:3025. The game was never released because Microsoft and Electronic Arts could not agree on a percentage of revenue. Microsoft owns the exclusive rights to publish BattleTech games. For EA to release 3025, they would have to agree with MS on a percentage of revenue. EA wanted to negotiate down, while MS wanted more. MPBT:3025 is completely done, bug free, sitting on a shelf at EA. EA was actually very excited about releasing it because all their research had shown that it was going to be huge. I know this for sure because it came straight from one of the 3025 producer' s mouth. Also, there is no chance they can release it now because they have released all of the developers that could have made it possible. Someone called EA about a price for 3025. It would cost \$500,000, and that' s before paying MS. So despite what anyone wants, 3025 will stay buried in EA' s dungeon.

RJ ' Hellion' Ascani

I think perhaps we should be looking on the net elsewhere to see if 3025 is truly dead. I don't think it really is.

~The Wolf

INTEL.



In AF this month is an interview from the folks who are producing the Battlefield: 2750, based on the popular third/first person action shooter Battlefield: 1942. This game really doesn't need any mods because it's done so well, which is most likely why they chose this game platform to go on. Anyway, without further adieu, the 2750 interview:

BattleField: 2750

Interview with Raingod, Project Leader for Battlefield 2750: A BattleTech Mod.
Conducted by AU4_maverick, Public Relations Officer for Armageddon Unlimited.
Interview was conducted on August 18th, 2003 on the Battlefield 2750's IRC channel.
All questions are from Maverick(**AF**), and all answers are from Raingod(**2750**).

AF) Each 'mech can hold the neural-pathways of one pilot in its computer(according to BattleTech Lore). It takes time for a 'mech to be purged and reprogrammed to

a new pilot. Will this issue be a part of game play?

2750) Well we are very limited by what we can modify in the game without having access to a SDK, so something like this couldn't be possible.

AF) Your FAQ addresses many questions, but does not give an answer about jump jets; will they be in the game, and to what extent?

2750) Yes we will have jump jets in the game, in the new expansion pack for BF1942 they have added a jetpack. So really all that we need to do is use the code from that for the 'mechs. Now, we're still working on how to implement it, like which keys will be used to control jump jets.

AF) Are the Battlmechs and Aerospace fighters to full scale in comparison to humans?

2750) Well one thing which will affect how to scale units will be the lag issue, but aerofighters, vtols and vehicles shouldn't be a problem. 'Mechs and dropships is something different, but the alpha testing will figure all of that out.

AF) Are you also making maps? If so, what are the planned settings?

2750) Yes we will be making maps, a lot of maps. We are planning to have some for all of the major battles during the Star League Era, from the Hidden Wars to the fall of Terra and the recapture of Terra by Kerensky's forces.

AF) In the screenshots of the "Mauser 960 Assault Rifle" there is a major clipping error with the player's left hand. Will this and any other clipping problems be addressed?

2750) That problem is caused by the Mauser not having custom animations for it yet, so it uses the animation of the weapon it is replacing, which in this case is the Thompson Sub-Machine Gun. So yes this will be fixed by it having its own custom animation.

AF) In reference to the prior question, will you also be making character models?

2750) Yes we will be. We will hopefully have a different one for each faction and maybe more than one for each faction to represent various soldier classes.

AF) Will there be Mobile Field Bases, 'Mech Repair Bays, or Field Repair Bays for damaged 'mechs, tanks and/or aerospace fighters to repair at?

2750) Well right now we planned to have repair bays and pads at bases, and also in some format, a mobile field base. Most likely it won't look like the ones from MechWarrior3.

AF) What if any other mod-able games had you considered as platforms for your project?

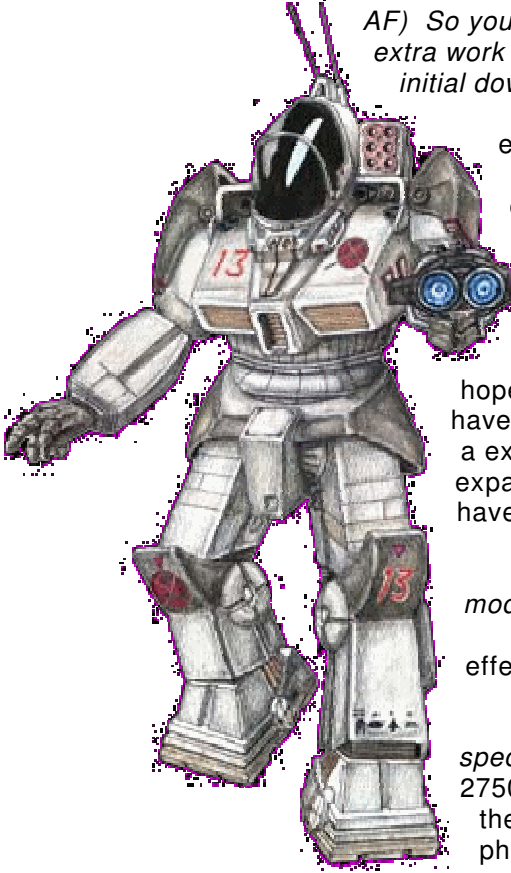
2750) Well when I got the idea for the mod I hadn't thought of any other platforms, but when facts started to come out about some problems we would have doing the mod, some of our early members (which left because of this) thought about moving it to either another more mod-able game or to start from scratch and make a full game by buying a game engine, which is what they did, but that project has since gone dead. Also we have plans to do a sequel to this mod for Half-Life 2.

AF) What problems did you run into?

