

Issue 17

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BATTLE TECHNOLOGY

THE MAGAZINE OF COMBAT IN THE THIRTY-FIRST CENTURY



Who ARE They?



The Inner Sphere has never been a stable environment for communication. BattleTechnology, as a medium for information, has always labored to report the facts as fairly and as completely as possible. In that task, the magazine's staff has been opposed by politicians seeking to control the truth, by soldiers wanting to prevent the spread of information with possible military usage, and by the disruption and violence of war itself.

Professor Donald L. Harrison and Professor John Merriken Preston, who had previously collaborated to discover a cache of de-circulated copies of BattleTechnology, have combined their efforts once again. And — again — they have been successful. This time, they have accessed a number of copies of BattleTechnology issues which were, for various reasons, not fully-circulated. These magazines are virtually unknown in some parts of the Inner Sphere.

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art for *Holding the Flank*, *Honor's Price*,
Desert Camo, *Hiring Hall* by James Greeson
Titan 1A

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Kruger Combat Car
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by William H Keith Jr

Writing in this issue:

Holding the Flank, *Defending Coalston*, *Deadly Collision*,
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Honor's Price by Glen L Mitchell
Dual Cockpit Combat Rules, *Kruger Combat Car*
by Spydre Connors
Captain-General: Thomas or Myndo NAIS Tactical Paper
by S Craig Harris by Aaron Braskin
Hiring Hall, *Duke Henry Marchante* *Titan*
by Gregory Detweiler by David Broussard
All Other Writing this issue
By Hilary Ayer

On The masthead of BattleTechnology #16, we inadvertently omitted credit to Walt Broucker for 'A Letter to the Archon' Our Apologies to Mr Broucker.

About the Cover: Artist James Greeson's painting from his battlefield sketches of the fight for Kandis II described in *Holding The Flank*.

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Honor's Price | 22 |
| Someone New at the Cobalt Coil — S. Jansfield | |
| Holding The Flank | 28 |
| Rasalhague Warrior Recounts the Fight For Kandis II | |

DEPARTMENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| BattleTechnology News Service: | |
| BattleTechnology News Service..... | 3 |
| Censored By Wolf's Dragoons | 4 |
| Jaime Wolf's Big Secret | 7 |
| Political Commentary | |
| Captain-General: Thomas or Myndo | 10 |
| Like Father, Like Son | 12 |
| Hiring Hall | |
| Henri Marchante, Duke of Altoona | 16 |
| BattleTac | |
| Desert Camo # 2 | 38 |
| BattleMechanics | |
| Kruger Combat Car | 40 |
| The Titan: Great 'Mech Gets New 'Tech | 43 |
| Nais Tactics Research Think Tank | 50 |

BATTLETECH SIMULATOR

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Defending Coalston | 34 |
| Deadly Collision | 36 |

BATTLETECHNOLOGY PRESENTS

By Permission of the AFFS
BattleMechanics
Dual Cockpit Combat Rules

14

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OPENING SHOTS

Christmas in June

There was only one thing I wanted for a present last Christmas; it was something that doesn't come in a box. I wanted some shiny new information. I wanted to know who the Clans were. I wanted to know why they had come here. I wanted to know where they got all those marvelous, deadly toys that they slap on their 'Mechs to kill our readers.

I didn't get what I wanted for Christmas. I don't think any of us did. Last holiday season there were fewer to light the Chanukah candles, fewer to share the Kwanze feast, fewer to dance the Midwinter circle, fewer around the Christmas tree. We've lost a lot of people. And many of those that survive are on planets taken by the Clans. Last December, we counted them all as lost.

Since then, ComStar has reestablished communications with many of these planets. We know that our friends and relatives who survived the fighting are going on with their daily lives. We can't visit them, but we can exchange vids. Details of their daily lives do not seem to come under censorship laws, but we have to deduce the actual conditions they live under from the 'casual' mentions they make.

And now Jaime Wolf has called a summit meeting. First the leaders of the Inner Sphere talked to him on Outreach in a series of meetings that lasted several months. They are still coming and going, leaving their heirs behind. (See 'Summit on Outreach' this issue). The hard data we're getting from that conference is my Christmas Present.

I didn't want to know that they'll be coming back. Their intention is to reestablish the Star League, but on their terms. So they will be coming back. Whether they'll pick us off one House at a time, try to take back all of the old Star League territory in a steady progression, attack straight for capital and key planets, or go straight line to Terra, nobody knows.

I did want to know how to fight them. Twycross and Wolcott have taught us that the Clans can be defeated. We are still evolving the tactics and the tech to do it consistently. And they do have factionalism. As we find out more about them, we may be able to play on their divisions as they have played on ours.

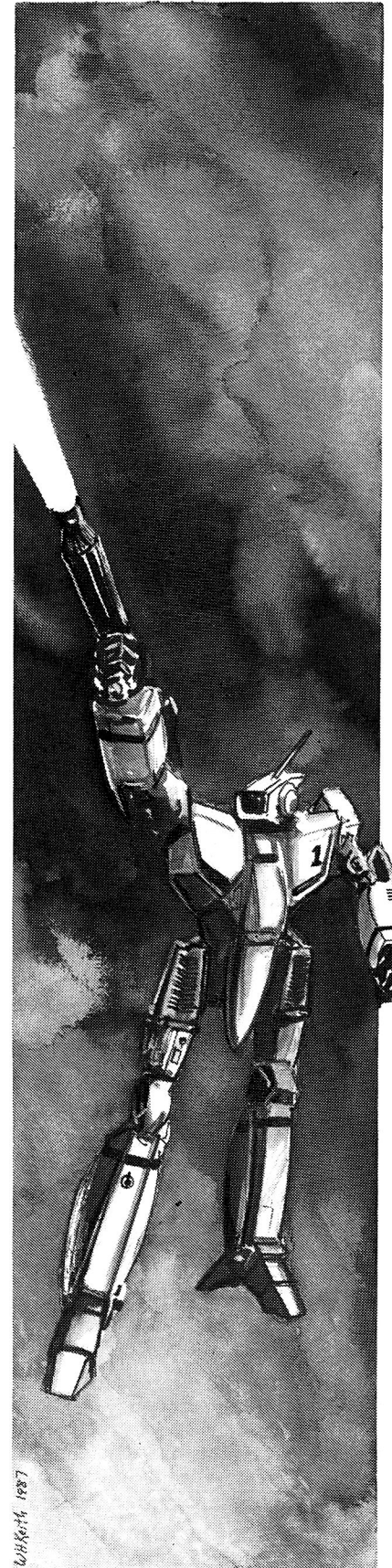
To quote the Terran military historian Winston Churchill during a similar trying time, when he was prime minister of a nation under deadly attack by a technically superior enemy, "I cannot promise this is the beginning of the end. I will promise rather that this is the end of the beginning."

We will never be so vulnerable to the Clans again.

With that note of limited optimism, let me tell you what we have in store for you in this issue. The rules on dual-cockpit combat which had to be censored last issue can now appear. Staffer Marcus Killegrew had used an example from the planet Twycross, which was at the time an extremely sensitive military objective, a planet which we were taking back from the Clans. The Federated Commonwealth could only tell us that the article was censored; they couldn't even tell us why. The revised version is in this issue. We have a Cobalt Coil story about the wounds a warrior's spirit can take...and be healed of. We have a first-person account about the fight for Kandis II, a gallant planet of the Free Rasalhague Republic now lost to the Clans. We have an example of the new designs which NAIS is coming up with to use against the Clans. At our readers' request, we have a new Hiring Hall. We hope you enjoy the issue.

— Hilary Ayer

Ginzburg, June 3051



BattleTechnology News Service

Wolcott Rearms

Swamp Valley, Wolcott, Draconis Combine, May 31 3051

The immediate area around here where the decisive challenge for Wolcott was fought and won is alive with prayer flags as the few who fell here are gratefully remembered. Hohiro Kurita fought a limited-scale battle here as a duel to decide the planet's future. The Genyosha (newly rechristened the *Yuutsu*, or Blue Devils) supplied the two regiments which were allowed to fight this battle. The terms of this battle promised that the Smoke Jaguars would take no action to retake this world if the Kuritan forces were victorious. And they were victorious.

House Kurita now has a base behind the enemy lines. Censorship forbids us to relate how the planet is being fortified, and which troops are being based here, but experienced MechWarriors can make their own assessment, probably with a fair chance of being right.

Honor to the Dragon!

Twycross Bounces Back

Camora City, Twycross, May 12, 3031

This war-torn planet seems to be well on the way to recovery now as the third in a series of relief cargo ships unloads for its mission of mercy. Twycross had never stopped fighting from June 2, 3050, when the Jade Falcons' Falcon Guard ships appeared insystem, until the end of September, when the last remnants of the Clan forces left the planet. Twycross is one of two planets which have ever been recaptured once taken by a Clan force. In June it was captured in a lightning-fierce short war. Although scattered guerilla forces maintained anti-Clan activity, the efforts of most citizens centered around staying alive.

Until September. When Federated Commonwealth JumpShips appeared insystem and it became apparent that the 10th Lyran Guards, the Kell Hounds, and the Ninth Federated Commonwealth RCT were attacking in force sufficient to retake the planet, the people of Twycross dug up their buried weapons and joined in with a vengeance. Cool-headed resistance groups jammed enemy communications near the cities, while back-country guides made contact somehow, anyhow, to aid their liberators.

It had been the general staff's theory that only second-line troops, garrison troops would remain on the planet. The Clans have seemed consistently to pull out their frontline shock troops after a planet is conquered so as to use them in the conquest of the next planet. Unfortunately for this theory, the scattered guerilla activities had warranted the attentions of the elite Falcon Guard.

Due to gallant action on many fronts (Kai Allard-Liao's action in blowing the reactor of his borrowed Hatchetman to bring down a pass on entire enemy company is only the best publicized), the Federated Commonwealth retook this world from the Clans' best warriors.

The damage to the cities was extensive but happened in quick battles, so it is easier to repair. The chief problem remaining to Twycross was that a year's food harvest had gone uncultivated and unharvested. The population of this planet required massive gifts of food to last the winter. Public and private agencies supplied food and medical aid; the resurgent spirit of the people of Twycross has accomplished the rest of the needed healing.

There was a motion before the legislature of Twycross to rename the planet "We Did It". The motion was defeated, but the feeling remains. Twycross is proud of itself.

Rhonda Snord Hired?

Sudeten, Federated

Commonwealth, May 24, 3051

Col Rhonda Snord, CO of Snord's Irregulars since her father Cranston's semiretirement, had a long meeting with Federated Commonwealth Field Marshal Nondi Steiner yesterday afternoon. This morning, she was closeted with General of the Armies Morgan Hasek-Davion. Speculation grows as to whether Snord's Irregulars is accepting a mission against the Clans.

The mystery is deepened because the current location of any Clan forces not garrisoning a captured world is unknown. Overheard dialog at Snord's museum on Clinton suggests that at least three DropShips full of MechWarriors will be involved. Will this be an ordinary raid against a Clan-held planet — or is Snord's Irregulars involved in a war of liberation?

In order to give a clear background to the events on Wolf's Dragoons world of Outreach which are so vital to the future of the Inner Sphere, BattleTechnology is reprinting several articles which discuss this controversial unit, and Jaime Wolf's recent staggering disclosures.

Not-So-Fearless Journalism

Censored By Wolf's Dragoons

February 6, 3031 *BattleTechnology Weekly News*

In ancient Terran times, the city-state of Rome built itself an empire. It lasted almost 800 years. At its largest, it covered two thirds of the known world, imposing within that territory the Pax Romanum, the Roman Peace. Under threat of most deadly destruction, no region could make war on another. No other nation dared to begin a war with Rome. The few tribes that fought did so as a last-ditch measure to avoid being absorbed by Rome.

The founders of this state were two brothers, children cast out by their kin who were nursed and raised by a wolf. A statue to this wolf, Rhea by name, stood in the Roman Forum until Rome fell.

Throughout the centuries, the legend persisted of lost children who were raised by wolves, raised as their own. The children were said to become more than human, gaining the power of the fighting animal without losing their loyalty or their humanity. Kipling's *Jungle Book* made popular the wolf-boy Mowgli, influencing the founders of today's Explorer Scout movement.

So there is a precedent.

In the 31st Century, if you wanted to raise your child to be like a wolf, which wolf would you choose?

No question. You'd choose Jaime Wolf of Wolf's Dragoons.

The Fourth Succession War left thousands of children orphaned. Some of these, like the fortunate children orphaned by biological warfare on Northwind, belonged to a large, close clan which took them in. But for the majority there were only impersonal agencies. Even on the richer planets, those agents were strained to the limit. Hearts were wrenched daily as the Inner Sphere grew all too familiar with orphaned children grubbing in garbage dumps.

Can you see the pieces of the puzzle taking shape?

Remember that Wolf's Dragoons had lost five of their six regiments to Takashi Kurita's bloody vendetta against them. After peace was signed they began a far-reaching plan of long-term recruitment. *Very* long term recruitment. It began with the children who were dependents of fallen Dragoons, but soon Wolf's agents (some of the best-known MechWarriors in the Inner Sphere, people whose reputations even an illiterate child might know) were sweeping the rubble-warrens of bombed-out cities, collecting children from overstressed child welfare agencies, adopting any child old enough to lisp the word "yes", when asked if it wanted a better life.

Normal recruitment has raised the Dragoons' numbers to three battalions. By 3050, the Dragoons will have fifty to a hundred new personnel trained specifically to their specs, children who were cast out by their kin (the adults of the Inner Sphere). And nurtured into a healthy adulthood by wolves.

We heard no objections to our printing this story about the Dragoons recruiting children. We got no static about quoting Natasha Kerensky. But a routine followup story several years later was instantly censored. While Wolf's Dragoons haven't got the support of a government agency, a visit from two hard-eyed individuals in black and red with wolf's head patches on their shoulders has enough clout to...well, if somebody gave you the choice of killing a routine story or getting onto the Dragoons' enemy list, how long would it take you to make up your mind? Uh huh, that's about how long it took us.

Even more mysterious; early in 3051, a Major Lilith Long sent us a note on Wolf's Dragoons' letterhead. "If you want to print that story about our schools, now would be a good time. It might even do some good."

BattleTechnology may back down once in a while, but we aren't stupid. Somewhere in this story is information that Wolf's Dragoons wants somebody to have. So although the story is a decade old, we're reprinting it.

BattleTechnology Weekly News, January 10 3039

In the early 3030's, a large amount of nonsense was generated about Wolf's Dragoons' recruitment of war orphans to raise as members of the unit. Morgan and Salome Ward Kell of the Kell Hounds took their young son Phelan for several long visits to the Dragoons' planet of Outreach. Prince Victor Steiner Davion spent a highly publicized fourth summer there in the care of the Dragoons' childhood professionals while his princely parents toured Outreach's facilities, sometimes being absent for days on end. After that stamp of approval, much of the outcry died down. With scandal quenched, the public soon lost interest.

We here at BattleTechnology thought you might like to see how the Dragoons raise children in wholesale lots. An anonymous source employed by the Dragoons gave us a look at their ambitious training program. Andolina Montoya, a child psychologist from the Savonburg Universities, analyzed the data for BattleTechnology.

"For much of their development these 'Young Wolves' lead similar lives to any other children in the Inner Sphere. They go to school for five hours a day, learning math, history, languages, spelling, the sciences...they tussle with each other on the playground and gripe about their homework. If their physical education classes are more martially oriented than most children's (how many 12-year-olds do you know who can field strip, clean, and reassemble a personal weapon in under twenty minutes?), shouting at play they look like ordinary happy kids."

"The obligatory courses in Tactics, Technical Skills, and Moral Philosophy in the early teen years, the survival and self-reliance classes which follow them, are all innovations which could be found in one utopian academy or another."

"There is one feature in the Young Wolves' training which is unique to the Dragoons. Remember, we are talking about hundreds of orphaned children, many of them couldn't even remember how it feels to be part of a family. The problem: how to simulate the necessary socialization process of belonging to a family? The brilliant solution of the Wolf's Dragoons' team is an artificial family called the 'Sibling Company'. Each group of fifty children has its own barracks, play area, school, and training course. They meet with other groups of children at the

central library and entertainment facilities. Each Sibling Company has round the clock coverage by the 'parent' teams which will remain with them throughout the growing process, thus giving stability and continuity in adult role model relationships as well as 'brothers' and 'sisters' to share that growing with. Each Sibling Company is encouraged to invent and to celebrate traditions of its own."

The child psychologists of Wolf's Dragoons are to be congratulated on their achievement. We here at BattleTechnology look forward to a new generation of well-adjusted Dragoons.

Kerensky Recruits a Kid

Dialogue overheard on LaBlon, August, 3030

Cast of Characters:

Colonel Natasha Kerensky, Wolf's Dragoons
Child about 7 years old, indeterminate gender

NK: Hey, your name Jacky?

(Suspicious stare, then a nod)

NK: I'm Natasha Kerensky. Allie says to tell you...er..."Ess-yeh, they're ok-weh".

(Jacky gets very still, says nothing.)

NK: (runs hand through hair; it stands up wildly)

Look, that's supposed to be a password. (Silence)

I'm no *good* at this sort of baby talk! (Silence) All

right, I'll describe Allie. He's maybe a meter and a

half high. His eyes are blue, and partly crossed. He

has dark brown hair. He...er...has a scar through

this eyebrow (gestures toward the left eye), and...

Jacky: (Mumbles something inaudible)

NK: (Leans closer) What did you say?

Jacky: What kind of scar?

NK: Good question! Shaped like a seven. (Realizes

that the child has probably never seen a school).

Like a line here and then a line that meets it there.

Jacky: OK.

NK: OK what?

Jacky: OK, come out. (A piece of wall moves aside.

Four ragged children crawl through it. One of them

whispers to Jacky) No drek? (to her) Hey, the Black

Widows? That Kerensky?

(NK nods wearily)

Jacky: What are you doing *here*?

NK: That's another good question. You coming or

not?

(She starts to walk away, slowly enough so the children can follow)

Reprint

The Wolf in His Den

Wolf City, Outreach, November 20, 3047

"The snake coiled to strike
The Wolf in his den
Trouble the hearts of
The bravest of men!"

from Let them Howl, title song of the hit musical of 3048

Wolf's Dragoons have made a bold return. The Inner Sphere is used to the Dragoons' aggressive attitude on a military front, but here they have been fighting a harder battle, fighting the enemy that most mercenary units fall prey to. We're talking about economics.

At the end of the Fourth Succession War, thanks to Coordinator Takashi Kurita's vendetta against them, the Dragoons had been reduced from six regiments to one. By treaty with the Federated Commonwealth, the Dragoons had been given the world of Outreach, near the Terran Core, as a homeworld. To quote Takashi Kurita in FASA's *More Tales of the Black Widows*, "Wolf says the Dragoons have gone to Outreach to lick their wounds. I say they've gone to Outreach to die."

Some few analysts felt that the Dragoons would do what they had done before; they'd disappear only to come back with new 'Mechs and MechWarriors.

But the Dragoons never do what's expected of them. They recruited from the Inner Sphere, not desperately filling their numbers, but accepting a few of the best of the fighters who wished to join them. They recruited children (see 'Censored by Wolf's Dragoons', elsewhere in this issue) to train as the next generation of Dragoons. Natasha Kerensky was not kept on kid detail for long. In March of 3031, Jaime Wolf and Natasha Kerensky held a press conference. They announced that the Black Widow Battalion was ready for hire and meaner than ever. The Black Widow Company had been in the thick of the fighting throughout the Misery Campaign and the Fourth Succession War, but the skill of the unit and its leader was so great that during the entirety of the campaign, they had lost only one Rifleman. Now expanded to battalion size, the Black Widows would further break with tradition by accepting only short-term contracts. The world Tsinghai, part of the Sarna March of the Federated Commonwealth, hired them first, to beat off an invasion by the Fourth Free World Guards. The Widows' reputation has built all over again during these last two decades as a pricy defender of lost causes.

The hiring fees from the Black Widows were a welcome boost to the Dragoons' finances, but what came next made all the difference.

In desolate worlds throughout the Inner Sphere, mercenaries hiring halls had sprung up. The best known one is Galaina, in the Lyran portion of the Federated Commonwealth, but they are much of a pattern; worlds where solo mercenaries and penniless units find their way, trying to keep in training while they wait for prospective employers. Jaime Wolf set up Wolf City as a hiring hall, but a high-class one. Representatives of employers and merc units met in tidy offices; the on-line hiring listings were accurate for all the Inner Sphere, and most of the Periphery Realms. Negotiations were carried on in dignity and privacy; while the listing of Wolf's Dragoons as guarantors of the terms of contracts made them worry-free. Support facilities sprang up; hotels, campgrounds, docking and repair facilities, meeting rooms, food emporiums, and recreation facilities paid substantial fees to establish businesses in Wolf City.

Wolf's Dragoons has also permitted mercenary and House units who can come up with the money to apply for advanced training with their trainers and facilities. The Kell Hounds, the Kathil Uhlans, Snord's Irregulars, several of the St Ives Regiments, and others have taken advantage of this 'unit level graduate work'.

For decades, the Dragoons have been known for secrecy, for keeping their business and their space private. It surprised the media to be invited in. The third and fourth line units who would never have considered finding themselves on the same world with the Dragoons except in nightmares have taken even longer to adjust. But the Dragoons have found a way to invite the Inner Sphere and its cash onto their homeworld and still keep their privacy.

In Wolf City, and for a five kilometer distance around the city borders, facilities for offworlders have sprung up like mushrooms. NOWHERE ELSE ON OUTREACH IS IT SAFE FOR THEM TO VENTURE! Most of the world is offlimits to anyone who is not a member or dependent of Wolf's Dragoons. The sizeable remains of the Star League Olympics training grounds are offlimits, though the stadium itself is within the Visitor Limited Area. Facilities, mines, factories, barracks, and domiciles of the Dragoons are offlimits.

*Photo, facing page
Wolf Clan 'Mechs on New Oslo, July 3050 (Vulture & Thor)*

Jaime Wolf's Big Secret

The Clans have identified themselves by name as they challenged us for our worlds. Clan Jade Falcon. Clan Smoke Jaguar. Clan Nova Cat. Clan Ghost Bear. Clan Steel Viper. Clan Wolf.

Colonel 'Weird Wayne' Waco of Waco's Rangers has often accused the Dragoons of being spies for some unnamed enemy. Usually the sort of force that crawls out of a bottle when the DTs are out in force. As the Terran Philosopher John Smith used to say, "Even a stopped clock is right twice a day." It seems that Colonel Waco, for all his paranoia, was correct. Let us review a bit of unit history.

On April 11, 3005, a convoy of JumpShips with heavy escort entered the system of the planet Delos in the Federated Suns. The tiny garrison estimated that there was transport enough for five full regiments of BattleMechs. The commander of the garrison was relieved beyond measure when instead of attacking, the force identified itself as "Wolf's

Dragoons" and asked for a job. Prince Ian Davion hired them as soon as the message was relayed to him. They shored up the Capellan March for him for five years, then left to take a contract with the Capellan Confederation, though they had been offered a substantial reenlistment bonus. Their contract with House Liao prohibited their use against their most recent employer; in this case, House Davion.

During their stay in Capellan service, they successfully evaded both court politics and the 'Company Store' attempt at forcing them into permanent indentured service. When they moved on to House Marik in 3014, they must have felt a sense of relief. This relief was to be short-lived. The Dragoons had signed on with Duke Anton Marik, who was attempted to oust his brother Janos from the Captain-Generalcy. Despite brave and intelligent support from the Dragoons on all fronts, Anton turned against the Dragoons. When the Dragoons refused to be broken up into small units and scattered, Anton



reacted by slaughtering liaison officer Joshua Wolf and twenty seven other hostages, among whom were Jaime Wolf's wife and daughters. This brought about the famous Vengeance Raid on New Delos which killed Anton Marik. The Dragoons withdrew to Second Chance to await attack by Janos Marik. Instead, he offered them a generous contract, saying that as one survivor of a fratricidal war, he could sympathize with another. (Janos' son and heir had joined in Anton's rebellion).

Their five years of service to House Marik culminated in the famous raid on the Defiance Metals Factory deep in the Myoo Mountains of Hesperus II. Outnumbered, with a tenuous supply line deep into enemy territory, Wolf's Dragoons lost the battle. But their dogged and ingenious fighting brought their reputation to a peak.

After this action, Wolf's Dragoons recruited a number of MechWarriors and, in 3019, made a mysterious journey out to a base in the Periphery. They returned with BattleMechs, DropShips, and repair supplies. It should be mentioned that in an age where most fighting equipment is assembled of cobbled-together spare parts, the Dragoons' equipment appeared to be factory-new.

