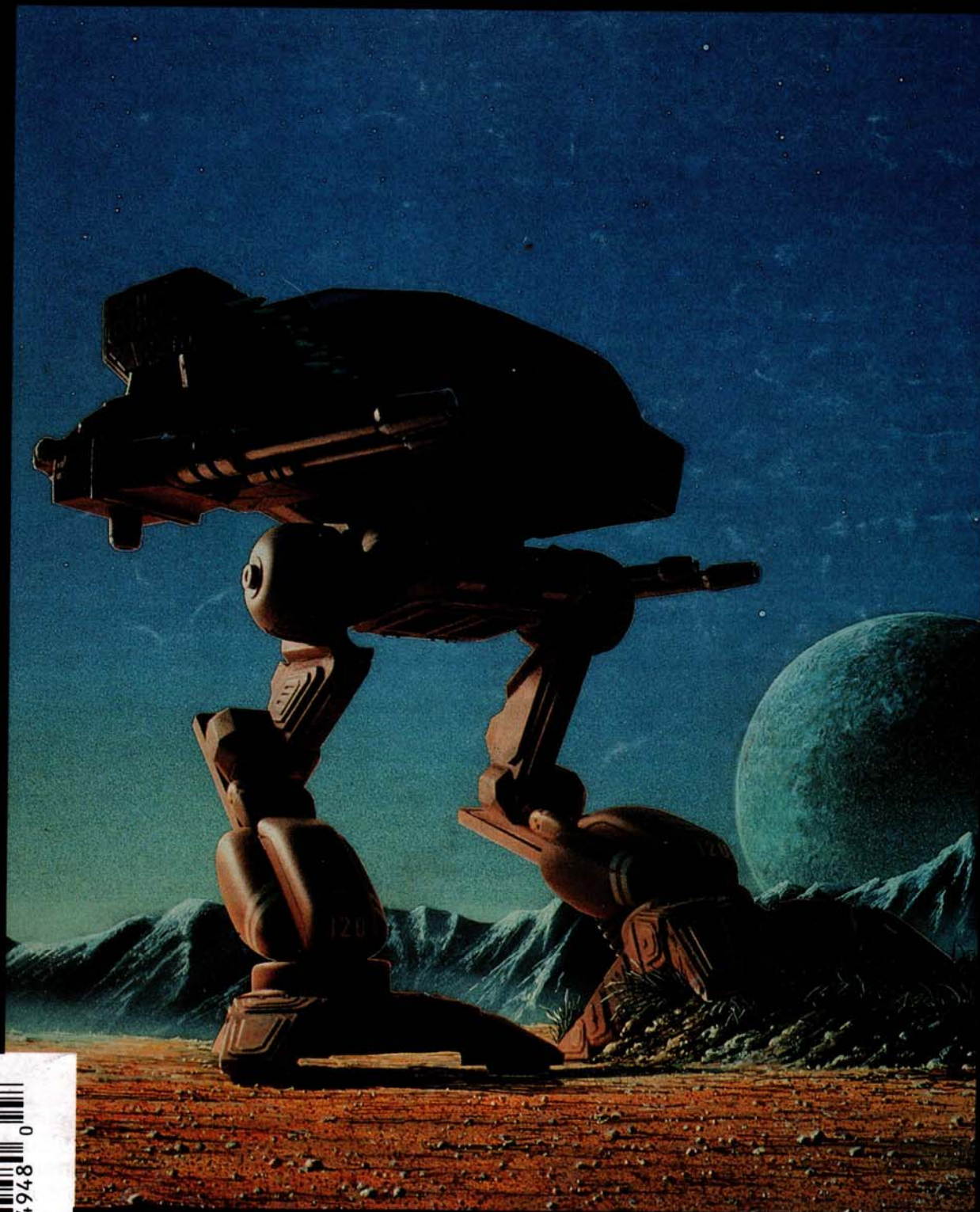


Issue # 13

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BattleTechnology

The Magazine of Combat in the 31st Century



Mystery Attackers!

Level 5

This level has an enormous "apartment house" complex. These are not mere barracks; they are quarters in which families and couples expected to live lifelong. Star League military forces saw no need to enforce austerity on long-term personnel. The lower two floors are studios and smaller apartments. The highest floor has senior officers' apartments, meant for entertaining, and two huge function rooms. There is an immense laundry and several rec room, craft rooms, etc in the "basement".

Your players can take as long as they want; they will not find anything of value here, except historically. Maybe allow them the war diary of someone once moderately famous — but a volume from years before which does not deal with the Castle Brian in any way. The senior officers in the chain of command did not live here, but were quartered in levels 1-4.

To the north, in location 5*, the Rom agent has set up his camp. Here he is amusing himself by building a Mech from spare parts. Schedule and stats for this Mech (The Monster) are given separately. On the outskirts of the level are several 20 x 20 meter shafts. One per side contains an elevator. The others have no opening on this floor. 8B's shaft has a visible card slot, but door is camouflaged. This is the commandant's personal elevator described on level 8.

Level 5A

The four tunnels which lead out of this level are kilometers long. They are square corridors 40 m high and 80 m wide. The east corridor is the shortest, at five kilometers. ComStar troops will enter along this corridor. If it is somehow blocked, they will try the northern corridor, the entrance of which is sixteen kilometers away. They have not found the outside entrances to the western corridor (fifteen kilometers distant), nor to the southern corridor, which travels for nine kilometers before ending in an artificially constructed cave.

The open endosteel doors which open off each corridor may be closed by a coded keypad on the inside of each door, or from the security computer. Once closed, they can be opened only by an override sequence no longer in existence, or from the security computer. Only a roll of natural 12 will allow a chance. In 2d6 x 10 hours, character will be able to open one door. Each door is different. Three failures make it impossible to open that door again. 2 kilometers along each tunnel, a tunnel joins from the floor below, curving in from the left side. These tunnels are 30 by 30 meters.

Available, any computer screen

Star League Guard
June 27, 2784
25th Division, Illyrian Force
Brothers in Arms,

I have been proud to serve as your commander. We had every right to expect to live and die here, serving the Star League and the Cameron family beyond this generation to our children's children. Now by the foul treachery of a conniving usurper, this destiny, as so much else, has been stolen from us.

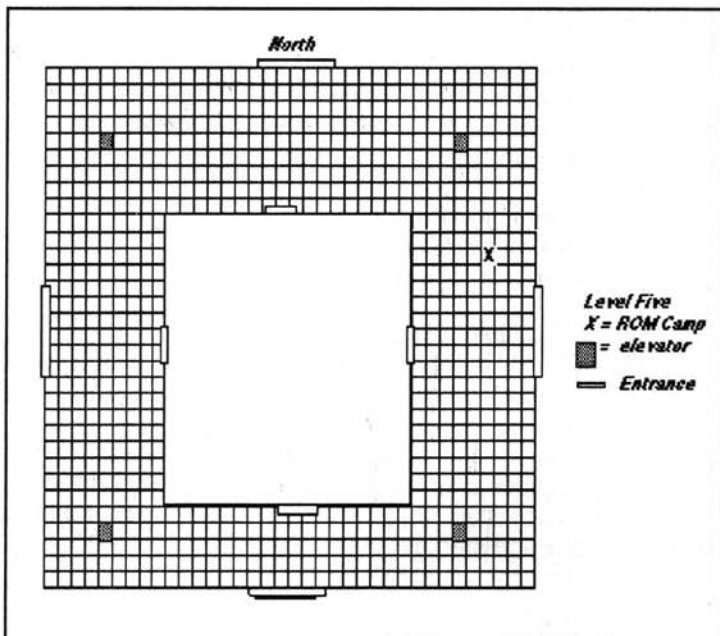
We are summoned once again to serve. General Kerensky's plan will be explained once we are en route. Those still loyal to the Star League: the time is now or never. Those who have requested permission to join with the forces of your planet of origin: farewell and good fortune.

Death to Stefan the Usurper!
Colonel Torquil Marshall,
Commandant

The Monster

History: This 'Mech was created by the ComStar exploratory team member who was left to chart the Castle Brian while the others went back for more Star League weapons specialists, a larger exploratory team, and much more firepower. He worked at mapping the Castle for eight hours a day or more, but he spent 6 hours or so pursuing his hobby, building up a 'Mech from the scrapped partial 'Mechs in the various workshops. He must have been an extremely skilled 'Tech, but not much is known about him because the party encountered him in an enemy situation. The quality of the parts is high; they date to the Star League. The workmanship is good, but improvisational.

Tonnage:		55.0
Internal Structure:		5.5
Engine Type:	275 CoreTek	15.5
Walk MPs:	5	
Run MPs:	8	
Jump MPs:	0	
Gyroscope:		3.0
Cockpit:		3.0
Heatsinks:	24 (double heatsinks)	2.0
Armor Factor:	152	9.5
Head	3	8
Center Torso	18	23/7
Rt/Lt Torso	13	20/7
Rt/Lt Arm	9	12
Rt/Lt Leg	13	16
Weapons & Ammo:		
PPC	RA	7.0
SRM 6-Pack	LT	3.0
Ammo SRM 6-Pack	CT	1.0
Small Laser	Head	0.5
Large Laser	LA	5.0



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Hiring Hall/ Khorsakov's Cossacks and Cossack Raid
by S Craig Harris
Star League CEFs
by Joel Connors
NAIS Training Scenario
by John A Theisen
Guardian
by Robert Benedotti
Brawler, Thuggee news item
by Stefan Paul Melin-Dempsey
Avatar or Madwoman, A Lust for Lostech
by Stefan Paul Melin-Dempsey and Hilary Ayer
Kell Hound Information supplied, Daniel Allard's Letter
by Michael A Stackpole

All other writing this issue
by Hilary Ayer

About the Cover:
What You Don't Know Can Kill You
by Steve Venters
The first confirmed view of our new
enemy's super-Mechs

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Opening Shots

*Sir Malachi Sandoval, editor of the Robinson Times-Herald,
December 27, 3049:*

"In Lewis Carroll's poem *The Hunting of the Snark*, the bad guys, or 'Boojums', "silently and secretly vanished away" whenever they were looked at directly. It's a slow season for news, for certain, when we keep getting reports of 'Star Boojums' coming in from less-civilized planets along the Steiner-Rasalhague-Kurita Periphery border! It's possible — barely — that one of the bigger realms that way (Oberon, for example) has happened on a LosTech cache that will make the Inner Sphere look up and pay attention. It's possible — more than barely — that two or three bored garrison outposts have dressed up their Mechs and are playing Halloween games out of season.

But — really, gentlemen! Mechs that make Star League technology look out of date? Ryan's Rebels cut to pieces by some monster Mech that nobody can ID? WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE KIDDING?

The real enemy is a lot closer to home. The Draconis Combine is the real threat. The Snakes are panting to cross the border and take more of our planets into their tyrannical sphere of mind control and subservience. We are a free people. We want our children to be free. Let's stop voting to 'investigate' refugee rumors from bad vid-drama. Preparedness is our need. Constant vigilance against an enemy that isn't about to 'vanish away', unless each citizen of the Federated Commonwealth gives his or her utmost effort..."

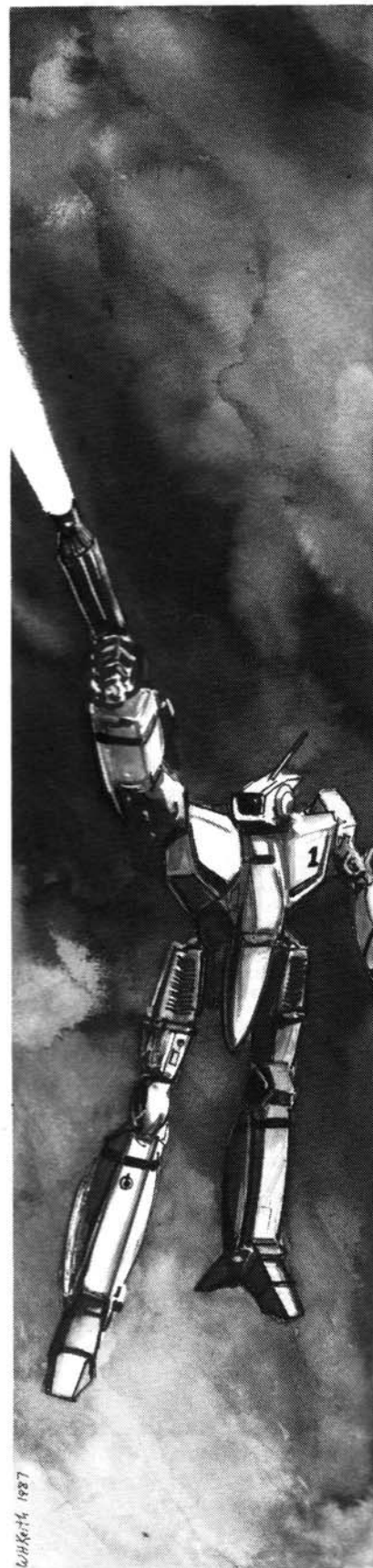
All I can say is — I hope he's right! I hope that there really is nothing there but a pirate with an extra big gun, or a unit that's decided to make the Inner Sphere see pink elephants along with them. I hope so — but I don't believe so. Somebody is out there shooting real weapons; the Kell Hounds have taken serious casualties, and they aren't exactly a wimp outfit.

I hope that by the time this sees print, the 'Star Boojums' will have been revealed as a hoax. But I'm offering a double news bounty to anyone who has real information about these forces. I hope you'll all be laughing at me next issue, even Sir Malachi. You know that itchy feeling that you get sometimes when you're on patrol and things are just too quiet? That's how it feels to me right now...

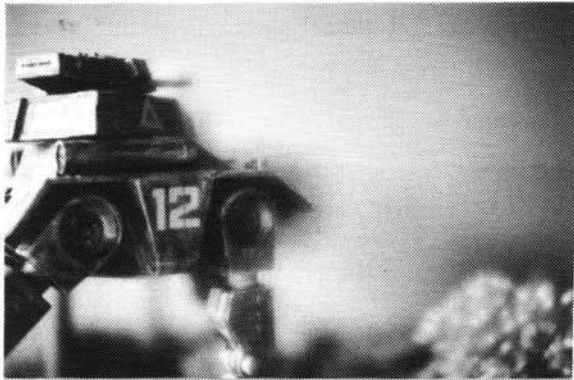
Some of our readers wrote in and complained that they didn't get an editorial last issue. Gosh, we didn't think you cared! I'll be certain to include one from now on! In this issue: Late-breaking news from that troubled Rasalhague- Periphery border; the interview with Chancellor Romano Liao that has a BattleTechnology reporter and camera crew on the run, a look at why tiny St Ives is a power to be reckoned with, and a Cobalt Coil story about a unit that broke the Ares Conventions — and how they paid for it! We're showing you the uses of the lowly mortar, some new and unusual Mechs, and an experiment in the form of an unusually long MechWarrior scenario of the Ellingsen expedition's disastrous attempt to buck ComStar. Let us know what you think of the experiment! If that's not enough, we're giving you census results and replies to comments, and the requested index to the Mechs & Vehicles which were published in the first twelve issues of BattleTechnology.

— *Hilary Ayer, Ambergrist, St Ives Compact: Jan 1, 3050*

Late News — on our cover is the single confirmed photograph of these new enemy Mechs. It is one of several new types that seem to have weapons beyond Star League. No news is reaching us from ComStar. This picture is going to be reproduced all over the Inner Sphere in hopes that someone can give more information!!



BattleTechnology News Service



*Waco's Rangers
Somewhere on Andurien front 3036*

ComStar Denies Street Crime

Xenia, Federated Suns, June 17, 3049

Ranking Officer Precentor IV Patrick Sammeli of the ComGuard 11th Division indignantly denied ComStar connection with this May's street rioting in Menominee Falls, chief industrial city of Xenia. Coupled with last week's denial from planetary Precentor Archer Simpson, this leaves newsgathering sources totally at a loss to explain the ROM dagger tattoo on the right upper bicep of the dead Stephen Chastain. Chastain, our readers will recall, was in life the huge strong-man aide to gang czar Irri Iradia. Iradia had come from nowhere to unify six of the major street gangs in Menominee Falls. Over the three weeks between May 7 and May 22, the coalition came dangerously close to seizing the city.

Gang sources claim the deaths of these two men are due to deliberate assassination by the MIIO, the Federated Sun's secret service. There have been rumors of a hidden war between the MIIO and ROM, the ComStar Covert Operations department. Newsmen never like to publish guesses, but so few facts are emerging from the charge and countercharge that we are forced to. There is indeed a war. And the Lyran Intelligence Corps is involved as well. Facts submitted to this and other newsmagazines by the Maskirova indicate well over two hundred agent deaths in the last five years alone. There seems to be no end in sight to this 'non-existent' war.

Missing MechWarrior!

Will Mr G or J Homan, who sent combat photos to our Terran office, please get in touch with us! Your name and address became separated. We want to use some of your work.

Waco's Rangers in an Uproar

Epsilon, Free Worlds League, November 14, 3049

CO Wayne Rogers of Waco's Rangers held a press conference today. The subject: the rumored presence of elements of Wolf's Dragoons in Free Worlds League territory.

It seems that B Company, Zeta Battalion, of the Dragoons has been hired on a temporary basis to garrison the troublesome region of Andurien. With so many of the First Free Worlds Legionnaires off on maneuvers near the Canopian border, it is logical that a small tough force would be needed. The Dragoons as a whole are under contract to the Federated Commonwealth, based on Outreach, where they have spent the years since the Fourth Succession War recruiting and training new warriors until they are once again at their former strength of five battalions. This small unit is detached as a sort of counterinsurgency training exercise.

It was Andurien that gave refuge to the survivors of Duke Anton Marik's rebellion against his brother, survivors who had taken part in the massacre of a Dragoon unit which was serving on their own side. In this massacre, Col Wolf's brother Joshua was among the slain. After the Dragoons counterstruck, killing Duke Anton and crushing the rebellion, Duchess Catherine Humphries allowed many "sudden settlers" in her lands. In 3030 Andurien itself seceded from the Free Worlds League and attempted to set up an independent state. The rebellion was finally crushed by Captain-General Thomas Marik in 3040. If some of the newer civic leaders are finding the Dragoons watching them rather closely, it is hardly a surprise.

Back to Waco's Rangers. It is part of the Rangers' contract that they will not serve the same employer as Wolf's Dragoons; they will not fight on the same side. This dates back to the death of the son of the Ranger's first CO. The young man was executed for cowardice on the field of battle, such cowardice endangering the men entrusted to his care.

Mediation is expected to drag on through mid-April of 3050. BattleTechnology expects that the Rangers will be looking for employment.

Thugee Cult Repressed

Highspire, Federated Commonwealth, November 17, 3049

Reports indicate that the Thugee populace has been under assault for the last month. Nearly 3,000 members of the strangler cult have been captured or killed by person or persons unknown. The police forces of Highspire have been receiving letters containing information on Thuggee operations which so far have proved correct. No one has taken responsibility for these actions, but public opinion has been sympathetic to the offensive, as the cult of Kali has had a stranglehold on the population since before the Fourth Succession War. Attempts to speak with Chancellor Liao, Patroness of the cult here and elsewhere, have been unsuccessful.

BattleTechnology News Service

Wolf's Dragoons Buy Out Contract!

Andurien, Free Worlds League, December 15, 3049

Phillip Humphries-Ortega, Governor of Andurien Province, was thunderstruck when a squad of infantry from Wolf's Dragoons entered his office today and presented him with a crisp stack of high-denomination M-bills.

"Col Wolf requires our presence on Outreach," was all the explanation given as Company B, Zeta Battalion, returned triple their fee to buy themselves out of their contract with no notice given.

While the planetary governor was still awaiting a reply to his message of protest, the Dragoon Drop-Ships rendezvoused with the JumpShips and they were safely away.

Briefly Noted:

Draconis Combine Trade Mission Returns

Atreus, October 5, 3049

Prince Henry Nakamura, second cousin once removed to Coordinator Takashi Kurita of the Draconis Combine, today returned to resume trade talks with Dr Jenna Halacek of the League General Accounting Office. The talks will begin with a formal reception on the evening of the seventh, after which "We will disappear into a suite of grey offices and work!"

Tormana Calls for Freedom — Again!

St Ives, St Ives Compact, November 16, 3049

"The unhappy peoples of the Capellan Confederation beg for release. My sister Romano has increased quotas in the steel industry by fourteen percent, heedless of the misery caused by her oppression." General Tormana Liao told a yawning press conference today. "Only under my leadership will House Liao recover from its stagnation..." He continued at some length. There was no actual news.

Palace Guard Dethroned

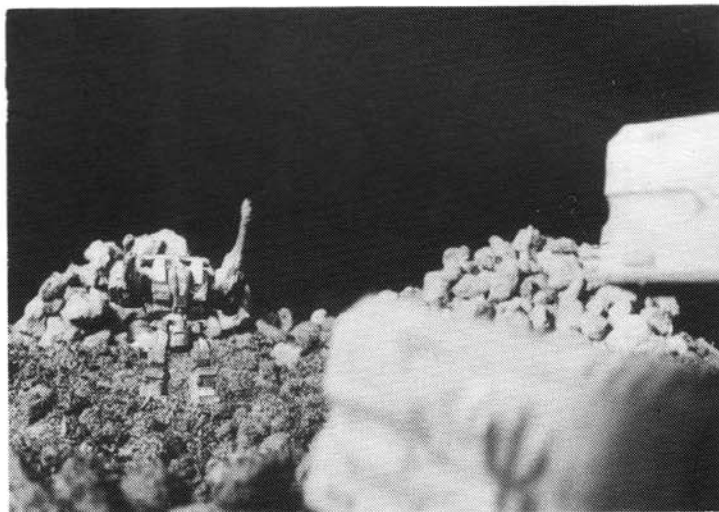
Sian, Dec 39, 3049

Chancellor Romano Liao celebrated Christmas by reorganizing her Palace Guard. Demoted are Wallace Chin, Ferris Williams-Banerji, Chen Wa, and Marise Anderson. Missing, presumed dead, is Commandant Simpson Yueh, and his aide Peony Adams.

Timely Reading: Thuggee Revived,

Saso Press, New Syrtis, December 3049

A new treatise by noted Marik-Halas Scholar Mikial Dragnos has recently been released. It deals with both the historical and the present-day cult of Kali in fascinating detail. During a recent publicity interview Dragnos was asked for his opinion on the Highspire situation. His reply? "It is obvious that someone is paying attention to an important problem."



Black Omens in recent action against the so-called Hi-Tech Bandits" Damian System Asteroid Belt

Merc Reservation Cited as Inhumane

*Damian, Skandia Province, Free Republic of Rasalhague
November 20, 3049*

An official protest was entered yesterday with ComStar's Mediation Board by Major Edwina Forest, CO of the Black Omen Battalion. "The Permitted Access Range of our unit's Reservation is only fifteen square blocks now!" she accused. "That includes flashy clothing stores, several bars, one vid theater, and enough gambling halls to separate a regiment from better pay than Rasalhague allows us. It includes no restaurants, no department or grocery stores, no hardware stores, no libraries, bookstores or vid sellers! Our people are forced into the Rasalhaguan stereotype of a mercenary as a drinking, wenching, slob who can't hold onto his money past Saturday night. We are forced into a tiny ghetto on the planet we defend with our lives!"

Dr Kjel Lindstrom, Waldherre of Damian, authorized another three square blocks to the reservation after a closed mediation meeting under ComStar auspices. This now allow the unit a laundromat, two small cafes, and a children's playground. It remains to be seen if the children of Damian and the children of the Black Omen will continue their elders' feud on the swing sets and the parallel bars.

Unit Timeline: The Kell Hounds

*For those of our readers who have missed the colorful history of the Kell Hounds, BattleTechnology presents a brief timeline. For more about the Kell Hounds, consult **The Kell Hounds**, **The Warrior Trilogy**, and **Lethal Heritage**, and the upcoming **Blood Legacy**, published by the FASA Corporation.*

3005 Morgan Kell, his cousin Arthur Luvon, and Arthur's fiancée Katrina Steiner flee to the Periphery near the Circinus Federation. When Katrina returns, she wins the Archonship of the Lyran Commonwealth from her cousin Alessandro Steiner.

3006 Megan Kell born, somewhere in the Periphery.

3010 Kell Hounds formed by brothers Morgan and Patrick Kell with legacy from Arthur Luvon. Unit begins as a full regiment.

3013 Unit with Prince Ian Davion on Mallory's World. Prince Ian killed.

3016 Morgan reduces Kell Hounds to one battalion, then retires suddenly following a one-to-one Mech fight with Yorinaga Kurita. Yorinaga also retires to a monastery. Remaining Kell Hounds officially disband into several smaller units. Patrick commands what is left of the Kell Hounds, under contract to the Lyran Commonwealth. Scott Bradley forms Bradley's Bravos, and contracts with the Federated Suns.

3026 Yorinaga Kurita forms the Genyosha and kills Patrick Kell who is defending the Kells' cousin, Archon-Designate Melissa Steiner. Patrick's son Christian born somewhere in the Draconis Combine.

3027 Morgan Kell comes out of retirement. Morgan resumes leadership of the Kell Hounds.

3028 Fourth Succession War begins. Kell Hounds and Genyosha seek a climactic battle. Bradley's Bravos in the long fight for Northwind; when Northwind Highlanders return to Northwind, they fight as comrades. Kell Hounds clash with Aldo Lestrade near Summer.

3029 Aldo Lestrade dies. Hanse Davion releases the Bravos to rejoin the Kell Hounds. Morgan Kell and Yorinaga Kurita fight a duel. Morgan proves the stronger, then gives up his advantage. The two units resolve their feud. Yorinaga realizes that this contradicts his oath to the Dragon.

3030 War ends. Morgan Finn Kell marries his executive officer Salome Ward. Kell Hounds, again one regiment strong, make their home base on Arc Royal.

After the seppuku of his father Yorinaga Kurita, Akira Brahe joins the Kell Hounds. He is a former member of the 11th Legion of Vega and the Genyosha. He has had to rise through the ranks on merit, not having his father's name or protection. He is from what is to become Rasalhague.

Cat Wilson marries Gwyneth Murdoch. Ceremony does not mention the groom's first name.

3031 Phelan Patrick Kell, first of Morgan and Salome's three children, born on Arc Royal.

3033 Megan Kell, Morgan's daughter, arrives to meet with her father.

3034 Megan Kell marries Daniel Allard and remains on Arc-Royal.

3034 Rasalhague independence. Tor Miraborg, interviewed in BattleTechnology, criticizes mercenary units, especially the Kell Hounds. Daniel Allard, Morgan's second in command, writes an angry response, *Letter on page 29*.

Year-End 3049

3030-Present Close friendship between Morgan Kell and Jaime Wolf of Wolf's Dragoons. Certain of the Kell Hounds receive training on the Dragoon planet of Outreach. Phelan is later to say that he spent more time on Outreach than he did on Arc-Royal.

3040 Archon Emerita Katrina Steiner dies; leaves a legacy to Morgan Kell that that enables the Kell Hounds to form a second regiment.

3042 Christian Kell, son of Morgan's dead brother Patrick by a Kuritan citizen, appears with a verigraphed statement by Patrick attesting to his birth. Morgan turns over command of the Kell Hounds to Daniel Allard, and takes Chris to Outreach, where he is tutored by Morgan and Jaime Wolf. Stanford Blake, the third of Christian Kell's instructors, must have something to teach in the way of endurance. He was severely wounded in Duke Anton Marik's massacre of Wolf's Dragoons, and severely wounded again in the pounding bloodbath that ended the Fourth Succession War for the Dragoons on Crossing. He is ten years or so older than Chris, but the two become close friends.

Daniel Allard refuses the title of Colonel, commands the Kell Hounds as Lieutenant Colonel. Lt. Col. Akira Brahe commands the first regiment, based on Summer, under contract to the Federated Commonwealth. Lt. Col. Scott Bradley commands the second regiment, based on Ambergrist, under contract to the St Ives Compact.

3046 Phelan Kell enters The Nagelring, elite Lyran military academy.

3048 Phelan Kell expelled from The Nagelring. Joins the 3rd Battalion of the 1st Regiment as a mechwarrior. 3rd Battalion of the 1st Kell Hounds accepts a contract from the Free Republic of Rasalhague. They are based on Outpost, fighting Periphery pirates. Contract is negotiated with Gen. Christian Månsdotter, head of the Kungsarmee, a former Lyran, then Tyr, mechwarrior, one of the few Rasalhaguians who have knowledge of and respect for mercenaries and their abilities.

3049 Kell Hound JumpShip *Cucumalus* is stranded near Ginzburg, Radstadt Province, Free Republic of Rasalhague. Tor Miraborg rules here, and he refuses cooperation with the mercenaries. They are confined to a mercenary reservation, and must wait three long months while liquid helium is shipped from the Federated Commonwealth to repair the ship. Waldherre Miraborg refuses them the right to buy and replace the needed supplies. Kell Hounds win the respect of much of the citizenry, although fights break out from time to time. A romance is rumored between Phelan Kell and Tor Miraborg's daughter Tyra. Nothing comes of it.

August 3049 Phelan's unit has finally arrived at their posting, eager for action. They are assigned to root out some elements of Ryan's Rebels, pirates from the Greater Valkyrate. They run the Rebels to ground just outside of the Periphery planet of Outreach. During the combat which follows, Phelan's Wolfhound is seen to take a critical cockpit hit. Both Mech and body are taken by victorious enemy

10 August 3010

So Many Deaths...

