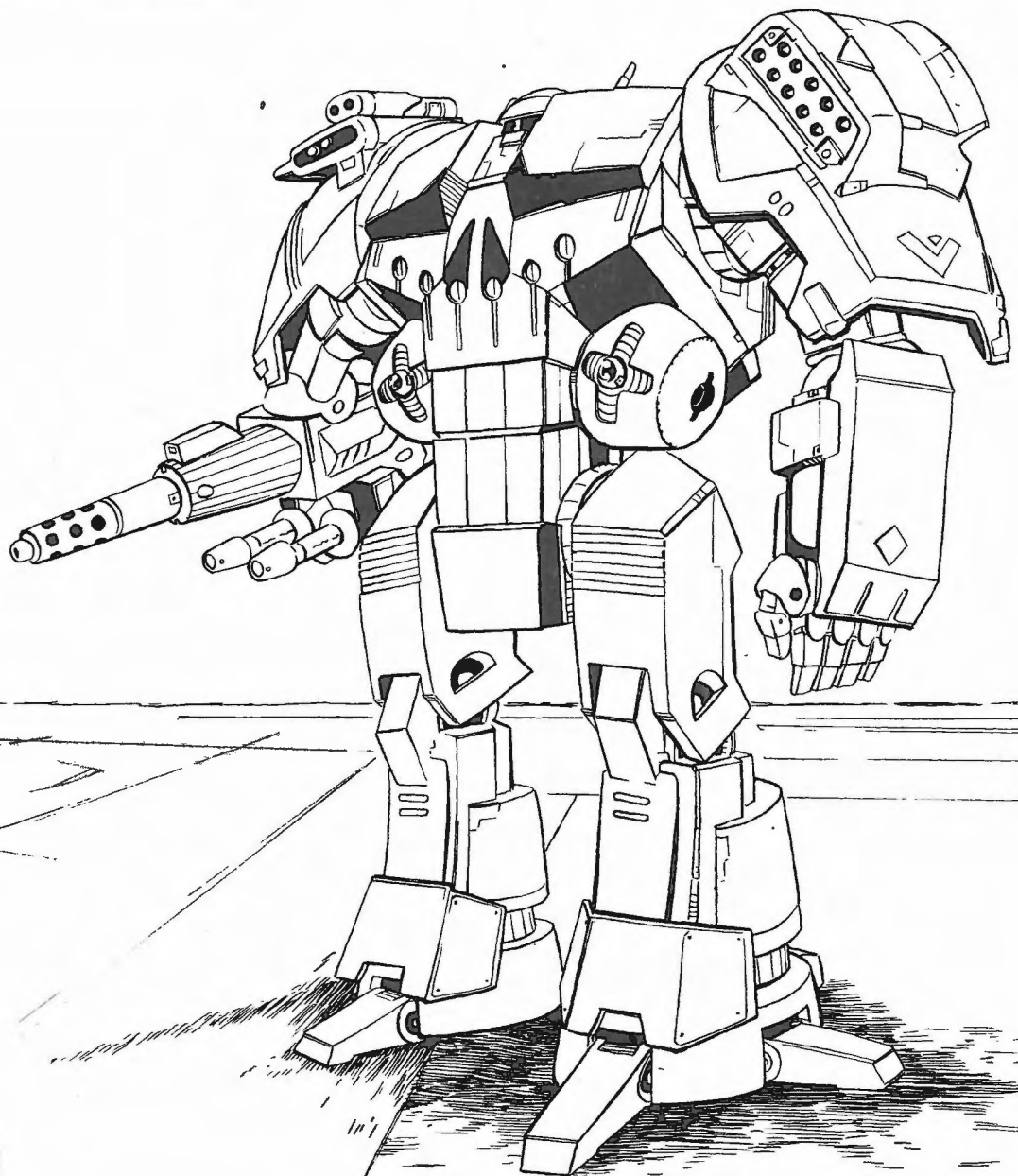


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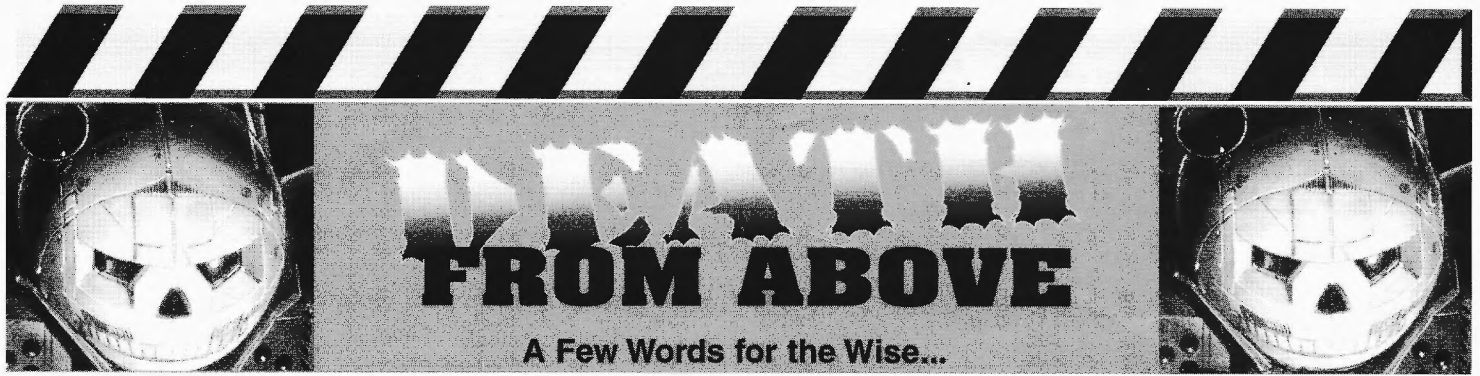
QUARTERLY

The Ursa
55 Ton 'Mech
From the Upcoming
BattleTech Technical
Readout:3060

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1
\$4.00



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Winter Fantasy, MechForce Style

Beryl Turner and I had the pleasure of attending Winter Fantasy in Chicago (February 27-March 1). The convention, hosted by Andon Unlimited of Wizards of the Coast, drew more than 1,300 gamers.

Okay, lots of them were Magic: The Gathering players and RPGA Network Living City fans (both are good groups of folks). But there were also a reasonable number of BattleTech players in the mix, and Beryl kept busy running sanctioned battles.

I kept busy, too, with writing seminars, dramatic readings, running a few AD&D game sessions for the Network (and playing a couple of WWI dogfight scenarios). Beryl and I were supposed to do a MechForce seminar together, but a scheduling conflict put that seminar solely on his capable head.

Another conflict kept Beryl from attending the MechForce writers' workshop, which I handled—with a bizarre twist. The convention computer must have burped, 'cause I was scheduled to give a reading from my latest DragonLance novel at the same time I was supposed to run the writers' workshop. Remember that television commercial slogan: If you can combine great taste with less. . . . Well, you get the idea. The DragonLance fans sat at the front of the room, and I handled the reading first. The MechForce authors were at the back, and we went off quietly and talked shop when the other folks left.

Words for Writers

Some things that came from that Winter Fantasy writing seminar were how to submit—to any publisher in the game industry. A magazine like MechForce Quarterly has only so many slots for articles. It is limited by size and by frequency—four times a year. Thus, if you want to be noticed by myself and Beryl, and find yourself at the top of the submission pile, take these hints to heart. You'd be surprised how many prospective authors don't listen.

* Put your name and address on your submission. Then make sure your name is at either the top or the bottom of each subsequent page of the submission. If you're able, include a disk with your submission kept as a WordPerfect or ASCII file.

* Run your submission through a spell-checker or a grammar-checker. If you're using a typewriter instead of a computer, pull out the dictionary—and use it.

* Make sure you know how to spell BattleTech, 'Mech, and the like—complete with where the capital letters go.

* Consult the magazine for how to present your material. In other words, review articles similar to what you intend to write. BattleTech scenarios follow a pattern. Stick to that pattern.

* Keep your names consistent. Don't call your main character John for half of your article, then switch to Jon for the remainder.

And don't make your villain male on the first page and then give the individual a new sexual identity on the following pages. Be consistent.

What the above boils down to is—be professional. Before I send one of my Star Wars short stories to West End Games, I go over it with the proverbial fine-toothed comb. Before I send in the first draft of a novel to a book editor, I make sure my very critical proofreading friend takes a read—and then I put in my corrections. Before I send an issue's worth of MechForce Quarterly articles to Beryl to fashion into a magazine, I reread everything. Then I print the articles and read them again—aloud.

And, of course, I spell-check and grammar-check everything. Yeah, some typos somehow always manage to slip through. People aren't perfect. But by being professional about it, you'll have fewer typos. And that'll make you get noticed. There are lots of sources on the Internet to help. I'll poke around and recommend some to you.

Because MechForce Quarterly is limited in the amount of material it can run, I've recommended to some our organization's more prolific authors that they spread their writing wings and look at *additional* avenues to find their way in print. I want them to still write for the Quarterly, of course, but they were writing so much that there was no way we could print all of it. Besides, the more they also write for other publications, the better writers they will become—which is a plus for them and MechForce.

Once you catch the writing bug, you shouldn't limit yourself to writing for only one venue.

Praise for Beryl

Let's hope Mr. Turner doesn't cut this out of my column. Y'see, I want to sing his praises for a moment. I've been involved in the gaming industry as a player since 1979, and as a writer, editor, or whatever since early 1987. There're a lot of great pros in the industry, people who work their hearts out to produce the best supplements and games imaginable. When some of them are assigned to work conventions, however, they can lose a bit of that energetic steam. I've seen some pros do the bare minimum to meet their employer's requirements.

Mr. Turner gives it 150%. He's about one of the hardest workers at a convention that I've ever seen—and I think you should know that. He really works up a sweat at a con (making his bald head gleam), and he puts in far more hours than he has to. He's got a genuine love of all angles of the gaming hobby, and you should be pleased and proud that he's at the helm of MechForce. Next issue: Lots of pages devoted to our Support Contest.

Take Care,
Jean

MECHFORCE QUARTERLY

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

Death From Above-2

by Jean Rabe

Jean reviews Winter Fantasy®, gives some sage advice for prospective MFQ writers and more..

From The War Room-4

by Beryl Turner

Precentor Turner asks, is it "How" you play the game or how "You" play the game?

1998 Origins Awards Ballot-5

Here's a chance to let your voice be heard by the bigshots in the gaming industry. Your vote is your voice. Vote today.

Battlefield Recovery-6

by Christopher Trossen

This is a discussion on the principles of getting your wounded and damaged equipment off the battlefield safely.

The Fifth Succession War: The Beginning- 12

War has broken out across the Inner Sphere and... you are the combatants! See the current results of your battles and activities in MechForce.

From The MechForce Showroom-15

New 'Mechs and Vehicles for your game, including two from the upcoming **BattleTech Technical Readout: 3060**.

Zulu Amabuthu II-23

by James Patterson

After taking Styk as per the Captain-General's orders the Zulus held the world. But, there's trouble back at home...

BattleTalk-27

by Bryan Nystul

After cajoling, threats and brutality, Bryan's decided to sit down and write to you guys. Who says violence doesn't solve anything?

MechForce Update Page-29

New information to bring all members up to date including, new 'Mechs for play, and a standing list of all actively participating members.

Notices and Announcements-30

New product releases, convention listings, and a few announcements. Also, a listing of days and times for **BattleTech** events and seminars for all the cons we're attending this summer

Precentor Tau: Jean Rabe, Editor
Precentor Epsilon I: Beryl J. Turner III
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Primus: Bryan Nystul
Precentor Martial: Randall N. Bills
Cover Art: Matthew Plog
From the Upcoming BattleTech
Technical Readout: 3060

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From The War Room

By Beryl Turner

“Commander on deck! Room! Atten-Hut!!”

Yo. I hope this issue finds you well.

My gaming group got a little weird with BattleTech at a recent anime convention called Anime Central. Like an idiot, I had left my gaming gear at home (duh, it was an anime con ...) and some other guys wanted to play BattleTech with us. So we played anyway using whatever robot models we could find at the con as our 'Mechs. I created a lance using a GPO-1, a RX-178 and two Leopards from the Mobile Suit Gundam series of anime. I fought against a guy who whipped up a lance using Patlabor models.

The playing field and terrain were set up using Geo-Hex™ and the natural green and brown coloring of the rug in our hotel function room. We converted the various weapons the robots mounted into standard BattleTech weaponry. A scale of 4"/Movement Point was used to account for the increased scale of the models. I would have killed to have had one of the Tyco BattleTech toys on hand for this battle.

Needless to say, we had the time of our lives! We were found at 10:00 the next morning resolving the last battles. By the way, my Leopard won its last fight with two shots from its pair of back-mounted AC-20 equivalents. “Ripped open its freakin’ head, I did!”

Before you folks slap me silly for engaging in such a “munchy” activity and using mecha that isn’t even BT, let me explain something. I’m telling you this story because I want to remind everyone within reading distance of my words that however you play BT is completely up to you—just as long as you all have fun doing it. If it isn’t fun, what’s the point? Despite all the heavy ranked battles we have, all the grueling tournaments we compete in and all the major campaigns we engage each other with, this is a hobby first and foremost.

hobby (hōb'è) *n.*, *An activity or interest pursued outside of one's regular work primarily for pleasure.*

That’s the definition, according to the dictionary. The key word is pleasure. I have sat in on many arguments about how the game is supposed to be played. Many have stemmed from disagreements over general rules definitions or feelings that “the Spirit of BattleTech” was being tarnished or disregarded. I have also seen variants of BT that would have Aleksandr Kerensky spinning in his grave—if he was in one!

I got into this game because of the strategic level of play involved. I can lose as happily as I can win if it was a well played game. There are some rules variants out there that are fun ... and a few that are downright silly. Of course, sometimes silly *is* fun (imagine getting hit with an APC-10—an Automatic Pie Cannon! Pineapple cream makes the best ammo ...), and when you’re with friends, who cares?

I tend to be very militant about people disrupting my fun. I’m in it for the love of the game. Bryan, Randall and I are so immersed in BT that we’ve turned that passion into an occupation. Loren Coleman is in so deep that he turns in reams of writing for the game (see his new stuff in **Crusader Clans**) and still gets in more play than the rest of us (see his standings on p. 29).

So remember—if you can’t laugh about it, then it’s not fun anymore. The choice is yours whether you as a group let it get to that point. Keep it fun. Or else I’ll be forced to hurt you ...

Anyway, the summer con season is upon us once again. FASA’s finest will be spreading their wings across the country along with legions of ‘other game industry reps to show off the hottest and newest products. We’ll be at four of the largest cons: Origins® '98, Wizard World: Chicago '98, the 1998 GEN CON® Game Fair and Dragon*Con '98. Make sure you try to get to one of them.

Take note that the Game Fair will be held in a new location in downtown Milwaukee. In fact, it will be the first event ever at a recently-constructed facility! Because of this, there’s bound to be a bit of confusion. When you’re in a new home, it takes time to get used to the real estate.

If any confusion occurs about the tournaments, be it times, locations or anything else, please just stop by the FASA booth. We will be able to answer just about any questions you may have (although anyone coming up and asking where Elvis is will be summarily taken out and shot!). This of course also applies for any other con that we’re at. So much for that PSA (Public Service Announcement).

Well, on to the issue. We have a lot of good material of course, as well as a lot of info that you, as players, need to see (p. 30). The fiction in this issue revolves around unusual situations and vehicles other than ‘Mechs in the BT Universe. “What! No ‘Mechs? I’m paying for stories about ‘Mechs and that’s what I want!” I bet that’s what some of you are saying right now. Well, to assuage your wounded MechWarrior spirit, we’ll take you all down to “Uncle B’s Showroom” to see some new ‘Mechs and vehicles ... two of which will actually be in the new **Technical Readout: 3060**.

One more thing. On the opposite page of this article, there is a ballot for the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design’s Origins Awards. Take a look. Guess what’s missing. That’s right—us. Now we can fix that, easily. Under the “Best Professional Game Magazine” category there is a spot for writing in a candidate. That’s where we go. Write in MechForce Quarterly under “Write-in Title” and put MechForce under “Manufacturer.” Then mail that puppy in. ASAP. Let’s see if we can shake the walls of heaven again and get that award.

That’s enough for now. I’m off to get a mug full of Faygo. Later days, troops. I’m out!

“Room! Atten-Hut! Dis-missed!”

Precentor Epsilon I
Beryl J. Turner III

Beryl J. Turner 111

Attention Gamers! It's time once again to select the best game and game-related releases of the past year (1997) for the annual Origins Awards. Please **vote for one release in each category**. Return your completed ballot by June 17. And feel free to photocopy this ballot for your own use or to pass it on to other gamers (only one ballot per person, though). Origins Award winners are announced at the ORIGINS national gaming convention—be there, or check summer issues of this magazine for the winners!