2750) Well, first off, weapons. Each person in a vehicle can only control 2 groups of weapons, so we can't have say PPC's, Lasers and LRM's in different groups all controlled by 1 person, so that's why we will be grouping weapons for 'mechs. With vehicles and aerofighters that won't be a problem since we can add extra gunners. Second the damage system, we can't have a damage system like in BattleTech, where you can disable a 'mech by destroying one of its legs. Here, if one part loses all armor it goes boom. Third is the walking animation for 'mechs. Some groups have been able to get some 'mechs working in BF1942 like the Star Wars Mod Team but most of the time, they don't look good. But we're hoping that we can change that.

AF) Will the "Road to Rome" and/or "Special Weapons" expansion packs be required to play your mod or will it be able to integrate their scripting without buying the new packs?

2750) No. They won't be required, but the problem is we can only have five factions without them. So for now the Lyran Commonwealth and Cappellan Confederation will only be playable with Road to Rome. We also plan to add factions in Special Weapons to expand the story and maybe even go into the Succession Wars.



AF) So your mod will be adaptable to the expansion packs, without extra work from you guys, if you include it in the mod in the user's initial download?

2750) Well the initial beta will not have the stuff for the expansion packs, but it won't take much work to get that out and into beta. But, additional betas will be separate downloads.

AF) Ok, so the "public release" will have the expansion pack stuff in it?

2750) Yes, but you won't need the expansion pack to play it. Like you will find Lyran units in Fed Sun, but hopefully soon after beta or maybe even during alpha, we will have a version with the expansion pack stuff, but that will be like an expansion for the mod, so if you don't have any of the expansions don't worry, you'll still be able to play, you just won't have access to some factions and 'mechs.

AF) Will the sound effects and musical score be modded?

2750) Yes we will have brand new music and sound effects for the mod.

AF) Will the "F" key communication system be specialized to the BattleTech theme?

2750) Yes, we plan to have those customized, me and a few of the mod crew will be recording our voices saying various phrases.

AF) Will you be accepting beta testers from outside sources like clans and units who want to help the development of the mod?

2750) Well Beta will [go] public. But the alpha will be done internally, but yes we will be opening a few spots in the alpha for fans to help testing it and get an early look at it. Alpha will only include 2 factions, Amaris Forces and the SLDF.

AF) Will your group try formulating a league or will you leave that up to private parties?

2750) Most likely we will leave that up to private parties, but [will] maybe if we can find people who can host it for free run an official league.

A huge thank you goes out to RainGod of Battlefield: 2750 for being the project manager for this mod. Only one thing really needs to be clarified, and that is the history and operations of the Star League.

You may find this information at <http://www.kerensky.tierranet.com/btech/starleague/hstsl.html>. To the guys of BF: 2750, we look forward to seeing your mod come out, and wish you guys the best for completing this.

Big thanks to Maverick, also, for getting this interview on the fly and doing such an excellent job on this.

~The Wolf

BATTLETALES

“Smugglers Rift”
By Paul L. Emerson
aka The Wolf

DropShip Sara J, Jeremiah Wolf's Stateroom
Zenith Jump Point, Tikonov, Federated Suns
February 21, 3009

Captain Jeremiah Wolf sat in his stateroom pondering the report he just wrote, hoping his liege lord, Prince Ian Davion, wouldn't have a problem accepting it. They'd run away from a full battalion of forces on Wasat and, even though the battle lasted three hours, their damage could have been worse than the report from his Chief Technician, Chance Giddeson, suggested. His present dilemma was, would he inflate the report and come under scrutiny, eventually, for the short term boost it would give his Cavaliers. Or, would he do the right thing and leave the report as honest as he could be and be aided later on. Prince Ian was good for such things.

In the end, and after several stressful minutes of typing, Captain Wolf's report looked like this:

Mission Statement: Parts raids into Free World's League space. Wolf's Cavaliers will raid worlds designated by the employer at times designated by the employer for the sole purpose of obtaining military parts.

Contract Specifics/Journal: This is where I will normally put a curt description of what happened during the contract. I keep an extended journal for myself, but that is not to be repeated here, so you'll always get the short version. Of 16 raids performed over the course of this ten month contract, the Cavaliers were actually involved in 4 battles. Three of these battles were wins, although at great cost to the Cavaliers and greater cost to the enemy, and the last battle ended in a retreat that the commanding General of forces in that theater saw as unavoidable, much to the aid of the Cavaliers. Five 'mechs overall were reduced to Salvage quality, and eventually brought back to full strength. The Cavaliers 'liberated' 70,000 C-Bills worth in special equipment and supplies for itself and over 3 million C-Bills worth of same for the employer.

Awards/Special Recognition: For actions far above and beyond the call of duty in getting off Wasat more or less intact, the entire Company vs. a Battalion of Regular, and above, quality Marik MechWarriors, the Wasat Campaign award is given. The battle lasted three hours, during which time the Cavaliers were in a constant state of run-and-gun retreat, touch and go with enemy forces the entire time back to the DropShip, after a successful raid, and we still made it in time for supper. The first Contract Completion Ribbon is also given in recognition of completing our first contract with great success and minor losses compared to what could have been.



He read over the treatise he'd just fabricated and breathed a sigh of relief because it was now, at least, done. Closing his eyes he turned the chair to face the port hole which allowed him to peer outside and watch the stars, then he leaned his head back and took a snip of the brandy in his right hand and exhaled deeply.

Kananga Rift Valley, Grosskirsche Continent
Wasat, Free Worlds League
January 5, 3009

“Tell me you have good news, Mydron?” The Wolf sat atop the right shoulder glacis, opposite the elementary SRM six-pack, of his Wolverine looking down at his First Sergeant, the unit Top Kick, Mydron Carris as he approached the foot of the tall 'mech. Mydron was a tall, strapping, black man with a gentle face and a demeanor completely opposite of his outward appearance. Just now he didn't look like he had happy news and, when Top looked back over his left shoulder, Jeremiah knew right away to look up and through the field glasses he held in his right hand resting on his knee. He looked down again at his trusted and long-time friend, “You're full of all kinds of good news, aren't you?”