Dear Morgan,

It is with deep regret that I write to tell you of the death of your cousin, my dear husband, Arthur Luvon. By now the busy vultures of the media will have scurried to break the news of his slaying. I am sure you gave them no satisfaction, showed none of your grief for the shocked pleasure of 'the viewers at home'.

Only you and I can know the full worth of the friend and counselor we have lost. If your obligations permit, Morgan, come to me on Tharkhad. I cannot leave my back undefended here. It is only to you that I say I feel very much alone, lost in a court of flatterers. Arthur will never see his child.

I share your grief,
Katrina Steiner,
Archon, Lyran Commonwealth

26 May 3027

Col. Morgan Kell
St. Marinus House
Zaniah

Morgan Kell:

During your absence from your command, Yorinaga Kurita has reappeared. He has formed a new unit. In a battle to defend the Archon-Designate, he killed your brother Patrick. Patrick's last words were, "Tell Morgan I understand." I don't.

Are you ready to return yet? Or shall I just have all personnel stand to attention and cut their own throats?

Major Salome Ward
1st Co, 1st Bn, Kell Hounds

(Undated)

Katrina,

Yorinaga Kurita died by seppuku this morning. I stood with him. His son Akira Brahe acted as his second. I still cannot accept his reasoning, yet certainly his life had been paid for many times over. He had a right to do with it as he saw necessary.

Brahe and others of the Genyosha have joined the Kell Hounds. Now that the war is over and before the ceremonies begin, Salome and I are taking leave to Arc-Royal. I need to see earth that has no recent scars of war. I need to see a child that is not cringing in fear.

Morgan

21 October 3013 Desolate Pass,
Mallory's World, Federated Suns

"...his Atlas took that bad cockpit hit about 14:00. The doctors estimate that First Prince Ian Davion died at 14:40. *He was dying as we came onto the field of battle!* We drove away the Second Sword of Light under Yorinaga Kurita after some difficulty. By then all we could save was Prince Ian's body.

None of us can stop thinking it — half an hour earlier, just half an hour, and he'd still be alive!"

Hypatia Donahue, *Catapult*
Assault Lance, 2nd Btn, Kell Hounds 1st Co
during debriefing

5 Jan 3040

Col Morgan Kell
Maj Salome Ward Kell
Baron and Baroness
von Arc-Royal, etc
Arc-Royal,
Federated Commonwealth

Dear Cousins,

I'm so sorry. My mother Katrina Steiner died in her sleep last night. She had been having great trouble breathing after this winter's bout with pneumonia. The strain on her heart — all of the strains on her heart — were too much for her at last.

She loved you both very much, I know. She dreamed of you a night or two before she died, Morgan. It was a happy dream.

We have scheduled the state funeral for February 16. If that is not enough time for you to arrange things so you can get here, let us know as soon as possible so that we can revise the date.

Do bring the children. They shouldn't be subjected to the full honorific horrors, but they can be with their cousins. I feel the family should all be together at this heavy time.

All my love,
Melissa Steiner Davion

Morgan Kell has known many deaths in his time. There can be no more painful loss than the one he is suffering now. The short, promising life of Phelan Kell is ended. The editor and staff of BattleTechnology salute Morgan Kell in his sorrow, and extend our condolences to Co.1 Kell and his grieving family.

Katrina Steiner
Archon, Lyran Commonwealth
Tharkhad, Lyran Commonwealth
Private

Rest in Peace, Phelan Kell



Col Morgan Kell
HQ Wolf's Dragoons
Outreach, Federated Commonwealth

Phelan Kell's Wolfhound at start of the fatal mission

I regret to inform you of the death of your oldest son, Phelan Patrick Kell, killed in the course of battle under my command. Phelan died fighting bravely against an enemy who seems to have a weapons technology beyond our grasp. He fell during our retreat under fire. We were unable to recover his body for burial.

Phelan was rapidly becoming a valuable member of the Third Battalion. He had a good grasp of tactics and a formidable ability to master new skills as quickly as he identified the need for change.

I asked for permission to write this letter because I wanted to tell you myself how valuable a person your son was, both as a person and as a mechwarrior. I wanted to tell you how grieved I am at his loss, and how much he will be missed.

Sincerely,
Lt. Col. Akira Brahe
First Rgt Kell Hounds

St Ives:

The Tiny Giant

When the St Ives Compact came into being, many people, even in the Federated Commonwealth, thought it would be little more than a buffer state, an economic basket case. Sooner or later, it would join with the Federated Commonwealth, just as the Tikinov Free Republic did in 3031. These people were totally in error.

In 3030, when Candace Liao declared the independence of the St Ives Commonality, the planetary ruler of St Ives itself, House Overton tried to rally his people against the idea. When to his surprise they did not rise, he ordered his private forces to take savage measures to make the people obey. On Duchess Candace's order, the St Ives military worked with the militia to safeguard the people, driving the Overtons to their other holdings within the remains of the Capellan Confederation. (Where much of their wealth was nationalized by Chancellor Romano in 3042.) This action was the cement that bound the peoples of the St Ives worlds to Candace Allard-Liao.

With the St Ives worlds, the Confederation lost much of its wealth. St Ives had factories for BattleMechs, Aerospace, and military materiel. Many consumer goods were already produced there. But what made St Ives viable as a state was the planet Vestallas. Vestallas was the banking leader, not only of the Capellan Confederation, but of the coreward sections of the Free Worlds League and the Federated Suns which lay near to her. In the Prosperity and Harmony Central Bank on Vestallas, Candace and Justin Allard-Liao found two accounts: the main working account of the Capellan Confederation, and what has been called the Liao Hoard. Much of the working account was blocked from their use by Chancellor Maximilian Liao and his successor, Candace's younger sister, the present Chancellor Romano Liao. (The ways in which they did their blocking led Justin's intelligence operatives to connections that House Liao would prefer not to have let slip.) But the Liao Hoard wasn't in credit; it was in cash. There were massive stocks of gold, silver, and platinum. Rare works of art were stacked in crates and shipping portfolios. Entire store-rooms were filled with currency, one for each House's bills, and several for Comstar C-bills. A ledger found in the vault revealed that past chancellors for several centuries had kept their private wealth, their skimming of the cream of Capellan profits, stored away here. Not all of this is tax money, either. Example: when the Chesterton worlds were seized by House

Davion, the planetary treasures were not looted by mercenaries, as House Liao spokesmen had charged, but brought here as a private acquisition.

It took weeks merely to count the wealth assembled here. Altogether, the loot came to many tens of trillions of C-bills, easily the greatest uncommitted amount of cash known to exist. There is a theory that Liao rulers are the best and the worst. The good ones are better (think of Alicia Liao, who spent her life writing and forcing acceptance of the Ares Conventions); the bad are horrific (they support what amounts to Thought Police; differences of opinion are not tolerated, far less learned from. There have been facilities for the study of bacteriological warfare, nerve gases, mind-altering chemicals placed in reservoirs to tranquilize their own citizens...). The St Ives worlds thought well of Duchess Candace; still they watched with suspicion to see how much of this wealth would ever be seen. Duchess Candace and her consort took a tithe of the wealth, one tenth (remember, Candace left the Capellan Confederation as a third person stuffed into the back of Andrew Redburn's Marauder, with only the clothes on her back — it's nice to have a little something of your own!). Then over the next several years, a major rebuilding program took place on the St Ives worlds. Schools, hospitals, homes, factories sprung up everywhere, intelligently planned by the best ecologists and architects so that no planet became an industrial waste. Government investment expanded companies and factories. A low-interest loan to Hildco allowed it to expand many of its operations. Not only did the government invest in military supply companies, but in a widescale program for the production of consumer goods.

Justin Allard-Liao's ties with House Davion produced considerable transfers of technology. In the early '30s, the government of the Federated Commonwealth found itself in a considerable cash crunch, first from the war, then from its commitment to repairing war damage in the formerly-Liao Sarna Marches. At this time, the Lyran portion could support itself, but had nothing left over. ComStar offered a major loan at a very good rate of interest...provided that Prince Hanse Davion agreed to placing their nominees in key civil and military positions within the Sarna Marches. Princess Melissa was even more adamant against this proposal than the First Prince. St Ives ruined ComStar's rock-and-a-hard-place

scheme by offering the Federated Commonwealth a loan of ten trillion C-bills. (10,000,000,000,000 C-bills, folks!) at standard rates, but over a long repayment period. Not at all by coincidence, a year later at Duke Justin's request (and with the personal aid of Riva Allard of the NAIS research team, Duke Justin's sister), House Davion shared a complete copy of the Grey Death Legion's Star League Computer Memory Core. St Ives researchers have concentrated on the peacetime applications of the technology to be found there; and much of that knowledge was used to improve the quality of life for all of St Ives. There are mass transportation systems built or under construction on all of the St Ives worlds that desire them. Farm production is up almost 30% across St Ives, between free education, new methods of animal husbandry and land management, more efficient storage (in the Capellan Confederation, almost 30% of the crop grown is lost to vermin or disease; in St Ives, less than 5%). Because those new factories were going up at the same time, Star League methods of industrial design to promote efficiency and worker satisfaction were incorporated; St Ives's new factories are more than competitive with the best that the Lyrans and the Mariks can offer. St Ives (in an undisclosed location) has the only working factory which produces mobile Long Tom artillery systems on an exclusive basis. The Federated Commonwealth buys all of these that the Compact is willing to sell.

In 3045 House Allard-Liao (as many are beginning to call it) stunned the other states by announcing that their Pathfinder Project, ongoing since 3035, was a plan to construct a major JumpShip construction facility, combined with a large system of on-planet sites for DropShip building and repair. For ten years, the design and construction personnel for this project had been studying Star League methods. Now construction has begun in orbit around Texlos, to be completed between 3055 and 3060. When fully operational, the factory will produce a new JumpShip every Z year. The first five years of production have been reserved for St Ives government and civilian concerns. The Federated Commonwealth is expected to be the major customer after that. Ambitious plans have been made for additional shipyards after that.

The military of the Compact which must protect such important projects has not changed in size in the past twenty years. Outside of mercenary and foreign forces, St Ives boasts a force of six regiments. This does not sound like enough, even given the high level of supply and technology enjoyed by the St Ives Compact. Remember, St Ives is a small state with only one real enemy, the Capellan Confederation. When one thinks that the Free Republic of Rasalhague, which is many times bigger, has only 16 regiments, perhaps St Ives is well off.

Let's expand on that issue of military supply and technol-

ogy. Ammo and spare parts are under regimental control, issued on a predictable basis and reissued by each regimental depot as it sees fit. This includes mercenary regiments with long-term contracts! House Allard-Liao produces tank and infantry weapons from Federated Commonwealth designs in return for easy-term contracts to produce these items for the Commonwealth. To protect planets with no Mech garrisons, St Ives has increased its supplies of conventional aircraft such as the Advanced Guardian fighter, the Mechbuster, and Warrior VTOL. In addition, PPC carriers, LRM/SRM carriers (many with the new listen/kill missiles), and Partisan AA weaponry are in use.

As far as aerospace forces, here the delicate nature of St Ives' politics comes in. Many of the units which were defeated by House Davion during the closing months of the Fourth Succession War feared to return to House Liao to the reprisals visited on losers. Instead, as the war ended, they swore allegiance to Candace, Chancellor Maximilian's chosen successor.

Despite having participated in very few major actions, the St Ives military maintains a high state of readiness. Several dozen raids by crack troops from the Warrior Houses, during the past two decades have required instant mobilization and defense. The most famous of these raids has been named the 'New Year Attack'. It happened on the planet Warlock in 3043 at the Chinese New Year. A major gathering of Allards, Liaos, and Allard-Liaos was under way at the family estate when House Fujita's First Battalion landed near the estate. (They had entered the system undetected through a pirate jump point.) Available were the Ducal Guard, which is a company sized Mech unit, and the personal Mechs of Justin, Candace, and Daniel Allard and Tormana Liao. Combined numbers were less than half of the enemy force. To make matters worse, young Kai Allard-Liao had a visitor — his friend Victor Steiner Davion, heir to the Federated Commonwealth, who had to be protected at all costs to avoid a major war. The Guard with its royal auxiliary gave a good account of itself, losing five Mechs to House Fujita's nine.

Just when things looked hopeless, out from the forest came several men and women, carrying crude explosive packs and homemade mortars. The slaughter among these infantry fighters was great, but they destroyed several Mechs. They attached packs to the invaders, sometimes holding the packs in place until they blew, achieving success at the sacrifice of their own lives. Between the two groups, they held House Fujita's forces, and the tide was beginning to turn when radar reported a force of 60+ Kell Hound Mechs approaching. House Fujita only just managed to escape in time.

These 'warriors from the forest' were of course members of several Tong organizations. Much has been made of Justin Xiang Allard's relationship with the Tongs. His decision to bring them into the open, to allow them to form companies, own land, and even to become part of the government. As a show of good faith (on both sides), the Tongs have contributed several tank and infantry companies to the military. In comparison, Chancellor Romano Liao has begun a pogrom against the Tongs remaining in the Capellan Confederation. She fears that they will link with Tormana Liao and become an organized source of resistance. If she doesn't manage to kill them all, this action of hers will force them to do exactly that.

The St Ives Tongs have sworn their holiest blood oaths to preserve House Allard-Liao. Our sources indicate that after the New Year's Raid, Justin Allard-Liao started Operation Triad. This plan will create several units of Tong mechwarrriors, trained by the Kell Hounds. BattleTechnology sources reveal that the training is taking place on the planet Dunbar. Large scale settlement has taken place on Dunbar — except on the northern continent, which is officially listed as 'volcanically and seismically unstable—overflight forbidden'. In past years Romano Liao has sent several units to discover what is going on there. None have succeeded, and none have returned. We've mentioned the Tongs as overt fighters — their best use has been in the realm of covert operations. As members of the SIS (Secret Intelligence Service), Tong members have been useful in locating Maskirova agents, linking with Tongs still in the Capellan Confederation to gain military intelligence, and linking with other 'families' throughout the Inner Sphere to the same purpose.

St Ives is small. This is a strong point more than it is a drawback. Its military can reach any point in it quickly; modern methods allow constant monitoring of any part of it. Resources can be quickly shifted to provide for any sudden need, military or civilian. St Ives has a high quality of life; there are no 'backworlds' in St Ives.

St Ives has improved its economy since independence in several ways. The first is its major trading bond with the Federated Commonwealth. House Davion buys almost all of

the Victor Mechs produced by Hildco, in addition to a large proportion of their jump jet production. The production of consumer goods has sparked trade, but it has also made the Compact self-sufficient. They do a brisk consumer-goods trade with House Marik, including sensors and scientific equipment, but no military goods as yet. Both sides are wary. St Ives exports 35% more than it imports. Capital comes into St Ives from investments in the Sarna Marches, both from the original post-war loans, and from private firms who still hold the Liao name in the highest respect. There is a booming trade with several Periphery Worlds, particularly the Magistracy of Canopus.

St Ives has the loyalty of another class. House Liao has a tradition of 'servitors', who are nothing more than bond slaves. When Duchess Candace became the ruler of St Ives, she did so on the condition that these servitors were to be freed. The Liao Hoard freed her of a knotty problem in economics here. If she freed all the slaves, the people who had capitol invested in them would have been ruined. Never mind the ethics of using people as portable wealth, the people whose wealth they *were* would fight against losing them, and would have formed a focus of discontent and rebellion afterward. The

St Ives policy was one of firmness and compassion allied. The former owners were compensated, and even aided in finding free staff to do the jobs that had formerly been done by servitors. Justin's one public speech on the subject (he makes it clear that he is Duke-Consort only; Candace is sole authority in the Duchy) stated simply that "slavery is against the rules of man and god". The former servitors had been provided with aid to resettle anywhere they chose. Justin offered a job to anyone who had a skill. To everyone's amazement, thousands of people took him up on it! Thousands of doctors, lawyers, teachers, and Techs of all kinds became an instant resource for St Ives.

Looking at the St Ives Compact, with its ever-increasing industrial base, its economic growth which averages 9% per year, it is not surprising that sources in the Federated Commonwealth are worried that 'House Allard-Liao' may gain too much influence, especially now that Duke Justin has become

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July 12, 3042*

Minister of Intelligence for Hanse Davion, and head of the MIIO. The amount of St Ives's foreign trade with (and possible controlling interests within) the Federated Suns portion of the Commonwealth has caused some factions to suggest trade sanctions against this small thriving economy. Victor Steiner Davion has been quoted in a well-publicized student debate at The Nagelring, "You are talking about the smallest state in the Inner Sphere, a state with only a handful of Mech regiments, a state headed by Candace Liao, a paragon among Liaos. Her husband is a man that has given the Federated Commonwealth much more than we can ever repay. His ultimate loyalty is to us, and it has been proved beyond the possibility of doubt. Their son and heir, Kai Allard-Liao, is like a brother to me. It is from personal knowledge that I say he has the potential to become one of the great Liaos. I have spent vacations among them. I find St Ivers to be a wonderful people who remind me in their independence and pride of our own citizens. You say that we should be afraid of them? They are skillful in trade? So are Lyrans. They are good enough to challenge us? Perhaps we need to learn to be better! St Ives is filled with good people. Its rulers are the most noble of allies. The Federated Commonwealth has enough enemies without the need of creating new ones. I say to you, sir, that this small state cannot be a danger to us in any way. We are the greatest state in existence; let us remember that and behave as befits such a state!"

The proof of the Duke of the Sarna March's speech lies with time. We at BattleTechnology feel that he is correct. St Ives has achieved a balance. They are well-armed enough to be difficult to take. They are prosperous enough to be independent of economic warfare. They have a sturdy network of alliances, with the economic sweetness to keep their allies interested in their continued welfare. They are like a friendly porcupine, not dangerous until attacked. Or like the tiger of their emblem — at whatever size, a force to be reckoned with.

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BattleTechnology Interviews

Romano Liao, Chancellor of the Capellan Confederation

Not everybody who writes for BattleTechnology is on staff. Much of our material is from freelancers all over the Known Sphere; most of the staff began that way. Not only do we pay a bounty for items used, we pay premium rates for articles and pictures sent in by the people on the spot. This issue we have such a find; Anders Donaldson, a writer of some stature, had been given permission to do research in the library of the Chancellory Palace on Sian for an upcoming book on Kurita-Liao relationships over the last two centuries. Three weeks into the project, he was astonished to receive the invitation shown below.

You'd better believe that Donaldson got in touch with our local offices for a recording crew. The date given was less than twenty four hours away! He stayed up all night reading, and preparing his questions. At 1000 hours, crew and journalist were ready. At 1130 hours, there was a clash of cymbals, and The Chancellor entered. For two hours she questioned the journalist and camera crew about personal history, life styles, living conditions outside the Confederation, politics in the Draconis Combine, fashions, warrior training methods, and how Capellan propaganda was being received all over the Known Sphere. The crew had brought plenty of tape, which was fortunate. They recorded every word; we have not edited out anything, and the complete record is available for public inspection. The portion that appears here is the last half hour of that record.

Until this time, Chancellor Liao had been most gracious. Donaldson recorded his impressions:

The Chancellor still has a mature beauty. She was once known for her lively charm; not a trace of that remains. Her

Chancellor Romano Liao, Mighty Sword of the Confederation, Sun of Union, Excellent Provider to Her People, Serene Highness of Tikonov and St Ives, Laureate of Universal Reason, Phoenix of Faithful Duty, and Jade Empress of the Marches

to

Researcher First Class Anders Donaldson
Servant to our honorable and worthy cousin
Takashi Kurita,
Coordinator of the Draconis Combine;
Greetings!

Know that the object of your studies is pleasing to us. The welfare of our ally the Dragon, and the past long friendship of our Houses are items of interest to the Capellan Confederation. Therefore it has been decided that on the 20th Day of November, 3049, at 1030 hours, you will be granted an interview with Myself, said interview to take place in the Chancellory Library. You may bring recording equipment for this meeting with history. Please be prompt, as our busy schedule permits us the leisure of but one hour.

Avatar or Madwoman ?



MAC
1990

beauty is severe now, regal and certain of herself. Her famous intelligence was more in evidence than ever; her questions were remarkably like an in-depth debriefing. I couldn't help being impressed with the energy and force of her personality. I had to resist a tendency to stammer. Could the rumors of cruelty and capriciousness be only propaganda, spread by her enemies?

Chancellor Liao: (with a gracious smile) And now, Mr Donaldson, I assume that you have a question or two prepared for me?

BattleTechnology: Thank you, Madame Chancellor. As the Thirty First Century passes its halfway mark, how would you say that House Liao stands, compared to the other Successor Houses?

Chancellor Liao: Stronger than ever! After the disastrous Davionist aggression of 3028, many of your news agency oracles said that we were finished. The Saso Clarion compared us to "a wounded shark, fated to be dismembered by others of the same kind once it was realized how mortally hurt we were." Other...sharks have certainly attempted it! The Andurien-Canopus alliance came the closest to succeeding. But now Andurien is no longer independent; Catherine Humphries is dead. Kyalla Centrella of Canopus is rotting to death in her madhouse. And the Capellan Confederation? We go from strength to strength.

BattleTechnology: The Illustrious Great Rebuilding is complete, Madame Chancellor?

Chancellor Liao: It is, yes! Every Mech factory, every

Hanse Davion... is a man of many talents and no principles whatsoever!

shipyard, every engine works on planets remaining to the Capellan Confederation has been rebuilt. Earthworks in particular, is many times expanded from what it was.

BattleTechnology: The nationalization of all industry in 3042 did not slow down this effort?

Chancellor Liao: Far from it! Under the direct leadership of a strong ruler, our economy flourishes!

(Editorial note: By independent economic studies, the Gross World Product index for Liao worlds is down an average of 10.12% over the past five years. ComStar med teams specializing in deficiency and malnutrition diseases

have been called in quietly to seventeen Liao backwater planets. They were brought in secretly because House Liao policy forbids any request of aid from ComStar.)

BattleTechnology: Would you give us a brief description of the other leaders of the Inner Sphere from the Capellan point of view?

Chancellor Liao: Thomas Marik is a clever man who knows how to wait and how to plan. It would be an honor to ally with him should the times permit it. Of House Kurita, Coordinator Takashi Kurita is a shrewd politician. He knows the human mind intimately, and can play upon it. He is quite recovered from his illness, quite rational. He is a brilliant strategist. His son the Deputy for War (*Gunji no Kanrei*), is both strategist and tactician. In addition, the Kanrei is aware of the value of training! Theodore Kurita knows that most battle are won or lost before you make contact with the enemy, by the level of training and supply of the troops involved.

Many consider the Free Republic of Rasalhague to be one of the Great Houses now. Territorially, I must concede this to be true. But as long as they continue giving credence to the Even Scale Policy they will never be great. From a proud warrior region they are becoming a nation of bureaucrats, accounting for each bean bought from the Lyrans in order to buy one of equal size and weight from the Draconis Combine! Foolish beyond belief.

The Lyrans? House Steiner's Archon Melissa Steiner Davion is a pretty puppet. She is Hanse Davion's greatest propaganda toy.

I once thought Hanse Davion was supernatural, a trickster spirit. He is ...merely an able and unscrupulous leader. A man of many talents and no principles whatsoever.

BattleTechnology: And your sister, Candace Liao, Duchess of St Ives?

Chancellor Liao: I have neither sister nor brother. You are misinformed. St Ives is part of the Capellan Confederation. The rebels currently infesting that unfortunate region have been neutralized. Or will be, shortly.

BattleTechnology: There is a rumor that House Liao might consider joining with the Taurian Concordat to make war upon the Federated Commonwealth. The Calderons would evidently consider themselves justified, as they fear a Davion invasion.

Chancellor Liao: It is a great pity that we are at present unable to give in to our justified and righteous indignation and aid these deserving victims of Hanse Davion's will to tyranny.

BattleTechnology: Madame Chancellor, one of the oldest traditions of House Liao are the strong Warrior Houses: House Ijori, House Fujita, House Imarra and the rest. They are deeply loyal to the Confederation, tremendously able, full of elite warriors. Yet they were cut to pieces during the Fourth Succession War. In your opinion, are the Warrior Houses

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obsolete?

Chancellor Liao: Certainly not! The Warrior Houses are the backbone of House Liao! They are back to strength now, proud and full of life. They are our finest, our hope for the future!

BattleTechnology: May we speak of your children? (*a gracious nod*) What may the peoples of the Inner Sphere expect from your son Sun Tzu?

Chancellor Liao: Expect that he will obtain whatever he desires! He is a military genius like Sir Stephen Liao of old. No world will be safe from him; no fortress will be able to withstand him. That is, if the Capellan Confederation were minded toward aggression and violence, which it is not.

BattleTechnology: And your daughter Kali? What may they expect from her.

Chancellor Liao: Kali is an energetic, intelligent young woman. She will be an ornament to whatever she chooses as a career.

BattleTechnology: Her title is Lady of Highspire, a title which used to be your own. The planet Highspire is now part of the Sarna Marches of the Federated Commonwealth. Can you comment upon that?

Chancellor Liao: (*with a tightlipped smile*) You dare a great deal, young man! I believe that my prior comment upon unprincipled Davionist aggressions covers this situation as well.

BattleTechnology: In September of 3049, there was a

popular uprising against the troops on Highspire. Sentries were murdered, barracks were blown up, Mechs and vehicles were sabotaged. The governor was assassinated. Signs were left at the various sites which suggested that the Thuggee cult, which is reputed to be very loyal to yourself, was responsible. The Armed Forces of the Federated Commonwealth suppressed this revolt quite sternly. Have you any comment to make?

Chancellor Liao: You yourself referred to the event as a 'popular uprising', Mr Donaldson. I grieve for my people in this savagely repressed world, ground under the iron boot of the Federated Commonwealth. Tsen Shang, head of our Maskirova, our intelligence gathering agency, has made public the many Davion atrocities that led a quiet, orderly people to an outraged revolt. I hope that the popular press will see fit to make these more widely known.

BattleTechnology: Back to the Warrior Houses for a moment. When you speak so proudly of them, does that include the secret House, the assassins of the House of the Setting Sun?

Chancellor Liao: (*Her eyes flare. She is abruptly silent. She thinks for a long moment, then replies*) There are no dark secrets in the Capellan Confederation. The so-called House of the Setting Sun is merely a series of citizens' lodges, groups of patriots. You might call them a group of reservists.

BattleTechnology: Will you deny for the record that you and your daughter Kali are descendants of Bhowanee?

Chancellor Liao: (*Gives no verbal answer. Looks toward where her guards are stationed.*)

BattleTechnology: Madame Chancellor, we are on record. Will you deny to all the Known Sphere that you and your daughter are descendants of the legendary ancestor of the Thuggee? (*Editorial note: By the beliefs of the Thuggee, you may tell any lie except to deny Bhowanee. Not very many outsiders have ever heard that name. To deny him is to be delivered unto a cursed death.*)

Chancellor Liao: (*with icy control*) You have overstepped the limits of my courtesy with your accusations. This interview is at an end.

BattleTechnology: The questions remain unanswered, Madame Chancellor.

Chancellor Liao: (*Whirling furiously*) You have until local sunrise to be gone from this planet! And from Capellan Territory! House Liao no longer extends you hospitality!

BattleTechnology: You know it is impossible to get so far in a fraction over thirteen hours...

Chancellor Liao: (*cutting him off*) Until sunrise, no more! (*She makes a furious gesture towards the cameraman. The tape ends.*)

State of the Inner Sphere

Report

As a companion piece to our Periphery report last issue, let's look at what the Periphery peoples have to contend with. In this year of 3049, the Inner Sphere has not seen major warfare in ten years; that is, none of the Successor Houses has warred upon another since the '39 war. Kurita and Davion raid each other; Steiner and Marik test each other's defenses; Periphery kingdoms, particularly the starving Tortuga Dominions, raid everyone in sight; but no major wars. Perhaps we were all exhausted.

From the twelve o'clock position again, let's start with the Federated Suns portion of the Federated Commonwealth. (For those without the 'clock' in front of them, the Federated Suns occupies the space from twelve to almost three.) The merger and reformation of Davion's and Steiner's military forces is complete. After the bombing of the Steiner High Command in '39, the most hidebound of Steiner's senior officers were left in charge. They hemmed and hawed and fidgeted about protocol for the rest of the war. When Field Marshal Nondi Steiner recovered, she had little choice but to assume command of the entirety of the Lyran Commonwealth-based troops yet again. Field Marshal Steiner has attempted to resign on the grounds of age yearly since 3025; yearly she has been requested to withdraw her resignation on the grounds of ability. In 3047 she put a condition to her acceptance; the appointment of distant cousin Hauptmann General Lisa Steiner to the command of the Department of the Quartermaster. "I can't hack this job if I have to be second-guessed and tied in red tape by incompetents!" Field Marshal Jackson Davion, Commander of the Federated Suns-based Operations Areas, agreed happily. He has long been an admirer of General Lisa Steiner's no-nonsense approach to supply. "I don't care about the dad-blank third pink copy, a gun's no good without rounds in it," is her best-known opinion. Not words to ring through the ages, but a sentiment every warrior will agree with. Lisa Steiner took a double jump in rank to Field Marshal with this command.

Internally the Federated Commonwealth is a going concern. Internal

trade in raw materials and manufactured goods prospers; all restrictions are lifted between planets in this sizable realm. By law, the two states won't merge until Victor Steiner Davion succeeds his parents. In practical fact, the realms are one.