Deadline: June 17, 1998



Best Abstract Board Game

- Balanx Mayfair
- Kill Doctor Lucky Cheapass Games
- Lowenherz Gold Sieber
- Stock Market Guru Avalon Hill
- Survival of the Witless Avalanche
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Historical Board Game

- Euphrat & Tigris Hans im Gluck
- Home Before the Leaves Fall Clash of Arms Games
- Sam Grant Columbia Games
- Six Days of Glory Clash of Arms Games/TOME
- Successors Avalon Hill
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Board Game

- BABYLON 5 Wars Agents of Gaming
- Princess Ryan's Star Marines Avalon Hill
- Roborally Grand Prix Wizards of the Coast
- Starship Troopers Avalon Hill
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Trading Card Game

- BABYLON 5 Collectible Card Game Precedence
- Dune: Eye of the Storm Last Unicorn
- Shadowrun Trading Card Game Limited Ed. FASA
- Warlords Trading Card Game Iron Crown
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Traditional Card Game

- Corporate Shuffle Wizards of the Coast
- Give Me the Brain Cheapass Games
- Groo: The Game Archangel Entertainment
- Lord of the Rings Tarot Deck and Card Game U.S. Games Systems, Inc.
- Titan: The Arena Avalon Hill
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Card Game Expansion or Supplement

- BattleTech: Mechwarrior Wizards of the Coast
- L5R—Time of the Void Five Rings Publishing
- Magic: the Gathering Portal Wizards of the Coast
- Magic: the Gathering Tempest Wizards of the Coast
- Middle-earth: The Lidless Eye Iron Crown
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Historical Miniatures Rules

- Battleground Rules Easy Eight Enterprises
- Battles of the Revolutionary & Napoleonic Wars Clash of Arms Games
- Crossfire Quantam Publishing Company
- Flint & Steel Clash of Arms Games/TOME
- High Noon Tactical Conflict Systems
- Red Star, Blue Sky Simtac
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Miniatures Rules

- Chronopia Heartbreaker Hobbies
- Deadlands: the Great Rail Wars Pinnacle
- Epic 40,000 Games Workshop
- Gorkamorka Games Workshop
- The Lost Toys Inner City Game Designs
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Historical Figure Miniatures Series

- 15mm ACW Personalities Stone Mountain
- 15mm American Revolution Musket Miniatures
- 6mm Adler Napoleonics Stone Mountain
- Charlie Company U.S. Army Figures RAFM
- GHQ Rebellon 10mm Napoleonics GHQ Microarmor
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Figure Miniature

- Dove Falconhand in Armor Ral Partha
- Golden Chaos Dragon Limited Edition Ral Partha
- High Elven Warlord Ral Partha
- Sisters of Battle Battle Squad (Seraphin) Games Workshop
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Vehicle Miniature

- AKU-1X Akuma Ral Partha
- Call of Cthulhu Roadster RAFM
- Cauldron Born Ral Partha
- GHQ Micronaut: CB-1 Alaska (USN 67) GHQ Microarmor
- Iceberg Silent Death Starship RAFM
- Longboat Silent Death Starship RAFM
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Action Computer Game

- 7th Legion Microprose
- Hexen II Activision
- Quake II Activision
- Star Trek Starfleet Academy Interplay
- Tomb Raider Eidos Software
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Roleplaying Computer Game

- Blade Runner Westwood
- Descent to Undermountain Interplay
- Fallout: A Post Nuclear Adventure Interplay
- Final Fantasy VII Eidos Software
- Ultima Online Origins Systems
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Strategy Computer Game

- Dark Reign Activision
- Emperor of the Fading Suns Holistic
- Sid Meier's Gettysburg Firaxis
- Imperialism Strategic Simulations
- Magic: the Gathering CD-ROM Microprose
- Panzer General II Strategic Simulations
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Amateur Game Magazine

- Alarums & Excursions Lee Gold
- Berg's Review of Games Berg's Review of Games
- Gaming Intelligence Gaming Intelligence
- Serendipity's Circle Wheeality
- Starry Wisdom Chaosium
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Professional Game Magazine

- Comics Retailer Krause Publications
- Dungeon Magazine TSR
- InQuest Wizard Press
- Knights of the Dinner Table Magazine Kenzer & Co.
- Pyramid Magazine Steve Jackson
- Shadis Magazine Alderac
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best New Play-by-Mail Game

- Cold War Battle Plan Flying Buffalo, Inc.
- Fire in the Galaxy Tactical Simulations
- Legends II Midnight Games
- Middle-earth PBM Fourth Age Circa 1000 Game Systems, Inc.
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Ongoing Play-by-Mail Game

- CTF 2187 Advanced Gaming
- Duelmasters Reality Simulations
- Hyborian War Reality Simulations
- Middle-earth PBM Game Systems, Inc.
- Star Web Flying Buffalo, Inc.
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Game-Related Novel

- Grave Covenant FASA
- Planar Powers TSR, Inc.
- Steel Rain FASA
- Tales from the Empire West End Games
- The Road to Hell White Wolf
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Game-Related Short Work

- A Bright Dream/A Dark Dream Steve Jackson
Appearing in In Nomine
- A Forty Share in Innsmouth Chaosium
Appearing in Singers of Strange Songs
- Crisis of Faith Dream Pod 9
- Independence Day Pinnacle
- Not Damned White Wolf
Appearing in Dark Tyrants Anthology
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Roleplaying Adventure

- Film Festival #1 (Honk Kong Action Theatre) Event Horizon
- Independence Day (Deadlands) Pinnacle
- Mob War (Shadowrun) FASA
- Tale of the Comet (AD&D) TSR
- The Great Modron March (AD&D) TSR
- The Medelin Agent (Millennium's End) Chameleon Eclectic
Appearing in The Medelin Agent
- The New Breed: Battle Before the Storm (Heavy Gear) Dream Pod 9
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Best Roleplaying Game

- Big Eyes, Small Mouth Guardians of Order
- Blue Planet Biohazard Games
- Domains of Dread TSR
- Legends of the Five Rings Roleplaying Game Alderac
- Saga Game Rules/Fate Deck TSR
- The Babylon Project Chameleon Eclectic
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

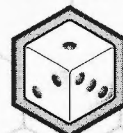
Best Roleplaying Supplement

- A Magical Medley (FUDGE) Grey Ghost
- BattleTech Field Manual: Mercenaries (Mechwarrior) FASA
- Delta Green (Call of Cthulhu) Pagan Publishing
- Heroes of Sorcery (AD&D) TSR
- Rigger 2 (Shadowrun) FASA
- The Blood Wood (Earthdawn) FASA
- Write-in Title: _____
- Manufacturer: _____

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State/Prov. _____
 Zip _____ Country _____
 Phone Number (____) _____
 Signature _____

For more information on the Academy or the Origins Awards, contact us at the address below.

Ballots must be received by June 17, 1998.
Mail your ballot to:



The Academy of
 Adventure Gaming
 Arts & Design

P.O. Box 10262 Blacksburg VA 24062
 540.953.1658 www.gama.org/academy

BATTLEFIELD RECOVERY

THE ANCIENT ART OF SALVAGE UNDER FIRE

by **CHRIS TROSSEN**

Since recorded time, man has waged war against his brother. No matter the century, a commander's thoughts are always to the battle ahead—how do I destroy a maximum number of enemy soldiers while keeping my own losses to a minimum? A good commander will also consider the aftermath—how many of my wounded can be saved, and how much of my damaged equipment can be repaired? Of the second question, the former concern is solely in the hands of the medics and God, well beyond even the best commander's capabilities. The latter is in the hands of the logisticians and mechanics, a group well influenced by a savvy commander.

Battlefield salvage has played an important role in every military operation. The immediate benefits are obvious: the timely repair and redeployment of materiel thought destroyed can have a detrimental effect upon an enemy. At the very least it can cause confusion among the opposing ranks; at best, the sudden appearance of a large number of additional salvaged tanks, guns, fighters, or BattleMechs can lead an enemy into a rout.

As important as it is to field as much useable equipment as possible, perhaps the most critical role of battlefield recovery is its most overlooked—intelligence. A great deal of information can be learned about an enemy and its state of readiness by examining their damaged weapons and equipment, and—as morbid as it sounds—their dead that they leave behind.

On old Terra, the Allies learned volumes about German Tiger tanks destroyed in battle during World War II, which allowed the Allies to pursue the war while taking fewer casualties. Centuries later, the Taurian Concordat reengineered scrapped Davion BattleMechs, assisting them in the construction of their own improved 'Mechs.

Most recently, rumors have circulated that elements of the Northwind Highlanders used reconstructed Clan OmniMechs to psychologically defeat a much stronger opponent.

Operations

Battlefield recovery is statistically one of the most dangerous military specialties a person can enter. More often than not, recovery crews are sent in before the fighting has ceased. And unlike medical personnel, such crews are not protected by any honors of war. While performing their tasks, these crews are subject to not only enemy fire, but sometimes friendly-fire as well. Additionally, they often operate in areas saturated with mines and unexploded ordnance. As if that wasn't enough, other dangers abound—including the possibility of being stepped on or run over by both enemy and friendly BattleMechs and vehicles.

The past few decades have seen a sharp increase in casualties suffered by recovery personnel. For several centuries, as the Succession Wars waged on, recovery crews were protected by the unwritten rules of engagement: where regiments and divisions once fought for continents, companies and battalions were fighting for whole planets. Such fighting led to widely-held conventions. Cease-fires for rearmament and recovery would often be called by both sides in a conflict, allowing each aggressor time to rest, and their recovery crews time aplenty to accomplish their tasks.

However, with the dawn of the Fourth Succession War, and later the Clan Invasion, the face of war changed. Lightning war again became the norm, where sometimes dozens of BattleMechs and conventional regiments fought for the same plot of land. Battlefield recovery again became a risky proposition, but one that guaranteed many benefits.

Each of the great houses are currently offering bonuses upwards of 10,000 C-Bills for enlisting in the recovery specialty, and average pay rates are among the highest for specialty infantrymen, often coming close to commissioned BattleMech or Aerospace pilots.

Current doctrine suggests that combat recovery operations (CRO) be accomplished in five main phases, with each of the phases carried out as time and conditions permit. Many of the great houses and even many of the Clans follow essentially the same plan of action for CRO, though each army, and oftentimes each regiment, has its own unique regulations to follow.

Preliminary Phase: Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR)

In just about any engagement, some pilot will be forced to abandon his vehicle. Life can become very dangerous very quickly for a pilot that finds himself suddenly deprived of his armored cockpit—doubly so if he finds himself wandering a battlefield behind enemy lines. Each regiment has at least one small unit of highly trained specialists, equipped with fast VTOLs or hovercraft, to help extract such personnel from the field of battle.

When any pilot ejects from his BattleMech or Aerospace fighter, a distress beacon is immediately set off. Often located in a survival vest on the ejection seat, the beacon may be manually shut off as the situation warrants. Likewise, the beacon may be manually reactivated at any time.

The CSAR crews have special direction-finding gear designed to home in on an emergency beacon. Oftentimes the crews are aided by aircraft, spacecraft, or satellites which can give them extremely accurate coordinate fixes and a better perspective on the terrain.

BATTLEFIELD RECOVERY

As soon as the missing crews are located, an extraction is either performed immediately or scheduled for a later time, again dependent upon the situation at hand. This phase is sometimes performed concurrent with Phase I.

Phase I: Personnel Treatment

Every modern engagement will leave behind casualties. As soon as possible after the battle has ended or moved on, medical teams will scour the battlefield looking for the wounded and dead. The casualties are immediately triaged—the first medics on scene perform a cursory examination of each and prioritize them according to their injuries. Serious injuries are tagged red indicating they are to be given first priority in treatment. Next, yellow tags are used for those with light wounds and who are unconscious or otherwise unable to remove themselves from the field. Orange, given third priority, is used for those mortally wounded (another sad fact of life is that those who are near death are given near last priority at receiving care). The walking wounded—those with only superficial wounds who are still capable of moving about—are tagged with green and are often put to work helping with the rest of the recovery operation after they take basic care of their own wounds. The dead are tagged black.

The practice of tagging casualties with colors originated over a millennium ago, but is still used because of its simplicity. The tags may take the form of colored tape or paper affixed to the casualty, a flag placed nearby, or any number of similar methods. In some cases, casualties may be situated in difficult to notice places, in which case a small radio beacon or colored-smoke generator may be used to help mark the position.

After a triage team completes the initial evaluation of the casualties, medical teams begin to pull out the injured, starting first with the reds and then moving down. Prisoners of War are also secured at this time.

Phase II: Materiel Assessment

This phase is often performed concurrent with Phase I. Much as medics triage those left wounded by the battle, specialty technical crews scrounge the battlefield performing a similar ritual on all of the BattleMechs, tanks, guns, and other such materiel left behind. Unlike the medical triage process, however, priority is most often given first to the least-damaged equipment left on the battlefield (and thus the easiest to repair). Only a few instances may supersede this standard procedure: if a heretofore unseen or technologically superior piece of equipment can be recovered fairly easily and if technology or data considered extremely sensitive are present, then they would be recovered immediately. The rest is tagged with similar priorities as human casualties. Equipment in remote or inconspicuous places is marked with both special radio beacons and infrared emitters, highly visible with just about any military-grade optics.

If highly sensitive equipment is known or suspected to be on the field, it is recovered immediately upon discovery. Any such equipment that cannot be recovered is marked for immediate destruction. All other salvageable materiel is left for the main recovery teams, who will begin their work as soon as the prelimi-

nary assessment is done and the casualties who might interfere with the operation are removed.

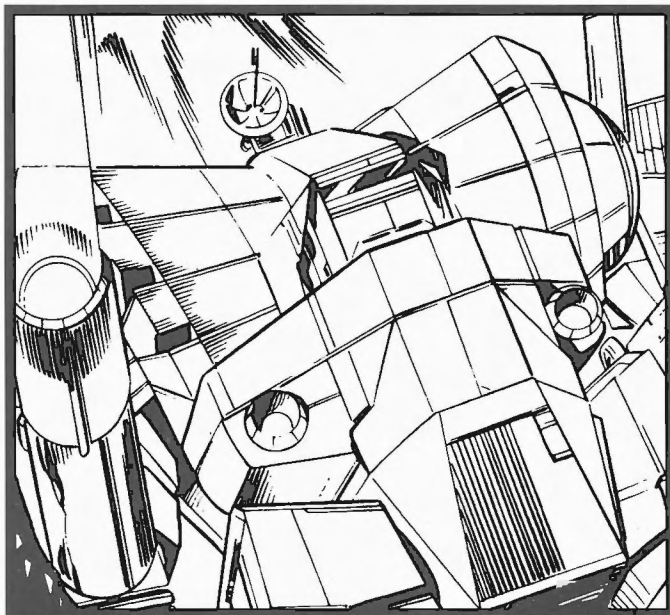
Phase III: Materiel Recovery and Repair

This phase is most often the longest and most grueling of the entire CRO process, dependent upon how large the battle was. Salvage teams work to remove the equipment from the field and transport it to the designated repair and refit areas, where repair crews work to fix the damaged equipment. As with the recovery assessment, the equipment is repaired generally starting with the least-damaged unit and progressing to that with the most damage. Special circumstances may dictate that this order be modified, generally as directed by the commander of the military operation.

Phase IV: Scavenging and Site Security

Not all of the equipment left on the field will be in a condition to be repaired again; BattleMechs and vehicles that have had their ammunition bins explode are prime examples. Such equipment may still yield a few serviceable parts or weapons. After the main salvage operation is concluded, a few teams are left to scavenge the field for such pieces. This phase may take place hours, days, or even months after the conclusion of the battle, depending upon many conditions. Eventually, the field should be cleared of all remaining debris—a majority of which often finds its way onto scrap piles.

There are times when, due to the pressures of battle, the field may fall again under attack, or a commander fears the field may fall back into enemy hands. If the field still contains salvageable materiel, and especially if sensitive equipment remains, the commander may elect to destroy the remaining equipment rather than let it fall into enemy hands. Such site security may be accomplished by any number of methods: engineer teams, BattleMechs, aerial or artillery bombardment, etc. No matter the method, the outcome should be that nothing of value remains for the enemy to take.



Recovery Crews and Equipment

Though each army has its own organizational structure for recovery units, all follow a similar basic system. The general recovery crew consists of a section (half a platoon) of two vehicles and between 10 and 18 men. The vehicles assigned to each section are usually of the same type or class, though oftentimes (two or three sections per company) a smaller and more maneuverable vehicle is teamed with a larger unit, giving the section more functionality. Two recovery sections, combined with a small HQ detachment (usually a commander and two to six assistants in another heavy recovery or a heavy transport vehicle), form a recovery platoon. Three to six such platoons, along with an HQ section, form a company. When possible, a battlefield commander will attach one or more BattleMech lances to the recovery unit for the duration of the recovery operation, both for security reasons and also to help in the operation. Each BattleMech or armored regiment has at least one such recovery company assigned to its repair and support battalion.

Of course, the most important piece of equipment in a recovery section is the recovery vehicle. Essentially a large flatbed cargo carrier with cranes, winches, and other heavy moving equipment, the recovery vehicle is designed to move disabled equipment to a secure repair area. BattleMechs and other massive equipment are lifted onto the recovery vehicle's cargo platform with the assistance of not only the vehicle's own cranes, but that of another such vehicle or with the help of a BattleMech. Even this seemingly simple task would not be possible, however, were it not for the fact that all BattleMechs and combat vehicles have built into their structure rings and anchors, used to securely bind them to DropShip cubicles and the like.

New Equipment

Winch

Vehicles may mount specialty equipment to help them move extremely heavy loads. This equipment, sometimes referred to as cranes or winches, is built directly into the structure of the vehicle it is mounted to—as it is designed to pull loads sometimes as massive, if not moreso, than its parent vehicle. As such, a winch system may never be added to an existing vehicle, but must come factory-installed.

A winch weighs one ton for every twenty tons it is required to pull, and takes one equipment slot (or 1 critical space) for every ton of its weight. A winch is the most critical piece of equipment on any recovery vehicle, allowing the recovery vehicle to pull just about anything it needs to, or to move a fallen BattleMech onto its cargo bed. Because of its required versatility, a winch system *must* be mounted on a turret.

A winch costs 15,000 C-Bills for each ton of its weight.

Location: Turret. Winches mounted on heavy recovery vehicles are usually positioned in the rear of the unit, with easy access to the open cargo bed.

A winch is considered a level-three piece of equipment.

Recovery Vehicles

UGS-47J Wheeled Recovery Vehicle

Mass: 75 Tons

Movement Type: Wheeled

Power Plant: SAAB-Met Super-Trane 205

Cruising Speed: 32 kph

Flank Speed: 54 kph

Armor: StarSlab/1

Armament and Equipment:

4 ScatterGun Light Machine Guns

1 Allied Exports Coolant System

1 GalacTracked Field Crane

Manufacturer: New Earth Trading Corp. and Quickscell Company

Primary Factory: New Earth (NETC), Oliver (Quickscell)

Communications System: Yurio SatLink IV

Targeting and Tracking System: NetSee Mk. I

UGS-92D Tracked Heavy Recovery Vehicle

Mass: 90 Tons

Movement Type: Tracked

Power Plant: GM 270 Fusion

Cruising Speed: 32 kph

Flank Speed: 54 kph

Armor: StarSlab/1

Armament and Equipment:

1 Jackson Model 12 Small Laser

1 Allied Exports Coolant System

1 GalacTracked Field Crane

Manufacturer: New Earth Trading Corp. and Quickscell Company

Primary Factory: New Earth (NETC), Oliver (Quickscell)

Communications System: Yurio SatLink IV

Targeting and Tracking System: NetSee Mk. I

Overview

When the *Mackie* was first introduced in 2439, it was clear to those in the maintenance and logistics corps that a new vehicle would have to be developed to pull the 100-ton behemoths from the mudholes and gorges that their pilots would get them stuck in. The UGS-series recovery vehicles were christened for just such operations.

Various versions of the UGS (**Utility Ground Service**) vehicles served first the Terran Hegemony Armed Forces and then the SLDF throughout the years. But the UGS-27 and the UGS-92 frames became the trademarks of the SLDF Transport and Recovery battalions. Even now, nearly three centuries after the fall of the Star League, with more than 150 distinct heavy recovery vehicle chassis in service throughout the Inner Sphere, the UGS units are still the most popular with the Successor States.

Capabilities

As their names suggest, the UGS series are recovery vehicles. They are designed to not only recover damaged and destroyed BattleMechs and vehicles from a battlefield, but also extract them from situations or terrain they could otherwise not get themselves out of.