Next came service to House Steiner. The usual clause in the contract prohibited Wolf's Dragoons from being used against their previous employer, so they went to the Kurita front, serving notably against the best Kuritan regiments, earning the enmity of the commander of the Second Sword of Light Regiment.

Takashi Kurita wooed the Dragoons with an excellent contract. In 3022 they went over to House Kurita. Despite an excellent relationship with General Minobu Tetsuhara, the Kuritan Liaison Officer, their relationship with the Draconis Combine went sour. There were attempts to make Jaime Wolf break the clause against service versus House Steiner. More serious, there was an attempt to coerce the Dragoons into becoming permanent House Kurita troops, breaking apart their command structure. Some of this pressure has been traced to Greig Samosonov, military head of the Galedon District, and Palmer Conti, commander of the Second Sword of Light, privileged as an advisor to Coordinator Takashi.

The Dragoons trained a unit called the Ryuken in their tactics; this unit is the nucleus of today's Ryoken regiments. Samsonov faked Dagoon 'atrocities' on civilian populations, even against ComStar. The deteriorating relationship with their employer peaked with a regimental level 'honor duel' on a planet well-named Misery. Tetsuhara and the five Ryuken regiments, together with 8th Sword of Light and the 17th and 21st Galedon Regulars were assigned to fight the Dragoons. Honor demanded that each side fight till it could fight no more. It was a bloodbath.

Tetsuhara committed seppuku despite Wolf's protests. The Dragoons took a contract with the Federated Suns which did NOT contain a clause against attacking the Draconis Com-

bine. During the Fourth Succession War, the Dragoons had Takashi Kurita's exclusive attention as he flung regiment after regiment at them in a determination to obliterate the unit. Wolf's Dragoons survived the Fourth Succession War, but they were reduced to one regiment where they had been six. By their agreement with House Davion, the Dragoons had gained permanent title to a coreward world called Outreach, former site of the Star League Olympics, a planet of excellent Star League era facilities; training courses and buildings.

WOLF'S DRAGOONS FOUGHT FOR EACH OF THE SUCCESSOR HOUSES IN TURN! They had an excellent chance to judge the state of technology, of military readiness, of defensive capability of each major house as they were employed.

Clan Smoke Jaguar. Clan Jade Falcon. Clan Wolf.

Have you seen it yet? They are not Wolf's Dragoons. They are the Wolf Dragoons. They have always been an information-gathering agency for Clan Wolf.

That was not Jaime Wolf's big surprise.

The big surprise is that the majority of Wolf's Dragoons have changed their allegiance. Natasha Kerensky has returned to the Clans with a few of the Wolf warriors. But most of the Dragoons are staying here.

Jaime Wolf called together the leaders of the Inner Sphere to give them hard information about the Clans, their purposes, potential, and tactics. His son Mackenzie Wolf, together with Christian Kell of the Kell Hounds, is training the sons and daughters of the Inner Sphere leaders in Clan MechWarrior tactics.

The Clans are descended from Kerensky's Exiles. They never stopped developing tech. They have specialized training programs to use that new tech. They breed for optimum characteristics for MechWarriors, aerospace pilots, and infantry. They have predictable psychological profiles.

Where are they now? Apparently their leader was killed during the fight for Rasalhague. Now they must regroup on their capital planet to elect a new one. We don't know how long this will take, because we don't know how the procedure works or what their politics are. We have had some hints that they do have politics, and do disagree with each other. Their intention is to reestablish the Star League, but on their terms. They are definitely coming back.

"If we are to fight the Clans and win, we *must* understand their capabilities and tactics. The Dragoons are willing to show us how. I'm a practical man when it comes to survival. If someone hands you an effective weapon, I say it is your duty to use it."

First Prince Hanse Davion
to Captain-General Thomas Marik
April, 3051, Outreach Meeting

BattleTechnology News Service

"Jaime Wolf was a traitor to us. Now he is a traitor to his former masters. He tells us this to reassure us that now he is telling the truth! I do not yet accuse him of being a lackey to the Federated Commonwealth. I have always been fair in my judgements. If he is not in Hanse Davion's pocket, he has only to prove it to me."

Romano Liao to her children

"The St Ives Compact will put its production facilities and its manpower behind the effort to keep invaders out of the Inner Sphere. You'd have to be insane not to see that we all are in the most deadly danger, and that this is no time for petty bickering..."

But since my sister *is* insane, there's no telling what the Capellan Confederation will do!"

Candace Liao to her children

"You want the Free Worlds League to retool its factories to production of unproven designs of BattleMechs and war materiel. You want us to devote all possible production to turning out supplies for you to fight *your* war to save *your* frontier.

You have offered a plan whereby we see our first payment five years down the line. So while we support your war, we grow ever more beleaguered in our efforts against acts of piracy and banditry from so-called independent periphery systems.

No, no, Prince Hanse. The Free Worlds League did not grow strong by accepting investments which did not provide any return. You will have to prove to us that the Clans intend harm to House Marik.

And then in terms borrowed from the Friday Night Poker games, you'll have to sweeten the pot a little. What is in it for us?"

Captain-General Thomas Marik to First Prince Hanse Davion

We don't call them spies. Our undercover people are journalists of the highest caliber. They must live for months or even years cut off from their families, working very hard at fulltime jobs which are not theirs, always in jeopardy lest they be discovered. We don't call them spies, we call them top reporters.

Yes, we do have undercover reporters. By going underground, BattleTechnology reporters have uncovered a covert PPC factory on Xanthe III, a slaver outlet from Port Krin in the Taurian Concordat, a smuggling operation on Alshain...

But no story has taken us longer to get than this one.

At the end of the Fourth Succession War, our former editor Bob Carter sent operatives to infiltrate Wolf's Dragoons. Three who attempted to join as MechWarriors were discovered and returned to our custody the worse for wear. Several others joined as cooks helpers, repair crew, even astechs. We had thought they were undetected. From time to time they've smuggled out a news item to us; mostly they've kept undercover waiting for a big story.

We thought it was lucky when they were all assigned to the Summit Conference. When Hanse Davion and Justin Allard fought through the Dragoon's live-fire course, one of our people was in target maintenance. When Romano Liao refused to believe that the Clans were Kerensky's descendents, one of ours was refilling water pitchers.

Enough 'lucky coincidences' add up to design. We knew all along that Jaime Wolf was smarter than most people. Now we have to admit that he's outsmarted this magazine. He knew who our people were, and he had them assigned where the news from this conference would leak out.

Wolf's Dragoons want the Inner Sphere to know the truth about the Clans. They informed every leader in the Inner Sphere. But just in case those leaders continue their usual policy of "We'll tell you whatever is good for you to know", the Dragoons are making certain that the news media are informed. Not because they love us, but so that you will be informed, and you will be prepared to fight back.

Our agents are still in place. We at BattleTechnology pledge to bring to you every bit of information we can possibly collect, information on the Clans, and information on the tactics and conflicts of the leaders of the Inner Sphere.

"Jaime Wolf is a man of his word. He is one of the foremost military thinkers of our time. And he's on our side. I think you should be paying him well to lead you all in battle. But then, I have a prejudice in favor of winning battles. If you don't what are you doing here?"

Anonymous Mercenary

CAPTAIN-GENERAL: THOMAS OR MYNDO?

BY RICARDO ORTIZ

LEST YOU READERS SHOULD THINK THAT CENSORSHIP IS A THING OF THE PAST FOR BATTLETECHNOLOGY, LET US GIVE THE LATEST EXAMPLE. IN OUR DECEMBER 3050 ISSUE, THE ARTICLES GIVEN HERE WERE NOT PRINTED IN OUR FREE WORLDS LEAGUE EDITION. AN ARTICLE REPRINTED FROM BATTLETECHNOLOGY WEEKLY NEWS TOOK THEIR PLACE. THE CHANGES WERE MADE BY OUR FREE WORLDS LEAGUE STAFF ON ATRÉUS UNDER THE FORCEFUL PERSUASION OF A UNIT FROM THE FIRST MARIK GUARDS.

Since 15 December 3036, Thomas Marik has ably led the Free Worlds League. Or has he?

Thomas is the first Captain-General who has been able to harness the Free Worlds League's squabbling internal states as a team. He has accomplished this by astute political maneuvers in Parliament, pervasive control of the bureaucracy and, perhaps, with the active aid of ComStar?

Documents exist confirming Thomas' release from ComStar service at the request of his father Captain-General Janos Marik. The elder Marik took this step apparently to provide a competent heir to the Captain-Generalcy; allegedly none of his other children were, in his opinion, worthy of the position. It remains officially unknown where Thomas spent eighteen months recuperating from his injuries in the 1 June 3035 explosion that killed Janos Marik and his son Duggan, whom many had seen as heir-apparent. The central question is: is Thomas Marik actually a free

agent, or is he still under the orders of Primus Myndo Waterly?

In 3029 ComStar began stationing military forces at its various stations throughout the Inner Sphere and Periphery, ostensibly to protect the stations. The ComGuard forces stationed in the territory of the Free Worlds League are the smallest in proportion to the stations they protect than they are anywhere else in the Known Sphere of space. The LCCC (Marik's combined military force command) has had to accept a ComStar military liaison (in fairness it must be stated that liaisons were exchanged). The LCCC, with one exception, opposed the idea from the first. Only Thomas' forceful insistence led the generals to accept the plan.

Until the advent of Thomas as Captain-General, the Free Worlds League enjoyed only typical relations with ComStar: neutrality combined with intense curiosity about ComStar's inner workings. Since '36, that attitude has dramatically changed. Free Worlds League government dispatches enjoy rapid transmission privileges that are the envy of the other Houses. Only Rasalhague comes close to enjoying the same quality of service. Free Worlds League surveillance at HPG stations has dropped dramatically, and relations between ComStar and the Free Worlds League are at an all-time high.

The question remains. Is Thomas his own man? Thus far, the Free Worlds League has continued to plow its own furrow, but that could change in an instant. After all, Thomas spent many years as a ComStar acolyte and must often look back fondly on those years of quietude.

As an individual, Thomas retains many attributes that are considered to be 'typical' of ComStar personnel. He never

publicly gives vent to excessive emotion. Though he is a persuasive speaker, he never uses the bombastic style so typical of his late cousin Duncan, or the somber rhetoric of Janos. He pays far more heed to scientific research for its own sake, much more than any Marik in several reigns. Many of these projects are undertaken with ComStar teams, or have ComStar personnel directly attached to the various projects. This practice is not universally accepted in the League's scientific community; it has caused eminent scientists and engineers to enter the private sector.

It can only be conjectured how much control ComStar exercise over Thomas, if any. During the era since the end of the Fourth Succession War, no crisis has come up between House Marik and ComStar to test the Captain-General's loyalty. The current invasion of the Inner Sphere, with ComStar's insistence upon serving as neutral liason, will probably give the public a clue as to the final loyalties of Thomas Marik.

If, for example, the Lyran portion of the Federated Commonwealth falls, the Free Worlds League is next in the line of invasion, just ahead of the Capellan Confederation. Obviously, Thomas would fight to defend his realm. Suppose, however, that ComStar interdicted service to the Free Worlds League? They've done it before, but hundreds of years ago. The Free Worlds League was ComStar's first test of Interdiction as a potent 'weapon' in their efforts to control through communication. In such a case, would Thomas attack the ComGuard garrison forces? Would he meekly accept the situation? Only the actual event would tell, for Thomas is a very difficult man to read. One thing is certain; his response would astound the Inner Sphere.

We cannot state with certainty whether or not Thomas is controlled by ComStar. We also cannot ignore the very real possibility that he is.

Editor's Note: The author, Ricardo Ortiz, is currently in hiding under an assumed name. Mail to him will be forwarded through our Andurien office.

BATTLE TECHNOLOGY STAFF COME FROM A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT WORLDS AND BACKGROUNDS. THEY DIFFER WIDELY IN OPINIONS ABOUT THE REASONS BEHIND THE ACTIONS OF THE LEADERS OF THE INNER SPHERE. JANE METYARD, WHO COMES FROM THE ORIENTE PROVINCE OF THE FREE WORLDS LEAGUE, DISAGREED WITH ORTIZ.

Dual Cockpit Rules

Continued From Page 15

Due to increased mobility, a DCC 'Mech is harder to hit.

Moved 0-2, +1 to hit

Moved 3-4 +2 to hit

Moved 5-6 +3 to hit

Moved 7-9 +4 to hit

Moved 10+, +5 to hit

A 'Mech that jumps 6 hexes is at +4.

Gunner: -1 to all Gunnery Rolls

Attacker Movement Modifiers

Stationery: 0

Walked: 0

Ran: +2

Jumped: +2

Sensor hits add +1 not +2 to rolls.

A prone DCC 'Mech is at +1, not +2

A DCC Gunner can engage two targets at no modifier for the second target. The third target is at +1.

Should either MechWarrior in a DCC 'Mech be absent or incapacitated, the other can pilot the 'Mech with the following modifiers:

Pilot: All Pilot bonuses are lost while attempting combat. All Gunnery rolls at +1.

Gunner: All Gunnery bonuses lost. All Piloting rolls are at +1.

'Mech Construction, Hit Sheet Details

A dual cockpit adds one ton in weight, one critical space to the head. When constructing the Critical Hit Table for the head, the two spaces should be marked 'Cockpit:Pilot' and 'Cockpit:Gunner'. As described in the text, a hit to one does not knock out the other, but forces the 'Mech to be piloted or fought at a disadvantage.

POINT OF VIEW

LIKE FATHER: LIKE SON

BY JANE METYARD

Though Hanse Davion of the Federated Commonwealth is known as The Fox, Janos Marik could well have been known as The Spider. He was capable of plots that took decades to unfold. In the jockeying for position that took place between the Free Worlds League and the Capellan Confederation in the first years of this century, he showed an ability to keep Maxmilian Liao at a psychological disadvantage; to force the Capellan Chancellor to attack where and when the Free Worlds League was ready for him; to seem to have a weak garrison just where Liao agents couldn't get reliable information. It shows an unappreciated strength in the Free Worlds League that after 3018 Maxmilian chose to concentrate his efforts on the Federated Suns, ignoring the Free Worlds League in his efforts at conquest. It took Takashi Kurita acting in concert with Maxmilian Liao to get Janos at a disadvantage in the formation of the Concord of Kapteyn.

Our readers will remember this Concord as the response of Houses Kurita, Marik, and Liao to the joining of Houses Steiner and Davion to form the Federated Commonwealth. Both of these took place just before the Fourth Succession War. Janos had thought himself to be negotiating with Coordinator Takashi only; Takashi had covertly opened negotiations with House Liao. Janos went to a secret Heads-of-Houses-only meeting with the Coordinator on Kapteyn, only to find two men waiting for him rather than one. Coordinator Kurita is said to have put it bluntly, "You make a pact with both of us or with neither. The two of us will make a pact regardless of what you do. I have no interest in attacking the Free Worlds League. Yet. Only the signers of this pact will be pledged to mutual aid. Consider well before you stalk out of this room."

Before the rebellion led by Janos' brother Anton in 3014, the heir-apparent was oldest son Gerald. Gerald was in-

duced by the charismatic Anton to join the rebellion. Duke Anton had the fortune to hire Wolf's Dragoons — and the idiocy to betray them. End of rebellion. End of Anton and Gerald (End also of Joshua Wolf, brother to Jaime and co-founder of the unit, killed by Anton's men as part of that betrayal). Janos, aging even in 3014, had the leadership of House Marik returned to him. He had five potential heirs, each of whom had a problem. Of his four children, Kristin only wanted to be a MechWarrior. The height of her ambitions was to have her own freelance unit. Kristin's Krushers was formed in 3037, with help from Janos' will, and its executor Uncle Thomas. The unit has seen service with ComStar and the Free Worlds League. Paul had no interest in becoming Captain-General. He is not interested in politics or warfare. His daughter, Captain Christine Marik of the Second Legionaires, is third in line as Thomas' heir. When Thomas assumed the Captain-Generalcy, he named Paul's only child as his heir by default, failing any heirs of his body. Thomas' natural daughter Isis was at that time a well-kept secret. These three candidates seem to have been bargained out of their rights of succession.

Then there was brother Duggan, the popular military leader. He and politically-astute cousin Duncan were the two obvious successors, each with a large and well-armed following. To choose either would initiate a civil war. Having just survived one fratricidal conflict, Janos had no desire to subject the Free Worlds League to another. Neither man had the abilities Janos prized, of subtlety and patience.

So much is observable history. I cannot prove that Janos planned as early as 3020, to make Thomas his heir. Thomas was young at the time, and seen as a colorless and scholarly individual. What he needed to be a viable heir was a powerful alliance. In another time and place, Janos would have found him a marriage alliance. In fact, what he wooed

for his son was ComStar. Remember that ComStar under Primus Julian Tiepolo was preserving its centuries-old image of benign neutrality. It was shrewd of Janos to see under the surface, to the party waiting in the wings which would unveil ComStar as a crushing military power.

There is no evidence that Thomas' desire to enter ComStar and to forego allegiance to his House of birth was anything but sincere. How difficult would it have been to persuade an impressionable and sensitive young man that his duty and an interesting lifework lay in the service of Jerome Blake's order? Especially for the father that he loved?

Thomas had a quietly favorable career in ComStar, culminating with his appointment to Precentor of Son Hoa (Lyran Commonwealth) in 3029.

Thomas was released from ComStar in 3031, at the urgent request of his father. Janos had had a stroke which disabled him in 3030. In the interim both Duggan and Duncan claimed to be regent for the ailing leader. Once Thomas had shown Janos' carefully prepared documents naming him as heir-designate, the two adopted a waiting position. For four years Thomas ruled wisely and consolidated his position. (It seems that he received secret tutoring in strategy and tactics from his ComStar allies during these years.)

In 3035 Janos recovered enough to resume his rule. Andurien foresaw a period of weak central leadership and chose that time to rebel. During a meeting of the House Marik leadership to formulate a strategy, the bombing occurred. Thomas was thought to have died. Duncan took the Captain-Generalcy. For eighteen months Thomas recovered...somewhere. The odds are nearly 100% that it was a ComStar somewhere. It is certain that, when he reappeared before a stunned parliament while Duncan was in the field in Andurien, Thomas was exceedingly well informed on every aspect of the current political situation and well able to take advantage of it.

It was a lucky break when Duncan was killed by the rebels. That was the only 'luck' that Thomas needed. He consolidated power brilliantly, finishing off the rebellion in 3040 with the other Free Worlds League provinces solidly behind him. It was clear to students of political theory that Thomas was acting on a long-held and well-thought-out plan.

The question is — whose plan?

If you must look behind Thomas Marik for a powerful mind directing his actions, you need look no further than the father who selected him. Janos Marik charted a course toward power for his son that took decades to accomplish.

Thomas is now making his own plans. He has assumed direct control over the chaotic formerly-free states of the Free Worlds League, a task at which no Captain-General before him was able to succeed. He has played 'who is my ally?' with the Federated Commonwealth, the Capellan Confederation, the Magistracy of Canopus and the Taurian Concordat for a decade. He will be a major factor in the possible Inner Sphere-wide alliance against the Clans Invaders.

But he stands on the shoulders of an unacknowledged great statesman.

Janos Marik, his own father.



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Dual Cockpit Combat: Are Two Heads Better Than One?

by Marcus Killebrew and Jacob Holloway

The battle for Twycross; this desperate gamble by the AFFC (Armed Forces of the Federated Commonwealth) is being touted as a pivotal battle on the scale of the torching of New Vandenberg in the Reunification or Kerensky's Battle For Terra.

New tactics, 'Davion Bravado', 'Steiner Determination', and daring planning are all major reasons reporters are giving for the victory. But facts are that two daring people and one Hatchetman turned the tide and won the day for the Inner Sphere's largest state.

Thanks to BattleTechnology reporters and courageous chroniclers from the FASA Corporation, we all know of Kai Allard-Liao's bravery against a regiment of Jade Falcons. Yet without his unnamed co-pilot to assist him he could never have held off the Clan forces long enough to destroy that key pass, burying the Falcons under a mountain of stone. (Ed note: See the novel *Lethal Heritage*, by Michael A Stackpole, for a more complete explanation of this incident.)

This accidental teaming of pilot and co-pilot brings to light an idea that has too long been forgotten. Four hundred years ago Star League Battlemasters with expanded command cockpits led the elite regiments of the era. Though it is an old idea, the concept of multi-use cockpits is only now being explored in depth. Since the fall of the Star League, technology has concerned itself with quantity, not progress. This priority has been maintained to such an extent that even simple upgrades in technology are often lost to the military treadmill. Today after 300 years of deadly war, we have seen a birth of new thought and fresh ideas which has given the unique Battlemaster cockpit a handful of new cousins.

Exploration of Head Space

In the Capellan Confederation, research concentrates on strengthening an undersized army. Scout tanks take ad-

vantage of larger crew space to increase the range of their patrols. BattleMech researchers are conducting research to extend the patrol range of 'Mechs. One solution is to expand the cockpit of Vindicators, Whitworths, Grasshoppers, and Ravens. By sacrificing a small amount of firepower, researchers hope to instal a small cabin capable of supporting two MechWarriors for four to five days. Success so far has been limited to a small number of test models.

The Banzai Weapons Company has recently announced plans to improve on the unique Hatchetman ejection systems. Scientists plan to move much of the cockpit sensors and avionics into the chest section. The space opened up in the head by this move is to be filled with a larger fuel tank, stronger rocket motors, and retractable steering vanes. Team Banzai hopes to extend the ejection range of the head assembly to at least 25 km. We can assume that success would mean the Wolfhound and Axman would also see these modifications on their newer models.

House Kurita's 'secret alliance' with ComStar netted them a number of Star League Battlemasters. Kanrei Theodore Kurita immediately recognized their tactical value (on occasions during the 3039 war, he gave up his trademark Orion to take the back seat in a Battlemaster), and ordered research into incorporating the design into other command 'Mechs. While the classic Kurita command 'Mech, the Dragon, is too small to sacrifice the tonnage for such specialized equipment, the 90 ton Cyclops may very well see a resurrection as a command 'Mech.

Controversy in Results

Perhaps the most common and controversial design is the DCC, Dual Cockpit Combat System. The basic intent of this system is to separate the tasks of piloting and gunnery into separate systems and roles. It provides a two-seated cockpit with specialized controls to increase efficiency.

Though it's commonly thought to be a NAIS brainchild, the DCC has actually evolved in two separate Houses and four organizations. The New Avalon Institute of Science built its ideas into the VNT-1A Ventilator (Ed Note: The original Ventilator appeared in *BattleTechnology* # 15). While the Ventilator was not a true Dual Combat System, the presence of the Weapons System Technician greatly reduced the pressure put on the MechWarrior. Recent work at NAIS produced three Ventilator prototypes. Two of these are nearly identical to the original, while the third is the first NAIS working model of a DCC 'Mech, with all weapons controlled from the gunner's seat.

House Kurita originally came across references to the Ventilator design in their Grey Death computer core. It wasn't until their DCMS forces encountered the original NAIS version of the Ventilator that DCMS researchers began research to create their own DCC systems. It is rumored that a mercenary company called Brendon's Bashers has field tested a production model against the Smoke Jaguars on Chupadero.

Before we were asked to leave Sudeten, we learned that a Steiner mercenary unit, the Wyld Stallions, possesses two 'Mechs with battletested Dual Combat Cockpits. (Ed Note: During the major Federated Commonwealth planning session which proceeded the action on Twycross, reporter Holloway is alleged to have used his friendship with certain cadets to gain access to the AFFC's main Battle Computer. The charge resulted in the *BattleTechnology DropShip* being required to leave Sudeten with all personnel on the next available transport. Without commenting on the charges, *BattleTechnology* wishes to thank Field Marshal Lisa Steiner for her aid in resolving an unfortunate misunderstanding.)

The Controversy

Despite being proven in testing by two House Armies and battlefield testing by two mercenary units, the DCC is far from gaining widespread acceptance. The largest storm of controversy revolves around the need for using two fully trained MechWarriors to pilot a single 'Mech. Opponents to the DCC cite the required training time (at least four months) which these teams must spend before they can perform at regular House standards. An additional four to eight months of training is required before the team begins to surpass individual pilots of comparable experience.

The greatest advantage as shown by experimental teams is the greatly increased 'Mech performance and weapons accuracy. With each MechWarrior able to concentrate on one job, he performs that job with marked improvement. The Gunner becomes more accurate; the Pilot more agile. The secondary controls at each station ensure that either MechWarrior can perform any duty of the 'Mech should the other be busy or injured. It should be noted that each station

is laid out with the controls specific to the job most accessible.