Problems at this end of the Commonwealth? 1) The Capellans continue their hornet-stings of constant raids. The St Ives Compact, an ally of the Commonwealth, continues to provoke the Capellans. (St Ives is described at length elsewhere in this issue). It's an unusual situation. The current Minister of Information for the Commonwealth, Justin Xiang Allard (who succeeded to the position following his father Quintus Allard's resignation in 3040), is married to Candace Liao, the ruler of St Ives. They and their children now use the surname 'Allard-Liao'. From their realm and with their aid, Tormana Liao raids Romano Liao's Capellan Confederation. 2) The Taurian Concordat has a 'mad on' at the Federated Suns. The Sandoval faction (Draconis March of the Federated Suns) fears that the Concordat will ally with the Draconis Combine to form an attack base against them. 3) Thomas Marik could re-ratify the Concord of Kapteyn and join the Draconis Combine in a concerted attack on the Federated Commonwealth. After the stunning miscalculation as to the Combine's troop strength in '39, Hanse Davion walks warily in estimating enemy capabilities.

The five children of Prince Hanse and Archon Princess Melissa continue in health and ability. Prince Victor entered The Nagelring in 3048, graduating with the class of 3050. His ability is unquestioned; unfortunately so is his temper. He'll have to learn to discipline that before he hopes to lead troops! Prince Peter followed him there in fall of '49. Princess Kate and Prince Arthur are destined for the NAIS. Prince Arthur seems to be the studious member of the family; he may remain there as a researcher. The fiery Kate seems made for a mechwarrior, and her father claims that she shows a gift for tactics. Princess Yvonne, born on Liao in the Sarna March in March of '39, is too young yet to assess.

At the 3 o'clock point, St Ives and the Capellan Confederation must be considered together. Chancellor Romano is reportedly mentally unstable. (see interview with Romano Liao elsewhere in this issue). She may storm at her generals; she may give her consort and spymaster Tsen Shang a dog's life; she may produce children informally, primarily to rival her sister Candace; the rumors about her involvement with the Phransigar/Thuggees and the assassin House of the Setting Sun may be true. But this is also true; she is good at what she does. She has rebuilt her sundered realm to a state of military preparedness that many larger states could envy. She has no open opposition to her rule and her policies. She fought off an invasion by Andurien and

"My father died on a peacemaking mission to the Capellan Confederation! Died of treachery! And you dare impugn the vigilance we maintain toward our enemies! Simply because a man does not agree with you that the Kuritans come from their mother's wombs with fangs does not mean that he is a liar and a coward, Duke Sandoval! I also know what it is to hate. But I can see the necessity to subdue my private emotions for the good of the peoples of the Federated Commonwealth! You can't seem to see anything more complex than a regimental motto!"

Morgan Hasek-Davion,
Duke of New Syrtis, Marshal of the Armies
response to a question raised in Parliament, November 9, 3049

Games People Play

Background: The Sarna March, formerly under Liao the Tikonov Commonality, briefly the Tikonov Free Republic under defecting General Pavel Ridzik... now most of these planets are reconciled to their fate as part of the Federated Commonwealth. They don't like having lost a war, but they don't like what they know of Chancellor Romano Liao. A popular vid comedian is loosely based on the Pretender to the Chancellory, Tormana Liao. They don't like him either.

Melissa Steiner Davion has made herself popular throughout most of the Marches. But the Sarna Martial Academy still hankers for the old days. A recent routine check of their simulator training programs created quite a scandal. The program includes an analysis of the Archon-Princess's fighting style with her Warhammer. Then it sets up a specialized scenario so that the students may either fight against her or with her, supposedly at random. The program seems to have a bias built into it so that the trainees are normally set against her rather than with her. In its most usual version, she fights alone.

Game Set-up: This particular scenario is a jungle scene. Place two BattleTech boards side by side, considering all clear terrain to be both light woods and rough terrain. Water hexes are standard, and all other terrain remains the same, with the exception of light woods, now impassible for all units. Because of the hot steamy climate, all heat points are at +3.

Attacker Set-up: The attacker will enter from anywhere on the far left hand side.

Jenner: Piloting 6, Gunnery: 5

Javelin: Piloting 5, Gunnery: 5

Stinger: Piloting 5, Gunnery 5

All Attacker Mechs are in perfect condition.

Defender Set-up: The defender is Melissa Steiner Davion. In this scenario, her Warhammer has taken some damage, 6 points of armor from its front torso. Her left arm has lost all but 3 points. She has a faulty sensor system, so all to-hit rolls are at +2. She may place herself anywhere on the center six rows of the board.

Warhammer: Piloting 6, Gunnery: 5

Victory Conditions: Whichever side eliminates the other first is the victor.

An anonymous source sent us this item. This scenario does not reflect the opinions of BattleTechnology, but is included simply for its political interest. We don't think it would be particularly interesting to play, but it shows that some hatreds linger long after peace is declared.

Canopus after the Fourth Succession War at a time when Andurien by itself was her superior in troops and materiel. Given courage by this success, the Warrior Houses came back to life, recruiting and training until they form the eight strongest of the Chancellor's thirty regiments. Included in those thirty are seven regiments of mercenaries, none of them great names. Those of us who have watched the Chancellor's father misuse and lose some of the best in the business watch these units with interest. Who will break first? Especially under the Chancellor's occasional bouts of search-and-destroy paranoia?

Sun Tzu and Kali, the Chancellor's children, are privately tutored. Sun Tzu seems to have his grandfather's character. Kali takes after her mother, too, the darker side of her mother's nature. It is rumored that she is her mother's apprentice in Romano's picked-target assassination maneuvers. Romano has made several tries at her sister Candace; she has earned the enmity of the Kell Hounds by striking at Morgan Kell's daughter Megan and her husband Daniel Allard. It is rumored that the attempt was made because of a visit by Kai Allard-Liao. If so, the assassin's target was at the time ten years old.

Speaking of the best in the business, St Ives is home to the second battalion of the Kell Hounds under Lt. Col. Scott Bradley. It was a good group as Bradley's Bravos; it's now one of the tops in the Inner Sphere. The nine regiments that make up the rest of the St Ives forces are of competent status, but the Kell Hounds are the pick of the bunch. It is difficult to imagine that should there be trouble, St Ives would not receive aid from, say the First Kathil Uhlans under Lt Gen Andrew Redburn from the Coreward combat theater of the Capellan March, or the newly reconstituted 5th Syrtis Fusiliers under Hauptmann General Hasek. St Ives has formidable allies. Heir Kai Allard-Liao graduates from the New Avalon Military Academy this year; his twin sisters, Cassandra and Kuan-Yin are to follow.

From the three o'clock to the six o'clock position we have the still-mighty Free Worlds League. Thomas Marik used the war with Andurien shrewdly. While Parliament was still reeling from the double shock of his surprise return and Duncan Marik's death in battle, Thomas pushed the Addendum to the Incorporation past them, giving him the power which generations of Captain-Generals sought in vain, the power to bypass provincial governments in levying troops — and the power to veto any legislation whatsoever. The Home Defense Act, which allowed provinces to keep their own troops at home from any war they disapproved of, is a dead letter.

The awesome and convoluted bureaucracy which was almost a second government has also been brought under Thomas' control. The League General Accounting Office was created in 3043. It had little power to begin with, so the Captain-General was able to staff it with people whom he could trust. By the time its policies of awarding contracts to pro-Marik companies with no strong provincial ties, combined with Thomas's fool-the-eye maneuvers of changing the names and functions of bureaucratic agencies until the old power brokers found themselves isolated and powerless while their real functions were taken over by the LGAO, by the time these were noticed by the general public, a skilled media program of propaganda had made 'trim the fat' a popular byword. Thomas won without a visible fight. Thomas has undergone mech-warrior training; he will never be more than mediocre, but he is popular with his troops. He is in process of organizing more of his Free Worlds League Legions, groups loosely patterned after the Davion Regimental Combat Teams. He has almost doubled the number of mercenary unit in his employ; he has the Federated Commonwealth on both of his borders, after all. He is keeping a wary distance from the Capellan Confederation. His other Concord of Kapteyn ally, the Draconis Combine, has offered tempting exchanges of military technology. Thomas may well reaffirm that alliance, but only after he has figured whether the father or the son of House Kurita holds the power.

The one fly in the ointment for Thomas Marik is the reported illness of his small son Joshua. Unconfirmed reports so far indicate a terminal illness. If the reports are untrue, why has The Marik quietly arranged the legitimation of his sixteen year old daughter Isis?

At the Lyran Commonwealth end of the Federated Commonwealth, troubles reinforce each other. Each time that Ryan's Rebels or the madmen of Star's End invade, Duke Ryan Steiner protests the neglect of the Tamar March by the AFFC. "The Archon has no interest in her subjects; she's too busy learning to pilot a Mech!" Yet when reinforcements are garrisoned in Ryde, Wotan, or Twycross, Hanse Davion is burned in effigy as a tyrant who wants to subdue a free people. It's a wonderful situation, for an ambitious man like Ryan Steiner.

There were small signs of tension in the most celebrated marriage in the Inner Sphere during the time that the new Archon was doubling her duties as a student at The Nagelring, dealing with state matters late into the night and standing to drill during the day. Archon Melissa's determination to succeed her mother as mechwarrior came a bit late in life. In the main, her subjects found it touching. AFFC bases from the Sarna March to Poulso have the prizewinning picture of the Archon after punch-out on their walls, the one where the famous blonde hair is

Playing For Keeps

Newsmen must protect their sources. We are requested to print this letter with certain portions withheld, then to reprint it again approximately one year from now as circumstances make it appropriate. At that time, details which are currently suppressed will be made clear.

What follows is a Top Secret communique delivered by special messenger into the hands of Duchess Candace Liao, currently in residence on St Ives. It is believed that knowledge of this communication should be entrusted to a neutral element, such as the editor of BattleTechnology., in case future events preclude the revelation intended for a year from now. Duchess Candace neither confirms nor denies receipt of a copy.

From: (Name withheld by request: see BattleTechnology for year-end 3050), House (Witheld), Capellan Armed Forces

TO: Candace Liao, Duchess of St Ives

Though you may find it strange that an officer in the military of your one-time homeland should contact you in secret, and with a personal matter to attend to, you must consent to hear my appeal if we are to reunite the worlds which were, and still are, the Capellan Confederation. St Ives may pay lip-service to the Fox, as befits Davion's success in conquering the Tkinov and Sarna Commonalities, but the citizens of both nations are yet of one mind and philosophy. Two decades have not washed the love which the people hold for House Liao from their hearts, and Davion's flag is tolerated only as long as your hand remains to guide them.

I acknowledge and respect your devotion to husband and children, but surely you cannot continue to allow the worlds of your youth to languish at the hand of your unholy sibling. The 'Black Witch of Sian', as she is known among the ranks of the Warrior Houses, has elevated assassins to the level of legitimate warriors. As a consequence, warriors who would be loyal are forced to acknowledge their demon-worshipping rituals, or to be in danger of receiving their direct attentions. The people have grown to fear the Chancellor. The Confederation crumbles under her iron fist.

Now I will tell you of the people's lingering admiration for Maximilian's true heir. Though you may not respect your father's ambitions, you must agree that he was much loved by his people and devoted to the advancement of the state. With his death, the people's love is transferred to you and your brother Tormana. Romano and her spawn are wholly detestable. I assure you that were the Chancellor and her heirs to be disposed of, a thunderous clamor would demand your acceptance of the Chancellorship. If you believe that age has stripped you of the audacity that once made you your father's pride and joy, then perhaps your son has ambitions of ruling more than a fragment of his grandfather's realm. It has been the trend of history that the Confederation has decreased in size throughout the centuries of its existence. Reunion of the Commonalities would reverse this and foreshadow the return to the glory that once was.

If you now doubt my ability to achieve what I propose, let me inform you of a few developments that have not become public knowledge. The Death Commandos are fully operational, as they were in the days of your father, and both they and the Warrior Houses are discontented with our treatment at the hands of your sister. In addition, I command a special unit which within one year will travel to *(rest of paragraph withheld for a period of one year.)*

Finally, with the dissolution of the Concord of Kapteyn, your homeland requires a competent negotiator to prevent such incidents as the Andurien-Canopian conflict which was nearly the death of the weakened Confederation. Reuniting under the military shield of the Fox is, of course, unacceptable. But relations with the tyrant, Davion, could be made palatable by a skillful negotiator such as the Duchess of St Ives. Needless to say, if any hint of my proposal to you reaches the Chancellor's ears, the souls of both myself and the numerous warriors willing to pledge loyalty to you will most likely become offerings to that accursed demon.

In anticipation of great changes,
(Name withheld by request)

"The Draconis Combine seeks to be on good terms with all of its neighbors. The neighbor who is most responsive to our courtesies is the Taurian Concordat. Rasalhague? Perhaps I feel that they are more than merely neighbors: I consider them still as our cousins in blood."

Gunji no Kanrei Theodore Kurita
Banquet after the annual Review of Merit day
May 30, 3049

"Our ancestors back on Terra were plunderers! We know how to deal with those scum from the Periphery who would menace our homes and our hard-won prosperity. The age of famous warriors from Rasalhague has not passed!"

Waldherre Tor Miraborg
Radstadt Provincial Review of Troops
Fifteenth Rasalhague Independence Day, March 13, 3049

dabbled in mud, and the mother of five looks like a child who lost her teddy bear. But the charms made from that training Mech by enterprising firm BattleTechnic Military Salvage command the price of a week in a good hotel. Prince Hanse is said never to be without his. If the Archon were not a recognized authority on infantry and small arms tactics, holding a Class One marksman rating, her less-than-total competence as a Mech pilot might lose her the respect of her troops. As it is, they seem to regard her as a plucky little sister. A remarkable number of those photographs are signed!

It was not to be expected that the private alliance would be without storms. Katrina Steiner's daughter was expected to be

stubborn, to stick up for her point of view. She was also expected to make sure that the Lyrans were equal partners in the Federated Commonwealth. Prince Hanse is almost twice her age; he had been a ruling monarch for two decades before he married. He doesn't take kindly to contradiction; cynics expected that he'd try to treat his wife like an insubordinate trooper. Perhaps he did — just once! But both parties have been disciplined from birth not to let private emotions interfere with public duty. When they quarreled, it was in private. They have always presented a united front. There may be a certain edge when one of them requests a conference in privy. That's the most the outside world will ever see. The outside world does see a warmth in Hanse that wasn't there earlier in his life, while the once-shy Melissa has grown sure in command. A likable pair — and formidable enemies.

As the marriage enters its third decade, the Alliance is stronger than ever. The First Prince is no longer smarting from his defeat in the '39 War. He seems to be gauging the numbers on his opposition. If Theodore Kurita can watch and wait, and learn from his enemies, the Fox of Davion can learn to do as well. Employment opportunities in the Federated Commonwealth continue to look good.

Rasalhague is a special case. Economically, it has a hard row to hoe. The richness of the many half-settled planets give a definite hope for the future. Individuals wishing to emigrate will find a generous welcome there, for trained technical people, for fighters of all sorts, and for anyone willing to work hard. The prevailing culture gives a good deal of individual freedom. You'll work hard, but you'll play hard too. Though a stubborn and pugnacious people, Rasalhagians know how to party.

Far different is their welcome to mercenaries. If your unit was there during the Ronin Wars, forget it. The cheaply made contracts that released many units before the worst of the fighting came are not blamed on the government that made them; every death is blamed on a mercenary's lack of zeal. Rasalhague, particularly Radstadt province, seems to have learned nothing and forgiven nothing. Pay is honestly given, but read every scrap of your contract. And working conditions are appalling. The civilian attitude ranges from surly to outright hostile. R&R is about as much fun as an obstacle course. And the failure of the Even Scale Policy makes the obtaining of any goods which have to be imported a nightmare of bureaucratic regulation.

ComStar is making no bones about their supplies to *Genji no Kanrei* Theodore Kurita. The Draconis Combine (12 to 3 o'clock) is formidable. The true military strength of House Kurita is unknown, because of this 'ghost army', but it is estimated that they can field at least ninety-nine Mech Regiments. If Kerensky were to come back today, we doubt he could take them on! Theodore Kurita's new-style army is strong and flexible. Opposition to Armed Forces reform died with the Ronin. The military now offers a chance to rise to warriors from all walks of life, unlike the class-conscious DCMF of the Fourth Succession War. Opportunities here are for individuals only, the Kanrei wishes to train and keep the loyalty of his own troops. The conflict between the Coordinator and his son may go on behind the scenes, but their public unity is impressive. Son Hohiro Kurita has already made a name for himself in several frontier actions. Can he lead men after the battle is over? Can he learn the administrative and interactive skills necessary to a rule? BattleTechnology waits for these answers with interest.

Already-formed units may be contracted, even by House Kurita, if they are willing to garrison the borders. The Periphery has kept mechwarriors in employment for four centuries now. That's not about to change.

The Kanrei watches The Fox. The Alliance watches the Combine. Thomas Marik watches everybody. Rasalhague maintains its neutrality. And the Capellan Confederation hates them all.

Bets, anyone?

"I have no plans at this moment to ally with the Taurian Concordat for purposes of conquest! Ambassador Albert Calderon is a welcome guest in the Free Worlds League. Good alliances make good borders. We share a mutual interest in sports: Fox-hunting, for example."

Captain-General Thomas Marik
Lord Protector of the Free Worlds League
December 5, 3049:

The thirteenth anniversary of his Accession,
a House Holiday in the Free Worlds League

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Tales of the Cobalt Coil # 3
by S. Jansfield

Most Saturdays at the Coil are rather quiet. This was an exception. I was bent over the bar, which is not unheard of, but I wasn't doing it by choice. I had help in the form of two street punks who held my arms while a third worked on me with his fists. Two more toughs stood at the door, automatic shotguns in hand, while the taskmaster directed. On Solaris, this is what's called a hostile takeover.

The head goon was a pretentious ex-street tough who now worked for an exiled Federated Suns Lord named Standish. Seemed some military hardware sort of drifted to Lord Standish's troops back during the Fourth Succession War. The Fox took exception when he found out and Standish judged it prudent to relocate quickly. Davion must have had bigger ships to lift because he didn't pursue Standish, just confiscated his holdings and merged his troops with the AFFC. I wonder if the old Fox set a trap for Standish? Wouldn't put it past him. In any case, Standish made it to Gameworld, the cesspit of the Inner Sphere, and started carving out a niche. Word on the street was that he was an arms broker, mostly hijacked militia stuff from all over the Sphere. But of late old Standish was getting hungry for a bigger piece of the action.

Standish must have figured the Cobalt Coil was ripe for the taking. We aren't a big flashy place like Valhalla or the just opened Hangar Sixty Six, but we do a good business. Standish thought we'd make a good front for some sort of scam, so he dispatched Junior and the leg-breaker Brigade to make a business proposition: sell or die. Since the old lady, bless her ferrocrete heart, keeps well behind the scenes, the offer came to me, head bartender, with plenty of fists to get my attention.

Junior assumed it was safe to rough me up even though he and his goons were outnumbered by the customer in the bar. When this sort of thing happens at just about any other place on Solaris, the customers watch, take bets on how many teeth the punchee will lose, and complain about the slow service. But the Coil's different. We're family here. The only real family a lot of us have ever known. And we don't like having our home invaded. Blake's Blood, I've seen people die rather than betray this battered mass of plywood and steel. But we weren't blindly suicidal about it either. The two by the door with the Saracen automatic shotguns covered the entire bar, but they were more for show than for effect. Junior didn't expect to use them and nobody was watching the customers. Nobody but me. I could see the emotions written on each face as they waited for an opening. A number of eyes sought mine, and I kept having to shake my head. It wasn't time yet. I'd let 'em pound me to scrap before I'd start a fight sure to get my people killed. We waited for a chance while the goons tapped my ribs and Junior repeated his master's offer to 'buy into' the Coil. Then it happened.

The door banged open as the delivery from the local Tsing

To Brewery arrived. The two guards spun towards the door and one of them, slightly more high-strung than the other, cut loose with his gun. The Saracen roared as it spit 12 gauge hardened plastic shot into the two kegs on the delivery man's dolly. Beer kegs are designed to take abuse, but not this kind. The thin aluminum shredded and a fountain of suds erupted, dousing the gunmen. That's all we needed.

Before they could clear the beer out of their eyes, the two gunmen were hit by an assortment of shots, lasers, and throwing knives. Fortunately, no one lost his wits and used a flamer. The gunmen dropped like hover-sled hit by an autocannon. I wasn't watching.

The goon in front of me had looked at the door. He didn't see my kick. The point of my right boot caught him square in the groin. Since I move beer kegs and such, I wear steel toed boots. He emitted a whistling scream and collapsed into a tight little ball.

There was a thud and the man on my left fell. I risked a quick glance. Cambeal, a long time customer and a hell of a nice lady, smiled and saluted with the shattered remains of a bottle of sour mash. That left the one on my right and Junior.

"They're mine," I shouted. The last goon I simply picked up and threw the length of the bar, silently thanking the daily sessions I spend at the gym. Then I crossed to Junior. He stood stunned, his mission reduced to wreckage in seconds. That's business for you. I pulled the Viper from my back holster (the idiots didn't even frisk me? Amateurs!) I put one slug into the floor, then stuffed the heated barrel into his mouth. A dozen other slug throwers were leveled at him. His eyes got as big as DropShip cargo doors.

"Now you're going to take a message to Standish," I spat. "The Coil is not for sale. End of discussion. And our insurance carriers take a dim view of this sort of business dealings. I figure you'll probably make it back to your master before the Neon Crysanthemum kills you. Then again, maybe not."

At the mention of the local Yakuza, Junior's face drained of all color and his eyes got even bigger. I carried him to the door and pitched him into the street where he joined the rest of the human rubbish, both living and dead. The regulars had taken care of them while I was explaining things to Junior. The beer deliveryman handed me the packing list. I signed and headed for the bar. I was halfway there before I remembered that Tsing To didn't deliver on Saturdays and sure as hell didn't send pressurized kegs. Someone who thought quickly had arranged the diversion. I had no idea who to thank. I was sure whoever did it wouldn't step forward to claim the honor; the Coil's that sort of place. So I headed for the board, paused to wipe a trickle of blood from my nose, then wrote "PPC's, Half Price."

Everybody was feeling good after our victory, but this assured a party. A few old timers took off to act as runners, letting the rest of the regular crowd know it was half-price

night again, and I took position behind the bar. Cambeal got in the first order.

"How 'bout a replacement order before you get swamped?" she asked.

I got a bottle of sour mash and checked the label.

"Five Cb's" I said.

"What? It's not free?"

"Is it my fault if you can't hold your liquor?"

That got a laugh, and she switched to a Canopus PPC. I filled a tumbler half full of grain alcohol, topped it off with cherry brandy, and set it in front of her.

"Where's the pearl? It's supposed to have a pearl dissolved in it," she said.

"Fresh out. Settle for a dash of oyster sauce?"

That got another laugh and set off the story telling. The subject of unexpected rescues sort of took command as afternoon blended into night. Wouldn't you know it, Cambeal topped us all.

About three hours after sundown, there was a break in the story telling while I got the next round of drinks out. The bar was nearly full, and a lot of good tales'd already been told. Cambeal called for another PPC, this one a Steiner (how that woman could survive mixing her drinks like that I'll never know!). I set it down. She lifted it and toasted, "To electricity!", then downed it in a single gulp.

That got our attention. Not just her odd toast, but that was her seventh PPC of the night and her speech was still razor sharp. So we listened, waiting for an explanation. She gestured for a refill.

"Yes, to electricity," she continued. "To that humble flow of electrons that lights bulbs, cooks food, refines aluminum, and powers Mechs. It's all the same, whether it comes from a fusion plant, a solar cell, or a gasoline generator. Power is power, and not something ever to be ignored."

That lesson was taught to me on a little Free Worlds League planet called Waterfall. Waterfall was well named. It's rather closed to Terran standard in gravity, solar intensity, atmosphere and the like. And it's got lots of water. But it's mostly mountains so you get lots of small, mountain lakes with vicious storms. The planet is tectonically quite unstable. This gives it lots of uplift so the mountains never really get worn down. Can't farm much of it, though a few species of native lichen produce very good natural dyes and pharmaceuticals. But Waterfall is basically a back-water planet that caters to rich Leaguers who like to climb. But Waterfall will never have a power shortage. It's got hydro-electric plants all over.

In fact, if there was a cost-effective way to export power, Waterfall would have long since been rich. But there isn't.

The Capros system is only four light years from Waterfall. I see a lot of you've heard of that one. The Capros star is a red dwarf, but there are two gas giants and a good sized asteroid belt in the system. The asteroids provide metals and the

giants yield helium. So Capros produces JumpShip batteries. But...solar collectors barely provide the energy to fuel the in-system industries, they can't spare much energy for battery testing. And no one wants to use untested batteries in a JumpShip.

Think about it. A battery failure in mid-jump is lethal. Batteries are one of the least complex parts of a JumpShip, they're one of the most critical. A battery is essentially just a big tank full of liquid helium. But no captain wants a green battery, and they only last a couple of years. Ideally, each battery should be fully tested before use. You overcharge on by at least 20%, and if it doesn't blow, monitor it for charge decay. It should hold 90% charge for ten days. But Capros doesn't have the power for that kind of testing.

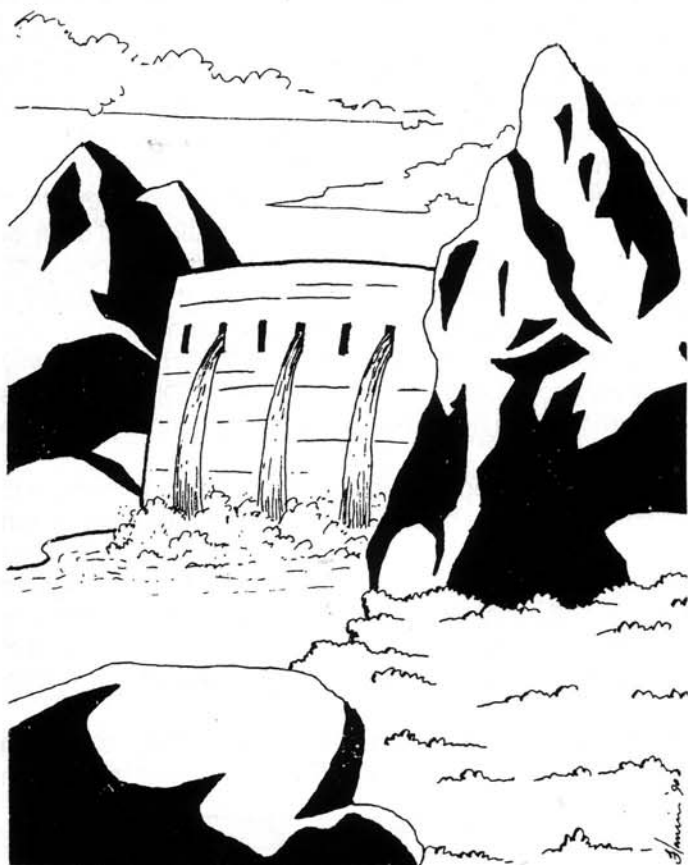
Waterfall does. It didn't take long for someone to figure this out. New batteries were shipped to Waterfall for testing. Crews could be given liberty while the batteries were checked and the ships could load a small, high profit cargo of dyes and drugs. Waterfall was never heavily garrisoned. It was never considered a strategic point; it's not the only place you find cheap power. But the last war changed some things.

Since the Fourth Succession War both the Federated Suns and the Lyran Commonwealth have experienced an upsurge in industrial output. Someone ran short of batteries. That's when the Mercs got called.

A while back, someone rounded up a bunch of mechwarriors. Someone with a lot of Federated Suns cash. Ten of us got selected, all with light, jump-capable Mechs. I was piloting a Stinger. We totaled four Stinger, four Wasps, and two Valkyries. Not exactly a heavy raiding force, but quick. We all got overhauls by experienced Techs, ammo, and about two thousand C-bs worth of replacement parts. We were promised a percentage of the haul-value. Wasn't till after we started out that we were given the details.

We were hitting Waterfall to hijack JumpShip batteries. Rather than going after the loaded cargo ships, we were going after the power station where the batteries were tested. Yes, despite the Ares Conventions. Our JumpShip snuck into the Waterfall system by way of a radical Jump Point. We took five days to make planetfall, using un-powered ballistic orbits that slipped us past the few in-system watch posts. It worked. Our DropShips came in fast shortly after sundown and landed in a high mountain lake four clicks from the target. Our Mechs exited on the lake bottom, then headed ashore. We formed two teams, each led by one of the Valkyries, and started cross country.

We didn't see a single eagle trooper on our march. But the climbing was a nightmare. We only had four kilometers to cover, but all of it was over some of the roughest terrain I've ever seen. Mechs, even light ones, were not designed for mountaineering. But we finally made it to our objective. Then all we had to do was to get in.



The testing facility was inside a dam. And by 'a dam', I mean a ferrocrete wall over 700 meters high by one and a half kilometers long, with twenty landing sites built into the face, each of which was capable of handling a Union class DropShip. Some engineer did himself proud with this monster. It filled the space between two peaks, and when it was fully operational, it powered half the planet. There were twelve generating stations inside it, and six spillways. Only half of all that was still working. The sight of all that water foaming at the base of the man-made cliff was truly awesome and, at the same time, sad. It made you realize just how far we've slid since the collapse of the Star League. But we had our pay to earn, so we jumped into the lake behind the dam.