“Jerry,” the older man started, “local scouts are saying that General Hound,” referring to the Marik commanding general, “has the entire bulk of forces after us,

although they seem to be terribly disorganized. All of them finished arriving by DropShip about two hours ago, they just finished forming, and they're about three hours behind us if we keep a steady pace with our slowest 'mechs." Mydron saw the look on Jerry's face and knew the man heard what he said, but also that he was thinking.

"Get 'em saddled up, then, Top and let's get moving. We have the Dinjy Swamp and the Kananga Ridge to cross before we can get to our Landing Zone, so we need to haul out."

"What about the spoils, Captain?"

"Well, we take 'em with us, and Lieutenants Drummond, Digby and myself will just have to try and hurry it along, won't we?" Jerry smiled and put the field glasses into the canvas pouch he always had with him these days.

Four days and the contract was over, which meant this was their last hop into enemy territory for this set of raids. Now The Wolf had to worry about three battalions of Medium to Assault class 'mechs to his single company of Lights and Mediums. Normally they should be able to outrun General Hounds forces because they would be slower. However, with the parts and supplies the company was carrying, coupled with the fact of unfamiliar terrain—the Cavaliers had begun their raids in a semi-circle of locations which had taken them around the swamp—was enough to slow them down.

Within minutes the company had all of the parts crates strung between 'mechs and the unit moved out by lances, each lance separated by a half-kilometer to stave off, or at least warn about, attempts at ambush so the other lances could assist and flank as necessary. None of the 'mechs, although they had taken limited fire, was hobbled, so that wouldn't be a factor, but the crates would effectively cut their speed in half.

Bait Lance moved out first with Lieutenant Drummond piloting his Griffin; David Wolf, Jeremiah's son, was at the controls of his Phoenix Hawk; and Privates Fonma and Kain at the controls of their Commando and Wasp. They had the largest load between them, two massive nets slung with all manner of spare parts, weapons and coolant tanks.

"What do you think, Julia? We gonna make it to the LZ?" Sergeant David Wolf, a strapping tall young man with shiny brown hair asked Julia Kain, his secret belle. Julia was tall and very skinny, bony, for her age, but she had a quality about her that, although she was not physically beautiful, made her appealing to men on many levels. Black hair and Eurasian eyes filled out a face with low cheek bones and a gaunt appearance. In many circles she would have been called a 'board' because she had no curves or lines to her body; to most men that was unappealing, but David couldn't keep away from her.

"I'm not sure, but I do know that I'm going to keep moving no matter what," she replied over the 'mech-to-'mech private frequency David had switched on. He heard her chuckle a little and then ask, "You're the Sergeant, what do you think?" The amusement in her voice, even through the tin-sounding communications array, let him know that she was jesting.

For a long time after they remained in silence, concentrating on the task of keeping their 'mechs upright and moving at a steady pace so General Hound's forces would not easily catch them.

Captain Jeremiah Wolf's lance came next, with First Sergeant Carris in his Commando and Specialist Rick Battonhall in a Wasp, followed by Private Lang in her Stinger. They carried fewer parts than the Bait Lance, but it was the remainder of what they took from the morning's raids. At five-hundred meters behind the first lance and a few degrees away from their normal line of march, Bait Lance seemed somewhat small to Captain Wolf.

Finally, at the rear of the procession came the Chaser Lance, headed by Lieutenant Lisa Kahl Digby. She had served with Captain Wolf in the 1st Robinson Rangers, Armed Forces Federated Suns. Indeed, he was the only officer who gave her the opportunity to prove herself there. Although she was only enlisted in the Rangers, her prowess in 'mech combat coupled with her ability to handle any situation better than any other officer, other than himself, he'd ever seen placed her high on his respect list.

So, when she finished her tour with the Rangers she came to Wolf's Cavaliers, but only while they were en route to this contract in March the previous year. So, she hadn't much time to get to know everyone, but her leadership skills were now unquestioned because of her efforts on Ascuncion six months back. Her lance was surrounded by five Medium 'mechs and, without losing one of her own, she ordered an immediate withdrawal through a very difficult mountain pass and led them all to safety

and away from certain death. Chaser Lance took a beating in the process, especially her Shadow Hawk, but once they were clear they knew they had faced death and lived to tell the tale.

With her was Specialist Justin Higgins in his Stinger, Private Hardin in his Phoenix Hawk and, finally, Private Vargas in his Locust. They traveled in a diamond formation and had just returned from a routine spotting circle to the rear.

"Captain Wolf," Digby began.

"What's up, LT?" The Wolf asked, knowing a request was coming.

"Let us go back further and see what they're doing, sir?" It was a carefully worded order made to sound like a military request. Jerry closed the radio channel for a second and laughed at her eagerness, then opened the channel again.

"Why would you want to do something like that?" No answer, so he knew she was serious. "Be back here in forty-five minutes, Lieutenant. We'll be starting into the swamp by then."

"Roger that, sir." And she closed that channel, opening one to her lance instead. "Alright, kids, we're goin' huntin' for eagles. So bring up the rear and keep your heads on straight. Understood?" Three sets of double-clicks sounded over her earphones and she smiled as she put the Shadow Hawk into high gear. "Everyone go passive once we hit the two click mark from the Cavaliers." She shut herself down at the right time and saw only her people displayed on her target tracking heads-down display. None of them were broadcasting radar signals, so they would be alright.

The map on her tactical HDD to the right of her seat displayed the current overhead view as seen by satellite and, just as she was wondering if they were on the wrong heading, target heat signatures captured by the satellite began to appear. The signals were disjointed and not fashioned to any military standard she was used to, but they were the bad guys nonetheless.