While the DCC is still controversial, the Stallions and NAIS intend to implement DCC pilot training programs. If nothing else, they both hope that MechWarriors trained in this manner will make excellent lancemates in a conventional lance.

Simulation Rules for the DCC

To receive the advantages for Dual Combat Cockpits *all* of the listed requirements must be met.

All characters must have the skill 'DCC Training' at level 3, and a designated training partner.

New characters must purchase DCC training at the cost of 3 pts for three levels. If choosing Academy or University packages, he may exchange one of his level 2 skills for three levels of DCC training at no additional cost. He may also exchange a level 1 skill for this training at the cost of one skill point.

Established characters must purchase one level of DCC Training at normal skill costs to begin training. After four months they may increase to level 2 at normal cost. After eight months the 3rd and final level may be purchased. If the characters train for twelve full months, the third level is free.

Two characters with DCC training who did not train together must train for four months to repurchase the third level in DCC. If they train together for nine months, this level is free.

A character may never have more than one partner at a time.

Training constitutes at least four hours a day six days a week. Time not spent in training is not counted.

DCC pilots must have a properly modified 'Mech. To modify an existing 'Mech requires a Tech with Tech/Mech 4, Tech/Elec 3, Engineering 4, Computer 3, and a BattleMech repair facility capable of full reconstruction.

Level 1 DCC pilots perform together at +1 to all rolls

Level 2 DCC pilots perform at normal modifiers.

At level 3, the following advantages are gained:

Pilot : -1 to all piloting rolls.

Pilot does not have to make a skill roll until he receives 30 pts of damage in one turn.

If the Pilot makes a successful skill roll at +6 he can keep a 'Mech standing after losing a leg./

'Mech's MPs and stability are unaffected by the first destroyed leg actuator. When second actuator is lost, regular modifiers apply.

A successful roll at +8 allows a pilot to keep his 'Mech standing after its second Gyro hit.

A +6 roll allows the 'Mech to walk with a gyro hit.

Continued on Page 11



Hiring Hall

Henri Merchante, Duke of Altoona

As a special service to its mercenary readers, BattleTechnology presents this column describing a potential employer, whether in the Inner Sphere or beyond. We will range from Great Houses through wealthy or powerful individuals, corporations, or institutes which periodically require soldiers-for-hire.

A three-letter coding system has been developed to rate each employer named in this column. Each letter, ranging from A (very good) to Z (very bad) provides insight into possible advantages or disadvantages associated with hiring out to the employer in question. The areas rated in this code are:

NEED: How frequently does the employer require mercenaries? Code values of A through G indicate a nearly continual need for mercenary forces of various types, Values of U through Z suggest that mercenary openings are relatively rare.

PAY: How well does the employer pay? Code Values of A-G indicate above-average pay scales. Values of U through Z indicate poor pay, or a history of noncompliance with mercenary contracts.

CONDITIONS: What are the usual conditions under which mercenaries work? Values of A-G indicate relatively good conditions - access to R&R facilities, service on an earthlike world, etc. Values of U-Z suggest bad or unpleasant conditions such as service on an isolated outpost far from recreational facilities, guard duty at a remote prison or forced labor facility, or a hitch on a world with an unusually hostile environment.

Duke Henri Marchant
Rating Code: H/F/L

SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Named after a former major rail center in the state of Pennsylvania in the old United States of Terra, Altoona is a center of Jump Ship traffic in the Kilbourne PDZ of the Federated Commonwealth. As such, it is a fairly prosperous Earthlike planet of 300 million people, with more than adequate R&R facilities for hired mercenaries and local militia alike. Indeed, until the fourth Succession War, our conditions rating would have been an "A". After the war broke out, and ComStar hit the Federated Suns with its Interdiction, tensions have risen measurably between the local troops (and the population in general) and the ComGuards garrison guarding the HPG station next to the capitol city of Badelaire. Primus Myndo Waterly "raised the ante" by stationing 'Mechs at this facility, as well as all others, and reliable reports tell of

skirmishes between ComGuard 'Mech patrols and those of the local militia. The government, both local and planetary, has suppressed the results as much as possible, but it appears the local militia got the worst of the fighting.

The local militia is particularly handicapped due to the fact that the Kilbourne PDZ has been fairly peaceful, bordering nothing but empty space, with not even a Periphery pirate realm next door to keep the defenders on their toes or boost its planets higher on military equipment procurement lists. Consequently, the locals have little or no combat experience, and only a lone, half-strength regiment on Altoona (many of whose 'Mechs were hastily rushed in as reinforcements from other planets in the PDZ after the skirmishes). To cap the local militia's problems, many of the newly-designated 1st (and only) Altoona Grenadiers' 'Mechs are literal museum pieces as to both age and models, with the heavy 'Mechs being all Mackie, Striker, and Emperor 'Mechs, while the recon lances have Chameleons instead of even Locusts. At first, Davion's preoccupation with the Liao and Kurita fronts kept reinforcements and modern equipment from being sent in, then it was preparations for the War of '39. After that, the improved Kurita and Marik military machines had to be kept a careful watch on. Now the Clan invasion has caused the best units in the PDZ, Greenburg's Godzillas and all three regiments of Dismal Disinherited, to be slated for withdrawal to either the Clan front, or to garrison more sensitive sectors whose regular units ARE being sent there. The remaining forces are spread far too thinly, and are of too low quality, to be of much help. By contrast, even 'Mechs of "common" models in the ComGuards have superior Star League-vintage weapons mounted on them, while the reliable rumors BattleTechnology has received on the fighting there have consistently mentioned Mercury 'Mechs in the ComGuards' recon lances. Freelance mercenaries, therefore, are in great demand on Altoona.

HENRI MARCHANRE: DUKE OF ALTOONA

Altoona's current ruler is the head of a noble French house that has ruled that planet even since it became a part of the Federated Suns. The bulk of the population had come from the old United States, so the planet's name (and those of most of its cities) are American or English names rather than French. Some small minorities in the populace have always

resented having an overlord who does not represent the majority of the people, though the Duke and his ancestors have always given Altoona good government. Still, terrorist activity and possibly even rebellion would have taken place there if it had been close enough for either Kurita or Liao to bother interfering in local politics.

Henri Marchante is a man of medium height, in his mid-forties. His dark brown hair shows no signs of graying yet, despite the fact that his responsibilities have been far heavier than those of his ancestors. He wears a sweeping moustache and a goatee beard, his facial hair being his lone indulgence. A quiet, fair-minded man, he definitely does not deserve the grief he is getting now, or will probably get in the future. The ComStar Interdiction and secretly noised-about skirmishes with the ComGuards have caused many freighter captains to seek alternate routes of travel. As a result of this drop in traffic, there has been noticeable unemployment on Altoona for the first time since it became a center of JumpShip traffic. The unexpected decline in prosperity, and the numbers of people now experiencing actual hardship in one form or another, has created a small but growing pool of discontent which has found a natural ally in the anti-French faction Altoona has always had. The bulk of the population is still loyal to the Duke, but this support will inevitably erode still further if (as seems likely) the economy continues to decline. Although nothing can be proven, Davion intelligence men have reason to believe that a "whispering campaign" by ROM agents is largely responsible for scaring off so much freighter traffic from Altoona.

As a final bit of personal misery for the Duke, his daughter Michelle (age 20, black hair), a black sheep of the family, has run off to join the ranks of the economy-minded rebels, as "atonement" for her family's supposed sins. This has given those would-be insurgents a degree of legitimacy that has been played up by ComStar, though for the moment, at least, it also has resulted in the anti-French faction refusing to totally integrate with the newer rebel groups in one organization. The real problem will come if local militia units are placed in a situation in which they may be required to fire upon a rebel unit with their ruler's own daughter in their midst. It was this awkwardness, as much as the threat of the

ComGuards, which caused reinforcements to be sent in from elsewhere in the Kilbourne PDZ, and which has led Duke Marchante to go shopping for mercenaries. The problem, of course, is that Michelle's presence in the rebel ranks hinders the Altoona Grenadiers in the role of riot duty and crowd control, which they are best suited for. If outsiders perform these duties, this will "free" the Grenadiers up for possible action against the high-tech ComGuards, whom they would have more trouble with than the average Inner Sphere regiment due to their antiquated equipment. With reinforcements from the rest of the PDZ limited, only a sizeable mercenary force can prop up the Davion government of Altoona if (or when) serious trouble develops.

MERCENARY TICKETS

To start with local troubles, the first task of mercenary units will be to keep the peace in whatever district Intelligence determines Michelle Marchante to be present. Although the Duke is their paymaster, it is expected that outsystem mercenaries will have less compunction on firing on his daughter and her comrades than locally raised militia units would. Of

At present, there is no fighting on Altoona. If fighting breaks out, the first assessment letter will be changed from "H" to "A", due to the unreliable nature of the local combat units. If the locals fold or join the rebels, mercenary units will be called upon to perform the full spectrum of military functions, such as:

MISSIONS

COMBAT CAMPAIGN

- Assaults on rebel military forces and/or ComStar installations (Offensive Campaign)
- Defense against rebel and/or ComGuard attacks (Defensive Campaign)
- Guerrilla Warfare

TERRITORIAL CAMPAIGN

- Riot duty and crowd control
- Siege campaigns against rebel cities and other strongholds

STATIC DEFENSE

- Garrison and security duty at local cities and bases
- Training cadre missions with local guerrillas (if necessary)

INTELLIGENCE

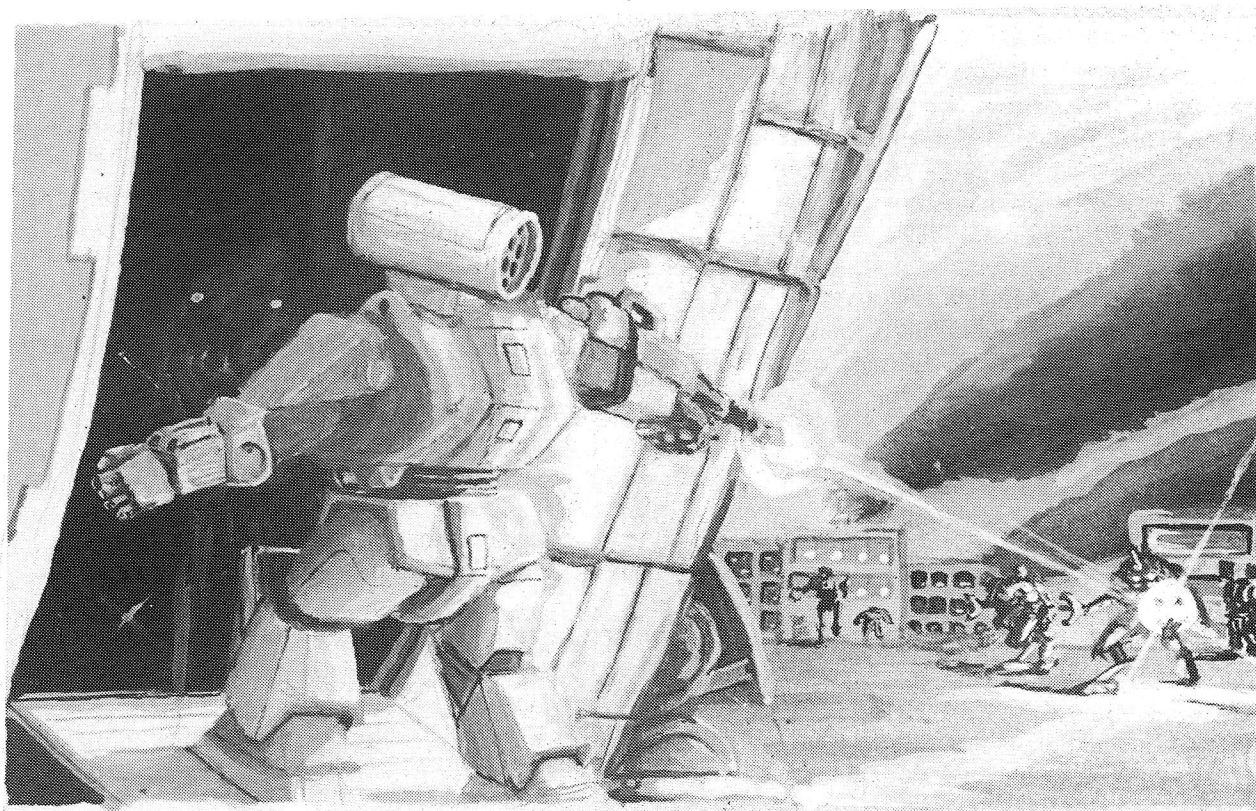
- One-man/small group intelligence missions
- Company-level intelligence raids
- Political raid (kidnapping Michelle Marchante, and possibly other rebel leaders)

course, as everyone knows, offworld mercs are a primary focus of hatred for any local insurgent group, and possibly the population in general. It is rumored that the Duke is particularly interested in hiring infantry trained in commando-style raids, to steal back his daughter if her location can be pinpointed by his intelligence men for any length of time. If so, this raid would likely take place before general rebellion broke out, both to get Michelle out of the line of fire and to possibly defuse the rebellion before it takes place, both by removing a leader and by means of a show of competent force. If this turns out to be the case, needless to say, the commandoes would be required to get Michelle out alive, and with the minimal number of civilian casualties.

If (or when) open rebellion does break out, it is expected that local units will be able to keep the situation well in hand. So far, there are no indications of any local military units even slightly sympathizing with the rebels. However, ROM agents are reported to be distributing weapons to the various rebel groups, as well as running secret training centers to teach the insurgents how to use them. If the Altoona Grenadiers are unexpectedly beaten due to the rebels displaying more tactical competence and/or firepower than expected, then the mercenaries will be expected to fill the gap. Depending on

how badly the Grenadiers are beaten, the mercs may have to perform ALL duties that the Grenadiers had performed, as well as providing external security (see below). Always remember that if a mercenary unit's patron is overthrown by a more-or-less popular rebellion, the revolutionary government is most unlikely to honor the mercs' contract. At worst, the mercenaries who survive the actual takeover may be marked for extermination. Due to the Kilbourne PDZ's remoteness and the shortage of regular JumpShip traffic due to preparations for the next Clan offensive, it is most unlikely that Davion reinforcements will ever be sent, certainly not in time to do any good.

The second major use for mercenaries on Altoona is for defensive and possibly offensive combat operations against the ComGuards garrison, which has been greatly expanded to now include major elements of the 2nd Division (ComStar Angels IV-mu) are now stationed there. It is suspected, though not confirmed, that Precentor IV James Arness has moved his command center from Peabody to Altoona, to be able to take direct command in the event of war. ComStar's noninvolvement in the war with the Clans thus far has naturally led to suspicions that an alliance with the Clans is in place, or at least being negotiated. It is entirely possible that



ComStar might attempt to conquer this district the moment the next Clan offensive begins, both to cripple the Suns' economy directly and to force Hanse Davion to divert troops to this remote region from the main battlefield.

As for actual missions against ComStar in the event of war, the first priority is the defense of Altoona's cities (including Badelaire, the capitol and city closest to the main ComGuards garrison) and bases. The ground between Badelaire and the HPG station consists of flat, bare plains, giving the Star League-vintage weapons of ComStar's 'Mechs full play of their range advantage over their Inner Sphere counterparts. For this reason, Duke Marchante means to base his defense in the city itself, and hopefully on its perimeter. Field fortifications are being hastily thrown up around Badelaire, and merc engineer units who can assist in this will be regarded as far more valuable than infantry or armor. Time permitting, the nearby Tristan River will even be diverted to flow between the city and the HPG station to create a moat. Any fast-heating merc 'Mechs such as Thunderbolts will probably be stationed directly in the river, enabling them to fire off all their weapons at once without fear of overheating. All other things being equal, the Duke's first priority will go toward units experienced in urban combat, while 'Mechs well-suited to urban warfare, such as Urbanmechs, Panthers, Hatchetmen, Clints, Hunchbacks, and Enforcers will be favored over flashier or swifter models. Abandoned (due to the bad economy) warehouses and office buildings are being feverishly prepared to shelter 'Mechs, with their floors and internal walls being ripped out (another source of employment for engineers). It is generally conceded that close-range urban combat is the defenders' only hope of nullifying the ComGuards' range advantage.

Open-field combat against the ComGuards' superior 'Mechs is quite unlikely, unless their losses or the mercenary reinforcements are so great that the latter can attack in overwhelming force. In all probability, any offensive action will consist of raids against lightly-guarded installations and small garrison units or stragglers. Remember, although the ComGuards' 'Mechs are good, the 2nd Division is largely a green outfit, whose only combat experience was in a few skirmishes with the 1st Altoona Grenadiers (which at least raised the unit's morale and lowered that of the local opposition). This makes it likely that Precentor Arness will want to be there by the time fighting breaks out, so he can keep a firm grip on his inexperienced troops. The ComGuards' air support is only the usual contingent for a unit of this size, but the unit's "common" model 'Mechs include many Riflemen and Jagermechs to provide superior anti-aircraft protection. Always remember the increased range of the Star League-vintage weapon systems. If worst comes to worst, the mercenaries will be expected to serve as a rallying point for the local defenders in a prolonged campaign of guerrilla warfare, with little change of swift relief due to the Clan invasion. It is not

known if ComStar would be any more merciful against mercenaries hired specifically to fight them than local revolutionaries would. Although the ComGuards' 'Mechs are good, at least fighting them is safer than locking horns with the Clans.

TICKET DETAILS

As the renewal of the Clan offensive is anticipated almost daily in the Inner Sphere, tensions with ComStar have risen in proportion. A "stab in the back" offensive of some sort is expected by almost everyone. Even if ComStar as a whole maintains its neutrality, there is always the chance that Precentor Arness may try some dubious scheme of his own (Precentor Rachan's actions on Sirius V and Helm just before the fourth Succession War demonstrate that ComStar is either into underhanded tactics on a grand scale, or does not have complete control over its members' actions). With the military buildup on both sides, there is also the possibility of an accident of some sort, such as a skirmish between patrols, touching off a full-scale conflict. Finally, even if ComStar does not intend to openly support the rebel minority, the rebels may find some way to drag their patrons into the conflict in an attempt to improve their chances of victory. Note that this last is likelier if Duke Marchante manages to hire sizeable mercenary contingents.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

1 to 2 years

The length of service is the same for all mercenary forces, regardless of unit type. Even if the rebels are crushed quickly, or an imminent rebellion is defused by the neutralization of one or more leaders, there will be plenty of bad feelings on Altoona (exacerbated by the failing economy) to ensure that "outsider" garrison troops will be needed for years to come. As for the ComGuards, they are present allegedly just to protect the HPG station, so they will be a permanent fixture on Altoona unless war with ComStar escalates so greatly that all ComStar installations in Federated Commonwealth territory must be destroyed (not at all unlikely, according to some rumors). In all likelihood, tension with (and the need for defense against) ComStar will continue until Primus Waterly's place is taken by someone who will cause that order to resume its even-handed neutrality of previous centuries.

GUARANTEES

Due to the unusual nature of the situation on Altoona, no ComStar intermediaries will be present during negotiations. Mercenary commanders will deal solely with the Department of Mercenary Relations of the AFFS. Fortunately, the Federated Suns takes the best care of its mercenaries of any Successor State, or the pay and conditions ratings would be

much lower. If Altoona had been a Kurita world, Duke Marchante would doubtless be on his own.

As for the guarantee itself, it is an agreed-upon sum (generally equal to one third of the entire agreed-upon sum for the mercenary unit for a six-month period) placed in an escrow account at the Altoona Investment Bank in Badelaire. Contractual noncompliance by either side is ground for release of funds to the aggrieved party. With no ComStar intermediary, the mercs will have to rely on Hanse Davion's and Duke Marchante's honor, but at least there will be no 5% fee for the order's services.

So far as battlefield salvage rights are concerned, the mercenaries may only keep ComGuards equipment (if any) that is not measurably superior to that of its Inner Sphere counterparts. The acquisition of high-tech ComGuards equipment, particularly 'Mechs, is a major priority for the Federated Commonwealth military, mainly to see if there is any difference between it and the new equipment the armies of the Inner Sphere are currently acquiring, courtesy of the famed Gray Death memory core. By way of compensation, all common ComGuard 'Mech models with superior weapons and other gear which are captured by the mercenary forces will be bought outright by the Federated Commonwealth, for the full price of a brand-new 'Mech of this type in the Inner Sphere (see the MECHTOTALCOSTLIST in the MechWarrior role-playing rules). The price of Star League-model 'Mechs will be negotiable, but certainly more than any common 'Mech of their weight class would be worth. 'Mech spares, ammunition, etc. will have a higher priority of delivery to mercenaries on Altoona than to most garrison units (due to their antiquated gear, the stock-piles of local 'Mech forces will be all but useless).

Due to the decline in the shipping trade, Duke Marchante has been making an effort to revive interest in farming Altoona's rich black soil. A fair number of the unemployed are now working as farm hands, but so far, few nobles or other officials want to play Gentleman Farmer. As a result of this, Duke Marchante is currently considering offering land grants to successful mercenary 'Mech (and possibly other) units who help maintain a firm hold on Altoona. As stated earlier, no matter what happens in the near future, tensions are liable to be high for quite some time to come, and Duke Marchante would like to have high-quality mercenary forces around all the time. It is also hoped that once the mercenaries become, in effect, a part of the community, public resentment of them as offworlders will subside.

COMMAND RIGHTS

Although Duke Marchante is overall commander of all military forces on Altoona, he is a firm believer in the AFFS position of semi-independence for mercenary units. The Duke expects to have his hands full handling his own world's

inexperienced militia (showing a close resemblance to his ComGuards opposite number), and it would considerably ease his command worries to know that the mercenaries, at least, can stand on their own under capable commanders. He also does not want to rely on his own judgement in case his daughter takes rebel forces into battle, or if an opportunity arises to snatch her back. In general, operations against the ComGuards will be defensive, involving fighting from prepared positions in and around installations and cities, with emphasis on Badelaire. Offensive operations will be carefully discussed beforehand, but if a commander sees a favorable opportunity and takes it, he is liable to get away with it providing all turns out well. If the local military forces are shattered in combat (not unlikely, given their performance thus far), the mercenary officers may even have to take the place of local officers in commanding the militia.

TRANSPORT

Because the threat of conflict has scared so many traders and businesses off, Altoona currently has a large number of unemployed JumpShips sitting around: more than enough to transport any mercenary force of a size the Duke could reasonably expect to hire. If the mercenaries have their own JumpShip transport, of course, the Duke will not look this gift horse in the mouth. All transport expenses will be paid by the government of Altoona.

ASSESSMENT

In general, Altoona seems to be good station for ambitious mercs eager to make a name for themselves, if only by dealing with local revolutionaries. If hostilities with ComStar break out, on a widespread or merely planetary basis, all bets may be off. Though ComGuards equipment is inferior to that of the clans, it is still superior to that of any Inner Sphere merc unit not being equipped with the new weapons. These units, needless to say, are all designated to see action against the Clans. Combat, therefore, will be riskier than it has been in the Succession Wars. Add to that the fact that in all probability, no reinforcements will arrive to salvage the situation in case of disaster, and that a small but by no means negligible segment of the population will support the enemy, while the local military forces are highly unreliable, and you will see the risks facing mercenary troops.

Due to the nature of the possible conflict, there is another risk: a business one. Engaging in all-out warfare on Altoona means battling ComStar, the traditional intermediary during mercenary negotiations. If the mercs do a good job, this means they will have given a ComGuards a very bloody nose, which does not bode well for fair treatment from ComStar the next time they seek work. Balancing this, in turn, is the opportunity for long-term service on Altoona, complete with

land grants. Between this and the traditional Davion good treatment of mercenaries, there are definite compensations for antagonizing ComStar.

The precise definition of the rating code depends a great deal on what happens in the near future. What we showed at the beginning is how things stand at the moment. In case of widespread rebellion, it will change to E/F/R, due to actual combat and the fact that mercenaries are a favorite focus of rebels' hatred. If ComGuard forces intervene as well, then conditions are A/F/V, as the mercenaries may find themselves caught between two fires, possibly as the only defenders left after local militia forces crumble away around them.

Even if the mercenaries (and any remaining locals) are forced into guerrilla warfare as the only means of survival, things are still not hopeless. Remember that the ComGuards are spread even more thinly across the Inner Sphere than the AFFS is. If the AFFS cannot reinforce Altoona quickly, chances are that ComStar will not be able to reinforce AT ALL. Eventually, help will arrive, even if it takes years, so if the mercs can hang on long enough, time will be working against the ComGuards. Remember, too, that though the ComGuards' 'Mechs are superior, their pilots will definitely be inferior to any mercenaries who have engaged in even one campaign with more than the most desultory fighting. They may get better with practice, but so will you, and you've got a head start on them. ComStar STILL has had no experience in large-scale land combat; the few pirate raids they have faced were on a considerably smaller scale. Between this and the fact that the local revolutionaries are still few in number, it is clear that the situation is by no means hopeless.