BATTLEFIELD RECOVERY

Central to their unique capabilities are the pair of heavy field cranes each vehicle mounts on its spacious cargo platform. Each of these cranes is rated to pull or lift at least one hundred metric tons, enough to position even the heaviest of BattleMechs on their vehicle's bed. Of course, after extended period of operation, the crane systems require a hefty preventive maintenance schedule, without which a winch or cable could unexpectedly fail. Countless crewmen have died over the years because they neglected their vehicle's maintenance schedule.

When a CRO team comes upon a salvage or recovery site, it first finds the closest level and stable ground possible. There, the team drops stabilization legs, and if possible uses two pneumatic pistons to drive ferro-titanium poles up to five feet into the ground to provide additional stabilization. The CRO team then secures the cranes' cables and a number of guy wires to the unit to be recovered. The crew then slowly eases the unit from its current position to either a position it can move away from under its own power or to the recovery vehicle's cargo bed.

In addition to the Field Crane, each of the UGS recovery vehicles also mounts several tanks of BattleMech coolant, allowing overheated and shutdown 'Mechs a chance to flush their heat-exchange systems with fresh coolant. Each vehicle also mounts some sort of rudimentary weapon system, mostly for anti-infantry or light vehicle defense, coupled with an off-the-shelf T&T system. Heavier defense is provided by the crew's parent unit.

Deployment

In the heyday of the Star League, nearly 20 manufacturers produced countless hundreds of thousands of the UGS vehicles across the Inner Sphere. Even today, both the NETC and Quicksell have devoted two production lines apiece to these classic vehicles. Nearly every house and mercenary BattleMech and Armor regiment in the Inner Sphere fields a number of these vehicles. Intelligence gathered from the Clan front and from Arc Royal seems to indicate that the Clans, too, field vehicles almost identical in design.

Type: UGS-47J Wheeled Recovery Vehicle

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Movement Type: Wheeled

Tonnage: 75

Equipment

	Mass
Inner Structure:	7.5
Engine:	17
Type:	ICE
Cruising MP:	3
Flanking MP:	5
Heat Sinks:	0
Control Equipment:	4
Lift Equipment:	0
Power Amplifier:	0
Turret:	.5
Armor Factor:	72

	Armor Value
Front:	22
R/L Side:	18
Rear:	14

Weapons and Ammo	Location	Tonnage
Coolant System	Rear	9
Winches (100 ton capacity)	Turret	5
Cargo	Rear	25
2 Machine Guns	Front	1
Machine Gun	Left Side	.5
Machine Gun	Right Side	.5
Ammo (MG) 100	Body	.5

Type: UGS-92D Tracked Heavy Recovery Vehicle

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Movement Type: Tracked

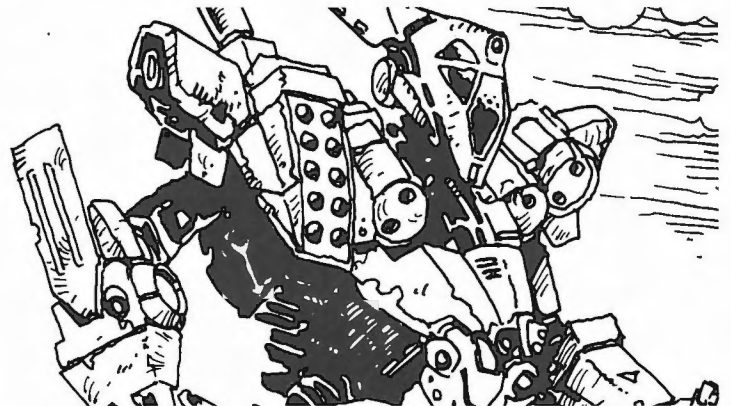
Tonnage: 90

Equipment

	Mass
Inner Structure:	9
Engine:	270
Type:	Fusion
Cruising MP:	3
Flanking MP:	5
Heat Sinks:	10
Control Equipment:	4
Lift Equipment:	0
Power Amplifier:	0
Turret:	.5
Armor Factor:	80

	Armor Value
Front:	25
R/L Side:	20
Rear:	15

Weapons and Ammo	Location	Tonnage
Small Laser	Front	.5
Coolant System	Rear	9
Winches (100 ton capacity)	Turret	5
Cargo	Rear	35



MECHFORCE QUARTERLY

UGS-24NA Light Recovery Vehicle

Mass: 25 Tons

Movement Type: Tracked

Power Plant: General Galactic 100

Cruising Speed: 44 kph

Flank Speed: 64 kph

Armor: StarSlab/1

Armament and Equipment:

5 ScatterGun Light Machine Guns

1 GalacTracked Light Field Crane

1 GalacTracked Dozer Blade

Manufacturer: New Earth Trading Corp. and Quicksell Company

Primary Factory: New Earth (NETC), Oliver (Quicksell)

Communications System: Yurio SatLink IV

Targeting and Tracking System: NetSee Mk. I

Overview

With the large number of heavy combat units deployed in the armies of the Terran Hegemony, it soon became evident to those tasked with the responsibility of the recovery of such vehicles that in many cases it would take more than just a single recovery vehicle to accomplish a mission. In the mid 25th Century, the Hegemony Armed Forces turned back to a classic design to assist in these tasks.

Capabilities

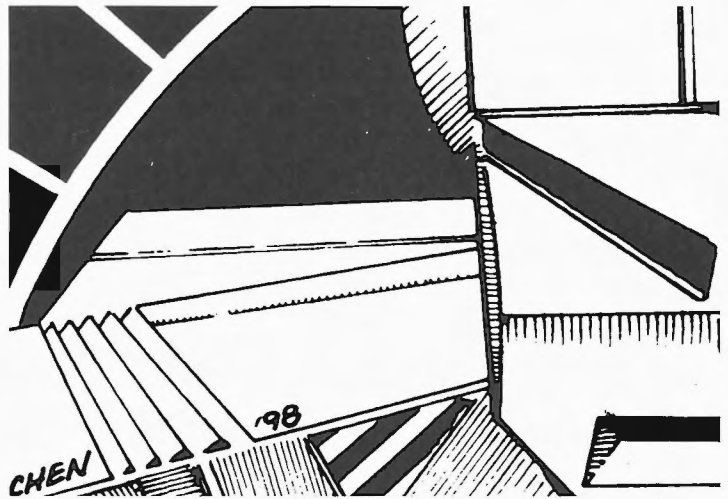
Originally deployed in 2312 by the Terran Hegemony as a multitask light engineering and recovery vehicle, the design soon fell out of favor as newer and more capable designs were fielded. The vehicle was looked at again in 2445 as a candidate for both light recovery work and as a companion for heavy BattleMech extraction operations. The vehicle received only cursory design changes, and as it used many of the same off-the-shelf components as the other UGS series vehicles, it was rushed into production.

As with its larger brothers, it can pull a tank or a BattleMech out of a bog or other terrain too rough for it to pull itself from. Its main duty, however, is to assist larger recovery vehicles, such as the UGS-92, in placing damaged and shutdown BattleMechs on their cargo platforms. The sheer mass of most BattleMechs preclude even the largest of recovery vehicles from accomplishing that task alone.

Of course, it is also a multipurpose vehicle usually assigned not to a specific recovery or engineering team, but to a regimental motor pool. Its cargo capacity and bulldozer blade, coupled with its rugged design, make it an ideal light engineering vehicle for constructing or quickly repairing battlefield defenses.

Variants

Something of a variation upon an existing design already, numerous configurations of the basic UGS-24 exist in the many militaries of the Successor States. Most commonly a minesweeper attachment replaces the bulldozer blade, giving the UGS-24 crews yet another vital and dangerous mission to perform.



Deployment

As with the rest of the UGS series vehicles, many army and most mercenary commands in the Inner Sphere employ one variation or another of the UGS-24 in their logistics and support sections.

Type: UGS-24NA Tracked Heavy Recovery Vehicle

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Movement Type: Tracked

Tonnage: 30

Equipment

		Mass
Inner Structure:		3
Engine:	120	8
Type:	ICE	
Cruising MP:	4	
Flanking MP:	6	
Heat Sinks:	0	0
Control Equipment:		1.5
Lift Equipment:		0
Power Amplifier:		0
Turret:		.5
Armor Factor:	64	4
	<i>Armor Value</i>	
Front:	20	
R/L Side:	17	
Rear:	10	

Weapons and Ammo

	Location	Tonnage
2 Machine Guns	Front	1
Machine Gun	Left Side	.5
Machine Gun	Right Side	.5
Machine Gun	Rear	.5
Ammo (MG) 100	Body	.5
Bulldozer Blade	Front	2
Winches (40 ton capacity)	Turret	2
Cargo	Rear	6

BATTLEFIELD RECOVERY

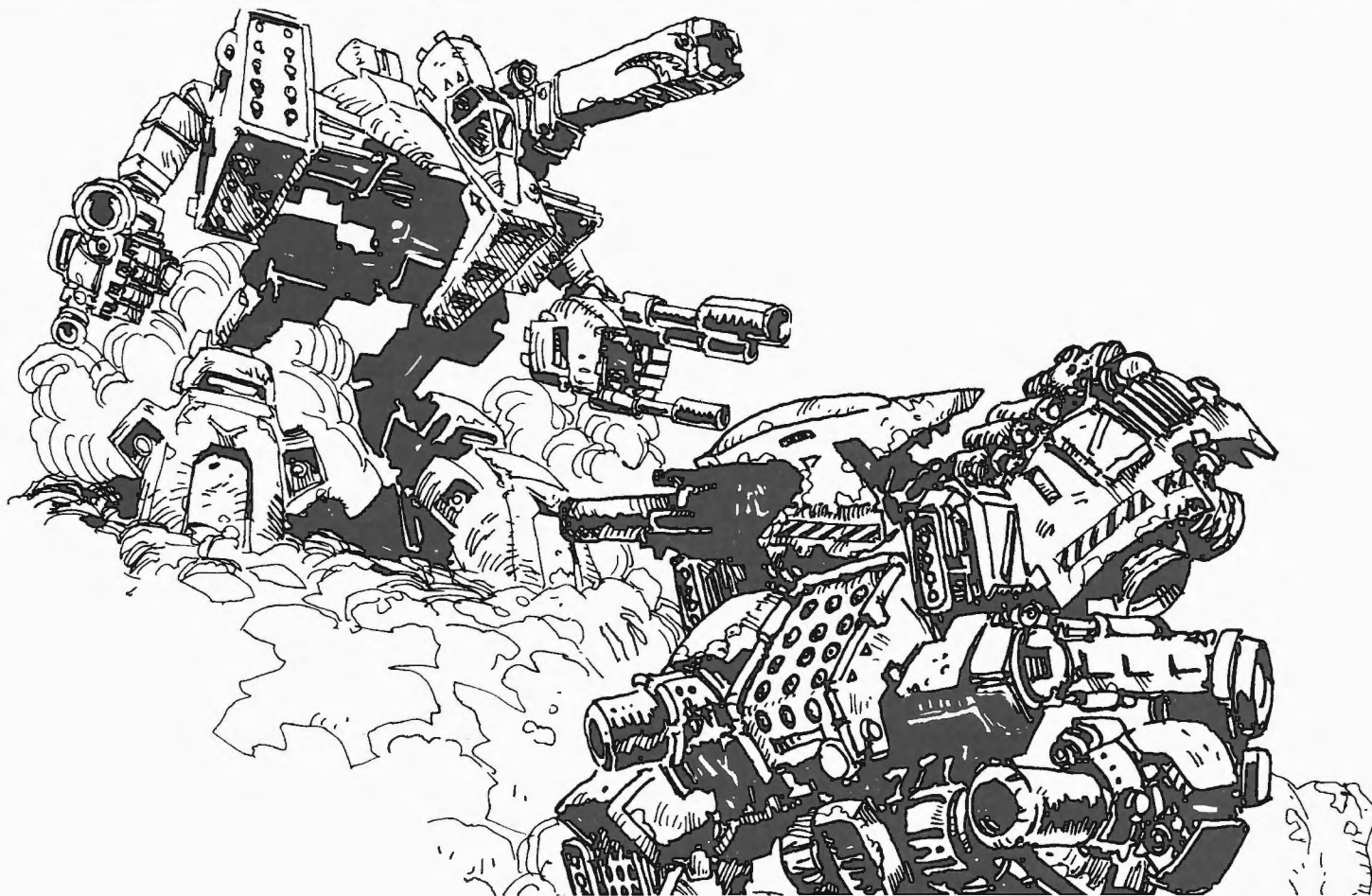
Game Notes

In order for a recovery vehicle to position an inoperative vehicle or BattleMech on its cargo platform, the unit must be in the same hex as the recovery vehicle, and that hex must be clear terrain. Recovery vehicles that mount winches may use that equipment to pull a derelict unit into the same hex they occupy, but may pull such a unit only 150 meters (5 hexes). Before any work is done, the recovery vehicle must set up in a clear hex, spending three full turns (30 seconds) to do so. The recovery crew must then mount the winch cables to the derelict unit, a process that usually takes no more than two minutes for a veteran crew (1D6+6 turns).

If the derelict unit must be pulled from difficult terrain to the recovery vehicle's hex, add up the number of Movement Points the disabled unit would normally need to expend to reach the hex occupied by the recovery vehicle. That number is the base number of turns it will require to pull the unit into the vehicle's hex. If the derelict unit is a BattleMech, as opposed to a vehicle, double the number of turns required (vehicles have wheels or treads 'Mechs do not). For each additional recovery vehicle or BattleMech with hand actuators available to help in the operation, cut the required time to drag the derelict unit by half, to a maximum of a quarter the base required time.

Once the derelict unit is in the same hex as the recovery vehicle, the actual recovery operation may begin. If the recovery vehicle has not already attached its winch cables, its crew must do so at this time (1D6+6 turns). After the winch cables have been attached to the derelict unit, the recovery operation may begin. At least one additional vehicle mounting a winch, or a BattleMech with hand actuators, is needed to safely accomplish the operation. The recovery of a derelict unit will take a base of 2D6 minutes plus one minute per 10 tons or fraction of it the derelict unit weighs. A derelict vehicle will take only half the base required time to recover. If an additional recovery vehicle or BattleMech with operating hand actuators is not available to assist with the operation, and the derelict unit is a BattleMech, the recovery will take three times the base required time.

Derelict units may be mounted on a recovery or transport vehicle up to that vehicle's cargo capacity with no adverse modifiers to that vehicle's movement. If the weight of the units mounted on the vehicle exceeds the cargo capacity of the transport, subtract that capacity from the total tonnage of the recovered units. The remainder may not exceed the tonnage of the transporting vehicle. For cargo exceeding the allotted cargo capacity of a vehicle, use the rules found on page 81, *Cargo Carriers*, of the **BattleTech Compendium: The Rules of Warfare** to determine movement penalties.



THE FIFTH SUCCESSION WAR... THE BEGINNING!!!

Dateline-March 31, 3050

—Excerpts from transcripts of a recent ComStar news broadcast from Hilton Head Island, Terra.

Our top news story of the night is what Com Guard military officials are already calling the 'Fifth Succession War.' Overnight, the hostilities that have been building since the assassination of Archon Melissa Steiner in May of 3049 have exploded into open conflict across the Inner Sphere, as every major power, both the Great Houses as well as the Periphery states, has launched large military offensives against neighboring states. At the present time, it appears that only the Magistracy of Canopus and the Lyran Alliance have refrained from launching reprisal attacks. However, as the Lyran Alliance has lost sixteen worlds to aggressors, it is doubtful they will maintain a peaceful stance for long.

Even more disturbing are eyewitness accounts from the Coreward Periphery, detailing a massive invasion by unknown forces. Calling themselves the Clans, they are sweeping through the Bandit Kingdoms and have invaded both the Free Rasalhague Republic and the Draconis Combine. Who or what these invaders are is the question that most of the Inner Sphere should be asking themselves. But with most militaries already engaged in hostilities, these 'Clans' are simply more enemies to be subdued.

The sheer scope of the fighting is beyond the ability of a single reporter to cover. Instead, we have live news feeds from our reporters across the Inner Sphere, detailing the war on every front. Let's now go to our reporters on site.

—Excerpt from transmission from Tantara

<Reporter> I am standing here with Corporal Steve Massey of the AFFC. What can you tell us about this assault on the St. Ives Compact?

<Corporal> Well ma'am, it was an open and closed textbook invasion. Several of our line-regiments dropped onto six St. Ives worlds: Teng, Tallin, Textos, Warlock, Tantara and Maladar. I was lucky enough to be a part of the invasion of Tantara. Some people might say we are betraying a trust by invading the Compact. But I say it's about time!

—Excerpt from transmission from Amber Grove

<Reporter> The Federated Commonwealth has invaded the Taurian Concordat. I am currently standing at the command post of the AFFC on Amber Grove, with me is Sergeant Carl Szczerski. Sergeant, what can you tell us about this invasion? Why the Concordat?

<Sergeant> I don't make the orders around here, I just follow them. Our regiment was ordered to take this world, and that is what we did. As for whether we will be staying awhile, just look around you. Do those new prefab, ferrocrete buildings give you a hint?

—Excerpt from transmission from Zion

<Reporter> Following both the AFFC invasion of the Taurian Concordat and the shocking invasion of the St. Ives Compact, it should come as no surprise that the Armed Forces of the Federated Commonwealth have also invaded the Free Worlds League. Five worlds have already fallen to the AFFC war machine—Zion, Asuncion, Suzano, Kyrkbacken and Menkalinan—and the invasion does not appear to be stopping anytime soon.

—Excerpt from transmission from Talitha

<Reporter> The stunned citizens of the Lyran Alliance can only wonder at the audacity of their one-time brethren of the Federated Commonwealth, as AFFC troops poured through the Terran Corridor in a series of lightning attacks to invade eight Lyran Alliance worlds: Wasat, Van Diemen IV, Talitha, Pollux, Devils Rock, Castor, Marcus and Callison. I am standing with Kommandant Richard Darr, acting commander of the on-planet forces on Talitha. Commander, why?

<Kommandant Richard Darr> The 'so called' Lyran Alliance is in open defiance of Prince Hanse Davion and the rightful government of the Federated Commonwealth. We are simply here to beckon home our wayward people in the Lyran half of the FedCom.

—Excerpt from transmission from Sian

<Reporter> Taking advantage of the confusion caused by the numerous attacks by the AFFC, the Capellan Confederation has launched their own attacks. With an audacity bordering on insanity, Chancellor Liao has opened up a three-front war, attacking the Free Worlds League on Conquista, the St. Ives Compact on Indicass and the Federated Commonwealth on four worlds: Sarmaxa, Sarna, Kaifeng and Truth. Only time will tell whether the Capellan military will be able to sustain the feverish pace of these invasions.