"I've got signals," she relayed to her lancemates, none of them having the same satellite package her 'mech did, "so stay frosty, folks!" she ordered, knowing she really didn't have to.

Human beings do a lot of things they really don't have to do, except for the sanity or satisfaction of other human beings.

"Follow me and keep it loose. If you bunch up we're all gonna die because this is one big signal. Roger, hooah?" Clicks sounded again and she began to slow her Shadow Hawk to a decent walking speed. Immediately over the next series of low hills and into the shallow valley the enemy was passing. Lisa needed to see their numbers for herself and so proceeded to stand, just out of range of their Long-Range Missiles, on top of the line of hilltops.

The sheer mass of the enemy machines was enough to strike terror into the hearts of MechWarriors anywhere. House Marik was well-known for producing Heavy and Assault 'mechs, and this regiment now facing them, disjointed as they were, was chock-full of Heavy and Assault 'mechs. Lieutenant Digby swallowed hard but stood her ground, fear tingling at the base of her spine, making her desire to reach around and scratch at the non-existent irritant.

"Eltee," Private Hardin, the Phoenix Hawk driver, spoke up and over her fugue.

"Yeah, Larry, what's up?" she finally got out just as he was preparing to speak her rank again.

"Ma'am, we have Light 'mechs on our left flank. They have speed on us and they'll be in range, from where we're standing, in about twenty seconds."



“Roger that,” Lisa answered, her voice betraying the annoyance Light ‘mechs produced whenever seen on the battlefield. “Alright, kids, start to back off. Turn and run until they are within range to fire at us, and then turn and engage. Understood?” This time voice confirmations came over the line. “They are going to try and drag us back to their main elements so we can get splashed. Do NOT get sucked in. Roger, hooah?” This time clicks in acknowledgement as they turned and moved out, as an organized group, to put distance between them and the pursuing ‘mechs, but especially the main body of the regiment following them.

Within two minutes time a Marik Locust fired its’ Medium Laser and the fight was on. The laser missed wide to the right of the formation, but that was certainly the signal they needed to turn and fight. As one they turned and fired the weapons within range. Lieutenant Digby fired her AC/5, LRM-5 and Medium Laser at the foremost ‘mech, also the only ‘mech presently painted on her Heads-Up Display, and knocked the Locust to the ground. Her fire was joined by the Medium and Large Lasers of the rest of her lance and within a split second the Locust lay a smoking heap on the ground.

Private Hardin, however, lost balance of the Phoenix Hawk as a Marik Valkyrie accurately planted a fifteen missile kiss on his ‘mechs upper torso and head.

“Larry!?” Lisa called over the radio as she tried to get to Hardin’s downed ‘mech.

“Gyro needs to be serviced in this thing,” he groaned back over the circuit as he regained the ‘mechs feet and rejoined the fight. Unfortunately, a Marik Commando had cut loose with all Short-Range Missiles in a single volley as well as the ‘mechs Medium Laser. Thermal imaging would have shown that ‘mech as a large red stamp bleeding over into the signatures of the other ‘mechs, so Lisa was glad it wasn’t night-time.

“Higgins and Vargas, would you please deal with the Valkyrie that just came over the top of the hill? Remember, keep moving away from the main body as much as you can.”

“Roger that, Eltee,” Specialist Justin Higgins shot back as he cut loose with another shot from his Stinger’s Medium Laser, scoring a hit on an approaching Spider; the hit had been more luck than anything because the Spider was really fast. However, the laser fire also heated the front plating of the Spider’s chest and the force of the blast slowed it down for a moment.

Specialist Higgins’ Stinger and Private Jordan Vargas’ Locust flanked to the right of the main action and then began moving in the direction of the Valkyrie, having just crested the hill. Higgins’ Medium Laser was not in range, yet, and the Valkyrie pilot already turned to deliver another volley of LRMs in their direction. Higgins’ Shadow Hawk took several on the right arm, indicators in his cockpit flashing yellow on that spot, and then two more peppered center mass on the tiny ‘mech. However, the damage hadn’t affected the Medium Laser rifle in the ‘mechs right arm or slowed him or Private Vargas down in any way. Once in range both of them cut loose on the Valkyrie with Medium Lasers, knocking the center of targeting for the ‘mech pilot off where his LRMs were concerned and scoring enough damage for the thin armor on the Valkyrie to run down the right torso and left arm until they cooled enough to stick in place on the ‘mech. The Valkyrie’s LRMs went wide and away from the battle.

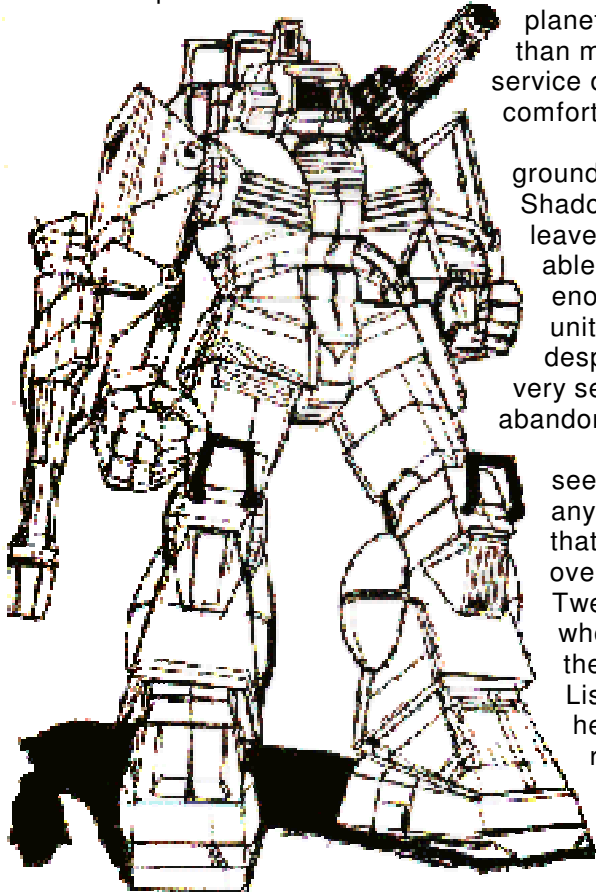
Lieutenant Digby and Private Hardin fired again on the advancing Commando and Spider. All fire from Hardin’s Phoenix Hawk went wide of the Spider, although one of his Medium Lasers hit the Commando in the left arm as the ‘mech swung to it’s left. Digby’s AC/5 stitched off some armor on the Commando’s center torso as three of its’ five LRMs in this flight slammed into the right leg of the ‘mech. Now off-balance the Commando pilot fought to regain equilibrium, giving Vargas and Higgins enough time to take the left leg off the Valkyrie.