BattleTechnology's recommendation is that, although the odds should be carefully considered by would-be mercenaries, service on Altoona is well worth the risk, particularly for any merc units which prefer settling down to local responsibility to wandering all over the Inner Sphere. McCarron's Armored Cavalry is the classic example of what to shoot for. After their outstanding service for House Liao during the Fourth Succession War, they were officially promoted into a Regular unit, with extra pay. If the mercenaries can preserve Altoona (and the Kilbourne PDZ in general) for the Federated Suns, then something similar might come their way. Who knows?

REMUNERATION (per man per week, unless otherwise designated)
Infantry, Armor (per squad per week):
Veteran-Elite: Cb 12,000
Regular: Cb 8,000
Green: Cb 6,000
Artillery (per 7-man squad per week):
Veteran-Elite: Cb 10,000
Regular: Cb 5,000
Green: Cb 2,000
MechWarriors, AeroSpace Pilots:
Veteran-Elite: Cb 2,000
Regular: Cb 1,200
Green: Cb 750
Engineers:
Veteran-Elite: Cb 2,000
Regular: Cb 1,000
Green: Cb 500
Support (Tech):
Veteran-Elite: Cb 1,500
Regular: Cb 1,000
Green: Cb 750

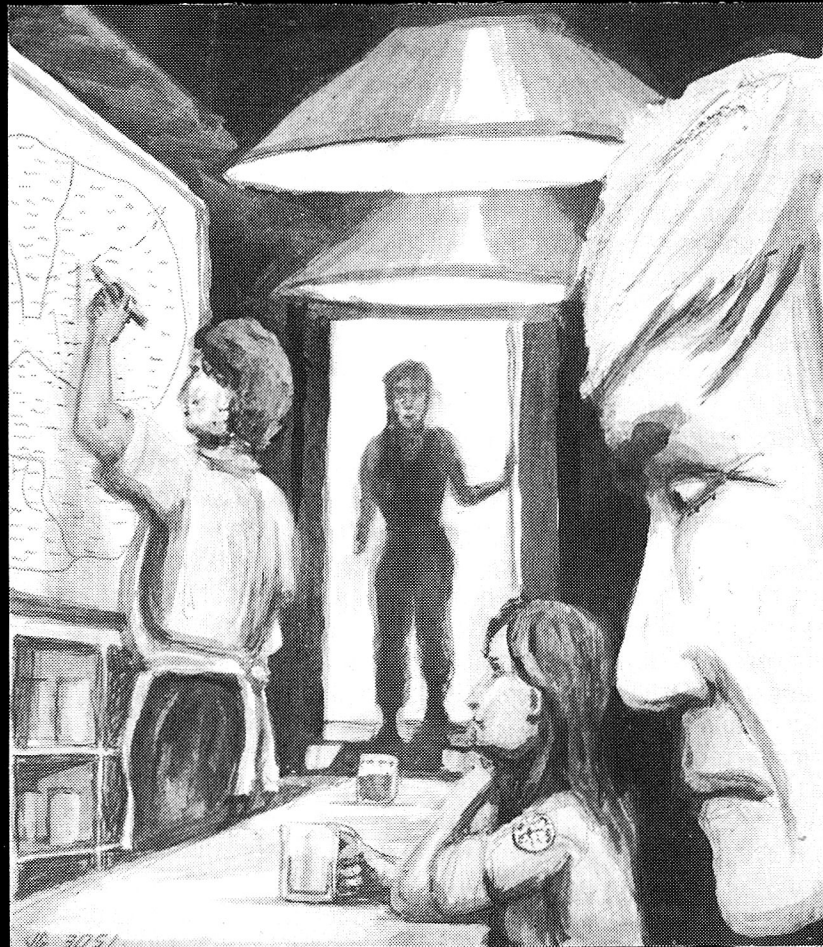
BattleTechnology
Mercenary Employer Assessment
Henri Marchante, Duke of Altoona

CODE: H/F/L

ASSESSMENT: Moderately favorable, good pay; good opportunity; high risk

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Tales of the Cobalt Coil # 7
by S. Jansfield

Every eye in the Cobalt Coil watched me as I made the changes on the Inner Sphere Map that hung behind the bar. The moment I took the latest updates from Tanian and moved to the map, conversation died and everyone turned to watch. I carefully marked off the latest Clan advances, color coding each fallen system so you could tell which of the invaders claimed it. As I wrote, I felt the weight of their eyes, each one watched with their own hidden feelings. Sometimes I heard a murmured word of relief or a curse of rage, but mostly this ritual passed in silence. I think it was a gesture of respect for the fallen for we all knew that each change reflected the deaths of countless warriors. Not until I was done and the pens capped did they begin to talk. The Clan invasion had changed us all.

Here in the Cobalt Coil on Solaris, that backwater planet of the Inner Sphere that attracts the flotsam of known space, we always thought of ourselves as separated from the rest of humanity. The Successor Lords and their houses were a distant presence, something to be discussed dispassionately over drinks with friends. We were all cut off from our nations but we had each other and that was enough. But now something from beyond human experience was eating away at the nations that birthed us and then turned their backs for one reason or another. For some, it was enough to waken old allegiances.

Some left in a swarm of words and promises. Others departed silently. All went to fight, and most probably to die. Those of us who stayed watched them go and wondered if someday a mark would go up on the board that would call us back to battle.

Tanian got the information about once every two to three weeks. She worked for one of the larger publishing companies on Solaris and so she got a look at the latest news releases. Nowadays most information passes between the stars on computer memory disks carried by JumpShip. ComStar trades in the critical stuff, information or messages that have to get somewhere in a matter of days or hours, rather than the weeks it can take on a JumpShip. But most information isn't that time dependent. News spreads slowly, like ripples in a lake. Tanian's company takes the raw information and produces news magazines and 'vids. They also produce some regular magazines such as the Janes Updates and BattleTechnology. She always brings in a damaged issue or two of any new magazine for general bar consumption. The regulars at the Coil are like that. They all give back whatever they can.

In any case, I marked off the latest Clan advances and returned to the bar. This time, no one up and left so things quickly returned to normal, as normal as they ever get on GameWorld. Someone was commenting on a recent story in BattleTechnology, 'The Price of Honor'. Personally, I took that item with about a metric ton of salt. To me, it was just so much ComStar propaganda; but then no one asked my

opinion. I gave it anyway. In any case, it stimulated discussion as to why people are willing to fight and die for something. And believe me, the opinions were flying thicker than slugs in a fire-fight. We all had our two C-bills worth to offer.

I think that if you ask that question to a hundred different people, you're apt to get a hundred different responses. Mankind fights for countless reasons. Sometimes it's fear, fear for yourself, fear for someone or something you care about, fear of retribution or even fear of looking cowardly.

Sometimes it's blind stupidity or overwhelming cause. Sometimes it's from ignorance or blindness. Vengeance is a popular favorite, as is greed. Then there is honor, that elusive concept that has damned so many to an early grave and destroyed worlds. Honor is the marching song leaders always strike up to motivate the masses. But like a summer fog, honor often evaporates in the heat of battle.

"So, what about honor?" I asked as I filled a pair of mugs with draft beer and set them on the worn, syntha-wood bar.

"Honor is a bird with bright feathers and broken wings," someone said. "A bird destined to be crushed by the fist of necessity."

We turned to the door and watched Sarah walk slowly down the stairs. Sarah had only been coming in the Cobalt Coil for a few weeks. By her accent, we knew she was from the Combine. She moved like a Mech pilot and her maimed right arm and leg didn't slow her too much. I figured she was once right handed, you could tell by the way she'd start to reach for something with her useless right hand. She wasn't quite a regular yet, though she'd never broken any of the house rules (always pay your bills, keep the peace and don't bother the other patrons when they don't want to be bothered). It looked like tonight she might take the plunge.

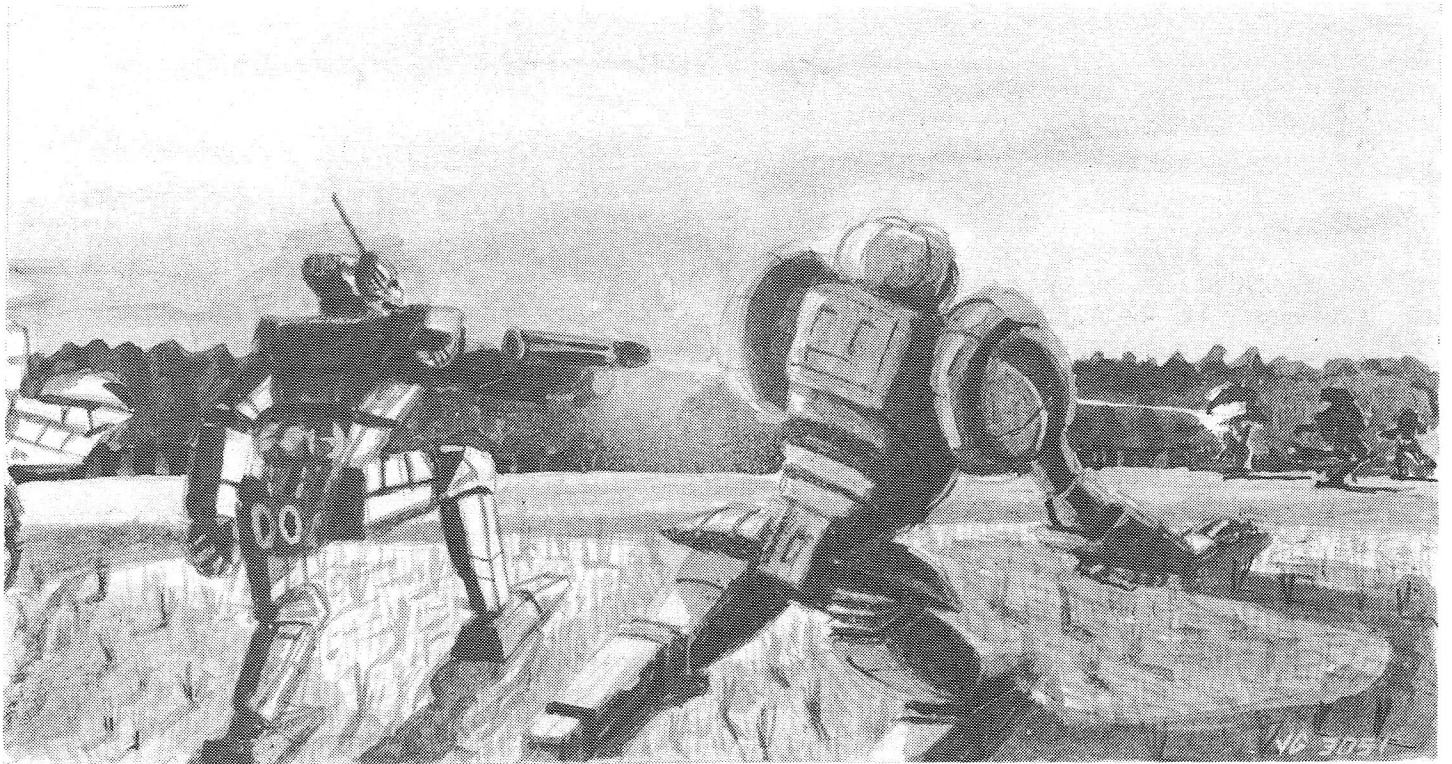
No one said anything as she crossed to the bar; they were waiting for an explanation to her cryptic comment. I mixed up a half-and-half, a lethal combination of *sake* and bourbon that I knew Sarah drank, and set it before her. She reached for it with her right, then took it in her left and drained off a third of it. And still we waited.

"The bright feathers are the trappings of honor," she explained at last. I heard the acid in her words. "Regimental colors and traditions, tales of past glory and thoughts of serving a greater good, they use them all to draw men and women into the web. I bet nearly everyone of us at one time or another was swayed by such voices."

She surveyed the room, her gaze flat and cold as a frozen razor. No one denied it, we all knew the lives we'd lead.

"But the wings are broken," Sarah continued, "because the bird cannot fly. Honor fails you in the only test that matters. To be effective and to survive, honor must be sacrificed."

She downed the rest of her drink, motioned for another and tossed a handful of crumpled house bills onto the bar.



I made change and poured her the next in what I felt was going to be a long string. This lady had some venom in her soul and it was time the venom was purged.

"I served with the 4th Pesht Regulars, The Evening Warriors and saw action during the second wave of the Clan invasion," Sarah said. "I came from a middle class family who gave up nearly everything they had so that I, their eldest daughter, might serve the Combine. It had always been my father's and grandfather's dreams that someday, a warrior of their line would win honor for the Dragon. My older brothers died in school. So I gladly took up the task. We all believed in the promise of the bright feathers.

"I graduated from a small MechWarrior academy shortly after the first contact with the Clans. My scores were impressive so I was drafted into the 4th Pesht and received a new BattleMech. I was pleased. It was a Kintaro, fresh out of whatever secret production center the combine has for those machines. The Kintaro is a 55-ton BattleMech with decent armor and speed and good mix of weapons. It carries a Magna Mark III Large Laser, a pair of Magna Mark II Mediums, a Holly-5 Long Range Missile rack and two HoverTec-6 Short Range missile launchers. A good machine, I named her 'LightGiver' and painted my family crest illuminated by a laser flash on her left breast. If it had jump

jets and freezers rather than heat sinks it would have been perfect, but who was I to complain? I was living my family dream. I was a MechWarrior, charged with upholding the sacred honor of Draconis Combine. And I joyed in the knowledge that, soon I would have the chance to prove the honor of LightGiver and my-self.

"That chance came on Coudoux."

Throughout the bar, you could hear a general intake of breath and the muttering of curses. I'd marked off Coudoux months ago. It fell to the clan called the Smoke Jaguars in the Third wave of invasions and rumor held that the fighting had been particularly savage. By the third wave, the Inner Sphere forces were better organized and actually winning some battles, though the war still looked bleak. I shook my head, remembering the battles I'd lived through in the service of the Archon, and looked carefully at Sarah while I mixed a new round of drinks. She paused to let me finish, her face down cast as if looking for secrets hidden in the worn bar top.

Though her face was young, I saw the streaks of gray etching her auburn hair. She held her body tense, all the muscles coiled, ready to fight or flee and challenging us to try her. As if sensing my gaze, she looked up and I saw

anger, pain and confusion in her gray-green eyes. She looked away, and returned to her tale.

"Cordoux isn't famous. It has some local industry, a few heavy factories, and large tracts of hard-wood forests. The 4th Pesht was part of the garrison force and we lifted towards it as soon as the unit was assembled. I spent most of the trip going over LightGiver in simulator runs. What little time I wasn't with her was spent sleeping or attending countless briefings. I can't remember any one of the many sessions; they all blend together. We went over everything the intelligence forces had on Clan equipment and tactics. It wasn't much. But at least, we had a few ideas.

"The Clans fight as units, almost never breaking off and fighting as individuals. Their behavior in battle is actually quite predictable, they take the most direct route to any objective and don't react too well to surprises. I believe the main reason they are ripping through most units is that the Clan equipment is hellishly superior to everything the inner-sphere has, even with the rediscovered tech that's coming to light throughout the Inner Sphere. So all we could do was something unexpected. The high command had some things to try out.

"We were dirt-side less than six weeks when the Clan ships showed up. It was the Smoke Jaguars and, as usual, they contacted us first and asked for our order of battle. As planned, the *Sho-Sho* in charge of defense told them who was garrisoned and what our level of experience was. Hours later, the Clan drop ships came in.

"My lance was assigned one of the anticipated landing points. Our job was simple. We were to meet a Clan lance, engage them briefly, then fall back towards a dense forest, making sure the Clan 'Mechs followed. There, screened by the trees, we would meet up with another lance and pair off, each pair of us taking on a separate Clan 'Mech. It was a tactical experiment to see if we could isolate the Clan units and bring roughly double their strength to bear.

"It started as planned, most battles do. We spotted a recon group of Clan 'Mechs about fifteen kilometers out from their drop ship. We engaged, snapping off shots from long range. Instantly, the Jaguars countered and we ran using a pre-arranged route that offered plenty of cover. Still, it was a chilling experience. The Clan weapons are more accurate and have better range than anything I'd even heard of. We lost a Jenner in the retreat. It was cut apart by PPC fire while in mid-jump.

"I'll never forget that first combat, the taste of my own salty sweat, the murmur of voices over the comlink, and the ghost-like images of the approaching Jaguar 'Mechs on my magnetic image screen. Then the order came and LightGiver surged to her feet and spat three quick flights of Long Range Missiles. Only the second set hit but the feeling of joy that filled me as I saw armor shred from the warhead explosions was indescribable. At last, I was a warrior. It felt bitter to turn

and run but we obeyed. From the comlink chatter, I knew the rest of the lance felt as I did. Still, morale was high and the songs of honor filled our minds. We made it to the trees with only the single casualty, and the Clan 'Mechs in hot pursuit.

"Because of the lost Jenner, we had to change tactics slightly. Someone had to go solo with a Clan 'mech. Since my Kintaro was the newest 'mech in the lance, I was given the honor. In a twist of fate, I was assigned to attack the Clansman my missiles hit. It was a Ryoken.

"The Ryoken weighs the same as the Kintaro, 55-tons. They have comparable armor, the Ryoken moves faster and can dissipate about twice the heat. The one I faced was armed with a pair of medium and a heavy pulse laser and a heavy auto-cannon that used cluster rounds. Not exactly an even duel but I wasn't too worried. I had the honor of Kurita on my side.

"Once I hit the woods and drew my assignment, I swung east to take an ambush position. The rest of the 'Mechs paired off and hid behind some artfully constructed artificial rock formations that contained hidden electronics designed to play hell with the Clan electromagnetic sensors. We waited, our seismic detectors tracking the Clan 'Mechs approach. I felt alive with tension, the blood singing in my veins as I prepared to fight. This was why I'd been born. This was why I lived. The order to attack came and LightGiver responded to my thoughts.

"I rolled to the side of my counterfeit boulder and launched another series of LRM shots. The range was a little close but enough of my shots hit to wreath the Ryoken in a cloud of armor and missile fragments. It staggered but did not fall. Its auto-cannon turned towards me and for the first time, I came under fire.

"The cannon roared and a stream of cluster rounds chewed into the false rock. Dust filled the air and sparks snapped as the inner electronics blew. I scrambled down slope and dropped LightGiver into a narrow stream gorge about half way down the flank of the hill. I put the right arm of my mech over the lip and let it hang limp, trying to give the impression I was down and out of action. Then I waited. At last, the Ryoken came to investigate. Once he was in sight, I fired.

"The twin ruby-red flashed of light speared the Clan 'Mech. One cut armor from its chest, the other struck its head. The Ryoken staggered as I fired again, ignoring the kick in LightGiver's internal heat. Both shots missed but they kept him off balance. Then I was up and dodging down the gorge, heading for the forest. Over the comlink, I heard garbled snatches of other battles. I ignored them, focusing inward, seeking my inner balance, knowing my fight had only begun. Then the Ryoken struck.

"The heat sensors on my right arm suddenly flared as the heavy laser beam cut into LightGiver's armor. The heat came in washes as the laser pulsed through its cycle. Armor

flowed like seared wax and I heard distant pops as myomer bundles near the point of contact ruptured from the heat. Another set of indicators told me I'd lost 7% of the effective strength in that arm. Then Lightgiver shuddered under a series of impacts as autocannon cluster rounds peppered her back. A buzzer sounded in my helmet as the glowing status display showed several breaches in the right arm armor. I started to turn LightGiver away, trying to shield her wounded side. More lasers caught me.

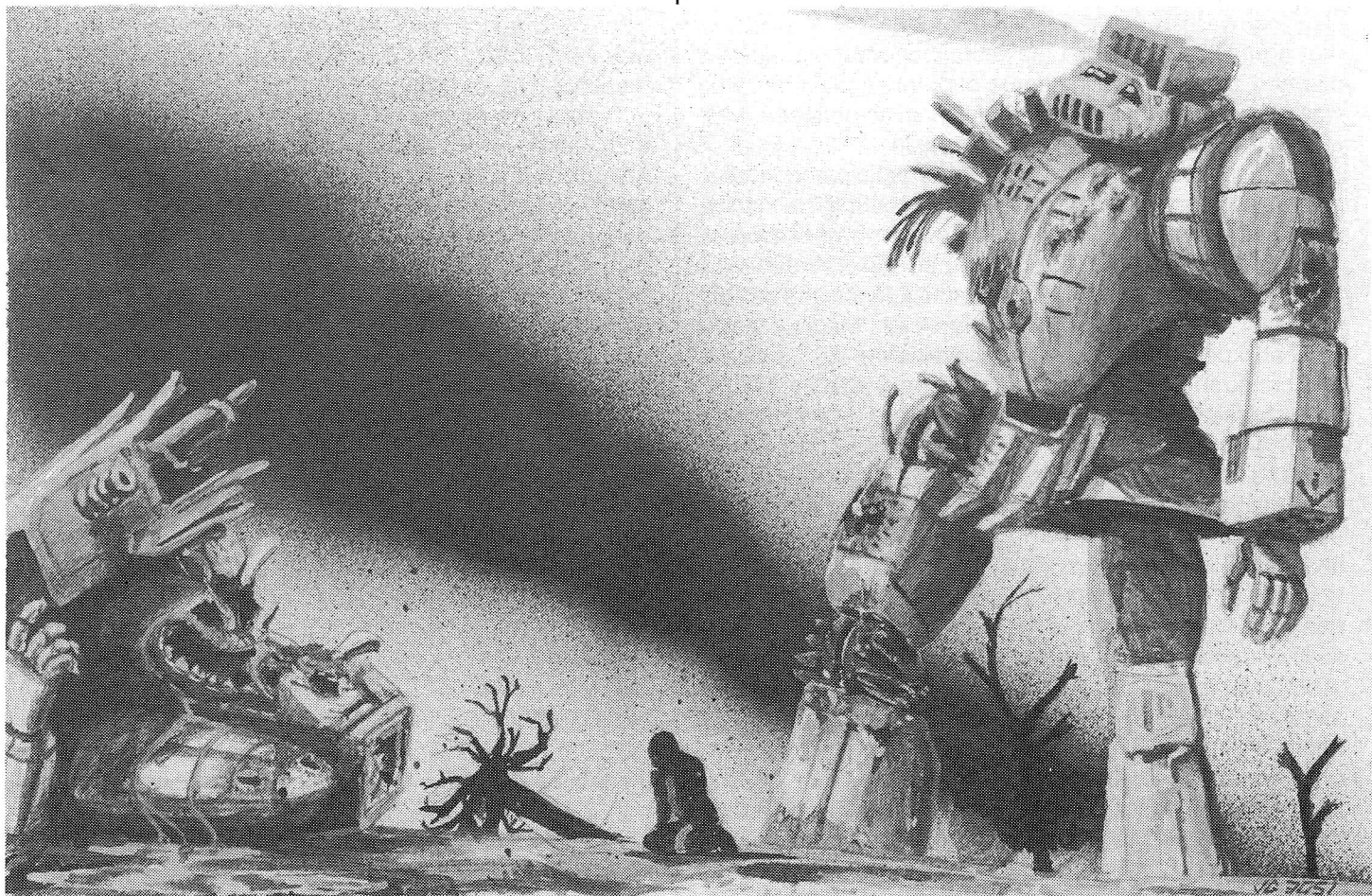
"Heat flooded over me as scattered laser-light reflected into the cockpit. There was a shuddering crack as the beams chewed through the titanium alloy shoulder joint, then the missiles in the arm launching tubes blew. LightGiver fell and I screamed as a wave of feedback poured into my brain through the impulse helmet. I blacked out and didn't feel Lightgiver smash into the rocky ground.

"I was only unconscious for a few moments. I awoke to the smell of burnt insulation and the vibration of the oncoming 'Mech. I was lying on my side and realized LightGiver's right arm was gone. For an instant, I felt physical pain as if my own arm were severed, then I saw how close the Clan 'Mech

was. It loomed over me, the muzzles of its lasers trained on my 'Mech. I reacted without thinking.

"Twin volleys of short range missiles erupted from LightGiver as she rolled aside. They exploded across the Ryoken, blasting chips of armor free. I kept rolling, trying to evade the pulse lasers. One creased LightGiver's side, carving a furrow through her armor. Then I was up and running as I launched more missiles, not caring if they hit only wanting to distract the smoke-grey killer. It worked, for a few seconds. Then it recovered.