—Excerpt from transmission from Tharkad

<Reporter> The liaison to the interim government of the Lyran Alliance has just briefed us regarding attacks by Periphery Independents against the Anti-spinward Periphery border of the Alliance. Already four worlds have fallen—Son Hoa, Madiun, Khon Kaen and Poulso—and there seems to be no end in sight.

—Excerpt from transmission from Solaris VII

<Reporter> I am standing with Sergeant Fred Stephanosky, Jr. on what was Lyran Alliance soil only hours before, but with the LAAF forces boosting to the Nadir jump point has become a Free Worlds League world: Solaris VII. Were you a part of the fighting, Sergeant?

THE FIFTH SUCCESSION WAR

<Sergeant Fred Stephanosky, Jr.> No, not at all. I was part of the second wave of forces that was to hit Solaris, 12 hours after the initial planet-fall by our FWLM. But the Lyran Alliance Armed Forces wanted to run more than fight and they were already lifting off-planet when my own regiment grounded. Pity really. I sure wanted to kick some LAAF butt. Haha.

—Excerpt from transmission from Alpheratz

<Reporter> In a move that has shocked the Inner Sphere, this once-peaceful realm has succumbed to the madness that is sweeping the rest of the Inner Sphere, and has attacked both the Draconis Combine and the Federated Commonwealth. As this realm has always shown a preference for peace, it is not surprising that two worlds of the Draconis Combine fell to this sudden invasion: Zlatoust and Kazanka. However, what is stunning military analysts around the Inner Sphere is the unbelievable success of the Outworlds Military Corps against the AFFC. Already seven worlds have fallen to this unexpected invasion: Kennard, Haynesville, Pajarito, Pitkin, Hazelhurst, Bastrop and Inner End. One can only speculate if these successes are due largely to the AFFC's concentration on other borders.

—Excerpt from transmission from Grumium

<Reporter> It is no shock to this reporter that the Draconis Combine has come to claim those worlds which belonged to them for so many centuries: the Free Rasalhague Republic. I am standing here with Tai-i Michael DeHoyos. Tai-i.

<Tai-i Michael DeHoyos> The Free Rasalhague Republic has been a part of the Draconis Combine since the 24th century. It is time they joined again with the Dragon.

—Excerpt from transmission from Moore

<Reporter> In a move that has surprised very few, the Draconis Combine Mustered Soldiery has begun to take worlds in the Lyons thumb, attacking Sabik, Moore and Lambrecht. With me is Tai-i Buster McCall. What can you tell me?

<Tai-i buster McCall> We are only moving to liberate those worlds which have previously belonged to the Dragon.

—Excerpt from transmission from Northwind

<Reporter> In an eerie parallel to the First Succession War, the might of the DCMS has fallen like a hammer blow into the Terran corridor of the Federated Commonwealth, attacking eight worlds: Caph, Epsilon Indi, Ingress, Ruchbah, Deneb Kaitos, Small World, Errai and, most shocking, Northwind. Knowing the reputation of the famed Mercenary unit the Northwind Highlanders, the fall of Northwind stunned most military analysts. I am here with Tai-sa Rich Cencarik. How is it that the Highlanders were so quickly thrown from their planet, Tai-sa?

<Tai-sa Rich Cencarik> A combination of overwhelming force and the fact that only 2 regiments of the Highlanders were on-planet at the time. I have no doubt the Highlanders will be back; I look forward to it.

—Excerpt from transmission from Rasalhague

<Reporter> Although the Inner Sphere is erupting into chaos as I speak, a more devastating reality is unfolding in the Coreward Periphery. Strange forces, known only as the Clans, have been intercepted all along the Coreward Periphery. Additionally, three of these 'Clans' have invaded the Draconis Combine and Free Rasalhague Republic, as well as overrunning portions of the

Bandit Kingdoms. The Nova Cats have overrun Tarnby, Altona, Garavenhage, Hartshill, Salford and Nowhere in the Combine. Clan Wolf has taken Nyserta in the Bandit Kingdoms and attacked seven worlds in the République: The Edge, St. John, Alleghe, Skallevoll, Outpost, Svelvik and New Bergen. Most shocking was the capture of eleven worlds by Clan Ghost Bear: Thule and Jezersko from the Free Rasalhague Republic, and Richmond, Constance, Idlewind, Rockland, Jarett, Nykvarn, Garstedt, Polcenigo, Schuyler, Luzerne and Courchevel from the Combine.

Who these forces are, or where they come from, is anyone's guess. Currently, our only clues are from intercepted transmission from the force known as Clan Ghost Bear. The apparent leaders of the invasion are known only as Star Commander Jeff Jorgensson and MechWarriors Bryan and Michell.

—Excerpt from transmission from Outreach

<Reporter> With armed conflict flaring around the Inner Sphere, it is no secret that business is booming on the mercenary capital of Outreach. With me are Corporal Thomas Ropers and MechWarrior Michael Selk of the Busse Irregulars, as well as Corporal Dave Barton of the Steel City MechWarriors. How is business?

<Mercenaries> Business couldn't be better. In fact, all three of our outfits already have contracts, and we'll be burning to the ol' jump point within the hour.

The map on the next page represents the current state of The Fifth Succession War as of March 31st. These results were tallied by factoring MechForce member participation in ranked battles, tournament participation, field journalism, organizing events and the total number of members in each affiliation group.

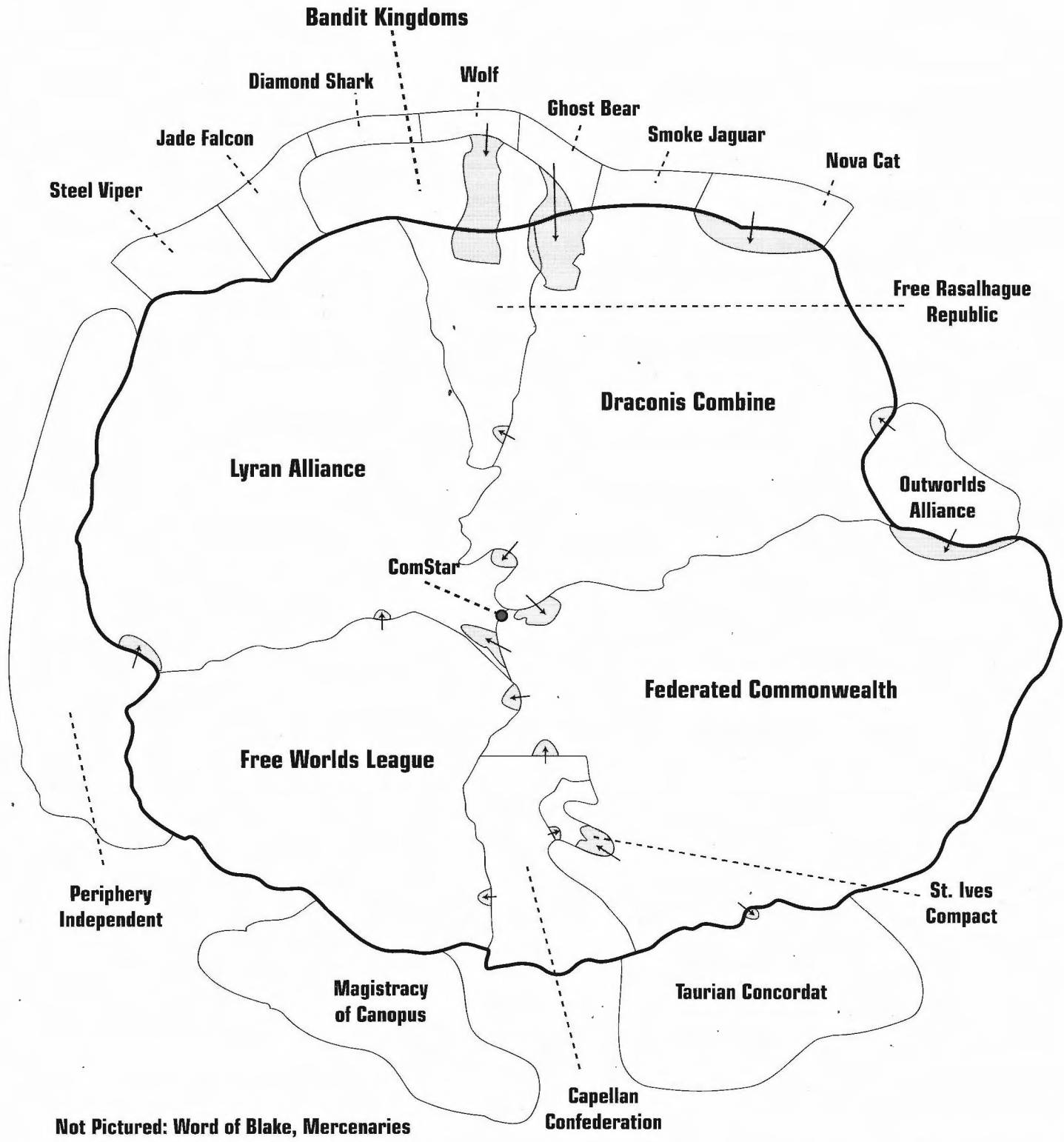
To all the affiliations who gained territory, congratulations and to those who lost worlds, remember... "to the victor, go the spoils." The larger the affiliation, the more members are needed to keep their strength up. The perfect example of this is the Outworlds Alliance. Carl Amedio's (the only member of the affiliation) results in battle ended with the Alliance taking seven worlds from the Federated Commonwealth and two from the Draconis Combine. Who says that one man can't make a difference? Congratulations, Carl.

To all the members who have been actively participating in MechForce, keep it up. The format of this ongoing report will highlight affiliation leaders (members in each affiliation who have the highest scores and ranks) and will show a map updating the current state of the war.

On the map, the grey-shaded areas represent sections of that affiliation's territory that has fallen to an enemy. These represent worlds that have been taken by attacking forces. This has the earmarks of a vicious war, as many known worlds, including Solaris VII have changed hands.

Only time and your efforts will tell what may happen next in The Fifth Succession War!

MECHFORD QUARTERLY



THE STATE OF THE WAR IN THE MECHFORD UNIVERSE DATELINE: MARCH 31, 3050

From The MechForce Showroom...

That's right, Uncle B's back with the hook-up for your game. This time, we have two 'Mechs and two vehicles for your inspection. The *Ursa* 'Mech and the *Shamash* Recon vehicle are straight from the upcoming product **BattleTech Technical Readout:3060**. They are considered Level 2 BattleTech and legal for tournament and ranked battle play.

So without any further chatter, look, enjoy and remember...if you break it, you bought it!!!

URSA

Mass: 50

Chassis: Bergan XIV

Power Plant: 200 Standard

Cruising Speed: 43 kph

Maximum Speed: 65 kph

Jump Jets: None

Jump Capacity: None

Armor: Compound A2F Ferro-Fibrous

Armament:

- 1 Series 7K Extended-Range Large Laser
- 2 Series 2a Extended-Range Medium Lasers
- 2 Kolibri Delta Series Medium Pulse Lasers
- 1 Type X LRM-10 Launcher
- 1 Type VI SRM-6 Launcher

Manufacturer: Bergan Industries, Alshain

Communications System: Garret T10B

Targeting and Tracking System: RCA Instatrac Mark VI

OVERVIEW

The hardest part of waging war in the Inner Sphere is logistics. Transporting men and materiel across the vast distance between the Kerensky Cluster and the Inner Sphere is a monumental task.

Ghost Bear Khan Bjorn Jorgensson planned for his Clan to overcome this challenge. Shortly after capturing Alshain in December of 3051, Ghost Bear technicians began bringing the Bergan Industries plant there back on line. The factory soon began producing light 'Mechs, but these antiquated machines were pathetic by Ghost Bear standards. In the lull after the Truce, Khan Jorgensson ordered the Bergan plant re-tooled to produce a new second-line 'Mech. This 'Mech would use Inner Sphere components manufactured in the Ghost Bear Occupied Zone, combined with advanced weapons shipped from factories in Clan Space.

The process took much longer than anticipated, mainly because of the incompatibility of Clan and Inner Sphere systems. After more than seven years of work, these challenges were overcome, and the revamped Bergan factory began producing the first Clan BattleMech entirely designed and manufactured in the Inner Sphere: the *Ursa*.

CAPABILITIES

The first in a planned series of Ghost Bear 'Mechs to be built in the Inner Sphere, the *Ursa* was designed to fulfill the most pressing need of the Clan: defense. The fall of the Smoke Jaguars left the Ghost Bears with a sizable border facing the Draconis Combine. A strong and flexible defensive unit was needed to garrison a border that could turn hostile at any moment.

The *Ursa* fulfills its mission with a variety of weapon systems designed to engage a target at any range with accurate and massive firepower. As a defensive 'Mech, speed is secondary, so the *Ursa* has only a standard 200-rated engine, readily available in the Inner Sphere. Although this limits the 'Mech to a maximum speed of only 65 kph, this was deemed a necessary sacrifice to mount the desired weapon systems on a 50-ton chassis.

Spearheaded by an extended-range large laser, the *Ursa's* arsenal is impressive for a 'Mech of its size. Its only real weakness is a shortage of significant long-range firepower, with merely an LRM-10 rack to supplement the large laser. The *Ursa* being a relatively slow 'Mech, a more maneuverable enemy can stay out of effective range of the majority of the *Ursa's* weapons. However, the *Ursa* is expected to face inferior Inner Sphere machines, so this is not as much of a flaw as it might seem.

DEPLOYMENT

The first *Ursas* began rolling off Bergan assembly lines in late 3059. Already most worlds bordering the Draconis Combine have received at least a Star of the new machines to bolster their defenses, with more on the way. Not a single *Ursa* has been deployed in Clan Space, which is not surprising given the 'Mech's design purpose. Khan Jorgensson is so far quite pleased with his brainchild, which is the equal of Inner Sphere 'Mechs twice its size and many times its cost.

Type: *Ursa*

Technology Base: Clan

Tonnage: 50

Battle Value: 1,509

Equipment

Equipment		Mass
Internal Structure:		5
Engine:	200	8.5
Walking MP:	4	
Running MP:	6	
Jumping MP:	0	
Heat Sinks:	16 [32]	6
Gyro:		2
Cockpit:		3
Armor Factor:	163	8.5
	<i>Internal Structure</i>	<i>Armor Value</i>
Head	3	9
Center Torso	16	25
Center Torso (rear)		7
R/L Torso	12	18
R/L Torso (rear)		5
R/L Arm	8	15
R/L Leg	12	23

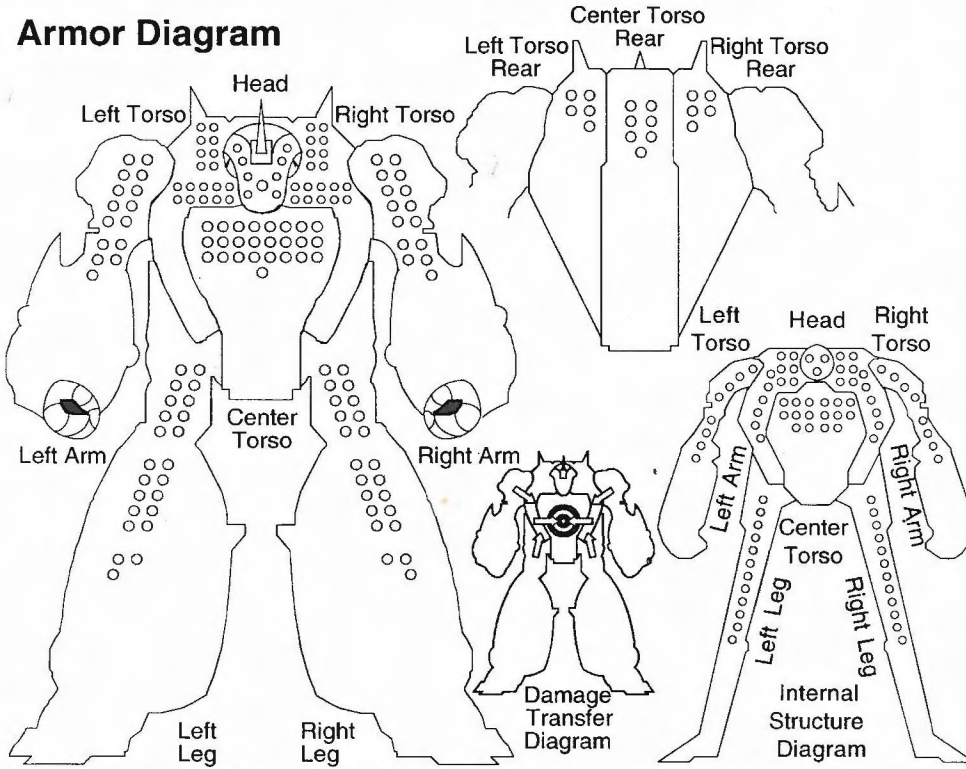
Weapons and Ammo

Weapons and Ammo	Location	Critical	Tonnage
ER Large Laser	RA	1	4
2 Medium Pulse Lasers	RA	2	4
ER Medium Laser	RT	1	1
ER Medium Laser	LT	1	1
SRM 6	CT	1	1.5
Ammo (SRM) 15	LT	1	1
LRM 10	LA	1	2.5
Ammo (LRM) 12	LA	1	1
ECM Suite	RT	1	1

BATTLETECH®

BATTLEMECH RECORD SHEET

Armor Diagram



Mech Data

Type: **Ursa**
 Tonnage: **50**
 Movement Points
 Walking: **4**
 Running: **6**
 Jumping: **0**

Technology Base:
 Clan
 3060

Weapons Inventory

#	Type	Loc	Ht	D	Mn	S	M	L
1	ER Large Laser	RA	12	10	0	8	15	25
1	ER Medium Laser	RT	5	7	0	5	10	15
1	ER Medium Laser	LT	5	7	0	5	10	15
2	Medium Pulse Laser	RA	4	7	0	4	8	12
1	LRM 10	LA	4	1	0	7	14	21
1	SRM 6	CT	4	2	0	3	6	9
1	ECM Suite	RT	0	0	0			6

Ammo Type	Rounds
LRM 10	12
SRM 6	15

Total Double Heat Sinks: 16 [32]

○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

Auto Eject

Operational Disabled

Warrior Data

Name: _____

Gunnery Skill: _____ Piloting Skill: _____

Hits Taken	1	2	3	4	5	6
Conscious #	3	5	7	10	11	Dead

Heat Scale

30	SHUTDOWN
29	
28	Ammo Explosion, avoid on 8+
27	
26	Shutdown, avoid on 10+
25	-5 Movement Points
24	+4 Modifier to Fire
23	Ammo Explosion, avoid on 6+
22	Shutdown, avoid on 8+
21	
20	-4 Movement Points
19	Ammo Explosion, avoid on 4+
18	Shutdown, avoid on 6+
17	+3 Modifier to Fire
16	
15	-3 Movement Points
14	Shutdown, avoid on 4+
13	+2 Modifier to Fire
12	
11	
10	-2 Movement Points
9	
8	+1 Modifier to Fire
7	
6	
5	-1 Movement Points
4	
3	
2	
1	
0	