“Eltee, we have issues!” Specialist Higgins spoke over the combat frequency. “The column picked up speed and they’re almost in LRM range now. Please advise?”

“Alright, MechWarriors, we are leaving!” Digby’s response brought sighs of relief as all four of her ‘mechs began to move out once again towards the LZ now almost two-and-a-half hours away. Private Vargas in his Locust ran past across the Spider’s line of approach close enough to pepper it with Machine Guns; his idea was to draw the Spider off from its’ attack and to a place where the two ‘mechs could fight it out away from the Spider’s friendly lines. The ruse worked and the Spider began to chase the Locust, trying to plant Medium Laser shots in the back of the agile ‘mech.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Digby and Specialist Higgens worked to finish off the Commando as fast as possible. They still hadn't dropped the 'mech by the time the Marik regiment began to crest this hill and fired their LRMs at extreme range. Digby and Higgens were far enough away from the line of fire that the missiles all but fell harmlessly around their 'mechs feet, although the Commando took a few hits to its' back in the process. As Digby and Higgens turned to run as fast as their 'mechs would carry them the Commando opened fire again, emptying the racks of SRM ammo and firing the Medium Laser in a last-ditch attempt to stop them. Then the 'mech shut down and, had it not been for the fact the little Commando was now out of ammo, it would have exploded and removed the 'mech from the scene of the battle.

Lieutenant Digby breathed a sigh of relief in the stiflingly hot cockpit and tried to allow the Heat Sinks of the 'mech catch up to the heat that needed to be dissipated. Had it



not been for the fact that this God-forsaken planet was warmer, and on average muggier, than most swamp worlds she had been to in the service of House Davion, she might have been comfortable once the Heat Sinks did compensate.

A second volley of missiles peppered the ground just a few short meters behind her Shadow Hawk and she decided it was time to leave the area. Her Chaser Lance would be able to make it back to the Cavaliers fast enough, but with speed almost halved for the unit because of the spare parts the unit would desperately need, Lieutenant Digby doubted very seriously the main unit would escape without abandoning the parts.

"Alright, kids, back to the barn. Let's see where our people are and if there's anything we can do to help them get through that swamp any faster." Clicks of ascent came over the crackling speakers in her helmet. Twenty-five minutes later, at top-speed the whole way, the Chaser Lance began to see the rear-most elements of the Cavaliers and Lisa dialed up Captain Wolf's frequency on her radio, "Captain, we're coming into your rear area within the next five minutes, have you on visual now."

"Welcome back, eltee. Have any fun out there?"

"Roger that, sir. Managed to meet some of their recon elements.

up with

Fortunately, the Spider that was running ahead of us decided to break off and return to its' own column about five minutes after we started running. I think Vargas would have caught him, eventually, sir, but we decided to be cheritable, especially since we didn't have any time."

"How much time do we have?" First Sergeant Carris asked, butting into the report.

"Top, I don't know, but I would guesstimate no more than ten minutes, sir."

"They're closer than we thought, Jerry. What now?"

"We keep movin', Top. We're almost into this swamp and then we'll be able to diversify our signatures and make ourselves harder to find. Fair enough?"

"No, sir, it's not. But, I guess it'll have to do, won't it?" No answer came back from The Wolf as Lieutenant Digby and her crew began to enter the swamp.

"Sir, I want to move my Chaser's deeper into the swamp and start clearing some space for you. Would that be alright?"

"Make it happen, Digby. We ain't got all day." Lisa smiled and gave directions to her people to move ahead and start clearing space. Within an hour, though everyone knew that Marik had entered the swamp by now, Digby and her crew made enough

headway to give a little bit more time to the Captain and the rest of the Cavaliers. Within another twenty minutes they cleared the tree-line and saw the ridge no more than five clicks away.

“Alright, sir, now we’re gonna try and set this bitch on fire. Come on out of there, please?” The Wolf brought his Wolverine nearly face-plate to face-plate with Lieutenant Digby’s and told her comm.-to-comm, “Do not be here more than about five minutes. Am I understood.” Lisa shook her head so the Captain could see it and then switched frequencies to direct her people to start burning it all. All the officers knew, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that fire would slow them down, but they would not stop until Wolf and his crew were vapors in the Kananga Rift Valley.

Fifteen minutes passed and Lieutenant Digby started up the hill after her people, leaving the Dinjy swamp to burn through all of the pent up methane swamps were famous for storing in abundance. At irregular intervals a gas pocket in the swamp exploded and the Chaser’s cheered, hoping another Marik ‘mech was, at least, down for the count. However, the cheers on this last explosion became short-lived as ‘mechs, first an Atlas and then a BattleMaster, fire and black smoke streaming from the paint on their ‘mechs, the very image of impending death, emerged from the edge of the fire and the Dinjy swamp.