The bottom was silty but our Mechs slogged through. As we approached the face of the dam, the current helped to keep the water clear, but it also tried to pull us off our feet. Yes, it was that strong. You could feel it tugging at your twenty tons of Mech, and you knew that if you were swept over, you'd go down one of the active spillways to die at the bottom, battered into rubble by thousands of tons of falling water. We lost one that way when the sand bar he stepped on shifted and he fell. The water took him. The survivors made it to the dam.

We moved along it, looking for one of the abandoned spillways. We found it right where our maps said it would be,

a huge steel shutter blocking it. Four of us took position and opened up with our medium lasers. Amid a swirl of bubbles that were lost to the currents, we cut an 'X' in the steel wall. By the time we were done cutting, the inner lock was filled, so we just had to bend the metal in to form a door. Once we were all in, we bent the metal sheets back and the two Valkyries used some special missiles they'd loaded in their LRM racks. The missiles spread a thick layer of industrial polymers that sealed off the laser cuts in seconds. Next, we shot a hole in the inner lock, waited for the water to drain off down the old spillway, and cut another doorway. Then came the fun part.

The generating station was halfway down the dam. All we had to do was climb down the spillway and the spillway was basically just a giant staircase. But each stair was twenty meters high, and cavitation had etched huge pits in most of them. We jumped, one step at a time, and tried not to overdo our jets. That would smash you into the ceiling. A few machines fell. Luckily, they landed at most two steps below their targets.

We stopped at mid-point of the spillway, and collected our frayed nerves. Then we turned to face the north way. Upon order, we all opened up with our lasers.

It took three volleys to blast a big enough hole through the wall into the power station. Blake's Blood, was it big! Think of a sports dome big enough for aerospace fighters to dogfight in, and you'll have some idea of the size. The floor was lined with generators taller than our Mechs, their spinning shafts vanished back into the walls of the dam, their hum filling the huge artificial cavern. A maze of gantries covered their ceiling and walls. The metal framework was studded with cranes that could lift BattleMechs, which looked like toys at this distance. Rows of JumpShip batteries, like a child's blocks, lined the floor. A pair of giant blast gates that opened onto one of the landing points were centered on the outer wall. For a few moments we all just looked around, wondering what to do. For me, it was the only time I've ever been in my Mech and still felt small. Then a crackle of small arms fire reminded us of where we were.

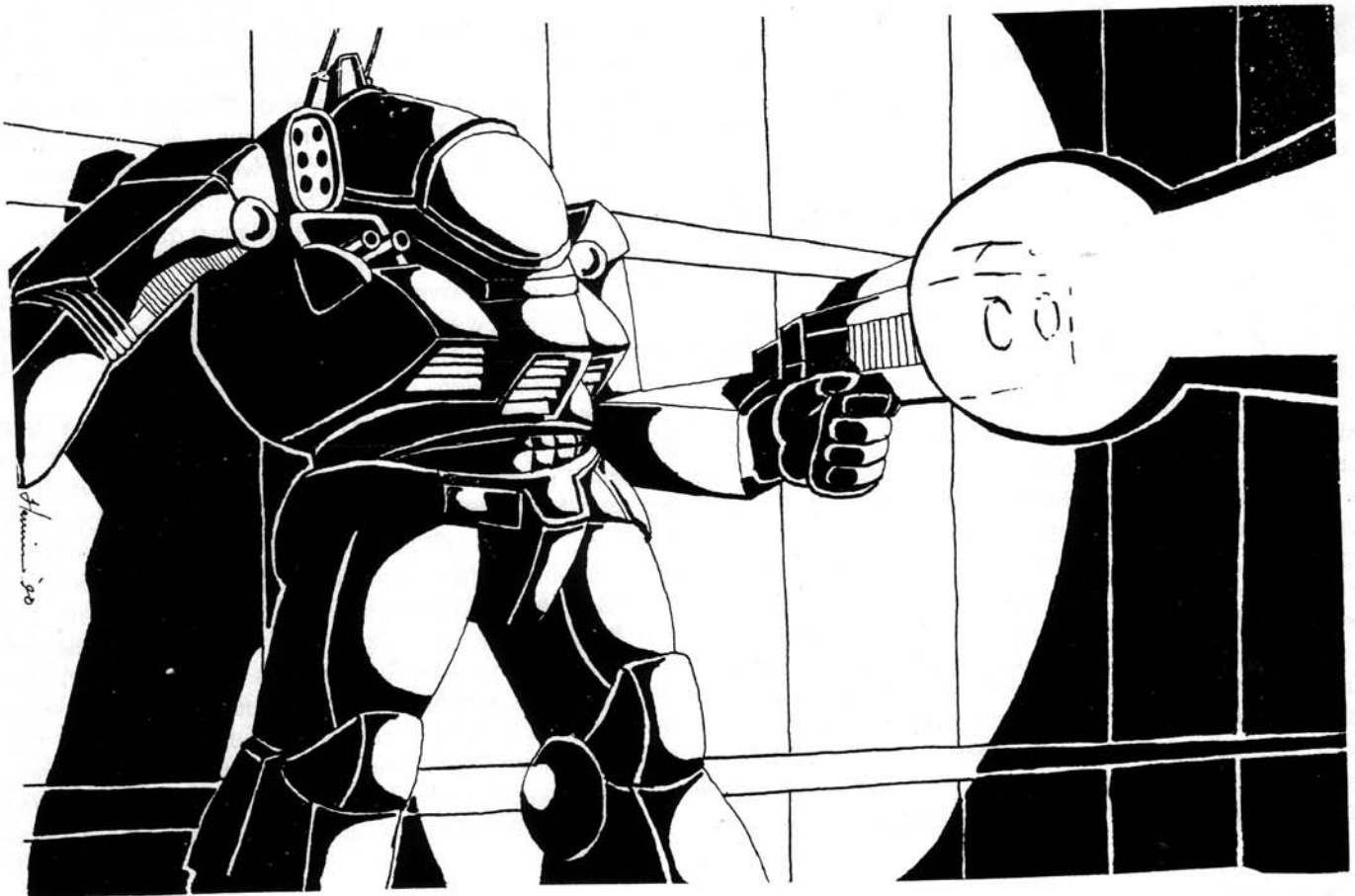
The few Techs and security personnel on duty at the station had decided to earn their pay. They were joined by four industrial Mechs that lumbered out of the shadows. It was pathetic. We'd been told not to use ballistic weapons inside the power station, but even with just our lasers, there was no contest. Concentrated laser fire slagged the 50-ton industrial Mechs. That broke the rest of the defenders' morale. They ran. It looked like the complex was ours until a single shout rang out from one of the Stinger pilots. Before the team leader could respond, one of the cranes struck. Its length of stress-formed steel chain lashed across the cockpit of the team leader's Valkyrie, smashing it to fragments. We all opened up on the cranes; in minutes, all were smoking ruin. When someone pointed out that one shot at the control center would

have done the job, as they were all slaved to remote control, we didn't care. With the last of the defenders routed, we moved to the blast curtain. We were not in the mood for delays now, so we simply shot it out. There was a small defensive force on the ship landing, but their weapons weren't positioned to fight an attack *from* the power station. We dealt with them quickly, then sent the pickup call. The DropShips would be coming in a few moments. By the best estimate, we had about forty five minutes before atmospheric defenses arrived. We then found out the main reason that Mechs were used for this mission rather than commandos. We got to help load the loot into the DropShips. We returned to the station to wait. Then it got interesting.

Our first warning of trouble was the grinding of Mech armor on concrete. The our breach in the power station wall got a lot bigger as eighty-five tons of BattleMech forces its way through in a spray of rock fragments. It came through hunched over, then stood up. We nearly panicked. It was a BattleMaster. By the scratches on its armor, you could tell it had climbed up the spillway from the bottom, a grueling task considering that BattleMasters on have one hand. Most likely someone saw the rush of water down the spillway when we opened the water lock, though why someone would climb an assault Mech up a spillway rather than send aerospace fighters in through the landing point, I'll never know. But the whys didn't matter. Our light Mechs were suddenly faced with a heavy Mech piloted by an experienced warrior. Then he showed us just how good a gunner he was.

The BattleMaster's right arm came up and the Donal Particle Projection Cannon fired twice in rapid succession. Twin streams of rapidly moving subatomic particles flashed out. Both hit the remaining Valkyrie. One blazed into the left leg; the second cored through the chest of the tottering Mech. The Valkyrie fell like a cold-cocked drunk. It hit the floor and didn't move. The BattleMaster stalked forward, the PPC charging coil glowing blue as red laser light flashed from the torso. A Wasp staggered back, its right arm hanging useless at its side. The BattleMaster triggered off a flight of short range missiles at less than ten meters range as it passed the damaged Wasp. All six hit. The light Mech swayed under the smashing impacts as a cloud of armor and missile fragments wreathed it. Then it vanished in a ball of gold light as its fusion engine exploded. We started fighting back with everything we had.

The power station filled with lasers and dodging Mechs as we fought against the leviathan. And it kept blasting us, seldom needing more than a single barrage to destroy a target. Nobody was too careful with weapons. Stray shots took their toll on



the generators and batteries ranked in the station. Batteries exploded, generators sparked as men and machines died. To this day I remember that fight as a series of disjointed images. A Stinger, sent too high on a jump, thrashing as it hung trapped in a net of cable beneath a ruined crane. A Wasp blundering into a spinning generator shaft and the turning metal cutting through the Mech's leg like a medtech's saw. Lasers lashing into the BattleMaster as it battered a Wasp into fragments. Then the single most frightful thing I've ever seen.

I'd just jumped my Mech, hoping to land behind the BattleMaster. But he saw me. The BattleMaster turned, tracking my flight, and stepped in to close. I landed, my back to a generator, with eighty five tons of hostile Mech facing me less than 30 meters away. In a moment of frozen clarity, I stared down the muzzle of its PPC. A faint nimbus of light shone around the charging coil. I could see scars all over the BattleMaster's body, but the armor was still nearly intact. A voice whispered in my ear, "You are going to die."

She paused to down a slug of her drink. We could see the tension in the lines of her face; a wet sheen covered her skin. Lots of us shared her remembered fear. Only an idiot never knows terror on the battlefield. And the truly fearless usually die quickly, victims of their lack of imagination.

"Without pausing to think, I triggered my jets," she continued, her voice the only sound in the bar. "As my Stinger rose on a column of super-heated exhaust, the PPC bolt seared beneath me. I hit the ceiling and grabbed. I got hold of a handful of reinforced girders and hung on. The metal beams groaned with the sudden added weight of my Mech, but they held. Then I looked down and watched the death of the BattleMaster.

The PPC beam was on target; it cut right through where my Mech had stood. But without my machine to absorb it, the beam went right on into the generator. It cracked the housing and lightning flashed back. You see, PPCs leave a charged ion trail in just about any atmosphere. The grounded BattleMaster offered the electricity another path, rather than the kilometers of wire it was supposed to run through. Electricity, like water, follows the path of least resistance. An arc of energy as wide as my Mech blazed along the ion trail into the BattleMaster. The arc twisted across the Mechs body for a few moments, leaving a trail of molten metal as it moved, while the BattleMaster twitched in a hideous parody of dance, the current convulsing its myomers. Then the remaining ammunition began to explode in a series of muffled blasts that resembled the popping of corn. It must have been CASE packed since it only ripped out the back of the Mech. Finally, the magnetic bottle holding the core collapsed, freeing the fusion reaction. A miniature star swelled in the power station as the BattleMaster blew apart! Plasma back-flashed into the generator, blowing it and overloading the online circuit break-

Tournaments and Conventions Noted

June 28-July 1 Origins 90, Box 47696, Atlanta GA 30362, or call 404-457-2490 The big one, lots of gaming!
August 11-12 *Operation Green Flag* All BT 717-774-6676 or write to 200 Third St, New Cumberland PA 17070
August 9-12 GenCon PO Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147
August 31-Sep 3 Gateway 10 LA Airport Hyatt contact PO Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808
August 31-Sep 3 Pacificon call Scenario Games 415-792-9333
October 6-7, TOLEDO GAMING CONVENTION: SASE to Toledo Gaming Convention 8, 3001 N Reynolds, Toledo, OH 43615

ers. The breakers went too fast, five more generators erupted with swarms of lightning bolts

The blast knocked me off the ceiling. I had the sense to trigger my jets as I fell. I didn't want to land in the pools of molten metal and cement beneath me. I smashed into the back wall. There was a burst of pain, then everything got dark.

I came to about five hours out from Waterfall in the care of the shipboard medtechs. Aside from a number of scrapes and bruises, I had fractured an arm and two ribs. I got the low down from the other mercs on what had happened after I crashed. Our raid was a marginal success at best. We got away with thirty JumpShip Batteries at the cost of most of the raiding party. Five deaths. I suspect that the power station was effectively destroyed. At the least, it would never run at that level again.

We all sweated about getting paid, but our unnamed paymaster came up with the Cb's, and even provided a few bonuses. After debriefing, we all returned to our lives. Well, most of us did."

Cambeal finished her drink and called for another.

"I've never been in a Mech cockpit since that night. Each time I try, I keep seeing that BattleMaster jolting through its hellish dance as it died. And I keep thinking I can hear the screams of the pilot, electrocuting in his command chair." She shuddered, then continued.

"Now I run a small repair shop. But every time someone fires up an arc-welder, I have to leave. Electricity saved me once, but it's a capricious friend, always willing to bite any hand."

There was a moment of silence as people thought about her words. Then the lights flickered. It was just the touch that we needed. A ripple of faintly nervous laughter trickled through the bar, and not less than five voices offered to stand the lady a drink. She smiled and said she'd accept, all of 'em. So I got back to work. I don't think anybody had seen me futzing with the power cable behind the bar. On Solaris, you do what you have to.

Star Simulator Ratings *A New Look at an old CEF*

Professor Eieon Mc Cleary PhD, PhD, MA
New Avalon Institute of Science

Following the Grey Death Legion's Discovery of a Star League Computer Memory Core, all of NAIS has been busy for two decades learning what can be discovered. Besides the advances in technology, the core has made it possible for NAIS to expand in several other fields.

We have always been a forerunner in Mechwarrior training, and we now have made another breakthrough in simulator combat. Combining our old system with the one used by the Star League Defense Force, we have come up with a new, more intensive and rewarding training simulation system. In addition to new training-class and holographic simulators, we have re-designed the old Combat Efficiency Factor system (published in BattleTechnology in the December 3028 issue.)

The new system was dubbed the Star Simulator Rating, as it incorporated old Star League data and simulations of Lostech equipment and vehicles. Today's Federated Commonwealth mechwarrior trainee will be ready for the day when Lostech is once again an integral part of the Inner Sphere.

In keeping with their policy of remaining as open and free as possible within the Inner Sphere, the Federated Commonwealth has released the New CEF:

To calculate the Combat Efficiency Factor of a Battle-Mech, you'll need a comp pad, Rating tables, and the performance specs for the Mech.

Step 1: Divide tonnage by 10 — Record

Step 2: Record armor tonnage

— If using Ferro-Fibrous armor, see SEFR table entry # 7

Step 3: Record walking MPs

— If equipped with MASC unit, see SEFR table entry # 5

Step 4: Add .75 for each jump jet

Step 5: Calculate Weapons Factor Rating and record

Step 6: Calculate Safe Weapons Factor Rating — Use WFR Table to calculate the most efficient use of Mech's weapons short of overheating — record.

Step 7: If after Safe WFR is calculated one or more heat sinks remain unused, add 1.0

Step 8: Calculate Hand to Hand Damage Factor — record

— Use DFR Table

Step 9: Calculate Special Equipment Factor Rating — record

— Use SEFR Table to add points for special equipment

Step 10: Total steps 1-9 to determine CEF.

DFR Table

Tonnage	Rating
15	3
20	4
25	5
30	6
35	7
40	8
45	9
50	10
55	11
60	12
65	13
70	14
75	15
80	16
85	17
90	18
95	19
100	20

WFR Table

Energy		Projectile	
Small Laser	.6	A/C 2	2.6
Small Pulse Laser	.9	A/C 5	2.3
Medium Laser	1.4	Kiwi Ultra A/C 5	2.8
Medium Pulse Laser	1.5	A/C 10	2.5
Large Laser	2.3	LB 10-X A/C	3.0
Large Pulse Laser	2.2	LB 10-X	
		A/C submunitions	2.7
ER Large Laser	2.7	A/C 20	2.9
PPC	2.8	Gauss Rifle	3.8
ER PPC	3.3	Machine Gun	.5
		Flamer	.5
SRM Munitions		LRM Munitions	
SRM-2	1.1	LRM-5	2.3
Streak SRM-2	1.3	LRM-10	2.7
SRM-4	1.5	LRM-15	3.0
SRM-6	1.9	LRM-20	3.3

End Notes

1 Some BattleMechs are designed for specific missions, or for operations in specific terrain. Example: both the UrbanMech and the Hatchetman are city fighting Mechs. When a BattleMech is operating in such a specific environment, add 5.0 to the CEF. When it is operating outside of it, the gamemaster may choose an appropriate negative modifier. Example: in open terrain where speed and long-range firepower are major factors, the UrbanMech especially will be at a serious minus. This only applies to Mechs which are designed with such a specialty in mind.

2: Many mercenary units use the famed Mercenary's Handbook (FASA Corporation) when preparing a mission. They use the tactical tables to determine percentage chances of success on any given mission. As Star Leagues BattleMechs and units outperform their Thirty-first Century counterparts, use the added Unit Strength Chart presented here to calculate Star League Vehicles' superior operational capabilities.

3: NAIS, working with NAMA Tactics Division, is in the process of reworking the conventional units' CEF Simulation System to be compatible with this new BattleMech Simulation System. Once this is perfected it will be released to the public.

Combat Efficiency Factor for Most BattleMechs

Mech	Where Published	CEF
10 tons		
MTE-12C Miite	Star Date v 3/6	15.7
15 tons		
GRD-1N Guardian	BT # 13	16.7
FLE-14 Flea	BT # 8	24.3
20 tons		
FLE-4 Flea	Wolf's	21.5
FLE-15 Flea	Wolf's	26.0
HNT-151 Hornet	Wolf's	27.35
MCY-99 Mercury	2750	26.36
LCT-IV Locust	3025	23.8
STG-3R Stinger	3025	25.3
THE-N Thorn	2750	28.2
WSP-1A Wasp	3025	25.5
25 Tons		
COM-20 Commando	3025	27.1
MON-66 Mongoose	2750	30.9
30 Tons		
FLC-4N Falcon	BT / Wolf's	33.7
FFL-4A Firefly	Wolf's	39.1
HER-1S Hermes	2750	31.2
HSR-200-D Hussar	2750	26.08
JVN-10N Javelin	3025	32.1
SDR-5V Spider	3025	33.1
UM-R50 UrbanMech	3025	25.7
VLK-QA Valkyrie	3025	32.95
35 Tons		
FS9-H Firestarter	3025	37.6
JR7-D Jenner	3025	37.65
OTT-7J Ostscout	3025	32.8
PNT-9R Panther	3025	32.6
WLF-1 Wolfhound	BT #6/Wolf's	37.1
40 Tons		
ASN-21 Assassin	3025	39.35
CDA-2A Cicada	3025	31.8
CLNT-2-3T Clint	3025	38.2
HER-2S Hermes II	3025	34.9
STN-3L Sentinel	2750	33.9
VL-2T Vulcan	3025	38.5
WTH-Whitworth	3025	42.1

continued next page

Mech	Where Published	CEF
45 Tons		
BJ-1 Blackjack	3025	47.8
HCT-3F Hatchetman	3025	40.6
PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk	3025	42.9
VND-1R Vindicator	3025	43.7
WVE-5N Wyvern	2750	45.24
50 Tons		
CN9-A Centurion	3025	42.1
CRB-27 Crab	2750	41.28
ENF-4R Enforcer	3025	41.8
HBK-4G Hunchback	3025	41.0
MLS-1A Malleus	BT # 11	52.95
TBT-2H Trebuchet	3025	43.7
55 Tons		
DV-6M Dervish	3025	49.65
GLD-3R Gladiator	BT #3	50.5
GRF-1N Griffin	3025	44.05
HOP-4C Hoplite	Wolf's	42.6
KTO-19 Kintaro	2750	50.1
LYN-5XL Lynx	BT #9	50.8
Monster	BT # 13	44.4
OSP-15 Osprey	BT #12	59.28
SCR-1A Screaming Hawk	BT #7	49.25/47.65
SHD-2H Shadow Hawk	3025	48.45
SCP-1N Scorpion	3025	37.0
WVT-6R Wolverine	3025	46.95
60 Tons		
CHP-1N Champion	2750	48.16
DRG-1N Dragon	3025	46.3
LNC-25-01 Lancelot	2750	49.7
OSR-2C Ostroc	3025	47.1
OTL-40 Otsol	3025	48.3
QKD-4S Quickdraw	3025	51.55
RFL-3N Rifleman	3025	49.9
RHN-10 Rhino	BT #12	53.5
65 Tons		
ACN-6B Archon	Game Review # 5	61.2
CPLT-C1 Catapult	3025	56.5
CST-35 Cestus	Spacegamer # 79	64.7
CRD-3R Crusader	3025	56.1
EXT-4D Exterminator	2750	59.8
BMB-12D Bombadier	2750	55.5
	(Swarm Missiles)	
JM6-S Jagermech	3025	54.7
TDR-5S Thunderbolt	3025	57.3

continued next page

Unit Strength Chart

Squad Type	Basic Values for:		
	Aerospace	Maneuver	Combat
Infantry	Unchanged		
Jump Infantry	0	3	2
Motorized Infantry	unchanged		
Light Armor	0	4	3
Heavy Armor	0	2	5
Artillery	0	1	5
Scout	Unchanged		
Support	Unchanged		
Light Mech	0	7	4
Medium Mech	0	6	5
Heavy Mech	0	5	6
Assault Mech	0	4	7
Lt Aerospace Fighter	4	0	0
Med Aerospace Fighter	5	0	0
Hvy Aerospace Fighter	6	0	0
Light LAM	2	7	3
Medium LAM	3	6	4
Aircraft	3	0	0
Air mobile	0	3	2
DropShip	Unchanged		
JumpShip	Unchanged		

No changes are made to the experience modifier subtable from the Mercenary's Handbook

WFR Table

Energy	Projectile	
Small Laser	A/C 2	2.6
Small Pulse Laser	A/C 5	2.3
Medium Laser	Kiwi Ultra A/C 5	2.8
Medium Pulse Laser	A/C 10	2.5
Large Laser	LB 10-X A/C	3.0
Large Pulse Laser	LB 10-X A/C	2.7
	submunitions	2.7
ER Large Laser	A/C 20	2.9
PPC	Gauss Rifle	3.8
ER PPC	Machine Gun	.5
	Flamer	.5
SRM Munitions	LRM Munitions	
SRM-2	LRM-5	2.3
Streak SRM-2	LRM-10	2.7
SRM-4	LRM-15	3.0
SRM-6	LRM-20	3.3

Kell Hounds Continued

Mech	Where Published	CEF
70 Tons		
ARC-2R Archer	3025	55.9
BTX-7K Battleax	BT #5	56.
GHR-5H Grasshopper	3025	61.4
GLT-3N Guillotine	2750	65.54
WHM-6R Warhammer	3025	56.3
75 Tons		
BL6-KNT Black Knight	2750	62.76
FLS-8K Flashman	2750	68.6
MAD-3R Marauder	3025	55.2
ON 1-K Orion	3025	56.8
80 Tons		
AWS-8Q Awesome	3025	58.2
BLR-1A Brawler	BT # 13	59.39
CGR-5B Challenger	BT #3	62.4
CGR-1A1 Charger	3025	45.0
GOL-14 Goliath	3025	59.1
THG-11E Thug	2750	66.16
VTR-9B Victor	3025	56.5
ZEU-6S Zeus	3025	58.9
85 Tons		
LGB-OW Longbow	Sorenson's	59.1
BLR-1G Battlemaster	3205	67.6
SHG-2E Shogun	Wolf's	67.75
STK-3F Stalker	3025	73.0
CRK-5003-1 Crockett	2750	72.35
90 Tons		
BRN-1 Brian	BT #13	76.3
CP 10-Z Cyclops	3025	57.5
HGH-732 Highlander	2750	72.41
95 Tons		
BNC-3E Banshee	3025	57.9
BNC-3S Banshee	BT #3	73.6
100 Tons		
ALI-1A Alliance	BT #7	
ANH-1A Annihilator	Wolf's	72.9
AS7-O Atlas	3025	75.2
IMP-2E Imp	Wolf's	79.5
MAD-4A Marauder II	3025	74.35
Matchmaker	Star Date	70.6
PLG-1N Pillager	Star Date v3 #5	70.1
RMG-2A Rampage	Classified	84.3
KGC-000 King Crab	2750	69.82
TIT-1A Titan	BT # 11	85.6
TYR-9T Tyrant	Game Review # 4	82.0

Kell Hounds Regimental Headquarters
Arc-Royal, Federated Commonwealth
23 September 3035

Dear Editor

Having been with the Kell Hounds Battalion on Skondia in 3020, I take exception to Tor Miraborg's characterization of the creation of Mare Aldo. He suggested that our action flooded out a major mining operation and that our motivation was purely the recovery of a DropShip. He further suggests that our action depressed the local economy for several years thereafter.

The Iron Jarl, in his seething hatred for mercenaries, has overlooked several factors. That mining operation was a vast open stripmine the members of the Skondia legislature described as "an open, stinking wound in the flesh of our planet." There had been numerous votes to shut the operation down and while the people wanted it closed, offworld mining interests managed to exert enough pressure to get any bill to that effect killed. The mine was coming to the end of its useful life anyway, as the companies hoped to abandon it and not replenish the site. In fact, the topsoil had been carted off to agrocombines elsewhere.

Our action of digging a channel to flood the area created an artificial ocean around which a resort community has grown up. The construction of the facility provided many jobs and continues to provide jobs. Tor Miraborg should have known this as at least one of the meetings he had with Tyr took place at this site. The facilities escaped the war undamaged and have continued to be an economic boon to Skondia.

More importantly, Skondia was not part of the Free Rasalhague Republic at that time. Had it been so, and had we been in the employ of the FRR, we are confident we would not have had to go to such lengths to obtain what was ours. Duke Lestrade, may he burn in hell, played a game and lost.

Regardless of his personal feeling toward mercenaries, Valdherre Miraborg should realize that we are not bloodhanded bandits. We are warriors who do what we are paid to do, and often more than that. He was betrayed by politicians, not mercenaries, and should lay the blame for his injuries where it truly belongs.

Sincerely
 Major Daniel W. Allard
 Kell Hounds

Military Technology Reviewed

Over the past 20 years, there have been many advances in technology within the Inner Sphere. This list covers the various military technological advances. It tells what offensive or defensive system is being covered, when it first appeared, who introduced it, and when it appeared in other Successor Houses' arsenals. All of these items are still uncommon; all are expensive where they are available. As so many of these items are still house secrets, BattleTechnology has had to agree to publish them without pictures.

Projectile Weapons

Antimissile system: First appeared in the Federated Commonwealth in 3048; the Draconis Combine acquired it by capture.) The Rasalhaguans received it from the Lyran Commonwealth the same year; both Marik and Liao, we conjecture, will have the system from Kurita by 3052 or '53.

Gauss Rifle: Prototypes appeared in both the Kuritan and Federated Commonwealth arsenals in 3048. This was the prototype version. The bugs seem to be out of this weapon, but it will take another year to see it in full production.

Ultra Autocannon/5: First prototype appeared in the Federated Commonwealth in 3046. It has spread throughout much of the Inner Sphere. By 3049 it has done so well in action that BattleTechnology predicts it will replace the old autocannon/5 wherever finances allow. Not in full production by Liao yet.

LB 10X Autocannon: This Mech 'shotgun' first appeared during raiding action in 3048 on the part of House Kurita. By 3049, Rasalhague had the design, which they promptly traded to the Federated Commonwealth. By 3050, Marik will have a working prototype. Marik intends to replace a large percentage of their older Mechs' autocannon/10s with this variant.

One Shot Missile Packs: These appeared all over at the same time, as they were an obvious next step from current technology. The first uses were recorded in 3049.

Streak SRM-2: This weapon made its first appearance in the '39 War. The prototypes had an unacceptable failure-to-fire rate, so it was back to the drawing board. By 3048, techs were attacking the problem in all the Succession House arsenals. In January, 3050, the Federated Commonwealth and Rasalhague's tiny Mjolnir Weapons announced a joint breakthrough. House Kurita had their own design by February.

Swarm LRM

Thunder LRM: Prototypes of these nasty missiles first appeared during the Fourth Succession War in the Davion portion of the Federated Commonwealth. Liao acquired them

by capture, and passed them on to their allies, Kurita and Marik. After two decades of research they are to be found throughout the Inner Sphere in small quantities. Several factories have been retooled to produce them. No Successor House dares to be without them.

Artillery

Arrow IV Missile System: First seen in 3047 in the Lyran Commonwealth. It is believed that Rasalhague has a working prototype, so it seems likely that House Kurita will soon have it also. Frequency is still extremely rare.

Energy Weapons

Pulse Lasers: These new lasers were introduced to the Federated Commonwealth and to House Kurita in 3048. They are relatively uncommon. Many mechwarrriors are unnerved by them because of their lessened range.

Extended Range Large Laser: This weapon was introduced in 3048 by the Federated Commonwealth. In 3049, the Rasalhaguans were given a copy. The Kuritans acquired it from Rasalhague, and then passed it on to House Marik. By the end of 3050, every Successor House will have one or two units armed with these new lasers.

Extended Range PPC: These PPCs were first seen in action on Draconis Combine worlds. They were first introduced in 3049; to date they have not been seen anywhere else.