"Lasers stitched their way up my side, slashing through armor and into the vital systems that powered her. LightGiver screamed in pain, her voice the wail of alarms. I felt each burning blow through the neural impulse helmet. Linked, I experienced her pain and panic filled me. LightGiver was dying. I fell again as the right leg actuators froze. Clods of rocky earth rose around me like offerings to the gods of war. I hit and let gravity take hold. LightGiver tumbled down slope, careening of boulders until she snagged in a stand of trees. I lay still, tears staining my face as the warning lights flickered, telling the tale of ruptured armor and failed systems. I knew I would soon die.



"The Ryoken closed cautiously. I kept expecting it to simply shoot me apart from a distance but something drew it closer. By then, blind panic drove me. It loomed over me, its armor battered but still intact, like some vengeful spirit. In my mind, I began to compose my death haiku. Then the will to live burst up from the depths of my mind. Screaming in rage, I triggered all weapons. LightGiver responded with the full battery of her lethal tools.

"Short range missiles erupted from all twelve ports. With only ten meters to fly, most hit. The Ryoken staggered and twisted to the right, exposing the left flank. All three of my lasers hit it square in the arm. They punched through and cut into the body of the 'Mech. More importantly, they detonated the remaining Autocannon ammo cassettes. There was an explosion that I heard even over the warning scream of my interior heat alarms. I hit an over ride switch and narrowly avoided an engine shut down as I staggered to my feet. Fragments of the Ryoken's arm pelted me as the CASE packed ammo took out the entire limb and further damaged the body. The Clan 'Mech fell. An interior coolant line in my cockpit ruptured.

Sarah lifted her maimed right arm and stared at it for a few moments. I had to look away. I've seen what a blast of super-heated coolant can do to a human body. Not many people survive the experience. If the burns don't kill them, the flourocarbons do. She was an exception.

"The pain nearly finished me," Sarah continued with only seconds lost. "Then I saw the Ryoken move. Like some unkillable insect, it was trying to stand. I lost control. Lightgiver lashed out with her armored foot and metal crushed under the impact. The Ryoken fell again, sparks dancing around the new scar in its torso. Then it tried again. I screamed and bent down. With Lightgiver's remaining hand, I picked up a boulder the size of an aircar. It made a ghastly crunching sound as I smashed it into the Ryoken's cockpit. It took three blows to finish it."

A moment of stunned silence filled the bar. A lot of faces filled with disgust at her admitted crime. Most MechWarriors subscribe to at least a rough code of honor; it's bad karma to kill a downed opponent. That code is a major part of bushido, the almost mystic belief that most Combine warriors follow to. It's rare to find a Dragon who doesn't at least claim to subscribe to it. Rarer still to find one who admits breaking it. It took a few moments, then most of us put aside our prejudices. I don't think any of us could honestly deny we might have done the same.

"I climbed out of LightGiver then," Sarah said, her voice a low whisper that still managed to fill the bar, "and looked at the fruits of honor. My BattleMech was a ruin. She was a twisted, smoking wreck. My family crest was gone, erased by a cannon shell. The countryside around me was devastated, the land ripped out by our battle and littered with

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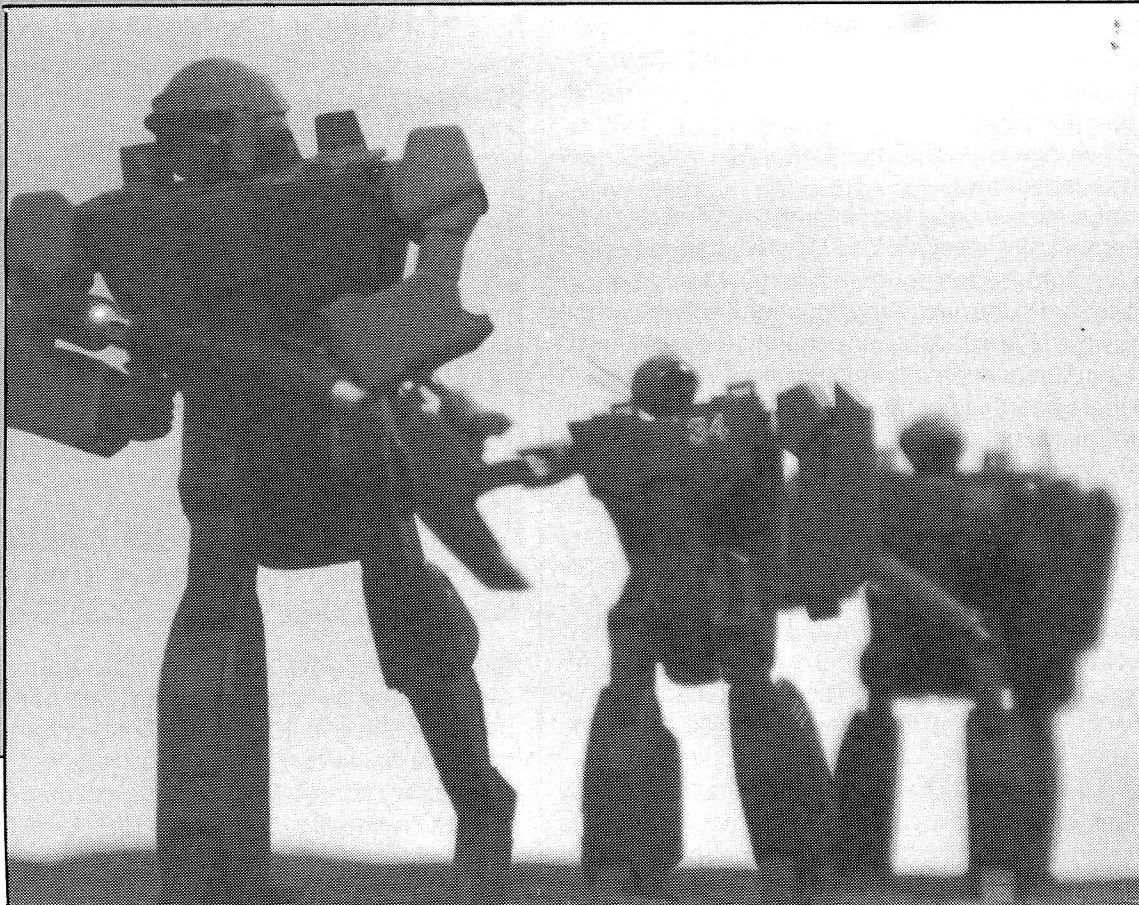
refuse Century-old trees were torn from the earth, their dying roots clawing at the air. Chunks of ripped earth and broken, melted rock stretched like a carpet around us and the huge prints of our BattleMechs wove like the steps of some crazy dance. There was my honorable opponent, his cockpit crushed to fragments by my final, enraged attack. Black and green fluid leaked like blood from the smashed head, poisoning the ground. It was too much for me. I fell to my knees and wept."

"This was 'honor' I realized. No bright banners or martial music, just two savages ripping at each other in a killing frenzy. Despite centuries of progress, when it came down to the final call, I beat my enemy to death with a rock. The killing ape stood supreme, all else was empty dreams and self delusion. The race of mankind has no right to claim the mantle of 'civilization'. I wonder if we ever will."

With that, Sarah drained her drink in a single, savage gulp that must have stripped raw her throat. She set her glass down with a crack, and glared around as if seeking someone, anyone who might refute her question. Silence answered her. She looked at me and we stared at each other. I saw such pain and anger in her eyes, I almost looked away. I didn't.

"We can keep trying," I softly said. I meant it. "It's the struggle that matters. It's not about winning or losing, it's about trying. That's why I always hated the thought of seppuku; it stops you from trying again."

Sarah looked down, but not before I saw the gleam of moisture on her cheek. I said nothing, only picked up her glass. Her healing had begun. The venom was draining.



HOLDING THE FLANK

Outside the old Phoenix Hawk's head, the driving rain drummed its unintelligible music against gray painted armor. I sat eight meters up, among small houses atop a low hill on the outskirts of Coalston City. With a familiar whine, a blower motor died in the 'Hawk's spherical head. Rivers of water poured across the 'Mech's armored visor, totally obliterating the view from within.

"Tolliver, my rain blower's shorted again; keep your eyes open in my sector."

"Yes sir," Rich Tolliver's voice sounded tinny in my bulky neurohelmet as his own PHX-1K's powerful Tek BattleComm's

tightbeam burned through the invaders' jamming. "I thought you got it fixed last time in."

"I DID fix it," I said, bringing up the systems status display on an auxiliary monitor. All the diagnostic indicators remained in the green. "Must be the motor this time."

"Must be the quartermaster this time?" asked a sarcastic female voice from the Stinger two houses down.

"Watch what you say and keep it quiet." I warned.

When shaking the 'Mech's head left to right then up and down failed to produce a response, a few blows against a bulkhead that read "Made with pride by the People of Diplan

MechYards in the year 2846.” brought a sputter and hum as the blower resumed function again. A second later the I/R snapped on as well, painting its blue and orange version of reality across the armored transparency of the 'Hawk's fisheye canopy.

“How 'bout that!” I said in amazement.

Turning the head toward the flaming spaceport, I could hear the distant thunder of battle echo across the city. From my elevated position, the engagement looked like a swarm of fireflies dancing in a vague semi-circle, midway between the port proper and its associated industrial areas. Away from the melee, 'Mechs, buildings, and anything else what would remain alight blazed in the rain. The fires left splotches of color across my HUD and illuminated the low rainbearing clouds with an orange glow. Some of those lights were my fellow 3rd Fremmen, trying to break through the invaders, and from the sound of things, it wasn't going well.

This past year had been a terrible nightmare for our newly born state. As if by some horrible cosmic irony: less than two decades after battling to control our own destiny, the barely human Clans began their bloody invasions.

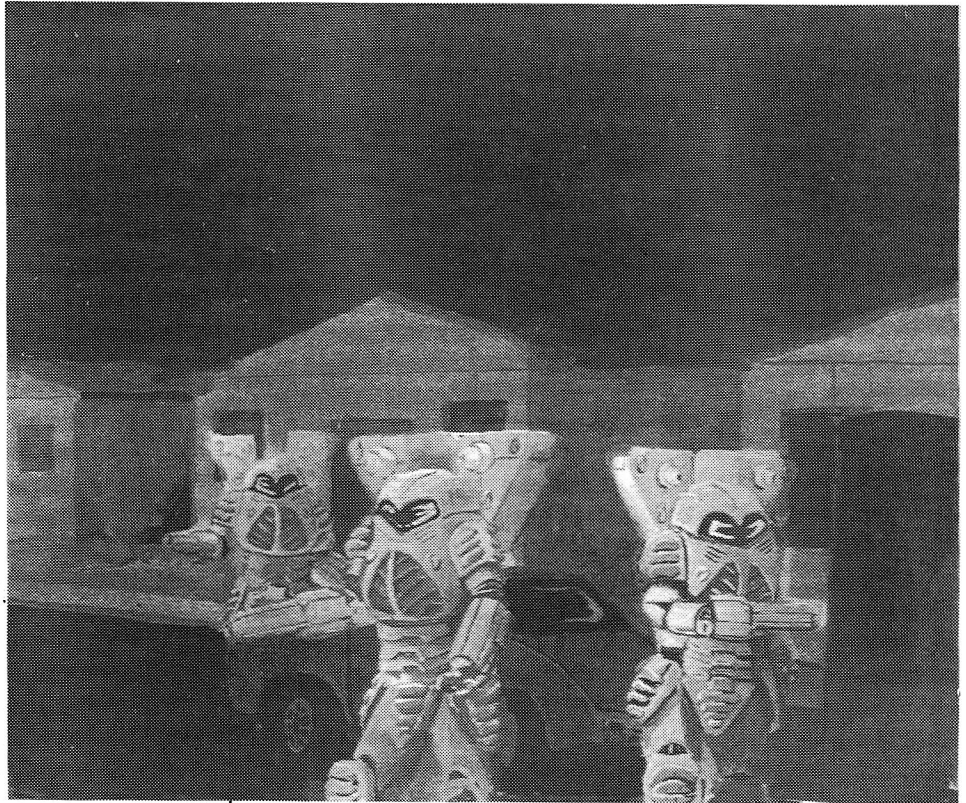
The first and third battalions of the 3rd were already gone, destroyed in the stillborn defense of the capitol, Rasalhague. Only the lack of jump-transport to the battlefield left us in the 2nd battalion stranded at our home base on Kandis, thus we escaped the death of the rest of our regiment, for the time being.

Everyone expected the inevitable, and it came with the speed and violence that had become the hallmark of the Wolf Clan. The invaders jumped in at a pirate point only three hours out from Kandis II. Their massive DropShips burned past the pathetic fighter screen we could put up. We'd had just enough time to arm and move out into the city before the first fighters came screaming in. I lost Tommy Holman in the first pass, his Wasp reduced to a burning wreck amongst shattered buildings.

The coming of night combined with heavy winter rains left their air support blind, giving us a chance to escape the city. Once free we could continue the fight as guerillas in the mountainous countryside of Kandis' northern continent.

We hoped.

Now our company stood watch in the western suburbs of Coalston City, holding open the left flank as the rest of the battalion and most of the local militia units threw themselves



at the Clanners. We sat in our machines, surrounded by a grim silence as we awaited the Clan thrust to hit us.

“Enemy at two o'clock!” hissed the radio.

Looking down a street directly ahead of my position, I spied what looked like a dozen miniature 'Mechs, moving rapidly, weaving around and behind abandoned ground cars. Their ugly, evil look was reinforced by the eerie red glow their warm armor cast on I/R. I'd seen enough reports and holos to know what a single platoon of those nasty things could do to a lance as light as mine. It would be over my dead body if they lived long enough to do the same to my people.

“Green Charlie to Green Alpha,” I called, keeping the lead suit centered in my sights.

“Go, Charlie,” Kaptan Reydun said eight blocks away.

“I've got five armored infantry moving east on Eighteenth Street. They look like scouts, sir”

After a second's silence, “Fire once, pull back two blocks, then hole up.”

Switching to lance frequency, I said “By the numbers, pick your targets. Be ready to move back two blocks.”

Checking the range, and bringing the 'Hawk's rifle-like heavy laser up, I sighted in on the first armor emerging from behind a delivery truck.

“Fire!”

For a split second, night became day as a blast of lasers lanced out to converge on the hapless figures. The sudden burst of light and heat overloaded the I/R, the screen 'blinked' to save my eyes from the blinding glare. The visor recovered and I could see charred bits of armor and men strewn around a blackened crater. The three surviving suits lit their jets and sailed backward over houses on brilliant torches.

"Fall back," I said, snapping off another shot at the fleeing forms.

We turned and ran. Our two Phoenix Hawks and single Stinger raced across roads and lawns, tearing up huge chunks of pavement and turf as we moved. Steam rolled off our 'Mechs as droplets of rain hit hot metal and heat sinks, making us look like three noisy, giant ghosts. We ducked around and took cover behind a line of single story houses.

Hunkering down beside some child's forgotten swing set, I scanned left. Tolliver's 'Hawk knelt hip deep in an overflowing swimming pool. His machine's weapon-laden arms reached up to clear a whitewashed brick house. To the right Sara Galigler's cobbled-together monstrosity, which has the head, leg, and left arm of a Commando, lay prone across an overturned skimmer.

Three hundred meters ahead, our old positions exploded as LRMs tore craters into the ambush site and obliterated nearby houses. Windows shattered and the ground rocked as multiple concussion waves spread outward.

As the wind and rain carried the smoke and dust away, the bastard offspring of a Locust and a Warhammer stepped into a collapsed house. Behind it a score of other, equally improbable, war machines sauntered out of the gloom.

"Green Charlie to Green Alpha. We've got a lance of uglies in the sixty-plus range, eastbound!"

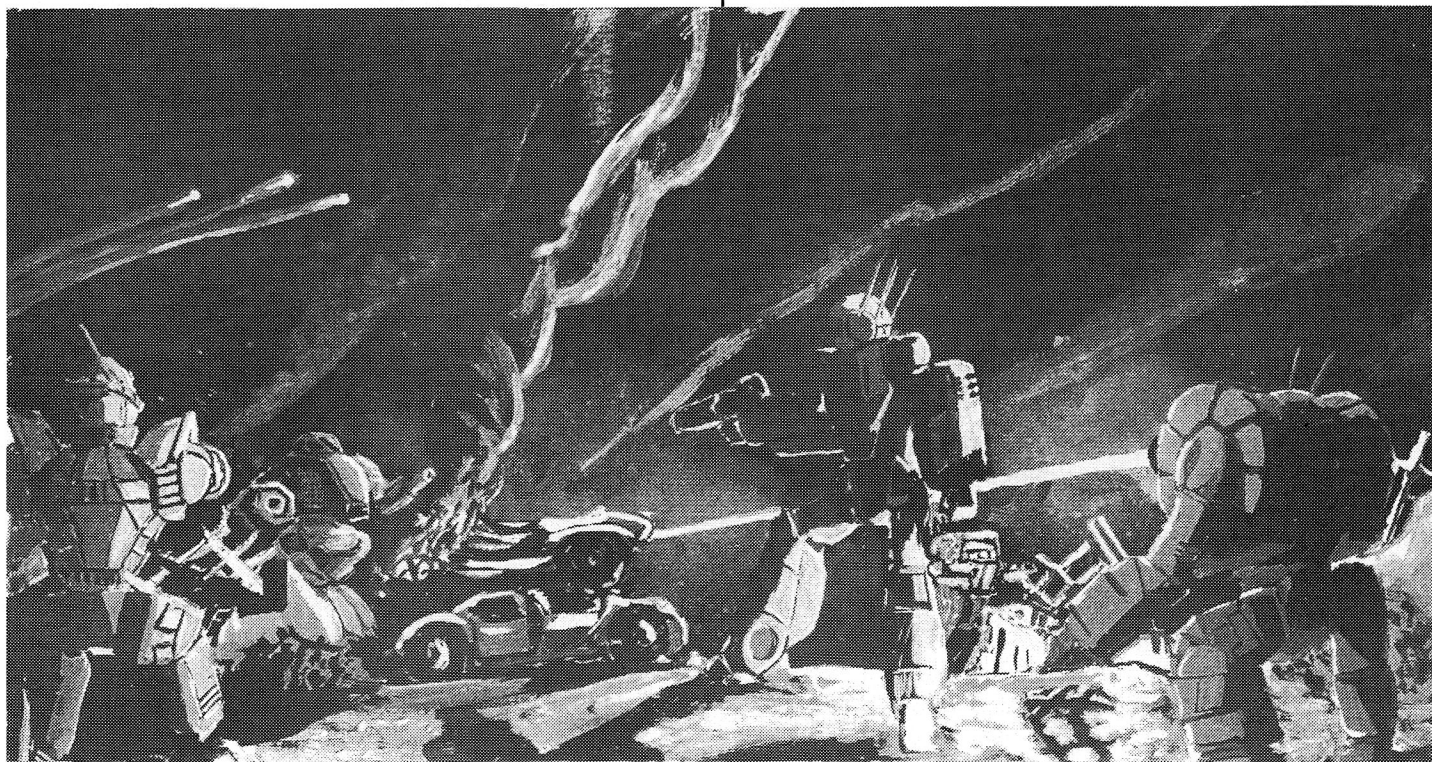
"Roger. Get back he..." The rest was lost in static as a brilliant azure bolt slashed into the roof ahead of my 'Mech. The flimsy wooden structure burst into flames and the unspent beam vaporized paint and armor off my 'Hawk's chest.

"Lance, fighting withdrawal. Galiger, jump!" I ordered.

Our Kurita model Phoenix Hawks, which sacrifice the original class' back-pack jumpjets for thicker armor, started in a backward walk, keeping our *still* thin rear armor away from the bit of the superior Clan weapons. As the little Stinger had about as much frontal armor as our rear armor, it jetted up and backward first, potting careless shots as it went.

As we backed across two rows of houses, the once quiet neighborhood was rapidly becoming a BattleMech hell. Paved roads were completely erased by missile craters, and houses reduced to scattered rubble by stray shots from both sides.

In one volley, the huge bird-like 'Mech that had fired first at me released an impossible horde of missiles at my Phoenix Hawk. The explosions whacked my elderly vehicle, sending the machine staggering over backwards. My entire battery of lasers blasted armor on its thin legs, across a set-back missile pack, and down gunbarrel arms. Its only response was to



shoot what might have been an arm mounted autocannon as I clambered to my feet.

By the time our machines reached the block where the command and fire lances had dug in, both of us had had armor shot or burned off. Tolliver's left shoulder was completely ruined. Severed myomers contracted in vain to lift the shattered joint.

Looking about as I entered my position, the rest of the company was in good shape. The Kapten's Grand Dragon sat on its haunches, alternating between his arm-mounted PPC and snoutlike LRM pack. The rest of the company was also enjoying remarkably little damage. Only Kalvich's Hunchback and Johnson's Ostsol showed the blackened paint and pitted craters of missile hits.

That all changed as the enemy closed to within 400 meters of our line! The Clan 'Mechs opened up individually on a single 'Mech as if they all had a vendetta against each and every one of us. The hellfire was total as we tried to repulse the invaders and they tried to blast us to scrap metal.

I had never seen such volume of fire come from a single lance in my entire career! Missile trails were speared and cut by beam and cannon. Our company answered as feverishly as overburdened heat sinks allowed. I lost track of the number of times I hit the shutdown override button and began to smell the characteristic smell of liners and insulation melting in the heat as the Phoenix Hawk reach the limits of its endurance.

I was on the edge of heat exhaustion, my vision narrowed down to the golden sighting crosshairs and my nemesis' avian nightmare caught in the strobe-light of night combat. Hit after hit, my lasers cut armor off its hide, only to reveal a new layer of the seemingly impenetrable material.

The monster staggered when a heavy laser bolt shattered a plas-glass plate in its nose. The smoking socket must have been its targeting system, for as it resumed its stride, its fire more often than not blasted craters far ahead of my 'Mech.

They seemed to hesitate when one of their number, a 'Mech looking for all the worlds like a misshapen Thunderbolt, went down with its head shot through by a lucky PPC hit. Apparently, they were impressed enough by our stand to switch tactics. They backed off into the darkness and smoke, content to pepper us with LRMs.

Or wait for reinforcements.

"Jacobs, take your lance and circle around our right flank; see if you can get in behind them." the Kapten said tiredly as a salvo of missiles streaked in over our hastily built fortification.

"Hai, sir" I stopped sponging sweat from my face with an already soaked towel to fight my battered machine to its feet.

We turned from the stacked ground cars and burning houses, and headed east past a Whitworth from the Fire

Lance. Its entire body had been flayed open when its ammo bays had taken a direct hit. I think Sharps had been its pilot.

We ran east about half a kilometer, dodging between houses that had escaped the destruction and started to circle north. As we reached the gates of a wooded park, the pitch of the fighting to the south escalated. The rain let up and I could see tracers and missiles arced up and down in the misty black sky like sparks from a bonfire. Lurching back and forth between columns of massive trees, I smashed down on the foot pedals to keep my speed up.

The motion sensor shrieked a warning! I caught sight of two strange green 'Mechs less than ten strides to my right. Before I was able to start the slow down procedure, my 'Mech had raced out among the enemy lance, with one of them running hell-bent straight at me!

With a deafening crash I ran headlong into the weird little 'Mech with arms attached above its head. The thing must have been very lightly armored as it practically disintegrated as I ran it over. Through my aft monitor all I could see left of it was a tangle of burning metal and broken limbs.

Each side had overshot the other, trying for surprise. We jockeyed our 'Mechs to get around but the nimble Clanners pivoted about and got their shots off first. A laser sliced through my already perforated left forearm, producing a shower of sparks and debris. The status display for the laser mounted there flashed from green to black, telling of critical damage. I pumped my remaining lasers into a 'Mech with big feet and something like a hood over its aircraft-style nose.

"Lance, don't let them get away! Fire at wi.." A static scream filled my headphones as one of the enemy pilots activated an ECM system from close range. My PA would be useless with the racket outside, so I concentrated on targeting my weapons; there wasn't anything else to do but fight.

The melee began in earnest as beams, missiles, and cannon blasted into 'Mech, tree, and ground. Another of the small 'Mechs went down, its guts burnt out by concentrated laser fire from Tolliver's Phoenix Hawk. The enemy 'Mechs appeared to be carrying mostly long range missile packs or other long ranged weapons, and so were having trouble bringing them to bear against our point-blank 'Mechs. I stood directly in front of the hooded type and blasted it while it stood kicking at my shins and lobbing missiles overhead until it fell, cockpit a mass of fused and shattered metal.