“Keep moving, kids!” The Lieutenant nearly screamed. Volleys of Long Range Missiles and Particle Projection Cannon fire rolled from the steadily advancing lines of the Marik ‘mechs, still just out of range. A tear came to Lisa’s eye and she struggled to keep the lump in her throat down, but it was not easy, as she realized that doom was standing on her door-step. Well, she resolved, before she went down, she would take a few of them with her. However, before her Chaser’s would even be able to get into minimum range they would all be dead because, except for Larry Hardin’s Phoenix Hawk, none of them had weapons that were effective beyond about two-hundred-seventy meters.

“Justin and Larry, I want you jumping up this hill. Vargas and I will join you shortly. He doesn’t have jets, so we’ll just have to tough it out. Now move!” It took several seconds for them to acknowledge the command and another few to implement it. Lisa could swear she saw the Stinger and Phoenix Hawk look at one another and then slump their shoulders in compliance, but was certain it had to be her imagination after thinking about it. When their jets did fire they left her and Vargas shrouded in smoke which helped them to gain cover behind a set of boulders which would serve to help them get halfway up the ridge. However, it wouldn’t be enough. LRMs, PPC and Large Laser fire began to flash all around them, making holes in the side of the ridge and dislodging the boulders Digby and Vargas were using as cover.

Within moments both ‘mechs armor complements had been depleted to redness across their status boards, but they continued to move, evading all the fire they could and using various tactics to clear shots to less damaged areas on their ‘mechs.

“Eltee,” Private Jordan Vargas huffed into the mic of his neurohelmet in the overheating Locust, “You’re going to have to go now, or we’re both going to die, ma’am.” Lisa ignored the truth of his assertion and continued to move, now grabbing the Locust with the left hand of the Shadow Hawk and working to help drag the ‘mech up the ridge face. “Eltee, come on, this isn’t doing you any good.”

“Shut your pie-hole, Vargas!” No return or feedback came from Vargas as he took another hit to the back of the ‘mech, exposing the right torso super-structure of the ‘mech and frying several bundles of myomer cabling there. The smoke poured from the back of the ‘mech and the Locust went still at that moment. “Damn’t, Jordan, get up!” No movement, nothing. Lisa couldn’t be sure if the man was unconscious or if he had just given up. It didn’t seem to her that the man would give up so easily, so he must be unconscious. “You better be knocked out, MechWarrior, or so help me God, I’ll kill ya with my bare hands! Now, MOVE!!!!”

More LRMs rained down around their position, very few of them impacting, but one burying itself deep enough into the Shadow Hawk’s back to destroy the casing, and therefore the functionality, of the Heat Sink located there. Lisa’s heat spiked for a moment, but then her attention was caught away to see the rest of the Cavaliers laying fire down the ridge face and into the Marik ‘mechs.

“It’s a duck shoot up here, Lieutenant, you really should see it once you get up here.” Laughter... was that laughter she was hearing from The Wolf. She looked up

through the cockpit lycoming to see if he was laughing but, of course, you couldn't see the pilot very well from the bottom of their cockpit on the Wolverine. Just as she was starting to look down a Phoenix Hawk and a Stinger slammed on their jets and began descending the ridge face, to land next to her a few seconds later.

"Alright, eltee, if you and I each take a side and Hardin gets the back of the Locust, we can boost Vargas to the top. Whaddya say?"

"Thanks, fella's," was all Lisa could get out as that lump in her throat changed from fear to joy and she moved to concentrate on her task. A moment later, as the munitions continued to rain down around them and the harnessed lighting licked at all of their backsides, Higgins counted to three and they lifted Vargas Locust, with all their jets compensating, up the hill.

"Alright, people," Captain Wolf began, "We have a plane to catch, so let's MOVE OUT!!!" The Command and Bait Lances turned and took up their burdens again and began down the rocky face of the ridge. The DropShip at the bottom, the Sara J, looked so inviting, so ready and able to go, and Lisa breathed a sigh of relief as she turned from the DropShip, after releasing the waking Vargas, to see the horde of BattleMechs ascending the ridge face. They were all the trouble in the world performing any mountaineering skills in their bulky 'mechs, and Lisa decided that, just for good measure, she should lay down some cover fire for the Company. The AC/5 was on its' last load of ammo and spat down the mountain into an advancing WarHammer, then went dry with dozens of rapid clicks before Lisa released the trigger. She also fired off the last rack of Long-Range Missile ammo she had before beginning a backwards retreat down the other side of the ridge.

"Lieutenant Digby, we do not have any time for heroics. Let's go while the gettin' s good!!!" Captain Wolf always had such an eloquent way with words.

DropShip Sara J, Jeremiah Wolf's Stateroom
Nadir Jump Point, Edwards, Federated Suns
February 21, 3009

A gentle knock on his door brought Captain Jeremiah Wolf from his reverie. He turned the seat from the port hole to face the door, noticing they had come into a new star system, presumably Edwards, while he had been away.