Other Systems

Freezers (double strength heat sinks): The Banzai prototype was first used in 3022 in Davion space, still in the development stage. By 3046 the double-strength heat sinks were commonly specified in new Davion Mechs, though production could not supply even enough of them for prototypes. Between 3046 and 3048, the other Houses acquired and analyzed these items; by 3049, they were the single most-used technological innovation in the Inner Sphere.

Triple Strength Myomers: Still under development by both Liao and Davion scientists. An imperfect form has existed since the Fourth Succession War in both House Davion and House Liao. Liao is reported to be close to breakthrough through sheer stubborn persistence.

Myomer Acceleration Signal Circuitry: (MASC) First appeared in the '39 War in the Star League Mechs used by the Kuritan forces, supplied by ComStar. From battlefield salvage, Davion and Kurita were able to field prototypes by 3048; both have been slowly upgrading and testing the new

Timeline

Year	Item	Location
3022	Freezer Heat Sinks available in small quantities, high failure rate	Davion (FC)
3048	Swarm/Thunder LRM (prototypes only: 5 of each type in entire Inner Sphere)	3048 FC, 3049 CC, 3050 All Houses
3029	Imperfect Triple Strength Myomer	Davion (FC) and CC: as of 3050, no working prototypes
3038	MASC (Myomer Acceleration Signal Circuitry) (ComStar Only)	3039 ComStar, 3048, DC & FC
3039	Streak SRM-2 (The Don't-Fire Version) (75.6% failure rate)	3048 FC & FRR, 39 DC, by 3050 All Houses
3045	Arrow IV Missile System	3047 FC, 3049 prototypes in FRR and DC
3046	Ultra Autocannon/5 (3 prototype models)	3048 FC, Spread to all houses but CC by 3049
3048	Anti-missile system	3048 FC, 3049 DC, 3049 FRR, 305? FWL & CC
3048	CASE Ammunition	FC, FRR & DC 3049, FWL & CC 3050
3048	Extended Range Large Laser	3048 FC, 3049 FRR, 3049 DC, 3050 FWL, 3050 All Houses
3048	Beagle Activeprobe (2 prototype models)	3048 FWL, 3049 DC & FRR, 305? FC
3048	Pulse Lasers	FC & DC
3048	Endosteel Internal Structure	FC & DC
3048	Gauss Rifle Prototypes	FC, DC
3048	LB 10-X Autocannon	3049 DC, 3049 FRR, 3050 FC, 305? FWL
3048	One-Shot Missile Packs	All Houses
3049	Guardian ECM Suite	30349 DC, 3050 FC
3049	Ferro Fibrous Armor	3049 FC & FRR, 3050 DC
3049	XL Technology Engines	3049 DC & FRR, 3050 FC
3049	Extended Range PPC	DC only at present
	Freezers (double strength heat sinks)	All Houses
	Endosteel Structures (small quantities)	All Houses

CC = Capellan Confederation, DC = Draconis Combine, FC = Federated Commonwealth, FRR = Free Republic of Rasalhague, FWL = Free Worlds League

Note to authorized designers: descriptions and stats for these weapons may be found in *Technical Readout: 2750*.

system.

Beagle Activeprobe: Surprisingly, this was developed by Marik scientists in 3048, from information "culled from special sources". They traded a prototype to House Kurita, which had it operational by 3049. The Kuritans gave a copy to Rasalhague. Even Scale policy demanded that Rasalhague trade it to the Lyrans. It is now being produced frantically for the Federated Commonwealth's front line armories.

Guardian ECM (Electronic Countermeasure) Suite: This device also first appeared on the Kuritan side of the 3049 Cold War. It has been extensively tested on the Kuritan battlefield, but should shortly have its counterpart in the Federated Commonwealth's arsenal.

Cellular Ammunition Storage Equipment (CASE): First introduced in 3048 by the Federated Commonwealth. By 3049, it is the object of frantic production in all Succession House units, whether front line or reserve. (Nobody likes an ammo explosion.)

Ferro-Fibrous Armor: First developed by the Federated Commonwealth in 3049, and supplied to the Rasalhaguian in the same year. The Rasalhague BattleMech factories were unable to retool for this new item, so they traded it to the Kuritans for a different item (see below).

XL Technology Engines: While House Davion was completing the Ferro-Fibrous Armor, Kuritan scientists were putting the finishing touches on these new engines. Rasalhague traded the armor for the engine system, then felt obliged to give the new engine plans to the Federated Commonwealth. Marik and Liao are out in the cold still.

Endosteel Internal Structure: Developed in the same year (3048) independently by the Draconis Combine and the Federated Commonwealth. Only now being introduced in the BattleMech factories of both realms.

We would like to thank all of the groups who were so helpful in putting together this list of Lostech which, though centuries old, is still the wave of the future. The NAIS, Dr Tony Banzai, Miyako Yamashira of Kanrei Kurita's staff, Sixten Holmerson of the Rasalhaguian Procurement Board, and the dedicated Free Thinkers of the Free Worlds League. Last but not least, we'd like to thank the Grey Death Legion, which made so much of this development possible.



Hiring Hall

BattleTechnology continues to present this column as a special service to those of its readers who are mercenary warriors. In each issue, Hiring Hall gives an in-depth review of potential patrons who could offer employment opportunities for freelance warriors. The patrons reviewed range from wealthy individuals in need of soldiers—for—hire, through corporations and merchant organizations, to the Major Houses of the Successor States. Employment opportunities screened here may include anything from individual openings for security guards of bounty hunters up to and including needs for entire mercenary BattleMech regiments.

A three—letter coding system has been developed to rate patrons reviewed in Hiring Hall. Each letter will range from A (very, very good from the mercenary's point of view) through Z (very, very bad), with the average at L through N. This code will be used exclusively in this and other BattleTechnology columns to indicate possible advantages or disadvantages in any potential employers.

The areas rated are:

NEED: How frequently does the patron employ mercenaries? Ratings of A through G suggest a nearly constant need for mercenaries of various types. Ratings of U through Z indicate that mercenaries are rarely, if ever, employed.

PAY: How well does the employer pay? High ratings suggest above-average pay scales. Low ratings indicate below-average pay, or a history of noncompliance with mercenary contracts. Note that pay alone is not the only factor used in calculating this rating. Other factors which affect the financial aspect of a potential contract with the employer are taken into account, such as whether or not the mercenaries must provide their own transportation, and how lenient the employer is likely to be in negotiating terms for battlefield salvage, logistical resupply, or death benefits.

CONDITIONS: What are the usual conditions under which mercenaries work? High ratings indicate relatively good conditions, including access to recreational or R&R facilities, service on an Earthlike world, or soft tickets such as ceremonial guard duty or providing escort for court functionaries. Low values indicate service under bad or unpleasant conditions, such as on a world with a hostile environment, or on an isolated outpost far from recreational facilities.

Many factors are applied to the calculations for each code value. Obviously, pay, conditions, and opportunities may vary tremendously from ticket to ticket, depending on circumstances and on changes in the employer's situation, unreported to BattleTechnology, since the research for this column was completed. For this reason, these codes are intended as guidelines only. BattleTechnology can assume no responsibility, written or implied, for damages, costs, or casualties incurred by readers during service to mercenary employers reviewed in this column.

Mercenary Requirements:

Hiring policy for the Cossacks is rather formal and structured, though Colonel Khorsakov has been known to hire troops out of hand, operating on verbal agreements for up to three months in one instance. This unit, unlike some, has never been known to violate employment terms with any of its contractees.

The Cossacks willingly accept Dispossessed pilots. An unusual contract provision states that a Dispossessed pilot, if he will sign a lifetime contract, will receive full and clear title to his Mech after five years of honorable service. (Mechs may also be acquired through victory in a one-on-one combat with an enemy pilot.)

Incoming troops will immediately notice the 'family' atmosphere here. The Cossacks make great efforts to create a team spirit, and dependents are welcomed with open arms. Another benefit is the Regimental School, which is mandatory for all minor dependents. Participation in the Military Training Program is strictly voluntary, and requires parental consent for minor. Age eighteen is considered adulthood in the Cossacks.

Another interesting feature is the cosmopolitan nature of the Cossacks. Unlike many merc units, which tend to recruit out of a certain area (the Kell Hounds, for example,) the Cossacks will hire with no distinctions made as to race or state of origin. According to Khorsakov, "I consider a warrior's skills, and his ability to get along with the others, to be far more important than where he comes from." Warriors unwilling to abide by this dictum typically don't last.

The Cossack organisation maintains and repairs all equipment regardless of ownership, repairing warrior-owned equipment as well as regimental property.

On-field command can be dictatorial at times, though Khorsakov encourages initiative. He does not, however, tolerate insolence and disobedience. Fortunately this comes up rarely. (On these occasions, his Capellan upbringing shows most clearly.)

Ticket Details:

Mercs joining the Cossacks should understand that the Cossacks are an assault regiment, and are liable to perform high-risk, high-profile missions; anything that the Federated Commonwealth requires done. No mission types are excluded.

Primary Missions:

Retainer

Static Defense (Bait)

Raids (Objective, Diversionary)

Invasion (Assault, Relief Duty)

Length of Service:

Thirty-six months minimum service; permanent enlistment

Khorsakov's Cossacks

Remuneration:

Pay scale in Cb's per month

Status:	Green	Regular	Veteran	Elite
MechWarrior	600	800	1,500	2,000
Aerospace Fighter Pilot	600	800	1,500	2,000
Infantry Squad *	1,050	1,750	3,500	7,000
Armor Crew *	1,000	1,750	2,500	5,000
Artillery Crew *	1,050	1,750	3,500	7,000
Scout		150	300	600
DropShip *	3,000	5,000	7,500	12,000
JumpShip *	3,500	6,000	10,000	
15,000				
Support **	200	400	750	1,500

* Complete crew.

** Salary for a full Tech. Astechs and others are paid as infantry.

units can be and often are hired, particularly on a subcontractural basis. Need is moderate to low.

There are no 'stars' in the Cossacks; a team spirit is preferred. Some warriors will dislike this, and we advise them to seek employment elsewhere. It is possible to void contracts by mutual agreement or for compelling personal reasons. Warriors with strong nationalistic prejudices are not welcome. The unit tends to get along well with civilian authorities.

Pay is average, offset by the regimental repair policy. Fines are rare and usually light. Drawbacks to Cossack service are long periods of service and somewhat strict command style. Mercenaries should also be aware of personality factors before signing on. There is the high-risk nature of many of the unit's missions as well; the Cossacks are liable to spearhead or immediately support planetary invasions and other high-profile (and -profit) missions. Otherwise risk is acceptable, much what one should expect.

It is rumored that at least three Houses have placed deep-cover agents within the ranks of the Cossacks, based on continued hints and

allegations about secret activities of the unit.

Guarantees:

Salary paid monthly, as stipulated in hiring contract. Arreage is subject to ComStar or other mutually acceptable mediation. Pay is made on the last day of each month, in C-bills. Various other arrangements can be made.

The Regiment offers a comprehensive retirement and disability benefits package.

Command Rights:

Troops are generally fully integrated into the Cossack organisation and required to obey all lawful orders of a superior. In the case of full units signing on, the command structure is kept intact, and they are fitted into the TO&E as whatever scale of formation they are at mustering-in.

Transport:

All transport is provided by the Cossacks. Units arriving with integral transport will receive preferential terms, though they may be asked to mothball their transport temporarily.

Rating L / H / R:

The Cossacks are recruiting on a continual, if low-key, basis. Hiring preference is given to individual warriors, but

Unit History:

6 Sep 3025,

The Cossacks are founded on Warlock, St Ives Commonality of the Capellan Confederation.

First mission, a raid, goes off well. The second mission, however, ends in th unit being abandoned by the House Liao forces who are with them in an invasion attempt on Atlas. The unit is indentured by the AFFS.

01 Jan, 3026 — 25 November 3026

The Cossacks have a contract dictated to them by a minor member of the Davion family (name deleted to protect innocent kin). Apparent intent is to force them into the AFFS. Threats made include the seizure of company transport (acquired during indentured garrison duty), and that the unit will be abandoned in-system, as the AFFS controls all interstellar transport locally. The unit leadership decides not to murder the person responsible, but to bide its time. Plans are made to leave Davion service.

During this time, the Cossacks disappear from their garrison post for three months, aboard AFFS transport. They return with some unusual equipment and claim to have been "on maneuvers".

Maximilian Liao orders the execution of Khorsakov's family, on Teng, for reasons unknown.

29 December, 3026 to 29 December, 3029

Davion offers a 'sweetheart' contract, both to retain a powerful assault battalion, and to make amends for earlier-shoddy treatment of the unit. During the first half of the contract, the unit grows by leaps and bounds, as large armor and infantry formations (with no apparent planet of origin) join up. By contract's end, the Cossacks have grown to almost the size of an AFFS RCT, lacking one armor regiment, and two infantry regiments of being full AFFS TO&E.

Transport consists of what the unit claims is a converted Mammoth-class and an Overlord-class DropShip, plus a Triumph. Other DropShips in the organisation belong to sub-units of the Cossacks, retained since they joined.

Interstellar transport consists of a pair each of Invader and Merchant class JumpShips.

30 Dec 3029 to 31 Dec 3038

The Cossacks remain on retainer contract with the Federated Commonwealth, having politely refused offers to become a House unit.

01 March 3039 to 28 Feb 3047

The Regiment contracts with the Free Worlds League, with stipulations barring action against the Federated Commonwealth. Long-standing feud with Death's Head Regiment resolved. Unit employed primarily on Periphery border as reaction force.

24 March 3047 to 30 March 3048

Training cadre with forces of Magistracy of Canopus.

1 April 3048 to 20 Nov 3049

Cossacks pass beyond Periphery, return at Galatea, seeking employment. Unit remains closemouthed about former employers while depositing precious metals in the bank.

Present

Unit on Galatea, looking for hire.

TO & E — Khorsakov's Cossacks

CO: Colonel Nikolai Aleksandrovich Khorsakov (Atlas)

BattleMech Regiment:

CO: Col Nina Altenberg-Flynn (Battlemaster)

2 Assault Battalions : avg 81.4 tons/company

1st Battalion CO: Major Aleksandr Jaime Khorsakov (Awesome)

2nd Battalion CO: Major Adrian Thorne (Stalker)

1 Recon Battalion; avg 47.9 tons/company (Lo Pan Tong)

CO: Major Barton Lo Pan

Armor:

Thompson's Armored Reconnaissance Regiment

CO: Col Michael Thompson

Huysman's Armored Cavalry Regiment

CO: Col Jan Huysman

Panzer Guderian

CO: Col James Henderson

Lo Pan Tong Battalion

CO: Major Francis Taggert

Infantry

1st Cossacks Infantry

CO: Col Martin Van Dorn

2nd Cossacks Infantry

CO: Col Ludwig Theissen

3rd Cossacks Infantry (Lo Pan Tong)

CO: Col Rachel Bonifacio

Aerospace:

Cortland's Aero Force

1 lance Corsairs

1 lance Transgressors

1 lance Samurai

Support/Technical:

Senior Tech: Miles Farwell Jr

Transport Group:

CO: Commodore Salvatore Estanco

Invader Class JumpShip *Alexander Bulganin*

Invader Class JumpShip *Tong's Trident*

Merchant Class JumpShip *Mailed Fist*

Merchant Class JumpShip *Courser*

Appledorn Class DropShip (brigade carrier)

5 Triumphs

2 Overlords

1 Leopard

1 Leopard-CV

Subcontractors:

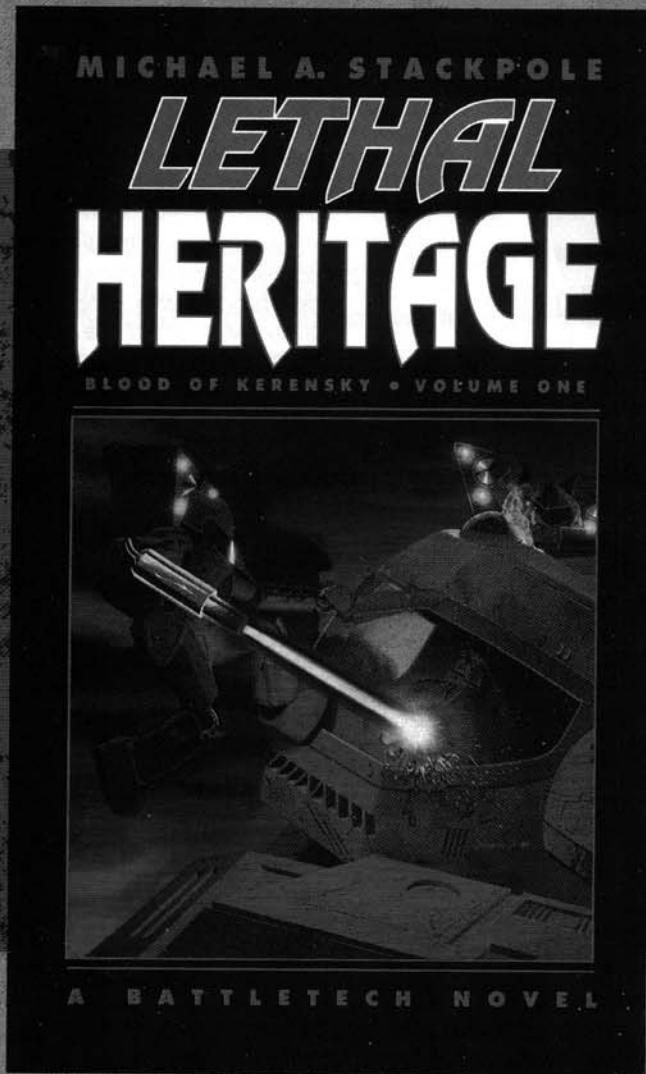
Rikemann's Wing Aerospace Company

Gypsy Jokers Mech Battalion (Recon)

The Cossacks have endured a chronic shortage of aerospace assets and artillery. At various time, these deficiencies have been gotten around with subcontractors, and indeed Col Khorsakov seem to be developing a fondness for hiring these specialties on a short-term basis.

THEY ARE COMING.

NOTHING WE HAVE CAN STOP THEM.



From beyond the Periphery

comes a threat. A threat

whose power, speed, and

ferocity are unparalleled. A

juggernaut whose sole

reason for being is battle.

THE CLANS.

Humanity's only hope is for Davion and Kurita to stand side by side.

Lethal Heritage is the first of a new trilogy by Michael A. Stackpole, author of the *Warrior Series*. Look for *Lethal Heritage* in July where you buy games.

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Heads Up!

Mortars in BattleTech



"Gentlemen, I think we are dead," said the Lieutenant, as he peered at the pass through the binocs. He was not happy with what he saw. Four light Mechs (two Wasps, a Stinger, and a Locust) were tip-toeing through the pass as if they were on their way to a picnic. The Lieutenant's platoon had been assigned to blow the ridge above the pass and close it off before the first scout lance of mercenary Mechs came through. Intelligence back at Base had said that the first Mechs wouldn't be through for twelve hours, but he should have known better than to believe that.

He put down the binocs and looked at his two sergeants.

"Gentlemen, we have failed in our mission, and it's doubtful that we can engage this lance without getting destroyed. Base can't send back-up for another twelve hours, but if we let them through here, Base has had it. I'm in a quandary."

Both sergeants nodded. McKeag, the more experienced, cursed harshly enough to do a Roman Centurion proud.

"I told those (deleted expletive) to give us some heavier (deleted) weapons, but they kept whining about the (censored) front to the north. A couple of Infernos, or even some (censored) man-portable rockets, or even a lousy (deleted) laser would help. We got fifteen kilos of explosive, a flamer, one 7mm machine gun, and a (deleted) platoon of (censored) assault rifles, pistols, knives, and fists."

"One Mech we could take, with

luck," commented the younger sergeant. "We've got surprise and high ground, and wide dispersion. But with a whole lance, they can triangulate and blow us to Hell."

"How about a (censored) air strike, Lieutenant?"

The officer shook his head, still looking at the approaching enemy. "Base needs all the jets and Aerospace fighters it has for the Northern defense. They said that maybe, MAYBE they might be able to spare a light VTOL scout. In six hours."

"I say we (deleted) bug out, sir. There ain't no use stayin' here just to get kilt by one of them (descriptive term meaning enemy Mechs)."

"No, Sergeant, as much as I'd love to bug out, I'm afraid we are going to have to hold them. It's either flight them here, or fight

lthem ater. We have a better chance here in the mountains."
"Fight them with what, sir? Begging your pardon, but we have one, repeat one vehicle with a 7mm machine gun. A 7mm gun on a jeep does not a tank division make."

"True." The lieutenant thought for a minute. "McKeag, before we left, the Supply Sergeant stuffed a couple of crates in the back of the jeep and muttered something about emergencies. What was that?"

The older sergeant looked pale. "Sir, you can't be serious! Those were some homemade mortars made in local machine shops and garages around base, just for kicks. Local kids too young to join up were turning them out to 'do their part' for the war. There's about ten of 'em in the crate, and the other two crates are filled with ammo. But, Sir, you can't want to use mortars against Mechs! It'd be suicide!"

"It's suicide any way I look at it, McKeag. What do they fire, homemade rounds?"

"No, sir," said the younger sergeant, Toshio. "House Davion surplus rounds. Standard. There's a whole mess of 'em back at Base."

"So they probably won't explode in our faces. Good. Toshio, get your squad set up on the west slope of this hill and dig in with the mortars. McKeag, get your squad dug into covering positions. I'll radio Base that we are going to try to tie these bozos up for a while, until they can send help. Or until we buy it. Either way, we aren't going to move."

The Lieutenant looked again through his binocs at the enemy below. He knew he had little chance of surviving this encounter. Mortars were a poor man's weapon, and weren't very accurate. Infantry-to-Mech combat was bad enough when it was one platoon on one Mech, with Infernos and SRMs and lasers. With one platoon on FOUR Mechs with nothing but a handful of mortars and rifles, this would be suicide. It would take every ounce of luck the platoon had to score even one hit.

But Lieutenant Baker was feeling lucky today...

The mortar has been around for centuries, from the very first it was evident that though an enemy's walls might be fearsome, his ceiling might be weak. Gravity was the key. Arcing fire from the first mortars laid waste to many a stronghold, and the practicality of the mortar was demonstrated. During the old days of cannon and gunpowder, it took less iron and bronze to build a mortar than to make a cannon. As weapons technology advanced, mortars became smaller and more devastating, eventually becoming man-portable supporting fire units. Yet they still remained one of the least favorite weapons of infantry, which preferred more personal weapons. Mortar training has continued in almost every army throughout the years of the Succession Wars, though it is used less and less often.

Mortars still remain a poor man's weapon, for they are simple in design and cheap in construction. Any decent machine shop can turn out several in a week or so. This makes them very appealing to those low-budget insurgent operations and those petty rebellions on backwater worlds. Guerillas and Irregulars of every sort favor them, for there are

few other support weapons at their disposal. Infantry regiments with more money tend to buy more sophisticated man-portable lasers and SRMs, almost sneering at the archaic design of the mortar. Yet lasers can malfunction or power-down in the field, SRMs can run out of ammo quickly, and both are expensive to lose. Mortars and mortar rounds are cheap.

The modern mortar round has changed little from the first ancient man-portable units. A simple rocket propellant on bottom, a high explosive on top, and a case to surround them both. The mortar itself is a simple steel tube with a firing mechanism at the foot. To use, figure the arc of the shot, place the mortar appropriately, drop in the round, and pray. Simple, they are. Accurate, they are not.

Among the Successor Houses, where precision guided munitions are the rule, the mortar is seen as a clumsy, random, weapon, almost as dangerous to its user as to its target. This is a bit of an exaggeration, but the weapon does have a nasty habit of malfunctioning in one way or another. Explosions in the mortar itself, sending shards of shrapnel among its crew, are less-than-rare occurrences. When a mortar is fired at an enemy that is too close to the firing location, it is possible that the mortar round will find its way back to the crew. Wild shots are also possible. Freak occurrences happen more than is comfortable to the average infantryman.

Yet, pound for pound, the mortar is a very efficient and cheap weapon. It can even be devastating in the right situation. You just have to be lucky, that's all.

Mortar Use in Simulation Play

A mortar round is usually made up of a rifle unit, either jump, mounted, or on foot. Since it takes two men to fire a mortar, halve the usual number of shots per turn for a platoon. Subtract one to-hit point for each hex closer than five; a malfunction could very possibly be a round returning on the crew.

The maximum range of a mortar is five hexes, and its minimum range is two. The round, at five hexes, travels up two hexes; at four, it travels up three hexes, at three, it travels up four hexes; at two, it travels up five hexes, and at one it travels up six hexes. Buildings, mountains, etc, can and do get in the way of a shot, if they are not planned for, but because the shot is an arc, these factors may be taken into account, and shots can be lobbed over such obstacles from a place of cover. For simulator use, you may wish to require line-of-sight spotters to accurately call the targeting. These could be hidden infantry, friendly Mechs or aircraft, satellite cameras, etc.

After establishing that your infantry unit has decided to plant mortars (it takes one round to plant and prepare loads), the unit may fire for three rounds before it needs to stop and allow the mortars to cool. If fire is continued for more than three rounds, the mortar begins to overheat; it has a 2 in 6

chance of malfunctioning each round. If a mortar is used for six consecutive rounds, the seventh shot will automatically explode, doing six points of damage to the unit.

If a double one ('snake eyes') is rolled, the mortar automatically misfires. Use the Malfunction table below for results.

Mortar fire does 5 points damage on a direct hit. When damage is being done to a Mech, use the Punch Location chart for the location of the damage.

Actually hitting a moving target is a matter of luck. The firing crew picks a position within range that it deems as the target, and fires. If a successful hit is scored, then the full damage is taken by the target. If the round misses, a die is rolled. With a '1' being north, proceeding clockwise, the round lands in the indicated hex, doing full damage to whatever is within it. Including the crew.

If a Mech moves to within one hex of a mortar crew, that crew may then switch to their regular weapons the next round, abandoning their mortars. If a crew is wounded, then the number of functioning mortars is half that of the number of functional soldiers. Round all fractions down.

A mortar squad usually has enough ammunition to fire all its guns six times.

A tremendous amount of firepower can be brought to bear by mortars. Even a sixteen man jump unit that carries mortars can pull a possible 40 points of damage. The chances of all eight mortars hitting in one location are very slim.

Special Mortars

There are a few special types of mortars in use. Inferno rounds are rare, but effective. They act just like normal SRM inferno rounds. Few crews feel comfortable about launching liquid fire from a gun that could malfunction at any time, however. Fas rounds are also used, loaded with either toxic, noxious, or simple colored smoke. These work best against infantry, as Mechs have protective life support systems. Should a Mech's life support be damaged, on the other hand...

Mortars may also be used from vehicles, such as jeeps and armored personnel carriers. For these units, there is no one-round setup time, as the mortars are mounted in the ready-to-fire position. They can carry three times as much ammo as foot crews. Heavier mortars can be mounted on vehicles, increasing all range and damage numbers by one.

Jump crews carry only half as much ammo, for weight's sake.

Mortars in the Inner Sphere

Each of the Houses produces a standard mortar. The best ones are made for Davion worlds. These high-tech guns have excellent cooling systems (Firing four rounds instead of three before requiring cooling), as well as special distance-range calculators that help the accuracy of the gun. They are made of a light super-alloy, and can go rather a long time without needing cleaning or maintenance. They also have less of a tendency to explode. Cost, new, is about Cb 400.

Mortar To-Hit Modifiers

Use Standard to-hit rolls

Target Distance

Target Distance	Modifier
1 hex	-4 to hit
2 hexes	-3 to hit
2 hexes	-2 to hit
4 hexes	-1 to hit
5 hexes	normal to hit

Mortar Malfunction Table

(roll one d6 for result)

1.....misfire, d3 hexes to right
2.....misfire, d3 hexes to left
3.....dud
4.....heads-up shot, 5 points to unit
5.....wild shot, no damage
6.....explosion, kills crew (2 men, one firing unit)

Reference Tables

Ammo-Carrying Capacity

Type	Carry	Set-Up Time
Infantry Squad	6 rounds/mortar	One Game Turn
Jump Infantry	3 rounds/mortar	One Game Turn
Armored*	18 rounds/mortar	none

*Jeep, APC: These usually mount heavier mortars, increasing range & damage by 1 each. If a regular mortar is mounted use infantry range & damage.

Mortar Round Cost/Effectiveness Table

Origin/Type	Cost	Effectiveness
Davion	20 Cb	-2 misfire roll*
Major Houses	15 Cb	average
Homemade	10 Cb	+1 misfire roll
Remade from SRM**	4/ SRM round	+2 misfire roll
Remade from LRM**	6/ LRM round	+2 misfire roll
Inferno	50 Cb	by origin
Nerve Gas	50 Cb	by origin
Tear Gas	20 Cb	by origin
Smoke	5 Cb	by origin

* A roll of two ones is always a misfire.

** Requires a successful Tech/Explosives roll for MechWarrior.

Mortar Damage Location Table

Target	Damage	Where
Mech	5 per mortar	Use Punch Location Chart
Moving Vehicle	5 per mortar	target is a hex:
		if vehicle goes thorough hex, then successful roll hits it.
Infantry Squad	5 per mortar	target hex
		damaged squad using mortars, round damage fractions up
Unsuccessful Roll	1 d6 for location, # 1 is north of target hex, then go clockwise	

House Marik produces a similar model without the computerization, but with the 4-round cooling system. Cost is Cb 300. The rest of the Great Houses produce standard mortars with no distinguishing qualities for about Cb 250 each.