In the surprise of this impromptu battle, all thought to our earlier missions was forgotten as we desperately tried to sop the enemy from flanking our comrades. So far we were beating them, with three of their number down to none of us, but the Clan lance's technical edge was beginning to show through. Odd noises from beneath me became audible over the din of battle and red lights migrated across my worry board. The rest of the lance wasn't doing any better; both of

the other 'Mechs were fast approaching CLG (*Ed note: Combat Loss Grouping*) threshold.

They were wearing my weakened lance down with sheer volume of fire.

Tolliver's crippled 'Hawk fell first, losing a slugging contest with a Clanner's 'Mech. One of the enemy's compound arms connected with his battered head, shearing it off at the neck. Galiger's Stinger went down next, a dozen missiles burning into her waist just above the legs, shattering its hips and toppling the little 'Mech in a pile of jagged armor and amputated limbs.

The two surviving Clan 'Mechs turned to my battered Phoenix Hawk and opened fire. A green laser bolt struck the 'Hawk's armorless chest just below the chin. It burned through the gyro stabilizer housing and slagged the delicate machinery and computers inside. With no sense of balance the 'Mech fell backwards against a tree with a thud.

I realized my life would be measured in seconds as one of them raised a blackened muzzle level with my cockpit. The last thing I remembered was pulling the eject handle in front of my seat.

I awoke a day later not in a Clan prison camp, but in a dusty, shattered basement bomb shelter. Apparently I had ejected just as the Clan 'Mech vaporized my cockpit. As I rocketed upward into a tree's canopy, it's branches snagged my ejector seat, hiding my unconscious body from marauding 'Mechs as they completed the job of smashing my 'Mech to scrap. After the battle, a group of citizens had found me and taken shelter there.

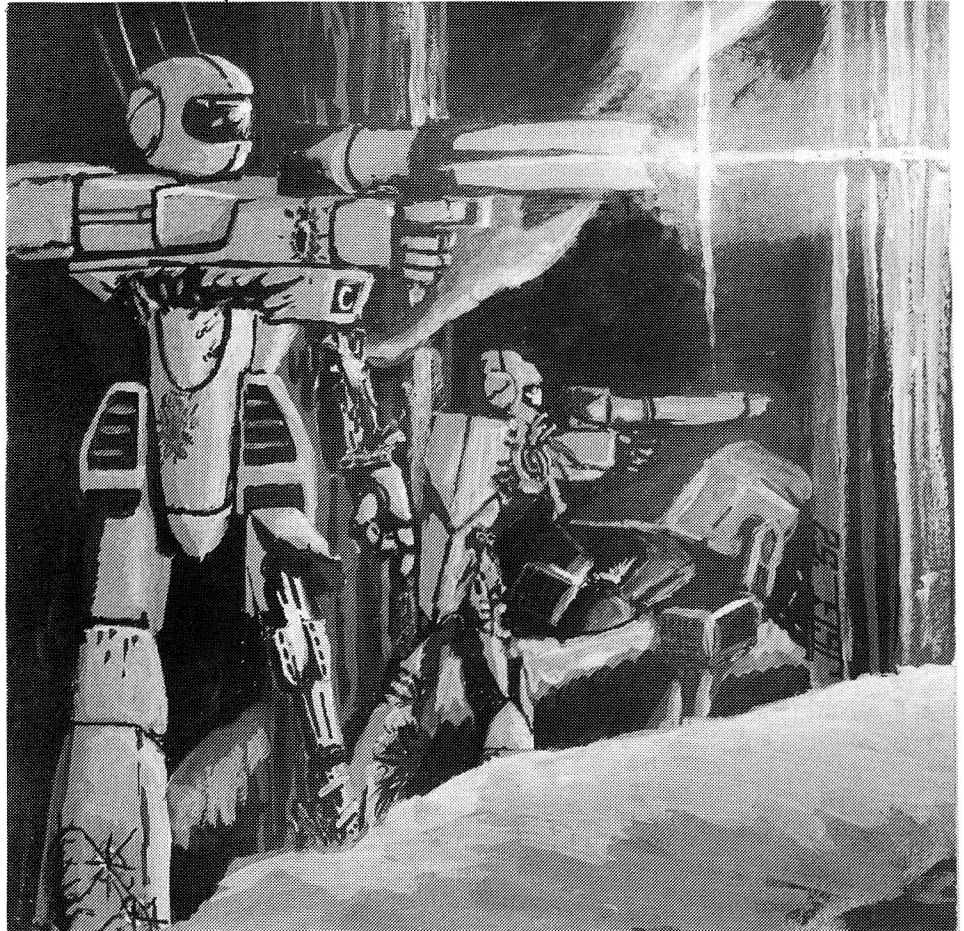
It turned out that a large part of the Fremen and militia had actually made the breakout and were getting set up for— what was for some ex-Tyr members — a return to guerilla warfare. After a week I was able to link up with a team of militia infantry doing recon work near the city and make my way to the main encampment. Though Dispossessed and wounded, I was still useful enough to get a job as staff officer with one of the southern guerilla detachments.

We had just built our camps and positions when word came that General Rhodes and most of our main force had been caught and captured by the Clanners. With the Wolves hot on our heels, we loaded what was left of our 'Mechs and personnel aboard the last uncaptured DropShip and made a grudgingly reluctant retreat offworld.

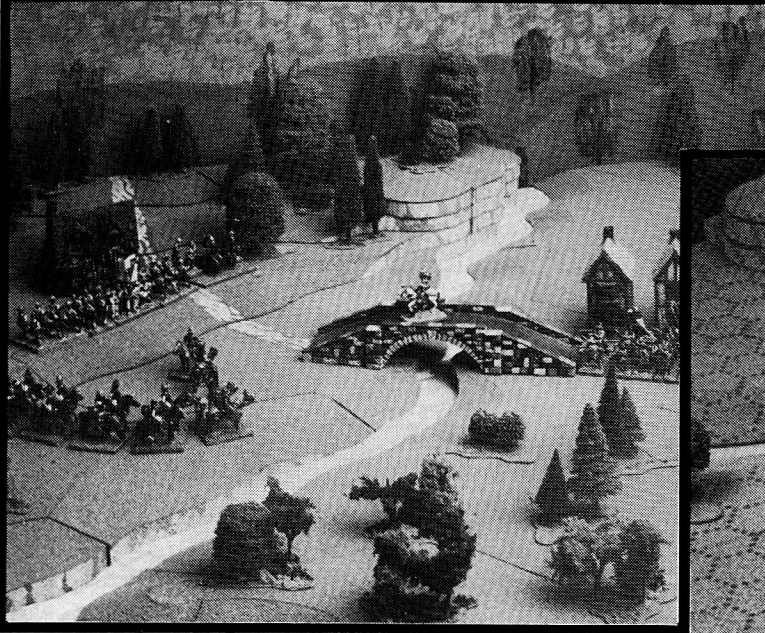
It is sobering to stop and think about this latest war, for nearly three hundred years we and our ancestors have been butchering each other to claim a neighbor's world as our own; all in a vast universe much of which we have yet to see, let alone fight over. All the while the Clans watched and waited from beyond the Periphery.

I for one have more than defending the homeworld as a motivation of answering the call to war. Even if the Clans gave up now and crawled back under the rock they came from, the blood of so many of our beloved dead demands vengeance. And vengeance they shall have.

Eric Jacobs is a native of Radstadt, born to the last survivor of a strong Kurita MechWarrior family that sided with Rasalhague during the Ronin War. In five years of service with the Kungsarme, he received a field commission to Lojtnant, and was decorated twice for bravery under fire during duty on the Periphery. He is currently employed as a MechWarrior with an unnamed mercenary regiment on the Lyran side of the Clan front.



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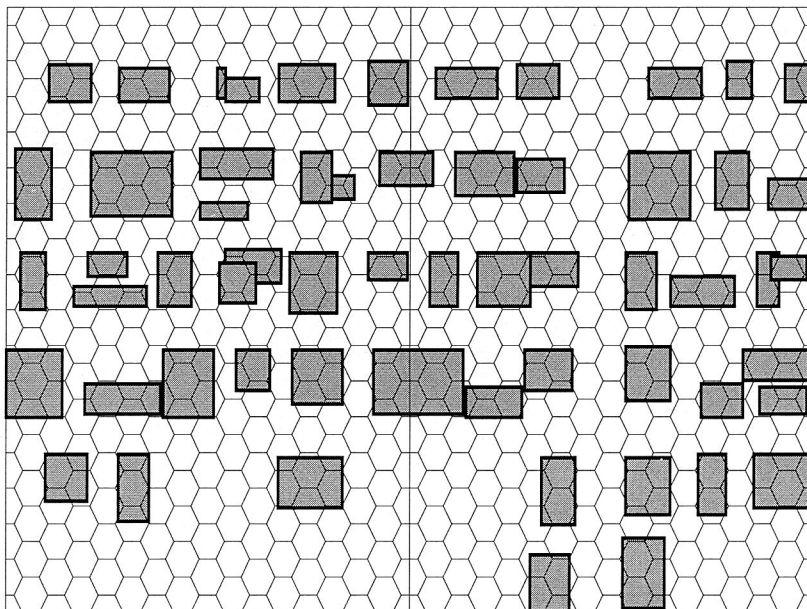
Defending Coalston

Well, every one had ben evacuated out of town for a day, because of the invasion and all. I was still in town to, ash...get my dog. Ya, that's it, my dog. The whole city was deserted, not a soul to be found anywhere.

Anyway, I was on the second floor of some kinda office building, when I see this flash out a window. The invaders had been bombing the place for hours, ya know, but this was different. So I walk up to take a look, and all of a sudden I've got a front row seat to this here battle. Them soldiers were really going at it hard, all those guns and stuff going off. They tore the cr— out of that whole neighborhood, and I watched a couple 'Mechs from both sides get blown away. So I watched until something hit the building, breaking every frigging window in the place! I bugged out as fast as I could and moved on, looking for more lo...looking for my dog, that is.

Excerpt of an eyewitness report taken by the Michal Constabulary, Michal City Jail
September 3050

N



Game Set up:

Lay out two BattleTech map sheets as shown, using the blank urban side. Rows of light buildings should be arranged North to South, spaced every other hex row.

Defender:

The defender is Reydun's Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Fremem

Command Lance

Kapten Henry Reydun, *Grand Dragon* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 2

Lojtnant Adam Johnson, *Ostsol* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2

Janet Kalvich, *Hunchback* Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3

Peter Goliver, *Panther* Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 4

Fire Lance

Lojtnant Derick Baker, *Thunderbolt* Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3

Nasha Holgelson, *Rifleman* Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3

Collen Mayato, *Centurion* Piloting: 5, Gunnery: 4

Arnold Sharps, *Whitworth* Piloting: 5, Gunnery: 4

Recon Lance

Lojtnant Eric Jacobs, Phoenix Hawk-K Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 3

Richard Tolliver, Phoenix Hawk-K Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3

Sara Galiger, modified Stinger* Piloting: 5, Gunnery: 4

*Drop the MGs, add a medium laser in the left arm and one ton of armor

The defender sets up the Command and Fire lances in improved positions in the second row of houses in the western edge of the map sheets. The Recon Lance may be placed anywhere on the eastern map.

Situation: 2325 hours September 26, 3050 Coalston City,

Attacker:

The attackers are elements of a trinary from the 352nd Assault Cluster.

Alpha Strike Star

Star Captain Gal, *Thor* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 1
Star Captain Zora Vickers, *Ferris* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 1
MechWarrior Nifton, *Vulture-A* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2
MechWarrior Spinola, *Blackhawk* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 3
MechWarrior Dena, *Puma-B* Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 2
Point Commander Havon w 4 Elementals
(temporarily attached)

Bravo Assault Star

Star Commander Stamm Brown, *Ferris* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2
MechWarrior Niffur, *Man O'War* Piloting: 1, Gunnery: 2
MechWarrior Ocar, *Mad Cat* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 2
MechWarrior Grift, *Puma* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 3
MechWarrior Olsan, *Puma-C* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 3

The attacker enters the board from the east on turn 1 with Alpha Strike Star. On turn 7, Bravo Assault Star arrives from the same direction.

Special Rules:

The small houses built in this area have a construction factor of 5 each. Once destroyed they should be removed from the board, and their hexes treated as open hexes instead of rubble. They are also low enough not to effect line of sight unless the target is prone inside or directly behind a building. All other building rules apply normally.

Before turn 6, the Defender must move the Recon Lance off the western edge of the board. If the player is unable to remove at least one member of the lance by the beginning of turn 7, then on turn 7 the attacker's Chase Star from the next scenario may enter the battlefield from the western edge behind the defender.

Due to the rain and drizzle, all units may subtract an extra 2 heat points per turn. All other rules pertaining to improved positions, Expert BattleTech rules, and Clan bidding and tactics apply without change.

Victory Conditions:

The Defender must hold off the Wolves for 12 turns, during which time the other Fremen units can escape the city to prevent the Wolves from consolidating their conquest of Kandis. Victory for the FRR forces can be rated as follows: Spectacular Victory: Holding out for the required amount of time and withdrawing with at least 3/4 of the company. Decisive Victory: Holding out for the 12 turns and escaping with half of the unit. Tactical Victory: Defender successful, regardless of loss.

The Attacker has won the bid to out-flank and encircle the enemy as the Fremen attempt a breakout. To do this, the player must defeat the flanking screen as quickly as possible and move on. Victory for the Wolves is determined by using the following: Spectacular Victory: Destroying all enemy units on the board before turn 12. Decisive Victory: Destroying the enemy before turn 12, but taking more than 50% casualties.

Partial Reprint from Sorenson's Sabres Phoenix Hawk-1K

Movement Rates

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Walking MPs: | 6 |
| Running MPs: | 9 |
| Jumping MPs: | 0 |
| Heat Sinks: | 13 |
| Armor Factor: | 152 |
| Head: | 8 |
| Center Torso: | 23/5 |
| Rt/Lt Torso: | 18/4 |
| Rt/Lt Arm: | 14 |
| Rt/Lt Leg: | 22 |

Weapons & Ammo:

| Type: | Location | Critical | Tons |
|-------------|----------|----------|------|
| Large Laser | RA | 2 | 5 |
| Med Laser | RA | 1 | 1 |
| Med Laser | LA | 1 | 1 |
| Sm Laser | CT | 1 | 0.5 |

Deadly Collision

Damn the Trees

Void, those Dogs are tough as steel! Our company was out on picket, protecting the flank as our mates tried to beat a retreat out of town. We'd already fought them off once, and as they fell back to lick their wounds the Lojtnant ordered us to work our way around the north to sneak up on the Clanners from behind.

We got around all right, but we had to go through some kind of park or something. But this wasn't your normal park now, it was filled with trees the size of skyscrapers. I'm used to feeling small in my Stinger, but even an Atlas would have to walk around these things! Even worse, they were so closely packed together it was like running through a wooden canyon. You could forget about seeing anything past ninety meters!

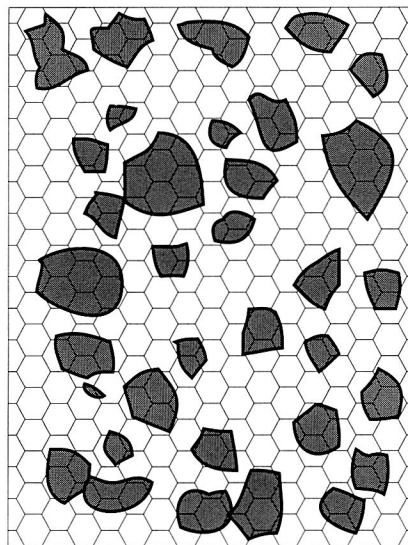
So there we were, stomping our way in the dark: trees, leaves, and other stuff blurring by. All of a sudden my MAD and my motion sensor start going bananas! Even before the computer could paint a target box, this spindly hob races by so close I could see the stupid expression of its pilot's face. Over on my right, the Lojtnant had broadsided one of them and laid the sucker out flat.

I almost cut in my jump jets, but remembered those bloody trees and what the canopy'd do to my old 'Mech. So I jinked behind a tree and tried to come out where I hoped they wouldn't expect me. I stepped around and dropped my sights on the closest enemy and realized how badly the deck had been stacked against us this time.

Sgt Sara Galiger,

As told to Jason Tomain,
BattleTechnology Correspondent
Weingarten, December 3050

N



Game Setup:

Lay out a single BattleTech map sheet, using the blank urban side. The entire area is considered to be covered with titanic xenosequoia trees. The trees' effect on combat is covered by the special rules section.

Defender:

The defenders are all the 'Mechs from the recon lance which survived the previous scenario. All damage remains unchanged, with an additional 2 points of damage to the left arm of Jacobs' Phoenix Hawk.

Attacker:

The attacker represents the Bravo Chase Star attempting to outflank Reydun's Company, still locked in combat with the rest of its trinary.

Star Commander Olson, *Puma-C* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 1

MechWarrior Smal, *Puma-A* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 2

MechWarrior Havn, *Koshi* Piloting: 3, Gunnery: 3

MechWarrior Loss, *Dasher-C* Piloting: 2, Gunnery: 3

MechWarrior Barth, *Dasher* (destroyed) Piloting: 4, Gunnery: 3

Note: All Clan 'Mechs carry NARC equipped missiles.

Both sides set up within 3 hexes of the center of the board, defender to the west and attacker to the east, all facing away from each other.

Special Rules:

The massive trees in the park dramatically reduce weapon ranges and movement ability. Line of sight is limited to 3 hexes and the maximum any unit can travel in one turn is 3 hexes regardless of MPs available. Due to the low, heavy canopy, jump jets cannot be used for normal movement and attacks. All other Expert BattleTech, Clan bidding, and tactics rules apply normally.

Situation: 2332 Hours, September 26,3050

Location:
Engleson Wooded Park
Cess Continent, Kandis II

It's a coincidence that occurs commonly on the battlefield: both company commanders order their scout units to flank the opponent in the same way, nearly simultaneously. As both units moved through a woodland park populated by giant xenosequoias (a strain imported from Tall Trees nearly a half millenium ago), they literally ran into one another.

In the ensuing firefight the Rasalhague 'Mechs attempted to fight a desperate delaying action. The Wolves, who were configured for the support role, were unprepared to fight a battle at close quarters. Thus they found themselves fighting an engagement at a distinct disadvantage that their superior technology was unable to reverse.

As the Clan star attempted to fall back to open the range, the Fremmen unit charged into hand to hand combat. Though the defending lance was destroyed, three Clan 'Mechs were knocked out, holding up the rest long enough for the surviving Fremmen units to make good their escape.

Victory Conditions:

Both units were issued the same mission by their respective commanders. Now both players are faced with the same problem: if a unit continues on to complete the mission, it leaves itself vulnerable to attack. Both sides must attempt to destroy or disable all enemy units on the board.

Defender needs to hold up the Clan 'Mechs, or to inflict enough damage to render them combat-ineffective. Determine success according to the following:

Defender

Spectacular Victory: Defender destroys or disables two or more enemy 'Mechs before turn 6 without any destroyed or disabled Defender 'Mechs. This does NOT include the Dasher destroyed (by collision with Jacobs) as the scenario begins.

Decisive Victory: Defender destroys or disables two or more enemy 'Mechs before turn 6.

Tactical Victory: Defender survives until Turn 6.

Attacker must destroy the Defenders AND be able to link up with the rest of its unit to finish the battle to the south. The player determines victory according to the following conditions:

Attacker

Spectacular Victory: All enemy 'Mechs destroyed without loss before Turn 6.

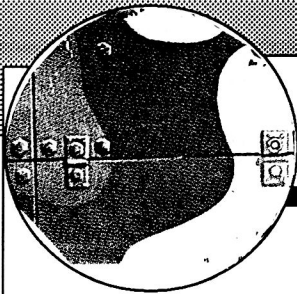
Decisive Victory: All enemy 'Mechs destroyed before Turn 6 without taking more than one-fourth casualties.

Tactical Victory: Attacker destroys or disables all enemy 'Mechs before Turn 6, regardless of loss.

Note that it is possible for both sides to claim a victory.

Tactical Note:

It may not be possible for the Defender to win if the player's 'Mech took too much damage in the previous battle. The Defender should try to close to point blank range or conversely, to use the giant forest as cover to avoid combat altogether. Remember, time is on the Defender's side.



BattleColors

Desert Camo #2

Desert Camo

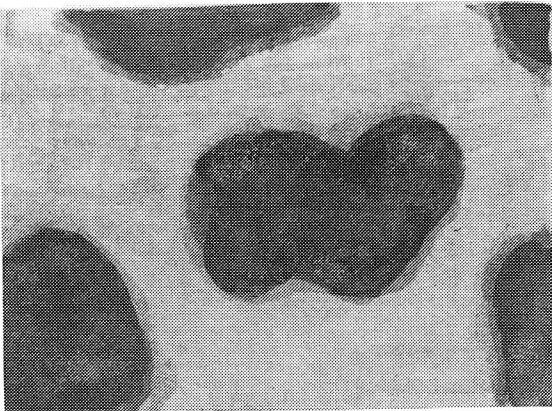
Rocky wastelands and flat expanses of brush, deserts are the most common landform in the Inner Sphere. As such, they often become the battlefields for the armies of the Successor States. The Desert Camouflage Pattern #2 is the scheme most widely used by units operating in rough ground and dry savannah. Though the use of camouflage in such locations may seem of limited value, it can prove surprisingly effective.

Worlds and Environments

Many planets, due to solar position or small size, consist entirely of this harsh climate. More hospitable planets normally have deserts along their equatorial regions, and even most wet worlds will have at least one area that receives little moisture. In such arid lands, vegetation is either thin or non-existent, leaving a windswept terrain of low brush, rock, and eroded ravine.

While discussing every desert environment in the Inner Sphere may well be impossible, a sampling of the wide variety of worlds are described below.

Pattern for Desert Camo #2



Hesperus II

Known throughout the Inner Sphere for its large BattleMech factories, Hesperus II has been repeatedly attacked and raided for nearly six centuries. While the battle have destroyed much of the planet's surface, the massive facility remains the Federated Commonwealth's single largest producer of BattleMechs. The main reason for the planet's continued survival has been the world's dry, planet-wide mountains. The contorted landscape of the Myoo Mountain range — into which Defiance Industries is build — makes large-scale attacks practically impossible, while the scarcity of passes through which 'Mechs can travel restricts access to the factories. The mountains themselves have been known to cause casualties when 'Mechs have lost their footing on the treacherous slopes.

The Defiance Self-Protection Force and regular units stationed on Hesperus II paint their vehicles in Desert Camo #2. Tan and dark brown colors are used to blend in with the granite mountains of the surrounding areas. 'Mechs serving in the few lowland deserts sport a variant scheme that uses horizontal "tiger stripes" in a lighter brown color.

Baker III

Small and cold, Baker III is the only marginally terrestrial planet in a system populated by gas giants. Its twin domed cities house a modest population that serves the 'Mech garrison and the administrative headquarters for a dozen orbital stations that mine the 'jovian' planets. Its location, over 58 parsecs from the old Kurita border, has spared the system from much of the devastation of the Succession Wars. The coming of the Clans, however, has put the Baker system on the front lines and in the direct path of the invading forces.

The planet's thin carbon dioxide atmosphere gives the surface a distinctly orange hue. A red and orange Desert



Javelin in the Foothills of the Myoo Mtns, Painted in Desert Camo #2

Camo #2 is the most effective pattern for 'Mechs serving on Baker III's rocky wastes.

Al Hillah

Beneath a blazing type A7 star, the Azami world of Al Hillah is a true desert planet. Completely uninhabitable at the equator without life support, the poles are the only places that the hardiest of plant life can survive. Sunlight at the temperate zones is just barely tolerable to the unprotected human eye.

During the War of 3039, Al Hillah served as a staging base for Kurita's counteroffensive into the Lyran half of the Federated Commonwealth. Since the subsequent peace treaty with both major powers, units stationed on Al Hillah have seen little action.

The odd pattern of gloss white and light sand paint is applied as camouflage to vehicles operating in Al Hillah's sandy deserts. Among dazzling silicate dunes, an unmoving BattleMech can remain undetected until its target is well within effective weapons range.

Thessalonika

Deep within the interior of the Draconis Combine, Thessalonika III is a world with minimal agricultural or industrial resources. Only a minor axial tilt and extensive natural underground aquifers give the planet large tracts of semi-arid plain that maintain herd of grazing animals. Its newfound importance is as the jump-off point for raids against Clan-occupied Rasalhague planets. During the winter-spring of 3051, Kurita units have conducted a dozen raids against Clan targets. On one occasion in April, elements of the Ghost Bear Clan traced the raiders back to Thessalonika and conducted a counter-strike. The Clan 'Mechs grounded in the savannah outside the capital city of Tyrsis and proceeded to attack a local air base. The local garrison — including the original raiding party — forced the Clan 'Mechs offplanet after the

attackers succeeded in destroying a lance of aerospace fighters and crippling the base's facilities.