Left Arm	Critical Hit Table	Right Arm								
1. Shoulder 2. Upper Arm Actuator 3. Lower Arm Actuator 4. Hand Actuator 5. LRM 10 6. Roll Again 1. Roll Again 2. Roll Again 3. Roll Again 4. Roll Again 5. Roll Again 6. Roll Again	<h3>Head</h3> 1. Life Support 2. Sensors 3. Cockpit 4. Ferro-Fibrous 5. Sensors 6. Life Support <h3>Center Torso</h3> 1. Engine 2. Engine 3. Engine 4. Gyro 5. Gyro 6. Gyro 1. Gyro 2. Engine 3. Engine 4. Engine 5. SRM 6 6. Roll Again	1. Shoulder 2. Upper Arm Actuator 3. Lower Arm Actuator 4. Heat Sink 5. Heat Sink 6. Heat Sink 1. Heat Sink 2. ER Large Laser 3. Medium Pulse Laser 4. Medium Pulse Laser 5. Roll Again 6. Roll Again <h3>Right Torso</h3> 1. Heat Sink 2. Heat Sink 3. Heat Sink 4. Heat Sink 5. Heat Sink 6. Heat Sink 1. Ferro-Fibrous 2. Ferro-Fibrous 3. ER Medium Laser 4. ECM Suite 5. Roll Again 6. Roll Again								
<h3>Left Torso (Case)</h3> 1. Heat Sink 2. Heat Sink 3. Heat Sink 4. Heat Sink 5. Heat Sink 6. Heat Sink 1. ER Medium Laser 2. Ammo (LRM 10) 12 3. Ammo (SRM 6) 15 4. Roll Again 5. Roll Again 6. Roll Again	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Engine Hits</td> <td>○○○</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gyro Hits</td> <td>○○</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sensor Hits</td> <td>○○</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Life Support</td> <td>○</td> </tr> </table> <p>Cost 4,535,501 Battle Value 1,509</p>	Engine Hits	○○○	Gyro Hits	○○	Sensor Hits	○○	Life Support	○	<h3>Right Leg</h3> 1. Hip 2. Upper Leg Actuator 3. Lower Leg Actuator 4. Foot Actuator 5. Ferro-Fibrous 6. Ferro-Fibrous
Engine Hits	○○○									
Gyro Hits	○○									
Sensor Hits	○○									
Life Support	○									
<h3>Left Leg</h3> 1. Hip 2. Upper Leg Actuator 3. Lower Leg Actuator 4. Foot Actuator 5. Ferro-Fibrous 6. Ferro-Fibrous										



From The MechForce Showroom

DERVISH IIc- by David Insley

Mass: 55 Tons

Chassis: Endo Steel

Power Plant: 275 XL

Cruising Speed: 54.0 kph

Maximum Speed: 86.4 kph

Jump Jets: 5

Jump Capacity: 150 meters

Armor: Ferro-Fibrous

Armament:

2 LRM-20 Launchers

2 Streak SRM-4 Launchers

1 Medium Pulse Laser

1 ER Medium Laser

Manufacturer: Unknown

Communications System: Unknown

Targeting System: Unknown

Overview

First seen in the latter half of 3058 along the Smoke Jaguar section of the Draconis front, this design speaks volumes on precisely what Clan designers have been able to accomplish when an entire society is devoted to the advancement of military technology for three centuries.

This new incarnation of the *Dervish* has roughly, twice the firepower of its Star League predecessor- as well as more armor, at no sacrifice in mobility, thanks to the compact style of Clan technology.

Capabilities

While able to inflict a substantial amount of punishment from more than 600 meters away with its lightweight Clan LRM-20 racks, the *Dervish IIc* is truly a monster when it closes to half that distance.

With the accuracy, even at short distances, of the Clan-upgraded long range missile packs, a pair of four-tube Streak SRMs and two powerful Clan lasers, this incarnation of the "poor man's Archer" has already made those "rich" men who have seen it, wish for a copy of the blueprints.

Word in the field also has it that the heat-exchange method employed in the *Dervish* upgrade is similar to the excited-gas system which was innovated with the recent debut of the *Night Gyr*.

Deployment

To date, over a dozen sightings of this 'Mech, more than half of which belong among front-line units, prove that the Clans are continuing to revamp old Star League-era designs as well as creating new ones.

Only the Smoke Jaguars have been seen using this 'Mech to date though, an unconfirmed report places one in a PGC in Ghost Bear-occupied territory.

One skirmish report from the DCMS mentions a pair of these machines laying waste to a trio of assault 'Mechs while only taking moderate damage.

By utilizing their 150-meter jump capability, LRM racks and the effectiveness of the Clan double-strength heat sink, the duo (rumor has it that the pilots were members of the same sibko as well) destroyed over 250 tons ' worth of Kurita BattleMechs in 15 minutes. Both *Dervishes* were able to leave the field under their own power after the fight.

Type: Dervish IIc

Technology Base: Clan

Tonnage: 55

BattleValue: 2512

Cost: 11,119,908

Equipment

Internal Structure: Endo Steel

Engine: 275 XL

Walking MP: 5

Running MP: 8

Jumping MP: 5

Heat Sinks: 15(30)

Gyro: 3

Cockpit: 3

Armor Factor: 182

Mass

3

8

5

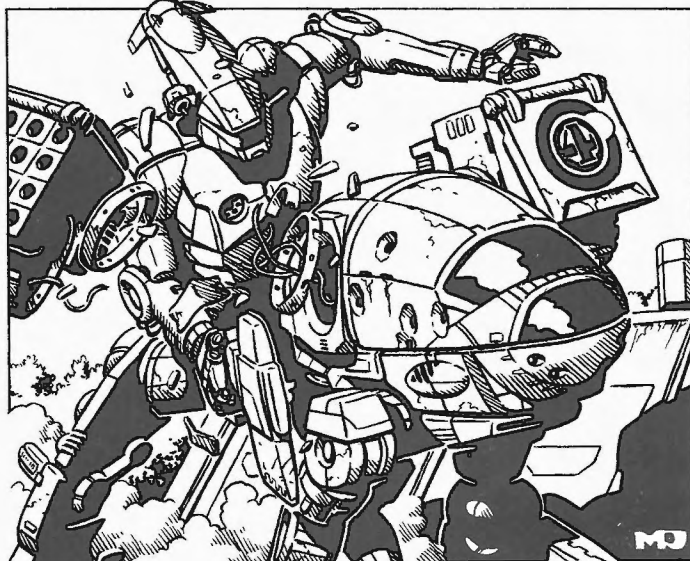
3

3

9.5

	Internal Structure	Armor Value
Head	3	9
Center Torso	18	28
Center Torso (Rear)	9	7
R/L Torso	13	20
R/L Torso (Rear)		6
R/L Arm	9	18
R/L Leg	13	25

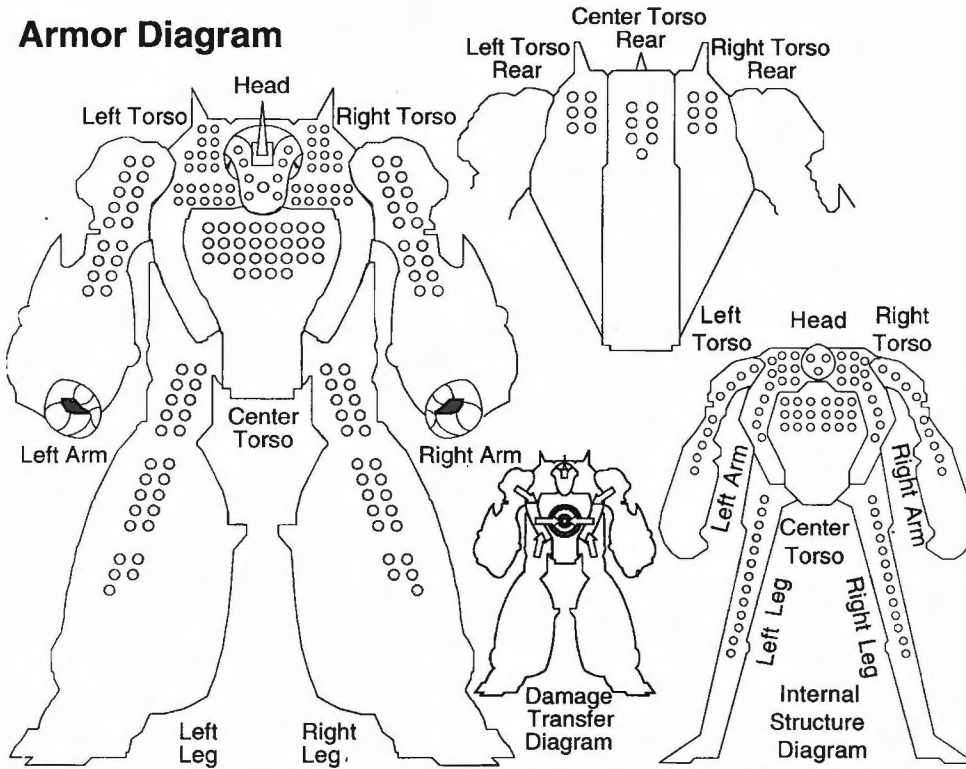
Weapons/ Ammo	Loc.	Crit.	Tonnage
LRM-20	RT	4	5
Ammo [LRM] 12	RT	2	2
LRM-20	LT	4	5
Ammo [LRM] 6	LT	1	1
SRM-4 Streak	H	1	2
SRM-4 Streak	CT	1	2
Ammo [Streak] 25	LT	1	1
Med. Pulse Laser	RA	1	2
ER Medium Laser	LA	1	1
Jump Jets	RT	2	1
Jump Jets	LT	2	1
Jump Jet	CT	1	.5



BATTLETECH®

BATTLEMECH RECORD SHEET

Armor Diagram



Mech Data

Type: **Dervish IIc**

Tonnage: **55**
 Movement Points
 Walking: **5**
 Running: **8**
 Jumping: **5**

Technology Base:
 Clan
 3060

Weapons Inventory

#	Type	Loc	Ht	D	Mn	S	M	L
1	Medium Pulse Laser	RA	4	7	0	4	8	12
1	ER Medium Laser	LA	5	7	0	5	10	15
1	LRM 20	LT	6	1	0	7	14	21
1	LRM 20	RT	6	1	0	7	14	21
1	SRM 4 Streak	H	3	2	0	4	8	12
1	SRM 4 Streak	CT	3	2	0	4	8	12

Ammo Type	Rounds
LRM 20	18
SRM 4 Streak	25

Total Double Heat Sinks: 15 [30]

○○○○○○○○○○
 ○○○○○○

Auto Eject

Operational Disabled

Warrior Data

Name: _____
 Gunnery Skill: _____ Piloting Skill: _____

Hits Taken	1	2	3	4	5	6
Conscious #	3	5	7	10	11	Dead

Heat Scale

30	SHUTDOWN
29	
28	Ammo Explosion, avoid on 8+
27	
26	Shutdown, avoid on 10+
25	-5 Movement Points
24	+4 Modifier to Fire
23	Ammo Explosion, avoid on 6+
22	Shutdown, avoid on 8+
21	
20	-4 Movement Points
19	Ammo Explosion, avoid on 4+
18	Shutdown, avoid on 6+
17	+3 Modifier to Fire
16	
15	-3 Movement Points
14	Shutdown, avoid on 4+
13	+2 Modifier to Fire
12	
11	
10	-2 Movement Points
9	
8	+1 Modifier to Fire
7	
6	
5	-1 Movement Points
4	
3	
2	
1	
0	

FASA®
 CORPORATION

Left Arm

- Shoulder
 - Upper Arm Actuator
 - Lower Arm Actuator
 - Hand Actuator
 - Ferro-Fibrous
 - Ferro-Fibrous
- 1-3
- Ferro-Fibrous
 - Ferro-Fibrous
 - Ferro-Fibrous
 - Ferro-Fibrous
 - Ferro-Fibrous
 - ER Medium Laser
- 4-6

Left Torso (Case)

- XL Engine
 - XL Engine
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Jump Jet
 - Jump Jet
- 1-3
- LRM 20
 - LRM 20
 - LRM 20
 - LRM 20
 - Ammo (LRM 20) 6
 - Ammo (SRM 4 Streak) 25
- 4-6

Left Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Heat Sink
- Heat Sink

Critical Hit Table

Head

- Life Support
- Sensors
- Cockpit
- SRM 4 Streak
- Sensors
- Life Support

Center Torso

- XL Engine
 - XL Engine
 - XL Engine
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
- 1-3
- Gyro
 - XL Engine
 - XL Engine
 - XL Engine
 - Jump Jet
 - SRM 4 Streak
- 4-6

Engine Hits	○○○
Gyro Hits	○○
Sensor Hits	○○
Life Support	○

Cost 11,119,908
 Battle Value 2,512

Right Arm

- Shoulder
 - Upper Arm Actuator
 - Lower Arm Actuator
 - Hand Actuator
 - Endo Steel
 - Endo Steel
- 1-3
- Endo Steel
 - Endo Steel
 - Endo Steel
 - Endo Steel
 - Endo Steel
 - Medium Pulse Laser
- 4-6

Right Torso (Case)

- XL Engine
 - XL Engine
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Jump Jet
 - Jump Jet
- 1-3
- LRM 20
 - LRM 20
 - LRM 20
 - LRM 20
 - Ammo (LRM 20) 6
 - Ammo (LRM 20) 6
- 4-6

Right Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Heat Sink
- Heat Sink

From The MechForce Showroom

SHAMASH RECONNAISSANCE VEHICLE

Mass: 11 tons

Movement Type: Hover

Power Plant: Fusion 60

Cruising Speed: 140 kph

Flank Speed: 216 kph

Armor: Compound JX2 Ferro Fibrous

Armament:

4 Series 1 Extended Range Small Lasers

Manufacturer: York Vehicle Y2 Facility

Communications System: Consolidated Type 2M

Targeting and Tracking System: Consolidated Type V TTS

OVERVIEW

Weakened militarily by years of feuding with Clan Burrock and deprived of all significant planetary resources, in the latter part of the twenty-ninth century Clan Blood Spirit found itself in desperate need of raw materials. The loss of the Clan's holdings on Foster, a relatively recent acquisition through colonization, as a result of renewed raiding by the Burrocks exacerbated the situation. Clan Blood Spirit concluded that it needed a faster, cheaper vehicle that it could use in the reconnaissance role of the Asshur, one of the original vehicles commissioned by ilKhan Jerome Winson. Aware that Clan Hell's Horses had recently constructed and fielded a new vehicle design, Khan Boques decided the Blood Spirit scientist caste also should begin working on a new, faster, cheaper vehicle that the Spirits could deploy quickly to repel other Clan's incursions into their territory. The Shamash reconnaissance vehicle is the product of that decision.

CAPABILITIES

The key to the success of the Shamash is its unrivaled speed. Able to travel at more than 200 kilometers per hour, the Shamash can outmaneuver almost any battlefield unit deployed by either the Clans or the Inner Sphere. In open terrain, it can even keep pace with most VTOL/VSTOL aircraft, most of which are specifically designed for speed.

Another factor in the phenomenal success of this vehicle was the unique combination of armor and firepower for a vehicle of its size. Mounting four Series 1 extended-range small lasers, the Shamash is able to deliver a withering fusillade of fire almost equal to the attack capabilities of the Asshur, a vehicle almost twice the size of the Shamash. These weapons mounted in the turret give the Shamash a full 360-degree arc of fire for maximum flexibility.

The final factor that contributed significantly to the Shamash's success was not immediately apparent: the decision to design the vehicle to be operated by a single crew member was made to lower the overall cost of the vehicle and allow rapid deployment. This decision had an unexpected long-term effect on its drivers, however, who, in repeated testing, demonstrated a sharp rise in their overall performance in standard field exercises as well as actual combat and Trials of Position. After months of evaluation, the Clan was forced to accept what was for them a deeply disturbing conclusion. Because Shamash drivers face the enemy alone, rather than with a team of crewmen, they quickly adopt the independent, highly motivated and loyal mindset of a MechWarrior. Like most Clans, Blood Spirit accepts vehicles as necessary to their Clan's survivability but maintains a prejudice against their crews as lesser warriors than 'Mech pilots.

The dramatic performances of Shamash drivers, however, may force at least Clan Blood Spirit to reevaluate that attitude.

DEPLOYMENT

From the time it first rolled off the assembly line at the York Vehicle Y2 facility, Clan Blood Spirit jealously guarded the Shamash against all Trials of Possession. Unfortunately, the disastrous Absorption War waged by Clan Blood Spirit against Clans Star Adder and Burrock left many of these vehicles in the hands of Clan Star Adder.

Type: **Shamash Reconnaissance Vehicle**

Technology Base: Clan

Movement Type: Hover

Tonnage: 11

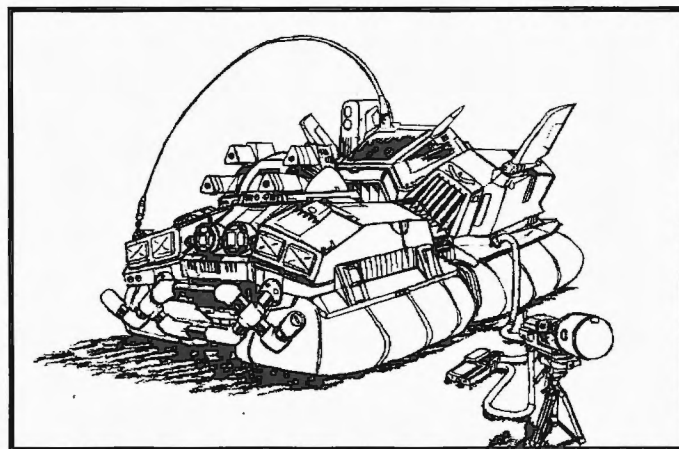
Battle Value: 406

Equipment

		Mass
Internal Structure:		1.5
Engine:	Fusion 60	2.5
Type:	Fusion	
Cruising MP:	13	
Flank MP:	20	
Heat Sinks:	10	0
Control Equipment:		1
Lift Equipment:		1.5
Power Amplifier:		0
Turret		0.5
Armor Factor:	38	2
	<i>Armor Value</i>	
Front	9	
R/L Side	7/7	
Rear	7	
Turret	8	

Weapons and Ammo

	Location	Tonnage
4 ER Small Lasers	Turret	2



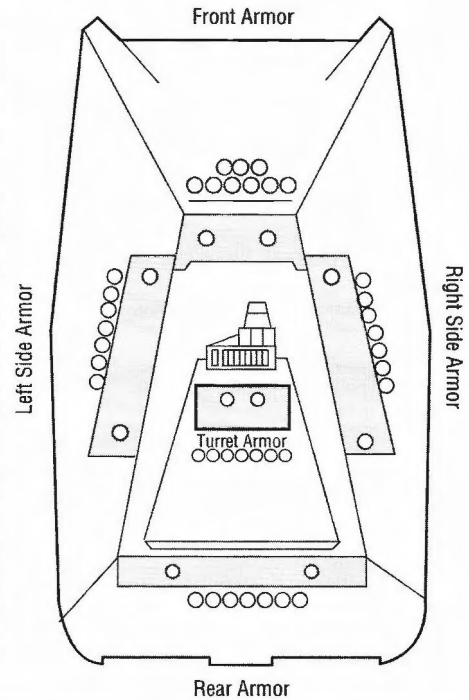
The *Shamash Recon* vehicle represents a new view of the Clans. This scout hovercraft is indicative of the technology the Clans use in all of their combat machines, despite the fact that combat vehicles other than 'Mechs are considered less than worthy of true honor.