Backwater and Periphery planets that have little heavy industry can easily make mortars of useable quality, but these are not as good as mass-produced mortars. They must cool after two rounds of firing, and they tend to malfunction more. They are twice as heavy as military models, being made from steel and iron instead of ceramics and alloys. These homemade mortars go from Cb 50 to Cb 100.

The same explosive and propellant that are used in SRM's and LRM's can be used in mortar production. If cannibalized, one SRM round yields enough of both to make four mortar rounds, and one LRM round yields enough to make six mortar rounds. It's no wonder that invading mechwarrriors try to police a battlefield of downed Mechs as soon as possible after a battle. One dead Mech with a small SRM magazine can yield dozens of first rate mortar rounds, and a dead Archer can arm a small army! It takes an excellent Explosives skill to do this. An unskilled person could very well destroy himself and his ammo the first time he tried it. Homemade mortar rounds cost Cb 10 a round.

House Davion produces the finest rounds, which sell for Cb 20 a round. They are worth it, for they don't tend to explode in one's face. The other Houses produce average rounds for Cb 15 apiece. Inferno rounds cost Cb 50 each, and gas rounds are Cb 5, Cb 20, and Cb 50 for smoke, tear gas, and nerve gas, respectively.

"There she goes!" yelled a corporal on the hill below them. His announcement was followed by a rumbling as the cliff side above the pass crashed to the ground, making it impassible by Mech or foot. Their mission was accomplished.

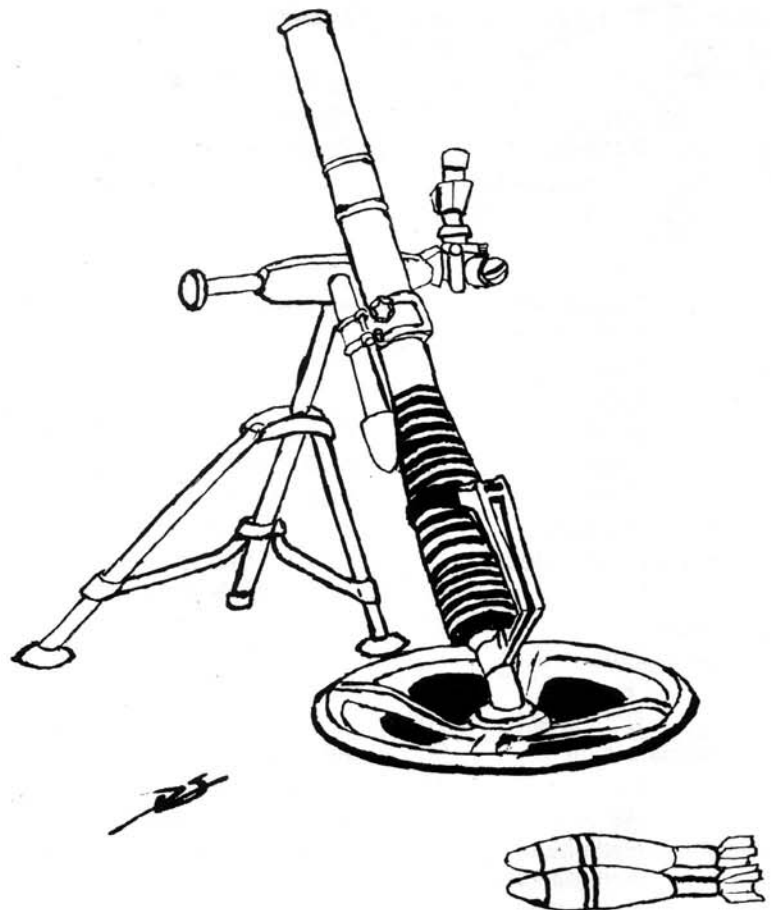
True, the Lieutenant was only taking half as many men back with him as he had started with, and some of the dead were going to be missed sorely. Nor more would Sgt McKeag's command of invective pierce the (deleted) morning air. Corporal Wan had taken command of the few men left in his squad. They had taken an awful licking, but they were still alive, which counted for something. Two Mechs lay dead and burning under the rubble of the cliff side. The Stinger had retreated, trailing a line of parts and shreds of armor. The concentrated mortar fire had done the job well, and taken the entire lance by surprise. While they had been flailing around, looking for targets, two different

crews had landed shells on the head of the Locust, shattering its cockpit and killing its pilot. The Wasps had finally discovered where the fire was coming from, just in time for the next volley of shells to impact on the chest of one, killing an engine and opening up a gaping hole. The Stinger had peppered the hillside with laser and machine gun fire before the third salvo knocked it around. The damaged Wasp had exchanged some fire before it, too took another lucky shot to the center torso. The other Wasp, confused and shaken, raised its arms and opened its hatch, signaling surrender. Its pilot was even now tied up in the back of the jeep, cursing his luck.

The mortar fire did it. There had been some fire from the 7mm and the assault rifles, but the damage had come from the mortars. Drop a rock on the enemy's head, reflected the Lieutenant, and he starts to worry. There was no doubt in his mind now. The next time he took a unit into the field, every other man would have a mortar strapped to his back. They might be cheap, but they could do a lot in the right place.

"Load up, you grunts!" he bellowed. "It's a long hike back to Base and I want to be there by nightfall. Wan, your squad takes point. Toshio, back him up. Move! There's a poker game over in Supply tonight, and I want in."

The Lieutenant was feeling lucky today.



BattleTechnology Mechs and Vehicles

Alphabetical List, Issues 1-12

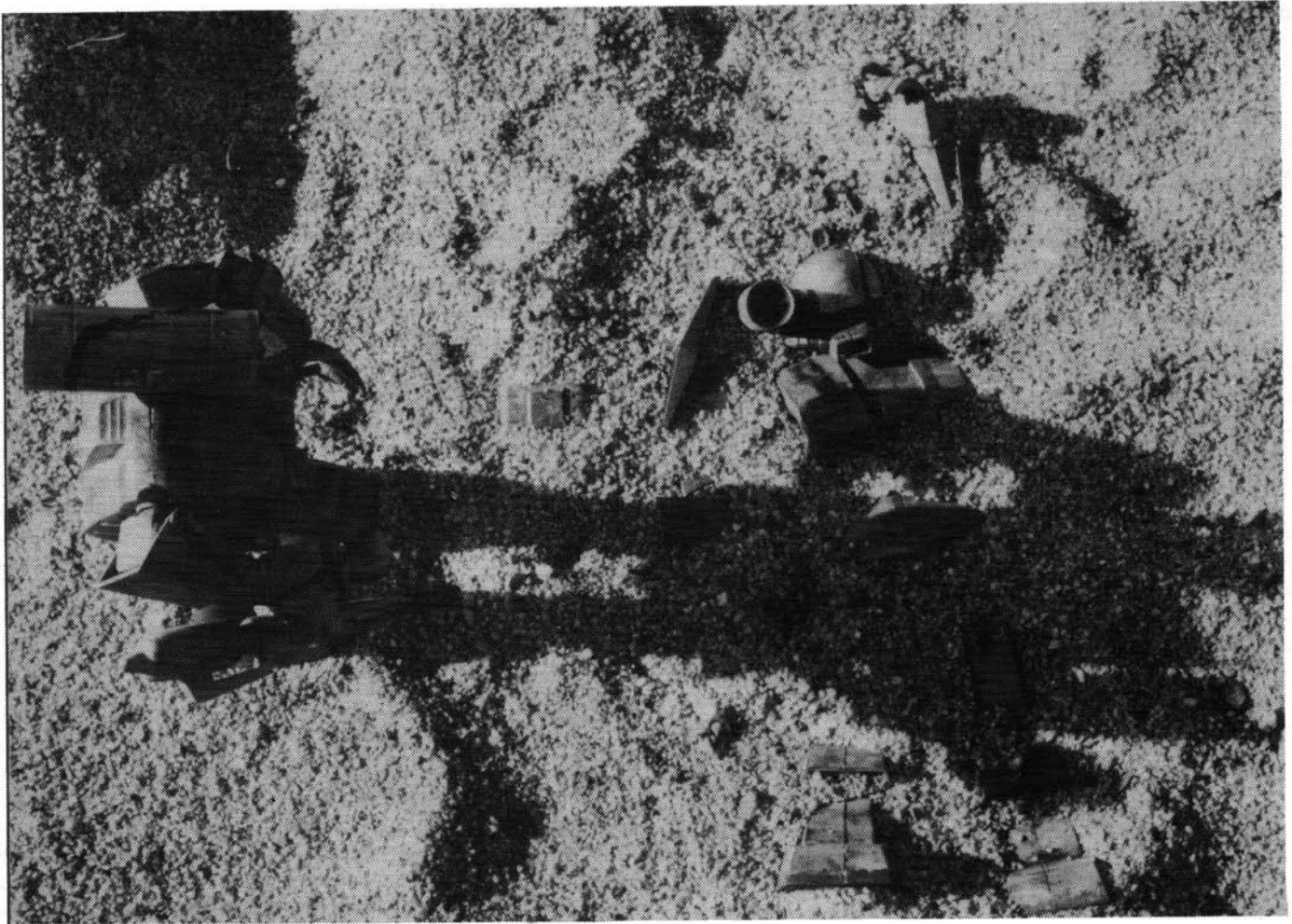
Any design which is stated is included, not just the featured Technical Readouts.

Name	Type	Tonnage	Comments	Designer	Issue #
Alliance	BattleMech	100	Davion/Steiner joint creation	Dale L Kemper	#7 (0205)
Athena	FDC Carrier	20	Command/Coordinate Fire	Michael T Hebert	#8
Banshee-S	BattleMech	95	new Lyran design	Bob Charette	0202 (#4)
Battleax	BattleMech	70		Dale L Kemper	0203 (#5)
Behemoth	Belfry	80	originally named 'Titanic'	John A Theisen	#11
BTE Beatie*	Hovertank	50	Intelligence, screening	Dale L Kemper	#8
Cerberus	Aerospace Fighter	50	Origin Unknown	LLWardIII	#10
Challenger	BattleMech	80	(Steiner Variant Charger)	Steven L Forsythe	0202 (#4)
Dervish-S	BattleMech	55	Steiner Dervish Variant	Hilary Ayer	#11
Devastator	Tank	80	Demolisher variant	Dale L Kemper	0102 (#2)
Falcon	BattleMech	30	Wolf's Dragoons book	Dale L Kemper	0101 (#1)
Flea-14*	BattleMech	15	"Jumping Flea"	Dale L Kemper	#8
Gladiator	BattleMech	55	Many Variants	Dale L Kemper	0201 (#3)
Goshawk	VTOL Gunship	25	VTOL Article	Thomas S Gressman	#9
Grand Dragon	BattleMech	60	prototype, not final FASA version	Stefan Melin-Dempsey	#7 (0205)
Guppy	Scout/Sub	2	Underwater Rules	Stefan Melin-Dempsey	#12
Harrier	Hovertank	50	Recon/Support	Thomas S Gressman	0202 (#4)
Holt's Rifleman	BattleMech	60	Prototype, too hot	Stefan Melin-Dempsey	#8
Hornet	BattleMech	20	Wolf's Dragoons Book	unknown—please informus	#9
Iroquois	VTOL Transport	15		Thomas S Gressman	#9
Ki-Rin	VTOL Gunship	30		Thomas S Gressman	#9
Leviathan	Belfry	80	Assault Vehicle	John A Theisen	#11
Lifesaver	VTOL Medivac	10		Thomas S Gressman	#9
Lynx	BattleMech	55	"Medium Mech that thinks it's a heavy"	Robert A Gross Jr / Scott Kreiser	#9
Malleus*	BattleMech	50		Stefan Melin-Dempsey	#11
Minnow	MiniSub	5	Underwater	Stefan Melin-Dempsey	#12
Munin	LAM	45	Tyr Secret/Rasalhague forces	Stefan Melin-Dempsey	#10
Osprey	BattleMech	55	Created to Rival the Lynx	Joel Connors/Steve Grant	#12
Predator	Tank	45	Main Battle Tank	John A Theisen	0203 (5)
Rifleman-K	BattleMech		just lists where it varies, Kurita variant		#9
Rhino	BattleMech	60	4-Legger w Ram Plate	Robert Benedetti	#12
Screaming Hawk	BattleMech	55	Death's Shadows	Dennis Greene	#7 (0205)
Sniper	Artillery	50	Self-propelled artillery	Michael T Hebert	0204 (#6)
Ammo Carrier for Sniper		50		Michael T Hebert	0204 (#6)
Steiner Guard Griffin	Mech	55	Guards the Archon	Stefan Melin-Dempsey	#9
Striga	Fighter	50	Conventional Fighter	Stefan Melin-Dempsey	#12
Titan	BattleMech	100		David Broussard	#11
Viking Hydrofoil	Naval	50	all-purpose gunboat	Michael T Hebert	0204 (#6)
Whirlwind	Hovertank	45	Scout/APC	Thomas S Gressman	0202 (#4)
Wildcat*	Aerospace Tanker	100	45 Tons are fuel	Gary A Kalin	#10
WolfHound	BattleMech	35	Kell Hound Mech from Warrior Series	Michael A Stackpole	0203 (#5)
Wolfman	BattleMech	55	Wolverine/Rifleman Hybrid	William H Keith Jr	0102 (#2)
Wyvern	VTOL Gunship	30		Thomas S Gressman	#9

* with blueprint drawn by Gary A Kalin

A Lust for Lostech

A Scenario for MechWarrior



Background

Several companies of mercenaries have been hired as a combination security-expeditionary force, to work with an archeological expedition. You were hired by by an awkward man called Pedro Ellingsen. He dresses in comfortable, wrinkled clothing. (On a successful LRN roll at -2 (-1 if you're from Marik space) the character will remember more about Ellingsen's background.)

The mercenary units are:

Corman's Dragoons, a 'Mech Company

Davies' Rockers, an Infantry Company

Morgan's Ghosts, independent Elite Scout platoon

Allen's Air Cavalry, a Transport Group and air lance; Used to be part of a battalion that got shot to pieces; negotiating with Corman's Dragoons to join together as one unit.

These groups know each other and have worked together before. In the past you each did your own job and didn't socialize much; if you think you may be friends with one another, ask the ref. You're all veteran, but not famous by any means. You haven't been working much lately; this job wasn't examined too far once the commanders looked up Ellingsen's credit rating.

McIlvey's Maulers is your Support Group; none of you knows these people, but they have a decent reputation. They do not mix with your people at all; their mission is perimeter defense and support.

You were hired under sealed orders; only the unit commanders knew where you were going. Your JumpShip travel lasted three weeks; that's all you know. You were told only that you were hired by an archaeological expedition, that you were going to a Periphery world, and that they were suspicious of strangers. (If anyone wants to roll CHA for charming information out of Ellingsen during the voyage, or DEX or Eavesdrop for informally overhearing a briefing, go ahead) Your DropShip landings were all at night. (See Periphery Source Book for information on Illyria) You have been here three weeks. You have set up camouflaged camps just outside of a box canyon. Scouts have a copy of the local topographical map; they have been on 16-hour days doing perpetual sweeps of the area using state-of-the-art scanning hardware. You get the idea that security is taken seriously here.

Earlier in the day, each of your commanders has picked you out to attend a briefing tonight. You are to be there at 0730 local time.

WARNING!

What follows is gamemaster-only information. Do not read further, under penalty of having the scenario spoiled for you.

NOTE TO GAMEMASTER:

This is a complex scenario; do not plan to finish it in one afternoon. The players do not know that there is another force working in competition with them, though there are plenty of clues along the way. You have a timetable for the Rom agent, and another for the ComStar forces. You may wish to resolve this scenario with roleplay, or with limited force. An optional company of Ilyrians is included for this purpose. If you'd rather do a grand battle, stats for all of Ellingsen's expedition and the full ComGuard force will be given in the next issue of *BattleTechnology*.

If you wish to do this scenario using a unit that exists in your campaign, simply replace the equivalent unit among the player forces with your own. Mechs should not be allowed to enter the Castle Brian until either 1) the party has found some trace of the ComStar presence or 2) the tunnels below the surface have been found and traced to allow entry.

Text which is surrounded by a dotted line may be photocopied and handed out to players.

Pedro Ellingsen GM info

Pedro Ellingsen, citizen of the Free Worlds League, made a big Lostech find in the mid 3020's. For a while, he was a media darling, not because he was so flamboyant, but because he was unspoiled by all his sudden wealth. Thousands of people sent him requests for money. He answered all of their letters, and is rumored to have sent several thousand C-bills out in response to their pleas.

During the Fourth Succession War, he dropped out of sight. It was rumored that he had joined various forces as a scout, that he had married Teela Jeffries, Lead Singer of the Bonzo Brickbats, that he was living the life of a pasha on Galatea, etc.

In truth, he has probably never fired a shot except when hunting, prefers classical music from the Madrigal Revival of the 2450's, and has only recently become engaged to an accountant named Shauna or Sheena McGuillicudy. He has also been rumored to be studying archaeology and memory retrieval techniques with Professor Ullerson...

For further information on Ellingsen, consult *House Marik* published by the FASA Corporation, and the State of the Periphery Report in *BattleTechnology* # 12.

Castle Brian

The Castle Brian was considered to be the ultimate defensive barrier against attacks from any outside force, similar to the Crusader Castles of the Terran Crusades period. Each was a huge self-sufficient military installation, something between a fortress and a research lab. Their locations and layouts were top secret. Up till and during the first Succession War, it is known that sixteen or so were destroyed, or found empty. In some cases they had never been occupied. The computer found by the Grey Death Legion was at first rumored to be part of a Castle Brian. No intact example has ever actually been found.

The rumors? *Castle Brians are ruled by giant, self-aware computers. There never were such things; the Castle Brian is a propaganda ploy which fooled thousands. If you found one, it'd be packed with perfect Star League 'Mechs, all new and gleaming like fish in oil. Whoever finds a wrecked one will make his fortune.*

Castle Brians were meant to house planetary garrisons in potential trouble spots and hold them against all comers. If the network envisioned by the Star League planners had actually been built and manned, perhaps the Inner Sphere would not be fragmented as it is now into the Successor Houses and their client states.

The Briefing

Ellingsen rises to speak. You notice he speaks softly; he is almost pathologically shy.

"You must have been wondering why an archaeological party needs a heavy armed force. I..I guess it's time to tell you what we're doing here. I inherited a map from my father. He told me it was a Star League map. I always believed him. But it was old and worn. Parts of it were drawn in pencil, several centuries ago. After I made my money, I had the map analysed for age (it was four centuries old). Then I paid several different good computer people—by good, I mean expensive type good—to do enhancement programs on different portions of the map. Nobody worked on the whole thing. Then I hired cryptographers to decode the possibilities the enhancers found. Last, I studied cartography and planetary recognition for almost ten years. I had realized that my family's map led to," his voice is almost a whisper, "a wrecked Castle Brian!"

"The results of the scout sensor survey suggest an even more enticing possibility. The Castle Brian shows no sign of entry or damage; it may have stood untouched since the Star League days. It may now be exactly as it was when the Star League Forces trashed their records and took flight out this way into the Periphery."

"Tomorrow, those of you who are Mech pilots are going to get the main door open for us. All of you who were told off to attend this briefing are going to be the first exploratory party. At 0800 hours tomorrow, this effort will begin. The technical end of this expedition is under the command of Dr Shane Ullerson, the noted archaeologist. Under him is Lucas Davidson, a Technician specializing in Star League artifacts, and his student Sara Cunningham."

Here Dr Ullerson protests the notion of Mechs in the delicate work of archaeology. It will be agreed that the expedition will at first be conducted on foot, once the Mechs have gotten the door open. LRN rolls may be tried for the Castle Brian. Target number is 9.

If roll succeeds, ask Gamemaster for Castle Brian.

Ground Level

Room 1: contains blocks for 16 Mechs. Served as a ready room for a full company at a time. Doors to the southern corridors on both sides have silent alarms; read descriptions of rooms 11 and 12 below if these doors are opened from either side. Toward the back (south) wall, there is a security robot which has been burned and inactivated. If characters examine this fully and make an INT roll, they will discern that the damage is only about a month old. The archaeological team will tell them this within a day if they are consulted. If asked directly, the archaeologists will blink and say, of course, that this is five weeks old, not ancient damage. Unless a twelve is rolled, the damage will be easily recognized as from a blazer.

Behind the false wall are two more of these robots. If the silent alarms are activated by opening the southern corridor doors, the robots will request a password, then attack to subdue.

Rooms 2 & 3: From stains on the floor, etc, characters can infer that up to 64 Mechs once were kept at the ready in each of these rooms. There is an enclosed hydraulic lift in each of these that connects directly to tunnels outside level three, room 2 to the east tunnel and room 3 to the west. The Star League design is so perfectly matched that it requires an int roll to notice the doors to the elevators. The doors have a pushbutton pad inside to enter the tunnels. The buttons are coded to the number 3/11/32, the commander's wife's birthday, ie, it's hard to exit to the tunnels from these elevators. False walls in the northern end have 'buzz bomb' VTOLs pointing outward to the box canyon. There are 12 VTOLs, little one-tonners which are robot controlled. These doors are computer controlled from 602.

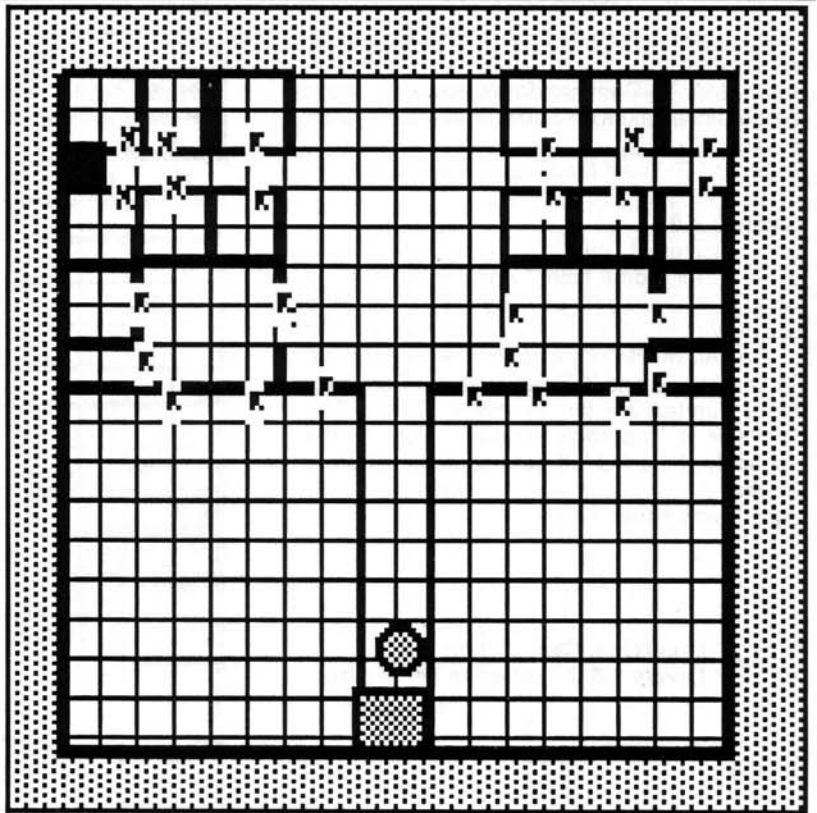
Rooms 4 & 5: are Mech repair bays. The only equipment here is too large to be moved. You could use the jacks, laser torches, etc, but you'd have to use them here.

Rooms 4A & 5A: are storage rooms for space parts. There is an inactivated welding robot in 4A. It was broken, so they left it. A fair salvage value would be Cb 5000.

Room 4B: has a computer which is one of five having access to the R&D lab. It is possible on a roll of 10 or better to find out the following: Security can be reached without the generator being on; it has backup battery power. R&D does not. As a security measure, R&D files cannot be accessed without either a security code which was changed on a weekly basis or a command originating in the main security computer. (GM, this code is the same as screen # 3)

Room 5B: Was a Head Tech's office. Has an interrupt program on the screen. If they try to activate it, Screen #2 is what will easily be found. If characters make a roll for communications, security systems, etc, they can get specs for the Guardian (see page 52), a second roll will yield a vehicle chosen at random from Technical Readout: 2750. That's all they will get without powering up the generator. Rooms 6-17: Each contains 4 bunks, 4 lockers, and a computer terminal with no access to secure material. Items found in some of these rooms will indicate that mechwarrriors were bunked here during on-call periods. Have the first person to enter each room make a roll. On a 2 or 7, some item of clothing will be found (a uniform cap left behind, for example); on a 4, a watch will be found with battery still running; on an 8, a torn piece of a personal letter; on a 10, a broken recorder with somebody's diary on it; on a 12, a personal tool kit. 5, 6, 9, & 11 signify empty rooms.

Behind the false wall on the far end are two security robots like the



inactivated ones found elsewhere, and two Guardian security Mechs. (See page 52). The security robots will activate if doors to the southern end corridors are opened, one for each door. (The other two assigned security robots have already been taken out.)

Level 1

is a duty station level.

Room 101: Briefing Room, Infantry Diagram still on board of evacuation procedure.

Room 102: Dining Hall & Kitchen for Infantry Personnel

Room 103: Medical Center, Infantry Personnel

Rooms 104 A-F: Sleeping rooms, each holding an infantry unit of 30

Room 105: Armory, hand weapons (Empty cases only)

Room 106: Briefing Room, Mechwarriors

Room 107: Dojo (practice pad left behind, a few pictures)

Room 108: Gymnasium (full equipment, nothing portable)

Room 109: Mechwarrior dining room, kitchen, rec room

Room 110 A-H & R-W: Unused ready rooms, 4 bunks in each

Room 110 I-J: Seem locked. (If investigated, the locks have been welded shut. Breaking down the door reveals a wall six inches inside the door. This is actually the shaft to 8B)

Room 110 X: Commandant's day room (Large Closet takes up North wall in the back of the closet there is a concealed door with an unobtrusive card slot. (security systems at 7 or better to open without card) It leads to the room which is actually 110 J, the Crisis Command Center. The computer here has the capability of accessing security computers. Shows signs of having been abandoned hastily; computer screen is still on. See handout letter A. There is also a small door on the east wall with a card slot. This is the door to the hidden

elevator. (security systems at 9 or better to open without card).

Room 110 Y: Commandant's sleeping room (Large Closet takes up South Wall. This is just a closet.)

Room 110 Z: Head MedTech's ready room.

Levels 2 & 3

are duplicates of Level 1:

Level 2. All rooms have furniture, but nothing more. Only the rooms used by the XO, and the Senior Watch Officer (210 Z) seem to have been in use. All of the other rooms were stripped. Rooms 210 I-J and X-Z duplicate the Commandant's quarters for the Executive Officer. The card slot is inoperable. Make it clear to the players that the XO left here some time before the end.

Level 3 was never in use.

Level One, Castle Brian

Levels 2 & 3 follow the same plan

Level 4

Room 401: Monitor station for fusion generator.

Room 402: Classroom

Room 403: 'Arsenal' on door. This was an arsenal for the security troops. Empty boxes are all that's left.

Room 404: Gymnasium/Dojo for security troops.

Room 405: Briefing room for security troops.

Room 406: Security Commander's office.

Screen # 1 found here.

Room 407: Waiting room

Room 408: Supply Officer's office

Room 409:

Morale Officer's office

Room 410:

Detention Block

Room 411:

Laundry/kitchen for detention block.

Room 412 A-P Officers' Ready Quarters, 2 beds per room. Small personal items remain.

Room 413: 28 beds, 28 footlockers. Notices on the bulletin board indicate that 28 elite scouts slept here.

Room 414: Head Tech's Quarters. Seems to have been a bachelor and actually lived here.

Screen # 2 may also be found here.