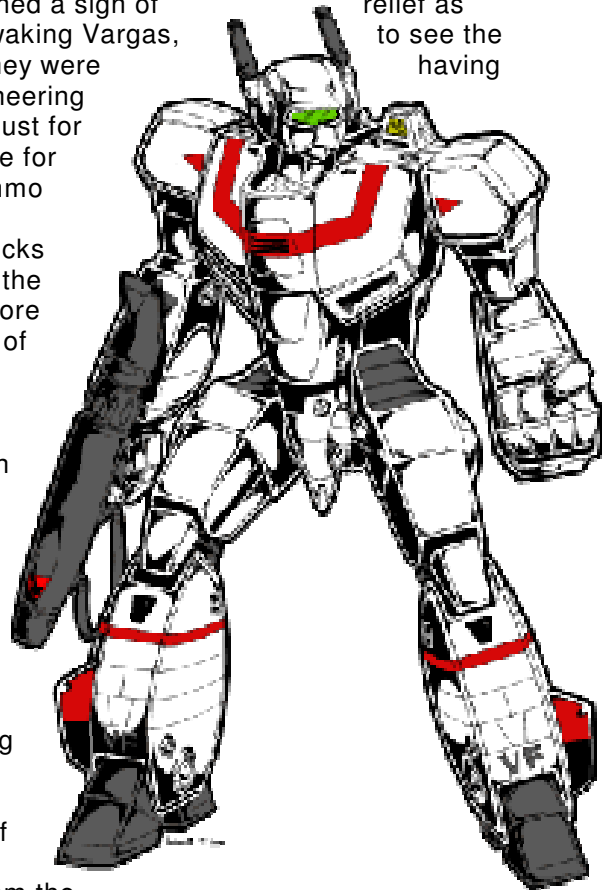
"Enter," he expressed as he sat the glass of brandy on the corner of the desk, the rotational gravity of the ship restored post jump. The light from the corridor beyond spilled into the room and lit the nighttime cycle lighting of his room momentarily. "Ahh, Lieutenant Digby. What can I do for you?"

"Captain Pargessor reports that we're right on track for New Aragon, sir. All of our 'mechs have been brought back to, at the very least, salvage quality, and most of them to better condition than what you brought back from Anywhere. Is there anything you need me to pass on before I relieve our people to rest, sir?" The Wolf actually thought about it for a moment, then answered,

"When we get to New Aragon, make sure they know we are guests there, we're not to start any crap, and we have to show the Sunflowers what it's really like to be a warrior. Got that?"

"Roger that, Captain," Lisa smiled enough to let the Captain know she was able to be cocky, and then left to stand down the crew for some much needed R&R.

~The Wolf



EVENT CALENDAR

This section of the E-Zine is designed for anyone who would like to post events, whether of their own making or someone else's. Personally, I would appreciate a full months warning for new events which are being scheduled; however, we'll deal with two weeks if necessary. Just be forewarned that with such short notice, even a month worth, since our E-Zine is noted to come out every other month, your event may not be broadcast through us in time to do any good. However, we may gain enough artists and writers in the future to make this E-Zine more popular, therefore it will come out faster. Don't count on more than one issue per month, however; I simply do not have that kind of time on my hands.

~The Wolf

September '03

- ____ Introduce AU, ELH, and Argent Fire(need writers and artists) around web; need db finished first.
- ____ AU OM – Strategy & Tactics and don't forget the By-Laws and Charter
- ____ Argent Fire – Volume 1, Issue 2 – Bio-Feedback, Intel & BattleTales

October '03

- ____ MechWarrior: Dark Age Tournament – Faction War, October 10-12 at any local DA tournament host, likely your game store. Go to the DA site for details.
- ____ AU Web Update; seeking Flash and php help.

November '03

- ____ AU FM – Wolf's Cavaliers – Contract 10 – 11; could use some help with this!!!
- ____ Argent Fire – Volume 1, Issue 2 – Event Calendar & Parting Shot, Publish to Web
- ____ Argent Fire – Volume 1, Issue 3 – Opening Volley, The Grapevine, BattleROMs & Bio-Feedback

December '03

- ____ AU FM – Equal Opportunity Destroyers – Basics & Contract 12; all work set back by one month.
- ____ Argent Fire – Volume 1, Issue 3 – Intel, BattleTales, Event Calendar & Parting Shot, Publish to Web

January '04

- ____ AU FM – Equal Opportunity Destroyers – Contract 13
- ____ Argent Fire – Volume 1, Issue 4 – Opening Volley, The Grapevine & BattleROMs
- ____ AU Web Update

February '04

- ____ AU FM – Equal Opportunity Destroyers – Contract 14 and the Waterworld Tragedy
- ____ Argent Fire – Volume 1, Issue 4 – Bio-Feedback, Intel & BattleTales
- ____ AU Stage 3: Recruiting, Trials, Command Structure, Unit Structure and League Hunting completed; begin combat operations in all Regiments

March '04

- ____ AU FM – Shadow Blade – Basics & Contract 15 – 16
- ____ Argent Fire – Volume 1, Issue 4 – Event Calendar & Parting Shot, Publish to Web

April '04

- ____ AU FM – Shadow Blade – Contract 17 – 18
- ____ Argent Fire – Volume 1, Issue 5 – Opening Volley, The Grapevine, BattleROMs & Bio-Feedback
- ____ AU Web Update

May '04

____AU FM – Armageddon Unlimited – Basics & Contract 19
 ____Argent Fire – Volume 1, Issue 5 – Intel, BattleTales, Event Calendar & Parting Shot, Publish to Web
 ____MW: DA Web Site Construction(hopefully a kit will be available by now)

June '04

____AU FM – Armageddon Unlimited – Contract 20 – 21

July '04

____AU FM – Armageddon Unlimited – Contract 22 – 23

August '04

____AU FM – Current Events and Introduction to Dark Age unit

September '04

____AU FM Completion of proofing, art insertion(?), making sure ALL AU resources have been tapped for completion of this manual, and selling to WizKids/ FanPro for Classic BattleTech

October '04

____Begin Construction of AMG/ MFOL League and Unit Repository
 ____Brand Spankin' New BattleTech To-Do List including Other Projects..., below

Other Projects on my Mind for BattleTech

MechWarrior: Dark Age RPG (Including: Introduction & Character Generation, Skill Use, Personal & 'Mech Combat Rules and Examples, Gear & Weapons Availability & Acquisition, GameMasters Section & Drama Rules, Eventualities, etc.)