On the next page with the *Shamash's* record sheet is an excerpt from the upcoming BattleTech product, *Technical Readout: 3060*, discussing the role and doctrine of Clan vehicles.

BATTLETECH®

GROUND VEHICLE RECORD SHEET

Unit Type: Shamash Reconnaissance Vehicle			Driving Skill:		
Movement Type: Hover	Cruising MP: 13	Flank MP: 20	Gunnery Skill:		
Tonnage: 11	Weapons and Ammo				
Engine Rating: 60	Tonnage: 2.5	Fusion X	I.C.E.	#	Type
Control Tonnage: 1	Lift Equipment: 1.5	4 ER Small Laser Tur 5 - 1-2 3-4 5-6			
Power Amplifier:	Heat Sinks: 10				
Internal Structure: 1.5					
Turret: .5					
Armor tons: 2	Armor points: 38				
Front: 9					
Left/Right side: 7/7					
Rear: 7					
Turret: 8					



CLAN VEHICLES

Nicholas Kerensky's reform of the society created by his father Aleksandr following the Exodus placed BattleMechs and aerospace fighters at the forefront of his new societal organization he named the Clans. Combat vehicles and other arms of the military were relegated to a supporting role as security troops and paramilitary police, and most were denied a place in the liberation of the Pentagon. These non-'Mech units soon formed a second tier within the warrior caste. As Kerensky's honor-based traditions of one-on-one combat gained pre-eminence in the Clan military, vehicles, which by their very nature relied on teamwork, fell further out of favor. Nicholas ensured that most Clan efforts at rebuilding their armed forces concentrated on 'Mech and aerospace production, and so by the 2830s many tanks and other armored vehicles had fallen into disrepair, abandoned in salvage yards and scavenged for spare parts.

The second ilKhan of the Clans, Jerome Winson, saw the folly of this way of thinking. As Clan society entered what is known as its Golden Century, one of the primary expansion efforts focused on establishing new colonies. It quickly became apparent that more troops would be needed to garrison these worlds. Because 'Mechs were already viewed as the province of the elite (ironically, when OmniMechs revolutionized Clan 'Mech design, the older Star League-vintage units would themselves be relegated to garrison duty), armored vehicles were the logical choice for garrison duty, but the Clans had long since abandoned maintenance on mothballed units and most vehicles were in poor condition. In 2842, in an effort to remedy the situation, ilKhan Winson commissioned a series of new designs that would be inexpensive to produce and use the latest technology.

Named for war gods from many Terran cultures, the designs when originally commissioned were little better than those found in the Inner Sphere today. Unwilling to again make the mistake of

ignoring the basic usefulness of conventional vehicles, however, Clan leaders have demanded that the vehicles selected for production continue to be refitted and upgraded over the years. While each improvement incorporates current technological advances, efficiency and cost-effectiveness remain cornerstones of the designs. While most use fusion engines, rather than taking up space with the extra-light variants carried by many 'Mechs and some Inner Sphere tanks, Clan vehicles make use of the Clans' lighter and more efficient weaponry, as well as enhanced armor composites, to gain an advantage on the battlefield.

Ironically, though many Clan vehicles contain compatible systems and components that simplify maintenance procedures, most do not use modular weapons packs. Though the original vehicle designs were built prior to the introduction of OmniMechs in 2854, there have been a number of opportunities to re-engineer them to make use of that new technology. Because the Clans believe that combat vehicles are a necessary evil unfit for deployment on the front lines, however, they see no benefit in incorporating the flexibility granted by the pod system into vehicle design. The main exception to this mindset belongs to Clan Hell's Horses, whose use of vehicles is well known. Their Epona design, which served as the basis for several designs the Wolf's Dragoons took to the Inner Sphere (primarily the Badger and Bandit), is the only true OmniVehicle in the Clans.

It would be a grave, most likely fatal mistake, however, to accept the Clan party line and consider Clan vehicles weak. The largest, the Mars, is easily the match of any Inner Sphere tank and is capable of defeating most light or medium 'Mechs. While Clan vehicles do not enjoy as great an advantage over Inner Sphere vehicles as do Clan OmniMechs over their Inner Sphere counterparts, they still represent a potent, if underused, fighting force.

—Jared Pascal
Adept XVI-Omega

From The MechForce Showroom

Gar class light OmniSubmarine: by Gerald Hall

Mass: 35 Tons

Movement Type: Submersible

Power Plant: Fusion 180

Cruise Speed: 35kph

Flank Speed: 90kph

Armor: Standard

Armament:

3 Diverse Optics Medium Lasers

6 Tons pod space available

Manufacturer: Triton Aquatic Industries

Communications System: Garrett T-15AQ

Targeting and Tracking System: Mullholland Multi-trak

Overview

The *Gar* class submarine was developed in the Federated Commonwealth in the mid 3050s to supplement the Neptune class combat submarine. A sub design was needed which could establish combat parity with undersea-modified OmniMechs and at the same time allow enough maneuverability to survive such an encounter. With the variety of missions such a vehicle would be expected to perform, it was decided to implement OmniTechnology to give the *Gar* the flexibility needed to carry out whatever mission it was assigned to, from reconnaissance to escort duty.

Capabilities

While the *Gar* is only a little over a third of the displacement of the Neptune, its speed and firepower make it quite potent. Unlike the Neptune, the *Gar* uses a small fusion engine which conserves space, while increasing the speed to approximately twice that of the Neptune class.

The *Gar* uses a special pumpjet propulsor to travel at speeds of over 90 kph without creating excessive noise. Already, *Gar* class submarines have engaged Clan OmniMechs with impressive results. The *Gar* is relatively lightly armored, but it uses its high agility to avoid getting hit while it fires its long- and short-range torpedoes at designated targets.

The *Gar's* torpedo armament is supplemented by three turret-mounted medium lasers, which can be used either underwater or against surface targets. Like Inner Sphere OmniMechs, the *Gar* uses a modular system to allow different armaments to be quickly mounted and remounted. The *Gar's* torpedo armament is mounted in an external pod forward of the main pressure hull and faired into the main hull. This pod can be interchanged with others depending on the required mission.

Some versions are armed exclusively with long-range torpedoes for the maximum in extended range firepower. Others trade ranged fire for tremendous short range punch. A final version blends both with additional torpedo stowage for long-endurance missions. This version has been most commonly used during special missions deep into Clan-controlled space.

Deployment

While the *Gar* has been often used as an escort or patrol vehicle, its flexibility has given it extensive usage of late, on water planets where Clan activity is very high.

Type: Gar Class Light OmniSubmarine

Technology Class: Inner Sphere

Movement Type: Submersible

Tonnage: 35

Battle Value: As per Variant

Cruise Speed: 6

Flank Speed: 9

Equipment

Equipment	Mass	Armor	Points
Engine: 180 Fusion	10.5	Loc.	
Control:	2	Front	22
Diving Equipment:	4.5	Sides	18
Heat Sinks: 10	0	Rear	17
Internal Structure:	4.5	Turret	21

Turret:

.5

Submarine drop kit:

1

Armor: 96 AP

6

Pod Space (see below):

6

Fixed Weapons: 3 Medium Lasers in turret

Primary Version: (Pod)

2 x SRM_2 (Torpedo) 2

Ammo (SRM) 50 1

1 x LRM_5 (Torpedo) 2

Ammo (LRM) 24 1

Battle Value: 420

Version A:

4 x SRM_2 (Torpedo) 4

Ammo (SRM) 100 2

Battle Value: 411

Version B:

2 x LRM_5 (Torpedo) 4

Ammo (LRM) 48 2

Battle Value: 429

Version C:

3 x SRM_2 (Torpedo) 3

Ammo (SRM) 50 1

Cargo 2

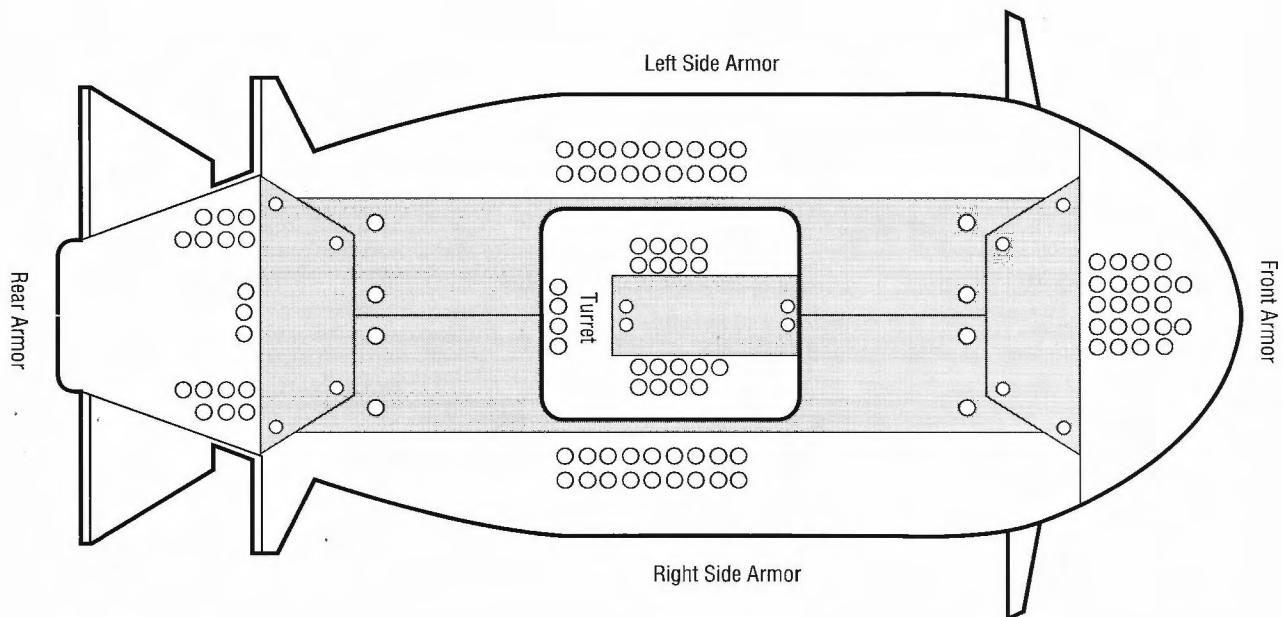
Battle Value: 375


Note: Can tow cargo pods (treat as trailer)

BATTLETECH®

NAVAL RECORD SHEET

Unit Type: Gar Class Light OmniSub- Primary				Driving Skill:				
Movement Type: Submarine		Cruising MP: 6	Flanking MP: 9	Gunnery Skill:				
Tonnage: 35				Weapons and Ammo			Turn	Depth
Engine Rating: 180	Tonnage: 10.5	Fusion X	I.C.E. <input type="checkbox"/>	#	Type	Loc. Dam Min S M L	1	
Control Tonnage: 2	Lift/Diving Equipment: 4.5			2	SRM-2 (Torpedo) R	2 - 1-3 4-6 7-9	2	
Power Amplifier:	Heat Sinks: 10			1	LRM-5 (Torpedo) F	1 6 1-7 8-14 15-21	3	
Internal Structure: 4.5				3	Medium Lasers Tur.	5 - 1-3 4-6 7-9	4	
Turret: ..5							5	
Armor tons: 6		Armor points: 96					6	
Front: 22							7	
Left/Right side: 18							8	
Rear: 17							9	
Turret: 21							10	
							11	
							12	
							13	
							14	





ZULU AMABUTHU II

KaDingane Triumphs Over Treachery

by James L. Patterson III

Great Shaka Julius KaDingane strolled along the ramp of the 'Mech bay. He casually sipped herbal tea from the mug in his hand as he eyed the 'Mechs. The tea was good this morning, he judged. He made a mental note to thank JinJin for brewing it just the way he liked it.

KaDingane was happy this morning—happier than he had been for quite some time. He smiled as he silently inspected the amabuthu's command company, which was called an iviyo. His chest swelled with pride at the sight of his *Czar*. Soon, very soon, the word would be out on the Zulu's secret Nobles, 'Mechs it had worked on quietly. Nothing remained a secret for long.

He was pleased he did not have to camouflage his new unit. The forest green color scheme did that well enough. Moreover, every weapon system was painted fire red. It was the first time in more than two generations the Zulus were taking to the battlefield in their traditional colors.

The Great Shaka instinctively counted to thirteen. Every Zulu iviyo had thirteen 'Mechs in it. KaDingane thought the additional 'Mech a necessity, not a luxury.

The Zulus loved the command and control computers that had become available with the new technology. Every lance, or impi as the Zulus called them, had one support 'Mech that was equipped with long-range missiles to provide covering fire for the other 'Mechs of the impi. The command impi usually had a larger support 'Mech to cover the entire iviyo. And in many cases that was an *Archer*, *Salamander*, or *Longbow*.

With the C³ computer systems, the Zulus could pound an enemy from a distance with the LRMs of the Archers and Catapults. They could hit with greater accuracy once one of the 'Mechs of the iviyo closed, and they didn't have to worry much about endangering the long-range bomber.

The Great Shaka knew, however, that the C³ computers were not without drawbacks. They were too bulky. The company commander had to sacrifice weapons to get the two command computers into the 'Mech. Worse was the isagaba's, or battalion commander's, 'Mech. That 'Mech had to carry a command console to give better control to the unit. This made the BattleMech even more vulnerable to attack.

The Great Shaka felt the tea pleasantly warming his throat and remembered back to the history of the unit class that all Zulus were required to take. During the battle for Hall, one of the isagaba commanders was pushed over by a *Centurion* that had charged. The colonel leading the unit was in an Atlas that had two of the C³ computers on board. Normally, an Atlas of that era would have crushed any fifty-ton 'Mech. However, the lack of hardhitting, in-close weapons that had been sacrificed for C³ space allowed the *Atlas* to be a push over.

Thus, the thirteenth 'Mech had been added to every iviyo. That 'Mech was a protector by Zulu tactics. Protector 'Mechs were not part of the command network. They were equipped with short-range weapons, usually medium pulse lasers or Ultra AC 10s or 20s. Most protectors had some sort of physical weapon for an added punch. This made *Axemen* and *Hatchetmen* valuable to the Zulus.

Finished with his rounds, KaDingane walked back to his quarters. He wanted an answer from Marik. His Zulus had just conquered the Styk Commonality, and they were ready to move again. His Zulus never stayed anywhere long. A moving target was hard to hit; an invisible one, impossible.

. . .

Captain-General Thomas Marik was in the middle of a cabinet meeting when he received the news. It was not much to his liking.

The Zulus had conquered both plariets of the Styk Commonality in less than two days. He knew they were efficient, but he hadn't expected them to be that good. Now he had to move up his timetable.

"Colonel, bring the Major from the mercenary unit. Uh, what was the name of that unit?"

"Oktober Fest, Sire."

"Yes. Oktober Fest. Bring Major Zimmermann to my library. I have a mission for him."

After returning the colonel's salute, Captain-General Marik pondered his next option. *How could they have moved so quickly? It should have taken them at least three weeks to conquer the Commonality. They must be stronger than the Great Shaka let on. Unless . . . could they have found what I seek?*

. . .

The Great Shaka stared at the view screen. He just received a report from his command center that a patrol discovered a pocket of 'Mechs hiding in a valley. He looked over the identification codes of his Zulus, lowered his head.

I pray they sent anyone but them, he muttered. *Anyone but them*. In his heart, however, he knew that the Brute Impi was the patrol involved.

. . .

"Yee-haw! I got that fool on the run!"

"Jaleesa, get back here!"

"Aw, c'mon Jorie, let her have some fun."

"No, Jennifer, you know how Jaleesa is. Always leaping before she looks."

"Yeah, but she brings us some exciting times."

"True, Jennifer, but remember what happened on Denebola?"

The ladies laughed. They were the Brute Impi of the First Iviyo, the most reckless impi of the Zulus.

MECHFORCE QUARTERLY

The women were quadruplets—and distant cousins of the Great Shaka. They had been giving him grief since he took command—not only because of their recklessness on the battlefield, but also because of their beauty. Every eligible Zulu male in the unit was pursuing at least one of the girls, repeatedly proposing marriage and waving glittering engagement rings—and repeatedly walking away dejected and rejected.

The Brute Impi was known for bending orders to the breaking point, such as what happened on Denebola. The Lyran Guard there that the Zulus were in the midst of defeating had launched a last-ditch counter attack into the Zulu left flank. A company of Lyran heavies had moved through a valley, trying to get to the rear of the Zulus. The Brutes let the company pass and did not report it. Then, the Brutes picked off the enemy one by one from behind—an entire company of heavies.

Lucky for the Brutes it had been a heavily wooded area. They would have received a commendation if they hadn't let the lead heavy break the treeline. The *Guillotine* fell 10 yards away from the imbuthu command lance. It was at this point that Jorie reported the situation. Everyone thought Induna Kanammi would split the girls up into other units. However, after two days of cooling off, the Induna let it pass with a reprimand. The joke at the time was that all the steam coming out of the Turkish baths was coming from the Induna.

The Brute Impi was a light lance, but it acted like it was an assault lance. Jorie KaLimaba was the captain of the impi, and she was overly aggressive. She led the lance in her heavily-modified and seriously-repaired *Clint*. She had been offered other 'Mechs, but she wanted to keep this one. It had belonged to an ancestor, and she refused to part with it for sentimental reasons. Her other sisters: Jaleesa, Jennifer, and Jasmine, piloted a *Wasp*, *Stinger*, and *Javelin*, respectively. During campaigns, their impi was responsible for guarding the flank of the main assault force and to report any enemy counterstrikes from their flank. However, more often than not, they loved cleanup and patrol duties. It usually got them into some hot spots, but they always found a way out of them.