BattleMechs serving on Thessalonika III typically use a Desert Camo # 2 painted with tan and drab green. While not providing in the way of closeup concealment, this pattern will blend a 'Mech's outline with the low brush and grass of a rolling plain.

The Desert Camouflage Pattern

Desert camouflage, unlike schemes designed for vegetation, uses a simple two-tone pattern. The lighter color is laid down as a base, the darker color is applied. In rocky or brush-covered areas, random irregular spots are most effective. Mountainous and open desert regions use short horizontal stripes to blend in with the natural lines of the terrain. It is important to keep the pattern uncluttered; a general rule of thumb is to have the secondary coat cover not more than 50% of the vehicle. Any more may make the overall tone darker than the surrounding terrain, contrasting the vehicle against its background and destroying the effect of the camouflage.

Even on the same planet, desert regions can be distinct enough from one another to reduce the effectiveness of camouflage when a unit is forced to move into a different area. For this reason, units expecting to fight a highly mobile campaign will paint their vehicles with colors that are partially useful in all expected areas of operation.

A commander who can effectively utilize camouflage has any number of advantageous tactics open to him. Properly camouflaged, a dug-in 'Mech of rank can remain nearly invisible, even on seemingly barren terrain. The pattern also provides an additional advantage when detected. Even on the move, the random dark areas will break up and disrupt a 'Mechs' silhouette as it advances across the battlefield.

Technical Readout

Kruger Combat Car

Overview

First produced over four hundred years ago, the Kruger Combat Car was based on design ideas proven as far back as the 20th Century. The Kruger was produced for ninety years before newer designs replaced it on the production lines. These original Krugers continued in service well into the 29th Century. In 2880, new Krugers were once again rolling off the assembly line. Avalon Arms, a Davion ammunition manufacturer, branched out into vehicles with the venerable Kruger as their first product. It was to prove a moneymaker for them, the first of a line of vehicles. For four centuries the Kruger Combat Car has been a perfect example of a reliable armor system.

Capabilities

Designed to fulfill only one role, the Kruger makes no pretense of being anything other than a fast attack vehicle. With eight independent suspension wheels, each with its own drive and steering system, it is able to traverse most terrains without slowing. In addition, the Kruger is able to move backwards at the same speeds it can move forward. To take advantage of this unique gear system, the radio operator sits in the rear of the car with a secondary steering system. When necessary, he can assume control of the vehicle to maneuver as well as the driver.

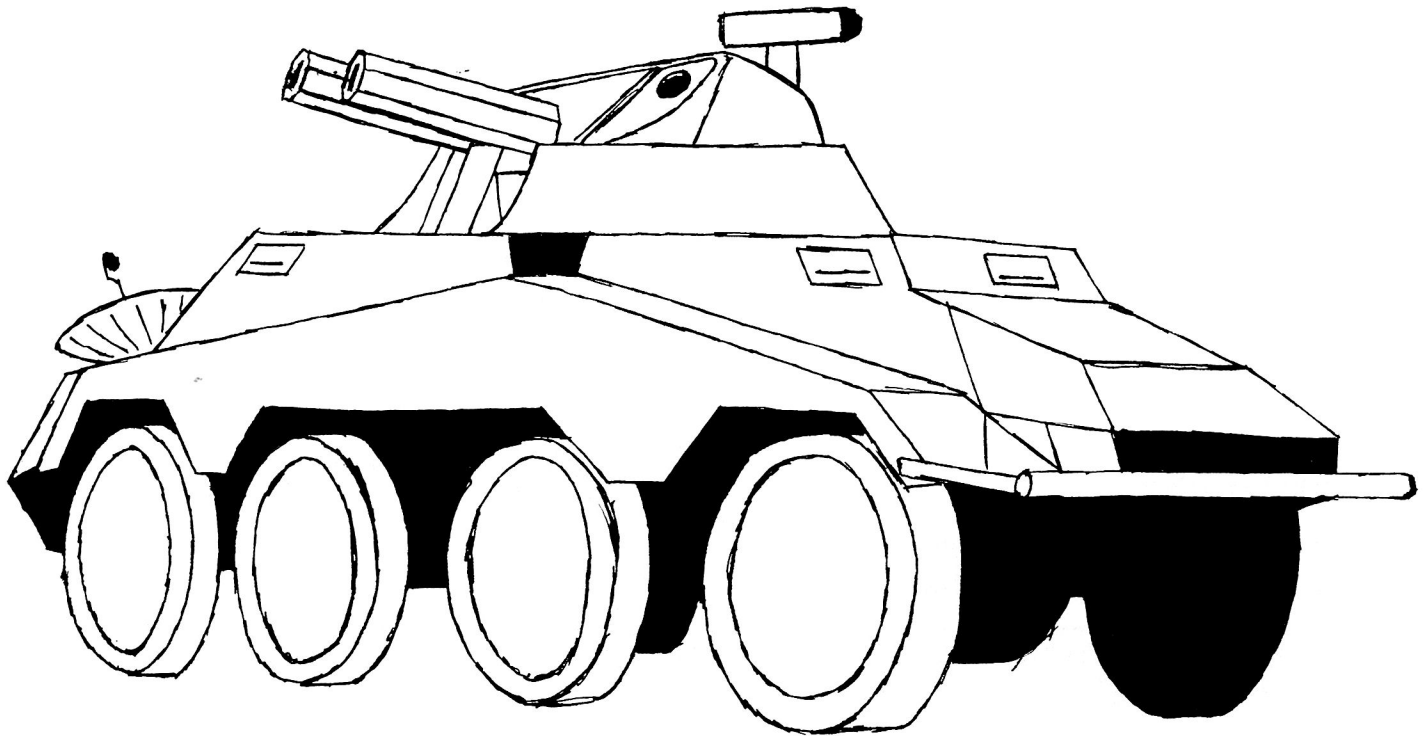
Its weapons systems consists of two Martell Medium Lasers mounted in a highly mobile roof turret. The ten-ton Kruger surprises many opponents who expect small lasers in the barrel system.

The mobile turret combined with the efficient Broadstar Pintel tracking system surprised even its designers by proving an effective anti-aircraft vehicle. Its four tons of armor ensure that the Kruger Combat Car can fill any combat role from raiding to city defense.

Drawbacks to the Kruger are few but significant. With the rarity of fusion engines available, production of the combat car is limited to fewer than seventy a year. In addition, the limited crew and storage space reduces its effective time in the field. Yet with its impressive track record and good survival rate the Kruger should continue to be an excellent choice for fast attack armor companies for the foreseeable future.

Battle History

In 2915, Periphery raiders attacked the Davion world of Sherwood. The raiders lacked BattleMechs, but had enough aerospace power to overwhelm the planet's defenses. Every time they tried to intercept the raiders' armor forces, the Davion units were destroyed by Aerospace fighter strafing. In desperation, the Davion commander dug in his eight Krugers, using his remaining heavy armor as bait. The bandits took the bait, sending their fighter wings to attack just as expected. Flying at treetop level as they had done before, the aerjocks were not expecting major opposition. As they topped a small rise, three of the six fighters were shot down immediately when the concealed Krugers opened fire with deadly accuracy. Losing two more fighters only moments later forced the raiders to abandon their attack, leaving the crews of these tiny vehicles the heroes of the hour.



KGT-2 Kruger Combat Car

Mass: 10 Tons
 Movement Type: Wheeled
 Power Plant: DAV Exo-Fusion 50
 Cruise Speed: 75.6 kph
 Flank Speed: 119.5 kph
 Armor: ProTec Light
 Armament: 2 Martell Medium Lasers
 Manufacturer: Avalon Arms Company
 Communications System: Broadstar Micro-Pulse
 Targeting/Tracking System: Broadstar Pintel-Star

Cost: 177,870 C-bills

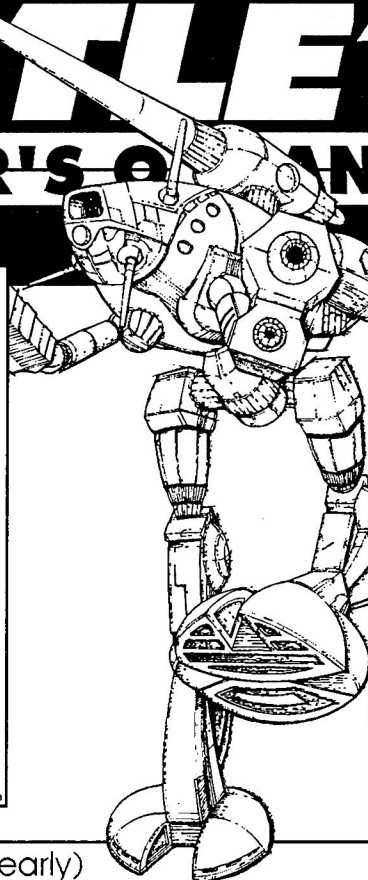
| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------|---------|
| Type: | Kruger Combat Car | Tonnage: | 10 Tons |
| Cruise Speed: | 7 | | |
| Flank Speed: | 11 | | |
| Engine: | DAV ExoFusion 50 | | 2.25 |
| Engine Rating: | 50 | | |
| Engine Type: | Fusion | | |
| Control Equipment: | | | 0.5 |
| Heat Sinks: | 10 | | 0.0 |
| Internal Structure: | | | 1.0 |
| Turret: | | | 0.20 |
| Armor: | 64 | | 4.0 |
| Front | 15 | | |
| Lt/Rt Side | 12 | | |
| Back | 13 | | |
| Turret | 12 | | |
| Weapons: | | | |
| Medium Laser | Turret | | 1.0 |
| Medium Laser | Turret | | 1.0 |

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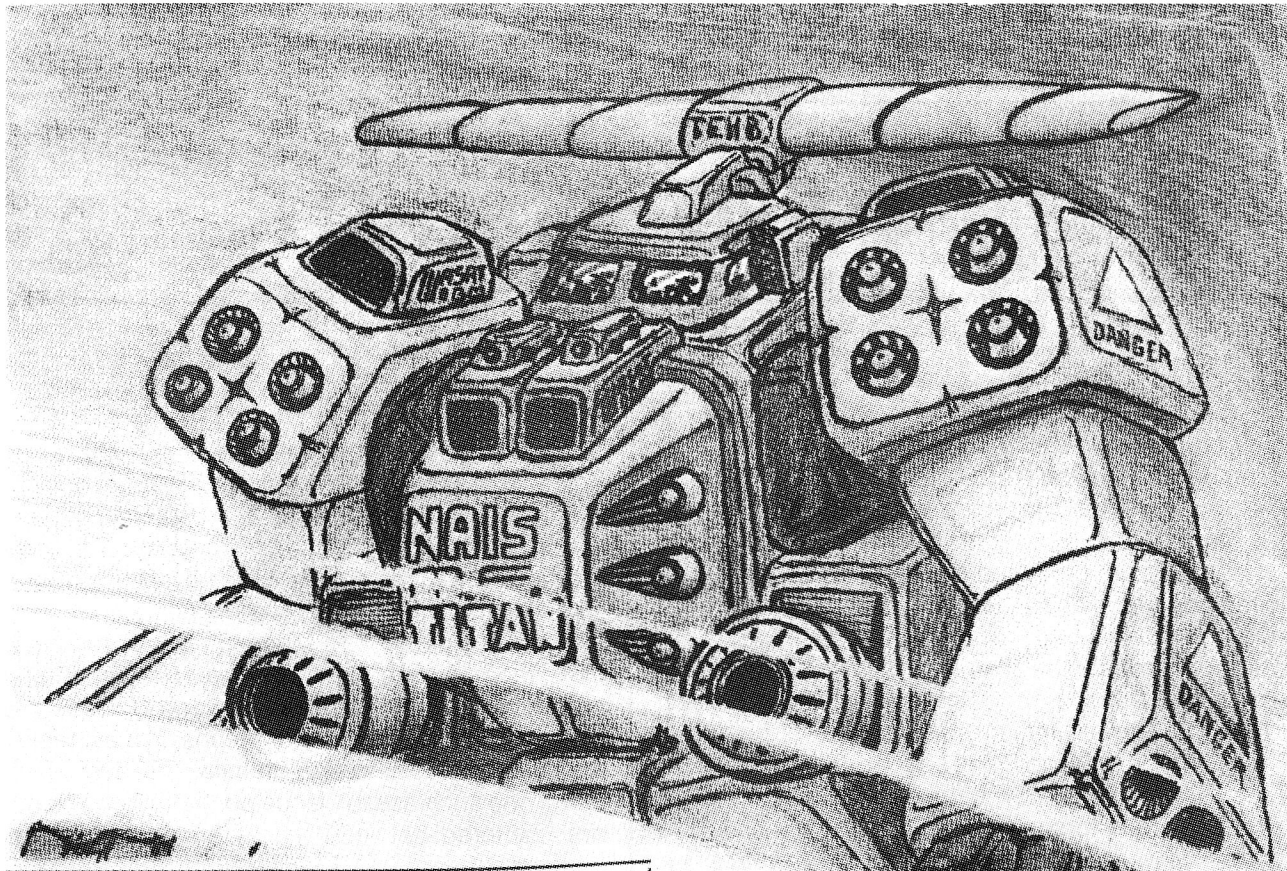
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The Titan - A Great 'Mech Gets New Tech

The Titan-1A was our state of the art 'Mech in 3038. Now, with a retooling and redesign job, it's ready to take on the Clans!



Technical Readout

TIA-D Titan-D

That's right! It's back, and meaner than ever. With just a brief 6-month closure of the NAIS 'Mech Fabrication plant on New Avalon, the TIA-1D is being churned out in record numbers. While security is tight, one of our agents has reported that the plant produced at least 6 'Mechs last year, with a large portion going to the Federated Commonwealth regiments.

The major upgrades of the Titan are the twin Defiance 100T Particle Projection Cannons replacing the older Magna Hellstar PPCs. Also the Martel Medium Lasers were upgraded to Sutel Precision Line Medium Pulse Lasers, and to protect the pilot of the Titan further, it now carries the reliable CASE in both the left and right torsos.

To upgrade its weaponry the Titan drops seven heat sinks. However, it employs the technology of double sinks to improve its heat dissipation and to compensate for the additional heat buildup of the new weapons.

Battle History:

The Titan has had an illustrious career despite being only 20 years old. Its ferocity and raw firepower are unequalled on the battlefield.

One example was the battle for Quentin in 3039. An assault lance of Titans were en route to the battlefield when a Kurita Company surprised them and opened fire. One Titan burst into a ball of flame as the rear armor was breached and the SRM ammo detonated.

Realizing her situation, Lt. Deneice Wages radioed to headquarters for reinforcements and engaged the invaders. The battle lasted five minutes. When reinforcement arrived all that remained was Lt. Wages' Titan. Out of ammo and missing its left arm, it was fighting a Panther and the Kuritan Commander's BattleMaster.

With a dual blast of PPC fire from the Titan, the Panther exploded as the engine went supernova. Deciding that discretion was the better part of valor, the BattleMaster pilot gave a salute and retreated from the field.

For her actions, Lt. Wages was promoted to the rank of Hauptmann. She retired at that rank three years later. This

battle did not affect the outcome of the war for the planet: Kuritan forces pushed the Federated Commonwealth off the planet two weeks later. What the battle did prove beyond a doubt was the Titan's durability. That three Titans going head to head with a Kurita company lasted for half an hour, with one surviving, is nothing short of a miracle.

Of the 400 plus Titans which have been produced, slightly more than 100 are the new Titan-1Ds. The Titan is mostly concentrated in the Federated Commonwealth regiments. They are used as command 'Mechs. In most regiments they are assembled in assault lances, the average frequency being one such assault lance per battalion. The other Titans are scattered between the Lyran Guard and the Crucis Lancers.

Variants:

The only variant of the new Titan is the substitution of a Guardian ECM for the Beagle Probe. Due to the modular nature of these systems, the substitution takes eight hours.

The older TIA-1A Titans have in some cases been upgraded with Star League technology. Dropping six heat sinks and the SRM6, one model adds Rawlings 550 Jump Jets, a medium laser, CASE in both torsos, an SRM 4, and a upgrade of the PPCs to Extended Range PPCs. The other model drops the same weapons but adds an SRM 4, CASE, and a third PPC. Both of these models replace the remaining heat sinks with freezer type double heat sinks.

Notable MechWarriors:

Hauptmann Dean Martin

Assigned to the 3rd Crucis Lancers, he was one of the first to receive Titan-1D. While he mourned the loss of his Victor, he realizes that the Titan is clearly superior. Using this superiority, he was the first to perform a Death From Above attack with the Titan. The facts that the opponent was a Kuritan Sho-sa, and that the attack was captured on camera, made the kill all the more spectacular.

TIA-1D Titan

Mass: 100 Tons

Chassis: NAIS-B

Power Plant: General Motors 300 Extralight

Cruising Speed: 32.4 kph

Maximum Speed: 54.8 kph

Jump Jets: Rawlings 550

Jump Capacity: 90 Meters

Armor: Durallex Super Heavy II

Armament:

2 Defiance 1001 Projection Cannons

7 Sutel Precision Line

Medium Pulse Lasers

6 Holly Short Range Missile 4-Pack

Manufacturer: NAIS Mech Fabrication

Primary Factory: New Avalon

Communication System: Tek BattleCom

Targeting/Tracking System:

Wasat IBM with Beagle Probe

| | | |
|---------------------|----------|----------|
| Type: TIA-1D Titan | | Tons |
| Tonnage: | 100 Tons | 100.0 |
| Internal Structure: | | 10.0 |
| Engine: | 300 XL | 9.5 |
| Walking: | 3 | |
| Running: | 5 | |
| Jumping: | 3 | |
| Heat Sinks: | 16(32) | 6.0 |
| Gyro: | | 3.0 |
| Cockpit | | 3.0 |
| Armor | 304 | 19.0 |
| | Internal | External |
| Head: | 3 | 9 |
| CT: | 31 | 50/11 |
| RT/LT: | 21 | 32/10 |
| RA/LA: | 17 | 34 |
| RL/LL: | 21 | 41 |

Weapons:

| Type: | Location | Crits | Tonnage |
|--------------------|----------|-------|---------|
| ER PPC | RT | 3 | 7.0 |
| ER PPC | LT | 3 | 7.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RA | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RA | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | LA | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | LA | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | H | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | CT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | LT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | LT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Ammo (SRM) 25 | RL | 1 | 1.0 |
| Ammo (SRM) 25 | LL | 1 | 1.0 |
| Beagle Probe | LT | 2 | 1.5 |
| Jump Jets | CT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Jump Jets | RL | 1 | 2.0 |
| Jump Jets | LL | 1 | 2.0 |

TIA-2D Titan Variant

| | | | |
|---------------------|----------|----------|-------|
| Tonnage: | | | 100.0 |
| Internal Structure: | | | 10.0 |
| Engine: | 300XL | | 9.5 |
| Walking: | 3 | | |
| Running: | 5 | | |
| Jumping: | 3 | | |
| Cockpit: | | | 3.0 |
| Gyro: | | | 3.0 |
| Heat Sinks: | 16(32) | | 6.0 |
| Armor: | 304 | | 19.0 |
| | Internal | External | |
| Head: | 3 | 9 | |
| CT: | 31 | 50/11 | |
| RT/LT: | 21 | 32/10 | |
| RA/LA: | 17 | 34 | |
| RL/LL: | 21 | 41 | |

Weapons:

| Type | Location | Crits | Tonnage |
|---------------------|----------|-------|---------|
| ER PPC | RT | 3 | 7.0 |
| ER PPC | LT | 3 | 7.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RA | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RA | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | LA | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | LA | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | H | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | CT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | LT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | LT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Ammo (SRM) 25 | RL | 1 | 1.0 |
| Ammo (SRM) 25 | LL | 1 | 1.0 |
| ECM or Beagle Probe | LT | 1 | 1.5 |
| Jump Jets | CT | 2 | 2.0 |
| Jump Jets | RL | 2 | 2.0 |
| Jump Jets | LL | 2 | 2.0 |

Space Allocation:

| Location | Fixed | Spaces Left |
|----------|-----------------------|-------------|
| H | SRM 4 | 0 |
| CT | SRM 4 | |
| | Jump Jet | 0 |
| RT | 3 Engines | |
| | 3 ER PPC | |
| | 3 Medium Pulse Lasers | |
| | 2 SRM 4 | 0 |
| LT | 3 Engine | |
| | 3 ER PPC | |
| | 2 ECM or Beagle Probe | |
| | 2 SRM 4 | 0 |
| RA | 2 Medium Pulse Lasers | |
| | 6 Double | |
| | Heat Sinks | 0 |
| LA | 2 Medium Pulse Lasers | |
| | 6 Double | |
| | Heat Sinks | 0 |
| RL | 1 Jump Jet | |
| | 1 Ammo (SRM) | 0 |
| LL | 1 Jump Jet | |
| | 1 Ammo (SRM) | 0 |

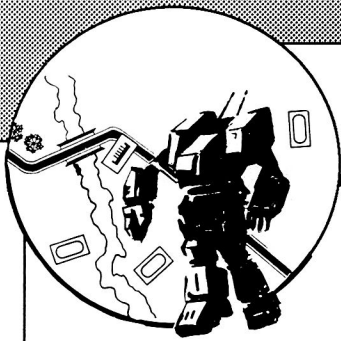
This kit replaces the weapons and heat sinks on the TIA-1A to update it to 3050 Tech level.

Type: TIA-1AD Titan Upgrade

| | | |
|---------------------|----------|-------|
| Tonnage | 100 Tons | 100.0 |
| Internal Structure: | | 10.0 |
| Engine: | 300 Vlar | 19.0 |
| Walking: | 3 | |
| Running: | 5 | |
| Jumping: | 0 | |
| Heatsinks: | 15(30) | 5.0 |
| Gyro: | | 3.0 |
| Cockpit: | | 3.0 |
| Armor: | 304 | 19.0 |
| Armor Factor: | | |

| | Internal | External |
|-------|----------|----------|
| Head | 3 | 9 |
| CT: | 31 | 50/11 |
| RT/LT | 1 | 32/10 |
| RA/LA | 17 | 34 |
| RL/LL | 21 | 41 |

| Weapons: | Location | Crits | Tons |
|--------------------|----------|-------|------|
| ER PPC | RT | 3 | 7.0 |
| ER PPC | LT | 3 | 7.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RA | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | RA | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | LA | 1 | 2.0 |
| Medium Pulse Laser | LA | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | RT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | LT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-4 | LT | 1 | 2.0 |
| SRM-6 | CT | 2 | 3.0 |
| Ammo (SRM) 25 | RT | 1 | 1.0 |
| Ammo (SRM) 25 | LT | 1 | 1.0 |
| Ammo (SRM) 15 | LT | 1 | 1.0 |
| CASE | RT | 1 | 0.5 |
| CASE | LT | 1 | 0.5 |



MechTac

New Avalon Tactics Research Think Tank Paper # FCH145-AS

THERE HAS BEEN MUCH COMMENT ABOUT USING NEW TECHNOLOGY, TACTICS AND COMBINED ARMS AGAINST THE CLANS TO OVERCOME THEIR DEVASTATING COMBAT ABILITY. BUT LITTLE HAS BEEN OFFERED SPECIFICALLY. THE NEW AVALON TACTICS RESEARCH THINK TANK HAS RELEASED THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION AND BATTLEMECH DESIGNS IN THEIR FIRST ATTEMPT AT EXPLORING NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND NEW TACTICS.

The key technologies which we have isolated for use have been the C3 Computer System in combination with the Pulse Laser. Previously the Pulse Laser has had limited applications because of its shorter range.

In most cases the benefit of extra accuracy is more than lost by the range reduction. Tests show that any opponent who is aware of pulse laser technology and has any ranged weapon capacity can move to longer ranges and offset any possible benefit of the pulse laser.

But that is not the case if the laser system is installed as a package with the C3 Computer system. In this instance, the range advantage can be maintained because all the units in a lance can fire based upon the targeting information of the closest unit!

Our research has determined that a standard medium lance could be produced, a force which would be fully integrated to fight as a unit, rather than as single units. The unit leader would pilot a 'Mech we have dubbed the Pulse Leader. This 'Mech weighs fifty tons and has limited movement.

Its key weapons are matched Pulse Lasers, one in the arm and another in the torso. The 'Mech avoids XL technology because it is far too likely that a 'Mech will be killed by a shot which penetrates the torso.