You're all more than welcome to contribute to the above list and AF will endeavor to make sure your information is put out to the rest of the community in a timely manner.
 ~The Wolf

PARTING SHOT

Alright, folks, thus ends the second issue of the BattleTech community magazine Argent Fire. It certainly will not be the last. However, until I get some help, it may be a little farther apart. I can't fathom why no one would want to help on a project as worthy of the community, I feel, as this one. Perhaps it has something to do with the idea of, "Oh, someone else will do it!" If that's how you feel, stop feeling that way. All articles and art are valid to go in here, even if/when we finally get swamped with articles and art and not everything is able to fit. I would like nothing more than to see this E-Zine grow to be 30+ pages in length like I explained in the first issue was our goal here. You don't have to be a member of the unit, or even the Armageddon Unlimited community, in order to contribute articles and art. So, that being said, bring 'em on, folks.

Now, in the next issue, for the Intel portion, I would like to see War! Online and IS3025(ex. Project Jenner) interviewed or pre-viewed so you'll know what they're all about. I certainly would like to find out more about these entities.

Hey, and it might be helpful if some of you programmers and modelers drop by Inner Sphere Wars and see what kind of help you can give them!?!?! Two of their programmers have quit and they need some help. This E-Zine is dedicated to aiding the BattleTech community to actually become a community instead of a series of vagabonds and gypsies incapable of appreciating one another and the programmers/modelers/designers of this community. Let's get it together, folks, and make something really good happen for the community!

~The Wolf

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<http://www.wolvesau.net/HowlNet>

<http://www.wolvesau.net>

UNIT/RESOURCE LISTINGS

This is the place we list all of the unit web pages in existence. If you have a web page to submit here, please feel free to email them to argentfire@wolvesau.net and we'll get you taken care of by the next issue.

Note that links are listed by category and then alphabetically. If you have a gaming unit, for instance, your unit will be listed in Unit Listings towards the end of these links, and then alphabetically by the name of your unit. No one gets any special privileges for placement, not even the guys who produce these games.

BattleTech Boards/PbEM/MechWarrior

BattleTech Play by E-Mail(in German)

<http://btpbem.kell-hounds.de/>

Dragon's Hobbies - BattleTechnical

<http://www.dragonshobbies.com/battletechnical/>

BattleTech Universe.org

<http://www.battletechuniverse.org/index1.php>

DropShip Command – Maps and Missions, News and Reviews and Forums area

<http://www.dropshipcommand.com/>

Galleries

Dak's BattleTech Miniatures Gallery

<http://www.luckshire.com/flealord/dakgallery/DakGalleryHome.htm>

Leagues

Inner Sphere Wars – A MechWarrior 4 Mod

<http://www.comstarterterminal.com>

Net BattleTech

<http://www.netbattletech.com/>

Mech Commander

Mech Lab – Mech Commander 2

<http://dynamic4.gamespy.com/~mechcommander>

MechWarrior: Dark Age

MechXF – A wonderful resource for Dark Age

<http://www.mektek.net/~mechxf/>

Maps & Missions

Alpha Strike – Produce MechWarrior maps and missions

<http://www.alpha-strike.net/>

MercStorm – Community based support for MechWarrior 4: Mercenaries

<http://www.mercstorm.com/>

News & Reviews

BattleTech HQ

<http://www.angelfire.com/games/battletechHQ/>

BattleTech News & Reviews

<http://btechnewsandreview.tripod.com/>

BattleTech – Until Your Cannon Glows

<http://www.antishaft.com/battletech/>

Lords of the Battlefield

<http://www.lordsofthebattlefield.com/>

The Task Force

<http://www.texmech.net/>

Personal Pages

Panzerfaust 150's BattleTech Web Home

<http://atlas7d.freeservers.com/>

Froggie's BattleTech Page

<http://www.ajfroggie.com/battletech/>

Producers

Archer's Miniatures

<http://www.archersminiatures.com/>

BattleCorps – A pay to read fiction site for Classic BattleTech

<http://www.battlecorps.com>

BattleTech Mod Productions – Document various mods which are coming out for Tech

<http://www.battletechmodproductions.com>

Custom Wooden Mechs

<http://spyder297.tripod.com/customwoodenmechs/id17.html>

Fantasy Productions – Producers of Classic BattleTech

<http://www.classicbattletech.com>

Inner Sphere Wars – A MechWarrior 4 Mod

<http://www.comstarterterminal.com>

Mecha Entertainment – A Portal site and BattleTech forums area; producers of BattleTech fun

<http://www.mechaentertainment.com/>

MechJock

<http://www.mechjock.com/>

WizKids Games, LLC – Producers of MechWarrior: Dark Age

<http://www.wizkidsgames.com/mwdarkage/>

Tech Readouts & Source Pages

Chaos March

<http://www.chaosmarch.com/>

Wolverine's BattleTech Home Page

<http://www.sanctum.com/surfers/btech/>

BattleNet(in Spanish)

<http://www.solaris7.net/battlenet/>

Unit Listings: Houses

Davion Heavy Guards

http://www.geocities.com/davionheavyguards_2000/DHG_Opening.html

Headhunters of Davion

<http://www.hhod.com/main/index.htm>

Unit Listings: Mercenaries

Armageddon Unlimited Primary Web Site

<http://www.wolvesau.net>

Christian Men Online(CMO) – **A Christian Mercenaries group**

<http://www.icehouse.net/cmonline>

Death Dealer Mercs

<http://216.202.36.201/>

Skye Rangers Primary Web Site – **A**

MechWarrior Game Club

<http://www.skye-rangers.net>

Strider's Strikers

<http://www.stridersstrikers.com/>



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porky@skizynka.pl
<http://www.clarwolf.ws/graphics/pawel>

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