"Jaleesa, watch your right flank!"

Jaleesa was chasing a damaged *Lineholder*. The 'Mech must have limped away from an earlier firefight. It had a damaged hip actuator, and that slowed it down. The Brutes moved in like a pack of lionesses on a wounded zebra. Jaleesa's sensors showed that the 'Mech was down to two medium lasers, and that it had little armor protecting it. Jaleesa's *Wasp* let loose a full spread of SRMs and medium laser fire. It tore into what was left of the *Lineholder's* rear armor.

Jasmine's *Javelin* had been modified to carry LRMs instead of SRMs. She fired the two LRM-5s at the *Lineholder* and hit the engine. Smoke spewed everywhere.

Jennifer just watched, a pretty grin splayed across her unblemished face.

"Great Shaka! Two enemy 'Mechs destroyed. There was one survivor," reported Jorie Kalimaba.

"Very well. Any word on the unit designator that we have fought?"

"No, Sire. The enemy 'MechWarrior is unconscious. We can interrogate him when he awakens."

"No. Return him to headquarters. Waha-ta!"

General Kykuyu burst into the command room.

"Sire, we have a message from the Captain-General."

The Great Shaka thumbed the communication console button, ending the conversation with Jorie. He whirled about in his chair and took the message from the general. His expression grew puzzled as he read the statement.

"Sire?" the general risked.

"It appears Marik wants us to remain here for another three weeks. The message says he cannot spare another unit to relieve us."

"Three weeks here? First, he takes a ranger unit and turns it into an assault unit. Now, he wants us to be a garrison unit. Why?"

The Great Shaka shook his head.

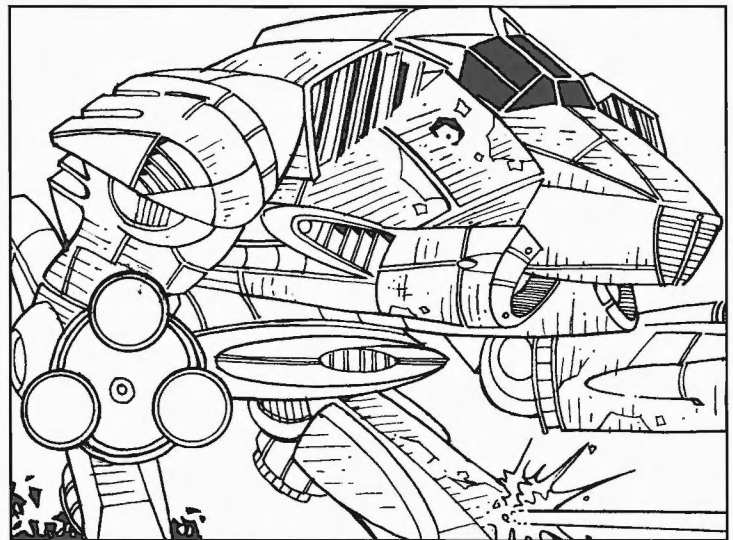
"I am not sure. In any event, prepare to send a reply to Bismarck."

"Yes, Sire!"

The Great Shaka walked back to his quarters. Along the way, he thought about the purpose of Marik's message. It was clear that Marik was up to something, but what? Then, he remembered a warning his father gave him about Thomas Marik. His father was once a part of Comstar and was privileged to information that the other Captain-Generals were not. He should never underestimate the knowledge of Marik. And he should never, under any circumstances, trust him. But why did Marik want all of the Zulus here? None on Bismarck? Unless. . .

"General Kykuyu, get in here! I have an urgent message to relay to the Induna! Hurry!" The greatest fears of all the Zulus rushed through the Great Shaka's mind. *Could Marik have found out the secret of the Zulus? He had been a part of Comstar and had privilege to all the secrets of the galaxy.*

"We must get our regiments back to Bismarck!"



ZULU AMABUTHU II

"Major Zimmermann, your orders have been accelerated. The rebels on Bismarck have seized control of the planet. You are to deploy your mercenary battalion to the planet and eliminate the rebels with extreme prejudice. No one on the planet is to survive!"

"Yes, Sir! But, aren't there some subjects loyal to you on the planet?"

Marik shook his head.

"No. The last of my agents escaped the massacres two days ago. Anyone left on the planet not loyal to the new Revolutionary Committee was executed. Now, get your unit ready. You will leave in three hours. The factories on Bismarck produce plenty of spare parts—and many secret weapon systems. We will divide the spoils."

Major Zimmermann hesitated. He did not want to ruin his opportunity to get on the good side of Marik. His unit was low on funds and needed the cash of the Free Worlds League. Still, he risked a question.

"Why aren't you sending one of your militias or regular line units? Out of curiosity, Sir, why benefit us with this mission?"

Marik laughed. *So, you are not the drunken fool your file claims.* He had a well prepared and well-fabricated answer for the mercenary major, but he hadn't thought he'd need it.

"All of our regular units have been deployed in anticipation of an attack by the new Lyran government. All of our intelligence networks indicate that they may try to seize some of the planets we liberated from their control. We couldn't possibly redeploy them for something as mundane as this. The rebels have at most a company of BattleMechs, mostly light 'Mechs. The majority of their forces are local militia supported by a few armored vehicles. Surely, not enough to warrant the attention of one of my line units. Besides, your unit could use the money and the share of technology. And it is a golden opportunity to show my general staff what your battalion of 'Mechs, armor, and infantry can do. You do a good job on this mission, Major Zimmermann, and there will be other, more profitable, assignments for you."

The major grinned. He could indeed use the money.

"Sire, we won't let you down. We'll teach those rebels not to challenge the Free Worlds League!"

"Good. Three hours, Major Zimmermann."

• • •

Induna Kenneth Kanammi, a Zulu elder, viewed the approaching ships with suspicion. He received word that the Defense Ministry was sending a vessel to pick up supplies, but he hadn't anticipated three. And these were large. However, they gave the proper codes. So all seemed in order.

Still. . . . Something did not sit well with Kanammi.

"Follow me, Major Grey," he said. "Have your dock workers get into position."

"Yes, Induna." Major Vincent Grey was a grizzled infantry veteran. He had led many grunts into combat. Now, in his retirement, he supervised some of the dock work at the spaceport of Bismarck. He needed a little excitement now. His glory years were too far behind him.

Grey walked with a slight limp, an injury he received in a fire-fight back in the old Succession Wars. He used to say he could do

anything the younger men could. But the words were not true any longer.

"Grab those carts, boys!" Grey crisply ordered. "We may have to unload a shipment." He continued to follow the Induna to the safe zone.

The *Mule* DropShip was close to touching down. The other two, both *Leopolds*, were landing on the secondary pads. The *Mule's* ramp was lowering.

Something wasn't right.

Grey felt it, too.

The cargo bay of the DropShip looked dark.

Suddenly, laser fire shot out of the hatch. A *Venom* light 'Mech stepped out, a *Nightstar* following. The shells from the gauss rifles hummed, striking a nearby warehouse. 'Mechs poured out of the *Leopolds*, too.

The Induna and Major Grey dove for cover.

"Clear the space port!" The Induna hollered over a communications pad. He took off running toward a nearby gate, looking over his shoulder and counting the enemy—seven 'Mechs so far. The Induna had time to identify four more of them—an *Exterminator*, a *Bushwacker*, a *Dervish*, and a *Vulcan*. The *Nightstar* was heading his way. Thinking quickly, he leapt down some stairs and through a door leading to the underground tunnels.

Major Grey didn't move as fast. Age had slowed his body, and he crawled between two large crates, trying to avoid the mayhem. An explosion cut through the air, and peering through the smoke, Grey saw the body of a young technician. He reached in his pocket, his fingers fumbling for a keypad. He tugged it free, attached it to a crate, and punched a couple of numbers. The crate popped open, and the veteran reached in and pulled out a shoulder-fired SRM 2 launcher. There were inferno rounds in the ammunition holders.

Grey peaked over a crate and saw a Panther coming his way. Perfect, he muttered. He crouched and waited for the 'Mech to pass.

Fffumpth! The SRMs streaked toward the back of the enemy. The Panther lit up like a Christmas tree. Fire engulfed the torso, and the 'Mech began flailing about as the pilot tried to put out the flames.

No! Pain shot through Grey's shoulder, and he fell to the ground. Through a haze, he spotted an enemy soldier standing on top of a crate, pointing a machine gun at him. The soldier fired again.

Dock workers and technicians were running everywhere. Oktober Fest 'Mechs continued to come out of the *Mule*. They were shooting everything that moved—and some things that didn't. Infantry poured out of the *Leopolds*. The grunts were whooping and hollering, riding atop light tanks and support vehicles. Last to exit were a couple of *Von Luckners*, seventy-five ton monsters heading for the capital city of Royal Kraal.

Some of the enemy 'Mechs secured the spaceport. Others headed to the city. Judging by their headings, they were obviously on a search and destroy mission for the Great Shaka's mansion and the governing buildings.

MECHFORSCE QUARTERLY

The 'Mechs blasted their way into the city, leveling buildings as they went. Civilians were scurrying for cover.

There was token resistance here and there.

A lone *Striker* tried to engage an approaching *Wolverine*, but the *Striker* was no match for it.

And there was also more substantial resistance.

Three more enemy 'Mechs followed the *Wolverine* into the city—the *Starslayer*, *Night Hawk*, and *Assassin*—and right into a surprise. The enemy *Wolverine* disappeared in a cloud of smoke and fire, as four shells pummeled the 'Mech into oblivion. The remainder of the Oktober Fest force stopped in their tracks. Broken pieces of the shattered *Wolverine* rained down.

The enemy pilots scanned the smoke cloud, finally making out the shadow of . . . something.

What the heck is that? one of the enemy pilots radioed.

The Zulu's *Czar* stepped forward, both autocannons lowered. It let loose with double shots at the *Night Hawk*—driving the 'Mech into a building. The *Starslayer* retaliated with its lasers, but the volley did little damage. The *Czar* trundled forward, lashing out at the *Starslayer* and smashing the cockpit.

The pilot of the *Assassin* decided that discretion was definitely the better part of valor and tried to gracefully retreat. However, with all the noise, the pilot hadn't noticed that a Zulu *Grasshopper* had landed behind it. The *Grasshopper* let loose four laser blasts, then leapt forward and kicked the enemy 'Mech. The *Assassin* stumbled back, only to be caught by a *Victor*.

All around the city, the 'Mechs of the Oktober Fest were being driven out. One poor *Rifleman* ran right into an *Atlas*, as it was emerging from a hidden bay. In the end, the only thing left standing were the *Rifleman's* legs.

Another Oktober Fest 'Mech, a *Trebuchet*, came out on the wrong end of a long-range duel with two *Archers* and a *Longbow*.

A *Griffin* and a *Catapult* tried valiantly to avoid the onslaught of a Zulu *Czar*. They both jumped behind the *Czar*, hoping to avoid its sting of death. However, the arms of the *Czar* flipped over and fired its twin autocannons.

Then, there was the fierce tank battle on the outskirts of the city. The *Von Luckners* of the invading force ran into two Zulu LRM carriers. The *Von Luckners* were outgunned, and every two minutes one of the *Von Luckners* went down.

The Zulus were pushing the Oktober Fest back, and anything in the way got crushed. The Zulus, spearheaded by General Yack's *iviyo*, destroyed every enemy 'Mech and tank in their range. Only a few escaped to flee to the space port.

Induna Kanammi viewed the tactical screen from the underground command post. Some of the opposing forces had tried to follow him into the tunnels. They made an effort to blast their way in, but met overwhelming resistance.

From his vantage point, Kanammi watched the battle and ordered General Yack's *iviyo* to continue the counterattack. The warning message from the Great Shaka had arrived just in time, Kanammi mused.

Then Kanammi ordered the main counterstrike, a combined arms brigade, to recapture the space port and prevent any of the

Fest's forces from escaping. The remainder of General Yack's 'Mechs swept the city clean.

Here and there, Yack found and executed an enemy soldier. The Zulus took no pirate prisoners.

. . .

Major Zimmermann realized too late that his arms battalion had run into a full regiment of BattleMechs. The Zulu regiment had the support of a battalion of armor and another complete regiment of infantry. These rebels were better armed than his unit. Whoever these guys were, they sure knew how to fight! Giving up all hope of making it back to the *Mule*, he gave the order to the DropShip to lift off, abandoning his men on the planet.

A nightmare, he whispered, as the ship accelerated.

But it was a nightmare that wasn't over yet. Some of the 'Mechs below were firing up at the ship, inflicting minor damage. That wasn't a problem. But the *Cheetahs*, *Stingrays*, and *Rievers* approaching were.

"Who are these rebels?" Zimmermann screamed.

The *Cheetahs* began a strafing run to draw off the gunners of the escaping DropShip. Although they did little damage, they effectively caught the gunners' attention. They circled back to the *Rievers*, as the *Stingrays* closed in on the engine section. The DropShip rocked and swayed from the blasts.

Major Zimmermann hoped the pursuers would allow them the chance to escape. However, that wish was put out of reach as the *Rievers* closed in. The hundred-ton aerospace fighters hammered the DropShip with missiles. The pounding was relentless.

The DropShip wavered in the air as warning signals blared.

"Hull breach!" Someone called.

In the chaos, Major Zimmermann crept to an escape pod, slipped inside and launched it. He watched the DropShip out of the port hole, as the aerospace fighters continued their assault against the big ship. A minute later, the DropShip exploded. The major suspected the cooling vents on one of the massive engines had been ruptured. More of his men lost.

The escape pod landed in the sea, about a mile from land. Major Zimmermann felt fortunate he had not come to planet near those who had destroyed his unit. *I might yet escape*, he whispered.

He popped the hatch, intent on launching the rubber liferaft. But as he thumbed the button, his pod was lifted violently into the air.

"Mylst!" he screamed.

A mylst, a huge water creature, had grabbed the pod in its jaws.

The major fell free and plunged into the cold water. He felt himself sinking, and the blackness quickly swallowed him.

. . .

Induna Kenneth Kanammi strolled through Royal Kraal. The city had suffered only moderately from the firefight. He passed a few families who were assessing the damage to their homes. He nodded and offered them a greeting.

"Waha-ta!" he said. "Success or death!"



by Bryan Nystul

Once again, my busy schedule has kept me from these pages too long. And once again, there is so much to talk about. So once again, here is a potpourri of various BattleBits for you. Enjoy!

BATTLETECH MASTER RULES

This July will see the release of the biggest thing to hit BattleTech since the XL engine: the **BattleTech Master Rules**, or **BMR** for short.

The **BMR** is the latest incarnation of the main rulebook for BattleTech, following in the footsteps of the **BattleTech Manual**, the **BattleTech Compendium**, and the **BattleTech Compendium: The Rules of Warfare (BTC:RoW)**. And like those previous works, the core rules of the game remain unchanged. It is still the same BattleTech you know and love.

So you might ask: "Why a new edition of the BattleTech rules? The **BTC:RoW** works just fine as-is." To give an exclusive perspective on this event, a little history lesson is in order.

Back in 1994 a young new BattleTech developer had just begun to work at FASA, after nearly a decade of being a BattleTech player. His new boss Sam Lewis gave him the good news that his first major project would be a new edition of the Compendium! As you can imagine, the new developer was a bit surprised. Sure, he had experience revising game systems before. In fact, he had just put together the third edition of the **DC Heroes** role-playing game over at Mayfair, which required the same kind of shuffling and polishing the Compendium job would call for. But BattleTech was somehow *different*.

Well, that young developer did not flinch from the task, and it turned out pretty good. On the whole, the rules were more complete and easier to understand than in previous editions, and the book was well-received by BattleTech players everywhere.

As you might have guessed, that young developer was me. Flash forward to 1997: I still see people playing with the old BattleTech Compendium at tournaments. Apparently, the fact that the **BTC:RoW** was called a Compendium seemed to suggest that there was no real difference. Apparently, some title confusion existed. And there are still people confused about various rules issues, not the least of which was the enigmatic line-of-sight (LOS) rule, which against all logic continues to cloud the minds of even the best players.

Flash forward to 1998: So I went back and read through the **BTC:RoW** again, and I quickly realized that I have learned a lot in the last four years. There were lots of little holes that could really use plugging. Here's one of my favorites: "A BattleMech with leg-mounted weapons may not fire through a hex that would provide that BattleMech with partial cover." Think about that one for a minute...

I also realized that rules like LOS were being misunderstood not because of what they said, but because of how they said it. I decided the best course of action was to restructure the rules so that they are easier to read and reference during game play.

Now, most rules are broken down into several sub-sections, each with its own header. For example, if you're looking for the heat generated by Jumping movement, there is a subsection entitled Heat in the Jumping rules that will tell you about it. I suspect tournament judges should especially like this book for its ease of reference during play.

So what have I done to your game? Not much, really. Okay, there were a few actual rules changes, but nearly all of them were suggested by you, the players. There is too much to go into here, but among the rules changes I have addressed the following favorites: Skidding, LOS, Death From Above, Heat, VTOLs, Smoke, and the dreaded Anti-Missile System.

And it bears repeating: *the game is still the same*. The **BMR** is fully compatible with all existing BattleTech products. I'm really looking forward to it, and now that you know the whole story, I hope you are too.

FIFTH SUCCESSION WAR

As you can see on page 12 of this issue, the 5th Succession War has begun! I imagine there are a few surprises on that map (did someone say Outworlds Alliance?). A few important bits of advice for the continuing war:

This is only a simulation! In case you were confused, the 5th Succession War is just for fun. It will have absolutely no impact on the "real" BattleTech storyline. But I am determined to add features to the war as we go, including web page updates. Perhaps you can even use the ongoing events of the MechForce war in your own campaigns at home. If you do, send us letters or email and tell us how they are going. We want to hear real reports from the front lines!

Make sure you are fighting for the right side! This means you, Steiner loyalists! The Lyran Alliance is pitifully small compared to the Federated Commonwealth. I have to assume this means that all loyal Steiners have not yet made it over to Lyran space. Please, for the sake of your homeland, let Beryl know your true loyalty as soon as possible! As you can see from, the battle reports, the Lyran Alliance lost the most worlds this quarter, and will continue to do so unless *you* help them! Note also there is now a Wolf-in-Exile faction for all you Wolves that don't want to follow Vlad. And the homeworld Clans will eventually be involved in the battle as well (as some invading Clans will inevitably fail to be worthy and fall to the Inner Sphere *surats*), so if you were waiting to sign up with Hell's Horses or Cloud Cobra, now's the time!