Room 415: Science Chief's Quarters

(also has apartment in Level 5)

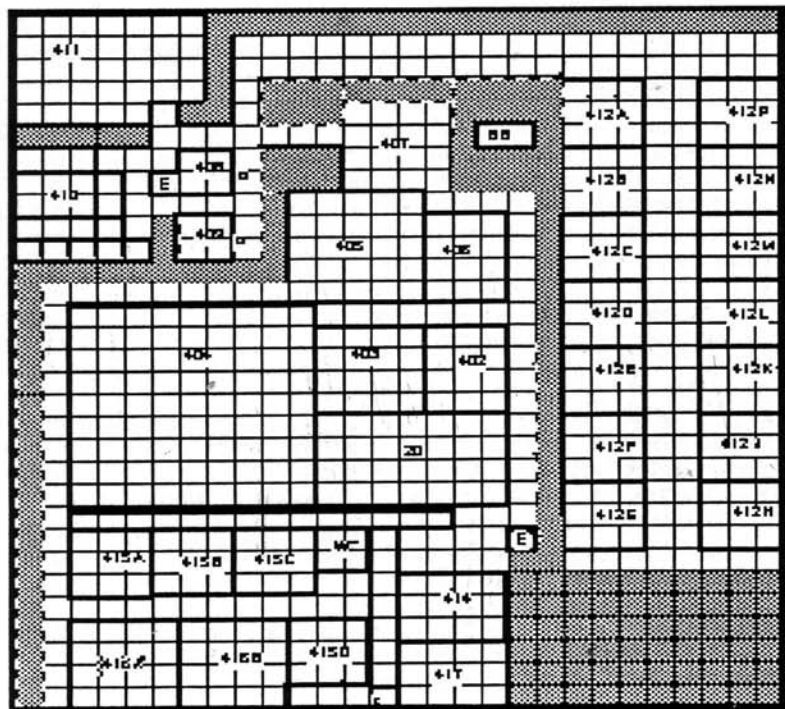
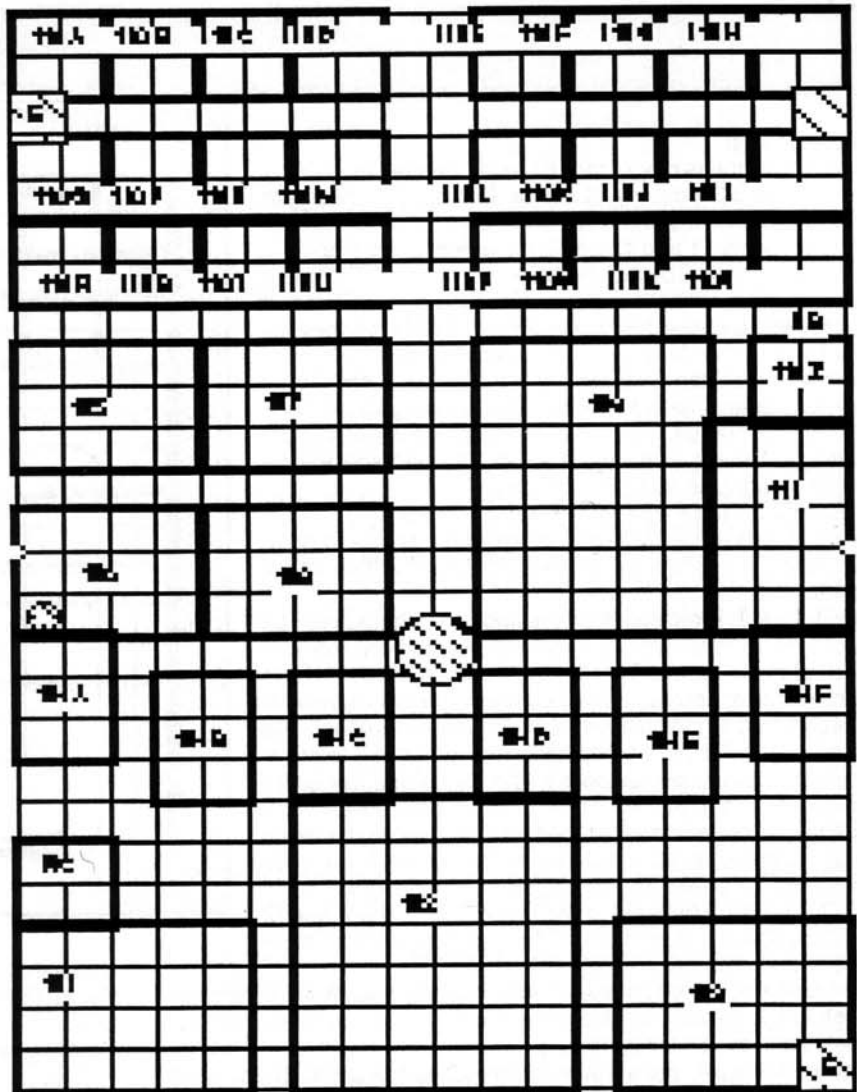
Rooms 416 A-D: Astech's Quarters

(also have apartments in Level 5)

Rooms 417 A-B: Science personnel

I (also have apartments in Level 5)

Room 418: Communications Room



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#10, December 3035 — Wildcat Aerospace Tanker, Munin LAM, Combat On Spaceships, RASALHAGHUE INDEPENDENCE!

#11, January 3040 — DAVION-KURITA WAR! Titanic Assault Mech, Malleus, The Useless Mech (Fourth Succession War Story), Hanse Davion Loses a War, Thomas Marik reclaims Andurien

#12, February 3045 — Osprey BattleMech, Caught in the Mech Flush, Underwater rules, Valley of the Winds Combined Arms Operation, Silence From the Periphery, Snow and Ashes

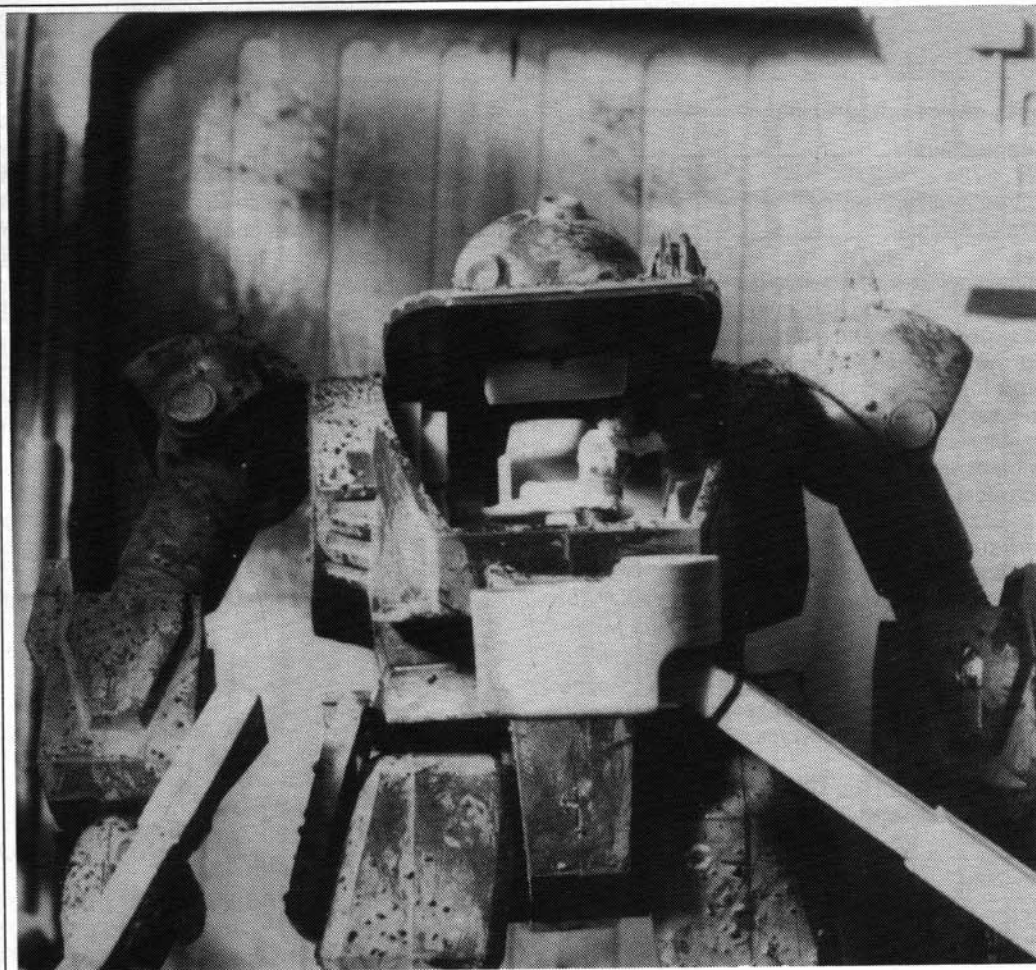
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ComStar Agent

Unknown to the player characters, a joint ComStar-Ilyrian scouting party found the Castle Brian before this party arrived. They left one agent in place to do mapping. He is:

BODY 8

DEX 9

LRN 9

CHA 5

Piloting-1, Tech-4, Mapng-3, Pistol-3, Brawling-3, Interrogation-3, Computer-2.

He will spend one day per floor. He has been there 1 d6 +3 days when the players arrive.

He entered on level 3, where the tunnel comes in. He set up his camp there. He has found the elevator near the commandant's office, his special ComStar training allowed him to trigger the lock. This elevator goes to floor 2, 4 & 6. He has explored levels 3, 3A, 2, 1, & 0 as of players day 1. After that he intends to explore:

The 'Monster' as found by the Ellingsen Expedition, 3032

Day 2: Floor 3

Day 3: Floor 6

Day 4: Break into commandant's quarters to find elevator he suspects exists to Floor 5.

Day 5: Begin to explore Floor 5.

Day 7:

ComGuard reinforcements due.

His commitment to ComStar is total. If he finds the PCs first, he will hide and spy on them. He will hide his com gear even better. He will avoid battle. If cornered, he will fight to the death. He will resist interrogation to the end. They will never even find his name.

Notes on levels 0 and 1 are on recorder in his pocket.

Level 0:

"I had to learn by trial and error what triggered the security robots. Now they mostly leave me alone. I disabled five by jamming their positronic brains, blanking their memories and abilities totally. I hated to do it, because their memories would have given valuable info. The mission must not be compromised!"

Level 1:

"Rooms 110 I-L. Rooms I & J seem locked. The locks have been welded shut.

Rooms 110 V-Y have one bed each. These are officer's rooms. X is the commandant's room. Pacing it out, I've found that the room extends far into area J and is finished off with an oversized closet. Room 110 Y is a sitting room. I paced the area out and found a room sized space (110-I) with no visible access to it."

Every day he has also put in four hours on his hobby: tinkering. He has put together a Mech from salvaged partially assembled pieces. This is not a great piece of Mech design, but it will work according to the chart. If found in partial condition, PCs with Tech skills may roll to advance his timetable and complete the Mech. All materials have been brought to his workshop. Each step in the building will take the PC 4 hours of game time.

A Tech level of 4 or above can shorten this time by one hour per level: minimum of 1 hour. Stats for this Mech if completed are listed as THE MONSTER.

Level 6

is the Security / R & D level, which is only reached by elevators 8B and SE.

Room 601: Security Control Room

Room 602: Security Computer, Main Security

Room 603: Chemistry Lab

Room 604-606: Experimental Hydroponics Labs (eventually it was projected that the Castle Brian could be fed entirely by hydroponic farming; hence the space given to this science)

Room 607: Electronics Lab

Room 608: Monitor Station for Labs (cameras and waldos for long-distance handling)

Room 609: Dining Room/Rec room for security troops

Room 610:

Room 611: Storage Room for Electronics Lab

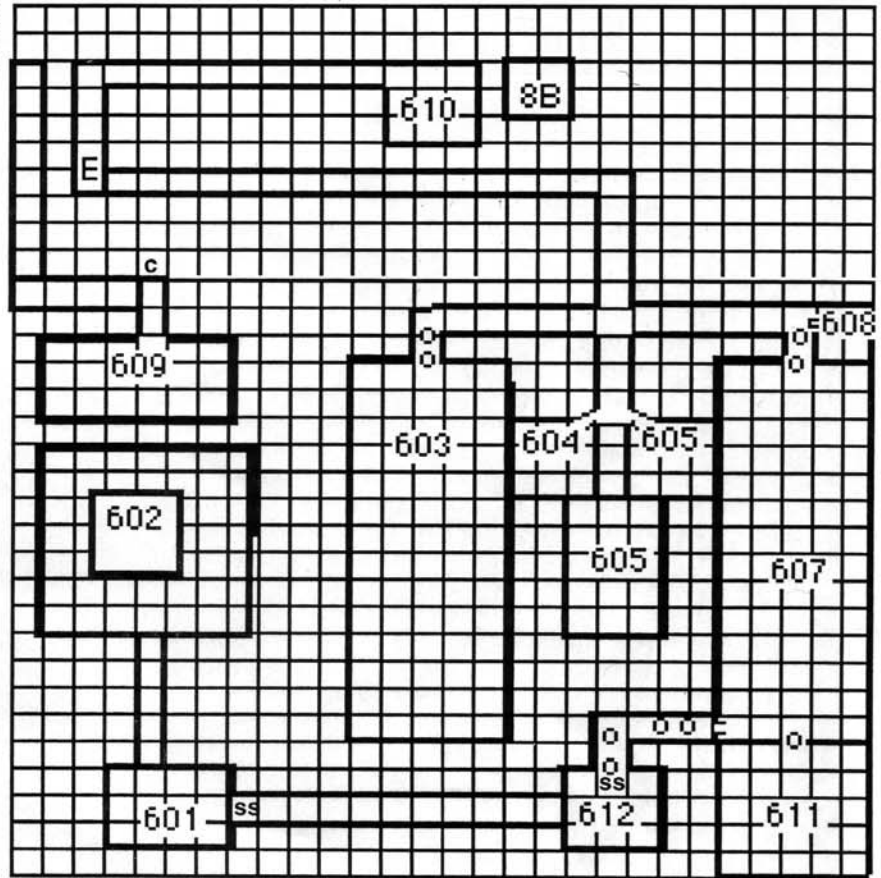
Room 612: Main Computer

Room 612 A-D: Series of small rooms with airtight doors, gas grills in ceiling. Entrance to main computer. Security forces could close off these little rooms and introduce a number of gases through the ceiling; different gases in each room, if wished. This setup is intact, and can be accessed through security computer.

The notation 'c' on this floor stands for a security door with a card slot. 'o' stands for an airtight door. 'SS' doors show screen # 3, and have a key entry pad next to the screen. GM NOTE: This "code" is based on the Solaris scores shown on the security chief's screen. If the player characters fill in the blanks with the numbers from the scores, the door will open; screen will request if reprogramming is desired. If player characters wish

to reprogram the security computer, they may (Skills needed: Computers or Security Systems, roll of 4 or over. Tech Skills, on a roll of 8 or over) Once inside, computer is not hard to master. Concealed security cameras on all levels may be accessed from here; any remaining security robots or Guardian Mechs may be controlled from here, as may the defensive mini-VTOLs (buzz bombs).

The same code will allow entry to the Main computer. Its memory core contains, essentially, the information in Technical Readout 2750. It will take somebody with Computer or Security Systems 2 x 2 d6 hours to ascertain this, on a roll of 6 or better. Let the character reroll, as long as no excitement is going on, like a ComStar invasion.



ComStar Timetable

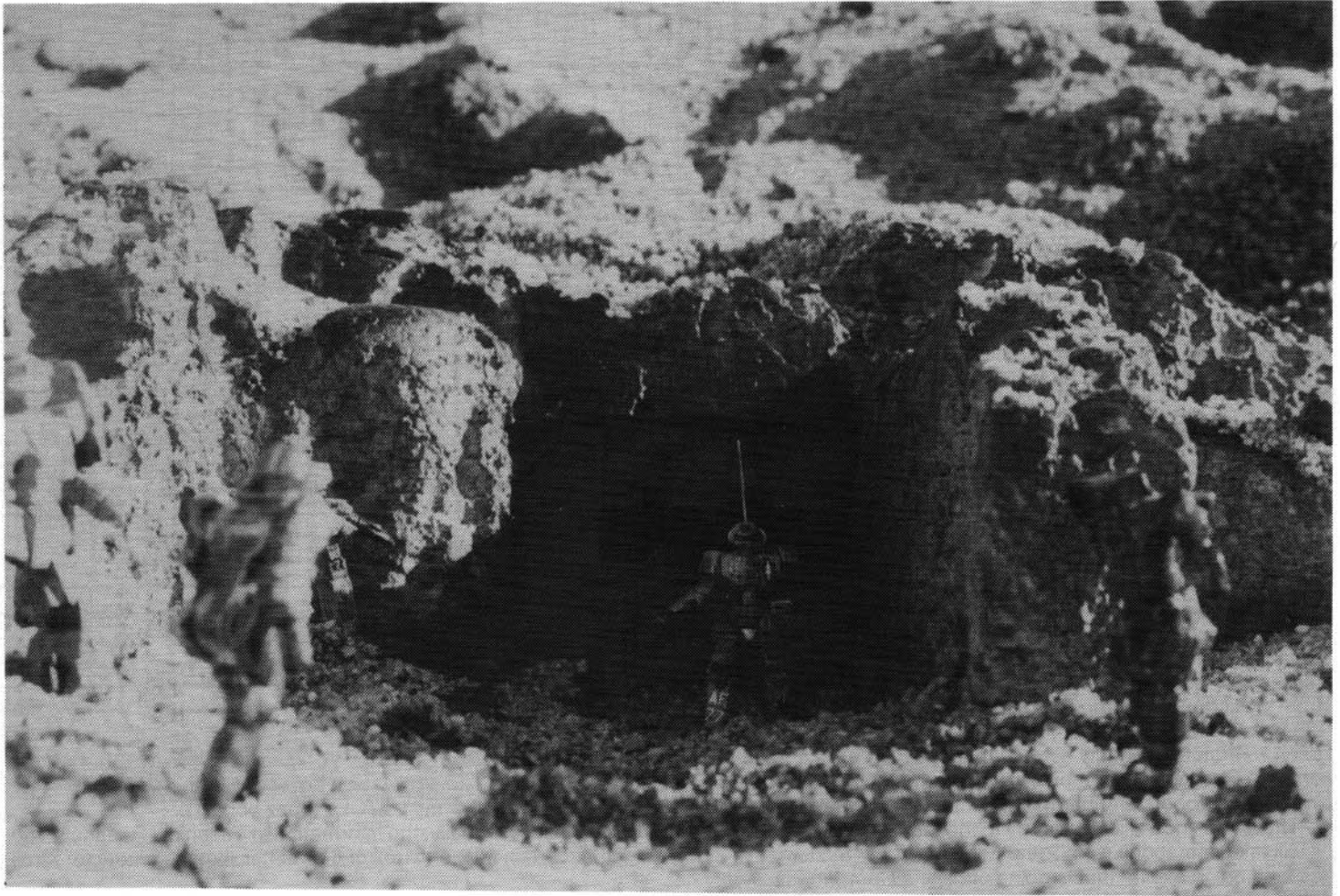
If nothing happens to alert ComStar (practically impossible), they will arrive in seven days, planning to set up camp in the box canyon where the player characters are camped. Their air recon will spot the scouts before this happens. Scouts may also spot them.

If the Rom agent fails to report, or if his report arouses his superiors' suspicions, from then on they will speed up the timetable, leaving their archeologists and non-military personnel behind, and working their drivers as long as the Mechs can march. They will arrive as follows. All times are calculated from the date of a bad report. Day players begin is day 1.

If bad report occurs	Air Recon	Air Forces	Ground Recon	Main Force
Day 1	Day 7	Day 7	Day 7 (late in day)	Day 8
Day 2	Day 6	Day 6	Day 6	Day 7
Day 3	Day 5	Day 5	Day 5	Day 6
Day 4	Day 4	Day 4	Day 4	Day 5
Day 5	Day 5	Day 5	Day 5 (afternoon)	Day 5 (late evening)
Day 6	Day 6	Day 6	Day 6	Day 6
	2hrs	2 hrs	5 hrs	5 hrs

All of these are times when they could arrive; Com Guard commander may bring them in as he chooses.

In all cases where they are alerted, Com Guard will approach through tunnels, and will not be detectable by the scouts from the air except by a roll of 2 on 2 d6 when they are within 1/4 day of entering. In such case, they will either spot air cover, or later, the main forces entering entrance to tunnel # 3, 10 kilometers west of the Castle Brian. They will have had the Rom agent's report on the box canyon entrance used by the players, and may use that in their battle plan.



Screen # 1

Security Chief's Computer Screen

{OK, Tony, here are the top ten Solaris Championship Scores for May. I'll keep this a secret as you asked. But why? Have you taking to making book on the side? — Mike}

	Win	Lose	Draw
Albers	18	2	2
Mc Cluskey	18	3	1
Zhong	17	4	1
Bialy	17	5	0
Robinson	16	2	4
Rafsani	16	3	3
Tanaka	16	4	2
Taira	14	8	0
Bronowsky	13	7	2
Sorenson	12	10	0

Screen # 2

**Head Tech's Computer Screen
(personal quarters, level 1)**

18	2	?
18	?	?
17	?	?
17	?	?
16	?	?
?	?	?
?	?	?
14	8	?
13	?	?
?	10	?

Notes:

Answers 9, 3 squared X2, & 20 rejected in 1st row, col 3 & Answers 26, 1.75, & 22 rejected in 8th row, col 3! What code is Tony using this time?

Census Results BattleTechnology # 11

BRN-1 Brian

History: This 'Mech was left behind in the Castle Brian on Ilyria when the Star League-era garrison pulled out suddenly. It was the personal 'Mech of the garrison commander: there was a direct access to it from his quarters. Your Tech will be able to reprogram its neural helmet in 3d6 weeks, or sell it for twice as much as an Atlas. It is in perfect working order. The workmanship of the 'Mech as a whole is very good; best of Star League craftsmanship. It will be very difficult to find spare parts for it that fit. This is a one of a kind 'Mech.

Tonnage:		90.0
Internal Structure:		9
Engine Type:	250 GM	14.5
Walk MPs:	3	
Run MPs:	5	
Jump MPs:	0	
Gyroscope:		3.0
Cockpit:		3.0
Heatsinks:	38 (double heatsinks)	9
Armor Factor:	312	19.5
Head	3 9	
Center Torso	29 50/22	
Rt/Lt Torso	19 44/20	
Rt/Lt Arm	15 30	
Rt/Lt Leg	19 42	
Weapons & Ammo:		
LRM 15-Pack	LT	7.0
Ammo LRM 15-Pack(Swarm)*	CT	2.0
LRM 15-Pack	RT	7.0
Large Laser	RA	5.0
SRM 6-Pack	RL	3.0
Ammo SRM 6-Pack	RL	1.0
Medium Laser (pulse)*	RA	2.0
Medium Laser (pulse)*	LA	2.0
Medium Laser	LL	2.0
Antimissile system*	LL	0.5
Ammo (6) antimissile	LL	0.5

On a scale of 0= I hate it to 5=Wonderful.
We forgot a listing for the Low Gravity rules variant! Most comments were favorable.
The Useless Mech 3.95, A Soldier's View 4.03, Special Tech Readout: Belfries 3.61, Hiring Hall 3.26
External Stores Article & Sheets 3.87, The Fox Eats Crow 3.51, BattleTechnology News Service 4.17
Tech Readout: Titan 4.62, Repair Bay 3.68, Tech Readout: Malleus 3.62, Blueprint: Malleus 3.55
Scenario: First Strike 3.49, Scenario: Legion of Vega 3.67, Scenario: Deep Six 3.53
MechWarrior Scenario: Open Fire! 2.97
Thornhill Arms 3.37, More Than Warriors: The Dragons They do it for Honor 3.24
The Cover 4.74, Interior Photographs 3.78, Interior Artwork 3.82, This census itself 4.24
On a Scale of 1-5, you'd like to see more or less of the following:
Single Combat Scenarios 4.26, Lance-to-Lance Scenarios 3.92, BattleTroops Scenarios 2.95 AeroTech Scenarios 3.16, CityTech Scenarios 3.68, MechWarrior Scenarios 3.2 (the last census gave MechWarrior a 4..2, so we didn't cancel the large scenario this issue. We'll wait to see what you think of that one.)

Access door: Security Computer LED display

Screen # 3

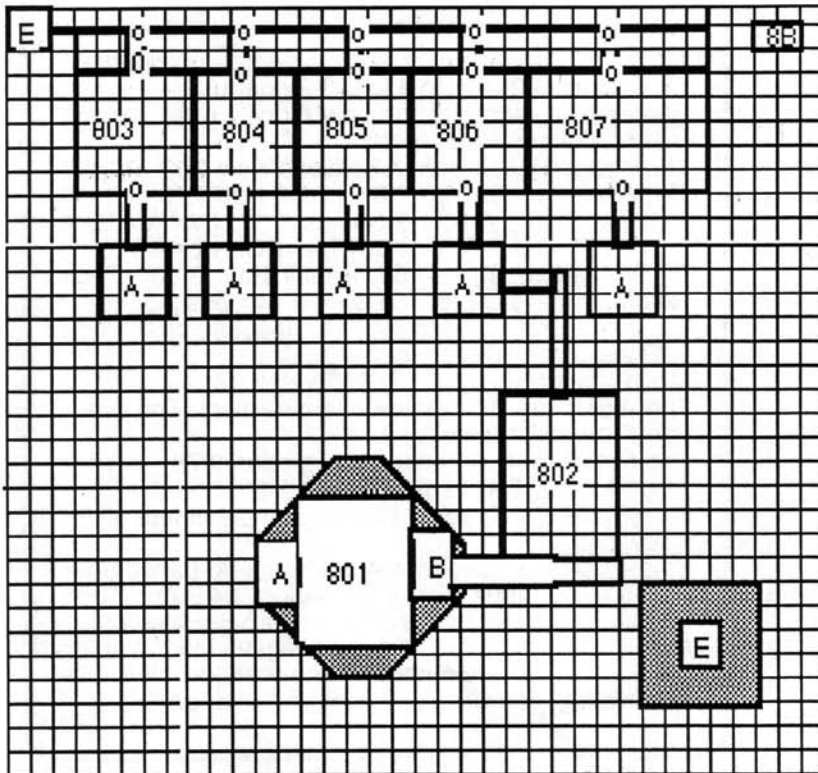
18	2	?
18	?	?
17	?	?
17	?	?
16	?	?
?	?	?
?	?	?
14	8	?
13	?	?
?	10	?

* Items from *Technical Readout: 2750*, available from FASA used in the **BRN-1 Brian**:

LRM Swarm missiles: If any missiles miss initial target, they are programmed to seek the next nearest target(so long as the target is in an adjacent hex). Roll to-hit with standard modifier.

Pulse Lasers: -2 to base to-hit , but ranges are shorter.

	Heat	Damage	Range-Short	Medium	Long	Crits	Tonnage
Medium pulse laser:	10	9	1-2	4-7	8-10	1	2
Antimissile system:	1	*					0.5



level 8

Level 8

is a classroom & laboratory level.

Room 801: Holographic Combat Arena. Controls allow any Mech or Lance of Mechs known to the Star League to be simulated. Damage will be simulated on a visual level only on any Mech or warrior who enters the room. Currently on, running a program where an Atlas is wrecking a Battlemaster.

Room 801 A: Holographic Control Room:

Room 801 B: Holographic Viewing Room:

Room 802: Lecture Room

Rooms 803-804: Regular Hydroponics rooms

Rooms 803A-804 A: Hydroponics Labs

Room 805: Electronics Shop

Room 805 A: Electronics Lab

Rooms 807-808: Classrooms

Rooms 807-808 A: small workrooms.

8B is the commandant's personal Mech, the Brian, at the bottom of a hydraulic elevator shaft which can raise it to any level he chooses. There is a smaller platform elevator (picture a mini freight elevator) which folds out of the way when the Mech elevator is activated. That smaller elevator is accessed from the commandant's ready quarters, and locations on every floor.

Resolving the scenario:

If the players do not find the Solaris Games Scores on the computer screen, give them the clipping so that they have a chance to solve the computers' lock. If they don't have any chance at all they will feel that the

scenario is unfair.

If the Com Guard is not allowed to examine the memory core they will commit all of their forces to capturing or destroying it.

If the Com Guard is allowed to examine the memory core, they will discover that it duplicates much of the information that the Grey Death Legion has already uncovered. They will then be willing to share the information with the player expedition. IF THE PLAYERS NEGOTIATE WELL, ComStar forces will allow the PCs to keep a copy of the core, and whatever loose items including THE BRIAN and (if anyone really wants it) THE MONSTER. This is a good place to let your unit stock up on spare parts. IF THE PLAYERS NEGOTIATE MAGNIFICENTLY, they may be able to keep the archaeologists and even their employer Ellingsen out of an Illyrian jail. IF THE PLAYERS CHOOSE TO FIGHT, they *may* be able to defeat *this* ComStar force. They will then have 1 D6 days to loot, that is *explore*, the Castle Brian. Then the main ComStar force arrives. If your group chooses that option, they must wait for next issue, when we print the table of organization of all the units involved in BattleTech and BattleForce terms. It is an overwhelming force, so unless they have discovered and blocked the tunnels early on and can 'hole up' in the Castle Brian itself, the player group hasn't much of a chance in a fight.

If player group manages a negotiated settlement, you may give them as much of Technical Readout: 2750 as will not unbalance your campaign. This is technical specs only; they will still have to raise the C-bills necessary to construct the items desired!

Solaris Semifinals

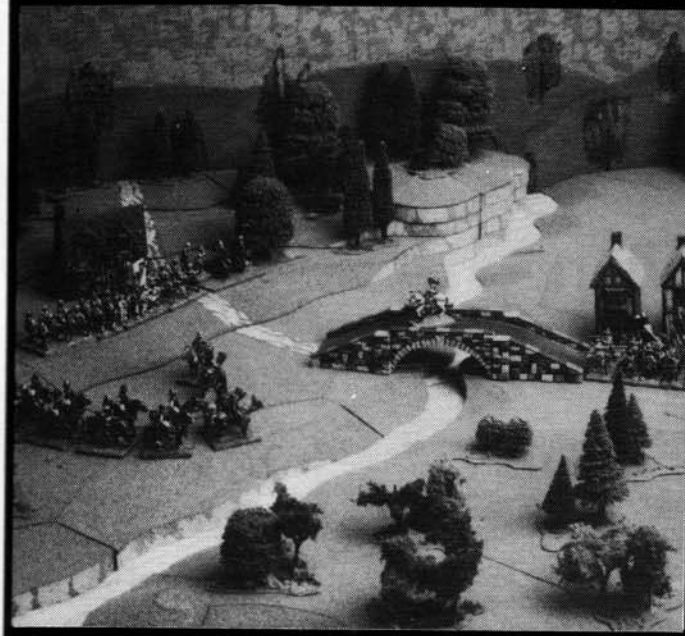
May 30, 2784	Win	Lose	Draw
Albers	18	2	2
Mc Cluskey	18	3	1
Zhong	17	4	1
Bialy	17	5	0
Robinson	16	2	4
Rafsani	16	3	3
Tanaka	16	4	2
Taira	14	8	0
Bronowsky	13	7	2
Sorenson	12	10	0

Tattered Clipping found in somebody's personal locker (GM Special)

Level 7 (no map shown)

is a garage level, now empty except for three Pack Rats and pieces of an unidentifiable hovercraft, all stripped down for repairs. This is clearly where scouts. Picture a vast empty hangar, stretching 3 x4 kilometers. Player characters can see quickly that it is totally deserted. At the center of each outer wall, tunnels slope up to the main exit tunnels.