Endo Steel construction was used along with double heat sinks to offset the high heat effects of the pulse lasers. The Pulse Leader is actually required to stay behind its two screen 'Mechs because it holds the master computer in the C3 system, which must be carefully protected. For this reason an anti-missile system was added to give as much protection as possible.

Type: LDR-1A Pulse Leader
Designer: A. Braskin
Tonnage: 50.0

Internal Structure: EndoSteel 2.5
Engine: Nissan 200 8.5

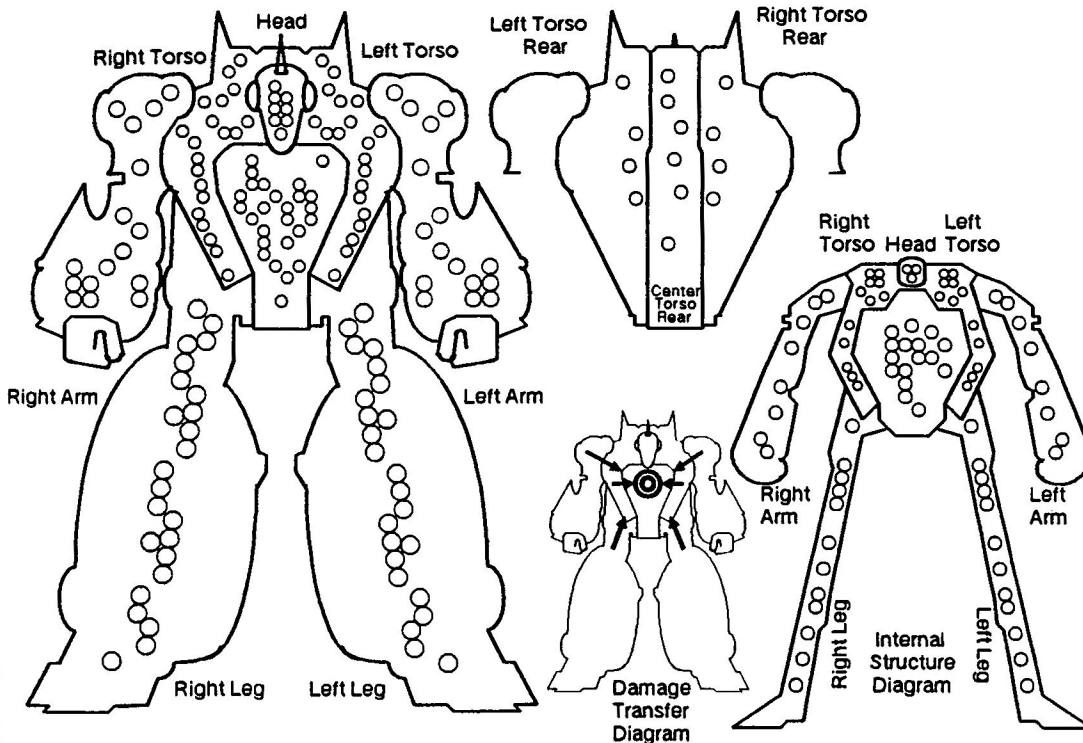
Walking: 4
Running: 6
Jumping: 4

Heat Sinks: 10 Double 0.0
Gyro: 2.0
Cockpit: 3.0
Armor Factor: 168 10.5

| | Internal | External |
|--------------|----------|----------|
| Head | 3 | 8 |
| Center Torso | 16 | 26/6 |
| LT/RT | 12 | 10/4 |
| LA/RA | 8 | 16 |
| LL/RL | 12 | 24 |

| Type | Loc | Qty | Crits | Tons |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-------|------|
| Heat Sink | LT | 1 | 3 | 0.0 |
| Heat Sink | LT | 1 | 3 | 0.0 |
| Jump Jet | LT | 2 | 1 | 1.0 |
| Jump Jet | RT | 2 | 1 | 1.0 |
| Large Pulse Laser | LA | 1 | 2 | 7.0 |
| Large Pulse Laser | RT | 1 | 2 | 7.0 |
| Anti-Missile System | H | 1 | 1 | 0.5 |
| Ammo (AMS) | CT | 2 | 2 | 2.0 |
| C3 Computer | LT | 1 | 5 | 5.0 |
| Net Free Tons: | | | | 0.0 |
| Net Free Critical Locations Remaining | | | | 11.0 |

Inner Sphere: 3050



MECH DATA

Type: LDR-1A Pulse Leader

Tonnage: 50

Movement Points:

Walking: 4

Running: 6

Jumping: 4

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

| # | Loc | Type | Ht | Dam | Mm | St | Mm | Lq | |
|---|-----|------------|----|-----|----|----|----|----|--|
| 1 | LA | L.P. Laser | 10 | 9 | | 3 | 7 | 10 | |
| 1 | RT | L.P. Laser | 10 | 9 | | 3 | 7 | 10 | |
| 1 | H | AMS | 1 | *10 | | | | | |
| 2 | CT | Ammo(AMS) | 24 | | | | | | |
| 1 | LT | C-3 Comp. | 0 | | | | | | |

WARRIOR DATA

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

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |

HEAT SCALE

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

TOTAL HEAT SINKS

○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

Left Arm

1. Shoulder
 2. Upper Arm Actuator
 3. Lower Arm Actuator
 4. Hand Actuator
 5. L.P. Laser
 6. L.P. Laser
- 1-3
1. *Roll Again*
 2. *Roll Again*
 3. *Roll Again*
- 4-6
4. *Roll Again*
 5. *Roll Again*
 6. *Roll Again*

CRITICAL HIT TABLE

Head

1. Life Support
2. Sensors
3. Cockpit
4. AMS
5. Sensors
6. Life Support

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

1. Endo Steel Structure

Right Arm

1. Shoulder
 2. Upper Arm Actuator
 3. Lower Arm Actuator
 4. Hand Actuator
 5. *Roll Again*
 6. *Roll Again*
- 1-3
1. *Roll Again*
 2. *Roll Again*
 3. *Roll Again*
- 4-6
4. *Roll Again*
 5. *Roll Again*
 6. *Roll Again*

Left Torso

1. Heat Sink
 2. Heat Sink
 3. Heat Sink
 4. Jump Jet
 5. Jump Jet
 6. C-3 Computer
- 1-3
1. C-3 Computer
 2. C-3 Computer
 3. C-3 Computer
- 4-6
4. C-3 Computer
 5. *Roll Again*
 6. *Roll Again*

Center Torso

1. Engine
 2. Engine
 3. Engine
 4. Gyro
 5. Gryo
 6. Gryo
1. Gyro
 2. Engine
 3. Engine
 4. Engine
 5. Ammo(AMS)
 6. Ammo(AMS)

Right Torso

1. Heat Sink
 2. Heat Sink
 3. Heat Sink
 4. Jump Jet
 5. Jump Jet
 6. L.P. Laser
- 1-3
1. L.P. Laser
 2. *Roll Again*
 3. *Roll Again*
- 4-6
4. *Roll Again*
 5. *Roll Again*
 6. *Roll Again*

Left Leg

1. Hip
2. Upper Leg Actuator
3. Lower Leg Actuator
4. Foot Actuator
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*

Right Leg

1. Hip
2. Upper Leg Actuator
3. Lower Leg Actuator
4. Foot Actuator
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*

Engine Hits ○○○○

Gyro Hits ○○

Sensor Hits ○○

Type: PLS-1A Pulsar
 Designer: A. Braskin
 Tonnage: 45.0

Internal Structure: EndoSteel 2.25
 Engine: VOX 225 10.0

Walking: 5
 Running: 8
 Jumping: 5

Heat Sinks:10 Double 0.0

Gyro: 3.0

Cockpit: 3.0

Armor Factor: 161 Ferro Fibrous 9.0

| | Internal | External |
|--------------|----------|----------|
| Head | 3 | 9 |
| Center Torso | 14 | 22/6 |
| LT/RT | 11 | 17/5 |
| LA/RA | 7 | 14 |
| LL/RL | 11 | 22 |

| Type | Loc | Qty | Crits | Tons |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-------|------|
| Heat Sink | LT | 1 | 3 | 0.0 |
| Jump Jet | LT | 2 | 1 | 1.0 |
| Jump Jet | RT | 3 | 1 | 1.5 |
| Large Pulse Laser | LA | 1 | 2 | 7.0 |
| Large Pulse Laser | CT | 1 | 2 | 7.0 |
| C3 Slave | H | 1 | 1 | 1.0 |
| Ammo (AMS) | CT | 2 | 1 | 2.0 |
| C3 Computer | LT | 1 | 5 | 5.0 |
| Net Free Tons: | | | | 0.25 |
| Net Free Critical Locations Remaining | | | 6.0 | |

The next unit in the lance is the 45 ton Pulsar. There will be two of these in each lance. They serve the purposes of screening the Pulse Leader and providing high powered fire support.

The purpose of these two 'Mechs is to orient themselves against the targeted enemy 'Mech, then to unload a precision barrage of pulse lasers at maximum range.

The C3 Computer will completely offset the long range effects and the pulse technology will allow for devastating accuracy! Each of these 'Mechs is equipped with two Large Pulse Lasers.

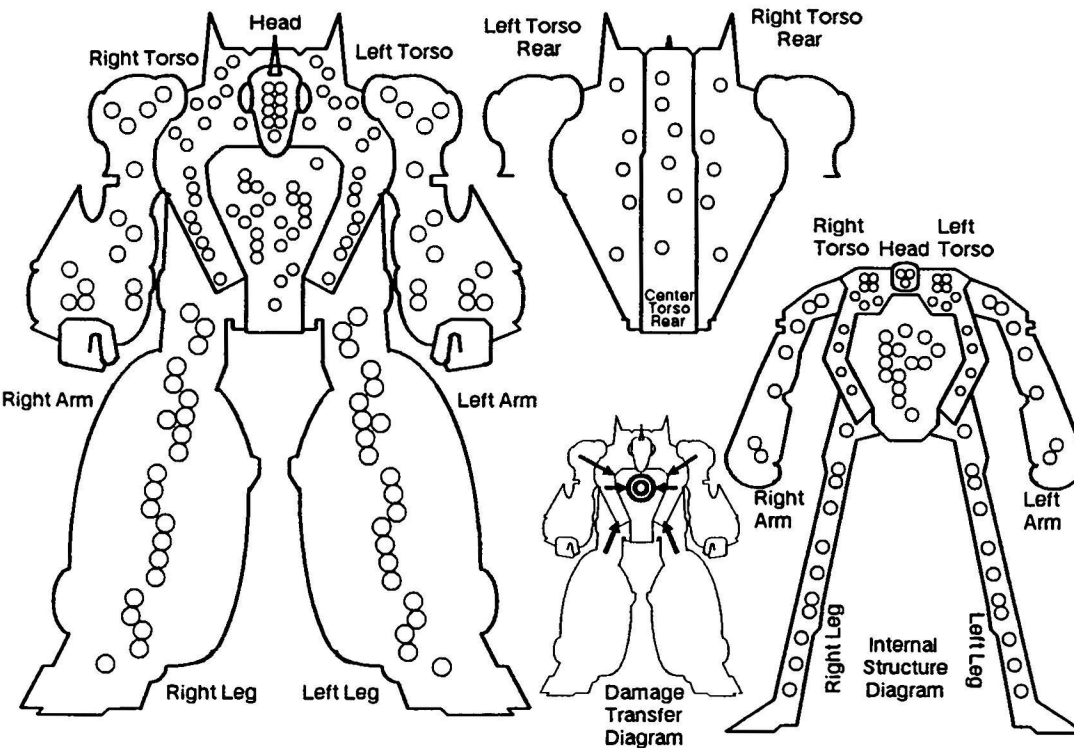
Inner Sphere: 3050

MECH DATA

Type: PLS-1A Pulsar
 Tonnage: 45
 Movement Points:
 Walking: 5
 Running: 8
 Jumping: 5

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

| # | Loc | Type | Ht | Dam | Mm | St | Mm | Lg |
|---|-----|------------|----|-----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | LA | L.P. Laser | 10 | 9 | | 3 | 7 | 10 |
| 1 | CT | L.P. Laser | 10 | 9 | | 3 | 7 | 10 |
| 1 | H | C-3 Slave | 0 | | | | | |



WARRIOR DATA

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

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |

HEAT SCALE

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

TOTAL HEAT SINKS

○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

Left Arm

1. Shoulder
2. Upper Arm Actuator
- 1-3 3. Lower Arm Actuator
4. Hand Actuator
5. L.P. Laser
6. L.P. Laser
1. *Roll Again*
2. *Roll Again*
- 4-6 3. *Roll Again*
4. *Roll Again*
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*

Left Torso

1. Heat Sink
2. Heat Sink
- 1-3 3. Heat Sink
4. Jump Jet
5. Jump Jet
6. *Roll Again*
1. *Roll Again*
2. *Roll Again*
3. *Roll Again*
- 4-6 4. *Roll Again*
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*

Left Leg

1. Hip
2. Upper Leg Actuator
3. Lower Leg Actuator
4. Foot Actuator
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*

CRITICAL HIT TABLE

Head

1. Life Support
2. Sensors
3. Cockpit
4. C-3 Slave
5. Sensors
6. Life Support

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

1. Ferro Fibrous Armor
2. Endo Steel Structure

Center Torso

1. Engine
2. Engine
3. Engine
4. Gyro
5. Gyro
6. Gyro
1. Gyro
2. Engine
3. Engine
4. Engine
5. L.P. Laser
6. L.P. Laser

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

Right Arm

1. Shoulder
2. Upper Arm Actuator
- 1-3 3. Lower Arm Actuator
4. Hand Actuator
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*
1. *Roll Again*
2. *Roll Again*
3. *Roll Again*
- 4-6 4. *Roll Again*
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*

Right Torso

1. Jump Jet
2. Jump Jet
- 1-3 3. Jump Jet
4. *Roll Again*
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*
1. *Roll Again*
2. *Roll Again*
3. *Roll Again*
- 4-6 4. *Roll Again*
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*

Right Leg

1. Hip
2. Upper Leg Actuator
3. Lower Leg Actuator
4. Foot Actuator
5. *Roll Again*
6. *Roll Again*

The final unit in the lance is the heaviest at 60 tons. The Ranger has the difficult task of closing with an enemy unit and maintaining a deadly attack while sending critical range information back to the C3 system.

Therefore this 'Mech is heavily armored (as much armor as we could possibly fit!) and has a devastating close in attack. It combines a Hand Axe with a single Large Pulse Laser.

The 'Mech was designed with Myomer Accelerator Signal Circuitry (MASC) in order to improve its movement profile. This should allow it to close quickly with the enemy and permit all of its team mates to deliver a devastating barrage of laser fire with deadly accuracy!

This concludes the 'Mech portion of the strategy. It is our opinion that dedicated vehicle detachment could work with this unit to improve its ability even further. Research and design has begun on that aspect and is expected to be completed soon.

Type: RGR-1A Ranger
 Designer: A. Braskin
 Tonnage: 60.0

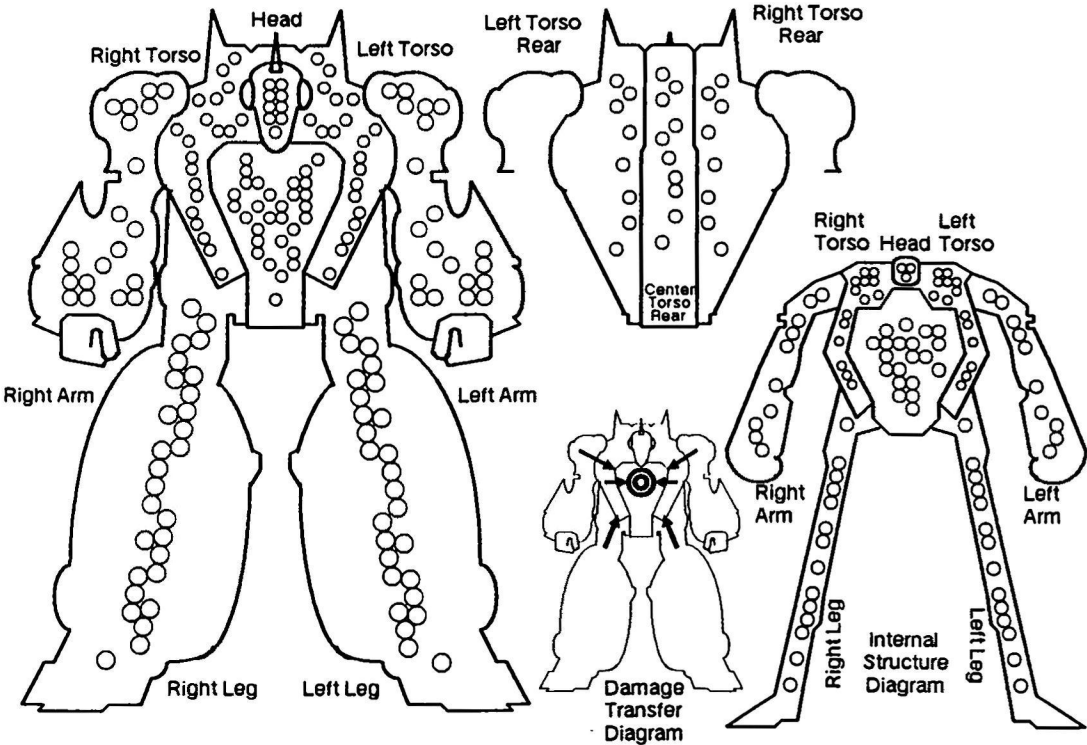
Internal Structure: EndoSteel 3.0
 Engine: Vlar 300 19.0
 Walking: 5
 Running: 8(10)
 Jumping: 5

Heat Sinks:10 Double 0.0
 Gyro: 3.0
 Cockpit: 3.0
 Armor Factor: 206 Ferro Fibrous 11.5

| | Internal | External |
|--------------|----------|----------|
| Head | 3 | 9 |
| Center Torso | 20 | 30/10 |
| LT/RT | 14 | 20/8 |
| LA/RA | 10 | 20 |
| LL/RL | 14 | 28 |

| Type | Loc | Qty | Crits | Tons |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-------|------|
| Jump Jet | LT | 2 | 1 | 2.0 |
| Jump Jet | RT | 3 | 1 | 3.0 |
| Small Laser | LT | 1 | 1 | 0.5 |
| Large Pulse Laser | CT | 1 | 2 | 7.0 |
| C3 Slave | H | 1 | 1 | 1.0 |
| Hand Axe | LA | 1 | 4 | 4.0 |
| Net Free Tons: | | | | 0.0 |
| Net Free Critical Locations Remaining | | | 3.0 | |

Inner Sphere: 3050



MECH DATA

Type: RGR-1A Ranger
 Tonnage: 60
 Movement Points:
 Walking: 5
 Running: 8(10)
 Jumping: 5

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

| # | Loc | Type | Ht | Dam | Mm | St | Mm | Lq |
|---|-----|-------------|----|-----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | RT | Small Laser | 1 | 3 | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | CT | L.P. Laser | 10 | 9 | | 3 | 7 | 10 |
| 1 | H | C-3 Slave | 0 | | | | | |
| 1 | LA | Axe | | | 12 | | | |

WARRIOR DATA

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

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |

HEAT SCALE

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

TOTAL HEAT SINKS



CRITICAL HIT TABLE

Left Arm

- 1. Shoulder
 - 2. Upper Arm Actuator
 - 3. Lower Arm Actuator
 - 4. Hand Actuator
 - 5. Axe
 - 6. Axe
- 1-3
- 1. Axe
 - 2. Axe
- 4-6
- 3. Roll Again
 - 4. Roll Again
 - 5. Roll Again
 - 6. Roll Again

Left Torso

- 1. Jump Jet
 - 2. Jump Jet
 - 3. Roll Again
 - 4. Roll Again
 - 5. Roll Again
 - 6. Roll Again
- 1-3
- 1. Roll Again
 - 2. Roll Again
 - 3. Roll Again
- 4-6
- 4. Roll Again
 - 5. Roll Again
 - 6. Roll Again

Left Leg

- 1. Hip
- 2. Upper Leg Actuator
- 3. Lower Leg Actuator
- 4. Foot Actuator
- 5. Roll Again
- 6. Roll Again

Head

- 1. Life Support
- 2. Sensors
- 3. Cockpit
- 4. C-3 Slave
- 5. Sensors
- 6. Life Support

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

- 1. Ferro Fibrous Armor
- 2. Endo Steel Structure
- 3. Myomer Accelerator SC

Center Torso

- 1. Engine
 - 2. Engine
 - 3. Engine
 - 4. Gyro
 - 5. Gryo
 - 6. Gryo
- 1. Gyro
 - 2. Engine
 - 3. Engine
 - 4. Engine
 - 5. L.P. Laser
 - 6. L.P. Laser

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

Right Arm

- 1. Shoulder
 - 2. Upper Arm Actuator
 - 3. Lower Arm Actuator
 - 4. Hand Actuator
 - 5. Roll Again
 - 6. Roll Again
- 1-3
- 1. Roll Again
 - 2. Roll Again
 - 3. Roll Again
- 4-6
- 4. Roll Again
 - 5. Roll Again
 - 6. Roll Again

Right Torso

- 1. Jump Jet
 - 2. Jump Jet
 - 3. Jump Jet
 - 4. Small Laser
 - 5. Roll Again
 - 6. Roll Again
- 1-3
- 1. Roll Again
 - 2. Roll Again
 - 3. Roll Again
- 4-6
- 4. Roll Again
 - 5. Roll Again
 - 6. Roll Again

Right Leg

- 1. Hip
- 2. Upper Leg Actuator
- 3. Lower Leg Actuator
- 4. Foot Actuator
- 5. Roll Again
- 6. Roll Again

The Last Word

And the Winners Are...

The Winners of BattleTechnology's DunDracon'92 BattleTech tournament are:

Phillip Fehler and Betty Mizes

both of Vallejo, CA

Congratulations to Phillip and Betty!

Send us the names of your tournament winners, and the occasion of the win. Whether your tournament took place at the largest convention imaginable, or at a store or club, we reserve this space to celebrate the winners.

Convention Calendar notice: to have your convention listed in these pages, please send your notice to "BattleTechnology Convention Calendar" at 944 Fletcher Lane #9, Hayward, CA 94544.

Arriving Late:

The brilliant professor Eion MacCleary of NAIS, inventor of the CEF system, is working pretty hard these days. For *BattleTechnology* #16, he meant to include these directions for calculating the CEF of Conventional Armor, but they arrived after we had gone to press. They are meant to be used with the tables presented in *BattleTechnology* #16. In issues to come, the professor has promised Combat Efficiency Factors for Clans 'Mechs.

- 1) Divide tonnage by 10. Record.
- 2) Divide armor by 2. Record.
- 3) Divide Crew Speed by 2. Record.
- 4) Multiply terrain propulsion rating by crew speed, using TPR table. Record.
- 5) If fusion powered, add 2 points. Record.
- 6) Calculate WFR, using WFR table. Record.
- 7) Calculate Turret WFR by adding WFR for turret weapons and dividing by 5.
- 8) Calculate special Equipment factor rating, using CEFR Table. Record.
- 9) Add steps 1-8 together.

New Releases:

The biggest news of this season is FASA's new *3055 Technical Readout*. It hasn't reached our office yet, as we reach our deadline, but MechWarriors from all over the East Coast have been calling the office to read us their favorite new 'Mechs. Check this one out, for sure.

Almost as big is *Objective Raids*, FASA's listing for 3055. This one lists most of the desirable production facilities in the Inner Sphere, including Clans-held territory. (Inexplicably, it does not mention the juicy prize of Tikinov, with its BattleMech Factory and ore deposits). If you want a realistic target for your unit or campaign, this one's a must.

The new MechWarrior system has already published two adventures; *Unbound* earlier this year, and now *Bloodright*. *Unbound* takes place on the Game World of Solaris. Now *Bloodright* takes Clans characters careering through the Inner Sphere in a linked series of adventures.

The newest novel is *Wolf Pack*, from Roc. This takes the hatred of Takashi Kurita for Jaime Wolf to its logical conclusion. It also lets us see the tensions inside the Dragoons between Clans-born and Freeborn.

From Pacific Rim, BattleTechnology, the Lost Issues. We tell the story of the Davion front of the 3039 war, and give you usable material for your campaigns. The Thena MacArthur drawing on the cover has gained us favorable comment in itself!

This summer we're looking forward to *Natural Selection*, a new novel by Michael Stackpole which reunites Phelan and Morgan Kell! And before summer ends, there'll be a new issue of BattleTechnology. You wanted us to come out more often — that's just what we're doing. Order your copy at your game store now! Let them know you want BattleTechnology!

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TECHNICAL READOUT: 3055

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