Turn in more ranked battles! The more ranked battles your faction sends in, the more aggressive they will be. Several Clans turned in no battles at all, which is why the Clan OZ is so small. And remember, you small factions have a chance because the number of battles turned in is determined per capita, in other words, the average number of ranked battles turned in per member in the faction. This means you large factions (Draconis Combine, FedCom, etc.) have to work extra hard to get your averages up. This is why the Outworlds Alliance kicked so much butt: there is one member and he turned in 17 battles himself! Of course, quantity alone is not enough without quality. Your MechForce standings are a factor in your factions success or failure in their offensive and defensive campaigns. Only you can stop your realm from being swallowed whole by aggressive neighbors (I'm talking to you, St. Ives Compact). So play those ranked battles and fight the good fight!

MECHFORCE QUARTERLY

SUMMIT MEETING 1998

An historic meeting took place on April 23 & 24th in the hallowed halls of FASA. Gathered in Chicago were: the indispensable Mike Stackpole, the creators of BattleTech, Jordan Weisman and L. Ross Babcock III, up-and-coming novelist Loren Coleman, live via satellite Chris Hartford, and the usual motley assortment of FASA staffers (Randall Bills, Donna Ippolito, Sharon Turner Mulvihill, FASA President Jill Lucas), and of course, yours truly.

Our goal was nothing less than *the complete domination of the world!* Oh, no wait, that was a different meeting. Our goal was to plot the course of the BattleTech story for the next two to three years. Over those two days many evil plots were hatched, and naturally, I can't tell you about any of them.

But there is one scoop I can give you, if you promise not to tell non-MechForce members. You promise? Okay. We have finally decided the real fate of Clan Wolverine. They are gathered in the Deep Periphery, valiantly battling the hordes of alien invaders that seek to conquer the Inner Sphere. We should all be grateful for their brave sacrifice. And remember, you promised not to tell.



Mike Stackpole, Loren Coleman and Bryan sit plotting mayhem, mischief and the fate of a cup of coffee... "...and it takes an engine hit here, the explosion wiping out the next cup, the phone and then...."



Okay, so you couldn't get in. At least you get to see inside the the BattleTech think-tank.

From left to right clockwise, BattleTech Co-creator L. Ross Babcock, Authors Mike Stackpole and Loren Coleman, BattleTech Developer Bryan Nystul, Editorial Director Donna Ippolito, Assistant Developer Randall Bills, and Managing Editor Sharon Turner Mulvihill. Photo taken by FASA President Jill Lucas (nope, I wasn't there....).

MECHFORCE MEMBER UPDATE

Since the printing of the **MechForce Manual-Second Edition** and **Maximum Tech**, several new 'Mechs and vehicles have been produced and released by FASA. With this in mind, we at MechForce GHQ, have figured that we'd better get this new data into the field. The listing is in order of creation as per type. The format is;

{MF#/ name/ BV/ Tonnage/ Cost/ Base/ Source}

'Mechs:

651/ *Black Watch* BKW-7R/ 1855/ 85/ 8,918,018/ IS-Lvl2 /NW
 652/ *Blackjack* BJ-3/ 1099/ 45/ 3,592,375/ IS-Lvl 2/ BP
 653/ *Hoplite* HOP-4B/ 994/ 55/4,335,759/ IS-Lvl1/ BP
 654/ *Catphract* CTF-2X/ 1035/ 70/ 5,877,354/ IS-Lvl1/ BP
 655/ *Charger* CGR-1A5/ 1132/ 80/7,756,771/ IS-Lvl1/ BP
 656/ *Blood Kite*/ 2484/ 85/ 9,691,225/ Clan-Lvl2/ C Clans
 657/ *Hellfire*/ 1495/ 60/6,824,960/ Clan-Lvl2/ CClans
 658/ *Hellion Prime*/ 1439/30 / 6,600,425/ Clan-Lvl2/ CClans
 659/ *Hellion A*/ 1290/30/ 6,545,500/ Clan-Lvl2/CClans
 700/ *Hellion B*/ 1043/ 30/6,659,900/ Clan-Lvl2/ CClans
 701/ *Ursal* 1509/ 50/4,535,501/ Clan-Lvl2/ TR:3060

Vehicles:

5163/ *Schiltron Prime*/ 776/80/10,959,666/ IS-Lvl2/ NW
 5164/ *Schiltron A*/ 1088/ 80/ 10,763,666/ IS-Lvl2/ NW
 5165/ *Schiltron B*/ 1117/ 80/ 11,712,166/ IS-Lvl2/ NW
 5166/ *Schiltron C*/ 714/ 80/ 10,034,266/ IS-Lvl2/ NW
 5167/ *Shamash*/ 406/ 11/?/Clan Lvl2/TR:3060

Key

NW- NorthWind Highlanders Scenario Pack
 CCLans- Field manual: Crusader Clans
 BP- BattlePack: The T4th Succession War
 TR:3060- Technical Readout: 3060

Current Member Ranks

This is the updated list of member ranked battle scores and MF point totals. If your name isn't on this list then your ranked battle score is leveled at 1000 and you have 0 MF points.

The members listed are the people who have participated in ranked battles, tournaments or have articles published in MechForce Quarterly. This is not intended to be a slight to all the other faithful members, but these are the people who have been active in club events.

Name	R. Battle Score	Name	R. Battle Score		
MF Rank		MF Rank			
Joel	Agee 21	1020	Jason	Blanchet 15	1000
Carl	Amedio 97	1022	Charles	Borner 1	996
Mark	Amoroso 5	1000	Nadin	Brzezinski 60	1000
Jerry	Bailey 39	1031	Darrell	Castillo 7	1000
Jonathan	Bartlett 3	1012	Rich	Cencarik 923	1865
Dave	Barton 125	1079	Loren	Coleman 160	1216
Graeme	Bayless 25	1000	Chris	Colson 2	1000
Randall	Bills 43	1039	Jonathan	Cox 21	1007
Robert	Binkley 75	1250	Thomas	Curzi 3	1002

Jeremy	Dalton 25	1000	James	Matherne 23	1004
Richard	Darr, Jr. 627	1523	Buster	McCall 130	1073
Michael	DeHoyos 109	1074	Lance Shawn	McGee 21	1010
Patrick	Dillon 10	1000	Chris	McNeely 41	1033
Warner	Doles 26	991	Bryan	Nystul 73	1065
Robert	Dunn 1	1000	James Lee	Patterson 35	1000
Serge	Elfassi 3	999	Corey	Radloff 32	1024
Sam	Escobar 40	1032	William	Ransdale 80	1250
L. Derek	Evans 52	1014	Rick	Remer 83	1000
Steven	Fox 52	1051	Kenneth R.	Reno 75	1250
Gabriel	Gong 5	1000	Ken	Rogner 15	1014
Craig	Gootee 26	1025	Thomas	Ropers 320	1272
Dan	Grendell 137	998	David	Rozelle 30	1039
Winter	Guité 43	1025	Janice	Ruane 4	996
Craig	Gulledge 102	1028	Keith	Ruhl 52	1000
Michell	Gulledge 45	1037	Paul	Self 2	996
Terrence	Haas 29	1023	Michael	Selk 85	1057
Jesse	Hagle 27	1026	Joshua	Shaffer 6	987
William	Hall 75	1250	Donald	Shaw 23	1022
Gerald	Hall 55	1000	Christopher	Smith 51	988
Richard	Hamer 7	1000	Jeff	Smith 128	1093
Lewis	Helfer 23	1022	Bill	Southworth 24	1016
Scott	Hensch 26	1018	Robert	Speicher 1	997
Detlef	Howe 40	1000	James	Spute 25	1020
Matthew	Hubert 1	997	Fred	Stephanosky Sr. 31	1023
Christopher	Hughes 25	1000	Fred	Stephanosky Jr. 60	1042
Chris	Hussey 57	1000	Jesse	Stockwell 10	1000
Walter	Illman 75	1250	Greg	Swanson 22	1000
Chris	Ings 5	1000	Chris	Swick 19	1018
John	Kielman 2	995	Carl	Szczerski 66	1062
Camille	Klein 39	1024	David	Szczerski 25	1018
Peter	LaCasse 25	1000	Yu Yao	Tham 1	993
William	Lais 33	1017	Christoffer	Trossen 65	1000
Al	Lakatos 42	1029	Beryl	Tumer III 45	1000
Roland	Lamothe 49	1041	Kevin	Unash 24	1023
Bob	Legro 147	1083	David J.	Vanden Noven 15	1000
Brian	Long 38	1030	Stephen	Watts 25	1000
David	Low 100	1250	Reid	Wilson 75	1250
Steve	Massey 484	1447	Jacques	Zarbatany 75	1250

NOTICES and ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Releases: BattleTech

Sword and Fire: Twilight of the Clans V 5719 \$6.99

A **BattleTech** novel by Thomas Gressman

Task Force Serpent stands poised on the brink of the greatest military operation since the liberation of Terra in 2277. Their target: The Smoke Jaguar homeworld. Their mission: Annihilation of that Clan's warrior caste, and the total destruction of the Jaguars' war-making ability.

With an assassin loose in her forces, General Ariana Winston will have to draw on all her skill to reduce the Jaguars' planet to ruins with sword and fire.

Available in late June

BattleTech Master Rules 1707 \$20.00

BattleTech Master Rules replaces the **BattleTech Compendium: The Rules of Warfare** as the single-source rulebook for advanced **BattleTech** players. This new rulebook combines material from **BattleTech, 4th Edition, CityTech, Second Edition** and other sources to offer the most comprehensive set of rules ever published for the **BattleTech** game system.

Also included are complete new table-top miniature rules. 'Mech designs, scenario building rules and the Battle Value System for balancing forces make this book a must-have manual for **BattleTech** enthusiasts.

Available in July

Shadows of War: Twilight of the Clans VI 5721 \$5.99

A **BattleTech** novel by Thomas Gressman

The massive invasion force of Task Force Serpent has descended behind enemy lines. Their mission is to obliterate the military power of Clan Smoke Jaguar, and seize the homeworld of Huntress. Commanding this historic assault is General Ariana Winston of the Eridani Light Horse mercenary brigade. After a year's voyage along the Exodus Road, they have arrived.

But the battle has only just begun. The dangers are more far-reaching than General Winston had ever feared. And the Jaguar garrison is far more cunning than they ever expected. And now, a new threat is bearing down on the Serpent armies. The greatest danger to humanity's future is right in their midst and about to ignite the fires of a war to end all wars.

Available in late July

BattleTech Technical Readout: 3060 8622 \$20.00

Armed with new BattleMechs and weapons, the Inner Sphere takes the fight to the Clans by striking at their homeworlds. But the Clan forces they face also have new 'Mechs as well as vehicles constructed with the Clan's vastly superior technology, and some other surprises. **Technical Readout: 3060** contains illustrations and complete game statistics for the latest Inner Sphere and Clan BattleMechs, tanks, hovercraft, VTOLs and more.

Available in August

FASA Interactive Technologies

www.FASAIInteractive.com

MechCommander - You take the role of a commander of a BattleMech unit in this real-time strategic combat game. You will control the operations of a unit during a planetary assault against a world held by Clan Smoke Jaguar.

Available this summer

Wizards of the Coast

www.wizards.com

BattleTech The Trading Card Game: 3rd Edition

This is the third printing of the collectable card game. The new edition will include new cards and new art and will now offer Clan and Inner Sphere decks. Great for card gamers and BT fans alike!

Available July/August

Ral Partha Releases

1-800-543-0272 or www.ralpartha.com

July 13, 1998

20-740- *Behemoth Heavy Tank (2)* \$8.25

20-904 *OBK-M10 O' Bakemono* \$7.95

20-905 *BJ2-0 Blackjack* \$6.75

20-906 *RJN101 A Raijin* \$5.95

August 17, 1998

20-739 *Ontos Heavy Tank (2)* \$8.25

20-907 *BHKU-0 Black Hawk-Ku (Omni)* \$7.50

20-908 *Thresher* \$6.75

20-909 *DGR-3F Dragon Fire* \$6.75

September 21, 1998

20-910 *Nobori-Nin (Omni)* \$8.95

20-911 *Crossbow (Omni)* \$7.50

20-912 *Kingfisher (Omni)* \$8.75

20-913 *P1 Perseus (Omni)* \$7.50

MECHFORCE EVENT AND TOURNAMENT LISTING

Origins 98 July 2-5,

Origins Open- Fri. 8 Am, 2PM, 9PM

MechForce MidWest Regional Sat. 12Noon, 7PM & Sun.10AM

BattleTalk: 3061- Sat. 10AM

Wizard World 98 (Chicago Comic-con) July 17-19

Grand Melee- Sat. 12 Noon

1998 GEN CON Game Fair August 6-9

BattleTalk: 3061- Fri. 12 Noon

Trial of Bloodright- Fri. 8AM, Sat. 8AM, Sun. 10AM

Gunslinger- Thurs. 2PM, Fri. 2PM, Sun. 10AM

BattleTech Open-Thurs. 8AM, Fri. 8AM, Sat. 4PM

Grand Melee- Thurs. 8AM

MechForce Challenge-Thurs. 9PM

ToyTech- Sat. 12 Noon

Dragon*Con 98 September 3-6

Dragon*Con Open-Thu. 1PM, Fri 1PM, 6PM

Gunslinger Thu. 6PM

MechForce Southern Regional-Sat 9AM, 1PM

Grand Melee-Sat-6PM

Trial of Bloodright-Sat-After Grand Melee

Trial of Grievance-Sat-10PM

Dragon*Con Invitational-Sun. 1PM

NOTICES and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Convention and Tournament Listing:

3rd Quarter-'98: End of Season.

Special tournaments and guests will be listed under the con that is hosting them. For more info, contact the individual convention or location, please. Asterisks indicate conventions where FASA will be in attendance.

July

Inconjunction- July 3-5, Indianapolis, IN

Open and Gunslinger Tournament

PO Box 19776, Indianapolis, IN 46219 incon@indy.net

Origins@ '98- July 2-5, Columbus, OH *

Origins Open tournament and Midwest MechForce Regional Tournament. Primus Bryan Nystul and Precentor Martial Randall Bills will be attending along with the rest of the FASA development staff. See them at the FASA booth.

(614)856-3976 or www.andonunlimited.com

Skirmishes '98- July 10-12, Kansas City, MO

BattleTech events scheduled-

(816)505-2014 or Skirmishes@Aol.com

Wizard World Chicago '98 July 17-19, Rosemont, IL*

We'll be there running demos and events and you can just come and hang out with the FASA staff and have a good ol' time.

River-Con-July 31-August 2, Louisville, KY

BattleTech Battle Royal and another tournament(non-MF)
(502)524-7477 or mlnunn@blue.net

August

GEN CON@ Game Fair August 6-9, Milwaukee, WI*

Yup, it's that time again. Time for the the grandmother of game cons. We'll all be there and ready to "chew bubble-gum and kick..." well you know! There will be the hall o' BattleTech set up (look for the big BattleTech Banner) and as much BT as you can handle. Plus, the full MechForce crew will be in attendance, so make sure to stop by the FASA booth.

(614)856-3976 or www.andonunlimited.com

Comic-Con International- August 13-16, San Diego, CA

Gunslinger and other BT events to be scheduled.

(619)491-2475 or cgigames@home.com

Corpse-Con IV/'98-August 21-23, Corpus Christi, TX

BT events are scheduled. No list available at time of this printing.

(512)814-2806 or Peloquin@Aol.com

Con-Bat '98- August 28-30, Clarksville, TN

BT events are scheduled. No list available at time of this printing.

WarRoomTN@Aol.com

Dragonflight '98-August 28-30, Seattle, WA

BT tournament is scheduled (non-MF)

(206)781-0047 or info@dragonflight.org

September

Dragon*Con- September 3-6, Atlanta, GA*

The South's biggest SF con is host to the '98-'99 MechForce Southern Regional Tournament. Precentor Chi Stacy Neilsen and Precentor Epsilon Beryl Turner will be attending (Ok, and Shadowrun The Trading Card Game developer Mike Neilsen will be there too...) so, stop by and see them at the FASA booth.

Another note, if you are planning to attend, hurry and get your reservation, as rooms are selling out quickly.

(770)623-6321 or dragoncon@dragoncon.com

Gateway '98- September 4-7, Los Angeles, CA

BT events scheduled. No list available at time of this printing.

(818)848-1748 or ctbrien@earthlink.net

Shorecon '98-September 17-20, Cherry Hill, NJ

BT events are scheduled. No list available at time of this printing.

(732)657-3311 or info@multigenre.com

RoleCon '98- September 18-20, Socorro, NM

BT events are scheduled. No list available at time of this printing.

getalife@nmt.edu

Mad Media 5- September 25-27, Madison, WI

BT Events are scheduled. No list available at time of this printing.

(608)836-1103 or madmedia@Aol.com

We have two more items to get out this issue. First off, we have only three classified pieces this issue, so here they are.

a.) Wanted: People to share driving time and gas/toll expenses to GEN CON 98. Must be from Metro NYC area or NJ/ Penn.

b.) Wanted to buy or trade for: 1 copy of Tech Readout:3025 (original edition). Must be complete and in fair condition. c.) Players wanted for MechWarrior/ BT Clan campaign and ranked battles.

Contact: William A. Ransdale, 75 West St. Trenton, NJ. 08611-1145 or phone (609)392-2542

Custom Terrain design to bring your battles to life. Contact me and see what we have for your BT game. Templeton Terrain (Tony Bauer)8251 S. Roberts Rd. Apt 2E, Bridgeview, IL 60455 or e-mail realms3@juno.com

Items Wanted, willing to negotiate on prices:

1606-The Fox's Teeth, 1614-Cranston Snord's Irregulars, 1630-The Star League and 1652-The Kell Hounds.

Contact: Marc Christophé 3, Rue Dom-Brial 66380, Pia, France

It is with great disappointment that I have to announce that the BattleTech World Championships that we had scheduled for last year and rescheduled for this year, are going to be postponed indefinitely.

There were two factors in this decision. First, due to GEN CON's move this year, we expect some small amount of confusion. This is in no way meant to slight the hard-working staff of Andon Unlimited, but as in all transitions to new territory, there are bound to be some bugs. We would want such issues worked out before we began a grand undertaking as a world championship tourney.

The second reason is simple. We don't have enough qualified competitors for the event. To compete, you have to be a winner of that year's regional tournament or a winner of a major event, like the Origins Open or the GEN CON Open. Counting in the winners of this and last year's regionals and the major tournaments, we only have eight entrants. To even consider an event like this we feel that we should have a more substantial number of competitors to get in the tournament. Out of the eight, how many would be able to even make the trip to Milwaukee? Odds say possibly one half or four. If we let the three place winners of the GEN CON Open have a slot, then we're up to seven.

In short, it's not feasible at this time. What can you do to help? We need more Regional tournaments going on out there. We need a larger field to draw from. Hopefully, in time, we will be able to hold this grand event and showcase the best of the best in this game we have chosen to play. Till next time troops, good luck and straight shootin'.



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