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Technical Readout

GRD-1N Guardian

Overview:

Unlike other Mechs, the Guardian was not produced for the military. Silver Shield sold the Guardian to large companies to serve as a security Mech for their more important installations. An occasional Guardian was also sold to law enforcement agencies for those rare instances when really heavy firepower would be needed.

Designed as a deterrent to criminals rather than as a machine of war, the Guardian really has no place on the battlefield. The increasing scarcity of Mechs, however, has forced many Guardians into military service.

Capabilities:

Armed with five SperryBrowning machine guns, the Guardian is more than a match for a crook wielding a slug thrower. Against BattleMechs and most other combat vehicles, however, the Guardian is hopelessly outgunned. The many machine guns do make it very effective against infantry. Its small size also allows the Guardian to go where larger, more potent Mechs could not. For this reason the Guardian is often used in heavily urbanized areas, going into the twisted mazes of back alleys and side streets to root out infantry units.

Battle History:

The most recent battle involving a fair number of Guardians occurred in January of 3028 on the world of An Ting. Elements of House Kurita's *Ryuken-ichi* and Wolf's Dragoons were fighting in the city of Cerant. The *Ryuken* sent a company's worth of Guardians into Cerant to deal with the Dragoon infantry. It was not one of the Guardian's more stellar moments. Using their own men as bait, the Dragoons lured the Kurita Guardians into carefully laid ambushes time and time again. Of the twelve Guardians which started in the fight, only one was operational at the end.

Variants:

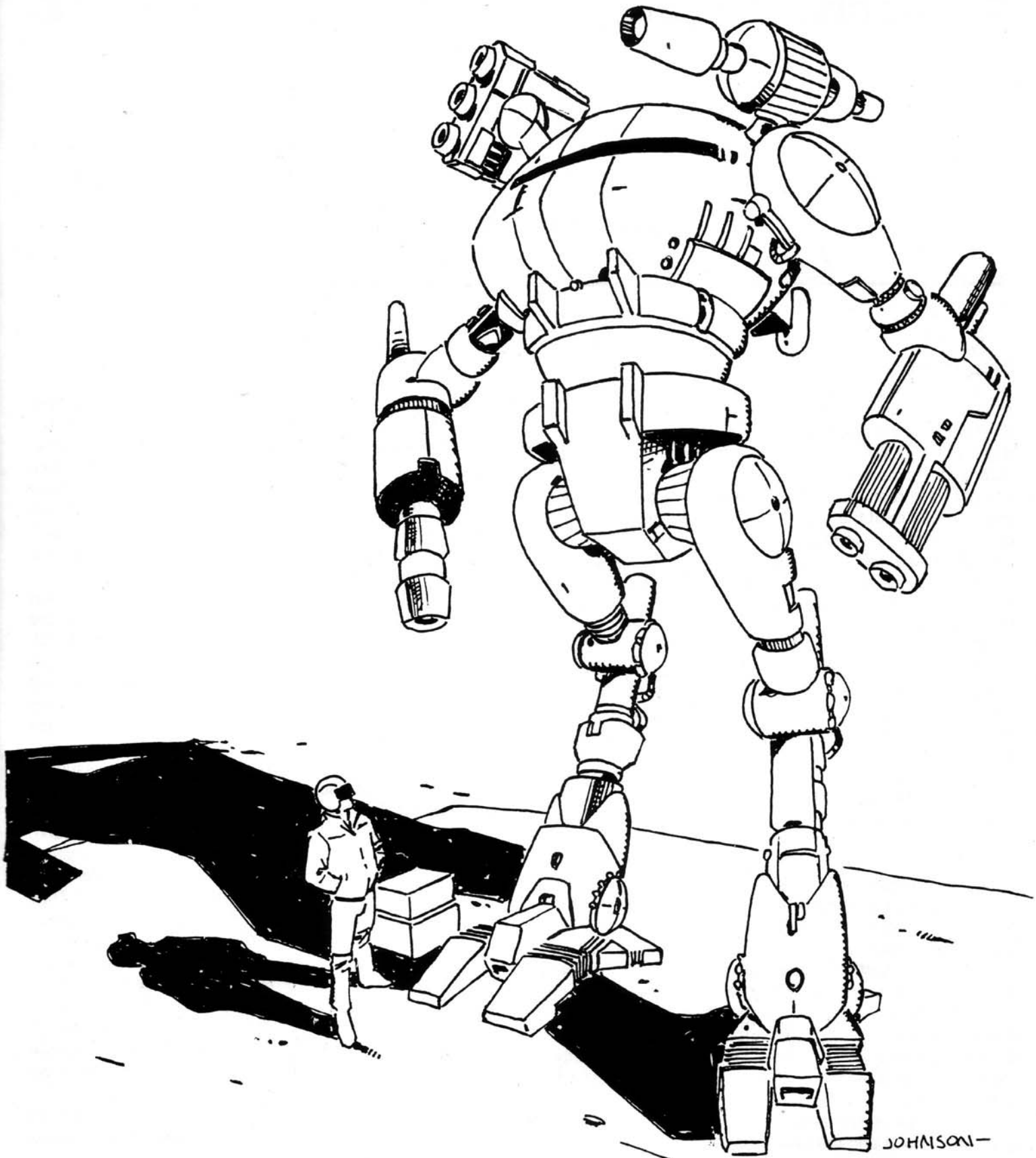
Faced with the very real possibility they might have to fight other Mechs, many Guardian pilots increase their firepower by removing a machine gun and half a ton of ammo, replacing them with a medium laser. While this does increase the Guardian's ability to defend itself, it is still outclassed by virtually every other Mech ever made. Combat is best avoided.

GRD-1N Guardian

Mass: 15 Tons
 Chassis: Shield 1
 Power Plant: Leenex 60
 Cruising Speed: 43.2 kph
 Maximum Speed: 64.8 kph
 Jump Jets: None
 Jump Capacity: None
 Armor: Durelex Light
 Armament: 5 SperryBrowning Machine Guns
 Manufacturer: Silver Shield Security
 Communications System: Garret T10 B
 Targeting/Tracking System: Dynatec 990

Type: GRD-1N Guardian			
Tonnage:	15 Tons		15
Internal Structure:			1.5
Engine: Leenex	60		1.5
Walking MPs:	4		
Running MPs:	6		
Jumping MPs:	0		
Heat Sinks :	10		0.0
Gyro:			1.0
Cockpit:			3.0
Armor Factor:	48		3.0
Location:	Internal	Armor	
	Structure:	Value	
Head	3	4	
Center Torso:	5	6/4	
Rt/Lt Torso:	4	6/2	
Rt/Lt Arms:	2	4	
Rt/Lt Leg:	3	5	

Weapons and Ammo:			
	Location	Critical	
Machine Gun	RA	1	.5
Machine Gun	LA	1	.5
Machine Gun	CT	1	.5
Machine Gun	RT	1	.5
Machine Gun	LT	1	.5
Ammo (MG) 500	RT	3	2.5



BLR-1A Brawler

Background:

After the war of 3039, it was realized that the Inner Sphere needed a universal military weapon. Thus was born the Brawler. It's a Mech equivalent to most assault Mechs in defensive capabilities, yet able to keep up with most medium Mechs for Recon purposes. During testing it showed that it can deliver a reasonable offensive punch. But — the most unusual feature of the Mech is that it is designed to carry a company of foot infantry and a platoon of jump infantry! This little surprise keeps the enemy guessing just how many forces are on the battlefield at any one time. As of 3049, the Brawler has just finished testing, and is being produced for the Draconis Combine.

Technical Data:

The technical aspects of the Brawler all but rival old Star League technology. The power plant is the most powerful on the market today; with the Combine's recent advantages in technology, it is only half as heavy as the norm. The heat sink systems are built right into the engine, literally living up to the name of 'freezer' in its capacity to handle all of the weapons and the engine with no heat buildup. Next comes the armor system, with thirteen tons of high grade armor, the brawler can punch with the best of Assault Mechs. As to the weapons systems, the one shot Longbow is a nice warning weapon to soften up a target. With Thunder LRMs (as they become available), the capability will exist to set up a great little minefield as one is escaping. The next two weapons are from the metallic series, the Gold pulse laser, and the Platinum streak missile system. They pulse laser is an intriguing choice: it builds up much heat and is poor on range, but anything which gets into its range will be devastated. The streak missile system is so perfect because of its discriminatory nature and its guaranteed strikes. The other large laser is of standard make. It only adds to the versatility of the Brawler.

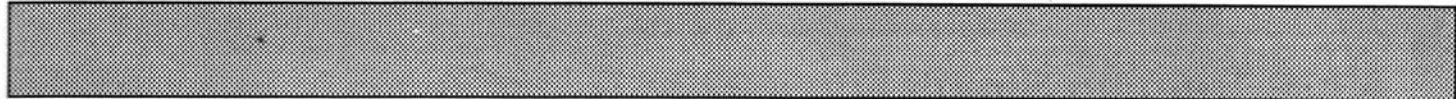
The next two systems are the myomer accelerated signal circuitry (MASC) and the phased sensor array. The MASC

system allows the Brawler to be the fastest in its weight class, providing for rapid changes in position to assist in other portions of the battle. The phased sensor array is designed to assist the mechwarrrior by giving suggestions on which weapon system would be most useful for the particular situation. (Of course there have been some problems with this. One warrior quipped to himself, "I'd like to get that girl", only to find the system suggesting the laying down of a Thunder LRM minefield around her house!)

The last items to be covered are the platoon carrier systems, and the ejection system for them. The sections are comfortable, but the inhabitants do get bounced around a lot. The shoulder socket arrangement is specially designed as a type of shock absorber to keep this down to a minimum, and the computer does give warning in case of any sudden movement that may occur in a combat situation. Now the ejection system is simple, and serves two purposes. Basically it consists of seven 30 m myomer cables which issue out of and are drawn back into a specially designed retrieval storage area. The line pays out of seven "finger line" apertures. The soldier simply slides down the line to the ground. The full company of foot infantry can be out and deployed in under two minutes. The jump infantry use a small portal on the side of the Brawler to affect their entrances and exits. They need no additional assistance because of their jet packs. (NOTE: Infantry units can deploy while the Mech is still moving, and have been known to do so at speeds up to 100 kph. This practice is extremely hazardous to the soldiers' well-being, and so is discouraged.)

During testing, the myomer steel cables were discovered to have a second function. They can also be used to entangle an enemy Mech's legs, causing it to fall. This of course allows the infantry to swarm the fallen Mech and destroy it.

Overall, the Brawler seems to be a good Mech for both scouting and behind the lines missions. It is certain to prove its worth in combat.



BLR-1A Brawler

Mass: 80 Tons
 Chassis: Dragon Industries Ltd
 Power Plant: LTV 400-XL
 Cruising Speed: 54 kph
 Maximum Speed: 86.4 kph / 108 kph
 Jump Jets: None
 Jump Capacity: None
 Armor: Dragon X-9 Heavy Slab
 Armament: 1 Gold Medium Pulse Laser
 1 Platinum Streak SRM-2
 1 Nightwind Large Laser
 1 Star Flash Small Laser
 1 Longbow LRM-5 One Shot
 Manufacturer: Dragon Industries Ltd
 Communications System: Silver Commo Array
 Targeting/Tracking System: Dragon Phased Sensor Array

Type:	BLR-1A Brawler	Tonnage:	80 Tons
Internal Structure:	Endo-Steel		4.0
Engine :	400 LTV-XL		26.25
Walking MPs:	5 (10)		
Running MPs:	8 (10)		
Jumping MPs:	0		
Heat Sinks :	10 (10 double)		0.0
Gyro:			4.0
Cockpit:			3.0
Armor Factor:	208		13.0
Location:	Internal Structure:	Armor Value	
Head	3	9	
Center Torso:	25	30/11	
Rt/Lt Torso:	17	22/8	
Rt/Lt Arms:	13	24	
Rt/Lt Leg:	17	25	

Weapons and Ammo:	Location	Critical	
Pulse Laser (Med)	RA	1	2.0
MASC	RL	2	2.0
MASC	LL	2	2.0
Streak SRM-2	LA	1	1.5
Ammo SRM-2(50)	LT	1	1.0
Large Laser	LT	3	5.0
LRM 5-pack (1-shot)	CT	2	2.5
Foot Infantry Carrier	RA	3	3
Foot Infantry Carrier	LA	3	3
Foot Infantry Carrier	RA	3	3
Jump Infantry Carrier	RT	4	4
Myomer Whip	RA	1	0.75

Rules Variant Weapon:

Myomer Whip: To entangle an opponent with a myomer whip, it must first be in an adjacent hex to the whipping Mech. Roll gunnery skill roll with a target number of 5. If successful, use the standard location table to see which area has become entangled. Then, to unbalance the entangled Mech, roll 2d6. If the roll is 7 or better (with appropriate modifier), the Mech falls and suffers as if it had been pushed. (See the *Rules of Warfare*.) The modifiers: for every 10 tons that the attacking/entangling Mech is heavier than its opponent, the attacker gets +1 to his piloting roll. For every 10 tons that the attacking/entangling Mech is **lighter** than its opponent, the attacker gets a -1 to his piloting roll.

Weapon	Crits	Weight
Myomer Whip	1	.75

NAIS Training Simulation # 0224

The Spider Meets the Ax by Major Z Hans Schmidt Staff Simulations Officer New Avalon Institute of Science

Introduction:

This scenario is an NAIS tactical combat training simulation for MechWarriors. Its general purpose is to improve a warrior's skill in tactical combat situations, such as those that may be encountered after graduation upon entering service with an active combat unit.

Some of these combat simulations are historical reenactments (and will be described as such), but many others describe purely hypothetical confrontations. Some may even involve lances or companies from famous House or mercenary units. Most, however, will be strict simulations containing typical formations that might be found anywhere in the Successor States or even in the Periphery.

This particular scenario is intended for two or more players. (Five players would be the ideal number, two sharing control of the Attacking force, and three controlling the Defending force.) For optimum training benefits, this scenario should be played at least twice, with players exchanging sides.

Background:

For centuries, military strategists could be roughly divided into two opposing camps: one faction supporting small numbers of large (or sophisticated, or expensive) weapons systems, with the other supporting larger numbers of smaller (or simpler, or cheaper) weapons systems. In contemporary schools of thought, the argument is waged between the respective merits of a lance of heavy BattleMechs in contrast to a company or more of light BattleMechs. (Note: the "few-but-heavy" doctrine seems to be the ideal preference of most Houses and combat units — when circumstances permit.)

In this scenario, a lance-sized force of large BattleMechs are moving through an area defended by a roughly company-sized force of small BattleMechs. The larger Mechs have superior firepower and protection; the smaller Mechs have superior numbers, speed, and the advantage of being on the defensive. Some may perceive this as a simple matter of ants attacking elephants.

Game Set-Up

This scenario uses Expert BattleForce rules, one CityTech map, and any one BattleTech map of the attacking Player's choice. Maps should be placed end to end, so that the xx01 hexrow of the upper (north or BattleTech) map is at the opposite end of the xx17 hexrow of the lower (south or CityTech) map. Any terrain features shown on the maps should be treated as in effect, with the following exceptions: All Pavement hexes are considered to be Elevation 3 Clear Terrain (ie, they form a sheer-cliffed plateau, or mesa, above the surrounding terrain), and all Water hexes which form the two lakes adjacent to the "plateau" (hexes 0409, 0509, 0510, 1207, 1307, 1308, and 1407) are considered to be Elevation 1 Clear Terrain. All combat units are considered to be in perfect working order. All MechWarriors are assumed to have skill levels of Piloting 5 and Gunnery 4. The Defender sets up first. At the beginning of each turn, randomly determine which player has combat initiative for that turn.

Defender:

Any combination of Light (ie, less than 40 tons each) BattleMechs totalling no more than 420 tons.

Defender Deployment:

The Defender may deploy his Mechs anywhere on the south map, with only one restriction: at least half of the total number of Mechs must be set up anywhere on the "plateau".

Attacker:

Any combination of Heavy and/or Assault (ie, more than 35 tons each)

The Spider Meets the Ax

BattleMechs totalling no more than 300 tons.

Attacker Deployment:

The Attacker may deploy his Mechs anywhere in the top four hexrows (xx01 through xx04, inclusive) of the north map.

Special Rules:

The Attacker may withdraw off the bottom (xx17) hexrow of the south map at any time, but any units withdrawn may not re-enter during the scenario. The Defender may not withdraw in any manner.

Victory Conditions:

The scenario lasts ten turns or until no Attacking Mechs remain on the board, whichever comes first. Victory Points (VP) for both sides are totalled up at the end of the scenario.

The Attacker receives 1 VP for every Defending BattleMech destroyed or incapacitated (ie, incapable of movement), and 2 VP for every Attacking Mech exited off the south map.

The Defender receives 3 VP for every Attacking Heavy Mech destroyed or incapacitated (or 4 VP for every Assault Mech), and 1 VP for each functional (ie, not destroyed or incapacitated) Attacking Mech *and* 1 VP for each functional Defending Mech still on the map.

The side with the higher VP total wins (a tie means a draw). Divide the winning side's VP total by the losing side's VP total to determine the level of victory.

- 2.0 or greater: Strategic Victory
- 1.50 to 1.99: Operational Victory
- 1.25 to 1.49: Tactical Victory
- 1.01 to 1.24: Marginal Victory

Cossack Raid

Dateline: Marduk
February 15, 3026

The Draconian *Tai-i* arose from his desk and cursed the bad luck that had his company stuck here in the boonies, guarding a supply dump while the rest of the regiment covered itself in glory. It just wasn't fair. The only compensation was the unusually beautiful lake close by the supply dump. It was a blessing in the muggy climate.

As he stared out across the lake, a staff runner panted up to him, bowed, and handed him a message form. HQ wanted a patrol of lance strength to move out north-east, toward the Davions' mercenary-scum 12th Vegan Rangers last reported location. Why *not* the Command Lance? His other two lances could certainly handle security duty on the dump.

Lindon smiled to himself as the lance moved away from the base camp. It was good to be on the move again. He hoped they would run into the Davionist forces and get some action. He shut from his mind the sitreps that had the DCMS's 'overwhelming victories' moving closer and closer to the DropShip base area.

They'd only made one and a half clicks when someone started screaming over the comm. Literally screaming. Finally he made out that a heavy lance was destroying his recon lance Mech by Mech. The last coherent report, before that channel went dead forever, was punctuated by the coughing roar of a vibromine detonating. At least some of the Federats would die.

He got the Command Lance back to base in time to die with his company.

Ed Note: The information included in this article has been provided to Battle Technology by representatives of Gunji no Kanrei Theodore Kurita, to whom we wish to express our deepest appreciation. Information accompanying the article asserts that the exercise has been in use at Sun Zhang Academy since 1 January 3027, as an object lesson in tactical response and humility.

Sitreps: While battling the Kurita forces which invaded Marduk, HQ 12th Vegan Rangers learns the location of the supply dump serving the 5th Sword of Light. As the 12th's forces are heavily engaged, they send elements of the mercenary group Khorsakov's Cossacks out on a raid to capture or destroy the dump.

Defender:

Command Lance: (A on map)
Marauder (Captain Lindon)
Warhammer
Thunderbolt
Panther

Attack Lance: (B on map)
Rifleman
Thunderbolt
Enforcer
Valkyrie (a recent capture from AFFS forces on Galtor)

Recon Lance: (C on Map)
Rifleman
Phoenix Hawk
Panther
Wasp

Units are deployed as seen on map. Defender has 7 vibromines placed at his discretion, along with two Sniper artillery pieces (D & E) and three platoons of infantry (F, G, & H). All are placed as shown.

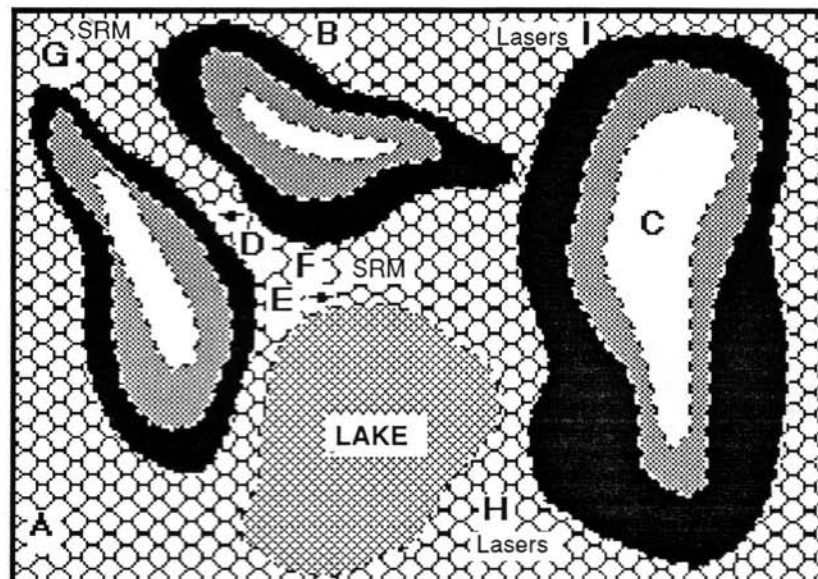
Kurita Mech pilots are Regular in this action, except for Captain Lindon, who is Veteran.

Attacker:

Command Lance:
Warhammer (Command Mech, Nikolai Khorsakov)
Marauder
Battlemaster
Awesome

Fire Lance:
reduced due to previous engagement
Archer

February 15, 3026



one hex = 1 km

Attached lance from the Wild Geese, a Steiner Merc unit on loan

Phoenix Hawk
Trebuchet
Javelin
Jenner

Air Lance:
Phoenix Hawk LAM
Phoenix Hawk LAM

Cossack Mech pilots are Veteran status in this engagement, except for the Archer pilot who is elite.

Special Conditions:

There is a percentage chance that any of the Kurita lances will be called away before the engagement begins.

Command Lance: 10%
Assault Lance: 25%
Recon Lance: 40%

There is also a percentage chance that a lance will return for resupply during the engagement.

Optional Lance: (20% chance this lance will enter from a random direction)

Warhammer
Jenner
Panther
Awesome

These options reflect events of the original engagement, but they are not necessary to the simulation.

This is one example of the ingenuity of the Techs of Khorsakov's Cossacks. It is not used in the current scenario.

CGR-1A2 Charger—KH

Mass: 80 Tons
Chassis: Wells 990
Power Plant: Pitban 320
Cruising Speed: 42.3 kph
Maximum Speed: 63.7 kph
Jump Jets: None
Jump Capacity: None
Armor: Durallex Heavy
Armament: 1 Donal PPC
1 Magna Mk III Heavy Laser
3 Magna Mk II Medium Lasers
Manufacturer: Wells Technologies
(Remade by Khorsakov's Cossacks)
Communications System: Tek BattleCom
Targeting/Tracking System: Dalban Hirez

Type:	Tonnage
CGR-1A2 Charger-KH	80.0
Internal Structure:	8.0
Engine: Pitban 320	22.5
Walking MPs: 4	
Running MPs: 6	
Jumping MPs: 0	
Heat Sinks : 22	12.0
Gyro:	4.0
Cockpit:	3.0
Armor Factor: 248	15.5
Location: Internal Armor	
Structure Value	
Head	3 9
Center Torso:	25 30/20
Rt/Lt Torso:	17 20/14
Rt/Lt Arm:	13 26
Rt/Lt Leg:	17 34

Weapons and Ammo:

Weapon	Location	Critical	Tons
PPC	LA	3	7.0
Large Laser	RA	2	5.0
Medium Laser	RT	1	1.0
Medium Laser	LT	1	1.0
Medium Laser	CT	1	1.0

Large-scale simulator statistics:

RA = 12 CA = 19 D = 12
R = 3 M = 4

Responses to Census # 11

Warning: The following is not in Thirty-First Century Terms!

The feedback results for issue # 11 had a few surprises. None of you feel mildly about the 31st Century-ness of the magazine. There were a lot of 1s and many more 5s. You were in favor: a 4.5 out of a possible 5.0! Those who wanted 20th Century things wanted a letter column, a listing of products for BattleTech which are due, or reviews of new ones, a convention calendar (which we've already begun), and a review of convention games and tournaments (there are just too many. We might occasionally publish a photograph; an optimum-play description could occasionally be used with a scenario that has seen multiple play. Responses?) The product listing and/or reviews are quite possible.

Ratings by number are on page 49.

Some Reader Comments, with replies:

Please do an update on the Combat Efficiency Factor (Variant) for Star League (2750) Mechs. See page 26.

Please do an official Question and Answer Column on

rules, etc? We can do an unofficial advice column, but only FASA rulings are official. We'll start next issue.

BattleTechnology is very informative and important, but my biggest gripe is the delivery status. I'm beginning to think that information would travel quicker under a ComStar interdiction!

I'm glad to have an opportunity to respond to this — you certainly aren't the only one to make this sort of comment. Subscribers will always see the issue in the stores before you see them in your mail. The issue ships from the printers to the store distribution channels at the same time it ships to us. On the west coast, we actually receive it a week later than the east coast stores do. Then we enter the most recent changes of address, print up labels, and send it out. On a Fourth Class basis, the US Post Office informs us that it takes 1-6 weeks for delivery. "Sometimes up to 10 weeks". This is opposed to First Class Mail, which takes 2-10 days. For APO and FPO boxes, it then may take up to another 10 weeks. We aren't happy about this delay, but we don't see a way around it. For BattleTechnology # 11, there was an additional problem. We are a small company. The person whose job it is to get the mailing out got a bad case of that 3-week flu, and was out for a while, then working at a diminished capacity. The rest of us were covering other items to do with production, stepping up the production schedule on BattleTechnology, and dealing with the results of various writers and artists who were also slowed down by the flu. The mailing went late. You have our apologies. Canadian subscribers: new subs and renewing subs are going to be processed through The Sentry Box, 2047 34th Ave SW, Calgary Alberta T2T 2C4, eliminating the two-postal system problems and the international mail delay: they do mail sales & back issue sales too.

Please do more optional rules: In future issues, we will include rules for fighting in rain/mud, heat modifiers in various terrains, and arctic conditions in general.

List A Clear Mailing Address and Procedure for Submission: BattleTechnology, 3833 Lake Shore Avenue, Oakland, CA 94610. Send for writer's guidelines. (With a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If you don't get them within a month, assume they've been lost in the mail and send again. (Mention that there was a mailing problem before.) Always send an SASE with your manuscript. I (Hilary) read everything that comes in. If I see a spot for it right away, or if it is wildly unsuitable, you hear promptly. (within 2 months). If it almost fits, or needs revision, it waits until a letter can go. I can't even pretend that we return unsolicited items promptly; how well would you cope with reading 200+ pieces of mail a week, some of them stories or multiple Mech submissions? Submissions on disk get quicker attention (Macintosh, in Microsoft Word, or Mac Write We can sometimes translate other systems: query us). If your item looks like it's been printed in something, tell us what and where (anything bigger than a club pass-around news letter gives us copyright problems). Please include your name and address on the manuscript itself!! We are swamped with Mech designs, though we want to use as many as we can. DO NOT SEND US ANY MECHS OVER 100 TONS! Please don't send any more variants on the Charger! Artists: pencil just doesn't reproduce in our format. If you wish to integrate art with text, send a separate copy of the art and text, and a sketch showing how you want them to go together. Art which goes off the page will rarely be used. If your story or news item deals with the current 3050 universe, or with an interesting 'Historical' time like the Fourth Succession War, Rasalhague, the Ronin Rebellion, Andurien-Canopian independence, or the Marik Civil War, it will also get an extra-quick reading. If you can't be patient through this — realize that our priorities must go toward solicited material and getting the magazine out — save yourself the hassle & submit elsewhere. The bad news is that we aren't the slowest in the business at responding!

I am interested in hearing what happened to some of the units profiled in your magazine over the 20 years since the Fourth Succession War. We are doing at least one 'historical' piece on Galt's Grenadiers (issue 15), an update on the First Kathil Uhlans (issue 14), and a brief update on the Kell Hounds (this issue). If people want to let us know other units (We can't get info from Wolf's Dragoons at this time) in which they are interested., we'll get our reporters right on it. For example, the Genyosha?

Briefly noted: We cannot return to the old newspaper format; the paper we used then has doubled in price, as well as not being good for art. Interior color photographs will appear very rarely, due once again to economics. As to showing Liao in a more sympathetic light, some pages about the undercover activities of House Fujita have recently come to light; watch for them about issue 15 or 16. As to the painted vs photographic cover controversy; it looks like we'll be alternating. See this issue for our first cover showing a Clans Mech. As to the Mech Force; yes, we're printing standings and some news; we have to strike a balance between the Mech Force members' needs and those of less formal player groups.

THE WINNERS!

Origins Tournaments

MECHFORSCE CHALLENGE

BATTLETECH OPEN

First Place

David Eamis

First Place

Alan Gopin

Second Place

David Sweeton

Second Place

Marvin L. Hall

Third Place

Shaun K Winstanley

Third Place

Vincent Bksha

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